

'Twas fit you should hear it all — What, tears?  
 they comfort me; now you will go,  
 Nor wrong your life for the naught you call “a pair  
 of beautiful eyes,”  
 “*I will not say I love you.*” Truly I will not, no.  
 “*Will I pity you?*”  
 Ay, but the pang will be short, you shall wake and  
 be wise.

“*Shall we meet?*” We shall meet on the other side,  
 but not before.  
 I shall be pure and fair, I shall hear the sound of  
 THE NAME,  
 And see the form of His face. You too will walk  
 on that shore,  
 In the garden of the Lord God, where neither is  
 sorrow nor shame.

Farewell, I shall bide alone, for God took my one  
 white lamb,  
 I work for such as she was, and I will the while I  
 last,  
 But there's no beginning again, ever I am what I  
 am,  
 And nothing, nothing, nothing, can do away with  
 the past.

## LETTERS ON LIFE AND THE MORNING.

(First of a series.)

## A PARSON'S LETTER TO A YOUNG POET.

THEY said “Too late, too late, the work is done;  
 Great Homer sang of glory and strong men  
 And that fair Greek whose fault all these long years  
 Wins no forgetfulness nor ever can;  
 For yet cold eyes upon her frailty bend,  
 For yet the world waits in the victor's tent  
 Daily, and sees an old man honorable,  
 His white head bowed, surprise to passionate tears  
 Awestruck Achilles; sighing, ‘I have endured  
 The like whereof no soul hath yet endured,  
 To kiss the hand of him that slew my son.’”  
 They said: “We, rich by him, are rich by more;  
 One Æschylus found watchfires on a hill  
 That lit Old Night's three daughters to their work;  
 When the forlorn Fate leaned to their red light  
 And sat a-spinning, to her feet he came  
 And marked her till she span off all her thread.

O, it is late, good sooth, to cry for more:  
 “The work once done, well done,” they said, “for-  
 bear!

A Tuscan afterward discovered steps  
 Over the line of life in its mid-way;  
 He climbed the wall of Heaven, beheld his love  
 Safe at her singing, and he left his foes  
 In a vale of shadow weltering, unassoiled  
 Immortal sufferers henceforth in both worlds.

“Who may inherit next or who shall match  
The Swan of Avon and go float with him  
Down the long river of life aneath a sun  
Not veiled, and high at noon? — the river of life  
That as it ran reflected all its lapse  
And rippling on the plumage of his breast?”

“Thou hast them, heed them, for thy poets now,  
Albeit of tongue full sweet and majesty  
Like even to theirs, are fallen on evil days,  
Are wronged by thee of life, wronged of the world.  
Look back they must and show thee thy fair past,  
Or, choosing thy to-day, they may but chant  
As they behold.

The mother-glowworm broods  
Upon her young, fast-folded in the egg  
And long before they come to life they shine —  
The mother-age broods on her shining thought  
That liveth, but whose life is hid. He comes  
Her poet son, and lo you, he can see  
The shining, and he takes it to his breast  
And fashions for it wings that it may fly  
And show its sweet light in the dusky world.

“Mother, O Mother of our dusk to-day,  
What hast thou lived for bards to sing of thee?  
Lapsed water cannot flow above its source;  
*‘The kid must browse,’* they said, *‘where she is tied.’*”

Son of to-day, rise up, and answer them.  
What! wilt thou let thy mother sit ashamed  
And crownless? — Set the crown on her fair head:  
She waited for thy birth, she cries to thee

“Thou art the man.” He that hath ears to hear,  
To him the mother cries “Thou art the man.”

She murmurs, for thy mother’s voice is low —  
“Methought the men of war were even as gods,  
The old men of the ages. Now mine eyes  
Retrieve the truth from ruined city walls  
That buried it; from carved and curious homes  
Full of rich garments and all goodly spoil,  
Where having burned, battered, and wasted them,  
They flung it. Give us, give us better gods  
Than these that drink with blood upon their hands,  
For I repent me that I worshipped them.  
O that there might be yet a going up!  
O to forget — and to begin again!”

Is not thy mother’s rede at one with theirs  
Who cry “The work is done”? What though to  
thee,

Thee only, should the utterance shape itself  
“O to forget, and to begin again,”  
Only of thee be heard as that keen cry  
Rending its way from some distracted heart  
That yields it and so breaks? Yet list the cry  
Begin for her again, and learn to sing;  
But first, in all thy learning learn to be.  
Is life a field? then plough it up — re-sow  
With worthier seed — Is life a ship? O heed  
The southing of thy stars — Is life a breath?  
Breathe deeper, draw life up from hour to hour,  
Aye, from the deepest deep in thy deep soul.

It may be God’s first work is but to breathe  
And fill the abysm with drifts of shining air

That slowly, slowly curdle into worlds.  
A little space is measured out to us  
Of His long leisure; breathe and grow therein,  
For life, alas! is short, and "*when we die*  
*It is not for a little while.*"

They said,  
"The work is done," and is it therefore done?  
Speak rather to thy mother thus: "All-fair,  
Lady of ages, beautiful To-day  
And sorrowful To-day, thy children set  
The crown of sorrow on their heads, their loss  
Is like to be the loss of all: we hear  
Lamenting, as of some that mourn in vain  
Loss of high leadership, but where is he  
That shall be great enough to lead thee now?"

Where is thy Poet? thou hast wanted him.  
Where? Thou hast wakened as a child in the night  
And found thyself alone. The stars have set,  
There is great darkness, and the dark is void  
Of music. Who shall set thy life afresh  
And sing thee thy new songs? Whom wilt thou  
love

And lean on to break silence worthily —  
Discern the beauty in thy goings — feel  
The glory of thy yearning, — thy self-scorn  
Flatter to dim oblivion with a smile —  
Own thy great want, that knew not its great name?  
O who shall make to thee mighty amends  
For thy lost childhood, joining two in one,  
Thyself and Him? Behold Him, He is near:  
God is thy Poet now.

A King sang once

Long years ago 'My soul is athirst for God,  
Yea for the living God' — thy thirst and his  
Are one. It is thy Poet whom thy hands  
Grope for, not knowing. Life is not enough,  
Nor love, nor learning, — Death is not enough  
Even to them, happy, who forecast new life;  
But give us now and satisfy us now,  
Give us now, now, to live in the life of God,  
Give us now, now, to be at one with Him."

Would I had words — I have not words for her,  
Only for thee; and thus I tell them out:  
For every man the world is made afresh;  
To God both it and he are young. There are  
Who call upon Him night, and morn, and night,  
"Where is the kingdom? Give it us to-day.  
We would be here with God, not there with God.  
Make Thine abode with us, great Wayfarer,  
And let our souls sink deeper into Thee" —  
There are who send but yearnings forth, in quest  
They know not why, of good they know not what.

The unknown life, and strange its stirring is.  
The babe knows naught of life, yet clothed in it  
And yearning only for its mother's breast  
Feeds thus the unheeded thing — and as for thee,  
That life thou hast is hidden from thine eyes,  
And when it yearns, thou, knowing not for what,  
Wouldst fain appease it with one grand, deep joy,  
One draught of passionate peace — but wilt thou  
know

The other name of joy, the better name  
Of peace? It is thy Father's name. Thy life

Yearns to its Source. The spirit thirsts for God,  
Even the living God.

But "No," thou sayest,  
"My heart is all in ruins with pain, my feet  
Tread a dry desert where there is no way  
Nor water. I look back, and deep through time  
The old words come but faintly up the track  
Trod by the sons of men. The man He sent,  
The Prince of life, methinks I could have loved  
If I had looked once in His deep man's eyes.  
But long ago He died, and long ago  
Is gone."

He is not dead, He cannot go.  
Men's faith at first was like a mastering stream,  
Like Jordan "the descender" leaping down  
Pure from his snow; and warmed of tropic heat  
Hiding himself in verdure: then at last  
In a Dead Sea absorbed as faith of doubt.  
But yet the snow lies thick on Hermon's breast  
And daily at his source the stream is born.  
Go up — go mark the whiteness of the snow —  
Thy faith is not thy Saviour, not thy God,  
Though faith waste fruitless down a desert old.  
The living God is new, and He is near.

What need to look behind thee and to sigh?  
When God left speaking He went on before  
To draw men after, following up and on;  
And thy heart fails because thy feet are slow;  
Thou think'st of Him as one that will not wait.  
A Father and not wait! — He waited long  
For us, and yet perchance He thinks not long  
And will not count the time. There are no dates  
In His fine leisure.

Speak then as a son:  
"Father, I come to satisfy Thy love  
With mine, for I had held Thee as remote,  
The background of the stars — Time's yesterday —  
Illimitable Absence. Now my heart  
Communes, methinks, with somewhat teaching me  
Thou art the Great To-day. God, is it so?  
Then for all love that was, I thank Thee, God,  
It is and yet shall bide. And I have part  
In all, for in Thine image I was made,  
To Thee my spirit yearns, as Thou to mine.  
If aught be stamped of Thy Divine on me,  
And man be God-like, God is like to man.

"Dear and dread Lord, I have not found it hard  
To fear Thee, though Thy love in visible form  
Bled 'neath a thorny crown — but since indeed,  
For kindred's sake and likeness, Thou dost thirst  
To draw men nigh, and make them one with Thee,  
My soul shall answer 'Thou art what I want:  
I am athirst for God, the living God.'"

Then straightway flashes up athwart the words:  
"And if I be a son I am very far  
From my great Father's house; I am not clean.  
I have not always willed it should be so,  
And the gold of life is rusted with my tears."

It is enough. He never said to men,  
"Seek ye My face in vain." And have they  
sought —  
Beautiful children, well-belovèd sons,  
Opening wide eyes to ache among the moons

All night, and sighing because star multitudes  
Fainted away as to a glittering haze,  
And sparkled here and there like silver wings,  
Confounding them with nameless, numberless  
Unbearable, fine flocks? It is not well  
For them, for thee. Hast thou gone forth so far  
To the unimaginable steeps on high  
Trembling and seeking God? Yet now come home,  
Cry, cry to Him: "I cannot search Thee out,  
But Thou and I must meet. O come, come down,  
Come." And that cry shall have the mastery.  
Ay, He shall come in truth to visit thee,  
And thou shalt mourn to Him, "Unclean, unclean,"  
But never more "I will to have it so."  
From henceforth thou shalt learn that there is love  
To long for, pureness to desire, a mount  
Of consecration it were good to scale.

Look you, it is to-day as at the first.  
When Adam first was 'ware his new-made eyes  
And opened them, behold the light! And breath  
Of God was misting yet about his mouth,  
Whereof they had made his soul. Then he looked  
forth

And was a part of light; also he saw  
Beautiful life, and it could move. But Eve —  
Eve was the child of midnight and of sleep.  
Lo, in the dark God led her to his side;  
It may be in the dark she heard him breathe  
Before God woke him. And she knew not light,  
Nor life but as a voice that left his lips,  
A warmth that clasped her; but the stars were out,  
And she with wide child-eyes gazed up at them.

Haply she thought that always it was night;  
Haply he, whispering to her in that reach  
Of beauteous darkness, gave her unworn heart  
A rumor of the dawn, and wakened it  
To a trembling, and a wonder, and want  
Kin to his own; and as he longed to gaze  
On his new fate, the gracious mystery  
His wife, she may have longed, and felt not why,  
After the light that never she had known.

So doth each age walk in the light beheld,  
Nor think on light, if it be light or no;  
Then comes the night to it, and in the night  
Eve.

The God-given, the most beautiful  
Eve.

And she is not seen for darkness' sake;  
Yet, when she makes her gracious presence felt,  
The age perceives how dark it is, and fain,  
Fain would have daylight, fain would see her well,  
A beauty half revealed, a helpmeet sent  
To draw the soul away from valley clods;  
Made from itself, yet now a better self —  
Soul in the soulless, arrow tipped with fire  
Let down into a careless breast; a pang  
Sweeter than healing that cries out with it  
For light all light, and is beheld at length —  
The morning dawns.

Were not we born to light?

Ay, and we saw the men and women as saints  
Walk in a garden. All our thoughts were fair;  
Our simple hearts, as dovecotes full of doves,  
Made home and nests for them. They fluttered  
forth,

And flocks of them flew white about the world.  
 And dreams were like to ships that floated us  
 Far out on silent floods, apart from earth,  
 From life — so far that we could see their lights  
 In heaven — and hear the everlasting tide,  
 All dappled with that fair reflected gold,  
 Wash up against the city wall, and sob  
 At the dark bows of vessels that drew on  
 Heavily freighted with departed souls  
 To whom did spirits sing; but on that song  
 Might none, albeit the meaning was right plain,  
 Impose the harsh captivity of words.

Afterward waking, sweet was early air,  
 Full excellent was morning: whether deep  
 The snow lay keenly white, and shrouds of hail  
 Blurred the gray breaker on a long foreshore,  
 And swarming plover ran, and wild white mews  
 And sea-pies printed with a thousand feet  
 The fallen whiteness, making shrill the storm;  
 Or whether, soothed of sunshine, throbbed and  
 hummed  
 The mill atween its bowering maple trees,  
 And churned the leaping beck that reared, and  
 urged  
 A diamond-dripping wheel.

The happy find

Equality of beauty everywhere  
 To feed on. All of shade and sheen is theirs,  
 All the strange fashions and the fair wise ways  
 Of lives beneath man's own. He breathes delight  
 Whose soul is fresh, whose feet are wet with dew  
 And the melted mist of morning, when at watch

Sunk deep in fern he marks the stealthy roe,  
 Silent as sleep or shadow, cross the glade,  
 Or dart athwart his view as August stars  
 Shoot and are out — while gracefully pace on  
 The wild-eyed harts to their traditional tree  
 To clear the velvet from their budded horns.  
 There is no want, both God and life are kind;  
 It is enough to hear, it is enough  
 To see; the pale wide barley-field they love,  
 And its weird beauty, and the pale wide moon  
 That lowering seems to lurk between the sheaves.  
 So in the rustic hamlet at high noon  
 The white owl sailing drowsed and deaf with sleep  
 To hide her head in turrets browned of moss  
 That is the rust of time. Ay so the pinks  
 And mountain grass marked on a sharp sea-cliff  
 While far below the northern diver feeds;  
 She having ended settling while she sits,  
 As vessels water-logged that sink at sea  
 And quietly into the deep go down.

It is enough to wake, it is enough  
 To sleep: — With God and time he leaves the rest.  
 But on a day death on the doorstep sits  
 Waiting, or like a veiled woman walks  
 Dogging his footsteps, or athwart his path  
 The splendid passion-flower love unfolds  
 Buds full of sorrow, not ordained to know  
 Appeasement through the answer of a sigh,  
 The kiss of pity with denial given,  
 The crown and blossom of accomplishment.  
 Or haply comes the snake with subtlety,  
 And tempts him with an apple to know all.

So,— Shut the gate; the story tells itself  
 Over and over; Eden must be lost  
 If after it be won. He stands at fault,  
 Not knowing at all how this should be — he feels  
 The great bare barrenness o' the outside world.  
 He thinks on Time and what it has to say;  
 He thinks on God, but God has changed His hand,  
 Sitting afar. And as the moon draws on  
 To cover the day-king in his eclipse,  
 And thin the last fine sickle of light, till all  
 Be gone, so fares it with his darkened soul.

The dark, but not Orion sparkling there  
 With his best stars; the dark, but not yet Eve.  
 And now the wellsprings of sweet natural joy  
 Lie, as the Genie sealed of Solomon  
 Fast prisoned in his heart; he hath not learned  
 The spell whereby to loose and set them forth,  
 And all the glad delights that boyhood loved  
 Smell at Oblivion's poppy, and lie still.

Ah! they must sleep — “The mill can grind no  
 more  
 With water that hath passed.” Let it run on.  
 For he hath caught a whisper in the night;  
 This old inheritance in darkness given,  
 The world, is widened, warmed, it is alive,  
 Comes to his beating heart and bids it wake,  
 Opens the door to youth, and bids it forth,  
 Exultant for expansion and release,  
 And bent to satisfy the mighty wish,  
 Comfort and satisfy the mighty wish,  
 Life of his life, the soul's immortal child  
 That is to him as Eve.

He cannot win,  
 Nor earn, nor see, nor hear, nor comprehend,  
 With all the watch, tender, impetuous,  
 That wastes him, this, whereof no less he feels  
 Infinite things; but yet the night is full  
 Of air-beats and of heart-beats for her sake.  
 Eve the aspirer, give her what she wants,  
 Or wherefore was he born?

O he was born  
 To wish — then turn away: — to wish again  
 And half forget his wish for earthlier joy;  
 He draws the net to land that brings red gold;  
 His dreams among the meshes tangled lie,  
 And learning hath him at her feet; — and love,  
 The sea-born creature fresh from her sea foam,  
 Touches the ruddiest veins in his young heart,  
 Makes it to sob in him and sigh in him,  
 Restless, repelled, dying, alive and keen,  
 Fainting away for the remorseless ALL  
 Gone by, gone up, or sweetly gone before,  
 But never in his arms. Then pity comes,  
 Knocks at his breast, it may be, and comes in,  
 Makes a wide wound that haply will not heal,  
 But bleeds for poverty, and crime, and pain,  
 Till for the dear kin's sake he grandly dares  
 Or wastes him, with a wise improvidence;  
 But who can stir the weighty world; or who  
 Can drink a sea of tears?

O love, and life,  
 O world, and can it be that this is all?  
 Leave him to tread expectance underfoot;  
 Let him alone to tame down his great hope  
 Before it breaks his heart: “Give me my share .

That I foresaw, my place, my draught of life.  
This that I bear, what is it? — me no less  
It binds, I cannot disenslave my soul."

There is but halting for the wearied foot.  
The better way is hidden; faith hath failed —  
One stronger far than reason mastered her.  
It is not reason makes faith hard, but life.  
The husks of his dead creed, downtrod and dry,  
Are powerless now as some dishonored spell,  
Some aged Pythia in her priestly clothes,  
Some widow'd witch divining by the dead.

Or if he keeps one shrine undesecrate  
And go to it from time to time with tears,  
What lies there? A dead Christ enswathed and  
cold,

A Christ that did not rise. The linen cloth  
Is wrapped about His head, He lies embalmed  
With myrrh and spices in His sepulchre,  
The love of God that daily dies; — to them  
That trust it the One Life, the all that lives.

O mother Eve, who wert beguiled of old,  
Thy blood is in thy children, thou art yet  
Their fate and copy; with thy milk they drew  
The immortal want of morning; but thy day  
Dawned and was over, and thy children know  
Contentment never, nor continuance long.  
For even thus it is with them: the day  
Waxeth, to wane anon, and a long night  
Leaves the dark heart unsatisfied with stars.

A soul in want and restless and bereft  
To whom all life hath lied, shall it too lie?

Saying, "I yield Thee thanks, most mighty God,  
Thou hast been pleased to make me thus and thus  
I do submit me to Thy sovereign will  
That I full oft should hunger and not have,  
And vainly yearn after the perfect good,  
Gladness and peace"?

No, rather dare think thus  
"Ere chaos first had being, earth, or time,  
My Likeness was apparent in high heaven,  
Divine and manlike, and his dwelling place  
Was the bosom of the Father. By His hands  
Were the worlds made and filled with diverse  
growths

And ordered lives. Then afterward they said,  
Taking strange counsel, as if he who worked  
Hitherto should not henceforth work alone,  
'Let us make man;' and God did look upon  
That Divine Word which was the form of God,  
And it became a thought before the event.  
There they foresaw my face, foreheard my speech,  
God-like, God-loved, God-loving, God-derived.

"And I was in a garden, and I fell  
Through envy of God's evil son, but Love  
Would not be robbed of me forever — Love  
For my sake passed into humanity,  
And there for my first Father won me home.  
How should I rest then? I have not gone home;  
I feed on husks, and they given grudgingly,  
While my great Father — Father — O my God,  
What shall I do?"

Ay, I will dare think thus:  
"I cannot rest because He doth not rest



In whom I have my being. THIS IS GOD —  
 My soul is conscious of His wondrous wish,  
 And my heart's hunger doth but answer His  
 Whose thought has met with mine.

I have not all;  
 He moves me thus to take of Him what lacks.  
 My want is God's desire to give, — He yearns  
 To add Himself to life and so for aye  
 Make it enough."

A thought by night, a wish  
 After the morning, and behold it dawns  
 Pathetic in a still solemnity,  
 And mighty words are said for him once more,  
 "Let there be light." Great heaven and earth have  
 heard,  
 And God comes down to him, and Christ doth rise.

NOTES.

"THE DREAMS THAT CAME TRUE."

Page 199.

This story I first wrote in prose, and it was published some years ago.

"A STORY OF DOOM."

Page 271.

The name of the patriarch's wife is intended to be pronounced Nigh-loi-ya.

Of the three sons of Noah — Shem, Ham, and Japhet — I have called Japhet the youngest (because he is always named last), and have supposed that, in the genealogies where he is called "Japhet the elder," he may have received the epithet because by that time there were younger Japhets

Page 324.

The quivering butterflies in companies,  
 That slowly crept adown the sandy marge,  
 Like *living crocus beds*.

This beautiful comparison is taken from "The Naturalist on the River Amazon." "Vast numbers of orange-colored butterflies congregated on the moist sands. They assembled in densely-packed masses, sometimes two or three yards in circumference, their wings all held in an upright position, so that the sands looked as though variegated with *beds of crocuses*."

"GLADYS AND HER ISLAND."

Page 366.

The woman is Imagination; she is brooding over what she brought forth.

The two purple peaks represent the domains of Poetry and of History.

The girl is Fancy.

"WINSTANLEY."

Page 402.

This ballad was intended to be one of a set, and was read to the children in the National Schools at Sherborne, Dorsetshire, in order to discover whether, if the actions of a hero were simply and plainly narrated, English children would like to learn the verses, recording them by heart, as their forefathers did.



