

Man Mohan Mukerji

A FEW LYRICS OF OWEN MEREDITH

SET TO HINDU MUSIC

BY

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Handwritten: 11/11/77

TO

His Excellency the Right Hon'ble
EDWARD ROBERT LYTON BULWER-LYTON,
BARON LYTON OF KNEBWORTH, G.M.S.I.,
Viceroy and Governor-General of India,
&c., &c., &c., &c.

My Lord,

THE present year, 1877, will soon pass away. This year, in consequence of the assumption by HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA of the to us most endearing Title of "EMPRESS OF INDIA," is a year of jubilee to the people of this country, and will ever be marked in white in their calendar. Poets have celebrated the auspicious occasion in befitting lays, bards have sung of it, priests in the countless shrines of India have invoked the blessing of the Almighty on our kind Sovereign, and rich, and rare, and varied have been the offerings which have been brought to the foot of the Imperial Throne. I too, an humble lover of music, joined my feeble voice to the mighty shout of joy, and to the swelling song of gratitude and loyalty, which resounded from one end of India to the other on the day the GRACIOUS MESSAGE of our EMPRESS-MOTHER was proclaimed to her Indian subjects. My heart still glows with feelings of loyalty and gratitude, and I would fain give vent to those feelings through my favorite art before this auspicious year passes away. I have therefore ventured to set some of your Lordship's poems to Hindu Music, and beg most respectfully, with your Lordship's kind permission, to dedicate the volume to your Lordship, as another humble memorial of our "year of jubilee."

I have the honor to remain,

MY LORD,

CALCUTTA :
Pathuriaghatta,
December, 1877. }

Your Lordship's most obedient
and humble servant,
SOURINDRO MOHUN TAGORE.

A FEW LYRICS
OF
OWEN MEREDITH
SET TO HINDU MUSIC.

ONE NIGHT.

I.

A FALLING star that shot across
The intricate and twinkling dark
Vanish'd, yet left no sense of loss
Throughout the wide ethereal arc.

(1.)

RÁGINÍ CHHÁYÁNAT.



A fal- ling star that shot ac- ross The



in- tri- cate and twink- ling dark Va- nish'd, yet



II.

Of those serene and solemn skies
That round the dusky prospect rose,
And ever seem'd to rise, and rise,
Through regions of unreach'd repose.

III.

Far, on the windless mountain-range,
One crimson sparklet died : the blue
Flush'd with a brilliance, faint and strange,
The ghost of daylight, dying too.

IV.

But half—reveal'd, each terrace urn
Glimmer'd, where now, in filmy flight,
We watch'd return, and still return,
The blind bats searching air for sight.

V.

With sullen fits of fleeting sound,
Borne half asleep on slumbrous air,
The drowsy beetle humm'd around,
And pass'd, and oft repass'd us, there ;

VI.

Where, hand in hand, our looks alight
With thoughts our faint lips left untold,
We sat, in that delicious night,
On that dim terrace, green and old.

VII.

Deep down, far off, the city lay,
When forth from all its spires was swept
A music o'er our souls ; and they
To music's midmost meanings leapt ;

VIII.

And, crushing some delirious cry
Against each other's lips, we clung
Together silent, while the sky
Throbbing with sound around us hung :

IX.

For, borne from bells on music soft,
That solemn hour went forth through heaven,
To stir the starry airs aloft,
And thrill the purple pulse of even.

X.

O happy hush of heart to heart !
O moment molten through with bliss !
O love, delaying long to part
That first, fast, individual kiss !

XI.

Was it some drowsy rose that moved ?
Some dreaming dove's pathetic moan ?
Or was it my name from lips beloved ?
And was it thy sweet breath, my Own,

XII.

That made me feel the tides of sense
O'er life's low levels rise with might
And pour my being down the immense
Shore of some sudden Infinite ?

XIII.

"Oh, have I found thee, my soul's soul ?
My chosen forth from time and space !
And did we then break earth's control ?
And have I seen thee face to face ?

XIV.

"Close, closer to this bursting breast,
Closer thy long'd-for arms enfold !
I need such warmth, for else the rest
Of life will freeze me dead with cold.

XV.

"Long was the search, the effort long,
Ere I compell'd thee from thy sphere,
I know not by what mystic song,
I know not with what nightly tear :

XVI.

“ But thou art here, beneath whose eyes
My passion falters, even as some
Pale wizard’s taper sinks, and dies,
When to his spell a spirit is come.

XVII.

“ What hath life been ? What will to be ?
How have I lived without thee ? How
Is life both lost and found in thee ?
Feel’st thou Forever in this Now ?

XVIII.

“ All in a moment ! a whole world,
With all its wonders strange and far,
In one fierce point of glory furl’d ;
—A universe within a star !

XIX.

“ Born for one bliss that could not fail,
How should faith flinch, or patience tire ?
I knew that Time could not prevail
Against my soul’s intense desire,

XX.

“ Nor shut these famisht eyes in night,
Of thee unsolaced. In which faith
Doubtless it must have been most light
To bear with life, and laugh to death :

XXI.

“ But now, life hath so much to lose !
And death so much to take ! the heats
Of love’s least costly moments use
And burn life’s essence out in sweets !

XXII.

“ Mere antechamber was the past
To the crown’d presence of this hour :
But, having seen his Queen at last,
In all her beauty, all her power,

XXIII.

“ What merest Page would turn again
Content to hum the careless rhyme,
Or trifle with the courtier train,
That whiled, perchance, a previous time ?

XXIV.

“ So the old life is lost, I know !
The new ? ’tis thine, not mine. My Own,
If thou should’st leave me lonely now,
I must be hopelessly alone.

XXV.

“ As one idea, half divined,
Labours and frets within the brain
Of some sad artist, and the mind
Is vassal to imperious pain,

XXVI.

“ For toil by day, for tears by night,
Till, in the sphere of vision brought,
Rises the beautiful, the bright
Predestined, and relentless Thought,

XXVII.

“ So, clothed in the desire of years,
This love doth to its destined seat
Rise sovran, through the light of tears,
Achieved, accomplisht, and complete !

XXVIII.

“ Ah, dearest ! yet the artist's thought
Once freed, in form, from forth his soul,
By chance and time is seized, and caught
Beyond the artist's own control,

XXIX.

“ To fare, he knows not how, for ill
Or well,—be shatter'd, or stand fast.
And this freed love, that doth fulfil
In thy bright presence my pale past,

XXX.

“ How shall it fare, for weal or woe ?
Already is it pass'd away
How far beyond the yes or no
That once was in my power to say !

XXXI.

" 'Tis mine no longer. It's am I.
And it, and I, Sweet-heart, are thine.
But thou thyself ? . . . dear Destiny,
Swear, swear again, that thou art mine !

XXXII.

" Swear twice and thrice, no future hour
Shall ever blight what this hath blest !
— Nay ! I possess thee by the power
Whereby I am myself possest.

XXXIII.

" And come what may, and pass what must,
Why we were born, at last, we know.
Spirit to spirit ! . . . Let the dust
Do with the dust what dust can do.

XXXIV.

" Why heed it ? , Our two souls 'tis sure,
Now understand the one thing best.
This is not earth's : this must endure :
Be earth's spite wreak'd upon the rest !

XXXV.

" These eyes may lose thy looks,—their light :
These lips from thine harsh fate may sever :
Oh, looks and lips may disunite,
But ever love is love for ever !"

THE SUBJECTS' APPEAL.

I.

DEAR despot of thy little state,
 This busy many-thoughted Me,
 Which thy sole will doth regulate,
 Since, 'twixt thy loyal folk and thee,

(2.)

RĀGINÍ MÁLAŚRĪ.



Dear des- pot of thy little state, This
 bu- sy ma- ny thought- ed Me, Which
 thy sole will doth re- gu- late, Since,
 'twixt thy lo- yal folk and thee,

II.

(Thy loyal folk,—each feeling, thought,
And fancy,—all the daily train
Which throngs this heart and brain) there's nought
That may thy sovran power restrain,

III.

Be in the uses of thy power
Gentle, as noble monarchs are ;
Nor vary with the varying hour,
But, bright and constant as a star,

IV.

Sit in the system of my soul,
And there, unmoved, the motions all
Of what thou mak'st my heaven control.
Dear, though I be indeed thy thrall,

V.

And such a grace have kings, though bad,
That even rebels, boldest grown
By wrongs that make man's patience mad,
Do fear to strike against the Crown,

VI.

Yet happy folk makes happy king :
And worthiest is that monarch's might
Whom freely freemen love, that cling
In loyal trust to legal right.

THE STORM.

I.

BOTH hollow and hill were as dumb as death,
 While the skies were silently changing form ;
 And the dread forecast of the thunder-storm
 Made the crouch'd land hold in its breath.

(3.)

RÁGA MEGHÁ.



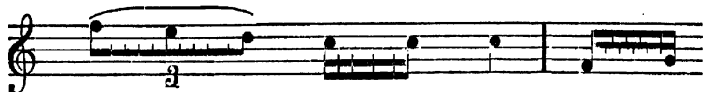
Both hol- low and hill were — — as



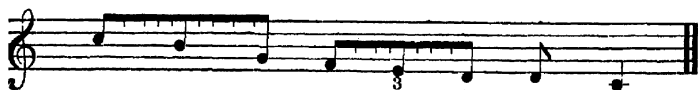
dumb as death, While the skies were si- lent- ly



chang- ing form — — ; And the dread fore- cast



of — the thun- der- storm Made the



crouch'd land, hold in — — its breath.

II.

But the monstrous vapour as yet was unriven
 That was breeding the thunder and lightning and rain;
 And the wind that was waiting to ruin the plain
 Was yet fast in some far hold of heaven.

III.

At the wide flung casement she stood full height,
 With her long rolling hair tumbled all down her back;
 And, against the back sky's supernatural black,
 Her white neck gleam'd scornfully white.

IV.

I could catch not a gleam of her anger'd eyes,
 (She was sullenly watching the storm-cloud brood)
 But I felt they were drawing down into her mood
 The thunder that darken'd the skies.

V.

And how could I feign, in that heartless gloom,
 To be carelessly reading that stupid page?
 What harm, if I flung it in anguish and rage,
 Her book, to the end of the room?

VI.

"And so, do we part thus for ever?" . . . I said;
"O speak only one word, and I pardon the rest!"
She drew her white scarf tighter over her breast,
But she never once turn'd round her head.

VII.

"Ah, must sweet love sourly play with pain?
Or"—I groan'd—"are those dark eyes such deserts of
blindness. [kindness
That, O Woman! your heart must hoard all its un-
For the man on whose breast it hath lain?"

VIII.

"Speak! the horrible silence is stifling my soul."
She turn'd on me at once all the storm in her eyes;
And I heard the low thunder aloof in the skies,
Beginning to mutter and roll.

IX.

She turn'd—by the lightning reveal'd in its glare,
And the tempest had clothed her with terror: it clung
To the folds of her vaporous garments, and hung
In the heaps of her heavy wild hair.

X.

But one word broke the silence; but one; and it fell
With the weight of a mountain upon me. Next
moment [comment.
The fierce levin flash'd in my eyes. From my
She was gone when I turn'd. Who can tell

XI.

How I got to my home on the mountain ? I know
That the thunder was rolling, the lightning still
flashing,
The great bells were tolling, my very brain crashing
In my head, but a short while ago :

XII.

Then all hush'd. In the distance the blue rain receded ;
And the fragments of storm were spread out on the
hills ;
Hard by, from my lattice, I heard the far rills
Leaping down their rock-channels, wild-weeded.

XIII.

The round, red moon was yet low in the air
Oh, I knew it, foresaw it, and felt it, before
I heard her light hand on the latch of the door !
When it open'd at last,—she was there.

XIV.

Child-like, and wistful, and sorrowful-eyed,
With the rain in her hair, and the rain on her cheek ;
She knelt down, with her fair forehead fallen and meek
In the light of the moon at my side.

XV.

And she call'd me by every carressing old name
She of old had invented and chosen for me :
She crouch'd at my feet, with her cheek on my knee,
Like a wild thing grown suddenly tame.

XVI.

In the world there are women enough, maids or
mothers :

Yet, in multiplied millions, I never should find
The symbol of aught in her face, or her mind.
She has nothing in common with others.

XVII.

And she loves me ! This morning the earth, press'd
beneath

Her light foot, keeps the print. 'Twas no vision
last night,

For the lily she dropp'd as she went, is yet white
With the dew on its delicate sheath !

FORBEARANCE.

I.

CALL me not, Love, unthankful, nor unkind,
That I have left my heart with thee, and fled :
I were not worth that wealth which I resign'd,
Had I not chosen poverty instead.

(4.)

RÁGINÍ LUMA.



Call me not, Love, un- thank- ful, nor un-



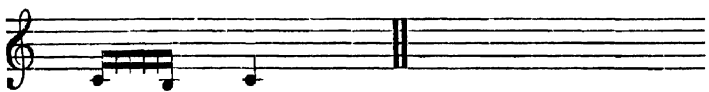
kind, That I have left my heart with thee, and



fled: I were not worth that wealth which I



re- sign'd, Had I not cho- sen po- ver-



ty in- stead.

II.

Grant me but solitude ! I dare not swerve

From my soul's rights—a slave, though serving thee.

I but forbear more grandly to deserve :

The free gift only cometh of the free.

A LOVE LETTER.

I.

My love,—my chosen,—but not mine ! I send
 My whole heart to thee in these words I write ;
 So let the blotted lines, my soul's sole friend,
 Lie upon thine, and there be blest at night.

(5.)

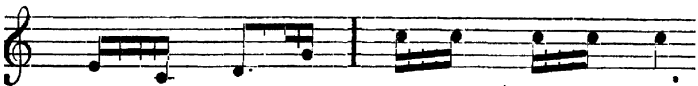
RĀGINÍ DEOGIRI.



My love,— my cho- sen,— but not mine ! I



send My whole heart to thee in these



words I write ; So let the blot- ted lines,



my soul's sole friend, Lie up- on thine, and there



be blest at night.

II.

This flower, whose bruised purple blood will stain
 The page now wet with the hot tears that fall—
 (Indeed, indeed, I struggle to restrain
 This weakness, but the tears come, spite of all !)

III.

I pluck'd it from the branch you used to praise,
 The branch that hides the wall. I tend your flowers.
 I keep the paths we paced in happier days.
 How long ago they seem, those pleasant hours !

IV.

The white laburnum's out. Your judas-tree
 Begins to shed those crimson buds of his.
 The nightingales sing—ah, too joyously !
 Who says those birds are sad ? I think there is

V.

That in the books we read, which deeper wrings
 My heart, so they lie dusty on the shelf.
 Ah me, I meant to speak of other things
 Less sad. In vain ! they bring me to myself.

VI.

I know your patience. And I would not cast
New shade on days so dark as yours are grown
By weak and wild repining for the past,
Since it is past for ever, O my Own !

VII.

For hard enough the daily cross you bear,
Without that deeper pain reflection brings ;
And all too sore the fretful household care,
Free of the contrast of remember'd things.

VIII.

But ah ! it little profits, that we thrust
From all that's said what both must feel, unnamed.
Better to face it boldly, as we must,
Than feel it in the silence, and be shamed.

IX.

Irene, I have loved you, as men love
Light, music, odour, beauty, love itself ;—
Whatever is apart from, and above
Those daily needs which deal with dust and self.

X.

And I had been content, without one thought
Our guardian angels could have blusht to know,
So to have lived and died, demanding nought
Save, living, dying, to have loved you so.

XI.

My youth was orphan'd, and my age will be
Childless. I have no sister. None, to steal
One stray thought from the lifelong thoughts of thee,
Which are the fountains of whate'er I feel.

XII.

My wildest wish was vassal to thy will :
My haughtiest hope, a pensioner on thy smile,
Which did with light my barren being fill,
As moonlight glorifies some desert isle.

XIII.

I never thought, to know what I have known,—
The rapture, Dear, of being loved by you :
I never thought, within my heart, to own
One wish so blest, that you should share it to :

XIV

Nor ever did I deem, contemplating
The many sorrows in this place of pain,
So strange a sorrow to my life could cling,
As, being thus loved, to be beloved in vain.

XV.

But now we know the best, the worst. We have
Interr'd, and prematurely, and unknown,
Our youth, our hearts, our hopes, in one small grave,
Whence we must wander, widow'd, to our own.

XVI.

And if we comfort not each other, what
Shall comfort us in the dark days to come?
Not the light laughter of the world, and not
The faces and the firelight of fond home.

XVII.

And so I write to you ; and write, and write,
For the mere sake of writing to you, Dear.
What can I tell you that you know not? Night
Is deepening through the rosy atmosphere

XVIII.

About the lonely casement of this room,
Which you have left familiar with the grace
That grows where you have been. And on the gloom
I almost fancy I can see your face :

XIX.

Not pale with pain, and tears restrain'd for me,
As when I last beheld it ; but as first,
A dream of rapture and of poesy,
Upon my youth, like dawn on dark, it burst.

XX.

Perchance I shall not ever see again
That face. I know that I shall never see
Its radiant beauty as I saw it then,
Save by this lonely lamp of memory.

13199

THE GAYAN
IN THE

XXI.

With childhood's starry graces lingering yet
I' the rosy orient of young womanhood ;
And eyes like woodland violets newly wet ;
And lips that left their meaning in my blood !

XXII.

I will not say to you what I might say
To one less worthily loved, less worthy love.
I will not say . . . 'Forget the past. Be gay.
And let the all-ill-judging world approve

XXIII.

'Light in your eyes, and laughter on your lip'.
I will not say . . . 'Dissolve in thought for ever
Our sorrowful, but sacred fellowship'.
For that would be to bid you, Dear, dis sever

XXIV.

Your nature from its nobler heritage
In consolations, register'd in Heaven,
For grief this world is powerless to assuage,
And hopes to which, on earth, no home is given.

XXV.

I will not cant that commonplace of friends,
Which never yet hath dried one mourner's tears,
Nor say that grief's slow wisdom makes amends
For broken hearts and desolated years.

XXVI.

For who would barter all he hopes from life,
To be a little wiser than his kind ?
Who arm his nature for continued strife,
When all he seeks for hath been left behind ?

XXVII.

Wherefore it happens, in this riddling world,
That where sin came not, sorrow yet should be ;
Why Heaven's most hurtful thunders should be hurl'd
At what seems noblest in Humanity ;

XXVIII.

And we are punish'd for our purest deeds,
And chasten'd for our holiest thoughts ; . . . alas !
There is no reason found in all the creeds,
Why these things are, nor whence they come to pass.

XXIX.

But in the heart of man, a secret voice
There is, which speaks and will not be restrain'd,
Which cries to Grief . . . ' Weep on, while I rejoice,
Knowing that, somewhere, all will be explain'd.'

XXX.

And I would say, ' O pure and perfect pearl,
O love which life hath dived so deep to find,
Lock'd in life's heart thou liest. The wave may curl,
The wind may wail above thee. Wave and wind,

XXXI.

Nor break, nor shake, thee.' Dear, on me and you
Life's storms have broken, but our love lives calm.
This life of ours, what is it? A very few
Soon-ended years, and then,—the ceaseless psalm,

XXXII.

And the eternal sabbath of the soul !
Hush ! . . . while I write, from the dim Carmine
The midnight angelus begins to roll,
And float athwart the darkness up to me.

XXXIII.

'My messenger (a man by danger tried)
Waits in the courts below ; and ere our star
Upon the forehead of the dawn hath died,
Heart of my heart, this letter will be far

XXXIV.

Athwart the mountain, and the mist, to you.
I know each robber hamlet. I know all
This mountain people, I have friends, both true
And trusted, sworn to aid whate'er befall.

XXXV.

I have a bark upon the gulf. And I,
If to my heart I yielded in this hour,
Might say . . . 'Sweet fellow-sufferer, let us fly !
I know a little isle which doth embower

XXXVI.

'A home where exiled angels might forbear
Awhile to mourn for Paradise.' . . . But no!
Never, whate'er fate now may bring us, Dear,
Shalt thou reproach me for that only woe

XXXVII.

Which even love is powerless to console ;
Which dwells where duty dies : and haunts the void
Of life's abandon'd purpose in the soul ;
The accusing ghost of what itself destroy'd.

XXXVIII.

Man cannot make, but may ennoble, fate,
By nobly bearing it. So let us trust
Death's justice, if not Life's, and calmly wait
Love's orient, out of darkness and of dust.

XXXIX.

Farewell, and yet again farewell, and yet
Never farewell,—if farewell mean to fare
Alone and disunited. Love hath set
Our days, in music, to the self-same air ;

XL.

And I shall feel, wherever we may be,
Even though in absence and an alien clime,
The shadow of the sunniness of thee,
Hovering, in patience, through a clouded time.

XLI.

Farewell ! The dawn is rising, and the light
 Is making, in the east, a faint endeavour
 To illuminate the mountain peaks. Good night,
 Thine own, and only thine, my love, for ever.

THE PRESENCE OF THE PAST.

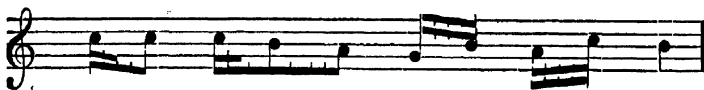
NEVER, dear, distant angel of my sorrow,
 Never more thy sweet solacings, to cheer me,
 Eve shall vouchsafe, no morrow
 Come with the comfort of thy beauty near me !

(6.)

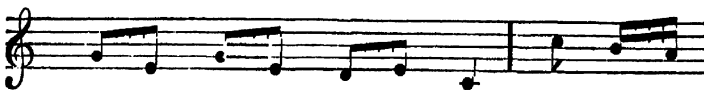
RĀGINĪ SANKARĀ.



Never, dear, dis- tant an- gel of my sor- row,



Never more thy sweet so- la- cings, to cheer me,



Eve shall vouch- safe, no mor- row Come with the



Long since departed travellers, we may not
 Flatter life's lone ways even with a semblance
 Of hand in hand. Yet say not
 Vain is the restless rapture of remembrance.

Memories, Dearest, are the sole possessions
 Man may bear with him over the Dark River.
 Brief are our pains, our passions,
 We in their memories do live for ever.

Thou, by the lilled lawn, the arbutue bowers,
 Dwellest, and where, 'mid old Italian fountains,
 Pause the blue breathless hours
 Ere they move westward o'er the happy mountains.

Thee, life eluding in thy green recesses,
 Change cannot reach abruptly. Time shall sprinkle
 Snow on thy golden tresses
 Slowly, and slowly bring the brow's first wrinkle.

I, still pursuing with a fretful fever
 Far off the wandering planet of the distance,
 Footsore, do fare for ever
 O'er the dry deserts of a scorch'd existence.

What may renew the old, the happy hours ?
Memories of thee, ever youthful-hearted,
'Mid unforgotten flowers
Beckon back time into the days departed.

Whether, by Danube darkening to the ocean,
I through the gateways of the Orient wander,
Or where, with gentle motion,
Thames' fluent lengths among the lawns meander,

Still, like a gliding ghost, from my own presence
Nightly I steal forth to the ancient places,
And, with the rose's essence,
Follow thee through the Garden of the Graces.

Place me where, 'neath the red Arabian heaven,
All in a camel-colour'd land, unbroken
By man's abodes, not even
Nature leaves one sick palm-tree for a token,

Place me where round bleak Baltic headlands, piling
Pale foam, the chafed sea spends his last endeavour,
Still shall I see thee smiling
Sweetly, still hear thee sweetly talking ever.

NIGHT.



I.

COME to me, not as once thou camest, Night !
 With light and splendour up the gorgeous West ;
 Easing the heart's rich sense of thee with sighs
 Sobb'd out of all emotion on Love's breast ;
 While the dark world waned wavering into rest,
 Half seen athwart the dim delicious light
 Of languid eyes :

(7.)

RÁGINÍ BHÚPÁLÍ.



Come to me, not as once thou camest, Night !



With light and splendour up the gorgeous West ;



Easing the heart's rich sense of thee with sighs



Sobb'd out of all emotion on Love's breast ;



While the dark world wan- ed wa- ver- ing in- to



rest, Half seen ath- wart the dim de- li- cious



light Of lan- guid eyes :

II.

But softly, soberly ; and dark—more dark !
Till my life's shadow lose itself in thine.

Athwart the light of slowly-gathering tears,
That come between me and the starlight, shine
From distant melancholy deeps divine,
While day slips downward through a rosy arc
To other spheres. 13199

THE HEART AND NATURE.

I.

THE lake is calm ; and, calm, the skies
In yonder cloudless sunset glow,
Where, o'er the woodland, homeward flies
The solitary crow ;

(8.)

RÁGINÍ HINDOLA.



The lake is calm; and, calm, the skies In yon- der



cloud- less sun- set glow, Where, o'er the wood- land,



home- ward flies The so- li- ta- ry crow;

II.

No moan the cushat makes to heave
 A leaflet round her windless nest;
 The air is silent in the eve;
 The world's at rest.

III. •

All bright below; all pure above;
 No sense of pain, no sign of wrong;
 Save in thy heart of hopeless love,
 Poor Child of Song!

IV.

Why must the soul through Nature rove,
At variance with her general plan ?
A stranger to the Power, whose love
Soothes all save Man ?

V.

Why lack the strength of meaner creatures ?
The wandering sheep, the grazing kine,
Are surer of their simple natures
Than I of mine.

VI.

For all their wants the poorest land
Affords supply ; they browse and breed ;
I scarce divine, and ne'er have found,
What most I need.

VII.

O God, that in this human heart
Hath made Belief so hard to grow,
And set the doubt, the pang, the smart
In all we know—

VIII.

Why hast thou, too, in solemn jest
At this tormented Thinking-power,
Inscribed, in flame on yonder West,
In hues on every flower,

IX.

Through all the vast unthinking sphere
Of mere material Force without,
Rebuke so vehement and severe
To the least doubt ?

X.

And robed the world, and hung the night,
With silent, stern, and solemn forms ;
And strown with sounds of awe, and might,
The seas and storms ;—

XI.

All lacking power to impart
To man the secret he assails,
But arm'd to crush him, if his heart
Once doubts or fails !

XII.

To make him feel the same forlorn
Despair, the Fiend hath felt ere now,
In gazing at the stern sweet scorn
On Michael's brow ?

AUTUMN.

I.

So now, then, Summer's over—by degrees.

Hark! 'tis the wind in yon red region grieves.

Who says the world grows better, growing old?
See! what poor trumpery on those pauper trees,
That cannot keep, for all their fine gold leaves,
Their last bird from the cold.

(9.)

RĀGINÍ KEDĀRĀ.



So now, then, Summer's over—by degrees.



Hark! 'tis the wind in yon red region



grieves. Who says the world grows better, growing old?



See! what poor trum- pe- ry on those pau- per



trees, That can not keep, for all their fine gold



leaves, Their last bird from the cold.

II.

This is Dame Nature, pucker'd, pinch'd, and sour,
 Of all the charms, her poets praised, bereft,
 Scowling, and scolding (only hear her, there!)
 Like that old spiteful Queen, in her last hour,
 Whom Spenser, Shakespeare sung to . . . nothing
 left
 But wrinkles, and red hair!

THE SWALLOW.

O SWALLOW chirping in the spangled eaves,
 Why hast thou left far south thy fairy homes,
 To build between these drench'd April-leaves,
 And sing me songs of Spring before it comes?

Too soon thou singest ! Yon black stubborn thorn
 Bursts not a bud : the sneaping wind drifts on.
 She that once flung thee crumbs, and in the morn
 Sang from the lattice where thou sing'st, is gone.
 Here is no Spring. Thy flight yet further follow.
 Fly off, vain swallow !

(10.)

RÁGINÍ SOHINÍ.



O swal- low chirp- ing in the spangl- ed



eaves, Why hast thou left far south thy fair- y



, homes, To build be- tween these dren- chéd Ap-



ril- leaves, And sing me songs of Spring be- fore it.



comes! Too soon thou sing- est! Yon black stub-



born thorn Bursts not a bud: the sneap- ing



wind drifts on. She that once flung thee crumbs,



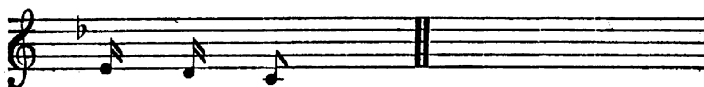
and in the morn Sang from the lat- tice



where thou sing'st, is gone. Here is no Spring.



Thy flight yet far- ther fol- low. Fly off,



vain swal- low !

Thou com'st to mock me with remember'd things.

I love thee not, O bird for me too gay.

That which I want thou hast—the gift of wings :

Grief—which I have—thou hast not. Fly away !

What hath my roof for thee ? my cold dark roof,

Beneath whose weeping thatch thine eggs will
freeze !

Summer will halt not here, so keep aloof.

Others are gone ; go thou. In those wet trees

• I see no Spring though thou still singest of it.

Fare hence, false prophet !

MEETING AGAIN.

I.

YES ; I remember the white rose. And since then
the young ivy has grown ;

From your window we could not reach it, and now it
is over the stone.

We did not part as we meet, Dear. Well, Time hath
his own stern cures !

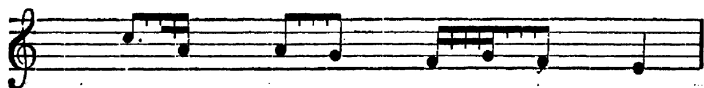
And Alice's eyes are deeper, and her hair has grown
like yours.

(11.)

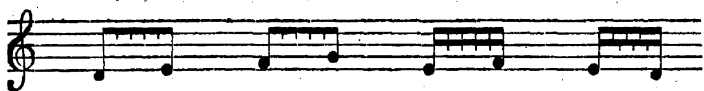
RÁGINÍ ÁLÁHIÁ.



Yes; I re- mem- ber the white rose. And



since then the young i- vy has grown;



From your win- dow we could not reach



it, and now it is o- ver the



stone. We did not part as we meet, Dear.



Well, Time hath his own stern cures!



And A-lice's eyes are deep-er, and her



hair has grown like yours.

II.

Is our greeting all so strange then ? But there's
something here amiss,
When it is not well to speak kindly. And the olives
are ripe by this.

I had not thought you so alter'd. But all is changed,
God knows !

Good-night. It is night so soon now. Look there !
You have dropt your rose.

III.

Nay, I have one that is wither'd and dearer to me.

I came

To say good-night, little Alice. She does not remem-
ber my name.

It is but the damp that is making my head and my
heart ache so.

I never was strong in the old time, as the others were,
you know.

IV.

And you 'll sleep well, will you not, Darling? The
old words sound so dear!

'Tis the last time I shall use them; you need show
neither anger nor fear.

It is well that you look so cheerful. And is time so
smooth with you?

How foolish I am! Good-night, Dear. And bid Alice
good-night too.

OLD AND NEW.

I.

ALL in its place as of old!
Nothing changed to the eye.
The moss'd rust tinted mass
Of the Manse in the meadow grass;
The half-moon afloat in a sky
Gray, neither warm nor cold.
All in its place as of old,
Nothing changed to the eye!
High over the mildewy pane
Of the long, low granary room,
In the mothy, moist ground-story,
The grass ripples russet, and hoary
With the cuckoo-flowers in bloom,
That mix their sick perfume

With the earthy smell of the rain,
 Clinging under each violet stain
 Of the streak'd and showery gloom.
 The red beech weepeth ;
 The cuckoo calleth ;
 In the fields afar
 Night waits.
 The silence sleepeth ;
 The twilight falleth,
 And the dim yellow star
 Dilates.
 All in the dew
 Hath the self-same hue.
 Nothing looks new.

(12.)

RÁGINÍ KHÁMBÁJA.



All in its place as of old! No-thing



chan- ged to the eye. The moss'd rust- tin- ted



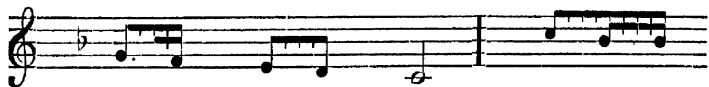
mass Of the Manse in the mea- dow grass ;

SET TO HINDU MUSIC.

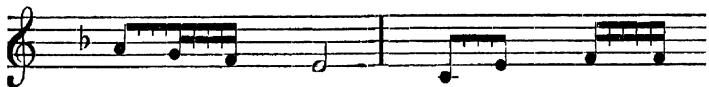
43



'The half- moon a- float in a sky Gray,



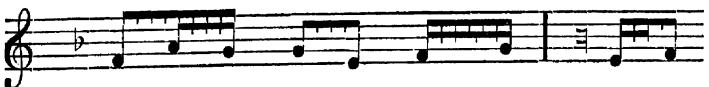
nei- ther warm nor cold. All in its



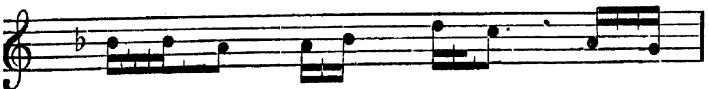
place as of old, No- thing chan- ged



to the eye! High o-ver the



mil- dew- y pane Of the long, low gra-



na- ry room, In the moth- y, moist ground-



sto- ry, The grass rip- ples rus- set, and



hoar- y With the cuc- koo flow- ers in



bloom, That mix their sick per- fume



With the ear- thy smell of the rain,



Cling- ing un- der each vio- let stain



Of the streak'd and show- er- y



gloom. The red beech weep- eth; The



cuc- koo call- eth; In the fields a-



far Night waits. The si- lence sleep- eth ;



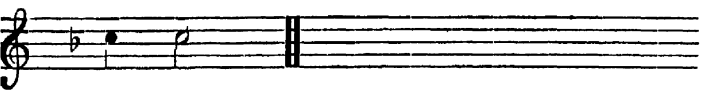
The twi- light fall- eth, And the



dim yel- low star Di- lates. All in



the dew Hath the self- same hue. No- thing



looks new.

II.

Nothing changed to the eye ;
Yet something is not as of old.
Where, and what, is the change ?
All is the same, yet strange.
My very heart grows cold ;
My lightest breath is a sigh.

Between the earth and sky,
Something is not as of old.
The buttercup's glimmering gold !
And the vetch with the purple dye !
And the wall-flower fading fast !
And the reeds in the creek where, aghast,
The stream like a ghost flits by,
With a moan to the watery sky,
Grazing the bulrush cold !
All in its place as of old,
Nothing changed to the eye !
The thin wave fleeteth ;
The white sail glideth ;
The blue reeds sigh
To the shore.
The light retreateth ;
The place abideth
Under my eye,
As of yore.
But the very dew
Doth chill me through.
All things feel new.

III.

Ah, memory is of the brain !
The heart remembers not ;
The heart can never recall ;
It feels, it hath felt, that is all ;
And a feeling unforget
Is a feeling felt again.

This is a joy which the brain
Renews, but the heart cannot.
I recall what I felt of old,
But I feel, not what I recall.
This,—this is the change !
This is why all feels strange !
Happy for man, after all,
That is Eden, after his fall,
God suffer'd him not to behold !
What I never may feel as of old
I would I might never recall.
But the river glideth ;
The red beech weepeth ;
The reeds to the shore
Still sigh.
The place abideth ;
The dead Past keepeth
The form it first wore
To the eye.
Ah few, how few,
In the heart can renew
What the eye may review !

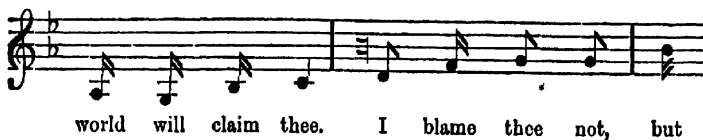
A FAREWELL.

I.

BE happy, child. The last wild words are spoken.
To-morrow, mine no more, the world will claim thee.
I blame thee not, but all my life is broken ;
Of what hath been I save not even a token.
Never in years to come my lips shall name thee,
Never, child, never.

(13.)

RÁGINÍ PILU.





all my life is bro- ken ; Of what hath been



I save not even a to- ken. Never in



years to come my lips shall name thee,



Never, child, never.

II.

I will not say ' Forget me,' nor those hours
Which were so sweet. Some scent dead leaves retain.
Keep all the flowers I gave thee—all the flowers,
Dead ! dead ! Though years on years of life were ours,
As we have met we shall not meet again,
For ever, child ! for ever !

FUTILITY.

I.

LET us not be dissatisfied
 With Nature. She is in her right.
 I neither blame thee, Sweet, nor chide.
 As, on a clear spring night,

(14.)

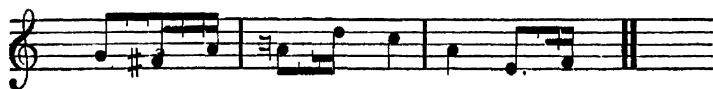
RÁGINÍ HÁMBIRÁ.



Let us not be dis- sa- tis- fied With Na-



ture. She is in her right. I nei- ther blame thee,



Sweet, nor chide. As, on a clear spring night,

II.

The cold encumbrance of the snow
 Drops from the bosom of the hills,
 So all my life from thine lets go,
 And all its weight of ills

III.

Drops from thee. Set thy smooth smile free,
Assert thy youth, bloom forth unblamed
Beyond me ! Whatsoe'er we be,
Why should we be ashamed ?

IV.

That which we are, we are. 'Twere vain
To plant with toil what may not blow.
The cloud will break and bring the rain,
Whether we reap, or sow.

V.

All finds its place. We shall not miss
God's meaning, whatsoe'er He mean.
If this were that, or that were this,
What hath been had not been.

VI.

Let all be as it is, dear Love.
There is no better thing than sleep.
They only fall, that strive to move,
Or lose, that care to keep.

VII.

Let go what will not stay. What then ?
Seed—time, and harvest,—soon, the snow !
Above the graves of buried men
The grass hath leave to grow.

LITTLE ELLA.

I.

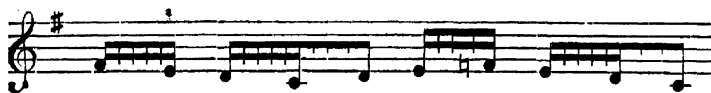
I KNOW now, little Ella, what the flowers
 Said to you then, to make your cheek so pale ;
 And why the blackbird in our laurel bowers
 Spake to you, only ; and the poor, pink snail
 Fear'd less your steps than those of the May—shower.
 It was not strange these creatures loved you so,
 And told you all. 'Twas not so long ago
 You were, yourself, a bird, or else a flower.

(15.)

RĀGINĪ IMAN-KALYĀNA.



I know now, little El- la, what the flow- ers



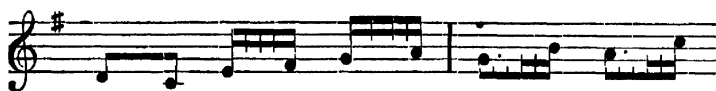
Said to you then, to make your cheek so pale ;



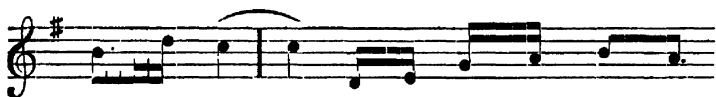
And why the black bird in our lau- rel



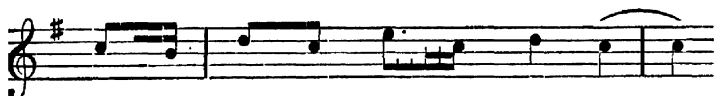
bow- ers Spake to you, on- ly ; and the poor,



pink snail Fear'd less your steps than those of the



May— show- er —. It was not strange these crea-



tures loved you so, And told you all —.



'Twas not so long a- go — You were,



your- self, a bird, or else a flow- er.

II.

And, little Ella, you were pale, because
So soon you were to die. I know that now.
And why there ever seem'd a sort of gauze
Over your deep blue eyes, and sad young brow.
You were too good to grow up, Ella, you,
And be a woman such as I have known !
And so upon your heart they put a stone,
And left you, Dear, amongst the flowers and dew.

III.

O thou, the morning star of my dim soul !
My little elfin friend from Fairy-Land !
Whose memory is yet innocent of the whole
Of that which makes me doubly need thy hand,
Thy guiding hand from mine so soon withdrawn !
Here where I find so little like to thee.
For thou wert as the breath of dawn to me,
Starry, and pure, and brief as is the dawn.

IV.

Thy knight was I, and thou my Fairy Queen.
('Twas in the days of love and chivalry !)
And thou didst hide thee in a bower of green.
But thou so well hast hidden thee, that I
Have never found thee since. And thou didst set
Many a task, and quest, and high emprise,
Ere I should win my guerdon from thine eyes,
So many, and so many, that not yet

V.

My tasks are ended, nor my wanderings o'er.
But some day there will come across the main
A magic barque, and I shall quit this shore
Of care, and find thee, in thy bower, again ;
And thou wilt say, " My brother, hast thou found
Our home at last ?" ... Whilst I, in answer, Sweet,
Shall heap my life's last booty at thy feet,
And bare my breast with many a bleeding wound.

VI.

The spoils of time ! the trophies of a world !
The keys of conquer'd towns, and captived kings,
And many a broken sword, and banner furl'd,
The heads of giants, and swart soldan's rings,
And many a maiden's scarf, and many a wand
Of baffled wizard, many an amulet,
And many a shield with mine own heart's blood wet,
And jewels rare from many a distant land !

VII.

How sweet, with thee, my sister, to renew,
In lands of light, the search for those bright birds
Of plumage so ethereal in its hue,
And music sweeter than all mortal words,
Which some good angel to our childhood sent
With messages from Paradisal flowers,
So lately left, the scent of Eden bowers
Yet linger'd in our hair, where'er we went !

VIII.

Now, they are all fled by this many a year,
Adown the viewless valleys of the wind,
And never more will cross this hemisphere,
Those birds of passage ! Never shall I find,
Dropt from the flight, you follow'd, Dear, so far,
That you will never come again, I know,
One plumelet on the paths whereby I go
Missing thy light there, O my morning star !

IX.

She pass'd out of my youth, at the still time
O' the early light, when all was green and husht.
She pass'd, and pass'd away. Some broken rhyme
Scrawl'd on the panel or the pane : the crusht
And faded rose she dropp'd : the page she turn'd
And finish'd not : the ribbon or the knot
That flutter'd from her ... Stranger, harm them not !
I keep these sacred relics undiscern'd.

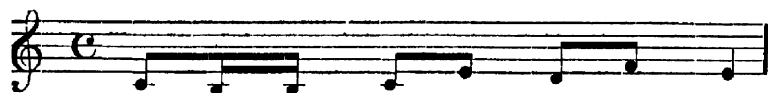
THE MERMAIDEN.

I.

HE was a Prince with golden hair,
(In a palace beside the sea,)
And I but a little white Mermaiden,
And how should he care for me ?

(16.)

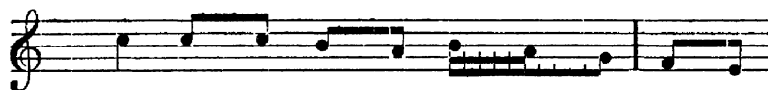
RÁGINÍ GAURA-SÁRANGA.



He was a Prince with gold- en hair,



(In a pa- lace be- side the sea,) And



I but a little white Mer- maid- en, And how



should he care for me ?

II.

Last summer I came, in the calm blue nights,
 To roam through the cool sea-caves :
 Last summer he came, when the stars were shining,
 To walk by the lone sea-waves.

III.

There is no light in the gray sea-groves
 Like the light on his golden hair :
 There be no sweetnesss known to the sea-folk
 So sweet as his kisses, were.

IV.

I love him, love him, ah, so well
 That my love hath grown pain in me,
 And to-morrow he weds the Princess, yonder
 In that palace beside the sea.

A NIGHT IN THE FISHERMAN'S HUT.

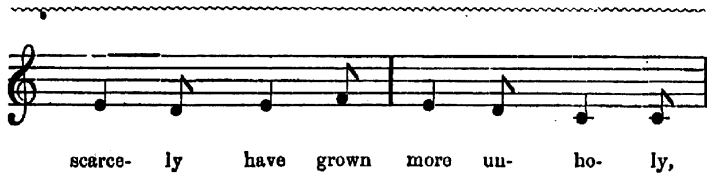
I.

If the wind had been blowing the Devil this way
 The midnight could scarcely have grown more unholy,
 Or the sea have found secrets more wicked to say
 To the toothless old crags it is hiding there wholly.

(17.)

RÁGINÍ KALYÁNA-JANGLÁ.





II.

I love well the darkness. I love well the sound
 Of the thunder-drift, howling this way over ocean :
 For 'tis though as in nature my spirit had found
 A trouble akin to its own fierce emotion.

III.

The hoarse night may howl herself silent for me ! [in
 When the silence comes, then comes the howling with-
 I am drench'd to my knees in the surf of the sea,
 And wet with the salt bitter rain to the skin.

IV.

Let it thunder and lighten ! this world's ruin'd angel
Is but fool'd by desire like the frailest of men ;
Both seek in hysterics life's awful evangel,
Then both settle down to life's silence again.

V.

Well I know the wild spirits of water and air,
When the lean morrow turns up his cynical grey,
Will, baffled, revert with familiar despair
To their old listless work, in their old helpless way.

VI.

Yonder's the light in the Fisherman's hut :
But the old wolf himself is, I know, off at sea ;
And I see through the chinks, though the shutters be
shut,
By the firelight that some one is watching for me.

VII.

Hark ! the horses of ocean that crouch at my feet,
They are moaning in impotent pain on the beach !
Lo ! the storm-light, that swathes in its blue winding—
sheet
That lone desert of sky, where the stars are dead, each !

VIII.

Holloa, there ! open, you little wild girl !
Hush, . . . 'tis her soft feet over the floor.
Stay not to tie up a single dark curl,
But quick with the candle, and open the door.

IX.

One kiss ? . . . there's twenty ! . . . but first, take my
coat there,
Salt as a sea-sponge, and dripping all through.
The old wolf, your father, is out in the boat there.
Hark to the thunder ! . . . we're safe,—I and you.

X.

Put on the kettle. And now for the cask
Of that famous old rum of your father's, the king
Would have claw'd on our frontier. There, fill me the
flask.
Ah, what a quick, little, neat-handed thing !

XI.

There's my pipe. Stuff it with black negro-head.
Soon I shall be in the cloud-land of glory.
Faith, 'tis better with you, Dear, than'fore the mast-
head,
With such lights at the windows of nights upper
story !

XII.

Next, over the round open hole in the shutter.
You may pin up your shawl, . . . lest a mermaid
should peep.
Come, now, the kettle's beginning to splutter,
And the cat recomposes herself into sleep.

XIII.

Poor little naked feet, . . . put them up there
On the black bearskin ; and now nestle here
Your head on my shoulder ; while all the dark hair
Falls round us like seaweed, the tender warm ear.

XIV.

Pink as a sea-shell, between it out-peeping.
What shall we do with this long windy night ?
It is all of it ours, choose we waking or sleeping ;
To talk, or be still,—in the dark or the light.

XV.

Will you sing to me songs ? shall I tell to you stories ?
Shall the stories, the songs, be of mirth or of woe ?
Of Fairyland fair, with its far—away glories ?
Or the loves of young lovers who died long ago ?

XVI.

We have time for each choice. Take the cards from
the cupboard,
Thumb'd over by every old thief in our crew,
And I'll tell you your fortune, you little Dame-Hubbard ;
My own has been squander'd on witches like you.

XVII.

Knave, King, and Queen, all the villanous pack of 'em,
I know what they're worth in the game, and have
found
Upon all the trump-cards the small mark at the back
of 'em,
The Devil's nail mark, who still cheats us all round.

CONTRABAND.

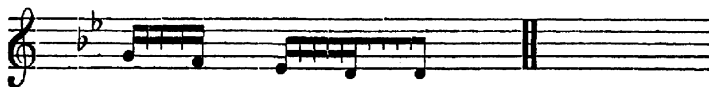
I.

A HEAP of low, dark, rocky coast,
 Where the blue-black sea sleeps smooth and even :
 And the sun, just over the reefs at most,
 In the amber part of a pale blue heaven :

(18.)

RĀGINĪ KĀFI-SINDHU.





a pale blue heaven :

II.

A village asleep below the pines,
 Hid up the gray shore from the low slow sun :
 And a maiden that lingers among the vines,
 With her feet in the dews, and her locks undone :

III.

The half-moon melting out of the sky ;
 And, just to be seen still, a star here, a star there,
 Faint, high up in the heart of the heaven ; so high
 And so faint, you can scarcely be sure that they
 are there :

IV.

And one of that small, black, raking craft ;
 Two swivel guns on a round deck handy ;
 And a great sloop sail with the wind abaft ;
 And four brown thieves round a cask of brandy.

V.

That's my life, as I left it last.
 And what it may be henceforth I know not.
 But all that I keep of the merry Past,
 Are trifles like these, which I care to show not :—

VI.

A leathern flask, and a necklace of pearl ;
 These rusty pistols, this tatter'd chart, Friend :
 And the soft dark half of a raven curl ;
 And, at evening, the thought of a true, true heart,
 Friend.

HOW THE SONG WAS MADE.

I.

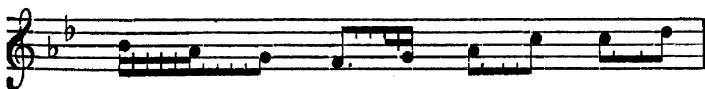
I SAT low down, at midnight, in a vale
 Mysterious with the silence of blue pines :
 White-cloven by a snaky river-tail,
 Uncoil'd from tangled wefts of silver twines.

(19.)

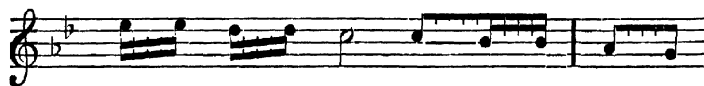
RĀGINÍ YOĠIĀN.



I sat low down, at mid- night,



in a vale Mys- te- ri- ous with the



si- lence of blue pines : White- clo- ven by a



sna- ky ri- ver- tail, Un- coil'd from tan-



gled wefts of sil- ver twines.

II.

Out of a crumbling castle, on a spike
 Of splinter'd rock, a mile of changeless shade
 Gorged half the landscape, Down a dismal dyke
 Of black hills the sluiced moonbeams streamed,
 and staid.

III.

I pluck'd blue mugwort, livid mandrakes, balls
 Of blossom'd nightshade, heads of hemlock, long
 White grasses, grown in oozy intervals
 Of marsh, to make ingredients for a song :

IV.

A song of mourning to embalm the Past—
 The corpse-cold Past—that it should not decay ;
 But in dark vaults of Memory, to the last,
 Endure unchanged : for in some future day

V.

I will bring my new love to look at it
 (Laying aside her gay robes for a moment)
 That, seeing what love came to, she may sit
 Silent awhile, and muse, but make no comment.

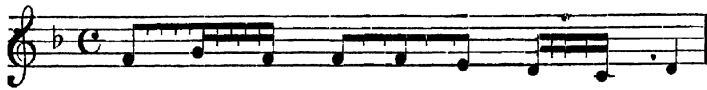
A L'ENTRESOL.

I.

His graven circle of golden hours
 The creeping hand of the Time-piece, there
 In yon bower of milk-white china flowers,
 Hath rounded unaware :

(20.)

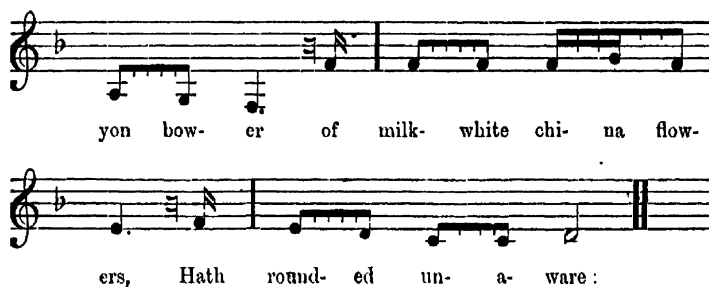
RĀGINĪ PĀHĀRĪĀ JHĪJHITĀ.



His gra- ven cir- cle of gol- den hours



The creep- ing hand of the Time- piece, there In



II.

While the firelight, flung from the pictured wall
On the large and limpid mirror behind,
Hath redden'd and darken'd down o'er all,
As the fire itself declined.

III.

Something of pleasure, and something of pain
There lived in that sinking light. What is it?
Faces I never shall look at again,
In places you never will visit,

IV.

Grew out of the glow of each ardent ember,
While, under a palely-wavering flame,
Half of the years life aches to remember
Reappeared, and died as they came.

V.

To its dark Forever an hour hath gone
Since either you or I have spoken:
Each of us might have been sitting alone
In a silence so unbroken.

VI.

I never shall know what made me look up
(In this cushion'd chair so soft and deep,
By the table where, over the empty cup,
I was leaning, half asleep)

VII.

To catch a gleam on the picture up there
Of the saint in the wilderness under the oak ;
And a light on the brow of the bronze Voltaire,
Like the ghost of a cynical joke :

VIII.

To mark, in each violet, velvet fold
Of the curtains that fall 'twixt room and room,
The dip and dance of the manifold
Shadows of rosy gloom.

IX.

O'er the Rembrandt there—the Caracci here—
Flutter warmly the ruddy and wavering hues ;
And St. Anthony over his book has a leer
At the little French beauty by Greuze :

X.

There—the Leda, weigh'd over her white swan's back,
By the weight of her passionate kiss, ere it falls—
On the ebony cabinet, glittering black
Through its ivory cups and balls :

XI.

Your scissors and thimble, and work laid away,
With its silks, in the scented rose-wood box :
The journals that tell truth every day ;
And that novel of Paul de Kock's :

XII.

The flowers in the vase, with their bells shut close
In a dream of the far green fields where they grew :
The cards of the visiting people and shows
In that bowl with the sea-green hue :

XIII.

Your shawl, with a queenly droop of its own,
Hanging over the arm of the crimson chair :
And, last—yourself, as silent as stone,
In a flush of the firelight there !

XIV.

I thought you were reading all this time.
And was it some wonderful page of your book
Telling of love, with its glory and crime,
That has left you that sorrowful look ?

XV.

For a tear from those dark, deep, humid orbs
'Neath their lashes, so long, and soft, and sleek,
All the light in your lustrous eyes absorbs,
As it trembles over your cheek.

XVI.

Were you thinking how we, sitting side by side,
Might be dreaming miles and miles apart?
Or if lips could meet over a gulf so wide
As separates heart from heart?

XVII.

Ah, well! when time is flown, how it fled
It is better neither to ask nor tell.
Leave the dead moments to bury their dead.
Let us kiss and break the spell!

XVIII.

Come, arm in arm, to the window here;
Draw by the thick curtain, and see how, to-night,
In the clear and frosty atmosphere,
The lamps are burning bright.

XIX.

It is scarcely so cold, but I and you,
With never a friend to find us out,
May stare at the shops for a moment or two,
And wander a while about.

XX.

For when in the crowd we have taken our place,
(—Just two more lives to the mighty street there!)
Knowing no single form or face
Of the men and women we meet there,—

XXI.

Knowing, and known of, none in the whole
Of that crowd all round, but our two selves only,
We shall grow nearer, soul to soul,
Until we feel less lonely.

XXII.

Here are your bonnet and gloves, dear. There—
How stately you look in that long rich shawl!
Put back your beautiful golden hair,
That never a curl may fall.

XXIII.

Stand in the firelight . . . so, . . . as you were—
O my heart, how fearfully like her she seem'd!
Hide me up from my own despair,
And the ghost of a dream I dream'd!

GOING BACK AGAIN.

I.

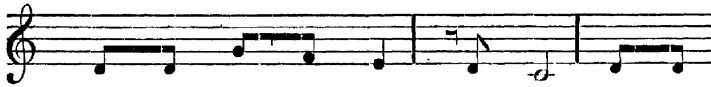
I DREAM'D that I walk'd in Italy
When the day was going down,
By a water that flow'd quite silently
Through an old dim-lighted town:

(21.)

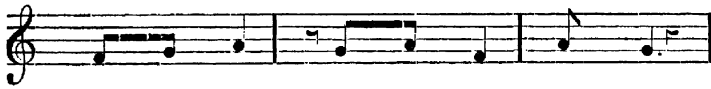
RÁGINÍ SURATHA.



I dream'd that I walk'd in I- ta- ly



When the day was go- ing down, By a



wa- ter that flow'd quite si- lent- ly



Through an old dim- light- ed town :

II.

Till I came a Palace fair to see :
 Wide open the windows were :
 My love at a window sat, and she
 Beckon'd me up the stair.

III.

I roam'd through many a corridor
And many a chamber of state :
I pass'd through many an open door,
While the day was growing late :

IV.

Till I came to the Bridal Chamber at last,
All dim in the darkening weather.
The flowers at the window were talking fast,
And whispering all together.

V.

The place was so still that I could hear
Every word that they said :
They were whispering, busy, and full of fear,
For somebody there was dead.

VI.

When I came to the little rose-colour'd room,
From the window there flew a bat.
The window was open'd upon the gloom :
My love at the window sat :

VII.

She sat with her guitar on her knee,
But she was not singing a note,
For some one had drawn (ah, who could it be ?)
A knife across her throat.

MADAME LA MARQUISE.

I.

THE folds of her wine-dark violet dress
 Glow over the sofa, fall on fall,
 As she sits in the air of her loveliness
 With a smile for each and for all.

(22.)

RĀGINÍ MULTĀNÍ.



The folds of her wine-dark vio- let



dress Glow over the so- fa, fall on



fall, As she sits in the air of her



love- li- ness With smile for



each and for all.

II.

Half of her exquisite face in the shade
Which o'er it the screen in her soft hand flings :
Through the gloom glows her hair in its odorous braid :
In the firelight are sparkling her rings.

III.

As she leans,—the slow smile half shut up in her eyes
Beams the sleepy, long, silk-soft lashes beneath ;
Through her crimson lips, stirr'd by her faint replies,
Breaks one gleam of her pearl-white teeth :

IV.

As she leans,—where your eye, by her beauty subdued,
Droops—from under warm fringes of broidery white
The slightest of feet—silken-slipper'd, protrude,
For one moment, then slip out of sight.

V.

As I bend o'er her bosom, to tell her the news,
The faint scent of her hair, the approach of her cheek,
The vague warmth of her breath, all my senses suffuse
With HERSELF : and I tremble to speak.

So she sits in the curtain'd, luxurious light
Of that room, with its porcelain, and pictures, and
flowers,
When the dark day's half done, and the snow flutters
white,
Past the windows in feathery showers.

All without is so cold,—'neath the low leaden sky !
Down the bald, empty street, like a ghost, the gen-
darme
Stalks surly : a distant carriage hums by :—
All within is so bright and so warm !

But she drives afternoon:—then's the time to behold
her,
With her fair face half hid, like a ripe peeping rose,
'Neath that veil,—o'er the velvets and furs which en-
fold her,—
Leaning back with a queenly repose,

As she glides up the sunlight ! . . . you'd say she was
made
To loll back in a carriage, all day, with a smile ;
And at dusk, on a sofa, to lean in the shade
Of soft lamps, and be woo'd for a while,

X.

Could we find out her heart through that velvet and lace !
Can it beat without ruffling her sumptuous dress ?
She will show us her shoulder, her bosom, her face ;
But what the heart's like, we must guess.

XI.

With live women and men to be found in the world—
(—Live with sorrow and sin,—live with pain and
with passion,—)
Who could live with a doll, though its locks should be
curl'd,
And its petticoats trimm'd in the fashion ?

XII.

'Tis so fair ! . . . would my bite, if I bit it, draw blood ?
Will it cry if I hurt it ? or scold if I kiss ?
Is it made, with its beauty, of wax or of wood ?
. . . Is it worth while to guess at all this ?

AUX ITALIENS.

I.

At Paris it was, at the Opera there ;—
And she look'd like a Queen of old time that night,
With the wreathed pearls in her raven hair,
And her breast with the diamond bright.

(23.)

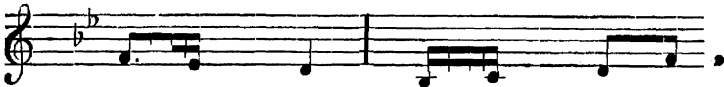
RÁGINÍ SINDHU-KHÁMBÁJA.



At Pa- ris it was, at the O- pe- ra



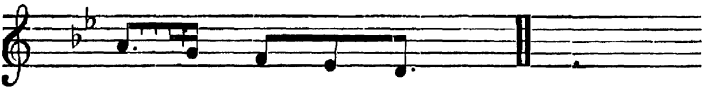
there ;— And she look'd like a Queen of old



time that night, With the wrea- thed



pearls in her ra- ven hair, And her breast



with the dia- mond bright.

II.

The moon on the tower slept soft as snow :

And who was not thrill'd in the strangest way,

As the Troubadour sung while the gas burn'd low,

' *Non ti scordar di me?*

III.

Side by side in our box we sat,
Together, my bride betroth'd and I :
My gaze was fix'd on my opera-hat,
And hers on the stage hard by :

IV.

And both were silent, and both were sad.
Queenly she lean'd on her full white arm,
With that regal, indolent air she had ;
So confident of her charm !

V.

I have not a doubt she was thinking then
Of her former lord, good soul that he was !
Who died the richest, and roundest of men,
The Marquis of Carabas.

VI.

That narrow gate to 'the kingdom of heaven,
He was not too portly, I trust, to pass.
I wish him well, for the jointure given
To my lady of Carabas.

VII.

Meanwhile, I was thinking of my first love,
As I had not been thinking of aught for years,
Till over my eyes there began to move
Something that felt like tears.

VIII.

I thought of the dress that she wore last time,
When we stood, 'neath the cypress trees, together,
In that lost land, in her own soft clime,
In the crimson evening weather,

IX.

By the broken wall, on the brown grass plot ;
And her warm white neck in its golden chain :
And her full, soft hair, wound into a knot,
And falling loose again :

X.

And the jasmin-flower in her fair young breast :
(O the faint, sweet smell of that jasmin-flower !)
And the last bird singing alone to his nest :
And the first star over the tower.

XI.

I thought of our little quarrels and strife ;
And the letter that brought me back my ring.
And it all seem'd then, in the waste of life ,
Such a very little thing !

XII.

For I thought of her grave below the hill,
Which the sentinel cypress tree stands over.
And I thought . . . 'were she only living still,
How I could forgive her, and love her !'

XIII.

And I swear, as I thought of her thus, in that hour,
And of how, after all, old things were best,
That I smelt the smell of that jasmin-flower,
Which she used to wear in her breast.

XIV.

It smelt so faint, and it smelt so sweet,
It made me creep, and it made me cold !
Like the scent that steals from the crumbling sheet
Where a mummy is half unroll'd.

XV.

And I turn'd and look'd. She was sitting there
In a dim box, over the stage ; and drest
In the dress that I knew, with her full soft hair,
And that jasmin in her breast !

XVI.

She was there : and I wa's here ;
And the glittering horse-shoe curved between :---
And from here to there, and from tier to tier,
From my bride that was to have been,

XVII.

To my early love, with her eyes downcast,
And over her blush-rose face the shade,
(In short from the Future back to the Past)
There was but a step to be made.

XVIII.

To my early love from my future bride
One moment I look'd. Then I stole to the door,
I traversed the passage ; and down at her side
I was sitting, a moment more.

XIX.

My thinking of her, or the music's strain,
Or something that never will be express't,
Had brought her back from the grave again,
With the jasmin in her breast.

XX.

She is not dead, and she is not wed !
But she loves me now, and she loved me then !
And the very first word that her sweet lips said,
My heart grew youthful again.

XXI.

The Marchioness there, of Carabas,
She is wealthy, and young, and handsome still,
And but for her . . . well, we'll let that pass,
She may marry whomever she will.

XXII.

But I will marry my own first love,
With her blush-rose face : for old things are best ;
And the flower in her bosom, I prize it above
The brooch in my lady's breast.

XXIII.

The world is fill'd with folly and sin,
 And Love must cling where it can, I say :
 For Beauty is easy enough to win ;
 But one is n't loved every day.

XXIV.

And I thing, in the lives of most women and men,
 There's a moment when all would go smooth and even,
 If only the dead could find out when
 To come back, and be forgiven.

THE CASTLE OF KING MACBETH.

I.

THIS is the castle of King Macbeth.
 And here he feasts—when the day-light wanes,
 And the moon goes softly over the heath—
 His Earls and Thaners.

(24.)

RÁGINÍ BHÚPA-KALYÁNA.



This is the cas- tle of King Mac- beth.



And here he feasts— when the day- light wanes,



And the moon goes soft- ly over the heath—



His Earls and Thanes.

II.

A hundred harpers with harps of gold
 Harp through the night high festival :
 And the sound of the music they make is roll'd
 From hall to hall.

III.

They drink, they sing, till the rafters rock
 In the Banquet Hall ; and the shout is borne
 To the courts outside, where the crowing cock
 Is waked ere morn.

IV.

They sing, they dance, till the raven is stirr'd
 On the wicked elm-tree outside in the gloom :
 And the rustle of silken robes is heard
 From room to room.

V.

But there is one room in that castle old,
 In a lonely turret where no one goes,
 And a dead man sits there, stark and cold,
 Whom no one knows.

THE PORTRAIT.

I.

MIDNIGHT past ! Not a sound of aught
 Through the silent house, but the wind at his prayers.
 I sat by the dying fire, and thought
 Of the dear dead woman upstairs.

(25.)

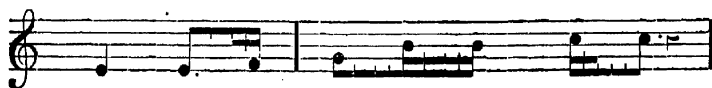
RÁGINÍ. BEHÁGA.



Mid- night past ! Not a



sound of au- ght Through the si- lent



house, but the wind at his pray- ers.



I sat by the dy- ing . fi- re, and thought



Of the dear dead wo- man up- — stairs.

II.

A night of tears ! for the gusty rain
 Had ceased, but the caves were dripping yet ;
 And the moon look'd forth, as though in pain,
 With her face all white and wet :

III.

Nobody with me, my watch to keep,
 But the friend of my bosom, the man I love :
 And grief had sent him fast to sleep
 In the chamber up above.

IV.

Nobody else, in the country place
 All round, that knew of my loss beside,
 But the good young priest with the Raphael-face,
 Who confess'd her when she died.

V.

That good young Priest is of gentle nerve,
And my grief had moved him beyond control ;
For his lip grew white, as I could observe,
When he speeded her parting soul.

VI.

I sat by the dreary hearth alone :
I thought of the pleasant days of yore :
I said " the staff of my life is gone :
The woman I love is no more.

VII.

• " Gem-clasp'd, on her bosom my portrait lies,
Which next to her heart she used to wear—
It is steep'd in the light of her loving eyes,
And the sweets of her bosom and hair."

VIII.

And I said—"the thing is precious to me :
They will bury her soon in the churchyard clay ;
It lies on her heart, and lost must be,
If I do not take it away."

IX.

I lighted my lamp at the dying flame,
And crept up the stairs that creak'd for fright,
Till into the chamber of death I came,
Where she lay all in white.

X.

The moon shone over her winding-sheet.

There, stark she lay on her carven bed :
Seven burning tapers about her feet,
And seven about her head.

XI.

As I stretch'd my hand, I held my breath ;
I turn'd, as I drew the curtains apart :
I dared not look on the face of death :
I knew where to find her heart.

XII.

I thought, at first, as my touch fell there,
It had warm'd that heart to life, with love ;
For the thing I touch'd was warm, I swear,
And I could feel it move.

XIII.

'Twas the hand of a man, that was moving slow
O'er the heart of the dead,—from the other side :
And at once the sweat broke over my brow,
“ Who is robbing the corpse ?” I cried.

XIV.

Opposite me, by the tapers' light,
The friend of my bosom, the man I loved,
Stood over the corpse, and all as white,
And neither of us moved.

XV.

"What do you here, my friend?" . . . The man
Look'd first at me, and then at the dead.
"There is a portrait here . . ." he began ;
"There is. It is mine," I said.

XVI.

Said the friend of my bosom, "yours, no doubt,
The Portrait was, till a month ago,
When this suffering angel took that out,
And placed mine there, I know."

XVII.

"This woman, she loved me well," said I.
"A month ago," said my friend to me :
"And in your throat," I groan'd, "you lie !"
He answer'd . . . "let us see."

XVIII.

"Enough !" I return'd, "let the dead decide :
And whose soever the portrait prove,
His shall it be, when the cause is tried,
Where Death is arraign'd by Love."

XIX.

We found the portrait there, in its place :
We open'd it by the tapers' shine :
The gems were all unchanged : the face
Was--neither his nor mine.

XX.

"One nail drives out another, at least !
 The face of the portrait there," I cried,
 "Is our friend's, the Raphael-faced young Priest,
 Who confess'd her when she died."

THE ALOE.

I.

A STRANGER sent from burning lands,
 In realms where buzz and mutter yet
 Old gods, with hundred heads and hands,
 On jewell'd thrones of jet,—

(26.)

RĀGINĪ SURATHA-KHĀMBĀJA.



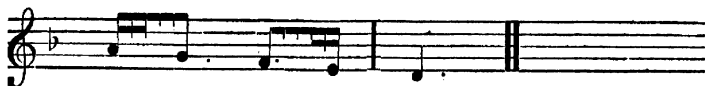
A stran- ger sent from bur- ning lands, In'



realms where buzz and mut- ter yet Old



gods, with hun- dred heads and hands, On



je- well'd thrones of jet,—

II.

(Old gods as old as Time himself,)

And, in a hot and heavy calm,

Recline o'er many a sandy shelf

Dusk forms beneath the palm,—

III.

To Lady Eve, who dwells beside

The river-meads, and oak-trees tall,

Whose dewy shades encircle wide

Her old Baronial Hall,

IV.

An Indian plant with leaves like horn,

And, all, along its stubborn spine,

Mere humps, with angry spike and thorn

.Arm'd, like the porcupine.

V.

In midst of which one sullen bud

Survey'd the world, with head aslant,

High-throned, and looking like the god

Of this strange Indian plant.

VI.

A stubborn plant, from looking cross
It seem'd no kindness could retrieve !
But for his sake whose gift it was
It pleased the Lady Eve.

VII.

She set it on the terraced walk,
Within her own fair garden-ground ;
And every morn and eve its stalk
was duly water'd round.

VIII.

And every eve and morn, the while
She tended this uncourteous thing,
I stood beside her,—watch'd her smile,
And often heard her sing.

IX.

The roses I at times would twist
To deck her hair, she oft forgot ;
But never that dark aloe miss'd
The daily watering-pot.

X.

She seem'd so gay,—I felt so sad,—
Her laugh but made me frown the more :
For each light word of hers I had
Some sharp reply in store.

XI.

Until she laugh'd . . . "This aloe shows
A kindlier nature than your own" . . .
Ah Eve, you little dream'd what foes
The plant and I had grown !

XII.

At last, one summer night, when all
The garden-flowers were dreaming still,
And still the old Baronial Hall,
The oak-trees on the hill,

XIII.

A loud and sudden sound there stirr'd,
As when a thunder-cloud is torn ;
Such thunder-claps are only heard
When little gods are born.

XIV.

The peacocks scream'd, and every rook
Upon the elms at roost did caw :
Each inmate straight the house forsook :
They search'd—and, last,—they saw

XV.

That sullen bud to flower had burst
Upon the sharp-leaved aloe there ;—
A wondrous flower ; whose breath disperst
Rich odours on the air :

XVI.

A flower, colossal—dazzling white,
And fair as is a Sphynx's face,
Turn'd broadly to the moon by night
From some vast temple's base.

XVII.

Yes, Eve ! your aloe paid the pains
With which its sullen growth you nurst.
But, ah ! my nature still remains
As churlish as at first.

XVIII.

And yet and yet—it might have proved
Not all unworth your hearts' approving.
Ah, had I only been beloved,—
(Beloved as I was loving !)

XIX.

I might have been . . . how much, how much,
I am not now, and shall not be !
One gentle look, one tender touch,
Had done so much for me !

XX.

I too, perchance, if kindly tended,
Had roused this napping generation
With something novel, strange, and splendid,
Deserving admiration :

XXI.

For all the while there grew, and grew
 A germ,—a bud, within my bosom :
 No flower, fair Eve !—for, thanks to you,
 It never came to blossom.

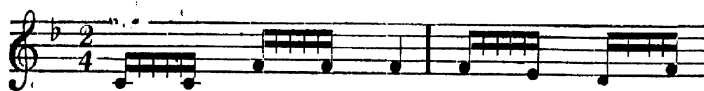
SPRING AND WINTER.

I.

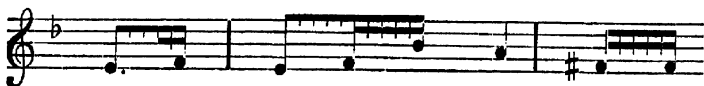
Was it well in him, if he
 Felt not love, to speak of love so ?
 If he still unmoved must be,
 Was it nobly sought to move so ?
 —Pluck the flower, but not to wear it—
 Spurn it from him, yet not spare it ?

(27.)

RĀGA BASANTA.



Was it well in him, if he Felt not



love, to speak of love so ? If he



still un- moved must be, Was it no- bly



sought to move so!— Pluck the flow- er, but



not to wear it— Spurn it from him,



yet not spare it?

II.

Need he say that I was fair,
With such meaning in his tone,
Adding ever that her hair
Had the same tinge as my own?
Pluck my life up, root and bloom,
To make garlands for her tomb?

III.

And, her eyes, though deep their light,
Were less deep, he said, than mine,
And her brow, though white, less white
Than this blue-vein'd crystalline ;
But 'twas just that he loved then
More than he can love again.

IV.

Then, if beauty could not bind him,
Wherefore praise me, speaking low ?
Use my face just to remind him
How no face could please him now ?
Why, if loving could not move him,
Did he teach me still to love him ?

V.

"Yes!" he said, "he had grown wise now :
He had suffer'd much of yore :
But a fair face to his eyes now,
Was a fair face, and no more.
Yet the anguish and the bliss,
And the dream too, had been his."

VI.

Ah, those words a thought too tender
For the common-places spoken !
Looks whose meaning seem'd to render
Help to words when speech come broken !
Why so late in July moonlight
Just to say what's said by moonlight ?

VII.

And why praise my youth for gladness,
Keeping something in his smile
That changed all my youth to sadness,
He still smiling all the while ?
Since, when so my youth was over,
He said "seek some younger lover !"

VIII.

Well, the spring's back now ! the thrushes
Are astir as heretofore,
And the apple-blossom blushes
As of old about the door.
Does he taste a finer bliss,
I must wonder, in all this,

IX.

(Winning thus what I have lost)
By the usage of my youth?
—I can feel my forehead crost
By the wrinkle's fretful tooth,
While the grey grows in my hair,
And the cold creeps everywhere.

THE END.

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