

FEMMES DAMNEES.

Like pensive cattle couched upon the sand
They turn their eyes to ocean's distant ring;
Feet seek each other, hand desires hand,
With langour sweet and bitter shuddering.

Some, hearts love-captured with long whispering,
Spell out the love of timorous childhood,
Where babbles in deep dell the gentle spring,
And dive among the young trees of the green
wood.

Other, like sisters, slowly, with grave eyes,
Cross the rocks filled with apparitions dim,
Where Antony beheld, like lavers, rise
The nude empurpled breasts that tempted him.

Some, by the dying torch-light call thy name,
In the dumb hollow of old pagan fanes,
To succour feverish shriekings of fierce flame,
O Bacchus, soother of men's ancient pains.

Others, whose throat is thirsty for breast-blood,
To hide a whip 'neath flowing robes are fain,
Mingling in lonely night and darksome wood
The foam of pleasure and the tears of pain.

O virgins, demons, monsters, O martyrs!
Great souls contemptuous of reality!
Seekers for the Infinite, satyrs, worshippers,
Now mad with cries, now torn with agony!

You whom my soul has followed to your hell,
Poor sisters, more beloved than wept by me,
For your fierce woes, your lusts insatiable,
And the urns of love that fill the hearts of ye!