

To Rev<sup>d</sup> Elisha Ballantyne D.D.  
Bloomington Indiana.

With kind remembrances of the writer

Philip Beran  
Spring Mount  
near Byrnsville  
Harrison County  
Indiana  
Oct. 1878 -



# WOMAN, LOST AND GAINED;

OR,

THE ISLAND OF THE INNOCENT.

A POEM.

BY

PHILIP BEVAN,

AUTHOR OF "LAYS OF CAMBRIA," THE "SINLESS WORLD," "SONGS OF HOME  
AND COUNTRY," ETC.



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THE ISLAND OF THE INNOCENT.

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## PREFACE.

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THE words "Island of the Innocent" are found in Job, chap. xxii: 30; but they are considered a mistranslation. The writer does not know how far those words may have assisted in giving rise to the following verses. There is nothing in the chapter which has any bearing upon the plan he has adopted. The poem is really a continuation of the "SINLESS WORLD," published some time ago. It is, nevertheless, a distinct narration, and may be read without the former. As to its moral, it is made to bear slightly upon the woman rights question, and may be read, if so chosen, as a discourse on the conjugal relation. It was chiefly written, together with other prose works, during a confinement from more active duties, in recovering from a severe hurt in the beginning of 1871.

P. BEVAN.

SPRING MOUNT, IND., *December, 1874.*

## PREFACE.

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L. BROWN.

Spring Street, New York, December, 1881.

## ARGUMENT.

### PART I.

Arrival at the Island and Introduction to the Inhabitants—The Place  
Described—Climate—Evening the Shortest—Description of the Place—  
Appearance of the People—The People to be described—Challenges  
from the People—The People and the Place—The People to the  
Place—The People with the People—The People of the Place—The  
People to the People—The People's Answer—The People's  
their Past History and Condition—And again, the People's  
Answer and Proposal—View and Agreement of the Queen—And  
and the People discover themselves—Mutual Greetings and Mutual  
offerings.

## ARGUMENT.



Arrival at the Island and Introduction to the Inhabitants—The Fleet described—Circuit around the Shores—Description of the Same—Appearance of the People—Preparations to disembark—Challenge from the Shore—Reply—The Cavern and Baths—March to the Interior—Meeting with the Natives—Address of the Queen—Festival—Second Address to the Leaders—Alban's Answer—The Queen relates their past History and Condition—And makes Inquiries—Alban's Answer and Proposal—Vow and Agreement of the Queen—Alban and his Partners discover themselves—Mutual Greetings and Thank-offerings.

# WOMAN, LOST AND GAINED;

OR,

## THE ISLAND OF THE INNOCENT.



### PART I.

We sailed away to Southern seas, and round and round we went,  
Until we neared, before the breeze, the Island Innocent.  
We were a fleet of galleys ten, with sails and oars to steer,  
With lusty bands of sailor men, well skilled to scud, and veer.

The van was led by Amphitrite; the rest, her daughters nine,  
Were guided by her signals bright, and followed in a line.  
Above the prows, they sculptured sit, to point the path afar,  
The billows bowed beneath their feet, and cease their foamy war.

Our painted sails that flowed so wide, our vanes that gaily fly,  
Adorned us like some Eastern bride, that comes escorted by:  
A squadron pleasure-bound we seemed, and strangers in the clime,  
Our decks with brazen cannon gleamed, our bells in music chime.

The sea-birds following on the gales, their weary wings would rest  
Above our full expanded sails, outswelling like their breast;  
The dolphin sporting round the bows, at length, was left behind;  
We skipped above the billowy rows, and fled the envious wind.

But now with other mind possessed, our vessels fain would stay,  
And droop their pinions huge to rest, and loiter on the way—  
Then orders came to skirt the shore, to cautious shun the ground;  
And thus we sailed the gale before, three days and nights around.

The shores sloped down invitingly, and seemed on every hand,  
With voice of bird and waving tree, to call us to the land:  
So light it floated on the wave, as if a gem of earth,  
This master-piece the Maker gave, untainted from the birth.

Anon we glide from front to side—its varied pictures rise,  
Of plain, and grove, and valley wide, and hills that jut the skies:  
No towers we saw, or city wall, or mark of busy trade;  
It seemed outspread a garden all, in virgin beauty laid.

Nor noisy commerce shook the flood, nor wheel, nor engine plied,  
Nor ornamental column stood, nor tomb, as if none died;  
And sickness was a word unknown, and Love and Beauty sate  
United on their peerless throne, our coming to await.

At length our galleys sped their way, and courted every breeze,  
Until we gain a circling bay, beneath o'erhanging trees;  
And then their purple wings let down, so clamorous and so fast,  
As if they never more would crown the tall, unburdened mast.

And as we touched the margin green, we saw, and not before, .  
That woman's form alone was seen, to grace this charming shore;  
For every moment from the glades, their shape was glancing spied,  
Or bounding through the flowery shades, or by the fountain's side.

While others, climbing high to see, had clasped the vine-bound oak,  
Descending swiftly, left the tree, their lovely forms to cloak,  
And through the alleys as they fly, a titter is suppressed—  
That we had marked them as they spy, in innocence undressed.

And now, in accents loud and clear, a voice is heard to speak:  
“List, list, ye foreigners, to hear, the laws ye may not break;  
We deem ye strangers from afar, and welcome without fear;  
But first reflect, if such ye are, before ye venture near.

“No walls ye view to guard our land, no armies to defend,  
But powers unseen around us stand, and all our steps attend;  
Let no adventurous footstep dare, uncalled our strand to gain,  
Lest these surround him unaware, and drag him to the main.

“Ye may not tread our sacred land, unless ye first declare,  
Ye will regard the laws that stand, o'er all this island fair;  
With solemn vows ye must consent, before the Powers on high,  
To deal with us in truth well meant, beneath heaven's arching sky.

“And if ye break the sacred word beneath our guardian heaven,  
Bethink above the vow is heard—ye never may be shriven.  
Swear, then, at once, ye stranger men, and we the rest will tell;  
Or else we warn you, sail again, and bid this clime farewell.”

Then stepped our leader forward there—he was a comely man—  
And from his mouth, in words sincere, the ready answer ran ;  
“ We take your bond in sanctity, and swear by Heaven, and more,  
That we will tread in purity, and truth, this lovely shore.

“ For we, too, come of noble race, and boast an ancient line,  
So can not mask a treacherous face, or infamous design :  
Deceit and guile to us unknown ; we freely take the test,  
To sojourn in this happy zone, and in this harbor rest.

“ A thousand mariners we rove, and vow, by land and sea,  
And skies above, and woman’s love, your duteous guests to be :  
Three days and nights, at most, be spent, to trim each gallant ship,  
And then away we must be sent, to journey o’er the deep.”

Straightway there came an answering voice, from out the sunny glade :  
’T was like of falling rills the noise, in echoing valley made ;  
’T was like the sound of woodlark’s tongue, when all around is still ;  
’T was like some pastoral pipe with song, discoursing from the hill.

“ Hear, then, ye foreign seamen bold, if here ye deign to stay,  
Ye must put off your vestments old, and don our vesture gay,  
And bathe in yonder grotto wide, with odorous waters rare ;  
Then newly clad, and qualified, ye may have audience fair.”

There was a spacious caverned room the headland cape beside,  
Where all the Nereid train might come, and shelter from the tide ;  
’T was scooped by Neptune for their home, with roof immense, and  
A thousand pillars held the dome around the echoing wall. [tall,

Illumined by the dazzling light of adamant on high,  
That fretted all the sculptured height, as stars begem the sky.  
Along the sides and floor displayed, in ruby basins clear,  
A hundred baths, like fountains made, were filled, and emptied near.

And as the waters came from far, where herbs and flowerets bloom,  
Their essence still the waters bear, and all the cave perfume;  
The violet, pansy, eglantine, with every sweet that grows,  
Had treasured here a liquid mine, that from the fountains rose.

While o'er the marble couches lie, prepared for us to don,  
Tunics, and robes of richest dye, that all embroidered shone;  
With unguents for anointing made, in vases wrought with pride,  
That we might sprinkle on our head, when we should leave the tide.

Hither we march, we could no less, to music on the strand,  
And soon we see the grotto's face, and spacious front expand;  
Here cresset-fires blazed, and glowed, all fed with spices rare,  
And o'er the room their sweets bestowed, and lulled the senses there.

And so we bathed, and laved our breasts, within the waters sweet,  
And clothed us in our regal vests, and sandaled new our feet.  
So purified, arrayed, and crowned, and perfumed as they said,  
Not long we lingered on the ground, impatient to be led.

And as we looked, and longing stand, within the arching gate,  
The lovely dwellers of the land, came forth in pomp and state.  
'T was like the morning's longed-for light, when morn, in choicest  
dyes,  
Comes forth, as flies the stormy night, and fills the blushing skies.

While as the sun above the cloud he first betrimmed with gold,  
So these, from out the leafy shroud, in splendor we behold ;  
And dazzled with the radiant sight, we could but bend and bow,  
While they, with queenly grace, unite, to give their curtesy low.

We scarce could hear the welcome word—one sense alone, the eye,  
Entranced in rapture, gazed and heard, and drank the ecstasy ;  
So lightly and so graceful clad, so rich, yet richly neat,  
Though few the charms left in the shade, yet modesty complete.

As sinless Eve in Paradise came from her Maker's hand,  
Before our love-bewildered eyes those shameless daughters stand ;  
The fashions Nature lavish pours—the garland, belt, and crown—  
Plucked freshly from her fadeless stores, o'er every form were thrown.

No bracelet knew the panting breast, nor ring the fingers small,  
The rounded bosom knew no vest, a scarf of bloom was all ;  
And some festooned their braided hair, with scarlet colors bright,  
While others turbaned them more fair with some broad blossom  
white.

As Eve unfallen might have trod, with all her daughters then,  
So pressed a thousand nymphs the sod, before these wondering men ;  
So led her myriad daughters down, immortal joys to taste,  
Adorned with Virtue's fadeless crown, and on to glory passed.

And this one seemed the loveliest, until the next ye view—  
Their forms thus picturesquely drest, no fault or blemish knew.  
How couldst thou cull the richest rose, amidst a thousand blown !  
How couldst thou tell which brightest glows, when all as brilliants  
shone !

And as the planets in the sky, amidst a cloudless night,  
At times the milder please the eye, and then the star most bright :  
So drank our eyes the witching draught, to all but beauty blind,  
And could those charms be wine-like quaffed, no charms were left  
behind.

But now the nymphs, with pipes, advanced, and stepped before the  
throng,  
And, moving slow in rhythmic dance, began to chant their song :  
The chorus answered them at will, till every voice combined,  
With tambourine, and cymbal shrill, and tuneful, thus rejoined :

"Ye're welcome to our favored strands, ye men of stranger clime ;  
Ye're welcome to our sunny lands :"—'t was thus they wove the  
rhyme.

"We backward step along the green, close shaven for your feet :  
For yonder is the banquet scene, all waiting you to greet.

"If still our customs ye obey, and sacred bind the vow,  
Prepare to see our homes to-day, we will conduct you now ;  
If humble viands meet your taste, and rustic pleasures sway,  
We guide you to a brief repast, and backward lead the way."

We vowed their customs to abide, and marched to follow near,  
Between us still an alley wide, they kept with maiden fear ;  
And still we wore our casques of gold, all gemmed, and sculptured  
round,  
And still our swords our baldrics hold, that on our waists were  
bound.

Our ample beards, from lip to breast, were curled, and trimmed  
with care,

But, underneath, our helmet crest concealed our curling hair,  
If there was semblance of disguise; yet all our garb was new,  
Except our helms as warriors 'rise, and then our falchions true.

There was a valley near the place, where verdant knolls sur-  
round,

And soon we reach, with measured grace, the chosen festal  
ground;

There turfy seats, with lilies pied, arise in circling rows,  
And left and right disclosed their pride, amidst the laurel boughs.

There roses grew of various hue, in hedge-rows laid between,  
While daisies white and harebells blue were carpeted between.  
A gurgling brooklet's silvery line, a living boundary made;  
The narrow line where sedges twine and purpling iris shade.

Then seated there the courteous fair, with stately motions still,  
Unfold confections choice and rare, and wines in flagons fill;  
And gracefully the virgins young, bear nimbly round the seats,  
Their crimsoned faces lowly hung, as they bestowed the sweets.

"Drink, strangers, drink," the maidens sung; "the wines are newly  
pressed.

Ye are adventurous seamen strong; drink now, and softly rest."  
And still so deftly bear the wine, so gently, gaily move,  
We fain their lily hands would join, but they elude with love.

And still they bear their dainties round—the mead, the fruit, the  
flowers;  
While still the pipes and symbols sound, within their clustering  
bowers.  
More luscious than the fruits they bore, and more inspiring wine,  
The forms that glanced our eyes before—the charms that seemed  
divine.

But now the matrons and the maids, for such they seemed to view,  
Retreated sudden through the glades, to clothe themselves anew.  
Their chamber room the arbor's shades, their glass the crystal  
brook;  
We fain had seen the dressing maids, but myrtles shade the nook.

'T was like a second morn that burst, when they came forth again;  
More fresh and rosy than at first—a more celestial train.  
And as the angels, if they came the sons of men to win—  
If angels bore their sex and name, thus came these fair ones in.

At distance meet, they fronting sate; the brooklet ran between.  
Each seemed a queen without a mate—we, mates without a queen.  
How shall we bear those beaming eyes? How shield the fatal fire,  
Enkindling passion's gusts that rise, in rapturous desire?

And still we drink the enchanting draught, and yet 't is shed  
around;  
And yet we gazed, and yet we quaffed, and felt, and gave the wound.  
We would have leaped in haste, and flown, to grasp a wild embrace,  
While each had chosen out his own, but this were void of grace.

But then there rose a lady tall—she might have been their guide ;  
She seemed the stateliest of them all, their sovereign, and their pride.  
She bowed, and raised her neck, and blushed, and then grew slightly  
And then her brow with crimson flushed, as she began her tale. [pale,

The locks that on her forehead met, in clustering tresses fell  
Adown like veil of glossy jet, and met the bosom's swell ;  
The crown that wreathed her forehead high, of glistening pearls was  
And spangled in her tresses lie, like flowery silver spread. [made,

She was a beauty of the kind, that British youths admire, [sire ;  
Where elegance with plumpness joined, where mind controlled de-  
And there was grandeur in her gait, and round her lofty brow  
Circled a majesty and state, which none beside could show.

And when she raised her hand to speak, she charmed the gazer's ear ;  
You would not dare the spell to break, so tender, fond, sincere.  
As living waters from the rill, as honey from the tree,  
So did the numbers sweet distill, so melt in harmony.

“Tell us, ye noble voyagers—ye seamen skilled and brave—  
Who battle in the ocean wars, and dwell upon the wave :  
Say whither now ye bend your way, and whither hence ye roam,  
And where the clime ye last did stay, and where your port and home.

“What wonders have ye marked and seen, as o'er the brine ye sweep?  
What prodigies, in sights terrene, or on the boundless deep?  
Here sunlight lingers long and sweet, nor yet is passed the noon ;  
And ye your travels may repeat, until the rising moon.

"We wait attentive for the tale. The birds in yonder grove  
Will cease to warble as ye tell, and hush their lay of love.  
Myself, they Amarantha call, upon this island dear:—  
A thousand dames and maids in all, and each one waiting near.

"Matrons and maidens, here we dwell, and tend our flocks in peace,  
And bees that build a golden cell, and kine, and fruitful trees.  
The lambkin sports along our meads, the fawn the leveret plays,  
The turtle nests above our heads, the linnet sings always."

She ceased. Then rose our leader young, the queen reclined with  
grace,

While yet the music of her tongue seemed floating round the place.  
"Ye women, beautiful and rare," our captain thus began,  
"To dwell upon this island fair, without the aid of man."

The women started as he spoke, as if they knew the sound,  
Or he some hidden chord had struck, or touched some secret wound,  
As wonder spoke in every eye, and whispers moved the throng;  
But still they quelled the rising joy, and hushed th' inquiring tongue.

"Gay rovers we, and merchantmen," our leader smiling said,  
"In spices, gold, and silver sheen, around the isles we trade.  
We visit every genial land where traffic's call invites,  
While still new climes and marts expand, and ever new delights

"We meet with terrors on the flood and wonders in the sky;  
We deal with men of gentle mood and hideous monsters high,  
And climes where woman is not found, but man reigns all alone,  
Where gaily glide the years around, and pleasure is his own.

"There woman's voice is never heard, to mar his peaceful life ;  
Where woman's rule is never feared, nor cause of bickering strife.  
They sing of independence, too, from ties connubial free—  
Of pleasures unrestrained and new, without satiety.

"And we have left our island home, just twenty years to-day,  
But now return, no farther roam, though here an hour delay."  
Oh swiftly rose the lady then, and, trembling, raised her hand :  
"Oh tell us of those mateless men, and tell us of their land.

"Show us their names, and how they fare, and how the nation  
thrives ; [wives."

Perchance our suitors once they were, nor distant dwell their  
She spoke no more ; for in her heart the tumult swelled so high,  
No more her thoughts she could impart, and tears suffused her eye.

While as she sate, her maidens near embraced her lovely neck,  
And tears burst forth among them there, and sobs the silence break ;  
Nor calm we viewed their souls distressed, but shook each manly  
form,

As bowed our heads upon our breast, as trees beneath a storm.

"Oh ladies, beautiful and kind," our leader slowly spoke,  
"These islanders we thus did find, like kings and princes look.  
They dwell in marble palaces, and halls that stately rise,  
Within their groves of balmy trees, beneath the Indian skies.

"Thus were they all resolved to dwell, if such should be their lot,  
And bid all womankind farewell, upon that favored spot.  
They were a race of noble men, of matchless shape and tall ;  
We may not view such forms again, upon this earthly ball."

The lady queen again arose, and weeping as she stood,  
(Beneath her veil her beauty shows,) she spake in tender mood :  
" What shall we give of gems of price, if ye would message bear  
To that same island paradise, where dwell those strangers fair."

" We may not turn for many a year," our leader answering spake ;  
" But when we next shall sojourn there, the message we may take.  
Reveal the story of your grief ; some light may spring to cheer,  
Some counsel for the mind's relief : so banish hence your fear."

" True to our partners we are found, though wanderers now unblest ;  
We hope to reach their happy ground, and there in love to rest."  
Then she began with troubled heart, and all were seated near ;  
Each seemed to feel her bosom's smart, as she discoursed sincere.

" We know not, youths, if this the band, that twenty years to-day,  
From off this isle and happy land, in galleys sailed away ;  
But if the same, we matrons claim, they are a thousand men.  
Duke Alban was their chief by name, their prince and leader then."

" Each man with locks of crisping gold, each youth with sunbright  
Each heart a mine of love untold, it was a heaven to share. [hair,  
If these ye saw but once alone, will write them on the mind ;  
The realms of earth can boast but one—no other can ye find."

" It must be these," our captain said. " I heard the chieftain's name.  
We saw the locks of golden braid, and features as ye claim.  
Thus we returning, there will tend, and faithfully will bear  
The embassy ye deign to send, and will unfold with care."

So now to open all her soul, the queen her speech prepared,  
And tenderly made known the whole, while we her anguish shared ;  
And ere the end her tale did tend, no maiden there or youth  
But melted did in pity bend, as she disclosed the truth.

"That noble race ye saw and knew, upon that land afar  
If we can judge and ye are true, our friends ~~and~~ are.  
There can not be another band, beneath the ~~sun~~ ,  
To match with them and equal stand," the ~~king~~ ply

"For many a year we lived and loved, till on ~~that~~ luckless day  
We suddenly conspired, and moved, to send them hence away.  
Or love of change, or love of ease, or sch~~er~~ of evil deed,  
We in one hour destroyed our peace, ~~and~~ sorrows gained instead.

"As once, we 're told, the angels went, ~~and~~ left their crowns behind,  
Thus viler we our dear ones sent, and wreaths of sorrow bind :  
The pillars of our blissful home, our husbands, brothers, sons,  
Were stricken from our household dome, and ruin came at once.

"The gates of heaven the angels close, ~~and~~ then would fain return ;  
Our doors we wide extend for those, but they in bliss sojourn.  
They left behind a blessed throng, to sing of love supreme ;  
But we, alas ! with lyre unstrung, to mourn our fatal scheme.

"They left us at the word and place, nor kiss nor farewell gave ;  
And no more ever saw them pass—they swiftly crossed the wave.  
So when next morning's sun did rise on the horizon ~~the~~ ,  
Their ensigns flouted 'gainst the skies, disdainfully—adieu.

"It was the darkest day the first, the gloomiest we have seen ;  
We thought our swelling heart would burst, and we must die I ween.  
The island shook, and tott'ring reeled, the sun waxed flaming red,  
The moon her soothing face concealed, while sable darkness spread ;

"While jagged lightnings rent the cloud, or fell in bolted fire,  
Amid the waves that landward bowed, to spout their foamy ire.  
No couch we pressed that horrid night—we dared not lie to rest ;  
And till this day those couches bright are waiting trimly drest.

"We wandered 'neath the troubled sky, and wrung our woeful hand,  
And looked afar o'er billows high, then dumb with sorrow stand :  
Our daughters, mourning, clung around, till weary with distress,  
We prostrate fall upon the ground, amidst the wilderness.

"We rose at last, and round the main, and round the indented shore,  
We fasting roved for days again, and bay and creek explore ;  
For in some sheltering headland side, they might return to lie,  
Within their vessel's breast to hide, from unobservant eye.

"Ah, fruitless toil ! We called their name, and fancied they replied ;  
The sportive echoes, to our shame, and noisy main deride :  
Till all forlorn and sore distressed, we laid us down to die,  
And many a day, in darkness pressed, we moan, and weep, and sigh.

But then one night a vision clear, was opened overhead,  
When voices came that called us near, and softly, sweetly said :  
'Arise and live ! ye matrons dear, and take refreshment meet ;  
Live as ye lived when mated here, and wait the season sweet,

"When from the seas the absent band shall sail before the isle,  
(And when the rule, ye understand,) shall on their partners smile.  
Excel in purity and grace, and dress your bowers with care:  
Some happy day each cherished face, shall greet you fondly there."

"Now, twenty rolling years have passed, while still we wait in pain,  
And fear this year will, like the last, be spent and borne in vain.  
Our life is grown so burdensome, we can not longer stay ;  
But from this land be forced to roam, if still our lords delay."

"When morning breaks, there is no guide to lead us forth in peace ;  
In noontide moments, by our side, no partner to caress ;  
When evening comes, no voice will chant, the nuptial roundelay ;  
While night, a gloomy stranger gaunt, shuts up the dismal day."

"What can we else but tend our flocks, and braid our flowing hair,  
And sing sad ditties among the rocks, to drive away despair?  
A thousand maids and matrons young, we live in love unblessed,  
While far away, all blithe and strong, our mates unmated rest."

"In vain we boast unchanging youth, and time and life speed on,  
And cherish modesty and truth ; there is no ill but one.  
We only live in one blest thought, we surely else had died :  
One day our mates will come unsought, and evermore abide."

She ceased her tale, and drooped her face, and wept to ease her heart,  
Her maidens flock about the place, and kindly words impart.  
Our leader rose with trembling voice, while tears bedew his eyes,  
He scarce could hide his secret joys to simulate disguise.

"Those islanders, so free from care, so jealous of control,  
We judge, will still inhabit there, with independent soul;  
In pleasure's round, they tread the ground, and nobly live, and free,  
And rich the prize that may be found, to tempt them o'er the sea."

Then graceful rose another fair—she was a sister queen—  
She had a soft, enchanting air, and blushed, and sighed between.  
And when she raised her shaded eyes, as from an ambush flew  
Love's arrows from their lids' disguise, to pierce the gazer through;

And when the deadly barbs retire, within their silken rest,  
You long to meet again their fire, yet shrink with fear suppressed.  
She bent, as bent the full-blown flower beneath the dews of morn,  
She spoke, as in the eve's mild hour the dove's soft voice is borne.

"I'd question of this matchless race, and pray those noble men,  
To rest a year of happy days, ere yet they sail again;  
We thus might learn, and then decide, if, in that land afar,  
Our truant wanderers abide, and what their pleasures are.

"We might reward our guests sincere, enrich with gems and gold,  
If they would tarry but a year, and all their tale unfold.  
Mayhap, ere this their maids are gone, to find a spouse more dear,  
And they may find their isle alone, and they unwelcome there.

"For twenty gliding years, they say, they wandered forth, and rove,  
And twenty years of absence may, quench all the flames of love;  
We fear, as Amarantha fears, the warmth of passions flies—  
When waning low, for twenty years, love's fuel gone, it dies."

"True," said Duke Alfred, thus we call the leader of our band;  
"The lady speaks to warn us all, that we as loiterers stand.  
There's danger in those artful smiles, and in those eyelids shine  
A spell too subtle, that beguiles, and beauty's snares entwine.

"If these may boast a faithful flame, that twenty suns have seen,  
Shall not our partners own the same, and still burn bright, I ween?  
This night we rest, but in the morn let every ship be weighed;  
Again the flags our masts adorn, and our farewell be paid."

Then Amarantha rose, in pain: "If thus resolved," said she,  
"To quickly leave our shores again, it were but curtesy  
To take us all on board your ships, and carry to the isle,  
Where truth your lonely matrons keep, upon their mates to smile.

"We'll serve ye for your kindness shown, and serve your partners,  
And wait till next ye voyage on, then bid your homes adieu; [too,  
To sail with you to seek your mates, until we find their shore,  
We'll pay the price, at merchant's rates, a hundred fold, and more."

"Ah!" said the captain, "on the land, was woman made to move,  
To flutter like the plumaged band, to languish, sigh, and love;  
But on the rude and angry wave, where shall she beauteous rest?  
Where tempests howl, and billows rave, where seamen shrink distressed.

"But still a plea we can extend to all this lovely band:  
What message will ye join to send, to good Duke Alban's land?  
What offers of your love mature, what embassy of truth,  
And fealty, and passion pure, to those ennobled youth?"

The queen arose. "We send," she said, "our love, that glows more bright

Than when they left each hapless maid, and vanished from our sight.  
We send," she said, "the vows ye heard—to them those vows belong;  
We send our word, our dearest word, tuned to love's sweetest song.

"We send all that a virgin soul, in widowhood can blend;  
Our bosoms we will treasure whole, till they shall homeward tend;  
The kisses on our lips shall rest, but they shall ripen sweet,  
Till they shall come, by them impressed, and we fall at their feet."

"But what the vow," our leader said, "that never more again  
Your dear ones shall be mateless made, and homeless seek the main."

"We vow, and kneel," the queen replied, "that, as the stars and sky,  
We will be patient, faithful, kind; and this they may rely.

"We vow, if they will come again, in wedlock's ties to join;  
We ne'er will murmur, or complain, or at our lot repine.  
We'll serve with zeal, and constancy, that ages shall not tire;  
We'll bow love's willing slaves to be, with ever new desire.

"We'll love as they were loved before, and now by wisdom taught;  
With love they never knew of yore, their presence shall be bought.  
If in their bosoms once again to tell them this, and sigh,  
It would be but the richest pain, to breathe it there, and die.

"We'll meet them on our bended knee, we'll kiss their feet and hands,

If all unmated, pure and free, again they tread our lands.

We'll press them in our joyful arms, we'll lift them to the sky,  
And yield them all our treasured charms, nor love's demands deny.

"We'll tend them in our choicest bowers, a thousand years, and more,  
And cherish mid the fruits and flowers, if they will tread this shore;  
We'll write on every tree that grows, and grave on every stone,  
The test and bond they shall propose, that these be always known.

"Oh! tell us, ye will bring to stay, and we, in rapturous mood,  
Will run to dress their beds to-day, our arbors in the wood.  
We'll rifle all Pomona's sweets, and all the floral bloom,  
And all of Nature's richer treats, to meet them when they come."

"Tell us"—"Enough!" our leader said. "Let every man arise!  
Put off the helmets from your head, and beards, and quaint disguise.

Stand forth, as when ye left this green; down let your tresses fall.

Arise! my Amaranth, my queen—Myrtilla—Rosa—all."

Then rose a sudden shriek on high, as thus disrobed the bands;  
The ranks of fair asunder fly, and lift their wondering hands.  
Then mingled all in soft embrace, like waves of beauteous swell,  
Or torrents in opposing race, that mighty floods impel.

A long caress of loving arms—a long, long gaze of bliss—  
A long, loud cry of names and charms—a long and honeyed kiss—  
A grove of love whose branches joined, of necks, and arms outspread,  
Like snows upon the boughs entwined, with blossoms pale and red,

Thus twenty anxious years had won the raptures of that day;  
But cheaply bought beneath the sun, these innocents would say.  
For 't was the morn that did begin, existence without stain,  
A life beclouded not by sin, embittered not by pain.

Awhile they stood, in rapture bound, all paired upon the green,  
For each his lovely maid had found, and each his ruling queen;  
For some were joined in wedlock's band, ere yet they wandered far,  
While others there but plighted stand, and still affianced are.

But now Duke Alban spoke aloud, his lofty queen beside:  
"Let order mark the circling crowd, and calm our rising pride;  
This sacred moment may not pass, while passion's tide runs high,  
Nor may we leave this blissful place, till we address the sky.

"Honor to Him who life bestows, who made the swelling soul,  
Expansive as it upward flows, and seeks to search the whole;  
Who Infinite, and changeless rests, devoid of creature's aid,  
Yet pours through changeful, feeble breasts, the stream immortal  
made;

"Who, clothed in majesty and might, is still in goodness found,  
To fill His children with delight, to pour love's stream around;  
Who, like Himself, our image drew, in symmetry divine,  
And gives, in colors ever new, the characters to shine;

"Who joined us once, and called us one, and yet, through trials borne,  
Hath faithful kept, as when our sun first chronicled the morn.  
Thee we adore with bended knee. Oh! let Thine eye bend down,  
And with a Father's favor see, a Father's blessing own.

United once, and ever true, let this delightful day  
Be consecrate with union new, that time shall not decay.  
More dear the bond, as years shall roll, let all beneath Thy gaze  
Be mutual bound in heart and soul, and joined Thy name to praise.

And then they lifted every face, and every beaming eye,  
That shone with more celestial grace, as they addressed the sky.  
The sun that smiled auspicious now, bestowed indulgent rays,  
And turned to gems their tears below, as long they upward gaze.

They bowed and rose, when thus the queen, awhile we fain would rest  
Within yon shady covert green, by amorous care o'erpressed,  
Let dainties lie upon the board, while we an hour delay;  
Be fruits, and mead, and garlands poured. Our chiefs reclining stay.

Thus noon, with glowing radiance past, shall yield refreshment due;  
While evening hours, more welcome haste, to cheer with pleasures  
new:

So Amarantha called her maids, and led the way apace;  
It seemed the night had brought its shades when these had left the  
place.

## PART II.

## ARGUMENT.



DIVISION OF THE ISLAND—ACCOUNT OF THE VOYAGERS.

The Ladies' Grotto—Alarm of the Chiefs—The Search—The Discovery—  
The Lions—Amaranth and Alban—The Queen and her Train—The  
Meeting upon the Mount—Partition of the Lands—Nuptials—Al-  
ban's Recital of his Travels—Women of Asia, Greece, Turkey,  
Italy, France, Britain, America, described—Festival—Retirement of  
the Parties.

## PART II.

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Beneath a grove a basin spreads, with pillared walls around,  
The billows bent their crested heads, and through the columns sound,  
Like to the famed basaltic cave on Scotia's sea-beat shore;  
Within, the ocean ceased to rave, and o'er the shallows pour.

Hither the wavelets seemed to band, to rest from briny war, [bar;  
To spread with shells the spotless sand, while mangroves screen and  
And shoreward sloped the emerald sod, that sipped the creamy foam,  
And here, by fair ones only trod, a blooming concourse come.

For Amarantha called her maids, in order by her side, [wide.  
And blew a conch-shell through the shades—the clarion sounded  
A sea-god made the wondrous shell, and left to show his skill:  
Its notes would calm the surge's swell, and hush the tempest shrill.

For as their lords perfumed and bathed before they ventured nigh,  
'T was meet their partners, decked and swathed, to look deliciously:  
Thus, while their lovers anxious wait, beneath the noontide hour,  
They go unrobed and separate, to taste the watery shower.

They ran, at whiles, with modest step, to try the waters cool;  
Then shrink, and venture in more deep, and wade the circling pool:  
Then farther through the limpid wave they plunge, with laughter sent  
Around the many echoing cave, in sport and merriment, ✓

Like to a flock of swans, snow white, all launching in the tide ;  
Then rush and flutter in delight, and fling its waters wide.  
Thus blushing, 'neath the crystal tide, the mirthful virgins sport ;  
Around their necks the ripples glide, and all their beauties court.

But now there flew a little bird, where all the chiefs recline ;  
And suddenly his note they heard, regaling with their wine.  
Forgot the labors of the past, they smiling chat with glee, [see.  
And long Time's lingering steps to haste, that they their brides may

For in the thickest umbrage near, they deemed the fair ones hide,  
Some new devices to prepare, in rustic taste and pride.  
So, looking eager for the guise, they on the myrtles stare, [fair.  
And scan the copse with searching eyes, and think they hear the

But when the tiny warbler sung, "How silent is the grove ;  
I marvel where's the maiden's tongue, and where the lays of love ?"  
The company look all amazed ; and, springing to their feet,  
Around the knolls and woods they gazed, and woman's name repeat.

But echo gave the answer still, and not a maid was seen,  
And vacant was the vale and hill, and all the forest green ;  
Yet still the little bird would call, and strain his throat to say :  
"Ah ! whither are the maidens all ? Are they too fled away ?"

"It would be fair," the leader said, "the fair ones fly in turn,  
And leave us now, as once they stayed, to live alone and mourn.  
Ascend to yonder height and spy, to scan the haven wide,  
To mark if there our galleys lie, and float all safe and tied."

'T was swiftly done; when to their sight the harbor vacant lay,  
And torn afar by force or sleight, their ships had left the bay.  
So back they ran, all woe-begone, to tell the tale again,  
That each had lost his lovely one, athwart 'th uncertain main.

But louder still the bird did cry, with sudden, piercing tone:  
"Oh! whither did the galleys fly? Where are the false ones gone?"  
"Not far as yet," Duke Alban said, "Go search the isle around;  
Mayhap within some headland's shade the runaways are found.

"Disperse in circuit through the grove, and through the glens and  
plains;

Within some cape or inland cove our navy yet remains.  
And when I wind my bugle high, and play a cheerful air,  
Then gather round and hover nigh, the wanderers may be there."

They swiftly range the uplands round, until the chieftain nigh  
The belt that girt his dame unbound, and tangled scarf did spy;  
And then a shout of merriment, and then a gentle shriek  
Of those who mirthfully were bent, but now alarm would speak.

The damsels then had left the flood, but on the margin fair,  
Unrobed in dazzling beauty stood, and bound their silky hair;  
O'er all their limbs a ruddy glow suffused them as they rest,  
And mingled with the rounded snow and with the panting breast.

But then the little bird flew in, and perched on column low,  
And shrilly sung, with knowing mien, "The youth are coming slow,"  
As stepped Duke Alban near the spot, between the mangroves tall,  
And heard the bathers in their sport, but paused before the hall.

While still the little songster cried, in silver accents clear,  
"Let all the timid virgins hide; the chief approaches near."  
Then swiftly through the pillared aisle, amid the columns tall,  
With mantles snatched in haste awhile, they fled in bevvies all.

As through the reedy, rushing brook, the wild fowl plashing hie,  
So through the pool, to cell and nook, these maidens scattered fly;  
And as the birds, with rapid wing, elude the sportsman's aim,  
So swift the trembling damsels spring, and secret shelter claim;

Or as the hunter beats the glen, and starts the ambushed doe,  
So paused the duke in wonder then, to mark the scene below.  
When swift a herd of lions rise from caverns near the shore,  
And leaped and growled, with flaming eyes, and gave a hideous roar.

Then Amarantha forward rushed, and thrust the screen aside;  
Half robed, in haste, she trembling blushed, then spoke with  
    queenly pride,  
Like Venus rising from the sea, or Sol behind a cloud.  
The chieftain paused in modesty, then back retreating, bowed.

She too withdrew amid the brake, to veil her loveliness—  
Her mantle fallen from her neck, her tresses hide her face.  
"Forbear," she cried, "to wind the horn, to call thy partners here;  
Our maidens are by flight o'erborne, and fly like hunted deer.

"These lions, with the scaly hide, our guardian Genii gave  
When we were lone and terrified, and ye had crossed the wave;  
And since, when dangers hover nigh, uncalled around our feet,  
These awful monsters outward fly, and guard our loved retreat.

"The ships ye seek all safely ride within the coral reef;  
Ten youths for you the vessels guide: they wait thy word as chief."  
Our new-found partners from the wave were left to bathe and dress:  
Their partners may perfume and lave, to meet their fond caress.

"Oh lovely mistress, pardon this; the galleys may be thine:  
To be thy love, too great the bliss, no more we cross the brine.  
Too beautiful, and chaste, and wise, unworthy I to view:  
Retire, thy wealth of charms; disguise, and robe, and charm anew.

"A bowshot backward we will run, thy coming to await,  
As wait the clouds the unveiled sun, to ope the orient gate;  
Not odors, or the sparkling tide, can add more charm or grace,  
Than Heaven has shed diversified, on form, and speech, and face."

He spoke, she bowed, then straight withdrew, to gather all her train.  
Like swan that calls her cygnets new, when she flies back again,  
Among the reeds and osiers tall, they gather 'round her feet—  
So Amaranth, her maidens all convened, and kindly greet.

Anon the bird his song began, the maidens safely screened;  
His voice in notes of music ran, and sweetly intervened.  
This bird the queenly dame had taught to be her herald true,  
And thus the tidings faithful brought, but worked the mischief too.

He sang of modesty, and truth, and love that does not cloy—  
Of innocence the endless youth, and virtue's lasting joy.  
He charmed the bathers as they dress, concealed in cell and cave,  
And cheered with mirth their loneliness, and truth with music gave.

Now, Alban blew a sounding blast, that far and wide rebounds ;  
It drew his comrades there in haste, as hunter calls the hounds.  
Arranged they form, a circling guard, outside the lions' court,  
A second wall from ills to ward, then wait the fair to escort.

But through another secret way, the queen was pleased to go,  
And sent two youth her will to say, and all her plans to show,  
That now they wait their partners all, upon the hills above,  
Beneath the flowering laurels tall, where swift these lovers move.

It was a central, lofty mount, amidst this verdant isle, [soil ;  
Thence many a stream the eye might count, that graced and fed the  
And living waters issuing, from hills to ocean glide,  
And thus from lakes and central spring, the climes and states divide.

There seated on a rustic throne, the lovely queen they found,  
With pearly crown and golden zone, the dame her maids surround.  
Upon her left the damsels sate ; the handsome stranger band,  
With order marched, and fitting state, in ranks confronting stand.

She called Duke Alban to her side, to sit as consort nigh ;  
He ran, and kissed her hand with pride, and sat delighted by.  
“ And now, my partner,” said the queen, “ before the evening come,  
’Tis fit we crown this happy scene, and give our sons their home.

“ With thy consent the pledged ones join, and parcel out their lot,  
In bands connubial firmly twine, and ever sacred knot.  
Their spacious lands and boundaries give, within our fertile isle,  
In artless innocence to live, where peace and concord smile.

"That where in childhood's hour they played when life was but a  
dream,  
And where in budding youth they strayed, to cherish love's first  
beam, [sever,  
And where they sung love's sad farewell, when fortunes seemed to  
In those same sacred haunts to dwell, and live and love forever."

"Thy will be mine," Duke Alban said. "Begin, fair queen, and say.  
Stand forth at call, each comely maid, with him new pledged and  
Let order rule the circling band, as we the gifts bestow; [gay.  
Let Truth our guardian genius stand, to consecrate the vow."

"First," said the queen, "I name the fair who farthest stands aside :  
To her we yield the portion there by Arethusa's side,  
The same the stream meandering down ; and this our will in all.  
The stream the maiden's name shall own, the lands and clime we call.

"The flocks upon the margin green, the folds upon the lea,  
The cots beside the fountains seen, we give to thine and thee ;  
The lambkins round thy feet shall sport, the ewes shall couch at eve,  
The doves within thy beeches court, their nests the song-birds weave.

"Next comes Irene : To her the vales that love her streams allot,  
The bees that build their nectared cells in tree, and bank, and grove ;  
Her kine along her meads shall low, and loiter in the glade,  
Their milky tribute to bestow, and daily riches shed ;

"While pheasants wave their golden wing to variegate the green,  
The linnet and the blackbird sing, the woodlark pipe between ;  
The boys shall yoke the fatling's neck, her partner at her side,  
In love's endearment ever speak and glory in his bride.

"Anemone we give the hills and plains that own her name,  
Where flowery summer's splendor reigns and richest treasures claim.  
Her youthful spouse shall crown her head and deem the crimsoned  
Less sweet than odors round her shed, less brilliant as it blows. [rose,

"Their purple vines along the steep, the fig and nectarines sweet,  
In honeyed juices 'round them drip and fall around their feet.  
Their feet the gushing clusters bruise, 'mid songs of grateful sound,  
Empurpled in the luscious juice, their brows with chaplets bound.

"Olivia take the lake, and springs that feed her branching streams,  
Where first Aurora decks her wings and Sol's bright chariot beams ;  
Her sons the antelopes shall bind, and o'er the lawns shall fly  
As swiftly as the viewless wind or meteors of the sky.

"The olive groves that yield her name, the pomegranate and pine,  
Her partner's care shall fruitful claim, and 'round their dwelling  
The presses and the cots we give, the stores of oil and wine, [twine.  
With herds of goats ye shall receive, to be forever thine.

"Beneath the limes and poplars tall, let Hermione reside ;  
The swallow from the thatch shall call, the wren and starling pied.  
Her garden's scented beds shall bloom, her arbors dressed with care,  
In varied colors and perfume, shall join their sweetness there.

"There orange and the lemon twine on every circling tree,  
While flowers and fruit commingling shine in tempting company.  
Her partner take her hand in haste to cull the ripened gold,  
And pour their juice a rich repast, and to his bosom fold.

"Cassandra bright shall lead her love where almond groves invite  
Where vines, festooned, adorn the grove, and star-like flowers de-  
light;

The partridge thence shall lead her brood—the bird of Paradise  
Shall perch around them in the wood, and there in splendor rise.

"Her spouse shall tend the fleecy goats along the heathy plain,  
And pipe and sing in rustic notes, while she respond again.  
The coney and the hare shall breed, and skip in safety by;  
The doe and fawn repose and feed, and ruminating lie.

"Alicia take her partner's hand, and seek the shelving shore,  
Where caves of golden ore expand, and gems the billows pour;  
The murmuring wave their lullaby, the arching cliff their dome,  
The lofty palms above them sigh, the sea-birds chattering come:

"While dolphins sport around their hall, the Nereids sing at eve,  
The cocoa's luscious fruit shall fall, the golden sands receive;  
The red flamingo on the banks shall stalk in martial play,  
And shine and march in scarlet ranks, and faithful guard the bay.

"The rest in this illumined scroll their heritage will find;  
The hermit Jason graved the roll, and all the plan designed—  
Jason who dwells on yonder height, and communes with the sky,  
Who all the streams beneath his sight, and all the lands can spy.

"Besides the rulers, we assign to arbitrate, if need,  
The same who ruled the galleys nine, and we confirm their deed.  
The treasures of our island rare, ye children now divide, [tide."  
And lands, and fruits, and fountains share with forest, grove, and

"This just allotment let me bind," our leader spoke with grace.  
"Thus shall each maid a dowry find, our sons their dwelling-place.  
With these I give to each and all, rich garments, jewels, gold,  
For burdened are our galleys tall with wealth of stores untold.

"Let each arise; be joined the pairs: let Heaven look kindly on,  
And grant to hear our proffered prayers for every maid and son."  
Thus to the queen her faithful lord then said, while all arise,  
And join in couples at the word, and lift adoring eyes.

Then hand in hand adown they sat, in smiling beauty gay,  
To join in jests and amorous chat, and love's devoirs to pay,  
As fruits and chaplets round are sent, and interlude began,  
And bursts of mirth and merriment through all the circle ran.

Then Amarantha made request, Duke Alban' bowing low,  
That he, as herald for the rest, their travels wide would show,  
And chief of lovely woman's lot, their grace, and high degree,  
In foreign lands and climes remote, he would unravel free.

"My partner love," the leader said, "delighted we comply.  
O'er many climes we travel made, as journeying round we fly;  
Yet not without some watchful ship, we left our brides alone,  
That oft returning through the deep your safety might be shown.

"And first we travel India's shore, in silks and gems to trade,  
And woman's servile lot deplore, for toil or lust degrade;  
With ebon skin and jetty hair, the amorous queens are found,  
Who lie on cushioned divans rare, while dancing girls surround.

"Nor winning, graceful arts they know, nor virtue's high reward,  
Nor tear that falls for other's woe, nor freedom's gifts regard—  
Like blossoms that no odors give and bloom in wintry time,  
Like fruits that in the shadows live and never see their prime.

"We traveled thence Arabian plains to Egypt's ancient shores,  
Where Nilus, chief of rivers, reigns, and wealth and plenty pours ;  
Her giant columns through the sky like Titan spectres stand,  
In lonely grandeur frowning high to mark the wondrous land.

"No Cleopatra now may sit enthroned in pride the while,  
As mighty Cæsar at her feet implores a favoring smile ;  
Her daughters bend in slavery's mart, or wander as they sigh  
Beneath her mountain piles of art, where kings and heroes lie.

"We traveled round the Egean main, where Athens ruled the free,  
But turned aside with grief and pain her low estate to see ;  
For Beauty from her altars thrown, hath with the Graces fled,  
Yet left their image on the stone to mourn their mistress dead.

"No Helen wakes the isles to arms and flies when kings pursue,  
Nor muse Corinna vaunts her charms, her judges can subdue ;  
Yet grandeur sleeps upon their grave and sadness on the steep,  
While pilgrims wander o'er the wave to chant her dirge and weep.

"The Turk's sultanas next we view in rich, voluptuous pride ;  
Plump, luscious, pale, with eyes of blue, they swim in pleasure's tide.  
Their charms, their liberty, they yield to please their tyrant lord ;  
From Virtue's noble walks concealed, and tremble at his word.

"We skirt Italia's famous strand, but not as once her fame ;  
In war no more to matchless stand, her daughters first in name :  
Virginia laid a sacrifice on Honor's shrine to bleed,  
Not now shall tempt the wondering skies to justify the deed.

"But still her daughters love to show, and tell you as you stand,  
Cornelia's grace, Octavia's woe immortalize the land ;  
How Caliphurnia once had stayed her Julius, doomed to fall,  
And saved him from the assassin's blade, and made him chief o'er all.

"That Garibaldi's Anna shone, and by her patriot's side,  
Amid the storm of war, was known, and in the battle died  
To leave the veteran chief alone, yet point him to the sky,  
And lead to nobler conquest on, and lasting love on high.

"We skirted round a city\* bright, all floating on the wave ;  
Her towers arose in stately height, her street the waters pave :  
Nor would her palaces decay, her beauteous daughters fade,  
If Pleasure's round could last alway, and life's high dues be paid.

"We sailed by Gallia's sunny plains, where Fashion's scepter guides :  
Eugenie, lovely empress, reigns, and in her court presides ;  
And as the floral garden sheds each day some stranger bloom,  
So change, with lavish colors, spreads new beauties round the dome.

"Thus magic forms and pictures new adorn and revel there,  
Like birds of gold and crimson hue that glitter everywhere ;  
While Pride, and Luxury, and Wit their gaudy triumph raise,  
And every mouth must kiss their feet, and every tongue must praise.

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\* Venice.

"Yet now, alas! her empress weeps above her consort's grave,  
And decks his tomb who crownless sleeps, and bids the cypress wave,  
Where every exile finds a home,\* by stern misfortune driven,  
And welcome hand, and sheltering dome, with smile to virtue given.

"Alas! that Fate a sepulcher in native soil denies:  
Like him, the first, the dazzling star, ambition's sacrifice,  
An island of the foe must still a home and grave supply,  
And Fortune bids thy race fulfill the rigid destiny.

"But, oh! more favored than the first† more great,  
No matron's hand to deck his lonely bier;  
He gave his name to Gallia, and to Fate,  
But gained from glory no consoling tear.

"Fortune and Fame have left, applause is gone,  
Of throne and scepter reft, no honors won;  
But faithful woman clings unfaltering there,  
And thither daily brings a sigh sincere.

"And Erin's fugitives we met, some foreign strand in view:  
Their eyelids still with tears were wet, their cheeks of pallid hue;  
While homeless babes their bosoms pressed, their locks disheveled  
hung,  
As grief their exiled souls distressed, while still of home they sung.

"That land renowned we next addressed, most northward in our  
And tarry for a time to rest in Britain's country gay. [way,  
There famed Victoria rules the land, and calls around her throne  
Her charming daughters to command, and make their virtues known.

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\* Britain.

† Napoleon I.

" For Venus, Hebe, Pallas joined, to search each clime with care,  
Despoiling every grace to bind around her children there ;  
To give the eyes, in meekness raised, with blue or hazel ray,  
Or rolling dark, or lustrous blazed, or glancing like the day.

" The changing tints of damask rose around their cheeks to glow ;  
The pearly teeth, the bosom snows, the alabaster brow ;  
The step of Dian on the lea, her tresses flowing round ;  
The stature, gait, and symmetry,\* the voice of music's sound.

" Their sisters in Columbia's home we waited to admire,  
And saw them glide, in bower and dome, with glance of fond desire ;  
Nor boasts the earth such loveliness as when those charms unite—  
Britannia's tints, Columbia's grace, might tempt a seraph's sight.

" And as they once, in red and white, of roses held the field,† [yield :  
While Death oft changed them, as he might, and red to pale must  
So now, in rivalry more fair, the red and white appear,  
And crimson's loveliest where we are, and white when white is near.

" Their gifts they bear to every shore, their names, their graces  
In Pity's quest and gospel lore, in pureness undefiled. [mild—  
At home, the maid, the wife adored ; abroad, the herald bright,  
To rescue man from guilt abhorred, and bear immortal light.

" And some we saw by Crimea's wave, a band by Mercy sent,  
The sick and wounded bent to save, and watch from tent to tent.  
The dying soldier lifts his hand, and dreams his distant wife  
Has come beside his couch to stand, and yields content his life.

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\* According to a modern female writer on beauty, *Lola Montes*.

† In the civil wars of the houses of York and Lancaster.

"And this in sojourning we found. Where love outlasts the years,  
Woman, in bonds connubial bound, undying pleasure bears,  
If still affection's chain she twine and weave in skillful loom,  
With every day some new design to consecrate her home.

"But some, like dame Penelope, the web the morning wove,  
Destroy ere night the picture see, and rend the threads of love;  
But not like that devoted dame, her partner's love to gain,  
Nor thus to earn a spotless fame, and wedlock's vows maintain.

"And oft we heard their bards recite to high-born circles there,  
Of woman's gifts, surpassing bright, and sacred damsels rare;  
Of some who once did armies lead against their country's foe,  
And taught their patriot sons to bleed, and rescued climes from woe

"On earth, behind their partner's fame, who sat to court the shade,  
Nor ask the crown they there might claim, nor share the throne  
they made;

Content to win the starry rays, to give the flower its bloom,  
To gain the diamond all its blaze, though she were wrapped in gloom,

"That, in immortal realms restored, they might more glorious shine,  
Their full reward of praise be poured, and man their meed resign;  
While deeds of honor wrought on earth, and loftiest arts admired,  
Be seen of woman's soul had birth—by woman's love inspired.

"And other noted climes we found, that might adorn the song,  
Where Passions cast their spells around, and Beauty rules the  
throng—

Where woman is the flower of all, and might enrich the waste,  
But appetite and lust enthrall, while crime and error blast.

"In future days we 'll sing these tales to all our maidens sweet,  
Discourse at leisure in the vales, and all these songs repeat  
Of Helen and Andromache, of Cleopatra's fate ;  
Of Boadicea, brave and free ; and all the truth narrate

"Of Helen, nurse to Constantine, who bade her son be wise,  
To follow still the sacred sign that pointed through the skies ;  
Of Joan, the visionary maid, when warriors blenched with fear,  
Who fought their battles undismayed, yet bowed to lot severe.

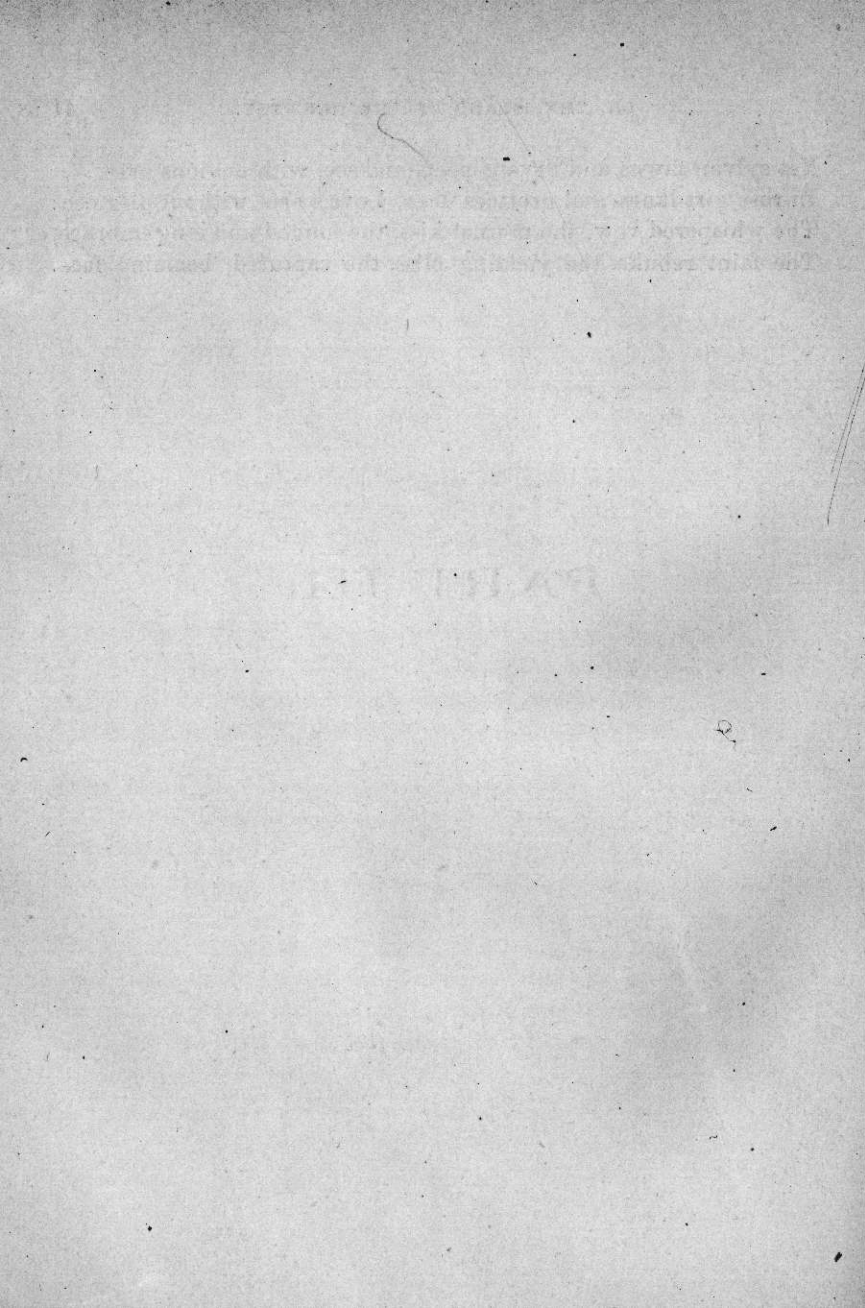
"But now the vivid story rest. As interlude between,  
Let Music's language be addressed—haste, bring the minstrels in.  
Let cithera, and pipe, and flute, and sackbut's voice resound ;  
Let dancing virgins strike the lute, and bear the wine-cup round."

Thus spoke the chief. The matron bowed, and gave the wonted sign :  
Ten youths the flagons huge bestowed—ten maidens fill the wine ;  
As joy illumined every face, and rose in mirth anew,  
Beside the maids their lovers press, and amorous glances threw.

Then Amarantha softly spoke, while love the speech inspires :  
"Arise ! Let all their partners take, and rove as each desires.  
An hour let eager passion learn to pour the tide restrained,  
When all our feet at eve return, be sport and games maintained."

The sounds in cadence died away, and every care forgot,  
Glad lovers haste, in couples gay, to stray in paths remote.  
The tall magnolias wave alone, unmoved their flowery pride ;  
Silent the knoll, as waste unknown, that late was occupied.

Yet sylvan fawns and dryads peep, and see, with envious eyes,  
In rose-girt lanes and grottoes deep, Love's arts without disguise:  
The whispered vow, the mutual kiss, the longed and long embrace,  
The faint rebuke, the yielding bliss, the raptured, beaming face.



PART III.

# ARGUMENT.



CONVERSATIONS AND DIALOGUES.



Alban and Amaranth—Alfred and Alicia—Cassandra, Hermione, Narcissa,  
Arethusa—The Return to the Theatre.

### PART III.

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"Love courts the shade to tell its joys; the humming-bird and bee  
Alone may see its sacred toys—no ruder company."

So sung the herald of the queen, the bird she trained with care;  
Then fled and never more was seen—a freeman of the air.

The silence Amarantha broke, as to her partner clung.

She wistful looked and gently spoke, and by his shoulder hung:

"Oh, tell me, didst thou, as thou roved in all those months and years,  
Bestow a thought on those who loved with yearnings, doubts, and  
fears?"

"Ye were not absent from our cares, nor from our thoughts profound,  
For one brief hour in all the years ye spent in roving round.

Did ye forget our former truth, the faithfulness ye gave  
In all the days of budding youth, when wandering on the wave?

"And did ye never in those days, and in those stranger lands,  
Where summer's richest bloom delays, and joins with spring her  
Say, didst thou never seek to find in lovely woman's arms, [hands:  
Some winning beauty to thy mind, some maid with heavenly charms?

"Say, did no hands as mine do now, thy manly neck embrace,  
And press thy cheek and arching brow, and kiss thy lips with grace?  
Say, is there none more beautiful beneath those brighter skies,  
That back could tempt thee there to stroll, and my poor love despise?"

"Is there no maid who yonder dwells, who may not cross the sea  
And call thy name, and tell love's tales, and steal thee off from me?  
Say, is thy Amaranth thy mate, thy wedded bride alone,  
Or does a fair, more fortunate, the chief, Duke Alban, own ?

"Tell me thou wilt not rove again, that thou wilt dwell with me,  
And never wander on the main, I shall the happiest be.  
My heart too full o'erflows with bliss, and can not ask for more—  
Nay, fain would share with one in this, lest passion's tide o'erpower."

"Come, cease, my charmer, calm thy fear ; for often near to thee,  
When far ye thought us, every year we all returned to see,"  
The other said. "On yonder isle we dwelt and made our home ;  
If 'round the lands we sailing toil, we often backward come.

"Ye could not follow on the tide the galleys borne away ;  
So round this land we sailed and spied, while ye unconscious stay,  
To learn if you were faithful bent and dwelt in truth sincere,  
To hear your vows and fond lament, and if we still were dear.

"Thus could we guard the coast and scan the dangers from the deep,  
And warn if need and scheme and plan, when you were locked in  
sleep ;

Thus could we know your hope and state, and undiscovered prove  
In many years, if thus we wait, how faithful fond ones love.

"We could survey, if near or far, if stranger vessel found,  
Or base intruder ventured here, or trod this hallowed ground.  
Thus would we know if still were borne the test ye chose to bear,  
Or, whether wearied and outworn, ye sank beneath your fear.

"Our hearts were emptied when we fled, by woman's voice decreed,  
And ye must fill the vase instead, and heal them ere they bleed.  
No fair ones sought we in the round, nor beauty blind our eyes,  
Nor trod with us the same green ground, till we came in disguise.

"Pure is the stream of passion's tide that springs within our breast;  
No mingled taint of lust beside has tinged to mar the rest.  
The flame upon the altar burns as when enkindled there;  
No icy coldness chills the urns, or doubt and change impair."

"Oh, had we known," the queen replied, "not all the waves and wind  
Had kept us from the parting tide, to cruel thoughts resigned.  
We all had waded through the flood, or floated on the sea  
In bark canoe or hollow wood, to gain your company;

"Or scaled the mount with nimble feet and looked, nor looked in vain,  
And spied with quickened eyes thy fleet all sailing round amain;  
Or chained the sea-dogs to our boat and boldly steered our way,  
And gained the galleys where ye float, or perished where ye lay.

"How couldst thou live so near at hand, and shun thy cherished fair,  
And we all weeping o'er the land and hopeless in our care,  
When in a moment ye were brought our sorrow to allay,  
And banish every woeful thought, if not abiding stay?"

"'T was so decreed, this pain and smart," replied her partner true,  
"Lest we one day should wider part and ruin dire ensue.  
Now, like a warning in the sky, that's seen and known forever,  
A hand shall point, a voice shall cry, and naught the union sever.

"Forget the past, or wake the thought to make our bliss more sweet ;  
For thus if wisely we are taught, no more shall Heaven repeat,  
Let cares be gone, if cares have wrung, for now shall truth expressed  
In tenfold melody be sung, and charm and soothe the breast."

Thus these in green alcove delayed, and looked and sighed and sued,  
And lingered fondly in the shade, and sang love's interlude,  
The tongue unwearied pours the flame, the answering soul returns,  
And fiercer kindled yields the same, and unconsuming burns.

"Come hither now," Alicia cried, as she to Alfred sung.  
"We'll hasten to the forest's side and speak with freedom's tongue.  
See here the path we used to tread ; come through this tangled wood,"  
As gently drawn his feet were led where decked her arbor stood.

"See here," she said, "the rocky nook that shades our nice retreat,  
And here the tiny crystal brook with crisping waters sweet.  
It sprinkles yet the primrose bank as when last time we came,  
And careful fills its mossy tank and overflows the same.

"How limpid flows the living rill—continuous, placid, clear :  
So flows my love for Alfred still, so constant and sincere.  
These knots of cowslips in the shade that unobtrusive bloom,  
As for this grotto, only made, my love for thee have shown.

"They covet not the parterre's bed where brighter plants are gay,  
But droop and hang a gentle head, for thou hast stayed away."  
Thus did Alicia droop and weep, when thou afar delayed,  
And mourned in solitude to keep the heart thus widowed made.

"There now we mark the fern-crowned seat beneath the branching tree,

Where clustering vines and creepers meet, where Alfred met with me;  
Oh! to behold thee here again let lonely years fly past;  
'T is worth a life of cruel pain to meet thee here at last.

"Oh, sacred place! My chosen mate, I feel my gushing soul  
Cries out this hour to consecrate, while solemn joys control; [rove,  
Here every day thy fond one came when thou didst thoughtless  
And wait and sigh, and call thy name, with unrequited love.

"While midnight came and found me lone, and all the stars looked down,

In pity as it seemed they shone—but thou, alas! hadst none—  
I heard thy step, methought, and turned, but 't was a bird that came.  
I rose and blushed, and inly yearned, then paled with fear and shame.

"How couldst thou leave Alicia here, by cruel anguish torn,  
And lingering, toss'd 'mid hope and fear, from night till dewy morn;  
To spend the morrow in distress, and yet unwearied try  
Another vigil in this place, and watch and pining lie?"

"Wert not afraid, devoted maid," said Alfred, "in this wood,  
Unguarded thus, to be betrayed, or fall in pit or flood?"

"Ah, no!" she cried. "I deemed thy shade, if not thyself, was near,  
While passion ruled and reason fled, and caution came not here."

"And more than shadow," said the youth, "mayhap the place did screen.

Didst thou not judge thy Alfred's truth was like thine own, if seen?  
What if he watched thy saddened face whilst thou no form descried,  
And stood thy sentry round this place, and kissed that seat beside?"

She said, "Thou giv'st the secret key : I marked the flowers were pressed ;

Some fawn I deemed had passed this way to make the couch his nest.  
And 't was thyself, thou artful lad, that plucked the lilies too"—  
"See them," said Alfred, "as they fade," and from his bosom drew.

"I thought the deer had cropped them close," the wondering maiden said ;

"But here I see the pink and rose, and thou the culprit made.  
Thrice happy ! let me kiss the flowers, and store them near my breast,  
And while I kiss them all the hours, my soul with joy be blest.

"There 's Olive, and myself beside, how far our love did go,  
I fear to tell what once we tried, distracted in our woe :  
We sate together and did tell, in memory's page how bright  
Our lovers' forms and pictures dwell, and talked from morn till night

"We draw their shape and manly grace, their eyes, their cheeks,  
their hair—

The color of their tresses trace, how tall, how large they were ;  
And could we make their forms in clay, to bring them to our sight,  
That we might see them every day, and worship them at night.

"So from the yielding rock we frame your statues both with care,  
And carve, and dye, and gild the same, and gorgeous clothe the pair.  
Something our love must feed upon, and charmed and joyed to find  
Our new-found skill upon the stone, we doat with doubtful mind.

"We made them all unknown, unseen, and secretly we came  
With trembling steps across the green to nurse the growing flame.  
Mayhap it was not right and pure to make the gods we wrought,  
But ah ! the pangs we did endure—'t was love, not prudence, taught,

"But as we came one sunny eve—our path we trod alone—  
To tell of pleasures past, and grieve, our idols prized were gone.  
Downfallen backward in disgrace the scattered fragments lay,  
While for a moment in their place we saw our lovers gay.

"'T was but a moment. As we flew to snatch the vision bright,  
It glided instant from our view, and left us in affright.  
And still we deemed it could not be; that fancy drew the scene,  
But still rejoiced once more to see the more than imaged screen.

"But never once did we essay to paint our absent loves;  
But mused and pondered still, and pray to Heaven amid the groves,  
And grave the image deeper here, and here enshrine the vow,  
Until it grew divinely clear as I behold thee now."

"We saw it all, Alicia, then," said Alfred, "from the shore.  
At first we deemed some stranger men did thus these haunts explore;  
But when we saw them imaged bold, how could we bide the sight,  
That modest virgins thus should mold, and their true lovers slight.

"We cast them down the rocky steep, and left in jealous pride,  
Till we could test in passion deep, our sweethearts could abide.  
So oft again we sought the beach to climb the neighboring hill,  
And soon your faithfulness did teach your love unchanging still.

"Nor was it vision all that stayed the fervor of your grief  
In your first woes, for as we strayed we counseled your relief.  
We landed from our ships one night, and unobserved drew nigh,  
And raised the phantom to your sight, and spoke, then seaward fly.

"I marked thee pale, and mute, and sad, with streaming tresses there ;

Thine eyes with weeping languid made, and wild, distracted stare.  
I knew full well thou wert forlorn, and fain to thee had come ;  
But then our leader bade return, and on the ocean roam."

"Oh! cruel runaways," she cries, "your faithful ones to fly,  
To cheat us with this fond surprise, and in our counsels pry.  
Our turn may come, and we may show what woman's art can do ;  
Then shall we fly, and ye shall know love's pains and tortures too."

"Run now, my charmer, run, and try the scheme thy words unfold ;  
Yield thy youth now to weep and sigh, and carve an image bold.  
Then come and gaze within the grove, and mark the fond embrace ;  
I'll call the stone Alicia, love, and bow before her face."

"We shall not please thee, knavish boy," she said. "I have and hold

Thy maiden is the dearer toy, my arm shall thus unfold.  
Oh happy hour, oh blissful spot, that gives thee back again ;  
Let anguish past be all forgot, while love and courtship reign.

"Come, Alfred, in this cool alcove we'll kneel and bow to-day,  
And from this fount of gushing love our meed of incense pay.  
How good the Infinite to blend my favored lot with thine—  
How kind with joy our grief to mend, and turn to bliss divine.

"Come join with us, ye winged sprites, who watch in nook unseen ;  
Chant, all ye songsters, fond delights, and carol o'er the green ;  
Shed, bloom, your odors on the air, and wave your garlands high ;  
Ye brooklets, babble everywhere, while we address the sky.

"Here let me set thee in the grot, adorn thy neck and face,  
And garlands hang with blossoms knot, and deck with dainty grace.  
Here stay, and be my idol now, and I will tend indeed;  
Then I will watch and kneel and bow, and praise and intercede."

"We'll weary passion's prattling tongue, and chant our amorous lay,  
And what the evening leaves unsung we'll sing at dawn of day.  
The creed of love we will recite, and tell the pages o'er,  
And then another volume write, and thousand volumes more."

Thus they, while every happy maid her tale as fondly sung,  
And through the opening forests strayed and to her partner hung,  
In fair Cassandra's panting heart the flames tumultuous rise,  
As thus she led her love apart, and gazed and wildly cries:

"Come, let me gaze upon thy face to find if 't is the same  
That wooed me in this rustic place, and first did call my name.  
Let my eyes eager drink their fill, be certain thou art he  
Who then my doting heart did steal, to rob my peace from me."

"Oh stay from hence each maid and dame. I pray no nymph draw  
Till I assuage love's rampant flame; oh come not here to pry. [nigh,  
Give room, intruding rocks and streams; oh hush, ye lowing kine.  
Let naught disturb the rapturous dreams to mar thy bliss and mine."

"Oh give me time to look and dwell upon the form I prize—  
A day, a year, an age to tell, and pay love's sacrifice.  
Oh let my fingers twine thy hair and trace thy temples round,  
And clasp thy neck, my idol fair, if idol I have found."

"Aye, drink thy fill, bewitching maid," the raptured partner cried.  
"Let love's long debt of vows be paid, with thousand debts beside.  
Drink from thy fountain, loveliest, till love intoxicate—  
Shall say I'm filled with sweet unrest and passion satiate.

"Come, rolling years of purest bliss; come, plighted vows well tried;  
Come, Time, that bids the charm increase; come, every grace beside;  
Come, sweetheart, come, and let my turn to talk of truth begin—  
Thy heart shall be the golden urn to pour the sweetness in."

Gay Hermione and her lover glide the yielding bays between,  
And now she talked and now she sighed amid the scented screen.  
"Oh wondrous power, how shall I tell the raptures thou dost bring?  
Come swiftly, aid, and aid me well, as I thy passion sing.

"Ye glancing rivulets and springs, ye bees that sip and taste,  
Thou arrowy light with golden wings, the painted clouds ye passed,  
The fount that rises in my breast that gushing power supplies—  
A deep that heaves to be expressed, while still new depths arise."

"A fountain, did my Hermione say? Then to this longing heart  
Still pour the rich infecting lay to quench the burning smart.  
Let all things wait on frenzied love till he assuage his pain,  
And when night's mantle shrouds the grove we'll fill and drink  
again."

But now the queen her conch-shell blew, that echoed far and wide,  
To call them forth to pleasures new, and check love's rushing tide.  
Rustled the brakes and copses green, like deer in circle drawn,  
Anon the lively groups are seen to press the mountain lawn.

While some a moment longer staid, as loth to rend the spell,  
And as they leave the groves delayed love's witching lays to tell:  
But loud the clarion conch will speak, the rocks resound the strain,  
The melting intercourse must break, to be renewed again.

Narcissa took her love in hand, and linked in fondness pressed,  
To climb the hill, and gazing stand, and thus the youth addressed :  
"Come, my young rover, let me lead, as thou hast often led,  
Thy feet athwart this yellow mead where oft of old we sped.

"Come farther till we reach the brow, where last I watched the ships  
As far they passed with rapid prow, when thou essayed the deeps.  
See, by yon island steep and high, e'en now there passes one,  
And here I sate as they went by, but hither wandered none."

"But now thy ship has haven found," the happy youth began.

"And now its prow hath struck the ground, and holds thy own  
seaman."

"And faster held a prisoner, too—to me, fond youth, behold !  
Thou art a captive, and may sue—see now thy jailer bold !"

"Ah, lovely fortress," said the youth, "where jewels guarded lie,  
By virtue, modesty, and truth, the willing prisoner I.  
The safeguard of those loving arms who would essay to rend ?  
This dungeon of divinest charms shall chain me to the end."

There dark-haired Arethusia trips, her comely boy beside,  
While often met their rosy lips, as hand in hand they glide :  
As turned their faces each to each, to see where love might dwell,  
And flowed at times 'th impassioned speech as to disclose the spell.

"Oh, rich delight of beauty's joys, where doth thy treasures lie?  
Where does my charmer keep the toys? Oh, let thy fond one pry  
O'er forehead smooth, or shining tress, or lips the kisses' throne,  
Or mantling cheek, or flowing dress, or waist encircling zone.

"Tell me, coy maiden, where they dwell, the enchanter's wiles and  
Show me the secret of his cell that I may bring to light. [sleight?  
Or rather," said the love-sick boy, "that hidden they remain,  
That I may taste and never cloy, may sip, but never stain.

"Of thee I dreamt when roving far, and oft did fancy bring  
Thy face as through the clouds, a star, but as a star took wing.  
Anon thy voice in music came: I answer, none replied,  
I rise, as if thou called'st my name, the sounds in cadence died.

"But now no more a vision chaste, no more the voice that dies—  
Thy arms around this neck are laced, to mine thy tongue replies.  
Life's cares begone, our trials past, shall harvest endless sweet,  
And circling time shall only haste with blissful stores to greet.

"Propitious power, look down and bless. We owe to Thee divine  
The forms that glow with loveliness, the passions' treasured mine.  
Be ours the favors so to prize that Thy unending smile  
May beam profusely from the skies to crown with bliss our isle.

"We come, we come, thrice honored queen, thrice honored chief and  
lord,

We come obedient to the scene, where beauty's throng is houred;  
Yet, in the even's calmer time, when none can view we'll sit  
To solemnize the nuptial prime, and vows of truth repeat.  
Sound, then, the call that brings us near our matron queen around,  
With youth and virgin gather there where mirth and music sound.

## PART IV.

## ARGUMENT.



DRAMATIC SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENTS.

The Stage—The Judge—The Spectators—Court of Love opened by the  
Heralds—The Assizes Begin—Trial of the Inconstant Lover—The  
Bashful Youth—The Slothful Lover—The Envious Fair One—The  
Intrusive Swains—The Deserters—Court Adjourns—Songs and Merry-  
making—Hymn and Conclusion.

## PART IV.

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The concourse gathered on the green, where chosen youth began  
To form a stage and curtained scene, in true theatric plan.  
Wide spread the circling pillared wall ; the roof, with garlands wove,  
O'ercanopied the rustic hall, and crowned this court of love.\*

Anon before the theater, that sylvan skill displayed,  
Duke Alban and his queen appear in bridal robes arrayed, [afar ;  
With diamond crown his hands had brought from Eastern climes  
With golden robe, in net-work wrought, she glittered like a star.

Harmonious preludes now arose, all plaintive as the wind ;  
But soon to wild vehemence grows, with volume unconfined,  
As all the merry company reclined upon the sward,  
Bedecked with wild embroidery, with daisies patched and barred.

Now came the players in their guise ; and prologues, made with grace,  
The crowd attend with eager eyes, and praise with smiling face.  
Full in the midst the judge appears with guards and licitor band,  
A boy with ancient beard, who rears his sword and sceptral wand.

While heralds, sent with horns, addressed aloud the south, and north,  
And east, and west, with high request, to urge the people forth—  
To post inscriptions straight above, on every rock and tree—  
To note the assize and court of love that hour would opened be.

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\*See Appendix to this part.

The stage was cleared, the chorus said ; the lictors now brought in  
A stripling, bound and manacled, with sparsely bearded chin.  
Arraigned he was by females twain, although a comely youth,  
Of being fickle, false, and vain, and all devoid of truth.

On either side the buxom dames the stripling plucked and drew,  
As if in settling just their claims they would divide in two ;  
And first this side they pushed and drove the breathless culprit  
round,  
And then the other side they rushed, and cast him on the ground.

Flora, before the judge (declared), and all the laughing throng,  
The boy to her was pledged and paired, so must perforce belong ;  
But Lilly cried, with aspect wild, and affidavit swore,  
That he had loved her from a child, and courted her before.

She named the vale and bower gay, the very time and place,  
Where late he wooed her, day by day, to win her smiles and grace ;  
And but last evening it was so—he vowed not once but thrice  
That but a moment he would go, then fly back in a trice :

That she had watched him as he ran, and in the almond grove  
Had caught the false, deceitful man, with Flora twined in love.  
They begged the judge decide the case, and with just law decide  
That they, with patient thankfulness, the judgment would abide.

The judge, with aspect sage and stern, then gave his sentence  
straight :

The boy should be condemned, and learn to love them alternate—  
That in fresh morning's dewy hour he should on Lilly tend,  
But when the purple eve should lower, to Lilly constant wend.

They bowed assent and marched away, amidst the sportive joy ;  
Each held a hand, and kisses pay, and claimed in half the boy,  
Until they found another youth, and so their hearts divide,  
While each her partner chose in truth to choose no spouse beside.

Next came a group of chubby girls, who thrust a blushing boy  
Along the stage, by turns and whirls, as if he was a toy ;  
They charged the youth, and stated clear, although of age and grown,  
He never did with maids appear, but moped and roved alone.

He had been courted by the group, who serenades had sung,  
But swiftly flew from all the troop, nor would abide their tongue—  
Would stray all day on lonely heights, and by the ocean shore,  
To shun all sports and love's delights, and come to them no more.

The judge decided as no youth a bachelor could rove,  
One of the fair ones he, in sooth, must choose to be his love—  
That now, before the court and chair, the issue must be tried,  
With blinded eyes select the fair, and then lead off the bride.

That as they all in beauty shone he scarce could choose amiss—  
'T was no hard lot to dwell with one in wedlock's envied bliss.  
The nymphs assent to try the scheme, if blindfold he appear,  
And silent all encircle him till he select his dear.

So on the floor, blindfolded, bound, with cautious step he stands,  
The lusty fair ones thrust him round, and slip uncaught his hands ;  
But he, as led by crafty hand, or whisper, sign or sigh, [shy.  
Now grasped the coyest of the band, who backward moved and

He led her from the platform gay, with nosegays showered near,  
The others pelted them away, while many shout and cheer,  
While viols played an interlude, the merry scenes to grace,  
And fruits went round, and flowers were strewed, and time flew on  
apace.

The viols cease : a buxom dame, athwart her brawny back,  
Bore in her partner, to his shame, all fastened in a sack ;  
Then thumping careless on the floor, she set the crowd aglee  
With laugh, and shout, in endless roar, she faced the company.

The sheepish partner hid his face as she disclosed her woe,  
Or peeping out with wild grimace, his pimpled nose would shew ;  
She said she bore it patiently, but yet her feelings grew,  
For sleep, and sloth, and luxury, must kill the boy she knew.

He eat the peaches\* from the trees, the clusters from the vine,  
With hands in bosom, at his ease, he eat, and thus recline ;  
No water from the fount he bore, no milk from herd or flock,  
But bask in sunshine at the door, and slumber like a rock.

She begged the judges, as a boon, to give a speedy cure,  
For now she fed him with a spoon, and more could not endure.  
The judge condemned him hence to bear his lady in his turn,  
And to the loftiest mount the fair each day by him be borne.

Straight in his arms he caught his bride, and swiftly bore away,  
And climbed in sight the mountain's side, with spirits fresh and gay ;  
Then down together, hand in hand, with sportive shout and glee,  
They ran to hail the merry band, and join the company.

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\* Thomson, the poet, was accused of doing this.

A noisy bevy now impelled a comely damsel there,  
Her hands a fan and mirror held, with ornamental hair;  
With pendant chains her neck was graced, and buskins laced her  
feet,  
And corset bound her taper waist, and scented odorous sweet.

They held the form before the court, and stated clear and straight  
It was a boy who would resort with them, and robed and ate;  
That for a damsel he had passed, whate'er his plan and aim,  
But watchful eyes had caught at last, as he his cheeks did stain.

But Chastity and Virtue rose, and brought him forth to shame,  
And now they begged the judge disclose the judgment they might  
claim.

The judge decided, for the deed, the maidens, in their zeal,  
Should take the would-be maid with speed, and strip him as they will.

Started the virgins at the word, and fled in haste away—  
They shrank to hear the law abhorred, and left the culprit gay.  
Two maidens now advanced with grace, and testified in love,  
There was no crime but loveliness, and they could vow and prove.

In envy at their sister's bloom, the girls in plot had joined,  
To lead him to the justice-room, some penalty to bind.  
They led the handsome fair along, her false accusers gone,  
With loud applauses from the throng, and fame her charms had won.

But, said they, could a youth arraign who fain a maid would be,  
With drooping locks and eyelids stain, with gilded waist and knee?  
And if the assize of love delayed and tarried yet an hour,  
They would arrest the would-be maid, and drag him from his bower.

Next stalked a haughty damsel in, with scornful, beaming eyes,  
Half veiled her crimsoned face was seen, as if she wore disguise ;  
She walked with trailing robes apace, and wrapped in purple round,  
With brodered vest and golden tress, her feet with slippers bound.

A handsome lad she ordered there, the lictors drew in chains,  
Indicted for a wicked stare, she punished for his pains ;  
She blushed, she said, before the court and that illustrious throng,  
But fain must make a fair report, nor would conceal the wrong.

For she was bathing in the flood, secluded close and lone,  
Beneath the dense and shady wood, where pathway there was none ;  
But slipping from the crystal tide, her watchful eye had seen  
This lurking gallant, slinking guide, his passage through the screen.

Thus had he viewed the treasured charms she long had purely kept ;  
Had robbed and filled her with alarms—the modest damsel wept.  
The youth then answered boldly there, “ I would the case were tried ;  
If I have wronged this stately fair, your judgment shall decide.

“ Truly, I left the leafy dell as Clara left the flood,  
But, as a faithful sentinel,\* I had as guardian stood ;  
And lest some ruder face should pry and rush imprudent there,  
I outward paced, till she came by, to shield the modest fair.

“ Her beauties still are all her own, her charms by me unseen,  
But she may bathe next morn alone, and I not there, I ween.”  
The judge then raised his sceptral wand, and to the crowd declared  
His sentence was, and that must stand—the parties should be paired :

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\* This idea is probably borrowed from an incident introduced in Thomson's Seasons.

"For since the charter of the land no maid allowed to stray,  
Or bathe unmated on the strand, or live a maid away;  
And as she was a ripened belle, no one more fit were found  
Than he who guarded her so well, yet she as culprit bound.

"The penalty the youth must pay, it was his firm decree,  
To watch the virgin every day until they wedded be."  
She hung her head in sullenness, but slyly gave her hand  
Beneath her flowing, silken dress, and fled with him the stand.

Mirth filled the court, and circled round in waves of merriment—  
The chorus sang while clarions sound, and greetings mingling went.  
But now a second prude would speak, the maiden was but young,  
With wavy ringlets round her neck, she drew a boy along.

Emboldened by the last decrees, she charged the gallant found  
Intruding through her arbor trees, while she her sandals bound;  
That thus the line of modesty and graces feminine  
He had transgressed so bold and free, it showed some base design.

She pointed to the weeping lad, and urged a judgment clear  
Should be upon the instant made with penalty severe.  
The judge was grave, and stroked his beard, as puzzled to decide,  
But gave the parties as he leered this verdict to abide:

"That he, the curious boy, should wait to serve the modest fair,  
To lace her waist and buskins straight when she did buskins wear,  
Until content, the coquette jade, his wedded partner be,  
And then to be her waiting maid he may gain title free."

Three matrons entered boldly then to make a solemn vow  
Against their recreant husbandmen, and called for sentence now.  
They said in fealty and truth they had essayed to live,  
And served them faithfully from youth, but did no love receive.

That they had fled from bed and board, with marks of scorn and  
hate,  
And vowed they spurned the rites abhorred, and now would separate.  
That 't was but treason in their eyes, and instant must be stayed,  
Or ruin like a storm arise and all the isle invade.

Their partners rose to plead their case, and told in playful mood,  
How they did tempt their matron's grace and they the test withstood.  
We did but press our matron kind to probe their passions deep,  
So now we find, with steady mind, they will unshaken keep.

"We pray the court to sentence bring and we will pay the fine,  
The lost embraces and the ring, and chains and jewels nine.  
"'T is fair and just," the judge replied, and leaping to the floor,  
He cast his beard and sword aside, for he was judge no more.

The trumpets sounded in the air, the pipes and cymbals clang,  
The court was ended, then and there, while shouts and laughter  
rang.

In masque and revel mingled now, the happy concourse join  
Beneath the forests' ample bough, and gayer sports combine.

To close the day with dance and song the leaders now prepare,  
And this the chaunt they did prolong and in this chorus share.  
Harmoniously the praises peal in anthem wild and free  
Far through the woodland echoes steal and reach the distant sea.

"When man in Paradise did rest, and woman yet was none,  
There came a vision to his breast to cheer him all alone;  
And when he woke and raised his eyes and opened wide his arms,  
She stood and smiled in beauty's guise and yielded all her charms."

"This woman from his bosom sprung, needs must his bosom share,  
And soothe and melt with pity's tongue and rule in meekness there.  
Nor from his side unsexed arise to tread life's pathway rude,  
Nor stand unveiled to common eyes, or mope in solitude.

"As light and shade the picture blends and both the drawing grace,  
So woman bright her mate attends with her celestial face;  
And if the earthly image lack the milder transcript given,  
So woman comes the tints to make to light with beams from heaven.

"And as the dream is more divine than earthly sense and power,  
So thus to man let woman shine to charm life's shaded hour.  
Thus beauty's rule and love's domain are wrought by hands united,  
So let us weave a lasting chain so wedlock ne'er be blighted."

And as they sing in mystic dance their guardian spirits stand—  
Truth, Unity, and Love advance to guide the threefold band.  
They lightly move in measured chain where hand and foot and  
tongue,

Were mingled by the lovely train who thus their bridal sung:

"Weave the song and sound the rhyme, let the foot and voice keep  
time;

Wreath the heart, and twine the soul, bind in sacred bonds the  
whole.

Let enkindling words be spoken, threefold cord that ne'er is broken.  
Now the measured chorus rise, round from every mouth it flies.

"Round again in measured chaunt, baneful grief and strife avaunt !  
This way bound the happy train, youth and maiden sing the strain.  
Care be gone, and thought be free ; music, laughter, partners be.  
Let the chain be jewel bound, send the merry chorus round.

"Strike the rhythmic chord and strain ; Venus, Hebe, weld the chain ;  
Cupid, Vulcan, temper fine ; gild and polish, Muses Nine.  
Heaven bestow the flame and heat, make the union links complete ;  
Earthly ties deceive and sever, weave the bonds that last forever.

"Life shall like a river glide—bathe we in the crystal tide ;  
Life shall spring with peaceful flow, weary languor never know ;  
While the sun shall gild the skies, while the heavenly planets rise,  
While the Eternal Father lives, while His hand our being gives.

"Welcome we the nuptial hour, welcome wedlock's hallowed power ;  
Welcome now the bridal bed, stars are blinking through the shade.  
Moon and planets veil your face, blossoms fall in every place ;  
Where the happy couch is seen, joy and mirth shall join to screen."

And now the song and dance went by, the parties fled unseen,  
As if they rose within the sky, deserted was the green ;  
Soft whispers floated on the air, yet not a bird would tell  
Or shew the couches of the fair, in arbor, grove and dell.

But Orient came and Hesper down,\* to gain a lesson meet,  
So sitting on a mountain's crown they viewed the bliss complete ;  
And not an angel in his haste but wondered in the skies,  
And stopped to listen as he passed, and blessed them as he flies.

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\*Sinless World, part ix.

## APPENDIX TO PART IV.

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Courts of love (or *cours d'amour*, *corti d'amore*) were established in the Middle Ages. The first was said to be held in Provence, about the twelfth century. In this chivalric period, when love was not satisfied with remaining a cherished secret of the heart, but stood forth to public view—when enamoured knights were ambitious to draw the attention of the world, and prove the ardor of their passion by deeds of daring—when ladies were the soul and ornament of the tourney, and love, in short, was the serious business of life among the higher classes of society—subtle questions on topics of gallantry were discussed in mixed companies, and often made subjects of poetical competition by the troubadours or poets in their *chansons*; such, for instance, as the following: “Which is most easy to be endured, the death or inconstancy of a mistress?” “Should you rather see me leave your mistress as you approach, or approach as you retire?” “Who suffers most, a husband whose wife, or a lover whose mistress is unfaithful?” At this period, when love was regarded as the source of nobleness of character—when even bishops sung its praises, and the uncultivated and unoccupied minds of a feudal nobility were at a loss for intellectual entertainment—the doubts and difficulties which grew out of the *belle passion* led to the formation of these courts. They were composed of knights, poets, and ladies, who gave their decision as *arrets d'amour*, after the manner of the parliaments. A collection of these decisions, from the ancient manuscripts, were published by Christopher von Areten, in 1803. There is also an older collection of them by Martial d’Auvergne.

This species of amusement became so popular, that hardly any court festival took place without a contest in a *cour d'amour*. These courts reached their highest splendor in France under Charles VI., through the influence of his consort, Isabella of Bavaria, whose court was established in 1380. Under Louis XIV. an academy of love was instituted by Cardinal Richelieu, *assemblée galante* at Ruel. It was an imitation of the courts of love. The Princess Maria of Gonzaga presided, and Mademoiselle Scuderi was attorney-general. An interesting decision was given by the Countess of Champagne on the question, "Can true love exist between husband and wife?" It is somewhat at variance with the notions of our times, and its translation runs thus: "We certify, by the tenor of these presents, that love can not extend its rights upon two married persons. In fine, lovers agree spontaneously, without being constrained by necessity, whilst married persons are bound reciprocally, by duty, to yield their wills, and refuse nothing to each other. Let this judgment, which we have given with great prudence, and after having consulted with a great number of other ladies, be your firm and constant authority. Given in the year 1174, third day of the calends of May, seventh indiction."

See Conversations Lexicon.