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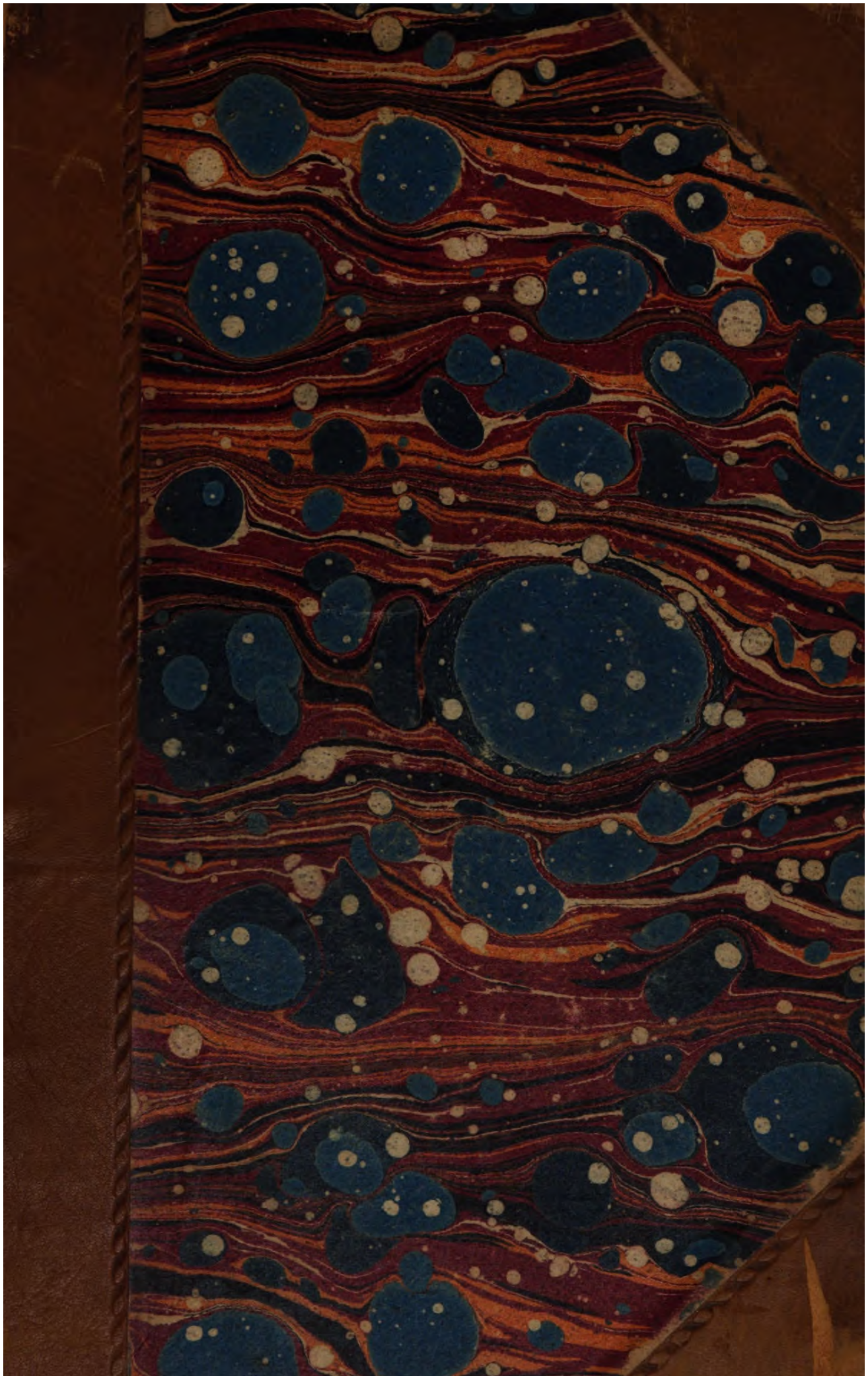
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**POEMS,
LEGENDARY AND HISTORICAL.**

P O E M S,
LEGENDARY AND HISTORICAL.

BY

RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES.

A NEW EDITION.



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TO

THE RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE,

THIS EDITION OF

LEGENDARY AND HISTORICAL POEMS

Is Dedicated,

WITH MUCH RESPECT AND SINCERE REGARD.

Amid the factions of the field of life
The Poet held his little neutral ground,
And they who mixed the deepest in the strife
Their evening way to his seclusion found.

There, meeting oft the antagonists of the day,
Who near in mute defiance seemed to stand,
He said what neither would be first to say,
And, having spoken, left them hand in hand.

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POEMS,
LEGENDARY AND HISTORICAL.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

THE windows and the garden door
Must now be closed for night,
And you, my little girl, no more
Can watch the snow-flakes white
Fall, like a silver net, before
The face of dying light.

Draw down the curtains every fold,
Let not a gap let in the cold,
Bring your low seat toward the fire,
And you shall have your heart's desire ;
A story of that favourite book
In which you often steal a look,

Regretful not to understand
Words of a distant time and land ;—
That small square book that seems so old
In tawny white and faded gold,
And which I could not leave to-day,
Even with the snow and you to play.—
It was on such a night as this,
 Six hundred years ago,
The wind as loud and pitiless,
 As loaded with the snow,
A night when you might start to meet
A friend in an accustomed street,
That a lone child went up and down
The pathways of an ancient town.
A little child, just such as you,
With eyes, though clouded, just as blue,
With just such long fine golden hair,
But wet and rough for want of care,
And just such tender tottering feet
Bare to the cold and stony street.

Alone ! this fragile human flower,
Alone ! at this unsightly hour,
A playful, joyful, peaceful form,
 A creature of delight,
Become companion of the storm,
 And phantom of the night !
No gentler thing is near,—in vain

Its warm tears meet the frozen rain,
No watchful ears await its cries
On every name that well supplies
The childly nature with a sense
Of love and care and confidence ;
It looks before, it looks behind,
And staggers with the weighty wind,
Till, terror overpowering grief,
And feeble as an autumn leaf,
It passes down the tide of air,
It knows not, thinks not, how or where.

Beneath a carven porch, before
An iron-belted oaken door,
The tempest drives the cowering child,
And rages on as hard and wild.
This is not shelter, though the sleet
Strikes heavier in the open street,
For, to that infant ear, a din
Of festive merriment within
Comes, by the contrast, sadder far
Than all the outer windy war,
With something cruel, something curst,
In each repeated laughter-burst ;
A thread of constant cheerful light,
Drawn through the crevice on the sight,
Tells it of heat it cannot feel,

And all the fire-side bliss
That home's dear portals can reveal
On such a night as this.
How can those hands so small and frail,
Empassioned as they will, avail
Against that banded wall of wood
Standing in senseless hardihood
Between the warmth and love and mirth,
The comforts of the living earth,
And the lorn creature shivering there,
The plaything of the savage air ?

We would not, of our own good will,
Believe in so much strength of ill,
Believe that life and sense are given
To any being under Heaven
Only to weep and suffer thus,
To suffer without sin
What would be for the worst of us
A bitter discipline.

Yet now the tiny hands no more
Are striking that unfeeling door ;
Folded and quietly they rest,
As on a cherub's marble breast ;
And from the guileless lips of woe
Are passing words confused and low,
Remembered fragments of a prayer,

Learned and repeated elsewhere,
With the blue summer overhead,
 On a sweet mother's knee,
Beside the downy cradle-bed,
 But always happily.

Though for those holy words the storm
Relaxes not its angry form,
The child no longer stands alone
Upon the inhospitable stone :
There now are two,—one to the other
Like as a brother to twin-brother,
But the new-comer has an air
Of something wonderful and rare,
Something divinely calm and mild,
Something beyond a human child :
His eyes come through the thickening night
With a soft planetary light,
And from his hair there falls below
A radiance on the drifting snow,
And his untarnished childly bloom
Seems but the brighter for the gloom.

See what a smile of gentle grace
Expatiates slowly o'er his face !
As, with a mien of soft command,

He takes that numbed and squalid hand,
And with a voice of simple joy
And greeting as from boy to boy,
He speaks, "What do you at this door?
Why called you not on me before?
What like you best? that I should break
This sturdy barrier for your sake,
And let you in that you may share
The warmth and joy and cheerful fare;—
Or will you trust to me alone,
And heeding not the windy moan
Nor the cold rain nor lightning-brand,
Go forward with me, hand in hand?
Within this house, if e'er on earth,
You will find love and peace and mirth;
And there may rest for many a day,
While I am on mine open way;
And should your heart to me incline,
 When I am gone,
Take you this little cross of mine
 To lean upon,
And setting out what path you will,
Careless of your own strength and skill,
You soon will find me; only say,
What wish you most to do to-day?"
The child looks out into the night,

With gaze of pain and pale affright,
Then turns an eye of keen desire
On the thin gleam of inward fire,
Then rests a long and silent while,
Upon that brother's glorious smile.
—You've seen the subtle magnet draw
The iron by its hidden law,
So seems that smile to lure along
The child from an enclosing throng
Of fears and fancies undefined,
And to one passion fix its mind,—
Till every struggling doubt to check
 And give to love its due,
It casts its arms about his neck,
 And cries "With you, with you,—
For you have sung me many a song,
Like mine own mother's, all night long,
And you have play'd with me in dreams,
Along the walks, beside the streams,
Of Paradise,—the blessèd bowers,
Where what men call the stars are flowers,
And what to them looks deep and blue
Is but a veil which we saw through,
Into the garden without end,
Where you the angel-children tend :
So that they asked me when I woke,
Where I had been, to whom I spoke,

What I was doing there, to seem
So heavenly-happy in my dream ?

Oh ! take me, take me, there again,
Out of the cold and wind and rain,
Out of this dark and cruel town,
Whose houses on the orphan frown ;
Bear me the thundering clouds above
To the safe kingdom of your love :
Or if you will not, I can go
With you barefooted through the snow ;—
I shall not feel the bitter blast,
If you will take me home at last.”

Three kisses on its dead-cold cheeks,—
Three on its bloodless brow,—
And a clear answering music speaks,
“ Sweet brother ! come there now :
It shall be so ; there is no dread
Within the aureole of mine head ;
This hand in yours, this living hand,
Can all the world of cold withstand,
And, though so small, is strong to lift
Your feet above the thickest drift ;
The wind that round you raged and broke
Shall fold about us like a cloak,
And we shall reach that garden soon,
Without the guide of sun or moon.”

So down the mansion's slippery stair,
 Into the midnight weather,
Pass, as if sorrows never were,
 The weak and strong together.

—This was the night before the morn,
On which the Hope of Man was born,
And long ere dawn can claim the sky,
The tempest rolls subservient by ;
While bells on all sides sing and say,
How Christ the child was born to-day ;
Free as the sun's in June, the rays
Mix merry with the Yuhl-log's blaze ;
Some butterflies of snow may float
Down slowly, glistening in the mote,
But crystal-leaved and fruited trees
Scarce lose a jewel in the breeze ;
Frost-diamonds twinkle on the grass,
 Transformed from pearly dew,
And silver flowers encrust the glass,
 Which gardens never knew.

The inmates of the house, before
Whose iron-fended heedless door,
The children of our nightly tale
Were standing, rise refreshed and hale,
And run, as if a race to win,
To let the Christmas morning in.

They find, upon the threshold stone,
A little Child, just like their own ;
Asleep it seems, but when the head
Is raised, it sleeps, as sleep the dead ;
The fatal point had touched it, while
The lips had just begun a smile,
The forehead 'mid the matted tresses
A perfect-painless end expresses,
And, unconvulsed, the hands may wear
The posture more of thanks than prayer.

They tend it straight in wondering grief,—
And, when all skill brings no relief,
They bear it onward, in its smile,
Up the Cathedral's central aisle :
There, soon as Priests and People heard
How the thing was, they speak not word,
But take the usual Image, meant
The blessèd babe to represent,
Forth from its cradle, and instead
Lay down that silent mortal head.
Now incense-cloud and anthem-sound
Arise the beauteous body round ;
Softly the carol chant is sung,
Softly the mirthful peal is rung,
And, when the solemn duties end,
With tapers earnest troops attend

The gentle corpse, nor cease to sing,
Till, by an almond tree,
They bury it, that the flowers of spring
May o'er it soonest be.

THE BROWNIE.

A GENTLE household Spirit, unchallenged and unpaid,
Attended with his service a lonely servant-maid.

She seemed a weary woman, who had found life unkind,
Whose youth had left her early and little left behind.

Most desolate and dreary her days went on until
Arose this unseen stranger her labours to fulfil.

But now she walked at leisure, secure of blame she slept,
The meal was always ready, the room was always swept.

And by the cheerful fire-light, the winter evenings long,
He gave her words of kindness and snatches of sweet
song ;—

With useful housewife secrets and tales of faeries fair,
From times when gaunt magicians and dwarfs and giants
were.—

Thus, habit closing round her, by slow degrees she nurst
A sense of trust and pleasure, where she had feared at first.

When strange desire came on her, and shook her like a
 storm,
To see this faithful being distinct in outward form.

He was so pure a nature, of so benign a will,
It could be nothing fearful, it could be nothing ill.

At first with grave denial her prayer he laid aside,
Then warning and entreaty, but all in vain, he tried.

The wish upgrew to passion,—she urged him more and
 more,—
Until, as one outwearied, but still lamenting sore,

He promised in her chamber he would attend her call,
When from the small high window the full-moon light
 should fall.

Most proud and glad that evening she entered to behold
How there her phantom Lover his presence would unfold ;

When lo ! in bloody pallor lay, on the moonlit floor,
The Babe she bore and murdered some thirteen years
 before.

THE BEGGAR'S CASTLE*.

A STORY OF THE SOUTH OF FRANCE.



THOSE ruins took my thoughts away
To a far eastern land ;
Like camels in a herd, they lay
Upon the dull red sand ;
I know not that I ever sate
Within a place so desolate.

Unlike the relics that connect
Our hearts with ancient Time,
All moss-besprent and ivy-deckt,
Gracing a lenient clime,
Here all was death and nothing born,—
No life but the unfriendly thorn.

* I am indebted for this legend, and part of its conduct, to Jean Reboul, the baker-poet of Nismes, the Burns of modern France.

“ My little guide, whose sunny eyes
 And darkly-lucid skin,
Witness, in spite of shrouded skies,
 Where southern realms begin ;
Come, tell me all you 've heard and know
About these mighty things laid low.”

The Beggar's Castle, wayward name,
 Was all these fragments bore,
And wherefore legendary fame
 Baptised them thus of yore,
He told in words so sweet and true,
I wish that he could tell it you.

A puissant Seigneur, who in wars
 And tournays had renown,
With wealth from prudent ancestors
 Sloping unbroken down,
Dwelt in these towers, and held in fee
All the broad lands that eye can see.

He never tempered to the poor
 Misfortune's bitter blast,
And when before his haughty door
 Widow and orphan past,
Injurious words and dogs at bay
Were all the welcome that had they.

The Monk who toiled from place to place,
That God might have his dole,
Was met by scorn and foul grimace,
And oaths that pierced his soul ;
'T was well for him to flee and pray,
“ They know not what they do and say.”

One evening, when both plain and wood
Were trackless in the snow,
A Beggar at the portal stood,
Who little seemed to know
That Castle and its evil fame,
As if from distant shores he came.

Like channelled granite was his front,
His hair was crisp with rime,—
He asked admittance, as was wont
In that free-hearted time ;
For who would leave to die i' the cold
A lonely man and awful-old.

At first his prayer had no reply,—
Perchance the wild wind checked it,
But when it rose into a cry,
No more the inmates recked it,
Till where the cheerful fire-light shone,
A voice out-thundered,—“ Wretch ! begone.”

“ There is no path,—I have no strength,—
What can I do alone ?
Grant shelter, or I lay my length,
And perish on the stone ;
I crave not much,—I should be blest
In kennel or in barn to rest.”

“ What matters thy vile head to me ?
Dare not to touch the door !”
“ Alas ! and shall I never see
Home, wife, and children more ? ”—
“ If thou art still importunate,
My serfs shall nail thee to the gate.”

But, when the wrathful Seigneur faced
The object of his ire,
The beggar raised his brow debased
And armed his eyes with fire :
“ Whatever guise is on me now,
I am a mightier Lord than thou ! ”

“ Madman or cheat ! announce thy birth.”—
“ *That* thou wilt know to-morrow.”
“ Where are thy fiefs ? ”—“ The whole wide Earth.”
“ And what thy title ? ”—“ SORROW.”
Then, opening wide his ragged vest,
He cried,—“ Thou canst not shun thy guest.”

He stamped his foot with fearful din,—
 With imprecating hand
He struck the door, and past within
 Right through the menial band :
“ Follow him, seize him,—There—and there ! ”
They only saw the blank night air.

But He was at his work : ere day,
 Began the work of doom,
The Lord's one daughter, one bright may,
 Fled with a base-born groom,
Bearing about, where'er she came,
The blighting of an ancient name.

His single son, that second self,
 Who, when his first should fall,
Would hold his lands and hoarded pelf,
 Died in a drunken brawl ;—
And now alone amidst his gold
He stood, and *felt* his heart was cold.

Till, like a large and patient sea
 Once roused by cruel weather,
Came by the raging Jacquerie,
 And swept away together
Him and all his, save that which time
Has hoarded to suggest our rhyme.

THE GODDESS VENUS

IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

Few and faint are the historic lights by which we can trace the victory of Christianity over Heathenism. The battle was fought on many fields, with every variety of weapon and manœuvre, and was protracted by many an obstinate resistance long after the main issue of the combat was decided. It was only in the sixth century that St. Benedict extinguished the fire on the altar of Apollo, on Monte Casino; and in many provinces of the empire, Pagan worship was celebrated down to a much later date. The temples of Diana at Trèves and of Venus at Magdeburg (Parthenopolis), have been recorded as of the last to be deserted. Charlemagne destroyed the latter, which had been erected by Germanicus, and built a church to St. Stephen in its place. But far deeper into the middle ages than this, winds the thread of Pagan tradition; and even in this our time, the peasants on the coast of old Etruria are seen annually to attach a gilded bunch of grapes to a plough, which is drawn by oxen down a long slope to the sea, as a propitiation to the elemental powers in favour of the harvest and the vintage*. It was, however, by a simple and

* An English gentleman and scholar of the 19th century professing Heathenism might be considered a burlesque, but Mr. Thomas Taylor in a note to Julian's oration writes thus, "The construction of the statues of the gods was the result of the most consummate theological

natural process that the sympathies of the people were frequently detached from the old faith, and associated to the history or tradition of the new. The temple of Jupiter the Preserver was readily re-consecrated to the Redeemer of mankind ; and even the play upon sounds had its meaning when the prophet Elias appropriated the reverence long paid to Apollo as the Sun. In Sicily, eight celebrated temples of Venus were, within a short period, dedicated to the Virgin ; and the same substitution is said to have taken place, at the command of the Empress Helena, in the church of the Holy Sepulchre. The deduction of Christian rites from Pagan ceremonies has unfortunately not been confined to the detection of Popish corruption, but has been extended by infidel writers to some of the vital principles of our religion. Yet we shall find that this principle of adaptation, however unscrupulously acted upon, was accompanied by a belief which gave the greatest distinctness and energy to the work of conversion from Heathenism. This was the plain conviction of the demoniac personality of each of the Pagan deities. The monotheism of the Jews does not seem to have prevented that people from regarding the gods of the Gentiles as substantial spirits of evil ; and there appeared, perhaps, to be doctrines in Christianity, which rather encouraged than forbade a similar conclusion. The Christian, who was liable to be thrown to the beasts for refusing to sacrifice to Jupiter or to be rent asunder by the mob for scorning a bacchanalian rite, was not likely to consider the one as a symbol of power, or the other as a device of the fancy. Political considerations might enter

science, and from their apt resemblance to divine natures, they became participants of divine illumination. Statues resemble life, and on this account they are similar to animals. Statues, through their habitude or fitness, conjoin the souls of those who pray to them with the gods themselves. Let not the reader, however, confound this scientific worship of the ancients with the *filthy piety* of the Catholics, as Proclus justly calls it."

into the question of Christian persecution, as, in after-times, heresy often became treason, and the people might be indignant at the violation of their ancestral customs, or the invasion of their festal repose, but the Christian understood not this ; "their gods were devils, and he could not worship them." For while some of them were powers claiming divine honour, which in his system could be only blasphemy, many others were such, that, from his own high moral ground, he could only look upon them as impersonated sins.

Thus, in the early Christian imagination, the goddess Venus stood out as the very queen of devildom. Chastity being once proclaimed, not a high and peculiar virtue, but an essential, indispensable, requisite of the Christian character, the antagonist appetite became a terrible evil, and the patroness and representative of it in the popular mind the worst of demons. The gods of Power would soon find themselves overcome : One had come into the world greater than they, and they must bend and pass away before him ; but unconverted man owned, and would ever own, the reign of Venus ; and she was there ever attempting to seduce the very holiest. She might be subdued and driven from the world at last, but not as long as vice was in the breast of man, open to her voice and ready for her rule. No wonder, then, that Venus is the great bond between Pagan and Christian tradition ; no wonder that Augustin leaves it as a matter not for him to decide, "whether Venus could have become the mother of *Æneas* by the embraces of *Anchises*" (*De Civitat. Dei*, 3, *sec.* 5) ; or that Kornman, a learned lawyer of the 17th century, should write a laborious book of the history, adventures, and devices of this subtle devil*.

Venus was not dead. When the vow of betrothal recorded

* The process by which the German *Holda* was changed from the character of a good Fairy into that of a demon is much the same as that of the conversion of Venus.

before her altar was violated by the Christian mother of the Corinthian maid, she could raise from the grave the broken-hearted victim of the new religion, and send her as a vampire to drink the life-blood of her destined bridegroom.* She could, too, waylay the passionate youth in a form of surpassing beauty, and seduce him into marriage ; sometimes, indeed, to be foiled by superior necromantic powers, and forced back into a hideous serpent shape, as was the Lamia of Greece ; but at others to retain her influence even after her deformity was revealed, as did, in comparatively later days, Melusina, the wife of Count Raymond of Poitiers, who turned out the fairest of mermaids. When, again, a Christian girl in Carthage was struck by the beauty of an image of Venus, and fancied herself like it, she was instantly seized by the goddess round her throat, and could take no food for seventy days and nights. She said, “ a bird came to her every midnight and touched her mouth ; ” and she was only relieved at last by the solemn functions of the Church and participation in its sacraments.† Even when her open worship was utterly driven from the face of the earth, the magic art knew where and how to find her. She still had her favourites in the vegetable creation, plants, many of whose names testified to whom they were dedicated ;—Venus’s comb (*Scandix*), Venus’s fly-trap (*Dionæa muscipula*), Venus’s looking-glass (*Campanula*), maiden-hair (*Adiantum*), and the mastic shrub, which covers with its thicket so many relics of her and other fanes on the old Hellenic hills. Over the sixth day of the week she still held an important authority, making it in general belief most unpropitious to mankind, although certain theologians have maintained the contrary, resting on the facts that the Virgin ascended to heaven, and Granada was taken, on a Friday. Astrology determined that under the influence of Venus it

* Read (but who has not read ?) GÖTTE’S *Braut zu Corinth*.

† Prosper Aquitanus,—lib. 6.

was fortunate to make love, marry, take medicine, and arrange your will. The formula by which Venus is conjured, after a general preface, thus continues:—"Unde benedictum est nomen Creatoris in loco suo, et per nomina Angelorum servientium in tertio exercitu, et per nomen stellæ quæ est Venus, et per sigillum ejus quod quidem est sanctum; et per nomina prædicta, conjuro, &c. &c." The spirits of Friday, or impersonations of Venus, appeared generally in the following forms:—a king with a sceptre riding on a camel, a maiden naked or gloriously attired, a goat, a camel, a dove, and a green or white vestment. And still the agents of this unholy commerce frequented the haunts of ancient idolatry, such as the 116 steps at Lyons, the remains of her temple there, up and down which sorcerers and witches were known to dance and gambol in their infernal yearly revelling.

But her principal method of seduction was to establish herself in some hilly region, and there, having constructed in the heart of the earth a palace of sensual delights, and having surrounded herself by subordinate spirits in loveliest shapes, by supernatural music, heard far and wide, and similar means, to entice into it brave and noble souls, and keep them there till they became debased and brutalised, and altogether lost.* The difficulty of knowing much about these wondrous places of pleasure and sin arose from the fewness of those who have ever again returned to the world of men after a sojourn, or even entrance, there. William of Newbury records that, in the reign of King Henry I. of England, a peasant walking by

* The chief of these localities in Germany is the Horselberg near Eisenach. The enchantment of the Odenberg is much of the same kind, although of a more innocent nature, under the power of a traditional combination of Charlemagne and Charles the Fifth: a man who got into it one day saw some tall and fair men playing bowls, who asked him to join them, but, finding the bowls too heavy for his arm, he refused: they then gave him one to take home, which, being laid on the anvil, split and showed a lump of solid gold.

a tumulus, about three stadia from the town of Burlington, in Yorkshire, heard songs and convivial sounds issuing from within it. He looked about for an entrance, astonished that that silent region and midnight hour should be so disturbed, and, finding a door open, went in. He saw an ample and brilliant chamber, and men and women engaged in high festivity and mighty mirth. One of the attendants, seeing him standing at the door, handed him a cup, which he grasped, flung the contents on the floor, and rushed out into the night, amid tremendous tumult and persevering pursuit. On, however, he ran, until at last the cries and sounds died away, and he brought his booty safe into the town. This cup was given to the king, who presented it to the queen of David, king of Scotland, and it was returned by his descendant King William to King Henry II. of England. In the Swiss Chronicle of Stumpfius we are told that a tailor of Basle, in the year 1600, had a similar adventure. He passed through an iron door, and a succession of halls and gardens, guarded by frightful dogs, who barred his retreat. The goddess appeared with long flowing hair, but her lower body as a serpent's. She said she should be freed from this enchantment by three kisses of a chaste mortal, on whom she would bestow infinite treasure. He kissed her once, and she grew more monstrous still. He kissed her again, and she became so terrible and violent, he thought she would tear him in pieces, so turned round in desperation and got safely out : a fellow-townsmen of his went into the cave again some time after, and, having found it full of human bones, died in a few days.

The story of Tannhauser may best be given in verse : there seem to be several old ballads of the same burthen, but the one generally known is that inserted in the collection of the *Wunderhorn*, of which the following is a free paraphrase.

VENUS AND THE CHRISTIAN KNIGHT.

“ WHY are thine eyes so red, Sir Knight,
And why thy cheek so pale ?
Thou tossest to and fro all night,
Like a ship without a sail.”

The Knight rose up, and answered quick :
“ Too long in lust I lie,
And now my heart is pleasure-sick ;
I must go hence, or die.

“ I must go hence, and strive to win,
By penitential tears,
God’s pardon for the shame and sin
Of these luxurious years.

“ No man his life can rightly keep
Apart from toil and pain ;
I would give all these joys, to weep
My youth’s sweet tears again ! ”

“ I will not let thee go, Sir Knight ;
 But I will make thee new
Untold devices of delight,
 That shall thy soul imbue ;

“ And thou, these sickly thoughts defy,
 Undo these vain alarms ;
What God can give thee more than I,—
 More Heaven than in mine arms ? ”

“ Venus ! I fear thy wanton heart,
 I fear thy glittering eyes ;
I shrink and tremble, lest thou art
 A demon in disguise.”

With high disdain the Ladie strove,
 Then uttered, sad and low,
“ Oh ! hard return for so much love !
 Ungrateful mortal ! go.”

The Knight, with none to check or meet,
 Thus left the marble dome ;
And soon his weary, wounded, feet
 Were near the gates of Rome.

There, where imperial Tiber flows,
 Pope Urban rode along ;
And “ Kyrie Eleison,” rose
 From all the thickening throng.

“ Thou that hast power to stay God’s wrath,
 And darkest souls to shrive,
Stop, holy Father! on thy path,
 And save a soul alive.

“ For I, a noble Christian Knight,
 Have served, for many a year,
In dalliance of impure delight,
 A demon, as I fear.

“ If Venus sooth a demon be,
 As thou hast skill to tell,
God’s face how shall I ever see,
 How shun the deep of hell ? ”

—“ Too well that fiend, and all her power,
 Most hapless man ! I know ;
If thou hast been her paramour,
 No grace can I bestow.

“ I could the demon’s self assoil,
 As well as pardon thee ;
Thy body hath been her willing spoil,
 Thy soul must be her fee !

“ For sooner shall this peelèd staff
 Put out both leaf and bloom,
Than God shall strike thy sentence off
 His dreadful book of doom ! ”

The Knight his feeble knee upraised,
Past weeping through the crowd ;
And some in silent pity gazed,
And some with horror loud.

“ Then shall I never, never, see
Thy countenance divine,
Jesus ! that died in vain for me,—
Sweet Mary, mother ! thine ? ”

Now forth this child of woe had gone
Full fourteen days, when, lo !
The staff the Pope laid hand upon
Began to bud and blow :

Green leaves, and flowers of perfect white,
The very growth of heaven ;—
Sure witness to that wretched Knight
Of all his sin forgiven !

Oh ! far and wide, o'er earth and tide,
Swift messengers are sped,
To hail the sinner justified,
The late devoted head.

In vain—in vain ! Straight back again
He bent his hopeless way,—
And Venus shall her Knight retain,
Until God's judgment-day.

Mysterious end of good remorse !
Strong lesson to beware,
Ye priests of mercy ! how ye force
Poor sinners to despair.

This book of Kornman's, to which allusion has been made, may deserve some further notice. The title is, "Mons Veneris ; a Wonderful and Especial Description of the Notions of old Heathen and Modern Writers with regard to the Goddess Venus ; her Origin, Worship, and Queenly Abode ; and the company she entertains there, &c. &c. Frankfort, 1614." A strange work, indeed, for the world to see, after Bacon had written. But our good jurisconsult sets about his investigation in the true old legendary spirit. His great object is to expose "that cursed, wicked, ape of God, the merry, malicious, Devil." He is, indeed, rather perplexed than pleased at the progress of knowledge and enterprise. "Mankind," he says in his preface, "is always yearning after something new ; but now there is nothing under the sun which they have not thrust their heads into ; the very stars are not safe from them : they send unheard-of immense Noah's arks to India, to see what the antipodes in the under-world are about. Like gnomes, they climb and claw into the holes of the hills, and get out gold, and silver, and adamant, and sapphire, and a hundred other fine names. Some penetrate into the very palace of the Gnome King himself, to find hidden treasure, or into the mountain-chambers of the Lady Venus, to enjoy luxurious delights. In fact, there is nothing left for them but to go to hell, and see what is going on there." But, anxious as he is "to give some book to the students and lovers of nature, to amuse their minds, and reveal some secret phenomena," he also protests, that "God is his witness, that if there are things in his book which all reasonable men cannot believe, *he* has fabricated no lies and fables, but has taken them all on the authority of men trust-worthy, and of acknowledged learning." And we are bound to believe him. For,

after a most delightful farrago of classical and mediæval fancies, he boldly grapples with the main question, "Num fuerit unquam Dea Venus?"—Whether there ever was such a person as Venus at all?—and handles it admirably. "Venus has been seen among men, been worshipped by them, has married some of them, has been born and has died with them, &c.—are not these all good proofs of her reality? It is very true that these spectacles are not of very frequent occurrence; but they are not more rare than the appearance of the Devil, or of the Holy Ghost, or of Angels, all of which nobody doubts to have from time to time been permitted by God, that we might know that he has created all kinds of creatures, and wills us to be aware of their reality: so Venus is not always showing herself, nor does she take up any regular abode amongst us, but she comes quite often enough for us to believe in her existence, and in the power of God to people the four elements with wonderful beings such as she is." He then goes into the theory of elemental spirits at large, explains that they have a subtle, not Adamite, flesh, and that each order has its own chaos or atmosphere, which is gross in proportion to their subtlety; thus the gnomes live in earth, as we men in air. Afterwards follows much dissertation as to the class which Venus belongs to, and it is at last concluded, from the phenomena of her nature and the facts of her history, that she is a nymph, a water-spirit, an Undina. She seems to have reigned a long time, and may probably be dead, as she has not been seen for many years, though it is likely enough she may live till the day of judgment: or perhaps she may have past away and left others of her race, other Venuses, behind her, similar in form and disposition: all these matters, however, a wise man will be content to doubt*.

* In the same critical style writes William of Newbury, at the end of his chapter on Mermaids:—"The further question of those green boys, who are said to have risen out of the earth, is more abstruse than our senses, slender as they are, can examine and resolve."

In the following Poem the idea of the essential contrast between the Northern and the Southern mind, between Beauty as the exponent of the one and Duty as the manifestation of the other (the germ of which is sufficiently distinct in the legendary foundation), is attempted to be developed. The facts, or rather images, of the story are very much the same as may be found in the graceful version of it by Heine in the third volume of the *Salon* :—they are but disposed and illustrated anew.

THE NORTHERN KNIGHT IN ITALY.

THIS is the record, true as his own word,
Of the adventures of a Christian knight,
Who, when beneath the foul Karasmian sword *
God's rescued city sunk to hopeless night,
Desired, before he gain'd his northern home,
To soothe his wounded heart at holy Rome.

And having found, in that reflected heaven,
More than Cæsarean splendors and delights,
So that it seemed to his young sense was given
An unimagined world of sounds and sights ;—
Yet, half regretful of the long delay,
He joined some comrades on their common way.

* At the conclusion of the last crusade.

The Spring was mantling that Italian land,
The Spring! the passion-season of our earth,
The joy, whose wings will never all expand,—
The gladsome travail of continuous birth,—
The force that leaves no creature unimbued
With amorous Nature's bland inquietude.

Though those hard sons of tumult and bold life,
Little as might be, own'd the tender power,
And only show'd their words and gestures rife
With the benign excitement of the hour,—
Yet one, the one of whom this tale is told,
In his deep soul was utterly controll'd.

New thoughts sprung up within him,—new desires
Opened their panting bosoms to the sun ;
Imagination scattered lights and fires
O'er realms before impenetrably dun ;
His senses, energized with wondrous might,
Mingled in lusty contest of delight.

The once-inspiring talk of steel and steeds
And famous captains lost its ancient zest ;
The free recital of illustrious deeds
Came to him vapid as a thrice-told jest ;
His fancy was of angels penance-bound
To convoy sprites of ill through heavenly ground.

The first-love vision of those azure eyes,
Twin stars that blessed and kept his spirit cool,
Down-beaming from the brazen Syrian skies,
Now seem'd the spectral dotting of a fool,—
Unwelcome visitants that stood between
Him and the livelier glories of the scene.

What wanted he with such cold monitors ?
What business had he with the past at all ?
Well, in the pauses of those clamorous wars,
Such dull endearment might his heart enthrall,
But, in this universe of blissful calm,
He had no pain to need that homely balm.

Occasion, therefore, in itself though slight
He made of moment to demand his stay,
Where some rare houses, in the clear white light,
Like flakes of snow among the verdure lay ;
And bade the company give little heed,
He would o'ertake them by redoubled speed.

But now at length resolved to satisfy
The appetite of beauty, and repair
Those torpid years which he had let glide by,
Unconscious of the powers of earth and air,
He rested, roved, and rested while he quafft
The deepest richness of the sunny draught.

Eve after eve he told his trusty band
They should advance straight northward on the morrow,
Yet when he rose, and to that living land
Addressed his farewell benison of sorrow,
With loveliest aspect Nature answer'd so,
It seem'd almost impiety to go.;

Thus days were gather'd into months, and there
He linger'd, sauntering without aim or end :
Not unaccompanied ; for wheresoe'er
His steps, through wood, or glen, or field, might tend,—
A bird-like voice was ever in his ear,
Divinely sweet and rapturously clear *.

From the pinaster's solemn-tented crown,—
From the fine olive spray that cuts the sky,—
From bare or flowering summit, floated down
That music unembodied to the eye :
Sometimes beside his feet it seemed to run,
Or fainted, lark-like, in the radiant sun.

* A bird is by no means an uncommon actor in a drama of this kind. It is recorded that, at the Council of Basle, three pious doctors were wont to walk out daily and discuss points of deep theology, but that, as soon as the song of a certain nightingale reached their ears, their argument was inevitably confused ; they contradicted themselves, drew false conclusions, and were occasionally very near falling into heresy. The thought struck one of them to exorcise the nightingale, and the devil flew visibly out of a bush, and left the disputants at peace. See also the beautiful story of "The Monk and Bird," in Mr Trench's poems.

Soon as this mystic sound attained his ear,
Barriers arose, impermeable, between
Him and the two wide worlds of hope and fear ;—
His life entire was in the present scene ;
The passage of each day he only knew
By the broad shadows and the deepening blue.

His senses by such ecstasy possest,
He chanced to climb a torrent's slippery side,
And, on the utmost ridge refusing rest,
Took the first path his eager look descried ;
And paused, as one outstartled from a trance,
Within a place of strange significance.

A ruin'd temple of the Pagan world,—
Pillars and pedestals with rocks confused,—
Art back into the lap of nature hurl'd,
And still most beautiful, when most abused ;
A Paradise of pity, that might move
Most careless hearts, unknowingly, to love !

A very garden of luxurious weeds,
Hemlock in trees, acanthine leaves outspread,
Flowers here and there, the growth of wind-cast seeds,
With vine and ivy draperies overhead ;
And by the access, two nigh-sapless shells,
Old trunks of myrtle, haggard sentinels !

Amid this strife of vigour and decay
An Idol stood, complete, without a stain,
Hid by a broad projection from the sway
Of winter gusts and daily-rotting rain.
Time and his agents seem'd alike to spare
A thing so unimaginably fair.

By what deep memory or what subtler mean
Was it, that at the moment of this sight,
The actual past—the statue and the scene,
Stood out before him in historic light ?
He knew the glorious image by its name—
Venus ! the Goddess of unholy fame.

He heard the tread of distant generations
Slowly defiling to their place of doom ;
And thought how men, and families, and nations
Had trusted in the endless bliss and bloom
Of Her who stood in desolation there,
Now lorn of love and unrevered by prayer.

Beauty without an eye to gaze on it,
Passion without a breast to lean upon,
Feelings unjust, unseemly, and unfit,
Troubled his spirit's high and happy tone ;
So back with vague imaginative pain
He turned the steps that soon returned again.

For there henceforth he every noon reposed
In languor self-sufficient for the day,
Feeling the light within his eyelids closed,
Or peeping, where the locust, like a ray,
Shot through its crevice, and, without a sound,
The insect host enjoyed their airy round.

Day-dreams give sleep, and sleep brings dreams anew ;
Thus oft a face of untold tenderness,
A cloud of woe with beauty glistening through,
Brooded above him in divine distress,—
And sometimes bowed so low, as it would try
His ready lips, then vanished with a sigh :

And round him flowed through that intense sunshine
Music, whose notes at once were words and tears ;
“ Paphos was mine, and Amathus was mine,
Mine were the Idalian groves of ancient years,—
The happy heart of Man was all mine own,
Now I am homeless and alone—alone ! ”

At other times, to his long-resting gaze,
Instinct with life the solid sculpture grew,
And rose transfigured, 'mid a golden haze,
Till lost within the impermeable blue ;
Yet ever, though with liveliest hues composed,
Sad-swooning sounds the apparition closed.

As the strong waters fill the leaky boat
And suck it downwards, by unseen degrees ;—
So sunk his soul, the while it seemed to float
On that serene security of ease,
Into a torpid meditative void,
By the same fancies that before upbuoyed.

His train, though wondering at their changeful lord,
Had no distaste that season to beguile
With mimic contests and well-furnished board,—
And even he would sometimes join awhile
Their sports, then turn, as if in scorn, away
From such rude commerce and ignoble play.

One closing eve, thus issuing forth, he cried,
“ Land of my love ! in thee I cast my lot ;—
Till death thy faithful subject I abide,—
Home, kindred, country, knighthood, all forgot,—
Names that I heed no more, while I possess
Thy heartfelt luxury of loveliness ! ”

That summer night had all the healthy cool
That nerves the spirit of the youthful year ;
Yet, as to eyes long fixed on a deep pool,
The waters dark and bright at once appear,
So, through the freshness on his senses soon
Came the warm memories of the lusty noon.

Such active pleasure tingling through his veins,
Quickened his pace beneath the colonnade,
Chesnut, and ilex—to the moonèd plains
A bronze relief and garniture of shade,—
When, just before him, flittingly, he heard
The tender voice of that familiar bird.

Holding his own, to catch that sweeter breath,
And listening, so that each particular sound
Was merged in that attention's depth, his path
Into the secret of the forest wound ;
The clear-drawn landscape, and the orb's full gaze,
Gave place to dimness and the wild-wood's maze.

That thrilling sense, which to the weak is fear,
Becomes the joy and guerdon of the brave ;
So, trusting his harmonious pioneer,
His heart he freely to the venture gave,
And through close brake, and under pleachèd aisle,
Walked without sign of outlet many a mile.

When, turning round a thicket weariedly,
A building, of such mould as well might pass
From graceful Greece to conquering Italy,
Rose in soft outline from the silver'd grass,
Whose doors thrown back and inner lustre show'd
It was no lorn and tenantless abode.

Children of all varieties of fair,
And gaily vested, cluster'd round the portal,
Until one Boy, who had not mien and air
Of future manhood, but of youth immortal,
Within an arch of light, came clear to view,
Descending that angelic avenue.

“Stranger! the mistress of this happy bower,”
Thus the bright messenger the knight addrest—
“Bids us assert her hospitable power,
And lead thee in a captive or a guest ;
Rest is the mate of night,—let opening day
Speed thee rejoicing on thy work and way.”

Such gentle bidding might kind answer earn ;
The full moon's glare put out each guiding star ;
He summ'd the dangers of enforc'd return,
And now first marvell'd he had roved so far :
Then murmur'd glad acceptance, tinged with fear,
Lest there unmeet his presence should appear.

Led by that troop of youthful innocence,
A hall he traversed, up whose heaven-topt dome
Thick vapours of delightful influence
From gold and alabaster altars clomb,
And through a range of pillar'd chambers past,
Each one more full of faerie than the last.

To his vague gaze those peopled walls disclosed
Graces and grandeurs more to feel than see,—
Celestial and heroic forms composed
In many a frame of antique poesy ;
But, wheresoe'er the scene or tale might fall,
Still Venus was the theme and crown of all.

There young Adonis scorn'd to yield to her,
Soon by a sterner nature overcome ;
There Paris, happy hapless arbiter,
For beauty barter'd kingdom, race, and home ;
Save what Æneas rescued by her care,
As the Didonian wood-nymph pictured there.

But ere he scanned them long, a Lady enter'd,
In long white robes majestic array'd,
Though on her face alone his eyes were centred,
Which weird suspicion to his mind convey'd,
For every feature he could there divine
Of the old marble in the sylvan shrine.

On his bewilderment she gently smiled,
To his confusion she benignly spoke ;
And all the fears that started up so wild
Lay down submissive to her beauty's yoke :
It was with him as if he saw through tears
A countenance long-loved and lost for years.

She asked, "if so he will'd," the stranger's name,
And, when she heard it, said, "the gallant sound
Had often reached her on the wing of fame,
Though long recluse from fortune's noisy round ;
Her lot was cast in loneliness, and yet
On noble worth her woman-heart was set."

Rare is the fish that is not meshed amain,
When Beauty tends the silken net of praise ;
Thus little marvel that in vaunting strain
He spoke of distant deeds and brave affrays,
Till each self-glorious thought became a charm,
For her to work against him to his harm.

Such converse of melodious looks and words
Paused at the call of other symphonies,
Invisible agencies that draw the cords
Of massive curtains, rising as they rise,
So that the music's closing swell reveal'd
The Paradise of pleasure there conceal'd.

It was a wide alcove, thick-wall'd with flowers,
Gigantic blooms, of aspect that appear'd
Beyond the range of vegetative powers,
A flush of splendour almost to be fear'd,
A strange affinity of life between
Those glorious creatures and that garden's Queen.

Luminous gems were weaving from aloft
Fantastic rainbows on the fountain-spray,—
Cushions of broider'd purple, silken-soft,
Profusely heaped beside a table lay,
Whereon all show of form and hue increast
The rich temptation of the coming feast.

There on one couch, and served by cherub hands,
The Knight and Lady banqueted in joy :
With freshest fruits from scarce discover'd lands,
Such as he saw in pictures when a boy,
And cates of flavours excellent and new,
That to the unpalled taste still dearer grew.

Once, and but once, a spasm of very fear
Went through him, when a breeze of sudden cold
Sigh'd, like a dying brother, in his ear,
And made the royal flowers around upfold
Their gorgeous faces in the leafy band,
Like the mimosa touched by mortal hand.

Then almost ghastly seem'd the tinted sheen,
Saltless and savourless those luscious meats,
Till quick the Lady rose, with smile serene,
As one who could command but still entreats,
And filling a gold goblet, kissed the brim,
And passed it bubbling from her lips to him.

At once absorbing that nectareous draught,
And the delicious radiance of those eyes,
At doubt and terror-fit he inly laughed,
And grasped her hand as 'twere a tourney's prize ;
And heard this murmur, as she nearer drew,
“ Yes, I am Love, and Love was made for you ! ”

They were alone : the attendants, one by one,
Had vanished : faint and fainter rose the air
Oppressed with odours : through the twilight shone
The glory of white limbs and lustrous hair,
Confusing sight and spirit, till he fell,
The will-less, mindless, creature of the spell.

In the dull deep of satisfied desire
Not long a prisoner lay that knightly soul,
But on his blood, as on a wave of fire,
Uneasy fancies rode without control,
Voices and phantoms that did scarcely seem
To take the substance of an order'd dream.

At first he stood beside a public road,
Hedged in by myrtle and embower'd by plane,
While figures, vested in old Grecian mode,
Drew through the pearly dawn a winding train,
So strangely character'd, he could not know
Were it of triumph or funereal woe.

For crowns of bay enwreath'd each beauteous head,
Beauty of perfect maid and perfect man ;
Slow-paced the milk-white oxen garlanded ;
Torch-bearing children mingled as they ran
Gleaming amid the elder that uphold
Tripods and cups and plates of chasèd gold.

But then he marked the flowers were colourless,
Crisp-wither'd hung the honourable leaves,
And on the faces sat the high distress
Of those whom Self sustains when Fate bereaves :
So gazed he, wondering how that pomp would close,
When the dream changed, but not to his repose.

For now he was within his father's hall,
No tittle changed of form or furniture,
But all and each a grave memorial
Of youthful days, too careless to endure,—
There was his mother's housewife-work, and there,
Beside the fire, his grandame's crimson chair :

Where, cowering low, that ancient woman sat,
Her bony fingers twitching on her knee,
Her dry lips muttering fast he knew not what,
Only the sharp convulsion could he see ;
But, as he looked, he felt a conscience dim
That she was urging God in prayer for him.

Away in trembling wretchedness he turn'd,
And he was in his leman's arms once more ;
Yet all the jewell'd cressets were out-burn'd,
And all the pictured walls, so gay before,
Show'd, in the glimmer of one choking lamp,
Blotched with green mould and worn by filthy damp.

Enormous bats their insolent long wings
Whirl'd o'er his head, and swung against his brow,
And shrieked—" We cozen'd with our ministerings
The foolish knight, and have our revel now : "
And worms bestrew'd the weeds that overspread
The floor with silken flowers late carpeted.

His sick astonished looks he straight addressed
To her whose tresses lay around his arm,
And fervent breath was playing on his breast,
To seek the meaning of this frightful charm ;
But she was there no longer, and instead,
He was the partner of a Demon's bed,—

That, slowly rising, brought the lurid glare
Of its fixed eyes close opposite to his ;
One scaly hand laced in his forehead hair,
Threatening his lips with pestilential kiss,
And somewise in the fiendish face it wore,
He traced the features he did erst adore.

With one instinctive agony he drew
His sword, that Palestine remember'd well,
And, quick recoiling, dealt a blow so true,
That down the devilish head in thunder fell :—
The effort seem'd against a jutting stone
To strike his hand, and then he woke—alone !

Alone he stood amid those ruins old,
His treasury of sweet care and pleasant pain ;
The hemlock crushed defined the body's mould
Of one who long and restless there had lain ;
His vest was beaded with the dew of dawn,
His hand fresh-blooded, and his sword fresh drawn !

The eastern star, a crystal eye of gold,
Full on the statued form of Beauty shone,
Now prostrate, powerless, featureless and cold,
A simple trunk of deftly carven stone :
Deep in the grasses that dismember'd head
Lay like the relics of the ignoble dead.

But Beauty's namesake and sidereal shrine
Now glided slowly down that pallid sky,
Near and more near the thin horizon line,
In the first gush of morning, there to die,—
While the poor Knight, with wilder'd steps and brain,
Hasten'd the glimmering village to regain.

With few uncertain words and little heed
His followers' anxious questions he put by,
Bidding each one prepare his arms and steed,
For "they must march before the sun was high,
And neither Apennine nor Alp should stay,
Though for a single night, his homeward way."

On, on, with scanty food and rest he rode,
Like one whom unseen enemies pursue,
Urging his favourite horse with cruel goad,
So that the lagging servants hardly knew
Their master of frank heart and ready cheer,
In that lone man who would not speak or hear.

Till when at last he fairly saw behind
The Alpine barrier of perennial snow,
He seem'd to heave a burthen off his mind,—
His blood in calmer current seem'd to flow,
And like himself he smiled once more, but cast
No light or colour on that cloudy past.

From the old Teuton forests, echoing far,
Came a stern welcome, hailing him restored
To the true health of life in peace or war,
Fresh morning toil, that earns the generous board ;
And waters, in the clear unbroken voice
Of childhood, spoke—"Be thankful and rejoice !"

Glad as the dove returning to his ark
Over the waste of universal sea,
He heard the huge house-dog's familiar bark,
He traced the figure of each friendly tree,
And felt that he could never part from this
His home of daily love and even bliss.

And in the quiet closure of that place,
He soon his first affection linked anew,
In that most honest passion finding grace,
His soul with primal vigour to endue,
And crush the memories that at times arose,
To stain pure joy and trouble high repose.

Never again that dear and dangerous land,
So fresh with all her weight of time and story,
Her winterless delights and slumbers bland,
On thrones of shade, amid a world of glory,
Did he behold : the flashing cup could please
No longer him who knew the poison-lees.

So lived he, pious, innocent, and brave,
The best of friends I ever saw on earth :
And now the uncommunicable grave
Has closed on him, and left us but his worth ;
I have revealed this strange and secret tale,
Of human fancy and the powers of bale.

He told it me, one autumn evening mild,
Sitting, greyhair'd, beneath an old oak tree,
His dear true wife beside him, and a child,
Youngest of many, dancing round his knee,—
And bade me, if I would, in fragrant rhymes
Embalm it, to be known in after-times.

Of the same nature as the above is the tale of the young Knight, who, unconsciously or daringly, placed his ring on the finger of a statue of Venus, and returning to repossess himself of it, found the finger bent, and the hand closed. In the old version of this, which is to be seen in Book iii. sect. 8, of the Jesuit Del Rio's *Magical Disquisitions* (Venetiis, 1616), the phantom Goddess ever comes between him and the bride he takes soon after this adventure, and is only banished through the mediation of a priest, named Palumnus, himself well skilled in necromancy. The Knight receives a parchment from him, which, at midnight, in a meeting of cross roads, he forces upon Venus, who passes by with a solemn but hurrying train of attendants, and when she receives it, cries,—“Cruel Priest Palumnus! art thou never content with the harm thou hast done! but the end of thy persecutions cometh, cruel Priest Palumnus.” The knight recovers his ring, and is freed from the enchantment; but the priest dies in dreadful agony the third day afterward. It is to be remarked that in the course of German Mythology the demonic character of Venus is often confused or identified with that of other personages,—such as Diana and Holda and Herodias, whose unholy exhibition of dancing has given her a prominent place in the circle of seductive sorcery.

THE LEGEND OF THE GLISBORN.

KING KARL bestrode the snow-white horse
 Whose speed and force
 Are known to song,—
 And kept the same unhalting course
 Without remorse
 The whole day long,
 Leading his straggling armèd train
 Across the plain.

To burning day came stifling night,
 With dubious light,
 Enough to show
 The thirsty looks of many a knight
 Who prayed to fight
 Some sudden foe,
 And sink upon that Hessian plain,
 Nor rise again.

The King, nigh feeble as the rest,
 With heaving breast
 Declared his need ;
 And cried, by nature overprest,

“ Water and rest,”—
The while his steed
Cheerfully paced the springless plain,
Without a pain.

Fresh as the chargers of the Sun,
That now begun
Their daily course,
He gamboled on, while one by one,
By toil undone,
Fell man and horse ;
Till the exhausted King would fain
His speed restrain.

With strange intelligence endowed,
He eyed the crowd,
That gazed aloof,
Then arched his neck in gesture proud,
And neighed aloud
And raised his hoof,
And struck a rock of solid grain,
That faced the plain.

A long, long, echo met the blow ;—
When, soft and slow,
A slender stream
From that dry heart began to flow,

And gurgled so
That it might seem
The cry of waters that disdain
Their stony chain.

The growing rill dispersed the sand
On either hand
To seek its rest,
While round the King a fainting band
To his command
Their looks addressed ;
“ One moment yet your thirst restrain,
For common gain.”

Till, when the stream ran large and free,
He bent his knee
In grateful prayer ;
And bade the army drink, while He,
His horse and he,
Stood patient there,—
His hand upon that milk-white mane,
No dust could stain.—

— Whole ages after Karl the Great
In mortal fate
Had past to heaven,
A Hessian peasant and his mate

Out-wandering late
By chance were driven,
To seek some shelter from the rain
On that same plain.

From a lone shed on that brook-side,
At night's mid-tide,
They heard the sound
Of men and steeds in warlike pride,
With eager stride,
Assemble round,—
While darkness held unbroken reign
O'er all the plain.

A single neigh ! a single blow !
And loud below
The waters raged,
As would they to a torrent grow,—
Nor was their flow
Till morn assuaged ;
—And rarely peasant crossed that plain
By night again.

CHARLEMAGNE,
 AND
 THE HYMN OF CHRIST.

“ And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.”—MATT. XXVI. 30 ; MARK XIV. 26.

THE great King Karl sat in his secret room,—
 He had sat there all day ;
 He had not called on minstrel knight or groom
 To wile one hour away.

Of arms or royal toil he had no care,
 Nor e'en of royal mirth ;
 As if a poor lone monk he rather were,
 Than lord of half the earth.

But chance he had some pleasant company,
 Dear wife, familiar friend,
 With whom to let the quiet hours slip by,
 As if they had no end.

The learnèd Alcuin, that large-browed clerk,
Was there within, and none beside ;
A book they read, and, where the sense was dark,
He was a trusty guide.

What book had worth so long to occupy
The thought of such a king,
To make the weight of all that sovereignty
Be a forgotten thing ?

Surely it were no other than the one,
Whose every line is fraught
With what a mightier King than He had done,
Conquered, endured, and taught.

There his great soul, drawn onward by the eye,
Saw in plain chronicle portrayed
The slow unfolding of the mystery
On which its life was stayed.

There read he how when Jesus, our dear Lord,
To men of sin and dust had given,
By the transforming magic of his word,
The bread of very Heaven ;

So that our race, by Adam's fatal food
Reduced to base decline,
Partaking of that body and that blood,
Might be again divine,—

After this wondrous largess, and before
The unimagined pain,
Which, in Gethsemane, the Saviour bore
Within his heart and brain,—

He read, how these two acts of Love between,
Ere that prolific day was dim,
Christ and his Saints, like men with minds serene,
Together sung a hymn.

These things he read in childly faith sincere,
Then paused and fixed his eye,
And said with kingly utterance—“ I must hear
That Hymn before I die.

“ I will send forth through sea and sun and snows,
To lands of every tongue,
To try if there be not some one which knows
The music Jesus sung.

“ For I have found delight in songs profane
Trolled by a foolish boy,
And when the monks intone a pious strain,
My heart is strong in joy ;

“ How blessèd then to hear those harmonies,
Which Christ's own voice divine engaged !
'Twould be as if a wind from Paradise
A wounded soul assuaged.”

Within the Emperor's mind that anxious thought
Lay travailing all night long,
He dreamed that Magi to his hand had brought
The burthen of the Song ;

And when to his grave offices he rose,
He kept his earnest will,
To offer untold guerdons unto those
Who should that dream fulfil.

But first he called to counsel in the hall
Wise priests of reverend name,
And with an open countenance to them all
Declared his hope and aim.

He said, " It is God's pleasure, that my will
Is made the natural law
Of many nations, so that out of ill
All good things I may draw.

" Therefore this holy mission I decree,
Sparing no pains or cost,
That thus those sounds of dearest memory
Be not for ever lost."

They spake. " Tradition streameth thro' our race,
Most like the gentle whistling air,
To which of old Elias veiled his face,
Conscious that God was there :

“ Not in the storm, the earthquake, and the flame,
That troubled Horeb’s brow,
The splendour and the power of God then came,
Nor thus he cometh now.

“ The silent water filtereth through earth,
One day to bless the summer land ;
The Word of God in Man slow bubbleth forth,
Touched by a worthy hand.

“ Thus, in the memory of some careful Jew
May lurk the record of a tune
Wont to be sung in ceremonial due
After the Paschal noon ;

“ And thy deep yearning for this mystic song
May give mankind at last
Some charm and blessing that has slept full long
The slumber of the Past.”

The King rejoiced, and, at this high behest,
Men, to all toil and change inured,
Passed out to search the World if East or West
That legend still endured.

What good or ill those venturous hearts befell,
What glory or what shame,—
How far they wandered, I have not to tell ;
Each has his separate fame.

I only know, that when the weight of hours
The prime of mortal heads had bowed,
He, slowly letting go his outward powers,
Spoke from his couch aloud :—

“ My soul has waited many a lingering year
To taste that one delight,
And now I know at last that I shall hear
The hymn of Christ to-night.

“ Look out, good friends ! be prompt to welcome home,
Straight to my presence bring,
My messengers, who hither furnished come
The Song of Christ to sing.”

Dark sank that night, but darker rose the morn,
That found the western earth
Of the divinest presence stripped and shorn
It ever woke to birth.

It seemed beyond the common lawful sway
Of Death and Nature o'er our kind,
That such a one as He should pass away,
And aught be left behind.

In Aachen Abbey's consecrated ground,
Within the hollowed stone,
They placed the imperial body, robed and crowned,
Seated as on a throne.

While the blest spirit holds communion free
 With that eternal quire,
 Of which on earth to trace the memory
 Was his devout desire*.

SAUL AND DAVID.

“And it came to pass, when the spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand : so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.”—1 SAM. XVI. 23.

“AN evil spirit lieth on our King !”
 So went the wailful tale up Israel,
 From Gilgal unto Gibeah : town and camp
 Caught the sad fame that spread like pestilence,
 In the low whispers of pale maiden lips,
 And tones, half-stifled by religious awe,
 Outbreathed from hearts that else had known no fear.

* It is probable that the hymn sung on this occasion was the Hallèl, or part of it. The Hallèl is invariably chanted in all Jewish families on the two first evenings of the Passover, and consists of Psalms 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, and 118, and is also read in the synagogue on every day of that feast. The music is not different from that of other Hebrew chants ; but the Song of Moses, which is chanted on the seventh day of the Passover, has a peculiar traditional air, which is probably the earliest musical composition preserved to our times.

—There stood a Boy beside the glooming King,
Whose serfish garb was strangely dissonant
To the high bearing and most gentle air
That waited on his beauty ; health and joy,
Though tempered now by sorrowing reverence,
Lay on his rose-red cheek ; transcendant love
Rounded his brow ; and when the delicate hand
Swept o'er the chords of that sweet instrument,
With which it long had been his use to fill
The lonely measure of his pastoral hours,—
It would have been no weak idolatry
To shroud your eyes and feel your heart beat strong,
As in the presence of one fresh from heaven,
Come down to save that doomed and desolate man.

A strain of War,—a deep and nervous strain
Of full and solemn notes, whose long-drawn swell
Dies on the silence, slow and terrible,
Making the blood of him who listens to it
To follow the great measure ; every tone
Clear in its utterance, and eloquent
Above all words : there was the settled tramp
Of warriors faithful to ancestral swords ;
There was the prayer that was not all a prayer,
But rising in a suppliant murmuring
Grows to a war-cry,—“ Victory, oh God !
For Israel's God and Israel, victory ! ”

Then came the onset,—chord fast following chord,
In passionate clang, as if the conscious harp
Were prodigal of all its life of sound,
To give that awful feint reality.

From off the couch, at one enormous leap,
To where his helmet and long-shadowing spear
And brazen target hung beside the wall,
Bounded the King, and grasp'd the quivering arms.
He raised his hand, and, as to gathering hosts,
Shouted, "Where 's Jonathan?—he is not here ;
Watchman, look out ! I cannot find my son ;
Here is the Ark,—there is the Philistine,—
There too is Jonathan ! On, Israel,—on !
Alloo ! Alloo !" * He ceased ; and while the short
Heroic blaze flared and died out, he cried,
In a most faint and miserable voice,
"He is not *there*,—the foe !—he is within !"
And fell upon his face, even as before.

The harper paused ; and when a struggling tear
Dropped on the string from his uplifted eye,
The spirit of the strain was changed ;—awhile
An under-current of discordant tones
Went trickling on, beneath the random fingers,—
Till, from a labyrinth of tangled notes

* 1 Sam. xiv. 17 to 20.

Came up with placid step a shape of sound
Distinct and fine-proportioned, redolent
Of love,—a fair, old Hebrew melody,
Most plaintive numbers, born of that pure time,—
That golden-shaded, half-revealèd time,
When Israel's patriarchs fed their wealth of herds
About the myrrhine shades of Araby,
And every passion out of their chaste hearts
Gushed freely forth, and wove a separate song.
But, more than all, to the tormented King
That rhythm was full of memories ;—fold by fold
The grey loose veil of long-forgotten Time
Shrunk back before the mystic minstrelsy ;
He was once more the simple Benjamite,
The gallant Boy, the innocent, the brave,
The choicest and the goodliest of his peers ; *
He was once more the owner of a life
Whose moments were all feathered, and kept cool
From scorching passion by continuous airs
Of gaysome hope and self-contenting joy.
Awful command and perilous empery
The difficult mean of power,—the hard, hard, task
To be at once a lord and servitor,
To rule allotted kingdoms and obey,
The caster of the lot, the King of Kings,
Had set no snaring choice before him, *then*.

* 1 Sam. ix. 2.

How often in the vain and weary guest,
When he pursued his father's wandering droves
All down the slopes of pleasant Ephraim
Thro' Shalisha and Shalim, had his ear
Drunk in the burthen of that antique tune
Giving him brotherhood with stranger-lands :
Oft too the maid, whose image ever lived
Within his breast, stronger than all real things,
Returning homeward when the expiring Sun
Mingled its life-blood with the waning light,
Had clothed her long farewell in that rich form,
While he, expecting on some distant height
His starlit watch, sent back such loud response
As made a chorus of the echoing hills.

As when the surges of the midland sea
Break on the carious, citron-fruited, shore
Of Western Italy in morn's grey prime,
Slowly above the coasting Apennine,
The sun appearing meets the wallowing foam
And pierces it with light, till every wave
Loses its frowning aspect and now sports
About the myrtles, showering precious gifts,
Rare diamond globes and flecks of liquid gold :
So to the fury of the darkened Spirit
The sunrise of that harmony unveiled
Its beauty, making beautiful, so fell,

Transformed from out its former terrible shape,
The passion into tender sympathy.
Tears, blessed tears, in full profusion burst
From the dry sockets, breaking up the dams
And foul embankments, arts of ill had raised
Against all holy natural impulses.

From the prostration of his body' and soul
Saul rose, but as a man who long had lain
Wasted by dire disease,—pale, sorrowful,
Yet calm and almost smiling in his woe.
And did He not rejoice, that marvellous youth,
To see his pious mediating work
Consummated? Glowed not his downy cheek
With a serene delight, while fade away
The notes in lingering trills and solemn sighs?
But is his countenance of other hue
When Saul, in generous gratefulness profuse,
Proffers him jewels, wealth, and titled name,
Or other gift, whate'er his soul might crave.
A pallid tremor swept across his face,
As with a suppliant but determinate mien
He speaks, "Oh! deem not, deem not, gracious Lord!
That I, of mean estate, dare scorn the boon
Thy sovereign bounty would pour forth on me,
But yet no gems, no gold, no praise for me!
Glory and praise and honor be to Him,

In the great circle of whose single will
I and my harp are most poor instruments,
His mightiness and goodness to proclaim.
Go forth into the clear and open air,
Look at all common things, and thou wilt find
The form of all this outward Universe
Is as the Body of the Living God :
And every movement, odour, shade, and hue
Is animate with music as divine
As lute, or harp, or dulcimer : to thee,
The' anthemnal voice of aged cataracts,
The jovial murmurings of summer brooks,
The carol that emblazoned flowers send up
From the cold earth in spring-time, the wild hymn
Of winter blasts sitting among the pines,
And the articu'late pulse of that large heart
Which beats beneath the Ocean, will be parts
Of the eternal symphony sublime,
In which the Maker of all worlds reveals
The spirit-depths of his untiring Love ;
If then all Nature, rightly asked, can do
What I have done, how dare I claim reward ? ”

In sooth it was a wondrous sight to see
How far above the proud and vaunted king,
In all the moral majesty of being,
That moment stood the God-selected child.

Thrice through the chamber with irresolute step
Saul paced, and pressed his hand upon his temples,
As if to hide the passing cloud of shame,
Then answering not a word, and motioning
That David should retire, in thoughtfulness
Or prayer, he past into the outer hall.

DECIUS BRUTUS,

ON THE COAST OF PORTUGAL.

“Having traversed the whole of the country to the very coast, the conqueror at last turned his standards, but not until, with a certain dread of sacrilege and conscious horror, he had discovered the Sun sinking into the ocean, and its fire overwhelmed by the waters.”—FLORUS.

NEVER did Day, her heat and trouble o'er,
Proclaim herself more blest,
Than when, beside that Lusitanian shore,
She wooed herself to rest :

And, freed from all that cumbrous-gilded dress
That pleased the lusty noon,
Lay down in her thin-shaded loveliness,
Cool as the coming moon.

There stood the gentlest and the wildest growth
Together in the calm,
The nightingale's long song was over both,
A dream of bliss and balm.

Pale-amber fruit among the cloistering leaves
Hung redolent and large,
Strong-spikèd aloes topped the broad rock-eaves
Above that fair sea-marge.

When through a thunder-cleft, now summer-dry,
A loosely-straggling band,
Plated in war's offensive blazonry,
Descended on the strand.

Men of flint brows, hard hands and hearts, were they,
Hunters of weaker men,
Shedders of blood for pleasure and for prey,
Wolves of the Roman den.

From their great home they had come out so far,
Nor ever loss or shame
Had lowered their fierce pride, they likened war
To pestilence or flame.

Frighting the tongueless caves with untuned cries,
They leapt from stone to stone ;
But last, and lingering, with unheedy eyes,
The leader came alone.

And suddenly upon the clear-edged orb,
Fast verging to the sea,
He gazed, like one whom music doth absorb
In mournful reverie.

His burly limbs were frosted with strange cold,
His blood grew half-asleep,
Beholding the huge corpse of ruddy gold
Let down into the deep.

At last to that wild crew he called aloud,
“ O soldiers ! we have been
Too daring-hardy,—we have been too proud,—
Too much have done and seen.

“ It is a venturous and unholy thing
To try the utmost bound
Of possibility,—our froward wing
Has reached forbidden ground.

“ We stand upon the earth’s extremest edge,
Beside the sacred bed
Of the Sun-god,—it is a privilege
Too lofty not to dread.”—

But they were drunk with glory as with wine,
They heard him not that day ;
That coast to them was nothing but a sign
Of Rome’s earth-circling sway ;

Till when, like dancers by amazing thunder
 Stunned in their mad career,
Their bold mid-revel ceased for very wonder,
 Their insolence for fear.

For they had caught a sound, first quivering low,
 Then widening o'er the brine,
As of a river slowly poured into
 A red-hot iron mine.*

And with confederate looks and held-in breath,
 They watched the molten round
Losing its form, the sweltering ooze beneath,
 To that terrific sound.

The hissing storm toward the darkening land
 A heated west-wind bore ;
They closed their ears, they crouched upon the sand,
 But heard it more and more.

They saw the whole full Ocean boil and swell,
 Receiving such a guest
As elemental Light inscrutable,
 Within its patient breast.

* For the notion of the fearful noise which accompanied the fall and quenching of the sun in the Great Western Ocean, consult Strabo, lib. iii ; Juvenal, xiv. 279 ; Ausonius, epist. xviii. The wide credit which this local tradition obtained may be inferred from the serious refutation of the physical fact in the second Book of the Cyclic Theory of Cleomedes.

At last into the void of dreary space
The tumult seemed to roll,
And left no other noise on Nature's face
Than the waves' muffled toll.

But to their first mistempered haughtiness
Those hearts returned no more,—
They were encumbered with a sore distress,
Crushed to the very core.

The chief this while had stood apart, and bowed
In penitential pain
His stanch war-soul, till that now-supple crowd
His voice thus reached again :—

“ Oh what a sanctuary have we profaned
In this unblest emprise !
Oh that a jealous wrath may be restrained
By timely sacrifice !

“ On these crag-altars let our choicest spoil
Be laid with humblest prayer ;
For what avails our valour or our toil
If angered Gods be there ?

“ As ye hold dear the memory of Rome,
Implore the Lords of Heaven,
That we once more may bear our victories home,
This sacrilege forgiven ! ”

So was it done : columns of vaporous grey
 Rose from that lone sea-glen,—
 And Brutus and his followers turned away,
 Wiser and gentler men.

* * * * *

Thus, in the time when Fancy was the nurse
 Of our young human heart,
 The Power whose voice is in the universe,
 And through each inmost part

Vibrates, and in one total melody
 Man and Creation blends,
 Worked out by marvel and by prodigy
 Its high religious ends.

Knowledge to us another scene displays,
 We fear nor sight nor sound ;
 Nature has bared her bosom, and we gaze
 Into the vast profound.

A myriad of her subtlest harmonies
 Our learnèd ears can tell ;
 We dare those simple listeners to despise,
 But do we *feel* as well ?

A GRECIAN ANECDOTE.

(FROM HERODOTUS.)

How Sparta lusted after orient gold
 And bartered faith for wealth she dared not use,
 Is as severe a tale as e'er was told
 The pride of man to conquer and confuse.*

Therefore forget not what that nature was,
 That once availed the base desire to foil,
 When sought the Ionian Aristagoras
 To mingle Sparta in his distant broil.

How thick the perils of that far emprise,
 How dim the vista cunningly displayed,
 The king discerned with clear and practised eyes,
 And bade the stranger court Athenian aid.

* "Avarice appears to have been the vice to which the Spartan was most prone; money, for which he had scarcely any use, a bait which even the purest patriotism could seldom resist."—THIRLWALL.

To people, as to prince, appeal was vain,—
Vain the dark menace—vain the shadowy gibe,—
But the wise envoy would not bend again
His homeward steps, till failed the wonted bribe.

A suppliant at the regal hearth he stood,
Nor ever thought that proffer to withhold,
Because about them, in her careless mood,
Played the king's child, a girl, some nine years old.

Ten—twenty—forty talents rose the bait ;—
Strange feeling glistened in those infant eyes,
That gazed attentive on the grave debate,
And seemed to search its meaning in surprise.

Yet fifty now had well secured the prey,
Had not a little hand tight clasped his arm,
And a quick spirit uttered, " Come away,
Father,—that man is there to do you harm."

Not unaccepted such pure omen came ;
That gentle voice the present God revealed,—
And back the Ionian chief returned in shame,
Checked by the virtue of that simple shield.

THE DREAM OF PILATE'S WIFE.

“When he (Pilate) was set down on the judgment-seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream, because of him.”

MATT. xxvii. 19.

A ROMAN soldier from long toil released,
 Beneath his native village vine,
 Rejoiced his friends with wonders of the East,
 And most of Palestine :

Of that dark people, separate and severe,
 Resting expectant of a day
 When a divine Redeemer should appear,
 And make the world their prey.

Much he recounted of a Prophet mild,
 In whom the Roman ruler saw
 No guilt, but yielded to their clamour wild
 And claim of ancient law.

“This Pontius Pilate ” (so the soldier told)
 “Possessed a fair and faithful wife,
 Who prayed him from such fury to withhold
 That just man's precious life.—

“ For she had suffered greatly in a dream
Concerning him, and urged her Lord
Arigh this solemn warning to esteem,
And take the Gods' award.—

“ But all his peaceful words the men of blood
With taunt and tumult thundered down,
And Jesus passed at last close where I stood
With cross and mocking crown.—

“ I know not what that is which some call fear,
But when I caught that Prophet's eye,
I felt as if it were my father here,
Who was led forth to die.—

“ While opposite me that poor matron fixed
On him her miserable eyes,—
—A long, long, gaze in which were strangely mixed
Shame, sorrow, and surprise.—

“ From that sad day, by truthful men 'twas said
That ever, weary and forlorn,
Like one just back from death, she left her bed,
Winter or summer morn.

“ And many' a night, though worn with daily care,
She kept herself awake in pain,
Crying, ' I will not sleep, I could not bear
To dream that dream again !'

“ Like that Cassandra, famed in Troy’s old song,
She seemed endowed with piteous power
All evils to foresee, yet was not strong
To stay them for one hour.

“ She has been often seen, a dead-white shade,
Standing against some dark hill-side,—
That olive-mount where Jesus was betrayed,
That other where he died.

“ But what the Voice or Vision of the gloom
That struck her soul with power divine,
Sped from the Gods, or wandering from the tomb,
She gave no word or sign.”

THE FALL OF ALIPIUS.

WHEN gentle Gratian ruled the Roman west,
And with unvigorous virtues thought to hold
That troubled balance in perpetual rest,
And crush with good intent the bad and bold,
The youth Alipius for the first time saw
The Mother of civility and law.

* From the Confessions of St. Augustin.

Mother in truth, but yet as one who now
By her disloyal children tended ill
Should sit apart, with hand upon her brow,
Moaning her sick desires and feeble will ;
So Rome was pictured to the subtler eye,
That could through words the soul of things descry.

But no such vision of the truth had He
Who with full heart passed under the old wall,
A Roman moulded by that sun and sea
Which lit and laved the infant Hannibal,
One who with Afric blood could still combine
The civic memories of a Roman line.

To him was Rome whatever she had been,
Republican, Cesarean, unforgot,
As much the single undisputed Queen,
As if the Empire of the East was not,—
Fine gold and rugged iron fused and cast
Into one image of the glorious Past :

And on a present throne to heaven up-piled,
Of arches, temples, basilics and halls,
He placed his Idol, while before her filed
Nations to gild and glut her festivals ;
And of her might the utterance was so loud,
That every other living voice was cowed.

Possessed by this idea, little heed
At first he gave the thickening multitude,
That met and passed him in their noisy speed,
Like hounds intent upon the scent of blood,
For all the City was that day astir,
Tow'ard the huge Flavian Amphitheatre.

Yet soon his sole attention grew to scan
That edifice whose walls might rather seem
The masonry of Nature than of man,
In size and figure a Titanic dream,
That could whole worlds of lesser men absorb
Within the embrace of one enormous orb.

The mighty tragedies of skill and strife,
That there in earnest death must ever close,
Exciting palates which no tastes of life
Could to a sense of such delight dispose,
Swept by his fancy with an hundred names,
The pomps and pageantries of Roman games.

Why should he not pass onward with that tide
Of passionate enchantment? why not share
The seeds of pleasure Nature spread so wide,
And gave the heart of men like common air?
Why should that be to him a shame and sin,
Which thousands of his fellows joy'd to win?

But ere this thought could take perspicuous form,
His Will arose and fell'd it at a blow ;
For he had felt that instinct's fever-storm
Lash his young blood to fury long ago,—
And in the Circus had consumed away
Of his best years how many' a wanton day !

Till the celestial guardian of his soul
Led him the great Augustin's voice to hear,
And soon that better influence o'er him stole,
A reverend master and companion dear,
From whom he learnt in his provincial home
Wisdom scarce utter'd in the schools of Rome :

“ How wide Humanity's potential range,—
From Earth's abysses to serenest Heaven,—
From the poor child of circumstance and change,
By every wind of passion tossed and driven,
To the established philosophic mind,
The type and model of the thing designed :

“ And how this work of works in each is wrought,
By no enthusiast leap to good from ill,
But by the vigorous government of thought,
The unrelaxing continence of will,—
Where little habits their invisible sway
Extend, like body's growth, from day to day.”

By meditations such as these sustained
He stoutly breasted that on-coming crowd,
Then, as in stupor, at one spot remained,
For thrice he heard his name repeated loud,
And close before him there beheld in truth
Three dearest comrades of his Afric youth.

O joy ! to welcome in a stranger land
Our homeliest native look and native speech,
To feel that in one pressure of the hand
There is a world of sympathy for each ;
And if old friendliness be there beside,
The meeting is of bridegroom and of bride.

What questions asked that waited not reply !
What mirthful comment on apparent change !
Till the three raised one gratulating cry,—
“ Arrived just then ! how fortunate,—how strange !
Arrived to see what they ne'er saw before,
The fight between the Daunian and the Moor.

“ One graceful-limbed and lofty as a palm,
The other moulded like his mountain-pine ;
Each with his custom'd arms content and calm,
In his own nation each of princely line,—
Two natures separate as the sun and snow
Battling to death to make a Roman show !”—

—Alipius, with few words and earnest mien,
Answered, “ That he long since had stood apart
From those ferocious pleasures, and would wean
Those whom he loved from them with all his heart,
Yet, as his counsel could have little power,
Where should they meet the morrow,—at what hour ?”

Their shafts of mockery from his virtuous head
Fell to the ground,—so, using ruder might,
Amid applauding bystanders, they said,
“ They would divert him in his own despite,”
And bore him forward, while in fearless tone
He cried, “ my mind and sight are still mine own.”

His body a mere dead-weight in their hands,
His angry eyes in proud endurance closed,
They placed him where spectators from all lands
In eager expectation sat disposed,
While in the distance still, before, behind,
The people gathering were as rushing wind :

Which ever rising grew into a storm
Of acclamations, when, at either end,
The combatant displayed his perfect form,
Brandished his arms, rejoicing to expend
His life in fight at least,—at least reclaim
A warrior’s privilege from a captive’s shame.

As rose before Amphion's notes serene
The fated City of heroic guilt,
Alipius thus his soul and sense between
Imagination's strong defence up-built,
With soft memorial music, dreamy strains
Of youthful happinesses, loves, and pains.

His stony seat seems on the Libyan coast,—
Augustin on one side, and on the other
Monica, for herself beloved, yet most
By him regarded as Augustin's mother ;
And from far off resounds the populous roar
As but the billows booming on the shore.

Never can he desert the truth he drew
From those all-honoured lips,—never can yield
To savage appetite, and fresh imbrue
That soul in filth to which had been revealed
The eternal purities that round it lie,
The Godhead of its birth and destiny.

—Now trumpets clanging forth the last command
Gave place to one tremendous pause of sound,
Silence like that of some rich-flowering land
With lava-torrents raging underground,
Scarce for one moment safe from such outbreak
As shall all nature to its centre shake.

And soon in truth it came ;—the first sharp blows
 Fell at long intervals as aimed with skill,
 Then grew expressive of the passion-throes
 That followed calm resolve and prudent will,—
 Till wild ejaculations took their part
 In the death-strife of hand and eye and heart.

“ Habet,—Hoc habet,—Habet !” * What a cry !
 As if the Circus were one mighty mouth
 Invading the deep vale of quiet sky
 With avalanche melted in the summer-drouth,—
 Articulate tumult from old earth upborne,
 Delight and ire and ecstasy and scorn !

Sat then Alipius silent there alone,
 With fast-shut eyes and spirit far away ?
 Remained he there as stone upon the stone,
 While the flushed conqueror asked the sign to slay
 The stricken victim, who despairing dumb
 Waited the sentence of the downward thumb ?

The shock was too much for him—too, too strong
 For that poor Reason and self-resting Pride ;
 And every evil fury that had long
 Lain crouching in his breast leaped up and cried
 “ Yield, yield at once, and do as others do,
 We are the Lords of all of them and you.”

* He is hit—he has got it !

The Love of contest and the Lust of blood
Dwell in the depths of man's original heart,
And at mere shows and names of wise and good
Will not from their barbaric homes depart,
But half-asleep await their time, and then
Bound forth, like tigers from their jungle-den :

And all the curious wicker-work of thought,
Of logical result and learned skill,
Of precepts with examples inter-wrought,
Of high ideals, and determinate will,—
The careful fabric of ten thousand hours,
Is crushed beneath the moment's brutal powers.

Thus fell Alipius ! He, so grave and mild,
Added the bloody sanction of his hand
To the swift slaughter of that brother-child
Of his own distant Mauritanian land,
Seeming content his very life to merge
In the confusion of that foaming surge.

The rage subsided ; the deep sandy floor
Sucked the hot blood ; the hook, like some vile prey,
Dragged off the noble body of the Moor ;
The Victor, doomed to die some other day,
Enjoyed the plaudits purposelessly earned,—
And back Alipius to himself returned.

There is a fearful waking unto woes,
 When sleep arrests her charitable course,
 Yet far more terrible the line that flows
 From ebrious passion to supine remorse ;
 Then welcome death,—but that the sufferers feel
 Wounds such as theirs no death is sure to heal !

But the demoniac power that well can use
 Self-trust and Pride as instruments of ill,
 Can such prostration to its ends abuse,
 And poison from Humility distil :
 “ Why struggle more ? Why strive, when strife is vain,
 —An infant’s muscles with a giant’s chain ?”

So in his own esteem debased, and glad
 To take distraction whencesoe’er it came,
 Though in his heart of hearts entirely sad,
 Alipius lived to pleasure and to fame * :
 Sometimes remindful of his youth’s high vow,
 Of hopes and aspirations, fables now.

When came to Rome his sire of moral lore,
 That Master, whom his love could ne’er forget,
 He too a proud Philosopher no more,
 He too his past reviewing with regret,

* Alipius was appointed Assessor of Justice to the treasurer of Italy.

But preaching One, who can on man bestow
Truth to be wise and strength to keep him so.

The secret of that strength the Christian sage
To his regained disciple there unsealed,
Giving his stagnant soul a war to wage
With weapons that at once were sword and shield ;
And thenceforth ever down Tradition glide
Augustin and Alipius side by side *.

And in this strength years afterward arose
That aged priest Telemachus, who cast
His life among those brutalising shows,
And died a willing victim and the last,
Leaving that temple of colossal crime
In silent battle with almighty Time.

* They went together to Milan, where they were both baptised by St. Ambrose on Easter Eve, A. D. 387. Thence they returned to Africa, and lived in monastic community in their native town of Tagaste. Alipius afterwards removed to Hippo, and visited St Jerome in Palestine: he was consecrated Bishop of Tagaste, A.D. 393: his festival is kept in the Roman Catholic Church on the 15th of August.

THE DEPARTURE OF ST. PATRICK FROM
SCOTLAND.

FROM HIS OWN "CONFESSIONS."



TWICE to your son already has the hand of God been
shown,
Restoring him from alien bonds to be once more your
own,
And now it is the self-same hand, dear kinsmen, that
to-day
Shall take me for the third time from all I love away.

While I look into your eyes, while I hold your hands in
mine,
What force could tear me from you, if it were not all
divine ?
Has my love ever faltered ? Have I ever doubted yours ?
And think you I could yield me now to any earthly
lures ?

I go not to some balmier land in pleasant ease to rest,—
I go not to content the pride that swells a mortal
breast,—

I go about a work my God has chosen me to do ;
Surely the soul which is his child must be his servant too.

I seek not the great City where our sacred father dwells,—
I seek not the blest Eremites within their sandy cells,—
I seek not our Redeemer's grave in distant Palestine,—
Another, shorter pilgrimage, a lonelier path is mine.

When sunset clears and opens out the breadth of western
sky,
To those who in yon mountain isles protect their flocks
on high
Loom the dark outlines of a land, whose nature and
whose name
Some have by harsh experience learned, and all by evil
fame.

Oh, they are wild and wanton men, such as the best will
be,
Who know no other gifts of God but to be bold and free,
Who never saw how states are bound in golden bonds of
law,
Who never knew how strongest hearts are bent by holy
awe.

When first into their pirate hands I fell, a very boy,
Skirting the shore from rock to rock in unsuspecting joy,

I had been taught to pray, and thus those slavish days
 were few,
 A wondrous hazard brought me back to liberty and you.

But when again they met me on the open ocean field,
 And might of numbers pressed me round and forced my
 arm to yield,
 I had become a man like them, a selfish man of pride,
 I could have cursed the will of God for shame I had not
 died.

And still this torment haunted me three weary years, until
 That summer night,—among the sheep,—upon the sea-
 ward hill,
 When God of his miraculous grace, of his own saving
 thought,
 Came down upon my lonely heart and rested unbesought !

That night of light ! I cared not that the day-star glim-
 mered soon,
 For in my new-begotten soul it was already noon ;
 I knew before what Christ had done, but never felt till
 then
 A shadow of the love for him that he had felt for men !

Strong faith was in me,—on the shore there lay a stranded
 boat,
 I hasted down, I thrust it out, I felt it rock afloat ;

With nervous arm and sturdy oar I sped my watery way,
The wind and tide were trusty guides,—one God had I
and they.

As one from out the dead I stood among you free and
whole,
My body Christ could well redeem, when he had saved
my soul ;
And perfect peace embraced the life that had been only
pain,
For Love was shed upon my head from everything, like
rain.

Then on so sweetly flowed the time, I almost thought to
sail
Even to the shores of Paradise in that unwavering gale,
When something rose and nightly stood between me and
my rest,
Most like some one, beside myself, reflecting in my breast.

I cannot put it into words, I only know it came,
A sense of self-abasing weight, intolerable shame,
“ That I should be *so* vile that not one tittle could be
paid
Of that enormous debt which Christ upon my soul had
laid ! ”

This yielded to another mood, strange objects gathered
 near,
 Phantoms that entered not by eye, and voices not by ear,
 The land of my injurious thrall a gracious aspect wore,
 I yearned the most toward the forms I hated most before.

I seemed again upon that hill, as on that blissful night,
 Encompassed with celestial air and deep retiring light,
 But sight and thought were fettered down, where glim-
 mering lay below
 A plain of gasping, struggling, men in every shape of woe.

Faint solemn whispers gathered round, " Christ suffered
 to redeem,
 Not you alone, but such as these, from this their savage
 dream,—
 Lo, here are souls enough for you to bring to him, and
 say,
 These are the earnest of the debt I am too poor to pay."

A cloud of children freshly born, innumerable bands,
 Passed by me with imploring eyes and little lifted hands,
 And all the Nature, I believed so blank and waste and
 dumb,
 Became instinct with life and love, and echoed clearly
 " Come ! "

“ Amen ! ” said I ; with eager steps a rude descent I
tried,
And all the glory followed me like an on-coming tide,
With trails of light about my feet I crossed the darkling
wild,
And, as I touched each sufferer’s hand, he rose and gently
smiled.

Thus night on night the vision came, and left me not
alone,
Until I swore that in that land should Christ be preached
and known,
And then at once strange coolness passed on my long
fever’d brow,
As from the flutter of light wings : I feel, I feel it now !

And from that moment unto this, this last and proving
one,
I have been calm and light at heart as if the deed were
done ;
I never thought how hard it was our earthly loves to lay
Upon the altar of the Lord, and watch them melt away !

Speak, friends ! speak what you will,—but change those
asking looks forlorn,
—Sustain me with reproachful words,—uphold me with
your scorn :

—I know God's heart is in me, but my human bosom
 fears
 Those drops that pierce it as they fall, those full and
 silent tears.

These comrades of my earliest youth have pledged their
 pious care
 To bear me to the fronting coast, and gently leave me
 there :
 It may be I shall fall at once, with little toil or need,—
 Heaven often takes the simple will for the most perfect
 deed :

Or, it may be that from that hour beneath my hand may
 spring
 A line of glories unachieved by hero, sage, or king ;—
 That Christ may glorify himself in this ignoble name,
 And shadow forth my endless life in my enduring fame.

—All as He wills ! Now bless me, mother,—your cheek
 is almost dry :—
 Farewell, kind brothers !—only pray ye may be blest as I :
 Smile on me, sisters !—when death comes near each of
 you, still smile,
 And we shall meet again somewhere, within a little
 while !

THE DEATH OF ALMANZOR.

Almanzor was the Campeador of the Moors in Spain, the guardian of the fainéant King Hixem ;—it is thought he aspired to the crown.

Two and fifty times Almanzor had the Christian host
o'erthrown ;
Still again the Christians gathered, by despair the stronger
grown.

Cityless and mountain-refuged they approached the
Douro's shores,
Falling, as a storm in summer, on the unsuspecting Moors.

Valiantly the Moslem rallied, all unordered as they stood,
Till the Evening, in her shadow, bore them safe across
the flood.

Then they cried, " The stream 's between us ; now can
we their schemes defy ;"—
But the great Almanzor spoke,—“ I have retreated, and
I die.”

“Allah, keep us from such evil!” prayed the faithful,
 crowding round,
While the wise Arabian leech his wounds examined,
 staunched, and bound.

“Lightly has the Christian touched thee,—much for thee
 is yet in store ;
Many are thy years, but Allah gives his conquerors many
 more.

“Do not the huge bells, that summoned pilgrims to
 Iago’s shrine,
Hang within our prophet’s temple, and confess thy work
 divine ?

“What is it that one small moment thou and thine did
 seem to yield,
Wielders of Mohammed’s sword and guarded by Mo-
 ammed’s shield ?

“Few shall be their boastful hours,—thou in wrath wilt
 rise again ;
Thou shalt cleanse the mountains of them, like the cities
 and the plain.”

So consoled the duteous servant, but he could not still
 the cry
Bursting from Almanzor’s lips,—“I have retreated, and
 I die.”

Once he rose and feebly spoke,—“ My friends, I perish
of self-scorn ;
Shame is come on my white hairs,”—and thus he died the
morrow-morn.

Fiercest hands in sorrow trembled, as they deeply dug the
grave,
On the spot where Azrael's lance had struck the Captain
of the brave.

There his spirit's dearest brethren, closest comrades of
his glory,
Laid him as a Moslem martyr, in his garments torn and
gory.

There too, from his side unsevered, lay his old familiar
brand,
Never to be touched and tarnished by a less victorious
hand.

From a chest that in his marches ever had been borne
before him,
Holy dust from two and fifty battle-fields was sprinkled
o'er him ;

While arose the imprecation, “ Utter Death to Christian
Spain ! ”
Praise to Jesus and his mother, that the vow was vowed
in vain !

A LEGEND OF CORFU.

THERE'S much of earth that Nature dowers
For others' glory than its own,
Surrounded by contending powers
That would possess its beauty's throne.

Who shall be lord of fair Corfu ?
Who shall repel the Genoese
Now outcast, but in strength anew
Returning vengeful o'er the seas ?

Who shall protect this lovely land
From such vile factions as of old
By freedom seem'd to understand
Mere thirst of blood and lust of gold ?

Upon the fratricidal brink
The nation stood in senseless rage ;
Well might the reverend Patriarch shrink
From such a storm at such an age !

But in the midst his form he cast,
And, to each other deaf, the crowd
Trembled before him, and the blast
Of passion ceased, and pride was bow'd.

Feeling how near was right to wrong,
They will'd their country's fate to trust
To Him whose justice could be strong,
As is his strength for ever just.

The bravest galley soon was mann'd,
And on the deck an altar raised,
Blest by the Prelate's holy hand,
While music rose and tapers blazed.

And to the Blessed Sacrament
Nobles and priests and people vow'd
That they would take this chance, content
As if God's self should speak aloud.

Then all pronounced themselves accursed,
Unless to him whose sign should wave
Above the ship they met the first,
Their Island and their truth they gave.

Past Vido, past St. Salvador,
The galley sail'd with numerous train :
No stranger craft approached the shore,
Until they sought the open main.

There in one line two vessels rode,
And thus had each an equal right ;
From this the fatal Crescent glow'd,
From that the Lion leapt to sight.

Much marvell'd these, no doubt, to meet
That galley like a church attired,
Those litanies resounding sweet,
Those tapers in the day-light fired.

To the Venetian, to the Turk,
The Bishop the same message told,
And none could mark within him lurk
Or hope, or fear, so well controll'd.

Then he proclaimed—" O rival powers,
Whichever best our isle shall woo,
Whichever first shall touch our towers,
He shall be lord of fair Corfu."

All sails were braced, all row'd amain,
On flew the ships in even chase,
But soon 'twas seen with bitter pain,
The Turk was foremost in the race.

—Now silence on all decks prevails,
Silence on all yon crowded shores,
Only are heard the changing sails
And lashes of the struggling oars.

A booming sound the air has rent—
From the Venetian guns a ball
Has cleft the sky, and just when spent
Has crash'd upon the city wall.

“ 'Tis thus that Venice claims her bride,”
Shouted the bold Venetian crew,
And echoes rose from every side,
“ Venice is Lord of fair Corfu.”

“ By Heaven itself that thought inspired
Has barr'd the Moslem from his prey,”
The Patriarch cried, with rapture fired,
While shrunk the Infidel away.

So from yon close Albanian coast
The Turk has ever gazed with greed
On that bright Isle, and once his host
Surprised it in its sudden need :

But God, regarding Christian men,
Again aroused heroic aid,
And Schullenberg who saved it then
Still stands upon the Esplanade.

HENRY OF ASTI AND PIERO ZENO.*

SEE between the moonlit myrtles, unbetrayed by sound or
gleam,

Henry of Asti,—Piero Zeno,—landing, silent as a dream :

Henry of Asti, Priest and Soldier, Legate of the Pontiff's
will,

Zeno, the Republic's Captain, pledged her glory to fulfil.

See them winding through the thicket up to Smyrna's
ancient wall,

Where by Moslem bands beleaguered, Christian hearts for
succour call.

Sure of their victorious morrow, weary warriors strew the
ground,

When the known Venetian war-cry, as by magic,
thunders round.

Masked and multiplied by darkness, strike the few, the
many fly,—

* A. D. 1341.

Chase and plunder will not slacken till the morn ascends
the sky.

Then, no more by cunning bye-paths,—freely scattered
o'er the plain,—
Soldiers, full of gain and glory, seek their secret ships
again.

But that ruined church has checked them,—by disordered
symbols shown
To the Evangelist devoted pious Venice holds her own.

So, their glad career arresting, spoke the Legate, “ We
must raise,
From this long-abandoned altar, sacrifice of prayer and
praise.

“ In the night's unequal conflict, hardly had our strength
been tried :
Felt we not our gracious Patron fight in spirit by our side ? ”

Loud “ Amen ” the troop replying knelt and steeped in
holy joy
Souls that seemed but now infuriate with the passion to
destroy.—

When at length the foe defeated, from their mountain
fastness, saw,

How unreal the might and numbers, whom the dark had
clothed with awe.

Down they bounded, as by instinct that might slake their
burning shame
In the blood of some far straggler, some who loitered
while they came :

Conscious that the warned Venetians need but raise the
bended knee,
And, despite this tardy valour, safely reach the neighbour-
ing sea,

Flight was ready, yet the Legate questioned with one look
his friend,
And the Captain answered—" Move not ! I am with you
to the end.

" Be thy blessed work consummate ! undisturbed thy
priestly care :
God can save us if he wills not we the martyr-crown
should wear."

" Seek the Ships," conjured the soldiers : louder grew the
clamorous foe ;
'Mid the pauses, like a river, seemed the solemn chant to
flow ;

One the holy words intoning, one responding firm and
clear,
Cast the very raging Heathen into trance of silent fear.

Nor until those noble spirits, satisfied with heavenly food,
Turned in calm disdain upon them, could they quench
their wrath in blood !

Thus were slain these faithful warders of the names and
faith they bore,
Not forgetting Rome or Venice, but remembering Christ
the more.

BERTRAND DU GUESCLIN.

A BRETON BALLAD.

I.

'Twas on the field of Navarrète,
When Trestamare had sought
From English arms a safe retreat,
Du Guesclin stood and fought :
And to the brave Black Prince alone
He yielded up his sword ;—
So we must sing in mournful tone,
Until it be restored ;—

CHORUS.

Spin, spin, maidens of Brittany,
 And let not your Litany
 Come to an end,
 Before you have prayed
 The Virgin to aid
 Bertrand du Guesclin, our Hero and Friend.

II.

The Black Prince is a gentle knight ;
 And bade Du Guesclin name
 What ransom would be fit and right
 For his renown and fame ;
 " A question hard,"—says he, " yet since
 Hard Fortune on me frowns,
 I could not tell you less, good Prince,
 Than twenty thousand crowns."

CHORUS.

Spin, spin, &c.

III.

" Where find you all that gold, Sir Knight ?
 I would not have you end
 Your days in sloth and undelight
 Away from home and friend : "

“ O Prince of generous heart and just !
Let all your fears be stayed ;
For my twenty thousand crowns I trust
To every Breton maid.”

CHORUS.

Spin, spin, &c.

IV.

And he is not deceived, for we
Will never let him pine
In stranger towers beyond the sea,
Like a jewel in the mine !
No work but this shall be begun,—
We will not rest or dream,
Till twenty thousand crowns are spun
Du Guesclin to redeem.

CHORUS.

Spin, spin, &c.

V.

The Bride shall grudge the marriage morn,
And feel her joy a crime ;
The mother shall wean her eldest-born
A month before its time ;

No festal day shall idle by,
 No hour uncounted stand,
 The grandame in her bed shall die
 With the spindle in her hand :

CHORUS.

Spin, spin, women of Brittany,
 Nor let your Litany
 Come to an end,
 Before you have prayed
 The Virgin to aid
 Bertrand du Guesclin, our Hero and Friend.



BRETON FAITH.



A SUMMER nightfall on a summer sea !
 From sandy ridges wildering o'er the deep,
 The wind's familiar under-song recalls
 The fishermen to duty, though that eve
 To unversed eyes their embarkation seem'd
 Rather a work of festival than toil.
 Women were there in gay precise attire,
 Girls at their skirts, and boys before at play,
 And many an infant sweet asleep on arm.

Emulous which the first shall set his boat
Free-floating from the clutches of deep sand,
Men lean and strive, till one and two and all,
Poised in descent, receive the leaping crews ;
And following close where leads the ripply way
One craft of heavier freight and larger sail,
Serene and silent as the horizon moon,
That fair flotilla seeks the open main.

Some little room of waters sever'd now
Those seeming sons of peaceful industry
From their diseased and desperate fatherland,
That France, where reign'd and raged for many a year
Madness, (the fearful reservoir of strength
Which God will open, at his own high will,
In men and nations,) so that very babes
Would tear the mother-breast of ancient Faith
To suck the bloody milk of Liberty.
The Christian name was outcast there and then ;
For Power and Passion were the people's gods,
And every one that worshipped not must die.

The shore extended one thin glittering line,
When, at the watched-for tinkling of a bell,
Fast fall the sails, and round their captain-boat,
Which rested steady as the waters would,
Each other bent its own obedient prow,
Making imperfect rays about a sun :

Nor paused they long before great change of form
Came o'er that centre. From the uncouth deck
Rose a tall altar, 'broider'd curiously,
With clear-outcarven crucifix i' the midst
Of tapers, lambent in the gentle gale :
Before it stood the reverend-robed Priest,
Late a rude fisherman,—an awful head,
Veteran in griefs and dangers more than years,
Perchance not finely moulded, but as seen
There upright to the illuminating moon,
With silver halo rather than white hair,
Beauteous exceedingly !

So seem'd to feel
The tender eyes then fixed on him, while slow
And quiet, as when he perform'd the rites
Of his old village church on Sabbath morn,
He set all things in order and began
That Litany, which, gathering voice on voice,
Made vocal with the names of God and Christ,
And the communion of the blest in heaven,
Space that had lain long silent of all sound
Save the chance greetings of some parting ships,
And elemental utterances confused.

Oh ! never in high Roman basilic,
Prime dome of Art, or elder Lateran,
Mother of churches ! never at the shrine

That sprang the freshest from pure martyr-blood,
Or held within its clasp a nation's heart
By San Iago or Saint Denys blest,—
Never in that least earthly place of earth,
The Tomb where Death himself lay down and died,
The Temple of Man's new Jerusalem,—
Descended effluence more indeed divine,
More total energy of Faith and Hope,
And Charity for wrongs unspeakable,
Than on that humble scantling of the flock,
That midnight congregation of the Sea !

Rise not, good Sun ! hold back unwelcome Light,
That shall but veil the nations in new crime !
Or hide thy coming ; yet some little while
Prolong the stupor of exhausted sin,
Nor with thy tainted rays disturb this peace,
These hard-won fragmentary hours of peace,
That soon must sink before the warring world !

He hears them not ; beneath his splendour fades
That darkness luminous of Love and Joy ;
Quickly its aspect of base daily life
The little fleet recovering plied in haste
Its usual labour, lest suspicious foes
Might catch some secret in those empty nets ;
But every one there toiling in his heart

Was liken'd to those other Fishermen,
 Who on their inland waters saw the form
 Of Jesus toward them walking, firm and free.

* * * * *

One moment yet, ere the religious Muse
 Fold up these earnest memories in her breast,
 Nor leave unutter'd that one Breton name
 Which is itself a History—Quiberon !
 Was it not heinous ? was it not a shame
 Which goes beyond its actors, that those men,
 Simply adventuring to redeem their own—
 Their ravished homes, and shrines, and fathers' graves,
 Meeting that rampant and adulterous power
 On its own level of brute force, that they,
 Crushed by sheer numbers, should be made exempt
 From each humane and generous privilege,
 With which the civil use of later times
 Has smooth'd the bristling fierceness of old war,
 And perish armless,—one by one laid low
 By the cold sanction'd executioner !

Nor this alone ; for fervid love may say,
 That death to them, beneath the foulest hood,
 Would wear an aureole crown ; and martyr-palms
 Have grown as freely from dry felon dust,
 As e'er from field enriched with fame and song.

But when they asked the only boon brave men
Could from inclement conquerors humbly pray—
To die as men, and not fall blankly down
Into steep death like butcher'd animals,
But to receive from consecrated hands
Those seals and sureties which the Christian soul
Demands as covenants of eternal bliss,—
They were encounter'd by contemptuous hate,
And mockery, bitter as the crown of thorns.

Thus passed that night, their farewell night to earth,
Grave, even sad,—that should have been so full
Of faith nigh realised, of young and old,
Met hand in hand, indifferent of all time,
On the bright shores of immortality!
Till 'mid the throng about their prison-door,
In the grey dawn, a rustic voice conveyed
Some broken message to a captive's ear,
Low, and by cruel gaolers unperceived;
Which whisper, flitting fast from man to man,
Was like a current of electric joy,
Awakening smiles, and radiant upward looks,
And interchange of symbols spiritual,
Leaving unearthly peace.

So when soon came
The hour of doom, and through the palsied crowd

Passed the long file without a word or sound,
The image, gait, and bearing of each man,
In those his bonds, in that his sorry dress,
Defiled with dust and blood, perchance his own,
A squalid shape of famine and unrest,
Were that of some full-sail'd, magnificent ship,
That takes the whole expanse of sea and air
For its own service, dignifying both
As accessories of its single pride.

To read the sense and secret of this change,
Look where beside the winding path that leads
These noble warriors to ignoble death,
Rises a knoll of white, grass-tufted, sand,
Upon whose top, against the brightening sky,
Stands a mean peasant, tending with one hand
A heifer browsing on that scanty food.
To the slow-moving line below he turns
An indistinct, almost incurious, gaze,
While with a long right arm upraised in air
He makes strange gestures, source of ribald mirth
To some, but unregarded by the most.
—Yet could a mortal vision penetrate
Each motion of that scene, it might perceive
How every prisoner, filing by that spot,
Bows his bold head, and walks with lighter steps
Onward to rest but once and move no more :

For in that peasant stands the yearned-for Priest,
 Perilling life by this last act of love,
 And in those gestures are the absolving signs,
 Which send the heroes to their morning graves
 Happy as parents' kisses duly speed
 Day-weary children to their careless beds.

Such are memorials, and a hundred more,
 Which, by the pious traveller haply caught,
 Falling from lowly lips and lofty hearts,
 Regenerate outward nature, and adorn
 With blossoms brighter than the Orient rose,
 And verdure fresher than an English spring,
 The dull sand-hillocks of the Morbihan.

THE DEATH OF SARSFIELD.

WHEN Ireland's cities, one by one, beneath the Orange
 brand,
 Fell overawed or overpowered and lost their noble land,
 Still Limerick, with her own strong arm and Sarsfield's
 leading will,
 Wasted the conqueror's gathered force and foiled his
 ready skill.

Yet vain the strife when all was gone save honour and
despair,
When in three realms King James's flag was floating only
there :
Thus came the time when England's fleet three thousand
warriors bore,
Willing, yet sorrowing, banished hearts, to yon more
friendly shore.

There Sarsfield, now Earl Lucan named, devoted faith
and sword
To Him who for his exiled land had spread the royal
board ;
Without a country or a king he knew no better law,
Than serve the Grand Monarque, the foe of England and
Nassau !

Thus on the Neckar's bristling banks and by the blood-
bought Rhine,
Earl Lucan and his famed brigade would lead the gallant
line ;
Though often came the grievous thought to close a well-
won day,
That others fought for fatherland,—for gold and glory
they !

Until before some sturdy fort that checked the Gallic
pride,
His comrades from the raining bolts one moment bent
aside ;
And he, while rallying them to show "how glad they
were to meet
Those little friends they knew so well," *—fell stricken
at their feet !

The blood outspouting from his breast, they gently raised
him up,
With hollow hand he caught the stream and filled the
living cup,
Then slowly poured it on the ground, and, heaven-ward
gazing, cried,
" Oh God, that this were only shed for Ireland !"—and
so died.

Alas ! we cannot even die for what we love the best ;
On things we feel are little worth we lavish toil and rest,
While all, on which the hope of youth and faith of man-
hood beamed,
Is doomed to perish by our love and sorrow unredeemed.

* Historical.

THE ROCK OF COOK'S DEATH.

DOMAIN of England's enterprise ! thrones of the Southern
wave !

The brightest flower on all your shores is the memory of
the brave.

Between the mainland and a Rock, one gorgeous after-
noon,

A Spaniard of the ancient stamp had moored his brave
galloon.

The slanting rays amid the blue delighted to unfold
That Rock, until it glowed a mass of molten bronze and
gold.

The Captain, willing on his crew his learning to bestow,
Spoke out,—“ That Rock was twice as large some twenty
years ago :

“ For all the English ships that here for trade and water
come,
Strike off some fragments which they bear as patriot relics
home ;

“Relics of Cook, their countryman, who there was sadly slain,
As great a sailor as e'er tried the undiscovered main.

“These islands and a thousand more he opened to mankind,
And left his name, where'er he went, like a trail of light
behind.

“A soul so brave is as our own,—then let the good Priest
here
Say prayers to-morrow morn for Cook, the glorious
marinere.”

The Father murmured not—but one whose face was dark
with pride,
Said, “'Twas but some base heretic who thus had fitly
died.”

The Captain answered like a man of deeper heart than lore,
“If he had not our faith, his soul must want the prayers
the more.”

Thus was he silenced, and for Cook that matin mass was
said

Upon the very spot where he by savage hands had bled :

And all the while an Albatross upon the mast-head stood,
Turning an earnest gaze toward that Rock of gallant blood.

Till when the sacred office ceased, away it slowly moved
Its snow-white wings, as parting from some ancient haunt
beloved.

And never ship through perilous seas pursued a course
more true,
And never wealthier home returned a Captain and a crew.

PRINCE EMILIUS OF HESSEN-DARMSTADT.

FROM Hessen-Darmstadt every step to Moskwa's blazing
banks
Was Prince Emilius found in fight before the foremost
ranks ;
And when upon the icy waste that host was backward
cast,
On Beresina's bloody bridge his banner waved the last.

His valour shed victorious grace on all that dread retreat,
That path across the wildering snow, athwart the blind-
ing sleet ;
And every follower of his sword could all endure and dare,
Becoming warriors strong in hope or stronger in despair.

Now, day and dark, along the storm the demon Cossacks
 sweep,
 The hungriest must not look for food, the weariest must
 not sleep ;
 No rest, but death, for horse or man, whichever first
 shall tire ;—
 They see the flames destroy but ne'er may feel the
 saving fire.

Thus never closed the bitter night nor rose the savage
 morn,
 But from that gallant company some noble part was
 shorn,
 And, sick at heart, the Prince resolved to keep his pur-
 posed way,
 With stedfast forward looks, nor count the losses of the
 day.

At length beside a black-burnt hut, an island of the
 snow,—
 Each head in frigid stupor bent toward the saddle-bow,—
 They paused, and of that sturdy troop, that thousand
 banded men,
 At one unmeditated glance he numbered only ten !

Of all that high triumphant life that left his German
 home,

Of all those hearts that beat beloved or looked for love to
 come,
 This piteous remnant hardly saved his spirit overcame,
 While memory raised each friendly face and called each
 ancient name.

Then were his words serene and firm—" Dear brothers it
 is best
 That here, with perfect trust in Heaven, we give our
 bodies rest ;
 If we have borne, like faithful men, our part of toil and
 pain,
 Where'er we wake, for Christ's good sake, we shall not
 sleep in vain."

Some murmured, others looked, assent, they had no heart
 to speak ;
 Dumb hands were pressed, the pallid lip approached the
 callous cheek ;
 They laid them side by side ; and death to him at least
 did seem
 To come attired in mazy robe of variegated dream.

Once more he floated on the breast of old familiar Rhine,
 His mother's and one other smile above him seemed to
 shine ;

A blessèd dew of healing fell on every aching limb,
 Till the stream broadened and the air thickened and all
 was dim.

Nature has bent to other laws, if that tremendous night
 Passed o'er his frame exposed and worn and left no deadly
 blight ;
 Then wonder not that when refreshed and warm he woke
 at last,
 There lay a boundless gulf of thought between him and
 the past.

Soon raising his astonished head he found himself alone,
 Sheltered beneath a genial heap of vestments not his own ;
 The light increased, the solemn truth revealing more and
 more,—
 His soldiers corses self-despoiled closed up the narrow door.

That very hour, fulfilling good, miraculous succour came,
 And Prince Emilius lived to give this worthy deed to fame.
 O brave fidelity in death ! O strength of loving will !
 These are the holy balsam-drops that woful wars distil.

THE TRAGEDY OF THE LAC DE GAUBE IN
THE PYRENEES.

THE marriage blessing on their brows,
Across the Channel seas
And lands of gay Garonne, they reach
The pleasant Pyrenees :—
He into boyhood born again,
A son of joy and life,—
And she a happy English girl,
A happier English wife.

They loiter not where Argelés,
The chesnut-crested plain,
Unfolds its robe of green and gold
In pasture, grape, and grain ;
But on and up, where Nature's heart
Beats strong amid the hills,
They pause, contented with the wealth
That either bosom fills.

There is a Lake, a small round Lake,
High on the mountain's breast,
The child of rains and melted snows,
The torrent's summer rest,—

A mirror where the veteran rocks
May glass their peaks and scars,
A nether sky where breezes break
The sunlight into stars.

Oh ! gaily shone that little lake,
And Nature, sternly fair,
Put on a sparkling countenance
To greet that merry pair ;
How light from stone to stone they leapt,
How trippingly they ran ;
To scale the rock and gain the marge
Was all a moment's span !

“ See, dearest, this primæval boat,
So quaint, and rough, I deem
Just such an one did Charon ply
Across the Stygian stream :
Step in,—I will your Charon be,
And you a Spirit bold,—
I was a famous rower once
In college days of old.

“ The clumsy oar ! the laggard boat !
How slow we move along,—
The work is harder than I thought,—
A song, my love, a song ! ”

Then, standing up, she carolled out
So blithe and sweet a strain
That the long-silent cliffs were glad
To peal it back again.

He, tranced in joy, the oar laid down,
And rose in careless pride,
And swayed in cadence to the song
The boat from side to side :
Then clasping hand in loving hand,
They danced a childish round,
And felt as safe in that mid-lake
As on the firmest ground.

One poise too much !—He headlong fell,—
She, stretching out to save
A feeble arm, was borne adown
Within that glittering grave :—
One moment, and the gush went forth
Of music-mingled laughter,—
The struggling splash and deathly shriek
Were there the instant after.

Her weaker head above the flood,
That quick engulfed the strong,
Like some enchanted water-flower,
Waved pitifully long :—

Long seemed the low and lonely wail
Athwart the tide to fade ;
Alas ! that there were some to hear,
But never one to aid.

Yet not alas ! if Heaven revered
The freshly-spoken vow,
And willed that what was then made one
Should not be sundered now,—
If She was spared, by that sharp stroke,
Love's most unnatural doom,
The future lorn and unconsoled,
The unavoided tomb !

But weep, ye very Rocks ! for those,
Who, on their native shore,
Await the letters of dear news,
That shall arrive no more ;
One letter from a stranger hand,—
Few words are all the need ;
And then the funeral of the heart,
The course of useless speed !

The presence of the cold dead wood,
The single mark and sign
Of her so loved and beautiful,
That handiwork divine !

The weary search for his fine form
 That in the depth would linger,
 And late success,—Oh ! leave the ring
 Upon that faithful finger.

And if in life there lie the seed
 Of real enduring being ;
 If love and truth be not decreed
 To perish unforeseeing ;
 This Youth, the seal of death has stamped,
 Now time can wither never,
 This Hope, that sorrow might have damped,
 Is fresh and strong for ever.*

A SPANISH ANECDOTE.

It was a holy usage to record
 Upon each refectory's side or end
 The last mysterious Supper of our Lord,
 That meanest appetites might upward tend.

Within the convent Palace of old Spain
 Rich with the gifts and monuments of Kings,

* Mr. and Mrs. Patteson were drowned in the year 1831.

Hung such a picture, said by some to reign
The sovereign glory of those wondrous things.

A Painter of far fame,* in deep delight,
Dwelt on each beauty he so well discerned,
While, in low tones, a grey Geronomite
This answer to his ecstasy returned.

“Stranger ! I have received my daily meal
In this good company, now threescore years,
And Thou, whoe’er Thou art, canst hardly feel
How Time these lifeless images endears.

“Lifeless,—ah ! no : both Faith and Art have given
That passing hour a life of endless rest,
And every soul who loves the food of Heaven
May to that table come a welcome guest :

“Lifeless,—ah ! no : while in mine heart are stored
Sad memories of my brethren dead and gone,
Familiar places vacant round *our* board,
And still *that* silent Supper lasting on ;

“While I review my youth,—what I was then,—
What I am now, and ye, beloved ones all !
It seems as if *these* were the living men,
And *wæ* the coloured shadows on the wall.”

* Wilkie.

THE FUNERAL OF NAPOLEON.

ALL nature is stiff in the chill of the air,
 The sun looks around with a smile of despair ;
 'Tis a day of delusion, of glitter and gloom,
 As brilliant as glory, as cold as the tomb.

The pageant is passing—the multitude sways—
 Awaiting, pursuing, the line with its gaze,
 With the tramp of battalion, the tremor of drums,
 And the grave exultation of trumpets he comes.

It passes ! what passes ? He comes ! who is He ?
 Is it Joy too profound to be uttered in glee ?
 Oh, no ! it is Death, the Dethroner of old,
 Now folded in purple and girded with gold !

It is Death, who enjoys the magnificent car,
 It is Death, whom the warriors have brought from afar,
 It is Death, to whom thousands have knelt on the shore,
 And sainted the bark and the treasure it bore.

What other than He, in his terrible calm,
Could mingle for myriads the bitter and balm,
Could hush into silence this ocean of men,
And bid the wild passion be still in its den?

What other than He could have placed side by side
The chief and the humblest, that serving him died,
Could the blood of the past to the mourner atone,
And let all bless the name that has orphaned their own?

From the shades of the olive, the palm and the pine,
From the banks of the Moskwa, the Nile and the Rhine,
From the sands and the glaciers, in armament dim,
Come they who have perished for France and for Him.

Rejoice, ye sad Mothers, whose desolate years
Have been traced in the desert of earth by their tears,
The Children for whom ye have hearts that still burn,
In this triumph of Death—it is they that return.

And Ye in whose breast dwell the images true
Of parents that loved Him still better than you,
No longer lament o'er a cenotaph urn,
In this triumph of Death—it is they that return.

From legion to legion the watchword is sped—
“ Long life to the Emperor—life to the dead !”
The prayer is accomplished—his ashes remain
'Mid the people he loved, on the banks of the Seine.

In dominions of Thought that no traitor can reach,
 Through the kingdoms of Fancy, the regions of Speech,
 O'er the world of Emotions, Napoleon shall reign
 'Mid the people he loved, on the banks of the Seine.

Paris, Dec. 1840.

TO A REFORMER.

“ IN a large room,” thy SPIRIT's feet were set,*
 In space which is not space, illimitable,—
 Living the Life which is ineffable,
 Being a Feeling not a Thought ; while yet
 Bound to the body, in the rack and fret,
 Turmoil and striving, Thou wert capable
 Of rendering great ideas palpable,
 In actual forms, which men can ne'er forget.
 Thus didst Thou live Religion,—thus the scroll
 Of God, the visible Bible, was unfurled
 Before Thee, while the Sun of Deity glowed,
 And all the shapes of Truth, reflected, showed,
 On the immaculate tablet of thy soul,
 Through the “ dark chamber ” of this dismal world.†

* Psalm, xxxi. 9.

† Camera Oscura.

ON ALFRED OF ENGLAND.

Alfred judged, and we have his own words before us grounded on such judgment, that it is better to permit the continuance of a defective law, than to destroy the foundation upon which all laws depend,—respect for established authority,—which sudden changes, even for the better, are apt to undermine.

PALGRAVE.

THERE rose, from out a most discordant age,
 A mind attuned to that slow harmony,
 With which the Former of Humanity
 Unfolds his book of will, from page to page.
 War, with that generous passion, he did wage,
 Which was the soul of Christian chivalry,—
 But *governing*, his wise humility
 Against high Heaven threw down no venturous gage.
 He knew, how staidly moves the Spirit of Law,
 Even as the dial-shade,—that men with awe
 May recognise the one law-giving hand ;
 And thus the Ruler, whom his own proud will
 Urges unbridled, be it for good or ill,
 Brings on himself like shame and misery on the land.

INSERTED IN M. RIO'S WORK, "LA PETITE
CHOUANNERIE."

FOR honest men, of every blood and creed,
 Let green La Vendée rest a sacred spot ;
 Be all the guilt of Quiberon forgot
 In the bright memory of its martyr-deed !
 And let this little book be one more seed,
 Whence sympathies may spring, encumbered not
 By circumstance of birth or mortal lot,
 But claiming virtue's universal meed !
 And as those two great languages, whose sound
 Has echoed through the realms of modern time,
 Feeding with thoughts and sentiments sublime
 Each other and the listening world around,
 Meet in these pages as on neutral ground,—
 So may their nations' hearts in sweet accord be found !

O France and England ! on whose lofty crests
 The day-spring of the Future flows so free,
 Save where the cloud of your hostility
 Settles between, and holy light arrests,
 Shall Ye, first instruments of God's behests,

But blunt each other ? Shall Barbarians see
 The two fair sisters of civility
 Turn a fierce wrath against each other's breasts ?
 No !—by our common hope and being—no !
 By the expanding might and bliss of peace,
 By the revealed fatuity of war,
 England and France shall not be foe to foe :
 For how can earth her store of good increase,
 If what God loves to make man's passions still will mar ?

ON TURNER'S PICTURE,

OF THE TÊMÉRAIRE MAN-OF-WAR, TOWED INTO PORT BY A
 STEAMER, FOR THE PURPOSE OF BEING BROKEN UP.

SEE how that small concentrate fiery force
 Is grappling with the glory of the main,
 That follows, like some grave heroic corse,
 Dragged by a suttler from the heap of slain.
 Thy solemn presence brings us more than pain—
 Something which Fancy moulds into remorse,
 That We, who of thine honour hold the gain,
 Should from its dignity thy form divorce.
 Yet will we read in thy high-vaunting Name,
 How Britain did what France could only *dare*,

And, while the sunset gilds the darkening air,
 We will fill up thy shadowy lines with fame,
 And, tomb or temple, hail thee still the same,
 Home of great thoughts, memorial Téméraire !

TO QUEEN VICTORIA,

ON A PUBLIC CELEBRATION.

How art Thou calm amid the storm, young Queen !
 Amid this wide and joy-distracted throng ?
 Where has the range of life-experience been
 To keep thy heart thus equable and strong ?
 Can the secluded cold which may belong
 To such high state compose thy noble mien,
 Without the duteous purpose not to wrong
 The truth of some Ideal spirit-seen ?

Perchance the depth of what I boldly asked
 None know—nor I, nor Thou.

Yet let us pray

That Thou, in this exceeding glory masked,
 Be not to loss of thy true self beguiled ;
 Still able at thy Maker's feet to lay
 The living, loving, nature of a child !

CORONATION SONG.


THE throne of Victoria is founded in peace,—
Let the air shed around it be pure and serene,—
Let Ocean her fulness and Earth her increase
Pour forth at the virginal feet of our Queen :

The garland of Empire that circles her brow
Be such as the meekest of maids might adorn ;
Fresh roses, and olive, and myrtle, be now
Entwined with the laurel her fathers have worn.—

Lament not, O People ! that fate should entrust
The sceptre of might to so tender a hand ;
If strength can be gentle and mercy be just,
How well for the ruler, how well for the land !

Remember the perils that wait upon Power,
That madden the wicked, and weaken the wise ;
And be joyful that Innocence holds as a dower
What wilful Ambition might claim as a prize.

But if ever her spirit is faint with alarm
 At the duties and dangers that shadow the throne,
 The Faith that is in us shall strengthen her arm,
 And the Heart of a nation encourage her own!—

TO AN ARTIST

LEAVING ENGLAND FOR THE UNITED STATES.

THE spring is in the south,—but here
 Winter, usurping half the year,
 Disheartens all the flowers and holds
 The leaves within their varnished folds :
 There 's scarce an insect on the wing,
 There 's not a bird has will to sing,
 And you, who stood to us in place
 Of Nature's warmth and Nature's grace,
 You, who made eldest hearts agree
 With childhood's sense and signs of glee,
 You, who sent happy home to bed
 So many a day-encumbered head,
 You, who could give us more than gold,
 Leave us alone to cloud and cold !

Yet, if this sorrow must be so,
We would not question when you go :
We would not know, we would not tell,
The actual moment of farewell :
When gone, we would believe you here,
And, for hope's sake, accept the fear ;
Like other flowers,—like summer day,—
Like mortal beauty, pass away !

. . . They say your path of pleasure lies,
With that of light, toward western skies,
That the broad billows rise and roll
Between you and your glory's goal ;
O worthy theme for poet-thought,
With old Hellenic fancies fraught,
And amorous of those days and forms
Of tritons blaring forth the storms,
Of sirens throned on sedgy isle,
And calm in Galatea's smile !
See, the triumphant waves upbuoy
Your image, plumed with hope and joy :—
Let it be borne, now mountain-high,
A star fresh added to the sky,—
Now sunk within that central deep
Where memories of Atlantis sleep ;
Yet, ever floating safe in grace,
As when upon the earth's still face

Your steps in gay caprices light,
 Like cataract-spray from Alpine height ;—
 Till, to our gaze confused and blent
 With the red-golden Occident,
 The lessening outline fades away,
 And we can only look and pray
 That all our brothers over-sea
 May love you, prize you, just as We.
 Let the blank waters lie between
 The artist and the artist's queen,
 While they can meet in dream and song ;
 " Life may be short, but Art is long."

April 13th, 1840.

THE SONG OF THE RAILROADS.

WHILE every age is crowned with rhyme,
 And song is ever young,
 The bravest birth of later time
 Must not remain unsung :
 A poet shall be born to us
 For living men to hail,
 Dismounted from old Pegasus
 To mount the fiery rail !

When speed and joy go hand in hand,
And loves are side by side,
We are the sunbeams of the land
On which the angels glide ;
The husband to his anxious wife,
The friend to friendly care,
The lover to his life of life,
On burning wings we bear.

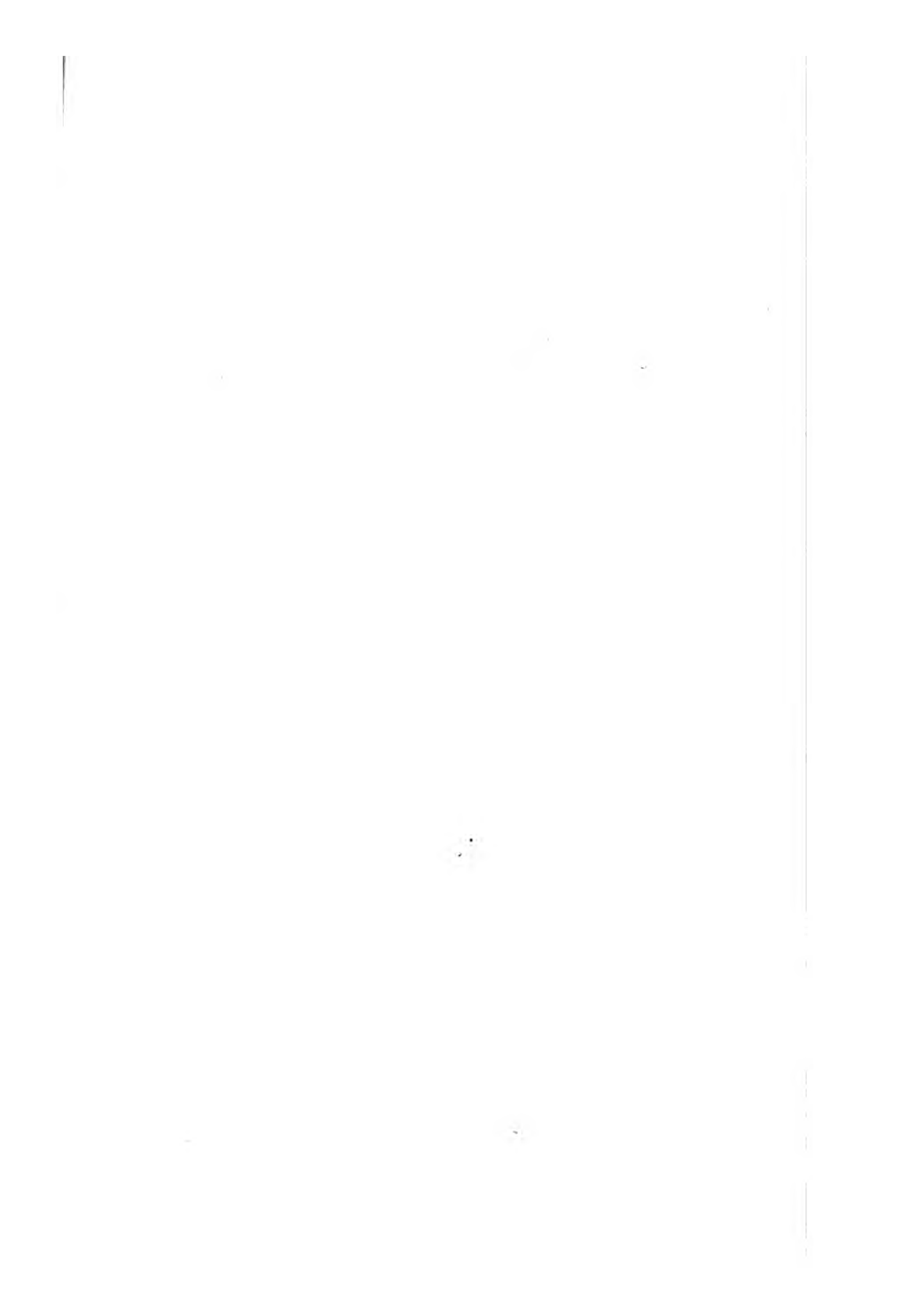
And oft as ships of ill accurst,
That sail the solid earth,
On sacred parting hours we burst,
And mar the moment's mirth :
The dearest and the longest-lost
Pass by, within a span,
Yet know it not ;—of little cost
We make the heart of man !

With precious freight of hopes and fears
We sweep the fields of space,
Decreed to dry the deepest tears
And dim the brightest face :
A few short words writ overnight
Hundreds of miles are borne,
And scatter sorrow or delight
Far, ere the morrow morn.

Our cry is onward, onward, yet,
Hard pace and little pause,—
We will not let the world forget
Her nature's motive laws :
Like her we hasten, day by day,
Nor rest at any goal,
—The Sun himself has moved, they say,
Since planets round him roll.

And if, when like a net we lie
O'er many a distant soil,
And glad the traveller's mind and eye,
Without a traveller's toil,—
From mutual virtues understood
All scorn and hate shall flee,
What instruments of God and good
Be mightier than than We !

TRANSLATIONS.



CHIDHAR.



RÜCKERT.

CHIDHAR, the Prophet ever-young
Thus loosed the bridle of his tongue.

I journeyed by a goodly Town,
Beset with many a garden fair,
And asked of one who gathered down
Large fruit, "how long the Town was there?"
He spoke, nor chose his hand to stay,
"The town has stood for many a day,
And will be here for ever and aye."

A thousand years passed by and then
I went the self-same road again.

No vestige of that Town I traced,—
But one poor swain his horn employed,—
His sheep unconscious browsed and grazed,
I asked "when was that Town destroyed?"

He spoke, nor would his horn lay by,
“ One thing may grow and another die,
But I know nothing of Towns—not I.”

A thousand years went on and then
I passed the self-same place again.

There in the deep of waters cast
His nets one lonely fisherman,
And as he drew them up at last
I asked him “ how that Lake began ? ”

He looked at me and laughed to say,
“ The waters spring for ever and aye,
And fish is plenty every day.”

A thousand years passed by and then
I went the self-same road again.

I found a country wild and rude,
And, axe in hand, beside a tree,
The Hermit of that Solitude,—
I asked “ how old that Wood might be ? ”

He spoke “ I count not time at all,
A tree may rise, a tree may fall,
The Forest overlives us all.”

A thousand years went on and then
I passed the self-same place again.

And there a glorious City stood,
 And 'mid tumultuous market-cry,
 I asked "Where rose the Town? where Wood
 Pasture and Lake forgotten lie?"

They heard me not, and little blame,—
 For them the world is as it came,
 And all things must be still the same.

A thousand years shall pass, and then
 I mean to try that road again.

THE MOORISH PRINCE.

—●—
 FREILIGRATH.

THE tribe has attended their chieftain's call ;
 He has wound his head with the purple shawl,—
 The cymbals amid the palm-trees rung,
 And the lion-hide o'er his shoulder is flung.

Like ants in confusion they came and they went,
 While his black gold-braceleted arm he bent
 About his belovèd, and bade her array
 Her form for the close of the glorious day.

“ I bring thee pearls that with radiance fair
Will shine through the night of thy crisp black hair,
Pearls that the coralline Persian sea
To the gasping diver has yielded for Thee :

“ And plumes that the ostrich has left on her way,
White on the dark of thy forehead to play :
Let the feast be ready, the tent be trimmed—
Be the cup of the conqueror crowned and brimmed.”

As the moon from the glimmering white-folded cloud
Goes forth, of her light and her shadow proud,
So forth from the white-folded glimmering tent
The Prince to his terrible pastime went.

There were voices of thousands his presence to meet,
And the welcoming tramp of the horses' feet,
And the tide of Negro life rolled on,
With the riddling Niger in unison.

“ He leads us to conquer who leads us to fight ”—
So they struggled from morning till deep in the night ;
And the shrieking blast of the elephant-horn
To the fainting spirit was valour and scorn.

The lion shrunk back and the serpent swooned
At the rattle of drums with skulls festooned ;
High floated the banner o'er dying and dead,
And the golden desert was flecked with red.

So raged the fray in the vale of Palm ;
But She, the belovèd, is busy and calm ;
She has twined the garlands the tent-shafts up,
And the palm-juice foams in each ivory cup.

She has woven the pearls in her thick crisp hair,
That the azure abysses of Persia bear ;
Her front with feathers—her arms and throat
She has decked with the muscle's glossy coat.

And before the tent, like a Queen she sits,
And listens the war-horn's distant fits ;
The noonday's arrows are piercing hot,
The flowers hang faint, but she heeds it not :

The evening reigns as the old sun dies,
The night-dew rustles, the glow-worm flies,—
The crocodile peers from the tepid stream,
To bask in the cool of the moonlight gleam :

The lion is out and roaring for prey,
The elephant-brood through the brake crash away,
The giraffe is stretching its length on the ground,
And eyes and blossoms are closing around :

Her bosom is swelling with pain and with fear,
When a bleeding Moor in his flight comes near ;
“ Lost as our battle be hope in thy breast—
Thy Lover is captive and borne to the West !

“ To the white man’s sea, as the white man’s slave.”
She falls to the earth, that is now but her grave ;
She buries the pearls in her crushing hand
And her burning cheek in the burning sand.

PART II.

What a rush to the Circus ! Bajazzo is there,
Bajazzo, the pride of the shows of the Fair :
'Mid the tumult of trumpets, and cymbals, and drums,
Round the flat sandy circle, like lightning, he comes.

Below, how the multitudes struggle and press,
How the women lean forth in their loveliness ;
He is over the barrier, and close in his track
Fly the English bay and the Arab black.

And by the Arena’s curtained door
Is standing a crisp-haired, high-browed, Moor,
Beating the loud kettle-drum whose side
Is hung with the lion’s magnificent hide.

He sees not the grace of the rider’s swing,
He sees not the strength of the horse’s spring ;
He gazes with stedfast eyes long-dried
On the tawny shag of the lion’s hide.

He thinks of the Niger, far, far away !
How the hunted lion had there been his prey,
How he wielded his sword on the wide sand-plain,
And never came back to his tent again :

And how She had gathered the flowers all for Him,
And woven the pearls in her hair all for Him ;
— His eyes are clouded— with muscular strain
He strikes the drum-head, till it bursts in twain !

THE BOY ROBERT.

—◆—
ARNDT.

THE stripling Robert, good and brave,
Holds in his hand a bare-drawn glaive,
And on the altar of the Lord,
He lays it with this earnest word :

“ I swear to thee, O fatherland !
With naked sword in clenched hand,
On this thy consecrated shrine,
Still to the death to be sincerely thine.

“ I swear with heart and mind to be
Thy honest servant, Liberty !
Body and soul, through all life's span,
For thou art the sublimest good of Man.

“ I swear a bloody, burning, hate,
And scorn, whose depth can ne'er abate,
To Gallic guile and Gallic band,
That they may never shame our German land.

“ And Thou, whose high coercing sway
Heaven's Suns and earthly hearts obey,
Thou mighty God ! stand by my oath,
Be thou the guardian of my faithful troth.

“ That I, from lie and treachery pure,
May be thy Lieger true and sure,—
And that this brand may never pause
In the high duty of a righteous cause.

“ And if against my fatherland
And God I draw it, then this hand
Be dust, this arm be withered cold,
And be this hilt a hundred-weight to hold ! ”

Oh ! no, oh ! no, for ever no !
No caitiff thought will Robert know,—
To God the Lord this oath is given,
Honour and Virtue lights his path to heaven.

THE MAID OF THE INN.



UHLAND.

I SAW three youths rowing over the Rhine ;
They land at a hostel and ask for wine,—

“ Good hostess ! give us your best of wine ;
And where is that darling daughter of thine ? ”

“ My wine is fresh and alive,” she said ;
“ But my darling daughter is still and dead.”

And when they enter'd the little room
They saw her laid out in the silent gloom.

The first from the face removed the shroud,
And gazed in sorrow and utter'd loud :—

“ Couldst thou, fair maid, but arise and live,
My heart for thine I would freely give.”

The next on the face replaced the shroud,
And turned to the window and wept aloud :—

“ Alas ! that I find thee on this dark bier,
I that have loved thee so many a year ! ”

The third, once more drawing back the veil,
Imprinted a kiss on the lips dead-pale :—

“ I have ever loved, as I love thee to-day,
And I must love thee for ever and aye ! ”

THE END.

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