

BOOK II.—IN FRANCE.

"PRENSUS IN ÆGÆO."

'Tis toil must help us to forget.
 In strife, they say, grief finds repose.
 Well, there's the game! I throw the stakes :—
 A life of war, a world of foes,
 A heart that triumphs while it breaks.
 Some day I too, perchance, may lose
 This shade which memory o'er me throws,
 And laugh as others laugh, (who knows?)
 But ah, 'twill not be yet!

How many years since she and I
 Walked that old terrace, hand-in-hand!
 Just one star in the rosy sky,
 And silence on the summer land.
 And she? . . .
 I think I hear her sing
 That song,—the last of all our songs.
 How all comes back!—thing after thing,
 The old life o'er me throngs!
 Put I must to the palace go;
 The ambassador's to-morrow:
 Here's little time for thought, I know,
 And little more for sorrow.
 Already in the *porte-cochère*
 The carriage sounds . . . my hat and gloves!
 I hear my friend's foot on the stair,—
 How joyously it moves!
 He must have done some wicked thing
 To make him tread so light:
 Or is it only that the king
 Admired his wife last night?
 We talk of nations by the way,

And praise the Nuncio's manners,
 And end with something fine to say
 About the "allied banners."
 'Tis well to mix with all conditions
 Of men in every station:
 I sup to-morrow with musicians,
 Upon the invitation
 Of my clever friend, the journalist,
 Who writes the reading plays
 Which no one reads; a socialist
 Most social in his ways.
 But I am sick of all the din
 That's made in praising Verdi,
 Who only know a violin
 Is not a hurdy-gurdy.

Here oft, while on a nerveless hand
 An aching brow reclining,
 Through this tall window where I stand,
 I see the great town shining.
 Hard by, the restless Boulevard
 roars,
 Heard all the night through, even
 in dreaming:
 While from its hundred open doors
 The many-headed Life is streaming.
 Upon the world's wide thorough-
 My lot is cast. So be it!
 Each on his back his burthen bears,
 And feels, though he may not
 see it.
 My life is not more hard than theirs
 Who toil on either side:
 They cry for quiet in their prayers,
 And it is still denied.

But sometimes, when I stand alone,
 Life pauses,—now and then:
 And in the distance dies the moan
 Of miserable men.
 As in a dream (how strange!) I seem
 To be lapsing, slowly, slowly,
 From noise and strife, to a stiller
 life,
 Where all is husht and holy.

Ah, love! our way's in a stranger
 land.
 We may not rest together.
 For an Angel takes me by the hand,
 And leads me . . . whither?
 whither?

A L'ENTRESOL.

ONE circle of all its golden hours
 The fitting hand of the Time-
 piece there,
 In its close white bower of china
 flowers,
 Hath rounded unaware:
 While the firelight, flung from the
 flickering wall
 On the large and limpid mirror be-
 hind,
 Hath reddened and darkened down
 o'er all,
 As the fire itself declined.
 Something of pleasure and something
 of pain
 There lived in that sinking light.
 What is it?
 Faces I never shall look at again,
 In places you never will visit,
 Revealed themselves in each falter-
 ing ember,
 While, under a palely wavering
 flame,
 Half of the years life aches to re-
 member
 Reappeared, and died as they
 came.

To its dark Forever an hour hath
 gone
 Since either you or I have spoken:
 Each of us might have been sitting
 alone
 In a silence so unbroken.
 I never shall know what made me
 look up
 (In this cushioned chair so soft
 and deep,
 By the table where, over the empty
 cup, I was leaning, half asleep)

To catch a gleam on the picture up
 there
 Of the saint in the wilderness
 under the oak;
 And a light on the brow of the bronze
 Voltaire,
 Like the ghost of a cynical joke.

To mark, in each violet velvet fold
 Of the curtains that fall 'twixt
 room and room,
 The dip and dance of the manifold
 Shadows of rosy gloom.

O'er the Rembrandt there—the
 Caracci here—
 Flutter warmly the ruddy and
 wavering hues;
 And St. Anthony over his book has
 a leer
 At the little French beauty by
 Greuze.

There,—the Leda, weighed over her
 white swan's back,
 By the weight of her passionate
 kiss, ere it falls;
 O'er the ebony cabinet, glittering
 black
 Through its ivory cups and balls:

Your scissors and thimble, and work
 laid away,
 With its silks, in the scented rose-
 wood box;
 The journals, that tell truth every
 day,
 And that novel of Paul de Kock's:

The flowers in the vase, with their
 bells shut close
 In a dream of the far green fields
 where they grew;
 The cards of the visiting people and
 shows
 In that bowl with the sea-green
 hue.

Your shawl, with a queenly droop of
 its own,
 Hanging over the arm of the crim-
 son chair:

And, last,—yourself, as silent as
stone,
In a glow of the firelight there !

I thought you were reading all this
time.

And was it some wonderful page
of your book
Telling of love, with its glory and
crime,
That has left you that sorrowful
look ?

For a tear from those dark, deep,
humid orbs
'Neath their lashes, so long, and
soft, and sleek,
All the light in your lustrous eyes
absorbs,
As it trembles over your cheek.

Were you thinking how we, sitting
side by side,
Might be dreaming miles and miles
apart ?
Or if lips could meet over a gulf so
wide
As separates heart from heart ?

Ah, well ! when time is flown, how
it fled
It is better neither to ask nor tell.
Leave the dead moments to bury
their dead.
Let us kiss and break the spell !

Come, arm in arm, to the window
here ;
Draw by the thick curtain, and see
how, to-night,
In the clear and frosty atmosphere,
The lamps are burning bright.

All night, and forever, in yon great
town,
The heaving Boulevard flares and
roars ;
And the streaming Life flows up
and down
From its hundred open doors.

It is scarcely so cold, but I and you,
With never a friend to find us out,
May stare at the shops for a moment
or two,
And wander awhile about.

For when in the crowd we have
taken our place,
(—Just two more lives to the
mighty street there !)
Knowing no single form or face
Of the men and women we meet
there,—

Knowing, and known of, none in the
whole
Of that crowd all round, but our
two selves only,
We shall grow nearer, soul to soul,
Until we feel less lonely.

Here are your bonnet and gloves,
dear. There,—
How stately you look in that long
rich shawl !
Put back your beautiful golden hair,
That never a curl may fall.

Stand in the firelight . . . so . . . as
you were,—
O my heart, how fearfully like her
she seemed !
Hide me up from my own despair,
And the ghost of a dream I
dreamed !

TERRA INCOGNITA.

How sweet it is to sit beside her,
When the hour brings nought
that's better !
All day in my thoughts to hide her,
And, with fancies free from fetter,
Half remember, half forget her.
Just to find her out by times
In my mind, among sweet fancies
Laid away :
In the fall of mournful rhymes ;
In a dream of distant climes ;
In the sights a lonely man sees

At the dropping of the day ;
Grave or gay.
As a maiden sometimes locks
With old letters, whose contents
Tears have faded,
In an old worm-eaten box,
Some sweet packet of faint
scents,
Silken-braided ;
And forgets it :
Careless, so I hide
In my life her love,—
Fancies on each side,
Memories heaped above :—
There it lies, unspied :
Nothing frets it.
On a sudden, when
Deed, or word, or glance,
Brings me back again
To the old romance,
With what rapture then,—
When, in its completeness,
Once my heart hath found it.
By each sense detected,
Steals on me the sweetness
Of the air around it,
Where it lies neglected !
Shall I break the charm of this
In a single minute ?
For some chance with fuller bliss
Proffered in it ?
Secrets unsealed by a kiss,
Could I win it !
'Tis so sweet to linger near her,
Idly so !
Never reckoning, while I hear her
Whispering low,
If each whisper will make clearer
Bliss or woe ;
Never roused to hope or fear her
Yes or No !
What if, seeking something more
Than before,
All that's given I displace—
Calm and grace—
Nothing ever can restore,
As of yore,
That old quiet face !
Quiet skies in quiet lakes,
No wind wakes,
All their beauty double :

But a single pebble breaks
Lake and sky to trouble ;
Then dissolves the foam it makes
In a bubble.
With the pebble in my hand,
Here, upon the brink, I stand ;
Meanwhile, standing on the brink,
Let me think !
Not for her sake, but for mine,
Let those eyes unquestioned shine,
Half divine :
Let no hand disturb the rare
Smoothness of that lustrous hair
Anywhere :
Let that white breast never break
Its calm motion—sleep or wake—
For my sake.
Not for her sake, but for mine,
All I might have, I resign.
Should I glow
To the hue—the fragrance fine—
The mere first sight of the wine,
If I drained the goblet low ?
Who can know ?
With her beauty like the snow,
Let her go ! Shall I repine
That no idle breath of mine
Melts it ? No ! 'Tis better so.
All the same, as she came,
With her beauty like the snow,
Cold, unspotted, let her go !

A REMEMBRANCE.

'Twas eve and May when last,
through tears,
Thine eyes sought mine, thy hand
my hand.
The night came down her silent
spheres,
And up the silent land.

In silence, too, my thoughts were
furled,
Like ring-doves in the dreaming
grove.
Who would not lightly lose the world
To keep such love ?

But many Mays, with all their flowers,
Are faded since that blissful time—
The last of all my happy hours
 P' the golden clime!

By hands not thine these wreaths
were curled
That hide the care my brows
above:
And I have almost gained the world,
 But lost that love.

As though for some serene dead
brow,
These wreaths for me I let them
twine,
I hear the voice of praise, and know
 It is not thine.

How many long and lonely days
I strove with life thy love to gain!
I know my work was worth thy
praise;
 But all was vain.

Vain Passion's fire, vain Music's art!
For who from thorns grape-
bunches gathers?
What depth is in the shallow heart?
 What weight in feathers?

As drops the blossom, ere the growth
Of fruit, on some autumnal tree,
I drop from my changed life, its
youth
 And joy in thee:

And look beyond, and o'er thee,—
right
To some sublimer end than lies
Within the compass of the sight
 Of thy cold eyes.

With thine my soul hath ceased its
strife.
Thy part is filled; thy work is
done;
Thy falsehood buried in my life,
 And known to none.

Yet still will golden memories frame
Thy broken image in my heart,
And love for what thou wast shut
blame
 From what thou art.

In Life's long galleries, haunting-
eyed,
Thy pictured face no change shall
show;
Like some dead Queen's who lived
and died
 An age ago!

MADAME LA MARQUISE.

THE folds of her wine-dark violet
dress
Glow over the sofa, fall on fall,
As she sits in the air of her loveliness
With a smile for each and for all.

Half of her exquisite face in the
shade
Which o'er it the screen in her
soft hand flings:
Through the gloom glows her hair
in its odorous braid:
In the firelight are sparkling her
rings.

As she leans,—the slow smile half
shut up in her eyes
Beams the sleepy, long, silk-soft
lashes beneath;
Through her crimson lips, stirred by
her faint replies,
Breaks one gleam of her pearl-
white teeth.

As she leans,—where your eye, by
her beauty subdued,
Droops—from under warm fringes
of broderie white
The slightest of feet—silken-slip-
pered, protrude,
For one moment, then slip out of
sight.

As I bend o'er her bosom, to tell her
the news,
The faint scent of her hair, the
approach of her cheek,

The vague warmth of her breath, all
my senses suffuse
With HERSELF: and I tremble to
speak.

So she sits in the curtained, luxu-
rious light
Of that room, with its porcelain,
and pictures, and flowers,
When the dark day's half done, and
the snow flutters white,
Past the windows in feathery
showers.

All without is so cold,—'neath the
low leaden sky!
Down the bald, empty street, like
a ghost, the gendarme
Stalks surly: a distant carriage hums
by:—
All within is so bright and so
warm!

Here we talk of the schemes and the
scandals of court,
How the courtesan pushes: the
charlatan thrives:
We put horns on the heads of our
friends, just for sport:
Put intrigues in the heads of their
wives.

Her warm hand, at parting, so
strangely thrilled mine,
That at dinner I scarcely remark
what they say,—
Drop the ice in my soup, spill the
salt in my wine,
Then go yawn at my favorite play.

But she drives after noon:—then's
the time to behold her,
With her fair face half hid, like a
ripe peeping rose,
'Neath that veil,—o'er the velvets
and furs which enfold her,
Leaning back with a queenly re-
pose,—

As she glides up the sunlight! . . .
You'd say she was made
To loll back in a carriage, all day,
with a smile,

And at dusk, on a sofa, to lean in
the shade
Of soft lamps, and be wooed for a
while.

Could we find out her heart through
that velvet and lace!
Can it beat without ruffling her
sumptuous dress?
She will show us her shoulder, her
bosom, her face;
But what the heart's like, we must
guess.

With live women and men to be
found in the world—
(—Live with sorrow and sin,—
live with pain and with pas-
sion,—)
Who could live with a doll, though
its locks should be curled,
And its petticoats trimmed in the
fashion?

'Tis so fair! . . . would my bite, if I
bit it, draw blood?
Will it cry if I hurt it? or scold if
I kiss?
Is it made, with its beauty, of wax or
of wood?
. . . . Is it worth while to guess at
all this?

THE NOVEL.

"HERE, I have a book at last—
Sure," I thought, "to make you
weep!"
But a careless glance you cast
O'er its pages, half asleep.

'Tis a novel,—a romance,
(What you will) of youth, of home,
And of brilliant days in France,
And long moonlit nights in Rome.

'Tis a tale of tears and sins,
Of love's glory and its gloom;
In a ball-room it begins,
And it ends beside a tomb;

There's a little heroine too,
Whom each chapter leaves more
pale ;
And her eyes are dark and blue
Like the violet of the vale ;

And her hand is frail and fair :
Could you but have seen it lie
O'er the convent death-bed, where
Wept the nuns to watch her die,

You, I think, had wept as well ;
For the patience in her face
(Where the dying sunbeam fell)
Had such strange heart-breaking
grace.

There's a lover, eager, bold,
Knocking at the convent gate ;
But that little hand grows cold,
And the lover knocks too late.

There's a high-born lady stands
At a golden mirror, pale ;
Something makes her jewelled hands
Tremble, as she hears the tale

Which her maid (while weaving
roses
For the ball, through her dark
hair)

Mixed with other news, discloses.
O, to-night she will look fair !

There's an old man, feeble-handed,
Counting gold . . . "My son shall
wed

With the Princess, as I planned it,
Now that little girl is dead."

There's a young man, sullen, husht,
By remorse and grief unmanned,
With a withered primrose crusht
In his hot and feverish hand.

There's a broken-hearted woman,
Haggard, desolate, and wild,
Says . . . "The world hath grown
inhuman !
Bury me beside my child."

And the little god of this world
Hears them, laughing in his
sleeve.

He is master still in his world,
There's another, we believe.

Of this history every part
You have seen, yet did not heed
it ;

For 'tis written in my heart,
And you have not learned to read
it.

AUX ITALIENS.

At Paris it was, at the Opera
there ;—

And she looked like a queen in a
book, that night,
With the wreath of pearl in her raven
hair,
And the brooch on her breast, so
bright.

Of all the operas that Verdi wrote,
The best, to my taste, is the Tro-
vatore :

And Mario can soothe with a tenor
note
The souls in Purgatory.

The moon on the tower slept soft as
snow :

And who was not thrilled in the
strangest way,
As we heard him sing, while the gas
burned low,
"Non ti scordar di me" ?

The Emperor there, in his box of
state,

Looked grave, as if he had just
then seen

The red flag wave from the city-gate,
Where his eagles in bronze had
been.

The Empress, too, had a tear in her
eye.

You'd have said that her fancy
had gone back again,

For one moment, under the old blue
sky,

To the old glad life in Spain.

Well ! there in our front-row box we
sat,
Together, my bride-betrothed and
I ;
My gaze was fixed on my opera-hat,
And hers on the stage hard by.

And both were silent, and both were
sad.

Like a queen, she leaned on her
full white arm,
With that regal, indolent air she
had ;
So confident of her charm !

I have not a doubt she was thinking
then

Of her former lord, good soul that
he was !

Who died the richest and roundest
of men,

The Marquis of Carabas.

I hope that, to get to the kingdom of
heaven,

Through a needle's eye he had not
to pass.

I wish him well, for the jointure
given

To my lady of Carabas.

Meanwhile, I was thinking of my
first love,

As I had not been thinking of
aught for years,

Till over my eyes there began to
move

Something that felt like tears.

I thought of the dress that she wore
last time,

When we stood, 'neath the cypress-
trees, together,

In that lost land, in that soft clime,
In the crimson evening weather :

Of that muslin dress (for the eve was
hot),

And her warm white neck in its
golden chain,

And her full, soft hair, just tied in a
knot,

And falling loose again :

And the jasmin-flower in her fair
young breast :

(O the faint, sweet smell of that
jasmin-flower !)

And the one bird singing alone to
his nest :

And the one star over the tower.

I thought of our little quarrels and
strife ;

And the letter that brought me
back my ring.

And it all seemed then, in the waste
of life,

Such a very little thing !

For I thought of her grave below the
hill,

Which the sentinel cypress-tree
stands over.

And I thought . . . "were she only
living still,

How I could forgive her, and love
her !"

And I swear, as I thought of her
thus, in that hour,

And of how, after all, old things
were best,

That I smelt the smell of that jas-
min-flower,

Which she used to wear in her
breast.

It smelt so faint, and it smelt so
sweet,

It made me creep, and it made me
cold !

Like the scent that steals from the
crumbling sheet

Where a mummy is half unrolled.

And I turned and looked. She was
sitting there

In a dim box, over the stage ; and
drest

In that muslin dress, with that full
soft hair,

And that jasmin in her breast !

I was here : and she was there :
And the glittering horseshoe curved
between :—

From my bride-betrothed, with her
raven hair,
And her sumptuous, scornful
mien.
To my early love, with her eyes
downcast,
And over her primrose face the
shade,
(In short, from the Future back to
the Past)
There was but a step to be made.
To my early love from my future
bride
One moment I looked. Then I
stole to the door,
I traversed the passage; and down
at her side,
I was sitting, a moment more.
My thinking of her, or the music's
strain,
Or something which never will be
expressed,
Had brought her back from the grave
again,
With the jasmin in her breast.
She is not dead, and she is not wed!
But she loves me now, and she
loved me then!
And the very first word that her
sweet lips said,
My heart grew youthful again.
The Marchioness there, of Carabas,
She is wealthy, and young, and
handsome still,
And but for her . . . well, we'll let
that pass,
She may marry whomever she
will.
But I will marry my own first love,
With her primrose face: for old
things are best,
And the flower in her bosom, I prize
it above
The brooch in my lady's breast.
The world is filled with folly and
sin,
And Love must cling where it can,
I say:

For Beauty is easy enough to win;
But one isn't loved every day.
And I think, in the lives of most wo-
men and men,
There's a moment when all would
go smooth and even,
If only the dead could find out when
To come back, and be forgiven.
But O the smell of that jasmin-
flower!
And O that music! and O the way
That voice rang out from the donjon
tower
*Non ti scordar di me,
Non ti scordar di me!*

PROGRESS.

WHEN Liberty lives loud on every
lip,
But Freedom moans,
Trampled by Nations whose faint
foot-falls slip
Round bloody thrones;
When, here and there, in dungeon
and in thrall,
Or exile pale,
Like torches dying at a funeral,
Brave natures fail:
When Truth, the armed archangel,
stretches wide
God tromp in vain,
And the world, drowsing, turns up-
on its side
To drowse again;
O Man, whose course hath called it
self sublime
Since it began,
What art thou in such dying age of
time,
As man to man?
When Love's last wrong hath been
forgotten coldly,
As First Love's face:
And, like a rat that comes to wanton
boldly
In some lone place,

Once festal,—in the realm of light
and laughter
Grim Doubt appears;
Whilst weird suggestions from
Death's vague Hereafter,
O'er ruined years,
Creep, dark and darker, with new
dread to mutter
Through Life's long shade,
Yet make no more in the chill breast
the flutter
Which once they made:
Whether it be,—that all doth at the
grave
Round to its term,
That nothing lives in that last dark-
ness, save
The little worm,
Or whether the tired spirit prolong
its course
Through realms unseen,—
Secure, that unknown world cannot
be worse
Than this hath been;
Then when through Thought's gold
chain, so frail and slender,
No link will meet;
When all the broken harps of
Language render
No sound that's sweet:
When, like torn books, sad days
weigh down each other
I' the dusty shelf;
O Man, what art thou, O my friend,
my brother,
Even to thyself?

THE PORTRAIT.

MIDNIGHT past! Not a sound of
aught
Through the silent house, but the
wind at his prayers.
I sat by the dying fire, and thought
Of the dear dead woman up stairs.
A night of tears! for the gusty rain
Had ceased, but the eaves were
dripping yet;

And the moon looked forth, as
though in pain,
With her face all white and wet:
Nobody with me, my watch to keep
But the friend of my bosom, the
man I love:
And grief had sent him fast to sleep
In the chamber up above.
Nobody else, in the country place
All round, that knew of my loss
beside,
But the good young Priest with the
Raphael-face, [died,
Who confessed her when she
That good young Priest is of gentle
nerve,
And my grief had moved him be-
yond control;
For his lip grew white, as I could
observe,
When he speeded her parting soul.
I sat by the dreary hearth alone:
I thought of the pleasant days of
yore:
I said "the staff of my life is gone:
The woman I loved is no more."
"On her cold, dead bosom my por-
trait lies,
Which next to her heart she used
to wear—
Haunting it o'er with her tender
eyes
When my own face was not there.
"It is set all round with rubies red,
And pearls which a Peri might
have kept.
For each ruby there, my heart hath
bled:
For each pearl, my eyes have
wept."
And I said—"the thing is precious
to me:
They will bury her soon in the
churchyard clay;
It lies on her heart, and lost must
be,
If I do not take it away."

I lighted my lamp at the dying
flame,
And crept up the stairs that
creaked for fright,
Till into the chamber of death I
came,
Where she lay all in white.
The moon shone over her winding-
sheet.
There, stark she lay on her carven
bed :
Seven burning tapers about her feet,
And seven about her head.
As I stretched my hand, I held my
breath ;
I turned as I drew the curtains
apart :
I dared not look on the face of
death :
I knew where to find her heart,
I thought, at first, as my touch fell
there,
It had warmed that heart to life,
with love ;
For the thing I touched was warm,
I swear,
And I could feel it move.
Twas the hand of a man, that was
moving slow
O'er the heart of the dead,—from
the other side ;
And at once the sweat broke over
my brow,
“ Who is robbing the corpse ? ” I
cried.
Opposite me by the tapers' light,
The friend of my bosom, the man
I loved,
Stood over the corpse and all as
white,
And neither of us moved.
“ What do you here, my friend ? ”
. . . The man
Looked first at me, and then at
the dead.
“ There is a portrait here,” he
began ;
“ There is. It is mine,” I said.

Said the friend of my bosom, “ yours
no doubt,
The portrait was, till a month ago,
When this suffering angel took that
out,
And placed mine there, I know.”
“ This woman, she loved me well,
said I.
“ A month ago,” said my friend
to me ;
“ And in your throat,” I groaned,
“ you lie ! ”
He answered . . . “ let us see.”
“ Enough ! ” I returned, “ let the
dead decide :
And whose soever the portrait
prove,
His shall it be, when the cause is
tried,
Where Death is arraigned by
Love.”
We found the portrait there, in its
place :
We opened it, by the tapers' shine :
The gems were all unchanged : the
face
Was—neither his nor mine.
“ One nail drives out another, at
least !
The face of the portrait there,” I
cried,
“ Is our friend's, the Raphael-faced
young Priest,
Who confessed her when she
died.”
The setting is all of rubies red,
And pearls which a Peri might
have kept.
For each ruby there my heart hath
bled :
For each pearl my eyes have wept.

ASTARTE.

WHEN the latest strife is lost, and all
is done with,
Ere we slumber in the spirit and
the brain,

We drowse back, in dreams, to days
that life begun with,
And their tender light returns to
us again.
I have cast away the tangle and the
torment
Of the cords that bound my life up
in a mesh :
And the pulse begins to throb that
long lay dormant
'Neath their pressure ; and the
old wounds bleed afresh.
I am touched again with shades of
early sadness,
Like the summer-cloud's light
shadow in my hair :
I am thrilled again with breaths of
boyish gladness,
Like the scent of some last prim-
rose on the air.
And again she comes, with all her
silent graces
The lost woman of my youth, yet
unpossessed :
And her cold face so unlike the
other faces
Of the women whose dead lips I
since have prest.
The motion and the fragrance of her
garments
Seem about me, all the day long,
in the room :
And her face, with its bewildering
old endearments
Comes at night between the
curtains, in the gloom.
When vain dreams are stirred with
sighing, near the morning,
To my own her phantom lips I
feel approach :
And her smile, at eve, breaks o'er
me without warning
From his speechless, pale, per-
petual reproach.
When Life's dawning glimmer yet
had all the tint there
Of the orient, in the freshness of
the grass,

(Ah, what feet since then have
trodden out the print there !)
Did her soft, her silent footsteps
fall, and pass.
They fell lightly, as the dew falls,
'mid ungathered
Meadow-flowers ; and lightly
lingered with the dew.
But the dew is gone, the grass is
dried and withered,
And the traces of those steps
have faded too.
Other footsteps fall about me,—faint,
uncertain,
In the shadow of the world, as it
recedes :
Other forms peer through the half-
uplifted curtain
Of that mystery which hangs be-
hind the creeds.
What is gone, is gone forever. And
new fashions
May replace old forms which noth-
ing can restore :
But I turn from sighing back de-
parted passions
With that pining at the bosom as
of yore.
I remember to have murmured, morn-
and even,
“ Though the Earth dispart these
Earthlies, face from face,
Yet the Heavenlies shall surely join
in Heaven,
For the spirit hath no bonds in
time or space.
“ Where it listeth, there it bloweth ;
all existence
Is its region ; and it houseth,
where it will.
I shall feel her through immeasur-
able distance,
And grow nearer and be gathered
to her still.

"If I fail to find her out by her gold tresses,
Brows, and breast, and lips, and language of sweet strains,
I shall know her by the traces of dead kisses,
And that portion of myself which she retains."

But my being is confused with new experience,
And changed to something other than it was ;
And the Future with the Past is set at variance ;
And Life falters with the burthens which it has.

Earth's old sins press fast behind me,
weakly wailing ;
Faint before me fleets the good I have not done :
And my search for her may still be unavailing
'Mid the spirits that are passed beyond the sun.

AT HOME DURING THE BALL.

'Tis hard upon the dawn, and yet
She comes not from the Ball.
The night is cold, and bleak, and wet,
And the snow lies over all.

I praised her with her diamonds on :—
And, as she went, she smiled.
And yet I sighed, when she was gone,
Above our sleeping child.

And all night long, as soft and slow
As falls the falling rain,
The thoughts of days gone long ago
Have filled my heart again.

Once more I hear the Rhine rush down,
(I hear it in my mind !)
Once more, about the sleeping town,
The lamps wink in the wind.

The narrow, silent street I pass :
The house stands o'er the river :
A light is at the casement-glass,
That leads my soul forever.

I feel my way along the gloom,
Stair after stair, I push the door
I find no change within the room,
And all things as of yore.

One little room was all we had
For June and for December.
The world is wide, but O how sad
It seems, when I remember !

The cage with the canary-bird
Hangs in the window still :
The small red rose-tree is not stirred
Upon the window-sill.

Wide open her piano stands ;
—That song I made to ease
A passing pain while her soft hands
Went faintly o'er the keys !

The fire within the stove burns down ;
The light is dying fast.
How dear is all it shines upon,
That firelight of the Past !

No sound ! the drowsy Dutch-clock ticks,
O, how should I forget
The slender ebon crucifix,
That by her bed is set ?

Her little bed is white as snow,—
How dear that little bed !
Sweet dreams about the curtains go
And whisper round her head.

That gentle head sleeps o'er her arm
—Sleeps all its soft brown hair :
And those dear clothes of hers, yet warm,
Droop open on the chair.

Yet warm the snowy petticoat !
The dainty corset too !
How warm the ribbon from her throat,
And warm each little shoe !

Lie soft, dear arm upon the pillow !
Sleep, foolish little head !
Ah, well she sleeps ! I know the willow
That curtains her cold bed.—

Since last I trod that silent street
'Tis many a year ago :
And, if I there could set my feet
Once more, I do not know

If I should find it where it was,
That house upon the river :
But the light that lit the casement-glass
I know is dark forever.

Hark ! wheels below, . . . my lady's knock !
—Farewell, the old romance !—
Well, dear, you're late,—past four o'clock !—
How often did you dance ?

Not cooler from the crowning waltz,
She takes my half the pillow.—
Well,—well !—the women free from faults
Have beds below the willow !

AT HOME AFTER THE BALL.

The clocks are calling Three
Across the silent floors.
The fire in the library
Dies out ; through the open doors
The red empty room you may see.

In the nursery, up stairs,
The child had gone to sleep,
Half-way 'twixt dreams and prayers,
When the hall-door made him leap
To its thunders unawares.

Like love in a worldly breast,
Alone in my lady's chamber,
The lamp burns low, suppress
'Mid satins of brodered amber,
Where she stands, half undrest :

Her bosom all unlaced :
Her cheeks with a bright red stop :
Her long dark hair displaced,
Down streaming, heeded not,
From her white throat to her waist :

She stands up her full height,
With her ball-dress slipping down
her,
And her eyes as fixed and bright
As the diamond stars that crown
her,—
An awful, beautiful sight.

Beautiful, yes . . . with her hair
So wild, and her cheeks so flushed !
Awful, yes . . . for there
In her beauty she stands hushed
By the pomp of her own despair !

And fixt there, without doubt,
Face to face with her own sorrow
She will stand, till, from without,
The light of the neighboring morrow
Creeps in, and finds her out.

With last night's music pealing
Youth's dirges in her ears :
With last night's lamps revealing,
In the charnels of old years,
The face of each dead feeling.

Ay, Madam, here alone
You may think, till your heart is broken,
Of the love that is dead and done,
Of the days that, with no token,
Forevermore are gone.—

Weep if you can, beseech you !
There's no one by to curb you :
Your child's cry cannot reach you :
Your lord will not disturb you :
Weep ! . . . what can weeping teach
you ?

Your tears are dead in you.
"What harm, where all things
change,"
You say, "if we change too ?
—The old still sunny Grango!
Ah, that's far off ! the dew.