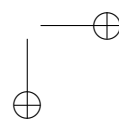
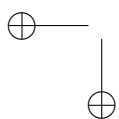
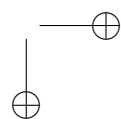
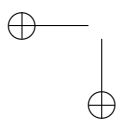
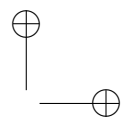
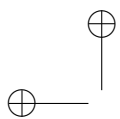
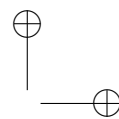
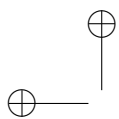


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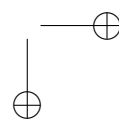
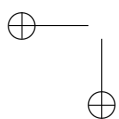


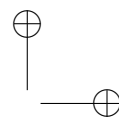
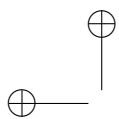


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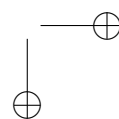
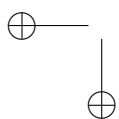
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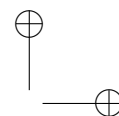
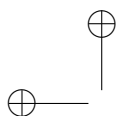
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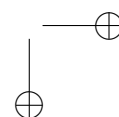
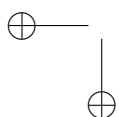
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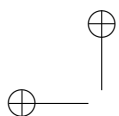




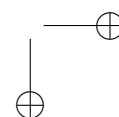
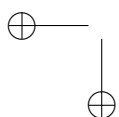
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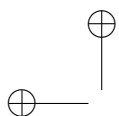
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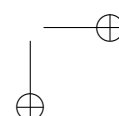
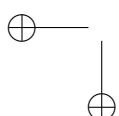


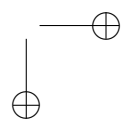
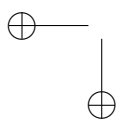
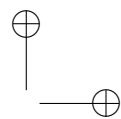
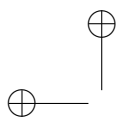
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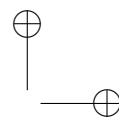
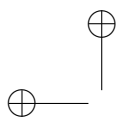




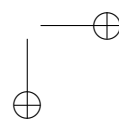
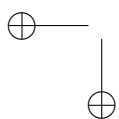
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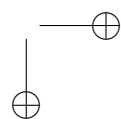
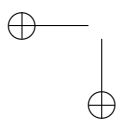
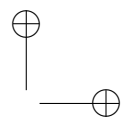
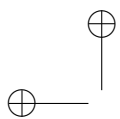






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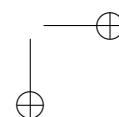




SONG OF TRIUMPH

When I have done the things they say –
The wise and good who teach me how to go; –
When my ambition has been flung away,
My pride brought low,
My vanity erased,
And all the plunging passions of my soul
Stand quivering to the touch of whip and rein, –
What will I do with all this self-control
That was so hard to gain?
Shall I be happy in my conqueror's crown? –
I hardly know...

When from my pinnacle I shall look down
To contemplate such vast defeat,
I think perhaps the taste
Of victory may not be so sweet
That I can view without a touch of pain
Those bright battalions of my youth
That shall not charge again.
Still are the summits, by fine airs embraced,
But there are trumpets on the plain;
And I may know a dim distress
To find myself the lord of loneliness, –
The monarch of a waste.





THE STEED

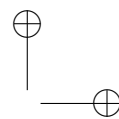
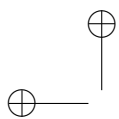
“If wishes were horses. . .”

When first he came to drink
He seemed a shadow where there was no shade;
The rocks, the earth, and the blue cup
That held that water, were one amethyst
Out of the stillness made; –
Then something quivered on the farther brink
And I looked up. . . .
His flanks were silver and his mane was mist.

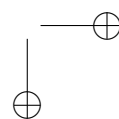
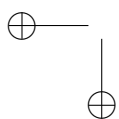
Surely, I said, He cannot linger here
Nor be the thing he seems;
This is a desert world and clear, –
Nor messengers, nor dreams
Come with wild feet across these sands
Where I have buried doubt with my two hands.
And yet he came again and came more near.

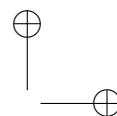
Until at last I know!
And now all nebulous around me grow
The shining certainties
Where I have dwelt so long,
And clear horizons lift
On dimmer destinies.





There is the race still swift,
The battle strong; –
O steed of wind and fire
Men call desire, –
Shall we not go?



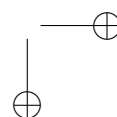


JUNE NIGHT

If that be silence there which here is song,
What echoes shall prolong
These cadences?
Shall those pure pauses be
Soft as this music is,
When time falls mute upon eternity?

Where all is fair forever, will white dreams
Lift like the lilies in some garden bed
The petals of perpetual flowers, –
Untarnished gleams, to shed
For us who plucked these roses and these hours
Pale peace instead?

There is no darkness on the destiny
Of yonder years;
They move
Lit by some far fidelity
Of unimaginable love.
Will never any shadows fall like these
To break our hearts with memories
Who knew the tides of passion and the tears
Drawn by this moon's inconstancy?





THE ANSWER

Remember you? . . . There are so many ways
Of memory:
Sometimes she comes with pictures; then the blaze
Of noon on the hot street
Grows dim, and suddenly
There is the marble coolness and the shade
Of a long colonnade,
And once again our feet
Go down her gracious gallery –
Past the pure profiles of seraphic days
On gold inlaid;
Past blue madonnas in trim gardens made
So still with little cypress trees,
And little children round their knees,
All blondness, peace and praise;
Past aureoled innocence and angel's wing,
To stand at last and gaze
Upon the canvas blossoming
With the bright lady who was all our Spring.
Sometimes she comes with lightning and a sword,
Sent from the Lord
To snatch us backward by the hair.
Then from the councils of the heart
The kings depart
And the old ruin is there;
Again the watchman quits the walls;

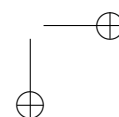


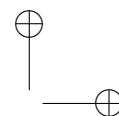
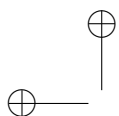


The chariot-wheels jar on the broken gate;
The trembling air
Is darkened, and the altar falls
Where the white image stood inviolate
And every breath was prayer.

Sometimes... but is this memory –
The whispering tide
That steals through every vein,
As in the trees the summer's alchemy
And in the earth the rain,
Bringing with hidden touch and still
Its perfect will
To flower again?
Ah, wide, more wide
Than any boundaries of sense
Lives on that boundless influence,
Whose terms are infinite, whose sign is set
Where men no more remember or forget....

So when you say: Remember me –
Think well what that may be!

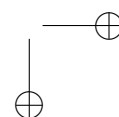
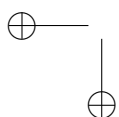


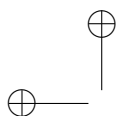


THE LADIES

In those forbidden gardens that I pass,
With walls my eyes may never wander through,
There are paths I know like ribbons in the grass
Where the roses walk all summer, two by two,
As ladies do.

Up and down the garden all the idle day
They trail their skirts, and in the evenings
I always listen, for I know the way
The white rose whispers and the red rose sings
Of fair far things.

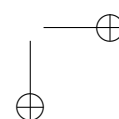
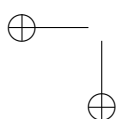


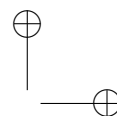


GOLD

That was her room –
The highest one.
It seems a cataract in bloom,
The way the yellow roses run
Down from the window facing to the sun.

What fool believes
She still is there?
What madman's memory deceives
That falling brightness on the air?
Rapunzel – whose the voice? – *let down your hair!*

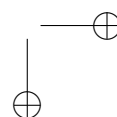




THE OUTCAST

I have no place to keep you any more;
Your shrine is broken, on the sagging door,
And on the window too,
The dampness gathers and the ivy clings,
And there the little bird that sways and sings,
Sings of his nest, not you;
The music that was yours has trailed away,
Gone with the incense and the dripping light
That stained your forehead where you stood all white.
I cannot put you in the noisy day;
What would you make of all its jangling strings –
You whom the silence cherished and the night
Touched with slow-moving wings?

If I could build anew
The broken beauty where you dwelt before,
And watch the moonlight stealing in to pray
Just as it used to do,
I know my dreams would come again and say
The orisons they knew;
But life that gives so much will scarce restore
At all, or gather back the dust it flings,
Or make new homes again for homeless things.
I have no place to keep you any more.





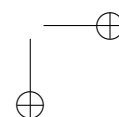
THE IDLE SINGER

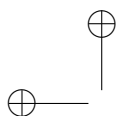
Not that I may be understood; –
Who understands the stream that slips
With endless music on its lips
Through the still wood?

Who listens when the night-winds blow
Through those high harps the poplars string?
And the low song the rushes sing,
Does any know?

And where the waves with milky hands
Touch the curved viol of the shore
And the old chords break evermore,
Who understands?

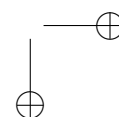
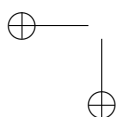
But should the ritual be dumb
And the long invocation cease? –
Still let us breathe of that far peace
That may not come!

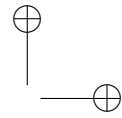
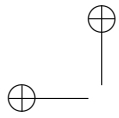




OUTRE MER

I've never visited that land
Of slow sweet things
Beyond the sea;
Her shores with stores of memories rich and grand
Still wait for me;
Yet I need only close my eyes
And I can see
Her honey-colored planets rise in skies
Where day's delight to night still clings,
And shadows falling like a dream
Across some Andalusian stream
That sleeps and sings;
And I can feel the airs that steal
Like heavy bees above some garden wall
Where orange trees stand tall and all
Their gold reveal,
And watch the hours like flowers that bloom and fall
In old Castile.
O loveliness that must be Spain,
Why do you rise for me so plain
And call my fancy so?
Familiar always and all fair –
Is it because once long ago
I had a castle there?





SANCTA SILVARUM

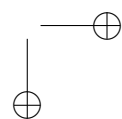
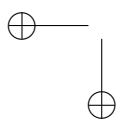
A goddess hunts in the wood to-night,
Her feet are light and her hair blows wide; –
Sorrow, hide!

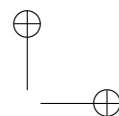
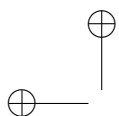
Full fast she flies and her leaping pack
Of shadows black flies faster yet; –
Lie low, regret!

The notes that trail from her windy horn,
Of madness born, beat where they will; –
Echo, be still!

What will she see when she leads the chase
By the low sweet place where the ferns lie crushed? –
Ah, pain, be hushed!

What will she start from that dewy bed
When she leaps ahead and the pack swings by? –
Ah, memory, die!



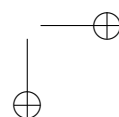
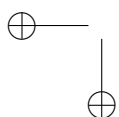


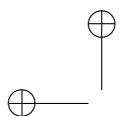
THE SPINNERS

*“Araignée du matin, chagrin;
Araignée du soir, espoir.”*

Spider spinning in the sun,
Hope is done;
Why with weary webs of care
And time interminably spun,
Still snare
The creeping worm despair?

Spider spinning in the night
Shadows gray,
Weaving threads of dreams and dew
That the low-hung moon shines through,
Ah, pray,
Spider spinning in the night,
Catch me the wingéd moth delight
That flies no more by day!

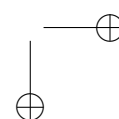
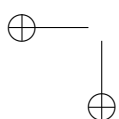


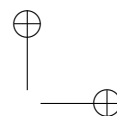


THE CHOSEN

The music is already made
For words like this –
Brocade.
For Oriel and Oubliette
The measure long ago was set,
For Bower and Bliss;
And could one name a circumstance
Where Gillyflower would not dance,
Or Fleur de Lys?
Such syllables on silken feet
Must meet
And kiss.

But there are other words that go
Sodden and slow
By ways made all of weariness,
Or linger while the fire burns low
In quietness;
Words that have been where weeping was
And nights were long,
That never yet have had a silken dress
Nor gone in any song.

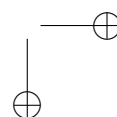




THE EMBLEM

By day
My crown seems light;
It is the night
That makes it heavy; then I sometimes pray
To take it off and lay it down,
Or hold it for a little in my hands.
A crown,
That is so dull a thing to wear, must be
Quite beautiful to see,
If one could count its precious stones, its bands
Of metal beaten fine.
There would be chrysoprase, chalcedony,
And onyx graven deep with imagery,
And opals, for a sign. . . .

I wonder if the years
Have dimmed its brightness? Gems grow dark for tears
Sometimes, and cease to shine;
And sometimes crowns have let their jewels fall; –
Or maybe there were never after all
Any in mine.

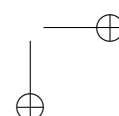
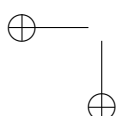




WAYSIDE BLOOM

This morning I was digging in the sun,
In the still garden I have made for me,
When I heard some one call,
And I looked up; it was so strange to see
That Life was standing there beside the wall
Just as she used to stand
Before my garden was begun.
She beckoned to me with her hand
And smiled
And said, – Come, child.

You know, –
I answered her, – I cannot go;
I must plant poppies in this garden bed.
It will take long for them to glow
And smolder red,
But I must press their petals to my pain
Before I go with you again.
And Life still smiled at me beyond the gate: –
You need not wait;
My ways are sown with them, she said.

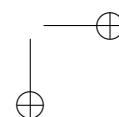


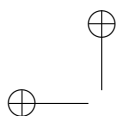


AN ALPINE VILLAGE

Their world stands all on end; no place at all
Is left for even the little fields to lie
That they have hung aloft like tapestry
Upon the granite reaches of the wall
That towers around them; there they cling and crawl
And still contrive between the earth and sky
To reap the fruits of their brief industry
Before the snows and the swift silence fall.

Then in the church the meagre women pray,
And in the huts the patient cattle sleep,
And earth the vow of her white peace fulfils,
And heeds them not who with such passion pay
Into her stony breast the faith they keep
And still lift up their eyes unto those hills.

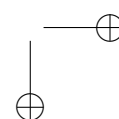
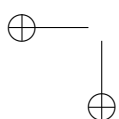


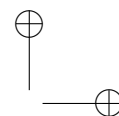
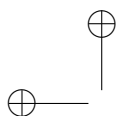


THE TOUCH

As a king, hot with hunting, snatches up
An offered goblet holding any wine,
And drinks and rides and leaves the common cup
A thing its owner shall henceforth enshrine,
So have you left my life; an idle glass
It stands now carefully upon its stem
Among things precious, or the ones that pass
For precious to me since I reverence them.

Earth makes its treasures out of such as this;
One cannot bear to break or throw away
Its useless cups, its empty chalices;
And even the grail that holy pilgrims kiss
But held the vintage of a thirsty day
To one rare moment's apotheosis.

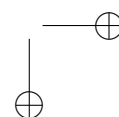
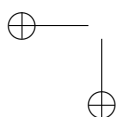


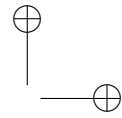
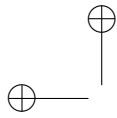


INVITATION

So long the bones of those old sins have lain
(Lo, they are many and exceeding dry)
With marble overlaid and porphyry
And dripping rubies from the leaded pane; –
No flesh shall ever cover them again
Nor word of miracle or prophecy
Nor the four winds of mighty memory
Shall breathe the breath of life upon these slain.

Then come a little where the deeply dead
Can vex you not; see how the place is fair
And silly fashioned for a great repose.
Yon kneeling figure will not lift its head
To hear the sound of music on the air,
Nor see where blooms upon the dusk a rose.





SONNETS TO THE WILD ASS

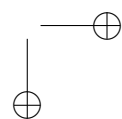
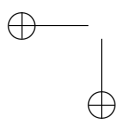
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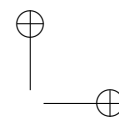
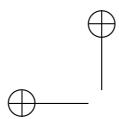
Poet and prophet for a simile
Have touched with tenderness your solitude,
And human nature's most unsocial mood
Is nurtured on your natural history.
On tombs you trample with impunity,
From desert springs you drink and find them good,
And through such references are understood
To triumph in a barren destiny.

Crowded and clamorous, our fancy swoons
With contemplation of your different lot,
You who are always where all else is not;
We picture Asia's overwhelming moons
Poured to project a toy-store silhouette;
On her excessive sands small hoofprints set.

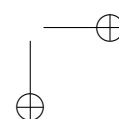
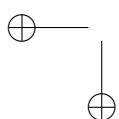
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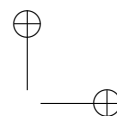
Who hath sent forth, asked Job, the wild ass free
To roam waste places; – who hath loosed his bands? –
A manumission that one understands
As symbol suiting arid imagery;
For superscriptions of captivity
Are written in the rivers of moist lands,





And frond and forest with umbrageous hands
Hold back the light of lurid liberty;
But few and futile are the tentacles
To twine about the heart of one who dwells
In those vast spaces where the world seems small.
There with indifference the foot may press
The dusty surface of its emptiness
And send it spinning like an idle ball.

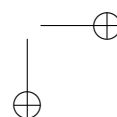




AT PARTING

“Absent thee from felicity a while” . . .
No one must say a thing like that to you.
Think of it! All your blue
Hung up in some dim place;
The brimming gold
Your hair can never hold
Caught in dark bonnets and the smile
Folded upon your face; –
My dear, I tell you it will never do.
I am quite sure this change
That comes to me cannot be half so strange.

I have been always close to earth, you know,
And loved the roots of things so much;
I often think I have not far to go.
There is no terror in the touch
Of those familiar alchemies
That change men sometimes into trees –
Which is at most a kind of blossoming.
But sorrow is a different thing.
Sorrow would take you very far
And make you something else than what you are. . . .
Where would you go, my sweet, what would you be
If you were absent from felicity?

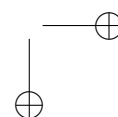


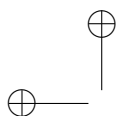


THE LESSON

You bid me come into your solitude
And let the meadows and the wood
Lay their cool fingers on my heart;
And much
You promise for this healing touch
And for the atmosphere
Of still repose,
And what you call the dumb
Companionship that nature knows
So well to keep;
You talk about the lotus noons,
The nights of unremembering sleep. . . .

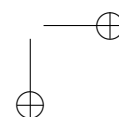
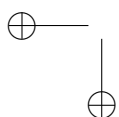
I shall not come.
For me your Nature has a cruel tongue and clear,
And full of an old sound
This sleepless city with its roar has drowned,
That I should weep to hear.
Hers is the voice whose utterance is desire;
Hers the tone
Whose breath is of bereavement and the will
To know no joy alone; –
The cry of mate and mother for its own
That shall no more be still.
Always one wakeful throat amid the drowsy herd
On the far hill;

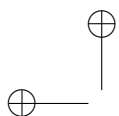




In some near tree a bird
That calls in vain. . . .
The shattering echoes overturn
And spill
The gathered silence from the night's deep urn
And break the promise of its peace and fill
Forest and field with their reiterant pain. . . .

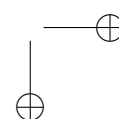
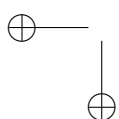
What Nature teaches I was quick to learn;
Why should I hear it from her lips again?

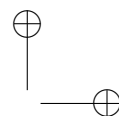
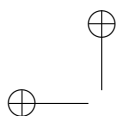




THE OUTDOOR THEATRE

In this sweet curving place
The play is always on,
The lights forever lit;
No *exeunt omnes* can unfashion it
Or bid its mimicry be gone.
The poplars' choral grace
Is here, the grasses' lithe ballet;
While yonder tree
Stands stark as Lear in his bitter age,
Howling upon the wind.
And see!
What flashed across the stage?
Was it a maple leaf that danced away,
Or Rosalind?

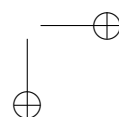
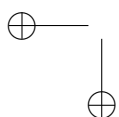


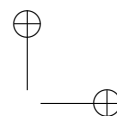


THE UNRETURNING

You who have waked when all the world lay sleeping,
What fingers brushed against the window-pane?
You know so well how long those hands have lain,
Holding the joy of earth in their still keeping,
There where the years fall fast as autumn rain;
Could bitter longing bring that touch again
To bless the vigil that your soul has kept,
While you have waked and all the world has slept?

You who have listened when the dawn was calling
All lovely things to follow in her train,
Brushing the feathery dews from hill and plain,
Whose were the footsteps that you heard soft falling
In ways where mossy silence long has lain? –
There is no path to lead those feet again
From out the shadow where they lie so still
Though morning call from every shining hill.

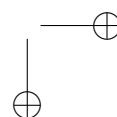


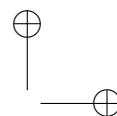


REFLECTION

When my poor beauty passes to its doom,
I will not let it go through any room
With mirrors nor by any hall
With burnished metal things along the wall,
Nor linger in the forest ways alone
Without some one to throw a stone
In all the pools, and watch them break, and swear
There was no lady leaning there.
I will have done with shining surfaces,
And I will fare
In peace without this cloud of witnesses.

I think if this can be arranged
I will not realize that things have changed;
The ghosts that go
Unchallenged need not ever know
That they are ghosts; and if I never pass
Except by ways made temperate and wise,
With nothing like a looking-glass
To stare and stab, and never gaze too deep
In forest pools where the brown autumn lies
With its lost leaves sleep. . . .
But then what will I do about your eyes?



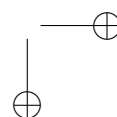


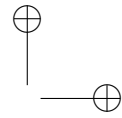
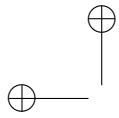
TO HIS TEACHER

Dear Humanist, this roaring street
Is far enough from your still garden close;
And here we move on hastier feet,
Too like the feet of those
Who fear to miss what they pursue; –
The same old Beauty, as no doubt you guess,
But moving with unwonted liveliness,
And like the ladies on the avenue,
All given just now to changeful thoughts of dress.

I find on every hand this tendency
To lay new stress upon the new;
The past has very decently
Interred its dead for us;
We cultivate the curious,
And rather seek to leave behind
Those universal points of view
That have a special charm for you
Who loiter down more tranquil ways,
Still musing on the ancient days
And with the eternal years in mind.

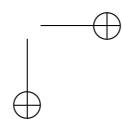
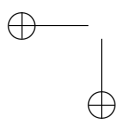
From the becoming flux of things
Our livelier inspiration springs,
And while we do not doubt
That men have had a common history,





We hold that the immediate Me
Is art's concern, and still unique;
Our effort must be to express
An egocentric consciousness
That leaves tradition absolutely out,
And not to blur originality
With echoes of conventions not our own
Or derivation's tiresome overtone. . . .

And yet, sometimes there comes to me
The thought of those brave revels that you hold –
The feasts where new and old
Make up one gallant company;
And then I find myself remembering
A bit of classic genealogy –
A tale so ancient that it may be true –
Which says the muses did not spring
From the young Inspiration that we woo,
Nor any pert Originality,
But all are daughters of that Memory
Who gravely walks with you.

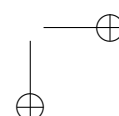
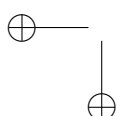


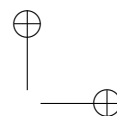


FREE FORMS

Now while each free-born son of Art is waking
And all the bonds are breaking
And the full fight is on;
For us who watch the battle ebb and flow,
How comforting it is to know
This war is not like other wars that we have seen,
Where, when the fittest had survived and gone,
They left a world so changed from what it once had been.
Then victory came, as come again it must,
But found old loveliness laid in the dust,
And freedom sang, as sing again it will,
Where beauty's wistful towers were fallen and still.

But this new fight for life and liberty,
While in no wise its terrors fail,
With Painters thundering on the hill
And Poets pawing in the vale,
Will leave the gracious terrain still
Much as it used to be;
And what was good will still be there,
And what was fair – if it was fair –
Will stand just as it always stood,
Ringing its holy bells to prayer.

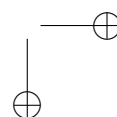




TWELFTH NIGHT

O sweet slow tempo of those happier years
That left men leisure for so many things; –
Leisure for music and for madness too,
For “adorations and for fertile tears”!
Who listens now when comes the Fool who sings?
Who cries Olivia the whole night through,
Or makes a willow cabin at the gate
Of his desire and stands importunate
Till air and earth give heed?

We have no time for anything but speed,
And scarcely know what we pursue
Or whither tend,
Nor what far lovers’ meeting may await
The reckless journey’s end!





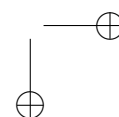
TWO SONGS OF RETURNING

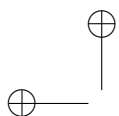
I

Now have I come at last
And this was home to me:
The mansion rises like a glittering hate,
The cypress darkens like a memory
That lays dim fingers on the past; –
And I have come too late.

Here have I come in vain
Where time has come before;
I find no more the pain,
The joy no more.
Now are the shadow and the sun
A blended mystery.
The love and hate are one; –
So long forgetfulness has lain
Here where I come again.

So let me turn and go
And steal from out the gloom,
Only another shade,
A fantasy;
And none shall ever know,
For none will care
To find the footprint by my sandal made,





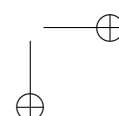
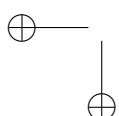
Or see low-lying on the tomb
The lock of severed hair.

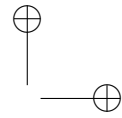
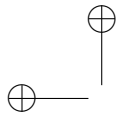
II

There is much music where the minstrels wait
Beside the gate,
And in the hall much revelry;
My father's smile, another melody,
Caresses me:
"For this my son," he said. . . .
Have I in truth been dead?

Again I see
The wide and wasted plain;
I feel again
The famished misery. . . .
And shall I now be fed?
How did the tending of those piteous swine
Make their one need seem mine!
Where is the hunger of that other day
When gathering up my all I went away
In search of other bread?

Ah, the rich robe seems heavy and the ring
A useless thing!





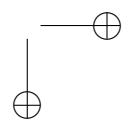
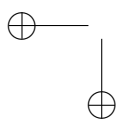
ACTÆON

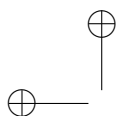
Then since I may not see your face and live,
High Goddess, of your grace,
Tell me the death you choose to give,
For I have chosen to die.

Will the white radiance of that form adored,
Like moonlight on the storm
Of my insatiate soul be poured
And peace bid life to cease?

Or will the glory of those eyes, like fire
Fallen from the ardent skies,
Strike, and this tumult of desire
Be lost, a holocaust?

Nay, rather let me be pursued and slain
By memory's ravening brood –
Fangs that shall tear my heart again
With this reshadowed bliss.

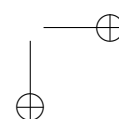
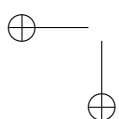


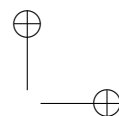
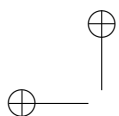


SONNET

Two women shall be grinding at the mill;
The one. . .
Not yet the sun
Has touched the meadow on the eastern hill;
The birds are sleeping still;
But the long grinding has begun
And all the little moments run
Into that vessel they can never fill.

One shall be taken and the other left. . .
O hands that were like flowers
Beside my own,
Alone, bereft,
I lay my hours
Beneath the heavy stone!





SPRING SONG

After Isaiah

I

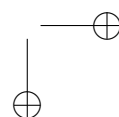
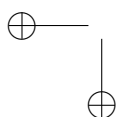
Who is this that cometh with dyed garments, leaving
gleams
Of purple on the hills and in the streams'
Deep chalices?
This that is glorious in apparel, weaving dreams
Of far Kings' palaces?

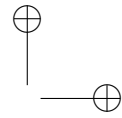
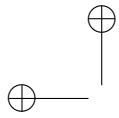
Go, set a watchman; let him now declare
Who rideth on the air!

II

There grew a murmur when the night was late; –
O you who are the Lord's remembrancers,
And stand upon the gate,
What banner stirs?

Who hath considered now the ancient days,
And come upon our darkened ways
With glint of gold inlaid by great
Artificers?

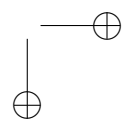
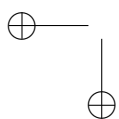


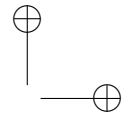
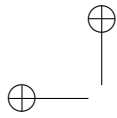


What mighty restoration hath
Set these fair colors on the barren path?

III

Now get you up into the mountain, you that bring
Good tidings; lift your voice and sing,
You that have seen
By every hill and field
His arm revealed
Whose planting this hath been.
Sing! For acceptable the year returneth
And his salvation as a lamp that burneth
Makes the waste places plain.
Sing! For again
By trees regenerate and on holy grass
The ransomed of the Lord shall pass.



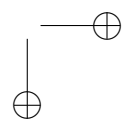
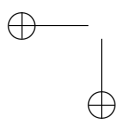


GARGOYLES

Lord, you have made your world (those builders said)
A place of dreams and death;
For your brief pleasure you have fashioned it:
Flesh as the flower of the field that perisheth,
Man as the beast that goes into the pit:
But we, who build of our necessity,
Have brought these blocks and make for you again
Forms that are neither beasts nor men.

Nor will we do with these what you have done
And hang them trembling in the great abyss;
The life that we create for them shall be their own –
Not ours; not this.
Not once shall they be warm, or suffer, or believe,
But they shall be forever and of stone.
And we, the burdened, will give them to bear
No haunting heaviness of ours.

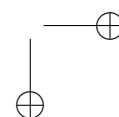
Look, Lord, we lay upon them agonies
To match their powers:
Bent back and monstrous sinews, they shall strain
Their adamant world aloft and hold it there
Blotted against the skies,
And with the stretching of their nightmare limbs shall
teach their towers to rise.





And some, grown long with leaning out above high cor-
nices,
To watch the city and the centuries
That enter at the gate,
Shall still lean out and wait;
Or gather up the waste of rain in their dark arteries
And from their swollen gullets cast it wide.
And some with shrieking mouth and shattered ear,
Because of the great bells they stand beside,
Shall mingle their wild blasphemies
With those recurrent clamors that they cannot hear.

And on them all the stroke of the sure chisel shall abide.
What shall it be to these if far below
The groined and vaulted world of their realities
Frail shadows come and go?
Or if strange repetitions rise within those walls
Like wind among the trees?
That is your image, Lord, that crawls
His little way toward death;
That is the murmur of your passing breath; –
What shall it be to these?





THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS

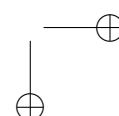
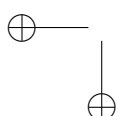
I have grown weary of the tales earth spins:
Her flaming caliphs and her cloudy jinns, –
Her lamps of wonder and her caves of gold. . .
 Scheherazade, I have grown old;
A night that is not one of yours begins.

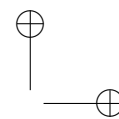
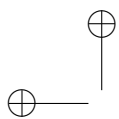
No more the silken cushions where my head
Has kept its court of visions shall be spread.
Seal now your perfumes and fold up your flowers:
 The dreams and dalliance that were ours
Shall find me not within that other bed.

I quit the chamber where my eyes have seen
The dawns and midnights that attend a queen:
The planets tangled in your hair, the east
 That caught the ardors of your breast
Shall be to me as things that have not been. . . .

Scheherazade, beyond the outer wall,
Where the unbroken lines of shadow fall;
Where in cool jars the perfect silence waits, –
 Beyond the city and the gates, –
I shall forget your wonders, one and all.

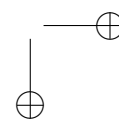
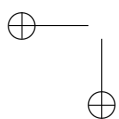
But not for this shall the swift numbers fall
Upon your lips, nor shall my peace avail





To teach you silence, or my nothingness
 Leave one bright syllable the less
Or make one marvel mute in all your tale.

Rather your fine and fragile sorcery
Will follow down the stillness after me;
Will whisper darker secrets, and will bring
 Back from the dust dim answering –
To weave anew another history.



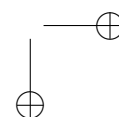


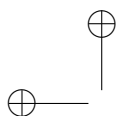
THE PLAY'S THE THING

Why do we never come again? –
The stage is set forever: –
Who thinks, we would grow weary of our painted
scene? –
The leaves' insistent green,
The hills that are too blue,
Or the resurgent passions and the pain
Too loud repeated, or the jests too clever
That still go on
And always are what they have always been,
Though we are gone?

Yes, gone – and here the pity lies –
With the bewildered laughter on our lips,
The puzzled tears still in our eyes;
Like children led reluctant by the hand,
Stumbling and looking back
At that beloved little lighted space
Where wonder was, and haunting beauty's face
And the strange words we could not understand.

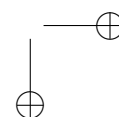
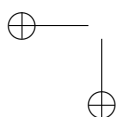
Gone while we still believe in the high ministry
Of all this art, and know
There must be meaning in the mimicry,
And fancy that we see
The actors moving to and fro





On cryptic winds of destiny, –
Their speech but symbols and their deeds but
dreams
Of some far other certainty
That is, not seems.

Perhaps if we came back a time or two,
The breathless, brief experience,
Being no longer altogether new,
Would not be so intense;
The overt spectacle in its gay dress
Might then seem just as true
As truths imagined nakedness,
And tranquil sense
Might be allowed to watch the evening through,
Unprodged by intelligence; –
We might enjoy more than we used to do,
Believing less.





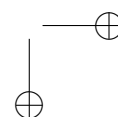
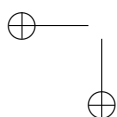
SONNET

Lord, will you not take back such things? –
Wide silence from the seas;
From dawn the whispering of soft litanies;
And from the wind the far-off voice that sings?

And that still, carven look the moonlight brings
Take from the trees?
I am no longer glad for gifts like these,
That give no more the old imaginings.

Once on the silence of wide tranquil places
A breath would move and call me by my name,
That calls no more the same.

Then to the music of the singing spaces
I answered – Lo, I come! –
Who now am dumb.





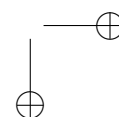
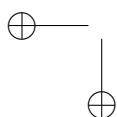
THE UNREGRETTING

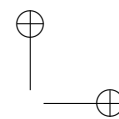
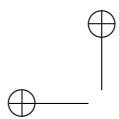
Is He indeed provoked to anger with high places,
And jealous of the graven forms we make
With patient hands
For some far beauty's sake? –
See how the dust the chiseled dream effaces, –
See where on every hill a broken column stands!

Is then our willing not what He has willed;
Or have we borrowed powers He has not lent;
That thus with labors infinite He lets us build
Up from the plain,
Then sees we have not made the thing He meant,
And bids us build again?

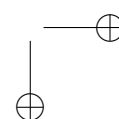
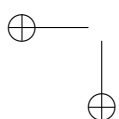
Perhaps He takes no joy in any ancient thing;
No slow perfection that we strive to hold
To Him seems dear;
His perfect leaf falls with His perfect year.
For He is young and will have back the spring;
But we are old.

Perhaps He keeps no bond at all with memory,
Nor owns the strong delusion whence
We still must see
In all created loveliness
The broken promise of its permanence.





For us the shadow of its history
Falls dark on what we dream or do.
He only knows the great forgetfulness
That maketh all things new.



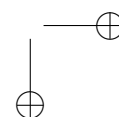


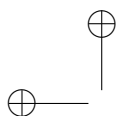
ACTUALITY

I am the thing that is;
There is no other jealousy
Like mine, no other vigilance.
I keep you, soul and sense,
For me.

I stuff the window and I bolt the door
Against all vagrancy –
Not even a wind may pass and bring
You tidings from that other thing
You dreamed might be. . . .
Pillow and hearth and floor
And wall –
What do you hope to see? –
For these are all.

Where do you think to go?
The ways are thick with memories,
And these are mine.
Sit down and eat the bread you know,
And drink the wine;
And creep
Into my arms and let me keep
You from your infidelities; –
Sleep!



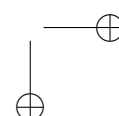
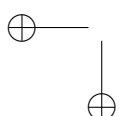


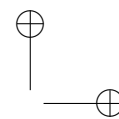
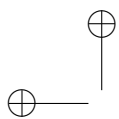
INTRUSION

Whence all this passionate preference?
Why bring
Such strange compelling choice
Into a world made of round innocence
And set to shine and sing
In equal air?
Life is not pledged to anything;
Why bid it always in a hollow voice
To swear?

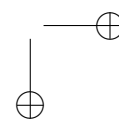
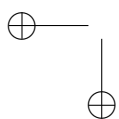
Who seeks foundations should not enter here;
These are castles made of cloud;
Reared without hope and ruined without regret,
Battlement and parapet,
To no endurance vowed.
Whence come desire and fear
To stalk so loud
And bring their airs from heaven and blasts from hell
Where all is well?

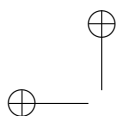
Here are the tiptoe partings and the loves
That linger not at all;
Here are the leaves that fall,
The groves
That flutter with farewells.
What tragic breath is this that tells





Of constancy
Where such forgetting dwells?
Alas, poor ghost! How have you learned to call
Down every wind – Adieu, remember me!





“NEL MEZZO” ...

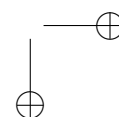
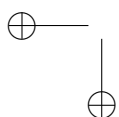
Now sinks the light of that high sun, whose rays
Through shining days were spun;
The web magnificent is done.

Deep fields whose fairness none might say, with gold
Wrought manifold, and gay
With budding rose and apple-spray.

Light forms whose magic none might sing, who danced
By ways entranced, a ring
Enchanted in a brodered spring;

Such is the fabric wonder-fraught, which time
In its fair prime has wrought
And to the house of lengthening shadows brought.

Here shall this tapestry upon the wall be hung,
The loom unstrung, and all
The years tread softly down a dim-lit hall.

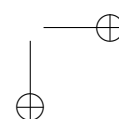
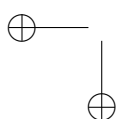


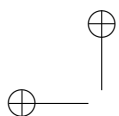


QUI VIVE!

Who goes there?
No sound on all the air.
Perhaps it was the rose
That lit the days of June,
So still she goes!
Perhaps it was the moon
Slipping behind the hill,
She goes so still!
Or autumn's footsteps on the grass,
That softly pass
And soon.

Who goes there?
And where?
Alas,
There's none who knows,
Nor why it is so fair –
This All that Flows!

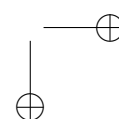
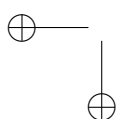


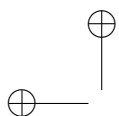


THE THIEF

I stole the feathers from the breast of night
To wing new sandals for your feet,
O Strange and Sweet!
Now are they plumed for flight
Nor will they pause again
Beside the bed where I must lie with pain.

I robbed the morning of her rainbow thread
Your tunic's sombre tint to change,
O Sweet and Strange!
Now her bright wheel stands dead
While with my straining eyes
I follow your far gleam through empty skies.

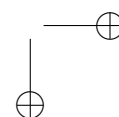
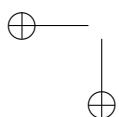


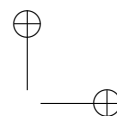


A NEW ANTHOLOGY

You are the little book
I read all day and fold away
With one last look
At night; gilt top so bright,
White pages fair,
And those blue covers that you wear; –
You are so gay,
With all the rippling songs that through you run
Like pebbles in the sun!

I think the Hand that wrote you knew quite well
How best to tell
Just what I best would love to read.
O priceless little screed,
If He had only written one thing less,
Just one,
And I need never guess
That there must be,
When all the songs are done,
An elegy!



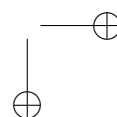


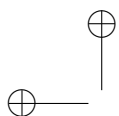
THE ALBUM

Was it because we had to have the sun
To take them that they look
So happy, every one?
The book
Has only light and laughter; you would say
There was no day
Of rain or tears
Through all those pictured years.

And were we out of doors as much as these
Insistent glimpses show?
It seems as if we never had to go
Inside the house at all,
But, scoring roof and wall,
Just pitched our lives beneath the blessèd trees.

The chronicle that memory keeps
Of what befell
In those same days
Would sometimes lead us back by shadowed ways
Where sorrow sleeps;
This little book is wiser and its pages tell
How all was well.



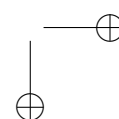
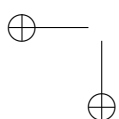


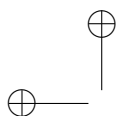
FOR REMEMBRANCE

No one even knows
Whose house it used to be
That stood where that great tree
Now stands and grows
And makes another home for happy things
Through the returning springs;

But you can see
The old foundation there and tell
How solidly and well
Its stones they laid;
For so they would have made
Their planted hopes more fast,
More sure the dreams they tended –
And on this hill they came to sleep at last,
When these were ended.

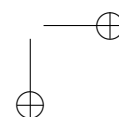
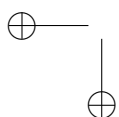
So few there are who ever pass
This way, or brush aside the grass,
Or care to know
That not a trace
Of those who sleep below,
No mound or stone,
Remains to-day,
Except, low-lying in a hollow place,
Some bits of marble overgrown





With moss, whose blackened letters say
Two words alone, –
A tiny protest in the face
Of vast oblivion.

Ah, “Little May,” –
The lightest breath can frame
So small a name,
A bit of broken stone
Make known
So brief a history;
Yet what this tells
Of you is all that there can ever be,
And all your claim
To earthly immortality
Is just three syllables!

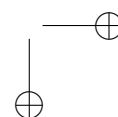




THE CARETAKER

Silence has drifted deep in these old rooms
Whose closets hold
The woven gold
And glooms
Of rich brocade
And lace and feathers laid
Softly away, –
The memories of a day
When life went dressed so gay
And hope wore plumes.

It is so strange to still find there
The things they used to wear,
And them no more at all, –
Never a ghostly footstep in the hall,
Never a shadow on the stair.
It seems as if they still would care
A little for some silken dress
That clothed a far blue happiness,
Or the soft lace that veiled some old despair.





A FARMER'S WIFE

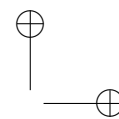
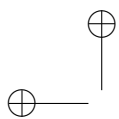
She stands like Ceres in the grass,
Watching the bright procession pass
And scattering bounty from her horn.
Helpless and soft and newly born
They come, and all too quickly go,
By ways that men and nature know.
Even the dearest never lingers;
All slip from her caressing fingers.

Repeated partings newly wept,
Eternal promise never kept;
The chickens in an Easter group,
Soft gold against their mother's wing,
Knew all the whisperings of the spring;
But turns the bright wheel of the year,
And neither spring nor they are here.

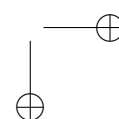
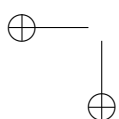
So many lives, so many loves,
And she must live to lose them all.
The lambs that made that vernal row –
A white relief against the wall
Carved by some saint of long ago –
Where are they in the fall?

I think that when at last she goes
To find that love of which she knows





So much, perhaps she'll find them too,
All happy underneath the trees,
There where the River flows.
Her heaven can't be like ours, who knew
Such pity for the least of these.



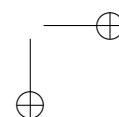


A MASQUE OF LOVED LADIES

When the boat touches on the other side
And I step out in those fair meads and wide,
I think I shall not care
To stoop and smell
One hyacinth nor pluck one immortelle
Till I have found three ladies there
Who died, –
O long ago, but whom I know quite well
Because of what their lovers had to tell.

And one will be by spirits bright attended,
And I shall know her by her mantle green
And by the scarlet vest that shows between
Its parted folds; – and were those colors blended
From clinging memories of the gown she wore,
Walking that day
Along the Arno's shore,
When all his ardent soul was caught away
By the *Antico Amor*?

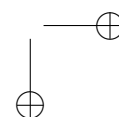
And one I'll find by "waters clear and fresh
And sweet," and still the mesh
Of her blonde hair
Will snare
The pearly bloom that falls upon its gold.
"Humbly she used to sit amid such glory"; –





Ah, *dopo i perduti giorni*, where
Is he who told
Her beauty's story?
Finding the rest he prayed for at her feet,
By waters clear and fresh and sweet?

And then the last one; shall I know her too, –
The “wayward girl” who used to pass
Outside the prison of that window glass
And wave her kisses through?
“Graceful and silly, beautiful and strange,” –
Alas, she could not change!
Always we see her as she went and came
By Hampstead Heath, and wore her “duffel gray,”
While the wild singing flame
That burned in that young heart across the way
Burned out at last, and left her girlish name
With his to face the years –
Writ in the water of our many tears.





SAN MICHELE DI PAGANA

Why light your candles on a day like this,
The sunshine being what it is
And faith not quite the thing it was before
On the Ligurian shore?

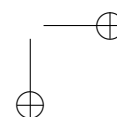
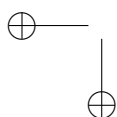
Your restless bells that call again to prayer
With such light voices on so blue an air
Seem ringing something foreign to the sense
Of mortal penitence,

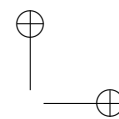
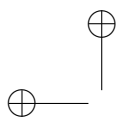
And earnest angels do not stand like these,
Blowing their trumpets in the olive trees
That grow so intimately near and tall
Beside your tinted wall.

Inside there is the pallid pictured Lord
And Michael, holding his avenging sword,
And a red Lucifer beneath his heel
But not the eyes that steal

Where those escutcheons that the morning weaves
With trellised clusters and enameled leaves
Are framed in slender ogives opening wide
On all the sea outside.

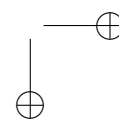
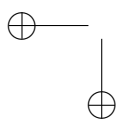
Ah, little church, set in too fair a place,
Hold fast your spiritual and inward grace,





Lest beauty beating so on every side
With waves unsanctified,

Through deep oblations that are strange to you
Should fashion man's mysterious heart anew
And get him in a shorter way to heaven,
His sins all unforgiven!

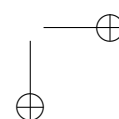
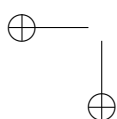




WITH RONSARD

What kind of roses blossomed in his day
And spilled their fragrance in the garden closes? –
French gardens; fountains and a clipped *allée*,
And marble Loves with weather-beaten noses. –
Versons ces roses, he sang; how red were they
That still such crimson in their dust reposes?
How white those petals *sur la branche, au mois de mai*,
That all his songs should be of roses, roses?

These are the songs. Had it been mine to sing them,
Guess whose the tints that would have flourished here,
Imperishably red and white as those;
And so forgive me that I only bring them
And lay them mutely in your hand, my dear,
Though knowing well *vos ivoire et vos roses*.



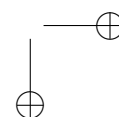


LETTERS

It was the day
Of correspondence infinite.
Madame de Maintenon,
In that attendance on the *Roi Soleil*
Which left her, sweet official saint,
Scarcely the time to pray,
Found still occasion to indite
Pages that must have helped his beams to light
The groping universe they shone upon.
With coifs and candle, scribbling in the night,
She summoned a voluminous restraint
And gave to art and ethics each its *ton*.

Poet or priest or playwright need but smite
The rock and the epistolary stream
Would gush in waters clear and erudite;
A solvent to disintegrate
The adamantine obstacles of State;
A medium where *le Sublime*
Of rarest spirits might amalgamate.
The courier glides from the mysterious door;
The world is wiser than it was before.

Those couriers were busy men:
How well they must have learned the way –
The endlessly *maudit chemin* –

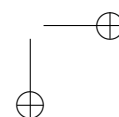


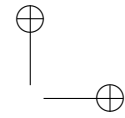
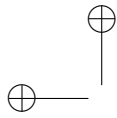


By which they spurred to far Provence,
Bearing packets from the pen
Of the Marquise de Sévigné;
Letters like nosegays warm and sweet
To lay at the indifferent feet
Of *la plus jolie fille de France*.

Letters that were the very cream
Of chronicles *intimes*,
The honey-dew of history: –
No one had ever quite so much to say,
And yet an ordered brilliance lay
In all she said.
The scheme
Of correspondence had to be
Woven as finely as a tapestry,
With that nice balance between heart and head
That makes for truth, or if truth is not there,
Makes graceful garments that it well might wear.

And garments always new:
Words were elastic to the last degree
And need not finish with infinity;
This much at least was true;
And was imagination limited?
Or should one ride with tightened rein
Through sentiment's diffuse domain? –
Je laisse trotter ma plume, la bride au cou,
She says, and on it goes with even beat,
Sheet after closely written sheet,
No phrase repeated and no word's excess,
The even tenor of exquisiteness.
Always the fire to make a pretty blaze;
Never enough to start *une portugaise*.



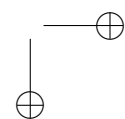
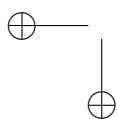


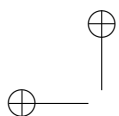
One lingers curiously on the phrase:
What was this *genre* come from Portugal, –
This something new in form or dress
Already interesting to all? –
Letters again; no less.
More letters, written in another tongue,
And by another lady, fair and young;
An importation from the seat of war;
A prize won by a noble officer;
His beauty's guerdon and his valor's meed –
And given all Paris to read.

Exotic accents blown from overseas
That blossomed like untended flowers
Among the clipped amenities
Of their own time, they blossom still in ours,
And all the years have sought in vain,
With passion *from the Portuguese*,
To capture their sincerity of pain.
There were just five of these. . . .

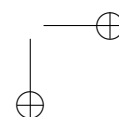
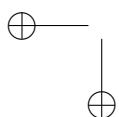
Meu amor. . . . And had that officer
Forgotten how the Andalusian plain
Sloped westward, yonder where the armies were?
Meu amor. . . . Did he not hear again
The bells of Beja, where the convent stood
Close to the city gate,
And see, beyond, the river and the wood?
Ah, late
The moon rose over the far hills of Spain
And windy shadows touched the convent door.
Too late. . . . *Amor*. . . . *Amor*. . . .

There is no fear
Of unrestraint or iteration here.





These letters have no carefulness
Lest their monotony offend the ear;
No subtle variation on the theme,
No bounds
To any sound's excess.
They seem
Like some one singing in the fields; there is
Nothing in that wide air
To break the song but its own silences.
Rising and falling at its passionate will,
Finding no echo anywhere,
Out of mysterious distances
It comes, and then is still.



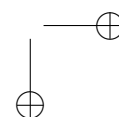


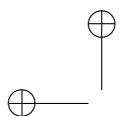
RAVENNA

*Nulla speranza li conforta mai,
Non che di posa, ma di minor pena.*
DANTE, *Inferno* V.

How could he write the things he wrote, just here
In her own home where she had once been dear?
I think sometimes he must have caught her eyes
Lighting in swift surprise
Upon those words remote, austere,
Falling from his stern pen
Just here, just when
She should have seemed most near,
With all the looks and ways
That made that dark house fair,
In the familiar days
While Guido's eagles brooded on the air
That still could kiss her hair.

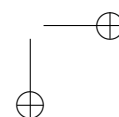
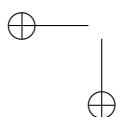
“No hope of rest or any lesser pain
Shall comfort them again”; –
How could he ever bear to think that way,
Here in the tranquil day
With not a shadow falling on the blue
Of the bright wave she knew?
How could he look on these still cypress trees
Scarce stirring in the breeze,

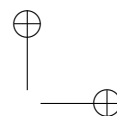




And write of rushing winds and beating wings
And damned and desperate things?

I like to think the deep didactic springs
Of such relentless words found birth
In some high region of the poet's mind
While memory lagged behind –
Being a fond and foolish thing that clings
Forever to the earth, –
And that when afterward he came to look
At what he had to say
Of that young flower that bloomed beside his way, –
Why, then I like to think that in the book
He wrote “no more that day.”





SANTA MARIA DEGLI ANGELI

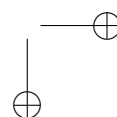
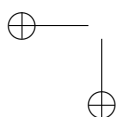
Adapted from the Italian of Carducci

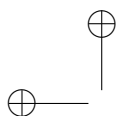
Frate Francesco, how the winds embrace
Vignola's cupola of tender stone!
But the still shadows haunt this narrow place
Where you lay stretched upon the ground alone.

Below, the songs of love and labor ring
Through all the fertile plain, and still a trace
Of your far words these Umbrian accents bring,
This Umbrian earth still gives of your calm face.

And where the hills with the horizon blended
Link the soft landscape to a fairer glory
And mix its murmurs with a purer breath,

I seem to see you with your arms extended,
Singing again; – “*Laudato sia, Signore,*
For this the sister of our body, death?”





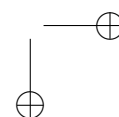
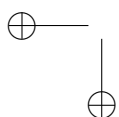
THE MOON HAS SET

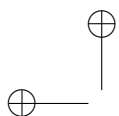
After the Italian of Francesco Pastonchi

The moon has set; the meadows and the wood
That in enchantment stood
Throw off the spell and waken with a sigh;
The stream is one low cry.

From far there comes the sound of flying feet;
A pause, then once again that gallop fleet,
Beyond the poplars and the shadowy dune
Toward the departed moon.

Is it some lover whom she lured before
With love by hill and shore,
Whom now she flies and who pursues her still
With love by shore and hill?





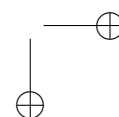
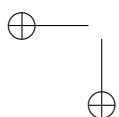
TO THE SUN

After the Italian of Francesco Pastonchi

Sun, from this rock that still assails the sky
With howling of wild winds that never die,
High limit to the feet of mortal things,
Beyond which only dreams and eagles beat their wings,

I face you equal, for the power is one
That hurled us forth our separate tracks to run,
Yours of eternal light in heaven made,
Mine in the shadow where I move, myself a shade;

Nor do I envy your refulgent lot,
Who steeped in light may comprehend it not,
May love not nor rejoice, nor know that we
Are but two specks of dust upon immensity.





CONTEST OF THE FOUNTAINS

After the Italian of Francesco Pastonchi

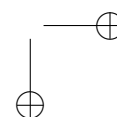
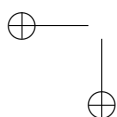
Fountain of Rosello!
Praise of the fairest must to you belong;
There are twelve throats that spill your silver song;
Twelve gushing throats there are that pour your pain,
But in my heart the anguish must remain.

Fountain of Ploaghe!
Fame of the purest must about you cling;
From the deep rock your crystal waters spring;
You drop in bounty down the mountain's side,
But in my heart the hot thirst must abide.

Fountain of Rosello,
The marble throats that pour your waters free
Can give no drop to me!

Fountain of Ploaghe,
The rocky bosom where your waters live
To me no drop can give!

Fountains of earth,
You have no mossy brink,
No crystal pool where love may kneel and drink
A draught to quench the fire
Of his unspent desire!





A MODERN MADRIGAL

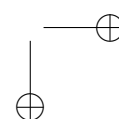
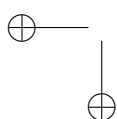
After the Italian of Francesco Pastonchi

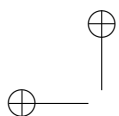
Time that has clipped the marble Cupid's wings,
In this old garden he adorns no more,
Has touched the poet too; no more he sings
 The madrigals of yore.

Gone are the stately speech, the gallant air;
The age is rude and tramples where it will;
No more to courtly hearts doth love repair,
 But to the closed and still.

Whence I, who may not dare to let these eyes
Be veiled with sentiment's suffusing tears,
Nor my lips breathe the gentle flatteries
 That fitted gentler years; –

I who may wreathe no praises to entwine
Thy name nor vows of adoration make,
Superbly stand and let a heart all thine
 In bitter silence break.





A SONG OF RETURNING

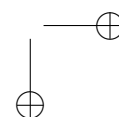
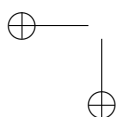
After the Italian of Francesco Pastonchi

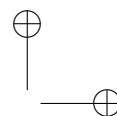
Day dies and on the plain
The shepherd homeward brings his sheep again.
I think he loves so well his tranquil lot
 Even death shall change it not,
 Even death shall change it not.

And so when he is old,
And so when he is old and weary grown
Of the long wandering on the mountains lone,

He'll slip beyond the bars
Of earth and at the fold,
And at the fold of heaven
A flock of little stars
Shall to his care be given,

And he shall roam the airy fields on high,
Herding his lambs through the eternal sky.

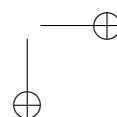




CHORAL

These
Are the tragic trees;
The masked and stilted actors of this ancient play
Are they;
Watching the earth's brief magic go,
Her torch burn low,
And then in gaunt despair
Beating the air,
The while they sing again,
Strophe and antistrophe and refrain,
All the old pain.

But I have found
A very weariness of sound
In what they tell;
Have I not learned it well?
Do I not know
All their wild gestures show?
Flinging their golden burden on the grass,
Chanting the glories of the world that pass; –
Why must I hear it yet?
Can I forget
That forehead lying underneath the ground
In all its gold fast bound?

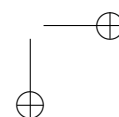


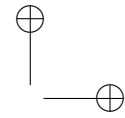
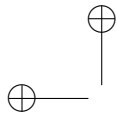


SIRMIONE

When Lesbia lived, a lady with a home in Rome,
The streets were doubtless dusty as they are to-day;
Chariots roared in perfect torrents down the Appian
Way, they say;
While we know her house was crowded, for *trecentos*,
maybe more,
Were the lovers she admitted from the number at the
door;
And the one who was a poet sang about it all and swore.
Lesbia illa, illa Lesbia – she was enough to make any
poet want to take
Long vacations in the country, and he took his by the
lake;
By the one called then Benacus; he had a villa there;
Suso in Italia bella – all the poets say how fair
Was *venusta Sirmio* where Catullus used to go
Quamque lætus in the summer to spend a month or so.

It is fair still, all in ruins, and the tourist in his car,
Turning from the scrambling village to the sudden silver
shore
Where the ilex and the olives and those empty arches
are,
Is confronted by a beauty he has never met before.
Although but a hardened tourist he is troubled, and he
feels



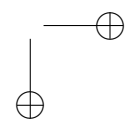
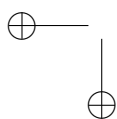


(As best he can for plucking agile urchins from the wheels
Where they climb imploring pennies, Dante's music on
their tongue)
That he has been long deluded and, when all is said and
sung,
Fate was kinder to Catullus than biography reveals.

Life was something more than Lesbia. She was trying, it
is true, but could she do
With all her sins and suitors anything to dim the blue
Of the days and dreams that drew him here each year a
month or two?
For Lesbia and her sparrow, in spite of all he said,
Were two sad birds of the city; one was old and one was
dead.
Loves and Graces might lament him – *passer mortuus*
est,
But to one who reads about it now it seems all for the
best.
Those were fits of Roman fever and one feels they found
no place
With the ilex and the olives and the Lydian Lake's em-
brace.

O Lydiæ lacus undæ, lying in your mountain bed,
With the morning and the evening weaving splendors for
your head,
You were an immortal mistress clothed in undiminished
grace,
Wearing azure on your bosom and all heaven in your
face. . . .

If one cultivates the classics one should surely see the
spot
On the beach at Sirmione that they call Catullus' Grot,
And then try to think the poet was unhappy. He was
not.



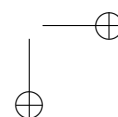


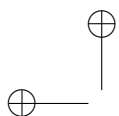
“GREAT IS DIANA OF THE EPHESIANS!”

Strange are the things they say,
These strangers who day after day
Talk in our market-place. Their words are wild;
Yet mild
Their eyes as those of men by dreams beguiled.

Sometimes my father stays to hear them there,
Holding me by the hand.
I wonder why they care
So much to make us understand
About the god they worship as their own,
Whose face is graven on no precious stone,
Whose image never shaped from any metal rare,
Who lives unseen, alone?
Surely that land
They came from must seem very cold and bare
Without these gracious forms my youth has known –
So many and so fair.

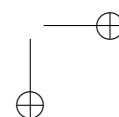
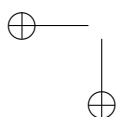
My father fashions very skilfully
Shrines of pure silver for the votaries
Of her who is the purest of all these,
And there her image stands;
But I can see
Her footprints any time beneath the trees
Or in the stream's soft sands,

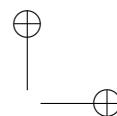




And often in the early morn
Her horn
Wakes the light echo that awakens me.
These strangers tell
Of one who is too great to dwell
In any temple made with human hands; –
And so is she
Too free.

I think I shall be glad when they
Have gone away
And I can quite forget their eyes,
That are so strange and deep
And seem to keep
Some secret of a world grown still and gray;
Where the far music dies
That called so clear;
Where she may never come again so near
As she has come before,
Nor hang her shining symbol any more
Low in the western skies.



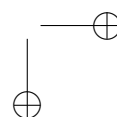


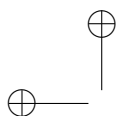
THE BEATEN PATH

Ιυγξ, ἔλαχε τὸ τῆγον ἐμὸν ποτὶ τὸν ἄνδρα
THEOCRITUS, *Idyll II*.

Dido with the driven hair
And with the salt sea-spray
Upon those undesired lips
And eyes that follow fading ships, –
It is no use to wander there
Along the shore
All day,
Or hope to see him any more: –
The way
He went is the old way!

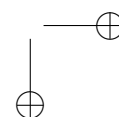
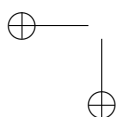
Calypso, let the wanderer go
And weave your web and sing your song; –
You knew you could not hold him long,
Though lost and shipwrecked on those shores;
And how can curses keep him yours
When kisses could not make him so?
There is no help from winds that blow;
No seas so strange or so unkind
That they can make him stay behind; –
The way he came he does not know,
But there's one way they all can find!

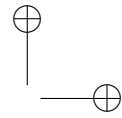
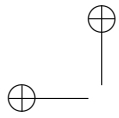




Fond Simetha, turning, turning
The bird upon your wheel, and burning
Laurel leaves and barley grain, –
It will not draw him back again.
The moon above the lemon-tree
Will watch with you, but watch in vain;
Nor are the dead of Hecate
Gone more utterly than he; –
Fled along a pathway fleet,
Worn smooth by many feet!

They make a long procession, sweeping
Relentlessly
Through all the past,
Those hearts that were not meant for keeping
And failed too fast.
And ships with windy sails at sea,
And flowery lanes in Sicily
Alike led lovers down the track
That knows no turning back.



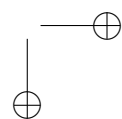
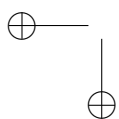


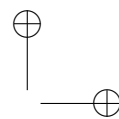
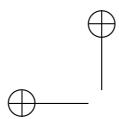
HIPPOLYTUS

In these untarnished meadows where the bee
Plies undisturbed his summer husbandry,
Where never sound of men who sow and reap
 Vexes the earth's soft sleep,
All is so still I sometimes hear her pass;
Her foot's divinity has touched the grass
 And left its bloom more fair,
 And falls upon the air
 A brightness from her hair.

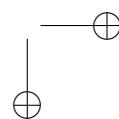
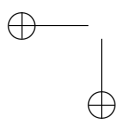
Here in her timeless garden where the hours
Leave off their ringéd dance, I wreathe cool flowers
To crown her brows; so would I gather peace
 And find at last release
From the dark visions the immortals send;
They give men death, but man's blind fate no end;
 Counting the wasted sands,
 Knitting the broken strands
 With their all-patient hands.

Like a dim legend written on the brain
The shadows come: deep caverns yawn again
In the steep rocks, and monstrous deeds are done
 Under an ancient sun;
Far voices call me and I hear the sound
Of endless hoof-beats on the echoing ground –





Why must you fall so fleet,
Dark and avenging feet,
While life and youth are sweet?



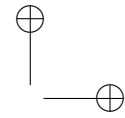
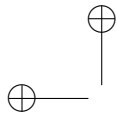


“CLASSIC DANCING”

“Dance from the Dionysiac Mysteries,”
The programme says. A grove of trees
Where stand
Two marble vases, one on either hand,
To make the classic atmosphere
For the tall maidens who appear
Wearing each a dappled skin,
Bearing each a cone-tipped wand
And ivy wreath, and now begin,
With much mad movement of their supple knees,
Much brandishing
Of their well-powdered arms in air,
A dance that is so strange a thing
To bear that name!
Awhile I watch them there,
Then close my eyes and turn away, and cling
With all my might to some old memories,
And the old dreams they bring. . .

There came a cry at midnight on the mountain,
Tearing its veil of mystery. . . .
The grasses tremble and the rocks are wet, –
Dark root and hidden fountain. . .
Creep closer yet. . . .
Have you forgotten her – Can you forget –
Her of the Ground? . . .





Touching her breast in ritual ecstasy
Each quivering vein
Runs white again
With the memorial lightning and the sound
Of thunder shakes the glen.
Bromios, god of voices, the old doom
Has fallen upon the woman, yet her eyes shall see
Thy radiant epiphany,
O god of bloom! . . .

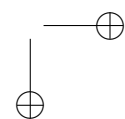
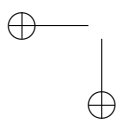
ὦ Σεμέλας, ὦ Διός παῖ. . .

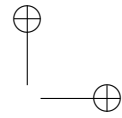
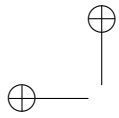
What life can lure us from thee, or divide, –
Thou beautiful on every mountain-side?
What love of lover or of child
Betray
The feet that seek thy way,
Thou pure and wild?
We know the secret of thy hidden things,
Thy power and whence it springs,
Lord of all blossomings. . .

ἀναγορεύσωμεν Βάχχιον. . .

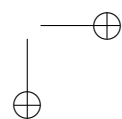
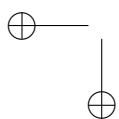
Where thy down-dropping tendrils run,
Drinking the sun,
Till the blond plain is fair
With the rich clusters of thy hair;
Where circling bees
Swing through thy drowsy reveries,
We follow, for we know
How sweet are these,
And sweeter things that flow
Where thy glad footsteps go. . .

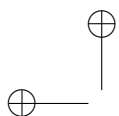
ῥεῖ δὲ γάλακτι πέδον, ῥεῖ δ' οἶνω. . .





And we will dwell with winds that wake,
With morning dew and evening mist,
And sleek and shining forms that creep
And bound away,
Soon to be overtaken
By forms more fleet than they; –
Light limbs that leap,
White throat back-flung and darting wrist, –
Soon shall we clutch and keep
And make their wild life ours,
And drink their silvan powers!
O maddened eucharist, –
O revels deep, –
Magic of trees that sway,
Magic of swaying flowers,
Magic of sleep. . . .
αὐτίκα γὰρ πᾶσα χορεύσει. . .





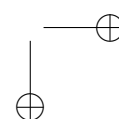
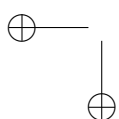
THE SUPPLIANT

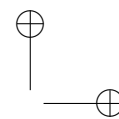
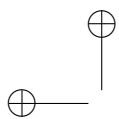
Πότνια, πότνια νύξ, ύπνοδότειρα τῶν πολυπόνων
βροτῶν...

I did not hear the footstep stealing softly through
the door,
I did not see the shadow falling darkly on the
floor;
I did not heed his coming nor know when he had
passed,
Nor dream that he could take you when I held
your hand so fast.

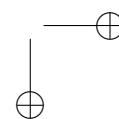
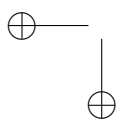
Are you happy in the meadows where his tall
pale flowers grow?
Do you never miss the roses that you loved so,
long ago?
How they bloom and how they wither while you
never come again,
In the garden where the morning still must look
for you in vain!

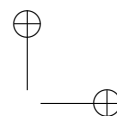
But the night knows how to find you; in her
mansions cool and deep
She has spells to lure and bind you, she has
dreams to clasp and keep;





And I kneel before the portal where her marble
 moons are hung
And I snatch the gift immortal to my mortal
 longing flung.



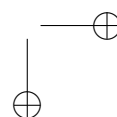


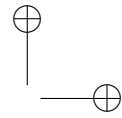
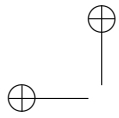
ALCESTIS

On the third day, the loud deliverer said,
She will awake; she stands so silent now,
With that white veil across her whiter brow,
Because thus silent were the dead;
So still she stands
With those yet folded hands
Because she found
Such stillness underneath the ground;
But take her; she is all your own, –
Beloved and known. . . .

So she had come again to tread
Her ordered household ways
With ordered mind,
And still, as long ago,
To find
Her joy at morning and her peace at night,
And light
As flowers round her head
To wear the garland of her blameless days;
For he had vanquished death and made it so.
But did he know? . . .

Among her maidens in the spacious room
What dimness steals across the loom,
Changing the pattern that she weaves?

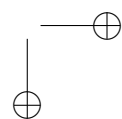
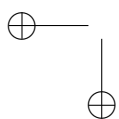


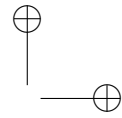
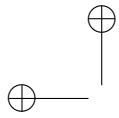


These are the leaves
That grow not on the trees of earth;
These flowers
Drew their mysterious birth
From no dark seed of ours.
Such are the tints that pale and gleam
Beyond that Other Stream...

Mixed with the music and the mirth that ring
Through the wide hall,
What murmurs drift and fall
Upon her ear?
How should these alien echoes cling
To notes she is so used to hear?
Faint are the winds and far they blow
That bring
Such breathings low
To our clear pipes, and wring
Such unknown sweetness from the harps we know...

So was it all in vain.
The twilight mists that steal
From those wan meadows may not lift and rise
Again, for eyes
That drank their shade too deep,
Nor music mend the broken chain
Of mortal memories;
Nor may forgetting seal
Those wells of silence soft as sleep
Where music sinks and dies.
Light is the joy of earth, too light its pain,
To keep
And bind again.





THE BIRTH TOKENS

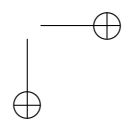
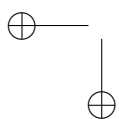
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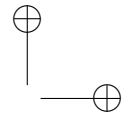
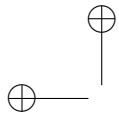
Variation on a theme from Menander

This is the place, and we will leave him here
In the deep valley; when the sun is high
Some warmth may reach him; that were good;
Still better should
Some kindly shepherd find him. – Who can say? –
Even a wolf may yield him food.
Nature is rich in resource and in care;
He will not die. –
So place the tokens with him there
And come away. . . .

Now have we laid upon his lips a song
Whose melody for him is all, –
Whose words but names he shall not comprehend
Of objects in a dream; –
Poor symbols without end
That drift and fall
And sweep like leaves along
The music of a stream.

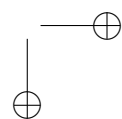
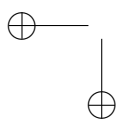
And we have bound a book upon his brow
Whose signs he shall not understand,

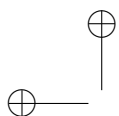




Though heaven and earth have set their hand
Unto it and their wisdom given;
But neither earth nor heaven
Shall witness to another theme
That he shall trace below
The image and the pattern, nor declare
How all its lines are fair. . .

... Sound
Are still his slumbers. – Look again –
How like a blossom on the ground
He lies. –
But, though the earth shall strain
His being to her breast
And pour her life through every vein
And lift her beauty to his eyes,
He shall not be her own.
Some day the tokens will be found;
His history known,
His lineage guessed.





EROS

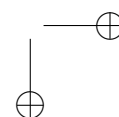
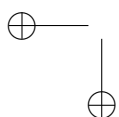
Ουκ ἀπὸ πανδήμου... Κύπριδος, οὐκ ἀπὸ γαίης...

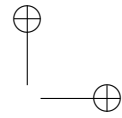
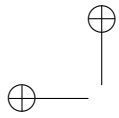
Gleaming through what forbidden dreaming,
What haunting hope, what old despair,
With his white limbs and windy hair
He came – a flame of beauty leaping
Beyond the mind's clear keeping!

Powers from worlds of light once ours
Awoke for his young praise and grew,
And genius lavished all it knew
To tell the miracle created
In line and music mated.

Ages that turned illumined pages
Were his continuous canticle,
Where shining song and sequence spell
His name – a shame and glory blending
In forms of grace unending.

Ranging by shore and sea and changing
And being changed forevermore, –
By this loud sea, on this clear shore,
Are cast the last far fancies driven
From that lost earth and heaven.

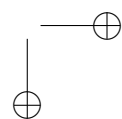
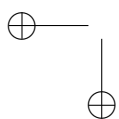




In faces that lean from holy places, –
Angelic profiles on dim walls
That chant their young processions,
We see a memory still turning
To those deep wells of yearning.

Keeping his watch by Daphnis sleeping,
The shepherds reedy pipes are spent
Where that lost breath the music lent,
But flowers those hours once garlanded
Still blossom round his head.

Departed is now the Cruel-hearted,
The Mightiest, with his torch of flame;
But blissful cherubs wear his name –
Soft things with wings whose prowess shines
On madrigals and valentines!





THE RIDER

Modern Greek Folk Song

Why are the mountains standing black while all
the sky still shines?

No rain is beating on the rocks, no wind is in
the pines.

What is that throbbing underfoot, that rushing
overhead? –

'Tis the dark horseman riding, and he bears the
newly dead.

The young before ride lightly and the old behind
drag slow,

And the children nestle in his arm upon his
saddle-bow.

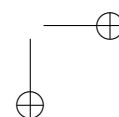
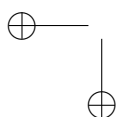
“O rest a moment when you come to yonder little
town,

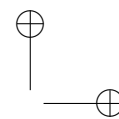
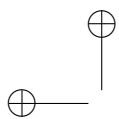
There by the well outside the wall, and set the
children down

And let them gather flowers once more, and let
the young men play

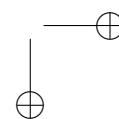
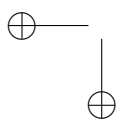
Their village games on the green grass before
they ride away!”

“Not so; I may not stop nor stay by yonder foun-
tain’s brink,





Lest there some mother come to draw, some
maiden pause to drink,
And spy the treasure that I took a little while
before
And clasp it in her empty arms and give it up
no more!"



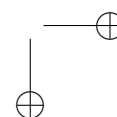


WAVES

Adapted from the Modern Greek of N. Mimopoulos

You who can read the morning's shining face
And in your wisdom trace
The wonders of the scroll
The midnight skies unroll,
Bring now your augury
Here where the tide fills high the brimming sea,
And gaze on it and tell
The meaning of a deeper mystery,
A stranger miracle.

Whence come the eagles ever flying low
In that dark ebb and flow?
See how their laboring pinions fall and rise
In those engulfing skies!
Out of the west they gather, out of the east;
What is the endless feast
To which they come,
Over the crossways that the winds have trod,
Leaving their storm-racked home?
You who are versed in omens, what means this,
These wings that winnow through the great abyss,
These auspices of God?





L'ENVOI

Pale Prince! The galleries are long,
And there
The faces that they used to wear
Watch you forever; gilded mile
On mile; those who have done you wrong
Look down and smile.

Ah, Prince! The wormwood and the wine
Are spent long since;
No sweet nor bitter did they leave:
Touched and tarnished is the shine
On every rapture that their eyes have seen,
Love is a cup where all their lips have been,
There is no grief they did not grieve.

Prince! Was there none to care
That from that proud and painted past
The wan projection that is you
Would be at last? –
Perhaps some spendthrift monarch knew
And put aside for your pale hair
A little gold;
Some wanton lady may have saved the blue
From her brief morning for your eyes to hold;
And maybe underneath the glittering dress
There on the wall
Some heart kept for your heart its emptiness,
But that was all.

