

The Englishman and Other Poems

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

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PREFACE--THE QUEEN'S LAST RIDE

(Written on the day of Queen Victoria's funeral)

The Queen is taking a drive to-day,
They have hung with purple the carriage-way,
They have dressed with purple the royal track
Where the Queen goes forth and never comes back.

Let no man labour as she goes by
On her last appearance to mortal eye;
With heads uncovered let all men wait
For the Queen to pass in her regal state.
Army and Navy shall lead the way
For that wonderful coach of the Queen's to-day.

Kings and Princes and Lords of the land
Shall ride behind her, a humble band;
And over the city and over the world
Shall the Flags of all Nations be half-mast-furled,
For the silent lady of royal birth
Who is riding away from the Courts of earth,
Riding away from the world's unrest
To a mystical goal, on a secret quest.

Though in royal splendour she drives through town,
Her robes are simple, she wears no crown:
And yet she wears one, for widowed no more,
She is crowned with the love that has gone before,
And crowned with the love she has left behind
In the hidden depths of each mourner's mind.

Bow low your heads--lift your hearts on high -
The Queen in silence is driving by!

THE ENGLISHMAN

Born in the flesh, and bred in the bone,
Some of us harbour still
A New World pride: and we flaunt or hide
The Spirit of Bunker Hill.
We claim our place, as a separate race,
Or a self-created clan;
Till there comes a day when we like to say,
'We are kin of the Englishman.'

For under the front that seems so cold,
And the voice that is wont to storm,
We are certain to find, a big, broad mind

And a heart that is soft and warm.
And he carries his woes in a lordly way,
As only the great souls can:
And it makes us glad when in truth we say,
We are kin of the Englishman.'

He slams his door in the face of the world,
If he thinks the world too bold.
He will even curse; but he opens his purse
To the poor, and the sick, and the old.
He is slow in giving to woman the vote,
And slow to put up her fan;
But he gives her room in the hour of doom,
And dies--like an Englishman.

CANADA

England, father and mother in one,
Look on your stalwart son.
Sturdy and strong, with the valour of youth,
Where is another so lusty?
Coated and mailed, with the armour of truth,
Where is another so trusty?
Flesh of your flesh, and bone of your bone,
He is yours alone.

England, father and mother in one,
See the wealth of your son.
Forests primeval, and virginal sod,
Wheat-fields golden and splendid:
Riches of nature and opulent God
For the use of his children intended.
A courage that dares, and a hope that endures,
And a soul all yours.

England, father and mother in one,
Hear the cry of your son.
Little cares he for the glories of earth
Lying around and above him,
Yearning is he for the rights of his birth,
And the heart of his mother to love him.
Vast are your gifts to him, ample his store,
Now open your door.

England, father and mother in one,
Heed the voice of your son.
Proffer him place in your councils of state:
Let him sit near, and attend you.
Ponder his words in the hour of debate,
Strong is his arm to defend you.
Flesh of your flesh, and bone of your bone,
Give him his own.

THE CALL

In the banquet hall of Progress
God has bidden to a feast
All the women in the East.

Some have said 'We are not ready, -
We must wait another day.'
Some, with voices clear and steady,
'Lord, we hear, and we obey.'

Others, timid and uncertain,
Step forth trembling in the light,
Many hide behind the curtain
With their faces hid from sight.

In the banquet hall of Progress
All must gather soon or late,
And the patient Host will wait.

If to-day, or if to-morrow,
If in gladness, or in woe,
If with pleasure, or with sorrow,
All must answer, all must go.
They must go with unveiled faces,
Clothed in virtue and in pride.
For the Host has set their places,
And He will not be denied.

CORONATION POEM AND PRAYER

The world has crowned a thousand kings:
But destiny has kept
Her weightiest hour of kingly power
To offer England's son.
The rising bell of Progress rings;
And Truths which long have slept,
Like prophets strange, predicting change,
Before Time's chariot run.

The greatest Empire of the Earth.
Old England proudly stands.
Like arteries her Colonies
Reach out from sea to sea.
She clasps all races in her girth;
Her gaze the world commands;
And far and wide where strong ships ride,
The British Flag floats free.

Oh, never since the stars began
Their round of Cosmic law,
And souls evolved in ways unsolved,
And kingdoms reached their prime
Has Destiny held out to Man

A gift so full of awe,
As England's crown which she hands down
In this stupendous time.

This is a crucial hour, when Fate
Tries Monarchs as by fire.
All rulers must be more than just -
Men starve on bread alone.
Old England's sense of RIGHT is great:
But now let her aspire
To feel more love, and build thereof
An everlasting Throne.

The dreaming East, awake at last,
Is asking 'when' and 'why';
Wait not too long nor answer wrong,
Nor in too stern a voice.
Let England profit by her past,
And with her wise reply
Rouse hearts, within her foster kin
To hope, and to rejoice.

True wealth dwells not in things we own,
But in our USE of things.
Who would command a conquered land
Must conquer first its heart.
Such might as Man has never known,
And power undreamed by kings,
And boundless strength would come at length
To one who used that art.

For now has dawned the People's day:
A day of great unrest.
Nor king nor creed can still man's need
Of time and space to grow.
All lands must shape a wider way,
For this eternal quest;
And Leisure yield a larger field
Where work-worn feet may go.

The Universe is all a-thrill
With changes imminent.
The World in faith, with bated breath,
Holds free the Leader's place.
And wise is he whose heart and will
At one with Time's intent,
Shall open wide doors long denied
To MOTHERS of the race.

On this round globe, oh, when and where
Were fitter time and scene
For Woman's soul to reach its goal
Than NOW in England's realm.
Was not the crown its King will wear
Made glorious by its Queen?
And who steered straight its ship of State?
VICTORIA AT THE HELM!

Kings have been kings by accident,

By favour and by force,
But right of birth and moral worth,
And Empires rich and broad
For England's King to-day are blent
Like rivers on one course.
But, ah! the light falls searching white
Down from the Throne of God.

Lord of the Earth and heavenly-spheres,
Creator of all things,
Thou who hast wrought great worlds from naught,
Give strength to England's son.
Give courage to dispel those fears
That come to even kings,
And for his creed give Love's full mead;
Amen. Thy Will be done.

TWO VOICES

VIRTUE

O wanton one, O wicked one, how was it that you came,
Down from the paths of purity, to walk the streets of shame?
And wherefore was that precious wealth, God gave to you in trust,
Flung broadcast for the feet of men to trample in the dust?

VICE

O prudent one, O spotless one, now listen well to me.
The ways that led to where I tread these paths of sin, were three:
And God, and good folks, all combined to make them fair to see.

VIRTUE

O wicked one, blasphemous one, now how could that thing be?

VICE

The first was Nature's lovely road, whereon my life was hurled.
I felt the stirring in my blood, which permeates the world.
I thrilled like willows in the spring, when sap begins to flow,
It was young passion in my veins, but how was I to know?

The second was the silent road, where modest mothers dwell,
And hide from eager, curious minds, the truth they ought to tell.
That misnamed road called 'Innocence' should bear the sign 'to Hell.'
With song and dance in ignorance I walked that road and fell.

VIRTUE

O fallen one, unhappy one, but why not rise and go
Back to the ways you left behind, and leave your sins below,
Nor linger in this sink of sin, since now you see, and know.

VICE

The third road was the fair high way, trod by the good and great.
I cried aloud to that vast crowd, and told my hapless fate.
They hurried all through door and wall and shut Convention's gate.
I beat it with my bleeding hands: they must have heard me knock.
They must have heard wild sob and word, yet no one turned the lock.

Oh, it is very desolate, on Virtue's path to stand,
And see the good folks flocking by, withholding look and hand.

And so with hungry heart and soul, and weary brain and feet,
I left that highway whence you came, and sought the sinful street.

O prudent one, O spotless one, when good folks speak of me,
Go, tell them of the roads I came; the road ways fair, and three.

A BALLADE OF THE UNBORN DEAD

They walked the valley of the dead;
Lit by a weird half light;
No sound they made, no word they said;
And they were pale with fright.
Then suddenly from unseen places came
Loud laughter, that was like a whip of flame.

They looked, and saw, beyond, above,
A land where wronged souls wait;
(Those spirits called to earth by love,
And driven back by hate).
And each one stood in anguish dumb and wild,
As she beheld the phantom of her child.

Yea, saw the soul her wish had hurled
Out into night and death;
Before it reached the Mother world,
Or drew its natal breath.
And terrified, each hid her face and fled
Beyond the presence of her unborn dead.

And God's Great Angel, who provides
Souls for our mortal land,
Laughed, with the laughter that derides,
At that fast fleeing band
Of self-made barren women of the earth.
(Hell has no curse that withers like such mirth.)

'O Angel, tell us who were they,
That down below us fared;
Those shapes with faces strained and grey,
And eyes that stared and stared;
Something there was about them, gave us fear;
Yet are we lonely, now they are not here.'

Thus spake the spectral children; thus
The Angel made reply:

'They have no part or share with us;
They were but passers-by.'
'But may we pray for them?' the phantoms plead.
'Yea, for they need your prayers,' the Angel said.

They went upon their lonely way;
(Far, far from Paradise);
Their path was lit with one wan ray
From ghostly children's eyes;
The little children who were never born;
And as they passed, the Angel laughed in scorn.

THE TRUTH TELLER

The Truth Teller lifts the curtain,
And shows us the people's plight;
And everything seems uncertain,
And nothing at all looks right.
Yet out of the blackness groping,
My heart finds a world in bloom;
For it somehow is fashioned for hoping,
And it cannot live in the gloom.

He tells us from border to border,
That race is warring with race;
With riot and mad disorder,
The earth is a wretched place;
And yet ere the sun is setting
I am thinking of peace, not strife;
For my heart has a way of forgetting
All things save the joy of life.

I heard in my Youth's beginning
That earth was a region of woe,
And trouble, and sorrow, and sinning:
The Truth Teller told me so.
I knew it was true, and tragic;
And I mourned over much that was wrong;
And then, by some curious magic,
The heart of me burst into song.

The years have been going, going,
A mixture of pleasure and pain;
But the Truth Teller's books are showing
That evil is on the gain.
And I know that I ought to be grieving,
And I should be too sad to sing;
But somehow I keep on believing
That life is a glorious thing.

JUST YOU

All the selfish joys of earth,
I am getting through.
That which used to lure and lead
Now I pass and give no heed;
Only one thing seems of worth -
Just you.

Not for me the lonely height,
And the larger view;
Lowlier ways seem fair and wide,
While we wander side by side.
One thing makes the whole world bright -
Just you.

Not for distant goals I run,
No great aim pursue;
Most of earth's ambitions seem
Like the shadow of a dream.
All the world to me means one -
Just you.

REFLECTION

Twice have I seen God's full reflected grace.
Once when the wailing of a child at birth
Proclaimed another soul had come to earth,
That look shone on, and through the mother's face.

And once when silence, absolute and vast,
Followed the final indrawn mortal breath,
Sudden upon the countenance of death
That supreme glory of God's grace was cast.

SONGS OF LOVE AND THE SEA

I

When first we met (the Sea and I),
Like one before a King,
I stood in awe; nor felt nor saw
The sun, the winds, the earth, the sky
Or any other thing.
God's Universe, to me,
Was just the Sea.

When next we met, the lordly Main
Played but a courtier's part;
Crowned Queen was I; and earth and sky,
And sun and sea were my domain,
Since love was in my heart.

Before, beyond, above,
Was only Love.

II

Love built me, on a little rock,
A little house of pine,
At first, the Sea
Beat angrily
About that house of mine;
(That dear, dear home of mine).

But when it turned to go away
Beyond the sandy track,
Down o'er its wall
The house would call,
Until the Sea came back;
(It always hurried back).

And now the two have grown so fond,
(Oh, breathe no word of this),
When clouds hang low,
And east winds blow,
They meet and kiss and kiss:
(At night, I hear them kiss).

III

No man can understand the Sea, until
He knows all passions of the senses; all
The great emotions of the heart; and each
Exalted aspiration of the soul.
Then may he sit beside the sea and say:
'I, too, have flung myself against the rocks,
And kissed their flinty brows with no return;
And fallen spent upon unfeeling sands.
I, too, have gone forth yearning, to far shores,
Seeking that something which would bring content;
And finding only what I took away;
And I have looked up, through the veil of skies,
When all the world was still, and understood
That I am one with Nature and with God.'

IV

The Dawn was flying from the Night;
Swift as the wind she sped;
Her hair was like a fleece of light;
Her cheeks were warm and red.

All passion pale, the Night pursued;
She fled away, away;
And in her garments, rainbow hued,
She gained the peak of day.

And then, all shaken with alarms,
She leaped down from its crest;
Into the Sea's uplifted arms,
And swooned upon his breast.

ACQUAINTANCE

Not we who daily walk the City's street;
Not those who have been cradled in its heart,
Best understand its architectural art,
Or realise its grandeur. Oft we meet
Some stranger who has stayed his passing feet
And lingered with us for a single hour,
And learned more of cathedral, and of tower,
Than we, who deem our knowledge quite complete.

Not always those we hold most loved and dear,
Not always those who dwell with us, know best
Our greater selves. Because they stand so near
They cannot see the lofty mountain crest,
The gleaming sun-kissed height, which fair and dear
Stands forth--revealed unto the some-time guest.

IN INDIA'S DREAMY LAND

In India's land one listens aghast
To the people who scream and bawl;
For each caste yells at a lower caste,
And the Britisher yells at them all.

RANGOON

Just a changing sea of colour
Surging up and flowing down;
And pagodas shining golden, night and noon;
And a sun-burst-tinted throng
Of young priests that move along
Under sun-burst-hued umbrellas through the town.
That's Rangoon.

THOUGHTS ON LEAVING JAPAN

A changing medley of insistent sounds,
Like broken airs, played on a Samisen,
Pursues me, as the waves blot out the shore.
The trot of wooden heels; the warning cry
Of patient runners; laughter and strange words

Of children, children, children everywhere:
The clap of reverent hands, before some shrine;
And over all the haunting temple bells,
Waking, in silent chambers of the soul,
Dim memories of long-forgotten lives.

But oh! the sorrow of the undertone;
The wail of hopeless weeping in the dawn
From lips that smiled through gilded bars at night.

Brave little people, of large aims, you bow
Too often, and too low before the Past;
You sit too long in worship of the dead.
Yet have you risen, open eyed, to greet
The great material Present. Now salute
The greater Future, blazing its bold trail
Through old traditions. Leave your dead to sleep
In quiet peace with God. Let your concern
Be with the living, and the yet unborn;
Bestow on them your thoughts, and waste no time
In costly honours to insensate dust.
Unlock the doors of usefulness, and lead
Your lovely daughters forth to larger fields,
Away from jungles of the ancient sin.

For oh! the sorrow of that undertone,
The wail of hopeless weeping in the dawn
From lips that smiled through gilded bars at night.

ON SEEING THE DIABUTSU--AT KAMAKURA, JAPAN

Long have I searched, cathedral shrine, and hall,
To find a symbol, from the hand of art,
That gave the full expression (not a part)
Of that ecstatic peace which follows all
Life's pain and passion. Strange it should befall
This outer emblem of the inner heart
Was waiting far beyond the great world's mart -
Immortal answer, to the mortal call.

Unknown the artist, vaguely known his creed:
But the bronze wonder of his work sufficed
To lift me to the heights his faith had trod.
For one rich moment, opulent indeed,
I walked with Krishna, Buddha, and the Christ,
And felt the full serenity of God.

THE LITTLE LADY OF THE BULLOCK CART

Now is the time when India is gay
With wedding parties; and the radiant throngs

Seem like a scattered rainbow taking part
In human pleasures. Dressed in bright array,
They fling upon the bride their wreaths of songs -
The Little Lady of the Bullock Cart.

Here is the temple ready for the rite:
The large-eyed bullocks halt; and waiting arms
Lift down the bride. All India's curious art
Speaks in the gems with which she is bedight.
And in the robes which hide her sweet alarms -
The Little Lady of the Bullock Cart.

This is her day of days: her splendid hour
When joy is hers, though love is all unknown.
It has not dawned upon her childish heart.
But human triumph, in a temporal power,
Has crowned her queen upon a one-day throne -
The Little Lady of the Bullock Cart.

Ah, Little Lady! What will be your fate?
So long, so long, the outward-reaching years:
So brief the joy of this elusive part;
So frail the shoulders for the loads that wait:
So bitter salt the virgin widow's tears -
O Little Lady of the Bullock cart.

EAST AND WEST

The Day has never understood the Gloaming or the Night;
Though sired by one Creative Power, and nursed at Nature's breast;
The White Man ever fails to read the Dark Man's heart aright;
Though from the self-same Source they came, upon the self-same quest;
So deep and wide, the Great Divide,
Between the East and West.

But like a shadow on a screen, mine eyes behold, above
The yawning gulf, a dim forecast, of structures strong and broad;
Where caste, and colour prejudice, by countless feet down trod,
With old traditions crushed by Time, pave smooth the bridge of Love;
And all the creed that men shall heed
Is consciousness of God.

THE SQUANDERER

God gave him passions, splendid as the sun,
Meant for the lordliest purposes; a part
Of nature's full and fertile mother heart,
From which new systems and new stars are spun.
And now, behold, behold, what he has done!
In Folly's court and carnal Pleasures' mart
He flung the wealth life gave him at the start.

(This, of all mortal sins, the deadliest one.)

At dawn he stood, potential, opulent,
With virile manhood, and emotions keen,
And wonderful with God's creative fire.
At noon he stands, with Love's large fortune spent
In petty traffic, unproductive, mean -
A pauper, cursed with impotent desire.

COMPENSATIONS

I

BLIND

When first the shadows fell, like prison bars,
And darkness spread before me, like a pall,
I cried out for the sun, the earth, the stars,
And beat the air, as madmen beat a wall,
Till, impotent, and broken with despair,
I turned my vision inward. Lo, a spark -
A light--a torch; and all my world grew bright;
For God's dear eyes were shining through the dark.
Then, bringing to me gifts of recompense,
Came keener hearing, finer taste, and touch;
And that oft unappreciated sense,
Which finds sweet odours, and proclaims them such;
And not until my mortal eyes were blind
Did I perceive how kind the world, how kind.

II

DEAF

I can recall a time, when on mine ears
There fell chaotic sounds of earthly life,
Shrill cries of triumph, and hoarse shouts of strife;
A medley of despairs, and hopes and fears.
Then silence came, and unavailing tears.
The stillness stabbed me, like a two edged-knife;
Until I found the Universe was rife
With subtle music of the neighbouring spheres.
Such harmonies, such congruous sweet chords,
Wherein each note conveys a healing balm.
And now no more I miss men's spoken words;
For, in a quiet world of larger thought,
I know the joy that comes from being calm.

III

SHUT-IN

Across my window glass
The moving shadows of the people pass.
Sometimes the shadow's pause; and through the hall

Kind neighbours come to call,
Bringing a word or smile
To cheer my loneliness a little while.
But as I hear them talk,
These people who can walk
And go about the great green earth at will,
I wonder if they know the joy of being still,
And all alone with thoughts that soar afar -
High as the highest star.
And oft I feel more free
Than those who travel over land and sea.
For one who is shut in,
Away from all the outer strife and din,
With faithful Pain for guide,
Finds where Great Truths abide.

Across my window glass
The moving shadows pass.
But swifter moves my unimpeded thought,
Speeding from spot to spot -
Out and afar -
High as the highest star.

SONG OF THE RAIL

Oh, an ugly thing is an iron rail,
Black, with its face to the dust.
But it carries a message where winged things fail;
It crosses the mountains, and catches the trail,
While the winds and the sea make sport of a sail;
Oh, a rail is a friend to trust.

The iron rail, with its face to the sod,
Is only a bar of ore;
Yet it speeds where never a foot has trod;
And the narrow path where it leads, grows broad;
And it speaks to the world in the voice of God,
That echoes from shore to shore.

Though the iron rail, on the earth down flung,
Seems kin to the loam and the soil,
Wherever its high shrill note is sung,
Out of the jungle fair homes have sprung,
And the voices of babel find one tongue,
In the common language of toil.

Of priest, and warrior, and conquering king,
Of Knights of the Holy Grail,
Of wonders of winter, and glories of spring,
Always and ever the poets sing;
But the great God-Force, in a lowly thing,
I sing, in my song of the rail.

ALWAYS AT SEA

Always at sea I think about the dead.
On barques invisible they seem to sail
The self-same course; and from the decks cry 'Hail'!
Then I recall old words that they have said,
And see their faces etched upon the mist -
 Dear faces I have kissed.

Always the dead seem very close at sea.
The coarse vibrations of the earth debar
Our spirit friends from coming where we are.
But through God's ether, unimpeded, free,
They wing their way, the ocean deeps above -
 And find the hearts that love.

Always at sea my dead come very near.
A growing host; some old in spirit lore,
And some who crossed to find the other shore
But yesterday. All, all, I see and hear
With inner senses, while the voice of faith
 Proclaims--there is no death.

THE SUITORS

There is a little Bungalow
Perched on a granite ledge,
And at its feet two suitors meet;
(I watch them, and I know)
One waits outside the casement edge;
One paces to and fro.

The Patient Rock speaks not a word;
The Sea goes up and down,
And sings full oft, in cadence soft;
(I listen, and have heard)
Again he wears an angry frown
By jealous passion stirred.

This dawn, the Rock was all aglow;
Far out the mad Sea went;
Beyond the raft, like one gone daft;
(I saw them, and I know)
While radiant and well content
Smiled down the Bungalow.

That was at Dawn; ere day had set,
The Sea with pleading voice
Came back to woo his love anew;
(I saw them when they met)
And now I know not which her choice -
(The Rock's gray face was wet.)

THE JEALOUS GODS

'Oh life is wonderful,' she said,
'And all my world is bright;
Can Paradise show fairer skies,
Or more effulgent light?'
(Speak lower, lower, mortal heart,
The jealous gods may hear.)

She turned for answer; but his gaze
Cut past her like a lance,
And shone like flame on one who came
With radiant glance for glance.
(You spoke too loud, O mortal heart,
The jealous gods were near.)

They walked through green and sunlit ways;
And yet the earth seemed black,
For there were three, where two should be;
So runs the world, alack.
(The listening gods, the jealous gods,
They want no Edens here.)

GOD RULES ALWAYS

Into the world's most high and holy places
Men carry selfishness, and graft and greed.
The air is rent with warring of the races;
Loud Dogmas drown a brother's cry of need.
The Fleet-of-Creeds, upon Time's ocean lurches;
And there is mutiny upon her decks;
And in the light of temples, and of churches,
Against life's shores drift wrecks and derelicts.
(God rules, God rules alway.)

Right in the shadow of the lofty steeple,
Which crowns some costly edifice of faith,
Behold the throngs of hungry, unhoused people;
The 'Bread Line,' flanked by charity and death.
See yonder Churchman, opulently doing
Unnumbered deeds, which gladden and resound;
The while his thrifty tenant is pursuing
The white slave trade on sacred, untaxed ground.
(God rules, God rules alway.)

For these are but the outward signs of fever;
Those flaunting signs, which through delirium burn;
And the clear-seeing eye of each Believer
Can note the coming crisis. It will turn,
For it has reached its summit. Convalescing,
The sick world shall arise to strength and peace,

And earth shall bloom, with each and every blessing
Life waits to give, when wars and conflicts cease.
(God rules, God rules alway.)

This is a mighty hour. No sounds of drumming,
No flying flags, no heralds do appear;
No Wise Men of the East proclaim His coming;
Yet He is coming--nay, our Christ is here!
And man shall leave his fever dreams behind him;
Those dreams of avarice, and lust, and sin,
And seek his Lord; yea, he shall seek and find Him,
In his own soul, where He has always been.
(God rules, God rules alway.)

Man longs for God. Before the Christ we wot of,
With His brief mighty message, came to earth,
Before His life, or creed, or cross were thought of,
The love of love within man's breast had birth.
But blindly, through his carnal senses reaching,
He plucked dead fruit, and nothing has sufficed;
Nor can his soul find rest in any teaching,
Until he knows that he, himself, is Christ.
(God rules, God rules alway.)

Oh, when he knows this truth in all its splendour,
What majesty, what glory crowns his life:
And, one with God, his every thought is tender;
He cannot enter into war, or strife.
His love goes out to every race and nation;
His whole religion lies in being kind.
THIS IS THE CREED THAT MEANS THE WORLD'S SALVATION;
THE BIRTH OF CHRIST IN EVERY MORTAL MIND.
(God rules, God rules alway.)

THE CURE

You may talk of reformations, of the Economic Plan,
That shall stem the Social Evil in its course;
But the Ancient Sin of nations, must be got at in THE MAN.
If you want to cleanse a river, seek the source.

Ever since his first beginning, Man has had his way, in lust.
He has never learned the law of Self-Control;
And the World condones his sinning, and the Doctors say he must,
And the Churches shut their eyes, and take his toll.

And the lauded 'Lovely Mothers' send the son out into life
With no knowledge-welded armour for the fight;
'He will make his way like others, through the Oat field, to the
Wife';
'He will somehow be led onward, to the light.'

Yes, his leaders, they shall find him. On the highways at each turn,
(Since you did not choose to counsel or to warn,)
They shall tempt him, then shall bind him; they shall blight, and

they shall burn,
Down to offspring and descendants yet unborn.

It can never end through preaching; it can never end through laws;
This social sore, no punishment can heal.
It must be the mother's teaching of the purpose, and the cause,
And God's glory, lying under sex appeal.

She must feel no fear to name it to the children it has brought;
She must speak of it as sacred, and sublime;
She must beautify, not shame it, by her speech and by her thought;
Till they listen, and respect it, for all time.

From the heart they rested under ere they saw the light of day,
Must the daughters and the sons be taught this truth;
Till they think of it with wonder, as a holy thing alway;
While love's wisdom guides them safely through their youth.

Oh, the world has made its devil, and the Mothers let it grow;
And the Man has dragged their thoughts down to the earth.
There will be no Social Evil, when each waking mind shall know
All the grandeur and the beauty hid in birth.

When each Mother sets the fashion to win confidence, and trust,
And to teach the mighty lesson, Self-Control,
We can lift the great Sex passion from the darkness and the dust,
And enshrine it on the altar of the soul.

THE FORECAST

It may be that I dreamed a dream; it may be that I saw
The forecast of a time to come by some supernal law.

I seemed to dwell in this same world, and in this modern time;
Yet nowhere was there sight or sound of poverty or crime.
All strife had ceased; men were disarmed; and quiet Peace had made
A thousand avenues for toil, in place of War's grim trade.
From east to west, from north to south where highways smooth and
broad
Tied State to State, the waste lands bloomed, like garden spots of
God.
There were no beggars in the streets; there were no unemployed,
For each man owned his plot of ground, and laboured and enjoyed.
Sweet children grew like garden flowers; all strong and fair to see;
And when I marvelled at the sight, thus spake a Voice to me:
'All Motherhood is now an art; the greatest art on earth;
And nowhere is there known the crime of one unwelcome birth
From rights of parentage the sick and sinful are debarred;
For Matron Science keeps our house, and at the door stands guard.
We know the cure for darkness lies in letting in the light;
And Prisons are replaced by Schools, where wrong views change to
right.
The wisdom, knowledge, study, thought, once bent on beast and sod,
We give now to the human race, the highest work of God;
And, as the gardener chooses seed, so we select with care;

And as our Man Plant grows, we give him soil and sun and air.
There are no slums; no need of alms; all men are opulent,
For Mother Earth belongs to them, as was the First Intent.'

It may be that I dreamed a dream; it may be that I saw
The forecast of a time to come by some supernal law.

LITTLE GIRLS

Whether you frolic with comrade boys,
Or sit at your studies, or play with toys,
Whatever your station, or place, or sphere,
For just one purpose God sent you here;
And always and ever, you are to me -
Dear little Mothers, of Men to be.

So would I guard you from all mean things;
From the dwarfing of wealth, and from poverty's stings.
And from silly mothers of fuss and show,
And from dissolute fathers whose aims are low,
I would take you, and shield you, and set you free,
Dear little Mothers, of Men to be.

And then were the wish of my heart fulfilled,
Around about you, the world should build
A wall of Wisdom, with Truth for its Tower,
Where mind and body would wax in power,
Till the tender twig was a splendid tree -
Dear little Mothers, of Men to be.

It is only a dream; but the world grows wise,
And a mighty truth in the dream seed lies
That shall gladden the earth, in its time and place.
WE MUST BETTER THE MOTHERS TO BETTER THE RACE.
A dream? nay, a vision, which all must see,
Dear little Mothers, of Men to be.

SCIENCE

Alone I climb the steep ascending path
Which leads to knowledge. In the babbling throngs
That hurry after, shouting to the world
Small fragments of large truths, there is not one
Who comprehends my purpose, or who sees
The ultimate great goal. Why, even she,
My heaven intended Spouse, my other self,
Religion, turns her beauteous face on me
With hatred in the eyes, where love should dwell.
While those who call me Master blindly run,
Wounding the ear of Faith with blasphemies,
And making useless slaughter in my name.

Mine is the difficult slow task to blaze
A road of Facts, through labyrinths of dreams
To tear down Maybe and establish IS:
And substitute I Know for I Believe.
I follow closely where the Seers have led:
But that intangible dim path of theirs,
Which may be trodden but by other Seers,
I seek to render solid for the feet
Of all mankind. With reverent hands I lift
The mask from Mystery: and show the face
Of Reason, smiling bravely on the world.
The visions of the prophets, one by one,
Grew visible beneath my tireless touch:
And the white secrets of elusive stars
I tell aloud, to listening multitudes.

To fit the better world my toil ensures,
Time will impregnate with a better race
The Future's womb: and when the hour is ripe,
To ready eyes of men, the alien spheres
Shall seem as friendly neighbours: and my skill
Shall make their music audible to ears
Which will be tuned to those high harmonies.

Mine is the work to fashion, step by step,
The shining Way that leads from man to God.
Though I demolish obstacles of creeds
And blast tradition, from the face of earth,
My hand shall open wide the door of Truth,
Whose other name is Faith: and at the end
Of this most holy labour, I shall turn
To see Religion, with enlightened eyes,
Seeking the welcome of my outstretched arms.
While all the world stands hushed and awed before
The proven splendour of the Fact Supreme.

THE EARTH

To build a house, with love for architect,
Ranks first and foremost in the joys of life.
And in a tiny cabin, shaped for two,
The space for happiness is just as great
As in a palace. What a world were this
If each soul born received a plot of ground;
A little plot, whereon a home might rise,
And beauteous green things grow!
We give the dead,
The idle vagrant dead, the Potter's Field;
Yet to the living not one inch of soil.
Nay, we take from them soil, and sun, and air,
To fashion slums and hell-holes for the race.
And to our poor we say, 'Go starve and die
As beggars die; so gain your heritage.'

That was a most uncanny dream; I thought the wraiths of those
 Long buried in the Potter's Field, in shredded shrouds arose;
 They said, 'Against the will of God
 We have usurped the fertile sod,
 Now will we make it yield.'

Oh! but it was a gruesome sight, to see those phantoms toil;
 Each to his own small garden bent; each spaded up the soil;
 (I never knew Ghosts laboured so.)
 Each scattered seed, and watched, till lo!
 The Graves were opulent.

Then all among the fragrant greens, the silent, spectral train
 Walked, as if breathing in the breath of plant, and flower, and
 grain.
 (I never knew Ghosts loved such things;
 Perchance it brought back early springs
 Before they thought of death.)

'The mothers' milk for living babes; the earth for living hosts;
 The clean flame for the un-souled dead.' (Oh, strange the words of
 Ghosts.)
 'If we had owned this little spot
 In life, we need not lie and rot
 Here in a pauper's bed.'

THE MUSE AND THE POET

The Muse said, Let us sing a little song
 Wherein no hint of wrong,
 No echo of the great world need, or pain,
 Shall mar the strain.
 Lock fast the swinging portal of thy heart;
 Keep sympathy apart.
 Sing of the sunset, of the dawn, the sea;
 Of any thing or nothing, so there be
 No purpose to thy art.
 Yea, let us make, art for Art's sake.
 And sing no more unto the hearts of men,
 But for the critic's pen.
 With songs that are but words, sweet sounding words,
 Like joyous jargon of the birds.
 Tune now thy lyre, O Poet, and sing on.
 Sing of

THE DAWN

The Virgin Night, all languorous with dreams
 Of her beloved Darkness, rose in fear,
 Feeling the presence of another near.
 Outside her curtained casement shone the gleams
 Of burning orbs; and modestly she hid
 Her brow and bosom with her dusky hair.

When lo! the bold intruder lurking there
 Leaped through the fragile lattice, all unbid,
And half unveiled her. Then the swooning Night
Fell pale and dead, while yet her soul was white
 Before that lawless Ravisher, the Light.

The Muse said, Poet, nay; thou hast not caught
My meaning. For there lurks a thought
 Back of thy song.
 In art, all thought is wrong.
Re-string thy lyre; and let the echoes bound
To nothing but sweet sound.
 Strike now the chords
 And sing of

WORDS

One day sweet Ladye Language gave to me
A little golden key.
 I sat me down beside her jewel box
 And turned its locks.
And oh, the wealth that lay there in my sight.
Great solitaires of words, so bright, so bright;
 Words that no use can commonize; like God,
And Truth, and Love; and words of sapphire blue;
And amber words; with sunshine dripping through;
And words of that strange hue
 A pearl reveals upon a wanton's hand.

Again the Muse:
 Thou dost not understand;
A thought within thy song is lingering yet.
Sing but of words; all else forget, forget.

 Nor let thy words convey one thought to men.
 Try once again.

Down through the dusk and dew there fell a word;
 Down through the dew and dusk.
And all the garments of the air it stirred
 Smelled sweet as musk;
And all the little waves of air it kissed
 Turned cold and amethyst.

There in the dew and dusk a heart it found;
 There in the dusk and dew
The sodden silence changed to fragrant sound;
 And all the world seemed new.
Upon the path that little word had trod,
 There shone the smile of God.

The Muse said, Drop thy lyre.
 I tire, I tire.

THE SPINSTER

I

Here are the orchard trees all large with fruit;
And yonder fields are golden with young grain.
In little journeys, branchward from the nest,
A mother bird, with sweet insistent cries,
Urges her young to use their untried wings.
A purring Tabby, stretched upon the sward,
Shuts and expands her velvet paws in joy,
While sturdy kittens nuzzle at her breast.

O mighty Maker of the Universe,
Am I not part and parcel of Thy World,
And one with Nature? Wherefore, then, in me
Must this great reproductive impulse lie
Hidden, ashamed, unnourished, and denied,
Until it starves to slow and tortuous death?
I knew the hope of spring-time; like the tree
Now ripe with fruit, I budded, and then bloomed;
We laughed together through the young May morns;
We dreamed together through the summer moons;
Till all Thy purposes within the tree
Were to fruition brought. Lord, Thou hast heard
The Woman in me crying for the Man;
The Mother in me crying for the Child;
And made no answer. Am I less to Thee
Than lover forms of Nature, or in truth
Dost Thou hold Somewhere in another Realm
Full compensation and large recompense
For lonely virtue forced by fate to live
A life unnatural, in a natural world?

II

Thou who hast made for such sure purposes
The mightiest and the meanest thing that is -
Planned out the lives of insects of the air
With fine precision and consummate care,
Thou who hast taught the bee the secret power
Of carrying on love's laws 'twixt flower and flower,
Why didst Thou shape this mortal frame of mine,
If Heavenly joys alone were Thy design?
Wherefore the wonder of my woman's breast,
By lips of lover and of babe unpressed,
If spirit children only shall reply
Unto my ever urgent mother cry?
Why should the rose be guided to its own,
And my love-craving heart beat on alone?

III

Yet do I understand; for Thou hast made
Something more subtle than this heart of me;
A finer part of me
To be obeyed.

Albeit I am a sister to the earth,
This nature self is not the whole of me;

The deathless soul of me
Has nobler birth.

The primal woman hungers for the man;
My better self demands the mate of me;
The spirit fate of me,
Part of Thy plan.

Nature is instinct with the mother-need;
So is my heart; but ah, the child of me
Should, undefiled of me,
Spring from love's seed.

And if, in barren chastity, I must
Know but in dreams that perfect choice of me,
Still will the voice of me
Proclaim God just.

BROTHERHOOD

When in the even ways of life
The old world jogs along,
Our little coloured flags we flaunt:
Our little separate selves we vaunt:
Each pipes his native song.
And jealousy and greed and pride
Join their ungodly hands,
And this round lovely world divide
Into opposing lands.

But let some crucial hour of pain
Sound from the tower of time,
Then consciousness of brotherhood
Wakes in each heart the latent good,
And men become sublime.
As swarming insects of the night,
Fly when the sun bursts in,
Self fades, before love's radiant light,
And all the world is kin.

God, what a place this earth would be
If that uplifting thought,
Born of some vast world accident,
Into our daily lives were blent,
And in each action wrought.
But while we let the old sins flock
Back to our hearts again,
In flame, and flood, and earthquake shock,
Thy voice must speak to men.

'THE TAVERN OF LAST TIMES'
(AT BOX HILL, SURREY)

A modern hour from London (as we spin
Into a silver thread the miles of space
Between us and our goal), there is a place
Apart from city traffic, dust, and din,
Green with great trees, where hides a quiet Inn.
Here Nelson last looked on the lovely face
Which made his world; and by its magic grace
Trailed rosy clouds across each early sin.
And, leaning lawnward, is the room where Keats
Wrote the last one of those immortal songs
(Called by the critics of his day 'mere rhymes').
A lark, high in the boxwood bough repeats
Those lyric strains, to idle passing throngs,
There by the little Tavern-of-Last-Times.

THE TWO AGES

On a great cathedral window I have seen
A Summer sunset swoon and sink away,
Lost in the splendours of immortal art.
Angels and saints and all the heavenly hosts,
With smiles undimmed by half a thousand years,
From wall and niche have met my lifted gale.
Sculpture and carving and illumined page,
And the fair, lofty dreams of architects,
That speak of beauty to the centuries -
All these have fed me with divine repasts.
Yet in my mouth is left a bitter taste,
The taste of blood that stained that age of art.

Those glorious windows shine upon the black
And hideous structure of the guillotine;
Beside the haloed countenance of saints
There hangs the multiple and knotted lash.
The Christ of love, benign and beautiful,
Looks at the torture-rack, by hate conceived
And bigotry sustained. The prison cell,
With blood-stained walls, where starving men went mad,
Lies under turrets matchless in their grace.

God, what an age! How was it that You let
Colossal genius and colossal crime
Walk for a hundred years across the earth,
Like giant twins? How was it then that men,
Conceiving such vast beauty for the world,
And such large hopes of heaven, could entertain
Such hellish projects for their human kin?
How could the hand that, with consummate skill
And loving patience, limned the luminous page,
Drop pen and brush, and seize the branding-rod,
To scourge a brother for his differing faith?

Not great this age in beauty or in art;

Nothing is wrought to-day that shall endure
For earth's adornment, through long centuries;
Not ours the fervid worship of a God
That wastes its splendid opulence on glass,
Leaving but hate for hungry human hearts.
Yet great this age; its mighty work is man
Knowing himself the universal life.
And great our faith, which shows itself in works
For human freedom and for racial good.
The true religion lies in being kind.
No age is greater than its faith is broad.
Through liberty and love men climb to God.

IF I WERE

If I were a raindrop, and you were a leaf,
I would burst from the cloud above you,
And lie on your breast in a rapture of rest,
And love you, love you, love you.

If I were a brown bee, and you were a rose,
I would fly to you, love, nor miss you;
I would sip and sip from your nectared lip,
And kiss you, kiss you, kiss you.

If I were a doe, dear, and you were a brook,
Ah, what would I do then, think you?
I would kneel by the bank, in the grasses dank,
And drink you, drink you, drink you.

WARNED

They stood at the garden gate.
By the lifting of a lid
She might have read her fate
In a little thing he did.

He plucked a beautiful flower;
Tore it away from its place
On the side of the blooming bower;
And held it against his face.

Drank in its beauty and bloom,
In the midst of his idle talk;
Then cast it down to the gloom
And dust of the garden walk.

Ay, trod it under his foot,
As it lay in his pathway there;
Then spurned it away with his boot,
Because it had ceased to be fair.

Ah! the maiden might have read
The doom of her young life then;
But she looked in his eyes instead,
And thought him the king of men.

She looked in his eyes and blushed,
She hid in his strong arms' fold;
And the tale of the flower, crushed
And spurned, was once more told.

FORWARD

Let me look always forward. Never back.
Was I not formed for progress? Otherwise
With onward pointing feet and searching eyes
Would God have set me squarely on the track
Up which we all must labour with life's pack?
Yonder the goal of all this travel lies.
What matters it, if yesterday the skies
With light were golden, or with clouds were black?
I would not lose to-morrow's glow of dawn
By peering backward after sun's long set.
New hope is fairer than an old regret;
Let me pursue my journey and press on -
Nor tearful eyed, stand ever in one spot,
A briny statue like the wife of Lot.

IN ENGLAND

In England there are wrongs, no doubt,
Which should be righted; so men say,
Who seek to weed earth's garden out
And give the roses right of way.
Yes, right of way to fruit and rose,
Where now but poison ivy grows.

In England there is wide unrest
They tell me, who should know. And yet
I saw but hedges gaily dressed,
And eyes, where love and kindness met.
Yes, love and kindness, met and made
Soft sunshine, even in the shade.

In England there are haunting things
Which follow one to other lands;
Like some pervading scent that clings
To laces, touched by vanished hands.
Yes, touched by vanished hands, that gave
A fragrance which defies the grave.

In England, centuries of art
Give common things a mellow tone,
And wake old memories in the heart
Of other lives the soul has known.
Yes, other lives in some past age
Start forth from canvas, or from page.

In England there are simple joys
The modern world has left all sweet;
In London's heart are nooks, where noise
Has entered but with slippered feet;
Yes, entered softly.
 Friend, believe,
To part from England is to grieve.

KARMA

I

We cannot choose our sorrows. One there was
Who, reverent of soul, and strong with trust,
Cried, 'God, though Thou shouldst bow me to the dust,
Yet will I praise thy everlasting laws.
Beggared, my faith would never halt or pause,
But sing Thy glory, feasting on a crust.
Only one boon, one precious boon I must
Demand of Thee, O opulent great Cause.
Let Love stay with me, constant to the end,
Though fame pass by and poverty pursue.'
With freighted hold her life ship onward sailed;
The world gave wealth, and pleasure, and a friend,
Unmarred by envy, and whose heart was true.
But ere the sun reached midday, Love had failed.

II

Then from the depths, in bitterness she cried,
'Hell is on earth, and heaven is but a dream;
And human life a troubled aimless stream;
And God is nowhere. Would God so deride
A loving creature's faith?' A voice replied,
'The stream flows onward to the Source Supreme,
Where things that ARE replace the things that SEEM,
And where the deeds of all past lives abide.
Once at thy door Love languished and was spurned.
Who sorrow plants, must garner sorrow's sheaf.
No prayers can change the seedling in the sod.
By thine own heart Love's anguish must be learned.
Pass on, and know, as one made wise by grief,
That in thyself dwells heaven and hell and God.'

THE GOSSIPS

A rose in my garden, the sweetest and fairest,
Was hanging her head through the long golden hours;
And early one morning I saw her tears falling,
And heard a low gossiping talk in the bowers.

The yellow Nasturtium, a spinster all faded,
Was telling a Lily what ailed the poor Rose:
'That wild, roving Bee, who was hanging about her
Has jilted her squarely, as every one knows.

'I knew when he came, with his singing and sighing,
His airs and his speeches, so fine and so sweet,
Just how it would end; but no one would believe me,
For all were quite ready to fall at his feet.'

'Indeed, you are wrong,' said the Lilybelle proudly,
'I cared nothing for him. He called on me once
And would have come often, no doubt, if I'd asked him.
But though he was handsome, I thought him a dunce.'

'Now, now, that's not true,' cried the tall Oleander.
'He has travelled and seen every flower that grows;
And one who has supped in the garden of princes,
We all might have known would not wed with the Rose.'

'But wasn't she proud when he showed her attention?
And she let him caress her,' said sly Mignonette.
'And I used to see it and blush for her folly.
The silly thing thinks he will come to her yet.'

'I thought he was splendid,' said pretty, pert Larkspur.
'So dark and so grand, with that gay cloak of gold;
But he tried once to kiss me, the impudent fellow,
And I got offended; I thought him too bold.'

'Oh, fie!' laughed the Almond. 'That does for a story.
Though I hang down my head, yet I see all that goes;
And I saw you reach out, trying hard to detain him,
But he just tapped your cheek and flew by to the Rose.'

'He cared nothing for her, he only was flirting
To while away time, as every one knew;
So I turned a cold shoulder to all his advances,
Because I was certain his heart was untrue.'

'The Rose it served right for her folly in trusting
An oily-tongued stranger,' quoth proud Columbine.
'I knew what he was, and thought once I would warn her.
But, of course, the affair was no business of mine.'

'Oh, well,' cried the Peony, shrugging her shoulders,
'I saw all along that the Bee was a flirt;
But the Rose has been always so praised and so petted,
I thought a good lesson would do her no hurt.'

Just then came a sound of a love-song sung sweetly;
I saw my proud Rose lifting up her bowed head;

And the talk of the gossips was hushed in a moment,
And the whole garden listened to hear what was said.

And the dark, handsome Bee, with his cloak o'er his shoulder,
Came swift through the sunlight and kissed the sad Rose,
And whispered: 'My darling, I've roved the world over,
And you are the loveliest blossom that grows.'

TOGETHER

We two in the fever and fervour and glow
Of life's high tide have rejoiced together;
We have looked out over the glittering snow,
And known we were dwelling in Summer weather,
For the seasons are made by the heart I hold,
And not by outdoor heat or cold.

We two, in the shadows of pain and woe,
Have journeyed together in dim, dark places,
Where black-robed Sorrow walked to and fro,
And Fear and Trouble, with phantom faces,
Peered out upon us and froze our blood,
Though June's fair roses were all in bud.

We two have measured all depths, all heights,
We have bathed in tears, we have sunned in laughter!
We have known all sorrows and delights -
They never could keep us apart hereafter.
Whether your spirit went high or low,
My own would follow, and find you, I know.

If they took my soul into Paradise,
And told me I must be content without you,
I would weary them so with my lonesome cries,
And the ceaseless questions I asked about you,
They would open the gates and set me free,
Or else they would find you and bring you to me.

PETITION

God, may Thy loving Spirit work,
In heart of Russian, and of Turk,
Until throughout each clime and land,
Armenian and Jew may stand,
And claim the right of every soul
To seek by its own path, the goal.
Parts of the Universal Force,
Rills from the same eternal Source
Back to that Source, all races go.
God, help Thy world to see it so.

A WAFT OF PERFUME

A waft of perfume from a bit of lace
Moved lightly by a passing woman's hand;
And on the common street, a sensuous grace
Shone suddenly from some lost time and land.

Tall structures changed to dome and parapet;
The stern-faced Church an oracle became;
In sheltered alcoves marble busts were set;
And on the wall frail Lais wrote her name.

Phryne before her judges stood at bay,
Fearing the rigour of Athenian laws;
Till Hyperides tore her cloak away,
And bade her splendid beauty plead its cause.

Great Alexander walking in the dusk,
Dreamed of the hour when Greek with Greek should meet;
From Thais' window attar breathed, and musk:
His footsteps went no farther down the street.

Faint and more faint the pungent perfume grew;
Of wall and parapet remained no trace.
Temple and statue vanished from the view:
The city street again was commonplace.

THE PLOUGH

If you listen you will hear, from east to west,
Growing sounds of discontent and deep unrest.
It is just the progress-driven plough of God,
Tearing up the well-worn custom-bounded sod;
Shaping out each old tradition-trodden track
Into furrows, fertile furrows, rich and black.
Oh, what harvests they will yield
When they widen to a field.

They will widen, they will broaden, day by day,
As the Progress-driven plough keeps on its way.
It will riddle all the ancient roads that lead
Into palaces of selfishness and greed;
It will tear away the almshouse and the slum
That the little homes and garden plots may come.
Yes, the gardens green and sweet
Shall replace the stony street.

Let the wise man hear the menace that is blent
In this ever-growing sound of discontent.
Let him hear the rising clamour of the race
That the few shall yield the many larger space.

For the crucial hour is coming when the soil
Must be given to, or taken back by Toil
Oh, that mighty plough of God;
Hear it breaking through the sod!

GO PLANT A TREE

God, what a joy it is to plant a tree,
And from the fallow earth to watch it rise,
Lifting its emerald branches to the skies
In silent adoration; and to see
Its strength and glory waxing with each spring.
Yes, 'tis a goodly, and a gladsome thing
To plant a tree.

Nature has many marvels; but a tree
Seems more than marvellous. It is divine.
So generous, so tender, so benign.
Not garrulous like the rivers; and yet free
In pleasant converse with the winds and birds;
Oh! privilege beyond explaining words,
To plant a tree.

Rocks are majestic; but, unlike a tree,
They stand aloof, and silent. In the roar
Of ocean billows breaking on the shore
There sounds the voice of turmoil. But a tree
Speaks ever of companionship and rest.
Yea, of all righteous acts, this, this is best,
To plant a tree.

There is an oak (oh! how I love that tree)
Which has been thriving for a hundred years;
Each day I send my blessing through the spheres
To one who gave this triple boon to me,
Of growing beauty, singing birds, and shade.
Wouldst thou win laurels that shall never fade?
Go plant a tree.

PAIN'S PURPOSE

How blind is he who prays that God will send
All pain from earth. Pain has its use and place;
Its ministry of holiness and grace.
The darker tones upon the canvas blend
With light and colour; and their shadows lend
The painting half its dignity. Efface
The sombre background, and you lose all trace
Of that perfection which is true art's trend.

Life is an artist seeking to reveal

God's majesty and beauty in each soul.
If from the palette mortal man could steal
The precious pigment, pain, why then the scroll
Would glare with colours meaningless and bright,
Or show an empty canvas, blurred with light.

MEMORY'S MANSION

In Memory's Mansion are wonderful rooms,
And I wander about them at will;
And I pause at the casements, where boxes of blooms
Are sending sweet scents o'er the sill.
I lean from a window that looks on a lawn:
From a turret that looks on the wave.
But I draw down the shade, when I see on some glade,
A stone standing guard, by a grave.

To Memory's attic I clambered one day,
When the roof was resounding with rain.
And there, among relics long hidden away,
I rummaged with heart-ache and pain.
A hope long surrendered and covered with dust,
A pastime, out-grown, and forgot,
And a fragment of love, all corroded with rust,
Were lying heaped up in one spot.

And there on the floor of that garret was tossed
A friendship too fragile to last,
With pieces of dearly bought pleasures, that cost
Vast fortunes of pain in the past.
A fabric of passion, once ardent and bright,
As tropical sunsets in spring,
Was spread out before me--a terrible sight -
A moth-eaten rag of a thing.

Then down the steep stairway I hurriedly went,
And into fair chambers below.
But the mansion seemed filled with the old attic scent,
Wherever my footsteps would go.
Though in Memory's House I still wander full oft,
No more to the garret I climb;
And I leave all the rubbish heaped there in the loft
To the hands of the Housekeeper, Time.

OLD RHYTHM AND RHYME

They tell me new methods now govern the Muses,
The modes of expression have changed with the times;
That low is the rank of the poet who uses
The old-fashioned verse with intentional rhymes.
And quite out of date, too, is rhythmical metre;

The critics declare it an insult to art.
But oh! the sweet swing of it, oh! the clear ring of it,
Oh the great pulse of it, right from the heart,
Art or no art.

I sat by the side of that old poet, Ocean,
And counted the billows that broke on the rocks;
The tide lilted in with a rhythmical motion;
The sea-gulls dipped downward in time-keeping flocks.
I watched while a giant wave gathered its forces,
And then on the gray granite precipice burst;
And I knew as I counted, while other waves mounted,
I knew the tenth billow would rhyme with the first.

Below in the village a church bell was chiming,
And back in the woodland a little bird sang;
And, doubt it who will, yet those two sounds were rhyming,
As out o'er the hill-tops they echoed and rang.

The Wind and the Trees fell to talking together;
And nothing they said was didactic or terse;
But everything spoken was told in unbroken
And beautiful rhyming and rhythmical verse.

So rhythm I hail it, though critics assail it,
And hold melting rhymes as an insult to art,
For oh! the sweet swing of it, oh! the dear ring of it,
Oh! the strong pulse of it, right from the heart,
Art or no art.

ALL IN A COACH AND FOUR

The quality folk went riding by,
All in a coach and four,
And pretty Annette, in a calico gown
(Bringing her marketing things from town),
Stopped short with her Sunday store,
And wondered if ever it should betide
That she in a long plumed hat would ride
Away in a coach and four.

A lord there was, oh a lonely soul,
There in the coach and four.
His years were young but his heart was old,
And he hated his coaches and hated his gold
(Those things which we all adore).
And he thought how sweet it would be to trudge
Along with the fair little country drudge,
And away from his coach and four.

So back he rode the very next day
All in his coach and four,
And he went each day whether dry or wet,
Until he married the sweet Annette
(In spite of her lack of lore).

But they didn't trudge off on foot together,
For he bought her a hat with a long, long feather,
And they rode in the coach and four.

Now a thing like this could happen we know,
All in a coach and four;
But the fact of it is, 'twixt me and you,
There isn't a word of the story true
(Pardon I do implore).
It is only a foolish and fanciful song
That came to me as I rode along,
All in a coach and four.

SONGS OF A COUNTRY HOME

I

Who has not felt his heart leap up, and glow
What time the Tulips first begin to blow,
Has one sweet joy still left for him to know.

It is like early love's imagining,
That fragile pleasure which the Tulips bring,
When suddenly we see them, in the Spring.

Not all the garden's later royal train,
Not great triumphant Roses, when they reign,
Can bring that delicate delight again.

II

One of the sweetest hours is this;
(Of all I think we like it best);
A little restful oasis,
Between the breakfast and the post.
Just south of coffee and of toast,
Just north of daily task and duty;
Just west of dreams, this island gleams,
A fertile spot of peace and beauty.

We wander out across the lawn;
We idle by a bush in bloom;
The household pets come following on;
Or if the day is one of gloom,
We loiter in a pleasant room,
Or from a casement lean and chatter.
Then comes the mail, like sudden hail,
And off we scatter.

III

When Roses die, in languid August days,
We leave the garden to its fallen ways,
And seek the shelter of wide porticoes,
Where Honeysuckle in defiance blows

Undaunted by the sun's too ardent rays.

The matron Summer turns a wistful gaze
Across green valleys, back to tender Mays;
And something of her large contentment goes,
 When Roses die;
Yet all her subtle fascination stays
To lure us into idle, sweet delays.
The lowered awning by the hammock shows
Inviting nooks for dreaming and repose;
Oh, restful are the pleasures of those days
 When Roses die.

IV

The summer folk, fled back to town;
The green woods changed to red and brown;
A sound upon the frosty air
Of windows closing everywhere.

And then the log, lapped by a blaze -
Oh! what is better than these days;
With books and friends and love a-near;
Go on, gay world, but leave me here.

WORTHY THE NAME OF 'SIR KNIGHT'

Sir Knight of the world's oldest order,
 Sir Knight of the Army of God,
You have crossed the strange mystical border,
 The ground-floor of truth you have trod;
You stand on the typical threshold
 Which leads to the temple above;
Where you come as a stone, and a Christ-chosen one,
 In the Kingdom of Friendship and Love.

As you stand in this new realm of beauty,
 Where each man you meet is your friend,
Think not that your promise of duty
 In hall, or asylum, shall end.
Outside, in the great world of pleasure.
 Beyond in the clamour of trade,
In the battle of life and its coarse daily strife,
 Remember the vows you have made.

Your service, majestic and solemn,
 Your symbols, suggestive and sweet,
Your uniform phalanx in column
 On gala-days marching the street;
Your sword and your plume and your helmet,
 Your 'secrets' hid from the world's sight;
These things are the small, lesser parts of the all
 Which are needed to form the true Knight.

The martyrs who perished rejoicing,

In Templary's glorious laws,
Who died 'midst the faggots while voicing
The glory and worth of their cause -
They honoured the title of 'Templar'
No more than the Knight of to-day,
Who mars not the name with one blemish of shame,
But carries it clean through life's fray.

To live for a cause; to endeavour
To make your deeds grace it; to try
And uphold its precepts for ever,
Is harder by far than to die.
For the battle of life is unending,
The enemy, Self, never tires,
And the true Knight must slay that sly foe every day,
Ere he reaches the heights he desires.

Sir Knight, have you pondered the meaning
Of all you have heard and been told?
Have you strengthened your heart for its weaning
From vices and faults loved of old?
Will you honour, in hours of temptation,
Your promises noble and grand?
Will your spirit be strong to do battle with wrong,
'And, having done all, to stand'?

Will you ever be true to a brother
In actions as well as in creed?
Will you stand by his side as no other
Could stand, in the hour of his need?
Will you boldly defend him from peril,
And lift from him poverty's curse -
Will the promise of old, which you willingly made,
Reach down from your lips to your purse?

The world's battle-field is before you:
Let Wisdom walk close by your side,
Let Faith spread her snowy wings o'er you,
Let Truth be your comrade and guide;
Let Fortitude, Justice, and Mercy
Direct all your conduct aright,
And let each word and act tell to men the proud fact,
You are worthy the name of 'Sir Knight.'

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