

THE EYES OF PHARAOH.

DEAD Pharaoh's eyes from out the tomb
Burned like twin planets ruby-red.
Enswathed, enthroned, the halls of gloom
Echo the agony of the dead.

Silent and stark the Pharaoh sate :
No breath went whispering, hushed or scared.
Only that red incarnate hate
Through pylon after pylon flared.

As in the blood of murdered things
The affrighted augur shaking skries
Earthquake and ruinous fate of kings,
Famine and desperate destinies,

So in the eyes of Pharaoh shone
The hate and loathing that compel
In death each damned minion
Of Set, the accursed lord of Hell.

Yea! in those globes of fire there sate
Some cruel knowledge closely curled
Like serpents in those halls of hate,
Palaces of the Underworld.

But in the hell-glow of those eyes
The ashen skull of Pharaoh shone
White as the moonrays that surprise
The invoking Druse on Lebanon.

Moreover pylon shouldered round
To pylon an unearthly tune,
Like phantom priests that strike and sound
Sinister sistrons at the moon.

And death's insufferable perfume
Beat the black air with golden fans
As Turkis rip a Nubian's womb
With damascenéd yataghans.

Also the taste of dust long dead
Of ancient queens corrupt and fair
Struck through the temple, subtly sped
By demons dominant of the air.

Last, on the flesh there came a touch
Like sucking mouths and stroking hands
That laid their foul alluring smutch
Even to the blood's mad sarabands.

So did the neophyte that would gaze
Into dead Pharaoh's awful eyes
Start from incalculable amaze
To clutch the initiate's place and prize.

He bore the blistering thought aloft :
It blazed in battle on his plume :
With sage and warrior enfeoffed,
He rushed alone through tower and tomb.

The myriad men, the cohorts armed,
Are shred like husks : the ensanguine brand
Leaps like a flame, a flame enchanted
To fire the pyramid heaven-spanned

Wherein dead Pharaoh sits and stares
Swathed in the wrappings of the tomb,
With eyes whose horror flits and flares
Like corpse-lights glimmering in the gloom,

Till all's a blaze, one roar of flame,
Death universal, locked and linked :—
Aha! one names the awful Name—
The twin red planets are extinct.