

KISMET.

INTO the rock the road is cut full deep,
 At its low ledges village children play,
 From its high rifts fountains of leafage weep,
 And silvery birches sway.

The boldest climbers have its face forsworn,
 Sheer as a wall it doth all daring flout;
 But benchlike at its base, and weather-worn,
 A narrow ledge leans out.

There do they set forth feasts in dishes rude
 Wrought of the rush — wild strawberries on
 the bed
 Left into August, apples brown and crude,
 Cress from the cold well-head.

Shy gamesome girls, small daring imps of boys,
 But gentle, almost silent at their play —
 Their fledgling daws, for food, make far more noise
 Ranged on the ledge than they.

The children and the purple martins share
 (Loveliest of birds) possession of the place;
 They veer and dart cream-breasted round the fair
 Faces with wild sweet grace.

Fresh haply from Palmyra desolate,
 Palmyra pale in light and storyless —
 From perching in old Tadmor mate by mate
 In the waste wilderness.

These know the world; what do the children know?
 They know the woods, their groaning noises
 weird,
 They climb in trees that overhang the slow
 Deep mill-stream, loved and feared.

Where shaken water-wheels go creak and clack,
 List while a lorn thrush calls and almost
 speaks;
 See willow-wrens with elderberries black
 Staining their slender beaks.

They know full well how squirrels spend the day;
 They peeped when field-mice stole and stored
 the seeds,
 And voles along their under-water way
 Donned collars of bright beads.

Still from the deep-cut road they love to mark
 Where set, as in a frame, the nearer shapes
 Rise out of hill and wood; then long downs dark
 As purple bloom on grapes.

But farms whereon the tall wheat musters gold,
 High barley whitening, creases in bare hills,
 Reed-feathered, castle-like brown churches old,
 Nor churning water-mills,

Shall make aught seem so fair as that beyond —
 Beyond the down, which draws their fealty;
 Blow high, blow low, some hearts do aye respond,
 The wind is from the sea.

Above the steep-cut steps as they did grow,
The children's cottage homes embowered are
seen;

Were this a world unfallen, they scarce could show
More beauteous red and green.

Milk-white and vestal-chaste the hollyhock
Grows tall, clove, sweetgale nightly shed forth
spice,

Long woodbines leaning over scent the rock
With airs of Paradise.

Here comforted of pilot stars they lie
In charmed dreams, but not of wold nor lea.
Behold a ship! her wide yards score the sky;
She sails a steel-blue sea.

As turns the great amassment of the tide,
Drawn of the silver despot to her throne,
So turn the destined souls, so far and wide
The strong deep claims its own.

Still the old tale, these dreaming islanders,
Each with hot Sunderbunds a somewhat owns
That calls, the grandsire's blood within them stirs,
Dutch Java guards his bones.

And these were orphan'd when a leak was sprung
Far out from land when all the air was balm;
The shipmen saw their faces as they hung,
And sank in the glassy calm.

These, in an orange-sloop their father plied,
Deck-laden deep she sailed from Cadiz town,

A black squall rose, she turned upon her side,
Drank water and went down.

They too shall sail. High names of alien lands
Are in the dream, great names their fathers
knew;
Madras, the white surf rearing on her sands,
E'en they shall breast it too.

See threads of scarlet down fell Roa creep,
When moaning winds rend back her vaporous
veil;

Wild Orinoco wedge-like split the deep,
Raging forth passion-pale;

Or a blue berg at sunrise glittering, tall,
Great as a town adrift come shining on
With sharp spires, gemlike as the mystical
Clear city of Saint John.

Still the old tale; but they are children yet;
O let their mothers have them while they may!
Soon it shall work, the strange mysterious fret
That mars both toil and play.

The sea will claim its own; and some shall mourn;
They also, they, but yet will surely go;
So surely as the planet to its bourne,
The chamois to his snow.

"Father, dear father, bid us now God-speed;
We cannot choose but sail, it thus befell."

"Mother, dear mother —" "Nay, 'tis all decreed.
Dear hearts, farewell, farewell!"

DORA.

A WAXING moon that, crescent yet,
 In all its silver beauty set,
 And rose no more in the lonesome night
 To shed full-orbed its longed-for light.

Then was it dark; on wold and lea,
 In home, in heart, the hours were drear.
 Father and mother could no light see,
 And the hearts trembled and there was fear.
 — So on the mount, Christ's chosen three,
 Unware that glory it did shroud,
 Feared when they entered into the cloud.

She was the best part of love's fair
 Adornment, life's God-given care,
 As if He bade them guard His own,
 Who should be soon anear His throne.
 Dutiful, happy, and who say
 When childhood smiles itself away,
 "More fair than morn shall prove the day."
 Sweet souls so nigh to God that rest,
 How shall be bettering of your best!
 That promise heaven alone shall view,
 That hope can ne'er with us come true,
 That prophecy life hath not skill,
 No, nor time leave that it fulfil.
 There is but heaven, for childhood never
 Can yield the all it meant, forever.
 Or is there earth, must wane to less
 What dawned so close by perfectness.

How guileless, sweet, by gift divine,
 How beautiful, dear child, was thine —
 Spared all their grief of thee bereaven,
 Winner, who had not greatly striven,
 Hurts of sin shall not thee soil,
 Carking care thy beauty spoil,
 So early blest, so young forgiven.

Among the meadows fresh to view,
 And in the woodland ways she grew,
 On either side a hand to hold,
 Nor the world's worst of evil knew,
 Nor rued its miseries manifold,
 Nor made discovery of its cold.
 What more, like one with morn content,
 Or of the morrow diffident,
 Unconscious, beautiful she stood,
 Calm, in young stainless maidenhood.
 Then, with the last steps childhood trod,
 Took up her fifteen years to God.

Farewell, sweet hope, not long to last,
 All life is better for thy past.
 Farewell till love with sorrow meet,
 To learn that tears are obsolete.

SPERANZA.

Her younger sister, that Speranza hight.

ENGLAND puts on her purple, and pale, pale
 With too much light, the primrose doth but wait
 To meet the hyacinth; then bower and dale

Shall lose her and each fairy woodland mate.
 April forgets them, for their utmost sum
 Of gift was silent, and the birds are come.

The world is stirring, many voices blend,
 The English are at work in field and way;
 All the good finches on their wives attend,
 And emmets their new towns lay out in clay;
 Only the cuckoo-bird only doth say
 Her beautiful name, and float at large all day.

Everywhere ring sweet clamors, chirruping,
 Chirping, that comes before the grasshopper;
 The wide woods, flurried with the pulse of spring,
 Shake out their wrinkled buds with tremor and
 stir;
 Small noises, little cries, the ear receives
 Light as a rustling foot on last year's leaves.

All in deep dew the satisfied deep grass
 Looking straight upward stars itself with white,
 Like ships in heaven full-sailed do long clouds pass
 Slowly o'er this great peace, and wide sweet
 light,
 While through moist meads draws down yon rushy
 mere
 Influent waters, sobbing, shining, clear.

Almost is rapture poignant; somewhat ails
 The heart and mocks the morning; somewhat
 sighs,
 And those sweet foreigners, the nightingales,
 Made restless with their love, pay down its
 price,

Even the pain; then all the story unfold
 Over and over again — yet 'tis not told.

The mystery of the world whose name is life
 (One of the names of God) all-conquering wends
 And works for aye with rest and cold at strife.
 Its pedigree goes up to Him and ends.
 For it the lucent heavens are clear o'erhead,
 And all the meads are made its natal bed.

Dear is the light, and eye-sight ever sweet,
 What see they all fair lower things that nurse,
 No wonder, and no doubt? Truly their meat,
 Their kind, their field, their foes; man's eyes
 are more;
 Sight is man's having of the universe,
 His pass to the majestic far shore.

But it is not enough, ah not enough
 To look upon it and be held away,
 And to be sure that, while we tread the rough,
 Remote dull paths of this dull world, no ray
 Shall pierce to us from the inner soul of things,
 Nor voice thrill out from its deep master-strings.

“To show the skies, and tether to the sod!
 A daunting gift!” we mourn in our long strife,
 And God is more than all our thought of God;
 E'en life itself more than our thought of life,
 And that is all we know — and it is noon,
 Our little day will soon be done — how soon!

O let us to ourselves be dutiful:
 We are not satisfied, we have wanted all,

Not alone beauty, but that Beautiful;
 A lifted veil, an answering mystical.
 Ever men plead, and plain, admire, implore,
 "Why gavest Thou so much — and yet — not more."

We are but let to look, and Hope is weighed."
 Yet, say the Indian words of sweet renown,
 "The doomèd tree withholdeth not her shade
 From him that bears the axe to cut her down;"
 Is hope cut down, dead, doomèd, all is vain:
 The third day dawns, she too has risen again

(For Faith is ours by gift, but Hope by right),
 And walks among us whispering as of yore:
 "Glory and grace are thrown thee with the light;
 Search, if not yet thou touch the mystic shore;
 Immanent beauty and good are nigh at hand,
 For infants laugh and snowdrops bloom in the land.

Thou shalt have more anon." What more? In
 sooth,
 The mother of to-morrow is to-day,
 And brings forth after her kind. There is no ruth
 On the heart's sigh, that "more" is hidden away,
 And man's to-morrow yet shall pine and yearn;
 He shall surmise, and he shall not discern,

But list the lark, and want the rapturous cries
 And passioning of morning stars that sing
 Together; mark the meadow-orchis rise
 And think it freckled after an angel's wing;
 Absent desire his land, and feel this, one
 With the great drawing of the central sun.

But not to all such dower, for there be eyes
 Are color-blind, and souls are spirit-blind.
 Those never saw the blush in sunset skies,
 Nor the others caught a sense not made of words
 As if were spirits about, that sailed the wind
 And sank and settled on the boughs like birds.

Yet such for aye divided from us are
 As other galaxies that seem no more
 Than a little golden millet-seed afar.
 Divided; swarming down some flat lee shore,
 Then risen, while all the air that takes no word
 Tingles, and trembles as with cries not heard.

For they can come no nearer. There is found
 No meeting point. We have pierced the lodging
 place
 Of stars that cluster'd with their peers lie bound,
 Embedded thick, sunk in the seas of space,
 Fortunate orbs that know not night, for all
 Are suns; — but we have never heard that call,

Nor learned it in our world, our citadel
 With outworks of a Power about it traced;
 Nor why we needs must sin who would do well,
 Nor why the want of love, nor why its waste,
 Nor how by dying of One should all be sped,
 Nor where, O Lord, Thou has laid up our dead.

But Hope is ours by right, and Faith by gift.
 Though Time be as a moon upon the wane
 Who walk with Faith far up the azure lift
 Off hear her talk of lights to wax again.

"If man be lost," she cries, "in this vast sea
Of being,—lost—he would be lost with Thee

Who for his sake once, as he hears, lost all.

For Thou wilt find him at the end of the days:
Then shall the flocking souls that thicker fall

Than snowflakes on the everlasting ways
Be counted, gathered, claimed.—Will it be long?
Earth has begun already her swan-song.

Who, even that might, would dwell forever pent
In this fair frame that doth the spirit inhearse,
Nor at the last grow weary and content,

Die, and break forth into the universe,
And yet man would not all things—all—were
new."

Then saith the other, that one robed in blue:

What if with subtle change God touch their eyes
When He awakes them,—not far off, but here
In a new earth, this: not in any wise
Strange, but more homely sweet, more heavenly
dear,

Or if He roll away, as clouds disperse
Somewhat, and lo, that other universe.

O how 'twere sweet new waked in some good hour,

Long time to sit on a hillside green and high,
There like a honeybee domed in a flower

To feed unneath the azure bell o' the sky,
Feed in the midmost home and fount of light
Sown thick with stars at noonday as by night,

To watch the flying faultless ones wheel down,
Alight, and run along some ridged peak,

Their feet adust from orbs of old renown,
Procyon or Mazzaroth, haply;—when they
speak

Other-world errands wondrous, all discern
That would be strange; there would be much to
learn.

Ay, and it would be sweet to share unblamed
Love's shining truths that tell themselves in
tears,

Or to confess and be no more ashamed
The wrongs that none can right through earthly
years;

And seldom laugh, because the tenderness
Calm, perfect, would be more than joy—would
bless.

I tell you it were sweet to have enough,
And be enough. Among the souls forgiven
In presence of all worlds, without rebuff
To move, and feel the excellent safety leaven
With peace that awe must loss and the grave sur-
vive—
But palpitating moons that are alive

Nor shining fogs swept up together afar,
Vast as a thought of God, in the firmament;
No, and to dart as light from star to star
Would not long time man's yearning soul con-
tent:

Albeit were no more ships and no more sea,
He would desire his new earth presently.

Leisure to learn it. Peoples would be here;
 They would come on in troops, and take at will
 The forms, the faces they did use to wear
 With life's first splendors — raiment rich with
 skill
 Of broidery, carved adornments, crowns of gold;
 Still would be sweet to them the life of old.

Then might be gatherings under golden shade,
 Where dust of water drifts from some sheer fall,
 Cooling day's ardor. There be utterance made
 Of comforted love, dear freedom after thrall,
 Large longings of the Seer, through earthly years
 An everlasting burden, but no tears.

Egypt's adopted child might tell of lore
 They taught him underground in shrines all dim,
 And of the live tame reptile gods that wore
 Gold anklets on their feet. And after him,
 With fairest eyes e'er met of mortal ken,
 Glorious, forgiven, might speak the mother of men,

Talk of her apples gather'd by the marge
 Of lapsing Gihon. "Thus one spoke, I stood,
 I ate." Or next the mariner-saint enlarge
 Right quaintly on his ark of gopher wood
 To wandering men through high grass meads that
 ran
 Or sailed the sea Mediterranean.

It might be common — earth afforested
 Newly, to follow her great ones to the sun,
 When from transcendent aisles of gloom they sped

Some work august (there would be work) now
 done.
 And list, and their high matters strive to scan
 The seekers after God, and lovers of man,
 Sitting together in amity on a hill,
 The Saint of Visions from Greek Patmos come —
 Aurelius, lordly, calm-eyed, as of will
 Austere, yet having rue on lost, lost Rome,
 And with them one who drank a fateful bowl,
 And to the unknown God trusted his soul.

The mitred Cranmer pitied even there
 (But could it be?) for that false hand which signed
 O, all pathetic — no. But it might bear
 To soothe him marks of fire — and gladsome kind
 The man, as all of joy him well beseemed
 Who "lighted on a certain place and dreamed."

And fair with the meaning of life their divine
 brows,
 The daughters of well-doing famed in song;
 But what! could old-world love for child, for
 spouse,
 For land, content through lapsing eons long?
 Oh for a watchword strong to bridge the deep
 And satisfy of fulness after sleep.

What know we? Whispers fall, "*And the last first,*
And the first last." The child before the king?
 The slave before that man a master erst?
 The woman before her lord? Shall glory fling
 The rolls aside — time raze out triumphs past?
 They sigh, "*And the last first, and the first last.*"

Answers that other, "Lady, sister, friend,
It is enough, for I have worshipped Life;
With Him that is the Life man's life shall blend,
E'en now the sacred heavens do help his strife,
There do they knead his bread and mix his cup,
And all the stars have leave to bear him up.

Yet must he sink and fall away to a sleep,
As did his Lord, His Life his worshippèd
Religion, Life. The silence may be deep,
Life listening, watching, waiting by His dead,
Till at the end of days they wake full fain
Because their King, the Life, doth love and reign.

I know the King shall come to that new earth,
And His feet stand again as once they stood,
In His Man's eyes will shine Time's end and worth
The chiefest beauty and the chiefest good,
And all shall have the all and in it bide,
And every soul of man be satisfied.

THE BEGINNING.

THEY tell strange things of the primeval earth,
But things that be are never strange to those
Among them. And we know what it was like,
Many are sure they walked in it; the proof
This, the all gracious, all admirèd gift
Called life, called world, called thought, was all as
one,
Nor yet divided more than that old earth

Among the tribes. Self was not fully come —
Self was asleep, embedded in the whole.

I too dwelt once in a primeval world,
Such as they tell of, all things wonderful;
Voices, ay visions, people grand and tall
Thronged in it, but their talk was overhead
And bore scant meaning, that one wanted not
Whose thought was sight as yet unbound of words,
This kingdom of heaven having entered through
Being a little child.

Such as can see,
Why should they doubt? The childhood of a race,
The childhood of a soul, hath neither doubt
Nor fear. Where all is super-natural
The guileless heart doth feed on it, no more
Afraid than angels are of heaven.

Who saith
Another life, the next one shall not have
Another childhood growing gently thus,
Able to bear the poignant sweetness, take
The rich long awful measure of its peace,
Endure the presences sublime?

"I saw
Once in the earth primeval, once — a face,
A little face that yet I dream upon."

"Of this world was it?"

"Not of this world — no,
In the beginning — for methinks it was
In the beginning, but an if you ask
How long ago, time was not then, nor date
For marking. It was always long ago,
E'en from the first recalling of it, long
And long ago.

And I could walk, and went,
Led by the hand through a long mead at morn,
Bathed in a ravishing excess of light.
It throbbed, and as it were fresh fallen from heaven,
Sank deep into the meadow grass. The sun
Gave every blade a bright and a dark side,
Glitter'd on buttercups that topped them, slipped
To soft red puffs, by some called holy-hay.

The wide oaks in their early green stood still
And took delight in it. Brown specks that made
Very sweet noises quivered in the blue;
Then they came down and ran along the brink
Of a long pool, and they were birds.

The pool
Pranked at the edges with pale peppermint,
A rare amassment of veined cuckoo flowers
And flags blue-green was lying below. This all
Was sight, it condescended not to words
Till memory kissed the charmed dream.

The mead
Hollowing and heaving, in the hollows fair
With dropping roses fell away to it,
A strange sweet place; upon its further side
Some people gently walking took their way
Up to a wood beyond; and also bells
Sang, floated in the air, hummed — what you will.”

“Then it was Sunday?”

“Sunday was not yet;
It was a holiday, for all the days
Were holy. It was not our day of rest
(The earth for all her rolling asks not rest,
For she was never weary).

It was sweet,
Full of dear leisure and perennial peace,
As very old days when life went easily,
Before mankind had lost the wise, the good
Habit of being happy.

For the pool
A beauteous place it was as might be seen,
That led one down to other meads, and had
Clouds and another sky. I thought to go
Deep down in it, and walk that steep clear slope.

Then she who led me reached the brink, her foot
Staying to talk with one who met her there.
Here were fresh marvels, sailing things whose vans
Floated them on above the flowering flags.
We moved a little onward, paused again,
And here there was a break in these, and here
There came the vision; for I stooped to gaze
So far as my small height would let me — gaze
Into that pool to see the fishes dart,
And in a moment from her under hills
Came forth a little child who lived down there,
Looked up at me and smiled. We could not talk,
But looked and loved each other. I a hand
Held out to her, so she to me, but ah,
She would not come. Her home, her little bed,
Was doubtless under that soft shining thing
The water, and she wanted not to run
Among red sorrel spires, and fill her hand
In the dry warmed grass with cowslip buds.

Awhile our feeding hearts all satisfied,
Took in the blue of one another's eyes,

Two dimpled creatures, rose-lipped innocent.
But when we fain had kissed — O! the end came,
For snatched aloft, held in the nurse's arms,
She parting with her lover I was borne
Far from that little child.

And no one knew
She lived down there, but only I; and none
Sought for her, but I yearned for her and left
Part of myself behind, as the lambs leave
Their wool upon a thorn."

"And was she seen
Never again, nor known for what she was?"

"Never again, for we did leave anon
The pasture and the pool. I know not where
They lie, and sleep a heaven on earth, but know
From thenceforth yearnings for a lost delight;
On certain days I dream about her still."

IN THE NURSERY.

"WHERE do you go, Bob, when you're fast asleep?"
"Where? O well, once I went into a deep
Mine, father told of, and a cross man said
He'd make me help to dig, and eat black bread.
I saw the Queen once, in her room, quite near.
She said, 'You rude boy, Bob, how came you
here?'"

"Was it like mother's boudoir?"
"Grander far,
Gold chairs and things — all over diamonds — Ah!"

"You're sure it was the Queen?"

"Of course, a crown
Was on her, and a spangly purple gown."

"I went to heaven last night."

"O Lily, no,
How could you?"

"Yes I did, they told me so,
And my best doll, my favorite, with the blue
Frock, Jasmine, I took her to heaven too."

"What was it like?"

"A kind of — I can't tell —
A sort of orchard place in a long dell,
With trees all over flowers. And there were birds
Who could do talking, say soft pretty words;
They let me stroke them, and I showed it all
To Jasmine. And I heard a blue dove call,
'Child, this is heaven.' I was not frightened
when

It spoke, I said 'Where are the angels then?'"

"Well."

"So it said, 'Look up and you shall see.'
There were two angels sitting in the tree,
As tall as mother; they had long gold hair.
They let drop down the fruit they gather'd there
And little angels came for it — so sweet.
Here they were beggar children in the street,
And the dove said they had the prettiest things,
And wore their best frocks every day."

"And wings,
Had they no wings?"