

CONTRA CONJUGIUM T.B.B.

Anathema foederis nefandi, jugeris immondi, flagitii contra Amorem, contra Naturam, contra Deum, in saecula praesit Amen! Cum comminatione pastorum improborum, Ecclesiae malae, qui tales nuptias benedicunt.

Through nave and chancel drone the choir,
 Their chant rolls through the darkened aisle;
Their song soars up beyond the spire;
 The priest prepares; there waits his smile
 A deed most vile.

Harken, thou fool at altar-rails
 The still small awful voice of fear
Whereat earth shakes and heaven pales—
 ‘I am the Lord’; His voice rings clear:
 ‘What dost thou here?’

‘Thou hast despised my laws, and stilled
 The voice of Nature and my voice,
Now, shall thy life with joy be filled?
 At thine own time shalt thou rejoice?
 At thine own choice?’

‘I gave thee life, I gave thee youth,
Four seasons fair, for love the same,
Health, strength and comeliness—forsooth,
And thou hast quenched my holy flame,
And scorned my name!

‘I gave thee life, life passeth by;
I gave thee youth, that youth is fled.
Thinkst thou that I will fructify
Now, at thine own good time, thy dead
And barren bed?

‘How worship me, yet break my laws?
Art thou a God? Didst thou devise
The infinite world? Did thy word cause
The silver Caucasus to arise?
Art thou all-wise?

‘Or hast thou mocked me, setting high
A molten calf, a graven block,
A fetish foul, a devil’s lie,
And worshipped that? Thou shalt not mock,
Thou barren rock!

‘Thou shalt not mock! Cold Chastity,
Father and child of Impotence,

Whom thou hast set on high for me,
From her foul shrine shall chase thee thence:
‘Avoid, get hence!’

‘And I—thou shalt not scorn my word,
All Nature sets its scorn on thee;
Sweet flower and stream, swift fish and bird,
Shall chorus out ‘Thou fruitless tree!
Thou salt dry sea!’

‘I will not aid thee in thine age,
Nor heed thee in thy piteous strait;
Live thou in thine own empty cage,
Forged every day that thou didst wait
Too long, too late!

‘Shall I turn back the seasons past,
Recall sun’s shine and cloudlet’s fleece,
Revive the ghosts of aeons vast,
And bid the scythe of Chronos cease
For thy caprice?

‘Because thou wilt, shall I accede
And change my laws that I have made
Shall I make grapes from thorn and weed,
Fresh water from the fountains stayed,
If thou hast prayed?

‘For thine outcry bring chaos back,
 Turn over earth and heaven to hell,
And listen ’mid the roar and wrack,
 With pleasure to creation’s knell,
 Thy marriage bell?’

‘I will not turn the Red Sea back
 That thou mayst pass again dry-shod:
Thou hast chosen, thou shalt live the black
 Dry years out till thou cleave the sod,
 And meet thy God.

‘What are thy good deeds? This one thing
 Thou hast not done. This chiefest task
Thou wouldst not do. And shall the King
 Of Kings do only what men ask?
 Thou empty mask!

‘Repentance is too late, lost fool,
 Dead flower, salt fountain, rusty sword,
This curse is on thee for thy dule,
 That thou shalt know and be assured
 I am the Lord.’

The loud-voiced choir would drown in song
 The voice of God; their music woke

Echoes through chancel weird and long—
In thunder and fierce fire and smoke
Jehovah spoke.

‘On with the farce! My perjured priests,
The wolves that raven through my flock,
Nay, wolves in shepherd’s garb, wild beasts
That fang and tear my lambs, and mock
At Judah’s stock.

‘On with the grim foul farce! Black hell
Gapes to receive all actors there.
Play on its brink! What soul can tell
But I, your God, may be as air,
A children’s snare?

‘But I am here, I will not heed,
I will not give more signs; But I
Will come with heavy hand and deed
And give men knowledge ere they die
How their priests lie.

‘A gospel marred, a bastard creed,
A dogma out of hell ye teach!
False shepherds, ye shall learn your meed;
Not as waves breaking on the beach
My wrath shall reach!

‘I forget not—heed not my cry,
 Play out the farce, wed fast the twain!—
Red judgment and black death draw nigh,
 Your blasphemies shall all be vain,
 And your souls slain.

‘Vipers! on him my mercy falls
 Perchance, at last, in heaven; but ye
I will sepulchre in black walls
 Of Hell, burn up and hide from me
 ’Neath the blind sea!

‘Vipers! eternal fire shall quench
 Your prayers and curses, hell shall hold
The vapourous vomit of your stench
 Wrung from foul souls, no longer bold
 But cowed and cold.

‘Vipers! his folly I will heal,
 Your sin I will not put away;
My Christ is vain for you; appeal
 In vain to his shed blood; nor pray
 I will not slay.

‘I will most utterly destroy
 Your souls from off the earth; your power

Sealed by your Satan I will cloy
With subtle strength; your church shall flower
No further hour.

‘Because ye set your hands to this,
Blaspheming nature and my name,
Cemented the unholy kiss
Of barren age’s fruitless shame
Your hell shall flame

‘Seven times more hot, that ye may know
My paths shall be most surely trod,
That I who answer thus, who show
Myself in wielding sword and rod,
Am high Lord God!’

Silent the voice, and through the nave
And chancel droned the choir; the sun
Darkened, as Satan’s perjured slave,
The priest, in blessing, made them one.
The Deed was done.