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POEMS,

BY

FRANCES ANNE BUTLER,

(LATE FANNY KEMBLE.)

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p. 4

TO

KATHARINE SEDGWICK,

THIS LITTLE VOLUME

IS

MOST RESPECTFULLY, GRATEFULLY,

AND AFFECTIONATELY

INSCRIBED.

p. 5

LINES WRITTEN AT NIGHT.

p. 11

August 9th, 1825.

Oh, thou surpassing beauty! that dost live
Shrined in yon silent stream of glorious light!
Spirit of harmony! that through the vast
And cloud-embroidered canopy art spreading
Thy wings, that o'er our shadowy earth hang brooding,
Like a pale silver haze, betwixt the moon
And the world's darker orb: beautiful, hail!
Hail to thee! from her midnight throne of ether,
Night looks upon the slumbering universe.
There is no breeze on silver-crown'd tree,
There is no breath on dew-bespangled flower,
There is no wind sighs on the sleepy wave,
There is no sound hangs in the solemn air.
All, all are silent, all are dreaming, all,

p. 12

Save those eternal eyes, that now shine forth
Winking the slumberer's destinies. The moon
Sails on the horizon's verge, a moving glory,
Pure, and unrivalled; for no paler orb
Approaches, to invade the sea of light
That lives around her; save yon little star,
That sparkles on her robe of fleecy clouds,
Like a bright gem, fallen from her radiant brow.

VENICE.

p. 13

Night in her dark array
Steals o'er the ocean,
And with departed day
Hushed seems its motion.
Slowly o'er yon blue coast
Onward she's treading,
'Till its dark line is lost,
'Neath her veil spreading.
The bark on the rippling deep
Hath found a pillow,
And the pale moonbeams sleep
On the green billow.
Bound by her emerald zone
Venice is lying,
And round her marble crown
Night winds are sighing.
From the high lattice now
Bright eyes are gleaming,
That seem on night's dark brow
Brighter stars beaming.
Now o'er the bright lagune
Light barks are dancing,
And 'neath the silver moon
Swift oars are glancing.
Strains from the mandolin
Steal o'er the water,
Echo replies between
To mirth and laughter.
O'er the wave seen afar
Brilliantly shining,
Glams like a fallen star
Venice reclining.

p. 14

TO MISS ---

p. 15

Time beckons on the hours: the expiring year
Already feels old Winter's icy breath;
As with cold hands, he scatters on her bier
The faded glories of her Autumn wreath.
As fleetly as the Summer's sunshine past,
The Winter's snow must melt; and the young Spring,
Strewing the earth with flowers, will come at last,
And in her train the hour of parting bring.
But, though I leave the harbour, where my heart
Sometime had found a peaceful resting-place,
Where it lay calmly moored; though I depart,
Yet, let not time my memory quite efface.
'Tis true, I leave no void, the happy home
To which you welcomed me, will be as gay,
As bright, as cheerful, when I've turned to roam,
Once more, upon life's weary onward way.
But oh! if ever by the warm hearth's blaze,
Where beaming eyes and kindred souls are met,
Your fancy wanders back to former days,
Let my remembrance hover round you yet.
Then, while before you glides time's shadowy train,

p. 16

Of forms long vanished, days and hours long gone,
Perchance my name will be pronounced again,
In that dear circle where I once was one.
Think of me then, nor break kind memory's spell,
By reason's censure coldly o'er me cast,
Think only, that I loved ye passing well!
And let my follies slumber with the past.

THE WIND.

p. 17

Night comes upon the earth; and fearfully
Arise the mighty winds, and sweep along
In the full chorus of their midnight song.
The waste of heavy clouds, that veil the sky,
Roll like a murky scroll before them driven,
And show faint glimpses of a darker heaven.
No ray is there of moon, or pale-eyed star,
Darkness is on the universe; save where
The western sky lies glimmering, faint and far,
With day's red embers dimly glowing there.
Hark! how the wind comes gathering in its course,
And sweeping onward, with resistless force,
Howls through the silent space of starless skies,
And on the breast of the swol'n ocean dies.
Oh, though art terrible, thou viewless power!
That rid'st destroying at the midnight hour!
We hear thy mighty pinion, but the eye
Knows nothing of thine awful majesty.
We see all mute creation bow before
Thy viewless wings, as thou careerest o'er
This rocking world; that in the boundless sky
Suspended, vibrates, as thou rushest by.
There is no terror in the lightning's glare,
That breaks its red track through the trackless air;
There is no terror in the voice that speaks
From out the clouds when the loud thunder breaks
Over the earth, like that which dwells in thee,
Thou unseen tenant of immensity.

p. 18

EASTERN SUNSET.

p. 19

'Tis only the nightingale's warbled strain,
That floats through the evening sky:
With his note of love, he replies again,
To the muezzin's holy cry;
As it sweetly sounds on the rosy air,
"Allah, il allah! come to prayer!"
Warm o'er the waters the red sun is glowing,
'Tis the last parting glance of his splendour and might,
While each rippling wave on the bright shore is throwing
Its white crest, that breaks into showers of light.
Each distant mosque and minaret
Is shining in the setting sun,
Whose farewell look is brighter yet,
Than that with which his course begun.
On the dark blue mountains his smile is bright,
It glows on the orange grove's waving height,
And breaks through its shade in long lines of light.
No sound on the earth, and no sound in the sky,
Save murmuring fountains that sparkle nigh,
And the rustling flight of the evening breeze,
Who steals from his nest in the cypress trees,
And a thousand dewy odours fling,
As he shakes their white buds from his gossamer wing,
And flutters away through the spicy air,
At sound of a footstep drawing near.

p. 20

Farewell awhile, beautiful Italy!
 My lonely bark is launched upon the sea
 That clasps thy shore, and the soft evening gale
 Breathes from thy coast, and fills my parting sail.
 Ere morning dawn, a colder breeze will come,
 And bear me onward to my northern home;
 That home, where the pale sun is not so bright,
 So glorious, at his noonday's fiercest height,
 As when he throws his last glance o'er the sea,
 And fires the heavens, that glow farewell on thee.
 Fair Italy! perchance some future day
 Upon thy coast again will see me stray;
 Meantime, farewell! I sorrow, as I leave
 Thy lovely shore behind me, as men grieve
 When bending o'er a form, around whose charms,
 Unconquered yet, Death winds his icy arms:
 While leaving the last kiss on some dear cheek,
 Where beauty sheds her last autumnal streak,
 Life's rosy flower just mantling into bloom,
 Before it fades for ever in the tomb.
 So I leave thee, oh! thou art lovely still!
 Despite the clouds of infamy and ill
 That gather thickly round thy fading form:
 Still glow thy glorious skies, as bright and warm,
 Still memory lingers fondly on thy strand,
 And Genius hails thee still her native land.
 Land of my soul's adoption! o'er the sea,
 Thy sunny shore is fading rapidly:
 Fainter and fainter, from my gaze it dies,
 'Till like a line of distant light it lies,
 A melting boundary 'twixt earth and sky,
 And now 'tis gone;—farewell, fair Italy!

p. 22

THE RED INDIAN.

p. 23

Rest, warrior, rest! thine hour is past,—
 Thy longest war-whoop, and thy last,
 Still rings upon the rushing blast,
 That o'er thy grave sweeps drearily.

Rest, warrior, rest! thy haughty brow,
 Beneath the hand of death bends low,
 Thy fiery glance is quenched now,
 In the cold grave's obscurity.

Rest, warrior, rest! thy rising sun
 Is set in blood, thy day is done;
 Like lightning flash thy race is run,
 And thou art sleeping peacefully.

Rest, warrior, rest! thy foot no more
 The boundless forest shall explore,
 Or trackless cross the sandy shore,
 Or chase the red deer rapidly.

Rest, warrior, rest! thy light canoe,
 Like thy choice arrow, swift and true,
 Shall part no more the waters blue,
 That sparkle round it brilliantly.

p. 24

Rest, warrior, rest! thine hour is past,
 Yon sinking sunbeam is thy last,
 And all is silent, save the blast,
 That o'er thy grave sweeps drearily.

Oh, turn those eyes away from me!
Though sweet, yet fearful are their rays;
And though they beam so tenderly,
I feel, I tremble 'neath their gaze.
Oh, turn those eyes away! for though
To meet their glance I may not dare,
I know their light is on my brow,
By the warm blood that mantles there.

SONG.

p. 25

Yet once again, but once, before we sever,
Fill we one brimming cup,—it is the last!
And let those lips, now parting, and for ever,
Breathe o'er this pledge, "the memory of the past!"

Joy's fleeting sun is set; and no to-morrow
Smiles on the gloomy path we tread so fast,
Yet, in the bitter cup, o'erfilled with sorrow,
Lives one sweet drop,—the memory of the past.

But one more look from those dear eyes, now shining
Through their warm tears, their loveliest and their last;
But one more strain of hands, in friendship twining,
Now farewell all, save memory of the past.

LAMENT FOR ISRAEL.

p. 26

Where is thy home in thy promised land?
Desolate and forsaken!
The stranger's arm hath seized thy brand,
Thou art bowed beneath the stranger's hand,
And the stranger thy birthright hath taken.

Where is the mark of thy chosen race?
Infamous and degraded!
It hath fallen on thee, on thy dwelling-place,
And that heaven-stamped sign to a foul disgrace
And the scoff of the world, has faded.

First-born of nations! upon thy brow,
Resistless and revenging,
The fiery finger of God hath now
Written the sentence of thy wo,
The innocent blood avenging!

Lion of Judah! thy glory is past,
Vanished and fled for ever.
Homeless and scattered, thy race is cast
Like chaff in the breath of the sweeping blast,
To rally or rise again, never!

p. 27

A WISH.

Let me not die for ever, when I'm gone
To the cold earth! but let my memory
Live like the gorgeous western light that shone
Over the clouds where sank day's majesty.
Let me not be forgotten! though the grave
Has clasped its hideous arms around my brow.
Let me not be forgotten! though the wave
Of time's dark current rolls above me now.
Yet not in tears remembered be my name;
Weep over those ye loved; for me, for me,
Give me the wreath of glory, and let fame
Over my tomb spread immortality!

The moment must come, when the hands that unite
 In the firm clasp of friendship, will sever;
 When the eyes that have beamed o'er us brightly to-night,
 Will have ceased to shine o'er us, for ever.
 Yet wreath again the goblet's brim
 With pleasure's roseate crown!
 What though the future hour be dim—
 The present is our own!

The moment is come, and again we are parting,
 To roam through the world, each our separate way;
 In the bright eye of beauty the pearl-drop is starting,
 But hope, sunny hope, through the tear sheds its ray.
 Then wreath again the goblet's brim
 With pleasure's roseate crown!
 What though the present hour be dim—
 The future's yet our own!

p. 29

The moment is past, and the bright throng that round us
 So lately was gathered, has fled like a dream;
 And time has untwisted the fond links that bound us,
 Like frost wreaths that melt in the morning's first beam.
 Still wreath once more the goblet's brim!
 With pleasure's roseate crown!
 What though all else beside be dim—
 The past has been our own!

TO MRS. ---

p. 30

Oh lady! thou, who in the olden time
 Hadst been the star of many a poet's dream!
 Thou, who unto a mind of mould sublime,
 Weddest the gentle graces that beseem
 Fair woman's best! forgive the darling line
 That falters forth thy praise! nor let thine eye
 Glance o'er the vain attempt too scornfully;
 But, as thou read'st, think what a love was mine,
 That made me venture on a theme, that none
 Can know thee, and not feel a hopeless one.
 Thou art most fair, though sorrow's chastening wing
 Hath past, and left its shadow on thy brow,
 And solemn thoughts are gently mellowing
 The splendour of thy beauty's summer now.
 Thou art most fair! but thine is loveliness
 That dwells not only on the lip, or eye;
 Thy beauty, is thy pure heart's holiness;
 Thy grace, thy lofty spirit's majesty.
 While thus I gaze on thee, and watch thee glide,
 Like some calm spirit o'er life's troubled stream,
 With thy twin buds of beauty by thy side
 Together blossoming; I almost deem
 That I behold the loveliness and truth,
 That like fair visions hovered round my youth,
 Long sought—and then forgotten as a dream.

p. 31

A WISH.

Let me not die for ever when I'm laid
 In the cold earth! but let my memory
 Live still among ye, like the evening shade,
 That o'er the sinking day steals placidly.
 Let me not be forgotten! though the knell
 Has tolled for me its solemn lullaby;
 Let me not be forgotten! though I dwell

For ever now in death's obscurity.
Yet oh! upon the emblazoned leaf of fame,
Trace not a record, not a line for me,
But let the lips I loved oft breathe my name,
And in your hearts enshrine my memory!

A SPIRIT'S VOICE.

p. 32

It is the dawn! the rosy day awakes;
From her bright hair pale showers of dew she shakes,
And through the heavens her early pathway takes;
Why art thou sleeping?

It is the noon! the sun looks laughing down
On hamlet still, on busy shore, and town,
On forest glade, and deep dark waters lone;
Why art thou sleeping?

It is the sunset! daylight's crimson veil
Floats o'er the mountain tops, while twilight pale
Calls up her vaporous shrouds from every vale;
Why art thou sleeping?

It is the night! o'er the moon's livid brow,
Like shadowy locks, the clouds their darkness throw,
All evil spirits wake to wander now;
Why art thou sleeping?

TO THE DEAD.

p. 33

On the lone waters' shore
Wander I yet;
Brooding those moments o'er
I should forget.
'Till the broad foaming surge
Warns me to fly,
While despair's whispers urge
To stay and die.
When the night's solemn watch
Falls on the seas,
'Tis thy voice that I catch
In the low breeze;
When the moon sheds her light
On things below,
Beams not her ray so bright,
Like thy young brow?
Spirit immortal! say,
When wilt thou come,
To marshal me the way
To my long home?

SONG.

p. 34

I sing the yellow leaf,
That rustling strews
The wintry path, where grief
Delights to muse,
Spring's early violet, that sweetly opes
Its fragrant leaves to the young morning's kiss,
Type of our youth's fond dreams, and cherished hopes,
Will soon be this:
A sere and yellow leaf,
That rustling strews
The wintry path, where grief
Delights to muse.

The summer's rose, in whose rich hues we read
Pleasure's gay bloom, and love's enchanting bliss,
And glory's laurel, waving o'er the dead,
Will soon be this:
A sere and yellow leaf,
That rustling strews
The wintry path, where grief
Delights to muse.

TO THOMAS MOORE, Esq.

p. 35

Here's a health to thee, Bard of Erin!
To the goblet's brim we will fill;
For all that to life is endearing,
Thy strains have made dearer still!

Wherever fond woman's eyes eclipse
The midnight moon's soft ray;
Whenever around dear woman's lips,
The smiles of affection play:

We will drink to thee, Bard of Erin!
To the goblet's brim we will fill,
For all that to life is endearing,
Thy strains have made dearer still!

Wherever the warrior's sword is bound
With the laurel of victory,
Wherever the patriot's brow is crowned
With the halo of liberty:

We will drink to thee, Bard of Erin!
To the goblet's brim we will fill;
For all that to life is endearing
Thy strains have made dearer still!

p. 36

Wherever the voice of mirth hath rung,
On the listening ear of night,
Wherever the soul of wit hath flung
Its flashes of vivid light:

We will drink to thee, Bard of Erin!
To the goblet's brim we will fill;
For all that to life is endearing,
In thy strains is dearer still.

A WISH.

p. 37

Oh! that I were a fairy sprite, to wander
In forest paths, o'erarched with oak and beech;
Where the sun's yellow light, in slanting rays,
Sleeps on the dewy moss: what time the breath
Of early morn stirs the white hawthorn boughs,
And fills the air with showers of snowy blossoms.
Or lie at sunset 'mid the purple heather,
Listening the silver music that rings out
From the pale mountain bells, swayed by the wind.
Or sit in rocky clefts above the sea,
While one by one the evening stars shine forth
Among the gathering clouds, that strew the heavens
Like floating purple wreaths of mournful nightshade!

THE MINSTREL'S GRAVE.

p. 38

Oh let it be where the waters are meeting,
In one crystal sheet, like the summer's sky bright!

Oh let it be where the sun, when retreating,
 May throw the last glance of his vanishing light.
Lay me there! lay me there! and upon my lone pillow
 Let the emerald moss in soft starry wreaths swell;
Be my dirge the faint sob of the murmuring billow,
 And the burthen it sings to me, nought but "farewell!"

Oh let it be where soft slumber enticing,
 The cypress and myrtle have mingled their shade:
Oh let it be where the moon at her rising,
 May throw the first night-glance that silvers the glade.
Lay me there! lay me there! and upon the green willow
 Hang the harp that has cheered the lone minstrel so well,
That the soft breath of heaven, as it sighs o'er my pillow,
 From its strings, now forsaken, may sound one farewell.

p. 39

TO ---

When we first met, dark wintry skies were glooming,
 And the wild winds sang requiem to the year;
But thou, in all thy beauty's pride wert blooming,
 And my young heart knew hope without a fear.

When we last parted, summer suns were smiling,
 And the bright earth her flowery vesture wore;
But thou hadst lost the power of beguiling,
 For my wrecked, wearied heart, could hope no more.

ON A FORGET-ME-NOT, Brought from Switzerland.

p. 40

Flower of the mountain! by the wanderer's hand
 Robbed of thy beauty's short-lived sunny day;
Didst thou but blow to gem the stranger's way,
And bloom, to wither in the stranger's land?
 Hueless and scentless as thou art,
 How much that stirs the memory,
 How much, much more, that thrills the heart,
 Thou faded thing, yet lives in thee!

Where is thy beauty? in the grassy blade,
 There lives more fragrance, and more freshness now;
Yet oh! not all the flowers that bloom and fade,
 Are half so dear to memory's eye as thou.
 The dew that on the mountain lies,
 The breeze that o'er the mountain sighs,
 Thy parent stem will nurse and nourish;
But thou—not e'en those sunny eyes
 As bright, as blue, as thine own skies,
 Thou faded thing! can make thee flourish.

SONNET.

p. 41

'Twas but a dream! and oh! what are they all,
 All the fond visions Hope's bright finger traces,
 All the fond visions Time's dark wing effaces,
But very dreams! but morning buds, that fall
 Withered and blighted, long before the night:
 Strewing the paths they should have made more bright,
With mournful wreaths, whose light hath past away,
 That can return to life and beauty never,
And yet, of whom it was but yesterday,
 We deemed they'd bloom as fresh and fair for ever.
Oh then, when hopes, that to thy heart are dearest,

Over the future shed their sunniest beam,
When round thy path their bright wings hover nearest,
Trust not too fondly!—for 'tis but a dream!

SONNET.

p. 42

Oh weary, weary world! how full thou art
Of sin, of sorrow, and all evil things!
In thy fierce turmoil, where shall the sad heart,
Released from pain, fold its unrested wings?
Peace hath no dwelling here, but evermore
Loud discord, strife, and envy, fill the earth
With fearful riot, whilst unhallowed mirth
Shrieks frantic laughter forth, leading along,
Whirling in dizzy trance the eager throng,
Who bear aloft the overflowing cup,
With tears, forbidden joys, and blood filled up,
Quaffing long draughts of death; in lawless might,
Drunk with soft harmonies, and dazzling light,
So rush they down to the eternal night.

ON A MUSICAL BOX.

p. 43

Poor little sprite! in that dark, narrow cell
Caged by the law of man's resistless might!
With thy sweet liquid notes, by some strong spell,
Compelled to minister to his delight!
Whence, what art thou? art thou a fairy wight
Caught sleeping in some lily's snowy bell,
Where thou hadst crept, to rock in the moonlight,
And drink the starry dew-drops, as they fell?
Say, dost thou think, sometimes when thou art singing,
Of thy wild haunt upon the mountain's brow,
Where thou wert wont to list the heath-bells ringing,
And sail upon the sunset's amber glow?
When thou art weary of thy oft-told theme,
Say, dost thou think of the clear pebbly stream,
Upon whose mossy brink thy fellows play,
Dancing in circles by the moon's soft beam,
Hiding in blossoms from the sun's fierce gleam,
Whilst thou, in darkness, sing'st thy life away?
And canst thou feel when the spring-time returns,
Filling the earth with fragrance and with glee;
When in the wide creation nothing mourns,
Of all that lives, save that which is not free?
Oh! if thou couldst, and we could hear thy prayer,
How would thy little voice beseeching cry,
For one short draught of the sweet morning air,
For one short glimpse of the clear azure sky!
Perchance thou sing'st in hope thou shalt be free,
Sweetly and patiently thy task fulfilling;
While thy sad thoughts are wandering with the bee,
To every bud with honey dew distilling.
That hope is vain: for even couldst thou wing
Thy homeward flight back to the greenwood gay,
Thou'dst be a shunned and a forsaken thing,
'Mongst the companions of thy happier day.
For fairy sprites, like many other creatures,
Bear fleeting memories, that come and go;
Nor can they oft recall familiar features,
By absence touched, or clouded o'er with woe.
Then rest content with sorrow: for there be
Many that must that lesson learn with thee;
And still thy wild notes warble cheerfully,
Till, when thy tiny voice begins to fail,
For thy lost bliss sing but one parting wail,
Poor little sprite! and then sleep peacefully!

p. 44

p. 45

TO THE PICTURE OF A LADY.

Lady, sweet lady, I behold thee yet,
With thy pale brow, brown eyes, and solemn air,
And billowy tresses of thy golden hair,
Which once to see, is never to forget!
But for short space I gazed, with soul intent
Upon thee; and the limner's art divine,
Meantime, poured all thy spirit into mine.
But once I gazed, then on my way I went:
And thou art still before me. Like a dream
Of what our soul has loved, and lost for ever,
Thy vision dwells with me, and though I never
May be so blest as to behold thee more,
That one short look has stamped thee in my heart,
Of my intensest life a living part,
Which time, and death, shall never triumph o'er.

FRAGMENT.

p. 46

Walking by moonlight on the golden margin
That binds the silver sea, I fell to thinking
Of all the wild imaginings that man
Hath peopled heaven, and earth, and ocean with;
Making fair nature's solitary haunts
Alive with beings, beautiful and fearful.
And as the chain of thought grew link by link,
It seemed, as though the midnight heavens waxed brighter,
The stars gazed fix'dly with their golden eyes,
And a strange light played o'er each sleeping billow,
That laid its head upon the sandy beach.
Anon there came along the rocky shore
A far-off sound of sweetest minstrelsy.
From no one point of heaven, or earth, it came;
But under, over, and about it breathed,
Filling my soul with thrilling, fearful pleasure.
It swelled, as though borne on the floating wings
Of the midsummer breeze: it died away
Towards heaven, as though it sank into the clouds,
That one by one melted like flakes of snow
In the moonbeams. Then came a rushing sound,
Like countless wings of bees, or butterflies;
And suddenly, as far as eye might view,
The coast was peopled with a world of elves,
Who in fantastic ringlets danced around,
With antic gestures, and wild beckoning motion,
Aimed at the moon. White was their snowy vesture,
And shining as the Alps, when that the sun
Gems their pale robes with diamonds. On their heads
Were wreaths of crimson and of yellow foxglove.
They were all fair, and light as dreams; anon
The dance broke off; and sailing through the air,
Some one way, and some other, they did each
Alight upon some waving branch, or flower,
That garlanded the rocks upon the shore.
One, chiefly, did I mark, one tiny sprite,
Who crept into an orange flower-bell,
And there lay nestling, whilst his eager lips
Drank from its virgin chalice the night dew,
That glistened, like a pearl, in its white bosom.

p. 47

SONNET.

p. 48

Cover me with your everlasting arms,
Ye guardian giants of this solitude!

From the ill-sight of men, and from the rude,
Tumultuous din of yon wide world's alarms!
Oh, knit your mighty limbs around, above,
And close me in for ever! let me dwell
With the wood spirits, in the darkest cell
That ever with your verdant locks ye wove.
The air is full of countless voices, joined
In one eternal hymn; the whispering wind,
The shuddering leaves, the hidden water-springs,
The work-song of the bees, whose honeyed wings
Hang in the golden tresses of the lime,
Or buried lie in purple beds of thyme.

WRITTEN ON CRAMOND BEACH.

p. 49

Farewell, old playmate! on thy sandy shore
My lingering feet will leave their print no more;
To thy loved side I never may return.
I pray thee, old companion, make due mourn
For the wild spirit who so oft has stood
Gazing in love and wonder on thy flood.
The form is now departing far away,
That half in anger oft, and half in play,
Thou hast pursued with thy white showers of foam.
Thy waters daily will besiege the home
I loved among the rocks; but there will be
No laughing cry, to hail thy victory,
Such as was wont to greet thee, when I fled,
With hurried footsteps, and averted head,
Like fallen monarch, from my venturous stand,
Chased by thy billows far along the sand.
And when at eventide thy warm waves drink
The amber clouds that in their bosom sink;
When sober twilight over thee has spread
Her purple pall, when the glad day is dead
My voice no more will mingle with the dirge
That rose in mighty moaning from thy surge,
Filling with awful harmony the air,
When thy vast soul and mine were joined in prayer.

p. 50

SONNET.

Away, away! bear me away, away,
Into the boundless void, thou mighty wind!
That rushest on thy midnight way,
And leav'st this weary world, far, far behind!
Away, away! bear me away, away,
To the wide strandless deep,
Ye headlong waters! whose mad eddies leap
From the pollution of your bed of clay!
Away, away, bear me away, away,
Into the fountains of eternal light,
Ye rosy clouds! that to my longing sight
Seem melting in the sun's devouring ray!
Away, away! oh, for some mighty blast,
To sweep this loathsome life into the past!

FRAGMENT.

p. 51

It was the harvest time: the broad, bright moon
Was at her full, and shone upon the fields
Where we had toiled the livelong day, to pile
In golden sheaves the earth's abundant treasure.
The harvest task had given place to song

And merry dance; and these in turn were chased
By legends strange, and wild, unearthly tales
Of elves, and gnomes, and fairy sprites, that haunt
The woods and caves; where they do sleep all day,
And then come forth i' the witching hour of night,
To dance by moonlight on the green thick sward.
The speaker was an aged villager,
In whom his oft-told tale awoke no fears,
Such as he filled his gaping listeners with.
Nor ever was there break in his discourse,
Save when with gray eyes lifted to the moon,
He conjured from the past strange instances
Of kidnapp'd infants, from their cradles snatch'd,
And changed for elvish sprites; of blights, and blains,
Sent on the cattle by the vengeful fairies;
Of blasted crops, maim'd limbs, and unsound minds,
All plagues inflicted by these angered sprites.
Then would he pause, and wash his story down
With long-drawn draughts of amber ale; while all
The rest came crowding under the wide oak tree,
Piling the corn sheaves closer round the ring,
Whispering and shaking, laughing too, with fear;
And ever, if an acorn bobb'd from the boughs,
Or grasshopper from out the stubble chirrup'd,
Blessing themselves from Robin Goodfellow!

p. 52

SONNET.

p. 53

Oft let me wander hand in hand with Thought,
In woodland paths, and lone sequester'd shades,
What time the sunny banks and mossy glades,
With dewy wreaths of early violets wrought,
Into the air their fragrant incense fling,
To greet the triumph of the youthful Spring.
Lo, where she comes! 'scaped from the icy lair
Of hoary Winter; wanton, free, and fair!
Now smile the heavens again upon the earth,
Bright hill, and bosky dell, resound with mirth,
And voices, full of laughter and wild glee,
Shout through the air pregnant with harmony;
And wake poor sobbing Echo, who replies
With sleepy voice, that softly, slowly dies.

SONNET.

p. 54

I would I knew the lady of thy heart!
She whom thou lov'st perchance, as I love thee,—
She unto whom thy thoughts and wishes flee;
Those thoughts, in which, alas! I bear no part.
Oh, I have sat and sighed, thinking how fair,
How passing beautiful, thy love must be;
Of mind how high, of modesty how rare;
And then I've wept, I've wept in agony!
Oh, that I might but once behold those eyes,
That to thy enamour'd gaze alone seem fair;
Once hear that voice, whose music still replies
To the fond vows thy passionate accents swear:
Oh, that I might but know the truth and die,
Nor live in this long dream of misery!

A PROMISE.

p. 55

By the pure spring, whose haunted waters flow
Through thy sequester'd dell unto the sea,

At sunny noon, I will appear to thee:
 Not troubling the still fount with drops of woe,
 As when I last took leave of it and thee,
 But gazing up at thee with tranquil brow,
 And eyes full of life's early happiness,
 Of strength, of hope, of joy, and tenderness.
 Beneath the shadowy tree, where thou and I
 Were wont to sit, studying the harmony
 Of gentle Shakspeare, and of Milton high,
 At sunny noon I will be heard by thee;
 Not sobbing forth each oft-repeated sound,
 As when I last faltered them o'er to thee,
 But uttering them in the air around,
 With youth's clear laughing voice of melody.
 On the wild shore of the eternal deep,
 Where we have stray'd so oft, and stood so long
 Watching the mighty waters conquering sweep,
 And listening to their loud triumphant song,
 At sunny noon, dearest! I'll be with thee:
 Not as when last I linger'd on the strand,
 Tracing our names on the inconstant sand;
 But in each bright thing that around shall be:
 My voice shall call thee from the ocean's breast,
 Thou'lt see my hair in its bright, showery crest,
 In its dark, rocky depths, thou'lt see my eyes,
 My form, shall be the light cloud in the skies,
 My spirit shall be with thee, warm and bright,
 And flood thee o'er with love, and life, and light.

p. 56

A PROMISE.

p. 57

In the dark, lonely night,
 When sleep and silence keep their watch o'er men;
 False love! in thy despite,
 I will be with thee then.
 When in the world of dreams thy spirit strays,
 Seeking, in vain, the peace it finds not here,
 Thou shalt be led back to thine early days
 Of life and love, and I will meet thee there.
 I'll come to thee, with the bright, sunny brow,
 That was Hope's throne before I met with thee;
 And then I'll show thee how 'tis furrowed now
 By the untimely age of misery.
 I'll speak to thee, in the fond, joyous tone,
 That wooed thee still with love's impassioned spell;
 And then I'll teach thee how I've learnt to moan,
 Since last upon thine ear its accents fell.
 I'll come to thee in all youth's brightest power,
 As on the day thy faith to mine was plighted,
 And then I'll tell thee weary hour by hour,
 How that spring's early promise has been blighted.
 I'll tell thee of the long, long, dreary years,
 That have passed o'er me hopeless, objectless;
 My loathsome days, my nights of burning tears,
 My wild despair, my utter loneliness,
 My heart-sick dreams upon my feverish bed,
 My fearful longing to be with the dead;—
 In the dark lonely night,
 When sleep and silence keep their watch o'er men;
 False love! in thy despite,
 We two shall meet again!

p. 58

SONNET.

p. 59

Spirit of all sweet sounds! who in mid air
 Sittest enthroned, vouchsafe to hear my prayer!
 Let all those instruments of music sweet,

That in great nature's hymn bear burthen meet,
Sing round this mossy pillow, where my head
From the bright noontide sky is sheltered.
Thou southern wind! wave, wave thy od'rous wings;
O'er your smooth channels gush, ye crystal springs!
Ye laughing elves! that through the rustling corn
Run chattering; thou tawny-coated bee,
Who at thy honey-work sing'st drowsily;
And ye, oh ye! who greet the dewy morn,
And fragrant eventide, with melody,
Ye wild wood minstrels, sing my lullaby!

TO ---

p. 60

I would I might be with thee, when the year
Begins to wane, and that thou walk'st alone
Upon the rocky strand, whilst loud and clear,
The autumn wind sings, from his cloudy throne,
Wild requiems for the summer that is gone.
Or when, in sad and contemplative mood,
Thy feet explore the leafy-paven wood:
I would my soul might reason then with thine,
Upon those themes most solemn and most strange,
Which every falling leaf and fading flower,
Whisper unto us with a voice divine;
Filling the brief space of one mortal hour,
With fearful thoughts of death, decay, and change,
And the high mystery of that after birth,
That comes to us, as well as to the earth.

SONNET.

p. 61

By jasper founts, whose falling waters make
Eternal music to the silent hours;
Or 'neath the gloom of solemn cypress bowers,
Through whose dark screen no prying sunbeams break:
How oft I dream I see thee wandering,
With thy majestic mien, and thoughtful eyes,
And lips, whereon all holy counsel lies,
And shining tresses of soft rippling gold,
Like to some shape beheld in days of old
By seer or prophet, when, as poets sing,
The gods had not forsaken yet the earth,
But loved to haunt each shady dell and grove;
When ev'ry breeze was the soft breath of love,
When the blue air rang with sweet sounds of mirth,
And this dark world seemed fair as at its birth.

THE VISION OF LIFE.

p. 62

Death and I,
On a hill so high,
Stood side by side:
And we saw below,
Running to and fro,
All things that be in the world so wide.

Ten thousand cries
From the gulf did rise,
With a wild discordant sound;
Laughter and wailing,
Prayer and railing,
As the ball spun round and round.

And over all

Hung a floating pall
Of dark and gory veils:
'Tis the blood of years,
And the sighs and tears,
Which this noisome marsh exhales.

All this did seem
Like a fearful dream,
Till Death cried with a joyful cry:
"Look down! look down!
It is all mine own,
Here comes life's pageant by!"

Like to a masque in ancient revelries,
With mingling sound of thousand harmonies,
Soft lute and viol, trumpet-blast and gong,
They came along, and still they came along!
Thousands, and tens of thousands, all that e'er
Peopled the earth, or ploughed th' unfathomed deep,
All that now breathe the universal air,
And all that in the womb of Time yet sleep.

Before this mighty host a woman came,
With hurried feet, and oft-averted head;
 With accursed light
 Her eyes were bright,
And with inviting hand them on she beckoned.
Her followed close, with wild acclaim,
Her servants three: Lust, with his eye of fire,
And burning lips, that tremble with desire,
Pale sunken cheek:—and as he staggered by,
The trumpet-blast was hush'd, and there arose
A melting strain of such soft melody,
As breath'd into the soul love's ecstasies and woes.
Loudly again the trumpet smote the air,
The double drum did roll, and to the sky
Bay'd War's bloodhounds, the deep artillery;
 And Glory,
 With feet all gory,
 And dazzling eyes, rushed by,
Waving a flashing sword and laurel wreath,
The pang, and the inheritance of death.

He pass'd like lightning—then ceased every sound
Of war triumphant, and of love's sweet song,
And all was silent—Creeping slow along,
With eager eyes, that wandered round and round,
Wild, haggard mien, and meagre, wasted frame,
Bow'd to the earth, pale, starving Av'rice came:
Clutching with palsied hands his golden god,
And tottering in the path the others trod.

 These, one by one,
 Came and were gone:
And after them followed the ceaseless stream
Of worshippers, who, with mad shout and scream,
Unhallow'd toil, and more unhallow'd mirth,
Follow their mistress, Pleasure, through the earth.
Death's eyeless sockets glared upon them all,
And many in the train were seen to fall,
Livid and cold, beneath his empty gaze;
But not for this was stay'd the mighty throng,
Nor ceased the warlike clang, or wanton lays,
But still they rush'd—along—along—along!

SONNET.

To a Lady who wrote under my likeness as Juliet, "Lieti giorni e felice."

Whence should they come, lady! those happy days
That thy fair hand and gentle heart invoke
Upon my head? Alas! such do not rise
On any, of the many, who with sighs
Bear through this journey-land of wo, life's yoke.

The light of such lives not in thine own lays;
Such were not hers, that girl, so fond, so fair,
Beneath whose image thou hast traced thy pray'r.
Evil, and few, upon this darksome earth,
Must be the days of all of mortal birth;
Then why not mine? Sweet lady! wish again,
Not more of joy to me, but less of pain;
Calm slumber, when life's troubled hours are past,
And with thy friendship cheer them while they last.

TO MY GUARDIAN ANGEL.

p. 66

Merciful spirit! who thy bright throne above
Hast left, to wander through this dismal earth
With me, poor child of sin!—Angel of love!
Whose guardian wings hung o'er me from my birth,
And who still walk'st unwearied by my side,
How oft, oh thou compassionate! must thou mourn
Over the wayward deeds, the thoughts of pride,
That thy pure eyes behold! Yet not aside
From thy sad task dost thou in anger turn;
But patiently, thou hast but gazed and sighed,
And followed still, striving with the divine
Powers of thy soul for mastery over mine;
And though all line of human hope be past,
Still fondly watching, hoping, to the last.

SONNET.

p. 67

Suggested by Sir Thomas Lawrence observing that we never dream of ourselves younger than we are.

Not in our dreams, not even in our dreams,
May we return to that sweet land of youth,
That home of hope, of innocence, and truth,
Which as we farther roam but fairer seems.
In that dim shadowy world, where the soul strays
When she has laid her mortal charge to rest,
We oft behold far future hours and days,
But ne'er live o'er the past, the happiest,
How oft will fancy's wild imaginings
Bear us in sleep to times and worlds unseen!
But ah! not e'en unfettered fancy's wings
Can lead us back to aught that we have been,
Or waft us to that smiling, sunny shore,
Which e'en in slumber we may tread no more.

SONNET.

p. 68

Whene'er I recollect the happy time
When you and I held converse dear together,
There come a thousand thoughts of sunny weather,
Of early blossoms, and the fresh year's prime;
Your memory lives for ever in my mind
With all the fragrant beauties of the spring,
With od'rous lime and silver hawthorn twined,
And many a noonday woodland wandering.
There's not a thought of you, but brings along
Some sunny dream of river, field, and sky;
'Tis wafted on the blackbird's sunset song,
Or some wild snatch of ancient melody.
And as I date it still, our love arose
'Twixt the last violet and the earliest rose.

Hail to thee, spirit of hope! whom men call Spring;
 Youngest and fairest of the four, who guide
 Our mortal year along Time's rapid tide.
 Spirit of life! the old decrepid earth
 Has heard thy voice, and at a wondrous birth,
 Forth springing from her dark, mysterious womb,
 A thousand germs of light and beauty come.
 Thy breath is on the waters, and they leap
 From their bright winter-woven fetters free;
 Along the shore their sparkling billows sweep,
 And greet thee with a gush of melody.
 The air is full of music, wild and sweet,
 Made by the joyous waving of the trees,
 Wherein a thousand winged minstrels meet,
 And by the work-song of the early bees,
 In the white blossoms fondly murmuring,
 And founts, that in the blessed sunshine sing;
 Hail to thee! maiden, with the bright blue eyes!
 And showery robe, all steeped in starry dew;
 Hail to thee! as thou ridest through the skies,
 Upon thy rainbow car of various hue.

p. 70

TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

How passing sad! Listen, it sings again!
 Art thou a spirit, that amongst the boughs,
 The livelong day dost chaunt that wond'rous strain
 Making wan Dian stoop her silver brows
 Out of the clouds to hear thee? Who shall say,
 Thou lone one! that thy melody is gay,
 Let him come listen now to that one note,
 That thou art pouring o'er and o'er again
 Through the sweet echoes of thy mellow throat,
 With such a sobbing sound of deep, deep pain,
 I prithee cease thy song! for from my heart
 Thou hast made memory's bitter waters start,
 And filled my weary eyes with the soul's rain.

SONNET.

p. 71

Lady, whom my beloved loves so well!
 When on his clasping arm thy head reclineth,
 When on thy lips his ardent kisses dwell,
 And the bright flood of burning light, that shineth
 In his dark eyes, is poured into thine;
 When thou shalt lie enfolded to his heart,
 In all the trusting helplessness of love;
 If in such joy sorrow can find a part,
 Oh, give one sigh unto a doom like mine!
 Which I would have thee pity, but not prove.
 One cold, calm, careless, wintry look, that fell
 Haply by chance on me, is all that he
 E'er gave my love; round that, my wild thoughts dwell
 In one eternal pang of memory.

TO ---

p. 72

When the dawn
 O'er hill and dale
 Throws her bright veil,

Oh, think of me!
When the rain
With starry showers
Fills all the flowers,
 Oh, think of me!
When the wind
Sweeps along,
Loud and strong,
 Oh, think of me!
When the laugh
With silver sound
Goes echoing round,
 Oh, think of me!
When the night
With solemn eyes
Looks from the skies,
 Oh, think of me!
When the air
Still as death
Holds its breath,
 Oh, think of me!
When the earth
Sleeping sound
Swings round and round,
 Oh, think of me!
When thy soul
O'er life's dark sea
Looks gloomily,
 Oh, think of me!

p. 73

WOMAN'S LOVE.

p. 74

A maiden meek, with solemn, steadfast eyes,
 Full of eternal constancy and faith,
And smiling lips, through whose soft portal sighs
 Truth's holy voice, with ev'ry balmy breath;
So journeys she along life's crowded way,
 Keeping her soul's sweet counsel from all sight;
Nor pomp, nor vanity, lead her astray,
 Nor aught that men call dazzling, fair, or bright:
For pity, sometimes, doth she pause, and stay
 Those whom she meeteth mourning, for her heart
 Knows well in suffering how to bear its part.
Patiently lives she through each dreary day,
 Looking with little hope unto the morrow;
And still she walketh hand in hand with sorrow.

TO MRS. ---

p. 75

I never shall forget thee—'tis a word
 Thou oft must hear, for surely there be none
 On whom thy wond'rous eyes have ever shone
But for a moment, or who e'er have heard
Thy voice's deep impassioned melody,
 Can lose the memory of that look or tone.
But, not as these, do I say unto thee,
 I never shall forget thee:—in thine eyes,
Whose light, like sunshine, makes the world rejoice,
 A stream of sad and solemn splendour lies;
And there is sorrow in thy gentle voice.
Thou art not like the scenes in which I found thee,
Thou art not like the beings that surround thee;
 To me, thou art a dream of hope and fear;
Yet why of fear?—oh sure! the Power that lent
Such gifts, to make thee fair, and excellent;
Still watches one whom it has deigned to bless
With such a dower of grace and loveliness;

Over the dangerous waves 'twill surely steer
The richly freighted bark, through storm and blast,
And guide it safely to the port at last.
Such is my prayer; 'tis warm as ever fell
From off my lips: accept it, and farewell!
And though in this strange world where first I met thee;
We meet no more—I never shall forget thee.

p. 76

AN ENTREATY.

p. 77

Once more, once more into the sunny fields
Oh, let me stray!
And drink the joy that young existence yields
In a bright, cloudless day.

Once more let me behold the summer sky,
With its blue eyes,
And join the wild wind's voice of melody,
As far and free it flies.

Once more, once more, oh let me stand and hear
The gushing spring,
As its bright drops fall starlike, fast and clear,
And in the sunshine sing.

Once more, oh let me list the soft sweet breeze
At evening mourn:
Let me, oh let me say farewell to these,
And to my task I gaily will return.

Oh, lovely earth! oh, blessed smiling sky!
Oh, music of the wood, the wave, the wind!
I do but linger till my ear and eye
Have traced ye on the tablets of my mind—

p. 78

And then, fare ye well!
Bright hill and bosky dell,
Clear spring and haunted well,
Night-blowing flowers pale,
Smooth lawn and lonely vale,
Sleeping lakes and sparkling fountains,
Shadowy woods and sheltering mountains,
Flowery land and sunny sky,
And echo sweet, my playmate shy;
Fare ye well!—fare ye well!

LINES FOR MUSIC.

p. 79

Loud wind, strong wind, where art thou blowing?
Into the air, the viewless air,
To be lost there:
There am I blowing.

Clear wave, swift wave, where art thou flowing?
Unto the sea, the boundless sea,
To be whelm'd there:
There am I flowing.

Young life, swift life, where art thou going?
Down to the grave, the loathsome grave,
To moulder there:
There am I going.

TO ---

p. 80

When the glad sun looks smiling from the sky,

Upon each shadowy glen and woody height,
And that you tread those well known paths where I
Have stray'd with you,—do not forget me quite.

When the warm hearth throws its bright glow around,
On many a smiling cheek, and glance of light,
And the gay laugh wakes with its joyous sound
The soul of mirth,—do not forget me quite.

You will not miss me; for with you remain
Hearts fond and warm, and spirits young and bright,
'Tis but one word—"farewell;" and all again
Will seem the same,—yet don't forget me quite.

THE PARTING.

p. 81

'Twas a fit hour for parting,
For athwart the leaden sky
The heavy clouds came gathering
And sailing gloomily:
The earth was drunk with heaven's tears,
And each moaning autumn breeze
Shook the burthen of its weeping
Off the overladen trees.
The waterfall rushed swollen down,
In the gloaming, still and gray;
With a foam-wreath on the angry brow
Of each wave that flashed away.
My tears were mingling with the rain,
That fell so cold and fast,
And my spirit felt thy low deep sigh
Through the wild and roaring blast.
The beauty of the summer woods
Lay rustling round our feet,
And all fair things had passed away—
'Twas an hour for parting meet.

SONG.

p. 82

When you mournfully rivet your tear-laden eyes,
That have seen the last sunset of hope pass away,
On some bright orb that seems, through the still sapphire skies,
In beauty and splendour to roll on its way:

Oh, remember this earth, if beheld from afar,
Appears wrapt in a halo as soft, and as bright,
As the pure silver radiance enshrining yon star,
Where your spirit is eagerly soaring to-night.

And at this very midnight, perhaps some poor heart,
That is aching, or breaking, in that distant sphere;
Gazes down on this dark world, and longs to depart
From its own dismal home, to a happier one here.

TO A STAR.

p. 83

Thou little star, that in the purple clouds
Hang'st, like a dew-drop, in a violet bed;
First gem of evening, glittering on the shrouds,
'Mid whose dark folds the day lies pale and dead:
As through my tears my soul looks up to thee,
Loathing the heavy chains that bind it here,
There comes a fearful thought that misery
Perhaps is found, even in thy distant sphere.
Art thou a world of sorrow and of sin,

The heritage of death, disease, decay,
A wilderness, like that we wander in,
Where all things fairest, soonest pass away?
And are there graves in thee, thou radiant world,
Round which life's sweetest buds fall witherèd,
Where hope's bright wings in the dark earth lie furled,
And living hearts are mouldering with the dead?
Perchance they do not die, that dwell in thee,
Perchance theirs is a darker doom than ours;
Unchanging woe, and endless misery,
And mourning that hath neither days nor hours.
Horrible dream!—Oh dark and dismal path,
Where I now weeping walk, I will not leave thee;
Earth has one boon for all her children—death:
Open thy arms, oh mother! and receive me!
Take off the bitter burthen from the slave,
Give me my birthright! give—the grave, the grave!

p. 84

SONNET.

p. 85

Thou poisonous laurel leaf, that in the soil
Of life, which I am doomed to till full sore,
Spring'st like a noisome weed! I do not toil
For thee, and yet thou still com'st dark'ning o'er
My plot of earth with thy unwelcome shade.
Thou nightshade of the soul, beneath whose boughs
All fair and gentle buds hang withering!
Why hast thou wreathed thyself around my brows,
Casting from thence the blossoms of my spring,
Breathing on youth's sweet roses till they fade?
Alas! thou art an evil weed of woe,
Watered with tears and watched with sleepless care,
Seldom doth envy thy green glories spare;
And yet men covet thee—ah, wherefore do they so!

SONNET.

p. 86

I hear a voice low in the sunset woods;
Listen, it says: "Decay, decay, decay!"
I hear it in the murmuring of the floods,
And the wind sighs it as it flies away.
Autumn is come; seest thou not in the skies,
The stormy light of his fierce lurid eyes?
Autumn is come; his brazen feet have trod,
Withering and scorching, o'er the mossy sod.
The fainting year sees her fresh flowery wreath
Shrivel in his hot grasp; his burning breath
Dries the sweet water-springs that in the shade
Wandering along, delicious music made.
A flood of glory hangs upon the world,
Summer's bright wings shining ere they are furled.

TO ---

p. 87

Is it a sin to wish that I may meet thee
In that dim world whither our spirits stray,
When sleep and darkness follow life and day?
Is it a sin, that there my voice should greet thee
With all that love that I must die concealing?
Will my tear-laden eyes sin in revealing
The agony that preys upon my soul?
Is't not enough through the long, loathsome day,
To hold each look, and word, in stern control?
May I not wish the staring sunlight gone,

Day and its thousand torturing moments done,
And prying sights and sounds of men away?
Oh, still and silent Night! when all things sleep,
Locked in thy swarthy breast my secret keep:
Come, with thy vision'd hopes and blessings now!
I dream the only happiness I know.

SONNET.

p. 88

Written at four o'clock in the morning, after a ball.

Oh, modest maiden morn! why dost thou blush,
Who thus betimes art walking in the sky?
'Tis I, whose cheek bears pleasure's sleepless flush,
Who shame to meet thy gray, cloud-lidded eye,
Shadowy, yet clear: from the bright eastern door,
Where the sun's shafts lie bound with thongs of fire,
Along the heaven's amber-pav'd floor,
The glad hours move, hymning their early choir.
O, fair and fragrant morn! upon my brow
Press thy fresh lips, shake from thy dropping hair
Cold showers of balmy dew on me, and ere
Day's chariot-wheels upon th' horizon glow,
Wrap me within thy sober cloak of gray,
And bear me to thy twilight bowers away.

LINES, In answer to a question.

p. 89

I'll tell thee why this weary world meseemeth
But as the visions light of one who dreameth,
Which pass like clouds, leaving no trace behind;
Why this strange life, so full of sin and folly,
In me awakeneth no melancholy,
Nor leaveth shade, or sadness, on my mind.
'Tis not that with an undiscerning eye
I see the pageant wild go dancing by,
Mistaking that which falsest is, for true;
'Tis not that pleasure hath entwined me,
'Tis not that sorrow hath enshrined me;
I bear no badge of roses or of rue,
But in the inmost chambers of my soul
There is another world, a blessed home,
O'er which no living power holdeth control,
Anigh to which ill things do never come.
There shineth the glad sunlight of clear thought,
With hope, and faith, holding communion high,
Over a fragrant land with flowers wrought,
Where gush the living springs of poesy;
There speak the voices that I love to hear,
There smile the glances that I love to see,
There live the forms of those my soul holds dear,
For ever, in that secret world, with me.
They who have walked with me along life's way,
And sever'd been by Fortune's adverse tide,
Who ne'er again, through Time's uncertain day,
In weal or woe, may wander by my side;
These all dwell here: nor these, whom life alone
Divideth from me, but the dead, the dead;
Those weary ones who to their rest are gone,
Whose footprints from the earth have vanish'd;
Here dwell they all: and here, within this world,
Like light within a summer sun cloud furled,
My spirit dwells. Therefore, this evil life,
With all its gilded snares, and fair deceivings,
Its wealth, its want, its pleasures, and its grievings,
Nor frights, nor frets me, by its idle strife.

p. 90

O thou! who readest, of thy courtesy,
Whoe'er thou art, I wish the same to thee!

A FAREWELL.

p. 91

I shall come no more to the Cedar Hall,
The fairies' palace beside the stream;
Where the yellow sun-rays at morning fall
Through their tresses dark, with a mellow gleam.

I shall tread no more the thick dewy lawn,
When the young moon hangs on the brow of night,
Nor see the morning, at early dawn,
Shake the fading stars from her robes of light.

I shall fly no more on my fiery steed,
O'er the springing sward,—through the twilight wood;
Nor reign my courser, and check my speed,
By the lonely grange, and the haunted flood.

At fragrant noon, I shall lie no more
'Neath the oak's broad shade, in the leafy dell:
The sun is set,—the day is o'er,—
The summer is past;—farewell!—farewell!

TO A PICTURE.

p. 92

Oh, serious eyes! how is it that the light,
The burning rays that mine pour into ye,
Still find ye cold, and dead, and dark, as night—
Oh, lifeless eyes! can ye not answer me?
Oh, lips! whereon mine own so often dwell,
Hath love's warm, fearful, thrilling touch, no spell
To waken sense in ye?—oh, misery!—
Oh, breathless lips! can ye not speak to me?
Thou soulless mimicry of life! my tears
Fall scalding over thee; in vain, in vain;
I press thee to my heart, whose hopes, and fears,
Are all thine own; thou dost not feel the strain.
Oh, thou dull image! wilt thou not reply
To my fond prayers and wild idolatry?

SONNET.

p. 93

There's not a fibre in my trembling frame
That does not vibrate when thy step draws near,
There's not a pulse that throbs not when I hear
Thy voice, thy breathing, nay, thy very name.
When thou art with me, every sense seems dull,
And all I am, or know, or feel, is thee;
My soul grows faint, my veins run liquid flame,
And my bewildered spirit seems to swim
In eddying whirls of passion, dizzily.
When thou art gone, there creeps into my heart
A cold and bitter consciousness of pain:
The light, the warmth of life, with thee depart,
And I sit dreaming o'er and o'er again
Thy greeting clasp, thy parting look, and tone;
And suddenly I wake—and am alone.

AN INVITATION.

p. 94

Come where the white waves dance along the shore
Of some lone isle, lost in the unknown seas;
Whose golden sands by mortal foot before
Were never printed,—where the fragrant breeze,
That never swept o'er land or flood that man
Could call his own, th' unearthly breeze shall fan
Our mingled tresses with its odorous sighs;
Where the eternal heaven's blue, sunny eyes
Did ne'er look down on human shapes of earth,
Or aught of mortal mould and death-doomed birth:
Come there with me; and when we are alone
In that enchanted desert, where the tone
Of earthly voice, or language, yet did ne'er
With its strange music startle the still air,
When clasped in thy upholding arms I stand,
Upon that bright world's coral-cradled strand,
When I can hide my face upon thy breast,
While thy heart answers mine together pressed,
Then fold me closer, bend thy head above me,
Listen—and I will tell thee how I love thee.

LINES FOR MUSIC.

p. 95

Oh, sunny Love!
Crowned with fresh flowering May,
Breath like the Indian clove,
Eyes like the dawn of day;
Oh, sunny Love!

Oh, fatal Love!
Thy robe wreath is nightshade all,
With gloomy cypress wove,
Thy kiss is bitter gall,
Oh, fatal Love!

SONG.

p. 96

Never, oh never more! shall I behold
Thy form so fair,
Or loosen from its braids the rippling gold
Of thy long hair.

Never, oh never more! shall I be blest
By thy voice low,
Or kiss, while thou art sleeping on my breast,
Thy marble brow.

Never, oh never more! shall I inhale
Thy fragrant sighs,
Or gaze, with fainting soul, upon the veil
Of thy bright eyes.

LINES ON A SLEEPING CHILD.

p. 97

Oh child! who to this evil world art come,
Led by the unseen hand of Him who guards thee,
Welcome unto this dungeon-house, thy home!
Welcome to all the woe this life awards thee!

Upon thy forehead yet the badge of sin
Hath worn no trace; thou look'st as though from heaven,
But pain, and guilt, and misery lie within;
Poor exile! from thy happy birth-land driven.

Thine eyes are sealed by the soft hand of sleep,
And like unruffled waves thy slumber seems;

The time's at hand when thou must wake to weep,
Or sleeping, walk a restless world of dreams.

How oft, as day by day life's burthen lies
Heavier and darker on thy fainting soul,
Wilt thou towards heaven turn thy weary eyes,
And long in bitterness to reach the goal!

How oft wilt thou, upon Time's flinty road,
Gaze at thy far off early days, in vain;
Weeping, how oft wilt thou cast down thy load,
And curse and pray, then take it up again!

How many times shall the fiend Hope, extend
Her poisonous chalice to thy thirsty lips!
How oft shall Love its withering sunshine lend,
To leave thee only a more dark eclipse!

How oft shall Sorrow strain thee in her grasp,—
How oft shall Sin laugh at thine overthrow—
How oft shall Doubt, Despair, and Anguish clasp
Their knotted arms around thine aching brow!

Oh, living soul, hail to thy narrow cage!
Spirit of light, hail to thy gloomy cave!
Welcome to longing youth, to loathing age,
Welcome, immortal! welcome to the grave!

p. 98

A RETROSPECT.

p. 99

Life wanes, and the bright sunlight of our youth
Sets o'er the mountain-tops, where once Hope stood.
Oh, Innocence! oh, Trustfulness! oh, Truth!
Where are ye all, white-handed sisterhood,
Who with me on my way did walk along,
Singing sweet scraps of that immortal song
That's hymn'd in Heaven, but hath no echo here?
Are ye departing, fellows bright and clear,
Of the young spirit, when it first alights
Upon this earth of darkness and dismay?
Farewell! fair children of th' eternal day,
Blossoms of that far land where fall no blights,
Sweet kindred of my exiled soul, farewell!
Here I must wander, here ye may not dwell;
Back to your home beyond the founts of light
I see ye fly, and I am wrapt in night!

AN INVOCATION.

p. 100

Spirit, bright spirit! from thy narrow cell
Answer me! answer me! oh, let me hear
Thy voice, and know that thou indeed art near!
That from the bonds in which thou'rt forced to dwell
Thou hast not broken free, thou art not fled,
Thou hast not pined away, thou art not dead.
Speak to me through thy prison bars; my life
With all things round, is one eternal strife,
'Mid whose wild din I pause to hear thy voice;
Speak to me, look on me, thou born of light!
That I may know thou'rt with me, and rejoice.
Shall not this weary warfare pass away?
Shall there not come a better, brighter day?
Shall not thy chain and mine be broken quite,
And thou to heaven spring,
With thine immortal wing,
And I, still following,
With steps that do not tire,
Reach my desire,
And to thy worship bring

p. 101

Some worthy offering?
Oh! let but these dark days be once gone by,
And thou, unwilling captive, that dost strain,
With tiptoe longing, vainly, towards the sky,
O'er the whole kingdom of my life shalt reign.
But, while I'm doomed beneath the yoke to bow,
Of sordid toiling in these caverns drear,
Oh, look upon me sometimes with thy brow
Of shining brightness; sometimes let me hear
Thy blessed voice, singing the songs of Heaven,
Whence thou and I, together have been driven;
Give me assurance that thou still art nigh,
Lest I sink down beneath my load, and die!

A LAMENT FOR THE WISSAHICCON.

p. 102

The waterfall is calling me
With its merry gleesome flow,
And the green boughs are beckoning me,
To where the wild flowers grow:

I may not go, I may not go,
To where the sunny waters flow,
To where the wild wood flowers blow;
I must stay here
In prison drear,
Oh, heavy life, wear on, wear on,
Would God that thou wert done!

The busy mill-wheel round and round
Goes turning, with its reckless sound,
And o'er the dam the wafers flow
Into the foaming stream below,
And deep and dark away they glide,
To meet the broad, bright river's tide;
And all the way
They murmuring say:
"Oh, child! why art thou far away?
Come back into the sun, and stray
Upon our mossy side!"

p. 103

I may not go, I may not go,
To where the gold-green waters run,
All shining in the summer sun,
And leap from off the dam below
Into a whirl of boiling snow,
Laughing and shouting as they go;
I must stay here
In prison drear,
Oh, heavy life, wear on, wear on,
Would God that thou wert done!

The soft spring wind goes passing by,
Into the forests wide and cool;
The clouds go trooping through the sky,
To look down on some glassy pool;
The sunshine makes the world rejoice,
And all of them, with gentle voice,
Call me away,
With them to stay,
The blessed, livelong summer's day.

I may not go, I may not go,
Where the sweet breathing spring winds blow,
Nor where the silver clouds go by,
Across the holy, deep blue sky,
Nor where the sunshine, warm and bright,
Comes down like a still shower of light;
I must stay here
In prison drear,
Oh, heavy life, wear on, wear on,
Would God that thou wert done!

p. 104

Oh, that I were a thing with wings!
A bird, that in a May-hedge sings!
A lonely heather bell that swings
 Upon some wild hill-side;
Or even a silly, senseless stone,
With dark, green, starry moss o'ergrown,
 Round which the waters glide.

TO THE WISSAHICCON.

p. 105

My feet shall tread no more thy mossy side,
 When once they turn away, thou *Pleasant Water*,
Nor ever more, reflected in thy tide,
 Will shine the eyes of the White Island's daughter.
But often in my dreams, when I am gone
 Beyond the sea that parts thy home and mine,
 Upon thy banks the evening sun will shine,
And I shall hear thy low, still flowing on.
And when the burden of existence lies
 Upon my soul, darkly and heavily,
I'll clasp my hands over my weary eyes,
 Thou *Pleasant Water*, and thy clear waves see.
Bright be thy course for ever and for ever,
 Child of pure mountain springs, and mountain snow;
And as thou wanderest on to meet the river
 Oh, still in light and music mayst thou flow!
I never shall come back to thee again,
When once my sail is shadowed on the main,
Nor ever shall I hear thy laughing voice
As on their rippling way thy waves rejoice,
Nor ever see the dark green cedar throw
Its gloomy shade o'er the clear depths below,
Never, from stony rifts of granite gray
Sparkling like diamond rocks in the sun's ray,
Shall I look down on thee, thou pleasant stream,
Beneath whose crystal folds the gold sands gleam;
Wherefore, farewell! but whensoe'er again
 The wintry spell melts from the earth and air;
And the young Spring comes dancing through thy glen,
 With fragrant, flowery breath, and sunny hair;
When through the snow the scarlet berries gleam,
Like jewels strewn upon thy banks, fair stream,
My spirit shall through many a summer's day
Return, among thy peaceful woods to stray.

p. 106

AN EVENING SONG.

p. 107

Good night, love!
May Heaven's brightest stars watch over thee!
Good angels spread their wings, and cover thee,
 And through the night,
 So dark and still,
 Spirits of light
 Charm thee from ill!
My heart is hovering round thy dwelling-place,
Good night, dear love! God bless thee with his grace!

Good night, love!
Soft lullabies the night-wind sing to thee!
And on its wings sweet odours bring to thee!
 And in thy dreaming
 May all things dear,
 With gentle seeming,
 Come smiling near!
My knees are bowed, my hands are clasped in prayer—
Good night, dear love! God keep thee in his care!

Mother, mother! my heart is wild,
 Hold me upon your bosom dear,
 Do not frown on your own poor child,
 Death is darkly drawing near.

Mother, mother! the bitter shame
 Eats into my very soul;
 And longing love, like a wrapping flame,
 Burns me away without control.

Mother, mother! upon my brow
 The clammy death-sweats coldly rise;
 How dim and strange your features grow
 Through the hot mist that veils my eyes!

Mother, mother! sing me the song
 They sing on sunny August eves,
 The rustling barley-fields along,
 Binding up the ripe, red sheaves.

Mother, mother! I do not hear
 Your voice—but his,—oh, guard me well!
 His breathing makes me faint with fear,
 His clasping arms are round me still.

p. 109

Mother, mother! unbind my vest,
 Upon my heart lies his first token:
 Now lay me in my narrow nest,
 Your withered blossom, crushed and broken.

IMPROMPTU.

You say you're glad I write—oh, say not so!
 My fount of song, dear friend, 's a bitter well;
 And when the numbers freely from it flow,
 'Tis that my heart, and eyes, o'erflow as well.

Castalia, fam'd of yore,—the spring divine,
 Apollo's smile upon its current wears:
 Moore and Anacreon, found its waves were wine,
 To me, it flows a sullen stream of tears.

WRITTEN AFTER LEAVING WEST POINT.**p. 110**

The hours are past, love,
 Oh, fled they not too fast, love!
 Those happy hours, when down the mountain side,
 We saw the rosy mists of morning glide,
 And, hand in hand, went forth upon our way,
 Full of young life and hope, to meet the day.

The hours are past, love,
 Oh, fled they not too fast, love!
 Those sunny hours, when from the mid-day heat,
 We sought the waterfall with loitering feet,
 And o'er the rocks that lock the gleaming pool,
 Crept down into its depths, so dark and cool.

The hours are past, love,
 Oh, fled they not too fast, love!
 Those solemn hours, when through the violet sky,
 Alike without a cloud, without a ray,
 The round red autumn moon came glowingly,
 While o'er the leaden waves our boat made way.

The hours are past, love,
 Oh, fled they not too fast, love!

p. 111

Those blessed hours, when the bright day was past,
And in the world we seemed to wake alone,
When heart to heart beat throbbingly, and fast,
And love was melting our two souls in one.

FAITH.

Better trust all, and be deceived,
And weep that trust, and that deceiving;
Than doubt one heart, that if believed,
Had blessed one's life with true believing.

Oh, in this mocking world, too fast
The doubting fiend o'ertakes our youth!
Better be cheated to the last,
Than loose the blessed hope of truth.

“'TIS AN OLD TALE AND OFTEN TOLD.”

p. 112

Are they indeed the bitterest tears we shed,
Those we let fall over the silent dead?
Can our thoughts image forth no darker doom,
Than that which wraps us in the peaceful tomb?
Whom have ye laid beneath that mossy grave,
Round which the slender, sunny, grass-blades wave?
Who are ye calling back to tread again
This weary walk of life? towards whom, in vain,
Are your fond eyes and yearning hearts upraised;
The young, the loved, the honoured, and the praised?
Come hither;—look upon the faded cheek
Of that still woman, who with eyelids meek
Veils her most mournful eyes;—upon her brow
Sometimes the sensitive blood will faintly glow,
When reckless hands her heart-wounds roughly tear,
But patience oftener sits palely there.
Beauty has left her—hope and joy have long
Fled from her heart, yet she is young, is *young*;
Has many years, as human tongues would tell,
Upon the face of this blank earth to dwell.
Looks she not sad? 'tis but a tale of old,
Told o'er and o'er, and ever to be told,
The hourly story of our every day,
Which when men hear, they sigh and turn away;
A tale too trite almost to find an ear,
A woe too common to deserve a tear.
She is the daughter of a distant land;—
Her kindred are far off;—her maiden hand,
Sought for by many, was obtained by one
Who owned a different birthland from her own.
But what reck'd she of that? as low she knelt
Breathing her marriage vows, her fond heart felt,
“For thee, I give up country, home, and friends;
Thy love for each, for all, shall make amends;”
And was she loved?—perishing by her side
The children of her bosom drooped and died;
The bitter life they drew from her cold breast
Flicker'd and failed; she laid them down to rest,
Two pale young blossoms in their early sleep,
And weeping said, “They have not lived to weep.”
And weeps she yet? no, to her weary eyes
The bliss of tears, her frozen heart denies;
Complaint, or sigh, breathes not upon her lips,
Her life is one dark, fatal, deep eclipse.
Lead *her* to the green grave where ye have laid
The creature that ye mourn;—let it be said,
“Here love, and youth, and beauty, are at rest!”
She only sadly murmurs, “Blest!—most blest!”
And turns from gazing, lest her misery

p. 113

p. 114

Should make her sin, and pray to Heaven to die.

FRAGMENT.
From an epistle written when the thermometer stood at
98° in the shade.

* * * * *

Oh! for the temperate airs that blow
Upon that darling of the sea,
Where neither sunshine, rain, nor snow,
For three days hold supremacy;
But ever-varying skies contend
The blessings of all climes to lend,
To make that tiny, wave-rocked isle,
In never-fading beauty smile.
England, oh England! for the breeze
That slowly stirs thy forest-trees!
Thy ferny brooks, thy mossy fountains,
Thy beechen woods, thy heathery mountains,
Thy lawny uplands, where the shadow
Of many a giant oak is sleeping;
The tangled copse, the sunny meadow,
Through which the summer rills run weeping.
Oh, land of flowers! while sinking here
Beneath the dog-star of the West,
The music of the waves I hear
That cradle thee upon their breast.
Fresh o'er thy rippling corn-fields fly
The wild-winged breezes of the sea,
While from thy smiling, summer sky,
The ripening sun looks tenderly.
And thou—to whom through all this heat
My parboiled thoughts will fondly turn,
Oh! in what "shady blest retreat"
Art thou ensconced, while here I burn?
Across the lawn, in the deep glade,
Where hand in hand we oft have strayed,
Or communed sweetly, side by side,
Hear'st thou the chiming ocean tide,
As gently on the pebbly beach
It lays its head, then ebbs away,
Or round the rocks, with nearer reach,
Throws up a cloud of silvery spray?
Or to the firry woods, that shed
Their spicy odours to the sun,
Goest thou with meditative tread,
Thinking of all things that are done
Beneath the sky?—a great, big thought,
Of which I know you're very fond.
For me, my mind is solely wrought
To this one wish:—O! in a pond
Would I were over head and ears!
(Of a *cold* ducking I've no fears)
Or any where, where I am not;
For, bless the heat! it is too hot!

p. 115

p. 116

AN APOLOGY.

Blame not my tears, love: to you has been given
The brightest, best gift, God to mortals allows;
The sunlight of hope on your heart shines from Heaven,
And shines from your heart, on this life and its woes.

Blame not my tears, love: on you her best treasure
Kind nature has lavish'd, oh, long be it yours!
For how barren soe'er be the path you now measure,

p. 117

The future still woos you with hands full of flowers.

Oh, ne'er be that gift, love, withdrawn from thy keeping!
The jewel of life, its strong spirit, its wings;
If thou ever must weep, may it shine through thy weeping,
As the sun his warm rays through a spring shower flings.

But blame not my tears, love: to me 'twas denied;
And when fate to my lips gave this life's mingled cup,
She had filled to the brim, from the dark bitter tide,
And forgotten to pour in the only sweet drop.

WRITTEN AFTER SPENDING A DAY AT WEST POINT.

p. 118

Were they but dreams? Upon the darkening world
Evening comes down, the wings of fire are furled,
On which the day soared to the sunny west:
The moon sits calmly, like a soul at rest,
Looking upon the never-resting earth;
All things in heaven wait on the solemn birth
Of night, but where has fled the happy dream
That at this hour, last night, our life did seem?
Where are the mountains with their tangled hair,
The leafy hollow, and the rocky stair?
Where are the shadows of the solemn hills,
And the fresh music of the summer rills?
Where are the wood-paths, winding, long and steep,
And the great, glorious river, broad and deep,
And the thick copses, where soft breezes meet,
And the wild torrent's snowy, leaping feet,
The rustling, rocking boughs, the running streams,—
Where are they all? gone, gone! were they but dreams?
And where, oh where are the light footsteps gone,
That from the mountain-side came dancing down?
The voices full of mirth, the loving eyes,
The happy hearts, the human paradise,
The youth, the love, the life that revelled here,—
Are they too gone?—Upon Time's shadowy bier,
The pale, cold hours of joys now past, are laid,
Perhaps, not soon from memory's gaze to fade,
But never to be reckoned o'er again,
In all life's future store of bliss and pain.
From the bright eyes the sunshine may depart,
Youth flies—love dies—and from the joyous heart
Hope's gushing fountain ebbs too soon away,
Nor spares one drop for that disastrous day,
When from the barren waste of after life,
The weariness, the worldliness, the strife,
The soul looks o'er the desert of its way
To the green gardens of its early day:
The paradise, for which we vainly mourn,
The heaven, to which our ling'ring eyes still turn,
To which our footsteps never shall return.

p. 119

SONG.

p. 120

Pass thy hand through my hair, love;
One little year ago,
In a curtain bright and rare, love,
It fell golden o'er my brow.
But the gold has passed away, love,
And the drooping curls are thin,
And cold threads of wintry gray, love,
Glitter their folds within:
How should this be, in one short year?
It is not age—can it be care?

Fasten thine eyes on mine, love;
One little year ago,

Midsummer's sunny shine, love,
Had not a warmer glow.
But the light is there no more, love,
Save in melancholy gleams,
Like wan moonlight wand'ring o'er, love,
Dim lands in troubled dreams:
How should this be, in one short year?
It is not age—can it be care?

Lay thy cheek to my cheek, love,
One little year ago
It was ripe, and round, and sleek, love,
As the autumn peaches grow.
But the rosy hue has fled, love,
Save a flush that goes and comes,
Like a flow'r born from the dead, love,
And blooming over tombs:
How should this be, in one short year?
It is not age—can it be care?

p. 121

TO MRS. DULANEY.

p. 122

What was thine errand here?
Thy beauty was more exquisite than aught
That from this marred earth
Takes its imperfect birth;
It was a radiant, heavenly beauty, caught
From some far higher sphere,
And though an angel now, thou still must bear
The lovely semblance that thou here didst wear.

What was thine errand here?
Thy gentle thoughts, and holy, humble mind,
With earthly creatures coarse,
Held not discourse,
But with fine spirits, of some purer kind,
Dwelt in communion dear;
And sure they speak to thee that language now,
Which thou wert wont to speak to us below.

What was thine errand here?
To adorn anguish, and ennoble death,
And make infirmity
A patient victory,
And crown life's baseness with a glorious wreath,
That fades not on thy bier,
But fits, immortal soul! thy triumph still,
In that bright world where thou art gone to dwell.

p. 123

IMPROMPTU, Written among the ruins of the Sonnenberg.

Thou who within thyself dost not behold
Ruins as great as these, though not as old,
Can'st scarce through life have travelled many a year,
Or lack'st the spirit of a pilgrim here.
Youth hath its walls of strength, its towers of pride;
Love, its warm hearth-stones; Hope, its prospects wide;
Life's fortress in thee, held these one, and all,
And they have fallen to ruin, or shall fall.

LINES,
Addressed to the Young Gentlemen leaving the Academy at
Lenox, Massachusetts.

p. 124

Life is before ye—and while now ye stand
Eager to spring upon the promised land,
Fair smiles the way, where yet your feet have trod
But few light steps, upon a flowery sod;
Round ye are youth's green bowers, and to your eyes
Th' horizon's line joins earth with the bright skies;
Daring and triumph, pleasure, fame, and joy,
Friendship unwavering, love without alloy,
Brave thoughts of noble deeds, and glory won,
Like angels, beckon ye to venture on.
And if o'er the bright scene some shadows rise,
Far off they seem, at hand the sunshine lies;
The distant clouds, which of ye pause to fear?
Shall not a brightness gild them when more near?
Dismay and doubt ye know not, for the power
Of youth is strong within ye at this hour,
And the great mortal conflict seems to ye
Not so much strife as certain victory—
A glory ending in eternity.

p. 125

Life is before ye—oh! if ye could look
Into the secrets of that seal'd book,
Strong as ye are in youth, and hope, and faith,
Ye should sink down, and falter, "Give us death!"
Could the dread Sphinx's lips but once disclose,
And utter but a whisper of the woes
Which must o'ertake ye, in your lifelong doom,
Well might ye cry, "Our cradle be our tomb!"
Could ye foresee your spirit's broken wings,
Earth's brightest triumphs what despis'd things,
Friendship how feeble, love how fierce a flame,
Your joy half sorrow, half your glory shame,
Hollowness, weariness, and, worst of all,
Self-scorn that pities not its own deep fall,
Fast gathering darkness, and fast waning light,—
Oh could ye see it all, ye might, ye might
Cower in the dust, unequal to the strife,
And die, but in beholding what is life.

Life is before ye—from the fated road
Ye cannot turn: then take ye up your load.
Not yours to tread, or leave the unknown way,
Ye must go o'er it, meet ye what ye may.
Gird up your souls within ye to the deed,
Angels, and fellow-spirits, bid ye speed!
What though the brightness dim, the pleasure fade,
The glory wane,—oh! not of these is made
The awful life that to your trust is given.
Children of God! inheritors of heaven!
Mourn not the perishing of each fair toy,
Ye were ordained to do, not to enjoy,
To suffer, which is nobler than to dare;
A sacred burthen is this life ye bear,
Look on it, lift it, bear it solemnly,
Stand up and walk beneath it steadfastly;
Fail not for sorrow, falter not for sin,
But onward, upward, till the goal ye win;
God guard ye, and God guide ye on your way,
Young pilgrim warriors who set forth to-day!

p. 126

THE PRAYER OF A LONELY HEART.

p. 127

I am alone—oh be thou near to me,
Great God! from whom the meanest are not far.
Not in presumption of the daring spirit,
Striving to find the secrets of itself,
Make I my weeping prayer; in the deep want
Of utter loneliness, my God! I seek thee;
If the worm may creep up to thy fellowship,
Or dust, instinct with yearning, rise towards thee.
I have no fellow, Father! of my kind;
None that be kindred, none companion to me,

And the vast love, and harmony, and brotherhood,
 Of the dumb creatures thou hast made below me,
 Vexes my soul with its own bitter lot.
 Around me grow the trees, each by the other;
 Innumerable leaves, each like the other,
 Whisper and breathe, and live and move together.
 Around me spring the flowers; each rosy cup
 Hath sisters, leaning their fair cheeks against it.
 The birds fly all above me; not alone,
 But coupled in free fellowship, or mustering
 A joyous band, weeping in companies
 The wide blue fields between the clouds;—the clouds
 Troop in society, each on the other
 Shedding, like sympathy, reflected light.
 The waves, a multitude, together run
 To the great breast of the receiving sea:
 Nothing but hath its kind, its company,
 Oh God! save I alone! then, let me come,
 Good Father! to thy feet, when even as now,
 Tears, that no human hand is near to wipe,
 O'erbrim my eyes, oh wipe them, thou, my Father!
 When in my heart the stores of its affections,
 Piled up unused, locked fast, are like to burst
 The fleshly casket, that may not contain them,
 Let me come nigh to thee;—accept thou them,
 Dear Father!—Fount of Love! Compassionate God!
 When in my spirit burns the fire, the power,
 That have made men utter the words of angels,
 And none are near to bid me speak and live:
 Harken, oh Father! Maker of my spirit!
 God of my soul, to thee I will outpour
 The hymns resounding through my troubled mind,
 The sighs and sorrows of my lonely heart,
 The tears, and weeping, of my weary eyes:
 Be thou my fellow, glorious, gracious God!
 And fit me for such fellowship with thee!

p. 128

ABSENCE.

p. 129

What shall I do with all the days and hours
 That must be counted ere I see thy face?
 How shall I charm the interval that lowers
 Between this time and that sweet time of grace?

Shall I in slumber steep each weary sense,
 Weary with longing?—shall I flee away
 Into past days, and with some fond pretence
 Cheat myself to forget the present day?

Shall love for thee lay on my soul the sin
 Of casting from me God's great gift of time;
 Shall I these mists of memory locked within,
 Leave, and forget, life's purposes sublime?

Oh! how, or by what means, may I contrive
 To bring the hour that brings thee back more near?
 How may I teach my drooping hope to live
 Until that blessed time, and thou art here?

I'll tell thee: for thy sake, I will lay hold
 Of all good aims, and consecrate to thee,
 In worthy deeds, each moment that is told
 While thou, beloved one! art far from me.

p. 130

For thee I will arouse my thoughts to try
 All heavenward flights, all high and holy strains;
 For thy dear sake I will walk patiently
 Through these long hours, nor call their minutes pains.

I will this dreary blank of absence make
 A noble task time, and will therein strive
 To follow excellence, and to o'ertake
 More good than I have won, since yet I live.

So may this doomed time build up in me
A thousand graces which shall thus be thine;
So may my love and longing hallowed be,
And thy dear thought an influence divine.

RETURN.

p. 131

When the bright sun back on his yearly road
Comes towards us, his great glory seems to me,
As from the sky he pours it all abroad,
A golden herald, my beloved, of thee.

When from the south the gentle winds do blow,
Calling the flowers that sleep beneath the earth,
It sounds like sweetest music, that doth go
Before thy coming, full of love and mirth.

When one by one the violets appear,
Opening their purple vests so modestly,
To greet the virgin daughter of the year,
Each seems a fragrant prophecy of thee.

For with the spring thou shalt return again;
Therefore the wind, the flower, and clear sunshine,
A double worship from my heart obtain,
A love and welcome not their own, but thine.

LINES, Written in London.

p. 132

Struggle not with thy life!—the heavy doom
Resist not, it will bow thee like a slave:
Strive not! thou shalt not conquer; to thy tomb
Thou shalt go crushed, and ground, though ne'er so brave.

Complain not of thy life!—for what art thou
More than thy fellows, that thou should'st not weep?
Brave thoughts still lodge beneath a furrowed brow,
And the way-wearied have the sweetest sleep.

Marvel not at thy life!—patience shall see
The perfect work of wisdom to her given;
Hold fast thy soul through this high mystery,
And it shall lead thee to the gates of heaven.

TO ---

p. 133

What recks the sun, how weep the heavy flowers
All the sad night, when he is far away?
What recks he, how they mourn, through those dark hours,
Till back again he leads the smiling day?

As lifts each watery bloom its tearful eye,
And blesses from its lowly seat, the god,
In his great glory he goes through the sky,
And recks not of the blessing from the sod.

And what is it to thee, oh, thou, my fate!
That all my hope, and joy, remains with thee?
That thy departing, leaves me desolate,
That thy returning, brings back life to me?

I blame not thee, for all the strife, and woe,
That for thy sake daily disturbs my life;
I blame not thee, that Heaven has made me so,
That all the love I can, is woe, and strife.

I blame not thee, that I may ne'er impart
 The tempest, and the death, and the despair,
 That words, and looks, of thine make in my heart,
 And turn by turn, riot and stagnate there.

Oh! I have found my sin's sharp scourge in thee,
 For loving thee, as one should love but Heaven;
 Therefore, oh, thou beloved! I blame not thee,
 But by my anguish hope to be forgiven.

TO ---

The fountain of my life, which flowed so free,
 The plenteous waves, which brimming gushed along,
 Bright, deep, and swift, with a perpetual song,
 Doubtless have long since seemed dried up to thee:
 How should they not? from the shrunk, narrow bed,
 Where once that glory flowed, have ebbed away
 Light, life, and motion, and along its way
 The dull stream slowly creeps a shallow thread,—
 Yet, at the hidden source, if hands unblest
 Disturb the wells whence that sad stream takes birth,
 The swollen waters once again gush forth,
 Dark, bitter floods, rolling in wild unrest.

EPISTLE FROM THE RHINE. To Y---, with a bowl of Bohemian glass.

p. 135

From rocky hills, where climbs the vine;
 Where on his waves the wandering Rhine
 Sees imaged ruins, towns and towers,
 Bare mountain scalps, green forest bowers;
 From that broad land of poetry,
 Wild legend, noble history,
 This token many a day bore I,
 To lay it at your feet, dear Y---.

Little the stupid bowl will tell
 Of all that on its way befell,
 Since from old Frankfort's free domain,
 Where smiling vineyards skirt the main,
 It took its way; what sunsets red
 Their splendours o'er the mountains shed,
 How the blue Taunus' distant height
 Like hills of fire gave back the light,
 And how, on river, rock, and sky,
 The sun declined so tenderly,
 That o'er the scene white moonlight fell,
 Ere we had bid the day farewell.
 From Maintz, where many a warrior priest
 Was wont of yore to fight and feast,
 The broad stream bore us down its tide,
 Till where upon its steeper side,
 Grim Ehrenfels, with turrets brown,
 On Hatto's wave-worn tower looks down.
 Here did we rest,—my dearest Y---,
 This bowl could all as well as I,
 Describe that scene, when in the deep,
 Still, middle night, all wrapped in sleep,
 The hamlet lone, the dark blue sky,
 The eddying river sweeping by,
 Lay 'neath the clear unclouded light
 Of the full moon: broad, brimming, bright,
 The glorious flood went rolling by
 Its world of waves, while silently
 The shaggy hills on either side,
 Watched like huge giants by the tide.
 From where the savage bishop's tower

p. 136

Obstructs the flood, a sullen roar
 Broke on the stillness of the night,
 And the rough waters, yeasty white,
 Foamed round that whirlpool dread and deep,
 Where still thy voice is heard to weep,
 Gisela! maiden most unblest,
 Thou Jephtha's daughter of the West!
 Who shall recall the shadowy train
 That, in the magic light, my brain
 Conjured upon the glassy wave,
 From castle, convent, crag and cave?
 Down swept the Lord of Allemain,
 Broad-browed, deep-chested Charlemagne,
 And his fair child, who tottering bore
 Her lover o'er the treacherous floor
 Of new-fallen snow, that her small feet
 Alone might print that tell-tale sheet,
 Nor other trace show the stern guard,
 The nightly path of Eginhard.
 What waving plumes and banners passed,
 With trumpet clang and bugle blast,
 And on the night-wind faintly borne,
 Strains from that mighty hunting-horn,
 Which through these woods, in other days,
 Startled the echoes of the chase.
 On trooped the vision; lord and dame,
 On fiery steed and palfrey tame,
 Pilgrims, with palms and cockle-shells,
 And motley fools, with cap and bells,
 Princes and Counties Palatine,
 Who ruled and revelled on the Rhine,
 Abbot and monk, with many a torch,
 Came winding from each convent porch;
 And holy maids from Nonnenwerth,
 In the pale moonlight all came forth;
 Thy love, Roland, among the rest,
 Her meek hands folded on her breast,
 Her sad eyes turned to heaven, where thou
 Once more shalt hear love's early vow,—
 That vow, which led thee home again
 From Roncevalles' bloody plain,—
 That vow, that ne'er again was spoken
 Till death the nun's drear oath had broken.
 Down from each crumbling castle poured,
 Of ruthless robber-knights, the horde,
 Sweeping with clang and clamour by,
 Like storm-cloud rattling through the sky:
 Pageant so glorious ne'er, I ween,
 On lonely river bank was seen.

p. 137

So passed that night: but with the day
 The vision melted all away;
 And wrapped in sullen mist and rain,
 The river bore us on again,
 With heavy hearts and tearful eyes,
 That answered well the weeping skies
 Of autumn, which now hung o'er all
 The scene their leaden, dropping pall,
 Beneath whose dark gray veils, once more
 We hailed our native Albion's shore,
 Our pilgrimage of pleasure o'er.

p. 138

p. 139

LINES FOR MUSIC.

Good night! from music's softest spell
 Go to thy dreams: and in thy slumbers,
 Fairies, with magic harp and shell,
 Sing o'er to thee thy own sweet numbers.

Good night! from Hope's intense desire
 Go to thy dreams: and may to-morrow,
 Love with the sun returning, fire

These evening mists of doubt and sorrow.

Good night! from hours of weary waking
I'll to my dreams: still in my sleep
To feel the spirit's restless aching,
And ev'n with eyelids closed, to weep.

SONNET.

p. 140

Say thou not sadly, "never," and "no more,"
But from thy lips banish those falsest words;
While life remains that which was thine before
Again may be thine; in Time's storehouse lie
Days, hours, and moments, that have unknown hoards
Of joy, as well as sorrow: passing by,
Smiles, come with tears; therefore with hopeful eye
Look thou on dear things, though they turn away,
For thou and they, perchance, some future day
Shall meet again, and the gone bliss return;
For its departure then make thou no mourn,
But with stout heart bid what thou lov'st farewell;
That which the past hath given the future gives as well.

SONNET.

Though thou return unto the former things,
Fields, woods, and gardens, where thy feet have strayed
In other days, and not a bough, branch, blade
Of tree, or meadow, but the same appears
As when thou lovedst them in former years,
They shall not *seem* the same; the spirit brings
Change from the inward, though the outward be
E'en as it was, when thou didst weep to see
It last, and spak'st that prophecy of pain,
"Farewell! I shall not look on ye again!"
And so thou never didst—no, though e'en now
Thine eyes behold all they so loved of yore,
The *Thou* that did behold them then, no more
Lives in this world, it is another Thou.

p. 141

SONNET.

Like one who walketh in a plenteous land,
By flowing waters, under shady trees,
Through sunny meadows, where the summer bees
Feed in the thyme and clover; on each hand
Fair gardens lying, where of fruit and flower
The bounteous season hath poured out its dower:
Where saffron skies roof in the earth with light,
And birds sing thankfully towards Heaven, while he
With a sad heart walks through this jubilee,
Beholding how beyond this happy land,
Stretches a thirsty desert of gray sand,
Where all the air is one thick, leaden blight,
Where all things dwarf and dwindle,—so walk I,
Through my rich, present life, to what beyond doth lie.

p. 142

SONNET.

BlaspHEME not thou thy sacred life, nor turn
O'er joys that God hath for a season lent,

Perchance to try thy spirit, and its bent,
Effeminate soul and base! weakly to mourn.
There lies no desert in the land of life,
For e'en that tract that barrenest doth seem,
Labour'd of thee in faith and hope, shall teem
With heavenly harvests and rich gatherings, rife.
Haply no more, music, and mirth and love,
And glorious things of old and younger art,
Shall of thy days make one perpetual feast;
But when these bright companions all depart,
Lay thou thy head upon the ample breast
Of Hope, and thou shalt hear the angels sing above.

p. 143

SONNET.

But to be still! oh, but to cease awhile
The panting breath and hurrying steps of life,
The sights, the sounds, the struggle, and the strife
Of hourly being; the sharp biting file
Of action, fretting on the tightened chain
Of rough existence; all that is not pain,
But utter weariness; oh! to be free
But for a while from conscious entity!
To shut the banging doors and windows wide,
Of restless sense, and let the soul abide
Darkly and stilly, for a little space,
Gathering its strength up to pursue the race;
Oh, Heavens! to rest a moment, but to rest
From this quick, gasping life, were to be blest!

SONNET.

p. 144

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

London: STEWART and MURRAY, Old Bailey.

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