

Serve thou it not for daily bread, —
 Serve it for pain and fear and need.
 Love it, though it hide its light;
 By love behold the sun at night.
 If the Law should thee forget,
 More enamoured serve it yet;
 Though it hate thee, suffer long;
 Put the Spirit in the wrong;
 Brother, no decrepitude
 Chills the limbs of Time;
 As fleet his feet, his hands as good,
 His vision as sublime:
 On Nature's wheels there is no rust;
 Nor less on man's enchanted dust
 Beauty and Force alight.

FRAGMENTS ON THE POET AND
 THE POETIC GIFT

I

THERE are beggars in Iran and Araby,
 SAID was hungrier than all;
 HAFIZ said he was a fly
 That came to every festival.
 He came a pilgrim to the Mosque
 On trail of camel and caravan,
 Knew every temple and kiosk
 Out from Mecca to Ispahan;

Northward he went to the snowy hills,
 At court he sat in the grave Divan.
 His music was the south-wind's sigh,
 His lamp, the maiden's downcast eye,
 And ever the spell of beauty came
 And turned the drowsy world to flame.
 By lake and stream and gleaming hall
 And modest copse and the forest tall,
 Where'er he went, the magic guide
 Kept its place by the poet's side.
 Said melted the days like cups of pearl,
 Served high and low, the lord and the churl,
 Loved harebells nodding on a rock,
 A cabin hung with curling smoke,
 Ring of axe or hum of wheel
 Or gleam which use can paint on steel,
 And huts and tents; nor loved he less
 Stately lords in palaces,
 Princely women hard to please,
 Fenced by form and ceremony,
 Decked by courtly rites and dress
 And etiquette of gentillesse.
 But when the mate of the snow and wind,
 He left each civil scale behind:
 Him wood-gods fed with honey wild
 And of his memory beguiled.
 He loved to watch and wake
 When the wing of the south-wind whipt the lake
 And the glassy surface in ripples brake

And fled in pretty frowns away
 Like the flitting boreal lights,
 Rippling roses in northern nights,
 Or like the thrill of Æolian strings
 In which the sudden wind-god rings.
 In caves and hollow trees he crept
 And near the wolf and panther slept.
 He came to the green ocean's brim
 And saw the wheeling sea-birds skim,
 Summer and winter, o'er the wave,
 Like creatures of a skiey mould,
 Impassible to heat or cold.
 He stood before the tumbling main
 With joy too tense for sober brain;
 He shared the life of the element,
 The tie of blood and home was rent:
 As if in him the welkin walked,
 The winds took flesh, the mountains talked,
 And he the bard, a crystal soul
 Sphered and concentric with the whole.

II

The Dervish whined to Said,
 "Thou didst not tarry while I prayed.
 Beware the fire that Eblis burned."
 But Saadi coldly thus returned,
 "Once with manlike love and fear
 I gave thee for an hour my ear,
 I kept the sun and stars at bay,

And love, for words thy tongue could say.
 I cannot sell my heaven again
 For all that rattles in thy brain."

III

Said Saadi, "When I stood before
 Hassan the camel-driver's door,
 I scorned the fame of Timour brave;
 Timour, to Hassan, was a slave.
 In every glance of Hassan's eye
 I read great years of victory,
 And I, who cower mean and small
 In the frequent interval
 When wisdom not with me resides,
 Worship Toil's wisdom that abides.
 I shunned his eyes, that faithful man's,
 I shunned the toiling Hassan's glance."

IV

The civil world will much forgive
 To bards who from its maxims live,
 But if, grown bold, the poet dare
 Bend his practice to his prayer
 And following his mighty heart
 Shame the times and live apart,—
Vae solis! I found this,
 That of goods I could not miss
 If I fell within the line,
 Once a member, all was mine,

Houses, banquets, gardens, fountains,
 Fortune's delectable mountains ;
 But if I would walk alone,
 Was neither cloak nor crumb my own.
 And thus the high Muse treated me,
 Directly never greeted me,
 But when she spread her dearest spells,
 Feigned to speak to some one else.
 I was free to overhear,
 Or I might at will forbear ;
 Yet mark me well, that idle word
 Thus at random overheard
 Was the symphony of spheres,
 And proverb of a thousand years,
 The light wherewith all planets shone,
 The livery all events put on,
 It fell in rain, it grew in grain,
 It put on flesh in friendly form,
 Frowned in my foe and growled in storm,
 It spoke in Tullius Cicero,
 In Milton and in Angelo :
 I travelled and found it at Rome ;
 Eastward it filled all Heathendom
 And it lay on my hearth when I came home.

v

Mask thy wisdom with delight,
 Toy with the bow, yet hit the white,

As Jeleddin old and gray ;
 He seemed to bask, to dream and play
 Without remoter hope or fear
 Than still to entertain his ear
 And pass the burning summer-time
 In the palm-grove with a rhyme ;
 Heedless that each cunning word
 Tribes and ages overheard :
 Those idle catches told the laws
 Holding Nature to her cause.

God only knew how Saadi dined ;
 Roses he ate, and drank the wind ;
 He freelier breathed beside the pine,
 In cities he was low and mean ;
 The mountain waters washed him clean
 And by the sea-waves he was strong ;
 He heard their medicinal song,
 Asked no physician but the wave,
 No palace but his sea-beat cave.

Saadi held the Muse in awe,
 She was his mistress and his law ;
 A twelvemonth he could silence hold,
 Nor ran to speak till she him told ;
 He felt the flame, the fanning wings,
 Nor offered words till they were things,
 Glad when the solid mountain swims
 In music and uplifting hymns.

Charmed from fagot and from steel,
 Harvests grew upon his tongue,
 Past and future must reveal
 All their heart when Saadi sung;
 Sun and moon must fall amain
 Like sower's seeds into his brain,
 There quickened to be born again.

The free winds told him what they knew,
 Discoursed of fortune as they blew;
 Omens and signs that filled the air
 To him authentic witness bare;
 The birds brought auguries on their wings,
 And carolled undeceiving things
 Him to beckon, him to warn;
 Well might then the poet scorn
 To learn of scribe or courier
 Things writ in vaster character;
 And on his mind at dawn of day
 Soft shadows of the evening lay.

PALE genius roves alone,
 No scout can track his way,
 None credits him till he have shown
 His diamonds to the day.

Not his the feaster's wine,
 Nor land, nor gold, nor power,
 By want and pain God screeneth him
 Till his elected hour.

Go, speed the stars of Thought
 On to their shining goals:—
 The sower scatters broad his seed,
 The wheat thou strew'st be souls.

I GRIEVE that better souls than mine
 Docile read my measured line:
 High destined youths and holy maids
 Hallow these my orchard shades;
 Environ me and me baptize
 With light that streams from gracious eyes.
 I dare not be beloved and known,
 I ungrateful, I alone.

Ever find me dim regards,
 Love of ladies, love of bards,
 Marked forbearance, compliments,
 Tokens of benevolence.
 What then, can I love myself?
 Fame is profitless as pelf,
 A good in Nature not allowed
 They love me, as I love a cloud
 Sailing falsely in the sphere,
 Hated mist if it come near.

THE POET

FOR thought, and not praise;
 Thought is the wages
 For which I sell days,
 Will gladly sell ages
 And willing grow old
 Deaf, and dumb, and blind, and cold,
 Melting matter into dreams,
 Panoramas which I saw
 And whatever glows or seems
 Into substance, into Law.

FOR Fancy's gift
 Can mountains lift;
 The Muse can knit
 What is past, what is done,
 With the web that 's just begun;
 Making free with time and size,
 Dwindles here, there magnifies,
 Swells a rain-drop to a tun;
 So to repeat
 No word or feat
 Crowds in a day the sum of ages,
 And blushing Love outwits the sages.

THE POET

TRY the might the Muse affords
 And the balm of thoughtful words;
 Bring music to the desolate;
 Hang roses on the stony fate.

BUT over all his crowning grace,
 Wherefor thanks God his daily praise,
 Is the purging of his eye
 To see the people of the sky:
 From blue mount and headland dim
 Friendly hands stretch forth to him,
 Him they beckon, him advise
 Of heavenlier prosperities
 And a more excelling grace
 And a truer bosom-glow
 Than the wine-fed feasters know.
 They turn his heart from lovely maids,
 And make the darlings of the earth
 Swainish, coarse and nothing worth:
 Teach him gladly to postpone
 Pleasures to another stage
 Beyond the scope of human age,
 Freely as task at eve undone
 Waits unblamed to-morrow's sun.

By thoughts I lead
 Bards to say what nations need;
 What imports, what irks and what behooves,
 Framed afar as Fates and Loves.

AND as the light divides the dark
 Through with living swords,
 So shall thou pierce the distant age
 With adamant words.

I FRAMED his tongue to music, *cultural*
 I armed his hand with skill, *practical*
 I moulded his face to beauty *spiritual*
 And his heart the throne of Will.

FOR every God
 Obeys the hymn, obeys the ode.

FOR art, for music over-thrilled,
 The wine-cup shakes, the wine is spilled.

HOLD of the Maker, not the Made;
 Sit with the Cause, or grim or glad.

THAT book is good
 Which puts me in a working mood.

Unless to Thought is added Will, *intelligence*
sun-god Apollo is an imbecile. *sun - understanding*
 What parts, what gems, what colors shine,—
 Ah, but I miss the grand design.

LIKE vaulters in a circus round
 Who leap from horse to horse, but never touch the
 ground.

FOR Genius made his cabin wide,
 And Love led Gods therein to bide.

THE atom displaces all atoms beside,
 And Genius unspheres all souls that abide.

To transmute crime to wisdom, so to stem
The vice of Japhet by the thought of Shem.

HE could condense cerulean ether
Into the very best sole-leather.

FORBORE the ant-hill, shunned to tread,
In mercy, on one little head.

I HAVE no brothers and no peers,
And the dearest interferes:
When I would spend a lonely day,
Sun and moon are in my way.

THE brook sings on, but sings in vain
Wanting the echo in my brain.

HE planted where the deluge ploughed,
His hired hands were wind and cloud;
His eyes detect the Gods concealed.
In the hummock of the field.

FOR what need I of book or priest,
Or sibyl from the mummied East,
When every star is Bethlehem star?
I count as many as there are
Cinquefoils or violets in the grass,
So many saints and saviors,
So many high behaviors
Salute the bard who is alive
And only sees what he doth give.

COIN the day-dawn into lines
In which its proper splendor shines;
Coin the moonlight into verse
Which all its marvel shall rehearse,
.
Chasing with words fast-flowing things; nor try
To plant thy shrivelled pedantry
On the shoulders of the sky.

AH, not to me those dreams belong!
A better voice peals through my song.

THE POET

THE Muse's hill by Fear is guarded,
A bolder foot is still rewarded.

His instant thought a poet spoke,
And filled the age his fame;
An inch of ground the lightning strook
But lit the sky with flame.

If bright the sun, he tarries,
All day his song is heard;
And when he goes he carries
No more baggage than a bird.

THE Asmodean feat is mine,
To spin my sand-heap into twine.

SLIGHTED Minerva's learnèd tongue,
But leaped with joy when on the wind
The shell of Clio rung.

FRAGMENTS ON NATURE AND LIFE

NATURE

THE patient Pan,
Drunken with nectar,
Sleeps or feigns slumber,
Drowsily humming
Music to the march of time.
This poor tooting, creaking cricket,
Pan, half asleep, rolling over
His great body in the grass,
Tooting, creaking,
Feigns to sleep, sleeping never;
'T is his manner,
Well he knows his own affair,
Piling mountain chains of phlegm
On the nervous brain of man,
As he holds down central fires
Under Alps and Andes cold;
Haply else we could not live,
Life would be too wild an ode.

COME search the wood for flowers, —
Wild tea and wild pea,