Spring Life

Lyrics

Moore, J. Sheridan (1828-1891)

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Spring Life
Lyrics
Sydney
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“VER erat aeternum; placidique tepentibus auris
Mulcebant Zephyri natos sine semine flores.” — Ovidius.
Preface.

I HAVE been induced to issue this collection of “Spring-Life Lyrics,” the first-fruits of my literary labours in Australia, for reasons which the public, or such portion of it as takes any interest in unmercantile matters of the kind, will respect, even if it cannot approve. Two-thirds of the contents of this volume originally made their appearance in the columns of newspapers, or the pages of magazines. They were printed, circulated, looked at by many, read by a few, now and then reproduced in contemporary periodicals, and then allowed to pass into that limbo of fugitive pieces, the scrap-book; or they were utterly forgotten. They are now drawn from their obscurity, through no stern conviction that it was undeserved. Whatever may be my ambition to take a place in other departments of Polite Letters, I have never irreverently thought of forcing my way into the domains of Poetry, for the best of all possible reasons, I am no poet, in the high and true sense of the word. Neither ambition, then, nor vanity, nor the “divine afflatus,” nor the action of “seraph ecstasy,” nor “fine phrensy,” nor any kindred kind of enthusiasm, impelled me to publish this volume of poems. It so happened that one or two parties sufficiently esteemed some of my productions as to quietly appropriate them, slightly changed and fashioned to suit their own purposes, or in accordance with their individual notions of taste. Not liking to submit to this proceeding, I felt it became my duty to claim what belonged to me, and to put forth to the public that which was really mine — and mine only, when freed from the reforming touches of those who had so very liberally applied to them the principles of a literary communism. The collection of these fugitive pieces in a volume, seemed to me the most desirable way of giving them publicity, although, if there had been a purely literary journal in Sydney, I should have been content to re-issue them in its pages, with my name and address added, as an adequate assertion of ownership. I was further induced to take the course I have followed, in consequence of the recent reproduction, in an obscure sectional weekly newspaper, of an illiberal criticism, by Mr. CHARLES HARPUR, on one of my poems, a criticism which I hope that gentleman will yet have the honesty and manliness to modify, and which, I am sure, the public will never endorse. I publish this volume — to sum up these personal considerations in a single sentence — in self-defence; namely, to claim what is mine, and as an appeal from criticism to which I will not submit, to Public Opinion, which if not infallible, is seldom unjust, and which I shall ever respect, even if I do not always accept its first judgments.
A few explanatory paragraphs are necessary to remove certain objections which may, and, without some such prefatory deprecation, probably will, be made against certain portions of this collection.

A sameness of sentiment, it will be noticed, runs through the series of songs entitled “Australian Melodies.” This mainly arises from a circumstance which affected the genesis of those lyrics. When I first wrote them, it was my intention — and I had hopes at the time of being able — to issue a series of Australian Songs, with appropriate music by some of our best composers. Messieurs KENDALL, HALLORAN, and MICHAEL kindly consented to cooperate with me in supplying suitable words. While I left to the two former the embodiment, in their own masterly way, of the higher peculiarities of our national life, and to the latter the harmonious expression of our deeper human emotions, I reserved for myself the pleasant duty of framing such stanzas as would fairly reflect Australian feeling on matters of light moment. Hence it happens that these “Australian Melodies” of mine are neither very Australian, nor very much diversified; are nothing better, in fact, with two exceptions, than the utterances of a “gay troubadour.” Had they been associated with truer and more characteristic lyrics, their sameness of sentiment would not be so apparent. I hope I may yet be able to accomplish my first purpose, and issue a series of Australian Songs, which, both as regards Music and Words, will do us no discredit in the judgment of those who form the highest tribunal of Art-Criticism in London.

In reference to the piece entitled “Yumulu and the Yallahs,” (pp. 133-145), I will make a few observations. That poem, although as now constructed objectively complete, is only a mere fragment of an unwritten epic, of which I have the outline in my mind. I have been long impressed with the conviction that a vein of the purest gold runs through our Indo-Malayan mythology. Notwithstanding the gross materialism and repulsive fanaticism in which the runes of Oceanica are imbedded, I believe traces of the grand “prime tradition” — the degeneracy of Man and the promise of his regeneration — can be discovered in them; and that opportunity, industry, and clear-headedness will yet render them available to the elucidation of truth and the enlargement of human knowledge. When the antiquarian and the philologist shall have laboured with some satisfactory results in this interesting field of inquiry, doubtless a Poet will arise and put their materials into some such goodly shape and form as LONGFELLOW has the myths and legends of the Red Man of North America, in his glorious and immortal “Song of Hiawatha.”

I have little further to add, beyond expressing a hope that these lyrical essays of mine will be judged by the Public with a due regard to all the circumstances under which they were originally written, and that they will be accepted as an honest and affectionate, if not very valuable, contribution to the Literature of Australia. Let them not be subjected to that most crucial of all kinds of criticism — contrast with the most matured creations of the best living British poets. Because we cannot in Australia, embody our emotions, or give utterance
to our inspirations, like the TENNYSONS and BROWNINGS of England, shall we, on that account, shut our eyes to the glimpses of the Beautiful, which Nature vouchsafes us, close our ears to the divine harmonies, and never raise our voice in a paean to the CREATOR? As we admit degrees of power and differences of character in all orders of intelligence — the beings of the spirit-world included; in all the hierarchies of religion; in all those who influence or direct human society — the guilds of Art emphatically included — let us not condemn those who aim — however humbly — at high things, chanting “Excelsior” all the while, because there happen to be other persons in the world whose height of excellence they cannot reach. This standard of criticism has seriously checked the development of literary enterprise in Australia.

I will, with another explanatory remark, bring this tedious preface to an end. I have excluded from the collection pieces, which rightfully belong to it, such as my “Myths and Legends of the Ages,” and certain rhymed pleasantries by which I am somewhat favourably known to a section of the public; and I have included the “Carmen Natale,” which is not a Springlife creation at all. Both the omission and admission have been determined by personal considerations, which I could not reasonably resist.

* I allude more particularly to the cool and skilful appropriation made in “Texts for Talkers” (London: Saunders, Otley, and Co., 1860), where extracts from pieces of mine are given as the productions of one OAKFIELD, while a sly hint is elsewhere prefixed, to the effect that “OAKFIELD” and the author of the “Texts” are identical. Cf. pp. viii., 23, 45, and 161. The reverence with which we regard the graves even of those who have done us disservice, prevents one from animadverting further on this point. The author of the “Texts” is now beyond the reach of praise or censure.
Spring-Life Lyrics.
Vignette.

IN the shining day —
In the shadowy night —
On his quiet way —
'Mid the world's fierce strife —
Where the flowers bloom —
Where the forests fade —
When his soul's in gloom —
When in light arrayed —
The Poet, to his instinct true,
Sings: — 'TIS THE WORK HE IS CALLED TO DO.
Hail, Boundless Ocean, Hail!

1
'TIS come at last, the hour to part,
   And leave the land behind;
Our glorious bark strains on the start,
   Her flag flaps in the wind.
Then up, true friends and spirits brave,
   And watch the swelling sail;
For, O, there's life upon the wave —
   Hail, boundless Ocean, hail!

2
Leave, leave, to those who love the land
   Their hills and valleys fair;
And let their velvet cheeks be fanned
   By soft and scented air;
For we, by scorching suns embrowned,
   Against them will not rail;
We know where life is to be found —
   Hail, boundless Ocean, hail!

3
And what if dangers round us rise,
   And what if wild winds rave;
If lightnings burst through blackened skies,
   And glare upon the wave;
'Tis God's own sovran voice we hear,
   So awful in the gale:
'Mid storms we feel His presence near —
Hail, boundless Ocean, hail!

4

All hail! immense, eternal Sea!
   Wild home in which we pride;
We never feel that we are free,
   Till on thy swelling tide.
Upon thy palpitating breast,
   Life's cares and sorrows fail
To flout or gloom our visions blest —
   Hail, boundless Ocean, hail!
To the Wild Geese.

1

SWEEP on, sweep on, to the summer sea,
Ye children of Nature, wild and free.
The wiles of the wicked, your olden foe,
As high through the realms of light ye go,
Can never reach you. Thus bravely soar,
Till you gain your sunlit seas once more.

2

Away, away, on untiring wing,
To the spot where the spirits of ocean sing
On lucent waves. 'Tis your native home,
And your pillows of peace its feathery foam.
Then blest be your flight to the summer sea,
Ye children of Nature, wild and free!

3

Rich is the sunshine upon your way,
And bright is the ocean to which ye stray;
And thrilling the rapture before you — to lave
Your stainless breasts in the flashing wave.
Then on, sweep on, to the summer sea
Ye children of Nature, wild and free!
Fairy Queen's Song.

1

THE moonbeam bright
Now lavishly throws
Its stainless light
On the bursting rose;
    Then haste — haste — haste
My airy, fairy train!
    No bright time waste
In gambols on the plain.
    Spirits!
Gather round me, and around me sing,
    Ere to the glen we ride,
    Ere to the glen we glide,
On the moonbeam's silvery wing.

CHORUS OF FAIRIES.

    Fair Queen! Rare Queen!
We are around thee in a ring;
    Light Queen! Bright Queen!
At thy high command we sing.

2

Our pearls are here;
Behold them around —
    The dew-drops clear,
Begemming the ground.
    Our light crowns, too —
The young bluebell's cup;
    'Tis time that you,
Fairy elves, pluck them up.
    Spirits!
Snatch your crowns, and let us away
   To the wild, wild glen,
   To the shadowed glen —
Ere 'tis touched by the morning's ray.

CHORUS OF FAIRIES.

   True Queen! You Queen!
See, we're crowned to fly away;
   Fleet Queen! Great Queen!
Ere 'tis tinged by Morning's ray.

3

Hark! through the trees
I hear fitful sighs —
   Gasps of a breeze
Which in the distance dies.
   We are more fleet
In our fairy flight —
   Our song more sweet —
Than the sighs of Night.
   Spirits!
List ye to this, my last command: —
   When ye see afar
   A bright shooting-star,
Then follow me all to Fairyland!

CHORUS OF FAIRIES.

   Wise Queen! Star Queen!
We hearken to thy last command.
   Lo, Queen! the Star
   Shoots forth afar. —
We're off — we're off — to Fairyland!
Our Australian Land.

YOUNG and fresh, and wondrous rich,
Our Land before us lies;
A glorious gift of Providence
   To prize, as freemen prize:
Oh, while the sun's auspicious rays
   In our blue heavens shine,
With hearts as warm we'll thank thee, God,
   For this great boon of Thine!

A bulwark wall around our coast,
   Which seas have not effaced —
To guard us from all outward foes,
   Thy sovran hand hath placed.
And there are strongholds, too, within —
   And there are ramparts good —
The union of stout-hearted men —
   The rights of nationhood.

Our Land is fair — her skies are bright —
   Her heart is made of gold;
And all the wonders of her wealth
   Time only can unfold.
And, therefore, 'tis our duty clear
   To work right manfully,
That brighter, purer, ampler far
   Her moral realm may be.

Then, like the native tree that sheds
   Its rugged bark, we'll try
To cast each year some fault away —
   Some harsh deformity.
And, like the faithful evergreens
   That fringe our golden plains,
Perennial let our virtues live,
   Whatever season reigns.

O Star of Peace, around us shed
   Thy tender, placid light:
Inspire our hearts — illume our minds —
And keep them sound and bright!
O Sun of Freedom, 'mid our gloom,
   In holiest glory rise,
To purify Australian hearts —
   To light Australian skies!
Sea Studies.

Inscribed to Captain Justin Cooper, R.N.

1

WHEN'ER thy bark, at midnight hour, rides o'er the heaving tide,
Like some fair sprite of ocean's wave, in beauty, peace, and pride;
Upon the scenes around thee spread, oh, cast a reverent look —
There God unfolds two wondrous leaves of His eternal book.
The one is Ocean, diademed with flecks of mystic light,
And resting in dread loveliness within the arms of Night:
The other is the sapphire dome, pavilioned on the deep,
In which, like guardian spirits, the stars their watches keep;
While o'er the sea and through the sky, in weird and wild career,
The winds pour forth a paean, enrapturing to hear;
The winds awake a music, which every soul-chord thrills —
Which all the cells of feeling with sense of beauty fills.

2

Perchance the scene will change anon, and clouds creep up the sky,
Throw shadows on our starlit sea, and veil the orbs on high;
Perchance that gloom will raise the ghosts of memories dark and drear,
Which we had hoped too deeply laid again to re-appear.
How like this page of chequered sea is to our shadowed life —
Now flashing in joy's fitful gleam — now lost in gloom and strife;
But still 'mid cheerlessness and change, brave hearts their course will keep,
Until they reach the haven where the heavenly waters sleep!

3

Methinks, no revelation more fully sates our eyes,
Than do the moonless, solemn seas, o'crarched by starry skies;
None where the Soul more clearly can Mystery explore,
Behold her God in everything, and tremblingly adore.
And yet, the glowing firmament, instinct although it be
With forms of Love and Beauty — of Might and Mystery —
Is but the veil of Isis, which hides from mortal sight
The unrevealed Reality — the primal, central Light.
Ecstatic rapture still impels, on seraph wings of love,
The Soul to soar from star to star — yea, all the spheres above;
From silken bonds and petty cares to break sublime away,
And flash amid adoring hosts a living, loving ray!
“‘All is Vanity,’ Saith the Preacher.”

LADYE, thy robe is bright and gay,
And rich are the hues which o'er it play;
It shines like the flush of evening's glean
On glossy plumage, or glassy stream.
Ladye, I would not give you pain,
Still, I must tell you — not to be vain
Of your silken robe and its shining train
Pitiful insects that fibre spun —
Yea, wasted their very lives upon.

Ladye, a chain of twisted gold
Upon your neck — of chastest mould —
Is loosely thrown: (its gleam so fine
Attracts the eye from the golden shine
Of thy radiant hair.) O Sister mine!
Let not that trinket — that petty toy —
Inspire you with unholy joy;
That gold was digged from the depths of earth,
Where gnomes and trolls had place of birth.

Ladye, I see in your auburn hair
Diamonds bright, and pearl-drops rare —
Thy native beauties, methinks, they mar,
Which, lacking them, would be fairer far.
Ladye, can diamonds make thee vain,
Stolen from marids beneath the main?
Can pearls infuse a thrill of pride —
The warts from which some shell-fish died?
To Mary of St. Leonard's.

How blest! to stray through yonder gloom,
When Silence rules the scene;
When Night, in all her starry bloom,
Is bright without her Queen.

How sweet to rest on some rude rock,
And think, or dream, in peace,
How best to meet fell Fortune's shock,
And make Life's sorrows cease;

To crush dark memories for awhile
Within their spirit-cell;
And let the soul on Heaven's smile
A few bright moments dwell.

Life's wear and tear — its moil and toil —
The lava of the breast —
Hypocrisies, with snaky coil,
Which make the world's unrest,

Are all forgotten, Mary mild,
Whene'er with thee I stray,
When stars look down upon the Wild,
Inviting all to pray.

Oh, let us, then, through yonder glen,
Where foot hath seldom trod,
Roam, heedless of the haunts of men,
To find the ways of God!
Material and Moral Changes.

1

I REMEMBER me once, with a cheerless eye,
To have gazed on a wild-faced wintry sky,
   To have sighed o'er a dreary scene;
For the landscape had lost its emerald dress,
The gardens their bloom and their loveliness,
   And the trees their shimmering sheen.
While I gazed, a cloud cruddled up in the air,
And let loose a storm on the woodlands bare,
   Which shook them with such rough rage,
That Nature seemed in that woful waste,
She looked so blurred — was so quickly defaced —
   To have sunk into sudden old age.

2

A few weeks gone, and I chanced once more
To view that landscape, all hopeless before,
   When I saw — with what surprise! —
All glowing and bright, like a blushing bride,
In the beauty of Spring extended wide,
   An Eden before mine eyes.
The heavens had lost their gloom and their frown —
The fields had flung off their deep sombre brown —
   Air and earth were flooded with light;
And playful winds, on their vassal wings,
Scattered fragrance stolen from all scented things,
   Which breathed in the sunshine bright.

3
“If God,” I cried, “the Sovereign Lord,
At whose creative luminous word,
Was wrought this wondrous change,
In a drearier scene will please to raise
A brighter world, oh why not praise,
His might so surpassingly strange?
On the dark and desolate human heart,
With the clouds of sin and remorse o'ercast,
Rich love doth He lovingly shed;
He flingeth a ray of His brightening grace,
And the shadows of death flit from the place
Where they lay like palls on the Dead.”

What spirit, illumed with the light of love,
Will not sigh to soar to her God above,
To the regions of endless day;
From the Life of Shame and the Walks of Death —
From the Basilisk's eye and the Scorpion's breath —
To pass for ever away?
Ah! truly we note in the changes of earth,
In every change which within us hath birth,
What restless wayfarers we be;
Still wandering and watching, in joy or dismay,
For some fairer land and some brighter day,
Till the final revealment we see!
Sighs for Solitude.

OH, give to me deep solitudes,
And I will leave you princely halls;
My soul prefers the horrent woods,
And rocks o'er which a torrent brawls.

I love to roam by ocean's flood,
And watch its breakers seethe and foam;
To wander over mountains rude,
Where eagles make themselves a home.

The silent glade — the haunted glen —
The shadowed regions of the Dead —
All paths but seldom trod by men —
Are charmèd scenes I love to tread.

In these alone — not all alone,
For star-eyed Psyche's by my side —
I revel in wild joys, unknown
To those who love life's restless tide.

Then give to me grim solitudes,
And I will leave you princely halls;
My soul prefers the horrent woods,
And rocks o'er which a torrent brawls.
Life Gloom.

Can nothing awaken
Bright Hope in the breast,
Which Love has forsaken —
Which shadows invest?
Still must it live pining
In slow sure decay,
Its anguish refining,
Till life's passed away?

'Tis strange that our vision
Of purple-hued Love,
When flush and Elysian
As Peris' above,
Should fade like the splendour
Of evening's last light,
Whose gleam, when most tender,
Glides into the night.

The Life-phantom cometh,
As silent as Death;
On the heart-rose which bloometh,
He breathes his fell breath.
That flower droops lowly,
And loses its bloom;
But though it dies slowly,
It dies in perfume.

The Spectre, on-stealing,
Fresh victims will find —
The purest in feeling,
The noblest in mind.
The vampire, unsated,
Still withers and seres;
With thirst unabated,
He feasts on our tears.

And thus, when Love leaves us,
To sorrow alone,
When the bright Hope deceives us,
   All impulse is gone.
Tho earth is less splendid,
   The heaven less bright;
Our golden dream's ended —
   We sink into night.
Myles Silver and His Sons: A Legend of Botany Bay.

AMID the dread monitions of the storm,
When thunder shakes the heaven, and clouds deform
Fair Nature's face, Man (if he will) can learn
The meanness of his greatness to discern;
And (if he will) he can the surge of pride,
Which erst to curb he has all vainly tried,
Drive back into a tideless, inner sea,
And o'er its heavings gain full mastery.
Yea, tempests mutter lessons loud and plain,
And hard's the heart to which they speak in vain.

* * * * * * *

'Tis years agone since, near that beauteous Bay,
Which Crime and Tyranny, alas, the day!
Have stippled deep and dark with Wrong and Shame,
And robbed of all the fragrance of its name,
Dwelt old Myles Silver. Strange and quaint was he,
Full of odd ways and harmless mystery,
Withal a patient and painstaking man,
Silent and mild-eyed, tall and spare and wan.
From whence he came, or how, none rightly knew;
For, questioned, with a smile he could subdue
Keen curiosity: so sadly bright
Was the dim flicker of the inward light
Which played about his lips, none cared to press
Their questions on his meek but sure distress.
Two stalwart sons (brave lads, the neighbours said)
Helped him to earn his humble daily bread;
Helped him with net and noose, harpoon and line,
To snatch a living from the treacherous brine;
Nay, oft without his aidance put to sea,
Thereon to ply their perilous industry.
One eve (the youths had absent been all day)
Old Silver on the beach was seen to stray
By neighbour Jones: for one so calm and staid,
His manner great anxiety betrayed.
Upon a patch of cloud, away to south,
His grey eyes straining, and with open mouth,
His soul concentrèd seemed. Anon, his gaze
He turned most peeringly, and in amaze,
Upon the wine-hued sea; nought there appears
To still the tumult of his doubts and fears.

In sooth, and soon, the cloud-spot blacker grew,
And sullon shadow on the waters threw;
And sudden gloom upon the gold-flecked bush,
Through which low moans in swooning echoes rush.
Eftsoons the waves began to swell and dip;
To fringe with foam the ghastly shore's cold lip;
To seethe and boil, or rush with sudden shock
Against, and smite, the gaunt fire-hardened rock;
To claw the grating sand and shingly shore,
Which by resisting waked its fury more.
The cloud, with fringe of lurid orange bound,
Spread loose above, and on the waters frowned:
Then came the wind in wild career along,
Like courser restless, but like war-horse strong;
And rent the gloom which brooded o'er the deep.
From out the fissure the red lightnings leap
In blinding vividness; an instant glare
On sea and land, like demons of the air,
Then pass away, gulfed by the spissy gloom —
To reappear, and that weird scene relume;
Or signal to the dark-browed wraiths of rain
To pour a torrent on the land and main.
MYLES SILVER, in an ecstacy of woe,
Too deep for even scalding tears to flow,
Along the beach impetuously ran,
His eyes a-flame — his features deadly wan —
His white hair streaming on the fitful wind.
“Oh, save my sons,” he cried, “great God, be kind!
“Put down this sea — call in the maddening wind —
“O FATHER, look upon a father's grief;
“In mercy hear — in pity grant relief!”
All vain his loud appeal and piteous cries —
In vain the tearless anguish of his eyes.
The winds rave on; but 'mid their wild uproar,
He seemed to hear — quite near the darkened shore —
A sudden shriek, an agonising cry,
Such dire acclaim as men make ere they die,
Amid the waves. The anguished father said, —
“I hear, I hear, my sons! and bring you aid;
“Ye are not lost; your father hears your call;
“He'll save you soon, or in the effort fall.”
This said, he gained an opening in the cliff,
From which he launched a frail but sharp-bowed skiff,
And, springing in, his arms love-nervèd sweep
The seething surges of the ravening deep.
He gains the spot whence came the drowning cry,
But nought, save foam-crowned breakers, meets his eye.
Behind, a second shriek he hears; again
He rows towards the sound, but rows in vain,
For, still behind him, cries pierce through the gale.
He turns, returns, but e'er behind him swell
Those wails of woe, bewildering and fell!
Unnerved and maddened, he flings down his oars,
And, louder than the winds' and billows' roars,
He calls his sons. Save echoes of despair,
No sound cuts through the turbid, darkened air.
Some power unseen his skiff drives swiftly on,
Through gulfs of foam Bomboora's rocks upon!
There — boat and boatman, whirled within that hell,
Are shrouded quickly by the foamy swell.

* * * * *

Of old MYLES SILVER and his stalwart sons
(For thus the sequel to the legend runs)
No more was heard, till in their hut one day
A learned clerk, who sojourned on the way,
Did note a massive, oak-bound, bronze-clasped book,
Half hidden by some rubbish in a nook;
Which tome he oped: it proved a Bible old,
On whose fly-leaves, in writing quaint and bold,
Were writ some records of a bloody deed,
Done in the name of Justice — travestied.
How coward Majesty, once, ill-advised,
Had a right trusty servant sacrificed;
It told of dark intrigue and subtle wile,
Of lawmen's quibble and of statesmen's guile:
It called the agents of this deed abhorred,
“A MURDERER KING, AND HIS ASSASSIN LORD!”
And to the tale did this attestation run —
“Witness — MYLES ARGENT BYNG, the Victim’s Son!”
Songs of the Heart.

1. — Life Treasures

'TIS a gladsome, sunny gleam,
Dancing on life's troubled stream,
Brightening, cheering, all the while —
Darling WILLIE’s soul-lit smile.

'Tis a faithful, steady star —
Purer — truer — brighter far
Than any orb in Heaven high —
Glorious WILLIE’s flashing eye.

'Tis a holy, hopeful blush,
Rich as evening’s rosy flush,
Soft as morning’s crimson streak,
That on WILLIE’S youthful cheek.

'Tis a music from above,
Melody of Truth and Love,
Making heart and soul rejoice —
Fervent WILLIE’S magic voice.

'Tis beatitude on earth;
'Tis of true celestial birth;
'Twill surround me when above —
True and truthful WILLIE’S love.

2. — Australian Wife's Song.

Come, rest your weary head, sweet love,
Upon this faithful breast;
Ah, let your own dear CONSTANCE prove
That she can make you blest!
   I know, I know,
   You undergo
Both wearing toil and anxious care —
   What gentler task,
I fondly ask,
Than part of both, my love, to share?

Oh, in the stormy world without,
   Wild waves around you beat;
Unkindness circles you about,
   And little truth you meet.
   Then, come and rest,
Upon this breast,
Your aching head a little while:
   I'll put to flight
   Your gloom to-night,
Or think I've lost my olden smile.

No, no, you can't forget the time —
   That sun- and soul-lit hour,
When, full of love and trust sublime,
   With more than mortal power,
   You fired my blood
   With burning flood
Of fervent words! You called me — “WIFE!”
   Said I should be,
Eternally,
Your Star of Hope, your Light of Life!

You can't forget the summer glow,
   Which flushed those happy days;
Now how your words were wont to flow
   To God in thanks and praise,
   For that he gave,
   Your soul to save
From darkness drear around it hurled,
   A living light —
   My heart's love bright —
The truest sun in all the world!

Hah! hah! I've touched your frozen heart;
   'Tis hard and cold no more;
The shadows from your brows depart;
   You're all you were of yore:
   Thus calmly rest
   Upon my breast;
Why dwell in gloom — why dream of storm?
   You've nought to fear,
   Your wife is here —
Our humble home is bright and warm!

3. — Australian Mother's Song.

Live smiling on, bright sinless elf,
In that fair fairy land,
Created by your little SELF,
With true Enchanter's wand.
Rare forms of beauty in your dream,
I know, fresh soul, you find;
And lambent glints of glory gleam
On your awaking mind —
   Proud father's hope — fond mother's joy —
   First child of love — My Blue-eyed Boy!

Thou hast, young oak, rude storms to bear;
But I will hope and pray,
That thou shalt mock the frowns they wear,
As phantoms on thy way;
And lessons, too, thou hast to learn,
Full oft in toil and pain;
But bright's the crown that brave men earn —
   True work is never vain,
   Proud father's hope — fond mother's joy —
   Fair child of love — My Blue-eyed Boy!

If thou shalt come to man's estate,
   Be still a man 'mongst men;
Though cares on Virtue ever wait,
   She pays us back again.
In death I'd rather see thee lie,
   A stainless child of bliss —
Though with thee life's best hopes would die —
   Than see thee act amiss,
   Proud father's hope — fond mother's joy —
   Dear child of love — My Blue-eyed Boy!

To GOD and TRUTH be ever true;
   To all thy kind be kind;
Whate'er the world may say or do,
   Maintain an upright mind.
Thy country yet may need thy wit,
   Or claim thy manly arm;
Thou art not mine if found unfit
   To guard her from all harm —
Proud father's hope — fond mother's joy —
True child of love — My Blue-eyed Boy!

And should'st thou, child, enact the part
The true and good man plays,
'Twill shed rich sunlight on my heart,
And brighten my last days:
I ne'er shall feel the chill of age —
For still to me 'twill seem
Thy father lives his youth again,
If thou be all I dream —
Proud father's hope — fond mother's joy —
Rich gift of love — My Blue-eyed Boy!

4. — First Love.

BACK, Spirit, back to the days of thy youth,
When all nature seemed mirrored in beauty and truth;
When the heart beat as wild as the pulse of a rill,
Which tumbles and foams down a rock-crusted hill,
When a glory came down, as from heaven above,
In the rich rosy cloud of first love — of first love!

Back, Spirit, back to the springtide of life,
Ere my dreamland had fled at the spell-name of wife;
When the hair now so silvered, and falling off fast,
In a shower of gold on my shoulders was cast;
Through the asphodel meadows again let us rove,
And re-dream the sweet dreams of our fairy first love:

Back, Spirit, back, to review with delight
That iris of youth whose reflection's still bright;
That bow which young Fervour high over us hung,
While Nature beneath it with jubilee rung!
Grand Arch of bright Promise, the soul, like a dove,
May still bathe her wings in thy sunlight of Love!

5. — My Mother's Song.

AH, no — not now! I dare not sing
Those strains, which to my sad soul bring
A shadowy throng
Of memories drear, which ghost-like float,
Called from their tomb by every note
Of my lost mother's song.
At eve, when gleams of rosy light
Suffuse the world: at still midnight,
   When lone and wakeful long,
A spirit stirs my stagnant breast;
I sigh for peace and blissful rest,
   And hum my mother's song.

And oft at night, before the glow
Which firebrands round our home-hearth throw,
   For other days I long;
I hymn the star serene and bright,
That lit our lives with placid light —
   I sing my mother's song.

When o'er my father's face I see
The clouds of care pass heavily,
   My soul at once grows strong;
With skill, at other times unknown,
And in a voice — almost her own —
   I sing my mother's song.

But, oh, not now! I dare not sing
Those strains, which to my sad soul bring
   A shadowy throng
Of memories drear, which ghost-like float,
Called from their tomb by every note
   Of my lost mother's song.

6. — Life Blooms.

THE rose I send will, ere it reach thee,
Have lost its freshness and its bloom;
Then, what can the poor trifle teach thee,
Whom richest lights of life illume?
Ah! doth it not right well betoken
How frail and flect are flowers of life;
How soon the spell of youth is broken
Amidst the world's wild strain and strife?

But are there not to memory clinging
Bright amaranths, whose deathless hue
A purple flush is ever flinging
On all our dreams — on all we do?
And are there not fair faces peering
And smiling through the misty Past;
The golden goal are we not nearing,  
Where bloom and fragrance both shall last?

Then keep this flower: my lips have pressed it;  
My tears have bathed its tender leaves;  
My tongue with fervent words hath blessed it;  
Oh, keep it still for one who grieves  
That thou art not here present smiling,  
And with those love-lit eyes of thine  
(This dreary lapse of life beguiling)  
Around me shedding thy soul's sunshine?

7. — Short Graves.

PAUSE here and ponder,  
Or silently tread!
This is a City  
And Home of the Dead.  
Here the heart-shadows  
Are spissy and rife,  
Flouting the glitter  
And glamour of life;  
Flinging a pall  
On passion and strife.

Of all the drear lessons  
Which here we may learn —  
Of all the death-trophies  
Around we discern —  
None chills so the soul,  
None's so sad to the eye,  
As the hallowed SHORT GRAVES,  
Where our dead children lie;  
As those flower-strewed mounds,  
Where our little ones lie.
I Am Dreaming.

I am dreaming — ever dreaming —
Dreaming of the long gone years,
Ere the morning's smile was shadowed,
Or the life-path stained with tears.

I am dreaming — ever dreaming —
Treading moonlight walks of old,
Clasping hands whose loving pressure
Now is chilled in death and cold.

I am dreaming — ever dreaming —
Of the love-tones, sweet and low,
Which have perished — save in echo —
From the realms of Long Ago.

I am dreaming — ever dreaming —
Lingering in the old romance,
Just the same in day's full noontide,
As when evening's fire-gleams dance.

I am dreaming — ever dreaming —
Weaving webs of fairy dye,
All of forests grey and olden,
Where the ruined castles lie.

I am dreaming — ever dreaming —
Of the streamlets on their way,
Winding through the vales and meadows,
Where the rustic children play.

I am dreaming — ever dreaming:
Fairer is the world to me,
When in Fancy's sunny colours
All its weary ways I see.

I am dreaming — ever dreaming —
Dreaming of the haleyon shore,
Where my weary feet, when resting,
Shall in Dreamland roam no more.
I am dreaming — ever dreaming —
Of the bright Eternity.
Nearer, quicker, surge the life-tides,
Till my dreams shall real be.
Mirans Et Amans.

Be still, my tongue! what wouldst thou say?
Beat slower, pulse! why this wild play?
O burning breast,
What fires thee with this subtle ray
Of strange unrest?
Why is every object round
With smiles of love or glory crowned?
The airs that float,
Why whisper they in mystic sound —
Sybilline note?

High heavens, why are ye bedight
In all this miracle of splendour bright?
In every hue
Of nameless beauty, changeful light,
Gold, crimson, blue?
Why, sovran Nature, thus proclaim,
In robes of joy, with tongues of flame,
This jubilee?
The quick and dead, the wild and tame,
Unite with thee!

* * * * * *

Because ye feel, perchance ye know,
Your Lord is present — doth bestow
His gifts on all:
Reflections from His mercy's glow
Around us fall!
My Immortelle.

Freshly dost thou, Flower of Promise,
Blush and bloom before mine eyes!
Though clouds eclipse my happiness,
Storms disturb these sunlit skies,
Thou always wilt their frowns despise!
O say what can have wrought such change
In this all-giddy heart of youth,
And, O fair gift of gracious God,
So re-inform my ways in truth,
That oft I sigh my life may be
Raised to its perfect state by thee?
Life and Love.

Something oddly
The bookman prated, yet he talked it weeping

Ford. (The Broken Heart.)

Prelude.

I've drifted darkly down a lethal stream;
I've lived and wept through a phantasmal dream;
I've felt the vulturo's beak, the viper's fang;
I've hoarded long each secret, sacred pang:
Then why recall, from Misery's blasted strand,
The phantoms which, with desolating hand,
Have left Life bare of every springtide bloom —
Yea, of its violets robbed the very tomb?

Time's glass is broken. Time's sweet hopes lie dead,
Like doves that, lacking mates, their nests have fled —
Like doves that, finding none, have inly bled.
And not one fleck of promise now remains:
A stone-eyed Spectre, not Astarte, reigns
Within the Heaven, which arches Life's domains.

'Tis long ago ... My brain grows clear and keen,
   Nor time nor change the kind nepenthe brings;
On Memory, pale-browed and sad, I lean,
   And crouch beneath the shadow of her wings.

That night of nights comes back, as moonlight steals
   Within the crested chambers of the dead;
The solemn Past tells out its awful peals,
   As She glides by me with her subtle tread.

I know not well how first the passion grew —
   I know at last it bower'd all my life, —
I know the purple fruit drained through and through,
   And that I drank it till my blood was rife.
She saw it all, and flung lush clusters down,
    She trailed them, bursting, o'er my thirsty lip;
She twined the leaves, and wreathed me with the crown,
    “And thus,” she sang, “should Love his life-draughts sip.

As steel expands before the breath of heat,
    Before her love my manhood glowed and sprang;
On one strong chord I thought our young hearts beat,
    On one clear note, she swore, our heart-chimes rang.

My strain grows wild: my woes refuse to bend
    To pass the arched necessities of rhyme;
Nor tithe nor tribute will this Anguish lend
    To calm-browed Reason on her crag sublime.

I only know a Sorrow, drear and dark,
    Wells from my bosom, like a burning spring;
I only feel a something, sere and stark,
    Clouds o'er my life, like some bad angel's wing.

And knowing this, and feeling thus, I kneel
    Within the ray of those white stars above,
And pray of those who've felt as now I feel,
    To listen to my plaint of LIFE and LOVE!

I.

A youth with a glance like the falcon-eye,
    A youth tried and tristful at heart,
Makes sad Farewell 'neath a balcony,
    Where a lady standeth apart.

He sends up a prayer to her guardian saint,
    To shield her from every sin,
To strengthen his hand, ere his heart waxeth faint,
    The crown of his life to win.

And what is the crown of this sad youth's life?
    Is it power, or wealth, or fame?
It is to call that fair lady his wife,
    But wed himself first with a Name!

To win renown ere he claims her hand, —
    To build up a brotherhood
With those of the trine-set starry band
    Of the Beautiful and Good:
He fears this night that his heart shall break,
    The lady looketh so fair:
As fair as the moon o'er the argent lake,
    She stands in her whiteness there.

He hears the flapping sails of his boat,
    As it grates on the rippled beach,
But she swims in his eye, like a golden mote,
    And his heart grows too big for speech.

“I'll prove myself great in the depths of my love,”
    He says, as his grief raineth fast;
“And though, like that moon, you are throned far above,
    “I'll tide to you, wave-like, at last.”

She bindeth her kerchief, starred over with blue,
    In folds on his nerveless arm,
Then giveth her cheek to his rapture so true,
    While her breath cometh richly and warm.

And now the sweet vision has fled from his sight,
    Her beauty all pregnate with pain,
He raises his voice in a fervent Good-Night,
    For his heart beats strong as he thinks of the fight
    He must wage ere he sees her again.

II.

Th' enlarging sun is sinking in the lake,
    A white-winged boat is sleeping on the stream,
The airs of evening the gaunt poplars take,
    And stir them solemnly, as in a dream.
Over the Terrace a sweet ladye,
Clad to her veinëd throat in whitest white,
    With strange love light within her 'ee,
    (The hawk's grand look of crueltie!)
Peers down the stillness of the folded night.
The tide of noble blood beats in her cheek,
    The dint of crowns shows from her wavy hair!
Ionic grandeur from her calm lips speak —
    Hellenic raptures from her white arms bare.
A marble globe of coolest water glows
    Beside her on the terrace (quaintly hewn),
And, as her mystic forehead o'er it bows,
    The crescent brow shines up, and mocks the moon.
A fountain, too, beside her laughs and leaps,
    A starling's note comes trilling through the green:
A knightly form bounds up the terrace steps,
    A knightly lip is pressed her lips between.
They drink of love, they drink as gods might drink,
    Till Pleasure reels, with fiery poppies crowned,
And stagger on to Passion's lymphic brink,
    Scorning to keep the lower, level ground.
They pause at length; the hectic flush of Youth,
    And Mirth, and Madness too, upon their cheeks:
She stands awhile, her mantled brow to soothe
    Within the coolness that the fountain reeks.

* * * * * *

And now their last embraces they divide beneath the terrace,
Now he clasps his arms about her, now he drinks her fragrant breath,
Now she holds her lips up to him, ere her face she coyly buries,
As she swears before God's peaceful stars her fealty till death.
A change of virgin roses — a loiter near the lilac trees —
Wild commerce of fond glances — a lingering, last Good-Night —
A barter of rich tresses — those precious love phylacteries —
A sudden rifled kiss — he has vanished from her sight!
She glides into her chamber, looking deathly calm and quiet
(Ghostly calm and quiet!) but her brain must work anew;
She has queened it all to-night at Passion's Paphian riot,
But to-morrow brings the lover-bard to claim his maiden true!

III.

“I bring you, lady, this lithe hound,
    “It served me well in other climes;
“And this small volume, you have found
    “Pleasure ere now in my poor rhymes:
“I bring this heart, bright, brave with love,
    “As yonder red-mailed star above.
“And, by that Star! I've kept the vow
    “Unbroken, made in days of youth, —
“The plight I sealed on that white brow,
    “Fair tablet for such holy truth!
“I've held your image near my soul,
    “A ring of flame — blest areole.
“I've felt your presence, day and night,
   “Stoop o'er me, like sweet eventide;
“I've seen you, robed in palest light,
   “Glide through the dark, like Seraph Bride:
“And I have thought my heart thick-laden
   “With all the flowers and fruits of Aidenn.

“You've walked with me on winter nights,
   “When all the world glowed crystalline;
“You've talked with me on summer heights,
   “When all my veins ran sacred wine:
“You've been with me in every mood —
   “The Woman following Life's rough rood.

“And of the cross I showed no fear,
   “For Genius (said you) plucks its crown
“From calvaries of lie and leer —
   “Of fervid sin and frigid sneer —
   “Of public flux and critic's frown.
“These were your words of long ago,
   “Words that have sanctified my woe.

“And now, that little book I bring —
   “(Why drops it idly from your hand?)
‘They're haughty lays you'll find I sing,
   “For you were Muse, and swayed the wand;
“And any bay the book has brought,
   “From thy imperial brow was caught.

“And what a joy it was when Fame
   “Shrilled his sharp clarion down the age,
“And pricked my unennobled name
   “In stipples deep of deathless flame
   “Amid the uncials of his page!
“For then I knew such place to keep
   “Would make one lofty bosom leap.

“I thought how, lacking riches, birth,
   “I now could that rich birthright flaunt,
“Of lettered fame and poet's birth,
   “And stifle Fashion's dearest vaunt;
“I thought no spot was holy ground,
   “While Chaucer's shoon my sandals bound.

“But let that pass.
   “That hound I prize,
("Peace, sir, your mistress smooths your skin!")
“In Italy he saved me twice,
“Once from Mount Sagro's precipice —
“Once from the bandit's javelin.

“And so I knew you'd love it—— — why
“'What means that quivering ashen lip? —
“What rocks that drooping lid and eye?
“'What knight rides here in proud equip?
“Lady, the night-air blows too bleak,
“'And far too roughly smites your cheek.

“Still pallid? ... Who can be this guest? ...
“'Lean heavily upon my arm, —
“'A truer or more reverent breast
“'Ne'er bore a sweeter, fairer form.
“'Your heart ... Great God! — Your hand ... that moan! ...
“'Pardon, Sir Knight, we'd talk alone.”

*   *   *   *   *

A hound stands o'er his master, and gives a piteous wail;
A lady and a bleeding knight ride swiftly through the vale;
Within the gurgling fountain two reddened blades are seen,
Blood-tinctured are its plashings as they catch the nightly sheen.
Some poems, smeared with gore, lie on the dinted ground;
Where she, to stanch her gallant's wounds, had wrapped the leaves around!
The honest hound still sorely wails — his master stirs at length,
And crawls anear the fountain with fitful flows of strength;
He bathes his wound, and wipes his brow, the fond hound licks his palm.
...
One thunder-cloud creeps up the sky, and breaks the curséd calm.

IV.

Mature and saddened falls the night,
And greys the brow of each dark height
   That rests upon the sea —
Those mountains in their sombre rule,
Edging the waters, green and cool,
   Like antique Tantali!

The sky is of a grey-blue tint,
With here and there a stammel glint
  Struck by the smouldering sun;
A light just bright and dim enough
To sheen the brine and shade the bluff,
  In deep comparison, —

A light that, too, carves out each tree
In clear and sharp asperity,
  And holds each twig in sight;
You see them — blackened, silver-stroked —
From clouds of leafiness evoked,
  Ribbed out in soft starlight.

A few wan clouds cream up the sky,
And as they float, like love-dreams, by,
  The stars appear in flight;
The clouds seem still, the stars to run,
All pendulous to sail alone,
  Like tiny cars of light.

Oh! certes, in so sweet an hour,
The Poet-heart must feel its power,
  The Poet-eye grow clear;
And as to-night One wanders free,
With lute and hound, fine minstrelsy
  Booms, bee-like, in his ear.

He sits him on a wave-worn stone,
And listens to that weary moan
  The old sea ever gives;
And, while he sits, the Present's fled,
The Past, sea-like, gives up its dead,
  And buried Sorrow lives.

A boat, bird-like, skims o'er the waves,
Its keel with pearls the passage laves,
  And streaks the sea with spray:
Two beings, nestling breast to breast,
And cheek to cheek, within it rest,
  And dream the eve away.

O loving pair! O fragrant time!
O babbling sea, with locks of rime!
  O bard, with slackened lyre!
How fair is earth, how wise is Heaven,
To whom all secret things are given,
All retribution dire!

Hark! how the wind wails in the tree-tops,
Hark! how the rain beats on the grass;
See! how the clouds quicken with thunder —
See! how the waves curl as they pass!
The sea, 'neath the flashes so vivid,
Grows curdled in wrinkled dismay;
Then, leaden-hued, snaky, and livid,
Darts white tongues of foam at its prey.

It bends o'er the beach like a lion,
White-maned, ere the fight has begun,
Then leaps up the sand with a bellow,
Creeping back when the battle is done.
It writhes and jets up like a serpent,
With its horrible, beautiful scales:
It crags into Alps of pale marble,
It troughs into basanite vales.
It plashes thick gouts of red sea-weed
On the cliffs whose scarred brows sternly nod:

O thou solemn-visaged Ocean!

What agony pierces the silence —
What forms are flung weed-like on shore —
What faces, averted from heaven,
Blanch in the salt sand evermore?

She's better — with her wave-cut face
Graved in the cold, cold sand,
Than held within his hot embrace,
With Sin's corroding hand.

Better to see her perish so,
Than slur her beauty down;
Better quick death than dilate woe,
These weeds than such a crown.

Now, with my ancient hound, I'll move
To some wood-bosomed cell,
And dream upon my Life and Love,
And each inurnèd spell.

O thou solemn-visaged Ocean,
Croon up thy choral strain;
It opes my pent emotion,
   And thaws my frozen brain!
Sea-Side Musings.

1

THE daylight is dying, and o'er the sad sea
Swells a sweet mystic music, the music for me;
'Tis breathed by the zephyrs, as onward they stray,
And they seem, with soft whispers, to call me away.
And my soul in her prison's not wakened in vain,
She gasps to rove free as a breeze o'er the main;
Every pulse is a herald which solemnly tells
There's a far-off bright world where happiness dwells.

2

The daylight is dying: a last golden gleam,
As rich as the raiment enthusiasts dream
The sweet angels are clad in on missions of love,
Streams silently forth from the heaven above.
It fires the landscape — it lights ocean's breast,
While amethyst shadows the valleys invest.
It fades; but ere fading to the white gates of Day,
It has tracked for my spirit a radiant way.

3

When that rare apparition from heaven had fled,
And the deep shades of night had come down on my head,
The hour was crucial: my old friend, Despair,
Jeered at the light which had lately been there.
“Oh, shall we for ever,” I sighingly said,
“Through labyrinths clueless be ruthlessly led?
“Is darkness the fountain and tomb of the light?”
While I murmured, a star on the stark brow of night
Benignly appeared, and glowed all alone;
Like Faith, how it trembled! like Hope, how it shone!
Like Love, how it spread its pure light everywhere —
On the dark face of earth — through the dull fields of air!

4.

And the mild moon of summer arose o'er the main,
And her luminous smile played on ocean and plain,
And the rent rack of clouds became white when she gleamed;
Like pure islands of peace in blue ether they seemed.
The daylight has faded; but over the sea
Still swells that sweet music, the music for me.
The daylight has faded; still starred skies above
Foreshadow the soul-spheres of Beauty and Love.
Rosaline of Carnah's Grove.

THE star of eve, so mildly bright,
That in the west doth gently rove,
Sheds not such chaste and tender light
As eyes which shine in Carnah's Grove —
    Young ROSALINE'S, of Carnah's Grove.

The clouds of eve, of golden glow,
Which richly hang in heaven above,
Are not so bright as curls which flow
On shoulders rare in Carnah's Grove —
    Fair ROSALINE'S, of Carnah's Grove.

Ere evening falls, on virgin wing,
Soars to her home the mild-eyed dove;
A fairer form, with livelier spring,
Moves like a fay through Carnah's Grove —
    Lithe ROSALINE'S, of Carnah's Grove.

Of old, 'tis said, against the the tide
Of Hellë, young LEANDER strove;
Thus, o'er opposing waves, I'll glide,
My beacon light in Carnah's Grove —
    Bright ROSALINE, of Carnah's Grove.

And if I sink beneath their swell,
One truth, at least, my death shall prove,
That 'twas for thee I lived and fell,
My blue-eyed Maid of Carnah's Grove —
    My ROSALINE, of Carnah's Grove!
Lights of Maiden Life.

MARY, thy soul was warm and bright
   In childhood's days,
Shining, like God's rich gift of light,
   The sun's first rays;
And brighter grew that glow, in sooth,
During thy cloudless spring of youth.

MARY, thy soul, in later years,
   Around thee threw
A light, which broke through doubts and fears,
   With deeper hue.
It flashed, although to hide you strove
This purple light of virgin love.

MARY, deep shadows o'er thy face
   Began to stray;
The old smile fled its olden place,
   And died away;
And life's fresh blooms began to fade;
A hidden grief that twilight made.

MARY, no more the shadow's gloom
   Rests on thy brow;
Yea, summer smiles thy face illume,
   Mild Maiden, now!
Thy heart is warm, thy soul all bright!
'Tis love-lit Faith's seraphic light!
Australian Melodies.

1. — The Beauty That Blooms in Australia.

RICH as the rose-light which dapples the dawn,
And soft as the shadows of eve;
Tender and true as the midnight blue —
Too tender and true to deceive —
Is the Beauty that blooms in Australia,
Is the Beauty that glows in Australia,
Is the Beauty we prize in Australia!

Shy as the lyre-bird, hidden away,
A glittering waif in the wild;
Coy as the flowers in Nature's own bowers,
But fresh as a golden-haired child,
Is the love that peeps out in Australia,
Is the love that allures in Australia,
Is the love we pursue in Australia.

And, oh, when that Beauty, so soft and so bright,
Doth gladden our hearts with its smile;
And, oh, when that Love, like a breeze in the light,
Glides out of its silence the while,
Joy beams like the moon in Australia,
We thrill with delight in Australia,
Life resteth complete in Australia!

2. — Fondly I Dream of the Bright Lagoon.

FONDLY I dream of the bright lagoon
And the forest in which it is set,
In a frame of woodlands set,
Like a mirror of silver set:
Fondly I sigh for the pearl-white moon,
Which lit us when first we met,
Where WILLIE and I first met,
Long ere the night of my soul's eclipse,
Ere life and the love-smile died on his lips.
While I dream and sigh the hours fly on,
But the fitful hours no solace bring,
    The hours no bright hopes bring,
    The hours dark memories bring:
They tell of the time when the love-light shone,
Then shadow it o'er with sorrow's wing,
    With sorrow's ebon wing,
    Dark grief's oppressive wing.
And my spirit the light shall ne'er shine upon,
Till ensphered in the orb to which WILLIE'S gone.

3. — Fanny Fay.

SEE yon beaming, burning star,
    Tremulous with splendour;
FANNY FAY is brighter far,
    Bright as heaven could send her:
Better than her beauties are
    Feelings fresh and tender.
FANNY FAY'S a lissom lass
    With lips like blushing cherry;
Her soul as clear as crystal glass,
    Although her eyes are merry.
Who could not with fair FANNY pass
    A life contented very?
FANNY'S mind is fairly stored
    With learning new and olden;
And from her lips are often poured
    Words of wisdom golden:
Within my soul those words I hoard,
    With dreams of love enfolden.

I will love thee, FANNY FAY,
    While the star-lights quiver;
I will love thee, grave or gay,
    Floating down life's river;
I will love thee night and day —
    Love and cherish thee for ever.

4. — The Maid of Windsor.

DEAR Maid of Windsor, though we part,
And all the sunshine of the heart
Fades like the morning's purple flush,
Or evening's evanescent blush,
Though fated thus our lives to sever,
Still, dearest girl, forget me never!

And should, hereafter, others name
Thy peerless graces, and proclaim
Such deep regard as mine hath been,
Still on me look with soul serene;
Though absent, on me smile as ever —
And, dearest girl, forget me never!

Although we break the mystic link,
And Hope amid life's shadows sink;
Though Love no more, with flashing wing,
Shall round us bright enthralment fling;
Still do not in affection waver —
O dearest girl, forget me never!

Ah, let one spot in life's bleak waste,
Like some bright isle in dark seas placed,
With gilded memories be o'ercast —
Reflections of the golden Past.
My soul still holds the bliss you gave her —
My own dear girl, forget it never!

5. — 'Twas Not the Light.

'TWAS not the light
Of lustres bright,
Or glasses richly gleaming,
Which shed the ray
That made us gay,
And left our souls all beaming;
No, no, it shone
Divinely on,
From a starry zone that bound us,
A luminous spell,
Which brightly fell
From sunny eyes around us.

'Twas not the bloom
Dispelled our gloom
Of flowers and arras glowing;
No, nor the dress
Of loveliness
In hues of beauty flowing:
'Twas Nature shed
The deep-toned red,
Which coloured every feeling;
Oh, 'twas the flush,
The virgin blush,
O'er fair young faces stealing!

'Twas not the sound
Which shook the ground,
Of dance and music thrilling,
Whose magic stroke
Upon us broke,
Our souls with rapture filling
No, mystic sighs,
In sweet surprise,
Or tender whispers given,
Ye made us deem
That scene a dream,
Or else an earthly heaven!

6. — Bright Astarte from Blue Heaven.

A Serenade

BRIGHT Astarte from blue heaven
Chastely smiles on calm Rose Bay;
By the mellowed water's margin,
By the crescent shore's white margin,
Come, my LINDA, let us stray,
Hand in hand, together stray!

Zephyrs fraught with balmy odours
O'er the moonlit waters rove;
O how sweetly they remind me,
Every fragrant air reminds me,
Of rich breathings full of love!

Hark! 'tis distant music stealing,
Swelling from the far-off sea;
But thy voice, my own fair LINDA,
Richer music makes for me,
Living melody for me!
Be Astarte in my heaven,
Breathe life's fragrance on my way,
Thrill the very soul of feeling,
As we wander round the bay,
Hand in hand, around the bay

7. — Dart Not, Bright Eyes.

DART not, bright eyes, electric fire,
Celestial smile, no more inspire
    My sad and stricken heart;
For I must quit this living light,
And greet the sea, and face the night:
    The hour is come to part.

Oh, spare, fair cheeks, your blushes bright!
Of raptures gone — of lost delight —
    Of love-lit times they tell:
Alas! that flush, so rich of hue,
Cannot prevent this sad adieu,
    Nor brighten my farewell.

O gentle voice, no hopes renew;
O timid heart, thy griefs subdue;
    'Twere now a vain endeavour
To win from fate one doomed to be
A wind-tossed waif on life's dark sea,
    An errant thing for ever.

The breeze is up, and freshly blows;
The signal light, half-mast-high, glows;
    Sad notes swell from the crew:
I must away, for dark-browed fate
Prevents me now to hesitate —
    I go — I'm gone — adieu!

8. — Minnie of Maitland.

TELL me not, ye Spanish minstrels,
    Of dark Andalusian eyes,
Full of wondrous, witching splendour,
    Gleams which dazzle or surprise.
Purer light is ever parting —
    Beams which soothe while they subdue —
Truer glints of soul are darting
From my MINNIE'S orbs of blue,
Maitland MINNIE'S orbs of blue.

Tell me not of jetty ringlets,
Which on lustrous shoulders flow,
Flashing, like the raven's plumage,
As it gleams upon the snow.
Beaming MINNIE'S golden tresses,
Falling like a veil of light,
Olden type of deathless beauty,
Can infuse more rare delight,
Doth infuse the true delight.


FROM the old white coasts of England,
There cometh o'er the sea
The echo of a nation's wail,
As sad as sad can be;
For it telleth of disaster,
Of want and misery;
How red-winged war hath dried the springs
Of patient Industry.

Gaunt and grim the shadow grows,
Which fills the land with dread;
And strong men pine, and women weep,
And children cry for bread.
Oh! shall those tears and cries be vain?
Shall not the poor be fed?
Who will not help to rend the gloom
Which o'er old England's spread?

Here in this broad, bright Southern land,
Where Peace and Plenty reign,
The cry of brethren in distress
Shall not be heard in vain.
Australia's gold shall freely flow
From city, bush, and plain,
To soothe old England's bitter grief,
And light her smiles again.

10. — Why Steep the Soul of Genius Bright.

WHY steep the soul of genius bright
In dreary dreams of sorrow?
From joy's soft smile and love's pure light
Her lustre let her borrow:
   Then far away
   From sad themes stray;
For 'tis an impious folly
   To keep confined
   The starry mind
In depths of melancholy.

Nor rove among the shadowed tombs,
   A prey to wild misgiving,
When Night all Nature grimly glooms —
   No, rather seek the living.
   Enjoy a while
   The laugh and smile,
   The dance, the song, and wine-bowl;
   Their triple tide
   I know doth hide
   A god who'll charm thy fine soul.

I know you set no price on praise,
   And smile at peacock power —
This seems to thee a blinding haze,
   And that a sickly flower;
   But do not deem
   Good men's esteem
Is aught to be neglected:
   Like fragrant air,
   It greets us where,
   And soothes when, least expected.

11. — Life's Young Dreams.

WHEN the Morning laughs through a rosy flush
   Of orient light, my EMMELINE,
A luminous phase akin to the blush
   Which mantles thy checks, my fair-browed queen,
You must surely think of those spring-life hours,
When we only dreamt of sunshine and flowers.

And at eve, when the sun's last golden light
   Sheds on the world a bright farewell,
And fairy winds in their fitful flight,
   In sweet, low, mystic music swell,
You cannot in spirit with gloom be o'ercast —
You must fondly remember the evenings past.

When darkness enfolds the silent earth,
   And windows are closed, and all is still,
Save the fire-brands crackling on the hearth,
   Or the wild-bird's scream from the pine-clad hill,
At such moments the Past is surely unrolled —
You must then remember the nights of old.

When the babble of brooks and songs of birds
   Suddenly break on thy tuneful ear;
When the bounding laugh and bright-hued words
   Of riant, romping youth you hear;
Keen Memory then must fleetly rove
Back to the scenes of Youth and Love.

12. — *Come, Dwell in the Forest.*

COME, dwell in the forest, my own bright Maid,
   On the skirts of a prairie wide,
Where life is not straitened by silken bonds,
   Nor rusted with sloth and pride.
Amid grand old gums, dark cedars and pines,
   In myall bowers and sheaoaks' shade,
Love shall put forth those rare blooms of heart,
   Which ne'er in storm or sunshine fade.

Come, dwell in the forest, my own bright girl,
   Where life is ingenuous and free;
And accept at my hands the floral crown,
   Which I've fondly prepared for thee.
The pansy and pea-bloom, the aster and rose,
   The lily pale and waratah bright,
Shall encircle your shining hair, if you come,
   And be of my heart and home the light.

Then beam on the forest, my Star of Hope,
   And scatter afar its spectral gloom;
The gullies and glens, wide plains and wild hills,
   With Beauty's rich radiance illume.
And I will endeavour, as time flows on,
   To approve myself trothful to thee —
Still hail thee my Fay of the golden-brown Bush,
   My Queen of the wild Prairie!
Life Musings.

I. Odune.

DOES aught survive to cheer this heart,
And make it feel as erst it felt,
At Friendship's call with zeal to start,
At Beauty's smile in love to melt?
Ah! is there left no gracious ray
The prison of my soul to light,
And, for a moment, drive away
The horrors of its hideous night?
When all the world in saddest brown,
In Autumn brown yclad was seen;
And suns went down with wrathful frown,
'Mid clouds of orange, red, and green;
When zephyrs went their mystic ways,
And winter winds began to blow;
The star on which I loved to gaze
Had gone on other scenes to glow;
How could I save my soul from gloom,
And all the passions of despair?
Alas! like shadows of the tomb,
They've fixed their dark dominion there.
The flowers of heart, the buds of bliss,
Which blow and bloom in youth alone,
Could not survive in gloom like this,
They drooped and faded: so they're gone.
The golden dreams, aërial forms,
And visions bright, which Fancy bred,
All that illumed the mind, and warmed
The heart, have also from me fled.
And there remains a cold, stark grief,
O'ershadowed by an ebon wing,
From which, methinks, no bright relief,
No beam of hope, can ever spring.

II. Phoenix
Ho! ho! the world is young again;
It must have felt transforming fire;
It smiles from valley, mountain, plain;
It glows a phoenix from its pyre.
The skies are blue, the fields are green,
There's light and fragrance everywhere.
Flame-coloured birds are heard or seen,
Enlivening earth — adorning air.
Their noon-life beauty now restored,
The flowers breathe their fragrant hymn;
A flood of light through heaven's poured,
From eyes of unseen seraphim.

III. Mnemosyne.

Amid this glow, my soul is sad —
Unthawed the frozen founts of life;
I'm cheerless though the world is glad —
I'm dull, though joys around are rife.
I lack the sympathetic power
Which e'en insensate things can cheer:
The ray which could revive the flower —
The spirit wake — is wanting here.
My light of life, alas! is lost —.
Then, ill-starred heart, through all time be
A waif upon wild waters tost —
A helmless bark on a storm-swept sea!

*    *    *    *    *    *
Mary in Heaven.

OH, 'tis a goodly, holy sight,
The clouds of eve in glory dight,
A hundred isles of rosy light!
    But, ah, to me
    No joy they bring;
    No hope bestow,
    No rapture fling;
    For oh, ochone,
    I'm all alone,
They're dull to me without my MARY!

And what if stars at midnight gleam
With Heaven's most seraphic beam,
And full of life and glory seem!
    For me, on me,
    In vain they glow;
    On me no flash
    Of hope they throw —
    For oh, ochone,
    I'm all alone —
They're cold and dim without my MARY!

And what of dreams and visions fair,
Of violet eyes and golden hair,
And azure robes as thin as air!
    They're mine no more:
    My soul's in gloom,
    The ebon darkness
    Of the tomb —
    For oh, ochone,
    I'm all alone —
No visions now — I've lost my MARY!

A spectral mist's before mine eyes —
There's weird wild music in the skies;
I see a ghostly shape arise!
    My MARY'S form,
Her virgin grace,
Her moonlight eyes,
Her holy face,
   All — all appear!
   She's surely here,
An apparition from the Heaven.
Triple Lights.

1

AMID rent clouds, in skies afar,
   I've seen it mildly gleaming —
A lone but luminous twinkling star,
   Upon the dark world beaming.
'Tis thus thy rays, O FAITH divine!
   Through all the gloom which shrouds us,
Break out — in trembling glory shine,
   When deepest darkness clouds us.

2

I've seen the genial beacon-light
   On ocean's bosom flashing,
While through the deep, at noon of night,
   Our bark was onwards dashing:
Ah, then I thought of gentle HOPE
   Which quits poor mortals never,
Whose luminous vistas slowly ope,
   Attracting upwards ever!

3

And there remains ETERNAL LOVE,
   A noon-day glory given
By Him, who is the sun above —
   The Lamb — the Lamp of Heaven.
Fell floods may rise — wild tempests rave —
   And phantom Sin affright us;
Still Love burns on — beyond the grave
Its God-lit rays shall light us!
Candian Nun's Hymn to the Holy Spirit.

O CENTRE of celestial Day!
   Adown the night
   Which shrouds my sight,
Transmit thy rare transmuting ray;
   And let mine eyes,
   In glad surprise,
The Giver's gifts of love survey.

O Uncreated Flame Divine!
   I feel a chill
   Benumb my will,
And freeze this errant heart of mine;
   In fiery stream
   Upon me gleam —
Consume what in me is not Thine.

O Fountain of unfailing Love,
   I gasp and sigh
   For wings to fly,
And in Thy glory blend above.
   I burn to be,
   Eternally,
Thy tabernacle, Spotless Dove!
Holy-Week Musings.

I. Triple Nights.

I LEFT the tapers' blended light,
Which, chastely pure and richly bright,
   Around the altar beamed,
To gaze on other vivid rays,
The holy stars in midnight blaze,
   Which high in heaven gleamed.

A radiant halo of the mind,
The glow of Faith and Love combined,
   Then broke in luminous life;
And as this triple glory shone,
Each in its separate sphere alone,
   With scarce a moment's strife.

It chased away the sceptic gloom,
Which, deep as shadows of the tomb,
   Had darkened every thought.
Hail, Author of this new-born light!
All hail, O King, whose kindling might
   Hath this rare marvel wrought!

II. Threefold Fragrance.

TRANSLUCENT clouds of incense rise,
And through their mystic veil mine eyes
   Behold a flower-wreathed shrine;
As in the fragrant air I kneel,
Rich perfumes through my senses steal,
   Most subtile, most divine:

Such charm of chastened ecstasy
Never in life had gladdened me
   Thus soothingly before.
The incense cloud, the flowers' sweet bloom,
The Spirit-breathings' own perfume,
Each separate rapture bore.

These are the types of fervent prayer,
Ascending through the lucid air,
    Enfired by heartfelt Love;
For passing o'er all Nature's bars,
The empyrean and the stars,
    It reaches God above.

III. Triune Harmony.

WHILE lingering in the temple's aisle,
There came all through the shadowy pile,
    The matins' monotone:
Anon, sweet blended voices raise
A dirge upon man's evil ways —
    In unison I moan.

But when in open air I stood,
Strange mystic music, in a flood,
    Broke over land and sea.
Methought, as did the seer of yore,
I heard the spheres that music pour —
    That wondrous litany.

Ah! if, of that rare gush of song,
I could its faintest tones prolong,
    The saints might hymn my lay;
Still to the Source of Harmony,
Let these weak echoes offered be,
    And to Him wing their way!
“We Bide Together Still.”

I KNOW a strain of other climes,
Which I have treasured long;
A deep-toned lay of olden times,
A gush of racy song.
'Tis of a Knight to Lady bright,
Who with right cunning skill,
Sang: — “Heart in heart, and soul in soul,
“We bide together still.”

If I could hope the day would come,
When doubt should disappear;
That Love would shed on life his bloom,
His purple atmosphere;
My Lady bright, your own true Knight
Would sing with ready will:
“Brave heart in heart, and soul in soul,
“We bide together still.”

I fear no task — I'll shun no test —
My truthfulness to prove;
Nay, trial gives but keener zest,
To win thy witching love.
Should fate benign e'er make thee mine,
Oft in your ears shall thrill,
How — “Heart in heart, and soul in soul,
“We bide together still.”
Yumulu and the Yallahs.

Yumulu, Spirit of the Deep; Yallahs, Coral Insects; Murrurun, Spirit of Lightning; Aroshin, the Sun; Dhalia, the Moon; Sphal, the Electric Fluid, or Internal Heat; Work of the Yallahs, Oceanica; Rent of Murrurun and Yumulu, various Bays and Inlets, chiefly Port Jackson and the Parramatta Estuary.

The Old Man of South Head accosteth Ernest Ivors.

SIT thee by me, ERNEST IVORS,
Sit thee on this crag of sandstone,
On this smooth and speckled sandstone,
With the flame-marks red upon it,
While the wanton winds of evening
Wander o'er the water's surface,
O'er the sooming sea's broad bosom,
Dance and sing on ocean's bosom,
As it blusheth in the sunset:
Sit thee here and listen to me,
Heedless of the day's departure,
Of the fire-eyed day's red exit,
As he rolleth, drunk with odours,
From the golden Bush inspired
To the mystical embraces,
To the cryptic deep embraces
Of the Night, his queenly mistress:
Sit thee still and sagely listen,
Conning well the weird narration;
And be sure you interrupt not
While I tell the strange revealment,
Which, while dreaming, was vouchsafed me —
Nay, I am not dazed, nor brain-mad
With the spirit of the fire-cup.

Ivors sitteth and hearkeneth.
'Twas, in very truth, revealed me  
In yon nook, agone ten summers,  
While among the ferns I slumbered  
On a bed of fragrant grasses,  
Mixed with golden moss and lichen —  
Pensile parasites, in flower,  
From the summer-flame my covert.

The Old Man describeth the advent of a Spirit.

From yon line of hills cerulean,  
Cloud-invested, timber-feathered;  
Through the valleys' purple shadows  
And the rivers' mists of opal,  
O'er the golden-brown expanses  
Of the still and sombre forest;  
Past the towered, spired city,  
To the very marge of ocean —  
Of this calcined, caverned coastline —  
Came a Form — immense, majestic —  
But, on nearing me, its mist-robes  
Blended with the circling ether;  
And instead of Moving Shadow,  
Stood a bronze-browed human Figure,  
Ebon-hued and silver-bearded,  
Eyes a-flame in sunken sockets,  
Sockets dark with grizzly shading.  
Lo! this mighty Form came near me,  
And his spectre gaze fixed on me,  
And his arms he raised above me,  
While his presence thrilled all through me.  
Then, eftsoons, he raised his right hand,  
Pointed starkly to the southward,  
With the left towards the Harbour,  
Also stiffly, starkly, pointed.  
Standing this-wise, thus he spoke me,  
In a kind of song sepulchral,  
In a sort of runic hymning,  
In a deep-toned, wizard croaking,  
Interspersed with fitful breathings  
Of impassioned mournful cadence.  
This is what the Spirit told me,  
What he murmured and recited,  
Of the wondrous Yallahs' labours,
Of dark Yumulu's deep hatreds,
Of dread Murrurun's red vengeance,
Of the Story of the Ages.

What the Spirit told him.

“Yumulu, the Ocean Spirit,
“Saw the Yallahs working ever:
“Race on race, through myriad races,
“Working on, and working ever:
“Grinding, kneading, weaving, spinning;
“Toiling on and toiling ever,
“These most marvellous tiny Yallahs!
“To upraise a mighty fabric,
“To perform a work colossal,
“Thus they toiled, these myriad millions,
“Through a lapse of countless ages,
“Till they laid the land's foundations,
“Till they made the earth's stone centre,
“Till they stored its heart with treasure,
“Till above the world of waters
“Peered a pinnacle of coral!
“Then the winged winds of ether,
“Then the wingèd birds of heaven,
“Then the witless, wandering billows
“Brought, in turn, unto the Yallahs
“Sands and seeds, with moulding juices,
“Salts and sea-fire, ores and acids,
“Till, at last, the rocks were covered,
“Till at last the land was piled up,
“Clothed with herbage and with frondage,
“Made a home for walking creatures,
“Made a home for living spirits!

“Yumulu, the Ocean Spirit,
“Hated them and their vast labours,
“Hated them for their encroachment
“On his rough and vast dominion:
“So he said he'd crush the Yallahs,
“That he'd sweep away their labours.
“And he roused himself to fury,
“And he seethed and raved in phrenzy,
“And he rushed with hugest billows
“Gainst the tiny workers' wonder!
“How he leaped, and lashed, and thundered,
“How he sapped, and clawed, and splintered,
“How he warred, with hate unsated!
“Still he could not, and he did not,
“Rend the Yallahs' works asunder,
“Scatter them abroad the ocean,
“Scatter them like dust on ocean.

“Murrurun, the Empyrean,
“Murrurun, the Air-fire Spirit,
“Eldest-born of red Aroshin,
“Saw that Yumulu was flouted —
“Beaten by the Yallahs — atoms!
“Now, the Yallahs had imprisoned,
“While they formed their caverned kingdom,
“Deep adown in closest dungeon
“Sphal, his daughter, eldest-born;
“And, with Yumulu united,
“On these Yallahs he'd take vengeance:
“So he offered instant aidance,
“If that Yumulu would promise
“Service to his sire and Dhalla,
“To Aroshin and white Dhalla;
“Ever yield them due allegiance,
“Ever show them meet submission,
“Ever flow whenever ordered,
“Here and there at each one's bidding.
“This he promised: nay, he swore it
“By upheaving a huge billow,
“Which he hurled against the Yallahs.
“So the Fire-god called his spirits,
“And his spirits came about him,
“And wild winds came rushing with them.
“Yumulu's vast force being ready,
“Murrurun flung out his thunder,
“Told in thunder he was coming!
“In a burst of living splendour,
“In a bolt of awful swiftness,
“In a broken stream of fire,
“Followed by his vengeful furies,
“By his red winged, black-winged furies,
“Trumpeted by tempests shrieking,
“Welcomed by the roaring billows,
“Down he leaped from out the thunder!
“And he smote the Yallahs' labours,
“And he rent their walls of purple,
“And he pierced the land's stone bosom,
“And he rushed towards his daughter,
“To his daughter in her prison.
“She, of Fire the active offspring,
“Sprung delighted through the fissure
“Which her sire for her had formèd;
“Rushed into that sire's embraces.
“When they met, there spread around them
“Spheric wreaths of fire quenchless;
“And anon the Yallahs' new world
“Was enwrapt by fiery breathings,
“Fused or calcined by those breathings,
“Licked by tongues of lurid lightning,
“Shrivelled up by fire-streams livid,
“Made an altar of the Fire-god,
“Made a victim to the Fire-god!

“Yumulu the land-rent seeing,
“Rent of Murrurun's fierce smiting,
“Burst he, in concentred fury,
“With full tide and ravening billow,
“In upon the Yallahs' new land,
“Twisting here, to shun the eddies
“Of the fire around him raging;
“Running there among the hollows —
“Winding, rolling, clawing, rushing;
“Till the fire-lines full engirt him!
“But the Fire burns on — consumeth
“All the labours of the Yallahs,
“Save the deep, huge, rock foundations,
“Which the flames can never get at!
“Earth, though charred and flame-invested,
“Fused, transmuted, blurred, and blackened,
“Once again was shaped and decked out;
“When the Fire-god and his furies
“Upwards went unto Aroshin.
“Once again the Yallahs formed it,
“Once again their world called forth they!
“This is how the Ocean Spirit,
“Yumulu, the Ocean Spirit,
“Here, about you, made his entrance;
“Here, before you, made encroachment;
“At these rock-heads broke his way in,
“Rocks by Murrurun first shattered!”

The Old Man saith for himself: —

So the Presence said and left me,
Through yon gap of cliff he vanished;
And I woke from out my dreaming,
With great weight of noon-heat on me,
With the zenith sun just o'er me.
You may deem this revelation
But a phantasy of fancy:
Deem it so, if it shall please you;
You may think me dazed or crazy,
Doubt of yours no unbelieving
Spirit in me waketh! May I
Often dream in this wise wisely.
Fare thee well, good ERNEST IVORS.

Ivors concludeth.

Thus he spake the old narrator;
Thus he said, and crept off from me —
Sighed and bowed, and gently left me —
Passed towards a fragrant thicket,
Tottering through the stunted gum-trees,
Tripped by sinuous, serpont runners,
Till he reached his lowly log-hut,
'Neath a shadowy mimosa.
Since, I have not met or seen him,
Met or seen that quaint narrator.
Shall I meet or see him ever?
Sonnets.

1. — The Ocean at Sunrise.

How like the Presence of Creative Power —
Intense and luminous, limitless and free —
Is this suffusion, which o'erspreads the sea,
And weds the waters, at the matin hour!
Behold how potently the radiant dower
Transmutes the ocean's dark immensity,
While to abysmal depths Night's shadows flec,
And on the ripples dance a diamond shower.
Oh, in such affluence of Love and Light,
Shall not the bursting spirit upward soar,
Unwavering in her mystic, starry flight,
Creation's utmost confines passing o'er,
Nor cease until she reach the Centre bright,
Where beams the unshadowed SUN for evermore?

2. — The Ocean at Noon.

OLD Ocean is at rest; but in his sleep
There are both solemn heave and heavy three;
These zenith rays, which on his dark face glow,
Are shivered by the fitful billowy sweep,
Which shakes him in his slumber. Shadows deep,
In forms phantasmal, o'er him come and go,
While sooming eddies of sad music flow
Around — haply, the wail of those who weep
Within his caverns!

Oh, how like the sea
Of human life, when lulled to brief repose,
Is this unreal, strange tranquillity
Of despot Ocean! Suddenly it throws
Its smile-lit bliss aside, full soon to be
A whirl of anarchy — wild gulf of woes.
3. — The Ocean by Moonlight.

THE Moon looks on the Deep, so chastely bright
That cloudy patches whiten in her beam,
And like to isles of pearl in ether gleam.
O ancient types of Beauty and of Might!
Ye steep the inner sense and outer sight
In such a lucid and pellucid dream
Of bliss ecstatic, that we, dazzled, seem
To reach fruition of supernal light!
What eye can on this clear evangel gaze,
Old Ocean bathed in beauty by the Moon,
And not endeavour, albeit weak, to raise
Its strong regards to that irradiant boon,
The end and guerdon of our well-spent days,
Which makes in Paradise unshadowed noon!

4. — Midnight by Moonlight

On the Parramatta Estuary.

THRICE hath my soul, O Everlasting Lord,
This solemn night, beneath thy dome on high —
The blessëd, blue, serene, o'erarching sky —
Thy loving kindness and Thy power adored.
First, when the broad red sun his farewell smile
Upon this palpitating water shed,
Around me luminous benediction spread,
Methought, I lived in some celestial isle.
Anon, from out heaven's deep unclouded blue,
A thousand radiant stars in glory beamed —
Like seraph hosts, through space, they sang and gleamed.
Why pales their vivid brightness on my view?
Because SHE comes — the virgin Queen of Light —
O God, how awful is this noon of night!

5. — Wanderings in Illawarra.

[Inscribed to John Connery, ESQ.]

I. Kiama.

YOU must remember, JOHN, how awed we stood
Upon Kiama's caverned, sea-carved peak,
Which, nathless grim and strong, is all too weak
To stem the fury of the ocean flood.
We spake not then — dark fancies chilled our blood!
But when, like white-robed vestal, bright and meek,
The Austral Moon, o'er sea and coastline bleak,
In perfect fulness rose, we did (and could)
Commend the beauties of that witching scene:
The mountain chain, which forms its barrier strong;
Its hamlet homes, and churches on the green;
Its strips of snowy sand the shore along.
Twice hallowed was the spot to us, I ween,
All glorified by Heaven and KENDALL'S song!

II. Heights of Jamberoo.

I WILL recall the mind-ghosts of that night,
Which quickly — sullenly — upon us fell
Ere we could bid Kiama's vale farewell.
And while we clomb steep Jamberoo's rough height,
Were not the glooms so spectral that our sight
Oft shut their shadows out? O'er knoll and dell
Did not shrill shrieks and their wild echoes swell,
While, here and there, glared eyes of lurid light
From red bush fires? In sooth, we seemed to live
In that dark, horrent valley of unrest,
Which weird word-workers to pale phantoms give —
The shadows of man's phantasies unblest —
As fitting place of sojourn. Let us strive
To win from that hard travail hope of endless rest.

III. Wollongong.

FAIR fell the hour in which with trembling eyes
We first beheld the beach of Wollongong;
The breath came freer, and the heart grew strong,
As, wonderstruck, we viewed the bright surprise.
Enwreathed in fadeless verdure, to the skies
Mount Keera raised his kingly head. The song —
The ocean murmurs of the waves which throng
High up the shimmering shore — in mystic sighs
Poured passion-breathings on the awakened ear,
While, like a dome of vast unsullied blue,
This grand expanse the empyrean clear
O'erarched. ... In every rounded shape and shifting hue
Of perfect Beauty did we then revere
Creative forces — ever ancient, ever new!

6. — To the Virgin Mary.

HAIL Virgin! Queen of all the heavenly host —
The brightest star of all the stars that shine
Robed in the glory of the light Divine —
Hail, creature of all creatures loved the most!
O Mary, Mother, is there heart so cold
As not to love a loving Queen like thee,
As not to sigh with ardent sighs to be
Nearer thy presence, and thy face behold?
Ah, with a mother's lovingness look down
From thy ensphered beatitude above —
Ensphered in depths ineffable of love —
On all who ill can bear life's thorny crown;
On all who faint or falter on the way.
Thy smile is harbinger of endless Day
Chaplets.

1. — To Miss Kate Hayes.

WHEN erst I heard in Erin's isle,
    The music of her rills;
The breeze awaking echoes wild,
    In glens and caverned hills;
Her feathered choirs with love prolong
    Their sweet and generous lay;
My young soul felt Old Erin's song
    Could never die away!

In sooth, there shone auroral light
    Upon those youthful days;
For Hope arose serenely bright,
    And shed her golden rays.
Young Fancy thought, despite the gloom
    Around Old Erin hurled,
Her light of song would still illume
    And charm a grateful world!

And oft, in dreams, a form would rise —
    It seemed a spirit bright —
Which changed the clouds in Erin's skies
    To isles of love and light.
The semblance of that radiant form,
    Its magic power, too,
The melting glance — the soul so warm —
    I find, fair KATE, in you!

Methinks, the bards of flashing eye,
    Our Senachies of old,
Gaze from the crimson clouds on high
    Their daughter to behold:
Methinks, they list too, once again,
    The Muse they first awoke,
And hear the wild — the wondrous strain —
    That from their clairsachs broke.
Fair Daughter of our island home,
   Bright guardian of her song,
Whate'er the land to which you roam,
   Old Erin's strains prolong.
Oh, let her lays — her deep-toned lays —
   Which first thy soul did fill
With music's breath — till life decays,
   Be dearest to thee still!

2. — To Madame Anna Bishop.

THIS must be witchery, winning away
Thought from its prison, its body of clay;
Giving it pinions to cleave the bright air,
Which o'erarches Atlantis — Hesperides fair.

*         *         *         *         *

While I wander, and wonder, ecstatic and free,
What Edens of bloom doth my rapt spirit see!
What stellar effulgence beams out on her sight,
As melody wafts her, and waits on her flight!

Thus I float, while I gloat, on the tide of your song,
And am borne, as a waif, on its current along,
Till the air becomes vocal! Then sense is all vain:
The Soul alone listens, and follows thy strain.

3. — To Miss Virginia Buchanan.

[Suggested by her “Erina,” in Sheridan Knowles's “Brian Boru.”]

FADE not, sweet vision, yet awhile!
Still let me in this transport live;
Catch soul-light from that sad-bright smile,
Which you, and you alone, can give.

The wildest dream of fervid youth
I realize, bright Maid, in thee;
My brain's afire — this must, in sooth,
The Genius of Old Erin be!

Yes, there she stands, a pale-browed maid,
With golden circlet in her hair;
In robes of richest green arrayed;
She's brightly dark, and darkly fair.

With those great eyes of deep-toned blue;
That face, now bright — now overcast;
That thrilling voice and changing hue!
She is the type of Erin's Past.

Then, Genius of the Tearful Isle,
A little — little — longer stay:
Still on me sweetly — sadly — smile —
Alas! ... the vision's fled away.

4. — Adeline's Song.

OH, that my spirit were at rest
   Where I behold
   Yon cloud of gold
Float like an island of the blest!
Oh, that these storms of life were o'er,
   And, through the gloom
   Which shrouds the tomb,
My soul had reached her native shore!
Oh, that the fires which in me burn
   Would waste their strength,
   Till nought, at length,
Survived, but ashes for the urn!

This holocaust would not be vain;
   If, hand in hand,
   Through Eden Land,
I could with EDWIN walk again.

5. — The Three Flowers.

I. My Snowdrop.

FROM the grip of grim Winter it sprung into life,
   A pallid, immaculate flower,
Peering out — peeping up — 'mid a wild season's strife,
   Frail child of the chill dew shower.
Just so there arose, in my dark days of grief,
   A SNOWDROP transparently pure;
And so, sprung of storm, its stay was as brief,
It could not full sunlight endure.

II. My Lily.

In the prime days of spring, how we thrill with delight
When a LILY, amid the lush leaves,
Candescent in loveliness, bursts on the sight —
Ah, its delicate beauty deceives!
Thus once throbbed my heart, with a full sense of bliss,
At a LILY, which whitened the day;
But it scarcely had sipped my first reverent kiss,
Ere it faded — evanished away!

III. My Rose.

And now in my parterre there bloometh alone,
A rare Tudor ROSE of exquisite hue;
On its petals the rich blooms of beauty have shone
And left it surpassingly bright to view.
Oh, never deprive me, good Lord, of this flower!
It is Thy sole merciful solace, I own;
And daily, all days of my life, shall an hour
Of praise, like incense, ascend to Thy throne.

6. — In Memoriam.

Kathleen Amina Harris
Obit, A.D. MDCCCLVI., anno aetatis suae decimo quinto.

SNATCHED in sunny spring of life,
Maiden mild,
From a world of sin and strife,
Undefiled!
Shall we stain thy virgin shroud
With a tear?
Wish thee from the Angel crowd
With us here?

Grieve we must, and mourn we may,
Gentle KATE,
At your passing thus away,
Sudden fate!
But the pure, and young, and bright,
Child of love,
Meetly seek the realms of light,
Stars above.

God takes the best, and leaves the worst,  
Just as we
Cull the fairest flowrets first  
Which we see.
From chill earth, its care and gloom  
Kate is won;
To the climes of fadeless bloom —  
She hath gone.

Ye, who for the maiden grieve,  
For her rave,
Think, whene'er the smile of eve  
Lights her grave,
Of those brighter living rays  
Which adorn
Souls, amid the seraph blaze,  
Newly born!

7. — In Memoriam

Viri Venerabilis et Reverendi Admodum  
Joannis Josephi Therry.

'TIS ever so! Amid the spissy gloom  
Of moonless woodlands at the noon of night,
With mental balance, most exact, we mete  
The value of departed daytime's gifts —  
Of blessëd light and its concomitants:
The dawning Morn, with crimson flush of hopes;  
The full Meridian, with its glow of life;  
The solemn Eve, with sombre silver shades,  
Withal so full of luminous loveliness,
That, meeting darkness with a tender smile,  
It fades, full of soft beauty, into night.
And so we judge, most truthfully and just,  
The Good Man's gifts of soul, when he hath gone —  
When, from the glazëd eye and pallid brow  
Of Death, the deepest of Life's shadows fall.
Ah, then it is we rightly understand  
And justly weigh the promise of his dawn —  
The perfect fulness of his mid career —  
The peaceful glory of his blissful eve!  
As now, departed THERRY, through this land,
Thy broad apostolate the people all
Of thy bright life most fully do adjudge.
'Tis ever so! The fruit-tree fades and falls;
And then we ponder on its useful past:
The freshness of its long-evanished spring;
The beauty of its early buds and blooms;
The ripeness of its later luscious fruit;
The stateliness in which it stood, and spread —
True scion of the bright Hesperides —
Its broad protecting branches far around,
Inviting all the feathered choirs of song,
To flash their plumage 'mid its emerald leaves —
To dance and carol on its gold-ribbed boughs —
And feast upon delicious, lavish fare!
And thus the Good Man grows from infant years;
And thus matures amid the shine and storm;
And thus gives from the abundance of his heart
The ripest fruitage he has garnered there,
Thus, too, he sinks, when all the days are gone
In which he was ordained to do good deeds;
And thus, the honours of his years upon him,
He falls in good and reverend old age —
As now, O saintly THERRY, all men know,
Who dwell within thy broad apostolate,
That thou hast sunk into the hopeful rest,
Incensèd by a grateful people's praise,
Encircled by a noble people's love,
And followed by a generous people's prayer,
That people whom for more than forty years
With Word of GOD and worthiness of life
You edified.
No, no — we will not weep,
Because Australia folds within her breast
The relics of the holy man whose deeds,
Throughout all time, shall consecrate her shore!

8. — The Explorer's Grave.

“Under the shade of a myall-tree his (Burke's) remains repose.”

— Newspaper Report.
IN might of an unconquered will —
In light of an undying hope —
He said, “This mission I fulfil,
“And pathways through the desert ope.”
So forth he went — the brave and mild —
To map a realm of waste lands wild.

Oh, breathe not words of bitter grief,
Nor tell us of that journey's moil!
Oh, speak not of the fallen chief,
Nor those who shared his death-crowned toil!
Enough to know a desert grave
Enflods the relics of the brave.

It was, in sooth, a high emprise
Through trackless wilds to trace a way,
And challenges far higher prize
Than man can mete — than men will pay.
The guerdon's won! — What may it be?
A GRAVE BENEATH A MYALL-TREE.

Well! mountain gorge, bewildering wild,
And bickering scrub, and burning sand
No more offend: for HEAVEN smiled,
And won the wanderer to a land
Where cares and griefs shall ne'er annoy —
Where Life's one trance of endless joy!
Carmen Natale.

THESE twelve pulsations on the midnight air,
Dealt by the brazen bell's remorseless tongue,
Have crushed into my brain, with sudden force,
The vivid presence of a solemn fact,
Which it were craven not to boldly meet —
Boldly confront. This fact I now will face.

In Life's grand cycle I have gained a point
Which oft is midway reckoned in its course:
Between the Future and the Past I stand,
Just where — if what the sages say be true —
The journey to be made will equal that
Which, weak and wayworn, I have travelled o'er.
The roads of life — dread meeting of the ways —
Which here converge, are all unknown — untried —
And fill my mind with solemn doubt and fear,
Lest, haply, I should miss the one which leads
Through rugged valleys and through dark ravines,
Through silent forests and o'er brawling streams,
Past thorny brakes and tracks o'er flint-rocks formed,
High up unto the Mountain of the LORD.
I'm like a pilgrim who an isthmus gains —
A narrow neck of granite which unites
Two mighty continents — where he can see
The waters of two oceans palpitate,
And hear them ceaseless croon their sullen song.
With fixed regard, he looks on the expanse
Of purpling waters, or of darkling woods;
But saddest — firmest — gaze of all bestows
Upon that shadowy sea o'er which he sailed,
Ere he this giddy eminence had reached.
And so will I, in this stern hour, take pause
And from the vantage that I thus have gained,
Gaze on those grim phantasmagoric seas,
The Past and Future, which so nearly meet
In this dread instant of my middle life.
Ah! there it lies — half-veilëd in a mist
Of silvery exhalation which conceals
Its warmer shades of beauty — that wide sea
O'er which, these many years, I've vaguely sailed,
Half-purposeless, half-conscious — quick alone
To seize the shadows of the passing day.
Yes, like a rover, have I tracked the main,
Now touching at its iridescent isles,
Where palaces of light and dens of gloom
Alternately attract or stun the soul;

Where linnets, doves, and humming-birds disport,
Unscared by raven wings and vulture beaks.
Anon, away from all of bright or dark —
The rubent light of love or gloom of sin —
Away — away — upon a ceaseless course —
Away — away — led by a ruddier flame
Than that which weds dull earth unto the heaven
At eventide, and makes them richly blend
In union luminous, ineffable.

Away — away — upon a wild pursuit —
With fiery thirst, in quest of Truth and Lore.
Oh, in this errantry, how many scenes —
Strange workings of the wondrous world's hot brain —
Have I surveyed, and in them played a part!
The voyage o'er, what merchandize of Thought,
What balms of Wisdom, what pure gold of Truth,
With stainless ivory of fair Renown,
And other items, priceless, of Soul-wealth,
Has Memory, faithful ministrant, laid up
From this long, varying voyage of the Past,
To be her treasure in the Final Port?
Ah, me! I feel a choking sense of drought,
As if I'd eaten of the Dead Sea fruit;
As if afflatus of the lethal air,
Evolved from stagnant pool and putrid marsh,
Had, in its silent, subtle way, run through
The vital chords of life: as if the tongues
Of fabled salamanders had dried up
The quickening fluids of the brain and heart!
And all this arid, torrid, penal sense
Is born of anguish which the sudden rush
Of burning memories brings upon the soul —
The ghastly, grim remembrance — keen and stark —
Of bright years wasted, and no treasures won!
Oh, were I like those solemn men of old,
Who inquest held on Egypt's lifeless kings —
Dead kings and grim — with emerald ivy crowned —
This to determine: of which they worthy were,
Cremation or immortal sepulture —
The wasting fire, or saving pyramid —
What verdict should I utter on the Past?
I would pronounce it wasted, blurred, or lost —
A hecatomb of holy gifts misused,
Laid on the altar of a Proserpine,
Or to the snake-wreathed Furies sacrificed.
Where is the brightness of its summers gone?
Its fruits and flowers are garnered where? Oh, where
Is now the guerdon of my maddening quest?
I've sought for Life's elixir, all in vain;
That essence is not Knowledge but Content.

The self-accusing Gentile cried of yore —
“T've lost a day!” O venial, trivial fault,
One little day! Ah! mine's a drear contrast,
Where years are yieldless of a single grain,
And lustrums lustreless — save that short flush
Of human love — Lethe of human woes!
But e'en this wondrous mystery of love
Forms no fixed orbit for the soaring soul:
The prisoned eagle strives to rend or break
The iron catenation of his bondage:
And so this inward, wayward, bounding Soul
Essays to spring from its entanglement,
And through a purer Empyrean move.

Then will I turn me, half in tears and shame,
From those reflecting waters which throw back
The Past, and look upon the Future's depths.
What do I see? A sparkle in the west;
A faint scintilla glimmering in the gloom;
A rosy edge to clouds of sombre dye;
A voiceless, vast, uncharted, cloudless main!
Nought here to fix the eye, or soothe the heart,
Save Hope's dim light which gleams amid the gloom.
I cannot rend the veil ('twere sacrilege!)
Which hides the Future from the peering sight.
That Future, then, with soul renewed, I face;  
And, as I wander, I will sing or chant,  
In changing tone, this

**Hymn of Life and Death.**

“Childhood's dawn, I'm Thine!  
Here I watch the merry hours  
Weave their flowing wreaths of flowers;  
Birds on every bough are singing,  
All the air with music ringing,  
While the sunbeams flash and quiver  
On the eddies of the river.  
Ah! they change — the songs are done;  
Clouds flit sadly o'er the sun,  
While with mournful step and slow,  
From my childhood's home I go —  
Home no longer mine.

Hold me, Life, I'm thine!  
Far away a sunny vision  
Beckons me to fields Elysian;  
Though the clouds are drooping low,  
With bright hues they shine and glow;  
When the summer's rain is o'er,  
Skies are brighter than before.  
'Ah, 'tis vain! sad soul, be still;  
There remains one sparkling rill.  
Stoop and drink, thou weary heart,  
Life and I in peace will part —  
Life no longer mine.

Clasp me, Love, I'm thine!  
Though all other light depart,  
Save the sunshine of the heart;  
Yet while sheltered at thy side,  
I am blessed, whate'er betide.  
'Ah, 'tis vain! The shadows flow  
O'er my heart — thou, too, must go!  
Love, farewell! Life's dream is done —  
Mine the shadow — thine the sun;  
Till, afar from grief and pain,  
In the light we meet again —  
There for ever mine.
“Take me, Death, I'm thine!
“Only through thy solemn portal
“Can we reach the light immortal,
“Where the amaranths unfading
“Brows of heavenly bloom are shading;
“While within thy darkened porch,
“With thy dim, inverted torch,
“Thou dost chant soft, holy psalms,
“Still we wait with folded palms,
“Till, stern Time's last triumph won,
“Thou shalt find thy labours done —
“Take me, Death, I'm thine!