

LOVE AND FEAR.

THE rose of the springtime that bended
Its delicate head to the breeze
Is crimson and stately and splendid
Now summer is here and at ease ;
Love risen as the sun hath transcended its passion
and peace.

In a garden of dark foliage that clusters
Round your face as a rosebud withdrawn,
New splendour springs carmine and lustres
Your cheeks with the coming of dawn,
Love's light as an army that musters its plumes—
and is gone.

For fear as a fountain, that trembles
With wind, is arisen, and hides
The light of your love, and dissembles
The roar of the passionate tides ;
Though a flickering flame it resembles, love is, and
abides.

I see through the moonlight that covers
(As a mist on the mountain) your head
The flame of your heart as a lover's
Shine out in your face and be shed,
A ruby that flashes and hovers and droops and is
dead.

As a saint in a vision half hidden
I see the sweet face in a mist,
A nimbus of glory unbidden
That shades you or shows as you list.

But I, as a bridegroom, unhidden, may kiss—and
am kissed.

In the light and the manifest splendour
That shows you in darkness a bride,
Pale blossom of moonlight and slender,
A lily that sways in the tide,
A star that falls earthward to bend her sweet
breast to my side :—

No depth of the darkness may shield you
From eyes that with love are aflame,
No darkness, but light, as you yield you
To love that is stronger than shame,
No music but kisses, that pealed you their paean,
proclaim :

That the light of heaven is shaded,
The sound of the sea is made still,
The climax shall come unupbraided
Obedient alone to our will,
And the flowers that were fallen and faded drink
dew to their fill :

Dew filling your eyes and their lashes
With tender mirage of a tear ;
Dew fallen on the mouth as it flashes,
The kiss that is master of fear ;
Dew covering the body that dashes and clings to
me here.

O fairest, O rose among roses !
O flower of the innermost fire !
O tune of my soul that encloses
All life, the tempestuous lyre !
O dawn of my dawn that reposes and darts in
desire !

And death and its portals are rifted,
Life listens our kisses that weep ;
Love hears, and his measure is shifted,
Grows solemn and deadly and deep ;
Love's ship droops its sails and is drifted in silence
to sleep.

And soft as a seal on our slumber
Dreams drift of Aurorean dew ;
Dreams shapen of flames that encumber
The shrine of the morn in the blue ;
Flames shapen of lips that outnumber our kisses
anew.