

All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,  
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!  
Ah, starry Hope! that didst arise  
But to be overcast!

A voice from out the Future cries,  
'On! on!' — but o'er the Past  
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies  
Mute, motionless, aghast!

For, alas! alas! with me  
The light of Life is o'er!  
'No more — no more — no more —'  
(Such language holds the solemn sea  
To the sands upon the shore)  
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,  
Or the stricken eagle soar!

And all my days are trances,  
And all my nightly dreams  
Are where thy gray eye glances,  
And where thy footstep gleams —  
In what ethereal dances,  
By what eternal streams.

1834, 1835.

## TO F — 1

BELOVED! amid the earnest woes  
That crowd around my earthly path —  
(Drear path, alas! where grows  
Not even one lonely rose) —  
My soul at least a solace hath  
In dreams of thee, and therein knows  
An Eden of bland repose.

And thus thy memory is to me  
Like some enchanted far-off isle  
In some tumultuous sea —  
Some ocean throbbing far and free  
With storms — but where meanwhile  
Serenest skies continually  
Just o'er that one bright island smile.

1835.

TO F — S. S. O — D<sup>2</sup>

THOU wouldst be loved? — then let thy  
heart  
From its present pathway part not!

<sup>1</sup> The title was in 1835 'To Mary,' in 1842 'To One Departed,' and in 1845 'To F —.'  
<sup>2</sup> Addressed in 1845, with some changes from the version of 1835, to Frances Sargent Osgood. See the biographies.

Being everything which now thou art,  
Be nothing which thou art not.  
So with the world thy gentle ways,  
Thy grace, thy more than beauty,  
Shall be an endless theme of praise,  
And love — a simple duty.

1835, 1845.

## SONNET TO ZANTE

FAIR isle, that from the fairest of all  
flowers,  
Thy gentlest of all gentle names dost  
take!<sup>3</sup>

How many memories of what radiant hours  
At sight of thee and thine at once awake!  
How many scenes of what departed bliss!  
How many thoughts of what entombèd  
hopes!

How many visions of a maiden that is  
No more — no more upon thy verdant  
slopes!

No more! alas, that magical sad sound  
Transforming all! Thy charms shall  
please no more —

Thy memory no more! Accursèd ground  
Henceforth I hold thy flower-enameled  
shore,

O hyacinthine isle! O purple Zante!  
'Isola d'oro! Fior di Levante!'

1837.

THE HAUNTED PALACE<sup>4</sup>

In the greenest of our valleys  
By good angels tenanted,  
Once a fair and stately palace —  
Radiant palace — reared its head.  
In the monarch Thought's dominion —  
It stood there!  
Never seraph spread a pinion  
Over fabric half so fair!

<sup>3</sup> Je souscris à ses noms d'Isola d'oro, de Fior di Levante. Ce nom de fleur me rappelle que l'hyacinthe était originaire de l'île de Zante, et que cette île reçut son nom de la plante qu'elle avait portée. (CHATEAUBRIAND, *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem*.)

<sup>4</sup> This poem is a part of Poe's tale of the 'Fall of the House of Usher,' which should be read entire. Lowell calls it 'one of the most beautiful of his poems,' and goes on: 'It loses greatly by being taken out of its rich and appropriate setting. . . . We know no modern poet who might not have been justly proud of it. . . . Was ever the wreck and desolation of a noble mind so musically sung?' By the 'Haunted Palace' I mean to imply a mind haunted by phantoms — a disordered brain,' says Poe himself, in a letter in which he also accuses Longfellow of plagiarizing from this poem in the 'Beleaguered City.'

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,  
On its roof did float and flow,  
(This — all this — was in the olden  
Time long ago.)  
And every gentle air that dallied,  
In that sweet day,  
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,  
A wingèd odor went away.

10

Wanderers in that happy valley,  
Through two luminous windows, saw  
Spirits moving musically,  
To a lute's well-tuned law,  
Round about a throne where, sitting,  
(Porphyrogene!)  
In state his glory well befitting,  
The ruler of the realm was seen.

20

And all with pearl and ruby glowing  
Was the fair palace door,  
Through which came flowing, flowing,  
flowing  
And sparkling evermore,  
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty  
Was but to sing,  
In voices of surpassing beauty,  
The wit and wisdom of their king.

30

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,  
Assailed the monarch's high estate.  
(Ah, let us mourn! — for never morrow  
Shall dawn upon him desolate!)  
And round about his home the glory  
That blushed and bloomed,  
Is but a dim-remembered story  
Of the old time entombèd.

40

And travellers, now, within that valley,  
Through the red-litten windows see  
Vast forms, that move fantastically  
To a discordant melody,  
While, like a ghastly rapid river,  
Through the pale door  
A hideous throng rush out forever  
And laugh — but smile no more.

1839.

## SONNET — SILENCE

THERE are some qualities — some incorpo-  
rate things,  
That have a double life, which thus is made  
A type of that twin entity which springs  
From matter and light, evinced in solid and  
shade.

There is a two-fold *Silence* — sea and  
shore —  
Body and soul. One dwells in lonely places,  
Newly with grass o'ergrown; some solemn  
graces,  
Some human memories and tearful lore,  
Render him terrorless: his name's 'No  
More.'

He is the corporate Silence: dread him  
not!  
No power hath he of evil in himself;  
But should some urgent fate (untimely  
lot!)  
Bring thee to meet his shadow (nameless  
elf,  
That haunteth the lone regions where hath  
trod  
No foot of man,) commend thyself to God!

1840.

## THE CONQUEROR WORM

Lo! 't is a gala night  
Within the lonesome latter years!  
An angel throng, bewinged, bedight  
In veils, and drowned in tears,  
Sit in a theatre, to see  
A play of hopes and fears,  
While the orchestra breathes fitfully  
The music of the spheres.

Mimes, in the form of God on high,  
Mutter and mumble low,  
And hither and thither fly —  
Mere puppets they, who come and go  
At bidding of vast formless things  
That shift the scenery to and fro,  
Flapping from out their Condor wings  
Invisible Woe!

10

That motley drama — oh, be sure  
It shall not be forgot!  
With its Phantom chased for evermore,  
By a crowd that seize it not,  
Through a circle that ever returneth in  
To the self-same spot,  
And much of Madness, and more of Sin,  
And Horror the soul of the plot.

20

But see, amid the mimic rout  
A crawling shape intrude!  
A blood-red thing that writhes from out  
The scenic solitude!  
It writhes! — it writhes! — with mortal  
pangs

The mimes become its food, <sup>30</sup>  
And seraphs sob at vermin fangs  
In human gore imbued.

Out — out are the lights — out all!  
And, over each quivering form,  
The curtain, a funeral pall,  
Comes down with the rush of a storm,  
While the angels, all pallid and wan,  
Uprising, unveiling, affirm  
That the play is the tragedy, 'Man,' <sup>40</sup>  
And its hero the Conqueror Worm.  
1843.

## DREAM-LAND

By a route obscure and lonely,  
Haunted by ill angels only,  
Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,  
On a black throne reigns upright,  
I have reached these lands but newly  
From an ultimate dim Thule —  
From a wild weird clime that lieth, sub-  
lime,  
Out of SPACE — out of TIME.

Bottomless vales and boundless floods,  
And chasms, and caves and Titan woods,  
With forms that no man can discover <sup>11</sup>  
For the tears that drip all over;  
Mountains toppling evermore  
Into seas without a shore;  
Seas that restlessly aspire,  
Surging, unto skies of fire;  
Lakes that endlessly outspread  
Their lone waters — lone and dead, —  
Their still waters — still and chilly  
With the snows of the lolling lily. <sup>20</sup>

By the lakes that thus outspread  
Their lone waters, lone and dead, —  
Their sad waters, sad and chilly  
With the snows of the lolling lily, —  
By the mountains — near the river  
Murmuring lowly, murmuring ever, —  
By the gray woods, — by the swamp  
Where the toad and the newt encamp, —  
By the dismal tarns and pools  
Where dwell the Ghouls, — <sup>30</sup>  
By each spot the most unholy —  
In each nook most melancholy, —  
There the traveller meets, aghast,  
Sheeted Memories of the Past —  
Shrouded forms that start and sigh  
As they pass the wanderer by —

White-robed forms of friends long given,  
In agony, to the Earth — and Heaven.

For the heart whose woes are legion  
'T is a peaceful, soothing region — <sup>40</sup>  
For the spirit that walks in shadow  
'T is — oh 't is an Eldorado!  
But the traveller, travelling through it,  
May not — dare not openly view it;  
Never its mysteries are exposed  
To the weak human eye unclosed;  
So wills its King, who hath forbid  
The uplifting of the fringed lid;  
And thus the sad Soul that here passes  
Beholds it but through darkened glasses.

By a route obscure and lonely, <sup>51</sup>  
Haunted by ill angels only,  
Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,  
On a black throne reigns upright,  
I have wandered home but newly  
From this ultimate dim Thule. <sup>1844.</sup>

THE RAVEN <sup>1</sup>

ONCE upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered,  
weak and weary,  
Over many a quaint and curious volume of  
forgotten lore —

<sup>1</sup> In connection with the 'Raven' Poe's 'Philosophy of Composition' must be read. See also: Ingram (John H.), *The Raven*, London, 1885. Benton (Joel), *In the Poe Circle*. Kent (Charles W.), 'Poe and Chivers' (in the Virginia Edition of Poe's Works, vol. vii, pp. 266-288). Woodberry (G. E.), 'The Poe-Chivers Papers' (in the *Century*, January and February, 1903). Newcomer (A. G.), 'The Poe-Chivers Tradition re-examined' (in the *Seaside Review*, January, 1904.) Stedman (E. C.), *The Raven*, illustrated by Doré, with comment by E. C. Stedman.

Whether or not Poe in the 'Raven' owed anything to Chivers, he unquestionably, as Mr. Stedman has pointed out, owed less to Chivers than to Mrs. Brown- ing. With the beginning of Poe's third stanza,

'And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain,'

compare Mrs. Browning's fourth stanza in the 'Conclusion' of *Lady Geraldine's Courtship*,

'With a murmurous stir uncertain, in the air the purple curtain  
Swelleth in and swelleth out around her motionless pale  
brows.  
While the gliding of the river sends a rippling noise for ever  
Through the open casement whitened by the moonlight's  
slant repose.'

Here, if we use the method adopted by Poe in his arraignment of Longfellow and his attack on Longfellow's defenders, where he insists that rhythm, metre, and stanza must form an essential part of any comparison, and that the probability of imitation is in direct ratio to the brevity of the passages compared as well as to the number of coincidences, it would be easy to show that Poe has followed, or as he would say plagiarized

While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly  
there came a tapping,  
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at  
my chamber door.

from Mrs. Browning. The rhythm is the same, trochaic; the metre is the same, octameter; the first four lines of the stanza which Poe uses throughout the 'Raven' are exactly identical with Mrs. Browning's stanza, the first and third lines having internal feminine rhyme at the fourth foot, and the second and fourth having single masculine rhymes. The only difference is that Poe has added another internal rhyme in the fourth line. He has then added a fifth line (always in part a repetition of the fourth and ending with the same word or words), and the refrain. Again to adopt Poe's method of comparison, one might note that in the first line of Poe's third stanza and of Mrs. Browning's fourth, the same word, 'curtain' occupies the same, and the most prominent, place, that it is matched in each case with the same rhyme-word, 'uncertain,' that the curtain is in each case a purple curtain, and in each case a vaguely waving curtain, and that in each case it produces a murmuring or rustling sound — and finally, that all these coincidences occur within the compass of one line, and are as numerous and peculiar as those which Poe insists upon, in what he calls the brief compass of eight or sixteen lines, in his article against Longfellow and Aldrich (see the *Longfellow War* in the Virginia Edition of Poe's Works, vol. xii, pp. 41-106, especially pp. 76-82). Other minute resemblances might be pointed out, such as the mention in both poems of the lattice-window; but this would be less profitable than to recognize the essential originality of Poe's conception and expression. He was a frank admirer of Mrs. Browning's poetry, and dedicated his chief volume, the *Raven and Other Poems*, to her: 'To the Noblest of her Sex — to the Author of "The Drama of Exile" — to Miss Elizabeth Barrett of England — I dedicate this volume, with the most enthusiastic admiration and with the most sincere esteem.' It is to be noted also that Mrs. Browning was more fond than any other English poet of the refrain. On Poe's use of the refrain, and also of the repeat, on which point he may be best compared with Coleridge, see C. A. Smith's *Repetition and Parallelism in English Verse*, J. P. Fruit's *The Mind and Art of Poe's Poetry*, etc.

However much of the 'Raven' may have been suggested by Poe's predecessors, it suggested even more to his followers. The most important instance of this (not forgetting his influence on Baudelaire and Mallarmé) is perhaps to be found in its having suggested to Rossetti 'The Blessed Damsel.' See W. M. Rossetti's *Dante Gabriel Rossetti: His Family Letters, etc.*, 1895, vol. i, p. 107: "'The Blessed Damsel' was written with a view to its insertion in a manuscript family magazine, of brief vitality. In 1881 Rossetti gave Mr. Caine an account of its origin, as deriving from his perusal and admiration of Edgar Poe's "Raven." "I saw" (this is Mr. Caine's version of Rossetti's statement) "that Poe had done the utmost it was possible to do with the grief of the lover on earth, and I determined to reverse the condition, and give utterance to the yearning of the loved one in heaven." Along with "The Raven" and other poems by Poe, "Ulalume," "For Annie," "The Haunted Palace," and many another were a deep well of delight to Rossetti in all these years. He once wrote a parody of "Ulalume." I do not rightly remember it, nor has it left a vestige behind.

On the time and place of composition of the 'Raven,' see the long note in the Stedman-Woodberry edition of the *Poems*, pages 156-9, and the authorities there cited; the last pages of chapter ix in Harrison's *Life of Poe*; and Ingram's *The Raven*, referred to above.

'T is some visiter,' I muttered, 'tapping  
at my chamber door —  
Only this and nothing more.'

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the  
bleak December;  
And each separate dying ember wrought  
its ghost upon the floor.  
Eagerly I wished the morrow; — vainly I  
had sought to borrow  
From my books surcease of sorrow — sor-  
row for the lost Lenore — <sup>10</sup>  
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the  
angels name Lenore —  
Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of  
each purple curtain  
Thrilled me — filled me with fantastic ter-  
rors never felt before;  
So that now, to still the beating of my heart,  
I stood repeating  
'T is some visiter entreating entrance at  
my chamber door —  
Some late visiter entreating entrance at my  
chamber door; —  
This it is and nothing more.'

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitat-  
ing then no longer,  
'Sir,' said I, 'or Madam, truly your for-  
giveness I implore; <sup>20</sup>  
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently  
you came rapping,  
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at  
my chamber door,  
That I scarce was sure I heard you' — here  
I opened wide the door;  
Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I  
stood there wondering, fearing,  
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever  
dared to dream before;  
But the silence was unbroken, and the still-  
ness gave no token,  
And the only word there spoken was the  
whispered word, 'Lenore!'  
This I whispered, and an echo murmured  
back the word 'Lenore!'  
Merely this and nothing more. <sup>30</sup>

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul  
within me burning,  
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat  
louder than before.

'Surely,' said I, 'surely that is something  
at my window lattice;  
Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this  
mystery explore —  
Let my heart be still a moment and this  
mystery explore; —  
'T is the wind and nothing more !'

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with  
many a flirt and flutter  
In there stepped a stately Raven of the  
saintly days of yore.  
Not the least obeisance made he; not a min-  
ute stopped or stayed he;  
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched  
above my chamber door —  
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above  
my chamber door —  
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy  
into smiling,  
By the grave and stern decorum of the  
countenance it wore,  
'Though thy crest be shorn and shaven,  
thou,' I said, 'art sure no craven,  
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering  
from the Nightly shore —  
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the  
Night's Plutonian shore !'  
Quoth the Raven, 'Nevermore.'

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to  
hear discourse so plainly,  
Though its answer little meaning — little  
relevancy bore;  
For we cannot help agreeing that no living  
human being  
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above  
his chamber door —  
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above  
his chamber door,  
With such name as 'Nevermore.'

But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid  
bust, spoke only  
That one word, as if his soul in that one  
word he did outpour.  
Nothing farther then he uttered — not a  
feather then he fluttered —  
Till I scarcely more than muttered 'Other  
friends have flown before —  
On the morrow he will leave me, as my  
hopes have flown before.'  
Then the bird said 'Nevermore.'

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so  
aptly spoken,  
'Doubtless,' said I, 'what it utters is its  
only stock and store  
Caught from some unhappy master whom  
unmerciful Disaster  
Followed fast and followed faster till his  
songs one burden bore —  
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy  
burden bore  
Of "Never — nevermore."'

But the Raven still beguiling all my fancy  
into smiling,  
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front  
of bird, and bust and door;  
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook  
myself to linking  
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this omi-  
nous bird of yore —  
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt,  
and ominous bird of yore  
Meant in croaking 'Nevermore.'

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syl-  
lable expressing  
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned  
into my bosom's core;  
This and more I sat divining, with my head  
at ease reclining  
On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-  
light gloated o'er,  
But whose velvet violet lining with the  
lamp-light gloating o'er,  
She shall press, ah, nevermore !

Then, methought, the air grew denser, per-  
fumed from an unseen censer  
Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled  
on the tufted floor.  
'Wretch,' I cried, 'thy God hath lent  
thee — by these angels he hath sent  
thee  
Respite — respite and nepenthe from thy  
memories of Lenore;  
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and for-  
get this lost Lenore !'  
Quoth the Raven 'Nevermore.'

'Prophet!' said I, 'thing of evil! prophet  
still, if bird or devil! —  
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest  
tossed thee here ashore,  
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert  
land enchanted —

On this home by Horror haunted — tell me  
truly, I implore —  
Is there — is there balm in Gilead? — tell  
me — tell me, I implore !'  
Quoth the Raven 'Nevermore.'

'Prophet!' said I, 'thing of evil! —  
prophet still, if bird or devil!  
By that Heaven that bends above us — by  
that God we both adore —  
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within  
the distant Aidenn,  
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the  
angels name Lenore —  
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the  
angels name Lenore.'  
Quoth the Raven 'Nevermore.'

'Be that word our sign of parting, bird or  
fiend!' I shrieked, upstarting —  
'Get thee back into the tempest and the  
Night's Plutonian shore!  
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie  
thy soul hath spoken!  
Leave my loneliness unbroken! — quit the  
bust above my door!  
Take thy beak from out my heart, and  
take thy form from off my door !'  
Quoth the Raven 'Nevermore.'

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting,  
still is sitting  
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my  
chamber door;  
And his eyes have all the seeming of a de-  
mon's that is dreaming,  
And the lamp-light o'er him streaming  
throws his shadow on the floor;  
And my soul from out that shadow that lies  
floating on the floor  
Shall be lifted — nevermore !<sup>1</sup>

1842-44?

1845.

## EULALIE — A SONG

I DWELT alone  
In a world of moan,  
And my soul was a stagnant tide,  
Till the fair and gentle Eulalie became my  
blushing bride —  
Till the yellow-haired young Eulalie be-  
came my smiling bride.

<sup>1</sup> In the concluding stanza . . . I convert him [the  
raven] into an allegorical emblem or personification of  
Mournful Remembrance, out of the Shadow of which  
the poet is 'lifted nevermore.' (Poe, *Works*, vol. xii,  
p. 75.)

Ah, less — less bright  
The stars of the night  
Than the eyes of the radiant girl!  
And never a flake  
That the vapor can make  
With the moon-tints of purple and  
pearl,  
Can vie with the modest Eulalie's most un-  
regarded curl —  
Can compare with the bright-eyed Eulalie's  
most humble and careless curl.

Now Doubt — now Pain  
Come never again,  
For her soul gives me sigh for sigh,  
And all day long  
Shines, bright and strong,  
Astarte within the sky,  
While ever to her dear Eulalie upturns her  
matron eye —  
While ever to her young Eulalie upturns  
her violet eye.

1845.

ULALUME<sup>2</sup>

THE skies they were ashen and sober;  
The leaves they were crisped and sere —  
The leaves they were withering and sere;  
It was night in the lonesome October  
Of my most immemorial year;  
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,  
In the misty mid region of Weir —  
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,  
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic,  
Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul —  
Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.  
These were days when my heart was vol-  
canic

As the scoriac rivers that roll —  
As the lavas that restlessly roll  
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek  
In the ultimate climes of the pole —  
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek  
In the realms of the boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,  
But our thoughts they were palsied and  
sere —  
Our memories were treacherous and  
sere —

<sup>2</sup> Poe's child-wife Virginia died in January of 1847,  
and this poem was published in December. See the  
biographical sketch.

For we knew not the month was October,  
 And we marked not the night of the  
 year —  
 (Ah, night of all nights in the year!)  
 We noted not the dim lake of Auber —  
 (Though once we had journeyed down  
 here) —  
 Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber,  
 Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent 30  
 And star-dials pointed to morn —  
 As the star-dials hinted of morn —  
 At the end of our path a liquescent  
 And nebulous lustre was born,  
 Out of which a miraculous crescent  
 Arose with a duplicate horn —  
 Astarte's bediamonded crescent  
 Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said — 'She is warmer than Dian :  
 She rolls through an ether of sighs — 40  
 She revels in a region of sighs :  
 She has seen that the tears are not dry on  
 These cheeks, where the worm never  
 dies  
 And has come past the stars of the Lion  
 To point us the path to the skies —  
 To the Lethean peace of the skies —  
 Come up, in despite of the Lion,  
 To shine on us with her bright eyes —  
 Come up through the lair of the Lion,  
 With love in her luminous eyes.' 50

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,  
 Said — 'Sadly this star I mistrust —  
 Her pallor I strangely mistrust : —  
 Oh, hasten ! — oh, let us not linger !  
 Oh, fly ! — let us fly ! — for we must.'  
 In terror she spoke, letting sink her  
 Wings until they trailed in the dust —  
 In agony sobbed, letting sink her  
 Plumes till they trailed in the dust —  
 Till they sorrowfully trailed in the  
 dust. 60

I replied — 'This is nothing but dreaming :  
 Let us on by this tremulous light !  
 Let us bathe in this crystalline light !  
 Its Sibyllic splendor is beaming  
 With Hope and in Beauty to-night : —  
 See ! — it flickers up the sky through  
 the night !  
 Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,  
 And be sure it will lead us aright —

We safely may trust to a gleaming  
 That cannot but guide us aright, 70  
 Since it flickers up to Heaven through  
 the night.'

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,  
 And tempted her out of her gloom —  
 And conquered her scruples and gloom ;  
 And we passed to the end of the vista,  
 But were stopped by the door of a tomb —  
 By the door of a legended tomb ;  
 And I said — 'What is written, sweet  
 sister,  
 On the door of this legended tomb ?'  
 She replied — 'Ulalume — Ulalume —  
 'Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume !' 81

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober  
 As the leaves that were crisped and  
 sere —  
 As the leaves that were withering and  
 sere,  
 And I cried — 'It was surely October  
 On this very night of last year  
 That I journeyed — I journeyed down  
 here —  
 That I brought a dread burden down  
 here —  
 On this night of all nights in the year,  
 Ah, what demon has tempted me here ? 90  
 Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber —  
 This misty mid region of Weir —  
 Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,  
 This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.' 1847.

#### TO HELEN<sup>1</sup>

I SAW thee once — once only — years ago:  
 I must not say *how* many — but *not* many.  
 It was a July midnight; and from out  
 A full-orbed moon, that, like thine own  
 soul, soaring,  
 Sought a precipitate pathway up through  
 heaven,

<sup>1</sup> The occasion of Poe's first sight of Mrs. Whitman is romantically described as follows: —  
 'Poe caught a glimpse of a white figure wandering in a moonlit garden in Providence, on his way from Boston, when he visited that city to deliver a poem before the Lyceum there. Restless, near midnight, he wandered from his hotel near where she lived, until he saw her walking in a garden. He related the incident afterwards in one of his most exquisite poems, worthy of himself, of her, and of the most exalted passion.' (Harrison's *Life of Poe*, p. 284.) See also Mrs. Whitman's *Poems*, and Woodberry's *Life of Poe*, pp. 308-325.

There fell a silvery-silken veil of light,  
 With quietude and sultriness and slumber,  
 Upon the upturn'd faces of a thousand  
 Roses that grew in an enchanted garden,  
 Where no wind dared to stir, unless on tip-  
 toe — 10  
 Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses  
 That gave out, in return for the love-light,  
 Their odorous souls in an ecstatic death —  
 Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses  
 That smiled and died in this parterre, en-  
 charmed  
 By thee, and by the poetry of thy presence.

Clad all in white, upon a violet bank  
 I saw thee half reclining; while the moon  
 Fell on the upturn'd faces of the roses,  
 And on thine own, upturn'd — alas, in sor-  
 row! 20

Was it not Fate, that, on this July mid-  
 night —  
 Was it not Fate, (whose name is also Sor-  
 row),  
 That bade me pause before that garden-  
 gate,  
 To breathe the incense of those slumbering  
 roses ?  
 No footstep stirred: the hated world all  
 slept,  
 Save only thee and me. (Oh, heaven ! —  
 oh, God !  
 How my heart beats in coupling those two  
 words !)  
 Save only thee and me. I paused — I  
 looked —

And in an instant all things disappeared.  
 (Ah, bear in mind this garden was en-  
 charmed!) 30  
 The pearly lustre of the moon went out:  
 The mossy banks and the meandering paths,  
 The happy flowers and the repining trees,  
 Were seen no more: the very roses' odors  
 Died in the arms of the adoring airs.  
 All — all expired save thee — save less  
 than thou:  
 Save only the divine light in thine eyes —  
 Save but the soul in thine uplifted eyes.  
 I saw but them — they were the world to  
 me.  
 I saw but them — saw only them for  
 hours — 40  
 Saw only them until the moon went down.  
 What wild heart-histories seemed to lie en-  
 written

Upon those crystalline, celestial spheres !  
 How dark a woe ! yet how sublime a hope !  
 How silently serene a sea of pride !  
 How daring an ambition ! yet how deep —  
 How fathomless a capacity for love !

But now, at length, dear Dian sank from  
 sight,  
 Into a western couch of thunder-cloud;  
 And thou, a ghost, amid the entombing  
 trees 50  
 Didst glide away. *Only thine eyes remained.*  
 They would not go — they never yet have  
 gone.

Lighting my lonely pathway home that  
 night,  
 They have not left me (as my hopes have)  
 since.

They follow me — they lead me through  
 the years

They are my ministers — yet I their slave.  
 Their office is to illumine and enkindle —  
 My duty, *to be saved* by their bright light,  
 And purified in their electric fire,  
 And sanctified in their elysian fire. 60  
 They fill my soul with Beauty (which is  
 Hope),

And are far up in Heaven — the stars I  
 kneel to  
 In the sad, silent watches of my night;  
 While even in the meridian glare of day  
 I see them still — two sweetly scintillant  
 Venuses, unextinguished by the sun !  
 1848. 1848.

#### THE BELLS<sup>1</sup>

I

HEAR the sledges with the bells —  
 Silver bells !  
 What a world of merriment their melody  
 foretells !

<sup>1</sup> It was shortly after this, during the summer, that Poe wrote the first rough draft of 'The Bells,' at Mrs. Shew's residence. 'One day he came in,' she records, 'and said, "Marie Louise, I have to write a poem; I have no feeling, no sentiment, no inspiration."' His hostess persuaded him to have some tea. It was served in the conservatory, the windows of which were open, and admitted the sound of neighboring church bells. Mrs. Shew said, playfully, 'Here is paper;' but the poet, declining it, declared, 'I so dislike the noise of bells to-night, I cannot write. I have no subject — I am exhausted.' The lady then took up the pen, and, pretending to mimic his style, wrote, 'The Bells, by E. A. Poe;' and then in pure sportiveness, 'The Bells, the little silver Bells,' Poe finishing off the stanza. She then suggested for the next verse, 'The heavy iron

How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,  
In the icy air of night!  
While the stars that oversprinkle  
All the heavens, seem to twinkle  
With a crystalline delight;  
Keeping time, time, time,  
In a sort of Runic rhyme,  
To the tintinnabulation that so musically  
wells  
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
Bells, bells, bells —  
From the jingling and the tinkling of the  
bells.

## II

Hear the mellow wedding bells —  
Golden bells!  
What a world of happiness their harmony  
foretells!  
Through the balmy air of night  
How they ring out their delight! —  
From the molten-golden notes,  
And all in tune,  
What a liquid ditty floats  
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she  
gloats

Bells; and this Poe also expanded into a stanza. He next copied out the complete poem, and headed it, 'By Mrs. M. L. Shew,' remarking that it was her poem, as she had suggested and composed so much of it. (INGRAM, *Life of Poe*.)

Such was the beginning of the poem; its development is described by the editor of *Sartain's Union Magazine*, a month after it was first published: 'This poem came into our possession about a year since. It then consisted of eighteen lines! They were as follows:

## THE BELLS — A SONG

The bells! — hear the bells!  
The merry wedding-bells!  
The little silver bells!  
How fairy-like a melody there swells  
From the silver tinkling cells  
Of the bells, bells, bells!  
Of the bells!

The bells! — ah, the bells!  
The heavy iron bells!  
Hear the tolling of the bells!  
Hear the knells!  
How horrible a monody there floats  
From their throats —  
From their deep-toned throats!  
How I shudder at the notes  
From the melancholy throats  
Of the bells, bells, bells!  
Of the bells!

'About six months after this we received the poem enlarged and altered nearly to its present size and form; and about three months since, the author sent another alteration and enlargement, in which condition the poem was left at the time of his death.'

Professor Woodberry suggests that Poe probably had the idea of his poem in mind for some time before Mrs. Shew induced him to begin writing it, and remarks on 'his frequent reference to the magical sound of bells throughout his literary life.' (*Life of Poe*, pp. 302-304.) He also quotes a striking parallel passage from Chateaubriand's *Génie du Christianisme*.

On the moon!  
Oh, from out the sounding cells,  
What a gush of euphony voluminously  
wells!  
How it swells!  
How it dwells  
On the Future! — how it tells  
Of the rapture that impels  
To the swinging and the ringing  
Of the bells, bells, bells —  
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
Bells, bells, bells —  
To the rhyming and the chiming of the  
bells!

## III

Hear the loud allurum bells —  
Brazen bells!  
What a tale of terror, now their turbulency  
tells!  
In the startled ear of night  
How they scream out their affright!  
Too much horrified to speak,  
They can only shriek, shriek,  
Out of tune,

In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of  
the fire,  
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and  
frantic fire,

Leaping higher, higher, higher,  
With a desperate desire,  
And a resolute endeavor  
Now — now to sit, or never,  
By the side of the pale-faced moon.

Oh, the bells, bells, bells!  
What a tale their terror tells  
Of Despair!

How they clang, and clash, and roar!  
What a horror they outpour  
On the bosom of the palpitating air!  
Yet the ear, it fully knows,  
By the twanging,  
And the clanging,

How the danger ebbs and flows;  
Yet the ear distinctly tells,  
In the jangling,  
And the wrangling,

How the danger sinks and swells,  
By the sinking or the swelling in the anger  
of the bells —

Of the bells —  
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
Bells, bells, bells —

In the clamor and the clanging of the  
bells!

## IV

Hear the tolling of the bells —  
Iron bells!  
What a world of solemn thought their  
monody compels!  
In the silence of the night,  
How we shiver with affright  
At the melancholy menace of their tone!  
For every sound that floats  
From the rust within their throats  
Is a groan.

And the people — ah, the people —  
They that dwell up in the steeple, so  
All alone,

And who, tolling, tolling, tolling,  
In that muffled monotone,  
Feel a glory in so rolling

On the human heart a stone —  
They are neither man nor woman —  
They are neither brute nor human —

They are Ghouls: —  
And their king it is who tolls: —  
And he rolls, rolls, rolls,

Rolls  
A pæan from the bells!  
And his merry bosom swells  
With the pæan of the bells!

And he dances, and he yells;  
Keeping time, time, time,  
In a sort of Runic rhyme,  
To the pæan of the bells: —

Of the bells:  
Keeping time, time, time  
In a sort of Runic rhyme,  
To the throbbing of the bells —

Of the bells, bells, bells —  
To the sobbing of the bells: —  
Keeping time, time, time,  
As he knells, knells, knells,

In a happy Runic rhyme,  
To the rolling of the bells —  
Of the bells, bells, bells: —  
To the tolling of the bells —

Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
Bells, bells, bells —  
To the moaning and the groaning of the  
bells.

1848-49, 1849.

TO MY MOTHER<sup>1</sup>

BECAUSE I feel that, in the Heavens above,  
The angels, whispering to one another,

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Clemm, Virginia's mother. See the biographical sketch.

Can find, among their burning terms of  
love,

None so devotional as that of 'Mother,'  
Therefore by that dear name I long have  
called you —

You who are more than mother unto me,  
And fill my heart of hearts, where Death  
installed you,

In setting my Virginia's spirit free.  
My mother — my own mother, who died  
early,

Was but the mother of myself; but you  
Are mother to the one I loved so dearly,  
And thus are dearer than the mother I  
knew

By that infinity with which my wife  
Was dearer to my soul than its soul-life.

1849.

FOR ANNIE<sup>2</sup>

THANK Heaven! the crisis —  
The danger is past,  
And the lingering illness  
Is over at last —  
And the fever called 'Living'  
Is conquered at last.

Sadly, I know  
I am shorn of my strength,  
And no muscle I move  
As I lie at full length —  
But no matter! — I feel  
I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly  
Now, in my bed,  
That any beholder  
Might fancy me dead —  
Might start at beholding me,  
Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,  
The sighing and sobbing,  
Are quieted now,  
With that horrible throbbing  
At heart: — ah that horrible,  
Horrible throbbing!

<sup>2</sup> See Harrison's *Life of Poe*, pp. 301, 302; and chapters xi and xii of the *Letters*, especially pp. 342-344, the letter of March 23, 1849, quoted also in Ingram's *Life of Poe*. In this letter was enclosed the poem, of which Poe says: 'I think the lines "For Annie" much the best I have ever written.'

The last two lines of the first stanza were suggested by Longfellow as an inscription for the monument tardily erected over Poe's grave in 1875.

The sickness — the nausea —  
The pitiless pain —  
Have ceased with the fever  
That maddened my brain —  
With the fever called 'Living'  
That burned in my brain. 30

And oh! of all tortures  
That torture the worst  
Has abated — the terrible  
Torture of thirst  
For the naphthaline river  
Of Passion accurst: —  
I have drank of a water  
That quenches all thirst: —

Of a water that flows,  
With a lullaby sound, 40  
From a spring but a very few  
Feet under ground —  
From a cavern not very far  
Down under ground.

And ah! let it never  
Be foolishly said  
That my room it is gloomy  
And narrow my bed;  
For a man never slept  
In a different bed — 50  
And, to sleep, you must slumber  
In just such a bed.

My tantalized spirit  
Here blandly reposes,  
Forgetting, or never  
Regretting, its roses —  
Its old agitations  
Of myrtles and roses:

For now, while so quietly  
Lying, it fancies 60  
A holier odor  
About it, of pansies —  
A rosemary odor,  
Commingle with pansies —  
With rue and the beautiful  
Puritan pansies.

And so it lies happily,  
Bathing in many  
A dream of the truth  
And the beauty of Annie — 70  
Drowned in a bath  
Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kissed me,  
She fondly caressed,  
And then I fell gently  
To sleep on her breast —  
Deeply to sleep  
From the heaven of her breast.

When the light was extinguished,  
She covered me warm, 80  
And she prayed to the angels  
To keep me from harm —  
To the queen of the angels  
To shield me from harm.

And I lie so composedly,  
Now, in my bed,  
(Knowing her love) 90  
That you fancy me dead —  
And I rest so contentedly,  
Now, in my bed,  
(With her love at my breast)  
That you fancy me dead —  
That you shudder to look at me,  
Thinking me dead: —

But my heart it is brighter  
Than all of the many  
Stars of the sky,  
For it sparkles with Annie —  
It glows with the light 100  
Of the love of my Annie —  
With the thought of the light  
Of the eyes of my Annie.

1849.

## ANNABEL LEE

It was many and many a year ago,  
In a kingdom by the sea  
That a maiden there lived whom you may  
know 60  
By the name of ANNABEL LEE;  
And this maiden she lived with no other  
thought  
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and *she* was a child,  
In this kingdom by the sea,  
But we loved with a love that was more  
than love —  
I and my ANNABEL LEE — 10  
With a love that the wingèd seraphs of  
heaven  
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,  
In this kingdom by the sea,  
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling  
My beautiful ANNABEL LEE;  
So that her high-born kinsmen came  
And bore her away from me,  
To shut her up in a sepulchre  
In this kingdom by the sea. 20

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,  
Went envying her and me —  
Yes! — that was the reason (as all men  
know,  
In this kingdom by the sea)  
That the wind came out of the cloud by  
night,  
Chilling and killing my ANNABEL LEE.

But our love it was stronger by far than  
the love  
Of those who were older than we —  
Of many far wiser than we —  
And neither the angels in heaven above, 30  
Nor the demons down under the sea,  
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul  
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE:

For the moon never beams, without bring-  
ing me dreams  
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE,  
And the stars never rise, but I feel the  
bright eyes  
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE:  
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by  
the side

Of my darling — my darling — my life and  
my bride,  
In the sepulchre there by the sea — 40  
In her tomb by the sounding sea.  
1849. 1849.

## ELDORADO

GAILY bedight,  
A gallant knight,  
In sunshine and in shadow,  
Had journeyed long,  
Singing a song,  
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old —  
This knight so bold —  
And o'er his heart a shadow  
Fell as he found  
No spot of ground  
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength  
Failed him at length,  
He met a pilgrim shadow —  
'Shadow,' said he,  
'Where can it be —  
This land of Eldorado?'

'Over the Mountains  
Of the Moon,  
Down the Valley of the Shadow,  
Ride, boldly ride,'  
The shade replied, —  
'If you seek for Eldorado.'

1850.