

POEMS OF YOUTH

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INTRODUCTION TO POEMS.--1831.

LETTER TO MR. B--.

"WEST POINT, 1831

"DEAR B--

...

Believing only a portion of my former volume to be worthy a second edition--that small portion I thought it as well to include in the present book as to republish by itself. I have therefore herein combined 'Al Aaraaf' and 'Tamerlane' with other poems hitherto unprinted. Nor have I hesitated to insert from the 'Minor Poems,' now omitted, whole lines, and even passages, to the end that being placed in a fairer light, and the trash shaken from them in which they were imbedded, they may have some chance of being seen by posterity.

"It has been said that a good critique on a poem may be written by one who is no poet himself. This, according to your idea and mine of poetry, I feel to be false--the less poetical the critic, the less just the critique, and the converse. On this account, and because there are but few B---s in the world, I would be as much ashamed of the world's good opinion as proud of your own. Another than yourself might here observe, 'Shakespeare is in possession of the world's good opinion, and yet Shakespeare is the greatest of poets. It appears then that the world judge correctly, why should you be ashamed of their favorable judgment?' The difficulty lies in the interpretation of the word 'judgment' or 'opinion.' The opinion is the world's, truly, but it may be called theirs as a man would call a book his, having bought it; he did not write the book, but it is his; they did not originate the opinion, but it is theirs. A fool, for example, thinks Shakespeare a great poet--yet the fool has never read Shakespeare. But the fool's neighbor, who is a step higher on the Andes of the mind, whose head (that is to say, his

more exalted thought) is too far above the fool to be seen or understood, but whose feet (by which I mean his every-day actions) are sufficiently near to be discerned, and by means of which that superiority is ascertained, which but for them would never have been discovered--this neighbor asserts that Shakespeare is a great poet--the fool believes him, and it is henceforward his opinion. This neighbor's own opinion has, in like manner, been adopted from one above him, and so, ascendingly, to a few gifted individuals who kneel around the summit, beholding, face to face, the master spirit who stands upon the pinnacle.

"You are aware of the great barrier in the path of an American writer. He is read, if at all, in preference to the combined and established wit of the world. I say established; for it is with literature as with law or empire--an established name is an estate in tenure, or a throne in possession. Besides, one might suppose that books, like their authors, improve by travel--their having crossed the sea is, with us, so great a distinction. Our antiquaries abandon time for distance; our very fops glance from the binding to the bottom of the title-page, where the mystic characters which spell London, Paris, or Genoa, are precisely so many letters of recommendation.

"I mentioned just now a vulgar error as regards criticism. I think the notion that no poet can form a correct estimate of his own writings is another. I remarked before that in proportion to the poetical talent would be the justice of a critique upon poetry. Therefore a bad poet

would, I grant, make a false critique, and his self-love would infallibly bias his little judgment in his favor; but a poet, who is indeed a poet, could not, I think, fail of making a just critique; whatever should be deducted on the score of self-love might be replaced on account of his intimate acquaintance with the subject; in short, we have more instances of false criticism than of just where one's own writings are the test, simply because we have more bad poets than good. There are, of course, many objections to what I say: Milton is a great example of the contrary; but his opinion with respect to the 'Paradise Regained' is by no means fairly ascertained. By what trivial circumstances men are often led to assert what they do not really believe! Perhaps an inadvertent word has descended to posterity. But, in fact, the 'Paradise Regained' is little, if at all, inferior to the 'Paradise Lost,' and is only supposed so to be because men do not like epics, whatever they may say to the contrary, and reading those of Milton in their natural order, are too much wearied with the first to derive any pleasure from the second.

"I dare say Milton preferred 'Comus' to either--if so--justly.

"As I am speaking of poetry, it will not be amiss to touch slightly upon the most singular heresy in its modern history--the heresy of what is called, very foolishly, the Lake School. Some years ago I might have been induced, by an occasion like the present, to attempt a formal refutation of their doctrine; at present it would be a work of supererogation. The wise must bow to the wisdom of such men as Coleridge

and Southey, but being wise, have laughed at poetical theories so prosaically exemplified.

"Aristotle, with singular assurance, has declared poetry the most philosophical of all writings--but it required a Wordsworth to pronounce it the most metaphysical. He seems to think that the end of poetry is, or should be, instruction; yet it is a truism that the end of our existence is happiness; if so, the end of every separate part of our existence, everything connected with our existence, should be still happiness. Therefore the end of instruction should be happiness; and happiness is another name for pleasure;--therefore the end of instruction should be pleasure: yet we see the above-mentioned opinion implies precisely the reverse.

"To proceed: *ceteris paribus*, he who pleases is of more importance to his fellow-men than he who instructs, since utility is happiness, and pleasure is the end already obtained which instruction is merely the means of obtaining.

"I see no reason, then, why our metaphysical poets should plume themselves so much on the utility of their works, unless indeed they refer to instruction with eternity in view; in which case, sincere respect for their piety would not allow me to express my contempt for their judgment; contempt which it would be difficult to conceal, since their writings are professedly to be understood by the few, and it is the many who stand in need of salvation. In such case I should no doubt

be tempted to think of the devil in 'Melmoth,' who labors indefatigably, through three octavo volumes, to accomplish the destruction of one or two souls, while any common devil would have demolished one or two thousand.

"Against the subtleties which would make poetry a study--not a passion--it becomes the metaphysician to reason--but the poet to protest. Yet Wordsworth and Coleridge are men in years; the one imbued in contemplation from his childhood; the other a giant in intellect and learning. The diffidence, then, with which I venture to dispute their authority would be overwhelming did I not feel, from the bottom of my heart, that learning has little to do with the imagination--intellect with the passions--or age with poetry.

"Trifles, like straws, upon the surface flow;  
He who would search for pearls must dive below,'

"are lines which have done much mischief. As regards the greater truths, men oftener err by seeking them at the bottom than at the top; Truth lies in the huge abysses where wisdom is sought--not in the palpable palaces where she is found. The ancients were not always right in hiding the goddess in a well; witness the light which Bacon has thrown upon philosophy; witness the principles of our divine faith--that moral mechanism by which the simplicity of a child may overbalance the wisdom of a man.

"We see an instance of Coleridge's liability to err, in his 'Biographia Literaria'--professedly his literary life and opinions, but, in fact, a treatise 'de omni scibili et quibusdam aliis'. He goes wrong by reason of his very profundity, and of his error we have a natural type in the contemplation of a star. He who regards it directly and intensely sees, it is true, the star, but it is the star without a ray--while he who surveys it less inquisitively is conscious of all for which the star is useful to us below--its brilliancy and its beauty.

"As to Wordsworth, I have no faith in him. That he had in youth the feelings of a poet I believe--for there are glimpses of extreme delicacy in his writings--(and delicacy is the poet's own kingdom--his 'El Dorado')--but they have the appearance of a better day recollected; and glimpses, at best, are little evidence of present poetic fire; we know that a few straggling flowers spring up daily in the crevices of the glacier.

"He was to blame in wearing away his youth in contemplation with the end of poetizing in his manhood. With the increase of his judgment the light which should make it apparent has faded away. His judgment consequently is too correct. This may not be understood,--but the old Goths of Germany would have understood it, who used to debate matters of importance to their State twice, once when drunk, and once when sober--sober that they might not be deficient in formality--drunk lest they should be destitute of vigor.

"The long wordy discussions by which he tries to reason us into admiration of his poetry, speak very little in his favor: they are full of such assertions as this (I have opened one of his volumes at random)--'Of genius the only proof is the act of doing well what is worthy to be done, and what was never done before; '--indeed? then it follows that in doing what is 'un'worthy to be done, or what 'has' been done before, no genius can be evinced; yet the picking of pockets is an unworthy act, pockets have been picked time immemorial, and Barrington, the pick-pocket, in point of genius, would have thought hard of a comparison with William Wordsworth, the poet.

"Again, in estimating the merit of certain poems, whether they be Ossian's or Macpherson's can surely be of little consequence, yet, in order to prove their worthlessness, Mr. W. has expended many pages in the controversy. 'Tantæne animis?' Can great minds descend to such absurdity? But worse still: that he may bear down every argument in favor of these poems, he triumphantly drags forward a passage, in his abomination with which he expects the reader to sympathise. It is the beginning of the epic poem 'Temora.' 'The blue waves of Ullin roll in light; the green hills are covered with day; trees shake their dusty heads in the breeze.' And this--this gorgeous, yet simple imagery, where all is alive and panting with immortality--this, William Wordsworth, the author of 'Peter Bell,' has 'selected' for his contempt. We shall see what better he, in his own person, has to offer. Imprimis:

"And now she's at the pony's tail,



And now she's at the pony's head,  
On that side now, and now on this;  
And, almost stifled with her bliss,  
A few sad tears does Betty shed....  
She pats the pony, where or when  
She knows not ... happy Betty Foy!  
Oh, Johnny, never mind the doctor!

"Secondly:

"The dew was falling fast, the--stars began to blink;  
I heard a voice: it said,--"Drink, pretty creature, drink!"  
And, looking o'er the hedge, before me I espied  
A snow-white mountain lamb, with a maiden at its side.  
No other sheep was near, the lamb was all alone,  
And by a slender cord was tether'd to a stone.'

"Now, we have no doubt this is all true: we will believe it,  
indeed we will, Mr, W. Is it sympathy for the sheep you wish to excite?  
I love a sheep from the bottom of my heart.

"But there are occasions, dear B----, there are occasions when even  
Wordsworth is reasonable. Even Stamboul, it is said, shall have an end,  
and the most unlucky blunders must come to a conclusion. Here is an  
extract from his preface:

"Those who have been accustomed to the phraseology of modern writers, if they persist in reading this book to a conclusion (impossible!) will, no doubt, have to struggle with feelings of awkwardness; (ha! ha! ha!) they will look round for poetry (ha! ha! ha! ha!), and will be induced to inquire by what species of courtesy these attempts have been permitted to assume that title.' Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

"Yet, let not Mr. W. despair; he has given immortality to a wagon, and the bee Sophocles has transmitted to eternity a sore toe, and dignified a tragedy with a chorus of turkeys.

"Of Coleridge, I cannot speak but with reverence. His towering intellect! his gigantic power! To use an author quoted by himself,

'J'ai trouvé souvent que la plupart des sectes ont raison dans une bonne partie de ce qu'elles avancent, mais non pas en ce qu'elles nient;'

and to employ his own language, he has imprisoned his own conceptions by the barrier he has erected against those of others. It is lamentable to think that such a mind should be buried in metaphysics, and, like the Nyctanthes, waste its perfume upon the night alone. In reading that man's poetry, I tremble like one who stands upon a volcano, conscious from the very darkness bursting from the crater, of the fire and the light that are weltering below.

"What is Poetry?--Poetry! that Proteus-like idea, with as many appellations as the nine-titled Corcyra! 'Give me,' I demanded of a scholar some time ago, 'give me a definition of poetry.'  
'Tres-volontiers;' and he proceeded to his library, brought me a Dr. Johnson, and overwhelmed me with a definition. Shade of the immortal Shakespeare! I imagine to myself the scowl of your spiritual eye upon the profanity of that scurrilous Ursa Major. Think of poetry, dear B----, think of poetry, and then think of Dr. Samuel Johnson! Think of all that is airy and fairy-like, and then of all that is hideous and unwieldy; think of his huge bulk, the Elephant! and then--and then think of the 'Tempest'--the 'Midsummer Night's Dream'--Prospero--Oberon--and Titania!

"A poem, in my opinion, is opposed to a work of science by having, for its immediate object, pleasure, not truth; to romance, by having, for its object, an indefinite instead of a definite pleasure, being a poem only so far as this object is attained; romance presenting perceptible images with definite, poetry with indefinite sensations, to which end music is an essential, since the comprehension of sweet sound is our most indefinite conception. Music, when combined with a pleasurable idea, is poetry; music, without the idea, is simply music; the idea, without the music, is prose, from its very definitiveness.

"What was meant by the invective against him who had no music in his soul?

"To sum up this long rigmarole, I have, dear B----, what you, no doubt, perceive, for the metaphysical poets as poets, the most sovereign contempt. That they have followers proves nothing:

"No Indian prince has to his palace  
More followers than a thief to the gallows."

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#### SONNET--TO SCIENCE.

SCIENCE! true daughter of Old Time thou art!  
Who alterest all things with thy peering eyes.  
Why preyest thou thus upon the poet's heart,  
Vulture, whose wings are dull realities  
How should he love thee? or how deem thee wise,  
Who wouldst not leave him in his wandering

To seek for treasure in the jewelled skies,  
Albeit he soared with an undaunted wing!  
Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car?  
And driven the Hamadryad from the wood  
To seek a shelter in some happier star?  
Hast thou not torn the Naiad from her flood,  
The Elfin from the green grass, and from me  
The summer dream beneath the tamarind tree?

1829.

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Private reasons--some of which have reference to the sin of plagiarism, and others to the date of Tennyson's first poems [1]--have induced me, after some hesitation, to republish these, the crude compositions of my earliest boyhood. They are printed 'verbatim'--without alteration from

the original edition--the date of which is too remote to be judiciously acknowledged.--E. A. P. (1845).

[Footnote 1: This refers to the accusation brought against Edgar Poe that he was a copyist of Tennyson.--Ed.]

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AL AARAAF. [1]

PART I.

O! nothing earthly save the ray

(Thrown back from flowers) of Beauty's eye,  
As in those gardens where the day  
Springs from the gems of Circassy--  
O! nothing earthly save the thrill  
Of melody in woodland rill--  
Or (music of the passion-hearted)  
Joy's voice so peacefully departed  
That like the murmur in the shell,  
Its echo dwelleth and will dwell--  
O! nothing of the dross of ours--  
Yet all the beauty--all the flowers  
That list our Love, and deck our bowers--  
Adorn yon world afar, afar--  
The wandering star.

'Twas a sweet time for Nesace--for there  
Her world lay lolling on the golden air,  
Near four bright suns--a temporary rest--  
An oasis in desert of the blest.  
Away away--'mid seas of rays that roll  
Empyrean splendor o'er th' unchained soul--  
The soul that scarce (the billows are so dense)  
Can struggle to its destin'd eminence--  
To distant spheres, from time to time, she rode,  
And late to ours, the favour'd one of God--  
But, now, the ruler of an anchor'd realm,

She throws aside the sceptre--leaves the helm,  
And, amid incense and high spiritual hymns,  
Laves in quadruple light her angel limbs.

Now happiest, loveliest in yon lovely Earth,  
Whence sprang the "Idea of Beauty" into birth,  
(Falling in wreaths thro' many a startled star,  
Like woman's hair 'mid pearls, until, afar,  
It lit on hills Achaian, and there dwelt),  
She look'd into Infinity--and knelt.  
Rich clouds, for canopies, about her curled--  
Fit emblems of the model of her world--  
Seen but in beauty--not impeding sight--  
Of other beauty glittering thro' the light--  
A wreath that twined each starry form around,  
And all the opal'd air in color bound.

All hurriedly she knelt upon a bed  
Of flowers: of lilies such as rear'd the head  
On the fair Capo Deucato [2], and sprang  
So eagerly around about to hang  
Upon the flying footsteps of--deep pride--  
Of her who lov'd a mortal--and so died [3].  
The Sephalica, budding with young bees,  
Uprear'd its purple stem around her knees:  
And gemmy flower, of Trebizond misnam'd [4]--



Inmate of highest stars, where erst it sham'd  
All other loveliness: its honied dew  
(The fabled nectar that the heathen knew)  
Deliriously sweet, was dropp'd from Heaven,  
And fell on gardens of the unforgiven  
In Trebizond--and on a sunny flower  
So like its own above that, to this hour,  
It still remaineth, torturing the bee  
With madness, and unwonted reverie:  
In Heaven, and all its environs, the leaf  
And blossom of the fairy plant, in grief  
Disconsolate linger--grief that hangs her head,  
Repenting follies that full long have fled,  
Heaving her white breast to the balmy air,  
Like guilty beauty, chasten'd, and more fair:  
Nyctanthes too, as sacred as the light  
She fears to perfume, perfuming the night:  
And Clytia [5] pondering between many a sun,  
While pettish tears adown her petals run:  
And that aspiring flower that sprang on Earth [6]--  
And died, ere scarce exalted into birth,  
Bursting its odorous heart in spirit to wing  
Its way to Heaven, from garden of a king:  
And Valisnerian lotus thither flown [7]  
From struggling with the waters of the Rhone:  
And thy most lovely purple perfume, Zante [8]!

Isola d'oro!--Fior di Levante!  
And the Nelumbo bud that floats for ever [9]  
With Indian Cupid down the holy river--  
Fair flowers, and fairy! to whose care is given  
To bear the Goddess' song, in odors, up to Heaven [10]:

"Spirit! that dwellest where,  
In the deep sky,  
The terrible and fair,  
In beauty vie!  
Beyond the line of blue--  
The boundary of the star  
Which turneth at the view  
Of thy barrier and thy bar--  
Of the barrier overgone  
By the comets who were cast  
From their pride, and from their throne  
To be drudges till the last--  
To be carriers of fire  
(The red fire of their heart)  
With speed that may not tire  
And with pain that shall not part--  
Who livest--that we know--  
In Eternity--we feel--  
But the shadow of whose brow  
What spirit shall reveal?

Tho' the beings whom thy Nesace,  
Thy messenger hath known  
Have dream'd for thy Infinity  
A model of their own [11]--  
Thy will is done, O God!  
The star hath ridden high  
Thro' many a tempest, but she rode  
Beneath thy burning eye;  
And here, in thought, to thee--  
In thought that can alone  
Ascend thy empire and so be  
A partner of thy throne--  
By winged Fantasy [12],  
My embassy is given,  
Till secrecy shall knowledge be  
In the environs of Heaven."

She ceas'd--and buried then her burning cheek  
Abash'd, amid the lilies there, to seek  
A shelter from the fervor of His eye;  
For the stars trembled at the Deity.  
She stirr'd not--breath'd not--for a voice was there  
How solemnly pervading the calm air!  
A sound of silence on the startled ear  
Which dreamy poets name "the music of the sphere."  
Ours is a world of words: Quiet we call

"Silence"--which is the merest word of all.

All Nature speaks, and ev'n ideal things  
Flap shadowy sounds from the visionary wings--  
But ah! not so when, thus, in realms on high  
The eternal voice of God is passing by,  
And the red winds are withering in the sky!  
"What tho' in worlds which sightless cycles run [13],  
Link'd to a little system, and one sun--  
Where all my love is folly, and the crowd  
Still think my terrors but the thunder cloud,  
The storm, the earthquake, and the ocean-wrath  
(Ah! will they cross me in my angrier path?)  
What tho' in worlds which own a single sun  
The sands of time grow dimmer as they run,  
Yet thine is my resplendency, so given  
To bear my secrets thro' the upper Heaven.  
Leave tenantless thy crystal home, and fly,  
With all thy train, athwart the moony sky--  
Apart--like fire-flies in Sicilian night [14],  
And wing to other worlds another light!  
Divulge the secrets of thy embassy  
To the proud orbs that twinkle--and so be  
To ev'ry heart a barrier and a ban  
Lest the stars totter in the guilt of man!"

Up rose the maiden in the yellow night,  
The single-mooned eve!-on earth we plight  
Our faith to one love--and one moon adore--  
The birth-place of young Beauty had no more.  
As sprang that yellow star from downy hours,  
Up rose the maiden from her shrine of flowers,  
And bent o'er sheeny mountain and dim plain  
Her way--but left not yet her Therasæan reign [15].

## PART II.

High on a mountain of enamell'd head--  
Such as the drowsy shepherd on his bed  
Of giant pasturage lying at his ease,  
Raising his heavy eyelid, starts and sees  
With many a mutter'd "hope to be forgiven"  
What time the moon is quadrated in Heaven--  
Of rosy head, that towering far away  
Into the sunlit ether, caught the ray  
Of sunken suns at eve--at noon of night,  
While the moon danc'd with the fair stranger light--  
Uprear'd upon such height arose a pile  
Of gorgeous columns on th' uuburthen'd air,

Flashing from Parian marble that twin smile  
Far down upon the wave that sparkled there,  
And nursled the young mountain in its lair.  
Of molten stars their pavement, such as fall [16]  
Thro' the ebon air, besilvering the pall  
Of their own dissolution, while they die--  
Adorning then the dwellings of the sky.  
A dome, by linked light from Heaven let down,  
Sat gently on these columns as a crown--  
A window of one circular diamond, there,  
Look'd out above into the purple air  
And rays from God shot down that meteor chain  
And hallow'd all the beauty twice again,  
Save when, between th' Empyrean and that ring,  
Some eager spirit flapp'd his dusky wing.  
But on the pillars Seraph eyes have seen  
The dimness of this world: that grayish green  
That Nature loves the best for Beauty's grave  
Lurk'd in each cornice, round each architrave--  
And every sculptured cherub thereabout  
That from his marble dwelling peered out,  
Seem'd earthly in the shadow of his niche--  
Achaian statues in a world so rich?  
Friezes from Tadmor and Persepolis [17]--  
From Balbec, and the stilly, clear abyss  
Of beautiful Gomorrah! Oh, the wave [18]

Is now upon thee--but too late to save!  
Sound loves to revel in a summer night:  
Witness the murmur of the gray twilight  
That stole upon the ear, in Eyraco [19],  
Of many a wild star-gazer long ago--  
That stealeth ever on the ear of him  
Who, musing, gazeth on the distance dim,  
And sees the darkness coming as a cloud--  
Is not its form--its voice--most palpable and loud? [20]  
But what is this?--it cometh--and it brings  
A music with it--'tis the rush of wings--  
A pause--and then a sweeping, falling strain,  
And Nesace is in her halls again.  
From the wild energy of wanton haste  
Her cheeks were flushing, and her lips apart;  
The zone that clung around her gentle waist  
Had burst beneath the heaving of her heart.  
Within the centre of that hall to breathe  
She paus'd and panted, Zanthel! all beneath,  
The fairy light that kiss'd her golden hair  
And long'd to rest, yet could but sparkle there!

Young flowers were whispering in melody [21]  
To happy flowers that night--and tree to tree;  
Fountains were gushing music as they fell  
In many a star-lit grove, or moon-light dell;

Yet silence came upon material things--  
Fair flowers, bright waterfalls and angel wings--  
And sound alone that from the spirit sprang  
Bore burthen to the charm the maiden sang:

"Neath blue-bell or streamer--  
Or tufted wild spray  
That keeps, from the dreamer,  
The moonbeam away--[22]  
Bright beings! that ponder,  
With half-closing eyes,  
On the stars which your wonder  
Hath drawn from the skies,  
Till they glance thro' the shade, and  
Come down to your brow  
Like--eyes of the maiden  
Who calls on you now--  
Arise! from your dreaming  
In violet bowers,  
To duty beseeming  
These star-litten hours--  
And shake from your tresses  
Encumber'd with dew  
  
The breath of those kisses  
That cumber them too--



(O! how, without you, Love!  
    Could angels be blest?)  
Those kisses of true love  
    That lull'd ye to rest!  
Up! shake from your wing  
    Each hindering thing:  
The dew of the night--  
    It would weigh down your flight;  
And true love caresses--  
    O! leave them apart!  
They are light on the tresses,  
    But lead on the heart.

Ligeia! Ligeia!  
    My beautiful one!  
Whose harshest idea  
    Will to melody run,  
O! is it thy will  
    On the breezes to toss?  
Or, capriciously still,  
    Like the lone Albatross, [23]  
Incumbent on night  
    (As she on the air)  
To keep watch with delight  
    On the harmony there?

Ligeia! wherever  
Thy image may be,  
No magic shall sever  
Thy music from thee.  
Thou hast bound many eyes  
In a dreamy sleep--  
But the strains still arise  
Which thy vigilance keep--

The sound of the rain  
Which leaps down to the flower,  
And dances again  
In the rhythm of the shower--  
The murmur that springs [24]  
From the growing of grass  
Are the music of things--  
But are modell'd, alas!  
Away, then, my dearest,  
O! hie thee away  
To springs that lie clearest  
Beneath the moon-ray--  
To lone lake that smiles,  
In its dream of deep rest,  
At the many star-isles  
That enjewel its breast--  
Where wild flowers, creeping,

Have mingled their shade,  
On its margin is sleeping  
Full many a maid--  
Some have left the cool glade, and  
Have slept with the bee--[25]  
Arouse them, my maiden,  
On moorland and lea--

Go! breathe on their slumber,  
All softly in ear,  
The musical number  
They slumber'd to hear--  
For what can awaken  
An angel so soon  
Whose sleep hath been taken  
Beneath the cold moon,  
As the spell which no slumber  
Of witchery may test,  
The rhythmical number  
Which lull'd him to rest?"

Spirits in wing, and angels to the view,  
A thousand seraphs burst th' Empyrean thro',  
Young dreams still hovering on their drowsy flight--  
Seraphs in all but "Knowledge," the keen light  
That fell, refracted, thro' thy bounds afar,

O death! from eye of God upon that star;  
Sweet was that error--sweeter still that death--  
Sweet was that error--ev'n with us the breath  
Of Science dims the mirror of our joy--  
To them 'twere the Simoom, and would destroy--  
For what (to them) availeth it to know  
That Truth is Falsehood--or that Bliss is Woe?  
Sweet was their death--with them to die was rife  
With the last ecstasy of satiate life--  
Beyond that death no immortality--  
But sleep that pondereth and is not "to be"--  
And there--oh! may my weary spirit dwell--  
Apart from Heaven's Eternity--and yet how far from Hell! [26]

What guilty spirit, in what shrubbery dim  
Heard not the stirring summons of that hymn?  
But two: they fell: for heaven no grace imparts  
To those who hear not for their beating hearts.  
A maiden-angel and her seraph-lover--  
O! where (and ye may seek the wide skies over)  
Was Love, the blind, near sober Duty known?  
Unguided Love hath fallen--'mid "tears of perfect moan." [27]

He was a goodly spirit--he who fell:  
A wanderer by mossy-mantled well--  
A gazer on the lights that shine above--

A dreamer in the moonbeam by his love:  
What wonder? for each star is eye-like there,  
And looks so sweetly down on Beauty's hair--  
And they, and ev'ry mossy spring were holy  
To his love-haunted heart and melancholy.  
The night had found (to him a night of wo)  
Upon a mountain crag, young Angelo--  
Beetling it bends athwart the solemn sky,  
And scowls on starry worlds that down beneath it lie.  
Here sate he with his love--his dark eye bent  
With eagle gaze along the firmament:  
Now turn'd it upon her--but ever then  
It trembled to the orb of EARTH again.

"Tante, dearest, see! how dim that ray!  
How lovely 'tis to look so far away!  
She seemed not thus upon that autumn eve  
I left her gorgeous halls--nor mourned to leave,  
That eve--that eve--I should remember well--  
The sun-ray dropped, in Lemnos with a spell  
On th' Arabesque carving of a gilded hall  
Wherein I sate, and on the draperied wall--  
And on my eyelids--O, the heavy light!  
How drowsily it weighed them into night!  
On flowers, before, and mist, and love they ran  
With Persian Saadi in his Gulistan:

But O, that light!--I slumbered--Death, the while,  
Stole o'er my senses in that lovely isle  
So softly that no single silken hair  
Awoke that slept--or knew that he was there.

"The last spot of Earth's orb I trod upon  
Was a proud temple called the Parthenon; [28]  
More beauty clung around her columned wall  
Then even thy glowing bosom beats withal, [29]  
And when old Time my wing did disenthral  
Thence sprang I--as the eagle from his tower,  
And years I left behind me in an hour.  
What time upon her airy bounds I hung,  
One half the garden of her globe was flung  
Unrolling as a chart unto my view--  
Tenantless cities of the desert too!  
Ianthe, beauty crowded on me then,  
And half I wished to be again of men."

"My Angelo! and why of them to be?  
A brighter dwelling-place is here for thee--  
And greener fields than in yon world above,  
And woman's loveliness--and passionate love."  
"But list, Ianthe! when the air so soft  
Failed, as my pennoned spirit leapt aloft, [30]  
Perhaps my brain grew dizzy--but the world

I left so late was into chaos hurled,  
Sprang from her station, on the winds apart,  
And rolled a flame, the fiery Heaven athwart.  
Methought, my sweet one, then I ceased to soar,  
And fell--not swiftly as I rose before,  
But with a downward, tremulous motion thro'  
Light, brazen rays, this golden star unto!  
Nor long the measure of my falling hours,  
For nearest of all stars was thine to ours--  
Dread star! that came, amid a night of mirth,  
A red Daedalion on the timid Earth."

"We came--and to thy Earth--but not to us  
Be given our lady's bidding to discuss:  
We came, my love; around, above, below,  
Gay fire-fly of the night we come and go,  
Nor ask a reason save the angel-nod  
She grants to us as granted by her God--  
But, Angelo, than thine gray Time unfurled  
Never his fairy wing o'er fairer world!  
Dim was its little disk, and angel eyes  
Alone could see the phantom in the skies,  
When first Al Aaraaf knew her course to be  
Headlong thitherward o'er the starry sea--  
But when its glory swelled upon the sky,  
As glowing Beauty's bust beneath man's eye,

We paused before the heritage of men,  
And thy star trembled--as doth Beauty then!"

Thus in discourse, the lovers whiled away  
The night that waned and waned and brought no day.  
They fell: for Heaven to them no hope imparts  
Who hear not for the beating of their hearts.

1839.

[Footnote 1: A star was discovered by Tycho Brahe which appeared suddenly in the heavens--attained, in a few days, a brilliancy surpassing that of Jupiter--then as suddenly disappeared, and has never been seen since.]

[Footnote 2: On Santa Maura--olim Deucadia.]

[Footnote 3: Sappho.]

[Footnote 4: This flower is much noticed by Lewenhoeck and Tournefort.



The bee, feeding upon its blossom, becomes intoxicated.]

[Footnote: Clytia--the Chrysanthemum Peruvianum, or, to employ a better-known term, the turnsol--which turns continually towards the sun, covers itself, like Peru, the country from which it comes, with dewy clouds which cool and refresh its flowers during the most violent heat of the day.--'B. de St. Pierre.']

[Footnote 6: There is cultivated in the king's garden at Paris, a species of serpentine aloe without prickles, whose large and beautiful flower exhales a strong odor of the vanilla, during the time of its expansion, which is very short. It does not blow till towards the month of July--you then perceive it gradually open its petals--expand them--fade and die.--'St. Pierre'.]

[Footnote 7: There is found, in the Rhone, a beautiful lily of the Valisnerian kind. Its stem will stretch to the length of three or four feet--thus preserving its head above water in the swellings of the river.]

[Footnote 8: The Hyacinth.]

[Footnote 9: It is a fiction of the Indians, that Cupid was first seen floating in one of these down the river Ganges, and that he still loves the cradle of his childhood.]

[Footnote 10: And golden vials full of odors which are the prayers of the saints.--'Rev. St. John.']

[Footnote 11: The Humanitarians held that God was to be understood as having really a human form.--'Vide Clarke's Sermons', vol. I, page 26, fol. edit.

The drift of Milton's argument leads him to employ language which would appear, at first sight, to verge upon their doctrine; but it will be seen immediately, that he guards himself against the charge of having adopted one of the most ignorant errors of the dark ages of the Church.--'Dr. Sumner's Notes on Milton's Christian Doctrine'.

This opinion, in spite of many testimonies to the contrary, could never have been very general. Andeus, a Syrian of Mesopotamia, was condemned for the opinion, as heretical. He lived in the beginning of the fourth century. His disciples were called Anthropomorphites.--'Vide du Pin'.

Among Milton's minor poems are these lines:

Dicite sacrorum præesides nemorum Dese, etc.,  
Quis ille primus cujus ex imagine  
Natura solers finxit humanum genus?  
Eternus, incorruptus, æquævus polo,  
Unusque et universus exemplar Dei.

--And afterwards,

Non cui profundum Cæcitas lumen dedit  
Dircæus augur vidit hunc alto sinu, etc.]

[Footnote 12:

Seltsamen Tochter Jovis  
Seinem Schosskinde  
Der Phantasie.

'Goethe'.]

[Footnote 13: Sightless--too small to be seen.--'Legge'.]

[Footnote 14: I have often noticed a peculiar movement of the fire-flies; they will collect in a body and fly off, from a common centre, into innumerable radii.]

[Footnote 15: Therasæa, or Therasea, the island mentioned by Seneca, which, in a moment, arose from the sea to the eyes of astonished mariners.]

[Footnote 16:

Some star which, from the ruin'd roof  
Of shak'd Olympus, by mischance did fall.

'Milton'.]

[Footnote 17: Voltaire, in speaking of Persepolis, says,

"Je connais bien l'admiration qu'inspirent ces ruines--mais un palais érigé au pied d'une chaîne de rochers steriles--peut-il être un chef d'oeuvre des arts!"]

[Footnote 18: "Oh, the wave"--Ula Deguisi is the Turkish appellation;

but, on its own shores, it is called Baliar Loth, or Al-motahah. There were undoubtedly more than two cities engulfed in the "dead sea." In the valley of Siddim were five--Adrah, Zeboin, Zoar, Sodom and Gomorrah. Stephen of Byzantium mentions eight, and Strabo thirteen (engulfed) --but the last is out of all reason. It is said (Tacitus, Strabo, Josephus, Daniel of St. Saba, Nau, Maundrell, Troilo, D'Arvieux), that after an excessive drought, the vestiges of columns, walls, etc., are seen above the surface. At 'any' season, such remains may be discovered by looking down into the transparent lake, and at such distance as would argue the existence of many settlements in the space now usurped by the "Asphaltites."]

[Footnote 19: Eyraco-Chaldea.]

[Footnote 20: I have often thought I could distinctly hear the sound of the darkness as it stole over the horizon.]

[Footnote 21:

Fairies use flowers for their charactery.

'Merry Wives of Windsor'.]

[Footnote 22: In Scripture is this passage:

"The sun shall not harm thee by day, nor the moon by night."

It is, perhaps, not generally known that the moon, in Egypt, has the effect of producing blindness to those who sleep with the face exposed to its rays, to which circumstances the passage evidently alludes.]

[Footnote 23: The Albatross is said to sleep on the wing.]

[Footnote 24: I met with this idea in an old English tale, which I am now unable to obtain and quote from memory:

"The verie essence and, as it were, springe heade and origine of all musiche is the verie pleasaunte sounde which the trees of the forest do make when they growe."]

[Footnote 25: The wild bee will not sleep in the shade if there be moonlight. The rhyme in the verse, as in one about sixty lines before, has an appearance of affectation. It is, however, imitated from Sir W. Scott, or rather from Claud Halcro--in whose mouth I admired its effect:

O! were there an island,  
Tho' ever so wild,  
Where woman might smile, and  
No man be beguil'd, etc. ]

[Footnote 26: With the Arabians there is a medium between Heaven and Hell, where men suffer no punishment, but yet do not attain that tranquil and even happiness which they suppose to be characteristic of heavenly enjoyment.

Un no rompido sueno--  
Un dia puro--allegre--libre  
Quiera--  
Libre de amor--de zelo--  
De odio--de esperanza--de rezelo.

'Luis Ponce de Leon.'

Sorrow is not excluded from "Al Aaraaf," but it is that sorrow which the living love to cherish for the dead, and which, in some minds, resembles the delirium of opium.

The passionate excitement of Love and the buoyancy of spirit attendant upon intoxication are its less holy pleasures--the price of which, to

those souls who make choice of "Al Aaraaf" as their residence after  
life, is final death and annihilation.]

[Footnote 27:

There be tears of perfect moan  
Wept for thee in Helicon.

'Milton'.]

[Footnote 28: It was entire in 1687--the most elevated spot in Athens.]

[Footnote 29:

Shadowing more beauty in their airy brows  
Than have the white breasts of the queen of love.

'Marlowe'.]

[Footnote 30: Pennon, for pinion.--'Milton'.]



\* \* \* \* \*

TAMERLANE.

Kind solace in a dying hour!  
Such, father, is not (now) my theme--  
I will not madly deem that power  
Of Earth may shrive me of the sin  
Unearthly pride hath revelled in--  
I have no time to dote or dream:  
You call it hope--that fire of fire!  
It is but agony of desire:  
If I can hope--O God! I can--  
Its fount is holier--more divine--  
I would not call thee fool, old man,  
But such is not a gift of thine.

Know thou the secret of a spirit

Bowed from its wild pride into shame  
O yearning heart! I did inherit  
Thy withering portion with the fame,  
The searing glory which hath shone  
Amid the Jewels of my throne,  
Halo of Hell! and with a pain  
Not Hell shall make me fear again--  
O craving heart, for the lost flowers  
And sunshine of my summer hours!  
The undying voice of that dead time,  
With its interminable chime,  
Rings, in the spirit of a spell,  
Upon thy emptiness--a knell.

I have not always been as now:  
The fevered diadem on my brow  
I claimed and won usurpingly--  
Hath not the same fierce heirdom given  
Rome to the Cæsar--this to me?  
The heritage of a kingly mind,  
And a proud spirit which hath striven  
Triumphantly with human kind.  
On mountain soil I first drew life:  
The mists of the Taglay have shed  
Nightly their dews upon my head,  
And, I believe, the winged strife

And tumult of the headlong air  
Have nestled in my very hair.

So late from Heaven--that dew--it fell  
(Mid dreams of an unholy night)  
Upon me with the touch of Hell,  
While the red flashing of the light  
From clouds that hung, like banners, o'er,  
Appeared to my half-closing eye  
The pageantry of monarchy;  
And the deep trumpet-thunder's roar  
Came hurriedly upon me, telling  
Of human battle, where my voice,  
My own voice, silly child!--was swelling  
(O! how my spirit would rejoice,  
And leap within me at the cry)  
The battle-cry of Victory!

The rain came down upon my head  
Unsheltered--and the heavy wind  
Rendered me mad and deaf and blind.  
It was but man, I thought, who shed  
Laurels upon me: and the rush--  
The torrent of the chilly air  
Gurgled within my ear the crush  
Of empires--with the captive's prayer--

The hum of suitors--and the tone  
Of flattery 'round a sovereign's throne.

My passions, from that hapless hour,  
Usurped a tyranny which men  
Have deemed since I have reached to power,  
My innate nature--be it so:  
But, father, there lived one who, then,  
Then--in my boyhood--when their fire  
Burned with a still intenser glow  
(For passion must, with youth, expire)  
E'en then who knew this iron heart  
In woman's weakness had a part.

I have no words--alas!--to tell  
The loveliness of loving well!  
Nor would I now attempt to trace  
The more than beauty of a face  
Whose lineaments, upon my mind,  
Are--shadows on th' unstable wind:  
Thus I remember having dwelt  
Some page of early lore upon,  
With loitering eye, till I have felt  
The letters--with their meaning--melt  
To fantasies--with none.

O, she was worthy of all love!  
Love as in infancy was mine--  
'Twas such as angel minds above  
Might envy; her young heart the shrine  
On which my every hope and thought  
Were incense--then a goodly gift,  
For they were childish and upright--  
Pure--as her young example taught:  
Why did I leave it, and, adrift,  
Trust to the fire within, for light?

We grew in age--and love--together--  
Roaming the forest, and the wild;  
My breast her shield in wintry weather--  
And, when the friendly sunshine smiled.  
And she would mark the opening skies,  
I saw no Heaven--but in her eyes.  
Young Love's first lesson is----the heart:  
For 'mid that sunshine, and those smiles,  
When, from our little cares apart,  
And laughing at her girlish wiles,  
I'd throw me on her throbbing breast,  
And pour my spirit out in tears--  
There was no need to speak the rest--  
No need to quiet any fears  
Of her--who asked no reason why,

But turned on me her quiet eye!

Yet more than worthy of the love

My spirit struggled with, and strove

When, on the mountain peak, alone,

Ambition lent it a new tone--

I had no being--but in thee:

The world, and all it did contain

In the earth--the air--the sea--

Its joy--its little lot of pain

That was new pleasure--the ideal,

Dim, vanities of dreams by night--

And dimmer nothings which were real--

(Shadows--and a more shadowy light!)

Parted upon their misty wings,

And, so, confusedly, became

Thine image and--a name--a name!

Two separate--yet most intimate things.

I was ambitious--have you known

The passion, father? You have not:

A cottager, I marked a throne

Of half the world as all my own,

And murmured at such lowly lot--

But, just like any other dream,

Upon the vapor of the dew

My own had past, did not the beam  
Of beauty which did while it thro'  
The minute--the hour--the day--oppress  
My mind with double loveliness.

We walked together on the crown  
Of a high mountain which looked down  
Afar from its proud natural towers  
Of rock and forest, on the hills--  
The dwindled hills! begirt with bowers  
And shouting with a thousand rills.

I spoke to her of power and pride,  
But mystically--in such guise  
That she might deem it nought beside  
The moment's converse; in her eyes  
I read, perhaps too carelessly--  
A mingled feeling with my own--  
The flush on her bright cheek, to me  
Seemed to become a queenly throne  
Too well that I should let it be  
Light in the wilderness alone.

I wrapped myself in grandeur then,  
And donned a visionary crown--  
Yet it was not that Fantasy

Had thrown her mantle over me--  
But that, among the rabble--men,  
Lion ambition is chained down--  
And crouches to a keeper's hand--  
Not so in deserts where the grand--  
The wild--the terrible conspire  
With their own breath to fan his fire.

Look 'round thee now on Samarcand!--  
Is she not queen of Earth? her pride  
Above all cities? in her hand  
Their destinies? in all beside  
Of glory which the world hath known  
Stands she not nobly and alone?  
Falling--her veriest stepping-stone  
Shall form the pedestal of a throne--  
And who her sovereign? Timour--he  
Whom the astonished people saw  
Striding o'er empires haughtily  
A diademed outlaw!

O, human love! thou spirit given,  
On Earth, of all we hope in Heaven!  
Which fall'st into the soul like rain  
Upon the Siroc-withered plain,  
And, failing in thy power to bless,



But leav'st the heart a wilderness!  
Idea! which bindest life around  
With music of so strange a sound  
And beauty of so wild a birth--  
Farewell! for I have won the Earth.

When Hope, the eagle that towered, could see  
No cliff beyond him in the sky,  
His pinions were bent droopingly--  
And homeward turned his softened eye.  
'Twas sunset: When the sun will part  
There comes a sullenness of heart  
To him who still would look upon  
The glory of the summer sun.  
That soul will hate the ev'ning mist  
So often lovely, and will list  
To the sound of the coming darkness (known  
To those whose spirits hearken) as one  
Who, in a dream of night, would fly,  
But cannot, from a danger nigh.

What tho' the moon--tho' the white moon  
Shed all the splendor of her noon,  
Her smile is chilly--and her beam,  
In that time of dreariness, will seem  
(So like you gather in your breath)

A portrait taken after death.  
And boyhood is a summer sun  
Whose waning is the dreariest one--  
For all we live to know is known,  
And all we seek to keep hath flown--  
Let life, then, as the day-flower, fall  
With the noon-day beauty--which is all.  
I reached my home--my home no more--  
For all had flown who made it so.  
I passed from out its mossy door,  
And, tho' my tread was soft and low,  
A voice came from the threshold stone  
Of one whom I had earlier known--  
O, I defy thee, Hell, to show  
On beds of fire that burn below,  
An humbler heart--a deeper woe.

Father, I firmly do believe--  
I know--for Death who comes for me  
From regions of the blest afar,  
Where there is nothing to deceive,  
Hath left his iron gate ajar.  
And rays of truth you cannot see  
Are flashing thro' Eternity----  
I do believe that Eblis hath  
A snare in every human path--

Else how, when in the holy grove  
I wandered of the idol, Love,--  
Who daily scents his snowy wings  
With incense of burnt-offerings  
From the most unpolluted things,  
Whose pleasant bowers are yet so riven  
Above with trellised rays from Heaven  
No mote may shun--no tiniest fly--  
The light'ning of his eagle eye--  
How was it that Ambition crept,  
Unseen, amid the revels there,  
Till growing bold, he laughed and leapt  
In the tangles of Love's very hair!

1829.

\* \* \* \* \*

TO HELEN.

Helen, thy beauty is to me

Like those Nicean barks of yore,  
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,  
The weary, wayworn wanderer bore  
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,  
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,  
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home  
To the glory that was Greece,  
To the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window niche,  
How statue-like I see thee stand,  
The agate lamp within thy hand!  
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which  
Are Holy Land!

1831.

\* \* \* \* \*

### THE VALLEY OF UNREST.

Once it smiled a silent dell  
Where the people did not dwell;  
They had gone unto the wars,  
Trusting to the mild-eyed stars,  
Nightly, from their azure towers,  
To keep watch above the flowers,  
In the midst of which all day  
The red sun-light lazily lay,  
Now each visitor shall confess  
The sad valley's restlessness.  
Nothing there is motionless--  
Nothing save the airs that brood  
Over the magic solitude.  
Ah, by no wind are stirred those trees

That palpitate like the chill seas  
Around the misty Hebrides!  
Ah, by no wind those clouds are driven  
That rustle through the unquiet Heaven  
Unceasingly, from morn till even,  
Over the violets there that lie  
In myriad types of the human eye--  
Over the lilies that wave  
And weep above a nameless grave!  
They wave:--from out their fragrant tops  
Eternal dews come down in drops.  
They weep:--from off their delicate stems  
Perennial tears descend in gems.

1831.

\* \* \* \* \*

ISRAFEL. [1]

In Heaven a spirit doth dwell  
    "Whose heart-strings are a lute;"  
None sing so wildly well  
As the angel Israfel,  
And the giddy Stars (so legends tell),  
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell  
    Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above  
    In her highest noon,  
    The enamoured Moon  
Blushes with love,  
    While, to listen, the red levin  
    (With the rapid Pleiads, even,  
    Which were seven),  
    Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir  
    And the other listening things)  
That Israfeli's fire  
Is owing to that lyre  
    By which he sits and sings--

The trembling living wire  
Of those unusual strings.

But the skies that angel trod,  
Where deep thoughts are a duty--  
Where Love's a grow-up God--  
Where the Houri glances are  
Imbued with all the beauty  
Which we worship in a star.

Therefore, thou art not wrong,  
Israfeli, who despisest  
An unimpassioned song;  
To thee the laurels belong,  
Best bard, because the wisest!  
Merrily live and long!

The ecstasies above  
With thy burning measures suit--  
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,  
With the fervor of thy lute--  
Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine; but this  
Is a world of sweets and sour;  
Our flowers are merely--flowers,



And the shadow of thy perfect bliss  
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell  
Where Israfel  
Hath dwelt, and he where I,  
He might not sing so wildly well  
A mortal melody,  
While a bolder note than this might swell  
From my lyre within the sky.

1836.

[Footnote 1:

And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who has the  
sweetest voice of all God's creatures.

'Koran'.]

\* \* \* \* \*

TO----

I heed not that my earthly lot  
Hath--little of Earth in it--  
That years of love have been forgot  
In the hatred of a minute:--  
I mourn not that the desolate  
Are happier, sweet, than I,  
But that you sorrow for my fate  
Who am a passer-by.

1829.

\* \* \* \* \*

TO----

The bowers whereat, in dreams, I see  
The wantonest singing birds,

Are lips--and all thy melody  
Of lip-begotten words--

Thine eyes, in Heaven of heart enshrined  
Then desolately fall,  
O God! on my funereal mind  
Like starlight on a pall--

Thy heart--thy heart!--I wake and sigh,  
And sleep to dream till day  
Of the truth that gold can never buy--  
Of the baubles that it may.

1829.

\* \* \* \* \*

TO THE RIVER

Fair river! in thy bright, clear flow

Of crystal, wandering water,

Thou art an emblem of the glow

Of beauty--the unhidden heart--

The playful mazziness of art

In old Alberto's daughter;

But when within thy wave she looks--

Which glistens then, and trembles--

Why, then, the prettiest of brooks

Her worshipper resembles;

For in his heart, as in thy stream,  
Her image deeply lies--  
His heart which trembles at the beam  
Of her soul-searching eyes.

1829.

\* \* \* \* \*

SONG.

I saw thee on thy bridal day--  
When a burning blush came o'er thee,  
Though happiness around thee lay,  
The world all love before thee:

And in thine eye a kindling light  
    (Whatever it might be)  
Was all on Earth my aching sight  
    Of Loveliness could see.

That blush, perhaps, was maiden shame--  
    As such it well may pass--  
Though its glow hath raised a fiercer flame  
    In the breast of him, alas!

Who saw thee on that bridal day,  
    When that deep blush would come o'er thee,  
Though happiness around thee lay,  
    The world all love before thee.

1827.

\* \* \* \* \*

SPIRITS OF THE DEAD.

Thy soul shall find itself alone  
'Mid dark thoughts of the gray tombstone  
Not one, of all the crowd, to pry  
Into thine hour of secrecy.  
Be silent in that solitude  
Which is not loneliness--for then  
The spirits of the dead who stood  
In life before thee are again  
In death around thee--and their will  
Shall overshadow thee: be still.  
The night--tho' clear--shall frown--  
And the stars shall not look down  
From their high thrones in the Heaven,  
With light like Hope to mortals given--  
But their red orbs, without beam,  
To thy weariness shall seem  
As a burning and a fever  
Which would cling to thee forever.  
Now are thoughts thou shalt not banish--  
Now are visions ne'er to vanish--  
From thy spirit shall they pass

No more--like dew-drops from the grass.  
The breeze--the breath of God--is still--  
And the mist upon the hill  
Shadowy--shadowy--yet unbroken,  
Is a symbol and a token--  
How it hangs upon the trees,  
A mystery of mysteries!

1837.

\* \* \* \* \*

A DREAM.

In visions of the dark night  
I have dreamed of joy departed--



But a waking dream of life and light  
Hath left me broken-hearted.

Ah! what is not a dream by day  
To him whose eyes are cast  
On things around him with a ray  
Turned back upon the past?

That holy dream--that holy dream,  
While all the world were chiding,  
Hath cheered me as a lovely beam,  
A lonely spirit guiding.

What though that light, thro' storm and night,  
So trembled from afar--  
What could there be more purely bright  
In Truth's day star?

1837.

\* \* \* \* \*

ROMANCE.

Romance, who loves to nod and sing,  
With drowsy head and folded wing,  
Among the green leaves as they shake  
Far down within some shadowy lake,  
To me a painted paroquet  
Hath been--a most familiar bird--  
Taught me my alphabet to say--  
To lisp my very earliest word  
While in the wild wood I did lie,  
A child--with a most knowing eye.

Of late, eternal Condor years  
So shake the very Heaven on high  
With tumult as they thunder by,  
I have no time for idle cares  
Though gazing on the unquiet sky.  
And when an hour with calmer wings  
Its down upon my spirit flings--

That little time with lyre and rhyme  
To while away--forbidden things!  
My heart would feel to be a crime  
Unless it trembled with the strings.

1829.

\* \* \* \* \*

FAIRYLAND.

Dim vales--and shadowy floods--  
And cloudy-looking woods,  
Whose forms we can't discover  
For the tears that drip all over  
Huge moons there wax and wane--

Again--again--again--  
Every moment of the night--  
Forever changing places--  
And they put out the star-light  
With the breath from their pale faces.  
About twelve by the moon-dial  
One more filmy than the rest  
(A kind which, upon trial,  
They have found to be the best)  
Comes down--still down--and down  
With its centre on the crown  
Of a mountain's eminence,  
While its wide circumference  
In easy drapery falls  
Over hamlets, over halls,  
Wherever they may be--  
O'er the strange woods--o'er the sea--  
Over spirits on the wing--  
Over every drowsy thing--  
And buries them up quite  
In a labyrinth of light--  
And then, how deep!--O, deep!  
Is the passion of their sleep.  
In the morning they arise,  
And their moony covering  
Is soaring in the skies,

With the tempests as they toss,  
Like--almost any thing--  
Or a yellow Albatross.  
They use that moon no more  
For the same end as before--  
Videlicet a tent--  
Which I think extravagant:  
Its atomies, however,  
Into a shower dissever,  
Of which those butterflies,  
Of Earth, who seek the skies,  
And so come down again  
(Never-contented thing!)  
Have brought a specimen  
Upon their quivering wings.

1831

\* \* \* \* \*

THE LAKE.

In spring of youth it was my lot  
To haunt of the wide world a spot  
The which I could not love the less--  
So lovely was the loneliness  
Of a wild lake, with black rock bound,  
And the tall pines that towered around.

But when the Night had thrown her pall  
Upon the spot, as upon all,  
And the mystic wind went by  
Murmuring in melody--  
Then--ah, then, I would awake  
To the terror of the lone lake.

Yet that terror was not fright,  
But a tremulous delight--  
A feeling not the jewelled mine  
Could teach or bribe me to define--  
Nor Love--although the Love were thine.

Death was in that poisonous wave,  
And in its gulf a fitting grave  
For him who thence could solace bring  
To his lone imagining--  
Whose solitary soul could make  
An Eden of that dim lake.

1827.

\* \* \* \* \*

EVENING STAR.

'Twas noontide of summer,  
And midtime of night,  
And stars, in their orbits,

Shone pale, through the light  
Of the brighter, cold moon.  
'Mid planets her slaves,  
Herself in the Heavens,  
Her beam on the waves.

I gazed awhile  
On her cold smile;  
Too cold--too cold for me--  
There passed, as a shroud,  
A fleecy cloud,  
And I turned away to thee,  
Proud Evening Star,  
In thy glory afar  
And dearer thy beam shall be;  
For joy to my heart  
Is the proud part  
Thou bearest in Heaven at night,  
And more I admire  
Thy distant fire,  
Than that colder, lowly light.



IMITATION.

A dark unfathomed tide  
Of interminable pride--  
A mystery, and a dream,  
Should my early life seem;  
I say that dream was fraught  
With a wild and waking thought  
Of beings that have been,  
Which my spirit hath not seen,  
Had I let them pass me by,  
With a dreaming eye!  
Let none of earth inherit  
That vision on my spirit;  
Those thoughts I would control,  
As a spell upon his soul:  
For that bright hope at last  
And that light time have past,  
And my wordly rest hath gone  
With a sigh as it passed on:  
I care not though it perish  
With a thought I then did cherish.

"THE HAPPIEST DAY."

- I. The happiest day--the happiest hour  
My seared and blighted heart hath known,  
The highest hope of pride and power,  
I feel hath flown.
  
- II. Of power! said I? Yes! such I ween  
But they have vanished long, alas!  
The visions of my youth have been--  
But let them pass.
  
- III. And pride, what have I now with thee?  
Another brow may ev'n inherit  
The venom thou hast poured on me--  
Be still my spirit!
  
- IV. The happiest day--the happiest hour  
Mine eyes shall see--have ever seen

The brightest glance of pride and power

I feel have been:

V. But were that hope of pride and power

Now offered with the pain

Ev'n then I felt--that brightest hour

I would not live again:

VI. For on its wing was dark alloy

And as it fluttered--fell

An essence--powerful to destroy

A soul that knew it well.

Translation from the Greek.

HYMN TO ARISTOGEITON AND HARMODIUS.

I. Wreathed in myrtle, my sword I'll conceal,

Like those champions devoted and brave,

When they plunged in the tyrant their steel,  
And to Athens deliverance gave.

II. Beloved heroes! your deathless souls roam  
In the joy breathing isles of the blest;  
Where the mighty of old have their home--  
Where Achilles and Diomed rest.

III. In fresh myrtle my blade I'll entwine,  
Like Harmodius, the gallant and good,  
When he made at the tutelary shrine  
A libation of Tyranny's blood.

IV. Ye deliverers of Athens from shame!  
Ye avengers of Liberty's wrongs!  
Endless ages shall cherish your fame,  
Embalmed in their echoing songs!

## DREAMS.

Oh! that my young life were a lasting dream!  
My spirit not awakening, till the beam  
Of an Eternity should bring the morrow.  
Yes! though that long dream were of hopeless sorrow,  
'Twere better than the cold reality  
Of waking life, to him whose heart must be,  
And hath been still, upon the lovely earth,  
A chaos of deep passion, from his birth.  
But should it be--that dream eternally  
Continuing--as dreams have been to me  
In my young boyhood--should it thus be given,  
'Twere folly still to hope for higher Heaven.  
For I have revelled when the sun was bright  
I' the summer sky, in dreams of living light  
And loveliness,--have left my very heart  
Inclines of my imaginary apart [1]  
From mine own home, with beings that have been  
Of mine own thought--what more could I have seen?  
'Twas once--and only once--and the wild hour  
From my remembrance shall not pass--some power  
Or spell had bound me--'twas the chilly wind  
Came o'er me in the night, and left behind  
Its image on my spirit--or the moon

Shone on my slumbers in her lofty noon  
Too coldly--or the stars--howe'er it was  
That dream was that that night-wind--let it pass.  
I have been happy, though in a dream.  
I have been happy--and I love the theme:  
Dreams! in their vivid coloring of life  
As in that fleeting, shadowy, misty strife  
Of semblance with reality which brings  
To the delirious eye, more lovely things  
Of Paradise and Love--and all my own!--  
Than young Hope in his sunniest hour hath known.

"IN YOUTH I HAVE KNOWN ONE."

How often we forget all time, when lone  
Admiring Nature's universal throne;  
Her woods--her wilds--her mountains--the intense  
Reply of Hers to Our intelligence!

- I. In youth I have known one with whom the Earth  
In secret communing held--as he with it,  
In daylight, and in beauty, from his birth:  
Whose fervid, flickering torch of life was lit  
From the sun and stars, whence he had drawn forth  
A passionate light such for his spirit was fit--  
And yet that spirit knew--not in the hour  
Of its own fervor--what had o'er it power.
- II. Perhaps it may be that my mind is wrought  
To a fever [1] by the moonbeam that hangs o'er,  
But I will half believe that wild light fraught  
With more of sovereignty than ancient lore  
Hath ever told--or is it of a thought  
The unembodied essence, and no more  
That with a quickening spell doth o'er us pass

As dew of the night-time, o'er the summer grass?

III. Doth o'er us pass, when, as th' expanding eye  
To the loved object--so the tear to the lid  
Will start, which lately slept in apathy?  
And yet it need not be--(that object) hid  
From us in life--but common--which doth lie  
Each hour before us--but then only bid  
With a strange sound, as of a harp-string broken  
T' awake us--'Tis a symbol and a token--

IV. Of what in other worlds shall be--and given  
In beauty by our God, to those alone  
Who otherwise would fall from life and Heaven  
Drawn by their heart's passion, and that tone,  
That high tone of the spirit which hath striven  
Though not with Faith--with godliness--whose throne  
With desperate energy 't hath beaten down;  
Wearing its own deep feeling as a crown.



A PÆAN.

- I.     How shall the burial rite be read?  
        The solemn song be sung?  
The requiem for the loveliest dead,  
        That ever died so young?
- II.    Her friends are gazing on her,  
        And on her gaudy bier,  
And weep!--oh! to dishonor  
        Dead beauty with a tear!
- III.   They loved her for her wealth--  
        And they hated her for her pride--  
But she grew in feeble health,  
        And they love her--that she died.
- IV.    They tell me (while they speak  
        Of her "costly broider'd pall")  
That my voice is growing weak--  
        That I should not sing at all--

- V. Or that my tone should be  
Tun'd to such solemn song  
So mournfully--so mournfully,  
That the dead may feel no wrong.
- VI. But she is gone above,  
With young Hope at her side,  
And I am drunk with love  
Of the dead, who is my bride.--
- VII. Of the dead--dead who lies  
All perfum'd there,  
With the death upon her eyes.  
And the life upon her hair.
- VIII. Thus on the coffin loud and long  
I strike--the murmur sent  
Through the gray chambers to my song,  
Shall be the accompaniment.
- IX. Thou diedst in thy life's June--

But thou didst not die too fair:  
Thou didst not die too soon,  
Nor with too calm an air.

X. From more than friends on earth,  
Thy life and love are riven,  
To join the untainted mirth  
Of more than thrones in heaven.--

XI. Therefore, to thee this night  
I will no requiem raise,  
But waft thee on thy flight,  
With a Pæan of old days.

#### NOTES.

30. On the "Poems written in Youth" little comment is needed. This section includes the pieces printed for the first volume of 1827 (which was subsequently suppressed), such poems from the first and second published volumes of 1829 and 1831 as have not already been given in their revised versions, and a few others collected from various sources.

"Al Aaraaf" first appeared, with the sonnet "To Silence" prefixed to it, in 1829, and is, substantially, as originally issued. In the edition for

1831, however, this poem, its author's longest, was introduced by the following twenty-nine lines, which have been omitted in all subsequent collections:

AL AARAAF.

Mysterious star!

Thou wert my dream

All a long summer night--

Be now my theme!

By this clear stream,

Of thee will I write;

Meantime from afar

Bathe me in light!

Thy world has not the dross of ours,

Yet all the beauty--all the flowers

That list our love or deck our bowers

In dreamy gardens, where do lie

Dreamy maidens all the day;

While the silver winds of Circassy

On violet couches faint away.

Little--oh! little dwells in thee

Like unto what on earth we see:

Beauty's eye is here the bluest

In the falsest and untruest--

On the sweetest air doth float

The most sad and solemn note--

If with thee be broken hearts,

Joy so peacefully departs,  
That its echo still doth dwell,  
Like the murmur in the shell.  
Thou! thy truest type of grief  
Is the gently falling leaf--  
Thou! thy framing is so holy  
Sorrow is not melancholy.

\* \* \* \* \*

31. The earliest version of "Tamerlane" was included in the suppressed volume of 1827, but differs very considerably from the poem as now published. The present draft, besides innumerable verbal alterations and improvements upon the original, is more carefully punctuated, and, the lines being indented, presents a more pleasing appearance, to the eye at least.

32. "To Helen" first appeared in the 1831 volume, as did also "The Valley of Unrest" (as "The Valley Nis"), "Israfel," and one or two others of the youthful pieces.

The poem styled "Romance" constituted the Preface of the 1829 volume,  
but with the addition of the following lines:

Succeeding years, too wild for song,  
Then rolled like tropic storms along,  
Where, though the garish lights that fly  
Dying along the troubled sky,  
Lay bare, through vistas thunder-riven,  
The blackness of the general Heaven,  
That very blackness yet doth fling  
Light on the lightning's silver wing.

For being an idle boy lang syne,  
Who read Anacreon and drank wine,  
I early found Anacreon rhymes  
Were almost passionate sometimes--  
And by strange alchemy of brain  
His pleasures always turned to pain--  
His naïveté to wild desire--  
His wit to love--his wine to fire--  
And so, being young and dipt in folly,  
I fell in love with melancholy.

And used to throw my earthly rest

And quiet all away in jest--  
I could not love except where Death  
Was mingling his with Beauty's breath--  
Or Hymen, Time, and Destiny,  
Were stalking between her and me.

\* \* \* \* \*

But now my soul hath too much room--  
Gone are the glory and the gloom--  
The black hath mellow'd into gray,  
And all the fires are fading away.

My draught of passion hath been deep--  
I revell'd, and I now would sleep--  
And after drunkenness of soul  
Succeeds the glories of the bowl--  
An idle longing night and day  
To dream my very life away.

But dreams--of those who dream as I,  
Aspiringly, are damned, and die:  
Yet should I swear I mean alone,  
By notes so very shrilly blown,  
To break upon Time's monotone,  
While yet my vapid joy and grief



Are tintless of the yellow leaf--  
Why not an imp the greybeard hath,  
Will shake his shadow in my path--  
And e'en the greybeard will o'erlook  
Connivingly my dreaming-book.

\* \* \* \* \*

DOUBTFUL POEMS.

\* \* \* \* \*

ALONE.

From childhood's hour I have not been  
As others were--I have not seen  
As others saw--I could not bring  
My passions from a common spring--  
From the same source I have not taken  
My sorrow--I could not awaken  
My heart to joy at the same tone--  
And all I loved--I loved alone--  
Thou--in my childhood--in the dawn  
Of a most stormy life--was drawn  
From every depth of good and ill

The mystery which binds me still--  
From the torrent, or the fountain--  
From the red cliff of the mountain--  
From the sun that round me roll'd  
In its autumn tint of gold--  
From the lightning in the sky  
As it passed me flying by--  
From the thunder and the storm--  
And the cloud that took the form  
(When the rest of Heaven was blue)  
Of a demon in my view.

TO ISADORE.

I.     Beneath the vine-clad eaves,  
          Whose shadows fall before  
          Thy lowly cottage door--  
Under the lilac's tremulous leaves--  
Within thy snowy clasped hand  
          The purple flowers it bore.  
Last eve in dreams, I saw thee stand,  
Like queenly nymph from Fairy-land--  
Enchantress of the flowery wand,  
          Most beauteous Isadore!

II.    And when I bade the dream  
          Upon thy spirit flee,  
          Thy violet eyes to me  
Upturned, did overflowing seem  
With the deep, untold delight  
          Of Love's serenity;  
Thy classic brow, like lilies white  
And pale as the Imperial Night  
Upon her throne, with stars bedight,  
          Enthralled my soul to thee!

III. Ah! ever I behold  
Thy dreamy, passionate eyes,  
Blue as the languid skies  
Hung with the sunset's fringe of gold;  
Now strangely clear thine image grows,  
And olden memories  
Are startled from their long repose  
Like shadows on the silent snows  
When suddenly the night-wind blows  
Where quiet moonlight lies.

IV. Like music heard in dreams,  
Like strains of harps unknown,  
Of birds for ever flown,--  
Audible as the voice of streams  
That murmur in some leafy dell,  
I hear thy gentlest tone,  
And Silence cometh with her spell  
Like that which on my tongue doth dwell,  
When tremulous in dreams I tell  
My love to thee alone!

V. In every valley heard,  
Floating from tree to tree,

Less beautiful to me,  
The music of the radiant bird,  
Than artless accents such as thine  
Whose echoes never flee!  
Ah! how for thy sweet voice I pine:--  
For uttered in thy tones benign  
(Enchantress!) this rude name of mine  
Doth seem a melody!

THE VILLAGE STREET.

In these rapid, restless shadows,  
Once I walked at eventide,  
When a gentle, silent maiden,  
Walked in beauty at my side.  
She alone there walked beside me  
All in beauty, like a bride.

Pallidly the moon was shining  
On the dewy meadows nigh;  
On the silvery, silent rivers,  
On the mountains far and high,--

On the ocean's star-lit waters,  
Where the winds a-weary die.

Slowly, silently we wandered  
From the open cottage door,  
Underneath the elm's long branches  
To the pavement bending o'er;  
Underneath the mossy willow  
And the dying sycamore.

With the myriad stars in beauty  
All bedight, the heavens were seen,  
Radiant hopes were bright around me,  
Like the light of stars serene;  
Like the mellow midnight splendor  
Of the Night's irradiate queen.

Audibly the elm-leaves whispered  
Peaceful, pleasant melodies,  
Like the distant murmured music  
Of unquiet, lovely seas;  
While the winds were hushed in slumber  
In the fragrant flowers and trees.

Wondrous and unwonted beauty  
Still adorning all did seem,

While I told my love in fables  
    'Neath the willows by the stream;  
Would the heart have kept unspoken  
    Love that was its rarest dream!

Instantly away we wandered  
    In the shadowy twilight tide,  
She, the silent, scornful maiden,  
    Walking calmly at my side,  
With a step serene and stately,  
    All in beauty, all in pride.

Vacantly I walked beside her.  
    On the earth mine eyes were cast;  
Swift and keen there came unto me  
    Bitter memories of the past--  
On me, like the rain in Autumn  
    On the dead leaves, cold and fast.

Underneath the elms we parted,  
    By the lowly cottage door;  
One brief word alone was uttered--  
    Never on our lips before;  
And away I walked forlornly,  
Broken-hearted evermore.



Slowly, silently I loitered,  
Homeward, in the night, alone;  
Sudden anguish bound my spirit,  
That my youth had never known;  
Wild unrest, like that which cometh  
When the Night's first dream hath flown.

Now, to me the elm-leaves whisper  
Mad, discordant melodies,  
And keen melodies like shadows  
Haunt the moaning willow trees,  
And the sycamores with laughter  
Mock me in the nightly breeze.

Sad and pale the Autumn moonlight  
Through the sighing foliage streams;  
And each morning, midnight shadow,  
Shadow of my sorrow seems;  
Strive, O heart, forget thine idol!  
And, O soul, forget thy dreams!

THE FOREST REVERIE.

'Tis said that when  
The hands of men  
Tamed this primeval wood,  
And hoary trees with groans of wo,  
Like warriors by an unknown foe,  
Were in their strength subdued,  
The virgin Earth  
Gave instant birth  
To springs that ne'er did flow--  
That in the sun  
Did rivulets run,  
And all around rare flowers did blow--  
The wild rose pale  
Perfumed the gale,  
And the queenly lily adown the dale  
(Whom the sun and the dew  
And the winds did woo),  
With the gourd and the grape luxuriant grew.

So when in tears  
The love of years  
Is wasted like the snow,  
And the fine fibrils of its life

By the rude wrong of instant strife  
Are broken at a blow--  
    Within the heart  
Do springs upstart  
Of which it doth now know,  
    And strange, sweet dreams,  
    Like silent streams  
That from new fountains overflow,  
    With the earlier tide  
    Of rivers glide  
Deep in the heart whose hope has died--  
Quenching the fires its ashes hide,--  
    Its ashes, whence will spring and grow  
    Sweet flowers, ere long,--  
    The rare and radiant flowers of song!

NOTES.

Of the many verses from time to time ascribed to the pen of Edgar Poe, and not included among his known writings, the lines entitled "Alone" have the chief claim to our notice. 'Fac-simile' copies of this piece had been in possession of the present editor some time previous to its publication in 'Scribner's Magazine' for September 1875; but as proofs of the authorship claimed for it were not forthcoming, he refrained from publishing it as requested. The desired proofs have not yet been

adduced, and there is, at present, nothing but internal evidence to guide us. "Alone" is stated to have been written by Poe in the album of a Baltimore lady (Mrs. Balderstone?), on March 17th, 1829, and the 'fac-simile' given in 'Scribner's' is alleged to be of his handwriting. If the caligraphy be Poe's, it is different in all essential respects from all the many specimens known to us, and strongly resembles that of the writer of the heading and dating of the manuscript, both of which the contributor of the poem acknowledges to have been recently added. The lines, however, if not by Poe, are the most successful imitation of his early mannerisms yet made public, and, in the opinion of one well qualified to speak, "are not unworthy on the whole of the parentage claimed for them."

Whilst Edgar Poe was editor of the 'Broadway Journal', some lines "To Isadore" appeared therein, and, like several of his known pieces, bore no signature. They were at once ascribed to Poe, and in order to satisfy questioners, an editorial paragraph subsequently appeared, saying they were by "A. Ide, junior." Two previous poems had appeared in the 'Broadway Journal' over the signature of "A. M. Ide," and whoever wrote them was also the author of the lines "To Isadore." In order, doubtless, to give a show of variety, Poe was then publishing some of his known works in his journal over 'noms de plume', and as no other writings whatever can be traced to any person bearing the name of "A. M. Ide," it is not impossible that the poems now republished in this collection may be by the author of "The Raven." Having been published without his usual elaborate revision, Poe may have wished to hide his hasty work under an

assumed name. The three pieces are included in the present collection, so the reader can judge for himself what pretensions they possess to be by the author of "The Raven."