

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

Felicia Dorothea Browne Hemans

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The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

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THE FOREST SANCTUARY.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

*Ihr Plätze aller meiner stillen freuden,
Euch lass' ich hinter mir auf immerdar!
So ist des geistes ruf an mich ergangen,
Mich treibt nicht eitles, irdisches verlangen.*

Die Jungfrau von Orleans.

*Long time against oppression have I fought,
And for the native liberty of faith
Have bled and suffer'd bonds.*

Remorse, a Tragedy.

The following Poem is intended to describe the mental conflicts, as well as outward sufferings, of a Spaniard, who, flying from the religious persecutions of his own country in the 16th century, takes refuge with his child in a North American forest. The story is supposed to be related by himself amidst the wilderness which has afforded him an asylum.

THE FOREST SANCTUARY.

I.

THE voices of my home! I hear them still!
They have been with me through the dreamy night
The blessed household voices, wont to fill
My heart's clear depths with unalloy'd delight!
I hear them still, unchang'd: though some from earth
Are music parted, and the tones of mirth
Wild, silvery tones, that rang through days more bright!
Have died in others, yet to me they come,
Singing of boyhood back the voices of my home!

II.

They call me through this hush of woods, reposing
In the grey stillness of the summer morn,
They wander by when heavy flowers are closing,
And thoughts grow deep, and winds and stars are born;
Ev'n as a fount's remember'd gushings burst
On the parch'd traveller in his hour of thirst,
E'en thus they haunt me with sweet sounds, till worn
By quenchless longings, to my soul I say
Oh! for the dove's swift wings, that I might flee away,

III.

And find mine ark! yet whither? I must bear
A yearning heart within me to the grave.
I am of those o'er whom a breath of air
Just darkening in its course the lake's bright wave,
And sighing through the feathery canes hath power

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

To call up shadows, in the silent hour,
From the dim past, as from a wizard's cave!
So must it be! These skies above me spread,
Are they my own soft skies? Ye rest not here, my dead!

IV.

Ye far amidst the southern flowers lie sleeping,
Your graves all smiling in the sunshine clear,
Save one! a blue, lone, distant main is sweeping
High o'er *one* gentle head ye rest not here!
'Tis not the olive, with a whisper swaying,
Not thy low riplings, glassy water, playing
Through my own chesnut groves, which fill mine ear;
But the faint echoes in my breast that dwell,
And for their birth-place moan, as moans the ocean-shell .

V.

Peace! I will dash these fond regrets to earth,
Ev'n as an eagle shakes the cumbering rain
From his strong pinion. Thou that gav'st me birth,
And lineage, and once home, my native Spain!
My own bright land my father's land my child's!
What hath thy son brought from thee to the wilds?
He hath brought marks of torture and the chain,
Traces of things which pass not as a breeze,
A blighted name, dark thoughts, wrath, woe thy gifts are these.

VI.

A blighted name I hear the winds of morn
Their sounds are not of this! I hear the shiver
Of the green reeds, and all the rustlings, borne
From the high forest, when the light leaves quiver:
Their sounds are not of this! the cedars, waving,
Lend it no tone: His wide savannahs laving,
It is not murmur'd by the joyous river!
What part hath mortal name, where God alone
Speaks to the mighty waste, and through its heart is known?

VII.

Is it not much that I may worship Him,
With nought my spirit's breathings to control,
And feel His presence in the vast, and dim,
And whispery woods, where dying thunders roll

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

From the far cataracts? Shall I not rejoice
That I have learn'd at last to know *His* voice
From man's? I will rejoice! my soaring soul
Now hath redeem'd her birth—right of the day,
And won, through clouds, to Him, her own unfetter'd way!

VIII.

And thou, my boy! that silent at my knee
Dost lift to mine thy soft, dark, earnest eyes,
Fill'd with the love of childhood, which I see
Pure through its depths, a thing without disguise;
Thou that hast breath'd in slumber on my breast,
When I have check'd its throbs to give thee rest,
Mine own! whose young thoughts fresh before me rise!
Is it not much that I may guide thy prayer,
And circle thy glad soul with free and healthful air?

IX.

Why should I weep on thy bright head, my boy?
Within thy fathers' halls thou wilt not dwell,
Nor lift their banner, with a warrior's joy,
Amidst the sons of mountain chiefs, who fell
For Spain of old. Yet what if rolling waves
Have borne us far from our ancestral graves?
Thou shalt not feel thy bursting heart rebel
As mine hath done; nor bear what I have borne,
Casting in falsehood's mould th' indignant brow of scorn.

X.

This shall not be thy lot, my blessed child!
I have not sorrow'd, struggled, liv'd in vain
Hear me! magnificent and ancient wild;
And mighty rivers, ye that meet the main,
As deep meets deep; and forests, whose dim shade
The flood's voice, and the wind's, by swells pervade;
Hear me! 'tis well to die, and not complain,
Yet there are hours when the charg'd heart must speak,
Ev'n in the desert's ear to pour itself, or break!

XI.

I see an oak before me, it hath been
The crown'd one of the woods; and might have flung
Its hundred arms to Heaven, still freshly green,

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

But a wild vine around the stem hath clung,
From branch to branch close wreaths of bondage throwing,
Till the proud tree, before no tempest bowing,
Hath shrunk and died, those serpent-folds among.
Alas! alas! what is it that I see?
An image of man's mind, land of my sires, with thee!

XII.

Yet art thou lovely! Song is on thy hills
Oh sweet and mournful melodies of Spain,
That lull'd my boyhood, how your memory thrills
The exile's heart with sudden-wakening pain!
Your sounds are on the rocks that I might hear
Once more the music of the mountaineer!
And from the sunny vales the shepherd's strain
Floats out, and fills the solitary place
With the old tuneful names of Spain's heroic race.

XIII.

But there was silence one bright, golden day,
Through my own pine-hung mountains. Clear, yet lone
In the rich autumn light the vineyards lay,
And from the fields the peasant's voice was gone;
And the red grapes untrodden strew'd the ground,
And the free flocks untended roam'd around:
Where was the pastor? where the pipe's wild tone?
Music and mirth were hush'd the hills among,
While to the city's gates each hamlet pour'd its throng.

XIV.

Silence upon the mountains! But within
The city's gates a rush a press a swell
Of multitudes their torrent way to win;
And heavy boomings of a dull deep bell,
A dead pause following each like that which parts
The dash of billows, holding breathless hearts
Fast in the hush of fear knell after knell;
And sounds of thickening steps, like thunder-rain,
That splashes on the roof of some vast echoing fane!

XV.

What pageant's hour approach'd? The sullen gate
Of a strong ancient prison-house was thrown

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

Back to the day. And who, in mournful state,
Came forth, led slowly o'er its threshold—stone?
They that had learn'd, in cells of secret gloom,
How sunshine is forgotten! They, to whom
The very features of mankind were grown
Things that bewilder'd! O'er their dazzled sight,
They lifted their wan hands, and cower'd before the light!

XVI.

To this man brings his brother! Some were there,
Who with their desolation had entwin'd
Fierce strength, and girt the sternness of despair
Fast round their bosoms, ev'n as warriors bind
The breast—plate on for fight: but brow and cheek
Seem'd *theirs* a torturing panoply to speak!
And there were some, from whom the very mind
Had been wrung out: they smil'd oh! startling smile
Whence man's high soul is fled! where doth it sleep the while?

XVII.

But onward moved the melancholy train,
For their false creeds in fiery pangs to die.
This was the solemn sacrifice of Spain
Heaven's offering from the land of chivalry!
Through thousands, thousands of their race they mov'd
Oh! how unlike all others! the belov'd,
The free, the proud, the beautiful! whose eye
Grew fix'd before them, while a people's breath
Was hush'd, and its one soul bound in the thought of death!

XVIII.

It might be that amidst the countless throng,
There swell'd some heart with Pity's weight oppress'd,
For the wide stream of human love is strong;
And woman, on whose fond and faithful breast
Childhood is rear'd, and at whose knee the sigh
Of its first prayer is breath'd, she, too, was nigh.
But life is dear, and the free footstep bless'd,
And home a sunny place, where each may fill
Some eye with glistening smiles, and therefore all were still

XIX.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

All still youth, courage, strength! a winter laid,
A chain of palsy, cast on might and mind!
Still, as at noon a southern forest's shade,
They stood, those breathless masses of mankind;
Still, as a frozen torrent! but the wave
Soon leaps to foaming freedom they, the brave,
Endur'd they saw the martyr's place assign'd
In the red flames whence is the withering spell
That numbs each human pulse? they saw, and thought it well.

XX.

And I, too, thought it well! That very morn
From a far land I came, yet round me clung
The spirit of my own. No hand had torn
With a strong grasp away the veil which hung
Between mine eyes and truth. I gaz'd, I saw,
Dimly, as through a glass. In silent awe
I watch'd the fearful rites; and if there sprung
One rebel feeling from its deep founts up,
Shuddering, I flung it back, as guilt's own poison-cup.

XXI.

But I was waken'd as the dreamers waken
Whom the shrill trumpet and the shriek of dread
Rouse up at midnight, when their walls are taken,
And they must battle till their blood is shed
On their own threshold-floor. A path for light
Through my torn breast was shatter'd by the might
Of the swift thunder-stroke and Freedom's tread
Came in through ruins, late, yet not in vain,
Making the blighted place all green with life again.

XXII.

Still darkly, slowly, as a sullen mass
Of cloud, o'ersweeping, without wind, the sky,
Dream-like I saw the sad procession pass,
And mark'd its victims with a tearless eye.
They mov'd before me but as pictures, wrought
Each to reveal some secret of man's thought,
On the sharp edge of sad mortality,
Till in his place came one oh! could it be?
My friend, my heart's first friend! and did I gaze on thee?

XXIII.

THEFOREST SANCTUARY.

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On thee! with whom in boyhood I had play'd,
At the grape-gatherings, by my native streams;
And to whose eye my youthful soul had laid
Bare, as to Heaven's, its glowing world of dreams;
And by whose side midst warriors I had stood,
And in whose helm was brought oh! earn'd with blood
The fresh wave to my lips, when tropic beams
Smote on my fever'd brow! Ay, years had pass'd,
Severing our paths, brave friend! and *thus* we met at last!

XXIV.

I see it still the lofty mien thou borest
On thy pale forehead sat a sense of power!
The very look that once thou brightly worest,
Cheering me onward through a fearful hour,
When we were girt by Indian bow and spear,
Midst the white Andes ev'n as mountain deer,
Hemm'd in our camp but thro' the javelin shower
We rent our way, a tempest of despair!
And thou hadst thou but died with thy true brethren there!

XXV.

I call the fond wish back for thou hast perish'd
More nobly far, my Alvar! making known
The might of truth ; and be thy memory cherish'd
With theirs, the thousands, that around her throne
Have pour'd their lives out smiling, in that doom
Finding a triumph, if denied a tomb!
Ay, with their ashes hath the wind been sown,
And with the wind their spirit shall be spread,
Filling man's heart and home with records of the dead.

XXVI.

Thou Searcher of the Soul! in whose dread sight
Not the bold guilt alone, that mocks the skies,
But the scarce-own'd, unwhisper'd thought of night,
As a thing written with the sunbeam lies;
Thou know'st whose eye through shade and depth can see.
That this man's crime was but to worship thee,
Like those that made their hearts thy sacrifice,
The call'd of yore; wont by the Saviour's side,
On the dim Olive-Mount to pray at eventide.

XXVII.

THEFOREST SANCTUARY.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

For the strong spirit will at times awake,
Piercing the mists that wrap her clay-abode;
And, born of thee, she may not always take
Earth's accents for the oracles of God;
And ev'n for this O dust, whose mask is power!
Reed, that wouldst be a scourge thy little hour!
Spark, whereon yet the mighty hath not trod,
And therefore thou destroyest! where were flown
Our hope, if man were left to man's decree alone?

XXVIII.

But this I felt not yet. I could but gaze
On him, my friend; while that swift moment threw
A sudden freshness back on vanish'd days,
Like water-drops on some dim picture's hue;
Calling the proud time up, when first I stood
Where banners floated, and my heart's quick blood
Sprang to a torrent as the clarion blew,
And he his sword was like a brother's worn,
That watches through the field his mother's youngest born.

XXIX.

But a lance met me in that day's career,
Senseless I lay amidst th' o'ersweeping fight,
Wakening at last how full, how strangely clear,
That scene on memory flash'd! the shivery light,
Moonlight, on broken shields the plain of slaughter,
The fountain-side the low sweet sound of water
And Alvar bending o'er me from the night
Covering me with his mantle! all the past
Flow'd back my soul's far chords all answer'd to the blast.

XXX.

Till, in that rush of visions, I became
As one that by the bands of slumber wound,
Lies with a powerless, but all-thrilling frame,
Intense in consciousness of sight and sound,
Yet buried in a wildering dream which brings
Lov'd faces round him, girt with fearful things!
Troubled ev'n thus I stood, but chain'd and bound
On that familiar form mine eye to keep
Alas! I might not fall upon his neck and weep!

XXXI.

THEFOREST SANCTUARY.

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He pass'd me and what next? I look'd on two,
Following his footsteps to the same dread place,
For the same guilt his sisters ! Well I knew
The beauty on those brows, though each young face
Was chang'd so deeply chang'd! a dungeon's air
Is hard for lov'd and lovely things to bear,
And ye, O daughters of a lofty race,
Queen-like Theresa! radiant Inez! flowers
So cherish'd! were ye then but rear'd for those dark hours?

XXXII.

A mournful home, young sisters! had ye left,
With your lutes hanging hush'd upon the wall,
And silence round the aged man, bereft
Of each glad voice, once answering to his call.
Alas, that lonely father! doom'd to pine
For sounds departed in his life's decline,
And, midst the shadowing banners of his hall,
With his white hair to sit, and deem the name
A hundred chiefs had borne, cast down by you to shame !

XXXIII.

And woe for you, midst looks and words of love,
And gentle hearts and faces, nurs'd so long!
How had I seen you in your beauty move,
Wearing the wreath, and listening to the song!
Yet sat, ev'n then, what seem'd the crowd to shun,
Half veil'd upon the clear pale brow of one,
And deeper thoughts than oft to youth belong,
Thoughts, such as wake to evening's whispery sway,
Within the drooping shade of her sweet eyelids lay.

XXXIV.

And if she mingled with the festive train,
It was but as some melancholy star
Beholds the dance of shepherds on the plain,
In its bright stillness present, though afar.
Yet would she smile and that, too, hath its smile
Circled with joy which reach'd her not the while,
And bearing a lone spirit, not at war
With earthly things, but o'er their form and hue
Shedding too clear a light, too sorrowfully true.

XXXV.

THEFOREST SANCTUARY.

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But the dark hours wring forth the hidden might
Which hath lain bedded in the silent soul,
A treasure all undreamt of; as the night
Calls out the harmonies of streams that roll
Unheard by day. It seem'd as if her breast
Had hoarded energies, till then suppress'd
Almost with pain, and bursting from control,
And finding first that hour their pathway free:
Could a rose brave the storm, such might her emblem be!

XXXVI.

For the soft gloom whose shadow still had hung
On her fair brow, beneath its garlands worn,
Was fled; and fire, like prophecy's had sprung
Clear to her kindled eye. It might be scorn
Pride sense of wrong ay, the frail heart is bound
By these at times, ev'n as with adamant round,
Kept so from breaking! yet not *thus* upborne
She mov'd, though some sustaining passion's wave
Lifted her fervent soul a sister for the brave!

XXXVII.

And yet, alas! to see the strength which clings
Round woman in such hours! a mournful sight,
Though lovely! an o'erflowing of the springs,
The full springs of affection, deep as bright!
And she, because her life is ever twin'd
With other lives, and by no stormy wind
May thence be shaken, and because the light
Of tenderness is round her, and her eye
Doth weep such passionate tears therefore she thus can die.

XXXVIII.

Therefore didst *thou* , through that heart-shaking scene,
As through a triumph move; and cast aside
Thine own sweet thoughtfulness for victory's mien,
O faithful sister! cheering thus the guide,
And friend, and brother of thy sainted youth,
Whose hand had led thee to the source of truth,
Where thy glad soul from earth was purified;
Nor wouldst thou, following him through all the past,
That he should see thy step grow tremulous at last.

XXXIX.

THEFOREST SANCTUARY.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

For thou hadst made no deeper love a guest
Midst thy young spirit's dreams, than that which grows
Between the nurtur'd of the same fond breast,
The shelter'd of one roof; and thus it rose
Twin'd in with life. How is it, that the hours
Of the same sport, the gathering early flowers
Round the same tree, the sharing one repose,
And mingling one first prayer in murmurs soft,
From the heart's memory fade, in this world's breath, so oft?

XL.

But thee that breath had touch'd not; thee, nor him,
The true in all things found! and thou wert blest
Ev'n then, that no remember'd change could dim
The perfect image of affection, press'd
Like armour to thy bosom! thou hadst kept
Watch by that brother's couch of pain, and wept,
Thy sweet face covering with thy robe, when rest
Fled from the sufferer; thou hadst bound his faith
Unto thy soul one light, one hope ye chose one death.

XLI.

So didst thou pass on brightly! but for her,
Next in that path, how may *her* doom be spoken!
All-merciful! to think that such things were,
And *are*, and seen by men with hearts unbroken!
To think of that fair girl, whose path had been
So strew'd with rose-leaves, all one fairy scene!
And whose quick glance came ever as a token
Of hope to drooping thought, and her glad voice
As a free bird's in spring, that makes the woods rejoice!

XLII.

And she to die! she lov'd the laughing earth
With such deep joy in its fresh leaves and flowers!
Was not her smile even as the sudden birth
Of a young rainbow, colouring vernal showers?
Yes! but to meet her fawn-like step, to hear
The gushes of wild song, so silvery clear,
Which, oft unconsciously, in happier hours
Flow'd from her lips, was to forget the sway
Of Time and Death below, blight, shadow, dull decay!

XLIII.

THEFOREST SANCTUARY.

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Could this change be? the hour, the scene, where last
I saw that form, came floating o'er my mind:
A golden vintage—eve; the heats were pass'd,
And, in the freshness of the fanning wind,
Her father sat, where gleam'd the first faint star
Through the lime-boughs; and with her light guitar,
She, on the greensward at his feet reclin'd,
In his calm face laugh'd up; some shepherd—lay
Singing, as childhood sings on the lone hills at play.

XLIV.

And now oh God! the bitter fear of death,
The sore amaze, the faint o'ershadowing dread,
Had grasp'd her! panting in her quick—drawn breath,
And in her white lips quivering; onward led,
She look'd up with her dim bewilder'd eyes,
And there smil'd out her own soft brilliant skies,
Far in their sultry southern azure spread,
Glowing with joy, but silent! still they smil'd,
Yet sent down no reprieve for earth's poor trembling child.

XLV.

Alas! that earth had all too strong a hold,
Too fast, sweet Inez! on thy heart, whose bloom
Was given to early love, nor knew how cold
The hours which follow. There was one, with whom,
Young as thou wert, and gentle, and untried,
Thou might'st, perchance, unshrinkingly have died;
But he was far away; and with thy doom
Thus gathering, life grew so intensely dear,
That all thy slight frame shook with its cold mortal fear!

XLVI.

No aid! thou too didst pass! and all had pass'd,
The fearful and the desperate and the strong!
Some like the bark that rushes with the blast,
Some like the leaf swept shiveringly along,
And some as men, that have but one more field
To fight, and then may slumber on their shield,
Therefore they arm in hope. But now the throng
Roll'd on, and bore me with their living tide,
Ev'n as a bark wherein is left no power to guide.

XLVII.

THEFOREST SANCTUARY.

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Wave swept on wave. We reach'd a stately square,
Deck'd for the rites. An altar stood on high,
And gorgeous, in the midst. A place for prayer,
And praise, and offering. Could the earth supply
No fruits, no flowers for sacrifice, of all
Which on her sunny lap unheeded fall?
No fair young firstling of the flock to die,
As when before their God the Patriarchs stood?
Look down! man brings thee, Heaven! his brother's guiltless blood!

XLVIII.

Hear its voice, hear! a cry goes up to thee,
From the stain'd sod; make thou thy judgment known
On him, the shedder! let his portion be
The fear that walks at midnight give the moan
In the wind haunting him a power to say
"Where is thy brother?" and the stars a ray
To search and shake his spirit, when alone
With the dread splendor of their burning eyes!
So shall earth own thy will mercy, not sacrifice!

XLIX.

Sounds of triumphant praise! the mass was sung
Voices that die not might have pour'd such strains!
Thro' Salem's towers might that proud chant have rung,
When the Most High, on Syria's palmy plains,
Had quell'd her foes! so full it swept, a sea
Of loud waves jubilant, and rolling free!
Oft when the wind, as thro' resounding fanes,
Hath fill'd the choral forests with its power,
Some deep tone brings me back the music of that hour.

L.

It died away; the incense-cloud was driven
Before the breeze the words of doom were said;
And the sun faded mournfully from Heaven,
He faded mournfully! and dimly red,
Parting in clouds from those that look'd their last,
And sigh'd "farewell, thou sun!" Eve glow'd and pass'd
Night midnight and the moon came forth and shed
Sleep, even as dew, on glen, wood, peopled spot
Save one a place of death and there men slumber'd not.

LI.

THEFOREST SANCTUARY.

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'Twas not within the city but in sight
Of the snow-crown'd sierras, freely sweeping,
With many an eagle's eyrie on the height,
And hunter's cabin, by the torrent peeping
Far off: and vales between, and vineyards lay,
With sound and gleam of waters on their way,
And chesnut-woods, that girt the happy sleeping,
In many a peasant-home! the midnight sky
Brought softly that rich world round those who came to die.

LII.

The darkly-glorious midnight sky of Spain,
Burning with stars! What had the torches' glare
To do beneath that Temple, and profane
Its holy radiance? By their wavering flare,
I saw beside the pyres I see thee *now* ,
O bright Theresa! with thy lifted brow,
And thy clasp'd hands, and dark eyes fill'd with prayer!
And thee, sad Inez! bowing thy fair head,
And mantling up thy face, all colourless with dread!

LIII.

And Alvar, Alvar! I beheld thee too,
Pale, steadfast, kingly; till thy clear glance fell
On that young sister; then perturb'd it grew,
And all thy labouring bosom seem'd to swell
With painful tenderness. Why came I there,
That troubled image of my friend to bear,
Thence, for my after-years? a thing to dwell
In my heart's core, and on the darkness rise,
Disquieting my dreams with its bright mournful eyes?

LIV.

Why came I? oh! the heart's deep mystery! Why
In man's last hour doth vain affection's gaze
Fix itself down on struggling agony,
To the dimm'd eye-balls freezing, as they glaze?
It might be yet the power to will seem'd o'er
That my soul yearn'd to hear his voice once more!
But mine was fetter'd! mute in strong amaze,
I watch'd his features as the night-wind blew,
And torch-light or the moon's pass'd o'er their marble hue.

LV.

THEFOREST SANCTUARY.

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The trampling of a steed! a tall white steed,
Rending his fiery way the crowds among
A storm's way through a forest came at speed,
And a wild voice cried "Inez!" Swift she flung
The mantle from her face, and gaz'd around,
With a faint shriek at that familiar sound,
And from his seat a breathless rider sprung,
And dash'd off fiercely those who came to part,
And rush'd to that pale girl, and clasp'd her to his heart.

LVI.

And for a moment all around gave way
To that full burst of passion! on his breast,
Like a bird panting yet from fear she lay,
But blest in misery's very lap yet blest!
Oh love, love, strong as death! from such an hour
Pressing out joy by thine immortal power,
Holy and fervent love! had earth but rest
For thee and thine, this world were all too fair!
How could we thence be wean'd to die without despair?

LVII.

But she as falls a willow from the storm,
O'er its own river streaming thus reclin'd
On the youth's bosom hung her fragile form,
And clasping arms, so passionately twin'd
Around his neck with such a trusting fold,
A full deep sense of safety in their hold,
As if nought earthly might th' embrace unbind!
Alas! a child's fond faith, believing still
Its mother's breast beyond the lightning's reach to kill!

LVIII.

Brief rest! upon the turning billow's height,
A strange sweet moment of some heavenly strain,
Floating between the savage gusts of night,
That sweep the seas to foam! Soon dark again
The hour the scene th' intensely present, rush'd
Back on her spirit, and her large tears gush'd
Like blood—drops from a victim; with swift rain
Bathing the bosom where she lean'd that hour,
As if her life would melt into th' o'erswelling shower.

LIX.

THEFOREST SANCTUARY.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

But he, whose arm sustain'd her! oh! I knew
'Twas vain, and yet he hop'd! he fondly strove
Back from her faith her sinking soul to woo,
As life might yet be hers! A dream of love
Which could not look upon so fair a thing,
Remembering how like hope, like joy, like spring,
Her smile was wont to glance, her step to move,
And deem that men indeed, in very truth,
Could mean the sting of death for her soft flowering youth!

LX.

He woo'd her back to life. "Sweet Inez, live!
My blessed Inez! visions have beguil'd
Thy heart abjure them! thou wert form'd to give,
And to find, joy; and hath not sunshine smil'd
Around thee ever? Leave me not, mine own!
Or earth will grow too dark! for thee alone,
Thee have I lov'd, thou gentlest! from a child,
And borne thine image with me o'er the sea,
Thy soft voice in my soul speak! Oh! yet live for me!"

LXI.

She look'd up wildly; these were anxious eyes
Waiting that look sad eyes of troubled thought,
Alvar's Theresa's! Did her childhood rise,
With all its pure and home-affections fraught,
In the brief glance? She clasp'd her hands the strife
Of love, faith, fear, and that vain dream of life,
Within her woman's breast so deeply wrought,
It seem'd as if a reed so slight and weak
Must, in the rending storm not quiver only break!

LXII.

And thus it was the young cheek flush'd and faded,
As the swift blood in currents came and went,
And hues of death the marble brow o'ershaded,
And the sunk eye a watery lustre sent
Thro' its white fluttering lids. Then tremblings pass'd
O'er the frail form, that shook it, as the blast
Shakes the sere leaf, until the spirit rent
Its way to peace the fearful way unknown
Pale in love's arms she lay *she!* what had lov'd was gone!

LXIII.

THEFOREST SANCTUARY.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

Joy for thee, trembler! thou redeem'd one, joy!
Young dove set free! earth, ashes, soulless clay,
Remain'd for baffled vengeance to destroy;
Thy chain was riven! nor hadst thou cast away
Thy hope in thy last hour! though love was there
Striving to wring thy troubled soul from prayer,
And life seem'd robed in beautiful array,
Too fair to leave! but this might be forgiven,
Thou wert so richly crown'd with precious gifts of Heaven!

LXIV.

But woe for him who felt the heart grow still,
Which, with its weight of agony, had lain
Breaking on his! Scarce could the mortal chill
Of the hush'd bosom, ne'er to heave again,
And all the silence curdling round the eye,
Bring home the stern belief that she could die,
That she indeed could die! for wild and vain
As hope might be his soul *had* hoped 'twas o'er
Slowly his failing arms dropp'd from the form they bore.

LXV.

They forc'd him from that spot. It might be well,
That the fierce, reckless words by anguish wrung
From his torn breast, all aimless as they fell,
Like spray—drops from the strife of torrents flung,
Were mark'd as guilt. There are, who note these things
Against the smitten heart; its breaking strings
On whose low thrills once gentle music hung
With a rude hand of touch unholy trying,
And numbering then as crimes, the deep, strange tones replying.

LXVI.

But ye in solemn joy, O faithful pair!
Stood gazing on your parted sister's dust;
I saw your features by the torch's glare,
And they were brightening with a heavenward trust!
I saw the doubt, the anguish, the dismay,
Melt from my Alvar's glorious mien away,
And peace was there the calmness of the just!
And, bending down the slumberer's brow to kiss,
"Thy rest is won," he said : "sweet sister! praise for this!"

LXVII.

THEFOREST SANCTUARY.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

I started as from sleep; yes! he had spoken
A breeze had troubled memory's hidden source!
At once the torpor of my soul was broken
Thought, feeling, passion, woke in tenfold force.
There are soft breathings in the southern wind,
That so your ce-chains, O ye streams! unbind,
And free the foaming swiftness of your course!
I burst from those that held me back, and fell
Ev'n on his neck, and cried "Friend, brother! fare thee well!"

LXVIII.

Did *he* not say "Farewell?" Alas! no breath
Came to mine ear. Hoarse murmurs from the throng
Told that the mysteries in the face of death
Had from their eager sight been veil'd too long.
And we were parted as the surge might part
Those that would die together, true of heart.
His hour was come but in mine anguish strong,
Like a fierce swimmer through the midnight sea,
Blindly I rush'd away from that which was to be.

LXIX.

Away away I rush'd; but swift and high
The arrowy pillars of the firelight grew,
Till the transparent darkness of the sky
Flush'd to a blood-red mantle in their hue;
And, phantom-like, the kindling city seem'd
To spread, float, wave, as on the wind they stream'd,
With their wild splendour chasing me! I knew
The death-work was begun I veil'd mine eyes,
Yet stopp'd in spell-bound fear to catch the victims' cries,

LXX.

What heard I then? a ringing shriek of pain,
Such as for ever haunts the tortur'd ear?
I heard a sweet and solemn-breathing strain
Piercing the flames, untremulous and clear!
The rich, triumphal tones! I knew them well,
As they came floating with a breezy swell!
Man's voice was there a clarion voice to cheer
In the mid-battle ay, to turn the flying
Woman's that might have sung of Heaven beside the dying!

LXXI.

THEFOREST SANCTUARY.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

It was a fearful, yet a glorious thing,
To hear that hymn of martyrdom, and know
That its glad stream of melody could spring
Up from th' unsounded gulfs of human woe!
Alvar! Theresa! what is deep? what strong?
God's breath within the soul! It fill'd that song
From your victorious voices! but the glow
On the hot air and lurid skies increas'd
Faint grew the sounds more faint I listen'd they had ceas'd!

LXXII.

And thou indeed hadst perish'd, my soul's friend!
I might form other ties but thou alone
Couldst with a glance the veil of dimness rend,
By other years o'er boyhood's memory thrown!
Others might aid me onward: Thou and I
Had mingled the fresh thoughts that early die,
Once flowering never more! And thou wert gone!
Who could give back my youth, my spirit free,
Or be in aught again what thou hadst been to me?

LXXIII.

And yet I wept thee not, thou true and brave!
I could not weep! there gather'd round thy name
Too deep a passion! *thou* denied a grave!
Thou, with the blight flung on thy soldier's fame!
Had I not known thy heart from childhood's time?
Thy heart of hearts? and couldst thou die for crime?
No! had all earth decreed that death of shame,
I would have set, against all earth's decree,
Th' inalienable trust of my firm soul in thee!

LXXIV.

There are swift hours in life strong, rushing hours,
That do the work of tempests in their might!
They shake down things that stood as rocks and towers
Unto th' undoubting mind; they pour in light
Where it but startles like a burst of day
For which th' uprooting of an oak makes way;
They sweep the colouring mists from off our sight,
They touch with fire, thought's graven page, the roll
Stamp'd with past years and lo! it shrivels as a scroll!

LXXV.

THEFOREST SANCTUARY.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

And this was of such hours! the sudden flow
Of my soul's tide seem'd whelming me; the glare
Of the red flames, yet rocking to and fro,
Scorch'd up my heart with breathless thirst for air,
And solitude, and freedom. It had been
Well with me then, in some vast desert scene,
To pour my voice out, for the winds to bear
On with them, wildly questioning the sky,
Fiercely th' untroubled stars, of man's dim destiny.

LXXVI.

I would have call'd, adjuring the dark cloud;
To the most ancient Heavens I would have said
"Speak to me! show me truth !" through night aloud
I would have cried to him, the newly dead,
"Come back! and show me truth!" My spirit seem'd
Gasping for some free burst, its darkness teem'd
With such pent storms of thought! again I fled
I fled, a refuge from man's face to gain,
Scarce conscious when I paus'd, entering a lonely fane.

LXXVII.

A mighty minster, dim, and proud, and vast!
Silence was round the sleepers, whom its floor
Shut in the grave; a shadow of the past,
A memory of the sainted steps that wore
Erewhile its gorgeous pavement, seem'd to brood
Like mist upon the stately solitude,
A halo of sad fame to mantle o'er
Its white sepulchral forms of mail-clad men,
And all was hush'd as night in some deep Alpine glen.

LXXVIII.

More hush'd, far more! for there the wind sweeps by,
Or the woods tremble to the streams' loud play!
Here a strange echo made my very sigh
Seem for the place too much a sound of day!
Too much my footstep broke the moonlight, fading,
Yet arch through arch in one soft flow pervading;
And I stood still: prayer, chant, had died away,
Yet past me floated a funereal breath
Of incense. I stood still as before God and death!

LXXIX.

THEFOREST SANCTUARY.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

For thick ye girt me round, ye long-departed !
Dust imaged form with cross, and shield, and crest;
It seem'd as if your ashes would have started,
Had a wild voice burst forth above your rest!
Yet ne'er, perchance, did worshipper of yore
Bear to your thrilling presence what *I* bore
Of wrath doubt anguish battling in the breast!
I could have pour'd out words, on that pale air,
To make your proud tombs ring: no, no! I could not *there!*

LXXX.

Not midst those aisles, through which a thousand years
Mutely as clouds and reverently had swept;
Not by those shrines, which yet the trace of tears
And kneeling votaries on their marble kept!
Ye were too mighty in your pomp of gloom
And trophied age, O temple, altar, tomb!
And you, ye dead! for in that faith ye slept,
Whose weight had grown a mountain's on my heart,
Which could not *there* be loos'd. I turn'd me to depart.

LXXXI.

I turn'd what glimmer'd faintly on my sight,
Faintly, yet brightening, as a wreath of snow
Seen through dissolving haze? The moon, the night,
Had waned, and dawn pour'd in; grey, shadowy, slow,
Yet day-spring still! a solemn hue it caught,
Piercing the storied windows, darkly fraught
With stoles and draperies of imperial glow;
And soft, and sad, that colouring gleam was thrown,
Where, pale, a pictur'd form above the altar shone.

LXXXII.

Thy form, thou Son of God! a wrathful deep,
With foam, and cloud, and tempest, round thee spread,
And such a weight of night! a night, when sleep
From the fierce rocking of the billows fled.
A bark show'd dim beyond thee, with its mast
Bow'd, and its rent sail shivering to the blast;
But, like a spirit in thy gliding tread,
Thou, as o'er glass, didst walk that stormy sea
Through rushing winds, which left a silent path for thee

LXXXIII.

THEFOREST SANCTUARY.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

So still thy white robes fell! no breath of air
Within their long and slumberous folds had sway!
So still the waves of parted, shadowy hair
From thy clear brow flow'd droopingly away!
Dark were the Heavens above thee, Saviour! dark
The gulfs, Deliverer! round the straining bark!
But thou! o'er all thine aspect and array
Was pour'd one stream of pale, broad, silvery light
Thou wert the single star of that all-shrouding night!

LXXXIV.

Aid for one sinking! Thy lone brightness gleam'd
On his wild face, just lifted o'er the wave,
With its worn, fearful; *human* look that seem'd
To cry through surge and blast "I perish save!"
Not to the winds not vainly! thou wert nigh,
Thy hand was stretch'd to fainting agony,
Even in the portals of th' unquiet grave!
O thou that art the life! and yet didst bear
Too much of mortal woe to turn from mortal prayer!

LXXXV.

But was it not a thing to rise on death,
With its remember'd light, that face of thine,
Redeemer! dimm'd by this world's misty breath,
Yet mournfully, mysteriously divine?
Oh! that calm, sorrowful, prophetic eye,
With its dark depths of grief, love, majesty!
And the pale glory of the brow! a shrine
Where Power sat veil'd, yet shedding softly round
What told that *thou* couldst be but for a time uncrown'd!

LXXXVI.

And more than all, the Heaven of that sad smile!
The lip of mercy, our immortal trust!
Did not that look, that very look, erewhile,
Pour its o'ershadow'd beauty on the dust?
Wert thou not such when earth's dark cloud hung o'er thee?
Surely thou wert! my heart grew hush'd before thee,
Sinking with all its passions, as the gust
Sank at thy voice, along its billowy way:
What had I there to do, but kneel, and weep, and pray?

LXXXVII.

THEFOREST SANCTUARY.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

Amidst the stillness rose my spirit's cry
Amidst the dead "By that full cup of woe,
Press'd from the fruitage of mortality,
Saviour! for thee give light! that I may know
If by *thy* will, in thine all-healing name,
Men cast down human hearts to blighting shame,
And early death and say, if this be so,
Where then is mercy? whither shall we flee,
So unallied to hope, save by our hold on thee?

LXXXVIII.

"But didst thou not, the deep sea brightly treading,
Lift from despair that struggler with the wave?
And wert thou not, sad tears, yet awful, shedding,
Beheld, a weeper at a mortal's grave?
And is this weight of anguish, which they bind
On life, this searing to the quick of mind,
That but to God its own free path would crave,
This crushing out of hope, and love, and youth,
Thy will indeed? Give light! that I may know the truth!

LXXXIX.

"For my sick soul is darken'd unto death,
With shadows from the suffering it hath seen
The strong foundations of mine ancient faith
Sink from beneath me whereon shall I lean?
Oh! if from thy pure lips was wrung the sigh
Of the dust's anguish! if like man to die,
And earth round *him* shuts heavily hath been
Even to *thee* bitter, aid me! guide me! turn
My wild and wandering thoughts back from their starless bourne!"

XC.

And calm'd I rose: but how the while had risen
Morn's orient sun, dissolving mist and shade!
Could there indeed be wrong, or chain, or prison.
In the bright world such radiance might pervade?
It fill'd the fane, it mantled the pale form
Which rose before me through the pictured storm,
Even the grey tombs it kindled, and array'd
With life! how hard to see thy race begun,
And think man wakes to grief, wakening to *thee* , O sun!

XCI.

THEFOREST SANCTUARY.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

I sought my home again: and thou, my child,
There at thy play beneath yon ancient pine,
With eyes, whose lightning laughter hath beguil'd
A thousand pangs, thence flashing joy to mine;
Thou in thy mother's arms, a babe, didst meet
My coming with young smiles, which yet, though sweet,
Seem'd on my soul all mournfully to shine,
And ask a happier heritage for thee,
Than but in turn the blight of human hope to see.

XCII.

Now sport, for thou art free the bright birds chasing,
Whose wings waft star-like gleams from tree to tree;
Or with the fawn, thy swift wood-playmate racing,
Sport on, my joyous child! for thou art free!
Yes, on that day I took thee to my heart,
And inly vow'd, for thee a better part
To choose; that so thy sunny bursts of glee
Should wake no more dim thoughts of far-seen woe,
But, gladdening fearless eyes, flow on as now they flow.

XCIII.

Thou hast a rich world round thee: Mighty shades
Weaving their gorgeous tracery o'er thy head,
With the light melting through their high arcades,
As through a pillar'd cloister's : but the dead
Sleep not beneath; nor doth the sunbeam pass
To marble shrines through rainbow-tinted glass;
Yet thou, by fount and forest-murmur led
To worship, thou art blest! to thee is shown
Earth in her holy pomp, deck'd for her God alone.

PART SECOND.

*Wie diese treue liebe seele
Von ihrem Glauben Voll,
Der ganz allein*

*Ihr selig machend ist, sich heilig quäle,
Das sie den liebsten Mann verloren halten soll!*

FAUST

I never shall smile more but all my days
Walk with still footsteps and with humble eyes,
An everlasting hymn within my soul.

WILSON.

I.

PART SECOND.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

BRING me the sounding of the torrent–water,
With yet a nearer swell fresh breeze, awake !
And river, darkening ne'er with hues of slaughter
Thy wave's pure silvery green, and shining lake,
Spread far before my cabin, with thy zone
Of ancient woods, ye chainless things and lone!
Send voices through the forest aisles, and make
Glad music round me, that my soul may dare,
Cheer'd by such tones, to look back on a dungeon's air!

II.

Oh, Indian hunter of the desert's race!
That with the spear at times, or bended bow,
Dost cross my footsteps in thy fiery chase
Of the swift elk or blue hill's flying roe;
Thou that beside the red night–fire thou heapest,
Beneath the cedars and the star–light sleepest,
Thou know'st not, wanderer never may'st thou know!
Of the dark holds wherewith man cumpers earth,
To shut from human eyes the dancing seasons' mirth.

III.

There, fetter'd down from day, to think the while
How bright in Heaven the festal sun is glowing,
Making earth's loneliest places, with his smile,
Flush like the rose; and how the streams are flowing
With sudden sparkles through the shadowy grass,
And water–flowers, all trembling as they pass;
And how the rich dark summer–trees are bowing
With their full foliage; this to know, and pine
Bound unto midnight's heart, seems a stern lot 'twas mine.

IV.

Wherefore was this? Because my soul had drawn
Light from the book whose words are grav'd in light!
There, at its well–head, had I found the dawn,
And day, and noon of freedom: but too bright
It shines on that which man to man hath given,
And call'd the truth the very truth, from Heaven!
And therefore seeks he, in his brother's sight,
To cast the mote; and therefore strives to bind
With his strong chains to earth, what is not earth's the mind!

V.

PART SECOND.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

It is a weary and a bitter task
Back from the lip the burning word to keep,
And to shut out Heaven's air with falsehood's mask,
And in the dark urn of the soul to heap
Indignant feelings making even of thought
A buried treasure, which may but be sought
When shadows are abroad and night and sleep.
I might not brook it long and thus was thrown
Into that grave-like cell, to wither there alone.

VI.

And I a child of danger, whose delights
Were on dark hills and many-sounding seas
I that amidst the Cordillera heights
Had given Castilian banners to the breeze,
And the full circle of the rainbow seen
There, on the snows ; and in my country been
A mountain wanderer, from the Pyrenees
To the Morena crags how left I not
Life, or the soul's life quench'd, on that sepulchral spot?

VII.

Because *Thou* didst not leave me, oh, my God!
Thou wert with those that bore the truth of old
Into the deserts from the oppressor's rod,
And made the caverns of the rock their fold,
And in the hidden chambers of the dead,
Our guiding lamp with fire immortal fed,
And met when stars met, by their beams to hold
The free heart's communing with Thee, and Thou
Wert in the midst, felt, own'd the strengthener then as now!

VIII.

Yet once I sank. Alas! man's wavering mind!
Wherefore and whence the gusts that o'er it blow?
How they bear with them, floating uncombin'd,
The shadows of the past, that come and go,
As o'er the deep the old long-buried things,
Which a storm's working to the surface brings!
Is the reed shaken, and must *we* be so,
With every wind? So, Father! must we be,
Till we can fix undimm'd our stedfast eyes on Thee.

IX.

PART SECOND.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

Once my soul died within me. What had thrown
That sickness o'er it? Even a passing thought
Of a clear spring, whose side, with flowers o'ergrown,
Fondly and oft my boyish steps had sought!
Perchance the damp roof's water-drops, that fell
Just then, low tinkling through my vaulted cell,
Intensely heard amidst the stillness, caught
Some tone from memory, of the music, welling
Ever with that fresh rill, from its deep rocky dwelling.

X.

But so my spirit's fever'd longings wrought,
Wakening, it might be, to the faint sad sound,
That from the darkness of the walls they brought
A lov'd scene round me, visibly around .
Yes! kindling, spreading, brightening, hue by hue,
Like stars from midnight, through the gloom it grew,
That haunt of youth, hope, manhood! till the bound
Of my shut cavern seem'd dissolv'd, and I
Girt by the solemn hills and burning pomp of sky.

XI.

I look'd and lo! the clear broad river flowing,
Past the old Moorish ruin on the steep,
The lone tower dark against a Heaven all glowing,
Like seas of glass and fire! I saw the sweep
Of glorious woods far down the mountain side,
And their still shadows in the gleaming tide,
And the red evening on its waves asleep;
And midst the scene oh! more than all there smil'd
My child's fair face, and hers, the mother of my child!

XII.

With their soft eyes of love and gladness rais'd
Up to the flushing sky, as when we stood
Last by that river, and in silence gaz'd
On the rich world of sunset: but a flood
Of sudden tenderness my soul oppress'd,
And I rush'd forward with a yearning breast,
To clasp alas! a vision! Wave and wood,
And gentle faces, lifted in the light
Of day's last hectic blush, all melted from my sight.

XIII.

PART SECOND.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

Then darkness! oh! th' unutterable gloom
That seem'd as narrowing round me, making less
And less my dungeon, when, with all its bloom,
That bright dream vanish'd from my loneliness!
It floated off, the beautiful! yet left
Such deep thirst in my soul, that thus bereft,
I lay down, sick with passion's vain excess,
And pray'd to die. How oft would sorrow weep
Her weariness to death, if he might come like sleep!

XIV.

But I was rous'd and how? It is no tale
Even midst *thy* shades, thou wilderness, to tell!
I would not have my boy's young cheek made pale,
Nor haunt his sunny rest with what befel
In that drear prison-house. His eye must grow
More dark with thought, more earnest his fair brow,
More high his heart in youthful strength must swell;
So shall it fitly burn when all is told:
Let childhood's radiant mist the free child yet enfold!

XV.

It is enough that through such heavy hours,
As wring us by our fellowship of clay,
I liv'd, and undegraded. We have powers
To snatch th' oppressor's bitter joy away!
Shall the wild Indian, for his savage fame,
Laugh and expire, and shall not truth's high name
Bear up her martyrs with all-conquering sway?
It is enough that Torture may be vain
I had seen Alvar die the strife was won from Pain.

XVI.

And faint not, heart of man! though years wane slow!
There have been those that from the deepest caves,
And cells of night, and fastnesses, below
The stormy dashing of the ocean-waves,
Down, farther down than gold lies hid, have nurs'd
A quenchless hope, and watch'd their time, and burst
On the bright day, like wakeners from the graves!
I was of such at last! unchain'd I trod
This green earth, taking back my freedom from my God!

XVII.

PART SECOND.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

That was an hour to send its fadeless trace
Down life's far sweeping tide! A dim, wild night,
Like sorrow, hung upon the soft moon's face,
Yet how my heart leap'd in her blessed light!
The shepherd's light the sailor's on the sea
The hunter's homeward from the mountains free,
Where its lone smile makes tremulously bright
The thousand streams! I could but gaze through tears
Oh! what a sight is Heaven, thus first beheld for years!

XVIII.

The rolling clouds! they have the whole blue space
Above to sail in all the dome of sky!
My soul shot with them in their breezy race
O'er star and gloom! but I had yet to fly,
As flies the hunted wolf. A secret spot,
And strange, I knew the sunbeam knew it not;
Wildest of all the savage glens that lie
In far sierras, hiding their deep springs,
And travers'd but by storms, or sounding eagles' wings.

XIX.

Ay, and I met the storm there! I had gain'd
The covert's heart with swift and stealthy tread:
A moan went past me, and the dark trees rain'd
Their autumn foliage rustling on my head;
A moan a hollow gust and there I stood
Girt with majestic night, and ancient wood,
And foaming water. Thither might have fled
The mountain Christian with his faith of yore,
When Afric's tambour shook the ringing western shore!

XX.

But through the black ravine the storm came swelling
Mighty thou art amidst the hills, thou blast!
In thy lone course the kingly cedars felling,
Like plumes upon the path of battle cast!
A rent oak thunder'd down beside my cave
Booming it rush'd, as booms a deep sea-wave;
A falcon soar'd; a startled wild-deer pass'd;
A far-off bell toll'd faintly through the roar
How my glad spirit swept forth with the winds once more!

XXI.

PART SECOND.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

And with the arrowy lightnings! for they flash'd,
Smiting the branches in their fitful play,
And brightly shivering where the torrents dash'd
Up, even to crag and eagle's nest, their spray!
And there to stand amidst the pealing strife,
The strong pines groaning with tempestuous life,
And all the mountain-voices on their way,
Was it not joy? 'twas joy in rushing might,
After those years that wove but one long dead of night!

XXII.

There came a softer hour, a lovelier moon,
And lit me to my home of youth again,
Through the dim chesnut shade, where oft at noon,
By the fount's flashing burst, my head had lain,
In gentle sleep: but now I pass'd as one
That may not pause where wood-streams whispering run,
Or light sprays tremble to a bird's wild strain,
Because th' avenger's voice is in the wind,
The foe's quick rustling step close on the leaves behind.

XXIII.

My home of youth! oh! if indeed to part
With the soul's lov'd ones be a mournful thing,
When we go forth in buoyancy of heart,
And bearing all the glories of our spring
For life to breathe on, is it less to meet,
When these are faded? who shall call it sweet?
Even though love's mingling tears may haply bring
Balm as they fall, too well their heavy showers
Teach us how much is lost of all that once was ours!

XXIV.

Not by the sunshine, with its golden glow,
Nor the green earth, nor yet the laughing sky,
Nor the faint flower-scents, as they come and go
In the soft air, like music wandering by;
Oh! not by these, th' unfailing, are we taught
How time and sorrow on our frames have wrought,
But by the sadden'd eye, the darken'd brow,
Of kindred aspects, and the long dim gaze,
Which tells us *we* are chang'd, how chang'd from other days!

XXV.

PART SECOND.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

Before my father in my place of birth,
I stood an alien. On the very floor
Which oft had trembled to my boyish mirth,
The love that rear'd me, knew my face no more!
There hung the antique armour, helm and crest,
Whose every stain woke childhood in my breast,
There droop'd the banner, with the marks it bore
Of Paynim spears; and I, the worn in frame
And heart, what there was I? another and the same!

XXVI.

Then bounded in a boy, with clear dark eye
How should *he* know his father? when we parted,
From the soft cloud which mantles infancy,
His soul, just wakening into wonder, darted
Its first looks round. Him follow'd one, the bride
Of my young days, the wife how lov'd and tried!
Her glance met mine I could not speak she started
With a bewilder'd gaze; until there came
Tears to my burning eyes, and from my lips her name.

XXVII.

She knew me then! I murmur'd "*Leonor!*"
And her heart answer'd! oh! the voice is known
First from all else, and swiftest to restore
Love's buried images with one low tone,
That strikes like lightning, when the cheek is faded,
And the brow heavily with thought o'ershaded,
And all the brightness from the aspect gone!
Upon my breast she sunk, when doubt was fled,
Weeping as those may weep, that meet in woe and dread.

XXVIII.

For there we might not rest. Alas! to leave
Those native towers, and know that they must fall
By slow decay, and none remain to grieve
When the weeds cluster'd on the lonely wall!
We were the last my boy and I the last
Of a long line which brightly thence had pass'd!
My father bless'd me as I left his hall
With his deep tones and sweet, tho' full of years,
He bless'd me there, and bath'd my child's young head with tears.

XXIX.

PART SECOND.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

I had brought sorrow on his grey hairs down,
And cast the darkness of my branded name
(For so *he* deem'd it) on the clear renown,
My own ancestral heritage of fame.
And yet he bless'd me! Father! if the dust
Lie on those lips benign, my spirit's trust
Is to behold thee yet, where grief and shame
Dim the bright day no more; and thou wilt know
That not thro' guilt thy son thus bow'd thine age with woe!

XXX.

And thou, my Leonor! that unrepining,
If sad in soul, didst quit all else for me,
When stars the stars that earliest rise are shining,
How their soft glance unseals each thought of thee!
For on our flight they smil'd; their dewy rays,
Thro' the last olives, lit thy tearful gaze
Back to the home we never more might see;
So pass'd we on, like earth's first exiles, turning
Fond looks where hung the sword above their Eden burning.

XXXI.

It was a woe to say "Farewell, my Spain!
The sunny and the vintage land, farewell!"
I could have died upon the battle plain
For thee, my country! but I might not dwell
In thy sweet vales, at peace. The voice of song
Breathes, with the myrtle scent, thy hills along;
The citron's glow is caught from shade and dell;
But what are these? upon thy flowery sod
I might not kneel, and pour my free thoughts out to God!

XXXII.

O'er the blue deep I fled, the chainless deep!
Strange heart of man! that ev'n midst woe swells high,
When thro' the foam he sees his proud bark sweep,
Flinging out joyous gleams to wave and sky!
Yes! it swells high, whate'er he leaves behind;
His spirit rises with the rising wind;
For, wedded to the far futurity,
On, on, it bears him ever, and the main
Seems rushing, like his hope, some happier shore to gain.

XXXIII.

PART SECOND.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

Not thus is woman. Closely *her* still heart
Doth twine itself with ev'n each lifeless thing,
Which, long remember'd, seem'd to bear its part
In her calm joys. For ever would she cling,
A brooding dove, to that sole spot of earth
Where she hath loved, and given her children birth,
And heard their first sweet voices. There may Spring
Array no path, renew no flower, no leaf,
But hath its breath of home, its claim to farewell grief.

XXXIV.

I look'd on Leonor, and if there seem'd
A cloud of more than pensiveness to rise,
In the faint smiles that o'er her features gleam'd,
And the soft darkness of her serious eyes,
Misty with tender gloom; I call'd it nought
But the fond exile's pang, a lingering thought
Of her own vale, with all its melodies
And living light of streams. Her soul would rest
Beneath your shades, I said, bowers of the gorgeous west!

XXXV.

Oh! could we live in visions! could we hold
Delusion faster, longer, to our breast,
When it shuts from us, with its mantle's fold,
That which we see not, and are therefore blest!
But they, our lov'd and loving, they to whom
We have spread out our souls in joy and gloom,
Their looks and accents, unto ours address'd,
Have been a language of familiar tone
Too long to breathe, at last, dark sayings and unknown.

XXXVI.

I told my heart 'twas but the exile's woe
Which press'd on that sweet bosom; I deceiv'd
My heart but half: a whisper faint and low,
Haunting it ever, and at times believ'd,
Spoke of some deeper cause. How oft we seem
Like those that dream, and *know* the while they dream,
Midst the soft falls of airy voices griev'd,
And troubled, while bright phantoms round them play,
By a dim sense that all will float and fade away!

XXXVII.

PART SECOND.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

Yet, as if chasing joy, I woo'd the breeze,
To speed me onward with the wings of morn.
Oh! far amidst the solitary seas,
Which were not made for man, what man hath borne,
Answering their moan with his! what *thou* didst bear,
My lost and loveliest! while that secret care
Grew terror, and thy gentle spirit, worn
By its dull brooding weight, gave way at last,
Beholding me as one from hope for ever cast!

XXXVIII.

For unto thee, as thro' all change, reveal'd
Mine inward being lay. In other eyes
I had to bow me yet, and make a shield,
To fence my burning bosom, of disguise;
By the still hope sustain'd, ere long to win
Some sanctuary, whose green retreats within,
My thoughts unfetter'd to their source might rise,
Like songs and scents of morn. But thou didst look
Thro' all my soul, and thine even unto fainting shook.

XXXIX.

Fall'n, fall'n, I seem'd yet, oh! not less belov'd,
Tho' from thy love was pluck'd the early pride,
And harshly, by a gloomy faith reprov'd,
And sear'd with shame! tho' each young flower had died,
There was the root, strong, living, not the less
That all it yielded now was bitterness;
Yet still such love as quits not misery's side,
Nor drops from guilt its ivy-like embrace,
Nor turns away from death's its pale heroic face.

XL.

Yes! thou hadst follow'd me thro' fear and flight;
Thou wouldst have follow'd had my pathway led
Even to the scaffold; had the flashing light
Of the rais'd axe made strong men shrink with dread,
Thou, midst the hush of thousands, wouldst have been
With thy clasp'd hands beside me kneeling seen,
And meekly bowing to the shame thy head
The shame! oh! making beautiful to view
The might of human love fair thing! so bravely true!

XLI.

PART SECOND.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

There was thine agony to love so well
Where fear made love life's chastener. Heretofore
Whate'er of earth's disquiet round thee fell,
Thy soul, o'erpassing its dim bounds, could soar
Away to sunshine, and thy clear eye speak
Most of the skies when grief most touch'd thy cheek.
Now, that far brightness faded! never more
Couldst thou lift heavenwards for its hope thy heart,
Since at Heaven's gate it seem'd that thou and I must part.

XLII.

Alas! and life hath moments when a glance
(If thought to sudden watchfulness be stirr'd,)
A flush a fading of the cheek perchance.
A word less, less the *cadence* of a word,
Lets in our gaze the mind's dim veil beneath,
Thence to bring haply knowledge fraught with death!
Even thus, what never from thy lip was heard
Broke on my soul. I knew that in thy sight
I stood howe'er below'd a recreant from the light!

XLIII.

Thy sad sweet hymn, at eve, the seas along,
Oh! the deep soul it breath'd! the love, the woe,
The fervor, pour'd in that full gush of song,
As it went floating through the fiery glow
Of the rich sunset! bringing thoughts of Spain,
With all her vesper-voices, o'er the main,
Which seem'd responsive in its murmuring flow.
" *Ave sanctissima!* " how oft that lay
Hath melted from my heart the martyr-strength away!

Ave, sanctissima!
'Tis night-fall on the sea;
Ora pro nobis!
Our souls rise to thee!

Watch us, while shadows lie
O'er the dim water spread;
Hear the heart's lonely sigh,
Thine , too, hath bled!

Thou that hast look'd on death,
Aid us when death is near!
Whisper of Heaven to faith;
Sweet mother, hear!

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

Ora pro nobis!
The wave must rock our sleep,
Ora, mater, ora!
Thou star of the deep!

XLIV.

"Ora pro nobis, mater!" What a spell
Was in those notes, with day's last glory dying
On the flush'd waters! seem'd they not to swell
From the far dust, wherein my sires were lying
With crucifix and sword? Oh! yet how clear
Comes their reproachful sweetness to mine ear!
"Ora!" with all the purple waves replying,
All my youth's visions rising in the strain
And I had thought it much to bear the rack and chain!

XLV.

Torture! the sorrow of affection's eye,
Fixing its meekness on the spirit's core,
Deeper, and teaching more of agony,
May pierce than many swords! and this I bore
With a mute pang. Since I had vainly striven
From its free springs to pour the truth of Heaven
Into thy trembling soul, my Leonor!
Silence rose up where hearts no hope could share:
Alas! for those that love, and may not blend in prayer!

XLVI.

We could not pray together midst the deep,
Which, like a floor of sapphire, round us lay,
Through days of splendour, nights too bright for sleep,
Soft, solemn, holy! We were on our way
Unto the mighty Cordillera-land,
With men whom tales of that world's golden strand
Had lur'd to leave their vines. Oh! who shall say
What thoughts rose in us, when the tropic sky
Touch'd all its molten seas with sunset's alchemy?

XLVII.

Thoughts no more mingled! Then came night th' intense
Dark blue the burning stars! I saw *thee* shine
Once more, in thy serene magnificence,
O Southern Cross ! as when thy radiant sign

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

First drew my gaze of youth. No, not as then;
I had been stricken by the darts of men
Since those fresh days, and now thy light divine
Look'd on mine anguish, while within me strove
The still small voice against the might of suffering love.

XLVIII.

But thou, the clear, the glorious! thou wert pouring
Brilliance and joy upon the crystal wave,
While she that met thy ray with eyes adoring,
Stood in the lengthening shadow of the grave!
Alas! I watch'd her dark religious glance,
As it still sought thee through the Heaven's expanse,
Bright Cross! and knew not that I watch'd what gave
But passing lustre shrouded soon to be
A soft light found no more no more on earth or sea!

XLIX.

I knew not all yet something of unrest
Sat on my heart. Wake, ocean-wind! I said;
Waft us to land, in leafy freshness drest,
Where through rich clouds of foliage o'er her head,
Sweet day may steal, and rills unseen go by,
Like singing voices, and the green earth lie
Starry with flowers, beneath her graceful tread!
But the calm bound us midst the glassy main;
Ne'er was her step to bend earth's living flowers again.

L.

Yes! as if Heaven upon the waves were sleeping,
Vexing my soul with quiet, there they lay,
All moveless through their blue transparence keeping,
The shadows of our sails, from day to day;
While she oh! strongest is the strong heart's woe
And yet I live! I feel the sunshine's glow
And I am he that look'd, and saw decay
Steal o'er the fair of earth, th' ador'd too much!
It is a fearful thing to love what death may touch.

LI.

A fearful thing that love and death may dwell
In the same world! She faded on and I
Blind to the last, there needed death to tell

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

My trusting soul that she *could* fade to die!
Yet, ere she parted, I had mark'd a change,
But it breath'd hope 'twas beautiful, though strange:
Something of gladness in the melody
Of her low voice, and in her words a flight
Of airy thought alas! too perilously bright!

LII.

And a clear sparkle in her glance, yet wild,
And quick, and eager, like the flashing gaze
Of some all wondering and awakening child,
That first the glories of the earth surveys.
How could it thus deceive me? she had worn
Around her, like the dewy mists of morn,
A pensive tenderness through happiest days,
And a soft world of dreams had seem'd to lie
Still in her dark, and deep, and spiritual eye.

LIII.

And I could hope in that strange fire! she died,
She died, with all its lustre on her mien!
The day was melting from the waters wide,
And through its long bright hours her thoughts had been,
It seem'd, with restless and unwonted yearning,
To Spain's blue skies and dark sierras turning
For her fond words were all of vintage-scene,
And flowering myrtle, and sweet citron's breath
Oh! with what vivid hues life comes back oft on death!

LIV.

And from her lips the mountain-songs of old,
In wild faint snatches, fitfully had sprung;
Songs of the orange bower, the Moorish hold,
The "*Rio verde*" on her soul that hung,
And thence flow'd forth. But now the sun was low,
And watching by my side its last red glow,
That ever stills the heart, once more she sung
Her own soft "*Ora, mater!*" and the sound
Was even like love's farewell so mournfully profound.

LV.

The boy had dropp'd to slumber at our feet;
"And I have lull'd him to his smiling rest

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

Once more!" she said: I rais'd him it was sweet,
Yet sad, to see the perfect calm which bless'd
His look that hour; for now her voice grew weak;
And on the flowery crimson of his cheek,
With her white lips a long, long kiss she press'd,
Yet light, to wake him not. Then sank her head
Against my bursting heart. What did I clasp? the dead!

LVI.

I call'd to call what answers not our cries
By that we lov'd to stand unseen, unheard,
With the loud passion of our tears and sighs
To see but some cold glistening ringlet stirr'd,
And in the quench'd eye's fixedness to gaze,
All vainly searching for the parted rays;
This is what waits us! Dead! with that chill word
To link our bosom-names! For this we pour
Our souls upon the dust nor tremble to adore!

LVII.

But the true parting came! I look'd my last
On the sad beauty of that slumbering face;
How could I think the lovely spirit pass'd,
Which there had left so tenderly its trace?
Yet a dim awfulness was on the brow
No! not like sleep to look upon art Thou,
Death, death! She lay, a thing for earth's embrace,
To cover with spring-wreaths. For earth's? the wave
That gives the bier no flowers makes moan above her grave!

LVIII.

On the mid-seas a knell! for man was there,
Anguish and love the mourner with his dead!
A long low-rolling knell a voice of prayer
Dark glassy waters, like a desert spread,
And the pale-shining Southern Cross on high,
Its faint stars fading from a solemn sky,
Where mighty clouds before the dawn grew red;
Were these things round me? Such o'er memory sweep
Wildly when aught brings back that burial of the deep.

LIX.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

Then the broad lonely sunrise! and the plash
Into the sounding waves ! around her head
They parted, with a glancing moment's flash,
Then shut and all was still. And now thy bed
Is of their secrets, gentlest Leonor!
Once fairest of young brides! and never more,
Lov'd as thou wert, may human tear be shed
Above thy rest! No mark the proud seas keep,
To show where he that wept may pause again to weep.

LX.

So the depths took thee! Oh! the sullen sense
Of desolation in that hour compress'd!
Dust going down, a speck, amidst th' immense
And gloomy waters, leaving on their breast
The trace a weed might leave there! Dust! the thing
Which to the heart was as a living spring
Of joy, with fearfulness of love possess'd,
Thus sinking! Love, joy, fear, all crush'd to this
And the wide Heaven so far so fathomless th' abyss!

LXI.

Where the line sounds not, where the wrecks lie low,
What shall wake thence the dead? Blest, blest are they
That earth to earth entrust; for they may know
And tend the dwelling whence the slumberer's clay
Shall rise at last, and bid the young flowers bloom,
That waft a breath of hope around the tomb,
And kneel upon the dewy turf to pray!
But thou, what cave hath dimly chamber'd *thee*?
Vain dreams! oh! art thou not where there is no more sea ?

LXII.

The wind rose free and singing: when for ever,
O'er that sole spot of all the watery plain,
I could have bent my sight with fond endeavour
Down, where its treasure was, its glance to strain;
Then rose the reckless wind! Before our prow
The white foam flash'd ay, joyously and thou
Wert left with all the solitary main
Around thee and thy beauty in my heart,
And thy meek sorrowing love oh! where could *that* depart?

LXIII.

PART SECOND.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

I will not speak of woe; I may not tell
Friend tells not such to friend the thoughts which rent
My fainting spirit, when its wild farewell
Across the billows to thy grave was sent,
Thou, there most lonely! He that sits above,
In his calm glory, will forgive the love
His creatures bear each other, ev'n if blent
With a vain worship; for its close is dim
Ever with grief, which leads the wrung soul back to Him!

LXIV.

And with a milder pang if now I bear
To think of thee in thy forsaken rest,
If from my heart be lifted the despair,
The sharp remorse with healing influence press'd,
If the soft eyes that visit me in sleep
Look not reproach, though still they seem to weep;
It is that He my sacrifice hath bless'd,
And fill'd my bosom, through its inmost cell,
With a deep chastening sense that all at last is well.

LXV.

Yes! thou art now Oh! wherefore doth the thought
Of the wave dashing o'er thy long bright hair,
The sea-weed into its dark tresses wrought,
The sand thy pillow thou that wert so fair!
Come o'er me still? Earth, earth! it is the hold
Earth ever keeps on that of earthy mould!
But *thou* art breathing now in purer air,
I well believe, and freed from all of error,
Which blighted here the root of thy sweet life with terror.

LXVI.

And if the love which here was passing light
Went with what died not Oh! that *this* we knew,
But this! that through the silence of the night,
Some voice, of all the lost ones and the true,
Would speak, and say, if in their far repose,
We are yet aught of what we were to those
We call the dead! their passionate adieu,
Was it but breath, to perish? Holier trust
Be mine! thy love *is* there, but purified from dust!

LXVII.

PART SECOND.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

A thing all heavenly! clear'd from that which hung
As a dim cloud between us, heart and mind!
Loos'd from the fear, the grief, whose tendrils flung
A chain, so darkly with its growth entwin'd.
This is my hope! though when the sunset fades,
When forests rock the midnight on their shades,
When tones of wail are in the rising wind,
Across my spirit some faint doubt may sigh;
For the strong hours *will* sway this frail mortality!

LXVIII.

We have been wanderers since those days of woe,
Thy boy and I! As wild birds tend their young,
So have I tended him my bounding roe!
The high Peruvian solitudes among;
And o'er the Andes—torrents borne his form,
Where our frail bridge hath quiver'd midst the storm .
But there the war—notes of my country rung,
And, smitten deep of Heaven and man, I fled
To hide in shades unpierc'd a mark'd and weary head.

LXIX.

But he went on in gladness that fair child!
Save when at times his bright eye seem'd to dream,
And his young lips, which then no longer smil'd,
Ask'd of his mother! that was but a gleam
Of Memory, fleeting fast; and then his play
Through the wide Llanos cheer'd again our way,
And by the mighty Oronoco stream,
On whose lone margin we have heard at morn,
From the mysterious rocks, the sunrise—music borne .

LXX.

So like a spirit's voice! a harping tone,
Lovely, yet ominous to mortal ear,
Such as might reach us from a world unknown,
Troubling man's heart with thrills of joy and fear!
'Twas sweet! yet those deep southern shades oppress'd
My soul with stillness, like the calms that rest
On melancholy waves : I sigh'd to hear
Once more earth's breezy sounds, her foliage fann'd,
And turn'd to seek the wilds of the red hunter's land.

LXXI.

PART SECOND.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

And we have won a bower of refuge now,
In this fresh waste, the breath of whose repose
Hath cool'd, like dew, the fever of my brow,
And whose green oaks and cedars round me close,
As temple-walls and pillars, that exclude
Earth's haunted dreams from their free solitude;
All, save the image and the thought of those
Before us gone; our lov'd of early years,
Gone where affection's cup hath lost the taste of tears.

LXXII.

I see a star eve's first-born! in whose train
Past scenes, words, looks, come back. The arrowy spire
Of the lone cypress, as of wood-girt fane,
Rests dark and still amidst a heaven of fire;
The pine gives forth its odours, and the lake
Gleams like one ruby, and the soft winds wake,
Till every string of nature's solemn lyre
Is touch'd to answer; its most secret tone
Drawn from each tree, for each hath whispers all its own.

LXXIII.

And hark! another murmur on the air,
Not of the hidden rills, or quivering shades!
That is the cataract's, which the breezes bear,
Filling the leafy twilight of the glades
With hollow surge-like sounds, as from the bed
Of the blue mournful seas, that keep the dead:
But *they* are far! the low sun here pervades
Dim forest-arches, bathing with red gold
Their stems, till each is made a marvel to behold ,

LXXIV.

Gorgeous, yet full of gloom! In such an hour,
The vesper-melody of dying bells
Wanders through Spain, from each grey convent's tower
O'er shining rivers pour'd, and olive-dells,
By every peasant heard, and muleteer,
And hamlet, round my home: and I am here,
Living again through all my life's farewells,
In these vast woods, where farewell ne'er was spoken,
And sole I lift to Heaven a sad heart yet unbroken!

LXXV.

PART SECOND.

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

In such an hour are told the hermit's beads;
With the white sail the seaman's hymn floats by:
Peace be with all! whate'er their varying creeds,
With all that send up holy thoughts on high!
Come to me, boy! by Guadalquivir's vines,
By every stream of Spain, as day declines,
Man's prayers are mingled in the rosy sky.
We, too, will pray; nor yet unheard, my child!
Of Him whose voice *we* hear at eve amidst the wild.

LXXVI.

At eve? oh! through all hours! From dark dreams oft
Awakening, I look forth, and learn the might
Of solitude, while thou art breathing soft,
And low, my lov'd one! on the breast of night:
I look forth on the stars the shadowy sleep
Of forests and the lake, whose gloomy deep
Sends up red sparkles to the fire-flies' light.
A lonely world! even fearful to man's thought,
But for His presence felt, whom here my soul hath sought.

LAYS OF MANY LANDS.

The following pieces may so far be considered a series, as each is intended to be commemorative of some national recollection, popular custom, or tradition. The idea was suggested by Herder's "*Stimmen der Volker in Liedern*;" the execution is however different, as the poems in his collection are chiefly translations.

Most of those forming the present one have appeared, as well as the miscellaneous pieces attached to them, in the *New Monthly Magazine*.

MOORISH BRIDAL SONG.

It is a custom among the Moors, that a female who dies unmarried is clothed for interment in wedding apparel, and the bridal song is sung over her remains before they are borne from her home.

See the *Narrative of a Ten Years' Residence in Tripoli*, by the sister-in-law of Mr. Tully.

THE citron groves their fruit and flowers were strewing
Around a Moorish palace, while the sigh
Of low sweet summer-winds, the branches wooing,
With music through their shadowy bowers went by;
Music and voices, from the marble halls,
Through the leaves gleaming, and the fountain-falls.

A song of joy, a bridal song came swelling,
To blend with fragrance in those southern shades,
And told of feasts within the stately dwelling,
Bright lamps, and dancing steps, and gem-crown'd maids;

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

And thus it flow'd; yet something in the lay
Belong'd to sadness, as it died away.

"The bride comes forth! her tears no more are falling
To leave the chamber of her infant years;
Kind voices from distant home are calling;
She comes like day—spring she hath done with tears;
Now must her dark eye shine on other flowers,
Her soft smile gladden other hearts than ours!
Pour the rich odours round!

"We haste! the chosen and the lovely bringing;
Love still goes with her from her place of birth;
Deep silent joy within her soul is springing,
Though in her glance the light no more is mirth!
Her beauty leaves us in its rosy years;
Her sisters weep but she hath done with tears!
Now may the timbrel sound!"

Know'st thou for *whom* they sang the bridal numbers?
One, whose rich tresses were to wave no more!
One, whose pale cheek soft winds, nor gentle slumbers,
Nor Love's own sigh, to rose-tints might restore!
Her graceful ringlets o'er a bier were spread.
Weep for the young, the beautiful, the dead!

THE BIRD'S RELEASE.

The Indians of Bengal and of the Coast of Malabar bring cages filled with birds
to the graves of their friends, over which they set the birds at liberty.
This custom is alluded to in the description of Virginia's funeral. *See Paul and Virginia.*

GO forth, for she is gone!
With the golden light of her wavy hair,
She is gone to the fields of the viewless air;
She hath left her dwelling lone!

Her voice hath pass'd away!
It hath pass'd away like a summer breeze,
When it leaves the hills for the far blue seas,
Where we may not trace its way.

Go forth, and like her be free!
With thy radiant wing, and thy glancing eye,
Thou hast all the range of the sunny sky,
And what is our grief to thee?

Is it aught ev'n to her we mourn?
Doth she look on the tears by her kindred shed?
Doth she rest with the flowers o'er her gentle head,

The Forest Sanctuary and Other Poems

Or float on the light wind borne?

We know not but she is gone!
Her step from the dance, her voice from the song,
And the smile of her eye from the festal throng;
She hath left her dwelling lone!

When the waves at sunset shine,
We may hear thy voice, amidst thousands more,
In the scented woods of our glowing shore,
But we shall not know 'tis thine!

Ev'n so with the lov'd one flown!
Her smile in the starlight may wander by,
Her breath may be near in the wind's low sigh,
Around us but all unknown.

Go forth, we have loos'd thy chain!
We may deck thy cage with the richest flowers,
Which the bright day rears in our eastern bowers,
But thou wilt not be lur'd again.

Ev'n thus may the summer pour
All fragrant things on the land's green breast,
And the glorious earth like a bride be dress'd,
But it wins *her* back no more!

THE SWORD OF THE TOMB.