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EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHING CO.
New York. Chicago.
THE PRINCESS

A MEDLEY

BY

ALFRED LORD TENNYSON

WITH

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHING COMPANY

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PREFACE.

The elaborately annotated edition of "The Princess" by Prof. Percy M. Wallace (Macmillan & Co.) and S. E. Dawson's "A Study of the Princess" (Sampson, Low & Co.) have been followed in the annotation of this edition. Students desiring to make a more thorough study of the Poem are referred to these works, as also to the editions by Henry W. Boynton (Leach, Shewell & Sanborn) and Prof. G. E. Woodbury (Macmillan & Co.)

Ed.
INTRODUCTION.

Alfred Tennyson was born on August 6th, 1809, at Somersby, a village in Lincolnshire, England, of which his father was rector.

When seven years old, he went to the Louth Grammar School, and returning home after a few years there, was educated with his elder brother Charles, by his father. Charles and Alfred Tennyson, while yet youths, published in 1827 a small volume of poetry entitled Poems by Two Brothers. In 1828 the two brothers entered Trinity College, Cambridge, where Alfred gained the University Chancellor's gold medal for a poem on Timbuctoo, and where he formed an intimate friendship with Arthur Henry Hallam (son of the historian), whose memory he has immortalized in In Memoriam. In 1830 Tennyson published his Poems, Chiefly Lyrical. In 1832 Poems by Alfred Tennyson appeared, and then, after an interval of ten years, two more volumes, also with the title Poems. His reputation as a poet was now established, though his greatest works were yet to come. Chief among these are The Princess (1847), In Memoriam (1850), Maud (1855), Idylls of the King (1859-1885), and Enoch Arden (1864). In 1875 Tennyson published his first drama, Queen Mary, followed by Harold (1877), The Cup (acted in 1881), The Promise of May (1882), The Falcon, and Becket (1884). On the death of Wordsworth in 1850, Tennyson succeeded him as Poet Laureate. In 1884, he was gazetted Baron of Aldworth and Farringford, his two seats in Sussex and in the Isle of Wight. He died on October 6th, 1892.
II. THE PRINCESS.

The Princess was first published in 1847, but the poem has undergone not a few alterations, both in matter and in language, since that date.

The poem, therefore, as we now possess it, is the outcome of careful and sustained effort on the poet's part, the offspring of his mature powers, polished and refined through several editions, and may thus be fairly regarded as a work upon which its author has bestowed the utmost of his critical afterthought as well as creative power.

III.

The Princess is a romance designed to indicate the poet's conception of the true sphere of woman and her function in society, a theme peculiarly suitable to the genius of Tennyson, who not only was profoundly interested in all the social problems of the day, but also has shown himself specially happy in his studies of various types of womankind.

In 1847, when this poem first appeared, the question of "Woman's Rights" was being vigorously discussed, and the poet, recognizing the vital importance of the points at issue, and foreseeing the damage that society would receive through the adoption of a false ideal for womankind, set himself to put the matter in a true and healthy light. The several points specially dwelt upon are the insufficiency of the culture of the intellect alone, the essential diversity between the sexes—diversity in kind not in degree—and the vanity of any attempt to crush out human impulses and affections. These may really be summed up under one head—that Nature is strongest of all things, that she will not be thwarted,
that attempts to act in defiance of her principles must be either grotesque or tragical in their results—not improbably both—and that true wisdom consists in the organization of our lives—physical, mental, moral, social, political—in conformity with her eternal laws.

And how has the poet set himself to enforce this lesson? By sketching for us the history of a scheme based upon the denial of this principle, and showing us how from the beginning it was doomed to failure. But there is no malice in his treatment of the case—he is tender and generous to the utmost—in deed, he shows more enthusiasm in his champaing of the feeble cause than on behalf of the triumphant. The fine character of the Princess, and the essential nobility of the cause which she advocates, are dwelt upon with the most fervent admiration; and the choicest graces of his language are poured forth in the rehearsal of the beauty of the College and the sumptuousness of its institutions. A noble effort is not to be treated with scorn because misdirected. Earnest work, however mistaken, demands our reverence and sympathy.

IV. THE CHARACTERS.

The Prince’s father, the “hard old king,” represents in his blunt violent manner the old-fashioned régime, when women were women and knew their place, and before these fantastic notions of “equal rights” had begun to shake the pillars of domestic peace.” To him women are beings essentially of another mould, not so distinctly inferior to men as altogether outside the sphere of comparison with them. He is not devoid of a certain rough respect for the sex, and speaks with affectionate pride of
his dead wife. But it is monstrous that they should be allowed to play such pranks as these, taking it upon themselves to organize their lives after their own views of right and justice, and setting at defiance the arrangements of their betters—this must be checked at once, or what will become of the order of the universe!

To him a ridiculous contrast is afforded in the person of his brother-monarch of the south, with his timid diffident manner, and his painful anxiety to be pleasant. He is utterly incapable of enforcing his will in any respect, and is lightly neglected by all his vigorous family, though he likes to chatter about his youth, and insists in his feeble way upon the respect due to his rank. The striking contrast presented by his physical insignificance and vacillating cast of mind to the gigantic bulk of Arac and the intrepid energy of Ida, impress the lover of the latter with a strong conviction, corroborative of his lady's earnest advocacy of her cause, that the paramount factor in our composition is that which is derived from the mother.

To the character of the Prince himself it has been objected that it is not sufficiently heroic, or even strongly marked, considering the important part he plays in the story. That this is no real blot upon the poem is well shown by Mr. Dawson:—"To bring out the Prince more strongly would have detracted from the unity of the poem. The Princess is not overcome by him or by his merits. She is worsted by Nature—by the constituted order of things." Indeed, the poet would seem to have taken pains to insist upon the comparative weakness of this character. He must not be mean, of course, or in any way despicable, but it must be
clearly shown that it was not the glamor of his physical or moral brilliance that won his lady from her isolation. His too emotional temperament and susceptibility to cataleptic seizures, added for the first time in the fourth edition of the poem, was probably intended to emphasize this point. At the same time it is plain that there was a further moral purpose for the introduction of this feature. For not only is the woman incomplete in herself, but, correspondingly, the man also cannot attain his full perfection until he has found his complement. Ida's womanhood is not developed till she has recognized the fallacy of her scheme of seclusion, and the Prince appeals to her to “accomplish his manhood” no less “than herself” by yielding her heart to his. Henceforth he can declare

"my doubts are dead,
My haunting sense of hollow shows,"

and he is at peace with himself and with the world. It is noteworthy that his successive attacks correspond with those crises in the story at which his lady shows herself least feminine — when she stands in the full splendor of her triumphant position, with her foot upon the leopard — when she has scornfully cast him from the gates by the hands of her “monstrous woman-guard”—when she takes her stand “among the statues, statue-like,” to watch with hard untender eyes her lover battling with her brother; nor does he finally “wake sane” until the long struggle in her is at an end, and, recognizing the folly of her fantastic theory, she has yielded to the pleadings of the true woman within her heart. And we may well believe that the repeated phrase in this connection—“all things were and were not”—is designed to indicate the half-truth that
pervades the "grand imaginations" of the fair enthusiast; for, had her cause been as ignoble as her methods were ridiculous, we could have felt no sympathetic interest in her story.

The character of Cyril is an admirable study of vigorous, healthy common-sense, undisturbed by haunting fancies, unfettered by false modesty, and as clear-sighted as jovial. His sound knowledge of human nature is humorously demonstrated in his manner of dealing with the two Tutors—Psyche he appeases by a delicate compliment to her ability as a lecturer and an expression of admiration for her baby—Blanche he persuades to silence by an appeal to her ambition. The illustration of his moral temperament, superficially frivolous but sound at bottom, by reference to the water-lily, is one of the happiest similies in literature.

The key-note to the character of the Lady Ida is to be found in the Prince's exclamation:—

"True she errs,
But in her own grand way: being herself
Three times more noble than three score of men,
She sees herself in every woman else,
And so she wears her error like a crown
To blind the truth and me."

She is essentially earnest and devoted to her cause for its own sake; nor can we doubt but that she would have gloriously justified at need her asseveration that she would shrink from no personal sacrifice which might promote the welfare of her darling purpose. Nor is her generous enthusiasm, which dazzles her lover, swells her brother's heart with pride, and commands even the respect of the Northern King, in any way the less admirable on account of the monstrous or ridiculous positions
into which she is occasionally forced by the burning indignation that dominates her or the honest misdirection of her energies.

In striking contrast to the unselfishness which pervades every moment of her life is presented the narrow jealous disposition of Lady Blanche. It has been well remarked that these two ladies stand respectively towards the College as do Brutus and Cassius in Shakespeare’s Play towards the cause of the Republic. One had devoted her whole energies unreservedly towards the attainment of an end from which others should benefit—the other regarded the Institution as a means for ignoble self-aggrandizement, and is willing to desert it when she conceives that her end may be more effectively secured elsewhere. Envious, self-centred, treacherous, she lacks even the redeeming feature of love for her child or respect for the memory of her dead husband. It is noteworthy, as Mr. Dawson remarks, that she is “the one thoroughly repulsive woman in all Tennyson’s works.”

Psyche has not the profound earnestness and majestic mien of her Chief, and is in consequence more immediately charming. She is, in fact, essentially feminine, both in heart and in manner. Her position at the College she invests with a certain prettiness that withdraws our attention from the lecture to the lecturer, but we feel that it is only an incidental episode in her life, and her discovery of her brother lets loose the natural flow of those tender affections which later, at the loss of her child, are developed with almost tragic intensity.

The minor characters, too, are very happily sketched. Arac, the “genial giant,” with his splendid muscles, his healthy love of action, and
his proud devotion to his sister—Florian, the Prince’s “other heart,” a loyal friend and affectionate brother—Melissa, the maiden whose tender conscience cannot endure the shadow of deceit.

But, if the importance of a character is to be estimated by the strength and far-reaching effect of its influence on those with whom it is associated, the real heroine of the poem is Aglaia. As Mr. Dawson says:

“Ridiculous in the lecture-room, the babe... is made the central point upon which the plot turns; for the unconscious child is the concrete embodiment of Nature itself, clearing away all merely intellectual theories by her silent influence. Ida feels the power of the child. The postscript of the despatch sent to her brother in the height of her indignation, contains, as is fitting, the kernel of the matter. She says:

I took it for an hour in mine own bed
This morning: there the tender orphan hands
Felt at my heart, and seem’d to charm from thence
The wrath I nursed against the world.
Rash princess! that fatal hour dashed
‘the hopes of half the world.’

“Alas for these hopes! The cause, the great cause, totters to the fall when the Head confesses—
I felt
Thy helpless warmth about my barren breast
In the dead prime.

Whenever the plot thickens the babe appears.” It is with Ida on her judgment seat. In the topmost height of the storm the wail of ‘the lost lamb at her feet’ reduces her eloquent anger into incoherence. She carries it when she sings her song of triumph. When she goes to tend her wounded brothers on the battle-field, she carries it. Through it, and for it, Cyril pleads his successful suit, and wins it for the mother. For its sake the mother is pardoned. O fatal babe! more fatal to the hopes of woman than the doomful horse to the proud walls of Ilion—for through thee the walls of pride are breached, and all the conquering affections flock in.”
V. THE SONGS.

A few words will suffice to point out the bearing of the Songs upon the teaching of the Poem. For, though they may at first sight appear to be, in character as in origin, entirely unconnected with the main work, a closer examination will discover that they are intimately bound up with its central purpose. To this important point our attention is drawn by those lines in the Conclusion which tell how, in opposition to the "mock-heroic gigan-
tesque" treatment which the men required, the women pleaded for a more serious tone:—

"and perhaps they felt their power,  
For something in the ballads which they sang,  
Or in their silent influence as they sat,  
Had ever seem’d to wrestle with burlesque,  
And drove us, last, to quite a solemn close."

The key to the Interpretation of this Song-
element is to be found in the fact that they all centre round the persistence of the affections, while four of the six bear special reference to the strengthening and purifying power of the love of children, thus reflecting the dominant purpose of the main work.

In the first, a man and his wife have quarrelled, and are reconciled over the grave of their dead child. The second tells of a man whose work keeps him far at sea, but whose thoughts are drawn home by his love for the child for whom he is laboring. The third dwells upon the contrast between the evanescent character of echoes in the physical world and the permanent and ever-widening sym-
pathies of human hearts — the notes of the bugle sound across the lake, and faint and die; those of human affection
Lilia’s wild stirring strain emphasizes the vital truth that in all noble endeavors man’s energy is inspired and his arm strengthened by the recollection of those whom he loves. In the next we see how, when all is wrapt in darkness and despair, it is the maternal instinct that can most forcibly survive to prolong an interest in life — this, be it noticed, the ninety years of her experience had taught the nurse, while the young maiden failed to move her mistress by uncovering the face of her dead husband. And in the last we hear a cry of self-surrender that explains itself, bearing a more pertinent relation to the Canto which it precedes.

It is interesting in this connection to read the following from a letter written by the Poet to Mr. Dawson in acknowledgment of the receipt of a copy of the latter’s Study:

“I may tell you that the songs were not an after-thought. Before the first edition came out I deliberated with myself whether I should put songs in between the separate divisions of the poem. Again, I thought, the poem will explain itself; but the public did not see that the child, as you say, was the heroine of the piece, and at last I conquered my laziness and inserted them.”
THE PRINCESS;  
A MEDLEY.  
PROLOGUE.  

Sir Walter Vivian all a summer's day  
Gave his broad lawns until the set of sun  
Up to his people: thither flock'd at noon  
His tenants, wife and child, and thither half  
The neighboring borough with their Institute  
Of which he was the patron. I was there  
From college, visiting the son,—the son  
A Walter too,—with others of our set,  
Five others: we were seven at Vivian-place.  

And me that morning Walter show'd the house,  
Greek, set with busts: from vases in the hall  
Flowers of all heavens, and lovelier than their names,  
Grew side by side: and on the pavement lay  
Carved stones of the Abbey-ruin in the park,  
Huge Ammonites, and the first bones of Time;  

5. Institute, an educational and social club called a 'Mechanics' Institute.  
11. Greek, of Grecian architecture.  
12. Names, i.e., their scientific names.  
first-bones, fossil-bones.
And on the tables every clime and age
Jumbled together; cels and calumets,
Claymore and snowshoe, toys in lava, fans
Of sandal, amber, ancient rosaries,
Laborious orient ivory sphere in sphere,
The cursed Malayan crease, and battle clubs
From the isles of palm: and higher on the walls,
Betwixt the monstrous horns of elk and deer,
His own foreforthers' arms and armor hung.

And "this" he said "was Hugh's at Agincourt;"
And that was old Sir Ralph's at Ascalon:
A good knight he! we keep a chronicle
With all about him"—which he brought, and I
Dived in a hoard of tales that dealt with knights,
Half-legend, half-historic, counts and kings
Who laid about them at their wills and died;
And mixed with these, a lady, one that arm'd
Her own fair head, and sallying thro' the gate,
Had beat her foes with slaughter from her walls.

"O miracle of women," said the book,
"O noble heart who, being strait-besieged

17. cels, stone hatchets of the ancient Danes.
18. claymore, the two-handed sword of the Highlanders.
20. sphere in sphere, carved Chinese ivory balls, one within another.
21. crease, a large curved dagger.
25. Agincourt, in France, where in 1415 Henry V. defeated the French.
26. Ascalon, in Palestine, where in 1192 Richard I. defeated the Saracens under Saladin in one of the battles of the crusades.
36. strait, hard.
By this wild king to force her to his wish,
Nor bent, nor broke, nor shunn’d a soldier’s death,
But now when all was lost or seem’d as lost—
Her stature more than mortal in the burst
Of sunrise, her arm lifted, eyes on fire—
Brake with a blast of trumpets from the gate,
And, falling on them like a thunderbolt,
She trampled some beneath her horses’ heels,
And some were whelm’d with missiles of the wall,
And some were push’d with lances from the rock,
And part were drown’d within the whirling brook:
O miracle of noble womanhood!"

So sang the gallant glorious chronicle;
And, I all rapt in this, “Come out,” he said,
“To the Abbey: there is Aunt Elizabeth
And sister Lilia with the rest.” We went
(I kept the book and had my finger in it)
Down thro’ the park: strange was the sight to me;
For all the sloping pasture murmur’d sown
With happy faces and with holiday.
There moved the multitude, a thousand heads:
The patient leaders of their Institute
Taught them with facts. One rear’d a font of stone
And drew, from butts of water on the slope,
The fountain of the moment, playing, now
A twisted snake, and now a rain of pearls,
Or steep-up spout whereon the gilded ball

55. murmured, was full of voices; sown, besprinkled.
63. steep-up, upright, perpendicular.
Danced like a wisp: and somewhat lower down
A man with knobs and wires and vials fired
A cannon: Echo answer'd in her sleep
From hollow fields: and here were telescopes
For azure views; and there a group of girls
In circle waited, whom the electric shock
Dislink'd with shrieks and laughter: round the lake
A little clock-work steamer paddling plied
And shook the lilies: perch'd about the knolls
A dozen angry models jetted steam:
A pretty railway ran: a fire-balloon
Rose gem-like up before the dusky groves
And dropt a fairy parachute and past:
And there thro' twenty posts of telegraph
They flash'd a saucy message to and fro
Between the mimic stations: so that sport
Went hand in hand with Science; otherwhere
Pure sport: a herd of boys with clamor bowl'd
And stump'd the wicket: babies roll'd about
Like tumbled fruit in grass; and men and maids
Arranged a country dance, and flew thro' light'
And shadow, while the twangling violin
Struck up with Soldier-laddie, and overhead
The broad ambrosial aisles of lofty lime
Made noise with bees and breeze from end to end.

Strange was the sight and smacking of the time;

64. *wisp*, will-o'-the-wisp.
82. *stumped the wicket*, played cricket.
86. *Soldier-laddie*, a favorite Scotch tune.
89. *smacking of the time*, typical of the age.
And long we gazed, but satiated at length
Came to the ruins. High-arch’d and ivy-claspt,
Of finest Gothic lighter than a fire,
Thro’ one wide chasm of time and frost they gave
The park, the crowd, the house; but all within
The sward was trim as any garden lawn:
And here we lit on Aunt Elizabeth,
And Lilia with the rest, and lady friends
From neighbor seats: and there was Ralph himself,
A broken statue propt against the wall,
As gay as any. Lilia, wild with sport,
Half child half woman as she was, had wound
A scarf of orange round the stony helm,
And robed the shoulders in a rosy silk,
That made the old warrior from his ivied nook
Glow like a sunbeam: near his tomb a feast
Shone, silver-set; about it lay the guests,
And there we join’d them: then the maiden Aunt
Took this fair day for text, and from it preach’d
An universal culture for the crowd,
And all things great; but we, unworthy, told
Of college: he had climb’d across the spikes,
And he had squeezed himself betwixt the bars,
And he had breathed the Proctor’s dogs; and one

93. chasm, rent in the walls. gave, gave a view of.
98. neighbor-seats, neighboring country residences.
111. spikes, on the wall of the college gardens.
112. bars, on the windows of the student’s rooms.
113. The Proctor is the University official charged with the superintendence of discipline; when on his rounds of inspection he is attended by servants, familiarly known as “bull-dogs,” who at his orders pursue and arrest any undergraduate who will not obey his summons. Breathed, tired out with a long run; cf. a somewhat similar use in V. 306.
Discuss'd his tutor, rough to common men,
But honeying at the whisper of a lord;
And one the Master, as a rogue in grain
Veneer'd with sanctimonious theory:

But while they talk'd, above their heads I saw
The feudal warrior lady-clad; which brought
My book to mind: and opening this I read
Of old Sir Ralph a page or two that rang
With tilt and tourney; then the tale of her
That drove her foes with slaughter from her walls,
And much I praised her nobleness, and "Where,"
A-ked Walter, patting Lilia's head (she lay
Beside him) "lives there such a woman now?"

Quick answer'd Lilia "There are thousands now
Such women, but convention beats them down:
It is but bringing up; no more than that:
You men have done it: how I hate you all!
Ah, were I something great! I wish I were
Some mighty poetess, I would shame you then,
That love to keep us children! O I wish
That I were some great princess, I would build
Far off from men a college like a man's,
And I would teach them all that men are taught;
We are twice as quick!" And here she shook aside
The hand that play'd the patron with her curls.

115. honeying, becoming affable.
128. convention, conventionality, custom.
And one said smiling "Pretty were the sight
If our old halls could change their sex, and flaunt
With prudes for proctors, dowagers for deans,
And sweet girl-graduates in their golden hair.
I think they should not wear our rusty gowns,
But move as rich as Emperor-moths, or Ralph
Who shines so in the corner; yet I fear,
If there were many Lillias in the brood,
However deep you might embowe! the nest,
Some boy would spy it."

At this upon the sward
She tapt her tiny silken-sandal'd foot:
"That's your light way; but I would make it death
For any male thing but to peep at us."

Petulant she spoke, and at herself she laugh'd;
A rosebud set with little wilful thorns,
And sweet as English air could make her, she:
But Walter hail'd a score of names upon her,
And "petty Ogress," and "ungrateful Puss,"
And swore he long'd at college, only long'd,
All else was well, for she-society.
They boated and they cricketed; they talk'd
At wine, in clubs, of art, of politics;
They lost their weeks; they vex't the souls of deans;

140. halls, colleges
141. dowagers, widows of noblemen. dean, officer of a college.
144. Emperor-moths, butterflies of beautiful coloring.
162 They lost their weeks. At an English University residence for
a certain number of Terms is necessary to render a student eligible for his
Degree, and residence for a certain proportion of each Term (reckoned by
attendance at dinner) is necessary to enable him to "count" that term.
The expression therefore denotes that they were irregular in their observ-
ance of the College regulations concerning attendance, and consequently
were unable to count certain weeks of their residence towards their
Degrees.
They rode; they betted; made a hundred friends,  
And caught the blossoms of the flying terms,  
But miss'd the mignonette of Vivian-place,  
The little hearth-flower Lilia. Thus he spoke.  
Part banter, part affection.  
"True," she said,  
"We doubt not that. O yes, you miss'd us much  
I'll stake my ruby ring upon it you did."

She held it out; and as a parrot turns  
Up thro' gilt wires a crafty loving eye,  
And takes a lady's finger with all care,  
And bites it for true heart and not for harm,  
So he with Lilia's. Daintily she shriek'd  
And wrung it. "Doubt my word again!" he said.  
"Come, listen! here is proof that you were miss'd:

We seven stay'd at Christmas up to read;  
And there we took one tutor as to read:  
The hard-grained Muses of the cube and square  
Were out of season: never man, I think,  
So moulder'd in a sinecure as he:  
For while our cloisters echo'd frosty feet  
And our long walks were stript as bare as brooms,  
We did but talk you over, pledge you all

172. true-heart, affection.
176. to read, to study.
178. hard-grain'd Muses, mathematics.
182. walks, avenues of trees.
183. pledge in wassail, drink your health.
In wassail; often, like as many girls—
Sick for the hollies and the yews of home—
As many little trifling Lilias—play’d
Charades and riddles as at Christmas here,
And what’s my thought and when and where and how,
And often told a tale from mouth to mouth
As here at Christmas.”

She remember’d that:
A pleasant game she thought: she liked it more
Than magic music, forfeits, all the rest.
But these—what kind of tales did men tell men,
She wonder’d, by themselves?

A half-disdain
Perch’d on the pouted blossom of her lips:
And Walter nodded at me; “He began,
The rest would follow, each in turn; and so
We forged a sevenfold story. Kind? what kind?
Chimeras, crotchets, Christmas solecisms,
Seven-headed monsters only made to kill
Time by the fire in winter.”

“Kill him now,
The tyrant! kill him in the summer too,"
Said Lilia; “Why not now?” the maiden Aunt

199. Chimeras. The Chimera of Greek Mythology was a monster having the head of a lion, the body of a goat, and the tail of a dragon. Hence the word signifies in modern usage any grotesquely incongruous composition. Crotchets, perverse fancies, whimsical productions. Solecisms. This word is fancifully derived from the fact that the Athenian settlers at Soli, a town in Cilicia, lost the original purity of the Attic dialect. It thus denotes originally an impropriety in language, then, more loosely, any incongruity or inconsistency—here a ridiculous story, such as might naturally pass from mouth to mouth during the festivities of Christmas time.
"Why not a summer's as a winter's tale?
A tale for summer as befits the time,
And something it should be to suit the place,
Heroic, for a hero lies beneath,
Grave, solemn!"

Walter warp'd his mouth at this
To something so mock-solemn, that I laugh'd
And Lilia woke with sudden-shrilling mirth
An echo like a ghostly woodpecker,
Hid in the ruins; 'till the maiden Aunt
(A little sense of wrong had touch'd her face
With color) turn'd to me with "As you will,
Heroic if you will, or what you will,
Or be yourself your hero if you will."

"Take Lilia, then, for heroine" clamor'd he,
"And make her some great Princess, six feet high,
Grand, epic, homicidal; and be you
The Prince to win her!"

"Then follow me, the Prince," I answer'd, "each be hero in his turn!
Seven and yet one, like shadows in a dream.—
Heroic seems our Princess as required —
But something made to suit with Time and place,
A Gothic ruin and a Grecian house,
A talk of college and of ladies' rights,
A feudal knight in silken masquerade,
And, yonder, shrieks and strange experiments

winter's tale. The reference is to Shakespeare's play, "The Winter's Tale," below.
warp'd, twisted.
For which the good Sir Ralph had burnt them all—
This were a medley! we should have him back. 230
Who told the "Winter's Tale" to do it for us.
No matter: we will say whatever comes.
And let the ladies sing us, if they will,
From time to time, some ballad or a song
To give us breathing-space."

So I began,

And the rest follow'd: and the women sang
Between the rougher voices of the men,
Like linnets in the pauses of the wind:
And here I give the story and the songs.

229. For which . . . burnt them all. The belief in witchcraft was universal in England during the Middle Ages, when the exercise of any new power or the pursuit of any mysterious study, especially if connected with Astrology, Chemistry, or any other obscure science, was held to indicate the existence of dealings with the Devil; the ordinary punishment for the offence was death by fire.
Part I.

A prince I was, blue-eyed, and fair in face,
Of temper amorous, as the first of May,
With lengths of yellow ringlet, like a girl,
For on my cradle shone the Northern star.

There lived an ancient legend in our house.
Some sorcerer, whom a far-off grandsire burnt
Because he cast no shadow, had foretold,
Dying, that none of all our blood should know
The shadow from the substance, and that one
Should come to fight with shadows and to fall.
For so, my mother said, the story ran.
And, truly, waking dreams were, more or less,
An old and strange affection of the house.
Myself too had weird seizures, Heaven knows what:
On a sudden, in the midst of men and day,
And while I walk'd and talk'd as heretofore,
I seem'd to move among a world of ghosts,
And feel myself the shadow of a dream.
Our great court-Galen poised his gilt-head cane,
And paw'd his beard, and mutter'd "catalepsy."
THE PRINCESS.

My mother pitying made a thousand prayers;
My mother was as mild as any saint,
Half-canonized by all that look’d on her,
So gracious was her tact and tenderness:
But my good father thought a king a king;
He cared not for the affection of the house;
He held his sceptre like a pedant’s wand
To lash offence, and with long arms and hands
Reach’d out, and pick’d offenders from the mass
For judgment.

Now it chanced that I had been
While life was yet in bud and blade, betroth’d
To one, a neighboring Princess: she to me
Was proxy-wedded with a bootless calf
At eight years old; and still from time to time
Came murmurs of her beauty from the South,
And of her brethren, youths of puissance;
And still I wore her picture by my heart,
And one dark tress; and all around them both
Sweet thoughts would swarm as bees about their queen.

But when the days drew nigh that I should wed,
My father sent ambassadors with furs

23. **Half-canonized**, regarded as almost a saint.

33. *with a bootless calf* refers to a ceremony occasionally observed during the Middle Ages in the celebration of proxy-marriages, according to which the bridegroom’s representative was brought into the presence of the bride with the lower part of his leg bare. This was done in the case of the marriage of Maximilian of Austria with Anne of Brittany in 1489, of which ceremony an account is given by Bacon in his *Life and Reign of King Henry VII*. Strictly speaking, recourse was only had to this device in the case of adults, competent to consent and appoint and receive representatives, when it was not possible or convenient for the principals to meet in person.
And jewels, gifts, to fetch her: these brought back
A present, a great labor of the loom;
And therewithal an answer vague as wind:
Besides, they saw the king; he took the gifts;
He said there was a compact; that was true:
But then she had a will; was he to blame?
And maiden fancies; loved to live alone
Among her women; certain, would not wed.

That morning in the presence room I stood
With Cyril and with Florian, my two friends:
The first, a gentleman of broken means
(His father's fault) but given to starts and bursts
Of revel; and the last, my other heart,
And almost my half-self; for still we moved
Together, twinn'd as horse's ear and eye.

Now, while they spake, I saw my father's face
Grow long and troubled, like a rising moon,
Inflamed with wrath: he started on his feet,
Tore the king's letter, snow'd it down, and rent
The wonder of the loom thro' warp and woof
From skirt to skirt; and at last he sware
That he would send a hundred thousand men,
And bring her in a whirlwind: then he chew'd
The thrice-turn'd cud of wrath, and cook'd his spleen,
Communing with his captains of the war.

50. presence-room, hall of audience.
65. cooked his spleen, nursed his wrath. The ancients believed that the spleen was the seat of wrath.
At last I spoke. "My father, let me go.
It cannot be but some gross error lies
In this report, this answer of a king,
Whom all men rate as kind and hospitable:
Or, maybe, I myself, my bride once seen,
Whate'er my grief to find her less than fame,
May rue the bargain made." And Florian said:
"I have a sister at the foreign court,
Who moves about the Princess; she, you know,
Who wedded with a nobleman from thence:
He, dying lately, left her, as I hear,
The lady of three castles in that land:
Thro' her this matter might be sifted clean."
And Cyril whisper'd: "Take me with you too."
Then laughing, "what, if these weird seizures come
Upon you in those lands, and no one near
To point you out the shadow from the truth!
Take me, I'll serve you better in a strait;
I grate on rusty hinges here:" but "No!"
Roar'd the rough king, "you shall not; we ourself
Will crush her pretty maiden fancies dead
In iron gauntlets: break the council up."

But when the council broke, I rose and past
Thro' the wild woods that hung about the town;
Found a still place, and pluck'd her likeness out;
Laid it on flowers, and watch'd it lying bathed
In the green gleam of dewy-tassell'd trees:
What were those fancies? wherefore break her troth?
THE PRINCESS.

Proud look’d the lips: but while I meditated
A wind arose, and rush’d upon the South,
And shook the songs, the whispers, and the shrieks
Of the wild woods together; and a Voice
Went with it, “Follow, follow, thou shalt win.”

Then, ere the silver sickle of that month
Became her golden shield, I stole from court
With Cyril and with Florian, unperceived,
Cat-footed thro’ the town and half in dread
To hear my father’s clamor at our backs
With Ho! from some bay-window shake the night;
But all was quiet; from the bastion’d walls
Like threaded spiders, one by one, we dropt,
And flying reach’d the frontier: then we crost
To a livelier land; and so by tilth and grange,
And vines, and blowing bosks of wilderness,
We gain’d the mother-city thick with towers,
And in the imperial palace found the king.

His name was Gama; crack’d and small his voice,
But bland the smile that like a wrinkling wind
On glassy water drove his cheek in lines;
A little, dry old man, without a star,

100-101. silver-sickle, new moon, golden shield, full moon.
106. Bastion’d fortified.
109. tilth, tilled land; grange, farmhouses.
110. blowing bosks, flowering bushes, underbrush.
111. Mother-city, capital town.
116. Without a star, with no appearances or symbols of royalty.
Not like a king; three days he feasted us, 
And on the fourth I spake of why we came,  
And my betroth'd. "You do us, Prince," he said, 
Airing a snowy hand and signet gem, 
"All honor. We remember love ourselves 
In our sweet youth: there did a compact pass 
Long summers back, a kind of ceremony— 
I think the year in which our olives fail'd. 
I would you had her, Prince, with all my heart,  
With my full heart: but there were widows here, 
Two widows, Lady Psyche, Lady Blanche; 
They fed her theories, in and out of place, 
Maintaining that with equal husbandry 
The woman were an equal to the man. 
They harp'd on this: with this our banquets rang; 
Our dances broke and buzz'd in knots of talk; 
Nothing but this; my very ears were hot 
To hear them: knowledge, so my daughter held, 
Was all in all; they had but been, she thought,  
As children; they must lose the child, assume 
The woman; then, Sir, awful odes she wrote, 
Too awful, sure, for what they treated of, 
But all she is and does is awful; odes 
About this losing of the child; and rhymes

134–135. knowledge . . all in all. This fallacy, upon which is based the fore-doomed scheme of the Princess for the betterment of woman's position, is one upon which Tennyson has expressed himself with great vehemence and earnestness in several passages throughout his works. Knowledge, he teaches, is good, but it is not the best. The best is Wisdom. Mere knowledge is brutal and overweening; Wisdom is reverent and serene.—Wallace.

136–137. lose the child, assume the woman, put off their meek submissiveness and claim the rights of mature beings able to think and act for themselves.
And dismal lyrics, prophesying change
Beyond all reason: these the women sang;
And they that know such things—I sought but peace;
No critic I—would call them masterpieces:
They mastered me. At last she begg'd a boon,
A certain summer palace which I have
Hard by your father's frontier: I said no,
Yet being an easy man, gave it: and there,
All wild to found an University
For maidens, on the spur she fled; and more
We know not,—only this: they see no men,
Not ev'n her brother Arac, nor the twins
Her brethren, tho' they love her, look upon her
As on a kind of paragon; and I
(Pardon me saying it) were much loth to breed
Dispute betwixt myself and mine: but since
(And I confess with right) you think me bound
In some sort, I can give you letters to her;
And yet, to speak the truth, I rate your chance
Almost at naked nothing."

Thus the king;
And I, tho' nettled that he seem'd to slur
With garrulous ease and oily courtesies
Our formal compact, yet, not less (all frets
But chafing me on fire to find my bride)
Went forth again with both my friends. We rode
Many a long league back to the North. At last

158. In some sort, to some extent.
163. frets, hindrances, impediments.
From hills, that look'd across a land of hope
We dropt with evening on a rustic town
Set in a gleaming river's crescent-curve,
Close at the boundary of the liberties;
There, enter'd an old hostel, call'd mine host
To council, plied him with his richest wines,
And show'd the late-writ letters of the king.

He, with a long low sibilation, stared
As blank as death in marble; then exclaim'd
Averring it was clear against all rules
For any man to go: but as his brain
Began to mellow, "If the king," he said,
"Had given us letters, was he bound to speak?
The king would bear him out;" and at the last—
The summer of the vine in all his veins—
"No doubt that we might make it worth his while.
She once had past that way; he heard her speak;
She scared him; life! he never saw the like;
She look'd as grand as doomsday and as grave:
And he, he reverenced his liege-lady there;
He always made a point to post with mares;

167. A land of hope, because it contained that for which he hoped, i.e., the Princess.
170. the liberties, an English legal term for the grounds of the college, over which the Princess had been given possession by her father.
171. hostel, tavern, hostelry.
174. sibilation, whistle.
179. speak, report our arrival to the Princess
180. bear him out, support him.
181. the summer of the vine, etc., under the influence of the wine.
187. to post, to run his coaches,
His daughter and his housemaid were the boys:
The land, he understood, for miles about
Was till'd by women; all the swine were sows, 190
And all the dogs "—

But while he jested thus,
A thought flash'd thro' me which I clothed in act,
Remembering how we three presented Maid
Or Nymph, or Goddess, at high tide of feast,
In masque or pageant at my father's court.

We sent mine host to purchase female gear;
He bought it, and himself, a sight to shake
The midriff of despair with laughter, holp
To lace us up, till, each, in maiden plumes

We rustled: him we gave a costly bribe
To guerdon silence, mounted our good steeds,
And boldly ventured on the liberties.

We follow'd up the river as we rode,
And rode till midnight when the college lights
Began to glitter firefly-like in copse
And linden alley: then we past an arch,

188. boys, postilions, post-boys.
194. tide, season

195. The masque was an allegorical occasional piece, generally
designed for a special festival at the Court, or some other scene of importance,
and produced with splendid circumstances of scenery, dresses, and music. The pageant was a gorgeous spectacular performance. Dramatic exhibitions of various kinds, amateur as well as professional, have always
been a favorite form of entertainment in the various countries of Europe.

198. holp, helped.
201. guerdon, reward.
206. linden alley, avenue of linden trees.
Whereon a woman-statue rose with wings
From four wing'd horses dark against the stars.
And some inscription ran along the front,
But deep in shadow: further on we gain'd
A little street half garden and half house;
But scarce could hear each other speak for noise
Of clocks and chimes, like silver hammers falling
On silver anvils, and the splash and stir
Of fountains spouted up and showering down
In meshes of the jasmine and the rose:
And all about us peal'd the nightingale,
Rapt in her song, and careless of the snare.

There stood a bust of Pallas for a sign,
By two sphere lamps blazon'd like Heaven and Earth
With constellation and with continent,
Above an entry: riding in, we call'd;
A plump-arm'd Ostleress and a stable wench
Came running at the call, and help'd us down.
Then stept a buxom hostess forth, and sail'd,
Full-blown, before us into rooms which gave
Upon a pillar'd porch, the bases lost
In laurel: her we ask'd of that and this,
And who were tutors. "Lady Blanche," she said,

219. Pallas, in Greek mythology, goddess of wisdom
220. blazoned, pictured.
226. gave, opened.
229. tutors. At a Cambridge College every student is placed under the care of one or other of the resident Fellows, who is called his Tutor, and advises him about his work, controls his expenditure, etc.
"And Lady Psyche." "Which was prettiest, Best-natured?" "Lady Psyche." "Hers are we," One voice, we cried; and I sat down and wrote, In such a hand as when a field of corn Bows all its ears before the roaring East;

"Three ladies of the Northern empire pray Your Highness would enroll them with your own, As Lady Psyche's pupils."

This I seal'd:
The seal was Cupid bent above a scroll, And o'er his head Uranian Venus hung, And raised the blinding bandage from his eyes: I gave the letter to be sent with dawn; And then to bed, where half in doze I seem'd To float about a glimmering night, and watch A full sea glazed with muffled moonlight, swell On some dark shore just seen that it was rich.

233-234. In such a hand, etc., i.e., with the lines of the letters long and thin and sloping regularly. Women in those days affected a very slanting style of writing.

238-240. The seal was Cupid ... from his eyes. The seal is significant. The reference is to Plato's romantic Dialogue, The Symposium (Drinking Party), in the course of which Pausanias, one of the characters, explains that there are two kinds of Love—one the Heavenly ("Uranian") Love, the pure, spiritual emotion, the other Gross or Common Love. Cupid, the son of the latter, is traditionally blind, that is, passionate without reason or discrimination; this defect Heavenly Love is represented on the Prince's seal as removing through her calm and purifying influence.
PART II.

As thro' the land at eve we went,
   And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
We fell out, my wife and I,
O we fell out I know not why,
   And kiss'd again with tears.
And blessings on the falling out
   That all the more endears,
When we fall out with those we love
   And kiss again with tears!
For when we came where lies the child
   We lost in other years,
There above the little grave,
O there above the little grave,
   We kiss'd again with tears.
At break of day the College Portress came:
She brought us Academic silks, in hue
The lilac, with a silken hood to each,
And zoned with gold; and now when these were on,
And we as rich as moths from dusk cocoons,
She, curtseying her obeisance, let us know
The Princess Ida waited; out we paced,
I first, and following thro' the porch that sang
All round with laurel, issued in a court
Compact of lucid marbles, boss'd with lengths
Of classic frieze, with ample awnings gay
Betwixt the pillars, and with great urns of flowers.
The Muses and the Graces, group'd in threes,
Enring'd a billowing fountain in the midst;
And here and there on lattice edges lay
Or book or lute; but hastily we past,
And up a flight of stairs into the hall.

8. sang, murmuring of the leaves.
9. compact, strongly built; lucid, shining.
10. boss'd, carved in relief, sculptured.
13. The nine Muses were the daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne. They presided over the departments of poetry, art and science. They were Clio, Enterpe, Thalia, Melpomene, Terpsichore, Erato, Polyhymnia, Urania, and Calliope. The three Graces, types of female beauty and refinement, were Euphrosyne, Aglaia, and Thalia.
There at a board by tome and paper sat,
With two tame leopards couch'd beside her throne,
All beauty compass'd in a female form,
The Princess; liker to the inhabitant
Of some clear planet close upon the Sun,
Than our man's earth; such eyes were in her head,
And so much grace and power, breathing down
From over her arch'd brows, with every turn
Lived thro' her to the tips of her long hands,
And to her feet. She rose her height, and said:

"We give you welcome: not without redound
Of use and glory to yourselves ye come,
The first-fruits of the stranger: aftertime,
And that full voice which circles round the grave,
Will rank you nobly, mingled up with me.
What! are the ladies of your land so tall?"
"We of the court," said Cyril. "From the court,"
She answer'd, "then ye know the Prince?" and he:
"The climax of his age! as tho' there were
One rose in all the world, your highness that,
He worships your ideal:" she replied:
"We scarcely thought in our own hall to hear
This barren verbiage, current among men,
Light coin, the tinsel clink of compliment.
Your flight from out your bookless wilds would seem

30 The first-fruits of the stranger, the first students from another country.
31 full voice, fame.
38 your ideal, his ideal, or dream of you.
40 verbiage, wordiness.
As arguing love of knowledge and of power; Your language proves you still the child. Indeed, We dream not of him: when we set our hand To this great work, we purposed with ourself Never to wed. You likewise will do well, Ladies, in entering here, to cast and fling The tricks, which make us toys of men, that so, Some future time, if so indeed you will, You may with those self-styled our lords ally Your fortunes, justlier balanced, scale with scale.”

At those high words, we, conscious of ourselves, Perused the matting; then an officer Rose up, and read the statutes, such as these: Not for three years to correspond with home; Not for three years to cross the liberties; Not for three years to speak with any men; And many more, which hastily subscribed, We enter’d on the boards: and “Now,” she cried, “Ye are green wood, see ye warp not. Look, our hall! Our statues!—not of those that men desire, Sleek Odalisques, or oracles of mode, Nor stunted squaws of West or East; but she That taught the Sabine how to rule, and she

43. arguing, implying.
53. conscious of ourselves, aware of our disguise.
60. entered on the boards, registered as undergraduates
63. Odalisques, female slaves in a Turkish harem; mode, fashion.
64-65. she . . . to rule. Egeria, a wood-nymph, to whom Numa Pompi- lius, the second king of Rome, is said to have betaken himself for instruction. He was a Sabine by birth, of the town of Ceyres.
The foundress of the Babylonian wall,
The Carian Artemisia strong in war,
The Rhodope, that built the pyramid,
Clelia, Cornelia, with Palmyrene
That fought Aurelian, and the Roman brows
Of Agrippina. Dwell with these, and lose
Convention, since to look on noble forms

65-66. The Babylonian wall. Semiramis, wife of Ninus, a legendary personage, to whom are ascribed innumerable marvelous deeds and heroic achievements. The gigantic city of Babylon is only one of many that she is said to have built. She is supposed to have lived about B.C. 2182.

67. The Carian in war. Queen of Halicarnassus, attached herself to the Expedition which Xerxes lead against Greece in B.C. 480. In the battle of Salamis she displayed signal courage and energy.

68. The Rhodope pyramid. The structure in question was really the work of another woman, Nicotris, sister and wife of Mycerinus (who himself began the erection, but died before its completion); it was, however, generally attributed in ancient times, and even after the exposure of the falseness of the story to Rhodopsis.

69. Clelia was a Roman girl, one of the hostages given to Lars Porsena, King of Clusium, during his investment of Rome on behalf of the expelled Tarquins. She is said to have escaped from the camp and swum across the Tiber back to Rome. Cornelia was the daughter of Scipio Africanus, the great Roman general, and the mother of the famous Tribunes and reformers of the Constitution, Tiberius and Caius Gracchus. She was a noble, refined and cultured lady, and one whom we may regard as an ideal Roman matron. She died about B.C. 110.

69-70. The Palmyrene That fought Aurelian. This was Zenobia, who succeeded to the throne of Palmyra on the death of her husband, Odenathus. She was a woman of vehement energy and ambition, and for a long time defied with success the efforts of the Emperor Aurelian to conquer her dominions. She was ultimately defeated, captured, and taken to Rome (A.D. 274).

70-71. The Roman brows Of Agrippina. This lady, the granddaughter of the Emperor Augustus and the wife of his general, Germanicus, was another typical Roman matron, cultured, courageous, and devoted to her husband and family. She died A.D. 33.

72. Convention, conventionality.
Makes noble, thro' the sensuous organism
That which is higher. O lift your natures up:
Embrace our aims: work out your freedom. Girls,
Knowledge is now no more a fountain seal'd:
Drink deep, until the habits of the slave,
The sins of emptiness, gossip and spite
And slander, die. Better not be at all
Than not be noble. Leave us: you may go:
To-day the Lady Psyche will harangue
The fresh arrivals of the week before;
For they press in from all the provinces,
And fill the hive."

She spoke, and bowing waved
Dismissal: back again we crost the court
To Lady Psyche's: as we enter'd in,
There sat along the forms, like morning doves
That sun their milky bosoms on the thatch,
A patient range of pupils; she herself
Erect behind a desk of satin-wood,
A quick brunette, well-moulded, falcon-eyed,
And on the hither side, or so she look'd,
Of twenty summers. At her left, a child,
In shining draperies, headed like a star,
Her maiden babe, a double April old,
Aglaïa slept. We sat: the Lady glanced:

92. The hither side, this side.
94. headed like a star, with bright golden hair.
95. a double April old, two years old.
96. Aglaïa, "Brightness," the name of one of the Graces.
Then Florian, but no livelier than the dame
That whisper'd "Asses' ears" among the sedge,
"My sister." "Comely, too, by all that's fair,"
Said Cyril. "O hush, hush!" and she began.

"This world was once a fluid haze of light,
Till toward the centre set the starry tides,
And eddied into suns, that wheeling cast
The planets: then the monster, then the man;
Tattoo'd or woaded, winter-clad in skins,
Raw from the prime, and crushing down his mate;
As yet we find in barbarous isles, and here
Among the lowest."

Thereupon she took
A bird's-eye view of all the ungracious past;
Glanced at the legendary Amazon
As emblematic of a nobler age;
Appraised the Lycian custom, spoke of those

97-98. the dame . . . the sedge. The reference is to the story of
Midas, the rich King of Phrygia. Apollo turned his ears into those of an ass.
Midas did his utmost to conceal the deformity, but his wife discovered the
secret, and, not daring to betray it to any other human being, but unable
to keep it to herself, whispered it into a hole in the ground; whence after-
wards grew up a reed which in its whispers betrayed the secret to the
world at large.

101-104. A summary of the "Nebular Hypothesis."

105. woaded, painted, stained with woad, a plant from the leaves of
which the ancient Britons made a blue dye.

106. Raw from the prime, undeveloped, uncivilized.

110. the legendary Amazon, a nation of female warriors of Asia
Minor.

112. appraised, spoke of the merits of.
the Lycian custom, that of tracing ancestry through the female
instead of the male line.
That lay at wine with Lar and Lucumo; Ran down the Persian, Grecian, Roman lines Of empire, and the woman's state in each, How far from just; till warming with her theme She fulmined out her scorn of laws Salique And little-footed China, touch'd on Mahomet With much contempt, and came to chivalry: When some respect, however slight, was paid To woman, superstition all awry: However then commenced the dawn: a beam Had slanted forward, falling in a land Of promise; fruit would follow. Deep, indeed, Their debt of thanks to her who first had dared To leap the rotten pales of prejudice, Disyoke their necks from custom, and assert None lordlier than themselves but that which made Woman and man. She had founded; they must build. Here might they learn whatever men were taught: Let them not fear; some said their heads were less; Some men's were small; not they the least of men; For often fineness compensated size: Besides the brain was like the hand, and grew

113. In Etruscan wall-paintings, the men and women are represented as feasting together. Lar, Lucumo, titles of honor borne by the Etruscan priests and nobles.

117. fulmined, thundered. laws Salique, the French law forbidding inheritance to pass through the female line.

118. It was popularly believed that Mahomet denied that women had souls.

126. pales, bounds.
With using; thence the man’s, if more was more; 135
He took advantage of his strength to be
First in the field: some ages had been lost;
But woman ripen’d earlier, and her life
Was longer; and albeit their glorious names
Were fewer, scatter’d stars, yet since in truth
The highest is the measure of the man,
And not the Kaffir, Hottentot, Malay,
Nor those horn-handed breakers of the glebe,
But Homer, Plato, Verulam; even so
With woman: and in arts of government
Elizabeth and others; arts of war,
The peasant Joan and others; arts of grace
Sappho and others vied with any man:
And, last not least, she who had left her place,
And bow’d her state to them, that they might grow
To use and power on this Oasis, lapt
In the arms of leisure, sacred from the blight
Of ancient influence and scorn.

At last

She rose upon a wind of prophecy
Dilating on the future; “everywhere

135 if more were more, if a larger brain did really imply a more powerful intellect.

143. glebe, earth.

144. Verulam, Bacon. Verulam was the title of the barony conferred upon Bacon.

146. Elizabeth, Queen Elizabeth of England, (1558-1603.)

147. Joan, Joan of Arc (1412-1431.)

148. Sappho, a lyric poetess of Greece.

149. place, her royal station.
Two heads in council, two beside the hearth,
Two in the tangled business of the world,
Two in the liberal offices of life,
Two plummets dropt for one to sound the abyss
Of science, and the secrets of the mind:
Musician, painter, sculptor, critic, more:
And everywhere the broad and bounteous Earth
Should bear a double growth of those rare souls,
Poets, whose thoughts enrich the blood of the world."

She ended here, and beckon'd us: the rest
Parted; and, glowing full-faced welcome, she
Began to address us, and was moving on
In congratulation, till as when a boat
Tacks, and the slacken'd sail flaps, all her voice
Faltering and fluttering in her throat, she cried,
"My brother!" "Well, my sister." "O," she said,
"What do you here? and in this dress? and these?
Why who are these? a wolf within the fold!
A pack of wolves! the Lord be gracious to me!
A plot, a plot, a plot, to ruin all!"
"No plot, no plot," he answer'd. "Wretched boy,
How saw you not the inscription on the gate,
LET NO MAN ENTER IN ON PAIN OF DEATH?"
"And if I had," he answer'd, "who could think
The softer Adams of your Academe,
O sister, Sirens tho' they be, were such

166. parted, departed.
168. gratulation, congratulation.
186. the softer Adams, the women founders.
181. Sirens, sea-nymphs who, by their singing, led sailors to shipwreck on the rocks of their island.
As chanted on the blanching bones of men?"
"But you will find it otherwise," she said.
"You jest: ill jesting with edge-tools! my vow
Binds me to speak, and O that iron will,
That axelike edge unturnable, our Head,
The Princess." "Well then, Psyche, take my life,
And nail me like a weasel on a grange
For warning: bury me beside the gate,
And cut this epitaph above my bones;
Here lies a brother by a sister slain,
All for the common good of womankind."
"Let me die too," said Cyril, "having seen
And heard the Lady Psyche."

I struck in:
"Albeit so mask'd, Madam, I love the truth;
Receive it; and in me behold the Prince
Your countryman, affianced years ago
To the Lady Ida: here, for here she was,
And thus (what other way was left) I came."
"O Sir, O Prince, I have no country; none;
If any, this; but none. Whate'er I was
Disrooted, what I am is grafted here.
Affianced, Sir? love-whispers may not breathe
Within this vestal limit, and how should I,
Who am not mine, say, live: the thunderbolt
Hangs silent; but prepare: I speak; it falls."

189. grange, barn, granary.
204. vestal-limit, virgin walls; vestal from Vesta, a Roman goddess,
to whose service only maidens of blameless life were consecrated.
205. the thunderbolt, your doom.
205. not mine, i.e., subject to the will of the Princess.
"Yet pause," I said: "for that inscription there, I think no more of deadly lurks therein, Than in a clapper clapping in a garth, To scare the fowl from fruit: if more there be, If more and acted on, what follows? war; Your own work marr'd: for this your Academe, Whichever side be Victor, in the halloo Will topple to the trumpet down, and pass With all the fair theories only made to gild A stormless summer." "Let the Princess judge Of that" she said: "farewell, Sir — and to you. I shudder at the sequel, but I go."

"Are you that Lady Psyche," I rejoin'd, "The fifth in line from that old Florian, Yet hangs his portrait in my father's hall (The gaunt old Baron with his beetle brow Sun-shaded in the heat of dusty fights) As he bestrode my Grandsire, when he fell, And all else fled? we point to it, and we say, 'The loyal warmth of Florian is not cold But branches current yet in kindred veins.'" "Are you that Psyche," Florian added; "she With whom I sang about the morning hills, Flung ball, flew kite, and raced the purple fly, And snared the squirrel of the glen? are you

209. clapper, a small windmill, which, when turned, makes a clapping sound; a scare-crow garth, an enclosure.
213. in the halloo, turmoil.
224. bestrode, stood over to defend.
227. current, flowing.
That Psyche, wont to bind my throbbing brow,
To smoothe my pillow, mix the foaming draught
Of fever, tell me pleasant tales, and read
My sickness down to happy dreams? are you
That brother-sister Psyche, both in one?
You were that Psyche, but what are you now?"
"You are that Psyche," Cyril said, "for whom
I would be that forever which I seem,
Woman, if I might sit beside your feet,
And glean your scatter'd sapience."

Then once more,
"Are you that Lady Psyche," I began,
"That on her bridal morn before she past
From all her old companions, when the king
Kiss'd her pale cheek, declared that ancient ties
Would still be dear beyond the southern hills;
That were there any of our people there
In want or peril, there was one to hear
And help them? look! for such are these and I."
"Are you that Psyche," Florian ask'd, "to whom,
In gentler days, your arrow-wounded fawn
Came flying while you sat beside the well?
The creature laid his muzzle on your lap,
And sobb'd, and you sobb'd with it, and the blood
Was sprinkled on your kirtle, and you wept.
That was fawn's blood, not brother's, yet you wept.
O by the bright head of my little niece,
You were that Psyche, and what are you now?"

241. sapience, wisdom.
255. kirtle, gown.
“You are that Psyche,” Cyril said again, 
“The mother of the sweetest little maid, 
That ever crow’d for kisses.”

“Out upon it!”
She answer’d, “peace! and why should I not play 
The Spartan Mother with emotion, be 
The Lucius Junius Brutus of my kind? 
Him you call great: he for the common weal, 
The fading politics of mortal Rome, 
As I might slay this child, if good need were, 
Slew both his sons: and I, shall I, on whom 
The secular emancipation turns 
Of half this world, be swerved from right to save 
A prince, a brother? a little will I yield. 
Best so, perchance, for us, and well for you. 
O hard, when love and duty clash! I fear 
My conscience will not count me fleckless; yet — 
Hear my conditions: promise (otherwise 
You perish) as you came, to slip away 
To-day, to-morrow, soon: it shall be said, 
These women were too barbarous, would not learn; 
They fled, who might have shamed us: promise, all.”

262–263. play... with emotion, crush out for the public good all natural affection, a duty sternly inculcated among the ancient Spartans

265–271. Him you call great... a brother? Lucius Junius Brutus, elected Consul in B.C. 509, upon the expulsion of the Tarquins, was so determined to maintain the freedom of the infant Republic committed to his charge that, having detected his two sons in a conspiracy with other young nobles to restore the banished dynasty, he did not hesitate to order them to execution.
What could we else, we promised each; and she,
Like some wild creature newly caged, commenced
A to-and-fro, so pacing till she paused
By Florian; holding out her lily arms
Took both his hands, and smiling faintly said:
"I knew you at the first: tho' you have grown
You scarce have alter'd: I am sad and glad
To see you, Florian. I give thee to death
My brother! it was duty spoke, not I.
My needful seeming harshness, pardon it.
Our mother, is she well?"

With that she kiss'd
His forehead, then, a moment after, clung
About him, and betwixt them blossom'd up
From out a common vein of memory
Sweet household talk, and phrases of the hearth,
And far allusion, till the gracious dews
Began to glisten and to fall: and while
They stood, so rapt, we gazing, came a voice,
"I brought a message here from Lady Blanche."
Back started she, and turning round we saw
The Lady Blanche's daughter where she stood,
Melissa, with her hand upon the lock,
A rosy blonde, and in a college gown,
That clad her like an April daffodilly
(Her mother's color) with her lips apart,
And all her thoughts as fair within her eyes,

304. her mother's color, the colors worn by the pupils of Lady Blanche.
305. fair, clearly seen.
As bottom agates seem to wave and float
In crystal currents of clear morning seas.

So stood that same fair creature at the door. Then Lady Psyche, "Ah — Melissa — you!
You heard us!" and Melissa, "O pardon me,
I heard, I could not help it, did not wish:
But, dearest Lady, pray you fear me not,
Nor think I bear that heart within my breast,
To give three gallant gentlemen to death."
"I trust you," said the other, "for we two
Were always friends, none closer, elm and vine:
But yet your mother's jealous temperament—
Let not your prudence, dearest, drowse, or prove
The Danaïd of a leaky vase, for fear
This whole foundation ruin, and I lose
My honor, these their lives." "Ah, fear me not" Replied Melissa; "no — I would not tell,
No, not for all Aspasia's cleverness,
No, not to answer, Madam, all those hard things
That Sheba came to ask of Solomon."
"Be it so" the other, "that we still may lead
The new light up, and culminate in peace,
For Solomon may come to Sheba yet."
Said Cyril, "Madam, he the wisest man
Feasted the woman wisest then, in halls
Of Lebanese cedar: nor should you
(Tho' Madam, you should answer, we would ask)
Less welcome find among us, if you came
Among us, debtors for our lives to you,
Myself for something more.” He said not what
But “Thanks,” she answer'd “Go: we have been too long
Together: keep your hoods about the face;
They do so that affect abstraction here.
Speak little; mix not with the rest; and hold
Your promise: all, I trust, may yet be well.”

We turn'd to go, but Cyril took the child,
And held her round the knees against his waist,
And blew the swoll'n cheek of a trumpeter,
While Psyche watch'd them, smiling, and the child
Push'd her flat hand against his face and laugh'd;
And thus our conference closed.

And then we stroll'd
For half the day thro' stately theatres
Bench'd crescent-wise. In each we sat, we heard
The grave Professor. On the lecture slate
The circle rounded under female hands
With flawless demonstration: follow'd then
A classic lecture, rich in sentiment,
With scraps of thundrous Epic lilted out

331. Lebanese cedar. Lebanon in Palestine was famous for its cedars, and from this locality Solomon procured the supply for his splendid buildings.

335. something more. Cyril's awakened love for Psyche.

347. theaters, lecture-halls with rows of seats in semicircles.

349. lecture slate, blackboard

353. lilted, declaimed in a feminine voice.
By violet-hooded Doctors, elegies
And quoted odes, and jewels five-words-long
That on the stretch’d forefinger of all Time
Sparkle for ever: then we dipt in all
That treats of whatsoever is, the state,
The total chronicles of man, the mind,
The morals, something of the frame, the rock,
The star, the bird, the fish, the shell, the flower,
Electric, chemic laws, and all the rest,
And whatsoever can be taught and known;
Till like three horses that have broken fence,
And glutted all night long breast-deep in corn,
We issued gorged with knowledge, and I spoke:
"Why, Sirs, they do all this as well as we."
"They hunt old trails" said Cyril, "very well;
But when did woman ever yet invent?"
"Ungracious!" answer'd Florian: "have you learnt
No more from Psyche’s lecture, you that talk’d
The trash that made me sick, and almost sad?"
"O trash" he said, "but with a kernel in it.
Should I not call her wise, who made me wise?
And learnt; I learnt more from her in a flash
Than if my brainpan were an empty hull,
And every Muse tumbled a science in.
A thousand hearts lie fallow in these halls,
And round these halls a thousand baby loves

360. frame, physiology.
377. every muse, see note on 13.
379. baby loves, Cupids.
Fly twangling headless arrows at the hearts
Whence follows many a vacant pang; but O
With me, Sir, enter'd in the bigger boy,
The Head of all the golden-shafted firm,
The long-limb'd lad that had a Psyche too:
He cleft me thro' the stomacher; and now
What think you of it, Florian? do I chase
The substance or the shadow? will it hold?
I have no sorcerer's malison on me,
No ghostly hauntings like his Highness. I
Flatter myself that always everywhere
I know the substance when I see it. Well,
Are castles shadows? Three of them? Is she
The sweet proprietress a shadow? If not,
Shall those three castles patch my tatter'd coat?
For dear are those three castles to my wants?
And dear is sister Psyche to my heart,
And two dear things are one of double worth,
And much I might have said, but that my zone
Unmann'd me: then the Doctors! O to hear
The Doctors! O to watch the thirsty plants
Imbibing! once or twice I thought to roar,
To break my chain, to shake my mane; but thou
Modulate me, Soul of mincing mimicry!
Make liquid treble of that bassoon, my throat;
Abase those eyes that ever loved to meet

384. The long-limb'd lad. This is a reference to the Greek legend of
Eros and Psyche, whose mutual attachment seems to signify the necessity
of Love to the Human Soul.

388. malison, curse.

404. bassoon, a wind instrument that takes the bass part.
Star-sisters answering under crescent brows;
Abate the stride, which speaks of man, and loose
A flying charm of blushes o'er this cheek,
Where they like swallows coming out of time
Will wonder why they came: but hark the bell
For dinner, let us go!"

And in we stream'd
Among the columns, pacing staid and still
By twos and threes, till all from end to end
With beauties every shade of brown and fair
In colors gayer than the morning mist,
The long hall glitter'd like a bed of flowers.
How might a man not wander from his wits
Pierced thro' with eyes, but that I kept mine own
Intent on her, who rapt in glorious dreams,
The second-sight of some Astræan age,
Sat compass'd with professors: they, the while,
Discuss'd a doubt and tost it to and fro:
A clamor thicken'd, mixt with inmost terms
Of art and science: Lady Blanche alone
Of faded form and haughtiest lineaments,
With all her autumn tresses falsely brown,
Shot sidelong daggers at us, a tiger-cat

420. The second-sight...age. According to the old legend Astræa
(Starbright), the daughter of Zeus and Themis (the Goddess of Justice),
lived among men on earth during the Golden Age, and was the last of the
Deities to leave when that had passed away. It was believed moreover,
that she would be the first to re-establish her home on earth should the
Golden Age ever return. The expression in the text means therefore that
the Princess's mind was all-engr.-ssed in the prophetic vision of some
glorious and ideal Era in the future.

423. inmost, most technical.

427. shallop, a light boat.
In act to spring.

At last a solemn grace
Concluded, and we sought the gardens; there
One walk'd reciting by herself, and one
In this hand held a volume as to read,
And smoothed a petted peacock down with that:
Some to a low song oar'd a shallop by,
Or under arches of the marble bridge
Hung shadow'd from the heat: some hid and sought
In the orange thickets: others tost a ball
Above the fountain-jets, and back again
With laughter: others lay about the lawns,
Of the older sort, and murmur'd that their May
Was passing: what was learning unto them?
They wish'd to marry; they could rule a house;
Men hated learned women: but we three
Sat muffled like the Fates: and often came
Melissa hitting all we saw with shafts
Of gentle satire, kin to charity,
That harm'd not: then day droopt; the chapel bells
Call'd us: we left the walks; we mixt with those
Six hundred maidens clad in purest white,
Before two streams of light from wall to wall,
While the great organ almost burst his pipes,
Groaning for power, and rolling thro' the court
A long melodious thunder to the sound

443. Sat muffled like the Fates. These were in Classical Mythology the Divinities who watched over and guided the lives and fortunes of men from birth to death. They were three in number, and their names were Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos. They are spoken of as "muffled" because their ways and decrees were hidden from mortal observation.
Of solemn psalms, and silver litanies,
The work of Ida, to call down from Heaven
A blessing on her labors for the world.

453. silver, soft and clearly ringing, used of voices and bells in opposition to "iron," "brazen," etc.

454. The work of Ida This may mean either that she had written the words or that she had composed the music—probably both.
PART III.

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
    Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
    Wind of the western sea!
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
    Blow him again to me;
While my little one, while my pretty one sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
    Father will come to thee soon;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
    Father will come to thee soon;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
    Under the silver moon:
Sleep, my little one, sleep my pretty one,
sleep.

Morn in the white wake of the morning star
Came furrowing all the orient into gold.
We rose, and each by other drest with care,
Descended to the court that lay three parts
In shadow, but the Muses' heads were touch'd
Above the darkness from their native East.
There while we stood beside the fount, and watch'd
Or seem'd to watch the dancing bubble, approach'd
Melissa, tinged with wan from lack of sleep,
Or grief, and glowing round her dewy eyes
The circled Iris of a night of tears;
"And fly," she cried, "O fly, while yet you may!
My mother knows;" and when I ask'd her "how,"
"My fault," she wept, "my fault! and yet not mine;
Yet mine in part.  O hear me, pardon me.
My mother, 'tis her wont from night to night
To rail at Lady Psyche and her side.
She says the Princess should have been the Head,
Herself and Lady Psyche the two arms;
And so it was agreed when first they came;
But Lady Psyche was the right hand now,
And she the left, or not, or seldom used;
Hers more than half the students, all the love.
And so last night she fell to canvass you:
Her countrywomen! she did not envy her.
'Who ever saw such wild barbarians?
Girls?—more like men!' and at these words the snake,
My secret, seem'd to stir within my breast;
And oh Sirs, could I help it, but my cheek

9.  wan, pallor.
11. The circled.  Iris was in Greek Mythology the Messenger of the Gods, and was later identified with the rainbow; here, refers to dark bands under the eyes that tells of a sleepless night of tears.
17. side, school.
Began to burn and burn, and her lynx eye
To fix and make me hotter, till she laugh'd:
'O marvellously modest maiden, you!
Men! girls, like men! why, if they had been men
You need not set your thoughts in rubric thus
For wholesale comment.' Pardon, I am shamed
That I must needs repeat for my excuse
What looks so little graceful: 'men' (for still
My mother went revolving on the word)
'And so they are — very like men indeed —
And with that woman closeted for hours!'
Then came these dreadful words out one by one,
'Why — these — are — men:' I shudder'd: 'and you know it.'
'O ask me nothing,' I said: 'And she knows too,
And she conceals it.' So my mother clutch'd
The truth at once, but with no word from me;
And now thus early risen she goes to inform
The Princess: Lady Psyche will be crush'd;
But you may yet be saved, and therefore fly:
But heal me with your pardon ere you go.'

"What pardon, sweet Melissa, for a blush?"
Said Cyril; "Pale one, blush again: than wear
Those lilies, better blush our lives away.
Yet let us breathe for one hour more in Heaven,"
He added, "lest some classic Angel speak

34. set in rubric, publish in red, so as to call attention to them — a metaphor from printing. The expression was of course suggested to Lady Blanche by the sight of her daughter's face burning with blushes.

51. than wear those lilies, than be so pale.
In scorn of us, 'They mounted, Ganymedes,  
To tumble, Vulcans, on the second morn.'  
But I will melt this marble into wax  
To yield us farther furlough;" and he went.

Melissa shook her doubtful curls, and thought  
He scarce would prosper. "Tell us," Florian ask'd,

"How grew this feud betwixt the right and left."
"O long ago," she said, "betwixt these two Division smoulders hidden: 'tis my mother,  
Too jealous, often fretful as the wind  
Pent in a crevice: much I bear with her:  
I never knew my father, but she says  
(God help her) she was wedded to a fool;  
And still she rail'd against the state of things.  
She had the care of Lady Ida's youth,  
And from the Queen's decease she brought her up.  
But when your sister came she won the heart  
Of Ida: they were still together, grew  
(For so they said themselves) inosculated;  
Consonant chords that shiver to one note;  
One mind in all things: yet my mother still  
Affirms your Psyche thieved her theories,  
And angled with them for her pupil's love:

55-56. Ganymede was a beautiful Phrygian boy who was taken up to Heaven to be the cup-bearer of the Gods. Vulcan was twice cast from Heaven, first by his mother Juno on account of his ugliness, second by Jupiter for the offence of championing his mother's cause when she was being punished by himself.

72. inosculated, blended together.

74. shiver, vibrate. If there be in the same room two stringed instruments, a note struck on a chord of one will cause the corresponding chord in the other to vibrate.
She calls her plagiarist; I know not what:
But I must go: I dare not tarry,” and light,
As flies the shadow of a bird, she fled.

Then murmur'd Florian gazing after her,
“An open-hearted maiden, true and pure.
If I could love, why this were she: how pretty
Her blushing was, and how she blush'd again,
As if to close with Cyril’s random wish:
Not like your Princess cramm’d with erring pride,
Nor like poor Psyche whom she drags in tow.”

“The crane,” I said, “may chatter of the crane,
The dove may murmur of the dove, but I
An eagle clang an eagle to the sphere.
My princess, O my princess! true she errs,
But in her own grand way: being herself
Three times more noble than three score of men,
She sees herself in every woman else,
And so she wears her error like a crown
To blind the truth and me; for her, and her
Hebes are they to hand ambrosia, mix
The nectar; but — ah she — whene’er she moves

90. clang, celebrate in ringing song. sphere, the sky.

95. her, and her, Lady Psyche and Melissa.

97–100. Hebe was in Greek Mythology the attendant at the banquets of the Gods, whose food was ambrosia and whose drink nectar. Here was the wife of Zeus and Queen of Heaven; Samos in the Ægean Sea was one of her favorite seats. Memnon was the son of Tithonus and Eos (the Goddess of the Dawn); the large statue at Thebes in Egypt which (though incorrectly) bore his name was said to give forth a musical sound when smitten by the rays of the rising sun. The passage thus means that, while Lady Psyche and Melissa are well enough with their youthful charm in their subordinate sphere, the Princess is the embodiment of majestic dignity, and her voice resonant and divine.
The Samian Here rises and she speaks
A Memnon smitten with the morning Sun.'

So saying, from the court we paced, and gain'd
The terrace ranged along the northern front,
And leaning there on those balusters, high
Above the empurpled champaign, drank the gale
That blown about the foliage underneath,
And sated with the innumerable rose,
Beat balm upon our eyelids. Hither came
Cyril, and yawning, "O hard task," he cried;
"No fighting shadows here! I forced a way
Thro' solid opposition crabb'd and gnarl'd.
Better to clear prime forests, heave and thump
A league of street in summer solstice down,
Than hammer at this reverend gentlewoman.
I knock'd and, bidden, enter'd: found her there
At point to move, and settled in her eyes
The green malignant light of coming storm.
Sir, I was courteous, every phrase well-oil'd,
As man's could be; yet maiden-meek I pray'd Concealment: she demanded who we were,
And why we came? I fabled nothing fair,
But, your example pilot, told her all.

104. empurpled champaign, the open country, lying blue in the distance.
111. prime, primeval
112. Make road-ways in the hottest season.
115 at point, on the point of.
120. I fabled noth'ng fair, invented no plausible story.
121. example. Cf. II. 195.
Up went the hush'd amaze of hand and eye.
But when I dwelt upon your old affiance,
She answer'd sharply that I talk'd astray.
I urged the fierce inscription on the gate
And our three lives. True—we had limed our-
selves
With open eyes, and we must take the chance.
But such extremes, I told her, well might harm
The woman's cause. 'Not more than now,' she said,
'So puddled as it is with favoritism.'
I tried the mother's heart. Shame might befall
Melissa, knowing, saying not she knew:
Her answer was 'Leave me to deal with that.'
I spoke of war to come and many deaths,
And she replied, her duty was to speak,
And duty, duty, clear of consequences.
I grew discouraged, Sir; but since I knew
No rock so hard but that a little wave
May beat admission in a thousand years,
I recommenced; 'Decide not ere you pause.
I find you here but in the second place,
Some say the third—the authentic foundress you
I offer boldly: we will seat you highest:
Wink at our advent: help my prince to gain
His rightful bride, and here I promise you
Some palace in our land, where you shall reign

126. limed, ensnared, caught, as birds with bird-lime.

130. puddled, polluted.

136. clear, regardless.
The head and heart of all our fair she-world,
And your great name flow on with broadening time
For ever.' Well, she balanced this a little,
And told me she would answer us to-day,

Meantime be mute; thus much, nor more I gain'd.'

He ceasing, came a message from the Head.
"That afternoon the Princess rode to take
The dip of certain strata to the North.
Would we go with her? we should find the land
Worth seeing; and the river made a fall
Out yonder;" then she pointed on to where
A double hill ran up his furrowy forks
Beyond the thick-leaved platans of the vale.

Agreed to, this, the day fled on thro' all
Its range of duties to the appointed hour.
Then summon'd to the porch we went. She stood
Among her maidens, higher by the head,
Her back against a piliar, her foot on one
Of those tame leopards. Kittenlike he roll'd
And paw'd about her sandal. I drew near;
I gazed. On a sudden my strange seizure came
Upon me, the weird vision of our house:
The Princess Ida seem'd a hollow show,
Her gay-furr'd cats a painted fantasy,
Her college and her maidens, empty masks,

153-154. to take the dip, to measure the inclination.
158. ran up his furrowy forks, shot up its two peaks.
159. platans, plane-trees.
And I myself the shadow of a dream,
For all things were and were not. Yet I felt
My heart beat thick with passion and with awe;
Then from my breast the involuntary sigh
Brake, as she smote me with the light of eyes
That lent my knee desire to kneel, and shook
My pulses, till to horse we got, and so
Went forth in long retinue following up
The river as it narrow'd to the hills.

I rode beside her and to me she said:
"O friend, we trust that you esteem'd us not
Too harsh to your companion yestermorn;
Unwillingly we spake." "No, not to her,"
I answer'd, "but to one of whom we spake
Your Highness might have seem'd the thing you say."
"Again?" she cried, "are you ambassadresses
From him to me? we give you, being strange,
A license: speak, and let the topic die."

I stammer'd that I knew him—could have wish'd—
"Our king expects—was there no precontract?
There is no truer-hearted—ah, you seem
All he prefigured, and he could not see
The bird of passage flying south but long'd

183. yestermorn. Cf. II. 39.
185. one, the Prince.
186. the thing you say, viz., "too harsh."
To follow: surely, if your Highness keep
Your purport, you will shock him e'en to death,
Or baser courses, children of despair."

"Poor boy," she said, "can he not read — no books?
Quoit, tennis, ball — no games? nor deals in that
Which men delight in, martial exercise?
To nurse a blind ideal like a girl,
Methinks he seems no better than a girl;
As girls were once, as we ourself have been:
We had our dreams; perhaps he mixt with them:
We touch on our dead self, nor shun to do it,
Being other — since we learnt our meaning here,
To lift the woman's fallen divinity
Upon an even pedestal with man."

She paused, and added with a haughtier smile
"And as to precontracts, we move, my friend,
At no man's beck, but know ourself and thee,
O Vashti, noble Vashti! Summon'd out
She kept her state, and left the drunken king
To brawl at Shushan underneath the palms."

"Alas your Highness breathes full East," I said,
"On that which leans to you. I know the Prince,
I prize his truth; and then how vast a work
To assail this gray preëminence of man!

212. Vashti, wife of King Ahasuerus. See Bible, Esther I.
215. full East, cold like an east wind.
218. gray, long established.
You grant me license; might I use it? think; Ere half be done perchance your life may fail; Then comes the feeblest heiress of your plan, And takes and ruins all; and thus your pains May only make that footprint upon sand Which old-recurring waves of prejudice Resmooth to nothing; might I dread that you, With only Fame for spouse and your great deeds For issue, yet may live in vain, and miss, Meanwhile, what every woman counts her due, Love, children, happiness?"

And she exclain'd,
"Peace, you young savage of the Northern wild! What! tho' your Prince's love were like a god's, Have we not made ourself the sacrifice? You are bold indeed: we are not talk'd to thus; Yet will we say for children, would they grew Like field-flowers everywhere! we like them well: But children die; and let me tell you, girl, Howe'er you babble, great deeds cannot die; They with the sun and moon renew their light For ever, blessing those that look on them. Children—that men may pluck them from our hearts,
Kill us with pity, break us with ourselves—
O—children—there is nothing upon earth
More miserable than she that has a son

227. issue, children.
241. break us with ourselves: crush us by means of our natural affections.
And sees him err: nor would we work for fame; 
Tho' she perhaps might reap the applause of Great,
Who learns the one POU STO whence afterhands 
May move the world, tho' she herself effect
But little: wherefore up and act, nor shrink
For fear our solid aim be dissipated 
By frail successors. Would, indeed, we had been, 
In lieu of many mortal flies, a race
Of giants living, each, a thousand years,
That we might see our own work out, and watch 
The sandy footprint harden into stone."

I answer'd nothing, doubtful in myself
If that strange Poet-princess with her grand
Imaginations might at all be won.
And she broke out interpreting my thoughts:

"No doubt we seem a kind of monster to you; 
We are used to that: for women, up till this
Cramp'd under worse than South-sea-isle taboo,
Dwarfs of the gynæceum, fail so far
In high desire, they know not, cannot guess
How much their welfare is a passion to us.
If we could give them surer, quicker proof—

246. POU STO (Greek', "a place to sta.d on." "some basis from which one can work"; the expression is derived from the challenge of Archimedes, the mathematician and mechanist of Syracuse (b.c. 287-212): "Give me a place to stand on, and I will move the world with a lever.”

261. taboo, a restraint.

262. Dwarfs of the gynæceum conveys exactly the same idea as the preceding line; "dwarfs" refers to their stunted intellects and aspirations. gynæceum, the woman's apartments in a Greek house.
THE PRINCESS.

Oh if our end were less achievable
By slow approaches, than by single act
Of immolation, any phase of death,
We were as prompt to spring against the pikes,
Or down the fiery gulf as talk of it,
To compass our dear sisters' liberties."

She bow'd as if to veil a noble tear;
And up we came to where the river sloped
To plunge in cataract, shattering on black blocks
A breath of thunder. O'er it shook the woods,
And danced the color, and below, stuck out
The bones of some vast bulk that lived and roar'd
Before man was. She gazed awhile and said,
"As these rude bones to us, are we to her
That will be." "Dare we dream of that," I ask'd,
"Which wrought us, as the workman and his work,
That practice betters?" "How," she cried, "you love

269-270. The the before pikes and gulf is not the definite article, but the generic, denoting any possible phases of death that might offer or be prescribed; cf. I. 218. The two forms here mentioned were probably suggested by two legends of ancient Rome: (1) In the Latin War (B.C. 340) Publius Decius Mus, one of the Roman generals, sacrificed himself on the spears of the enemy in order to secure the victory to his army, it having been revealed to him in a vision from Heaven that one army was doomed and the general of the other (a somewhat similar act of devotion is recorded of Arnold von Winkelried in the battle of Sempach, 1388, during the Swiss struggle for independence against the Austrians; this hero, seeing that the Austrian line of spears was impregnable, gathered into his breast as many as he could, and falling upon them created a gap into which his comrades poured); (2) A chasm having appeared in the market-place of Rome, and the priests having declared that this would not close up until there had been cast into it the chief element of Rome's greatness, a young noble named Marcus Curtius, thinking that this condition would best be fulfilled by the sacrifice of one of her sons, leapt into it on horseback and in full armor (B.C. 362). — Wallace.

280-282. "Dare — betters?" Dare we dream of the Creator as a workman that improves by practice?
The metaphysics! read and earn our prize,  
A golden brooch: beneath an emerald plane  
Sits Diotima, teaching him that died  
Of Hemlock; our device; wrought to the life;  
She rapt upon her subject, he on her:  
For there are schools for all." "And yet" I said  
"Methinks I have not found among them all  
One anatomic." "Nay, we thought of that,"  
She answer'd, "but it pleased us not: in truth  
We shudder but to dream our maids should ape  
Those monstrous males that carve the living hound,  
And cram him with the fragments of the grave,  
Or in the dark dissolving human heart,  
And holy secrets of this microcosm,  
Dabbling a shameless hand with shameful jest,  
Encarnalize their spirits: yet we know  
Knowledge is knowledge, and this matter hangs:  
Howbeit ourself, foreseeing casualty,  
Nor willing men should come among us, learnt,  
For many weary moons before we came,  
This craft of healing. Were you sick, ourself  

285-286. Diotima... hemlock. Diotima is mentioned by Plato as a priestess of Mantinea, who used to instruct Socrates in matters philosophical. The latter was put to death in B.C. 399 on a charge of atheism and immoral teaching. The ordinary method of inflicting the death penalty in Athens was by a decoction of the poisonous plant, hemlock.  

290. One anatomic, school of anatomy.  
296. microcosm, "little world" (the human body).  
298. Encarnalize, brutalize.  
299. hangs, is undecided.  
300. casualty, accidents.  
303. This craft of healing, i.e., Medicine (as opposed to Surgery). "Craft" means o ignantly skill or dexterity in any employment, whence later, as here, the employment or profession itself.
Would tend upon you. To your question now, Which touches on the workman and his work. Let there be light and there was light: 'tis so; For was, and is, and will be, are but is; And all creation is one act at once, The birth of light: but we that are not all, As parts, can see but parts, now this, now that, And live, perforce, from thought to thought, and make One act a phantom of succession: thus Our weakness somehow shapes the shadow, Time; But in the shadow will we work and mould The woman to the fuller day."

She spake With kindled eyes: we rode a league beyond, And, o'er a bridge of pinewood crossing, came On flowery levels underneath the crag, Full of all beauty. "O how sweet" I said (For I was half-oblivious of my mask) "'To linger here with one that loved us.' "Yea," She answer'd, "or with fair philosophies That lift the fancy; for indeed these fields Are lovely, lovelier not the Elysian lawns,

306-313. Let there be light... the shadow, Time. The Princess's doctrine of the relation of Knowledge to Nature, as enunciated in these lines, may be elaborated thus: "Creation was complete in one moment of the Divine volition—does not depend on Time for its development. The fault is in us, who, being of weak and limited vision, cannot see all at once, and are compelled to study Creation in a series of observations. This weakness in ourselves we transfer to Nature, whom we thus grow to regard as working bit by bit; hence the fallacious conception of Time, which does not exist in Nature at all, only in ourselves, and that because of our imperfection."—Wallace.
Where paced the Demigods of old, and saw
The soft white vapor streak the crowned towers
Built to the Sun: "then, turning to her maids,
"Pitch our pavilion here upon the sward:
Lay out the viands." At the word, they raised
A tent of satin, elaborately wrought
With fair Corinna’s triumph; here she stood,
Engirt with many a florid maiden-cheek,
The woman-conqueror; woman-conquer’d there
The bearded Victor of ten-thousand hymns,
And all the men mourn’d at his side: but we
Set forth to climb; then, climbing, Cyril kept
With Psyche, with Melissa Florian, I
With mine affianced. Many a little hand
Glanced like a touch of sunshine on the rocks,
Many a light foot shone like a jewel set
In the dark crag: and then we turn’d, we wound
About the cliffs, the copses, out and in,
Hammering and clinking, chattering stony names
Of shale and hornblende, rag and trap and tuff,
Amygdaloid and trachyte, till the Sun
Grew broder toward his death and fell, and all
The rosy heights came out above the lawns.

324–327. lovelier . . . not to the Sun. Elysium was the name in Greek Mythology for the abode of the righteous dead. The title of “Demi-gods” originally confined to those who could boast divine descent, was also in common usage applied to men who had been deified for courage or other virtues which had won for them the privilege of inheriting Elysian bliss.

331. Corinna was a Boeotian poetess, who is said to have obtained the victory in a musical contest five times over Pindar (522–442), the most eminent of the Greek lyric poets of whose works a great number have come down to us. These are chiefly Odes and Songs of praise.

334. the bearded Victor, Pindar.
PART IV.

The splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story:
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

There sinks the nebulous star we call the Sun,
If that hypothesis of theirs be sound"
Said Ida; "let us down and rest;" and we

2. hypothesis, the Nebular Hypothesis, cf. II. 101.
Down from the lean and wrinkled precipices,
By every coppice-feathered chasm and cleft,
Dropt thro' the ambrosial gloom to where below
No bigger than a glow-worm shone the tent
Lamp-lit from the inner. Once she leaned on me,
Descending; once or twice she lent her hand,
And blissful palpitations in the blood,
Stirring a sudden transport rose and fell.

But when we planted level feet, and dipt
Beneath the satin dome and enter'd in,
There leaning deep in broider'd down we sank
Our elbows; on a tripod in the midst
A fragrant flame rose, and before us glow'd
Fruit, blossom, viand, amber wine, and gold.

Then she, "Let some one sing to us; lightlier move
The minutes fledged with music:" and a maid,
Of those beside her, smote her harp, and sang.

"Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

"Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,

5. coppice-feathered, lightly fringed with foliage.
17. gold, golden vessels.
27. the underworld, below the horizon.
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

"Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

"Dear as remember'd kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more."

She ended with such passion that the tear,
She sang of, shook and fell, an erring pearl
Lost in her bosom: but with some disdain
Answer'd the Princess, "If indeed there haunt
About the moulder'd lodges of the Past
So sweet a voice and vague, fatal to men,
Well needs it we should cram our ears with wool
And so pace by; but thine are fancies hatch'd
In silken-folded idleness; nor is it

29. verge, horizon.

44-48. If indeed ... pace by, if indeed the Past has power to call from out its mouldering ruins with so weird and seductive a voice, fatal to the highest interests of humanity, we should do wisely to stuff our ears with wool against the temptation. There is a reference in this passage to Homer's story of Ulysses and the Sirens; the singing of these enchantresses was so seductive that all who passed near their isle were wholly fascinated and lured to their doom, but Ulysses, warned by Circe, stopped the ears of his crew with wax, and had himself bound to the mast, that he might listen in safety, until his ship had gone by.
Wiser to weep a true occasion lost,
But trim our sails, and let old by-gones be,
While down the streams that float us each and all
To the issue, goes, like glittering bergs of ice,
Throne after throne, and molten on the waste
Becomes a cloud: for all things serve their time
Toward that great year of equal mights and rights,
Nor would I fight with iron laws, in the end
Found golden; let the past be past; let be
Their cancell'd Babels: tho' the rough kex break
The starr'd mosaic, and the beard-blown goat
Hang on the shaft, and the wild fig-tree split
Their monstrous idols, care not while we hear
A trumpet in the distance pealing news
Of better, and Hope, a poising eagle, burns
Above the unrisen morrow;" then to me;
"Know you no song of your own land," she said,
"Not such as moans about the retrospect,
But deals with the other distance and the hues
Of promise; not a death's-head at the wine."

Then I remember'd one myself had made,
What time I watched the swallow winging south

59. cancell'd, destroyed. kex, poisonous weeds.
61. hang on the shaft, stand on the heights of the rounded pillars.
64. burns, shines.
68. the other distance, the Future as opposed to the Past.
69. a death's-head at the wine, i.e., something dismal in the midst of festivity. The reference is to the custom observed among the ancient Egyptians of having carried round at their banquets a wooden figure of a coffined corpse, as a reminder to the company of the inevitable certainty of death.
From mine own land, part made long since, and part
Now while I sang, and maidenlike as far
As I could ape their treble, did I sing.

"O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying South,
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee.

"Oh, tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest each
That bright and fierce and fickle is the South,
And dark and true and tender is the North.

"O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow, and light
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,
And cheep and twitter twenty million loves.

"O were I thou that she might take me in,
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died.

"Why lingereth she to clothe her heart with love
Delaying as the tender ash delays
To clothe herself, when all the woods are green?

"O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is flown;
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,
But in the North long since my nest is made.

"O tell her, brief is life but love is long,
And brief the sun of summer in the North,
And brief the moon of beauty in the South.

"O Swallow, flying from the golden woods,
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and make her mine
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee."

I ceased, and all the ladies, each at each,
Like the Ithacensian suitors in old time,
Stared with great eyes, and laugh'd with alien lips,
And knew not what they meant; for still my voice
Rang false; but smiling "Not for thee," she said,
"O Bulbul, any rose of Gulistan
Shall burst her veil; marsh-divers, rather, maid,
Shall croak thee sister, or the meadow-crake
Grate her harsh kindred in the grass; and this
A mere love-poem! O for such, my friend,
We hold them slight; they mind us of the time
When we made bricks in Egypt. Knaves are men,

103-107. Not for thee... in the grass. Bulbul is the Persian for "Nightingale," and Gulistan for "Rose-garden". The Persian poets represent the Nightingale as the passionate wooer of the Rose.

110. when we made bricks in Egypt, when, like the children of Israel in Egypt, we lived in bondage. Cf. Exodus, i. 8-11. v. 7.
That lute and flute fantastic tenderness,  
And dress the victim to the offering up.  
And paint the gates of Hell with Paradise,  
And play the slave to gain the tyranny.  
Poor soul! I had a maid of honor once;  
She wept her true eyes blind for such a one.  
A rogue of canzonets and serenades.  
I loved her. Peace be with her. She is dead.  
So they blaspheme the muse! But great is song  
Used to great ends: ourselves have often tried  
Valkyrian hymns, or into rhythm have dash'd  
The passion of the prophetess; for song  
Is duer unto freedom, force and growth  
Of spirit than to junketing and love.  
Love is it? Would this same mock-love, and this  
Mock-Hymen were laid up like winter bats,  
Till all men grew to rate us at our worth,  
Not vassals to be beat, nor pretty babes  
To be dandled, no, but living wills, and sphered  
Whole in ourselves and owed to none. Enough!  
But now to leaven play with profit, you,  
Know you no song, the true growth of your soil,  
That gives the manners of your countrywomen?"

117. canzonets, a light song, like a serenade.

121. Valkyrian. The Valkyrs "Choosers of the Slain") were in Scandinavian Mythology the Warrior Nymphs who accompanied the heroes into battle, and conducted the slain to Valhalla, the Palace of Immortal Delight. The word is here used in the sense of 'inspiring.' Cf. "Ni bēán" in 352, below.

123. duer, suitable

126. Hymen, the god of marriage.

130. owed, bound.
She spoke and turn'd her sumptuous head with eyes
Of shining expectation fixt on mine.
Then while I dragged my brains for such a song,
Cyril, with whom the bell-mouth'd glass had wrought,
Or master'd by the sense of sport, began
To troll a careless, careless tavern-catch
Of Moll and Meg, and strange experiences
Unmeet for ladies. Florian nodded at him,
I frowning; Psyche flush'd and wann'd and shook;
The lilylike Melissa droop'd her brows;
"Forbear," the Princess cried; "Forbear, Sir," I;
And heated thro' and thro' with wrath and love,
I smote him on the breast; he started up;
There rose a shriek as of a city sack'd;
Melissa clamor'd, "Flee the death;" "To horse,"
Said Ida; "home! to horse!" and fled, as flies
A troop of snowy doves athwart the dusk,
When some, one batters at the dovecot-doors,
Disorderly the women. Alone I stood
With Florian, cursing Cyril, vext at heart,
In the pavilion: there like parting hopes
I heard them passing from me: hoof by hoof,
And every hoof a knell to my desires,
Clang'd on the bridge; and then another shriek,
"The Head, the Head, the Princess, O the Head!"
For blind with rage she miss'd the plank, and roll'd

137. with whom... had wrought, on whom the wine had taken effect.
142. wann'd, paled.
In the river. Out I sprang from glow to gloom:
There whirl'd her white robe like a blossom'd branch
Rapt to the horrible fall: a glance I gave,
No more; but woman-vested as I was,
Plunged; and the flood drew; yet I caught her;
then
Oaring one arm, and bearing in my left
The weight of all the hopes of half the world,
Strove to buffet to land in vain. A tree
Was half disrooted from his place and stoop'd
To drench his dark locks in the gurgling wave
Mid-channel. Right on this we drove and caught,
And grasping down the boughs I gain'd the shore.

There stood her maidens glimmeringly group'd
In the hollow bank. One reaching forward drew
My burthen from mine arms; they cried "she lives:"
They bore her back into the tent; but I,
So much a kind of shame within me wrought,
Nor yet endured to meet her opening eyes,
Nor found my friends; but push'd alone on foot
(For since her horse was lost I left her mine)
Across the woods, and less from Indian craft
Than beelike instinct hiveward, found at length
The garden portals. Two great statues, Art
160. from glow to gloom, from the brilliant tent to the outer darkness.
162. Rapt, hurried.
166. half the world, woman.
172. glimmeringly, indistinctly.
And Science, Caryatids, lifted up
A weight of emblem, and betwixt were valves
Of open-work in which the hunter rued
His rash intrusion, manlike, but his brows
Had sprouted, and the branches thereupon
Spread out at top, and grimly spiked the gates.

A little space was left between the horns,
Thro' which I clamber'd o'er at top with pain,
Dropt on the sward, and up the linden walks,
And, tost on thoughts that changed from hue to hue,
Now poring on the glow-worm, now the star,
I paced the terrace, till the Bear had wheel'd
Thro' a great arc his seven slow suns.

A step
Of lightest echo, then a loftier form.
Than female, moving thro' the uncertain gloom,
Disturb'd me with the doubt "if this were she,"
But it was Florian. "Hist, O hist," he said,
"They seek us: out so late is out of rules.
Moreover 'seize the strangers' is the cry.
How came you here?" I told him: "I," said he,
"Last of the train, a moral leper, I,
To whom none spake, half sick at heart, return'd.
Arriving all confused among the rest.

183. Caryatids, draped female figures used as columns in architecture.
184. valves, gates.
185. the hunter, Actæon, who, having come upon Diana bathing, was
for punishment turned into a stag, when his hounds tore him to pieces. In
this design his branching horns are trained above into a regular pattern,
and form the spikes at the top.
194. Bear, the constellation, the "Great Bear."
With hooded brows I crept into the hall,
And, couch'd behind a Judith, underneath
The head of Holofernes, peep'd and saw.

Girl after girl was call'd to trial: each
Disclaim'd all knowledge of us: last of all, 
Melissa: trust me, Sir, I pitied her.

She, question'd if she knew us men, at first
Was silent; closer prest, denied it not:
And then, demanded if her mother knew,
Or Psyche, she affirm'd not, or denied:

From whence the Royal mind, familiar with her,
Easily gather'd either guilt. She sent
For Psyche, but she was not there; she call'd
For Psyche's child to cast it from the doors;
She sent for Blanche to accuse her face to face;
And I slipt out: but whither will you now?
And where are Psyche, Cyril? both are fled:
What, if together? that were not so well.
Would rather we had never come! I dread
His wildness, and the chances of the dark."

"And yet," I said, "you wrong him more than I
That struck him: this is proper to the clown,
Tho' smock'd, or furr'd and purpled, still the clown,
To harm the thing that trusts him, and to shame

207. Judith is one of the chief heroines of Jewish history. When her native town, Bethulia, was being besieged by the Assyrians under Holofernes, she made her way into the general's tent and cut off his head as he lay asleep. Florian hid himself behind a statue which represented her holding the head of the slain Assyrian in her hand.

212. knew us men, knew us to be men.

217. either guilt, the guilt of both.
That which he says he loves: for Cyril, howe'er He deal in frolic, as to-night — the song Might have been worse and sinn'd in grosser lips Beyond all pardon — as it is, I hold These flashes on the surface are not he. He has a solid base of temperament: But as the water lily starts and slides Upon the level in little puffs of wind, Tho' anchor'd to the bottom, such is he.''

Scarce had I ceased when from a tamarisk near Two Proctors leapt upon us, crying, "Names": He, standing still, was clutch'd; but I began To thrid the musky-circled mazes, wind And double in and out the boles, and race By all the fountains: fleet I was of foot: Before me shower'd the rose in flakes; behind I heard the puff'd pursuer; at mine ear Bubbled the nightingale and heeded not, And secret laughter tickled all my soul. At last I hook'd my ankle in a vine, That claspt the feet of a Mnemosyne, And falling on my face was caught and known.

They haled us to the Princess where she sat High in the hall: above her droop'd a lamp,

227. the clown, vulgar person.
242. thrid, thread.
243. boles, trunks of trees.
250. Mnemosyne, Goddess of Memory.
252. haled, dragged, hauled.
And made the single jewel on her brow
Burn like the mystic fire on a mast-head.
Prophet of storm: a handmaid on each side
Bow’d toward her, combing out her long black hair
Damp from the river; and close behind her stood
Eight daughters of the plough, stronger than men,
Huge women blowzed with health, and wind, and rain,
And labor. Each was like a Druid rock;
Or like a spire of land that stands apart
Cleft from the main, and wail’d about with mews.

Then, as we came, the crowd dividing clove
An advent to the throne: and there beside,
Half naked, as if caught at once from bed
And tumbled on the purple footcloth, lay
The lily-shining child; and on the left,
Bow’d on her palms and folded up from wrong,
Her round white shoulder shaken with her sobs,
Melissa knelt; but Lady Blanche erect
Stood up and spake, an affluent orator.

"It was not thus, O Princess, in old days:
You prized my counsel, lived upon my lips:
I led you then to all the Castalies;"
I fed you with the milk of every Muse;
I loved you like this kneeler, and you me
Your second mother: those were gracious times.
Then came your new friend: you began to change—
I saw it and grieved—to slacken and to cool;
Till taken with her seeming openness
You turn'd your warmer currents all to her,
To me you froze: this was my meed for all.
Yet I bore up in part from ancient love,
And partly that I hoped to win you back,
And partly conscious of my own deserts,
And partly that you were my civil head,
And chiefly you were born for something great,
In which I might your fellow-worker be,
When time should serve; and thus a noble scheme
Grew up from seed we two long since had sown;
In us true growth, in her a Jonah's gourd,
Up in one night and due to sudden sun:
We took this palace; but even from the first
You stood in your own light and darken'd mine.
What student came but that you planed her path
To Lady Psyche, younger, not so wise,
A foreigner, and I your countrywoman,
I your old friend and tried, she new in all?
But still her lists were swell'd and mine were lean;
Yet I bore up in hope she would be known:

292. The Prophet Jonah's gourd that grew up in a night Cf. Jonah, IV.. 5-11.

296. planed, smoothed, made easy.
Then came these wolves: they knew her: they endured,
Long-closeted with her the yestermorn,
To tell her what they were, and she to hear:
And me none told: not less to an eye like mine
A lidless watcher of the public weal,
Last night, their mask was patent, and my foot
Was to you: but I thought again: I fear'd
To meet a cold 'We thank you, we shall hear of it
From Lady Psyche: ' you had gone to her,
She told, perforce; and winning easy grace,
No doubt, for slight delay, remain'd among us
In our young nursery still unknown, the stem
Less grain than touchwood, while my honest heat
Were all miscounted as malignant hate
To push my rival out of place and power.
But public use required she should be known;
And since my oath was ta'en for public use,
I broke the letter of it to keep the sense.
I spoke not then at first, but watch'd them well,
Saw that they kept apart, no mischief done;
And yet this day (tho' you should hate me for it)
I came to tell you; found that you had gone,
Ridd'n to the hills, she likewise: now, I thought

305. lidless, sleepless.
306. patent, apparent.
311. grace, pardon.
313-314. the stem . . . touchwood. "Touchwood" is the name given to certain kinds of decayed wood, which, being exceedingly inflammable, was used to catch a spark from flint and steel. The word includes therefore the two ideas of rottenness and inflammability, in opposition to "grain," which denotes healthy, strong-fibred wood.
317. use, welfare.
That surely she will speak; if not, then I:

Did she? These monsters blazon'd what they were,
According to the coarseness of their kind,
For thus I hear; and known at last (my work)
And full of cowardice and guilty shame,
I grant in her some sense of shame, she flies;
And I remain on whom to wreak your rage,
I, that have lent my life to build up yours,
I that have wasted here health, wealth, and time,
And talent, I—you know it—I will not boast:
Dismiss me, and I prophesy your plan,
Divorced from my experience, will be chaff
For every gust of chance, and men will say
We did not know the real light, but chased
The wisp that flickers where no foot can tread."

She ceased: the Princess answer'd coldly,
"Good:
Your oath is broken: we dismiss you: go.
For this lost lamb (she pointed to the child)
Our mind is changed: we take it to ourself."

Thereat the Lady stretch'd a vulture throat,
And shot from crooked lips a haggard smile.
"The plan was mine. I built the nest" she said,
"To hatch the cuckoo. Rise!" and stoop'd to
updrag
Melissa: she, half on her mother propt,
Half-drooping from her, turn'd her face, and cast

339. the wisp, will-of-the-wisp, seen in marshes.
347. the cuckoo. The cuckoo lays its eggs in other bird's nests.
A liquid look on Ida, full of prayer,
Which melted Florian's fancy as she hung,
A Niobean daughter, one arm out,
Appealing to the bolts of Heaven; and while
We gazed upon her came a little stir
About the doors, and on a sudden rush'd
Among us, out of breath, as one pursued,
A woman-post in flying raiment. Fear
Stared in her eyes, and chalk'd her face, and wing'd
Her transit to the throne, whereby she fell
Delivering seal'd dispatches which the Head
Took half-amazed, and in her lion's mood
Tore open, silent we with blind surmise
Regarding, while she read, till over brow
And cheek and bosom brake the wrathful bloom
As of some fire against a stormy cloud,
When the wild peasant rights himself, the rick
Flames, and his anger reddens in the heavens;
For anger most it seem'd, while now her breast,
Beaten with some great passion at her heart,
Palpitated, her hand shook, and we heard
In the dead hush the papers that she held
Rustle: at once the lost lamb at her feet
Sent out a bitter bleating for its dam;
The plaintive cry jarr'd on her ire; she crush'd
The scrolls together, made a sudden turn

352. **A Niobean daughter.** According to the old legend, Niobe was Queen of Thebes, and had twelve children; proud of this number, she exulted over Leto, who had only two, Apollo and Artemis, whereupon these latter slew all her family, and the Queen herself, mourning their loss, was changed into a stone, which yet continued to bewail her cruel fate.

366. **rick,** hay-stack.
As if to speak, but, utterance failing her,
She whirl'd them on to me, as who should say
"Read," and I read — two letters — one her sire's.

"Fair daughter, when we sent the Prince your way
We knew not your ungracious laws, which learnt,
We, conscious of what temper you are built,
Came all in haste to hinder wrong, but fell
Into his father's hands, who has this night,
You lying close upon his territory,
Slip round and in the dark invested you,
And here he keeps me hostage for his son."

The second was my father's running thus:
"You have our son: touch not a hair of his head:
Render him up unscathed: give him your hand:
Cleave to your contract: tho' indeed we hear
You hold the woman is the better man;
A rampant heresy, such as if it spread
Would make all women kick against their Lords
Thro' all the world, and which might well deserve
That we this night should pluck your palace down;
And we will do it, unless you send us back
Our son, on the instant, whole."

So far I read;
And then stood up and spoke impetuously.

"O not to pry and peer on your reserve,
But led by golden wishes and a hope
The child of regal compact, did I break
Your precinct; not a scorners of your sex
But venerator, zealous it should be
All that it might be: hear me, for I bear,
Tho’ man, yet human, whatsoever your wrongs,
From the flaxen curl to the gray lock a life
Less mine than yours: my nurse would tell me of you;
I babbled for you, as babies for the moon,
Vague brightness; when a boy, you stoop’d to me
From all high places, lived in all fair lights,
Came in long breezes rapt from inmost south
And blown to inmost north; at eve and dawn
With Ida, Ida, Ida rang the woods;
The leader wildswan in among the stars
Would clang it, and lapt in wreaths of glowworm light
The mellow breaker murmur’d Ida. Now,
Because I would have reach’d you, had you been
Sphered up with Cassiopëia, or the enthroned
Persephonë in Hades, now at length,
Those winters of abeyance all worn out,
A man I came to see you: but, indeed,
Not in this frequence can I lend full tongue,

415. clang, cry. glowworm, phosphorescent.

417-419. had you been ... Hades. Cassiopëia was a mythical Queen of Ethiopia, and her name is now given to a constellation near the North Pole Star. Persephone was the wife of Hades, King of the Lower World, which is itself known by his name. The Prince means that he would have won his way to the utmost recesses of Heaven and Hell to find her.

420. abeyance, waiting.

422. frequence, assembly.
O noble Ida, to those thoughts that wait
On you, their centre: let me say but this,
That many a famous man and woman, town
And landskip, have I heard of, after seen
The dwarfs of presage: tho' when known, there grew
Another kind of beauty in detail
Made them worth knowing; but in you I found
My boyish dream involved and dazzled down
And master'd, while that after-beauty makes
Such head from act to act, from hour to hour,
Within me, that except you slay me here,
According to your bitter statute-book,
I cannot cease to follow you, as they say
The seal does music: who desire you more
Than growing boys their manhood; dying lips,
With many thousand matters left to do,
The breath of life; O more than poor men wealth,
Than sick men health—yours, yours, not mine—
but half
Without you; with you, whole; and of those halves
You worthiest; and howe'er you block and bar
Your heart with system out from mine, I hold
That it becomes no man to nurse despair,
But in the teeth of clench'd antagonisms
To follow up the worthiest till he die:
Yet that I came not all unauthorized
Behold your father's letter.''

426. landskip, landscape.
427. The dwarfs of presage, less than expected, or foretold.
445. clench'd, determined, resolute.
On one knee
Kneeling, I gave it, which she caught, and dash'd
Unopen'd at her feet: a tide of fierce
Invective seem'd to wait behind her lips,
As waits a river level with the dam
Ready to burst and flood the world with foam:
And so she would have spoken, but there rose
A hubbub in the court of half the maids
Gather'd together: from the illumined hall
Long lanes of splendor slanted o'er a press
Of snowy shoulders, thick as herded ewes,
And rainbow robes, and gems and gemlike eyes,
And gold and golden heads; they to and fro
Fluctuated, as flowers in storm, some red, some pale,
All open-mouth'd, all gazing to the light,
Some crying there was an army in the land,
And some that men were in the very walls,
And some they cared not; till a clamor grew
As of a new-world Babel, woman-built,
And worse-confounded: high above them stood
The placid marble Muses, looking peace.

Not peace she look'd, the Head: but rising up
Robed in the long night of her deep hair, so
To the open window moved, remaining there
Fxt like a beacon-tower above the waves
Of tempest, when the crimson-rolling eye

455 court, courtyard
472-475. Fxt like a beacon-tower... dead. A tower with a revolving light, erected on a dangerous coast to warn vessels that may approach too near. "Glares ruin" expresses the fierce red blaze that indicates the dangerousness of its neighborhood. The light is fatally attractive to sea-birds, which dash themselves against the thick glass and fall dead into the water.
Glares ruin, and the wild birds on the light
Dash themselves dead. She stretch'd her arms and
call'd
Across the tumult and the tumult fell.

"What fear ye, brawlers? am not I your Head?
On me, me, me, the storm first breaks: I dare
All these male thunderbolts: what is it ye fear?
Peace! there are those to avenge us and they come:
If not,—myself were like enough, O girls,
To unfurl the maiden banner of our rights,
And clad in iron burst the ranks of war,
Or, falling, protomartyr of our cause,
Die: yet I blame you not so much for fear;
Six thousand years of fear have made you that
From which I would redeem you: but for those
That stir this hubbub—you and you—I know
Your faces there in the crowd—to-morrow morn
We hold a great convention: then shall they
That love their voices more than duty, learn
With whom they deal, dismiss'd in shame to live
No wiser than their mothers, household stuff,
Live chattels, mincers of each other's fame,
Full of weak poison, turnspits for the clown,
The drunkard's football, laughing-stocks of Time,

480. those, her brothers.
484. protomartyr, first martyr of a cause.
495-496. turnspits...football. In these trenchant phrases the
speaker reminds them that a wife may be subjected by a brutal husband
to degrading work or even to physical cruelty. "Clown" is a word of
Scandinavian origin, and denotes a man of coarse temper and unrefined
manners. A "spit" is a long pointed spike on which meat is fixed for
roasting; "turnspit" thus, denotes one who is set to cook the food; the
word is specially applied to a variety of dog, formerly employed in this
work.
Whose brains are in their hands and in their heels,
But fit to flaunt, to dress, to dance, to thrum,
To tramp, to scream, to burnish, and to scour,
For ever slaves at home and fools abroad.”

She, ending, waved her hands: thereat the crowd
Muttering, dissolved: then with a smile, that look’d
A stroke of cruel sunshine on the cliff,
When all the glens are drown’d in azure gloom
Of thunder-shower, she floated to us and said:

“You have done well and like a gentleman,
And like a Prince: you have our thanks for all:
And you look well too in your woman’s dress:
Well have you done and like a gentleman.
You saved our life: we owe you bitter thanks:
Better have died and spilt our bones in the flood—
Than men had said — but now—What hinders me?
To take such bloody vengeance on you both?—
Yet since our father—Wasps in our good hive,
You would-be quenchers of the light to be,
Barbarians, grosser than your native bears—
O would I had his sceptre for one hour!
You that have dared to break our bound, and gull’d
Our servants, wrong’d and lied and thwarted us—
I wed with thee! I bound by precontract
Your bride, your bondslove! not tho’ all the gold
That veins the world were pack’d to make your crown,
And every spoken tongue should lord you. Sir,

lord you, call you lord.
Your falsehood and yourself are hateful to us:
I trample on your offers and on you:
Begone: we will not look upon you more.
Here, push them out at gates."

In wrath she spake.
Then those eight mighty daughters of the plough
Bent their broad faces toward us and address'd
Their motion: twice I sought to plead my cause,
But on my shoulder hung their heavy hands,
The weight of destiny: so from her face
They push'd us, down the steps, and thro' the court,
And with grim laughter thrust us out at gates.

We cross'd the street and gain'd a petty mound
Beyond it, whence we saw the lights and heard
The voices murmuring. While I listen'd came,
On a sudden the weird seizure and the doubt:
I seem'd to move among a whirl of ghosts;
The Princess with her monstrous woman-guard,
The jest and earnest working side by side,
The cataract and the tumult and the kings
Were shadows; and the long fantastic night
With all its doing had and had not been,
And all things were and were not.

This went by
As strangely as it came, and on my spirits
Settled a gentle cloud of melancholy;

529. address'd, directed.
Not long; I shook it off; for spite of doubts
And sudden ghostly shadowing I was one
To whom the touch of all mischance but came
As night to him that sitting on a hill
Sees the midsummer, midnight, Norway sun
Set into sunrise; then we moved away.

Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums,
That beat to battle where he stands;
Thy face across his fancy comes,
And gives the battle to his hands:

A moment, while the trumpets blow,
He sees his brood about thy knee;
The next, like fire he meets the foe,
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

So Lilia sang: we thought her half-possess'd,
She struck such warbling fury thro' the words;
And, after, feigning pique at what she call'd
The raillery or grotesque, or false sublime—
Like one that wishes at a dance to change
The music — clapt her hands and cried for war,
Or some grand fight to kill and make an end:
And he that next inherited the tale
Half-turning to the broken statue, said,
"Sir Ralph has got your colors: if I prove
Your knight, and fight your battle, what for me?"
It chanced, her empty glove upon the tomb
Lay by her like a model of her hand.
She took it and she flung it. "Fight" she said,
"And make us all we would be, great and good."
He knightlike in his cap instead of casque,
A cap of Tyrol borrow'd from the hall,
Arranged the favor and assumed the Prince.

Assumed, took the part of.
PART V.

Now, scarce three paces measured from the mound
We stumbled on a stationary voice,
And "Stand, who goes?" "Two from the palace" I.
"The second two: they wait," he said, "pass on;
His Highness wakes:" and one that clash'd in
arms,
By glimmering lanes and walls of canvas led
Threading the soldier-city, till we heard
The drowsy folds of our great ensign shake
From blazon'd lions o'er the imperial tent
Whispers of war,

Entering, the sudden light
Dazed me half-blind: I stood and seem'd to hear,
As in a poplar grove when a light wind wakes
A lisping of the innumerable leaf and dies,
Each hissing in his neighbor's ear; and then
A strangled titter, out of which there brake
On all sides, clamoring etiquette to death,
Unmeasured mirth; while now the two old kings

2. stationary voice, a sentinel.
4. The second two, Cyril and Psyche had already passed.
5. His Highness, the King.
9. blazon'd lions, on the ensign.
13. innumerable, innumerable.
14. hissing, whispering.
Began to wag their baldness up and down,
The fresh young captains flash'd their glittering teeth,
The huge bush-bearded Barons heaved and blew, 20
And slain with laughter roll'd the gilded Squire.

At length my Sire, his rough cheek wet with tears,
Panted from weary sides "King, you are free!
We did but keep you surety for our son,
If this be he,— or a draggled mawkin, thou
That tends her bristled grunters in the sludge:"
For I was drench'd with ooze, and torn with briers,
More crumpled than a poppy from the sheath,
And all one rag, disprinced from head to heel.
Then some one sent beneath his vaulted palm
A whisper'd jest to some one near him, "Look,
He has been among his shadows." "Satan take
The old women and their shadows! (thus the King
Roar'd) make yourself a man to fight with men.
Go: Cyril told us all."

As boys that slink
From ferule and the trespass-chiding eye,
Away we stole, and transient in a trice
From what was left of faded woman-slough
To sheathing splendors and the golden scale
Of harness, issued in the sun, that now

25. mawkin, kitchen maid.
26. sludge, mire.
28. from the sheath, when just blossomed.
37. transient, passing.
38 Slough, covering, garment.
40. harness, plate armor.
Leapt from the dewy shoulders of the Earth,
And hit the Northern hills. Here Cyril met us.
A little shy at first, but by and by
We twain, with mutual pardon ask'd and given
For stroke and song, resolder'd peace, whereon
Follow'd his tale. Amazed he fled away
Thro' the dark land, and later in the night
Had come on Psyche weeping: "then we fell
Into your father's hand, and there she lies,
But will not speak, nor stir."

He show'd a tent

A stone-shot off: we enter'd in, and there
Among piled arms and rough accoutrements,
Pitiful sight, wrapp'd in a soldier's cloak,
Like some sweet sculpture draped from head to foot,
And push'd by rude hands from its pedestal,
All her fair length upon the ground she lay:
And at her head a follower of the camp,
A charr'd and wrinkled piece of womanhood,
Sat watching like a watcher by the dead.

Then Florian knelt, and "Come" he whisper'd
to her,
"Lift up your head, sweet sister: lie not thus.
What have you done but right? you could not slay
Me, nor your prince: look up: be comforted:
Sweet is it to have done the thing one ought,
When fall'n in darker ways." And likewise I:
"Be comforted: have I not lost her too,
In whose least act abides the nameless charm
That none has else for me?" She heard, she moved,
She moan'd, a folded voice; and up she sat,
And raised the cloak from brows as pale and smooth
As those that mourn half-shrouded over death
In deathless marble. "Her," she said, "my friend—
Parted from her — betray'd her cause and mine—
Where shall I breathe? why kept ye not your faith? O base and bad! what comfort! none for me!"
To whom remorseful Cyril, "Yet I pray
Take comfort: live, dear lady, for your child."
At which she lifted up her voice and cried.

"Ah me, my babe, my blossom, ah, my child,
My one sweet child, whom I shall see no more!
For now will cruel Ida keep her back;
And either she will die from want of care,
Or sicken with ill-usage, when they say
The child is hers — for every little fault,
The child is hers; and they will beat my girl
Remembering her mother: O my flower!
Or they will take her, they will make her hard,
And she will pass me by in after-life
With some cold reverence worse than were she dead.
Ill mother that I was to leave her there,
To lag behind, scared by the cry they made,
The horror of the shame among them all:

71. those that mourn, the marble figures of angels, such as occasionally form part of the design on monuments and tombs.
90. ill, bad.
THE PRINCESS.

But I will go and sit beside the doors,
And make a wild petition night and day,
Until they hate to hear me like a wind
Wailing for ever, till they open to me,
And lay my little blossom at my feet,
My babe, my sweet Aglaïa, my one child:
And I will take her up and go my way,
And satisfy my soul with kissing her:
Ah! what might that man not deserve of me
Who gave me back my child?" "Be comforted,"
Said Cyril, "you shall have it:" but again
She veil'd her brows, and prone she sank, and so
Like tender things that being caught feign death,
Spoke not, nor stirr'd.

By this a murmur ran
Thro' all the camp and inward raced the scouts
With rumor of Prince Arac hard at hand.
We left her by the woman, and without
Found the gray kings at parle: and "Look you"
cried
My father "that our compact be fulfill'd:
You have spoilt this child; she laughs at you and man:
She wrongs herself, her sex, and me, and him:
But red-faced war has rods of steel and fire;
She yields, or war."

Then Gama turn'd to me:
"We fear, indeed, you spent a stormy time
With our strange girl: and yet they say that still

110. parle, parley, conference.
You love her. Give us, then, your mind at large:
How say you, war or not?"

"Not war, if possible,
O king," I said, "lest from the abuse of war,
The desecrated shrine, the trampled year,
The smouldering homestead, and the household
flower
Torn from the lintel— all the common wrong—
A smoke go up thro’ which I loom to her
Three times a monster: now she lightens scorn
At him that mars her plan, but then would hate
(And every voice she talk’d with ratify it,
And every face she look’d on justify it)
The general foe. More soluble is this knot,
By gentleness than war. I want her love.
What were I nigher this altho’ we dash’d
Your cities into shards with catapults,
She would not love;— or brought her chain’d, a
slave,
The lifting of whose eyelash is my lord,
Not ever would she love; but brooding turn
The book of scorn, till all my flitting chance
Were caught within the record of her wrongs,
And crush’d to death: and rather, Sire, than this
I would the old God of war himself were dead,
Forgotten, rusting on his iron hills,
Rotting on some wild shore with ribs of wreck,

121. year, harvest.
122. shards, fragments, especially of brick or other earthenware, catapults were contrivances employed by the ancients, and occasionally during the Middle Ages prior to the invention of gunpowder, for the hurling of large stones and other missiles against walled cities.
Or like an old-world mammoth bulk'd in ice, Not to be molten out."

And roughly spake
My father, "Tut, you know them not, the girls. Boy, when I hear you prate I almost think That idiot legend credible. Look you, Sir! Man is the hunter; woman is his game: The sleek and shining creatures of the chase, We hunt them for the beauty of their skins; They love us for it, and we ride them down. Wheedling and siding with them! Out! for shame! Boy, there's no rose that's half so dear to them As he that does the thing they dare not do, Breathing and sounding beauteous battle, comes With the air of the trumpet round him, and leaps in Among the women, snares them by the score Flatter'd and fluster'd, wins, tho' dash'd with death He reddens what he kisses: thus I won Your mother, a good mother, a good wife, Worth winning; but this firebrand — gentleness To such as her! if Cyril spake her true, To catch a dragon in a cherry net, To trip a tigress with a gossamer, Were wisdom to it."

"Yea but Sire," I cried,

146. idiot legend, legend of the sorcerer. Cf. I. 5.  
157. dashed with death, spattered with blood.  
162 cherry net, a net placed over cherry trees to protect the fruit from birds.
"Wild natures need wise curbs. The soldier?

No:

What dares not Ida do that she should prize

The soldier? I beheld her, when she rose

The yesternight, and storming in extremes,

Stood for her cause, and flung defiance down

Gagelike to man, and had not shunn’d the death,

No, not the soldier’s: yet I hold her, king,

True woman: but you clash them all in one,

That have as many differences as we.

The violet varies from the lily as far

As oak from elm: one loves the soldier, one

The silken priest of peace, one this, one that,

And some unworthily; their sinless faith,

A maiden moon that sparkles on a sty,

Glorifying clown and satyr; whence they need

More breadth of culture: is not Ida right?

They worth it? truer to the law within?

Severer in the logic of a life?

Twice as magnetic to sweet influences

Of earth and heaven? and she of whom you speak,

My mother, looks as whole as some serene

Creation minted in the golden moods

Of sovereign artists; not a thought, a touch,

But pure as lines of green that streak the white

Of the first snowdrop’s inner leaves: I say,

Not like the piebald miscellany, man,

---

179 satyr, a mythological being, half man and half goat; hence brutal; i.e. glorifying ignorance and brutality.

181 the law within, conscience.

183 magnetic, susceptible.
Bursts of great heart and slips in sensual mire, 
But whole and one: and take them all-in-all, 
Were we ourselves but half as good, as kind, 
As truthful, much that Ida claims as right 
Had ne'er been mooted, but as frankly theirs 
As dues of Nature. To our point: not war: 
Lest I lose all."

"Nay, nay, you spake but sense"
Said Gama. "We remember love ourself 
In our sweet youth; we did not rate him then 
This ret-hot iron to be shaped with blows. 
You talk almost like Ida: she can talk; 
And there is something in it as you say: 
But you talk kindlier: we esteem you for it. —
He seems a gracious and a gallant Prince, 
I would he had our daughter: for the rest, 
Our own detention, why, the causes weigh'd, 
Fatherly fears — you used us courteously —
We would do much to gratify your Prince—
We pardon it; and for your ingress here 
Upon the skirt and fringe of our fair land, 
You did but come as goblins in the night, 
Nor in the furrow broke the ploughman's head, 
Nor burnt the grange, nor buss'd the milking-maid, 
Nor robb’d the farmer of his bowl of cream: 
But let your Prince (our royal word upon it,

191. great heart, noble impulses. 
195 mooted, questioned, disputed. 
204. Here Gama addresses the old king. 
211. goblins, fairies, elves. 
213. buss’d, kissed.
He comes back safe) ride with us to our lines,  
And speak with Arac: Arac's word is thrice  
As ours with Ida: something may be done—  
I know not what — and ours shall see us friends.  
You, likewise, our late guests, if so you will,  
Follow us: who knows? we four may build some  
plan  
Foursquare to opposition.”

Here he reach'd  
White hands of farewell to my sire, who growl'd  
An answer which, half-muffled in his beard,  
Let so much out as gave us leave to go.  

Then rode we with the old king across the lawns  
Beneath huge trees, a thousand rings of Spring  
In every bole, a song on every spray  
Of birds that piped their Valentines, and woke  
Desire in me to infuse my tale of love  
In the old king's ears, who promised help, and oozed  
All o'er with honey'd answer as we rode  
And blossom-fragrant slipt the heavy dews  
Gather'd by night and peace, with each light air  
On our mail'd heads: but other thoughts than  
Peace  
Burnt in us, when we saw the embattled squares,

219. ours, our party.
220. you, Florian and Cyril.
222. foursquare, impregnable. Cf. Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington, 39:  
"That tower of strength  
Which stood foursquare to all the winds that blew."
229. Valentines, love messages.
And squadrons of the Prince, trampling the flowers
With clamor: for among them rose a cry
As if to greet the king; they made a halt;
The horses yell’d; they clash’d their arms; the drum
Beat; merrily-blowing shrill’d the martial fife;
And in the blast and bray of the long horn
And serpent-throated bugle, undulated
The banner: anon to meet us lightly pranced
Three captains out; nor ever had I seen
Such thews of men: the midmost and the highest
Was Arac: all about his motion clung
The shadow of his sister, as the beam
Of the East, that play’d upon them, made them glance
Like those three stars of the airy Giant’s zone,
That glitter burnish’d by the frosty dark;
And as the fiery Sirius alters hue,
And bickers into red and emerald, shone
Their morions, wash’d with morning, as they came.

And I that prated peace, when first I heard War-music, felt the blind wildbeast of force,
Whose home is in the sinews of a man,

246. thews, muscles and sinews. *i.e.*, "such muscular men."
250. the airy Giant’s zone. The three bright stars in the constellation Orion, called his "belt."
251. frosty. Orion is brightest in England during the winter.
252. Sirius, the dog star.
253. bickers, flickers, glistens.
254. morions, helmets.
Stir in me as to strike: then took the king
His three broad sons; with now a wandering hand
And now a pointed finger, told them all:
A common light of smiles at our disguise
Broke from their lips, and, ere the windy jest
Had labor'd down within his ample lungs,
The genial giant, Arac, roll'd himself
Thrice in the saddle, then burst out in words.

"Our land invaded, 'sdeath: and he himself
Your captive, yet my father wills not war:
And, 'sdeath! myself, what care I, war or no?
But then this question of your troth remains:
And there's a downright honest meaning in her;
She flies too high, she flies too high! and yet
She ask'd but space and fairplay for her scheme;
She prest and prest it on me — I, myself,
What know I of these things! but, life and soul!
I thought her half-right talking of her wrongs;
I say she flies too high, 'sdeath! what of that?
I take her for the flower of womankind,
And so I often told her, right or wrong,
And, Prince, she can be sweet to those she loves,
And, right or wrong, I care not: this is all,
I stand upon her side: she made me swear it —
'Sdeath! — and with solemn rights by candle-light —
Swear by St. something — I forget her name —

266. 'sdeath! an old oath.

269. troth, betrothal.
Her that talk'd down the fifty wisest men;  
She was a princess too; and so I swore.

Come, this is all; she will not: waive your claim:  
If not, the foughten field, what else, at once  
Decides it, 'sdeath! against my father's will."

I lagg'd in answer loth to render up  
My precontract, and loth by brainless war  
To cleave the rift of difference deeper yet;  
Till one of those two brothers, half aside  
And finger ing at the hair about his lip,  
To prick us on to combat "Like to like!  
The woman's garment hid the woman's heart."  
A taunt that clench'd his purpose like a blow!  
For fiery-short was Cyril's counter-scoff,  
And sharp I answer'd, touch'd upon the point  
Where idle boys are cowards to there shame,  
"Decide it here: why not? we are three to three."

283-285. *St. something*. princess too. The reference is to St. Catharine of Alexandria, an almost, if not wholly, mythical personage, round whose name has grown up a vast amount of legendary lore. She is said to have lived about the beginning of the fourth century, and to have been the daughter of Ceistus, the half brother of Constantine, by Sabinella, Queen of Egypt, whom she succeeded on the throne of that country — this story is of course entirely without historical warrant. According to the commonly received legend, the Emperor Maximian (or, as some say, Maximin) sent the fifty wisest men of his court to convert her from Christianity, but she confuted them all with their own weapons of scholarly rhetoric, and won them over to her faith.

298-299. touch'd upon the point. shame. The Prince means that, in the face of this sneer he had not the courage to abide by the decision which his better judgment had approved. "Idle" seems to mean "thoughtless." Most young men of spirit would, under such a charge, have acted on the spur of the moment in the same manner, and, to rebut a scornful reflection upon their physical courage, have consented to an act of moral cowardice.
Then spake the third "But three to three? no more?
No more, and in our noble sister's cause?
More, more, for honor: every captain waits
Hungry for honor, angry for his king.
More, more, some fifty on a side, that each
May breathe himself, and quick? by overthrow
Of these or those, the question settled die."
"Yea," answer'd I, "for this wild wreath of air,
This flake of rainbow flying on the highest
Foam of men's deeds — this honor if ye will.
It needs must be for honor if at all:
Since, what decision? if we fail, we fail,
And if we win, we fail: she would not keep
Her compact." 'Sdeath! but we will send to her,'
Said Arac, "worthy reasons why she should
Bide by this issue: let our missive thro'
And you shall have her answer by the word."

"Boys!" shriek'd the old king, but vainlier than a hen
To her false daughters in the pool; for none
Regarded; neither seem'd there more to say:
Back rode we to my father's camp, and found
He thrice had sent a herald to the gates,
To learn if Ida yet would cede our claim,

306. breath, exercise.
316. Bide by this issue, act according to the result of the fight
317. by the word, in her very words.
319. false daughters, ducks hatched by a hen.
Or by denial flush her babbling wells
With her own people's life: three times he went:
The first, he blew and blew, but none appear'd:
He batter'd at the doors; none came: the next,
An awful voice within had warn'd him thence:
The third, and those eight daughters of the plough
Came sallying thro' the gates, and caught his
hair,
And so belabor'd him on rib and cheek
They made him wild: not less one glance he caught
Thro' open doors of Ida station'd there
Unshaken, clinging to her purpose, firm
Tho' compass'd by two armies and the noise
Of arms; and standing like a stately Pine
Set in a cataract on an island-crag,
When storm is on the heights, and right and left
Suck'd from the dark heart of the long hills roll
The torrents, dash'd to the vale: and yet her will
Bred will in me to overcome it or fall.

But when I told the king that I was pledged
To fight in tourney for my bride, he clash'd
His iron palms together with a cry:
Himself would tilt it out among the lads:
But overborne by all his bearded lords
With reasons drawn from age and state, perforce
He yielded, wroth and red, with fierce demur:
And many a bold knight started up in heat,
And sware to combat for my claim till death.

324. flush, to fill full, and redden.
344. palms, gauntlets.
All on this side the palace ran the field
Flat to the garden-wall: and likewise here,
Above the garden’s glowing blossom-belts,
A column’d entry shone and marble stairs,
And great bronze valves, emboss’d with Tomyris
And what she did to Cyrus after fight,
But now fast barr’d: so here upon the flat
All that long morn the lists were hammer’d up,
And all that morn the heralds to and fro,
With message and defiance, went and came;
Last, Ida’s answer, in a royal hand,
But shaken here and there, and rolling words
Oration-like. I kiss’d it and I read.

"O brother, you have known the pangs we felt,
What heats of indignation when we heard
Of those that iron-cramp’d their women’s feet;
Of lands in which at the altar the poor bride
Gives her harsh groom for bridal-gift a scourge;
Of living hearts that crack within the fire
Where smoulder their dead despots; and of
those,—

355. valves, gates.
355–356. Tomyris... after fight. She was Queen of the Massagetae, a tribe against whom Cyrus planned a wanton expedition of conquest. Having solemnly warned him to desist, she at last gave him battle. He was slain on the field, and she then took his head and dipping it in a skin of blood bade him, since he was so bloodthirsty, drink his fill therefrom. The story which forms the subject of this ominous design is told by Herodotus.
358. the lists, i.e., the enclosure designed for the combat, with the barriers, railings, etc.
360. In China.
369–370. The Hindoo custom of burning widows on the funeral piles of their dead husbands.
Mothers,—that, all prophetic pity, fling
Their pretty maids in the running flood, and swoops
The vulture, beak and talon, at the heart
Made for all noble motion: and I saw
That equal baseness lived in sleeker times
With smoother men: the old leaven leaven'd all:
Millions of throats would bawl for civil rights,
No woman named: therefore I set my face
Against all men, and lived but for mine own.
Far off from men I built a fold for them:
I stored it full of rich memorial:
I fenced it round with gallant institutes,
And biting laws to scare the beasts of prey
And prosper'd: till a rout of saucy boys
Brake on us at our books, and marr'd our peace,
Mask'd like our maids, blustering I know not what
Of insolence and love, some pretext held
Of baby troth, invalid, since my will
Seal'd not the bond — the striplings! — for their
sport!—
I tamed my leopards: shall I not tame these?
Or you? or I? for since you think me touch'd
In honor — what, I would not aught of false —
Is not our cause pure? and whereas I know
Your prowess, Arac, and what mother's blood
You draw from, fight; you failing, I abide

371. prophetic pity, fearing that their daughters would remain single and thus be dishonored.
372. flood, the Ganges, in India.
381. memorial, paintings, statues, etc., memorials of great deeds.
382. institutes, rules and regulations.
What end soever: fail you will not. Still
Take not his life: he risk'd it for my own;
His mother lives: yet whatsoe'er you do,
Fight and fight well; strike and strike home. O
dear
Brothers, the woman's Angel guards you, you
The sole men to be mingled with our cause.
The sole men we shall prize in the aftertime,
Your very armor hallow'd, and your statues
Rear'd, sung to, when, this gad-fly brush'd aside,
We plant a solid foot into the Time,
And mould a generation strong to move
With claim on claim, from right to right, till she
Whose name is yoked with children's, know herself;
And Knowledge in our own land make her free,
And, ever following those two crowned twins,
Commerce and conquest, shower the fiery grain
Of freedom broadcast over all that orbs
Between the Northern and the Southern morn.''

Then came a postscript dash'd across the rest.
"See that there be no traitors in your camp:
We seem a nest of traitors — none to trust
Since our arms fail'd — this Egypt-plague of men!
Almost our maids were better at their homes,
Than thus man-girdled here: indeed I think

404. this gadfly, temporary annoyance.
412. all that orbs, etc., from pole to pole.
Our chiefest comfort is the little child
Of one unworthy mother; which she left:
She shall not have it back: the child shall grow
To prize the authentic mother of her mind.
I took it for an hour in mine own bed
This morning: there the tender orphan hands
Felt at my heart, and seem'd to charm from thence
The wrath I nursed against the world: farewell."

I ceased; he said, "Stubborn, but she may sit
Upon a king's right hand in thunderstorms,
And breed up warriors! See now, tho' yourself
Be dazzled by the wildfire Love to sloughs
That swallow common sense, the spindling king,
This Gama swamp'd in lazy tolerance.
When the man wants weight, the woman takes it up,
And topples down the scales; but this is fixt
As are the roots of earth and base of all;
Man for the field and woman for the hearth:
Man for the sword and for the needle she:
Man with the head and woman with the heart:
Man to command and woman to obey;
All else confusion. Look you! the gray mare
Is ill to live with, when her whinny shrills
From tile to scullery, and her small goodman

422-423. the child, her mind I will have her so brought up that
she shall value most highly me, not her mere physical mother, but the
genuine mother of her mind, for I shall have reared and trained it after my
own views.

431. wildfire, will-o' the-wisp.

441. the gray mare. The old proverb, "the gray mare is the better
horse," was said of a wife who ruled her husband.

443. tile to scullery, roof to cellar.
Shrinks in his armchair while the fires of Hell Mix with his hearth: but you—she’s yet a colt—
Take, break her: strongly groom’d and straitly curb’d
She might not rank with those detestable
That let the bantling scald at home, and brawl
Their rights or wrongs like potherbs in the street
They say she’s comely; there’s the fairer chance: I like her none the less for rating at her!
Besides, the woman wed is not as we,
But suffers change of frame. A lusty brace
Of twins may weed her of her folly. Boy,
The bearing and the training of a child
Is woman’s wisdom.”

Thus the hard old king:
I took my leave, for it was nearly noon:
I pored upon her letter which I held,
And on the little clause “take not his life”:
I mused on that wild morning in the woods,
And on the “Follow, follow, thou shalt win”:
I thought on all the wrathful king had said,
And how the strange betrothment was to end:
Then I remember’d that burnt sorcerer’s curse
That one should fight with shadows and should fall;
And like a flash the weird affection came:
King, camp and college turn’d to hollow shows;
I seem’d to move in old memorial tilts,

448 bantling, baby.
449 potherbs, vegetables; i.e., as pedlers hawk vegetables.
And doing battle with forgotten ghosts,
To dream myself the shadow of a dream:
And ere I woke it was the point of noon,
The lists were ready. Empanoplied and plumed
We enter’d in, and waited, fifty there
Opposed to fifty, till the trumpet blared
At the barrier like a wild horn in a land
Of echoes, and a moment, and once more
The trumpet, and again: at which the storm
Of galloping hoofs bare on the ridge of spears
And riders front to front, until they closed
In conflict with the crash of shivering points,
And thunder. Yet it seem’d a dream, I dream’d
Of fighting. On his haunches rose the steed,
And into fiery splinters leapt the lance,
And out of stricken helmets sprang the fire.
Part sat like rocks: part reel’d but kept their
seats:
Part roll’d on the earth and rose again and drew:
Part stumbled mixt with floundering horses. Down
From those two bulks at Arac’s side, and down
From Arac’s arm, as from a giant’s flail,
The large blows rain’d, as here and everywhere
He rode the mellay, lord of the ringing lists,
And all the plain — brand, mace, and shaft, and
shield —

472. Empanoplied, in armor.
478. bare on, carried forward.
486. drew, their swords.
488. two bulks, Arac’s brothers.
491. mellay, mêlée, tumult of battle.
Shock'd, like an iron-clanging anvil bang'd
With hammers; till I thought, can this be he
From Gama's dwarfish loins? if this be so,
The mother makes us most — and in my dream
I glanced aside, and saw the palace-front
Alive with fluttering scarfs and ladies' eyes,
And highest, among the statues, statue-like,
Between a cymbal'd Miriam and a Jael,
With Psyche's babe, was Ida, watching us,
A single band of gold about her hair,
Like a Saint's glory up in heaven: but she
No saint — inexorable — no tenderness —
Too hard, too cruel: yet she sees me fight,
Yea, let her see me fall! with that I drave
Among the thickest and bore down a Prince,
And Cyril, one. Yea, let me make my dream
All that I would. But that large-moulded man,
His visage all agrin as at a wake,
Made at me thro' the press, and, staggering back
With stroke on stroke the horse and horseman,
came
As comes a pillar of electric cloud,
Flaying the roofs and sucking up the drains,
And shadowing down the champaign till it strikes

was the sister of Moses, and after the miraculous passage of the Red Sea
she led a chorus of thanksgiving to the Almighty who had delivered them
from their persecutors, the whole female population following her with
cymbals and guitars. Jael is famous as having by the assassination of
Sisera delivered the Jews from the oppression of Jabin, King of Canaan.
—Bible, Judges, IV.

503. glory, halo, aureole. .
On a wood, and takes, and breaks, and cracks, and splits,
And twists the grain with such a roar that Earth Reels, and the herdsmen cry; for everything Gave way before him: only Florian, he That loved me closer than his own right eye,
Thrust in between; but Arac rode him down:
And Cyril seeing it, push'd against the Prince, With Psyche's color round his helmet, tough, Strong, supple, sinew-corded, apt at arms;
But tougher, heavier, stronger, he that smote And threw him: last I spurr'd; I felt my veins Stretch with fierce heat; a moment hand to hand, And sword to sword, and horse to horse we hung, Till I struck out and shouted; the blade glanced, I did but sheer a feather, and dream and truth Flow'd from me; darkness closed me; and I fell.

530. dream and truth Flowed from me, became unconscious.
Home they brought her warrior dead:
She nor swoon'd, nor utter'd cry:
All her maidens, watching, said,
"She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,
Call'd him worthy to be loved,
Truest friend and noblest foe;
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
Lightly to the warrior stept,
Took the face-cloth from the face;
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
Set his child upon her knee —
Like summer tempest came her tears —
"Sweet my child, I live for thee."
PART VI.

My dream had never died or lived again. 
As in some mystic middle state I lay; 
Seeing I saw not, hearing not I heard: 
Tho' if I saw not, yet they told me all 
So often that I speak as having seen.

For so it seem'd, or so they said to me, 
That all things grew more tragic and more strange; 
That when our side was vanquish'd and my cause 
Forever lost, there went up a great cry, 
The Prince is slain. My father heard and ran 10 
In on the lists, and there unlaced my casque 
And grovell'd on my body, and after him 
Came Psyche, sorrowing for Aglaia.

But high upon the palace Ida stood 
With Psyche's babe in arm: there on the roofs 15 
Like that great dame of Lapidoth she sang.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n: the seed, 
The little seed they laughed at in the dark,

16. that great dame of Lapidoth. The reference is to the Hebrew prophetess, Deborah, wife of Lapidoth, who, when her nation were groaning under the tyranny of Jabin, King of Canaan, instigated Barak to rise and expel the heathen oppressor. After a signal victory over the latter she and Barak sang together a splendid pean of triumph—Bible, Judges IV. V.

17-42. The tone and language of this Song are based upon the main idea that inspires it—viz., a comparison between the cause represented by the College and a tree.
Has risen and cleft the soil, and grown a bulk
Of spanless girth, that lays on every side
A thousand arms and rushes to the Sun.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n: they came;
The leaves were wet with women's tears: they heard
A noise of songs. they would not understand:
They mark'd it with the red cross to the fall,
And would have strown it, and are fall'n themselves.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n; they came;
The woodmen with their axes: lo the tree!
But we will make it faggots for the hearth,
And shape it plank and beam for roof and floor,
And boats and bridges for the use of men.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n: they struck;
With their own blows they hurt themselves, nor knew
There dwelt an iron nature in the grain:
The glittering axe was broken in their arms,
Their arms were shatter'd to the shoulder blade.
"Our enemies have fall'n, but this shall grow
A night of Summer from the heat, a breadth

25. the red cross. This, marked on a tree, was the sign of condemnation.

38. night of, shade in. breadth of Autumn, a mighty harvest,
Of Autumn, dropping fruits of power: and roll'd
With music in the growing breeze of Time,
The tops shall strike from star to star, the fangs
Shall move the stony bases of the world.

"And now, O maids, behold our sanctuary
Is violate, our laws broken: fear we not
To break them more in their behoof, whose arms
Champion'd our cause and won it with a day
Blanch'd in our annals, and perpetual feast,
When dames and heroines of the golden year
Shall strip a hundred hollows bare of Spring,
To rain an April of ovation round
Their statues, borne aloft, the three: but come,
We will be liberal, since our rights are won.
Let them not lie in the tents with coarse mankind,
Ill nurses: but descend, and proffer these
The brethren of our blood and cause, that there
Lie bruised and maim'd the tender ministries
Of female hands and hospitality."

She spoke, and with the babe yet in her arms,
Descending, burst the great bronze valves, and led
A hundred maids in train across the Park.
Some cowl'd, and some bare-headed, on they came,
Their feet in flowers, her lovliest: by them went

40. fangs, roots.
41. Blanch'd, marked.
42. golden. See note on IV. 400.
43. Spring, spring flowers.
44. an April, the month of showers, hence, a shower.
The enamor'd air sighing, and on their curls
From the high tree the blossoms wavering fell,
And over them the tremulous isles of light
Slided, they moving under shade: but Blanche
At distance follow'd: so they came: anon
'Tho' open field into the lists they wound
Timorously; and as the leader of the herd
That holds a stately fretwork to the Sun,
And follow'd up by a hundred airy does,
Steps with a tender foot, light as on air,
The lovely, lordly creature floated on
To where her wounded brethren lay; there stay'd;
Knelt on one knee,—the child on one,—and prest
Their hands, and call'd them dear deliverers,
And happy warriors, and immortal names,
And said "You shall not lie in the tents but here,
And nursed by those for whom you fought, and
served
With female hands and hospitality."

Then, whether moved by this, or was it chance,
She past my way. Up started from my side
The old lion, glaring with his whelpless eye,
Silent; but when she saw me lying stark,
Dishelm'd and mute, and motionlessly pale,
Cold ev'n to her, she sigh'd; and when she saw
The haggard father's face and reverend beard
Of grisly twine, all dabbled with the blood

65. isles of light, the sunshine falling through the leaves.
70. fretwork, his branching antlers.
83. whelpless, childless.
Of his own son, shudder'd, a twitch of pain
Tortured her mouth, and o'er her forehead past
A shadow, and her hue changed, and she said:
"He saved my life: my brother slew him for it."
No more: at which the king in bitter scorn
Drew from my neck the painting and the tress,
And held them up: she saw them, and a day
Rose from the distance on her memory,
When the good Queen, her mother, shore the tress
With kisses, ere the days of Lady Blanche:
And then once more she looked at my pale face:
Till understanding all the foolish work
Of Fancy, and the bitter close of all,
Her iron will was broken in her mind;
Her noble heart was molten in her breast;
She bow'd, she set the child on the earth; she laid
A feeling finger on my brows, and presently
"O Sire," she said, "he lives: he is not dead:
O let me have him with my brethren here
In our own palace: we will tend on him
Like one of these; if so, by any means,
To lighten this great clog of thanks, that make
Our progress falter to the woman's goal."

She said: but at the happy word "he lives,"
My father stoop'd, refather'd o'er my wounds.
So those two foes above my fallen life,

101. Fancy, her fantastic ideas.

110-111. The feeling of dependence on man, which her gratitude to the Prince for saving her life and to her brothers for their support implies, have caused the Princess's faith in the certainty of progress to "the woman's goal" to falter.
With brow to brow like night and evening mixt
Their dark and gray, while Psyche ever stole
A little nearer, till the babe that by us,
Half-lapt in glowing gauze and golden brede,
Lay like a new-fall'n meteor on the grass,
Uncared for, spied its mother and began
A blind and babbling laughter, and to dance
Its body, and reach out its fatling innocent arms
And lazy lingering fingers. She the appeal
Brook'd not, but clamoring out, "Mine — mine —
not yours,
It is not yours, but mine: give me the child,"
Ceased all on tremble: piteous was the cry:
So stood the unhappy mother open-mouth'd,
And turn'd each face her way: wan was her cheek
With hollow watch, her blooming mantel torn,
Red grief and mother's hunger in her eye,
And down dead-heavy sank her curls, and half
The sacred mother's bosom, panting, burst
The laces toward her babe; but she nor cared
Nor knew it, clamoring on, till Ida heard,
Look'd up, and rising slowly from me, stood
Erect and silent, striking with her glance
The mother, me, the child; but he that lay
Beside us, Cyril, batter'd as he was,
Trail'd himself up on one knee: then he drew
Her robe to meet his lips, and down she look'd
At the arm'd man sideways, pitying as it seem'd

118. brede, embroidery.
130. Red grief, grief that makes red the eyes with weeping.
Or self-involved; but when she learnt his face,
Remembering his ill-omen'd song, arose
Once more thro' all her height, and o'er him grew
Tall as a figure lengthen'd on the sand
When the tide ebbs in sunshine, and he said:

"O fair and strong and terrible! Lioness
That with your long locks play the Lion's mane!
But Love and Nature, these are two more terrible
And stronger. See, your foot is on our necks,
We vanquish'd, you the Victor of your will.
What would you more? give her the child! remain
Orb'd in your isolation: he is dead,
Or all as dead: henceforth we let you be:
Win you the hearts of women; and beware
Lest, where you seek the common love of these,
The common hate with the revolving wheel
Should drag you down, and some great Nemesis
Break from a darken'd future, crown'd with fire,
And tread you out forever: but howsoe'er
Fix'd in yourself, never in your own arms
To hold your own, deny not hers to her,
Give her the child! O if, I say, you keep
One pulse that beats true woman, if you loved

142. self-involved, wrapt in thought.
157. with the revolving wheel. The expression is derived from Classical Mythology, which represents the fortunes of the world and all therein as governed by Fate working a wheel round and round, the imagery being of course suggested by the constant reactions observable in the careers of men and institutions.
158. Nemesis was to the Greeks the Goddess of Moral Justice, and as such was most commonly regarded as the personification of Divine Retribution for insolence or reckless defiance of established principles. It is in this capacity that Cyril warns Ida to beware of her.
The breast that fed or arm that dandled you,
Or own one port of sense not flint to prayer,
Give her the child! or if you scorn to lay it,
Yourself, in hands so lately claspt with yours,
Or speak to her, your dearest, her one fault
The tenderness, not yours, that could not kill,
Give me it: I will give it her."

He said:

At first her eye with slow dilation roll'd
Dry flame, she listening; after sank and sank
And, into mournful twilight mellowing, dwelt
Full on the child; she took it: "Pretty bud!
Lily of the vale! half open'd bell of the woods!
Sole comfort of my dark hour, when a world
Of traitorous friend and broken system made
No purple in the distance, mystery,
Pledge of a love not to be mine, farewell;
These men are hard upon us as of old,
We two must part; and yet how fain was I
To dream thy cause embraced in mine, to think
I might be something to thee, when I felt
Thy helpless warmth about my barren breast
In the dead prime: but may thy mother prove
As true to thee as false, false, false to me!
And, if thou needs must bear the yoke, I wish it
Gentle as freedom" — here she kiss'd it: then —
"All good go with thee! take it, Sir," and so

166. port, portal.
180. a love not to be mine, the love of mother.
186. dead prime, dead of night, darkest hour just before dawn.
Laid the soft babe in his hard-mailed hands,
Who turn'd half-round to Psyche as she sprang
To meet it, with an eye that swum in thanks;
Then felt it sound and whole from head to foot,
And hugg'd and never hugg'd it close enough,
And in her hunger mouth'd and mumbled it,
And hid her bosom with it; after that
Put on more calm and added suppliantly:

"We two were friends: I go to mine own land
Forever: find some other: as for me
I scarce am fit, for your great plans: yet speak to me,
Say one soft word and let me part forgiven."

But Ida spoke not, rapt upon the child.
Then Aac. "Ida — 'sdeath! you blame the man!
You wrong yourselves — the woman is so hard
Upon the woman. Come, a grace to me!
I am your warrior: I and mine have fought
Your battles: kiss her; take her hand, she weeps:
Sdeath! I would sooner fight thrice o'er than see it."

But Ida spoke not, gazing on the ground,
And reddening in the furrows of his chin,
And moved beyond his custom, Gama said:
"I've heard that there is iron in the blood,
And I believe it. Not one word? not one?"
Whence drew you this steel temper? not from me,
Not from your mother, now a saint with saints.
She said you had a heart — I heard her say it —
‘Our Ida has a heart’— just ere she died —
‘But see that some one with authority
Be near her still,’ and I — I sought for one —
All people said she had authority —
The Lady Blanche: much profit! Not one word;
No! tho’ your father sues: see how you stand
Stiff as Lot’s wife, and all the good knights maim’d,
I trust that there is no one hurt to death,
For your wild whim: and was it then for this,
Was it for this we gave our palace up,
Where we withdrew from summer heats and state,
And had our wine and chess beneath the planes,
And many a pleasant hour with her that’s gone,
Ere you were born to vex us? Is it kind?
Speak to her I say: is this not she of whom,
When first she came, all flush’d you said to me
Now had you got a friend of your own age,
Now could you share your thought; ‘now should men see
Two women faster welded in one love
Than pairs of wedlock; she you walk’d with, she
You talk’d with, whole nights long, up in the tower,
Of sine and arc, spheroid and azimuth,
And right ascension, Heaven knows what; and now

239 sine and arc . . . spheroid . . . ascension, technical terms in astronomy.
A word, but one, one little kindly word,  
Not one to spare her: out upon you, flint!  
You love nor her, nor me, nor any; nay,  
You shame your mother's judgment too. Not one?  
You will not? well — no heart have you, or such
As fancies like the vermin in a nut  
Have fretted all to dust and bitterness.”
So said the small king moved beyond his wont.

But Ida stood nor spoke, drain'd of her force  
By many a varying influence and so long.  
Down thro' her limbs a drooping languor wept:  
Her head a little bent; and on her mouth
A doubtful smile dwelt like a clouded moon  
In a still water: then brake out my sire,
Lifting his grim head from my wounds. "O you,  
Woman, whom we thought woman even now,  
And were half fool'd to let you tend our son,  
Because he might have wish'd it — but we see
The accomplice of your madness unforgiven,  
And think that you might mix his draught with  
dead,
When your skies change again: the rougher hand  
Is safer: on to the tents: take up the Prince.”

He rose, and while each ear was prick'd to attend  
A tempest, thro' the cloud that dimm'd her broke  
A genial warmth and light once more, and shone
Thro' glittering drops on her sad friend.

261. When your skies change again, when your temper changes again
“Come hither,
O Psyche,” she cried out, “embrace me, come,
Quick while I melt; make reconcilement sure
With one that cannot keep her mind an hour;
Come to the hollow heart they slander so!
Kiss and be friends, like children being chid!
I seem no more: I want forgiveness too:
I should have had to do with none but maids,
That have no links with men. Ah false but dear,
Dear traitor, too much loved, why? — why? — Yet
see,
Before these kings we embrace you yet once more
With all forgiveness, all oblivion,
And trust, not love, you less.
And now, O sire,
Grant me your son, to nurse, to wait upon him,
Like mine own brother. For my debt to him,
This nightmare weight of gratitude, I know it;
Taunt me no more: Yourself and yours shall have
Free adit: we will scatter all our maids
Till happier times each to her proper hearth:
What use to keep them here — now? grant my prayer.
Help, father, brother, help; speak to the king:
Thaw this male nature to some touch of that
Which kills me with myself, and drags me down
From my fixt height to mob me up with all

283. adit, access.
284. proper, own.
289 mob me up, merge me with all the mob of.
THE PRINCESS.

The soft and milky rabble of womankind,
Poor weakling ev’n as they are.”

Passionate tears

Follow’d: the king replied not: Cyril said:
"Your brother, Lady, — Florian, — ask for him
Of your great head — for he is wounded too —
That you may tend upon him with the prince.”

"Ay so,” said Ida with a bitter smile,
"Our laws are broken: let him enter too.”

Then Violet, she that sang the mournful song,
And had a cousin tumbled on the plain,
Petition’d too for him. "Ay so,” she said,
"I stagger in the stream: I cannot keep
My heart an eddy from the brawling hour:
We break our laws with ease, but let it be.”

"Ay so?” said Blanche: "Amazed am I to hear
Your Highness: but your Highness breaks with ease
The law your Highness did not make: ’twas I.
I had been wedded wife; I knew mankind,
And block’d them out; but these men came to woo
Your Highness — verily I think to win.”

So she, and turn’d askance a wintry eye:
But Ida with a voice, that like a bell
Toll’d by an earthquake in a trembling tower,
Rang ruin, answer’d full of grief and scorn.

"Fling our doors wide! all, all, not one, but all,
Not only he, but by my mother’s soul,

298. the song. Cf. IV. 21-40.
Whatever man lies wounded, friend or foe, Shall enter, if he will. Let our girls flit, Till the storm die! but had you stood by us, The roar that breaks the Pharos from his base Has left us rock. She fain would sting us too, But shall not. Pass, and mingle with your likes. We brook no further insult but are gone."

She turn’d; the very nape of her white-neck Was rosed with indignation: but the Prince Her brother came; the king her father charm’d Her wounded soul with words: nor did mine own Refuse her proffer, lastly gave his hand.

Then us they lifted up, dead weights, and bare Straight to the doors: to them the doors gave way Groaning, and in the Vestal entry shriek’d The virgin marble under iron heels: And on they moved and gain’d the hall, and there Rested: but great the crush was, and each base, To left and right, of those tall columns drown’d In silken fluctuation and the swarm Of female whisperers: at the farther end Was Ida by the throne, the two great cats Close by her, like supporters on a shield, Bow-back’d with fear: but in the centre stood

319. the Pharos, a famous ancient lighthouse built (about B.C. 250) on the Island of Pharos, near Alexandria.

330. Vestal, dedicated to woman, untrodden by foot of man.

338. supporters, the name given, in heraldry, to the two figures that stand on either side of a coat of arms.
The common men with rolling eyes; amazed
They glared upon the women, and aghast
The women stared at these, all silent, save
When armor clash'd or jingled, while the day
Descending, struck athwart the hall, and shot
A flying splendor out of brass and steel,
That o'er the statues leapt from head to head,
Now fired an angry Pallas on the helm,
Now set a wrathful Dian's moon on flame,
And now and then an echo started up,
And shuddering fled from room to room, and died
Of fright in far apartments.

Then the voice
Of Ida sounded, issuing ordinance:
And me they bore up the broad stairs, and thro'
The long-laid galleries past a hundred doors
To one deep chamber shut from sound, and due
To languid limbs and sickness; left me in it;
And others otherwhere they laid; and all
That afternoon a sound arose of hoof
And chariot, many a maiden passing home
Till happier times; but some were left of those
Held sagest, and the great lords out and in,
From those two hosts that lay beside the walls,
Walk'd at their will, and everything was changed.

347. Pallas, the Goddess of Wisdom.
348. Dian, Diana, the Goddess of Purity, whose symbol was the moon.
352. ordinance, orders.
355. due, appropriate for.
Part VII.

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the sea;
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;
But O too fond, when have I answer'd thee?
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I give?
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:
Yet, O my friend I will not have thee die!
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are seal'd:
I strove against the stream and all in vain:
Let the great river take me to the main:
No more, dear love, for at touch I yield;
Ask me no more.

So was their sanctuary violated,
So their fair college turn'd to hospital;
At first with all confusion: by and by
Sweet order lived again with other laws:
A kindlier influence reign'd; and everywhere
Low voices with the ministering hand
Hung round the sick: the maidens came, they talk'd,
They sang, they read; till she not fair began
To gather light, and she that was, became
Her former beauty treble; and to and fro
With books, with flowers, with Angel offices,
Like creatures native unto gracious act,
And in their own clear element, they moved.

But sadness on the soul of Ida fell,
And hatred of her weakness blent with shame.
Old studies fail'd; seldom she spoke: but oft
Clomb to the roofs, and gazed alone for hours
On that disastrous leaguer, swarms of men
Darkening her female field: void was her use,
And she as one that climbs a peak to gaze
O'er land and main, and sees a great black cloud
Drag inward from the deeps, a wall of night,
Blot out the slope of sea from verge to shore,
And suck the blinding splendor from the sand,
And quenching lake by lake and tarn by tarn
Expunge the world: so fared she gazing there;
So blacken'd all her world in secret, blank
And waste it seem'd and vain; till down she came
And found fair peace once more among the sick.

12. native unto, who take naturally to.
17. Clomb, climbed.
18. leaguer, camped armies
19. void was her use, her wonted occupation was gone.
23. verge, horizon.
25. tarn, a small lake; pond.
And twilight dawn'd; and morn by morn the lark
Shot up and shrill'd in flickering gyres, but I
Lay silent in the muffled cage of life:
And twilight gloom'd; and broader-grown the bowers
Drew the great night into themselves, and Heaven,
Star after star, arose and fell; but I
Deeper than those weird doubts could reach me, lay.
Quite sunder'd from the moving Universe,
Nor knew what eye was on me, nor the hand
That nursed me, more than infants in their sleep.

But Psyche tendered Florian: with her oft,
Melissa came: for Blanche had gone, but left
Her child among us, willing she should keep
Court-favor: here and there the small bright head,
A light of healing, glanced about the couch,
Or thro' the parted silks the tender face
Peep'd, shining in upon the wounded man
With blush and smile, a medicine in themselves
To wile the length from langorous hours, and draw
The sting from pain; nor seem'd it strange that soon
He rose up whole, and those fair charities
Join'd at her side: nor stranger seem'd that hearts
So gentle, so employ'd, should close in love,
Than when two dewdrops on the petals shake

31. gyres, circles
45. silks, curtains of the beds.
50–51. fair charities, Florian and Melissa.
To the same sweet air, and tremble deeper down,
And slip at once all-fragrant into one.

Less prosperously the second suit obtain'd
At first with Psyche. Not tho' Blanche had sworn
That after that dark night among the fields
She needs must wed him for her own good name;
Not tho' he built upon the babe restored;
Nor tho' she liked him, yielded she, but fear'd
To incense the Head once more; till on a day
When Cyril pleaded, Ida came behind
Seen but of Psyche: on her foot she hung
A moment, and she heard, at which her face
A little flush'd, and she past on; but each
Assumed from thence a half-consent involved
In stillness, plighted troth, and were at peace.

Nor only these: Love in the sacred halls
Held carnival at will, and flying struck
With showers of random sweet on maid and man.
Nor did her father cease to press my claim,
Nor did mine own now reconciled; nor yet
Did those twin brothers, risen again and whole;
Nor Arac, satiate with his victory.

But I lay still, and with me oft she sat:
Then came a change; for sometimes I would catch

56. obtain'd, prevailed.
60. built upon, based his suit upon.
67. involved in stillness, implied in silence.
71. showers of random sweet. At carnival time it is customary to pelt one another with flowers and sweetmeats.
Her hand in wild delirium, gripe it hard,
And fling it like a viper off, and shriek
"You are not Ida;" clasp it once again,
And call her Ida, tho' I knew her not,
And call her sweet, as if in irony,
And call her hard and cold which seem'd a truth:
And still she fear'd that I should lose my mind,
And often she believed that I should die:
Till out of long frustration of her care,
And pensive tendance in the all-weary noons
And watches in the dead, the dark, when clocks
Throbb'd thunder thro' the palace floors, or call'd
On flying Time from all their silver tongues—
And out of memories of her kindlier days,
And sidelong glances at my father's grief,
And at the happy lovers heart in heart—
And out of haunttings of my spoken love,
And lonely listenings to my mutter'd dream,
And often feeling of the helpless hands,
And wordless broodings on the wasted cheek—
From all a closer interest flourish'd up,
Tenderness touch by touch, and last, to these,
Love, like an Alpine harebell hung with tears
By some cold morning glacier; frail at first
And feeble, all unconscious of itself,
But such as gather'd color day by day.

Last I woke sane, but well-nigh close to death
For weakness: it was evening: silent light

88. the dead, dead of night.
Slept on the painted walls, wherein were wrought
Two grand designs: for on one side arose
The women up in wild revolt, and storm'd
At the Oppian law. Titanic shapes, they cramm'd
The forum, and half-crush'd among the rest
A dwarf-like Cato cower'd. On the other side
Hortensia spoke against the tax; behind,
A train of dames; by axe and eagle sat,
With all their foreheads drawn in Roman scowls,
And half the wolf's-milk curdled in their veins,
The fierce triumvers; and before them paused
Hortensia pleading: angry was her face.

I saw the forms: I knew not where I was:
They did but look like hollow shows; nor more

109. the Oppian law. In B.C. 215, during the second Punic War, when Rome was in extreme peril from Hannibal, the Tribune Caius Oppius carried a Sumptuary Law, to restrain the luxury of the Roman women in the matter of dress, ornaments, etc. Twenty years afterwards, the crisis having passed, the women rose in fury and forced its repeal, in spite of the determined opposition of Cato. The Roman historian, Livy, gives a graphic account of the tumultuous excitement and wild energy displayed by the women on this occasion Titanic, colossal; cf. The Day-Dream, 229—"Titanic forces." The Titans were in Greek Mythology the gigantic sons of Heaven and Earth, who inhabited the universe during the primeval chaos.

112. the tax. The assassination of Julius Cæsar (B.C. 44) having thrown Rome into great confusion, there was formed not long afterwards a Commission of Public Safety, consisting of Anthony, Octavian, and Lepidus. These three, having declared war against Brutus and Cassius, sought to defray the necessary expenses of the campaign by levying a tax on wealthy matrons, but the eloquence of Hortensia procured the rejection of the proposal.

113. by axe and eagle. These were the two emblems of official authority in the Roman Republic, the former signifying the civil power of punishment, and being always borne before the Magistrates in public, the latter typifying military strength and prowess, and forming the chief standard of the army.

115. wolf's-milk. According to an old legend Romulus, the founder of Rome, was suckled by a wolf

119. They did but look like hollow shows. This originally ran:—"Sad phantoms conjured out of circumstance, Ghosts of the fading brain, they seem'd."
Sweet Ida: palm to palm she sat: the dew
Dwelt in her eyes, and softer all her shape
And rounder seem'd: I moved: I sigh'd: a touch
Came round my wrist, and tears upon my hand:
Then all for languor and self-pity ran
Mine down my face, and with what life I had,
And like a flower that cannot all unfold,
So drench'd it is with tempest, to the sun,
Yet, as it may, turns toward him, I on her
Fixt my faint eyes, and utter'd whisperingly:

"If you be, what I think you, some sweet
dream,
I would but ask you to fulfill yourself:
But if you be that Ida whom I knew,
I ask you nothing: only, if a dream,
Sweet dream, be perfect. I shall die to-night.
Stoop down and seem to kiss me ere I die."

I could no more, but lay like one in trance,
That hears his burial talk'd of by his friends,
And cannot speak, nor move, nor make 'one sign,
But lies and dreads his doom. She turn'd; she paused;
She stoop'd; and out of languor leapt a cry;

120. the dew. Cf. II. 295-6.
121-122. softer ... seem'd, as though in sympathy with the change that had come over her heart.
124. all for languor, out of sheer weakness.
140. languor, deathly weakness.
Leapt fiery Passion from the brinks of death;  
And I believed that in the living world  
My spirit closed with Ida’s at the lips;  
Till back I fell, and from mine arms she rose  
Glowing all over noble shame; and all  
Her falser self slipt from her like a robe,  
And left her woman, lovelier in her mood  
Than in her mould that other, when she came  
From barren deeps to conquer all with love;  
And down the streaming crystal dropt; and she  
Far-fleeted by the purple island-sides.  
Naked, a double light in air and wave,  
To meet her Graces, where they deck’d her out  
For worship without end; nor end of mine,  
Stateliest, for thee! but mute she glided forth,  
Nor glanced behind her, and I sank and slept,  
Fill’d thro, and thro, with Love, a happy sleep.

141–143. Leapt...at the lips. This originally ran:—  
“Crown’d Passion from the brinks of death, and up  
Along the shuddering senses struck the soul,  
And closed on fire with Ida’s at the lips.”

142. the living world seems to mean [that the kiss was a reality and  
not one of his weird seizures. H. T.]

143. My spirit...lips. Cf. Locksley Hall, 38—  
“And our spirits rush’d together at the touching of the lips.”

145. Glowing...shame. See note on II. 166.

146. Her falser self, i.e., the false unwomanly element in her.

147. woman, emphatic—“pure woman.”

147–154. lovelier...without end. This is a beautiful description of  
the traditional birth of Venus, whose Greek name Aphrodite, perhaps signi-  
ifies “foam-born.” On rising from the sea (“barren,” a common  
epithet of the sea in Greek poetry, is here aptly used to accentuate the  
contrast between the origin of the Goddess and her function) she was  
taken charge of by the Graces, whose duty it was to adorn her and keep  
her beautiful. The islands specially devoted to her service were Cyprus,  
Cos, and Cythera.

154. mine, i.e., my worship.

155. thee, the Princess.
Deep in the night I woke: she, near me, held
A volume of the Poets of her land:
There to herself, all in low tones, she read.

"Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white:
Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk;
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry font:
The fire-fly wakens: waken thou with me.

Now droops the milk-white peacock like a ghost,
And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

Now lies the Earth all Danaë to the stars,
And all thy heart lies open unto me.

Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves
A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me.

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,
And slips into the bosom of the lake:
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip
Into my bosom and be lost in me."

I heard her turn the page; she found a small Sweet Idyl, and once more, as low, she read:

"Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height:

167. all Danae to the stars, i.e., wholly open to their influence Danaë was an Argive Princess, who was confined in an inaccessible tower for safety, but Zeus obtained admittance to her in the form of a shower of gold."
What pleasure lives in height (the shepherd sang)
In height and cold, the splendor of the hills?
But cease to move so near the Heavens, and cease
To glide a sunbeam by the blasted Pine,
To sit a star upon the sparkling spire;
And come, for Love is of the valley, come,
For Love is of the valley, come thou down
And find him; by the happy threshold, he,
Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize,
Or red with spited purple of the vats,
Or foxlike in the vine; nor cares to walk
With Death and Morning on the silver horns,
Nor wilt thou snare him in the white ravine,
Nor find him dropt upon the firths of ice,
That huddling slant in furrow-cloven falls
To roll the torrent out of dusky doors:
But follow; let the torrent dance thee down.
To find him in the valley; let the wild
Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and leave
The monstrous ledges there to slope, and spill
Their thousand wreaths of dangling water-smoke,
That like a broken purpose waste in air:
So waste not thou; but come; for all the vales
Await thee; azure pillars of the hearth
Arize to thee; the children call, and I
Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every sound,
Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is sweet;
Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,
The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees.”

189. silver horns, the tops of snow-capped mountains.
190. white, snowy.
191. firths of ice, glaciers.
198. water-smoke, spray (cascades).
201. azure pillars, the blue-smoke.
So she low-toned; while with shut eyes I lay
Listening; then look'd. Pale was the perfect face;
The bosom with long sighs labor'd; and meek
Seem'd the full lips, and mild the luminous eyes,
And the voice trembled and the hand. She said
Brokenly, that she knew it, she had fail'd
In sweet humility; had fail'd in all;
That all her labor was but as a block
Left in the quarry; but she still were loth,
She still were loth to yield herself to one
That wholly scorn'd to help their equal rights
Against the sons of men, and barbarous laws.
She pray'd me not to judge their cause from her
That wrong'd it, sought far less for truth than power
In knowledge: something wild within her breast,
A greater than all knowledge, beat her down.
And she had nursed me there from week to week:
Much had she learnt in little time. In part
It was ill counsel had misled the girl
To vex true hearts: yet she was but a girl—
"Ah fool, and made myself a Queen of farce!
When comes another such? never, I think,
Till the Sun drop, dead, from the signs."

Her voice
Choked, and her forehead sank upon her hands,
And her great heart thro' all the faultful Past
Went-sorrowing in a pause I dared not break;

230. Till the Sun... signs, i.e., till the final dissolution of Nature. The expression has reference to the old-world partition of the zodiac into twelve districts, each known by the name of some animal or other distinguishing "sign," as "the Lion," "the Fishes," "the Virgin," "The Scales."
Till notice of a change in the dark world
Was lispt about the acacias, and a bird,
That early woke to feed her little ones,
Sent from a dewy breast a cry for light:
She moved, and at her feet the volume fell.

"Blame not thyself too much," I said, "nor blame
Too much the sons of men and barbarous laws;
These were the rough ways of the world till now.
Henceforth thou hast a helper, me, that know
The woman's cause is man's: they rise or sink
Together, dwarf'd or godlike, bond or free:
For she that out of Lethe scales with man
The shining steps of Nature, shares with man
His nights, his days, moves with him to one goal,
Stays all the fair young planet in her hands—
If she be small, slight-natured, miserable,
How shall men grow? but work no more alone!
Our place is much: as far as in us lies
We two will serve them both in aiding her—
Will clear away the parasitic forms
That seem to keep her up but drag her down—
Will leave her space to burgeon out of all
Within her—let her make herself her own

234. Change, dawn.
245. out of Lethe, oblivion, from her birth. Lethe (oblivion), was a river in Hades.
248. Stays... in her hands, controls the destiny of the future inhabitants of the planet.
253. forms, conventionalities.
255. burgeon, blossom
To give or keep, to live and learn and be
All that not harms distinctive womanhood.
For woman is not undevelop man,
But diverse: could we make her as the man,
Sweet Love were slain: his dearest bond is this,
Not like to like, but like in difference.
Yet in the long years liker must they grow
The man be more of woman, she of man:
He gain in sweetness and in moral height,
Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw the world;
She mental breadth, nor fail in childward care,
Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind;
Till at the last she set herself to man,
Like perfect music unto noble words;
And so these twain, upon the skirts of Time,
Sit side by side, full-summ'd in all their powers,
Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,
Self-reverent each and reverencing each,
Distinct in individualities,
But like each other ev'n as those who love.
Then comes the statelier Eden back to men:
Then reign the world's great bridals, chaste and calm:
Then springs the crowning race of humankind.
May these things be!"

272. full-summed, developed.

Lines 271—9 may be paraphrased thus: — "And so these two, the man and the woman, in some distant age, when the fulness of time has come, shall sit throned together, in perfect development of soul and body, sowing the seeds that shall ripen to the harvest of the future, each inspired with a strong reverence both for self and for the other, each distinct from the other in the special characteristics of sex, but both enjoying the perfect unity that springs from perfect love. Then shall come back perfection.
—Wallace.
Sighing she spoke "I fear they will not."

"Dear, but let us type them now In our own lives, and this proud watchward rest Of equal; seeing either sex alone Is half itself, and in true marriage lies Nor equal, nor unequal: each fulfils Defect in each, and always thought in thought, Purpose in purpose, will in will, they grow, The single pure and perfect animal, The two-cell'd heart beating, with one full stroke, Life."

And sighing she spoke: "A dream That once was mine! what woman taught you this?"

"Alone," I said, "from earlier than I know, Immersed in rich foreshadowings of the world, I loved the woman: he, that doth not, lives A drowning life, besotted in sweet self, Or pines in sad experience worse than death, Or keeps his wing'd affections clipt with crime: Yet was there one thro' whom I loved her, one Not learned, save in gracious household ways, Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants, No Angel, but a dearer being, all dipt In Angel instincts, breathing Paradise,

Interpreter between the Gods and men,

281 type, typify, exemplify
282 rest, be no more mentioned.
Who look'd all native to her place, and yet
On tiptoe seem'd to touch upon a sphere
Too gross to tread, and all male minds perforce
Sway'd to her from their orbits as they moved,
And girdled her with music. Happy he
With such a mother! faith in woman kind
Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high
Comes easy to him, and tho' he tript and fall
He shall not blind his soul with clay."

"But I,"

Said Ida, tremulously, "so all unlike—
It seems you love to cheat yourself with words:
This mother is your model. I have heard
Of your strange doubts: they well might be: I seem
A mockery to my own self. Never, Prince;
You cannot love me."

"Nay but thee" I said
"From yearlong poring on thy pictured eyes,
Ere seen I loved, and loved thee seen, and saw
Thee woman thro' the crust of iron moods
That mask'd thee from men's reverence up, and forced
Sweet love on pranks of saucy boyhood: now,
Giv'n back to life, to life indeed, thro' thee,
Indeed I love: the new day comes, the light,
Dearer for night, as dearer thou for faults

308. This figure is derived from the poetical belief in the "Music of the Spheres."

321. Thee woman, thee, a true woman; the crust of iron moods, the outward shell of severity.
Lived over: lift thine eyes; my doubts are dead,
My haunting sense of hollow shows: the change,
This truthful change in thee has kill’d it. Dear,
Look up, and let thy nature strike on mine,
Like yonder morning on the blind half-world;
Approach and fear not; breathe upon my brows;
In that fine air I tremble, all the past.
Melts mist-like into this bright hour, and this
Is morn to more, and all the rich to come
Reels, as the golden autumn woodland reels
Athwart the smoke of burning weeds. Forgive me,
I waste my heart in signs: let be. My bride,
My wife, my life. O we will walk this world,
Yoked in all exercise of noble end,
And so thro’ those dark gates across the wild
That no man knows. Indeed I love thee: come,
Yield thyself up: my hopes and thine are one:
Accomplish thou my manhood and thyself;
Lay thy sweet hands in mine and trust to me.”

331. blind half-world, the hemisphere that is yet wrapped in darkness.
333. signs, mere words.
340. end, aim.
341. dark gates, i.e., of death.
CONCLUSION.

So closed our tale, of which I give you all
The random scheme as wildly as it rose:
The words are mostly mine; for when we ceased
There came a minute's pause, and Walter said,
"I wish she had not yielded!" then to me,
"What, if you dressed it up poetically!"
So pray'd the men, the women: I gave assent:
Yet how to bind the scattered scheme of seven
Together in one sheaf? What style could suit?
The men required that I should give throughout
The sort of mock-heroic gigantesque,
With which we banter'd little Lilia first:
The women — and perhaps they felt their power,
For something in the ballads which they sang,
Or in their silent influence as they sat,
Had ever seem'd to wrestle with burlesque,
And drove us, last, to quite a solemn close —
They hated banter, wish'd for something real,
A gallant fight, a noble princess — why
Not make her true-heroic — true-sublime?
Or all, they said, as earnest as the close?
Which yet with such a framework scarce could be.
Then rose a little feud betwixt the two,
Betwixt the mockers and the realists:
And I, betwixt them both, to please them both,
And yet to give the story as it rose,
I moved as in a strange diagonal,
And maybe neither pleased myself nor them.

But Lilia pleased me, for she took no part
In our dispute: the sequel of the tale
Had touch'd her; and she sat, she pluck'd the grass,
She flung it from her, thinking: last, she fixt
A showery glance upon her aunt, and said,
"You—tell us what we are" who might have told,
For she was cramm'd with theories out of books,
But that there rose a shout: the gates were closed
At sunset, and the crowd were swarming now,
To take their leave, about the garden rails.

So I and some went out to these: we climb'd
The slope to Vivian-place, and turning saw
The happy valleys, half in light, and half
Far-shadowing from the west, a land of peace;
Gray halls alone among their massive groves;
Trim hamlets; here and there a rustic tower
Half-lost in belts of hop and breadths of wheat;
The shimmering glimpses of a stream; the seas;
A red sail, or a white; and far beyond,
Imagined more than seen, the skirts of France.

27. as in a strange diagonal. This is an illustration of the character of the treatment of the story, which does not maintain a consistent tone throughout, but, having begun in a festive mood, proceeds gradually though irregularly to a grave conclusion.
33. showery, tearful.
"Look there, a garden!" said my college friend, The Tory member's elder son, "and there! God bless the narrow sea which keeps her off, And keeps our Britain, whole within herself, A nation yet, the rulers and the ruled — Some sense of duty, something of a faith, Some reverence for the laws ourselves have made Some patient force to change them when we will, Some civic manhood firm against the crowd — But yonder, whiff! there comes a sudden heat, The gravest citizen seems to lose his head, The king is scared, the soldier will not fight, The little boys begin to shoot and stab, A kingdom topples over with a shriek Like an old woman, and down rolls the world In mock heroics stranger than our own; Revolts, republics, revolutions, most. No graver than a schoolboys' barring out; Too comic for the solemn things they are, Too solemn for the comic touches in them, Like our wild Princess with as wise a dream As some of theirs — God bless the narrow seas! I wish they were a whole Atlantic broad."

"Have patience," I replied, "ourselves are full

48. skirts, the borders, coasts.
49. a garden! England.
50. there! France; Tory member, member of Conservative Party of English Parliament.
51. narrow sea. English channel.
58. yonder. France; heat, revolution, political disturbance.
66 no graver, of no more importance.
barring out, barring the door against the school teacher.
Of social wrong; and maybe wildest
Are but the needful preludes of the truth.
For me, the genial day, the happy crowd,
The sport half-science, fill me with a faith.
This fine old world of ours is but a child
Yet in the go-cart. Patience! Give it time
To learn its limbs: there is a hand that guides."

In such discourse we gain'd the garden rails,
And there we saw Sir Walter where he stood,
Before a tower of crimson holly-oaks,
Among six boys, head under head, and look'd
No little lily-handed Baronet he,
A great broad-shoulder'd genial Englishman,
A lord of fat prize-oxen and of sheep,
A raiser of huge melons and of pine,
A patron of some thirty charities,
A pamphleteer on guano and on grain,
A quarter-sessions chairman, abler none;
Fair-hair'd and redder than a windy morn;
Now shaking hands with him, now him, of those
That stood the nearest — now address'd to speech —
Who spoke few words and pithy, such as closed
Welcome, farewell, and welcome for the year
To follow: a shout rose again, and made

94. closed, included.

78. go-cart, a framework on rollers that was formerly used to support children while learning to walk.
82. Holly-oaks, hollyhocks.
87. pine, pineapples.
90. quarter-session chairman, justice of the peace.
of the approaching rookery swerve
ms, and shook the branches of the deer
e to slope thro' distant ferns, and rang
the bourn of sunset; O, a shout

e joyful than the city-roar that hails
dremier or king! Why should not these great Sirs
Give up their parks some dozen times a year
To let the people breathe? So thrice they cried,
I likewise, and in groups they stream'd away.

But we went back to the Abbey, and sat on,
So much the gathering darkness charm'd: we sat
But spoke not, rapt in nameless reverie,
Perchance upon the future man: the walls
Blacken'd about us, bats wheel'd, and owls
whoop'd,
And gradually the powers of the night,
That range above the region of the wind,
Deepening the courts of twilight broke them up
Thro' all the silent spaces of the worlds,
Beyond all thought into the Heaven of Heavens.

Last little Lilia, rising quietly,
Disrobed the glimmering statue of Sir Ralph
From those rich silks, and home well-pleased we went.

---

97. rookery, the rooks, a species of crow.
98. branches, antlers.
100. bourn, limit.
112. the region of the wind, the atmosphere.
113. broke them up, divided the darkness, i.e., the stars began to shine.
5th Grade.

33. The Chimæra. (Hawthorne.)
34. Paradise of Children. (Hawthorne.)
92. Audubon.
102. Nathan Hale.

6th Grade.

15. Legend of Sleepy Hollow. (Irving.)
16. Rip Van Winkle, etc. (Irving.)
32. King of the Golden River. (Ruskin.)
39. We are Seven, etc. (Wordsworth.)
47. Rab and His Friends.
50. Christmas Eve, etc. (Irving.)
54. Pied Piper of Hamelin. (Browning.)
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