

## COENUM FATALE.

“La cour d'appel de la volonte de l'homme  
— C'est le ventre!” — *Old proverb.*

THE worst of meals is that we have to meet.  
They trick my purpose and evade my will,  
Remind my conscience that I love her still,  
And pull my spirit from its lofty seat.  
For I withdraw myself: my stealthy feet  
Seek half-ashamed the alembic which I fill  
To the epic-mark — one sonnet to distil,  
In this poor miracle — my love to cheat.  
Dinner clangs cheerily from my lady's gong.  
A man must eat in intervals of song!  
Swift feet run back, to hide my hate of her.  
And then — that hate flies truant, as my thought  
Rests (surely it beseems the overwrought)  
And I am left her slave and minister.