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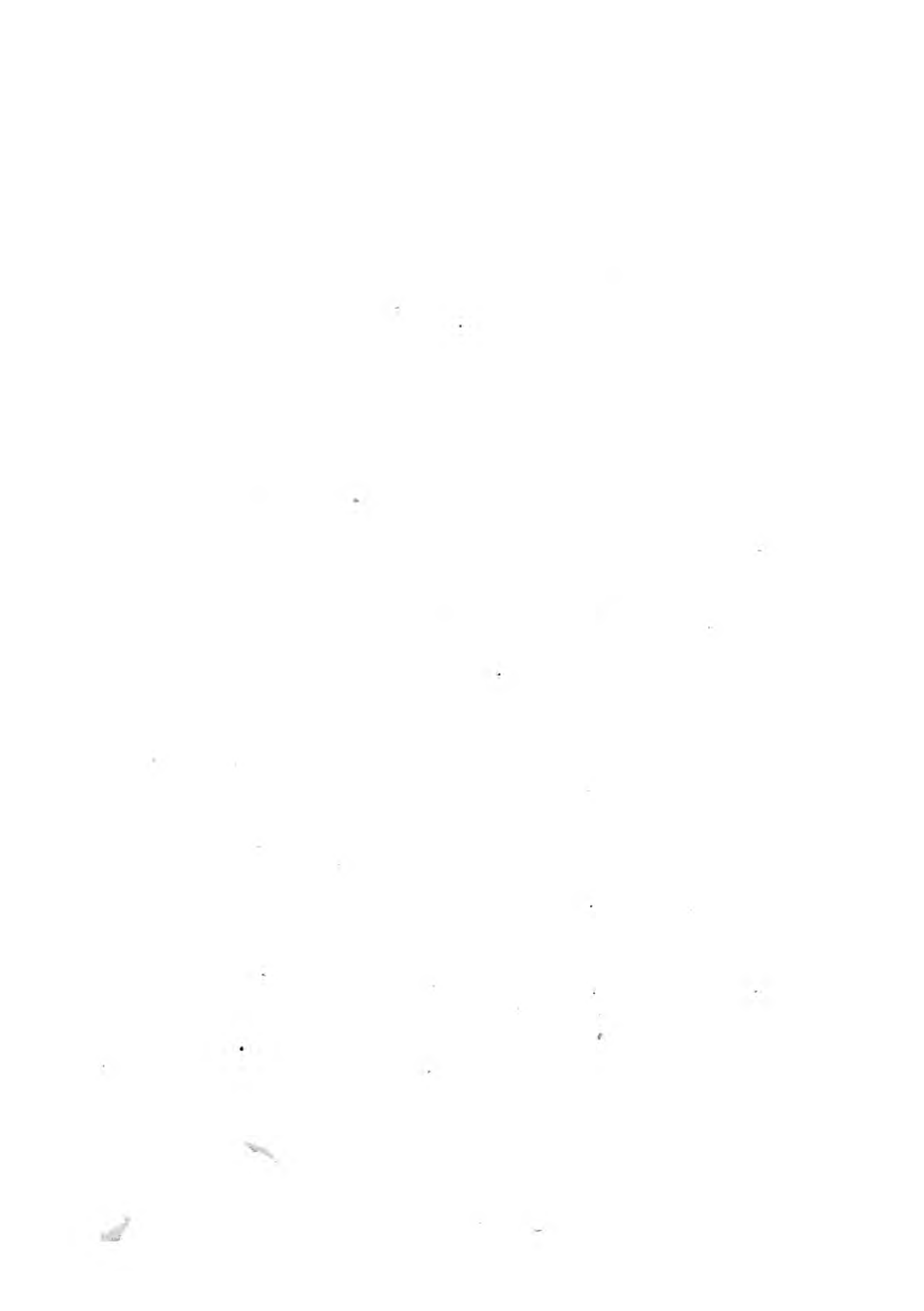




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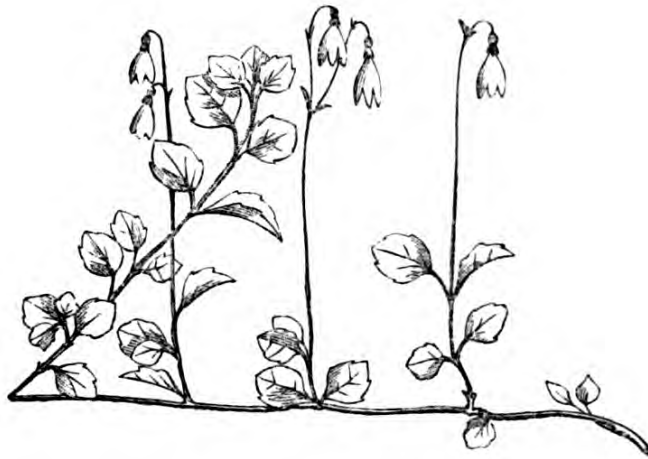
AXEL,

AND OTHER POEMS:

TRANSLATED FROM THE SWEDISH

BY

HENRY LOCKWOOD.



LONDON:  
LONGMANS, GREEN, READER, AND DYER.

MDCCCLXVII.

285. n. 9.

LIVERPOOL:  
PRINTED BY DAVID MARPLES,  
LORD STREET.

DEDICATED,

BY PERMISSION,

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

OSCAR FREDRIC,

HEREDITARY PRINCE OF SWEDEN AND NORWAY,

DUKE OF OSTROGOTIA,

ETC., ETC., ETC.





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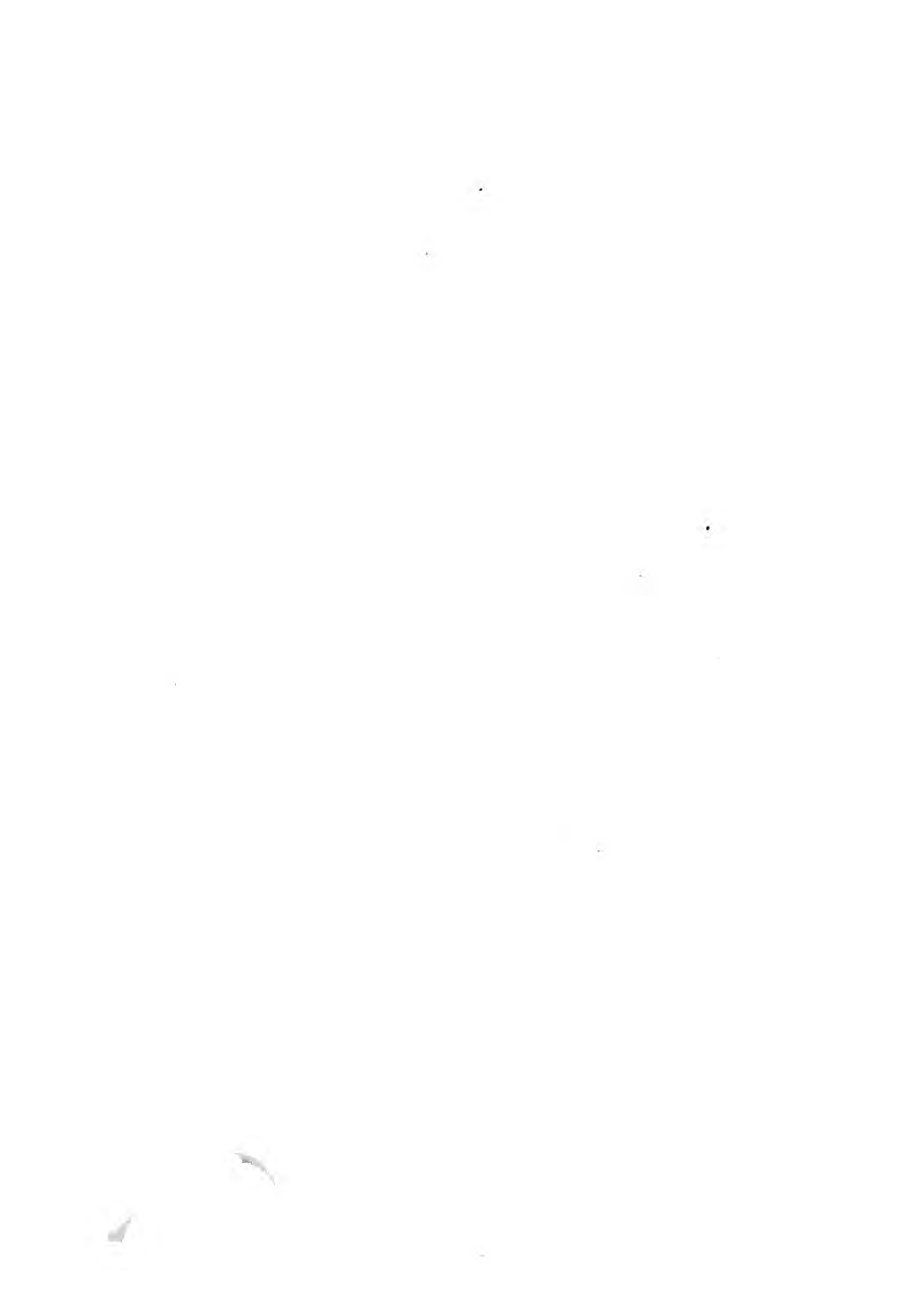
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IN offering the following specimens of Swedish Poetry to the Public, the Translator has been careful to select those poems which, with the exception of the two ballads from the "Frithiof Saga," have not, as far as he is aware, been hitherto rendered into English.

It has been the Translator's aim to follow the originals as closely as possible, both as regards rhythm and imagery; and it would be a satisfaction to him to think that the experiment he has ventured to make may be the means of inducing the English student of languages to turn his attention to a class of poetry which has hitherto scarcely received the attention it deserves.



## INTRODUCTION.

THE interest with which the literature of the North, and especially of Sweden, has been regarded in England for some years past, is a sufficient motive for reproducing any compositions which have attained a more than ordinary share of popularity among the Swedes, and to induce us to seek a nearer acquaintance with their principal authors. This interest was first aroused by an appeal, at once eloquent and erudite, on the part of the late Professor Wilson, in his essay in the columns of *Blackwood's Magazine* on the "Frithiof Saga," and the genius of its distinguished author, Tegnér, Bishop of Wexiö.

Since that appeal was made, several specimens of northern literature, of varied character, including even Icelandic and Finnish traditions,

have been introduced to the notice of the English public, and arrested considerable attention. Some of these specimens have been in the walks of Poetry, and others representing traits of social character and scenes of domestic habits, all possessing claims of interest as being stamped with the features of truth, appealing to the heart and impressing the imagination.

The primary cause of this interest is no doubt to be found in the similarity which exists between the national mind of the two countries. For if we feel that the mental characteristics, the tone of thought and sentiment, of Sweden and England are in unison, our interest in any Swedish work is at once awakened, and our approval, if not yet fully yielded in friendly anticipation, is still half accorded to the literary essay of kindred spirits and of an order of mind congenial with our own.

As one instance in support of this proposition, it may be observed that the best Poets of both nations derive many of their happiest inspirations from the scenes of beauty and grandeur with which Nature has adorned our earth. There are few authors in whose works this feature stands

out more prominently than in Tegnér, the subject of the following memoir. He paints in brilliant colours the majestic scenery of his native land, its lakes and fiords and pine-clad heights; and, to quote another Swedish Poet, Börjesson,—

“That parting golden ray  
“That gilds the glories of her summer night,  
“And blends its beauties with the smile of day:”

its mingled forest, stream, and rock; its sublime cliffs, whose vaulted caverns overarch the waves that wash its shores, and which at night are resplendent in the reflection of a star-lit heaven, of whose brilliancy we have but a faint conception under our more dense and humid atmosphere.

Apart from the impulses derived in common from the external beauty and grandeur of nature, there are other and no less vivid springs of feeling and sources of interest which are shared equally by the two nations.

There is, in fact, in the Swedish character a certain native frankness, a generous, undisguised and confiding spirit, congenial with our own. It is the consciousness on the part of the Swedes of this similarity which has caused English



sentiments and habits of thought, as reflected in our literature, to attract so much attention in Sweden of late years. This acknowledgment of sympathy and admiration should prompt us to consider the feeling with which we are met, with a view to reciprocate it; and the more we scrutinise the character of our Swedish admirers, the more we shall recognise the same traits of straightforwardness, the same disgust of false sentiment, of striving after effect, (observable among some continental nations,) and the same resolution for bold and practical purpose, which are common to the English character.

In fact, if modern Anglo-Saxons and Swedes trace a common ancestry, their intellectual and moral traits no less certainly point them out as akin to each other. For instance, what is the reason that English literature is so much more sought after by Swedish readers than that of France? The answer is obvious. English literature inculcates precisely the moral of the Classic historian, explaining friendship as the result of sympathy or congeniality of taste. In a word, the diseased springs of interest appealed to by the exaggerated sophistication of French ideas,

sometimes in what is called "terrorism," to which even the genius of Victor Hugo may plead guilty, sometimes in impossible intricacies of plot, such as Dumas twists out of his mental gymnastics, are not to the taste of Sweden. The overwrought phases of feeling in which French genius delights; the incidents of the story, whether in the shape of romance or drama, calculated as they are to excite convulsive rather than natural emotions of the heart; the stilted or supernatural attitude assumed by the literary artist, to astound the mind by what has been termed "spasmodic sensation;" all these exaggerated requirements are revolting to the genius and character of the Swede, who repudiates them as unhealthy and unnatural. What is sought for is more nutritious and congenial mental aliment, less highly seasoned, less morbidly stimulating, less destructive to the natural sensibilities, less hurtful in its moral tendency.

Hence, to a certain extent, we find a similarity of taste and disposition in the two countries, evinced not only in the better specimens of the literature of each, but also in the cultivation of those habits of thought, and in that observance

of the ties of domestic relationship, which are the distinguishing characteristics of a thinking and moral people.

ESAIAS TEGNÉR, one of the most celebrated of Swedish Poets, was born on the 13th of November, 1782, at Millesvick, in the province of Wermland, in which place his father filled the office of Rector. At the age of nine years he was left an orphan. An old friend of his father's, named Branting, who was assessor of the province of Småland, took the boy into his house, and made him the frequent companion of the journeys he was obliged to undertake through the province for the collection of taxes. These wanderings, among the mountains and lakes of one of the most picturesque parts of Sweden, served to develop the deep love and admiration for the beauties of nature, which, as has been remarked, formed so prominent a feature of Tegnér's character, and tinged so vividly his subsequent writings.

His fine poem entitled "To my Homeland" especially shows how strongly those scenes had impressed themselves on his mind. Tegnér tells us of himself that he could not remember when

he first began to write poetry, and that he was in the habit as a child of committing to verse almost every trifling incident of his uneventful life. As he grew older, he devoted much time to the study of the classics, for which, particularly as regards Greek, he early showed great aptitude. Nor did he neglect French literature; and he acquired English entirely without assistance, having been attracted to the study of our language in consequence of the effect produced on his imagination by a translation of Ossian. In his seventeenth year, he went up to the university of Lund, and soon after was first introduced to the notice of his countrymen by the publication of the poem before alluded to, "Till min Hembygd" ("To my Homeland"), which was succeeded by several lyrical pieces, showing genius of a lofty order. In 1811, he received the great prize of the Swedish Academy, for his poem entitled "Svea" (Sweden), which excited a universal sensation throughout the country, owing to its patriotic spirit, no less than its poetic beauty. In the following year he was elected to the chair of the Greek Professorship at the university, and soon after entered holy orders and was appointed to the living of

Stäffe. It was at this time that he composed his "Prestvigningen," or "Consecration to the Priesthood," a poem which breathes throughout a spirit of true religious fervour, and which Franzen, a cotemporary Swedish Poet, styles "beams of heavenly radiance." Tegnér's fame was now continually on the ascendant, and he published successively a number of lyrical pieces, the one surpassing the other in poetical pathos and imagery, as well as two more lengthy compositions, "Axel" and "The Children of the Lord's Supper," of which latter poem Longfellow has given us a spirited translation. In 1824, appeared Tegnér's fine epic poem, the "Frithiof Saga," founded on the wild legends of the north, which had ever been the favourite study of his childhood. It was this work which raised Tegnér to the first rank among modern Poets, and was the means of spreading his fame throughout Europe. In six years the "Frithiof" passed through five editions. It was four times translated into German; three times into Danish; and four times into English. Indeed it was subsequently rendered into every European language, not excepting Russ and Polish. In the same year in which the "Frithiof" appeared,

Tegnér was elected by the unanimous voice of the people to the Bishopric of Wexiö; and henceforth his episcopal duties, and perhaps also his failing health, contributed to make him neglect his lyre, for after the publication of the "Frithiof," he only occasionally struck its strings, though each time he did so it was to captivate and enchant his hearers. The duties of his diocese were indefatigably fulfilled for twenty-two years, though they were frequently interrupted by journeys fruitlessly undertaken to various watering-places in Germany and Bohemia, in the hope of curing an obstinate liver-complaint, which terminated fatally on the 2nd of November, 1846, in the 64th year of his age.

As Tegnér's opinion of the causes of his own popularity as a poet cannot fail to excite our attention, it may be as well to insert his remarks on the subject. "The Swede," he observes, "like the Frenchman, prefers in poetry the light, the clear, and the transparent. He esteems, indeed, and values, the profound also; but it must be a depth which is pellucid. He desires to see the golden sands at the bottom of the wave. He has a decided objection to whatever is so dark and

“turbid as not to convey a distinct image to his  
“mind. He believes that — ‘Det dunkelt sagda, är  
“det dunkelt tänkta,’— ‘The obscurely uttered is  
“the obscurely thought.’ Hence clearness is a  
“necessary condition to whatever is to produce any  
“effect upon him. In this he differs widely from  
“the German, who, owing to his contemplative  
“nature, not only tolerates, but even prefers, the  
“mystical and the nebulous, in which he loves to  
“trace some deep thought. He has more mind and  
“gloomy seriousness than the comparatively super-  
“ficial and frivolous Swede. This is the source of  
“those mystical feelings in German poetry for  
“which we have no taste. As regards the poetical  
“spirit itself, and the views of the world in the  
“poet’s own breast, we prefer the life-enjoying, the  
“fresh, the bold, and even over-daring. This is  
“also applicable to the Swedish character. How-  
“ever weakened, frivolous, or degenerate the people  
“may in these days be, a *Viking* vein still lies at  
“the bottom of the national temperament. The  
“race of giant occupants of old Scandinavia is not  
“yet extinct. Something Titanic and full of  
“defiance runs through the people like a national  
“feature. The proper image of the northern dis-

“ position is a cold and clear but fresh winter day,  
“ which steels and braces all the energies of man  
“ to contend against and conquer a hard climate  
“ and an unwilling soil. Wherever this fresh  
“ spirit breathes, the nation recognises its own  
“ inward life, and on that account pardons other  
“ poetical faults.”

The high esteem and consideration in which Tegnér is held by the Swedes, cannot be better expressed than by the following passage, taken from the opening narrative of the Poet's life, delivered before the Academy of Lund, by Professor Böttiger, and which is appended to the complete edition of Tegnér's works, published at Stockholm in 1847. “One fleeting spring,” remarks the Professor, “has already waved its  
“ tribute of verdure over Tegnér's ashes, but an  
“ imperishable spring sheds its blossoms over his  
“ works. These bear witness that the kernel of  
“ life cannot crumble into dust; that the fruits of  
“ genius know of no decay. Creations like his  
“ pass on through time without fading. Each  
“ successive generation receives them as its inherit-  
“ ance, and the latest posterity will be enchanted  
“ with them as we are.



“Thoughts which like flashes of lightning have  
“quivered through the frames of the people, poems  
“whose music has thrilled so many hearts, do not  
“lose their fire with the closing eyes of the  
“author, are not hushed with the mute tongue  
“of the poet. They extend their reflections and  
“their echoes beyond the limits of the grave. It  
“is not we who have outlived Tegnér, it is rather  
“he who will outlive us all.”

Though twenty years have elapsed since Böttiger edited Tegnér's works, and passed upon them this panegyric, which was enthusiastically received at the time, and was indeed in full unison with the feelings of all the educated classes in Sweden, the great popularity of the poet has suffered no diminution. His “Sång till Solen,” or “Ode to the Sun,” is a composition which is perhaps better calculated than any other to give the reader a just impression of the character and style of Tegnér's poetry. It was pronounced by another of his Swedish cotemporaries, Leopold, himself a poet, and minister of state under Gustavus III., to be the best of all his minor pieces, both as regards the lofty flight of the imagery and the harmony of the verse, which are kept up in spite of the difficulty of the metre.

It is perhaps unnecessary to remark that the Translator is far from offering to the reader specimens of the works of every distinguished Swedish Poet. Such an undertaking would naturally much exceed the limits of the present volume. The Translator's object has rather been to select some of the more remarkable compositions of Tegnér, whose place in the front rank of Swedish Poets is generally conceded, as well as to add a few lyrics from the works of the very numerous contributors to the laurels wreathed round the Swedish lyre. He reserves to himself the task of reproducing on a future occasion a few extracts from the writings of the other leading Poets of Sweden.

BARCOMBE, S. DEVON,

*October, 1867.*



AXEL.

\*\_\* In the following poem, the name of Olga, the heroine, is substituted for Maria, as more metrical.

## AXEL.

FONDLY I treasure in my breast  
The good old days of Charles the King,<sup>1</sup>  
For gay they were, as hearts at rest,  
As voices in full triumph ring.  
And still in Northern lands we trace  
The shades of that departed race,  
And forms to mighty stature grown  
In azure robe and yellow zone,  
At rosy sunset pace the ground.  
With reverence I look around,  
For heroes from on high I hail,  
With trusty sword and breast of mail.  
I can recall from earliest birth  
One of that ancient warrior-band,  
For still he lingered on the earth,—  
A shattered trophy of our land.  
The silver on his agèd head  
Was all that he could call his own;

<sup>1</sup> Charles XII.

The scars upon his forehead read  
The lesson of the Runic stone.<sup>2</sup>  
True he was poor, but full well schooled  
To want,—for sport to him it stood.  
A soldier's life he lived,—and ruled  
A peasant's hut within the wood.  
Two jewels were his slender store,  
Prized above every earthly thing,—  
His Bible, and his blade, which bore  
The royal name of Charles the King.  
The Hero's triumphs o'er his foes,  
Which full recorded now you find,  
(For high aloft the eagle rose,)  
Were graven in the old man's mind,  
Deep as those tablets of the brave  
On some sepulchral grassy mound.  
And when in burning words he gave  
The picture of a battle ground,  
Where peril menaced king and men,  
How brightly gleamed his bright eyes then!

<sup>2</sup> "Runic Stone" — Tombstones or landmarks. — The Runic Alphabet was peculiar to the ancient Northern tribes of Europe (Germans and Scandinavians). It was long considered to have existed before the Christian æra, but Langebeck found, in 1753, that none of the numerous Runic writings in Gothland reached further back than the year 1200 (A. D.); the latest were of the year 1449.

How proudly too he tossed his head!  
Like sword-cut by some strong hand sped,  
Rang on his lips each word he said.  
Thus oft he sat till late at night,  
And spoke of old and by-gone days;  
When Charles was named, he thought it right  
His worn-out hat each time to raise.  
I stood in wonder at his knee  
(For then I did not measure more),  
And all his tales of chivalry  
I treasured from those days of yore;  
Tales of a dark and dreary kind,  
Stored in the chambers of my mind,  
As Irises before they blow  
Sleep in their seed, beneath the snow.

The old man rests among the dead,  
May peace be o'er his ashes spread.  
From him this tale of days gone by;  
Scorn not o'er Axel's fate to sigh.  
The old man's voice was strong,—this time  
The song is weak,—in simple rhyme.



At Bender lay the great king camped;  
His lands by Ruin's hand were stamped,  
And on his name there fell a blight.  
His people, like a wounded knight  
Who feels the coming chill of death,  
Fought on one knee with fainting breath  
Behind their shields, without a hope  
Much longer with reverse to cope.  
Hope only dwelt within *his* breast.  
Though tempests never seemed to rest  
From raging o'er Fate's written book,  
Though earth unto her centre shook,  
Calmly he stood, as shot-proof walls  
Stand 'mid some burning city's halls;  
Like rocks that spurn the angry wave,  
Like fortitude beside a grave.

One ev'n he said to Axél — " Bear  
" This letter with your utmost care;  
" Haste! for it brooks of no delay.  
" Axél! ride on both night and day

“To Sweden; when you reach our lands  
“Entrust it to the Council’s hands.  
“Go! and may God your buckler be!  
“Greet those familiar hills from me.”

Young Axel dearly loved to ride;  
He took the missive, sewed it in  
The belt which never left his side.  
His father fell at Holofzin<sup>3</sup>  
Beside his King, and friendless grew  
This child of camps, 'mid many storms  
Of battle-field. 'T was grand to view  
His fine made limbs; such manly forms  
In Northern climes may still be found.  
Fresh as the bloom of blushing May,  
Tall as a pine in Swedish ground,  
Like heaven on a cloudless day,  
So pure his brow, so full of grace  
Each feature of his manly face,  
Where candour, truth, and honour beamed;  
And in his brilliant eye there gleamed

<sup>3</sup> Holofzin.—A town in Lithuania, celebrated for the victory gained by Charles XII. over the Russians, on July 4th, 1708.

A light, which showed that eye was made  
To scan with hope the sacred sphere  
Of One whose realms on high are laid,  
Or look without a shade of fear  
On men whose deeds make darkness dear.  
He served in Charles's body-guard,  
Where some relations were enrolled,  
*There* fortunes were not made but marred.  
They were but seven warriors bold,  
The number of the stars which troop  
Around the constellation "Bear,"  
Or nine at most,—the Muses' group.  
Stern was the test to enter there;  
Through fire and steel lay each man's course;  
They formed a Christian Viking-force,  
Like that of old which dragons bore  
O'er dark blue waves to Sweden's shore.  
Unused to beds, they ever found  
Rest in their cloaks spread on the ground;  
'Mid Northern storms, 'mid drenching showers,  
Each slept as if his couch were flowers.  
They bent a horse-shoe in their hand;  
You could not find in all the band  
*One* man—aye, *one*—who e'er became  
A courtier of the cheering flame

That smiles upon the hearth of home ;  
*They* loved the strife. They chose to roam  
Where balls of fire their showers sped,  
Vieing in hue that brilliant red  
That streaks the setting star of day  
And dips in blood its dying ray.  
A law was made, that in the field  
None should to less than seven yield ;  
Each, breast to breast, must meet the foe,—  
No back should e'er receive a blow ;  
Then came an edict,—hard to bear,  
Perchance the hardest lot to share,—  
That none should wed,—that all must bide  
Till Charles himself had gained his bride.  
Though orbs of azure hue should glance,  
And smiles on rosy lips entrance ;  
Though breasts like sister swans should swim  
The snowy lake they loved to skim ;  
'T was theirs the Syren's smile to shun,—  
The sword *their* bride,—the sword they won.

Young Axel gladly girthed his steed,  
And rode through day and night with speed,  
Till Ukraine's borders burst in sight,—

When in a forest flashed a light  
From many a lance and sabre bright,  
Which, mustering swift in serried mass,  
Stood stern, prepared to bar the pass.  
“Thou comest from Bender—quick! dismount!  
“Thy letter—or thy minutes count!”  
Rose on the air the savage cry:  
A sword-cut was the Swede’s reply;  
And quickly to submission led,  
From many a wound the speaker bled.  
Then, leaning back against an oak,  
The hero doubled stroke on stroke;  
Where’er he dealt his sturdy blow,  
A knee was bent, a crimson flow  
Gushed from each fierce and prostrate foe.  
Right well he kept his oath, I trow;  
Not one to seven—’t were little said—  
Beneath his blade full twenty bled.  
He strove as Rudolf Krakè<sup>4</sup> fought,  
And in his need no succour,—nought,—  
Of friendly aid all hope had fled,—  
He fought for rest among the dead.

<sup>4</sup> A champion of the ancient Northern Sagas.

Full many a purple wound revealed  
His dying hour was near at hand ;  
The blood about his heart congealed,  
The fingers stiffened round the brand,  
A thickening haze obscured his sight,  
The soul unloosed her wings for flight.  
Shrill cries across the forest sound ;  
The falcon bold, the faithful hound  
Pursue their game, and headlong bound  
The Hunters o'er the open ground.  
And foremost on a mottled steed,  
With mantling cheeks, in green array,  
A maiden rode at whirlwind speed,  
Fair as the fairest beam of day.

Alarmed, the robber-horde retreat,  
But terror binds the courser's feet  
When near the dead ; so with a bound  
She left her steed and touched the ground.  
And there he lay, as in the vale  
The oak o'er brushwood prostrate lies,  
When from the North the winter gale  
Across the landscape madly flies.  
How handsome still, though bathed in blood !  
And bending gently o'er him stood

Olga, as in those days of yore  
Diana left the Olympian shore  
For Latmos,—from the chace to rest,  
And bend o'er her Endymion's breast;  
*Her* lover, in her fondest dreams,  
No nobler stamp of beauty wore.  
One spark of life—but one—still gleams  
Within his shattered frame. They bore  
His death-like form with tender care  
(On branches swiftly gathered there),  
The shelter of her home to share.

She stood beside his couch alone,  
With pity stirred, with sorrow wrung  
And with a glance well worth a throne,  
O'er his pale face intently hung.  
As in some grove in Grecian land  
(That Greece which ruin seems to seize)  
A tender rose is wont to stand  
Beside some prostrate Hercules.

His trance is o'er, he looks around,  
His lips give forth a feeble sound;  
And ah! his eye, but now so mild,  
Is full dilated, vacant, wild.

“Where am I now? what wouldst thou? Speak!  
“No woman may my presence seek;  
“To Charles belongs my life,—my all,—  
“Thy tear, girl, should not, *must* not fall  
“Into my wound. My father’s breath  
“Has soared beyond the sting of death  
“To starry realms. My oath he heard,—  
“With righteous wrath his soul is stirred.  
“Satan! avaunt! And yet how fair  
“The Tempter seems . . . back to thy lair! . . .  
“Where is my belt,—my letter,—where  
“The royal manual which I bear?  
“My father’s blade is tempered well,  
“As many Muscovites can tell;  
“’T was joy to draw, ’t was joy to fight,—  
“I would the King had seen the sight.  
“As the ripe ears their richest store  
“To reapers at the harvest pour,  
“They fell; and I too streamed with gore.  
“That letter I was charged to bear . . . .  
“My pledgèd honour binds me there.  
“Away! ere vanished hours I mourn!”—

Thus spake, by fevered visions torn,  
This lover of the battle-field;



And, pale as death, was gently borne  
Back to the pillow's peaceful shield.

And Life and Death their forces led,  
As fiercest foes, for youth to fight :  
But Life o'ercame, and danger fled ;  
Reason regained her realms of light.  
Though oft his dull uncertain glance  
Was coldly fixed as in a trance,  
At times he viewed with conscious pride  
The guardian Angel by his side.  
She was no Sylph, who loves to woo  
Some velvet sward of emerald hue,  
And sigh her sorrows o'er the stream,—  
An idyl, myth, an empty dream,  
With waving locks of golden gleam,  
Cheeks like the fairest Queen of flowers,  
And eyes where, beaming softly, bowers  
The true Forget-me-not. A child  
She was of some far Eastern wild.  
Her tresses rolled in ebon flow,  
Like midnight's mantle round a rose ;  
And on her brow youth's sunny glow,  
That nought of earthly sorrow knows,—  
A brow of pride and noble race,

Like Victory's image on the shield  
Which Amazons are wont to wield.  
So pure that face, so softly bright,  
She was as painters love to trace  
Aurora in a wreath of light.  
In form she looked an Oread,—  
Her step elastic,—never sad ;  
High swelled her bosom's tender wave,  
And youth and health their freshness gave.  
Her cheeks, a rose and lily's dream,—  
Her soul, a flame of purest gleam,—  
A Southern sky in Summer hours,  
Gilt in the rainbow's brilliant bowers,  
Breathing the breath of Eden's flowers.  
Her dark eye showed a deadly strife  
Between the world and heaven's life ;  
Now darting scorn, with anger sown  
As Jove's proud eagle from his throne ;  
Now melting, as the gentle dove  
That bears on high the Queen of love.

Axel ! thy flesh will tell thee fast  
The throb has ceased ; the sting is gone ;  
A single scar will write the Past ;  
Thy outward wound will heal anon.

But ah! thy heart! will life be bright?  
Look not with Love's undying light  
On the fair hand that bound thy breast;  
That hand, so soft, so slim, so white,  
In thy warm grasp may not be pressed.  
Yes! deeper dangers, darker signs  
Are written in those slender lines  
Than covered Bender's bloody chace,  
When robber crews of Othman race  
Launched the keen shaft, or bared the brand  
Against that small devoted band.  
Those lips so fresh, that mock the hue  
Of moss-buds in the early dew,  
Ope but to sing a seraph strain  
Of hope,—of solace in thy pain,  
'T were better far to hear once more  
The clash of arms, the cannon's roar  
That echoed o'er Pultava's plain,  
And told of Swede and Russian slain.  
If e'er thou brave the summer beam,  
And still worn, pale, weak, prostrate seem,  
Lean on thy tried and trusty blade,  
Not on that full, well-rounded arm  
Which Cupid on his couch has laid,  
For weary limbs his only balm.

Wonder of earth and heaven,—Love!  
Pure breath of endless, perfect bliss!  
Refreshing gale from realms above,  
Life's sultry grove thou deign'st to kiss.  
Thou heart enshrined in Nature's breast!  
To Gods and men, peace, comfort, rest.  
Where'er the ocean's waters roll,  
Drop clings to drop, and foam to foam,  
As plighted lovers onward roam;  
And e'en the stars from pole to pole  
Lead bridal dances round the sun.  
Thy pulse has ceased, thy work is done  
In many breasts that owned thy sway;  
Or like the last faint evening ray  
Thou linger'st still,—a faded page,  
The record of a happier age,  
When Love, a child, was wont to sport  
'Mid the blue vault of Heaven's court,  
Studded with silver diadems  
Resplendent with the brightest gems.  
If from fatigue 't was forced to rest  
It nestled in its father's breast.  
Love then was wreathed with every grace  
That on the brow of genius smiles,

And owned each form, each lovely face  
That hovers o'er the Heavenly Isles ;  
Its language one unceasing prayer  
To God, to soothe, to save, to spare.  
But ah ! since then, Love fell to earth,  
And lost its claim to heavenly birth.  
Yet still in earthly mansions dwell  
Some echoes of Love's angel-choir ;  
And you may hear their accents swell  
In lay of Spring, or Poet's lyre.  
With rapture then the bosom thrills,  
As the lone wanderer's, when he hears  
Some strain recall his native hills,  
And wake to life sweet Childhood's years.

'T was Even. In the glowing West  
The sun was sinking slow to rest ;  
And mute as Egypt's priests of old  
The stars in silence onward rolled ;  
And earth seemed in those roseate skies  
Like some fair bride, with beaming eyes,  
Full smiling lip, and blushing face,  
Whose raven locks rare jewels grace,  
Exhausted with the sports of day,  
In grots the Naiads pensive lay ;

And tints of sunset brighter dressed  
The roses nestling on their breast.  
Each child of Love whose wings were bound,  
When gleamed the sun on all around,—  
With bow and quiver, free from foes,  
Now on the silvery moonbeam rose,  
Through many an arch of triumph cast,—  
Where leafy spring had lately passed ;  
And from the oaks the nightingale  
Sent tender tidings to the vale.  
'T was as if nature from her bower  
Proclaimed to earth her pastoral hour,  
In notes so soft, so hushed, so sweet,  
You might have heard her pulses beat.  
Side linked to side stroll on the pair,  
Their eyes the heart's reflection wear ;  
In turn, o'er scenes of youth they range,  
As plighted lovers rings exchange.  
He spoke of happy days gone by  
Beneath his mother's loving eye ;  
He told where, from the forest hewed,  
Stood 'mid its pines her cottage rude ;  
Of home, and days of deepest gloom,  
Of dear ones laid within the tomb ;

Of those old vellum-covered lays,  
The stirring tales of warrior days,  
That fired his soul to daring deeds,—  
The food on which the hero feeds ;  
How in his dreams in coat of steel,  
Proud Sigurd's<sup>5</sup> giant steed he rode  
Through charmèd flames he could not feel,  
To where Brynhilda's<sup>6</sup> towers showed,  
Amid a grove of laurel leaves,  
Their gleaming walls on moonlit eves ;  
Till heated couch and fevered throes  
Drove him from dreams, to seek repose  
Where waved the pines their plumèd crests,  
And haughty eagles built their nests ;  
Where fanned the northern breeze his breast,  
Made glad his heart, and gave him rest.  
He told her how he longed to sail  
On every cloud that braved the gale  
And drifted near the eagle's home,  
To some far distant land to roam,  
Where Victory's banner seemed to wave,  
And Fame her wreaths to valour gave ;

<sup>5</sup> Sigurd Fofnisbane. — Sigurd (the Sigfried of German Legends) slew the fabled Dragon Fafner, and was the son of Volsungen Sigmund.

<sup>6</sup> Brynhilda — Sigurd's wife. Her castle was supposed to be guarded by magic fire.

Where Royal Charles, who scarce could score  
More summers than graced Olga's age,  
Won all the crowns that monarchs wore  
Only to spurn the victor's gauge.

And Axel spake:—“Ten winters past  
“My mother to this breast I bore;  
“Our hearts grew chill, our tears fell fast,  
“I left my home for Poland's shore.  
“To my dear Liege's tents I flew,  
“And 'mid the clash of arms I grew  
“Staunch as the flame of camp-fire gleams,—  
“The guardian of the soldier's dreams.  
“Yet still when, wandering through some wood,  
“I watched a bird 'light near its brood,  
“Or when some child around me played  
“By the brook's margin 'neath the shade,  
“Then dreams of peace unbidden stole  
“O'er the rude surface of my soul.  
“I saw the reaper's sickle glance,  
“The smile of youth, the green expanse;  
“Radiant in sunset's golden light,  
“Hard by her peaceful cottage door,  
“Methought there stood a form as bright  
“As her who gilt my dreams of yore.



“ Since then those scenes before me rise  
“ In vivid lines stamped on my brain ;  
“ In vain I close my aching eyes,  
“ They do but press on me again ;  
“ The form I saw, and see e'en now,  
“ Olga ! that lovely girl art *thou* ! ”

Glowed Olga's cheeks with deeper dye.  
“ How blest is man ! ” she spake at length,  
“ Free as the wind that sweeps the sky,  
“ No fetters bind his iron strength.  
“ *His*, — dangers, joys, and glory's rays,  
“ Earth, Heaven, — each his voice obeys ;  
“ But woman fills a harder part, —  
“ To bind and heal man's wounded heart,  
“ To be his bright attendant star,  
“ And yet forgot when griefs are far, —  
“ The victim on Love's fane to lie,  
“ While man, the flame, ascends the sky.  
“ My father, whose delight was war,  
“ Fell in the battles of the Czar ;  
“ My mother's face I scarce recall.  
“ The desert's daughter untamed grew  
“ Amid that strange and savage crew  
“ That filled our old ancestral hall ;

“ Base slaves, whom conscious meanness bade  
“ Worship the idol they had made.  
“ Ill brooks the spirit of the free  
“ To dwell where all is slavery.  
“ Say! hast thou seen on desert-plain  
“ Our coursers wild that know no rein?  
“ Light as the roe the sand they spurn,  
“ Their dauntless hearts for battle burn;  
“ With ears erect, in mid career,  
“ They halt, and sniff the danger near;  
“ Then with a bound, in clouds that blind,  
“ Across the trackless waste they rush  
“ With unshod hoof, to trample, crush,  
“ And give fierce battle to their kind.  
“ Thou desert race! how blest, how free,  
“ How passing sweet thy life must be!  
“ In vain I oft essayed to stay  
“ This haughty host, and barred their way;  
“ They gazed upon my bridled steed  
“ With scorn, and scarce would slack their speed.  
“ My spirit could no longer bear  
“ The castle’s chill and fettered air;  
“ I drove the boar and wolf to bay,  
“ I robbed the vultures of their prey,

“ And bought a lore from this wild chase,  
“ That bore its fruits in life’s hard race.  
“ Save Nature’s law, we conquer all,  
“ In lowly hut or gilded hall.  
“ Huntress or shepherd-maid at will,  
“ Fair woman is a woman still!  
“ A being ’reft of half its pride  
“ When torn from man’s sustaining side,  
“ A feeble vine, whose tendrils fade  
“ If shorn of all support and shade,—  
“ She knows no bliss *alone*, no mirth,  
“ Her joys are of a two-fold birth.  
“ A something sped my pulse’s beat;  
“ ’T was painful,—yet so strangely sweet,—  
“ A longing which I could not tame,—  
“ Sadness and joy were mingled there;  
“ It owned no limits,—had no aim,—  
“ On wings it bore me in the air  
“ From this poor clay, from earth and sky,  
“ Through starry realms to God on high;  
“ And when at last I closed my wings,  
“ And turned once more to earthly things,—  
“ To woods that ’mid my childhood grew,  
“ To hills with flowers of every hue,

“ To streams that murmured songs of love,—  
“ Though oft I saw ye, fount and grove,  
“ Like statue formed of lifeless clay  
“ Coldly I viewed ye, day by day,—  
“ Far more than life I prize ye now,  
“ A sacred love, a solemn vow,  
“ Shall ever bind you to this heart,  
“ With bonds that death alone can part,  
“ Since ——” And now dyed a crimson flush  
To deeper hue the fleeting blush ; —  
A gentle sigh then full revealed  
The secret so abruptly sealed.

The nightingale’s soft plaintive tale  
Re-echoes from her leafy bower ;  
The smiling moon beneath a veil  
Illumes the mystic evening hour,—  
As one tumultuous long embrace,  
Pure as the blood that tells of race,  
And true as Candour’s faultless face,  
Dissolved their souls in speechless bliss,  
Their hearts were fused in that warm kiss,  
Like flames that meet on sacred shrine,  
And gleam as sun and planets shine  
With purer rays near realms divine.

For them the world had ceased to be,  
And in its flight swift Time stood still,—  
For each hour of mortality  
Is meted,— must its course fulfil;  
But kiss of love and kiss of death  
Survive for aye the parting breath.  
O happy pair! a flaming world  
Would not have torn them from their trance;  
The earth in mighty fragments hurled  
Scarce could have gained a wondering glance.  
Lip sealed to lip, and breath to breath,  
They had not marked the shattered sky.  
Nor known that through the gates of death  
They passed to Paradise on high!

First Axel woke from that sweet dream:  
“By Sweden’s honour,—by my blade,—  
“And by those stars that yonder beam  
“White as the garb of bridal maid  
“And glisten through this grove of pine,—  
“By Earth and Heaven, thou art mine!  
“O that ’t were given me to flee  
“To some secluded vale with thee,  
“Where peace has set its sunny seat,  
“To live and die there at thy feet!

“ But ah! an oath enchains me now,—  
“ With flashing eye, with pallid brow,  
“ A hand of ice, a heart of stone,  
“ It comes between us,— says, ‘ Begone!’  
“ Nay, start not! all will yet be well;  
“ We may escape this hated spell.  
“ I must away. When May’s sweet hours  
“ Invite us to their feast of flowers,  
“ Once more I ’ll hasten to thy side,  
“ To claim, to win again, my bride.  
“ Farewell, my better part of life,—  
“ Farewell till then, my plighted wife!”

He turned,— and belt and scabbard shone,—  
A moment more, and he was gone.  
Through hostile hosts he spurred his way,  
Lurking in woods by night and day,  
And guided by that polar ray  
That never pales to mortal eyes,—  
The diadem of Northern skies,—  
And by that never-setting star,  
The radiant wheels of Charles’s car,

<sup>7</sup> Charles’s Car.—The constellation of the “Great Bear.”

Studded with nails of molten gold,  
Where thistles their bright gems unfold,  
Till, braving danger's darkest hour  
'Mid sternest foes of Sweden's power,  
He reached at last his native strand,—  
And, faithful to the king's command,  
Delivered at the council-board  
The missive with deep meaning stored.

Meantime, within her lonely halls  
Olga in vain on Axel calls.  
She taugh his name to hill and vale,  
And distant woods gave back her wail.  
“What is that solemn vow?” she cried,  
“The oath that tore him from my side,—  
“A former love? My heart replies:  
“‘Yes! for another bride he sighs.’  
“Dread maid, born 'neath a Northern sky,  
“Beware! for one of us must die!  
“Thou know'st not those devouring flames  
“No force subdues, no power tames,  
“That Southern fires fiercely show;  
“Beyond thy home of mountain snow,  
“Beyond thy water's frozen wave,  
“I come to drive thee to the grave.

“ Stay — was not Axel still a child  
“ When erst he left his Northern wild?  
“ Since then his steps ne'er trod his home,  
“ And love ne'er smiles when armies roam.  
“ No guile could rest on brow so high,—  
“ Truth is enshrined in that blue eye,  
“ In whose dark depths now mirrored lay  
“ The reflex of the soul divine,  
“ Clear as the images of day  
“ O'er tranquil breast of rivers shine.  
“ Why fly, then,— why must we two part,—  
“ Why should'st thou break this bleeding heart?  
“ No answer . . . . Save my accents drear,  
“ That echo faintly in my ear,—  
“ As o'er a grave a widow sighs  
“ And wafts a prayer beyond the skies;  
“ Or murmurs of some lonely dove  
“ Die in the whispers of the grove.  
“ Between us Ocean's billows roll,  
“ Fit emblems of my restless soul,—  
“ He hears me not. . . . . Nay, I will fly,  
“ Bowed on that breast win his reply.  
“ But is it meet that I should hide  
“ 'Neath veil of love my woman's pride?



“ Stay,— none shall close these features scan,  
“ I ’ll wield a sword,— and be a man!  
“ Oft have I played with perils past,  
“ Staked life and death upon a cast;  
“ The wildest steed to tameness bent,  
“ And with sure aim the arrow sent.  
“ God will lend aid to my design,—  
“ O Axel! Axel! thou art mine!  
“ I ’ll track thee through eternal snow,  
“ Seek thee where’er thy star shall glow,  
“ From vale to vale, from strand to strand;  
“ Yes! from those lips this vow I ’ll wring.  
“ Take me, O War! upon thy wing,  
“ And bear me to my Axel’s land.”

She ceased, and, woman-like, ’t was done,—  
Her will and act were blent in one.  
Beneath the helmet’s raven plume  
She hid her tresses’ midnight gloom;  
The leathern cuirass rudely pressed  
The restless surface of her breast;  
While full across that fragile frame  
Reposed the carbine’s mouth of flame;  
And in the girdle’s Grecian folds  
Its iron grasp the sabre holds.

Then o'er her lips of coral hue  
A shade of darkest tint she drew;  
It was as if a veil of woe  
Waved o'er a bank where roses grow.  
She looked, with gleaming casque and blade,  
The God of love for war arrayed,—  
E'en as the son of Klinias<sup>8</sup>  
Pourtrayed him on his shield of brass.

“Farewell!” she cried, “my hallowed home!  
“’T is but to bring thee peace I roam;  
“I shall return to welcome thee  
“With loving heart, from sorrow free.  
“Thy veil, O Night, in pity lend,  
“And lead me to my more than friend.”

There rose on land by conquest swept,  
Where yet the Northern eagle slept,  
His talons still unsteeled for war,  
The towers of the Russian Czar.  
A fortress mean; no borrowed sheen  
On Peter's brows as yet was seen.

<sup>8</sup> Alcibiades, on whose shield, Plutarch tells us, the God of Love was represented in the disguise of the God of Thunder.

Still like a new born Hydra lay  
The city in that frozen bay,—  
Wreathed in the sand,—you might descry  
The mischief in her treacherous eye ;  
E'en now the fangs with venom hung,  
E'en now she hissed with cloven tongue.  
The sea her freight of vultures bore  
To desolate fair Sweden's shore ;—  
'Mid waving banners,—glistening brands,  
Held high aloft by stalwart hands,  
Unbared to meet the Swedish host,—  
Olga unharmed had reached the coast.  
And now she made her modest prayer  
To join the standards gathered there.  
“ Stern is the sport,” the chief replied,  
As Olga's scabbard touched his side,—  
“ Stripling ! to Sweden's maids thy charms  
“ More fatal seem than these thine arms  
“ Arrayed against our country's foes ;  
“ They e'en must scorn thy puny blows.  
“ Whate'er in thee their legions feared,  
“ It would not be that downy beard.  
“ But thou may'st learn the art of war  
“ By clinging to her bloody car.

“ Where’er the fate of battle tend,  
 “ God and His Saints our cause defend.”

Now speed across the western wave,  
 Through rising gale and fleecy foam,  
 A thousand barks, whose banners lave  
 The tides that kiss their northern home.  
 And soon the sunset’s golden smiles  
 Played on fair Sweden’s hundred isles.  
 Her bulwarks stood as now, to wage  
 A war with time and ocean’s rage,—  
 As nature’s giant landmarks stand  
 To guard some wild and favoured strand.  
 By Sotaskär,<sup>9</sup> the anchors lay,  
 Deep bedded in the silver sand,—  
 To legend lore a treasured bay,  
 To many hearts a mournful strand.  
 ’T was there Hialmar,<sup>10</sup>—Sagas tell,—  
 Clasped Ingeborg,<sup>11</sup>—their last farewell;

<sup>9</sup> Sotaskär, on the coast of the province of Södermaland, in the district of Sotholm.

<sup>10</sup> Hialmar or Hjalmar—a celebrated northern champion, whose fate is described in the Hervare Saga.

<sup>11</sup> Ingeborg; Hialmar’s bride, daughter of King Ane of Upsala.

For when, at Fame's resistless call,  
His life-blood flowed in Odin's hall,—  
A shattered wreck,—no more a bride,  
Her heart was broke,—she sank and died;  
And on that rock her spirit sighs,  
And ever veils its weeping eyes.  
Fain would the North forget the spot  
Where moans that broken-hearted bride;  
But Hialmar cannot be forgot,—  
No poet's breast his death can hide.

Dense wreaths of smoke,—bright sheets of flame,  
No hand can stay, no force can tame,—  
Now rise to tell their bloody tale,  
'Mid childhood's shriek and woman's wail.  
Full well they know yon Cossack band  
Is leagued to lay in waste their land.  
Mournful and slow the village bell  
Tolls night and day a warning knell;  
But vain that voice to wake the dead;  
With widows' tears its notes are wed.  
O woe to thee, thou stricken land!  
For 'neath the turf thy warriors sleep.  
Still Sweden's small devoted band  
A wavering line of battle keep.

Can handfuls force such hosts to yield,  
Howe'er they learn their swords to wield;  
Those rusty arms, 'mid banners flung,  
That long in tatters idly hung,  
Though waved of yore in Victory's field?  
Thin were the Swedish ranks that day,—  
A small and ill-accounted band,—  
Though dauntless, resolute to slay,  
And court a contest hand to hand.  
But clouds obscured the glorious rays  
That lit their brows in olden days.  
From deepest vale to topmost rock,  
No courage could resist the shock;  
Where'er the charge—the stand—advance—  
In serried mass they crossed the lance,  
Till every moment thinner grew  
The line of that enfeebled few.

Now dashed athwart the ensanguined field,  
As Thor might rush with lifted mace,  
Axel, with sword he loved to wield.  
Where danger spread, where paled a face,  
He seemed an Angel sent at need;  
His breast was steel,—his arm was death.

He rights the ranks,—he reins his steed,—  
He gives commands with panting breath:  
“Stand, Swedes! and mass in close array,  
“King Charles has sent me here to day,—  
“I bear his greeting; shout on high,  
“‘God and King Charles!’—our battle-cry.”  
“God and King Charles!” is echoed far  
Where’er the contest wildly waged;  
And rocks, where red the battle raged,  
Are stormed as swift as flash of star;  
And hushed the shout, and quenched the flame  
That from the trenches fiercely came.  
The field with dead and arms was strewn,  
Shattered by ball,—by sabre hewn;  
For true and crushing was the blow  
That fell upon the flying foe;  
Till, panic-struck, that robber band  
Severed their cables from the strand.

The moon shone forth with pallid ray  
O’er broken casque and dented shield;  
Like some exhausted beast of prey,  
The battle slept upon the field.  
And by that shore with corpses spread,  
Axel trod slowly ’mid the Dead.

Limb pressed to limb, and face to face,—  
Locked in that long, that last embrace,  
In pairs they lay,—foe stretched by foe.  
Would you not vainly here below  
Seek ties that know no severing fate,  
Go,—search them in the grasp of hate,—  
Not in that tender clasp of love  
That wins its rivets from above ;  
Go,—tread the hard-contested field,  
And see stern Death its harvest yield,—  
How firmly, ere life's chord can part,  
Fierce foes will press the bleeding heart.  
Love, joy, and laughter's merry ring  
Dissolve in air like sighs of spring,  
But sorrow's sting and hatred's breath  
Endure till closely sealed in death.  
And thus he mused ;—why did he start ?  
Some moan, that through the stillness broke,  
Seemed with its chill to strike his heart ;—  
A voice in feeble accents spoke :  
“Axel, I thirst . . . . Fain would I try  
“To kiss your lips before I die.” . . . .  
That voice,—that sudden sound bespeak,—  
A flush came o'er his pallid cheek,—



He bounded from the jagged rock,  
As if he felt an earthquake's shock,—  
Beheld a youth stretched by the shore,  
Wan, — wayworn, — fainting, — bleeding sore.  
The moon, with clear unclouded beam,  
Shone full on features pale as death,—  
He trembled, groaned, and gasped for breath,—  
Was it a vision, — fancy's dream?  
“Spare me!” he cried, “ye Heavens above!  
“O God! it *is*, it *is* my love!”

Yes it was *she*, — with smothered woe  
She spake in accents faint and low:  
“Good even, Axel! nay good night,—  
“For Death is sealing fast my sight;  
“Ask not what hither brought thy bride,—  
“Thou know'st I could not leave thy side;  
“When life has reached death's fearful brink,  
“Oh! how our cares unheeded sink;  
“Such love alone as ours has been  
“Will shine above with Heaven's sheen.  
“Thy oath, thy vow 'mid records lie  
“Graved in the Book of Life on high;  
“Thy secret I shall soon be taught.  
“I feel I acted without thought;

“ I know thou lovest me as thy life,—  
“ Axel! forgive,—forgive thy wife,  
“ For our love’s sake, each bitter tear  
“ That thou may’st shed upon my bier.  
“ I had nor sister, father, mother,—  
“ Thou more to me than tender brother!  
“ Thou wert my all. Swear by that tear  
“ Even in death to hold me dear.  
“ But ah! why should I thus repine?  
“ The brightest page of life was mine.  
“ May not thy bride sleep on this breast?  
“ Wilt thou not lay my dust to rest  
“ In that bright land thou lovest best?  
“ See! Axel! yonder envious cloud  
“ Would veil the moon beneath its shroud;  
“ Ere it has fled, I breathe no more,—  
“ My soul will rest on Heaven’s shore,  
“ Where spirits dwell for ever free,  
“ Clothed in the living light above,  
“ And suppliant at the throne of love,  
“ With glory’s eyes to gaze on thee.  
“ Oh! when I lie within the grave,  
“ Let Sweden’s roses o’er me wave;  
“ And when they fade beneath the snow,  
“ Think on thy love who lies below.

“ Her summer days of bloom were brief,  
“ She had not shed her earliest leaf;  
“ See! Axel—See! the cloud is past;  
“ Farewell! farewell! one kiss,— the last!”  
She quivered,— gasped,— then softly sighed,  
And wildly pressed his hand, and died.

Then Madness rose from 'neath the earth,—  
That fiend, who claims a kindred birth  
With Death, and flames of fury breathes,  
His locks with Lethe's poppies wreathes;—  
Now gazing wildly on the sky,  
Now on the deep with rayless eye,  
And bathed in tears which mock the smile  
That plays upon his lips the while;  
He seized on Axel. Night and day  
He hovered where his Olga lay,—  
By rugged rock, by seething tide,  
This moving tale of sorrow sighed:

“ Hush! hush! be still, thou azure wave,  
“ Thou must not thus the shingle lave,  
“ Thy measured moans disturb my dreams,—  
“ I do not love thy foaming streams,—

“ With drops of blood they stain the sand,  
“ And wash the Dead upon the strand.  
“ But now, a youth lay here and bled,  
“ I strewed his grave with roses red,—  
“ And he was like . . . . I know full well.  
“ When blooms the Spring on hill and dell  
“ Olga will deck my mountain-cave.  
“ They say that on earth’s sunny breast  
“ My only love is laid to rest,  
“ And o’er her tender grasses wave,—  
“ ’T is false,—’t is false,—they do but rave,  
“ And all my bitter sorrows mock.  
“ This night she sat upon the rock,  
“ Pale with the hue that tints the Dead,—  
“ ’T was but the light the moonbeams shed.  
“ Frozen her lips as waters freeze,—  
“ ’T was only Night that kissed the breeze.  
“ I bade my love awhile remain,—  
“ She laid her finger on my brain;  
“ That brain a leaden weight had borne,—  
“ It grew as clear as early morn,  
“ And mirrored gorgeous Eastern rays,  
“ Sweet memories of happier days,—  
“ Those laughing hours for aye gone by,  
“ Seasons of cloudless azure sky,

"That in my soul bright summer made.  
 "There stood within a smiling glade  
 "A bower, whose roses knew me well;  
 "'T was there I first felt passion's spell;  
 "Hard by, a bleeding corse I fell,—  
 "An Angel-form, a soul in bliss,  
 "Revived my Spirit with a kiss;  
 "To me a warm, fond heart she gave,—  
 "That heart now withers in the grave.  
 "'T is past.—Ye stars, that shine above,  
 "Be quenched, and vanish with my love.  
 "I knew a brilliant morning-star,  
 "That brighter shed her silver flood;  
 "Amid the raging gale of war,  
 "She sank into a sea of blood.  
 "I still scent blood upon the shore,  
 "And from my hand flow streams of gore." . . .

On that dreary strand he made his moan,—  
 By night and day you might hear his groan;  
 And while his long, weary watch he kept,  
 A mist of tears o'er his eyelids swept.  
 One morn he sat by the surging deep,  
 His blue eyes steeped in eternal sleep,—

His thin hands upheld by Hope in prayer :  
The large tears froze on his pallid cheek,  
Like dew congealed in the morning air :  
And e'en in death the dull, sightless eyes  
Seemed turned towards the grave where his Olga lies.

---

Yes! such was the thrilling tale I heard ;  
My soul to its inmost depths was stirred.

Near thirty winters since have spread  
Their snowy mantles o'er the Dead ;  
Yet on my heart 't is deeply graved  
As rocks by restless billows laved.  
For memories of Childhood's days  
Are wreathed in vivid fadeless rays.  
Those grand immortal lays of old  
Must stir the heart, however cold.  
In every note the Poet sings  
They lie concealed with folded wings,  
As Aslög<sup>12</sup> slept 'neath Heimer's strings ;

<sup>12</sup> Aslög, daughter of Sigurd and Brynhilda, who, according to the legend, was concealed after death in a harp belonging to old King Heimer. She was celebrated for her beauty.

Until like her they charm the earth  
And proudly claim a Heavenly birth,  
In gay array, with noble mien,  
And locks of gorgeous golden sheen.  
Yes! Childhood's Heaven is thickly hung  
With lyres of gold, with jewels strung;  
And all that Poets since have sung,  
Lasting as Time's resistless power,  
Or frail and fleeting as a flower,  
Was clothed in nobler forms, I deem,  
When Childhood slept its sunny dream.  
Still,—when the notes of linnets ring  
Melodious in the joyous spring,  
And,—as some spirit leaves the grave,—  
The moon emerges from the wave  
To paint each vale, each mountain-head,  
In hue of silver, softly shed,  
As pale Death pencils on the dead,—  
A gentle whisper meets my ear,—  
Methinks I still distinctly hear  
That ancient lay, half sung, half sighed,  
Of Axel and his Russian Bride.

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## ODE TO THE SUN.

To Thee I tune a lay,  
Thou mighty light of day!  
Lo! marshalled in thy sight,  
Within the depths of night,  
Unnumbered worlds are sown,  
As vassals round thy throne,—  
From thy bright path of gold  
The worshippers behold!

Lo! Nature meets her end,—  
And Night, the Spirit's friend,  
O'er her pale beauty bowed,  
Has wrapped her in her shroud,—  
And many stars of night  
Gaze sadly on the sight.  
But deign once more to rise  
From out the Eastern skies,



And loose thy fiery flood,—  
As the rose within the bud,  
Then Nature in her throes  
With life and colour glows.  
And smiling on the glade,  
On every shining blade,  
High o'er the mountain gleam!  
Life's ever-gliding stream  
In icy barriers bound,  
Then flows with gentle sound,  
To mirror on its breast  
Thy beams that never rest,—  
Till, turning at thy call,  
They seek thy Western hall,  
Of loving hearts the hope,—  
Till wide thy portals ope,  
And weary souls shall rest  
In mansions of the Blest!

O Divine light of Day,—  
Whence, whence comest thou? Say!  
Wert thou there, wert thou there,  
When the Almighty's fond care,  
In the full sheen of night,  
Sowed bright flames for thy light?

Or perchance by the side  
Of His throne didst thou bide,  
And kneel in the air  
Like an Angel at prayer?  
Till, too proud to accord  
The demands of thy Lord,  
He hurled in His ire  
Thy circle of fire  
Like a ball into space,  
To proclaim by thy face  
His glory and His might  
In the regions of Night.  
Say! for this dost thou drift  
For aye restless and swift  
In the seas of the sky,—  
And no friendly ally  
Bids the wanderer stay  
From his lone weary way?

Yes! for this thou dost shroud  
'Neath the veil of a cloud  
The deep blushes that glow  
On thy face here below;  
For thou mournest the hour  
When God in His power

Sent thee ever to roam  
From thy Heavenly home,  
And to run on thy race  
In the measureless space.

Say! art thou not weary  
With thy weird, lonesome way?  
Does the path not seem dreary  
Thou treadest each day?  
Though long ages have rolled,  
Thou art with us once more,—  
But thy locks of bright gold,  
Are they bright as of yore?

Like a warrior's thy march  
O'er the glittering field,  
And the starry hosts arch  
Round the rays of thy shield;  
But the dread hour will sound  
When thy bright globe of gold  
Must in fragments be ground,  
And earth's death-bell be tolled.

As a tottering wall  
All Creation will fall

'Mid the depths of the sea  
Into ruins with thee.  
Flying Time, at God's word,  
Like a wing-stricken bird,  
Shorn of power and pride,  
Will drop dead at thy side.  
Then an Angel shall soar  
O'er the earth's shattered shore  
(Who in ages gone by  
Swept the deep azure sky),  
And with motionless face  
Scan the desolate space  
In keen search for thy light:  
But now fruitless his flight!  
For thou shinest no more;  
All thy trials are o'er!  
And, thy reconciled Lord  
Having sheathed His sharp sword,  
Thou art pressed to his breast,  
Like an infant at rest.

Aye! then roll on thy course,  
Where the light draws its source,  
Till God blesses thy rays;—  
After long weary days

I shall see thee once more  
On the Heavenly shore ;  
I shall greet thee again  
With a Heavenly strain !



## TO MY HOME LAND.

O thou! who to my childhood gave its tender care and seal,  
My gentle Home, thy memory through this fond bosom thrills,  
And o'er my soul my ear still longs to hear thy echoes steal;  
From distant lands I worship still those forest mantled hills,  
Where thy portals rise securely, on granite bases laid,  
With the boldness of a giant, in wildest garb arrayed.

O how vividly each feature thy simple grace pourtrays!  
Each thought within thy bosom, like thy sky, of candour tells.  
In rushing stream and waterfall wild Force its sceptre sways,  
And Peace in silence wanders through thy deeply shadowed dells.  
As thy mountains 'mid the heavens raise their lofty crests around,  
Behold! about their haughty brows a wreath of stars is bound.

Yes; such was the forgotten home that Ossian's wildness bred,  
As standing on a rocky peak to sing his stirring lay,

While God shone in his bosom and a storm swept round his head,  
Past years in ghost-like form were seen to glide in white array.  
From those far distant ages his celestial music sprang,  
That breathed a gentle fervour, and with loudest thunder rang.

How joyous is thy Summer! a giant from his birth  
He rises, wreathed with flowers from out the icy main;  
And with one touch he ripens each ear that crowns the earth;  
With one hand fruits and blossoms he showers in his train.  
While with remorseless reapers is leagued the sleepless day,  
With scarce a blush to steal more than half his rest away.

How beautiful thy Winter! I see the hero rove,  
The tempests toss his beard, and the pines his chaplet yield;  
He scatters grains of silver o'er every sunny grove,  
And with his frozen fingers strews lilies o'er the field,  
As on the heaving billows, at war with cliff and rock,  
His diamond buckler presses with unresisting shock.

How happy passed my childhood 'mid many a snowy crest,  
Now flying down the steep decline like lightning from a cloud,

Now riding with our shoes of steel the billow's rugged breast ;  
While Winter wrapped around us its unrelenting shroud,  
Spring gladdened every sunny cheek, and Innocence each heart,  
As winged by winds each foot pressed on like some strong  
driven dart.

How brilliant through the winter nights the moon shone o'er  
the lea,  
Her rays so gently slumbered there, on beds of drifted snow ;  
The North breeze came,—and lashed the rocks, swept wood  
and angry sea,  
And o'er the sky the Northern lights flashed forth their  
lurid glow ;  
As Fairies with the night aroused rose from their gilded rest,  
To stand amid the clouds that stormed upon the mountain crest.

But softly beams thy summer night our loving gaze to share,  
And notes of joyous revelry her gliding hours hail ;  
A shower of pearly dew she wrings from out her auburn hair,  
And stars and planets early pale upon her azure veil,  
As tremulous and silent she turns her car aside  
To quivering rays of daylight that through the landscape glide.



Thy groves bind on their shining brows a never-fading wreath ;  
With diadem of clouds, and feet that trample Satan's home,  
Thy everlasting pines arise from forth their couch of heath,  
To uplift their mighty sceptres above the billows' foam ;  
No longer softly mirrored on the lake's unruffled breast,  
In flowing robe of adamant and granite girdle drest.

O ! thou who pour'st thy riches, by labour's triumphs won,  
The tyrant's ever-present dread and freedom's ancient shield,  
I welcome thee, O iron, the rocks' concealèd son,  
Who smote of yore, with vengeful blow, fair Latium's  
    smiling field ;  
From their proud hold her glittering ranks and legion  
    eagles hurled,  
And gave the Northern mountain realms the sceptre of the world.

Arise to-day in safety, amid thy palms of peace ;  
Let trembling nations woo thee their homesteads to defend ;  
Survey thy quiet dwellings, where war and tumult cease,  
Thy edge to plough-shares turn, or to reaper's sickle bend.  
Triumphant as the peaceful scythe, or as the cruel brand,  
Now mow the sunny harvest field, and now an armèd land.

Let many a fallen country its baser manners praise,  
Where Virtue finds a sepulchre and Truth an iron flail ;  
The people I am born among preserve their homely ways,  
Their Innocence, their simple plough, and Freedom's freshest gale.  
Their hearths are never sullied by any rebel band,  
Their fealty stands firm as the rocks that gird their land.

Accept, ye gentle maidens, the crown your brother wreathes,  
Amid the din of cities his heart still clings to you ;  
Around you white-robed Modesty her heavenly spirit breathes,  
And on you joy and health alone have stamped their  
brilliant hue.

See ! the shining mirror's surface your blushing cheeks betray,  
As sheds the moon upon the wave a tender roseate ray.

Does my lyre tell its story ? Thy son, dear home, will long  
To win, among thy noble hearths, a humble spot of ground ;  
May thy greatness stamp his soul, thy simplicity his song ;  
May a tablet for his memory within thy heart be found ;  
And may thy friendly shadow, — the perfume of thy bloom, —  
Ne'er shun the turf that shelters his ashes and his tomb.

THE  
CONSECRATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD.

Lo ! to the altar's sacred shrine  
A pious train ascends,  
And Innocence her robe divine  
To every suppliant lends.  
From knitted hands to God above  
The prayer soars to the skies,  
And like some nestling child of love  
Within His bosom lies.

The Saviour's silvery voice we hail;  
As when we chance to roam  
Through paths of some far distant vale,  
And hear the songs of home.  
As o'er the burning cheeks of earth  
The cloud's tears gently roll,  
The message of a second birth  
Revives the drooping soul.

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The sacred hands are waving here  
A blessing o'er my brow ;  
A gentle whisper greets my ear,—  
God's Spirit nears me now.  
Farewell, ye snares of mortals !  
Farewell, earth's tender clasp !  
The keys of heaven's portals  
Are now within my grasp.

Look up ! what means that radiant gleam ?  
A new world's golden rays !  
God's mighty power and glory seem  
To meet my rapturous gaze.  
Lo ! righteous throngs are showering  
Their blessings,—peace and love,—  
Lo ! angel forms are hovering  
In the riven skies above.

How swift subdues the breath of Heaven  
Earth's fires from pole to pole !  
How fitted is the holy leaven  
To purify the soul !


Hear David's sacred harp proclaim  
Eternity and God,  
Hear Eden's palms breathe soft His name,  
Reveal His broken rod.

Now to the Poet's lyre heed;  
He sings a sacred theme,—  
A lay that wisdom cannot read,  
That faith can only dream.  
The base and sordid cares of Earth  
Are hushed and laid to rest,  
When rich notes of immortal birth  
Re-echo in his breast.

How sweet through this lone vale to trace  
The wanderer's holy throng,—  
The heavenly beams that light their face,  
The echoes of their song.  
How lightly through life's paths they glide,  
Like summer's softest sigh,  
While Angels hover by their side  
And fan them as they fly.

Arise! Priests of Eternity,  
Arise! ye righteous train,  
O dust and ashes! turn ye  
Unto your home again.  
As gentle dove is wont to sigh,  
As loud the thunders roll,  
Proclaim the law of God on high  
To every fallen soul.

Far as the starry vault can arch  
Your Hallelujas send,—  
Far as the rolling ages march,  
Till space and time shall end.  
Halleluja! O say, my soul,  
What loftier strain would'st sing?  
O'er earth Salvation's tidings roll,—  
Thy Hallelujas ring!



BY THE  
GRAVE OF A PEASANT GIRL.

AN ELEGY.

That gentle maiden in the grave is laid,—  
Wake then, my Muse, and sing a simple rhyme!  
O may the worth that lowly dwellings shade  
Find some short record in the page of Time.  
Her priceless gifts the world had never seen,  
For twilight veiled her too brief days in gloom;  
The memory alone of what her life has been  
Lives, like some star that rises from its tomb.

To paint her form the Poet scarcely dreams,—  
Her graceful figure and her classic face,  
Her cheeks like flowers, her eyes like Heaven's beams,—  
A seraph's pencil must the picture trace.

In vain through life o'er her whole being beamed  
Beauty and Truth, in fairest mantle drest,  
Since all their glories but the reflex seemed  
Of that bright flame that gleamed within her breast.

The subtle Spirits which oft mortals rule,  
And scowl on features where but beauty smiles,—  
Pride, struck with blindness in its erring school,  
Envy, that sees but other's faults and wiles,  
Conceit, that ever of self-worship sings,  
Caprice, whose hand bestows and takes away,  
Frail Vanity, that thousands captive brings,  
And Levity, that leads weak hearts astray,—  
All these base passions, which the darkness breeds,  
Fled at the brightness that shone o'er her soul;  
Deep in her bosom sown, there lay the seeds  
Of thoughts for others she could scarce control.

To solace grief in secret was her part;  
Without disguise she shared the joys of all.  
Love only dwelt within her tender heart,  
Fresh, warm, and pure as Eve's before her fall.  
She had not grudged her foe the brightest turn  
Of Fortune's wheel,—could she have owned a foe;  
The hate of Earth she would have wished to earn,  
The sweets of Love's forgiving breast to know.



By birth debarred from polished courts of life,  
The friend of those whose stars must ever wane,  
Her heart was raised above the glittering strife,  
And turned to commune with itself again.  
Like some poor lily buried in the vale,  
She saw the darkness gather round apace ;  
Too bright to shun the eyes her charms assail,  
And yet too modest not to hide her face.  
She ever mirrored the heart's generous rays,—  
In silence sat when Scandal told its tale,  
Thoughtful, amid a life of thoughtless days,  
And calm, when swept by youth's delirious gale ;  
Noble and pure, as wisdom's virtue shines,  
Gentle and loving, as a mother's prayer,  
She sought to change earth's lowly huts to shrines,—  
Not for *her* guerdon, but for Heaven's share.

Moulded, alas ! for death, from early birth,  
She fell a victim to its iron hand ;  
Without a home, she wandered o'er the earth,—  
Eternity her only fatherland.  
And hers those tears of many lonely hours,  
Those sighs that rose to realms that know no gloom,  
That gaze of fervour fled from pleasures bowers  
To seek the calm that lies within the tomb.

She felt those flames that in the soul e'er burn ;  
A child of Heaven, chastened by His rod,  
Still every thought in gratitude would turn  
From nature's bosom unto nature's God.


And now life's sand with swifter measure flies,—  
The roses gently die upon her cheek,  
And pining care seems painted in her eyes,  
Where long pent tears an exit vainly seek.  
As some bright Angel to man's gaze revealed,  
With outstretched wings soon takes his upward flight,  
She seemed already by God's finger sealed,—  
Through sorrow fitted for His realms of light.

Say! have I painted thee, thou noble maid?  
Know'st thou thy form, drest in this simple gear?  
These fleeting flowers, alas! will swiftly fade,  
Poor blossoms, early scattered on thy bier.  
The heart is cold,—for ever hushed the breath,—  
The eye is closed that shone with Heaven's gleam,—  
The earth thy couch,—thy only bridegroom Death,—  
As long as Time shall last, so lasts thy dream!

Flowers of a day! yon place of slumber view,  
For life's deep lessons are best gathered here,

And soon, perchance, its breast will ope for you,  
Ere dies that strain of music on your ear.  
Your dearest joys and schemes for aye will cease,  
Too surely Death, alas! will shatter them,—  
O think of what belongeth to your peace,  
Ye fairest daughters of Jerusalem!

Some hasty tears the vain are wont to weep;  
They swiftly wake from a brief moment's gloom,  
E'en on the morrow all their sorrows sleep;  
They pass with coldness by the silent tomb.  
Our Sires' virtues are for ever fled;  
We live in worthless and degenerate times,—  
Where man is deaf, and deaf the mouldering Dead.  
Be hushed, my Muse, and cease your simple rhymes!



## THE SWALLOWS.

See! bright glistens the Sun on the Nile's azure shore,  
And the palm-branches yield their deep shadows no more,  
To the land of our birth we all long to go forth,—  
The ranks are assembled. To the north! To the north!

Far below, as we rise, we behold like a grave  
The fresh verdure of earth, the deep blue of the sea,  
Where each day has cares and where the winds wildly rave,  
While on swift clouds of Heaven we ride,— we are free!

And high 'mid the mountains, where a soft meadow lies,  
Our sweet melodies ring as we thread its green ways;  
And we lay there our eggs, 'neath the cold polar skies,  
To unfold when the Sun gilds the night with his rays.

No rude step ever breaks the deep hush of our vale,  
Where the golden winged Elves on light foot skim the ground,  
Where green mantled Fairies through the leafy aisles sail,  
And weird dwarfs beat their gold in the mountains around.

With loud crash the winter shakes his mantle of snow,  
Now once more on the hills stands the son of the gale,  
And the trembling hares whiten, and ash-berries glow,—  
The ranks are assembled. To the south we must sail!

To bright gleaming meads, to warm waves of the sea,  
To deep shading palms and acacias, we flee,  
There to rest from our toils in the regions above,  
There to wait till we sail for the land of our love.



## HER EYES.

I know two eyes that brightly shine,  
But brightest when my face they see,  
For ever promise to be mine,  
Then gently veil themselves from me.

Yes! both our hearts with love o'erflow;—  
Lip pressed to lip, and breast to breast,  
'Mid joys no other mortals know,  
The Earth and Heaven sink to rest.

When ope those eyes to bless my lot,  
Soft mists hang o'er their sea of blue,  
Like drops on some forget-me-not  
Distilled from Heaven's gentle dew.

Two heavens are thine eyes to me,  
Where only holy Angels dwell;  
Come! let me freely gaze on thee,  
For ever bind me with thy spell.

## TO M<sup>ME</sup> STOLTZ.

(BY HER HUSBAND'S GRAVE.<sup>13</sup>)

Yes! Thy friend is gone,—yet stay this grief,  
Though dear he was to thy true heart.  
Remember the hours of life are brief,  
More brief its joys from which we part.

Ah! the day must come when in the air  
Freed from its dust the soul shall rise,  
Like Elijah drop its mantle there,—  
For ever vanish from our eyes.

But truth on its foundation sure,  
That goodly part he sought and found,  
Ever, aye! ever shall endure,  
By no base earthly fetters bound.

<sup>13</sup> Professor Stoltz, a friend of Tegnér. He died in 1814.

Lady! the good that here we sow  
Dies not. On Time's deep furrows cast  
'Neath shades of peace, that seed will grow  
And form a noble tree at last.

Its towering crest the skies shall rend  
When nature even breathes no more;  
Its golden fruit to earth shall bend  
With ripeness from the Heavenly shore.

When a Star from those realms on high  
Looks down into the peace of Night,  
Think that it is *his* friendly eye  
That beams on Thee with loving light.

When the soft winds of sorrow sing,  
And sighs thy tender bosom sear,  
In the wide space their echoes wing,  
Think 't is *his* voice is whispering near.

And when sad, as a Widow's part,  
A lily pale bends o'er yon tomb,  
Behold a herald from his heart,—  
Kiss it e'er it sheds its bloom.



O gather then the fleeting leaves  
And take them fondly to thy breast,  
Read on the tablets Memory weaves  
His treasured face and name impressed.

And tell them that he watches there  
All whom he loved, where'er they roam ;  
Tell them that still his heart, in prayer,  
Beats for them in his Heavenly home.

Tell them that Life's sweet blossom sears,—  
That Virtue has immortal sheen ;  
Tell all that from a Mother's tears,—  
A Father's grave,—they have to glean !



## FRITHIOF AND INGEBORG.

There rose in Hilding's<sup>14</sup> garden fair  
Two plants bred 'neath that father's care.  
Ne'er had the North more comely seen,  
Full well they grew as Summer's green.

Like the young Oak one shot apace,  
Its stem a lance in strength and grace;  
Arched was its crown, by breezes swayed,  
Like helm on hero's temples laid.

The other grew like some sweet rose,  
When erst the Winter melts his snows;  
And Spring to hide the rose's beams  
Lies in the bud beneath, and dreams.

<sup>14</sup> Hilding, the yeoman, who was charged by King Bele to bring up his daughter, Ingeborg.

But storms around the Earth must rage,  
The oak be torn as war they wage,  
The sun fierce rays o'er Heaven shed,  
The rose unfold her lips of red.

'Mid sport and jest thus side by side :  
And Frithiof<sup>15</sup> was the Forest's pride ;  
The rose that breathed the vale's soft air,  
Men called her Ingeborg, the fair.

To see the twain by light of day  
Through Freja's halls you 'd seem to stray,  
Where angel pairs their converse hold  
With roseate wings and locks of gold.

Or when the Moon glanced on the lea,  
They danced beneath some spreading tree,  
You 'd deem that 'neath those garlands green,  
The Elf-king tripped it with his queen.

'T was passing sweet, 't was joy to view,  
When his first Runic sign he knew.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Frithiof, son of Thorsten, who was the son of Viking.

<sup>16</sup> The study of the old Sagas is to this day one of the favourite pursuits of the Icelanders. We learn from Strinnholm's *Svenska Volkets Historia*,

No monarch ever felt such pride ;  
His loved one learnt it by his side.

Thrilling to skim the waters wide,—  
In his light skiff with her to glide !  
Wildly, when loosed the sail's firm bands,  
She clapped her slender snowy hands.

There was no nest built up so high  
That e'er for *her* escaped his eye ;  
The Eagle e'en, that heavenward soars,  
Was made to yield its precious stores.

There was no brook swelled by the storm  
O'er which he ne'er had borne her form.  
Sweet, when the stream unveils its charms,  
To feel the cling of soft white arms.

(vol. 2, page 283,) that "A winter evening in an Icelandic family presents a scene in the highest degree interesting and pleasing. Between three and four o'clock, the lamp is hung up in the *Bad-Stofa*, (Bath-room), or chief apartment, and all the principal members of the family take their station with their work in their hands. The work is no sooner begun than one of the family, selected on purpose, advances to a seat near the lamp and commences the evening reading, which generally consists of some old Saga, or such other histories as are to be obtained on the Island."

The first bright flower that graced the field,  
The earliest blush sweet berries yield,  
The grain that first unrolled its gold,  
For her he culled with joy untold.

But Childhood's hours must glide away ;  
Frithiof reached Life's meridian day,  
With eyes that sue, a heart that hopes :  
And Ingeborg's fragrant blossom opes.

The chase young Frithiof loved to seek :  
Such sport would blanch the manly cheek ;  
For without spear or falchion keen  
He fought the bear in woodlands green.

Breast sealed to breast, they strove for life,  
Though wounded, Frithiof won the strife ;  
Then homeward bent with shaggy prey,—  
From *him* could Ingeborg turn away ?

Love for brave deeds all women share ;  
'T is but the strong deserve the fair ;  
Both formed to grace love's fondest vow,  
As the casque crowns the warrior's brow.

Oft when on winter nights he read,  
By the deep glow the red flames shed,  
Lays of Valhalla's glorious halls,  
Of Gods and Goddess' 'neath its walls,—

He thought: "Bright shines our Freja's<sup>17</sup> hair,  
"A field of corn waved by the air,—  
"But Ingeborg's fair tresses seem  
"Gold nets, where rose and lily gleam.

"Soft, like snow, is Iduna's<sup>18</sup> breast,  
"It heaves beneath its green silk vest;  
"I know a veil 'neath which are found  
"Two fairy Elves with rose-buds crowned.

"And Frigga's<sup>19</sup> eyes are azure blue,  
"Like Heaven's vault those eyes to view;  
"I know two eyes before whose rays  
"Pales the blue sky of vernal days.

"Why say that Gerda's<sup>20</sup> features gleam  
"As freshest snow where meteors beam?

<sup>17</sup> The Scandinavian "Goddess of Love."

<sup>18</sup> Goddess of Eternal Youth.

<sup>19</sup> Wife of Odin, the principal God of Valhalla.

<sup>20</sup> Wife of Frej, or Frejr, the God of the Harvest.

“ I know two cheeks like some bright day  
 “ Formed from two Morns’ most blushing ray.

“ A heart with Nanna’s<sup>21</sup> precious worth,  
 “ Though not so prized as her’s on Earth.  
 “ Balder ! full well the lyre may rouse  
 “ To praise thee, Nanna’s happy spouse.

“ Ah ! were it given me to die,  
 “ Mourned by some faithful partner’s sigh,  
 “ Tender and true, as Nanna dear,  
 “ Before Death’s Goddess I ’d appear.”

Now the king’s daughter sang a lay  
 Of warrior days. Wove<sup>22</sup> blithe and gay  
 A web of heroes’ wondrous deeds  
 On azure waves,—in leafy meads.

And there, in snow-white wool unrolled,  
 Gleamed brilliant shields of woven gold ;

<sup>21</sup> Wife of Balder, Odin and Frigga’s son. Balder was the God of the “ Pure Light.” He is also styled “ The White,” on account of the brilliancy of his light locks.

<sup>22</sup> “ Great delight had they,” (the ladies) says the *Volsunga Saga*, “ in this their needle-work, and greatly was Gudran’s sorrow eased thereby.”

It may be added that the famous “ Bayeux Tapestry ” was the result of the activity and skill of the Scandinavian needle.

There redly waved the warrior's lance,  
Glistened the silver breast-plate's glance.

Howe'er she wove, as each day wore,  
Those heroes Frithiof's features bore.  
As o'er her web their bright forms spread,—  
'T was but with joy,—her cheeks grew red.

And Frithiof carved, where'er his goal,  
An I and F in the birch's bole.  
The runes grew gaily side by side  
Like those young hearts by love allied.

When Daylight streamed o'er earth and air,  
That king of worlds with golden hair,  
And life was stirring,—men around,—  
Their thoughts were to each other bound.

When brooded Night o'er earth and air,  
Mother of worlds with raven hair,  
And silence reigned, and stars had met,  
Their dreams were on each other set.

“O Earth, that binds each Spring, I ween,  
“Bright flowerets in thy tresses green,



“O call thy sweetest blossoms mine,  
“A crown for Frithiof’s brows to twine!”

“O Ocean, whose dark caves are sown  
“With fairest pearls in hosts unknown,  
“Give me the purest thou canst lend  
“Round Ingeborg’s neck in wreaths to bend.”

“Gem that caps Odin’s throne on high,  
“Thou golden Sun, the world’s bright eye!  
“Wert thou but mine, full soon shouldst yield  
“Thy disc to form my Frithiof’s shield.”

“Lamp in Allfader’s<sup>23</sup> mansion bright,  
“Thou moon, with thy pale rays of light,  
“Wert thou but mine, thy silvery sheen  
“Should deck the form of my loved queen.”

“My foster-son,” good Hilding said,  
“From this sweet love thy thoughts be led;  
“Fate’s laws on earth unequal fall,  
“Bele’s daughter men yon maiden call.

<sup>23</sup> Odin’s surname.

"From Odin's throne her sires are traced,  
 "From halls with Heaven's bright planets graced,  
 "And thou but Thorsten's son; — nay, cease,  
 "For like with like best thrives in peace."—

But Frithiof smiled! "Behold my race  
 "Far as Death's realms their limits trace.  
 "I slew but now by forest tree  
 "Its king, and won his lineage free.

"A freeborn man will never yield,  
 "For the whole world is freedom's field,  
 "Fortune can well atone her frown,  
 "And Hope's brow bears a royal crown.

"All power springs from a source divine,  
 "And great Thor weighs from Trudvang's<sup>24</sup> shrine  
 "The worth, not sires, that men record;—  
 "A mighty wooer is the sword!

"I 'd battle for my youthful bride,  
 "Were thunder's God 'gainst me allied;  
 "Bloom, my fair flower, in joy, — in peace,—  
 "Woe to the wish our love should cease!

<sup>24</sup> Thor's castle in Valhalla.

## FRITHIOF AND KING RING.

King Ring drank mead at Christmas tide in all his regal pride,  
And by him sat his lovely Queen, a fair and blushing bride ;  
Like Spring and Autumn side by side the pair thus seemed to be,—  
She was the fresh and verdant Spring,—the chilly Autumn he.

Now came within that sumptuous hall an unknown agèd guest,  
In robe of fur that veiled his head was this bold stranger drest,  
A massive staff was in his hand, and bending he was seen,  
But taller far than all the rest was that tall form, I ween.

He sat him down upon the seat hard by the entrance door,  
Where lowly born and friendless poor had ever sat before ;  
The courtiers smiled in very scorn, and gazed at one another,  
And pointed in derision at this “bear’s unruly brother.”

Then uprose that mysterious guest,—his eyes flashed flames of  
fire,

And with one hand he swiftly seized a courtier in his ire,  
Right warily he spun him round and turnèd him about ;  
Then silent grew his fellows,—as we had done, no doubt.

---

“ Whence that stir, who breaks the peace of this our royal  
pile ?

“ Come hither, agèd stranger, let us converse awhile.

“ Thy name, thy errand, country ?” the angry King demands  
To him who half concealèd by a friendly corner stands.

“ Full much thou askest, monarch, but I will answer thee ;

“ My name I will not give, it pertains alone to me.

“ In repentance I was nurtured, of want I am the heir ;

“ ’T was from the fierce wolf’s den I came, and last I rested  
there.

“ In days of yore I gladly sat the Dragon’s scaly side

“ Whose strong wings made it safely soar and in wild joyance  
glide ;

“ But now it lies in lameness, and frozen like the land,—

“ I too am old, and live to burn the salt<sup>25</sup> upon the strand.

“ I came to see thy wisdom, King, wide o’er these regions  
spread,

“ And I was met with bitter scorn,—for scorn I was not bred.

“ The jester by the breast I seized and spun him like a reed ;

“ Unharmèd he rose,—thy pardon now I crave for this my deed.”

<sup>25</sup> Frithiof was disguised as a salt burner.

To him the King: "Thy sentences with right good sense are  
stored ;  
" The Agèd we must honour ; prithee come, sit at my board ;  
" Lay thy disguise aside, — let us see thee as thou art, —  
" Mirth is not wont to mask, I trow, and mirth must be our  
part." —

Now fell from that tall stranger's head the bear skin's furry  
screen,  
And in the agèd figure's stead a comely youth was seen ;  
Lo ! from a lofty brow's expanse, o'er shoulders broad, there rolled  
Rich flowing locks of flaxen hue like some bright sea of gold.

His form in gorgeous azure folds of velvet was arrayed,  
With silver belt where forest beasts were thickly overlaid,  
By cunning hand of craftsman worked and welded in their place,  
Around the hero's loins they sprang and gave each other  
chace.

Upon his arm a golden ring displayed its glittering light,  
And by his side his weapon hung like flash stayed in its  
flight.  
O'er hall and guest the warrior's gaze with calmness seemed  
to soar ;  
In form he was like Odin's son and tall as Asa-Thor.

The cheeks of the astonished queen soon changed to scarlet  
glow,  
As fiery Northern lights that play upon the fields of snow:  
And, like two water lilies fair that breast the billow's rage,  
Her bosom's rise and fall proclaim the strife her heart must  
wage.

And now the trumpet sounded shrill: there was deep silence now,  
For Frejer's hour of sacrifice and for the solemn vow;  
With garlands bright his shoulders wreathed, his jaws with  
apples graced,  
The boar in silver charger borne within the hall was placed.

Thereat King Ring with grisly locks rose from his seat, not loth  
He stroked the grim boar's forehead down, and thus he made  
his oath:

"I swear to conquer Frithiof, though a mighty warrior he,  
"So help me Frej and Odin, — great Thor my helper be!" —

Rose up the guest unbidden; with defiant laughter wed  
A crimson flush of hero's wrath athwart his features spread;  
Then with his blade he smote the board, and at the mighty  
clang  
Each warrior from his oaken bench throughout that concourse  
sprang.

“Nay! hear me, King,” he cried aloud, — “hear what *I* have to tell,—

“Young Frithiof is my kinsman,—I know the youth full well;

“I vow to shelter Frithiof e’en against the world arrayed,—

“So help me, my good Norna,<sup>26</sup> and my own trusty blade.”—

But King Ring smiled, and said: “Thy words, good youth, are wondrous bold,

“Still speech has perfect freedom here in this our royal hold;

“Fill up the bowl, fair queen, with wine, — whate’er thou lovest best,

“I give this stranger welcome here through winter as our guest.”—

The Queen then raised the goblet bright that stood before her there,  
Formed from the priceless Urus’<sup>27</sup> horn, esteemed a jewel rare,  
Mounted on burnished silver feet with golden circlets bound,  
Adorned with ancient figures quaint, with runic words around.

Her eyes downcast, she tendered the goblet with a sign,  
But her fair fingers trembled, — ’t was stained with drops of wine;  
As oft the evening purple paints the lilies of the land,  
So deeply dyed those crimson drops her slender snowy hand.

<sup>26</sup> “Norna,” singular of “Nornor,” The Goddesses of Fate. These were “Urd,” “Verdandi,” and “Skuld.” symbols of the Past, Present, and Future.

<sup>27</sup> Bos-urus.

Right joyously the stranger took that goblet from the Queen,—  
 No two men e'en, as men now are, would quaff that cup, I ween;  
 Yet with the ease of grace and straight to do her will and pleasure  
 The stalwart youth ne'er drew his breath to drain that royal  
 measure.

Then by the agèd Monarch's board the Minstrel swept his strings,  
 And sang a stirring Northern lay, a lay the lover sings,  
 Of Hagbart and fair Signè,<sup>28</sup> — and at each thrilling rest  
 The hardest heart was melted within its mailed breast.

He sang of old Valhalla's halls, of Einherīer<sup>29</sup> meed,  
 Of conquest on the land and sea, of noble sire's deed,  
 Till each man tighter grasped his blade, and each eye sparkling  
 grew,  
 While swiftly round the festive board the circling goblet flew.

Drained to the dregs each goodly cask within that kingly house  
 Full well they all acquitted them in that wild Yule carouse;  
 Then went to court their slumber, free from anger and from  
 care;—  
 But old King Ring lay on his couch near Ingeborg the fair.—

<sup>28</sup> Hagbart, a hero celebrated in the ancient Sagas; the "fair Signè's" betrothed.

<sup>29</sup> The sacred heroes of Valhalla.



## THE MONUMENTAL MOUND.

TO L——.

Like some sad urn amid a field of flowers,  
Thy tablet rises from its silent home,  
And, half concealed, amid the grain it bowers,  
To view the plain and watch the billow's foam.

In the soft verdure of the spring 't is drest.  
See! Life is blooming on the couch of Death.  
Deep where the ashes of the victor rest,  
The lime strikes roots, and sighs 'neath evening's  
breath.

Oft from these heights has swept my joyous gaze  
O'er summer's charms,—where Saxo's walls appear  
A faded monument of bygone days;  
Where crowd sad thoughts, and Memory drops a tear.

O look around! far as the eagle sees  
The landscape stretches to a flowery plain,  
And, like pale spirits watching 'mid the trees,  
White shrines are gleaming through the tender grain.

And in the west the deep-blue arching bay;  
What mighty wonders lurk beneath its breast!  
O who can know where lead its billows? Say!  
Who reach the spot where the Sun sinks to rest?

Come! build an altar on this hallowed ground,  
Lofty and light, for all the Poet sings,—  
For from above the monumental mound  
The lyre still yields its most inspired strings.

The sweetest strain is born, as flowers' breath,  
To shed a moment's perfume o'er its tomb;  
And all our joys, from budding life to death,  
Are but Mirth's shrines veiled in sepulchral gloom.





# GERDA.

(A FRAGMENT.)



## GERDA.

“GERDA” is an incomplete Poem. Tegnér’s original intention was to extend the story over four Cantos. But the first was the only one he was able to finish. It was near the close of his life that the Poet returned to his neglected, and, as he states, his favourite work. This circumstance is very agreeably placed before his readers at the opening of the second Canto, where Tegnér speaks of Gerda’s “shadow” having “waited at his gate,” till he was once more at liberty to pay his attentions to her. When the Poet was on his death bed, the last stroke of his pen was drawn on the manuscript of “Gerda,” with a view to publishing the poem in an abbreviated form.

In the guise in which it appeared two years after Tegnér’s death, it is now submitted to the English reader, who, it may be hoped, will be inclined to consider this fragmentary piece in the light in which Professor Böttiger views it, namely, as a “Torso,” not unworthy to stand in the gallery of Swedish master-pieces.

The story of “Gerda” carries us back to the middle of the twelfth century, when Waldemar the Great’s foster brother, Axel Hvide, afterwards the celebrated Archbishop Absalon, fell in love at twenty years of age with Gerda, daughter of the Giant Finn, who, according to an ancient legend, built the Cathedral of Lund. Love for Gerda, as well as the desire to promote her eternal

welfare, had induced the young knight to sacrifice his brilliant worldly prospects, and even the hope of ever obtaining her hand ; since, in order to effect the conversion of this proud daughter of the giant, he determined to become a priest. On his return, in his thirtieth year, from pursuing his studies in France, he was named Bishop of Roskild, and was subsequently promoted to the Archbishopric of Lund. Absalon converted and baptized not only Gerda, but also Sölve, her brother. Both the latter had at that time left their mountain haunts for ever. Sölve built himself a castle in the neighbourhood of Blekinge, where Sölvitsborg now stands. Gerda returned to her old paternal home in the mountain at Lund. Here, under Absalon's protection, she founded a convent, where, as Prioress, she ended her days.



#### LEGEND OF FINN THE GIANT.

At Helgonobacken, near Lund, there once lived a grim giant called Finn, who had his dwelling underground. St. Lawrence, who had settled at Lund on his arrival from Saxony, preached the word of God through the whole neighbourhood. Every hill on which the sun of heaven beamed was his pulpit, for he had no church. Finn remarked on this to St. Lawrence, and said with scorn, "Christ is surely a God who is worthy of having a "holy temple. I will build him one, if on its completion you "will tell me my name. But should you fail in this, beware, for

“then you must give my little ones the two torches which are “wandering in the plains of heaven.” To this St. Lawrence replied, “Thou heathen fool, the sun and moon have been placed “above to light both the wise and the foolish, and must remain “there.”

“Well answered,” rejoined the giant; “it would no doubt “be very dark here in Skåne without them. I give up the sun “and moon, and only stipulate for the possession of your eyes.”

“If the holy church be but built,” replied St. Lawrence, “you shall have them; I will willingly sacrifice my eyes in “such a cause. God’s truth can be preached as well by the “blind as by those who are blest with sight.”

The giant immediately set to work, carried a mountain to the spot, which he crushed to pieces to form the building; and called on the walls to rise, exulting over the impossibility of his name being known, and the consequent certainty of his little daughter playing with the “monk’s eyes” before the moon was at her full. The vast building, with its rows of mighty columns, soon sprang from its foundations. Already Finn sat on the roof, singing a triumphant song; when St. Lawrence came by, in a sorrowful mood, to gaze for the last time on the setting sun. While earnestly invoking the aid of the Almighty, he suddenly heard a wondrous voice, coming he knew not whence, and singing these words: “Sleep, little Sölve, sleep, my son; thy father Finn “is sitting on those walls yonder. Sleep, little Gerda, sleep, “fair daughter; Finn will come home at night with a present “for thee.”

St. Lawrence ran joyfully to the cathedral, exclaiming— “Finn, Finn, come down; but one stone is still wanting to



“complete the work, it will soon be laid, and God preserves my eyes.”

“By my name Finn,” replied the giant furiously, “that stone shall not be laid so easily. Thy church shall be a standing ruin for ever, and shall never be completed, either without or within. I am Finn, and I will crush this building to atoms.”

He then leapt down, seized the pillars rooted in the crypt, and shook them till the walls tottered; when suddenly his strength failed him, and he was turned into stone. There he now stands, still embracing those mighty pillars.

Ever since that time, many centuries ago, man has worked in vain, year by year, at this cathedral. Money, labour, or materials,—something is always wanting, and the edifice to this day remains unfinished.



## CANTO I.

On Runamò<sup>30</sup> Spring's sun-rays beam,  
Where, if the Saga true you deem,  
Hildetand in those days of yore  
On the mount side was wont to score  
Hero deeds, a full half mile graded,  
Great Runes by pilgrims worn and waved.  
And here and there those bold signs lie  
To set at nought man's searching eye,  
Like the faint memories we trace  
Of well known lines on Death's pale face.  
Those Runes spoke once an earthly speech,  
And now their sense but spirits reach.

On Runamò Spring's sun-rays beam.—  
Slumbering in her shaded dream

<sup>30</sup> A mountain lying in the parish of Hoby, situated in the district of Blekinge, where it is believed colossal Runic inscriptions are to be found, ascribed by tradition to Harald Hildetand, and supposed to be commemorative of the exploits of Ivar Wildfamn, his maternal grandfather.

There, as a sleeping Norna, lay,  
Like some song of the olden day,  
Gerda, the savage,—still a child,  
Finn's beloved daughter,—fair, though wild.  
As a reed trembles on the wave,  
Quivered the lance to sport she gave;  
Her bow, half steel half bone, was seen  
Balanced on bough fresh dressed in green.  
Her foot was bare, and bare her arm;  
A fur-skin screened her breast from harm,  
Veiled many a beauteous swelling form,  
Like drifts upheaved by snowy storm.  
Around her neck and face were laid  
Bright tresses by the breezes swayed,  
Rippling as waves that darkly break  
On flowered isle of some fair lake.

With a rustling in the grove,  
Gerda rose from dreams she wove,  
And before her wondering eyes  
Stood a form, as in the skies  
Poets paint young Nature's son,  
Thor and Balder blent in one.  
Clad in green with plumèd hat;  
On his arm a falcon sat.

Less with wonder than with ire  
 Mantling on her brow of fire,  
 Gerda cried: "Nay! in this place  
 "Lies no pathway for thy race,  
 "False they are, and false thou art,—  
 "Christians! Christ alone their part.  
 "Yes, away! with them abide,—  
 "We for aye have left their side.  
 "Schemes enough spread far and wide.—  
 "Woods with tresses emerald sown,  
 "Desert waste, are still our own!"  
 Boldly with youth's unblushing mien  
 Spoke the hunter clad in green:  
 "Heretofore my path was free,  
 "In the wood as on the lea;  
 "Axel Hvide<sup>31</sup> hunts and strays,  
 "Heeds not when, or where, his ways,—  
 "Even in the giant's bower.  
 "Way-worn, trackless, here an hour,  
 "Lady, at your shrine to bow,  
 "Methought. I see my error now.

<sup>31</sup> Axel Hvide was born in 1128, in the district of Sorö. He studied at Paris, was made Bishop of Roskild in 1158, under the name of "Absalon;" was raised to the Archbishopric of Lund in 1177, and died at Sorö in 1201.

“ Let that pass. The forest bear,  
“ Or oxen, yield the Hunter’s fare.  
“ Be his weapon still his friend.  
“ Come then, Night, thy torches lend,—  
“ Stars, lead on now, as of yore,  
“ Shine on a more bounteous door,—  
“ Fly, my hawk.” With blushes gleams  
Gerda’s cheek. “ Nay! ill beseems  
“ Giant’s friendship such as you,  
“ And his home too poor to view.  
“ Yet for those who seek our care,  
“ We have always bread to spare.  
“ Stony bed and simple cheer,  
“ Follow! if you feel no fear!”  
Silent on each other gaze  
As they thread the leafy maze.  
Here a narrow crooked way  
’Mid the dark oaks wreathing lay;  
Further where the lime grove winds  
Bounds a herd of gentle hinds;  
Tame elks, starting from the band,  
Fondly lick fair Gerda’s hand.  
Ever onward still they press  
Where the glens their treasures dress,

Till they reach a chasm wide,  
And the mountain paths divide  
In two parts the valleys chain,  
Then for ever close again.  
Foams a stream with deafening roar ;  
High above, the green groves soar  
Rooted on the mountain's brow,  
With bright crowns to Heaven bow.  
Gerda rings a silver bell ;  
Then, as swift as words can tell,  
Opes a mighty portal wide  
Hidden in the mountain side.  
At the gate a form uprose ;  
Dwarfed, born 'neath the North-cape snows,—  
Trembling seeks to welcome them,  
Kisses Gerda's flowing hem.  
In his hand a torch he bears,  
Bright the blue flame shines and flares,  
As will-o-wisps on moorland show  
Their lantern's weird and magic glow.  
Faintly beams the quivering light  
O'er the boundless cavern's height,  
Lurid sheen but feebly laid  
On that lofty Colonnade !

How yon threatening pillars shoot  
Shadows to each wanderer's foot,  
Giant shades dark spirits trace,  
Looming dim in that desert place!  
Till, as the sky of Heaven free,  
The light of hundred lamps they see,  
Open from a Rotunda vast.  
At that gleam so sudden cast  
Quailed the eye beneath its veil;  
So dazzling flashed that giant hall  
With thick ore crusted roof and wall.  
Thus her greeting Gerda gave:  
"Welcome to the Giant's cave!  
"Ancient as the old Earth's base.  
"Northern Kings were wont to pace  
"All the Courts your glances meet;  
"Now a prison,—or retreat  
"For our outcast children's feet.  
"What avail! The mountain still  
"Feels for friends no hatred's chill;  
"Freedom's sires and deeds shall glow  
"In our breasts yet, here below!  
"Treasures now will meet your gaze  
"Traces of our bygone days;

“As you list the hour beguile,—  
“I will tend your meal the while.”

Lo! wonders swiftly now unfold,  
In masses to the eye unrolled.  
What gems those powers below had hid  
'Neath many a sombre casket-lid!  
Here glistening in the mountain's night  
Lay gold in quartz with mica bright,  
Rich leaves where yellow bosses glow,  
Like some grove chilled by Winter snow.  
There silver through gigantic blocks  
Stretched its veins o'er the lime-girt rocks  
In endless long and waving lines,  
Lost in those vast mysterious shrines;  
A mighty serpent to behold,  
Of azure blue and shining gold!  
Where'er the restless eye reposed  
By metal gleam 't was swiftly closed;—  
Core of the earth, around which cling  
The gems that form her emerald ring!  
Here in a thousand shapes they bide  
In the clefts of the mountain side,  
To clothe in hosts those glittering walls  
That grace ungodly Mammon's halls.



From the arched roof floating low  
Streamed the rays of Heaven's bow,  
As the seven colours rise  
And Hope diadems the skies.  
Still how'er her hues are laid  
Hope's bright tints will swiftly fade;  
*Here* each ray was turned to stone,  
With unchanging brightness shone;  
So through sorrow's stricken heart  
Thoughts of happy hours dart.

Tender rose-quartz firmly wed  
With the garnet's berry red,  
Yellow topaz, emerald bright,  
Cast their pale unpolished light.  
Chaste the azure sapphires rise,  
Like a Northern maiden's eyes;  
While aloft the lapis' rest,  
With their deep blue spangled breast.—  
A riband web of fluor spar,  
In the space 'neath, floating far,  
Edged the bow with violet sheen.  
A huge crystal mass was seen

Balanced from the dome, and soon  
Like a subterraneous moon  
Cold and drear,—unearthly sight,—  
Dimly lit the guests of Night;  
As when rays of reason find  
Entrance in the ruined mind.

While Axel, rooted, looked his fill,  
Weird torch in hand, the Dwarf stood still;  
And thus he spake: “Full near the way,  
“See where Death holds his silent sway.”  
With shrivelled hands that told where Age  
Had graved his never-fading page,  
He oped a porch, deep ebon lined,  
Of massive silver bars refined.  
This the dark mountain’s burial ground,—  
Huge giant remnants, mound on mound,  
Fresh with green hues,—at every turn  
Wrought marble tombs with each its urn.  
If but in peace man’s ashes rest,  
As well they lie by marble prest  
As ’neath the shield of earth’s soft breast.  
On each high mound were plainly seen  
Records of what its dust had been,

Titles that each had to bequeath  
While wrapt in iron dream beneath.  
O'er names in Hero Sagas sung,  
Names long forgotten, Axel hung;  
For from remotest giant days  
Those rolls gave forth their brilliant rays.  
On the last grave amid that host  
Axel beheld, in wonder lost,  
Finn's name,—upon a massive block  
But late carved in the living rock.  
“Is yon grave empty? e'en in death  
“Is man a prey to liar's breath?  
“Was not Finn's clay long since transformed?  
“Have snare and guile all here deformed?  
“Lo! yonder darkling waters rave,  
“Gloomy as Ellivaga's<sup>32</sup> wave,  
“And here I feel chill vapours shed,  
“Cold as the breath that haunts the dead.  
“I will away,—but first a prayer  
“For Pagan ashes gathered there.  
“Let peace by Pity's voice be said,—  
“Rest, Peace of God, on every head!”—

<sup>32</sup> An underground poisonous stream, celebrated in Northern fable.

Meantime Gerda's busy hands  
 Tend the meal, and wondrous stands  
 In bright contrast to her task  
 That queenly form in homely mask.  
 With bowl upraised and apron bound,—  
 Like to some ancient goddess found  
 In those stirring Grecian days  
 Of the great Ionian's lays,—  
 Soon on the marble slab she stored  
 A feast to grace a monarch's board.  
 Wheat-bread formed on Swedish land,  
 Fine and white as Gerda's hand;  
 Butter bright as crowfoot's gold,  
 Wild boar from the forest hold,  
<sup>33</sup>Uren's breast and haunch of bear  
 In tempting forms are gathered there;  
 Blackcock in the thicket slain  
 (Where he sings his sweetest strain  
 With the breath of heaven elate—  
 Happy he with freedom's fate—);  
 Berries in silver chargers shed  
 Blushed like Gerda's cheeks of red;

<sup>33</sup> UR-oxe (*Bos Urus*).

As her breast, so rose the cream ;  
Struggled pike with sparkling gleam,  
Dove's blue eggs, too, modest peered ;  
Oysters bared their salty beard,  
And in the glittering wall hard by  
A fountain peeped, with silvery eye.  
" Vast is our cellar," Gerda said ;  
" 'Neath town and moor its paths are spread  
" To distant Southern regions led ;"—  
Lo ! as she gently turned her hand,  
Like sun-beams bright on Summer's land  
And clear as light that gilds the Pole,  
Sparkling wine-streams sprightly roll,  
Or shoot their jets from out the wall  
In lofty crystal cups to fall.  
Now as water poured on gold  
Bright drops o'er the chalice rolled ;  
Gerda's rosy lips were wed  
To the brim. She smiled and said :  
" Join the toast, guest, ' Prosper well  
" ' All this Mountain's magic spell !'  
" Axel Hvidè is thy name,  
" From Hvidarp's<sup>34</sup> vale thy sires came,

<sup>34</sup> Now " Vidarp."

“ Hvidè, too, thy ancestral halls  
“ By Löddeå, near Lund’s fair walls.  
“ How o’er that land has Fortune rolled  
“ Since turned my Sire, the Giant old,  
“ (So runs the monkish tale,) — to stones,  
“ Though in the Mount we burnt his bones?  
“ Nay, thou thyself hast seen his grave,  
“ The last ’mid hosts where grasses wave.  
“ Since then, a monk, ill-favoured, pale,  
“ Disguised beneath Religion’s veil,  
“ Returned to seek yon mountain height,  
“ Where an undying stalactite  
“ Concealed upon its jaggèd brow,  
“ Drops silver tears in ceaseless flow  
“ O’er his poor dust that lies below.”  
‘ This mount,’ he said, ‘ for aye remains  
‘ An heirloom to a race that gains  
‘ Its title of immortal fame  
‘ From all that can enrich a name.  
‘ As yet its form unshaken stands ;  
‘ A thousand years our stalwart hands  
‘ Have heaped here many a treasure bright,  
‘ Hid in these caves’ sepulchral night.  
‘ Still from a fresh sustaining source  
‘ The green Earth draws her vital force ;

‘ In these dark depths that cover them,  
 ‘ Rich ore-veins shoot from fruitful stem.  
 ‘ But well I know a day will bloom  
 ‘ O’er Baltic waves, to seal its doom,  
 ‘ Then must the Mount’s strong life be hushed,  
 ‘ ’Neath realms of Night for ever crushed.  
 ‘ Of old we strove for Asa’s<sup>35</sup> star  
 ‘ Matched with the restless fiends of war,—  
 ‘ A host the Fates have aye decreed  
 ‘ ’Gainst Order’s reign must fight,—and bleed.  
 ‘ But soon the foes their forces wed,—  
 ‘ Ruler and Ruled in turn are led,—  
 ‘ Heavenly light and Earthly pride  
 ‘ Blent on the Northern mountain side.  
 ‘ Then a strong keen-sighted band  
 ‘ Peopled our Sires’ unfettered land;  
 ‘ That race on battle-field and wave  
 ‘ Were wont the Gods themselves to brave.  
 ‘ But now a lore, pale, sickly born,  
 ‘ Of sinew reft, of honour shorn,  
 ‘ Like fevered blood that knows no rest,  
 ‘ Creeps stealthy in the Norseman’s breast,

<sup>35</sup> Abbreviation for Asa Balder, or Asa-Thor; “As,” or “Asa,” signifying a God, Demigod, or Hero.

‘ So late ’neath Freedom’s banner ranged  
 ‘ From mortal ills so late estranged.  
 ‘ It lives but to atone the Past,  
 ‘ To seek the shade that others cast,  
 ‘ Speaks peace to hide its feeble deeds,  
 ‘ Nor power recalls, nor valour heeds.  
 ‘ Ready with tears, well versed in wile,  
 ‘ Steeped to the very lips in guile,—  
 ‘ Yet victor crowned. Valhalla’s laurels won  
 ‘ Paled like the flames of an extinguished Sun!  
 ‘ For ever fled the Northern hero’s strength,—  
 ‘ In vain he wields his hammer’s shortened length.  
 ‘ Did not e’en I, betrayed, with this my hand  
 ‘ Raise yonder Fane in fair Lund’s smiling land?’

“ Tell me,”—here Gerda spake again,—  
 “ Does the proud Temple still remain?  
 “ Or did not Thor with fire divine  
 “ In wrath destroy that impious shrine?  
 “ But nay, forgive, thou art my guest,—  
 “ Tell of the scenes I love the best;  
 “ Still are my hills with verdure gay?  
 “ ’Mid these how gladly would I stray,  
 “ Where oft I hung o’er perfumed flowers  
 “ And heard sweet notes from feathered bowers.



“ In childhood’s days I used to roam  
“ O’er those broad meads that girt my home,  
“ Rich plains, where waved the yellow grain  
“ Like restless billows of the main.  
“ Those ancient groves with victims fair,  
“ (Too soon Valhalla’s fall to share,)  
“ Rise like bright Isles, whose brows of green  
“ Shine on the Sea with golden sheen.  
“ But azure waters take their stand  
“ Ever around to watch the strand;  
“ And dragons flanks of ebon yield  
“ To bear the shrine on castled shield.  
“ O my too precious childhood’s days,  
“ Halos that gild me with their rays,  
“ O how those smiling hours glance  
“ Athwart that heavenly blue expanse  
“ To distant but far happier fields,—  
“ And Life to me a desert yields!”

And as she spake, a dew-drop clear  
Dimmed her dark eye; that gentle tear  
Unveiled the sorrow-laden soul.  
With kindred grief that mocked control  
Axel made answer: “ Lady mine,  
“ I treasure too that land of thine!

“ But unblest Discord ruthless reigns  
“ O'er noble Freja's peaceful plains ;  
“ And blood-stained hounds of carnage rave  
“ O'er Earth's green vale and Ocean's wave.  
“ But when once Sven<sup>36</sup> his thirst shall sate,—  
“ Sven whom we shun,—Sven whom we hate,—  
“ When scorn and blood their course have run,  
“ Then shall arise the martyr's son,  
“ My foster-brother, Valdemar,<sup>37</sup>  
“ To seize the wheels of Time's fleet car,  
“ Conjure the storm, direct our race  
“ By stars that shine on Heaven's face.  
“ Each hope in our country's bosom bred  
“ Its seed in Valdemar's heart has shed.  
“ High thoughts dwell in that hero's mind,  
“ Earth's weal and Heaven's faith combined.  
“ Both nurtured in the same dear home,  
“ My dreams in fancy oft will roam

<sup>36</sup> Sven Grathe. He usurped the Crown of Denmark in 1147, and was murdered near Wiborg in 1157.

<sup>37</sup> Valdemar the Great reigned over Denmark from 1157 to 1182. He is called “The Martyr's Son,” on account of his father, Knut Laward, having been murdered (in 1131). Knut was afterwards canonized.

" To future scenes that shall unroll,  
 " Days full of germ within his soul,  
 " To bloom into the victor's brand;  
 " Then shall he swift unmail his hand,  
 " In Concord's laureled temple stand.  
 " Lo! Knut the Great's forgotten line  
 " Upon proud Denmark's<sup>38</sup> throne shall shine,  
 " Victory crown our foaming tide,  
 " And Peace on our green hills abide.—  
 " Gerda! still round thy homesteads cling  
 " The tributes of a blooming Spring,  
 " And firm as Earth that fane stands forth  
 " The noblest, holiest in the North;  
 " Of late with novel wonders drest,  
 " By saintly Bishop Eskil blessed,<sup>39</sup>  
 " Within, without, above, below;  
 " (Since then thrice Winter heaped his snow;)   
 " O would that thou, like me, hadst been  
 " A witness of that glorious scene,

<sup>38</sup> "Skoldungastol." "Sköld," the family name of the Danish Kings.

<sup>39</sup> Eskil, nephew of Ascer, first Archbishop of Lund, whom he succeeded (in the Archbishopric) in 1139. Eskil was Absalon's (Axel's) predecessor. The Cathedral of Lund was consecrated in 1145.

“Bright memory that can ne'er depart,  
“It blooms for ever in my heart!  
“As sunset's blushes softly rest  
“On ocean's calm, deep-azure breast.”

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“Foremost amid a priestly cloud  
“Eskil walks; each in the crowd  
“Who marks that glance, that form, that rich array  
“Confesses ‘These the man of God betray!’  
“High o'er his locks of silvery white  
“Rises a Bishop's mitre bright,  
“Where quivering rays with lustre shine  
“From many a precious jewelled mine.  
“His pallium, the great Pontiff's gift,  
“Seems as some spotless fleecy drift  
“That steeped in sleep the sunbeams lave.  
“The robe four purple crosses pave;  
“A golden clasp where rubies gleam  
“Restrains the cope. Those jewels beam  
“As some sweet rose whose flushed cheek bowers  
“'Mid lilies in a land of flowers.  
“The crozier in right hand he wields,  
“And from his left the censer yields

“ Its fragrant perfumed stream, anon  
“ From cedar-crested Lebanon.  
“ Around the fane full three times swept  
“ The train, while hymns sweet measure kept.  
“ With holy water thrice bedewed  
“ Eskil the stones so lately hewed ;  
“ Beginning from the eastern face  
“ Sprinkled the walls, roof, nave, and base ;  
“ Whene'er the grand procession's flow  
“ Approached the porch, a mighty blow  
“ He struck the bronze with crooked stave,  
“ And cried : ‘ List ! each his place must waive,  
“ ‘ The altar's King is near, nor wait, —  
“ ‘ Make broad the way, set wide the gate, —  
“ ‘ The altar's King has reached his state ! ’  
“ And when the third strong blow was given  
“ The porch oped wide, the dome was riven  
“ With shouts of ‘ Holy ! Holy Lord ! ’  
“ To sweetest strains from cymbals poured.  
“ How brightly shone that glorious sight  
“ By glare of countless streams of light  
“ That rose from golden lustres round  
“ And lit upon that holy ground !  
“ As if through Tabor man had bored  
“ To form a fane for God the Lord, —

“ The God of Truth, the God of Right,—  
“ So seemed that Temple to my sight.  
“ ’T is Eden’s breath that softly breathes,  
“ And incense through these columns wreathes ;  
“ ’T is the Almighty One that dwells  
“ Unseen amid those choral spells ;  
“ And yon flame that gleams below,  
“ Waving high its fiery flow,  
“ From the crypt with darkness rife,  
“ Is the hope of immortal Life !” —  
“ Eskil with fervour speaks again :  
“ Rest Peace and Blessing on this fane !’  
“ Then on the sacred floor he draws,  
“ Graved crosswise on the sandy ground,  
“ Two mystic signs,<sup>40</sup> where blent are found  
“ God’s Holy Writ and Holy Laws.  
“ For Evil Spirits ever flee  
“ When those dread hidden signs they see,  
“ Type of the power from Heaven above,  
“ They shun God’s earthly seat of love.  
“ Hastes in a ring of rays to paint  
“ (One for each Apostolic Saint)

<sup>40</sup> One of the most ancient and symbolical customs of the Roman Catholic Church, signifying the expulsion of Evil Spirits from the sacred walls.

" Twelve black crosses on the wall,—  
 " Lights for each a taper tall,  
 " Kneels in the dust with suppliant eyes,  
 " While his strong prayers to Heaven rise,  
 " And sprinkles wine and salt around  
 " On font and pulpit's holy ground.  
 " *St. Lawrence*<sup>41</sup> names that consecrated shrine,  
 " To him he vows it by his right divine.  
 " The Saint who bars of glowing iron defied,—  
 " On the red pile as some blest martyr died.  
 " Then from the anointed altar burst  
 " The holy Mass, now uttered first,  
 " That offered to those standers by  
 " God's peace on earth,—peace from on high.  
 " Now first for all the Saints above  
 " Resounded strains of holy love;  
 " Erst now upon that solemn day  
 " The organ made its first essay,—  
 " Jehovah's lungs in mortal clay  
 " Drew a deep breath. The Elect alone  
 " Intone such notes before His throne,  
 " When with jubilant shouts they stand  
 " On the blue hills of Heaven's strand.

<sup>41</sup> St. Laurentius, a well-known Roman Catholic Saint, who, in the Emperor Valerian's reign, was tortured on the "gridiron" stake.

“ Now as soft as Evening’s breeze  
“ Sighs through Eden’s linden trees,  
“ Then as in thrilling tones He spoke  
“ When thunders over Sinai broke.  
“ Echo the high Hosannas now  
“ From the great Temple’s archèd brow,  
“ And each thought its swift flight wings  
“ Upward to the King of Kings.  
“ Lo! when the holy Eskil calls  
“ On man within those sacred walls,  
“ And dwells upon Salvation’s themes,  
“ On grace that from bright Heaven beams  
“ With blessings and with pardon free,—  
“ Bows to the earth each hearer’s knee;  
“ Each painted Angel seems to scan  
“ The fane with glance of living man.  
“ O Gerda! hadst thou been but there,  
“ E’en thou, with me that scene to share,  
“ And list to words of Heavenly power,—  
“ Tidings of peace,— in that bright hour,  
“ Gerda, thou hadst believed in God!  
“ To Him by whose Almighty word  
“ The heart of mortal man is stirred  
“ And stars that shine on high are led,  
“ To Him my prayers for thee are said.



“ O may He turn thee from the way  
“ Where wandering blindly thou dost stray,  
“ Sunk in this dark abyss of woe ;  
“ And may thy soul its freedom know,  
“ For aye those speechless idols spurn  
“ And to its only Saviour turn ! ”

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Thus Axel speaks with folded hands,  
As in those mountain halls he stands.  
But lo ! on Gerda's brow there glide  
Silent clouds. At length she cried :  
“ Night round the earth its mantle throws,  
“ 'T is time our converse now should close.  
“ Yet my loved brother Sölve still  
“ Lingers for sport upon the hill.  
“ This Mount owns many a cavern deep,  
“ Choose thee a refuge, — there to sleep.  
“ I ” — blushes here her lilies dye, —  
“ At times seek slumber 'neath the sky,  
“ On the Oak's brow, whose tall plume nods  
“ Nearer to Valhalla's Gods :  
“ On high I breathe a freer air,  
“ For the Heavenly ones are there ;

“ And through my brain high thoughts will soar,  
“ Drawn from the Eternal’s boundless shore.  
“ Old Night, too, looks with friendly eye  
“ Upon her daughter from that sky.”—  
And now a cold farewell she cries  
To Axel, lost in dumb surprise,  
Who her receding figure views,  
And to the mountain porch pursues,  
Where, as if with hidden wings,  
Aloft her agile form she swings.  
Like an antelope fleet her race  
To reach the tall rock’s glassy face,—  
To climb the oak whose firm roots rest  
Upon the ancient mountain’s crest,  
While spreading abroad its branches tall  
To grasp the sphere and its golden ball.  
There like a rose in green array,  
On leafy bed the fair one lay,  
Her cheek sought on her hand repose.  
Then the light breeze of evening rose,  
Kissed and whispered, rocked and slept:  
And as a stately curtain swept  
O’er her the Heavens with stars untold,  
Like plains of light-blue silk and gold.

Meantime in his dark cavern ponders  
Axel alone, on that day's wonders.  
"Nay! what tribe is that whereon I gazed?  
"Firstborn that Earth to her bosom raised,  
"When with as yet unweakened force  
"Her strength sprang from its youthful source.  
"Mortals are they as we, but how  
"Before their height and mind we bow!  
"Wandering and dark shadowed traces  
"Of an age of mighty races,  
"Which like some river that yet knows  
"No bed secure, the banks o'erflows,  
"Though well it feels its course must run  
"Through bounds it cannot, scatheless, shun.  
"E'en in these days each valiant Northern son  
"Feels the strong fiend that whispers in his breast,  
"And ever taunts him with some biting jest;  
"Speaks of self-trust, and prompts rebellion's love,  
"Or breeds loud murmurs 'gainst the Powers above.  
"When bursts the storm his willing arm he sweeps  
"To stay that storm,—his rugged breast he keeps  
"Bared, that the lightning's vivid flash may know  
"Where lies its goal, where best to strike its blow.  
"Our strength,—the wild defiant notes we sound,—  
"For us to fall is to be victor-crowned;

“ For, ere subdued, we learn to yield our breath,  
 “ We drive our foes to the dark realms of Death.  
     “ But this Gerda in whose heart  
     “ All that ’s noble has its part,  
     “ How she hates the theme of peace,  
     “ Nurturing in her wild unrest  
     “ Odin’s ravens<sup>42</sup> in her breast!  
     “ Man on Earth can never cease  
     “ To feel that Love’s deep well must trace  
     “ Its purest source in faith and race,  
     “ Unshaken as an oak fast bound  
     “ By roots of iron to the ground,  
     “ The firmer for Time’s contest wild.  
     “ Yet how beauteous is that child!  
     “ As a Painter e’en might trace  
     “ Skadè<sup>43</sup> ’neath the moon’s mild face,  
     “ Gliding in Dofrè’s mountain chace.  
     “ How those bright orbs darkly beam  
     “ With earnest and impassioned gleam!  
     “ How Gerda’s being speaks the birth  
     “ Of one whose soul is not of Earth!

<sup>42</sup> Two ravens, Hugin (thought) and Munin (memory), said to sit on Odin’s shoulders, and whisper to him all they have heard and witnessed.

<sup>43</sup> Spouse of the God Njord.

“ Glows with fire,— but of midnight’s sun  
“ When near the pole his course is run ;  
“ Allures,— but like the rose’s spell  
“ That hovers round the gates of Hell.  
“ Unwooded shall rest that rose’s sheen  
“ For me, as if it ne’er had been ;  
“ Yet happy he who Pœans sings  
“ O’er that tamed soul with eagle wings ;  
“ Yes! happy he who fills in life the part  
“ To lay his breast ’gainst Gerda’s beating heart!  
“ Saw I not but e’en now rise  
“ Tears to those dark and lustrous eyes,  
“ And heard I not emotion’s voice?  
“ How in her love would man rejoice!  
“ That heart is fascination’s throne,  
“ With heavenly blessings richly sown ;  
“ No earthly mortal knows such bliss!  
“ But, Axel Hvidè, what is this?  
“ What has caused that restless vein?  
“ Magic in the mountain plain?  
“ Do evil spirits weave their guile  
“ On pilgrims lost in this defile?  
“ Sought I not now fair Fortune’s gale  
“ In the wild chase? And lo! a tale,

“ Stone sealed, but old as Childhood’s days,  
“ My path around this mountain stays.  
“ Of all these wonders, roll on roll,  
“ But *one* has stirred my inmost soul.  
“ Ah! why does Gerda’s fair form gleam  
“ (Savage but grand,—strange, beauteous beam!)  
“ Like mirrored flash on that bright ore,  
“ Why lures she from yon crystal shore?  
“ O that she had her Saviour known,  
“ That Christ had bought her for His own!  
“ Round her may God His buckler throw,  
“ Shield her from powers that reign below!”

While Axel’s thoughts through those mazes wade  
Lo! the lamps expire,—the planets fade.  
Gerda, in fuller measure wise,  
Rocking on airy leaf-couch lies;  
Softly slumbers the night long,  
Wakes,—only in my Second Song.



## CANTO II.

Long hast thou strayed on Dreamland's shore,  
Gerda! 'T is time to wake once more.  
To many a memory, many a hope,  
Purpose, song of lesser scope  
This heart has turned. Still at my gate  
Gerda's dear shadow seemed to wait;  
While Fancy's pencil has pourtrayed  
Scenes that in Thought's deep cells were laid,  
And rank weeds, too, unseen have grown  
O'er many a stanza flower sown.  
The Muse can lull life's cares to sleep. Yet fain  
I would awake. My soul! arise again  
To sing once more this gentle Gerda's strain.

Morn's first blushing, golden hours  
Radiant smiled o'er Bleking's bowers:  
From leafy stems were heard sweet lays  
Tuned to the Sun's unfolding rays,

As Gerda's brother reached the dale;  
O'er field and flood, o'er mount and vale,  
Far into Varend's desert waste,  
The wild and savage prey had chased.  
On his broad shoulders Sölve bore  
A huge bear deeply stained with gore;  
Right bravely waged the bear that strife,—  
It fought with madness for its life,  
Yet in blind fury, bleeding fell  
Before the blow directed well.  
Still ere stern death its limbs set free  
And closed for aye that agony,  
With iron might he tore his foe;  
Ere downward crashed the last stout blow,  
Shivered lay many a stalwart lance,  
A sword point shot its steely glance  
Firm bedded in that strong breast's girth;  
While clotted gore was seen to cling  
Around the wound's light ruby ring.  
Bear's blood dries slow in smiling spring  
So still the red drops ebbed to earth.  
Sölve with scorn his dead foe spurned  
That on him late with fury turned.

\* \* \* \* \*



All the finished portions of the Poem end here, with the exception of one passage, in which Axel, on again seeing Gerda, after a lapse of years, recalls to her recollection their first meeting at Runamò, his youthful love, and the vision of the Virgin which decided him to devote his life to the service of God.

“O'er Seland's groves the shades of Even swept.  
“In sadness, dreaming, my lone path I kept,  
“But thy dear face in the bright moonlight beamed,  
“From bough to bough in silvery softness gleamed;  
“And like the wave thy voice stole o'er the main  
“As liquid notes of nightingale's sweet strain.  
“Along the shore my saddened footsteps bent;  
“To land and billow Night its darkness lent,  
“When lo! there shone in the deep purple skies  
“A wondrous scene to my bewildered eyes,—  
“Mother of God enthroned on Glory's beams,—  
“Beauteous as in those brilliant hues she seems  
“When Genius' torch on southern canvas played,—  
“A virgin mother in white garb arrayed,—  
“The brightest Saga that in great Heaven dwells,—  
“Yet nay! forgive, the fairest truth that breathes,—

“ For me with smiles her lips of sweetness wreathes,  
“ With gaze benign and pure unfolds her spells,  
“ Warning, but with a gentle mother’s mien ;  
“ And round her brow there shone resplendent sheen  
“ Of saintly glory. And as then I gazed  
“ Awe-struck, and seemed to halt, her hand she raised,  
“ Pointed to where the realms of Frankland rise,  
“ O’er the Sound’s waves beyond the southern skies.  
“ Then lo ! a cross amid the planets glowed  
“ Where liquid fire of Heavenly radiance flowed ;  
“ And round the centre shone a thorny crown  
“ O’er land and sea through that night’s darkness down.”

\* \* \* \* \*



## THE DEW-DROP.

On the branch of yon rose-tree what is it that gleams?  
A bright dew-drop that shines as it flows;  
How fragile, how tender, how trembling it seems!  
Yet a Sun on its bosom there glows.

On the branch of life's tree, too, what is it that gleams?  
A man's soul born to joy and to care,—  
How small and how trifling, how worthless it seems!  
Yet a God in His glory is there!

Yes! two mirrors are they, on whose surface is cast  
The *one* light that fills all the earth;  
And both, 'mid rude briars, the first as the last,  
Must perish almost at their birth.

But a dew-drop, what is it? A drop or a tear  
The wind's breath despises to save,—  
To the soul is but given that life which can fear  
No summons to come to the grave.

O how glorious it seems ! with life's spring it is flushed,  
Like a drop of Existence itself !  
Nay ! it heeds not the wind, if it rage or be hushed,  
It has life without end in itself !



## THE ISLE OF THE BLEST.

I know of a sacred and moss-mantled isle,  
Whose leaves never sadden, whose springs ever smile,  
Where blossoms of summer enamel the wold,  
Where gleams through the grove a rich harvest of gold,  
And zephyrs 'mid roses whose blushes ne'er fade,  
Breathe whispers of love to the sighs of the glade.

In the firmament's boundless and glittering dome  
The sun gilds in silence his fathomless home;  
And though clear shine his rays, with pale splendour  
they light  
On the cedar's dark crest, on the plantain's deep night,  
Where 'mid bowers in vesture of emerald green  
Fond lovers in secret their beating hearts screen.

Where the moon from her couch on the wave lifts her  
beams,  
To silver the crystals that shine on the streams,  
Through a snowy veil steeped in her quivering light;  
Here the nightingale sings from her deep wooded height.

And where the bright vintage empurples the hill,  
The notes of loud revel through the night hours thrill.


By the banks of the rivulets fair maidens stand,  
There to gather fresh flowers with shining white hand ;  
With lilies their long waving tresses are drest,  
With roses they garland the spring of their breast ;  
And soft gleaming forms amid summer's breath play,  
All decked in the gauze's deceptive array.

In the shadows of roses their lyres they string,  
In mounds bathed in sunlight like Syrens they sing,  
In lakes, where the sands spread soft gold for their feet,  
They chase the wild billows, and shun the noon heat,  
Or wreath in sweet cadence beneath the moon's  
    glance  
Their snowy white arms in the maze of the dance.

There is one, 'mid those beauties the fairest I deem,  
Deep graved in my soul her dear image will beam ;  
Nor soft lute nor language obeys the behest  
To paint that bright form from the Isle of the Blest ;  
The mind can scarce picture such angel-like grace,—  
The heart alone feels there is life in that face.

O'er my pillow the Syren was bending one day,  
As entranced by the magic of poppies I lay,—  
“Come with me!” she cried, “to th' abodes of the Blest,  
“On couches of flowers 'neath cedars to rest,  
“With kisses and goblets, with dances and smiles,  
“Our maidens will greet thee in palm-shaded isles.”

O how shall I reach that dear coveted land,  
Say! rocks there no slender skiff moored to the strand?  
In vain,—'t is but Fable on fleet wings can soar  
With Song's sweetest strain, and thus land on that  
    shore,—  
So bear me on clouds, mighty Fay, to your isle,  
Where for ever the well-springs of happiness smile.



## THE PRAYER.

With olive branch of peace and prayer  
Betwixt her polished parted lips,  
A gentle dove soars through the air,  
As Night the hills with ebon tips.

Her wing with moonlight splendour beams,  
White as the foam the billows toss;  
And on her shining breast there gleams  
A broad and mystic purple cross.

Swift as the warrior's arrow flies,  
Launched from some stalwart silver bow,  
She cleaves the silent midnight skies,  
And leaves the mountains far below.

And not the fierce and armed host  
That shine in coat of golden mail,  
And guard the Prince's castled coast,  
Can ever stay that snow-white sail.



In vain the bow-string sharply rings,—  
Unscathed her course the dove pursues,  
Where Heaven's radiant morning flings  
Its incense and its rainbow hues.

And by the throne of God on high,  
Where ever dwells the mercy-seat,  
She lays the symbol, with a sigh,  
At the Almighty's glorious feet.

And Christ lifts up the shining leaves  
With a smile of heavenly love,  
He bears them where an Angel weaves  
The roses bright that bloom above.

He culls a wondrous blossom there,  
Clothed in immortal Sharon's hue,  
And drops into that chalice fair  
A glistening pearl of Heaven's dew.

The dove hastes back with His reply,  
Far from those realms of love and light,  
To seek the souls that ever sigh  
Beneath the bonds of Satan's might.

## FAREWELL TO LIFE.

Gentle Lyre, whose silver tones  
Erst in sorrow's bitter hours  
Hushed this weary bosom's moans,  
And through Pleasure's sunny bowers  
Bore me to green fields of hope,—  
Come, upon this breast repose,  
Aid me with my sighs to cope.  
When thy magic music flows  
Burst the chains that bind the slave;  
Beggars throned the monarch's throne,  
Feast where golden banners wave,  
Drain the bowl with jewels sown;  
Bloom the purple rose of health  
Where wan pallor beauty sears,  
Rays of joy like mines of wealth  
Sparkling through the mist of tears.  
And the heart borne down with grief  
Suns itself in beams of love,  
Knows that rapturous relief  
Saints can only feel above.—

Come, then, Lyre, thy voice raise  
Loose thy tears' most bitter stream,  
Weep o'er faded summer days,  
O'er the Poet's fairy dream;  
O'er the idyl's rosy vale,  
O'er life's joys that bloom a day,  
O'er hope's briefly shining sail.  
Teach me, Lyre, my last lay  
Aid me to that word "Farewell!"—  
When the cares that crush the heart  
Find a language in the lyre,  
Their deep wounds forget to smart  
They draw solace from their fire.  
And the tears that gently course  
Down the pallid face of woe  
Pass in purity of source  
Every pearl the East can show.  
From the moss-encumbered tomb  
Rises all our buried bliss,  
Gilds with sunny beams our gloom,  
Prints on us its sweetest kiss.  
Sound ye chords so soon to wave  
In the sighing cypress trees  
That o'ershade the Poet's grave,  
And his head will rest at ease

On the narrow couch of Death;  
When his tears in freedom flow  
And he breathes with parting breath  
Long adieus to all below;  
Dreams of happy days once more  
Fleeting Life can ne'er restore.



## THE MAIDEN AND HER LOVER.

Home from her love a maiden fled ;  
Her hands were red ;  
Her mother said,  
“ Why are thy hands, my child, so red ? ”

“ I gathered flowers by the flood , ”  
The maid replied,  
“ And they have dyed  
“ My fingers with their rosy blood . ”

Again the maid her lover fled ;  
Her lips were red ;  
Her mother said  
“ Why are thy lips, my child, so red ? ”

“ Bright berries for my lips did sue ;  
“ That honeyed stream  
“ Of brilliant gleam  
“ Has stained them with a scarlet hue . ”

Once more she heard love's thrilling tale ;

Her roses fled ;

Her mother said,

“ Why are thy cheeks, my child, so pale ? ”

“ Give me,” she cried, “ Death's couch of rest ;

“ O hide me there,

“ And let me wear

“ My Saviour's cross upon my breast.

“ And grave upon the simple tomb :

‘ Once home she fled,

‘ Her hands were red,

‘ For from her love they reaped their bloom.

‘ Again she came, her lips were red,—

‘ For sweetest kiss

‘ Of Lover's bliss

‘ Its roses o'er her lips had shed.

‘ Once more she took her wonted place,

‘ Wayworn and weak,

‘ With pallid cheek,

‘ For faithless love had paled her face.’ ”

## BY THE BROOK.

O Brook! I sat by thy strand,  
And watched the moon's quivering beams,  
As, led by an unseen hand,  
They changed in thy silvery streams.

Came a cloud with roseate smile,  
Like rosebuds, bright blushes it wore;  
Alas! it stayed but a while,  
And returned to that spot no more.

There sailed another, more bright  
And gleaming, above me again;  
But ah! with wings of the light,  
Soon its onward flight it had ta'en.

One still,—but this would not fly,  
With slow steps pursuing its way;  
Brook! yon dark veil of the sky  
O'ershadowed thy blue bed with grey.

I thought, when I saw that shroud,  
Of my soul in its earthly spell,  
How many a fair golden cloud  
Has bid it for ever farewell!

How many a dark storm has spread  
The blackness of night on my soul,  
Come with like swiftness, but fled  
With slow step once more to its goal.

The cloud's changing courses on high  
I knew, for I marked them roll;  
Thin vapours they were in the sky,  
Glassed on the depths of my soul.

Yes! that mirror's darkness and light  
Are ruled, Brook, by clouds on its breast;  
When wilt thou for ever be bright,  
O when will thy wave be at rest?






## TO A SLEEPING CHILD.

How blest thy rest  
On the warm cradle's breast ;  
How free, as air,  
From all deceit and snare !  
Thy dreamy land  
Hedged by a Mother's hand,  
Close sealed thine eyes  
By Spirits from the skies.  
As Morn's soft beam  
Rests on the azure stream,  
So Life's waves sleep  
On thy untainted Deep.  
For Time's wing wild  
Has not yet struck thee, child,  
Nor Fate's storm passed  
To wreck thee with its blast.  
Thy sweet lips smile :  
O turn to me awhile,

And let me glean  
Thy gilded Vision's scene.  
It is not earth  
That crowns thee with its mirth,  
But Memory's star  
That shines from realms afar.  
Gentle one, rest,—  
Thy lot is doubly blest,—  
To bind life's flower  
With blossoms bright that bower  
Round the heart's rays.  
Through thy long Summer's days  
Ne'er may'st thou cease  
To shed thy glance of peace.  
Nought but Sleep's spell  
Thine eyes soft radiance quell;  
In thy pure breast  
Dream's Angel gently rest!



## THE MAIDEN BY THE STREAM.

A maiden sat by the banks of a stream  
Her ivory feet to lave;  
Sang o'er her a bird in the sunshine's gleam:  
"Stir not that glittering wave.  
"No more will the Heavens be glassed on its face."  
The Maiden uplifted her head,  
Large tears down her cheek ran their sorrowful race,  
"Weep not for the Stream," she said,  
"Soon with fresh brightness 't will dance o'er the lea.  
"As one Even I lingered here,  
"By the side of a youth so dear to me,  
"Thou said'st with foreshadowing fear:  
"Leave not on the soul of the maiden a stain,  
"On this earth its pureness for ever is ta'en,  
"And ne'er can it mirror the Heavens again.'"

## THE LAPLANDER'S RETURN.

A Laplander sped, with steel-bound feet,  
On a stormy winter night,  
His wife and only child to greet,  
Who watch'd by a lonely light.

They crouched upon their cheerless floor  
In hunger's gnawing pain,  
The last crumb from their slender store,  
The last rein-deer was ta'en.

He bore with joy a little corn  
Brought from a distant mart,  
To chase the hunger they had borne,  
And cheer his loving heart.

The ice cracked 'neath his shoes of steel,  
Thick clouds swept o'er his head;  
"Three days," he cried, "they wait a meal,  
"Their trust in me has fled."

And midnight struck. The deep blue sky  
Shone with its silvery sheen,  
The wolf gave forth his savage cry,  
The bear for prey was keen.

A thrill of awe shot through his frame  
At the majesty of night;  
Swift as the hound pursues his game,  
He winged his onward flight.

For stronger grew a secret dread  
Of some mysterious doom;  
The weight seemed to bow down his head,  
To veil his eyes in gloom.

And as he tracked his weary way,  
Full on that pathless wild  
An Angel shone, in white array,  
With features of his child;

And with a smile unloosed the bands  
That his swift feet had steeled,  
And led him with its slender hands  
Through a deep shaded weald.

Thus onward went the pair; when lo!  
Before his wondering eyes,  
The Angel soared like shaft from bow,  
Or meteor in the skies.

Soon in its stead another gleamed  
In raiments of his bride,—  
With its shadowy arms it seemed  
To press him to its side.

Nearer he scanned the form that came,  
Like Fairy out the ground;  
He tried to breathe that cherished name,—  
His lips gave forth no sound.

He reached his home as day blushed red,—  
That home so dear to sight,—  
When like a dream the Angel fled,  
As dies the Evening light.

At last the weary way was o'er!  
But ah! with piteous wail,  
He sank before his cottage door,  
Where lay two corses pale.

The greeting on his lips began,  
And died there, crushed by fate,—  
For earthly love and help of man  
May come, alas! too late.



## FLOATING THOUGHTS.<sup>44</sup>

Say! what are all those glorious dreams  
That shed a halo o'er our youth,—  
Those gilded years, those sunshine gleams,—  
A living lie, a living truth?  
Like houses built on melting snow,  
Like tears dissolving as they flow!

And what are beauty's boasted bowers?  
What are the bonds which chain the heart?  
But slender, fading summer flowers,  
But chords that vibrate as they part.

And what the visions that are rife  
In every brain, which each revolves?  
A mirage on the plain of life,—  
An image which the breeze dissolves.

<sup>44</sup> These three last Poems are taken from Borjesson's Drama of "Solen Sjunker;" or "The Sun is Setting."



What is that peace that lovers haste  
To whisper with such burning breath?  
A peace that leaves the heart a waste,  
A peace which is the peace of death!



## THE ADIEUS.

These sad adieus, my broken heart  
Whispers aloud, are near at hand,—  
'T is grief indeed for aye to part  
From love, and thee, thou Northern land!  
How light my step, how flushed my cheek,  
When o'er these hills I used to roam!  
How sadly now I turn to seek  
The desolation of my home.  
Dear land, before thou fadest from sight  
I breathe for thee a parting prayer,  
And gaze with rapture on thy night,  
So still, and so serenely fair.  
Clear Summer nights of Northern climes!  
Ye glassy lakes of azure blue!  
Ye pines that mantle Runic shrines  
With mossy shrouds of emerald hue!  
Thou silence deep in Nature's fane!  
Where plighted faith, truth, hope, and love

O'er mortal man proclaim their reign,—  
Their sacred mission from above!  
To you I leave this fairy form,—  
Deal gently with your tender prize,  
Protect her from each threatening storm  
That may o'ercast life's clouded skies.

The fetters which for love I bore  
With eager hand I clasp again,  
And here renew the oath I swore,  
To bear on earth no other chain.  
To link these bonds with sweetest buds  
By Memory stored 'mid poignant sighs,  
Bedew them with the bitterest floods  
That ever rose to human eyes,—  
And bear them to the Stranger's land,  
That in my grave they may be laid;  
And grant that when the Just shall stand  
Before God's throne, in light arrayed,  
I too, my love, with glory crowned,  
To heavenly realms with thee may rise,  
Where broken hearts are never found,  
Where tears are wiped from mortal eyes!

## A HYMN AT SUNSET.

The Sun has set along thy purple hills,  
Thou smiling Sweden! See! night's stately queen  
Ascends her throne,—thy wide horizon fills  
With all the softness of her silvery sheen;  
And round thy Future sheds immortal light,—  
Refulgent as that parting golden ray  
That gilds the glories of thy Summer-night,  
And blends its beauties with the smile of day.

The Sun has set; and, ere his lingering rays  
Fade in the west, let us reflect, O Lord,  
How quick the nights succeed the longest days,  
How soon thy realms their lasting rest afford.  
In empty works let us not spend our day,  
That Life's last night with perfect peace be crowned;  
O let us live, as we so often pray,  
By faith and love to our Redeemer bound,

The Sun has set, but he will once more rise  
From Nature's breast, and meet the rosy morn;  
O let us pray, before we close our eyes,  
Like him we also may anew be born.  
His righteous realms, His glorious throne on high,  
The Heavenly host, the pure, unspotted fold;  
Those endless days, — that never fading sky,  
His Son, His face, His majesty behold!

