

THE GOAD.

AMSTERDAM, *December 23rd, 1897.*

LET me pass out beyond the city gate.
All day I loitered in the little streets
Of black worn houses tottering, like the fate
That hangs above my head even now, and meets
Prayer and defiance as not hearing it.
They lean, these old black streets! a little sky
Peeps through the gap, the rough stone path is lit
Just for a little by the sun, and I
Watch his red face pass over, fade away
To other streets, and other passengers,
See him take pleasure where the heathen pray,
See him relieve the hunter of his furs,
All the wide world awaiting him, all folk
Glad at his coming, only I must weep;
Rest he or sink, my weary eyes invoke
Only the respite of a little sleep;
Sleep, just a little space of sleep, to rest
The fevered head and cool the aching eyes;
Sleep for a space, to fall upon the breast
Of the dear God, that He may sympathize.
Long has the day drawn out; a bitter frost
Sparkles along the streets; the shipping heaves
With the slow murmur of the sea, half lost
In the last rustle of forgotten leaves.
Over the bridges pass the throngs; the sound,
Deep and insistent, penetrates the mist—