

THE MANTRA-YOGI
To Reginald Haselden

I

How should I seek to make a song for thee
 When all my music is to moan thy name?
 That long sad monotone—the same—the same—
Matching the mute insatiable sea
That throbs with life's bewitching agony,
 Too long to measure and too fierce to tame.
 An hurtful joy, a fascinating shame
Is this great ache that grips the heart of me.

Even as a cancer, so this passion gnaws
Away my soul, and will not ease its jaws
 Till I am dead. Then let me die! Who knows
But that this corpse committed to the earth
May be the occasion of some happier birth?
 Spring's earliest snowdrop? Summer's latest rose?

II

Thou knowest what asp hath fixed its lethal tooth
 In the white breast that trembled like a flower
 At thy name whispered. Thou hast marked how hour
By hour its poison hath dissolved my youth,
Half skilled to agonise, half skilled to soothe
 The passion ineluctable, this power
 Slave to its single end, to storm the tower
That holdeth thee, who art Authentic Truth.

O golden hawk! O lidless eye! Behold
How the grey creeps upon the shuddering gold!
 Still I will strive! That by the striving broken

I may exhaust this me! That thou mayst sweep
Swift on the dead from thine all-seeing steep—
And the unutterable word be spoken.