

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

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POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

BY

LADY LINDSAY



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CONTENTS

I. POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

	PAGE
THE ORACLE	11
SIR RAYMOND'S DREAM	25
THE MURDERER'S WIFE	28
BARRY	36
WAS SHE A MISER?	40
THE LADYES OF HEARTBREAK CASTLE	49
MARIA ROBUSTI	54
TWO OLIVE TREES	56
AN OLD WOMAN'S FAITH	60
UNEMPLOYED	64
THE REFRAIN	67
OF A SHAWL	68
LADY ELFREDA	69

CONTENTS

	PAGE
IDLE WISHES	71
THE LIGHTHOUSE	72
AN OLD MAN'S RHYME	74
THE SAILOR BOY'S MOTHER	76

II. TALMUDIC TRADITIONS

ENOCH	81
THE DEATH OF ABEL	98
THE FIRST BURIAL	101
THE BLIND RABBI	103
THE JEWELS	106
A SHADOW	108
A MUSSULMAN TRADITION	109

III. NATURE'S VOICE

THE ALMOND TREE	113
TO A FIRE-FLY	121
WHY TARRIES A BOAT?	124
MOON AND CLOUDS	126

CONTENTS

	PAGE
A WOODLAND ROMANCE	127
AUTUMN IN THE GARDEN	128
TO SOME CHRYSANTHEMUMS	130
THE PLANTING OF THE MAY	132
WHEN THE SUN SINKS LOW	134
IN A GARDEN	136
SPRING-TIME	137
IN SURREY	139
WIND MUSIC	140
THE PIPES OF PAN	142
DEATH'S ANSWER	144
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NOTES	145

I

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH



THE ORACLE

I SING of love. Ye nymphs that haunt the South,
List from your lemon groves and ilex woods !
Wan dryads, prisoned close in olive stems,
Or thrilling from dark cypress and red pine,
Hearken to this, a ballad fraught of love !
And ye, strange denizens that hide and dive
By slumbering rushes and wet sedgy banks,
Stay now your murmured melodies, attend !
While from mid-air Queen Aphrodite's doves,
That croon of constancy, shall flutter down
To pluck the petals in yon rose-grown hedge,
And deck the sombre pall that Memory weaves.

A simple tale I tell of Love and Death ;
Yet, Love being Life, I would as lief have said

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

A simple tale of Life and Death I tell.
Life is an isle ; each mind dwells there alone,
And, if one climb the heights and choose to look,
He'll scan Death all around—unfathomable—
Whose mighty breadth encroaches day by day,
An ocean from the which is no escape.
To life we cling. Why fear we so to die ?
If late we bide, the more unwilling we ;
And when our dear ones vanish from our sight
They tear from us a portion of our hearts,
And bear it as a hostage to the shades.

Then what is Love? Love is the purest gold,
Without alloy—therefore the gods in sport
Can mould the docile metal to their will,
And shape the bend. Love is the loveliest thing
Upon our earth, the brightest spring-time flower,
That blooms though bitter winds and snows may
beat.

It is the fragrant rose pressed in a book,

THE ORACLE

Still sweet, though careless eyes should pass it by.
'Tis a cool water-draught to fevered lips,
The pulse's throb, the music of the heart,
The gem that emperors hold of greater worth
Than do unthinking clods, nor would exchange
For rubies. Love, that is the best of earth,
Is still the joy in heaven. Let none deride.

A noble dame was Claudia—rich and fair,
As chaste as fair, and well-esteemed by all
But loving solely him that was her lord ;
And he—her lord—loved her with equal love.
So wedded were the twain, and so content
To spend their peaceful lives in unison,
Craving naught else, and blissful in each other,
Their very names, throughout the Grecian land,
Grew to a saying, spelling happiness.

But lo ! a pestilence, a murky cloud,
With poisoned wing loomed o'er the heated noon,

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

Slaying to right and left, and laying low ;
Thus, ere that evening deepened into night,
The light of Claudia's life was likewise done,
For he she loved sank lifeless in her arms.
Strange, she but smiled, she called with dulcet
words ;

She pleaded softly, raised his pallid face
To her sweet mouth, then trembling, and for fear
Blanched as himself, in silent dread she stared.
That this was death she could not, would not
know.

Last cried she loud : " Awake, dear heart, awake !
The night is young, the moon is at her full ;
Come, let us hie unto the velvet fringe
Of yon pine forest where so oft we sit,
Hand locked in hand, beneath the starry vault,
Waiting the lilt of rich-voiced nightingales."

Nay, nay, he heard not, and she shrieked. Then
flocked

THE ORACLE

Her maidens, crowding round her, and they wailed :
“ Ah, woe that he is dead ! my lord is dead ! ”

“ Dead, say ye ? nay, he is not, *is not* dead.”
Thus long she sat and cried : “ He is not dead !
He’s but a-cold ” ; so wrapt him in her veil,
And laid her soft warm hands in his, and kissed
The frozen lips that well their secret kept.
But, when the mourners came to bear him thence,
And took him from her close and jealous guard,
He making ne’er a sign—and on the ground
Naught left but dusky poppies and rent veils—
She learned that he was dead. No more she strove,
But let dull days pass o’er her listless head
Uncounted, while her straining tearless eyes,
Reproachful, viewed the unheeding world without.

It was at length her maidens prayed of her
Delphi’s great oracle to seek, and ask
Some mild relief to stay the gnawing pain

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

That soon must turn to direful malady.
She went—she cared not how she dwelt or moved—
And when, the journey o'er, she reached its goal,
Dismounting from the chariot which she stayed,
She left her maids, her gifts, her retinue,
And lonely passed the gate and climbed the steps
Nigh to the oracle, and crouched there long,
While the slow tears coursed down her anguished face,
And her veiled head drooped hidden in her hands,
So none might know her. There she lay and wept.
And presently, for soothing of her grief,
There came unto her ear a voice that asked :
“ What wilt thou, daughter ? Speak what boon thou
 crav'st ! ”
“ But this,” she cried, and eager hastened near :
“ To see him once again, to scan the face
That's ever in my dreams, and hold him nigh
For some short moments, even as of old.”

“ The boon is thine, my daughter, if indeed,

THE ORACLE

For every moment of such untold bliss
Thou art content to lose one year of life.
Reply ; art thus content ? ”

“ Yea, yea ! ” she cried.

Then, as she stood bewildered yet o’erjoyed,
A ghostly figure of familiar form,
From out the groves of laurel drew to her,
And once again his clasp was round her heart,
And once again his lips were on her brow,
Her hair, her eyes. . . .

Next, all the world grew dark.
Bereaved, she wailed, alone, most desolate.
Fain had she followed, but the temple’s folk
With anger thrust her forth and barred the way.

Thus she returned unto her home, but when
Her women saw her face—worn wan with grief
As though ten years had oldened her, and marked

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

Harsh tracks about her lovely brow and eyes—
They prayed her find some cheer in life and love,
And take unto herself another mate.
Whereat she wept, for every passing day
Seemed but to add more sorrow to her sorrow,
And weight her grief with new-wrought heaviness.
Lastly, her kin besought her go once more,
Bearing to Delphi costly jewelled gifts,
And travel with a splendid retinue.
This she obeyed ; but—when she drew anear
Unto the temple, then she went alone,
And crouched once more upon the steps, and wept,
Her head bowed low—as murmur of the wind,
There came unto her ear the welcome voice :
“What wilt thou, daughter? Yea, I bless’d thee
erst ;
Speak now what further boon thou crav’st from me.”

“But this,” she cried, and eager climbed anear ;
“To see him, to behold that face belov’d

THE ORACLE

That's ever in my dreams, to hold him close,
Close held by him, even as 'twas of old."

"The boon is thine, my daughter, if indeed
For each brief moment of thy happiness
Thou art content to give one year of life.
Reply, art thus content?"

"Yea, yea," she cried.
Life hath no charm, unless he share with me.
Life knows no joy, unless to dwell with him,"
Then, as she rose, and hastened forward yet,
A figure, grey and ghostly pale, came forth
From out the groves of laurel, meeting her.

"Oh leave me not, my love, my husband dear!"
Her tears were part of joy; she clung to him;
She passed her fingers lightly o'er his brow,
As do the blind, seeking familiar form.
And he—his kind eyes sought her upturned face,

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

His arms made shelter for her stricken head.
She whispered to him, and he answered back ;
His voice was like some deep-toned melody,
As, passionate, he strained her to his breast.

Then, sudden, by the menials was she thrust
Out from the temple gate, and stood aghast,
Trembling.

Yea, fifteen bartered years had gone ;
And they who saw her on her homeward way
Mourned that grim Time had lined her tender face
And marred her shape. So none would urge her now
To seek a fair new life ; they left her lone.
And thus her middle age moved slowly on,
As might some silent, well-nigh stagnant, flood
That erst had been a running silver stream.
But scarce could she endure those days inert.
It seemed as though she must wait on in grief,
And, waiting, wait yet longer, albeit none

THE ORACLE

Came by from mount or mere, and Death himself,
Being loudly called, had scornful passed her by.
Therefore, one morn, she banished all her maids,
Sharing no tittle of her grave intent,
And went forth down the rugged vale, alone,
Robed as a beggared pilgrim, and so pass'd,
With many more, along the Sacred Way,
Stumbling full oft and leaning on a staff,
And viewed with pity, haply with contempt,
Who bore no gift, and marched unknown, enfeebled.
What could she plead that Delphi might ensure?
Alas! the very stones that bruised her feet,
Seemed harsher than to others; ere she drew
In sight of that so glorious gilded dome—
That was the Sun-God's—she had almost dropt,
A faded shrunken flower, in way-side dust.
At last—and scarcely conscious how she went—
She reached the temple, and there, presently,
Faltering because she was so weak and sad,
She crouched once more upon the shrine's great stair,

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

Perfumed with scent of garlands overhead ;
And, though her senses reeled, eager she prayed,
And prayed till evening twilight came apace,
And shadows fell upon the blossoms rich,
And on the golden shields that duly crowned
The architraves, while, 'twixt the sombrous columns,
Swept rustling whispers from low-murmuring bays.
Then, lastly, from the mystic tripod, rose
A voice that thrilled all hearers to the heart :
“ Behold ! a third time hast thou come, O daughter !
What cravest thou ? ”

“ In pity let me see
Him for whose touch I hunger, for whose love
I thirst more than I deemed a woman might.
Grant me some moment with him, so that I
May taste of life once more in his embrace.”

“ Claudia, beware ! ”

“ Nay, but I have no fear !

THE ORACLE

Old age appals me not—mine only dread
Is that the years creep slowly ; I am lone,
And every morn I cry : O that this day
Were but my last ! and every night I sob
In sleepless longing for the languid day.”

“Claudia, beware ! Perchance, if thou shouldst
lose

Twenty brave years that still might work for weal
In cold though tranquil eld. . . .”

“ I want them not.

But if in truth such years be mine to give,
Then twenty times I give them ; fain, yea glad,
That such poor gift be proffered to the gods !”

While yet she prayed, from myrtles and sweet
bays

One neared—familiar—dear unto her sight.
She spake no more—she drifted to his arms,

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

Her yearning eyes o'erflowed for blinding bliss,
Her feeble steps, too slack to please her will,
Bore not alone her body but her heart
That brake in homing. At that moment pass'd
Her gift—a score of years—unto his hands.
Death stood aside—Death knew no need to strike,
For with those twenty years her life had end,
And with the soul she loved her soul went forth.

SIR RAYMOND'S DREAM

SIR RAYMOND lay on the sward one day,
In sound of the watermill's restful drone,
And the while he slept the sweet air crept
O'er guelder-rose bushes with tender tone.

Perchance he dreamed, for to him it seemed
Four angels drew to the grassy floor,
And lowly they bent, as for his sake sent,
Borne down on a sun-ray, from heaven's own door.

"Heaven's winds are we that have come to thee,
To reach thy soul with rebuking rod ;
Yet shalt thou not fail, nor falter or quail,
For to thee has been given the blessing of God."

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

'Twas thus they sang, then a clear voice rang :

“ I am the North Wind from lands of snow ;
Though steep thy way, thy feet shall not stray,
But ever with stalwart purpose go.”

“ All weakness and sloth,” the East Wind quoth,
“ Will I with mine utmost strength upbraid.”
“ Impatience of mind in thy spirit I find—
Be thou gentle and trustful,” the West Wind said.

“ Yea, learn to forgive if thy soul would live,
For I, the South Wind, can teach thee ruth.”
Sir Raymond cried grace, and he hid his face :
“ Alas ! Your reproofs I acknowledge for truth.”

Then neared each one in the path of the sun,
And touched him softly on hair and cheek ;
As a harp's throbbing strings came a flutter of wings,
And slowly in turn did each angel speak.

SIR RAYMOND'S DREAM

"I am Purity named," was the first word framed ;
"I am Courage, I conquer !" the next voice spoke.
"Calm Patience am I." Now Mercy drew nigh,
While, gladsome of heart, Sir Raymond awoke.

Behold ! In his sight stood four lilies white,
Though he had not been 'ware of the lovely things ;
As, rhythmic, they swayed in the sun-lighted glade
Their perfumed petals seemed angels' wings.

THE MURDERER'S WIFE

*(Night. No moon. A remote corner of a wood.
Husband and wife speaking in low tones.)*

He. "IT was a brawl, my girl, a sudden brawl like a
storm,

Haply a storm in truth, for the air loomed red
in my eyes.

Yonder we sat to rest, on the bench near the
sycamore tree.

I was coming from work, my knapsack of tools
at my feet.

He came on from 'the Feathers'; *he'd* been
loafing around,

Swilling a cup too much, so his talk grew noisy
and free,

Names o'erlight on his tongue—Nancy, and
Meg, and Sal—

THE MURDERER'S WIFE

Ah ! but I ought to have known—he was but a
foolish lad—

I might have been more wise, for sure the drink
was the fiend

Bade him to whisper of you, fouling your name
with his breath."

She. "Nay, my husband, my own ! John, you were
never in doubt ?

Never, oh never in doubt ? Kiss me now once
again !"

He. "Swift I rose in my wrath ; I cursed him then
and there.

He only lounged and laughed—laughed at my
anger and pain !

How it happened I know not : I held an axe in
my hand,

There, as we wrestled and swayed ; he, far
stronger than I,

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

I with the axe in my hand—sudden he slipt on
the grass,
Lying so stiff and stark—it seemed I were fighting
with death.”

She. “John, it was done for me! The sorrow and ill
are mine;
Mine to the utmost of days lengthy and long as
my love.”

He. “Then, as I saw his face, and his glazing eyes
that stared:
‘Cain, thou art Cain!’ I cried; to my quivering
soul I cried!
What had I done? Oh heaven! fain would I
give my life
Just to bring back *his* life—though surely again
we’d have striven,
Wife, I could fell him anew at thought of the
words he dared!

THE MURDERER'S WIFE

Wife, I had been no man to take such slight
from his mouth,
If not to force the lie to his coward heart again.
Dastard, the words he spoke! And yet I would
give my life
Just to bring back the life to his strange white
face and his eyes."

She. "Say, can this be his blood that trickles down
to my hand,
Here, as I touch *your* heart? John, it is
trickling warm!
John, you are hurt! Speak, speak! The
darkness is overdark."

He. "Surely I hear a step, stealthy among the
leaves."

She. "Nay, 'tis the sighing wind, or a bird that
drops from a branch—

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

Only some woodland thing—husband, speak !
You are hurt.”

He. “Hush ! I can hear a voice—a cry from beyond
the hill.”

She. “Nay, we are safely here, hiding so safely here !”

He. “Hush ! I can hear a voice—another—”

She. “Alas ! You are hurt !”

He. “Just as he fell, he snatched, from where it lay
on the bench,
Something that shone in the sun—something
slender and small.
Naught I felt at the time, and yet I fancy he
struck,
Struck with a point so small, it could but be
small of wound—

THE MURDERER'S WIFE

(Be that a cry again?) 'Vengeance is mine,
saith the Lord.'"

She. "Courage! We're safe in the wood: well it
was that we met,
So that we fled together, here to the sheltering
wood."

He. "Ay, when I turned to go, no one was by to
see.
No, not a soul to see; but the sin will find me
out."

She. "Then shall it find me also, here with my
clinging arms;
O! How swift is the blood I try to staunch
with my hair."

He. "Nearer they come, my girl. I know that your
lips are true;
This is our last good-bye; creep to me closer
yet."

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

She. "Hush! If we speak no word maybe they'll miss the way."

He. "Hark, they are searching the wood—it matters no more that we speak.

Quick! Let us say good-bye."

She (very softly). "Once 'twas a trysting-place.
Here in the long ago we plighted our loving troth.
Hand in hand we returned, to my mother's
cottage-door.

John, you plucked the bluebells; John, you
remember them well?

Thick they grew in the wood—blue as my eyes,
you said—

John, could I ever forget, ever be false to
you?

Listen, I'm yours to the end, whether in life or
death;

Just as I promised that day, with bluebells thick
at our feet."

THE MURDERER'S WIFE

He. "See, they are carrying lights, nearer and nearer
they come,

Flashing and reeling—I swoon—Is it his burial,
or mine?

Wife, your hold's growing weak! See, 'tis the
lad himself,

Ghastly and grim he looks—all open the wounds
in his head.

Ah! he would take me hence. Yes, I am
coming—I come!" *(Dies.)*

She (fiercely). "Lay not a finger here! I charge
ye to stand aloof—

Lay no touch on his body; harm no hair of his
head!

(Tenderly.) Mine, in death as in life; dear, I for
ever am yours!"

BARRY

"A monument to a St Bernard, named Barry, has just been erected on the mountain of that name. . . . The monument represents the St Bernard carrying a child on its back, while underneath is written: 'Barry, the heroic, saved the lives of forty persons, and was killed by the forty-first.'"—From the *Daily Mail*, September 1900.

ONLY a convent dog in years ago !
Across the pathless fields of snow,
O'er beetling ridge and ice-crowned peak,
'Twas Barry's duty to go forth, and seek
Some weary wanderer, lost and helpless quite
In clouds of darkening night.
Alas ! he could not speak,
But food and hope he carried,
And, joyous, led the way,

BARRY

Or swift returned alone, and never tarried,
But sought
The good monks waiting him, so duly brought
Kind help to where the sufferer lay.

'Tis told how once a little child,
By hapless chance, had strayed.
The wind rose loud and wild,
The moon was wrapt in shade.
The child—with limbs grown stiff and numb—
By dangerous sleep o'ercome,
Sank in the drift, 'mid frozen pillows laid.

Upon the cruel mountain-side
The little child had surely died ;
But Barry followed on the track,
And, warm of body and of breath,
Awoke the sleeper from the trance of death.
Next, offered as a mount his broad soft back,
A furry back, so safe and near,

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

The child clung tight with naught of fear ;
And thus did Barry
His precious burden slowly carry.
On and yet on he bore,
Nor paused until he reached the monastery door,
Surrendering there
His charge unto a home of tenderness and care.

O ! many and many a time
Forth went he, roaming out, to climb
Some storm-capt rock, or ice-bemantled steep,
Till, roused from conquering sleep,
The lost wayfarer on St Bernard's height descried
That gentle messenger and trusty guide,
Shaggy, warm, wistful-eyed—
In place of wan Despair—close at his side.

Stand thou by yonder grave !
Yea, thoughtful, meditate on it,
And con the record o'er the piteous tombstone writ:—

BARRY

Barry, the brave,
Barry, who rescued forty lives of men,
The forty-first would likewise save.
That one—unknown—a stranger—
Saw in such mercy naught but danger ;
Ay, and through fear and senseless anger then
He smote the noble creature on the head ;
And left it—dead !

WAS SHE A MISER?

THERE dwelt in some grey town of northern clime—
Long since—an aged woman, lonely, hard,
So hard (the neighbours said) she would not spare
To any starveling half a farthing's worth.

Poor was she not (they swore) but miserly.

If winter pinched her as she sat alone,

'Twas thus her will; contemptuous then, they
shrugged

Warm-mantled shoulders nigh the roaring stove
Whereby they grouped and gossiped, till their spite,
Like to the smouldering logs, was stirred to flame.

Yet lived she on, nor seemed to ask for praise
Or shrink from blame, and, as the years went by,
Unheeded lived—her very name unheard.

WAS SHE A MISER?

She moved no step beyond her threshold-stone,
But, when her shadow drifted o'er the wall,
Seen through dim lattice: "'Tis the miser woman,"
The townsfolk said, and the children fled for fear.

One Christmas Eve—a frosty night and cold—
The miser, shivering in her squalid room,
Felt a strange faintness gather at her heart,
And tottering rose to scan her cupboard shelf
In search of food. Food was there none, no crumb
Of bread, and naught to slake the parching thirst,
Save one stale draught of water—then she sighed,
And, piteous, tottered to her seat again.

The great cathedral bell was clanging now ;
The still air pulsed with it, and, down the street,
Came voices of young boys, well-tuned, who sang :
"*Gloria in excelsis, peace on earth*" ;
While by the lattice for a moment stood
A woman, fair and sad, half-clothed in rags,

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

Who to her thin breast held an ill-clad babe,
And prayed for food. The other shook her head—
She had no food to give, nay, naught to dole.
Herself was starved and poor—the beggar wept ;
“ Forgive me, sister ! ’twas to save the child.”
Then slowly went once more upon her way,
Her aching feet bruised by the cruel road.

.
Lo, sudden came a knocking clamorous
Against the panels of the quivering door.
Two fellows entered, who betwixt them brought
A steel-bound chest of massive shape and weight,
The which with many a surly curse and look
They roughly dragged close where the miser sat.
Nerveless she sat, unmoved, and mute and cold ;
And naught she asked, nor thanked them for their
toil,

But, when the churlish twain had swung away
With careless steps and much of angry noise,
She deeply sighed, and from her wrinkled brow

WAS SHE A MISER ?

Wiped the chill damp. "At last," she cried, "at last!"
So rose with shaking knees, and, bending down,
Broke into sobs. "Full well, full well I knew
'Twould come at last!" she shrieked. "But ah,
too late!"

Whereat the thin hands clasped themselves together
In strenuous pain, and then unclasped again,
While the grey head above the coffer drooped.
Then, rousing, from a band about her neck,
She, tremulous, found a small and hidden key
That slid familiar to the massive lock—
So the chest opened wide.

Behold ! within,
A field of gold—great furrows of gold coin
Where greedy hands might roam and please them-
selves,
Finding a mine beneath—more coins that shone
A-glitter in the moonlight till was drawn
The tattered cloth that screened the window-pane.

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

Long thus the lonely woman crouched—nor heeded,
For joy of gold, how wan she grew and faint,
Albeit her riches could not cure her thirst,
Nor ease the hunger-pangs within her breast.

Long, long she crouched, then slowly raised her
head,
For gently oped the door, soundless, unlatched,
While flooding moonbeams poured to fill the room,
Lighting the face of him who stood and smiled,
And moved a step towards her silently.

*He held out beckoning arms : " Yea, come," he said.
His voice was soft—as is the rippling flow
That creeps through golden sand so tenderly,
On some warm summer's day, you cannot tell
It is the rising tide—" Come now, my love,
My dear one, come. Have I not yearned for thee ?
How fair thou art ! How white thy beauteous robe !"
Ay, he was fair and young ! How well she knew*

WAS SHE A MISER?

*That face whose likeness she had worn for years
On aching heart and deep in grieving soul,
Deep graven by the searing drill of pain ;
But she ? She gazed down at her feeble hands—
How smooth they were ! how strangely youthful
grown !*

*Her shining hair in graceful tendrils fell
Below her shoulders on her girlish gown !
'Twas strange. And yet that tender pleading voice !
“ Come, love ; I wait for thee, I've waited long ;
Leave this thy gold. Oft have we talked of wealth
In our sweet days amid the lanes and fields,
And how together we would surely spend
My gold and thine to help the poor and sick.
I mind me how thy gentle visage flamed
For joy of that fair thought ; thy kind eyes shone
For future deeds ; we'd live such heaven-blest lives
In making glad a-many other lives—”
He spake, and touched her with familiar touch,
And swiftly she arose—her quickened limbs*

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

*Knew neither pain nor age—so with him passed
In silent joy out to the silent street.*

*She cared not for her store of cumbrous gold
That filled the open chest and heaped the floor ;
She cared not if the swinging door were latched,
Or if through rifts of curtain peered the moon.
Nay, 'neath her feet the stony path grew smooth,
As close she followed where that dear one led ;
And all her burdening life dropt from her now
As might be some huge load that she had borne,
While care and sadness drifted from her heart,
And left it young and joyous to the full.*

*They passed adown the street. The mighty bell
Clanged loud from the cathedral's ancient tower,
And boyish voices in the market-place
Sang through the night-time to a rhythmic strain :
" Gloria in excelsis, peace on earth."
But ever yet the one that led led on.
They passed adown the city's poorest ways,*

WAS SHE A MISER?

*And he that led smiled on the sick and blind,
The lame and halt, and touched them, so they knelt
And bless'd him, and the exulting woman cried :
“ Dear love, with all my gold I thee endow
To cure and save and glorify our world,
And bid all sad hearts taste God's peace anew.”
Then turned he to her, saying as he gazed :
“ Thou hast no need to give it, nathless give—
And I—” She lifted brimming eyes to him,
Dear comrade of her youth, who'd gone, she thought,
Beyond the bournes of human life and death ;
Ay, dead, long dead, while lonely she had lived.
For now the years were piled up as are leaves
That withering lie and rot in forest gloom,
Till swept adrift by sudden mighty gales,
Or hid beneath a tranquil cloth of snow.
Yet, as she looked and strove to raise her arms
To clasp him nearer who beside her stood,
And he towards her bent his tender face,
Behold ! the features slowly changed, the eyes*

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

*That were so full of glowing earthly love
Shone with divinest pity, and the brow
Of heavenly calm was crowned—a crown of thorns—*

.

But on the morrow came a ribald crowd
To find the miser dead beside her gold—
Kneeling, with pillowed head upon her gold,
With hands and arms deep hidden in the gold.
“’Tis well,” they sneered—“in truth she loved the
gold.”

And some of it—a paltry sum indeed—
Purchased her tomb ; the rest, ’tis said, was given
Unto the wealthy burghers of the town
For cost of pulling down some alms-house walls.

THE LADYES OF HEARTBREAK CASTLE

(Les Dames de Crèvecoeur.)

HEARTBREAK Castle is the name,
And a right good name enow,
For there three valiant hearts did break
Three faithful hearts, I trow.

In fifteen hundred fifty four,
The second Henry sent
From France unto the Belgic lines
A mighty armament.

Upon a grassy mountain top
That lonely castle stood,
With, at the foot, a deep ravine
By the fringe of a dark fir wood.

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

It was the Castle of Bovigne
That from its height looked down,
And still drove back the invading force
That sacked yon captive town.

Long days the cannon it defied,
That castle on the hill,
And each day closer drew the siege,
But the castle held out still.

*O comes never a horseman from east or west,
Or a lance from across the plain ?
Only ten archers to man the walls,
While hope and courage grow vain.*

*O rides there none by the windy moor,
Or sails by the river way ?
The captain and his henchmen true,
They are slain at the breach to-day.*

THE LADYES OF HEARTBREAK CASTLE

Ten archers alone on the ramparts,
Ten archers alone and no more ;
Dead are the gunners, the pikemen,
And of men-at-arms over a score.

Hither had journeyed a short while syne
Three noble knights and their dames ;
But now is the castle beleaguered,
And the town of Bovigne is in flames.

Three brave knights from Namur they came,
To aid in their country's strife ;
And each one strove for the fortress' sake,
And each one has given his life.

Three ladies fair they did battle there,
Each by her liege lord's side ;
Three ladies fair they do battle yet,
Each where her liege lord died.

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

*O comes no succour from hill or dale?
For the castle is well-nigh spent ;
Only ten archers to man the walls,
'Gainst so mighty an armament.*

The Frenchmen are storming the drawbridge fast,
And the castle may scarcely stand ;
Only three ladyes to guard the gate—
Each grasps of the other a hand :

“ Better were death than dishonour,
Sweeter than grace from the foe.”
With a murmured prayer on their pallid lips,
Up to the tower they go.

Up by the narrow battered stair,
To the heights of the old grey keep ;
There, hand in hand, from the parapet edge
They have taken their deadly leap.

THE LADYES OF HEARTBREAK CASTLE

Like three white birds have they cleft the air—
In their flight one instant seen—
Down, down to death, where the lances gleam
From the depth of the dark ravine.

Ay, sad is the rede of that bygone day—
Sad for all time, I trow ;
And the ruined Castle of Old Bovigne
Is named Heartbreak Castle now.

MARIA ROBUSTI

"I WILL not leave thee, father ; let no fear
Of such farewell steal sombre through thy mind.
I will not leave thee ; nay, no gilded court
Of Maximilian or of Ferdinand,
Or Philip, king of Spain and Spanish realms,
Shall tempt me hence. Thy love has plaited bonds
That bind me—first to thee through tenderness,
Next to our Venice for my loyalty.
What ? should I live and count sad morning hours,
Lagging as might my steps, in some far land,
Remembering how no more I'd haste to thee
And clasp thee for Aurora, taking this
My place beside thee, 'mid thy canvases,
Thy brushes, easels, colours, yea, thy work ?
Was I not trained thy right hand, ever nigh,
Doing the will the head commanded it ?
And shall that hand be parted from its lord ?

MARIA ROBUSTI

Kiss me again, my father, just as when
Thy Marieta, clad in boyish dress,
First leaned, a baby student, at thy knee.
We women, gladdened by the call of Fame,
Deem Love yet nobler ; haply thus we lose,
Oft, ay so oft, the prize each artist seeks—
Bartering our glory for a faithful heart.

“ See, I will bide ; I’ll fetch my lute and sing
The very songs that please thy fancy best,
And win a smile from thy grave lips once more ;
While proud Venetian lords and lovely dames
Shall hasten hither in their gondolas,
Praying that Tintoretto and his child
Give to their features immortality.

“ I will not leave thee, father. Let the years
Pass on ; we’ll cling yet closer—thou and I.”

TWO OLIVE TREES

(An ancient legend retold.)

It once befel :—

An anchorite

Planted an olive tree within a sandy rut,

Hard by his lonely hut,

Deeming it should become a fair and green
delight

To please him well ;

So prayed for rain to make the young tree grow.

And lo !

Fast, as replying, dropt the bounteous rain.

Thereat, again

He prayed, that sunshine might the frail buds
kiss,

TWO OLIVE TREES

And soon the sun, for answer given to this,
From out the gathered clouds appeared.
Still for the tree the good man ever feared ;
A feeble head it reared,
And, wan and pale,
Each day more sadly seemed to ail.

Then craved the hermit yet a further boon,
And asked such hardening hoar-frost as should
come
Till the soft buds be moulded strong though
numb.

Nor was denied.

The white frost came and decked the verdure soon,
But sickly, and more sickly, bent the little tree.
In sorrow then, with breaking heart, out-cried
The anchorite, and last
For one sweet breath of south wind pleaded he.
The south wind on her gentle pinions pass'd,
Breathing her tend'rest at warm eventide ;

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

And yet, alas ! and yet,
Ere that again the crimson sun had set,
The sapling drooped and died.

It thus befel :—
The anchorite
Went forth upon some later day
To seek a brother hermit in his solitude,
And there, beside that friendly cell,
He viewed,
Surprised, a lovely tree—an olive—making sweet
delight
With spray on spray
Thick-leaved—a sheltering tent beneath the burn-
ing sky,
A shield, a fence against each windy gust,
Or storm of parching dust,
A verdant bower the desert plain hard by.
Then, as he gazed
Amazed,

TWO OLIVE TREES

He questioned : "How came this thy tree
To grow so strong, and now so goodly be ?

How was it nourished ? Didst thou pray
For rain, or breeze, or sunshine, day by
day ? "

"Friend," quoth the other, "God knows
best.

I framed no special prayer.

Content, within His all-wise care
I placed my tree, and left to Him the rest."

AN OLD WOMAN'S FAITH

NAY, but the time's too short to fret—only a few
more years—

What's the use of grief or regret? Where's the
comfort of tears?

He went yesterday to the grave—I shall follow to-
morrow ;

They that travel so fast and sure may not bandy
words with sorrow.

Well, you say that I don't heed much—yes, you have
said it, and dare

To count me heartless or hardened of heart, while
you—that scarce knew him—can care !

You with your youth and beauty and friends, and a
thousand gifts of earth,

AN OLD WOMAN'S FAITH

I who'd but one thing left to love, and had learned
to know its worth.

Yes, for our forty wedded years that passed like a
breath on the sea,

Were better than empty words or sobs—better for
him and for me ;

And if hope cries loud from the human breast that
we'll live and meet again

In the mystic land where there's never a tear, never
a twinge of pain,

But where we're to clasp each other close and look
in each other's eyes—

Smiling to see youth's smile renewed, forgetting old
age and its sighs—

Why, I'd better sit still and think—think of the joy
to come,

And patiently fold my hands and wait till the
message : "Now *you* come home.

Home to peace, and home to Christ, with your good-
man waiting so true,

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

Longing to greet your wan old face—longing, just
longing for you.”

God never set us in this small world only to grieve
and endure ;

Perchance to try us through fire, my dear, but then
make us free, for sure.

And the woman's heart He has taught to beat, to
grow warm at His bidding, to ache

And yet to resign, and be silent and strong—oh,
He'll never let it break !

In the strength of His palm He will gather it up,
more perfect though same as of old,

And say : “ Here's a lonely heart in trust—a slight
thing, but wrought of gold.

Give it to those she has loved and nursed and obeyed
at My command ;

Give it, as born again, most fair, from the hollow of
Mine own hand.”

Then why should I weep, my child, why weep, for
dear ones dropt asleep ?

AN OLD WOMAN'S FAITH

When already I hear the angels sing from a distant
strand—why weep?

Already a score of welcomes fall on mine eager ex-
pectant ear;

I am nearer to heaven than you can be—and oh! I
am glad to be near!

A few short years are but the bridge that I'll soon be
stepping o'er—

The weariest feet can totter along, in sight of yon
glorious shore.

Then never complain that I cannot feel, nor re-
member my life, nor regret.

I'm nigh touching the great Hereafter, dear—that's
how I seem to forget!

UNEMPLOYED

LAST night I lay, so weary ! on the bed.
I could not sleep, or move, or think, or speak ;
A dull pain throbbed unceasing in my head ;
My limbs were heavy, and I knew them weak.

A pale moon flickered through the chill night-air
To give us light, not warmth, by fitful rays.
My husband sat in stony still despair,
As oft he sat in these our hopeless days.

But when he muttered in half-angered tone
Strange words unlike his tender speech of old,
The children woke, and cried with sobbing moan :
“Bread, mother, bread !” then, growing wild and
bold,

UNEMPLOYED

"Bread, father, bread ! we've had no crust
to-day !"

And stretched thin hands, and closer to him
crept.

"Bread, bread, alas !" I heard him slowly say ;

"Go sleep, poor babes !" and, sudden, then he
wept.

He wept, and on his arms he bent his head ;

But quickly rose, and to my side he came :

"I have no bread to give, no scrap of bread,

I have no work, and I am sick with shame.

"How can I watch you starve ? how shall I live ?

'Twere better in the quiet grave to lie.

How can I bide, when I've no bread to give ?

My little wife, come kiss me for good-bye.

"I've walked the city, miles and miles around—

'We need no men,' the sad words said again—

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

My feet are frozen on the frozen ground.

No work, no bread ! then let me end my pain ! ”

“ Nay, nay, not that ! ” so closely did I cling :

“ Dear, if you die, then I will die with you.

Oh, let us pray ! The dawn perchance may bring
More light, more hope and courage for us two.

“ Be strong,” I whispered, though my face was wet ;

“ Death is not due ; a nobler course we’ll run.”

And heart to heart the dawning day we met—

And God sent help before the day was done.

THE REFRAIN

A MELODY went straying
Through an open door to the stair ;
A hand at the piano softly touched
The notes of that ancient air.

It faltered out through the stillness,
Past the roses' fragrant bloom,
And far o'er the dusky fields it crept
To the roadside's eerie gloom.

The one who sat at the keyboard
Was young, and blithesome, and fair ;
But, yonder, a tattered pilgrim wept
Because of that ancient air.

OF A SHAWL

'Tis but a shawl—a Spanish shawl—
And the lace is worn and old,
Yet, when the soft waves round me fall
They seem to bring with each gentle fold
A fond embrace and a call.

Some perfume is wafted from olden time,
A dear voice draws strangely near,
And now there rings like a well-known chime
The pet name familiar to girlhood's ear,
Which memory makes sublime.

My mother's arms about me close—
(Nay, 'tis only the shawl she wore—)
I drink in the perfume of faded rose,
And tears come fast for that love of yore
Which the heart of my old shawl knows.

LADY ELFREDA

"LADY Elfreda, what would you know,
With your wild white hands and your eyes of
 woe?"

*"Fain would I know if a chief rode near,
 Bearing lance and spear—
A steel-clad knight on a steed of snow."*

"Lady Elfreda, whom would you meet,
With your rain-stained robe and your way-worn
 feet?"

*"Fain would I meet the lord of my love;
 On his helm my glove,
On his lips a message my heart to greet."*

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

"Lady Elfreda, pray you to rest,
For sake of the babe that lies on your breast."

*"Rest for my babe and me there is none,
By starlight or sun,
Till we come to end of our weary quest."*

IDLE WISHES

LIKE to the flight of a bird
Homing across the blue,
Straight and speedy and true—
So is the course of my fond heart, stirr'd,
Dear, by my longing for you.

Mocking at earthly bars,
Laughing at prison keys,
Free as the wind on seas,
Swift it travels as mist o'er stars,
Fresh as the perfumed leas.

How may I reach my dear?
O for the throstle's note,
Or the lilt of the wild dove's throat!
For they in the garden delight her ear,
But her minstrel dwells remote.

THE LIGHTHOUSE

THE lighthouse lonely stands
Firm on a stretch of rock,
Daring the wild waves' shock,
Warning of treacherous sands.

The lighthouse toils at night,
When the village lies in rest ;
It gleams on the sea's wide breast,
So the mariner steers aright.

The lighthouse cried in grief :
" I am lone—oh, so lonely here !
With never a word of cheer,
And never a night of relief !"

THE LIGHTHOUSE

Then God said : " Toil on, toil on ;
Let others labour by day ;
But thou in the dark obey,
When thy weaker brethren are gone !

" Toil on, for to thee I give
A harder yet nobler task :
Bring light that the storm-toss'd ask,
And the blind shall behold and live !

" The lonely worker I love,
For his is the best work done—
Keep watch till the hidden Sun
Beams again in Heaven above ! "

AN OLD MAN'S RHYME

WHEN I was young I loved to roam
Where the heather covered the sod,
Or to wander at will afar from home
Where no white man's foot had trod.
I loved to sail o'er the deep blue main,
Or climb to an ice-bound peak,
And Fortune seemed ne'er the worth to gain,
If she were not hard to seek.

Now I am old I love to roam
In the land of the Long Ago.
I do not need to leave my home,
And my footsteps are soft and slow.

AN OLD MAN'S RHYME

I can sit in my chair at ease and dream
Of days that are past and gone ;
The old times return and the old friends seem
To crowd here when I'm alone.

Sometimes—now I'm old—I try to roam
In the land to which all are bound,
Where the dear folk went, one by one, from
home,
And a brave strong life is found.
'Tis strange and dim, but 'tis good and true,
With a promise of joy untold ;
So I sit and look for a world that's new,
And where none shall be sad or old.

THE SAILOR BOY'S MOTHER

FARE you well, my little lad,
Over the sea you'll roam ;
Fare you well, my pretty lad,
Far from mother and home.

When you were but a babe, my lad,
I laid you on my heart ;
Still you're nigh to my heart, my lad,
Howsoe'er we part.

Yes, for now we part, my lad—
You'll away to the West—
Come once more and lay you down,
Close on your mother's breast.

THE SAILOR BOY'S MOTHER

Here's a kiss for your brow, my lad,

Two for your eyes of blue—

One for my heart-ache, my pretty lad,

And a dozen for love of you.

II

TALMUDIC TRADITIONS



ENOCH

"HE walked with God." In that fair vale he dwelt
Where bend the hills, as kneeling giants might,
To spread upon the earth a carpet green
Studded with jewels ; for, through leafy groves,
Ruby and topaz-like, the luscious fruits,
Glowing in shade and vermeil in the sun,
Were hung for lamps, and the wide river's course
Shone as a string of pearl in emerald laid.
Around, high banks of flowers with garlands touched
The radiant plains that seemed each morn to vaunt
New tones of iridescence, flinging free
Sweet healthful perfume to the plaintive wind.
There Enoch dwelt in holy solitude,
His thoughtful days, bred from a guileless soul,
White as the blossom yonder pear has shed.

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

And when the stars their silver harness donned
To guard the darkened ramparts of the sky,
Secure he laid him down to rest and sleep—
Soft moss for couch, for roof close-plaited reed—
Pillowed by peace, companioned by content.

“He walked with God.” Oft-time he climbed the hills,
Yea, to the peaks that met the mist and cloud ;
There his glad spirit stood as purified
From earthly gifts and fullness of this world,
Awaiting that the great Creator’s breath
Should consecrate His image once again,
So bid that human heart become divine.

Long then he prayed, and grew nor faint nor wan,
Because to him God’s grace was meat and drink.

Yet, as he sat, one summer eve, at dusk—
Beneath wide-spreading boughs of tamarind,
In that sweet garden he himself had wrought,

ENOCH

Filled full with lilies tracing out the paths
Among the citron and magnolia woods—
There shone a sudden light betwixt the leaves—
The whiteness of an angel's wing—and next
From out the shadows came a voice, a call :
“ Enoch ! ” then once again : “ Enoch ! ” so he
In answer humbly spake : “ Yea, here am I.”

“ The world is sorrowful ; canst thou not hear
Its piteous cry of pain ? ” the angel asked.
“ Nay, I but hear the grasses as they moan
Whene'er the south wind treads them on his way.”

“ And see'st thou not from far the faces pale
Of such sad souls as wear a lonely grief ? ”
“ Nay, but I see the wan moon when she climbs
From cloud to cloud, making her weary quest.”

“ Heed'st thou no echo in thine heart ? No throe
Of passions such as doom thy fellow-men ? ”

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

"Nay, I but wot the flash and thunderous peal
That are the harbingers of nature's pangs."

"Yet is the great world sorrowful. And God
Bids thee go comfort it, and bind its wounds,
And teach the helpless and the ignorant,
And turn th' idolaters toward His truth.
Hearken ! for I, His messenger, am bidden
To send thee forth likewise to do His will."
"I go," quoth Enoch ; "blessèd be His will."

Thus Enoch rose, obedient to God's word,
And left the fields and took the bridle path,
And journeyed silent and unquestioning.
Then, as he neared the city, in the dawn,
One met him, known to him of former days,
Who, turning swiftly back, cried out to tell
All men that Enoch, lord of countries wide,
Had come—Enoch of high renown and fame—
Enoch, much missed, because most truly loved.

ENOCK

So flocked the people forth to greet his steps,
Bearing brave gifts and treasure in their hands,
Laying their golden bracelets at his feet,
With softest fleeces of the whitest lambs,
While such as owned no better to bestow
Brought dates, or figs, or olives, heaped and ripe.

Thus made they Enoch king, and bade him reign,
And long he dwelt in glory and in peace,
Teaching the law that Seth had taught to him,
And leading men unto the ways of truth,
With echoes from forgotten Paradise—
Yea, gently leading sullen hearts and hard,
Such as were bound in gross and brutish sin,
And such as held no rule but cruel lust,
And such as wrought no hurt, yet knew no
good—

To follow him, their shepherd, meek as sheep,
So dwell in pasture of the Eternal God,
And therein taste the water-springs of Life.

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

His reign was Peace—e'en as his name spelled Rest—
A tree whereon all arts and crafts of peace
Blossomed for roses, while rich years went by
Many and full as red-ripe ears of corn
Bound in a sheaf—ay, and yet more again ;
While, at his knee, his children grew, and soon
His children's children, fair and tall and strong.
And from far east and west disciples came,
Young chiefs with gifts, and many a hoary sage,
Eager to learn obeisance to the rule
That Enoch made, and gather up the pearls
Of lore and wisdom that the great seer stowed
As crumbs from the broad table of his mind.

Some tell he was the first to write, to bid
Broad stones or tablets hold unuttered thought,
Breathing in signs the swift and cryptic words
Which yet were words and bore a mighty speech,
By eyesight journeying from man to man
More surely secret than from mouth to ear.

ENOCH

Ay, many another wondrous gift of life
Did Enoch place in grasp of mortal men.
'Tis said that, deeming naught too poor of worth,
Patient, he taught the cut of sandalled shoon,
And shaped the skins of forest beasts to clothe
His people's limbs ; yea, of his own hand marked
The way of seams or stitches dexterous—
So bade the nations glory in their trades.

Yet, as time went, within the great king's soul
A yearning grew—that lay but slight at first,
Then rose from strength to giant mastering force—
For that aloneness he had loved of yore,
With silent days of prayer and holy thought,
When the disciple communed with his Lord.
To him it seemed, the more did he bestow
Of ease and wealth upon the hungering folk,
The more of pain he gathered to himself—
Dull weight of grief that dragged him earthward down,
And care, whose mantling folds encumbered sore ;

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

Therefore, at last, he must enfranchise him.
Stern-willed, he bade to regal state adieu,
(Naught but a pilgrim's scrip and staff in hand,)
And, eager, journeyed out, to seek again
The verdant vale betwixt its guardian hills,
Where radiant lilies blossomed in the field.
Again he climbed the heights, and flung himself
Upon those arid steeps to touch the dew
Of peace with fevered hands, while cooling mist
Revived his brow ; thus, lifted from the world,
Once more he answered to the voice of God.

Awhile he stayed, and lingered so for love,
And fain had lingered on, yet might he not.
Therefore refreshed, and, of new strength endowed,
With shining eyes returned he to the world.

Anew, he donned his kingship and his state,
And taught, and ruled, and lived a valiant life ;
Albeit the vision of his soul turned oft

ENOCH

Toward the sweetness of yon hermitage.
Thus, ever and anon, he fled from court,
And, as a weighty chain, from off his neck
Unclasped the glittering gaud of royalty ;
So went his way, a wanderer, and alone.
But with such journeying waxed the absent hours,
Of freedom pure, in number ever more,
Until it came to be that only now
Each seventhly dawning could he turn to dwell
Amid his people, yea, more seldom yet ;
Then, presently, but one short day each year.
All else dark absence ; none might him behold,
Though in reproach unto his tender ear
The plaint of this sad world did sometimes reach,
As moan of wind-blown trees beside a mere,
Calling his heart to aid the common grief
Till for the poor he pleaded to the Lord,
And, last, returned to succour them once more.

Yet now such holiness encompassed him,

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

None dared to draw o'ernear ; his face was 'light
With wondrous glory still reflected there
From one pure ray of heaven that lately touched
It for a moment's space. The people knelt,
Imploring blessing, while from his grave eyes
Rained down warm tears of pity and of love,
And out to them he held his healing hands.

Then cried the multitude with lusty voice :
"Long live the King !"

The which when Enoch heard
He motioned them to silence, and he spake.
So witnessed how to him had strangely come
Unasked, and but a little while eregone,
A beauteous youth that sought to be his friend.
Much earnest speech had passed betwixt the twain,
And pleasant amity of argument,
For never yet had Enoch met another
To whom his very self so warmly turned

ENOCH

As to this one. Nor guessed he at the first,
How that the friend he loved was Asrael,
Angel of Death, whose scorching wings were hid,
With every grim and fearsome appanage,
Beneath the comely person of a youth,
Because he ne'er might gather Enoch's soul,
Nor thrill him with the tremor of a touch,
But only pass the message from on high
That Enoch, righteous king, should soon ascend
To dwell a prince in heaven for 'stead of earth.

The word did Enoch to his realm impart,
Witting right well that soon he thence must go,
And fain at heart that all should learn God's will—
Yet none believed such warrant as he gave.

Thus came it that one day he mounted steed,
And rode away, bidding a vain farewell,
For a great crowd went with him.

Now the fields

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

Were rich with fruit, and on the far-off hills
The setting sun laid mystic purple veils,
And through the paths of oleander bloom
Came dancing children, swinging wreaths of rose,
While sweet girl-voices struck the languid air.
And many clashed thin plates of metal smoothed,
And many plucked tall reeds from out the sedge
And notched them so they lilted tuneful sound,
While every step timed to the pipe. And still
From out their homes the people streamed, with cry
"Long live the King," and ever yet again :
"Long live the King !" But he, the king, rode
slow

Upon a milk-white steed, chaining his sight
Unto the distance, where the round sun dropt,
And warm sky-glory quickly swooned to grey.

And all the next day, through the laden fields
The people followed, bearing fruits and gifts.
And crying "Enoch, Enoch, live for ever !

ENOCK

O Teacher, King, great Master, dear to us,
God's angel, do thou stay with us ! O stay !
Thy will shall be our law. Come thou again !"
Thus, faithful, prayed they.

But he gently spake
Turning upon the saddle : " Go ye back
Lest Death o'ertake you. People of my love,
Hie to your tents ! 'Tis meet I journey lone.
So leave me."

Then did many homeward wend,
But others clung to him and followed yet.
Through many a wilderness and sultry steppe
They followed, feebler grown of foot and breath,
Yet following onward, while the burning sun
From out the cruel blueness parched their skin,
And hot winds bore red sand-gusts to their
mouths.

There ne'er a creature wild nor bird was seen,

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

Nor shade nor shelter in the stifling waste ;
Only the straggling cactus desolate.

But, on the sixth day, Enoch, drawing rein,
For space of one short moment, stayed his horse,
And spake, his voice grown thick from grief and
tears :

“ My loved ones, go ; I pray that ye will go.
Return, lest Death o’ertake you with that sword
Which none may see and live—return, return,
Nor longer follow me.”

And some went back,
But some few stayed, who said : “ Nay, where thou
goest
There will we follow—only Death himself
Shall part us from our king.”

Then Enoch spake
No more, but veiled his face so none might see

ENOCK

Whether he wept or smiled ; ne'er spake he more,
But onward rode, where rocky ground began
To lift to hills ; ever the way was upward
And bleak and hard, with many a ridge and chasm,
And chill the air, and darkling as by storm
That breathed forth menace, while those few that
 strove,
With bleeding feet and wearied limbs, to follow,
Now stumbled oft and faltered on the march.
Yet some pressed on.

 Last, came they to a lake
That slept in blackness 'mid the rocky gloom
As in a deep stone cave, and, here and there,
A giant peak seemed poised above the clouds
That fleetly passed as though they were in chase,
Albeit below was windless atmosphere ;
Not one poor leaf hung by the water's edge,
No ripple slid athwart its shadowy face.
And there the king dismounted from his horse

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

And went a little way apart to pray,
Though still in view to those that followed him.
But sudden seemed the earth to quake and shiver,
And all around an eddying whirlwind rose.
Huge rocky fragments hurled themselves to depth,
While overhead the sky was rift in twain,
Parting to dazzling light ; then tongues of flame,
In shape as angels' wings, enwrapt the king,
And in an aureate cradle bore him high
Unto the stars beyond all eyes of men.

For they that looked saw Enoch never more.
Not they that stood anear, nor any man
Might him again behold on earth, for that
“ He was not.”

But the few that followed close—
Stunned by the lurid glare of blinding fire,
Which showed where all around lay tracts of ice,
As shining glass, close up unto their feet—

ENOCH

Trembling for fear, essayed no further step,
And on their knees they fell, crying aloud.

Lo ! sudden, in their midst, a vision rose,
A mighty form, whose face was pale and sere ;
Yea, sudden in their midst stood Asrael,
With outspread wings that touched the mountains'
height,
His sword uplift which human sight beholds
But once.

A diamond in the gloom it flashed—
Then darkness fell upon the silent hills,
And on the faces of the dead who lay,
Entombed in ice, among the icy fields.

THE DEATH OF ABEL

CAIN and Abel, first of brothers,
Stood and parleyed, face to face ;
Cain was keen with greed and envy,
Abel spake in truth and grace :
“ Bind we now a compact, brother,
Thus shall both have rightful case.

“ See this world of peaceful plenty,
Riches many and to spare !
Thou, mine elder, choose thy portion—
I will hold thy judgment fair,
Well content with whatsoever
Thou hast left to me for share.”

THE DEATH OF ABEL

Then quoth Cain : " I choose from henceforth
Earth, and all its wealth, for mine ;
Yet bestow on thee possession,
So each thing that moves be thine.
I will till the ground ; thou, shepherd,
Drive thy sheep and goats and kine ! "

Thereon forth went Abel, roaming
With his herd across the plain ;
But a wild and ruthless anger
Shook his brother's soul again.
" Earth is mine ; thy feet are treading
On my realm ; begone ! " cried Cain.

Abel, in his fear and sorrow,
Tenderly once more appealed :
" Brother, see, to make thy garment,
Woollen fleece my sheep did yield ;
Should I murmur ? " But Cain thundered :
" Take thy feet from off my field ! "

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

Swiftly Abel sought the vantage
Of a hillock nigh at hand,
Deeming that, perchance, in safety
He might touch a sheltered land.
"Earth is mine! Hence, leave my kingdom!"
Came the pitiless command.

Last, o'er steep and rocky passes,
To the mountain height he fled.
"Earth is mine!" the words came following—
Closer still the murderer sped—
Now he strikes! . . . And in the moonlight
Lies young Abel, stark and dead.

THE FIRST BURIAL

DEAD on the ground lay Abel—stiff and stark on the
ground,
From his wide eyes never a gleam, from his cold lips
never a sound,
And, ready 'gainst beasts of prey, was watching his
faithful hound.

There at last they saw him—his parents, Adam and
Eve—
And stood, astonished and trembling, too suddenly
'frighted to grieve ;
Fearful, they waited his waking, nor aught of death
could believe.

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

Near, on a bush, sat a raven ; in sorrow it viewed
the twain :

“ Alas, and alas ! ” it cried ; “ he is dead, nor will
speak again.

They know not what they should do. I will show
them ; they linger in vain.”

Its fellow had died that day ; to their feet the dead
mate it bare ;

It scraped a space in the earth, and laid down its
load with care—

Then Adam and Eve made a grave, and buried their
dear one there.

THE BLIND RABBI

A BLIND Rabbi stayed in the midst of the crowd

To greet a great king on his way,

But one who stood near chose to murmur and jeer,

With a laugh and a sneer : "Pray, what doest *thou*
here?

To thee all is dark at mid-day !

" 'Tis true that our buckets are dipped in the wells

For bringing the water we need,

But who'd use his skill broken pitchers to fill?

It surely were ill the pure water to spill,

And for thirst sorry comfort indeed."

"Wait, wait," said the Rabbi, "nor scoff thou so
loud ;

Perchance, through these blind eyes of mine

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

I have power for to see many pageants that be,
Yea, in truth, hid from thee, and thou soon shalt
agree

That my sight is yet better than thine."

The horsemen ride near, and the mighty sound
swells,

The music, the voices, outflow ;

"The king, he is nigh," said that one who stood by,

"'Tis the king, for they cry, and the glad shouts
rise high !"

"Not so," quoth the Rabbi, "not so."

Behold ! yet again a great company neared :

"See the king, ay, the king dost thou see ?

Hark, the huge cannon roar from the town to the
shore !

List the brave cheers galore, and the echoes bring
more !"

But the Rabbi quoth : "Nay, 'tis not he."

THE BLIND RABBI

Lo! the cheering died down as more horsemen
appeared,

While a strange hush and silence there fell.

Quoth the blind Rabbi: "*Now*, 'tis the king, well I
throw!

To his might let us bow!" Cried the other:

"But how

Couldst thou this so immediately tell?"

"Of Majesty Divine," the wise man spake,

"'Tis writ: the whirlwind came, all earth did quake,

Yet therein was not God. And following

Came fire, but not in fire the heavenly King.

Then after fire a gentle stillness drew—

The Lord was there. Nay, earthly kings, I knew

Fain would the Almighty greatness emulate—

Praise God, Who grants them somewhat of His
State!"

THE JEWELS

A RABBI, teaching through the livelong day,
Missed his two sons, of scholars best alway.
Arriving home, he called ; but they were gone ;
In answer came to him his wife alone.

“Where be the lads ?”

“Haply they’re roaming still.
Here is thine evening meal—come, take thy fill.
Husband, for wise advice I make my prayer :—
A friend once left some jewels to my care,
And now, alas ! he asks for their return ;
Say, must I give them back ? I fain would learn—
Thou know’st what I should do.”

“Give back with speed.
They were but lent. It was a kindly deed.
Wife, canst thou doubt thy duty ?”

THE JEWELS

Thereon she,
Pale-faced, with tear-drenched eyes that scarce could
see,

Her husband to an inner chamber led,
Where—cold in death—lay stretched upon the bed
Two lovely children, calm as though they slept.
The father gazed, then knelt, and sorely wept.
“These be the jewels,” quoth his noble wife.
“God lent them to us—bright and short their life.
God is the Friend demanding back his loan ;
Shall we repine because He claims His own ?”

“Praise God,” the Rabbi spake, with lifted brow.

“Praise God ; yea, sent by heav’n, dear wife, art
thou.

Together let us praise that mighty Friend
Who for our gladness chose His gems to lend.”

A SHADOW

" LIFE is a shadow—thus the Word of God,
Naught but a shadow passing o'er the sod."

" May it at least awhile enduring be,
As is the shade of some great tower or tree ?

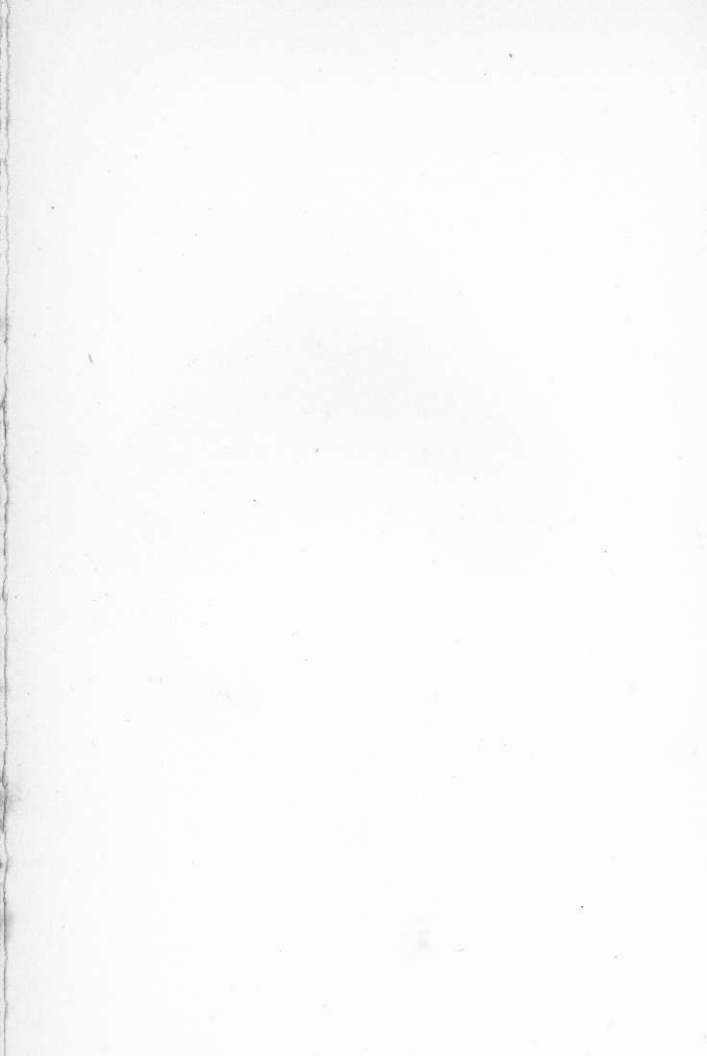
" Nay, 'tis a shade as when a bird doth fly
O'erhead ; when that the bird has flitted by
There shall remain to us no more in view
Or bird or shadow—vanished are the two."

A MUSSULMAN TRADITION

WHEN Abraham grew old, his beard grew white
That erst was black as swarthy night ;
So ask'd he of the Lord : " Shall this portend
Sorrow ? Thy wrath ? Haply mine end ? "
" My son "—the answer came to his distress—
" It is a sign of gentleness."

III

NATURE'S VOICE



THE ALMOND TREE

(The Hebrew name for the Almond is "Shaked," which means to hasten or awake early.)

AWAKE, awake !

Upon the naked boughs

The rosied petals break,

And, first among her woodland peers,

The Almond Spirit hastens as she hears

The voice of Spring that bids her rouse

And don

Her robe of dawn and draw her pinky mantle on.

Awake, awake !

The forest is not burgeoning,

Yet shall she take

Her festive wreath to bind about her brows ;

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

While—though the chorused thrushes sing—
She sends a message by the April wind
 Bidding him find
The swallows where they linger over-seas ;
 And so bestows
 Light blossoms as for tokens kind.
 Then past the leas
He straightway fares, her wayward will to please.

 The perfumed lilac still
 Sleeps by the hawthorn croft ;
The limes and oaks stand bare below the hill,
 And oft
The river whispers to the rill,
The runnels murmur to the lake :
“They slumber the long winter through ; we
 cannot make
 These dreaming trees awake.”
Only the Almond, gazing upward, cries

THE ALMOND TREE

To the wide world : " Arise !"—

The drowsy world that, as a well-tilled field,
Shall by-and-by ripe summer-nurtured sheaves of
beauty yield.

Here, on this grassy floor,
Tarry some crocus flecks of golden ore,
And the wan primrose shyly peeps to see
Dame Almond decked in all her pageantry.

The daisies from afar
Mimic her roseate loveliness,
And daffodils bring each unto her feet a star
To nod toward its fellows in the sky
That shine out through the day's recess,
And ere Queen Moon rides by.

Awake, awake ! Spring's clarion sounds :
" Awake !"

But Nature, like a child full tired at play,
Sleeps calmly on until the fresh new day,

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

Pale wind-flow'rs in each hand ;
Yet presently intent with smiles to rise
And shake
The dewdrops from half-opened eyes,
Letting a garland scatter on the fragrant land.

Afar—far in the warm South's mellowing,
Nigh to some curved sea-rim,
Banked by grey olive and the red-stemmed
pines,
There, likewise, craves the Almond first
Her chains to burst,
Pulsating, flushing, when young Spring
Calls to the woods to answer him.
Against the sapphire ocean lines,
By arch and tower
The leafless fig-tree clings,
And the wild rose in thorny rings
Builds but a bleak and scentless bower.

THE ALMOND TREE

Yet rosy-toned is she,
Aurora-like, the wakening Almond tree.

Behold ! where, 'twixt high mountains and smooth
vales,

On sunny slopes the noble chestnuts rear
Their branches' labyrinth, albeit no buds appear,
And scarce a greeny mist redeems the dales ;
The wild peach and the cherry sway
Their lithe light forms, but wear no chaplets gay :
Only the Almond tree is crowned,
And out some fairy loom most glorious gowned.
The children in her drifting blooms delight,
And lovers pluck them for a posy ;
The nimble-footed sheep and lambkins white
That climb the knolls beneath her roofing rosy,
Follow their shepherd with a pleasure new,
Seeing such wondrous beauty rising from the dew.

But, haply, in some narrow plots of ground—

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

That, 'mong the city's courts and marts,
And stifling walls and boundless masonry,
Yet may be found,
'Spite dust and grime, beneath our leaden sky,
To cheer the toilers' wearied hearts
By semblance of a garden space
And greenwood grace—
The Almond speaks her sweet command
At every springtime of the year,
With voice more clear,
Than e'er she tells it in the Syrian land.

“Awake, awake!”

She surely cries: “Wake, human souls, unfold!

Your callous slumber break!

Lift ye from earthy thought and care,
And all such strangling plants as crowd the mould.
Your lives' divinest blossom haste and bear,
This dusky world with radiance to o'ertake—

THE ALMOND TREE

Awake, awake !

Ye that have joyance haste your joy to lend,

And comfort give

To them that in bleak haunts of sorrow live,

Nor for themselves can fend :

The poor, the sick, the maimed, wrapt in a sombre
sadness—

The child that's stunted, an uncared-for flower—

The aged folk who wait Death's liberating hour—

The eyes that weep, the hearts that ache—

O blossom forth for them, and teach them gladness !

Awake, awake !”

And ye that hold no hope, but only doubt or fear

To guide upon the way,

Awake, awake ! here is good cheer—

Chill winter time's o'erdone and past.

Awake from lethargy of grief,

Cast hence all bonds of pain.

Hope, as an Almond, leads the van to-day,

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

And seeing of her bounty, all the forest's fain

Right fast

To robe in tender green again.

The coppice bursts to leaf,

And Autumn's hostages, in rose or white,

Fill our bare orchards with a flood of light.

Hope flaunts her lovely flag unfurled—

Have not our souls a hope, a new and promised
world?

Let him that will our hope deny!

Give him the lie!

All ye that slumber wake! awake! awake!

TO A FIRE-FLY

TINY flame of wondrous birth
Flitting o'er the dusky hedges,
Glimmering deep in banks and sedges,
Jewel-like on dark-browed earth :

Drift thou to my outstretched palm !
Give the secret whence thou comest,
Whither haply now thou homest
While the night is fair and calm.

Didst thou sail from near or far ?
Art perchance a segment riven,
Through wide leagues of ether driven,
From some fiery falling star ?

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

As by stilly ways we pass,
Fade San Gimignano's towers,
Richer floats the scent of flowers
Where thy fellows fleck the grass.

White upon the broad white road
Pass the oxen, freed from labour,
Ghostly, slow, each by his neighbour,
Bearing neither yoke nor load.

So their peasant lords themselves
End the work of vine and valley,
On the quiet paths to dally,
Where the fire-flies dance with elves.

Elf-like, art thou magic-born?
Cased with gold to shine in blueness,
Stript and swarth at each day's newness,
Exorcised by touch of morn?

TO A FIRE-FLY

Turned to but a squalid thing—
Poor dull insect, small, unsightly—
Who should guess thy power, that nightly
Ridest on a radiant wing?

Nay, thou seem'st a holy spark
Dropt from out the lamp of angels,
Sent to teach of God's evangels :
How the Light may shine through dark.

Fire-fly, blaze across the plain !
Float upon the breath of summer !
Thus to-morrow, saintly comer,
Tell thy parable again !

WHY TARRIES A BOAT?

WHY tarries a boat from the northern seas
That should ride at noon in our bay?
Yon headland looms black and the clouds lie low,
And swift from the open shall high tides flow—
(O the wild wet wind and the spray !)

The white gulls drift as but flecks of surf,
The curlew shrieks on her way ;
Down by the reach the shingle moans,
While fierce waves grapple and suck in the stones—
(O the wild salt wind and the spray !)

Come boat ! come fishers ! and ride the storm
To our haven within the bay !

WHY TARRIES A BOAT?

Though mocking spirits around ye leer,
And to treacherous reefs Death fain would steer—
(O the wild weird sea and the spray !)

Thou sea ! that art but a chill still grave,
The mariner's bourne of home,
Peace, peace to thy metrical mournful dirge,
Thy requiem chaunt of billow and surge—
(O the wild white sea and the foam !)

MOON AND CLOUDS

IT was but yesternight I journeyed home
In full flood of the moon. Her silver car
Illumed the clouds adrift from star to star.
It seemed she rode upon a bank of foam
That, shifting, brake, and cleared the loftier dome,
As though some mighty door were drawn ajar,
Revealing countless realms on realms afar
Of windless azure where the angels roam.

Such sight to us our littleness may teach
More than all science or all priestly word.
"The heavens declare" in mute but potent speech
God's glory; and yon starry "firmament,"
Fit "handywork" that tells of the omniscient Lord,
Stands as a glorious witness from His greatness
sent.

A WOODLAND ROMANCE

O SING of the oak and the hawthorn tree,
As pretty a pair as you well may see !
He is tall, he is strong, his green leaves glisten
Brave in the sunshine or wind or rain ;
Close she leans, to nestle and listen
To the lilt of his boughs and his heart's refrain :
“ Ever as near through the changeful year !
I love you, I love you, my queen, my dear ! ”

O sing of the oak and the hawthorn tree,
As pretty a pair as you well may see !
At each Spring-tide, for joy of her lover,
She dons her snow-white garment again ;
And the dryads peep from their verdant cover
To croon once more her bridal refrain :
“ Never a fear, through the changeful year !
He loves you, he loves you, my queen, my dear ! ”

AUTUMN IN THE GARDEN

ONE breath of the wintry wind—

And the leaves must fall—

Golden clusters of chestnut leaves,

Crimson garlands from sheltered eaves—

All, yes, all.

How they curl !

Now they whirl,

Drift and swirl—

Each his little flag must furl—

And Frost will soon weave Nature's pall.

One breath of the wintry wind—

How the chill birds cower !

But a while ago they sang

From those boughs where sparse leaves hang—

AUTUMN IN THE GARDEN

(Their green bower).

Sad they sit—

Thrush or tit—

Nor will flit,

Though bold Robin trills a bit,

And the blackbird mocks from his dark yew tower.

One breath of the wintry wind—

Never a flower again,

Never until this old year dies,

And a young year beams through sunnier skies.

In their pain

Of storm or snow

Lay them low,

So they go

Haply in realms of Dis to blow—

While we look for their lovely forms in vain.

TO SOME CHRYSANTHEMUMS IN A WORK-HOUSE GRAVEYARD

Poor pallid flowers, faint stars 'mid murky gloom,
Shining through fog and devastating grime,
Weak aliens, early bent by our chill clime,
That spectre-wise sway round the pauper's tomb!
Be yours a harder fate, a sadder doom,
Than bound these nameless ones of bygone time,
Whose death-like hours craved Death's releasing
 chime
To call them from the unlovely work-house room?

See, human forms now also, lingering, wait
Among the stones! They seek the sheltered
 nooks,

TO SOME CHRYSANTHEMUMS

Wearing their garb of humblest servitude ;
As withered plants they nod, while drooping looks
They cast to right or left, in vacant mood—
Then drift out through the mist with tottering
gait.

THE PLANTING OF THE MAY

(A translation.)

Now is come the month of flowers,
And of songs and perfumed dowers—
 Month of all delectance,
 Month of sweet expectance—
Greenness once more clothes the bowers ;
In the wood the wild birds sing.

May is come, but love's belated,
Love for whom I, constant, waited.
 While the birds are chanting,
 Folks the hawthorn planting,
Lonely 'mid these woods, I'm fated
Lone to be in sorrowing.

THE PLANTING OF THE MAY

Voici venu le mois des fleurs,
Des chansons et des senteurs ;
 Le mois qui tout enchante,
 Le mois de douce attente.
Le buisson reprend ses couleurs ;
 Au bois l'oiseau chante.

Il est venu sans mes amours
Que j'attends, hélas, toujours !
 Tandis que l'oiseau chante,
 Et que le mai l'on plante,
Seule en ces bois que je parcours,
 Seule je me lamente.

(An old song preserved in Burgundy, quoted by Countess Evelyn Martinengo-Cesaresco. "Essays in the Study of Folk-Songs.")

WHEN THE SUN SINKS LOW

WHEN the sun sinks low,
And the wild west winds have ceased to blow,
When borne from over
The shelving cliffs comes a scent of clover,
When down in the gorge
Gleams red the spark of the lonely forge—
Then my pent-up heart goes out on her quest
As a dove to her nest.

Along the strand
The surf shrinks back from the weed-fleck'd sand,
And further away
Sounds the dull moan of the throbbing bay.
Is it far or near

WHEN THE SUN SINKS LOW

That day when we stood on the dark shore here?

A hand-grasp—a sigh—

One word on our lips—the word “goodbye.”

O my pent-up thought flies swift on the quest,

As a dove to her nest !

IN A GARDEN

No boundary line 'twixt sea and sky,
A filmy mist both far and near ;
The russet leaves drop light and sere
Upon our garden lawn to lie.

Within yon bush a robin sings ;
From oaken height a rival lifts
His note, then as a leaf down drifts
Unto the sward with out-spread wings.

Blooms that in summer rose from earth
Must now to earth return again ;
The very richness tells of wane,
And autumn gifts spell wintry dearth.

SPRING-TIME

LEAVES are budding
In each sombre copse and croft,
Clouds are scudding
O'er the blueness high aloft.

Primrose faces
Peep amid the winter's green,
And in places
Tender violets are seen.

'Tis the glamour
Of the fair and jocund Spring,
With sweet clamour
When the merle and mavis sing.

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

Rooks are building
In their lofty wind-blown nests,
Now, for gilding,
On the hills the pale sun rests.

IN SURREY

PURPLE and gold, purple and gold,
Heather and gorse all across the wold ;
The tall-stemm'd firs gleam red by the lake,
Where cloud-shadows float and the green leaves shake.

Purple and gold, purple and grey,
The moor is fading to distance away ;
A flock of sheep with their shepherd go by,
And the rooks are specks on an azure sky.

WIND MUSIC

SIGH, O kind wind,
'Mong throbbing reeds and radiant iris-beds,
Past willow-silver and tall bulrush heads !
Lift my fond thoughts upon thy whispering wings,
The while a glad thrush from yon arbour sings—
Sigh, gentle wind !

Blow, thou wild wind,
Tearing the ragged foam-wreaths in thy blast,
Driving sand-swirl and surf before thee cast !
Cool thou my brain, restless as is the sea,
Bear my fierce spirit on thy pinions free—
Blow, ocean wind !

WIND MUSIC

Moan, mournful wind,
Against the shuddering casement of my room,
Down tower and chimney, through the twilight gloom,
By rift and crevice, round the half-shut door—
Wailing a dirge for friends that are no more—
Moan, sobbing wind !

Shriek, mighty wind,
With hurrying gale tracking the saffron light
O'er snow-bound plains unto the infinite !
Clash loud the pæan of wide-thrilling spheres,
The mystic cadence of unmeasured years—
Shriek, ruthless wind !

THE PIPES OF PAN

I HEARD the pipes of Pan
Go lilting down the vale,
And all the reeds were trembling,
And the iris buds grew pale.

I heard the pipes of Pan
Go trilling through the morn ;
They lingered on the hillside
In echoes most forlorn.

I heard the pipes of Pan,
And my heart grew light and wild—
I knew not, was't the woods that called
To a poet or a child ?

THE PIPES OF PAN

I heard the pipes of Pan

In the sunset's ruddy glow,

And the river followed away and away

With a restless throb and flow.

DEATH'S ANSWER

LOVE craved of Death and craved with tears :

“ I pray thee, pass us by ;

Sweet bride and I are young in years,

We would not, cannot die.

Scarce have we for to-day made ready yet—

Life scarce has blossomed yet.”

Death answered Love and answered low :

“ Time calls, I must obey ;

I follow him, and, as I go,

Pluck blossoms by the way.

But o'er us twain a greater will is set—

O'er Time and Death 'tis set.”

NOTES

POEMS OF LOVE AND DEATH

THE ORACLE. Page 11

THIS poem was dreamed one night in sleep by the author, (as were similarly "The King's Last Vigil," "A Vision of Erebus," and "The Gentle Knight," published in former volumes,) and it is therefore hoped that any topographical errors may be forgiven by the learned reader. The dream, set down in prose on the following morning after its occurrence, has been absolutely followed in every detail, even to the name of "Claudia," which name seems to point to the fact that the noble lady here mentioned was Roman, not Greek, by birth.

THE LADYES OF HEARTBREAK CASTLE. Page 49

Baron de Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, in his "Traditions et Légendes de Belgique," (Brussels, 1870,) gives the following account:—

"La tradition locale dit que c'étaient trois dames jeunes et belles qui, à l'époque de la désastreuse invasion du roi Henri II. dans l'Entre-Sambre-et-Meuse, avaient suivi dans Bouvigne" (or Bovigne) "leurs maris venus de Namur pour disputer le terrain aux Français.

"On connaît la défense opiniâtre des Bouvignois. Après la

NOTES

prise de la ville, les quelques défenseurs qui étaient encore en vie, se retirèrent dans le château fort de Crèvecoeur, situé sur la montagne au-dessus de Bouvigne. Les trois femmes combattirent comme des amazones à côté de leurs maris. Mais lorsque, le 8 Juillet 1554, ceux-ci aussi eurent été tués au dernier assaut, elles montèrent sur la tour du château, et, se donnant la main, se précipitèrent ensemble dans l'abîme, préférant ainsi la mort à la captivité."

The Baron also quotes a popular ballad on the same subject, of which these are a few lines :—

.
" La garnison rendait l'âme :
Il n'y avait plus sur pied
Que dix archers, voilà tout.

" Pour ne point tomber vivantes
Aux mains des durs assiégeants,
Les trois dames bravement
S'en vont sur la tour branlante,
Monter en blancs vêtements,
Et par la main se tenant.

.
" Depuis ce trépas si digne
Qui nous crève à tous le coeur,
On appela Crèvecoeur
Le vieux château de Bouvigne :
Qu'il plaise au divin Seigneur
Prendre leur âme en douceur ! "

NOTES

MARIA ROBUSTI. Page 54

Maria Robusti, otherwise known as Maria Tintoretto, was the gifted and beloved daughter of Tintoretto. "Cara delizia di Jacopo Tintoretto suo padre," says a Venetian chronicler (*Bartolommeo Gamba*). She was born in 1560, and died at thirty years of age. Having entered her father's studio in early youth, clad as a boy, she soon attained celebrity. She excelled likewise in music and singing.

So renowned became her portrait-painting, that her art was considered to equal that of Titian. The Emperor Maximilian, the King of Spain, and the Archduke Ferdinand, all sought to induce her to reside at their courts; but her love for her father caused her to reject all such proposals. "Tutta la nobilità Veneta si fece dipingere da lei. L'imperatore Massimiliano, il re di Spagna Filippo II., l'arciduca Ferdinando, cercarono con le proferte più vantaggiose d'attirlarla alla loro corte; ma la sua tenerezza per suo padre le fece rigettare tali proposizione tutte."

Biografia universale, Venezia, 1829.

TALMUDIC TRADITIONS

ENOCH. Page 81

"And Enoch served the Lord and walked with Him, despising the wicked ones about him, and cleaving with knowledge and understanding to the ways of the Most High.

"Enoch did not mix with the people, but lived alone as a hermit for many years.

"And it came to pass, as he was praying, an angel of the

NOTES

Lord called to him from heaven, saying, 'Enoch, Enoch,' and he answered, 'Here am I.'

"Then said the angel:—

"'Arise, go forth from thy solitude, and walk among the people of the land. Teach to them the way they should go, and instruct them in the actions they should perform.' And Enoch did as the Lord commanded him.

"He walked among the people and taught them the ways of the Creator, assembling them together and addressing them in earnestness and truth. And he charged his followers to proclaim in all places where men dwelt—'Who is he that desires to know the ways of the Lord and to do righteously? Let him seek Enoch.' And Enoch reigned over the human race and the people obeyed him, and while Enoch was among them they served God. And princes and rulers came to listen to his words of wisdom, and to make obeisance before him. And he made peace through all the land.

• • • • •

"And it came to pass that Enoch again felt a longing for solitude take possession of him, and he again withdrew from frequent communion with his people. He did not separate himself from them altogether; for three days he remained alone, and on the fourth he appeared to exhort and instruct them. But when a few years had passed he increased the periods of his withdrawal from the world, and, separating himself from the people for six days, he preached to them upon the seventh. And after this he appeared before the people but one time in a year, and though they were desirous of seeing him and hearkening to his voice, save at this one time they were unable to behold him.

NOTES

“And Enoch became so holy that the people feared him, and dared not approach when he appeared before them, for the glory of heaven rested on his face. Yet when he spoke they assembled and listened to his words, and, learning from his knowledge, they bowed before him, and cried aloud, ‘Long live the King!’

“And it came to pass when the inhabitants of the world had learned from Enoch the ways of the Lord, an angel called to him from heaven, saying: ‘Ascend, Enoch, ascend to heaven, and reign over the children of God in heaven as thou hast reigned over the children of men on earth.’

.
“Then Enoch mounted his horse and rode away, and a multitude of people followed him a day’s journey.

“And it came to pass on the second day that Enoch spoke to those who followed him, saying: ‘Return to your tents! Wherefore follow me? Return, lest death overtake ye.’

“A number of the followers returned at these words, but others continued to journey with him; and every day he spoke to them, saying: ‘Return, lest death overtake ye.’

“And on the sixth day there were still some who followed after him, and they said, ‘Where thou goest will we go; as the Lord liveth naught but death shall separate us;’ so when Enoch saw that they were thus determined he spoke to them no more.

“Those who went back on the sixth day knew how many they had left following, but of those whom they left on the sixth day not one returned.

“And on the seventh day Enoch ascended to heaven in whirlwind, with chariot and horses of fire.

NOTES

“And it came to pass after Enoch had gone up to heaven that the people started out to search for those men who had followed after him. And on the spot where they had left them they found deep snow and ice. They cut through the ice and they found there the dead bodies of the men for whom they were searching, but Enoch they did not find.”

The Talmud. H. POLANO.

The Rev. S. Baring-Gould, in his legends of Old Testament characters, gives the Arabic account of Enoch :—

“Enoch, or Edris, as he is called by the Arabs, was born in Hindostan, but he lived in Yemen. He was a prophet. In his days men worshipped fire, being deceived by Eblis. When God sent Enoch to his brethren to turn them from their false worship, they would not believe him. . . .

“Enoch knew how to sew, and was an accomplished tailor. He was the first to put pen to paper ; he wrote many books. He had in his possession the books of Adam, and for ten years, instead of sleeping, he spent the night in reading them.

“He instructed men in the art of making garments ; Enoch showed them how to cut out the skins to the proper shape, and to sew them together ; and how to make shoes to protect their feet.

“And then, when the people had derived this great blessing from him, they were ready to listen to his books ; and he read to them the books of Adam, and endeavoured thereby to bring them back to the knowledge of the true God.

“When he had spent many years in prayer, the Angel of Death desired to make a compact of friendship with him. He took on him a human form and approached him, saying, ‘I am the Angel of Death, and I desire thy friendship. . . .’

NOTES

“Enoch continued to praise and pray to God; and the Angel of Death became his friend, and often came to visit him.”

“SWIFTLY ABEL SOUGHT THE VANTAGE.” Page 100.

... “Von dem grässlichen und drohenden Blicke Kains erschreckt, geht Abel rasch aus dem Felde und springt auf einen Hügel. Kain folgt ihm und ruft: ‘Was machst du auf jenem Hügel? Die Erde ist mein.’ Abel flieht und springt auf einen Berg; der Bruder hinter ihm drein und ruft: ‘Was machst du auf jenem Berge? Die Erde ist mein.’ Und holt ihn ein und tödtet ihn.”—Prof. G. LEVI.

“THESE BE THE JEWELS.” Page 107.

“Rabbi Meir’s wife (Beruryah) was good and pious as her husband. . . .

“‘Weep not, beloved husband,’ said his noble wife; ‘didst thou not say to me we must return cheerfully, when ’tis called for, all that has been placed in our care? God gave us these jewels; He left them with us for a time, and we gloried in their possession; but now that He calls for His own, we should not repine.’”

The Talmud. H. POLANO.

(These poems, “The Death of Abel,” “The first Burial,” “The Blind Rabbi,” “The Jewels,” and “A Shadow,” are founded on the prose traditions given in *Parabeln, Legenden, und Gedanken, aus Thalmud und Midrasch, gesammelt und geordnet von Prof. Guisepppe Levi, aus dem Urtexte in’s Deutsche übertragen von Ludwig Seligmann.*)

NOTES

A MUSSULMAN TRADITION. Page 109

The [above is included here, because of the beauty of it, although it is not a Talmudic tradition.

“ Abraham was the first, say the Mussulmans, whose beard became white. He asked God when it became so, ‘What is this?’ The Lord replied, ‘It is a token of gentleness, my son.’”

Legends of old Testament characters.

REV. S. BARING-GOULD.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR
THE PRAYER OF ST SCHOLASTICA
AND OTHER POEMS

THIRD EDITION

PRESS OPINIONS

St James's Gazette.—" 'St Scholastica's Prayer' will fully maintain, if it does not increase, the gifted writer's already high poetic reputation."

Literature.—"We have the inspiration, and the labour which gives it form; we do not ask to have the eccentric or the startling; the writer is too grave an artist to obtrude on us the merely obviously novel. Range is the note of this volume. . . . And, again, there is the poet's music—the artist's capacity for good technique."

World.—"The poem is profoundly touching; the humanity and the super-humanity of it, the gentle reminiscence, the quiet unfathomable love, the submission, the faith. . . . all these in verse, simple, musical, and dignified, give rarely felt pleasure to the reader."

Morning Post.—"Of all the pieces in the present selection, we like best the little lyrics, such as 'In Praise of Spring' or 'My Maiden Beautiful.' The sentiments may be as old as love itself, but the thoughts are charmingly uttered, and ring with the sincerity of true poetry."

Pall Mall Gazette.—"Lady Lindsay's musical mastery of many forms of metre, from stately measures to lilting lullabies, is not the real secret of her charm. . . . It is the unceasing poet in Lady Lindsay that marks her apart from the mere versifier."

Month.—"In poetic grace, vivid power of description, and noble loftiness of tone, 'The Prayer of St Scholastica' in no way falls short of Lady Lindsay's beautiful 'Chronicle of St Hubert.'"

Globe.—"From Lady Lindsay one can always depend upon receiving verse which is not only technically impeccable, but informed by sincere sentiment and refined reflection."

Bookman.—"Real poetry; sure, deep, and beautiful; its strength being felt unmistakably through the delicacy of fancy and elevation of thought."

Birmingham Daily Post.—"The poem which gives its name to Lady Lindsay's new volume of verse contains some passages that could only be equalled by one or two poets of our own age."

Glasgow Herald.—"These tales are told with grace and spirit. . . . 'The Knitter,' suggested by a mining disaster, is a beautiful and pathetic ballad."

Manchester Guardian.—"The legend of 'Gerasimus and the Lion' has something of a limited and a childlike beauty of conception which is rarely attained without apparent affectation."

Cork Examiner.—"Full of tender thought, deep feeling, and delicate fancies exquisitely expressed."

Review of the Week.—"Lady Lindsay proves once more that she is the possessor of a very real poetic talent."

Weekly Register.—"The poem most dramatic in situation is that founded on the well-known legend of 'The Martyrs of Sebaste.' . . . Lady Lindsay's spirited poem."

Dundee Advertiser.—"The book does justice to Lady Lindsay's enviable reputation as a poetess."

Academy.—"Elegant and poetical."

Graphic.—"Lady Lindsay is a real poetess, and her new volume, 'The Prayer of St Scholastica' is full of deep feeling, strong emotion, and exquisite lyrics. Sincerity, grace, and, at times, a wonderful insight—these are the main characteristics of the verse. . . . There are moments when she strikes home most poignantly with beautiful and telling phrases."

THE APOSTLE OF THE ARDENNES

SECOND EDITION

PRESS OPINIONS

Pall Mall Gazette.—"A genuine poet. With what lofty purity of thought, what beautiful and intimate feeling, and what unfailing poetic instinct Lady Lindsay enters into all these phases and makes them a perfect whole we cannot hope to show."

Morning Post.—"Few poems of equal length and beauty have been produced by living writers, and Lady Lindsay must be warmly congratulated on the success of her labour of love."

St James's Gazette.—"From the first page to the last an actual, living piece of poetry. It gives its author a definite place among contemporary makers of poetry, and that place a worthy and a distinguished one."

Observer.—"Lady Lindsay has written a really beautiful poem, a poem full of delicate description and interspersed with delightful lyrics. . . . It should heighten her reputation and widen her audience."

Lady's Pictorial.—"In 'The Apostle of the Ardennes' one of the most accomplished of our living writers has written a beautiful poem."

Dublin Daily Express.—"Lady Lindsay has brought out the noble and beautiful features of her story with true poetic insight, and her many pictures of woodland life have a singular charm and vividness."

Newcastle Chronicle.—"Instinct with vividness of imagination, fluent play of fancy, subtle little touches, and a curious blend of delicacy and firmness. . . . Full of beauty as a finely cut diamond is full of fire."

World.—"By this poem Lady Lindsay attains a rank among the poets of our time high and indisputable. . . . The poem deserves grave appreciation and the tribute of keen emotion, for its qualities are very rare."

Yorkshire Herald.—"Worthy of Lady Lindsay's high reputation, which it will tend to enhance. . . . The verse is chaste, melodious, and stately."

Outlook.—"There is much real poetry in the volume."

Bookseller.—"Lady Lindsay has established her claim as a writer of poetry, and her latest production more than realises the hopes long since conceived."

Scotsman.—"No one will read this graceful poem, without taking an interest in St Hubert's name and memory."

British Weekly.—"A beautiful story told in fittingly beautiful words."

Queen.—"Bids fair to take its place among the few larger poems accepted by the public. The beauty of the poem lies above all in the elevated and poetical spirit which runs through it. It has many sonorous and beautiful lines, and is full of little gracious touches."

Sunday Times.—"A beautiful poem, which should make her recognised more surely among the true poets of the day."

Westminster Review.—"The stately verse of the poem makes it not unworthy of comparison with some of Tennyson's 'Idylls of the King.'"

Manchester Guardian.—"Perhaps only one living poet could do equal justice to a similar theme in a narrative poem of sustained flight."

The Month.—"Not only has a most high and noble theme been chosen, but in every page deep insight is revealed, and most perfect sympathy with that theme. . . . A most lovely Christian idyl, and one which lingers in the mind like the memory of some melodious, changeful symphony."

Church Review.—"We would pay a hearty tribute to the sympathy and insight with which the story is told."

THE FLOWER SELLER

AND OTHER POEMS

PRESS OPINIONS

Daily News.—"A collection of pieces, finely felt and finely fashioned, from first to last."

Speaker.—"The thought has grown richer and deeper; the style is surer, and, while not losing its simplicity, is often marked by an extreme dignity and beauty; and in many passages these poems arrive within the higher domains of poetry."

World.—"In the 'Flower Seller and other Poems,' by Lady Lindsay, we have the best that she has yet given us. The refined thought and musical utterance of her former poems are here, but she strikes a higher note in 'Outremer,' and the sonnets of this volume are more finely finished. Very beautiful is the story of the waiting and the longing of the painter monk for that 'promised shaft of blue.' 'The Flower Seller' is beautiful also; not so subtle and heart-searching as 'Outremer,' but a fine strain of romance, full of colour, stateliness, and the mortal ill of a love as innocent as it is impossible."

Globe.—"Lady Lindsay again shows considerable command of varied metre, which she handles easily, but her best and most lasting work, perhaps, takes the sonnet form. Here, also, is the individuality of thought and feeling and expression—a pleasant freshness in the choice of subjects and the mode of dealing with them."

Glasgow Herald.—"Lady Lindsay's new book begins with a pleasing tale, admirably told."

Scotsman.—"A dainty elegance, shown in a sonnet sequence and in a cycle of songs like Tennyson's 'The Window,' both of which exhibit many felicities in the handling of difficult forms of verse."

Daily Telegraph.—"In her sonnets Lady Lindsay is seen to best advantage."

Birmingham Gazette.—"The volume . . . contains much that betokens that the accomplished writer has the artistic sense and poetic sense, with beauty and loftiness of thought and no mean power of expression."

Academy.—"This . . . ('Outremer') is set forth with delicacy and charm. But more charming still are some of Lady Lindsay's lyrics. . . . These not infrequently possess a free and spontaneous quality that reminds one of the bird that 'starts into song one moment—then is still.'"

Pall Mall Gazette.—"Lady Lindsay writes with a graceful and facile pen, and rhyme and rhythm are ready to her hand. There is much thought and pathos in her little volume. Perhaps the shorter lyrics show most poetical power, though 'In Sleep' and 'The Gentle Knight' are finely finished work, and 'West of the Mountains' is a tiny flawless gem."

Daily Courier.—"Lady Lindsay proves that her faculty for musical verse is as fresh and buoyant as ever. Meanwhile, in increasing the volume of her verse she has added to its strength; and the degree in which she has combined strength with sweetness is as rare as it is stimulating."

Morning Post.—"The Flower Seller' which stands in the fore-front, is clearly inferior to most of the poems which follow it, and particularly to the charming and brightly-written piece which is second in order, and which graphically portrays the influences of art and religion on the romantic mind of a cloistered monk. Decidedly poetical, too, is 'Long years after,' with its pathetic thoughts of the past—and, in a very different style, 'The Stormy Petrel' is spirited and excellent."

Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News.—"Lady Lindsay is so conscientious a worker, that it is scarcely surprising to find her rapidly coming into the front rank of poets."

Queen.—"It ('The Flower Seller') is distinctly the most striking poem I have read for a long time by anyone but our most recognised poets. Its charm, as I have said, is not in tricks of finish, but in the wealth of imagination and beauty with which the picture is presented to us."

THE KING'S LAST VIGIL

AND OTHER POEMS

THIRD EDITION

PRESS OPINIONS

Of "The King's Last Vigil" Mr Gladstone wrote: "It appears to me that the idea is very poetical; and the expression of it in a tone so reverent and tender cannot but do good."

Times.—"Lady Lindsay has generous sympathies, graceful fancy, skill and variety of versification, a wide reach of thought, and a broad range of theme. . . . Amongst contemporary singers, Lady Lindsay should take no undistinguished rank."

New Review.—"It may at least be maintained that she combines them" (the secrets of simplicity and distinction) "in a very high degree, in a degree not too common in contemporary art, and in a degree that proves her to be touched with the true inaccessible spirit of poetry, the spirit which (to use the outworn formula) is born and not created."

Speaker.—"This volume contains a notable deal of genuine poetry, expressed with admirable art."

World.—"The little touches of mirth, the sweet and solemn tones of melancholy, the bird music, and the fine correctness and completeness of the sonnet forms in which some of the best and highest thoughts of the poetess find expression, are equally rare and admirable."

Globe.—"Lady Lindsay's new book will increase and intensify her reputation as a writer of melodious and effective verse. . . . The general level of her workmanship is high—so high indeed that it is not easy to make selection of examples."

Glasgow Herald.—"The whole book is full of charm."

Sun.—"Lady Lindsay is one of the few among present-day poets who write verse that is simple, that expresses sentiment and emotion in restrained yet effective words; that is graceful without being namby-pamby, delicate without being finicking. Her lines have melody, strength, and grace."

Observer.—"In the book of 'Lyrics' and the verses for children, entitled 'A String of Beads,' Lady Lindsay had shown the world that she possessed considerable literary faculty in addition to genuine poetic feeling, and the variety of her poetical attainments is still further exemplified in this new volume."

Illustrated London News.—"Her 'Lyrics,' belonging to the present decade, and, followed by 'A String of Beads,' only two years ago, secure for her an honourable place in any future collection. And now comes a new volume, called 'The King's Last Vigil,' of more importance in size and in range of subject, if not in art and beauty, than either of its prede-

cessors. . . . A new, as well as a charmingly simple and sincere, note is struck by Lady Lindsay in her lines 'To My Own Face.' . . . For all this, and for much more that her volume gives us of answering charm, she holds the respect and admiration of her readers."

Irish Daily Independent.—"These poems are musical, sweet and tender, and reveal a beautiful nature."

Liberal.—"In such pieces as 'Told in the Orchard,' 'A Violin Maker in the North,' 'Il mare mi chiama,' 'On the Morrow,' 'The Lover's Story,' she strikes a note distinctively original, like the song of some bird in the woodland, careless and free, singing for the sheer love of song. Many of her pieces, and these her best, are tremulous with a deep and profound pathos, evoked by the dread mystery of life and the vicarious suffering everywhere visible."

Queen.—"Lady Lindsay's new volume of verse shows a high level of attainment among the singers that are so numerous around us at the present day. . . . We must strongly commend Lady Lindsay's latest volume to all lovers of poetry."

Academy.—"So much applause has been showered on this little book that it is not easy to speak temperately. . . . Lady Lindsay is a poetess of real charm: it is easy to concede so much, but as yet she cannot claim exalted rank. . . . She has in her the makings of a fine poet."

Vanity Fair.—"Her poems are of the type that bear reading and re-reading."

Woman.—"I have come to the conclusion that Lady Lindsay is a real poet. . . . Some of the things in the book linger in the memory by reason of their music, their true sentiment, and their fitting expression, and for these the volume is worth having."

Dublin Express.—"The proof of his" (Mr Gladstone's) "discernment is seen in the fact that a second edition of these poems has been called for in little more than a month since the issue of the first."

Dundee Advertiser.—"A book which in all it contains does honour to a singer of marked poetic gift."

Pall Mall Gazette.—"By the way—the subject being the poetry of women—how intensely one acknowledges a justified poem in another woman's work. This is Lady Lindsay's sonnet, 'To My Own Face.' What she says there is true, beautiful, as old as the race, and has never been said before."

Pall Mall Magazine.—"The 'Ode to Father Time' somehow recalls an early French poet in love with life; there is true phantasy in 'The Mad Mother's Lullaby,' and true pathos in 'A Poor Ghost,' and many an artless snatch of song—like the 'Bulfinch' triolet—beguiles the reader's journey. Two of the sonnets are really memorable—'Love or Fame,' and 'In Remembrance.'"

Court Journal.—"The King's Last Vigil' . . . This is the title of the opening poem, which is an extremely beautiful little piece of work, simple in style, but thoughtfully conceived, and expressed with much grace of diction."

New Age.—"The sonnet 'To My Own Face' is the most subtle poem in a book where all is pleasing."

GODFREY'S QUEST

PRESS OPINIONS

Times.—"A poem in blank verse (touched throughout with Lady Lindsay's fine poetic vein) of the wanderings of an idealist, who, as a boy, sets out to seek the Sun-King's Palace."

Literary World.—"Lady Lindsay has given us a very beautiful allegory in blank verse, with some charming lyrics interspersed. There is vivid imagination, considerable descriptive power, and much pathos in Lady Lindsay's poem."

Dublin Review.—"Lady Lindsay's place among contemporary poets is securely established. Of this charming philosophic poem all that can be said here is that it is not only worthy of her reputation as a writer of verse, but will considerably enhance it. Philosophic the work is, in the best sense of the word; but Lady Lindsay wears her wisdom lightly, and her deep thoughts on 'the burden and the mystery of all this unintelligible world' are lightened by very graceful songs."

Dundee Advertiser.—"Lady Lindsay adds to her series of little volumes of quietly thoughtful and beautifully pictorial poetry a fantastic poem entitled 'Godfrey's Quest.' . . . It is a work quaintly imagined, enriched with several lyrics that invite a musical setting, and gemmed with some lovely lines and others of a bold beauty, such as—

'And red clouds broke against the flushing peaks.'

Pall Mall Gazette.—"The hero, Godfrey, leaves his sister and his home to wander away westwards towards the magical sun-setting; as he moves the West moves, and so ever on and on he goes, neglecting the little obvious duty for the great achievement and the difficult enterprise. 'This high mind aiming at a million, misses a unit,' is the legend which fits Godfrey. Then, after a time of purgation described in some of the best verse in the book, Godfrey leaves again for his native home, blind, but chastened and wise. There he finds still waiting for him the sister whose love was his first rejection, and the poem closes on a note of hopefulness. It is evident that the poem challenges, for its motive, comparisons with the great masters, an *Odyssey* or a *Peer Gynt*. But in manner it is reminiscent of Tennyson's narrative work, and at times Lady Lindsay's verse has a charm and flowing sweetness that need not dread the recollection."

Daily Telegraph.—"The pathetic description of a man who—
'Lives from day to day, from hour to hour,
Only content because not discontent.'"

Morning Post.—"Lovers of verse, the verse that is accomplished in technique and says the thing that is willed, though what is said may be a matter of no great moment, should read 'Godfrey's Quest.'"

Evening Standard and St James' Gazette.—"On former occasions it has been our pleasant duty to recognise the poetical qualities inherent in Lady Lindsay's work, and there is no falling off of these in 'Godfrey's Quest.' Both the central idea and the expression of it, varying as it does in tune and time with the changeful emotions and ventures springing naturally from the dominating impulse of the wanderer, will appeal to all true lovers of fantasy. . . . The little volume has a wide compass of variety in scene and emotion, and the final meeting between brother and sister has the spell of the quiet pathos for which Lady Lindsay has so delicate a touch."

Glasgow Herald.—"Criticism of the story apart, the poem has much noble and beautiful verse, while the lyrics have that lightness of touch which marks the writer's work; even in single lines one may see something of the beauty with which the story is told."

Scotsman.—"The work is made interesting by the skilful management of the story, which varies scene, action, feeling, and situation with a charming freshness of invention; while its graceful and accomplished poetic art makes it often impressive and always enjoyable."

Queen.—"The author of 'The Flowerseller,' 'The Apostle of the Ardennes,' 'The Prayer of St Scholastica,' and 'From a Venetian Balcony,' has a large and ever-increasing public, who love her simplicity, her deep sympathy, her natural piety. They look to her to carry on the old traditions of British poetry unaffected by passing fashions. The blank verse of the poem has a note of its own."

Morning Leader.—"It is a beautiful and melodious poem, happier, by a rare chance, in the quality of its blank verse than in the few lyrics which occur here and there."

Liverpool Courier.—"Its charm lies in its choice diction and occasional passages of really fine verse. Some of the lyrics also are really lyrical."

Jewish Chronicle.—"Those who are lovers of poetry would do well to read a most exquisite story in verse that has recently appeared, by Lady Lindsay, called, 'Godfrey's Quest; a Fantastic Poem.'"

FROM A VENETIAN BALCONY

THIRD EDITION

PRESS OPINIONS

Times.—"Poems setting in fine verse the spell and magic of Venice; with a number of little pen-sketches by Clara Montalba."

Bookman.—"These little poems stand out as glowing gems in a pretty setting. There is so much of colour and swaying movement in them, that the poetry of the scene lies almost as delicate painting before the eyes as well as lingering musically in the ear. The pen sketches, which in execution are dainty as the tracery of a shell or flower, are quite in keeping with the words. The glamour and opalescent tints of Venice are here, and the spell of her starlight and her moonlight, her dawn and her darkness, can be realised intensely."

The Lady.—"An exquisite little volume is that entitled 'From a Venetian Balcony,' by Lady Lindsay, so beautifully printed, bound, and illustrated that one finds a pure, æsthetic pleasure in merely handling and looking at it. The poems, for the most part, are worthy of their dainty setting. Lady Lindsay's muse appears to best advantage in graceful lyrics, such as the quaint and charming 'Barcarol'—

'In the June-tide, in the June-tide,
In the sweet and summer noon-tide,'

or in ballads like that of 'St Mark's Ring' or 'The Legend of the Boccolo,' which is worthy of Elizabeth Barrett Browning in her most romantic mood. The many 'pen-pictures' by Clara Montalba that adorn the lovely little book are delightfully done."

Month.—"From a Venetian Balcony and other Poems' is Lady Lindsay's latest volume, and in its grace of thought and delicacy of expression yields to none of its predecessors."

Queen.—"From a Venetian Balcony, and other Poems of Venice and the Near Lands,' by Lady Lindsay, with pen sketches by Clara Montalba, is a lovely little book in every way. Its green limp lambskin binding is stamped with a Venetian lion; its marbled end-papers with a linen surface are inferior to no marbling that has yet been executed in the fascinating

new style. Miss Montalba's etchings are wonderfully good. . . . Lady Lindsay's position as a poet has long since been realised. She is serious. She has very deep feeling. Her local colour is not consciously laid on, but the growth of long familiarity. Many of her poems have much lyrical charm, but she is best, perhaps, in blank verse, which does not distract the reader's attention from the depth of thought. . . . The second edition of Lady Lindsay's familiar volume of poems, 'From a Venetian Balcony,' has delightful black-and-white etchings by Miss Clara Montalba—a whole sheaf of them. It is difficult to say which are more Venetian, the etchings or the poems. It is a book that every lover of Venice (which means everyone who knows Venice) who can read English will want to have on her shelves. 'O Venezia benedeta, non ti vogio più lasar,' says the song.

Liverpool Post.—"Lady Lindsay's 'From a Venetian Balcony' is a book of poems of a luxurious order, and shows the insight and the imagination of the author in every stanza. 'A Painted Missal,' though not a novel topic, appeals especially to us, and we venture to assign it a higher place than anything which Lady Lindsay has yet given us. The pen drawings by Miss Montalba are simply exquisite."

World.—"A dainty little volume of poems by Lady Lindsay will be widely welcomed, as usual. 'From a Venetian Balcony' is a title to conjure with, and a picture in a line. The refined and musical verse that embodies the separate characteristics of Venice, some of the traits of its people, but especially the fascination of the City of St Mark for the writer, has a charm of its own as distinct as its theme. The tradition of the 'Povero Fornareto,' the legend of the 'Bocolo,' the legend of St Mark's ring, and the story of the 'ancient-house alone,' called Malcontenta, because of the unquiet spirit who once dwelt there, are beautiful singly, and typical as a group. In the lesser poems, in which the writer's love of the city on the sea, of her people, her mystery, her sadness, and her spell, attunes the lines, touch the reader to the point of an envious desire to hear the Song of the Vineyards and hearken to the murmur of that Sunset Shell. . . . The value and grace of Lady Lindsay's poems are enhanced by the illustrations with which Miss Clara Montalba has beautified the volume. These lovely little drawings localise the legends and seem to deepen and prolong the melody of the verse."

Dundee Advertiser.—"There are seventeen pieces, some like poetic seed pearls, others like larger and more resplendent gems, and the longest, to carry out the simile, big as amethysts, and as full of rich colour. In 'Venetian Spell' the poet has caught in language the very air, colour, and quietude of the city. The 'Barcarol,' is delightfully sunny, fragrant, and just touched with love passion; and 'Summer Evening' is a picture in words. In its completeness the collection gently demonstrates a gifted poetic mind and graceful fancy finding utterance in poetry of an alluring and even exquisite kind."

Morning Post.—"Lady Lindsay has already proved abundantly that she possesses a very genuine gift of poetry, and her latest volume, 'In a

Venetian Balcony, and other Poems,' can only enhance her reputation. In form her verse is apparently careless, but only those who are themselves in the habit of using this medium and of studying for their own improvement its use by others will detect the amount of art that is concealed. The manner is delicately adapted to the matter; again and again one feels that Lady Lindsay has conveyed to us exactly what she wanted to say, and that is surely the highest success which the poet can gain. The whole book gives one a definite impression of the regions of which Lady Lindsay writes. It is charming in form, and contains many delicate pen sketches by Miss Clara Montalba."

Outlook.—"Instinct with the artistic temperament and graced with many a melodious touch."

Glasgow Herald.—"This is one of the daintiest little volumes of verse of the season, for the charm of the authoress's lyrics of Venice is greatly enhanced by the sketches from the pen of Clara Montalba. Some half a dozen of the poems, and these the best, have already appeared in one or other of Lady Lindsay's books; the rest, song and legend and ballad, derive their sweetness from the writer's affection for Venice and things Venetian. Their note is essentially minor, the inspiration being more tender than passionate, yet every now and again we have a sudden glimpse of the city of canals, clear as a vignette, with

'Gondolas black as the swift that floats o'er an autumn sky—
Gondolas silent and shadowy, wondrously slender of form—
Gliding in close-measured rhythm down where the barges lie,'

or with

'Wherries
Filled with cherries,
Flaunting sails of russet yellow,'

and in these touches, wedded to a pleasant sense of agreeable rhymes, lies the attraction of the little book."

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