

A VALENTINE, '98.

THE sea laughs jewels, on her breast
The sunbeams bear
Children most delicately drest,
Gold flowers and fair

The blue sea sparkles in the noon,
At dusk is free
At midnight does the sacred moon
Embrace the sea.

And on the land the woods are green ;
A wild bird's note
Shrills till the air trembles between
His beak and throat.

And up through blue and gold and black
The shivering sound
Rushes ; no echo murmurs back
From sky or ground.

In the loud agony of song
The moon is still ;
The wind drops down the shore along ;
Night hath her will.

The bird becomes a dancing flame
In leaf and bower.
The forest trembles ; loves reclaim
Their own still hour.

So are the stars moved ; so the night
Puts off her robe.
So to his music breaks the light
O'er the pale globe.

The dawn is here, and on the sands
Where sun first flames,
I gather lilies from all lands
Of sad sweet names.

The Lesbian lily is of white
Stained through with blood,
Swayed with the stream, a wayward light
Upon the flood.

The Spartan lily is of blue,
With green leaves fresh ;
Apollo glints his crimson through
The azure mesh.

The English lily is of white,
All white and clean ;
There plays a tender flame of light
Her flowers between.

The English lily is a bloom
Too cold and sweet ;
One might say—in the twilight gloom
A maiden's feet.

Silent and slim and delicate
The flower shall spring,
Till there be born immaculate
A fair new thing.

Tall is the mother-lily, still
By faint winds swayed ;
Tender and pure, without a will—
An English maid.

No tree of poison, at whose feet
All men lie dead ;
No well of death, whose waters sweet
Are tinged with red.

No hideous impassioned queen
For whom love dies ;
No warm imperious Messaline
That slew with sighs.

Fiercer desires may cast away
All things most good ;
A people may forget to-day
Their motherhood.

She will remain, unshaken yet
By storm and sun ;
She will remain, when years forget
That fierier one.

A race of clean strong men shall spring
From her pure life.
Men shall be happy ; bards shall sing
The English wife.

And thou, forget thou that my mouth
Has ever clung
To flame of hell ; that of the south
The songs I sung.

Forget that I have trampled flowers,
And worn the crown
Of thorns of roses in the hours
So long dropped down.

Forget, O white-faced maid, that I
Have dallied long
In classic bowers and mystery
Of classic song.

Eros and Aphrodite now
I can forget,
Placing upon thy maiden brow
Love's coronet.

Wake from the innocent dear sleep
Of childhood's life :
An English maiden must not weep
To be a wife.

So shall out love bridge space, and bring
The tender breath
Of sun and moon and stars that sing
To gladden Death.

I see your cheek grow pale and cold,
Then flush above.
Kiss me ; I know that I behold
The birth of Love.