

For o'er faint tracts of fragrance
wide,
A rapture pouring up the tide—
A freshness through the heat—a
sweet,
Uncertain sound, like fairy feet—
The west-wind blows my love to
e.

Love-laden from the lighted west
Thou comest, with thy soul opprest
For joy of him : all up the dim,
Delicious sea blow fearlessly,
Warm wind, that art the tenderest
Or all that breathe from south or
west,

Blow whispers of him up the sea :
Upon my cheek, and on my breast,
And on the lips which he hath prest,
Blow all his kisses back to me !

Far off, the dark green rocks about,
All night shines, faint and fair,
the far light :

Far off, the lone, late fishers shout
From boat to boat i' the listening
starlight :

Far off, and fair, the sea lies bare,
Leagues, leagues beyond the reach
of rowing :

Up creek and horn the smooth wave
swells
And falls asleep ; or, inland flow-
ing,

Twinkles among the silver shells,
From sluice to sluice of shallow
wells ;

Or, down dark pools of purple
glowing,
Sets some forlorn star trembling
there

In his own dim, dreamlike bril-
liancy.

And I feel the dark sails grow-
ing
Nearer, clearer, up the sea :
And I catch the warm west
blowing

All my own love's sighs to me :
On the deck I hear them singing
Songs they sing in my own land :

Lights are swinging : bells are ring-
ing :
On the deck I see him stand !

II.

The day is down into his bower :
In languid lights his feet he steeps :
The flusht sky darkens, low and
lower,
And closes on the glowing deeps.

In creeping curves of yellow foam
Up shallow sands the waters slide :
And warmly blow what whispers
roam
From isle to isle the lulléd tide :

The boats are drawn : the nets drip
bright :
Dark casements gleam : old songs
are sung :
And out upon the verge of night
Green lights from lonely rocks are
hung.

O winds of eve that somewhere
rove
Where darkest sleeps the distant
sea,
Seek out where haply dreams my
love,
And whisper all her dreams to
me !

THE SUMMER-TIME THAT
WAS.

THE swallow is not come yet ;
The river-banks are brown ;
The woodside walks are dumb yet,
And dreary is the town.
I miss a face from the window,
A footstep from the grass ;
I miss the boyhood of my heart,
And the summer-time that was.

How shall I read the books I read,
Or meet the men I met ?
I thought to find her rose-tree dead,
But it is growing yet.

And the river winds among the
flags,
And the leaf lies on the grass.
But I walk alone. My hopes are
gone,
And the summer-time that was.

ELAYNE LE BLANC.

O THAT sweet season on the April-
verge
Of womanhood ! When smiles are
toucht with tears,
And all the unsolaced summer
seems to grieve
With some blind want : when Eden-
exiles feel
Their Paradisal parentage, and
search
Even yet some fragrance through
the thorny years
From reachless gardens guarded by
the sword.

Then those that brood above the
fallen sun,
Or lean from lonely casements to
the moon,
Turn round and miss the touching
of a hand :
Then sad thoughts seem to be more
sweet than gay ones :
Then old songs have a sound as
pitiful
As dead friends' voices, sometimes
heard in dreams :
And all a-tiptoe for some great
event,
The Present waits, her finger at her
lips,
The while the pensive Past with
meek pale palms,
Crost (where a child should lie) on
her cold breast,
And wistful eyes forlorn, stands
mutely by,
Reproaching Life with some un-
uttered loss ;
And the heart pines, a prisoned
Danaë,

Till some God comes, and makes
the air all golden.

In such a mood as this, at such an
hour
As makes sad thoughts fall saddest
on the soul,
She, in her topmost bower all alone,
High-up among the battlemented
roofs,

Leaned from the lattice, where the
road runs by
To Camelot, and in the bulrush beds
The marish river shrinks his stag-
nant horn.

All round, along the spectral arras,
gleamed
(With faces pale against the dreary
light,

Forms of great Queens—the women
of old times.

She felt their frowns upon her, and
their smiles,
And seemed to hear their garments
rustling near.

Her lute lay idle her love-books
among :

And, at her feet, flung by, the
broidered scarf,
And velvet mantle. On the verge
of night

She saw a bird float by, and wished
for wings :

She heard the hoarse frogs quarrel
in the marsh :

And now and then, with drowsy
song and oar,

Some dim barge sliding slow from
bridge to bridge,

Down the white river past, and far
behind

Left a new silence. Then she fell
to muse

Unto what end she came into this
earth

Whose reachless beauty made her
heart so sad,

As one that loves, but hopes not,
inly ails

In gazing on some fair unloving
face.

Anon, there dropt down a great gulf
of sky
A star she knew ; and as she looked
at it,
Down-drawn through her intensity
of gaze,
One angry ray fell tangled in her
tears,
And dashed its blinding brightness
in her eyes.
She turned, and caught her lute, and
pensively
Rippled a random music down the
strings,
And sang . . .

All night the moonbeams bathe
the sward.
There's not an eye to-night in Joy-
ous-Gard
That is not dreaming something
sweet. I wake
Because it is more sweet to dream
awake :
Dreaming I see thy face upon the
lake.

I am come up from far, love, to be-
hold thee,
That hast waited for me so bravely
and well
Thy sweet life long (for the Fairies
had told thee
I am the Knight that shall loosen
the spell),
And to-morrow morn mine arms
shall infold thee :
And to-morrow night . . . ah, who
can tell ?

As the spirit of some dark lake
Pines at nightfall, wild-awake,
For the approaching consumma-
tion

Of a great moon he divines
Coming to her coronation
Of the dazzling stars and signs,
So my heart, my heart,
Darkly (ah, and tremblingly !)
Waits in mystic expectation
(From its wild source far apart)

Until it be filled with thee,—
With the full-orbed light of thee,—
O beloved as thou art !
With the soft sad smile that
flashes
Underneath thy long dark lashes ;
And thy floating raven hair
From its wreathed pearls let slip ;
And thy breath, like balmy air ;
And thy warm wet rosy lip,
With my first kiss lingering there ;
Its sweet secret unrevealed,—
Sealed by me, to me unsealed ;
And . . . but, ah ! she lies asleep
In yon gray stone castle-keep,
On her lids the happy tear ;
And alone I linger here ;
And to-morrow morn the fight ;
And . . . ah, me ! to-morrow
night ?

Here she brake, trembling, off ; and
on the lute,
Yet vibrating through its melodious
nerves,
A great tear plashed and tinkled.
For a while
She sat and mused ; and, heavily,
drop by drop,
Her tears fell down ; then through
them a slow smile
Stole, full of April-sweetness ; and
she sang—

—It was a sort of ballad of the sea :
A song of weather-beaten mariners,
Gray-headed men that had survived
all winds

And held a perilous sport among
the waves,
Who yet sang on with hearts as bold
as when
They cleared their native harbor
with a shout,
And lifted golden anchors in the
sun.

Merrily, merrily drove our barks,—
Merrily up from the morning beach !
And the brine broke under her
prows in sparks ;
For a spirit sat high at the helm of
each.

We sailed all day ; and, when day
was done,
Steered after the wake of the sunken
sun,
For we meant to follow him out of
reach
Till the golden dawn was again
begun.

With lifted oars, with shout and
song,
Merry mariners all were we !
Every heart beat stout and strong.
Through all the world you would
not see,
Though you should journey wide
and long,
A comelier company.
And where, the echoing creeks
among,

Merrily, steadily,
From bay to bay our barks did fall,
You might hear us singing, one and
all,

A song of the mighty sea.
But, just at twilight, down the rocks
Dim forms trooped fast, and clearer
grew :

For out upon the sea-sand came
The island-people, whom we knew,
And called us :—girls with glowing
locks ;
And sunburnt boys that tend the
herd
Far up the vale ; gray elders too
With silver beards :—their cries we
heard :
They called us, each one by his
name.

“Could ye not wait a little while,”
We heard them sing, “for all our
sakes ?

A little while, in this old isle,”
They sung, “among the silver lakes ?
For here,” they sung, “from horn
to horn

Of flowery bays the land is fair :
The hillside glows with grapes : the
corn
Grows golden in the vale down there.

Our maids are sad for you,” they
sung :

“Against the field no sickle falls :
Upon the trees our harps are hung :
Our doors are void : and in the
stalls

The little foxes nest ; among
The herd-roved hills no shepherd
calls :

Your brethren mourn for you,” they
sung.

“Here weep your wives : here passed
your lives

Among the vines, when you were
young :

Here dwell your sires : your house-
hold fires

Grow cold. Return ! Return !” they
sung.

Then each one saw his kinsman
stand

Upon the shore, and wave his hand :
And each grew sad. But still we
sung

Our ocean-chorus bold and clear ;
And still upon our oars we hung,
And held our course with steadfast
cheer.

“For we are bound for distant
shores,”

We cried, and faster swept our oars :
“We pine to see the faces there

Of men whose deeds we heard long
since,

Who haunt our dreams : gray he-
roes : kings

Whose fame the wandering minstrel
sings :

And maidens, too, more fair than
ours,

With deeper eyes and softer hair,
Like hers that left her island bowers

To wed the sullen Cornish Prince
Who keeps his court upon the hill

By the gray coasts of Tyntagill,
And each, before he dies, must gain
Some fairy-land across the main.”

But still “return, beloved, return !”
The simple island-people sung :

And still each mariner's heart did
burn,
As each his kinsman could discern,
Those dim green rocks among.

"O'er you the rough sea-blasts will
blow,"
They sung, "while here the skies
are fair :
Our paths are through the fields we
know :
And yours you know not where."

But we waved our hands . . . "fare-
well ! farewell !"
We cried . . . "our white sails flap
the mast :
Our course is set : our oars are wet :
One day," we cried, "is nearly past :
One day at sea ! Farewell ! fare-
well !
No more with you we now may
dwell !"

And the next day we were driving
free
(With never a sail in sight)
Over the face of the mighty sea,
And we counted the stars next night
Rise over us by two and three
With melancholy light :
A grave-eyed, earnest company,—
And all round the salt foam white !

With this, she ceased, and sighed
. . . "though I were far,
I know yon moated iris would not
shed
His purple crown : yon clover-field
would ripple
As merry in the waving wind as
now :
As soft the Spring down this bare
hill would steal,
And in the vale below fling all her
flowers :
Each year the wet primroses star the
woods :
And violets muffle the sharp rivu-
lets :
Round this lone casement's solitary
panes

The wandering ivy move and mount
each year :
Each year the red wheat gleam near
river-banks :

While, ah, with each my memory
from the hearts
Of men would fade, and from their
lips my name.
O which were best—the wide, the
windy sea,
With golden gleams of undiscovered
lands,
Odors, and murmurs—or the placid
Port,
From wanton winds, from scornful
waves secure,
Under the old, green, happy hills of
home ?"
She sat forlorn, and pondered. Night
was near,
And, marshalling o'er the hills her
dewy camps,
Came down the outposts of the sen-
tinel stars.
All in the owlet light she sat forlorn.

Now hostel, hall, and grange, that
eve were crammed :
The town being choked to bursting
of the gates :
For there the King yet lay with all
his Earls,
And the Round Table, numbering
all save one.

On many a curving terrace which
o'erhung
The long gray river, swan-like,
through the green
Of quaintest yews, moved, pacing
stately by,
The lovely ladies of King Arthur's
court.
Sighing, she eyed them from that
lonely keep.

The Dragon-banners o'er the turrets
drooped,
The heavy twilight hanging in their
folds.

And now and then, from posterns in
the wall
The knights stole, lingering for some
last Good-night,
Whispered or sighed through closing
lattices ;
Or paused with reverence of bending
plumes,
And lips on jewelled fingers gayly
prest.
The silver cressets shone from pane
to pane :
And tapers flitted by with flitting
forms :
Clanged the dark streets with clash
of iron heels :
Or fell a sound of coits in clattering
courts,
And drowsy horse-boys singing in
the straw.

These noises floated upward. And
within,
From the great Hall, forever and
anon,
Brake gusts of revel ; snatches of
wild song,
And laughter ; where her sire among
his men
Caroused between the twilight and
the dark.
The silence round about her where
she sat,
Vext in itself, grew sadder for the
sound.
She closed her eyes : before them
seemed to float
A dream of lighted revels,—dance
and song
In Guenver's palace : gorgeous tour-
naments ;
And rows of glittering eyes about
the Queen
(Like stars in galaxies around the
moon),
That sparkled recognition down be-
low,
Where rode the Knights amort with
lance and plume ;
And each his lady's sleeve upon his
heim :

Murmuring . . . "none ride for me.
Am I not fair,
Whom men call the White Flower
of Astolat ?"

Far, far without, the wild gray mar-
ish spread,
A heron startled from the pools, and
flapped
The water from his wings, and
skirred away.
The last long limit of the dying light
Dropped, all on fire, behind an iron
cloud :
And, here and there, through some
wild chasm of blue,
Tumbled a star. The mist upon the
fens
Thickened. A billowy opal grew i'
the crofts,
Fed on the land, and sucked into
itself
Paling and park, close copse and
bushless down,
Changing the world for Fairies.

Then the moon
In the low east, unprisoned from
black bars
Of stagnant fog (a white light,
wrought to the full,
Summed in a perfect orb) rose sud-
denly up
Upon the silence with a great sur-
prise,
And took the inert landscape un-
awares.

White, white, the snaky river : dark
the banks :
And dark the folding distance, where
her eyes
Were wildly turned, as though the
whole world lay
In that far blackness over Carlyel.
There she espied Sir Launcelot, as
he rode
His coal-black courser downward
from afar,
For all his armor glittered as he
went,
And showed like silver : and his
mighty shield,

By dint of knightly combat hackt and worn,
 Looked like some cracked and frozen moon that hangs
 By night o'er Baltic headlands all alone.

TO —.

As, in lone fairy-lands, up some rich shelf
 Of golden sand the wild wave moaningly
 Heaps its unvalued sea-wealth, weed and gem,
 Then creeps back slow into the salt sad sea :
 So from my life's new searched deeps to thee,
 Beloved, I cast these weed-flowers. Smile on them.
 More than they mean I know not to express.
 So I shrink back into my old sad self,
 Far from all words where love lies fathomless.

QUEEN GUENEVERE.

THENCE, up the sea-green floor, among the stems
 Of mighty columns whose unmeasured shades
 From aisle to aisle, unheeded in the sun,
 Moved without sound, I, following all alone
 A strange desire that drew me like a hand,
 Came unawares upon the Queen. She sat
 In a great silence, which her beauty filled
 Full to the heart of it, on a black chair
 Mailed all about with sullen gems, and crusts
 Of sultry blazonry. Her face was bowed,
 A pause of slumbrous beauty, o'er the light

Of some delicious thought new-risen above
 The deeps of passion. Round her stately head
 A single circlet of the red gold fine
 Burned free, from which, on either side streamed down
 Twilights of her soft hair, from neck to foot. [is,
 Green was her kirtle as the emeralde
 And stiff from hem to hem with seams of stones
 Beyond all value ; which, from left to right
 Disparting, half revealed the snowy gleam
 Of a white robe of spotless samite pure.
 And from the soft repression of her zone,
 Which like a light hand on a lute-string pressed
 Harmony from its touch, flowed warmly back
 The bounteous outlines of a glowing grace,
 Nor yet outflowed sweet laws of loveliness.

Then did I feel as one who, much perplexed,
 Led by strange legends and the light of stars
 Over long regions of the midnight sand
 Beyond the red tract of the Pyramids,
 Is suddenly drawn to look upon the sky
 From sense of unfamiliar light, and sees,
 Revealed against the constellated cope
 The great cross of the South. The chamber round
 Was dropt with arras green ; and I could hear,
 In courts far off, a minstrel praising May,
 Who sang . . . *Si douce, si douce est la Margarete !*

To a faint lute. Upon the window-sill,
 Hard by a latoun bowl that blazed i' the sun
 Perched a strange fowl, a Falcon Peregrine ;
 With all his feathers puffed for pride, and all
 His courage glittering outward in his eye ;
 For he had flown from far, athwart strange lands,
 And o'er the light of many a setting sun,
 Lured by his love (such sovereignty of old
 Had Beauty in all coasts of Christendom !)
 To look into the great eyes of the Queen.

THE NEGLECTED HEART.

THIS heart, you would not have, I laid up in a grave
 Of song : with love enwound it ;
 And set sweet fancies blowing round it.
 Then I to others gave it ;
 Because you would not have it.
 "See you keep it well," I said ;
 "This heart's sleeping—is not dead ;
 But will wake some future day :
 See you keep it while you may."

All great Sorrows in the world,—
 Some with crowns upon their heads,
 And in regal purple furred ;
 Some with rosaries and beads ;
 Some with lips of scorning, curled
 At false Fortune ; some, in weeds
 Of mourning and of widowhood,
 Standing tearful and apart,—
 Each one in his several mood,
 Came to take my heart.

Then in holy ground they set it ;
 With melodious weepings wet it
 And revered it as they found it,
 With wild fancies blowing round it.

And this heart (you would not have)
 Being not dead, though in the grave,
 Worked miracles and marvels strange,
 And healed many maladies :
 Giving sight to sealed-up eyes,
 And legs to lame men sick for change.
 The fame of it grew great and greater.
 Then said you, "Ah, what's the matter ?
 How hath this heart I would not take,
 This weak heart a child might break—
 This poor, foolish heart of his—
 Since won worship such as this ?"
 You bethought you then . . . "Ah me,

What if this heart, I did not choose
 To retain, hath found the key
 Of the kingdom ? and I lose
 A great power ? Me he gave it :
 Mine the right, and I will have it."
 Ah, too late ! For crowds exclaimed,
 "Ours it is : and hath been claimed.
 Moreover, where it lies, the spot
 Is holy ground : so enter not.
 None but men of mournful mind,—
 Men to darkened days resigned ;
 Equal scorn of Saint and Devil ;
 Poor and outcast ; halt and blind ;
 Exiles from Life's golden revel ;
 Gnawing at the bitter rind
 Of old griefs ; or else, confined
 In proud cares, to serve and grind,—
 May enter : whom this heart shall cure.
 But go thou by : thou art not poor :
 Nor defrauded of thy lot :
 Bless thyself : but enter not !"

APPEARANCES.

WELL, you have learned to smile.
 And no one looks for traces
 Of tears about your eyes.
 Your face is like most faces,
 And who will ask, meanwhile,
 If your face your heart beliees ?

Are you happy? You look so.
Well, I wish you what you seem.
Happy persons sleep so light!
In your sleep you never dream?
But who would care to know
What dreams you dreamed last
night?

HOW THE SONG WAS MADE.

I SAT low down, at midnight, in a
vale
Mysterious with the silence of blue
pines:
White-cloven by a snaky river-tail,
Uncoiled from tangled wefts of sil-
ver twines.

Out of a crumbling castle, on a spike
Of splintered rock, a mile of
changeless shade
Gorged half the landscape. Down a
dismal dike
Of black hills the sluiced moon-
beams streamed, and stayed.

The world lay like a poet in a swoon,
When God is on him, filled with
Heaven, all through,—
A dim face full of dreams turned to
the moon,
With mild lips moist in melau-
choly dew.

I plucked blue mugwort, livid man-
drakes, balls
Of blossomed nightshade, heads of
hemlock, long
White grasses, grown in oozy inter-
vals
Of marsh, to make ingredients for
a song:

A song of mourning to embalm the
Past,—
The corpse-cold Past,—that it
should not decay;
But in dark vaults of memory, to the
last,
Endure unchanged: for in some
future day

I will bring my new love to look at
it
(Laying aside her gay robes for a
moment)
That, seeing what love came to, she
may sit
Silent awhile, and muse, but make
no comment.

RETROSPECTIONS.

TO-NIGHT she will dance at the
palace,
With the diamonds in her hair:
And the Prince will praise her
beauty—
The loveliest lady there!

But tones, at times, in the music
Will bring back forgotten things:
And her heart will fail her some-
times,
When her beauty is praised at the
King's.

There sits in his silent chamber
A stern and sorrowful man:
But a strange sweet dream comes to
him,
While the lamp is burning wan,

Of a sunset among the vineyards
In a lone and lovely land,
And a maiden standing near him,
With fresh wild-flowers in her
hand.

THY VOICE ACROSS MY SPIRIT
FALLS.

THY voice across my spirit falls
Like some spent sea-wind through
dim halls
Of ocean-king's, left bare and wide
(Green floors o'er which the sea-
weed crawls!)
Where once, long since, in festal
pride
Some Chief, who roved and ruled the
tide,
Among his brethren reigned and
died.

I dare not meet thine eyes; for so,
In gazing there, I seem once more
To lapse away through days of yore
To homes where laugh and song is
o'er,
Whose inmates each went long ago—
Like some lost soul, that keeps the
semblance
On its brow of ancient grace
Not all faded, wandering back
To silent chambers, in the track
Of the twilight, from the Place
Of retributive Remembrance.
Ah, turn aside those eyes again!
Their light has less of joy than pain.
We are not now what we were then.

THE RUINED PALACE.

BROKEN are the Palace windows:
Rotting is the Palace floor.
The damp wind lifts the arras,
And swings the creaking door;
But it only startles the white owl
From his perch on a monarch's
throne,
And the rat that was gnawing the
harp-strings
A Queen once played upon.

Dare you linger here at midnight
Alone, when the wind is about,
And the bat, and the newt, and the
viper,
And the creeping things come out?
Beware of these ghostly chambers!
Search not what my heart hath
been,
Lest you find a phantom sitting
Where once there sat a Queen.

A VISION OF VIRGINS.

I HAD a vision of the night.
It seemed
There was a long red tract of barren
land,
Blockt in by black hills, where a
half-moon dreamed

Of morn, and whitened.
Drifts of dry brown sand,
This way and that, were heapt be-
low: and flats
Of water:—glaring shallows, where
strange bats
Came and went, and moths flick-
ered.

To the right
A dusty road that crept along the
waste
Like a white snake: and, farther up,
I traced
The shadow of a great house, far in
sight:
A hundred casements all ablaze
with light:
And forms that flit athwart them as
in haste:
And a slow music, such as some-
times kings
Command at mighty revels, softly
sent
From viol, and flute, and tabor, and
the strings
Of many a sweet and slumbrous in-
strument
That wound into the mute heart of
the night
Out of that distance.

Then I could perceive
A glory pouring through an open
door,
And in the light five women. I be-
lieve
They wore white vestments, all of
them. They were
Quite calm; and each still face un-
earthly fair,
Unearthly quiet. So like statues
all,
Waiting they stood without that
lighted hall;
And in their hands, like a blue star,
they held
Each one a silver lamp.
Then I beheld
A shadow in the doorway. And One
came
Crowned for a feast. I could not
see the Face.

The Form was not all human. As
the flame
Streamed over it, a presence took
the place
With awe.
He, turning, took them by the
hand,
And led them each up the white
stairway, and
The door closed.

At that moment the moon dipped
Behind a rag of purple vapor, ript
Off a great cloud, some dead wind,
ere it spent
Its last breath, had blown open, and
so rent
You saw behind blue pools of light,
and there
A wild star swimming in the lurid
air.
The dream was darkened. And a
sense of loss
Fell like a nightmare on the land :
because
The moon yet lingered in her cloud-
eclipse.
Then, in the dark, swelled sullenly
across
The waste a wail of women.
Her blue lips
The moon drew up out of the cloud.
Again
I had a vision on that midnight
plain.

Five women : and the beauty of
despair
Upon their faces : locks of wild wet
hair,
Clammy with anguish, wandered low
and loose
O'er their bare breasts, that seemed
too filled with trouble
To feel the damp crawl of the mid-
night dews
That trickled down them. One was
bent half double,
A dismayed heap, that hung o'er
the last spark

Of a lamp slowly dying. As she
blew
The dull light redder, and the dry
wick flew
In crumbling sparkles all about the
dark,
I saw a light of horror in her eyes ;
A wild light on her flushed cheek ; a
wild white
On her dry lips ; an agony of surprise
Fearfully fair.

The lamp dropped. From my sight
She fell into the dark.

Beside her, sat
One without motion : and her stern
face flat
Against the dark sky.

One, as still as death,
Hollowed her hands about her lamp.
for fear
Some motion of the midnight, or her
breath,
Should fan out the last flicker. Rosy-
clear

The light oozed, through her fingers,
o'er her face.

There was a ruined beauty hovering
there
Over deep pain, and, dasht with
lurid grace
A waning bloom.

The light grew dim and blear :
And she, too, slowly darkened in her
place.

Another, with her white hands hotly
loct

About her damp knees, muttering
madness, rocked
Forward and backward. But at last
she stopped,
And her dark head upon her bosom
dropped
Motionless.

Then one rose up with a cry
To the great moon ; and stretched a
wrathful arm

Of wild expostulation to the sky,
Murmuring, "These earth-lamps fail
us ! and what harm ?

Does not the moon shine ? Let us
rise and haste

To meet the Bridegroom yonder o'er
the waste !
For now I seem to catch once more
the tone
Of viols on the night. 'Twere better
done,
At worst, to perish near the golden
gate,
And fall in sight of glory one by one,
Than here all night upon the wild,
to wait
Uncertain ills. Away ! the hour is
late !"

Again the moon dipped.
I could see no more.
Not the least gleam of light did
heaven afford.

At last, I heard a knocking on a door,
And some one crying, "Open to us,
Lord !"

There was an awful pause.
I heard my heart

Beat.
Then a Voice—"I know you not.
Depart."

I caught, within, a glimpse of glory.
And
The door closed.

Still in darkness dreamed the land.
I could not see those women. Not
a breath !

Darkness, and awe : a darkness more
than death.
The darkness took them. * * * * *

LEOLINE.

In the molten-golden moonlight,
In the deep grass warm and dry,
We watched the fire-fly rise and
swim

In floating sparkles by.
All night the hearts of nightingales,
Song-steeping, slumbrous leaves,
Flowed to us in the shadow there
Below the cottage-eaves.

We sang our songs together
Till the stars shook in the skies.

We spoke — we spoke of common
things,
Yet the tears were in our eyes.
And my hand,—I know it trembled
To each light warm touch of thine.
But we were friends, and only
friends,
My sweet friend, Leoline !

How large the white moon looked,
Dear !

There has not ever been
Since those old nights the same great
light

In the moons which I have seen.
I often wonder, when I think,
If you have thought so too,
And the moonlight has grown dim-
mer, Dear,
Than it used to be to you.

And sometimes, when the warm
west-wind

Comes faint across the sea,
It seems that you have breathed on
it,

So sweet it comes to me :
And sometimes, when the long light
wanes

In one deep crimson line,
I muse, "and does she watch it too,
Far off, sweet Leoline ?"

And often, leaning all day long
My head upon my hands,

My heart aches for the vanished time
In the far fair foreign lands :

Thinking sadly—"Is she happy ?
Has she tears for those old hours ?

And the cottage in the starlight ?
And the songs among the flow-
ers ?"

One night we sat below the porch,
And out in that warm air,

A fire-fly, like a dying star,
Fell tangled in her hair :

But I kissed him lightly off again,
And he glittered up the vine,

And died into the darkness
For the love of Leoline !

Between two songs of Petrarch
I've a purple rose-leaf prest,
More sweet than common rose-
leaves,
For it once lay in her breast.
When she gave me that her eyes
were wet,
The rose was full of dew.
The rose is withered long ago ;
The page is blistered too.

There's a blue flower in my garden,
The bee loves more than all :
The bee and I, we love it both,
Though it is frail and small.
She loved it too—long, long ago :
Her love was less than mine.
Still we are friends, but only
friends,
My lost love, Leoline !

SPRING AND WINTER.

THE world buds every year :
But the heart just once, and when
The blossom falls off sere
No new blossom comes again.
Ah, the rose goes with the wind :
But the thorns remain behind.

Was it well in him, if he
Felt not love, to speak of love so ?
If he still unmoved must be,
Was it nobly sought to move so ?
—Pluck the flower, and yet not wear
it—
Spurn, despise it, yet not spare it ?

Need he say that I was fair,
With such meaning in his tone,
Just to speak of one whose hair
Had the same tinge as my own ?
Pluck my life up, root and bloom,
Just to plant it on her tomb ?

And she'd scarce so fair a face
(So he used to say) as mine :
And her form had far less grace :
And her brow was far less fine :
But 'twas just that he loved then
More than he can love again.

Why, if Beauty could not bind him,
Need he praise me, speaking low :
Use my face just to remind him
How no face could please him
now ?

Why, if loving could not move him
Did he teach me still to love him ?

And he said my eyes were bright,
But his own, he said, were dim :
And my hand, he said, was white,
But what was that to him ?
"For," he said, "in gazing at you
I seem gazing at a statue."

"Yes," he said, "he had grown
wise now :
He had suffered much of yore :
But, a fair face to his eyes now,
Was a fair face, and no more.
Yet the anguish and the bliss,
And the dream too, had been his."

Then, why talk of "lost romances"
Being "sick of sentiment !"
And what meant those tones and
glances

If real love was never neant ?
Why, if his own youth were with-
ered,
Must mine also have been gathered ?

Why those words a thought too
tender
For the commonplaces spoken ?
Looks whose meaning seemed to
render
Help to words when speech came
broken ?

Why so late in July moonlight
Just to say what's said by noon-
light ?

And why praise my youth for glad-
ness,
Keeping something in his smile
Which turned all my youth to sad-
ness,

He still smiling all the while ?
Since, when so my youth was over
He said—"Seek some younger
lover !"

"For the world buds once a year,
But the heart just once," he said.
True ! . . . so now that Spring is
here

All my flowers, like his, are dead.
And the rose drops in the wind.
But the thorns remain behind.

KING HERMANDIAZ.

THEN, standing by the shore, I saw
the moon
Change hue, and dwindle in the
west, as when
Warm looks fade inward out of dying
eyes,

And the dim sea began to moan.
I knew
My hour had come, and to the bark
I went.

Still were the stately decks, and hung
with silk
Of stoled crimson : at the mast-head
burned
A steadfast fire with influence like a
star,

And underneath a couch of gold. I
loosed
The dripping chain. There was not
any wind :

But all at once the magic sails began
To belly and heave, and like a bat
that wakes

And flits by night, beneath her
swarthy wings
The black ship rocked and moved.

I heard anon
A humming in the cordage and a
sound

Like bees in summer, and the bark
went on,
And on, and on, until at last the
world

Was rolled away and folded out of
sight,

And I was all alone on the great sea.
There a deep awe fell on my spirit.
My wound

Began to bite. I, gazing round, be-
held

A lady sitting silent at the helm,

A woman white as death, and fair as
dreams.

I would have asked her "Whither
do we sail ?"

And "how ?" but that my fear
clung at my heart,

And held me still. She, answering
my doubt,

Said slowly, "To the Isle of Ava-
lon."

And straightway we were nigh a
strand all gold,

That glittered in the moon between
the dusk

Of hanging bowers made rich with
blooms and balms,

From which faint gusts came to me;
and I heard

A sound of lutes among the vales,
and songs

And voices faint like voices through
a dream

That said or seemed to say, "Hail,
Hermandiaz !"

SONG.

IN the warm, black mill-pool wink-
ing,

The first doubtful star shines blue:
And alone here I lie thinking
O such happy thoughts of you !

Up the porch the roses clamber,
And the flowers we sowed last
June ;

And the casement of your chamber
Shines between them to the moon.

Look out, Love ! fling wide the lat-
tice :

Wind the red rose in your hair,
And the little white clematis
Which I plucked for you to wear :

Or come down, and let me hear you
Singing in the scented grass,
Through tall cowslips nodding near
you,

Just to touch you as you pass