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Songs Unsung

ME

JOHANNES C. ANDERSEN

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Johanness L. Andersen
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SONGS UNSUNG

BY

JOHANNES CARL ANDERSEN.

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DEDICATED
WITH THE "CRADLE SONG"
TO
MY MOTHER.

INTRODUCTION.

I HAVE been asked by the author, as a former student of mine, to write a few lines of introduction to his volume. It is with some reluctance that I have consented ; for its intrinsic merits are such that it should find its public without introduction. When the manuscript was put into my hands, I was delighted to find, wherever I dipped into it, the "good wine" of true poetry "that needs no bush." On almost every page that I read, I recognised the fine music by nature wedded to beauty of emotion or thought that marks the work of a real poet. I could not fail to find echoes of the old familiar Home singers ; for Mr. Andersen is manifestly a keen student of all that is poetically best in European literature. But even in the deliberate imitations, as *e.g.* in "Aspirations to Immortality," there is a distinctive, if not original, note that makes them well worth reading. It is a somewhat ambitious project to answer and revise the philosophy of Wordsworth in a direct echo of his famous Ode on "Intimations of Immortality": it seems to justify itself ; for the thought is as philosophical as the model, without loss of clearness, and the language is as limpid and musical, whilst there is nothing of slavishness in the echo. But it is in the lyrics, it seems to me, that the volume is most successful. I would instance only three: "Morning," "Can we Change?" and the "Cradle Song." For the musical expression of the sounds and sights of the

dawn by the seaside, it would be difficult to surpass the first. In "Can we Change?" the old thought is worked up into a song that is worthy of the best musical setting, and has a flavour of Herrick about it. But the "Cradle Song" is, to my mind, the finest of the lyrics ; it is so pathetic, and so nobly expressive of the noblest of all passions—maternal love, and it has the very rhythm of the rocking cradle in its music. And for the more artificial forms of poetry, it would be difficult to find anything more poetical than the Rondeau "Soft, Low and Sweet," or the Sonnet "Summer's Last Flower."

It is a great pleasure to know that such fine work can be produced in a country like ours, given over entirely, as is commonly supposed, to the clipping of wool and the freezing of mutton. It would be a still greater pleasure to know that there is a large public in these colonies capable of appreciating such good work.

J. MACMILLAN BROWN.

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NOTE.—Against pieces which have been previously published, the name of the publication has been inserted. The Editors are hereby thanked for permission to include the same in this volume. Contributions to *Sydney Bulletin* are over the pen-name AHAU.

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SONGS UNSUNG.

I.

Home-Echoes.

YEAR after year, age after age,
The white-topped billows of the unwearying sea
Have beaten out on shell-white sands their rage,
Or lost it, rolling past majestic walls
Clothed in green forests or white waterfalls.
Lonely she lay, in sunny, singing seas,
A virgin land, of untaught harmonies ;
Bright, sunny beaches ; fiords imperious, cold ;
Plains, forests, lakes, and mountains skyward roll'd,
Softened in purple hazes or soft-limned in gold.

First the adventurers, wanderers, falcon-eyed,
On the horizon, mountain shapes espied ;
And with high hopes and swelling hearts,
They cried a welcome from the sea-beat sand
To that fair land

Whence never Spring departs.
Revelling in its beauties, grave or gay,
In their sea solitude they charmed the years away.

Then we, from countries hoary in the ways
 Of man from ancient days,
Saw where wild Nature's wilder children trod
A country fresh and lovely from the hands of God.
 From that far North which gave us birth,
Wind-beat, we baffled half this watery earth :
Be it from mountain-land of lake, ravine,
 Where heather blooms between,
Whence the fierce hardy clans of chieftains sprang,
 Where Ossian lived and sang—
Be it from where the sails of the great world
 In merchant-ships lie furled,
That land all flowery meadowed, many streamed,
 Where Chaucer lived, and Spenser dreamed;—
 Or where in Time's young reign
 Balder the good was slain,
Where Thor the angry in the thunders roll'd,
Where dragon-ships breasted the peopled waves,
And Odin's skalds in rhythmic, lettered staves
Praised gods and heroes bluff and great in that good
 Age of Gold.

 We came, our hearts impress'd
With ancient hills, great castles, ruins gray,
With quietnesses where moss-covered rest
 The hearts of happy ages pass'd away :
 We came, with eyes still bright

From gazing on the scenes of youth's delight—
Or eyes yet dim with sorrow of farewell
 To ingles, and loved dells :
Full of old scenes and memories we came,
And feigned the old and new might yet become
 the same.

 But all was new,
 In sound, in shape, in hue.
 All was most strange, tho' fair ;
 And while scarce felt, impalpable as air
The old familiar things seemed haunting everywhere.

With us we even tempted Oldworld Spring,
 And Autumn, sere and gold !
Willows and elms from the familiar wold,
Poplars and oaks, where woodland dryads sing ;
 Fain would we have the holly, mistletoe,
 To herald Christmas with December snow :
 But here, in Summer-day,
 That season comes, and sadly goes its way,
Where only silver-foliaged, purple-tasselled ratas
 blow !

 The lark in cloudland floats,
The thrush and blackbird pour their careless notes
 From river-grove :
These too we brought ; and each in cadence weaves

Its song of frosty glades, of fluttering leaves
In that land where we first knew life and love,
The cheer of Winter days, the charm of Summer eves.

These old remembrancers around us, how we fain
In song pourtray the land that saw us roam !
And every beauty, every sweet refrain—
Yes, every joy, and too delicious pain,
Finds a far echo in our earlier home !

And we have yet to learn
Those true, peculiar charms our longings hide :
The new and old we now see side by side ;
And whilst we can discern
The new is beautiful, cannot withhold
Our sad interpretation thro' the old.

How long, before our voices will outgive
In song, those beauties in whose midst we live ?
The quaint, sweet-throated birds ; the men
Whose songs and legends wail from hill and glen.
How long, before our hearts will see and hear
The charms themselves, not those that youth makes
dear ?

How long ?—Alas ! We wean ourselves with pain
From that which, while desired, we know comes not
again.

II.

Lilies.

O LILY of the fountains
Of sparkling, deep delight,
O lily of the mountains,
Edelweiss, snow-white :
Dream upon your stream and snow,
Pure and undefiled so ;—
*Happy they, whoever may
One half your pureness know.*

O lily of the valleys
Whose scent exultant wells,
Quaint fancy-pageant rallies
About your snowy bells ;
Nod above your broad green leaf :—
*Whiles may Pleasure, welcome thief,
Half-unknown till he is flown,
Rifle every heart of grief.*

O Lily of the Spirit,
Of wonderfullest bloom ;
Blest whoso may inherit
Thine Eden-sweet perfume :
*May thy buds of beauty start
And their petals sweetly part
Thro' the dole of every soul,
O Lily of the Heart.*

III.

April of the Antipodes.

THE October of her life,
Sweet seventeen,
When the trees are full of sap,
And all the leaves are green :
The time of falling tears,
With flying clouds the while,
And gleaming thro' the showers
The rainbow of a smile.

IV.

June.

FOR woman, memory has joys in store ;
For man, regrets that they were not more :
The *might have been* is the woman's dream ;
The past's dead promise, the man's sad theme

SHE (*her side the World.*)

Do you remember the days of Spring ?—
Spring's gladdest day ?
How scents were sweet and birds aswing
On the hawthorn spray ?
How the first gay revel of blossoming
Went singing away ?—
All things made for pleasure,
Nothing for regret ;
All was to remember,
And nothing to forget :
The earth was a white-flowered garden of tune ;
For May had just turned June.

HE (*his side the World.*)

Have I forgotten the old Spring days

With their changing skies !

When only the flowers in their fragrant sprays

Had tear-dimmed eyes !

Have I forgotten the hawthorn ways,—

And the words,— and the sighs,—

Ah,— *nothing* makes for pleasure ;

All is now regret ;

The dearest to remember,

Alas ! 'twere best forget !

The earth is white, its frosts are strewn ;—

For May has just turned June.

V.

RONDEAU.

Soft, Low and Sweet.

SOFT, low and sweet, the blackbird wakes the day,
And clearer pipes, as rosier grows the gray
Of the wide sky, far, far into whose deep
The rath lark soars, and scatters down the steep
His runnel song, that skyey roundelay.

Earth with a sigh awakes ; and tremors play,
Coy in her leafy trees, and falt'ring creep
Across the daisy lawn and whisper, " Well-a-day,"
Soft, low and sweet.

From violet-banks, the scent-clouds float away
And spread around their fragrance, as of sleep :
From ev'ry mossy nook the blossoms peep ;
From ev'ry blossom comes one little ray
That makes the world-wealth one with Spring, alway
Soft, low and sweet.

VI.

Retrospect.

PASS we by the trysting-place,
 Heigh-ho ! the river !
We have lost the little grace
 Giv'n us then and there :
Pass by,— but eyes look back,—
 Ah me ! lips quiver !
All our joy is now our lack,
 All our burden, care.

Think we of that king of days,
 Heigh-ho ! it leaves us !
Life has many blended ways,—
 We tread sundered now :
Once met,— and that we scorned,—
 Ah me ! now grieves us,—
They grow graceless who have mourned,
 Sorrow sears the brow.

Backward looks and sweet-sad sighs,
 Heigh-ho ! they linger !
Voice-echoes, beaming eyes,
 How they gleam and call !
Kind Time would blot all out
 With his soft, firm finger,—
But we find our sadness, doubt,
 Sweetest thoughts of all !

VII.

Cradle-Song.

SONG of the night, song of the day,
Where are the forms that we fondled away ?
Song of the eve, song of the morn,
Soon they forsake us as others are born ;
Mothers sit watching with faces of love,
God watches them from His Heaven above ;
Life is a task, set with a vow,—
Babies that slept in us where are ye now ?

Up from our arm, up from our breast,
Where are ye wandered in East or in West ?
Mothers may love, mothers may croon,
Ye become stripling and maiden too soon ;
Stripling and maiden,— and lo the refrain
Crooned by the mother is murmured again :
Life is a war, life is a race,—
Over the cradle a heavenly face.

“Son of my heart, where wilt thou go ?
Empty mine arms when thou leavest me so ;—
Where wilt thou speed, daughter of mine ?
Look in my face as I looked upon thine ;—

Earth is a wilderness open and wide ;
Shun ye its evil, and God be your Guide :
Children of mine, go on your way—
Think ye of mother when aging and gray ?

“ Goest so soon, idol of love ?
Goest so soon to the Father above ?
Thou in mine arms cradled shalt be ;—
Goest so soon from thy cradle and me ?
Earth is too wide for thy weak little feet ?
Life is too weary ?— and Heaven so sweet ?
Idol of love ; soul of my heart ;
Heaven is thine who of Heaven wast part.”

Life and its toil, death and its sleep,
Children *must* wander and mothers *will* weep ;
Life is so wide, death is so cold,
Other embraces than mother's enfold :—
Children are mothers and mothers are gone,
Cradles are rocking forevermore on ;
Children are born, never remain,—
Life is a rocking of pleasure and pain.

VIII.

Moonrise.

(FROM NEW BRIGHTON PIER.)

THERE's the moon rising
Up from the sea ;
Shadows disguising
River and lea,
Hasten and flee :
O, there's a paven,
Ripple-traced road,
Straight to the haven
Of Quiet's abode.

But for a shallop
Gauzily-sailed—
Nautilus, scallop—
Lover-breath-galed,
Angel-waft-swaled,
Only to speed me
Over the road,
Only to lead me
To Quiet's abode.

Over the dimples
 Pressed on the sea,
Under the wimples
 Night-shade flings free
 O'er you and me,
Floating and sailing
 Swift on the road,—
Everything's ailing
 From Quiet's abode.

Where does it finish,
 Path o' the wave ?
Will it diminish
 But in the grave ?—
 God our souls save !—
Might we explore it,
 'Vanescent road,
Travelling o'er it
 To Quiet's abode !

IX.

RONDEAU.

When We are One.

WHEN we are one, and thenceforth life we share,
Trusting and trusted, all our hope and care—
That glow or shade that may have come and gone—
Shall be as benisons to help us on,
Content with what we've borne, and yet may bear.

When carelessness grows staid, yet can spare
A tithe of its life-joyance—and anon
Grows to the full,—life's day-dream shall be fair
When we are one.

Be Earth as't will ; ourselves, we can declare
All Earth is good that we may look upon ;
All blemishes that seemed to be, are gone,
For in the fulness of the glory there,
Each little sorrow hides a joy most rare
When we are one.

X.

Rosemary and Rue.

*There's rosemary, that's for remembrance ; pray you, love,
remember : . . . there's rue for you, and here's some for
me.*

THE days when we were strangers,
(Pray love, remember ;)
To Love and his sweet dangers,—
Ah, forget them not.
Days of all days cherished,
When strangeness fled and perished,
Utterly forgot.
Timid questionings of eyes
Mutely glad in mute replies,
Wishes only voiced in sighs,—
Love ; forget them not.

The days of Spring-time wooing,
(Pray love, remember ;)
With Earth her charms renewing,—
Ah, forget not these !
Words as new as flowers were,
Grateful as the showers were
To the flowers and trees.
Words as untaught as the wind,
Sweet as new light to the blind,—
Words, of new worlds undefined,
Ah, forget not these !

How the life grew keener,
Pray love, remember ;
Heav'n and Earth serener,—
Ah, forget not this :
How when glances mingled,
And all our pulses tingled,
Lips taught lips to kiss.
Ah dear love, the joy we knew :
Days sped swiftly, all too few,
As our lives together grew,—
Love ! forget not this !

*How our dream was broken,
Do not, love, remember !
How our last words spoken,
Ah dear love, forget !
How the flowers faded,
How we drooped as they did,
How our cheeks were wet.
Broken dreams may come again ;
There's an end to deepest pain :—
That our dearest hopes are vain,
Ah sweet love, forget !*

XI.

Peace.

AH ; on this upland there is peace enough.
Night's wingless phantoms creep from the dark East,
To overtake the calm magnificence
Of the tired sun-god, pausing in the West.
The last few remnants of the day he takes,
And presses from them gold and amethyst,
Drenching the clouds, making the hills run fire,—
Then downward plunges. With far-reaching hands,
The phantoms grasp and scatter in his steps
The gorgeousness and gold.

This is unpeered.

Languid is Earth ; the singing winds have ceased,
And whisper benedictions to the world :
The phantoms tread the dark to upper glooms,
Where their dusk fingers trim the burning stars.
Out in the dimness, see, the church-spire lifts
Its jewelled finger, bidding :—" Hush ; this hour
Of peace and rest it is wherein your God
Stands near to guard and bless."

Ope we our hearts,
And long-sought blessings fall, as falls the dew.
Move we together down the winding road,
Thro' the gaunt firs, thro' busy streets and home.
We on the heights together have seen God
And heard His voice : it dwells within us now,
A silence strange ; a still, expectant awe.

XII.

Summer's Last Flower.

ALAS! the fading of the regal Summer.

It goes ere scarcely comes its fullest day :

Those winds that blow the Autumn gold away
Will beat to death this latest lowly comer.

The Summer, ah, it fades ; and going sweetly,

Bears too the firstling's bleat, the hedgerow's
may ;

The fruit hangs plump where bark was bare and
gray,

Leaves fashioned newly fall away completely.

Yet all is meet : for laden well and truly,

Now sleeps the gleaming, nimble-footed bee ;

The golden sea is shaken into foam :

The august season brings its off'ring duly,

In fruit of brake and herb, of flower and tree,

And songs awake, deep in the breezes' home.

XIII.

Evensong.

THE poplars bend across the dark'ning sky,
And whisper to the east wind from the seas ;
Night comes ; with it, the wish that you were by,
To bend and whisper, soft as Summer's trees.

The hills grow distant, dark,—then fade away ;
My thoughts of you have lived beyond the day.

The white mists from the river float to heaven,
So my thoughts float to you this Summer even.

The birds are mute, and my song falls away,
That thought may hear what hope dreamed thro' the
day.

The heavy scent of honeysuckle clings
And overpowers the sweetness of the rose ;
So melancholy, with his heavy wings,
Broods over me, at this day's quiet close.

I have not heard nor seen you, many days
Tho' I in dreams have heard you, and have seen ;
Thus often Earth has lain in rain and haze,
And only one blue flash of sky has been.

I eagerly have sought you, hour by hour ;
As winds have sought, have found and lost the flower.

I have sought honey from your sweetness, but
Came, like the late bee, when the flower was shut.

I saw you, and have striven you to reach,
But beat myself like seas on a rough beach.

Twilight has gone : cloud has obscured the star ;
The sad winds in the dark trees sink to rest :

I muse ; and, tired, would be where you are,
Your hand in my hand, my breast by your breast.

XIV.

RONDEAU.

Love's Onward Day.

LOVE's onward day ; as sun of morn
Kissing,—soft kiss,—Spring's budded thorn,
 Flooding the verdure of Earth's breast,—
 Pearly the east, purple the west,—
So wakes new life, when love is born.

As noon of day :—one cloud forlorn
 Straying about the mountain-crest,—
Full trees, rich blooms and fields of corn,
 Love's onward day.

As noon to sober eve has worn
 And birds are silent in the nest,
 And winds are so unmoved in rest
That eve's light cloud-woof scarce is torn,—
Such restfulness, such peace, adorn
 Love's onward day.

XV.

The Dance.

(FROM SCHILLER.)

SEE how with hovering steps, in undulations the
dancers

Move, while the light-winged feet touch but an
instant the floor.

Are they shadows I see, released from the gyves of
the body ?

Are they the moonlight elves, dancing in light-
hearted maze ?

Light as the smoke in the air wafted by zephyr from
earth,

Light as the rocking skiff borne on the silvery tide,
Flutter the docile feet to the music's billowy
sweetness ;

Murmuring violin-tones bear up the body to heaven.
Now, inspired with a zeal to break thro' the dance
and its fetters,

Swings an adventurous pair into the closely-set
ranks :

Soon before them a path opens and closes behind
them ;

Magical hands, it seems, open and close the way.

See ; this moment they're gone, in wildest confusion
they mingle,

Lost is their grace-endowed motion, lost in the
changing world.—

No,—in triumph they hover unfettered, the knot
disentangling,

Only in varied grace is the rule manifest here.
Ever destroyed, self-created continues this whirling
creation,

An invisible law binds its transmutable parts.
Say how it chances ; this maze, wavering, still moves
in order,

And rest still exists where the whole form is unrest ?
Each one a ruler, free, hears but his own heart's
dictating,

And in speediest course finds thro' confusion his
way.

Shall I discover the cause ? 'Tis melody, mighty and
godlike,

That in the sociable dance orders each movement
and pause ;

It as a Nemesis curbs with the golden bridle of
rhythm

Pleasure's impetuous joy, subduing intractable
mirth.

Round you murmurs in vain the harmony of the star
worlds ?

Cannot you comprehend the music of their great
song ?

Cannot you hear the measure beating thro' animate
nature ?

Nor see the whirling dance in which thro' eternal
space

Bright burning suns majestic move in vast wonderful
courses ?

No ; you can honour in sport that which in earnest
you shun.

XVI.

One by One.

ONE by one, lover and friend must go
Tho' in the absence, sorrow will linger on ;
One by one, as stars in the morning glow,
Tremble, and fade, and are gone.

One by one, raindrops are falling fast ;
Sighs moan so low and so sad in the cold, wet tree ;
One by one, tears fall for days that are past,
Mourning, that parting must be.

One by one. Ah, and you too, must go :
You who have lingered so short and so sweet a while.
One by one,—ah, that the heart must know
Sorrow, for Pleasure's soft smile.

XVII.

Pikiarero.

(The Yellow Clematis.)

MEEK clematis ; tree-dweller ; child of dew ;
Nursling of light and air !
Slow-trailing stars, or showers of misty suns,—
Whence is the hand thou reachest wistfully,
Feeling, on earth, for something not of earth ?—
Lo, is this Bethel, and the gate of Heaven ?
Art thou the golden ladder, whereon pass
God's angels up and down continually ?
Ev'n now (God's thoughts are angels) one descends ;—
A pure gold petal flutters to my feet.

XVIII.

RONDEAU.

Be Near Me Then.

BE near me then, when I am old,
And in the veins the blood grows cold,
And Earth becomes a stranger, dear ;
If you alone will linger near
The shadows will not all-enfold.

Tho' life be bought, and love be sold,
Must *both*, on aging, disappear ?—
When from the tomb the stone is roll'd,
Be near me then.

Ay : Earth can nothing dearer hold,
Nor aught can burn more nobly clear
Than that thy love, pure and sincere :
Sweet ; as the last slow days are doled
That mark the sinking to the mould,
Be near me then.

XIX.

CANZONETS.

The Two Iseults.

IF wand'ring some gray eve
In the oak-grove whose sere leaves strow the
ground,
My dream of years should leave,
And waking me from reverie profound
Bid me rejoice, or grieve,—
I wonder which were keener, joy or grief?
Belief, or disbelief?
For many years I've loved the woman-graces
Of old times and old places;
I've walked where they have walked; have heard
Their sorrow and their joy; have seen their eyes,
Have known without disguise
The deepest feelings that within them stirr'd:
I've laughed with them, and with them I have
wept;
Loved them, in dream awake, in truth when I have
slept.

Iseult of Cornwall ; she
Whom Tristram loved, and woman none beside :
Iseult of Brittany,
Loving, unloved, beautiful, mournful-eyed,—
Which was more sad ?—ay me,
One loved, was loved again ; but love's best bliss,—
She could but dream of this :
One loved, was loved not, yet beside her trod
Her vain love's only god.—
O women, both denied that dearest love,
Where was the virtue of your constancy ?
Ah ; 'twas not constancy
To man, to flesh, but to a spirit above.—
But, when two souls as one might never be,
Would either wish extinction ?—*or* eternity ?

XX.

BALLADE.

The Leaves are Gathered.

THE leaves are gather'd from the wintry bough,
The flowers are faded and their beauty strown ;
The Earth is sere and frosty-cold ; then how
May we be young where all is older grown ?
Each Summer songster with that day has flown,
And Earth is hush'd of voice, and void of song ;
Only the dirges of the night make moan
That hope to Love, and Love to death belong.

Have not the lines begun to mark the brow
With deepening furrows, so the shades are thrown
Darker upon its whiteness even now ?
Has not the heart begun to feel alone
On the broad Earth ?—the grassy knoll and stone
Seem welcome,—as when days are hard and long
Is sleep to tired eyes ;—and still the moan
That hope to Love, and Love to death belong.

Sick, mournful heart : it is not Earth, but thou ;
That, being wearied, dost so sadly groan,
As do the pines when to the winds they bow
And tremble yet, when winds are over-blown :
For Youth, Earth's gaiety ;—let Age atone
For its own follies if it deem them wrong :—
And yet, tho' rest may come, too comes the moan
That hope to Love, and Love to death belong.

L'ENVOY.

Look to the Spring,—she from her radiant zone
Casts life and love ; and dew to flowerets throng
Like tears to happy eyes :—and yet, the moan
That hope to Love, and Love to death belong.

XXI.

We Three.

Dost thou love thy little maid,
Love her well ? love her true ?
Canst thou love her unafraid
Of the things the years may do ?
Canst thou this ? tell me true !

What dost thou resign for her ?
Hope of years ? pride of place ?
Canst thou give without demur
All thy life for her sweet face ?
Canst thou this ? and with grace ?

Much thy little maid must give,
Much indeed, loving thee :
But, so we two happy live,
What's the loss to thee or me ?—
Only gain, I can see.

Thou hadst lost thy freedom sure
Said she Ay, said she Nay,—
But our happiness will 'dure
Till ourselves are past away ;—
This I pray, night and day.

Dost thou love thy little maid
 Tho' she chafe ? tho' she fret ?
Dearest one ! when she is laid
 In the grass, wilt thou forget ?
 Think her fair ? love her yet ?

Nay ; thou shalt not be downcast ;
 She's full glad ; she's full well ;—
Once the hour of pain is past,
 Hearts can not their gladness tell.
 Kiss thy maid ; all is well.

Ah yes ; kiss me with a smile,
 As of old ; long ago ;
We have spent a happy while
 In the vale where hot tears flow :
 We knew none, none we know.

Dost thou love thy little maid
 As of old ? dear old days !
She will suffer unafraid
 As her mother-debt she pays ;—
 Ah those sweet, future days !

Kiss me now for what has been ;
 What we two found and knew ;
Kiss me for the pleasures keen
 All the years can not undo.
 Kiss the face of—me and you !

XXII.

RONDEAU.

Love Once Sat A-Sighing.

Love once sat a-sighing, by a reedy brook,—
Near, a shepherd loitered with his horn and crook ;—
Love sought one to fasten with his flowery chain,
Then to watch the chafing at the bonds in vain,—
Yet towards the shepherd, never would he look !

Sought the shepherd, sighing, ev'ry cornfield nook,
Seeking one to love him, and be loved again ;
Yet was Love all wayward : while the long reeds
shook,

Love once sat a-sighing !

Love ! enchant the shepherd, when the sickled hook
Of the Queen Diana reaps the skyey plain,
Where the corn all golden, falls like summer rain :—
Still is Love all wayward ; and like sage from book,
Culls what best may please him : near the corn in
stook,

Love once sat a-sighing !

XXIII.

Cease.

(FROM HEINE.)

THE day is in the night beloved,
The Springtime in the Winter,
The life is beloved in death—
And thou, thou lovest me.

Thou lov'st me—and about thee now
Fall shadows gray and gloomy ;
Thy blossoming is fading ;
Thy spirit-heart is bleeding.

O, cease from loving me, and love
The butterfly, more ennobled
As it flutters in sunny beams—
O, cease from love and sorrow !

XXIV.

SESTINA.

The Spring-time of Roses.

OF roses red, of roses white I sing,
 Clasping the trellis, stately in the bed,
Or in the hedgeways, pendent as they swing ;
 There's the full rose unfolded, whose bent head
Droops with the haste of the departing Spring,
 And buds whose green shews yet no white nor red.

Nay ; every rose that pulls aside her head,
 With weight of her own beauties all aswing,
Has love of me ; but chiefest white and red,
 Be these of Summer's pride, or youth of Spring :
One glows, as glows the day-lord's western bed,—
 But gold shines blood ; so not of gold I sing.

The wealth of tales that flowers awake in Spring !
 And know'st thou how the white rose turned to
 red ?

Nay ; an thou know'st not, other lips shall sing
 As they have sung : now raise thee from thy bed,
And look where young Aurora's censers swing
 Now that Apollo lifts his golden head !

THE SPRING-TIME OF ROSES

Lift up with them, lift up with them thine head

O maid ! and let thy spirit heav'nward swing,
Nor let the morning look on thee abed :

Thy spirit with the lark shall rise and sing,
And thou shalt see where morning clouds run red,
And Earth laughs, wet and fragrant, in the Spring!

Yea, and of fairer roses I would sing ;

For on thy cheek they nestle, white and red,
Perfect their colour in thy youthful Spring,

Thou with thy tresses round about thine head !
And as thy thoughts in varied channels swing,
One colour vies with other in its bed !

To hide the flaming rose, thou droop'st thine head ;

Thy tresses roundward with the motion swing
Aiding therein ; how, in one silken bed

Lie two sweet warring hearts ; yet therefore sing,
Since sweet is blending of the white and red,
Sweetest of all in life's fair youth and Spring !

Of wars and roses, life and love I sing,

Roses and love, alternate white and red ;
And fairest these, now Earth is fair in Spring.

XXV.

Dream's Vagary.

It is not true, it is not true :—they say
Where thoughts have closely centred thro' the day
 The dream clings too at night ;
That where the wishes from the heart have sped,
Thereto the soul in sleep's soft leash is led,
 Finding night's day of light
 More living and more bright.—
But 'tis not true ; o love, it is not true ;—
 I cannot dream of you.

One day ? no, nights and days my thoughts have flown
Heaven-high round one star, till it has grown
 The only light on high ;
One day and many days my heart has yearned
For you, towards you, and my soul has turned
 Its one desire to fly
 Upward to your clear sky :
But when night comes,—O love, it is not true ;—
 I cannot dream of you.

XXVI.

SONNET.

Time.

O, OBDURATE face of changeless Time the old,
We look on thee thro' orbs of diverse eyes :
Before us, as a book, thy record lies,—
Or rather, as a papyrus unroll'd :
For tho' the characters are firm and bold
Marked upon thee, rarely in any wise
Can we, for all our industry, surmise
The depth of secrets thou alone dost hold.
Some deem thy face all smiles, some deem it frowns ;
Some think it hard and stern, some think it mild ;
Some see it lined in age, some wreath'd in youth :
'Tis we who change : a calm serenity crowns
Thee, who art old or young to man or child,
And, for us all, a Citadel of Truth.

XXVII.

BALLADE.

Beauty Has Been.

SOFT, in the twinkle of stars at night,
Nurtured in dew, are blossoms rare ;
Scarce' they endure in the broader light
Flashed by the sun over Earth, and ere
Half of their beauty the blossoms can bear,
All are they faded ; and none can tell
How, in the bloom that is drooping there,
Beauty has been and was never so well.

Soft, in the clamour of Earth's hard fight,
Jewels are born that a world might wear ;
But that the world in an heedless slight
Casts them without, and beyond its care ;
Soon are they lost, in the wear and tear,
Toiling and moiling, and ardour fell :—
One soft glow in the ceaseless glare,
Beauty has been and was never so well.

Faint little stars in the heaven's height
Falter their rays down the skyey stair ;
Faint little stars ;—and the sun, all-bright,
Gathers the rays to himself ; and fair,
Many star-thousands a sparkle spare,
Giving the sun, that they all may swell
Into that glory whose beams declare
Beauty has been and was never so well.

L'ENVOY.

Lives of the Earth ; they have each a share
Moulding the world where as one they dwell ;
Each of his best,—and beyond compare,
Beauty has been and was never so well.

XXVIII.

Love's Perjury.

DOES the child know how its life began ?—
Not any more than the wise old man !
Does the dew know why it falls from above ?—
And I—
Can I know why I love ?

I know that I live, I know that I love ;
That Earth is as wondrous as Heaven above :
That the grace of a flower or the might of the ocean
Can move in my breast a delicious emotion ;
The magic of clouds and the mists of the river,
The spirits that move when the leaves are a-quiver ;
The liberal depths of the haunt of the thrush,
With its echo of song or significant hush ;
The blossoming tree, the budding, the fruity,
The infinite changes of infinite beauty ;
The depth of a clear eye ; the hue of a cheek ;
The curve of a bosom, a blossom,—all speak,
Bidding—"Love and rejoice: ye have Beauty forever ;
It changes, it varies,—but vanishes never !"

. . . . Why art thou crying,
Pretty-eyed one ?
Time is for sighing
When joys are done !—
Art thou so jealous of all the rest ?
How if I say that I love *thee* best—
That I am the sun,
And thou,—
Art the wonderful East and West ?

XXIX.

Love Has Been.

WHAT has sorrow to you and me
Told in passing ?—Of joys to be ?

Keen and poignant,—ah too keen
To last for ever,—Love has been.

And we found it : yes, we two
Found and treasured what so few

Ever bloom in : and ours has blown
As sweet a Love-summer as ever was known.

Ah, the Autumn, red and gold,
Has our Summer fast in's hold.

Many Autumns went and came,
Still our Summer bloomed the same.

Now 'tis fallen unawares !
(So the star-world earthward fares).

We look upward and see the sky
Of life's fair colours passing by :

Ah the sorrow, thus to gaze
Where loving gave us our best days !

Hush ; for sorrow sunders all,
He comes bearing shroud and pall :

Takes so deftly one of twain,—
One must go, and one remain.

Two worlds together share this one :
One's in darkness, one i' the sun,—

And that we dreamed in.—Ah, dreams break ;
In the other must we awake.

XXX.

Time Passes.

Too soon, too soon, our childhood wears away,
And broken is its fairy-peopled slumber ;
Too soon its childlike fancies cease to play,
While in their place come doubts and fears past
number :
And youth wears on to its maturity,
And old age follows manhood's golden noon ;—
Thro' all this burden beats unceasingly,—
“Time passes—ah, Time passes, soon, too soon.”

XXXI.

What and Whence Art "Thou."

(Any Lover to his Love.)

THOU awful and mysterious sojourner
Upon an earth of shadows and unrest,
Wakening in me a strange disquietude,—
What and whence art thou ?

In the obscure past,
Upon an earth, weird, and to us unknown,
That spirit lived and moved, gyved in a form
That no conjecture can discover ; mine
Too lived and moved. We have inherited
That which our ancient fathers had from eld !
Whence is the fabric that composes "thee" ?
So like this "me," and yet how different !
How have thy bodily elements been knit
And folded round the spirit thou dost bear ?—
Our elements may be co-mingled now !
Yet our attraction has repulsion too,
And between these, we pause and hesitate.

Lives there a mood, swift and imperious,
Of some old lover in thee, one that swayed
A world of men and women, and then died ?—
With such an influence thou comest to me !
Dwells there within thee but the smallest part
Of one that warred with part of that in me
And slew, or else was slain ?—for times there be
When love is veiled in a most ominous mood.

A glimpse of terror from thy presence breaks ;—
What creature's dust may in thy cheek repose,
Or monstrous shape fashion a part of thee ?
Some brute that trampling crushed the tender herb,
Some lurid rock that earth smokingly hurled,
And ages ground to dust, absorbed in thee ?
That passes, ghost-like ; and a sweeter mood
Speaks of the resurrection of fair things
That live in thee as mortals live in joy.
The scattered dust of queens may lodge in thee ;
The dust of creatures, lowly and blind and frail ;
The vapors that have dyed the violet,
Or that in evening calm the sun has dyed.
Thou hast the allurements of the luminous sea,
Moon-gladdened, infinite ; the exquisite
And musical tenderness of airs
Trembling with bird-song and the murmuring bee ;

The persuasiveness of love-compelling flowers :—
The life that was, lingers about thee still !
The breath thou breathest may have touched the lips
Of our first parents ; and the shape they bore
May be, in thee, mirrored and faintly traced !

Thou art no new thing ; only a new form
Of ancient and most venerable parts
Reknit in living substance. Therefore, I,
Feeling myself kin in antiquity,
Look curiously on thee if I may trace
The immemorial parts of ages flown ;
Mysterious, awful, whirled like sands and rain
Limitless ages between earth and sky,
Dispersed, and all these variable parts
Reanimate. Another heir of Time
Stands before thee, and gazing thro' those eyes
That beam as windows in the shrouding mists
Of past and future, speculates with awe
What once thou wast who now art what thou art !

XXXII.

The Sharing of the Earth.

(FROM SCHILLER.)

*Take hence the world ! cried Zeus from his heaven
Unto mankind : take it, yours shall it be.
To you the earth as heritage is given ;
But, sharing, dwell in amity.*

In haste, whoso had hands, thereon fell slaving
To win his share ; so labored young and old.
The husbandman seized fields of gold corn waving,
The young squire hunted deer in wood and wold.

The merchant rose, his warehouse goods securing,
The abbot chose his share of last-year wine ;
The king stopped roads and bridges, with assuring
Saying : " The tithes and tolls are mine."

Too late, when the division all was over
The poet came ; he came from lands abroad ;
Alas, no vacant place could he discover,
For all things now possessed their lord.

" Alas ! am I the only one remaining
Forgotten quite ? I, truest son alone ?"
Loudly unto the skies went his complaining ;
He cast himself before Jove's throne.

*Since you in lands of dreams and fields Elysian
Roved far, quoth Jove, do not come blaming me.
Where were you loit'ring when they made division ?
Then said the poet : " I was here by thee.*

" Mine eyes were fastened on thy face sun-beaming ;
Harmonious heaven held enchained mine ear ;
Pardon the Spirit so enchanted dreaming,
That he has lost earth's share while wond'ring
here."

*What's to be done ? said Zeus ; the world is given,
The harvest, hunt, the fields, are mine no more.
If you will dwell with me up here in heaven,
Oft as you come you'll find an open door.*

XXXIII.

Winter.

*This burden bears each falling leaf—
“ I am the emblem of a grief.”*

GONE is all pleasure from the land
For birds and bees,
For Winter with his ruthless hand
Strips flowers and trees ;

And now are seen the many nests,
Woven and warm,
That fluttering trees hid in their breasts
Safe from the storm :

Empty they lie above, and bare
To heaven's dew :
Love's nests lie open to the air,
Deserted too.

Winter of life and all fair things ;—
But we, alas,
Will never know what Spring-time brings
When bleak days pass.

Gone is all pleasure from the land ;—
Ah, one thought stings us ;
We know not what death's ruthless hand
Thereafter brings us.

XXXIV.

RONDEL.

Older Years.

THE happy days are happy years,
And hours are pleasure-fill'd alone,
When Life has fuller, richer grown,
Than Youth of shadow-hopes and fears.

When we have pass'd the Vale of Tears
And have the sequent gladness known,
The happy days are happy years,
And hours are pleasure-fill'd alone.

Richly engemmed in rainbow spheres
The blossom-youth has gaily blown
In tints and blushes all its own :
But, tho' the blossom droops and seres,
The happy days are happy years.

XXXV.

The Tauhou.

(Or Silver-eye.)

A SUMMER long the sun and thou
In flowering bush have lingered merry,
Ye both have left the bushlands now,
Where neither flower there is, nor berry,
And insects, as the days turn cold,
Hide deep in bark, and leaf, and mould.

The keen winds and thy plaintive cry
Have come together down the glen ;
Is Earth unkind, O Silver-eye,
Thou comest to the haunts of men.
Ah ; we desert our gay haunts thus
When life grows cold, unkind to us.

XXXVI.

RONDEL.

Songs Unsung.

SONGS unsung will the longest last,
Soft sweet tones are at rest so soon ;
Clear and full is the lark at noon,
But still when the even hour is past.

All the songs that in Spring fall fast
Cease when the Winter snows are strewn,
Songs unsung will the longest last,
Soft sweet tones are at rest so soon.

Ardent vows to the winds are cast
Faint as the sighs that brood and croon
Deep in the firs 'neath rising moon :
But, while others are dead and past,
Songs unsung will the longest last.

XXXVII.

SAPPHICS.

Prelude to Sappho's Prayer.

"SANDS of gold, these, boatman of Lesbos ferry !
Sweet, as the trade plies, gleam the skies and water ;
Hardly a gray age toiling thus should find thee.—
Seem I a stranger ? "

"Stranger ? Yea, truth ; stranger as seems my boy-
hood ;
Tho' as the days past, pleasant thoughts thou stirrest ;
Rarely the old boat lightly as this even
Breasted the billows.

"Swift my blood flies,—who is the Lesbos boatman ?
Yea I am old, grey ; these my boat and ferry ;
Ah, but the gay youth flushed back thro' the ages,
Warmed by thy touches ! "

"Wouldst thou know youth, e'en as in days departed ?
Leave to the high gods age and age's wisdom ?—
Be it as thou wilt ; take my golden girdle,
Clasp it about thee."

.

High on rocks, lo, Sappho is seated musing ;
Dreams she of great deeds ? mighty, valiant heroes ?—
Rather of sweet love ; Phaon by the ferry
Sees she, but heeds not.

Neither long time looks she upon the stranger ;
 (Dreams of the dead stream, Charon, Proserpina) :
 Dreaming her eyes turn back to those below her,—
 See them no longer.

“ Where art thou gone, Phaon, and where the fair one ?
 Who is the youth, lithe, active as the athlete,
 Supple of limb, tall, ruddy of complexion,
 Hair like Apollo ? ”

(Rue it, dark maid ; rue it and turn thee homeward ;
 He as a dream dreamed, now appears before thee ;
 Flown is thy heart's ease, all thy soul has floated
 Out to the stripling.)

“ Ah the sweet power, rending us this and that way
 Ah, but the mad love, wild bird never caged ;
 Spoiler of heart's peace,—spoiler or restorer ?—
 Whither wilt lead me ?

“ Dearest Queen, hear ; thou, Aphrodite, hear me ;
 Conjure thy spoilt child, him with the dreaded arrows :
 Shoot he of love, hate,—so he shoot but rightly,
 Bare is my bosom.”

XXXVIII.

Eros.

(FROM ANACREON.)

*(Written for the late John Mouat, of Dunedin, who
supplied a literal translation.)*

ONCE in the quiet hours of middle night,
When all mankind lay sleeping, spent with toil,
And Arctos had already turned himself
Down to the hand of Bootes,—Eros came
To me who knew him not. Against the bolts
That shut my door he beat, and wakened me.
“Who knocks,” said I, “my door, and knocking comes
Breaking my dreams up and my sleep?” But Eros,
“Open to me,” said he; “I am a child,”
And nothing dreadful; I am wet and cold
With wand’ring down the moonless night.”

I rose
From hearing these things, and my lamp I trimmed;
I opened, and a child indeed I saw,
With wings, a bow and quiver. By my hearth
I set him; with my palms I warmed his hands,
And squeezed the moisture from his hair. But then,
When that his chill was past, said Eros, “Come;
We now will try my bow, and if from wetting
The string hath taken hurt.”

He drew the bow,
And underneath the breasts he smote me keen
As it had been an arrow.

Up he jumped,
And, giggling,—“Host, rejoice with me,” he cried ;
“Without hurt is my bow ; but thou henceforth,
As to thy heart wilt suffer pain enough.”

XXXIX.

RONDEAU.

There's Not One Wish.

THERE'S not one wish I would not give for thee,
If wishing might the heart's fulfilment be :

There's not one hope nor dearest thought of mine
That should not, were it worth, be also thine,
And being ours, be wealth to thee and me.

Each dream of night, might it day's glory see,
And live and thrive in broader light divine,—
That dreams should fail or be of less degree
There's not one wish.

In harmony our lives, an both agree
To meet half-way, and each to each incline :—
The noblest glories do not richest shine,
And if content, at one with all, are we,
That we should ever greater, statelier be,
There's not one wish.

XL.

Two Lovers.

HE called her every fair thing Nature wrought
Or fancy fashioned ;
He gave her the best homage that love taught
To him impassioned ;
He woo'd her as the morn woos the star-night forlorn,
And as the slim fern woos the breaking river :—
She turned her head aside,—“ *No, no ; not love,*” she
cried,
And shivered as the silver-birches shiver.

A gaunt and shrouded form
Passed, with its features covered ;—
Her life-blood red and warm,
Hot in her white cheeks hovered :
She sprang up, life flushed thro' her,—
She, who to love was numb,
When cold death came to woo her,—
“ *Sweet Death,*” she cried, “ *I come.*”

XLI.

Rest.

WHEN Spring comes dancing on the flowery lea,
Why then, of all times, should Death come to me ?

Rest, my beloved, rest,
Thy hands together press'd,
And laid upon thy breast.

Rest, in the clinging white,
No more thy day beams bright ;
Sleep, thro' the endless night.

Sleep, rest. Thy day is done :—
And, with thy darkened sun
Thy woes sink, every one.

No more thy looks, thy motion, or thy speech
May pleasure me ; no more thy goodness teach ;—
Only thy spirit hands towards me reach.

Why art thou gone, now that the Spring is here
With golden scented blossoms, and with clear
Blue skies as were thine eyes ?—Spring deck thy bier.

Not only white ; purple and blue and gold
Be flowers upon thee strown :—but thou shalt hold
Them close, nor feel them press thy bosom cold.

Sweet scented, as the spirit that is fled
Was sweet in life, is sweet now life is dead.—
And Spring shall quilt the covers of thy bed.

Two such there might not be.
Spring laughs on hill and lea,
My Love has gone from me.

Two such Earth could not keep.
Spring's pulses wake and leap,
My Love is fall'n asleep.

XLII.

RONDEL.

When Gorgeous Days.

WHEN gorgeous days have fall'n away,
The half-gray eve is doubly clear ;
And in the star-rayed atmosphere
The night is lovely as the day.

So calm the eve, the soft lights stray
In ripples on the reedy mere,
When gorgeous days have fall'n away,
And half-gray eve is doubly clear.

When wiseless youth has played its play,
And life is surer, more sincere,
Love's ceaseless after-glows appear
More truly coloured, tho' less gay,
When gorgeous days have fall'n away.

XLIII.

Pleasant Days.

O, we are fall'n on pleasant days,
Yet look with longing to the dead ;
Our sunset skies are gold and red,—
Yet none so dear as olden grays :

Nor life so merry in her maze,
Nor death so soft when all is said :
O, we are fall'n on pleasant days,
Yet look with longing to the dead.

Where is the guile of artless ways ?
Where the garland for Pleasure's head ?
Where the rhapsody of Joy's dread ?
Past's past ; as dream alone it stays ;
O, we are fall'n on pleasant days.

XLIV.

Philosophy from Schiller.

The Highest.

SEEK you the highest, the greatest ? The plant can teach you the secret.

It is this : be *with will*, what the plant is *without* !

The true Ideal.

All men may know what you think ; your *own* is what lies in your feeling.

Is he to be as your own, *feel* then the God of your thought.

The Key.

Would you yourself know, observe the evolving of others :

But, would you understand *them*, then you must scan your own heart.

My Faith.

What's my religion ? you ask me : none of the many
Mentioned by you ; and why none ? My religion
forbids it !

The best State.

Do you ask how I know the best state ? By even the
method

Of knowing good women : friend, nobody talks of
these two.

Friend and Foe.

Precious to me is my friend, and also my foe is of
value :

My friend points me out what I *can*, my enemy
what I *should* do.

Love and Desire.

Rightly said, layman ! one *loves* what he has, one
desires what he has not :

The man who is rich in emotion, loves ; the poor
one desires.

Science.

Science to one is holy, a heavenly goddess ; to another,
Only an excellent cow, existing to butter his bread.

Goodness and Greatness.

Two great virtues there are. O, were they at all
times united :

Always the Good with the Great, always the Great
with the Good.

The Bond of Union.

How does Nature proceed in welding the greatest and
meanest
Of mankind ?—She sets vanity only between.

Perilous Consequences.

Friend, be careful to speak of bold Truth only in
whispers :
Speak thereof loudly, and you man's animosity
rouse.

Expectation and Fulfilment.

On the ocean, youth with a thousand masts sets voyag-
ing ;
Age, in a storm-toss'd boat, painfully comes to
harbour.

The Most Estimable.

Honour the whole as you will ; I can appreciate parts :
Only in studying *parts*, have I caught sight of the
whole.

False Studies.

Countless thine enemies, Truth ! My spirit is bleed-
ing
Seeing the owlish creation nourished to life in thy
light.

The Fount of Rejuvenescence.

Trust me, this is no fable ; the fountain of youth ever
bubbles

Certain, unfailing : whence comes it ? From art
of the poets.

The Child in the Cradle.

Happiest infant ! your cradle to you is an infinite
space.

Grow, and the endless world will cramp and confine
you as man.

XLV.

Autumn.

AUTUMN has come from o'er the seas,
With yellow hair ;
Autumn in the Antipodes,—
Sweet here, as there.

The spear-head poplars' shafts of green
Are shafts of gold,
Standing in aisles that run between
Firs, dark and cold.

With golden beaten barbs a-spring
The birches quiver,
And icy-hearted dewdrops fling
Upon the river.

Ripe rounded globes on bending stems
Grown sweet and mellow,
O'erload the drooping trees with gems
Of red and yellow.

Bluff Autumn fills his coffers now,
 Till running o'er ;
The season of the golden bough,
 And golden store.

Ah ; Autumn from across the seas,
 With yellow hair ;
Autumn in the Antipodes,—
 Sad here, as there.

XLVI.

Rosebuds.

HIGH on the lattice-work clustered the roses ;
And lower, half blown,
One little bud in the morning was drooping,
Fragrant, alone ;
And my little sweetheart saw it, and claimed it
All as her own.

I lifted her up ; she would taste of its sweetness
From the tree as it hung :
She drew it towards her, her lips were all hidden
The petals among ;
But the blossom was wet, and the dews were down
shaken
From where they had clung.

Then she loosened her hold of the pinky-pearl blossom
And stood by my side,
And her cheeks,—they were wet from the dews that
were shaken,
As tho' she had cried ;
And she pouted, complaining the bloom kissed
unkindly
As half satisfied.

Then I told her I knew of a bud that was sweeter
Than rosebuds to me ;
And the dews only made it more lovely and rosy
And tempting to see ;
Then I kiss'd her dear lips,—and she waywardly left
me
Alone by the tree.

XLVII.

Reverie.

IN tremulous chords, wakened by little hands
From the white keys, my spirit lives :
There lies revealed one land of many lands,
 Whose beauty gives
Glory, thro' her, to all things else so drear ;—
And she herself is glory ;—dear, so dear.

Yon withered tree, lifting its arms all bare
To the blue sky, brings olden dreams
When it too spread its leaves in vernal air
 And sunny beams ;
And the cold wind, when the night's stars are clear,
Whispers a by-gone story ;—dear, so dear.

Yon barren rock, by the long-surgings sea,
Nor leaf will love, nor seabird build her nest,
All cold and gray, when winds wail from the lea,
 And darkened west,
In its hard sleep, dreams, more than life sincere,
Live of the sea of Summer ;—dear, so dear.

Ah, joyless life ; when the last hopes are dead,
And dreams no more glamour the clouded day ;
When the soul sleeps, in fancies pillowed,
 Love far away,—
Those little hands ; one voice, divine and clear,
Waken departed glory ;—dear, so dear.

XLVIII.

RONDEL.

Soft Hands.

SOFT hands on tired eyes,
Cool breath o'er paling brow,
Life sinks to slumber now
'Mid music of soft sighs.

Hands on the breast cross-wise
Trust in Above avow ;
Soft hands on tired eyes,
Cool breath o'er paling brow.

Echo of faint "Good-byes,"—
Life, Life, too sweet art thou ;
Why Death this part allow ?—
Peace, if no death denies
Soft hands on tired eyes.

XLIX.

Morning.

*Morning passes, never ceases,
Day-break laughs on earth forever.*

Now is the hour of the morning's prime,—
 (List to the voices ;—sea-sprites hymning !)
Wispy clouds from the sea-haze climb,
 Rosy gulls in a gold sea swimming :
 Waves defying Time's aging hand
 Dance to the gleaming sand.

Now is the hour of the morning's prime,
 Earth lies laughing and Heaven bends over :
Bees are a-hum in the banks of thyme,
 Bees are a-drone in the fields of clover :
 Poppies and cornflowers gem the corn,
 And a new world smiles, dew-born.

Now is the hour of the morning's prime,—
 Ho,—the revel of rival thrushes !
(That's a blackbird hid in the lime,)
 Clearly the lark's lay fills the hushes :—
 Silver hazes and cloud-wefts sever,—
 And such morns break forever !

L.

Spring-festal.

(FROM HEINE.)

It is the Spring-time's sorrowful quest !
The wild troop of maidens blooming and fair
Impetuously comes, with fluttering hair,
And anguished lament, and uncovered breast :—

“ *Adonis ! Adonis !* ”

The night smiles round. With torches' glare
They seek him thro' the pathless wood,
While echoes, bewildered in multitude
Are crying and laughing, and sobbing despair :—

“ *Adonis ! Adonis !* ”

The wondrous lovely form of youth
Lies on the earth cold, pale and dead ;
His blood dies all the blossoms red,
The air is fill'd with sounds of ruth :—

“ *Adonis ! Adonis !* ”

LI.

VILLANELLE.

How Much is Said.

How much is said,
How little done
When we are dead.

Resolves, instead
Of work begun,—
How much is said.

Hopes, glowing red
Sink like the sun
When we are dead.

Vows, idly sped
From every one,—
How much is said.

No more to dread,
No more to shun
When we are dead.

O, hearts have bled,
Life's sands have run :
How much is said
When we are dead.

LII.

Aspirations to Immortality.

(Induced and fostered by teachings of Early Childhood.)

FROM darkness, thro' a rosy atmosphere,
The little child floats to a Heaven here.

None other has he known ;
From no unsorrowful fair sky has flown :

Ere that great hour was set
Wherein he should find freedom from the prison
Of his Earth-mother, Love's bright sun had risen
His Heaven to beget.

A chrysalis he lay, inert and numb,
Nor dreamt of joys and sorrows yet to come.

Within him dwells no heavenly memory ;
Tho' life be his, its joys are yet to be ;
And one by one awake within his breast
(As he lies loved, caress'd),

Those feelings and emotions that impart
All knowledge to his heart :

Words, looks of love, these all his hours employ,
And build that mansion fair of childhood joy.

How should this tender slip
Of Heaven, remember that he came from thence ?
His memory is not born with him,
But in his brain lies dim,
Growing, as young perceptions slowly unfold :
Untutored is his lip
To tell the past as is his heart to know ;
But unto him, as glad days swiftly go,
The secrets of his blossoming life are told,
And Earth is fair, in childhood's innocence.

He sees great suns arise,
And stars bedeck the skies,
He sees their beauty filling nights and days ;
Who built his Heav'n, build Earth,
And wonders spring to birth,
Around him thronging as he sleeps or plays.
He at his mother's knee
Learns God is good, that He
Created all things, great be they or small ;
And as he then is taught
So is within him wrought
The soul that trusts or fears, gazing on all.
Only his own small pain,
Soothed, soon forgotten, comes within his sphere ;

That Earth doth ills contain,
Pain wearieth all things, skies grow dark thro' fear,
Nothing of this he knows ;
For ever round him flows
The stream that love keeps soft, and pure, and clear.

Each day's a life, an hour ;
No bound he sets
To what may be the term of hour or day :
All light and darkness, going, he forgets,
While he remembers a bright bird, a flower,
Less lasting ev'n than they :
Two gods he knows : all he refers to these,
Knowing no other laws than their decrees.
They know the marvels he's content to see,
Always as beautiful, always as gay :
He wonders that such wonders there may be,
Why night and stars succeed to light and day ;
Yet darkness holds no fears,
Terrors or tears ;
These too, from him, has love kept quite away.

As the red flush portends the bright day's breaking,
Our infancy's the dream before the waking :
We only dream when waking is most near ;
And blest indeed are we
Who yet have memory,
Forbidding *all* our dreams to disappear.

For soon implicit trust
Broadens to questioning, as dreams
Broaden to keener, deep reality :
Till now has all been equable and just,
But now come groping beams ;
And eyes grow dim, beginning first to see.
Now shall those two, thro' whom the child first saw,
Be proven lustrous, or false-rayed thro' flaw :
For as they led his weak steps to the light,
So now his vision breaks, distorted or aright.

And shall the child, waking from fairy-land,
Distrust those dear enchanters, who could make
A Paradise spread round on every hand ?
Rather his love shall deepen, he awake :
And seeing how they watched the path he trod,
He feels the strange, mysterious ways of God.

Tho' the reality forever flies,
This memory of Heaven will remain ;
And in his life of toil, or bed of pain,
The youth still sees its beauties in the skies :
Heart-faith awakens then
Thro' hope, that he again
May know as glad a Heaven when he dies.

As the boy ages, all the wonders seen
By childhood's eye,
The majesty of suns, the pure serene
No less majestic star-encrusted sky
Grow vastly greater ; and the heart expands
In adoration, as the youth more understands ;
And he can well conceive
That He who could achieve
Such works, can build that Temple, not of hands,
Where, as illimitable ages roll,
Expands in Godlike awfulness the soul.

The quickly aging man
Looks back to childhood's time ;
Nor deems he that his onward course began
In a sublimer and more distant clime.
He looks to a far day
When two now gone above his cradle leant,
And in the infant blent
The glories of an ever living love :
What less than gods were they
Who taught a love that, stedfast, lingered on
When they themselves were gone ?
That dream of childhood came not from above,
But thro' the magic wand
Of two most kind and fond ;
Too good to be confined in deathly house of clay.

No soul is downward sent,
Falling from Heav'n-set pinnacle eminent,
To languish upon Earth
In new but lowly birth.
Wakened by earthly love, in mortal time,
Fostered in that small space
That spans the human race,
(The years from infancy to age's rime),
Such height was hardly dreamt, was never known,
To which the soul has flown ;
Unscaled the height to which man sees it climb :
Swinging from Heaven to Heaven were little worth ;
Sublime that upward flight to Heaven from lowly
earth.

LIII.

Art and Labour.

THE tree is in flower ; but the flower
Came not without stem, without root :
Thus Beauty and Art : there's a power
Toiling on before these, unseen, mute :
No flower can exist if no root grope in earth ;
A race drags thro' labour,—and Art is the birth.

LIV.

Evolution.

THE man is too mean to evolve to a God ?

Nay, be not afraid :—

The colours that animate canvas ;—

Of what are *these* made ?

And the Great Master-artist can colour aright ;

Making Children of Earth into Angels of Light :

Changing Darkness of Earth to a Heaven of Light.

LV.

First Love.

(FROM GOETHE.)

AH, what hand can wake from slumber
Days when first-love rose exultant ?
Who bring back an hour only
Of that gracious time again ?

Now I nurse my sorrow lonely,
And in longings, sighs past number,
Mourn lost happiness, in vain.

Ah, what hand can wake from slumber
That most gracious time again ?

LVI.

Lady Mine.

(A SONG.)

BREATHE a lay divine and low,
Lady mine,
Of the ages long ago,
Lady mine :
Thro' the present's doubtful glory
Breathe the olden knightly story
When fair forms moved to and fro
As now moveth thine,
Lady mine.

Breathe of dreams that once have been,
And are dead';
Dreams that flushed the day between
Rosy red :
Breathe of love, so all its seeming
Shall appear no more as dreaming ;—
Breathe then of thyself, my queen ;—
When the words from thee are sped,
Dreams are fled.

Breathe the lay thou lovest best,
Lady mine,
When the clouds are in the west,
Lady mine ;
When the snowy mountains shimmer
And in sunset glories glimmer ;
When the winds are rocked in rest,
And the keen stars shine,
Lady mine.

LVII.

Twilight and the Makomako.

NIGHT on the forest is falling,
Slowly the day leaves the hill,
Birds from the coverts are calling,
Calling in tinkle and trill :

Medley of harmony ringing,
Musical, mellow and chiming ;
Night-airs a-quiver with singing,—
Jangle of sweetness and riming !

Twilight is gone from the hill,
Dark are the woods to the moon ;
All the sweet voices are still,
Darkness has come too soon.—

One lone bird forgets
That the white moon is climbing ;
While over a hill a star sets,
It is chiming and chiming :—

Bell-birds, softer than bells,
Bell-bird, ever in tune,
What god in your bosom dwells ?—
What passion your bosom swells
As you chime to the climbing moon ?

LVIII.

The Rata-bloom and Tui.

THE rata flings purple array
O'er the great forest kings ;
The sun-god leads Summer away,
And a wood-dryad sings
'Mid the flower-sprays dewy :
Inarticulate gasps, then a chime
That no bird of the forest can rime,
Then silence again : 'twas a tui.

LIX.

On the Shore.

THE sea hath music in its wave,
That sings of the Evermore ;
But the waters wash on a mouldering grave
When they foam to the sounding shore ;
For the ebbing tide leaves the broad sands bare,
And the dead lie scattered there.

Beautiful shells and white bleached bones,
And roots of the twisted pine,
Torn sea-weeds, and encrusted stones
Roughened in sand and brine :
But the ocean sings, and the sea-winds sigh,
Till it seems 'twere sweet to die.

Polished shells of perfect mould,
Complete in themselves they seem,
No groping ghouls of the ocean cold
With its cruel charnel gleam.
And strange it is that we feel no dread
When the sea gives up its dead.

Death and decay ; but all so fair
And lulled with such lullaby,
That the keenest life is enchanted there,
Forgetting it too must die,—
That when its wondrous house is gone
The ocean still sings on.

.

Life has a sea with a sounding shore,
We are as shells in the deep ;
We hear its music of Evermore,
We live, and we laugh, and weep,—
May we, to a God of eternal breath,
Be as fair as we lie in death.

Summer Day.

O RARE, O sweet the summer day
 Whose air is languid from the bloom
 Of scented flowers ; the young winds play,
 Swinging the censers of perfume,
 And half their sweetness they consume :
 O rare, O sweet the summer day
 When winds from blossoms steal away,
 And in the grove's secluded gloom
 Linger and sigh, while skies illumine
 O rare ! O sweet ! the Summer day !

Pleasant to listen to the lisp
 Of the young winds : the crickets chirr
 In the long grass ; the song-birds stir
 The ready air to measures crisp ;
 The skies have scarce a single blurr,
 Since clouds are frayed to finest wisp.

Old Ocean's unremitting beat
 Monotonous, drones far away ;
 All Nature's voices wake and greet
 And in one song voluptuous meet
 O rare, O sweet, the Summer day !

LXI.

VILLANELLE.

(In Shorthand.)

Time Flies.

TIME flies
While yet
Earth sighs.

Sad eyes
Regret
Time flies.

Clear skies
Forget
Earth sighs.

Suns rise
And set,
Time flies.

Love cries
In fret ;
Earth sighs.

Death ties
His net :
Time flies,
Earth sighs.

LXII.

Can We Change ?

WHAT is change to you and me ?

Years may pass,

Each that comes like that which was ;

As they flee,

Shall they joys for us amass ?—

We shall see.

Shall we ever, then, grow old,

Wrinkled, gray ?

Will your soft hair fade away

From the gold ?

Will Love in that later day

Be a-cold ?

Faces alter ; souls endure

Evermore ;

Spirit-love is the soul's core,

Ever sure ;

Love of heart for heart therefore

Is most pure.

Love of soul for soul shall last
Till the end :
Love of face,—ev'n love of friend,
Soon is past :
Soul with soul our hearts' loves blend,
Firm and fast.

One day like another goes,
Night like night ;
Lily always pure and white,
Red the rose :—
Will life always be delight ?
Ah ; who knows ?

Little words are great indeed,
Rightly said ;
Hearts from little words have bled—
Some still bleed :
Hearts still love tho' lips be dead,—
Love their need.

Time in one place idly stands,
Looks aside ;
Works his changes over wide
Seas and lands :—
We, untouched, move side by side,
Clasped our hands.

What is change to you and me ?—

Life's long maze

Alters not our wills, our ways,

Steadfast we :

Will joy last thro' length of days ?

We shall see !

LXIII

Serenade.

(FROM KÖRNER.)

CRADLED in the silent night
Life is sweetly sleeping ;
Longing makes the darkness bright,
Love his watch is keeping.
Round about me come and go
Ghosts and spirits lonely,
Yet I linger here below,
Faithful to thee only.

Gracious maiden, hearest thou ?
Why so long delaying ?
Liest thou in slumber now,
Deep in dreamland straying ?
Nay ; thou movest not in dreams ;
For my spirit, yearning,
Thro' thy curtain sees the gleams
Of thy lamp, still burning.

Ah ; so glance thou, child most kind,
From thy window bending :
Softly ; how the evening wind
Sweet with song is wending.
And the wind shall truly hear,
Bear my thoughts above me,
And shall whisper in thine ear,
Where thou art,—“ I love thee.”

When the earnest lover sings
True love listens, waking ;—
But the night to morning wings,
I your rest am breaking.
Slumber till the morning light
Breaks in day the clearest ;
Until morning, then, Good-night ;
Good-night, thou, my dearest.

LXIV.

The Waterfall and the
Piwakawaka.

WATER falling in foam,
And a dead fuchsia bending
From the daylight above, to the gloam
Of the chasm descending :
Frondage of ferns, and the drip
From bark hanging in tatters,—
Sunlight and cheerfulness slip
To the gloom, when asway on the tip
Of a twig, the gay fantail chatters ;
Death is around it—what matters ?—
A flirt of its fan and its flits
And over the foaming sits
And flirts, twits and chatters.

Ti-trees and the Kukupa.

A GROVE of the southern palm
 On an islet, alone
 In the bosom unrippled and calm
 Of a lake with its mountain-zone :

The wild bee's singing
 Has ceased in the great white bloom ;
 And the once gay scented plume
 Hangs lazily swinging :

White ? it is still milk-white
 In its green top serried,
 Still milk-white,—
 But drooping, heavily berried.

In the midst, iridescent and glowing,
 Full-breasted, bead-eyed,
 Bright as the Argus shewing,
 Not knowing its pride,—
 (*Low and gentle the call,*
Cooing, and cooing :
Wood-pigeons ; that is all,
Cooing and wooing).

LXVI.

Spring-time and Echo.

(A MYTHOLOGICAL IDYLL.)

I LAY me down in the sweet Spring-time,
(*Dreamed a dream of dreams !*)

I dreamed the blossoms arose in mime ;
(*Sleep with fancy teems !*)

I lay at morn by a stream alone,
(*Lay till morn was noon !*)

My head was pillowed on a mossy stone ;
(*Noon was all too soon !*)

I saw a vale lie broad to day,
(—*Tempe, happy chance !*)

Spring-time revelled therein alway ;
(*With faun and satyrs' dance !*)

The moody wind-flower stood alone,—
(*The Love-Queen by it knelt !*)

A youth as fair as the carven stone.
(*As cold to the Queen he felt !*)

In the woods a maiden wept,
 (*And Apollo there !*)
Scents of laurel about her crept,—
 (*Laurel in his hair !*)
List ! a chord of music swept—
 (*Ah ; Apollo there !*)

The flower whose leaf is stamped with grief,
 (*He whom Zephyr loved !*)
Watched in the East but joy was brief.
 (*The Sun-god onward moved !*)

By the pool where naiads swim
 (*Hovered Echo's voice !*)
Leaned a youth, and a spell held him ;
 (*To a wayward choice !*)
And he gazed in the waters dim.
 (*Heard not Echo's voice !*)

Who is this who kneels and turns
 (*In the skies,—Apollo !*)
To the sun while her heart burns ?—
 (*That she may not follow !*)
'T is the gold-rayed flower that yearns.
 (*Ever for Apollo !*)

O'er a pool a maiden leant,
 (Pan leant o'er the maid !)
In her arms the reeds she bent.
 (On his pipes he played !)

Lonely shepherd without sheep,
 (Cybele looks thunder !)
Firs stand lonely on the steep,
 (Castles lower under !)
Thou and they bemoan in sleep.
 (Neither do we wonder !)

Lovely flowers of the olden time,
 (Lovely maids and men !)
Lost are the days of your golden prime ;
 (Grant us fancy, then !)
Ye in dreams of the sweet Spring-time
 Live and breathe again !

LXVII.

Fortune.

(FROM HEINE.)

FORTUNE ! it is all in vain
You are adverse ! I can gain,
Since I know that fighting, striving,
I am your defeat conniving.

I will overcome you yet,
And my yoke upon you set ;
In the end you must surrender—
Tho' my wounds are sore and tender.

But it drains my life's red blood ;
And the fair life's active mood
Peaks away, and I lie dying
With victorious banners flying !

LXVIII.

The Cry of the Dishonoured.

THERE'S a moan from our by-ways and streets—"We
are born to shame ;

We are thrust in the dark, being seared with the
outcast's brand ;

We are cursed by our fathers that are, and denied a
name,

And our fathers, in spurning, have made us a curse
to the land ;

And our mothers,—they love us, yet hate ; we are
bless'd and bann'd ;

For the salt of their tears parch'd the joy at the
hour of our birth ;

And the voices of pitiless virtue cry—"Woe that ye
came,

As a blot to our fame, and a burden to cumber our
earth.'

"Unhonoured the name that we bear, and unhonoured
our toil—

'Can aught that is good be of these?'—and the
upright pass by ;

Can the fruitage be good from the tree if evil the soil ?

For they cast us where evil must flourish and
virtue must die ;

And serenely they move, content if obscured from
their eye

And shut from their ear are the sight and the
sound of our pain,

The gloom of our sorrow, the ceaselessness of our
moil—

What wonder we harden, if prayers are forever in
vain ?

“ What law can be guidance to us when the law-
givers turn

The sword to our hearts ?—from the first we are
doomed in their eyes :

Our fathers are proud in their midst, while our
mothers they spurn,

They place us in deepest of hell, and themselves in
the skies,

And crush us with tyrannous laws if we murmur or
rise ;

We must labour in darkness, and love like the
beasts of the field

Since Nature's first law was transgressed ! we must
evermore burn

In the fire of those sins, no better from being
concealed.

“ And our mothers ; gaunt women of weeping that
once were fair ;

Whose tears have burned in their cheeks the
‘ furrows of vice,’ they say ;

Whose eyes looked furtively up to the creatures who
cast them there,

But now are fierce with the fire of animals turned
to bay ;

God’s image is man—if the man-god will help not the
devil-god may ;—

And once we are soiled and spurned, it needs a
powerful hand

To help us, if not to save honour, dishonour to
bear ;—

If *no* help for us is forthcoming, what soul can the
curse withstand ?

“ Only the patient women workers whose fingers are
worn,

Whose hands are hard, but whose hearts are soft,
are the ones who feel ;

These most know the despair and the anguish of
sisters forlorn,

Of the struggles to save the honour dishonours
conceal,

For not one-half of their strivings their shames reveal ;
And callously, men look down on the burning
shame alone.

Awake, *if men* ; bring mercy forth living, and not
still-born ;

Nor, when we call from the heart for pardon, down-
crush with the stone.—

“ Death in life ; when the honour is dead that we’re
taught to revere ;—

And make they the straitened ways easier, the
burden to bear ?

Do they help us herein ? Ye women that tremble so
near

That chasm whose awfulness marks not the foul
from the fair,

Take heed ; for the man is self-seeking, evading his
share ;

He will leave you to stumble alone to destruction’s
abyss ;

He escapes what to you is such travail ; he laughs,
and you fear ;

He calls you to love and to life, and he leaves you
to this.

“But they say that the woman through justice may
hold to her own ;

For justice compels, where the man is unwilling to
do.

Ay ! 'tis nothing the shame of the woman thro' trust
should be known,

And nothing how false she appear if but justice
seem true ;

Then either in broad-reaching shame, or in deep-
piercing rue

Must she bear what her love and her trust were too
willing to take :

Then who is the first that against her shall lift up the
stone ?

Who is the pure one to curse and to crush, for
God's sake ?”

Nature's law over-rules man's, tho' he try to reverse
With his puniest learning the laws that will bless
if obeyed ;

The blessing of bearing is now as the veriest curse
To thousands whose hunger for love will not die
nor be stayed,—

And what are they lesser therefore ? No shame
to the maid

If she's weaker than Nature, but, shame to the
man, who should be

As strong as his vaunting, at least ; yet these weak
they immerse

In the flood of dishonour ; that brackish, black,
horror-waved sea.

There's a moan from our by-ways and streets, too
piteous to speak ;

We know not one-half, not a tithe of the misery
there,

Nor can we ; but women are wronged, and women
are meek,

Whilst against them is pitted the callous old giant
Despair :

Tho' our ears and our eyes are fast closed, the
sorrows they bear

Seem to touch us, we cannot tell how, as o'erladen
they plod ;

And what little service we render to shelter the
weak

Is a service that strengthens ourselves, and the
goodness of God.

LXIX.

The Old Story.

OUR youth of life together we have spent ;
Together we have reached our middle age :

We did not mark the pathway as we went,
We did not sift our thoughts like sober mage :

Alas ; we did not even gage
What our lives taught, or what life's teaching
meant.

It now has come to this ; that we must say,—
Those bygone days seem pleasant to the thought

That backward turns : our paths diverge to-day :
'Tis not all sweet to go the way we ought.

What recompenses has Time brought ?—
These :—Love to each ; pledges of Life's warm May.

We two thought not, nor dreamed to seek out love
So close beside, but looked beyond our pale ;

How could such friends ever as lovers move ?
How could the friend take up the lover's tale ?

And yet ; it seems the found loves fail
To meet the tests we set their truth to prove.

Why should we think of parting with regret ?
Each knows the other goes his joy to meet,
Each knows, too, his own purpose : . . ay, and yet
The newer meeting does not seem complete.

We laugh, and say *To part is sweet*.—
Whence then the wish for tears, and to forget ?

Go, meet your lover while I too meet mine.
They wait for us to join them : well they know
That we were friends, are friends ; can *they* define,
Can *they* resolve, the doubts that move us so —
Now that 'tis time we both should go,
To remain, more than ever we incline.

What is it then ; why should this wonder be ?
We've often spoken of it, laughed at it.
Why should I wish to know you still near me ?
Why should your going trouble me one whit ?
We're friends,—ah yes ; and, *Life is lit*
With friendship : true ; and still we fail to see.

Is it that we would rather wander on
In the old way, because it is so good ?
I cannot think of life, you being gone,
In the same way : now, it is understood :
But we two parted ?—O, I would
The dream were clearer that we chance upon.

Cannot we find contentment otherwise ?
Are we mistaken when we deem that we
Part to our joy ?—O, close those longing eyes,
For I look back to you as you to me :
We give our hands to others ; see
How our two hearts return, and feign surprise !

No, no : it is not good for us to part.
Love must be ours : we long ago have given
Each to the other :—nay love ; do not start
As I an ill thought to your soul had driven.—
So, love : you are my only heaven,
My breast your rest, your sanctuary my heart.

Will this be hard, be unjust to those two,
The one you leave, the one that I have left ?—
Yes, yes ; you will, I have : . . . what should we do ?
The soul must bleed and bleed whose heart is cleft,—
Will we cleave theirs ?—*'tis left*
Only to part, then, evermore to rue.

Now we have found our hearts we turn to go ;
You to yours, I to mine, as we are pledged.
Try to forget this truth that now we know,—
Strive that this callow thing be never fledged.
O love : are all truths double-edged,
That one edge salves, and one must torture so ?

Is it Good-bye then ? . . . gather up our strength
That we may conquer where we are enslaved.

What hollow mockery that at this length
We find Love's banner over us has waved !—

Deep truth is in that saying graved—
“ In our most weakness we discover strength.”

*You shall not go ; shall not : it is a reed
To lean on, thinking we shall ever win
To conquer this, long-lived : my love shall plead
With yours ; and who shall overtop with din
The word that bids you let me in,—*

Nay, I am in ! Let be, is all I plead !

Lean so and rest then ; surely it is best.
Ah ; why till now has your head never found
This is its place ?—scorn rears an angry crest,
But, unregarded, topples to the ground.

We two shall bide in depth profound
Of Love, where warring worlds shall not molest.

Ha, ha ! what was it tried to part us then ?
That very deed has made us see the truth !
Who would have dreamt Love was about us, when
We side by side walked—dreamed we waked to ruth !

No, we must never part, love ;—sooth,
Mishaps bring Heav'n. Praise Heav'n therefor.

Amen.

The Acorn Hath a Grove of Oaks.

WHAT are words once given ;
Breaths that pass away ?
(Clouds at night are riven,
And are naught at day :)—
Is a word a thing so small,
Thoughtless, idly spoken,
That no hopes of all in all
Can thereby be broken ?

What are plighted vows ;
Whispers that have been ?
(Often Spring-trees' boughs
Lose their promised green :)—
Is a vow a thing so light,
One with ease can sever,
Nor be cursèd of its blight
Ever and forever ?

LXXI.

Perennial Joy.

WHY sorrow when joy is past ?
Know we not well that it cannot stay ?
Look you ; the loveliest Summer's day
Must go at last.

No pleasure, but some alloy
Is blended ; and, is it not more dear
Thus two-fold ?—if all must age and sere,
Why should not joy ?

But softly, dear heart ; for then,
When it is gone like the day's blue sky,
Know we not well, ev'n by night's sorrow-sigh,
'Twill wake again ?

LXXII.

Margaret at Her Spinning-
Wheel.

(FROM GOETHE.)

MY peace is gone,
My heart is sore ;
I've lost it forever
And evermore.

When he is not by
I am like to die ;
The world is all
Suffused with gall.

My aching head
Is racked with pain,
My restless soul
Is rent in twain.

My peace is gone,
My heart is sore ;
I've lost it forever
And evermore.

To see him only
I sit at the pane,
I leave the house only
To meet him again.

His stately front,
His noble guise,
His mouth's soft laughter,
His wonderful eyes.

The magic tones
In that word of his ;
His firm hand-clasp ;
And ah ! his kiss !

My peace is gone,
My heart is sore ;
I've lost it forever
And evermore.

My bosom yearns
With him to be ;
Ah, dared I but hold him
And clasp him to me !

To kiss his lips
Unchecked, unhidden,
Tho' I from kisses
To death were bidden.

Old Love-Songs.

WHEN song has sounded high,
 And divine chords their melodies have flung,
 There comes a murmur from the days gone by
 Of hands that have such wakened, and lips sung :
 Comes a diviner air, full, sad and slow,
 Of lingered singing, subdued, perfect, clear ;—
 Those accents that the soul but once might know,
 And knowing, hold most dear.

When music's failing notes
 In languishment grow slower, and more slow,
 Bright with its swiftness a clear vision floats ;
 And echoes passing by, faltered and low,
 Breathe half-remembered, simple, olden songs,
 That sleep till some unlooked for, trivial call
 Wakens them beating to a life that throngs
 With newer notes and chords, and blends them
 all.

Ah, the remembrance ; ah, the afterthought ;
 eauty grows fairer, happiness more dear ;
 orgot is this dull present, when unsought
 The memories of other days are near !

O tones, that ready stir
To whatso hand can waken you to song,—
And such, how few !—awaken now, and long,
Ah long in blissfulness vibrate, and sing of her.

O tones, all ready set
To sing the best that ever has been sung,
Reveal to me the sweets that to you clung,
Those sweet sad wistful songs of love's regret !

O tones, that sleep so fast
When hands are inexpert to set you free,—
Whisper those glories only once to me,
That from my heart the echoes may outlast
My thought, my life, when I have ceased to be.

LXXIV.

On Cremation.

What the eye sees not, grieves not the heart ;—for remembrance, without the remembrancer, must perish ; and we put away our dearest in the midst of strangers, forgetful, as we read the epitaph, of what is passing under the daisies. Dead sea apples were fair without, but ashes within ;—and the grave, so beautiful to look upon ; will we think of that ?

Man's lowly house ; God's acre ; the green grass turf ; it is the name we cling to and are loth to relinquish : mother Earth calls us to her breast, lovingly and persistently ; and we forget that *her* visible beauty, like that of her fair children, is but skin deep.

If there is one sorrow more deep while more common than another, it is this severing in death ; and it of all sorrows is the one we most cherish ; choosing for its emblem that mournfullest of colours, melancholy black, sorrow's harbinger.

*Underneath this sable hearse
Lies the subject of all verse.*

Death has, at the graveside, inspired as many mournful reflections, and sometimes even hopeful, as love has inspired happy ones ; and not yet do we know which is stronger, love or death ; for though death gathers to himself the strongest love, even the weakest survives his dissolution ; and life and death are one, love links them in the grave.

The grave : mother Earth calls back her children ; but does that quiet voice call them to darkness, cold and shuddering, while close above, though hearts may be heavy, and eyes wet, the birds still sing, the flowers laugh by the forest ways, and the skies are tenderly blue ? Earth on her breast would rock and croon to her children, weary of life ; we make her a charnel-house, breathing decay. What though the decay be hidden by

the grass green knoll and mossy stone,
and the thought of it seem put quite away ; at times we cannot but think of it ; and then death's chill fingers press our wrist, so coldly and faintly the life pulses within us.

Sweet mourners ! your tears only wither the flowers on the grave that your hands make beautiful : well it is that love can beautify death, and forgetfulness dull his terrors.

*We must be patient : but I cannot choose but weep,
to think they should lay him i' the cold ground.*

Poor Ophelia : mourning her father more, perhaps, thro' already having lost her lover ; giving her flowers in careful foolishness to those who soon would forget her and her griefs in their more immediate own.

*There's rosemary, that's for remembrance ; pray you,
love, remember : and there is pansies, that's for
thoughts. . . . there's rue for you : and here's
some for me : . . .*

Work as we will, alas, rosemary and rue for us all.

Round the head of death is a halo, woven of sorrow and affection, and its beams have flickered down from antiquity : flickered, yet so strong are they that the grave cannot quench them, but over it they linger, an 'ignus fatuus,' indeed, but not altogether of evil.

Old customs are shackles ; and so strange is our human nature, that certain of our bonds we love ; and this old sorrow of burial, this old woe o' the world, one of them : nay, had we our choice, we would even seek heaven through the lowly wicket of the grave rather than through the gateway of the skies ; seek it in the doleful hearse rather than in the chariot of fire.

It is this chariot of fire that seems so commendable; yet we eye it with disfavour, as we would a supplanter and a stealer of birthrights: fire, the cleanly, the everbright; the refiner, the lifegiver; fire, in whose arms life is cradled, and whose extinction were the end of all.

Odes there are in abundance: odes to life and to death, to sorrow and to happiness; to every feeling that has at any time affected the heart of man; but never yet an

ODE TO A CREMATION URN.

Thou placidest container of the dust
That was a being! unchanged thro' the years
When man feels hopes and fears,
Unsullied and untarnished, free from rust
Tho' thy curved sides are bathed with human tears!
Thou form of changeless beauty; far more firm
Than was the wonder whose last ashes lie
Still in thy sides: the living charms must die,
But thou surviv'st unchanged their longest term:
Their looks decay ere half their day is past;
Thou guard'st their ashes closely at the last.

The teeming brain that scorned the body's thrall,
The loving heart, for its weak house too strong,
The aspiring spirit, pent on earth too long,—

Thou hold'st the body that contained them all :
That body, purged of dross by heavenly fire,
No more knows fruitless hope, or blank desire.

And we ; shall we regret
The pleasures that are past ?
Their memory lives yet,—
They were too good to last :—
Gladness be ours that such joys might be known
Not sorrow that they're flown ;
Gladness be ours that we can *not* forget.

Immortal ! Keeper of the mortal part
Of one whose spirit never shall know death ;
The dust of earth within thee slumbereth
No more flushed red with blood of a pure heart !

Keen with high aspiration was that form ;
Now 't is impassive, lustreless and cold ;
Thy little bound that restless dust can hold
Within whose bounds high hopes surged live and
warm.

No looks unloving rest on thee, fair urn !
No careless passer wonders who lies there !
No cynic at thy epitaph shall turn
And laugh at who displays too fond a care

Impassive sepulchre ! untouched by frost,
Nor sodden with the rains, nor scorched by sun,—
Undimmed thou standest till our day is done,
Thy charge unscattered, nor thy beauty lost !
Thus in earth's frailties man his strength displays,
Moulding a shape that far outlasts his days ;
And mortal man invents
Immortal monuments
And in his works will still remembered be ;
Himself must pass away ;—
To thee he gives his clay,
And sets thy beauty 'gainst eternity.

LXXV.

After-Life.

WEAVE the wreath of moly ;—
Is it the victor, Death,
Gives us this crown most holy,
Taking our latest breath ?
Shall we forget this life we leave ?
Have we forgotten an earlier left ?—
Is it cause to joy, or cause to grieve,
That we of remembrance are quite bereft ?

Bow the head most lowly ;—
We of the Earth are born,
Bless'd with a spirit holy,
Giv'n of Life's rose and thorn.
Do we return from ages past,
Or is our spirit but now create ?
Is the world we tread the one that last
Was the scene of a former life's estate ?

Look with awe and wonder ;
What are we all but dust ?
Earth we are sure is under ;
Heav'n is above, we trust :—
Or is our trust an errant thing,
Seeking without what is most within ?
Is it true that death our soul shall bring
To Earth, that its new life may begin ?

Breadths unknown asunder,
Life from life is set ;
All that was ever under,
Lives under Heaven yet ;
All that has lived in the ages gone
Lives, and shall live till time be past :
The first create till the end lives on,
And first shall be always the same as last.

Same, but upward lifting ;
So shall the base be dead,
All that is noble, drifting
To the supreme God-head.
So shall each good deed lift us more,
Nearer the goal we at length shall reach ;
And the fight we win shall strength outpour,
And the truth we see shall a greater teach.

Good from evil sifting,
Glorious spirit-flight ;
Souls of the Years up-drifting :—
Passing from Doubt's dark night :—
Shall we forget each friend, each tie,
Binding us closely, and sweet past thought ?
If dying we live, is it hard to die ?
Shall Death's be the hand to make past life naught ?

What is all our feeling ?
Is it the force that moulds
That which Life, half revealing,
As the Soul's end, unfolds ?
That which is perfect, pure and clean,
That which must broaden in power and grace,
Till the veil of doubt can no more screen
Its eyes from its Maker's, its great God's face ?

What seems most concealing
To our unknowing mind,
May be the best revealing
Of the great Life, Mankind :
Deep is it hidden, the truth we seek ;
Yet are we able to find it out.—
But the rayless depths, adverse and bleak,
We must traverse and trace ere freed from doubt.

LXXVI.

Patito.

WHO is the spearman whose fame comes to REINGA
the dreary ?

Whose is the prowess that rings even 'mid shades
of the dead ?

He upon earth ; and I, locked in the caverns of
darkness :—

Were I above, would his arm wield with such
valour the spear ?

PATITO am I, the *toa* ;—ah for the shout of the battle,
Clash of the *mere* and grate spear against spear
impelled !

Still'd is the bosom of youth, old are the sinews of
vigour,

Dim grow the eyes that flashed, fierce in the face
of the foe.

Who is the spearman that now boasts there are none
to oppose him ?

Can he be bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh is he ?

Worthy his arm indeed, if worthy the arm of my
fathers !—

Only again to return, measuring spear with spear ;
Test if the fame of the lips finds a true tongue in his
manhood ;

Test if the arm itself urges the fame or no.

Never a change in the gloom ; shadow on shadow is
gliding

Fast from the rocky gate, jaws of the Mother of
Death ;

Jaws that between them griped MAUI the god and
enchanter

When he would pierce the deeps where the dark
mother lay hid ;

Mother of endless death, daughter and helpmate of
TANE,

First of all women begot out of the maiden of
earth.

Fast from the rocky gate ; none to its portals
returning

Watch where the flaming sun dips in the waters of
life :—

MAUI, the giver of fire, MAUI, upborne on the waters,
Sunsnarer,—even a god knew HINE-NUI-TE-PO ;

How then shall I, a man, warrior indeed but a mortal,

Hope to return to life, walk in the pleasantest sun ?

Lower and lower I sink, deeper in shades of REINGA ;

Full of the sacred food, earthward I cannot return.—

Yet, is it *quite* beyond hope ?—once MATAORA
returned,

Left the dark caves with his wife, bringing the
moko to man.

Ah, but no offering he made ; sacrificed naught at the
portals ;

Wherefore no man can return once he has dwelt in
the gloom.

What is the warrior to do ? fight his own fears in his
bosom ?

Combat with armies of ghosts, silent as shadows of
clouds ?

Never the tumult of war, only the aching and
longing :—

Are they as goodly on earth now as in time-eaten
days ?

Ah ; and the spearman whose fame comes to REINGA
the dreary !

Even the spirits that sigh, leaving old life and its
joys,

Murmur the message and say,—“ He is the foremost
of spearmen ;

His is the arm of a god ; his is a god-driven spear ;
TU in his bosom is glad, TU in his bosom rejoices,

Having a son so fierce, skilled in the arts that he
loves.”

Knew they the warriors of old, eager and hardy and
fearless ?

Knew they of spearmen of days gone as the light
of a dream ?

Nothing these spirits can know ; nothing of death-
conquered valour ;

Nothing of *toa* of old ; nothing of prowess and
might. —

Back to the portals I flit. Shimmering down thro'
the water

Comes the pale light of the sun : far in the sky,
how he laughs !

Pallid and sickly he smiles, here where his snarer was
vanquished !

Over the river I wade ; regions of night are behind,
Realms of the day are before,—ah that I could but
attain them !

Clearer the wavering light sinks to the cleft where
I stand ;

Shadowed above, behold ; netting the sunbeams
among them

Float the great tangles of weed : over them hang
the two roots

Dropping from earth to the sea. Now thro' the
tangles an opening,—

*Up !—tho' despair drag me down,—up to the warmth
of the day !—*

This was my journey of old ; dreary and rocky and
silent ;

O'er the two hills, to the tree out from whose
buttress the roots

Drop till they dip in the weeds ceaselessly tangled by
ocean.

Southward is laughing life ; southward is shouting
of war !

Lo ! AHIPARA beyond, bounded and washed by the
billows.

Delicate winnowing sand, soft as if trodden in
dream ;

Life-giving breezes of heaven ; deeply they sink in
my bosom,

Warming my blood till my cheeks burn with their
olden fire.

Over my spirit the leaves, lost as I ended my journey,
Bend as the leaves of the *ti* closely encircle its
heart

Shielding the immature flower : over my spirit the
mantle

Gross, of the flesh, descends ; gross, but how
joyously thrilled !

One little battle on earth better than ages unnumbered
Down in the spirit-land haunted by demons and
gnomes.

Ha ; round yon hummock of sand, who is the
warrior approaches ?

Massy of limb is he ; breasted and shouldered a god :
Head held imperiously high,—now if my arm be
abased not,

Low on the sand shall he fall, victor again I will
be.—

Haere mai e tua ! PATITO am I, the valourous !

Dead, I have heard of the fame borne by the son
of my loins ;

Dead, I have yearned for the day when in the impulse
of battle

Arm against arm opposed, spear against spear
inclined,

I of his strength might know, is it of arm or breath
only :

Thou art a foeman of worth ; limbs of no stripling
are thine :

Try if thy thrusting spear break thro' the guard I
present thee ;

Try if thy strongest guard bend from its course my
spear !

“PATITO art thou indeed ? I and my tribe call thee
father !

Son of thy loins am I, glory is mine in the name.

Where is the foe that dared ever oppose me in battle ?

Only my name can turn TU the red-eyed to our hand.
Come thou again to thine own ; there shall be feast
and rejoicing :

Come to thy kindred, and lead first in the fight as
of yore."

Mine is no lust for the feast ; heart have I none for
rejoicing ;

War have I loved, but war charmed me not back
from the dead :

All I desire is with thee, fairly with weapon for
weapon,

Trial of skill with the spear.

"Nay ; but thine arm is grown old ;
Mine as the sapling is strong, bending when blasts of
the conflict

Sing, as it shaketh out death."

Is then thy might in thy tongue ?
Never a son of mine lightly avoided a challenge !

What is mine age to thee ? knowest thou not that
the pine
Drops but a bough in the blast, breaking the delicate
saplings ?

Son of thy mother thou art ;—none of thy mother's
proud lord !

“That shall be proven or no ! not for thine age did I
taunt thee :

Never a noble son fought with a father as bold
Striving with him as a foe. Father, thy son is not
lacking

Now in the art thou didst teach, learnt ere his
warrior-days.”

Steady then ; point and point : ah, how the combative
spirit

Warms me and fills me with life :—truly my son to
view !

Pass so—and guard—aha !—skilled in my tricking
and cunning ?

Son, thou art more than son ; out of thine eyes I
gaze !

Come then, again, — and again ; — swift from the
sinewy shoulder :

Pleasant the rasp of shafts thrills to the quivering
heart !

Well thou canst fend, my son ; thrustest thou well as
thou fendest—

What !—was the feint undiscerned ?—lo, thou art
wounded, my son.

Sorely I longed for a fight equalling this in its promise ;
Art thou hast some, but alas ; better was buried
with me.

“ Better ; but stay thou with us ; teach us thy skill
as aforetime ;

How can the stripling excel, lacking the teacher
and sage ?

Stay thou, and lead us in war.”

Nay ; if thine arm be the stoutest,
Swiftest of all thy spear, strongest of all in the land
Where is the man I should cope, where should I meet
with my fellows ?

Weaklings are not for the strong ; give me my
shadows again ;

Down to my peers will I go, valiant still in REINGA.

There move the *toa* ; and there, gazing on spirits
and shades,

Well shall I dream of the past, dream of the *mana* of
heroes :

Dream of the days when the gods were not remote
from the earth ;

TANE the maker of man, and MAUI the fisher of islands.

Ah ; my desire was life ;—now my desire is death :
Death had been conquered hadst thou wielding thy
spear overcome me ;

Then had I longed to return, joyous in arts that I
loved.

Memory livens and stirs, more than a dream that is
broken ;

Wherefore farewell to the dream ; memory only be
mine.

NOTES.

HINE-NUI-TE-PO.—Daughter and afterwards wife of TANE, god of forests. On learning her parentage, she in shame left TANE, and descended to the Lower Regions, where she became Queen, and took the name HINE-NUI-TE-PO, or The Great Mother of Death. Here she continually strove to drag down man's soul to darkness.

MAUI.—The great hero of the MAORI. He was born prematurely, and as this was unlucky, his mother wrapped him in her top-knot and cast him into the sea: hence his full name, MAUI-TIKITIKI-O-TARANGA. He was, however, rescued by an ancestor, and it was prophesied that he was to be the death of HINE-NUI-TE-PO: owing to his father making a slip in the baptismal ceremony, however, this prophecy was not fulfilled. MAUI fished up the North Island, stole fire from Heaven, snared the sun and made it move more slowly over heaven, and did other wonderful things before his ignominious death. This took place while he was striving to win immortality for man by penetrating the secrets of HINE-NUI-TE-PO: some birds were watching the performance, when a fantail, ludicrously affected, could not refrain from laughing: this woke up the old Lady, and she nipped MAUI in two at the shoulders.

REINGA.—The Underworld. The spirit leaving the body for REINGA, travelled towards North Cape, coming first to a hill, WAIHOKIMAI, where it stopped to lament and strip off its spirit-dress, leaves of the *wharangi*, *makuku* and *horopito*: then it passed a second hill, WAIOTIOTI, and came to a *pohutukawa* tree, from which two roots descended into a tangle of weeds in the sea. Hanging from these roots the spirit waited till the weeds opened, then plunged down to REINGA. Here it crossed a stream and was offered food: if it ate, it could never return to the upper world, but suffered gradual extinction.

TANE.—God of forests: the son who separated his parents RANGI and PAPA (Heaven and Earth).

TU.—The god of war: brother of Tane.

MATAORA.—A mortal who descended to the lower regions, and brought thence the *moko*, or art of tattooing in curves.

Toa.—A brave fighting man.

Haere mai e tua!—Form of address to a man.

LXXVII.

In the Forest.

PERSONÆ.

SIVARD.—*A jarl's son.*

HILDA.—*Daughter of a distant rival jarl.*

KNUD.—*Hilda's cousin.*

Scene I.

A Summer morning. Glade in a pine-forest on a hill-side overlooking the upper arm of a fiord.

Sivard pacing along the glade : his horse fastened in a thicket close by.

Siv.—Impatience for his leader, how time lags :

Three hours since sunrise, and it seems a day !

The fourth morn after Odin's feast;—she'll come,—

And then, ho time ! Upon my hither way

I heard, or seemed to hear the echoes long

Of blowing horns ; if Thorwald hunts to-day

His daughter stays no cage-bird ?—yet she sure

Might tarry, deeming greater danger ours

If found together ; and that jealous lynx

Her cousin, may have eyes for other hunt

Than that of shaggy bear or nimble deer.—

(An echo of horns heard faintly.)

Again ; no fancy : those are Thorwald's horns ;
His hinds and hounds can not be far away.—

Well, on a little way upon this soft
Thick needle-carpet ; on, whence Hilda comes ;
And if not, . . . soft, . . . a horseman, and in
haste ;

It may be her, but the whole hunt's abroad,—

(Loosens his sword as he retires behind the trees. Enter
Hilda riding hastily.)

Hil.—No Sivard.

Siv.— Yea ; and Thor be praised 't is thou !

Hil.—Ah, Sivard, there is danger in the air—

Siv.—Whereof I heard the echoes ?

Hil.— You must go—

Siv.—So long to wait, and such a little space
To meed the waiting ?

Hil.— Hush ; that's recklessness ;
Your bravery lies now in leaving me.
I know your courage of heart, your strength of
arm,
But would not here behold the test of both
To your sure hurt—for Knud is not alone.

Siv.—He hunts then ?

Hil.— All game !

Siv.— Be it even so ;
The hunter surely finds his doom some day,

And then hounds yelp at random ; let him
come ;

Am I not ready ?

Hil.— Sivard ; as you know,
Your peril is not thro' his arm alone,
And where you cannot hope to win,—no, no ;
While time is, leave me.

Siv.— Far enough 's the hunt,
Dear life, nor lies this glade within its range ;
They'll hunt to southward in the forest's heart ;
What sport is near the shore ?

Hil.— Can you say that ?
What sport is keener than the ringing clash
Of blade with blade, of chain-mail against mail ?
Hear now, if ever you would hear me more ;
Tempt not the serious Norns. What hope have
we

If wisdom do not prompt our counsel?—You
May meet me but so rarely—

Sir.— Yea, by Thor
Too rarely. What ; need you return again ?
Why not away for ever from th' old tower
And sit the lady of my hall ?—I swear
Your welcome shall be great, your state as high,
Your honour more than in your father's house.—
He bore your mother from a southern jarl—

Hil.—Ah there : but he was kind, she learned to love ;
Can I but love him who was kind to her ?—
Tho' Frigga took her many a year ago.

Siv.—Thy love I chide not,—nay, if needs must be,
I'll brave the bear's den, seek you in your bower,
And take you as he sits at meat and mead.

(Echo of horns coming nearer.)

Hil.—Sivard ; good love : go now, and I will send—
Have I not sent before, and safe enough ?—
And we shall con again those pleasant truths
Our faces tell each other ;—not as now
When I'm afraid and you are reckless ; go ;—
When next we meet there need be no Farewell.

Siv.—Away then, love ; and Freya be your guard :
Your hand—I have the rein—

Hil.—My hand ; and here
My lips. Farewell.

Scene II.

A Winter night. A bluff above a river tumbling into the fiord : behind, Jarl Thorwald's stronghold. The great hall is lighted up, and laugh and song come from the revellers within.

Sivard, under cover of wall.

(Enter *Hilda* hastily, in mantle and hood.)

Hil.—Sivard, what folly! Rolf, with frightened looks—
The poor boy sees the danger more than you,—
Gave me your words ev'n as I left the hall.
What madness has possessed you, thus to dare
Into the very midst of foes ?

Siv.—

Give o'er :

Fear not ; I'm here, let's make of that, my girl,
The most we may : — they have broached
Suttung's mead
Within there, by the revel,—but the dregs
That Odin spilt on earth by that last stave !

Hil.—And you can jest with ghastly death at hand !
That's not the Sivard unlocked Hilda's heart.

Siv.—Ah ; is 't the thought of death that makes me
gay ?

Rather your nearness makes an end of him.—
Come lower down the steep-way to the boats—
Hear you them grind below like chafing jaws
As the flood swirls around them ?—there's a
place

Under a bank where we are safe enough,
Where we can watch the up-way and the down
And not be seen ;—or is the frost too eager ?

Hil.—No hazard, Sivard, is too hazardous
So you are farther hence.

(They move downwards towards the boats, a crouching
figure following.)

Siv.—Brr ! this is Winter ;—good hap Njord is still
And herds not now his winds : the stars are
keen,
And black the moonless night ; only the pulse
Of northern lights throbs wavering here and
there
Across the Wain and Bear ; but from the trees
The heavy snow falls, as with growing weight
The branches bend : the owl can find no warmth
And hoots in discontent.

Hil.— And hear you ; far
Away the dismal howl of hungry wolves !
Where lies the path for your home-going,
Sivard ?
A long night's journey thro' these frozen woods
Will barely take you thither, and the way
Will now be thick with dangers.

Siv.— The more need
To keep sharp eyes and ready weapons : lo ;
Hither I came with never a mishap,

And Thor being good, without mishap we'll go;—
For fain I would have company ; alone
Should no man's journeying be ;—and would
you come

Your horse were readied at a word ; and mine,—
Cannot I borrow from my friends within ?

Hil.—Sivard, it may not be ; and if it might—

Siv.—But wherefore may not ? is there let so great
We cannot laugh at ?—need there's none for
aught

Save our two selves, and under us our steeds !—
We would be hence, or ever morning broke,
A night of leagues ; and ere the brawlers stirred
A night and morn ; too far to be o'erta'en.

Hil.—Nay : for you take no count of prowling wolves ;
Marauding bears ; snow-drifts and splintered
pines ;

The forest is as full of traps and snares
And dangers as the hall ; and can we 'scape
From every one ?

Siv.— The dangers are not there
An we heed well : I know each turn of path,
Each dip and swell therein ; and what's my
sword
But guard and stay ?—nor wolves are yet so
fierce
But they have dread of man—

Hil.—(hastily) What sound was that ?

No hoot of owl nor cry of raven—

Siv.— Naught :

A branch's rustle as the snow brushed past ;

A hare within the copse—

Hil.— I thought a laugh

Came smothered from above.

Siv.— Ho ; they are free

To sing and laugh as 't pleases ! Say then,
love ;

Shall we two lonely pass beneath the pines

Out of their lives ?—Even I'll cast a boat

From the complaining fleet below, and pull

Across the fiord, avoiding forest paths

Till morning opes them up ? My horse is there,

And, shall I say ? another one for you ;

The carle waits where we land—

Hil.— No ; the black fiord

Has ice upon its bosom, and the jags

Bite treacherously : I feel afraid and cold,

Sivard ; I would not stay in this dark burg,

But dread the forest ; wait till Summer suns

Have thawed the snow and made all bright
again.

Siv.—Too long, too long ; already far too long

We've waited ; days knit firmer bonds

About us ; and when Summer comes,—lo you

Will even then be tardy : love, come now
When both are willing, both are ready : see ;
Can one night hold more danger and more dread
Than that long time where days and nights
abound,

When every day is full of thwarting deeds,
And every night more desolate than this ?
Yea, days and nights ; how many have I told
Since that last Summer day you rode so fast ?
What hand has stayed you all these days and
days

From riding with your maidens in the wood ;
Or setting out for the high promontory
To watch the viking ships sail up the fiord
Breasting the billows like sea-creatures ?

Hii.—

Ah ;

No ships have sailed ; for Berse, nor Orne, nor
Knud,

Have borne sea spirits of late ; but hunt and
raid

Inland have been their zest.

Slv.—

Your brothers then

Love changes too ?—I thought them sheer sea
wolves

With no concern save for the briny waves—
And would they'd beat their ocean to and fro
If staying hinders you—

Hil.—

But Knud's alert !

I know it. When I came from my hard ride,
He, who I thought in fore-front of the chase,
Stood at the gate and eyed me as I past :
“ So, Hilda ; thou rid'st fast and far,” said he ;
“ Hast too been hunting ? ”—and tho' no more
said,
I knew he watched me keener day by day,
Till life was all a burden.

Siv.—

Thor's my life !

A spear's his only need—

Hil.—

That must not be ;

Enough already 'twixt your house and mine :—
And I stand promised, thro' a father's whim—

Siv.—To Knud ?*Hil.*—

To him, my cousin.

Siv.—

And to me

Thro' your own whim and mine ;—and that's
enough
To thwart their wishes. — Snap the bond
to-night ;
Why more delay when every day is danger ?
(A breath of wind passes through the pines.)
Hark ; even now old Njord turns in his sleep
And soon will loose the North wind with its
snows ;

And listen ; in the fiord Ran heaves her breast
Grating the ices harshly ; the North lights
Have flickered out, and stars grow dim in
mist :—

Come, Hilda ; ere the air be filled with keen
Swift ringing winds loaded with frozen snow ;
And ere the pine trees rock towards heaven
their arms,
Scattering down their burdens ! A warm snood,
Thy furs and gloves, no more, — and then
away :—

All the night's elements, the forest glooms,
Are nothing to the conflict in my thoughts
Thinking of thee away. Wouldst thou remain
Prisoned and chafing all these weary days
To 'scape the fancied dangers of one night ?—

Hil.—No, no. . . I'll come to-night !

Siv.— There spoke the maid
Whom men call Hilda ; there the maid whose
heart

Sivard unlocked !

Hil.— But all the dangers set
For him who slipped the bolt !

Siv.— Who slipped, can brave !

Hil.—Ha, ha ! now having set my face to thee,
My back to all else, how the sweet warm blood
Sings in my veins till I must laugh again !

Siv.—Nor laughing, fear the night ?

Hil.— Nor it, nor day.

I even can think of what has been till now
A dream ; and now I wake and laugh at fears
That troubled me when sleeping.

Siv.— Thou shalt laugh
With forest deeps to echo ; now away,
While to the stables—

Hil.— Need is none for that !
My horse is ever ready ;—ah, bold love,
A midnight ride has lingered in my dreams !—
And thine, the warriors' steeds are ever set
With bit and saddle, ready for *all* chance !

Siv.—*All* chance ?

Hil.— Tho' never was *this* fancy dreamed !
But thou ; thou know'st the lodge at the west
end
Near the great gate ?

Siv.— I know it.

Hil.— Wait me there.
A stairway from my bower to it—

Siv.— I'll wait
And watch that all is safe.

Hil.— There ; . . hark again. .
Was that a laugh ?

Siv.— I heard a rustling bush ;—
But the North wind is rousing from his lair.

Hil.—I heard the rustle, but a laugh as well.
But haste we, lord ; . . yea, lord or love, say I.
And let us break away from bonds and death.

(They move upwards to the castle.)

Scene III.

(A shadow approaches the lodge from the way to the boats.)

Shadow.—Has watched her keenly ; keenly ;
 yea ; and there's somewhat bites keenly ;
 so that the bitten needs no watching.—Look to
 the horses, boy ; if Hel be not thy
 hostess within the hour, then Knud shall be her
 guest. Ho : this is Knud's task, and it
 shall have brave doing. A spear's his only
 need ? . . . no, not so much as a spear ; not
 so much.

(He enters the lodge, which is in darkness. A Chorus is
 heard from the hall :—

“ Vimur rose quickly as Thor in it stood ;
 Over his shoulders he sank in the flood :
 ‘ Whence comes the water ? ’ in anger quoth Thor ;
 Down came the torrent, more and yet more :
 Gejrrod's great daughter stood over the flood ;
 ‘ Drown me ? ’ cried he, ‘ mingle water and blood : ’
 Lifted a stone ; as he smote the maid sore,
 ‘ Greet me your father with water ! ’ quoth Thor.”)

(Laughter and shouting as Sivard approaches the lodge.
 He enters, but falls back stunned.)

Shadow.—“Sivard shall ride over Gjaller to-night!”—
 and it shall be lonely riding :
 ha ! we knew it ; the boy wears mail ; 'twas
 well Knud's knife was not his only henchman ;
 but now, there knife ; seek

his heart ; ei ! you have warm
welcome ! Now is no more of Sivard than his
name and this.—(Rising and kicking the body.)
Light ho ! now, Knud ; there's more to follow.

(He lights a small torch at the wall, and sets the dead body
upright on a bench beneath it ; then hides outside the door
as steps are heard, and a voice softly humming :—

“ Freija loved the giant-maid,
Loved her well, loved her true :
Freija gave his flashing blade—
Say love ; what give you ?—
Sivard loves the prisoned maid,
Loves her well—”

(The inner door opens,
and Hilda enters, in furs.)

Hil.—A light ! what's here ? and Sivard !

(Throws off furs and kneels at Sivard's side.)

A blow ! — poor stricken brow. . . . Here's
blood ; yet warm ;
It oozes from thy breast.—

(Hearing a sound she rises ; and turning, confronts Knud.)

You Knud !

Knud.—Yes me, blue-eyes ; and none the less your
cousin for all, I hope.

Hil.—Cousin ! . . . you my blood ! . . . niding that
you are—

Knud.—Now softly, Hilda;—don't you love your dog?
I'd serve you like a dog; my only thanks
A look, a smile—

Hil.— Would my dog do this deed?—
And did he this, what then?

Knud.— What then? . . . why then—

Hil.—My dog would die too! What was he to you?—
What was his fault then?

Knud.— Stole my promised bride.

Hil.—Who promised with a right?—

Knud.—Promise or no promise, I have it, whoever
gave it; and Knud's not the lad to go
tamely wanting.

Hil.—Sivard was all, you *nothing*; leave me then;
Go drink with your companions; there's your
place.

Mine's here,—and here's no room for dogs like
you.

(Turns to Sivard.)

Knud.—What's he but carrion now; here is a living
man ready to do your bidding—be your
slave—

Hil.—My slave!

Knud.—Ay! . . till such time as it is in his power to
make you his! . . . Lie with your lover,
great white girl; . . . fondle him; kiss
him; . . . he's gone; not to Valhal—

Hil.—(turning on him) When you seek Hel, you ne'er
shall find him there !

Knud.—Ho, white-arms ! fire can live in snow, it seems !

Hil.—White-arms ?

Knud.—Well a few bloody slashes, truly ; but then—

Hil.— Are white arms firm enough to thrust
A knife ? (Stabs him in the breast.)

Knud.—A shrewd thrust, beauty ! but with mail—
(He falls with a groan as she stabs him in the temple.)

Hil.—O Sivard ; long and dark the ride to-night ;
If Mother Frigga wills it, we shall meet
In Valhal, ay, to-night. . . . The wind is
ris'n. . .

(Goes into the night of wind and snow.)

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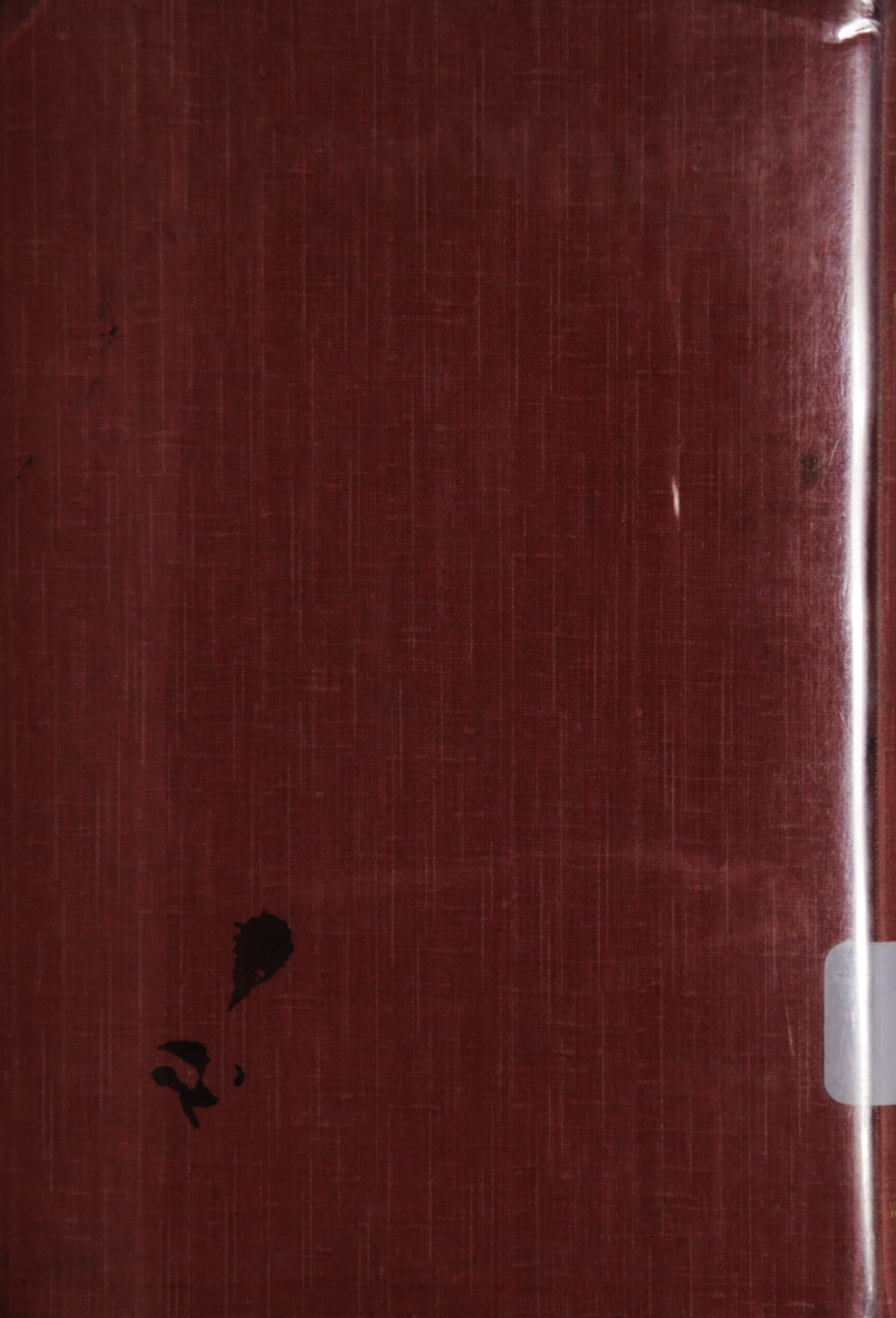
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821
AND

1903



SONGS
UNSUNG

JOHANNES C.
ANDERSEN

NZ C
821
AND

1903

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