# Poems of Arthur Hugh Clough

by Arthur Hugh Clough

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK POEMS OF ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH ***

# POEMS OF ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

Monogram of the author (AHC)

Logo of Macmillan and Company

Engraved portrait of the author

Engraved by C. H. Jeens.

POEMS OF ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

SOMETIME FELLOW OF ORIEL COLLEGE OXFORD

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# EARLY POEMS.

## AN EVENING WALK IN SPRING.

It was but some few nights ago
I wandered down this quiet lane;
I pray that I may never know
The feelings then I felt, again.
The leaves were shining all about,
You might almost have seen them springing;
I heard the cuckoo’s simple shout,
And all the little birds were singing.
It was not dull, the air was clear,
All lovely sights and sounds to deal,
My eyes could see, my ears could hear,
Only my heart, it would not feel;
And yet that it should not be so,
My mind kept telling me within;
Though nought was wrong that I did know,
I thought I must have done some sin.
For I am sure as I can be,
That they who have been wont to look
On all in Nature’s face they see,
Even as in the Holy Book;
They who with pure and humble eyes
Have gazed and read her lessons high,
And taught their spirits to be wise
In love and human sympathy,—

That they can soon and surely tell
When aught has gone amiss within,
When the mind is not sound and well,
Nor the soul free from taint of sin.
For as God’s Spirit from above,
So Beauty is to them below,
And when they slight that holy love,
Their hearts that presence may not know.
So I turned home the way I came,
With downcast looks and heavy heart,
A guilty thing and full of shame,
With a dull grief that had no smart.
It chanced when I was nearly there
That all at once I raised my eyes—
Was it a dream, or vision rare,
That then they saw before them rise?
I see it now, before me here,
As often, often I have done,
As bright as it could then appear,
All shining in the setting sun.
Elms, with their mantling foliage spread,
And tall dark poplars rising out,
And blossomed orchards, white and red,
Cast, like a long low fence, about;

And in the midst the grey church-tower,
With one slight turret at its side,
Bringing to mind with silent power
Those thousand homes the elm-trees hide.
And then there came the thought of one
Who on his bed of sickness lay,
Whilst I beneath the setting sun
Was dreaming this sweet hour away.
I thought of hearts for him that beat,
Of aching eyes their watch that kept;
The sister’s and the mother’s seat—
And oh! I thought I should have wept.
And oh! my spirit melted then,
The weight fell off me that I bore,
And now I felt in truth again
The lovely things that stood before.
O blessed, blessed scene, to thee,
For that thy sweet and softening power,
I could have fallen upon my knee,
Thy stately elms, thy grey church-tower.
So then I took my homeward way,
My heart in sweet and holy frame,
With spirit, I may dare to say,
More good and soft than when I came.

1836

## AN INCIDENT.

’Twas on a sunny summer day
I trod a mighty city’s street,
And when I started on my way
My heart was full of fancies sweet;
But soon, as nothing could be seen,
But countenances sharp and keen,
Nought heard or seen around but told
Of something bought or something sold,
And none that seemed to think or care
That any save himself was there,—
Full soon my heart began to sink
With a strange shame and inward pain,
For I was sad within to think
Of this absorbing love of gain,
And various thoughts my bosom tost;
When suddenly my path there crossed,
Locked hand in hand with one another,
A little maiden and her brother—
A little maiden, and she wore
Around her waist a pinafore.
And hand in hand along the street
This pretty pair did softly go,

And as they went, their little feet
Moved in short even steps and slow:
It was a sight to see and bless,
That little sister’s tenderness;
One hand a tidy basket bore
Of flowers and fruit—a chosen store,
Such as kind friends oft send to others—
And one was fastened in her brother’s.
It was a voice of meaning sweet,
And spake amid that scene of strife
Of home and homely duties meet,
And charities of daily life;
And often, should my spirit fail,
And under cold strange glances quail,
’Mid busy shops and busier throng,
That speed upon their ways along
The thick and crowded thoroughfare,
I’ll call to mind that little pair.
1836

**THE THREAD OF TRUTH.**

Truth is a golden thread, seen here and there
In small bright specks upon the visible side
Of our strange being’s party-coloured web.
How rich the converse! ’Tis a vein of ore

Emerging now and then on Earth's rude breast,
But flowing full below. Like islands set
At distant intervals on Ocean's face,
We see it on our course; but in the depths
The mystic colonnade unbroken keeps
Its faithful way, invisible but sure.
Oh, if it be so, wherefore do we men
Pass by so many marks, so little heeding?
1839

**REVIVAL.**

So I went wrong,
Grievously wrong, but folly crushed itself,
And vanity o'ertoppling fell, and time
And healthy discipline and some neglect,
Labour and solitary hours revived
Somewhat, at least, of that original frame.
Oh, well do I remember then the days
When on some grassy slope (what time the sun
Was sinking, and the solemn eve came down
With its blue vapour upon field and wood
And elm-embosomed spire) once more again
I fed on sweet emotion, and my heart
With love o'erflowed, or hushed itself in fear
Unearthly, yea celestial. Once again

My heart was hot within me, and, me seemed,
I too had in my body breath to wind
The magic horn of song; I too possessed
Up-welling in my being's depths a fount
Of the true poet-nectar whence to fill
The golden urns of verse.
1839

**THE SHADY LANE.**

Whence comest thou, shady lane? and why and how?
Thou, where with idle heart, ten years ago,
I wandered, and with childhood's paces slow
So long unthought of, and remembered now!
Again in vision clear thy pathwayed side
I tread, and view thy orchard plots again
With yellow fruitage hung,—and glimmering grain
Standing or shocked through the thick hedge espied.
This hot still noon of August brings the sight;
This quelling silence as of eve or night,
Wherein Earth (feeling as a mother may
After her travail's latest bitterest throes)
Looks up, so seemeth it, one half repose,
One half in effort, straining, suffering still.
1839

## THE HIGHER COURAGE.[1]

Come back again, my olden heart!—
Ah, fickle spirit and untrue,
I bade the only guide depart
Whose faithfulness I surely knew:
I said, my heart is all too soft;
He who would climb and soar aloft
Must needs keep ever at his side
The tonic of a wholesome pride.
Come back again, my olden heart!—
Alas, I called not then for thee;
I called for Courage, and apart
From Pride if Courage could not be,
Then welcome, Pride! and I shall find
In thee a power to lift the mind
This low and grovelling joy above—
’Tis but the proud can truly love.
Come back again, my olden heart!—
With incrustations of the years
Uncased as yet,—as then thou wert,
Full-filled with shame and coward fears:
Wherewith amidst a jostling throng
Of deeds, that each and all were wrong,
The doubting soul, from day to day,

Uneasy paralytic lay.
Come back again, my olden heart!
I said, Perceptions contradict,
Convictions come, anon depart,
And but themselves as false convict.
Assumptions, hasty, crude and vain,
Full oft to use will Science deign;
The corks the novice plies to-day
The swimmer soon shall cast away.
Come back again, my olden heart!
I said, Behold, I perish quite,
Unless to give me strength to start,
I make myself my rule of right:
It must be, if I act at all,
To save my shame I have at call
The plea of all men understood,—
Because I willed it, it is good.
Come back again, my olden heart!
I know not if in very deed
This means alone could aid impart
To serve my sickly spirit’s need;
But clear alike of wild self-will,
And fear that faltered, paltered still,
Remorseful thoughts of after days

A way espy betwixt the ways.
Come back again, old heart! Ah me!
Methinks in those thy coward fears
There might, perchance, a courage be,
That fails in these the manlier years;
Courage to let the courage sink,
Itself a coward base to think,
Rather than not for heavenly light
Wait on to show the truly right.
1840

## WRITTEN ON A BRIDGE.

When soft September brings again
To yonder gorse its golden glow,
And Snowdon sends its autumn rain
To bid thy current livelier flow;
Amid that ashen foliage light
When scarlet beads are glistering bright,
While alder boughs unchanged are seen
In summer livery of green;
When clouds before the cooler breeze
Are flying, white and large; with these
Returning, so may I return,
And find thee changeless, Pont-y-wern.
1840

## A RIVER POOL.

Sweet streamlet bason! at thy side
Weary and faint within me cried
My longing heart,—In such pure deep
How sweet it were to sit and sleep;
To feel each passage from without
Close up,—above me and about,
Those circling waters crystal clear,
That calm impervious atmosphere!
There on thy pearly pavement pure,
To lean, and feel myself secure,
Or through the dim-lit inter-space,
Afar at whiles upgazing trace
The dimpling bubbles dance around
Upon thy smooth exterior face;
Or idly list the dreamy sound
Of ripples lightly flung, above
That home, of peace, if not of love.
1840

## IN A LECTURE-ROOM.

Away, haunt thou not me,
Thou vain Philosophy!
Little hast thou bestead,
Save to perplex the head,

And leave the spirit dead.

Unto thy broken cisterns wherefore go,

While from the secret treasure-depths below,

Fed by the skiey shower,

And clouds that sink and rest on hill-tops high,

Wisdom at once, and Power,

Are welling, bubbling forth, unseen, incessantly?

Why labour at the dull mechanic oar,

When the fresh breeze is blowing,

And the strong current flowing,

Right onward to the Eternal Shore?

1840

## ‘Blank Misgivings of a Creature moving about in Worlds not realised.’

I

Here am I yet, another twelvemonth spent,

One-third departed of the mortal span,

Carrying on the child into the man,

Nothing into reality. Sails rent,

And rudder broken,—reason impotent,—

Affections all unfixed; so forth I fare

On the mid seas unheedingly, so dare

To do and to be done by, well content.

So was it from the first, so is it yet;

Yea, the first kiss that by these lips was set

On any human lips, methinks was sin—
Sin, cowardice, and falsehood; for the will
Into a deed e’en then advanced, wherein
God, unidentified, was thought-of still.

II

Though to the vilest things beneath the moon
For poor Ease’ sake I give away my heart,
And for the moment’s sympathy let part
My sight and sense of truth, Thy precious boon,
My painful earnings, lost, all lost, as soon,
Almost, as gained; and though aside I start,
Belie Thee daily, hourly,—still Thou art,
Art surely as in heaven the sun at noon;
How much so e’er I sin, whate’er I do
Of evil, still the sky above is blue,
The stars look down in beauty as before:
It is enough to walk as best we may,
To walk, and, sighing, dream of that blest day
When ill we cannot quell shall be no more.

III

Well, well,—Heaven bless you all from day to day!
Forgiveness too, or e’er we part, from each,
As I do give it, so must I beseech:
I owe all much, much more than I can pay;

Therefore it is I go; how could I stay
Where every look commits me to fresh debt,
And to pay little I must borrow yet?
Enough of this already, now away!
With silent woods and hills untenanted
Let me go commune; under thy sweet gloom,
O kind maternal Darkness, hide my head:
The day may come I yet may re-assume
My place, and, these tired limbs recruited, seek
The task for which I now am all too weak.

IV

Yes, I have lied, and so must walk my way,
Bearing the liar's curse upon my head;
Letting my weak and sickly heart be fed
On food which does the present craving stay,
But may be clean-denied me e'en to-day,
And tho' 'twere certain, yet were ought but bread;
Letting—for so they say, it seems, I said,
And I am all too weak to disobey!
Therefore for me sweet Nature's scenes reveal not
Their charm; sweet Music greets me and I feel not
Sweet eyes pass off me uninspired; yea, more,
The golden tide of opportunity
Flows wafting-in friendships and better,—I

Unseeing, listless, pace along the shore.

V

How often sit I, poring o’er
My strange distorted youth,
Seeking in vain, in all my store,
One feeling based on truth;
Amid the maze of petty life
A clue whereby to move,
A spot whereon in toil and strife
To dare to rest and love.
So constant as my heart would be,
So fickle as it must,
’Twere well for others as for me
’Twere dry as summer dust.
Excitements come, and act and speech
Flow freely forth;—but no,
Nor they, nor ought beside can reach
The buried world below.

1841

VI

——Like a child
In some strange garden left awhile alone,
I pace about the pathways of the world,
Plucking light hopes and joys from every stem

With qualms of vague misgiving in my heart
That payment at the last will be required,
Payment I cannot make, or guilt incurred,
And shame to be endured.
1841

VII

——Roused by importunate knocks
I rose, I turned the key, and let them in,
First one, anon another, and at length
In troops they came; for how could I, who once
Had let in one, nor looked him in the face,
Show scruples e’er again? So in they came,
A noisy band of revellers,—vain hopes,
Wild fancies, fitful joys; and there they sit
In my heart’s holy place, and through the night
Carouse, to leave it when the cold grey dawn
Gleams from the East, to tell me that the time
For watching and for thought bestowed is gone.
1841

VIII

O kind protecting Darkness! as a child
Flies back to bury in its mother’s lap
His shame and his confusion, so to thee,
O Mother Night, come I! within the folds

Of thy dark robe hide thou me close; for I
So long, so heedless, with external things
Have played the liar, that whate’er I see,
E’en these white glimmering curtains, yon bright stars,
Which to the rest rain comfort down, for me
Smiling those smiles, which I may not return,
Or frowning frowns of fierce triumphant malice,
As angry claimants or expectants sure
Of that I promised and may not perform,
Look me in the face! O hide me, Mother Night!
1841

IX

Once more the wonted road I tread,
Once more dark heavens above me spread,
Upon the windy down I stand,
My station whence the circling land
Lies mapped and pictured wide below;—
Such as it was, such e’en again,
Long dreary bank, and breadth of plain
By hedge or tree unbroken;—lo!
A few grey woods can only show
How vain their aid, and in the sense
Of one unaltering impotence,
Relieving not, meseems enhance

The sovereign dulness of the expanse.
Yet marks where human hand hath been,
Bare house, unsheltered village, space
Of ploughed and fenceless tilth between
(Such aspect as methinks may be
In some half-settled colony),
From Nature vindicate the scene;
A wide, and yet disheartening view,
A melancholy world.
’Tis true,
Most true; and yet, like those strange smiles
By fervent hope or tender thought
From distant happy regions brought,
Which upon some sick bed are seen
To glorify a pale worn face
With sudden beauty,—so at whiles
Lights have descended, hues have been,
To clothe with half-celestial grace
The bareness of the desert place.
Since so it is, so be it still!
Could only thou, my heart, be taught
To treasure, and in act fulfil
The lesson which the sight has brought:
In thine own dull and dreary state

To work and patiently to wait:
Little thou think’st in thy despair
How soon the o’ershaded sun may shine,
And e’en the dulling clouds combine
To bless with lights and hues divine
That region desolate and bare,
Those sad and sinful thoughts of thine!
Still doth the coward heart complain;
The hour may come, and come in vain;
The branch that withered lies and dead
No suns can force to lift its head.
True!—yet how little thou canst tell
How much in thee is ill or well;
Nor for thy neighbour nor for thee,
Be sure, was life designed to be
A draught of dull complacency.
One Power too is it, who doth give
The food without us, and within
The strength that makes it nutritive;
He bids the dry bones rise and live,
And e’en in hearts depraved to sin
Some sudden, gracious influence,
May give the long-lost good again,
And wake within the dormant sense

And love of good;—for mortal men,
So but thou strive, thou soon shalt see
Defeat itself is victory.
So be it: yet, O Good and Great,
In whom in this bedarkened state
I fain am struggling to believe,
Let me not ever cease to grieve,
Nor lose the consciousness of ill
Within me;—and refusing still
To recognise in things around
What cannot truly there be found,
Let me not feel, nor be it true,
That, while each daily task I do,
I still am giving day by day
My precious things within away
(Those thou didst give to keep as thine)
And casting, do whate’er I may,
My heavenly pearls to earthly swine.
1841

## A SONG OF AUTUMN.

My wind is turned to bitter north,
That was so soft a south before;
My sky, that shone so sunny bright,
With foggy gloom is clouded o’er:

My gay green leaves are yellow-black,
Upon the dank autumnal floor;
For love, departed once, comes back
No more again, no more.
A roofless ruin lies my home,
For winds to blow and rains to pour;
One frosty night befell, and lo!
I find my summer days are o’er:
The heart bereaved, of why and how
Unknowing, knows that yet before
It had what e’en to Memory now
Returns no more, no more.

**τὸ καλόν.**

I have seen higher, holier things than these,
And therefore must to these refuse my heart,
Yet am I panting for a little ease;
I’ll take, and so depart.
Ah, hold! the heart is prone to fall away,
Her high and cherished visions to forget,
And if thou takest, how wilt thou repay
So vast, so dread a debt?
How will the heart, which now thou trustest, then
Corrupt, yet in corruption mindful yet,
Turn with sharp stings upon itself! Again,

Bethink thee of the debt!
—Hast thou seen higher, holier things than these,
And therefore must to these thy heart refuse?
With the true best, alack, how ill agrees
That best that thou would’st choose!
The Summum Pulchrum rests in heaven above;
Do thou, as best thou may’st, thy duty do:
Amid the things allowed thee live and love;
Some day thou shalt it view.
1841

**Χρυσέα κλῄς ἐπὶ γλώσσᾳ.**

If, when in cheerless wanderings, dull and cold,
A sense of human kindliness hath found us,
We seem to have around us
An atmosphere all gold,
’Midst darkest shades a halo rich of shine,
An element, that while the bleak wind bloweth,
On the rich heart bestoweth
Imbreathèd draughts of wine;
Heaven guide, the cup be not, as chance may be,
To some vain mate given up as soon as tasted!
No, nor on thee be wasted,
Thou trifler, Poesy!
Heaven grant the manlier heart, that timely, ere

Youth fly, with life’s real tempest would be coping;
The fruit of dreamy hoping
Is, waking, blank despair.
1841

## THE SILVER WEDDING.[2]

The Silver Wedding! on some pensive ear
From towers remote as sound the silvery bells,
To-day from one far unforgotten year
A silvery faint memorial music swells.
And silver-pale the dim memorial light
Of musing age on youthful joys is shed,
The golden joys of fancy’s dawning bright,
The golden bliss of, Woo’d, and won, and wed.
Ah, golden then, but silver now! In sooth,
The years that pale the cheek, that dim the eyes,
And silver o’er the golden hairs of youth,
Less prized can make its only priceless prize.
Not so; the voice this silver name that gave
To this, the ripe and unenfeebled date,
For steps together tottering to the grave,
Hath bid the perfect golden title wait.
Rather, if silver this, if that be gold,
From good to better changed on age’s track,
Must it as baser metal be enrolled,

That day of days, a quarter-century back.
Yet ah, its hopes, its joys were golden too,
But golden of the fairy gold of dreams:
To feel is but to dream; until we do,
There’s nought that is, and all we see but seems.
What was or seemed it needed cares and tears,
And deeds together done, and trials past,
And all the subtlest alchemy of years,
To change to genuine substance here at last.
Your fairy gold is silver sure to-day;
Your ore by crosses many, many a loss,
As in refiners’ fires, hath purged away
What erst it had of earthy human dross.
Come years as many yet, and as they go,
In human life’s great crucible shall they
Transmute, so potent are the spells they know,
Into pure gold the silver of to-day.
Strange metallurge is human life! ’Tis true;
And Use and Wont in many a gorgeous case
Full specious fair for casual outward view
Electrotype the sordid and the base.
Nor lack who praise, avowed, the spurious ware,
Who bid young hearts the one true love forego,
Conceit to feed, or fancy light as air,

Or greed of pelf and precedence and show.
True, false, as one to casual eyes appear,
To read men truly men may hardly learn;
Yet doubt it not that wariest glance would here
Faith, Hope and Love, the true Tower-stamp discern.
Come years again! as many yet! and purge
Less precious earthier elements away,
And gently changed at life's extremest verge,
Bring bright in gold your perfect fiftieth day!
That sight may children see and parents show!
If not—yet earthly chains of metal true,
By love and duty wrought and fixed below,
Elsewhere will shine, transformed, celestial-new;
Will shine of gold, whose essence, heavenly bright,
No doubt-damps tarnish, worldly passions fray;
Gold into gold there mirrored, light in light,
Shall gleam in glories of a deathless day.
1845

## THE MUSIC OF THE WORLD AND OF THE SOUL.

I

Why should I say I see the things I see not?
Why be and be not?
Show love for that I love not, and fear for what I fear not?
And dance about to music that I hear not?

Who standeth still i’ the street

Shall be hustled and justled about;

And he that stops i’ the dance shall be spurned by the dancers’ feet,—

Shall be shoved and be twisted by all he shall meet,

And shall raise up an outcry and rout;

And the partner, too,—

What’s the partner to do?

While all the while ’tis but, perchance, an humming in mine ear,

That yet anon shall hear,

And I anon, the music in my soul,

In a moment read the whole;

The music in my heart,

Joyously take my part,

And hand in hand, and heart with heart, with these retreat, advance;

And borne on wings of wavy sound,

Whirl with these around, around,

Who here are living in the living dance!

Why forfeit that fair chance?

Till that arrive, till thou awake,

Of these, my soul, thy music make,

And keep amid the throng,

And turn as they shall turn, and bound as they are bounding,—

Alas! alas! alas! and what if all along

The music is not sounding?

II

Are there not, then, two musics unto men?—
One loud and bold and coarse,
And overpowering still perforce
All tone and tune beside;
Yet in despite its pride
Only of fumes of foolish fancy bred,
And sounding solely in the sounding head:
The other, soft and low,
Stealing whence we not know,
Painfully heard, and easily forgot,
With pauses oft and many a silence strange
(And silent oft it seems, when silent it is not),
Revivals too of unexpected change:
Haply thou think’st ’twill never be begun,
Or that ’t has come, and been, and passed away:
Yet turn to other none,—
Turn not, oh, turn not thou!
But listen, listen, listen,—if haply be heard it may;
Listen, listen, listen,—is it not sounding now?

III

Yea, and as thought of some departed friend
By death or distance parted will descend,
Severing, in crowded rooms ablaze with light,

As by a magic screen, the seër from the sight
(Palsying the nerves that intervene
The eye and central sense between);
So may the ear,
Hearing not hear,
Though drums do roll, and pipes and cymbals ring;
So the bare conscience of the better thing
Unfelt, unseen, unimaged, all unknown,
May fix the entrancèd soul ’mid multitudes alone.

## LOVE, NOT DUTY.

Thought may well be ever ranging,
And opinion ever changing,
Task-work be, though ill begun,
Dealt with by experience better;
By the law and by the letter
Duty done is duty done:
Do it, Time is on the wing!
Hearts, ’tis quite another thing,
Must or once for all be given,
Or must not at all be given;
Hearts, ’tis quite another thing!
To bestow the soul away
Is an idle duty-play!—
Why, to trust a life-long bliss

To caprices of a day,
Scarce were more depraved than this!
Men and maidens, see you mind it;
Show of love, where’er you find it,
Look if duty lurk behind it!
Duty-fancies, urging on
Whither love had never gone!
Loving—if the answering breast
Seem not to be thus possessed,
Still in hoping have a care;
If it do, beware, beware!
But if in yourself you find it,
Above all things—mind it, mind it!
1841

## LOVE AND REASON.

When panting sighs the bosom fill,
And hands by chance united thrill
At once with one delicious pain
The pulses and the nerves of twain;
When eyes that erst could meet with ease,
Do seek, yet, seeking, shyly shun
Extatic conscious unison,—
The sure beginnings, say, be these
Prelusive to the strain of love

Which angels sing in heaven above?
Or is it but the vulgar tune,
Which all that breathe beneath the moon
So accurately learn—so soon?
With variations duly blent;
Yet that same song to all intent,
Set for the finer instrument;
It is; and it would sound the same
In beasts, were not the bestial frame,
Less subtly organised, to blame;
And but that soul and spirit add
To pleasures, even base and bad,
A zest the soulless never had.
It may be—well indeed I deem;
But what if sympathy, it seem,
And admiration and esteem,
Commingling therewithal, do make
The passion prized for Reason's sake?
Yet, when my heart would fain rejoice,
A small expostulating voice
Falls in; Of this thou wilt not take
Thy one irrevocable choice?
In accent tremulous and thin
I hear high Prudence deep within,

Pleading the bitter, bitter sting,
Should slow-maturing seasons bring,
Too late, the veritable thing.
For if (the Poet’s tale of bliss)
A love, wherewith commeasured this
Is weak and beggarly, and none,
Exist a treasure to be won,
And if the vision, though it stay,
Be yet for an appointed day,—
This choice, if made, this deed, if done,
The memory of this present past,
With vague foreboding might o’ercast
The heart, or madden it at last.
Let Reason first her office ply;
Esteem, and admiration high,
And mental, moral sympathy,
Exist they first, nor be they brought
By self-deceiving afterthought,—
What if an halo interfuse
With these again its opal hues,
That all o’erspreading and o’erlying,
Transmuting, mingling, glorifying,
About the beauteous various whole.
With beaming smile do dance and quiver;

Yet, is that halo of the soul?—
Or is it, as may sure be said,
Phosphoric exhalation bred
Of vapour, steaming from the bed
Of Fancy’s brook, or Passion’s river?
So when, as will be by-and-by,
The stream is waterless and dry,
This halo and its hues will die;
And though the soul contented rest
With those substantial blessings blest,
Will not a longing, half confest,
Betray that this is not the love,
The gift for which all gifts above
Him praise we, Who is Love, the Giver?
I cannot say—the things are good:
Bread is it, if not angels’ food;
But Love? Alas! I cannot say;
A glory on the vision lay;
A light of more than mortal day
About it played, upon it rested;
It did not, faltering and weak,
Beg Reason on its side to speak:
Itself was Reason, or, if not,
Such substitute as is, I wot,

Of seraph-kind the loftier lot;—
Itself was of itself attested;—
To processes that, hard and dry,
Elaborate truth from fallacy,
With modes intuitive succeeding,
Including those and superseding;
Reason sublimed and Love most high
It was, a life that cannot die,
A dream of glory most exceeding.
1844

### Ὁ Θεὸς μετὰ σοῦ![3]

Farewell, my Highland lassie! when the year returns around,
Be it Greece, or be it Norway, where my vagrant feet are found,
I shall call to mind the place, I shall call to mind the day,
The day that’s gone for ever, and the glen that’s far away;
I shall mind me, be it Rhine or Rhone, Italian land or France,
Of the laughings and the whispers, of the pipings and the dance;
I shall see thy soft brown eyes dilate to wakening woman thought,
And whiter still the white cheek grow to which the blush was brought;
And oh, with mine commixing I thy breath of life shall feel,
And clasp thy shyly passive hands in joyous Highland reel;
I shall hear, and see, and feel, and in sequence sadly true,
Shall repeat the bitter-sweet of the lingering last adieu;
I shall seem as now to leave thee, with the kiss upon the brow,

And the fervent benediction of—Ὁ Θεὸς μετὰ σοῦ!
Ah me, my Highland lassie! though in winter drear and long
Deep arose the heavy snows, and the stormy winds were strong,
Though the rain, in summer's brightest, it were raining every day,
With worldly comforts few and far, how glad were I to stay!
I fall to sleep with dreams of life in some black bothie spent,
Coarse poortith's ware thou changing there to gold of pure content,
With barefoot lads and lassies round, and thee the cheery wife,
In the braes of old Lochaber a laborious homely life;
But I wake—to leave thee, smiling, with the kiss upon the brow,
And the peaceful benediction of—Ὁ Θεὸς μετὰ σοῦ!

**WIRKUNG IN DER FERNE.**

When the dews are earliest falling,
When the evening glen is grey,
Ere thou lookest, ere thou speakest,
My beloved,
I depart, and I return to thee,—
Return, return, return.
Dost thou watch me while I traverse
Haunts of men, beneath the sun—
Dost thou list while I bespeak them
With a voice whose cheer is thine?
O my brothers! men, my brothers,
You are mine, and I am yours;

I am yours to cheer and succour,
I am yours for hope and aid:
Lo, my hand to raise and stay you,
Lo, my arm to guard and keep,
My voice to rouse and warn you,
And my heart to warm and calm;
My heart to lend the life it owes
To her that is not here,
In the power of her that dwelleth
Where you know not—no, nor guess not—
Whom you see not; unto whom,—
Ere the evening star hath sunken,
Ere the glow-worm lights its lamp,
Ere the wearied workman slumbers,—
I return, return, return.

**ἐπὶ Λάτμῳ.**

On the mountain, in the woodland,
In the shaded secret dell,
I have seen thee, I have met thee!
In the soft ambrosial hours of night,
In darkness silent sweet
I beheld thee, I was with thee,
I was thine, and thou wert mine!
When I gazed in palace-chambers,

When I trod the rustic dance,
Earthly maids were fair to look on,
Earthly maidens' hearts were kind:
Fair to look on, fair to love:
But the life, the life to me,
'Twas the death, the death to them,
In the spying, prying, prating
Of a curious cruel world.
At a touch, a breath they fade,
They languish, droop, and die;
Yea, the juices change to sourness,
And the tints to clammy brown;
And the softness unto foulness,
And the odour unto stench.
Let alone and leave to bloom;
Pass aside, nor make to die,
—In the woodland, on the mountain,
Thou art mine, and I am thine.
So I passed.—Amid the uplands,
In the forests, on whose skirts
Pace unstartled, feed unfearing
Do the roe-deer and the red,
While I hungered, while I thirsted,
While the night was deepest dark,

Who was I, that thou shouldst meet me?

Who was I, thou didst not pass?

Who was I, that I should say to thee

Thou art mine, and I am thine?

To the air from whence thou camest

Thou returnest, thou art gone;

Self-created, discreated,

Re-created, ever fresh,

Ever young!——

As a lake its mirrored mountains

At a moment, unregretting,

Unresisting, unreclaiming,

Without preface, without question,

On the silent shifting levels

Lets depart,

Shows, effaces and replaces!

For what is, anon is not;

What has been, again ’s to be;

Ever new and ever young

Thou art mine, and I am thine.

Art thou she that walks the skies,

That rides the starry night?

I know not——

For my meanness dares not claim the truth

Thy loveliness declares.

But the face thou show’st the world is not

The face thou show’st to me;

And the look that I have looked in

Is of none but me beheld.

I know not; but I know

I am thine, and thou art mine.

And I watch: the orb behind

As it fleeteth, faint and fair

In the depth of azure night,

In the violet blank, I trace

By an outline faint and fair

Her whom none but I beheld.

By her orb she moveth slow,

Graceful-slow, serenely firm,

Maiden-Goddess! while her robe

The adoring planets kiss.

And I too cower and ask,

Wert thou mine, and was I thine?

Hath a cloud o’ercast the sky?

Is it cloud upon the mountain-sides

Or haze of dewy river-banks

Below?—

Or around me,

To enfold me, to conceal,
Doth a mystic magic veil,
A celestial separation,
As of curtains hymeneal,
Undiscerned yet all excluding,
Interpose?
For the pine-tree boles are dimmer,
And the stars bedimmed above;
In perspective brief, uncertain,
Are the forest-alleys closed,
And to whispers indistinctest
The resounding torrents lulled.
Can it be, and can it be?
Upon Earth and here below,
In the woodland at my side
Thou art with me, thou art here.
’Twas the vapour of the perfume
Of the presence that should be,
That enwrapt me?
That enwraps us,
O my Goddess, O my Queen!
And I turn
At thy feet to fall before thee;
And thou wilt not:

At thy feet to kneel and reach and kiss thy finger-tips;
And thou wilt not:
And I feel thine arms that stay me,
And I feel——
O mine own, mine own, mine own,
I am thine, and thou art mine!

**A PROTEST.**

Light words they were, and lightly, falsely said:
She heard them, and she started,—and she rose,
As in the act to speak; the sudden thought
And unconsidered impulse led her on.
In act to speak she rose, but with the sense
Of all the eyes of that mixed company
Now suddenly turned upon her, some with age
Hardened and dulled, some cold and critical;
Some in whom vapours of their own conceit,
As moist malarious mists the heavenly stars,
Still blotted out their good, the best at best
By frivolous laugh and prate conventional
All too untuned for all she thought to say—
With such a thought the mantling blood to her cheek
Flushed-up, and o'er-flushed itself, blank night her soul
Made dark, and in her all her purpose swooned.
She stood as if for sinking. Yet anon

With recollections clear, august, sublime,
Of God’s great truth, and right immutable,
Which, as obedient vassals, to her mind
Came summoned of her will, in self-negation
Quelling her troublous earthy consciousness,
She queened it o’er her weakness. At the spell
Back rolled the ruddy tide, and leaves her cheek
Paler than erst, and yet not ebbs so far
But that one pulse of one indignant thought
Might hurry it hither in flood. So as she stood
She spoke. God in her spoke and made her heard.
1845

**SIC ITUR.**

As, at a railway junction, men
Who came together, taking then
One the train up, one down, again
Meet never! Ah, much more as they
Who take one street’s two sides, and say
Hard parting words, but walk one way:
Though moving other mates between,
While carts and coaches intervene,
Each to the other goes unseen;
Yet seldom, surely, shall there lack
Knowledge they walk not back to back,

But with an unity of track,
Where common dangers each attend,
And common hopes their guidance lend
To light them to the self-same end.
Whether he then shall cross to thee,
Or thou go thither, or it be
Some midway point, ye yet shall see
Each other, yet again shall meet
Ah, joy! when with the closing street,
Forgivingly at last ye greet!
1845

**PARTING.**

O tell me, friends, while yet we part,
And heart can yet be heard of heart,
O tell me then, for what is it
Our early plan of life we quit;
From all our old intentions range,
And why does all so wholly change?
O tell me, friends, while yet we part!
O tell me, friends, while yet we part,—
The rays that from the centre start
Within the orb of one warm sun,
Unless I err, have once begun,—
Why is it thus they still diverge?

And whither tends the course they urge?
O tell me, friends, while yet we part!
O tell me, friends, while yet ye hear,—
May it not be, some coming year,
These ancient paths that here divide
Shall yet again run side by side,
And you from there, and I from here,
All on a sudden reappear?
O tell me, friends, while yet ye hear!
O tell me, friends, ye hardly hear,—
And if indeed ye did, I fear
Ye would not say, ye would not speak,—
Are you so strong, am I so weak,
And yet, how much so e’er I yearn,
Can I not follow, nor you turn?
O tell me, friends, ye hardly hear!
O tell me, friends, ere words are o’er!
There’s something in me sad and sore
Repines, and underneath my eyes
I feel a somewhat that would rise,—
O tell me, O my friends, and you,
Do you feel nothing like it too?
O tell me, friends, ere words are o’er!
O tell me, friends that are no more,

Do you, too, think ere it is o’er
Old times shall yet come round as erst,
And we be friends, as we were first?
Or do you judge that all is vain,
Except that rule that none complain?
O tell me, friends that are no more!

**QUA CURSUM VENTUS.**

As ships, becalmed at eve, that lay
With canvas drooping, side by side,
Two towers of sail at dawn of day
Are scarce long leagues apart descried;
When fell the night, upsprung the breeze,
And all the darkling hours they plied,
Nor dreamt but each the self-same seas
By each was cleaving, side by side:
E’en so—but why the tale reveal
Of those, whom year by year unchanged,
Brief absence joined anew to feel,
Astounded, soul from soul estranged?
At dead of night their sails were filled,
And onward each rejoicing steered—
Ah, neither blame, for neither willed,
Or wist, what first with dawn appeared!
To veer, how vain! On, onward strain,

Brave barks! In light, in darkness too,
Through winds and tides one compass guides—
To that, and your own selves, be true.
But O blithe breeze; and O great seas,
Though ne’er, that earliest parting past,
On your wide plain they join again,
Together lead them home at last.
One port, methought, alike they sought,
One purpose hold where’er they fare,—
O bounding breeze, O rushing seas!
At last, at last, unite them there!

## ‘WEN GOTT BETRÜGT, IST WOHL BETROGEN.’

Is it true, ye gods, who treat us
As the gambling fool is treated;
O ye, who ever cheat us,
And let us feel we’re cheated!
Is it true that poetical power,
The gift of heaven, the dower
Of Apollo and the Nine,
The inborn sense, ‘the vision and the faculty divine,’
All we glorify and bless
In our rapturous exaltation,
All invention, and creation,
Exuberance of fancy, and sublime imagination,

All a poet’s fame is built on,
The fame of Shakespeare, Milton,
Of Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley,
Is in reason’s grave precision,
Nothing more, nothing less,
Than a peculiar conformation,
Constitution, and condition
Of the brain and of the belly?
Is it true, ye gods who cheat us?
And that’s the way ye treat us?
Oh say it, all who think it,
Look straight, and never blink it!
If it is so, let it be so,
And we will all agree so;
But the plot has counterplot,
It may be, and yet be not.

# POEMS ON RELIGIOUS AND BIBLICAL SUBJECTS.

## FRAGMENTS OF THE MYSTERY OF THE FALL.[4]

Scene I. Adam and Eve.

Adam. Since that last evening we have fallen indeed!
Yes, we have fallen, my Eve! O yes!—
One, two, and three, and four;—the Appetite,
The Enjoyment, the aftervoid, the thinking of it—

Specially the latter two, most specially the last.

There, in synopsis, see, you have it all:

Come, let us go and work!

Is it not enough?

What, is there three, four, five?

Eve. Oh, guilt, guilt, guilt!

Adam. Be comforted; muddle not your soul with doubt.

’Tis done, it was to be done; if, indeed,

Other way than this there was, I cannot say:

This was one way, and a way was needs to be found.

That which we were we could no more remain

Than in the moist provocative vernal mould

A seed its suckers close and rest a seed;

We were to grow. Necessity on us lay

This way or that to move; necessity, too,

Not to be over careful this or that,

So only move we should.

Come, my wife,

We were to grow, and grow I think we may,

And yet bear goodly fruit.

Eve. Oh, guilt! oh, guilt!

Adam. You weary me with your ‘Oh, guilt! oh, guilt!’

Peace to the senseless iteration. What!

Because I plucked an apple from a twig

Be damned to death eterne! parted from Good,
Enchained to Ill! No, by the God of gods;
No, by the living will within my breast,
It cannot be, and shall not; and if this,
This guilt of your distracted fantasy,
Be our experiment's sum, thank God for guilt,
Which makes me free!
But thou, poor wife! poor mother, shall I say?
Big with the first maternity of man,
Draw'st from thy teeming womb thick fancies fond,
That with confusion mix thy delicate brain;
Fondest of which and cloudiest call the dream
(Yea, my beloved, hear me, it is a dream)
Of the serpent, and the apple, and the curse:
Fondest of dreams and cloudiest of clouds.
Well I remember, in our marriage bower,
How in the dewiest balminess of rest,
Inarmèd as we lay, sudden at once
Up from my side you started, screaming 'Guilt!'
And 'Lost! lost! lost!' I on my elbow rose,
And rubbed unwilling eyes, and cried, 'Eve! Eve!
My love! my wife!' and knit anew the embrace,
And drew thee to me close, and calmed thy fear,
And wooed thee back to sleep. In vain; for soon

I felt thee gone, and opening widest eyes,
Beheld thee kneeling on the turf, hands now
Clenched and uplifted high, now vainly outspread
To hide a burning face and streaming eyes
And pale small lips that muttered faintly, ‘Death.’
And thou wouldst fain depart; thou saidst the place
Was for the like of us too good: we left
The pleasant woodland shades, and passed abroad
Into this naked champaign—glorious soil
For digging and for delving, but indeed,
Until I killed a beast or two, and spread
Skins upon sticks to make our palace here,
A residence sadly exposed to wind and rain.
But I in all submit to you; and then
I turned out too, and trudged a furlong’s space,
Till you fell tired and fain would wait for morn.
So as our nightly journey we began,
Because the autumnal fruitage that had fallen
From trees whereunder we had slept, lay thick,
And we had eaten overnight, and seen,
And saw again by starlight when you woke me,
A sly and harmless snake glide by our couch;
And because, some few hours before, a lamb
Fell from a rock and broke its neck, and I

Had answered, to your wonder, that ’twas dead,
Forsooth the molten lava of your fright
Forth from your brain, its crater, hurrying down,
Took the chance mould; the vapour blowing by
Caught and reflected back some random shapes.
A vague and queasy dream was obstinate
In waking thoughts to find itself renewed,
And lo! the mighty Mythus of the Fall!
Nay, smile with me, sweet mother!
Eve. Guilt! oh, guilt!
Adam. Peace, woman, peace; I go.
Eve. Nay, Adam, nay;
Hear me,—I am not dreaming, am not crazed.
Did not yourself confess that we are changed?
Do not you too?
Adam. Do not I too? Well, well,
Listen! I too when homeward, weary of toil,
Through the dark night I have wandered in rain and wind,
Bewildered, haply scared, I too have lost heart,
And deemed all space with angry power replete,
Angry, almighty—and panic-stricken have cried,
‘What have I done?’ ‘What wilt thou do to me?’
Or with the coward’s ‘No, I did not, I will not,’
Belied my own soul’s self. I too have heard,

And listened, too, to a voice that in my ear
Hissed the temptation to curse God, or worse,
And yet more frequent, curse myself and die;
Until, in fine, I have begun to half believe
Your dream my dream too, and the dream of both
No dream but dread reality; have shared
Your fright: e’en so share thou, sweet life, my hope;
I too, again, when weeds with growth perverse
Have choked my corn and marred a season’s toil,
Have deemed I heard in heaven abroad a cry,
‘Cursed is the ground for thy sake; thou art cursed.’
But oftener far, and stronger also far,
In consonance with all things out and in,
I hear a voice more searching bid me, ‘On!
On! on! it is the folly of the child
To choose his path and straightway think it wrong,
And turn right back and lie on the ground to weep.
Forward! go, conquer! work and live!’ Withal
A word comes, half command, half prophecy,
‘Forgetting things behind thee, onward press
Unto the mark of your high calling.’ Yea,
And voices, too, in woods and flowery fields
Speak confidence from budding banks and boughs,
And tell me, ‘Live and grow,’ and say, ‘Look still

Upward, spread outward, trust, be patient, live;’

Therefore, if weakness bid me curse and die,

I answer, No! I will not curse myself,

Nor aught beside; I shall not die, but live.

Eve. Ah me! alas! alas!

More dismally in my face stares the doubt,

More heavily on my heart weighs the world.

Methinks

The questionings of ages yet to be,

The thinkings and cross-thinkings, self-contempts,

Self-horror; all despondencies, despairs,

Of multitudinous souls on souls to come,

In me imprisoned fight, complain and cry.

Alas!

Mystery, mystery, mystery evermore.

Scene II. Adam, alone.

Adam. Misery, oh my misery! O God, God!

How could I ever, ever, could I do it?

Whither am I come? where am I? O me, miserable!

My God, my God, that I were back with Thee!

O fool! O fool! O irretrievable act!

Irretrievable what, I should like to know?

What act, I wonder? What is it I mean?

O heaven! the spirit holds me; I must yield;

Up in the air he lifts me, casts me down;
I writhe in vain, with limbs convulsed, in the void.
Well, well! go idle words, babble your will;
I think the fit will leave me ere I die.
Fool, fool! where am I? O my God! Fool, fool!
Why did we do ’t? Eve, Eve! where are you? quick!
His tread is in the garden! hither it comes!
Hide us, O bushes! and ye thick trees, hide!
He comes, on, on. Alack, and all these leaves,
These petty, quivering and illusive blinds,
Avail us nought: the light comes in and in;
Displays us to ourselves; displays—ah, shame—
Unto the inquisitive day our nakedness.
He comes; He calls. The large eye of His truth,
His full, severe, all-comprehending view,
Fixes itself upon our guiltiness.
O God, O God! what are we? what shall we be?
What is all this about, I wonder now?
Yet I am better, too. I think it will pass
’Tis going now, unless it comes again.
A terrible possession while it lasts.
Terrible, surely; and yet indeed ’tis true.
E’en in my utmost impotence I find
A fount of strange persistence in my soul;

Also, and that perchance is stronger still,
A wakeful, changeless touchstone in my brain,
Receiving, noting, testing all the while
These passing, curious, new phenomena—
Painful, and yet not painful unto it.
Though tortured in the crucible I lie,
Myself my own experiment, yet still
I, or a something that is I indeed,
A living, central, and more inmost I,
Within the scales of mere exterior me's,
I,—seem eternal, O thou God, as Thou;
Have knowledge of the evil and the good,
Superior in a higher good to both.
Well, well, well! it has gone from me, though still
Its images remain upon me whole;
And undisplaced upon my mind I view
The reflex of the total seizure past.
Really now, had I only time and space,
And were not troubled with this wife of mine,
And the necessity of meat and drink—
I really do believe,
With time and space and proper quietude,
I could resolve the problem in my brain.
But, no; I scarce can stay one moment more

To watch the curious seething process out.
If I could only dare to let Eve see
These operations, it is like enough
Between us two we two could make it out.
But she would be so frightened—think it proof
Of all her own imaginings. ’Twill not do;
So as it is
I must e’en put a cheery face on it,
Suppress the whole, rub off the unfinished thoughts,
For fear she read them. O, ’tis pity indeed,
But confidence is the one and main thing now:
Who loses confidence, he loses all.
A demi-grain of cowardice in me
Avowed, were poison to the whole mankind;
When men are plentier, ’twill be time to try;
At present, no.
No;
Shake it all up and go.
That is the word, and that must be obeyed.
I must be off. But yet again some day
Again will I resume it; if not I,
I in some child of late posterity.
Yes, yes, I feel it; it is here the seed,
Here in my head; but, O thou Power unseen,

In whom we live and move and have our being,

Let it not perish; grant, unlost, unhurt,

In long transmission, this rich atom some day,

In some posterity of distant years—

How many thou intendest to have I know not—

In some matured and procreant human brain,

May germinate, burst, and rise into a tree.

No; I shall not tell Eve.

Scene III. (‘Now the birth of Cain was in this wise.’) Adam and Eve.

Eve. Oh, Adam, I am comforted indeed;

Where is he? O my little one!

My heart is in the garden as of old,

And Paradise come back.

Adam. My love,

Blessed be this good day to thee indeed;

Blessed the balm of joy unto thy soul.

A sad unskilful nurse was I to thee;

But nature teaches mothers, I perceive.

Eve. But you, my husband, you meantime, I feel,

Join not your perfect spirit in my joy.

No; your spirit mixes not, I feel, with mine.

Adam. Alas! sweet love, for many a weary day,

You and not I have borne this heavy weight:

How can I, should I, might I feel your bliss,

Now heaviness is changed to glory? Long,
In long and unparticipated pangs,
Your heart hath known its own great bitterness:
How should, in this its jubilant release,
A stranger intermeddle with its joy?
Eve. My husband, there is more in it than this;
Nay, you are surely, positively sad.
Adam. What if I was (and yet I think I am not),
'Twere but the silly and contrarious mood
Of one whose sympathies refuse to mix
In aught not felt immediate from himself.
But of a truth,
Your joy is greater—mine seems therefore none.
Eve. Nay, neither this I think nor that is true.
Evermore still you love to cheat me, Adam:
You hide from me your thoughts like evil beasts
Most foolishly; for I, thus left to guess,
Catch at all hints, and where perchance one is,
People the forest with a hundred ills,
Each worse perhaps a hundred times than it.
No; you have got some fearful thoughts—no, no;
Look not in that way on my baby, Adam—
You do it hurt; you shall not!
Adam. Hear me, Eve,

If hear you will—and speak I think I must—
Hear me.
What is it I would say? I think—
And yet I must—so hear me, mother blest,
That sittest with thy nursling at thy heart,
Hope not too greatly, neither fear for him,
Feeling on thy breast his small compressing lips,
And glorying in the gift they draw from thee;
Hope not too greatly in thyself and him.
And hear me, O young mother—I must speak.
This child is born of us, and therefore like us;
Is born of us, and therefore is as we;
Is born of us, and therefore is not pure;
Earthy as well as godlike; bound to strive—
Not doubtfully I augur from the past—
Through the same straits of anguish and of doubt,
’Mid the same storms of terror and alarm,
To the calm ocean which he yet shall reach,
He or himself or in his sons hereafter,
Of consummated consciousness of self.
The selfsame stuff which wrought in us to grief
Runs in his veins; and what to work in him?
What shape of unsuspected deep disguise,
Transcending our experience, our best cares

Baffling, evading all preventive thought,
Will the old mischief choose, I wonder, here?
O born to human trouble! also born—
Else wherefore born—to some diviner lot,
Live, and may chance treat thee no worse than us
There, I have done: the dangerous stuff is out;
My mind is freed. And now, my gentle Eve,
Forgive thy foolish spouse, and let me set
A father’s kiss upon these budding lips,
A husband’s on the mother’s—the full flower.
There, there; and so, my own and only wife,
Believe me, my worst thought is now to learn
How best and most to serve this child and thee.
This child is born of us, and therefore like us—
Most true, mine own; and if a man like me
Externally, internally I trust
Most like to thee, the better of the twain.
Is born of us, and therefore is not pure—
Did I say that? I know not what I said;
It was a foolish humour; but, indeed,
Whatever you may think, I have not learnt
The trick of deep suppression, e’en the skill
To sort my thoughts and sift my words enough.
Not pure, indeed!—And if it is not pure,

What is? Ah, well! but most I look to the days
When these small arms, with pliant thews filled out.
Shall at my side break up the fruitful glebe,
And aid the cheery labours of the year—
Aid, or, in feebler wearier years, replace,
And leave me longer hours for home and love.
Scene IV. Adam and Eve.
Eve. O Adam, it was I was godless then;
But you were mournful, heavy, but composed.
At times would somewhat fiercely bite your lip
And pass your hand about your brow; but still
Held out, denied not God, acknowledged still
Those glories that were gone. No, I never
Felt all your worth to me before; I feel
You did not fall as I did.
Adam. Nay, my child,
About our falls I don’t profess to know.
I know I ne’er was innocent as thou;
I only know, as you will have it so,
Were your descent more lengthy than was mine,
It is not that your place is lower now,
But that first ’twas higher up than mine;
It is, that I being bestial, you divine,
We now alike are human beings both.

About our fall I won’t profess to know,

But know I do,

That I was never innocent as thou.

Moping again, my love; yes, I dare swear,

All the day long while I have been at work,

With some religious folly in your head.

Eve. No, Adam, I am cheerful quite to-day;

I vary much, indeed, from hour to hour,

But since my baby’s birth I am happier far;

And I have done some work as well as you.

Adam. What is it tho’? for I will take my oath

You’ve got some fancy stirring in your brain.

Eve. Nay, but it vexes me for evermore

To find in you no credence to my thought.

Adam. What is it then you wish me to subscribe to?

That we were in a garden put by God,

Allowed to eat of all the trees but one.

Somehow—I don’t know how—a serpent tempted us,

And eat we did, and so were doomed to die;

Whereas before we were meant to live for ever.

Meantime, turned out——

Eve. You do not think then, Adam,

We have been disobedient unto God?

Adam. My child, how should I know, and what do you mean?

Your question’s not so simple as it looks;
For if you mean that God said this or that—
As that ‘You shall not touch those apples there,’
And that we did—why, all that I can say
Is, that I can’t conceive the thing to be.
But if it were so, I should then believe
We had done right—at any rate, no harm.
Eve. O Adam, I can scarcely think I hear;
For if God said to us—God being God—
‘You shall not,’ is not His commandment His?
And are not we the creatures He hath made?
Adam. My child, God does not speak to human minds
In that unmeaning arbitrary way.
God were not God if so, and good not good.
Search in your heart, and if you tell me there
You find a genuine voice—no fancy, mind you—
Declaring to you this or that is evil,
Why, this or that I daresay evil is.
Believe me, I will listen to the word;
For not by observation of without
Cometh the kingdom of the voice of God:
It is within us—let us seek it there.
Eve. Yet I have voices, surely, in my heart.
Often you say I heed them over much.

Adam. God’s voice is of the heart: I do not say
All voices, therefore, of the heart are God’s;
And to discern the voice amidst the voices
Is that hard task, my love, that we are born to.
Eve. Ah me, in me I am sure the one, one voice
Goes somehow to the sense of what I say—
The sense of disobedience to God.
O Adam, some way, some time, we have done wrong,
And when I think of this, I still must think
Of Paradise, and of the stately tree
Which in the middle of the garden grew,
The golden fruit that hung upon its boughs,
Of which but once we ate, and I must feel
That whereas once in His continual sight
We lived, in daily communing with Him,
We now are banished, and behold not Him.
Our only present communing, alas!
Is penitential mourning, and the gaze
Of the abased and prostrate prayerful soul;
But you, yourself, my Adam, you at least
Acknowledge some time somehow we did wrong.
Adam. My child, I never even granted that.
Eve. Oh, but you let strange words at times fall from you.
They are to me like thunderbolts from heaven;

I listen terrified and sick at heart,

Then haste and pick them up and treasure them.

What was it that you said when Cain was born?

‘He’s born of us and therefore is not pure.’

O, you corrected well, my husband, then

My foolish, fond exuberance of delight.

Adam. My child, believe me, truly I was the fool;

But a first baby is a strange surprise.

I shall not say so when another comes;

And I beseech you treasure up no words.

You know me: I am loose of tongue and light.

I beg you, Eve, remember nought of this;

Put not at least, I pray you—nay, command—

Put not, when days come on, your own strange whim

And misconstruction of my idle words

Into the tender brains of our poor young ones.

Scene V. Adam with Cain and Abel.

Adam. Cain, beware!

Strike not your brother! I have said, beware!

A heavy curse is on this thing, my son.

With doubt and fear,

Terror and toil and pain already here,

Let us not have injustice too, my son.

So Cain, beware!

And Abel, too, see you provoke him not.

Scene VI. Abel alone.

Abel. At times I could believe

My father is no better than his son:

If not as overbearing, proud and hard,

Yet prayerless, worldly, almost more than Cain.

Enlighten and convert him ere the end,

My God! spurn not my mother’s prayers and mine.

Since I was born, was I not left to Thee,

In an unspiritual and godless house,

Unfathered and unbrothered—Thine and hers?

They think not of the fall: e’en less they think

Of the redemption, which God said should be;

Which, for we apprehend it by our faith,

Already is—is come for her and me.

Yea, though I sin, my sin is not to death;

In my repentance I have joy, such joy

That almost I could sin to seek for it—

Yea, if I did not hate it and abhor,

And know that Thou abhorr’st and hatest it,

And will’st, for an example to the rest,

That Thine elect should keep themselves from it.

Alas!

My mother calls the fall a mystery;

Redemption is so too. But oh, my God,
Thou wilt bring all things in the end to good.
Yea, though the whole earth lie in wickedness, I
Am with Thee, with Thee, with Thee evermore
Ah, yet I am not satisfied with this!
Am I not feeding spiritual pride,
Rejoicing over sinners, inelect
And unadmitted to the fellowship
Which I, unworthy, most unworthy, share?
What can I do—how can I help it then?
O God, remove it from my heart; pluck out,
Whatever pain, whatever wrench to me,
These sinful roots and remnants which, whate'er
I do, how high so e'er I soar from earth,
Still, undestroyed, still germinate within.
Take them away in Thy good time, O God.
Meantime, for that atonement's precious sake
Which in Thy counsels predetermined works
Already to the saving of the saints,
O Father, view with mercy, and forgive;
Nor let my vexed perception of my sin,
Nor any multitude of evil thoughts,
Crowding like demons in my spirit's house,
Nor life, nor death, things here or things below,

Cast out the sweet assurance of my soul

That I am Thine, and Thou art mine, my God.

Scene VII. Cain alone.

Cain. Am I or am I not this which they think me?

My mother loves me not; my brother Abel,

Searing my heart, commends my soul to God;

My father does not shun me—there's my comfort:

Almost I think they look askance on him.

Ah, but for him,

I know not what might happen; for at times

Ungovernable angers take the waves

Of my deep soul and sweep them—who knows whither?

And a strange impulse, struggling to the truth,

Urges me onward to put forth my strength,

No matter how. A wild anxiety

Possesses me moreover to essay

This world of action round me so unknown;

And to be able to do this or that

Seems cause enough without a cause for doing it,

My father, he is cheerful and content,

And leads me frankly forward. Yet, indeed,

His leading—or, more truly, to be led

At all, by any one, and not myself—

Is mere dissatisfaction: evermore

Something I must do individual,

To vindicate my nature, to give proof

I also am, as Adam is, a man.

Scene VIII. Adam and Eve.

Adam. These sacrificings, O my best beloved,

These rites and forms which you have taught our boys,

Which I nor practise nor can understand,

Will turn, I trust, to good; but I much fear.

Besides the superstitious search of signs

In merest accidents of earth and air,

They cause, I think, a sort of jealousy—

Ill-blood. Hark, now!

Eve. O God, whose cry is that?

Abel, where is my Abel?

Adam. Cain! what, Cain!

Scene IX. Cain alone with the body of Abel.

Cain. What! fallen? so quickly down—so easily felled,

And so completely? Why, he does not move.

Will not he stir—will he not breathe again?

Still as a log—still as his own dead lamb.

Dead is it then? O wonderful! O strange!

Dead! dead! And we can slay each other then?

If we are wronged, why we can right ourselves;

If we are plagued and pestered with a fool

That will not let us be, nor leave us room
To do our will and shape our path in peace,
We can be rid of him. There—he is gone;
Victory! victory! victory! My heaven,
Methinks, from infinite distances borne back,
It comes to me re-borne—in multitude
Echoed, re-echoed, and re-echoed again,
Victory! victory!—distant, yet distinct—
Uncountable times repeated. O ye gods!
Where am I come, and whither am I borne?
I stand upon the pinnacle of earth,
And hear the wild seas laughing at my feet;
Yet I could wish that he had struggled more—
That passiveness was disappointing. Ha!
He should have writhed and wrestled in my arms,
And all but overcome, and set his knee
Hard on my chest, till I—all faint, yet still
Holding my fingers at his throat—at last,
Inch after inch, had forced him to relax:
But he went down at once, without a word,
Almost without a look.
Ah!—hush! My God!
Who was it spoke? What is this questioner?
Who was it asked me where my brother is?

Ha, ha! Was I his keeper? I know not.
Each for himself; he might have struck again.
Why did he not? I wished him to. Was I
To strike for both at once? No! Yet, ah!
Where is thy brother? Peace, thou silly voice;
Am I my brother's keeper? I know not,
I know not aught about it; let it be.
Henceforth I shall walk freely upon earth,
And know my will, and do it by my might.
My God!—it will not be at peace—my God!
It flames; it bursts to fury in my soul.
What is it that will come of this? Ah me!
What is it I have done?—Almighty God!
I see it; I behold it as it is,
As it will be in all the times to come:
Slaughter on slaughter, blood for blood, and death,
For ever, ever, ever, evermore!
And all for what?
O Abel, brother mine,
Where'er thou art, more happy far than me!

Scene X. Adam alone.

Adam. Abel is dead, and Cain—ah, what is Cain?
Is he not even more than Abel dead?
Well, we must hope in Seth. This merest man,

This unambitious commonplace of life,
Will after all perhaps mend all; and though
Record shall tell men to the after-time
No wondrous tales of him, in him at last,
And in his seed increased and multiplied,
Earth shall be blest and peopled and subdued,
And what was meant to be be brought to pass.
Oh but, my Abel and my Cain, e'en so
You shall not be forgotten nor unknown.
Scene XI. Cain and Eve.
Cain. I am come. Curse me;
Curse Cain, my mother, ere he goes. He waits.
Eve. Who? What is this?
Oh Abel! O my gentle, holy child,
My perfect son!
Monster! and did I bear thee too?
Cain. He was so good, his brother hated him,
And slew him for't. Go on, my mother, on.
Eve. ...
For there are rites and holy means of grace
Of God ordained for man's eternal [weal].
With these, my son, address thyself to Him,
And seek atonement from a gracious God,
With whom is balm for every wounded heart.

Cain. I ask not for atonement, mother mine;
I ask but one thing—never to forget.
I ask but—not to add to one great crime
Another self-delusion scarcely less.
I could ask more, but more I know is sin.
If sacrifices and the fat of lambs,
And whole burnt-offerings upon piles of turf,
Will bring me this, I'd fill the heaven with smoke,
And deface earth with million fiery scars.
I could ask back (and think it but my right,
And passionately claim it as my right)
That precious life which one misguided blow,
Which one scarce conscious momentary act,
One impulse blindly followed to its close,
Ended for ever; but that I know this vain.
If they shall only keep my sin in mind,
I shall not, be assured, neglect them either.
Eve. You ask not for atonement! O my son—
Cain, you are proud and hard of heart e'en now.
Beware!
Prostrate your soul in penitential prayer,
Humble your heart beneath the mighty hand
Of God, whose gracious guidance oft shall lead
Through sin and crime the changed and melted heart

To sweet repentance and the sense of Him.
You ask not for atonement! O my son!
What, to be banished from the sight of God;
To dwell with wicked spirits, be a prey
To them and prey yourself on human souls;
What, to be lost in wickedness and wrath,
Deeper and deeper down;
What, Cain, do you choose this?
Cain. Alas! my mother,
I know not; there are mysteries in your heart
Which I profess not knowledge of: it may be
That this is so; if so, may God reveal it.
Have faith you too in my heart's secrets; yea,
All I can say, alas, is that to me,
As I now comprehend it, this were sin.
Atonement—no: not that, but punishment.
But what avails to talk? talk as we will,
As yet we shall not know each other's hearts;
Let me not talk, but act. Farewell, for ever.
Scene XII. Adam and Cain.
Cain. This is the history then, my father, is it?
This is the perfect whole?
Adam. My son, it is.
And whether a dream, or if it were a dream,

A transcript of an inward spiritual fact
(As you suggest, and I allow, might be),
Not the less true because it was a dream.
I know not—O my Cain, I cannot tell,
But in my soul I think it was a dream,
And but a dream; a thing, whence'er it came,
To be forgotten and considered not.
Cain. Father, you should have told me this before;
It is no use now. Oh God, my brother! oh God!
Adam. For what is life, and what is pain or death?
You have killed Abel: Abel killed the lamb—
An act in him prepense, in you unthought of.
One step you stirred, and lo! you stood entrapped.
Cain. My father, this is true, I know; but yet,
There is some truth beside: I cannot say,
But I have heard within my soul a voice
Asking, 'Where is thy brother?' and I said—
That is, the evil heart within me said—
'Am I my brother's keeper? go ask him.
Who was it that provoked me? should he rail,
And I not smite? his death be on his head.'
But the voice answered in my soul again,
So that the other ceased and was no more.
Scene XIII. Adam and Cain.

Cain. My father, Abel's dead.

Adam. My son, 'tis done, it was to be done; some good end

Thereby to come, or else it had not been.

Go, for it must be. Cain, I know your heart,

You cannot be with us. Go, then, depart;

But be not over scrupulous, my son.

Cain. Curse me, my father, ere I go. Your curse

Will go with me for good; your curse

Will make me not forget,

Alas! I am not of that pious kind,

Who, when the blot has fallen upon their life,

Can look to heaven and think it white again—

Look up to heaven and find a something there

To make what is not be, altho' it is.

My mother—ah, how you have spoke of this!

The dead—to him 'twas innocence and joy,

And purity and safety from the world:

To me the thing seems sin—the worst of sin.

If it be so, why are we here?—the world,

Why is it as I find it? The dull stone

Cast from my hand, why comes it not again?

The broken flow'ret, why does it not live?

If it be so,

Why are we here, and why is Abel dead?

Shall this be true

Of stocks and stones and mere inanimate clay,

And not in some sort also hold for us?

Adam. My son, Time healeth all,

Time and great Nature; heed her speech, and learn.

Cain. My father, you are learned in this sort:

You read the earth, as does my mother heaven.

Both books are dark to me—only I feel

That this one thing

And this one word in me must be declared;

That to forget is not to be restored;

To lose with time the sense of what we did

Cancels not that we did; what's done remains—

I am my brother's murderer. Woe to me!

Abel is dead. No prayers to empty heaven,

No vegetative kindness of the earth,

Will bring back warmth into his clay again,

The gentleness of love into his face.

Therefore, for me farewell;

Farewell for me the soft,

The balmy influences of night and sleep,

The satisfaction of achievement done,

The restorative pulsing of the blood

That changes all and changes e'en the soul—

And natural functions, moving as they should,
The sweet good-nights, the sweet delusive dreams
That lull us out of old things into new.
But welcome Fact, and Fact's best brother, Work;
Welcome the conflict of the stubborn soil,
To toil the livelong day, and at the end,
Instead of rest, recarve into my brow
The dire memorial mark of what still is.
Welcome this worship, which I feel is mine;
Welcome this duty—
—the solidarity of life
And unity of individual soul.
That which I did, I did, I who am here:
There is no safety but in this; and when
I shall deny the thing that I have done,
I am a dream.
Adam. My son,
What shall I say?
That which your soul, in marriage with the world,
Imbreeds in you, accept;—how can I say
Refuse the revelations of the soul?
Yet be not over scrupulous, my son,
And be not over proud to put aside
The due consolements of the circling years.

What comes, receive; be not too wise for God.
The past is something, but the present more;
Will not it too be past?—nor fail withal
To recognise the future in our hopes;
Unite them in your manhood each and all,
Nor mutilate the perfectness of life.
You can remember, you can also hope;
And, doubtless, with the long instructive years,
Comfort will come to you, my son, to me,
Even to your mother, comfort; but to us
Knowledge, at least—the certainty of things
Which, as I think, is consolation's sum.
For truly now, to-day, to-morrow, yes,
Days many more to come, alike to you,
Whose earliest revelation of the world
Is, horrible indeed, this fatal fact—
And unto me, who, knowing not much before,
Look gropingly and idly into this,
And recognise no figure I have seen—
Alike, my son, to me, and to yourself,
Much is now dark which one day will be light;
With strong assurance fortify your soul
Of this: and that you meet me here again,
Promise me, Cain. Farewell, to meet again.

Scene XIV. Adam's Vision.

Adam. O Cain, the words of Adam shall be said;
Come near and hear your father's words, my son.
I have been in the spirit, as they call it,
Dreaming, which is, as others say, the same.
I sat, and you, Cain, with me, and Eve
(We sat as in a picture people sit,
Great figures, silent, with their place content);
And Abel came and took your hand, my son,
And wept and kissed you, saying, 'Forgive me, Cain
Ah me! my brother, sad has been thy life
For my sake, all thro' me; how foolishly,
Because we knew not both of us were right;'
And you embraced and wept, and we too wept.
Then I beheld through eyes with tears suffused,
And deemed at first 'twas blindness thence ensuing;
Abel was gone, and you were gone, my son—
Gone, and yet not gone; yea, I seemed to see
The decomposing of those coloured lines
Which we called you, their fusion into one,
And therewithal their vanishing and end.
And Eve said to me, 'Adam, in the day
When in the inexistent void I heard God's voice,
An awful whisper, bidding me to be,

How slow was I to come, how loth to obey;
As slow, as sad, as lingeringly loth,
I fade, I vanish, sink, and cease to be,
By the same sovereign strong compulsion borne:
Ah, if I vanish, take me into thee!’
She spoke, nor, speaking, ceased I listening; but
I was alone, yet not alone, with her
And she with me, and you with us, my sons,
As at the first;—and yet not wholly—yea,
And that which I had witnessed thus in you,
This fusion, and mutation, and return,
Seemed in my substance working too. I slept,
I did not dream, my sleep was sweet to me.
Yes, in despite of all disquietudes,
For Eve, for you, for Abel, which indeed
Impelled in me that gaiety of soul—
Without your fears I had listened to my own—
In spite of doubt, despondency, and death,
Though lacking knowledge alway, lacking faith
Sometimes, and hope; with no sure trust in ought
Except a kind of impetus within,
Whose sole credentials were that trust itself;
Yet, in despite of much, in lack of more,
Life has been beautiful to me, my son,

And I, if I am called, will come again.
As he hath lived he dies.—My comforter,
Whom I believed not, only trusted in,
What had I been without thee? how survived?
Would I were with thee wheresoe’er thou art!
Would I might follow thee still!
But sleep is sweet, and I would sleep, my son.
Oh Cain! behold your father’s words are said!

## THE SONG OF LAMECH.

Hearken to me, ye mothers of my tent:
Ye wives of Lamech, hearken to my speech:
Adah, let Jubal hither lead his goats:
And Tubal Cain, O Zillah, hush the forge;
Naamah her wheel shall ply beside, and thou,
My Jubal, touch, before I speak, the string.
Yea, Jubal, touch, before I speak, the string.
Hear ye my voice, beloved of my tent,
Dear ones of Lamech, listen to my speech.
For Eve made answer, Cain, my son, my own,
O, if I cursed thee, O my child, I sinned,
And He that heard me, heard, and said me nay:
My first, my only one, thou shalt not go;—
And Adam answered also, Cain, my son,
He that is gone forgiveth, we forgive:

Rob not thy mother of two sons at once;
My child, abide with us and comfort us.
Hear ye my voice; Adah and Zillah, near;
Ye wives of Lamech, listen to my speech.
For Cain replied not. But, an hour more, sat
Where the night through he sat; his knit brows seen,
Scarce seen, amid the foldings of his limbs.
But when the sun was bright upon the field,
To Adam still, and Eve still waiting by,
And weeping, lift he up his voice and spake
Cain said, The sun is risen upon the earth;
The day demands my going, and I go.—
As you from Paradise, so I from you:
As you to exile, into exile I:
My father and my mother, I depart.
As betwixt you and Paradise of old,
So betwixt me, my parents, now, and you,
Cherubim I discern, and in their hand
A flaming sword that turneth every way,
To keep the way of my one tree of life,
The way my spirit yearns to, of my love.
Yet not, O Adam and O Eve, fear not.
For He that asked me, Where is Abel? He
Who called me cursed from the earth, and said

A fugitive and vagabond thou art,
He also said, when fear had slain my soul,
There shall not touch thee man nor beast. Fear not.
Lo, I have spoke with God, and He hath said.
Fear not;—and let me go as He hath said.
Cain also said (O Jubal, touch thy string),—
Moreover, in the darkness of my mind,
When the night's night of misery was most black,
A little star came twinkling up within,
And in myself I had a guide that led,
And in myself had knowledge of a soul.
Fear not, O Adam and O Eve: I go.
Children of Lamech, listen to my speech.
For when the years were multiplied, and Cain
Eastward of Eden, in this land of Nod,
Had sons, and sons of sons, and sons of them,
Enoch and Irad and Mehujael
(My father, and my children's grandsire he),
It came to pass, that Cain, who dwelt alone,
Met Adam, at the nightfall, in the field:
Who fell upon his neck, and wept, and said,
My son, has not God spoken to thee, Cain?
And Cain replied, when weeping loosed his voice,
My dreams are double, O my father, good

And evil. Terror to my soul by night,
And agony by day, when Abel stands
A dead, black shade, and speaks not, neither looks,
Nor makes me any answer when I cry—
Curse me, but let me know thou art alive.
But comfort also, like a whisper, comes,
In visions of a deeper sleep, when he,
Abel, as him we knew, yours once and mine,
Comes with a free forgiveness in his face,
Seeming to speak, solicitous for words,
And wearing ere he go the old, first look
Of unsuspecting, unforeboding love.
Three nights are gone I saw him thus, my Sire.
Dear ones of Lamech, listen to my speech.
For Adam said, Three nights ago to me
Came Abel, in my sleep, as thou hast said,
And spake, and bade,—Arise my father, go
Where in the land of exile dwells thy son;
Say to my brother, Abel bids thee come,
Abel would have thee; and lay thou thy hand,
My father, on his head, that he may come;
Am I not weary, father, for this hour?
Hear ye my voice, Adah and Zillah, hear;
Children of Lamech, listen to my speech:

And, son of Zillah, sound thy solemn string.
For Adam laid upon the head of Cain
His hand, and Cain bowed down, and slept, and died.
And a deep sleep on Adam also fell,
And, in his slumber's deepest, he beheld,
Standing before the gate of Paradise,
With Abel, hand in hand, our father Cain.
Hear ye my voice, Adah and Zillah, hear;
Ye wives of Lamech, listen to my speech.
Though to his wounding he did slay a man,
Yea, and a young man to his hurt he slew,
Fear not, ye wives, nor sons of Lamech fear:
If unto Cain was safety given and rest,
Shall Lamech surely and his people die?

## GENESIS XXIV.

Who is this man
that walketh in the field,
O Eleazar,
steward to my lord?
And Eleazar
answered her and said,
Daughter of Bethuel,
it is other none
But my lord Isaac,

son unto my lord,
Who, as his wont is,
walketh in the field,
In the hour of evening,
meditating there.
Therefore Rebekah
hasted where she sat,
And from her camel
’lighting to the earth,
Sought for a veil
and put it on her face,
But Isaac also,
walking in the field,
Saw from afar
a company that came,
Camels, and a seat
as where a woman sat;
Wherefore he came
and met them on the way.
Whom, when Rebekah
saw, she came before,
Saying, Behold
the handmaid of my lord,
Who, for my lord’s sake,

travel from my land.
But he said, O
thou blessed of our God,
Come, for the tent
is eager for thy face.
Shall not thy husband
be unto thee more than
Hundreds of kinsmen
living in thy land?
And Eleazar answered,
Thus and thus,
Even according
as thy father bade,
Did we; and thus and
thus it came to pass:
Lo! is not this
Rebekah, Bethuel’s child?
And, as he ended,
Isaac spoke and said,
Surely my heart
went with you on the way,
When with the beasts
ye came unto the place.
Truly, O child

of Nahor, I was there,
When to thy mother
and thy mother's son
Thou madest answer,
saying, I will go.
And Isaac brought her
to his mother's tent.

**JACOB.**

My sons, and ye the children of my sons,
Jacob your father goes upon his way,
His pilgrimage is being accomplished.
Come near and hear him ere his words are o'er.
Not as my father's or his father's days,
As Isaac's days or Abraham's, have been mine;
Not as the days of those that in the field
Walked at the eventide to meditate,
And haply, to the tent returning, found
Angels at nightfall waiting at their door.
They communed, Israel wrestled with the Lord.
No, not as Abraham's or as Isaac's days,
My sons, have been Jacob your father's days,
Evil and few, attaining not to theirs
In number, and in worth inferior much.
As a man with his friend, walked they with God,

In His abiding presence they abode,
And all their acts were open to His face.
But I have had to force mine eyes away,
To lose, almost to shun, the thoughts I loved,
To bend down to the work, to bare the breast,
And struggle, feet and hands, with enemies;
To buffet and to battle with hard men,
With men of selfishness and violence;
To watch by day, and calculate by night,
To plot and think of plots, and through a land
Ambushed with guile, and with strong foes beset,
To win with art safe wisdom’s peaceful way.
Alas! I know, and from the onset knew,
The first-born faith, the singleness of soul,
The antique pure simplicity with which
God and good angels communed undispleased,
Is not; it shall not any more be said,
That of a blameless and a holy kind,
The chosen race, the seed of promise, comes.
The royal, high prerogatives, the dower
Of innocence and perfectness of life,
Pass not unto my children from their sire,
As unto me they came of mine; they fit
Neither to Jacob nor to Jacob’s race.

Think ye, my sons, in this extreme old age
And in this failing breath, that I forget
How on the day when from my father’s door,
In bitterness and ruefulness of heart,
I from my parents set my face, and felt
I never more again should look on theirs,
How on that day I seemed unto myself
Another Adam from his home cast out,
And driven abroad unto a barren land,
Cursed for his sake, and mocking still with thorns
And briers that labour and that sweat of brow
He still must spend to live? Sick of my days,
I wished not life, but cried out, Let me die;
But at Luz God came to me; in my heart
He put a better mind, and showed me how,
While we discern it not, and least believe,
On stairs invisible betwixt His heaven
And our unholy, sinful, toilsome earth
Celestial messengers of loftiest good
Upward and downward pass continually.
Many, since I upon the field of Luz
Set up the stone I slept on, unto God,
Many have been the troubles of my life;
Sins in the field and sorrows in the tent,

In mine own household anguish and despair,
And gall and wormwood mingled with my love.
The time would fail me should I seek to tell
Of a child wronged and cruelly revenged
(Accursed was that anger, it was fierce,
That wrath, for it was cruel); or of strife
And jealousy and cowardice, with lies
Mocking a father's misery; deeds of blood,
Pollutions, sicknesses, and sudden deaths.
These many things against me many times,
The ploughers have ploughed deep upon my back,
And made deep furrows; blessed be His name
Who hath delivered Jacob out of all,
And left within his spirit hope of good.
Come near to me, my sons: your father goes,
The hour of his departure draweth nigh.
Ah me! this eager rivalry of life,
This cruel conflict for pre-eminence,
This keen supplanting of the dearest kin,
Quick seizure and fast unrelaxing hold
Of vantage-place; the stony hard resolve,
The chase, the competition, and the craft
Which seems to be the poison of our life,
And yet is the condition of our life!

To have done things on which the eye with shame
Looks back, the closed hand clutching still the prize!—
Alas! what of all these things shall I say?
Take me away unto Thy sleep, O God!
I thank Thee it is over, yet I think
It was a work appointed me of Thee.
How is it? I have striven all my days
To do my duty to my house and hearth,
And to the purpose of my father's race,
Yet is my heart therewith not satisfied.

## JACOB'S WIVES.

These are the words of Jacob's wives, the words
Which Leah spake and Rachel to his ears,
When, in the shade at eventide, he sat
By the tent door, a palm-tree overhead,
A spring beside him, and the sheep around.
And Rachel spake and said, The nightfall comes—
Night, which all day I wait for, and for thee.
And Leah also spake, The day is done;
My lord with toil is weary and would rest.
And Rachel said, Come, O my Jacob, come;
And we will think we sit beside the well,
As in that day, the long long years agone,
When first I met thee with my father's flock.

And Leah said, Come, Israel, unto me;
And thou shalt reap an harvest of fair sons,
E’en as before I bare thee goodly babes;
For when was Leah fruitless to my lord?
And Rachel said, Ah come! as then thou cam’st,
Come once again to set thy seal of love;
As then, down bending, when the sheep had drunk,
Then settedst it, my shepherd—O sweet seal!—
Upon the unwitting, half-foretasting lips,
Which, shy and trembling, thirsted yet for thine
As cattle thirsted never for the spring.
And Leah answered, Are not these their names—
As Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah—four?
Like four young saplings by the water’s brim,
Where straining rivers through the great plain wind—
Four saplings soon to rise to goodly trees—
Four trees whose growth shall cast an huger shade
Than ever yet on river-side was seen.
And Rachel said, And shall it be again
As, when dissevered far, unheard, alone,
Consumed in bitter anger all night long,
I moaned and wept, while, silent and discreet,
One reaped the fruit of love that Rachel’s was
Upon the breast of him that knew her not?

And Leah said, And was it then a wrong
That, in submission to a father's word,
Trembling yet hopeful, to that bond I crept,
Which God hath greatly prospered, and my lord,
Content, in after-wisdom not disowned,
Joyful, in after-thankfulness approved?
And Rachel said, But we will not complain,
Though all life long, an alien, unsought third,
She trouble our companionship of love.
And Leah answered, No, complain we not,
Though years on years she loiter in the tent,
A fretful, vain, unprofitable wife.
And Rachel answered, Ah! she little knows
What in old days to Jacob Rachel was.
And Leah said, And wilt thou dare to say,
Because my lord was gracious to thee then,
No deeper thought his riper cares hath claimed,
No stronger purpose passed into his life?
That, youth and maid once fondly, softly touched,
Time's years must still the casual dream repeat,
And all the river far, from source to sea,
One flitting moment's chance reflection bear?
Also she added, Who is she to judge
Of thoughts maternal, and a father's heart?

And Rachel said, But what to supersede
The rights which choice bestowed hath Leah done?
What which my handmaid or which hers hath not?
Is Simeon more than Naphtali? is Dan
Less than his brother Levi in the house?
That part that Billah and that Zilpah have,
That, and no more, hath Leah in her lord;
And let her with the same be satisfied.
Leah asked then, And shall these things compare
(Fond wishes, and the pastime, and the play)
With serious aims and forward-working hopes—
Aims as far-reaching as to earth's last age,
And hopes far-travelling as from east to west?
Rachel replied, That love which in his youth,
Through trial proved, consoles his perfect age;
Shall this with project and with plan compare?
Is not for-ever shorter than all time,
And love more straitened than from east to west?
Leah spake further, Hath my lord not told
How, in the visions of the night, his God,
The God of Abraham and of Isaac, spake
And said, Increase, and multiply, and fill
With sons to serve Me this thy land and mine;
And I will surely do thee good, and make

Thy seed as is the sand beside the sea,
Which is not numbered for its multitude?
Shall Rachel bear this progeny to God?
But Rachel wept and answered, And if God
Hath closed the womb of Rachel until now,
Shall He not at His pleasure open it?
Hath Leah read the counsels of the Lord?
Was it not told her, in the ancient days,
How Sarah, mother of great Israel's sire,
Lived to long years, insulted of her slave,
Or e'er to light the Child of Promise came,
Whom Rachel too to Jacob yet may bear?
Moreover, Rachel said, Shall Leah mock,
Who stole the prime embraces of my love,
My first long-destined, long-withheld caress?
But not, she said, methought, but not for this,
In the old days, did Jacob seek his bride;—
Where art thou now, O thou that sought'st me then?
Where is thy loving tenderness of old?
And where that fervency of faith to which
Seven weary years were even as a few days?
And Rachel wept and ended, Ah, my life!
Though Leah bare thee sons on sons, methought
The child of love, late-born, were worth them all.

And Leah groaned and answered, It is well:
She that hath kept from me my husband's heart
Will set their father's soul against my sons.
Yet, also, not, she said, I thought, for this,
Not for the feverish nor the doating love,
Doth Israel, father of a nation, seek;
Nor to light dalliance, as of boy and girl,
Incline the thoughts of matron and of man,
Or lapse the wisdom of maturer mind.
And Leah ended, Father of my sons,
Come, thou shalt dream of Rachel if thou wilt,
So Leah fold thee in a wife's embrace.
These are the words of Jacob's wives, who sat
In the tent door, and listened to their speech,
The spring beside him, and above the palm,
While all the sheep were gathered for the night.

**THE NEW SINAI.**

Lo, here is God, and there is God!
Believe it not, O Man;
In such vain sort to this and that
The ancient heathen ran:
Though old Religion shake her head,
And say in bitter grief,
The day behold, at first foretold,

Of atheist unbelief:

Take better part, with manly heart,

Thine adult spirit can;

Receive it not, believe it not,

Believe it not, O Man!

As men at dead of night awaked

With cries, ‘The king is here,’

Rush forth and greet whome’er they meet,

Whoe’er shall first appear;

And still repeat, to all the street,

‘’Tis he,—the king is here;’

The long procession moveth on,

Each nobler form they see,

With changeful suit they still salute

And cry, ‘’Tis he, ’tis he!’

So, even so, when men were young,

And earth and heaven were new,

And His immediate presence He

From human hearts withdrew,

The soul perplexed and daily vexed

With sensuous False and True,

Amazed, bereaved, no less believed,

And fain would see Him too:

‘He is!’ the prophet-tongues proclaimed;

In joy and hasty fear,
‘He is!’ aloud replied the crowd,
‘Is here, and here, and here.’
‘He is! They are!’ in distance seen
On yon Olympus high,
In those Avernian woods abide,
And walk this azure sky:
‘They are! They are!’—to every show
Its eyes the baby turned,
And blazes sacrificial, tall,
On thousand altars burned:
‘They are! They are!’—On Sinai’s top
Far seen the lightnings shone,
The thunder broke, a trumpet spoke,
And God said, ‘I am One.’
God spake it out, ‘I, God, am One;’
The unheeding ages ran,
And baby-thoughts again, again,
Have dogged the growing man:
And as of old from Sinai’s top
God said that God is One,
By Science strict so speaks He now
To tell us, There is None!
Earth goes by chemic forces; Heaven’s

A Mécanique Céleste!
And heart and mind of human kind
A watch-work as the rest!
Is this a Voice, as was the Voice,
Whose speaking told abroad,
When thunder pealed, and mountain reeled,
The ancient truth of God?
Ah, not the Voice; ’tis but the cloud,
The outer darkness dense,
Where image none, nor e’er was seen
Similitude of sense.
’Tis but the cloudy darkness dense
That wrapt the Mount around;
While in amaze the people stays,
To hear the Coming Sound.
Is there no prophet-soul the while
To dare, sublimely meek,
Within the shroud of blackest cloud
The Deity to seek?
’Midst atheistic systems dark,
And darker hearts’ despair,
That soul has heard perchance His word,
And on the dusky air
His skirts, as passed He by, to see

Hath strained on their behalf,
Who on the plain, with dance amain,
Adore the Golden Calf.
’Tis but the cloudy darkness dense;
Though blank the tale it tells,
No God, no Truth! yet He, in sooth,
Is there—within it dwells;
Within the sceptic darkness deep
He dwells that none may see,
Till idol forms and idol thoughts
Have passed and ceased to be:
No God, no Truth! ah though, in sooth
So stand the doctrine’s half:
On Egypt’s track return not back,
Nor own the Golden Calf.
Take better part, with manlier heart,
Thine adult spirit can;
No God, no Truth, receive it ne’er—
Believe it ne’er—O Man!
But turn not then to seek again
What first the ill began;
No God, it saith; ah, wait in faith
God’s self-completing plan;
Receive it not, but leave it not,

And wait it out, O Man!

‘The Man that went the cloud within

Is gone and vanished quite;

He cometh not,’ the people cries,

‘Nor bringeth God to sight:

Lo these thy gods, that safety give,

Adore and keep the feast!’

Deluding and deluded cries

The Prophet’s brother-Priest:

And Israel all bows down to fall

Before the gilded beast.

Devout, indeed! that priestly creed,

O Man, reject as sin;

The clouded hill attend thou still,

And him that went within.

He yet shall bring some worthy thing

For waiting souls to see:

Some sacred word that he hath heard

Their light and life shall be;

Some lofty part, than which the heart

Adopt no nobler can,

Thou shalt receive, thou shalt believe

And thou shalt do, O Man!

1845

## QUI LABORAT, ORAT.

O only Source of all our light and life,
Whom as our truth, our strength, we see and feel,
But whom the hours of mortal moral strife
Alone aright reveal!
Mine inmost soul, before Thee inly brought,
Thy presence owns ineffable, divine;
Chastised each rebel self-encentered thought,
My will adoreth Thine.
With eye down-dropt, if then this earthly mind
Speechless remain, or speechless e’en depart;
Nor seek to see—for what of earthly kind
Can see Thee as Thou art?—
If well-assured ’tis but profanely bold
In thought’s abstractest forms to seem to see,
It dare not dare the dread communion hold
In ways unworthy Thee,
O not unowned, thou shalt unnamed forgive,
In worldly walks the prayerless heart prepare;
And if in work its life it seem to live,
Shalt make that work be prayer.
Nor times shall lack, when while the work it plies,
Unsummoned powers the blinding film shall part,
And scarce by happy tears made dim, the eyes

In recognition start.
But, as thou willest, give or e'en forbear
The beatific supersensual sight,
So, with Thy blessing blest, that humbler prayer
Approach Thee morn and night.

**ὕμνος ἄυμνος.**

O Thou whose image in the shrine
Of human spirits dwells divine;
Which from that precinct once conveyed,
To be to outer day displayed,
Doth vanish, part, and leave behind
Mere blank and void of empty mind,
Which wilful fancy seeks in vain
With casual shapes to fill again!
O Thou that in our bosom's shrine
Dost dwell, unknown because divine!
I thought to speak, I thought to say,
'The light is here,' 'behold the way,'
'The voice was thus,' and 'thus the word,'
And 'thus I saw,' and 'that I heard,'—
But from the lips that half essayed
The imperfect utterance fell unmade.
O Thou, in that mysterious shrine
Enthroned, as I must say, divine!

I will not frame one thought of what
Thou mayest either be or not.
I will not prate of ‘thus’ and ‘so,’
And be profane with ‘yes’ and ‘no,’
Enough that in our soul and heart
Thou, whatsoe’er Thou may’st be, art.
Unseen, secure in that high shrine
Acknowledged present and divine,
I will not ask some upper air,
Some future day to place Thee there;
Nor say, nor yet deny, such men
And women saw Thee thus and then:
Thy name was such, and there or here
To him or her Thou didst appear.
Do only Thou in that dim shrine,
Unknown or known, remain, divine;
There, or if not, at least in eyes
That scan the fact that round them lies,
The hand to sway, the judgment guide,
In sight and sense Thyself divide:
Be Thou but there,—in soul and heart,
I will not ask to feel Thou art.

**THE HIDDEN LOVE.**

O let me love my love unto myself alone,

And know my knowledge to the world unknown;

No witness to my vision call,

Beholding, unbeheld of all;

And worship Thee, with Thee withdrawn apart,

Whoe’er, Whate’er Thou art,

Within the closest veil of mine own inmost heart.

What is it then to me

If others are inquisitive to see?

Why should I quit my place to go and ask

If other men are working at their task?

Leave my own buried roots to go

And see that brother plants shall grow;

And turn away from Thee, O Thou most Holy Light,

To look if other orbs their orbits keep aright,

Around their proper sun,

Deserting Thee, and being undone.

O let me love my love unto myself alone,

And know my knowledge to the world unknown;

And worship Thee, O hid One, O much sought,

As but man can or ought,

Within the abstracted’st shrine of my least breathed on thought.

Better it were, thou sayest, to consent;

Feast while we may, and live ere life be spent;

Close up clear eyes, and call the unstable sure,

The unlovely lovely, and the filthy pure;
In self-belyings, self-deceivings roll,
And lose in Action, Passion, Talk, the soul.
Nay, better far to mark off thus much air,
And call it Heaven: place bliss and glory there;
Fix perfect homes in the unsubstantial sky,
And say, what is not, will be by-and-bye.

## SHADOW AND LIGHT.

Cease, empty Faith, the Spectrum saith,
I was, and lo, have been;
I, God, am nought: a shade of thought,
Which, but by darkness seen,
Upon the unknown yourselves have thrown,
Placed it and light between.
At morning's birth on darkened earth,
And as the evening sinks,
Awfully vast abroad is cast
The lengthened form that shrinks
And shuns the sight in midday light,
And underneath you slinks.
From barren strands of wintry lands
Across the seas of time,
Borne onward fast ye touch at last
An equatorial clime;

In equatorial noon sublime
At zenith stands the sun,
And lo, around, far, near, are found
Yourselves, and Shadow none.
A moment! yea! but when the day
At length was perfect day!
A moment! so! and light we know
With dark exchanges aye,
Nor morn nor eve shall shadow leave
Your sunny paths secure,
And in your sight that orb of light
Shall humbler orbs obscure.
And yet withal, ’tis shadow all
Whate’er your fancies dream,
And I (misdeemed) that was, that seemed,
Am not, whate’er I seem.

## ‘WITH WHOM IS NO VARIABLENESS, NEITHER SHADOW OF TURNING.’

It fortifies my soul to know
That, though I perish, Truth is so:
That, howsoe’er I stray and range,
Whate’er I do, Thou dost not change.
I steadier step when I recall
That, if I slip, Thou dost not fall.

## IN STRATIS VIARUM.

Blessed are those who have not seen,
And who have yet believed
The witness, here that has not been,
From heaven they have received.
Blessed are those who have not known
The things that stand before them,
And for a vision of their own
Can piously ignore them.
So let me think whate'er befall,
That in the city duly
Some men there are who love at all,
Some women who love truly;
And that upon two millions odd
Transgressors in sad plenty,
Mercy will of a gracious God
Be shown—because of twenty.

## 'PERCHÈ PENSA? PENSANDO S'INVECCHIA.'

To spend uncounted years of pain,
Again, again, and yet again,
In working out in heart and brain
The problem of our being here;
To gather facts from far and near,
Upon the mind to hold them clear,

And, knowing more may yet appear,
Unto one’s latest breath to fear,
The premature result to draw—
Is this the object, end and law,
And purpose of our being here?

## ‘O THOU OF LITTLE FAITH.’

It may be true
That while we walk the troublous tossing sea,
That when we see the o’ertopping waves advance,
And when we feel our feet beneath us sink,
There are who walk beside us; and the cry
That rises so spontaneous to the lips,
The ‘Help us or we perish,’ is not nought,
An evanescent spectrum of disease.
It may be that indeed and not in fancy,
A hand that is not ours upstays our steps,
A voice that is not ours commands the waves;
Commands the waves, and whispers in our ear,
O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?
At any rate,
That there are beings above us, I believe,
And when we lift up holy hands of prayer,
I will not say they will not give us aid.

## ‘THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY.’

What we, when face to face we see
The Father of our souls, shall be,
John tells us, doth not yet appear;
Ah! did he tell what we are here!
A mind for thoughts to pass into,
A heart for loves to travel through,
Five senses to detect things near,
Is this the whole that we are here?
Rules baffle instincts—instincts rules,
Wise men are bad—and good are fools,
Facts evil—wishes vain appear,
We cannot go, why are we here?
O may we for assurance’ sake,
Some arbitrary judgment take,
And wilfully pronounce it clear,
For this or that ’tis we are here?
Or is it right, and will it do,
To pace the sad confusion through,
And say:—It doth not yet appear,
What we shall be, what we are here?
Ah yet, when all is thought and said,
The heart still overrules the head;
Still what we hope we must believe,

And what is given us receive;
Must still believe, for still we hope
That in a world of larger scope,
What here is faithfully begun
Will be completed, not undone.
My child, we still must think, when we
That ampler life together see,
Some true result will yet appear
Of what we are, together, here.

## AH! YET CONSIDER IT AGAIN!

‘Old things need not be therefore true,’
O brother men, nor yet the new;
Ah! still awhile the old thought retain,
And yet consider it again!
The souls of now two thousand years
Have laid up here their toils and fears,
And all the earnings of their pain,—
Ah, yet consider it again!
We! what do we see? each a space
Of some few yards before his face;
Does that the whole wide plan explain?
Ah, yet consider it again!
Alas! the great world goes its way,
And takes its truth from each new day;

They do not quit, nor can retain,

Far less consider it again.

1851

## NOLI ÆMULARI.

In controversial foul impureness

The peace that is thy light to thee

Quench not: in faith and inner sureness

Possess thy soul and let it be.

No violence—perverse, persistent—

What cannot be can bring to be;

No zeal what is make more existent,

And strife but blinds the eyes that see.

What though in blood their souls embruing,

The great, the good, and wise they curse,

Still sinning, what they know not doing;

Stand still, forbear, nor make it worse.

By curses, by denunciation,

The coming fate they cannot stay;

Nor thou, by fiery indignation,

Though just, accelerate the day.

## ‘WHAT WENT YE OUT FOR TO SEE?’

Across the sea, along the shore,

In numbers more and ever more,

From lonely hut and busy town,
The valley through, the mountain down,
What was it ye went out to see,
Ye silly folk of Galilee?
The reed that in the wind doth shake?
The weed that washes in the lake?
The reeds that waver, the weeds that float?—
A young man preaching in a boat.
What was it ye went out to hear
By sea and land, from far and near?
A teacher? Rather seek the feet
Of those who sit in Moses' seat.
Go humbly seek, and bow to them,
Far off in great Jerusalem.
From them that in her courts ye saw,
Her perfect doctors of the law,
What is it came ye here to note?—
A young man preaching in a boat.
A prophet! Boys and women weak!
Declare, or cease to rave;
Whence is it he hath learned to speak?
Say, who his doctrine gave?
A prophet? Prophet wherefore he
Of all in Israel tribes?—

He teacheth with authority,

And not as do the Scribes.

1851

**EPI-STRAUSS-IUM.**

Matthew and Mark and Luke and holy John

Evanished all and gone!

Yea, he that erst his dusky curtains quitting,

Thro' Eastern pictured panes his level beams transmitting,

With gorgeous portraits blent,

On them his glories intercepted spent:

Southwestering now, thro' windows plainly glassed,

On the inside face his radiance keen hath cast,

And in the lustre lost, invisible and gone,

Are, say you, Matthew, Mark and Luke and holy John?

Lost, is it, lost, to be recovered never?

However,

The place of worship the meantime with light

Is, if less richly, more sincerely bright,

And in blue skies the Orb is manifest to sight.

**THE SHADOW.[5]**

I dreamed a dream: I dreamt that I espied,

Upon a stone that was not rolled aside,

A Shadow sit upon a grave—a Shade,

As thin, as unsubstantial, as of old
Came, the Greek poet told,
To lick the life-blood in the trench Ulysses made—
As pale, as thin, and said:
‘I am the Resurrection of the Dead.
The night is past, the morning is at hand,
And I must in my proper semblance stand,
Appear brief space and vanish,—listen, this is true,
I am that Jesus whom they slew.’
And shadows dim, I dreamed, the dead apostles came,
And bent their heads for sorrow and for shame—
Sorrow for their great loss, and shame
For what they did in that vain name.
And in long ranges far behind there seemed
Pale vapoury angel forms; or was it cloud? that kept
Strange watch; the women also stood beside and wept.
And Peter spoke the word:
‘O my own Lord,
What is it we must do?
Is it then all untrue?
Did we not see, and hear, and handle Thee,
Yea, for whole hours
Upon the Mount in Galilee,
On the lake shore, and here at Bethany,

When Thou ascendedst to Thy God and ours?’
And paler still became the distant cloud,
And at the word the women wept aloud.
And the Shade answered, ‘What ye say I know not;
But it is true
I am that Jesus whom they slew,
Whom ye have preached, but in what way I know not.
And the great World, it chanced, came by that way,
And stopped, and looked, and spoke to the police,
And said the thing, for order’s sake and peace,
Most certainly must be suppressed, the nuisance cease
His wife and daughter must have where to pray,
And whom to pray to, at the least one day
In seven, and something sensible to say.
Whether the fact so many years ago
Had, or not, happened, how was he to know?
Yet he had always heard that it was so.
As for himself, perhaps it was all one;
And yet he found it not unpleasant, too,
On Sunday morning in the roomy pew,
To see the thing with such decorum done.
As for himself, perhaps it was all one;
Yet on one’s death-bed all men always said
It was a comfortable thing to think upon

The atonement and the resurrection of the dead.
So the great World as having said his say,
Unto his country-house pursued his way.
And on the grave the Shadow sat all day.
And the poor Pope was sure it must be so,
Else wherefore did the people kiss his toe?
The subtle Jesuit cardinal shook his head,
And mildly looked and said,
It mattered not a jot
Whether the thing, indeed, were so or not;
Religion must be kept up, and the Church preserved,
And for the people this best served,
And then he turned, and added most demurely,
‘Whatever may befal,
We Catholics need no evidence at all,
The holy father is infallible, surely!’
And English canons heard,
And quietly demurred.
Religion rests on evidence, of course,
And on inquiry we must put no force.
Difficulties still, upon whatever ground,
Are likely, almost certain, to be found.
The Theist scheme, the Pantheist, one and all,
Must with, or e’en before, the Christian fall.

And till the thing were plainer to our eyes,
To disturb faith was surely most unwise.
As for the Shade, who trusted such narration?
Except, of course, in ancient revelation.
And dignitaries of the Church came by.
It had been worth to some of them, they said,
Some hundred thousand pounds a year a head.
If it fetched so much in the market, truly,
'Twas not a thing to be given up unduly.
It had been proved by Butler in one way,
By Paley better in a later day;
It had been proved in twenty ways at once,
By many a doctor plain to many a dunce;
There was no question but it must be so.
And the Shade answered, that He did not know;
He had no reading, and might be deceived,
But still He was the Christ, as He believed.
And women, mild and pure,
Forth from still homes and village schools did pass,
And asked, if this indeed were thus, alas,
What should they teach their children and the poor?
The Shade replied, He could not know,
But it was truth, the fact was so.
Who had kept all commandments from his youth

Yet still found one thing lacking—even Truth:
And the Shade only answered, ‘Go, make haste,
Enjoy thy great possessions as thou may’st.’

## EASTER DAY. NAPLES, 1849.

Through the great sinful streets of Naples as I past,
With fiercer heat than flamed above my head
My heart was hot within me; till at last
My brain was lightened when my tongue had said—
Christ is not risen!
Christ is not risen, no—
He lies and moulders low;
Christ is not risen!
What though the stone were rolled away, and though
The grave found empty there?—
If not there, then elsewhere;
If not where Joseph laid Him first, why then
Where other men
Translaid Him after, in some humbler clay.
Long ere to-day
Corruption that sad perfect work hath done,
Which here she scarcely, lightly had begun:
The foul engendered worm
Feeds on the flesh of the life-giving form
Of our most Holy and Anointed One.

He is not risen, no—
He lies and moulders low;
Christ is not risen!
What if the women, ere the dawn was grey,
Saw one or more great angels, as they say
(Angels, or Him himself)? Yet neither there, nor then,
Nor afterwards, nor elsewhere, nor at all,
Hath He appeared to Peter or the Ten;
Nor, save in thunderous terror, to blind Saul;
Save in an after Gospel and late Creed,
He is not risen, indeed,—
Christ is not risen!
Or, what if e'en, as runs a tale, the Ten
Saw, heard, and touched, again and yet again?
What if at Emmaüs' inn, and by Capernaum's Lake,
Came One, the bread that brake—
Came One that spake as never mortal spake,
And with them ate, and drank, and stood, and walked about?
Ah? 'some' did well to 'doubt!'
Ah! the true Christ, while these things came to pass,
Nor heard, nor spake, nor walked, nor lived, alas!
He was not risen, no—
He lay and mouldered low,
Christ was not risen!

As circulates in some great city crowd
A rumour changeful, vague, importunate, and loud,
From no determined centre, or of fact
Or authorship exact,
Which no man can deny
Nor verify;
So spread the wondrous fame;
He all the same
Lay senseless, mouldering, low:
He was not risen, no—
Christ was not risen!
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
As of the unjust, also of the just—
Yea, of that Just One, too!
This is the one sad Gospel that is true—
Christ is not risen!
Is He not risen, and shall we not rise?
Oh, we unwise!
What did we dream, what wake we to discover?
Ye hills, fall on us, and ye mountains, cover!
In darkness and great gloom
Come ere we thought it is our day of doom;
From the cursed world, which is one tomb,
Christ is not risen!

Eat, drink, and play, and think that this is bliss:
There is no heaven but this;
There is no hell,
Save earth, which serves the purpose doubly well,
Seeing it visits still
With equalest apportionment of ill
Both good and bad alike, and brings to one same dust
The unjust and the just
With Christ, who is not risen.
Eat, drink, and die, for we are souls bereaved:
Of all the creatures under heaven's wide cope
We are most hopeless, who had once most hope,
And most beliefless, that had most believed.
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
As of the unjust, also of the just—
Yea, of that Just One too!
It is the one sad Gospel that is true—
Christ is not risen!
Weep not beside the tomb,
Ye women, unto whom
He was great solace while ye tended Him;
Ye who with napkin o'er the head
And folds of linen round each wounded limb
Laid out the Sacred Dead;

And thou that bar’st Him in thy wondering womb;

Yea, Daughters of Jerusalem, depart,

Bind up as best ye may your own sad bleeding heart;

Go to your homes, your living children tend,

Your earthly spouses love;

Set your affections not on things above,

Which moth and rust corrupt, which quickliest come to end:

Or pray, if pray ye must, and pray, if pray ye can,

For death; since dead is He whom ye deemed more than man,

Who is not risen: no—

But lies and moulders low—

Who is not risen!

Ye men of Galilee!

Why stand ye looking up to heaven, where Him ye ne’er may see,

Neither ascending hence, nor returning hither again?

Ye ignorant and idle fishermen!

Hence to your huts, and boats, and inland native shore,

And catch not men, but fish;

Whate’er things ye might wish,

Him neither here nor there ye e’er shall meet with more.

Ye poor deluded youths, go home,

Mend the old nets ye left to roam,

Tie the split oar, patch the torn sail:

It was indeed an ‘idle tale’—

He was not risen!

And, oh, good men of ages yet to be,

Who shall believe because ye did not see—

Oh, be ye warned, be wise!

No more with pleading eyes,

And sobs of strong desire,

Unto the empty vacant void aspire,

Seeking another and impossible birth

That is not of your own, and only mother earth.

But if there is no other life for you,

Sit down and be content, since this must even do:

He is not risen!

One look, and then depart,

Ye humble and ye holy men of heart;

And ye! ye ministers and stewards of a Word

Which ye would preach, because another heard—

Ye worshippers of that ye do not know,

Take these things hence and go:—

He is not risen!

Here, on our Easter Day

We rise, we come, and lo! we find Him not,

Gardener nor other, on the sacred spot:

Where they have laid Him there is none to say;

No sound, nor in, nor out—no word

Of where to seek the dead or meet the living Lord.
There is no glistering of an angel's wings,
There is no voice of heavenly clear behest:
Let us go hence, and think upon these things
In silence, which is best.
Is He not risen? No—
But lies and moulders low?
Christ is not risen?

## EASTER DAY. II

So in the sinful streets, abstracted and alone,
I with my secret self held communing of mine own.
So in the southern city spake the tongue
Of one that somewhat overwildly sung,
But in a later hour I sat and heard
Another voice that spake—another graver word.
Weep not, it bade, whatever hath been said,
Though He be dead, He is not dead.
In the true creed
He is yet risen indeed;
Christ is yet risen.
Weep not beside His tomb,
Ye women unto whom
He was great comfort and yet greater grief;
Nor ye, ye faithful few that wont with Him to roam,

Seek sadly what for Him ye left, go hopeless to your home;
Nor ye despair, ye sharers yet to be of their belief;
Though He be dead, He is not dead,
Nor gone, though fled,
Not lost, though vanished;
Though He return not, though
He lies and moulders low;
In the true creed
He is yet risen indeed;
Christ is yet risen.
Sit if ye will, sit down upon the ground,
Yet not to weep and wail, but calmly look around.
Whate'er befell,
Earth is not hell;
Now, too, as when it first began,
Life is yet life, and man is man.
For all that breathe beneath the heaven's high cope,
Joy with grief mixes, with despondence hope.
Hope conquers cowardice, joy grief:
Or at least, faith unbelief.
Though dead, not dead;
Not gone, though fled;
Not lost, though vanished.
In the great gospel and true creed,

He is yet risen indeed;

Christ is yet risen.

# DIPSYCHUS.

## PROLOGUE TO DIPSYCHUS.

‘I hope it is in good plain verse,’ said my uncle,—‘none of your hurry-scurry anapæsts, as you call them, in lines which sober people read for plain heroics. Nothing is more disagreeable than to say a line over two, or, it may be, three or four times, and at last not be sure that there are not three or four ways of reading, each as good and as much intended as another. Simplex duntaxat et unum. But you young people think Horace and your uncles old fools.’

‘Certainly, my dear sir,’ said I; ‘that is, I mean, Horace and my uncle are perfectly right. Still, there is an instructed ear and an uninstructed. A rude taste for identical recurrences would exact sing-song from “Paradise Lost,” and grumble because “Il Penseroso” doesn’t run like a nursery rhyme.’ ‘Well, well,’ said my uncle, ‘sunt certi denique fines, no doubt. So commence, my young Piso, while Aristarchus is tolerably wakeful, and do not waste by your logic the fund you will want for your poetry.’

## DIPSYCHUS.[6]

### Part I.

Scene I.—The Piazza at Venice, 9 p.m. Dipsychus and the Spirit.

Di. The scene is different, and the place, the air

Tastes of the nearer north; the people

Not perfect southern lightness; wherefore, then,

Should those old verses come into my mind
I made last year at Naples? Oh, poor fool!
Still resting on thyself—a thing ill-worked—
A moment's thought committed on the moment
To unripe words and rugged verse:—
'Through the great sinful streets of Naples as I past,
With fiercer heat than flamed above my head
My heart was hot within me; till at last
My brain was lightened when my tongue had said—
Christ is not risen!'
Sp. Christ is not risen? Oh, indeed,
I didn't know that was your creed.
Di. So it went on, too lengthy to repeat—
'Christ is not risen.'
Sp. Dear, how odd!
He'll tell us next there is no God.
I thought 'twas in the Bible plain,
On the third day He rose again.
Di. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
As of the unjust, also of the just—
Yea, of that Just One, too!
Is He not risen, and shall we not rise?
Oh, we unwise!'
Sp. H'm! and the tone, then, after all,

Something of the ironical?

Sarcastic, say; or were it fitter

To style it the religious bitter?

Di. Interpret it I cannot. I but wrote it—

At Naples, truly, as the preface tells,

Last year, in the Toledo; it came on me,

And did me good at once. At Naples then,

At Venice now. Ah! and I think at Venice

Christ is not risen either.

Sp. Nay,

Such things don’t fall out every day:

Having once happened, as we know,

In Palestine so long ago,

How should it now at Venice here

Where people, true enough, appear

To appreciate more and understand

Their ices, and their Austrian band

And dark-eyed girls.

Di. The whole great square they fill,

From the red flaunting streamers on the staffs,

And that barbaric portal of St. Mark’s,

To where, unnoticed, at the darker end,

I sit upon my step—one great gay crowd.

The Campanile to the silent stars

Goes up, above—its apex lost in air—

While these do what?

Sp. Enjoy the minute,

And the substantial blessings in it:

Ices, par exemple; evening air,

Company, and this handsome square;

And all the sweets in perfect plenty

Of the old dolce far niente.

Music! Up, up; it isn't fit

With beggars here on steps to sit.

Up, to the caffé! take a chair,

And join the wiser idlers there.

And see that fellow singing yonder;

Singing, ye gods, and dancing too—

Tooraloo, tooraloo, tooraloo, loo—

Fiddledi diddledi, diddle di di;

Figaro sù, Figaro giù—

Figaro quà, Figaro là!

How he likes doing it—Ha, ha!

Di. While these do what? Ah, heaven! too true, at Venice

Christ is not risen either.

Scene II.—The Public Garden.

Di. Assuredly, a lively scene!

And, ah, how pleasant something green!

With circling heavens one perfect rose

Each smoother patch of water glows,

Hence to where, o’er the full tide’s face,

We see the Palace and the Place,

And the white dome; beauteous, but hot.

Where in the meantime is the spot—

My favourite—where by masses blue,

And white cloud-folds, I follow true

The great Alps, rounding grandly o’er,

Huge arc, to the Dalmatian shore?

Sp. This rather stupid place, to-day,

It’s true, is most extremely gay;

And rightly—the Assunzione

Was always a gran’ funzione.

Di. What is this persecuting voice that haunts me?

What? whence? of whom? How am I to detect?

Myself or not myself? My own bad thoughts,

Or some external agency at work,

To lead me who knows whither?

Sp. Eh?

We’re certainly in luck to-day:

What crowds of boats before us plying—

Gay parties, singing, shouting, crying—

Saluting others past them flying!

What numbers at the causeway lying!
What lots of pretty girls, too, hieing
Hither and thither—coming, going,
And with what satisfaction showing
Their dark exuberance of hair,
Black eyes, rich tints, and sundry graces
Of classic pure Italian faces!
Di. Ah me, me!
Clear stars above, thou roseate westward sky,
Take up my being into yours; assume
My sense to know you only; steep my brain
In your essential purity, or, great Alps,
That wrapping round your heads in solemn clouds
Seem sternly to sweep past our vanities,
Lead me with you—take me away, preserve me!
O moon and stars, forgive! and thou, clear heaven,
Look pureness back into me. Oh, great God!
Why, why, in wisdom and in grace's name,
And in the name of saints and saintly thoughts,
Of mothers, and of sisters, and chaste wives,
And angel woman-faces we have seen,
And angel woman-spirits we have guessed,
And innocent sweet children, and pure love,
Why did I ever one brief moment's space

But parley with this filthy Belial?

...Was it the fear

Of being behind the world, which is the wicked?

Scene III.—At the Hotel.

Sp. Come, then,

And with my aid go into good society.

Life little loves, ’tis true, this peevish piety;

E’en they with whom it thinks to be securest—

Your most religious, delicatest, purest—

Discern, and show as pious people can

Their feeling that you are not quite a man.

Still the thing has its place; and with sagacity,

Much might be done by one of your capacity.

A virtuous attachment formed judiciously

Would come, one sees, uncommonly propitiously:

Turn you but your affections the right way,

And what mayn’t happen none of us can say;

For in despite of devils and of mothers,

Your good young men make catches, too, like others.

Di. To herd with people that one owns no care for;

Friend it with strangers that one sees but once;

To drain the heart with endless complaisance;

To warp the unfinished diction on the lip,

And twist one’s mouth to counterfeit; enforce

Reluctant looks to falsehood; base-alloy
The ingenuous golden frankness of the past;
To calculate and plot; be rough and smooth,
Forward and silent, deferential, cool,
Not by one's humour, which is the safe truth,
But on consideration.
Sp. That is, act
On a dispassionate judgment of the fact;
Look all the data fairly in the face,
And rule your judgment simply by the case.
Di. On vile consideration. At the best,
With pallid hotbed courtesies to forestall
The green and vernal spontaneity,
And waste the priceless moments of the man
In regulating manner. Whether these things
Be right, I do not know: I only know 'tis
To lose one's youth too early. Oh, not yet—
Not yet I make the sacrifice.
Sp. Du tout!
To give up nature's just what would not do.
By all means keep your sweet ingenuous graces,
And use them at the proper times and places.
For work, for play, for business, talk and love,
I own as wisdom truly from above,

That scripture of the serpent and the dove;
Nor's aught so perfect for the world's affairs
As the old parable of wheat and tares;
What we all love is good touched up with evil—
Religion's self must have a spice of devil.
Di. Let it be enough,
That in our needful mixture with the world,
On each new morning with the rising sun,
Our rising heart, fresh from the seas of sleep,
Scarce o'er the level lifts his purer orb
Ere lost and sullied with polluting smoke—
A noon-day coppery disk. Lo, scarce come forth,
Some vagrant miscreant meets, and with a look
Transmutes me his, and for a whole sick day
Lepers me.
Sp. Just the one thing, I assure you,
From which good company can't but secure you.
About the individual's not so clear,
But who can doubt the general atmosphere?
Di. Ay truly, who at first? but in a while——
Sp. O dear, this o'er-discernment makes me smile.
You don't pretend to tell me you can see
Without one touch of melting sympathy
Those lovely, stately flowers that fill with bloom

The brilliant season's gay parterre-like room,
Moving serene yet swiftly through the dances;
Those graceful forms and perfect countenances,
Whose every fold and line in all their dresses
Something refined and exquisite expresses.
To see them smile and hear them talk so sweetly,
In me destroys all lower thoughts completely;
I really seem, without exaggeration,
To experience the true regeneration.
One's own dress, too—one's manner, what one's doing
And saying, all assist to one's renewing.
I love to see, in these their fitting places,
The bows, the forms, and all you call grimaces.
I heartily could wish we'd kept some more of them,
However much we talk about the bore of them.
Fact is, your awkward parvenus are shy at it,
Afraid to look like waiters if they try at it.
'Tis sad to what democracy is leading—
Give me your Eighteenth Century for high breeding.
Though I can put up gladly with the present,
And quite can think our modern parties pleasant.
One shouldn't analyse the thing too nearly:
The main effect is admirable clearly.
'Good manners,' said our great-aunts, 'next to piety:'

And so my friend, hurrah for good society!

Scene IV.—On the Piazza.

Sp. Insulted! by the living Lord!

He laid his hand upon his sword.

‘Fort,’ did he say? a German brute,

With neither heart nor brains to shoot.

Di. What does he mean? he’s wrong, I had done nothing.

’Twas a mistake—more his, I am sure, than mine.

He is quite wrong—I feel it. Come, let us go.

Sp. Go up to him!—you must, that’s flat.

Be threatened by a beast like that!

Di. He’s violent: what can I do against him?

I neither wish to be killed nor to kill:

What’s more, I never yet have touched a sword,

Nor fired, but twice, a pistol in my life.

Sp. Oh, never mind, ’twon’t come to fighting—

Only some verbal small requiting;

Or give your card—we’ll do’t by writing.

He’ll not stick to it. Soldiers too

Are cowards, just like me or you.

What! not a single word to throw at

This snarling dog of a d——d Croat?

Di. My heavens! why should I care? he does not hurt me.

If he is wrong, it is the worst for him.

I certainly did nothing: I shall go.

Sp. Did nothing! I should think not; no,

Nor ever will, I dare be sworn!

But, O my friend, well-bred, well-born—

You to behave so in these quarrels

Makes me half doubtful of your morals!

...It were all one,

You had been some shopkeeper’s son,

Whose childhood ne’er was shown aught better

Than bills of creditor and debtor.

Di. By heaven, it falls from off me like the rain

From the oil-coat. I seem in spirit to see

How he and I at some great day shall meet

Before some awful judgment-seat of truth;

And I could deem that I behold him there

Come praying for the pardon I give now,

Did I not think these matters too, too small

For any record on the leaves of time.

O thou great Watcher of this noisy world,

What are they in Thy sight? or what in his

Who finds some end of action in his life?

What e’en in his whose sole permitted course

Is to pursue his peaceful byway walk,

And live his brief life purely in Thy sight,

And righteously towards his brother-men?

Sp. And whether, so you're just and fair,

Other folks are so, you don't care;

You who profess more love than others

For your poor sinful human brothers.

Di. For grosser evils their gross remedies

The laws afford us; let us be content;

For finer wounds the law would, if it could,

Find medicine too; it cannot, let us bear;

For sufferance is the badge of all men's tribes.

Sp. Because we can't do all we would,

Does it follow, to do nothing's good?

No way to help the law's rough sense

By equities of self-defence?

Well, for yourself it may be nice

To serve vulgarity and vice:

Must sisters, too, and wives and mothers,

Fare like their patient sons and brothers?

Di. He that loves sister, mother, more than me——

Sp. But the injustice—the gross wrong!

To whom on earth does it belong

If not to you, to whom 'twas done,

Who saw it plain as any sun,

To make the base and foul offender

Confess, and satisfaction render?
At least before the termination of it
Prove your own lofty reprobation of it.
Though gentleness, I know, was born in you,
Surely you have a little scorn in you?
Di. Heaven! to pollute one's fingers to pick up
The fallen coin of honour from the dirt—
Pure silver though it be, let it rather lie!
To take up any offence, where't may be said
That temper, vanity—I know not what—
Had led me on!
To have so much as e'en half felt of one
That ever one was angered for oneself!
Beyond suspicion Cæsar's wife should be,
Beyond suspicion this bright honour shall.
Did he say scorn? I have some scorn, thank God.
Sp. Certainly. Only if it's so,
Let us leave Italy, and go
Post haste, to attend—you're ripe and rank for't—
The great peace-meeting up at Frankfort.
Joy to the Croat! Take our lives,
Sweet friends, and please respect our wives;
Joy to the Croat! Some fine day,
He'll see the error of his way,

No doubt, and will repent and pray.

At any rate he'll open his eyes,

If not before, at the Last Assize.

Not, if I rightly understood you,

That even then you'd punish, would you?

Nay, let the hapless soul go free—

Mere murder, crime, or robbery,

In whate'er station, age, or sex,

Your sacred spirit scarce can vex:

De minimis non curat lex.

To the Peace Congress! ring the bell!

Horses to Frankfort and to ——!

Di. I am not quite in union with myself

On this strange matter. I must needs confess

Instinct turns instinct out, and thought

Wheels round on thought. To bleed for others' wrongs

In vindication of a cause, to draw

The sword of the Lord and Gideon—oh, that seems

The flower and top of life! But fight because

Some poor misconstruing trifler haps to say

I lie, when I do not lie,

Why should I? Call you this a cause? I can't.

Oh, he is wrong, no doubt; he misbehaves—

But is it worth so much as speaking loud?

And things so merely personal to myself
Of all earth's things do least affect myself.
Sp. Sweet eloquence! at next May Meeting
How it would tell in the repeating!
I recognise, and kiss the rod—
The methodistic 'voice of God;'
I catch contrite that angel whine,
That snuffle human, yet divine.
Di. It may be I am somewhat of a poltroon;
I never fought at school; whether it be
Some native poorness in my spirit's blood,
Or that the holy doctrine of our faith
In too exclusive fervency possessed
My heart with feelings, with ideas my brain.
Sp. Yes; you would argue that it goes
Against the Bible, I suppose;
But our revered religion—yes,
Our common faith—seems, I confess,
On these points to propose to address
The people more than you or me—
At best the vulgar bourgeoisie.
The sacred writers don't keep count,
But still the Sermon on the Mount
Must have been spoken, by what's stated,

To hearers by the thousands rated.
I cuff some fellow; mild and meek
He should turn round the other cheek.
For him it may be right and good;
We are not all of gentle blood
Really, or as such understood.
Di. There are two kindreds upon earth, I know—
The oppressors and the oppressed. But as for me,
If I must choose to inflict wrong, or accept,
May my last end, and life too, be with these.
Yes; whatsoe'er the reason, want of blood,
Lymphatic humours, or my childhood's faith,
So is the thing, and be it well or ill,
I have no choice. I am a man of peace,
And the old Adam of the gentleman
Dares seldom in my bosom stir against
The mild plebeian Christian seated there.
Sp. Forgive me, if I name my doubt,
Whether you know 'fort' means 'get out.'
Scene V.—The Lido.
Sp. What now? the Lido shall it be?
That none may say we didn't see
The ground which Byron used to ride on,
And do I don't know what beside on.

Ho, barca! here! and this light gale
Will let us run it with a sail.
Di. I dreamt a dream: till morning light
A bell rang in my head all night,
Tinkling and tinkling first, and then
Tolling and tinkling, tolling again,
So brisk and gay, and then so slow!
O joy and terror! mirth and woe!
Ting, ting, there is no God; ting, ting,—
Dong, there is no God; dong,
There is no God; dong, dong.
Ting, ting, there is no God; ting, ting.
Come, dance and play, and merrily sing,
Staid Englishman, who toil and slave
From your first childhood to your grave,
And seldom spend and always save—
And do your duty all your life
By your young family and wife;
Come, be’t not said you ne’er had known
What earth can furnish you alone.
The Italian, Frenchman, German even,
Have given up all thoughts of heaven:
And you still linger—oh, you fool!—
Because of what you learnt at school.

You should have gone at least to college,
And got a little ampler knowledge.
Ah well, and yet—dong, dong, dong:
Do as you like, as now you do;
If work's a cheat, so's pleasure too.
And nothing's new and nothing's true;
Dong, there is no God; dong.
O, in our nook unknown, unseen,
We'll hold our fancy like a screen
Us and the dreadful fact between;
And it shall yet be long—ay, long—
The quiet notes of our low song
Shall keep us from that sad dong, dong.—
Hark, hark, hark! O voice of fear,
It reaches us here, even here!
Dong, there is no God; dong.
Ring ding, ring ding, tara, tara,
To battle, to battle—haste, haste—
To battle, to battle—aha, aha!
On, on, to the conqueror's feast,
From east to west, and south and north,
Ye men of valour and of worth,
Ye mighty men of arms come forth,
And work your will, for that is just;

And in your impulse put your trust,
Beneath your feet the fools are dust.
Alas, alas! O grief and wrong,
The good are weak, the wicked strong;
And O my God, how long, how long!
Dong, there is no God; dong.
Ring, ting; to bow before the strong,
There is a rapture too in this;
Work for thy master, work, thou slave—
He is not merciful, but brave.
Be't joy to serve, who free and proud
Scorns thee and all the ignoble crowd;
Take that, 'tis all thou art allowed,
Except the snaky hope that they
May sometime serve who rule to-day.
When, by hell-demons, shan't they pay?
O wickedness, O shame and grief,
And heavy load, and no relief!
O God, O God! and which is worst,
To be the curser or the curst,
The victim or the murderer? Dong.
Dong, there is no God; dong.
Ring ding, ring ding, tara, tara,
Away, and hush that preaching—fagh!

Ye vulgar dreamers about peace,
Who offer noblest hearts, to heal
The tenderest hurts honour can feel,
Paid magistrates and the police!
O peddling merchant-justice, go,
Exacter rules than yours we know;
Resentment’s rule, and that high law
Of whoso best the sword can draw.
Ah well, and yet—dong, dong, dong.
Go on, my friends, as now you do;
Lawyers are villains, soldiers too;
And nothing’s new and nothing’s true.
Dong, there is no God; dong.
I had a dream, from eve to light
A bell went sounding all the night.
Gay mirth, black woe, thin joys, huge pain:
I tried to stop it, but in vain.
It ran right on, and never broke;
Only when day began to stream
Through the white curtains to my bed,
And like an angel at my head
Light stood and touched me—I awoke,
And looked, and said, ‘It is a dream.’
Sp. Ah! not so bad. You’ve read, I see,

Your Béranger, and thought of me.
But really you owe some apology
For harping thus upon theology.
I'm not a judge, I own; in short,
Religion may not be my forte.
The Church of England I belong to,
And think Dissenters not far wrong too;
They're vulgar dogs; but for his creed
I hold that no man will be d——d.
But come and listen in your turn,
And you shall hear and mark and learn.
'There is no God,' the wicked saith,
'And truly it's a blessing,
For what He might have done with us
It's better only guessing.'
'There is no God,' a youngster thinks,
'Or really, if there may be,
He surely didn't mean a man
Always to be a baby.'
'There is no God, or if there is,'
The tradesman thinks, ''twere funny
If He should take it ill in me
To make a little money.'
'Whether there be,' the rich man says,

‘It matters very little,
For I and mine, thank somebody,
Are not in want of victual.’
Some others, also, to themselves,
Who scarce so much as doubt it,
Think there is none, when they are well,
And do not think about it.
But country folks who live beneath
The shadow of the steeple;
The parson and the parson’s wife,
And mostly married people;
Youths green and happy in first love,
So thankful for illusion;
And men caught out in what the world
Calls guilt, in first confusion;
And almost every one when age,
Disease, or sorrows strike him,
Inclines to think there is a God,
Or something very like Him.
But eccoci! with our barchetta,
Here at the Sant’ Elisabetta.
Di. Vineyards and maize, that’s pleasant for sore eyes.
Sp. And on the island’s other side,
The place where Murray’s faithful Guide

Informs us Byron used to ride.

Di. The trellised vines! enchanting! Sandhills, ho!

The sea, at last the sea—the real broad sea—

Beautiful! and a glorious breeze upon it.

Sp. Look back; one catches at this station

Lagoon and sea in combination.

Di. On her still lake the city sits,

Where bark and boat around her flits,

Nor dreams, her soft siesta taking,

Of Adriatic billows breaking.

I do; I see and hear them. Come! to the sea!

Oh, a grand surge! we'll bathe; quick, quick!—undress!

Quick, quick!—in, in!

We'll take the crested billows by their backs

And shake them. Quick! in, in!

And I will taste again the old joy

I gloried in so when a boy;

Aha! come, come—great waters, roll!

Accept me, take me, body and soul!

That's done me good. It grieves me though,

I never came here long ago.

Sp. Pleasant, perhaps; however, no offence,

Animal spirits are not common sense;

They're good enough as an assistance,

But in themselves a poor existence.

But you, with this one bathe, no doubt,

Have solved all questions out and out.

**Part II.**

Scene I.—The interior Arcade of the Doge's Palace.

Sp. Thunder and rain! O dear, O dear!

But see, a noble shelter here,

This grand arcade where our Venetian

Has formed of Gothic and of Grecian

A combination strange, but striking,

And singularly to my liking!

Let moderns reap where ancients sowed,

I at least make it my abode.

And now let's hear your famous Ode:

'Through the great sinful'—how did it go on?

For principles of Art and so on

I care perhaps about three curses,

But hold myself a judge of verses.

Di. 'My brain was lightened when my tongue

had said, "Christ is not risen."'

Sp. Well, now it's anything but clear

What is the tone that's taken here:

What is your logic? what's your theology?

Is it, or is it not, neology?

That’s a great fault; you’re this and that,

And here and there, and nothing flat;

Yet writing’s golden word what is it,

But the three syllables ‘explicit’?

Say, if you cannot help it, less,

But what you do put, put express.

I fear that rule won’t meet your feeling:

You think half showing, half concealing,

Is God’s own method of revealing.

Di. To please my own poor mind! to find repose;

To physic the sick soul; to furnish vent

To diseased humours in the moral frame!

Sp. A sort of seton, I suppose,

A moral bleeding at the nose:

H’m;—and the tone too after all,

Something of the ironical?

Sarcastic, say; or were it fitter

To style it the religious bitter?

Di. Interpret it I cannot, I but wrote it.

Sp. Perhaps; but none that read can doubt it,

There is a strong Strauss-smell about it.

Heavens! at your years your time to fritter

Upon a critical hair-splitter!

Take larger views (and quit your Germans)

From the Analogy and sermons;
I fancied—you must doubtless know—
Butler had proved an age ago,
That in religious as profane things
’Twas useless trying to explain things;
Men’s business-wits, the only sane things,
These and compliance are the main things.
God, Revelation, and the rest of it,
Bad at the best, we make the best of it.
Like a good subject and wise man,
Believe whatever things you can.
Take your religion as ’twas found you,
And say no more of it, confound you!
And now I think the rain has ended;
And the less said, the soonest mended.
Scene II.—In a Gondola.
Sp. Per ora. To the Grand Canal.
Afterwards e’en as fancy shall.
Di. Afloat; we move. Delicious! Ah,
What else is like the gondola?
This level floor of liquid glass
Begins beneath us swift to pass.
It goes as though it went alone
By some impulsion of its own.

(How light it moves, how softly! Ah,
Were all things like the gondola!)
How light it moves, how softly! Ah,
Could life, as does our gondola,
Unvexed with quarrels, aims, and cares,
And moral duties and affairs,
Unswaying, noiseless, swift and strong,
For ever thus—thus glide along!
(How light we move, how softly! Ah,
Were life but as the gondola!)
With no more motion than should bear
A freshness to the languid air;
With no more effort than exprest
The need and naturalness of rest,
Which we beneath a grateful shade
Should take on peaceful pillows laid!
(How light we move, how softly! Ah,
Were life but as the gondola!)
In one unbroken passage borne
To closing night from opening morn,
Uplift at whiles slow eyes to mark
Some palace front, some passing bark;
Through windows catch the varying shore,
And hear the soft turns of the oar!

(How light we move, how softly! Ah,

Were life but as the gondola!)

So live, nor need to call to mind

Our slaving brother here behind!

Sp. Pooh! Nature meant him for no better

Than our most humble menial debtor:

Who thanks us for his day’s employment

As we our purse for our enjoyment.

Di. To make one’s fellow-man an instrument——

Sp. Is just the thing that makes him most content.

Di. Our gaieties, our luxuries,

Our pleasures and our glee,

Mere insolence and wantonness,

Alas! they feel to me.

How shall I laugh and sing and dance?

My very heart recoils,

While here to give my mirth a chance

A hungry brother toils.

The joy that does not spring from joy

Which I in others see,

How can I venture to employ,

Or find it joy for me?

Sp. Oh come, come, come! By Him that sent us here.

Who’s to enjoy at all, pray let us hear?

You won't; he can't! Oh, no more fuss!

What's it to him, or he to us?

Sing, sing away, be glad and gay,

And don't forget that we shall pay.

Di. Yes, it is beautiful ever, let foolish men rail at it never.

Yes, it is beautiful truly, my brothers, I grant it you duly.

Wise are ye others that choose it, and happy ye all that can use it.

Life it is beautiful wholly, and could we eliminate only

This interfering, enslaving, o'ermastering demon of craving,

This wicked tempter inside us to ruin still eager to guide us,

Life were beatitude, action a possible pure satisfaction.

Sp. (Hexameters, by all that's odious,

Beshod with rhyme to run melodious!)

Di. All as I go on my way I behold them consorting and coupling;

Faithful it seemeth, and fond; very fond, very possibly faithful;

All as I go on my way with a pleasure sincere and unmingled

Life it is beautiful truly, my brothers, I grant it you duly,

But for perfection attaining is one method only, abstaining;

Let us abstain, for we should so, if only we thought that we could so.

Sp. Bravo, bravissimo! this time though

You rather were run short for rhyme though;

Not that on that account your verse

Could be much better or much worse.

This world is very odd we see,

We do not comprehend it;

But in one fact we all agree,

God won’t, and we can’t mend it.

Being common sense, it can’t be sin

To take it as I find it;

The pleasure to take pleasure in;

The pain, try not to mind it.

Di. O let me love my love unto myself alone,

And know my knowledge to the world unknown;

No witness to the vision call,

Beholding, unbeheld of all;

And worship thee, with thee withdrawn, apart,

Whoe’er, whate’er thou art,

Within the closest veil of mine own inmost heart

Better it were, thou sayest, to consent,

Feast while we may, and live ere life be spent;

Close up clear eyes, and call the unstable sure,

The unlovely lovely, and the filthy pure;

In self-belyings, self-deceivings roll,

And lose in Action, Passion, Talk, the soul.

Nay, better far to mark off thus much air,

And call it heaven; place bliss and glory there;

Fix perfect homes in the unsubstantial sky,

And say, what is not, will be by-and-by;

What here exists not must exist elsewhere.

But play no tricks upon thy soul, O man;

Let fact be fact, and life the thing it can.

Sp. To these remarks so sage and clerkly,

Worthy of Malebranche or Berkeley,

I trust it won't be deemed a sin

If I too answer 'with a grin.'

These juicy meats, this flashing wine,

May be an unreal mere appearance;

Only—for my inside, in fine,

They have a singular coherence.

Oh yes, my pensive youth, abstain;

And any empty sick sensation.

Remember, anything like pain

Is only your imagination.

Trust me, I've read your German sage

To far more purpose e'er than you did;

You find it in his wisest page,

Whom God deludes is well deluded.

Di. Where are the great, whom thou would'st wish to praise thee?

Where are the pure, whom thou would'st choose to love thee?

Where are the brave, to stand supreme above thee,

Whose high commands would cheer, whose chidings raise thee?

Seek, seeker, in thyself; submit to find

In the stones, bread, and life in the blank mind.

(Written in London, standing in the Park,

One evening in July, just before dark.)

Sp. As I sat at the café, I said to myself,

They may talk as they please about what they call pelf,

They may sneer as they like about eating and drinking,

But help it I cannot, I cannot help thinking,

How pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho!

How pleasant it is to have money.

I sit at my table en grand seigneur,

And when I have done, throw a crust to the poor;

Not only the pleasure, one's self, of good living,

But also the pleasure of now and then giving.

So pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho!

So pleasant it is to have money.

It was but last winter I came up to town,

But already I'm getting a little renown;

I make new acquaintance where'er I appear;

I am not too shy, and have nothing to fear.

So pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho!

So pleasant it is to have money.

I drive through the streets, and I care not a d——n;

The people they stare, and they ask who I am;

And if I should chance to run over a cad,

I can pay for the damage if ever so bad.
So pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho!
So pleasant it is to have money.
We stroll to our box and look down on the pit,
And if it weren't low should be tempted to spit;
We loll and we talk until people look up,
And when it's half over we go out to sup.
So pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho!
So pleasant it is to have money.
The best of the tables and the best of the fare—
And as for the others, the devil may care;
It isn't our fault if they dare not afford
To sup like a prince and be drunk as a lord.
So pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho!
So pleasant it is to have money.
We sit at our tables and tipple champagne;
Ere one bottle goes, comes another again;
The waiters they skip and they scuttle about,
And the landlord attends us so civilly out.
So pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho!
So pleasant it is to have money.
It was but last winter I came up to town,
But already I'm getting a little renown;
I get to good houses without much ado,

Am beginning to see the nobility too.

So pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho!

So pleasant it is to have money.

O dear! what a pity they ever should lose it!

For they are the gentry that know how to use it;

So grand and so graceful, such manners, such dinners,

But yet, after all, it is we are the winners.

So pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho!

So pleasant it is to have money.

Thus I sat at my table en grand seigneur,

And when I had done threw a crust to the poor;

Not only the pleasure, one’s self, of good eating,

But also the pleasure of now and then treating.

So pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho!

So pleasant it is to have money.

They may talk as they please about what they call pelf,

And how one ought never to think of one’s self,

And how pleasures of thought surpass eating and drinking—

My pleasure of thought is the pleasure of thinking

How pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho!

How pleasant it is to have money.

(Written in Venice, but for all parts true,

’Twas not a crust I gave him, but a sou.)

A gondola here, and a gondola there,

’Tis the pleasantest fashion of taking the air.
To right and to left; stop, turn, and go yonder,
And let us repeat, o’er the tide as we wander,
How pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho!
How pleasant it is to have money.
Come, leave your Gothic, worn-out story,
San Giorgio and the Redentore;
I from no building, gay or solemn,
Can spare the shapely Grecian column.
’Tis not, these centuries four, for nought
Our European world of thought
Hath made familiar to its home
The classic mind of Greece and Rome;
In all new work that would look forth
To more than antiquarian worth,
Palladio’s pediments and bases,
Or something such, will find their places;
Maturer optics don’t delight
In childish dim religious light,
In evanescent vague effects
That shirk, not face, one’s intellects;
They love not fancies just betrayed,
And artful tricks of light and shade,
But pure form nakedly displayed,

And all things absolutely made.

The Doge’s palace though, from hence,

In spite of doctrinaire pretence,

The tide now level with the quay,

Is certainly a thing to see.

We’ll turn to the Rialto soon;

One’s told to see it by the moon.

A gondola here, and a gondola there,

’Tis the pleasantest fashion of taking the air.

To right and to left; stop, turn, and go yonder,

And let us reflect, o’er the flood as we wander,

How pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho!

How pleasant it is to have money.

Di. How light we go, how soft we skim,

And all in moonlight seem to swim!

The south side rises o’er our bark,

A wall impenetrably dark;

The north is seen profusely bright;

The water, is it shade or light?

Say, gentle moon, which conquers now

The flood, those massy hulls, or thou?

(How light we go, how softly! Ah,

Where life but as the gondola!)

How light we go, how soft we skim,

And all in moonlight seem to swim!
In moonlight is it now, or shade?
In planes of sure division made,
By angles sharp of palace walls
The clear light and the shadow falls;
O sight of glory, sight of wonder!
Seen, a pictorial portent, under,
O great Rialto, the vast round
Of thy thrice-solid arch profound!
(How light we go, how softly! Ah,
Life should be as the gondola!)
How light we go, how softly——
Sp. Nay;
Fore heaven, enough of that to-day:
I’m deadly weary of your tune,
And half-ennuyé with the moon;
The shadows lie, the glories fall,
And are but moonshine after all.
It goes against my conscience really
To let myself feel so ideally.
Come, for the Piazzetta steer;
’Tis nine o’clock or very near.
These airy blisses, skiey joys
Of vague romantic girls and boys,

Which melt the heart and the brain soften,
When not affected, as too often
They are, remind me, I protest,
Of nothing better at the best
Than Timon’s feast to his ancient lovers,
Warm water under silver covers;
‘Lap, dogs!’ I think I hear him say;
And lap who will, so I’m away.
Di. How light we go, how soft we skim,
And all in moonlight seem to swim!
Against bright clouds projected dark,
The white dome now, reclined I mark,
And, by o’er-brilliant lamps displayed,
The Doge’s columns and arcade;
Over still waters mildly come
The distant waters and the hum.
(How light we go, how softly! Ah,
Life should be as the gondola!)
How light we go, how soft we skim,
And all in open moonlight swim!
Ah, gondolier, slow, slow, more slow!
We go; but wherefore thus should go?
Ah, let not muscle all too strong
Beguile, betray thee to our wrong!

On to the landing, onward. Nay,

Sweet dream, a little longer stay!

On to the landing; here. And, ah!

Life is not as the gondola.

Sp. Tre ore. So. The Parthenone

Is it? you haunt for your limone.

Let me induce you to join me,

In gramolate persiche.

Scene III.—The Academy at Venice.

Di. A modern daub it was, perchance,

I know not: but the connoisseur

From Titian’s hues, I dare be sure,

Had never turned one kindly glance,

Where Byron, somewhat drest-up, draws

His sword, impatient long, and speaks

Unto a tribe of motley Greeks

His fealty to their good cause.

Not far, assumed to mystic bliss,

Behold the ecstatic Virgin rise!

Ah, wherefore vainly, to fond eyes

That melted into tears for this?

Yet if we must live, as would seem,

These peremptory heats to claim,

Ah, not for profit, not for fame,

And not for pleasure’s giddy dream,
And not for piping empty reeds,
And not for colouring idle dust;
If live we positively must,
God’s name be blest for noble deeds.
Verses! well, they are made, so let them go;
No more if I can help. This is one way
The procreant heat and fervour of our youth
Escapes, in puff, in smoke, and shapeless words
Of mere ejaculation, nothing worth,
Unless to make maturer years content
To slave in base compliance to the world.
I have scarce spoken yet to this strange follower
Whom I picked up—ye great gods, tell me where!
And when! for I remember such long years,
And yet he seems new come. I commune with myself;
He speaks, I hear him, and resume to myself;
Whate’er I think, he adds his comments to;
Which yet not interrupts me. Scarce I know
If ever once directly I addressed him:
Let me essay it now; for I have strength.
Yet what he wants, and what he fain would have,
Oh, I know all too surely; not in vain,
Although unnoticed, has he dogged my ear.

Come, we'll be definite, explicit, plain;
I can resist, I know; and 'twill be well
For colloquy to have used this manlier mood,
Which is to last, ye chances say how long
How shall I call him? Mephistophiles?
Sp. I come, I come.
Di. So quick, so eager; ha!
Like an eaves-dropping menial on my thought,
With something of an exultation too, methinks,
Out-peeping in that springy, jaunty gait.
I doubt about it. Shall I do it? Oh! oh!
Shame on me! come! Shall I, my follower,
Should I conceive (not that at all I do,
'Tis curiosity that prompts my speech)—
But should I form, a thing to be supposed,
A wish to bargain for your merchandise,
Say what were your demands? what were your terms!
What should I do? what should I cease to do?
What incense on what altars must I burn?
And what abandon? what unlearn, or learn?
Religion goes, I take it.
Sp. Oh,
You'll go to church of course, you know;
Or at the least will take a pew

To send your wife and servants to.

Trust me, I make a point of that;

No infidelity, that’s flat.

Di. Religion is not in a pew, say some;

Cucullus, you hold, facit monachum.

Sp. Why, as to feelings of devotion

I interdict all vague emotion;

But if you will, for once and all

Compound with ancient Juvenal

Orandum est, one perfect prayer

For savoir-vivre and savoir-faire.

Theology—don’t recommend you,

Unless, turned lawyer, Heaven should send you

In your profession’s way a case

Of Baptism and prevenient grace;

But that’s not likely. I’m inclined,

All circumstances borne in mind,

To think (to keep you in due borders)

You’d better enter holy orders.

Di. On that, my friend, you’d better not insist.

Sp. Well, well, ’tis but a good thing missed.

The item’s optional, no doubt;

But how to get you bread without?

You’ll marry; I shall find the lady.

Make your proposal, and be steady.

Di. Marry, ill spirit! and at your sole choice?

Sp. De rigueur! can’t give you a voice.

What matter? Oh, trust one who knows you,

You’ll make an admirable sposo.

Di. Enough. But action—look to that well, mind me;

See that some not unworthy work you find me;

If man I be, then give the man expression.

Sp. Of course you’ll enter a profession;

If not the Church, why then the Law.

By Jove, we’ll teach you how to draw!

Besides, the best of the concern is

I’m hand and glove with the attorneys.

With them and me to help, don’t doubt

But in due season you’ll come out;

Leave Kelly, Cockburn, in the lurch.

But yet, do think about the Church.

Di. ’Tis well, ill spirit, I admire your wit;

As for your wisdom, I shall think of it.

And now farewell.

Scene IV.—In St. Mark’s. Dipsychus alone.

The Law! ’twere honester, if ’twere genteel,

To say the dung-cart. What! shall I go about,

And like the walking shoeblack roam the flags

To see whose boots are dirtiest? Oh, the luck
To stoop and clean a pair!
Religion, if indeed it be in vain
To expect to find in this more modern time
That which the old world styled, in old-world phrase
Walking with God. It seems His newer will
We should not think of Him at all, but trudge it,
And of the world He has assigned us make
What best we can.
Then love: I scarce can think
That these be-maddening discords of the mind
To pure melodious sequence could be changed,
And all the vext conundrums of our life
Solved to all time by this old pastoral
Of a new Adam and a second Eve
Set in a garden which no serpent seeks.
And yet I hold heart can beat true to heart:
And to hew down the tree which bears this fruit,
To do a thing which cuts me off from hope,
To falsify the movement of Love's mind,
To seat some alien trifler on the throne
A queen may come to claim—that were ill done.
What! to the close hand of the clutching Jew
Hand up that rich reversion! and for what?

This would be hard, did I indeed believe
’Twould ever fall. That love, the large repose
Restorative, not to mere outside needs
Skin-deep, but throughly to the total man,
Exists, I will believe, but so, so rare,
So doubtful, so exceptional, hard to guess;
When guessed, so often counterfeit; in brief,
A thing not possibly to be conceived
An item in the reckonings of the wise.
Action, that staggers me. For I had hoped,
’Midst weakness, indolence, frivolity,
Irresolution, still had hoped: and this
Seems sacrificing hope. Better to wait:
The wise men wait; it is the foolish haste,
And ere the scenes are in the slides would play,
And while the instruments are tuning, dance.
I see Napoleon on the heights intent
To arrest that one brief unit of loose time
Which hands high Victory’s thread; his marshals fret,
His soldiers clamour low: the very guns
Seem going off of themselves; the cannon strain
Like hell-dogs in the leash. But he, he waits;
And lesser chances and inferior hopes
Meantime go pouring past. Men gnash their teeth;

The very faithful have begun to doubt;
But they molest not the calm eye that seeks
’Midst all this huddling silver little worth
The one thin piece that comes, pure gold; he waits.
O me, when the great deed e’en now has broke
Like a man’s hand the horizon’s level line,
So soon to fill the zenith with rich clouds;
Oh, in this narrow interspace, this marge,
This list and selvage of a glorious time,
To despair of the great and sell unto the mean!
O thou of little faith, what hast thou done?
Yet if the occasion coming should find us
Undexterous, incapable? In light things
Prove thou the arms thou long’st to glorify,
Nor fear to work up from the lowest ranks
Whence come great Nature’s Captains. And high deeds
Haunt not the fringy edges of the fight,
But the pell-mell of men. Oh, what and if
E’en now by lingering here I let them slip,
Like an unpractised spyer through a glass,
Still pointing to the blank, too high! And yet,
In dead details to smother vital ends
Which would give life to them; in the deft trick
Of prentice-handling to forget great art,

To base mechanical adroitness yield
The Inspiration and the Hope a slave!
Oh, and to blast that Innocence which, though
Here it may seem a dull unopening bud,
May yet bloom freely in celestial clime!
Were it not better done, then, to keep off
And see, not share, the strife; stand out the waltz
Which fools whirl dizzy in? Is it possible?
Contamination taints the idler first;
And without base compliance, e'en that same
Which buys bold hearts free course, Earth lends not these
Their pent and miserable standing-room.
Life loves no lookers-on at his great game,
And with boy's malice still delights to turn
The tide of sport upon the sitters-by,
And set observers scampering with their notes.
Oh, it is great to do and know not what,
Nor let it e'er be known. The dashing stream
Stays not to pick his steps among the rocks,
Or let his water-breaks be chronicled.
And though the hunter looks before he leap,
'Tis instinct rather than a shaped-out thought
That lifts him his bold way. Then, instinct, hail!
And farewell hesitation. If I stay,

I am not innocent; nor if I go—
E’en should I fall—beyond redemption lost.
Ah, if I had a course like a full stream,
If life were as the field of chase! No, no;
The life of instinct has, it seems, gone by,
And will not be forced back. And to live now
I must sluice out myself into canals,
And lose all force in ducts. The modern Hotspur
Shrills not his trumpet of ‘To Horse, To Horse!’
But consults columns in a Railway Guide;
A demigod of figures; an Achilles
Of computation;
A verier Mercury, express come down
To do the world with swift arithmetic.
Well, one could bear with that, were the end ours,
One’s choice and the correlative of the soul;
To drudge were then sweet service. But indeed
The earth moves slowly, if it move at all,
And by the general, not the single force
Of the linked members of the vast machine.
In all these crowded rooms of industry,
No individual soul has loftier leave
Than fiddling with a piston or a valve.
Well, one could bear that also: one would drudge

And do one's petty part, and be content
In base manipulation, solaced still
By thinking of the leagued fraternity,
And of co-operation, and the effect
Of the great engine. If indeed it work,
And is not a mere treadmill! which it may be.
Who can confirm it is not? We ask action.
And dream of arms and conflict; and string up
All self-devotion's muscles; and are set
To fold up papers. To what end? we know not.
Other folks do so; it is always done;
And it perhaps is right. And we are paid for it,
For nothing else we can be. He that eats
Must serve; and serve as other servants do:
And don the lacquey's livery of the house.
Oh, could I shoot my thought up to the sky,
A column of pure shape, for all to observe!
But I must slave, a meagre coral-worm,
To build beneath the tide with excrement
What one day will be island, or be reef,
And will feed men, or wreck them. Well, well, well.
Adieu, ye twisted thinkings. I submit: it must be.
Action is what one must get, it is clear,
And one could dream it better than one finds,

In its kind personal, in its motive not;
Not selfish as it now is, nor as now
Maiming the individual. If we had that,
It would cure all indeed. Oh, how would then
These pitiful rebellions of the flesh,
These caterwaulings of the effeminate heart,
These hurts of self-imagined dignity,
Pass like the seaweed from about the bows
Of a great vessel speeding straight to sea!
Yes, if we could have that; but I suppose
We shall not have it, and therefore I submit!
Sp. (from within). Submit, submit!
’Tis common sense, and human wit
Can claim no higher name than it.
Submit, submit!
Devotion, and ideas, and love,
And beauty claim their place above;
But saint and sage and poet’s dreams
Divide the light in coloured streams,
Which this alone gives all combined,
The siccum lumen of the mind
Called common sense: and no high wit
Gives better counsel than does it.
Submit, submit!

To see things simply as they are
Here at our elbows, transcends far
Trying to spy out at midday
Some ‘bright particular star,’ which may,
Or not, be visible at night,
But clearly is not in daylight;
No inspiration vague outweighs
The plain good common sense that says,
Submit, submit!
’Tis common sense, and human wit
Can ask no higher name than it.
Submit, submit!

Scene V.—The Piazza at Night.

Di. There have been times, not many, but enough
To quiet all repinings of the heart;
There have been times, in which my tranquil soul,
No longer nebulous, sparse, errant, seemed
Upon its axis solidly to move,
Centred and fast: no mere elastic blank
For random rays to traverse unretained,
But rounding luminous its fair ellipse
Around its central sun. Ay, yet again,
As in more faint sensations I detect,
With it too, round an Inner, Mightier orb,

Maybe with that too—this I dare not say—
Around, yet more, more central, more supreme,
Whate'er how numerous soe'er they be,
I am and feel myself, where'er I wind,
What vagrant chance soe'er I seem to obey
Communicably theirs.
O happy hours!
O compensation ample for long days
Of what impatient tongues call wretchedness!
O beautiful, beneath the magic moon,
To walk the watery way of palaces!
O beautiful, o'ervaulted with gemmed blue,
This spacious court, with colour and with gold,
With cupolas, and pinnacles, and points,
And crosses multiplex, and tips and balls
(Wherewith the bright stars unreproving mix,
Nor scorn by hasty eyes to be confused);
Fantastically perfect this low pile
Of Oriental glory; these long ranges
Of classic chiselling, this gay flickering crowd.
And the calm Campanile. Beautiful!
O beautiful! and that seemed more profound,
This morning by the pillar when I sat
Under the great arcade, at the review,

And took, and held, and ordered on my brain
The faces, and the voices, and the whole mass
O' the motley facts of existence flowing by!
O perfect, if 'twere all! But it is not;
Hints haunt me ever of a more beyond:
I am rebuked by a sense of the incomplete,
Of a completion over soon assumed,
Of adding up too soon. What we call sin,
I could believe a painful opening out
Of paths for ampler virtue. The bare field,
Scant with lean ears of harvest, long had mocked
The vext laborious farmer; came at length
The deep plough in the lazy undersoil
Down-driving; with a cry earth's fibres crack,
And a few months, and lo! the golden leas,
And autumn's crowded shocks and loaded wains.
Let us look back on life; was any change,
Any now blest expansion, but at first
A pang, remorse-like, shot to the inmost seats
Of moral being? To do anything,
Distinct on any one thing to decide,
To leave the habitual and the old, and quit
The easy-chair of use and wont, seems crime
To the weak soul, forgetful how at first

Sitting down seemed so too. And, oh! this woman’s heart,
Fain to be forced, incredulous of choice,
And waiting a necessity for God.
Yet I could think, indeed, the perfect call
Should force the perfect answer. If the voice
Ought to receive its echo from the soul,
Wherefore this silence? If it should rouse my being,
Why this reluctance? Have I not thought o’ermuch
Of other men, and of the ways of the world?
But what they are, or have been, matters not.
To thine own self be true, the wise man says.
Are then my fears myself? O double self!
And I untrue to both? Oh, there are hours,
When love, and faith, and dear domestic ties,
And converse with old friends, and pleasant walks,
Familiar faces, and familiar books,
Study, and art, upliftings unto prayer,
And admiration of the noblest things,
Seem all ignoble only; all is mean,
And nought as I would have it. Then at others,
My mind is in her rest; my heart at home
In all around; my soul secure in place,
And the vext needle perfect to her poles.
Aimless and hopeless in my life I seem

To thread the winding byways of the town,
Bewildered, baffled, hurried hence and thence,
All at cross-purpose even with myself,
Unknowing whence or whither. Thence at once,
At a step, I crown the Campanile's top,
And view all mapped below; islands, lagoon,
A hundred steeples and a million roofs,
The fruitful champaign, and the cloud-capt Alps,
And the broad Adriatic. Be it enough;
If I lose this, how terrible! No, no,
I am contented, and will not complain.
To the old paths, my soul! Oh, be it so!
I bear the workday burden of dull life
About these footsore flags of a weary world,
Heaven knows how long it has not been; at once,
Lo! I am in the spirit on the Lord's day
With John in Patmos. Is it not enough,
One day in seven? and if this should go,
If this pure solace should desert my mind,
What were all else? I dare not risk this loss.
To the old paths, my soul!
Sp. O yes.
To moon about religion; to inhume
Your ripened age in solitary walks,

For self-discussion; to debate in letters
Vext points with earnest friends; past other men
To cherish natural instincts, yet to fear them
And less than any use them; oh, no doubt,
In a corner sit and mope, and be consoled
With thinking one is clever, while the room
Rings through with animation and the dance.
Then talk of old examples; to pervert
Ancient real facts to modern unreal dreams
And build up baseless fabrics of romance
And heroism upon historic sand;
To burn, forsooth, for action, yet despise
Its merest accidence and alphabet;
Cry out for service, and at once rebel
At the application of its plainest rules:
This you call life, my friend, reality;
Doing your duty unto God and man—
I know not what. Stay at Venice, if you will;
Sit musing in its churches hour on hour
Cross-kneed upon a bench; climb up at whiles
The neighbouring tower, and kill the lingering day
With old comparisons; when night succeeds,
Evading, yet a little seeking, what
You would and would not, turn your doubtful eyes

On moon and stars to help morality;
Once in a fortnight say, by lucky chance
Of happier-tempered coffee, gain (great Heaven!)
A pious rapture: is it not enough?
Di. ’Tis well: thou cursed spirit, go thy way!
I am in higher hands than yours. ’Tis well;
Who taught you menaces? Who told you, pray,
Because I asked you questions, and made show
Of hearing what you answered, therefore——
Sp. Oh,
As if I didn’t know!
Di. Come, come, my friend,
I may have wavered, but I have thought better.
We’ll say no more of it.
Sp. Oh, I dare say:
But as you like; ’tis your own loss; once more,
Beware!
Di. (alone.) Must it be then? So quick upon my thought
To follow the fulfilment and the deed?
I counted not on this; I counted ever
To hold and turn it over in my hands
Much longer, much: I took it up indeed,
For speculation rather; to gain thought,
New data. Oh, and now to be goaded on

By menaces, entangled among tricks;
That I won't suffer. Yet it is the law;
'Tis this makes action always. But for this
We ne'er should act at all; and act we must.
Why quarrel with the fashion of a fact
Which, one way, must be, one time, why not now?
Sp. Submit, submit!
For tell me then, in earth's great laws
Have you found any saving clause,
Exemption special granted you
From doing what the rest must do?
Of common sense who made you quit,
And told you, you'd no need of it,
Nor to submit?
To move on angels' wings were sweet;
But who would therefore scorn his feet?
It cannot walk up to the sky;
It therefore will lie down and die.
Rich meats it don't obtain at call;
It therefore will not eat at all.
Poor babe, and yet a babe of wit!
But common sense, not much of it,
Or 'twould submit.
Submit, submit!

As your good father did before you,
And as the mother who first bore you,
O yes! a child of heavenly birth!
But yet it was born too on earth.
Keep your new birth for that far day
When in the grave your bones you lay,
All with your kindred and connection,
In hopes of happy resurrection.
But how meantime to live is fit,
Ask common sense; and what says it?
Submit, submit!

Scene VI.—On a Bridge.

Di. ’Tis gone, the fierce inordinate desire,
The burning thirst for action—utterly;
Gone, like a ship that passes in the night
On the high seas: gone, yet will come again:
Gone, yet expresses something that exists.
Is it a thing ordained, then? is it a clue
For my life’s conduct? is it a law for me
That opportunity shall breed distrust,
Not passing until that pass? Chance and resolve,
Like two loose comets wandering wide in space,
Crossing each other’s orbits time on time,
Meet never. Void indifference and doubt

Let through the present boon, which ne’er turns back
To await the after sure-arriving wish.
How shall I then explain it to myself,
That in blank thought my purpose lives?
The uncharged cannon mocking still the spark
When come, which ere come it had loudly claimed.
Am I to let it be so still? For truly
The need exists, I know; the wish but sleeps
(Sleeps, and anon will wake and cry for food);
And to put by these unreturning gifts,
Because the feeling is not with me now,
Seems folly more than merest babyhood’s.
But must I then do violence to myself,
And push on nature, force desire (that’s ill),
Because of knowledge? which is great, but works
By rules of large exception; to tell which
Nought is more fallible than mere caprice.
What need for action yet? I am happy now,
I feel no lack—what cause is there for haste?
Am I not happy? is not that enough?
Depart!
Sp. O yes! you thought you had escaped, no doubt,
This worldly fiend that follows you about,
This compound of convention and impiety,

This mongrel of uncleanness and propriety.
What else were bad enough? but, let me say,
I too have my grandes manières in my way;
Could speak high sentiment as well as you,
And out-blank-verse you without much ado;
Have my religion also in my kind,
For dreaming unfit, because not designed.
What! you know not that I too can be serious,
Can speak big words, and use the tone imperious;
Can speak, not honiedly, of love and beauty,
But sternly of a something much like duty.
Oh, do you look surprised? were never told,
Perhaps, that all that glitters is not gold.
The Devil oft the Holy Scripture uses,
But God can act the Devil when He chooses.
Farewell! But, verbum sapienti satis—
I do not make this revelation gratis.
Farewell: beware!
Di. Ill spirits can quote holy books I knew;
What will they not say? what not dare to do?
Sp. Beware, beware!
Di. What, loitering still? Still, O foul spirit, there?
Go hence, I tell thee, go! I will beware.
(Alone.) It must be then. I feel it in my soul;

The iron enters, sundering flesh and bone,
And sharper than the two-edged sword of God.
I come into deep waters—help, O help!
The floods run over me.
Therefore, farewell! a long and last farewell,
Ye pious sweet simplicities of life,
Good books, good friends, and holy moods, and all
That lent rough life sweet Sunday seeming rests,
Making earth heaven-like. Welcome, wicked world,
The hardening heart, the calculating brain
Narrowing its doors to thought, the lying lips,
The calm-dissembling eyes; the greedy flesh,
The world, the Devil—welcome, welcome, welcome!
Sp. (from within.) This stern necessity of things
On every side our being rings;
Our sallying eager actions fall
Vainly against that iron wall.
Where once her finger points the way,
The wise thinks only to obey;
Take life as she has ordered it,
And come what may of it, submit,
Submit, submit!
Who take implicitly her will,
For these her vassal chances still

Bring store of joys, successes, pleasures;
But whoso ponders, weighs, and measures,
She calls her torturers up to goad
With spur and scourges on the road;
He does at last with pain whate’er
He spurned at first. Of such, beware,
Beware, beware!
Di. O God, O God! The great floods of the soul
Flow over me! I come into deep waters
Where no ground is!
Sp. Don’t be the least afraid;
There’s not the slightest reason for alarm;
I only meant by a perhaps rough shake
To rouse you from a dreamy, unhealthy sleep.
Up, then—up, and be going: the large world,
The thronged life waits us.
Come, my pretty boy,
You have been making mows to the blank sky
Quite long enough for good. We’ll put you up
Into the higher form. ’Tis time you learn
The Second Reverence, for things around.
Up, then, and go amongst them; don’t be timid;
Look at them quietly a bit: by-and-by
Respect will come, and healthy appetite.

So let us go.

How now! not yet awake?

Oh, you will sleep yet, will you! Oh, you shirk,

You try and slink away! You cannot, eh?

Nay now, what folly's this? Why will you fool yourself?

Why will you walk about thus with your eyes shut?

Treating for facts the self-made hues that flash

On tight-pressed pupils, which you know are not facts.

To use the undistorted light of the sun

Is not a crime; to look straight out upon

The big plain things that stare one in the face

Does not contaminate; to see pollutes not

What one must feel if one won't see, what is,

And will be too, howe'er we blink, and must

One way or other make itself observed.

Free walking's better than being led about; and

What will the blind man do, I wonder, if

Some one should cut the string of his dog? Just think!

What could you do, if I should go away?

Oh, you have paths of your own before you, have you?

What shall it take to? literature, no doubt?

Novels, reviews? or poems! if you please!

The strong fresh gale of life will feel, no doubt,

The influx of your mouthful of soft air.

Well, make the most of that small stock of knowledge
You've condescended to receive from me;
That's your best chance. Oh, you despise that! Oh.
Prate then of passions you have known in dreams,
Of huge experience gathered by the eye;
Be large of aspiration, pure in hope,
Sweet in fond longings, but in all things vague;
Breathe out your dreamy scepticism, relieved
By snatches of old songs. People will like that, doubtless.
Or will you write about philosophy?
For a waste far-off maybe overlooking
The fruitful is close by, live in metaphysic,
With transcendental logic fill your stomach,
Schematise joy, effigiate meat and drink;
Or, let me see, a mighty work, a volume,
The Complemental of the inferior Kant,
The Critic of Pure Practice, based upon
The Antinomies of the Moral Sense: for, look you,
We cannot act without assuming x,
And at the same time y, its contradictory;
Ergo, to act. People will buy that, doubtless.
Or you'll perhaps teach youth (I do not question
Some downward turn you may find, some evasion
Of the broad highway's glaring white ascent);

Teach youth, in a small way, that is, always,
So as to have much time left you for yourself;
This you can't sacrifice, your leisure's precious.
Heartily you will not take to anything;
Whatever happen, don't I see you still,
Living no life at all? Even as now
An o'ergrown baby, sucking at the dugs
Of instinct, dry long since. Come, come, you are old enough
For spoon-meat surely.
Will you go on thus
Until death end you? if indeed it does.
For what it does, none knows. Yet as for you,
You'll hardly have the courage to die outright;
You'll somehow halve even it. Methinks I see you,
Through everlasting limbos of void time,
Twirling and twiddling ineffectively,
And indeterminately swaying for ever.
Come, come, spoon-meat at any rate.
Well, well,
I will not persecute you more, my friend.
Only do think, as I observed before,
What can you do, if I should go away?
Di. Is the hour here, then? Is the minute come—
The irreprievable instant of stern time?

O for a few, few grains in the running glass,

Or for some power to hold them! O for a few

Of all that went so wastefully before!

It must be then, e’en now.

Sp. (from within.) It must, it must.

’Tis common sense! and human wit

Can claim no higher name than it.

Submit, submit!

Necessity! and who shall dare

Bring to her feet excuse or prayer?

Beware, beware!

We must, we must.

Howe’er we turn, and pause and tremble—

Howe’er we shrink, deceive, dissemble—

Whate’er our doubting, grief, disgust,

The hand is on us, and we must,

We must, we must.

’Tis common sense! and human wit

Can find no better name than

Submit, submit!

Scene VII.—At Torcello. Dipsychus alone.

Di. I had a vision; was it in my sleep?

And if it were, what then? But sleep or wake,

I saw a great light open o’er my head;

And sleep or wake, uplifted to that light,
Out of that light proceeding heard a voice
Uttering high words, which, whether sleep or wake,
In me were fixed, and in me must abide.
When the enemy is near thee,
Call on us!
In our hands we will upbear thee,
He shall neither scathe nor scare thee,
He shall fly thee, and shall fear thee.
Call on us!
Call when all good friends have left thee,
Of all good sights and sounds bereft thee;
Call when hope and heart are sinking,
And the brain is sick with thinking,
Help, O help!
Call, and following close behind thee
There shall haste, and there shall find thee,
Help, sure help.
When the panic comes upon thee,
When necessity seems on thee,
Hope and choice have all foregone thee,
Fate and force are closing o’er thee,
And but one way stands before thee—
Call on us!

Oh, and if thou dost not call,

Be but faithful, that is all.

Go right on, and close behind thee

There shall follow still and find thee,

Help, sure help.

Scene VIII.—In the Piazza.

Di. Not for thy service, thou imperious fiend,

Not to do thy work, or the like of thine;

Not to please thee, O base and fallen spirit!

But One Most High, Most True, whom without thee

It seems I cannot.

O the misery

That one must truck and pactise with the world

To gain the ’vantage-ground to assail it from,

To set upon the Giant one must first,

O perfidy! have eat the Giant’s bread.

If I submit, it is but to gain time

And arms and stature: ’tis but to lie safe

Until the hour strike to arise and slay:

’Tis the old story of the adder’s brood

Feeding and nestling till the fangs be grown.

Were it not nobler done, then, to act fair,

To accept the service with the wages, do

Frankly the devil’s work for the devil’s pay?

Oh, but another my allegiance holds
Inalienably his. How much soe'er
I might submit, it must be to rebel.
Submit then sullenly, that's no dishonour.
Yet I could deem it better too to starve
And die untraitored. O, who sent me, though?
Sent me, and to do something—O hard master!—
To do a treachery. But indeed 'tis done;
I have already taken of the pay
And curst the payer; take I must, curse too.
Alas! the little strength that I possess
Derives, I think, of him. So still it is,
The timid child that clung unto her skirts,
A boy, will slight his mother, and, grown a man,
His father too. There's Scripture too for that!
Do we owe fathers nothing—mothers nought?
Is filial duty folly? Yet He says,
'He that loves father, mother more than me;'
Yea, and 'the man his parents shall desert,'
The Ordinance says, 'and cleave unto his wife.'
O man, behold thy wife, the hard naked world;
Adam, accept thy Eve.
So still it is,
The tree exhausts the soil; creepers kill it,

Their insects them: the lever finds its fulcrum
On what it then o’erthrows; the homely spade
In labour’s hand unscrupulously seeks
Its first momentum on the very clod
Which next will be upturned. It seems a law.
And am not I, though I but ill recall
My happier age, a kidnapped child of Heaven,
Whom these uncircumcised Philistines
Have by foul play shorn, blinded, maimed, and kept
For what more glorious than to make them sport?
Wait, then, wait, O my soul! grow, grow, ye locks,
Then perish they, and if need is, I too.
Sp. (aside.) A truly admirable proceeding!
Could there be finer special pleading
When scruples would be interceding?
There’s no occasion I should stay;
He is working out, his own queer way,
The sum I set him; and this day
Will bring it, neither less nor bigger,
Exact to my predestined figure.
Scene IX.—In the Public Garden.
Di. Twenty-one past—twenty-five coming on;
One-third of life departed, nothing done.
Out of the mammon of unrighteousness

That we make friends, the Scripture is express.

My Spirit, come, we will agree;

Content, you'll take a moiety.

Sp. A moiety, ye gods, he, he!

Di. Three-quarters then? O griping beast;

Leave me a decimal at least.

Sp. Oh, one of ten! to infect the nine

And make the devil a one be mine!

Oh, one! to jib all day, God wot,

When all the rest would go full trot!

One very little one, eh? to doubt with,

Just to pause, think, and look about with?

In course! you counted on no less—

You thought it likely I'd say yes!

Di. Be it then thus—since that it must, it seems.

Welcome, O world, henceforth; and farewell dreams!

Yet know, Mephisto, know, nor you nor I

Can in this matter either sell or buy;

For the fee simple of this trifling lot

To you or me, trust me, pertaineth not.

I can but render what is of my will,

And behind it somewhat remaineth still.

Oh, your sole chance was in the childish mind

Whose darkness dreamed that vows like this could bind;

Thinking all lost, it made all lost, and brought
In fact the ruin which had been but thought.
Thank Heaven (or you) that's past these many years,
And we have knowledge wiser than our fears.
So your poor bargain take, my man,
And make the best of it you can.
Sp. With reservations! oh, how treasonable!
When I had let you off so reasonable.
However, I don't fear; be it so!
Brutus is honourable, I know;
So mindful of the dues of others,
So thoughtful for his poor dear brothers,
So scrupulous, considerate, kind—
He wouldn't leave the devil behind
If he assured him he had claims
For his good company to hell-flames!
No matter, no matter, the bargain's made;
And I for my part will not be afraid.
With reservations! oh! ho, ho!
But time, my friend, has yet to show
Which of us two will closest fit
The proverb of the Biter Bit.
Di. Tell me thy name, now it is over.
Sp. Oh!

Why, Mephistophiles, you know—

At least you've lately called me so;

Belial it was some days ago.

But take your pick; I've got a score—

Never a royal baby more.

For a brass plate upon a door

What think you of Cosmocrator?

Di. Τοὺς κοσμοκράτορας τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου.

And that you are indeed, I do not doubt you.

Sp. Ephesians, ain't it? near the end

You dropt a word to spare your friend.

What follows, too, in application

Would be absurd exaggeration.

Di. The Power of this World! hateful unto God.

Sp. Cosmarchon's shorter, but sounds odd:

One wouldn't like, even if a true devil,

To be taken for a vulgar Jew devil.

Di. Yet in all these things we—'tis Scripture too—

Are more than conquerors, even over you.

Sp. Come, come, don't maunder any longer,

Time tests the weaker and the stronger;

And we, without procrastination,

Must set, you know, to our vocation.

O goodness; won't you find it pleasant

To own the positive and present;

To see yourself like people round,

And feel your feet upon the ground! (Exeunt.)

END OF DIPSYCHUS.

## EPILOGUE TO DIPSYCHUS.

‘I don’t very well understand what it’s all about,’ said my uncle. ‘I won’t say I didn’t drop into a doze while the young man was drivelling through his latter soliloquies. But there was a great deal that was unmeaning, vague, and involved; and what was most plain, was least decent and least moral.’

‘Dear sir,’ said I, ‘says the proverb—“Needs must when the devil drives;” and if the devil is to speak——’

‘Well,’ said my uncle, ‘why should he? Nobody asked him. Not that he didn’t say much which, if only it hadn’t been for the way he said it, and that it was he who said it, would have been sensible enough.’

‘But, sir,’ said I, ‘perhaps he wasn’t a devil after all. That’s the beauty of the poem; nobody can say. You see, dear sir, the thing which it is attempted to represent is the conflict between the tender conscience and the world. Now, the over-tender conscience will, of course, exaggerate the wickedness of the world; and the Spirit in my poem may be merely the hypothesis or subjective imagination formed——’

‘Oh, for goodness’ sake, my dear boy,’ interrupted my uncle, ‘don’t go into the theory of it. If you’re wrong in it, it makes bad worse; if you’re right, you may be a critic, but you can’t be a poet. And then you know very well I don’t understand all those new words. But as for that, I quite agree that consciences are much too tender in your generation—schoolboys’ consciences, too! As my old friend the Canon says of the Westminster students, “They’re all so pious.” It’s all Arnold’s doing; he spoilt the public schools.’

‘My dear uncle,’ said I, ‘how can so venerable a sexagenarian utter so juvenile a paradox? How often have I not heard you lament the idleness and listlessness, the boorishness and vulgar tyranny, the brutish manners alike, and minds——’

‘Ah!’ said my uncle, ‘I may have fallen in occasionally with the talk of the day; but at seventy one begins to see clearer into the bottom of one’s mind. In middle life one says so many things in the way of business. Not that I mean that the old schools were perfect, any more than we old boys that were there. But whatever else they were or did, they certainly were in harmony with the world, and they certainly did not disqualify the country’s youth for after-life and the country’s service.’

‘But, my dear sir, this bringing the schools of the country into harmony with public opinion is exactly——’

‘Don’t interrupt me with public opinion, my dear nephew; you’ll quote me a leading article next. “Young men must be young men,” as the worthy head of your college said to me touching a case of rustication. “My dear sir,” said I, “I only wish to heaven they would be; but as for my own nephews, they seem to me a sort of hobbadi-hoy cherub, too big to be innocent, and too simple for anything else. They’re full of the notion of the world being so wicked and of their taking a higher line, as they call it. I only fear they’ll never take any line at all.” What is the true purpose of education? Simply to make plain to the young understanding the laws of the life they will have to enter. For example—that lying won’t do, thieving still less; that idleness will get punished; that if they are cowards, the whole world will be against them; that if they will have their own way, they must fight for it. As for the conscience, mamma, I take it—such as mammas are now-a-days, at any rate—has probably set that agoing fast enough already. What a blessing to see her good little child come back a brave young devil-may-care!’

‘Exactly, my dear sir. As if at twelve or fourteen a roundabout boy, with his three meals a day inside him, is likely to be over-troubled with scruples.’

‘Put him through a strong course of confirmation and sacraments, backed up with sermons and private admonitions, and what is much the same as auricular confession, and really, my dear nephew, I can’t answer for it but he mayn’t turn out as great a goose as you—pardon me—were about the age of eighteen or nineteen.’

‘But to have passed through that, my dear sir! surely that can be no harm.’

‘I don’t know. Your constitutions don’t seem to recover it, quite. We did without these foolish measles well enough in my time.’

‘Westminster had its Cowper, my dear sir; and other schools had theirs also, mute and inglorious, but surely not few.’

‘Ah, ah! the beginning of troubles——’

‘You see, my dear sir, you must not refer it to Arnold, at all at all. Anything that Arnold did in this direction——’

‘Why, my dear boy, how often have I not heard from you, how he used to attack offences, not as offences—the right view—against discipline, but as sin, heinous guilt, I don’t know what beside! Why didn’t he flog them and hold his tongue? Flog them he did, but why preach?’

‘If he did err in this way, sir, which I hardly think, I ascribe it to the spirit of the time. The real cause of the evil you complain of, which to a certain extent I admit, was, I take it, the religious movement of the last century, beginning with Wesleyanism, and culminating at last in Puseyism. This over-excitation of the religious sense, resulting in this irrational, almost animal irritability of consciences, was, in many ways, as foreign to Arnold as it is proper to——’

‘Well, well, my dear nephew, if you like to make a theory of it, pray write it out for yourself nicely in full; but your poor old uncle does not like theories, and is moreover sadly sleepy.’

‘Good night, dear uncle, good night. Only let me say you six more verses.’

# DIPSYCHUS CONTINUED. A FRAGMENT.

[An interval of thirty years.]

Scene I.—In London. Dipsychus in his Study.

Dipsychus. O God! O God! and must I still go on
Doing this work—I know not, hell's or thine;
And these rewards receiving—sure not thine;
The adulation of a foolish crowd,
Half foolish and half greedy; upright judge—
Lawyer acute—the Mansfield and the Hale
In one united to bless modern Courts.
O God! O God! According to the law,
With solemn face to solemn sentence fit,
Doing the justice that is but half just;
Punishing wrong that is not truly wrong!
Administering, alas, God! not Thy law.
(Knock at the door.)
What? Is the hour already for the Court?
Come in. Now, Lord Chief Justice, to thy work.
(Enter a Servant.)
Serv. My lord, a woman begging to be seen.
Di. A woman begging to be seen? What's this?
'Tis not the duty of your post, my friend,
To give admittance on the busy days
Of a hard labourer in this great world

To all poor creatures begging to be seen.
Something unusual in it? Bid her wait
In the room below, I'll see her as I pass.
Is the horse there?
Serv. He's coming round, my lord.
Di. Say I will see her as I pass. (Exit Servant.)
I have but one way left; but that one way,
On which once entered, there is no return;
And as there's no return, no looking back,
Amidst the smoky tumult of this field
Whereon, enlisted once, in arms we stand,
Nor know, nor e'en remotely can divine
The sense, or purport, or the probable end,
One only guide to our blind work we keep,
To obey orders, and to fight it out.
Some hapless sad petitioner, no doubt,
With the true plaintiveness of real distress,
Twisting her misery to a marketable lie,
To waste my close-shorn interval of rest.
She came upon me in my weaker thoughts,
Those weaker thoughts that still indeed recur,
But come, my servants, at a word to go.
(Enter Woman.)
What is it? what have you to say to me?

Who are you?

Wom. Once you knew me well enough.

Di. Oh, you! I had been told that you were dead.

Wom. So your creatures said;

But I shall live, I think, till you die too.

Di. What do you want? Money, subsistence, bread?

Wom. I wanted bread, money, all things, ’tis true,

But wanted, above all things, to see you.

Di. This cannot be. What has been done is o’er.

You have no claim or right against me more;

I have dealt justly with you to the uttermost.

Wom. I did not come to say you were unjust—

I came to see you only.

Di. Hear me now.

Remember, it was not the marriage vow,

Nor promise e’er of chaste fidelity,

That joined us thirty years ago in a tie

Which I, I think, scarce sought. It was not I

That took your innocence; you spoiled me of mine.

And yet, as though the vow had been divine,

Was I not faithful? Were you so to me?

Had you been white in spotless purity,

Could I have clung to you more faithfully?

I left you, after wrongs I blush with shame

E’en now through all my fifty years to name.

I left you; yet I stinted still my ease,—

Curtailed my pleasures—toil still extra toil,—

To repay you for what you never gave.

Is it not true?

Wom. Go on, say all and more.

Upon this body, as the basis, lies

The ladder that has raised you to the skies.

Di. Is that so much? am I indeed so high?

Am I not rather

The slave and servant of the wretched world,

Liveried and finely dressed—yet all the same

A menial and lacquey seeking place

For hire, and for his hire’s sake doing work?

Wom. I do not know; you have wife and child I know

Domestic comfort and a noble name,

And people speak in my ears too your praise.

O man, O man! do you not know in your heart

It was for this you came to me—

It was for this I took you to my breast?

O man, man, man!

You come to us with your dalliance in the street,

You pay us with your miserable gold,

You do not know how in the——

Di. (looks at his watch). You must go now. Justice
calls me elsewhere;
Justice—might keep you here.
You may return again; stay, let me see—
Six weeks to-morrow you shall see me again;
Now you must go. Do you need money? here,
It is your due: take it, that you may live;
And see me, six weeks from to-morrow, elsewhere.
Wom. I will not go;
You must stay here and hear me, or I shall die!
It were ill for you that I should.
Di. What! shall the nation wait?
Woman, if I have wronged you, it was for good—
Good has come of it. Lo, I have done some work.
Over the blasted and the blackened spot
Of our unhappy and unhallowed deed
I have raised a mausoleum of such acts
As in this world do honour unto me,
But in the next to thee.
Wom. Hear me, I cannot go!
Di. It cannot be; the court, the nation waits.
Is not the work, too, yours?
Wom. I go, to die this night!
Di. I cannot help it. Duty lies here. Depart!

Wom. Listen; before I die, one word! In old times
You called me Pleasure—my name now is Guilt.

Scene II.—In Westminster Hall.

1st Barrister. They say the Lord Chief Justice is unwell;
Did you observe how, after that decision
Which all the world admired so, suddenly
He became pale and looked in the air and staggered,
As if some phantom floated on his eyes?
He is a strange man.

Bar. 2. He is unwell, there is no doubt of that,
But why or how is quite another question.
It is odd to find so stern and strong a man
Give way before he's sixty. Many a mind,
Apparently less vigorous than his,
Has kept its full judicial faculty,
And sat the woolsack past threescore and ten.

Bar. 3. No business to be done to-day. Have you heard
The Chief Justice is lying dangerously ill?
Apoplexy, paralysis, Heaven knows what—some seizure.

Bar. 1. Heavens! that will be a loss indeed!

Bar. 2. A loss
Which will be some one's gain, however.

Bar. 1. Not the nation's,
If this sage Chancellor give it to ——

But is he really sure to die, do you think?

Bar. 3. A very sudden and very alarming attack.

And now you know to the full as much as I,

Or, as I fancy, any lawyer here.

Bar. 2. Do you know anything of his early life?

Bar. 1. My father knew him at college: a reading man,

The quietest of the quiet, shy and timid.

And college honours past,

No one believed he ever would do anything.

Bar. 2. He was a moral sort of prig, I've heard,

Till he was twenty-five; and even then

He never entered into life as most men.

That is the reason why he fails so soon.

It takes high feeding and a well-taught conscience

To breed your mighty hero of the law.

So much the worse for him; so much the better

For all expectants now.

Bar. 3. For ——, for one.

Bar. 2. Well, there'll be several changes, as I think.

Not that I think the shock of new promotion

Will vibrate quite perceptibly down here.

There was a story that I once was told,

Some woman that they used to tease him with.

Bar. 1. He grew too stern for teasing before long;

A man with greater power of what I think

They call, in some new sense of the word, Repulsion,

I think I never saw in all my life.

Bar. 2. A most forbidding man in private life,

I've always heard. What's this new news?

Bar. 4. The Lord Chief Justice has resigned.

Bar. 1, 2, 3. Is it true?

Really? Quite certain?

Bar. 4. Publicly announced.

You're quite behind. Most probably ere this

The Times has got it in a new edition.

Scene III.—Dipsychus in his own house, alone.

Di. She will come yet, I think, although she said

She would go hence and die; I cannot tell.

Should I have made the nation's business wait,

That I might listen to an old sad tale

Uselessly iterated? Ah—ah me!

I am grown weak indeed; those old black thoughts

No more as servants at my bidding go,

But as stern tyrants look me in the face,

And mock my reason's inefficient hand

That sways to wave them hence.

Serv. You rung, my lord?

Di. Come here, my friend. The woman,

A beggar-woman, whom six weeks ago,
As you remember, you admitted to me,
You may admit again if she returns. [Exit Servant.
Will she return? or did she die? I searched
Newspaper columns through to find a trace
Of some poor corpse discovered in the Thames,
Weltering in filth or stranded on the shoals.
‘You called me Pleasure once, I now am Guilt.’
Is that her voice?—
‘Once Pleasure and now Guilt—and after this
Guilt evermore.’ I hear her voice again.
‘Once Guilt, but now’—I know not what it says;—
Some word in some strange language, that my ears
Have never heard, yet seem to long to know.
‘Once Pleasure and now Guilt, and after this’—
What does she say?—...

## POEMS ON LIFE AND DUTY.

### DUTY.

Duty—that’s to say, complying
With whate’er’s expected here;
On your unknown cousin’s dying,
Straight be ready with the tear;
Upon etiquette relying,

Unto usage nought denying,
Lend your waist to be embraced,
Blush not even, never fear;
Claims of kith and kin connection,
Claims of manners honour still,
Ready money of affection
Pay, whoever drew the bill.
With the form conforming duly,
Senseless what it meaneth truly,
Go to church—the world require you,
To balls—the world require you too,
And marry—papa and mamma desire you,
And your sisters and schoolfellows do.
Duty—'tis to take on trust
What things are good, and right, and just;
And whether indeed they be or be not,
Try not, test not, feel not, see not:
'Tis walk and dance, sit down and rise
By leading, opening ne'er your eyes;
Stunt sturdy limbs that Nature gave,
And be drawn in a Bath chair along to the grave.
'Tis the stern and prompt suppressing
As an obvious deadly sin,
All the questing and the guessing

Of the soul’s own soul within:

’Tis the coward acquiescence

In a destiny’s behest,

To a shade by terror made,

Sacrificing, aye, the essence

Of all that’s truest, noblest, best:

’Tis the blind non-recognition

Or of goodness, truth, or beauty,

Save by precept and submission;

Moral blank, and moral void,

Life at very birth destroyed.

Atrophy, exinanition!

Duty!

Yea, by duty’s prime condition

Pure nonentity of duty!

**LIFE IS STRUGGLE.**

To wear out heart, and nerves, and brain,

And give oneself a world of pain;

Be eager, angry, fierce, and hot,

Imperious, supple—God knows what,

For what’s all one to have or not;

O false, unwise, absurd, and vain!

For ’tis not joy, it is not gain,

It is not in itself a bliss,

Only it is precisely this
That keeps us all alive.
To say we truly feel the pain,
And quite are sinking with the strain;—
Entirely, simply, undeceived,
Believe, and say we ne'er believed
The object, e'en were it achieved,
A thing we e'er had cared to keep;
With heart and soul to hold it cheap,
And then to go and try it again;
O false, unwise, absurd, and vain!
O, 'tis not joy, and 'tis not bliss,
Only it is precisely this
That keeps us still alive.

## IN THE GREAT METROPOLIS.

Each for himself is still the rule;
We learn it when we go to school—
The devil take the hindmost, O!
And when the schoolboys grow to men,
In life they learn it o'er again—
The devil take the hindmost, O!
For in the church, and at the bar,
On 'Change, at court, where'er they are,
The devil takes the hindmost, O!

Husband for husband, wife for wife,
Are careful that in married life
The devil takes the hindmost, O!
From youth to age, whate’er the game,
The unvarying practice is the same—
The devil takes the hindmost, O!
And after death, we do not know,
But scarce can doubt, where’er we go,
The devil takes the hindmost, O!
Ti rol de rol, ti rol de ro,
The devil take the hindmost, O!

## THE LATEST DECALOGUE.

Thou shalt have one God only; who
Would be at the expense of two?
No graven images may be
Worshipped, except the currency:
Swear not at all; for, for thy curse
Thine enemy is none the worse:
At church on Sunday to attend
Will serve to keep the world thy friend:
Honour thy parents; that is, all
From whom advancement may befall;
Thou shalt not kill; but need’st not strive
Officiously to keep alive:

Do not adultery commit;
Advantage rarely comes of it:
Thou shalt not steal; an empty feat,
When it's so lucrative to cheat:
Bear not false witness; let the lie
Have time on its own wings to fly:
Thou shalt not covet, but tradition
Approves all forms of competition.

## THE QUESTIONING SPIRIT.

The human spirits saw I on a day,
Sitting and looking each a different way;
And hardly tasking, subtly questioning,
Another spirit went around the ring
To each and each: and as he ceased his say,
Each after each, I heard them singly sing,
Some querulously high, some softly, sadly low,
We know not—what avails to know?
We know not—wherefore need we know?
This answer gave they still unto his suing,
We know not, let us do as we are doing.
Dost thou not know that these things only seem?—
I know not, let me dream my dream.
Are dust and ashes fit to make a treasure?—
I know not, let me take my pleasure.

What shall avail the knowledge thou hast sought?—
I know not, let me think my thought.
What is the end of strife?—
I know not, let me live my life.
How many days or e'er thou mean'st to move?—
I know not, let me love my love.
Were not things old once new?—
I know not, let me do as others do.
And when the rest were over past,
I know not, I will do my duty, said the last.
Thy duty do? rejoined the voice,
Ah, do it, do it, and rejoice;
But shalt thou then, when all is done,
Enjoy a love, embrace a beauty
Like these, that may be seen and won
In life, whose course will then be run;
Or wilt thou be where there is none?
I know not, I will do my duty.
And taking up the word around, above, below,
Some querulously high, some softly, sadly low,
We know not, sang they all, nor ever need we know;
We know not, sang they, what avails to know?
Whereat the questioning spirit, some short space,
Though unabashed, stood quiet in his place.

But as the echoing chorus died away
And to their dreams the rest returned apace,
By the one spirit I saw him kneeling low,
And in a silvery whisper heard him say:
Truly, thou know’st not, and thou need’st not know;
Hope only, hope thou, and believe alway;
I also know not, and I need not know,
Only with questionings pass I to and fro,
Perplexing these that sleep, and in their folly
Imbreeding doubt and sceptic melancholy;
Till that, their dreams deserting, they with me
Come all to this true ignorance and thee.
1847

**BETHESDA. A SEQUEL.**

I saw again the spirits on a day,
Where on the earth in mournful case they lay;
Five porches were there, and a pool, and round,
Huddling in blankets, strewn upon the ground,
Tied-up and bandaged, weary, sore and spent,
The maimed and halt, diseased and impotent.
For a great angel came, ’twas said, and stirred
The pool at certain seasons, and the word
Was, with this people of the sick, that they
Who in the waters here their limbs should lay

Before the motion on the surface ceased
Should of their torment straightway be released.
So with shrunk bodies and with heads down-dropt,
Stretched on the steps, and at the pillars propt,
Watching by day and listening through the night,
They filled the place, a miserable sight.
And I beheld that on the stony floor
He too, that spoke of duty once before,
No otherwise than others here to-day,
Foredone and sick and sadly muttering lay.
‘I know not, I will do—what is it I would say?
What was that word which once sufficed alone for all,
Which now I seek in vain, and never can recall?’
And then, as weary of in vain renewing
His question, thus his mournful thought pursuing,
‘I know not, I must do as other men are doing.’
But what the waters of that pool might be,
Of Lethe were they, or Philosophy;
And whether he, long waiting, did attain
Deliverance from the burden of his pain
There with the rest; or whether, yet before,
Some more diviner stranger passed the door
With his small company into that sad place,
And breathing hope into the sick man’s face,

Bade him take up his bed, and rise and go,
What the end were, and whether it were so,
Further than this I saw not, neither know.
1849

## HOPE EVERMORE AND BELIEVE!

Hope evermore and believe, O man, for e'en as thy thought
So are the things that thou see'st; e'en as thy hope and belief.
Cowardly art thou and timid? they rise to provoke thee against them;
Hast thou courage? enough, see them exulting to yield.
Yea, the rough rock, the dull earth, the wild sea's furying waters
(Violent say'st thou and hard, mighty thou think'st to destroy),
All with ineffable longing are waiting their Invader,
All, with one varying voice, call to him, Come and subdue;
Still for their Conqueror call, and, but for the joy of being conquered
(Rapture they will not forego), dare to resist and rebel;
Still, when resisting and raging, in soft undervoice say unto him,
Fear not, retire not, O man; hope evermore and believe.
Go from the east to the west, as the sun and the stars direct thee,
Go with the girdle of man, go and encompass the earth.
Not for the gain of the gold; for the getting, the hoarding, the having,
But for the joy of the deed; but for the Duty to do.
Go with the spiritual life, the higher volition and action,
With the great girdle of God, go and encompass the earth.
Go; say not in thy heart, And what then were it accomplished,

Were the wild impulse allayed, what were the use or the good!
Go, when the instinct is stilled, and when the deed is accomplished,
What thou hast done and shalt do, shall be declared to thee then.
Go with the sun and the stars, and yet evermore in thy spirit
Say to thyself: It is good: yet is there better than it.
This that I see is not all, and this that I do is but little;
Nevertheless it is good, though there is better than it.

## BLESSED ARE THEY THAT HAVE NOT SEEN!

O happy they whose hearts receive
The implanted word with faith; believe
Because their fathers did before,
Because they learnt, and ask no more.
High triumphs of convictions wrought,
And won by individual thought;
The joy, delusive oft, but keen,
Of having with our own eyes seen,
What if they have not felt nor known
An amplitude instead they own,
By no self-binding ordinance prest
To toil in labour they detest:
By no deceiving reasoning tied
Or this or that way to decide.
O happy they! above their head
The glory of the unseen is spread;

Their happy heart is free to range
Thro’ largest tracts of pleasant change;
Their intellects encradled lie
In boundless possibility.
For impulses of varying kinds
The Ancient Home a lodging finds:
Each appetite our nature breeds,
It meets with viands for its needs.
Oh happy they! nor need they fear
The wordy strife that rages near:
All reason wastes by day, and more,
Will instinct in a night restore.
O happy, so their state but give
A clue by which a man can live;
O blest, unless ’tis proved by fact
A dream impossible to act.

## COLD COMFORT.

Say, will it, when our hairs are grey,
And wintry suns half light the day,
Which cheering hope and strengthening trust
Have left, departed, turned to dust,—
Say, will it soothe lone years to extract
From fitful shows with sense exact
Their sad residuum, small, of fact?

Will trembling nerves their solace find
In plain conclusions of the mind?
Or errant fancies fond, that still
To fretful motions prompt the will,
Repose upon effect and cause,
And action of unvarying laws,
And human life’s familiar doom,
And on the all-concluding tomb?
Or were it to our kind and race,
And our instructive selves, disgrace
To wander then once more in you,
Green fields, beneath the pleasant blue;
To dream as we were used to dream,
And let things be whate’er they seem?
O feeble shapes of beggars grey
That, tottering on the public way,
Die out in doting, dim decay,
Is it to you when all is past
Our would-be wisdom turns at last?

**SEHNSUCHT.**

Whence are ye, vague desires,
Which carry men along,
However proud and strong;
Which, having ruled to-day,

To-morrow pass away?

Whence are ye, vague desires?

Whence are ye?

Which women, yielding to,

Find still so good and true;

So true, so good to-day,

To-morrow gone away,

Whence are ye, vague desires?

Whence are ye?

From seats of bliss above,

Where angels sing of love;

From subtle airs around,

Or from the vulgar ground,

Whence are ye, vague desires?

Whence are ye?

A message from the blest,

Or bodily unrest;

A call to heavenly good,

A fever in the blood:

What are ye, vague desires?

What are ye?

Which men who know you best

Are proof against the least,

And rushing on to-day,

To-morrow cast away.

What are ye, vague desires?

What are ye?

Which women, ever new,

Still warned, surrender to;

Adored with you to-day,

Then cast with you away,

What are ye, vague desires?

What are ye?

Which unto boyhood’s heart

The force of man impart,

And pass, and leave it cold,

And prematurely old,

What are ye, vague desires?

What are ye?

Which, tremblingly confest,

Pour in the young girl’s breast

Joy, joy—the like is none,

And leave her then undone—

What are ye, vague desires?

What are ye?

Ah yet! though man be marred,

Ignoble made, and hard;

Though broken women lie

In anguish down to die;
Ah yet! ye vague desires,
Ah yet!
By Him who gave you birth,
And blended you with earth,
Was some good end designed
For man and womankind;
Ah yet! ye vague desires,
Ah yet!
The petals of to-day,
To-morrow fallen away,
Shall something leave instead,
To live when they are dead;
When you, ye vague desires,
Have vanished;
A something to survive,
Of you though it derive
Apparent earthly birth,
But of far other worth
Than you, ye vague desires,
Than you.

## HIGH AND LOW.

The grasses green of sweet content
That spring, no matter high or low,

Where’er a living thing can grow,
On chilly hills and rocky rent,
And by the lowly streamlet’s side—
Oh! why did e’er I turn from these?—
The lordly, tall, umbrageous trees,
That stand in high aspiring pride,
With massive bulk on high sustain
A world of boughs with leaf and fruits,
And drive their wide-extending roots
Deep down into the subject plain.
Oh, what with these had I to do?—
That germs of things above their kind
May live, pent up and close confined
In humbler forms, it may be true;
Yet great is that which gives our lot;
High laws and powers our will transcend
And not for this, till time do end,
Shall any be what he is not.
Each in its place, as each was sent,
Just nature ranges side by side;
Alike the oak tree’s lofty pride
And grasses green of sweet content.

## ALL IS WELL.

Whate’er you dream with doubt possest,

Keep, keep it snug within your breast,
And lay you down and take your rest;
Forget in sleep the doubt and pain,
And when you wake, to work again.
The wind it blows, the vessel goes,
And where and whither, no one knows.
’Twill all be well: no need of care;
Though how it will, and when, and where,
We cannot see, and can’t declare.
In spite of dreams, in spite of thought,
’Tis not in vain, and not for nought,
The wind it blows, the ship it goes,
Though where and whither, no one knows.

**πάντα ῥεῖ· οὐδὲν μένει.**

Upon the water, in the boat,
I sit and sketch as down I float:
The stream is wide, the view is fair,
I sketch it looking backward there.
The stream is strong, and as I sit
And view the picture that we quit,
It flows and flows, and bears the boat,
And I sit sketching as we float.
Each pointed height, each wavy line,
To new and other forms combine;

Proportions vary, colours fade,
And all the landscape is remade.
Depicted neither far nor near,
And larger there and smaller here,
And varying down from old to new,
E’en I can hardly think it true.
Yet still I look, and still I sit,
Adjusting, shaping, altering it;
And still the current bears the boat
And me, still sketching as I float.
Still as I sit, with something new
The foreground intercepts my view;
Even the distant mountain range
From the first moment suffers change.

## THE STREAM OF LIFE.

O stream descending to the sea,
Thy mossy banks between,
The flow’rets blow, the grasses grow,
The leafy trees are green.
In garden plots the children play,
The fields the labourers till,
And houses stand on either hand,
And thou descendest still.
O life descending into death,

Our waking eyes behold,
Parent and friend thy lapse attend,
Companions young and old.
Strong purposes our mind possess,
Our hearts affections fill,
We toil and earn, we seek and learn,
And thou descendest still.
O end to which our currents tend,
Inevitable sea,
To which we flow, what do we know,
What shall we guess of thee?
A roar we hear upon thy shore,
As we our course fulfil;
Scarce we divine a sun will shine
And be above us still.

## IN A LONDON SQUARE.

Put forth thy leaf, thou lofty plane,
East wind and frost are safely gone;
With zephyr mild and balmy rain
The summer comes serenely on;
Earth, air, and sun and skies combine
To promise all that’s kind and fair:—
But thou, O human heart of mine,
Be still, contain thyself, and bear.

December days were brief and chill,
The winds of March were wild and drear,
And, nearing and receding still,
Spring never would, we thought, be here.
The leaves that burst, the suns that shine,
Had, not the less, their certain date:—
And thou, O human heart of mine,
Be still, refrain thyself, and wait.

## THE BOTHIE OF TOBER-NA-VUOLICH: A LONG-VACATION PASTORAL.

Nunc formosissimus annus
Ite meæ felix quondam pecus, ite camenæ.

### THE BOTHIE OF TOBER-NA-VUOLICH.

I

Socii cratera coronant.

It was the afternoon; and the sports were now at the ending.
Long had the stone been put, tree cast, and thrown the hammer;
Up the perpendicular hill, Sir Hector so called it,
Eight stout gillies had run, with speed and agility wondrous;
Run too the course on the level had been; the leaping was over:
Last in the show of dress, a novelty recently added,
Noble ladies their prizes adjudged for costume that was perfect,

Turning the clansmen about, as they stood with upraised elbows;
Bowing their eye-glassed brows, and fingering kilt and sporran.
It was four of the clock, and the sports were come to the ending,
Therefore the Oxford party went off to adorn for the dinner.
Be it recorded in song who was first, who last, in dressing.
Hope was first, black-tied, white-waistcoated, simple, His Honour;
For the postman made out he was heir to the earldom of Ilay
(Being the younger son of the younger brother, the Colonel),
Treated him therefore with special respect; doffed bonnet, and ever
Called him His Honour: His Honour he therefore was at the cottage;
Always His Honour at least, sometimes the Viscount of Ilay.
Hope was first, His Honour, and next to His Honour the Tutor.
Still more plain the Tutor, the grave man, nicknamed Adam,
White-tied, clerical, silent, with antique square-cut waistcoat
Formal, unchanged, of black cloth, but with sense and feeling beneath it;
Skilful in Ethics and Logic, in Pindar and Poets unrivalled;
Shady in Latin, said Lindsay, but topping in Plays and Aldrich.
Somewhat more splendid in dress, in a waistcoat work of a lady,
Lindsay succeeded; the lively, the cheery, cigar-loving Lindsay,
Lindsay the ready of speech, the Piper, the Dialectician,
This was his title from Adam because of the words he invented,
Who in three weeks had created a dialect new for the party;
This was his title from Adam, but mostly they called him the Piper.
Lindsay succeeded, the lively, the cheery, cigar-loving Lindsay.

Hewson and Hobbes were down at the matutine bathing; of course too
Arthur, the bather of bathers, par excellence, Audley by surname,
Arthur they called him for love and for euphony; they had been bathing,
Where in the morning was custom, where over a ledge of granite
Into a granite basin the amber torrent descended,
Only a step from the cottage, the road and larches between them.
Hewson and Hobbes followed quick upon Adam; on them followed Arthur.
Airlie descended the last, effulgent as god of Olympus;
Blue, perceptibly blue, was the coat that had white silk facings,
Waistcoat blue, coral-buttoned, the white tie finely adjusted,
Coral moreover the studs on a shirt as of crochet of women:
When the fourwheel for ten minutes already had stood at the gateway,
He, like a god, came leaving his ample Olympian chamber.
And in the fourwheel they drove to the place of the clansmen's meeting.
So in the fourwheel they came; and Donald the innkeeper showed them
Up to the barn where the dinner should be. Four tables were in it;
Two at the top and the bottom, a little upraised from the level,
These for Chairman and Croupier, and gentry fit to be with them,
Two lengthways in the midst for keeper and gillie and peasant.
Here were clansmen many in kilt and bonnet assembled,
Keepers a dozen at least; the Marquis's targeted gillies;
Pipers five or six, among them the young one, the drunkard;
Many with silver brooches, and some with those brilliant crystals
Found amid granite-dust on the frosty scalp of the Cairn-Gorm;

But with snuff-boxes all, and all of them using the boxes.
Here too were Catholic Priest, and Established Minister standing
Catholic Priest; for many still clung to the Ancient Worship,
And Sir Hector's father himself had built them a chapel;
So stood Priest and Minister, near to each other, but silent,
One to say grace before, the other after the dinner.
Hither anon too came the shrewd, ever-ciphering Factor,
Hither anon the Attaché, the Guardsman mute and stately,
Hither from lodge and bothie in all the adjoining shootings
Members of Parliament many, forgetful of votes and bluebooks,
Here, amid heathery hills, upon beast and bird of the forest
Venting the murderous spleen of the endless Railway Committee.
Hither the Marquis of Ayr, and Dalgarnish Earl and Croupier,
And at their side, amid murmurs of welcome, long looked-for, himself too
Eager, the grey, but boy-hearted Sir Hector, the Chief and the Chairman.
Then was the dinner served, and the Minister prayed for a blessing,
And to the viands before them with knife and with fork they beset them:
Venison, the red and the roe, with mutton; and grouse succeeding;
Such was the feast, with whisky of course, and at top and bottom
Small decanters of sherry, not overchoice, for the gentry.
So to the viands before them with laughter and chat they beset them.
And, when on flesh and on fowl had appetite duly been sated,
Up rose the Catholic Priest and returned God thanks for the dinner.
Then on all tables were set black bottles of well-mixed toddy,

And, with the bottles and glasses before them, they sat, digesting,
Talking, enjoying, but chiefly awaiting the toasts and speeches.
Spare me, O great Recollection! for words to the task were unequal,
Spare me, O mistress of Song! nor bid me remember minutely
All that was said and done o'er the well-mixed tempting toddy;
How were healths proposed and drunk 'with all the honours,'
Glasses and bonnets waving, and three-times-three thrice over,
Queen, and Prince, and Army, and Landlords all, and Keepers;
Bid me not, grammar defying, repeat from grammar-defiers
Long constructions strange and plusquam-Thucydidean;
Tell how, as sudden torrent in time of speat[7] in the mountain
Hurries six ways at once, and takes at last to the roughest,
Or as the practised rider at Astley's or Franconi's
Skilfully, boldly bestrides many steeds at once in the gallop,
Crossing from this to that, with one leg here, one yonder,
So, less skilful, but equally bold, and wild as the torrent,
All through sentences six at a time, unsuspecting of syntax,
Hurried the lively good-will and garrulous tale of Sir Hector.
Left to oblivion be it, the memory, faithful as ever,
How the Marquis of Ayr, with wonderful gesticulation,
Floundering on through game and mess-room recollections,
Gossip of neighbouring forest, praise of targeted gillies,
Anticipation of royal visit, skits at pedestrians,
Swore he would never abandon his country, nor give up deer-stalking;

How, too, more brief, and plainer, in spite of the Gaelic accent,
Highland peasants gave courteous answer to flattering nobles.
Two orations alone the memorial song will render;
For at the banquet's close spake thus the lively Sir Hector,
Somewhat husky with praises exuberant, often repeated,
Pleasant to him and to them, of the gallant Highland soldiers
Whom he erst led in the fight;—something husky, but ready, though weary,
Up to them rose and spoke the grey but gladsome chieftain:—
Fill up your glasses, my friends, once more,—With all the honours!
There was a toast I forgot, which our gallant Highland homes have
Always welcomed the stranger, delighted, I may say, to see such
Fine young men at my table—My friends! are you ready? the Strangers.
Gentlemen, here are your healths,—and I wish you—With all the honours!
So he said, and the cheers ensued, and all the honours,
All our Collegians were bowed to, the Attaché detecting His Honour,
Guardsman moving to Arthur, and Marquis sidling to Airlie,
And the small Piper below getting up and nodding to Lindsay.
But, while the healths were being drunk, was much tribulation and trouble,
Nodding and beckoning across, observed of Attaché and Guardsman:
Adam wouldn't speak,—indeed it was certain he couldn't;
Hewson could, and would if they wished; Philip Hewson a poet,
Hewson a radical hot, hating lords and scorning ladies,
Silent mostly, but often reviling in fire and fury
Feudal tenures, mercantile lords, competition and bishops,

Liveries, armorial bearings, amongst other matters the Game-laws:
He could speak, and was asked to by Adam; but Lindsay aloud cried,
(Whisky was hot in his brain,) Confound it, no, not Hewson,
Ain’t he cock-sure to bring in his eternal political humbug?
However, so it must be, and after due pause of silence,
Waving his hand to Lindsay, and smiling oddly to Adam,
Up to them rose and spoke the poet and radical Hewson:—
I am, I think, perhaps the most perfect stranger present.
I have not, as have some of my friends, in my veins some tincture,
Some few ounces of Scottish blood; no, nothing like it.
I am therefore perhaps the fittest to answer and thank you.
So I thank you, sir, for myself and for my companions,
Heartily thank you all for this unexpected greeting,
All the more welcome, as showing you do not account us intruders,
Are not unwilling to see the north and the south forgather.
And, surely, seldom have Scotch and English more thoroughly mingled;
Scarcely with warmer hearts, and clearer feeling of manhood,
Even in tourney, and foray, and fray, and regular battle.
Where the life and the strength came out in the tug and tussle,
Scarcely, where man met man, and soul encountered with soul, as
Close as do the bodies and twining limbs of the wrestlers,
When for a final bout are a day’s two champions mated,—
In the grand old times of bows, and bills, and claymores,
At the old Flodden-field—or Bannockburn—or Culloden.

—(And he paused a moment, for breath, and because of some cheering,)
We are the better friends, I fancy, for that old fighting,
Better friends, inasmuch as we know each other the better,
We can now shake hands without pretending or shuffling.
On this passage followed a great tornado of cheering,
Tables were rapped, feet stamped, a glass or two got broken:
He, ere the cheers died wholly away, and while still there was stamping,
Added, in altered voice, with a smile, his doubtful conclusion.
I have, however, less claim than others perhaps to this honour,
For, let me say, I am neither game-keeper, nor game-preserver.
So he said, and sat down, but his satire had not been taken.
Only the men, who were all on their legs as concerned in the thanking,
Were a trifle confused, but mostly sat down without laughing;
Lindsay alone, close-facing the chair, shook his fist at the speaker.
Only a Liberal member, away at the end of the table,
Started, remembering sadly the cry of a coming election,
Only the Attaché glanced at the Guardsman, who twirled his moustachio,
Only the Marquis faced round, but, not quite clear of the meaning,
Joined with the joyous Sir Hector, who lustily beat on the table.
And soon after the chairman arose, and the feast was over:
Now should the barn be cleared and forthwith adorned for the dancing,
And, to make way for this purpose, the Tutor and pupils retiring
Were by the chieftain addressed and invited to come to the castle.
But ere the door-way they quitted, a thin man clad as the Saxon,

Trouser and cap and jacket of homespun blue, hand-woven,
Singled out, and said with determined accent, to Hewson,
Touching his arm: Young man, if ye pass through the Braes o' Lochaber,
See by the loch-side ye come to the Bothie of Tober-na-vuolich.

II

Et certamen erat, Corydon cum Thyrside, magnum.
Morn, in yellow and white, came broadening out from the mountains,
Long ere music and reel were hushed in the barn of the dancers.
Duly in matutine bathed, before eight some two of the party,
Where in the morning was custom, where over a ledge of granite
Into a granite basin the amber torrent descended.
There two plunges each took Philip and Arthur together,
Duly in matutine bathed, and read, and waited for breakfast:
Breakfast commencing at nine, lingered lazily on to noon-day.
Tea and coffee were there; a jug of water for Hewson;
Tea and coffee; and four cold grouse upon the sideboard;
Gaily they talked, as they sat, some late and lazy at breakfast,
Some professing a book, some smoking outside at the window.
By an aurora soft-pouring a still sheeny tide to the zenith,
Hewson and Arthur, with Adam, had walked and got home by eleven;
Hope and the others had stayed till the round sun lighted them bedward.
They of the lovely aurora, but these of the lovelier women
Spoke—of noble ladies and rustic girls, their partners.
Turned to them Hewson, the Chartist, the poet, the eloquent speaker.

Sick of the very names of your Lady Augustas and Floras
Am I, as ever I was of the dreary botanical titles
Of the exotic plants, their antitypes in the hot-house:
Roses, violets, lilies for me! the out-of-door beauties;
Meadow and woodland sweets, forget-me-nots and hearts-ease!
Pausing awhile, he proceeded anon, for none made answer.
Oh, if our high-born girls knew only the grace, the attraction.
Labour, and labour alone, can add to the beauty of women,
Truly the milliner's trade would quickly, I think, be at discount,
All the waste and loss in silk and satin be saved us,
Saved for purposes truly and widely productive——
That's right,
Take off your coat to it, Philip, cried Lindsay, outside in the garden,
Take off your coat to it, Philip.
Well, then, said Hewson, resuming;
Laugh if you please at my novel economy; listen to this, though;
As for myself, and apart from economy wholly, believe me,
Never I properly felt the relation between men and women,
Though to the dancing-master I went perforce, for a quarter,
Where, in dismal quadrille, were good-looking girls in abundance,
Though, too, school-girl cousins were mine—a bevy of beauties—
Never (of course you will laugh, but of course all the same I shall say it),
Never, believe me, I knew of the feelings between men and women,
Till in some village fields in holidays now getting stupid,

One day sauntering ‘long and listless,’ as Tennyson has it,
Long and listless strolling, ungainly in hobbadiboyhood,
Chanced it my eye fell aside on a capless, bonnetless maiden,
Bending with three-pronged fork in a garden uprooting potatoes.
Was it the air? who can say? or herself, or the charm of the labour?
But a new thing was in me; and longing delicious possessed me,
Longing to take her and lift her, and put her away from her slaving.
Was it embracing or aiding was most in my mind? hard question!
But a new thing was in me; I, too, was a youth among maidens:
Was it the air I who can say! but in part ’twas the charm of the labour.
Still, though a new thing was in me, the poets revealed themselves to me,
And in my dreams by Miranda, her Ferdinand, often I wandered,
Though all the fuss about girls, the giggling and toying and coying,
Were not so strange as before, so incomprehensible purely;
Still, as before (and as now), balls, dances, and evening parties,
Shooting with bows, going shopping together, and hearing them singing,
Dangling beside them, and turning the leaves on the dreary piano,
Offering unneeded arms, performing dull farces of escort,
Seemed like a sort of unnatural up-in-the-air balloon-work
(Or what to me is as hateful, a riding about in a carriage),
Utter removal from work, mother earth, and the objects of living.
Hungry and fainting for food, you ask me to join you in snapping—
What but a pink-paper comfit, with motto romantic inside it?
Wishing to stock me a garden, I’m sent to a table of nosegays;

Better a crust of black bread than a mountain of paper confections,
Better a daisy in earth than a dahlia cut and gathered,
Better a cowslip with root than a prize carnation without it.
That I allow, said Adam.
But he, with the bit in his teeth, scarce
Breathed a brief moment, and hurried exultingly on with his rider,
Far over hillock, and runnel, and bramble, away in the champaign,
Snorting defiance and force, the white foam flecking his flanks, the
Rein hanging loose to his neck, and head projecting before him.
Oh, if they knew and considered, unhappy ones! oh, could they see, could
But for a moment discern, how the blood of true gallantry kindles,
How the old knightly religion, the chivalry semi-quixotic
Stirs in the veins of a man at seeing some delicate woman
Serving him, toiling—for him, and the world; some tenderest girl, now
Over-weighted, expectant, of him, is it? who shall, if only
Duly her burden be lightened, not wholly removed from her, mind you
Lightened if but by the love, the devotion man only can offer,
Grand on her pedestal rise as urn-bearing statue of Hellas;—
Oh, could they feel at such moments how man’s heart, as into Eden
Carried anew, seems to see, like the gardener of earth uncorrupted,
Eve from the hand of her Maker advancing, an help meet for him,
Eve from his own flesh taken, a spirit restored to his spirit,
Spirit but not spirit only, himself whatever himself is,
Unto the mystery’s end sole helpmate meet to be with him;—

Oh, if they saw it and knew it; we soon should see them abandon
Boudoir, toilette, carriage, drawing-room, and ball-room,
Satin for worsted exchange, gros-de-naples for plain linsey-woolsey,
Sandals of silk for clogs, for health lackadaisical fancies!
So, feel women, not dolls; so feel the sap of existence
Circulate up through their roots from the far-away centre of all things.
Circulate up from the depths to the bud on the twig that is topmost!
Yes, we should see them delighted, delighted ourselves in the seeing,
Bending with blue cotton gown skirted up over striped linsey-woolsey,
Milking the kine in the field, like Rachel, watering cattle,
Rachel, when at the well the predestined beheld and kissed her,
Or, with pail upon head, like Dora beloved of Alexis,
Comely, with well-poised pail over neck arching soft to the shoulders,
Comely in gracefullest act, one arm uplifted to stay it,
Home from the river or pump moving stately and calm to the laundry;
Ay, doing household work, as many sweet girls I have looked at,
Needful household work, which some one, after all, must do,
Needful, graceful therefore, as washing, cooking, and scouring,
Or, if you please, with the fork in the garden uprooting potatoes.—
Or,—high-kilted perhaps, cried Lindsay, at last successful,
Lindsay this long time swelling with scorn and pent-up fury,
Or high-kilted perhaps, as once at Dundee I saw them,
Petticoats up to the knees, or even, it might be, above them,
Matching their lily-white legs with the clothes that they trod in the wash-tub!

Laughter ensued at this; and seeing the Tutor embarrassed,
It was from them, I suppose, said Arthur, smiling sedately,
Lindsay learnt the tune we all have learnt from Lindsay,
For oh, he was a roguey, the Piper o' Dundee.
Laughter ensued again; and the Tutor, recovering slowly,
Said, Are not these perhaps as doubtful as other attractions?
There is a truth in your view, but I think extremely distorted;
Still there is a truth, I own, I understand you entirely.
While the Tutor was gathering his purposes, Arthur continued,
Is not all this the same that one hears at common-room breakfasts,
Or perhaps Trinity wines, about Gothic buildings and Beauty?
And with a start from the sofa came Hobbes; with a cry from the sofa,
Where he was laid, the great Hobbes, contemplative, corpulent, witty,
Author forgotten and silent of currentest phrases and fancies,
Mute and exuberant by turns, a fountain at intervals playing,
Mute and abstracted, or strong and abundant as rain in the tropics;
Studious; careless of dress; inobservant; by smooth persuasions
Lately decoyed into kilt on example of Hope and the Piper,
Hope an Antinoüs mere, Hyperion of calves the Piper.
Beautiful! cried he up-leaping, analogy perfect to madness!
O inexhaustible source of thought, shall I call it, or fancy!
Wonderful spring, at whose touch doors fly, what a vista disclosing!
Exquisite germ; Ah no, crude fingers shall not soil thee;
Rest, lovely pearl, in my brain, and slowly mature in the oyster.

While at the exquisite pearl they were laughing and corpulent oyster,
Ah, could they only be taught, he resumed, by a Pugin of women,
How even churning and washing, the dairy, the scullery duties,
Wait but a touch to redeem and convert them to charms and attractions,
Scrubbing requires for true grace but frank and artistical handling,
And the removal of slops to be ornamentally treated.
Philip who speaks like a book, (retiring and pausing he added,)
Philip, here, who speaks—like a folio say'st thou, Piper?
Philip shall write us a book, a Treatise upon The Laws of
Architectural Beauty in Application to Women;
Illustrations, of course, and a Parker's Glossary pendent.
Where shall in specimen seen be the sculliony stumpy-columnar
(Which to a reverent taste is perhaps the most moving of any),
Rising to grace of true woman in English the Early and Later,
Charming us still in fulfilling the Richer and Loftier stages,
Lost, ere we end, in the Lady-Debased and the Lady-Flamboyant:
Whence why in satire and spite too merciless onward pursue her
Hither to hideous close, Modern-Florid, modern-fine-lady?
No, I will leave it to you, my Philip, my Pugin of women.
Leave it to Arthur, said Adam, to think of, and not to play with.
You are young, you know, he said, resuming, to Philip,
You are young, he proceeded, with something of fervour to Hewson.
You are a boy; when you grow to a man you'll find things alter.
You will then seek only the good, will scorn the attractive,

Scorn all mere cosmetics, as now of rank and fashion,
Delicate hands, and wealth, so then of poverty also,
Poverty truly attractive, more truly, I bear you witness.
Good, wherever it's found, you will choose, be it humble or stately,
Happy if only you find, and finding do not lose it.
Yes, we must seek what is good, it always and it only;
Not indeed absolute good, good for us, as is said in the Ethics,
That which is good for ourselves, our proper selves, our best selves.
Ah, you have much to learn, we can't know all things at twenty.
Partly you rest on truth, old truth, the duty of Duty,
Partly on error, you long for equality.
Ay, cried the Piper,
That's what it is, that confounded égalité, French manufacture,
He is the same as the Chartist who spoke at a meeting in Ireland,
What, and is not one man, fellow-men, as good as another?
Faith, replied Pat, and a deal better too!
So rattled the Piper:
But undisturbed in his tenor, the Tutor.
Partly in error
Seeking equality, is not one woman as good as another?
I with the Irishman answer, Yes, better too; the poorer
Better full oft than richer, than loftier better the lower,
Irrespective of wealth and of poverty, pain and enjoyment,
Women all have their duties, the one as well as the other;

Are all duties alike? Do all alike fulfil them?
However noble the dream of equality, mark you, Philip,
Nowhere equality reigns in all the world of creation,
Star is not equal to star, nor blossom the same as blossom;
Herb is not equal to herb, any more than planet to planet.
There is a glory of daisies, a glory again of carnations;
Were the carnation wise, in gay parterre by greenhouse,
Should it decline to accept the nurture the gardener gives it,
Should it refuse to expand to sun and genial summer,
Simply because the field-daisy that grows in the grass-plat beside it,
Cannot, for some cause or other, develop and be a carnation?
Would not the daisy itself petition its scrupulous neighbour?
Up, grow, bloom, and forget me; be beautiful even to proudness,
E'en for the sake of myself and other poor daisies like me.
Education and manners, accomplishments and refinements,
Waltz, peradventure, and polka, the knowledge of music and drawing
All these things are Nature's, to Nature dear and precious,
We have all something to do, man, woman alike, I own it;
We all have something to do, and in my judgment should do it
In our station; not thinking about it, but not disregarding;
Holding it, not for enjoyment, but simply because we are in it.
Ah! replied Philip, Alas! the noted phrase of the Prayer-book,
Doing our duty in that state of life to which God has called us,
Seems to me always to mean, when the little rich boys say it,

Standing in velvet frock by mamma's brocaded flounces,
Eyeing her gold-fastened book and the watch and chain at her bosom,
Seems to me always to mean, Eat, drink, and never mind others.
Nay, replied Adam, smiling, so far your economy leads me,
Velvet and gold and brocade are nowise to my fancy.
Nay, he added, believe me, I like luxurious living
Even as little as you, and grieve in my soul not seldom,
More for the rich indeed than the poor, who are not so guilty.
So the discussion closed; and, said Arthur, Now it is my turn,
How will my argument please you? To-morrow we start on our travel.
And took up Hope the chorus,
To-morrow we start on our travel.
Lo, the weather is golden, the weather-glass, say they, rising;
Four weeks here have we read; four weeks will we read hereafter;
Three weeks hence will return and think of classes and classics.
Fare ye well, meantime, forgotten, unnamed, undreamt of,
History, Science, and Poets! lo, deep in dustiest cupboard,
Thookydid, Oloros' son, Halimoosian, here lieth buried!
Slumber in Liddell-and-Scott, O musical chaff of old Athens,
Dishes, and fishes, bird, beast, and sesquipedalian blackguard!
Sleep, weary ghosts, be at peace and abide in your lexicon-limbo!
Sleep, as in lava for ages your Herculanean kindred,
Sleep, for aught that I care, 'the sleep that knows no waking,'
Æschylus, Sophocles, Homer, Herodotus, Pindar, and Plato.

Three weeks hence be it time to exhume our dreary classics.
And in the chorus joined Lindsay, the Piper, the Dialectician,
Three weeks hence we return to the shop and the wash-hand-stand basin
(These are the Piper's names for the bathing-place and the cottage).
Three weeks hence unbury Thicksides and hairy Aldrich.
But the Tutor inquired, the grave man, nick-named Adam,
Who are they that go, and when do they promise returning?
And a silence ensued, and the Tutor himself continued,
Airlie remains, I presume, he continued, and Hobbes and Hewson.
Answer was made him by Philip, the poet, the eloquent speaker:
Airlie remains, I presume, was the answer, and Hobbes, peradventure;
Tarry let Airlie May-fairly, and Hobbes, brief-kilted hero,
Tarry let Hobbes in kilt, and Airlie 'abide in his breeches;'
Tarry let these, and read, four Pindars apiece an' it like them!
Weary of reading am I, and weary of walks prescribed us;
Weary of Ethic and Logic, of Rhetoric yet more weary,
Eager to range over heather unfettered of gillie and marquis,
I will away with the rest, and bury my dismal classics.
And to the Tutor rejoining, Be mindful; you go up at Easter,
This was the answer returned by Philip, the Pugin of women.
Good are the Ethics I wis; good absolute, not for me, though;
Good, too, Logic, of course; in itself, but not in fine weather.
Three weeks hence, with the rain, to Prudence, Temperance, Justice,
Virtues Moral and Mental, with Latin prose included;

Three weeks hence we return to cares of classes and classics.
I will away with the rest, and bury my dismal classics.
But the Tutor inquired, the grave man, nick-named Adam,
Where do you mean to go, and whom do you mean to visit?
And he was answered by Hope, the Viscount, His Honour, of Ilay.
Kitcat, a Trinity coach, has a party at Drumnadrochet,
Up on the side of Loch Ness, in the beautiful valley of Urquhart;
Mainwaring says they will lodge us, and feed us, and give us a lift too
Only they talk ere long to remove to Glenmorison. Then at
Castleton, high in Braemar, strange home, with his earliest party,
Harrison, fresh from the schools, has James and Jones and Lauder.
Thirdly, a Cambridge man I know, Smith, a senior wrangler,
With a mathematical score hangs-out at Inverary.
Finally, too, from the kilt and the sofa said Hobbes in conclusion,
Finally, Philip must hunt for that home of the probable poacher,
Hid in the braes of Lochaber, the Bothie of What-did-he-call-it.
Hopeless of you and of us, of gillies and marquises hopeless,
Weary of Ethic and Logic, of Rhetoric yet more weary,
There shall he, smit by the charm of a lovely potato-uprooter,
Study the question of sex in the Bothie of What-did-he-call-it.

III

Namque canebat uti——
So in the golden morning they parted and went to the westward.
And in the cottage with Airlie and Hobbes remained the Tutor;

Reading nine hours a day with the Tutor, Hobbes and Airlie;
One between bathing and breakfast, and six before it was dinner
(Breakfast at eight, at four, after bathing again, the dinner),
Finally, two after walking and tea, from nine to eleven.
Airlie and Adam at evening their quiet stroll together
Took on the terrace-road, with the western hills before them;
Hobbes, only rarely a third, now and then in the cottage remaining,
E'en after dinner, eupeptic, would rush yet again to his reading;
Other times, stung by the œstrum of some swift-working conception,
Ranged, tearing on in his fury, an Io-cow through the mountains,
Heedless of scenery, heedless of bogs, and of perspiration,
On the high peaks, unwitting, the hares and ptarmigan starting.
And the three weeks past, the three weeks, three days over,
Nither letter had come, nor casual tidings any,
And the pupils grumbled, the Tutor became uneasy,
And in the golden weather they wondered, and watched to the westward.
There is a stream (I name not its name, lest inquisitive tourist
Hunt it, and make it a lion, and get it at last into guide-books),
Springing far off from a loch unexplored in the folds of great mountains,
Falling two miles through rowan and stunted alder, enveloped
Then for four more in a forest of pine, where broad and ample
Spreads, to convey it, the glen with heathery slopes on both sides:
Broad and fair the stream, with occasional falls and narrows;
But, where the glen of its course approaches the vale of the river,

Met and blocked by a huge interposing mass of granite,
Scarce by a channel deep-cut, raging up, and raging onward,
Forces its flood through a passage so narrow a lady would step it.
There, across the great rocky wharves, a wooden bridge goes,
Carrying a path to the forest; below, three hundred yards, say,
Lower in level some twenty-five feet, through flats of shingle,
Stepping-stones and a cart-track cross in the open valley.
But in the interval here the boiling pent-up water
Frees itself by a final descent, attaining a basin,
Ten feet wide and eighteen long, with whiteness and fury
Occupied partly, but mostly pellucid, pure, a mirror;
Beautiful there for the colour derived from green rocks under;
Beautiful, most of all, where beads of foam uprising
Mingle their clouds of white with the delicate hue of the stillness,
Cliff over cliff for its sides, with rowan and pendent birch boughs,
Here it lies, unthought of above at the bridge and pathway,
Still more enclosed from below by wood and rocky projection.
You are shut in, left alone with yourself and perfection of water,
Hid on all sides, left alone with yourself and the goddess of bathing.
Here, the pride of the plunger, you stride the fall and clear it;
Here, the delight of the bather, you roll in beaded sparklings,
Here into pure green depth drop down from lofty ledges.
Hither, a month agone, they had come, and discovered it; hither
(Long a design, but long unaccountably left unaccomplished),

Leaving the well-known bridge and pathway above to the forest,
Turning below from the track of the carts over stone and shingle,
Piercing a wood, and skirting a narrow and natural causeway
Under the rocky wall that hedges the bed of the streamlet,
Rounded a craggy point, and saw on a sudden before them
Slabs of rock, and a tiny beach, and perfection of water,
Picture-like beauty, seclusion sublime, and the goddess of bathing.
There they bathed, of course, and Arthur, the Glory of headers,
Leapt from the ledges with Hope, he twenty feet, he thirty;
There, overbold, great Hobbes from a ten-foot height descended,
Prone, as a quadruped, prone with hands and feet protending;
There in the sparkling champagne, ecstatic, they shrieked and shouted.
'Hobbes's gutter' the Piper entitles the spot, profanely,
Hope 'the Glory' would have, after Arthur, the Glory of headers:
But, for before they departed, in shy and fugitive reflex,
Here in the eddies and there did the splendour of Jupiter glimmer;
Adam adjudged it the name of Hesperus, star of the evening.
Hither, to Hesperus, now, the star of evening above them,
Come in their lonelier walk the pupils twain and Tutor;
Turned from the track of the carts, and passing the stone and shingle,
Piercing the wood, and skirting the stream by the natural causeway,
Rounded the craggy point, and now at their ease looked up; and
Lo, on the rocky ledge, regardant, the Glory of headers,
Lo, on the beach, expecting the plunge, not cigarless, the Piper,—

And they looked, and wondered, incredulous, looking yet once more.
Yes, it was he, on the ledge, bare-limbed, an Apollo, down-gazing,
Eyeing one moment the beauty, the life, ere he flung himself in it,
Eyeing through eddying green waters the green-tinting floor underneath them,
Eyeing the bead on the surface, the bead, like a cloud rising to it,
Drinking-in, deep in his soul, the beautiful hue and the clearness,
Arthur, the shapely, the brave, the unboasting, the Glory of headers;
Yes, and with fragrant weed, by his knapsack, spectator and critic,
Seated on slab by the margin, the Piper, the Cloud-compeller.
Yes, they were come; were restored to the party, its grace and its gladness,
Yes, were here, as of old; the light-giving orb of the household,
Arthur, the shapely, the tranquil, the strength-and-contentment diffusing,
In the pure presence of whom none could quarrel long, nor be pettish,
And, the gay fountain of mirth, their dearly beloved of Pipers;
Yes, they were come, were here: but Hewson and Hope—where they then?
Are they behind, travel-sore, or ahead, going straight, by the pathway?
And from his seat and cigar spoke the Piper, the Cloud-compeller.
Hope with the uncle abideth for shooting. Ah me, were I with him!
Ah, good boy that I am, to have stuck to my word and my reading!
Good, good boy to be here, far away, who might be at Balloch!
Only one day to have stayed who might have been welcome for seven,
Seven whole days in castle and forest—gay in the mazy
Moving, imbibing the rosy, and pointing a gun at the horny!
And the Tutor impatient, expectant, interrupted.

Hope with the uncle, and Hewson—with him? or where have you left him?
And from his seat and cigar spoke the Piper, the Cloud-compeller.
Hope with the uncle, and Hewson—Why, Hewson we left in Rannoch,
By the lochside and the pines, in a farmer's house,—reflecting—
Helping to shear,[8] and dry clothes, and bring in peat from the peat-stack.
And the Tutor's countenance fell; perplexed, dumb-foundered
Stood he,—slow and with pain disengaging jest from earnest.
He is not far from home, said Arthur from the water,
He will be with us to-morrow, at latest, or the next day.
And he was even more reassured by the Piper's rejoinder.
Can he have come by the mail, and have got to the cottage before us?
So to the cottage they went, and Philip was not at the cottage;
But by the mail was a letter from Hope, who himself was to follow.
Two whole days and nights succeeding brought not Philip,
Two whole days and nights exhausted not question and story.
For it was told, the Piper narrating, corrected of Arthur,
Often by word corrected, more often by smile and motion,
How they had been to Iona, to Staffa, to Skye, to Culloden,
Seen Loch Awe, Loch Tay, Loch Fyne, Loch Ness, Loch Arkaig,
Been up Ben-nevis, Ben-more, Ben-cruachan, Ben-muick-dhui;
How they had walked, and eaten, and drunken, and slept in kitchens
Slept upon floors of kitchens, and tasted the real Glenlivat,
Walked up perpendicular hills, and also down them,
Hither and thither had been, and this and that had witnessed,

Left not a thing to be done, and had not a copper remaining.
For it was told withal, he telling, and he correcting,
How in the race they had run, and beaten the gillies of Rannoch,
How in forbidden glens, in Mar and midmost Athol,
Philip insisting hotly, and Arthur and Hope compliant,
They had defied the keepers; the Piper alone protesting,
Liking the fun, it was plain, in his heart, but tender of game-law;
Yea, too, in Meäly glen, the heart of Lochiel's fair forest,
Where Scotch firs are darkest and amplest, and intermingle
Grandly with rowan and ash—in Mar you have no ashes,
There the pine is alone, or relieved by the birch and the alder—
How in Meäly glen, while stags were starting before, they
Made the watcher believe they were guests from Achnacarry.
And there was told moreover, he telling, the other correcting,
Often by word, more often by mute significant motion,
Much of the Cambridge coach and his pupils at Inverary,
Huge barbarian pupils, Expanded in Infinite Series,
Firing-off signal guns (great scandal) from window to window
(For they were lodging perforce in distant and numerous houses),
Signals, when, one retiring, another should go to the Tutor:—
Much too of Kitcat, of course, and the party at Drumnadrochet,
Mainwaring, Foley, and Fraser, their idleness horrid and dog-cart;
Drumnadrochet was seedy, Glenmorison adequate, but at
Castleton, high in Braemar, were the clippingest places for bathing;

One by the bridge in the village, indecent, the Town Hall christened.
Where had Lauder howbeit been bathing, and Harrison also,
Harrison even, the Tutor; another like Hesperus here, and
Up the water of Eye, half-a-dozen at least, all stunners.
And it was told, the Piper narrating and Arthur correcting,
Colouring he, dilating, magniloquent, glorying in picture,
He to a matter-of-fact still softening, paring, abating,
He to the great might-have-been upsoaring, sublime and ideal,
He to the merest it-was restricting, diminishing, dwarfing,
River to streamlet reducing, and fall to slope subduing:
So was it told, the Piper narrating, corrected of Arthur,
How under Linn of Dee, where over rocks, between rocks,
Freed from prison the river comes, pouring, rolling, rushing,
Then at a sudden descent goes sliding, gliding, unbroken,
Falling, sliding, gliding, in narrow space collected,
Save for a ripple at last, a sheeted descent unbroken,—
How to the element offering their bodies, downshooting the fall, they
Mingled themselves with the flood and the force of imperious water.
And it was told too, Arthur narrating, the Piper correcting,
How, as one comes to the level, the weight of the downward impulse
Carries the head under water, delightful, unspeakable; how the
Piper, here ducked and blinded, got stray, and borne-off by the current
Wounded his lily-white thighs, below, at the craggy corner.
And it was told, the Piper resuming, corrected of Arthur,

More by word than motion, change ominous, noted of Adam,
How at the floating-bridge of Laggan, one morning at sunrise,
Came, in default of the ferryman, out of her bed a brave lassie;
And as Philip and she together were turning the handles,
Winding the chain by which the boat works over the water
Hands intermingled with hands, and at last, as they stepped from the boatie,
Turning about, they saw lips also mingle with lips; but
That was flatly denied and loudly exclaimed at by Arthur:
How at the General's hut, the Inn by the Foyers Fall, where
Over the loch looks at you the summit of Méalfourvónie,
How here too he was hunted at morning, and found in the kitchen
Watching the porridge being made, pronouncing them smoked for certain,
Watching the porridge being made, and asking the lassie that made them
What was the Gaelic for girl, and what was the Gaelic for pretty;
How in confusion he shouldered his knapsack, yet blushingly stammered,
Waving a hand to the lassie, that blushingly bent o'er the porridge,
Something outlandish—Slan-something, Slan leat, he believed, Caleg Looach—
That was the Gaelic, it seemed, for 'I bid you good-bye, bonnie lassie;
Arthur admitted it true, not of Philip, but of the Piper.
And it was told by the Piper, while Arthur looked out at the window,
How in thunder and in rain—it is wetter far to the westward—
Thunder and rain and wind, losing heart and road, they were welcomed,
Welcomed, and three days detained at a farm by the lochside of Rannoch;
How in the three days' detention was Philip observed to be smitten,

Smitten by golden-haired Katie, the youngest and comeliest daughter;
Was he not seen, even Arthur observed it, from breakfast to bedtime,
Following her motions with eyes ever brightening, softening ever?
Did he not fume, fret, and fidget to find her stand waiting at table?
Was he not one mere St. Vitus' dance, when he saw her at nightfall
Go through the rain to fetch peat, through beating rain to the peat-stack?
How too a dance, as it happened, was given by Grant of Glenurchie,
And with the farmer they went as the farmer's guests to attend it;
Philip stayed dancing till daylight,—and evermore with Katie;
How the whole next afternoon he was with her away in the shearing,[9]
And the next morning ensuing was found in the ingle beside her
Kneeling, picking the peats from her apron,—blowing together,
Both, between laughing, with lips distended, to kindle the embers;
Lips were so near to lips, one living cheek to another,—
Though, it was true, he was shy, very shy,—yet it wasn't in nature,
Wasn't in nature, the Piper averred, there shouldn't be kissing;
So when at noon they had packed up the things, and proposed to be starting,
Philip professed he was lame, would leave in the morning and follow;
Follow he did not; do burns, when you go up a glen, follow after?
Follow, he had not, nor left; do needles leave the loadstone?
Nay, they had turned after starting, and looked through the trees at the corner,
Lo, on the rocks by the lake there he was, the lassie beside him,
Lo, there he was, stooping by her, and helping with stones from the water
Safe in the wind to keep down the clothes she would spread for the drying.

There they had left him, and there, if Katie was there, was Philip,
There drying clothes, making fires, making love, getting on too by this time,
Though he was shy, so exceedingly shy.
You may say so, said Arthur,
For the first time they had known with a peevish intonation,—
Did not the Piper himself flirt more in a single evening,
Namely, with Janet the elder, than Philip in all our sojourn?
Philip had stayed, it was true; the Piper was loth to depart too,
Harder his parting from Janet than e'en from the keeper at Balloch;
And it was certain that Philip was lame.
Yes, in his excuses,
Answered the Piper, indeed!—
But tell me, said Hobbes interposing,
Did you not say she was seen every day in her beauty and bedgown
Doing plain household work, as washing, cooking, scouring?
How could he help but love her? nor lacked there perhaps the attraction
That, in a blue cotton print tucked up over striped linsey-woolsey,
Barefoot, barelegged, he beheld her, with arms bare up to the elbows,
Bending with fork in her hand in a garden uprooting potatoes?
Is not Katie as Rachel, and is not Philip a Jacob?
Truly Jacob, supplanting a hairy Highland Esau?
Shall he not, love-entertained, feed sheep for the Laban of Rannoch?
Patriarch happier he, the long servitude ended of wooing,
If when he wake in the morning he find not a Leah beside him!

But the Tutor inquired, who had bit his lip to bleeding,
How far off is the place? who will guide me thither to-morrow?
But by the mail, ere the morrow, came Hope, and brought new tidings;
Round by Rannoch had come, and Philip was not at Rannoch;
He had left at noon, an hour ago.
With the lassie?
With her? the Piper exclaimed. Undoubtedly! By great Jingo'
And upon that he arose, slapping both his thighs like a hero,
Partly for emphasis only, to mark his conviction, but also
Part in delight at the fun, and the joy of eventful living.
Hope couldn't tell him, of course, but thought it improbable wholly;
Janet, the Piper's friend, he had seen, and she didn't say so,
Though she asked a good deal about Philip, and where he was gone to;
One odd thing, by the bye, he continued, befell me while with her;
Standing beside her, I saw a girl pass; I thought I had seen her,
Somewhat remarkable-looking, elsewhere; and asked what her name was;
Elspie Mackaye, was the answer, the daughter of David! she's stopping
Just above here, with her uncle. And David Mackaye, where lives he?
It's away west, she said; they call it Tober-na vuolich.

IV

Ut vidi, ut perii, ut me malus abstulit error.
So in the golden weather they waited. But Philip returned not.
Sunday six days thence a letter arrived in his writing.—
But, O Muse, that encompassest Earth like the ambient ether,

Swifter than steamer or railway or magical missive electric,
Belting like Ariel the sphere with the star-like trail of thy travel,
Thou with thy Poet, to mortals mere post-office second-hand knowledge
Leaving, wilt seek in the moorland of Rannoch the wandering hero.
There is it, there, or in lofty Lochaber, where, silent upheaving,
Heaving from ocean to sky, and under snow-winds of September,
Visibly whitening at morn to darken by noon in the shining,
Rise on their mighty foundations the brethren huge of Ben-nevis?
There, or westward away, where roads are unknown to Loch Nevish,
And the great peaks look abroad over Skye to the westernmost islands?
There is it? there? or there? we shall find our wandering hero?
Here, in Badenoch, here, in Lochaber anon, in Lochiel, in
Knoydart, Moydart, Morrer, Ardgower, and Ardnamurchan,
Here I see him and here: I see him; anon I lose him!
Even as cloud passing subtly unseen from mountain to mountain,
Leaving the crest of Ben-more to be palpable next on Ben-vohrlich,
Or like to hawk of the hill which ranges and soars in its hunting,
Seen and unseen by turns, now here, now in ether eludent.
Wherefore, as cloud of Ben-more or hawk over-ranging the mountains,
Wherefore in Badenoch drear, in lofty Lochaber, Lochiel, and
Knoydart, Moydart, Morrer, Ardgower, and Ardnamurchan,
Wandereth he who should either with Adam be studying logic,
Or by the lochside of Rannoch on Katie his rhetoric using;
He who, his three weeks past, past now long ago, to the cottage

Punctual promised return to cares of classes and classics.
He who, smit to the heart by that youngest comeliest daughter,
Bent, unregardful of spies, at her feet, spreading clothes from her wash-tub?
Can it be with him through Badenoch, Morrer, and Ardnamurchan;
Can it be with him he beareth the golden-haired lassie of Rannoch?
This fierce, furious walking—o'er mountain-top and moorland,
Sleeping in shieling and bothie, with drover on hill-side sleeping,
Folded in plaid, where sheep are strewn thicker than rocks by Loch Awen,
This fierce, furious travel unwearying—cannot in truth be
Merely the wedding tour succeeding the week of wooing!
No, wherever be Katie, with Philip she is not; I see him,
Lo, and he sitteth alone, and these are his words in the mountain.
Spirits escaped from the body can enter and be with the living;
Entering unseen, and retiring unquestioned, they bring,—do they feel too?—
Joy, pure joy, as they mingle and mix inner essence with essence;
Would I were dead, I keep saying, that so I could go and uphold her!
Joy, pure joy, bringing with them, and, when they retire, leaving after
No cruel shame, no prostration, despondency; memories rather,
Sweet happy hopes bequeathing. Ah! wherefore not thus with the living?
Would I were dead, I keep saying, that so I could go and uphold her!
Is it impossible, say you, these passionate fervent impulsions,
These projections of spirit to spirit, these inward embraces,
Should in strange ways, in her dreams, should visit her, strengthen her, shield her?
Is it possible, rather, that these great floods of feeling

Setting-in daily from me towards her should, impotent wholly,
Bring neither sound nor motion to that sweet shore they heave to?
Efflux here, and there no stir nor pulse of influx!
Would I were dead, I keep saying, that so I could go and uphold her!
Surely, surely, when sleepless I lie in the mountain lamenting,
Surely, surely, she hears in her dreams a voice, ‘I am with thee,’
Saying, ‘although not with thee; behold, for we mated our spirits
Then, when we stood in the chamber, and knew not the words we were saying;’
Yea, if she felt me within her, when not with one finger I touched her
Surely she knows it, and feels it while sorrowing here in the moorland.
Would I were dead, I keep saying, that so I could go and uphold her!
Spirits with spirits commingle and separate; lightly as winds do,
Spice-laden South with the ocean-born zephyr! they mingle and sunder;
No sad remorses for them, no visions of horror and vileness.
Would I were dead, I keep saying, that so I could go and uphold her!
Surely the force that here sweeps me along in its violent impulse,
Surely my strength shall be in her, my help and protection about her,
Surely in inner-sweet gladness and vigour of joy shall sustain her,
Till, the brief winter o’er-past, her own true sap in the springtide
Rise, and the tree I have bared be verdurous e’en as aforetime!
Surely it may be, it should be, it must be. Yet ever and ever,
Would I were dead, I keep saying, that so I could go and uphold her!
No, wherever be Katie, with Philip she is not: behold, for
Here he is sitting alone, and these are his words in the mountain.

And, at the farm on the lochside of Rannoch, in parlour and kitchen,
Hark! there is music—the flowing of music, of milk, and of whisky;
Lo, I see piping and dancing! and whom in the midst of the battle
Cantering loudly along there, or, look you, with arms uplifted,
Whistling, and snapping his fingers, and seizing his gay-smiling Janet,
Whom?—whom else but the Piper? the wary precognisant Piper,
Who, for the love of gay Janet, and mindful of old invitation,
Putting it quite as a duty and urging grave claims to attention,
True to his night had crossed over: there goeth he, brimful of music,
Like a cork tossed by the eddies that foam under furious lasher,
Like to skiff, lifted, uplifted, in lock, by the swift-swelling sluices,
So with the music possessing him, swaying him, goeth he, look you,
Swinging and flinging, and stamping and tramping, and grasping and clasping
Whom but gay Janet?—Him rivalling, Hobbes, briefest-kilted of heroes,
Enters, O stoutest, O rashest of creatures, mere fool of a Saxon,
Skill-less of philabeg, skill-less of reel too,—the whirl and the twirl o't:
Him see I frisking, and whisking, and ever at swifter gyration
Under brief curtain revealing broad acres—not of broad cloth.
Him see I there and the Piper—the Piper what vision beholds not?
Him and His Honour with Arthur, with Janet our Piper, and is it,
Is it, O marvel of marvels! he too in the maze of the mazy,
Skipping, and tripping, though stately, though languid, with head on one shoulder,
Airlie, with sight of the waistcoat the golden-haired Katie consoling?
Katie, who simple and comely, and smiling and blushing as ever,

What though she wear on that neck a blue kerchief remembered as Philip's,
Seems in her maidenly freedom to need small consolement of waistcoats!—
Wherefore in Badenoch then, far-away, in Lochaber, Lochiel, in
Knoydart, Moydart, Morrer, Ardgower, or Ardnamurchan,
Wanders o'er mountain and moorland, in shieling or bothie is sleeping,
He, who,—and why should he not then? capricious? or is it rejected?
Might to the piping of Rannoch be pressing the thrilling fair fingers,
Might, as he clasped her, transmit to her bosom the throb of his own—yea,—
Might in the joy of the reel be wooing and winning his Katie?
What is it Adam reads far off by himself in the cottage?
Reads yet again with emotion, again is preparing to answer?
What is it Adam is reading? What was it Philip had written?
There was it writ, how Philip possessed undoubtedly had been,
Deeply, entirely possessed by the charm of the maiden of Rannoch;
Deeply as never before! how sweet and bewitching he felt her
Seen still before him at work, in the garden, the byre, the kitchen;
How it was beautiful to him to stoop at her side in the shearing,
Binding uncouthly the ears that fell from her dexterous sickle,
Building uncouthly the stooks,[10] which she laid by her sickle to straighten,
How at the dance he had broken through shyness; for four days after
Lived on her eyes, unspeaking what lacked not articulate speaking;
Felt too that she too was feeling what he did.—Howbeit they parted!
How by a kiss from her lips he had seemed made nobler and stronger,
Yea, for the first time in life a man complete and perfect,

So forth! much that before has been heard of.—Howbeit they parted!
What had ended it all, he said, was singular, very.—
I was walking along some two miles off from the cottage
Full of my dreamings—a girl went by in a party with others;
She had a cloak on, was stepping on quickly, for rain was beginning;
But as she passed, from her hood I saw her eyes look at me.
So quick a glance, so regardless I, that although I had felt it,
You couldn't properly say our eyes met. She cast it, and left it:
It was three minutes perhaps ere I knew what it was. I had seen her
Somewhere before I am sure, but that wasn't it; not its import;
No, it had seemed to regard me with simple superior insight,
Quietly saying to itself—Yes, there he is still in his fancy,
Letting drop from him at random as things not worth his considering
All the benefits gathered and put in his hands by fortune,
Loosing a hold which others, contented and unambitious,
Trying down here to keep up, know the value of better than he does,
What is this? was it perhaps?—Yes, there he is still in his fancy,
Doesn't yet see we have here just the things he is used to elsewhere;
People here too are people and not as fairy-land creatures;
He is in a trance, and possessed; I wonder how long to continue;
It is a shame and a pity—and no good likely to follow.—
Something like this, but indeed I cannot attempt to define it.
Only, three hours thence I was off and away in the moorland,
Hiding myself from myself if I could; the arrow within me.

Katie was not in the house, thank God: I saw her in passing,
Saw her, unseen myself, with the pang of a cruel desertion;
What she thinks about it, God knows! poor child; may she only
Think me a fool and a madman, and no more worth her remembering!
Meantime all through the mountains I hurry and know not whither,
Tramp along here, and think, and know not what I should think.
Tell me then, why, as I sleep amid hill-tops high in the moorland,
Still in my dreams I am pacing the streets of the dissolute city,
Where dressy girls slithering by upon pavements give sign for accosting,
Paint on their beautiless cheeks, and hunger and shame in their bosoms;
Hunger by drink, and by that which they shudder yet burn for, appeasing,—
Hiding their shame—ah God!—in the glare of the public gas-lights?
Why, while I feel my ears catching through slumber the run of the streamlet,
Still am I pacing the pavement, and seeing the sign for accosting,
Still am I passing those figures, not daring to look in their faces?
Why, when the chill, ere the light, of the daybreak uneasily wakes me,
Find I a cry in my heart crying up to the heaven of heavens,
No, Great Unjust Judge! she is purity; I am the lost one.
You will not think that I soberly look for such things for sweet Katie;
No, but the vision is on me; I now first see how it happens,
Feel how tender and soft is the heart of a girl; how passive
Fain would it be, how helpless; and helplessness leads to destruction.
Maiden reserve torn from off it, grows never again to reclothe it,
Modesty broken through once to immodesty flies for protection.

Oh, who saws through the trunk, though he leave the tree up in the forest,
When the next wind casts it down,—is his not the hand that smote it?
This is the answer, the second, which, pondering long with emotion,
There by himself in the cottage the Tutor addressed to Philip.
I have perhaps been severe, dear Philip, and hasty; forgive me;
For I was fain to reply ere I wholly had read through your letter;
And it was written in scraps with crossings and counter-crossings
Hard to connect with each other correctly, and hard to decipher;
Paper was scarce, I suppose: forgive me; I write to console you.
Grace is given of God, but knowledge is bought in the market;
Knowledge needful for all, yet cannot be had for the asking.
There are exceptional beings, one finds them distant and rarely,
Who, endowed with the vision alike and the interpretation,
See, by the neighbours' eyes and their own still motions enlightened,
In the beginning the end, in the acorn the oak of the forest,
In the child of to-day its children to long generations,
In a thought or a wish a life, a drama, an epos.
There are inheritors, is it? by mystical generation
Heiring the wisdom and ripeness of spirits gone by; without labour
Owning what others by doing and suffering earn; what old men
After long years of mistake and erasure are proud to have come to,
Sick with mistake and erasure possess when possession is idle.
Yes, there is power upon earth, seen feebly in women and children,
Which can, laying one hand on the cover, read off, unfaltering,

Leaf after leaf unlifted, the words of the closed book under,
Words which we are poring at, hammering at, stumbling at, spelling.
Rare is this; wisdom mostly is bought for a price in the market;—
Rare is this; and happy, who buys so much for so little,
As I conceive have you, and as I will hope has Katie.
Knowledge is needful for man,—needful no less for woman,
Even in Highland glens, were they vacant of shooter and tourist.
Not that, of course, I mean to prefer your blindfold hurry
Unto a soul that abides most loving yet most withholding;
Least unfeeling though calm, self-contained yet most unselfish;
Renders help and accepts it, a man among men that are brothers,
Views, not plucks the beauty, adores, and demands no embracing,
So in its peaceful passage whatever is lovely and gracious
Still without seizing or spoiling, itself in itself reproducing.
No, I do not set Philip herein on the level of Arthur;
No, I do not compare still tarn with furious torrent,
Yet will the tarn overflow, assuaged in the lake be the torrent.
Women are weak, as you say, and love of all things to be passive,
Passive, patient, receptive, yea, even of wrong and misdoing,
Even to force and misdoing with joy and victorious feeling
Patient, passive, receptive; for that is the strength of their being,
Like to the earth taking all things, and all to good converting.
Oh ’tis a snare indeed!—Moreover, remember it, Philip,
To the prestige of the richer the lowly are prone to be yielding,

Think that in dealing with them they are raised to a different region,
Where old laws and morals are modified, lost, exist not;
Ignorant they as they are, they have but to conform and be yielding.
But I have spoken of this already, and need not repeat it.
You will not now run after what merely attracts and entices,
Every-day things highly-coloured, and common-place carved and gilded.
You will henceforth seek only the good: and seek it, Philip,
Where it is—not more abundant, perhaps, but—more easily met with;
Where you are surer to find it, less likely to run into error,
In your station, not thinking about it, but not disregarding.
So was the letter completed: a postscript afterward added,
Telling the tale that was told by the dancers returning from Rannoch.
So was the letter completed: but query, whither to send it?
Not for the will of the wisp, the cloud, and the hawk of the moorland,
Ranging afar thro' Lochaber, Lochiel, and Knoydart, and Moydart,
Have even latest extensions adjusted a postal arrangement.
Query resolved very shortly, when Hope, from his chamber descending,
Came with a note in his hand from the Lady, his aunt, at the Castle;
Came and revealed the contents of a missive that brought strange tidings;
Came and announced to the friends, in a voice that was husky with wonder,
Philip was staying at Balloch, was there in the room with the Countess,
Philip to Balloch had come and was dancing with Lady Maria.
Philip at Balloch, he said, after all that stately refusal,
He there at last—O strange! O marvel, marvel of marvels!

Airlie, the Waistcoat, with Katie, we left him this morning at Rannoch;
Airlie with Katie, he said, and Philip with Lady Maria.
And amid laughter Adam paced up and down, repeating
Over and over, unconscious, the phrase which Hope had lent him,
Dancing at Balloch, you say, in the Castle, with Lady Maria.

V

——Putavi
Stultus ego huic nostræ similem.
So in the cottage with Adam the pupils five together
Duly remained, and read, and looked no more for Philip,
Philip at Balloch shooting and dancing with Lady Maria.
Breakfast at eight, and now, for brief September daylight,
Luncheon at two, and dinner at seven, or even later,
Five full hours between for the loch and the glen and the mountain,—
So in the joy of their life and glory of shooting-jackets,
So they read and roamed, the pupils five with Adam.
What if autumnal shower came frequent and chill from the westward,
What if on browner sward with yellow leaves besprinkled,
Gemming the crispy blade, the delicate gossamer gemming,
Frequent and thick lay at morning the chilly beads of hoar-frost,
Duly in matutine still, and daily, whatever the weather,
Bathed in the rain and the frost and the mist with the Glory of headers
Hope. Thither also at times, of cold and of possible gutters
Careless, unmindful, unconscious, would Hobbes, or ere they departed,

Come, in heavy pea-coat his trouserless trunk enfolding,
Come, under coat over-brief those lusty legs displaying,
All from the shirt to the slipper the natural man revealing.
Duly there they bathed and daily, the twain or the trio,
Where in the morning was custom, where over a ledge of granite
Into a granite basin the amber torrent descended;
Beautiful, very, to gaze in ere plunging; beautiful also,
Perfect as picture, as vision entrancing that comes to the sightless,
Through the great granite jambs the stream, the glen, and the mountain,
Beautiful, seen by snatches in intervals of dressing,
Morn after morn, unsought for, recurring; themselves too seeming
Not as spectators, accepted into it, immingled, as truly
Part of it as are the kine in the field lying there by the birches.
So they bathed, they read, they roamed in glen and forest;
Far amid blackest pines to the waterfall they shadow,
Far up the long, long glen to the loch, and the loch beyond it,
Deep, under huge red cliffs, a secret; and oft by the starlight,
Or the aurora, perchance, racing home for the eight o’clock mutton.
So they bathed, and read, and roamed in heathery Highland;
There in the joy of their life and glory of shooting-jackets
Bathed and read and roamed, and looked no more for Philip.
List to a letter that came from Philip at Balloch to Adam.
I am here, O my friend!—idle, but learning wisdom.
Doing penance, you think; content, if so, in my penance.

Often I find myself saying, while watching in dance or on horseback
One that is here, in her freedom and grace, and imperial sweetness,
Often I find myself saying, old faith and doctrine abjuring,
Into the crucible casting philosophies, facts, convictions,—
Were it not well that the stem should be naked of leaf and of tendril,
Poverty-stricken, the barest, the dismallest stick of the garden;
Flowerless, leafless, unlovely, for ninety-and-nine long summers,
So in the hundredth, at last, were bloom for one day at the summit,
So but that fleeting flower were lovely as Lady Maria.
Often I find myself saying, and know not myself as I say it,
What of the poor and the weary? their labour and pain is needed.
Perish the poor and the weary! what can they better than perish,
Perish in labour for her, who is worth the destruction of empires?
What! for a mite, for a mote, an impalpable odour of honour,
Armies shall bleed; cities burn; and the soldier red from the storming
Carry hot rancour and lust into chambers of mothers and daughters:
What! would ourselves for the cause of an hour encounter the battle,
Slay and be slain; lie rotting in hospital, hulk, and prison:
Die as a dog dies; die mistaken perhaps, and dishonoured.
Yea,—and shall hodmen in beer-shops complain of a glory denied them,
Which could not ever be theirs more than now it is theirs as spectators?
Which could not be, in all earth, if it were not for labour of hodmen?
And I find myself saying, and what I am saying, discern not,
Dig in thy deep dark prison, O miner! and finding be thankful;

Though unpolished by thee, unto thee unseen in perfection,
While thou art eating black bread in the poisonous air of thy cavern,
Far away glitters the gem on the peerless neck of a Princess.
Dig, and starve, and be thankful; it is so, and thou hast been aiding.
Often I find myself saying, in irony is it, or earnest?
Yea, what is more, be rich, O ye rich! be sublime in great houses,
Purple and delicate linen endure; be of Burgundy patient;
Suffer that service be done you, permit of the page and the valet,
Vex not your souls with annoyance of charity schools or of districts,
Cast not to swine of the stye the pearls that should gleam in your foreheads.
Live, be lovely, forget them, be beautiful even to proudness,
Even for their poor sakes whose happiness is to behold you;
Live, be uncaring, be joyous, be sumptuous; only be lovely,—
Sumptuous not for display, and joyous, not for enjoyment;
Not for enjoyment truly; for Beauty and God’s great glory!
Yes, and I say, and it seems inspiration—of Good or of Evil!
Is it not He that hath done it, and who shall dare gainsay it?
Is it not even of Him, who hath made us?—Yea, for the lions,
Roaring after their prey, do seek their meat from God!
Is it not even of Him, who one kind over another
All the works of His hand hath disposed in a wonderful order?
Who hath made man, as the beasts, to live the one on the other,
Who hath made man as Himself to know the law—and accept it!
You will wonder at this, no doubt! I also wonder!

But we must live and learn; we can't know all things at twenty.
List to a letter of Hobbes to Philip his friend at Balloch.
All Cathedrals are Christian, all Christians are Cathedrals,
Such is the Catholic doctrine; 'tis ours with a slight variation;
Every woman is, or ought to be, a Cathedral,
Built on the ancient plan, a Cathedral pure and perfect,
Built by that only law, that Use be suggester of Beauty,
Nothing concealed that is done, but all things done to adornment,
Meanest utilities seized as occasions to grace and embellish.—
So had I duly commenced in the spirit and style of my Philip,
So had I formally opened the Treatise upon the Laws of
Architectural Beauty in Application to Women,
So had I writ.—But my fancies are palsied by tidings they tell me.
Tidings—ah me, can it be then? that I, the blasphemer accounted,
Here am with reverent heed at the wondrous Analogy working,
Pondering thy words and thy gestures, whilst thou, a prophet apostate,
(How are the mighty fallen!) whilst thou, a shepherd travestie,
(How are the mighty fallen!) with gun,—with pipe no longer,
Teachest the woods to re-echo thy game-killing recantations,
Teachest thy verse to exalt Amaryllis, a Countess's daughter?
What, thou forgettest, bewildered, my Master, that rightly considered
Beauty must ever be useful, what truly is useful is graceful?
She that is handy is handsome, good dairy-maids must be good-looking,
If but the butter be nice, the tournure of the elbow is shapely,

If the cream-cheeses be white, far whiter the hands that made them,
If—but alas, is it true? while the pupil alone in the cottage
Slowly elaborates here thy System of Feminine Graces,
Thou in the palace, its author, art dining, small-talking and dancing,
Dancing and pressing the fingers kid-gloved of a Lady Maria.
These are the final words, that came to the Tutor from Balloch.
I am conquered, it seems! you will meet me, I hope, in Oxford,
Altered in manners and mind. I yield to the laws and arrangements,
Yield to the ancient existent decrees: who am I to resist them?
Yes, you will find me altered in mind, I think, as in manners,
Anxious too to atone for six weeks' loss of your Logic.
So in the cottage with Adam, the pupils five together,
Read, and bathed, and roamed, and thought not now of Philip,
All in the joy of their life, and glory of shooting-jackets.

VI

Ducite ab urbe domum, mea carmina, ducite Daphnin.
Bright October was come, the misty-bright October,
Bright October was come to burn and glen and cottage;
But the cottage was empty, the matutine deserted.
Who are these that walk by the shore of the salt sea water?
Here in the dusky eve, on the road by the salt sea water?
Who are these? and where? it is no sweet seclusion;
Blank hill-sides slope down to a salt sea loch at their bases,
Scored by runnels, that fringe ere they end with rowan and alder:

Cottages here and there outstanding bare on the mountain,
Peat-roofed, windowless, white; the road underneath by the water.
There on the blank hill-side, looking down through the loch to the ocean,
There with a runnel beside, and pine-trees twain before it,
There with the road underneath, and in sight of coaches and steamers,
Dwelling of David Mackaye, and his daughters Elspie and Bella,
Sends up a column of smoke the Bothie of Tober-na-vuolich.
And of the older twain, the elder was telling the younger,
How on his pittance of soil he lived, and raised potatoes,
Barley, and oats, in the bothie where lived his father before him;
Yet was smith by trade, and had travelled making horse-shoes
Far; in the army had seen some service with brave Sir Hector,
Wounded soon, and discharged, disabled as smith and soldier;
He had been many things since that,—drover, schoolmaster,
Whitesmith,—but when his brother died childless came up hither;
And although he could get fine work that would pay in the city,
Still was fain to abide where his father abode before him.
And the lassies are bonnie,—I'm father and mother to them,—
Bonnie and young; they're healthier here, I judge, and safer,
I myself find time for their reading, writing, and learning.
So on the road they walk by the shore of the salt sea water,
Silent a youth and maid, and elders twain conversing.
This was the letter that came when Adam was leaving the cottage.
If you can manage to see me before going off to Dartmoor,

Come by Tuesday's coach through Glencoe (you have not seen it),
Stop at the ferry below, and ask your way (you will wonder,
There however I am) to the Bothie of Tober-na-vuolich.
And on another scrap, of next day's date, was written:—
It was by accident purely I lit on the place; I was returning,
Quietly, travelling homeward by one of these wretched coaches;
One of the horses cast a shoe; and a farmer passing
Said, Old David's your man; a clever fellow at shoeing
Once; just here by the firs; they call it Tober-na-vuolich.
So I saw and spoke with David Mackaye, our acquaintance.
When we came to the journey's end some five miles farther,
In my unoccupied evening I walked back again to the bothie.
But on a final crossing, still later in date, was added:
Come as soon as you can; be sure and do not refuse me.
Who would have guessed I should find my haven and end of my travel,
Here, by accident too, in the bothie we laughed about so?
Who would have guessed that here would be she whose glance at Rannoch
Turned me in that mysterious way; yes, angels conspiring,
Slowly drew me, conducted me, home, to herself; the needle
Which in the shaken compass flew hither and thither, at last, long
Quivering, poises to north. I think so. But I am cautious:
More, at least, than I was in the old silly days when I left you.
Not at the bothie now; at the changehouse in the clachan;[11]
Why I delay my letter is more than I can tell you.

There was another scrap, without or date or comment,
Dotted over with various observations, as follows:
Only think, I had danced with her twice, and did not remember.
I was as one that sleeps on the railway; one, who dreaming
Hears thro' his dream the name of his home shouted out; hears and hears not,—
Faint, and louder again, and less loud, dying in distance;
Dimly conscious, with something of inward debate and choice,—and
Sense of claim and reality present, anon relapses
Nevertheless, and continues the dream and fancy, while forward
Swiftly, remorseless, the car presses on, he knows not whither.
Handsome who handsome is, who handsome does is more so;
Pretty is all very pretty, it's prettier far to be useful.
No, fair Lady Maria, I say not that; but I will say,
Stately is service accepted, but lovelier service rendered,
Interchange of service the law and condition of beauty:
Any way beautiful only to be the thing one is meant for.
I, I am sure, for the sphere of mere ornament am not intended:
No, nor she, I think, thy sister at Tober-na-vuolich.
This was the letter of Philip, and this had brought the Tutor:
This is why Tutor and pupil are walking with David and Elspie.—
When for the night they part, and these, once more together,
Went by the lochside along to the changehouse near in the clachan,
Thus to his pupil anon commenced the grave man, Adam.
Yes, she is beautiful, Philip, beautiful even as morning:

Yes, it is that which I said, the Good and not the Attractive!
Happy is he that finds, and finding does not leave it!
Ten more days did Adam with Philip abide at the changehouse,
Ten more nights they met, they walked with father and daughter.
Ten more nights, and night by night more distant away were
Philip and she; every night less heedful, by habit, the father.
Happy ten days, most happy: and, otherwise than intended,
Fortunate visit of Adam, companion and friend to David.
Happy ten days, be ye fruitful of happiness! Pass o'er them slowly,
Slowly; like cruse of the prophet be multiplied, even to ages!
Pass slowly o'er them, ye days of October; ye soft misty mornings,
Long dusky eves; pass slowly; and thou, great Term-time of Oxford
Awful with lectures and books, and Little-goes, and Great-goes,
Till but the sweet bud be perfect, recede and retire for the lovers,
Yea, for the sweet love of lovers, postpone thyself even to doomsday!
Pass o'er them slowly, ye hours! Be with them, ye Loves and Graces!
Indirect and evasive no longer, a cowardly bather,
Clinging to bough and to rock, and sidling along by the edges,
In your faith, ye Muses and Graces, who love the plain present,
Scorning historic abridgment and artifice anti-poetic,
In your faith, ye Muses and Loves, ye Loves and Graces,
I will confront the great peril, and speak with the mouth of the lovers,
As they spoke by the alders, at evening, the runnel below them,
Elspie, a diligent knitter, and Philip her fingers watching.

VII

Vesper adest, juvenes, consurgite. Vesper Olympo
Expectata diu vix tandem lumina tollit.
For she confessed, as they sat in the dusk, and he saw not her blushes,
Elspie confessed at the sports long ago with her father she saw him,
When at the door the old man had told him the name of the bothie;
Then after that at the dance; yet again at a dance in Rannoch—
And she was silent, confused. Confused much rather Philip
Buried his face in his hands, his face that with blood was bursting.
Silent, confused, yet by pity she conquered her fear, and continued.
Katie is good and not silly; be comforted, Sir, about her;
Katie is good and not silly; tender, but not, like many,
Carrying off, and at once, for fear of being seen, in the bosom
Locking-up as in a cupboard the pleasure that any man gives them,
Keeping it out of sight as a prize they need be ashamed of;
That is the way, I think, Sir, in England more than in Scotland;
No, she lives and takes pleasure in all, as in beautiful weather,
Sorry to lose it, but just as we would be to lose fine weather.
And she is strong to return to herself and feel undeserted,
Oh, she is strong, and not silly: she thinks no further about you;
She has had kerchiefs before from gentle, I know, as from simple.
Yes, she is good and not silly; yet were you wrong, Mr. Philip,
Wrong, for yourself perhaps more than for her.
But Philip replied not,

Raised not his eyes from the hands on his knees.

And Elspie continued.

That was what gave me much pain, when I met you that dance at Rannoch,

Dancing myself too with you, while Katie danced with Donald;

That was what gave me such pain; I thought it all a mistaking,

All a mere chance, you know, and accident,—not proper choosing,—

There were at least five or six—not there, no, that I don't say,

But in the country about—you might just as well have been courting

That was what gave me much pain, and (you won't remember that, though),

Three days after, I met you, beside my uncle's, walking,

And I was wondering much, and hoped you wouldn't notice,

So as I passed I couldn't help looking. You didn't know me.

But I was glad, when I heard next day you were gone to the teacher.

And uplifting his face at last, with eyes dilated,

Large as great stars in mist, and dim, with dabbled lashes,

Philip, with new tears starting,

You think I do not remember,

Said,—suppose that I did not observe! Ah me, shall I tell you?

Elspie, it was your look that sent me away from Rannoch.

It was your glance, that, descending, an instant revelation,

Showed me where I was, and whitherward going; recalled me,

Sent me, not to my books, but to wrestlings of thought in the mountains.

Yes, I have carried your glance within me undimmed, unaltered,

As a lost boat the compass some passing ship has lent her,

Many a weary mile on road, and hill, and moorland:
And you suppose that I do not remember, I had not observed it!
O, did the sailor bewildered observe when they told him his bearings?
O, did he cast overboard, when they parted, the compass they gave him?
And he continued more firmly, although with stronger emotion:
Elspie, why should I speak it? you cannot believe it, and should not:
Why should I say that I love, which I all but said to another?
Yet should I dare, should I say, O Elspie, you only I love; you,
First and sole in my life that has been and surely that shall be;
Could—O, could you believe it, O Elspie, believe it and spurn not?
Is it—possible,—possible, Elspie?
Well,—she answered,
And she was silent some time, and blushed all over, and answered
Quietly, after her fashion, still knitting, Maybe, I think of it,
Though I don’t know that I did: and she paused again; but it may be,
Yes,—I don’t know, Mr. Philip,—but only it feels to me strangely,
Like to the high new bridge, they used to build at, below there,
Over the burn and glen on the road. You won’t understand me.
But I keep saying in my mind—this long time slowly with trouble
I have been building myself, up, up, and toilfully raising,
Just like as if the bridge were to do it itself without masons,
Painfully getting myself upraised one stone on another,
All one side I mean; and now I see on the other
Just such another fabric uprising, better and stronger,

Close to me, coming to join me: and then I sometimes fancy,—
Sometimes I find myself dreaming at nights about arches and bridges,—
Sometimes I dream of a great invisible hand coming down, and
Dropping the great key-stone in the middle: there in my dreaming,
There I felt the great-key stone coming in, and through it
Feel the other part—all the other stones of the archway,
Joined into mine with a strange happy sense of completeness. But, dear me,
This is confusion and nonsense. I mix all the things I can think of.
And you won't understand, Mr. Philip.
But while she was speaking,
So it happened, a moment she paused from her work, and pondering,
Laid her hand on her lap: Philip took it: she did not resist:
So he retained her fingers, the knitting being stopped. But emotion
Came all over her more and yet more from his hand, from her heart, and
Most from the sweet idea and image her brain was renewing.
So he retained her hand, and, his tears down-dropping on it,
Trembling a long time, kissed it at last. And she ended.
And as she ended, uprose he: saying, What have I heard? Oh,
What have I done, that such words should be said to me? Oh, I see it,
See the great key-stone coming down from the heaven of heavens;
And he fell at her feet, and buried his face in her apron.
But as under the moon and stars they went to the cottage,
Elspie sighed and said, Be patient, dear Mr. Philip,
Do not do anything hasty. It is all so soon, so sudden.

Do not say anything yet to any one.

Elspie, he answered,

Does not my friend go on Friday? I then shall see nothing of you.

Do not I go myself on Monday?

But oh, he said, Elspie!

Do as I bid you, my child: do not go on calling me Mr.;

Might I not just as well be calling you Miss Elspie?

Call me, this heavenly night for once, for the first time, Philip.

Philip, she said, and laughed, and said she could not say it;

Philip, she said; he turned, and kissed the sweet lips as they said it.

But on the morrow Elspie kept out of the way of Philip:

And at the evening seat, when he took her hand by the alders,

Drew it back, saying, almost peevishly,

No, Mr. Philip,

I was quite right, last night; it is too soon, too sudden.

What I told you before was foolish perhaps, was hasty.

When I think it over, I am shocked and terrified at it.

Not that at all I unsay it; that is, I know I said it,

And when I said it, felt it. But oh, we must wait, Mr. Philip!

We mustn’t pull ourselves at the great key-stone of the centre:

Some one else up above must hold it, fit it, and fix it;

If we try ourselves, we shall only damage the archway,

Damage all our own work that we wrought, our painful upbuilding.

When, you remember, you took my hand last evening, talking,

I was all over a tremble: and as you pressed the fingers
After, and afterwards kissed them, I could not speak. And then, too,
As we went home, you kissed me for saying your name. It was dreadful.
I have been kissed before, she added, blushing slightly,
I have been kissed more than once by Donald my cousin, and others;
It is the way of the lads, and I make up my mind not to mind it;
But, Mr. Philip, last night, and from you, it was different, quite, Sir.
When I think of all that, I am shocked and terrified at it.
Yes, it is dreadful to me.
She paused, but quickly continued,
Smiling almost fiercely, continued, looking upward.
You are too strong, you see, Mr. Philip! just like the sea there,
Which will come, through the straits and all between the mountains
Forcing its great strong tide into every nook and inlet,
Getting far in, up the quiet stream of sweet inland water,
Sucking it up, and stopping it, turning it, driving it backward,
Quite preventing its own quiet running: and then, soon after,
Back it goes off, leaving weeds on the shore, and wrack and uncleanness:
And the poor burn in the glen tries again its peaceful running,
But it is brackish and tainted, and all its banks in disorder.
That was what I dreamt all last night. I was the burnie,
Trying to get along through the tyrannous brine, and could not;
I was confined and squeezed in the coils of the great salt tide, that
Would mix-in itself with me, and change me; I felt myself changing;

And I struggled, and screamed, I believe, in my dream. It was dreadful.
You are too strong, Mr. Philip! I am but a poor slender burnie,
Used to the glens and the rocks, the rowan and birch of the woodies,
Quite unused to the great salt sea; quite afraid and unwilling.
Ere she had spoken two words, had Philip released her fingers;
As she went on, he recoiled, fell back, and shook and shivered;
There he stood, looking pale and ghastly; when she had ended,
Answering in hollow voice,
It is true; oh, quite true, Elspie;
Oh, you are always right; oh, what, what have I been doing?
I will depart to-morrow. But oh, forget me not wholly,
Wholly, Elspie, nor hate me; no, do not hate me, my Elspie.
But a revulsion passed through the brain and bosom of Elspie;
And she got up from her seat on the rock, putting by her knitting;
Went to him, where he stood, and answered:
No, Mr. Philip,
No, you are good, Mr. Philip, and gentle; and I am the foolish:
No, Mr. Philip, forgive me.
She stepped right to him, and boldly
Took up his hand, and placed it in hers: he dared no movement;
Took up the cold hanging hand, up-forcing the heavy elbow.
I am afraid, she said, but I will; and kissed the fingers.
And he fell on his knees and kissed her own past counting.
But a revulsion wrought in the brain and bosom of Elspie;

And the passion she just had compared to the vehement ocean,
Urging in high spring-tide its masterful way through the mountains
Forcing and flooding the silvery stream, as it runs from the inland;
That great power withdrawn, receding here and passive,
Felt she in myriad springs, her sources far in the mountains,
Stirring, collecting, rising, upheaving, forth-outflowing,
Taking and joining, right welcome, that delicate rill in the valley,
Filling it, making it strong, and still descending, seeking,
With a blind forefeeling descending ever, and seeking,
With a delicious forefeeling, the great still sea before it;
There deep into it, far, to carry, and lose in its bosom,
Waters that still from their sources exhaustless are fain to be added
As he was kissing her fingers, and knelt on the ground before her,
Yielding backward she sank to her seat, and of what she was doing
Ignorant, bewildered, in sweet multitudinous vague emotion,
Stooping, knowing not what, put her lips to the hair on his forehead:
And Philip, raising himself, gently, for the first time round her
Passing his arms, close, close, enfolded her, close to his bosom.
As they went home by the moon, Forgive me, Philip, she whispered;
I have so many things to think of, all of a sudden;
I who had never once thought a thing,—in my ignorant Highlands.

VIII.

Jam veniet virgo, jam dicetur Hymenæus.
But a revulsion again came over the spirit of Elspie,

When she thought of his wealth, his birth and education:
Wealth indeed but small, though to her a difference truly;
Father nor mother had Philip, a thousand pounds his portion,
Somewhat impaired in a world where nothing is had for nothing;
Fortune indeed but small, and prospects plain and simple.
But the many things that he knew, and the ease of a practised
Intellect's motion, and all those indefinable graces
(Were they not hers, too, Philip?) to speech, and manner, and movement,
Lent by the knowledge of self, and wisely instructed feeling,—
When she thought of these, and these contemplated daily,
Daily appreciating more, and more exactly appraising,—
With these thoughts, and the terror withal of a thing she could not
Estimate, and of a step (such a step!) in the dark to be taken,
Terror nameless and ill-understood of deserting her station,—
Daily heavier, heavier upon her pressed the sorrow,
Daily distincter, distincter within her arose the conviction,
He was too high, too perfect, and she so unfit, so unworthy,
(Ah me! Philip, that ever a word such as that should be written!)
It would do neither for him nor for her; she also was something,
Not much indeed, it was true, yet not to be lightly extinguished
Should he—he, she said, have a wife beneath him? herself be
An inferior there where only equality can be?
It would do neither for him nor for her.
Alas for Philip!

Many were tears and great was perplexity. Nor had availed then
All his prayer and all his device. But much was spoken
Now, between Adam and Elspie: companions were they hourly:
Much by Elspie to Adam, inquiring, anxiously seeking,
From his experience seeking impartial accurate statement
What it was to do this or do that, go hither or thither,
How in the after-life would seem what now seeming certain
Might so soon be reversed; in her quest and obscure exploring
Still from that quiet orb soliciting light to her footsteps;
Much by Elspie to Adam, inquiringly, eagerly seeking:
Much by Adam to Elspie, informing, reassuring,
Much that was sweet to Elspie, by Adam heedfully speaking,
Quietly, indirectly, in general terms, of Philip,
Gravely, but indirectly, not as incognisant wholly,
But as suspending until she should seek it, direct intimation;
Much that was sweet in her heart of what he was and would be,
Much that was strength to her mind, confirming beliefs and insights
Pure and unfaltering, but young and mute and timid for action:
Much of relations of rich and poor, and of true education.
It was on Saturday eve, in the gorgeous bright October,
Then when brackens are changed, and heather blooms are faded,
And amid russet of heather and fern green trees are bonnie;
Alders are green, and oaks; the rowan scarlet and yellow;
One great glory of broad gold pieces appears the aspen,

And the jewels of gold that were hung in the hair of the birch-tree,
Pendulous, here and there, her coronet, necklace, and ear-rings,
Cover her now, o’er and o’er; she is weary and scatters them from her.
There, upon Saturday eve, in the gorgeous bright October,
Under the alders knitting, gave Elspie her troth to Philip,
For as they talked, anon she said,
It is well, Mr. Philip.
Yes, it is well: I have spoken, and learnt a deal with the teacher.
At the last I told him all, I could not help it;
And it came easier with him than could have been with my father;
And he calmly approved, as one that had fully considered.
Yes, it is well, I have hoped, though quite too great and sudden;
I am so fearful, I think it ought not to be for years yet.
I am afraid; but believe in you; and I trust to the teacher;
You have done all things gravely and temperate, not as in passion;
And the teacher is prudent, and surely can tell what is likely.
What my father will say, I know not; we will obey him:
But for myself, I could dare to believe all well, and venture.
O Mr. Philip, may it never hereafter seem to be different!
And she hid her face—
Oh, where, but in Philip’s bosom!
After some silence, some tears too perchance, Philip laughed, and said to her,
So, my own Elspie, at last you are clear that I’m bad enough for you
Ah! but your father won’t make one half the question about it

You have—he'll think me, I know, nor better nor worse than Donald,
Neither better nor worse for my gentlemanship and bookwork,
Worse, I fear, as he knows me an idle and vagabond fellow,
Though he allows, but he'll think it was all for your sake, Elspie,
Though he allows I did some good at the end of the shearing.
But I had thought in Scotland you didn't care for this folly.
How I wish, he said, you had lived all your days in the Highlands!
This is what comes of the year you spent in our foolish England.
You do not all of you feel these fancies.
No, she answered.
And in her spirit the freedom and ancient joy was reviving.
No, she said, and uplifted herself, and looked for her knitting,
No, nor do I, dear Philip, I don't myself feel always
As I have felt, more sorrow for me, these four days lately,
Like the Peruvian Indians I read about last winter,
Out in America there, in somebody's life of Pizarro;
Who were as good perhaps as the Spaniards; only weaker;
And that the one big tree might spread its root and branches,
All the lesser about it must even be felled and perish.
No, I feel much more as if I, as well as you, were,
Somewhere, a leaf on the one great tree, that, up from old time
Growing, contains in itself the whole of the virtue and life of
Bygone days, drawing now to itself all kindreds and nations
And must have for itself the whole world for its root and branches.

No, I belong to the tree, I shall not decay in the shadow;
Yes, and I feel the life-juices of all the world and the ages,
Coming to me as to you, more slowly no doubt and poorer:
You are more near, but then you will help to convey them to me.
No, don’t smile, Philip, now, so scornfully! While you look so
Scornful and strong, I feel as if I were standing and trembling,
Fancying the burn in the dark a wide and rushing river;
And I feel coming unto me from you, or it may be from elsewhere,
Strong contemptuous resolve; I forget, and I bound as across it.
But after all, you know, it may be a dangerous river.
Oh, if it were so, Elspie, he said, I can carry you over.
Nay, she replied, you would tire of having me for a burden.
O sweet burden, he said, and are you not light as a feather?
But it is deep, very likely, she said, over head and ears too.
O let us try, he answered, the waters themselves will support us,
Yea, very ripples and waves will form to a boat underneath us;
There is a boat, he said, and a name is written upon it,
Love, he said, and kissed her.—
But I will read your books, though,
Said she: you’ll leave me some, Philip?
Not I, replied he, a volume.
This is the way with you all, I perceive, high and low together.
Women must read, as if they didn’t know all beforehand:
Weary of plying the pump, we turn to the running water,

And the running spring will needs have a pump built upon it.
Weary and sick of our books, we come to repose in your eyelight,
As to the woodland and water, the freshness and beauty of Nature.
Lo, you will talk, forsooth, of things we are sick to the death of.
What, she said, and if I have let you become my sweetheart,
I am to read no books! but you may go your ways then,
And I will read, she said, with my father at home as I used to.
If you must have it, he said, I myself will read them to you.
Well, she said, but no, I will read to myself, when I choose it;
What, you suppose we never read anything here in our Highlands,
Bella and I with the father, in all our winter evenings!
But we must go, Mr. Philip—
I shall not go at all, said
He, if you call me Mr. Thank heaven! that's over for ever.
No, but it's not, she said, it is not over, nor will be.
Was it not then, she asked, the name I called you first by?
No, Mr. Philip, no—you have kissed me enough for two nights;
No—come, Philip, come, or I'11 go myself without you.
You never call me Philip, he answered, until I kiss you.
As they went home by the moon that waning now rose later,
Stepping through mossy stones by the runnel under the alders,
Loitering unconsciously, Philip, she said, I will not be a lady;
We will do work together—you do not wish me a lady.
It is a weakness perhaps and a foolishness; still it is so;

I have been used all my life to help myself and others;
I could not bear to sit and be waited on by footmen,
No, not even by women—
And God forbid, he answered,
God forbid you should ever be aught but yourself, my Elspie!
As for service, I love it not, I; your weakness is mine too,
I am sure Adam told you as much as that about me.
I am sure, she said, he called you wild and flighty.
That was true, he said, till my wings were clipped. But, my Elspie,
You will at least just go and see my uncle and cousins,
Sister, and brother, and brother's wife. You should go, if you liked it,
Just as you are; just what you are, at any rate, my Elspie.
Yes, we will go, and give the old solemn gentility stage-play
One little look, to leave it with all the more satisfaction.
That may be, my Philip, she said; you are good to think of it.
But we are letting our fancies run on indeed; after all, it
May all come, you know, Mr. Philip, to nothing whatever,
There is so much that needs to be done, so much that may happen.
All that needs to be done, said he, shall be done, and quickly.
And on the morrow he took good heart, and spoke with David.
Not unwarned the father, nor had been unperceiving:
Fearful much, but in all from the first reassured by the Tutor.
And he remembered how he had fancied the lad from the first; and
Then, too, the old man's eye was much more for inner than outer,

And the natural tune of his heart without misgiving
Went to the noble words of that grand song of the Lowlands,
Rank is the guinea stamp, but the man's a man for a' that.
Still he was doubtful, would hear nothing of it now, but insisted
Philip should go to his books; if he chose, he might write; if after
Chose to return, might come; he truly believed him honest.
But a year must elapse, and many things might happen.
Yet at the end he burst into tears, called Elspie, and blessed them:
Elspie, my bairn, he said, I thought not when at the doorway
Standing with you, and telling the young man where he would find us,
I did not think he would one day be asking me here to surrender
What is to me more than wealth in my Bothie of Tober-na-vuolich.

IX

Arva, beata Petamus arva!
So on the morrow's morrow, with Term-time dread returning,
Philip returned to his books, and read, and remained at Oxford,
All the Christmas and Easter remained and read at Oxford.
Great was wonder in College when postman showed to butler
Letters addressed to David Mackaye, at Tober-na-vuolich,
Letter on letter, at least one a week, one every Sunday:
Great at that Highland post was wonder too and conjecture,
When the postman showed letters to wife, and wife to the lassies,
And the lassies declared they couldn't be really to David;
Yes, they could see inside a paper with E. upon it.

Great was surmise in College at breakfast, wine, and supper,
Keen the conjecture and joke; but Adam kept the secret,
Adam the secret kept, and Philip read like fury.
This is a letter written by Philip at Christmas to Adam.
There may be beings, perhaps, whose vocation it is to be idle,
Idle, sumptuous even, luxurious, if it must be:
Only let each man seek to be that for which nature meant him.
If you were meant to plough, Lord Marquis, out with you, and do it;
If you were meant to be idle, O beggar, behold, I will feed you.
If you were born for a groom, and you seem, by your dress, to believe so,
Do it like a man, Sir George, for pay, in a livery stable;
Yes, you may so release that slip of a boy at the corner,
Fingering books at the window, misdoubting the eighth commandment.
Ah, fair Lady Maria, God meant you to live and be lovely;
Be so then, and I bless you. But ye, ye spurious ware, who
Might be plain women, and can be by no possibility better!
—Ye unhappy statuettes, and miserable trinkets,
Poor alabaster chimney-piece ornaments under glass cases,
Come, in God’s name, come down! the very French clock by you
Puts you to shame with ticking; the fire-irons deride you.
You, young girl, who have had such advantages, learnt so quickly,
Can you not teach? O yes, and she likes Sunday-school extremely,
Only it’s soon in the morning. Away! if to teach be your calling,
It is no play, but a business: off! go teach and be paid for it.

Lady Sophia’s so good to the sick, so firm and so gentle.
Is there a nobler sphere than of hospital nurse and matron?
Hast thou for cooking a turn, little Lady Clarissa? in with them,
In with your fingers! their beauty it spoils, but your own it enhances
For it is beautiful only to do the thing we are meant for.
This was the answer that came from the Tutor, the grave man, Adam
When the armies are set in array, and the battle beginning,
Is it well that the soldier whose post is far to the leftward
Say, I will go to the right, it is there I shall do best service?
There is a great Field-Marshal, my friend, who arrays our battalions;
Let us to Providence trust, and abide and work in our stations.
This was the final retort from the eager, impetuous Philip.
I am sorry to say your Providence puzzles me sadly;
Children of Circumstance are we to be? you answer, On no wise!
Where does Circumstance end, and Providence, where begins it?
What are we to resist, and what are we to be friends with?
If there is battle, ’tis battle by night, I stand in the darkness,
Here in the mêlée of men, Ionian and Dorian on both sides,
Signal and password known; which is friend and which is foeman?
Is it a friend? I doubt, though he speak with the voice of a brother.
Still you are right, I suppose; you always are, and will be;
Though I mistrust the Field-Marshal, I bow to the duty of order.
Yet is my feeling rather to ask, where is the battle?
Yes, I could find in my heart to cry, notwithstanding my Elspie,

O that the armies indeed were arrayed! O joy of the onset!
Sound, thou Trumpet of God, come forth, Great Cause, to array us,
King and leader appear, thy soldiers sorrowing seek thee.
Would that the armies indeed were arrayed, O where is the battle!
Neither battle I see, nor arraying, nor King in Israel,
Only infinite jumble and mess and dislocation,
Backed by a solemn appeal, ‘For God’s sake, do not stir, there!’
Yet you are right, I suppose; if you don’t attack my conclusion,
Let us get on as we can, and do the thing we are fit for;
Every one for himself, and the common success for us all, and
Thankful, if not for our own, why then for the triumph of others,
Get along, each as we can, and do the thing we are meant for.
That isn’t likely to be by sitting still, eating and drinking.
These are fragments again without date addressed to Adam.
As at return of tide the total weight of ocean,
Drawn by moon and sun from Labrador and Greenland,
Sets-in amain, in the open space betwixt Mull and Scarba,
Heaving, swelling, spreading the might of the mighty Atlantic;
There into cranny and slit of the rocky, cavernous bottom
Settles down, and with dimples huge the smooth sea-surface
Eddies, coils, and whirls; by dangerous Corryvreckan:
So in my soul of souls, through its cells and secret recesses,
Comes back, swelling and spreading, the old democratic fervour.
But as the light of day enters some populous city,

Shaming away, ere it come, by the chilly day-streak signal,
High and low, the misusers of night, shaming out the gas-lamps—
All the great empty streets are flooded with broadening clearness,
Which, withal, by inscrutable simultaneous access
Permeates far and pierces to the very cellars lying in
Narrow high back-lane, and court, and alley of alleys:—
He that goes forth to his walks, while speeding to the suburb,
Sees sights only peaceful and pure: as labourers settling
Slowly to work, in their limbs the lingering sweetness of slumber;
Humble market-carts, coming in, bringing in, not only
Flower, fruit, farm-store, but sounds and sights of the country
Dwelling yet on the sense of the dreamy drivers; soon after
Half-awake servant-maids unfastening drowsy shutters
Up at the windows, or down, letting-in the air by the doorway;
School-boys, school-girls soon, with slate, portfolio, satchel,
Hampered as they haste, those running, these others maidenly tripping,
Early clerk anon turning out to stroll, or it may be
Meet his sweetheart—waiting behind the garden gate there;
Merchant on his grass-plat haply bare-headed; and now by this time
Little child bringing breakfast to ‘father’ that sits on the timber
There by the scaffolding; see, she waits for the can beside him;
Meantime above purer air untarnished of new-lit fires:
So that the whole great wicked artificial civilised fabric—
All its unfinished houses, lots for sale, and railway out-works—

Seems reaccepted, resumed to Primal Nature and Beauty:—
—Such—in me, and to me, and on me the love of Elspie!
Philip returned to his books, but returned to his Highlands after;
Got a first, ’tis said; a winsome bride, ’tis certain.
There while courtship was ending, nor yet the wedding appointed,
Under her father he studied the handling of hoe and of hatchet:
Thither that summer succeeding came Adam and Arthur to see him
Down by the lochs from the distant Glenmorison; Adam the tutor,
Arthur, and Hope; and the Piper anon who was there for a visit;
He had been into the schools; plucked almost; all but a gone-coon;
So he declared; never once had brushed up his hairy Aldrich;
Into the great might-have-been upsoaring sublime and ideal
Gave to historical questions a free poetical treatment;
Leaving vocabular ghosts undisturbed in their lexicon-limbo,
Took Aristophanes up at a shot; and the whole three last weeks
Went, in his life and the sunshine rejoicing, to Nuneham and Godstowe:
What were the claims of Degree to those of life and the sunshine?
There did the four find Philip, the poet, the speaker, the Chartist,
Delving at Highland soil, and railing at Highland landlords,
Railing, but more, as it seemed, for the fun of the Piper’s fury.
There saw they David and Elspie Mackaye, and the Piper was almost
Almost deeply in love with Bella the sister of Elspie;
But the good Adam was heedful: they did not go too often.
There in the bright October, the gorgeous bright October,

When the brackens are changed, and heather blooms are faded,
And amid russet of heather and fern green trees are bonnie,
Alders are green, and oaks, the rowan scarlet and yellow,
Heavy the aspen, and heavy with jewels of gold the birch-tree,
There, when shearing had ended, and barley-stooks were garnered,
David gave Philip to wife his daughter, his darling Elspie;
Elspie the quiet, the brave, was wedded to Philip the poet.
So won Philip his bride. They are married and gone—But oh, Thou
Mighty one, Muse of great Epos, and Idyll the playful and tender,
Be it recounted in song, ere we part, and thou fly to thy Pindus,
(Pindus is it, O Muse, or Ætna, or even Ben-nevis?)
Be it recounted in song, O Muse of the Epos and Idyll,
Who gave what at the wedding, the gifts and fair gratulations.
Adam, the grave careful Adam, a medicine chest and tool-box,
Hope a saddle, and Arthur a plough, and the Piper a rifle,
Airlie a necklace for Elspie, and Hobbes a Family Bible,
Airlie a necklace, and Hobbes a Bible and iron bedstead.
What was the letter, O Muse, sent withal by the corpulent hero?
This is the letter of Hobbes the kilted and corpulent hero.
So the last speech and confession is made, O my eloquent speaker!
So the good time is coming, or come is it? O my Chartist!
So the cathedral is finished at last, O my Pugin of women;
Finished, and now, is it true? to be taken out whole to New Zealand!
Well, go forth to thy field, to thy barley, with Ruth, O Boaz,

Ruth, who for thee hath deserted her people, her gods, her mountains.
Go, as in Ephrath of old, in the gate of Bethlehem said they,
Go, be the wife in thy house both Rachel and Leah unto thee;
Be thy wedding of silver, albeit of iron thy bedstead!
Yea, to the full golden fifty renewed be! and fair memoranda
Happily fill the fly-leaves duly left in the Family Bible.
Live, and when Hobbes is forgotten, may'st thou, an unroasted Grand-sire,
See thy children's children, and Democracy upon New Zealand!
This was the letter of Hobbes, and this the postscript after.
Wit in the letter will prate, but wisdom speaks in a postscript;
Listen to wisdom—Which things—you perhaps didn't know, my dear fellow,
I have reflected; Which things are an allegory, Philip.
For this Rachel-and-Leah is marriage; which, I have seen it,
Lo, and have known it, is always, and must be, bigamy only,
Even in noblest kind a duality, compound, and complex,
One part heavenly-ideal, the other vulgar and earthy:
For this Rachel-and-Leah is marriage, and Laban, their father,
Circumstance, chance, the world, our uncle and hard task-master.
Rachel we found as we fled from the daughters of Heth by the desert
Rachel we met at the well; we came, we saw, we kissed her;
Rachel we serve-for, long years,—that seem as a few days only,
E'en for the love we have to her,—and win her at last of Laban.
Is it not Rachel we take in our joy from the hand of her father?
Is it not Rachel we lead in the mystical veil from the altar?

Rachel we dream-of at night: in the morning, behold, it is Leah.
‘Nay, it is custom,’ saith Laban, the Leah indeed is the elder.
Happy and wise who consents to redouble his service to Laban,
So, fulfilling her week, he may add to the elder the younger,
Not repudiates Leah, but wins the Rachel unto her!
Neither hate thou thy Leah, my Jacob, she also is worthy;
So, many days shall thy Rachel have joy, and survive her sister;
Yea, and her children—Which things are an allegory, Philip,
Aye, and by Origen’s head with a vengeance truly, a long one!
This was a note from the Tutor, the grave man, nick-named Adam.
I shall see you of course, my Philip, before your departure
Joy be with you, my boy, with you and your beautiful Elspie.
Happy is he that found, and finding was not heedless;
Happy is he that found, and happy the friend that was with him.
So won Philip his bride:—
They are married and gone to New Zealand.
Five hundred pounds in pocket, with books, and two or three pictures,
Tool-box, plough, and the rest, they rounded the sphere to New Zealand.
There he hewed, and dug; subdued the earth and his spirit;
There he built him a home; there Elspie bare him his children,
David and Bella; perhaps ere this too an Elspie or Adam;
There hath he farmstead and land, and fields of corn and flax fields;
And the Antipodes too have a Bothie of Tober-na-vuolich.

# IDYLLIC SKETCHES.

## ITE DOMUM SATURÆ, VENIT HESPERUS.

The skies have sunk, and hid the upper snow
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie),
The rainy clouds are filing fast below,
And wet will be the path, and wet shall we.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.
Ah dear, and where is he, a year agone,
Who stepped beside and cheered us on and on?
My sweetheart wanders far away from me,
In foreign land or on a foreign sea.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.
The lightning zigzags shoot across the sky
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie),
And through the vale the rains go sweeping by;
Ah me, and when in shelter shall we be?
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.
Cold, dreary cold, the stormy winds feel they
O’er foreign lands and foreign seas that stray
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie).
And doth he e’er, I wonder, bring to mind
The pleasant huts and herds he left behind?
And doth he sometimes in his slumbering see

The feeding kine, and doth he think of me,
My sweetheart wandering wheresoe’er it be?
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.
The thunder bellows far from snow to snow
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie),
And loud and louder roars the flood below.
Heigho! but soon in shelter shall we be:
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.
Or shall he find before his term be sped,
Some comelier maid that he shall wish to wed?
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.)
For weary is work, and weary day by day
To have your comfort miles on miles away.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.
Or may it be that I shall find my mate,
And he returning see himself too late?
For work we must, and what we see, we see,
And God he knows, and what must be, must be,
When sweethearts wander far away from me.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.
The sky behind is brightening up anew
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie),
The rain is ending, and our journey too:
Heigho! aha! for here at home are we:—

In, Rose, and in, Provence and La Palie.

## A LONDON IDYLL.

On grass, on gravel, in the sun,
Or now beneath the shade,
They went, in pleasant Kensington,
A prentice and a maid.
That Sunday morning's April glow,
How should it not impart
A stir about the veins that flow
To feed the youthful heart.
Ah! years may come, and years may bring
The truth that is not bliss,
But will they bring another thing
That can compare with this?
I read it in that arm she lays
So soft on his; her mien,
Her step, her very gown betrays
(What in her eyes were seen)
That not in vain the young buds round,
The cawing birds above,
The air, the incense of the ground,
Are whispering, breathing love.
Ah! years may come, &c.
To inclination, young and blind,

So perfect, as they lent,
By purest innocence confined
Unconscious free consent.
Persuasive power of vernal change,
On this, thine earliest day,
Canst thou have found in all thy range
One fitter type than they?
Ah! years may come, &c.
Th’ high-titled cares of adult strife,
Which we our duties call,
Trades, arts, and politics of life,
Say, have they after all,
One other object, end or use
Than that, for girl and boy,
The punctual earth may still produce
This golden flower of joy?
Ah! years may come, &c.
O odours of new-budding rose,
O lily’s chaste perfume,
O fragrance that didst first unclose
The young Creation’s bloom!
Ye hang around me, while in sun
Anon and now in shade,
I watched in pleasant Kensington

The prentice and the maid.

Ah! years may come, and years may bring

The truth that is not bliss,

But will they bring another thing

That will compare with this?

## NATURA NATURANS.[12]

Beside me,—in the car,—she sat,

She spake not, no, nor looked to me:

From her to me, from me to her,

What passed so subtly, stealthily?

As rose to rose that by it blows

Its interchanged aroma flings;

Or wake to sound of one sweet note

The virtues of disparted strings.

Beside me, nought but this!—but this,

That influent as within me dwelt

Her life, mine too within her breast,

Her brain, her every limb she felt:

We sat; while o’er and in us, more

And more, a power unknown prevailed,

Inhaling, and inhaled,—and still

’Twas one, inhaling or inhaled.

Beside me, nought but this;—and passed;

I passed; and know not to this day

If gold or jet her girlish hair,
If black, or brown, or lucid-grey
Her eye's young glance: the fickle chance
That joined us, yet may join again;
But I no face again could greet
As hers, whose life was in me then.
As unsuspecting mere a maid
As, fresh in maidhood's bloomiest bloom,
In casual second-class did e'er
By casual youth her seat assume;
Or vestal, say, of saintliest clay,
For once by balmiest airs betrayed
Unto emotions too, too sweet
To be unlingeringly gainsaid:
Unowning then, confusing soon
With dreamier dreams that o'er the glass
Of shyly ripening woman-sense
Reflected, scarce reflected, pass,
A wife may-be, a mother she
In Hymen's shrine recalls not now,
She first in hour, ah, not profane,
With me to Hymen learnt to bow.
Ah no!—Yet owned we, fused in one,
The Power which e'en in stones and earths

By blind elections felt, in forms
Organic breeds to myriad births;
By lichen small on granite wall
Approved, its faintest feeblest stir
Slow spreading, strengthening long, at last
Vibrated full in me and her
In me and her—sensation strange!
The lily grew to pendent head,
To vernal airs the mossy bank
Its sheeny primrose spangles spread,
In roof o'er roof of shade sun-proof
Did cedar strong itself outclimb,
And altitude of aloe proud
Aspire in floreal crown sublime;
Flashed flickering forth fantastic flies,
Big bees their burly bodies swung,
Rooks roused with civic din the elms,
And lark its wild reveillez rung;
In Libyan dell the light gazelle,
The leopard lithe in Indian glade,
And dolphin, brightening tropic seas,
In us were living, leapt and played:
Their shells did slow crustacea build,
Their gilded skins did snakes renew.

While mightier spines for loftier kind
Their types in amplest limbs outgrew;
Yea, close comprest in human breast,
What moss, and tree, and livelier thing,
What Earth, Sun, Star of force possest,
Lay budding, burgeoning forth for Spring
Such sweet preluding sense of old
Led on in Eden's sinless place
The hour when bodies human first
Combined the primal prime embrace,
Such genial heat the blissful seat
In man and woman owned unblamed,
When, naked both, its garden paths
They walked unconscious, unashamed:
Ere, clouded yet in mistiest dawn,
Above the horizon dusk and dun,
One mountain crest with light had tipped
That Orb that is the Spirit's Sun;
Ere dreamed young flowers in vernal showers
Of fruit to rise the flower above,
Or ever yet to young Desire
Was told the mystic name of Love.

# AMOURS DE VOYAGE.

Oh, you are sick of self-love, Malvolio,

And taste with a distempered appetite!

Shakspeare.

Il doutait de tout, même de l’amour.

French Novel.

Solvitur ambulando.

Solutio Sophismatum.

Flevit amores

Non elaboratum ad pedem.

Horace.

## AMOURS DE VOYAGE.

CANTO I.

Over the great windy waters, and over the clear-crested summits,

Unto the sun and the sky, and unto the perfecter earth,

Come, let us go,—to a land wherein gods of the old time wandered,

Where every breath even now changes to ether divine.

Come, let us go; though withal a voice whisper, ‘The world that we live in,

Whithersoever we turn, still is the same narrow crib;

’Tis but to prove limitation, and measure a cord, that we travel;

Let who would ’scape and be free go to his chamber and think;

’Tis but to change idle fancies for memories wilfully falser;

’Tis but to go and have been.’—Come, little bark! let us go.

i. Claude To Eustace.

Dear Eustatio, I write that you may write me an answer.

Or at the least to put us again en rapport with each other.
Rome disappoints me much,—St. Peter's, perhaps, in especial;
Only the Arch of Titus and view from the Lateran please me:
This, however, perhaps is the weather, which truly is horrid.
Greece must be better, surely; and yet I am feeling so spiteful,
That I could travel to Athens, to Delphi, and Troy, and Mount Sinai,
Though but to see with my eyes that these are vanity also.
Rome disappoints me much; I hardly as yet understand, but
Rubbishy seems the word that most exactly would suit it.
All the foolish destructions, and all the sillier savings,
All the incongruous things of past incompatible ages,
Seem to be treasured up here to make fools of present and future.
Would to Heaven the old Goths had made a cleaner sweep of it!
Would to Heaven some new ones would come and destroy these churches!
However, one can live in Rome as also in London.
It is a blessing, no doubt, to be rid, at least for a time, of
All one's friends and relations,—yourself (forgive me!) included,—
All the assujettissement of having been what one has been,
What one thinks one is, or thinks that others suppose one;
Yet, in despite of all, we turn like fools to the English.
Vernon has been my fate; who is here the same that you knew him—
Making the tour, it seems, with friends of the name of Trevellyn.

ii. Claude to Eustace.

Rome disappoints me still; but I shrink and adapt myself to it.

Somehow a tyrannous sense of a superincumbent oppression
Still, wherever I go, accompanies ever, and makes me
Feel like a tree (shall I say?) buried under a ruin of brickwork
Rome, believe me, my friend, is like its own Monte Testaceo,
Merely a marvellous mass of broken and castaway wine-pots.
Ye gods! what do I want with this rubbish of ages departed,
Things that Nature abhors, the experiments that she has failed in?
What do I find in the Forum? An archway and two or three pillars.
Well, but St. Peter's? Alas, Bernini has filled it with sculpture!
No one can cavil, I grant, at the size of the great Coliseum.
Doubtless the notion of grand and capacious and massive amusement,
This the old Romans had; but tell me, is this an idea?
Yet of solidity much, but of splendour little is extant:
'Brickwork I found thee, and marble I left thee!' their Emperor vaunted;
'Marble I thought thee, and brickwork I find thee!' the Tourist may answer.

iii. Georgina Trevellyn to Louisa ——.

At last, dearest Louisa, I take up my pen to address you.
Here we are, you see, with the seven-and-seventy boxes,
Courier, Papa and Mamma, the children, and Mary and Susan:
Here we all are at Rome, and delighted of course with St. Peter's,
And very pleasantly lodged in the famous Piazza di Spagna.
Rome is a wonderful place, but Mary shall tell you about it;
Not very gay, however; the English are mostly at Naples;
There are the A.'s, we hear, and most of the W. party.

George, however, is come; did I tell you about his mustachios?
Dear, I must really stop, for the carriage, they tell me, is waiting;
Mary will finish; and Susan is writing, they say, to Sophia.
Adieu, dearest Louise,—evermore your faithful Georgina.
Who can a Mr. Claude be whom George has taken to be with?
Very stupid, I think, but George says so very clever.
iv. Claude to Eustace.
No, the Christian faith, as at any rate I understood it.
With its humiliations and exaltations combining,
Exaltations sublime, and yet diviner abasements,
Aspirations from something most shameful here upon earth and
In our poor selves to something most perfect above in the heavens,—
No, the Christian faith, as I, at least, understood it,
Is not here, O Rome, in any of these thy churches;
Is not here, but in Freiburg, or Rheims, or Westminster Abbey,
What in thy Dome I find, in all thy recenter efforts,
Is a something, I think, more rational far, more earthly,
Actual, less ideal, devout not in scorn and refusal,
But in a positive, calm, Stoic-Epicurean acceptance.
This I begin to detect in St. Peter's and some of the churches,
Mostly in all that I see of the sixteenth-century masters;
Overlaid of course with infinite gauds and gewgaws,
Innocent, playful follies, the toys and trinkets of childhood,
Forced on maturer years, as the serious one thing needful,

By the barbarian will of the rigid and ignorant Spaniard.
Curious work, meantime, re-entering society: how we
Walk a livelong day, great Heaven, and watch our shadows!
What our shadows seem, forsooth, we will ourselves be.
Do I look like that I you think me that: then I am that.
v. Claude to Eustace.
Luther, they say, was unwise; like a half-taught German, he could not
See that old follies were passing most tranquilly out of remembrance;
Leo the Tenth was employing all efforts to clear out abuses;
Jupiter, Juno, and Venus, Fine Arts, and Fine Letters, the Poets,
Scholars, and Sculptors, and Painters, were quietly clearing away the
Martyrs, and Virgins, and Saints, or at any rate Thomas Aquinas:
He must forsooth make a fuss and distend his huge Wittenberg lungs, and
Bring back Theology once yet again in a flood upon Europe:
Lo you, for forty days from the windows of heaven it fell; the
Waters prevail on the earth yet more for a hundred and fifty;
Are they abating at last? the doves that are sent to explore are
Wearily fain to return, at the best with a leaflet of promise,—
Fain to return, as they went, to the wandering wave-tost vessel,—
Fain to re-enter the roof which covers the clean and the unclean,—
Luther, they say, was unwise; he didn’t see how things were going;
Luther was foolish,—but, O great God! what call you Ignatius?
O my tolerant soul, be still! but you talk of barbarians,
Alaric, Attila, Genseric;—why, they came, they killed, they

Ravaged, and went on their way; but these vile, tyrannous Spaniards,
These are here still,—how long, O ye heavens, in the country of Dante?
These, that fanaticized Europe, which now can forget them, release not
This, their choicest of prey, this Italy; here you see them,—
Here, with emasculate pupils and gimcrack churches of Gesu,
Pseudo-learning and lies, confessional-boxes and postures,—
Here, with metallic beliefs and regimental devotions,—
Here, overcrusting with slime, perverting, defacing, debasing,
Michael Angelo's Dome, that had hung the Pantheon in heaven,
Raphael's Joys and Graces, and thy clear stars, Galileo!

vi. Claude to Eustace.

Which of three Misses Trevellyn it is that Vernon shall marry
Is not a thing to be known; for our friend is one of those natures
Which have their perfect delight in the general tender-domestic;
So that he trifles with Mary's shawl, ties Susan's bonnet,
Dances with all, but at home is most, they say, with Georgina,
Who is, however, too silly in my apprehension for Vernon.
I, as before when I wrote, continue to see them a little;
Not that I like them much or care a bajocco for Vernon,
But I am slow at Italian, have not many English acquaintance,
And I am asked, in short, and am not good at excuses.
Middle-class people these, bankers very likely, not wholly
Pure of the taint of the shop; will at table d'hôte and restaurant
Have their shilling's worth, their penny's pennyworth even:

Neither man’s aristocracy this, nor God’s, God knoweth!
Yet they are fairly descended, they give you to know, well connected;
Doubtless somewhere in some neighbourhood have, and are careful to keep, some
Threadbare-genteel relations, who in their tum are enchanted
Grandly among county people to introduce at assemblies
To the unpennied cadets our cousins with excellent fortunes.
Neither man’s aristocracy this, nor God’s, God knoweth!
vii. Claude to Eustace.
Ah, what a shame, indeed, to abuse these most worthy people!
Ah, what a sin to have sneered at their innocent rustic pretensions!
Is it not laudable really, this reverent worship of station?
Is it not fitting that wealth should tender this homage to culture?
Is it not touching to witness these efforts, if little availing,
Painfully made, to perform the old ritual service of manners?
Shall not devotion atone for the absence of knowledge? and fervour
Palliate, cover, the fault of a superstitious observance?
Dear, dear, what do I say? but, alas! just now, like Iago,
I can be nothing at all, if it is not critical wholly;
So in fantastic height, in coxcomb exultation,
Here in the garden I walk, can freely concede to the Maker
That the works of His hand are all very good: His creatures,
Beast of the field and fowl, He brings them before me; I name them;
That which I name them, they are,—the bird, the beast, and the cattle.
But for Adam,—alas, poor critical coxcomb Adam!

But for Adam there is not found an help-meet for him.

viii. Claude to Eustace.

No, great Dome of Agrippa, thou art not Christian! canst not,
Strip and replaster and daub and do what they will with thee, be so!
Here underneath the great porch of colossal Corinthian columns,
Here as I walk, do I dream of the Christian belfries above them;
Or, on a bench as I sit and abide for long hours, till thy whole vast
Round grows dim as in dreams to my eyes, I repeople thy niches,
Not with the Martyrs, and Saints, and Confessors, and Virgins, and children,
But with the mightier forms of an older, austerer worship;
And I recite to myself, how
Eager for battle here
Stood Vulcan, here matronal Juno,
And with the bow to his shoulder faithful
He who with pure dew laveth of Castaly
His flowing locks, who holdeth of Lycia
The oak forest and the wood that bore him,
Delos' and Patara's own Apollo.[13]

ix. Claude to Eustace.

Yet it is pleasant, I own it, to be in their company; pleasant,
Whatever else it may be, to abide in the feminine presence.
Pleasant, but wrong, will you say? But this happy, serene coexistence
Is to some poor soft souls, I fear, a necessity simple,
Meat and drink and life, and music, filling with sweetness,

Thrilling with melody sweet, with harmonies strange overwhelming,
All the long-silent strings of an awkward, meaningless fabric.
Yet as for that, I could live, I believe, with children; to have those
Pure and delicate forms encompassing, moving about you,
This were enough, I could think; and truly with glad resignation
Could from the dream of Romance, from the fever of flushed adolescence,
Look to escape and subside into peaceful avuncular functions.
Nephews and nieces! alas, for as yet I have none! and, moreover,
Mothers are jealous, I fear me, too often, too rightfully; fathers
Think they have title exclusive to spoiling their own little darlings;
And by the law of the land, in despite of Malthusian doctrine,
No sort of proper provision is made for that most patriotic,
Most meritorious subject, the childless and bachelor uncle.

x. Claude to Eustace.

Ye, too, marvellous Twain, that erect on the Monte Cavallo
Stand by your rearing steeds in the grace of your motionless movement,
Stand with your upstretched arms and tranquil regardant faces,
Stand as instinct with life in the might of immutable manhood,—
O ye mighty and strange, ye ancient divine ones of Hellas.
Are ye Christian too? to convert and redeem and renew you,
Will the brief form have sufficed, that a Pope has set up on the apex
Of the Egyptian stone that o'ertops you, the Christian symbol?
And ye, silent, supreme in serene and victorious marble,
Ye that encircle the walls of the stately Vatican chambers,

Juno and Ceres, Minerva, Apollo, the Muses and Bacchus,
Ye unto whom far and near come posting the Christian pilgrims,
Ye that are ranged in the halls of the mystic Christian Pontiff,
Are ye also baptized? are ye of the kingdom of Heaven?
Utter, O some one, the word that shall reconcile Ancient and Modern!
Am I to turn me from this unto thee, great Chapel of Sixtus?

xi. Claude to Eustace.

These are the facts. The uncle, the elder brother, the squire (a
Little embarrassed, I fancy), resides in the family place in
Cornwall, of course; 'Papa is in business,' Mary informs me;
He's a good sensible man, whatever his trade is. The mother
Is—shall I call it fine?—herself she would tell you refined, and
Greatly, I fear me, looks down on my bookish and maladroit manners;
Somewhat affecteth the blue; would talk to me often of poets;
Quotes, which I hate, Childe Harold; but also appreciates Wordsworth;
Sometimes adventures on Schiller; and then to religion diverges;
Questions me much about Oxford; and yet, in her loftiest flights still
Grates the fastidious ear with the slightly mercantile accent.
Is it contemptible, Eustace—I'm perfectly ready to think so,—
Is it,—the horrible pleasure of pleasing inferior people?
I am ashamed my own self; and yet true it is, if disgraceful,
That for the first time in life I am living and moving with freedom.
I, who never could talk to the people I meet with my uncle,—
I, who have always failed,—I, trust me, can suit the Trevellyns;

I, believe me,—great conquest, am liked by the country bankers.
And I am glad to be liked, and like in return very kindly.
So it proceeds; Laissez faire, laissez aller,—such is the watchword.
Well, I know there are thousands as pretty and hundreds as pleasant.
Girls by the dozen as good, and girls in abundance with polish
Higher and manners more perfect than Susan or Mary Trevellyn.
Well, I know, after all, it is only juxtaposition,—
Juxtaposition, in short; and what is juxtaposition?
xii. Claude to Eustace.
But I am in for it now,—laissez faire, of a truth, laissez aller.
Yes, I am going,—I feel it, I feel and cannot recall it,—
Fusing with this thing and that, entering into all sorts of relations,
Tying I know not what ties, which, whatever they are, I know one thing,
Will, and must, woe is me, be one day painfully broken,—
Broken with painful remorses, with shrinkings of soul, and relentings,
Foolish delays, more foolish evasions, most foolish renewals.
But I have made the step, have quitted the ship of Ulysses;
Quitted the sea and the shore, passed into the magical island;
Yet on my lips is the moly, medicinal, offered of Hermes.
I have come into the precinct, the labyrinth closes around me,
Path into path rounding slyly; I pace slowly on, and the fancy,
Struggling awhile to sustain the long sequences weary, bewildered.
Fain must collapse in despair; I yield, I am lost, and know nothing;
Yet in my bosom unbroken remaineth the clue; I shall use it.

Lo, with the rope on my loins I descend through the fissure; I sink, yet
Inly secure in the strength of invisible arms up above me;
Still, wheresoever I swing, wherever to shore, or to shelf, or
Floor of cavern untrodden, shell sprinkled, enchanting, I know I
Yet shall one time feel the strong cord tighten about me,—
Feel it, relentless, upbear me from spots I would rest in; and though the
Rope sway wildly, I faint, crags wound me, from crag unto crag re-
Bounding, or, wide in the void, I die ten deaths, ere the end I
Yet shall plant firm foot on the broad lofty spaces I quit, shall
Feel underneath me again the great massy strengths of abstraction,
Look yet abroad from the height o'er the sea whose salt wave I have tasted.

xiii. Georgina Trevellyn to Louisa ——.

Dearest Louisa,—Inquire, if you please, about Mr. Claude ——.
He has been once at R., and remembers meeting the H.'s.
Harriet L., perhaps, may be able to tell you about him.
It is an awkward youth, but still with very good manners;
Not without prospects, we hear; and, George says, highly connected.
Georgy declares it absurd, but Mamma is alarmed, and insists he has
Taken up strange opinions, and may be turning a Papist.
Certainly once he spoke of a daily service he went to.
'Where?' we asked, and he laughed and answered, 'At the Pantheon
This was a temple, you know, and now is a Catholic church; and
Though it is said that Mazzini has sold it for Protestant service,
Yet I suppose this change can hardly as yet be effected.

Adieu again,—evermore, my dearest, your loving Georgina.

P.S. by Mary Trevellyn.

I am to tell you, you say, what I think of our last new acquaintance.

Well, then, I think that George has a very fair right to be jealous.

I do not like him much, though I do not dislike being with him.

He is what people call, I suppose, a superior man, and

Certainly seems so to me; but I think he is terribly selfish.

Alba, thou findest me still, and, Alba, thou findest me ever,

Now from the Capitol steps, now over Titus's Arch,

Here from the large grassy spaces that spread from the Lateran portal,

Towering o'er aqueduct lines lost in perspective between,

Or from a Vatican window, or bridge, or the high Coliseum,

Clear by the garlanded line cut of the Flavian ring.

Beautiful can I not call thee, and yet thou hast power to o'ermaster,

Power of mere beauty; in dreams, Alba, thou hauntest me still.

Is it religion? I ask me; or is it a vain superstition?

Slavery abject and gross? service, too feeble, of truth?

Is it an idol I bow to, or is it a god that I worship?

Do I sink back on the old, or do I soar from the mean?

So through the city I wander and question, unsatisfied ever,

Reverent so I accept, doubtful because I revere.

CANTO II.

Is it illusion? or does there a spirit from perfecter ages,

Here, even yet, amid loss, change, and corruption abide?

Does there a spirit we know not, though seek, though we find, comprehend not,
Here to entice and confuse, tempt and evade us, abide?
Lives in the exquisite grace of the column disjointed and single,
Haunts the rude masses of brick garlanded gaily with vine,
E'en in the turret fantastic surviving that springs from the ruin,
E'en in the people itself? is it illusion or not?
Is it illusion or not that attracteth the pilgrim transalpine,
Brings him a dullard and dunce hither to pry and to stare?
Is it illusion or not that allures the barbarian stranger,
Brings him with gold to the shrine, brings him in arms to the gate?
i. Claude to Eustace.
What do the people say, and what does the government do?—you
Ask, and I know not at all. Yet fortune will favour your hopes; and
I, who avoided it all, am fated, it seems, to describe it.
I, who nor meddle nor make in politics,—I who sincerely
Put not my trust in leagues nor any suffrage by ballot,
Never predicted Parisian millenniums, never beheld a
New Jerusalem coming down dressed like a bride out of heaven
Right on the Place de la Concorde,—I, nevertheless, let me say it,
Could in my soul of souls, this day, with the Gaul at the gates shed
One true tear for thee, thou poor little Roman Republic;
What, with the German restored, with Sicily safe to the Bourbon,
Not leave one poor corner for native Italian exertion?
France, it is foully done! and you, poor foolish England,—

You, who a twelvemonth ago said nations must choose for themselves, you
Could not, of course, interfere,—you, now, when a nation has chosen——
Pardon this folly! The Times will, of course, have announced the occasion,
Told you the news of to-day; and although it was slightly in error
When it proclaimed as a fact the Apollo was sold to a Yankee,
You may believe when it tells you the French are at Civita Vecchia.

ii. Claude to Eustace.

Dulce it is, and decorum, no doubt, for the country to fall,—to
Offer one's blood an oblation to Freedom, and die for the Cause; yet
Still, individual culture is also something, and no man
Finds quite distinct the assurance that he of all others is called on,
Or would be justified even, in taking away from the world that
Precious creature, himself. Nature sent him here to abide here;
Else why send him at all? Nature wants him still, it is likely;
On the whole, we are meant to look after ourselves; it is certain
Each has to eat for himself, digest for himself, and in general
Care for his own dear life, and see to his own preservation;
Nature's intentions, in most things uncertain, in this are decisive;
Which, on the whole, I conjecture the Romans will follow, and I shall.
So we cling to our rocks like limpets; Ocean may bluster,
Over and under and round us; we open our shells to imbibe our
Nourishment, close them again, and are safe, fulfilling the purpose
Nature intended,—a wise one, of course, and a noble, we doubt not.
Sweet it may be and decorous, perhaps, for the country to die; but,

On the whole, we conclude the Romans won't do it, and I sha'n't.

iii. Claude to Eustace.

Will they fight? They say so. And will the French? I can hardly,
Hardly think so; and yet—He is come, they say, to Palo,
He is passed from Monterone, at Santa Severa
He hath laid up his guns. But the Virgin, the Daughter of Roma,
She hath despised thee and laughed thee to scorn,—The Daughter of Tiber,
She hath shaken her head and built barricades against thee!
Will they fight! I believe it. Alas! 'tis ephemeral folly,
Vain and ephemeral folly, of course, compared with pictures,
Statues, and antique gems!—Indeed: and yet indeed too,
Yet, methought, in broad day did I dream,—tell it not in St. James's,
Whisper it not in thy courts, O Christ Church!—yet did I, waking,
Dream of a cadence that sings, Si tombent nos jeunes héros, la
Terre en produit de nouveaux contre vous tous prêts à se battre;
Dreamt of great indignations and angers transcendental,
Dreamt of a sword at my side and a battle-horse underneath me.

iv. Claude to Eustace.

Now supposing the French or the Neapolitan soldier
Should by some evil chance come exploring the Maison Serny
(Where the family English are all to assemble for safety),
Am I prepared to lay down my life for the British female?
Really, who knows? One has bowed and talked, till, little by little,
All the natural heat has escaped of the chivalrous spirit.

Oh, one conformed, of course; but one doesn't die for good manners,
Stab or shoot, or be shot, by way of graceful attention.
No, if it should be at all, it should be on the barricades there;
Should I incarnadine ever this inky pacifical finger,
Sooner far should it be for this vapour of Italy's freedom,
Sooner far by the side of the d——d and dirty plebeians.
Ah, for a child in the street I could strike; for the full-blown lady——
Somehow, Eustace, alas! I have not felt the vocation.
Yet these people of course will expect, as of course, my protection,
Vernon in radiant arms stand forth for the lovely Georgina,
And to appear, I suppose, were but common civility. Yes, and
Truly I do not desire they should either be killed or offended.
Oh, and of course, you will say, 'When the time comes, you will be ready.'
Ah, but before it comes, am I to presume it will be so?
What I cannot feel now, am I to suppose that I shall feel?
Am I not free to attend for the ripe and indubious instinct?
Am I forbidden to wait for the clear and lawful perception?
Is it the calling of man to surrender his knowledge and insight,
For the mere venture of what may, perhaps, be the virtuous action?
Must we, walking our earth, discern a little, and hoping
Some plain visible task shall yet for our hands be assigned us,—
Must we abandon the future for fear of omitting the present,
Quit our own fireside hopes at the alien call of a neighbour,
To the mere possible shadow of Deity offer the victim?

And is all this, my friend, but a weak and ignoble refining,
Wholly unworthy the head or the heart of Your Own Correspondent?

v. Claude to Eustace.

Yes, we are fighting at last, it appears. This morning as usual,
Murray, as usual, in hand, I enter the Caffè Nuovo;
Seating myself with a sense as it were of a change in the weather,
Not understanding, however, but thinking mostly of Murray,
And, for to-day is their day, of the Campidoglio Marbles;
Caffè-latte! I call to the waiter,—and Non c' è latte,
This is the answer he makes me, and this is the sign of a battle.
So I sit: and truly they seem to think any one else more
Worthy than me of attention. I wait for my milkless nero,
Free to observe undistracted all sorts and sizes of persons,
Blending civilian and soldier in strangest costume, coming in, and
Gulping in hottest haste, still standing, their coffee,—withdrawing
Eagerly, jangling a sword on the steps, or jogging a musket
Slung to the shoulder behind. They are fewer, moreover, than usual,
Much and silenter far; and so I begin to imagine
Something is really afloat. Ere I leave, the Caffè is empty,
Empty too the streets, in all its length the Corso
Empty, and empty I see to my right and left the Condotti.
Twelve o'clock, on the Pincian Hill, with lots of English,
Germans, Americans, French,—the Frenchmen, too, are protected,—
So we stand in the sun, but afraid of a probable shower;

So we stand and stare, and see, to the left of St. Peter's,
Smoke, from the cannon, white,—but that is at intervals only,—
Black, from a burning house, we suppose, by the Cavalleggieri;
And we believe we discern some lines of men descending
Down through the vineyard-slopes, and catch a bayonet gleaming.
Every ten minutes, however,—in this there is no misconception,—
Comes a great white puff from behind Michel Angelo's dome, and
After a space the report of a real big gun,—not the Frenchman's!—
That must be doing some work. And so we watch and conjecture.
Shortly, an Englishman comes, who says he has been to St. Peter's,
Seen the Piazza and troops, but that is all he can tell us;
So we watch and sit, and, indeed, it begins to be tiresome.—
All this smoke is outside; when it has come to the inside,
It will be time, perhaps, to descend and retreat to our houses.
Half-past one, or two. The report of small arms frequent,
Sharp and savage indeed; that cannot all be for nothing:
So we watch and wonder; but guessing is tiresome, very.
Weary of wondering, watching, and guessing, and gossiping idly,
Down I go, and pass through the quiet streets with the knots of
National Guards patrolling, and flags hanging out at the windows,
English, American, Danish,—and, after offering to help an
Irish family moving en masse to the Maison Serny,
After endeavouring idly to minister balm to the trembling
Quinquagenarian fears of two lone British spinsters,

Go to make sure of my dinner before the enemy enter.
But by this there are signs of stragglers returning; and voices
Talk, though you don't believe it, of guns and prisoners taken;
And on the walls you read the first bulletin of the morning.—
This is all that I saw, and all I know of the battle.
Victory! Victory!—Yes! ah, yes, thou republican Zion,
Truly the kings of the earth are gathered and gone by together;
Doubtless they marvelled to witness such things, were astonished, and so forth.
Victory! Victory! Victory!—Ah, but it is, believe me,
Easier, easier far, to intone the chant of the martyr
Than to indite any pæan of any victory. Death may
Sometimes be noble; but life, at the best, will appear an illusion.
While the great pain is upon us, it is great; when it is over,
Why, it is over. The smoke of the sacrifice rises to heaven,
Of a sweet savour, no doubt, to Somebody; but on the altar,
Lo, there is nothing remaining but ashes and dirt and ill odour.
So it stands, you perceive; the labial muscles that swelled with
Vehement evolution of yesterday Marseillaises,
Articulations sublime of defiance and scorning, to-day col-
Lapse and languidly mumble, while men and women and papers
Scream and re-scream to each other the chorus of Victory. Well, but
I am thankful they fought, and glad that the Frenchmen were beaten.

vii. Claude to Eustace.

So, I have seen a man killed! An experience that, among others!

Yes, I suppose I have; although I can hardly be certain,
And in a court of justice could never declare I had seen it.
But a man was killed, I am told, in a place where I saw
Something; a man was killed, I am told, and I saw something.
I was returning home from St. Peter's; Murray, as usual,
Under my arm, I remember; had crossed the St. Angelo bridge; and
Moving towards the Condotti, had got to the first barricade, when
Gradually, thinking still of St. Peter's, I became conscious
Of a sensation of movement opposing me,—tendency this way
(Such as one fancies may be in a stream when the wave of the tide is
Coming and not yet come,—a sort of noise and retention);
So I turned, and, before I turned, caught sight of stragglers
Heading a crowd, it is plain, that is coming behind that corner.
Looking up, I see windows filled with heads; the Piazza,
Into which you remember the Ponte St. Angelo enters,
Since I passed, has thickened with curious groups; and now the
Crowd is coming, has turned, has crossed that last barricade, is
Here at my side. In the middle they drag at something. What is it?
Ha! bare swords in the air, held up? There seem to be voices
Pleading and hands putting back; official, perhaps; but the swords are
Many, and bare in the air. In the air? they descend; they are smiting,
Hewing, chopping—At what? In the air once more upstretched? And—
Is it blood that's on them? Yes, certainly blood! Of whom, then?
Over whom is the cry of this furor of exultation?

While they are skipping and screaming, and dancing their caps on the points of
Swords and bayonets, I to the outskirts back, and ask a
Mercantile-seeming bystander, ‘What is it?’ and he, looking always
That way, makes me answer, ‘A Priest, who was trying to fly to
The Neapolitan army,’—and thus explains the proceeding.
You didn’t see the dead man? No;—I began to be doubtful;
I was in black myself, and didn’t know what mightn’t happen,—
But a National Guard close by me, outside of the hubbub,
Broke his sword with slashing a broad hat covered with dust,—and
Passing away from the place with Murray under my arm, and
Stooping, I saw through the legs of the people the legs of a body.
You are the first, do you know, to whom I have mentioned the matter.
Whom should I tell it to else?—these girls?—the Heavens forbid it!—
Quidnuncs at Monaldini’s?—Idlers upon the Pincian?
If I rightly remember, it happened on that afternoon when
Word of the nearer approach of a new Neapolitan army
First was spread. I began to bethink me of Paris Septembers,
Thought I could fancy the look of that old ’Ninety-two. On that evening
Three or four, or, it may be, five, of these people were slaughtered.
Some declared they had, one of them, fired on a sentinel; others
Say they were only escaping; a Priest, it is currently stated,
Stabbed a National Guard on the very Piazza Colonna:
History, Rumour of Rumours, I leave to thee to determine!
But I am thankful to say the government seems to have strength to

Put it down; it has vanished, at least; the place is most peaceful.
Through the Trastevere walking last night, at nine of the clock, I
Found no sort of disorder; I crossed by the Island-bridges,
So by the narrow streets to the Ponte Rotto, and onwards
Thence by the Temple of Vesta, away to the great Coliseum,
Which at the full of the moon is an object worthy a visit.

viii. Georgina Trevellyn to Louisa ——.

Only think, dearest Louisa, what fearful scenes we have witnessed!—
George has just seen Garibaldi, dressed up in a long white cloak, on
Horseback, riding by, with his mounted negro behind him:
This is a man, you know, who came from America with him,
Out of the woods, I suppose, and uses a lasso in fighting,
Which is, I don't quite know, but a sort of noose, I imagine;
This he throws on the heads of the enemy's men in a battle,
Pulls them into his reach, and then most cruelly kills them:
Mary does not believe, but we heard it from an Italian.
Mary allows she was wrong about Mr. Claude being selfish;
He was most useful and kind on the terrible thirtieth of April.
Do not write here any more; we are starting directly for Florence:
We should be off to-morrow, if only Papa could get horses;
All have been seized everywhere for the use of this dreadful Mazzini.
P.S.
Mary has seen thus far.—I am really so angry, Louisa,—
Quite out of patience, my dearest! What can the man be intending?

I am quite tired; and Mary, who might bring him to in a moment,
Lets him go on as he likes, and neither will help nor dismiss him.

ix. Claude to Eustace.

It is most curious to see what a power a few calm words (in
Merely a brief proclamation) appear to possess on the people.
Order is perfect, and peace; the city is utterly tranquil;
And one cannot conceive that this easy and nonchalant crowd, that
Flows like a quiet stream through street and market-place, entering
Shady recesses and bays of church, osteria, and caffè,
Could in a moment be changed to a flood as of molten lava,
Boil into deadly wrath and wild homicidal delusion.
Ah, 'tis an excellent race,—and even in old degradation,
Under a rule that enforces to flattery, lying, and cheating,
E'en under Pope and Priest, a nice and natural people.
Oh, could they but be allowed this chance of redemption!—but clearly
That is not likely to be. Meantime, notwithstanding all journals,
Honour for once to the tongue and the pen of the eloquent writer!
Honour to speech! and all honour to thee, thou noble Mazzini!

x. Claude to Eustace.

I am in love, meantime, you think; no doubt you would think so.
I am in love, you say; with those letters, of course, you would say so.
I am in love, you declare. I think not so; yet I grant you
It is a pleasure indeed to converse with this girl. Oh, rare gift,
Rare felicity, this! she can talk in a rational way, can

Speak upon subjects that really are matters of mind and of thinking,
Yet in perfection retain her simplicity; never, one moment,
Never, however you urge it, however you tempt her, consents to
Step from ideas and fancies and loving sensations to those vain
Conscious understandings that vex the minds of mankind.
No, though she talk, it is music; her fingers desert not the keys; ’tis
Song, though you hear in the song the articulate vocables sounded,
Syllabled singly and sweetly the words of melodious meaning.
I am in love, you say: I do not think so, exactly.

xi. Claude to Eustace.

There are two different kinds, I believe, of human attraction:
One which simply disturbs, unsettles, and makes you uneasy,
And another that poises, retains, and fixes and holds you.
I have no doubt, for myself, in giving my voice for the latter.
I do not wish to be moved, but growing where I was growing,
There more truly to grow, to live where as yet I had languished.
I do not like being moved: for the will is excited; and action
Is a most dangerous thing; I tremble for something factitious,
Some malpractice of heart and illegitimate process;
We are so prone to these things, with our terrible notions of duty.

xii. Claude to Eustace.

Ah, let me look, let me watch, let me wait, unhurried, unprompted!
Bid me not venture on aught that could alter or end what is present!
Say not, Time flies, and Occasion, that never returns, is departing!

Drive me not out, ye ill angels with fiery swords, from my Eden,
Waiting, and watching, and looking! Let love be its own inspiration!
Shall not a voice, if a voice there must be, from the airs that environ,
Yea, from the conscious heavens, without our knowledge or effort,
Break into audible words? And love be its own inspiration?

xiii. Claude to Eustace.

Wherefore and how I am certain, I hardly can tell; but it is so.
She doesn't like me, Eustace; I think she never will like me.
Is it my fault, as it is my misfortune, my ways are not her ways?
Is it my fault, that my habits and modes are dissimilar wholly?
'Tis not her fault; 'tis her nature, her virtue, to misapprehend them:
'Tis not her fault; 'tis her beautiful nature, not ever to know me.
Hopeless it seems,—yet I cannot, though hopeless, determine to leave it:
She goes—therefore I go; she moves,—I move, not to lose her.

xiv. Claude to Eustace.

Oh, 'tisn't manly, of course, 'tisn't manly, this method of wooing;
'Tisn't the way very likely to win. For the woman, they tell you,
Ever prefers the audacious, the wilful, the vehement hero;
She has no heart for the timid, the sensitive soul; and for knowledge,—
Knowledge, O ye Gods!—when did they appreciate knowledge?
Wherefore should they, either? I am sure I do not desire it.
Ah, and I feel too, Eustace, she cares not a tittle about me!
(Care about me, indeed! and do I really expect it?)
But my manner offends; my ways are wholly repugnant;

Every word that I utter estranges, hurts, and repels her;
Every moment of bliss that I gain, in her exquisite presence,
Slowly, surely, withdraws her, removes her, and severs her from me.
Not that I care very much!—any way I escape from the boy's own
Folly, to which I am prone, of loving where it is easy.
Not that I mind very much! Why should I? I am not in love, and
Am prepared, I think, if not by previous habit,
Yet in the spirit beforehand for this and all that is like it;
It is an easier matter for us contemplative creatures,
Us upon whom the pressure of action is laid so lightly;
We, discontented indeed with things in particular, idle,
Sickly, complaining, by faith, in the vision of things in general,
Manage to hold on our way without, like others around us,
Seizing the nearest arm to comfort, help, and support us.
Yet, after all, my Eustace, I know but little about it.
All I can say for myself, for present alike and for past, is,
Mary Trevellyn, Eustace, is certainly worth your acquaintance.
You couldn't come, I suppose, as far as Florence to see her?

xv. Georgina Trevellyn to Louisa ——.

...To-morrow we're starting for Florence,
Truly rejoiced, you may guess, to escape from republican terrors;
Mr. C. and Papa to escort us; we by vettura
Through Siena, and Georgy to follow and join us by Leghorn.
Then—Ah, what shall I say, my dearest? I tremble in thinking!

You will imagine my feelings,—the blending of hope and of sorrow.
How can I bear to abandon Papa and Mamma and my Sisters?
Dearest Louise, indeed it is very alarming; but, trust me
Ever, whatever may change, to remain your loving Georgina.
P.S. by Mary Trevellyn.
...'Do I like Mr. Claude any better?'
I am to tell you,—and, 'Pray, is it Susan or I that attract him?'
This he never has told, but Georgina could certainly ask him.
All I can say for myself is, alas! that he rather repels me.
There! I think him agreeable, but also a little repulsive.
So be content, dear Louisa; for one satisfactory marriage
Surely will do in one year for the family you would establish;
Neither Susan nor I shall afford you the joy of a second.
P.S. by Georgina Trevellyn.
Mr. Claude, you must know, is behaving a little bit better;
He and Papa are great friends; but he really is too shilly-shally,—
So unlike George! Yet I hope that the matter is going on fairly.
I shall, however, get George, before he goes, to say something.
Dearest Louise, how delightful to bring young people together!
Is it to Florence we follow, or are we to tarry yet longer,
E'en amid clamour of arms, here in the city of old,
Seeking from clamour of arms in the Past and the Arts to be hidden,
Vainly 'mid Arts and the Past seeking one life to forget?
Ah, fair shadow, scarce seen, go forth! for anon he shall follow,—

He that beheld thee, anon, whither thou leadest must go!
Go, and the wise, loving Muse, she also will follow and find thee!
She, should she linger in Rome, were not dissevered from thee!

CANTO III.

Yet to the wondrous St. Peter's, and yet to the solemn Rotonda,
Mingling with heroes and gods, yet to the Vatican Walls,
Yet may we go, and recline, while a whole mighty world seems above us,
Gathered and fixed to all time into one roofing supreme;
Yet may we, thinking on these things, exclude what is meaner around us;
Yet, at the worst of the worst, books and a chamber remain;
Yet may we think, and forget, and possess our souls in resistance.—
Ah, but away from the stir, shouting, and gossip of war,
Where, upon Apennine slope, with the chestnut the oak-trees immingle,
Where, amid odorous copse bridle-paths wander and wind,
Where, under mulberry-branches, the diligent rivulet sparkles,
Or amid cotton and maize peasants their water-works ply,
Where, over fig-tree and orange in tier upon tier still repeated,
Garden on garden upreared, balconies step to the sky,—
Ah, that I were far away from the crowd and the streets of the city,
Under the vine-trellis laid, O my beloved, with thee!

i. Mary Trevellyn to Miss Roper,—on the way to Florence.

Why doesn't Mr. Claude come with us? you ask.—We don't know,
You should know better than we. He talked of the Vatican marbles;
But I can't wholly believe that this was the actual reason,—

He was so ready before, when we asked him to come and escort us.
Certainly he is odd, my dear Miss Roper. To change so
Suddenly, just for a whim, was not quite fair to the party,—
Not quite right. I declare, I really almost am offended:
I, his great friend, as you say, have doubtless a title to be so.
Not that I greatly regret it, for dear Georgina distinctly
Wishes for nothing so much as to show her adroitness. But, oh, my
Pen will not write any more;—let us say nothing further about it.
Yes, my dear Miss Roper, I certainly called him repulsive;
So I think him, but cannot be sure I have used the expression
Quite as your pupil should; yet he does most truly repel me.
Was it to you I made use of the word? or who was it told you?
Yes, repulsive; observe, it is but when he talks of ideas
That he is quite unaffected, and free, and expansive, and easy;
I could pronounce him simply a cold intellectual being.—
When does he make advances?—He thinks that women should woo him;
Yet, if a girl should do so, would be but alarmed and disgusted.
She that should love him must look for small love in return,—like the ivy
On the stone wall, must expect but a rigid and niggard support, and
E’en to get that must go searching all round with her humble embraces.

ii. Claude to Eustace,—from Rome.

Tell me, my friend, do you think that the grain would sprout in the furrow,
Did it not truly accept as its summum and ultimum bonum
That mere common and may-be indifferent soil it is set in?

Would it have force to develop and open its young cotyledons,
Could it compare, and reflect, and examine one thing with another?
Would it endure to accomplish the round of its natural functions
Were it endowed with a sense of the general scheme of existence?
While from Marseilles in the steamer we voyage to Civita Vecchia,
Vexed in the squally seas as we lay by Capraja and Elba,
Standing, uplifted, alone on the heaving poop of the vessel,
Looking around on the waste of the rushing incurious billows,
'This is Nature,' I said: 'we are born as it were from her waters;
Over her billows that buffet and beat us, her offspring uncared-for,
Casting one single regard of a painful victorious knowledge,
Into her billows that buffet and beat us we sink and are swallowed.'
This was the sense in my soul, as I swayed with the poop of the steamer;
And as unthinking I sat in the hall of the famed Ariadne,
Lo, it looked at me there from the face of a Triton in marble.
It is the simpler thought, and I can believe it the truer.
Let us not talk of growth; we are still in our Aqueous Ages.

iii. Claude to Eustace.

Farewell, Politics, utterly! What can I do? I cannot
Fight, you know; and to talk I am wholly ashamed. And although I
Gnash my teeth when I look in your French or your English papers,
What is the good of that? Will swearing, I wonder, mend matters?
Cursing and scolding repel the assailants? No, it is idle;
No, whatever befalls, I will hide, will ignore or forget it.

Let the tail shift for itself; I will bury my head. And what's the
Roman Republic to me, or I to the Roman Republic?
Why not fight?—In the first place, I haven't so much as a musket;
In the next, if I had, I shouldn't know how I should use it;
In the third, just at present I'm studying ancient marbles;
In the fourth, I consider I owe my life to my country;
In the fifth—I forget, but four good reasons are ample.
Meantime, pray let 'em fight, and be killed. I delight in devotion.
So that I 'list not, hurrah for the glorious army of martyrs!
Sanguis martyrum semen Ecclesiæ; though it would seem this
Church is indeed of the purely Invisible, Kingdom-come kind:
Militant here on earth! Triumphant, of course, then, elsewhere!
Ah, good Heaven, but I would I were out far away from the pother!

iv. Claude to Eustace.

Not, as we read in the words of the olden-time inspiration,
Are there two several trees in the place we are set to abide in;
But on the apex most high of the Tree of Life in the Garden,
Budding, unfolding, and falling, decaying and flowering ever,
Flowering is set and decaying the transient blossom of Knowledge,—
Flowering alone, and decaying, the needless unfruitful blossom.
Or as the cypress-spires by the fair-flowing stream Hellespontine,
Which from the mythical tomb of the godlike Protesilaüs
Rose sympathetic in grief to his love-lorn Laodamia,
Evermore growing, and when in their growth to the prospect attaining,

Over the low sea-banks, of the fatal Ilian city,
Withering still at the sight which still they upgrow to encounter.
Ah, but ye that extrude from the ocean your helpless faces,
Ye over stormy seas leading long and dreary processions,
Ye, too, brood of the wind, whose coming is whence we discern not,
Making your nest on the wave, and your bed on the crested billow,
Skimming rough waters, and crowding wet sands that the tide shall return to,
Cormorants, ducks, and gulls, fill ye my imagination!
Let us not talk of growth; we are still in our Aqueous Ages.

v. Mary Trevellyn to Miss Roper,—from Florence.

Dearest Miss Roper,—Alas! we are all at Florence quite safe, and
You, we hear, are shut up! indeed, it is sadly distressing!
We were most lucky, they say, to get off when we did from the troubles.
Now you are really besieged; they tell us it soon will be over;
Only I hope and trust without any fight in the city.
Do you see Mr. Claude?—I thought he might do something for you.
I am quite sure on occasion he really would wish to be useful.
What is he doing? I wonder;—still studying Vatican marbles?
Letters, I hope, pass through. We trust your brother is better.

vi. Claude to Eustace.

Juxtaposition, in fine; and what is juxtaposition?
Look you, we travel along in the railway-carriage or steamer,
And, pour passer le temps, till the tedious journey be ended,
Lay aside paper or book, to talk with the girl that is next one;

And, pour passer le temps, with the terminus all but in prospect,
Talk of eternal ties and marriages made in heaven.
Ah, did we really accept with a perfect heart the illusion!
Ah, did we really believe that the Present indeed is the Only!
Or through all transmutation, all shock and convulsion of passion,
Feel we could carry undimmed, unextinguished, the light of our knowledge!
But for his funeral train which the bridegroom sees in the distance,
Would he so joyfully, think you, fall in with the marriage procession?
But for that final discharge, would he dare to enlist in that service?
But for that certain release, ever sign to that perilous contract?
But for that exit secure, ever bend to that treacherous doorway?—
Ah, but the bride, meantime,—do you think she sees it as he does?
But for the steady fore-sense of a freer and larger existence,
Think you that man could consent to be circumscribed here into action?
But for assurance within of a limitless ocean divine, o’er
Whose great tranquil depths unconscious the wind-tost surface
Breaks into ripples of trouble that come and change and endure not,—
But that in this, of a truth, we have our being, and know it,
Think you we men could submit to live and move as we do here?
Ah, but the women,—God bless them! they don’t think at all about it.
Yet we must eat and drink, as you say. And as limited beings
Scarcely can hope to attain upon earth to an Actual Abstract,
Leaving to God contemplation, to His hands knowledge confiding,
Sure that in us if it perish, in Him it abideth and dies not,

Let us in His sight accomplish our petty particular doings,—
Yes, and contented sit down to the victual that He has provided.
Allah is great, no doubt, and Juxtaposition his prophet.
Ah, but the women, alas! they don't look at it in that way.
Juxtaposition is great;—but, my friend, I fear me, the maiden
Hardly would thank or acknowledge the lover that sought to obtain her,
Not as the thing he would wish, but the thing he must even put up with,—
Hardly would tender her hand to the wooer that candidly told her
That she is but for a space, an ad-interim solace and pleasure,—
That in the end she shall yield to a perfect and absolute something,
Which I then for myself shall behold, and not another,—
Which amid fondest endearments, meantime I forget not, forsake not.
Ah, ye feminine souls, so loving, and so exacting,
Since we cannot escape, must we even submit to deceive you?
Since, so cruel is truth, sincerity shocks and revolts you,
Will you have us your slaves to lie to you, flatter and—leave you?

vii. Claude to Eustace.

Juxtaposition is great,—but, you tell me, affinity greater.
Ah, my friend, there are many affinities, greater and lesser,
Stronger and weaker; and each, by the favour of juxtaposition,
Potent, efficient, in force,—for a time; but none, let me tell you,
Save by the law of the land and the ruinous force of the will, ah,
None, I fear me, at last quite sure to be final and perfect.
Lo, as I pace in the street, from the peasant-girl to the princess,

Homo sum, nihil humani a me alienum puto,—
Vir sum, nihil fæminei,—and e'en to the uttermost circle,
All that is Nature's is I, and I all things that are Nature's.
Yes, as I walk, I behold, in a luminous, large intuition,
That I can be and become anything that I meet with or look at:
I am the ox in the dray, the ass with the garden-stuff panniers;
I am the dog in the doorway, the kitten that plays in the window,
On sunny slab of the ruin the furtive and fugitive lizard,
Swallow above me that twitters, and fly that is buzzing about me;
Yea, and detect, as I go, by a faint but a faithful assurance,
E'en from the stones of the street, as from rocks or trees of the forest
Something of kindred, a common, though latent vitality, greets me;
And to escape from our strivings, mistakings, misgrowths, and perversions,
Fain could demand to return to that perfect and primitive silence,
Fain be enfolded and fixed, as of old, in their rigid embraces.
viii. Claude to Eustace.
And as I walk on my way, I behold them consorting and coupling;
Faithful it seemeth, and fond, very fond, very probably faithful,
All as I go on my way, with a pleasure sincere and unmingled.
Life is beautiful, Eustace, entrancing, enchanting to look at;
As are the streets of a city we pace while the carriage is changing,
As a chamber filled-in with harmonious, exquisite pictures,
Even so beautiful Earth; and could we eliminate only
This vile hungering impulse, this demon within us of craving,

Life were beatitude, living a perfect divine satisfaction.

ix. Claude to Eustace.

Mild monastic faces in quiet collegiate cloisters:
So let me offer a single and celibatarian phrase, a
Tribute to those whom perhaps you do not believe I can honour.
But, from the tumult escaping, 'tis pleasant, of drumming and shouting,
Hither, oblivious awhile, to withdraw, of the fact or the falsehood,
And amid placid regards and mildly courteous greetings
Yield to the calm and composure and gentle abstraction that reign o'er
Mild monastic faces in quiet collegiate cloisters:
Terrible word, Obligation! You should not, Eustace, you should not,
No, you should not have used it. But, oh, great Heavens, I repel it!
Oh, I cancel, reject, disavow, and repudiate wholly
Every debt in this kind, disclaim every claim, and dishonour,
Yea, my own heart's own writing, my soul's own signature! Ah, no!
I will be free in this; you shall not, none shall, bind me.
No, my friend, if you wish to be told, it was this above all things,
This that charmed me, ah, yes, even this, that she held me to nothing.
No, I could talk as I pleased; come close; fasten ties, as I fancied;
Bind and engage myself deep;—and lo, on the following morning
It was all e'en as before, like losings in games played for nothing.
Yes, when I came, with mean fears in my soul, with a semi-performance
At the first step breaking down in its pitiful rôle of evasion,
When to shuffle I came, to compromise, not meet, engagements,

Lo, with her calm eyes there she met me and knew nothing of it,—
Stood unexpecting, unconscious. She spoke not of obligations,
Knew not of debt—ah, no, I believe you, for excellent reasons.

x. Claude to Eustace.

Hang this thinking, at last! what good is it? oh, and what evil!
Oh, what mischief and pain! like a clock in a sick man's chamber,
Ticking and ticking, and still through each covert of slumber pursuing.
What shall I do to thee, O thou Preserver of men? Have compassion;
Be favourable, and hear! Take from me this regal knowledge;
Let me, contented and mute, with the beasts of the fields, my brothers,
Tranquilly, happily lie,—and eat grass, like Nebuchadnezzar!

xi. Claude to Eustace.

Tibur is beautiful, too, and the orchard slopes, and the Anio
Falling, falling yet, to the ancient lyrical cadence;
Tibur and Anio's tide; and cool from Lucretilis ever,
With the Digentian stream, and with the Bandusian fountain,
Folded in Sabine recesses, the valley and villa of Horace:—
So not seeing I sang; so seeing and listening say I,
Here as I sit by the stream, as I gaze at the cell of the Sibyl,
Here with Albunea's home and the grove of Tiburnus beside me;[14]
Tivoli beautiful is, and musical, O Teverone,
Dashing from mountain to plain, thy parted impetuous waters,
Tivoli's waters and rocks; and fair unto Monte Gennaro
(Haunt, even yet, I must think, as I wander and gaze, of the shadows,

Faded and pale, yet immortal, of Faunus, the Nymphs, and the Graces),
Fair in itself, and yet fairer with human completing creations,
Folded in Sabine recesses the valley and villa of Horace:—
So not seeing I sang; so now—Nor seeing, nor hearing,
Neither by waterfall lulled, nor folded in sylvan embraces,
Neither by cell of the Sibyl, nor stepping the Monte Gennaro,
Seated on Anio's bank, nor sipping Bandusian waters,
But on Montorio's height, looking down on the tile-clad streets, the
Cupolas, crosses, and domes, the bushes and kitchen-gardens,
Which, by the grace of the Tibur, proclaim themselves Rome of the Romans,—
But on Montorio's height, looking forth to the vapoury mountains,
Cheating the prisoner Hope with illusions of vision and fancy,—
But on Montorio's height, with these weary soldiers by me,
Waiting till Oudinot enter, to reinstate Pope and Tourist.
Dear Miss Roper,—It seems, George Vernon, before we left Rome, said
Something to Mr. Claude about what they call his attentions.
Susan, two nights ago, for the first time, heard this from Georgina.
It is so disagreeable and so annoying to think of!
If it could only be known, though we may never meet him again, that
It was all George's doing, and we were entirely unconscious,
It would extremely relieve—Your ever affectionate Mary.
P.S. (1)
Here is your letter arrived this moment, just as I wanted.
So you have seen him,—indeed, and guessed,—how dreadfully clever!

What did he really say? and what was your answer exactly?

Charming!—but wait for a moment, I haven't read through the letter.

P.S. (2)

Ah, my dearest Miss Roper, do just as you fancy about it.

If you think it sincerer to tell him I know of it, do so.

Though I should most extremely dislike it, I know I could manage.

It is the simplest thing, but surely wholly uncalled for

Do as you please; you know I trust implicitly to you.

Say whatever is right and needful for ending the matter.

Only don't tell Mr. Claude, what I will tell you as a secret,

That I should like very well to show him myself I forget it.

P.S. (3)

I am to say that the wedding is finally settled for Tuesday.

Ah, my dear Miss Roper, you surely, surely can manage

Not to let it appear that I know of that odious matter.

It would be pleasanter far for myself to treat it exactly

As if it had not occurred: and I do not think he would like it.

I must remember to add, that as soon as the wedding is over

We shall be off, I believe, in a hurry, and travel to Milan;

There to meet friends of Papa's, I am told, at the Croce di Malta;

Then I cannot say whither, but not at present to England.

xiii. Claude to Eustace.

Yes, on Montorio's height for a last farewell of the city,—

So it appears; though then I was quite uncertain about it.

So, however, it was. And now to explain the proceeding.
I was to go, as I told you, I think, with the people to Florence.
Only the day before, the foolish family Vernon
Made some uneasy remarks, as we walked to our lodging together,
As to intentions forsooth, and so forth. I was astounded,
Horrified quite; and obtaining just then, as it happened, an offer
(No common favour) of seeing the great Ludovisi collection,
Why, I made this a pretence, and wrote that they must excuse me.
How could I go? Great Heavens! to conduct a permitted flirtation
Under those vulgar eyes, the observed of such observers!
Well, but I now, by a series of fine diplomatic inquiries,
Find from a sort of relation, a good and sensible woman,
Who is remaining at Rome with a brother too ill for removal,
That it was wholly unsanctioned, unknown,—not, I think, by Georgina:
She, however, ere this,—and that is the best of the story,—
She and the Vernon, thank Heaven, are wedded and gone—honey mooning.
So—on Montorio's height for a last farewell of the city.
Tibur I have not seen, nor the lakes that of old I had dreamt of;
Tibur I shall not see, nor Anio's waters, nor deep en-
Folded in Sabine recesses the valley and villa of Horace;
Tibur I shall not see;—but something better I shall see.
Twice I have tried before, and failed in getting the horses;
Twice I have tried and failed: this time it shall not be a failure.
Therefore farewell, ye hills, and ye, ye envineyarded ruins!

Therefore farewell, ye walls, palaces, pillars, and domes!
Therefore farewell, far seen, ye peaks of the mythic Albano,
Seen from Montorio's height, Tibur and Æsula's hills!
Ah, could we once, ere we go, could we stand, while, to ocean descending,
Sinks o'er the yellow dark plain slowly the yellow broad sun,
Stand, from the forest emerging at sunset, at once in the champaign,
Open, but studded with trees, chestnuts umbrageous and old,
E'en in those fair open fields that incurve to thy beautiful hollow,
Nemi, imbedded in wood, Nemi, inurned in the hill!—
Therefore farewell, ye plains, and ye hills, and the City Eternal!
Therefore farewell! We depart, but to behold you again!

CANTO IV.

Eastward, or Northward, or West? I wander and ask as I wander;
Weary, yet eager and sure, Where shall I come to my love?
Whitherward hasten to seek her? Ye daughters of Italy, tell me,
Graceful and tender and dark, is she consorting with you?
Thou that out-climbest the torrent, that tendest thy goats to the summit,
Call to me, child of the Alp, has she been seen on the heights?
Italy, farewell I bid thee! for whither she leads me, I follow.
Farewell the vineyard! for I, where I but guess her, must go;
Weariness welcome, and labour, wherever it be, if at last it
Bring me in mountain or plain into the sight of my love.

i. Claude to Eustace,—from Florence.

Gone from Florence; indeed! and that is truly provoking;—

Gone to Milan, it seems; then I go also to Milan.
Five days now departed; but they can travel but slowly;—
I quicker far; and I know, as it happens, the house they will go to.—
Why, what else should I do? Stay here and look at the pictures,
Statues, and churches? Alack, I am sick of the statues and pictures!—
No, to Bologna, Parma, Piacenza, Lodi, and Milan,
Off go we to-night,—and the Venus go to the Devil!

ii. Claude to Eustace,—from Bellaggio.

Gone to Como, they said; and I have posted to Como.
There was a letter left; but the cameriere had lost it.
Could it have been for me? They came, however, to Como,
And from Como went by the boat,—perhaps to the Splügen,—
Or to the Stelvio, say, and the Tyrol; also it might be
By Porlezza across to Lugano, and so to the Simplon
Possibly, or the St. Gothard,—or possibly, too, to Baveno,
Orta, Turin, and elsewhere. Indeed, I am greatly bewildered.

iii. Claude to Eustace,—from Bellaggio.

I have been up the Splügen, and on the Stelvio also:
Neither of these can I find they have followed; in no one inn, and
This would be odd, have they written their names. I have been to Porlezza;
There they have not been seen, and therefore not at Lugano.
What shall I do? Go on through the Tyrol, Switzerland, Deutschland,
Seeking, an inverse Saul, a kingdom to find only asses?
There is a tide, at least, in the love affairs of mortals,

Which, when taken at flood, leads on to the happiest fortune,—
Leads to the marriage-morn and the orange-flowers and the altar,
And the long lawful line of crowned joys to crowned joys succeeding.—
Ah, it has ebbed with me! Ye gods, and when it was flowing,
Pitiful fool that I was, to stand fiddle-faddling in that way!

iv. Claude to Eustace,—from Bellaggio.

I have returned and found their names in the book at Como.
Certain it is I was right, and yet I am also in error.
Added in feminine hand, I read, By the boat to Bellaggio.—
So to Bellaggio again, with the words of her writing to aid me.
Yet at Bellaggio I find no trace, no sort of remembrance.
So I am here, and wait, and know every hour will remove them.

v. Claude to Eustace,—from Bellaggio.

I have but one chance left,—and that is going to Florence.
But it is cruel to turn. The mountains seem to demand me,—
Peak and valley from far to beckon and motion me onward.
Somewhere amid their folds she passes whom fain I would follow;
Somewhere among those heights she haply calls me to seek her.
Ah, could I hear her call! could I catch the glimpse of her raiment!
Turn, however, I must, though it seem I turn to desert her;
For the sense of the thing is simply to hurry to Florence,
Where the certainty yet may be learnt, I suppose, from the Ropers!

vi. Mary Trevellyn, from Lucerne, to Miss Roper, at Florence.

Dear Miss Roper,—By this you are safely away, we are hoping,

Many a league from Rome; ere long we trust we shall see you.
How have you travelled? I wonder;—was Mr. Claude your companion?
As for ourselves, we went from Como straight to Lugano;
So by the Mount St. Gothard; we meant to go by Porlezza,
Taking the steamer, and stopping, as you had advised, at Bellaggio,
Two or three days or more; but this was suddenly altered,
After we left the hotel, on the very way to the steamer.
So we have seen, I fear, not one of the lakes in perfection.
Well, he is not come, and now, I suppose, he will not come.
What will you think, meantime? and yet I must really confess it;—
What will you say? I wrote him a note. We left in a hurry,
Went from Milan to Como, three days before we expected.
But I thought, if he came all the way to Milan, he really
Ought not to be disappointed: and so I wrote three lines to
Say I had heard he was coming, desirous of joining our party;—
If so, then I said, we had started for Como, and meant to
Cross the St. Gothard, and stay, we believed, at Lucerne, for the summer.
Was it wrong? and why, if it was, has it faded to bring him?
Did he not think it worth while to come to Milan? He knew (you
Told him) the house we should go to. Or may it, perhaps, have miscarried?
Any way, now, I repent, and am heartily vexed that I wrote it.
There is a home on the shore of the Alpine sea, that upswelling
High up the mountain-sides spreads in the hollow between;
Wilderness, mountain, and snow from the land of the olive conceal it;

Under Pilatus's hill low by its river it lies:
Italy, utter the word, and the olive and vine will allure not,—
Wilderness, forest, and snow will not the passage impede;
Italy, unto thy cities receding, the clue to recover,
Hither, recovered the clue, shall not the traveller haste?

CANTO V.

There is a city, upbuilt on the quays of the turbulent Arno,
Under Fiesole's heights,—thither are we to return?
There is a city that fringes the curve of the inflowing waters,
Under the perilous hill fringes the beautiful bay,—
Parthenope, do they call thee?—the Siren, Neapolis, seated
Under Vesevus's hill,—are we receding to thee?—
Sicily, Greece, will invite, and the Orient;—or are we to turn to
England, which may after all be for its children the best?

i. Mary Trevellyn, at Lucerne, to Miss Roper, at Florence.

So you are really free, and living in quiet at Florence;
That is delightful news; you travelled slowly and safely;
Mr. Claude got you out; took rooms at Florence before you;
Wrote from Milan to say so; had left directly for Milan,
Hoping to find us soon;—if he could, he would, you are certain.—
Dear Miss Roper, your letter has made me exceedingly happy.
You are quite sure, you say, he asked you about our intentions;
You had not heard as yet of Lucerne, but told him of Como.—
Well, perhaps he will come; however, I will not expect it.

Though you say you are sure,—if he can, he will, you are certain.

O my dear, many thanks from your ever affectionate Mary.

ii. Claude to Eustace.

Florence.

Action will furnish belief,—but will that belief be the true one?

This is the point, you know. However, it doesn't much matter

What one wants, I suppose, is to predetermine the action,

So as to make it entail, not a chance belief, but the true one.

Out of the question, you say; if a thing isn't wrong we may do it.

Ah! but this wrong, you see—but I do not know that it matters.

Eustace, the Ropers are gone, and no one can tell me about them.

Pisa.

Pisa, they say they think, and so I follow to Pisa,

Hither and thither inquiring. I weary of making inquiries.

I am ashamed, I declare, of asking people about it.—

Who are your friends? You said you had friends who would certainly know them.

Florence.

But it is idle, moping, and thinking, and trying to fix her

Image more and more in, to write the whole perfect inscription

Over and over again upon every page of remembrance.

I have settled to stay at Florence to wait for your answer.

Who are your friends? Write quickly and tell me. I wait for your answer.

iii. Mary Trevellyn to Miss Roper,—at Lucca Baths.

You are at Lucca baths, you tell me, to stay for the summer;

Florence was quite too hot; you can't move further at present.
Will you not come, do you think, before the summer is over?
Mr. C. got you out with very considerable trouble;
And he was useful and kind, and seemed so happy to serve you.
Didn't stay with you long, but talked very openly to you;
Made you almost his confessor, without appearing to know it,—
What about?—and you say you didn't need his confessions.
O my dear Miss Roper, I dare not trust what you tell me!
Will he come, do you think? I am really so sorry for him.
They didn't give him my letter at Milan, I feel pretty certain.
You had told him Bellaggio. We didn't go to Bellaggio;
So he would miss our track, and perhaps never come to Lugano,
Where we were written in full, To Lucerne across the St. Gothard.
But he could write to you;—you would tell him where you were going.

iv. Claude to Eustace.

Let me, then, bear to forget her. I will not cling to her falsely:
Nothing factitious or forced shall impair the old happy relation.
I will let myself go, forget, not try to remember;
I will walk on my way, accept the chances that meet me,
Freely encounter the world, imbibe these alien airs, and
Never ask if new feelings and thoughts are of her or of others.
Is she not changing herself?—the old image would only delude me.
I will be bold, too, and change,—if it must be. Yet if in all things,
Yet if I do but aspire evermore to the Absolute only,

I shall be doing, I think, somehow, what she will be doing;—
I shall be thine, O my child, some way, though I know not in what way,
Let me submit to forget her; I must; I already forget her.
v. Claude to Eustace.
Utterly vain is, alas! this attempt at the Absolute,—wholly!
I, who believed not in her, because I would fain believe nothing,
Have to believe as I may, with a wilful, unmeaning acceptance.
I, who refused to enfasten the roots of my floating existence
In the rich earth, cling now to the hard, naked rock that is left me,—
Ah! she was worthy, Eustace,—and that, indeed, is my comfort,—
Worthy a nobler heart than a fool such as I could have given her.
Yes, it relieves me to write, though I do not send, and the chance that
Takes may destroy my fragments. But as men pray, without asking
Whether One really exist to hear or do anything for them,—
Simply impelled by the need of the moment to turn to a Being
In a conception of whom there is freedom from all limitation,—
So in your image I turn to an ens rationis of friendship,
Even so write in your name I know not to whom nor in what wise.
There was a time, methought it was but lately departed,
When, if a thing was denied me, I felt I was bound to attempt it.
Choice alone should take, and choice alone should surrender.
There was a time, indeed, when I had not retired thus early,
Languidly thus, from pursuit of a purpose I once had adopted,
But it is over, all that! I have slunk from the perilous field in

Whose wild struggle of forces the prizes of life are contested.
It is over, all that! I am a coward, and know it.
Courage in me could be only factitious, unnatural, useless.
Comfort has come to me here in the dreary streets of the city,
Comfort—how do you think?—with a barrel-organ to bring it.
Moping along the streets, and cursing my day as I wandered,
All of a sudden my ear met the sound of an English psalm-tune,
Comfort me it did, till indeed I was very near crying.
Ah, there is some great truth, partial, very likely, but needful,
Lodged, I am strangely sure, in the tones of the English psalm-tune:
Comfort it was at least; and I must take without question
Comfort, however it come, in the dreary streets of the city.
What with trusting myself, and seeking support from within me,
Almost I could believe I had gained a religious assurance,
Formed in my own poor soul a great moral basis to rest on.
Ah, but indeed I see, I feel it factitious entirely;
I refuse, reject, and put it utterly from me;
I will look straight out, see things, not try to evade them;
Fact shall be fact for me, and the Truth the Truth as ever,
Flexible, changeable, vague, and multiform, and doubtful.—
Off, and depart to the void, thou subtle, fanatical tempter!
I shall behold thee again (is it so?) at a new visitation,
O ill genius thou! I shall at my life’s dissolution
(When the pulses are weak, and the feeble light of the reason

Flickers, an unfed flame retiring slow from the socket),
Low on a sick-bed laid, hear one, as it were, at the doorway,
And, looking up, see thee standing by, looking emptily at me;
I shall entreat thee then, though now I dare to refuse thee,—
Pale and pitiful now, but terrible then to the dying.—
Well, I will see thee again, and while I can, will repel thee.

vi. Claude to Eustace.

Rome is fallen, I hear, the gallant Medici taken,
Noble Manara slain, and Garibaldi has lost il Moro;—
Rome is fallen; and fallen, or falling, heroical Venice.
I, meanwhile, for the loss of a single small chit of a girl, sit
Moping and mourning here,—for her, and myself much smaller.
Whither depart the souls of the brave that die in the battle,
Die in the lost, lost fight, for the cause that perishes with them?
Are they upborne from the field on the slumberous pinions of angels
Unto a far-off home, where the weary rest from their labour,
And the deep wounds are healed, and the bitter and burning moisture
Wiped from the generous eyes? or do they linger, unhappy,
Pining, and haunting the grave of their by-gone hope and endeavour?
All declamation, alas! though I talk, I care not for Rome nor
Italy; feebly and faintly, and but with the lips, can lament the
Wreck of the Lombard youth, and the victory of the oppressor.
Whither depart the brave?—God knows; I certainly do not.

vii. Mary Trevellyn to Miss Roper.

He has not come as yet; and now I must not expect it.
You have written, you say, to friends at Florence, to see him,
If he perhaps should return;—but that is surely unlikely.
Has he not written to you?—he did not know your direction.
Oh, how strange never once to have told him where you were going!
Yet if he only wrote to Florence, that would have reached you.
If what you say he said was true, why has he not done so?
Is he gone back to Rome, do you think, to his Vatican marbles?—
O my dear Miss Roper, forgive me! do not be angry!—
You have written to Florence;—your friends would certainly find him
Might you not write to him?—but yet it is so little likely!
I shall expect nothing more.—Ever yours, your affectionate Mary.

viii. Claude to Eustace.

I cannot stay at Florence, not even to wait for a letter.
Galleries only oppress me. Remembrance of hope I had cherished
(Almost more than as hope, when I passed through Florence the first time)
Lies like a sword in my soul. I am more a coward than ever,
Chicken-hearted, past thought. The caffès and waiters distress me.
All is unkind, and, alas! I am ready for any one's kindness.
Oh, I knew it of old, and knew it, I thought, to perfection,
If there is any one thing in the world to preclude all kindness,
It is the need of it,—it is this sad, self-defeating dependence.
Why is this, Eustace? Myself, were I stronger, I think I could tell you.
But it is odd when it comes. So plumb I the deeps of depression,

Daily in deeper, and find no support, no will, no purpose.
All my old strengths are gone. And yet I shall have to do something.
Ah, the key of our life, that passes all wards, opens all locks,
Is not I will, but I must. I must,—I must,—and I do it.
After all, do I know that I really cared so about her?
Do whatever I will, I cannot call up her image;
For when I close my eyes, I see, very likely, St. Peter's,
Or the Pantheon façade, or Michel Angelo's figures,
Or, at a wish, when I please, the Alban hills and the Forum,—
But that face, those eyes,—ah, no, never anything like them;
Only, try as I will, a sort of featureless outline,
And a pale blank orb, which no recollection will add to.
After all, perhaps there was something factitious about it;
I have had pain, it is true: I have wept, and so have the actors.
At the last moment I have your letter, for which I was waiting;
I have taken my place, and see no good in inquiries.
Do nothing more, good Eustace, I pray you. It only will vex me.
Take no measures. Indeed, should we meet, I could not be certain;
All might be changed, you know. Or perhaps there was nothing to be changed.
It is a curious history, this; and yet I foresaw it;
I could have told it before. The Fates, it is clear, are against us;
For it is certain enough I met with the people you mention;
They were at Florence the day I returned there, and spoke to me even;
Stayed a week, saw me often; departed, and whither I know not.

Great is Fate, and is best. I believe in Providence partly.

What is ordained is right, and all that happens is ordered.

Ah, no, that isn't it. But yet I retain my conclusion.

I will go where I am led, and will not dictate to the chances.

Do nothing more, I beg. If you love me, forbear interfering.

ix. Claude to Eustace.

Shall we come out of it all, some day, as one does from a tunnel?

Will it be all at once, without our doing or asking,

We shall behold clear day, the trees and meadows about us,

And the faces of friends, and the eyes we loved looking at us?

Who knows? Who can say? It will not do to suppose it.

x. Claude to Eustace,—from Rome.

Rome will not suit me, Eustace; the priests and soldiers possess it;

Priests and soldiers:—and, ah! which is the worst, the priest or the soldier?

Politics, farewell, however! For what could I do? with inquiring,

Talking, collating the journals, go fever my brain about things o'er

Which I can have no control. No, happen whatever may happen,

Time, I suppose, will subsist; the earth will revolve on its axis;

People will travel; the stranger will wander as now in the city;

Rome will be here, and the Pope the custode of Vatican marbles.

I have no heart, however, for any marble or fresco;

I have essayed it in vain; 'tis in vain as yet to essay it:

But I may haply resume some day my studies in this kind;

Not as the Scripture says, is, I think, the fact. Ere our death-day,

Faith, I think, does pass, and Love; but Knowledge abideth.
Let us seek Knowledge;—the rest may come and go as it happens.
Knowledge is hard to seek, and harder yet to adhere to.
Knowledge is painful often; and yet when we know we are happy.
Seek it, and leave mere Faith and Love to come with the chances.
As for Hope,—to-morrow I hope to be starting for Naples.
Rome will not do, I see, for many very good reasons.
Eastward, then, I suppose, with the coming of winter, to Egypt.
xi. Mary Trevellyn to Miss Roper.
You have heard nothing; of course I know you can have heard nothing.
Ah, well, more than once I have broken my purpose, and sometimes,
Only too often, have looked for the little lake steamer to bring him.
But it is only fancy,—I do not really expect it.
Oh, and you see I know so exactly how he would take it:
Finding the chances prevail against meeting again, he would banish
Forthwith every thought of the poor little possible hope, which
I myself could not help, perhaps, thinking only too much of;
He would resign himself, and go. I see it exactly.
So I also submit, although in a different manner.
Can you not really come? We go very shortly to England.
So go forth to the world, to the good report and the evil!
Go, little book! thy tale, is it not evil and good?
Go, and if strangers revile, pass quietly by without answer.
Go, and if curious friends ask of thy rearing and age,

Say, ‘I am flitting about many years from brain unto brain of
Feeble and restless youths born to inglorious days:
But,’ so finish the word, ‘I was writ in a Roman chamber,
When from Janiculan heights thundered the cannon of France.’

# SEVEN SONNETS ON THE THOUGHT OF DEATH.

### SEVEN SONNETS ON THE THOUGHT OF DEATH.[15]

I

That children in their loveliness should die
Before the dawning beauty, which we know
Cannot remain, has yet begun to go;
That when a certain period has passed by,
People of genius and of faculty,
Leaving behind them some result to show,
Having performed some function, should forego
The task which younger hands can better ply,
Appears entirely natural. But that one
Whose perfectness did not at all consist
In things towards forming which time can have done
Anything,—whose sole office was to exist,
Should suddenly dissolve and cease to be
Is the extreme of all perplexity.

II

That there are better things within the womb

Of Nature than to our unworthy view
She grants for a possession, may be true:
The cycle of the birthplace and the tomb
Fulfils at least the order and the doom
Of earth, that has not ordinance to do
More than to withdraw and to renew,
To show one moment and the next resume:
The law that we return from whence we came,
May for the flowers, beasts, and most men remain;
If for ourselves, we ask not nor complain:
But for a being that demands the name
We highest deem—a Person and a Soul—
It troubles us that this should be the whole.

III

To see the rich autumnal tint depart,
And view the fading of the roseate glow
That veils some Alpine altitude of snow,
To hear of some great masterpiece of art
Lost or destroyed, may to the adult heart,
Impatient of the transitory show
Of lovelinesses that but come and go,
A positive strange thankfulness impart.
When human pure perfections disappear,
Not at the first, but at some later day,

The buoyancy of such reaction may
With strong assurance conquer blank dismay.

IV

But whether in the uncoloured light of truth,
This inward strong assurance be, indeed,
More than the self-willed arbitrary creed,
Manhood's inheritor to the dream of youth;
Whether to shut out fact because forsooth
To live were insupportable unfreed,
Be not or be the service of untruth:
Whether this vital confidence be more
Than his, who upon death's immediate brink,
Knowing, perforce determines to ignore;
Or than the bird's, that when the hunter's near,
Burying her eyesight, can forget her fear;
Who about this shall tell us what to think?

V

If it is thou whose casual hand withdraws
What it at first as casually did make,
Say what amount of ages it will take
With tardy rare concurrences of laws,
And subtle multiplicities of cause,
The thing they once had made us to remake;
May hopes dead slumbering dare to reawake,

E’en after utmost interval of pause,
What revolutions must have passed, before
The great celestial cycles shall restore
The starry sign whose present hour is gone;
What worse than dubious chances interpose,
With cloud and sunny gleam to recompose
The skiey picture we had gazed upon.

VI

But if as not by that the soul desired
Swayed in the judgment, wisest men have thought,
And furnishing the evidence it sought,
Man’s heart hath ever fervently required,
And story, for that reason deemed inspired,
To every clime, in every age, hath taught;
If in this human complex there be aught
Not lost in death, as not in birth acquired,
O then, though cold the lips that did convey
Rich freights of meaning, dead each living sphere
Where thought abode, and fancy loved to play,
Thou yet, we think, somewhere somehow still art,
And satisfied with that the patient heart
The where and how doth not desire to hear.

VII

Shall I decide it by a random shot?

Our happy hopes, so happy and so good,
Are not mere idle motions of the blood;
And when they seem most baseless, most are not.
A seed there must have been upon the spot
Where the flowers grow, without it ne'er they could;
The confidence of growth least understood
Of some deep intuition was begot.
What if despair and hope alike be true?
The heart, 'tis manifest, is free to do
Whichever Nature and itself suggest,
And always 'tis a fact that we are here,
And with being here, doth palsy-giving fear
(Whoe'er can ask or hope) accord the best?

# MARI MAGNO OR TALES ON BOARD.

### MARI MAGNO or TALES ON BOARD.[16]

A youth was I. An elder friend with me,
'Twas in September o'er the autumnal sea
We went; the wide Atlantic ocean o'er
Two amongst many the strong steamer bore.
Delight it was to feel that wondrous force
That held us steady to our proposed course,
The burning resolute victorious will
'Gainst winds and waves that strive unwavering still.

Delight it was with each returning day
To learn the ship had won upon her way
Her sum of miles,—delight were mornings grey
And gorgeous eves,—nor was it less delight,
On each more temperate and favouring night,
Friend with familiar or with new-found friend,
To pace the deck, and o’er the bulwarks bend,
And the night watches in long converse spend;
While still new subjects and new thoughts arise
Amidst the silence of the seas and skies.
Amongst the mingled multitude a few,
Some three or four, towards us early drew;
We proved each other with a day or two;
Night after night some three or four we walked
And talked, and talked, and infinitely talked.
Of the New England ancient blood was one;
His youthful spurs in letters he had won,
Unspoilt by that, to Europe late had come,—
Hope long deferred,—and went unspoilt by Europe home.
What racy tales of Yankeeland he had!
Up-country girl, up-country farmer lad;
The regnant clergy of the time of old
In wig and gown;—tales not to be retold
By me. I could but spoil were I to tell:

Himself must do it who can do it well.
An English clergyman came spick and span
In black and white—a large well-favoured man,
Fifty years old, as near as one could guess.
He looked the dignitary more or less.
A rural dean, I said, he was, at least,
Canon perhaps; at many a good man's feast
A guest had been, amongst the choicest there.
Manly his voice and manly was his air:
At the first sight you felt he had not known
The things pertaining to his cloth alone.
Chairman of Quarter Sessions had he been?
Serious and calm, 'twas plain he much had seen,
Had miscellaneous large experience had
Of human acts, good, half and half, and bad.
Serious and calm, yet lurked, I know not why,
At times, a softness in his voice and eye.
Some shade of ill a prosperous life had crossed;
Married no doubt: a wife or child had lost?
He never told us why he passed the sea.
My guardian friend was now, at thirty-three,
A rising lawyer—ever, at the best,
Slow rises worth in lawyer's gown compressed;
Succeeding now, yet just, and only just,

His new success he never seemed to trust.
By nature he to gentlest thoughts inclined,
To most severe had disciplined his mind;
He held it duty to be half unkind.
Bitter, they said, who but the exterior knew;
In friendship never was a friend so true:
The unwelcome fact he did not shrink to tell,
The good, if fact, he recognised as well.
Stout to maintain, if not the first to see;
In conversation who so great as he?
Leading but seldom, always sure to guide,
To false or silly, if ’twas borne aside,
His quick correction silent he expressed,
And stopped you short, and forced you to your best.
Often, I think, he suffered from some pain
Of mind, that on the body worked again;
One felt it in his sort of half-disdain,
Impatient not, but acrid in his speech;
The world with him her lesson failed to teach
To take things easily and let them go.
He, for what special fitness I scarce know,
For which good quality, or if for all,
With less of reservation and recall
And speedier favour than I e’er had seen,

Took, as we called him, to the rural dean.
As grew the gourd, as grew the stalk of bean,
So swift it seemed, betwixt these differing two
A stately trunk of confidence up-grew.
Of marriage long one night they held discourse;
Regarding it in different ways, of course.
Marriage is discipline, the wise had said,
A needful human discipline to wed;
Novels of course depict it final bliss,—
Say, had it ever really once been this?
Our Yankee friend (whom, ere the night was done,
We called New England or the Pilgrim Son),
A little tired, made bold to interfere;
‘Appeal,’ he said, ‘to me; my sentence hear.
You’ll reason on till night and reason fail;
My judgment is you each shall tell a tale;
And as on marriage you can not agree,
Of love and marriage let the stories be.’
Sentence delivered, as the younger man,
My lawyer friend was called on and began.
‘Infandum jubes! ’tis of long ago,
If tell I must, I tell the tale I know:
Yet the first person using for the freak,
Don’t rashly judge that of myself I speak.’

So to his tale; if of himself or not
I never learnt, we thought so on the spot.
Lightly he told it as a thing of old,
And lightly I repeat it as he told.

**THE LAWYER'S FIRST TALE. Primitiæ, or Third Cousins.**

I

'Dearest of boys, please come to-day,
Papa and mama have bid me say,
They hope you'll dine with us at three;
They will be out till then, you see,
But you will start at once, you know,
And come as fast as you can go.
Next week they hope you'll come and stay
Some time before you go away.
Dear boy, how pleasant it will be!
Ever your dearest Emily!'
Twelve years of age was I, and she
Fourteen, when thus she wrote to me,
A schoolboy, with an uncle spending
My holidays, then nearly ending.
My uncle lived the mountain o'er,
A rector, and a bachelor;
The vicarage was by the sea,
That was the home of Emily:

The windows to the front looked down
Across a single-streeted town,
Far as to where Worms-head was seen,
Dim with ten watery miles between;
The Carnedd mountains on the right
With stony masses filled the sight;
To left the open sea; the bay
In a blue plain before you lay.
A garden, full of fruit, extends,
Stone-walled, above the house, and ends
With a locked door, that by a porch
Admits to churchyard and to church;
Farm-buildings nearer on one side,
And glebe, and then the country wide.
I and my cousin Emily
Were cousins in the third degree;
My mother near of kin was reckoned
To hers, who was my mother’s second:
My cousinship I held from her.
Such an amount of girls there were,
At first one really was perplexed:
’Twas Patty first, and Lydia next,
And Emily the third, and then,
Philippa, Phœbe, Mary Gwen.

Six were they, you perceive, in all;
And portraits fading on the wall,
Grandmothers, heroines of old,
And aunts of aunts, with scrolls that told
Their names and dates, were there to show
Why these had all been christened so.
The crowd of blooming daughters fair
Scarce let you see the mother there,
And by her husband, large and tall,
She looked a little shrunk and small;
Although my mother used to tell
That once she was a county belle:
Busied she seemed, and half-distress’d
For him and them to do the best.
The vicar was of bulk and thewes,
Six feet he stood within his shoes,
And every inch of all a man;
Ecclesiast on the ancient plan,
Unforced by any party rule
His native character to school;
In ancient learning not unread,
But had few doctrines in his head;
Dissenters truly he abhorr’d,
They never had his gracious word.

He ne’er was bitter or unkind,
But positively spoke his mind.
Their piety he could not bear,
A sneaking snivelling set they were:
Their tricks and meanness fired his blood;
Up for his Church he stoutly stood.
No worldly aim had he in life
To set him with himself at strife;
A spade a spade he freely named,
And of his joke was not ashamed,
Made it and laughed at it, be sure,
With young and old, and rich and poor.
His sermons frequently he took
Out of some standard reverend book;
They seemed a little strange, indeed,
But were not likely to mislead.
Others he gave that were his own,
The difference could be quickly known.
Though sorry not to have a boy,
His daughters were his perfect joy;
He plagued them, oft drew tears from each,
Was bold and hasty in his speech;
All through the house you heard him call,
He had his vocatives for all:

Patty Patina, Pat became,
Lydia took Languish with her name,
Philippa was the Gentle Queen,
And Phœbe, Madam Proserpine;
The pseudonyms for Mary Gwen
Varied with every week again;
But Emily, of all the set,
Emilia called, was most the pet.
Soon as her messenger had come,
I started from my uncle’s home,
On an old pony scrambling down
Over the mountain to the town.
My cousins met me at the door,
And some behind, and some before,
Kissed me all round and kissed again,
The happy custom there and then,
From Patty down to Mary Gwen.
Three hours we had, and spent in play
About the garden and the hay;
We sat upon the half-built stack;
And when ’twas time for hurrying back,
Slyly away the others hied,
And took the ladder from the side;
Emily there, alone with me,

Was left in close captivity;
But down the stack at last I slid,
And found the ladder they had hid.
I left at six; again I went
Soon after and a fortnight spent:
Drawing, by Patty I was taught,
But could not be to music brought;
I showed them how to play at chess,
I argued with the governess;
I called them stupid; why, to me
'Twas evident as A B C;
Were not the reasons such and such?
Helston, my schoolfellow, but much
My senior, in a yacht came o'er,
His uncle with him, from the shore
Under Worms-head: to take a sail
He pressed them, but could not prevail;
Mama was timid, durst not go,
Papa was rather gruff with no.
Helston no sooner was afloat,
We made a party in a boat,
And rowed to Sea-Mew Island out,
And landed there and roved about:
And I and Emily out of reach,

Strayed from the rest along the beach.
Turning to look into a cave
She stood, when suddenly a wave
Ran up; I caught her by the frock,
And pulled her out, and o’er a rock,
So doing, stumbled, rolled, and fell.
She knelt down, I remember well,
Bid me where I was hurt to tell,
And kissed me three times as I lay;
But I jumped up and limped away.
The next was my departing day.
Patty arranged it all with me
To send next year to Emily
A valentine. I wrote and sent;
For the fourteenth it duly went.
On the fourteenth what should there be
But one from Emily to me;
The postmark left it plain to see.
Mine, though they praised it at the time,
Was but a formal piece of rhyme.
She sent me one that she had bought;
’Twas stupid of her, as I thought:
Why not have written one? She wrote,
However, soon, this little note.

‘Dearest of boys, of course ’twas you;
You printed, but your hand I knew,
And verses too, how did you learn?
I can’t send any in return.
Papa declares they are not bad—
That’s praise from him—and I’m so glad
Because you know no one can be
I’d rather have to write to me.
‘Our governess is going away,
We’re so distressed she cannot stay:
Mama had made it quite a rule
We none of us should go to school.
But what to do they do not know,
Papa protests it must be so.
Lydia and I may have to go;
Patty will try to teach the rest,
Mama agrees it will be best.
Dear boy, good-bye, I am, you see,
Ever your dearest Emily.
We want to know, so write and tell,
If you’d a valentine as well.’

II

Five tardy years were fully spent
Ere next my cousins’ way I went;

With Christmas then I came to see
My uncle in his rectory:
But they the town had left; no more
Were in the vicarage of yore.
When time his sixtieth year had brought,
An easier cure the vicar sought:
A country parsonage was made
Sufficient, amply, with the aid
Of mortar here and there, and bricks,
For him and wife and children six.
Though neighbours now, there scarce was light
To see them and return ere night.
Emily wrote: how glad they were
To hear of my arrival there;
Mama had bid her say that all
The house was crowded for the ball
Till Tuesday, but if I would come,
She thought that they could find me room;
The week with them I then should spend,
But really must the ball attend;
‘Dear cousin, you have been away
For such an age, pray don’t delay,
But come and do not lose a day.’
A schoolboy still, but now, indeed,

About to college to proceed,
Dancing was, let it be confess’d,
To me no pleasure at the best:
Of girls and of their lovely looks
I thought not, busy with my books.
Still, though a little ill-content,
Upon the Monday morn I went:
My cousins, each and all, I found
Wondrously grown! They kissed me round,
And so affectionate and good
They were, it could not be withstood.
Emily, I was so surprised,
At first I hardly recognised;
Her face so formed and rounded now,
Such knowledge in her eyes and brow;
For all I read and thought I knew,
She could divine me through and through.
Where had she been, and what had done,
I asked, such victory to have won?
She had not studied, had not read,
Seemed to have little in her head,
Yet of herself the right and true,
As of her own experience knew.
Straight from her eyes her judgments flew,

Like absolute decrees they ran,
From mine, on such a different plan.
A simple county country ball
It was to be, not grand at all;
And cousins four with me would dance,
And keep me well in countenance.
And there were people there to be
Who knew of old my family,
Friends of my friends—I heard and knew,
And tried; but no, it would not do.
Somehow it seemed a sort of thing
To which my strength I could not bring;
The music scarcely touched my ears,
The figures fluttered me with fears.
I talked, but had not aught to say,
Danced, my instructions to obey;
E’en when with beautiful good-will
Emilia through the long quadrille
Conducted me, alas the day,
Ten times I wished myself away.
But she, invested with a dower
Of conscious, scarce-exerted power,
Emilia, so, I know not why,
They called her now, not Emily,

Amid the living, heaving throng,
Sedately, somewhat, moved along,
Serenely, somewhat, in the dance
Mingled, divining at a glance,
And reading every countenance;
Not stately she, nor grand nor tall,
Yet looked as if controlling all
The fluctuations of the ball;
Her subjects ready at her call,
All others, she a queen, her throne
Preparing, and her title known,
Though not yet taken as her own.
O wonderful! I still can see,
And twice she came and danced with me.
She asked me of my school, and what
Those prizes were that I had got,
And what we learnt, and ‘oh,’ she said,
‘How much to carry in one’s head,’
And I must be upon my guard,
And really must not work too hard:
Who were my friends? and did I go
Ever to balls? I told her no:
She said, ‘I really like them so;
But then I am a girl; and dear,

You like your friends at school, I fear
Better than anybody here.’
How long had she left school, I asked.
Two years, she told me, and I tasked
My faltering speech to learn about
Her life, but could not bring it out:
This while the dancers round us flew.
Helston, whom formerly I knew,
My schoolfellow, was at the ball,
A man full-statured, fair and tall,
Helston of Helston now they said,
Heir to his uncle, who was dead;
In the army, too: he danced with three
Of the four sisters. Emily
Refused him once, to dance with me.
How long it seemed! and yet at one
We left, before ’twas nearly done:
How thankful I! the journey through
I talked to them with spirits new;
And the brief sleep of closing night
Brought a sensation of delight,
Which, when I woke, was exquisite.
The music moving in my brain
I felt; in the gay crowd again

Half felt, half saw the girlish bands,
On their white skirts their white-gloved hands,
Advance, retreat, and yet advance,
And mingle in the mingling dance.
The impulse had arrived at last,
When the opportunity was past.
Breakfast my soft sensations first
With livelier passages dispersed.
Reposing in his country home,
Which half luxurious had become,
Gay was their father, loudly flung
His guests and blushing girls among,
His jokes; and she, their mother, too,
Less anxious seemed, with less to do,
Her daughters aiding. As the day
Advanced, the others went away,
But I must absolutely stay,
The girls cried out; I stayed and let
Myself be once more half their pet,
Although a little on the fret.
How ill our boyhood understands
Incipient manhood’s strong demands!
Boys have such troubles of their own,
As none, they fancy, e’er have known,

Such as to speak of, or to tell,
They hold, were unendurable:
Religious, social, of all kinds,
That tear and agitate their minds.
A thousand thoughts within me stirred,
Of which I could not speak a word;
Strange efforts after something new,
Which I was wretched not to do;
Passions, ambitions lay and lurked,
Wants, counter-wants, obscurely worked
Without their names, and unexplained.
And where had Emily obtained
Assurance, and had ascertained?
How strange, how far behind was I,
And how it came, I asked, and why?
How was it, and how could it be,
And what was all that worked in me?
They used to scold me when I read,
And bade me talk to them instead;
When I absconded to my room,
To fetch me out they used to come;
Oft by myself I went to walk,
But, by degrees, was got to talk.
The year had cheerfully begun,

With more than winter’s wonted sun,
Mountains, in the green garden ways,
Gleamed through the laurel and the bays.
I well remember letting out
One day, as there I looked about,
While they of girls discoursing sat,
This one how sweet, how lovely that,
That I could greater pleasure take
In looking on Llynidwil lake
Than on the fairest female face:
They could not understand: a place!
Incomprehensible it seemed;
Philippa looked as if she dreamed,
Patty and Lydia loud exclaimed,
And I already was ashamed,
When Emily asked, half apart,
If to the lake I’d given my heart;
And did the lake, she wished to learn,
My tender sentiment return.
For music, too, I would not care,
Which was an infinite despair:
When Lydia took her seat to play,
I read a book, or walked away.
I was not quite composed, I own,

Except when with the girls alone;
Looked to their father still with fear
Of how to him I must appear;
And was entirely put to shame,
When once some rough he-cousins came.
Yet Emily from all distress
Could reinstate me, more or less;
How pleasant by her side to walk,
How beautiful to let her talk,
How charming; yet, by slow degrees,
I got impatient, ill at ease;
Half glad, half wretched, when at last
The visit ended, and ’twas past.

III

Next year I went and spent a week,
And certainly had learnt to speak;
My chains I forcibly had broke,
And now too much indeed I spoke.
A mother sick and seldom seen
A grief for many months had been,
Their father too was feebler, years
Were heavy, and there had been fears
Some months ago; and he was vexed
With party heats and all perplexed

With an upheaving modern change
To him and his old wisdom strange.
The daughters all were there, not one
Had yet to other duties run,
Their father, people used to say,
Frightened the wooers all away;—
As vines around an ancient stem,
They clung and clustered upon him,
Him loved and tended; above all,
Emilia, ever at his call.
But I was—intellectual;
I talked in high superior tone
Of things the girls had never known,
Far wiser to have let alone;
Things which the father knew in short
By country clerical report;
I talked of much I thought I knew,
Used all my college wit anew,
A little on my fancy drew;
Religion, politics, O me!
No subject great enough could be.
In vain, more weak in spirit grown,
At times he tried to put me down.
I own it was the want, in part,

Of any discipline of heart.
It was, now hard at work again,
The busy argufying brain
Of the prize schoolboy; but, indeed,
Much more, if right the thing I read,
It was the instinctive wish to try
And, above all things, not be shy.
Alas! it did not do at all;
Ill went the visit, ill the ball;
Each hour I felt myself grow worse,
With every effort more perverse.
I tried to change; too hard, indeed,
I tried, and never could succeed.
Out of sheer spite an extra day
I stayed; but when I went away,
Alas, the farewells were not warm,
The kissing was the merest form;
Emilia was distraite and sad,
And everything was bad as bad.
O had some happy chance fall’n out,
To turn the thing just round about,
In time at least to give anew
The old affectionate adieu!
A little thing, a word, a jest,

A laugh, had set us all at rest;
But nothing came. I went away,
And could have really cried that day,
So vexed, for I had meant so well,
Yet everything so ill befell,
And why and how I could not tell.
Our wounds in youth soon close and heal,
Or seem to close; young people feel,
And suffer greatly, I believe,
But then they can’t profess to grieve:
Their pleasures occupy them more,
And they have so much time before.
At twenty life appeared to me
A sort of vague infinity;
And though of changes still I heard,
Real changes had not yet occurred:
And all things were, or would be, well,
And nothing irremediable.
The youth for his degree that reads
Beyond it nothing knows or needs;
Nor till ’tis over wakes to see
The busy world’s reality.
One visit brief I made again
In autumn next but one, and then

All better found. With Mary Gwen
I talked, a schoolgirl just about
To leave this winter and come out.
Patty and Lydia were away,
And a strange sort of distance lay
Betwixt me and Emilia.
She sought me less, and I was shy.
And yet this time I think that I
More subtly felt, more saw, more knew
The beauty into which she grew;
More understood the meanings now
Of the still eyes and rounded brow,
And could, perhaps, have told you how
The intellect that crowns our race
To more than beauty in her face
Was changed. But I confuse from hence
The later and the earlier sense.

IV

Have you the Giesbach seen? a fall
In Switzerland you say, that’s all;
That, and an inn, from which proceeds
A path that to the Faulhorn leads,
From whence you see the world of snows.
Few see how perfect in repose,

White green, the lake lies deeply set,
Where, slowly purifying yet,
The icy river-floods retain
A something of the glacier stain.
Steep cliffs arise the waters o’er,
The Giesbach leads you to a shore,
And to one still sequestered bay
I found elsewhere a scrambling way.
Above, the loftier heights ascend,
And level platforms here extend
The mountains and the cliffs between,
With firs and grassy spaces green,
And little dips and knolls to show
In part or whole the lake below;
And all exactly at the height
To make the pictures exquisite.
Most exquisite they seemed to me,
When, a year after my degree,
Passing upon my journey home
From Greece, and Sicily, and Rome,
I stayed at that minute hotel
Six days, or eight, I cannot tell.
Twelve months had led me fairly through
The old world surviving in the new.

From Rome with joy I passed to Greece,
To Athens and the Peloponnese;
Saluted with supreme delight
The Parthenon-surmounted height;
In huts at Delphi made abode,
And in Arcadian valleys rode;
Counted the towns that lie like slain
Upon the wide Bœotian plain;
With wonder in the spacious gloom
Stood of the Mycenæan tomb;
From the Acrocorinth watched the day
Light the eastern and the western bay.
Constantinople then had seen,
Where, by her cypresses, the queen
Of the East sees flow through portals wide
The steady streaming Scythian tide;
And after, from Scamander's mouth,
Went up to Troy, and to the South,
To Lycia, Caria, pressed, atwhiles
Outvoyaging to Egean isles.
To see the things, which, sick with doubt
And comment, one had learnt about,
Was like clear morning after night,
Or raising of the blind to sight.

Aware it might be first and last,
I did it eagerly and fast,
And took unsparingly my fill.
The impetus of travel still
Urged me, but laden, half oppress’d,
Here lighting on a place of rest,
I yielded, asked not if ’twere best.
Pleasant it was, reposing here,
To sum the experience of the year,
And let the accumulated gain
Assort itself upon the brain.
Travel’s a miniature life,
Travel is evermore a strife,
Where he must run who would obtain.
’Tis a perpetual loss and gain;
For sloth and error dear we pay,
By luck and effort win our way,
And both have need of every day.
Each day has got its sight to see,
Each day must put to profit be;
Pleasant, when seen are all the sights,
To let them think themselves to rights.
I on the Giesbach turf reclined,
Half watched this process in my mind,

Watch the stream purifying slow,
In me and in the lake below;
And then began to think of home,
And possibilities to come.
Brienz, on our Brienzer See
From Interlaken every day
A steamer seeks, and at our pier
Lets out a crowd to see things here;
Up a steep path they pant and strive;
When to the level they arrive,
Dispersing, hither, thither, run,
For all must rapidly be done,
And seek, with questioning and din,
Some the cascade, and some the inn,
The waterfall, for if you look,
You find it printed in the book
That man or woman, so inclined,
May pass the very fall behind;
So many feet there intervene
The rock and flying jet between;
The inn, ’tis also in the plan
(For tourist is a hungry man),
And a small salle repeats by rote,
A daily task of table d’hôte,

Where broth and meat, and country wine
Assure the strangers that they dine;
Do it they must while they have power,
For in three-quarters of an hour
Back comes the steamer from Brienz,
And with one clear departure hence
The quietude is more intense.
It was my custom at the top
To stand and see them clambering up,
Then take advantage of the start,
And pass into the woods apart.
It happened, and I know not why,
I once returned too speedily;
And, seeing women still and men,
Was swerving to the woods again,
But for a moment stopped to seize
A glance at some one near the trees;
A figure full, but full of grace,
Its movement beautified the place.
It turns, advances, comes my way;
What do I see, what do I say?
Yet, to a statelier beauty grown,
It is, it can be, she alone!
O mountains round! O heaven above!

It is—Emilia, whom I love;
‘Emilia, whom I love,’ the word
Rose to my lips, as yet unheard,
When she, whose colour flushed to red,
In a soft voice, ‘My husband,’ said;
And Helston came up with his hand,
And both of them took mine; but stand
And talk they could not, they must go;
The steamer rang her bell below;
How curious that I did not know!
They were to go and stay at Thun,
Could I come there and see them soon?
And shortly were returning home,
And when would I to Helston come?
Thus down we went, I put them in;
Off went the steamer with a din,
And on the pier I stood and eyed
The bridegroom, seated by the bride,
Emilia closing to his side.

V

She wrote from Helston; begged I’d come
And see her in her husband’s home.
I went, and bound by double vow,
Not only wife, but mother now,

I found her, lovely as of old,
O, rather, lovelier manifold.
Her wifely sweet reserve unbroke,
Still frankly, tenderly, she spoke;
Asked me about myself, would hear
What I proposed to do this year;
At college why was I detained,
Was it the fellowship I'd gained?
I told her that I was not tied
Henceforward further to reside,
Yet very likely might stay on,
And lapse into a college don;
My fellowship itself would give
A competence on which to live,
And if I waited, who could tell,
I might be tutor too, as well.
Oh, but, she said, I must not stay,
College and school were only play;
I might be sick, perhaps, of praise,
But must not therefore waste my days!
Fellows grow indolent, and then
They may not do as other men,
And for your happiness in life,
Sometime you'll wish to have a wife.

Languidly by her chair I sat,
But my eyes rather flashed at that.
I said, ‘Emilia, people change,
But yet, I own, I find it strange
To hear this common talk from you:
You speak, and some believe it true,
Just as if any wife would do;
Whoe’er one takes, ’tis much the same,
And love—and so forth, but a name.’
She coloured. ‘What can I have said
Or what could put it in your head?
Indeed, I had not in my mind
The faintest notion of the kind.’
I told her that I did not know—
Her tone appeared to mean it so.
‘Emilia, when I’ve heard,’ I said,
‘How people match themselves and wed,
I’ve sometimes wished that both were dead,’
She turned a little pale. I woke
Some thought; what thought I but soft she spoke;
‘I’m sure that what you meant was good,
But, really, you misunderstood.
From point to point so quick you fly,
And are so vehement,—and I,

As you remember, long ago,
Am stupid, certainly am slow.
And yet some things I seem to know;
I know it will be just a crime,
If you should waste your powers and time.
There is so much, I think, that you,
And no one equally, can do.'
'It does not matter much,' said I,
'The things I thought of are gone by;
I'm quite content to wait to die.'
A sort of beauteous anger spread
Over her face. 'O me!' she said,
'That you should sit and trifle so,
And you so utterly don't know
How greatly you have yet to grow,
How wide your objects have to expand,
How much is yet an unknown land!
You're twenty-three, I'm twenty-five,
And I am so much more alive.'
My eyes I shaded with my hand,
And almost lost my self-command.
I muttered something: 'Yes, I see;
Two years have severed you from me.
O, Emily, was it ever told,'

I asked, ‘that souls are young and old?’
But she, continuing, ‘All the day
Were I to speak, I could but say
The one same thing the one same way.
Sometimes, indeed, I think, you know,’
And her tone suddenly was low,
‘That in a day we yet shall see,
You of my sisters and of me,
And of the things that used to be,
Will think, as you look back again,
With something not unlike disdain;
So you your rightful place obtain,
That will to me be joy, not pain.’
Her voice still lower, lower fell,
I heard, just heard, each syllable.
‘But,’ in the tone she used before,
‘Don’t stay at college any more!
For others it perhaps may do,
I’m sure it will be bad for you.’
She softened me. The following day
We parted. As I went away
Her infant on her bosom lay,
And, as a mother might her boy,
I think she would with loving joy

Have kissed me; but I turned to go,
’Twas better not to have it so.
Next year achieved me some amends,
And once we met, and met as friends.
Friends, yet apart; I had not much
Valued her judgment, though to touch
Her words had power; yet, strangely still,
It had been cogent on my will.
As she had counselled, I had done,
And a new effort was begun.
Forth to the war of life I went,
Courageous, and not ill content.
‘Yours is the fault I opened thus again
A youthful, ancient, sentimental vein,’
He said, ‘and like Munchausen’s horn o’erflow
With liquefying tunes of long ago.
My wiser friend, who knows for what we live,
And what shall seek, will his correction give.’
We all made thanks. ‘My tale were quickly told,’
The other said, ‘but the turned heavens behold;
The night two watches of the night is old,
The sinking stars their suasions urge for sleep.
My story for to-morrow night will keep.’
The evening after, when the day was stilled,

His promise thus the clergyman fulfilled.

**THE CLERGYMAN'S FIRST TALE. Love is fellow-service.**

A youth and maid upon a summer night
Upon the lawn, while yet the skies were light,
Edmund and Emma, let their names be these,
Among the shrubs within the circling trees,
Joined in a game with boys and girls at play:
For games perhaps too old a little they;
In April she her eighteenth year begun,
And twenty he, and near to twenty-one.
A game it was of running and of noise;
He as a boy, with other girls and boys
(Her sisters and her brothers), took the fun;
And when her turn, she marked not, came to run,
'Emma,' he called,—then knew that he was wrong,
Knew that her name to him did not belong.
Her look and manner proved his feeling true,—
A child no more, her womanhood she knew;
Half was the colour mounted on her face,
Her tardy movement had an adult grace.
Vexed with himself, and shamed, he felt the more
A kind of joy he ne'er had felt before.
Something there was that from this date began;
'Twas beautiful with her to be a man.

Two years elapsed, and he who went and came,
Changing in much, in this appeared the same;
The feeling, if it did not greatly grow,
Endured and was not wholly hid below.
He now, o’ertasked at school, a serious boy,
A sort of after-boyhood to enjoy
Appeared—in vigour and in spirit high
And manly grown, but kept the boy’s soft eye:
And full of blood, and strong and lithe of limb,
To him ’twas pleasure now to ride, to swim;
The peaks, the glens, the torrents tempted him.
Restless he seemed,—long distances would walk,
And lively was, and vehement in talk.
A wandering life his life had lately been,
Books he had read, the world had little seen.
One former frailty haunted him, a touch
Of something introspective overmuch.
With all his eager motions still there went
A self-correcting and ascetic bent,
That from the obvious good still led astray,
And set him travelling on the longest way;
Seen in these scattered notes their date that claim
When first his feeling conscious sought a name.
‘Beside the wishing gate which so they name,

’Mid northern hills to me this fancy came,
A wish I formed, my wish I thus expressed:
Would I could wish my wishes all to rest,
And know to wish the wish that were the best!
O for some winnowing wind, to the empty air
This chaff of easy sympathies to bear
Far off, and leave me of myself aware!
While thus this over health deludes me still,
So willing that I know not what I will;
O for some friend, or more than friend, austere,
To make me know myself, and make me fear!
O for some touch, too noble to be kind,
To awake to life the mind within the mind!’
‘O charms, seductions and divine delights!
All through the radiant yellow summer nights
Dreams, hardly dreams, that yield or e’er they’re done,
To the bright fact, my day, my risen sun!
O promise and fulfilment, both in one!
O bliss, already bliss, which nought has shared,
Whose glory no fruition has impaired,
And, emblem of my state, thou coming day,
With all thy hours unspent to pass away!
Why do I wait? What more propose to know?
Where the sweet mandate bids me, let me go;

My conscience in my impulse let me find,
Justification in the moving mind,
Law in the strong desire; or yet behind,
Say, is there aught the spell that has not heard,
A something that refuses to be stirred?'
'In other regions has my being heard
Of a strange language the diviner word?
Has some forgotten life the exemplar shown?
Elsewhere such high communion have I known,
As dooms me here, in this, to live alone?
Then love, that shouldest blind me, let me, love,
Nothing behold beyond thee or above;
Ye impulses, that should be strong and wild,
Beguile me, if I am to be beguiled!'
'Or are there modes of love, and different kinds,
Proportioned to the sizes of our minds?
There are who say thus, I held there was one,
One love, one deity, one central sun;
As he resistless brings the expanding day,
So love should come on his victorious way.
If light at all, can light indeed be there,
Yet only permeate half the ambient air?
Can the high noon be regnant in the sky,
Yet half the land in light, and half in darkness lie?

Can love, if love, be occupant in part,
Hold, as it were, some chambers in the heart;
Tenant at will of so much of the soul,
Not lord and mighty master of the whole?
There are who say, and say that it is well;
Opinion all, of knowledge none can tell.’
‘Montaigne, I know in a realm high above
Places the seat of friendship over love;
’Tis not in love that we should think to find
The lofty fellowship of mind with mind;
Love’s not a joy where soul and soul unite,
Rather a wondrous animal delight;
And as in spring, for one consummate hour
The world of vegetation turns to flower,
The birds with liveliest plumage trim their wing,
And all the woodland listens as they sing;
When spring is o’er and summer days are sped,
The songs are silent, and the blossoms dead:
E’en so of man and woman is the bliss.
O, but I will not tamely yield to this!
I think it only shows us in the end,
Montaigne was happy in a noble friend,
Had not the fortune of a noble wife;
He lived, I think, a poor ignoble life,

And wrote of petty pleasures, petty pain;
I do not greatly think about Montaigne.’
‘How charming to be with her! yet indeed,
After a while I find a blank succeed;
After a while she little has to say,
I’m silent too, although I wish to stay;
What would it be all day, day after day?
Ah! but I ask, I do not doubt, too much;
I think of love as if it should be such
As to fulfil and occupy in whole
The nought-else-seeking, nought-essaying soul.
Therefore it is my mind with doubts I urge;
Hence are these fears and shiverings on the verge;
By books, not nature, thus have we been schooled,
By poetry and novels been befooled;
Wiser tradition says, the affections’ claim
Will be supplied, the rest will be the same.
I think too much of love, ’tis true: I know
It is not all, was ne’er intended so;
Yet such a change, so entire, I feel, ’twould be,
So potent, so omnipotent with me;
My former self I never should recall,—
Indeed I think it must be all in all.’
‘I thought that Love was winged; without a sound,

His purple pinions bore him o’er the ground,
Wafted without an effort here or there,
He came—and we too trod as if in air:—
But panting, toiling, clambering up the hill,
Am I to assist him? I, put forth my will
To upbear his lagging footsteps, lame and slow,
And help him on and tell him where to go,
And ease him of his quiver and his bow?’
‘Erotion! I saw it in a book;
Why did I notice it, why did I look?
Yea, is it so, ye powers that see above?
I do not love, I want, I try to love!
This is not love, but lack of love instead!
Merciless thought! I would I had been dead,
Or e’er the phrase had come into my head.’
She also wrote: and here may find a place,
Of her and of her thoughts some slender trace.
‘He is not vain; if proud, he quells his pride,
And somehow really likes to be defied;
Rejoices if you humble him: indeed
Gives way at once, and leaves you to succeed.’
‘Easy it were with such a mind to play,
And foolish not to do so, some would say;
One almost smiles to look and see the way:

But come what will, I will not play a part,
Indeed I dare not condescend to art.'
'Easy 'twere not, perhaps, with him to live;
He looks for more than any one can give:
So dulled at times and disappointed; still
Expecting what depends not of my will:
My inspiration comes not at my call,
Seek me as I am, if seek you do at all.'
'Like him I do, and think of him I must;
But more—I dare not and I cannot trust.
This more he brings—say, is it more or less
Than that no fruitage ever came to bless,—
The old wild flower of love-in-idleness?'
'Me when he leaves and others when he sees,
What is my fate who am not there to please?
Me he has left; already may have seen
One, who for me forgotten here has been;
And he, the while is balancing between.
If the heart spoke, the heart I knew were bound;
What if it utter an uncertain sound?'
'So quick to vary, so rejoiced to change,
From this to that his feelings surely range;
His fancies wander, and his thoughts as well;
And if the heart be constant, who can tell?

Far off to fly, to abandon me, and go,
He seems returning then before I know:
With every accident he seems to move,
Is now below me and is now above,
Now far aside,—O, does he really love?'
'Absence were hard; yet let the trial be;
His nature's aim and purpose he would free,
And in the world his course of action see.
O should he lose, not learn; pervert his scope;
O should I lose! and yet to win I hope.
I win not now; his way if now I went,
Brief joy I gave, for years of discontent.'
'Gone, is it true? but oft he went before,
And came again before a month was o'er.
Gone—though I could not venture upon art,
It was perhaps a foolish pride in part;
He had such ready fancies in his head,
And really was so easy to be led;
One might have failed; and yet I feel 'twas pride,
And can't but half repent I never tried.
Gone, is it true? but he again will come,
Wandering he loves, and loves returning home.'
Gone, it was true; nor came so soon again;
Came, after travelling, pleasure half, half pain,

Came, but a half of Europe first o’erran;
Arrived, his father found a ruined man.
Rich they had been, and rich was Emma too.
Heiress of wealth she knew not, Edmund knew.
Farewell to her!—In a new home obscure,
Food for his helpless parents to secure,
From early morning to advancing dark,
He toiled and laboured as a merchant’s clerk.
Three years his heavy load he bore, nor quailed,
Then all his health, though scarce his spirit, failed;
Friends interposed, insisted it must be,
Enforced their help, and sent him to the sea.
Wandering about with little here to do,
His old thoughts mingling dimly with his new,
Wandering one morn, he met upon the shore,
Her, whom he quitted five long years before.
Alas! why quitted? Say that charms are nought,
Nor grace, nor beauty worth one serious thought;
Was there no mystic virtue in the sense
That joined your boyish girlish innocence?
Is constancy a thing to throw away,
And loving faithfulness a chance of every day?
Alas! why quitted? is she changed? but now
The weight of intellect is in her brow;

Changed, or but truer seen, one sees in her
Something to wake the soul, the interior sense to stir.
Alone they met, from alien eyes away,
The high shore hid them in a tiny bay.
Alone was he, was she; in sweet surprise
They met, before they knew it, in their eyes.
In his a wondering admiration glowed,
In hers, a world of tenderness o'erflowed;
In a brief moment all was known and seen,
That of slow years the wearying work had been:
Morn's early odorous breath perchance in sooth,
Awoke the old natural feeling of their youth:
The sea, perchance, and solitude had charms,
They met—I know not—in each other's arms.
Why linger now—why waste the sands of life?
A few sweet weeks, and they were man and wife.
To his old frailty do not be severe,
His latest theory with patience hear:
'I sought not, truly would to seek disdain,
A kind, soft pillow for a wearying pain,
Fatigues and cares to lighten, to relieve;
But love is fellow-service, I believe.'
'No, truly no, it was not to obtain,
Though that alone were happiness, were gain,

A tender breast to fall upon and weep,
A heart, the secrets of my heart to keep;
To share my hopes, and in my griefs to grieve;
Yet love is fellow-service, I believe.'
'Yet in the eye of life's all-seeing sun
We shall behold a something we have done,
Shall of the work together we have wrought,
Beyond our aspiration and our thought,
Some not unworthy issue yet receive;
For love is fellow-service I believe.'
The tale, we said, instructive was, but short;
Could he not give another of the sort?
He feared his second might his first repeat,
'And Aristotle teaches, change is sweet;
But come, our younger friend in this dim night
Under his bushel must not hide his light.'
I said I'd had but little time to live,
Experience none or confidence could give.
'But I can tell to-morrow, if you please,
My last year's journey towards the Pyrenees.'
To-morrow came, and evening, when it closed,
The penalty of speech on me imposed.

**MY TALE. A la Banquette, or a Modern Pilgrimage.**

I stayed at La Quenille, ten miles or more

From the old-Roman sources of Mont Dore;
Travellers to Tulle this way are forced to go,
—An old high-road from Lyons to Bordeaux,—
From Tulle to Brives the swift Corrèze descends,
At Brives you've railway, and your trouble ends;
A little bourg La Quenille; from the height
The mountains of Auvergne are all in sight;
Green pastoral heights that once in lava flowed,
Of primal fire the product and abode;
And all the plateaux and the lines that trace
Where in deep dells the waters find their place;
Far to the south above the lofty plain,
The Plomb du Cantal lifts his towering train.
A little after one, with little fail,
Down drove the diligence that bears the mail;
The courier therefore called, in whose banquette
A place I got, and thankful was to get;
The new postillion climbed his seat, allez,
Off broke the four cart-horses on their way.
Westward we roll, o'er heathy backs of hills,
Crossing the future rivers in the rills;
Bare table-lands are these, and sparsely sown,
Turning their waters south to the Dordogne.
Close-packed we were, and little at our ease,

The conducteur impatient with the squeeze;
Not tall he seemed, but bulky round about,
His cap and jacket made him look more stout;
In grande tenue he rode of conducteur;
Black eyes he had, black his moustaches were,
Shaven his chin, his hair and whiskers cropt;
A ready man; at Ussel when we stopt,
For me and for himself, bread, meat, and wine,
He got, the courier did not wait to dine;
To appease our hunger, and allay our drouth,
We ate and took the bottle at the mouth;
One draught I had, the rest entire had he,
For wine his body had capacity.
A peasant in his country blouse was there,
He told me of the conseil and the maire.
Their maire, he said, could neither write nor read,
And yet could keep the registers, indeed;
The conseil had resigned—I know not what.—
Good actions here are easily forgot:
He in the quarante-huit had something done,
Were things but fair, some notice should have won.
Another youth there was, a soldier he,
A soldier ceasing with to-day to be;
Three years had served, for three had bought release:

From war returning to the arts of peace,
To Tulle he went, as his department's town,
To-morrow morn to pay his money down.
In Italy, his second year begun,
This youth had served, when Italy was won.
He told of Montebello, and the fight,
That ended fiercely with the close of night.
There was he wounded, fell, and thought to die,
Two Austrian cones had passed into his thigh;
One traversed it, the other, left behind,
In hospital the doctor had to find:
At eight of night he fell, and sadly lay
Till three of morning of the following day,
When peasants came and put him on a wain,
And drove him to Voghera in his pain;
To Alessandria thence the railway bore,
In Alessandria then two months and more
He lay in hospital; to lop the limb
The Italian doctor who attended him
Was much disposed, but high above the knee;
For life an utter cripple he would be.
Then came the typhoid fever, and the lack
Of food. And sick and hungering, on his back,
With French, Italians, Austrians as he lay,

Arrived the tidings of Magenta's day,
And Milan entered in the burning June,
And Solferino's issue following soon.
Alas, the glorious wars! and shortly he
To Genoa for the advantage of the sea,
And to Savona, suffering still, was sent
And joined his now returning regiment.
Good were the Austrian soldiers, but the feel
They did not well encounter of cold steel,
Nor in the bayonet fence of man with man
Maintained their ground, but yielded, turned and ran
Les armes blanches and the rifled gun
Had fought the battles, and the victories won.
The glorious wars! but he, the doubtful chance
Of soldiers' glory quitting and advance,—
His wounded limb less injured than he feared,—
Was dealing now in timber, it appeared;
Oak-timber finding for some mines of lead,
Worked by an English company, he said.
This youth perhaps was twenty-three years old;
Simply and well his history he told.
They wished to hear about myself as well;
I told them, but it was not much to tell;
At the Mont Dore, of which the guide-book talks,

I'd taken, not the waters, but the walks.
Friends I had met, who on their southward way
Had gone before, I followed them to-day.
They wondered greatly at this wondrous thing,—
Les Anglais are for ever on the wing,—
The conducteur said everybody knew
We were descended of the Wandering Jew.
And on with the declining sun we rolled,
And woods and vales and fuller streams behold.
About the hour when peasant people sup,
We dropped the peasant, took a curé up,
In hat and bands and soutane all to fit.
He next the conducteur was put to sit;
I in the corner gained the senior place.
Brown was his hair, but closely shaved his face;
To lift his eyelids did he think it sin?
I saw a pair of soft brown eyes within.
Older he was, but looked like twenty-two,
Fresh from the cases, to the country new.
I, the conducteur watching from my side,
A roguish twinkle in his eye espied;
He begged to hear about the pretty pair
Whom he supposed he had been marrying there;
The deed, he hoped, was comfortably done,—

Monsieur l’Evêque he called him in his fun.
Then lifted soon his voice for all to hear;
A barytone he had both strong and clear:
In fragments first of music made essay,
And tried his pipes and modest felt his way.
Le verre en main la mort nous trouvera,
It was, or Ah, vous dirai-je, maman!
And then, A toi, ma belle, à toi toujours;
Till of his organ’s quality secure,
Trifling no more, but boldly, like a man,
He filled his chest and gallantly began.
‘Though I have seemed, against my wiser will,
Your victim, O ye tender foibles, still,
Once now for all, though half my heart be yours,
Adieu, sweet faults, adieu, ye gay amours!
Sad if it be, yet true it is to say,
I’ve fifty years, and ’tis too late a day,
My limbs are shrinking and my hair turns grey;
Adieu, gay loves, it is too late a day!
‘Once in your school (what good, alas! is once?)
I took my lessons, and was not the dunce.
Oh, what a pretty girl was then Juliette!
Don’t you suppose that I remember yet,
Though thirty years divide me from the day,

When she and I first looked each other's way?
But now! midwinter to be matched with May!
Adieu, gay loves, it is too late a day!
'You lovely Marguerite! I shut my eyes,
And do my very utmost to be wise;
Yet see you still; and hear, though closed my ears,
And think I'm young in spite of all my years;
Shall I forget you if I go away?
To leave is painful, but absurd to stay;
I've fifty dreadful reasons to obey.
Adieu, gay loves, it is too late a day!'
This priest beside the lusty conducteur
Under his beaver sat and looked demure;
Faintly he smiled the company to please,
And folded held his hands above his knees.
Then, apropos of nothing, had we heard,
He asked, about a thing that had occurred
At the Mont Dore a little time ago,
A wondrous cure? and when we answered, No,
About a little girl he told a tale,
Who, when her medicines were of no avail,
Was by the doctor ordered to Mont Dore,
But nothing gained and only suffered more.
This little child had in her simple way

Unto the Blessed Virgin learnt to pray,
And, as it happened, to an image there
By the roadside one day she made her prayer,
And of our Lady, who can hear on high,
Begged for her parents' sake she might not die.
Our Lady of Grace, whose attribute is love,
Beheld this child and listened from above.
Her parents noticed from that very day
The malady began to pass away,
And but a fortnight after, as they tell,
They took her home rejoicing, sound and well.
Things come, he said, to show us every hour
We are surrounded by superior power.
Little we notice, but if once we see,
The seed of faith will grow into a tree.
The conducteur, he wisely shook his head:
Strange things do happen in our time, he said;
If the bon Dieu but please, no doubt indeed,
When things are desperate, yet they will succeed.
Ask the postillion here, and he can tell
Who cured his horse, and what of it befell.
Then the postillion, in his smock of blue,
His pipe into his mouth's far corner drew,
And told about a farrier and a horse;

But his Auvergnat grew from bad to worse;
His rank Arvernian patois was so strong,
With what he said I could not go along;
And what befell and how it came to pass,
And if it were a horse or if an ass,
The sequence of his phrase I could not keep,
And in the middle fairly sank to sleep.
When I awoke, I heard a stream below
And on each bank saw houses in a row,
Corrèze the stream, the houses Tulle, they said;
Alighted here and thankful went to bed.
‘But how,’ said one, ‘about the Pyrenees?
In Hamlet give us Hamlet, if you please;
Your friend declares you said you met with there
A peasant beauty, beauteous past compare,
Who fed her cows the mountain peaks between,
And asked if at Velletri you had been.
And was Velletri larger than was Rome?
Her soldier-brother went away from home,
Two years ago,—to Rome it was he went,
And to Velletri was this summer sent;
He twenty-three, and she was sweet seventeen,
And fed her cows the mountain peaks between.
Lightly along a rocky path she led,

And from a grange she brought you milk and bread.
In summer here she lived, and with the snow
Went in October to the fields below;
And where you lived, she asked, and oh, they say,
That with the English we shall fight some day;
Loveliest of peasant girls that e'er was seen,
Feeding her cows the mountain peaks between.'
''Tis true,' I said, 'though to betray was mean.
My Pyrenean verses will you hear,
Though not about that peasant girl, I fear.'
'Begin,' they said, 'the sweet bucolic song,
Though it to other maids and other cows belong.'
Currente calamo.
Quick, painter, quick, the moment seize
Amid the snowy Pyrenees;
More evanescent than the snow,
The pictures come, are seen, and go:
Quick, quick, currente calamo.
I do not ask the tints that fill
The gate of day 'twixt hill and hill;
I ask not for the hues that fleet
Above the distant peaks; my feet
Are on a poplar-bordered road,
Where with a saddle and a load

A donkey, old and ashen-grey,
Reluctant works his dusty way.
Before him, still with might and main
Pulling his rope, the rustic rein,
A girl: before both him and me,
Frequent she turns and lets me see,
Unconscious, lets me scan and trace
The sunny darkness of her face
And outlines full of southern grace.
Following I notice, yet and yet,
Her olive skin, dark eyes deep set,
And black, and blacker e’en than jet,
The escaping hair that scantly showed,
Since o’er it in the country mode,
For winter warmth and summer shade,
The lap of scarlet cloth is laid.
And then, back-falling from the head,
A crimson kerchief overspread
Her jacket blue; thence passing down,
A skirt of darkest yellow-brown,
Coarse stuff, allowing to the view
The smooth limb to the woollen shoe.
But who—here’s some one following too,—
A priest, and reading at his book!

Read on, O priest, and do not look;
Consider,—she is but a child,—
Yet might your fancy be beguiled.
Read on, O priest, and pass and go!
But see, succeeding in a row,
Two, three, and four, a motley train,
Musicians wandering back to Spain;
With fiddle and with tambourine,
A man with women following seen.
What dresses, ribbon-ends, and flowers!
And,—sight to wonder at for hours,—
The man,—to Phillip has he sat?—
With butterfly-like velvet hat;
One dame his big bassoon conveys,
On one his gentle arm he lays;
They stop, and look, and something say,
And to ‘España’ ask the way.
But while I speak, and point them on,
Alas! my dearer friends are gone;
The dark-eyed maiden and the ass
Have had the time the bridge to pass.
Vainly, beyond it far descried,
Adieu, and peace with you abide,
Grey donkey, and your beauteous guide.

The pictures come, the pictures go,
Quick, quick, currente calamo.
They praised the rhymes, but still would persevere
The eclogue of the mountain peaks to hear,
Eclogue that never was; and then awhile,
Of France, and Frenchmen, and our native isle,
They talked; pre-insular above the rest,
My friend his ardent politics expressed;
France was behind us all, he saw in France
Worse retrogression, and the least advance.
Her revolutions had but thrown her back.
Powerful just now, but wholly off the track;
They in religion were, as I had seen,
About where we in Chaucer's time had been;
In Chaucer's time, and yet their Wickliffe where?
Something they'd kept—the worst part—of Voltaire.
Strong for Old England, was New England too;
The clergyman was neutral in his view,
And I, for France with more than I could do,
Though sound, my thesis did not long maintain.
The contemplation of the nightly main,
The vaulted heavens above, and under these,
The black ship working through the dusky seas,
Deserting, to our narrow berths we crept;

Sound slumbered there, the watch while others kept.
The second officer, who kept the watch,
A young man, fair of feature, partly Scotch
And partly Irish in his voice and way,
Joined us the evening of the following day,
And of our stories when he heard us tell,
Offered to give a narrative as well.

**THE MATE'S STORY.**

'I've often wondered how it is, at times
Good people do what are as bad as crimes.
A common person would have been ashamed
To do what once a family far-famed
For their religious ways was known to do.
Small harm befell, small thanks to them were due.
They from abroad, perhaps it cost them less,
Had brought a young French girl as governess,
A pretty, youthful thing as e'er you saw;
She taught the children how to play and draw,
Of course, the language of her native land;
English she scarcely learnt to understand.
After a time they wanted her no more;
She must go home,—but how to send her o'er,—
Far in the south of France she lived, and they
In Ireland there—was more than they could say.

A monthly steamer, as they chanced to know,
From Liverpool went over to Bordeaux,
And would, they thought, exactly meet the case.
They wrote and got a friend to take a place;
And from her salary paid her money down.
A trading steamer from the seaport town
Near which they lived, across the Channel plied,
And this, they said, a passage would provide.
With pigs, and with the Irish reaping horde,
This pretty tender girl was put on board;
And a rough time of it, no doubt, had she,
Tossing about upon the Irish Sea.
Arrived at last and set ashore, she found
The steamer gone for which she had been bound.
The pious people, in their careless way,
Had made some loose mistake about the day.
She stood; the passengers with whom she crossed
Went off, and she remained as one that’s lost.
Think of the hapless creature standing here
Alone, beside her boxes on the pier.
Whither to turn, and where to try and go,
She knew not; nay, the language did not know.
So young a girl, so pretty too, set down
Here, in the midst of a great seaport town,

What might have happened one may sadly guess,
Had not the captain, seeing her distress,
Made out the cause, and told her she could stay
On board the vessel till the following day.
Next day, he said—the steamer to Bordeaux
Was gone no doubt, next month the next would go;
For this her passage-money she had paid,
But some arrangement could, he thought, be made,
If only she could manage to afford
To wait a month and pay for bed and board.
She sadly shook her head—well, after all,
'Twas a bad town, and mischief might befall.
Would she go back? Indeed 'twas but a shame,
To take her back to those from whom she came.
'There's one thing, Miss,' said he, 'that you can do
It's speaking somewhat sudden-like, it's true,
But if you'll marry me, I'll marry you.
May be you won't, but if you will you can.'
This captain was a young and decent man,
And I suppose she saw no better way;
Marry they did, and married live this day.
Another friend, these previous nights away,
An officer of engineers, and round
By Halifax to far Bermuda bound,

Joined us this night; a rover he had been.
Many strange sights and many climes had seen,
And much of various life; his comment was, ’twas well
There was no further incident to tell.
He’d been afraid that ere the tale was o’er,
’Twould prove the captain had a wife before.
The poor French girl was luckier than she knew;
Soldiers and sailors had so often two.
And it was something, too, for men who went
From port to port to be with two content.
In every place the marriage rite supplied
A decent spouse to whom you were not tied.
Of course the women would at times suspect,
But felt their reputations were not wrecked.
One after night we took ourselves to task
For our neglect who had forborne to ask
The clergyman, who told his tale so well,
Another tale for our behalf to tell.
He to a second had himself confessed.
Now, when to hear it eagerly we pressed.
He put us off; but, ere the night was done,
Told us his second, and his sadder one.

**THE CLERGYMAN’S SECOND TALE.**

Edward and Jane a married couple were,

And fonder she of him or he of her
Was hard to say; their wedlock had begun
When in one year they both were twenty-one;
And friends, who would not sanction, left them free
He gentle-born, nor his inferior she,
And neither rich; to the newly-wedded boy,
A great Insurance Office found employ.
Strong in their loves and hopes, with joy they took
This narrow lot and the world's altered look;
Beyond their home they nothing sought nor craved,
And even from the narrow income saved;
Their busy days for no ennui had place,
Neither grew weary of the other's face.
Nine happy years had crowned their married state
With children, one a little girl of eight;
With nine industrious years his income grew,
With his employers rose his favour too;
Nine years complete had passed when something ailed.
Friends and the doctors said his health had failed,
He must recruit, or worse would come to pass;
And though to rest was hard for him, alas!
Three months of leave he found he could obtain,
And go, they said, get well and work again.
Just at this juncture of their married life,

Her mother, sickening, begged to have his wife.
Her house among the hills in Surrey stood,
And to be there, said Jane, would do the children good
They let their house, and with the children she
Went to her mother, he beyond the sea;
Far to the south his orders were to go.
A watering-place, whose name we need not know,
For climate and for change of scene was best:
There he was bid, laborious task, to rest.
A dismal thing in foreign lands to roam
To one accustomed to an English home,
Dismal yet more, in health if feeble grown,
To live a boarder, helpless and alone
In foreign town, and worse yet worse is made,
If ’tis a town of pleasure and parade.
Dispiriting the public walks and seats,
The alien faces that an alien meets;
Drearily every day this old routine repeats.
Yet here this alien prospered, change of air
Or change of scene did more than tenderest care;
Three weeks were scarce completed, to his home,
He wrote to say, he thought he now could come,
His usual work was sure he could resume,
And something said about the place’s gloom,

And how he loathed idling his time away.
O, but they wrote, his wife and all, to say
He must not think of it, ’twas quite too quick;
Let was their house, her mother still was sick,
Three months were given, and three he ought to take;
For his, and hers, and for his children’s sake.
He wrote again, ’twas weariness to wait,
This doing nothing was a thing to hate;
He’d cast his nine laborious years away,
And was as fresh as on his wedding-day;
At last he yielded, feared he must obey.
And now, his health repaired, his spirits grown
Less feeble, less he cared to live alone.
’Twas easier now to face the crowded shore,
And table d’hôte less tedious than before;
His ancient silence sometimes he would break,
And the mute Englishman was heard to speak.
His youthful colour soon, his youthful air
Came back; amongst the crowd of idlers there,
With whom good looks entitle to good name,
For his good looks he gained a sort of fame,
People would watch him as he went and came.
Explain the tragic mystery who can,
Something there is, we know not what, in man,

With all established happiness at strife,
And bent on revolution in his life.
Explain the plan of Providence who dare,
And tell us wherefore in this world there are
Beings who seem for this alone to live,
Temptation to another soul to give.
A beauteous woman at the table d'hôte,
To try this English heart, at least to note
This English countenance, conceived the whim.
She sat exactly opposite to him.
Ere long he noticed with a vague surprise
How every day on him she bent her eyes;
Soft and inquiring now they looked, and then
Wholly withdrawn, unnoticed came again;
His shrunk aside: and yet there came a day,
Alas! they did not wholly turn away.
So beautiful her beauty was, so strange,
And to his northern feeling such a change;
Her throat and neck Junonian in their grace;
The blood just mantled in her southern face:
Dark hair, dark eyes; and all the arts she had
With which some dreadful power adorns the bad,—
Bad women in their youth,—and young was she,
Twenty perhaps, at the utmost twenty-three,—

And timid seemed, and innocent of ill;—
Her feelings went and came without her will.
You will not wish minutely to know all
His efforts in the prospect of the fall.
He oscillated to and fro, he took
High courage oft, temptation from him shook,
Compelled himself to virtuous thoughts and just,
And as it were in ashes and in dust
Abhorred his thought. But living thus alone,
Of solitary tedium weary grown;
From sweet society so long debarred,
And fearing in his judgment to be hard
On her—that he was sometimes off his guard
What wonder? She relentless still pursued
Unmarked, and tracked him in his solitude.
And not in vain, alas!
The days went by and found him in the snare.
But soon a letter full of tenderest care
Came from his wife, the little daughter too
In a large hand—the exercise was new—
To her papa her love and kisses sent.
Into his very heart and soul it went.
Forth on the high and dusty road he sought
Some issue for the vortex of his thought.

Returned, packed up his things, and ere the day
Descended, was a hundred miles away.
There are, I know of course, who lightly treat
Such slips; we stumble, we regain our feet;
What can we do? they say, but hasten on
And disregard it as a thing that's gone.
Many there are who in a case like this
Would calm re-seek their sweet domestic bliss;
Accept unshamed the wifely tender kiss,
And lift their little children on their knees,
And take their kisses too; with hearts at ease
Will read the household prayers,—to church will go,
And sacrament,—nor care if people know.
Such men—so minded—do exist, God knows,
And, God be thanked, this was not one of those.
Late in the night, at a provincial town
In France, a passing traveller was put down;
Haggard he looked, his hair was turning grey,
His hair, his clothes, were much in disarray:
In a bedchamber here one day he stayed,
Wrote letters, posted them, his reckoning paid
And went. 'Twas Edward rushing from his fall
Here to his wife he wrote and told her all.
Forgiveness—yes, perhaps she might forgive—

For her, and for the children, he must live
At any rate; but their old home to share
As yet was something that he could not bear.
She with her mother still her home should make,
A lodging near the office he should take;
And once a quarter he would bring his pay,
And he would see her on the quarter-day,
But her alone; e'en this would dreadful be,
The children 'twas not possible to see.
Back to the office at this early day
To see him come, old-looking thus and grey,
His comrades wondered, wondered too to see
How dire a passion for his work had he,
How in a garret too he lived alone;
So cold a husband, cold a father grown.
In a green lane beside her mother's home,
Where in old days they had been used to roam,
His wife had met him on the appointed day,
Fell on his neck, said all that love could say,
And wept; he put the loving arms away.
At dusk they met, for so was his desire;
She felt his cheeks and forehead all on fire;
The kisses which she gave he could not brook;
Once in her face he gave a sidelong look,

Said, but for them he wished that he were dead,
And put the money in her hand and fled.
Sometimes in easy and familiar tone,
Of sins resembling more or less his own
He heard his comrades in the office speak,
And felt the colour tingling in his cheek;
Lightly they spoke as of a thing of nought;
He of their judgment ne’er so much as thought.
I know not, in his solitary pains,
Whether he seemed to feel as in his veins
The moral mischief circulating still,
Racked with the torture of the double will;
And like some frontier-land where armies wage
The mighty wars, engage and yet engage
All through the summer in the fierce campaign;
March, counter-march, gain, lose, and yet regain;
With battle reeks the desolated plain;
So felt his nature yielded to the strife
Of the contending good and ill of life.
But a whole year this penance he endured,
Nor even then would think that he was cured.
Once in a quarter, in the country lane,
He met his wife and paid his quarter’s gain;
To bring the children she besought in vain.

He has a life small happiness that gives,
Who friendless in a London lodging lives,
Dines in a dingy chop-house, and returns
To a lone room while all within him yearns
For sympathy, and his whole nature burns
With a fierce thirst for some one,—is there none?—
To expend his human tenderness upon.
So blank, and hard, and stony is the way
To walk, I wonder not men go astray.
Edward, whom still a sense that never slept
On the strict path undeviating kept,
One winter-evening found himself pursued
Amidst the dusky thronging multitude.
Quickly he walked, but strangely swift was she,
And pertinacious, and would make him see.
He saw at last, and recognising slow,
Discovered in this hapless thing of woe
The occasion of his shame twelve wretched months ago.
She gaily laughed, she cried, and sought his hand,
And spoke sweet phrases of her native land;
Exiled, she said, her lovely home had left,
Not to forsake a friend of all but her bereft;
Exiled, she cried, for liberty, for love,
She was; still limpid eyes she turned above.

So beauteous once, and now such misery in,
Pity had all but softened him to sin;
But while she talked, and wildly laughed, and cried,
And plucked the hand which sadly he denied,
A stranger came and swept her from his side.
He watched them in the gas-lit darkness go,
And a voice said within him, Even so,
So midst the gloomy mansions where they dwell
The lost souls walk the flaming streets of hell!
The lamps appeared to fling a baleful glare,
A brazen heat was heavy in the air;
And it was hell, and he some unblest wanderer there.
For a long hour he stayed the streets to roam,
Late gathering sense, he gained his garret home;
There found a telegraph that bade him come
Straight to the country, where his daughter, still
His darling child, lay dangerously ill.
The doctor would he bring? Away he went
And found the doctor; to the office sent
A letter, asking leave, and went again,
And with a wild confusion in his brain,
Joining the doctor caught the latest train.
The train swift whirled them from the city light
Into the shadows of the natural night.

’Twas silent starry midnight on the down,
Silent and chill, when they, straight come from town,
Leaving the station, walked a mile to gain
The lonely house amid the hills where Jane,
Her mother, and her children should be found.
Waked by their entrance, but of sleep unsound,
The child not yet her altered father knew;
Yet talked of her papa in her delirium too.
Danger there was, yet hope there was; and he,
To attend the crisis, and the changes see,
And take the steps, at hand should surely be.
Said Jane the following day, ‘Edward, you know,
Over and over I have told you so,
As in a better world I seek to live,
As I desire forgiveness, I forgive.
Forgiveness does not feel the word to say,—
As I believe in One who takes away
Our sin and gives us righteousness instead,—
You to this sin, I do believe, are dead.
’Twas I, you know, who let you leave your home
And bade you stay when you so wished to come;
My fault was that: I’ve told you so before,
And vainly told; but now ’tis something more.
Say, is it right, without a single friend,

Without advice, to leave me to attend
Children and mother both? Indeed I've thought
Through want of you the child her fever caught.
Chances of mischief come with every hour.
It is not in a single woman's power
Alone, and ever haunted more or less
With anxious thoughts of you and your distress,—
'Tis not indeed, I'm sure of it, in me,—
All things with perfect judgment to foresee.
This weight has grown too heavy to endure;
And you, I tell you now, and I am sure,
Neglect your duty both to God and man
Persisting thus in your unnatural plan.
This feeling you must conquer, for you can.
And after all, you know we are but dust,
What are we, in ourselves that we should trust?'
He scarcely answered her; but he obtained
A longer leave, and quietly remained.
Slowly the child recovered, long was ill,
Long delicate, and he must watch her still;
To give up seeing her he could not bear,
To leave her less attended, did not dare.
The child recovered slowly, slowly too
Recovered he, and more familiar drew

Home’s happy breath; and apprehension o’er,
Their former life he yielded to restore,
And to his mournful garret went no more.
Midnight was dim and hazy overhead
When the tale ended and we turned to bed.
On the companion-way, descending slow,
The artillery captain, as we went below,
Said to the lawyer, life could not be meant
To be so altogether innocent.
What did the atonement show? he, for the rest,
Could not, he thought, have written and confessed.
Weakness it was, and adding crime to crime
To leave his family that length of time,
The lawyer said; the American was sure
Each nature knows instinctively its cure.
Midnight was in the cabin still and dead,
Our fellow-passengers were all in bed,
We followed them, and nothing further spoke.
Out of the sweetest of my sleep I woke
At two, and felt we stopped; amid a dream
Of England knew the letting-off of steam
And rose. ’Twas fog, and were we off Cape Race?
The captain would be certain of his place.
Wild in white vapour flew away the force,

And self-arrested was the eager course
That had not ceased before. But shortly now
Cape Race was made to starboard on the bow.
The paddles plied. I slept. The following night
In the mid seas we saw a quay and light,
And peered through mist into an unseen town,
And on scarce-seeming land set one companion down,
And went. With morning and a shining sun,
Under the bright New Brunswick coast we run,
And visible discern to every eye
Rocks, pines, and little ports, and passing by
The boats and coasting craft. When sunk the night
Early now sunk, the northern streamers bright
Floated and flashed, the cliffs and clouds behind,
With phosphorus the billows all were lined.
That evening, while the arctic streamers bright
Rolled from the clouds in waves of airy light,
The lawyer said, ‘I laid by for to-night
A story that I would not tell before;
For the last time, a confidential four,
We meet. Receive in your elected ears
A tale of human suffering and tears.’

**THE LAWYER’S SECOND TALE. Christian.**

A Highland inn among the western hills,

A single parlour, single bed that fills
With fisher or with tourist, as may be;
A waiting-maid, as fair as you can see,
With hazel eyes, and frequent blushing face,
And ample brow, and with a rustic grace
In all her easy quiet motions seen,
Large of her age, which haply is nineteen,
Christian her name, in full a pleasant name,
Christian and Christie scarcely seem the same;—
A college fellow, who has sent away
The pupils he has taught for many a day,
And comes for fishing and for solitude,
Perhaps a little pensive in his mood,
An aspiration and a thought have failed,
Where he had hoped, another has prevailed,
But to the joys of hill and stream alive,
And in his boyhood yet, at twenty-five.
A merry dance, that made young people meet,
And set them moving, both with hands and feet;
A dance in which he danced, and nearer knew
The soft brown eyes, and found them tender too.
A dance that lit in two young hearts the fire,
The low soft flame, of loving sweet desire,
And made him feel that he could feel again;—

The preface this, what follows to explain.
That night he kissed, he held her in his arms,
And felt the subtle virtue of her charms;
Nor less bewildered on the following day,
He kissed, he found excuse near her to stay,—
Was it not love? And yet the truth to speak,
Playing the fool for haply half a week,
He yet had fled, so strong within him dwelt
The horror of the sin, and such he felt
The miseries to the woman that ensue.
He wearied long his brain with reasonings fine,
But when at evening dusk he came to dine,
In linsey petticoat and jacket blue
She stood, so radiant and so modest too,
All into air his strong conclusions flew.
Now should he go. But dim and drizzling too,
For a night march, to-night will hardly do,
A march of sixteen weary miles of way.
No, by the chances which our lives obey,
No, by the heavens and this sweet face he'll stay.
A week he stayed, and still was loth to go,
But she grew anxious and would have it so.
Her time of service shortly would be o'er,
And she would leave; her mistress knew before.

Where would she go? To Glasgow, if she could;
Her father's sister would be kind and good;
An only child she was, an orphan left,
Of all her kindred, save of this, bereft.
Said he, 'Your guide to Glasgow let me be,
You little know, you have not tried the sea;
Say, at the ferry when are we to meet?
Thither, I guess, you travel on your feet.'
She would be there on Tuesday next at three;
'O dear, how glad and thankful she would be;
But don't,' she said, 'be troubled much for me.'
Punctual they met, a second class he took,
More naturally to her wants to look,
And from her side was seldom far away.
So quiet, so indifferent yet, were they,
As fellow-servants travelling south they seemed,
And no one of a love-relation dreamed.
At Oban, where the stormy darkness fell,
He got two chambers in a cheap hotel.
At Oban of discomfort one is sure,
Little the difference whether rich or poor.
Around the Mull the passage now to make,
They go aboard, and separate tickets take,
First-class for him, and second-class for her.

No other first-class passengers there were,
And with the captain walking soon alone,
This Highland girl, he said, to him was known.
He had engaged to take her to her kin;
Could she be put the ladies' cabin in?
The difference gladly he himself would pay,
The weather seemed but menacing to-day.
She ne'er had travelled from her home before,
He wished to be at hand to hear about her more.
Curious it seemed, but he had such a tone,
And kept at first so carefully alone,
And she so quiet was, and so discreet,
So heedful, ne'er to seek him or to meet,
The first small wonder quickly passed away.
And so from Oban's little land-locked bay
Forth out to Jura—Jura pictured high
With lofty peaks against the western sky,
Jura, that far o'erlooks the Atlantic seas,
The loftiest of the Southern Hebrides.
Through the main sea to Jura;—when we reach
Jura, we turn to leftward to the breach,
And southward strain the narrow channel through,
And Colonsay we pass and Islay too;
Cantire is on the left, and all the day

A dull dead calm upon the waters lay.
Sitting below, after some length of while,
He sought her, and the tedium to beguile,
He ventured some experiments to make,
The measure of her intellect to take.
Upon the cabin table chanced to lie
A book of popular astronomy;
In this he tried her, and discoursed away
Of Winter, Summer, and of Night and Day.
Still to the task a reasoning power she brought,
And followed, slowly followed with the thought;
How beautiful it was to see the stir
Of natural wonder waking thus in her;
But loth was he to set on books to pore
An intellect so charming in the ore.
And she, perhaps, had comprehended soon
Even the nodes, so puzzling, of the moon;
But nearing now the Mull they met the gale
Right in their teeth: and should the fuel fail?
Thinking of her, he grew a little pale,
But bravely she the terrors, miseries, took:
And met him with a sweet courageous look:
Once, at the worst, unto his side she drew,
And said a little tremulously too,

‘If we must die, please let me come to you.’
I know not by what change of wind or tide,
Heading the Mull, they gained the eastern side,
But stiller now, and sunny e’en it grew;
Arran’s high peaks unmantled to the view;
While to the north, far seen from left to right,
The Highland range, extended snowy white.
Now in the Clyde, he asked, what would be thought,
In Glasgow, of the company she brought:
‘You know,’ he said, ‘how I desire to stay;
We’ve played at strangers for so long a day,
But for a while I yet would go away.’
She said, O no, indeed they must not part.
Her father’s sister had a kindly heart.
‘I’ll tell her all, and O, when you she sees,
I think she’ll not be difficult to please.’
Landed at Glasgow, quickly they espied
Macfarlane, grocer, by the river side:
To greet her niece the woman joyful ran,
But looked with wonder on the tall young man
Into the house the women went and talked,
He with the grocer in the doorway walked.
He told him he was looking for a set
Of lodgings: had he any he could let?

The man was called to council with his wife;
They took the thing as what will be in life,
Half in a kind, half in a worldly way;
They said, the lassie might play out her play.
The gentleman should have the second floor,
At thirty shillings, for a week or more.
Some days in this obscurity he stayed,
Happy with her, and some inquiry made
(For friends he found) and did his best to see,
What hope of getting pupils there would be.
This must he do, ’twas evident, ’twas clear,
Marry and seek a humble maintenance here.
Himself he had a hundred pounds a year.
To this plain business he would bend his life,
And find his joy in children and in wife,
A wife so good, so tender, and so true,
Mother to be of glorious children too.
Half to excuse his present lawless way,
He to the grocer happened once to say
Marriage would cost him more than others dear,
Cost him, indeed, three hundred pounds a-year.
‘’Deed,’ said the man, ‘a heavy price, no doubt,
For a bit form that one can do without.’
And asked some questions, pertinent and plain,

Exacter information to obtain;
He took a little trouble to explain.
The College Audit now, to last at least
Three weeks, ere ending with the College Feast,
He must attend, a tedious, dull affair,
But he, as junior Bursar, must be there.
Three weeks, however, quickly would be fled,
And then he'd come,—he didn't say to wed.
With plans of which he nothing yet would say,
Preoccupied upon the parting day,
He seemed a little absent and distrait;
But she, as knowing nothing was amiss,
Gave him her fondest smile, her sweetest kiss.
A fortnight after, or a little more,
As at the Audit, weary of the bore,
He sat, and of his future prospects thought,
A letter in an unknown hand was brought.
'Twas from Macfarlane, and to let him know
To South Australia they proposed to go.
'Rich friends we have, who have advised us thus,
Occasion offers suitable for us;
Christie we take; whate'er she find of new,
She'll ne'er forget the joy she's had with you;
'Tis an expensive pilgrimage to make,

You'll like to send a trifle for her sake.'
Nothing he said of when the ship would sail.
That very night, by swift-returning mail,
Ten pounds he sent, for what he did not know;
And 'In no case,' he said, 'let Christian go.'
He in three days would come, and for his life
Would claim her and declare her as his wife.
Swift the night-mail conveyed his missive on;
He followed in three days, and found them gone.
All three had sailed: he looked as though he dreamed;
The money-order had been cashed, it seemed.
The Clergyman, 'This story is mere pain,'
Exclaimed, 'for if the women don't sustain
The moral standard, all we do is vain.'
'But what we want,' the Yankee said, 'to know,
Is if the girl went willingly or no.
Sufficient motive though one does not see,
'Tis clear the grocer used some trickery.'
He judged himself, so strong the clinging in
This kind of people is to kith and kin;
For if they went and she remained behind,
No one she had, if him she failed to find.
Alas, this lawless loving was the cause,
She did not dare to think how dear she was.

Justly his guilty tardiness he curst,
He should have owned her when he left her first.
And something added how upon the sea,
She perilled, too, a life that was to be;
A child that, born in far Australia, there
Would have no father and no father's care.
So to the South a lonely man returned,
For other scenes and busier life he burned,—
College he left and settled soon in town,
Wrote in the journals, gained a swift renown.
Soon into high society he came,
And still where'er he went outdid his fame.
All the more liked and more esteemed, the less
He seemed to make an object of success.
An active literary life he spent,
Towards lofty points of public practice bent,
Was never man so carefully who read,
Whose plans so well were fashioned in his head,
Nor one who truths so luminously said.
Some years in various labours thus he passed,
A spotless course maintaining to the last.
Twice upon Government Commissions served
With honour; place, which he declined, deserved.
He married then,—a marriage fit and good,

That kept him where his worth was understood;
A widow, wealthy, and of noble blood.
Mr. and Lady Mary are they styled,
One grief is theirs—to be without a child.
I did not tell you how he went before
To South Australia, vainly to explore.
The ship had come to Adelaide, no doubt;
Watching the papers he had made it out,
But of themselves, in country or in town,
Nothing discovered, travelling up and down.
Only an entry of uncertain sound,
In an imperfect register he found.
His son, he thought, but could not prove it true;
The surname of the girl it chanced he never knew.
But this uneasy feeling gathered strength
As years advanced, and it became at length
His secret torture and his secret joy
To think about his lost Australian boy.
Somewhere in wild colonial lands has grown
A child that is his true and very own.
This strong parental passion fills his mind,
To all the dubious chances makes him blind.
Still he will seek, and still he hopes to find.
Again will go.

Said I, ‘O let him stay,
And in a London drawing-room some day—
Rings on her fingers, brilliants in her hair,
The lady of the latest millionaire—
She’ll come, and with a gathering slow surprise
On Lady Mary’s husband turn her eyes:
The soft brown eyes that in a former day
From his discretion lured him all astray.
At home, six bouncing girls, who more or less
Are learning English of a governess,
Six boisterous boys, as like as pear to pear;
Only the eldest has a different air.’
‘You jest,’ he said, ‘indeed it happened so.’
From a great party just about to go,
He saw, he knew, and ere she saw him, said
Swift to his wife, as for the door he made,
‘My Highland bride! to escape a scene I go,
Stay, find her out—great God!—and let me know.’
The Lady Mary turned to scrutinise
The lovely brow, the beautiful brown eyes,
One moment, then performed her perfect part,
And did her spiriting with simplest art,
Was introduced, her former friends had known,
Say, might she call to-morrow afternoon

At three? O yes! At three she made her call,
And told her who she was and told her all.
Her lady manners all she laid aside;
Like women the two women kissed and cried.
Half overwhelmed sat Christian by her side,
While she, ‘You know he never knew the day
When you would sail, but he believed you’d stay
Because he wrote—you never knew, you say,—
Wrote that in three days’ time, they need not fear,
He’d come and then would marry you, my dear.
You never knew? And he had planned to live
At Glasgow, lessons had arranged to give.
Alas, then to Australia he went out,
All through the land to find you sought about,
And found a trace, which though it left a doubt.
Sufficed to make it still his grief, his joy,
To think he had a child, a living boy,
Whom you, my love——’
‘His child is six foot high,
I’ve kept him as the apple of my eye,’
Cried she, ‘he’s riding, or you’d see him here.
O joy, that he at last should see his father dear!
As soon as he comes in I’ll tell him all,
And on his father he shall go and call.’

‘And you,’ she said, ‘my husband will you see?
‘O no, it is not possible for me.
The boy I’ll send this very afternoon.
O dear, I know he cannot go too soon;
And something I must write, to write will do.’
So they embraced and sadly bade adieu.
The boy came in, his father went and saw!
We will not wait this interview to draw;
Ere long returned, and to his mother ran:
His father was a wonderful fine man,
He said, and looked at her; the Lady, too,
Had done whatever it was kind to do.
He loved his mother more than he could say,
But if she wished, he’d with his father stay.
A little change she noticed in his face,
E’en now the father’s influence she could trace;
From her the slight, slight severance had begun,
But simply she rejoiced that it was done.
She smiled and kissed her boy, and ‘Long ago,
When I was young, I loved your father so.
Together now we had been living, too,
Only the ship went sooner than he knew.
In loving him you will be loving me:
Father and mother are as one you see.’

Her letter caught him on the following day
As to the club he started on his way.
From her he guessed, the hand indeed was new;
Back to his room he went and read it through.
‘I know not how to write and dare not see;
But it will take a load of grief from me—
O! what a load—that you at last should know
The way in which I was compelled to go.
Wretched, I know, and yet it seems ’twas more
Cruel and wretched than I knew before;
So many years to think how on your day
Joyful you’d come, and found me flown away.
What would you think of me, what would you say?
O love, this little let me call you so;
What other name to use I do not know
O let me think that by your side I sit,
And tell it you, and weep a little bit,
And you too weep with me, for hearing it.
Alone so long I’ve borne this dreadful weight;
Such grief, at times it almost turned to hate.
O let me think you sit and listening long,
Comfort me still, and say I wasn’t wrong,
And pity me, and far, far hence again
Dismiss, if haply any yet remain,

Hard thoughts of me that in your heart have lain.
O love! to hear your voice I dare not go;
But let me trust that you will judge me so.
‘I think no sooner were you gone away,
My aunt began to tell me of some pay,
More than three hundred pounds a-year ’twould be,
Which you, she said, would lose by marrying me.
Was this a thing a man of sense would do?
Was I a fool, to look for it from you?
You were a handsome gentleman and kind,
And to do right were every way inclined,
But to this truth I must submit my mind,
You would not marry. “Speak, and tell me true,
Say, has he ever said one word to you
That meant as much?” O, love, I knew you would.
I’ve read it in your eyes so kind and good,
Although you did not speak I understood.
Though for myself, indeed, I sought it not,
It seemed so high, so undeserved a lot,
But for the child, when it should come, I knew—
O, I was certain—what you meant to do.
She said, “We quit the land, will it be right
Or kind to leave you for a single night,
Just on the chance that he will come down here,

And sacrifice three hundred pounds a-year,
And all his hopes and prospects fling away,
And has already had his will, as one may say?
Go you with us, and find beyond the seas,
Men by the score to choose from, if you please.”
I said my will and duty was to stay,
Would they not help me to some decent way
To wait, and surely near was now the day?
Quite they refused; had they to let you know
Written, I asked, to say we were to go?
They told me yes; they showed a letter, too,
Post-office order that had come from you.
Alas, I could not read or write, they knew.
I think they meant me, though they did not say,
To think you wanted me to go away;
O, love, I’m thankful nothing of the kind
Ever so much as came into my mind.
‘To-morrow was the day that would not fail;
For Adelaide the vessel was to sail.
All night I hoped some dreadful wind would rise,
And lift the seas and rend the very skies.
All night I lay and listened hard for you.
Twice to the door I went, the bolt I drew,
And called to you; scarce what I did I knew.

‘Morning grew light, the house was emptied clear;
The ship would go, the boat was lying near.
They had my money, how was I to stay?
Who could I go to, when they went away?
Out in the streets I could not lie, you know.
O dear, but it was terrible to go.
Yet, yet I looked; I do not know what passed,
I think they took and carried me at last.
Twelve hours I lay, and sobbed in my distress;
But in the night, let be this idleness,
I said, I’ll bear it for my baby’s sake,
Lest of my going mischief it should take,
Advice will seek, and every caution use;
My love I’ve lost—his child I must not lose.
‘How oft I thought, when sailing on the seas,
Of our dear journey through the Hebrides,
When you the kindest were and best of men:
O, love, I did not love you right till then.
O, and myself how willingly I blamed,
So simple who had been, and was ashamed,
So mindful only of the present joy,
When you had anxious cares your busy mind to employ.
Ah, well, I said, but now at least he’s free,
He will not have to lower himself for me.

He will not lose three hundred pounds a-year,
In many ways my love has cost him dear.
‘Upon the passage, great was my delight,
A lady taught me how to read and write.
She saw me much, and fond of me she grew,
Only I durst not talk to her of you.
‘We had a quiet time upon the seas,
And reached our port of Adelaide with ease.
At Adelaide my lovely baby came.
Philip, he took his father’s Christian name,
And my poor maiden surname, to my shame.
O, but I little cared, I loved him so,
’Twas such a joy to watch and see him grow.
At Adelaide we made no length of stay;
Our friends to Melbourne just had gone away.
We followed shortly where they led before,
To Melbourne went, and flourished more and more.
My aunt and uncle both are buried there;
I closed their eyes, and I was left their heir.
They meant me well, I loved them for their care.
‘Ten years ago I married Robert; dear
And well he loved, and waited many a year.
Selfish it seemed to turn from one so true,
And I of course was desperate of you.

I've borne him children six; we've left behind
Three little ones, whom soon I hope to find.
To my dear boy he ever has been kind.
'Next week we sail, and I should be so glad,
Only to leave my boy will make me sad.
But yours he is by right—the grief I'll bear,
And at his age, more easy he can spare,
Perhaps, a mother's than a father's care.
Indeed I think him like his father, too;
He will be happier, probably, with you.
'Tis best, I know, nor will he quite forget,
Some day he'll come perhaps and see his mother yet.
'O heaven! farewell—perhaps I've been to blame
To write as if it all were still the same.
Farewell, write not.—I will not seek to know
Whether you ever think of me or no.'
O love, love, love, too late! the tears fell down.
He dried them up—and slowly walked to town.
To bed with busy thoughts; the following day
Bore us expectant into Boston Bay;
With dome and steeple on the yellow skies,
Upon the left we watched with curious eyes
The Puritan great Mother City rise.
Among the islets, winding in and round,

The great ship moved to her appointed ground.
We bade adieu, shook hands and went ashore:
I and my friend have seen our friends no more.

# SONGS IN ABSENCE.

### SONGS IN ABSENCE.[17]

Farewell, farewell! Her vans the vessel tries,
His iron might the potent engine plies;
Haste, wingèd words, and ere ’tis useless, tell,
Farewell, farewell, yet once again, farewell.
The docks, the streets, the houses past us fly,
Without a strain the great ship marches by;
Ye fleeting banks take up the words we tell,
And say for us yet once again, farewell.
The waters widen—on without a strain
The strong ship moves upon the open main;
She knows the seas, she hears the true waves swell,
She seems to say farewell, again farewell.
The billows whiten and the deep seas heave;
Fly once again, sweet words, to her I leave,
With winds that blow return, and seas that swell,
Farewell, farewell, say once again, farewell.
Fresh in my face and rippling to my feet
The winds and waves an answer soft repeat,

In sweet, sweet words far brought they seem to tell,
Farewell, farewell, yet once again, farewell.
Night gathers fast; adieu, thou fading shore!
The land we look for next must lie before;
Hence, foolish tears! weak thoughts, no more rebel,
Farewell, farewell, a last, a last farewell.
Yet not, indeed, ah not till more than sea
And more than space divide my love and me,
Till more than waves and winds between us swell,
Farewell, a last, indeed, a last farewell

Ye flags of Piccadilly,
Where I posted up and down,
And wished myself so often
Well away from you and town,—
Are the people walking quietly
And steady on their feet,
Cabs and omnibuses plying
Just as usual in the street?
Do the houses look as upright
As of old they used to be,
And does nothing seem affected
By the pitching of the sea?
Through the Green Park iron railings
Do the quick pedestrians pass?

Are the little children playing
Round the plane-tree in the grass?
This squally wild north-wester
With which our vessel fights,
Does it merely serve with you to
Carry up some paper kites?
Ye flags of Piccadilly,
Which I hated so, I vow
I could wish with all my heart
You were underneath me now!
Come home, come home! and where is home for me,
Whose ship is driving o'er the trackless sea?
To the frail bark here plunging on its way,
To the wild waters, shall I turn and say
To the plunging bark, or to the salt sea foam,
You are my home?
Fields once I walked in, faces once I knew,
Familiar things so old my heart believed them true,
These far, far back, behind me lie, before
The dark clouds mutter, and the deep seas roar,
And speak to them that 'neath and o'er them roam
No words of home.
Beyond the clouds, beyond the waves that roar,
There may indeed, or may not be, a shore,

Where fields as green, and hands and hearts as true,
The old forgotten semblance may renew,
And offer exiles driven far o’er the salt sea foam
Another home.
But toil and pain must wear out many a day,
And days bear weeks, and weeks bear months away,
Ere, if at all, the weary traveller hear,
With accents whispered in his wayworn ear,
A voice he dares to listen to, say, Come
To thy true home.
Come home, come home! and where a home hath he
Whose ship is driving o’er the driving sea?
Through clouds that mutter, and o’er waves that roar,
Say, shall we find, or shall we not, a shore
That is, as is not ship or ocean foam,
Indeed our home?
1852
Green fields of England! wheresoe’er
Across this watery waste we fare,
Your image at our hearts we bear,
Green fields of England, everywhere.
Sweet eyes in England, I must flee
Past where the waves’ last confines be,
Ere your loved smile I cease to see,

Sweet eyes in England, dear to me.

Dear home in England, safe and fast

If but in thee my lot lie cast,

The past shall seem a nothing past

To thee, dear home, if won at last;

Dear home in England, won at last.

1852

Come back, come back, behold with straining mast

And swelling sail, behold her steaming fast;

With one new sun to see her voyage o'er,

With morning light to touch her native shore.

Come back, come back.

Come back, come back, while westward labouring by,

With sailless yards, a bare black hulk we fly.

See how the gale we fight with sweeps her back,

To our lost home, on our forsaken track.

Come back, come back.

Come back, come back, across the flying foam,

We hear faint far-off voices call us home,

Come back, ye seem to say; ye seek in vain;

We went, we sought, and homeward turned again.

Come back, come back.

Come back, come back; and whither back or why?

To fan quenched hopes, forsaken schemes to try;

Walk the old fields; pace the familiar street;
Dream with the idlers, with the bards compete.
Come back, come back.
Come back, come back; and whither and for what?
To finger idly some old Gordian knot,
Unskilled to sunder, and too weak to cleave,
And with much toil attain to half-believe.
Come back, come back.
Come back, come back; yea back, indeed, do go
Sighs panting thick, and tears that want to flow;
Fond fluttering hopes upraise their useless wings,
And wishes idly struggle in the strings;
Come back, come back.
Come back, come back, more eager than the breeze,
The flying fancies sweep across the seas,
And lighter far than ocean's flying foam,
The heart's fond message hurries to its home.
Come back, come back.
Come back, come back!
Back flies the foam; the hoisted flag streams back;
The long smoke wavers on the homeward track,
Back fly with winds things which the winds obey,
The strong ship follows its appointed way.
1852

Some future day when what is now is not,
When all old faults and follies are forgot,
And thoughts of difference passed like dreams away,
We'll meet again, upon some future day.
When all that hindered, all that vexed our love,
As tall rank weeds will climb the blade above,
When all but it has yielded to decay,
We'll meet again upon some future day.
When we have proved, each on his course alone,
The wider world, and learnt what's now unknown,
Have made life clear, and worked out each a way,
We'll meet again,—we shall have much to say.
With happier mood, and feelings born anew,
Our boyhood's bygone fancies we'll review,
Talk o'er old talks, play as we used to play,
And meet again, on many a future day.
Some day, which oft our hearts shall yearn to see,
In some far year, though distant yet to be,
Shall we indeed,—ye winds and waters, say!—
Meet yet again, upon some future day?
1852
Where lies the land to which the ship would go?
Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.
And where the land she travels from? Away,

Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

On sunny noons upon the deck's smooth face,

Linked arm in arm, how pleasant here to pace;

Or, o'er the stern reclining, watch below

The foaming wake far widening as we go.

On stormy nights when wild north-westers rave,

How proud a thing to fight with wind and wave!

The dripping sailor on the reeling mast

Exults to bear, and scorns to wish it past.

Where lies the land to which the ship would go?

Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.

And where the land she travels from? Away,

Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

1852

The mighty ocean rolls and raves,

To part us with its angry waves;

But arch on arch from shore to shore,

In a vast fabric reaching o'er,

With careful labours daily wrought

By steady hope and tender thought,

The wide and weltering waste above—

Our hearts have bridged it with their love.

There fond anticipations fly

To rear the growing structure high

Dear memories upon either side
Combine to make it large and wide.
There, happy fancies day by day,
New courses sedulously lay;
There soft solicitudes, sweet fears,
And doubts accumulate, and tears.
While the pure purpose of the soul,
To form of many parts a whole,
To make them strong and hold them true,
From end to end, is carried through.
Then when the waters war between,
Upon the masonry unseen,
Secure and swift, from shore to shore,
With silent footfall travelling o’er,
Our sundered spirits come and go,
Hither and thither, to and fro,
Pass and repass, now linger near,
Now part, anew to reappear.
With motions of a glad surprise,
We meet each other’s wondering eyes,
At work, at play, when people talk,
And when we sleep, and when we walk.
Each dawning day my eyelids see
You come, methinks, across to me,

And I, at every hour anew,

Could dream I travelled o’er to you.

1853

That out of sight is out of mind

Is true of most we leave behind;

It is not sure, nor can be true,

My own and only love, of you.

They were my friends, ’twas sad to part;

Almost a tear began to start;

But yet as things run on they find

That out of sight is out of mind.

For men, that will not idlers be,

Must lend their hearts to things they see;

And friends who leave them far behind,

When out of sight are out of mind.

I blame it not; I think that when

The cold and silent meet again,

Kind hearts will yet as erst be kind,

’Twas ‘out of sight,’ was ‘out of mind.’

I knew it when we parted, well,

I knew it, but was loth to tell;

I felt before, what now I find,

That ‘out of sight’ is ‘out of mind.’

That friends, however friends they were,

Still deal with things as things occur,
And that, excepting for the blind,
What's out of sight is out of mind.
But love, the poets say, is blind;
So out of sight and out of mind
Need not, nor will, I think, be true,
My own and only love, of you.
1853

Were you with me, or I with you,
There's nought, methinks, I might not do;
Could venture here, and venture there,
And never fear, nor ever care.
To things before, and things behind,
Could turn my thoughts, and turn my mind,
On this and that, day after day,
Could dare to throw myself away.
Secure, when all was o'er, to find
My proper thought, my perfect mind,
And unimpaired receive anew
My own and better self in you.
1853

Am I with you, or you with me?
Or in some blessed place above,
Where neither lands divide nor sea,

Are we united in our love?
Oft while in longing here I lie,
That wasting ever still endures;
My soul out from me seems to fly,
And half-way, somewhere, meet with yours.
Somewhere—but where I cannot guess—
Beyond, may be, the bound of space,
The liberated spirits press
And meet, bless heaven, and embrace.
It seems not either here nor there,
Somewhere between us up above,
A region of a clearer air,
The dwelling of a purer love.
1852
Were I with you, or you with me,
My love, how happy should we be;
Day after day it is sad cheer
To have you there, while I am here.
My darling’s face I cannot see,
My darling’s voice is mute for me,
My fingers vainly seek the hair
Of her that is not here, but there.
In a strange land, to her unknown,
I sit and think of her alone;

And in that happy chamber where
We sat, she sits, nor has me there.
Yet still the happy thought recurs
That she is mine, as I am hers,
That she is there, as I am here,
And loves me, whether far or near.
The mere assurance that she lives
And loves me, full contentment gives;
I need not doubt, despond, or fear,
For, she is there, and I am here.

1852

Were you with me, or I with you,
There's nought methinks I could not do;
And nothing that, for your dear sake,
I might not dare to undertake.
With thousands standing by as fit,
More keen, perhaps more needing it,
To be the first some job to spy,
And jump and call out, Here am I!
O for one's miserable self
To ask a pittance of the pelf,
To claim, however small, a share,
Which other men might think so fair:
It was not worth it! a first time

A thought upon it seemed a crime;
To stoop and pick the dirty pence,
A taint upon one’s innocence.
My own! with nothing sordid, base.
Or mean, we would our love disgrace;
Yet something I methinks could do,
Were you with me, or I with you:
Some misconstruction would sustain;
Count some humiliation gain;
Make unabashed a righteous claim,
And profess merit without shame:
Apply for service; day by day
Seek honest work for honest pay,
Without a fear by any toil
The over-cleanly hand to soil:
Secure in safety to return,
And every pettiness unlearn;
And unimpaired still find anew
My own and better self in you.
O ship, ship, ship,
That travellest over the sea,
What are the tidings, I pray thee,
Thou bearest hither to me?
Are they tidings of comfort and joy,

That shall make me seem to see
The sweet lips softly moving
And whispering love to me?
Or are they of trouble and grief,
Estrangement, sorrow, and doubt,
To turn into torture my hopes,
And drive me from Paradise out?
O ship, ship, ship,
That comest over the sea,
Whatever it be thou bringest,
Come quickly with it to me.
1853

# ESSAYS IN CLASSICAL METRES.

## TRANSLATIONS OF ILIAD.

(I. 1-32.)

Goddess, the anger sing of the Pelean Achilles,
Fatal beginning of griefs unnumbered to the Achæans;
Many valiant souls untimely it hurried to Hades,
And the heroes left themselves of dogs to be eaten
And of ravenous birds—till Zeus's plan was accomplished—
From the day when first contention arose to dissever
Atrides the King and the godlike hero Achilles.
What divinity thus incited them to contention?—

Zeus and Leto's son; who, in anger with Agamemnon,
Sent a deadly disease on the host, destroying the people,
On account of the wrong the King to his worshipper offered,
Chryses, who had come to the hollow ships of Achaia,
To recover his daughter, with gifts of costly redemption,
Carrying in his hands the wreaths of the archer Apollo
Set on a golden staff—beseeching all the Achæans,
And the Atridæ in chief, the two in command of the nations:
'Ye, Atreus' sons, and other well-greaved Achaïan heroes,
May the gods, who live in Olympian houses, accord you
Capture of Priam's town and safe to return to Achaia,
But liberate to me my child and take the redemption—
Fearing Zeus's son, the far-death-dealing Apollo.'
Then the Achæans all with acclamation assented,
Honour to show to the priest, and take the costly redemption;
Only to Atrides Agamemnon it was unpleasing,
Sternly who dismissed him with contumelious answer:
'Old man, let me not, by the hollow ships of Achaia
Lingering find you now, or henceforth ever appearing,
Lest to defend you fail the staff and wreaths of Apollo.
Her do I not release until old age come upon her,
In my house in the land of Argos, far from her country,
Stepping at the loom and in the chamber attending.
Go, and trouble me not, that your return be the safer.'

(I. 121-218.)

And replying, said godlike, swift-footed Achilles:
‘Atrides, our chief, as in rank, so in love of possessions,
Say, in what way shall the noble Achæans find you a present?
Little we yet have gained the general stock to replenish,
Distributed were all the spoils we took from the cities,
And to recall our gifts and reapportion befits not—
Yield you the maiden to-day to the god, and we, the Achæans,
Three or four times over will compensate it, if ever
Zeus the capture accord of the well-walled Ilian city.’
And with words of reply the King Agamemnon addressed him:
‘Think not, great as you are, O god-resembling Achilles,
Thus to dissimulate and evade me with a profession;
Is it that you desire to enjoy your prize, and to let me
Sit empty-handed here, and mine you bid me surrender—
Doubtless, if the noble Achæans find me another
Suitable to my wants and answerable in value;
But, if they do not give, myself will make my election—
Yours, or that, if I please, of Ajax or of Ulysses,
I for my own will take, and leave the loser lamenting.
At a suitable time this, after, will we determine;
Now proceed we to haul a swift ship into the water,
Choose the rowers to take her, and send the cattle aboard her
For sacrifice, and bring the beautiful daughter of Chryses

Also on board, and appoint some prudent chief to convey her—
Ajax shall it be, or Idomeneus, or Ulysses?
Or will Pelides, incomparable of heroes,
Go, and with holy rite appease the wrath of Apollo?’
And with a frown swift-footed Achilles eyed him, and answered:
‘O me! clothed-upon with impudence, greedy-hearted,
How shall any Achæan again be willing to serve you,
Make any expedition, or fight in battle to help you?
Certainly not upon any account of the Troïan horsemen
Came I hither to fight; they never gave me occasion,
Never carried away any cattle of mine, any horses,
Nor in Phthia ever, the rich land, feeder of people,
Devastated the fruit; since numerous, to divide them,
Mountains shadowy lie, and a sea’s tumultuous water:
To’ attend thee we came, on thy effrontery waiting,
Reparation to take of the Trojans for Menelaus,
And thy unblushing self. All which you little remember,
And can threaten to-day of my reward to deprive me,
Dearly with labour earned, and given me by the Achæans.
Do I ever receive any gift your gifts to compare with,
When the Achæans sack any wealthy town of the Trojans?
Truly the larger part of the busy, hurrying warfare
My hands have to discharge; but, in the day of division,
Yours is the ample share, and I, content with a little,

Thankfully turn to my ships, well wearied out with the fighting.
Now to Phthia I go—far wiser for me to do so,
Home with my hollow ships to travel, than for another
Accumulate riches to be requited with insult.'
And replying, said the king of men, Agamemnon:
'Go, if to go be your wish; I keep you not—do not ask you
For my honour to stay; I have others here to support it,
Who—and Zeus above all, the Counsellor—will uphold me
You are the hatefullest to me of the Zeus-fed princes,
Lover for evermore of brawl and battle and discord.
Strong if you are, your strength was by some deity given.
Home with your hollow ships, and with your people returning
Order the Myrmidonans: expect not me to regard you,
Or to observe your wrath. I advertise you beforehand—
As Chryseïda Phœbus Apollo hath bid me surrender,
I in a ship of my own will with my people remit her
Home, and the beautiful-cheeked Briseïda then to replace her
Out of your tent, your prize, will carry; an argument to you
How much greater I am than yourself, and a warning to others
Not to oppose my will and talk with me as an equal.'
So said he, and pain seized Pelides, and in the bosom
Under his hairy breast two purposes he divided,
Either, from by his thigh the glittering blade unsheathing,
To put aside the rest and straightway kill Agamemnon,

Or to repress his wrath and check himself in his anger.
With the purposes yet conflicting thus in his bosom,
From the sheath the huge sword was issuing out, when Athena
Came from heaven: the goddess, the white-armed Hera, desired it,
Solicitous for the good of the one alike and the other.
Standing behind, by the yellow hair she drew back Achilles,
Visible only to him, of the rest to no one apparent;
And with wonder seized he turned, and knew in a moment
Pallas Athenæa, with dreadful eyes looking at him;
And he opened his lips with wingèd words and addressed her:
'Wherefore art thou come, O child of the ægis-bearer;
Was it the fury to see of Atrides Agamemnon?
Lo, I declare it now, and you will see it accomplished,
His injurious acts will bring his death-blow upon him.'
And replying, said the blue-eyed goddess, Athena:
'To repress I came, if practicable, your anger,
Out of heaven,—the goddess, the white-armed Hera, desired me,
Solicitous for the good of the one alike and the other.
Abstain from violence, put back the sword in the scabbard,
Let opprobrious words, if necessary, requite him;
For I declare it now, and you will see it accomplished,
Three times as many gifts will soon, as costly, be sent you
In reparation of this; be ruled by us to be patient.'
And replying, spoke and said swift-footed Achilles:

‘Unto admonition of you two given, O goddess,
Even the greatly incensed should yield; ’tis well to obey you;
Who to the voice of the gods is obedient, they will assist him.’

## ELEGIACS.

I

From thy far sources, ’mid mountains airily climbing,
Pass to the rich lowland, thou busy sunny river;
Murmuring once, dimpling, pellucid, limpid, abundant,
Deepening now, widening, swelling, a lordly river.
Through woodlands steering, with branches waving above thee,
Through the meadows sinuous, wandering irriguous;
Towns, hamlets leaving, towns by thee, bridges across thee,
Pass to palace garden, pass to cities populous.
Murmuring once, dimpling, ’mid woodlands wandering idly,
Now with mighty vessels loaded, a mighty river.
Pass to the great waters, though tides may seem to resist thee,
Tides to resist seeming, quickly will lend thee passage,
Pass to the dark waters that roaring wait to receive thee;
Pass them thou wilt not, thou busy sunny river.
Freshwater, 1861.

II

Trunks the forest yielded with gums ambrosial oozing,
Boughs with apples laden beautiful, Hesperian,
Golden, odoriferous, perfume exhaling about them,

Orbs in a dark umbrage luminous and radiant;
To the palate grateful, more luscious were not in Eden,
Or in that fabled garden of Alcinoüs;
Out of a dark umbrage sounds also musical issued,
Birds their sweet transports uttering in melody:
Thrushes clear piping, wood-pigeons cooing, arousing
Loudly the nightingale, loudly the sylvan echoes;
Waters transpicuous flowed under, flowed to the list'ning
Ear with a soft murmur, softly soporiferous;
Nor, with ebon locks too, there wanted, circling, attentive
Unto the sweet fluting, girls, of a swarthy shepherd;
Over a sunny level their flocks are lazily feeding,
They of Amor musing rest in a leafy cavern.
1861

## ALCAICS.

So spake the voice: and as with a single life
Instinct, the whole mass, fierce, irretainable,
Down on that unsuspecting host swept;
Down, with the fury of winds, that all night
Upbrimming, sapping slowly the dyke, at dawn
Fall through the breach o'er holmstead and harvest; and
Heard roll a deluge: while the milkmaid
Trips i' the dew, and remissly guiding
Morn's first uneven furrow, the farmer's boy

Dreams out his dream; so, over the multitude
Safe-tented, uncontrolled and uncon-
trollably sped the Avenger’s fury.

**ACTÆON.[18]**

Over a mountain slope with lentisk, and with abounding
Arbutus, and the red oak overtufted, ’mid a noontide
Now glowing fervidly, the Leto-born, the divine one,
Artemis, Arcadian wood-rover, alone, hunt-weary,
Unto a dell cent’ring many streamlets her foot unerring
Had guided. Platanus with fig-tree shaded a hollow,
Shaded a waterfall, where pellucid yet abundant
Streams from perpetual full-flowing sources a current:
Lower on either bank in sunshine flowered the oleanders:
Plenteous under a rock green herbage here to the margin
Grew with white poplars overcrowning. She thither arrived,
Unloosening joyfully the vest enfolded upon her,
Swift her divine shoulders discovering, swiftly revealing
Her maidenly bosom and all her beauty beneath it,
To the river water overflowing to receive her
Yielded her ambrosial nakedness. But with an instant
Conscious, with the instant the’ immortal terrific anger
Flew to the guilty doer: that moment, where amid amply
Concealing plane-leaves he the’ opportunity pursued,
Long vainly, possessed, unwise, Actæon, of hunters,

Hapless of Arcadian, and most misguided of hunters,
Knew the divine mandate, knew fate directed upon him.
He, to the boughs crouching, with dreadful joy the desired one
Had viewed descending, viewed as in a dream, disarraying,
And the unclad shoulders awestruck, awestruck let his eyes see
The maidenly bosom, but not—dim fear fell upon them—
Not more had witnessed. Not, therefore, less the forest through
Ranging, their master ceasing thenceforth to remember,
With the instant together came trooping, as to devour him
His dogs from the ambush.—Transformed suddenly before them,
He fled, an antlered stag wild with terror to the mountain,
She, the liquid stream in, her limbs carelessly reclining,
The flowing waters collected grateful about her.

# MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

## COME, POET, COME![19]

Come, Poet, come!
A thousand labourers ply their task,
And what it tends to scarcely ask,
And trembling thinkers on the brink
Shiver, and know not how to think.
To tell the purport of their pain,
And what our silly joys contain;
In lasting lineaments pourtray

The substance of the shadowy day;
Our real and inner deeds rehearse,
And make our meaning clear in verse:
Come, Poet, come! for but in vain
We do the work or feel the pain,
And gather up the seeming gain,
Unless before the end thou come
To take, ere they are lost, their sum.
Come, Poet, come!
To give an utterance to the dumb,
And make vain babblers silent, come;
A thousand dupes point here and there,
Bewildered by the show and glare;
And wise men half have learned to doubt
Whether we are not best without.
Come, Poet; both but wait to see
Their error proved to them in thee.
Come, Poet, come!
In vain I seem to call. And yet
Think not the living times forget.
Ages of heroes fought and fell
That Homer in the end might tell;
O’er grovelling generations past
Upstood the Doric fane at last;

And countless hearts on countless years
Had wasted thoughts, and hopes, and fears,
Rude laughter and unmeaning tears;
Ere England Shakespeare saw, or Rome
The pure perfection of her dome.
Others, I doubt not, if not we,
The issue of our toils shall see;
Young children gather as their own
The harvest that the dead had sown,
The dead forgotten and unknown.

## THE DREAM LAND.

I

To think that men of former days
In naked truth deserved the praise
Which, fain to have in flesh and blood
An image of imagined good,
Poets have sung and men received,
And all too glad to be deceived,
Most plastic and most inexact,
Posterity has told for fact;—
To say what was, was not as we,
This also is a vanity.

II

Ere Agamemnon, warriors were,

Ere Helen, beauties equalling her,
Brave ones and fair, whom no one knows,
And brave or fair as these or those.
The commonplace whom daily we
In our dull streets and houses see,
To think of other mould than these
Were Cato, Solon, Socrates,
Or Mahomet or Confutze,
This also is a vanity.

III

Hannibal, Cæsar, Charlemain,
And he before, who back on Spain
Repelled the fierce inundant Moor;
Godfrey, St. Louis, wise and pure,
Washington, Cromwell, John, and Paul,
Columbus, Luther, one and all,
Go mix them up, the false and true,
With Sindbad, Crusoe, or St. Preux,
And say as he was, so was he,
This also is a vanity.

IV

Say not: Behold it here or there,
Or on the earth, or in the air.
That better thing than can be seen

Is neither now nor e’er has been;
It is not in this land or that,
But in a place we soon are at,
Where all can seek and some can find,
Where hope is liberal, fancy kind,
And what we wish for we can see,
Which also is a vanity.

**IN THE DEPTHS.**

It is not sweet content, be sure,
That moves the nobler Muse to song,
Yet when could truth come whole and pure
From hearts that inly writhe with wrong?
’Tis not the calm and peaceful breast
That sees or reads the problem true;
They only know on whom ’t has prest
Too hard to hope to solve it too.
Our ills are worse than at their ease
These blameless happy souls suspect,
They only study the disease,
Alas, who live not to detect.

**DARKNESS.**

But that from slow dissolving pomps of dawn
No verity of slowly strengthening light

Early or late hath issued; that the day
Scarce-shown, relapses rather, self-withdrawn,
Back to the glooms of ante-natal night,
For this, O human beings, mourn we may.

**TWO MOODS.**

Ah, blame him not because he’s gay!
That he should smile, and jest, and play
But shows how lightly he can bear,
How well forget that load which, where
Thought is, is with it, and howe’er
Dissembled, or indeed forgot,
Still is a load, and ceases not.
This aged earth that each new spring
Comes forth so young, so ravishing
In summer robes for all to see,
Of flower, and leaf, and bloomy tree,
For all her scarlet, gold, and green,
Fails not to keep within unseen
That inner purpose and that force
Which on the untiring orbit’s course
Around the sun, amidst the spheres
Still bears her thro’ the eternal years.
Ah, blame the flowers and fruits of May,
And then blame him because he’s gay.

Ah, blame him not, for not being gay,
Because an hundred times a day
He doth not currently repay
Sweet words with ready words as sweet,
And for each smile a smile repeat.
To mute submissiveness confined,
Blame not, if once or twice the mind
Its pent-up indignation wreak
In scowling brow and flushing cheek,
And smiles curled back as soon as born,
To dire significance of scorn.
Nor blame if once, and once again
He wring the hearts of milder men,
If slights, the worse if undesigned,
Should seem unbrotherly, unkind;
For though tree wave, and blossom blow
Above, earth hides a fire below;
Her seas the starry laws obey,
And she from her own ordered way
Swerves not, because it dims the day
Or changes verdure to decay.
Ah, blame the great world on its way,
And then blame him for not being gay.

## YOUTH AND AGE.

Dance on, dance on, we see, we see
Youth goes, alack, and with it glee,
A boy the old man ne’er can be;
Maternal thirty scarce can find
The sweet sixteen long left behind;
Old folks must toil, and scrape, and strain,
That boys and girls may once again
Be that for them they cannot be,
But which it gives them joy to see,
Youth goes and glee; but not in vain,
Young folks, if only you remain.
Dance on, dance on, ’tis joy to see;
The dry red leaves on winter’s tree,
Can feel the new sap rising free.
On, on, young folks; so you survive,
The dead themselves are still alive;
The blood in dull parental veins
Long numbed, a tingling life regains.
Deep down in earth, the tough old root
Is conscious still of flower and fruit.
Spring goes and glee but were not vain:
In you, young folks, they come again.
Dance on, dance on, we see, we feel;

Wind, wind your waltzes, wind and wheel,
Our senses too with music reel;
Nor let your pairs neglect to fill
The old ancestral scorned quadrille.
Let hand the hand uplifted seek,
And pleasure fly from cheek to cheek;
Love too; but gently, nor astray,
And yet, deluder, yet in play.
Dance on; youth goes: but all's not vain,
Young folks, if only you remain.
Dance on, dance on, 'tis joy to see;
We once were nimble e'en as ye,
And danced to give the oldest glee;
O wherefore add, as we, you too,
Once gone your prime cannot renew;
You too, like us, at last shall stand
To watch and not to join the band,
Content some day (a far-off day)
To your supplanters soft to say,
Youth goes, but goes not all in vain,
Young folks, so only you remain,
Dance on, dance on, 'tis joy to see.

## SOLVITUR ACRIS HIEMS.

Youth, that went, is come again,

Youth, for which we all were fain;
With soft pleasure and sweet pain
In each nerve and every vein,
Circling through the heart and brain,
Whence and wherefore come again?
Eva, tell me!
Dead and buried when we thought him,
Who the magic spell hath taught him?
Who the strong elixir brought him?
Dead and buried as we thought,
Lo! unasked for and unsought
Comes he, shall it be for nought?
Eva, tell me!
Youth that lifeless long had lain,
Youth that long we longed in vain for,
Used to grumble and complain for,
Thought at last to entertain
A decorous cool disdain for,
On a sudden see again
Comes, but will not long remain,
Comes, with whom too in his train,
Comes, and shall it be in vain?
Eva, tell me!

## THESIS AND ANTITHESIS.

If that we thus are guilty doth appear,
Ah, guilty tho’ we are, grave judges, hear!
Ah, yes; if ever you in your sweet youth
’Midst pleasure’s borders missed the track of truth,
Made love on benches underneath green trees,
Stuffed tender rhymes with old new similes,
Whispered soft anythings, and in the blood
Felt all you said not most was understood—
Ah, if you have—as which of you has not?—
Nor what you were have utterly forgot,
Then be not stern to faults yourselves have known,
To others harsh, kind to yourselves alone.
That we, young sir, beneath our youth’s green trees
Once did, not what should profit, but should please,
In foolish longing and in love-sick play
Forgot the truth and lost the flying day—
That we went wrong we say not is not true,
But, if we erred, were we not punished too?
If not—if no one checked our wandering feet,—
Shall we our parents’ negligence repeat?—
In future times that ancient loss renew,
If none saved us, forbear from saving you?
Nor let that justice in your faults be seen

Which in our own or was or should have been?
Yet, yet, recall the mind that you had then,
And, so recalling, listen yet again;
If you escaped, ’tis plainly understood
Impunity may leave a culprit good;
If you were punished, did you then, as now,
The justice of that punishment allow?
Did what your age consents to now, appear
Expedient then and needfully severe?
In youth’s indulgence think there yet might be
A truth forgot by grey severity.
That strictness and that laxity between,
Be yours the wisdom to detect the mean.
’Tis possible, young sir, that some excess
Mars youthful judgment and old men’s no less;
Yet we must take our counsel as we may
For (flying years this lesson still convey),
’Tis worst unwisdom to be overwise,
And not to use, but still correct one’s eyes.

**ἀνεμώλια.**

Go, foolish thoughts, and join the throng
Of myriads gone before;
To flutter and flap and flit along
The airy limbo shore.

Go, words of sport and words of wit,
Sarcastic point and fine,
And words of wisdom wholly fit,
With folly's to combine.
Go, words of wisdom, words of sense,
Which, while the heart belied,
The tongue still uttered for pretence,
The inner blank to hide.
Go, words of wit, so gay, so light,
That still were meant express
To soothe the smart of fancied slight
By fancies of success.
Go, broodings vain o'er fancied wrong;
Go, love-dreams vainer still;
And scorn that's not, but would be, strong;
And Pride without a Will.
Go, foolish thoughts, and find your way
Where myriads went before,
To languish out your lingering day
Upon the limbo shore.
November, 1850

**COLUMBUS.**

How in God's name did Columbus get over
Is a pure wonder to me, I protest,

Cabot, and Raleigh too, that well-read rover,
Frobisher, Dampier, Drake, and the rest.
Bad enough all the same,
For them that after came,
But, in great Heaven’s name,
How he should ever think
That on the other brink
Of this wild waste terra firma should be,
Is a pure wonder, I must say, to me.
How a man ever should hope to get thither,
E’en if he knew that there was another side;
But to suppose he should come any whither,
Sailing straight on into chaos untried,
In spite of the motion
Across the whole ocean,
To stick to the notion
That in some nook or bend
Of a sea without end
He should find North and South America,
Was a pure madness, indeed I must say, to me.
What if wise men had, as far back as Ptolemy,
Judged that the earth like an orange was round,
None of them ever said, Come along, follow me,
Sail to the West, and the East will be found.

Many a day before
Ever they'd come ashore,
From the 'San Salvador,'
Sadder and wiser men
They'd have turned back again;
And that he did not, but did cross the sea,
Is a pure wonder, I must say, to me.

**EVEN THE WINDS AND THE SEA OBEY.**

Said the Poet, I wouldn't maintain,
As the mystical German has done,
That the land, inexistent till then,
To reward him then first saw the sun;
And yet I could deem it was so,
As o'er the new waters he sailed,
That his soul made the breezes to blow,
With his courage the breezes had failed;
His strong quiet purpose had still
The hurricane's fury withheld;
The resolve of his conquering will
The lingering vessel impelled:
For the beings, the powers that range
In the air, on the earth, at our sides,
Can modify, temper and change
Stronger things than the winds and the tides,

By forces occult can the laws—
As we style them—of nature o'errule;
Can cause, so to say, every cause,
And our best mathematics befool;
Can defeat calculation and plan,
Baffle schemes ne'er so wisely designed,
But will bow to the genius of man,
And acknowledge a sovereign mind.

**REPOSE IN EGYPT.**

O happy mother!—while the man wayworn
Sleeps by his ass and dreams of daily bread,
Wakeful and heedful for thy infant care—
O happy mother!—while thy husband sleeps,
Art privileged, O blessed one, to see
Celestial strangers sharing in thy task,
And visible angels waiting on thy child.
Take, O young soul, O infant heaven-desired,
Take and fear not the cates, although of earth,
Which to thy hands celestial hands extend,
Take and fear not: such vulgar meats of life
Thy spirit lips no more must scorn to pass;
The seeming ill, contaminating joys,
Thy sense divine no more be loth to allow;
The pleasures as the pains of our strange life

Thou art engaged, self-compromised, to share.
Look up, upon thy mother’s face there sits
No sad suspicion of a lurking ill,
No shamed confession of a needful sin;
Mistrust her not, although of earth she too:
Look up! the bright-eyed cherubs overhead
Strew from mid air fresh flowers to crown the just
Look! thy own father’s servants these, and thine,
Who at his bidding and at thine are here.
In thine own word was it not said long since
Butter and honey shall he eat, and learn
The evil to refuse and choose the good?
Fear not, O babe divine, fear not, accept;
O happy mother, privileged to see,
While the man sleeps, the sacred mystery.

## TO A SLEEPING CHILD.

Lips, lips, open!
Up comes a little bird that lives inside—
Up comes a little bird, and peeps, and out he flies.
All the day he sits inside, and sometimes he sings,
Up he comes, and out he goes at night to spread his wings.
Little bird, little bird, whither will you go?
Round about the world, while nobody can know.
Little bird, little bird, whither do you flee?

Far away around the world, while nobody can see.
Little bird, little bird, how long will you roam?
All round the world and around again home;
Round the round world, and back through the air,
When the morning comes, the little bird is there.
Back comes the little bird and looks and in he flies,
Up wakes the little boy, and opens both his eyes.
Sleep, sleep, little boy, little bird's away,
Little bird will come again, by the peep of day;
Sleep, little boy, the little bird must go
Round about the world, while nobody can know.
Sleep, sleep sound, little bird goes round,
Round and round he goes; sleep, sleep sound.

## TRANSLATIONS FROM GOETHE.

I

Over every hill
All is still;
In no leaf of any tree
Can you see
The motion of a breath.
Every bird has ceased its song,
Wait; and thou too, ere long,
Shall be quiet in death.

II

Who ne’er his bread with tears hath ate,

Who never through the sad night hours

Weeping upon his bed hath sate,

He knows not you, you heavenly powers.

Forth into life you bid us go,

And into guilt you let us fall,

Then leave us to endure the woe

It brings unfailingly to all.

III

You complain of the woman for roving from one to another:—

Where is the constant man whom she is trying to find?

IV

Slumber and Sleep, two brothers appointed to serve the immortals,

By Prometheus were brought hither to comfort mankind;

But what in heaven was light, to human creatures was heavy:—

Slumber became our Sleep, Sleep unto mortals was Death.

V

Oh, the beautiful child! and oh, the most happy mother!

She in her infant blessed, and in its mother the babe—

What sweet longing within me this picture might not occasion,

Were I not, Joseph, like you, calmly condemned to stand by!

VI

Diogenes by his tub, contenting himself with the sunshine,

And Calanus with joy mounting his funeral pyre:—

Great examples were these for the eager approving of Philip,
But for the Conqueror of Earth were, as the earth was, too small.

**URANUS.[20]**

When on the primal peaceful blank profound,
Which in its still unknowing silence holds
All knowledge, ever by withholding holds—
When on that void (like footfalls in far rooms),
In faint pulsations from the whitening East
Articulate voices first were felt to stir,
And the great child, in dreaming grown to man,
Losing his dream to piece it up began;
Then Plato in me said,
‘’Tis but the figured ceiling overhead,
With cunning diagrams bestarred, that shine
In all the three dimensions, are endowed
With motion too by skill mechanical,
That thou in height, and depth, and breadth, and power,
Schooled unto pure Mathesis, might proceed
To higher entities, whereof in us
Copies are seen, existent they themselves
In the sole kingdom of the Mind and God.
Mind not the stars, mind thou thy Mind and God.’
By that supremer Word
O’ermastered, deafly heard

Were hauntings dim of old astrologies;
Chaldean mumblings vast, with gossip light
From modern ologistic fancyings mixed,
Of suns and stars, by hypothetic men
Of other frame than ours inhabited,
Of lunar seas and lunar craters huge.
And was there atmosphere, or was there not?
And without oxygen could life subsist?
And was the world originally mist?—
Talk they as talk they list,
I, in that ampler voice,
Unheeding, did rejoice.

**SELENE.**

My beloved, is it nothing
Though we meet not, neither can,
That I see thee, and thou me,
That we see, and see we see,
When I see I also feel thee;
Is it nothing, my beloved?
Thy luminous clear beauty
Brightens on me in my night,
I withdraw into my darkness
To allure thee into light.
About me and upon me I feel them pass and stay,

About me, deep into me, every lucid tender ray.

And thou, thou also feelest

When thou stealest

Shamefaced and half afraid

To the chamber of thy shade,

Thou in thy turn,

Thou too feelest

Something follow, something yearn,

A full orb blaze and burn.

My full orb upon thine,

As thine erst, gently smiling,

Softly wooing, sweetly wiling,

Gleamed on mine;

So mine on thine in turn

When thou feelest blaze and burn,

Is it nothing, my beloved?

My beloved, is it nothing

When I see thee and thou me,

When we each other see,

Is it nothing, my beloved?

Closer, closer come unto me.

Shall I see thee and no more?

I can see thee, is that all?

Let me also,

Let me feel thee,
Closer, closer, my beloved,
Come unto me, come to me, come!
O cruel, cruel lot, still thou rollest, stayest not,
Lookest onward, look’st before,
Yet I follow, evermore.
Oh, cold and cruel fate, thou rollest on thy way,
Scarcely lookest, wilt not stay,
From thine alien way.
The inevitable motion
Bears me forth upon the line
Whose course I cannot see.
I must move as it conveys me
Evermore. It so must be.
O cold one, and I round thee
Revolve, round only thee,
Straining ever to be nearer
While thou evadest still;
Repellest still, O cold one,
Nay, but closer, closer, closer,
My beloved, come, come, come!
The inevitable motion
Carries both upon its line,
Also you as well as me.

What is best, and what is strongest,
We obey. It so must be.
Cruel, cruel, didst thou only
Feel as I feel evermore,
A force, though in, not of me,
Drawing inward, in, in, in.
Yea, thou shalt though, ere all endeth
Thou shalt feel me closer, closer,
My beloved, close, close to thee,
Come to thee, come, come, come!
The inevitable motion
Bears us both upon its line
Together, you as me,
Together and asunder,
Evermore. It so must be.

**AT ROME.**

O richly soiled and richly sunned,
Exuberant, fervid, and fecund!
Is this the fixed condition
On which may Northern pilgrim come,
To imbibe thine ether-air, and sum
Thy store of old tradition?
Must we be chill, if clean, and stand
Foot-deep in dirt on classic land?

So is it: in all ages so,
And in all places man can know,
From homely roots unseen below
The stem in forest, field, and bower,
Derives the emanative power
That crowns it with the ethereal flower,
From mixtures fœtid, foul, and sour
Draws juices that those petals fill.
Ah Nature, if indeed thy will
Thou own’st it, it shall not be ill!
And truly here, in this quick clime,
Where, scarcely bound by space or time,
The elements in half a day
Toss off with exquisitest play
What our cold seasons toil and grieve,
And never quite at last achieve;
Where processes, with pain, and fear,
Disgust, and horror wrought, appear
The quick mutations of a dance,
Wherein retiring but to advance,
Life, in brief interpause of death,
One moment sitting taking breath,
Forth comes again as glad as e’er,
In some new figure full as fair,

Where what has scarcely ceased to be,
Instinct with newer birth we see—
What dies, already, look you, lives;
In such a clime, who thinks, forgives;
Who sees, will understand; who knows,
In calm of knowledge find repose,
And thoughtful as of glory gone,
So too of more to come anon,
Of permanent existence sure,
Brief intermediate breaks endure.
O Nature, if indeed thy will,
Thou ownest it, it is not ill!
And e'en as oft on heathy hill,
On moorland black, and ferny fells,
Beside thy brooks and in thy dells,
Was welcomed erst the kindly stain
Of thy true earth, e'en so again
With resignation fair, and meet
The dirt and refuse of thy street,
My philosophic foot shall greet,
So leave but perfect to my eye
Thy columns, set against thy sky!

## LAST WORDS. NAPOLEON AND WELLINGTON.

NAPOLEON.

Is it this, then, O world-warrior,
That, exulting, through the folds
Of the dark and cloudy barrier
Thine enfranchised eye beholds?
Is, when blessed hands relieve thee
From the gross and mortal clay,
This the heaven that should receive thee?
‘Tête d’armée.’
Now the final link is breaking,
Of the fierce, corroding chain,
And the ships, their watch forsaking,
Bid the seas no more detain,
Whither is it, freed and risen,
The pure spirit seeks away,
Quits for what the weary prison?
‘Tête d’armée.’
Doubtless—angels, hovering o’er thee
In thine exile’s sad abode,
Marshalled even now before thee,
Move upon that chosen road!
Thither they, ere friends have laid thee
Where sad willows o’er thee play,
Shall already have conveyed thee!
‘Tête d’armée.’

Shall great captains, foiled and broken,
Hear from thee on each great day,
At the crisis, a word spoken—
Word that battles still obey—
‘Cuirassiers here, here those cannon;
Quick, those squadrons, up—away!
To the charge, on—as one man, on!’
‘Tête d’armée.’
(Yes, too true, alas! while sated
Of the wars so slow to cease,
Nations, once that scorned and hated,
Would to Wisdom turn, and Peace;
Thy dire impulse still obeying,
Fevered youths, as in the old day,
In their hearts still find thee saying,
‘Tête d’armée.’)
Oh, poor soul!—Or do I view thee,
From earth’s battle-fields withheld,
In a dream, assembling to thee
Troops that quell not, nor are quelled,
Breaking airy lines, defeating
Limbo-kings, and, as to-day,
Idly to all time repeating
‘Tête d’armée’?

WELLINGTON.

And what the words, that with his failing breath
Did England hear her aged soldier say?
I know not. Yielding tranquilly to death,
With no proud speech, no boast, he passed away.
Not stirring words, nor gallant deeds alone,
Plain patient work fulfilled that length of life;
Duty, not glory—Service, not a throne,
Inspired his effort, set for him the strife.
Therefore just Fortune, with one hasty blow,
Spurning her minion, Glory's, Victory's lord,
Gave all to him that was content to know,
In service done its own supreme reward.
The words he said, if haply words there were,
When full of years and works he passed away,
Most naturally might, methinks, refer
To some poor humble business of to-day.
'That humble simple duty of the day
Perform,' he bids; 'ask not if small or great:
Serve in thy post; be faithful, and obey;
Who serves her truly, sometimes saves the State.'
1852

## PESCHIERA.

What voice did on my spirit fall,

Peschiera, when thy bridge I crost?
‘’Tis better to have fought and lost,
Than never to have fought at all.’
The tricolor—a trampled rag
Lies, dirt and dust; the lines I track
By sentry boxes yellow-black,
Lead up to no Italian flag.
I see the Croat soldier stand
Upon the grass of your redoubts;
The eagle with his black wings flouts
The breath and beauty of your land.
Yet not in vain, although in vain,
O men of Brescia, on the day
Of loss past hope, I heard you say
Your welcome to the noble pain.
You say, ‘Since so it is,—good-bye
Sweet life, high hope; but whatsoe’er
May be, or must, no tongue shall dare
To tell, “The Lombard feared to die!”’
You said (there shall be answer fit),
‘And if our children must obey,
They must; but thinking on this day
’Twill less debase them to submit.’
You said (Oh not in vain you said),

‘Haste, brothers, haste, while yet we may;
The hours ebb fast of this one day
When blood may yet be nobly shed.’
Ah! not for idle hatred, not
For honour, fame, nor self-applause,
But for the glory of the cause,
You did, what will not be forgot.
And though the stranger stand, ’tis true,
By force and fortune’s right he stands;
By fortune, which is in God’s hands,
And strength, which yet shall spring in you.
This voice did on my spirit fall,
Peschiera, when thy bridge I crost,
‘’Tis better to have fought and lost,
Than never to have fought at all.’
1849

**ALTERAM PARTEM.**

Or shall I say, Vain word, false thought,
Since Prudence hath her martyrs too,
And Wisdom dictates not to do,
Till doing shall be not for nought?
Not ours to give or lose is life;
Will Nature, when her brave ones fall,
Remake her work? or songs recall

Death’s victim slain in useless strife?
That rivers flow into the sea
Is loss and waste, the foolish say,
Nor know that back they find their way,
Unseen, to where they wont to be.
Showers fall upon the hills, springs flow,
The river runneth still at hand,
Brave men are born into the land,
And whence the foolish do not know.
No! no vain voice did on me fall,
Peschiera, when thy bridge I crost,
‘’Tis better to have fought and lost,
Than never to have fought at all.’
1849

## SAY NOT THE STRUGGLE NOUGHT AVAILETH.

Say not the struggle nought availeth,
The labour and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.
If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e’en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.
For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,

Seem here no painful inch to gain,

Far back, through creeks and inlets making,

Comes silent, flooding in, the main,

And not by eastern windows only,

When daylight comes, comes in the light,

In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,

But westward, look, the land is bright.

1849

## FOOTNOTES

[1] This and the following Early Poems are reprinted from the volume called Ambarvalia.

[2] This was written for the twenty-fifth wedding-day of Mr. and Mrs. Walrond, of Calder Park.

[3] Ho Thëos meta sou—God be with you!

[4] The manuscript of this poem is very imperfect, and bears no title.

[5] The manuscript of this poem is incomplete; but it has been thought best to give all the separate fragments, since they evidently are conceived on the same plan, and throw light on each other.

[6] This poem, as well as the ‘Mari Magno,’ was not published during the author’s lifetime, and should not be regarded as having received his finishing touches.

[7] Flood.

[8] Reap.

[9] Reaping.

[10] Shocks.

[11] Public-house in the hamlet.

[12] This poem is reprinted from the volume called Ambarvalia.

[13]

Hic avidus stetit

Vulcanus, hic matrona Juno, et

Nunquam humeris positurus arcum;

Qui rore puro Castaliæ lavit

Crines solutos, qui Lyciæ tenet

Dumeta natalemque silvam,

Delius et Patareus Apollo.

[14]

——domus Albuneæ resonantis,

Et præceps Anio, et Tiburni lucus, et uda

Mobilibus pomaria rivis

[15] These Sonnets have been brought together from very imperfect manuscripts. It is not to be supposed that their author would have given them to the public in their present state; but they are in parts so characteristic of his thought and style, that they will not be without interest to the readers of his poems.

[16] These Tales were written only a few months before the writer’s death, during his journeys in Greece, Italy, and the Pyrenees, and had not been revised by him.

[17] These songs were composed either during the writer’s voyage across the Atlantic in 1852, or during his residence in America.

[18] Passages of the second letter of Parepidemus (vol. i. pp. 400, 401) illustrate the theory which Mr. Clough has carried into practice in these hexameters as well as in the Translations from the Iliad.

[19] A great proportion of the Poems described as Miscellaneous have, like some included in previous divisions, been brought together from rough copies and unfinished manuscripts. Fragmentary and imperfect as they are, they yet are so characteristic of their writer, that they have been placed here along with others more finished.

[20] This thought is taken from a passage on astronomy in Plato's Republic, in which the following sentence occurs, vii. 529, D: 'We must use the fretwork of the sky as patterns, with a view to the study which aims at these higher realities, just as if we chanced to meet with diagrams cunningly drawn and devised by Dædalus or some other craftsman or painter.'

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183 Eastward, or Northward, or West? I wander and ask as I wander 305 Edward and Jane a married couple were 374 Farewell, farewell! Her vans the vessel tries 401 Farewell, my Highland lassie! when the year returns around 29 For she confessed, as they sat in the dusk, and he saw not her blushes 239 From thy far sources, 'mid mountains airily climbing 422 Go, foolish thoughts, and join the throng 436 Goddess, the anger sing of the Pelean Achilles 417 Green fields of England! wheresoe'er 404 Hearken to me, ye mothers of my tent 69 Here am I yet, another twelvemonth spent 12 Hope evermore and believe, O man, for e'en as thy thought 188 How in God's name did Columbus get over 437 How often sit I, poring o'er 14 I dreamed a dream: I dreamt that I espied 96 I have seen higher, holier things than these 19 I saw again the spirits on a day 186 I stayed at La Quenille, ten miles or more 361 If it is thou whose casual hand withdraws 321 If that we thus are guilty doth appear 434 If, when in cheerless wanderings, dull and cold 20 In controversial foul impureness 93 Is it illusion? or does there a spirit from perfecter ages 280 Is it this, then, O world-warrior 448 Is it true, ye gods, who treat us 39 It fortifies my soul to know 90 It is not sweet content, be sure 430 It may be true 91 It was but some few nights ago 3 It was the afternoon; and the sports were now at the ending 201 I've often wondered how it is, at times 371 Light words they were, and lightly, falsely said 34 Like a child 14 Lips, lips, open! 440 Lo, here is God, and there is God! 81 Matthew and Mark and Luke and holy John 95 Morn, in yellow and white, came broadening out from the mountains 207 My beloved, is it nothing 443 My sons, and ye children of my sons 74 My wind is turned to bitter north 18 O God! O God! and must I still go on 171 O happy mother!—while the man wayworn 439 O happy they whose hearts receive 189 O kind protecting Darkness! as a child 15 O let me love my love unto myself alone 87 O only Source of all our light and life 85 O richly soiled and richly sunned 446 O ship, ship, ship 413 O stream descending to the sea 196 O tell me, friends, while yet we part 36 O Thou whose image in the shrine 86 Oh, the beautiful child! and oh, the most happy mother! 442 'Old things

need not be therefore true’ 93 On grass, on gravel, in the sun 260 On the mountain, in the woodland 31 Once more the wonted road I tread 16 Or shall I say, Vain word, false thought 452 Over a mountain slope with lentisk, and with abounding 423 Over every hill 441 Over the great windy waters, and over the clear-crested summits 269 Put forth thy leaf, thou lofty plane 197 Roused by importunate knocks 15 Said the Poet, I wouldn’t maintain 438 Say not the struggle nought availeth 452 Say, will it, when our hairs are grey 190 Shall I decide it by a random shot? 322 Since that last evening we have fallen indeed! 43 Slumber and Sleep, two brothers appointed to serve the immortals 441 So I went wrong 7 So in the cottage with Adam the pupils five together 232 So in the golden morning they parted and went to the westward 215 So in the golden weather they waited. But Philip returned not 224 So in the sinful streets, abstracted and alone 104 So on the morrow’s morrow, with Term-time dread returning 250 So spake the voice: and as with a single life 423 Some future day when what is now is not 406 Sweet streamlet bason! at thy side 10 That children in their loveliness should die 319 That out of sight is out of mind 409 That there are better things within the womb 319 The grasses green of sweet content 193 The human spirits saw I on a day 185 The mighty ocean rolls and raves 407 The scene is different, and the place, the air 109 The Silver Wedding! on some pensive ear 20 The skies have sunk, and hid the upper snow 259 There is a city, upbuilt on the quays of the turbulent Arno 309 These are the words of Jacob’s wives, the words 77 Thou shalt have one God only; who 184 Though to the vilest things beneath the moon 12 Thought may well be ever ranging 25 Through the great sinful streets of Naples as I past 100 To see the rich autumnal tint depart 320 To spend uncounted years of pain 91 To think that men of former days 428 To wear out heart, and nerves, and brain 182 Trunks the forest yielded with gums ambrosial oozing 422 Truth is a golden thread, seen here and there 6 ’Twas on a sunny summer day 5 Upon the water, in the boat 195 Well, well,—Heaven bless you all from day to day! 13 Were I with you, or you with me 411 Were you with me, or I with you 410 Were

you with me, or I with you 412 What voice did on my spirit fall 450 What we, when face to face we see 92 Whate’er you dream with doubt possest 194 When on the primal peaceful blank profound 442 When panting sighs the bosom fill 26 When soft September brings again 10 When the dews are earliest falling 30 Whence are ye, vague desires 191 Whence comest thou, shady lane? and why and how? 8 Where lies the land to which the ship would go? 407 Who is this man that walketh in the field 72 Who ne’er his bread with tears hath ate 441 Why should I say I see the things I see not? 23 Ye flags of Piccadilly 402 Yes, I have lied, and so must walk my way 13 Yet to the wondrous St. Peter’s, and yet to the solemn Rotonda 293 You complain of the woman for roving from one to another 441 Youth, that went, is come again 434

THE END.

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