

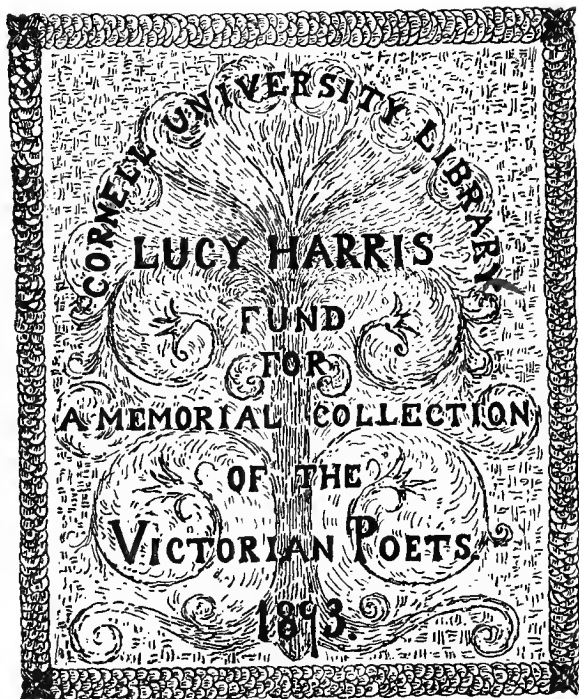
SONGS OF ADIEU

LORD HENRY SOMERSET

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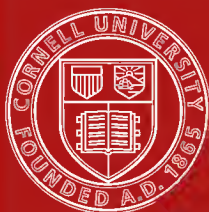
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SONGS OF ADIEU

BY

LORD HENRY SOMERSET



LONDON

CHATTO & WINDUS, PICCADILLY, W.

1889

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DEDICATION.

O THOU, who on my empty life didst shine
Turning my night to one short, glorious day,
Who on my heart didst lay Thy hand divine
That woke from sleep its cold, insensate clay,
To Thee I consecrate this faultful book,
These halting lines, unworthy though they be,—
To Thee on whom I nevermore shall look
In speechless love and spellbound ecstasy—
Ah, nevermore! for art Thou not as dead,
Dead, dead, alas! more dead than dead to me?—
Ah, nevermore! for on my luckless head
Have broke the storms of curs'd calamity,
And Thou art not. And in Thy place there reigns
An empty void, a vacuum of tears,
And I sit weeping, palsied by these pains
That waste my youth and wear away my years.
Ah! read my love in every single line
That in this book hath fallen from my pen,

*Read, read therein that old sweet dream divine
That ne'er on earth can be for us again.
And as Thou readest think once more of me
And weep with me for that wild, blissful past,
And pray that in God's blest eternity
We two may rest in endless love at last.*





SONGS OF ADIEU.

ONE MORE.

ONE more glimpse of the sun,
One more breath of the sea,
One more kiss from my darling one—
Then, Death, come speedily !

One more smile from my sweet,
One more clasp of a hand,
One more sound of returning feet—
Then come, that Better Land !

One more passionate prayer
To Christ, that He shall be
My Guide as I climb the Golden Stair—
Then come, Eternity !



BURIED MEMORIES.

IT was an empty grave,
And into it my every care I cast,
No hope did hold, no fingle sorrow save
From out my past.

Into that deep, dark hole
Each thrust-out, murdered memory I threw,
And laughed out loud, and longed within my soul
For pleasures new.

‘Life is not long,’ said I,
‘And haggard Death hangs over every one :
What good is gained by waisting misery
On what is done ?’

Then ere I turned away
I trimmed the grave and left thereof no trace,

Then wooed the world afresh, all glad and gay,
With merry face.

Years fled and youth flew by,
And to the dregs I drank of Pleasure's cup,
My foul, grown fat with fair festivity,
Was lifted up.

It chanced one summer's eve
My friends and I with jest and joyous song
Came forth the still, sweet, fun-warmed air to breathe,
A careless throng.

Then with light laugh I said,
'Of all these fairest flowers that I see
I will a garland gather, and my head
Shall crownèd be.'

I stooped me down to pluck
The first fair bud that blossomed hard at hand,
And in an instant, as though thunderstruck,
Like stone did stand.

Buried Memories.

For from that flower to me
There came a lingering, long-forgotten scent,
And straightway a strange throb of memory
Through my heart went.

‘O flower most fair,’ I said,
‘What sacred soil is this that sweetens thee
With perfume of a past I deemed was dead
Long since to me?’

Then down I dug full deep,
And when my spade gave forth a warning sound
I wist not whether to rejoice or weep
O’er what I found.

Ah! there at rest they lay,
The dear, dead bones of memories still sweet,
The relics of a far-off, fairer day
Were at my feet.

Then my hard heart I hurled
Into that grave, and laid it low beside
Those bones beloved—then to the outer world
In them it died.



COME BACK!

I CANNOT live without thee—oh, come back !
Come back to him that, weeping, waits for thee ;
For life is death without thee—oh, come back !
Dear love, that art the very life of me.

Haft thou no care that, ebbing all too fast,
My youth is scorched and scarred with burning tears ?
Hath thy hard heart no memories of the past,
No longings for the love of happier years ?

Haft thou forgotten all thou saidst to me
That night of love when on the bridge we met ?—
Ah ! baseless dreams of endless ecstasy
That I would give a lifetime to forget !—

Why didst thou turn my path from smooth to rough,
That knew no shadows till that fateful day ?

Hadst thou not lift of lovers long enough
That thou must stoop to steal my heart away ?

And yet I cannot chide thee, for thou art
My love—and that is all in all to me :
Behold my tear-dimmed eyes, my broken heart,
And read how wildly do I worship thee.

Come back ! come back ! I beg from thee this boon
Oh, turn thine ear and hearken to my cry—
Come back ! come back ! and come, dear love, for
For if thou come not soon I needs must die.





ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

PAST.

'TIS winter, but the sun shines cheerily,
 And all things seem to smile on you and me,
 As with low laughter sweet
 We mount the old stone steps on merry feet.

Then with our laughter hushed to happy smiles
 We pass within, and wandering through the aisles
 We choose some pleasant place
 Wherein to sit beneath the dome's wide space.

Then from the choir a flood of harmony
 Flows all around—a gracious, golden sea,
 And o'er our hearts it rolls
 And steepes in sweetness our thrice-happy souls.

Peal on ! great Organ, let thy glorious voice
To Heaven resound and with my heart rejoice :
Sing out ! O Choir, and raise
With me your thankful hymns of highest praise.

Ay ! praise be to God, for He has given us love
To sweeten life and lift our souls above
The cankered cares of earth
Now left behind in this our second birth.

What joy is ours ! How shall there ever be
A jarring note in this glad harmony ?
Yea, to the very end
Our heaven-blessed lives in one long love shall blend.

PRESENT.

'Tis winter now again—
I mount those self-same steps with languid feet :
I am alone, and grief and grinding pain
On my life beat.

What matters where I go ?
I wander in and choose some vacant chair—

The first that comes—I care not which—I know
One is not there !

The music's mournful note
Comes in upon my soul, and all around
Old memories wake and sadly seem to float
On that sweet sound.

O Choir ! sing mournfully,
Sing saddest strains, for I am fore and fad,
Nor jar upon my joyless misery
With anthems glad.

Speak to my heart of Heaven
And sing of songs sung there beyond the grave,
And tell me that these griefs God-given
Our souls shall save.

Oh, nevermore shall we
Together walk thine aisles, O temple fair—
Teach us at least this lesson—learnt in thee—
Our cross to bear.



A SONG OF SHIPS.

THE ships come sailing from the sea,
Up from the river mouth,
Sailing on to the noisy quay
From east and west and south.

‘O ships, what burden do ye bear
Home from the boundless blue?
Is all your freight but dull despair,
Or laughter sweet your crew?’

‘Oh! we have old and we have young,
And we have good and bad,
And we have hearts by sorrows wrung
And lives by love made glad.

‘With grief and joy we come again,
But, ah! poor lover true,
We bring no solace for your pain,
No single word to you.’



A HARVEST SONG.

A SULLEN fall of ceaseless rain,
 A sky of ink, a world of grey,
 A shattered hope of golden grain—
 Harvest ! forsooth, on such a day !

Harvest indeed—of bitter tears
 To blight life's blackened fields of corn !
 Harvest of such heart-broken years
 That one could wish them never born !





TO A PHOTOGRAPH.

O LOVED and lost ! with the dreamy, tender eyes,
 What soft, mysterious sweetness underlies
 That silent smile of thine,
 That moves my heart like music half divine ?

O love ! my love ! thou hast a subtle power
 To stir my senses like some fragrant flower,
 Whose petals, opening, bear
 A strong, sweet scent to all the summer air.

Yea, like that perfume is my love for thee,
 For both delights are born of purity
 And both are passing sweet—
 O love, kind lord, keep pure our wayward feet !—

I love thee more than all on earth beside,
 And if till death this cruel woe betide
 Thy memory for me
 Shall live, a dream of fair felicity.



ONE SHORT HOUR.

GOOD is bad to me, gold but worthless dross,
 Laughter tear-laden and all sweetness four :
 What gain is gain to me that weep the loss
 Of one short hour ?

There is no gladness in the morning light,
 For me no fragrance in the sun-warmed flower,
 Music is discord, day but dawnless night,
 Since one short hour.

Oh, would I could hie me over the sea,
 Though the storm-winds blow and the storm-clouds
 lower,
 And rest in the haven where I would be,
 For one short hour !



THE BIRD.

A BIRD sits fingering in a tree
So high above my head,—
Tell me, dear bird, if love for me
For evermore is dead?—

He sings on still, but in his note
There breathes a saddened strain,
No words come welling from his throat,
But every throb is pain.

I thank him for his clemency,
I could not bear the blow
That words would give in telling me
What all too well I know.



GOLD, SILVER, AND LEAD.

A LIFE of gold—those early years,
 When love was new and knew no tears,
 And the long fair future laughed at fears.
 In thee, dear love, in thee
 Was all my glad heart's ecstasy!

A life of silver, all too fast,
 Upon our lives its cold gleams cast,
 And paled the gold that could not last.
 By thee, dear love, by thee
 My heart was racked with jealousy.

Ah! what is left? A life of lead!
 A feeble, flickering light, just fed
 By thoughts of what for aye is dead.
 For thee, dear love, for thee
 My heart dies down in agony!



*THE BIRDS IN DEAN'S COURT,
ST. PAUL'S.*

THE sad, sweet sound of even-song is hushed,
The last, low wail of psalm and anthem done,
I stand without, and all the west is flushed
In setting sun.

O House of God ! that art so dear to me,
I turn me sadly from thy sacred fane :
'Tis thou alone canst soothe the misery
Of my heart's pain.

For 'twas in thee, in those sweet, happier years,
We drank deep draughts of melody divine,
Nor ever dreamt of those remembering tears
That now are mine.

The Birds in Dean's Court, St. Paul's. 17

Good night ! good night ! and on my homeward way
I pass, as always, sadly pondering,
And pause a moment here where twice a-day
The brown birds sing.

Sunrise and sunset see that feathered throng
Thick gathered there, methinks, in yon tall trees
To sing their matins and their evensong,
Their Lord to please.

O happy birds ! there seem no jarring notes
In your sweet psalms of hope and joy and love :
'Tis one long hymn of happiness that floats
To God above.

Sing on ! sing on ! I would not have you sad—
'Tis only men must weep and suffer here—
Sing daily forth to God your anthems glad
From year to year.

And let me seek sometimes a moment's peace
In listening to your songs that are so fair :
Perchance in them my heart awhile shall cease
From dull despair.



*A SONG OF THE STREAM OF
LIFE.*

AH! but it's lonely drifting here
Down the stream through the darkening night,
The low, flat banks are waste and drear—
Oh, for the light!

One little lantern at the prow
Lit from a summer's golden ray—
A glory then—a glimmer now—
Oh, for the day!

Yea, for a time we, happy pair,
Floated by on the self-same stream,
Making sweet music to the air—
Ah! vanished dream!

Now through the night my voice sounds low—
'Love! my own love! I die for thee!
Loft at length is the river's flow
In death's calm sea!'



FINISHED !

FINISHED ! the day that brought us dear delight,
 And wearily I stretch me on my bed,
 Weeping the death of day, the birth of night,
 Weeping for sunlit hours for ever fled.

Oh, for that thrill of the first flush of dawn !
 Oh, for the glory of golden-red sea !
 Oh, for that breeze rippling by through the corn
 And the song-birds' awakening ecstasy !

Then life was so happy and hope was so high—
 The glad sun shone out and blazed full in my face,
 And deep from my heart a wild, passionate cry
 Welled forth at the touch of its glorious embrace.

What though the bright glare of noontide oppressed us,
 And all things were silent and wan from the heat ?

Finished!

Its fires soon paled and a soft wind caressed us,
And fanned our flushed faces and played round our feet.

O short, sweet hours of eventide,
The best, the dearest of the day,
We cried to you, 'With us abide!'—
But, ah! you waned and passed away.
Good night! good night! the day is done,
The final mesh of the web is spun,
The last ray sunk, the sands all run—
Finished! alas! for aye! for aye!

Finished! the life, that life so pure and sweet,
And we who here stand weeping round the grave
Know all too well that nevermore shall beat
The heart of hearts we would have died to save.

Murdered! in all the strength of youth's bright day!
Murdered! the victim of a ruthless band,
A loathsome crew whose lust it is to slay
With covert thrust and foul assassin hand!

O dear, dear dead, though thou and we must part,
Though through long years thy love we may not know,

Thou livest still at least in one poor heart
That daily weeps thy destiny of woe.

Justice! justice! my God! how long? how long?
Wilt Thou not see and shalt Thou not repay?
Avenge, O Lord, avenge this cruel wrong
And let the murdered rise to light of day!

Ye that in this world have your ease
And fatten on your goodly store,
Who live but for yourselves to please
And on all else shut fast your door,
Laugh on! make merry! eat and drink!
Live out your lives! nor ever think
Of all that's snapped this young life's link—
Finished! alas! for evermore!

Finished! the love, that was mine all in all,
And in love's bitter death life ceased for me,
And on my foul the leaves of autumn fall
Where summer still should reign rejoicingly!

Thou beauteous god! imperial monarch! Love!
That holdest in thy hand the lives of men,

Why dost thou show thy fair face from above,
And, having toyed with us, draw back again?

O fun of funs! O lord of all delight!
Hast thou no ears to hear thy victims' cry?
If thus it be, then kill us in thy might
And let us learn at least in thee to die.

For life without love is a cruel jest,
A branch without sap and a leafless tree,
A day without fun and a night without rest,
A farce played out in feeble mockery.

Be still, my heart, and fret not so
For what again can never be,
The lonely years must come and go
And leave for you but misery.
Be still! there is no death to pain—
Shall love die down and live again?—
Ah! nevermore! All, all is vain—
'Tis finished! lost! eternally!

Finished! finished! the love, the life, the day!
And though the night is dark and death accurst,
We who have learnt love's sweet, sad lesson say—
Of all the three the death of love is worst.



IN THE DUPPLIN WOODS.

NO. I.—THE BELL.

A WILD west wind is flinging
 The dead leaves to the ground,
 And it sets a great bell ringing
 With weird, uncertain found.
 I weep, for I remember
 The voice, to me how dear,
 That in that glad September
 First founded on mine ear.

And 'twixt these two wild voices
 Herein the difference lies—
 This found in the storm rejoices
 But with the wind it dies :
 Life's summer may be flinging
 Or winds of winter roar,
 But the bell that you set ringing
 Rings on for evermore.

No. II.—AUTUMN LEAVES.

The golden leaves are falling,—
Falling one by one,
Their tender 'Adieux' calling
To the cold autumnal sun.
The trees in the keen and frosty air
Stand out against the sky—
'Twould seem they stretch their branches bare
To Heaven in agony.

The joys of life are falling,—
Falling away from me,
I am sick and weary of calling
On love for sympathy.
There is no cup I have not drunk,
No path I have not trod—
I stand like an aged, leafless trunk
With my arms stretched out to God.





LAST NIGHT.

LAST night I dreamt a dream in sleep,
 And twice I woke and dreamed again :
 I lay upon a hillside steep,
 Far from all mortal ken.

Cold, cold I was and passing sad
 With all the burden of my grief,
 And to the night my soul, half mad,
 Cried out for some relief.

And first I called upon my past,
 And lo ! he stood and gazed on me,
 A radiant youth—then fled aghast
 Such black despair to see.

Then to the present, ‘ Friend,’ I said,
 ‘ Hast thou no word of comfort sweet ? ’

Last Night.

He nothing spake but shook his head,
Then passed with silent feet.

Then I arose in maddened mood
And loudly bade my future come—
And by my side an old man stood,
Stricken, and sad, and dumb.

And as he faded from my sight
There came a mist before mine eyes,
In burning tears I lost the light,
And fell as one that dies.

Then, love, dear love, I called on thee
To come and wipe away those tears,
And drown my dreadful misery
In love of former years.

And as I cried, from all around
There breathed a breath of music sweet,
And flowers sprang up and gazed spell-bound—
I clasped and kissed thy feet!

And in thine arms thou foldedst me,
And all my soul seemed lulled to rest,
And, dead to all the world but thee,
Lay pillowed on thy breast.

And then I raised mine eyes to thine
And looked for that sweet, tender love
That seemed in happier days divine,
Straight sent from Heaven above.

Ah ! there the fatal truth I read,
Heart-sick and of all hope bereft—
The love, the love was lost and dead—
'Twas only pity left.

One long, last look ! one clinging kiss !
And never a single word I spoke,
But hurled me down the precipice,
And falling thus—awoke !





THE EXILE.

O PRAY for me !

That weeping stand on a distant shore,
My young days darkened for evermore—

O pray for me !

Pray for the homeless, outcast one,
Pray for the life crushed out and done
Ere yet its youth had scarce begun—

O pray for me !

O think of me !

I loved you well in the days gone by,
Together, you said, we'd live and die—

O think of me !

Think then of those imperial years,
Think, think of all my bitter tears,
My racking doubts, my dismal fears—

O think of me !

Yea, dear one, morning, noon, and night,
I think, and weep, and pray for thee,
And through my tears my one delight
Is born of thy dear memory.
My life with thine is past and o'er,
We can but weep for evermore !





A FALLING STAR.

OUT in the night I stood and watched the sky
 And steadily the stars looked down on me,
 And all I asked was there and then to die,
 And so at length from pain my soul to free.

Yea, better far to lie
 Within the silent grave and cease to be !

And suddenly there shot from left to right
 A brilliant star, a flame of brightest gold,
 That came I know not whence, flashed through the night,
 And vanished, (as a dream that dies untold),

Almost too swift for sight :—
 And then the rest reigned once more, pale and cold.

'Twas thus, dear love, I thought, you came to me—
 A thousand eyes had met my gaze and mine

A thousand hands had touched, yet cold and free
My listless heart looked on and gave no sign.

Then, when it was to be,
We met—and life was steeped in joy divine.

And when remembrance came that, as the light
Of this great star, you went and left no trace,
Content from this poor heart to wing your flight
And lend to other worlds your matchless grace,

Again I cried—O Night
Of Death! enfold me in your kind embrace!





THY WILL BE DONE!

I STAND and look upon the sea—
 The hours of day have all but run—
 There is no love in life for me—
 Thy will be done !

I stretch my hands to God on high—
 I plead for one bright ray of sun—
 There comes no answer from the sky—
 Thy will be done !

My cry rings out upon the air—
 A cry for help—and there is none—
 How deep the depth of my despair !—
 Thy will be done !

The crowd looks on with stony stare,
 Nor lifts that love be lost or won

For this poor fool that beats the air—
Thy will be done !

In twos the lovers pass me by—
Their last adieux seem never done !—
How strange that love should ever die !—
Thy will be done !

There come that weep around a bier—
A life crushed out when scarce begun—
The dead in life was ah ! so dear—
Thy will be done !

Thus grief and joy ! Thus night and day !
For them the two—for me the one—
And through the mist of tears I say—
Thy will be done !





THOU ART NO LONGER NEAR.

THOU art no longer near—
 And all the pulse of life beats faint and slow,
 And all the skies loom dark and grey and drear—
 I love thee so !

My love ! how long ago
 Since last I saw thy face so pale and pure !
 Why should our poor twin-lives, by pain laid low,
 So long endure ?

Thou music of my soul,
 In thoughts of thee the chords have birth and grow,
 And called from chaos at thy sweet control
 In love outflow.

Lean down and drink, dear love,
 Of that harmonious stream, so shalt thou know
 The depth wherefrom my heart hath learnt to love
 And loves thee so !



*A SONG OF GRIEF AND JOY
AND LOVE.*

THERE is a grief too great for tears,
 A still, dark, ever-deepening night,
 That eats all heart from out the years
 That dawned in sunshine golden bright.
 No word that tells of dull despair—
 No moan—no pain-begotten cry—
 A load, almost too hard to bear,
 Is borne—and crushes silently.

There is a joy for smiles too deep,
 A heart-content both grave and glad,
 When happier morn kills happy sleep,
 Yet all surrounding deem you sad.
 There is no room for rippling mirth
 In hearts almost attune for tears,
 Since Heaven has lighted down to earth
 And love reigns lord of all the years.

36 *A Song of Grief and Joy and Love.*

There is a Love too grand, too great,
Too deep for words, too sweet for song,
That lives for those who weep and wait,
Though day be dark and night be long.
Ah, yes ! to Thee our hearts would press
And count all things beside but loss,
Poor wanderers in life's wilderness
That seek the solace of Thy Cross.





TEN YEARS AGO!

TEN years ago, a little child of seven,
 You sat with folded hands upon my knee,
 And told me all your childish thoughts of Heaven
 And what you meant your life meanwhile to be,
 And sang with laughter in your clear blue eyes—
 ‘How sweet the world and sweeter Paradise!’

But now you sit with hands fast clasped in mine,
 And in your face there dwells a new delight,
 And both our lives are bathed in love divine
 Whose golden day has dawned upon our night.
 Ah! happy tears that glisten in your eyes!—
 How sweet is love! This, this is Paradise!—

* * * * *

Ten years ago!—and you are twenty-seven—
 I stand once more and look upon your face:
 The life has passed that was to be a heaven—
 A ten years’ hell of darkness and disgrace!—

How wild the glare of those dead, fightless eyes !—
Alas ! they have no look of Paradise !—

Poor heart ! poor heart ! I lay you in your grave
And leave therein the memories of the past :
One murmured prayer to God your soul to save,
One lingering look—and you have peace at last.
Life lies stretched out before my wearied eyes—
How lost is love ! how far off Paradise !





SPRING AND WINTER.

I NEVER knew you in the Spring
 Nor framed in Summer's grace,
 The tired birds had ceased to sing
 When first I saw your face.
 And ere a leaf was born again
 To its wind-tossed parent tree
 My life's bright light was quenched in pain
 And you were dead to me.

Short, wintry days ! like you, love's glow
 Passed all too soon away.
 Dark hours ! that dawn no more I know
 That turned your night to day.
 Summer and Autumn, Winter, Spring
 Pass by—I care not how—
 Those winter days were all my Spring
 And Spring is Winter now.



THINE !

THINE for ever ! darling one !
 Thine ! through the stricken, struggling years !
 Thine ! though the darkness sinks my sun,
 Loft, loft in tears !

Thine ! in this toilsome, thorn-strewn way !
 Thine ! in the transient gleams of light—
 Thoughts of a long-past happier day,
 Ere all was night !

Thine for ever ! love of mine !
 Thine ! though the worldlings curse and rave—
 My heart and soul and body thine
 Until the grave !

Thine ! in a far-off fairer place !
 Thine ! on a bright and tearless shore,
 Lit with the sunlight of thy face
 For evermore !



SONGS OF THE NIGHT.

No. I.

THE sunlit hours are past and gone,
 The world is hushed in sleep,
 'Tis I alone, the sleepless one,
 My night-long vigils keep :
 Watching for one who never comes
 In answer to my prayer,
 But fighting still with faithful heart
 The demon of despair.

O love ! if in my waking hours
 Thou canst not come to me,
 If watching ever day by day
 Thy face I may not see,
 Give me in dreams one long, last look
 And kiss me but once more,
 Then life has nothing left for me,
 And death may close my door.

No. II.

Midnight ! the darkest hour of all the night !

The sands indeed have run—the day is dead :
But in that death is born a morrow's light
That from these shades shall lift its golden head.

Yea, presently
A dawn shall rise, dear love, for you and me.

Midnight ! and our sad hearts could well despair.

What hope is ours in these dull hours of pain ?
Simply that when things seem too hard to bear
Fate holds its hand and Fortune smiles again.

Yea, verily
The wheel shall turn, dear love, for you and me.

Midnight !—Alas ! the hours of love have fled,

And from its ashes love can never rise :
His days alone, once numbered with the dead,
Can wake no more upon our weeping eyes.

Yea, it must be,
Love's midnight ours, dear love, eternally !



TWO ROSES AND A LILY.

TWO roses and a lily fair
 · For love and spotless purity—
 A breath of sweetness on the air—
 A flood of memory !

See ! one rose droops, its bright bloom past,
 And hangs its head that soon must die—
 'Twould seem that love can never last
 In twofold sympathy.

O lily, feed with thy sweet breath
 That other rose that clings to thee,
 For, close-entwined, there is no death
 For love and purity.



IN COVENT GARDEN MARKET.

A CROSS and bouquet of fair white flowers
 Lying side by side,
 One for a young life's sun-lit hours
 And one for eventide.

One for the gleam of love's glad dawn,
 First felt—half unconfessed,
 And one for the heart so sad, so worn,
 That finds at length its rest.

O symbols fair of life and death,
 When all that is is past,
 May we whose lives are a living death
 Find life in death at last !



THREE BURDENS.

THE burden of life—Hours of pain,
 Strong struggles for victories vain,
 Dull doom of dust to dust again—
 A ship of insecurity
 On stormy sea.

The burden of love—A bright morn
 That looks its loveliest at its dawn,—
 Ah! better had it ne'er been born!
 For soon drive mists of misery
 O'er darkened sea.

The burden of Christ—Blinding tears,
 A longing and love through long years,
 A faith that is death to all fears—
 Then glorious eternity
 Of Golden Sea.



'THE EVENING BRINGS ALL HOME.'

THE evening brings all home? — Ah me !
 We have toiled the live-long day,
 And tired hearts, I ween, have we
 And scarcely strength to pray.
 See where our bruised and bleeding feet
 Have left their tracks behind—
 Ah ! steep the hill to the haven sweet
 And hard that house to find !

Home ! Home ! in the eventide !
 Seek ye the door !
 Home ! Home ! and there abide
 For evermore !

‘ The evening brings all home ! ’ — Behold !
 The sun has all but set —
 We knock at the door in the cruel cold
 But there comes no answer yet.

Are there none in the house to hear our cry ?
Has the toil been all in vain ?
Is it here at the door that we must die
In hopeless, helpless pain ?

Home ! Home ! in the eventide !
Swings back the door !
Home ! Home ! safe ! side by side !
For evermore !





A LIVING GRAVE.

PREDESTINED from thy birth to know
 The full, foul fruits of cruelty,
 Ah ! patient victim ! child of woe !
 How shall we gauge thine agony ?

How shall we count the burning tears
 That in thy childhood's hours were shed ?
 Fit training they for future years
 Of life and hope crushed out and dead

Is it a curse that hunts thee down,
 Born of some ancient infamy,
 That through the ages filtering down
 Bursts forth, a fateful legacy ?

Was it that this world's tear-worn way
 Was no fit place for love so fair ?

That thou didst make too bright the day
For us poor children of despair ?

We know not. Only this we know,
As weeping at thy grave we stand,
That it was life thy love to know
And peace the clasp of thy dear hand.

Ah now ! dear Dead, what peace can be
In this thy tortured, sleepless night ?
What peace for us, what peace for thee,
That, longing, look in vain for light ?

Farewell ! Farewell ! for aye farewell !
We tread the path that thou hast trod,
Thine every pain we know full well
And bear with thee the wrath of God.

O day that is but life's long death !
'Tis only He release can bring,
Can turn this life of living death
To death that is glad life's day/spring.



SO STILL!

SO still ! so still ! the Sea !
 No ripple stirs its calm and glorious face
 Kissed lightly by a breath that leaves no trace
 And passes silently.

So still ! so still ! the Night !
 No single note of bird, no rustling leaf—
 A stillness as the grave that knows nor grief
 Nor pain nor dear delight.

So still ! so still ! my Heart !
 That, patient, waits the livelong night till morn,
 Ay ! waits till Sundered lives in love's own dawn
 Are linked, no more to part.



A SONG OF DEATH.

NO! No! let me die! For, love, I will not live,
 Since thou art false that art too dear to me :
 Speak to me not of life, for love thou canst not give,
 And Death, more kind, shall kill this misery.

Death! Death! thou art welcome to my wearied soul,
 I have no fear but fold thee to my breast,
 Over my wasted years let thy black waters roll
 And in that sea of silence let me rest.

Years! years I have waited, yearning fore for thee,
 For thy deep sleep shall heal my heart's dull pain ;
 And 'tis in thee, dear friend, I shall once more be free,
 And, losing life, shall learn to smile again.

Lord, from this weary world I flee,
 For 'tis Death's door that leads to Thee
 And Love through all eternity.



A SONG OF LOVERS.

BEHOLD ! a band of lovers clad
 In garments rich and fair,
 And loud their song rings out and glad
 To all the summer air :
 A song that sings of happiness,
 Of long-forgotten tears,
 Of death to pain and bitterness
 And life of love-crowned years.

The same procession comes again,
 But clad in sombre hue,
 Their hearts are damped with winter's rain,
 Their songs are sad and few :
 Their lily-crowns are smirched with mire
 And bruised their wearied feet,
 But in their eyes there burns the fire
 Of love that is so sweet.

Yea, love, dear lord, in weal and woe
Our hearts still turn to thee,
'Neath summer suns and winter's snow
Thine ever we would be !
O give us measure of delight
And bloom of thy bright flowers,
Though day be swallowed up in night
And lost in death the hours.





A PRAYER.

KEEP us, Thou righteous God, from bitterness,
 Lest we despair and murmur against Thee :
 Teach us the sum of all life's littleness
 And give us rest in Thine immensity.

Let me myself forget for one short hour
 And plead with Thee another's bitter grief :
 Lord, that in mercy makest known Thy power,
 Stretch out, stretch out the right hand of relief.

Think of the gloom of these unhappy years,
 Think of the darkness of that cruel night,
 Think of that exile in a land of tears
 Without one tender word, one ray of light !

Look on that broken life, so young, so sweet,
 Done to its death by foul and loathsome hate—

Prostrate, behold ! I cast me at Thy feet—
Wilt Thou not answer ere it be too late ?

Thy will be done ! My God, Thou knowest best,
In ways mysterious all things work Thy will ;
Forgive these tears, my faithless heart's unrest,
And in Thy mercy teach me to be still.





HAVE YOU NO WORD ?

HAVE you no word to say to me
 That loved you so these many years,
 No single word of sympathy
 For all my bitter tears ?

How have I mourned your luckless fate
 And that pure love that now you spurn !
 That love that yet deserves—(too late !)
 Some slight return !

O silent one, that answers not !
 O cruel soul, that makes no sign !
 Your heart, frost-bound, has clean forgot
 That dream divine.

Come ! soothe my heart and dry my tears,
 For you are all the world to me,
 Come back ! and steep these love-lorn years
 In love's felicity !



OF THOSE AT SEA.

I'M thinking of those at sea, love,
 This dark and stormy night,
 Drifting right on to the cruel rocks
 And never a warning light.—
 Christ their Guide and Pilot be
 To the far home-land they fain would see,
 Of His love and boundless clemency !

I'm thinking of those at sea, love,
 On an ocean of despair,
 And the waves that break upon them
 Are stronger than they can bear.—
 Christ ! that walked upon the sea,
 From out these waves we cry to Thee
 For peace and tender sympathy.

I'm thinking of those at sea, love,
 The silent deep of death,

Of the souls of men and women
That have sigh'd their last, long breath.—
Christ! Thy light shall make them Thine,
And gloom be lost in glad sunshine,
Thou Haven sweet of Love divine!





*‘MY HARP IS TURNED TO
MOURNING.’*

(JOB, xxx.)

M^Y harp is turned to mourning,
 To mourning sad and low,
 Mine organ into weeping
 And weary voice of woe.
 I cry in prayer unceasing,
 But ah ! Thou hearest not,
 In silence stand despairing
 And Thou regardest not.

Behold ! me unresisting
 Thou liftest to the wind,
 Before Thy storms appalling
 I crouch, deaf, dumb, and blind.

60 *'My Harp is Turned to Mourning.'*

To death, to death, Thou'lt bring me,
My foul Thou wilt not save—
Ah, yes ! full soon Thou'lt fling me
Like duft into the grave !

Have I not wept that dear one,
That heart so true and pure ?
Have I not mourned that poor one
That lived but to endure ?
Why are we lost in darkness,
That look so long for light,
Our sad souls steeped in blackness
Of everlasting night ?

The waters break around us,
The waters wide and deep,
Their terrors turn upon us,
Yea, even in our sleep !
O Lord, Thou know'ft with weeping
How drowned are all our years,
How turned our harp to mourning,
Our organ into tears !



O TURN YOUR FACES !

O TURN your faces to the West,
 And bid the sun a last adieu,
 Then hie you home and take your rest—
 (The world is fair for you !)

But ere you close your eyes in sleep,
 Sweet sleep that lasts till morning light,
 The sleepless ones in mem'ry keep—
 (How dark for them the night!)

Pray for the stricken ones—the sad—
 The exiles—vanished—clean forgot—
 The wounded—hunted—well-nigh mad—
 (What death in life their lot !)

Ah ! well-loved faces of the dead,
 That live your lives in pain and wrong,

Be present here around our bed—
(My God ! how long ? how long ?)

Come back one moment as of yore
And whisper sweetly in our ears
Of days and hours that are no more—
(Ah me ! those love-lit years !)

O Thou, my God, that knowest best,
Take Thou our lost and dead to Thee,
Bind up their wounds and give them rest
In Thine eternity !



*FORGET YOU?*

FORGET you ? O my dear one ! No !
Your face I never can forget,
And for that love of long-ago
I languish yet.

Ah ! then the thought was sweet and dear
That evermore there at my side
You'd live with me year after year
Till days had died.

But now I know it could not be,
And oh ! His will, not ours, be done !
There's love at last for you and me
Beyond the sun.

Farewell ! I leave you in His hand,
Till passing through Death's welcome door
We meet upon that Golden Strand,
To part no more.



O MY DEAR ONE !

O MY dear one, how I love you !
Better, better every day,
With unending, true devotion
Deeper far than I can say.
When at evening dies the daylight,
Loft at length in night's embrace,
All the gloom is steeped in sunshine
By the memory of your face.
And with morning comes the whisper
Of the name that I adore,
And I waken, sleep forfaking,
Wake to love you more and more.

O my dear one, loved so truly,
Though the years are lone and sad,
Memory lives and speaks of solace,
Speaks of hope and makes me glad.

For some dawn shall end the sadness,
For some day shall kill the pain,
For our lives shall come together,
Bloom and blossom once again.
Love shall find its consummation
On the Paradisal Shore,
Love triumphant ! Love undying !
Love that lives for evermore !





AND THEN—

SO long ago ! and yet it seems
 But yesterday you passed me by,
 And what I'd dreamt in shadowy dreams
 Became a sweet reality.
 You turned and placed your hand in mine—
 I whispered low the where and when—
 You answered with a smile divine—
 And then—my love !—and then—

The golden days flew by—too fast !—
 One blinding flash—and all was o'er—
 Our love a thing of some vague past,
 Our lives a wreck for evermore.
 No single word of last adieu—
 You went—and never came again—
 I'd lost my all in losing you—
 And then—my God !—and then—

Ah ! years have passed of grief and pain,
But, faithful still, I watch and wait,
Though love for me dawns not again
On this side of the Silent Gate.
For in some fair and distant land
Beyond the bounds of mortal ken
We'll wander ever hand in hand—
And then—dear love!—and then—





COULD I BUT KNOW!

COULD I but know you thought sometimes of me
 With just one pang for all the joy and pain,
 That some remembrance sweet still stirred a memory
 Of that dear past within your heart again !
 Can yet some strain of music wake the tears
 In those poor wearied eyes I worshipped so,
 And once again bring back the love-lit years ?—
 Could I but know, dear love, could I but know !—

Could I but know your heart was healed at last,
 Your spirit raised from out the dust once more !
 Yea, even though some love, new-born, should kill the past
 And my remembrance fade for evermore !
 Could I but give my life to ease your pain,
 My shattered love to bear alone the blow,
 And rest assured the gift were not in vain !—
 Could I but know, dear love, could I but know !—



ON THE BREEZY UPLAND.

ON the breezy upland here I stand,
 Gazing across the sea,—
 Is there never a single home-bound ship
 That brings one word to me ?

There's a summer sea and a fair south wind
 And many a ship in sight,
 But all are sailing to distant lands
 Or else to left or right.

O ships ! come dancing in from the blue
 And over the harbour-bar,
 'Tis a haven of rest that waits for all
 That hail from near and far.

Ah ! deaf and cruel, that do not hear !
 Sail on then, if ye will !—

My heart is unchanging unto death
And it can wait on still.

A heart that hopes and a heart that loves
Through many a mist of tears,
Though never a word come home to me
Through all the silent years.





A PRIMROSE.

A CROSS the wild and stormy sea
 I send you just one single flower,
 To wake one moment's thought of me
 And call to mind one vanished hour.

O let its perfume speak to you
 Of that too-brief and golden day
 Wherein I lived my life and knew
 Just one bright gleam from out the grey.

A primrose pale—the flower of spring—
 Fresh-culled, with tears, by mine own hand,
 To stir old memories sweet and bring
 An echo of the dear home-land.

Oh ! eyes are dim and hearts are true
 When here your name is murmured low,

And some poor lives are dark till you
Return to those that loved you so.

Come back ! come back ! what happiness
To see your dear, dear face once more !
Come back ! and turn this wilderness
To fair rose-bloom for evermore !





DIDST THOU BUT SLEEP!

DIDST thou but sleep I would not grieve,
 Did but thy heart lie 'neath the sod,
 My heart could rest, content to leave
 Our lot, in life and death, to God.
 For I am framed in mortal clay
 And there's too much of earth in me,
 My soul is fashioned for a day
 And quails at Heaven's eternity.

But death for thee would be the gate
 Of life renewed for evermore,
 And death the wing whereon thy fate
 To royal realms of bliss would soar.
 For this poor world is nought to thee,
 To happier climes thy face is set,
 Where Saints and Angels ever be
 And savèd souls their sighs forget.

But ah ! dear one, thou livest still,
Thou yet the pangs of life dost bear,
And, though far, far away, I thrill
With every throb of thy despair.
Christ take thee to Himself, I pray,
To His dear Arms wherein to lie !—
Sleep ! till thine eyes at Break of Day
Shall wake to Immortality !



*I LOVE YOU!*

I LOVE you in the earliest dawn,
When all the skies are sunk in sleep,
And waiting for the birth of morn
The stars their death-watch faintly keep.

I love you in the wondrous hour
When stream the sunrays o'er the world,
And rising with resistless power
The young day's banner waves unfurled.

I love you in the glorious noon,
When high the sun reigns royally,
And all the flowers droop and swoon
And shed their sweetness wantonly.

I love you in the evening hour,
When strefs and toil of day are done,

And birds from every leafy bower
Sing fond farewell to the setting sun.

And, best of all, in dead of night,
When naught can come 'twixt you and me,
And I can bathe me in delight
And bask in sweetest memory.

Ah, yes ! I love you, night and day,
Love you, my darling, more and more,
Live but to hope, and trust, and pray
To meet you on some happier shore.





REMEMBER ME!

O MY beloved,
 Though this is Heaven's decree,
 That steeped in pain and parted
 Our lives must ever be,
 Through all the void and cruel night
 Remember me!—

Love! it is hard to say—
 Finished—the love-lit years!
 As we stand at the dear divided way
 In a tender mist of tears.—

O my beloved,
 My life belongs to thee,
 My soul is but the temple
 Of thy dear memory,
 And from its shrine I breathe the prayer—
 Remember me!—

Kiss me once more—we part—
Once more—then it must be—
Farewell !—and a cry from heart to heart—
My love ! remember me !





FAR AWAY.

FAR away across the billows,
 Surging waste of cruel sea,
 Eyes so dear and sad and tender
 Strain and weep and watch for me.
 And my voice thrills through the silence,
 Breaking out in bitter cry—
 Love ! my love ! how can I reach thee,
 Clasp thee once more ere I die ?
 And there comes no word in answer—
 At my feet the fullen sea—
 In my heart a dull despairing
 For the love that's lost to me.

Far away across the billows
 Of life's sad and stormy sea,
 There's a land of love and sweetness
 Where my spirit fain would be.

For the winter time is weary,
For the night is dark and cold,
For the flowers are dead and dying
And the years are waxing old.
And I stand with arms outstretching,
Gazing o'er the troubled sea,
Waiting for a gleam of sunshine
That shall bring the dawn for me.





BREAK THROUGH!

AS one that hungers in a desert land
 And cries aloud for comfort, rest, and food,
 So on the downward path of life I stand
 And wait one single word, one sign for good.
 Break through the silence! love of mine,
 For though our lives are lived apart
 Across the leagues thy voice divine
 Shall find an echo in my heart.

Let me look back along the length of years
 And ask how harsh or fair my fate has been :
 Alas! the answer!—Two long nights of tears
 With just one hour of sunshine in between.
 Break through the gloom! dear love of mine,—
 My sun, alas! is far away,
 But through the clouds thy rays divine
 Shall drown the night in glorious day.

O prison walls, wherein my heart lies dead !
O cruel doors, well barred with lock and key !
O dreams delusive, born of hope and fed
By thoughts of long-past love and liberty !
Break through the bars ! thou love of mine,
Strike off the chains and set me free !
Saved ! saved at length by love divine
My heart shall find its rest in thee !





ALONG THE SANDS.

(A SONG OF BOURNEMOUTH.)

A LONG the sands to Branksome
 And home across the heath,
 With a sky of gold above me
 And an azure sea beneath.
 O wondrous world of beauty !
 O picture passing fair !
 Your symphony of gladness
 Is more than I can bear.

Ye sunlit woods and sky and sea,
 Your smile is careless cruelty,
 For love is lost and dead to me !

Along the sands to Branksome
 And home across the heath,

With a sky of grey above me
And a leaden sea beneath.
A moan comes through the pine-trees,
A dirge from out the sea —
'Tis all one wail of sadness,
One chord of sympathy.

Welcome ! ye clouds that hide the sun,
For all the hours of joy have run
And love for me is lost and done !





THE RAISING OF LAZARUS.

(ST. JOHN, XI.)

IN Bethany there sounds a sister's wail—
 'O Jesus, Lord, if by that dear bedfide,
 Thou too hadst stood, when dawned the morning pale
 On eyes death-dulled, my brother had not died.'

JESUS WEPT.—O rain of blessed tears
 That told His love for that thrice-happy dead !
 O voice most sweet that echoing down the years
 From out the dust has raised each mourner's head.

'I am the Resurrection and the Life !
 He that on Me believeth, though he die
 Yet shall he live : the end of earthly strife
 Is life in Me : My dear ones cannot die !'

Behold ! the stone rolls back, that door of death,
And loud on all the air rings out the call—
‘Lazarus ! come forth !’—and whilst they scarce
draw breath
He that was dead comes forth before them all.

See, where he casts him at his Saviour’s feet
With tears of joy and mute, adoring kifs !
Hear the glad words of love and comfort sweet
Of Friend to friend and Heart to heart in blifs !

O Christ ! by Thy remembrance of these tears,
By Thy deep love for him, Thine earthly friend,
Bind up the wounds that waste our hapless years
And raise us, dead, to life that has no end !





ONE ALONE !

ONLY one cry of distress—
 Only one heart stricken sore—
 Only one poor life the less—
 That is no more !

Only one stab in the dark—
 Only one moan of despair—
 Only one corpse stiff and stark—
 That was so fair !

Only one great stretch of sea—
 Only one sad, sunless shore—
 Only one voice lost to me
 For evermore !

ONE alone—that knows the pain—
 ONE alone—can dry these tears—
 ONE alone—shall raise again
 The dear dead years !



*A SUNSET SEEN THROUGH THE
BRANCHES OF A YEW TREE.*

MY face is turned to the setting sun
In the solemn evening hour,
With the fands of daylight all but run
And closed each weary flower.

And 'twixt that last rose-flush and me
The branches cross and twine
Of a great wide-spreading graveyard-tree—
And these sad thoughts are mine :—

It seems it is only at the close,
When life is sinking fast,
That here the tired pilgrim knows
A gleam of light at last.

Yea, even then between that light
And his poor wearied eyes
There stretch the bars of the grave's dark night
Athwart the golden skies.

Break down! my God! break down the bars
And sweep all shades away,
Thou Light of sun and moon and stars,
Thou Everlasting Day!





THREE FATEFUL DAYS.

THE day wherein I saw, and loved, your face—
The day we sealed our love in first embrace—
The day you left, and, leaving, left no trace.





FORSAKEN !

WHY did you leave me, O my darling,
 Drowning my life in bitter tears ?
 Why did you leave me, thus forsaken,
 Leave me to languish all these years !
 O my love, it was hard and cruel,
 Hard and cruel so young to die—
 Life for us both seemed fair and lovely,
 Fair as the dawn in a summer sky.
 Fair as the bloom of a thousand roses,
 Fair as the scent of an orange-grove,
 Sweet as the whispered words of lovers,
 Sweet as the wondrous wine of love.
 Then, how we drained that draught enthralling,
 Yea, loved and laughed in the long-ago,
 Loved in the glad and golden sunshine,
 Laughed at the winter of death and woe !—
 Ah ! now, a grave for love and laughter !
 Ah ! now, a draught of bitter wine !

Ah ! now, a blight on all the roses,
Death to the dream of a life divine !—
So muft it be, fince thus you wifh it,
So muft it be, I know, for aye—
And this my anfwer—O God blefs you !—
Love, loved fo dearly, Good-bye ! Good-bye !

THE END.

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