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CT 168

"KEY NOTES."

BY

ARBOR LEIGH.



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“KEY NOTES.”

UPWARD.

WHAT is the tireless key
Of the unheard chorus of things?
Of the ceaseless autumns and springs?
Of the ebbing and flowing sea?

Answer: that we may join in thy chorus, Eternity!

What shall we do to-day
To lessen the total strife?
To forward the total life?
To help the worlds on their way?
To live by the last-learnt law is more than to praise
or to pray.

Why is the fit thing best?
Why is the best thing fit?
We work, and we cease from it;
Do we work for work or for rest?
Daily the light comes up in the East to hide in the
West.

Never, never in sight,
The Perfect we long to see:
The Perfect we long to be:
The final, immutable Right.
Nay: for the Perfect *grows*, with growth that is
infinite.

Over the verges fair
Of the best we can feel and think,
Ever just over the brink
Of the best we can do and dare,
Till we ask—“Are there ends at all, to Purposes
everywhere?”

From stars in the solemn sky,
 From the tender flower at our feet,
 Certain, and clear, and sweet,
 Comes the same eternal reply :
 "Upward! upward, O man! for Progress can never
 die!"

UNTO THIS PRESENT.

I.

Free and yet fast : fast, and for ever free :
 Led in the line of law to liberty :
 Sweeping the spirals of invariant space :
 On flees the little earth around her sun.
 For ever tending to his fiery breast ;
 For ever tending to the outer cold ;
 So held, unfettered, 'twixt her two desires,
 From either doom ; and of her impotence,
 Driven, where hindrances are least, along
 The curves of gentler possibility.
 O little planet ! fated to be free,
 And have thy leisure for an æon's space
 To bud, and bloom, and grow a teeming thing :
 Cooling, yet lifewards ;—darkening unto sight
 That wakes in many eyes of many lives ;
 And lights the living into wider light ;—
 O little planet ! Chariot of mankind,
 Force-drifted from impalpability
 Into thy rounded being, and the form
 Thy children know thee by,—how sternly kind
 Is Force, new-differenced as Life, as Love,
 As Fitness for a freedom yet to be.
 Free, and yet fast ; fast, and for ever free !
 Thy history is writ in parable :
 Man's tale is one with thine, O little world of
 Man !

II.

I looked into the green sea yesterday,
And dreamt in outline of that sum of Cause
Which brought it there, and me to watch it curl
Its never-sleeping mystery to my feet.

Although so far ago as now appears
Like Never, yet I think there was an hour,
Down the dim reaches of a cosmic Past,
Ere the beginnings of the growth of things,
When Fact stayed, poised, and centred everywhere ;
And for one pregnant moment of suspense
The awful Infinite had nought to do :—
When universal forces nowhere clash'd,
And all thro' Space hung equal formlessness :
When, wreck'd, some all-dissolv'd, older Past
Yielded its untired atoms for new work—
Or play—at System-churning ; till there went
Slow, doubtful whirlings through Immensity,
And sameness grew new-focuss'd, here or there,
With glimmering, gassy nuclei. So, anon,
These, settling into fluid balls of fire,
Flung forth, all wildly spinning into space,
Planets ; and these, all spinning, flung their moons,
Until, among an unguessed myriad more,
This little thing we live to call our world
Grew individual, and puny shone
Among the millions : thence, self-centred, roll'd,
An isle of gleaming chaos, thro' the cycled years.

III.

The young world's radiance ebb'd away to night,
And a slow-settling darkness veiled her curves,
As she, a vaporous mantle for awhile
Drew round her broodingly. And in that gloom
The mystery, Motion, learned a strange new art
In subtle particles. Change after change
Smaller and stiller grew, and more complex—
As Life began in darkness. For 'twas then,

Under a heaven all murky with the breath
 Of young creation rising hot and thick,
 Sprung that, which, lighted, had been loveliness.
 Fern-forests, haply, at the steaming poles
 Spread to the darkness beauty unbeheld ;
 And forms most gracious in the eye of Day
 Were born unheralded, and died in night.
 Nor so were wasted ! What, though living eyes
 That turn ethereal quiverings into light,
 And use the light to find out loveliness—
 Not yet were focuss'd from a vaguer Force :—
 Men, retrospective, in this later age,
 Learn, by the trace of what they never saw,
 A lesson worth the learning. Let it pass.

Dawn conquered e'en the long primeval night,
 The blackness thinn'd, and wept itself away,
 And let the light through from the parent sun,
 And life began to know itself as life
 In sentient things that joyed in some degree.
 New inter-adaptation everywhere,
 Among material bent on issuing
 At last, in that supremest noblest thing,
 Achieved by all that has been—Consciousness—
 The being, who not only lived a life,
 Loved, joyed, and suffered, slept and woke again,
 But noted it, and recognised himself, ~~and~~
 And found some words and said, "I am a man."

IV.

In yon far distance, where the sea and sky
 Make of two meeting edges one thin line,
 A boundary seems where yet no boundary is.
 Being persists : and, grandly gradual,
 All aspects melt in one-ness as we move,
 And, spite of all our severing, ill fit names—
 Cause, as effect, retains its force unspent.
 One fact grows smoothly on, through changing
 lights,

Stable alone in instability,
 Unchangeable in constant changefulness.
 In thine own piteous, piteous ignorance,
 Break not the calm continuous tale of growth,
 Told by the tacit truthfulness of things,
 With theory of breach—O petty man!
 Pause with thy rounded story in mistrust
 Of its full-blown completeness! In the face—
 The awful face—of deep, unfinished Life,
 Cast thy neat sketch of things aside awhile:
 Forget thy need of headings to thy page,
 Or final flourish hinting all is said.
 Learn of thy planet home, man-dazzled man!
 The life of man is *not* the end of things.
 For, not till earth hid all her fires away,
 And gave but borrowed splendour to the night,
 Knew she of greater glory than her own,
 And, in her children's vision, learnt to see the
 stars.

v.

Strong, sanely conscious, sweet Philosophy!
 I see her dealing with the fevered screams
 Of angry over-certain ignorance;
 She measures men by what they tend to be,
 Endures all honest lies right patiently,
 Knows them for lies, but knows she knows them so,
 By knowledge that would make the liar true
 Could he lay hold of it. A day shall dawn,
 When error, *proved*, shall be no longer held,
 And battled for, as somehow, somewhat good
 And beneficial, error though it be.

Grand, unrebelling, sane Philosophy!
 Crown'd and calm I see her sit aloft,
 Upon the apex of things knowable;
 Her heart the stiller that it is so vast;
 Her deed emergent from her gravest thought,
 As it illumines and tempers to the Fact

“ *Key Notes.* ”

The deepest of her feeling. And around—
 Above her, spreads the measureless abyss :
 Time both ways endless :—all ways endless,
 Space.

O strongly patient, fair Philosophy !
 She reads the midmost truth betwixt extremes,
 Dreams of the far point whither truths converge,
 And with a question in her thoughtful smile
 Ponders the poetry of paradox—
 How highest knowledge waxes negative,
 How he who soars the farthest in his thought,
 Basks in a beatific ignorance,
 Knows by his knowledge he can never know,
 Sees by the light of sight that he is blind,
 And loves the largeness of the total sum,
 That lured him to be ignorant and wise.

O just, harmonious Philosophy !
 She links, and interlinks the sciences,
 Finds the coherence of a Universe,
 And one-ness in the varied wide-lived All ;
 Reads in a lump of dirt the very law,
 That rules the being of Society,
 Kinship between the atoms and the suns,
 And reason for a Virtue foreshadowed in a clod.

VI.

There is a sense in which the Universe
 Is pivoted upon a molecule ;
 There is a sense in which Eternity
 Hangs on each moment. Read that truth reversed,
 The softest dimple on a baby's smile,
 Springs from the whole of past Eternity :
 Tasked all the sum of things to bring it there,
 And so was only barely possible.
 Yet 'twas so one and equal with its cause
 'Twould need that whole of past Eternity,
 Cancell'd and changed, and every motor force
 And every atom through Infinitude,

Set otherwise a-going to hinder it.
 The Future lies potential in the Now :
 The Necessary is the Possible,
 The two are differing names for one stiff Fact,
 That Fact—the Being of whatever is.
 Is this dogmatic? 'Tis the normal voice
 Of sougning breezes, and of singing birds ;
 It comes to me thwart distant silences
 Of inter-stellar vacancy at night,
 It comes to me from human influence
 Drifted through centuries, half-unperceived ;
 And in it is an all-embracing Code,—
 And in it is an all-inspiring Creed,—
 In what has been man learns the law of life,
 And finds his Revelation writ as Genesis.

VII.

But now what says Philosophy of Self ?
 What thinks her follower of the man he is ?
 Can he, in presence of the symphony
 That rolls around him, played by viewless Cause
 On suns for instruments, with Life for Key
 And the For Ever we can only name
 As metronome to beat out rhythmic bars,
 Great æons long, in number infinite—
 Can he revert to his small destiny,
 As with a moment's stopping of his ears,
 While that sweet thundering of the huge “Not
 Self,”
 Challenges him to listen while he may ?
 Aye, for his egotism is not killed,
 But only stunn'd, by vastness : now forgot
 In the strong consciousness of larger things,
 But yet, anon, assertive ; full of rights ;
 Measuring worth by “What is that to me ?”
 And so we look about us for a god,
 Whom we may bind in trust to work our welfare
 out.

VIII.

The tacit flux of unexplaining fact
 That deals one recompense to one offence
 Whether we call the doer, "fool," or "knave ;"
 The steady tendency that draws the child,
 Playing too near a precipice, to death,
 And holds in safety every wretched life
 That fails of chancing on the way to die—
 This tacit fact, this steady tendency
 Breeds our experience, and makes us wise ;
 Breathes on our wisdom then, and makes us good.
 O man! thou mad ! thou blind ! thou self-
 engross'd !

Let thy poor blindness be chastised to sight,
 Grow acquiescent in the utmost ward
 Of Nature's fine impartiality :
 Learn that what *is* must measure what thou dost,
 That on thy knowledge hangs thy highest fate
 And all thy virtue grows of the outer Cosmic
 growth.

IX.

Daily we die, eternally to live,
 Each in the measure of his deathlessness
 In the undying life of that strong Thing,
 That once was Chaos and that shall be God,
 But now is Man, and needs the lives of men
 To learn its Being,—weave its Future by.
 Freedom is born of fetters. Joy of pain.
 For he who *feels* the gain of greater things
 In his own loss, makes of his loss a gain ;
 And masters so the stern Necessity
 That so apportion'd. When thy will is one
 With what must be, with or without thy will,
 Thy will grows helpful, and thy will is free.
 For mastery is service perfected,
 And, being won, yields back obedience
 To laws of larger life. 'Tis thus we grow

And feel a world-pulse thrill our hopeful soul,
 And feel our bark of life lift on the wave,
 With progress, joyous, sure and palpable.
 Free, and yet fast; fast, and for ever free!
 Lured by a love-like law in lines of Liberty.

X.

Now shall we worship? Aye: but name no name.
 A thousand Gods, outgrown of growing man,
 Strew with their martyr'd prophets, all the past.

Man's spirit is the father of his God,
 When, seeking in his misty ignorance
 For sign of meaning in the drift of things—
 For trace of purpose in his little life,
 His hope,—his trust sends forth blind, yearning
 cries,

Which echo back from the mysterious face
 Of outer things, transfigured as Reply.
 Is this so piteous? Nay: but it is well!
 Such dreams have brought man up the slippery
 steep

Of half-learnt rectitude, and made him man.

But now we worship with our faces hid,
 And name no name, since All we cannot name:
 Our homage to the awfulness of Law
 Lies in the meekness of the earnest act,
 Which, with sweet constancy in its reward,
 Deals with us well, and turns our awe to love.
 The end lies hid in future victory,
 Won by the faithfulness of man to man.
 We know not of that end, and yet we wait,
 And worship, acquiescent, for we *feel* it must be
 great.

AMEN.

- SUMMER SONG.

I.

O sun, that makes haste to be early to look on thy
 self-kindled morn,
 And to see the most beautiful brightness of dewdrop-
 fill'd daisies at dawn ;
 O tears of the gladness of greeting when earth
 shakes her short sleep away,
 And turns her to meet the long future of one more
 intense summer day ;
 O fullness of life in the flowers, of joy in the
 fledgling's new flight,
 There is left no work for the heart at home, when the
 earth is so full of delight.

II.

I will hark to the innocent secret, in whisp'rings of
 tall, flow'r'd grass,
 I will read the white lesson of daylight, in breeze-
 wreathed clouds as they pass,
 And with fullest surrender of spirit to the free
 efflorescence of things,
 I will think not a thought that is duller than glint of
 the dragon-fly's wings.
 My heart shall be tender and trustful, and hold not a
 heavier care
 Than a butterfly, flutt'ring 'mid roses at noon, might
 carry, nor know it was there.

III.

There are harebells that, nodding and swaying, defy
 the full sunshine to fade ;
 There are oaks, in their gnarl'd firmness, dividing the
 noon from the shade ;
 There are beetles that shimmer and vanish among
 little stones by the bank ;

There are hummings of flight that is seeking, and
perfume of blossoms that thank.
Things seem all youthful and faithful, and life all
earnest and glad :
Who can believe 'tis the same old earth men say is so
sinful and sad ?

IV.

So busy the flowers are blowing, so busy and so
untired ;
So certain the bee is of finding the sweetness her life
has desired ;
So steady the sky stands over, to bless all the
kindling and birth
Of a thousand new things in a minute, on the
teeming summer-day earth.
O breezes, aglow with the sunbeams! ye'd utter it all
if ye could—
The tending of things to be conscious of life: the
tending of life to be Good.

MORNING.

What's the text to-day for reading,
Nature and its being by?
There is effort all the morning
Through the windy sea and sky.

All, intent in earnest grapple,
That the All may let it be:
Force, in unity, at variance
With its own diversity.

Force, prevailing unto action:
Force, persistent to restrain:
In a two-fold, one-soul'd wrestle,
Forging Being's freedom-chain.

“ *Key Notes.* ”

Frolic! say you—when the billow
 Tosses back a mane of spray?
 No; but haste of earnest effort;
 Nature works in guise of play.

Till the balance shall be even
 Swings the to and fro of strife;
 Till an awful equilibrium
 Stills it, beats the Heart of Life.

What's the text to-day for reading,
 Nature and its being by?
 Effort, effort all the morning,
 Through the sea and windy sky.

AFTERNOON.

Purple headland over yonder,
 Fleecy, sun-extinguish'd moon,
 I am here alone, and ponder
 On the theme of Afternoon.

Past has made a groove for Present,
 And what fits it *is*: no more.
 Waves before the wind are weighty;
 Strongest sea-beats shape the shore.

Just what is, is just what can be,
 And the Possible is free:
 'Tis by being, not by effort,
 That the firm cliff juts to sea.

With an uncontentious calmness
 Drifts the Fact before the “Law;”
 So we name the order'd sequence
 We, remembering, foresaw.

And a law is mere procession
Of the forcible and fit;
Calm of uncontested Being,
And our thought that comes of it.

In the mellow shining daylight,
Lies the Afternoon at ease,
Little willing ripples answer
To a drift of casual breeze.

Purple headland to the westward!
Ebbing tide and fleecy moon!
In the "line of least resistance,"
Flows the life of Afternoon.

T W I L I G H T.

Grey the sky, and growing dimmer,
And the twilight lulls the sea.
Half in vagueness, half in glimmer,
Nature shrouds her mystery,

What have all the hours been spent for?
Why the on and on of things?
Why, eternity's procession
Of the days and evenings?

Hours of sunshine, hours of gloaming,
Wing their unexplaining flight,
With a measured punctuation
Of unconsciousness, at night.

Just at sunset was translucence
When the west was all aflame;
So I asked the sea a question,
And a kind of answer came.

"Key Notes."

Is there nothing but Occurrence ?
 Tho' each detail seem an Act,
 Is that whole we deem so pregnant,
 But unemphasis'd Fact ?

Or, when dusk is in the hollows
 Of the hillside and the wave,
 Are things just so much in earnest
 That they cannot but be grave ?

Nay, the lesson of the twilight
 Is as simple as 'tis deep ;
 Acquiescence: acquiescence:
 And the coming on of sleep.

 MIDNIGHT.

There are sea and sky about me,
 And yet nothing sense can mark ;
 For a mist fills all the midnight,
 Adding blindness to its dark.

There is not the faintest echo
 From the life of yesterday :
 Not the vaguest stir foretelling
 Of a morrow on the way.

'Tis negation's hour of triumph,
 In the absence of the sun,
 'Tis the hour of endings, finished ;
 Of beginnings, unbegun.

Yet the voice of awful Silence,
 Bids my waiting spirit hark ;
 There is action in the stillness.
 There is progress in the dark.

In the drift of things and forces,
Comes the better from the worse,
Swings the whole of nature upward,
Wakes, and thinks—a Universe.

There will be *more* life to-morrow,
And of life, more life that *knows* ;
Though the sum of Force be constant,
Yet the Living ever grows.

So we sing of Evolution,
And step strongly on our ways,
And we live thro' nights in patience,
And we learn the worth of days.

In the silence of murk midnight
Is revealed to me this thing :
Nothing hinders, all ennobles
Nature's vast awakening.

OCTOBER.

O still, sweet mornings, silvery with frost !
O holy early sunsets full of calm !
When the spent year has seen her utmost fruit,
And beautifully leans towards her doom.
I think if I could choose my hour to go
Into the unknown infinite, 'twould be
While earth is lying patiently bereft
During this yearning month—while summer holds
A failing hand across the narrowing days,
To meet the stern cold grip of winter : smiles
The last sweet effort of her life away,
And bids October mourn in gold and grey.
'Tis not quite hopefulness I gather there,
And yet methinks it is not quite despair,
But a resigning with a painless will,
Of what was lovely once, is lovely still,

And yet must go. O mystery of Death!
 The formless blank that margins liveliest life!
 We turn the weary face towards the wall,
 We wish less vehemently hour by hour,
 We let the thought-worn spirit ebb away
 Into unconsciousness, and as we fail,
 No more have energy to question God,
 Or men, or things, but dimly think it strange,
 That ever it had seemed to matter so.

Are there degrees of dying? Or, when breath
 Has ceased for ever are men all the same?
 Do varying intensities of Death
 Mark of past lives which most deserved the name?
 When noble purpose, unfulfilled, subsides
 With the out-ebbing of a human life,
 With the slow-slacking beat of noble heart
 That erewhile did conceive it, is no sign
 Vouchsafed, to mark the lapse from death of such
 As all his life long kept his soul asleep?
 Each did his nothing. One from lack of days,
 Or lack of God's-help—opportunity.
 The other from the lack of purpose, or
 Of force to wield it: now it seems all one:
 Each dies his death: the nothing that is done
 Has less of satire for the self-wrapt fool,
 Than for his loftier brother.

Earth's fair things

Perish so unresistingly; the while
 They meet the autumn as they met the spring,
 Lovely, and acquiescent; for the year
 Seems never surer,—less indifferent
 Than when the woods are withering and *aglow*,
 And oaks in calmness let their acorns go,
 To fare as they are able, in the dark.

Let the true aspirant endure to leave
 His precious noblest thought. Aye! bear to die,
 Not seeing it prevail. Thou feeble man!
 Meet the inevitable with strong trust

That waste *is not*, but *fitness* everywhere ;
 And though thy thought had seemed so very good,
 Its worth might well have won thy fame for thee,
 Mistrust that love of it as *thine own* thing,
 In measure of its fitness, not *as thine*,
 'Twill rule the life-blood of posterity,
 And make of man meet master of his ways.
 Good is too strong to need thy consciousness ;
 But, having blest thy vision, lets thee die.

O prophet ! live the flowering future through
 In present days, however chill and few ;
 Catch the vast measure of the march of man,
 And read a cycle in an hour ; for he,
 And only he, may live immortally,
 Who lives, the while he lives, in tune with life
 That lives for ever. Prophet ! having lived
 And quickened with thy word some further soul,
 And sent a-ringing through eternity
 The chord thy hand was formed to strike, and
 leave,
 Thou shalt October-wise, resign thy breath,
 Glad with faint echoings from a future life,
 Grown beautiful and great beyond thine hour of
 death.

DECEMBER.

Winter ; and loveliness of frosty hours :
 Winter, and frost ; and sorrow of the poor :
 More than one-half of all the men alive,
 Forced, by the struggle 'twixt the hurling power
 Of orbit motion, and the strong, stiff pull
 Of yon white sun,—to be immersed in cold.
 Snow crystals ! tiny, perfect, everywhere :
 Man's work and nature's crisply fringed with hoar
 That sends a gem-hued sparkle through the eye
 Into the gladdened consciousness behind,

And helps the poet to sufficient theme
For kindling song where prose was yesterday.

What? will he glibly, gaily dare extol
The levelling force of whiteness; and the robe
Of Beauty, thrown alike o'er hut and hall,
And miss the lesson of it?—Let him pause!
A ledge exists where snowflakes can be lodged;
There they *are* lodged, and there their beauty is,
And, being snow, their coldness, tho' the shelf
Be shoulder of a baby, scarcely clad,
And dying of it, or the cosy eaves
That hold the flakes away from ruder lives,
Fitter to weather winter circumstance—
Admiring and not dying of the snow.

I do not trust the unreflective praise
That would appropriate the fair "must be"
As man's especial, heaven-sent heritage.
For he who calls the glory of this world
His own, his right, his message from a God
Intent on beautifying life for man,
Will find his logic sadly overset,
And all his music stricken out of tune,
When he, perchance, shall find his own delight
Hangs on that fact that strikes a brother dead.

We skim the surface of the Actual,
Daub it with moral, wall it round with names,
Fit puny, arbitrary adjectives,
Where Fact is subtle, mergent, and *itself*,
Until we see no more the real drift
Of Being, nor coherence in the tale
Perpetually uttered everywhere.

Meanings are made and fastened by our moods:
Things only mean themselves: each fact proclaims,
By its existence, but that it exists:
What *is*, not what it stands for, is the theme
Of Nature's teaching. Let us learn that first.
Grave lessons learnt of cosmic constancy
Work in us, patience. Thence more safely true

Live we our lives, law-tempered, soberly,
 But ever law-rewarded. And, unchill'd
 By doubt of irony in sun or sky,
 We learn to smile up in the face of Fact,
 And praise its Fitness, fitly. Let us learn :
 For, certainty attained, we acquiesce ;
 And acquiescence wins the way to Happiness.

S O N N E T.

A little brook doth babble, and doth dance ;
 And in its eddies traps a sunny ray,
 And toys with it, and splits it every way,
 Till thousand seeming gems dazzle and glance,
 The summer earth lies in a lovely trance ;
 While a blithe song-bird on th' o'erhanging spray,
 Trills forth his mirth all thro' the livelong day.
 And some have said this world is ruled by Chance !
 O broad, blue lift ! wherein the sun is set—
 Whence the stars peep and sparkle all the night.
 Why do things *seem* so love-ruled, purpose-set,
 If blind Chance gave them birth, and holds them
 right ?
 Most happy Chance ! such beauties chance to be :
 I, too ; with ears that tear and eyes that see !

M A R C H.

Wild winds of March ! ruthless, and stern, and cold :
 Wild flowers of March ! that tenderly unfold :
 Wind—as a voice of sovereign fury wild,
 Flower, only so, as is a peasant's child.
 Why come ye thus together, wind and flower,
 Linked hand in hand, a weakness, and a power ?
 One speaks in both ; and doth the storm-wind hold
 That it hurt not His primrose, and His smile,

'Mid blustering bleakness, helps the flower meanwhile

With courage to be lovely in the cold.

For God is everywhere if anywhere,

Ruling the strong and weak with equal care :

In the wild days when Nature's voice is harsh,

Weaving the rudest breath of bitter March ;

Yet guarding, that its fragrance may not fail,

The weakest bud that opens in the gale.

One law demands the twain. We are so blind !

Spite of the legend God is in the wind,

As in the still small voice with which meanwhile

The meek, pale primrose wakes into a smile.

O little flower ! teach me to be bold,

And like thyself keep courage in life's bitter cold !

A P R I L.

O sights, and scents, and sounds of this fair earth,

When Nature has her way unmarred by man !

From the arched beauty of the rainbow span

That sheds its lustre thro' an April hour,

To yonder lark's intensity of mirth,

Or the mysterious fragrance of a flower,

There is no imperfection. It is strange

That man alone has power to disarrange,

And, when he will, can mar. Who would suspect

This creature, called a "crowning work," with hands

Doing the meddling will of intellect.

The more can do the more he understands

To dim the face of Nature's loveliness,

And make the sum of all her beauties less !

Sweet April morning ! by what wide mischance,

Is it that things more lovely are, in fact,

Where men are few and steeped in ignorance

Than where a crowd of thinkers plan and act ?

Yet for all this is Beauty's self a lie,

Because she shrinks away and seems to die,
 When rude man in the hurry of his need
 Tortures her into usefulness : when greed,
 By twisting fair and good things into gold,
 Makes "progress" one with wealth, and young men
 old ?

'Tis well there are some feats beyond our reach,
 'Tis well we cannot climb the rainbow's arc
 With earthy tread, to make its glory dark ;
 'Tis well no art of ours can ever teach
 The wind and song-bird trammell'd, thought-bound
 speech.

Or build sick cities on the mighty sea,
 Or make one billow's curve less wildly free.
 And though on earth we crowd achievement so,
 That little flowers have hardly room to grow,
 Price-labell'd prose may reach not very high,
 We cannot "civilise" and spoil the sky !

Yet stay ! we weep this beauty that we soil,
 And shrink from turning all our play to toil ;
 But this fair thought may shine athwart our tears,
 And hope gleam, April-wise, on gloomy fears.
 The reign of fitness is not over yet ;
 We never wholly lose what we regret.
 If he be man who blots the sunny sky
 With breath of avarice and smoke of gain,
 Yet man he is who feels relenting pain
 For Beauty's sickness : hates to see her die.
 The poet in the bosom of the best
 Shall *never* starve ; because the law is just
 By which it lives,—in which we put this trust,
 That all fair things from final loss Love's Strength
 may wrest.