

BOOK III.—IN ENGLAND.

THE ALOE.

A STRANGER sent from burning lands,
In realms where buzz and mutter yet
Old gods, with hundred heads and hands,
On jewelled thrones of jet, —

(Old gods as old as Time itself,
And, in a hot and level calm,
Recline o'er many a sandy shelf
Dusk forms beneath the palm, —

To Lady Eve, who dwells beside
The river-meads, and oak-trees tall,
Whose dewy shades encircle wide
Her old Baronial Hall,

An Indian plant with leaves like horn,
And, all along its stubborn spine,
Mere humps, with angry spike and thorn
Armed like the porcupine.

In midst of which one sullen bud
Surveyed the world, with head aslant,
High-throned, and looking like the god
Of this strange Indian plant.

A stubborn plant, from looking cross
It seemed no kindness could retrieve !
But for his sake whose gift it was
It pleased the Lady Eve.

She set it on the terraced walk,
Within her own fair garden-ground ;
And every morn and eve its stalk
Was duly watered round.

And every eve and morn, the while
She tended this uncourteous thing,
I stood beside her, — watched her smile,
And often heard her sing.

The roses I at times would twist
To deck her hair, she oft forgot ;
But never that dark aloe missed
The daily watering-pot.

She seemed so gay, — I felt so sad, —
Her laugh but made me frown the more :
For each light word of hers I had
Some sharp reply in store.

Until she laughed . . . "This aloe shows
A kindlier nature than your own" . . .
Ah, Eve, you little dreamed what foes
The plant and I had grown !

At last, one summer night, when all
The garden-flowers were dreaming still,
And still the old Baronial Hall,
The oak-trees on the hill,

A loud and sudden sound there stirred,
As when a thunder-cloud is torn ;
Such thunder-claps are only heard
When little gods are born.

The echo went from place to place,
And wakened every early sleeper.
Some said that poachers in the chase
Had slain a buck — or keeper.

Some hinted burglars at the door :
Some questioned if it had not light-
ened :

While all the maids, as each one swore,
From their seven wits were frightened.

The peacocks screamed, and every rook
Upon the elms at roost did caw :
Each inmate straight the house forsook :
They searched — and, last, — they saw

That sullen bud to flower had burst
Upon the sharp-leaved aloe there ; —
A wondrous flower, whose breath disperst
Rich odors on the air.

A flower, colossal — dazzling white,
And fair as is a Sphinx's face,
Turned broadly to the moon by night
From some vast temple's base.

Yes, Eve ! your aloe paid the pains
With which its sullen growth you
nurst.

But ah ! my nature yet remains
As churlish as at first.

And yet, and yet — it might have proved
Not all unworth your heart's approv-
ing.

Ah, had I only been beloved, —
(Beloved as I was loving !)

I might have been . . . how much, how
much,
I am not now, and shall not be !
One gentle look, one tender touch,
Had done so much for me !

I too, perchance, if kindly tended,
Had roused the napping generation,
With something novel, strange, and
splendid,
Deserving admiration :

For all the while there grew, and grew
A germ, — a bud, within my bosom :
No flower, fair Eve ! — for, thanks to you,
It never came to blossom.

"MEDIO DE FONTE LEPORUM
SURGIT AMARI ALIQUID."

LUCRETIVS.

WE walked about at Hampton Court,
Alone in sunny weather,
And talked — half earnest, and half
sport,
Linked arm in arm together.

I pressed her hand upon the steps.
Its warmest light the sky lent.
She sought the shade : I sought her lips :
We kissed : and then were silent.

Clare thought, no doubt, of many things,
Besides the kiss I stole there ; —
The sun, and sunny founts in rings,
The bliss of soul with soul there,

The bonnet, fresh from France, she wore,
My praise of how she wore it,
The arms above the carven door,
The orange-trees before it ; —

But I could only think, as, mute
I watched her happy smile there,
With rising pain, of this curst boot,
That pinched me all the while there.

THE DEATH OF KING HÆCON.

It was Odin that whispered in Vingolf,
"Go forth to the heath by the sea ;
Find Hæcon before the moon rises,
And bid him to supper with me."

They go forth to choose from the Princes
Of Yngvon, and summons from fight
A man who must perish in battle,
And sup where the gods sup to-night.

Leaning over her brazen spear, Gondula
Thus bespake her companions, "The
feast
Of the gods shall, in Vingolf, this
evening,
O ye Daughters of War, be increast.

"For Odin hath beckoned unto me,
For Odin hath whispered me forth,
To bid to his supper King Hæcon
With the half of the hosts of the
North."

Their horses gleamed white through the
vapor :
In the moonlight their corselets did
shine :
As they wavered and whispered together,
And fashioned their solemn design.

Hæcon heard them discoursing — "Why
hast thou
Thus disposed of the battle so soon ?
O, were we not worthy of conquest ?
Lo ! we die by the rise of the moon."

"It is not the moon that is rising,
But the glory which penetrates death,
When heroes to Odin are summoned :
Rise, Hæcon, and stand on the heath !

"It is we," she replied, "that have given
To thy pasture the flower of the fight,
It is we, it is we that have scattered
Thine enemies yonder in flight.

"Come now, let us push on our horses
Over yonder green worlds in the east,
Where the great gods are gathered to-
gether,
And the tables are piled for the feast.

"Betimes to give notice to Odin,
Who waits in his sovran abodes,
That the King to his palace is coming
This evening to visit the gods."

Odin rose when he heard it, and with him
Rose the gods, every god to his feet.
He beckoned Hermoder and Brago,
They came to him, each from his
seat.

"Go forth, O my sons, to King Hacon,
And meet him and greet him from all,
A King that we know by his valor
Is coming to-night to our hall."

Then faintly King Hacon approaches,
Arriving from battle, and sore
With the wounds that yet bleed through
his armor
Bedabbled and dripping with gore.

His visage is pallid and awful
With the awe and the pallor of death,
Like the moon that at midnight arises
Where the battle lies strewn on the
heath.

To him spake Hermoder and Brago,
"We meet thee and greet thee from
all,
To the gods thou art known by thy valor,
And they bid thee a guest to their hall."

"Come hither, come hither, King Hacon,
And join those eight brothers of thine,
Who already, awaiting thy coming,
With the gods in Walhala recline."

"And loosen, O Hacon, thy corselet,
For thy wounds are yet ghastly to see.
Go pour ale in the circle of heroes,
And drink, for the gods drink to thee."

But he answered, the hero, "I never
Will part with the armor I wear.
Shall a warrior stand before Odin
Unshamed, without helmet and spear?"

Black Fenris, the wolf, the destroyer,
Shall arise and break loose from his
chain
Before that a hero like Hacon
Shall stand in the battle again.

"CARPE DIEM."

HORACE.

TO-MORROW is a day too far
To trust, whate'er the day be.
We know, a little, what we are,
But who knows what he may be?

The oak that on the mountain grows
A goodly ship may be,
Next year; but it is as well (who knows?)
May be a gallows-tree.

'Tis God made man, no doubt, — not
Chance:
He made us, great and small;
But, being made, 'tis Circumstance
That finishes us all.

The Author of this world's great plan
The same results will draw
From human life, however man
May keep, or break, His law.

The Artist to his Art doth look;
And Art's great laws exact
That those portrayed in Nature's Book,
Should freely move and act.

The moral of the work unchanged
Endures eternally,
Howe'er by human wills arranged
The work's details may be.

"Give us this day our daily bread,
The morrow shall take heed
Unto itself." The Master said
No more. No more we need.

To-morrow cannot make or mar
To-day, whate'er the day be:
Nor can the men which now we are
Foresee the men we may be.

THE FOUNT OF TRUTH.

It was the place by legends told.
I read the tale when yet a child.
The castle on the mountain hold,
The woodland in the wild.

The wrecks of unremembered days
Were heaped around. It was the
hour
When bold men fear, and timorous
fays
Grow bold, and know their power.

The month was in the downward year.
The breath of Autumn chilled the
sky:
And useless leaves, too early sere,
Muttered and eddied by.

It seemed that I was wending back
Among the ruins of my youth,
Along a wild night-haunted track
To seek the Fount of Truth.

The Fount of Truth, — that wondrous
fount!
Its solemn sound I seemed to hear
Wind-borne adown the clouded mount,
Desolate, cold, and clear.

By clews long lost, and found again
I know not how, my course was led
Through lands remote from living men,
As life is from the dead.

Yet up that wild road, here and there,
Large, awful footprints did I meet:
Footprints of gods perchance they were,
Prints — not of human feet.

The mandrake underneath my foot
Gave forth a shriek of angry pain.
I heard the roar of some wild brute
Prowling the windy plain.

I reached the gate. I blew with power
A blast upon the darkness wide.
"Who art thou?" from the gloomy tower
The sullen warder cried.

"A Pilgrim to the Fount of Truth."
He laughed a laugh of scornful spleen.
"Art thou not from the Land of Youth?
Report where thou hast been."

"The Land of Youth! an alien race
There, in my old dominions, reign;
And, with them, one in whose false
face
I will not gaze again.

"From to and fro the world I come,
Where I have fared as exiles fare,
Mocked by the memories of home
And homeless everywhere.

"The snake that slid through Paradise
Yet on my pathway slides and slips:
The apple plucked in Eden twice
Is yet upon my lips.

"I can report the world is still
Where it hath been since it began:
And Wisdom, with bewildered will,
Is still the same sick man,

"Whom yet the self-same visions fool,
The self-same nightmares haunt and
scare.
Folly still breeds the Public Fool,
Knowledge increaseth care:

"Joy hath his tears, and Grief her smile;
And still both tears and smiles deceive.
And in the Valley of the Nile
I hear — and I believe —

"The Fiend and Michael, as of yore,
Yet wage the ancient war: but how
This strife will end at last, is more
Than our new sages know."

I heard the gate behind me close.
It closed with a reluctant wail.
Roused by the sound from her repose
Started the Porteress pale:

In pity, or in scorn . . . "Forbear,
Madman," she cried, . . . "thy search
for Truth.
The curl is in thy careless hair.
Return to Love and Youth.

"What lured thee here, through dark,
and doubt,
The many-periled prize to win?" —
"The dearth" . . . I said . . . "of all
without,
The thirst of all within.

"Age comes not with the wrinkled brow
But earlier, with the ravaged heart;
Full oft hath fallen the winter snow
Since Love from me did part."

"Long in dry places, void of cheer,
Long have I roamed. These features
scan:
If magic lore be thine, look here,
Behold the Talisman!"

I crossed the court. The bloodhound
bayed
Behind me from the outer wall.
The drowsy grooms my call obeyed
And lit the haunted hall.

They brought me horse, and lance, and
helm,
They bound the buckler on my breast,
Spread the weird chart of that wild
realm,
And armed me for the quest.

Uprose the Giant of the Keep.
"Rash fool, ride on!" . . . I heard
him say,
"The night is late, the heights are steep,
And Truth is far away!"

And . . . "Far away!" . . . the echoes
fell
Behind, as from that grisly hold
I turned. No tongue of man may
tell
What mine must leave untold.

The Fount of Truth, — that wondrous
fount!

Far off I heard its waters play.
But ere I scaled the solemn mount,
Dawn broke. The trivial day

To its accustomed course flowed back,
And all the glamour faded round.
Is it forever lost, — that track?
Or — was it never found?

MIDGES.

SHE is talking æsthetics, the dear clever
creature!

Upon Man, and his functions, she
speaks with a smile.
Her ideas are divine upon Art, upon
Nature,
The Sublime, the Heroic, and Mr.
Carlyle.

I no more am found worthy to join in
the talk, now;
So I follow with my surreptitious
cigar;

While she leads our poetical friend up
the walk, now,
Who quotes Wordsworth and praises
her "*Thoughts on a Star*."

Meanwhile, there is dancing in yonder
green bower
A swarm of young midges. They
dance high and low.

'T is a sweet little species that lives but
one hour,
And the eldest was born half an hour
ago.

One impulsive young midge I hear ar-
dently pouring
In the ears of a shy little wanton in
gauze,
His eternal devotion; his ceaseless ador-
ing;
Which shall last till the Universe
breaks from its laws:

His passion is not, he declares, the mere
fever
Of a rapturous moment. It knows no
control:
It will burn in his breast through exist-
ence forever,
Immutably fixed in the deeps of the
soul!

She wavers: she flutters: . . . male
midges are fickle:
Dare she trust him her future? . . .
she asks with a sigh:
He implores, . . . and a tear is beginning
to trickle:
She is weak: they embrace, and . . .
the lovers pass by.

While they pass me, down here on a
rose leaf has lighted
A pale midge, his feelers all drooping
and torn:

His existence is withered; its future is
blighted:
His hopes are betrayed: and his breast
is forlorn.

By the midge his heart trusted his heart
is deceived, now
In the virtue of midges no more he
believes:

From love in its falsehood, once wildly
believed, now
He will bury his desolate life in the
leaves.

His friends would console him . . . the
noblest and sagest
Of midges have held that a midge
lives again.

In Eternity, say they, the strife thou
now wagest
With sorrow shall cease . . . but their
words are in vain!

Can Eternity bring back the seconds now
wasted
In hopeless desire? or restore to his
breast

The belief he has lost, with the bliss he
once tasted,
Embracing the midge that his being
loved best?

His friends would console him . . . life
yet is before him;
Many hundred long seconds he still
has to live:

In the state yet a mighty career spreads
before him:
Let him seek in the great world of
action to strive!

There is Fame! there's Ambition! and,
grander than either,
There is Freedom! . . . the progress
and march of the race! . . .
But to Freedom his breast beats no
longer, and neither
Ambition nor action her loss can replace.

If the time had been spent in acquiring
æsthetics
I have squandered in learning this
language of midges,
There might, for my friend in her peri-
patetics,
Have been now *two* asses to help o'er
the bridges.

As it is, . . . I'll report her the whole
conversation.
It would have been longer; but, some-
how or other
(In the midst of that misanthrope's
long lamentation),
A midge in my right eye became a
young mother.

Since my friend is so clever, I'll ask her
to tell me
Why the least living thing (a mere
midge in the egg!)
Can make a man's tears flow, as now it
befell me . . .
O you dear clever woman, explain it,
I beg!

THE LAST TIME THAT I MET
LADY RUTH.

THERE are some things hard to under-
stand.
O help me, my God, to trust in thee!
But I never shall forget her soft white
hand,
And her eyes when she looked at me.

It is hard to pray the very same prayer
Which once at our mother's knee we
prayed —
When, where we trusted our whole
heart, there
Our trust hath been betrayed.

I swear that the milk-white muslin so
light
On her virgin breast, where it lay
demure,
Seemed to be toucht to a purer white
By the touch of a breast so pure.

I deemed her the one thing undefiled
By the air we breathe, in a world of
sin:
The truest, the tenderest, purest child
A man ever trusted in!

When she blamed me (she, with her fair
child's face!)
That never with her to the Church I
went
To partake of the Gospel of truth and
grace,
And the Christian sacrament,

And I said I would go for her own sweet
sake,
Though it was but herself I should
worship there,
How that happy child's face strove to
take
On its dimples a serious air!

I remember the chair she would set for
me,
By the flowers, when all the house
was gone
To drive in the Park, and I and she
Were left to be happy alone.

There she leaned her head on my knees,
my Ruth,
With the primrose loose in her half-
closed hands:
And I told her tales of my wandering
youth
In the far fair foreign lands. —

The last time I met her was here in
town,
At a fancy ball at the Duchess of D.,
On the stairs, where her husband was
handing her down.
— There we met, and she talked to me.

She, with powder in hair, and patch on
chin,
And I, in the garb of a pilgrim Priest,
And between us both, without and
within,
A hundred years at least!

We talked of the House, and the late
long rains,
And the crush at the French Amba-
sador's ball,
And . . . well, I have not blown out my
brains.
You see I can laugh. That is all.

MATRIMONIAL COUNSELS.

You are going to marry my pretty rela-
tion,
My dove-like young cousin, so soft in
the eyes,
You are entering on life's settled dis-
simulation,
And, if you'd be happy, in season be
wise.

Take my counsel. The more that, in
church, you are tempted
To yawn at the sermon, the more
you'll attend.

The more you'd from milliner's bills be
exempted,
The more on your wife's little wishes
you'll spend.

You'll be sure, every Christmas, to send
to the rector
A dozen of wine, and a hamper or
two.

The more your wife plagues you, the
more you'll respect her,
She'll be pleasing your friend, if she's
not plaguing you.

For women of course, like ourselves,
need emotion;
And happy the husband, whose failings
afford
To the wife of his heart, such good
cause for commotion,
That she seeks no excitement, save
plaguing her lord.

Above all, you'll be careful that nothing
offends, too,
Your wife's lady's maid, though she
give herself airs.
With the friend of a friend it is well to
be friends too,
And especially so, when that friend
lives up stairs.

Under no provocation you'll ever avow
yourself
A little put out, when you're kept at
the door,
And you never, I scarcely need say, will
allow yourself
To call your wife's mother a vulgar
old bore.

However she dresses, you'll never sug-
gest to her
That her taste, as to colors, could
scarcely be worse,
Of the rooms in your house, you will
give up the best to her,
And you never will ask for the car-
riage, of course.

If, at times with a doubt on the soul
and her future,
Revelation and reason, existence
should trouble you,
You'll be always on guard to keep care-
fully mute your
Ideas on the subject, and read Dr. W.

Bring a shawl with you, home, when you
come from the Club, sir,
Or a ring, lest your wife, when you
meet her, should pout;
And don't fly in a rage and behave like
a cub, sir,
If you find that the fire, like yourself,
has gone out.

In eleven good instances out of a dozen,
'Tis the husband's a cur, when the
wife is a cat.
She is meekness itself, my soft-eyed
little cousin,
But a wife has her rights, and I'd
have you know that.

Keep my counsel. Life's struggles are
brief to be borne, friend.
In Heaven there's no marriage nor
giving in marriage.
When Death comes, think how truly
your widow will mourn, friend,
And your worth not the best of your
friends will disparage!

SEE-SAW.

SHE was a harlot, and I was a thief:
But we loved each other beyond belief:

She lived in the garret, and I in the
kitchen,
And love was all that we both were rich
in.

When they sent her at last to the hos-
pital,
Both day and night my tears did fall;
They fell so fast that, to dry their grief,
I borrowed my neighbor's handkerchief.

The world, which, as it is brutally taught,
Still judges the act in lieu of the thought,
Found my hand in my neighbor's pocket,
And clapped me, at once, under chain and
locket.

When they asked me about it, I told
them plain,
Love it was that had turned my brain:
How should I heed where my hand had
been,
When my heart was dreaming of Cele-
stine?

Twelve friends were so struck by my
woeful air,
That they sent me abroad for change of
air:
And, to prove me the kindness of their
intent,
They sent me at charge of the Govern-
ment.

When I came back again, — whom, think
you, I meet
But Celestine, here, in Regent Street?
In a carriage adorned with a coronet,
And a dress, all flounces, and lace, and
jet:

For her carriage drew up to the book-
seller's door,
Where they publish those nice little
books for the poor:
I took off my hat: and my face she
knew,
And gave me — a sermon by Mr. Bellew.

But she gave me (God bless her!) along
with the book,
Such a sweet sort of smile, such a heav-
enly look,
That, as long as I live, I shall never for-
get
Celestine, in her coach with the earl's
coronet.

There's a game that men play at in great
London-town;
Whereby some must go up, sir, and some
must go down:
And, since the mud sticks to your coat
if you fall,
Why, the strongest among us keep close
to the wall.

But some day, soon or late, in my shoes
I shall stand,
More exalted than any great Duke in
the land;
A clean shirt on my back, and a rose in
my coat,
And a collar conferred by the Queen
round my throat.

And I know that my Celestine will not
forget
To be there, in her coach with my lord's
coronet:
She will smile to me then, as she smiled
to me now:
I shall nod to her gayly, and make her
my bow; —

Before I rejoin all those famous old
thieves
Whose deeds have immortalized Rome,
sir, and Greece:
Whose names are inscribed upon His-
tory's leaves,
Like my own on the books of the City
Police: —

Alexander, and Cæsar, and other great
robbers,
Who once tried to pocket the whole uni-
verse:
Not to speak of our own parliamentary
jobbers,
With their hands, bless them all, in the
popular purse!

BABYLONIA.

ENOUGH of simpering and grimace!
Enough of damning one's soul for
nothing!
Enough of Vacuity trimmed with lace!
And Poverty proud of her purple cloth-
ing!
In Babylon, whene'er there's a wind
(Whether it blow rain, or whether it
blow sand),

The weathercocks change their mighty mind;
And the weathercocks are forty thousand.

Forty thousand weathercocks,
Each well-minded to keep his place,
Turning about in the great and small ways!

Each knows, whatever the weather's shocks,
That the wind will never blow in his face;

And in Babylon the wind blows always.

I cannot tell how it may strike you,
But it strikes me now, for the first and last time,

That there may be better things to do,
Than watching the weathercocks for pastime.

And I wish I were out of Babylon,
Out of sight of column and steeple,
Out of fashion and form, for one,
And out of the midst of this double-faced people.

Enough of catgut! Enough of the sight
Of the dolls it sets dancing all the night!
For there is a notion come to me,
As here, in Babylon, I am lying,
That far away, over the sea,
And under another moon and star,
Braver, more beautiful beings are dying
(Dying, not dancing, dying, dying!)
To a music nobler far.

Full well I know that, before it came
To inhabit this feeble, faltering frame,
My soul was weary; and, ever since then,

It has seemed to me, in the stir and bustle

Of this eager world of women and men,
That my life was tired before it began,
That even the child had fatigued the man,
And brain and heart have done their part

To wear out sinew and muscle.

Yet, sometimes, a wish has come to me,
To wander, wander, I know not where,
Out of the sight of all that I see,
Out of the hearing of all that I hear;
Where only the tawny, bold, wild beast
Roams his realms; and find, at least,
The strength which even the beast finds there,

A joy, though but a savage joy;—
Were it only to find the food I need,
The scent to track, and the force to destroy,
And the very appetite to feed;
The bliss of the sense without the thought,
And the freedom, for once in my life,
from aught
That fills my life with care.

And never this thought hath so wildly crost
My mind, with its wildering, strange temptation,

As just when I was enjoying the most
The blessings of what is called Civilization:—

The glossy boot which tightens the foot;
The club at which my friend was black-balled

(I am sorry, of course, but one must be exclusive);

The yellow kid glove whose shape I approve,
And the journal in which I am kindly called

Whatever's not libellous—only abusive:

The ball to which I am careful to go,
Where the folks are so cool, and the rooms are so hot;

The opera, which shows one what music—is not;

And the simper from Lady . . . but why should you know?

Yet, I am a part of the things I despise,
Since my life is bound by their common span:

And each idler I meet, in square or in street,

Hath within him what all that's without him belies,—

The miraculous, infinite heart of man,
With its countless capabilities!

The sleekest guest at the general feast,
That at every sip, as he sips, says grace,

Hath in him a touch of the untamed beast;
And change of nature is change of place.

The judge on the bench, and the scamp at the dock,

Have, in each of them, much that is common to both;

Each is part of the parent stock,
And their difference comes of their different cloth.

'Twixt the Seven Dials and Exeter Hall
The gulf that is fixed is not so wide:
And the fool that, last year, at Her Majesty's Ball,
Sickened me so with his simper of pride,
Is the hero now heard of, the first on the wall,
With the bayonet-wound in his side.

O, for the times which were (if any
Time be heroic) heroic indeed!
When the men were few,
And the deeds to do
Were mighty, and many,
And each man in his hand held a noble deed.

Now the deeds are few,
And the men are many,
And each man has, at most, but a noble need.

Blind fool! . . . I know that all acted time

By that which succeeds it, is ever received

As calmer, completer, and more sublime,
Only because it is finished: because
We only behold the thing it achieved;
We behold not the thing that it was.

For, while it stands whole and immutable,

In the marble of memory—we, who have seen

But the statue before us,—how can we tell

What the men that have hewn at the block may have been?

Their passion is merged in its passionlessness;

Their strife in its stillness closed forever:

Their change upon change in its changelessness;

In its final achievement, their feverish endeavor:

Who knows how sculptor on sculptor starved

With the thought in the head by the hand uncarved?

And he that spread out in its ample repose

That grand, indifferent, godlike brow,
How vainly his own may have ached,
who knows,

'Twixt the laurel above and the wrinkle below?

So again to Babylon I come back,
Where this fettered giant of Human Nature
Cramped in limb, and constrained in stature,
In the torture-chamber of Vanity lies;
Helpless and weak, and compelled to speak

The things he must despise.
You stars, so still in the midnight blue,
Which over these huddling roofs I view,
Out of reach of this Babylonian riot,—
We so restless, and you so quiet,
What is difference 'twixt us and you?

You each may have pined with a pain divine,

For aught I know,
As wildly as this weak heart of mine,

In an Age ago:

For whence should you have that stern repose,

Which, here, dwells but on the brows of those

Who have lived, and survived life's fever,

Had you never known the ravage and fire
Of that inexpressible Desire,

Which wastes and calcines whatever is less

In the soul, than the soul's deep consciousness

Of a life that shall last forever?

Doubtless, doubtless, again and again,
Many a mouth has starved for bread

In a city whose wharves are choked with corn

And many a heart hath perished dead
From being too utterly forlorn,

In a city whose streets are choked with men.

Yet the bread is there, could one find it out:

And there is a heart for a heart, no doubt,
Wherever a human heart may beat;

And room for courage, and truth, and love,

To move, wherever a man may move,
In the thickest crowded street.

O Lord of the soul of man, whose will
Made earth for man, and man for heaven,

Help all thy creatures to fulfil
The hopes to each one given!

So fair thou madest, and so complete,
The little daisies at our feet ;
So sound, and so robust in heart,
The patient beasts, that bear their part
In this world's labor, never asking
The reason of its ceaseless tasking ;
Hast thou made man, though more in
kind,

By reason of his soul and mind,
Yet less in unison with life,
By reason of an inward strife,
Than these, thy simpler creatures, are,
Submitted to his use and care ?

For these, indeed, appear to live
To the full verge of their own power,
Nor ever need that time should give
To life one space beyond the hour.
They do not pine for what is not ;
Nor quarrel with the things which are ;
Their yesterdays are all forgot ;
Their morrows are not feared from far :
They do not weep, and wail, and moan,
For what is past, or what's to be,
Or what's not yet, and may be never ;
They do not their own lives disown,

Nor haggle with eternity
For some unknown Forever.

Ah yet, — in this must I believe
That man is nobler than the rest : —
That, looking in on his own breast,
He measures thus his strength and size
With supernatural destinies,
Whose shades o'er all his being
fall ;

And, in that dread comparison
'Twixt what is deemed and what is
done,
He can, at intervals, perceive
How weak he is, and small.

Therefore, he knows himself a child,
Set in this rudimental star,
To learn the alphabet of Being ;
By straws dismayed, by toys beguiled,
Yet conscious of a home afar ;
With all things here but ill agreeing,
Because he trusts, in manhood's prime,
To walk in some celestial clime ;
Sit in his Father's house ; and be
The inmate of Eternity.

BOOK IV.—IN SWITZERLAND.

THE HEART AND NATURE.

THE lake is calm ; and, calm, the skies
In yonder silent sunset glow,
Where, o'er the woodland, homeward flies
The solitary crow ;

The woodman to his hut is gone ;
The wood-dove in the elm is still ;
The last sheep drinks, and wanders on
To graze at will.

Nor aught the pensive prospect breaks,
Save where my slow feet stir the grass,
Or where the trout to diamonds breaks
The lake's pale glass.

No moan the cushat makes, to heave
A leaflet round her windless nest ;
The air is silent in the eve ;
The world's at rest.

All bright below ; all calm above ;
No sense of pain, no sign of wrong ;

Save in thy heart of hopeless love,
Poor child of Song !

Why must the soul through Nature rove,
At variance with her general plan ?
A stranger to the Power, whose love
Soothes all save Man ?

Why lack the strength of meaner crea-
tures ?
The wandering sheep, the grazing kine,
Are surer of their simple natures
Than I of mine.

For all their wants the poorest land
Affords supply ; they browse and breed ;
I scarce divine, and ne'er have found,
What most I need.

O God, that in this human heart
Hath made Belief so hard to grow,
And set the doubt, the pang, the smart
In all we know —

Why hast thou, too, in solemn jest
At this tormented thinking-power,
Inscribed, in flame on yonder West,
In hues on every flower,

Through all the vast unthinking sphere
Of mere material Force without,
Rebuke so vehement and severe
To the least doubt ?

And robbed the world and hung the night,
With silent, stern, and solemn forms ;
And strown with sounds of awe and
might,
The seas and storms, —

All lacking power to impart
To man the secret he assails,
But armed to crush him, if his heart
Once doubts or fails !

To make him feel the same forlorn
Despair the Fiend hath felt ere now,
In gazing at the stern sweet scorn
On Michael's brow.

A QUIET MOMENT.

STAY with me, Lady, while you may !
For life's so sad, — this hour's so
sweet ;

Ah, Lady, — life too long will stay ;
Too soon this hour will fleet.

How fair this mountain's purple bust,
Alone in high and glimmering air !
And see, . . . those village spires, up-
thrust
From yon dark plain, — how fair !

How sweet yon lone and lovely scene,
And yonder dropping fiery ball,
And eve's sweet spirit, that steals, un-
seen,
With darkness over all !

This blessed hour is yours, and eve's ;
And this is why it seems so sweet
To lie, as hushed as fallen leaves
In autumn, at your feet ;

And watch, awhile released from care,
The twilight in yon quiet skies,
The twilight in your quiet hair,
The twilight in your eyes :

Till in my soul the twilight stays,
— Eve's twilight, since the dawn's is
o'er !
And life's too well-known worthless
days
Become unknown once more.

Your face is no uncommon face ;
Like it, I have seen many a one,
And may again, before my race
Of care be wholly run.

But not the less, those earnest brows,
And that pure oval cheek can charm ; —
Those eyes of tender deep repose ;
That breast, the heart keeps warm.

Because a sense of goodness sleeps
In every sober, soft, brown tress,
That o'er those brows, uncared for, keeps
Its shadowy quietness :

Because that lip's soft silence shows,
Though passion it hath never known,
That well, to kiss one kiss, it knows —
— A woman's holiest one !

Yours is the charm of calm good sense,
Of wholesome views of earth and
heaven,
Of pity, touched with reverence,
To all things freely given.

Your face no sleepless midnight fills,
For all its serious sweet endeavor ;
It plants no pang, no rapture thrills,
But ah ! — it pleases ever !

Not yours is Cleopatra's eye,
And Juliet's tears you never knew :
Never will amorous Antony
Kiss kingdoms out for you !

Never for you will Romeo's love,
From deeps of moonlit musing, break
To poetry about the glove
Whose touch may press your cheek.

But ah, in one, — no Antony
Nor Romeo now, nor like to these, —
(Whom neither Cleopatra's eye,
Nor Juliet's tears, could please)

How well they lull the lurking care
Which else within the mind endures, —
That soft white hand, that soft dark hair,
And that soft voice of yours !