

And even the whitening winging sails  
 It was right late to see, by dawn  
 Sleep, pretty fair, and never know  
 Who engaged and who transgressed;  
 These to retain I was full fain,  
 But God, He knoweth best!  
 And His peace upon the brow his pain  
 As the sunshine on the breast  
 The man of state, he enters in,  
 Looks, and his pride doth ease;  
 Anger and sorrow shall be to-morrow,  
 Trouble, and no more;  
 But the babe whose life awake the state  
 Hath entered into peace,  
 This child, his name is peace;  
 I could not find a name for him,  
 'Till I saw him,  
 A man of state, he enters in,  
 His name is peace;  
 With people leaves the road and eaves  
 Were they not there,  
 And I should have a name for him,  
 Alas, the name is peace.  
 "Sleep on, thou pretty, pretty lamb,"  
 He says, and then he says,  
 "And if I sleep, stand at my right hand,  
 As now I sleep, thou art."  
 And if I sleep, stand at my left hand,  
 I fear, thou art not there.  
 "Come watch, I will be near thy heart,  
 It was all mine to be,  
 For thy pretty lamb, and I am strong  
 To be thy bed and I am strong."

A STORY OF DOOM AND OTHER POEMS

THE DREAMS THAT CAME TRUE

I saw in a vision once, our Mother, where  
 The world, her feet doth tread, and tracing  
 Rolling and rolling on and resting never,  
 While like a phantom, fell behind her passing  
 The unrolled flag of night, her shadow drew  
 Pled as she led and hung to her forever.

Great Heaven! methought, how strange a doom to

STORY OF DOOM,

inevitable darkness after me  
 (Darkness, and shadow, and mist ascendingly)  
 And shadowy forms that hung ascendingly)  
 Nor feel that phantom-wings behind me sweep,  
 As she feels night pursuing through the long  
 Unimitable reaches of the vasty deep.

God save you, gentlefolk. There was a man  
 Who lay awake at midnight on his bed,  
 Watching the spiral flame that feeding ran  
 Among the logs upon his hearth, and shed  
 A comfortable glow, both warm and dim,  
 On crimson curtains that encompassed him.  
 Right stately was his chamber, soft and white  
 The pillow, and his quilt was eider-down,  
 What mattered it to him through all that night

A STORY OF DOOM, AND OTHER POEMS.

—♦—  
THE DREAMS THAT CAME TRUE.

I SAW in a vision once, our mother-sphere  
The world, her fixed foredoomèd oval tracing,  
Rolling and rolling on and resting never,  
While like a phantom fell, behind her pacing  
The unfurled flag of night, her shadow drear  
Fled as she fled and hung to her forever.

Great Heaven! methought, how strange a doom to  
share.

Would I may never bear  
Inevitable darkness after me  
(Darkness endowed with drawings strong,  
And shadowy hands that cling unendingly),  
Nor feel that phantom-wings behind me sweep,  
As she feels night pursuing through the long  
Illimitable reaches of "the vasty deep."

—  
God save you, gentlefolks. There was a man  
Who lay awake at midnight on his bed,  
Watching the spiral flame that feeding ran  
Among the logs upon his hearth, and shed  
A comfortable glow, both warm and dim,  
On crimson curtains that encompassed him.  
Right stately was his chamber, soft and white  
The pillow, and his quilt was eider-down.  
What mattered it to him through all that night

The desolate driving cloud might lower and frown,  
And winds were up the eddying sleet to chase,  
That drave and drave and found no settling-place?

What mattered it that leafless trees might rock,  
Or snow might drift athwart his window-pane?  
He bare a charmed life against their shock,

Secure from cold, hunger, and weather stain;  
Fixed in his right, and born to good estate,  
From common ills set by and separate.

From work and want and fear of want apart,  
This man (men called him Justice Wilvermore)—  
This man had comforted his cheerful heart  
With all that it desired from every shore.  
He had a right, — the right of gold is strong, —  
He stood upon his right his whole life long.

Custom makes all things easy, and content  
Is careless, therefore on the storm and cold,  
As he lay waking, never a thought he spent,  
Albeit across the vale beneath the wold,  
Along a reedy mere that frozen lay,  
A range of sordid hovels stretched away.

What cause had he to think on them, forsooth?  
What cause that night beyond another night?  
He was familiar even from his youth  
With their long ruin and their evil plight.  
The wintry wind would search them like a scout,  
The water froze within as freely as without.

He think upon them? No! They were forlorn,  
So were the cowering inmates whom they held;  
A thriftless tribe, to shifts and leanness born,  
Ever complaining: infancy or eld  
Alike. But there was rent, or long ago  
Those cottage roofs had met with overthrow.

For this they stood; and what his thoughts might be  
That winter night, I know not; but I know  
That, while the creeping flame fed silently  
And cast upon his bed a crimson glow,  
The Justice slept, and shortly in his sleep  
He fell to dreaming, and his dream was deep.

He dreamed that over him a shadow came;  
And when he looked to find the cause, behold  
Some person knelt between him and the flame:—  
A cowering figure of one frail and old,—  
A woman; and she prayed as he descried,  
And spread her feeble hands, and shook and sighed.

“Good Heaven!” the Justice cried, and being dis-  
traught

He called not to her, but he looked again:  
She wore a tattered cloak, but she had naught  
Upon her head; and she did quake amain,  
And spread her wasted hands and poor attire  
To gather in the brightness of his fire.

“I know you, woman!” then the Justice cried;  
“I know that woman well,” he cried aloud;  
“The shepherd Aveland’s widow: God me guide!  
A pauper kneeling on my hearth:” and bowed  
The hag, like one at home, its warmth to share!  
“How dares she to intrude? What does she there?”

“Ho, woman, ho!” — but yet she did not stir,  
Though from her lips a fitful plaining broke;  
“I’ll ring my people up to deal with her;  
I’ll rouse the house,” he cried; but while he spoke  
He turned, and saw, but distant from his bed,  
Another form, — a Darkness with a head.

Then, in a rage, he shouted, “Who are you?”  
For little in the gloom he might discern.  
“Speak out; speak now; or I will make you rue

The hour!" but there was silence, and a stern,  
Dark face from out the dusk appeared to lean,  
And then again drew back, and was not seen.

"God!" cried the dreaming man, right impiously,

"What have I done, that these my sleep affray?"

"God!" said the Phantom, "I appeal to Thee,

Appoint Thou me this man to be my prey."

"God!" sighed the kneeling woman, frail and old,

"I pray Thee take me, for the world is cold."

Then said the trembling Justice, in affright,

"Fiend, I adjure thee, speak thine errand here!"

And lo! it pointed in the failing light

Toward the woman, answering, cold and clear,

"Thou art ordained an answer to thy prayer;

But first to tell *her* tale that kneeleth there."

"*Her* tale!" the Justice cried. "A pauper's tale!"

And he took heart at this so low behest,

And let the stoutness of his will prevail,

Demanding, "Is't for *her* you break my rest?"

She went to jail of late for stealing wood,

She will again for this night's hardihood.

"I sent her; and to-morrow, as I live,

I will commit her for this trespass here."

"Thou wilt not!" quoth the Shadow, "thou wilt  
give

Her story words;" and then it stalked anear

And showed a lowering face, and, dread to see,

A countenance of angered majesty.

Then said the Justice, all his thoughts astray,

With that material Darkness chiding him,

"If this must be, then speak to her, I pray,

And bid her move, for all the room is dim

By reason of the place she holds to-night:

She kneels between me and the warmth and light."

"With adjurations deep and drawings strong,

And with the power," it said, "unto me given,

I call upon thee, man, to tell thy wrong,

Or look no more upon the face of Heaven.

Speak! though she kneel throughout the livelong  
night,

And yet shall kneel between thee and the light."

This when the Justice heard, he raised his hands,

And held them as the dead in effigy

Hold theirs, when carved upon a tomb. The bands

Of fate had bound him fast: no remedy

Was left: his voice unto himself was strange,

And that unearthly vision did not change.

He said, "That woman dwells anear my door,

Her life and mine began the selfsame day,

And I am hale and hearty: from my store

I never spared her aught: she takes her way

Of me unheeded; pining, pinching care

Is all the portion that she has to share.

"She is a broken-down, poor, friendless wight,

Through labor and through sorrow early old;

And I have known of this her evil plight,

Her scanty earnings, and her lodgment cold;

A patienter poor soul shall ne'er be found:

She labored on my land the long year round.

"What wouldst thou have me say, thou Fiend ab-

horred?

Show me no more thine awful visage grim.

If thou obey'st a greater, tell thy lord

That I have paid her wages. Cry to him!

He has not *much* against me. None can say

I have not paid her wages day by day.

"The spell! It draws me. I must speak again;

And speak against myself; and speak aloud.

The woman once approached me to complain,—

‘My wages are so low.’ I may be proud;  
It is a fault.” “Ay,” quoth the Phantom fell,  
“Sinner! it is a fault: thou sayest well.”

“She made her moan, ‘My wages are so low.’”

“Tell on!” “She said,” he answered, “‘My  
best days

Are ended, and the summer is but slow  
To come; and my good strength for work decays  
By reason that I live so hard, and lie  
On winter nights so bare for poverty.’”

“And you replied,”—began the lowering Shade,

“And I replied,” the Justice followed on,

“That wages like to mine my neighbor paid;

And if I raised the wages of the one  
Straight should the others murmur; furthermore,  
The winter was as winters gone before.

“No colder and not longer.” “Afterward?”—  
The Phantom questioned. “Afterward,” he  
groaned,

“She said my neighbor was a right good lord,  
Never a roof was broken that he owned;  
He gave much coal and clothing. ‘Doth he so?  
Work for my neighbor, then,’ I answered, ‘Go!’

“‘You are full welcome.’ Then she mumbled out  
She hoped I was not angry; hoped, forsooth,  
I would forgive her: and I turned about,  
And said I should be angry in good truth  
If this should be again, or ever more  
She dared to stop me thus at the church door.”

“Then?” quoth the Shade; and he, constrained,  
said on,

“Then she, reproved, curtseyed herself away.”

“Hast met her since?” it made demand anon;

And after pause the Justice answered, “Ay;  
Some wood was stolen; my people made a stir:  
She was accused, and I did sentence her.”

But yet, and yet, the dreaded questions came:

“And didst thou weigh the matter,—taking  
thought

Upon her sober life and honest fame?”

“I gave it,” he replied, with gaze distraught;

“I gave it, Fiend, the usual care; I took  
The usual pains; I could not nearer look,

“Because—because their pilfering had got head.

What wouldst thou more? The neighbors pleaded  
hard,

’Tis true, and many tears the creature shed;

But I had vowed their prayers to disregard,  
Heavily strike the first that robbed my land,  
And put down thieving with a steady hand.

“She said she was not guilty. Ay, ’tis true  
She said so, but the poor are liars all.

O thou fell Fiend, what wilt thou? Must I view  
Thy darkness yet, and must thy shadow fall  
Upon me miserable? I have done  
No worse, no more than many a scathless one.”

“Yet,” quoth the Shade, “if ever to thine ears  
The knowledge of her blamelessness was brought,  
Or others have confessed with dying tears

The crime she suffered for, and thou hast wrought  
All reparation in thy power, and told  
Into her empty hand thy brightest gold:—

“If thou hast honored her, and hast proclaimed

Her innocence and thy deplorèd wrong,  
Still thou art naught; for thou shalt yet be blamed

In that she, feeble, came before thee, strong,  
And thou, in cruel haste to deal a blow,  
Because thou hadst been angered, worked her woe.

“But didst thou right her? Speak!” The Justice  
sighed,

And beaded drops stood out upon his brow;  
“How could I humble me,” forlorn he cried,

“To a base beggar? Nay, I will avow  
That I did ill. I will reveal the whole;  
I kept that knowledge in my secret soul.”

“Hear him!” the Phantom muttered; “hear this  
man,

O changeless God upon the judgment throne.”  
With that, cold tremors through his pulses ran,

And lamentably he did make his moan;  
While, with its arms upraised above his head,  
The dim dread visitor approached his bed.

“Into these doors,” it said, “which thou hast closed,  
Daily this woman shall from henceforth come;  
Her kneeling form shall yet be interposed,

Till all thy wretched hours have told their sum,—  
Shall yet be interposed by day, by night,  
Between thee, sinner, and the warmth and light.

“Remembrance of her want shall make thy meal  
Like ashes, and thy wrong thou shalt not right.  
But what! Nay, verily, nor wealth nor weal

From henceforth shall afford thy soul delight.  
Till men shall lay thy head beneath the sod,  
There shall be no deliverance, saith my God.”

“Tell me thy name,” the dreaming Justice cried;

“By what appointment dost thou doom me thus?”

“’Tis well that thou shouldst know me,” it replied,

“For mine thou art, and naught shall sever us;

From thine own lips and life I draw my force:

The name thy nation give me is REMORSE.”

This when he heard, the dreaming man cried out,

And woke affrighted; and a crimson glow  
The dying ember shed. Within, without,

In eddying rings the silence seemed to flow;  
The wind had lulled, and on his forehead shone  
The last low gleam; he was indeed alone.

“O, I have had a fearful dream,” said he;

“I will take warning and for mercy trust;  
The fiend Remorse shall never dwell with me:

I will repair that wrong, I will be just,  
I will be kind, I will my ways amend.”

*Now the first dream is told unto its end.*

Anigh the frozen mere a cottage stood,

A piercing wind swept round and shook the door,  
The shrunken door, and easy way made good,

And drave long drifts of snow along the floor.  
It sparkled there like diamonds, for the moon  
Was shining in, and night was at the noon.

Before her dying embers, bent and pale,

A woman sat because her bed was cold;  
She heard the wind, the driving sleet and hail,

And she was hunger-bitten, weak, and old;  
Yet while she cowered, and while the casement shook,  
Upon her trembling knees she held a book—

A comfortable book for them that mourn,

And good to raise the courage of the poor;  
It lifts the veil and shows, beyond the bourne,

Their Elder Brother, from His home secure,  
That for them desolate He died to win,

Repeating, “Come, ye blessed, enter in.”

What thought she on, this woman? on her days  
 Of toil, or on the supperless night forlorn?  
 I think not so; the heart but seldom weighs  
 With conscious care a burden always borne;  
 And she was used to these things, had grown old  
 In fellowship with toil, hunger, and cold.  
 Then did she think how sad it was to live  
 Of all the good this world can yield bereft?  
 No, her untutored thoughts she did not give  
 To such a theme; but in their warp and weft  
 She wove a prayer: then in the midnight deep  
 Faintly and slow she fell away to sleep.  
 A strange, a marvellous sleep, which brought a dream,  
 And it was this: that all at once she heard  
 The pleasant babbling of a little stream  
 That ran beside her door, and then a bird  
 Broke out in songs. She looked, and lo! the rime  
 And snow had melted; it was summer time!  
 And all the cold was over, and the mere  
 Full sweetly swayed the flags and rushes green;  
 The mellow sunlight poured right warm and clear  
 Into her casement, and thereby were seen  
 Fair honeysuckle flowers, and wandering bees  
 Were hovering round the blossom-laden trees.  
 She said, "I will betake me to my door,  
 And will look out and see this wondrous sight.  
 How summer is come back, and frost is o'er,  
 And all the air warm waxen in a night."  
 With that she opened, but for fear she cried,  
 For lo! two Angels, — one on either side.  
 And while she looked, with marvelling measureless,  
 The Angels stood conversing face to face,  
 But neither spoke to her. "The wilderness."  
 One Angel said, "the solitary place,

Shall yet be glad for Him." And then full fain  
 The other Angel answered, "He shall reign."  
 And when the woman heard, in wondering wise,  
 She whispered, "They are speaking of my Lord."  
 And straightway swept across the open skies  
 Multitudes like to these. They took the word,  
 That flock of Angels, "He shall come again,  
 My Lord, my Lord!" they sang, "and He shall  
 reign!"  
 Then they, drawn up into the blue o'erhead,  
 Right happy, shining ones, made haste to flee;  
 And those before her one to other said,  
 "Behold He stands aneath yon almond-tree."  
 This when the woman heard, she fain had gazed,  
 But paused for reverence, and bowed down amazed.  
 After she looked, for this her dream was deep;  
 She looked, and there was naught beneath the tree;  
 Yet did her love and longing overleap  
 The fear of Angels, awful though they be,  
 And she passed out between the blessed things,  
 And brushed her mortal weeds against their wings.  
 O, all the happy world was in its best,  
 The trees were covered thick with buds and flowers,  
 And these were dropping honey; for the rest,  
 Sweetly the birds were piping in their bowers;  
 Across the grass did groups of Angels go,  
 And Saints in pairs were walking to and fro.  
 Then did she pass toward the almond-tree,  
 And none she saw beneath it: yet each Saint  
 Upon his coming meekly bent the knee,  
 And all their glory as they gazed waxed faint.  
 And then a lighting Angel neared the place,  
 And folded his fair wings before his face.

She also knelt, and spread her aged hands  
 As feeling for the sacred human feet;  
 She said, "Mine eyes are held, but if He stands  
 Anear, I will not let Him hence retreat  
 Except He bless me." Then, O sweet! O fair!  
 Some words were spoken, but she knew not where.

She knew not if beneath the boughs they woke,  
 Or dropt upon her from the realms above;  
 "What wilt thou, woman?" in the dream He spoke;  
 "Thy sorrow moveth Me, thyself I love;  
 Long have I counted up thy mournful years,  
 Once I did weep to wipe away thy tears."

She said, "My one Redeemer, only blest,  
 I know Thy voice, and from my yearning heart  
 Draw out my deep desire, my great request,  
 My prayer, that I might enter where Thou art.  
 Call me, O call from this world troublesome,  
 And let me see Thy face." He answered, "Come."

*Here is the ending of the second dream.*

It is a frosty morning, keen and cold,  
 Fast locked are silent mere and frozen stream,  
 And snow lies sparkling on the desert wold;  
 With savory morning meats they spread the board,  
 But Justice Wilvermore will walk abroad.

"Bring me my cloak," quoth he, as one in haste.

"Before you breakfast, sir?" his man replies.

"Ay," quoth he, quickly, and he will not taste

Of aught before him, but in urgent wise,

As he would fain some carking care allay,

Across the frozen field he takes his way.

"A dream! how strange that it should move me so

'Twas but a dream," quoth Justice Wilvermore:

"And yet I cannot peace nor pleasure know,

For wrongs I have not heeded heretofore;

Silver and gear the crone shall have of me,  
 And dwell for life in yonder cottage free.

"For visions of the night are fearful things,

Remorse is dread, though merely in a dream;

I will not subject me to visitings

Of such a sort again. I will esteem

My peace above my pride. From natures rude,

A little gold will buy me gratitude.

"The woman shall have leave to gather wood

As much as she may need, the long year round;

She shall, I say; moreover, it were good

Yon other cottage roofs to render sound.

Thus to my soul the ancient peace restore,

And sleep at ease," quoth Justice Wilvermore.

With that he nears the door: a frosty rime

Is branching over it, and drifts are deep

Against the wall. He knocks, and there is time—

(For none doth open),—time to list the sweep,

And whistle of the wind along the mere,

Through beds of stiffened reeds and rushes sear.

"If she be out, I have my pains for naught,"

He saith, and knocks again, and yet once more,

But to his ear nor step nor stir is brought;

And, after pause, he doth unlatch the door

And enter. No; she is not out, for see,

She sits asleep 'midst frost-work winterly.

Asleep, asleep before her empty grate,

Asleep, asleep, albeit the landlord call.

"What, dame," he saith, and comes toward her  
 straight,

"Asleep so early!" But whate'er befall,

She sleepeth; then he nears her, and behold

He lays a hand on hers, and it is cold.



Then doth the Justice to his home return ;  
 From that day forth he wears a sadder brow ;  
 His hands are opened, and his heart doth learn  
 The patience of the poor. He made a vow  
 And keeps it, for the old and sick have shared  
 His gifts, their sordid homes he hath repaired.

And some he hath made happy, but for him  
 Is happiness no more. He doth repent,  
 And now the light of joy is waxen dim,  
 Are all his steps toward the Highest sent ;  
 He looks for mercy, and he waits release  
 Above, for this world doth not yield him peace.

Night after night, night after desolate night,  
 Day after day, day after tedious day,  
 Stands by his fire, and dulls its gleamy light,  
 Paceth behind or meets him in the way ;  
 Or shares the path by hedge-row, mere, or stream,  
 The visitor that doomed him in his dream.

Thy kingdom come.  
 I heard a Seer cry : "The wilderness,  
 The solitary place,  
 Shall yet be glad for Him, and He shall bless  
 (Thy kingdom come) with His revealed face  
 The forests ; they shall drop their precious gum,  
 And shed for Him their balm : and He shall yield  
 The grandeur of His speech to charm the field.

"Then all the soothèd winds shall drop to listen,  
 (Thy kingdom come,) Comforted waters waxen calm shall glisten  
 With bashful tremblement beneath His smile :  
 And Echo ever the while  
 Shall take, and in her awful joy repeat,

The laughter of His lips — (Thy kingdom come) :  
 And hills that sit apart shall be no longer dumb ;  
 No, they shall shout and shout,  
 Raining their lovely loyalty along the dewy plain :  
 And valleys round about,

"And all the well-contented land, made sweet  
 With flowers she opened at His feet,  
 Shall answer ; shout and make the welkin ring,  
 And tell it to the stars, shout, shout, and sing ;  
 Her cup being full to the brim,  
 Her poverty made rich with Him,  
 Her yearning satisfied to its utmost sum —  
 Lift up thy voice, O Earth, prepare thy song,  
 It shall not yet be long,  
 Lift up, O Earth, for He shall come again,  
 Thy Lord ; and He shall reign, and He SHALL reign, —  
 Thy kingdom come."

## SONGS ON THE VOICES OF BIRDS.

## INTRODUCTION.

## CHILD AND BOATMAN.

"MARTIN, I wonder who makes all the songs."  
 "You do, sir?"  
 "Yes, I wonder how they come."  
 "Well, boy, I wonder what you'll wonder next!"  
 "But somebody must make them?"  
 "Sure enough."  
 "Does your wife know?"  
 "She never said she did."  
 "You told me that she knew so many things."  
 "I said she was a London woman, sir,  
 And a fine scholar, but I never said  
 She knew about the songs."

"I wish she did."  
 "And I wish no such thing; she knows enough,  
 She knows too much already. Look you now,  
 This vessel's off the stocks, a tidy craft."  
 "A schooner, Martin?"

"No, boy, no; a brig,  
 Only she's schooner-rigged, — a lovely craft."  
 "Is she for me? O, thank you, Martin, dear.  
 What shall I call her?"

"Well, sir, what you please."  
 "Then write on her 'The Eagle.'"

"Bless the child!  
 Eagle! why, you know naught of eagles, you.  
 When we lay off the coast, up Canada way,  
 And chanced to be ashore when twilight fell,  
 That was the place for eagles; bald they were,  
 With eyes as yellow as gold."

"O Martin, dear,  
 Tell me about them."  
 "Tell! there's naught to tell,  
 Only they snored o' nights and frightened us."  
 "Snored?"

"Ay, I tell you, snored; they slept upright  
 In the great oaks by scores; as true as time,  
 If I'd had aught upon my mind just then, [gold;  
 I wouldn't have walked that wood for unknown  
 It was most awful. When the moon was full,  
 I've seen them fish at night, in the middle watch,  
 When she got low. I've seen them plunge like  
 stones,

And come up fighting with a fish as long,  
 Ay, longer than my arm; and they would sail —  
 When they had struck its life out — they would sail  
 Over the deck, and show their fell, fierce eyes,  
 And croon for pleasure, hug the prey, and speed  
 Grand as a frigate on the wind."

"My ship,  
 She must be called 'The Eagle' after these.  
 And, Martin, ask your wife about the songs  
 When you go in at dinner-time."

"Not I."

THE NIGHTINGALE HEARD BY THE UNSAT-  
 ISFIED HEART.

WHEN in a May-day hush  
 Chanteth the Missel-thrush,  
 The harp o' the heart makes answer with murmur  
 ous stirs;  
 When Robin-redbreast sings,  
 We think on budding springs,  
 And Culvers when they coo are love's remembran-  
 cers.

But thou in the trance of light  
 Stayest the feeding night,  
 And Echo makes sweet her lips with the utterance  
 wise,  
 And casts at our glad feet,  
 In a wisp of fancies fleet,  
 Life's fair, life's unfulfilled, impassioned prophecies.

Her central thought full well  
 Thou hast the wit to tell,  
 To take the sense o' the dark and to yield it so;  
 The moral of moonlight  
 To set in a cadence bright,  
 And sing our loftiest dream that we thought none  
 did know.

I have no nest as thou,  
 Bird on the blossoming bough,  
 Yet over thy tongue outfloweth the song o' my soul,

Chanting, "Forego thy strife,  
The spirit out-acts the life,  
But MUCH is seldom theirs who can perceive THE  
WHOLE.

"Thou drawest a perfect lot  
All thine, but holden not,  
Lie low, at the feet of beauty that ever shall bide;  
There might be sorer smart  
Than thine, far-seeing heart,  
Whose fate is still to yearn, and not be satisfied."

—◆—  
SAND MARTINS.

I PASSED an inland-cliff precipitate;  
From tiny caves peeped many a soot-black poll;  
In each a mother-martin sat elate,  
And of the news delivered her small soul.  
Fantastic chatter! hasty, glad and gay,  
Whereof the meaning was not ill to tell:  
"Gossip, how wags the world with you to-day?"  
"Gossip, the world wags well, the world wags  
well."

And hark'ning, I was sure their little ones  
Were in the bird-talk, and discourse was made  
Concerning hot sea-bights and tropic suns,  
For a clear sultriness the tune conveyed;—

And visions of the sky as of a cup  
Hailing down light on pagan Pharaoh's sand,  
And quivering air-waves trembling up and up,  
And blank stone faces marvellously bland.

"When should the young be fledged and with them  
hie  
Where costly day drops down in crimson light?"

(Fortunate countries of the fire-fly  
Swarm with blue diamonds all the sultry night,

"And the immortal moon takes turn with them.)  
When should they pass again by that red land,  
Where lovely mirage works a broidered hem  
To fringe with phantom-palms a robe of sand?

"When should they dip their breasts again and play  
In slumberous azure pools, clear as the air,  
Where rosy-winged flamingoes fish all day,  
Stalking amid the lotos-blossom fair?

"Then, over podded tamarinds bear their flight,  
While cassias blossom in the zone of calms,  
And so betake them to a south sea-bight,  
To gossip in the crowns of cocoa-palms

"Whose roots are in the spray. O, haply there  
Some dawn, white-winged they might chance to  
find  
A frigate, standing in to make more fair  
The loneliness unaltered of mankind.

"A frigate come to water: nuts would fall,  
And nimble feet would climb the flower-flushed  
strand,  
While northern talk would ring, and therewithal  
The martins would desire the cool north land.

"And all would be as it had been before;  
Again, at eve, there would be news to tell;  
Who passed should hear them chant it o'er and o'er,  
'Gossip, how wags the world?' 'Well, gossip,  
well.'"