

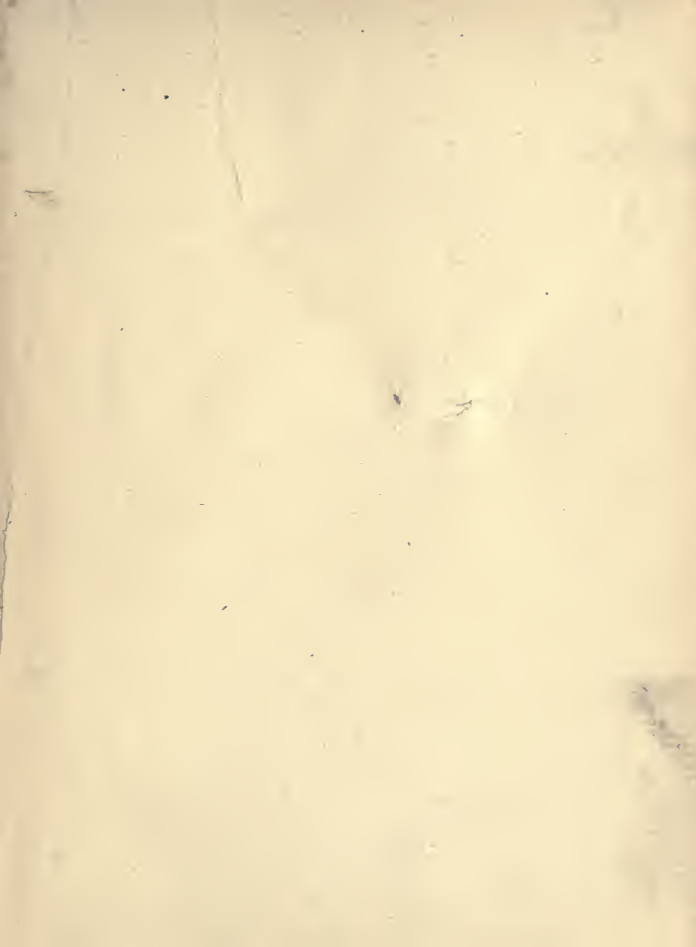


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## Josephine Preston Peabody

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THE SINGING LEAVES



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*by*

**Hugh Anson-Cartwright**



THE SINGING LEAVES  
A BOOK OF SONGS AND SPELLS  
BY JOSEPHINE PRESTON PEABODY

*'Come, my beloved, let us go forth  
into the field. Let us lodge in the  
villages.'*



BOSTON AND NEW YORK  
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN & COMPANY  
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*Published November, 1903*



Thanks are due to the editors of Harper's Monthly, Scribner's Magazine, and other periodicals, for their courteous permission to reprint many of the following poems.

DEDICATION.

Whosoever cares to look  
    In my little Book,  
If he care to look again,  
    Let him so; and then,  
Should there be a very few  
    Glad to say Amen  
To old wonders ever new,  
— Why, it is for You.



## SONGS AND SPELLS.

THE HOUSE AND THE ROAD . . . . .	PAGE 3
CHARM TO BE SAID IN THE SUN . . . . .	4
BEFORE MEAT . . . . .	6
SAD TRUTH . . . . .	7
GLAD TRUTH . . . . .	8
THE BIRD IN THE HAND . . . . .	9
WAKING . . . . .	10
THE MAGIC . . . . .	12
ROAD-SONGS. I. AND II. . . . .	14, 15
THE CEDARS . . . . .	16
ALMS . . . . .	17
THE INN . . . . .	18
SINS . . . . .	19
THE WATCHER . . . . .	20
TO SAD-HEART . . . . .	21
SONG AND NEED . . . . .	22

HERE 'S APRIL . . . . .	25
THE COMING . . . . .	26
MUSIC . . . . .	27
EVER THE SAME . . . . .	28
MAYBE . . . . .	29
THE SONG OUTSIDE . . . . .	30
THE PASSERS-BY . . . . .	32

### THE LITTLE PAST.

JOURNEY . . . . .	35
SUNSET . . . . .	37
THE BUSY CHILD . . . . .	38
CONCERNING LOVE . . . . .	40
COW-BELLS . . . . .	41
WIND . . . . .	42
THE MYSTIC . . . . .	43
THE MASTERPIECE . . . . .	44
LATE . . . . .	46
CAKES AND ALE . . . . .	47
EARLY . . . . .	48

## THE YOUNG THINGS.

THE SAPLING . . . . .	51
THE HERO . . . . .	52
NESTS . . . . .	53
SIDE-STREETS . . . . .	55
THE FIR-TREE . . . . .	56
EARLY-HEART . . . . .	57
BEAUTIFUL . . . . .	58
AFTER ALL . . . . .	59
VANITY, SAITH THE PREACHER . . . . .	60
THE TOP OF THE MORNING . . . . .	62
FORETHOUGHT . . . . .	63
UNSAID . . . . .	64
DANCE-TIME . . . . .	65
THE ENCHANTED SHEEP-FOLD . . . . .	67
YES, LOVE IS BLIND . . . . .	69
THE MORNING WAS SO BRIGHT . . . . .	71
THE TWO . . . . .	73
AFTER-THOUGHT . . . . .	74

## OTHERS.

NEAR AND FAR . . . . .	77
FRIENDS ALL . . . . .	78
VANTAGE . . . . .	79
A SONG OF SOLOMON . . . . .	80
COUNSEL TO BEGGARS . . . . .	81
THE TWA CHEERLESS . . . . .	83
THE WALK . . . . .	84
REFRAINS . . . . .	86
OUTSIDE THE MUSIC . . . . .	87
THE FAIREST . . . . .	88
THE CHILD AND THE ANGEL . . . . .	90
READING FOR THE POOR . . . . .	91
THE BLIND ONE . . . . .	92
HOLIDAY . . . . .	93
THE FOOL . . . . .	94
DRUDGE . . . . .	96
THE YOUNGEST DRYAD . . . . .	97
COME BUY! . . . . .	99



PRINCE CHARLIE . . . . .	100
THE MEETING . . . . .	101
THE COBBLER . . . . .	102
MIRACLE . . . . .	103
OPEN HOUSE . . . . .	104
O SLEEP, SLEEP, SLEEP! . . . . .	105
THE CLOUD . . . . .	107
THE RAVENS . . . . .	109
NEIGHBORS . . . . .	111
THE MORNING SOUL . . . . .	112
THE HILL-TOP . . . . .	114
THE DOVES . . . . .	115
FOUND . . . . .	116
ALL HAIL . . . . .	117
THE ANOINTED . . . . .	119

### EPILOGUE.

<i>TO THE EVENING STAR</i> . . . . .	123
<i>TO HER BOOK</i> . . . . .	124



SONGS AND SPELLS.



## THE HOUSE AND THE ROAD.

The little Road says Go,  
The little House says Stay :  
And O, it 's bonny here at home,  
But I must go away.

The little Road, like me,  
Would seek and turn and know ;  
And forth I must, to learn the things  
The little Road would show !

And go I must, my dears,  
And journey while I may,  
Though heart be sore for the little House  
That had no word but Stay.

Maybe, no other way  
Your child could ever know  
Why a little House would have you stay,  
When a little Road says, Go.

CHARM : TO BE SAID IN THE SUN.

I reach my arms up, to the sky,  
And golden vine on vine  
Of sunlight showered wild and high,  
Around my brows I twine.

I wreathe, I wind it everywhere,  
The burning radiancy  
Of brightness that no eye may dare,  
To be the strength of me.

Come, redness of the crystalline,  
Come green, come hither blue  
And violet — all alive within,  
For I have need of you.

Come honey-hue and flush of gold,  
And through the pallor run,  
With pulse on pulse of manifold  
New largess of the Sun!

O steep the silence till it sing !  
O glories from the height,  
Come down, where I am garlanding  
With light, a child of light !

## BEFORE MEAT.

Hunger of the world,  
When we ask a grace,  
Be remembered here with us,  
By the vacant place.

Thirst, with nought to drink,  
Sorrow more than mine,  
May God someday make you laugh,  
With water turned to wine.



## SAD TRUTH.

Truth I tell with heavy heart,  
To another one,  
Give me sweetness for your smart,  
When sad time is done.

Then may I be clear again,  
Love without disguise ;  
Since I have to bear, till then,  
Dark of hostile eyes.

*Bitter shall be sweet some day.  
Ah, but that is far away !  
I must bind my heart and say :  
Bitter now, but sweet some day.*

## GLAD TRUTH.

Beautiful, that did come true,  
Beautiful, so it was you !  
If forgiveness be for us  
That we ever doubted thus,  
Then forgive us radiantly,  
All our doubts that are to be.  
Now that we lay hold of you,  
Nearer than we hoped or knew,  
Dearer than we looked to find,  
Beautiful, forgive the blind.

## THE BIRD IN THE HAND.

Yesterday has flown away  
Far beyond the sun.  
And of morrows, who can say,  
Till another one ?

Only Now is all my own,  
And my heart knows how :  
O wild wings for a sky unknown,  
Mine, mine — now !

## WAKING.

Early in the morning,  
Early in the dew,  
Singing from the mountains  
Where the dreams withdrew,  
Lingered one I knew.

‘Soul, art thou so shining?  
What is there to tell?  
Whither hast thou journeyed?’  
And the answer fell,  
‘Early to the well.

‘Early, early, early,  
To the farthest light;  
Drinking, singing, bathing  
In the cool, the might,  
Whence I have my sight.

‘There I found my sandals  
    Gladdened with a wing;  
And my fair apparel  
    Woven out of Spring.  
    Therefore do I sing.’

And the golden voices  
    Warming with the sun,  
Dimmed the silver voices,  
    Fading, one by one.  
    And the dream was done.

## THE MAGIC.

You who saw through my disguise  
    Though I came so poor,  
Let me bless your true two eyes  
    And your open door.  
Yes, I am a wonder-child ;  
    Hark and tell it not. —  
With the journey and the cold  
    I had half forgot.

Take the charmèd seeds I lay  
    In your open hand :  
Some would cast them all away,  
    You will understand.  
Trust the bud to come to flower,  
    Trust the flower for fruit.  
Listen in the winter-time  
    For a cricket lute.

Here are blessings all from me  
— Though they look like tears —  
For your blessed eyes that see  
And your heart that hears.  
I am higher than I seem,  
Fair as I would be:  
O, I bless your heart that hears,  
And your eyes that see !

They were ragged gifts I showed,  
But you took the sense  
Of the bird-nest from the road,  
And the lucky pence.  
And for all the charms I leave  
Every time I pass,  
Simple folk will only see  
Cobwebs on the grass !

## ROAD-SONG.

### I.

At home the waters in the grass  
Went singing happy words ;  
But here, they flicker through my hands  
As silent as the birds.

I see a Rose. But once they grew  
All thronging, thronging, — wild,  
And white, and red, before I came  
To be a human child.



## ROAD-SONG.

### II.

While I am resting by the road  
So dully here apart,  
Far-off my Angel laughs, maybe,  
Where God shines round her heart.

O, she is laughing, as I think,  
Because they cannot know  
The parching wonder of the noon  
With all our ways below.

They cannot know. But now and then,  
They may let fall a song  
Blown like a feather down to me,  
Because the road is long.

## THE CEDARS.

All down the years the fragrance came,  
The mingled fragrance, with a flame,  
Of Cedars breathing in the sun,  
The Cedar-trees of Lebanon.

O thirst of song in bitter air,  
And hope, wing-hurt from iron care,  
What balm of myrrh and honey, won  
From far-off trees of Lebanon !

Not from these eyelids yet, have I  
Ever beheld that early sky.  
Why do they call me through the sun ? —  
Even the trees of Lebanon ?

I met Poor Sorrow on the way  
As I came down the years ;  
I gave him everything I had  
And looked at him through tears.

‘ But Sorrow, give me here again  
Some little sign to show ;  
For I have given all I own ;  
Yet have I far to go.’

Then Sorrow charmed my eyes for me  
And hallowed them thus far :  
‘ Look deep enough in every dark,  
And you shall see the star.’

## THE INN.

When I come back to sorrow,  
The place seems very old.  
Full well I know the lodging,  
The meagreness, the cold ;  
And everything is told.

The common daily portion,  
No ampler and no less ;  
And sorry worn the cup is  
And full of humbleness :  
A soul can say but, ' Yes.'

The earthen wares are many,  
But never are they new.  
The one-time guest departed  
The same gray service knew.  
There is no change for you.

## SINS.

A lie, it may be black or white ;  
I care not for the lie :  
My grief is for the tortured breath  
Of Truth that cannot die.

And cruelty, what that may be,  
What creature understands ?  
But O, the glazing eyes of Love,  
Stabbed through the open hands !

## THE WATCHER.

My neighbor's grief is dark to me.  
I gaze and dread, without ;  
And marvel how he lives to bear  
The blackness, and the doubt.

And yet, by all lost ways of grief  
That I have had to plod,  
I know how small a rift lets through  
A little gleam of God.

TO SAD-HEART.

I have a word for you,  
For you, Sad-Heart,  
And pray you keep it till the dawn come true,  
And sorrow part.

I never bid you doff  
A single care :  
But ever till to-morrow, O, put off—  
Put off Despair !

## SONG AND NEED.

Heart said, 'If I had wings,  
Such wings as hath the lark,  
Even as that freedom sings  
Beyond the dark,  
I too, if I could fly  
From chains that weigh and cling  
Ah, but then I could sing,—  
Could I!

'O dayspring of desire!  
Mid-ocean of delight  
Before the dawn of fire  
On dawn of sight!  
My joy, could it undo  
All that despair has done,  
I could find out the Sun,  
— I too.'



But ah, how vain to long  
For glory of the lark,  
Who hast more need of song  
Down in thy dark ;  
Where chains may always irk,  
And every day's rebuff  
Leave thee scarce breath enough,  
To work !

Nay, never to assuage  
Our need, is joy begun,  
But follows some poor wage  
Full hardly won.  
Never vain wish shall bring  
The music from the dumb.  
Needs must — ere song will come —  
We sing !

To him who hath, late, soon,  
To him shall it be given.  
Make to thyself some boon,  
Some little heaven :  
Some feigning, through that mirk,  
The blue of upper skies ;  
And sing — with blindfold eyes —  
At work !

## HERE 'S APRIL.

Wearied one,  
Rest a little in the sun.  
Here is April come behind you  
With a blessing on your head:  
Rains unshed,  
And her loving hands that blind you  
While she queries, ' Who am I ? '  
Of the darkened eye.  
O, I heard the winter pass !  
Came a sigh from waking grass  
That should wake a daffodilly.  
April, and up-rising now, — and every kind  
of lily !

## THE COMING.

Low in the west, the early star  
    Is hazed with fires of Spring.  
Low in the east, the golden moon  
    Comes slowly westering.

The last-year leaves, they breathe and stir  
    With hope beyond their ken.  
O golden fear! — that men must hear  
    All hearts wake up again.

MUSIC.

‘ O Heart of all things, Heart’s Desire come  
true,

That nothing may undo !

How long have I been stricken dim with fear,  
Hungry and cold and lost, till I should hear

You, — you.

‘ Now fold me in, O Beautiful, most dear !

And now that you are here,

Where were you, Dearness, — lost and far  
apart ?

So far !’ — ‘ Nay, all the time, O little heart,

So near.’

EVER THE SAME.

King Solomon walked a thousand times  
Forth of his garden-close ;  
And saw there spring no goodlier thing,  
Be sure, than the same little rose.

Under the sun was nothing new,  
Or now, I well suppose.  
But what new thing could you find to sing  
More rare than the same little rose ?

Nothing is new ; save I, save you,  
And every new heart that grows,  
On the same Earth met, that nurtures yet  
Breath of the same little rose.

MAYBE.

Heigh-ho ! The same old road it is,  
And weary dull am I,  
With the same old road and the same old  
song  
I hum and know not why.

But over yon, the city smoke  
Goes after one gray dove,  
With a flock of gold and silver wings  
Along the sun, above.

And of the miry pools below,  
The sparrows make the best ;  
And windows all, with dazzled eyes,  
They stare into the west.

And I, I hum the same old song  
Though no one could say why.  
Maybe so, my singing knows  
Even more than I.

## THE SONG OUTSIDE.

When will you come, you maiden by the  
window,

Come out and leave your little window,  
there ?

Why will you bind your heart up every  
morning,

As every morning you bind your hair ?

Your vine astir would wake a cloud of  
swallows ;

The sower's forth and every worker fol-  
lows ;

The world goes forth, to earn, to seek, to  
share !

Why is it, little face behind a window,

You do not dare,

You do not dare ?



Then will you come, you maiden by the  
window,

To hear the heart of twilight in the air?  
And will you heed the breathing of the way-  
side,

And all the wise, wide singing every-  
where? —

And you and more than you, and more  
than neighbor,

— With care and bloom, despair and  
wrinkled labor,

It folds, it holds them all, till they are fair;

— Fairer than you, my maiden by the win-  
dow,

And unaware,

— All unaware!

## THE PASSERS-BY.

Though the dawn bring grayest thread  
That my Fates have spun ;  
Though I lift not up my head,  
Sorrow may not shun  
The glory of the Sun.

Yea, and though the gold sands run  
Fleet through afternoon,  
Shadow, that will speed the Sun,  
Brings me yet as soon  
The glory of the Moon.

Blessèd Ones, and shining boon  
Over all our wars !  
Blessed we, by night or noon,  
That no anguish mars  
The glory of the Stars.

THE LITTLE PAST.



## JOURNEY.

I never saw the hills so far  
And blue, the way the pictures are ;

And flowers, flowers growing thick,  
But not a one for me to pick !

The land was running from the train  
All blurry through the window-pane ;

And then it all looked flat and still,  
When up there jumped a little hill !

I saw the windows and the spires,  
And sparrows sitting on the wires ;

And fences running up and down ;  
And then we cut straight through a town.

I saw a Valley, like a cup ;  
And ponds that twinkled, and dried up.

I counted meadows that were burnt ;  
And there were trees, and then there  
    were n't !

We crossed the bridges with a roar,  
Then hummed the way we went before.

And tunnels made it dark and light  
Like open-work of day and night ;

Until I saw the chimneys rise,  
And lights and lights and lights, like eyes.

And when they took me through the door,  
I heard it all begin to roar. —

I thought, as far as I could see,  
That everybody wanted me !

## SUNSET.

Those islands far away are mine,  
Beyond the cloudy strip ;  
And something beautiful, besides : —  
I think it is a ship.

## THE BUSY CHILD.

I have so many things to do,  
I don't know when I shall be through.

To-day I had to watch the rain  
Come sliding down the window-pane.

And I was humming all the time,  
Around my head, a kind of rhyme ;

And blowing softly on the glass  
To see the dimness come and pass.

I made a picture, with my breath  
Rubbed out to show the underneath.

I built a city on the floor ;  
And then I went and was a War.

And I escaped from square to square  
That 's greenest on the carpet there,



Until at last I came to Us ;  
But it was very dangerous :

Because if I had stepped outside,  
I made believe I should have died !

And now I have the boat to mend,  
And all our supper to pretend.

I am so busy, every day,  
I have n't any time to play.

## CONCERNING LOVE.

I wish she would not ask me if I love the  
Kitten more than her.

Of course I love her. But I love the Kitten  
too: and It has fur.

## COW-BELLS.

O what is there behind the hills,  
That all of the bells must know? —  
Over in all the light that fills  
The Valley with that glow?

I followed a bell, and it all came true :  
Some down, and a yellow-bird ;  
And Cedars—oh ! — and specked with blue ;  
And everything else I heard :

Only whatever it is, behind  
The bell with the farthest call ;  
The one I follow and never find,  
— The loveliest one of all.

## WIND.

I let them call it just the Wind  
And tell me not to grieve :  
But I know all it left behind,  
And more than they believe.

I know about the far-off lands  
Where people never sleep ;  
They hide their faces in their hands,  
And rock and weep and weep.

And I too little, all alone,  
To go and find them yet : —  
But oh, I hear ! — When I am grown,  
I never will forget.

## THE MYSTIC.

People say to me,  
‘ A Penny for your thought ! ’  
And I can't remember thinking ;  
And I should think I ought.  
I was n't sleeping, either :  
I know that, because  
I saw things out of both my eyes.  
I wonder where I was.

Now I 'm back, I see them  
Sitting all around ;  
And the noise together  
Makes a purring sound.  
But I know something more  
Than just awhile ago.  
I know something more ! —  
I wonder what I know.

## THE MASTERPIECE.

My mother cut it out for me  
And started it so I could see ;  
And then she turned some edges in  
And let me take it to begin.  
I made it. But I did not know  
How very hard it is to sew.  
I took a long time for that stitch,  
And now it 's there, I don't know  
which  
Is better. But not one is small,  
And they are not alike at all.  
That side was very hard to fix ;  
And then the needle always pricks,  
But you must hold it and take care,  
Because the point is always there.  
And knots keep coming, by and  
by ;  
And then, no matter how you try,

The thread comes out of its old eye.

. . . . .  
But somehow, now I have it done, —  
I think it is a pretty one.

LATE.

My father brought somebody up,  
To show us all asleep.  
They came as softly up the stairs  
As you could creep.

They whispered in the doorway there  
And looked at us awhile.  
I had my eyes shut up, but I  
Could feel him smile.

I shut my eyes up close, and lay  
As still as I could keep ;  
Because I knew he wanted us  
To be asleep.



## CAKES AND ALE.

I'm always glad when Andrew comes.  
If only I am there,  
He stays awhile and talks to me  
As if he did not care.

He took me to some Music once,  
When it was all for me:  
And O, I had a splendid time!  
And he said, so did he.

It lasts, as if the Music still  
Went round and round the sky:—  
He said he had a good time, too;  
And I said, so did I!

## EARLY.

I like to lie and wait to see  
    My mother braid her hair.  
It is as long as it can be,  
    And yet she does n't care.  
I love my mother's hair.

And then the way her fingers go ;  
    They look so quick and white, —  
In and out, and to and fro,  
    And braiding in the light,  
And it is always right.

So then she winds it, shiny brown,  
Around her head into a crown,  
    Just like the day before.  
And then she looks and pats it down,  
    And looks a minute more ;  
While I stay here all still and cool.  
O, is n't morning beautiful ?

THE YOUNG THINGS.



## THE SAPLING.

When I was but a sprig of May,  
With wonders to command,  
Above all else I loved most well  
What none could understand ;  
And dear were things far-off — far-off, but  
nothing near at hand.

O, now it was the sunset isle  
Beyond the weather-vane ;  
And now it was the chime I heard  
From belfry-towers of Spain ;  
But never yet the little leaf that tapped my  
window-pane.

Heigh-ho, the wistful things unseen  
That reach, as I did then,  
To guess, and wear the heart of youth  
With eager Why and When !  
And never eye takes heed of them, in all the  
world of men.

## THE HERO.

I saw the river going,  
All silver to the brim,  
Along the southern meadows  
That were a home to him.

I sang, 'O River, bear him  
My dream, a silver swan.  
'T is only he, all day, all day,  
That I do think upon.'

And oh, my foolish heart forgot,  
So rapt in heart's desire,  
The years he has been sleeping,  
Beneath a far-off spire.

## NESTS.

O Sparrow, sparrow, did you ever try  
To build a nest high up where no birds  
are,  
And close unto a star,  
Where it might cling and hear the wind  
go by?  
For that did I!

And far and far I flew along the quest,  
For shelter, and I passed the summer rain,  
I saw the daylight wane;  
I found among the stars no place of rest,  
And built no nest.

Down to the Earth again with baffled wings,  
The warm green earth where such as we  
must stay.  
But all the livelong day,

High over heaven my dream nest clings and  
swings,  
And my heart sings,  
Sparrow !



## SIDE STREETS.

Some days the faces in the street  
Are clouded all, and dull ;  
And near or far, not one I see  
To call it beautiful.

O heavy, heavy is my heart ;  
And is the spirit blind ?  
That I am stricken with a doubt,  
Because of human kind.

Until I rest my looks upon  
Some cart-horse standing by,  
With patient forehead, weary mane,  
And unreprouchful eye.

And kiss him on the brow I do ! —  
Because I have a mind  
To thank him just that he will be  
So beautiful, and kind.

## THE FIR-TREE.

The winds have blown more bitter  
Each darkening day of fall ;  
High over all the house-tops  
The stars are far and small.  
I wonder, will my fir-tree  
Be green in spite of all ?

O grief is colder — colder  
Than wind from any part ;  
And tears of grief are bitter tears,  
And doubt 's a sorer smart !  
But I promised to my fir-tree  
To keep the fragrant heart.

## EARLY-HEART.

‘ Early-Heart tends no geese like ours ;  
Every one is a swan,  
Fit to sing with a nightingale,  
Or say to a goose, Begone ! ’

‘ Alack, poor souls, ’ quoth Early-Heart,  
‘ Then yours be only geese ?  
Nor only so ; but your sheep are sheep ;  
And mine have a golden fleece ! ’

Quoth Early-Heart, ‘ And if mine be swans,  
Right true you say, hereby.  
So take your little and leave my much ;  
For the lad in luck am I ! ’

Waddle and quack, and bleat and baa,  
They quacked and they baa’d, ’t is true. .  
But Early-Heart followed a white, white flock,  
And the hills were far and blue.

## BEAUTIFUL.

I have no word to tell you  
The beauty of her face ;  
From her, a wedding garment  
Would win a grace.

And as the glow of moonrise  
Will make the east divine,  
Doth Soul, the radiant dweller,  
Her face outshine.

AFTER ALL.

I would not now give up one hurt,  
In this far light of morning ;  
Each one a rose, a blood-red rose,  
A rose for my adorning.

Yes, and the pallor of old grief,  
Too lowly even for scorning,  
Is warmed into a breathing rose,  
A rose for my adorning.

## VANITY, SAITH THE PREACHER.

I love my little gowns ;  
I love my little shoes,  
All standing still below them,  
Set quietly by twos.

All day I wear them careless,  
But when I put them by  
They look so dear and different,  
And yet I don't know why.

My oldest one of all, —  
Worn out ; and then the best ;  
But that I have not worn enough  
To love it, like the rest.

The dimity for Sunday,  
The blue one and the wool,  
Now that I see them hanging up,  
Are somehow beautiful.

Of all the white, with ribbons  
Gray-green, if I could choose ;  
The fichu that helps everything  
Be gay ; and then, my shoes.

My shoes that skip and saunter,  
And one that will untie : —  
They look so funny and so young,  
I hate to put them by.

I wonder, — if some day . . .  
All this will be the Past ? —  
Poor Hop-the-brook and Dance-with-me,  
They cannot always last !

## THE TOP OF THE MORNING.

My days are strung in amber

Till I am sad again :

My days are full of sunlight

Beyond all sun or rain.

My heart is full of tidings

From every wind that blows ;

And I cannot say, ' Good-day to you,'

But everybody knows !



## FORETHOUGHT.

I did not keep the Rose he brought,  
    After its day ;  
Although it lived a longer time  
    Than other roses may.

I let it go the way of all,  
    For this one fear :  
Because it might persuade my heart  
    That he was growing dear.

But now my heart is well assured ;  
    And I still sing ;  
And no one here would ever know  
    That I miss anything !

## UNSAID.

Ah lad, if I could only say  
The smiles are not for you !  
But since your eyes are turned this way,  
What is there I can do ?  
It's one I see beyond, beyond,  
My heart is leaning to.

I know, I know, the whole hour long  
I have been dull and sad,  
And answered not the word at all  
I meant to answer, lad ;  
Because my wits were gone astray  
With all the heart I had.

And now the latest ones are come,  
And he is coming too ;  
And I would keep the starlight back,  
But oh, it will shine through !  
And since you never turn to see,  
You take it all to you.

## DANCE-TIME.

It 's I live in a very wise Town,  
As all wise people know :  
They read, they write, they read all day  
As orchard-trees do grow.

Said I, — I was a young thing then,  
And a foolish young thing, too, —  
' I will not spend my little life thus ;  
There 's much I 'd rather do.

' For I would rather look at you  
This way, with happy looks,  
Than lose the stars from my two eyes  
With poring over books.

' I 'd rather far be red and white  
For stupid folks to see  
Than write nine books for little dull worms  
To eat them, leisurely.

‘ And I would rather have it said  
When all my days are through,  
“ O she was good to see and hear  
And say Good-morning to ! ”

‘ When learning makes you white and red  
And fresh as west-winds blow,  
I may spend sun and candle-light  
To learn what they all know.

‘ But O, the wise in this wise Town,  
They have no longer prime.  
And there are fewer wise men, now,  
Than once upon a time ! ’

## THE ENCHANTED SHEEP-FOLD.

The hills far-off were blue, blue,  
The hills at hand were brown ;  
And all the herd-bells called to me  
As I came by the down.

The briars turned to roses — roses  
Ever we stayed to pull  
A white little rose, and a red little rose,  
And a lock of silver wool.

Nobody heeded, — none, none ;  
And when True Love came by,  
They thought him nought but the shepherd-  
boy.  
Nobody knew but I !

The trees were feathered like birds, birds ;  
Birds were in every tree.  
Yet nobody heeded, nobody heard,  
Nobody knew, save we.

And he is fairer than all, — all.

How could a heart go wrong?

For his eyes I knew, and his knew mine,

Like an old, old song.

## YES, LOVE IS BLIND.

Truly, Love is blind.  
All my wish and will,  
That he takes for me :  
Sure Love cannot see,  
That he thinks so, still !

Truly, Love is blind ;  
But he hears, instead.  
He hath such fine ears,  
Far away he hears  
Little words unsaid.

Truly, Love is blind ;  
For the merest touch,  
Hover of a breath,  
Smiling underneath,  
He will take for much.

Blind, and without fear !  
Even so, I find  
He would have me here  
Always, very near.  
Truly, Love is blind.



## THE MORNING WAS SO BRIGHT.

The morning was so bright to see,  
I thought that he would come,  
Though he is far away from me  
While I bide on at home.

The morning was so wide, so blue ;  
The tide ran in to greet : —  
It could not be, I knew, I knew,  
But O, the wind was sweet !

There was a ripple on the pond ;  
The road had one refrain ;  
And something called me, just beyond  
The turn of every lane.

The trees were trying not to sing ;  
They beckoned on and on :  
The day went by with promising,  
And now the day is gone.

The after-glow, it fades away  
    With my own Star above ; —  
And all the day, and all the day,  
    I looked for my true love.

## THE TWO.

And if they faltered in their speech,  
They knew not ; for their eyes  
Grew like with gazing, each on each,  
Like deep of sea and skies.

## AFTER-THOUGHT.

‘ But I was happy then,  
How happy was I then ! ’  
The sorry saying you may hear  
Upon the lips of men.

To know when you are happy,  
You would not call it wise ;  
Yet, for the seeing happiness,  
How tears will clear the eyes !

They laugh best who laugh last,  
Says Pride that fears a fall.  
But O, who will not laugh at first,  
May never laugh at all !

OTHERS.



## NEAR AND FAR.

Near and far, near and far,  
All the lights were keeping  
Quiet watch with lamp and star,  
While the roads were sleeping.

And I saw, far and near :  
Starlight overhead ;  
While a woman's shadow, here,  
Made to-morrow's bread.

Near and far ; and I forgot  
Stars must needs be small :  
Lamp and shadow, knowing not,  
Did so fold them all.

## FRIENDS ALL.

Little Kathleen, when I was ill,  
Offered the mass for me ;  
And burned a holy candle, too  
As white as wax could be.  
Little Kathleen, I think of her, —  
It may be once a year, —  
When houses sweeten with the fir  
And bells ring out good cheer !

Hejà ! But it is good to live  
And walk brown earth once more ;  
And good to hear your fingers knock  
At some familiar door. —  
And O, to see them all again,  
To see them, — though they say,  
' And did you take a journey, then ?  
And were you long away ?'  
*O, did you take a journey, then ?  
And were you long away ?*



## VANTAGE.

The wisest finding that I have  
Is very young, no doubt.  
Yet many a man must needs grow old  
Before he finds it out.

How happily it comes about —  
And I was never told! —  
That we must all be young awhile,  
Before we can be old.

## A SONG OF SOLOMON.

King Solomon was the wisest man  
Of all that have been kings.  
He built an House unto the Lord :  
And he sang of creeping things.

Of creeping things, of things that fly,  
Or swim within the seas ;  
Of the little weed along the wall ;  
And of the Cedar-trees.

And happier he, without mistake,  
Than all men since alive.  
God's House he built ; and he did make  
A thousand songs and five.

## COUNSEL TO BEGGARS.

O, came you by the same road too,  
The road that called to me?  
And fellow-farers, will you learn  
What shelter there may be?

There 's daybreak there to fill your heart  
Red wine for half the way ;  
And gold there is of sunset, then,  
To last another day.

(And fill your pockets with the same  
Altho' your need be small.  
Take all the bounty while you may,  
To have some wherewithal.)

And if you see the new moon,  
I bid you tell the news,  
And lend the slender silverness  
For other poor to use.

And if your heart be sudden light,  
And yet you know not why,  
I counsel you to hold the joy ;  
Let pride of woe go by.

And if your feet be wearied out,  
And you would rest therefore,  
Seek out some house ; but look you leave  
Your sandals at the door.

For you shall find — tho' sad to find  
Where houses be so few —  
Your too-much sorrow irks a friend,  
If ever it irkèd you !

Take heart. And if the open air  
No shelter seem to be,  
Yet there you shall — and only there —  
Have all that you can see.

## THE TWA CHEERLESS

Eh, is there nothing doing?  
Then give your soul good heed;  
And show yourself the miracles  
That you would like to read,  
As long as you 're in need.

And then suppose I sing myself  
— And if you will, give ear, —  
The very song I never heard,  
But I would like to hear:  
And this, man, will be cheer!

## THE WALK.

We left the house, for we were sad,  
To talk of all the griefs we had ;

And little did we talk at first,  
Leaving to silence all the worst.

The rain it rained and star was none ;  
The wet made two lights out of one.

And broken paths of shining yet  
Made on before us, through the wet.

The more we walked and still would walk,  
The less did seem the need of talk.

The more we walked from light to light,  
The wiser grew the troubled night.

The tacit lamps proved something clear  
As often as one stayed to hear :

And better ways, and endless clews  
Dawned with the lengthening avenues.

Till where the street-ends met the square,  
We found a thousand tulips there,

Sleeping as flowers sleep o' nights,  
Beneath a thousand city-lights.

And then the Bridge from shore to shore  
Solved everything forevermore,

So clearly, you could leave the Why,  
Contented, to some by-and-by.

And time, and grief, were worn away  
Till there was nothing left, to say.

## REFRAINS.

‘ I love all the world to-day ! ’

*That is very young.*

‘ So I sing, the while I may.’

*All the songs are sung.*

‘ God would never say me nay.’

*Heed the foolish tongue !*

‘ There’s a singing in the tree,’ —

*All the songs are sung.*

‘ Nightingales ! Oh, could it be ? ’

*Heed the foolish tongue !*

‘ And the new moon smiles at me.’

*Ah, the moon is young !*



## OUTSIDE THE MUSIC.

Now they come, and now they stop,  
Now they all go in.  
Now the coaches drive away ;  
And now it must begin.

All their faces looked the same,  
Every time before.  
If I heard it, I should know  
More and more and more.

If I heard it, I would sing,  
When I went away.  
I would sing it till I grew  
Beautiful, some day.

O, I hear a whiff of it ;  
There 's another one ; —  
And the coaches driving up,  
After it 's begun !

## THE FAIREST.

The fairest thing that men have made,  
My lad, it is a Ship,  
O, beautiful beyond the white  
Wild bird she would outstrip !  
So beautiful, so beautiful,  
A heart must leap to bless,  
And after her the wake of foam  
Stay white with happiness.

And fairer than all things beside,  
My maid, — a Violin ;  
Nay, aught that will give out again  
The music hid within.  
Or pipe or string or hollow shell,  
It breaks enchanted sleep,  
To win awhile the faëry heart  
Of air that none may keep.

But all of you who may not go  
    To sail upon the sea, —  
Who wait upon another's whim  
    For hope of melody, —  
Oh, bless your hunger and your thirst,  
    And give your spirit wings  
To speed beyond a narrow door  
    The heart that sails and sings!

## THE CHILD AND THE ANGEL.

Oh, is it you at evening,  
And near enough to speak?  
And early in the morning,  
Your breath upon my cheek?

And when the city noises  
Turn into clouds that sing,  
Is it your veil around me,  
Of hush, and wondering?

And is it you, at sunset,  
Who beckon me apart  
Till I am something golden,  
With petals in my heart?

Ah, Dearness, somewhere over!  
A happy child is this  
That with shut eyes uplifted,  
Waits for you with a kiss.

## READING FOR THE POOR.

Young Pity passed us in the street.  
Her eyes were like a brook ;  
And golden leaf and shadow bird  
Darkened and lit her look.

Her hair was like the meadow-marsh  
That reaches to the sea ;  
And on her cheek a wild-rose glowed,  
The timely rose for me !

Young Pity never knew the word  
She gave to men in need,  
All clear and simple, in her face,  
For working ones to read.

## 'THE BLIND ONE.

O hide your eyes, my maiden,  
And tell your heart to hush;  
For love is very bright to see,  
And louder than a thrush.  
And all adream you wander  
Alone in crowded ways,  
Where eyes of all the fools and wise  
Do follow, wide agaze!

Yet all in vain, my maiden,  
To shadow eyes like these;  
They shine behind your fingers  
Like starlight through the trees.  
So dream and shine among us,  
Unwitting of the boon,—  
How all the eyes, of fools and wise,  
Are grateful to the Moon.

## HOLIDAY.

When I am far from joy of this,  
In yon thick world of men,  
O, save me — save me, world of blue! —  
That I shall thirst for then.

And when the little strength is spent  
And little hope burns low,  
Blow softly on that tortured flame,  
— Fresh air from long ago!

## THE FOOL.

O what a Fool am I! — Again, again,  
To give for asking: yet again to trust  
The needy love in women and in men,  
Until again my faith is turned to dust  
By one more thrust.

How you must smile apart who make my  
hands  
Ever to bleed where they were reached to  
bless ;  
— Wonder how any wit that understands  
Should ever try too near, with gentle stress,  
Your sullenness !

Laugh, stare, deny. Because I shall be  
true, —  
The only triumph slain by no surprise:  
True, true, to that forlornest truth in you,



The wan, beleaguered thing behind your  
eyes,

Starving on lies.

Build by my faith ; I am a steadfast tool :

When I am dark, begone into the sun.

I cry, ' Ah Lord, how good to be a Fool : —

A lonely game indeed, but now all done ;

— And I have won ! '

## DRUDGE.

I waited long until the sky  
Should give me of its blue  
To weave and wear, and share, and weave  
The very stars into.  
The days they went, the years they went,  
And left my hands instead  
Another thing for wonderment,  
— The mending, and the bread.

Ah me, and one must set a hand  
To burnish up the task,  
And hush and hush the old demand  
A wakeful heart will ask.  
But with a star's clear eye on me,  
O, I can hear it said,  
'What souls there be, that only see  
The mending, and the bread!'

## THE YOUNGEST DRYAD.

What were you seeking? For my heart  
    Woke at your step and heard;  
The farthest wakeful leaf of me,  
And the hidden nest of the midmost tree,  
    Hushed with its hidden bird.  
Ah, but the rune imprisoned me  
    Till you should speak one word.

Why did you think the spell that drew  
    Fell from the cedar there?  
You questioned pine and sister pine,  
Lingered near ash and wild-grape vine,  
    — Doubted the maidenhair;  
Ever you missed these eyes of mine  
    Too like the twilight air.

The Sun may call the dew to him,  
    The waters call the deer;  
But O, my roots bind every limb

To hold me hid, apart and dim  
And silent, and so near ; —  
And every leaf of me abrim —  
With that you shall not hear.

## COME BUY !

The flowers knew her through the frost,  
Their own true-lover.

Rose crowding rose, the color crossed ;  
The silver breath could hover  
Near and far, poor lover !

They wondered at her through the pane,  
And through December.  
And then she went her way again,  
— Eyes trying to remember.  
Have your day, December !

## PRINCE CHARLIE.

O had you died upon the field  
That was so grim to plough,  
The tears had blinded every eye  
That sharpens on you now.

For death had been a glorious gift,  
With all you had to give,  
And kinder than we stay-at-homes ;  
But ah, you had to live !

## THE MEETING.

‘ Good-morning to you, then.’  
(O stricken heart of her !  
Silence, silence, breathe for me  
A little breath of myrrh.)

‘ And so good-by again ;  
Good-by, if you must go.’  
(Go after, little shade of me,  
And tell her that I know.)

## THE COBBLER.

A little cloud in a golden veil  
At setting of the sun :  
And I a cobbler working — working ;  
Work is never done.

A little cloud in a golden veil ;  
And I am mending shoes,  
Never a feathered sandal thing  
Such as a cloud may use.

A little cloud in a golden veil,  
Along the bright highway :  
And but for her, to-morrow were  
Another yesterday.

And this will stay, tho' she melt away  
After the moon sets sail.  
For no man's sky is always gray,  
— Cloud in a golden veil.



## MIRACLE.

Love came by in bitter need.

Oh, but I was sad !

Love stood by in bitter need,

And I nothing had.

Empty were the hands I held

Silently to Love.

Empty, as my heart of words,

Stared the sky above.

Lo, Love took — and thankfully —

All my wish for true ;

Then my hands gave back to me,

Full of kisses too.

## OPEN HOUSE.

My home is not so great ;  
But open heart I keep.  
The sorrows come to me,  
That they may sleep.

The little bread I have  
I share, and gladly pray  
To-morrow may give more,  
To give away.

Yes, in the dark sometimes  
The childish fear will haunt :  
How long, how long, before  
I die of want ?

But all the bread I have,  
I share, and ever say,  
To-morrow shall bring more  
To give away.

O SLEEP, SLEEP, SLEEP !

Do not dream of me.  
Nay, without mistake,  
Even for love's sake  
And all heedfully ;  
Do not dream of me.

All day long am I  
Leal to all you ask :  
Wish and care and task,  
Every need come nigh ; —  
Still to serve and try.

But with my Good-night,  
O unrippled sleep !  
What is here, should keep  
This bewildered light  
From its skyward right ?

Let me feel no need ;  
Not a love that clings.  
Let me have my wings ;  
Love my wings indeed :  
Give my wings godspeed !

Do not dream of me.  
Waking, I'll be human ;—  
Call it child or woman.  
Sleeping, I would be  
Only Something Free.

## THE CLOUD.

The islands called me far away,  
The valleys called me home.  
The rivers with a silver voice  
Drew on my heart to come.

The paths reached tendrils to my hair  
From every vine and tree.  
There was no refuge anywhere  
Until I came to thee.

There is a northern cloud I know,  
Along a mountain crest.  
And as she folds her wings of mist,  
So I could make my rest.

There is no chain to bind her so  
Unto that purple height ;  
And she will shine and wander, slow,  
Slow, with a cloud's delight.

Would she begone? She melts away,  
A heavenly joyous thing.  
Yet day will find the mountain white,  
White-folded with her wing.

As you may see, but half aware  
If it be late or soon,  
Soft breathing on the day-time air,  
The fair forgotten Moon.

And though love cannot bind me, Love,  
— Ah no! — yet I could stay  
Maybe, with wings forever spread,  
— Forever, and a day.

## THE RAVENS.

My eyes are blind with dust ;  
My limbs are dull with pain :  
But my body shall up and after me,  
Again — again — again.

They hover and wheel above.  
Where I creep on, they fly ;  
And with their call and vaunt of life,  
They tempt my soul to die.

And the numbness of my heart,  
The length I have to go,  
The dimness of my starving sight,  
They know, they know, they know !

But the little spark I hold  
Shall light me farther on  
After the gleam — like a far-off stream,—  
Until that, too, is gone.

*Mirage — mirage — mirage !*

But I say, I will not die

For the hoarse Despairs that wait, that poise,  
— And I creep while they do fly.

No wonder they stoop so low ;

And no wonder they should scoff

With Ah and Ah ! — and beak and claw,

As they let me beat them off.

For there is no path to see.

But after the vanished flag

My soul has gone ; and after me,

Body must strive and lag.

Up with you, — follow ; come —

Whither my face is set.

They would have us dead : but I have said,

Not yet, — not yet, — not yet !



## NEIGHBORS.

‘ Who found for you the waters that soothed  
your heart-break first ? ’

‘ Oh, who but these, my Sorrow, my Hunger  
and my Thirst ! ’

‘ Who made your eyes the wiser to hail the  
farthest star ? ’

‘ Who but my Dark I thanked not, — the Dark  
where no lamps are !

‘ And I come singing, Neighbor, to tell you,  
where you grieve.

And though my song bled, bled afresh, — yet  
would you not believe.’

## THE MORNING SOUL.

O little cripple, with the lovely eyes,  
What have we done to thee? —  
For all our wisdom, putting out thy gleam,  
Crying, 'Thou seest not, it is a dream!' —  
Against thy cry, 'I see.'

O little cripple with the lovely eyes,  
What have we now to show?  
With vext perpetual ways past finding out,  
Teaching thee well the hundred things of  
doubt,  
Who saidest once, 'I know.'

O little cripple with the lovely eyes,  
That music of the Sphere  
We only sought to bind for thee secure  
Some day, if it were true, for thee too  
sure  
Rejoicing with, 'I hear!'

O little cripple with the lovely eyes,  
Flower of the broken stalk,  
Have pity on our need, for it is sore, —  
Of thee, thee only, — thee to go before;  
Rise up, rise up, and walk!

## THE HILL-TOP.

‘Look down upon thy grief.’ — O heart of  
mine,  
That path alone climbed here!

‘Look down upon thy fear.’ — O heart of  
mine,  
That cloud-shadow, my fear!

‘Look down on thy desire.’ — And could it  
shine,  
That sorry fallen ember?

‘Ah, in the valley yonder, child of mine,  
Wilt thou remember?’

## THE DOVES.

The doves fly out, the doves fly in,  
Brighter than cloud above,  
From thee to me, and again to thee,  
Out of my heart, O Love.

My heart is troubled and hushed with wings  
From the deep, beneath, above ;  
And the hovering flight of more white things  
Than Earth hath the gladness of.

After one call they follow, all ; —  
Thy call to me, O Love :  
Lightning out of the blue, but mine  
In the likeness of the Dove.

FOUND.

O, when I saw your eyes,  
So old it was, so new, the hushed surprise :  
After a long, long search, it came to be,  
Home folded me.

And looking up, I saw  
The far, first stars like tapers to my awe,  
In the dim hands of hid, benignant Powers,  
At search long hours.

And did they hear us call,  
That they have found us children after all ?  
And did you know, O Wonderful and Dear,  
That I was here ?

ALL HAIL.

O, Blessed of the dark, we meet along an  
unknown sky ;  
And here within the light of you, how beau-  
tiful am I !

The other worlds are dim around, beneficent  
with night.  
But I — I turn my face to you, and have no  
other sight.

So poising radiant, strong with joy, in desert  
air divine,  
One star doth to another call, and we belovèd  
shine.

We shine transfigured, shine, to know beyond  
all hope made wise,  
The echo, echo of All Hail, from new-illu-  
mined eyes.

Who know not what your glory is, nor why  
my looks are bright,  
I lean to you, I call to you, I shine with you,  
my light.



## THE ANOINTED.

I was a little gleaner  
Of all the days would yield,  
When wonder overtook me  
At work within the field.

The stars they gathered round me,  
Holding their torches high.  
They cried, ' Behold the chosen !'  
And it was none but I.

They hailed me royal, kindred,  
And made me understand  
With gifts of light and darkness  
They gave into my hand.

And here the wonder holds me  
Though voices all are gone,  
Here in the brimming silence,  
With this to think upon.

The kiss upon my forehead  
Forevermore is mine.  
The sweetness fills my heart up ;  
The tears make all things shine.

## EPILOGUE.



## TO THE EVENING STAR.

Yes, and you come, you come. Soft piercing  
through  
The luminous fair pallor of the west ;  
Budded in light and blooming manifest  
As that first lily of the field may do ;  
Unshaken by the winds, that all for you  
Have made the pathway ready, loveliest,  
You come, you look upon us, shining Guest  
Of glories that the world is blind unto !

All hail, from us who work no more, but wait :  
From the worn furrows darkened after toil,  
And from the Sea ; and from all eyes that  
are.

Hallow our upward looks, and consecrate  
These thankful offered saviors of the soil  
With the one lovingkindness of a Star.

TO HER BOOK.

I kiss you once for luck,  
    That you may feel no care.  
I kiss you thrice for love  
    That you must spend and share.  
    Go now, and wheresoe'er  
A heart shall take you in,  
It is your very kin :  
    Make music there.





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