

IN A CORNFIELD.

O VOICE of sightless magic
Clear through day's crystal sky,
Blithe, contemplative, tragic,
As men may laugh or sigh;
As men may love or sorrow,
Their moods thy music borrow
To bid them live or die.
So sweet, so sad, so lonely,
In silent noontide only
Thy song-wings float and lie
On cloud-foam scarred and riven,
By God's red lightnings shriven,
And quiet hours are given
To him that lingers nigh.

Fain would I linger near thee
Amid the poppies red,
Forget this world, and hear thee
As one among the dead;
Amid the daffadillies,
Red tulips and white lilies,
Where daisies' tears are shed;
Where larkspur and cornflower
Are blue with sunlight's hour,
And all the earth is spread
As in a dream before me;

While steals divinely o'er me
Love's scented spring to draw me
From moods of dreamy dread.

O winged passion! traveller
Too near to God to see!
O lyrical unraveller
Of knotted life to me!
O song! O shining river
Of thought and sound! O giver
Of goodly words of glee!
Like to a star that singeth,
A flower that incense bringeth,
A love-song of the free!
Oh! let me sing thy glories
While spring winds whisper stories
Of winter past, whose shore is
Beyond a shoreless sea.

Sing on, thou lyric lover!
Sing on, and thrill me long
With such delights as cover
The days and deeds of wrong!
Live lyre of songs immortal
That pierce Heaven's fiery portal
With shafts of splendour strong,
Winged with thought's sharpest fires,
Arrowed with soul's desires
And sped from thunder's thong;
Heaven's gates rock, rage, and quiver,
Earth's walls gape wide and shiver,
While Freedom doth deliver
Men's spirits with thy song.

Ah, chainless, distant, fleeting,
To lands that know no sea,
Where ocean's stormy greeting
Fills no man's heart with glee;
Where lovers die or sever,
And death destroys for ever,
And God bears slavery: —
Fly thither, so thou leave us
That no man's hand may reave us
Of this — that we are free.

Free all men that may heed thee,
On freemen's praises feed thee,
Who chorus full, "God speed thee,
Live lyre of Liberty!"