

JEUNE MERE

SURELY the secret whisper of sweet life  
Shakes in the shell-ear murmurous memories  
Of the old wonder of young ecstasies  
In the first hours when the white word of wife  
She won so hardly out of dark wild strife  
And mystery of peace; thine utter ease,  
Abandoned rapture! Caught and cut by seas  
Of sudden wisdom, stinging as a knife  
Swift struck sets all the blood a-tingle. Woe!  
What wakes within? What holiest intimation  
Of intimate knowledge of the lords of nature?  
She sees her fate smile out on her, doth know  
Her weird of womanhood, her noble station  
Among the stars and ages; and her stature  
Soars o'er the system; so the scarred misfeature  
Of death avails her for the isolation  
Of high things ever holy; this the throe  
Of swiftly-comprehended motherhood  
Once taught her. Now the whisper of the child  
Bids her be great, who was supremely good.  
For, mark you! babes are ware of wiser things,  
And hold more arcane matters in their mild  
Cabochon eyes than men are ware of yet.  
Therefore have poets, lest they should forget,  
Likened the little sages unto kings.  
But look! the baby whispers—hush! Nay! nay!  
We shall disturb them loving—come away!