

So now I'm a blesséd and wandering
ghost,
Though I cannot quite find out my
way up to heaven :
But I hover about o'er the long
reedy coast,
In the wistful light of a low red
even.

I have borrowed the coat of a little
gray gnat :
There's a small sharp song I have
learned how to sing :
I know a green place she is sure to
be at :
I shall light on her neck there,
and sting, and sting.

Tra-la-la, tra-la-la, life never pleased
me !

I fly where I list now, and sleep at
my ease.

Buzz, buzz, buzz ! the dead only are
free.

Yonder's my way now. Give place,
if you please.

TO THE QUEEN OF SERPENTS.

I TRUST that never more in this
world's shade

Thine eyes will be upon me : never
more

Thy face come back to me. For
thou hast made

My whole life sore :

And I might curse thee, if thou
camest again

To mock me with the memory in
thy face

Of days I would had been not. So
much pain

Hath made me base—

Enough to wreak the wrath of years
of wrong

Even on so frail and weak a thing
as thou !

Fare hence, and be forgotten. . . .
Sing thy song,

And braid thy brow,

And be beloved, and beautiful,—
and be

In beauty baleful still . . . a Ser-
pent Queen

To others not yet curst by kissing
thee,

As I have been.

But come not nigh me till my end
be near,

And I have turned a dying face
toward heaven.

Then, if thou wilt, approach,—and
have no fear,

And be forgiven.

Close, if thou wilt, mine eyes, and
smooth my hair :

Fond words will come upon my
parting breath.

Nor, having desolated life, forbear
Kind offices to death.

BLUEBEARD.

I WAS to wed young Fatima,
As pure as April's snowdrops are.

In whose love lay hid my crooked
life,

As in its sheath my cimeter.

Among the hot pomegranate boughs,
At sunset, here alone we sat.

To call back something from that
hour

I'd give away my Caliphat.

She broke her song to gaze at me :
Her lips she leaned my lips

above . . .

"Why art thou silent all this while,
Lord of my life, and of my love?"

"*Silent I am, young Fatima,
For silent is my soul in me,
And language will not help the want
Of that which cannot ever be.*"

"But wherefore is thy spirit sad,
My lord, my love, my life?" . . .

she said.

"*Because thy face is wondrous like
The face of one I knew, that's
dead.*"

"Ah cruel, cruel," cried Fatima,
"That I should not possess the
past !

What woman's lips first kissed the
lips

Where my kiss lived and lingered
last ?

"And she that's dead was loved by
thee,

That so her memory moves thee
yet ? . . .

Thy face grows cold and white, as
looks

The moon o'er yonder minaret !"

"*Ay, Fatima ! I loved her well,
With all of love's and life's de-
spair,*

*Or else I had not strangled her,
That night, in her own fatal hair.*"

FATIMA.

A YEAR ago thy cheek was bright,
As oleander buds that break

The dark of yonder dells by night
Above the lamp-lit lake.

Pale as a snowdrop in Cashmere
Thy face to-night, fair infant,

seems.

Ah, wretched child ! What dost
thou hear

When I talk in my dreams ?

GOING BACK AGAIN.

I DREAMED that I walked in Italy
When the day was going down,

By a water that flowed quite silently
Through an old dim-lighted town :

Till I came to a Palace fair to see :
Wide open the windows were :

My love at a window sat, and she
Beckoned me up the stair.

I roamed through many a corridor
And many a chamber of state :

I passed through many an open door,
While the day was growing late :

Till I came to the Bridal Chamber at
last,

All dim in the darkening weather.
The flowers at the window were talk-
ing fast,

And whispering all together.

The place was so still that I could
hear

Every word that they said :
They were whispering under their
breath with fear,

For somebody there was dead.

When I came to the little rose-colored
room,

From the window there flew a bat.
The window was opened upon the
gloom :

My love at the window sat.

She sat with her guitar on her knee,
But she was not singing a note,

For some one had drawn (ah, who
could it be ?)

A knife across her throat.

THE CASTLE OF KING MAC- BETH.

THIS is the castle of King Macbeth.

And here he feasts—when the
daylight wanes,

And the moon goes softly over the
heath—

His Earls and Thanes.

A hundred harpers with harps of gold
Harp through the night high festi-
val :

And the sound of the music they
make is rolled

From hall to hall.

They drink deep healths till the
rafters rock

In the Banquet Hall ; and the
shout is borne

To the courts outside, where the
crowing cock

Is waked ere morn.

And the castle is all in a blaze of light
From cresset, and torch, and sconce : and there
Each warrior dances all the night
With his lady fair.

They dance and sing till the raven is stirred
On the wicked elm-tree outside in the gloom :
And the rustle of silken robes is heard
From room to room.

But there is one room in that castle old,
In a lonely turret where no one goes,
And a dead man sits there, stark and cold,
Whom no one knows.

DEATH-IN-LIFE.

BLEST is the babe that dies within the womb.
Blest is the corpse which lies within the tomb.
And blest that death for which this life makes room.
But dreary is the tomb where the corpse lies :
And wretched is the womb where the child dies :
And curst that death which steals this life's disguise.

KING LIMOS.

THERE once was a wicked, old, gray king—
Long damned, as I have reason to know,
For he was buried (and no bad thing !)
Hundreds of years ago.

His wicked old heart had grown so chilled
That the leech, to warn him, did not shrink
To give him each night a goblet, filled
With a virgin's blood, to drink.

"A splenetic legend," . . . you say, of course !
Yet there may be something in it, too.
Kill, or be killed . . . which choice were the worse ?
I know not. Solve it you.

But even the wolf must have his prey :
And even the gallows will have her food :
And a king, my friend, will have his way,
Though that way may lie through blood.

My heart is hungry, and must be fed ;
My life is empty, and must be filled ;
One is not a Ghoul, to live on the dead :
What then if fresh blood be spilled ?

We follow the way that nature leads.
What's the very first thing that we learn ? To devour.
Each life the death of some other needs
To help it from hour to hour.

From the animalcule that swallows his friends,
Nothing loath, in the wave as it rolls,
To man, as we see him, this law ascends :
'Tis the same in the world of souls.

The law of the one is still to absorb :
To be absorbed is the other's lot :—
The lesser orb by the larger orb,
The weak by the strong . . . why not ?

My want's at the worst : so why should I spare
(Since just such a thing my want supplies)
This little girl with the silky hair,
And the love in her two large eyes ?

THE FUGITIVE.

THERE is no quiet left in life,
Not any moment brings me rest :
Forevermore, from shore to shore,
I bear about a laden breast.

I see new lands : I meet new men :
I learn strange tongues in novel places.
I cannot chase one phantom face
That haunts me, spite of newer faces.

For me the wine is poured by night,
And deep enough to drown much sadness ;
But from the cup that face looks up,
And mirth and music turn to madness.

There's many a lip that's warm for me :
Many a heart with passion bounding :

But ah, my breast, when closest prest,
Creeps to a cold step near me sounding.

To this dark penthouse of the mind
I lure the bat-winged Sleep in vain ;
For on his wings a dream he brings
That deepens all the dark with pain.

I may write books which friends will praise,
I may win fame, I may win treasure ;
But hope grows less with each success,
And pain grows more with every pleasure.

The draughts I drain to slake my thirst
But fuel more the infernal flame.
There tanga a sting in everything :—
The more I change, the more the same !

A man that flies before the pest,
From wind to wind my course is whirled.
This fly accurst stung I first,
And drove her wild across the world !

THE SHORE.

CAN it be women that walk in the sea-mist under the cliffs there ?
Where, 'neath a briny bow, creaming, advances the lip
Of the foam, and out from the sand-choked anchors, on to the skiffs there,
The long ropes swing through the surge, as it tumbles ; and glitter, and drip.

All the place in a lurid, glimmering, emerald glory,
Glares like a Titan world come back under heaven again :
Yonder, up there, are the steeps of the sea-kings, famous in story ;
But who are they on the beach ? They are neither women, nor men.

Who knows, are they the land's, or the water's, living creatures ?
Born of the boiling sea ? nursed in the seething storms ?
With their woman's hair dishevelled over their stern male features,
Striding, bare to the knee ; magnified maritime forms !

They may be the mothers and wives, they may be the sisters and daughters
Of men on the dark mid-seas, alone in those black-coiled hulls,
That toil 'neath yon white cloud, whence the moon will rise o'er the waters
To-night, with her face on fire, if the wind in the evening lulls.

But they may be merely visions, such as only sick men witness
(Sitting as I sit here, filled with a wild regret),
Framed from the sea's misshapen spume with a horrible fitness
To the winds in which they walk, and the surges by which they are
wet :—

Salamanders, sea-wolves, witches, warlocks ; marine monsters,
Which the dying seaman beholds, when the rats are swimming away,
And an Indian wind 'gins hiss from an unknown isle, and alone stirs
The broken cloud which burns on the verge of the dead, red day,

I know not. All in my mind is confused ; nor can I dis sever
The mould of the visible world from the shape of my thoughts in me.
The Inward and Outward are fused : and, through them, murmur forever
The sorrow whose sound is the wind, and the roar of the limitless sea.

THE NORTH SEA.

By the gray sand-hills, o'er the cold sea-shore ; where, dumbly peering,
Pass the pale-sailed ships, scornfully, silently ; wheeling and veering
Swift out of sight again ; while the wind searches what it finds never,
O'er the sand-reaches, bays, billows, blown beaches,—homeless forever !
And, in a vision of the bare heaven seen and soon lost again,
Over the rolling foam, out in the mid-seas, round by the coast again,
Hovers the sea-gull, poised in the wind above, o'er the bleak surges,
In the green briny gleam, briefly revealed and gone ; . . . fleet, as emerges
Out of the tumult of some brain where memory labors, and fretfully
Moans all the night-long,—a wild winged hope, soon fading regretfully.
Here walk the lost Gods o' dark Scandinavia, morning and even ;
Faint pale divinities, realmless and sorrowful, exiled from Heaven ;
Burthened with memories of old theogonies ; each ruined monarchy
Roaming amazed by seas oblivious of ancient fealty.
Never, again at the tables of Odin, in their lost Banquet Hall,
Shall they from golden cups drink, hearing golden harps, harping high
festival.

Never praise bright-haired Freya, in Vingolf, for her lost loveliness !
Never, with Ægir, sail round cool moonlit isles of green wilderness !
Here on the lone wind, through the long twilight, when day is waning,
Many a hopeless voice near the night is heard coldly complaining,
Here, in the glimmering darkness, when winds are dropped, and not a
seaman sings

From cape or foreland, pause, and pass silently, forms of discrowned
kings,

With sweeping, floating folds of dim garments ; wandering in wonder
Of their own aspect ; trooping towards midnight ; feeling for thunder.

Here, in the afternoon ; while, in her father's boat, heavily laden,
Mending the torn nets, sings up the bleak bay the Fisher-Maiden,
I too, forlornly wandering, wandering, see, with the mind's eye,
Shadows beside me, . . . (hearing the wave moan, hearing the wind
sigh) . . .
Shadows, and images balefully beautiful, of days departed :

Sounds of faint footsteps, gleams of pale foreheads, make me sad-hearted :
Sad for the lost, irretrievable sweetness of former hours ;
Sad with delirious, desolate odors, from faded flowers ;
Sad for the beautiful gold hair, the exquisite, exquisite graces
Of a divine face, hopelessly unlike all other faces !

O'er the gray sand-hills (where I sit sullenly, full of black fancies),
Nipt by the sea-wind, drenched by the sea-salt, little wild pansies
Flower, and freshly tremble, and twinkle ; sweet sisterhoods,
Lone, and how lovely, with their frail green stems, and dark purple
hoods !

Here, even here in the midst of monotonous, fixt desolation,
Nature has touches of tenderness, beauties of young variation ;
Where, O my heart, in thy ruined, and desolate, desolate places,
Springs there a floweret, or gleams there the green of a single oasis ?
Hidden, it may be perchance, and I know it not . . . hidden yet invio-
late,

Pushes the germ of an unconscious rapture in me, like the violet
Which, on the bosom of March, the snows cover and keep till the coming
Of April, the first bee shall find, when he wanders, and welcome it hum-
ming.

Teach me, thou North where the winds lie in ambush ; the rains and foul
weather

Are stored in the house of the storms ; and the snow-flakes are garnered
together ;

Where man's stern, dominate, sovereign intelligence holds in allegiance
Whatever blue Sirius beholds on this Earth-ball,—all seas, and all regions ;
The iron in the hill's heart ; the spirit in the loadstone ; the ice in the
poles ;

All powers, all dominions ; ships ; merchandise ; armaments ; beasts ;
human souls ; . . .

Teach me thy secrets : teach to refrain, to restrain, to be still ;
Teach me unspoken, steadfast endurance ;—the silence of Will !

A NIGHT IN THE FISHER- | Or the sea have found secrets more
MAN'S HUT. | wicked to say
To the toothless old crags it is
hiding there wholly.

PART I.

THE FISHERMAN'S DAUGHTER.

If the wind had been blowing the | I love well the darkness. I love
Devil this way | well the sound
The midnight could scarcely have | Of the thunder-drift, howling this
grown more unholy, | way over ocean.

For 'tis though as in nature my spirit has found
A trouble akin to its own free emotion.

The hoarse night may howl herself silent for me.
When the silence comes, then comes the howling within.
I am drenched to my knees in the surf of the sea,
And wet with the salt bitter rain to the skin.

Let it thunder and lighten ! this world's ruined angel
Is but fooled by desire like the frailest of men ;
Both seek in hysterics life's awful evangel,
Then both settle down to life's silence again.

Well I know the wild spirits of water and air,
When the lean morrow turns up its cynical gray,
Will, baffled, revert with familiar despair
To their old listless work, in their old helpless way.

Yonder's the light in the Fisher-man's hut ;
But the old wolf himself is, I know, off at sea.
And I see through the chinks, though the shutters be shut,
By the firelight that some one is watching for me.

Three years ago, on this very same night,
I walked in a ball-room of perfume and splendor
With a pearl-bedecked lady below the lamplight :—
Now I walk with the wild wind, whose breath is more tender.

Hark ! the horses of ocean that crouch at my feet,
They are moaning in impotent pain on the beach !

Lo ! the storm-light, that swathes in its blue winding-sheet
That lone desert of sky, where the stars are dead, each !

Holloa, there ! open, you little wild girl !
Hush, . . . 'tis her soft little feet o'er the floor.
Stay not to tie up a single dark curl,
But quick with the candle, and open the door.

One kiss ? . . . there's twenty ! . . . but first, take my coat there,
Salt as a sea-sponge, and dripping all through.
The old wolf, your father, is out in the boat there.
Hark to the thunder ! . . . we're safe,—I and you.

Put on the kettle. And now for the cask
Of that famous old rum of your father's, the king
Would have clawed on our frontier.
There, fill me the flask.
Ah, what a quick, little, neat-handed thing !

There's my pipe. Stuff it with black negro-head.
Soon I shall be in the cloud-land of glory.
Faith, 'tis better with you, dear, than 'fore the mast-head,
With such lights at the windows of night's upper story !

Next, over the round open hole in the shutter
You may pin up your shawl, . . . lest a mermaid should peep.
Come, now, the kettle's beginning to splutter,
And the cat recomposes herself into sleep.

Poor little naked feet, . . . put them up there . . .
Little white foam-flakes ! and now the soft head,

Here, on my shoulder ; while all the dark hair
Falls round us like sea-weed.
What matter the bed
If sleep will visit it, if kisses feel there
Sweet as they feel under curtains of silk ?
So, shut your eyes, while the fire-light will steal there
O'er the black bear-skin, the arm white as milk !

Meanwhile I'll tell to you all I remember
Of the old legend, the northern romance
I heard of in Sweden, that snowy December
I passed there, about the wild Lord Rosencrantz.

Then, when you're tired, take the cards from the cupboard,
Thumbed over by every old thief in our crew,
And I'll tell you your fortune, you little Dame Hubbard ;
My own has been squandered on witches like you.

Knave, King, and Queen, all the villainous pack of 'em,
I know what they're worth in the game, and have found
Upon all the trump-cards the small mark at the back of 'em,
The Devil's nail-mark, who still cheats us all round.

PART II.

THE LEGEND OF LORD ROSENCRANTZ.

THE lamps in the castle hall burn bright,
And the music sounds, and the dancers dance,
And lovely the young Queen looks to-night,
But pale is Lord Rosencrantz.

Lord Rosencrantz is always pale,
But never more deadly pale than now . . .
O, there is a whisper, an ancient tale,—
A rumor, . . . but who should know ?
He has stepped to the dais. He has taken her hand.
And she gives it him with a tender glance.
And the hautboys sound, and the dancers stand,
And envy Lord Rosencrantz.
That jewelled hand to his lips he prest ;
And lightly he leads her towards the dance :
And the blush on the young Queen's cheek confest
Her love for Lord Rosencrantz.
The moon at the mullioned window shone ;
There a face and a hand in the moonlight glance ;
But that face and that hand were seen of none,
Save only Lord Rosencrantz.
A league aloof in the forest-land
There's a dead black pool, where a man by chance
. . . Again, again, that beckoning hand !
And it beckons Lord Rosencrantz.
While the young Queen turned to whisper him,
Lord Rosencrantz from the hall was gone ;
And the hautboys ceased, and the lamps grew dim,
And the castle clock struck One !

* * * *

It is a bleak December night,
And the snow on the highway gleams by fits :
But the fire on the cottage-heart
burns bright,
Where the little maiden sits.

Her spinning-wheel she has laid
aside ;
And her blue eyes soft in the fire-
light glance ;
As she leans with love, and she leans
with pride,
On the breast of Lord Rosen-
crantz.

Mother's asleep, up stairs in bed :
And the black cat, she looks won-
drous wise
As she licks her paws in the firelight
red,
And glares with her two green
eyes :

And the little maiden is half afraid,
And closely she clings to Lord
Rosencrantz ;
For she has been reading, that little
maid,
All day, in an old romance,

A legend wild of a wicked pool
A league aloof in the forest-land,
And a crime done there, and a sinful
soul,
And an awful face and hand.

"Our little cottage is bleak and
drear,"
Says the little maid to Lord Rosen-
crantz ;
"And this is the loneliest time of the
year,
And oft, when the wind, by
chance,

"The ivy beats on the window-pane,
I wake to the sound in the gusty
nights ;
And often, outside, in the drift and
rain,
There seem to pass strange sights.

"And O, it is dreary here alone !
When mother's asleep, in bed, up
stairs,
And the black cat, there, to the
forest is gone,
—Look at her, how she glares !"

"Thou little maiden, my heart's own
bliss,
Have thou no fear, for I love thee
well ;
And sweetest it is upon nights like
this,
When the wind, like the blast of
hell,

"Roars up and down in the chimneys
old,
And the wolf howls over the distant
snow,
To kiss away both the night and the
cold
With such kisses as we kiss now."

"Ah ! more than life I love thee,
dear !"
Says the little maiden with eyes so
blue ;
"And, when thou art near, I have
no fear,
Whatever the night may do.

"But O, it is dreary when thou art
away !
And in bed all night I pray for
thee :
Now tell me, thou dearest heart, and
say,
Dost thou ever pray for me ?"

"Thou little maiden, I thank thee
much,
And well I would thou shouldst
pray for me ;
But I am a sinful man, and such
As ill should pray for thee."

Hist ! . . . was it a face at the win-
dow past ?
Or was it the ivy leaf, by chance,
Tapping the pane in the fitful blast,
That startled Lord Rosencrantz ?

The little maid, she has seen it plain,
For she shrieked, and down she
fell in a swoon :
Mutely it came, and went again,
In the light of the winter moon.

* * * *

The young Queen,—O, but her face
was sweet !—
She died on the night that she was
wed :
And they laid her out in her wind-
ing-sheet,
Stark on her marriage-bed.

The little maiden, she went mad ;
But her soft blue eyes still smiled
the same,
With ever that wistful smile they
had :
Her mother, she died of shame.

The black cat lived from house to
house,
And every night to the forest
hied ;
And she killed many a rat and
mouse
Before the day she died.

And do you wish that I should de-
clare
What was the end of Lord Rosen-
crantz ?
Ah ! look in my heart, you will find
it there,
—The end of the old romance !

PART III.

DAYBREAK.

YES, you have guessed it. The wild
Rosencrantz,
It is I, dear, the wicked one ; who
but I, maiden ?
My life is a tattered and worn-out
romance,
And my heart with the curse of
the Past hath been laden :

For still, where I wander or linger,
forever
Comes a skeleton hand that is
beckoning for me ;
And still, dogging my footsteps, life's
long Never-never
Pursues me, wherever my footsteps
may be :

The star of my course hath been long
ago set, dear ;
And the wind is my pilot wher-
ever he blows :
He cannot blow from me what I
would forget, dear,
Nor blow to me that which I seek
for,—repose.

What ! if I were the Devil himself,
would you cling to me,
Bear my ill humors, and share my
wild nights ?
Crouch by me, fear me not, stay by
me, sing to me,
While the dark haunts us with
sounds and with sights ?

Follow me far away, pine not, but
smile to me,
Never ask questions, and always
be gay ?
Still the dear eyes meekly turned all
the while to me,
Watchful the night through, and
patient the day ?

What ! if this hand, that now strays
through your tresses,
Three years ago had been dabbled
in gore ?
What ! if this lip, that your lip now
caresses,
A corpse had been pressing but
three years before ?

Well then, behold ! . . . 'tis the
gray light of morning
That breaks o'er the desolate wa-
ters . . . and hark !
'Tis the first signal shot from my
boat gives me warning :
The dark moves away : and I fol-
low the lark.

On with your hat and your cloak !
you are mine, child,
Mine and the fiend's that pursues
me, henceforth !
We must be far, ere day breaks, o'er
the brine, child :
It may be south I go, it may be
north.

What ! really fetching your hat and
your cloak, dear ?
Sweet little fool. Kiss me quick
now, and laugh !
All I have said to you was but a joke,
dear :
Half was in folly, in wantonness
half.

PART IV.

BREAKFAST.

Ax, maiden : the whole of my story
to you
Was but a deception, a silly ro-
mance :
From the first to the last word, no
word of it true ;
And my name's Owen Meredith,
not Rosencrantz.
I never was loved by a Queen, I de-
clare :
And no little maiden for me has
gone mad :
never committed a murder, I
swear ;
And I probably should have been
hanged if I had.
I never have sold to the Devil my
soul ;
And but small is the price he
would give me, I know :
I live much as other folks live, on
the whole :
And the worst thing in me's my
digestion . . . heigh ho !
Let us leave to the night-wind the
thoughts which he brings,
And leave to the darkness the
powers of the dark ;
For my hopes o'er the sea lightly
flit, like the wings
Of the curlews that hover and
poise round my bark.
Leave the wind and the water to
mutter together
Their weird metaphysical grief, as
of old,

For day's business begins, and the
clerk of the weather
To the powers of the air doth his
purpose unfold.
Be you sure those dread Titans,
whatever they be,
That sport with this ball in the
great courts of Time,
To play practical jokes upon you,
dear, and me,
Will never desist from a sport so
sublime.
The old Oligarchy of Greece, now
abolished,
Were idle aristocrats fond of the
arts,
But though thus refined, all their
tastes were so polished,
They were turbulent, dissolute
gods, without hearts.
They neglected their business, they
gave themselves airs,
Read the poets in Greek, sipped
their wine, took their rest,
Never troubling their beautiful
heads with affairs,
And as for their morals, the least
said, the best.
The scandal grew greater and great-
er : and then
An appeal to the people was for-
mally made.
The old gods were displaced by the
suffrage of men,
And a popular government formed
in their stead.
But these are high matters of state,—
I and you
May be thankful, meanwhile, we
have something to eat,
And nothing, just now, more impor-
tant to do,
Than to sit down at once, and say
grace before meat.
You may boil me some coffee, an
egg, if it's handy,
The sea's rolling mountains just
now. I shall wait

For King Neptune's *mollissima tem-
pora fandi*,
Who will presently lift up his
curly white pate,
Bid Eurus and Notus to mind their
own business,
And make me a speech in Hexa-
meters slow ;
While I, by the honor elated to diz-
ziness,
Shall yield him my offerings, and
make him my bow.

A DREAM.

I HAD a quiet dream last night :
For I dreamed that I was dead ;
Wrapped around in my grave-clothes
white,
With my gravestone at my head.

I lay in a land I have not seen,
In a place I do not know,
And the grass was deathly, deathly
green
Which over my grave did grow.

The place was as still as still could
be,
With a few stars in the sky,
And an ocean whose waves I could
not see,
Though I heard them moan hard
by.

There was a bird in a branch of yew,
Building a little nest.
The stars looked far and very few,
And I lay all at rest.

There came a footstep through the
grass,
And a feeling through the mould :
And a woman pale did over me pass,
With hair like snakes of gold.

She read my name upon my grave :
She read my name with a smile.
A wild moan came from a wandering
wave,
But the stars smiled all the while.

The stars smiled soft. That woman
pale
Over my grave did move,
Singing all to herself a tale
Of one that died for love.
There came a sparrow-hawk to the
tree,
The little bird to slay :
There came a ship from over the sea,
To take that woman away.
The little bird I wished to save,
To finish his nest so sweet :
But so deep I lay within my grave
That I could not move my feet.
That woman pale I wished to keep
To finish the tale I heard :
But within my grave I lay so deep
That I could not speak a word.

KING SOLOMON.

KING Solomon stood, in his crown
of gold,
Between the pillars, before the
altar
In the House of the Lord. And the
King was old,
And his strength began to falter,
So that he leaned on his ebony staff,
Sealed with the seal of the Pente-
graph.

All of the golden fretted work,
Without and within so rich and
rare,
As high as the nest of the building
stork,
Those pillars of cedar were :—
Wrought up to the brazen chapters
Of the Sidonian artificers.

And the King stood still as a carven
king,
The carven cedarn beams below,
In his purple robe, with his signet-
ring,
And his beard as white as snow,
And his face to the Oracle, where
the hymn
Dies under the wing of the cherubim.

The wings fold over the Oracle,
 And cover the heart and eyes of
 God :
 The Spouse with pomegranate, lily,
 and bell,
 Is glorious in her abode ;
 For with gold of Ophir, and scent of
 myrrh,
 And purple of Tyre, the King clothed
 her.

By the soul of each slumbrous instru-
 ment
 Drawn soft through the musical
 misty air,
 The stream of the folk that came
 and went,
 For worship, and praise, and
 prayer,
 Flowed to and fro, and up and down,
 And round the King in his golden
 crown.

And it came to pass, as the King
 stood there,
 And looked on the house he had
 built, with pride,
 That the Hand of the Lord came
 unawares,
 And touched him ; so that he died,
 In his purple robe, with his signet-
 ring,
 And the crown wherewith they had
 crowned him king.

And the stream of the folk that
 came and went
 To worship the Lord with prayer
 and praise,
 Went softly ever, in wonderment,
 For the King stood there always ;
 And it was solemn and strange to
 behold
 That dead king crowned with a
 crown of gold.

For he leaned on his ebony staff up-
 right ;
 And over his shoulders the purple
 robe ;
 And his hair and his beard were
 both snow-white

And the fear of him filled the
 globe ;
 So that none dared touch him,
 though he was dead,
 He looked so royal about the head.

And the moons were changed : and
 the years rolled on :
 And the new king reigned in the
 old king's stead :
 And men were married and buried
 anon ;
 But the King stood, stark and
 dead ;
 Leaning upright on his ebony staff ;
 Preserved by the sign of the Pente-
 graph.

And the stream of life, as it went
 and came,
 Ever for worship and praise and
 prayer,
 Was awed by the face, and the fear,
 and the fame
 Of the dead king standing there ;
 For his hair was so white, and his
 eyes so cold,
 That they left him alone with his
 crown of gold.

So King Solomon stood up, dead, in
 the House
 Of the Lord, held there by the
 Pentagraph,
 Until out from a pillar there ran a
 red mouse,
 And gnawed through his ebony
 staff :
 Then, flat on his face, the King fell
 down :
 And they picked from the dust a
 golden crown.*

* My knowledge of the Rabbinical legend
 which suggested this Poem is one among
 the many debts I owe to my friend Robert
 Browning. I hope these lines may remind
 him of hours which his society rendered
 precious and delightful to me, and which
 are among the most pleasant memories of
 my life.

CORDELIA.

THOUGH thou never hast sought to
 divine it,
 Though to know it thou hast not a
 care,
 Yet my heart can no longer confine
 it,
 Though my lip may be blanched to
 declare
 That I love thee, revere thee, adore
 thee,
 O my dream, my desire, my despair !
 Though in life it may never be given
 To my heart to repose upon thine ;
 Though neither on earth, nor in
 heaven,
 May the bliss I have dreamed of be
 mine ;
 Yet thou canst not forbid me, in
 distance,
 And silence, and long lonely years,
 To love thee, despite thy resistance,
 And bless thee, despite of my tears.

Ah me, *couldst* thou love me ! . . .
 Believe me,
 How I hang on the tones of thy voice ;
 How the least sign thou sighest can
 grieve me,
 The least smile thou smilest rejoice :
 In thy face, how I watch every shade
 there ;
 In thine eyes, how I learn every
 look ;
 How the least sigh thy spirit hath
 made there
 My heart reads, and writes in its
 book !

And each day of my life my love
 shapes me
 From the mien that thou wearest,
 Beloved.
 Thou hast not a grace that escapes
 me,
 Nor a movement that leaves me un-
 moved.
 I live but to see thee, to hear thee ;
 I count but the hours where thou
 art ;

I ask—only ask—to be near thee,
 Albeit so far from thy heart.

In my life's lonely galleries never
 Will be silenced thy lightest foot-
 fall :
 For it lingers, and echoes, forever
 Until Memory mourning o'er all.
 All thy fair little footsteps are
 bright
 O'er the dark troubled spirit in me,
 As the tracts of some sweet water-
 sprite
 O'er the heaving and desolate sea.
 And, though cold and unkind be
 thine eyes,
 Yet, unchilled their unkindness be-
 low,
 In my heart all its love for thee lies,
 Like a violet covered by snow.

Little child ! . . . were it mine to
 watch o'er thee,
 To guide, and to guard, and to
 soothe ;
 To shape the long pathway before
 thee,
 And all that was rugged to smooth ;
 To kneel at one bedside by night,
 And mingle our souls in one prayer ;
 And, awaked by the same morning-
 light,
 The same daily duties to share ;

Until Age with his silver dimmed
 slowly
 Those dear golden tresses of thine ;
 And Memory rendered thrice holy
 The love in this poor heart of mine ;

Ah, never . . . (recalling together,
 By one hearth, in our life's winter
 time,
 Our youth, with its lost summer
 weather,
 And our love, in its first golden
 prime),
 Should those loved lips have cause
 to record
 One word of unkindness from me,
 Or my heart cease to bless the least
 word