

POEMS
BY
HENRY KENDALL

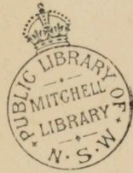
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POEMS OF HENRY KENDALL

W. Mitchell

P O E M S



OF

HENRY KENDALL

GEORGE ROBERTSON & COMPANY
MELBOURNE, SYDNEY, ADELAIDE, AND BRISBANE

1886



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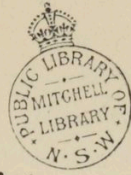
P. J. HOLDSWORTH

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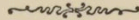
P. F. FAGAN

(OF SYDNEY)

AS A MEMENTO OF THEIR CONSTANT KINDNESS TO THE POET.



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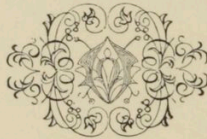
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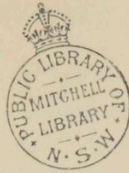
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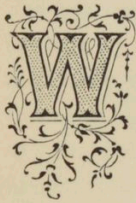




HENRY KENDALL:

A Prefatory Note.

By PHILIP J. HOLDSWORTH.



HEN Shelley, in his superlative rhapsody, "Alastor," pictured the penalties of the poetic gift, he used the inspired language of the poet to enforce the wisdom of the philosopher. Alastor, it will be remembered, is a dreamer and a poet, who, having almost exhausted the fountains of beauty, is still insatiate. He recognizes a vastness and love in his nature which lack their satisfying counterpart in the world; and to find whether that counterpart exists is the object of his poetic aim. He seeks in vain—utterly in vain; and, blasted and baffled by disappointment, finds an early grave.

If it were ever the lot of the poet to test this sort of theory, the nineteenth century certainly offers an excellent field. In this age, the singer, except in isolated cases, personally proves the truth of Hamlet's aphorism that "the world is out of joint;" nor has he the good luck to be able to say with the Danish prince that he

“was born to set it right.” On the contrary, the world of to-day seems to have been specially commissioned to set the bard “right”—or wrong, which amounts to the same thing. That fact is abundantly visible; but whether the fault be upon the side of the singer or his audience I am not called upon to determine. I simply note that, amid the hoarse roar of this utilitarian age, the poet’s tenure seems mainly a matter of sufferance; and inappreciation, not infrequently, is his fixed reward. He pipes to a generation that will not dance; or, if it dance, prefers to wait until he is dead.

In the brief remarks I am now to make upon Henry Kendall, I shall not travel beyond the strict line and limit of my subject. I shall resist the very natural temptation to glide into an examination of Kendall’s poetic merits, as compared with those of the very few Australian writers who have vindicated their claim to be considered poets. That task—pleasant as it would be—may well be left for a time and place more fitting than the present. Enough for us that the poet incontestably possessed high lyrical genius; and that, at any rate, from the time Arthur Phillip stood upon these shores until to-day, when, in Wentworth’s phrase, we are being rapidly “precipitated into a nation,” Australia has produced no sweeter singer. And if ever a man were dominated by what might be termed intense intellectual patriotism—by a burning desire to mirror, in musical verse, the bewildering beauty of the fauna and flora of his native land—Henry Kendall was that man. From his first poem in his first work to the ultimate one in his last, he was loyal to that exalted

aim. The note which he struck in his earliest lyric was musically sustained through many years of trials and vicissitudes; and the melancholy verses which open with

“The song that once I dreamed about”

are practically the singer's epilogue, sustaining and completing the initial strain. Of the wail of failure which runs through this latter poem (“After Many Years”) we need take no heed. The poet is not always the best appraiser of his own work. We assuredly know that between the dates of these two poems much work was produced which Australia “will not willingly let die.”

The simple facts connected with the poet's life may be briefly summarized. Born in the Ulladalla district, on the 18th April, 1841, the earliest recollections of Henry Clarence Kendall were saturated with the beauty of one of the most favoured spots in the colony. His school education was of the elementary sort then and there obtainable. His father was a man of thought and reading, but extremely delicate in constitution; and his mother was gifted by nature with much intellectual power. The boy, shy and solitary in disposition, and keenly observant of the natural beauty about him, soon found out what books were best fitted to furnish him with intellectual nutriment; and, while becoming an omnivorous reader, closely studied that modern development of poetry which is bounded by Shelley on its ethereal, and by Keats on its sensuous side. Undoubtedly, one of the most important facts connected with his

mental development is that of being associated, at a very early age, with the author of "John Cumberland"—James Lionel Michael—a name almost forgotten by the present generation of readers. Michael was a solicitor by profession, who cherished an affection for the Muses, which those ladies did not very fondly reciprocate. He was also a prose writer of exquisite taste, and a man altogether of singular culture, devotedly attached to literature generally. Important, indeed, was Michael's influence over the young poet, who had, even then, begun "to sip Castalian dews." And until Michael's lamented and mysterious death at Grafton, the warmest friendship existed between them. Among Australian authors, however, Harpur was Kendall's earliest favourite. To the last, his high estimate of Harpur remained undiminished—an estimate, of course, based not so much upon what Harpur did, as upon what he might and could have done. For, with many of the potentialities of poetic achievement, Harpur's, after all, was "unfulfilled renown."

Not being enamoured of a profession which, as Junius phrases it, "lives by the indiscriminate defence of right and wrong," Kendall jilted the law; and not long after entered the public service, first in the Survey Office, and then in the Colonial Secretary's Department. He was now a married man, having wedded Charlotte, daughter of the late Dr. Rutter, of Sydney, a lady in every way fitted to make his home happy. Becoming, however, dissatisfied with the poor outlook afforded by official life—not an uncommon experience for intellect cooped up in the Service—he resigned, and visited Mel-

bourne. He had, about this time, won a poetical prize offered by a Victorian journal, and he was led to believe he might find a literary future in the southern metropolis. The step was financially disastrous; but it is hardly necessary to dwell upon this darker period. It may simply be noted that he remained some time in Melbourne, experiencing vicissitudes known only to himself and those who were his friends indeed. Eventually he revisited Sydney, and subsequently found his way to Gosford, where Mr. Charles Fagan received him with a friendly warmth which Kendall did not forget. There, not far from the Narrara Creek and the Mooni Creek, which live in two of his lyrics, he dwelt for many months, leaving it only to proceed to Camden Haven, as clerk to the Messrs. Fagan Bros., who have an extensive business in that wild but lovely locality. In this seclusion he wrote some of his latest and best verses, and left it only when he accepted the position of Inspector of Forests, which was offered him by Sir Henry Parkes, who was always a warm and sincere friend of the poet. Unfortunately, in this new post he was compelled to face hardships which severely taxed a frame never physically robust, but at this time almost worn out. The result was that he came at length to Sydney, ill and debilitated. From that time he sank; day by day his weakness increased, until, on the 1st August, 1882, he died at the house of the Messrs. Fagan. These fine-hearted brothers, and their admirable sister, whose friendship for Kendall was sound and sincere, ministered to his last wants, and his devoted wife incessantly watched beside him.

He was buried by a handful of mourners (twenty was the full total) in the Waverley Cemetery, within sight and sound of the illimitable sea he loved so well, and not far from the resting-place of Samuel Bennett, who was long attached to him. A memorial movement was speedily inaugurated; and, after immense efforts on the part of a few willing workers, it was found that a tardy public, as the result of many months' solicitation, had been galvanized into giving some £1,200—probably about half the amount that would be cheerfully subscribed in a week or two's time to enable a prize athlete to visit England. The money was judiciously devoted to the use of Mrs. Kendall and the five helpless little ones dependent upon her. The Rev. G. F. Macarthur, of King's School, Parramatta, undertook to educate the eldest of the boys, a bright and promising lad—a piece of practical sympathy with the bereaved widow which merits remembrance.

As I pen this, a memorial stone is about to be erected over the poet's remains. More than four years have passed since the singer's death, and the resting-place of his body would have been fittingly marked many long months since had it not been for the strange fact that the present generation of Australians apparently prefer to reward brawn rather than brain, and muscle than mind. They value the prowess of a live athlete higher than the fame of a dead poet.

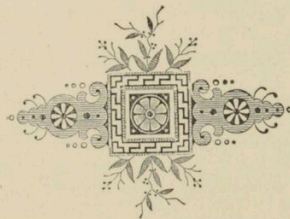
SYDNEY, *October*, 1886.



DEDICATION.



O her who, cast with me in trying days,
Stood in the place of health and power and
praise ;
Who, when I thought all light was out, became
A lamp of hope that put my fears to shame ;
Who faced for love's sole sake the life austere
That waits upon the man of letters here ;
Who, unawares, her deep affection showed
By many a touching little wifely mode ;
Whose spirit, self-denying, dear, divine,
Its sorrows hid, so it might lessen mine.
To her, my bright, best friend, I dedicate
This book of songs,—'twill help to compensate
For much neglect. The act, if not the rhyme,
Will touch her heart, and lead her to the time
Of trials past. That which is most intense
Within these leaves is of her influence ;
And if aught here is sweetened with a tone
Sincere, like love, it came of love alone.





PREFATORY SONNETS.

I.



PURPOSED once to take my pen and write,
Not songs, like some, tormented and awry
With passion, but a cunning harmony
Of words and music caught from glen and height,
And lucid colours born of woodland light
And shining places where the sea-streams lie.
But this was when the heat of youth glowed white,
And since I've put the faded purpose by.
I have no faultless fruits to offer you
Who read this book ; but certain syllables
Herein are borrowed from unfooted dells
And secret hollows dear to noontide dew ;
And these at least, though far between and few,
May catch the sense like subtle forest spells.

II.


So take these kindly, even though there be
Some notes that unto other lyres belong,
Stray echoes from the elder sons of song ;
And think how from its neighbouring native sea
The pensive shell doth borrow melody.

I would not do the lordly masters wrong
By filching fair words from the shining throng
Whose music haunts me as the wind a tree !

Lo, when a stranger in soft Syrian glooms
Shot through with sunset treads the cedar dells,
And hears the breezy ring of elfin bells

Far down by where the white-haired cataract booms,
He, faint with sweetness caught from forest smells,
Bears thence, unwitting, plunder of perfumes.

ARALUEN.*


 IVER, myrtle rimmed, and set
 Deep among unfooted dells—
 Daughter of grey hills of wet,
 Born by mossed and yellow wells.

Now that soft September lays
 Tender hands on thee and thine,
 Let me think of blue-eyed days,
 Star-like flowers, and leaves of shine.

Cities soil the life with rust,
 Water banks are cool and sweet ;
 River, tired of noise and dust,
 Here I come to rest my feet.

Now the month from shade to sun
 Fleets and sings supremest songs,
 Now the wilful wood-winds run
 Through the tangled cedar throngs.

* A stream of the east coast of New South Wales, in the Braidwood district.

Here are cushioned tufts and tarns
Where the sumptuous noontide lies :
Here are seen by flags and ferns
Summer's large, luxurious eyes.

On this spot wan Winter casts
Eyes of ruth, and spares its green
From his bitter sea-nursed blasts,
Spears of rain, and hailstones keen.

Rather here abideth Spring,
Lady of a lovely land,
Dear to leaf and fluttering wing,
Deep in blooms—by breezes fanned.

Faithful friend beyond the main,
Friend that time nor change makes cold :
Now, like ghosts, return again
Pallid, perished days of old.

Ah! the days, the old, old theme,
Never stale, but never new,
Floating like a pleasant dream,
Back to me and back to you.

Since we rested on these slopes
Seasons fierce have beaten down
Ardent loves and blossoming hopes—
Loves that lift, and hopes that crown.

But, believe me, still mine eyes
Often fill with light that springs
From divinity, which lies
Ever at the heart of things.

Solace do I sometimes find
Where you used to hear with me
Songs of stream and forest wind,
Tones of wave and harp-like tree.

Araluen! home of dreams,
Fairer for its flowerful glade
Than the face of Persian streams
Or the slopes of Syrian shade.

Why should I still love it so,
Friend and brother far away?
Ask the winds that come and go
What hath brought me here to-day.

Evermore of you I think,
When the leaves begin to fall,
Where our river breaks its brink,
And a rest is over all.

Evermore in quiet lands,
Friend of mine beyond the sea,
Memory comes with cunning hands,
Stays, and paints your face for me.

BELL-BIRDS.

BY channels of coolness the echoes are calling,
 And down the dim gorges I hear the creek
 falling ;
 It lives in the mountain, where moss and the
 sedges

Touch with their beauty the banks and the ledges ;
 Through breaks of the cedar and sycamore bowers
 Struggles the light that is love to the flowers.
 And, softer than slumber, and sweeter than singing,
 The notes of the bell-birds are running and ringing.

The silver-voiced bell-birds, the darlings of day-time,
 They sing in September their songs of the May-time.
 When shadows wax strong, and the thunder-bolts hurtle,
 They hide with their fear in the leaves of the myrtle ;
 When rain and the sunbeams shine mingled together
 They start up like fairies that follow fair weather,
 And straightway the hues of their feathers unfolden
 Are the green and the purple, the blue and the golden.


October, the maiden of bright yellow tresses,
 Loiters for love in these cool wildernesses ;

Loiters knee-deep in the grasses to listen,
Where dripping rocks gleam and the leafy pools glisten.
Then is the time when the water-moons splendid
Break with their gold, and are scattered or blended
Over the creeks, till the woodlands have warning
Of songs of the bell-bird and wings of the morning.

Welcome as waters unkissed by the summers,
Are the voices of bell-birds to thirsty far-comers.
When fiery December sets foot in the forest,
And the need of the wayfarer presses the sorest,
Pent in the ridges for ever and ever,
The bell-birds direct him to spring and to river,
With ring and with ripple, like runnels whose torrents
Are toned by the pebbles and leaves in the currents.

Often I sit, looking back to a childhood
Mixt with the sights and the sounds of the wildwood,
Longing for power and the sweetness to fashion
Lyrics with beats like the heart-beats of passion—
Songs interwoven of lights and of laughters
Borrowed from bell-birds in far forest rafters ;
So I might keep in the city and alleys
The beauty and strength of the deep mountain valleys,
Charming to slumber the pain of my losses
With glimpses of creeks and a vision of mosses.

A DEATH IN THE BUSH.


 HE hut was built of bark and shrunken slabs,
 That wore the marks of many rains, and showed
 Dry flaws wherein had crept and nestled rot.
 Moreover, round the bases of the bark
 Were left the tracks of flying forest-fires,
 As you may see them on the lower bole
 Of every elder of the native woods.

For, ere the early settlers came and stocked
 These wilds with sheep and kine, the grasses grew
 So that they took the passing pilgrim in
 And whelmed him, like a running sea, from sight.

And therefore, through the fiercer summer months,
 While all the swamps were rotten ; while the flats
 Were baked and broken ; when the clayey rifts
 Yawned wide, half choked with herbage, drifted past,
 Spontaneous flames would burst from thence and race
 Across the prairies all day long.

At night

The winds were up, and then, with four-fold speed,
 A harsh gigantic growth of smoke and fire

Would roar along the bottoms, in the wake
Of fainting flocks of parrots, wallaroos,
And wildered wild things, scattering right and left
For safety vague, throughout the general gloom.

Anon the nearer hillside-growing trees
Would take the surges ; thus from bough to bough
Was borne the flaming terror ! Bole and spire,
Rank after rank, now pillared, ringed, and rolled
In blinding blaze, stood out against the dead,
Down-smothered dark, for fifty leagues away.

For fifty leagues ! and when the winds were strong
For fifty more ! But in the olden time
These fires were counted as the harbingers
Of life-essential storms, since out of smoke
And heat there came across the midnight ways
Abundant comfort, with upgathered clouds
And runnels babbling of a plenteous fall.

So comes the southern gale at evenfall
About the streets of Sydney, when the dust
Lies burnt on glaring windows, and the men
Look forth from doors of drouth and drink the change
With thirsty haste and that most thankful cry
Of " Here it is—the cool, bright, blessed rain ! "

The hut, I say, was built of bark and slabs,
And stood, the centre of a clearing, hemmed

By hurdle-yards, and ancients of the blacks ;
These moped about their lazy fires, and sang
Wild ditties of the old days, with a sound
Of sorrow, like an everlasting wind
Which mingled with the echoes of the noon
And moaned amongst the noises of the night.

From thence a cattle track, with link to link,
Ran off against the fish-pools to the gap
Which sets you face to face with gleaming miles
Of broad Orara,* winding in amongst
Black, barren ridges, where the nether spurs
Are fenced about by cotton scrub, and grass
Blue-bitten with the salt of many droughts.

'Twas here the shepherd housed him every night,
And faced the prospect like a patient soul,
Borne up by some vague hope of better days,
And God's fine blessing in his faithful wife,
Until the humour of his malady
Took cunning changes from the good to bad,
And laid him lastly on a bed of death.

Two months thereafter, when the summer heat
Had roused the serpent from his rotten lair
And made a noise of locusts in the boughs,
It came to this, that as the blood-red sun

* A stream on the east coast of New South Wales, north of the Hunter.

Of one fierce day of many slanted down
Obliquely past the nether jags of peaks
And gulfs of mist, the tardy night came vexed
By belted clouds and scuds that wheeled and whirled
To left and right about the brazen cliffs
Of ridges, rigid with a leaden gloom.

Then took the cattle to the forest camps
With vacant terror, and the hustled sheep
Stood dumb against the hurdles, even like
A fallen patch of shadowed mountain snow ;
And ever, through the curlew's call afar,
The storm grew on, while round the stunted slabs
Sharp snaps and hisses came, and went, and came,
The huddled tokens of a mighty blast
Which ran with an exceeding bitter cry
Across the tumbled fragments of the hills,
And through the sluices of the gorge and glen.

So, therefore, all about the shepherd's hut
That space was mute, save when the fastened dog,
Without a kennel, caught a passing glimpse
Of firelight moving through the lighted chinks,
For then he knew the hints of warmth within,
And stood and set his great pathetic eyes,
In wind and wet, imploring to be loosed.

Not often now the watcher left the couch
Of him she watched, since in his fitful sleep
His lips would stir to wayward themes, and close

With bodeful catches. Once she moved away,
 Half-deafened by terrific claps, and stooped
 And looked without : to see a pillar dim
 Of gathered gusts and fiery rain.

Anon

The sick man woke, and, startled by the noise,
 Stared round the room with dull, delirious sight
 At this wild thing and that : for through his eyes
 The place took fearful shapes, and fever showed
 Strange crosswise lights about his pillow-head.
 He, catching there at some phantasmic help,
 Sat upright on the bolster with a cry
 Of "Where is Jesus? It is bitter cold!"
 And then, because the thunder-calls outside
 Were mixed for him with slanders of the past,
 He called his weeping wife by name, and said,
 "Come closer, darling! we shall speed away
 Across the seas, and seek some mountain home
 Shut in from liars and the wicked words
 That track us day and night and night and day."

So waned the sad refrain. And those poor lips,
 Whose latest phrases were for peace, grew mute,
 And into everlasting silence passed.

As fares a swimmer who hath lost his breath
 In wildering seas afar from any help—
 Who, fronting Death, can never realize
 The dreadful Presence, but is prone to clutch

At every weed upon the weltering wave—
So fared the watcher, poring o'er the last
Of him she loved, with dazed and stupid stare :
Half conscious of the sudden loss and lack
Of all that bound her life, but yet without
The power to take her mighty sorrow in.

Then came a patch or two of starry sky,
And through a reef of cloven thunder-cloud
The soft moon looked : a patient face beyond
The fierce impatient shadows of the slopes
And the harsh voices of the broken hills !
A patient face, and one which came and wrought
A lovely silence, like a silver mist,
Across the rainy relics of the storm.

For in the breaks and pauses of her light
The gale died out in gusts : yet, evermore
About the roof-tree on the dripping eaves,
The damp wind loitered, and a fitful drift
Sloped through the silent curtains, and athwart
The dead.

There, when the glare had dropped behind
A mighty ridge of gloom, the woman turned
And sat in darkness, face to face with God,
And said, "I know," she said, "That Thou art wise ;
That when we build and hope, and hope and build,
And see our best things fall, it comes to pass
For evermore that we must turn to Thee !

And therefore, now, because I cannot find
The faintest tokens of Divinity
In this my latest sorrow, let Thy light
Inform mine eyes, so I may learn to look
On something past the sight which shuts and blinds
And seems to drive me wholly, Lord, from Thee."

Now waned the moon beyond complaining depths,
And as the dawn looked forth from showery woods
(Whereon had dropped a hint of red and gold)
There went about the crooked cavern-eaves
Low flute-like echoes, with a noise of wings,
And waters flying down far-hidden fells.
Then might be seen the solitary owl
Perched in the clefts ; scared at the coming light,
And staring outward (like a sea-shelled thing
Chased to his cover by some bright, fierce foe),
As at a monster in the middle waste.

At last the great kingfisher came, and called
Across the hollows, loud with early whips,
And lighted, laughing, on the shepherd's hut,
And roused the widow from a swoon like death.

This day, and after it was noised abroad,
By blacks, and straggling horsemen on the roads,
That he was dead, "who had been sick so long,"
There flocked a troop from far-surrounding runs,
To see their neighbour, and to bury him ;

And men who had forgotten how to cry
(Rough, flinty fellows of the native bush)
Now learned the bitter way, beholding there
The wasted shadow of an iron frame,
Brought down so low by years of fearful pain,
And marking, too, the woman's gentle face,
And all the pathos in her moaned reply
Of "Masters, we have lived in better days."

One stooped—a stockman from the nearer hills—
To loose his wallet-strings, from whence he took
A bag of tea, and laid it on her lap ;
Then sobbing, "God will help you, missus, yet,"
He sought his horse, with most bewildered eyes,
And, spurring, swiftly galloped down the glen.

Where black Orara nightly chafes his brink,
Midway between lamenting lines of oak
And Warra's Gap, the shepherd's grave was built ;
And there the wild-dog pauses, in the midst
Of moonless watches, howling through the gloom
At hopeless shadows flitting to and fro,
What time the east wind hums his darkest hymn,
And rains beat heavy on the ruined leaf.

There, while the autumn in the cedar trees
Sat cooped about by cloudy evergreens,
The widow sojourned on the silent road,
And mutely faced the barren mound, and plucked
A straggling shrub from thence, and passed away,

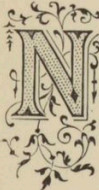
Heart-broken, on to Sydney, where she took
Her passage, in an English vessel bound
To London, for her home of other years.

At rest ! Not near, with Sorrow on his grave,
And roses quickened into beauty—wrapt
In all the pathos of perennial bloom ;
But far from these, beneath the fretful clay
Of lands within the lone perpetual cry
Of hermit plovers and the night-like oaks,
All moaning for the peace which never comes.

At rest ! And she who sits and waits behind
Is in the shadows ; but her faith is sure,
And *one* fine promise of the coming days
Is breaking, like a blessed morning, far
On hills that “slope through darkness up to God.”



THE HUT BY THE BLACK SWAMP.


 OW comes the fierce north-easter, bound
 About with cloud and racks of rain,
 And dry, dead leaves go whirling round
 In rings of dust, and sigh like pain
 Across the plain.

Now twilight, with a shadowy hand
 Of wild dominionship, doth keep
 Strong hold of hollow straits of land,
 And watery sounds are loud and deep
 By gap and steep.

Keen, fitful gusts, that fly before
 The wings of storm when day hath shut
 Its eyes on mountains, flaw by flaw,
 Fleet down by whistling box-tree butt,
 Against the hut.

And, ringed and girt with lurid pomp,
 Far eastern cliffs start up, and take
 Thick, steaming vapours from a swamp
 That lieth like a great blind lake,
 Of face opaque.

The moss that, like a tender grief,
About an English ruin clings—
What time the wan autumnal leaf
Faints, after many wanderings
On windy wings—

That gracious growth, whose quiet green
Is as a love in days austere,
Was never seen—hath never been—
On slab or roof, deserted here
For many a year.

Nor comes the bird whose speech is song—
Whose songs are silvery syllables
That unto glimmering woods belong,
And deep, meandering mountain dells
By yellow wells.

But rather here the wild-dog halts,
And lifts the paw, and looks, and howls ;
And here, in ruined forest vaults,
Abide dim, dark, death-featured owls
Like monks in cowls.

Across this hut the nettle runs,
And livid adders make their lair
In corners dank from lack of suns,
And out of foetid furrows stare
The growths that scare.

Here Summer's grasp of fire is laid
On bark and slabs that rot, and breed
Squat ugly things of deadly shade,
The scorpion, and the spiteful seed
Of centipede.

Unhallowed thunders, harsh and dry,
And flaming noontides, mute with heat,
Beneath the breathless, brazen sky,
Upon these rifted rafters beat
With torrid feet.

And night by night the fitful gale
Doth carry past the bittern's boom,
The dingo's yell, the plover's wail,
While lumbering shadows start, and loom,
And hiss through gloom.

No sign of grace—no hope of green
Cool-blossomed seasons marks the spot ;
But chained to iron doom, I ween,
'Tis left, like skeleton, to rot
Where ruth is not.

For on this hut hath murder writ,
With bloody fingers, hellish things ;
And God will never visit it
With flower or leaf of sweet-faced Springs,
Or gentle wings.

ILLA CREEK.



STRONG sea-wind flies up and sings
 Across the blown-wet border,
 Whose stormy echo runs and rings
 Like bells in wild disorder.

Fierce breath hath vext the foreland's face,
 It glistens, glooms, and glistens ;
 But deep within this quiet place
 Sweet Illa lies and listens.

Sweet Illa of the shining sands,
 She sleeps in shady hollows,
 Where August flits with flowerful hands,
 And silver Summer follows.

Far up the naked hills is heard
 A noise of many waters,
 But green-haired Illa lies unstirred
 Amongst her star-like daughters.

The tempest, pent in moaning ways,
Awakes the shepherd yonder,
But Illa dreams unknown to days
Whose wings are wind and thunder.

Here fairy hands and floral feet
Are brought by bright October ;
Here, stained with grapes and smit with heat,
Comes Autumn, sweet and sober.


Here lovers rest, what time the red
And yellow colours mingle,
And daylight droops with dying head
Beyond the western dingle.

And here, from month to month, the time
Is kissed by peace and pleasure,
While nature sings her woodland rhyme
And hoards her woodland treasure.

Oh, Illa Creek ! ere evening spreads
Her wings o'er towns unshaded,
How oft we seek thy mossy beds
To lave our foreheads faded !

For, let me whisper, then we find
The strength that lives, nor falters,
In wood and water, waste and wind,
And hidden mountain altars.

COOGEE.


 ING the song of wave-worn Coogee, Coogee in
 the distance white,
 With its jags and points disrupted, gaps and
 fractures fringed with light ;
 Haunt of gledes, and restless plovers of the
 melancholy wail,

Ever lending deeper pathos to the melancholy gale.
 There, my brothers, down the fissures, chasms deep and
 wan and wild,
 Grows the sea-bloom, one that blushes like a shrinking,
 fair, blind child ;
 And amongst the oozing forelands many a glad green
 rock-vine runs,
 Getting ease on earthy ledges, sheltered from December
 suns.

Often, when a gusty morning, rising cold and gray and
 strange,
 Lifts its face from watery spaces, vistas full with cloudy
 change,
 Bearing up a gloomy burden which anon begins to wane,
 Fading in the sudden shadow of a dark determined rain,

Do I seek an eastern window, so to watch the breakers
 beat
Round the steadfast crags of Coogee, dim with drifts of
 driving sleet :
Hearing hollow mournful noises sweeping down a solemn
 shore,
While the grim sea-caves are tideless, and the storm
 strives at their core.

Often when the floating vapours fill the silent autumn
 leas,
Dreaming mem'ries fall like moonlight over silver sleep-
 ing seas,
Youth and I and Love together ! other times and other
 themes
Come to me unsung, unwept for, through the faded
 evening gleams.
Come to me and touch me mutely—I that looked and
 longed so well,
Shall I look, and yet forget them ?—who may know or
 who foretell ?
Though the southern wind roams, shadowed with its
 immemorial grief,
Where the frosty wings of Winter leave their white-
 ness on the leaf.

Friend of mine beyond the waters, here and here these
 perished days
Haunt me with their sweet dead faces and their old
 divided ways.

You that helped, and you that loved me, take this song,
and when you read
Let the lost things come about you, set your thoughts,
and hear and heed.
Time has laid his burden on us—we who wear our
manhood now,
We would be the boys we have been, free of heart and
bright of brow,
Be the boys for just an hour, with the splendour and
the speech
Of thy lights and thunders, Coogee, flying up thy
gleaming beach.

Heart's desire and heart's division! who would come
and say to me,
With the eyes of far-off friendship, "You are as you
used to be?"
Something glad and good has left me here with sickening
discontent,
Tired of looking, neither knowing what it was or where
it went.
So it is this sight of Coogee, shining in the morning
dew,
Sets me stumbling through dim summers once on fire
with youth and you—
Summers pale as southern evenings when the year has
lost its power
And the wasted face of April weeps above the withered
flower.

Not that seasons bring no solace, not that time lacks
light and rest,

But the old things were the dearest, and the old loves
seem the best.

We that start at songs familiar, we that tremble at a
tone

Floating down the ways of music, like a sigh of sweetness
flown,

We can never feel the freshness, never find again the
mood

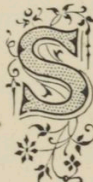
Left among fair-featured places, brightened of our
brotherhood.

This and this we have to think of when the night is
over all

And the woods begin to perish, and the rains begin to
fall.



GHOST GLEN.


SHUT your ears, stranger, or turn from Ghost
 Glen now,
 For the paths are grown over, untrodden by
 men now ;
 Shut your ears, stranger," saith the grey
 mother, crooning
 Her sorcery runic, when sets the half moon in.

To-night the north-easter goes travelling slowly,
 But it never stoops down to that hollow unholy ;
 To-night it rolls loud on the ridges red-litten,
 But it cannot abide in that forest, sin-smitten.

For over the pitfall the moon-dew is thawing,
 And with never a body two shadows stand sawing—
 The wraiths of two sawyers (step under and under),
 Who did a foul murder and were blackened with thunder !

Whenever the storm-wind comes driven and driving,
 Through the blood-spattered timber you may see the saw
 striving—
 You may see the saw heaving, and falling, and heaving,
 Whenever the sea-creek is chafing and grieving !

And across a burnt body, as black as an adder,
Sits the sprite of a sheep-dog (was ever sight sadder?)
For as the dry thunder splits louder and faster,
The sprite of a sheep-dog howls for his master.

“Oh, count your beads deftly,” saith the grey mother,
 crooning
Her sorcery runic when sets the half-moon in.
And well may she mutter, for the dark, hollow laughter
You will hear in the sawpits and the bloody logs after.

Aye, count your beads deftly, and keep your ways
 wary,
For the sake of the Saviour and sweet mother Mary.
Pray for your peace in these perilous places,
And pray for the laying of horrible faces.

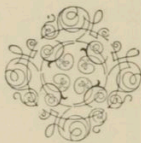
One starts, with a forehead all wrinkled and livid,
Aghast at the lightnings sudden and vivid;
One telleth, with curses, the gold that they drew there
(Ah, cross your breast humbly) from him whom they
 slew there:

The stranger, who came from the loved, the romantic
Island that sleeps on the moaning Atlantic,
Leaving behind him a patient home, yearning
For the steps in the distance—never returning;


Who was left in the forest, shrunken and starkly,
Burnt by his slayers (so men have said, darkly),
With the half-crazy sheep-dog, who cowered beside there,
And yelled at the silence, and marvelled, and died there.

Yea, cross your breast humbly, and hold your breath
tightly,
Or fly for your life from those shadows unsightly,
From the set staring features (cold, and so young, too),
And the death on the lips that a mother hath clung to.

I tell you, that bushman is braver than most men
Who even in daylight doth go through the Ghost Glen,
Although in that hollow unholy and lonely
He sees the dank sawpits and bloody logs only.



MOSS ON A WALL.


 DIM dreams it hath of singing ways,
 Of far-off woodland water-heads,
 And shining ends of April days
 Amongst the yellow runnel-beds.

Stoop closer to the ruined wall,
 Wherein the wilful wilding sleeps,
 As if its home were waterfall
 By dripping clefts and shadowy steeps.

A little waif, whose beauty takes
 A touching tone because it dwells
 So far away from mountain lakes,
 And lily leaves, and lightening fells.

Deep hidden in delicious floss
 It nestles, sister, from the heat—
 A gracious growth of tender moss
 Whose nights are soft, whose days are sweet.

Swift gleams across its petals run
With winds that hum a pleasant tune,
Serene surprises of the sun,
And whispers from the lips of noon.

The evening-coloured apple trees
Are faint with July's frosty breath.
But lo ! this stranger getteth ease,
And shines amidst the strays of Death.

And at the turning of the year,
When August wanders in the cold,
The raiment of the nursling here
Is rich with green, and glad with gold.

Oh, friend of mine, to one whose eyes
Are vexed because of alien things,
For ever in the wall moss lies,
The peace of hills and hidden springs.

From faithless lips and fickle lights
The tired pilgrim sets his face,
And thinketh here of sounds and sights
In many a lovely forest-place.


And when by sudden fits and starts
The sunset on the moss doth burn,
He often dreams, and, lo ! the marts
And streets are changed to dells of fern.

For, let me say, the wilding placed
By hands unseen amongst these stones,
Restores a Past by Time effaced,
Lost loves and long-forgotten tones !

As sometimes songs and scenes of old
Come faintly unto you and me,
When winds are wailing in the cold,
And rains are sobbing on the sea.



AT EUROMA.

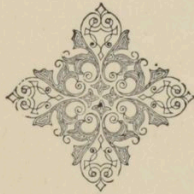

 HEY built his mound of the rough red ground,
 By the dip of a desert dell,
 Where all things sweet are killed by the heat,
 And scattered o'er flat and fell ;
 In a burning zone they left him alone,
 Past the uttermost western plain,
 And the nightfall dim heard his funeral hymn
 In the voices of wind and rain.

The songs austere of the forests drear,
 And the echoes of cliff and cave,
 When the dark is keen where the storm hath been,
 Fleet over the far-away grave.
 And through the days when the torrid rays
 Strike down on a coppery gloom,
 Some spirit grieves in the perished leaves,
 Whose theme is that desolate tomb.

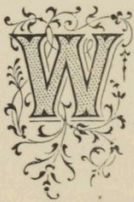
No human foot, or paw of brute,
 Halts now where the stranger sleeps ;
 But cloud and star his fellows are,
 And the rain that sobs and weeps.

The dingo yells by the far iron fells,
The plover is loud in the range,
But they never come near to the slumberer here,
Whose rest is a rest without change.

Ah ! in his life, had he mother or wife,
To wait for his step on the floor ?
Did Beauty wax dim while watching for him
Who passed through the threshold no more ?
Doth it trouble his head ? He is one with the dead ;
He lies by the alien streams ;
And sweeter than sleep is death that is deep
And unvexed by the lordship of dreams.



CHARLES HARPUR.



HERE Harpur lies the rainy streams,
 And wet hill-heads, and hollows weeping,
 Are swift with wind, and white with gleams,
 And hoarse with sounds of storms un-
 sleeping.

Fit grave it is for one whose song
 Was tuned by tones he caught from torrents,
 And filled with mountain breaths, and strong,
 Wild notes of falling forest currents.

So let him sleep ! the rugged hymns
 And broken lights of woods above him !
 And let me sing how sorrow^d dims
 The eyes of those that used to love him.

As April in the wilted wold
 Turns faded eyes on splendours waning,
 What time the latter leaves are old,
 And ruin strikes the strays remaining ;

So we that knew this singer dead,
Whose hands attuned the harp Australian,
May set the face and bow the head,
And mourn his fate and fortunes alien.

The burthen of a perished faith
Went sighing through his speech of sweetness,
With human hints of time and death,
And subtle notes of incompleteness.

But when the fiery power of youth
Had passed away and left him nameless,
Serene as light, and strong as truth,
He lived his life, untired and tameless.

And far and free this man of men,
With wintry hair and wasted feature,
Had fellowship with gorge and glen,
And learned the loves and runes of Nature.

Strange words of wind, and rhymes of rain,
And whispers from the inland fountains
Are mingled, in his various strain,
With leafy breaths of piny mountains.

But as the undercurrents sigh
Beneath the surface of a river,
The music of humanity
Dwells in his forest-psalms for ever.

No soul was he to sit on heights
And live with rocks apart and scornful :
Delights of men were his delights,
And common troubles made him mournful.

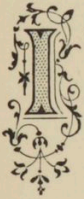
The flying forms of unknown powers
With lofty wonder caught and filled him ;
But there were days of gracious hours
When sights and sounds familiar thrilled him.

The pathos worn by wayside things,
The passion found in simple faces,
Struck deeper than the life of springs
Or strength of storms and sea-swept places.

But now he sleeps, the tired bard,
The deepest sleep ; and, lo ! I proffer
These tender leaves of my regard,
With hands that falter as they offer.



MOUNTAIN MOSS.



It lies amongst the sleeping stones,
 Far down the hidden mountain glade ;
 And past its brink the torrent moans
 For ever in a dreamy shade.

A little patch of dark-green moss,
 Whose softness grew of quiet ways
 (With all its deep, delicious floss)
 In slumb'rous suns of summer days.

You know the place? With pleasant tints
 The broken sunset lights the bowers ;
 And then the woods are full with hints
 Of distant, dear, voluptuous flowers !

'Tis often now the pilgrim turns
 A faded face towards that seat,
 And cools his brow among the ferns :
 The runnel dabbling at his feet.

There fierce December seldom goes,
With scorching step, and dust, and drouth ;
But, soft and low, October blows
Sweet odours from her dewy mouth.

And Autumn, like a gipsy bold,
Doth gather near it grapes and grain,
Ere Winter comes, the woodman old,
To lop the leaves in wind and rain.

O, greenest moss of mountain glen,
The face of Rose is known to thee ;
But we shall never share with men
A knowledge dear to Love and me !

For are they not between us saved,
The words my darling used to say,
What time the western waters laved
The forehead of the fainting day ?

Cool comfort had we on your breast
While yet the fervid noon burned mute
O'er barley field and barren crest,
And leagues of gardens flushed with fruit.

Oh ! sweet and low, we whispered so,
And sucked the pulp of plum and peach ;
But it was many years ago,
When each, you know, was loved of each.

THE GLEN OF ARRAWATTA.



SKY of wind! and while these fitful gusts
 Are beating round the windows in the cold,
 With sullen sobs of rain, behold I shape
 A settler's story of the wild old times :
 One told by camp-fires when the station drays

Were housed and hidden, forty years ago ;
 While swarthy drivers smoked their pipes, and drew,
 And crowded round the friendly gleaming flame
 That lured the dingo, howling, from his caves,
 And brought sharp sudden feet about the brakes.

A tale of Love and Death. And shall I say
 A tale of love *in* death—for all the patient eyes
 That gathered darkness, watching for a son
 And brother, never dreaming of the fate—
 The fearful fate—he met alone, unknown,
 Within the ruthless Australasian wastes ?

For in a far-off sultry summer, rimmed
 With thundercloud and red with forest fires,
 All day, by ways uncouth and ledges rude,
 The wild men held upon a stranger's trail,

Which ran against the rivers and athwart
The gorges of the deep blue western hills.

And when a cloudy sunset, like the flame
In windy evenings on the Plains of Thirst
Beyond the dead banks of the far Barcoo,
Lay heavy down the topmost peaks, they came,
With pent-in breath and stealthy steps, and crouched,
Like snakes, amongst the grasses, till the night
Had covered face from face, and thrown the gloom
Of many shadows on the front of things.

There, in the shelter of a nameless glen,
Fenced round by cedars and the tangled growths
Of blackwood, stained with brown and shot with grey,
The jaded white man built his fire, and turned
His horse adrift amongst the water-pools
That trickled underneath the yellow leaves
And made a pleasant murmur, like the brooks
Of England through the sweet autumnal noons.

Then, after he had slaked his thirst and used
The forest fare, for which a healthful day
Of mountain life had brought a zest, he took
His axe, and shaped with boughs and wattle-forks
A wurley, fashioned like a bushman's roof :
The door brought out athwart the strenuous flame,
The back thatched in against a rising wind.

And while the sturdy hatchet filled the cliffs
With sounds unknown, the immemorial haunts
Of echoes sent their lonely dwellers forth,
Who lived a life of wonder : flying round
And round the glen—what time the kangaroo
Leapt from his lair and huddled with the bats—
Far scattering down the wildly-startled fells.
Then came the doleful owl ; and evermore
The bleak morass gave out the bittern's call,
The plover's cry, and many a fitful wail
Of chilly omen, falling on the ear
Like those cold flaws of wind that come and go
An hour before the break of day.

Anon

The stranger held from toil, and, settling down,
He drew rough solace from his well-filled pipe,
And smoked into the night : revolving there
The primal questions of a squatter's life ;
For in the flats, a short day's journey past
His present camp, his station yards were kept,
With many a lodge and paddock jutting forth
Across the heart of unnamed prairie-lands,
Now loud with bleating and the cattle bells,
And misty with the hut-fire's daily smoke.

Wide-spreading flats, and western spurs of hills
That dipped to plains of dim perpetual blue ;
Bold summits set against the thunder heaps ;
And slopes behacked and crushed by battling kine !

Where now the furious tumult of their feet
Gives back the dust, and up from glen and brake
Evokes fierce clamour, and becomes indeed
A token of the squatter's daring life,
Which, growing inland—growing year by year—
Doth set us thinking in these latter days,
And makes one ponder of the silent lands
Beyond the lonely tracks of Burke and Wills,
Where, when the wandering Stuart fixed his camps
In central wastes, afar from any home
Or haunt of man, and in the changeless midst
Of sullen deserts and the footless miles
Of sultry silence, all the ways about
Grew strangely vocal, and a marvellous noise
Became the wonder of the waxing glooms.

Now, after darkness, like a mighty spell
Amongst the hills and dim dispeopled dells,
Had brought a stillness to the soul of things,
It came to pass that, from the secret depths
Of dripping gorges, many a runnel-voice
Came, mellowed with the silence, and remained
About the caves, a sweet though alien sound :
Now rising ever, like a fervent flute
In moony evenings, when the theme is love ;
Now falling, as ye hear the Sunday bells
While hastening fieldward from the gleaming town.

Then fell a softer mood, and memory paused
With faithful love, amidst the sainted shrines

Of youth and passion in the valleys past
Of dear delights which never grow again.
And if the stranger (who had left behind
Far anxious homesteads in a wave-swept isle,
To face a fierce sea-circle day by day,
And hear at night the dark Atlantic's moan),
Now took a hope and planned a swift return,
With wealth and health and with a youth unspent,
To those sweet ones that stayed with want at home,
Say *who* shall blame him—though the years are long,
And life is hard, and waiting makes the heart grow
old?

Thus passed the time, until the moon serene
Stood over high dominion like a dream
Of peace, within the white transfigured woods ;
And o'er the vast dew-dripping wilderness
Of slopes illumined with her silent fires.

Then, far beyond the home of pale red leaves
And silver sluices, and the shining stems
Of runnel blooms, the dreamy wanderer saw,
The wilder for the vision of the moon,
Stark desolations and a waste of plain,
All smit by flame and broken with the storms :
Black ghosts of trees, and sapless trunks that stood
Harsh hollow channels of the fiery noise,
Which ran from bole to bole a year before,
And grew with ruin, and was like, indeed,
The roar of mighty winds with wintering streams

That foam about the limits of the land,
And mix their swiftness with the flying seas.

Now, when the man had turned his face about
To take his rest, behold the gem-like eyes
Of ambushed wild things stared from bole and brake
With dumb amaze and faint-recurring glance,
And fear anon that drove them down the brush ;
While from his den the dingo, like a scout
In sheltered ways, crept out and cowered near
To sniff the tokens of the stranger's feast,
And marvel at the shadows of the flame.

Thereafter grew the wind ; and chafing depths
In distant waters sent a troubled cry
Across the slumb'rous forest ; and the chill
Of coming rain was on the sleeper's brow,
When, flat as reptiles huddled in the scrub,
A deadly crescent crawled to where he lay—
A band of fierce fantastic savages
That, starting naked round the faded fire,
With sudden spears and swift terrific yells,
Came bounding wildly at the white man's head,
And faced him, staring like a dream of Hell !

Here let me pass ! I would not stay to tell
Of hopeless struggles under crushing blows ;
Of how the surging fiends with thickening strokes
Howled round the stranger till they drained his strength ;

How Love and Life stood face to face with Hate
And Death ; and then how Death was left alone
With Night and Silence in the sobbing rains.

So, after many moons, the searchers found
The body mouldering in the mouldering dell,
Amidst the fungi and the bleaching leaves,
And buried it, and raised a stony mound
Which took the mosses. Then the place became
The haunt of fearful legends and the lair
Of bats and adders.


There he lies and sleeps
From year to year ; in soft Australian nights :
And through the furnaced noons ; and in the times
Of wind and wet ! Yet never mourner comes
To drop upon that grave the Christian's tear
Or pluck the foul, dank weeds of death away.

But while the English Autumn filled her lap
With faded gold, and while the reapers cooled
Their flame-red faces in the clover grass,
They looked for him at home : and when the frost
Had made a silence in the morning lanes
And cooped the farmers by December fires,
They looked for him at home : and through the days
Which brought about the million-coloured Spring,
With moon-like splendours, in the garden plots,
They looked for him at home : while Summer danced,

A shining singer, through the tasselled corn,
They looked for him at home. From sun to sun
They waited. Season after season went,
And Memory wept upon the lonely moors,
And Hope grew voiceless, and the watchers passed,
Like shadows, one by one away.

And he
Whose fate was hidden under forest leaves
And in the darkness of untrodden dells
Became a marvel. Often by the hearths
In winter nights, and when the wind was wild
Outside the casements, children heard the tale
Of how he left their native vales behind
(Where he had been a child himself) to shape
New fortunes for his father's fallen house ;
Of how he struggled—how his name became,
By fine devotion and unselfish zeal,
A name of beauty in a selfish land ;
And then, of how the aching hours went by,
With patient listeners praying for the step
Which never crossed the floor again. So passed
The tale to children ; but the bitter end
Remained a wonder, like the unknown grave,
Alone with God and Silence in the hills.

ROSE LORRAINE.


 WEET water-moons, blown into lights
 Of flying gold on pool and creek,
 And many sounds and many sights
 Of younger days are back this week.
 I cannot say I sought to face,
 Or greatly cared to cross again
 The subtle spirit of the place
 Whose life is mixed with Rose Lorraine.

What though her voice rings clearly through
 A nightly dream I gladly keep,
 No wish have I to start anew
 Heart fountains that have ceased to leap.
 Here, face to face with different days,
 And later things that plead for love,
 It would be worse than wrong to raise
 A phantom far too fain to move.

But, Rose Lorraine—ah ! Rose Lorraine,
 I'll whisper now, where no one hears—
 If you should chance to meet again
 The man you kissed in soft, dead years,

Just say for once "He suffered much,"
And add to this "His fate was worst
Because of me, my voice, my touch"—
There is no passion like the first !

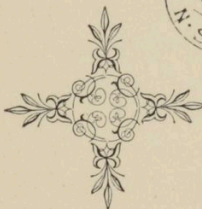
If I that breathe your slow sweet name,
As one breathes low notes on a flute,
Have vext your peace with word of blame,
The phrase is dead—the lips are mute.
Yet when I turn towards the wall,
In stormy nights, in times of rain,
I often wish you could recall
Your tender speeches, Rose Lorraine.

Because, you see, I thought them true,
And did not count you self-deceived,
And gave myself in all to you,
And looked on Love as Life achieved.
Then came the bitter, sudden change,
The fastened lips, the dumb despair :
The first few weeks were very strange,
And long, and sad, and hard to bear.


No woman lives with power to burst
My passion's bonds, and set me free ;
For Rose is last where Rose was first,
And only Rose is fair to me.

The faintest memory of her face,
The wilful face that hurt me so,
Is followed by a fiery trace
That Rose Lorraine must never know.

I keep a faded ribbon string
You used to wear about your throat ;
And of this pale, this perished thing,
I think I know the threads by rote.
God help such love ! To touch your hand,
To loiter where your feet might fall,
You marvellous girl, my soul would stand
The worst of hell—its fires and all !



ARAKOON.*


 O! in storms, the triple-headed
 Hill, whose dreaded
 Bases battle with the seas,
 Looms across fierce widths of fleeting
 Waters beating
 Evermore on roaring leas !

Arakoon, the black, the lonely !
 Housed with only
 Cloud and rain-wind, mist and damp :
 Round whose foam-drenched feet and nether
 Depths, together
 Sullen sprites of thunder tramp !

There the East hums loud and surly,
 Late and early,
 Through the chasms and the caves,
 And across the naked verges
 Leap the surges !
 White and wailing waifs of waves.

* A mountainous promontory on the coast of New South Wales.

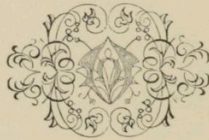
Day by day the sea-fogs gathered—
 Tempest-fathered—
Pitch their tents on yonder peak,
Yellow drifts and fragments lying
 Where the flying
Torrents chafe the cloven creek !

And at nightfall, when the driven
 Bolts of heaven
Smite the rock and break the bluff,
Thither troop the elves whose home is
 Where the foam is,
And the echo, and the clough.

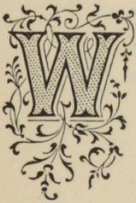
Ever girt about with noises,
 Stormy voices,
And the salt breath of the Strait,
Stands the steadfast Mountain Giant,
 Grim, reliant,
Dark as Death, and firm as Fate.

So when trouble treads, like thunder,
 Weak men under—
Treads and breaks the thews of these—
Set thyself to bear it bravely,
 Greatly, gravely,
Like the hill in yonder seas.

Since the wrestling and endurance
Give assurance
To the faint at bay with pain,
That no soul to strong endeavour,
Yoked for ever,
Works against the tide in vain.



KING SAUL AT GILBOA.



WITH noise of battle and the dust of fray,
 Half-hid in fog, the gloomy mountain lay ;
 But Succoth's watchers, from their outer
 fields,
 Saw fits of flame and gleams of clashing
 shields ;

For, where the yellow river draws its spring,
 The hosts of Israel travelled, thundering !
 There, beating like the storm that sweeps to sea
 Across the reefs of chafing Galilee,
 The car of Abner and the sword of Saul,
 Drove Gaza down Gilboa's southern wall ;
 But swift and sure the spears of Ekron flew,
 Till peak and slope were drenched with bloody dew.
 " Shout, Timnath, shout ! " the blazing leaders cried,
 And hurled the stone and dashed the stave aside.
 " Shout, Timnath, shout ! Let Hazor hold the height,
 Bend the long bow and break the lords of fight ! "
 From every hand the swarthy strangers sprang,
 Chief leaped on chief, with buckler buckler rang !

The flower of armies ! set in Syrian heat,
The ridges clamoured under labouring feet ;
Nor stayed the warriors till, from Salem's road,
The crescent horns of Abner's squadrons glowed ;
Then, like a shooting splendour on the wing,
The strong-armed son of Kish came thundering ;
And as in Autumn's fall, when woods are bare,
Two adverse tempests meet in middle air,
So Saul and Achish, grim with heat and hate,
Met by the brook and shook the scales of Fate ;
For now the struggle swayed, and, firm as rocks
Against the storm-wind of the equinox,
The rallied lords of Judah stood and bore,
All day, the fiery tides of fourfold war.

But he that fasted in the secret cave
And called up Samuel from the quiet grave,
And stood with darkness and the mantled ghosts
A bitter night on shrill Samarian coasts,
Knew well the end—of how the futile sword
Of Israel would be broken by the Lord.
How Gath would triumph, with the tawny line
That bend the knee at Dagon's brittle shrine ;
And how the race of Kish would fall to wreck,
Because of vengeance stayed at Amalek.
Yet strove the sun-like king, nor rested hand
Till yellow evening filled the level land ;
Then Judah reeled before a biting hail
Of sudden arrows shot from Akor's vale,
Where Libnah, lapped in blood from thigh to heel,

Drew the tense string, and pierced the quivering steel.
There fell the sons of Saul ; and, man by man,
The chiefs of Israel, up to Jonathan.
And while swift Achish stooped and caught the spoil,
Ten chosen archers, red with sanguine toil,
Sped after Saul, who, faint, and sick, and sore
With many wounds, had left the thick of war ;
He, like a baffled bull by hunters pressed,
Turned sharp about, and faced the flooded west,
And saw the star-like spears and moony spokes
Gleam from the rocks and lighten through the oaks ;
A sea of splendour ! How the chariots rolled
On wheels of blinding brightness manifold ;
While stumbling over spike and spine and spur
Of sultry lands, escaped the son of Ner
With smitten men. At this the front of Saul
Grew darker than a blasted tower wall,
And seeing how there crouched upon his right,
Aghast with fear, a black Amalekite,
He called, and said : “ I pray thee, man of pain,
Red from the scourge, and recent from the chain,
Set thou thy face to mine, and stoutly stand
With yonder bloody sword-hilt in thy hand,
And fall upon me.” But the faltering hind
Stood trembling, like a willow in the wind.
Then further Saul : “ Lest Ashdod’s vaunting hosts
Should bear me captive to their bleak-blown coasts,
I pray thee, smite me ! seeing peace has fled,
And rest lies wholly with the quiet dead.”
At this a flood of sunset broke, and smote
Keen blazing sapphires round a kingly throat,

Touched arm and shoulder, glittered in the crest,
 And made swift starlights on a jewelled breast.
 So, starting forward, like a loosened hound,
 The stranger clutched the sword and wheeled it round,
 And struck the Lord's Anointed. Fierce and fleet
 Philistia came, with shouts and clattering feet ;
 By gaping gorges and by rough defile
 Dark Ashdod beat across a dusty mile ;
 Hot Hazor's bowmen toiled from spire to spire,
 And Gath sprang upwards, like a gust of fire ;
 On either side did Libnah's lords appear,
 And brass-clad Timnath thundered in the rear.
 "Mark, Achish, mark!"—South-west and south there
 sped

A dabbled hireling from the dreadful dead.
 "Mark, Achish, mark!"—The mighty front of Saul,
 Great in his life and god-like in his fall!
 This was the arm that broke Philistia's pride,
 Where Kishon chafes his seaward-going tide ;
 This was the sword that smote till set of sun
 Red Gath, from Michmash unto Ajalon,
 Low in the dust. And Israel scattered far!
 And dead the trumps and crushed the hoofs of war.

So fell the king, as it was said by him
 Who hid his forehead in a mantle dim
 At bleak Endor, what time unholy rites
 Vexed the long sleep of still Samarian nights ;
 For, bowed to earth before the hoary priest,
 Did he of Kish withstand the smoking feast,

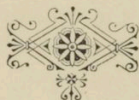
To fast, in darkness and in sackcloth rolled,
And house with wild things in the biting cold,
Because of sharpness lent to Gaza's sword,
And Judah widowed by the angry Lord.

So silence came. As when the outer verge
Of Carmel takes the white and whistling surge,
Hoarse, hollow noises fill the caves and roar
Along the margin of the echoing shore,
Thus war had thundered ; but as evening breaks
Across the silver of Assyrian lakes,
When reapers rest, and through the level red
Of sunset, peace, like holy oil, is shed,
Thus silence fell. But Israel's daughters crept
Outside their thresholds, waited, watched, and wept.

Then they that dwell beyond the flats and fens
Of sullen Jordan, and in gelid glens
Of Jabesh-Gilead—chosen chiefs and few—
Around their loins the hasty girdle drew,
And faced the forests, huddled fold on fold,
And dells of glimmering greenness manifold.
What time Orion in the west did set
A shining foot on hills of wind and wet,
These journeyed nightly till they reached the capes
Where Ashdod revelled over heated grapes ;
And while the feast was loud, and scouts were turned
From Saul's bound body, cord by cord they burned,
And bore the king athwart the place of tombs,

And hasted eastward through the tufted glooms,
Nor broke the cake nor stayed the step, till morn
Shot over Debir's cones and crags forlorn.

From Jabesh then the weeping virgins came,
In Jabesh then they built the funeral flame ;
With costly woods they piled the lordly pyre,
Brought yellow oils and fed the perfect fire,
While round the crescent stately elders spread
The flashing armour of the mighty dead,
With crown and spears, and all the trophies won
From many wars by Israel's dreadful son ;
Thence, when the feet of evening paused and stood
On shadowy mountains and the roaring flood
(As through a rushing twilight, full of rain,
The weak moon looked athwart Gadara's plain),
The younger warriors bore the urn, and broke
The humid turf about a wintering oak,
And buried Saul ; and, fasting, went their ways,
And hid their faces seven nights and days.



FAITH IN GOD.



HAVE faith in God. For whosoever lists
 To calm conviction in these days of strife,
 Will learn that in this steadfast stand exists
 The scholarship severe of human life.

This face to face with doubt !—I know how strong
 His thews must be who fights, and falls, and bears,
 By sleepless nights and vigils lone and long,
 And many a woeful wraith of wrestling prayers.

Yet trust in Him ! Not in an old man throned
 With thunders on an everlasting cloud,
 But in that awful entity enzoned
 By no wild wraths nor bitter homage loud.

When from the summit of some sudden steep
 Of speculation you have strength to turn
 To things too boundless for the broken sweep
 Of finer comprehension, wait and learn

That God hath been "His own interpreter"
 From first to last. So you will understand
 The tribe who best succeed, when men most err,
 To suck through fogs the fatness of the land.

One thing is surer than the autumn tints
 We saw last week in yonder river-bend—
 That all our poor expression helps and hints,
 However vaguely, to the solemn end,

That God is Truth ; and if our dim ideal
 Falls short of fact—so short that we must weep—
 Why shape specific sorrows, though the real
 Be not the song which erewhile made us sleep ?

Remember, truth draws upward. This to us
 Of steady happiness should be a cause
 Beyond the differential calculus
 Or Kant's dull dogmas and mechanic laws.

A man is manliest when he wisely knows
 How vain it is to halt, and pule, and pine ;
 Whilst under every mystery haply flows
 The finest issue of a love divine.

TWELVE SONNETS.

I.

A MOUNTAIN SPRING.

PEACE hath an altar there. The sounding feet
 Of thunder and the 'wildering wings of rain
 Against fire-rifted summits flash and beat,
 And through grey upper gorges swoop and
 strain,

But round that hallowed mountain-spring remain,
 Year after year, the days of tender heat,
 And gracious nights, whose lips with flowers are sweet,
 And filtered lights, and lutes of soft refrain.
 A still, bright pool. To men I may not tell
 The secret that its heart of water knows,
 The story of a loved and lost repose ;
 Yet this I say to cliff and close-leaved dell :
 A fitful spirit haunts yon limpid well,
 Whose likeness is the faithless face of Rose.

II.

LAURA.

IF Laura—lady of the flower-soft face—
Should light upon these verses, she may take
The tenderest line, and through its pulses trace
What man can suffer for a woman's sake.
For in the nights that burn, the days that break,
A thin pale figure stands in Passion's place,
And peace comes not, nor yet the perished grace
Of youth, to keep old faiths and fires awake.
Ah! marvellous maid. Life sobs, and sighing saith,
“She left me, fleeting like a fluttered dove;
But I would have a moment of her breath,
So I might taste the sweetest sense thereof,
And catch from blossoming, honeyed lips of love
Some faint, some fair, some dim, delicious death.”

III.

BY A RIVER.

BUT red-ripe mouth and brown luxurious eyes
Of her I love, by all your sweetness shed
In far fair days, on one whose memory flies
To faithless lights, and gracious speech gainsaid,
I pray you, when yon river-path I tread,
Make with the woodlands some soft compromise,
Lest they should vex me into fruitless sighs
With visions of a woman's gleaming head!
For every green and golden-hearted thing
That gathers beauty in that shining place,
Beloved of beams and wooed by wind and wing,
Is rife with glimpses of her marvellous face;
And in the whispers of the lips of Spring,
The music of her lute-like voice I trace.

IV.

ATTILA.

WHAT though his feet were shod with sharp, fierce flame,
And death and ruin were his daily squires,
The Scythian, helped by Heaven's thunders, came :
The time was ripe for God's avenging fires.
Lo ! loose, lewd trulls, and lean, luxurious liars
Had brought the fair, fine face of Rome to shame,
And made her one with sins beyond a name ;
That queenly daughter of imperial sires !
The blood of elders, like the blood of sheep,
Was dashed across the circus. Once, while din,
And dust, and lightning, and a draggled heap
Of beast-slain men made lords with laughter leap,
Night fell, with rain. The earth, so sick of sin,
Had turned her face into the dark to weep.

v.

A REWARD.

BECAUSE a steadfast flame of clear intent
Gave force and beauty to full-actioned life ;
Because his way was one of firm ascent,
Whose stepping-stones were hewn of change and strife ;
Because as husband loveth noble wife
He loved fair Truth ; because the thing he meant
To do, that thing he did, nor paused, nor bent
In face of poor and pale conclusions ; yea !
Because of this, how fares the Leader dead ?
What kind of mourners weep for him to-day ?
What golden shroud is at his funeral spread ?
Upon his brow what leaves of laurel, say ?
*About his breast is tied a sackcloth grey,
And knots of thorns deface his lordly head.*

VI.

TO ———

A HANDMAID to the genius of thy song
Is sweet, fair Scholarship. 'Tis she supplies
The fiery Spirit of the 'passioned eyes
With subtle syllables, whose notes belong
To some chief source of perfect melodies ;
And glancing through a laurelled, lordly throng
Of shining singers, lo ! my vision flies
To William Shakespeare ! He it is whose strong,
Full, flute-like music haunts thy stately verse.
A worthy Levite of his court thou art !
One sent among us to defeat the curse
That binds us to the Actual. Yea, thy part,
Oh, lute-voiced lover ! is to lull the heart
Of love repelled, its darkness to disperse.

VII.

THE STANZA OF CHILDE HAROLD.

Who framed the stanza of Childe Harold? He
It was who, halting on a stormy shore,
Knew well the lofty voice which evermore,
In grand distress, doth haunt the sleepless sea
With solemn sounds. And as each wave did roll
Till one came up, the mightiest of the whole,
To sweep and surge across the vacant lea,
Wild words were wedded to wild melody.
This poet must have had a speechless sense
Of some dead summer's boundless affluence ;
Else, whither can we trace the passioned lore
Of Beauty, steeping to the very core
His royal verse, and that rare light which lies
About it, like a sunset in the skies ?

VIII.

A LIVING POET.

HE knows the sweet vexation in the strife
Of love with time, this bard who fain would stray
To fairer place beyond the storms of life,
With astral faces near him day by day.
In deep-mossed dells the mellow waters flow
Which best he loves ; for there the echoes rife,
With rich suggestions of his long ago,
Astarte, pass with thee. And, far away,
Dear southern seasons haunt the dreamy eye :
Spring, flower-zoned, and Summer, warbling low
In tasselled corn, alternate come and go,
While gipsy Autumn, splashed from heel to thigh
With vine-blood, treads the leaves ; and, halting nigh,
Wild Winter bends across a beard of snow.

IX.

DANTE AND VIRGIL.

WHEN lost Francesca sobbed her broken tale
Of love, and sin, and boundless agony,
While that wan spirit by her side did wail
And bite his lips for utter misery—
The grief which could not speak, nor hear, nor see—
So tender grew the superhuman face—
Of one who listened that a mighty trace
Of superhuman woe gave way, and pale
The sudden light up-struggled to its place ;
While all his limbs began to faint and fail
With such excess of pity. But, behind,
The Roman Virgil stood—the calm, the wise—
With not a shadow in his regal eyes,
The stately type of all his stately kind.

x.

REST.

SOMETIMES we feel so spent for want of rest,
We have no thought beyond. I know to-day,
When tired of bitter lips and dull delay
With faithless words, I cast mine eyes upon
The shadows of a distant mountain-crest,
And said "That hill must hide within its breast
Some secret glen secluded from the sun."

Oh, mother Nature! would that I could run
Outside to thee; and, like a wearied guest,
Half blind with lamps, and sick of feasting, lay
An aching head on thee. Then down the streams
The moon might swim, and I should feel her grace,
While soft winds blew the sorrows from my face,
So quiet in the fellowship of dreams.

XI.

AFTER PARTING.


I CANNOT tell what change hath come to you
To vex your splendid hair. I only know
One grief : the passion left betwixt us two,
Like some forsaken watchfire, burneth low.
'Tis sad to turn and find it dying so,
Without a hope of resurrection ! Yet,
Oh, radiant face that found me tired and lone,
I shall not for the dear dead past forget
The sweetest looks of all the summers gone.
Ah ! time hath made familiar wild regret ;
For now the leaves are white in last year's bowers,
And now doth sob along the ruined leas
The homeless storm from saddened southern seas,
While March sits weeping over withered flowers.

XII.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

THE silvery dimness of a happy dream
I've known of late. Methought where Byron moans,
Like some wild gulf in melancholy zones,
I passed tear-blinded. Once a lurid gleam
Of stormy sunset loitered on the sea
While travelling, troubled like a straitened stream,
The voice of Shelley died away from me.
Still sore at heart I reached a lake-lit lea,
And then the green-mossed glades with many a grove,
Where lies the calm which Wordsworth used to love ;
And lastly, Locksley Hall, from whence did rise
A haunting song that blew, and breathed, and blew
With rare delights. 'Twas *there* I woke and knew
The sumptuous comfort left in drowsy eyes.

AT DUSK.


 T dusk, like flowers that shun the day,
 Shy thoughts from dim recesses break,
 And plead for words I dare not say
 For your sweet sake.

My early love! my first, my last,
 Mistakes have been that both must rue;
 But all the passion of the past
 Survives for you.

The tender message Hope might send,
 Sinks fainting at the lips of speech,
 For, are you lover—are you friend,
 That I would reach?

How much to-night I'd give to win
 A banished peace—an old repose;
 But here I sit, and sigh, and sin
 When no one knows.

The stern, the steadfast reticence,
Which made the dearest phrases halt,
And checked a first and finest sense,
Was not my fault.

I held my words because there grew
About my life persistent pride ;
And you were loved who never knew
What love could hide !


This purpose filled my soul like flame :
To win you wealth and take the place
Where care is not, or any shame
To vex your face.

I said—"Till then my heart must keep
Its secret safe and unconfest ;"
And days and nights unknown to sleep
The vow attest.

Yet, oh ! my sweet, it seems so long
Since you were near ; and fates retard
The sequel of a struggle strong,
And life is hard.

Too hard, when one is left alone
To wrestle passion, never free
To turn and say to you, "My own,
Come home to me !"

SEPTEMBER IN AUSTRALIA.


 REY Winter hath gone, like a wearisome guest,
 And, behold, for repayment,
 September comes in with the wind of the West
 And the Spring in her raiment !
 The ways of the frost have been filled of the
 flowers,
 While the forest discovers
 Wild wings, with the halo of hyaline hours,
 And a music of lovers.

September, the maid with the swift, silver feet !
 She glides, and she graces
 The valleys of coolness, the slopes of the heat,
 With her blossomy traces ;
 Sweet month, with a mouth that is made of a rose,
 She lightens and lingers
 In spots where the harp of the evening glows,
 Attuned by her fingers.

The stream from its home in the hollow hill slips
 In a darling old fashion ;
And the day goeth down with a song on its lips
 Whose key-note is passion ;
Far out in the fierce, bitter front of the sea
 I stand, and remember
Dead things that were brothers and sisters of thee,
 Resplendent September.

The West, when it blows at the fall of the noon
 And beats on the beaches,
So filled with a tender and tremulous tune
 That touches and teaches ;
The stories of Youth, of the burden of Time,
 And the death of Devotion,
Come back with the wind, and are themes of the rhyme
 In the waves of the ocean.

We, having a secret to others unknown,
 In the cool mountain-mosses,
May whisper together, September, alone
 Of our loves and our losses.
One word for her beauty, and one for the place
 She gave to the hours ;
And then we may kiss her, and suffer her face
 To sleep with the flowers.

High places that knew of the gold and the white
 On the forehead of Morning
Now darken and quake, and the steps of the Night
 Are heavy with warning !
Her voice in the distance is lofty and loud
 Through its echoing gorges ;
She hath hidden her eyes in a mantle of cloud,
 And her feet in the surges !

On the tops of the hills, on the turreted cones—
 Chief temples of thunder—
The gale, like a ghost, in the middle watch moans,
 Gliding over and under.
The sea, flying white through the rack and the rain,
 Leapeth wild at the forelands ;
And the plover, whose cry is like passion with pain,
 Complains in the moorlands.

Oh, season of changes—of shadow and shine—
 September the splendid !
My song hath no music to mingle with thine,
 And its burden is ended ;
But thou, being born of the winds and the sun,
 By mountain, by river,
May lighten and listen, and loiter and run,
 With thy voices for ever.

EUROCLYDON.



N the storm-cloven Cape
 The bitter waves roll,
 With the bergs of the Pole,
 And the darks and the damps of the Northern Sea:
 For the storm-cloven Cape
 Is an alien Shape
 With a fearful face ; and it moans, and it stands
 Outside all lands
 Everlastingly !

When the fruits of the year
 Have been gathered in Spain,
 And the Indian rain
 Is rich on the evergreen lands of the Sun,
 There comes to this Cape,
 To this alien Shape,
 As the waters beat in and the echoes troop forth,
 The Wind of the North,
 Euroclydon !

And the wilted thyme,
And the patches past
Of the nettles cast
In the drift of the rift, and the broken rime,
Are tumbled and blown
To every zone
With the famished glede, and the plovers thinned
By this fourfold Wind—
This Wind sublime !

On the wrinkled hills,
By starts and fits,
The wild Moon sits ;
And the rindles fill, and flash, and fall
In the way of her light,
Through the straitened night,
When the sea-heralds clamour, and elves of the war,
In the torrents afar,
Hold festival !

From ridge to ridge
The polar fires,
On the naked spires,
With a foreign splendour, flit and flow ;
And clough and cave
And architrave
Have a blood-coloured glamour on roof and on wall,
Like a nether hall
In the hells below !

The dead, dry lips
Of the ledges, split
By the thunder fit
And the stress of the sprites of the forkèd flame,
Anon break out,
With a shriek and a shout,
Like a hard, bitter laughter, cracked and thin,
From a ghost with a sin
Too dark for a name !

And, all thro' the year,
The fierce seas run
From sun to sun,
Across the face of a vacant world !
And the Wind flies forth
From the wild, white North,
That shivers and harries the heart of things,
And shapes with its wings
A chaos uphurled !

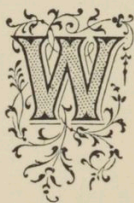
Like one who sees
A rebel light
In the thick of the night,
As he stumbles and staggers on summits afar—
Who looks to it still,
Up hill and hill,
With a steadfast hope (though the ways be deep,
And rough, and steep),
Like a steadfast star—

So I, that stand
On the outermost peaks
Of peril, with cheeks
Blue with the salts of a frosty sea,
Have learnt to wait,
With an eye elate
And a heart intent, for the fuller blaze
Of the Beauty that rays
Like a glimpse for me—

Of the Beauty that grows
Whenever I hear
The Winds of Fear
From the tops and the bases of barrenness call ;
And the duplicate lore
Which I learn evermore,
Is of Harmony filling and rounding the Storm
And the marvellous Form
That governs all !



ON A CATTLE TRACK.



HERE the strength of dry thunder splits
 hill-rocks asunder,
 And the shouts of the desert-wind break,
 By the gullies of deepness and ridges of
 steepness,
 Lo, the cattle-track twists like a snake !
 Like a sea of dead embers, burnt white by Decembers,
 A plain to the left of it lies ;
 And six fleeting horses dash down the creek courses
 With the terror of thirst in their eyes.

The false strength of fever, that deadly deceiver,
 Gives foot to each famishing beast ;
 And over lands rotten, by rain-winds forgotten,
 The mirage gleams out in the east.
 Ah ! the waters are hidden from riders and ridden
 In a stream where the cattle track dips ;
 And Death on their faces is scoring fierce traces,
 And the drouth is a fire on their lips.

It is far to the station, and gaunt Desolation
Is a spectre that glooms in the way ;
Like a *red* smoke the air is, like a hell-light its glare is,
And as flame are the feet of the day.
The wastes are like metal that forges unsettle
When the heat of the furnace is white ;
And the cool breeze that bloweth when an English sun
goeth,
Is unknown to the wild desert night.

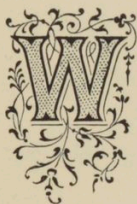
A cry of distress there ! a horseman the less there !
The mock-waters shine like a moon !
It is "Speed, and speed faster from this hole of disaster,
And hurrah for yon God-sent lagoon."
Doth a devil deceive them ? Ah, now let us leave them—
We are burdened in life with the sad :
Our portion is trouble, our joy is a bubble,
And the gladdest is never too glad.

From the pale tracts of peril, past mountain heads sterile,
To a sweet river shadowed with reeds,
Where Summer steps lightly, and Winter beams brightly,
The hoof-rutted cattle track leads.
There soft is the moonlight, and tender the noonlight ;
There fiery things falter and fall ;
And there may be seen, now, the gold and the green, now,
And the wings of a peace over all.

Hush, bittern and plover ! Go, wind, to thy cover
 Away by the snow-smitten Pole !
The rotten leaf falleth, the forest-rain calleth ;
 And what is the end of the whole ?
Some men are successful after seasons distressful
 [Now, masters, the drift of my tale] ;
But the brink of salvation is a lair of damnation
 For others who struggle yet fail.



TO DAMASCUS.



HERE the sinister sun of the Syrians beat
 On the brittle, bright stubble,
 And the camels fell back from the swords
 of the heat,
 Came Saul, with a fire in the soles of his
 feet,
 And a forehead of trouble.

And terrified faces to left and to right,
 Before and behind him,
 Fled away with the speed of a maddening fright
 To the cloughs of the bat and the chasms of night,
 Each hoping the zealot would fail in his flight
 To find him and bind him.

For, behold you ! the strong man of Tarsus came down
 With breathings of slaughter,
 From the priests of the city, the chiefs of the town
 (The lords with the sword, and the sires with the gown),
 To harry the Christians, and trample, and drown,
 And waste them like water.

He was *ever* a fighter, this son of the Jews—
 A fighter in earnest ;
 And the Lord took delight in the strength of his thews,
 For He knew he was one of the few He could choose
 To fight out His battles and carry His news
 Of a marvellous truth through the dark, and the dews,
 And the desert lands furnaced !

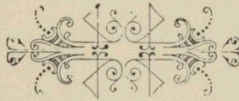
He knew he was one of the few He could take
 For His mission supernal,
 Whose feet would not falter, whose limbs would not
 ache,
 Through the waterless lands of the thorn and the snake,
 And the ways of the wild—bearing up for the sake
 Of a Beauty eternal.

And therefore the road to Damascus was burned
 With a swift, sudden brightness ;
 While Saul, with his face in the bitter dust, learned
 Of the sin which he did ere he tumbled, and turned
 Aghast at God's whiteness !

Of the sin which he did ere he covered his head
 From the strange revelation.
 But, thereafter, you know of the life that he led ;
 How he preached to the peoples, and suffered, and sped
 With the wonderful words which his Master had said,
 From nation to nation.

Now would we be like him, who suffer and see,
 If the Chooser should choose us !
For I tell you, brave brothers, whoever you be,
It is right, till all learn to look further, and see,
 That our Master should use us !

It is right, till all learn to discover and class,
 That our Master should task us :
For now we may judge of the Truth through a glass ;
And the road over which they must evermore pass,
Who would think for the many, and fight for the mass,
 Is the road to Damascus.



THE LAST OF HIS TRIBE.



HE crouches, and buries his face on his knees,
 And hides in the dark of his hair ;
 For he cannot look up to the storm-smitten
 trees,
 Or think of the loneliness there—
 Of the loss and the loneliness there.

The wallaroos grope through the tufts of the grass,
 And turn to their covers for fear ;
 But he sits in the ashes and lets them pass
 Where the boomerangs sleep with the spear—
 With the nullah, the sling, and the spear.

Uloola, behold him ! The thunder that breaks
 On the tops of the rocks with the rain,
 And the wind which drives up with the salt of the lakes,
 Have made him a hunter again—
 A hunter and fisher again.


For his eyes have been full with a smouldering thought ;
 But he dreams of the hunts of yore,
And of foes that he sought, and of fights that he fought
 With those who will battle no more—
 Who will go to the battle no more.

It is well that the water which tumbles and fills,
 Goes moaning and moaning along ;
For an echo rolls out from the sides of the hills,
 And he starts at a wonderful song—
 At the sounds of a wonderful song.

And he sees, through the rents of the scattering fogs,
 The corroboree warlike and grim,
And the lubra who sat by the fire on the logs,
 To watch, like a mourner, for him—
 Like a mother and mourner for him.

Will he go in his sleep from these desolate lands,
 Like a chief, to the rest of his race,
With the honey-voiced woman who beckons and stands,
 And gleams like a dream in his face—
 Like a marvellous dream in his face ?

THE VOYAGE OF TELEGONUS.


 LL fares it with the man whose lips are set
 To bitter themes and words that spite the gods :
 For, seeing how the son of Saturn sways
 With eyes and ears for all, this one shall halt
 As on hard, hurtful hills ; his days shall know
 The plaintive front of Sorrow ; level looks,
 With cries ill-favoured, shall be dealt to him ;
 And *this* shall be that he may think of peace
 As one might think of alienated lips
 Of sweetness touched for once in kind, warm dreams.
 Yea, fathers of the high and holy face,
 This soul thus sinning shall have cause to sob
 " Ah, ah," for sleep, and space enough to learn
 The wan, wild Hyrie's aggregated song
 That starts the dwellers in distorted heights,
 With all the meaning of perpetual sighs
 Heard in the mountained deserts of the world
 And where the green-haired waters glide between
 The thin, lank weeds and mallows of the marsh.

But thou to whom these things are like to shapes
 That come of darkness—thou whose life slips past

Regarding rather these with mute fast mouth—
Hear none the less how fleet Telegonus,
The brass-clad hunter, first took oar and smote
Swift eastward-going seas, with face direct
For narrowing channels and the twofold coasts
Past Colchis and the fierce Symplegades,
And utmost islands, washed by streams unknown.

For in a time when Phasis whitened wide
And drove with violent waters blown of wind
Against the bare salt limits of the land,
It came to pass that, joined with Cytheræa,
The black-browed Ares, chafing for the wrong
Ulysses did him on the plains of Troy,
Set heart against the king ; and when the storms
Sang high in thunder and the Thracian rain,
The god bethought him of a pale-mouthed priest
Of Thebæ, kin to ancient Chariclo,
And of an omen which the prophet gave
That touched on death and grief to Ithaca ;
Then, knowing how a heavy-handed fate
Had laid itself on Circe's brass-clad son,
He pricked the hunter with a lust that turned
All thoughts to travel and the seas remote ;
But chiefly now he stirred Telegonus
To longings for his father's exiled face,
And dreams of rest and honey-hearted love,
And quiet death with much of funeral flame
Far in the mountains of a favoured land
Beyond the wars and wailings of the waves.

So, past the ridges where the coast abrupt
Dips greyly westward, Circe's strong-armed son
Swept down the foam of sharp-divided straits
And faced the stress of opening seas. Sheer out
The vessel drave ; but three long moons the gale
Moaned round ; and swift strong streams of fire revealed
The labouring rowers and the lightening surf,
Pale watchers deafened of sonorous storm,
And dripping decks and rents of ruined sails.
Yea, when the hollow ocean-driven ship
Wheeled sideways, like a chariot cloven through
In hard hot battle, and the night came up
Against strange headlands lying east and north,
Behold a black wild wind with death to all
Ran shoreward, charged with flame and thunder smoke,
Which blew the waters into wastes of white
And broke the bark, as lightning breaks the pine ;
Whereat the sea in fearful circles showed
Unpitied faces turned from Zeus and light,
Wan swimmers wasted with their agony,
And hopeless eyes and moaning mouths of men.
But one held by the fragments of the wreck,
And Ares knew him for Telegonus,
Whom heavy-handed Fate had chained to deeds
Of dreadful note with sin beyond a name.
So, seeing this, the black-browed lord of war,
Arrayed about by Jove's authentic light,
Shot down amongst the shattered clouds and called
With mighty strain, betwixt the gaps of storm,
"Oceanus ! Oceanus !" Whereat

The surf sprang white, as when a keel divides
The gleaming centre of a gathered wave ;
And, ringed with flakes of splendid fire of foam,
The son of Terra rose half-way and blew
The triple trumpet of the water-gods,
At which great winds fell back and all the sea
Grew dumb, as on the land a war-feast breaks
When deep sleep falls upon the souls of men.
Then Ares of the night-like brow made known
The brass-clad hunter of the facile feet
Hard clinging to the slippery logs of pine,
And told the omen to the hoary god
That touched on death and grief to Ithaca ;
Wherefore Oceanus, with help of hand,
Bore by the chin the warrior of the North,
A moaning mass, across the shallowing surge,
And cast him on the rocks of alien shores
Against a wintry morning shot with storm.

Hear also, thou, how mighty gods sustain
The men set out to work the ends of Fate,
Which fill the world with tales of many tears
And vex the sad face of humanity :
Six days and nights the brass-clad chief abode
Pent up in caverns by the straitening seas
And fed on ferns and limpets ; but the dawn,
Before the strong sun of the seventh, brought
A fume of fire and smells of savoury meat
And much rejoicing, as from neighbouring feasts ;—

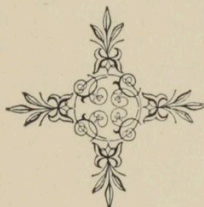
At which the hunter, seized with sudden lust,
Sprang up the crags, and, like a dream of fear,
Leapt, shouting, at a huddled host of hinds
Amongst the fragments of their steaming food ;
And as the hoarse wood-wind in autumn sweeps
To every zone the hissing latter leaves,
So fleet Telegonus, by dint of spear
And strain of thunderous voice, did scatter these
East, south, and north. 'Twas then the chief had
rest,
Hard by the outer coast of Ithaca,
Unknown to him who ate the spoil and slept.
Nor stayed he hand thereafter ; but when noon
Burned dead on misty hills of stunted fir,
This man shook slumber from his limbs and sped
Against hoar beaches and the kindled cliffs
Of falling waters. These he waded through,
Beholding, past the forests of the west,
A break of light and homes of many men,
And shining corn, and flowers, and fruits of flowers.
Yea, seeing these, the facile-footed chief
Grasped by the knot the huge *Ææan* lance
And fell upon the farmers ; wherefore they
Left hoe and plough, and crouched in heights remote,
Companioned with the grey-winged fogs ; but he
Made waste their fields and throve upon their toil—
As throve the boar, the fierce four-footed curse
Which *Artemis* did raise in *Calydon*
To make stern mouths wax white with foreign fear,
All in the wild beginning of the world.

So one went down and told Laertes' son
Of what the brass-clad stranger from the straits
Had worked in Ithaca : whereat the King
Rose, like a god, and called his mighty heir,
Telemachus, the wisest of the wise ;
And these two, having counsel, strode without,
And armed them with the arms of warlike days—
The helm, the javelin, and the sun-like shield,
And glancing greaves and quivering stars of steel !
Yea, stern Ulysses, rusted not with rest,
But dread as Ares, gleaming on his car
Gave out the reins ; and straightway all the lands
Were struck by noise of steed and shouts of men,
And furious dust, and splendid wheels of flame.
Meanwhile the hunter (starting from a sleep
In which the pieces of a broken dream
Had shown him Circe with most tearful face),
Caught at his spear, and stood like one at bay
When Summer brings about Arcadian horns
And headlong horses mixt with maddened hounds ;
Then huge Ulysses, like a fire of fight,
Sprang sideways on the flying car, and drave
Full at the brass-clad warrior of the North
His massive spear ; but fleet Telegonus
Stooped from the death, but heard the speedy lance
Sing like a thin wind through the steaming air ;
Yet he, dismayed not by the dreadful foe—
Unknown to him—dealt out his strength, and aimed
A strenuous stroke at great Laertes' son,
Which missed the shield, but bit through flesh and bone,

And drank the blood, and dragged the soul from thence !
So fell the king ! and one cried " Ithaca !
Ah, Ithaca !" and turned his face and wept.
Then came another—wise Telemachus—
Who knelt beside the man of many days
And pored upon the face ; but lo, the life
Was like bright water spilt in sands of thirst,
A wasted splendour swiftly drawn away.
Yet held he by the dead : he heeded not
The moaning warrior who had learnt his sin—
Who waited now, like one in lairs of pain,
Apart with darkness, hungry for his fate ;
For, had not wise Telemachus the lore
Which makes the pale-mouthed seer content to sleep
Amidst the desolations of the world ?
So therefore he, who knew Telegonus,
The child of Circe by Laertes' son,
Was set to be a scourge of Zeus, smote not,
But rather sat with moody eyes, and mused,
And watched the dead. For, who may brave the gods ?

Yet, O my fathers, when the people came,
And brought the holy oils and perfect fire,
And built the pile, and sang the tales of Troy—
Of desperate travels in the olden time,
By shadowy mountains and the roaring sea,
Near windy sands and past the Thracian snows—
The man who crossed them all to see his sire,
And had a loyal heart to give the king,

Instead of blows—this man did little more
Than moan outside the fume of funeral rites,
All in a rushing twilight full of rain,
And clap his palms for sharper pains than swords.
Yea, when the night broke out against the flame,
And lonely noises loitered in the fens,
This man nor stirred, nor slept, but lay at wait,
With fastened mouth. For who may brave the gods?



GOD HELP OUR MEN AT SEA.



HE wild night comes like an owl to its lair,
 The black clouds follow fast,
 And the sun-gleams die and the lightning's
 glare,
 And the ships go heaving past, past, past—
 The ships go heaving past !
 Bar the doors, and higher, higher
 Pile the faggots on the fire !
 Now abroad, by many a light,
 Empty seats there are to-night—
 Empty seats that none may fill,
 For the storm grows louder still !
 How it surges and swells through the gorges and dells,
 Under the ledges and over the lea,
 Where a watery sound goeth moaning around,
 God help our men at sea !

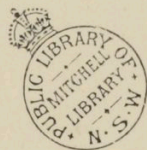
Oh ! never a tempest blew on the shore
 But that some heart did moan
 For a darling voice it would hear no more
 And a face that had left it lone, lone, lone—
 A face that had left it lone !

I am watching by a pane
Darkened with the gusty rain,
Watching, through a mist of tears,
Sad with thoughts of other years :
For a brother I did miss
In a stormy time like this.

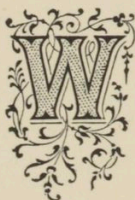
Ah ! the torrent howls past, like a fiend on the blast,
Under the ledges and over the lea ;
And the pent waters gleam, and the wild surges scream !
God help our men at sea !

Ah, Lord ! they may grope through the dark to find
Thy hand within the gale ;
And cries may rise on the wings of the wind
From mariners weary and pale, pale, pale—
From mariners weary and pale !
’Tis a fearful thing to know,
While the storm-winds loudly blow,
That a man can sometimes come
Too near to his Father’s home ;
So that he shall kneel and say,
“ Lord, I would be far away !”

Ho ! the hurricanes roar round a dangerous shore,
Under the ledges and over the lea ;
And there twinkles a light on the billows so white—
God help our men at sea !



SONG OF THE CATTLE HUNTERS.



WHILE the morning light beams on the fern-
matted streams,

And the water-pools flash in its glow,
Down the ridges we fly, with a loud ringing
cry —

Down the ridges and gullies we go !
And the cattle we hunt, they are racing in front,
With a roar like the thunder of waves,
As the beat and the beat of our swift horses' feet
Start the echoes away from their caves !
As the beat and the beat
Of our swift horses' feet
Start the echoes away from their caves !

Like a wintry shore that the waters ride o'er,
All the lowlands are filling with sound ;
For swiftly we gain where the herds on the plain,
Like a tempest, are tearing the ground !
And we'll follow them hard to the rails of the yard,
Over gulches and mountain-tops grey,
Where the beat and the beat of our swift horses' feet
Will die with the echoes away !

Where the beat and the beat
Of our swift horses' feet
Will die with the echoes away !

SUTHERLAND'S* GRAVE.

[*The first white man buried in Australia.*]



ALL night long the sea out yonder—all night
 long the wailful sea,
 Vext of winds and many thunders, seeketh
 rest unceasingly !
 Seeketh rest in dens of tempest where, like
 one distraught with pain,
 Shouts the wild-eyed sprite, Confusion : seeketh rest, and
 moans in vain !
 Ah ! but you should hear it calling, calling when the
 haggard sky
 Takes the darks and damps of Winter with the mournful
 marsh-fowl's cry ;
 Even while the strong, swift torrents from the rainy
 ridges come
 Leaping down and breaking backwards—million coloured
 shapes of foam !
 Then, and then, the sea out yonder chiefly looketh for
 the boon
 Portioned to the pleasant valleys and the grave sweet
 summer moon :

* A seaman of Captain Cook's first voyage, who died shortly after the *Endeavour* anchored in Botany Bay.

Boon of Peace, the still, the saintly spirit of the dew-
dells deep—

Yellow dells and hollows haunted by the soft, dim
dreams of sleep.

All night long the flying water breaks upon the stubborn
rocks—

Ooze-filled forelands burnt and blackened, smit and
scarred with lightning shocks ;

But above the tender sea-thrift, but beyond the
flowering fern,

Runs a little pathway westward—pathway quaint with
turn on turn—

Westward trending, thus it leads to shelving shores and
slopes of mist :

Sleeping shores, and glassy bays of green and gold and
amethyst !

There tread gently—*gently*, pilgrim ; *there* with thought-
ful eyes look round ;

Cross thy breast and bless the silence : lo, the place is
holy ground !

Holy ground for ever, stranger ! All the quiet silver lights
Dropping from the starry heavens through the soft
Australian nights—

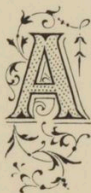
Dropping on those lone grave-grasses—come serene,
unbroken, clear,

Like the love of God the Father, falling, falling, year by
year !

Yea, and like a Voice supernal, *there* the daily wind doth
blow

In the leaves above the sailor buried ninety years ago.

SYRINX.



HEAP of low, dark, rocky coast,
 Unknown to foot or feather?
 A sea-voice moaning like a ghost;
 And fits of fiery weather!

The flying Syrinx turned and sped
 By dim, mysterious hollows,
 Where night is black, and day is red,
 And frost the fire-wind follows!

Strong, heavy footfalls in the wake
 Came up with flights of water:
 The gods were mournful for the sake
 Of Ladon's lovely daughter.

For when she came to spike and spine,
 Where reef and river gather,
 Her feet were sore with shell and chine;
 She could not travel farther.

Across a naked strait of land
Blown sleet and surge were humming ;
But, trammelled with the shifting sand,
She heard the monster coming !

A thing of hoofs, and horns, and lust !
A gaunt, goat-footed stranger !
She bowed her body in the dust
And call on Zeus to change her.

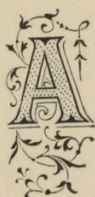
And called on Hermes, fair and fleet,
And her of hounds and quiver,
To hide her in the thickets sweet
That sighed above the river.

So he that sits on flaming wheels,
And rules the sea and thunder,
Caught up the satyr by the heels
And tore his skirts in sunder.

While Arcas, of the glittering plumes,
Took Ladon's daughter lightly,
And set her in the gracious glooms
That mix with moon-mist nightly ;

And touched her lips with wild-flower wine,
And changed her body slowly,
Till, in soft reeds of song and shine,
Her life was hidden wholly.

ON THE PAROO.


 S when the strong stream of a wintering sea
 Rolls round our coast, with bodeful breaks of
 storm,
 And swift salt rain, and bitter wind that saith
 Wild things and woeful of the White South
 Land

Alone with God and Silence in the cold—
 As when this cometh, men from dripping doors
 Look forth, and shudder for the mariners
 Abroad, so we for absent brothers looked
 In days of drought, and when the flying floods
 Swept boundless : roaring down the bald, black plains
 Beyond the farthest spur of western hills.

For where the Barwan cuts a rotten land,
 Or lies unshaken, like a great blind creek,
 Between hot mouldering banks, it came to this,
 All in a time of short and thirsty sighs,
 That thirty rainless months had left the pools
 And grass as dry as ashes : then it was
 Our kinsmen started for the lone Paroo,

From point to point, with patient strivings, sheer
Across the horrors of the windless downs,
Blue gleaming like a sea of molten steel.

But never drought had broke them : never flood
Had quenched them : they with mighty youth and health,
And thews and sinews knotted like the trees—
They, like the children of the native woods,
Could stem the strenuous waters, or outlive
The crimson days and dull, dead nights of thirst
Like camels : yet of what avail was strength
Alone to them—though it was like the rocks
On stormy mountains—in the bloody time
When fierce sleep caught them in the camps at rest,
And violent darkness gripped the life in them
And whelmed them, as an eagle unawares
Is whelmed and slaughtered in a sudden snare.

All murdered by the blacks ! smit while they lay
In silver dreams, and with the far, faint fall
Of many waters breaking on their sleep !
Yea, in the tracts unknown of any man
Save savages—the dim-discovered ways
Of footless silence or unhappy winds—
The wild men came upon them, like a fire
Of desert thunder ; and the fine firm lips
That touched a mother's lips a year before,
And hands that knew a dearer hand than life,
Were hewn like sacrifice before the stars,
And left with hooting owls, and blowing clouds,
And falling leaves, and solitary wings !

Ay, you may see their graves—you who have toiled,
 And tripped, and thirsted, like these men of ours ;
 For, verily, I say that *not* so deep
 Their bones are that the scattered drift and dust
 Of gusty days will never leave them bare.
 O dear, dead, bleaching bones ! I know of those
 Who have the wild strong will to go and sit
 Outside all things with you, and keep the ways
 Aloof from bats, and snakes, and trampling feet
 That smite your peace and theirs—who have the heart,
 Without the lusty limbs, to face the fire,
 And moonless midnights, and to be, indeed,
 For very sorrow, like a moaning-wind
 In wintry forests with perpetual rain.

Because of this—because of sisters left
 With desperate purpose and dishevelled hair,
 And broken breath, and sweetness quenched in tears—
 Because of swifter silver for the head,
 And furrows for the face—because of these
 That should have come with age, that come with pain,
 O Master ! Father ! Sitting where our eyes
 Are tired of looking, say for once are we—
 Are *we* to set our lips with weary smiles
 Before the bitterness of Life and Death,
 And call it honey, while we bear away
 A taste like wormwood ?

Turn thyself, and sing—
 Sing, Son of Sorrow ! Is there any gain
 For breaking of the loins, for melting eyes,

And knees as weak as water?—any peace,
Or hope, for casual breath, and labouring lips,
For clapping of the palms, and sharper sighs
Than frost ; or any light to come for those
Who stand and mumble in the alien streets
With heads as grey as Winter?—any balm
For pleading women, and the love that knows
Of nothing left to love?

They sleep a sleep
Unknown of dreams, these darling friends of ours.
And *we* who taste the core of many tales
Of tribulation—*we* whose lives are salt
With tears indeed—we therefore hide our eyes
And weep in secret, lest our grief should risk
The rest that hath no hurt from daily racks
Of fiery clouds and immemorial rains.



EUTERPE.

GHILD of Light, the bright, the bird-like ! wilt
 thou float and float to me
 Facing winds, and sleets, and waters, flying
 glimpses of the sea,
 Down amongst the hills of tempest where the
 elves of tumult roam—

Blown wet shadows of the summits, dim sonorous sprites
 of foam ?

Here, and here, my days are wasted, shorn of leaf and
 stript of fruit :

Vexed because of speech half-spoken, maiden with the
 marvellous lute !

Vexed because of songs half-shapen, smit with fire, and
 mixed with pain :

Part of thee, and part of Sorrow, like a sunset pale with
 rain.

Child of Light, the bright, the bird-like ! wilt thou float
 and float to me

Facing winds, and sleets, and waters, flying glimpses of
 the sea ?

All night long, in fluent pauses, falling far, but full, but
fine,

Faultless friend of flowers and fountains, do I hear that
voice of thine.

All night long, amidst the burden of the lordly storm,
that sings

High above the tumbled forelands, fleet and fierce with
thunderings!

Then, and then, my love, Euterpe, lips of life replete
with dreams

Murmur for thy sweet, sharp fragments dying down
Lethean streams :

Murmur for thy mouth's marred music, splendid hints
that burn and break,

Heavy with excess of beauty : murmur for thy music's
sake.

All night long in fluent pauses, falling far, but full, but
fine,

Faultless friend of flowers and fountains, do I hear that
voice of thine.

In the yellow flame of evening sound of thee doth come
and go

Through the noises of the river, and the drifting of the
snow :

In the yellow flame of evening—at the setting of the
day—

Sound that lightens, falls, and lightens, flickers, faints,
and fades away.

I am famished of thy silence—broken for the tender
note

Caught with its surpassing passion—caught and strangled
in thy throat!

We have nought to help thy trouble—nought for that
which lieth mute

On the harpstring and the lutestring and the spirit of
the lute.

In the yellow flame of evening sound of thee doth come
and go

Through the noises of the river and the drifting of the
snow.

Daughter of the dead red summers! men that laugh and
men that weep

Call thee Music—shall I follow, choose their name, and
turn, and sleep?

What thou art, behold, I know not; but thy honey
slakes and slays

Half the want which whitens manhood in the stress of
alien days!

Even as a wondrous woman struck with love and great
desire

Hast thou been to me, Euterpe! half of tears and half
of fire.

But thy joy is swift and fitful; and a subtle sense of
pain

Sighs through thy melodious breathing, takes the rapture
from thy strain,

Daughter of the dead red summers! men that laugh and
men that weep

Call thee Music—shall I follow, choose their name, and
turn, and sleep?

SAFI.

STRONG pinions bore Safi, the dreamer,
 Through the dazzle and whirl of a race,
 And the earth, raying up in confusion,
 Like a sea thundered under his face !

And the earth raying up in confusion
 Passed flying and flying afar,
 Till it dropped like a moon into silence,
 And waned from a moon to a star.

Was it light, was it shadow he followed,
 That he swept through those desperate tracts
 With his hair beating back on his shoulders
 Like the tops of the wind-hackled flax ?

“ I come,” murmured Safi, the dreamer,
 “ I come, but thou fliest before !
 But thy way hath the breath of the honey,
 And the scent of the myrrh evermore.”

His eyes were the eyes of a watcher
 Held on by luxurious faith,
 And his lips were the lips of a longer
 Amazed with the beauty of Death.

“For ever and ever,” he murmured,
“My love, for the sweetness with thee,
Do I follow thy footsteps,” said Safi,
“Like the wind on a measureless sea.”

And, fronting the furthestmost spaces,
He kept through the distances dim,
Till the days, and the years, and the cycles,
Were lost and forgotten by him.

When he came to the silver star-portals,
The Queen of that wonderful place
Looked forth from her towers resplendent,
And started, and dreamed in his face.

And one said, “This is Safi the Only,
Who lived in a planet below,
And housed him apart from his fellows,
A million of ages ago.

“He erred, if he suffers, to clutch at
High lights from the wood and the street ;
Not caring to see how his brothers
Were content with the things at their feet.”

But she whispered, “Ah, turn to the stranger!
He looks like a lord of the land ;
For his eyes are the eyes of an angel,
And the thought on his forehead is grand !

“Is there never a peace for the sinner
 Whose sin is in this, that he mars
 The light of his worship of Beauty,
 Forgetting the flower for the stars.”

“Behold him, my Sister immortal,
 And doubt that he knoweth his shame,
 Who raves in the shadow for sweetness,
 And gloats on the ghost of a flame !

“His sin is his sin, if he suffers,
 Who wilfully straitened the truth ;
 And his doom is his doom, if he follows
 A lie without sorrow or ruth.”

And another from uttermost verges
 Ran out with a terrible voice—
 “Let him go—it is well that he goeth,
 Though he break with the lot of his choice.”

“I come,” murmured Safi, the dreamer,
 “I come, but thou fliest before !
 But thy way hath the breath of the honey,
 And the scent of the myrrh evermore.”

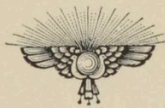
“My Queen,” said the first of the Voices,
 “He hunteth a perilous wraith,
 Arrayed with voluptuous fancies
 And ringed with tyrannical faith.

“ Wound up in the heart of his error
He must sweep through the silences dire,
Like one in the dark of a desert
Allured by fallacious fire.”

And she faltered, and asked, like a doubter,
“ When he hangs on those Spaces sublime
With the Terror that knoweth no limit,
And holdeth no record of Time—

“ Forgotten of God and the demons—
Will he keep to his fancy amain ?
Can he live for that horrible chaos
Of flame and perpetual rain ?”

But an answer as soft as a prayer
Fell down from a high hidden land,
And the words were the words of a language
Which none but the gods understand.



IN MEMORIAM.

DANIEL HENRY DENIEHY.



TAKE the harp, but very softly for our brother
 touch the strings :
 Wind and wood shall help to wail him, waves
 and mournful mountain-springs.
 Take the harp, but very softly, for the friend
 who grew so old
 Through the hours we would not hear of—nights we
 would not fain behold !
 Other voices—sweeter voices—shall lament him year by
 year,
 Though the morning finds us lonely, though we sit and
 marvel here :
 Marvel much while Summer cometh, trammelled with
 November wheat,
 Gold about her forehead gleaming, green and gold about
 her feet ;
 Yea, and while the land is dark with plover, gull, and
 gloomy glede,
 Where the cold, swift songs of Winter fill the interlucent
 reed.

Yet my heart, and oh, my fathers, never look for Sorrow's
lay,
Making life a mighty darkness in the patient noon of day;
Since he resteth whom we loved so, out beyond these
fleeting seas,
Blowing clouds and restless regions paved with old per-
plexities,
In a land where thunder breaks not, in a place unknown
of snow,
Where the rain is mute for ever, where the wild winds
never go:
Home of far-forgotten phantoms—genii of our peaceful
prime,
Shining by perpetual waters past the ways of Change
and Time:
Haven of the harried spirit, where it folds its wearied
wings,
Turns its face and sleeps a sleep with deep forgetfulness
of things.

His should be a grave by mountains, in a cool and thick-
mossed lea,
With the lone creek falling past it—falling ever to the
sea.

His should be a grave by waters, by a bright and broad
lagoon,
Making steadfast splendours hallowed of the quiet,
shining moon.
There the elves of many forests—wandering winds and
flying lights—

Born of green, of happy mornings, dear to yellow
summer nights,
Full of dole for him that loved them, then might halt,
and then might go,
Finding fathers of the people to their children speaking
low—
Speaking low of one who, failing, suffered all the poet's
pain,
Dying with the dead leaves round him—hopes which
never grow again.



MEROPE.



AR in the ways of the hyaline wastes—in the
face of the splendid

Six of the sisters—the star-dowered sisters
ineffably bright,

Merope sitteth, the shadow-like wife of a
monarch unfriended

Of Ades—of Orcus, the fierce, the implacable god of the
night.

Merope—fugitive Merope! lost to thyself and thy lover,
Cast, like a dream, out of thought, with the moons
which have passed into sleep,

What shall avail thee? Alcyone's tears, or the sight to
discover

Of Sisyphus pallid for thee by the blue, bitter lights of
the deep—

Pallid, but patient for sorrow? Oh, thou of the fire and
the water,

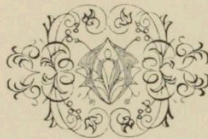
Half with the flame of the sunset, and kin to the streams
of the sea,

Hast thou the songs of old times for desire of thy dark-
featured daughter,


Sweet with the lips of thy yearning, O Æthra : with
tokens of thee !
Songs that would lull her, like kisses forgotten of silence
where speech was
Less than the silence that bound it as passion is bound
by a ban ;
Seeing we know of thee, Mother, *we* turning and hearing
how each was
Wrapt in the other ere Merope faltered and fell for a
man ?
Mortal she clave to, forgetting her birthright, forgetting
the lordlike
Sons of the Many-winged Father, and chiefs of the
plume and the star,
Therefore, because that her sin was the grief of the
grand and the godlike,
Sitteth thy child than a morning-moon bleaker, the
faded, and far.
Ringed with the flower-like Six of the Seven, arrayed
and anointed
Ever with beautiful pity, she watches, she weeps, and
she wanes,
Blind as a flame on the hills of the Winter in hours
appointed
For the life of the foam and the thunder—the strength
of the imminent rains.
Who hath a portion, Alcyone, like her ? Asterope,
fairer
Than sunset on snow, and beloved of all brightness, say
what is there left

Sadder and paler than Pleione's daughter, disconsolate
bearer
Of trouble that smites like a sword of the gods to the
break of the heft?
Demeter, and Dryope, known to the forests, the falls,
and the fountains,
Yearly, because of their walking, and wailing, and
wringing of hands,
*Are they as one with this woman? or Hyrie wild in the
mountains,*
Breaking her heart in the frosts and the fires of the
uttermost lands?
*These have their bitterness. This, for Persephone, that
for Æchalian*
Homes, and the lights of a kindness blown out with the
stress of her shame:
One for her child, and one for her sin; but thou above
all art an alien,
Girt with the halos that vex thee, and wrapt in a grief
beyond name.
Yet sayeth Sisyphus—Sisyphus, stricken and chained of
the minioned
Kings of great darkness, and trodden in dust by the
feet of the Fates—
“Sweet are the ways of thy watching, and pallid, and
perished, and pinioned,
Moon amongst maidens, I leap for thy love like a god
at the gates—
Leap for the dreams of a rose of the heavens, and beat
at the portals

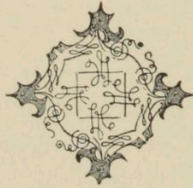
Paved with the pain of unsatisfied pleadings for thee
and for thine ;
But Zeus is immutable Master, and these are the walls
the immortals
Build for our sighing, and who may set lips at the lords
and repine ?
Therefore," he saith, "I am sick for thee, Merope,
faint for the tender
Touch of thy mouth, and the eyes like the lights of an
altar to me ;
But, lo, thou art far ; and thy face is a still and a
sorrowful splendour !
And the storm is abroad with the rain on the perilous
straits of the sea."



AFTER THE HUNT.



 NDERNEATH the windy mountain walls
 Forth we rode, an eager band,
 By the surges, and the verges, and the gorges,
 Till the night was on the land—
 On the hazy, mazy land!
 Far away the bounding prey
 Leapt across the ruts and logs,
 But we galloped, galloped, galloped on!
 Till we heard the yapping of the dogs.

Oh, it was a madly merry day
 We shall not so soon forget,
 And the edges, and the ledges, and the ridges,
 Haunt us with their echoes yet—
 Echoes, echoes, echoes yet!
 While the moon is on the hill
 Gleaming through the streaming fogs,
 Don't you gallop, gallop, gallop still?
 Don't you hear the yapping of the dogs?



SONGS FROM THE MOUNTAINS.

TO A MOUNTAIN.


 O thee, O father of the stately peaks,
 Above me in the loftier light—to thee,
 Imperial brother of those awful hills
 Whose feet are set in splendid spheres of flame,
 Whose heads are where the gods are, and
 whose sides

Of strength are belted round with all the zones
 Of all the world, I dedicate these songs.
 And if, within the compass of this book,
 There lives and glows *one* verse in which there beats
 The pulse of wind and torrent—if *one* line
 Is here that like a running water sounds,
 And seems an echo from the lands of leaf,
 Be sure that line is thine. Here, in this home,
 Away from men and books and all the schools,
 I take thee for my Teacher. In thy voice
 Of deathless majesty, I, kneeling, hear
 God's grand authentic gospel! Year by year,
 The great sublime cantata of thy storm
 Strikes through my spirit—fills it with a life
 Of startling beauty! Thou my Bible art
 With holy leaves of rock, and flower, and tree,
 And moss, and shining runnel. From each page

That helps to make thy awful volume, I
Have learned a noble lesson. In the psalm
Of thy grave winds, and in the liturgy
Of singing waters, lo ! my soul has heard
The higher worship ; and from thee, indeed,
The broad foundations of a finer hope
Were gathered in ; and thou hast lifted up
The blind horizon for a larger faith !
Moreover, walking in exalted woods
Of naked glory, in the green and gold
Of forest sunshine, I have paused like one
With all the life transfigured ; and a flood
Of light ineffable has made me feel
As felt the grand old prophets caught away
By flames of inspiration ; but the words
Sufficient for the story of my Dream
Are far too splendid for poor human lips !
But thou, to whom I turn with reverent eyes—
O stately Father, whose majestic face
Shines far above the zone of wind and cloud,
Where high dominion of the morning is—
Thou hast the Song complete of which my songs
Are pallid adumbrations ! Certain sounds
Of strong authentic sorrow in this book
May have the sob of upland torrents—these,
And only these, may touch the great World's heart ;
For, lo ! they are the issues of that grief
Which makes a man more human, and his life
More like that frank exalted life of thine.
But in these pages there are other tones
In which thy large, superior voice is not—

Through which no beauty that resembles thine
Has ever shone. *These* are the broken words
Of blind occasions, when the World has come
Between me and my Dream. No song is here
Of mighty compass ; for my singing robes
I've worn in stolen moments. All my days
Have been the days of a laborious life,
And ever on my struggling soul has burned
The fierce heat of this hurried sphere. But thou,
To whose fair majesty I dedicate
My book of rhymes—thou hast the perfect rest
Which makes the heaven of the highest gods !
To thee the noises of this violent time
Are far, faint whispers ; and, from age to age,
Within the world and yet apart from it,
Thou standest ! Round thy lordly capes the sea
Rolls on with a superb indifference
For ever ; in thy deep, green, gracious glens
The silver fountains sing for ever. Far
Above dim ghosts of waters in the caves,
The royal robe of morning on thy head
Abides for ever ! Evermore the wind
Is thy august companion ; and thy peers
Are cloud, and thunder, and the face sublime
Of blue mid-heaven ! On thy awful brow
Is Deity ; and in that voice of thine
There is the great imperial utterance
Of God for ever ; and thy feet are set
Where evermore, through all the days and years,
There rolls the grand hymn of the deathless wave.

MARY RIVERS.



PATH beside the silver waters, flashing in Oc-
 tober's sun—
 Walk, by green and golden margins where the
 sister streamlets run,
 Twenty shining springs have vanished, full of
 flower, and leaf, and bird,
 Since the step of Mary Rivers in your lawny dell was
 heard.
 Twenty white-haired Junes have left us—gray with
 frost and bleak with gale—
 Since the hand of her we loved so plucked the blossoms
 in your dale.
 Twenty summers, twenty autumns, from the grand old
 hills have passed,
 With their robes of royal colour, since we saw the
 darling last.

Morning comes—the blessed morning! and the slow
 song of the sea,
 Like a psalm from radiant altars, floats across a rose-
 red lea ;

Then the fair, strong noonday blossoms, and the reaper
seeks the cool
Valley of the moss and myrtle, and the glimmering
waterpool.
Noonday flames and evening follows; and the lordly
mountains rest,
Heads arrayed with tenfold splendour on the rich heart
of the West.
Evening walks with moon and music where the higher
life has been;
But the face of Mary Rivers *there* will nevermore be
seen.

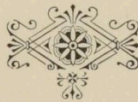
Ah! when autumn dells are dewy, and the wave is very
still,
And that gray ghost called the Twilight passes from the
distant hill—
Even in the hallowed nightfall, when the fathers sit and
dream,
And the splendid rose of heaven sees a sister in the
stream—
Often do I watch the waters gleaming in a starry
bay,
Thinking of a bygone beauty, and a season far
away:
Musing on the grace that left us in a time of singing
rain,
On the lady who will never walk amongst these heaths
again.

Four there were, but two were taken ; and this darling
we deplore,
She was sweetest of the circle—she was dearest of the
four !
In the daytime and the dewtime comes the phantom of
her face :
None will ever sit where she did—none will ever fill her
place.
With the passing of our Mary, like a sunset out of
sight,
Passed away our pure first passion—all its life and all
its light !
All that made the world a dreamland—all the glory
and the glow
Of the fine fresh morning feeling vanished twenty years
ago.

Girl, whose strange, unearthly beauty haunts us ever in
our sleep,
Many griefs have worn our hearts out—we are now too
tired to weep !
Time has tried us, years have changed us ; but the
sweetness shed by you
Falls upon our spirits daily, like divine, immortal
dew.
Shining are our thoughts about you—of the blossoms
past recall,
You are still the rose of lustre—still the fairest of them
all ;

In the sleep that brings the garland gathered from the
bygone hours,
You are still our Mary Rivers—still the queen of all the
flowers.

Let me ask, where none can hear me—When you passed
into the shine,
And you heard a great love calling, did you know that
it was mine?
In your life of light and music, tell me did you ever
see,
Shining in a holy silence, what was as a flame in
me?
Ah, my darling! no one saw it. Purer than untrodden
dew
Was that first unhappy passion buried in the grave
with you.
Bird and leaf will keep the secret—wind and wood will
never tell
Men the thing that I have whispered. Mary Rivers,
fare you well.



BEYOND KERGUELEN.



DOWN in the South, by the waste without sail
on it—

Far from the zone of the blossom and tree—
Lieth, with winter and whirlwind and wail on
it,

Ghost of a land by the ghost of a sea.

Weird is the mist from the summit to base of it ;

Sun of its heaven is wizened and gray ;

Phantom of light is the light on the face of it—

Never is night on it, never is day !

Here is the shore without flower or bird on it ;

Here is no litany sweet of the springs—

Only the haughty, harsh thunder is heard on it,

Only the storm, with a roar in its wings !

Shadow of moon is the moon in the sky of it—

Wan as the face of a wizard, and far !

Never there shines from the firmament high of it

Grace of the planet or glory of star.

All the year round, in the place of white days on it—

All the year round where there never is night—

Lies a great sinister, bitter, blind haze on it :
Growth that is neither of darkness nor light !
Wild is the cry of the sea in the caves by it—
Sea that is smitten by spears of the snow ;
Desolate songs are the songs of the waves by it—
Down in the South, where the ships never go.

Storm from the Pole is the singer that sings to it
Hymns of the land at the planet's gray verge.
Thunder discloses dark, wonderful things to it—
Thunder, and rain, and the dolorous surge.
Hills with no hope of a wing or a leaf on them,
Scarred with the chronicles written by flame,
Stare through the gloom of inscrutable grief on them,
Down on the horns of the gulfs without name.
Cliffs with the records of fierce flying fires on them—
Loom over perilous pits of eclipse ;
Alps, with anathema stamped in the spires on them—
Out by the wave with a curse on its lips.

Never is sign of soft, beautiful green on it—
Never the colour, the glory of rose !
Neither the fountain nor river is seen on it,
Naked its crags are, and barren its snows !
Blue as the face of the drowned is the shore of it—
Shore, with the capes of indefinite cave.
Strange is the voice of its wind, and the roar of it
Startles the mountain and hushes the wave.
Out to the south and away to the north of it,
Spectral and sad are the spaces untold !

All the year round a great cry goeth forth of it—
 Sob of this leper of lands in the cold.

No man hath stood, all its bleak, bitter years on it—

Fall of a foot on its wastes is unknown :

Only the sound of the hurricane's spears on it

Breaks with the shout from the uttermost zone.

Blind are its bays with the shadow of bale on them ;

Storms of the nadir their rocks have uphurled ;

Earthquake hath registered deeply its tale on them—

Tale of distress from the dawn of the world !

There are the gaps, with the surges that seethe in them—

Gaps in whose jaws is a menace that glares !

There the wan reefs, with the merciless teeth in them,

Gleam on a chaos that startles and scares !

Back in the dawn of this beautiful sphere, on it—

Land of the dolorous, desolate face—

Beamed the blue day ; and the bountiful year on it

Fostered the leaf and the blossom of grace.

Grand were the lights of its midsummer noon on it—

Mornings of majesty shone on its seas :

Glitter of star and the glory of moon on it

Fell, in the march of the musical breeze.

Valleys and hills, with the whisper of wing in them,

Dells of the daffodil—spaces imperaled,


Flowered and flashed with the splendour of Spring in
 them—

Back in the morn of this wonderful world.

Soft were the words that the thunder then said to it—
Said to this lustre of emerald plain ;
Sun brought the yellow, the green, and the red to it—
Sweet were the songs of its silvery rain.
Voices of water and wind in the bays of it
Lingered, and lulled like the psalm of a dream.
Fair were the nights and effulgent the days of it—
Moon was in shadow and shade in the beam.
Summer's chief throne was the marvellous coast of it,
Home of the Spring was its luminous lea !
Garden of glitter ! but only the ghost of it
Moans in the South by the ghost of a sea.



HY-BRASIL.


 DAUGHTER," said the ancient father, pausing
 by the evening sea,
 "Turn thy face towards the sunset—turn thy
 face and kneel with me !
 Prayer and praise and holy fasting, lips of
 love and life of light,
 These and these have made thee perfect—shining saint
 with seraph's sight,
 Look towards that flaming crescent—look beyond that
 glowing space—
 Tell me, sister of the angels, what is beaming in thy
 face ?"
 And the daughter, who had fasted, who had spent her
 days in prayer,
 Till the glory of the Saviour touched her head and rested
 there,
 Turned her eyes towards the sea-line—saw beyond the
 fiery crest,
 Floating over waves of jasper, far Hy-Brasil in the West.
 All the calmness and the colour—all the splendour and
 repose,
 Flowing where the sunset flowered, like a silver-hearted
 rose !

There indeed was singing Eden, where the great gold
river runs

Past the porch and gates of crystal, ringed by strong and
shining ones !

There indeed was God's own garden, sailing down the
sapphire sea—

Lawny dells and slopes of summer, dazzling stream and
radiant tree !

Out against the hushed horizon—out beneath the reverent
day,

Flamed the Wonder on the waters—flamed, and flashed,
and passed away.

And the maiden who had seen it, felt a hand within her
own,

And an angel that we know not, led her to the lands
unknown.

Never since hath eye beheld it—never since hath
mortal, dazed

By its strange, unearthly splendour, on the floating
Eden gazed !

Only once since Eve went weeping through a throng of
glittering wings,

Hath the holy seen Hy-Brasil where the great gold
river sings !

Only once by quiet waters, under still, resplendent skies,
Did the sister of the seraphs kneel in sight of Paradise !
She, the pure, the perfect woman, sanctified by patient
prayer,

Had the eyes of saints of Heaven, all their glory in her
hair :

Therefore, God the Father whispered to a radiant spirit
near—

“Show Our daughter fair Hy-Brasil—show her this, and
lead her here.”

But beyond the halls of sunset, but within the wondrous
West,

On the rose-red seas of evening, sails the Garden of the
Blest,

Still the gates of glassy beauty, still the walls of
glowing light,

Shine on waves that no man knows of, out of sound and
out of sight.

Yet the slopes and lawns of lustre, yet the dells of
sparkling streams,

Dip to tranquil shores of jasper, where the watching
angel beams.

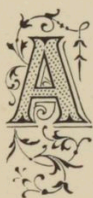
But, behold, our eyes are human, and our way is paved
with pain,

We can never find Hy-Brasil, never see its hills again !
Never look on bays of crystal, never bend the reverent
knee

In the sight of Eden floating—floating on the sapphire
sea !

MOONI.

[Written in the shadow of 1872.]*



H, to be by Mooni now !

Where the great dark hills of wonder,
Scarred with storm and cleft asunder
By the strong sword of the thunder,
Make a night on morning's brow !

Just to stand where Nature's face is
Flushed with power in forest places—
Where of God authentic trace is—
Ah, to be by Mooni now !

Just to be by Mooni's springs !
There to stand, the shining sharer
Of that larger life, and rarer
Beauty caught from beauty fairer
Than the human face of things !
Soul of mine from sin abhorrent
Fain would hide by flashing current
Like a sister of the torrent,
Far away by Mooni's springs.

* An allusion to the temporary clouding of the poet's intellect.

He that is by Mooni now,
 Sees the water-sapphires gleaming
 Where the River Spirit, dreaming,
 Sleeps by fall and fountain streaming
 Under lute of leaf and bough !
 Hears, where stamp of storm with stress is,
 Psalms from unseen wildernesses
 Deep amongst far hill-recesses—
 He that is by Mooni now.

Yea, for him by Mooni's marge
 Sings the yellow-haired September
 With the face the gods remember
 When the ridge is burnt to ember,
 And the dumb sea chains the barge !
 Where the mount like molten brass is,
 Down beneath fern-feathered passes,
 Noonday dew in cool green grasses
 Gleams on him by Mooni's marge.

Who that dwells by Mooni yet,
 Feels, in flowerful forest arches,
 Smiting wings and breath that parches
 Where strong Summer's path of march is
 And the suns in thunder set ?
 Housed beneath the gracious kirtle
 Of the shadowy water myrtle,
 Winds may hiss with heat, and hurtle—
 He is safe by Mooni yet !

Days there were when he who sings
 (Dumb so long through passion's losses)
 Stood where Mooni's water crosses
 Shining tracts of green-haired mosses,
 Like a soul with radiant wings ;
 Then the psalm the wind rehearses—
 Then the song the stream disperses
 Lent a beauty to his verses—
 Who to-night of Mooni sings.

Ah, the theme—the sad, gray theme !
 Certain days are not above me,
 Certain hearts have ceased to love me,
 Certain fancies fail to move me
 Like the affluent morning dream.
 Head whereon the white is stealing,
 Heart whose hurts are past all healing,
 Where is now the first pure feeling ?
 Ah, the theme—the sad, gray theme !

Sin and shame have left their trace !
 He who mocks the mighty, gracious
 Love of Christ, with eyes audacious,
 Hunting after fires fallacious,
 Wears the issue in his face.
 Soul that flouted gift and giver,
 Like the broken Persian river,
 Thou hast lost thy strength for ever !
 Sin and shame have left their trace.

In the years that used to be,
 When the large, supreme occasion
 Brought the life of inspiration
 Like a god's transfiguration,
 Was the shining change in me.
 Then, where Mooni's glory glances,
 Clear diviner countenances
 Beamed on me like blessed chances,
 In the years that used to be.

Ah, the beauty of old ways !
 Then the man who so resembled
 Lords of light unstained, unhumbled,
 Touched the skirts of Christ, nor trembled
 At the grand benignant gaze !
 Now he shrinks before the splendid
 Face of Deity offended,
 All the loveliness is ended !
 All the beauty of old ways !

Still to be by Mooni cool—
 Where the water-blossoms glisten,
 And, by gleaming vale and vista,
 Sits the English April's sister
 Soft, and sweet, and wonderful.
 Just to rest beyond the burning
 Outer-world—its sneers and spurning—
 Ah, my heart—my heart is yearning
 Still to be by Mooni cool !

Now, by Mooni's fair hill heads,
Lo, the gold green lights are glowing
Where, because no wind is blowing,
Fancy hears the flowers growing


In the herby watersheds !
Faint it is—the sound of thunder
From the torrents far thereunder,
Where the meeting mountains ponder—
Now, by Mooni's fair hill heads.

Just to be where Mooni is,
Even where the fierce fall races
Down august unfathomed places,
Where of sun or moon no trace is,
And the streams of shadow hiss !
Have I not an ample reason
So to long for—sick of treason—
Something of the grand old season ?
Just to be where Mooni is ?



THE VOICE IN THE WILD OAK.

[*Written in the shadow of 1872.*]


 TWELVE years ago, when I could face
 High heaven's dome with different eyes—
 In days full-flowered with hours of grace,
 And nights not sad with sighs—
 I wrote a song in which I strove
 To shadow forth thy strain of woe,
 Dark widowed sister of the grove—
 Twelve wasted years ago.

But youth was then too young to find
 Those high authentic syllables,
 Whose voice is like the wintering wind
 By sunless mountain fells ;
 Nor had I sinned and suffered then
 To that superlative degree
 That I would rather seek, than men,
 Wild fellowship with thee.

But he who hears this autumn day
 Thy more than deep autumnal rhyme,
 Is one whose hair was shot with gray
 By Grief instead of Time.

He has no need, like many a bard,
To sing imaginary pain,
Because he bears, and finds it hard,
The punishment of Cain.

No more he sees the affluence
Which makes the heart of Nature glad ;
For he has lost the fine first sense
Of Beauty that he had.
The old delight God's happy breeze
Was wont to give, to Grief has grown ;
And therefore, Niobe of trees,
His song is like thine own.

But I, who am that perished soul,
Have wasted so these powers of mine,
That I can never write that whole,
Pure, perfect speech of thine.
Some lord of words august, supreme,
The grave, grand melody demands ;
The dark translation of thy theme
I leave to other hands.

Yet here, where plovers nightly call
Across dim melancholy leas—
Where comes by whistling fen and fall
The moan of far-off seas—
A gray old Fancy often sits
Beneath thy shade with tired wings,
And fills thy strong, strange rhyme by fits
With awful utterings.

Then times there are when all the words
 Are like the sentences of one
 Shut in by fate from wind and birds
 And light of stars and sun !
 No dazzling dryad, but a dark
 Dream-haunted spirit doomed to be
 Imprisoned, cramped in bands of bark,
 For all eternity.

Yea, like the speech of one aghast
 At Immortality in chains,
 What time the lordly storm rides past
 With flames and arrowy rains :
 Some wan Tithonus of the wood,
 White with immeasurable years—
 An awful ghost in solitude
 With moaning moors and meres !

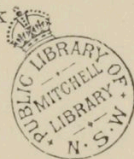
And when high thunder smites the hill
 And hunts the wild dog to his den,
 Thy cries, like maledictions, shrill
 And shriek from glen to glen,
 As if a frightful memory whipped
 Thy soul for some infernal crime
 That left it blasted, blind, and stript—
 A dread to Death and Time !

But when the fair-haired August dies,
 And flowers wax strong and beautiful,
 Thy songs are stately harmonies
 By wood-lights green and cool.

Most like the voice of one who shows
Through sufferings fierce, in fine relief,
A noble patience and repose—
A dignity in grief.

But, ah ! conceptions fade away,
And still the life that lives in thee—
The soul of thy majestic lay—
Remains a mystery !
And he must speak the speech divine—
The language of the high-throned lords—
Who'd give that grand old theme of thine
Its sense in faultless words.

By hollow lands and sea-tracts harsh,
With ruin of the fourfold gale,
Where sighs the sedge and sobs the marsh,
Still wail thy lonely wail ;
And, year by year, one step will break
The sleep of far hill-folded streams,
And seek, if only for thy sake,
Thy home of many dreams.



ARALUEN.

[*The Poet's Daughter.*]



TAKE this rose, and very gently place it on the
 tender, deep
 Mosses where our little darling, Araluen, lies
 asleep.
 Put the blossom close to baby—kneel with
 me, my love, and pray ;
 We must leave the bird we've buried—say good-bye to
 her to-day ;
 In the shadow of our trouble we must go to other
 lands,
 And the flowers we have fostered will be left to other
 hands.
 Other eyes will watch them growing—other feet will
 softly tread
 Where two hearts are nearly breaking, where so many
 tears are shed.
 Bitter is the world we live in : life and love are mixed
 with pain ;
 We will never see these daisies—never water them
 again.

Ah, the saddest thought in leaving baby in this bush
alone

Is that we have not been able on her grave to place a
stone!

We have been too poor to do it; but, my darling, never
mind—

God is in the gracious heavens, and His sun and rain are
kind:

They will dress the spot with beauty, they will make
the grasses grow;

Many winds will lull our birdie, many songs will come
and go.

Here the blue-eyed Spring will linger, here the shining
month will stay,

Like a friend, by Araluen, when we two are far away;

But, beyond the wild, wide waters, we will tread another
shore—

We will never watch this blossom, never see it any
more.

Girl, whose hand at God's high altar in the dear, dead
year I pressed,

Lean your stricken head upon me—this is still your
lover's breast!

She who sleeps was first and sweetest—none we have to
take her place!

Empty is the little cradle—absent is the little face.

Other children may be given; but this rose beyond
recall,

But this garland of your girlhood, will be dearest of them
all.

None will ever, Araluen, nestle where you used to be,
In my heart of hearts, you darling, when the world was
new to me ;

We were young when you were with us, life and love
were happy things

To your father and your mother ere the angels gave you
wings.

You that sit and sob beside me—you, upon whose golden
head

Many rains of many sorrows have from day to day been
shed ;

Who, because your love was noble, faced with me the
lot austere

Ever pressing with its hardship on the man of letters
here—

Let me feel that you are near me, lay your hand
within mine own ;

You are all I have to live for, now that we are left
alone.

Three there were, but one has vanished. Sins of mine
have made you weep ;

But forgive your baby's father now that baby is asleep.

Let us go, for night is falling, leave the darling with
her flowers ;

Other hands will come and tend them—other friends in
other hours.

NAMES UPON A STONE.



CROSS bleak widths of broken sea
 A fierce north-easter breaks,
 And makes a thunder on the lea—
 A whiteness of the lakes.
 Here, while beyond the rainy stream
 The wild winds sobbing blow,
 I see the river of my dream
 Four wasted years ago.

Narrara of the waterfalls,
 The darling of the hills,
 Whose home is under mountain walls
 By many-luted rills!
 Her bright green nooks and channels cool
 I never more may see;
 But, ah! the Past was beautiful—
 The sights that used to be.

There was a rock-pool in a glen
 Beyond Narrara's sands;
 The mountains shut it in from men
 In flowerful fairy lands;

But once we found its dwelling place—
The lovely and the lone—
And, in a dream, I stooped to trace
Our names upon a stone.

Above us, where the star-like moss
Shone on the wet, green wall
That spanned the straitened stream across,
We saw the waterfall—
A silver singer far away,
By folded hills and hoar ;
Its voice is in the woods to-day—
A voice I hear no more.

I wonder if the leaves that screen
The rock-pool of the past
Are yet as soft and cool and green
As when we saw them last !
I wonder if that tender thing,
The moss, has overgrown
The letters by the limpid spring—
Our names upon the stone !

Across the face of scenes we know
There may have come a change—
The places seen four years ago
Perhaps would now look strange.
To you, indeed, they cannot be
What, haply, once they were :
A friend beloved by you and me
No more will greet us there.

Because I know the filial grief
That shrinks beneath the touch—
The noble love whose words are brief—
I will not say too much ;
But often when the night-winds strike
Across the sighing rills,
I think of him whose life was like
The rock-pool's in the hills.

A beauty like the light of song
Is in my dreams, that show
The grand old man who lived so long
As spotless as the snow.
A fitting garland for the dead
I cannot compass yet ;
But many things he did and said
I never will forget.

In dells where once we used to rove
The slow, sad water grieves ;
And ever comes from glimmering grove
The liturgy of leaves.
But time and toil have marked my face—
My heart has older grown
Since, in the woods, I stooped to trace
Our names upon the stone.

COORANBEAN.



EARS fifty, and seven to boot, have smitten
the children of men

Since sound of a voice or a foot came out of
the head of that glen.

The brand of black devil is there—an evil
wind moaneth around—

There is doom, there is death in the air : a curse groweth
up from the ground !

No noise of the axe or the saw in that hollow unholy is
heard,

No fall of the hoof or the paw, no whirr of the wing of
the bird ;

But a gray mother down by the sea, as wan as the foam
on the strait,

Has counted the beads on her knee these forty-nine
winters and eight.

Whenever an elder is asked—a white-headed man of the
woods—

Of the terrible mystery masked where the dark ever-
lastingly broods,

Be sure he will turn to the bay, with his back to the
glen in the range,
And glide like a phantom away, with a countenance
pallid with change.
From the line of dead timber that lies supine at the foot
of the glade,
The fierce-featured eaglehawk flies—afraid as a dove is
afraid ;
But back in that wilderness dread are a fall and the
forks of a ford—
*Ah ! pray and uncover your head, and lean like a child
on the Lord.*

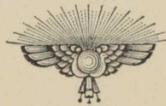
A sinister fog at the wane—at the change of the moon
cometh forth
Like an ominous ghost in the train of a bitter, black
storm of the North !
At the head of the gully unknown, it hangs like a spirit
of bale,
And the noise of a shriek and a groan strikes up in the
gusts of the gale.
In the throat of a feculent pit is the beard of a bloody-
red sedge ;
And a foam like the foam of a fit sweats out of the lips
of the ledge.
But down in the water of death, in the livid, dead pool
at the base—
*Bow low, with inaudible breath, beseech with the hands to
the face !*

A furlong of fetid, black fen, with gelid green patches of
pond,
Lies dumb by the horns of the glen—at the gates of the
horror beyond ;
And those who have looked on it tell of the terrible
growths that are there—
The flowerage fostered by hell, the blossoms that startle
and scare ;
If ever a wandering bird should light on Gehennas like
this,
Be sure that a cry will be heard, and the sound of the
flat adder's hiss.
But, hard by the jaws of the bend, is a ghastly Thing
matted with moss—
*Ah, Lord ! be a father, a friend, for the sake of the
Christ of the Cross.*

Black Tom, with the sinews of five—that never a hang-
man could hang—
In the days of the shackle and gyve, broke loose from
the guards of the gang.
Thereafter, for seasons a score, this devil prowled under
the ban :
A mate of red talon and paw, a wolf in the shape of a
man.
But, ringed by ineffable fire, in a thunder and wind of
the North,
The sword of Omnipotent ire—the bolt of high heaven
went forth !

But, wan as the sorrowful foam, a gray mother waits by
the sea
For the boys that have never come home these fifty-four
winters and three.

From the folds of the forested hills there are ravelled
and roundabout tracks
Because of the terror that fills the strong-handed men
of the axe !
Of the workers away in the range there is none that will
wait for the night,
When the storm-stricken moon is in change and the
sinister fog is in sight.
And later and deep in the dark, when the bitter wind
whistles about,
There is never a howl or a bark from the dog in the
kennel without ;
But the white fathers fasten the door, and often and
often they start,
At a sound like a foot on the floor and a touch like a
hand on the heart.



BOB.



INGER of songs of the hills—
 Dreamer, by waters unstirred,
 Back in a valley of rills,
 Home of the leaf and the bird—
 Read in this fall of the year
 Just the compassionate phrase,
 Faded with traces of tear,
 Written in far-away days :

*“Gone is the light of my lap
 (Lord at Thy bidding I bow),
 Here is my little one’s cap,
 He has no need of it now.
 Give it to somebody’s boy—
 Somebody’s darling”*—she wrote.
 Touching was Bob in his joy—
 Bob without boots or a coat.

Only a cap ; but it gave
 Capless and comfortless one
 Happiness, bright as the brave,
 Beautiful light of the sun.

Soft may the sanctified sod
Rest on the father who led
Bob from the gutter, unshod—
Covered his cold little head !

Bob from the foot to the crown
Measured a yard, and no more—
Baby alone in the town,
Homeless, and hungry, and sore !
Child that was never a child,
Hiding away from the rain,
Draggled, and dirty, and wild,
Down in a pipe of the drain.

Poor little beggar was Bob—
Couldn't afford to be sick !
Getting a penny a job ;
Sometimes a curse and a kick.
Father was killed by the drink,
Mother was driven to shame ;
Bob couldn't manage to think—
He had forgotten their name.

God was in heaven above,
Flowers illumined the ground,
Women of infinite love
Lived in the palaces round—
Saints with the character sweet
Found in the fathers of old,
Laboured in alley and street—
Baby slept out in the cold.

Nobody noticed the child—
Nobody knew of the mite
Creeping about like a wild
Thing in the shadow of night.
Beaten by drunkards and cowed—
Frightened to speak or to sob—
How could he ask you aloud,
“ *Have you a penny for Bob ?* ”

Few were the pennies he got—
Seldom could hide them away,
Watched by the ravenous sot
Ever at wait for his prey.
Poor little man ! he would weep
Oft for a morsel of bread ;
Coppers he wanted to keep,
Went to the tavern instead.

This was his history, friend—
Ragged, unhoused, and alone !
How could the child comprehend
Love that he never had known ?
Hunted about in the world,
Crouching in crevices dim,
Crust with a curse at him hurled
Stood for a kindness with him.

Little excited his joy—
Bun after doing a job ;
Mother of bright-headed boy,
Think of the motherless Bob !

High in the heavens august
 Providence saw him, and said—
 “*Out of the pits of the dust*
Lift him, and cover his head.”

Ah, the ineffable grace,
 Father of children, in Thee !
 Boy in a radiant place,
 Fanned by the breeze of the sea—
 Child on a lullaby lap
 Said, in the pause of his pain,
 “*Mother, don't bury my cap—*
Give it to Bob in the lane.”

Beautiful bidding of Death !
 What could she do but obey,
 Even when suffering Faith
 Hadn't the power to pray ?
 So, in the fall of the year,
 Saint with the fatherly head
 Hunted for somebody's dear—
 “*Somebody's darling,*” he said.

Bob who was nobody's child,
 Sitting on nobody's lap,
 Draggled, and dirty, and wild—
 Bob got the little one's cap.
 Strange were compassionate words !
 Waif of the alley and lane
 Dreamed of the music of birds
 Floating about in the rain.

White-headed father in God
Over thy beautiful grave
Green is the grass of the sod,
Soft is the sound of the wave.
Down by the slopes of the sea
Often and often will sob
Boy who was fostered by thee—
This is the story of Bob.



NARRARA CREEK.

[Written in the shadow of 1872.]



FROM the rainy hill-heads, where, in starts and
in spasms,

Leaps wild the white torrent from chasms to
chasms—

From the home of bold echoes, whose voices of
wonder

Fly out of blind caverns struck black by high thunder—
Through gorges august, in whose nether recesses
Is heard the far psalm of unseen wildernesses—
Like a dominant spirit, a strong-handed sharer
Of spoil with the tempest, comes down the Narrara.

Yea, where the great sword of the hurricane cleaveth
The forested fells that the dark never leaveth—
By fierce-featured crags, in whose evil abysses
The clammy snake coils, and the flat adder hisses—
Past lordly rock temples, where Silence is riven
By the anthems supreme of the four winds of heaven—
It speeds, with the cry of the streams of the fountains
It chained to its sides, and dragged down from the
mountains.

But when it goes forth from the slopes with a sally—
 Being strengthened with tribute from many a valley—
 It broadens, and brightens, and thereupon marches
 Above the stream sapphires, and under green arches,
 With the rhythm of majesty—careless of cumber—
 Its might in repose, and its fierceness in slumber—
 Till it beams on the plains, where the wind is a bearer
 Of words from the sea to the stately Narrara !

Narrara ! grand son of the haughty hill torrent,
 Too late in my day have I looked at thy current—
 Too late in my life to discern and inherit
 The soul of thy beauty, the joy of thy spirit !
 With the years of the youth and the hairs of the hoary,
 I sit like a shadow outside of thy glory ;
 Nor look with the morning-like feelings, O river,
 That illumined the boy in the days gone for ever.

Ah ! sad are the sounds of old ballads which borrow
 One-half of their grief from the listener's sorrow ;
 And sad are the eyes of the pilgrim who traces
 The ruins of Time in revisited places ;
 But sadder than all is the sense of his losses
 That cometh to one when a sudden age crosses
 And cripples his manhood. So, stricken by fate, I
 Felt older at thirty than some do at eighty.

Because I believe in the beautiful story—
 The poem of Greece in the days of her glory—
 That the high-seated Lord of the woods and the waters
 Has peopled His world with His deified daughters—

That flowerful forests, and waterways streaming;
 Are gracious with goddesses glowing and gleaming—
 I pray that thy singing divinity, fairer
 Than wonderful women, may listen, Narrara !

O Spirit of sea-going currents—thou being
 The child of immortals, all-knowing, all-seeing—
 Thou hast at thy heart the dark truth that I borrow
 For the song that I sing thee, no fanciful sorrow ;
 In the sight of thine eyes is the history written
 Of Love smitten down as the strong leaf is smitten ;
 And before thee there goeth a phantom beseeching
 For faculties forfeited—hopes beyond reaching.

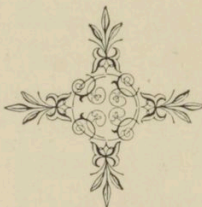
* * * * *

Thou knowest, O sister of deities blazing
 With splendour ineffable, beauty amazing,
 What life the gods gave me—what largess I tasted—
 The youth thrown away, and the faculties wasted.
 I might, as thou seest, have stood in high places,
 Instead of in pits where the brand of disgrace is,
 A by-word for scoffers—a butt, and a caution,
 With the grave of poor Burns and Maginn for my portion.

But the heart of the Father Supreme is offended,
 And my life in the light of His favour is ended ;
 And, whipped by inflexible devils, I shiver,
 With a hollow "*Too late*" in my hearing for ever ;

But thou—being sinless, exalted, supernal,
The daughter of diademed gods, the eternal—
Shalt shine in thy waters when time and existence
Have dwindled, like stars, in unspeakable distance.

But the face of thy river—the tormented power
That smites at the rock while it fosters the flower—
Shall gleam in my dreams with the summer-look splendid,
And the beauty of woodlands and waterfalls blended ;
And often I'll think of far-forested noises,
And the emphasis deep of grand sea-going voices,
And turn to Narrara the eyes of a lover,
When the sorrowful days of my singing are over.



PERSIA.



AM writing this song at the close
 Of a beautiful day of the spring,
 In a dell where the daffodil grows,
 By a grove of the glimmering wing ;
 From glades where a musical word
 Comes ever from luminous fall,
 I send you the song of a bird
 That I wish to be dear to you all.

I have given my darling the name
 Of a land at the gates of the day,
 Where morning is always the same,
 And spring never passes away.
 With a prayer for a lifetime of light,
 I christened her Persia, you see ;
 And I hope that some fathers to-night
 Will kneel in the spirit with me.

She is only commencing to look
 At the beauty in which she is set ;
 And forest, and flower, and brook,
 To her are all mysteries yet.

I know that to many my words
 Will seem insignificant things ;
 But *you* who are mothers of birds
 Will feel for the father who sings ;

For all of you doubtless have been
 Where sorrows are many and wild ;
 And you *know* what a beautiful scene
 Of this world can be made by a child.
 I am sure, if they listen to this,
 Sweet women will quiver, and long
 To tenderly stoop to and kiss
 The Persia I've put in a song.

And I'm certain the critic will pause,
 And excuse, for the sake of my bird,
 My sins against critical laws—
 The slips in the thought and the word.
 And, haply, some dear little face
 Of his own to his mind will occur—
 Some Persia who brightens his place—
 And I'll be forgiven for her.


A life that is turning to gray
 Has hardly been happy, you see ;
 But the rose that has dropped on my way
 Is morning and music to me.
 Yea, she that I hold by the hand
 Is changing white winter to green,
 And making a light of the land—
 All fathers will know what I mean !

All women and men who have known
The sickness of sorrow and sin,
Will feel—having babes of their own—
My verse and the pathos therein.
For that must be touching which shows
How a life has been led from the wild
To a garden of glitter and rose,
By the flower-like hand of a child.

She is strange to this wonderful sphere ;
One summer and winter have set
Since God left her radiance here—
Her sweet second year is not yet.
The world is so lovely and new
To eyes full of eloquent light,
And, sisters, I'm hoping that you
Will pray for my Persia to-night.

For I, who have suffered so much,
And know what the bitterness is,
Am sad to think sorrow must touch
Some day even darlings like this !
But sorrow is part of this life,
And, therefore, a father doth long
For the blessing of mother and wife
On the bird he has put in a song.

ORARA.*


 HE strong sob of the chafing stream,
 That seaward fights its way
 Down crags of glitter, dells of gleam,
 Is in the hills to-day.

But far and faint, a gray-winged form
 Hangs where the wild lights wane—
 The phantom of a bygone storm,
 A ghost of wind and rain.

The soft white feet of afternoon
 Are on the shining meads,
 The breeze is as a pleasant tune
 Amongst the happy reeds.

The fierce, disastrous, flying fire,
 That made the great caves ring,
 And scarred the slope, and broke the spire,
 Is a forgotten thing.

* A tributary of the Clarence River.

The air is full of mellow sounds,
The wet hill-heads are bright,
And, down the fall of fragrant grounds,
The deep ways flame with light.

A rose-red space of stream I see,
Past banks of tender fern ;
A radiant brook, unknown to me
Beyond its upper turn.

The singing silver life I hear,
Whose home is in the green,
Far-folded woods of fountains clear,
Where I have never been.

Ah, brook above the upper bend,
I often long to stand
Where you in soft, cool shades descend
From the untrodden land !

Ah, folded woods, that hide the grace
Of moss and torrents strong,
I often wish to know the face
Of that which sings your song !

But I may linger, long, and look
Till night is over all :
My eyes will never see the brook,
Or sweet, strange waterfall.

The world is round me with its heat,
And toil, and cares that tire ;
I cannot with my feeble feet
Climb after my desire.

But, on the lap of lands unseen,
Within a secret zone,
There shine diviner gold and green
Than man has ever known.

And where the silver waters sing
Down hushed and holy dells,
The flower of a celestial Spring—
A tenfold splendour, dwells.

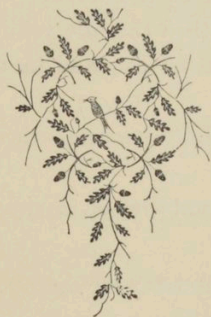
Yea, in my dream of fall and brook
By far sweet forests furled,
I see that light for which I look
In vain through all the world.

The glory of a larger sky
On slopes of hills sublime,
That speak with God and morning, high
Above the ways of Time !


Ah ! haply, in this sphere of change
Where shadows spoil the beam,
It would not do to climb that range
And test my radiant Dream.

The slightest glimpse of yonder place,
Untrodden and alone,
Might wholly kill that nameless grace
The charm of the unknown.

And therefore, though I look and long,
Perhaps the lot is bright
Which keeps the river of the song
A beauty out of sight.



PYTHEAS.


 AUL, whose keel in far, dim ages ploughed
 wan widths of polar sea—
 Gray old sailor of Massilia, who hath woven
 wreath for thee?
 Who amongst the world's high singers, ever
 breathed the tale sublime
 Of the man who coasted England in the misty dawn of
 time?
 Leaves of laurel, lights of music—these and these have
 never shed
 Glory on the name unheard-of, lustre on the vanished
 head!
 Lords of song, and these are many, never yet have raised
 the lay
 For the white, wind-beaten seaman of a wild, forgotten
 day!
 Harp of shining son of Godhead still is as a voice
 august:
 But the man who first saw Britain sleeps beneath un-
 noticed dust.

From the fair, calm bays Hellenic, from the crescents
and the bends,
Round the wall of crystal Athens, glowing in gold
evening-ends,
Sailed abroad the grand, strong father, with his face
towards the snow
Of the awful northern mountains, twenty centuries ago !
On the seas that none had heard of, by the shores where
none had furled
Wing of canvas, passed this elder to the limits of the
world !
Lurid limits, loud with thunder and the roar of flaming
cone,
Ghastly tracts of ice and whirlwind lying in a dim, blind
zone,
Bitter belts of naked region, girt about by cliffs of fear,
Where the Spirit of the Darkness dwells in heaven half
the year !

Yea, against the wild, weird Thule, steered the stranger,
through the gates
Opened by a fire eternal, into tempest-trampled straits—
Thule, lying like a nightmare on the borders of the Pole :
Neither land, nor air, nor water, but a mixture of the
whole !
Dumb, dead chaos, gray as spectre, now a mist and now
a cloud,
Where the winds cry out for ever, and the wave is
always loud.

Here the lord of many waters, in the great exalted
years,
Saw the sight that no man knows of—heard the sound
that no man hears !
Felt that God was in the Shadow ere he turned his prow
and sped
To the sweet green fields of England with the sunshine
overhead.

In the day when pallid Persia fled before the Thracian
steel,
By the land that now is London passed the strange
Hellenic keel.
Up the bends of quiet river, hard by banks of grove
and flower,
Sailed the father through a silence in the old majestic
hour.
Not a sound of fin or feather, not a note of wave or
breeze,
Vext the face of sleeping streamlets, broke the rest of
stirless trees !
Not a foot was in the forest, not a voice was in the
wood,
When the elder from Massilia over English waters
stood !
All was new, and hushed, and holy—all was pure
untrodden space,
When the lord of many oceans turned to it a reverent
face.

Man who knew resplendent Athens, set and framed in
silver sea,
Did not dream a dream of England—England of the
years to be !
Friend of fathers like to Plato—bards august and
hallowed seers—
Did not see that tenfold glory, Britain of the future
years !
Spirit filled with Grecian music, songs that charm the
dark away,
On that large, supreme occasion, did not note diviner
lay !
Did not hear the voice of Shakespeare—all the mighty
life was still,
Down the slopes that dipped to seaward, on the shoulders
of the hill ;
But the gold and green were brighter than the bloom of
Thracian springs,
And a strange, surpassing beauty shone upon the face of
things.

In a grave that no man thinks of—back from far-forgotten
bays—
Sleeps the gray, wind-beaten sailor of the old exalted
days.
He that coasted Wales and Dover, he that first saw
Sussex plains,
Passed away with head unlaurelled in the wild Thessalian
rains !

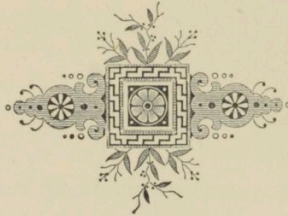
In a space by hand untended, by a fen of vapours blind,
Lies the king of many waters—out of sight and out of
mind!

No one brings the yearly blossom—no one culls the
flower of grace,

For the shell of mighty father buried in that lonely
place!

But the winds are low and holy, and the songs of sweet-
ness flow,

Where he fell asleep for ever, twenty centuries ago.



LEICHHARDT.

LORDLY harp, by lordly master wakened from
 majestic sleep,
 Yet shall speak and yet shall sing the words
 which make the fathers weep !
 Voice surpassing human voices—high, unearthly
 harmony—

Yet shall tell the tale of hero, in exalted years to
 be !

In the ranges, by the rivers, on the uplands, down the
 dells,

Where the sound of wind and wave is, where the
 mountain anthem swells,

Yet shall float the song of lustre, sweet with tears and
 fair with flame,

Shining with a theme of beauty, holy with our Leich-
 hardt's name !

Name of him who faced for science thirsty tracts of
 bitter glow,

Lurid lands that no one knows of—two-and-thirty years
 ago.

Born by hills of hard gray weather, far beyond the
northern seas,

German mountains were his "sponsors," and his mates
were German trees ;

Grandeur of the old-world forests passed into his radiant
soul,

With the song of stormy crescents, where the mighty
waters roll.

Thus he came to be a brother of the river and the wood—
Thus the leaf, the bird, the blossom, grew a gracious
sisterhood ;

Nature led him to her children, in a space of light
divine :

Kneeling down, he said—"My mother, let me be as
one of thine !"

So she took him—thence she loved him, lodged him in
her home of dreams,

Taught him what the trees were saying, schooled him in
the speech of streams.

For her sake he crossed the waters—loving her, he left
the place

Hallowed by his father's ashes, and his human mother's
face—

Passed the seas and entered temples domed by skies of
deathless beam,

Walled about by hills majestic, stately spires and peaks
supreme !

Here he found a larger beauty—here the lovely lights
were new

On the slopes of many flowers, down the gold-green
dells of dew.

In the great august cathedral of his holy lady, he
Daily worshipped at her altars, nightly bent the
reverent knee—

Heard the hymns of night and morning, learned the
psalm of solitudes ;

Knew that God was very near him—felt His presence
in the woods !

But the starry angel, Science, from the home of glitter-
ing wings,

Came one day and talked to Nature by melodious moun-
tain springs :

“Let thy son be mine,” she pleaded ; “lend him for a
space,” she said,

“So that he may earn the laurels I have woven for his
head !”

And the lady, Nature, listened ; and she took her loyal
son

From the banks of moss and myrtle—led him to the
Shining One !

Filled his lordly soul with gladness—told him of a
spacious zone

Eye of man had never looked at, human foot had never
known.

Then the angel, Science, beckoned, and he knelt and
whispered low—

“I will follow where you lead me” —two-and-thirty
years ago.

On the tracts of thirst and furnace—on the dumb, blind,
burning plain,
Where the red earth gapes for moisture, and the wan
leaves hiss for rain,
In a land of dry, fierce thunder, did he ever pause and
dream
Of the cool green German valley and the singing
German stream?
When the sun was as a menace, glaring from a sky
of brass,
Did he ever rest, in visions, on a lap of German
grass?
Past the waste of thorny terrors, did he reach a sphere
of rills,
In a region yet untravelled, ringed by fair untrodden
hills?
Was the spot where last he rested pleasant as an old-
world lea?
Did the sweet winds come and lull him with the music
of the sea?

Let us dream so—let us hope so! Haply in a cool
green glade,
Far beyond the zone of furnace, Leichhardt's sacred
shell was laid!
Haply in some leafy valley, underneath blue, gracious
skies,
In the sound of mountain water, the heroic traveller
lies!

Down a dell of dewy myrtle, where the light is soft and
green,
And a month like English April, sits, an immemorial
queen,
Let us think that he is resting—think that by a radiant
grave
Ever come the songs of forest, and the voices of the
wave !
Thus we want our sons to find him—find him under
floral bowers,
Sleeping by the trees he loved so, covered with his
darling flowers !



CHRISTMAS CREEK.



HANTOM streams were in the distance—
 mocking lights of lake and pool—
 Ghosts of trees of soft green lustre—groves of
 shadows deep and cool!
 Yea, some devil ran before them changing skies
 of brass to blue,
 Setting bloom where curse is planted, where a grass-blade
 never grew.
 Six there were, and high above them glared a wild and
 wizened sun,
 Ninety leagues from where the waters of the singing
 valleys run.
 There before them, there behind them, was the great,
 stark, stubborn plain,
 Where the dry winds hiss for ever, and the blind earth
 moans for rain!
 Ringed about by tracks of furnace, ninety leagues from
 stream and tree,
 Six there were, with wasted faces, working northwards
 to the sea!

*

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Ah, the bitter, hopeless desert! Here these broken
human wrecks

Trod the wilds where sand of fire is with the spiteful
spinifex,

Toiled through spheres that no bird knows of, where
with fiery emphasis

Hell hath stamped its awful mint-mark deep on every
thing that is!

Toiled and thirsted, strove and suffered! *This* was
where December's breath

As a wind of smiting flame is on weird, haggard wastes
of death!

This was where a withered moan is, and the gleam of
weak, wan star,

And a thunder full of menace sends its mighty voices
far!

This was where black execrations, from some dark
tribunal hurled,

Set the brand of curse on all things in the morning of
the world!

* * * * *

One man yielded—then another—then a lad of nineteen
years

Reeled and fell, with English rivers singing softly in his
ears.

English grasses started round him—then the grace of
Sussex lea

Came and touched him with the beauty of a green land
by the sea!

Old-world faces thronged about him—old-world voices
spoke to him ;

But his speech was like a whisper, and his eyes were
very dim.

In a dream of golden evening, beaming on a quiet
strand,

Lay the stranger till a bright One came and took him by
the hand.

England vanished, died the voices ! but he heard a
holier tone,

And an angel that we know not led him to the lands
unknown !

* * * * *

Six there were, but three were taken ! Three were left
to struggle still ;

But against the red horizon flamed a horn of brindled
hill !

But beyond the northern skyline, past a wall of steep
austere,

Lay the land of light and coolness in an April-coloured
year !

“ Courage, brothers,” cried the leader ; “ on the slope of
yonder peak

There are tracts of herb and shadow, and the channels of
the creek !”

So they made one last great effort—haled their beasts
through brake and briar—

Set their feet on spurs of furnace—grappled spikes and
craggs of fire—

Fought the stubborn mountain forces, smote down
naked, natural powers,
Till they gazed from thrones of Morning on a sphere of
streams and flowers.

Out behind them was the desert, glaring like a sea of
brass !

Here before them were the valleys, fair with moonlight-
coloured grass !

At their backs were haggard waste-lands, bickering in a
wicked blaze !

In their faces beamed the waters, marching down
melodious ways !

Touching was the cool, soft lustre over laps of lawn and
lea ;

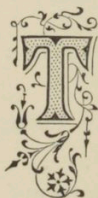
And majestic was the great road Morning made across
the sea.

On the sacred day of Christmas, after seven months of
grief,

Rested three of six who started, on a bank of moss and
leaf—

Rested by a running river, in a hushed, a holy week ;
And they named the stream that saved them—named it
fitly—"Christmas Creek."

JIM THE SPLITTER.



HE bard who is singing of Wollombi Jim
 Is hardly just now in the requisite trim
 To sit on his Pegasus fairly ;
 Besides, he is bluntly informed by the Muse
 That Jim is a subject no singer should choose ;
 For Jim is poetical rarely.

But being full up of the myths that are Greek—
 Of the classic, and noble, and nude, and antique,
 Which means not a rag but the pelt on ;
 This poet intends to give Daphne the slip,
 For the sake of a hero in moleskin and kip
 With a jumper and snake-buckle belt on.

No party is Jim of the Pericles type—
 He is modern right up from the toe to the pipe ;
 And being no reader or roamer,
 He hasn't Euripides much in the head ;
 And let it be carefully, tenderly said,
 He never has analyzed Homer.

He can roar out a song of the twopenny kind ;
But, knowing the beggar so well, I'm inclined
 To believe that a "par." about Kelly,
The rascal who skulked under shadow of curse,
Is more in his line than the happiest verse
 On the glittering pages of Shelley.

You mustn't, however, adjudge him in haste,
Because a red robber is more to his taste
 Than Ruskin, Rossetti, or Dante !
You see, he was bred in a bangalow wood,
And bangalow pith was the principal food
 His mother served out in her shanty.

His knowledge is this—he can tell in the dark
What timber will split by the feel of the bark ;
 And rough as his manner of speech is,
His wits to the fore he can readily bring
In passing off ash as the genuine thing
 When scarce in the forest the beech is.

In girthing a tree that he sells in the round,
He assumes, as a rule, that the body is sound,
 And measures, forgetting to bark it !
He may be a ninny, but still the old dog
Can plug to perfection a pipe of a log
 And palm it away on the market.

He splits a fair shingle, but holds to the rule
Of his father's, and, haply, his grandfather's school ;
 Which means that he never has blundered,
When tying his shingles, by slinging in more
Than the recognized number of ninety and four
 To the bundle he sells for a hundred !

When asked by the market for ironbark red,
It always occurs to the Wollombi head
 To do a "mahogany" swindle.
In forests where never the ironbark grew,
When Jim is at work, it would flabbergast you
 To see how the ironbarks dwindle.

He can stick to the saddle, can Wollombi Jim,
And when a buckjumper dispenses with him,
 The leather goes off with the rider.
And, as to a team, over gully and hill
He can travel with twelve on the breadth of a quill
 And boss the unlucky offsider.

He shines at his best at the tiller of saw,
On the top of the pit, where his whisper is law
 To the gentleman working below him.
When the pair of them pause in a circle of dust,
Like a monarch he poses—exalted, august—
 There's nothing this planet can show him !

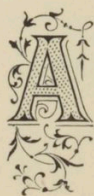
For a man is a *man* who can sharpen and set,
 And *he* is the only thing masculine yet
 According to sawyer and splitter :
 Or rather according to Wollombi Jim ;
 And nothing will tempt me to differ from him,
 For Jim is a bit of a hitter.

But, being full up, we'll allow him to rip,
 Along with his lingo, his saw, and his whip—
 He isn't the classical notion.
 And, after a night in his humpy, you see
 A person of orthodox habits would be
 Refreshed by a dip in the ocean.

To tot him right up from the heel to the head,
 He isn't the Grecian of whom we have read—
 His face is a trifle too shady.
 The nymph in green valleys of Thessaly dim
 Would never jack up her old lover for him,
 For she has the tastes of a lady.

So much for our hero ! A statuesque foot
 Would suffer by wearing that heavy-nailed boot—
 Its owner is hardly Achilles.
 However, he's happy ! He cuts a great fig
 In the land where a coat is no part of the rig—
 In the country of damper and billies.

KINGSBOROUGH.



WAVING of hats and of hands,
 The voices of thousands in one,
 A shout from the ring and the stands
 And a glitter of heads in the sun!
 “*They are off—they are off*,” is the roar,
 As the cracks settle down to the race,
 With the “yellow and black” to the fore,
 And the Panic blood forcing the pace.

At the back of the course, and away
 Where the running-ground home again wheels,
 Grubb travels in front on the “bay,”
 With a feather-weight hard at his heels.
 But Yeomans, you see, is “about,”
 And the wily New Zealander waits,
 Though the high-blooded flyer is out,
 Whose rider and colours are Tait’s.

Look ! Ashworth comes on with a run
 To the head of the Levity colt ;
 And the fleet, the magnificent son
 Of Panic is “shooting his bolt.”

Hurrah for the Weatherbit strain !

A Fireworks is first in the straight ;
And " *A Kelpie will win it again,*"

Is the roar from the ring to the gate.

The leader must have it—but no !

For see, full of running, behind

A beautiful, wonderful foe

With the speed of the thunder and wind !

A flashing of whips, and a cry,

And Ashworth sits down on his horse,

With Kingsborough's head at his thigh

And the " field " scattered over the course !

In a clamour of calls and acclaim

The pair race away from the " ruck : "

The horse to the last of its game—

A marvel of muscle and pluck !

But the foot of the Sappho is there,

And Kingston's invincible strength ;

And the numbers go up in the air—

The colt is the first by a length !

The first, and the favourite too !

The terror that came from his stall,

With the spirit of fire and of dew,

To show the road home to them all ;

From the back of the field to the straight

He has come, as is ever his wont,

And carried his welter-like weight,

Like a tradesman, right through to the front.

Nor wonder at cheering a whit,
 For this is the popular horse,
 That never was beaten when "fit"
 By any four hoofs on the course ;
 To starter for Leger and Cup,
 Has he ever shown feather of fear
 When saddle and rider were up
 And the case to be argued was clear ?

No ! rather the questionless pluck
 Of the blood unaccustomed to yield,
 Preferred to "spread-eagle" the ruck,
 And make a long tail of the "field."
 Bear witness, ye lovers of sport,
 To races of which he can boast,
 When flyer by flyer was caught,
 And beaten by lengths on the post !

Lo ! this is the beautiful bay—
 Of many, the marvellous one
 Who showed us last season the way
 That a Leger should always be won.
 There was something to look at and learn,
 Ye shrewd, irreproachable "touts,"
 When the Panic colt tired at the turn,
 And the thing was all over—but shouts !

Aye, that was the "spin," when the twain
 Came locked by the bend of the course,
 The Zealander pulling his rein,
 And the veteran hard on his horse !

When Ashworth was "riding" 'twas late
For his friends to applaud on the stands,
And the Sappho colt entered the straight
With the race of the year in his hands.

Just look at his withers, his thighs !
And the way that he carries his head !
Has Richmond more wonderful eyes,
Or Melbourne that spring in his tread ?
The grand, the intelligent glance
From a spirit that fathoms and feels,
Makes the heart of a horse-lover dance
Till the warm-blooded life in him reels.

What care have I ever to know
His owner by sight or by name !
The horse that I glory in so
Is still the magnificent same !
I own I am proud of the pluck
Of the sportsman that never was bought ;
But the nag that "spread-eagled the ruck"
Is bound to be first in my thought.

For who that has masculine flame,
Or who that is thorough at all,
Can help feeling joy in the fame
Of this king of the kings of the stall ?
What odds if assumption has sealed
His soulless hereafter abode,
So long as he shows to his "field"
The gleam of his hoofs, and the road.

BILL THE BULLOCK-DRIVER.



HE leaders of millions, the lords of the lands,
 Who sway the wide world with their will
 And shake the great globe with the strength
 of their hands,
 Flash past us—unnoticed by Bill.

The elders of Science who measure the spheres
 And weigh the vast bulk of the sun—
 Who see the grand lights beyond æons of years,
 Are less than a bullock to *one*.

The singers that sweeten all time with their song—
 Pure voices that make us forget
 Humanity's drama of marvellous wrong—
 To Bill are as mysteries yet.

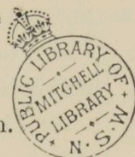
By thunders of battle and nation uphurled,
 Bill's sympathies never were stirred :
 The helmsmen who stand at the wheel of the world
 By him are unknown and unheard.

What trouble has Bill for the ruin of lands,
 Or the quarrels of temple and throne,
 So long as the whip that he holds in his hands,
 And the team that he drives, are his own ?

As straight and as sound as a slab without crack,
 Our Bill is a king in his way :
 Though he camps by the side of a shingle track,
 And sleeps on the bed of his dray.

A whip-lash to him is as dear as a rose
 Would be to a delicate maid :
 He carries his darlings wherever he goes,
 In a pocket-book tattered and frayed.

The joy of a bard when he happens to write
 A song like the song of his dream,
 Is nothing at all to our hero's delight
 In the pluck and the strength of his team.



For the kings of the earth, for the faces august
 Of princes, the millions may shout ;
 To Bill, as he lumbers along in the dust,
 A bullock's the grandest thing out.

His four-footed friends are the friends of his choice—
 No lover is Bill of your dames ;
 But the cattle that turn at the sound of his voice
 Have the sweetest of features and names.

A father's chief joy is a favourite son,
When he reaches some eminent goal,
But the pride of Bill's heart is the hairy-legged one
That pulls with a will at the pole.

His dray is no living, responsible thing,
But he gives it the gender of life ;
And, seeing his fancy is free in the wing,
It suits him as well as a wife.

He thrives like an Arab. Between the two wheels
Is his bedroom, where, lying up-curved,
He thinks for himself, like a sultan, and feels
That his home is the best in the world.

For, even though cattle, like subjects, will break
At times from the yoke and the band,
Bill knows how to act when his rule is at stake,
And is therefore a lord of the land.

Of course he must dream ; but be sure that his dreams,
If happy, must compass, alas !
Fat bullocks at feed by improbable streams,
Knee-deep in improbable grass.

No poet is Bill, for the visions of night
To him are as visions of day ;
And the pipe that in sleep he endeavours to light
Is the pipe that he smokes on the dray.

To the mighty, magnificent temples of God,
In the hearts of the dominant hills,
Bill's eyes are as blind as the fire-blackened clod
That burns far away from the rills.

Through beautiful, bountiful forests that screen
A marvel of blossoms from heat—
Whose lights are the mellow and golden and green—
Bill walks with irreverent feet.

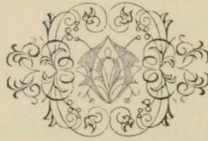
The manifold splendours of mountain and wood
By Bill like nonentities slip :
He loves the black myrtle because it is good
As a handle to lash to his whip.

And thus through the world, with a swing in his tread,
Our hero self-satisfied goes ;
With his cabbage-tree hat on the back of his head,
And the string of it under his nose.

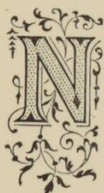
Poor bullocky Bill ! In the circles select
Of the scholars he hasn't a place ;
But he walks like a *man*, with his forehead erect,
And he looks at God's day in the face.

For, rough as he seems, he would shudder to wrong
A dog with the loss of a hair ;
And the angels of shine and superlative song
See his heart and the deity there.

Few know him, indeed ; but the beauty that glows
In the forest is loveliness still ;
And Providence helping the life of the rose
Is a Friend and a Father to Bill.



BILLY VICKERS.


 O song is this of leaf and bird,
 And gracious waters flowing ;
 I'm sick at heart, for I have heard
 Big Billy Vickers "blowing."

He'd never take a leading place
 In chambers legislative :
 This booby with the vacant face—
 This hoddy-doddy native !

Indeed, I'm forced to say aside,
 To you, O reader, solely,
 He only wants the horns and hide
 To be a bullock wholly.

But, like all noodles, he is vain ;
 And when his tongue is wagging,
 I feel inclined to copy Cain,
 And drop him for his bragging.

He, being bush-bred, stands, of course,
Six feet his dirty socks in ;
His lingo is confined to horse,
And plough, and pig, and oxen.

Two years ago he'd less to say
Within his little circuit,
But now he has, besides a dray,
A team of twelve to work it.

No wonder is it that he feels
Inclined to clack and rattle
About his bullocks and his wheels—
He owns a dozen cattle.

In short, to be exact and blunt,
In his own estimation
He's "out and out" the head and front
Top-sawyer of creation !

For, mark me, he can "sit a buck"
For hours and hours together ;
And never horse has had the luck
To pitch him from the leather.

If ever he should have a "spill"
Upon the grass or gravel,
Be sure of this, the saddle will
With Billy Vickers travel.

At punching oxen, you may guess
There's nothing out can "camp" him :
He has, in fact, the slouch and dress
Which bullock-driver stamp him.

I do not mean to give offence,
But I have vainly striven
To ferret out the difference
'Twixt driver and the driven.

Of course, the statements herein made
In every other stanza
Are Billy's own ; and I'm afraid
They're stark extravaganza.

I feel constrained to treat as trash
His noisy fiddle-faddle
About his doings with the lash,
His feats upon the saddle.

But grant he " knows his way about,"
Or grant that he is silly,
There cannot be the slightest doubt
Of Billy's faith in Billy.

Of all the doings of the day
His ignorance is utter ;
But he can quote the price of hay,
The current rate of butter.

His notions of our leading men
Are mixed and misty very :
He knows a Cochín-China hen—
He never speaks of Berry.

As you'll assume, he hasn't heard
Of Madame Patti's singing ;
But I will stake my solemn word
He knows what maize is bringing.

Surrounded by majestic peaks,
By lordly mountain ranges,
Where highest voice of thunder speaks,
His aspect never changes.

The grand Pacific there beyond
His dirty hut is glowing :
He only sees a big salt pond,
O'er which his grain is going.

The sea that covers half the sphere,
With all its stately speeches,
Is held by Bill to be a mere
Broad highway for his peaches.

Through Nature's splendid temples he
Plods, under mountains hoary ;
But he has not the eyes to see
Their grandeur and their glory.

A bullock in a biped's boot,
I iterate, is Billy !
He crushes with a careless foot
The touching water-lily.

I've said enough—I'll let him go !
If he could read these verses,
He'd pepper me for hours, I know,
With his peculiar curses.

But this is sure, he'll never change
His manners loud and "flashy,"
Nor learn with neatness to arrange
His clothing, cheap and trashy.

Like other louts, he'll jog along,
And swig at shanty liquors,
And chew and spit. Here ends the song
Of Mr. Billy Vickers.



IN MEMORY OF JOHN FAIRFAX.

[Written after reading a touching poem by Mrs. Browning.]

BECAUSE this man fulfilled his days,
 Like one who walks with steadfast gaze
 Averted from forbidden ways
 With lures of fair, false flowerage deep,
 Behold the Lord whose throne is dim
 With fires of flaming seraphim—
 The Christ that suffered sent for him :
 “ He giveth His beloved sleep.”

Think not that souls whose deeds august
 Put sin to shame and make men just
 Become at last the helpless dust
 That wintering winds through waste-lands sweep !
 The higher life within us cries,
 Like some fine spirit from the skies,
 “ The Father’s blessing on us lies—
 ‘ He giveth His beloved sleep.’ ”

Not human sleep—the fitful rest
 With evil shapes of dreams distressed,—
 But perfect quiet, unexpressed
 By any worldly word we keep.

The dim Hereafter framed in creeds
 May not be this ; but He who reads
 Our lives, sets flowers on wayside weeds —
 “ He giveth His beloved sleep.”

Be sure this hero who has passed
 The human space—the outer vast—
 Who worked in harness to the last,
 Doth now a hallowed harvest reap.
 Love sees his grave, nor turns away—
 The eyes of Faith are like the day,
 And Grief has not a word to say—
 “ He giveth His beloved sleep.”

That fair, rare spirit, Honour, throws
 A light, which puts to shame the rose,
 Across his grave, because she knows
 The son whose ashes it doth keep ;
 And, like far music, *this* is heard—
 “ Behold the man who never stirred,
 By word of his, an angry word !—
 ‘ He giveth His beloved sleep.’ ”

He earned his place. Within his hands,
 The power which counsels and commands,
 And shapes the social life of lands,
 Became a blessing pure and deep.*

* The Press.

Through thirty years of turbulence
Our thoughts were sweetened with a sense
Of his benignant influence—

“ He giveth His beloved sleep.”

No splendid talents, which excite
Like music, songs, or floods of light,
Were his ; but, rather, all those bright,
Calm qualities of soul which reap
A mute, but certain, fine respect,
Not only from a source elect,
But from the hearts of every sect—

“ He giveth His beloved sleep.”

He giveth His beloved rest !
The faithful soul that onward pressed,
Unswerving, from Life's east to west,
By paths austere and passes steep,
Is past all toil ; and, over Death,
With reverent hands and prayerful breath,
I plant this flower, alive with faith—

“ He giveth His beloved sleep.”

THE SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL
EXHIBITION.

[A prize poem, published with the kind permission of the proprietors of the "Sydney Morning Herald."]

NOW, while Orion, flaming south, doth set
 A shining foot on hills of wind and wet—
 Far haughty hills beyond the fountains cold
 And dells of glimmering greenness manifold—
 While August sings the advent of the Spring,
 And in the calm is heard September's wing,
 The lordly voice of song I ask of thee,
 High, deathless radiance—crowned Calliope !
 What though we never hear the great god's lays
 Which made all music the Hellenic days—
 What though the face of thy fair heaven beams
 Still only on the crystal Grecian streams—
 What though a sky of new, strange beauty shines
 Where no white Dryad sings within the pines :
 Here is a land whose large, imperial grace
 Must tempt thee, goddess, in thine holy place !
 Here are the dells of peace and plenilune,
 The hills of morning and the slopes of noon ;
 Here are the waters dear to days of blue,

And dark-green hollows of the noontide dew ;
Here lies the harp, by fragrant wood-winds fanned,
That waits the coming of thy quickening hand !
And shall Australia, framed and set in sea
August with glory, wait in vain for thee ?
Shall more than Tempe's beauty be unsung
Because its shine is strange—its colours young ?
No ! by the full, live light which puts to shame
The far, fair splendours of Thessalian flame—
By yonder forest psalm which sinks and swells
Like that of Phocis, grave with oracles—
By deep prophetic winds that come and go
Where whispering springs of pondering mountains flow—
By lute-like leaves and many-languaged caves,
Where sounds the strong hosanna of the waves,
This great new majesty shall not remain
Unhonoured by the high immortal strain !
Soon, soon, the music of the southern lyre
Shall start and blossom with a speech like fire !
Soon, soon, shall flower and flow in flame divine
Thy songs, Apollo, and Euterpe, thine !
Strong, shining sons of Delphicus shall rise
With all their father's glory in their eyes ;
And then shall beam on yonder slopes and springs
The light that swims upon the light of things.
And therefore, lingering in a land of lawn,
I, standing here, a singer of the dawn,
With gaze upturned to where wan summits lie
Against the morning flowing up the sky—
Whose eyes in dreams of many colours see
A glittering vision of the years to be—

Do ask of thee, Calliope, one hour
Of life pre-eminent with perfect power,
That I may leave a song whose lonely rays
May shine hereafter from these songless days.

For now there breaks across the faint gray range
The rose-red dawning of a radiant change.
A soft, sweet voice is in the valleys deep,
Where darkness droops and sings itself to sleep.
The grave, mute woods, that yet the silence hold
Of dim, dead ages, gleam with hints of gold.
Yon eastern cape that meets the straitened wave—
A twofold tower above the whistling cave—
Whose strength in thunder shields the gentle lea,
And makes a white wrath of a league of sea,
Now wears the face of peace ; and in the bay
The weak, spent voice of Winter dies away.
In every dell there is a whispering wing—
On every lawn a glimmer of the Spring—
By every hill are growths of tender green—
On every slope a fair, new life is seen ;
And lo ! beneath the morning's blossoming fires,
The shining city of a hundred spires !
In mists of gold, by countless havens furled,
And glad with all the flags of all the world !

These are the shores where, in a dream of fear,
Cathay saw darkness dwelling half the year ! *

* According to that eminent authority, Mr. R. H. Major, and others, the Great Southern Land is referred to in old Chinese records as a polar continent, subject to the long polar nights.

These are the coasts that old fallacious tales
 Chained down with ice and ringed with sleepless gales !
 This is the land that, in the hour of awe,
 From Indian peaks the rapt Venetian saw ! *
 Here is the long gray line of strange sea wall
 That checked the prow of the audacious Gaul,
 What time he steered towards the southern snow,
 From zone to zone, four hundred years ago ! †
 By yonder gulf, whose marching waters meet
 The wine-dark currents from the isles of heat,
 Strong sons of Europe, in a far dim year,
 Faced ghastly foes, and felt the alien spear !
 There, on a later dawn, by shipless waves,
 The tender grasses found forgotten graves. ‡
 Far in the west, beyond those hills sublime,
 Dirk Hartog anchored in the olden time :
 There, by a wild-faced bay, and in a cleft,
 His shining name the fair-haired Northman left, §
 And on those broad imperial waters, far

* Marco Polo mentions a large land called by the Malays Lochac. The northern coast was supposed to be in latitude 10° S. (*Vide* Bennett and others.)

† Mr. R. H. Major has discovered a map of Terra Australis dated A.D. 1542, and bearing the name of Le Testu, a French pilot. Le Testu must have visited these coasts some years before the date of the chart.

‡ The sailors of the *Duyfhen*, a Dutch vessel which entered the Gulf of Carpentaria in A.D. 1606, were attacked by the natives. In the fray some of the whites were killed. No doubt these unlucky adventurers were the first Europeans buried in Australia. (*Vide* Woods and others.)

§ Dirk Hartog left a tin plate, bearing his name, in Shark's Bay, Western Australia. It was last seen in A.D. 1803.

Beneath the lordly occidental star
Sailed Tasman down a great and glowing space
Whose softer lights were like his lady's face.
In dreams of her he roved from zone to zone,
And gave her lovely name to coasts unknown ;
And saw, in streaming sunset everywhere,
The curious beauty of her golden hair.*
By flaming tracts of tropic afternoon,
Where in low heavens hangs a fourfold moon,
Here, on the tides of a resplendent year,
By capes of jasper, came the buccaneer.†
Then, then, the wild men, flying from the beach,
First heard the clear, bold sounds of English speech ;
And then first fell across a Southern plain
The broad, strong shadows of a Saxon train.
Near yonder wall of stately cliff, that braves
The arrogance of congregated waves,
The daring son of gray old Yorkshire stood
And dreamed in a majestic solitude,
What time a gentle April shed its showers,
Aflame with sunset, on the Bay of Flowers.‡
The noble seaman who withheld the hand,
And spared the Hector of his native land—
The single savage, yelling on the beach
The dark, strange curses of barbaric speech !
Exalted sailor ! whose benignant phrase

* Abel Tasman's love for Maria Van Diemen is well known. Tasmania, and many of the islands and points on the north-west coasts, were named after her.

† Dampier.

‡ Botany Bay.

Shines full of beauty in these latter days ;
Who met the naked tribes of fiery skies
With great, divine compassion in his eyes ;
Who died, like Him of hoary Nazareth,
That death august—the radiant martyr's death ;
Who in the last hour showed the Christian face
Whose crumbling beauty shamed the alien race.
In peace he sleeps where deep eternal calms
Lie round the land of heavy-fruited palms.
Lo ! in that dell, behind a singing bar,
Where deep, pure pools of glittering waters are,
Beyond a mossy, yellow, gleaming glade,
The last of Forby Sutherland was laid—
The blue-eyed Saxon from the hills of snow
Who fell asleep a hundred years ago.
In flowerful shades, where gold and green are rife,
Still rests the shell of his forgotten life.
Far, far away, beneath some northern sky,
The fathers of his humble household lie ;
But by his lonely grave are sapphire streams,
And gracious woodlands, where the fire-fly gleams ;
And ever comes across a silver lea
The hymn sublime of the eternal sea.
On that bold hill, against a broad blue stream,
Stood Arthur Phillip in a day of dream :
What time the mists of morning westward rolled,
And heaven flowered on a bay of gold !
Here, in the hour that shines and sounds afar,
Flamed first old England's banner like a star ;
Here, in a time august with prayer and praise,
Was born the nation of these splendid days ;

And here this land's majestic yesterday
Of immemorial silence died away.

Where are the woods that, ninety summers back,
Stood hoar with ages by the water-track?
Where are the valleys of the flashing wing,
The dim green margins and the glimmering spring?
Where now the warrior of the forest race,
His glaring war-paint and his fearless face?
The banks of April and the groves of bird,
The glades of silence, and the pools unstirred,
The gleaming savage, and the whistling spear,
Passed with the passing of a wild old year!
A single torrent singing by the wave,
A shadowy relic in a mountain cave,
A ghost of fire in immemorial hills,
The whittled tree by folded wayside rills,
The call of bird that hides in hollows far,
Where feet of thunder, wings of winter are—
Of all that past, these wrecks of wind and rain,
These touching memories—these alone remain!

What sun is this that beams and broadens west?
What wonder this, in deathless glory dressed?
What strange, sweet harp of highest god took flame
And gave this Troy its life, its light, its name?
What awful lyre of marvellous power and range
Upraised this Ilion—wrought this dazzling change?
No shining singer of Hellenic dreams
Set yonder splendour by the morning streams!

No god who glimmers in a doubtful sphere
 Shed glory there—created beauty here !
 This is the city that our fathers framed—
 These are the crescents by the elders named !
 The human hands of strong, heroic men
 Broke down the mountain, filled the gaping glen,
 Ran streets through swamp, built banks against the foam,
 And bent the arch and raised the lordly dome !
 Here are the towers that the founders made !
 Here are the temples where these Romans prayed !
 Here stand the courts in which their leaders met !
 Here are their homes, and here their altars yet !
 Here sleep the grand old men whose lives sublime
 Of thought and action shine and sound through time !
 Who worked in darkness—onward fought their ways
 To bring about these large majestic days—
 Who left their sons the hearts and high desires
 Which built this city of the hundred spires !

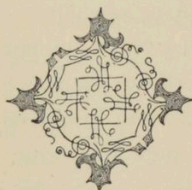
A stately Morning rises on the wing,
 The hills take colour, and the valleys sing.
 A strong September flames beyond the lea—
 A silver vision on a silver sea.
 A new Age, "cast in a diviner mould,"
 Comes crowned with lustre, zoned and shod with gold !
 What dream is this on lawny spaces set ?
 What miracle of dome and minaret ?
 What great mute majesty is this that takes
 The first of morning ere the song-bird wakes ?
 Lo, this was built, to honour gathering lands,

By Celtic, Saxon, Australasian hands !
These are the halls where all the flags unfurled
Break into speech that welcomes all the world.
And lo, our friends are here from every zone—
From isles we dream of and from tracts unknown !
Here are the fathers from the stately space
Where Ireland is and England's sacred face !
Here are the Norsemen from their strong sea-wall,
The grave, grand Teuton and the brilliant Gaul !
From green, sweet groves the dark-eyed Lusians sail,
And proud Iberia leaves the grape-flushed vale.
Here are the lords whose starry banner shines
From fierce Magellan to the Arctic pines.
Here come the strangers from the gates of day—
From hills of sunrise and from white Cathay.
The spicy islands send their swarthy sons,
The lofty North its mailed and mighty ones.
Venetian keels are floating on our sea ;
Our eyes are glad with radiant Italy !
Yea, north and south, and glowing west and east,
Are gathering here to grace our splendid feast !
The chiefs from peaks august with Asian snow,
The elders born where regal roses grow,
Come hither, with the flower of that fair land
That blooms beyond the fiery tracts of sand
Where Syrian suns their angry lustres fling
Across blind channels of the bygone spring.
And, on this great, auspicious day, the flowers
Of labour glorify majestic hours.
The singing angel from the starry sphere
Of dazzling Science shows his wonders here ;

And Art, the dream-clad spirit, starts, and brings
From Fairyland her strange, sweet, glittering things.
Here are the works man did, what time his face
Was touched by God in some exalted place ;
Here glows the splendour—here the marvel wrought
When heaven flashed upon the maker's thought !
Yea, here are all the miracles sublime—
The lights of Genius and the stars of Time !
And, being lifted by this noble noon,
Australia broadens like a tropic moon.
Her white, pure lustre beams across the zones ;
The Nations greet her from their awful thrones.
From hence, the morning beauty of her name
Will shine afar, like an exceeding flame.
Her place will be with mighty lords, whose sway
Controls the thunder and the marching day :
Her crown will shine beside the crowns of kings
Who shape the seasons, rule the course of things.
The fame of her across the years to be
Will spread like light on a surpassing sea ;
And graced with glory, girt with power august,
Her life will last till all things turn to dust.

To Thee, the face of song is lifted now,
O Lord! to whom the awful mountains bow ;
Whose hands, unseen, the tenfold storms control ;
Whose thunders shake the spheres from pole to pole ;
Who from the highest heaven lookest down,
The sea Thy footstool, and the sun Thy crown ;
Around whose throne the deathless planets sing

Hosannas to their high, eternal King—
To Thee, the soul of prayer this morning turns,
With faith that glitters, and with hope that burns !
And, in the moments of majestic calm
That fill the heart in pauses of the psalm,
She asks Thy blessing for this fair young land
That flowers within the hollow of Thine hand !
She seeks of Thee that boon, that gift sublime,
The Christian radiance, for this hope of Time !
And Thou wilt listen ; and Thy face will bend
To smile upon us—Master, Father, Friend !
The Christ to whom pure pleading heart hath crept,
Was human once, and in the darkness wept ;
The gracious love that helped us long ago
Will on us like a summer sunrise flow ;
And be a light to guide the nation's feet
On holy paths—on sacred ways and sweet.



THE MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL
EXHIBITION.

[*Written for Music.*]

I.

BROTHERS from far-away lands,
 Sons of the fathers of fame,
 Here are our hearts and our hands—
 This is our song of acclaim.
 Lords from magnificent zones,
 Shores of superlative sway,
 Awful with lustre of thrones,
 This is our greeting to-day.
 Europe and Asia are here—
 Shining they enter our ports !
 She that is half of the sphere
 Beams like a sun in our courts.
 Children of elders whose day
 Shone to the planet's white ends,
 Meet, in the noble old way,
 Sons of your forefathers' friends.

II.

Dressed is the beautiful city—the spires of it
Burn in the firmament stately and still ;
Forest has vanished—the wood, and the lyres of it,
Lutes of the sea-wind, and harps of the hill.
This is the region, and here is the bay by it,
Collins, the deathless, beheld in a dream :
Flinders and Fawkner, our forefathers gray, by it
Paused in the hush of a season supreme.
Here, on the waters of majesty near to us,
Lingered the leaders by towers of flame :
Elders who turn from the lordly old year to us
Crowned with the lights of ineffable fame.

III.

Nine and seventy years ago,
Up the blaze of yonder bay,
On a great exalted day,
Came from seas august with snow—
Waters where the whirlwinds blow—
First of England's sons who stood
By the deep green bygone wood
Where the wild song used to flow
Nine and seventy years ago.
Five and forty years ago,
On a grand auspicious morn
When the South Wind blew his horn,
Where the splendid mountains glow—
Peaks that God and Sunrise know—

Came the fearless, famous band—
 Founders of our radiant land—
 From the lawns where roses grow,
 Five and forty years ago.

IV.

By gracious slopes of fair green hills,
 In shadows cool and deep,
 Where floats the psalm of many rills,
 The noble elders sleep.
 But while their children's children last—
 While seed from seedling springs,
 The print and perfume of their past
 Will be as deathless things.
 Their voices are with vanished years—
 With other days and hours ;
 Their homes are sanctified by tears—
 They sleep amongst the flowers.
 They do not walk by street or stream,
 Or tread by grove or shore,
 But, in the nation's highest dream,
 They shine for evermore.

V.

By lawny slope and lucent strand
 Are singing flags of every land ;
 On streams of splendour—bays impearled—
 The keels are here of all the world.
 With lutes of light and cymbals clear
 We waft goodwill to every sphere.

The links of love to-day are thrown
From sea to sea—from zone to zone ;
And, lo ! we greet, in glory drest,
The lords that come from east and west,
And march like noble children forth
To meet our fathers from the North !

VI.

To Thee be the glory, All-Bountiful Giver !

The song that we sing is an anthem to Thee,
Whose blessing is shed on Thy people for ever,
Whose love is like beautiful light on the sea.
Behold, with high sense of Thy mercy unsleeping,
We come to Thee, kneel to Thee, praise Thee, and
pray,
O Lord, in whose hand is the strength that is keeping
The storm from the wave and the night from the day !



ON A SPANISH CATHEDRAL.*



DEEP under the spires of a hill, by the feet of
the thunder-cloud trod,

I pause in a luminous, still, magnificent temple
of God!

At the steps of the altar august—a vision of
angels in stone—

I kneel, with my head to the dust, on the floors by the
seraphim known.

No father in Jesus is near, with the high, the com-
passionate face,

But the glory of Godhead is here—its presence trans-
figures the place!

Behold, in this beautiful fane, with the lights of blue
heaven impearled,

I think of the Elders of Spain, in the deserts—the wilds
of the world!

I think of the wanderers poor, who knelt on the flints
and the sands,

When the mighty and merciless Moor was lord of the
Lady of Lands.

* Every happy expression in these stanzas may fairly be
claimed by the Hon. W. B. Dalley. (*Author's note.*)

Where the African scimitar flamed, with a swift, bitter
death in its kiss,
The Fathers, unknown and unnamed, found God in
cathedrals like this !
The glow of the Spirit—the beam of His blessing—made
lords of the men
Whose food was the herb of the stream, whose roof was
the dome of the den.
And, far in the hills by the sea, these awful hierophants
prayed
For Rome and its temples to be—in a temple by Deity
made.

Who knows of their faith—of its power? Perhaps, with
the light in their eyes,
They saw, in some wonderful hour, the marvel of
centuries rise !
Perhaps in some moment supreme, when the mountains
were holy and still,
They dreamed the magnificent dream that came to the
monks of Seville !
Surrounded by pillars and spires whose summits shone
out in the glare
Of the high, the omnipotent fires, who knows what was
seen by them there ?
Be sure, if they saw, in the noon of their faith, some
ineffable fane,
They looked on the Church like a moon dropped down
by the Lord into Spain.

And the Elders who shone in the time when Christ over
Christendom beamed,
May have dreamed at their altars sublime the dream
that their fathers had dreamed,
By the glory of Italy moved—the majesty shining in
Rome—
They turned to the land that they loved, and prayed for
a church in their home ;
And a soul of unspeakable fire descended on them, and
they fought
And laboured a life for the spire and tower and dome
of their thought !
These grew under blessing and praise, as morning in
summertime grows—
As Troy in the dawn of the days to the music of
Delphicus rose.

In a land of bewildering light, where the feet of the
season are Spring's,
They worked in the day and the night, surrounded by
beautiful things.
The wonderful blossoms in stone—the flower and leaf of
the Moor,
On column and cupola shone, and gleamed on the
glimmering floor.
In a splendour of colour and form, from the marvellous
African's hands
Yet vivid and shining and warm, they planted the Flower
of Lands.

Inspired by the patience supreme of the mute, the
magnificent past,
They toiled till the dome of their dream in the firmament
blossomed at last!

Just think of these men—of their time—of the days of
their deed, and the scene!

How touching their zeal—how sublime their suppression
of self must have been!

In a city yet hacked by the sword and scarred by the
flame of the Moor,

They started the work of their Lord, sad, silent, and
solemnly poor.

These Fathers, how little they thought of themselves,
and how much of the days

When the children of men would be brought to pray in
their temple, and praise!

Ah! full of the radiant, still, heroic old life that has
flown,

The merciful monks of Seville toiled on, and died bare
and unknown.

The music, the colour, the gleam, of their mighty
cathedral will be

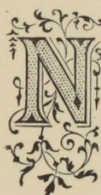
Hereafter a luminous dream of the heaven I never may
see;

To a spirit that suffers and seeks for the calm of a
competent creed,

This temple, whose majesty speaks, becomes a religion
indeed ;
The passionate lights—the intense, the ineffable beauty
of sound,
Go straight to the heart through the sense, as a song
would of seraphim crowned.
And lo ! by these altars august, the life that is highest
we live,
And are filled with the infinite trust and the peace that
the world cannot give.

They have passed—have the elders of time ; they have
gone, but the work of their hands,
Pre-eminent, peerless, sublime, like a type of eternity
stands !
They are mute, are the Fathers who made this church
in the century dim ;
But the dome with their beauty arrayed remains, a
perpetual hymn.
Their names are unknown ; but so long as the humble in
spirit and pure
Are worshipped in speech and in song, our love for these
monks will endure.
And the lesson by sacrifice taught will live in the light
of the years
With a reverence not to be bought, and a tenderness
deeper than tears.

ROVER.


 NO classic warrior tempts my pen
 To fill with verse these pages—
 No lordly-hearted man of men
 My muse's thoughts engages.

Let others choose the mighty dead,
 And sing their battles over!
 My champion, too, has fought and bled—
 My theme is one-eyed Rover.

A grave old dog, with tattered ears
 Too sore to cock up, reader—
 A four-legged hero, full of years,
 But sturdy as a cedar.

Still, age is age ; and if my rhyme
 Is dashed with words pathetic,
 Don't wonder, friend ; I've seen the time
 When Rove was more athletic.

He lies coiled up before me now,
A comfortable crescent ;
His night-black nose and grizzled brow
Fixed in a fashion pleasant.

But ever and anon he lifts
The one good eye I mention,
And tries a thousand doggish shifts
To rivet my attention.

Just let me name his name, and up
You'll see him start and patter
Towards me, like a six-months' pup
In point of speed, but fatter.

He pokes his head upon my lap,
Nor heeds the whip above him ;
Because he knows, the dear old chap,
His human friends all love him.

Our younger dogs cut off from hence
At sight of lash uplifted ;
But Rove, with grand indifference,
Remains, and can't be shifted.

And, ah ! the set upon his phiz
At meals defies expression ;
For I confess that Rover is
A cadger by profession.

The lesser favourites of the place
At dinner keep their distance ;
But by my chair one grizzled face
Begs on with brave persistence.

His jaws present a toothless sight,
But still my hearty hero
Can satisfy an appetite
Which brings a bone to zero.

And while Spot barks and pussy mews,
To move the cook's compassion,
He takes his after-dinner snooze
In genuine biped fashion.

In fact, in this our ancient pet
So hits off human nature
That I at times almost forget
He's but a dog in feature.

Between his tail and bright old eye
The swift communications
Outstrip the messages which fly
From telegraphic stations.

And, ah ! that tail's rich eloquence
Conveys too clear a moral
For men who have a grain of sense
About its drift to quarrel.

At night, his voice is only heard
When it is wanted badly ;
For Rover is too cute a bird
To follow shadows madly.

The pup and Carlo in the dark
Will start at crickets chirring ;
But when we hear the old dog bark
We know there's *something* stirring.

He knows a gun, does Rover here ;
And if I cock a trigger,
He makes himself from tail to ear
An admirable figure.

For, once the fowling piece is out,
And game is on the *tapis*,
The set upon my hero's snout
Would make a cockle happy.

And as for horses, why, betwixt
Our chestnut mare and Rover
The mutual friendship is as fixed
As any love of lover.

And when his master's hand resigns
The bridle for the paddle,
His dogship on the grass reclines,
And stays and minds the saddle.

Of other friends he has no lack ;
Gray pussy is his crony,
And kittens mount upon his back,
As youngsters mount a pony.

They talk of man's superior sense,
And charge the few with treason
Who think a dog's intelligence
Is very like our reason.

But though Philosophy has tried
A score of definitions,
'Twi'x't man and dog it can't decide
The relative positions.

And I believe upon the whole
(Though you my creed deny, sir)
That Rove's entitled to a soul
As much as you or I, sir.

Indeed, I fail to see the force
Of your derisive laughter
Because I will not say my horse
Has not some horse-hereafter.

A fig for dogmas—let them pass !
There's much in life to grieve us ;
And what most grieves is *this*, alas !
That all our best friends leave us.

And when I sip my nightly grog,
And watch old Rover blinking,
This royal ruin of a dog
Calls forth some serious thinking.

For, though he's lightly touched by fate,
I cannot help remarking
The step of age is in his gait—
Its hoarseness in his barking.

He still goes on his rounds at night
To keep off forest prowlers !
But, ah ! he has no teeth to bite
The cunning-hearted howlers.

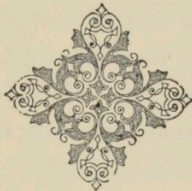
Not like the Rover that, erewhile,
Gave droves of dingoes battle,
And dashed through flood and fierce defile—
The friend, but dread, of cattle !

Not like to him that, in past years,
Won fight by fight, and scattered
Whole tribes of dogs with rags of ears
And tail-ends torn and tattered !

But while time tells upon our pet,
And makes him grayer daily,
He is a noble fellow yet,
And wears his old age gaily.

Still, dogs must die ; and in the end,
When he is past caressing,
We'll mourn him like some human friend,
Whose presence was a blessing.

Till then, be bread and peace his lot—
A life of calm and clover !
The pup may sleep outside with Spot—
We'll keep the nook for Rover.



BY THE CLIFFS OF THE SEA.

[In Memory of Samuel Bennett.]



IN a far-away glen of the hills,
 Where the bird of the night is at rest,
 Shut in from the thunder that fills
 The fog-hidden caves of the west—
 In a sound of the leaf, and the lute
 Of the wind on the quiet lagoon,
 I stand, like a worshipper, mute
 In the flow of a marvellous tune!
 And the song that is sweet to my sense
 Is, "*Nearer, my God, unto Thee ;*"
 But it carries me sorrowing hence,
 To a grave by the cliffs of the sea.

So many have gone that I loved—
 So few of the fathers remain,
 That where in old seasons I moved
 I could never be happy again.
 In the breaks of this beautiful psalm,
 With its deep, its devotional tone,
 And hints of ineffable calm,
 I feel like a stranger, alone.

No wonder my eyes are so dim—
Your trouble is heavy on me,
O widow and daughter of him
Who sleeps in the grave by the sea!

The years have been hard that have pressed
On a head full of premature gray,
Since Stenhouse went down to his rest,
And Harpur was taken away.
In the soft yellow evening ends,
The wind of the water is faint
By the home of the last of my friends—
The shrine of the father and saint.
The tenderness touching, the grace
Of Ridley no more is for me ;
And flowers have hidden the face
Of the brother who sleeps by the sea.

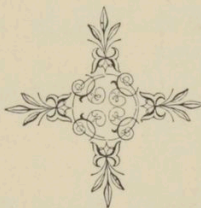
The vehement voice of the South
Is loud where the journalist lies ;
But calm hath encompassed his mouth,
And sweet is the peace in his eyes.
Called hence by the Power who knows
When the work of a hero is done,
He turned at the message, and rose
With the harness of diligence on.
In the midst of magnificent toil,
He bowed at the holy decree ;
And green is the grass on the soil
Of the grave by the cliffs of the sea.

I knew him, indeed ; and I knew,
Having suffered so much in his day,
What a beautiful nature and true
In Bennett was hidden away.
In the folds of a shame without end,
When the lips of the scorner were curled,
I found in this brother a friend—
The last that was left in the world.
Ah ! under the surface austere
Compassion was native to thee ;
I send from my solitude here
This rose for the grave by the sea.

To the high, the heroic intent
Of a life that was never at rest,
He held, with a courage unspent,
Through the worst of his days and the best.
Far back in the years that are dead
He knew of the bitterness cold
That saddens with silver the head
And makes a man suddenly old.
The dignity gracing his grief
Was ever a lesson to me ;
He lies under blossom and leaf
In a grave by the cliffs of the sea.

Above him the wandering face
Of the moon is a loveliness now,
And anthems encompass the place
From lutes of the luminous bough.

The forelands are fiery with foam
Where often and often he roved ;
He sleeps in the sight of the home
That he built by the waters he loved.
The wave is his fellow at night,
And the sun, shining over the lea,
Sheds out an unspeakable light
On this grave by the cliffs of the sea.



GALATEA.



SILVER slope, a fall of firs, a ledge of gleaming
 grasses,
 And fiery cones, and sultry spurs, and swarthy
 pits and passes !

* * * * *

The long-haired Cyclops bated breath, and bit his lip
 and hearkened,
 And dug and dragged the stone of death, by ways that
 dipped and darkened.

Across a tract of furnaced flints there came a wind of
 water,
 From yellow banks with tender hints of Tethys' white-
 armed daughter.

She sat amongst wild singing weeds, by beds of myrrh
 and moly ;
 And Acis made a flute of reeds, and drew its accents
 slowly ;

And taught its spirit subtle sounds that leapt beyond
suppression,
And paused and panted on the bounds of fierce and
fitful passion.

Then he who shaped the cunning tune, by keen desire
made bolder,
Fell fainting, like a fervent noon, upon the sea-nymph's
shoulder.

Sicilian suns had laid a dower of light and life about
her :
Her beauty was a gracious flower—the heart fell dead
without her.

“ Ah, Galaté,” said Polypheme, “ I would that I could
find thee
Some finest tone of hill or stream, wherewith to lull and
bind thee !

“ What lyre is left of marvellous range, whose subtle
strings, containing
Some note supreme, might catch and change, or set thy
passion waning ?—

“ Thy passion for the fair-haired youth whose fleet, light
feet perplex me
By ledges rude, on paths uncouth, and broken ways that
vex me

“Ah, turn to me! else violent sleep shall track the
cunning lover ;
And thou wilt wait and thou wilt weep when I his
haunts discover.”

But golden Galatea laughed, and Thôsa's son, like
thunder,
Broke through a rifted rannel shaft, and dashed its
rocks asunder,

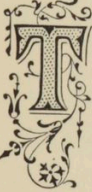
And poised the bulk, and hurled the stone, and crushed
the hidden Acis,
And struck with sorrow drear and lone the sweetest of
all faces.

To Zeus, the mighty Father, she, with plaint and prayer,
departed :
Then from fierce Ætna to the sea a fountained water
started—

A lucent stream of lutes and lights—cool haunt of
flower and feather,
Whose silver days and yellow nights made years of
hallowed weather.

Here Galatea used to come, and rest beside the river ;
Because, in faint, soft, blowing foam, her shepherd lived
for ever.

AFTER MANY YEARS.


 HE song that once I dreamed about,
 The tender, touching thing,
 As radiant as the rose without,
 The love of wind and wing :
 The perfect verses, to the tune
 Of woodland music set,
 As beautiful as afternoon,
 Remain unwritten yet.

It is too late to write them now—
 The ancient fire is cold ;
 No ardent lights illumine the brow,
 As in the days of old.
 I cannot dream the dream again ;
 But, when the happy birds
 Are singing in the sunny rain,
 I think I hear its words.

I think I hear the echo still
Of long-forgotten tones,
When evening winds are on the hill
And sunset fires the cones ;
But only in the hours supreme,
With songs of land and sea,
The lyrics of the leaf and stream,
This echo comes to me.

No longer doth the earth reveal
Her gracious green and gold ;
I sit where youth was once, and feel
That I am growing old.
The lustre from the face of things
Is wearing all away ;
Like one who halts with tired wings,
I rest and muse to-day.

There is a river in the range
I love to think about ;
Perhaps the searching feet of change
Have never found it out.
Ah ! oftentimes I used to look
Upon its banks, and long
To steal the beauty of that brook
And put it in a song.

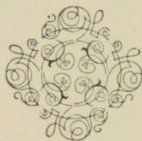
I wonder if the slopes of moss,
 In dreams so dear to me—
The falls of flower, and flower-like floss—
 Are as they used to be !
I wonder if the waterfalls,
 The singers far and fair,
That gleamed between the wet, green walls,
 Are still the marvels there !

Ah ! let me hope that in that place
 The old familiar things
To which I turn a wistful face
 Have never taken wings.
Let me retain the fancy still,
 That, past the lordly range,
There always shines, in folds of hill,
 One spot secure from change !

I trust that yet the tender screen
 That shades a certain nook,
Remains, with all its gold and green,
 The glory of the brook.
It hides a secret, to the birds
 And waters only known :
The letters of two lovely words—
 A poem on a stone.

Perhaps the lady of the past
 Upon these lines may light,
The purest verses, and the last,
 That I may ever write.
She need not fear a word of blame :
 Her tale the flowers keep—
The wind that heard me breathe her name
 Has been for years asleep.

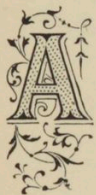
But in the night, and when the rain
 The troubled torrent fills,
I often think I see again
 The river in the hills ;
And when the day is very near,
 And birds are on the wing,
My spirit fancies it can hear
 The song I cannot sing.





SOME POEMS FOR THE FIRST TIME
COLLECTED.

IN MEMORY OF EDWARD BUTLER.



VOICE of grave, deep emphasis
 Is in the woods to-night ;
 No sound of radiant day is this,
 No cadence of the light.
 Here, in the fall and flights of leaves
 Against gray widths of sea,
 The spirit of the forest grieves
 For lost Persephone.

The fair divinity that roves
 Where many waters sing,
 Doth miss her daughter of the groves—
 The golden-headed spring.
 She cannot find the shining hand
 That once the rose caressed ;
 There is no blossom on the land,
 No bird in last year's nest.

Here, where this strange Demeter weeps—
This large, sad life unseen—
Where July's strong, wild torrent leaps
The wet hill-heads between,
I sit and listen to the grief,
The high, supreme distress,
Which sobs above the fallen leaf
Like human tenderness !

Where sighs the sedge and moans the marsh
The hermit plover calls ;
The voice of straitened streams is harsh
By windy mountain walls ;
There is no gleam upon the hills
Of last October's wings ;
The shining lady of the rills
Is with forgotten things.

Now where the land's worn face is gray
And storm is on the wave,
What flower is left to bear away
To Edward Butler's grave ?
What tender rose of song is here
That I may pluck and send
Across the hills and seas austere
To my lamented friend ?

There is no blossom left at all !
But this white winter leaf,
Whose glad green life is past recall,
Is token of my grief ;
Where love is tending growths of grace,
The first-born of the spring,
Perhaps there may be found a place
For my pale offering.

For this heroic Irish heart,
We miss so much to-day,
Whose life was of our lives a part,
What words have I to say ?
Because I know the noble woe
That shrinks beneath the touch—
The pain of brothers stricken low—
I will not say too much.


But often in the lonely space
When night is on the land,
I dream of a departed face—
A gracious, vanished hand.
And when the solemn waters roll
Against the outer steep,
I see a great, benignant soul
Beside me in my sleep.

Yea, while the frost is on the ways
 With barren banks austere,
The friend I knew in other days
 Is often very near.
I do not hear a single tone ;
 But where this brother gleams,
The elders of the seasons flown
 Are with me in my dreams.


The saintly face of Stenhouse turns—
 His kind old eyes I see ;
And Pell and Ridley from their urns
 Arise and look at me.
By Butler's side the lights reveal
 The father of his fold,
I start from sleep in tears, and feel
 That I am growing old.

Where Edward Butler sleeps the wave
 Is hardly ever heard ;
But now the leaves above his grave,
 By August's songs are stirred.
The slope beyond is green and still,
 And in my dreams I dream
The hill is like an Irish hill
 Beside an Irish stream.

BLUE MOUNTAIN PIONEERS.


 HE dauntless three! for twenty days and
 nights
 These heroes battled with the haughty heights ;
 For twenty spaces of the star and sun
 These Romans kept their harness buckled on ;
 By gaping gorges, and by cliffs austere,
 These fathers struggled in the great old year ;
 Their feet they set on strange hills scarred by fire,
 Their strong arms forced a path through brake and briar ;
 They fought with Nature till they reached the throne
 Where morning glittered on the great UNKNOWN !
 There, in a time with praise and prayer supreme,
 Paused Blaxland, Lawson, Wentworth, in a dream ;
 There, where the silver arrows of the day
 Smote slope and spire, they halted on their way.
 Behind them were the conquered hills—they faced
 The vast green West, with glad, strange beauty graced ;
 And every tone of every cave and tree
 Was as a voice of splendid prophecy.

INTAGLIO—FRANK DENZ.


 N the roar of the storm, in the wild, bitter voice
 of the tempest-whipped sea,
 The cry of my darling, my child, comes ever
 and ever to me ;
 And I stand where the haggard-faced wood
 stares down on a sinister shore,
 But all that is left is the hood of the babe I can cherish
 no more.

A little blue hood, with the shawl of the girl that I took
 for my wife,
 In a happy old season, is all that remains of the light of
 my life ;
 The wail of a woman in pain, and the sob of a smothering
 bird,
 They come through the darkness again—in the wind and
 the rain they are heard.

Oh, women and men who have known the perils of
weather and wave,
It is sad that my sweet ones are blown under sea without
shelter of grave ;
I sob like a child in the night, when the gale on the
waters is loud—
My darlings went down in my sight, with neither a
coffin nor shroud.

In the whistle of wind, and the whirl of ominous frag-
ments of wreck,
The wife, with her poor little girl, saw death on the lee
of the deck ;
But, sirs, she depended on me—she trusted my comforting
word ;
She is down in the depths of the sea—my love, with her
beautiful bird.

In the boat I was ordered to go—I was not more afraid
than the rest,
But a husband will falter, you know, with the love of his
life at his breast ;
My captain was angry a space, but soon he grew tender
in tone—
Perhaps there had flashed by his face a wife and a child
of his own.

I was weak for some moments, and cried ; but only one
 hope was in life ;
The hood upon baby I tied—I fastened the shawl on my
 wife.
The skipper took charge of the child—he stuck to his
 word till the last ;
But only this hood on the wild, bitter shore of the sea
 had been cast.

In the place of a coward, who shook like a leaf in the
 quivering boat,
A seat on the rowlocks I took ; but the sea had me
 soon by the throat,
The surge gripped me fast by the neck—in a ring, and a
 roll, and a roar,
I was cast like a piece of the wreck, on a bleak, beaten,
 shelterless shore.

And there were my darlings on board for the rest of
 that terrible day,
And I watched and I prayed to the Lord, as never
 before I could pray.
The windy hills stared at the black, heavy clouds coming
 over the wave ;
My girl was expecting me back, but where was my
 power to save ?

Ah, where was my power, when Death was glaring at me
from the reef?

I cried till I gasped for my breath, aloof with a
maddening grief.

We couldn't get back to the deck: I wanted to go; but
the sea

Dashed over the sides of the wreck, and carried my
darling from me.

Oh, girl that I took by the hand to the altar two
summers ago,

I would you were buried on land—my dear, it would
comfort me so!

I would you were sleeping where grows the grass and
the musical reed,

For how can you find a repose in the toss of the tangle
and weed?

The night sped along, and I strained to the shadow, and
saw to the end

My captain and bird—he remained to the death, a
superlative friend:

In the face of the hurricane wild, he clung with the
babe to the mast;


To the last he was true to my child—he was true to my
child to the last.

The wind, like a life without home, comes mocking at
door and at pane
In the time of the cry of the foam—in the season of
thunder and rain,
And, dreaming, I start in the bed, and feel for my little
one's brow !
But lost is the beautiful head ; the cradle is tenantless
now.

My home was all morning and glow when wife and her
baby were there,
But, ah ! it is saddened, you know, by dresses my girl
used to wear.
I cannot re-enter the door ; its threshold can never be
crossed,
For fear I should see on the floor the shoes of the child
I have lost.

There were three of us once in the world ; but two are
deep down in the sea,
Where waif and where tangle are hurled—the two that
were portions of me ;
They are far from me now, but I hear, when hushed are
the night and the tide,
The voice of my little one near—the step of my wife by
my side.

HOW THE MELBOURNE CUP WAS WON.


 N the beams of a beautiful day,
 Made soft by a breeze from the sea,
 The horses were started away,
 The fleet-footed thirty and three ;
 Where beauty, with shining attire,
 Shed more than a noon on the land,
 Like spirits of thunder and fire
 They flashed by the fence and the stand.

And the mouths of pale thousands were hushed
 When Somnus, a marvel of strength,
 Past Bowes like a sudden wind rushed,
 And led the bay colt by a length ;
 But a chestnut came galloping through,
 And down where the river-tide steals,
 O'Brien, on brave Waterloo,
 Dashed up to the big horse's heels.

But Cracknell still kept to the fore,
 And first by the water bend wheeled,
 When a cry from the stand, and a roar,
 Ran over green furlongs of field ;
 Far out by the back of the course—
 A demon of muscle and pluck—
 Flashed onward the favourite horse,
 With his hoofs flaming clear of the ruck.

But the wonderful Queenslander came,
 And the thundering leaders were three ;
 And a ring, and a roll of acclaim,
 Went out, like a surge of the sea ;
 “ An Epigram ! Epigram wins ! ”—
 “ The colt of the Derby ”—“ The bay ! ”
 But back where the crescent begins
 The favourite melted away.

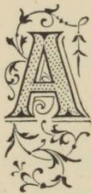
And the marvel that came from the North,
 With another, was heavily thrown ;
 And here at the turning flashed forth
 To the front a surprising unknown ;
 By shed and by paddock and gate
 The strange, the magnificent black,
 Led Darebin a length in “ the straight,”
 With thirty and one at his back.

But the Derby colt tired at the rails,
And Ivory's marvellous bay
Passed Burton, O'Brien, and Hales,
As fleet as a flash of the day.
But Gough on the African star
Came clear in the front of his "field,"
Hard followed by Morrison's Czar
And the blood unaccustomed to yield.

Yes, first from the turn to the end,
With a boy on him paler than ghost,
The horse that had hardly a friend
Shot flashing like fire by the post.
When Graham was "riding" 'twas late
For his friends to applaud on the stands,
The black, through the bend and the "straight,"
Had the race of the year in his hands.

In a clamour of calls and acclaim,
He landed the money—the horse
With the beautiful African name,
That rang to the back of the course.
Hurrah for the Hercules race,
And the terror that came from his stall,
With the bright, the intelligent face,
To show the road home to them all.


ON A BABY BURIED BY THE HAWKESBURY.

[*Lines sent to a Young Mother.*]

GRACE that was lent for a very few hours,
 By the bountiful Spirit above us ;
 She sleeps like a flower in the land of the flowers,
 She went ere she knew how to love us ;
 Her music of Heaven was strange to this sphere,
 Her voice is a silence for ever ;
 In the bitter, wild fall of a sorrowful year,
 We buried our bird by the river.

But the gold of the grass, and the green of the vine,
 And the music of wind and of water ;
 And the torrent of song and superlative shine,
 Are close to our dear little daughter ;
 The months of the year are all gracious to her,
 A winter breath visits her never ;
 She sleeps like a bird in a cradle of myrrh,
 By the beautiful banks of the river.

AT HER WINDOW.


 O-NIGHT a strong south wind in thunder sings
 Across the city. Now by salt wet flats,
 And ridges perished with the breath of drought,
 Comes up a deep, sonorous, gulf-like voice—
 Far-travelled herald of some distant storm—
 That strikes with harsh gigantic wings the cliff,
 Where twofold Otway meets his straitened surf,
 And makes a white wrath of a league of sea.

To-night the fretted Yarra chafes its banks,
 And dusks and glistens ; while the city shows
 A ring of windy light. From street to street
 The noise of labour, linked to hurrying wheels,
 Rolls off, as rolls the stately sound of wave,
 When he that hears it hastens from the shore.

To-night beside a moody window sits
 A wife who watches for her absent love ;
 Her home is in a dim suburban street,
 In which the winds, like one with straitened breath,
 Now fleet with whispers dry and short half-sobs,
 Or pause and beat against the showery panes
 Like homeless mem'ries seeking for a home.

There, where the plopping of the guttered rain
Sounds like a heavy footstep in the dark,
Where every shadow thrown by flickering light
Seems like her husband halting at the door,
I say a woman sits, and waits, and sits,
Then trims her fire, and comes to wait again.

The chapel clock strikes twelve! He has not come.
The night grows wilder, and the wind dies off
The roads, now turned to thoroughfares of storm,
Save when a solitary, stumbling foot
Breaks through the clamour. Then the watcher starts,
And trembles, with her hand upon the key,
And flutters, with the love upon her lips—
Then sighs, returns, and takes her seat once more.
Is this the old, old tale? Ah, do not ask,
My gentle reader, but across your doubts
Throw shining reasons on the happier side ;
Or, if you cannot choose but doubt the man—
If you do count him in your thoughts as one
Who leaves a good wife by a lonely hearth
For more than half the night, for scenes (we'll say)
Of revelry—I pray you think of how
That wretch must suffer in his waking times
(If he be human) when he recollects
That through the long, long hours of evil feasts
With painted sin, and under glaring gas,
His brightest friend was at a window-sill
A watcher, seated in a joyless room,
And haply left without a loaf of bread.

I, having learnt from sources pure and high,
From springs of love that make the perfect wife,
Can say how much a woman will endure
For one to whom her tender heart has passed.
When fortune fails, and friends drop off, and time
Has shadows waiting in predestined ways—
When shame that grows from want of money comes,
And sets its brand upon a husband's brow,
And makes him walk an alien in the streets :
One faithful face, on which a light divine
Becomes a glory when vicissitude
Is in its darkest mood—one face, I say,
Marks not the fallings-off that others see,
Seeks not to know the thoughts that others think,
Cares not to hear the words that others say :
But, through her deep and self-sufficing love,
She only sees the bright-eyed youth that won
Her maiden heart in other, happier days,
And not the silent, gloomy-featured man
That frets and shivers by a sullen fire.

And, therefore, knowing this from you, who've shared
With me the ordeal of most trying times,
I sometimes feel a hot shame flushing up,
To think that there are those among my sex
Who are so cursed with small-souled selfishness
That they do give to noble wives like you,
For love—that first and final flower of life—
The dreadful portion of a drunkard's home.

WILLIAM BEDE DALLEY.



HAT love of letters which is as the light
 Of deathless verse, intense, ineffable,
 Hath made this scholar's nature like the white,
 Pure Roman soul of whom the poets tell.

He having lived so long with lords of thought,
 The grand hierophants of speech and song,
 Hath from the high, august communion caught
 Some portion of their inspiration strong.

The clear, bright atmosphere through which he looks
 Is one by no dim, close horizon bound ;
 The power shed as flame from noble books
 Hath made for him a larger world around.

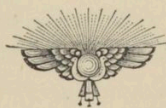
And he, thus strengthened with the fourfold force
 Which scholarship to genius gives, is one
 That liberal thinkers, pausing in their course,
 With fine esteem are glad to look upon.

He with the faultless intuition born
Of splendid faculties, sees things aright,
And all his strong, immeasurable scorn
Falls like a thunder on the hypocrite.

But for the sufferer and the son of shame
On whom remorse—a great, sad burden—lies,
His kindness glistens like a morning flame,
Immense compassion shines within his eyes.

Firm to the church by which his fathers stood,
But tolerant to every form of creed,
He longs for universal brotherhood,
And is a Christian gentleman indeed.

These in his honour. May his life be long,
And, like a summer with a brilliant close,
As full of music as a perfect song,
As radiant as a rich unhandled rose.



ON A STREET.



DREAD that street—its haggard face
 I have not seen for eight long years ;
 A mother's curse is on the place
 (There's blood, my reader, in her tears).
 No child of man shall ever track,
 Through filthy dust, the singer's feet—
 A fierce old memory drags me back ;
 I hate its name—I dread that street.

Upon the lap of green, sweet lands,
 Whose months are like your English Mays,
 I try to hide in Lethe's sands
 The bitter old Bohemian days.
 But sorrow speaks in singing leaf,
 And trouble talketh in the tide ;
 The skirts of a stupendous grief
 Are trailing ever at my side.

I will not say who suffered there,
 'Tis best the name aloof to keep,
 Because the world is very fair—
 Its light should sing the dark to sleep.
 But, let me whisper, in that street
 A woman, faint through want of bread,
 Has often pawned the quilt and sheet
 And wept upon a barren bed.

How gladly would I change my theme,
 Or cease the song and steal away,
 But on the hill and by the stream
 A ghost is with me night and day!
 A dreadful darkness, full of wild,
 Chaotic visions, comes to me:
 I seem to hear a dying child,*
 Its mother's face I seem to see.

Here, surely, on this bank of bloom,
 My verse with shine would ever flow;
 But, ah! it comes—the rented room,
 With man and wife who suffered so!
 From flower and leaf there is no hint—
 I only see a sharp distress—
 A lady in a faded print,
 A careworn writer for the press.

* The poet's daughter, Araluen.

I only hear the brutal curse
Of landlord clamouring for his pay ;
And yonder is the pauper's hearse
That comes to take a child away.
Apart, and with the half-grey head
Of sudden age, again I see
The father writing by the dead,
To earn the undertaker's fee.

No tear at all is asked for him—
A drunkard well deserves his life ;
But voice will quiver, eyes grow dim,
For her, the patient, pure young wife,
The gentle girl of better days,
As timid as a mountain fawn,
Who used to choose untrodden ways,
And place at night her rags in pawn.

She could not face the lighted square,
Or show the street her poor, thin dress ;
In one close chamber, bleak and bare,
She hid her burden of distress.
Her happy schoolmates used to drive,
On gaudy wheels, the town about ;
The meat that keeps a dog alive,
She often had to go without.

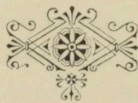
I tell you, this is not a tale
Conceived by me, but bitter truth ;
Bohemia knows it, pinched and pale,
Beside the pyre of burnt-out youth.
These eyes of mine have often seen
The sweet girl-wife, in winters rude,
Steal out at night, through courts unclean,
To hunt about for chips of wood.

Have I no word at all for him
Who used down fetid lanes to slink,
And squat in tap-room corners grim,
And drown his thoughts in dregs of drink ?
This much I'll say, that when the flame
Of reason reassumed its force,
The hell the Christian fears to name,
Was heaven to his fierce remorse.


Just think of him—beneath the ban,
And steeped in sorrow to the neck,
Without a friend—a feeble man
In failing health—a human wreck ;
With all his sense and scholarship,
How could he face his fading wife ?
The devil never lifted whip
With strings like those that scourged his life.

But He in whom the dying thief
 Upon the Cross did place his trust,
Forgets the sin and feels the grief,
 And lifts the sufferer from the dust.
And now, because I have a dream,
 The man and woman found the light ;
A glory burns upon the stream,
 With gold and green the woods are bright.

But still I hate that haggard street,
 Its filthy courts, its alleys wild ;
In dreams of it I always meet
 The phantom of a wailing child.
The name of it begets distress,
 Ah, song, be silent ! show no more
The lady in the perished dress,
 The scholar on the tap-room floor.



THE FATE OF THE EXPLORERS.*


 SET your face toward the darkness—tell of
 deserts weird and wide,
 Where unshaken woods are huddled, and low
 languid waters glide ;
 Turn and tell of deserts lonely, lying pathless,
 deep, and vast,
 Where in utter silence ever Time seems slowly breathing
 past—
 Silence only broken when the sun is flecked with cloudy
 bars,
 Or when tropic squalls come hurtling underneath the
 sultry stars !
 Deserts thorny, hot, and thirsty, where the feet of men
 are strange,
 And eternal Nature sleeps in solitudes which know no
 change.
 Weakened with their lengthened labours, past long
 plains of stone and sand,

* This and the following poem are from "Songs and Poems," the poet's juvenile volume, afterwards suppressed.

Down those trackless wilds they wandered, travellers
from a far-off land,
Seeking now to join their brothers, struggling on with
faltering feet,
For a glorious work was finished, and a noble task complete ;
And they dreamt of welcome faces—dreamt that soon
unto their ears
Friendly greetings would be thronging, with a nation's
well-earned cheers ;
Since their courage never failed them, but with high,
unflinching soul,
Each was pressing forward, hoping, trusting all should
reach the goal.

* * * * *

Though he rallied in the morning, long before the close
of day
He had sunk, the worn-out hero, fainting, dying by the
way !
But with Death he wrestled hardly ; three times, rising
from the sod,
Yet a little further onward o'er the weary waste he
trod.
Facing fate with heart undaunted, still the chief would
totter on
Till the evening closed about him—till the strength to
move was gone ;
Then he penned his latest writing, and, before the life
was spent,

Gave the records to his comrade—gave the watch he
said was lent—
Gave them with his last commandments, charging him
that night to stay,
And to let him lie unburied when the soul had passed
away.

Through that night he uttered little, rambling were the
words he spoke :
And he turned, and died in silence, when the tardy
morning broke.
Many memories come together whilst in sight of death
we dwell,
Much of sweet and sad reflection through the weary
mind must well.
As those long hours glided past him, till the east with
light was fraught,
Who may know the mournful secret—who can tell us
what he thought ?

Very lone and very wretched was the brave man left
behind,
Wandering over leagues of waste-land, seeking, hoping
help to find ;
Sleeping in deserted wurleys, fearful many nightfalls
through
Lest unfriendly hands should rob him of his hoard of
wild nardoo.

* * * * *

Ere he reached their old encampment—ere the well-
known spot he gained,
Something nerved him—something whispered that his
other chief remained.
So he searched for food to give him, trusting they might
both survive
Till the aid so long expected from the cities should
arrive ;
So he searched for food and took it to the gunyah,
where he found
Silence broken by his footfalls—death and darkness
on the ground.

Weak and wearied with his journey, there the lone
survivor stooped,
And the disappointment bowed him and his heart with
sadness drooped,
And he rose and raked a hollow with his wasted, feeble
hands,
Where he took and hid the hero, in the rushes and the
sands ;
But he, like a brother, laid him out of reach of wind and
rain,
And for many days he sojourned near him on that wild-
faced plain ;
Whilst he stayed beside the ruin, whilst he lingered
with the dead,
Oh ! he must have sat in shadow gloomy as the tears he
shed.

*

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*

Where our noble Burke was lying—where his sad
companion stood,
Came the natives of the forest—came the wild men of
the wood ;
Down they looked, and saw the stranger—he who there
in quiet slept—
Down they knelt, and o'er the chieftain bitterly they
moaned and wept :
Bitterly they mourned to see him all uncovered to the
blast—
All uncovered to the tempest as it wailed and whistled
past ;
And they shrouded him with bushes, so in death that
he might lie,
Like a warrior of their nation, sheltered from the stormy
sky.

* * * * *


Ye must rise and sing their praises, O ye bards with
souls of fire,
For the people's voice shall echo through the wailings of
your lyre ;
And we'll welcome back their comrade, though our eyes
with tears be blind
At the thoughts of promise perished, and the shadow
left behind ;
Now the leaves are bleaching round them—now the gales
above them glide,
But the end was all accomplished, and their fame is far
and wide,

Though this fadeless glory cannot hide a grateful nation's
grief,
And their laurels have been blended with a gloomy
cypress wreath.

Let them rest where they have laboured ! but, my
country, mourn and moan,
We must build with human sorrow grander monuments
than stone ;
Let them rest, for oh ! remember, that in long hereafter
time
Sons of Science oft shall wander o'er that solitary
clime !
Cities bright shall rise about it : Age and Beauty there
shall stray,
And the fathers of the people, pointing to the graves,
shall say :
“ Here they fell, the glorious martyrs ! when these
plains were woodlands deep ;
Here a friend, a brother, laid them ; here the wild men
came to weep.”



KOOROORA.


 HE gums in the gully stand gloomy and stark,
 A torrent beneath them is leaping,
 And the wind goes about like a ghost in the
 dark,
 Where a chief of Wahibbi lies sleeping !

He dreams of a battle—of foes of the past,
 But he hears not the whooping abroad on the blast,
 Nor the fall of the feet that are travelling fast.

Oh ! why dost thou slumber, Kooroora ?

They come o'er the hills in their terrible ire,
 And speed by the woodlands and water ;
 They look down the hills at the flickering fire,
 All eager and thirsty for slaughter.

Lo ! the stormy moon glares like a torch from the vale,
 And a voice in the beela grows wild in its wail,
 As the cries of the Wanneroos swell with the gale—

Oh ! rouse thee, and meet them, Kooroora.

He starts from his sleep, and he clutches his spear,
 And the echoes roll backward in wonder,
 For a shouting strikes into the hollow woods near,
 Like the sound of a gathering thunder.
 He clammers the ridge, with his face to the light,
 The foes of Wahibbi come full in his sight—
 The waters of Mooki will redden to-night.
 Go! and glory awaits thee, Kooroora.

Lo! yeelamans splinter, and boomerangs clash,
 And a spear in the darkness is driven—
 It whizzes along like a wandering flash
 From the heart of a hurricane riven.
 They turn to the mountains, that gloomy-browed band;
 The rain droppeth down with a moan to the land,
 And the face of a chieftain lies buried in sand—
 Oh! the light that was quenched in Kooroora!

To-morrow the Wanneroo dogs will rejoice,
 And feast in this desolate valley;
 But where are his brothers—the friends of his choice,
 And why art thou absent, Ewalli?
 Now silence draws back to the forest again,
 And the wind, like a wayfarer, sleeps on the plain,
 But the cheeks of a warrior bleach in the rain.
 Oh! where are thy mourners, Kooroora?

HYMN OF PRAISE.

[Closing of Exhibition.]

ENCOMPASSED by the psalm of hill and stream,
 By hymns august with their majestic theme,
 Here in the evening of exalted days
 To Thee, our Friend, we bow with breath of
 praise.

The great sublime hosannas of the sea
 Ascend on wings of mighty winds to Thee,
 And mingled with their stately words are tones
 Of human love, O Lord of all the zones !

Ah ! at the close of many splendid hours,
 While falls Thy gracious light in radiant showers,
 We seek Thy face, we praise thee, bless Thee, sing
 This song of reverence, Master, Maker, King !

To Thee, from whom all shining blessings flow,
 All gifts of lustre, all the joys we know,
 To Thee, O Father, in this lordly space,
 The great world turns with worship in its face.

For that glad season which will pass to-day
With light and music like a psalm away
The gathered nations with a grand accord,
In sight of Thy high heaven, thank Thee, Lord !

All praise is Thine—all love that we can give
Is also Thine, in whose large grace we live,
In whom we find the *One* long-suffering Friend,
Whose immemorial mercy has no end.



ROBERT PARKES.



HIGH travelling winds by royal hill
 Their awful anthem sing,
 And songs exalted flow and fill
 The caverns of the spring.

To-night across a wild wet plain
 A shadow sobs and strays;
 The trees are whispering in the rain
 Of long-departed days.

I cannot say what forest saith—
 Its words are strange to me:
 I only know that in its breath
 Are tones that used to be.

Yea, in these deep dim solitudes
 I hear a sound I know—
 The voice that lived in Penrith woods
 Twelve weary years ago.

And while the hymn of other years
Is on a listening land,
The Angel of the Past appears
And leads me by the hand ;

And takes me over moaning wave,
And tracts of sleepless change,
To set me by a lonely grave
Within a lonely range.

The halo of the beautiful
Is round the quiet spot ;
The grass is deep, and green, and cool,
Where sound of life is not.

Here in this lovely lap of bloom,
The grace of glen and glade,
That tender days and nights illumine,
My gentle friend was laid.

I do not mark the shell that lies
Beneath the touching flowers :
I only see the radiant eyes
Of other scenes and hours.

I only turn by grief inspired,
Like some forsaken thing,
To look upon a life retired
As hushed Bethesda's spring.

The glory of unblemished days
Is on this silent mound—
The light of years, too pure for praise ;
I kneel on holy ground !

Here in the clay of one whose mind
Was fairer than the dew,
The sweetest nature of his kind
I haply ever knew.

This Christian, walking on the white
Clear paths apart from strife,
Kept far from all the heat and light
That fills his father's life.

The clamour and exceeding flame
Were never in his days :
A higher object was his aim
Than thrones of shine and praise.

Ah, like an English April psalm,
That floats by sea and strand,
He passed away into the calm
Of the Eternal Land.

The chair he filled is set aside
Upon his father's floor ;
In morning hours, at eventide,
His step is heard no more.

No more his face the forest knows ;
His voice is of the Past ;
But from his life of beauty flows
A radiance that will last.

Yea, from the hours that heard his speech
High shining mem'ries give
That fine example which will teach
Our children how to live.

Here, kneeling in the body, far
From grave of flower and dew,
My friend, beyond the path of star,
I say these words to you.

Though you were as a fleeting flame
Across my road austere,
The memory of your face became
A thing for ever dear.

I never have forgotten yet
The Christian's gentle touch ;
And, since the time when last we met,
You know I've suffered much.

I feel that I have given pain
By certain words and deeds,
But stricken here with Sorrow's rain
My contrite spirit bleeds.

For your sole sake I rue the blow,
But this assurance send :
I smote, in noon, the public foe,
But not the private friend.

I know that once I wronged your sire,
But since that awful day
My soul has passed through blood and fire,
My head is very grey.

Here let me pause ! From years like yours
There ever flows and thrives,
The splendid blessing which endures
Beyond our little lives.

From lonely lands across the wave
Is sent to-night by me
This rose of reverence for the grave
Beside the mountain lea.



FEBRUARY.

THE bright-haired, blue-eyed last of Summer. Lo,
Her clear song lives in all the winds that blow ;
The upland torrent and the lowland rill,
The stream of valley and the spring of hill,
The pools that slumber and the brooks that run
Where dense the leaves are, green the light of sun,
Take all her grace of voice and colour. She,
With rich warm vine-blood splashed from heel to knee,
Comes radiant through the yellow woodlands. Far
And near her sweet gifts shine like star by star.
She is the true Demeter. Life of root
Glow under her in gardens flushed with fruit ;
She fills the fields with strength and passion—makes
A fire of lustre on the lawn-ringed lakes ;
Her beauty awes the great wild sea ; the height
Of gray magnificence takes strange delights
And softens at her presence, at the dear
Sweet face whose memory beams through all the year.

MARCH.

CLEAR upland voices, full of wind and stream,
Greet March, the sister of the flying beam
And speedy shadow. She, with rainbow crowned,
Lives in a sphere of songs of many sound.
The hymn of waters and the gale's high tone,
With anthems from the thunder's mountain throne,
Are with her ever. This, behold, is she
Who draws its great cry from the strong sad sea ;
She is the month of majesty. Her force
Is power that moves along a stately course,
Within the lines of order, like no wild
And lawless strength of winter's fiercest child.
About her are the wind-whipped torrents ; far
Above her gleams and flies the stormy star,
And round her, through the highlands and their rocks,
Rings loud the grand speech from the equinox.

APRIL.

THE darling of Australia's Autumn—Now
Down dewy dells the strong, swift torrents flow !
This is the month of singing waters—here
A tender radiance fills the southern year ;
No bitter winter sets on herb and root,
Within these gracious glades, a frosty foot ;
The spears of sleet, the arrows of the hail,
Are here unknown. But down the dark green dale
Of moss and myrtle, and the herby streams,
This April wanders in a home of dreams ;
Her flower-soft name makes language falter. All
Her paths are soft and cool, and runnels fall
In music round her ; and the woodlands sing,
For evermore, with voice of wind and wing,
Because this is the month of beauty—this
The crowning grace of all the grace that is.

MAY.

Now sings a cool, bland wind, where falls and flows
The runnel by the grave of last year's rose ;
Now, underneath the strong perennial leaves,
The first slow voice of wintering torrent grieves.
Now in a light, like English August's day,
Is seen the fair, sweet, chastened face of May ;
She is the daughter of the year who stands
With Autumn's last rich offerings in her hands ;
Behind her gleams the ghost of April's noon,
Before her is the far, faint dawn of June ;
She lingers where the dells and dewy leas
Catch stormy sayings from the great bold seas ;
Her nightly raiment is the misty fold
That zones her round with moonlight-coloured gold ;
And in the day she sheds, from shining wings,
A tender heat that keeps the life in things.

JUNE.

Not like that month when, in imperial space,
The high, strong sun stares at the white world's face ;
Not like that haughty daughter of the year
Who moves, a splendour, in a splendid sphere ;
But rather like a nymph of afternoon,
With cool, soft sunshine, comes Australian June :
She is the calm, sweet lady, from whose lips
No breath of living passion ever slips ;
The wind that on her virgin forehead blows
Was born too late to speak of last year's rose ;
She never saw a blossom, but her eyes
Of tender beauty see blue, gracious skies ;
She loves the mosses, and her feet have been
In woodlands where the leaves are always green ;
Her days pass on with sea-songs, and her nights
Shine, full of stars, on lands of frosty lights.

JULY.

HIGH travelling winds, filled with the strong storm's soul,
Are here, with dark, strange sayings from the Pole ;
Now is the time when every great cave rings
With sharp, clear echoes caught from mountain springs ;
This is the season when all torrents run
Beneath no bright, glad beauty of the sun.
Here, where the trace of last year's green is lost,
Are haughty gales, and lordships of the frost ;
Far down, by fields forlorn, and forelands bleak,
Are wings that fly not, birds that never speak ;
But in the deep hearts of the glens, unseen,
Stand grave, mute forests of eternal green ;
And here the lady, born in wind and rain,
Comes oft to moan and clap her palms with pain ;
This is our wild-faced July, in whose breast
Is never faultless light or perfect rest.

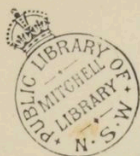
AUGUST.

Across the range, by every scarred black fell,
Strong Winter blows his horn of wild farewell ;
And in the glens, where yet there moves no wing,
A slow, sweet voice is singing of the Spring.
Yea, where the bright, quick woodland torrents run,
A music trembles under rain and sun.
The lips that breathe it are the lips of her
At whose dear touch the wan world's pulses stir—
The nymph who sets the bow of promise high
And fills with warm life-light the bleak gray sky.
She is the fair-haired August. Ere she leaves
She brings the woodbine blossom round the eaves
And where the bitter barbs of frost have been
She make a beauty with her gold and green ;
And, while a sea-song floats from bay and beach,
She sheds a mist of blossoms on the peach.

SEPTEMBER—*See page 77.*

OCTOBER.

WHERE fountains sing and many waters meet,
October comes with blossom-trammelled feet.
She sheds green glory by the wayside rills,
And clothes with grace the haughty-featured hills.
This is the queen of all the year. She brings
The pure chief beauty of our Southern springs.
Fair lady of the yellow hair ! Her breath
Starts flowers to life, and shames the storm to death ;
Through tender nights and days of generous sun
By prospering woods her clear strong torrents run ;
In far deep forests, where all life is mute,
Of leaf and bough she makes a touching lute.
Her life is lovely. Stream, and wind, and bird
Have seen her face—her marvellous voice have heard ;
And, in strange tracts of wildwood, all day long,
They tell the story in surpassing song.



NOVEMBER.

Now beats the first warm pulse of Summer—now
There shines great glory on the mountain's brow.
The face of heaven in the western sky,
When falls the sun, is filled with Deity !
And while the first light floods the lake and lea,
The morning makes a marvel of the sea ;
The strong leaves sing ; and in the deep green zones
Of rock-bound glens the streams have many tones ;
And where the evening-coloured waters pass,
Now glides November down fair falls of grass.
She is the wonder with the golden wings,
Who lays one hand in Summer's—one in Spring's ;
About her hair a sunset radiance glows ;
Her mouth is sister of the dewy rose ;
And all the beauty of the pure blue skies
Has lent its lustre to her soft bright eyes.

DECEMBER.

THE month whose face is holiness ! She brings
With her the glory of majestic things.
What words of light—what high resplendent phrase
Have I for all the lustre of her days ?
She comes, and carries in her shining sphere
August traditions of the world's great year ;
The noble tale which lifts the human race
Has made a morning of her sacred face.
Now in the emerald home of flower and wing
Clear summer streams their sweet hosannas sing ;
The winds are full of anthems, and a lute
Speaks in the listening hills when night is mute ;
And through dim tracks where talks the royal tree
There floats a grand hymn from the mighty sea ;
And where the gray, grave, pondering mountains stand
High music lives—the place is holy land !

OUTRE MER.

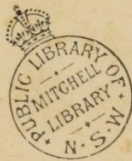


SEE, as one in dreaming,
 A broad, bright, quiet sea ;
 Beyond it lies a haven—
 The only home for me.
 Some men grow strong with trouble,
 But all my strength is past,
 And tired and full of sorrow
 I long to sleep at last.
 By force of chance and changes
 Man's life is hard at best ;
 And, seeing rest is voiceless,
 The dearest thing is rest.

Beyond the sea—behold it,
 The home I wish to seek,
 The refuge of the weary,
 The solace of the weak !
 Sweet angel fingers beckon,
 Sweet angel voices ask
 My soul to cross the waters ;
 And yet I dread the task.

God help the man whose trials
 Are tares that he must reap ;
 He cannot face the future—
 His only hope is sleep.

Across the main a vision
 Of sunset coasts, and skies,
 And widths of waters gleaming,
 Enchant my human eyes.
 I, who have sinned and suffered,
 Have sought—with tears have sought—
 To rule my life with goodness,
 And shape it to my thought.
 And yet there is no refuge
 To shield me from distress,
 Except the realm of slumber
 And great forgetfulness.



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