

THE NAME.

SACRED, between the serpent fangs of Pain,
Ringed by the vortex of the hurricane,
Lurks the abyss of fate: the gloomy cave,
Sullen as night, and sleepy as a wave
When tempest lowers and dare not strike, gapes wide,
Vomiting pestilence; the deadly bride
Of death, Despair, grins charnel-wise: the gate
Of Hope clangs resonant: and starless Fate
Glowers like a demon brooding over death.
Monstrous and mute, the slow resurgent breath
Spreads forth its poison: the pale child at play
Coughs in his gutter; the hard slave of day
Groans once and dies: the sickly spouse can feel
The cold touch kill the unborn child, and steal
Up to her broken heart: the pale hours hang
Like death upon the aged: the days clang
Like prison portals on the folk of day.
Yet for the children of the night they play
Like fountains in the moonlight: for the few,
The sorrowful, sweet faces of the dew,
The laughter-loving daughters of the dawn,
Whose moving feet make tremble all the lawn

From Hesper to the break of rose and gold,
Where Heaven's petals in the East unfold
The awful flower of morning: for the folk
Bound in one single patient love, a yoke
Too light for fairy fingers to have woven,
Too strong for mere archangels to have cloven
With adamantine blades from the armoury
Of the amazing forges of the sea:
The folk that follow with undaunted mein
The utmost beauty that their eyes have seen—
O patient sufferers! yet your storm-scarred brows
Burn with the star of majesty: your vows
Have given you the wisdom and the power
To weld eternities within one hour,
To bind and braid the North wind's serpent hair,
And track the East wind to his mighty lair
Even in the caverns of the womb of dawn;
To take the South wind and his fire withdrawn
And clothe him with your kiss; to seize the West
In his gold palace where the sea-winds rest,
And hurl him ravening on the breaking foam;
To find the Spirit in his glimmering home
And draw his secret from unwilling lips;
To master earthquake, and the dread eclipse;
To dominate the red volcanic rage;
To quench the whirlpool, conquering war to wage
Against all gods not wholly made as ye,
O patient, and O marvellous! I see,
I see before me an archangel stand,
Whose flaming scimitar, a triple brand,

Quivers before him, whose vast eyebrows bend,
A million comets : for his locks extend
A million flashing terrors : on his breast
He bears a mightier cuirass : for his vest
All heaven blazes : for his brows a crown
Roars into the abyss : his mighty frown
Quells many an universe and many an age—
Yea, many eternities ! His nostrils rage
With fire and fury, and his feet are shod
With all the splendours of the avenging God.
I see him and I tremble ! But my hand
Still flings its gesture of supreme command
Upwards ; my voice still dares to tongue the word
That hell and chaos and destruction heard
And ruined, shrieking ! yea, my strong voice rolls,
That martyr-cry of many slaughtered souls,
Utterly potent both to bless and ban—
I, I command thee in the name of Man !
He trembled then. And far in thunder rolled
Through countless ages, through the infinite gold
Beyond existence, grew that master-sound
Into the rent and agonized profound,
Till even the Highest heard me : and He said,
As one who speaks alone among men dead :
“ Behold, he rules as I the abyss of flame.
For lo ! he knoweth, and hath said, My Name ! ”