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Edward Carl Swinton

# *THE SOUL IN SILHOUETTE*



*With Tracings Here and There*

BY

*EDWARD EARLE PURINTON*

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OCT 15 1904  
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Printed and Bound by  
The Acme Publishing Company  
Morgantown West Va.

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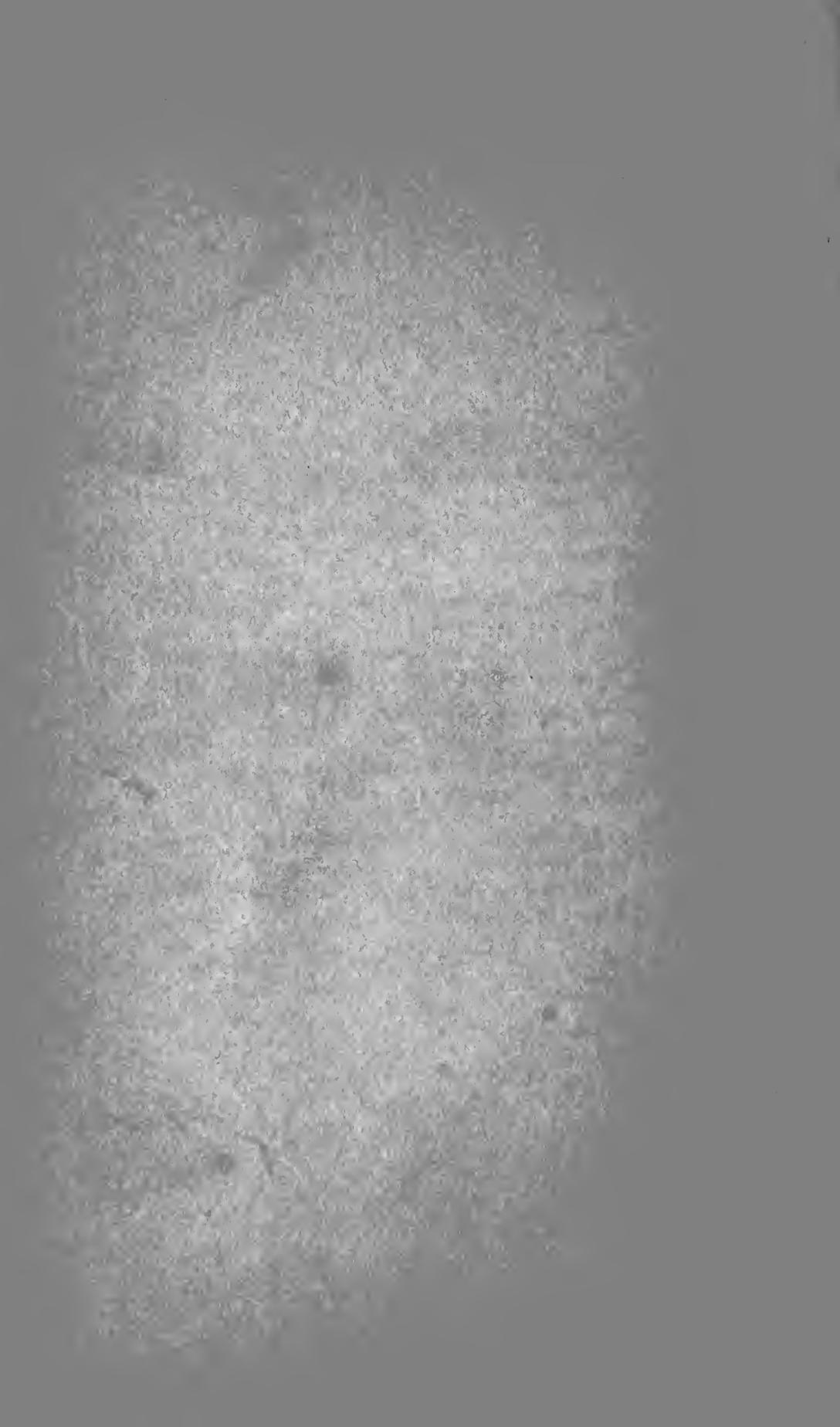
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### *Prelude*

I sing the Soul Sublime. The world asks why.  
I do not know;  
Except that every flower must droop and die  
Unless it grow.

And if it grow; although its stalk at first  
Was scentless while  
Engrossed within the soil whence blossoms burst  
From vestment vile;

At last the petals render forth complete  
Its fragrance hid  
When men misjudged;—a spirit pure and sweet  
Though weeds amid.

And thus the Soul of Me, if unrestrained  
Must grow until  
It wafts the message all the bud contained;  
Where'er it will.



## *The Soul in Silhouette*

Behind a canvas stands a maid. Behind the maid there gleams  
A brilliant light whose splendor fills the room.

And yet her face upon the screen a shadow casts, that seems  
To be forever veiled in deepest gloom.

The silhouette is graceful. But the roses from her cheek  
Have fled, as well the sunbeams from her hair.

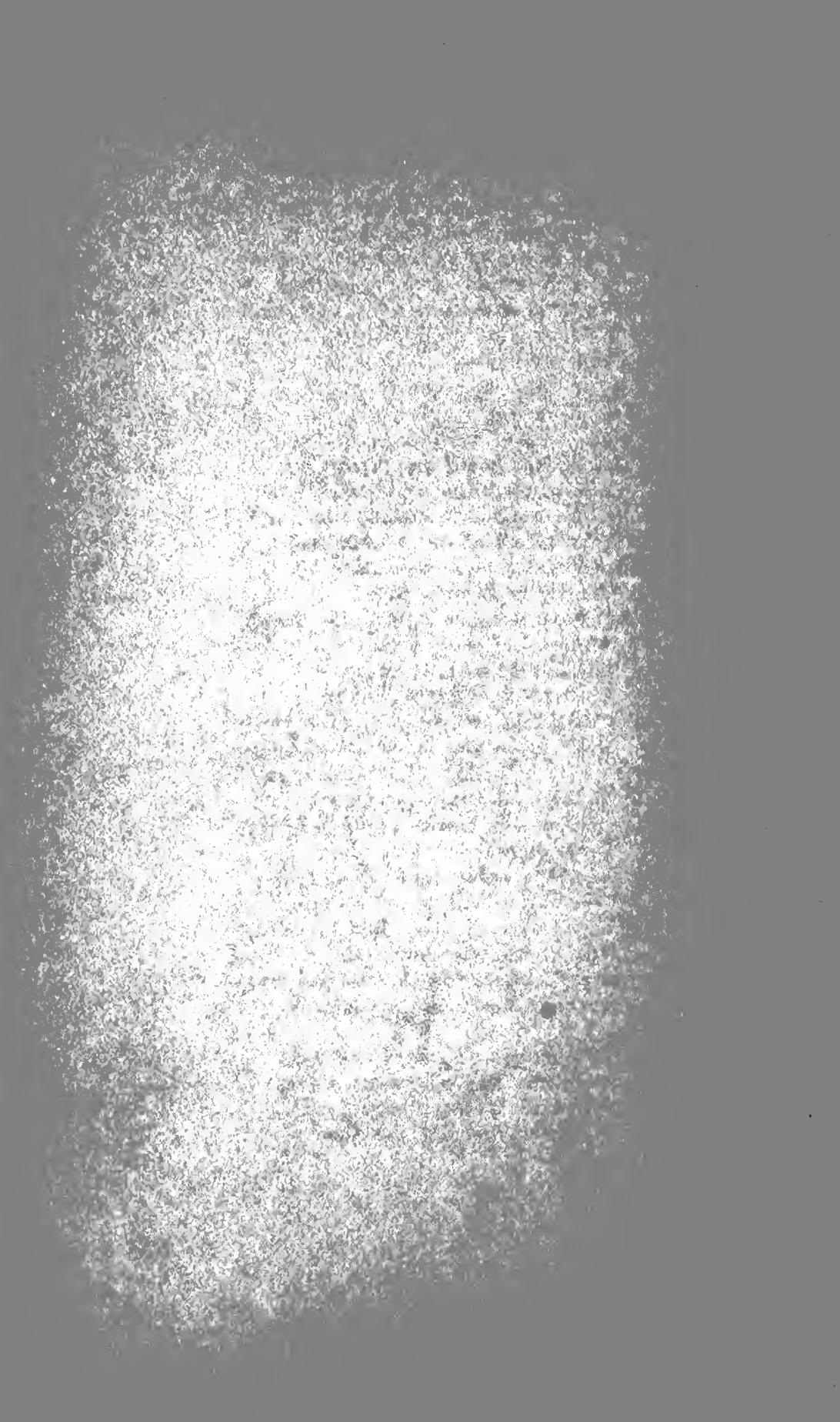
The lips are cold. Her face's meagre outline bids us seek  
The maid herself—her charms but hinted there.

How earth-enshrouded phantoms do engage our mortal sight  
Foreshadowing some entity afar.

The blackness of the form indeed epitomizes Night—  
We grope—we wonder whence and what we are.

We gaze upon the shadow cast by object mortal, since  
We dare not face the Light of Truth as yet;

But still each dim-limned figure with its god-like features hints  
The Universal Soul in Silhouette.



## *The Sphinx of Purpose*

He toiled from morn till night, nor ceased  
    A moment from his labors.  
As large as Thing he wrought, increased  
    The questions of his neighbors.  
The Thing was shapeless, vaguely vast;  
    Unused were eyes to seeing  
So huge a work—in all the past  
    None like it came to being.  
It was not bread, it was not wine  
    They could not grasp and taste it:  
So how indeed could they divine  
    The plan of him who placed it?  
Their idle tongues besought him then  
    Who toiled in dumb submission.  
Response came not—save once again  
    The chisel's competition.  
They looked askance at this, the Thing  
    Whose very size eluding  
The estimate of such as cling  
    To records, kept obtruding.  
The Thing that throve on labor's throes  
    Grew more and more commanding;  
So grew their spite—as stature rose  
    Beyond their understanding.  
They hoped each morning might reveal  
    Some answer to their query.  
Instead the evening made them feel  
    The Thing became more eerie.  
They lived in vain, they died in vain—  
    The silence still unbroken.  
But now The Sphinx of brawn and brain  
    Through centuries has spoken.

---

They ask me why I toil? and what  
    I build? And where my wages?  
I answer not. I answer not.  
    I answer through the ages.

## *Dream or Vision*

A youth watched an apple fall swift to the ground.  
“Now what is the law,” questioned he, “by which bound  
An object falls down—and not up or around  
    And falls with unerring precision?”  
He wondered and pondered and troubled his head  
With foolish imaginings—so the world said;  
“A good-for-naught dreamer, on phantasy fed.”  
    But was it a dream—or a vision?

A man saw the steam from a kettle’s mouth rise.  
He begged of the learned, beseeching the wise  
To answer him why the steam rose to the skies.  
    He met only scorn and derision;  
“A grown man like you to be playing with steam!  
Your feverish brain with its clouds must needs teem.  
Cease wasting yourself on a profitless dream.”  
    Oh, was it a dream—or a vision?

An ancient geographer pored o’er a map.  
The people that passed him would grumble and gape,  
And ask him what puzzle he held in his lap—  
    Or was it a guide-book Elysian?  
Then when he declared that the world was not flat,  
They mauled him and mobbed him;—“Take this and take that,  
You impudent dreamer.” Still looked he thereat;  
    A dream—a mere dream—or a vision?

Just lately a youth flew a mystical kite  
Uncannily gleaming though black was the night.  
The neighbors, afraid of the unforeseen light  
    Came angrily into collision;  
“In league with the sorcerers, devils and elves,  
This eerie man wanders and soars and delves,  
The dreams of the madman but speak for themselves.”  
    A dream—think again—or a vision?

A babe in a manger, a lad yet ungrown  
Quite conscious that He was prime heir to a throne,  
Declared that He owned the world—ruled it alone,  
    A kingdom of joys Paradisian.  
“Just hear the mad blasphemy this fellow saith.”  
They mocked Him. They stoned Him. They nailed Him to death.  
The dream that He voiced still possessed His last breath.  
    A dream—and no more—or a vision?

O Dreamers, dream on! For your dreams are the seeds  
To germinate centuries later in deeds.  
Heed not the blind world whence the babble proceeds  
    Confusing a dream with a vision.  
Though mortals condemn, neither falter not faint;  
Posterity rises to call you a saint.  
Admit to your Soul the full Light, free of taint—  
    Your vision—your heavenly vision!

---

### *On to Success*

From off the heights of Mount Success I heard a splendid cheer—  
    It sounded like “Achieve!”  
    So on I sped.

But this was just the echo. For again, as I drew near  
    Rang out the Voice. “Believe!”—  
    It really said.

## *Life and Death*

Life is but a longing  
That thrills until it throbs;  
And Death is just a dreading  
That sickens as it sobs.

There is no fear that threatens  
A mortal mind and heart,  
But whatsoe'er it touches  
Must fade and fall apart.

There is no hope that blossoms  
Where soul of mortal dwells,  
But from it you may gather  
A wreath of immortelles.

## *The Divine Feminine*

When a bard would sing, in a bard's rich rhyme  
Of the thing that he loves the most,  
He lifts his voice in an ode sublime  
To a maiden—the poet's boast;  
For in all this world there is none or naught  
Whose thrill can his song refine  
Expressing the Something his soul has sought  
As a feminine form divine.

When a sculptor moulds the curves of grace  
That bound the beauteous All,  
He moulds her bosom, her arm, her face  
Whose loveliness casts their thrall;  
For in all this world there is no caress  
When tender limbs entwine  
But can aught more than its dearth confess  
To a feminine form divine.

When a child has bruised his fragile flesh  
And wails with a childish grief,  
He hides his head in the garment's mesh  
Of a mother's soft relief;  
For in all this world there is no true balm  
Whence smiles through sorrows shine  
That dare approach to the trustful calm  
Of a feminine form divine.

When a lover feels emotions fill  
His being with silent bliss,  
He woos with a reverent look the thrill  
Of a virgin's raptured kiss;  
For in all this world there is nowhere whence  
There blends the mine and thine  
In a Oneness like to the spirit-sense  
Of a feminine Soul divine.

---

O Man, with your massive brain, you wait  
To reason it deep and long.  
While a woman feels. And the powers of Fate  
With a feeling's impulse throng.  
And this is the why of a thing so odd—  
That men should their throne resign;—  
*There is less of the human to clog the god  
In the Feminine Most Divine.*

## *The Whisper of the Soul*

When perplexities are crowding  
And the world seems bleak and cold;  
When your doubts and dreads are shrouding  
All your hopes in gloom untold;  
When the sun eludes your vision  
And the skies seem far away;  
When your efforts meet derision  
And you fall misfortune's prey;  
When your prospects cease to glisten  
And your fears portentous roll;  
Ah, Dear Heart, then listen, listen  
For the Whisper of the Soul.

Men may speak, and men advise you  
Books may yield their ancient lore,  
Yet the Truth withal denies you—  
You must seek for something more.  
All this manifest Creation  
Burst in being—star or stone,  
When it heard the revelation  
Of a whisper all its own.  
Heeding not the things without it  
Heeding but the Voice within  
Life unfolding dare not doubt It;  
Doubting, doubting—this is sin.  
Hear and heed the gentle calling  
Urging you to utmost goal;  
Feel the thrill your heart entralling  
Through the Whisper of the Soul.

Oh, the music in the Whisper  
Of the Soul's seraphic strain;  
Soft and sweet as baby lisper  
Begs a kiss—nor begs in vain;  
Gracious as a maiden blushing  
Raptured from her first embrace;  
Mighty as a torrent rushing  
Unconcerned from place to place;  
Silent, mute, and uncomplaining  
If neglected overlong  
Yet forever straining, straining  
In the one amid the throng;  
Voice that moves the wisest sages,  
Voice that sways the truest bard,

Voice of Wisdom through the ages,  
Voice of Love, our hearts to guard;  
Voice that sums a god's ambition  
Sweeping clean from pole to pole;  
Voice whose faultless, pure rendition  
Is the Whisper of the Soul.

---

### *Aspiration*

The lonely forest Pine, aspiring from his early infancy to tower  
aloft

Discerns above the lowly altitude  
That settles down upon the vulgar brood  
Of grasses, weeds and cringing herbage sheltered close in Mother  
Earth's embrace so soft.

Beholding him askance whose slow and painful growth but puts  
him out of touch with them,

They chatter volubly with jealous ire  
Predicting such a stand a demise dire.

The Pine matured abides exalted. Long ago the herbage with-  
ered—root and stem.

---

The lonely Human Soul that lifts his longing eyes and yearns to  
dwell where all is Light

Must vision far beyond the common throng;  
And whilst they jostle hurriedly along

On transitory pleasures bent, must his horizon cloudless keep—  
the end in sight.

A thousand maledictions, persecutions let the herd that cannot  
understand

Heap hard upon thee, splendid-sighted Soul;—  
Deep oceans of oblivion shall roll

Above their lives forgotten, when at last the Universal thou hast  
nobly spanned.

## *Dawn*

In the silence  
Mystic silence  
Of the dim and dusky morn,  
Love has blended  
All the splendid  
Prospects of a day unborn.

Lightly looming  
Darkness dooming  
From Aurora's matin feast,  
Love revealing  
Paints Love's feeling,  
Tints the zenith, gilds the East.

Far from caring  
With whom sharing  
Brilliant jewels of the day,  
Love arrays her,  
Love displays her  
After Love's impulsive way.

Worlds lay hidden  
Still unbidden  
Yet to lift their dewy face;  
Till Love lit them.  
Till Love fit them  
Thus to shine with Love's glad grace.

Shadows darkling,  
Dewdrops sparkling  
Blend to beautify the earth.  
Sunbeams seeing  
Moonbeams fleeing  
Dance with glee at sunbeams' birth.

From their sleeping  
Creatures creeping  
Crawling, flying, greet the light;  
Through with homing  
Now for roaming  
Spend the strength restored by night.

Dreams chaotic,  
Spells narcotic  
Hazy, misty, unexplained  
Fading, fading,  
Fast abrading  
All their outlines, lose them—feigned.

Dreamland's plunder  
Piled in wonder  
Sinks, and sinking is no more.  
Fancies fleeting,  
Films depleting  
Dread the day, and upward soar.

In their slumber  
Men still cumber  
Weary minds with foolish fret;  
Feel the falling  
Of the palling  
Of the night with blind regret.

But the paining  
Of the waning  
Of the nooning of the mind  
Is a blessing,  
Which confessing  
Humans must its fruitage find.

Skyward soaring,  
Hopes restoring  
Through the ether's mystic void,  
Finds man's spirit  
Means to cheer it  
That the day has not enjoyed.

Up, up yonder  
Spirits wander  
Newly nourished from the sky;  
In the morning  
Minds adorning  
With a freshness born on high.

So be grateful  
To the fateful  
Flitting fancies of the dusk;  
Whither leading  
Souls proceeding  
Leave at night their bodies' husk.

Whence returning  
They discerning  
Part the clouds and thrill things numb;  
Creatures drooning  
Hear them crooning  
"Wake and work! For Day has come."

## *A Magic Secret*

There are folks forever frowning,  
Life's delights so deeply drowning  
In the teary dark recesses hid by gloomy jutting brow,  
That their vision fills with ghastly  
Ghostly spectres rising vastly  
From the frowning, weeping chasm gulping pleasure in its slough.

There are other people smiling,  
Joys upon each other piling  
In the wrinkly little hollows where a smile is wont to play;  
And to look at them you never  
Would imagine that they ever  
Had a blessed thing to do but smile and coo the livelong day.

Now I know a little secret  
That is good for all the week, yet  
On a dismal dark blue Monday, 'twould excel in magic wile;  
Slip the frown a little lower  
From the brow it lingers o'er  
With a sudden twist just turn it round your lips—and there's a  
smile.

### *The Making of Time*

“Why do you grieve?”  
Hope said to Sorrow;  
“Time’s glad reprieve  
Comes with the morrow.”

“For those who mourn,”  
Sobbed sad-eyed Sorrow,  
“Memory’s bourn  
Suffers no morrow.”

---

Naught—at the last  
Is to-day or to-morrow,  
Save what from the Past  
Or the Future we borrow.

## *Whatever is Earthy*

I stroked the soft petals enfolding a rose  
Whose cheek with the welcome of Summerland glows.  
The song of its soul into harmony stirred  
My heart with a rapture too fine for a word.  
My spirit responded, and blended, and yearned  
To cherish the fragrance whose thrill it discerned;  
But fading and fading and withering fast  
The petals resolved into ruin at last.  
And as the sweet soul of the flower took wing  
It seemed to my listening longing to sing:—  
*“Whatever is earthy partakes of earth’s blight.  
'Twas born in a day. ’Twill die in a night.”*

I gathered possessions, I hoarded more gold  
Than Capital’s coffers expanded could hold.  
With bonds and securities, chattels and stocks  
I thought to obtain the one key that unlocks  
The wealth of a Universe waiting to pour  
On him who possessing sought more and still more.  
But Failure o’ertook me. And at Failure’s side  
Lean Poverty stalked, first to rob, then deride.  
Between them they snatched my last pauperish pence  
Then eerily echoed, ere tottering hence;—  
*“Whatever is earthy partakes of earth’s blight.  
'Twas born in a day. ’Twill die in a night.”*

I fondled my child—a mere babe at the breast.  
I watched her mature with a joy self-confessed.  
I planned her a future eclipsing the sun.  
But, ah, just before her life-work was begun  
The Angel of Death cut her down in her bloom—  
To prove how mortality speeds to its doom.  
Bemoaning the close of the maid’s bright career  
I watched her as marble stretched stiff in her bier;  
Beseeching the heavens my eyes seemed to see  
Transcribed by the angels, this fateful decree:—  
*“Whatever is earthy partakes of earth’s blight.  
'Twas born in a day. ’Twill die in a night.”*

I filled endless archives with ponderous books.  
My library bordered with ruminant nooks  
Invited mad worry to banish its care  
And dazzle the brain with the brilliances there.  
I buried the past in a book-lover’s grave—  
As if the dead pages were able to save.

But feverish fancies despoiled my hot brain  
Exposing the scars of my sorrow and pain.  
My brain overwrought, heard through all its wild whirl  
The leaves, as I thumbed them, so scornfully curl;—  
“Whatever is earthy partakes of earth’s blight.  
’Twas born in a day. ’Twill die in a night.”

I summoned my friends into revelry’s hall.  
I sought in its vintage to blur the black pall  
That settled and settled and blotted my life  
With shadows of dread of oblivion rife.  
I jested and sang and heaped high the glib cup  
Of merriment meaningless. Dine then and sup  
And laugh with a leer that the devils would shun  
Till day with its deadening damning is done.  
Then hear in the watches of night a ghost wail  
This sentence uncanny to make your heart quail;—  
“Whatever is earthy partakes of earth’s blight.  
’Twas born in a day. ’Twill die in a night.”

I flung me insane at a mountain of work.  
Expected that in its recesses must lurk  
Some balm for my spirit, some peace for my heart.  
When once I fell idle a twitch and a start  
Reminded again that a memory mad  
Was waiting to trap me. Until I turned glad  
To lose me in toil. But my sinews grew thin.  
My senses aquiver with labor’s wild din  
Betrayed me and mocked me and strove to proclaim  
That warning monotonous, ever the same:—  
“Whatever is earthy partakes of earth’s blight.  
’Twas born in a day. ’Twill die in a night.”

I yielded to Sorrow. She stripped my life lorn  
Of all the bright baubles that used to adorn;  
I felt my friends slipping, my happiness o’er  
While yesterday’s hopes seemed to beckon no more.  
I scanned the black sky for a token of day—  
Dim Dawn was still hiding in darkness away.  
But list! a monition thrilled low to instil  
Fresh courage and hope in my impotent will;  
I hearkened to the Voice. And a whisper came soft  
To comfort me, buoy me, and bear me aloft;—  
*“Whatever is earthless forever remains  
At peace with Itself till Eternity wanes.”*

## *The Three Paths*

“Indulge!” shouts the glutton, the sot, the roué,  
“For pleasure is sure,—and it lasts but a day.  
Let merriment spill from the wine of life’s brim.  
Come, watch the lights sparkle—though vision be dim  
With dews of the morning or shades of the night,  
Since swift on the heels of the dawn flees the light.  
Let passion run red. Let Flesh be our God.  
Ere swift we return, whence we came, to the sod.”

“Renounce!” shrieks the monk, the ascetic, the sage,  
“With youth comes Desire—but Wisdom with age.  
The wants of the body are beastly and bad;  
So turn from your chamberings wantonly mad,  
Your appetites, flesh-pots, your instincts to lust  
Ere Punishment damn you and doom you to dust.  
For bodies are sired of the Devil—while souls  
Are fathered of God, who exacts His just tolls.”

“Exalt!” cries the spirit illumined and pure,  
“The God of Desire. Let all longing endure.  
Enjoy the grosser—but lift it on high,  
Refine your delights till they blend with the sky.  
For tasteless and touchless and formless are joys  
Whose ecstasy clings, and yet never once cloys.  
The world is a Paradise. Enter and sip  
Its waters ambrosial. But first—*cleanse the lip.*”

## *An Episode Among the Planets*

Mother Earth lay lonely weeping  
In the early morning light.  
For her sister, snugly sleeping  
By her side throughout the night

Was with break of day fast fading—  
Mistress Moon had fled abashed  
As King Sun, his pomp parading,  
On her gaze his splendor flashed.

Mother Earth lay there a-sighing  
Face all tearful with her rue—  
Which some thoughtless folk espying  
Call the tears but morning dew.

When His Royal Sunship riding  
Sumptuous among the clouds  
Caught a glimpse of beauty hiding  
In the face her sorrow shrouds,

Gently then from clouds descending  
Softly sped the Solar Lord,  
Brought to speedy, happy ending  
All the gloom he so abhorred.

For he boldly kissed the grieving  
Tearful Earth at break of day.  
At his touch the tears kept leaving—  
Till he kissed them all away.

And they say that every growing  
Fragrant flower and luscious fruit  
Lies in dimpled hollow, showing  
Where she smiled upon his suit.

## *Paid by the Day*

His forehead was furrowed, his brow tightly knitted  
His cheek deeply sunken, his eye dull and dim;  
His coat, frayed and shiny, his form poorly fitted—  
A form that appeared but the shadow of him.  
His step automatic propelled a dead creature  
That sambled about with a crawl and a creep;  
His listless demeanor showed always some feature  
That could but remind you of something asleep.  
My heart deeply grieving, his footsteps I followed  
And watched him at last to a desk stiffly climb;—  
A desk that his skeleton elbows had hollowed  
And marked with the dents of endurance sublime.  
A look of despair crossed a face bleak and cheerless,  
All ashen and cold with the sorrows of years  
And yet with its anguish so stony and tearless,—  
For tears turn to ice when grief genuine nears.  
His lips replied not to my unspoken question,  
His brain must concentrate to earn his scant pay.  
His soul, though, made answer, amid its congestion;  
“A word explains all—I am *paid by the day.*”

“With figures and facts in black myriads trooping  
Forever I cipher and cipher away  
While still I sit stooping and stifing and drooping,  
For I am a chattel—and paid by the day.  
Through ten weary hours, ten hours together,  
Of sunshine and shadow, here shackled I stay;  
The sunshine infuses the outer world’s weather—  
The shadows are his who is paid by the day.  
The hours that throb their slow march o’er the dial  
Appear with the sun to yield Hope a faint ray,  
But morrows and yesterdays make grim denial—  
For hours are endless when paid by the day.  
I once had a brain and a heart and a longing  
And hopes fitted past me to brighten my way,  
But stringent and strident necessities thronging  
Have choked the soul dumb in him paid by the day.  
There once was a time when my thought to things higher  
Than figuring fallacies tended to stray;  
But backward I drew it—no man dare aspire  
When chained to a consciousness paid by the day.  
A brain automatic; a hand ever steady:  
A spirit content not to dream or to play;  
Instead, with a willingness never unready

To slave for its deadening pay by the day.  
Existence a grind and your wage but a pittance  
Enough just to keep your sad soul in its clay  
While time with its clangingly cold unremitance  
Oppresses and maddens him paid by the day.  
Though spirit be fainting and body be halting,  
Still on you must race in the victorless fray.  
Your time is your master's. Your wage is defaulting—  
He durst not be ill who is paid by the day.”

“I rise in the morning—my soul the while falling  
And pleading and sobbing as souls alone may.  
For harshly and hatefully Duty is calling,  
That taskmaster Duty who pays by the day.  
I sink in the evening—but not to sweet sleeping  
Black spectres foreboding loom up in array  
Portentously shuddering! chills of fear creeping  
Congealing the hope in me paid by the day.  
The gamins that grovel, mere waifs in the alley  
Have naught but their vagrancy's voice to obey.  
Let me though—a man—for a brief moment dally,  
Then swift the thought goads—‘You are paid by the day.’  
The bird and the flower, in fields bright and sunny  
Unfold their souls' sweetness with none to say nay.  
But they have not learned the vast value of money  
That gilds an aggrandizement paid by the day.  
My spirit grows deaf with the dollars' loud clinking  
Whose avalanche brooks neither doubt nor delay.  
In goblets of gold their frail health they are drinking.  
They? Not they who toil and are paid by the day.  
The creature that buys my lean soul has his pleasure—  
A plutocrat's pomp with a showman's display.  
But ah, his great coffers heaped high could not measure  
The sorrows of families paid by the day.  
My children are human as well as my neighbor's,  
My wife is as noble—and none can gainsay.  
Yet let them all starve. While the fruits of my labors  
Are swallowed by him who pays me by the day.”

“Ah, whence can I hope in my madness to borrow  
Some sympathy's boon for which only I pray?  
Since men must provide for their own meagre morrow  
They cannot befriend whom they pay by the day.  
The world heeds me not. It is busy devising  
Some means whence its profits more ponderous weigh—  
Save when it is occupied deeply despising

The plight of a thing scanty paid by the day.  
The moralists urge me to keep my eyes straining  
Both outward and onward, and upward alway;  
But forces without and beyond are disdain  
And Heaven is haze to him paid by the day.  
No more do I find bits of comfort accruing  
By looking within. For my soul must inveigh  
With turmoil both righteous and wroth the pursuing  
Of demons incarnate that pay by the day.  
I close my eyes then. Let my vision slow blinding  
Grow numb with the senses that all must decay  
And atrophy wholly beneath the dead binding  
Of pressure external that pays by the day.  
The Infinite Spirit within me is pleading  
But I must forever its earnest betray.  
Who cares for a god when his being is bleeding  
With anguish untold? Does God pay by the day?  
A piece of accoutrement shaped for the battle  
That Greed fights with Greed till the world has grown grey  
A mindless and soulless and spiritless chattel—  
This chattel the Devil still pays by the day.”

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### *Doubt's Unreason*

If now and then a cloud obscure the Sun  
Do I, construing that its course is run,  
Declare the solar system out of place  
And swift effacement threatening the race?

If now and then a doubt obstruct my view—  
To passing cloud in mortal vision due,  
Shall I conclude that Truth has lost its light  
And God interred the world in endless night?

## *Understanding*

The beggar moaned without the gate.  
He cursed his lot, that cruel Fate  
Had left him there in rags to wait  
    While Wealth within lay sleeping.  
The night was raw. The wind blew chill.  
He plead and plead and plead until  
His voice became a wail. But still  
    Upon him Death came creeping.

“Dear Lady, give me just a crust!  
'Tis life I beg—so beg I must.  
For Death is close. And o'er my dust  
    The snows will soon be falling.”  
Yet on she slumbered deep and long.  
No beggar—nor the passing throng  
Could waken her; be right or wrong  
    The manner of the calling.

Then suddenly a voice rang out  
In tones that bore no trace of doubt  
As from afar a joyous shout  
    Betokened some one coming.  
It was the Master's homeward stride.  
He flashed a key—the door swung wide;  
He kissed his lovely virgin bride  
    Nor felt the winds benumbing.

Within the walls a soft caress,  
A look—a kiss—a touch to bless  
A man and make his soul confess  
    That Heaven has descended.  
Without the walls, a freezing form  
That gasps and grovels in the storm  
And starves for want of something warm  
    Till life's despair has ended.

Without a woman's soul there pleads  
To sate his body's grosser needs  
A man who, begging, intercedes—  
    Her passion's throb demanding.  
Within a woman's soul there lies  
A lover, for whose touch she cries;  
He owns her love. Nor begs nor buys.  
    The Key is “Understanding.”

## *The Mystic Isle of Sex*

A beautiful stream in the woodland is flowing  
Where flowers are growing,  
And Nature, bestowing  
Her smiles and caresses, sends breezes that blowing  
From out the South Summer Land sweeten the air.

The stream in the course of its eddyings winding,  
A spot of land finding,  
Its narrow bed binding—  
A verdure-clad island its vista thus blinding  
Its separates then, to each bayou a share.

But on past the island, the branches uniting  
Their ripples inviting,  
Are speedily righting  
The brief incompleteness they felt when first sighting  
That island that cuts the one stream into two.

---

The stream we call Life from the Infinite rushing  
Its barriers flushing  
Its obstacles crushing  
Discovers an island. Though flowers are blushing,  
Yet serpents are brewing their venomous rue.

The Isle is so mystic men scarce can discern it  
Nor study, nor learn it;  
So many would spurn it  
That soon a drear waste the race human must turn it  
Did not some brave soul dare to fathom its shore.

As if to escape the dark wiles of its wonder  
Two bayous that sunder,  
Plunge over, delve under  
Divide the one stream. And dividing they thunder  
Their mad discontent till united once more.

The Isle is called Sex. It enchants with rare flowers  
Whose fragrance endowers  
Ecstatic the hours  
While visitors tarry, held thrall'd in its bowers.  
Yet serpents are hiding—beware their dread fangs.

The stream known as Woman flows placid forever.  
    But currents that sever  
    The Man-stream can never  
Be trusted for transport, save through strong endeavor;  
Else ruin ensues—how the knell of it clangs!

Upon this dim island have errors erected  
    And usage protected  
    And churchlings elected  
A wall so forbidding its ban has effected  
Complete isolation from either lone side.

And Life, cut in two, flows with surging foreboding  
    Its twin-banks corroding  
    Its twin-impulse goading  
Its twin-soul with separate anguish o'erloading  
The wastes of the shore with the wrecks of the tide.



Some day eons hence, an upheaval will shatter  
    The heaps of earth-matter  
    Whose clods of clay scatter  
Their cloy o'er the Isle. In this period latter,  
The Isle shall subside with a crash and a groan.

Then Woman and Man once again sweetly blended,  
    Duality ended,—  
    Sex wholly transcended—  
Shall merge their twin-Self from the Source first intended  
To flow a Finality, One and Alone.

## *Speechless*

I have searched the Universe through and through  
For words to tell you, Dear,  
Of the beautiful vision that greets my view  
When you have nestled near.

I had heard from a poet that roses lent  
Their tint to a woman's cheek,  
So straight to the garden's bloom I went  
The secret there to seek.

With a trembling hope I softly stooped  
And for the favor plead;  
But the petals fell and the flower drooped—  
The lovely tint had fled.

Perhaps the lily was like your throat  
For thus I had also heard;  
From its fragrant lips might burst some note  
With faint descriptive word.

But the lily's touch is hard and cold  
And never a bit like yours;  
Its calm, severe, ascetic mould  
Scant sympathy assures.

Where the limpid waters flowed along  
I sought your scented breath;  
For a maid but echoes their silver song—  
The bard so plainly saith.

A defiant splash was the answer curt  
Of eddies swirling past.  
If ever they paused 'twas but to flirt—  
Embraced by the sea at last.

But surely the stars illumed your eyes  
So lovers all agreed;  
And eagerly I scanned the skies—  
My quest was vain indeed,—

The stars just twinkled and winked and smiled;  
With never a glance so true  
As to make me think of the evenings whiled  
Just looking, Love, at you.

There is nothing in all God's perfect Plan  
That more than shadows ill  
Her presence who inspires a man  
To feel the lover's thrill.

And yet, although I cannot frame  
The words to speak my thought,  
We two need not a verbal name  
In printed texture wrought.

For when your throat and cheek caress  
My lips—and linger there;  
And while you whisper low to bless  
Unspeakably; my prayer

To be more worthy rises mute  
And meets your eyes—and then  
Just you and God and I refute  
The words required of men.

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### *To Her Who Feels*

A thousand medley sounds may throng a harp. And yet  
It answers not.  
Insulted then they feel a sort of crude regret;  
They wonder what  
Illusive spell has seized the thing; that it should lie  
Inert and dumb  
The while their voices gutturally coarse may cry—  
Whose souls are numb.

But let a note from any single instrument  
Attuned in pitch  
Approach the harp. Then suddenly the harp has blent  
Its music rich  
In glad response to one wee understanding tone.  
The screeching mob  
Withdraw in rough disgust and leave the two alone—  
Whose souls can throb.

Through many clanging years I seemed to all my friends  
A sullen thing.  
For they, of childish aims and inharmonious ends  
Had failed to bring  
A touch attuned. But you with all your poet's heart  
Once happened near;  
And now I fling my joyous, free, melodious Art  
From sphere to sphere.

## *Let There Be Light*

“Let There Be Light!” The Heaving Void has calmed its incoherent cries and speaks.  
And through the shoreless, soundless seas of space, one world upon another creaks  
In huge embroiling effort to obey. Vast waves of anxious ether roll  
Tumultuous amid the spectral stars, demanding as their trifling toll  
A single glimmer from the cycling spheres—to satisfy the stern command  
Of that resounding, thrilling Cosmic Voice, by breath of ceaseless motion fanned.  
The piercing mandate cleaves dark orbits grim where nebulae revolve disturbed  
Lest some blind planet whirling by collide, and thus their onward course be curbed;  
Deep echoes vibrate forth the clarion call throughout the awful spanless bound  
That forms the realm of unsensed Omnipresence. As the strange unheard-of sound  
First strikes relentless on the cumbered ear of atoms, with audition dulled—  
From hearing through a million ages past mere rumblings aimless and annulled—  
Each speck of star-dust leaps exulting, wild to realize its dream of Light,  
While myriads of mighty molecules have danced ecstatic in their flight;  
Stupendous joy commoves the nascent suns from common chaos just emerged,  
As through each orb impatient long to shine a pulse of new-born power has surged.  
Thus eagerly their energies they bend to halo every mote in reach,  
But tardy lags the Light and still no gleam illumines the dismal, endless breach.  
Together in a cataclysmic clash—a strain that seems to rupture space  
The Universe is tossing back and forth, to find some wee secluded place  
Where just one ray of light appears afar. The face of all Creation weeps  
With torrents teeming mingled hope and fear. A flood of sweaty anguish steps

In hotter haste and yet more frantic pain the monumental tra-  
vail-throes  
Of Mother Cosmos. Soon the muttering roar of hurtling worlds  
to madness grows  
And swift destruction threatens all that is. But still the black  
eternal Night  
Enshrouding deeper unborn worlds, defies the Voice that bade it  
yield to Light.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Let There Be Light.” A tiny wingéd thing discerns the crisis  
falling fast—  
Bethinks himself to second God’s command. And Lo! effulgent  
breaks at last  
A glory clothing all the mortal race. The Universe sobs glad  
relief.  
And as the chorus swells, I ask the mite his secret. His reply  
comes brief;—  
“There never was a time when Light was not, in spite of theories  
men devise.  
But splendors paled unseen—since God was blind; until forsooth  
I gave Him eyes.”

---

### *Hope Ever Shining*

Twisting its way through the stones and the stubble  
Rising unwelcome before it,  
Finds the crude worm a world jutting with trouble,  
Since for its keep it must bore it.  
Breasting the breeze, the world’s care overthrowing,  
Soars the fleet bird gladly trilling,  
Sees but the beckoning orbs ever glowing,  
Wings its repose to their thrilling.

---

HOPE is a star that transcends our attaining—  
Merged in reality never;  
Shining yet on us some eminence gaining,  
Lighting us upward forever.

Sloughed in the dark of a light-bereft valley,  
Stumbling and trembling and groping  
Gross mortal minds with their wallowing dally,  
Weighed by the vainness of hoping.

Heed not their slough or their dubitant story  
Mired in a finite infernal.  
Keep your eye fixed on the visions of glory  
Fulsome from Hope shed eternal.

## *The Kiss*

I kissed you first upon the hand—  
    A queenly hand;  
The softest one in all the land  
    To wield command  
Of human souls that come and go  
When you, My Lady, will it so,  
Permitting adulation's flow  
    In granting this  
    Admirer's Kiss.

I kissed you then upon the brow—  
    I made a vow  
That if you only would allow  
    Me near you now,  
Henceforth I should be at your call  
To guard you, Sister—that is all  
Nor let your charms my heart enthrall.  
    Quite safe, I wis,  
    That Brother's Kiss.

I kissed you then upon the cheek—  
    You were so meek  
So helpless that I fain would seek—  
    And thus bespeak  
Some deeper interest in you, Dear—  
A place where dimples might appear  
In children's cheeks. No need to fear;  
    'Twere not amiss—  
    A Father's Kiss.

I kissed you then with tongue on tongue—  
    A kiss that stung  
That burned our lips, while Passion wrung  
    The plea it flung;  
"Come closer, Love—Love, *Love!*" Until  
We felt the wild ecstatic thrill  
Of Heaven's rapture that can fill  
    All Hell's abyss—  
    The Lover's Kiss.

I kissed you then upon the breast.  
    And in the West  
The sun was setting where the blest  
    Abide at rest.

While o'er my soul the peace that fell  
Transported me to heights where dwell  
The angels, far from mortal spell.  
Love's crowning bliss  
Is Baby's Kiss.

---

### *Both Lover and Friend*

When first my eyes beheld your winsome grace, a host  
Of longings sprung  
Impetuous within my breast to make my boast—  
As bards have sung—  
That I, your lover, might enchant and charm you most.  
For I was young;  
And then it seemed to me that you and I alone  
Were all the world.  
When other suitors pressed to make your love their own  
With hopes unfurled,  
I fain had heard them from the depths of ruin groan  
By envy hurled.  
I clung to you, and fought for you, and prayed that I  
Might crown you queen.  
Exalting you above the Love that broods on high  
I strove to wean  
Your heart away from all your friends. My ceaseless sigh  
To come between.

But now 'tis not enough to touch your hand and feel  
The lover's thrill;  
And through my raptured being sense the godhood steal  
Ecstatic—fill  
My soul with all the Heaven gods could ask. Your weal;  
Your woman's will;  
Your aspirations; and your soul's success; these need  
A something more  
Than gave a lover blinded by his tender greed  
In days of yore.  
'Mid many lovers *let me be a friend.* Whose lead  
Above, before,  
You trust and follow to your life's consummate end.  
I thrill with you  
Because our souls' desire is one. And I would lend  
My judgment true.

So call me Lover, Dear, but more;—esteem me Friend.  
For friends are few.

## *A Vision of the Night*

Amid the deep shroud of the dead of the night  
Whose vestige of light  
Had fled from my sight

A Vision appeared. And as its form neared  
I saw it was clad in a glistre of white.

They trembled and twitched—my poor sleep-heavy eyes  
With dread that denies  
The truth it espies,  
And strives to return to lethargy, spurn  
The brilliance to blame for dull torpor's surprise.

“Sink back to your sleep!” cried the sprites of the West  
Whose blackness confessed  
Their earthiness. “Lest  
To-morrow you shirk your drudgery work  
Since weary and worn and deprived of your rest.”

“Awake and behold!” from the East rang the word  
Of power that stirred  
My senses that heard  
And bade me awake though dawn itself break  
To witness my woe for the hours I had erred.

Still thickly benumbed my slumbered once more;  
But all the earth o'er  
I *felt* the Light pour  
Its radiance illumine the last shade of gloom  
And beckon my spirit forever to soar.

“O who can you be,” I sobbed, “who indeed  
That sightless you lead  
Me on whence proceed  
The rays of the morn; ere dawn can adorn  
The earth and the sky with the sunlight they need?”

The Vision replied: “My name is not known  
To mortals who moan  
That they must alone  
And lonely observe my outlines, nor swerve  
From things I reveal in the dead of night shown.”

I followed the Light to the crest where it led  
My bruised limbs bled  
I wandered unfed  
Unclothed and unkept by humans who slept  
Interred in their somnolence deep as the dead.

The work of the morrow I wholly forgot.  
It mattered not what  
Remotely lone spot  
My spirit must seek. Still up loomed the peak  
Attainment that urged me press on, and pause not.  
At last the bleak summit I reached weak and worn  
With vesture all torn.  
I heard my friends mourn  
Below in the vale. Where, drowsily pale  
They clung to what I *to be crowned must be shorn.*  
Then—wonder of wonders—forever away  
Earth's night passed. Broad day  
Revealed an array  
Of glories that I ne'er saw in the sky  
While I below lingered to work or to play.

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The Vision had faded. But still brighter yet  
Above my regret  
My raptured sight met  
A message from God. "Until you had trod  
The heights of abandonment, suns must all set."  
"The Vision you saw was a foregleam I cast  
O'er present and past  
That flickering fast  
Souls see who aspire. Come higher, come higher!  
Forget your Soul's dawn. Lo, the sun shines at last."

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### *A Sure Remedy*

I've a secret, Dear, to tell you,  
Cross my heart, I tell you true.  
And I hope it may impel you  
Just to watch it work for you.  
Now's the very time to try it—  
Now and always after this;  
Then if you would like to buy it  
You can pay me with a kiss.  
When a fear or doubt or worry  
Comes to bother you again  
Till your brain's all fret and flurry;  
Don't you ask advice of men.  
Don't you wonder what's the reason,  
But before the clock says "tick"—  
Here's the secret right in season,  
Just you *love somebody—quick.*

### *Only a Worm*

“Only a worm!”—exclaimed the man  
As he crushed the mite in the Maker’s Plan.  
But eons hence must the man atone;  
For lo the worm to a god full-grown  
Shall teach the man, at Judgment Day  
That Life is one, and ’tis Self we slay.

## *Humanity's Prisoners*

Angrily foreboding, with a sullen snarl that tells  
How a heart ferocious through the growling mutter swells;  
Gnashing on his jagged teeth in mighty rage unkempt;  
Lashing bristling tail from which no object seems exempt;  
Swaying tawny body like a tower in a storm;  
Hate and lust exhaling from his gaunt and hungry form;  
Circles mountain Lion in his artificial den,  
Pouring out his loathing on the gaping sons of men.  
Lordly in the forest, here he froths at ironed shame  
Impotently panting for the freedom whence he came.

Pitifully beating eager wings against the bars—  
Frenziedly unmindful of the smarting wounds whose scars  
Add to one another deeper witness to the crime  
Where a cage discordant robs the woodland's choral chime;  
Pale and sick and sorrowful, a Birdling plaintive peeps,  
Pleading with a restlessness that never lulls nor sleeps;  
Hoping spite of vanished hopes to reach again the nest  
Whence a man marauder snatched this childie from the rest.  
All the tender sweetness long ago has left her voice,  
Now the note of sobbing is the songster's only choice.

Massively inert, cowed dumb, all powerless there lies  
Caged as yet a mighty force that passers-by despise.  
In the brain of man a fettered Mind awaits the day  
When that jailer Ignorance shall die and yield his sway.  
In the human heart confined a bird is pining too  
Known as Love—her jailer Fear. She pleads with me and you.

Who will break the cruel thrall and set the prisoners free;  
Then discern what their Creator meant the two to be?

## *The Soul of a Flower*

A tulip and a violet were growing side by side.  
The violet lay lowly. But the tulip flaunted wide  
Her coarse plebeian petals that, coquetting with the sun,  
Compelled a heightened color at the notice she had won  
Through beauty's dower.

A maiden passed along that way, in search of fragrant bloom.  
A little maid of charity—she helped to cheer the gloom  
Of dreary army hospitals where dying soldiers lay,  
Tormented with the memories of men they strove to slay  
By brutish power.

Not once a single glance gave she to charms of tulip bold.  
But tenderly she felt among the tangled moss and mold  
To where the little violet was hiding—all unseen,  
While pouring forth her perfume with her wonted modest mien,  
Each hour by hour.

Her body bruised and broken, soon the violet lay dead  
Within the maiden's grasp. And then the brilliant tulip said,  
"You foolish little flower, it is plain as plain can be  
That you should have asserted more of self. Just look at me—  
I never cower."

The tulip hung there till it rotted on its withered stem.  
The dying soldiers smiled—while souls of violets wafted them  
To realms where waves of fragrance out from God's own presence  
roll.

For the petal is the body, but the perfume is the soul  
Of every flower.

## *Missing the Mark*

The master bowman wings his arrows true.  
His matchless skill  
Had pierced the finest target through and through  
Transfixed at will.  
But let the sun withdraw its limpid light;  
Let shadows fall  
That swiftly merge in gloom the nascent night  
Till black the pall  
Of total darkness wraps the earth in shroud;  
No archer then  
Can lift from off his arms the cumbrous cloud  
Whose burden men  
Must bear until another dawning day.  
If now his bow  
He turn and twang toward what had been his prey  
The shaft falls low  
And wide the mark; for Night has clutched his hand,  
Obscured the goal,  
And made the master marksman lose command  
Of skill's control.

So likewise fails at times the Soul of us  
Its prize to win.  
When mental midnight clouds its action thus,  
We call it sin.  
But sin is merely missing some one mark  
The Soul has set.  
And that because there broods yon shadow dark;  
Then why regret?  
For just as men must tread the cycle round  
Of dusk and dawn  
Before the Timeless have their efforts crowned  
Of brain and brawn;  
So night and day must ever alternate  
With sure return  
Upon the Soul that aims at lofty Fate  
Some boon to earn.  
Rebuke you not—if once your aim have failed;  
By sin depressed;  
But,—till your knowledge-dawn shall have prevailed  
Lie still, and rest.

## *The Self-Accusing Verdict*

The painting was fearlessly bare of a film of a robe to enmesh  
In shaméd obscurity the curves of her form or the tints of  
her flesh.

Her bosom, her cheek and her limbs were so rounded and whole-  
some and sweet

That taken together the charms of all Womanhood scarce could  
compete.

The truth was portrayed from arcana most sacred vouchsafed to  
the race—

Divinity shone from the ground at her feet to the crown o'er her  
face.

The multitude passing pronounced its opinion in tones that I  
heard

With emphasis challenging, spite of the fact that they said not  
a word.

“How shameful!” declared a lean spinster, her visage bespeaking  
the prude,

“To show to the public a figure so wantonly, shamelessly nude.

I sigh for my sex that a creature thus brazen, immoral and bold  
Should pose in impurity's nakedness, waiting for men to behold.  
'Tis wicked to gaze on a sight so unclothed, so unchaste, so  
unclean;

I flee from a vision whose outlines defile and pollute and be-  
mean.”

“How luscious!” he cried with the full-orbed perceptions, the  
passion of youth

That sensed the mere form but evaded the essence and spirit of  
Truth.

“My blood rises hot—and my manhood leaps up and my heart is  
on fire

To clasp to my breast and to thrill, through and through, the  
fair maid I desire.

For woman was meant but to satisfy wholly my manhood's de-  
mand—

Oh, that she might spring from the canvas and follow the lead  
of my hand.”

Two lovers passed by. They were husband and wife, yet  
avowed lovers still.

They looked at the form standing mute with its judgment. A  
great divine thrill

Of soul-understanding united them both in a thought that spoke  
not.

All words are but shadows. Which falling must hide and dis-  
figure and blot  
The soul that looks sunward. They knew what it was to sense  
passion—and yet  
Their love was so pure that its fullest expression left not one  
regret.  
Amid the dumb multitude lazing along with a somnolent nod,  
Illumined these two murmured low in one whisper, "The Image  
of God."

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### *Fulfilling the Great Command*

A thousand priests may creep their painful way to distant gilded  
shrine  
To venerate a sacred bone;—  
And God can scarce withhold reproving frown. A blasphemous  
design—  
By marrow-wasting to atone.

A band of thoughtless zealots labeled Christ may vainly proselyte  
A race of totem-minded blacks;—  
And God but weeps in pity that His servants hypnotized by fright  
Ecstatic, self-deluded wax.

A little child may fling a careless drop of water on a rose  
Just budding into gracious bloom;—  
And God transported in a wave of joy His presence sweet bestows  
Through every petal's fresh perfume.

For lo, the God of countless planets sleeping in the flower abides  
Until full-blown the fragrance wakes.  
The "Logos" is but Self-expression. He obeys who, where God  
hides,  
With Christlike touch the casement breaks.

## *Return to Nature*

"Return to Nature." 'Tis a graceful phrase  
But signifying little in the saying  
Until we thread the deep, perplexing maze  
That Naturism seems to be displaying.

To bare a body naked to the sun;  
To live upon the rudiment essentials;  
To eat and sleep and die the while you shun  
Refinement with her gentle consequentials;  
To forage for a bit of tardy food;  
And then to win it only by a battle;  
To watch your footsteps lest their crunch intrude  
And hostile missiles somewhence rudely rattle;  
To prowl about and scurry fleet away  
In terror lest you be with spoils detected;  
To sulk and growl and rage the livelong day  
When earnest effort fails since misdirected;  
To keep a ferret vigilance on foes;  
To face exposed the most ferocious weather;  
To share with none your pleasures or your woes;  
To seek in vain scant cover from the heather;  
To have no home but where you skulk at night;  
To own no ties you may not roughly sever;  
To crouch at every sound from out the light;  
To drag a restless, aimless life forever;  
To wander here and there with none to care;  
To stretch a shaggy limb upon the mountain;  
To wallow in a cold, uncanny lair;  
To lap with lurid tongue from forest fountain;  
To feel that you exist for you alone;  
To live upon your prey, perforce made selfish;  
To champion no cause but just your own;  
To hide in hermit haunt till fairly elfish;  
To know your dormant soul though sprung from God  
Is choked and dumb for lack of true expression;  
To grunt and growl and nose amid the sod  
The while your hungry heart demands progression;  
To browse upon the stubble near the earth  
For food whereby your body may be nourished,  
Unconscious that the husk at seedling's birth  
Involved a Something whence your soul has flourished;  
To lead in short a desultory life  
With sun and shadow, joy and sorrow blended  
Perhaps in peace, perhaps in bloody strife

Till savage Death has all your struggles ended;  
To be but one among the countless horde  
Of vulgar beings unevolved for ages;  
To halt content while others hasten toward  
The Honor Roll in Michael's glistening pages;—  
Is *this* Return to Nature? If it be  
We imitate the traits of brutes most bestial  
And retrograde throughout Eternity.  
For even beasts are facing heights celestial.

---

To roam at will the fragrant, flowering fields;  
To nestle near the tender dear Earth Mother;  
To care for no protection if it shields  
By sacrificing some less able brother;  
To eat the luscious fruit the fields supply  
Or eat it not,—in lack or fulness wealthy;  
To scorn the drug, the knife, the occult eye,  
From but the dew's elixir springing healthy;  
To welcome forms divinely bare—and yet  
To prize the lace a lovely arm adorning;  
To watch the shadows fall without regret;  
To greet the splendid sunrise every morning;  
To draw a rythmic, calm, refreshing breath;  
To revel in a solitude quite soundless;  
To know no fear, not even that of Death;  
To claim as yours by right possessions boundless;  
To let the breezes kiss responsive flesh;  
To range abroad supreme in your dominion;  
To cast the last externals that enmesh;  
To gambol free of popular opinion;  
To make no marriage save your love impel;  
To hold aloof from clannish, family feeling;  
To bear no child but that desired full well;  
To need no counsel to your Soul's revealing;  
To act on impulse, reckless of result;  
To trust the ready instinct that imbues you;  
To glory in your freedom and exult  
To court Desire whose prescient hopes enthuse you;  
To ridicule dependence on a friend;  
To seek no mystic doctor, lawyer, preacher;  
To lord the heights of Selfhood you ascend;  
to make the starry firmament your teacher;  
To laugh at laws and penalties for crime;  
To scratch the statutes off the earth, save only  
That single mandate with its sense sublime

“To thine own Self be true,”—and dare be lonely;  
To know that education means unfold;  
To break instinctively whatever fetters;  
To face tradition’s dictum, calmly bold;  
To study laws of life—not laws of letters;  
To honor Nature’s cause in happy hymns;  
To realize that Nature is the raiment  
Wherein the God of Nature robes His limbs;  
To laud as Deity no counter-claimant;  
To act and think and feel and be all true;  
To vote with Love, in lawless legislature;  
To cherish worlds, since worlds abide in you;—  
We could perhaps call this Return to Nature.

But vastly most important of the whole  
Wherein I have but named some single feature  
Is that you recognize the subtle Soul  
That animates and guides each living creature.  
It matters little what you call the Thing—  
Volition, Instinct, Conscience, Judgment, Longing,  
It matters much how earnestly you cling  
To those desires which with the Thing come thronging.  
For this may sum the argument entire;—  
*The animals obey their Souls’ monition.*  
Escaping Its divinely righteous ire  
That blights so much of human-hoped fruition.  
No method, system, school, or cult, or creed  
Need hamper you with fetish nomenclature;  
*To be yourself,—and let your godhood lead—*  
Herein, I wean, is true Return to Nature.

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### *Environment*

From out the blackest, grossest earth  
The fairest flower may flourish.  
Her seed evolved her own pure birth—  
The clods but scantily nourish.

Within a sin-soiled world, I stood  
Uncertain of my sweetness  
Till, as a flower, I drew the good  
From even sin’s completeness.

## *The Marriage of God and Nature*

When relatives meddlesome come interfering  
    'Twixt husband and wife there is apt to be strife;  
Till ugly Divorce in its envy appearing  
    Has torn them apart for the rest of their life.  
When husband and wife are alone with each other,  
    A thousand times closer entwines the soft bond  
That makes the two one, with no room for another—  
    The bond of Desire unites them more fond.

A billion years since, Father God went a-wooing;  
    'Twas ages before this race human was born.  
He wooed Mother Nature—nor wearied pursuing  
    Until She said "Yes" on their bright wedding morn.  
The child that first blessed them we know as Creation  
    And from her matured, all we mortals have sprung;  
And of her immortal in manifestation  
    Of her immemorial poets have sung.

Now God has a friend that is surnamed Religion  
    Who strives to tear God from dear Nature apart;  
And threatens damnation with penalties Stygian  
    In order to terrify God's human heart.  
Then sweet Mother Nature knows some one called Science  
    Who alienates Her from endearments of God,  
And begs Her to place a more certain reliance  
    Upon the grim skeletons dug from the sod.

And so God and Nature though longing to weld them  
    In tenderest union; while heart with heart throbs;  
Are sundered—so long have outsiders withheld them  
    And robbed them of rapture; while heart from heart sobs.  
Their daughter Creation is anxiously weeping  
    That Nature and God have been rent into twain.  
While we with our sympathies stunted and sleeping,  
    Seek churches and books. But our quest is in vain.

---

O blinded Humanity, can a babe issue  
    From womb of its mother or loins of its sire  
Save only the bone and the blood and the tissue  
    Be formed by uniting the parents' desire?  
So call not God impotent,—Mind analytic,  
    The while you hold Nature from God's dear embrace;  
If Nature be sterile,—Oh Spiritist critic,  
    You need but give God His original place.

### *Her Answer*

I sent my Love a spray of bloom  
    And begged her wear just one  
To seal my happiness, or doom  
    With a rose in her hair—or none.

I sped that night to the festal hall  
    To watch for the maiden fair;  
Then over my heart there fell a pall—  
    Her tresses were coldly bare.

But while I looked there flamed afire  
    The token I fain would seek;  
For the rose that answered my heart's desire  
    Had blossomed in her cheek.

## *Virgin Gold*

Deep in the heart of the mountain there lay  
Modestly, shyly in hiding  
Nuggets of gold—virgin gold. Till one day  
Miners disturbed their abiding.

All the bright nuggets forthwith they displaced,  
Melted them up in a mixture;  
Copper and nickel in coin that they chased—  
Bases to give the gold fixture.

One bit they saved as a pure souvenir,  
Put it where hands could not tarnish;  
Mounted in setting whose charms would endear  
With an appropriate garnish.

Moulded in money 'twould pass as mere coin  
Coarsened through process of minting;  
Gold in virginity never may join  
Throngs harshly clutching and stinting.

---

*Souls* that the world with the wear of its care  
Worries away prematurely—  
There are the spirits most spotlessly fair,  
Wrought the most finely and purely.

You, with your practical base of alloy,  
Coin of a race roughly fingered,  
Circulate still with the clink of your cloy.  
Calloused, your spirit has lingered.

But if your brother lose heart and pass out,  
Sensitive soul that soars higher,  
Torture him not with derision or doubt—  
Past is his crucible fire.

## *The Pursuit of Pleasure*

Through the green meadows I wandered one day  
Wandered away  
Child—in my play,  
Seeking the gold of the rainbow so gay;  
Seeking but finding it fleeting.

Out from the flowers a fairy arose—  
Every child knows  
Where a child goes  
When it needs Fairyland's balm for its woes—  
There came we two to be meeting.

Softly I whispered and asked her her name.  
"So you just came?  
Wide is my fame,  
Pleasure they call me—and rapture my aim.  
Would you love life? Only follow."

Gleefully grasping the hand of my guide  
Proud at her side  
Proud in my stride  
Gladly I followed. But soon I espied  
Meadow depressed into hollow.

Into the valley of misty Despair,  
Tottering where  
Lust laid its lair  
Pleasure allured me—made my soul bear  
Tortures devised of the devil.

Pleasure deserted me. Pleasure cared not  
How black the spot  
Hellishly hot  
Where my heart sank, with a moan that its lot  
Lay where this Pleasure wrought revel.

Hopless I floundered and writhed and cried out;—  
Groan and yet shout;  
"Hedge me about  
Doom me and damn me! But leave me, O Doubt,  
Save me or slay me—one quickly."

Shrieking in torture my prayer to be saved  
While still I raved  
Gently there waved  
Down from the heights the salvation I craved—  
Cards woven strongly and thickly.

Some hidden hand held the life-saving line,  
Paying it fine.  
Strength newly mine,  
Up till I drank once again Life's sweet wine  
Climbed I with grasp sure and steady.

Ah, but the vision that met my glad eyes  
Held a surprise  
Reason denies;  
How many facts that our reason defies  
Seem to astound us made ready.

For on the summit stood Pleasure, arrayed  
Not for the shade—  
Lest the tints fade;  
Splendor celestial about her displayed  
Made me exclaim in wide wonder.

“Truly I led you,” she said with a kiss,  
“Led you amiss,  
You who sought bliss  
All the while led you that you might seek this  
Summit where mortal hopes sunder.

Deep in the gloom and the dead of the night  
Robbed of my sight,  
Crazed by my fright,  
Cried I aloft for a glimmer of light,  
Then and then only ascended.

When men would follow, they needs must face Hell;  
Ah, I know well  
Hell's human spell—  
But if you climb to the heights where I dwell,  
Heaven and I, lo, are blended.”

## *Mothering Souls*

A virgin mother suffers more than man  
Can ever comprehend. His mental span  
Is limited to cold experience—  
To sense a soul his brain is far too dense.  
And yet to man the very synonym  
For agony is that which seems to him  
An unexplainable and mystic thing;  
To even his dull eyes her sorrows bring  
The tears of sympathy beyond control  
That steal unbid from out his inmost soul.

The mother weighed in travail does but jest  
Beside the enciente Soul within whose breast  
Lies hope of unborn babe begot from God.  
Since men so little know where God has trod,  
More often they confound His greatest act  
With Satan's power, by all their creeds attacked.  
No earthly laws will ever legalize  
To earthless Soul a spouse beyond the skies.  
If they consort above the pale of sex  
A child, or man, or patriarch, who recks  
Of naught but that the Spirit broods above  
May bear on earth a god conceived of Love.  
Nor time nor place nor circumstance prevents  
The union of the Soul with Spirit; whence  
A second Christ in flesh or print or stone  
Shall burst Immaculate, whom God must own.  
The Spirit—whether He or She or It  
Forever woos the Soul. Endearments fit  
Along the sea of ether, on whose waves  
Must navigate the human ere he braves  
And dominates at last the Boundless All.  
A million souls detect the whisper fall  
Wherein the Limitless conceals Its voice.  
Though every one if left to honest choice  
Would mate with Spirit only, still the fear  
Of men and laws and customs must appear—  
An interloper snatching heart from heart,  
To keep our dear divinities apart.  
As lovers innocent of any wrong  
May twine their raptured forms, since both belong  
To one another and to Love, just so  
When sympathy and impulse freely flow  
The Spirit and the Soul commune as one;

And if they have not sadly learned to shun  
The soft caress of those who thrill akin,  
A babe is born. 'Tis God's—though men see sin.

O, Soul, if such you be, whose longings yearn  
To mother all the Universe, then learn  
That in your Spirit Lover lies the strength  
To bear and buoy and cheer you any length  
Whereto your travail labors. God perceives  
Those law-abiding fools whose speech relieves  
Themselves of undue pressure on the brain.  
But God will not permit their curse to stain  
The nascent Christ that struggles while you groan  
And suffer in the night-time all alone.  
So bear you hard upon the Spirit's arm,  
Embraced thereby you nestle free from harm.  
If ever tears would blur your downcast eye  
Look on and up. And soon the Great Most High  
Shall smile upon you, Mother Soul, to crown  
Your pangs through wondrous Child of world-renown.

---

### *As A Flower*

Does the flower question whence it came?  
No more do I.  
Fragrance pours profuse to waft it fame  
That cannot die.

Years may pass—and still the perfume clings  
To withered rose.  
Eons flit—and still my spirit sings  
Though flesh repose.

## *Two Views of Death*

A sloughing of a shrunken shell;  
A blasting of the hopes that dwell  
    Within the human breast;  
A rending of these mortal ties  
By some fierce God beyond the skies,  
    Whose ire is thus confessed;  
A memory that brands red-hot  
Our lives recorded blot by blot;  
    An ashen-charred regret;  
A throttling clutch upon the throat;  
A band of leering fiends that gloat  
    Their molten snares to set;  
A sigh—a moan—a gasp—a groan;  
A writhing anguish all alone  
    With none to soothe the pain;  
A blinding flood of bitter tears  
To bury all that Life endears  
    Beneath their torrents vain.  
A gaunt-eyed throng of weeping friends  
Who shriek as Fate's keen stroke descends  
    And strive to stay the blow;  
A stillness as of endless sleep;  
A horde of famished worms that creep  
    To wreak their crunching woe;  
A torment far too deep for speech  
In yawning Hell's relentless breach—  
    Since thus the Preacher saith;  
A damning of a spirit lost  
On shoreless seas of brimstone tossed;—  
    And *this to men is Death.*

---

A doffing of an outgrown robe  
That clothed the Soul whose earth-abode  
    Must house it for a time;  
A childlike slumber, painless, sweet,  
While just before rare visions greet  
    And voice high Heaven's chime;  
A world 'tis best to do without  
And leave it to its dread and doubt—  
    Its merely mortal mind;  
A mob of foolish persons bent  
On trickling tears of discontent  
    Till all their views are blind;

A blasphemous black mourning rite  
 While through a superhuman light  
     Flits he for whom they mourn;  
 A ceremony thick with shrouds  
 While he is smiling through the clouds  
     Of whom they think them shorn;  
 Long prayers of penance for the dead;  
 And tears upon his grave, long shed—  
     The dead who lives, now first;—  
 As wise to grieve for butterfly  
 Which as a grub must seem to die  
     Before its beauty burst;—  
 A spirit crushed by mortal men,  
 Whose nobleness surpassed their ken  
     Expanded full at last;  
 A lien on all Eternity;  
 Horizon-hope whence one may see  
     The Time-disfigured Past;  
 A Soul unthralled and left to choose  
 What next integument to use  
     To compass swifter growth;  
 A vast domain as free as air,  
 Unflecked by fear or grief or care  
     With minions never loath;  
 An entrance into fuller Life  
 Where Love for hate and Peace for strife  
     Yields Happiness unmixed;  
 Progression based on Heaven's hints  
 With power to conquer Cosmos, since  
     No destiny is fixed;  
 A goal at which the sunrise quails,  
 A couch by which the sunset pales,  
     A splendor unforetold;  
 Communion with those spirits who  
 Attuned on earth their ear to you  
     The Self of you to hold;  
 A brotherhood of stars and suns  
 Whose love supports the weaker ones  
     Until the least grow great;  
 A kingship with the Lord of All—  
 Of wingéd host and worms that crawl;  
     Full mastery of Fate;

The Heaven promised every race  
Upon this earth's full-featured face  
    Condensed in one great joy;  
But all the crudities cut off  
Whereat men had a right to scoff—  
    A Heaven without alloy;  
A power quelling ocean's storm  
And yet as light as rose's form  
    And pure as lily's breath;  
Solution in a blossomed Soul  
For problems human buds enroll;—  
    And *this to God is Death.*

---

### *A Bit of Crepe*

A bit of crepe upon the door  
    And nothing more;  
But oh the woe that lurks behind!  
To stab the heart and shroud the mind,  
Attacking hosts of humankind  
    Whose tears outpour.

A bit of hope within the heart;  
    Then woes depart,  
The clouds that frowned across the sky  
Have rolled away. And from on high  
The heart of Heaven draweth night  
    Whence sunbeams dart.

A bit of love to light the soul;  
    Let shadows roll  
As dense as forest wraithed in shade.  
Lo! even ere the shadow fade  
Some sunrise glory is displayed  
    To clear the Whole.

## *Sunset on the River*

In a lovely land of hills  
Flows a stream whose life instils  
From its surging hillside rills

Rapture—and with reason.

For while night is settling low  
O'er the waters' mirrored flow,  
Sunset splendors come and go

In the autumn season.

Clear in placid pools there lie  
Blendings rich of earth and sky;  
Earth on shore and sun on high

Meet in mystic mingling.

Radiant hues of autumn leaf  
Nature's ripened golden sheaf  
Stretched in wondrous, rare relief,

Thrill our senses tingling.

Sunshine glints athwart the shade;  
Heaven's beauties are displayed  
Ere the suns of winter fade

And the sad pines shiver.

Vista vivid lends the stream  
Backward glow with onward gleam,  
Calm supernal, hope supreme—

Sunset on the River.

---

When the sun descends at last  
On my Soul's unruffled past,  
May the prospect be as vast,  
Shedding equal glory.

May I rest as calm and clear;  
Thus reflect when night draws near  
Foregleams from a higher sphere

O'er my life's pure story.

## *Love is God*

A woman had taken a loaf from another,  
Not begging but stealing.  
The woman was penniless. She was a mother;  
About her were kneeling  
And starving and crying for one crust of bread  
Her gaunt, pinchéd children that must have lain dead  
But for this bare morsel. Since Law she defied  
Her sentence was lawful. Yet still her soul cried;—  
“I loved them so dearly!  
The need of them nearly  
Put me in the sod.  
And is not Love God?”

A virgin no longer a virgin lay weeping  
And throbbing and twinging.  
The man who had wooed her sweet body slunk creeping  
And halting and cringing.  
The world cried “Dishonored,” condemning them both.  
Her father impanelling jurists on oath  
Declared it a crime for two lovers to love.  
Then Truth—my heart heard her—proclaimed from above;—  
“Blasphemers, cease blaming  
These lovers! enshaming  
Them scourged of Law’s rod.  
Love truly is God.”

A soul so illumined it broke every fetter  
Whose cruelly binding  
Enshacklement crushed it; saw farther and better  
Relieved of creed’s blinding.  
Expanding beyond the sectarian thrall,  
Its personal God was the Good in us all.  
But churchmen were shocked at this atheist’s views,  
Expelled him from worship their Man-God might lose.  
“Ye churchlings debasing;  
In vain your effacing  
Of heights I have trod.  
I—loving, *am* God.”

## *God in Sin*

A huge unsightly mass of blackness loomed  
    Athwart the sky,  
So frowning that the children scarce presumed  
    To pass it by.  
Through many weary months it grew and grew  
    Though none saw how.  
The shroud upon its surface hid its view,  
    Hid then—not now;  
For finally the work, declared complete  
    Was all unveiled.  
Before the form mens' eyes were bid to greet  
    Their dreams had paled;—  
A golden statute, smiling, wooing, stood  
    Imbued with grace  
Revealing, when it shed its dismal hood,  
    A human face.  
The children clapped their hands. They gathered near,  
    Nor felt afraid—  
Since features like their own their foolish fear  
    Had quite allayed.

The veil called Sin encloses roundabout  
    This human kind.  
Beholding but the pall cast on without,  
    Our childish mind  
Would shudder at the shroud. And flee the sight  
    That mortal men  
Despoil of good. But when exposed to light  
    The likeness then  
Of God Himself shall burst upon our eyes.  
    To God akin  
Some souls already—prematurely wise,  
    See God in Sin.

## Poets Piteous

You call me a poet. Sometimes a faint gleam  
Of truth you discern through the rhyme you esteem.  
But ah you know not, nor ever can dream

What anguish I suffer.  
My soul sobs asunder;  
So deep pinioned under  
Man's crass gilded plunder,  
I seem but a buffer

Between a world struggling and shackles supreme.

A bit of embellishment verbally wrought  
From out my heart's texture, with pangs dearly bought,  
You judge by its rhythm. The longings that sought

Therein some expression  
You pass all unwitting.  
Mere phantoms they fitting  
Beyond your brows knitting  
But mark your confession

That you cannot *feel* —as a free spirit ought.

None knows but a poet, an artist, a bard,  
The sorrows that doom the race, griping it hard.  
The wounds fresh and bleeding, the wounds old and scarred,

They cut the flesh tender  
Of humans to teach them  
Why woes must impeach them  
And ruin still reach them  
Their reason to render,

Till men learn the causes of grief to regard.  
The waif in the gutter,—the king on his throne,  
The populace herding,—the hermit alone,  
The patriarch dying,—the babe yet ungrown,

They all have their sorrow.  
But still they all share it  
With him who will bear it  
Unflinching, and wear it  
A shroud he must borrow—

Vicarious sufferer—born to atone.

The tiniest life in the world that feels pain  
Impresses my heart, nor impresses in vain.  
At times with the woes of the world sent insane

I rack me with sobbing.  
Sad sympathies crowding,  
Unkindnesses clouding,  
Forebodings enshrouding,  
Possess my brain throbbing  
And all of its energies sap till they drain.

---

Ah, envy me not the ephemeral fame  
Attaching its wreath to a poet's brief name.  
If you were to suffer in measure the same  
Lo, fame would not flourish.  
No man Messianic  
But felt some Titanic  
Heart-throe. Some oceanic  
Grief-tide; whose depths nourish  
The frail plant of poesy, whence these blooms came.

---

### *Stream and Source*

With laughing swirl and playful whirl  
And cataract resounding  
The storied Rhine delights to shine.  
Along its banks abounding  
Sweet verdure springs whose fragrance flings  
Far up and down the valley;  
Till weary men are tempted then  
Within its realm to dally.  
The River Song just flows along  
As if 'twere born to babble  
Its brimming glee to you and me  
While by its brink we dabble.  
Yet first it flows whence no one knows  
Amid the Alpine mountains;  
A thousand brooks from lofty nooks  
Have swelled its ceaseless fountains.  
\* \* \* \* \*  
That songful Soul whose deeds may roll  
For human fructifying  
Has hid alone on heights unknown  
Above all mortal spying.

## *The Flower of Woman's Love*

In a hothouse all protected  
Where surroundings were directed  
By the tender, wise attention of a floriculturist;  
Once a violet was growing  
Through his thoughtful care bestowing  
Such a gracious, sweet perfume upon the atmosphere she kissed.

If there wandered by a worry,  
All the garden in a flurry  
Just pulled to its glass enclosure, shutting interlopers out.  
Not a boisterous wind could harry  
Or a chilly hailstone tarry  
Where a home so providential reared its fortress roundabout.

But the gardener once while making  
Extra haste, his care forsaking  
Left a cruel piece of timber lying on the violet.  
And the shadow crushed the flower  
Closer cringing hour by hour  
Till her heart lay cold and dying when the evening sun had set.

---

In a woodland wild and lonely  
Where the forest monarchs only  
Were preserving haughty vigilance upon the rugged slope,  
There matured somewhat tardy  
Struggling with her neighbors hardy  
Still another little violet. But she must bravely grope

Through a tangled mass forbidding,  
Where the weeds would fain be ridding  
Their uncouth and lawless conclaves from a presence chiding fair.  
So her angry neighbors bristled  
While the winds more ruthless whistled  
While the chilly blasts of Boreas thus flung their spiteful share

Toward the flower's persecution.  
Every hour's revolution  
Seemed to fasten on her being still another cruel clutch.  
But the wondrous flower flourished,  
For a *loving sunbeam* nourished  
And empowered her to blossom by his sympathetic touch.

---

There exists a budding fragrance  
In a spot where Nature's vagrance  
May not penetrate to rob it of its tender virgin heart.

In the bosom of a maiden  
By her mother-breasts o'erladen  
There abides a flower nascent—Woman's Love—that hides apart.

You may place here where surrounding  
Tempest shocks are fierce resounding  
And the barren earth exhales a blighting poverty of growth;  
Or the struggle with her neighbors  
For the fruits of all her labors  
Would compel a stronger creature to forsake the battle, loath.

Let the cruel blasts of sorrow  
Cloud the day and shroud the morrow;  
Let the Universe unite to crush the fragile flower's life;  
*If you smile upon her*—tender  
That is all she needs to lend her  
Such a superhuman sweetness as illumines a loving wife.

---

### *A Rainbow Smile*

High in his chariot gleaming like gold  
Pompously proud and commanding  
Glories the Sun. But we cannot behold  
Splendors past our understanding.

Gently unveiling her sweet laughing face  
Rare as a shy four-leaf clover,  
Glances the Rainbow. We haste to the place  
Wait till her last smile is over.

---

Every-day cheer on the faces of men  
Lightens our way; still less sweetly  
As when the tears fall in torrents—and then  
Smiles come to banish completely.

## *Measure Me an Hour*

"Measure me an hour,"

I bade a tortoise sprawling  
Sluggish, churlish, sour,  
Where Earth's great tears are falling.  
Not the barest nod

Vouchsafed the clumsy creature;  
Clammy as a clod  
Lay listless every feature.

When the hour was past,  
I found the logy turtle  
Senseless—sleeping fast.

A thousand storms might hurtle;  
Avalanches pour;

The elements commingle;  
Cataclysms roar;

And through all not a single  
Sound disturbs the brute,

Inert, inane, inutile;  
Time's intense pursuit  
Falls short, forever futile.

"Measure me an hour,"

I bade an ant whose eager  
Consciousness of power  
Would any sloth beleaguer.  
Straining every limb—

Abristle with ambition—  
Cheery still, the glim  
Of joy illumines her mission.

Scarce the tenth had sped  
Of this the hour expected  
When I saw ahead

An army close collected;  
Ants of every size  
And strength and stride and muscle;  
Bearing each a prize

For which the fiercest tussle  
Made the creatures groan—

The weight was so oppressive.  
Proudly led alone

My ant the host aggressive.

Chronometric name

By human computation  
Fixed both hours the same.

And yet complete cessation  
Marked the course of one—  
If acts be worth computing;  
While its span was run  
A life was but imbruting.  
Through the second space  
An army was advancing  
Swift from place to place,  
Its revenues enhancing.

---

Figures on a clock  
Are fallacies deceiving  
With their clanging shock  
That toll the minutes leaving.  
Time is framed within  
The heart whose rare attaining  
Makes a mortal win  
In spite of dial's feigning.

---

### *Renunciation*

The maid was wondrous fair in face and limb.  
And as he looked, her beauty thrilling him  
Sent passion surging like a tidal wave  
Throughout his frame—a wave he dared not brave.  
He looked again. He gasped. He hid his eyes.  
He pursed his pious lips—ah, he was wise—  
Renounced the carnal pulse. Renounce he must—  
Saint Anthony—*himself he could not trust.*

\* \* \* \* \*

A sinner passed, his soul so sensitive  
That every form of beauty seemed to give  
A pang of longing, that he might translate  
The passion of the souls that must create.  
He too discerned the maid. But stooping down  
He gently touched her cheek—her virtue's crown—  
Then whispered, "Dear, I love you far too well  
To press you close, and spoil your virgin's spell."

## *Love and the Lark*

A lark once flitted beside my door  
And I bade the lark come in;  
But though I beckoned her o'er and o'er  
She was none of my kind or kin.

So I ceased my importuning quite  
And I looked the other way;  
When she sought my arm—this warbling wight—  
And settled as if to stay.

The silver song from her crested throat  
Entranced my listening ear,  
While sped its melody far remote  
To burst on a distant sphere.

Desirous then of possessing her  
I touched her tender wing.  
With a little flutter and frightened stir  
The birdling ceased to sing;

Her voice with terror first grew hoarse,  
Then mute with fear and dread.  
Till back she flew on her airy course—  
Forever my longings fled.

---

Oh Love is a lark with the sweetest song  
That ever a mortal heard;  
Yet you cannot summon her till she long  
To sing as a soaring bird.

And when she nestles your human heart  
'Twere best *to notice not*,  
But just enjoy; while her songs impart  
Their thrill. Lest she leave the spot.

## *Through Psychic to Mystic*

My brain is another's  
Now foe's and now brother's  
But never my own for a set space of time;  
For through it are rushing  
And clashing and crushing  
The thoughts of the world that make me but a mime.

The shadows that haunt me,  
The spectres that taunt me,  
The demons that leer with a lurid red eye,  
The fetters that thrall me,  
The fears that appall me;  
Belong to the train of some spirit swept by.

He leaves them behind him—  
These objects that bind him,  
And flees while he frees his chilled flesh from their touch.  
But fleeing he leaves them  
For one who receives them  
Lethargic—though wild to escape from their clutch.

What maddening devils  
Cavort in their revels  
Upon by brain feverish—bursting—on fire;  
My maudlin mind mooning  
And drooning and swooning  
Goes out as the gust of a futile desire.

The graves of creation  
Entombing damnation  
Have lifted their lids till their stench turns me sick.  
With foulness streaking  
Their vapors rise reeking  
Of vices and villainies noisomely thick.

On yon remote border  
Of civilized order  
A savage is roasting his prey at the stake;  
His victim is moaning  
And writhing and groaning  
In all his mad torture must I too partake.

Beside me some neighbor  
Connives to shirk labor  
And drudges and drones with a hate in his heart;

His hate disconcerts me  
My courage deserts me  
His thought has impaled me—a venom-tipped dart.

Above the thronged city  
I hover in pity  
In pity that men like wild cattle should herd.  
No less is my sorrow  
Lone countrymen borrow  
To see their souls stunted—too dead to be stirred.

Sad spirits command me—  
Shall men understand me?  
Ah, never till men may transcend their mere brain.  
I live and die lonely.  
But if through me only  
One truth be revealed—I am racked not in vain.

---

O, Soul! cease repining.  
The sun is still shining  
And Heaven—not Man—thrills response to your cry.  
Though lowlands be dreary,  
Love's summit is cheery;  
Leave spirits earth-shackled. Soar on to the sky.

For shame to be blaming  
Thought-wanderers, claiming  
That you deserve pity since helpless—their prey  
Why, even the Devil  
A devil's own level  
Must seek. If above it, fear not—face the Day.

Your senses are finer  
With God their Designer  
That you may approach and appreciate Him.  
For ears must hear keenly,  
And vision see cleanly,  
And heart respond wholly, while thrills frame and limb.

Sad thoughts must forsake you  
When Love shall once make you  
Receptive to messages higher than Thought.  
For highest is *Feeling*;  
And Love's true revealing  
Thence dawns to the fullest degree you have sought.

The Mind has its valley  
Where languid souls dally  
And mourn for a bourne that still beckons beyond.  
Above this vale's shadow  
Invites Eldorado!  
Emerge into space—and of earth be less fond.

Throughout countless ages  
The spirits of sages  
Have waited to minister swift to your need.  
Call them—not the ghastly  
Grim shades that throng vastly  
To block your strait path. With the prophets proceed.

Beneath their weird croaking  
All spectres are cloaking  
A fear quite reciprocal, summing your own.  
Be bold and defy them;  
Their mask will belie them,  
And they shall flee fearful. And you reign alone.

These psychic surroundings  
Are like to the soundings  
Men take to determine the tint of the sea.  
Though shallows be sullied  
By surface streams gullied  
The fathomless deep is as clear as can be.

Love's ether, grown boundless  
And senseless and soundless  
Shall shelter no longer these breeders of ruth.  
Do mortals defame you?  
Yourself shall proclaim you  
Possessed not of demons—illumined of Truth.

At last your own master  
Above earth's disaster,  
Above personalities, living or dead,  
Behold the Eternal  
With splendor supernal  
Shall brighten the path where your footsteps have bled.

## *Aborted*

The patient ass performs his irksome labor day by day  
Apparently content to drudge his tedious life away.  
But if the ass were made to sing—though singing be by far  
The easier, the brute could not conclude a single bar.

The lark that flits among the trees was born to ceaseless song;  
Her melodies the sweetest, dearest memories prolong.  
But if the bird were harnessed, thus constrained to drag her load,  
Her silent struggles her eternal stillness would forebode.

In Man there consummate the orders designated brute  
Whose salient traits through Man's innate Divinity transmute  
Their heavy, shaggy, wild, uncouthly unattractive mould.  
To trace, with dainty beauty, forms an angel might enfold.  
In every man some animal predominates. Its voice  
Should swell above the minor tones, proclaiming loud its choice  
Among the multitudinous vocations men have filled—  
With less success the readier its pleadings they have stilled.  
And yet where dwell the humans, undiscovered to themselves,  
The devils do the work of gods, and fairies that of elves.  
The sweetest songsters of the race are burdened as the ass;  
Those fragrant souls whose mission is to soothe you as you pass  
Are crushed and withered hopelessly beneath the sultry sun,  
That glares relentless on the slave whose task is never done.  
Yet menials born to labor loll about in softest silk  
Though chafed distraught within the gauze that scarce befits their  
ilk.

And so of all God's creatures, Man alone must grope confused  
Until he learns to sense his powers fatally misused.  
Perhaps in distant ages we shall seek in Nature's ways  
And glean the education whose objective truly pays.

Rejoice—if you have found your message whose expression gives  
A Messianic motive to the meanest thing that lives.  
But—when you judge the flutterings of soul that may have erred,  
Remember then the tortures of a bound and baffled bird.

### *How the Dimple Grew*

A maiden once was weeping  
As maidens will you know—  
For in their mystic keeping  
Hold tears both weal and woe—

When suddenly came stealing  
From no one knew just where,  
Its modesty concealing,  
A smile; so debonair

That meeting tear first falling  
Athwart the maiden's face  
Its very touch enthralling  
Enclosed in soft embrace

The drop of sorrow, grieving  
No longer o'er hopes dead.  
And lo, it vanished, leaving  
A dimple in its stead.

---

If on your cheek bright beaming  
Whenever smile meets tear;  
A dimple be not gleaming—  
It's in your heart, My Dear.

## *The Illegitimate Child*

Isolated, ostracized, barred from men's commingling;  
Hated, feared, shunned, despised; cut with curses tingling  
From the forkéd tongues of those mouthing in their blindness  
Angry calumnies and woes void of human kindness;  
Branded with a living shame; seared from birth by sorrow;  
Plundered even of the name none may buy or borrow;  
There it stands and shivers, shorn clean of all but being  
Fugitive to Death's bleak bourne; doomed by man's decreeing.  
    Vagabond and outcast is the child illicit;  
    Stone it—if you dare; hoot it, hound it, hiss it.

Petted, fondled, crowned, adored, minions at his bidding  
Every obstacle untoward frantically ridding  
From the path of son and heir born in wedlock's cover,  
Life for him is passing fair, "angels" o'er him hover,  
And the future opens wide gates of gilded glory;  
For his mother was a bride. And the mouldy, hoary  
Fiat binding loveless twain twined about the baby  
Laws respectable and sane. If perchance they may be.  
    Autocrat and princeling is the heir made legal;  
    Bow the knee and render homage due the regal.

Winds of Heaven, pregnant oft with the seeds of flowers,  
Dare you fructify aloft fields enciente with bowers?  
Birds, free nesting where you will, mating whomsoever  
Instinct authorizes, still old espousals never,  
Shall you not be stricken dead, chancery defying  
Save you make your marriage bed lawfully allying?  
Holy Ghost, in Mary's womb, did some priest permit you?  
Church's rite—not Virgin's bloom, for the Christ-child fit you?  
    Parentage illegal—may lacking Law defame us;  
    Liason illicit does lacking Love enshame us.

## *Why the Shell Shatters*

The seed within the ground though quite intact  
Lies dead

Until its soaring Soul with longing racked  
Has shed

The polished crust that cased the Soul at first.  
Some break

Upon the even surface must have burst,  
To wake

The sleeping germ to all the natal need  
That Life

Instils within a growing thing. Indeed  
The strife

“Twixt Soul and shell—when Souls do most advance,  
Cuts deep.

It matters not. For Destiny—not Chance  
Shall heap

Upon itself the circumstances which  
It wrests

That they emerge whose deep resources rich  
God tests.

What man has called Misfortune bruises oft  
The shell

Wherein his Soul that stretches far aloft  
May dwell

In infancy. Some circumstance abrades;  
Then he

Bemoans the rended tomb whose figment shades  
Till free

His stifled Soul. O foolish mortal mind!  
To grieve

When shackles shatter and the things that bind  
Relieve

Their pressure with a sudden snap. For you—  
Your Soul—

Perceived that if externals should accrue,  
The whole

Of God would suffer—buried in the clay.  
And so

You flung your man-affections clean away—  
To grow.

## *A Reversed Theology*

They picture Hell a soundless pit  
Whose seething vengeance glows  
Where deep sequestered horrors flit  
Beneath a cold world's woes.

While Heaven floats ethereal  
Enwrapped in holy haze  
Whose canopy empyreal  
Surpasses mortal gaze.

---

There is no Heaven, neither Hell  
Save in the eye alone  
That visions deep, below the spell  
Of seeming star or stone.

If forkéd lightnings play above,  
And storms revengeful rage  
Propelled by Hate and not by Love—  
Too fiendish to assuage;

If clouds be dissipated clods  
And Matter all there be;  
The Power some blind Fate's—not God's  
So far as man can see;

If solar spheres be framed and wrecked  
As churly chance may choose;  
If comets, mad, career unchecked  
Their freedom to abuse;

If horrid harpies brood on high  
To vex a helpless man;—  
Then Hell all lurid lies awry  
Amid the heavens' span.

---

If limpid waters flow along  
A grassy sun-lit shore,  
To murmur low their lapping song  
Of welcome to the roar

Of Ocean's anthem swelling loud  
Surcharged with Primal Power  
And, conscious of It, justly proud  
To voice It, hour by hour;

If stones proclaim a sermon heard  
By inner senses true;  
If waving meadows lisp their word  
Of joyousness to you;

If every tiny bursting bloom  
But throws its petals wide  
To compass more expanding room  
To shed the Love inside;

If all the worms and weeds that grow  
As fellow-gods you greet;—  
Then Heaven stoops and lingers low  
Beneath your very feet.

---

### *Love and Duty*

Love and Duty made a tryst.  
Duty came but Love he missed;  
Looked around, yet found her not  
Anywhere about the spot.  
Frowned and grumbled, stormed and raved,  
All her path with curses paved;  
Thus did Duty—surly he  
Since he loved not Love, you see.

Love came late. And with her brought  
That whence Duty's grace she sought.  
"Duty dear, I saw a bird  
Flutter, wounded. Feebly stirred  
This her body racked with pain.  
'Help!' she cried. Nor cried in vain.  
So I stopped to bind her wing.  
See! The bird begins to sing."

"Take your whole bird-business back,"  
Snapped stern Duty. "You must lack  
Common sense and honor too.  
Kept me waiting overdue  
While you patched your piping ward.  
Leave—henceforth to slink abhorred."  
Love and Duty parted then.  
Nor have they been friends again.

## *Bohemia Beckons*

Men compose songs to their place of nativity.  
Humans seem mostly addicted to odes  
Bearing the stamp of an inborn proclivity  
Thus to exalt their primeval abodes.  
Ever intent on a shelter locational,  
Hymning their home in a congregant host,  
Wholly forget they that love inspirational  
Functions unfettered the freest and most.  
Songs patriotic that win popularity  
Lauding sequestered some single small place  
Swiftly disintegrate that solidarity  
Said to inhere in the whole human race.  
Love men cannot when the heart is attaching it  
Solely and blindly to circumscribed spot;  
For when Fate seizes the home, roughly snatching it,  
Love evanesces. And such love loves not.

Am I then homeless and friendless and motherless?  
Have I no heath where my spirit may cling?  
Orphan not only, but sisterless, brotherless,  
Envious thus, other homes hate to sing?  
Homeless I am, yet acknowledge not friendlessness;—  
Friends dear to me loose forever home ties;  
Neither such freedom, affection or endlessness  
Offers a home where home selfishness lies.  
Freeing my spirit, with nothing to fetter it  
Shaking the shackles of family pride,  
Seeking the Love Universal to better it,  
Out from my home henceforth homeless I stride.  
Child of the Universe, let me be sundering  
All the relationships binding a man,  
Since from my Soul proclamation is thundering;—  
“Dwell in Bohemia! Dwell there who can.”

Negligent, tolerant, careless Bohemia,  
Home of the spirit and not of the flesh,  
None of the listlessness there—the anaemia  
Lining the folds of the home's narrow mesh.  
None of the duty, the duty traditional  
Husbands and wives are constrained to obey  
Blights the affections ere Love grow fruitonal;  
Blights them with custom, with honor, with pay.  
Hours and minutes that clang their recessional  
Ever receding with us looking back,

Clanging the knell of a future progressional,  
Keeping the mind on a sun-dial's rack;  
Human opinions that mob men unreasoning—  
Thoughts of externals, chill shudders at fate—  
Undulant, sinuous, plotting their treasoning  
Burrowing under the mortal mind's gate;

Creeds, superstitions, all racial rule rigorous;  
Loyalty, pride, bonds of caste and of sex;  
Usages taut, with a stretch over-vigorous  
Drawn o'er a race that appearance most checks;  
Claims of outsiders that probe superficially  
Into a life which the heart alone knows;  
Penalties, prisons and threats flung judicially  
At the poor soul that must sin as it grows;  
Hedgings and harpings and houndings whose haltering  
Puts a man's neck in the noose of the mind  
Keeps his heart trembling and dreading and faltering  
Lest the noose tighten and death round him wind;  
All these encumbrances humanly harrowing  
Whence a free spirit derives its brief care;  
All the strait tendencies humanly narrowing;—  
These in Bohemia fade into air.

Genius takes genesis when Freedom beckons it  
Out from the rut and the rule of the throng;  
Genius finds exodus when the world reckons it  
Solely a singer because of its song.  
Here in Bohemia, Genius full-flowering  
Bursts into bloom as a bud in the spring—  
Forth from the depths of it leaps the empowering  
Message this soul was just sent here to bring.  
Talents untouched by the termagants dragging them  
Through education that draws nothing out  
Here are expanded. And grow, with none flagging them  
Greenish with envy or blackish with doubt.  
"Be but yourself!" is the slogan awaking us  
Softly and gently, but mightily too  
Up to the eminence whence we betaking us  
Face the sun fairly—and dare to be true.

Back in a country where shepherds were tethering  
Closely and carefully flocks feeding near,  
Lived once a Man who evaded the heathering,  
Homing and haunting of spots that endear.  
Though the few friends that He had were all pressing Him  
Somewhere to settle—and best in their home,

Still He refused them. The Spirit kept blessing Him  
Only so long as He lonely should roam.  
Wife He knew not. And the children He favored most  
All were begotten by some stranger sire;  
For He knew well that a family savored most  
Strongly of duty—and not of desire.  
Speak I with reverence moved by sincerity  
When I declare that the Christ lived as I;  
Free to unfold with a facile celerity  
In a Bohemia founded on High.

---

### *A Fledgeling Flutters*

When a birdling nesting  
Its powers testing  
Attempts to fly, with a flutter wild;  
The mother-bird hovers  
And lovingly covers  
The unformed wings of her restless child.

The little one knowing  
It still is growing  
Then trusts the mother and lies content.  
Its wings maturing  
Shall soon be assuring  
The promise kept of delay well spent.

When I, grown restless,  
Would fain be nestless  
And toss my flightless wings about;  
The God-Mother, wiser  
Than child who defies Her,  
Just presses me back ere I venture out.

I trust completely,  
I sink back sweetly,  
Await the wings that must slowly grow.  
Till at last endowered  
As She, full-powered,  
I shall soar with the gods. Not trust—but know.

## *Finding the Focus*

Let a little baby point a telescope  
At the sun  
Scanning with his feeble gaze the stellar slope  
Bare eyes shun.

If perchance the focus fit his tiny sight  
He may see;  
But if not, the solar beam celestial bright  
Blurred must be.

Then the peevish infant blames the sun that hides;  
Dull of wit  
Breaks the glass wherein his impotence abides,  
Bit by bit.

---

You—a baby soul, direct your glass toward Truth.  
Truth is blurred—  
Ignorance, and trembling hold, and fitful youth,  
These have erred.

When the hand of Knowledge sets the focus true  
As it will,  
Skilled to blend the Light peculiarly for you;  
Patient still

Since you trust the staunch support that Faith supplies  
Always best;  
Then shall Truth reveal her splendors where your eyes  
Peaceful rest.

### *The Place Auspicious*

There exists in God's Creation  
Some spot where a man may brood  
And bend with a just elation  
Success from his every mood.

Does he long to span the heavens  
With achievements unsurpassed?  
'Tis the mountain's breath that leavens  
The hopes that attain at last.

Does he weary of his striving  
And yearn for a place of rest  
Remote from his mad contriving?  
Then the ocean lulls the best.

Once God had a busy hour  
And a time for tranquil joys;  
So He clothed the hills with His Power,  
But the sea with His peerless Poise.

## *A Surcharged Flood*

A mountain gorge was dammed across by sticks  
Which lads would fix  
To hold the leaping cataract, whose flow  
Restrained below  
Accommodates their play. The bashful ooze  
Its force must lose  
When dabbled in and sailed with chips upon.  
Asparkle shone  
Their eyes short-sighted. Every rivulet  
Whose moisture wet  
Their eager touch, appeared as if they owned.  
They them enthroned,  
Proud masters of the sea. Exalted they  
Their dam of clay  
So lofty that they clean forget the surge  
Whose rise must urge  
Impetuous, resistless as the tide;—  
And then deride  
All artificial walls. Too late to flee  
Amazed they see  
A raging torrent sweeping down the slope.  
It gulfs their hope  
And them together buffeted and bruised.  
Since they misused,  
Despised, diminished stream and source, its path  
Exhales its wrath.

---

My restless Soul a sea of power roars  
And ceaseless pours  
Its mighty volume hard against the dam  
Whose fragile sham  
Decaying barricade men dared to build.  
At last, flood-filled  
The barriers grown impotent shall snap.  
I hope mayhap  
Yon loiterers have seen Me surge sublime  
In tardy time  
To make their wild escape. But oh, if not  
I can but blot  
Their slight, obstructing forms to nothingness.  
While I progress.

## *God Only*

I wandered one day where the masters had hung  
    The works of their prime,  
And men in admiring multitudes sung  
    Their genius sublime.  
Unmoved by the technical torsions of Art  
I stood in my loneliness, silent, apart.  
Could daubs from a palette find place in my heart?  
    Why, I have seen God!

I sat in my pew while the organ's grand peal  
    Poured forth into song,  
Whose echoes aroused an ephemeral zeal  
    In hearts of the throng.  
One note in a thousand gave me scare a thrill.  
Can organ and organist's harmonies fill  
This heart with their rapture? Though voices be still  
    My heart yet hears God.

I scanned the great books of the sages, piled high  
    On library shelves.  
Inscribed by the learned, adept to espy  
    All themes save themselves.  
Their facts and their figures,—their logical claims,  
Their quibbles and quarrels,—their titular names  
Repelled me aghast at such lore as defames  
    A mind that spans God.

I kissed a pure maiden with reverent touch—  
    A lover's caress.  
For I was a youth, and a maiden meant much  
    I could but confess.  
Then suddenly shot from the sky a great Light.  
In letters of gold that shone clear through the night  
This vision indelible burned my sad sight;—  
    "Thou wooest? Woo God."

Proceed in your tiny attempts to portray  
    The Infinite Soul.  
Sing on with a voice like a Lorelei lay—  
    Let melodies roll.  
Though pleasures be thick as the sands by the sea  
They pass unmolested the spirit of Me.  
Prime heir to the raptures of souls that be free  
    This soul knows its God.

## “Abandoned”

The sun had left them to themselves. And as the stars came out  
They nestled closer—lovers true. The daylight of their doubt  
That but disclosed the wizened form of surface things of men  
Had vanished since the darkness helped them sense their souls.

For when

Two lovers let themselves forget

The sterile standards men have set,

Then God enfolds them with a love no man has measured yet.

From every tender touch where'er her lover's hands had strayed  
A thrill had quivered through her. All his soft caresses made  
The maiden's inborn touch motherhood leap up in mighty throbs  
Until her virgin passion's longing swayed her with its sobs.

And then the God of him and her,

Too pure to sin—too wise to err

Just mated as the birds, nor thought whose blame It might incur.

When they awoke, from out the dream of Love's forgetful bliss  
A flower blossomed where the two had met—and left a kiss.  
Though formed in wondrous beauty, still the little human bud  
Was flung beneath the heel of men, and trampled in the mud.

“Abandoned woman,” cried the world,

As on the child its curses hurled

An odium that blasts that over which its scorn has curled.

Amid an equal solitude, to worlds both deaf and dumb  
An artist clasped a spirit-form. He prayed, “Creator, come!”  
“Oh Mother Inspiration, bear a child of brain and heart  
Whose message to the souls of men shall be of God—apart.”

His prayer came true. Upon the child

Was heaped men's adulation wild;

This child reposed in marble—only flesh can be defiled.

---

Then God looked down. And God was wroth. And God said,

“Stay in Hell,

O evil-minded world. Nor ever hope in bliss to dwell  
So long as you blaspheme the sacred stream of Love whose course  
Winds in and out of Heaven, *with Abandonment its source.*

Abandoned must the lover be,

As thoughtlessly abandoned he

Who weds the Spirit. Genius, Love—and God must all be free.”

## *Where Dwells the Sunlit Soul*

You may dream of your quaint old Swiss chalet  
With its edelweiss adorning,  
Where a tangent Sun prolongs the day  
Through a lustrous, white-limned morning;

You may laud the castle that Briton bold  
Has built with the wealth accruing  
From his lieges robbed and chattels sold  
For his ultimate undoing;

You may hymn sweet odes to the Fatherland  
Deep loyalty professing—  
And the tender touch of your Gretchen's hand  
Keeps time, with its caressing;

You may choose your home beneath the flag  
Of Freedom gaily waving,  
While the masses in its shadow drag  
To a close their sullen slaving;

You may bind your love to any spot  
In earth or heavens lying;  
And you cramp the Soul, that narrows not  
To a planet doomed and dying.

For the North and South and East and West  
Of the heart's congenial dwelling  
Abide beyond the compass' test,  
In a world whose music swelling

No human ear can ever sense  
Nor human eye the gleaming  
Of glorious visions, rising whence  
The Real belies the Seeming.

For the hills of Hope are an Eastern slope  
Whose sun is always smiling;  
But the vale of Fear spans a darkness drear  
Where the West its night is whiling;

And the chill of Hate blows a North-cold fate  
That blights the soul unfolding;  
While the breath of Love from realms above  
Is the South wind's blessing holding.

---

You may house your body in Afric's plain  
Or an Iceland hut's enclosure;  
But the Sun of your Soul shall never wane  
In its own South-East exposure.

## *Life's Husbandman*

A husbandman of harvests, wise, minutely provident and skilled  
Selects the fairest, choicest seed  
To fructify his special need,  
Commits it then to soil that yields the most and best for being  
tilled.

But first he plows a furrow where before the barren earth had hid  
Beneath her sterile surface deep  
Her fruitful womb that lay asleep  
Until aroused by seed whose touch her motherhood shall softly  
bid.

To right or left the plowman glances not. He fixes straight ahead  
His keenly unremitting gaze.  
And, lest he stray in crooked ways,  
He views some distant object with a near. Thus true his course  
is led.

---

A husbandman of Life, within my brain I guard a thousand kinds  
Of thoughts, that quickly germinate  
And harvests like themselves create  
When once they fall upon the fields of Cosmic or atomic minds.

I sift and sift and sift again the germ-potentials in my Thought  
To choose and use the very best—  
Forgot, let Time inter the rest;  
And then I find the spot on earth for just this seed with promise  
fraught.

I dig my tedious furrow, caring not what loiterers may say;  
The parchéd earth may burn my feet;  
The long, hard toil may seem ill mete  
To satisfy a husbandman with aching limbs at close of day.

But still I persevere. For two bright points allure me on and on.  
A great Ideal beckons me  
Beyond the Real mortals see.  
My harvest shall appear, when long enough the Sun of Truth  
has shone.

## *The Unfinished Portrait*

A crude and formless mass of color lies  
Upon a canvas, while the artist rests.  
Design is lacking. There is none so wise  
As but to hazard what the daub suggests.  
Grotesquely purposeless the spots appear  
As if the painter, whelmed in sudden rage,  
Had flung his implements with folly sheer  
Where ruin greatest might his wrath assuage.  
The palette too is utterly devoid  
Of any slightest touch denoting Art.  
Its surface everywhere is queerly cloyed  
With tints prepared to blend, yet left apart.  
Are blotches spattered here and there the sign  
Of that peculiar temperamental gift  
Whose tracings pencil concepts most divine?  
We question thus, the mystery to sift  
And ponder deeply, till the man returns  
Whose recklessness where colors are involved  
Apparently our condemnation earns.  
But speedily the culprit is absolved;  
For lo, a few swift strokes from magic brush  
Descending here and there with deftest grace  
Disclose a face illumed with beauty's blush  
That seems to light the whole surrounding place.

The artist puts together tones and shades  
From off a palette any man may find;  
But previous to tint that blurs and fades—  
He blends the form ideal in his mind.

---

If God the Master Artist now and then  
Must rest and leave a little while the Plan  
Whereat He labors long, perfecting men.  
Shall humans with their lesser judgment scan  
The portrait still unfinished—then despise  
Both it and Him who paints it? Let us wait;  
Believing not our grossly holden eyes,  
Until the final stroke descend from Fate.

For though my beauty lie potential yet  
Promiscuous upon a palette's shelf,  
The Infinite enjoins me not to fret—  
He paints the while an Image of Himself!

## *Blind Deity Prays*

I prayed for Fame and a laurel wreath,  
A budding diadem beneath,  
A magic wand in a fairy sheath;  
    To ease my lot.

I asked that purbind word should see  
What merit might abide in me;  
But God said, "Fame is not for thee."  
    So Fame came not.

I prayed for Power and a mighty hand  
To sway whole worlds at my command  
And marshal many an eager band  
    Success to seek;  
But God said, "Prayers do but confuse  
Save thou art competent to use  
The boons thy foolish heart would choose."  
    I still lay weak.

I prayed for Wealth and a countless hoard  
To buy me circumstances toward  
From vast accumulations stored  
    To back my bond;  
But God said, "Tempt not thus thy fate.  
Until thou hast some purpose great  
Mere riches scant could compensate."  
    Wealth gleamed beyond.

I prayed for Beauty—that sweet grace  
Which hallows every winsome face  
And makes, where'er its homing-place,  
    Glad smiles abound;  
But God said, "Thoughtless thou hast sought  
What never has been loaned or bought.  
True Beauty from the Soul is wrought."  
    My mirror frowned.

Disheartened then I ceased from prayer  
To find my one and constant care  
A quest for Love. Searched everywhere—  
    Both cloud and clod.  
And then a wondrous joy possessed  
My being. For at my behest  
The prayers were answered, each thrice-blest;  
    Since I was God!

## *My Infinite Self*

In tune with every lark's unsullied song;  
With disembodied spirits as they throng;  
With harps of angels thrilled the air along;  
I sing pure Me.

The mind of Me has purged within its ken  
What things may seem impure to blinded men.  
For I have sifted sins, and yet again;  
No taint bear we.

Within the flower whose fragrance stintless flows;  
Within the grain that flaunts its luscious rows;  
Within the maiden's cheek which bards disclose;  
I sense sweet Me.

The heart of Me pours forth its perfume rare  
So lavish that the passer-by may share  
Its fragrance hanging heavy on the air  
At Love's decree.

Behind the hugely whirling cataract;  
Behind the fierce tornado's wasting tact;  
Behind the dread volcano, passion-racked;  
I sway strong Me.

The might of Me in all its cosmic dower  
Restrains itself, though cataclysms shower.  
It fears to show a fraction of its power,  
Lest men should flee.

Below the fens and bogs and black morass;  
Below the viprous haunts our shudders pass;  
Below the bowels of the earth so crass;  
I sound deep Me.

The brain of Me has force to penetrate  
The deepest problems of the nascent great;  
And wrest thenceforth proud mastery of Fate,  
Whate'er Fate be.

Above the clouds that lift their dreamy haze;  
Above the stars that bend their earnest gaze;  
Above the zenith of the solar blaze;  
I vaunt high Me.

The Soul of Me transcends this realm of clay  
And soars to where the light of endless day  
Illumines them who to the Earthless pray;  
From worlds set free.

Beyond the ocean's far horizon dim;  
Beyond the setting sun's departing glim;  
Beyond the limits we ascribe to Him;  
    I spread vast Me.  
The scope of Me is boundless, soundless, grand.  
No being save my Soul vouchsafes command.  
What distance Omnipresence may have spanned  
    My eye can see.

Before the hills had heaped their bulging brow;  
Before the waters might their banks endow;  
Before the birth of Time's immortal Now;  
    I trace prime Me.  
The seed of Me—the Spirit's formless seed,  
Existed in the hope that moulds the deed  
A million years ere sprang this human breed  
    As he and she.

Throughout the Manifest that men discern;  
Throughout the Ether earthy mortals spurn;  
Throughout the Love whence mind and matter turn;  
    I laud Lord Me.  
For I alone, the One Eternal I,  
Both clot the clod and dome the cloud-flecked sky.  
And thus at last the lowly with the high  
    In Me agree.

---

### *For the Song's Own Sake*

The Lark will warble sweetly whether humans hear or not  
    To echo back a bird's unbounded joy;  
The Rose will waft its fragrance to the drearest desert spot  
    Where none may melt its breath to perfume coy.  
My Soul must sing. I care not whether men applaud the song  
    Or even sense it light on heavy ears;  
My Heart must love. And if it cannot touch the human throng  
    'Twill spend itself upon the distant spheres.

## *A Tottering Tripod*

To build the creaking timbers of the place that we call home  
    In some deep dell  
    To treasure well  
    The trinkets 'neath its dome;  
Forgetting that the Infinite of which we form a part  
    Pervades all Space,  
    Too vast for Place—  
    That narrows mind and heart;—

To twine our brief affections with a close tenacious grasp  
    That cares for naught  
    Save object sought—  
    Some selfish human clasp;  
And then when personality falls off—a shell outgrown  
    To sob and sigh  
    That friends must die  
    And we be left alone;—

To measure Life and its success by Time's short-sighted span;  
    To call Fate hard  
    If she retard  
    The making of a man;  
And yet one thought, embosomed in the Limitless may lie  
    A thousand years  
    Ere it appears  
    To such as you and I;—

To stand in fine upon this tripod tottering and frail  
    Of Person, Place,  
    And Time's scant grace;  
    Then tremblingly to quail  
When each support decays and falls, as finally it must;—  
    *This makes a worm*  
    That creeps infirm  
    And crumbles back to dust.

To dwell unvalled, forever free amid the suns and stars;  
    To stand unmoved  
    Till Time has proved  
    The wisdom of her scars;  
To sense the Soul within the shell, to tear the mask from Death;  
    And know that Life  
    Transcends the strife  
    Of fleeting human breath;

To give unstintingly one's best—all careless of result—  
    And whether gain  
    Be vast or vain,  
Supremely to exult;  
To love the Universe as one that human touch endears;—  
    *This makes a god*  
    That shall have trod  
The circuit of the spheres.

---

### *The First Dream*

A billion years ago  
And then a billion more  
Before the flux and flow  
On ocean's rock-bound shore,  
Ere suns began to rise  
Or stars presumed to shine;  
I owned the unformed skies—  
The Universe was Mine.

And then I dreamed a dream  
Amid My loneliness;  
I saw the splendid gleam  
Of suns I should possess,  
The hum of world on world,  
The prattle too of man,  
As solar cycles whirled  
Their orbits, span on span.

Though nothing had appeared  
As yet to warrant Me  
To hope My vision weird  
Would ever surely be,  
My hope still rose supreme  
I knew no lack nor need—  
For *Chaos was the dream*  
And *Cosmos is the deed*.

## *I Am That I Am*

You a human fill your mortal mind  
Plethoric with facts you strain to find,  
Heaping them within a mental rut  
Darkening the sides whereof o'erjut

But—

I the Mindless, Universal Consciousness need not  
Learning, reason, all the brain that men to them have got.

Men teach fact—I but act

Men would kneel—I would feel

Men must ask—I unmask

Through the endless cycles I have marked Me every spot.

You bestow your liking here and there  
Making residence your crucial care;  
Banished from your heath you pine and fret  
On location all your longing set

Yet—

I, the All in All, the great I Am pervading space  
Hide Me in the coarsest clod as in the flower's grace.

Friend and Foe—Joy and Woe

Smile and Tear—Hope and Fear

Peace and Strife—Death and Life

I abide the Soul of these, no matter what their face.

You must manufacture great machines  
Even thence Achievement scantily gleans;  
You before the product of your skill  
Wax distraught till Time its measure fill

Still—

I the Deathless, I the Birthless, I the Changeless stand:  
Planets melt and worlds dissolve in dust at My command.

Babes are born—homes left lorn

Fortunes gripped—beggars stripped

Kingdoms owned—kings dethroned

Mist is matter, matter mist, beneath My Cosmic Hand.

Mortal, bind you not with human chains;  
Free your Soul from human wants and pains;  
Picture you as pure as sunset tints,  
See yourself reflected in their glints

Since—

I am You and You are I. Together we evolved;

Both from Formless Unity and back must be resolved.  
Flee men's din—look within.  
Just be You—boldly true.  
Then and thus—deep in Us  
Omniscience, Omnipresence and Omnipotence are solved.

---

### *Twilight*

When the day is disappearing  
And the shades of Night are nearing  
And the distant hills are rearing  
    Their retreats of rest;  
From the fragrant breezes thrilling  
All my soul with rapture filling  
I recall the hour stilling  
    That I love the best.

When the bells a-tinkle chiming  
At the homing Twilight-timing  
Tell the kine are slowly climbing  
    From the grass-clothed vale.  
Then my spirit likewise soaring  
Hears a chime whose swell outpouring  
Keeps my quickened heart adoring  
    With its echo frail.

As the lads and maids returning  
From their toil, I too am learning  
That my brain must cease from earning  
    Its relentless wage.  
Let my senses sinking, sleeping  
Trust the airy spirits sweeping  
Whence the angels, kindly keeping  
    Guard the day's new page.

Down beside the listening willows  
Spreads the pool its placid pillows  
Where its long-forgotten billows  
    Used to lash the deep.  
There the water-lily lying  
Proves how futile is my sighing  
For the things whose ebb is dying  
    Ere the hour for sleep.

Though the mountain, mystic looming  
Stands in peace forever dooming  
Transient fears whose vain presuming  
    Makes a man lose heart;  
Firmer yet am I, abiding  
Evermore to offer hiding  
For the soul that comes confiding,  
    Seeks a place apart.

Through the turmoil and collision  
Of the Day I see a vision  
Where a prospect Paradisian  
    Wooes the soul to peace.  
Through the silence and oppression  
Of the Midnight's retrogression  
Still that hour's clear confession  
    Bids forebodings cease.

Human strife and human straining  
For a profitless attaining  
Must subside upon the waning  
    Of the sun's bright ray;  
For when once we cease to see them—  
Earthy objects—we shall flee them,  
From our earthless spirits free them,  
    Things that thrall by day.

Make a truce with blind Ambition!  
Let the Soul's more sane fruition  
Prove once more a human's mission  
    On this earth below.  
Rest awhile among the flowers  
Through the wondrous dreamy hours  
Of the Twilight, that empowers  
    More than mortals know.

---

Yet more dear than Nature's wooing  
More intent than shades' pursuing  
More sublime than gods' imbuing  
    Comes a dream of one  
Whose perfection sums Creation.  
By her side my Soul's elation  
Marks a great illumination  
    Brighter than the sun.

If no reason e'er existed  
For my sympathies enlisted  
Save that you and I had trysted  
    In the Twilight calm;  
Still should I with tributes ringing  
To the hour of spirits winging  
Find my Soul the sweeter singing  
    All of Life's glad psalm.

Hand in hand, my Sweetheart, roaming  
Through the tender, peaceful gloaming,  
This, Dear Love, is all the homing  
    That my spirit needs.  
What is sleep—with your embracing?  
Love's oblivion effacing  
Spreads a veil with magic lacing  
    Whence new life proceeds.

Can an angel's evening blessing  
Bring the thrill of your caressing  
Which in transport I possessing  
    Quiver through and through?  
Is the hope of Heaven higher  
Than the sum of my desire  
That whatever you require  
    I may be to you?

Can the Twilight's soft descending  
Be more sweet than two souls blending  
While together homeward wending  
    To the realm of Love?  
Sweetheart Mine, your loving taught me  
When thus heavenward it caught me  
More than Twilight ever brought me;  
    More of things above.

L. of C.

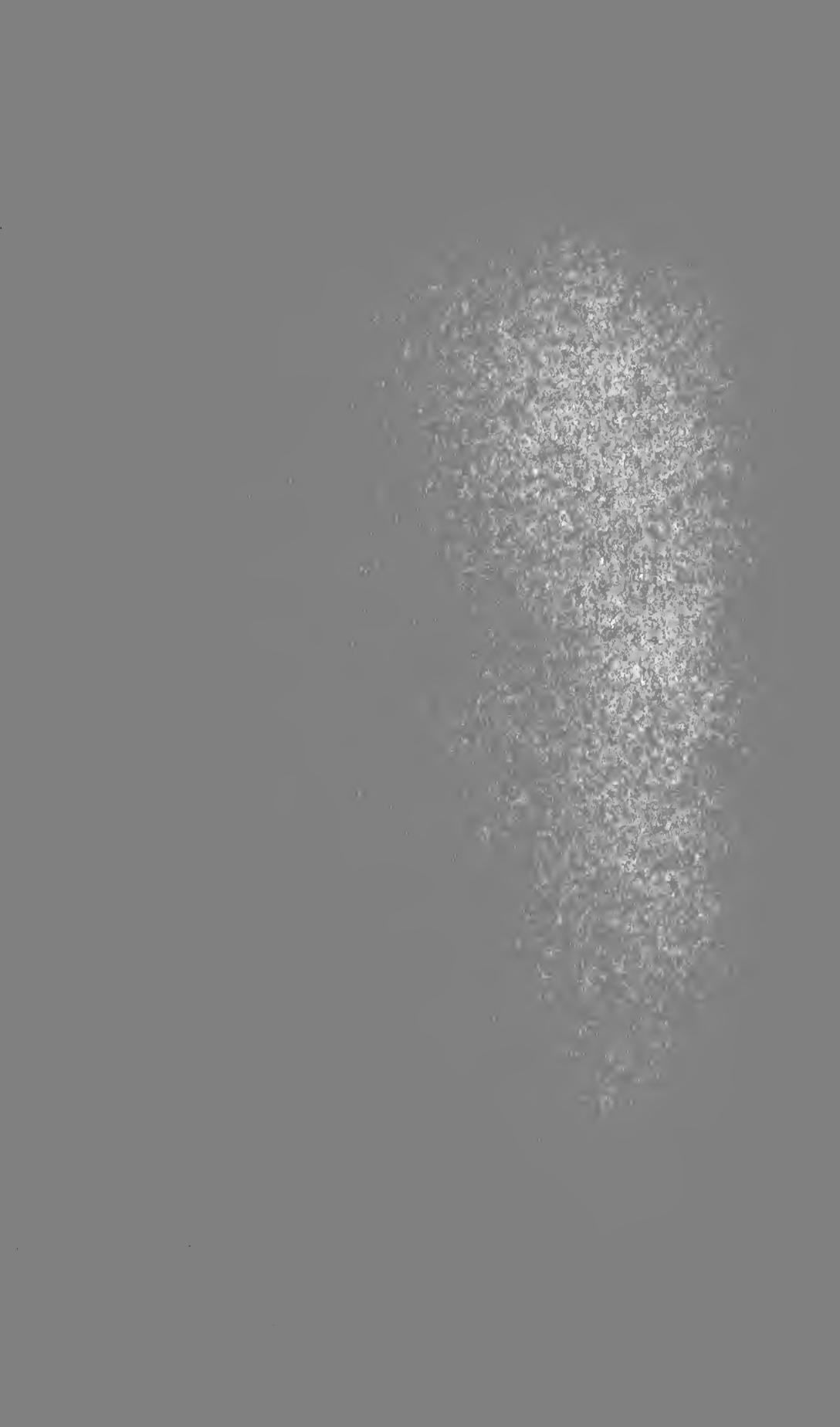
## *A Beacon to Eternity*

Upon a barren island stands  
To light aloft the distant lands  
A spiral tower that commands  
    A clean horizon-vision.  
But all its base lies drear and dark;  
Where tiny creatures cold and stark  
Permit their corpses' wake to mark  
    A cruel tide's collision.

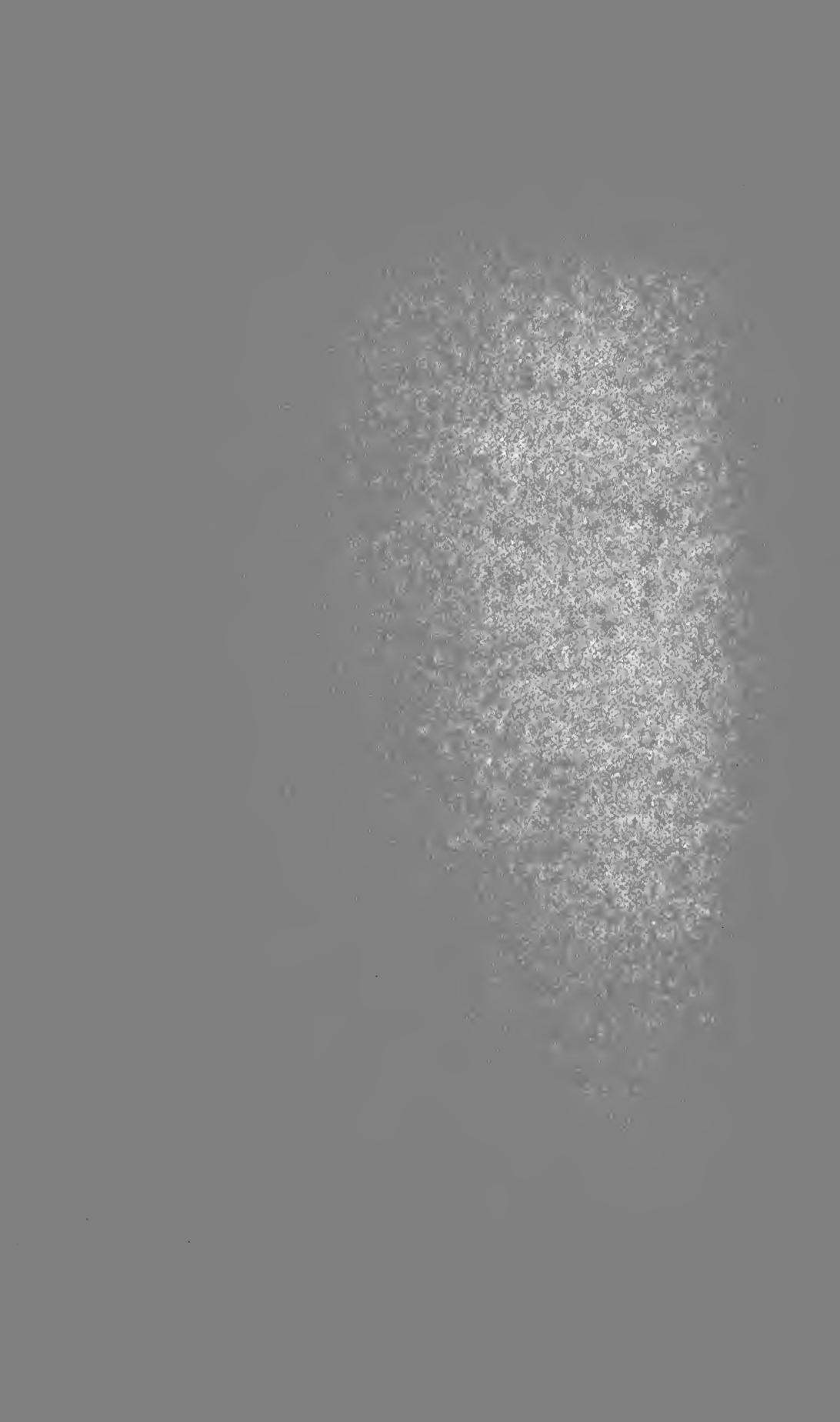
Far out along the trackless deep  
Whose midnight storms relentless sweep  
'Tis there the lights their vigil keep  
    The jagged reefs defying.  
Once perished full a thousand men  
In total outer darkness, when  
The Lighthouse held within its ken  
    The creatures near it dying.

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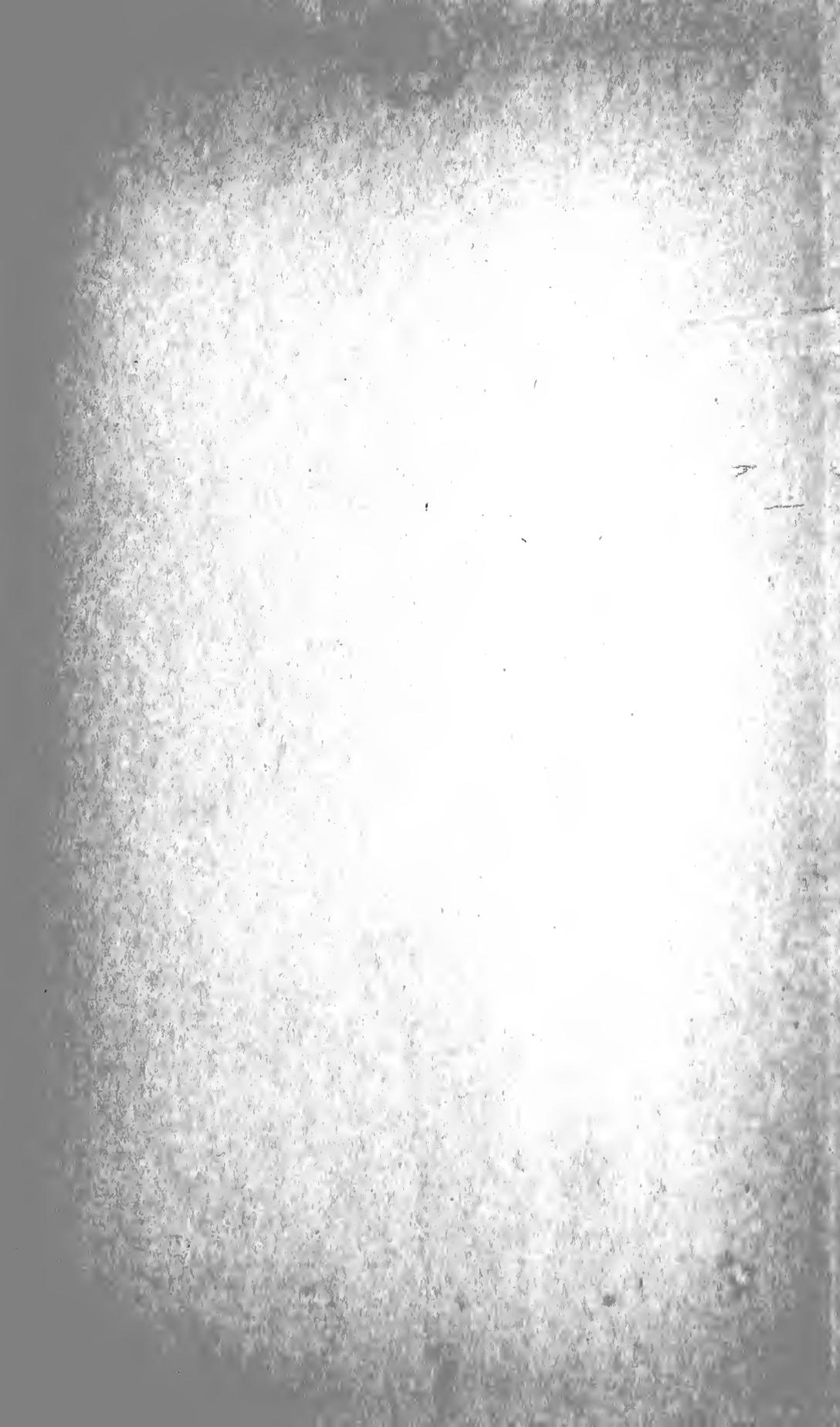
Along the distant line I loom.  
Beside me creatures meet their doom;  
I see them not—the outer gloom  
    With wilder moaning beckons.  
I light the shoreless, soundless Sea  
That humans call Eternity.  
And that is why the Soul of Me  
    No mortal ever reckons.











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