

Chanting and changing it o'er and  
o'er,  
Like the mournful mad melodious  
breath  
Of some wild swan singing himself to  
death,  
As he floats down a strange land  
leagues away.  
One day the song ceased. They  
heard it no more.

Did you ever an Alpine eagle see  
Come down from flying near the sun  
To find his eyrie all undone  
On lonely cliffs where chance hath  
led  
Some spying thief the brood to  
plunder?  
How hangs he desolate overhead,  
And circling now aloft, now under,  
His ruined home screams round and  
round,  
Then drops flat fluttering to the  
ground.  
So moaning round the roofs they saw  
him,  
With his gleaming harp and his  
vesture white : [ing  
Going, and coming, and ever return-  
To those chambers, emptied of beauty  
and state  
And choked with blackness and  
ruin and burning ;

Then, as some instinct seemed to  
draw him,  
Like hidden hands down to his fate,  
He paused, plunged, dropped forever  
from sight ;  
And a cone of smoke and sparkles  
rolled up,  
As out of some troubled crater-cup  
As for the rest, some died ; some  
fled  
Over the sea, nor ever returned.  
But until to the living return the  
dead,  
And they each shall stand and take  
their station  
Again at the last great conflagration,  
Never more will be seen the Earl or  
the stranger.  
No doubt there is much here that's  
fit to be burned.  
Christ save us all in that day from  
the danger !  
And this is why these fishermen say,  
Sitting alone in their boats on the  
bay,  
When the moon is low in the wild  
windy nights,  
They hear strange sounds, and see  
strange sights.  
Spectres gathering all forlorn  
Under the boughs of this bare black  
thorn.

## A SOUL'S LOSS.

"If Beauty have a soul this is not she."—TROIUS AND CRESSIDA.

'TwiXt the Future and the Past  
There's a moment. It is o'er.  
Kiss sad hands ! we part at last.  
I am on the other shore.  
Fly, stern Hour ! and hasten fast.  
Nobler things are gone before.  
From the dark of dying years  
Grows a face with violet eyes,  
Tremulous through tender tears,—

Warm lips heavy with rich sighs,—  
Ah, they fade ! it disappears,  
And with it my whole heart dies !  
Dies . . . and this choked world is  
sickening ;  
Truth has nowhere room for breath.  
Crusts of falsehood, slowly thicken-  
ing  
From the rottenness beneath

These rank social forms, are quick-  
ening  
To a loathsome life-in-death.

O those devil's market-places !  
Knowing, nightly, she wa there,  
Can I marvel that the traces  
On her spirit are not fair ?  
I forgot that air debases  
When I knew she breathed such  
air.

This a fair immortal spirit  
For which God prepared his  
spheres ?  
What ! shall this the stars inherit ?  
And the worth of honest tears ?  
A fool's fancy all its mirth !  
A fool's judgment all its fears !

No, she loves no other ! No,  
That is lost which she gave me.  
Is this comfort,—that I know  
All her spirit's poverty ?  
When that dry soul is drained low,  
His who wills the dregs may be !

Peace ! I trust a heart forlorn  
Weakly upon boisterous speech.  
Pity were more fit than scorn.  
Fingered moth, and bloomless  
peach !  
Gathered rose without a thorn,  
Set to flee in all men's reach !

I am clothed with her disgrace.  
O her shame has made my own !  
O I reel from my high place !  
All belief is overthrown.  
What ! This whirligig of lace,  
This is the Queen that I have  
known ?

Starry Queen that did confer  
Beauty on the barren earth !  
Woodlands, wandered oft with her  
In her sadness and her mirth,  
Feeling her ripe influence stir  
Brought the violets to birth.

The great golden clouds of even,  
They, too, knew her, and the  
host

Of the eternal stars in heaven ;  
And I deemed I knew her most.  
I, to whom the Word was given  
How archangels have been lost !

Given in vain ! . . . But all is over !  
Every spell that bound me broken !  
In her eyes I can discover  
Of that perisht soul no token.  
I can neither hate nor love her.  
All my loss must be unspoken.

Mourn I may, that from her features  
All the angel light is gone.  
But I chide not. Human creatures  
Are not angels. She was none.  
Women have so many natures !  
I think she loved me well with  
one.

All is not with love departed.  
Life remains, though toucht with  
scorn.

Lonely, but not broken-hearted.  
Nature changes not. The morn  
Breathes not sadder. Buds have  
started  
To white clusters on the thorn.

And to-morow I shall see  
How the leaves their green leaves  
sheath  
Have burst upon the chestnut-tree.  
And the white rose-bush beneath  
My lattice which, once tending, she  
Made thrice sweeter with her  
breath,

Its black buds through moss and  
glue  
Will swell greener. And at eve  
Winking bats will waver through  
The gray warmth from eave to  
eave,  
While the daisy gathers dew.  
These things grieve not, though I  
grieve.

What of that? Deep Nature's glad-  
ness  
Does not help this grief to less.  
And the stars will show no sadness,  
And the flowers no heaviness,  
Though each thought should turn to  
madness  
'Neath the strain of its distress!

No, if life seem lone to me,  
'Tis scarce lonelier that at first.  
Lonely natures there must be.  
Eagles are so. I was nurst  
Far from love in infancy:  
I have sought to slake my thirst

At high founts; to fly alone,  
Haunt the heaven, and soar, and  
sing.  
Earth's warm joys I have not  
known.

This one heart held everything.  
Now my eyrie is o'erthrown!  
As of old, I spread the wing,

And rise up to meet my fate  
With a yet unbroken will.  
When Heaven shut up Eden-gate,  
Man was given the earth to till.  
There's a world to cultivate,  
And a solitude to fill.

Welcome man's old helpmate, Toil!  
How may this heart's hurt be  
healed?

Crush the olive into oil;  
Turn the ploughshare; sow the  
field.

All are tillers of the soil.  
Each some harvest hopes to yield.

Shall I perish with the whole  
Of the coming years in view  
Unattempted? To the soul  
Every hour brings something new.  
Still suns rise: still ages roll.  
Still some deed is left to do.

Some . . . but what? Small matter  
now!  
For one lily for her hair,

For one rose to wreath her brow,  
For one gem to sparkle there,  
I had . . . words, old words, I know!  
What was I, that she should care

How I differed from the common  
Crowd that thrills not to her  
touch?

How I deemed her more than  
human,  
And had died to crown her such?  
They? To them she is mere  
woman.

O, her loss and mine is much!

Fool, she haunts me still! No  
wonder!

Not a bud on yon black bed,  
Not a swated lily yonder,  
But recalls some fragrance fled!  
Here, what marvel I should ponder  
On the last word which she said?

I must seek some other place  
Where free Nature knows her not:  
Where I shall not meet her face  
In each old familiar spot.  
There is comfort left in space.  
Even this grief may be forgot.

Great men reach dead hands unto  
me  
From the graves to comfort me.  
Shakspeare's heart is throbbing  
through me.

All man has been man may be.  
Plato speaks like one that knew  
me.  
Life is made Philosophy.

Ah, no, no! while yet the leaf  
Turns, the truth upon its pall.  
By the stature of this grief,  
Even Shakspeare shows so small!  
Plato palters with relief.  
Grief is greater than them all!

They were pedants who could speak.  
Grander souls have passed un-  
heard:

Such as found all language weak;  
Choosing rather to record  
Secrets before Heaven: nor break  
Faith with angels by a word.

And Heaven heeds this wretched-  
ness

Which I suffer. Let it be.  
Would that I could love thee less!  
I, too, am dragged down by thee.

Thine—in weakness—thine—ah yes!  
Yet farewell eternally.

Child, I have no lips to chide thee.  
Take the blessing of a heart  
(Never more to beat beside thee!)  
Which in blessing breaks. De-  
part.

Farewell. I that deified thee  
Dare not question what thou art.

## THE ARTIST.

O ARTIST, range not over-wide:  
Lest what thou seek be haply hid  
In bramble-blossoms at thy side,  
Or shut within the daisy-lid.

God's glory lies not out of reach.  
The moss we crush beneath our  
feet,  
The pebbles on the wet sea-beach,  
Have solemn meanings strange and  
sweet.

The peasant at his cottage door  
May teach thee more than Plato  
knew:  
See that thou scorn him not: adore  
God in him, and thy nature too.

Know well thy friends. The wood-  
bine's breath,  
The woolly tendril on the vine,  
Are more to thee than Cato's death,  
Or Cicero's words to Catiline.

The wild rose is thy next in blood:  
Share Nature with her, and thy  
heart.

The kingly are thy sisterhood:  
Consult them duly on thine art.

Nor cross the sea for gems. Nor  
seek:  
Be sought. Fear not to dwell  
alone.

Possess thyself. Be proudly meek.  
See thou be worthy to be known.

The Genius on thy daily ways  
Shall meet, and take thee by the  
hand:  
But serve him not as who obeys:  
He is thy slave if thou command:

And blossoms on the blackberry-  
stalks  
He shall enchant as thou dost pass,  
Till they drop gold upon thy walks,  
And diamonds in the dewy grass.

Such largess of the liberal bowers  
From left to right is grandly flung,  
What time their subject blooms and  
flowers  
King-Poets walk in state among.

Be quiet. Take things as they come;  
Each hour will draw out some sur-  
prise.  
With blessing let the days go home:  
Thou shalt have thanks from even-  
ing skies.

Lean not on one mind constantly:  
Lest, where one stood before, two  
fall.  
Something God hath to say to thee  
Worth hearing from the lips of all.

All things are thine estate : yet must  
Thou first display the title-deeds,  
And sue the world. Be strong : and  
trust  
High instincts more than all the  
creeds.

The world of Thought is packed so  
tight,  
If thou stand up another tumbles :  
Heed it not, though thou have to  
fight  
With giants ; whoso follows  
stumbles.

Assert thyself : and by and by  
The world will come and lean on  
thee.  
But seek not praise of men : thereby  
Shall false shows cheat thee.  
Boldly be.

Each man was worthy at the first :  
God spake to us ere we were born :  
But we forget. The land is curst :  
We plant the brier, reap the thorn.

Remember, every man He made  
Is different : has some deed to do,  
Some work to work. Be undis-  
mayed,  
Though thine be humble : do it  
too.

Not all the wisdom of the schools  
Is wise for thee. Hast thou to  
speak ?  
No man hath spoken for thee. Rules  
Are well : but never fear to break

The scaffolding of other souls :  
It was not meant for thee to mount ;  
Though it may serve thee. Separate  
wholes  
Make up the sum of God's account.

Earth's number-scale is near us set ;  
The total God alone can see ;  
But each some fraction : shall I fret  
If you see Four where I saw  
Three ?

A unit's loss the sum would mar ;  
Therefore if I have One or Two,  
I am as rich as others are,  
And help the whole as well as you.

This wild white rosebud in my hand  
Hath meanings meant for me  
alone,  
Which no one else can understand :  
To you it breathe with altered  
tone :

How shall I class its properties  
For you ? or its wise whisperings  
Interpret ? Other ears and eyes  
It teaches many other things.

We number daisies, fringe and star :  
We count the cinquefoils and the  
poppies :  
We know not what they mean. We  
are  
Degenerate copyists of copies.

We go to Nature, not as lords,  
But servants : and she treats us  
thus :  
Speaks to us with indifferent words,  
And from a distance looks at us.

Let us go boldly, as we ought,  
And say to her, " We are a part  
Of that supreme original Thought  
Which did conceive thee what thou  
art :

" We will not have this lofty look :  
Thou shalt fall down, and recog-  
nize  
Thy kings : we will write in thy  
book,  
Command thee with our eyes."

She hath usurpt us. She should be  
Our model ; but we have become  
Her miniature-painters. So when  
we  
Entreat her softly she is dumb.

Nor serve the subject overmuch :  
Nor rhythm and rhyme, nor color  
and form.

Know truth hath all great graces,  
such  
As shall with these thy work in-  
form.

We ransack History's tattered page :  
We prate of epoch and costume :  
Call this, and that, the Classic Age :  
Choose tunic now, now helm and  
plume :

But while we halt in weak debate  
'Twixt that and this appropriate  
theme,  
The offended wild-flowers stare and  
wait,  
The bird hoots at us from the  
stream.

Next, as to laws. What's beautiful  
We recognize in form and face :  
And judge it thus, and thus, by rule,  
As perfect law brings perfect grace :

If through the effect we drag the  
cause,  
Dissect, divide, anatomize,  
Results are lost in loathsome laws,  
And all the ancient beauty dies :

Till we, instead of bloom and light,  
See only sinews, nerves, and veins :  
Nor will the effect and cause unite,  
For one is lost if one remains :

But from some higher point behold  
This dense, perplexing complica-  
tion ;  
And laws involved in laws unfold.  
And orb into thy contemplation.

God, when he made the seed, con-  
ceived  
The flower ; and all the work of  
sun  
And rain, before the stem was leaved,  
In that prenatal thought was done ;

The girl who twines in her soft hair  
The orange-flower, with love's  
devotion,

By the mere act of being fair  
Sets countless laws of life in mo-  
tion ;

So thou, by one thought thoroughly  
great,  
Shalt, without heed thereto, fulfil  
All laws of art. Create ! create !  
Dissection leaves the dead dead  
still.

All Sciences are branches, each,  
Of that first science,—Wisdom.  
Seize  
The true point whence, if thou  
shouldst reach  
Thine arm out, thou may'st grasp  
all these,

And close all knowledge in thy palm.  
As History proves Philosophy :  
Philosophy, with warnings calm,  
Prophet-like, guiding History.

Burn catalogues. Write thine own  
books.  
What need to pore o'er Greece and  
Rome ?  
When whoso through his own life  
looks  
Shall find that he is fully come,

Through Greece and Rome, and  
Middle-Age :  
Hath been by turns, ere yet full-  
grown,  
Soldier, and Senator, and Sage,  
And worn the tunic and the gown.

Cut the world thoroughly to the  
heart.  
The sweet and bitter kernel crack.  
Have no half-dealings with thine art.  
All heaven is waiting : turn not  
back.

If all the world for thee and me  
One solitary shape possessed,  
What shall I say ? a single tree—  
Whereby to type and hint the rest,

And I could imitate the bark  
And foliage, both in form and hue,  
Or silvery-gray, or brown and dark,  
Or rough with moss, or wet with  
dew,

But thou, with one form in thine  
eye,  
Couldst penetrate all forms :  
possess  
The soul of form : and multiply  
A million like it, more or less,—

Which were the Artist of us twain ?  
The moral's clear to understand.  
Where'er we walk, by hill or plain,  
Is there no mystery on the land ?

The osiered, oozy water, ruffled  
By fluttering swifts that dip and  
wink :  
Deep cattle in the cowslips muffled,  
Or lazy-eyed upon the brink :

Or, when—a scroll of stars—the  
night [away,  
(By God withdrawn) is rolled  
The silent sun, on some cold height,  
Breaking the great seal of the day :

Are these not words more rich than  
ours ?  
O seize their import if you can !  
Our souls are parched like withering  
flowers, [gan.  
Our knowledge ends where it be-

While yet about us fall God's dews,  
And whisper secrets o'er the earth  
Worth all the weary years we lose  
In learning legends of our birth,

Arise, O Artist ! and restore  
Their music to the moaning winds,  
Love's broken pearls to life's bare  
shore,  
And freshness to our fainting  
minds.

## THE WIFE'S TRAGEDY.

### I.

#### THE EVENING BEFORE THE FLIGHT.

TAKE the diamonds from my hair !  
Take the flowers from the urn !  
Fling the lattice wide ! more air !  
Air—more air, or else I burn !

Put the bracelets by. And thrust  
Out of sight these hated pearls.  
I could trample them to dust,  
Though they were his gift, the  
Earl's !

Flusht I am ? The dance it was.  
Only that. Now leave me, Sweet.  
Take the flowers, Love, because  
They will wither in this heat.

Good-night, dearest ! Leave the  
door  
Half-way open as you go.  
—O, thank God ? . . . Alone once  
more.  
Am I dreaming ? . . . Dream-  
ing ? . . . no !

Still that music underneath  
Works to madness in my brain.  
Even the roses seem to breathe  
Poisoned perfumes, full of pain.

Let me think . . . my head is ach-  
ing.  
I have little strength to think.  
And I know my heart is breaking.  
Yet, O love, I will not shrink !

In his look was such sweet sadness.  
And he fixed that look on me.  
I was helpless . . . call it madness,  
Call it guilt . . . but it must be.

I can bear it, if, in losing  
All things else, I lose him not.  
All the grief is my own choosing,  
Can I murmur at my lot ?

Ah, the night is bright and still  
Over all the fields I know  
And the chestnuts on the hill :  
And the quiet lake below.

By that lake I yet remember  
How, last year, we stood together  
One wild eve in warm September  
Bright with thunder : not a feather

Stirred the slumbrous swans that  
floated  
Past the reed-beds, husht and  
white :

Towers of sultry cloud hung moated  
In the lake's unshaken light :

Far behind us all the extensive  
Woodland blackened against heav-  
en : [sive :  
And we spoke not :—pausing pen-  
Till the thunder-cloud was riven,

And the black wood whitened under,  
And the storm began to roll,  
And the love laid up like thunder  
Burst at once upon my soul.

There ! . . . the moon is just in  
crescent  
In the silent happy sky.  
And to-night the meanest peasant  
In her light's more blest than I.

Other moons I soon shall see  
Over Asian headlands green :  
Ocean-spaces sparkling free  
Isles of breathless balm between.

And the rosy-rising star  
At the setting of the day  
From the distant sandy bar  
Shining over Africa :

Steering through the glowing wea-  
ther  
Past the tracks of crimson light,  
Down the sunset lost together  
Far athwart the summer night.

“Canst thou make such life thy  
choice,  
My heart's own, my chosen one ?”  
So he whispered and his voice  
Had such magic in its tone ?

But one hour ago we parted.  
And we meet again to-morrow.  
Parted—silent, and sad-hearted :  
And we meet—in guilt and sor-  
row.

But we *shall* meet . . . meet, O God,  
To part never . . . the last time !  
Yes ! the Ordeal shall be trod.  
Burning ploughshares—love and  
crime.

O with him, with him to wander  
Through the wide world—only  
his !  
Heart and hope and heaven to  
squander  
On the wild wealth of his kiss !

Then ? . . . like these poor flowers  
that wither  
In my bosom, to be thrown  
Lightly from him any whither  
When the sweetness all is flown ?

O, I know it all, my fate !  
But the gulf is crost forever.  
And regret is born too late.  
The shut Past reopens never.

Fear ? . . . I cannot fear ! for fear  
Dies with hope in every breast.  
O, I see the frozen sneer.  
Careless smile, and callous jest !

But my shame shall yet be worn  
Like the purple of a Queen.  
I can answer scorn with scorn.  
Fool ! I know not what I me