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OF MAN'S SEARCH FOR GOD

THE BOOK OF
THE HOLY GRAAL

Eva Palmer

THE BOOK OF THE
HOLY GRAAL *By*
ARTHUR EDWARD
WAITE 1857 -

m/le

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Contents

	PAGE
I The Quest of a Perfect Sleep	7
II Dream-Nomads	15
III A Daughter of Life	21
IV A Way in the Waking World	31
V A Tale of Eternal Death	39
VI The House of Many Mansions	47
VII A Dream in the Quest of God	59
VIII A Garden of Life.	67
IX The Master Comes	75
X The Way of the Waterside	85
XI Food of Heaven	93
XII A Man and Maid	107
XIII Of Spiritual Marriage	121
XIV Priest and Priestess	135
XV A Golden Veil of Doctrine	145
XVI Christ Mystical	159
XVII Within the Veil	165
XVIII Valete	175

The Quest of a Perfect Sleep

SEEKERS of very life, who urge the quest,
 God save and keep you through the waking
 ways :

Hear ye the quest in dream. The soul is call'd
 In every path and can advance in each.
 God compasses His ends in ways of sleep,
 As on death's road, and while from day to day
 Light into dark dissolves, while night in turn
 Dies and is glorified in golden dawn,
 With no line drawn between, no mood of haste
 Or violence : so softly, unawares—
 After the wont of blessings—the sleep-state
 And waking fuse together and transform.
 Each unto each has ministry : the soul
 Is led through both, and those who keep the quest—
 Set round in all the spaces of the heart

8 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

With fires of eager longing—may in sleep
Press on to reach the vision and attain
The Sacred Goal. . . . Can dreams begun therein
Their true translation find in waking terms ?
Where else but in high dream does quest begin—
Asleep and waking ? Or when pass therefrom
But in the quickening and the eyes' keen light
Of compass'd end ?

I look, my God, for Thee
On both sides of the world of life, and Thou
Hast peopled both with auspices, hast flung
Paths open. I have found Thy sacraments—
A daily nourishment—in each. Reverse
All normal orders, Thou forestalling Will :
One quest is ours ; the ardent heart is one.
What care or choice is mine when all is Thou ?
Nay, unto man I testify and Thee
That any phantom change which man calls death
Shall not one moment's space bewray the feet
Which hasten towards Thee. I have known one need
Since first we came together—Thou and I—
With that concurrent flash of certitude
That each was meant for each. The want is Thou.
Need me still, Master, on Thy part as God !
And slumber, waking life, concordant death,
Divided veils—showing another sun
Upon the soul—another mode of search,

THE QUEST OF A PERFECT SLEEP 9

Of questioning the darkness and the light
Until they give Thee up—not these, nor aught
Shall still or satisfy, or turn aside :
I challenge all in Thee, for Thee—the All.

Hear then the Quest in dream, and mark it well :
Sleep has its sacraments, and God pours through.
BEATA MEA through the world of dream
Went up and down in wistful ways of sleep,
And bore the great Pyx or Ciborium,
With meek hands lifted as in sacrifice,
Head as in worship bent. A crowd at times
She fed, with blessed fingers lifting up
Host after Host, pure lips from time to time
Blessing as well. Now some received, their hearts—
Like knees—inclined ; some also bless'd ; and some
Pray'd, in the presence of a mystery.
Some stood with heads erect, aspiring eyes,
Uplifted hands, as into rapture drawn,
Nor knew they well the giver or the gift,
By contemplation hush'd. But other some,
Heart-thankless, wrought with hunger, took and
cursed.
Some cried, upbraiding ; a few turn'd and rent
Their garments, passing into paths aside.
But whether dole or joy, the end was one :
From rapture, recollection or disdain

10 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

They rose, each man and woman going forth
Soul starved—O sorrowful, ungracious task,
BEATA MEA, faring far—alone
And weariful—by wistful ways of sleep.
So moved the normal ministry. But great
And singular were interposed events
Which raised it rarely from those faded grooves
About the spurs of which grey characters
Spelt failure. Issues into other paths
Brought other service, now of dying men,
Stricken by hedges, under trees, in wastes
Of perilous rocks. A scowling sun perchance
Through tempest glared, or an attenuate moon
Whiten'd the mournful spaces. In such hours,
Such places, raising the maim'd presences
On her own knees, she gave of that she bare,
Helping the perishing through to further bourne,
Restoring seldom or to life of earth
In dream-life leading back. So also glades
Gave up thatch'd cottages, sequester'd huts,
Where bread was life to mother or to maid
And child in arms. A nimbus moved about
BEATA'S head in ministry like this—
And hers an angel's visits.

The white Bread
Fail'd not within the Pyx ; but whence it came
She wot not ; how such mournful service fell

THE QUEST OF A PERFECT SLEEP 11

Upon her, or the meaning and the end—
These things were veil'd. Beginning there was none,
Through all her life of dream—nothing but this :
The immemorial spaces of sleep's mind
Held nought beside ; and well, it seem'd, might one
Who found no vestige in the furthest past
Of starting forth come never unto term—
God's pilgrim ever, through an age before,
An endless age behind.

Did God impose
Indeed ? A certain vestige of His will
Seem'd in the tying of that inward yoke,
Which thus constrain'd, and would have made it
light
Had ever dawn of purpose lifted up
Close-brooding clouds of doubt. Her heart therein
Wearied, if not perchance the psychic limbs.
She pass'd a shadow, dream by dream inwoven,
A presence of beauty, sadness in the soul
Chief immanence within, fell want without,
For all the nations in that shadow'd world
Were starved about her. Darkly shrouded end,
Not less perchance all brightness, shall your sun,
Beyond the vision, soaring upward, still
Long questioning with perfect answer ? How
Interpret else that feeling—formless, vague—
Which dwelt within the pilgrim, parted far

12 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

From any stage of certitude, and yet
Suggesting not alone a term of quest
But meaning in the whole to compass path
And origin? Would this be found in dream
Or waking? Question for the heart which reads
BEATA'S story, yet beyond her own
Measures of sleep, unknown as dream by her.
Though elsewhere a diverse part of life
Was surely hers, its images were dim :
While shapes of sleep upon the waking state
Broke in, this other—for the conscious soul—
Sank deeper down.

Now, while her world of dream
BEATA travels, a phantom bearing bread,
God keep the paths of action and God lead
Through paths of vision to a goal of peace.

I SEE Thy morning brighten ;
 Its floods of splendour spread :
O gold beyond the purple
 And green above the red.
All locks and gates flung backward,
 Behind the radiant tide
Thy towers and courts are looming,
 The entrance ways look wide.
When words well'd up within me,
 As one to witness bidden,
My voice declared Thy presence—
 Within the cosmos hidden.
Now in the godly coming
 Of this most gracious day,
Thy rumours throng the threshold
 And not the far away.
In the blessed now and here
Do I behold Thee near ;
And if my earthly seeing
Still veils Thy holy being,
Till other eyes are given,
Of Thee in golden heaven,
When heart of light is open
 And paths to Thee spread wide,
Will I bear faithful witness
 As now at morning-tide.

II

Dream-Nomads

AND QUÆSTOR DEI, Brother of our hearts,
To whom we also wish the end in God,
A second pilgrim in the world of dream—
Though each to each unknown—bore Wine therein,
And up and down the wistful ways of sleep
A Blessed Chalice in his hands held up,
Through sleepways dark and light—most sacred
gift,
He knew not whence, high sign put forth in sleep,
He knew not why. The fabled alkahest
Might so be pour'd, as from another world
On this—high spirit, potent to renew :
Yet craving was not still'd. As she with Bread,
He—darkly mission'd—minister'd in Wine
To multitudes who drank and were athirst.
She was not quench'd who fed the rest, while he
Went famish'd who bore Wine about the world,
And both knew grief, though less for want of theirs

Than service impotent in normal need
 To cruel dearth of many. There were times
 When all his office, all events therein
 Seem'd moving through a world of images,
 Of painted signs which signified in vain
 For lack of life within him. Could he reach
 The hidden meaning, life imparted then
 Might make in very truth the wine he bore
 A saving gift. In grace of other hours—
 Rare visitants, as if from far away—
 He felt that something waited to declare
 Itself, the term exhibit and perchance
 Put end to pilgrim life, from other souls
 Apart.

Two nomads of a realm wherein
 They moved like living symbols, their dream-world
 Itself a show which shows, divided each
 From each, observe among the things they shared
 In common, one enduring miracle :
 The Bread and Wine between them borne and
 served
 Were never wanting. Some unstinted spring
 Renew'd the red juice of the mystic grape
 In holy Chalice, as in holy Pyx
 Was Bread renew'd. Most surely from one source
 Of hidden power or grace in the unseen
 Both came. Now, what shall follow if they be

Foremeant to meet at one or other point—

The man and maid ? When Wine and Bread shall
mix,

Will those who want in any place of dream

Be fill'd and satisfied ? Will clouded term

Strip off its shadows and will eager eyes

Be lighted up with Knowledge ?

Keep them, Lord,

Of secret ways and open. Stand about

The pilgrim-hearts who do Thy strange behests,

Till now uncertain that they come from Thee,

But yet with something of good will, towards Thine

Directed. Present in Thy Wine and Bread

Be Thou, the immanence in all, the life

And meaning. Lo, Thy sacraments abide

In all our paths and grace through them flows in ;

Meet for the measures of our daily needs,

Our powers of true perception. Most of all

We have tried and proved Thy sacro-saintly food,

And unto some a saving door to Thee

Has open'd there. Beyond these ministries

Of Thine, all doors beyond, we look for Thee.

In waking life we hold within our hearts

Thy dream, and after Thee we strive in sleep :

Through dreams and waking aid, to reach our goal.

TILL I can bless with fingers touch'd by Thee,
 Bless Thou my Bread,
And bless the Wine by which I look to be
 Through Thine all-ministering bounty fed.
 In all my ways through earthly days
May food of earth become the food of soul
 And food of souls sustain this earthly frame :
 So under one control
Of sacramental law shall earth and heaven
 Become the same.
 For both one food is given,
 And in Thy Name
For these Thy gifts I praise Thee. But if this
 I can and dare, Thy gifts are less than Thou :
 Send down Thy saving grace. Make sacred now
These hands, O Heart of Hallows, nor alone
 For self in blessing ; but that Food which is
My life of soul to others let me give,
 That they may also live.
Thy valid consecrations by my own
Be in the shadow-types of words foreshown ;
And Thou who art the Giver and the Gift,
 To those who hearts uplift,
 Be Thou made known.

III

A Daughter of Life

BEATA MEA, in the world of men
Was Eva, shorten'd from Evangeline,
As if she bore unspell'd—in hidden life—
Some gospel-message, on a day beyond,
Predestined to awaken in the heart
And well to lips. The maid meanwhile was fair :
Her beauty brought good tidings to a few.
What else I know not, in the morn of youth,
She gave, except an inward shining sense
And virtue of her clean simplicity.
A little, none too plainly, set apart
By orchid-whiteness of her womanhood
Or one great longing—of the soul to learn
And the soul's end—she went about her ways,
The tasks allotted in her father's house.
Still ways, light tasks, made little call at best
On sources seal'd, capacities within,

22 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

To whose own hidden wants that house held none
For ministry—no mother to discern
The roots of need. Her father—kind in heart
Of meaning—dwelt absorb'd, a learned man,
Maker of learned books and known to fame.
By indecisive movements, passing through
His ring-fenced province of material mind,
He felt her famine, but the soul was dream
And the soul's hope for him. Of that and this
He spoke, as one who takes within his thought
A bare, remote hypothesis and turns
One fact about another, to survey
With reason's eye. Detach'd, no light he found,
No life of true concern to that domain
He brought, but wish'd the daughter whom he
prized
In his abstracted way might find ere long
Something of life's realities, perhaps
In wedlock, motherhood, the natural cares
Which cast out vague imaginings. What help
Here for a hungry heart, no stir in his
Towards ghostly aims? Distresses and regrets,
Love even, for his one and lonely girl—
If duly weigh'd—were of a kindly heart,
A little puzzled, and far down amused
A little, but live heart—the letter'd man
Had none to prompt within him. It was well

And pleasant when in too brief hours of ease
She sat, low-stool'd, beside him, shaded light
Casting its lustre, gold among the red
Of the rich auburn hair ; while glowing hearth
Flush'd the fair face with more than normal warmth
Of changing colour. And though no strict sense
Of definite possession, outside his range—
Second to none—of keen, unfruitful thought,
Kept him in actual touch with things without,
There was a mode, quite tacitly implied,
Wherein the notion of her daughterhood,
Of him as father, interlinking both,
Was counted good, however unexpress'd.

So with this slight, yet serviceable bond
They dwelt together and no burden knew
Therein. The void beneath it and the sad
Awareness that she look'd for help in vain
To him, so quietly assumed by her,
So held as granted, these—in mildness kept—
Took on no deep complexion of distress.
Indeed the want and waiting were themselves
As much her natural, foregranted state
As that strange mission in the place of dream,
Accounted always in the waking ways
A something sacred, haunted and remote,
Not to be shared with any.

The clouded term—

By which suspended purpose left the heart
 Emptied therein—gave answer from afar
 To the world-ways of her, for us who see
 That twofold state of life, but not for her,
 Or scarcely. There was lonely doom in both,
 An arrestation and a formless blank,
 The task of doing and of going on,
 Truly a task imposed she knew not why.
 Poor patience proved in each her main support :
 And expectation also, whether more
 In sleep or waking she could hardly tell,
 Nor I convey. That something, near or far,
 Upheld a torch of knowledge in the path
 She felt, and so kept on. All these things shaped
 Her moods and harbour'd certitude—in both
 Her inward states—of being kept apart.
 Reflected ever in the waking ways,
 That undetermined mission of her dreams
 Shut off, she knowing there was none like her
 In all her circle. She had talk'd of sleep,
 Its mystery, of things that came therein,
 And with a certain sacred subtlety
 Had sought in others for a whisper'd hint
 Of kindred happenings, of work and quest,
 But follow'd vainly. There were dreamers round
 About her, but of strange continuance

In vision, meaningful or dark like her,
None ; and the baffled essay, coupled too
With disconcerting questions in return
On why and what, her own experience—
If any—stifled an experiment
Which jeopardized the secret still her own
And not another's, to be shared at will.

So as in all things else, herein she took
The waiting counsel, spelling to herself
Patience. The word was written in her heart :
Patience, not only for the end of quest,
For hidden purpose shaping things within,
For higher knowledge in the normal mind,
But more for that which wore no certain form,
Though all bespoke its presence—need of love.
So 'twixt desire of light and that profound
Necessity of nature which engulfs
Our being—in possession and absence both—
She stood suspended. Now the viewless term
Shaped itself vaguely as of Things Divine
Encompass'd, now as love uplifting life
And glorifying outward things, in truth
A shining towards her from the shrouded end.

But since self-knowledge, not indeed explored,
Though vistas open'd, shew'd her human love

26 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

Asleep within her, stirring in the sleep
And moaning, as if this also dream'd and wept
Frustrated, these twin aspects of the one
Great good, which is all life and earth and heaven,
Work'd in and out and round upon themselves,
Until—reversed in dealings of the mind—
She seem'd to seek the one as if in terms
And symbols of the other, yet attain'd
Neither, so close and yet so far was man,
Though yearn'd for only in the sense of God
Encompassing, indwelling, while how past
All seeing, utterly remote of all
Was all of God.

There is but one thing more
To close these plain memorials of a maid
In outward ways, before her change began.
The Churches drew her and the Mass therein ;
But records in the hand have fail'd to show
When and how often, if indeed at all—
Except in spirit—she received the Food
Of Souls at earthly Altars. It is known
That something mostly hinder'd—as in dream
She who fed others never broke the bread
She bore in Pyx, because her office served
Not to herself but others. Here on earth,
I think, her unfill'd multitudes of sleep
Spelt a regarded lesson, or some fear

Restrain'd her, lest the indrawn thought of
Christ—

The Mystical—should suffer from a rite
Perform'd with partial knowledge, the Bread
here

Want life beyond the element and Wine
Reserve the spirit in its shining veil,
A cover'd mystery. But she made at will,
And often, spiritual communions, cast
In spirit—worshipping—on altar steps,
While kneeling bodily in nave or aisle,
Or reservation chapels seal'd with peace
And still'd with sanctity. From far away—
Distance and greatest distance—to the soul
That long'd—she almost saw the end of quest
And almost tasted spiritual food
Of sweetness, while the palpitating chant
Of great invoking litanies inwraft
Her psychic nature. So at times she lost
The lame unmeaningness of days and dreams,
And on the threshold of a living land
Paused love-inspired. *O Bona Domini,*
Terra viventium. Then the waste itself
Of ill-spell'd dreams and days changed over, took
The grade of life, uplifted in the Breath
Of Life and Spirit—*Terra Exilii,*
Yet also *Bona Domini.*

28 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

So much

The blessed spirit of the quest on earth,
Uplifted to the holy path of heaven,
Gives me to certify of thy life-steps,
BEATA MEA.

A LITTLE while, a little while,
Thou hast placed me—a pilgrim here—
But at first I knew not why,
Because of the heart's idolatry,
Its making of idols, its worshipping.
And yet in the hush of the heart I heard,
Low breathed for ever, one secret word.

A little while, a little while—
Is it long from cloud to clear?—
Then out of the dark and its deeps indrawn
A glimmer, a gleam and a golden dawn
High promise of beauty bring.
From idols fallen and altar broken
I turn'd because of Thy secret token.

A little while, a little while,
Thou wilt gather me hence and steer
Through ways more open, through ways more fair,
Ways that are Thine in the otherwhere,
When the soul its flight shall wing.
But that which is secret, that which is mine,
In the heart of the soul carry I.
It is Thine, it is mine ;
It is mine because it is Thine :
O mystery, meaning and reason why.

IV

A Way in the Waking
World

AND the man whose part—
Unmark'd by each—made answer to her own
Thus closely in a common mystery :
What of his outer ways ? He kept, I know,
Some glimpse of dream-beginnings, or at least
His soul-state pass'd into the waking life,
A sudden dawn of knowledge, on a day
Remember'd well. Behind it spread the time
When conscious life no beacon cast thereon.
But that which fix'd the sovereign fact in mind
Mark'd not an origin in pregnant dream :
As yesterday therein led on to-day
And spoke of morrows, so the past might be
Drawn out unbroken. Leaving clear in thought
No hint of limitation at one end
Or other, possibly pre-natal states

32 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

Held that same theme, and life past earth perchance
No other : so did his experience
Repeat BEATA'S. But this blank of blanks
Reacted ever in the outward ways
Diversely on an eager, restless heart,
Quick with desire, as sudden in resolve,
All ready to rebel but not to wait—
Saving the soul in patience. Hence his name
Of QUÆSTOR DEI, for his life in verse
As fitting symbol chosen. Not to hide
That which counts nothing, poor identity
On earth, it reaches over to express
A sacramental nature, up and down
Strange ways of thought and effort urging fast
And moiling. There turn'd back, it broke up here
Whatever barr'd ; or at an alley's end
Finding no better than a wall's sheer height—
Past scaling—yet unconquer'd, once again
It veer'd and so restarted. Labour wins
Result at last ; the crown descends thereto,
And high desire—upleaping and aflame—
Soars to attain it.

Now, the sleepless heart
Of QUÆSTOR DEI toil'd after truth and God.
Resolve was ever towards the end ; misease
At let and hindrance was the chafe at self
And its preventing chain. Rebellion too

A WAY IN THE WAKING WORLD 33

Withstood no idle postulate of doom
Or God's opposing will, but failing worth
To follow on a call so high, but weak
And errant nature, all within the man
Which miss'd the goal conceived. These, in his
thoughts,

Kept back, these made the warfare of his world
Faint-hearted tactics, he so prone to yield,
Call truce, so tempted towards a shameful peace.
Perchance misdoubt and such reproach made up
The bar erected. In his heart he knew
The quest was follow'd, being part of growth,
And to forestall was foolish in the hope,
Nor came to aught, save new impediment.

So also moods befell, when unawares
The contest ceased : a little while the soul
Reposed as on the open hand of God,
Resign'd and temper'd. Then the strange dream-
life

Display'd its miracle of guidance ; then
Expectant mind foresaw what lay beyond—
Not in clear vision, yet from doubt set free—
As some fair end in knowledge and in light.
Then also QUÆSTOR DEI felt and knew
What place apart he held. He did not need
To sift acquaintance, so to stand assured

34 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

That no man slept himself into a world
Like his. That it must take him in good time
To some unwitting term—here faith came in ;
The high sincerity and truth of God
Involved this and assured. But more than all
He knew dream-life into the waking life
Had brought salvation, brought the note of quest,
Made known that something somewhere in the world
Was waiting, not beyond a strenuous search
And not so much desirable or fair
As very need, meaning and life of being.

For the rest, QUÆSTOR DEI stood unyoked,
Without possessions or prosperity,
Without adversity, or pinch of want,
In a middle and moderate way, some daily bread
Earn'd, nor too hardly—how shall matter not.
Poet he was by virtue of the gift,
Not quite unheeded. A young, earnest man
And student, clean of thought and in his life
Clean, he resolved on God and his own soul's
Unfoldment, rather as a work in God
Than as demanding guerdon, not in fear
Of loss, yet anxious lest he miss the term
And go in darkness who should walk in light.

His past knew other searchings, but the dream

A WAY IN THE WAKING WORLD 35

Had saved him, dawning into consciousness ;
Had once conceived unutterable loss
And found it dwell within him. In his verse
He pictured one who took such loss to heart
As pre-elected to its nameless charge—
For the whole world's salvation. When this theme
Grew first within him, when from more to more
He shaped it, zealous and absorb'd therein,
The thing possess'd him, the thing lived in him—
Subject and self inwoven and inbound.

The more he dwelt upon that darksome tale,
Touch'd and retouch'd the record, not to gild,
Not to adorn with picture-light of words,
But there and here to give the guise of truth
And very seeming, the more it work'd in him,
On him laid hold. A sickness of the mind
Came over him : the imaged life became
His own. In stresses of a final draft,
A last sad conquest in reality,
It seem'd that something which was more than self
Empower'd him to accept the part of doom.
That which his mind had fashion'd and evolved
Cross'd the dim threshold between art and life,
Lodged after as a madness in the brain,
And haunted. Exorcizing power of will
Was baffled. Panic follow'd, then the time

36 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

Of a still frenzy, as he took the dread
Into his heart and nursed it, help'd the growth
Within, consented and was crucified.

The grand climacteric of a single night
Wrote itself—a red fire—in heart and head.
He rent the poem and its fragments knew
Another flame. His witness was himself,
All else flash'd back false seeming, having cast
Self beyond hope apart. To satisfy
Such woe with record were some weak attempt
To comfort that which neither man nor God
Would rest henceforth. But then, another mood :
So great a tragedy of all the worlds
Might well be burnt into a few brief lines,
That man at least might know. And so he wrote,
As one whose stylus in the darkness halts,
Whose hand shakes, shaping an uncertain word,
Or misspells half his message in the night :
Night all, both word and thought, most dreadful night ;
And in the soul that dark on which no dawn
Was look'd to break, world without end prolong'd.

I KNOW that life is Thine and life is Thou,
That life is life, O Lord, for evermore :
Thou the beginning and Thou the end and Thou
The after and before—
That which abides betwixt the here and now,
And there and then.
But death is that which stands from Thee apart
In empty nothingness eternally ;
For Thou art all. Amen.
A Life in life, where'er I move Thou art,
And growth is mine in Thee from more to more :
Shall aught of soul to naught of death respond ?
I am alive in Thee and cannot die,
But pass from star to star, from shore to shore,
In vast of this world and more vast beyond,
Imploring knowledge of my soul in Thee,
Its deeps to penetrate, its heights endow :
Knowledge of Thee in me,
Till Thine in Thee is Thou.

A Tale of Eternal Death

“**T**HE saviour of the unborn worlds to come”—
 So shaped his story of eternal death—

“Renouncing type and parable, speaks once
 And there is henceforth no more prophecy.

“I pledged myself to seek diviner life,
 Flinging the past behind ; with stedfast face,
 Look'd forth on truth ; and one of all the world
 Dared all the heights. Not so the mission came.
 Heights fail'd : upstanding as on peaks of thought,
 Meseem'd the mazes of the mind enwound
 Still, and beyond them was unpeopled void—
 God hidden in the spaces 'twixt the stars
 And more in solar glory deeply veil'd.
 But thought, the darkest curtain, hung between
 Heart and essential being. Self likewise
 Barr'd self from knowledge, open'd gulfs between

Man and that great unmanifest Divine
 Deep-seal'd within him. Paralyse'd I fell
 To night and nothing. In my darkness then—
 Helpless and humbled—the dread mission came.
 It gave me darkness for my place, and hope
 My broken lamp—all purpose miss'd but one.
 As Christ flung back Heaven's gates to all who came
 Believing and embracing, so could I
 Shut up the gates of hell by passing through
 And there abiding, through a work of will,
 Not slave's compulsion. Mine free choice of heart,
 And choice alone could make the mission mine.
 I testify as one who knelt and pray'd,
 In blacker garden than Gethsemane,
 For cup more bitter than was drunk of old
 By Mount of Olives to be taken hence.
 That cup still offer'd unto shrinking lips,
 Nor was mine angel mission'd to console.
 In fine I drank it to the dregs, all pain,
 All wrath accepting in the inmost self,
 That I might bring thee, World, from doom and woe.
 Body and soul into the gulf I cast,
 And fill it : now thou canst not fall therein.
 Hell's House is shut against thee by these hands,
 While from the dolorous place, all hope beyond,
 I peer between the bars, and thee so fair,
 Redeem'd unwittingly, my World, I see.

Account it thou the chiefest test of love
 That though no Word Divine has come to mark
 Such sacrifice as ratified above—
 The mission only from the mind itself
 Unfolded, self-conceived, self-built and last
 Self-taken—I hold God's silence like a word
 Of doom-encompassing consent ; and that
 Accorded, utter dereliction now
 Descends and certifies the offering.
 I cry not—woe is me—with God's strong Son
 That ' Why hast Thou forsaken me ? '—which
 seal'd
 His mission and reveal'd Divinity.
 My passion and the long-drawn life thereof
 Seems more than Golgotha or Calvary,
 For consciousness of Godhead unobscured
 Supported Him ; but I am man alone :
 Nor special strength has nerved, nor man has
 dream'd,
 Nor Nature known.

 “ Here in this testament
 The inspiration which inform'd me once
 At length bereaves me. Now my voice has lost
 Its early ring ; the lightness from this pen
 Has vanish'd : there is lead in every line.
 Without conviction in the weight it drags,
 By every word I wrong the cause I own,

And my poor life which, from this garrulous state
 Apart, might take some touch of the sublime—
 Because it was so secret and so still—
 Counts itself out in folly at the end.

“ Yet must I speak : so only man shall know
 That one unaided, voluntary act
 Has taken to my heart the whole world’s shame,
 Even the unrepented yoke thereof,
 For evermore. Who deems I err herein ?
 Nay, God in fine is mercy and would send
 Some envoy surely of his hierarch-host
 To turn my path, if I deceived myself—
 To scourge me, were I blinded with my pride.
 The unassisted agony wherein
 This soul must keep shall over quickly quench
 All shining spectacles of sacrifice ;
 Yet should I madden past the second death—
 World—could I save thee not. And Thou, O Lord,
 Make this self-ruin grateful in Thy sight,
 But do not let one wrathful shaft of flame,
 From Thine eyes scorch, but for a moment’s space,
 One fibre of man’s being.

“ Man, forgive

This unskill’d harping on the creaking strings
 Of my worn thought. Behold, I pass through life
 Anonymous, unknown, who might have seal’d

Such mission with a gorgeous ministry,
 Sending apostles and disciples forth
 Through all the world, to conquer every heart,
 To bid them cease from evil and so make
 My stripes perchance the fewer. Through pleasant
 paths

Of rose-leaf creed, for all in truth but one,
 Hereafter, haply I had led the earth
 To temple me, so taking full delight
 Of pomp and splendour from the peak of doom,
 Self-poised o'er all in god-pre-eminence.
 I might have met Diana the divine—
 High love—upon a golden night of nights—
 Yea, on some marriage-night of main and sky—
 And in a silent, passion-haunted place,
 On which the stars shed influence benign,
 Where stars and moon concur, have known her grand
 And holy secret. So for this, for all
 Foregone, acquit me when my weakness calls
 On distant pulse of love from those I love
 To travel towards me through the sable voids.
 Trust me, in fine, to hold thee freed. Spare all
 Thou canst of all that hurts me. On my part
 I do repent me not. With heart aflame,
 Here I renew, a meek but stedfast man,
 My godly sacrifice.

“Refulgent light

44 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

Bared in the stormy West—fire-fill'd abyss—
A conscious life assume and hear my pledge.”

So broke the testament, reaching a kind of close
In frenzy. Ave, Poet. He became
His own dread epic ; lived it out in heart ;
Took back, accepted ; and again took back.
So crazing more and more, he spilt himself
Towards death or madness, then was sick to death,
But at the end, by mercy, fell in strange,
Far-haunted sleep. The mission-life of dream
Broke there upon him, an old tale maybe,
Long since rehearsed ; but coming back with him
For the first time into his waking world,
That other dream which long distracted life
Led forth its darksome pageant and went down
Below the mind's horizon.

So it was
With QUÆSTOR DEI, bearing Cup of Dream,
When something flowing over life of earth
Brought on salvation.

I AWOKE in Thy sunlight,
I lived in Thy light :
Very good, very sweet has it been,
For all I have heard and seen
Has been songs and visions of Thee.
In the golden haze or the noon-white blaze
And the violet height of the brooding night
Were images—all of Thee.
I have found Thee, Master of life and Lord :
In all true voices Thy voice alone,
And written on star and stone
Thy sigils of act and word.

May I, who awaken'd to hear and see
The sounds so bless'd and the sights of Thee,
Pass off at length into states more deep,
The finding and keeping of perfect sleep,
And awaken after in Thee.

VI

The House of Many Mansions

A HOUSE of Many Mansions, lifted up,
Arch over arch, wall above wall, with towers
And spires, its portals soaring towards the sky—
An unimaginable vastness—fill'd
The open space, wherein the woodland path
Ceased suddenly. A mist was on the wold
Woven about BEATA, gazing still'd.
A blotted moon, distended in the mist,
Sifted the pallid vapours and infused
A swooning light. The stedfast ways of sleep
Had brought her up all suddenly, unwarn'd,
Against that admirable pile. Between
The parted hedge she look'd, as one transfix'd,
Across the saturated mead's great stretch
And at that mighty vision straight in front,
Keeping the whole horizon. So might one

48 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

Stand startled, stricken, unaccountable,
To some strange star all suddenly transferr'd.
It was a very silent place—Amen—
In a silent world. Whatever breeze or wind
Lived, in the breathing hush'd, had fallen low
And, if it moved, stirr'd stilly wavering.
Whatever life abode in leaf or blade
Was being suspended. In BEATA died
Heart and heart's rhythm. A cold fear at first
Slipp'd through her veins of being. But this pass'd
In wonder, reaching out from its own state
To that of worship. Hence as one in prayer
Clasps hands, to interlock the sense of God,
She raised her Pyx to grasp the sense of height.
And round about that unchased silver vase
The moonlight fell and whiten'd. So stood she,
By grades grown conscious in the secret soul
That—long days over, the rogation weeks
Past—her uncertain and uncounted months,
Telling off years, had attain'd at length
Their whole duration's culminating point,
Till now there loom'd a threshold of the end,
And there should presently be no more veils
But high, intelligible purpose, glass'd
In the great term attain'd.

A patient ghost
Among ghost-dwellers, from a land of ghost

THE HOUSE OF MANY MANSIONS 49

Emerging, all that lay behind her steps—
Of places and durations—seem'd about
To take on vestures of reality,
While she towards something vibrant in the heights
And deeps of being, to the truth and life
Of things moved surely. Now—no longer ghost
Or body of fleshly life, but soul awake—
Or swiftly passing towards the waking state—
She with uplifted arms and bended head,
Crossing the meadow spaces, paused again,
Those roofs and towers above her. That which came—
Here in the closer presence of the House—
Was neither sense of peace welling within
Nor sense-possessing majesty of span
From base to summit, but the measureless,
The abounding possibility of all
In and outside relation to herself.

Of how the great end should its scope affirm,
Or where she was, no intimation came,
Nor conscious need thereof. Unguerdon'd toil,
Lone ways, unprofitable moods of thought
Were over—this, for ever. Was she meant
To cross those precincts? Was it holy ground
Within? Such questions did not leave her mind
Uncertain. Would the mighty doors move back
Unbidden, to admit her, or she wait—

50 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

A silent, watchful postulant—through days
Or moons her summons? Nay, in a good hour
She came, and this was the appointed place.
That which had brought her to a pause without
Look'd now pure worship of a heart set free ;
And worshipping she moved, from step to step
Ascending. Then upon the last, with head
Still bow'd, the vessel in her hands upraised,
In the white flickering of the moon, she pass'd
Within. But whether through an open'd door
Or as pure spirits glide, finding no bar,
Which of us seeks to know, and who shall say ?

Behold BEATA MEA in the House
Of Many Mansions, now received in dream ;
And the good God, Who takes some souls in sleep
But some in waking to their term in Him,
Give her good issue out of dreams and all
Which counts with us for waking, that true life
And its most high fruition be hers in Him.

I know not, ask not, through what halls or aisles
Her heart's dream-images had drawn the maid :
Were such my own adventure, beyond doubt,
The sacraments of sleep would have been clothed
In other vestures : unto each his dream
And unto each its pageantry. But she

In chantry or in chapel, transept, nave—
 It matters little—at due time attain'd
 That which was given to be reached, and so
 A valid moral to the quest of sleep.
 Altar or Table—was it that or this?—
 She stood enwrapp'd on one or other side
 And waited : the oblation of white Bread
 Within the Pyx seem'd light upon the hands
 Which held. A hush'd expectancy possess'd
 Her being, without haste and without search
 Tarrying awhile in very certainty,
 While in the stillness came a very sense
 Of God's most utter wholeness—nothing slipp'd
 Apart or wanting. All her thought within
 Sank gently down into a calm, deep pool
 Of pure mind-being, from vicissitude
 And chequer of complexion perfectly
 Deliver'd—into an embracing state
 Of uttermost awareness. So abide,
 BEATA, Altar and Ciborium
 Have left awhile no image in your heart,
 And there is nothing but the formless, free
 Unmodal certitude of God in all.

What space of time unmeasured in her dream
 Elapsed, I know not. On such side of life
 That mute duration drawn within the self

Was like a contemplation in the heart—
 Unbiass'd by the mark of hours or days.
 But, still inwoven, at a certain point
 It grew within her that the vaulted place
 Encompassing was vastness in the vast
 Of halls and chambers. That which fronted her
 Show'd endless in the shadows, and the moon
 Through some interminable window shone
 Behind her, utterly remote. Thereat
 Her lifted eyes look'd forward, placid-like,
 Aware that having been alone, and long
 Within the measures of her single self,
 Such tide of circumstance was breaking here
 A last wave on the bourne. From what far end
 She knew not, growing into human shape,
 There came a figure which, with shining eyes,
 Held mute communion—not less deep than hers—
 In his own being. Betwixt hands he bore
 A Chalice and drew on as one who moves
 But does not walk. The altar's further side
 Reaching, he paused. Thus did the man and maid
 Confront each other ; so the Pyx and Cup
 Were met together in a Holy Place :
 So QUÆSTOR DEI and BEATA join'd
 Their life in dream.

Another door than hers
 Received him ; by another path he drew

THE HOUSE OF MANY MANSIONS 53

Within that House of Souls. The world of sleep
Which him enfolded on the self-same night
Had shown him hills encompassing, a steep
And rocky way beneath a blending moon ;
And he went down, somewhat as one who toils,
Proceeding slowly—not as yet indeed
Conscious of end, yet hearing in the heart
An unvoiced witness that the mode of dream
Led on to that of vision. In the hope
Hereof, he fared among the hills and crags,
Until at length they stood on either side
Behind him, while in front the mystic House—
Vision indeed—loom'd suddenly across—
It might be—glebe-land in a great expanse.
Now, on this side of it the moon was clear
And the high mastery of the mighty pile
Stood forth, sharp-angled towards the base and lost,
If lost indeed, as spires and pinnacles
Melting in yellow light, with all the depth
Shut off in continuity sublime
Behind.

Hereat the mission'd seeker knew
There came his first great moment of the quest,
And his essential being leap'd within,
As child in womb outreaching into birth.
Thereafter, born into that world unknown,
He cross'd the threshold. Thus, with open eyes

But soul indrawn, at once most surely led
 And self-directing, worshipful, he pass'd
 High precincts, oriels and vaulted rooms,
 An altar reaching at the end, and saw—
 Beneath moon-litten window—that white maid
 Hidden in contemplation and moon-veil
 Of unshaped nimbus.

Whether spoken word
 Or thought's communion follow'd meeting eyes
 Shall matter not. The terms we use on earth
 Are sacraments of interchanging souls
 And thus we know each other—but in part,
 With bars between. If speech seems used in sleep,
 Perchance so only to our waking hours
 Can recollection in the soul convey
 Her messages from spiritual mind
 Through the material brain. Hence all is clothed
 In symbols—thought and love. The modes of speech
 Are emblematic, like the arms' embrace
 And the entrancing meeting of the lips.
 Only in each and all we prove at times
 What unplumb'd wells remain—the unexpress'd
 Within—what fountains and what fires leap up
 Towards manifestation, but to fail therein.
 And then we know, beyond our space and time,
 Past shapes and ways of thought or loving act,
 We also, grafted on reality,

Draw roots of being from the eternal world
 And flow through all things.

She who sank therein

And for the first time found her nature's deeps—

BEATA MEA—to the psychic state

Returning slowly, and he—less withdrawn

But rather vigilant in both his worlds

For living vision as a crown of dreams—

Saw in the half-light each the eyes of each

Resplendent, growing from the human mode

To high-uplifted spiritual states

Wherein the God-ray from the centre pours

Through every bond of being. There and then—

As those who reach a place for rest ordain'd

And find that Eden's bowers are not beyond

The hammer'd pathways of a weary world,

Or those who seek a hostel of the Lord

Through convent-gate and reach a mercy-seat

Shelter'd by wings of cherubim—with one

Accord they set the Chalice down and Pyx.

Then with cross'd arms and interlinking hands

They gave the watchwords of that secret hour

Through inward reading eyes, perchance in speech,

But most by sudden union of the soul,

Far from all jar and shock, as quiet streams

Converge and mingle, where the water-ways

Meet on a level ground.

HOW many Houses in Thy Name are builded
And in the shadow of Thy presence dwell,
By aspiration raised, while faith has welded
The holy stones with craft of holy spell.
But there is one behind them or above
Which is not built of hands or heart of man,
Great Architect thereof Eternal Love,
Who built in wisdom ere the world began.
From this the soul comes forth, to this returns :
About it shines the Presence which is He ;
Abiding Glory in the chancel burns
And blessed hierarchies their Master see.
But past the chancel, past the Holy Place,
As in an All-God dark of dread abyss,
A plenitude of being and of grace,
Lies that most hidden centre which is His.
No forms emerge therefrom, no forms go in,
But that which is not made in me and you,
An inmost root of being, dwells therein,
Gulf-deep, beyond the viewing and the view.
Now this is that from which we are, and by
This does our endless to the endless cleave,
Our spaceless with the unspaced unify.
Seek, and all separating worlds retrieve :
Beyond the silence and beyond the speech,
Seek inward, soul of mine and soul of each.

VII

A Dream in the Quest of God

THE lonely ways

Of long dream-life slipp'd from them silently.
The spacious presages of things to come
Spread vistas widely, peopled far and near
With cohorts of prevision, angel-hosts
Thronging a court of heaven. When something
loosed

All bounds and bonds, they stood as those on whom
The kingship of the spiritual city
Confers its freedom. In such hour the soul
Enlarged its auras, and that moon which look'd
From her far height upon them, with its beams,
Form'd pallid background where each shone to each
In radiant light of beauty. They beheld
Enough of coming things to know that God
And the Divine Ambassadors keep well

60 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

The future ways, shaping them all in love
To perfect ends. Moreover, in the glass—
Clear and bright-shining—of each other's eyes
They look'd and saw some part of that which lay
Behind in their unfathom'd past of things.
Not here and now their primal meeting-point,
Nor in the sleep of far anterior worlds,
Or waking life in elder days of earth,
But in the spirit they had dwelt with God—
Beyond distinctions of the twain and Him—
Together, He alone possessing all
And all in Him: unsearchable unity,
Infinite multiplicity.

So came

The gospel of their eyes and spoke itself
Within their hearts, preach'd from the soul of both,
Received and realized in heart and soul.
The dream had grown to vision: if in sleep,
It was a sleep in God. The eyes of her
Were gates for an expanding universe,
And the whole world was she, desired in God,
In God received—a blessed sacrament,
Image and type of Him. On her own part
BEATA'S wells of being leap'd, and she
Saw God alone in eyes through which she look'd,
God in the cosmic vistas far prolong'd
Beyond their gate, an unescapable,

A DREAM IN THE QUEST OF GOD 61

All-keeping love. And she herself became
No longer loving or of things beloved
But love itself, with God of God therein.

Thus were they open'd and replenish'd thus
Within them. Each to one another given
Forecast not then concerning future lots
And waking life together. They inwove
At root, in essence, knowing that the bond
Was not in holy house or place of dream
Welded, but that which had for ever been,
Though only now discovered. Being fill'd
Themselves, they also saw the end of want
Among the famish'd peoples of their sleep.
So therefore in the Blessed and Holy House
Of Many Mansions, inly moved thereto,
And in a silence both of lips and heart,
They seal'd refreshment and its grace attain'd,
Communicating each to each the Bread
And Wine, so long in separation borne,
But now in union shared. A secret wealth
Hidden in that communion raised for them
Some further gates, sluice-gates of very light,
As if through channels of the outward signs
The life and substance of God's hidden deeps
Flow'd in them and flow'd over and immersed—
A saturation of the Soul with God.

62 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

One moment only they were drown'd therein,
And all the canticles of saints and Kings,
Whom God has visited in fullness, join'd
In clamorous melody. It was good to dwell
In the Lord's House, the beauty of that House
O'er all desired ; to stand within the gates
Of this true Zion ; to sing with golden tongue
The mystery of eternal life in Him,
As blood and body received in body and blood.
They look'd towards that great day when all who
strive

In their poor hearts for God and Things Divine
Shall feel their hearts a cellarage of God
Press'd down, fill'd over, pouring through the streets
Of spiritual cities ; the worldly rich
Left empty, till they also starve, and God
Shall also them replenish.

I have said

One moment—very transport, yet too still
For words of mine. The spirits had dissolved
Together, into God's great dark withdrawn.
But they had far to travel in the soul
And what befell them on one side of life
To reach upon the other. Therefore this
Viaticum of rapture came and went
Flashwise, and never in their life of dream
Did they come bearing Bread and Wine again

A DREAM IN THE QUEST OF GOD 63

To feed each other. At the end of all,
When those who now stand in the Outer Court
Shall cross the Holy Place and after—raised
Towards the Holy of Holies—find the last
Most highest veil, perchance upon their call
Awaiting, they may minister once more
To one another, or the veil itself
Be parted by a ministry behind.
Then God shall draw them through, while other
voice
Than theirs recites the *consummatum est*.

Quantum magnale Dei gaudium:

Come, taste and prove the sweetness of the Lord,
Glory of joy in Him, the King Whose joy
Is to be known in hearts, Who else abides
Unknown, received not in the part of life.
Mayst thou, O Word of all, in all take flesh :
Those which conceive Thee in embodied womb
Of soul and bring Thee forth into their lives
Shall make one flesh together, one heart and soul.
Here are true marriages, my spouse, my love—
BEATA MEA. Consummations here
Are perfect for all life, death and beyond—
O QUÆSTOR DEI, spiritual friend,
Most High Companion of the Holy Quest.
So in one night of sacrament those twain

64 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

Grew one into another : they were known
And knew. Wide openings of the cryptic way
Were made within them and the vistas shone—
World upon world. At that still rapture's end
They stood together, but now side by side,
Bearing the Chalice and Ciborium
For other needs than theirs. The light within
Was light without, fair-flowing through the House.
The Sacred Presence manifest within
Show'd forth another Presence like thereto—
Nay, but the same and self-declared without,
Through all the hallow'd images and veils,
Though not set wholly free from certain clouds,
As might be incense-fumes from thuribles
Or sanctuary chant down nave and aisles
Panting and pouring, muffling for the most
That still, small voice which in the shrouded Pyx
Recites the blessed privities of God.

So much—towards vision in elected hearts—
Of many mansions in the House of God
And chambers of the Presence.

FOR what from me could hide Thee
In worlds without I sought
Who needed none beside Thee ;
But there I met with naught.

With golden tongues for leading
All Nature's glories preach,
And beauty spreads for reading
Her gospels, clear as speech.

Where earths and skies and seas are,
The witness never fails :
Thy revelations these are
And not Thy clouding veils.

I only then conceal Thee :
Strip off this self, and I
Shall unto That reveal Thee
Which not in self can die :

A Thou within my being
Which past all mine and me,
My ways of thought and seeing,
Is I at one with Thee.

VIII

A Garden of Life

BEATA MEA on the search for God
And QUÆSTOR DEI on the self-same quest,
In expectation bless'd and looking forth
Beyond their present measures, from the bonds
Of these, towards ends attain'd and fruit thereof :
Learn how it fared with both in waking ways,
After the dreams and visions of the night
Had open'd their new epoch in the life
Of sleep and dual drama of the soul.

She in sunlitten gardens of the house,
Among the peacocks and fantastic trees—
Uncouthly shaped—at the glad morning-tide,
Before the shining city—far below—
Had waken'd fully ; he from mesh of streets
Emerging on the brimming river's side,
Between the bridges ; ponder'd on the night
And that new gospel of the life of trance

68 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

Which both had shared, though each to each
unknown

In outward ways. One dream-experience
Therein, so also in the aftermath
One thought was kindled in the mind and one
Burnt in the heart of each—the when and where
Of earthly meeting. Somewhere in the world
She lived in flesh, somewhere he dwelt with men.
No common hunger after human love
Made quick that thought. They had not kiss'd in
sleep,

Since deeper ways are open to the soul,
With soul in search of union. Mindful now
Of that which was, no longing in the hearts
Enter'd, but certitude of things to come
Left therewithin a hundred doubts unsolved
On what must follow meeting. Would their ways
Be cast henceforth together? Nay, not this—
Too pressured already. Would those twain
Grow one in waking life? And nay, not that :
No earthly life divides what sleep makes one
When soul in vision is deeply bound with soul.
But wheresoever such foreseen event
Should cross the threshold of their circumstance,
Would those great wells which they had sounded once
Unseal again? Would past and future fling
Gates open to the future and the past?

Would they see farther back and yet more far
Before them in the Mystery of God ?
They could not meet within the common bonds
Of strangers : that was certain. Yet perchance
The things within might cast on those without
Pale reflex only, from true life apart
And its unplumb'd reality. Perchance
It must be so, for on the side of sleep
Abode henceforth the very truth of truth,
The constant light of light ; but here, like shades
Or aspens, flicker'd on the waking side
All painted images of things without.
At most on this the omens moved and shone,
But there the great moralities. So sign
And signified, in this the aftermath,
Stood parted clearly on confronting banks
Of being.

Better in his heart he knew
Than haply she that this was mood alone—
And fleeting. Presently the focus lost
Would find itself, the shifted balance turn,
Adjust and compensate. For both no less
The speculation issued and the doubt,
Bearing their saving clauses at the end,
Since—howsoever it might prove at first—
Not on one only side of life there dwells
Reality, and not on one the soul

Attains. The gates would open here as there,
 The deeps unseal ; and late or soon the twain
 Should know each other, as in sleep they knew—
 At one, and thus for ever. Granted this
 For utter certainty, and passing hence
 Unchallenged, there remain'd on either side
 A certain failing of the heart in face
 Of such foregone encounter, for the how
 Of its beginning, for grey common light
 Which might encompass, those first banal words
 Of greeting, that first obvious wonderment,
 For all the limits of mere earthly eyes,
 Slow growth in learning one another's ways,
 Status, pursuits, diurnal interests.

What if at first those twain, so near in soul
 And fill'd with mission when the inward world
 Was lifting veils from off its infinite,
 Should in the manifest body and life to each
 Prove scarcely possible ? What if meeting's doom
 Came on them at a corner of the streets,
 In hurry and drive of rain, draggled and drench'd ?
 His more than hers this special pictured dread ;
 But she had pictures. Setting those which bless'd
 To cancel those which tortured, she lived down
 The spaces of suspense, and he at last
 Discharged all images and look'd towards sleep.

But this fail'd both : an utter blank in dream
Had follow'd after that revealing night,
Till they remember'd that the leaves of life
In sleep turn'd slowly, discontinuous,
Though nought seem'd miss'd, while any will of
 theirs
For nothing counted.

I HAVE lived among the symbols
Of Thy great dramas long ;
The pomp of Thy pontificals
About me moves in song.

Thine Art sends forth its tidings
In all the play-scenes round me ;
Its grace uplifting Nature
To her World-Rites has bound me.

Give me High Grades for ever,
All parts in Thy masques to try,
More and yet more of Thy pageants,
Their meaning and mastery.

IX

The Master Comes

WHEN a week had pass'd,
As earthly air of old at times gave up
Some blessed spirit in the guise of man,
Or—when all doors were shut—the risen Christ
Stood in an upper room, invoking peace
On true disciples, so life's native mode
And daily sequence to BEATA gave
One unto her as Master—not that man
Of vision with the chalice in his hands,
Knowing and known in unity. Some two
Or three mere shadows in the life of her—
Met there or here, at lecture or at home—
Brought them together, from design apart,
And something in the white-hair'd, travell'd man
Had drawn her father. So at the right time,
In the right way, by manifest design
Untinged, he came who saw and knew within.
Perhaps with open knowledge of her life

76 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

In dream he came : she told him naught thereon.
His silence notwithstanding, something spoke
Within her and bore witness to the heart
That neither waking life nor life of sleep
Were hidden from his inward eyes. She felt
Unveil'd before him who was veil'd to her,
Though not indeed as one who vests himself
In mystery, or willingly shuts fast
The doors of secret spirit or of mind.

He seem'd uplifted in the height of things,
Beyond all common vision, into rest
Of knowledge and possession in the still
And active centre. She had seen the soul
As one who on the threshold of a world
Looks down its vistas. He abode therein
And came not therefore with the types and signs
Of outward sacraments, in bread and wine ;
As any spokesman of a church or creed,
Of any system warranted by man ;
As bearing seals of mission, set on that
Or this—in high hypothesis—by God.
His the authority of very life,
Which makes no claim, but is and is confess'd.
The fountain-springs of self-hood and its notes
Were missing, and the impression so produced
Was not of one who has effaced the self

But, in the measures of a wider world
Increased, has come into a higher state,
Another heritage, a cosmic mode.
Being that she was, no special words of his
BEATA needed to communicate
This and things deeper than such terms convey.
His presence and its quality of life
Awaken'd. As the incense in the church
Entrances sense and thus the thurible,
Amidst the blessed fragrance over aisles
And nave, is counted nothing but goes by
Unheeded, so the Master as a man
Of flesh was in the nowhere and the naught
For her, but all—in silence or in speech—
The life-evoking quality of life
Which dwelt about him and for her was he.
Moreover, on his lips our common words
Took on another vesture. Had he talk'd
Pure trifles, idly as an old man might,
Or blended things which pass with things that stay
And matter, lest a woman in her youth,
Just raised from girlhood, find it hard to stand
In thought at full attention, still his words—
To her at least and others tuned like her—
With life vibrating, would have pass'd life on
And with deep modes of music stirr'd deep chords
Of very soul within.

A word indeed,

But one sufficed, wherever God's great Name
 Was utter'd, for there flash'd through him to her
 Light plenary from infinite of things,
 As if it had been spoken from the heart
 Of Heaven. The path, the end of all her quest
 Were voiced therein. She felt the sacrament
 Of simple words, and the dry bones of speech
 Lived, moved: so utter'd in the depths of her
 They traversed all her galleries and crypts.
 She answer'd from the soul in sympathy
 Of understanding love—at times with lips,
 More often in that silence of the mind
 Which answers fully through the speaking eyes.
 So learn'd she and so grew. He spoke at times
 Of Hidden Mysteries in Holy Church.
 Then all distinctions between Church and World
 Were brought to nothing ; there was unity
 Of Grace and Nature, being Grace in all ;
 And this was Nature raised upon the heights
 Of holiness. On woman and on man
 He spoke, and there was oneness in the depth
 And height of consecrate humanity,
Sub specie amoris—so alone—
 Regarded : all was kingship and high light
 In the great vistas opening before
 And round them. It recall'd that vision-state

When her soul open'd and the soul of him
Who stood upon the farther altar-side,
While far beyond that prefatory state
Lay other worlds of union, here reveal'd
To mind alone. And she remember'd too
That at the close of such high change in sleep—
She knew not how—the altar interposed
No longer ; but they, standing side by side,
Prepared upon a predetermined path
To take their course and so perchance exchange
A state of soul far looking into soul
For two in one abiding self-immersed.

Observe, her Master never chose a theme
As one with office to discourse thereon,
Nor ever spoke as teacher. That and this
Of each high subject out of this and that,
Among the seeming accidents of things,
Issued, and self-presented unawares
Became their theme, which heaven-born wisdom's art
Seal'd with great Nature's own simplicity.

Music of words which subtly work'd their spell
Outside all conscious knowledge or intent,
And silence after as at end of song :
I know not which gave most, but both had light
And warmth of teaching for the need she had,

While her responding nature lifted up
 And—as a tree of many roses draws
 The life-increasing dew—drew springs of speech
 Within, or sheen of subtle silences,
 As rose from golden sun derives at once
 Beauty and nutriment. So too, as this
 Gives forth a royal fragrance in return,
 She radiated quick with sympathy,
 True understanding, answers from the heart.
 Thus was there antiphon and fair response
 Continually between them, and behind
 The outward Church of Nature and of Grace
 She pass'd in spirit to the Church within,
 And through such incense of the Master's words
 Beheld the Blessed Mystery of all
 Inward experience taking outward form.
 The *Sacramentum ineffabile*,
 The Holy Graal upheld by priestly hands
 Shone out dilucid over altar height.

But afterwards alone, in worship rapt
 And ravish'd, reverent over radiant Cup
 Bent the adoring face of him who stood
 Before her in the many-mansion'd House,
 While she, Pyx-Bearer, held on virgin breast
 The great white secret which is Bread of Life.
 This aspect ceased. Thereafter, side by side

Standing, the sacred vessels glow'd in light
Together. Then a little while, and then
One vessel only, which was Pyx and Cup,
Till this dissolved, and Christ between them stood
One moment's space. *Valete*, time and life,
All separate sense of being and of thought ;
But that which was and is and is to come
Abode alone in them and they therein—
Eternal Life in Christ.

But thence return'd
Within the normal measures of our life,
BEATA MEA, by the reasoning mind,
Discern'd in part and very far away
That in some sense to be hereafter known
Her nature answer'd to the Bread she bare
And must be changed into the Bread of Life,
While he—brought strangely into worlds of dream—
Stood in some deep relation to the Cup
He carried and must suffer change himself,
Till that which answer'd to its wine became
The Wine of Life, Blessed and Holy Graal.

THY Word is buried in the heart of man,
Below the life of sense :

Of all creation Thou art life and plan,
The essence and the immanence.

But, ah, for us the hidden Godhead sleeps
In cosmic Nature and is veiled in ours,
Till something calls it from unsounded deeps
To rise within us and unfold its powers.

Then shall great Nature stir
And putting sleep for us away from her
Shall also wake.

How shall that morning break ?

O not in East or West alone
And not from here or there :
At once and everywhere

The Christ Who comes within is seen and known,
The Voice of Life is heard,
Life of all life and Word.

O admirable Presence, Voice Divine,
Thy world is ours and mine ;
And to Thy light, transfigured, shall respond
In light the worlds without us and beyond.

The Way of the Waterside

BEYOND the city, by the South and West,
 Far over fields and meadows, heath and down,
 By stream and fell, in recollected thought
 Fared QUÆSTOR DEI, at the quiet end
 Of this same week wherein the dream of sleep
 Had grown for him to vision ; and he kept
 That sacred vision and the maid thereof
 Companions chosen of the peaceful way.
 All omens, portents of the natural world
 And all the gracious lesser outward signs
 Gave up their meanings in the sense of hopes
 Which overflow'd him from the world within,
 While the two worlds, reacting each on each,
 Found both enlarge their borders. So there came
 A certain hallow'd noon, when leafy ways
 Of woodland labyrinths melted in the light,
 And the light sifted through a thousand sprigs
 And branches, moving subtly overhead,

86 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

Round and about was like a Pentecost,
With little tongues of fire in open spots
Moving and murmuring on the edge of speech.

There—unaccountable, unsought, unknown—
At the fence-side, over against a stile
Which gave on level meads, the meads on brook
Below, the brook upon a hamlet—drawn
About its little ancient church—it fell
That QUÆSTOR DEI and the Master met.

What profit—were it possible—to say
How rose the flimsy veils which first divide
Two strangers, predetermined each on each
To interact? The upward-pointing spire
Seen in the distance, or the slipping burn
Between its bridges, yea, the ravish'd scream
Of lark—song-bursting—hidden in the high
Glory of light—these three or one of these
Could break the bar, could lift so light a yoke
Of silence. Howsoever, in a space
More brief than that which intervened unmark'd
Between the hour and quarter of the old
Church clock, all bonds were melted, and the heart
Of QUÆSTOR DEI to the Master's heart
Was open'd. Here again no word of sleep,
With its strange pageants; and the poet kept—

As one whose inmost issues not in words
Even at deep communion, soul to soul—
His tale of agony and endless death
Buried in wells of silence. Might perchance
Recital bring that phantom back to life ?
Or was it dead so utterly that words
Could scarce evoke the images ? I know
They spoke of symbols and their work in sleep,
Meanings behind them, parables of dream,
Of dreams which lead to vision, but apart
From any vestige of the self therein
On either side of its experience.

For certain days the leading, so begun,
Continued there and here, as seeming chance
Gave out the ways and means. And whatso'er
The Master knew of those two inward lives,
He led the other as He led the one
To one same point, which was the Holy Graal
In manifested aspects and in deeps
Withdrawn of hidden meaning. Do I need
To say that both into the heart of heart
Received his message, ponder'd thereupon
And treasured ? That which had been long remote,
Some matter of romance—and heard perchance
At second hand, or scarcely heard at all—
Began to live within them and unfold

88 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

As light upon familiar ways of sleep.
In part to her who bore the mystic Pyx
There came its message on the verso page
Of life ; more fully he beheld who served
The Cup in sleep ; but both beheld and read.
So in the light of late experience,
When Pyx and Cup, the woman and the man,
Were brought together, it seem'd—for their two
lives—

The Holy Graal was going up and down
The world, as once it went in Arthur's days.

Was it a finding of the Graal for them,
The second advent of the Wounded King,
Himself made whole and bringing healing back
To a wounded world ? On many songs to come
The poet dwelt in mind. In mind and heart—
But more and deeper in the secret heart—
BEATA dwelt on life and thought and love,
Hidden within the Hallows of the Cup,
But most upon that moment of the Mass
When priestly hands divide the Sacred Host
And in the consecrated Wine there slips
And sinks one particle of Living Bread.

As if meanwhile his modest part were done
In this first act, the Faithful Master moved

Aside, and in a while the act fulfill'd
Itself. A silent interlude ensued,
And then this drama of a double life
Reopen'd suddenly on wider scenes.

A STAR was mine, and on its throne—
In kingly state, to earth unknown—
I ruled star-nations far and wide,
As one who has been deified.
Thou wast not there : too far behind
The compass of my regal state,
I could not hear Thy voice or find
From mine to Thine an open gate.
In chapel, fane and minster fair
Thine altars blazed with flowers and light ;
Thine images were everywhere,
Thy worship sounded day and night :
Thou wast not there, Thou wast not there.
A star on earth or star in heaven,
What boots it if all stars be given,
So clouds Thy face of beauty hide ?
What boots a crown, and Thou denied ?
My throne is vacant and my star
Is left where other signets are :
If Thou be with me, all is mine,
But all is naught till all is Thine ;
If Thou be absent, well-a-day,
Stars will not help me on my way.
Better to wait in weeds for Thee
Than rule, a Lord of earth and sea,
Apart from Thee, apart from Thee.

Food of Heaven

THEY pass'd again into the sleep of dream
And vision ; and again they met therein.
A certain consciousness of time elapsed
Was with them, never realized before,
Elusive now, no break in the events
Suggesting, rather some subsurface law
Which interlink'd them on both sides of life
And mark'd one sequence. The next stage of sleep
Would issue therefore from the waking stage
Of being and henceforward lead in turn
Through some assembly of external things
To follow on. But now it came no more—
Did it come ever—with a sense of doom
Unfolding and of actors used therein
As doll's house manikins. Their human will
Had all at once been married to an end
And purpose which in every process spoke
Of Higher Will, shaping with those who shaped

On their own part. O sacred interchange
 By which through all the ages of the world
 The partnership of God and man directs
 The great redeeming work. So souls are led.
 So souls obtaining knowledge of themselves
 Look back from their attainments and confess
 They could not choose but coincide and lead
 Their nature-wills to that most perfect point
 When they henceforth are taken. Yet the choice
 Was theirs, as driven by themselves in love,
 Not God-compell'd, Who yet compels by love ;
 For working with the whole is love's constraint
 And an ineffable freedom, love-insured.

Thus are we loosen'd always in the great
 High things of being and are bound alone
 In law of trifles. God and His good ends
 Are reach'd in liberty ; the lesser self
 Spins ropes, makes rivets, forges heavy chains
 To yoke itself, and perishes therein.
 Yet from that body of death may the live self
 Rise up to vindicate the race thereof,
 The freedom and the royalty in God.

The SEEKER-POET and BEATA moved
 Amidst the many mansions of the House,
 And there was morning in the world without
 Its portals. As upon the moon of soul

The self-source light of spirit on a day
Arises and the soul dissolves therein,
To dwell henceforward in the Sun of Christ,
So pass'd for them that quiet moon of dream
Which through the windows of the House had look'd
When soul for soul had lifted veils and thrown
The gates wide open. Morning gold and red
Emblazon'd all the East ; and the Sun rose.
It seem'd to both as if that blessed light
Had never shone before on their dream-world.
Dark under stars at times, at others glow'd
The portent of a red unradiant moon,
Low-stooping towards the West, while in the day
Dank vapours blotted out the vault above,
Or at the most the dim light through the clouds
Gloom'd, and perchance—flung through a jagged
patch—
Might slantwise fall some transitory gleam.

Now it was light ineffable and now
Glory of living freshness, glory of pearl,
Of rose and amethyst, a second birth
Of Nature. Now the Many Mansion'd House
Received the light without and gave it back
From plinth and pilaster and arch and wall,
While evermore its depths, from space to space,
Open'd, with domes, with chapels and with naves—

An endless Temple. But the Holy Place,
 At the imputed East far and away,
 Behind a rood-screen and the shining woof
 Of a golden curtain, from the vaulted height
 To base extended, heal'd its mysteries.

There pour'd forth only an enkindling sense
 Of presences ; and within, behind, above
 That first suggestion, something undeclared,
 August and dreadful loom'd. Thereat the heart
 Still'd beatings and the offices of thought
 Broke on the threshold. Was it of the One
 Spirit, withdrawn upon Itself, which gives
 Their life to hierarchies whose cohorts fill
 The courts, the palaces, the jewell'd streets
 Of Zion ? Were they facing unawares
 A porch of still eternity, or well
 Of infinite being, God-head self-immersed,
 Which in the spirit-body of the House
 Gave notions of immeasurable range ?
 For those who moved in the soul-part of them
 Through aisle or nave, back from the Golden Veil
 Self-press'd, were conscious not of awe alone,
 Or that which lies too deep for ghostly dread—
 But distance past all travel.

So it was
 With QUÆSTOR DEI and BEATA, brought

Through many precincts into mighty aisle,
From aisle to nave. The Presence put them back,
Till as from star to star the distance show'd
Between them and the curtain's blazon'd screen
Of glittering cloud. What awful Mercy-seat
Was fix'd behind and through that gorgeous veil
Pour'd rays from GLORIA INHABITANS ?
And would that veil at some determined point
Of their advancement open to admit
Their introgession from the Holy Place
Into the utter Adytum, Holiest
Among the Holies ?

Where a window sprang
From base to height, the risen Sun, above
Pale vapours, and with never lightest cloud
Throughout the welkin, pour'd upon them—there
Kneeling—regenerate glory of its own
And clothed and crown'd them. For a moment, thus
Transform'd, it fell upon the Pyx and Cup,
And there and then, beyond the Golden Veil,
The glory that was ineffable within
Sent down a shaft ineffable and caught
These vessels in the network of the light,
Whereat within the metal began to move
A life which never in the dream before
Had stirr'd and trembled. So the priest—sublimed
In sanctity—on Bread and Wine invokes

98 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

The life of Christ, the body and the blood,
And life is there.

The Bearers bow'd their heads
And all was heaven within them for a space,
By thought indrawn. The Bearers rose and stood,
Midwise in nave, while unseen thuribles
Swung round about them, filling the still air
With other incense than ascends on earth,
And in the centre of those hallow'd fumes
Yet sweeter fragrance—not of incense burnt
In heaven or earth—past psychic senses stole,
Till it was with them, for a moment's space,
As when the spirit is alone with God,
In God's great rapture. Incense, solar light,
The golden glory of the Veil, the House
Of Many Mansions in that space dissolved,
And there was neither earth nor very heaven,
But only God ; while ravish'd, out of self,
In the love-state of being, they beheld
And were and realized in Him alone—
As love that is, and is alone and one.
So was it, till the glory was withdrawn
Behind the Veil ; but this remain'd to shine
With its own splendour, and the blessed sun,
In the salvation of its natural light.
An inward impulse brought the Bearers back
To conscious presence in the Holy House,

Their rapture done : an inner impulse turn'd
Their faces westward. Where the distance—vast
But not beyond our measures—shadow'd forth
A western wall, the Portal of the House
And all its miracle of stone and wood,
Of carvings and of images, they saw
Looming—uncertain, wonderful. With Cup
And Pyx upraised, that impulse prompted still
The Bearers. Passing through the medial space,
The Portal's majesty of breadth and height,
Line upon line of symbol and of saint—
Known and unknown—high messages in words
Heart-flaming, doctrine of all hidden life,
Maxims and mastery of sentences,
Held eyes and mind, their very heart of heart
In homage. So it was a worshipful
Space as of well-deep stillness, whereupon
There supervened a state of hush'd, alert
Expectancy—not silence, for they felt
All chords vibrate within them. New event
Stirr'd on the threshold, and its rumours woke
An answer from their inmost. Not a word
Was utter'd or was needed, for the flash
Of understanding—as through lambent eyes—
From each to each spoke eloquently. Pyx
And Cup yet farther in the shade and light
Were lifted, while the mode and mien of each,

High in the act exalted, swept from grade
 To grade of recollection, reverence,
 Devotion : this to adoration grew,
 Then love—beginning at the human best,
 But afterwards transumed, it shone divine.
 God's love was in their faces and God's work
 Inspired them.

Now they paused, nor scarcely knew
 Of waiting, till the gracious thing to come,
 As crossing threshold, on the actual
 Emerged. Nor slowly, nor with strident haste
 Slipp'd back the Portal's mighty double leaves ;
 And moving forward—still as those enwrapp'd—
 Erect between the pillars of the House
 The Bearers stood, like vested priests prepared
 For ministry. About the courts and steps
 Of that immeasurable edifice,
 A multitude of women and of men
 Crowded and sway'd : and still the old, old want
 Was scored upon their faces. But whereas
 That which all recently befell within
 Had alter'd aspects in the ways without,
 Something had enter'd in those wither'd hearts
 And expectation now exceeded want.
 Sun-clarity and sheen, with every mark
 Of life abounding and world's weal therein,
 Warm'd also these, enlighten'd and bestirr'd

Unwonted pulses, as of ends declared,
Great new beginnings.

So when those vast doors
Reveal'd the overwhelming nave within,
Whilst the gold curtain's glory glow'd and gleam'd
Where eye could scarcely follow in the far,
An universal sobbing of tremulous hope
And prayer of pent distress went up and down
The concourse. Hush'd into an undertone,
There stirr'd some currents of dead hopes re-born,
Of wonder and desire engirt with awe,
And loosed bonds slipp'd. For which of all had
seen

That Temple in old dim-light of the world ?
If any, which of them in gloom of night
Or day, had come upon its Portal cast
Open before them, and had look'd therein ?

Those Bearers truly through the sad grey land
Had moved and minister'd ; but now they stood
Thus, in the nimbus of an aureate light
Transfigured, and the vessels in their hands
Not only gave back glory shining round
But were made quick with splendour of their own—
Subtle, innate and spiritual. Thus
It came about that, prompted suddenly—
As one together—upon bended knees

That congregation fell ; and the great work
 For QUÆSTOR DEI and BEATA there
 And then began. In rapture and in trance
 Of ministry, communicating and themselves
 Receiving, over and above all signs
 Of sacraments, on the morning of that day—
 Out of all days taken and set apart—
 They fed five thousand in the wilderness
 Of morning glory, as with Living Bread
 And Wine of Being.

The partakers there
 Had very sustenance, to heart's content :
 So was there want no longer in that world,
 And a deep sense of God within the soul
 Was felt abiding. They arose in light
 Of innermost refreshment. The old scales
 Fell from their eyes, so that for these—as those
 Who minister'd—that wilderness whereon
 Such Day-Star broke was seen as Paradise ;
 And a TE DEUM never sung on earth
 Peal'd forth triumphant on the lips of all—
 The gratitude, the knowledge and the joy
 Of such as find that God in very truth
 Dwells with His people.

At the end hereof
 The House of Many Mansions—in its depth
 Of light and grace—received the Bearers back.

The Portals, with a blessing for the world,
Closed on them in a worshipful melody
Of motion ; and the conclave thereupon
Was scatter'd on its proper paths and ways.
Each man and woman, to their call in life
Returning, realized the call of God
Therein, so therefore went about His will
And work in peace of the concurring heart.
Peace in the cottage, peace in hall and keep,
The grace of union and the bliss thereof :
O Rose and Lily of that new morning tide,
Feast of the Substance and the Life Divine.
When each partaker had that joy which most
He long'd for served from a most plenteous dish,
Truly the Holy Graal about the world
Was moving, and the end of perilous times,
Of hard adventure, of the want of man,
Had dawn'd, for man was satisfied in God.

So QUÆSTOR DEI and BEATA fed
Their famish'd multitude in a wilderness.

A VISION in the night
Of a place that is far away,
On a certain sacred height
Which few can gain : in a secret fane
At the gospel-side
Of an altar strangely bless'd
An open Mass-Book lay.
Till I knew them over and over, again, again
I have read the words therein ;
And now in this aureate Easter morning tide—
Praise God—I have brought them back from the farther side.
They are words of peace and light ;
All other words above, they are words of love :
They are sacred words of rest.
Who knows my art ? Who knows ?
An altar of repose
I have made in the heart within.
O Sacred Host, O Wine and Bread,
Those secret things in the heart are said,
And where no foot of man has trod
I have learn'd how to look for God.

A Man and Maid

NOT in the secret paths, or sacred house,
Built up by hands of men, or any place
Far from the busy turmoil and its haunts ;
But just within the free-born country-side,
Rich in a light of summer afternoon,
Among the trees and where a simple stream
Slipp'd through its edges of green herb and grass,
The Blessed Master brought the Man and Maid
Together, and between them took his seat.
No regnant epoch in the life of two
Began more simply. Any story told
Of human lovers, meeting once and then
Inbound for ever, might have found its place
In such a setting. Was his art perchance
For this the greater ? If indeed he knew
The secret working of the heart in each
And all the deep misgiving gather'd round
This first encounter of the twain in flesh,

No words betray'd the knowledge, and no words
Did homage to conventions of the world
When they were set together face to face.
How did he shape the normal chance of things
To make them meet? The woman by his side
Was seated haply, or on clover turf
Knelt, as she often did, with her clasp'd hands
Across his knees. Thereafter came the man,
Parting the leafy vintage from behind,
Or down some path's declivity—betwixt
The beech and birch. Some accidents of great
Events stand round them unobserved, and love—
Amidst the epochs in the life of love—
Retains not all the images of that
And this about it. Whether therefore these
Keepers of sacred love within the soul—
And some abysses of experience
Beyond the compass of the name of love
In this our region of similitude—
Did in their hearts preserve the lesser things
Of that deep searching moment, who shall tell?
Not I at least, nor what was firstly said
By him who sat between them. This I know :
On their own part the silence held them each,
But granted such a meeting of true eyes
As spoke more potently than words of earth
On recognition, knowledge held within

And mysteries of being elsewhere
Which each had shared in each.

As these flared up

They made a sudden glory of mien and face,
While all suspicions of the faithless past
Fell from their present blessing and no wrack
Of recollection left. It came about,
In high simplicity which seals both worlds,
That—as perchance across the Master's knees—
The hands of each stretch'd over and were clasp'd,
And with a worshipful purity of mouth
They kiss'd each other under the blue sky,
In Nature's happy sunlight. Then it seem'd
That fountain-melodies of hidden birds
Were sprinkling all the spaces, though in truth
They heard them not till coming back to life
Of open senses. So on either side
Of that Wise Master who had shaped their ends
They kept, in silence still, and heard His voice
As if within the singing of the birds,
Like tongues of grace which give to Nature's tones
Another life and meaning.

Surely both

Had learn'd already in divided ways,
On his wise part, that which had seem'd to each
Raised up from wells of wisdom lying deep
Within his holy undiscover'd world

Of being. As great poets speak in song
 And unmistakable authority
 Of inspiration so compels mankind,
 It cannot choose but hear, and having heard
 Does not alone with clamour of the heart
 Make answer, but the very heart of some
 Seems speaking in the music and the words,
 Until the poet's messages become
 A part of life and ready on the lips
 Are pass'd for evermore from mouth to mouth :
 So QUÆSTOR DEI and BEATA heard
 Of old, with every pulse arrested, then
 With pulses quicken'd, then with far prolong'd
 Heart beatings, then with stillness of the heart,
 And finally with fully waken'd soul,
 Responding both in silence and in speech,
 And from the midmost and the very ends
 Of their two natures filling with the light
 Of understanding, as all heaven and earth
 Are fill'd with light at noon.

This for the past,

This for its sever'd ways, for dowers therein.
 But in the present linking of their lives
 It was as though some intervening bar,
 Unnoticed, had been raised. They knew not how,
 They knew not what : this only standing forth—
 That something potent here unloosed and freed

The Master's tongue, Who spoke as never yet
He spoke to either in divided days—
From such deep places of experience.

He might have lifted up anointed hands
At that great Altar's eastern end, when they
Stood looking towards each other in the House
Of Many Mansions ; might have moved between
The Bearers passing down the Temple's nave
To feed the hungry in the wilderness.
What other House—or so it seem'd to them—
But that which vision had reveal'd and led
Their souls within, was limn'd by burning words,
He speaking of the hidden head and font
Of spiritual mysteries, a House
Not made with hands, a Temple whence the grace
And knowledge flow to sanctify the world
In and by Christ, the Spirit and the Man,
The Immanent Divinity shown forth
In human nature ? Known by many names,
Far up and down the ages and the world,
Its echoes and reflections of the life
Divinely hidden in the heart of God
Had spread. House of the Spirit, Hidden Church,
The School of Heaven and Brotherhood elect :
Therein abides the Christ Who once on earth
Was Chief and Crown of all the Messengers.

The earthly Master, hail'd in heart as such
 By both his hearers, though no claim of his
 Assumed the title, though he pass'd indeed
 On many missions bearing a plain name—
 That witness testified concerning Him
 Who still is Master here on earth, in heaven
 And in the underworld, for those who call
 On His great Name, and for all chosen souls
 Under the ægis of the Christian world.
 House, Palace, Temple, howsoever styled,
 The Sanctuary of His Presence, when He walks—
 Seen or unseen, but ever seen in heart—
 Amidst the Blessed Company and School
 Is that most sacred source of valid grace
 Which flows through all the Sacraments of Grace
 And Nature.

Thus with power the Master spoke
 As one proficient in the secret things
 Of high communication and the modes
 By which the world derives not only life
 But sustenance. To two of all that world
 The timeless certitude behind such words
 Gave what the message, of this power deprived,
 Could not itself impart, the seal of one
 Who from the centre of experience
 Came forth to witness, who had dwelt within
 That hidden Temple, realized and shared

The presence of that Immanence Divine
Which is the core of this created world.

After a space wherein the stillness seem'd
Like Nature sleeping in the arms of God,
Or like the calm activity of God
Within the sacramental veil of things
Made manifest—so that his hearers touch'd,
For that brief moment in their waking state
The vibrant centre of essential life—
Again the Blessed Master spoke and said :

“ Beyond that Temple there is unity,
And Thou and I, changed over from this mode
Of being which abides in self of self,
Are henceforth bosom'd in the self of God,
Know Him, and are deliver'd from the bond
Of our own knowing. He is All in all,
And we in Him, no more from all apart,
Are integrated with the whole in all.
The world's great joy is with us and within,
While our self-joy is in the mighty world.
Here is the true theopathy of rest
And here the true activity, at once
' Divine event ' and that which works thereto,
And—being raised—uplifts the lesser things,

With all that in creation moves to reach
 Beatitude, perfection, mastery.
 So come we at the end into our own
 And this receives us."

On his hearers fell
 Another stillness, as of inward soul.
 The Master's voice had died, or if He spoke
 They knew not. The enlightening word became
 The silence, but the light therein shone out,
 Dissolving and transfiguring. All stir
 Of Nature fell away in one last chord,
 And this was hush'd. Ineffably those twain
 Were pour'd together ; each became in each
 One ens transcendant. They were poised therein
 Almost across the threshold of a state
 Which was but prefaced in the Holy House.
 Great issue of an instant from the known
 Of being's aspects, in such flash of time
 That pass'd which was not of itself contain'd
 In measures of duration.

Then the tones
 Of Nature's voices enter'd once again
 By normal avenues of sense. The twain—
 A little dazed—for one more moment saw
 Creation with the focus of their eyes
 Striving to readjust. Thereafter came
 The Master's voice, while his right hand was lock'd

Within the two hands of the Man and Maid.
Once more in soul or spirit he might have stood
Between them, they bearing the Pyx and Cup
In their dream-place of holy mystery.
Then the diaphanous brightness of the world
About them—and the beauty everywhere
Purified and uplifted—gave them back,
Through all their channels, a still vaster sense
Of Temple and of Sanctuary. Behind
Their veils—which any moment, in between
The Master's words, might lift or melt away—
The sacred cosmos quiver'd to disclose
The sacred place of true experience,
The Holy of the Presence—not indeed
To eyes of flesh, nor even eyes of soul,
But heart within the soul and heart of hearts.
The Master speaking of the Master Christ
Said that He came carrying Bread and Wine.
These were His visible symbols ; these He raised
From signs of Nature into signs of Grace,
To manifest analogies betwixt
The food of body and the food of souls,
The nutrimental matter of the world
And that God-substance lying hid therein,
Its life and essence. So these two dissolve
One into other ; so the Daily Bread
Becomes as Bread of Angels ; so the Wine

Which cheers and fortifies the natural man
 May also be the Wine of Other Life
 Unto the man within. The pregnant scheme
 Of sign and symbol, for all those who dwell
 In the two worlds without dividing them
 But equally partaking, is maintain'd
 In marriage union with that noumenal
 Which signs show forth. The Eucharist is thus
 A bond between the worlds, for this bequeathed,
 A link of union in the height and deep.
 The Spirit of the Christ remains therein
 On every altar and in every soul
 Which can receive the Spirit. So is God
 Made man in Christ, and so the Word takes flesh
 Through all the ages. There is Bethlehem
 In every kingdom, country, shire and town.
 The world itself is Nazareth. Each man
 And woman in the body-part of them
 Is Bethlehem's stable. But the soul therein
 Is seldom Mary, bearing Christ within.
 Hence is the Hidden Church from age to age
 In travail, working towards that perfect day
 When Christ shall have been born of every soul,
 Or when the soul shall know the Christ within,
 And the most blessed offices of Bread
 And Wine shall reach fulfilment. Then the soul—
 God-tinctured, God-transmuted, God-possess'd—

Shall need these signs no more. Till that great
day

The Hidden Church has sent out messengers
With rumours of a noumenal Eucharist,
Doctors and saints and mystics more than all.
But once through legend and through high romance
The Secret Church sent out the Holy Graal.

After these words that kind of silence fell
Which indicates the end of things attain'd,
Or their suspension for some given time.
The hearers look'd into their Master's face
And saw how joy was also peace therein.
He link'd their hands together, rose and then
Standing behind them rather than between,
While they two drew together, his own hands
Extended, blessing silently, and left
By the ascending path between the trees :
The trees received the Master out of sight.

IN the morning of life,
But the morning was sombre and sad :
There was mist upon valley and street
And sadly, with wearyful feet—
How pale in the morning of life—
Came love, full of tears, to the lad.
I did not know it, and woe is me,
Thus early and only I look'd for Thee.

In the noonday of life
There came with a crown to the man,
Strong, stedfast and starry of birth,
A love for the life of earth—
So fair in the noonday of life—
To dwell on the earth for a span.
Great gifts are gracious, such gifts were given :
But, Earthly Love, what of Love in Heaven ?

In the evening of life,
In an ashen glow, on a path alone,
It was Thou, Whom I look'd for from first to last :
I found Thee, I have Thee, I hold Thee fast—
Soul-Lord in the evening of life—
Thine be my leading through ways unknown :
They are known in Thee ; they are paths above ;
In the arms which enfold me, all paths are love.

XIII

Of Spiritual Marriage

THOSE whom a strange election had in sleep
Granted a grade of union never reach'd
In earthly nuptials—or if reach'd indeed
By some few souls, no record rests on earth—
Thus left together, having hand in hand,
Look'd once again into each other's eyes ;
As soul in soul had look'd when purposed dream
Had grown to vision, after gates unbarr'd
And veils uplifted. Now the eyes of both
Show'd deeps within and light upon the deeps ;
But eyes of flesh are not true doors of soul,
While fleshly veils do not in waking states
Strip off their vestures. So perchance for this
They did not kiss in solitude, who kiss'd
At their first greeting. When the witness sat,
A golden link of spirit them between,
His presence meted freedom in the heart.

No yoke constrain'd them now ; but something pass'd,
 And in the precincts left its place unfill'd,
 With him. Awhile the sunlight and green leaves
 Were things of Nature to herself return'd,
 Not seen in trance of spiritual joy.

Mayhap the greeting kisses to their own
 Drew added sanctity of grace and light
 From springs within the Master, while apart
 From him that high observance—for a space—
 Seem'd best held over. Whether best or not
 I rule in no wise, since by many ways
 Soul reaches soul. However, so they sat,
 True lovers, unto whom external signs
 Of love incarnate and the house of flesh
 In scant wise profited. A little while,
 And they were speaking of their state in dream,
 Together drawing on the outward side
 From more to more.

Withal a certain sense

Of want unsatisfied, of cloud in thought,
 Or such disparity, had breathed betwixt
 And importuned the consciousness of both.
 How light a sense, how very rare a veil,
 Was best, I think, exhibited when each
 Found ready terms in freedom thereupon
 And earn'd, moreover, in the speech exchanged
 An interlinking like the state of soul

In sleep, however far the distance stretch'd
To make a phantom of comparison.

She gave him both her hands. He took them both
In sudden silence momentarily. To him
And her it was at once as if a queen
Had offer'd hands and in the act became
Earth-queen no longer but of sacred realms
Explored in part, while other worlds beyond
Stretch'd through the undiscover'd. Unto her
And him it was as though a priest and king
Came out of Salem, carrying Bread and Wine,
The healing of the nations in his hands.
And she acclaim'd him ever in her heart
Priest of the Most High God. They knelt anon,
Facing each other, while the falling sun
Cast slantwise beams upon them and betwixt,
And made another glory in the world,
Transmuting gold to amber, building up
Nimbus on nimbus, crown and aureole,
Till all the simple blossoms of the wild—
Daisy and buttercup and celandine—
Shone round them, gleaming, glowing on the sward,
Then changing suddenly to things most rich,
Most rare.

So was it, and again to both
Transfigured Nature, full of radiant dyes,

Discover'd pageants by the world at large
 Unseen, beyond the violet and the red,
 Glamour ineffable of gorgeous hues,
 Of tints betwixt the purple and the blue,
 Orange and yellow, like a soul within
 Great Nature, pouring from behind all bands
 And lines and crannies. Out of grassy nest
 A bird sprang up and in the middle heaven
 Scream'd high Graal overture of melody,
 And hidden runnels by the path and hedge
 Began to speak in silver undertones
 Intelligibly. No longer in the world
 Did hearts which "need a language" seek in vain.
 All spoke, and in the tongue native to each—
 From summer breeze between the leaves, from
 loud

And resonant organ-tones over the hills,
 To whatsoever moved and what was still
 Far over earth. Places of silence spoke,
 And that which spoke gave silence to the heart,
 While very stillness profited in speech
 To ears of soul.

So was it and would be :
 But at that moment when they look'd and saw,
 About the mauves and ochres of the hills
 Which made their jewell'd ring on that world's
 verge,

The changing splinter'd light of many rays
 Flung there and here, a thousand little tongues
 Of lambent fire and light flickered and fled,
 Or dwelt and hover'd up and down the slopes,
 And there was flowing as of streams of light,
 While round and through the pillars of the piled
 Upland on upland in the middle West,
 An opening for the departing sun
 Reveal'd a cosmic heart of ardent fire
 Beneath abysses of green. Hereat the wind
 Veer'd suddenly, pour'd forth its warm life-breath,
 Till there was Pentecost for those two hearts,
 Once and henceforth for ever in the world.
 In that great moment's glory, suddenly struck
 Out of the open globe—as fire from flints—
 They might have raised their voices, kneeling still,
 Amidst the mystic pentecostal tongues.
 But there were harps sounding within the spheres
 Of each, to hold them silent, and they heard
 That tongue of tongues which has no voice on
 earth,
 An utterance of the cosmic word within—
 Infinite love, infinite melody,
 The very root of all the life in life
 Of earths and worlds.

So the misfaith and doubt
 Utterly perish'd. Those who met in soul,

And not till later in the body of each,
Knew one another, nor beheld therein
That real things were very far away ;
But rather for the work of dream in sleep
And work of waking vision there was reach'd
A certain centre, a most holy ground
To build on. It foreshadow'd—as on verge
Of living knowledge—that those dual states,
Reacting on each other, should produce
An end of being, welded, unified,
Which never surely in divided life
Of outward sense or inward deeps might reach
Such measure of fruition. Therefore flesh,
Seen in this light of spiritual things,
Profited something. Not as through a glass
And darkly, in the common life of earth,
They look'd at one another, for the world
And mundane light, transfigured from within
Their own transmuted natures, enter'd now
Another grade of dignity and wore
New robes of glory. When the parting came,
For that or this allotted space of time,
They would not leave unsatisfied but fill'd,
And with no hunger in the world henceforth
Awaiting them.

The hour of sunset came
And in the evening purples and the puce,

Amidst the lifted thuribles which smoked
In answer to the falling dews and gave
A temple-scent like unto breath of life,
They stood together and were folded up
In one another's arms. It was again
Two souls which met and kiss'd and interlock'd,
While all the motions and desires of flesh
Went up to God, like incense born of dews
From weeds and flowers about them. Heaven's blue
dome,

Out of its phosphor, brought forth liquid stars—
Like Sons of God in contemplation still
And vibrant, full of witness and of joy.
All weary burdens of the world of sin,
Letting and hindrance, fell from off their hearts.
In love's great worship and high reverence
The blessed goodness of the Lord of Good
Was with them in the Land of Living Things.

So they were married in their hearts of flesh,
To ratify a union in the soul
By rite most perfect, catholic and pure,
Beyond all need of ministry from man,
All consummations which the outward rites
Do consecrate for earthly needs and ends,
Nor yet reducing offices of these
And holy sacraments of outward Church,

Or laws of state, but entering withal
 A world of higher measures, hidden life
 Of union, intercourse of nuptial souls,
 As fully seal'd in the external ways
 By marriage intercourse of mouth and mouth,
 Or arms in arms, as by the five pure points
 Of fellowship in nuptial modes of earth,
 And with the centre.

When the night had come

They parted on their proper earthly ways
 And made no covenants of meeting, there
 Or here, well knowing that the world of dream
 Should give them back the Altar and the House,
 The Bearers' Office and the Rite therein,
 While in the world of those who think they wake—
 But are encompass'd by another sleep
 Until they waken both in dream and life—
 Unmeasured vistas, stretch'd through place and
 time,
 Held opportunities at every point
 For meetings and renewals. Which of these
 Should most befit the purpose of their days
 That blessed purpose would itself declare ;
 And in the perfect certitude hereof,
 Each looking only in the eyes of each
 And each commending each to God's true care,
 They left—and look'd not back—in holy joy.

The Master, leading over earthly ways,
 Stood in the middle night, and the great dome
 Of starry heaven watch'd with him, when the world
 Was sleeping. As it might be, from a peak
 He watch'd the city and its ways of men—
 I know not : or the city was asleep
 And with the stars he watch'd, as it might be,
 On tower or lonely parapet or bridge—
 I know not. Wheresoever, unto stars—
 With eyes uplifted and extended arms—
 He reach'd out, inly worshipping, in trance
 Of thought imploring. Then beyond the stars,
 Out of all signs, transported in pure mind,
 His soul soar'd through the Immanence Divine
 To God transcendent, and enfolded there
 His wordless prayer was fix'd upon the end
 Towards which his son and daughter of desire
 Were taken—in some part surely by him
 But for the rest by the invisible
 Keepers of mysteries. Be they drawn and brought
 Thereby within the shelter of its arms,
 As he was drawn unsearchably and found
 A place within the palace and the shrine.

At that ineffable centre which fulfils
 In oneness the within and the without
 Be God discern'd not only of their hearts

And known of soul, but He abide in them
 And they in Him, a perfect being-state
 At once of God in all and all in God.

Beyond the prayer of rapture and the prayer
 Of silence drawn into a deeper mode,
 The Master's soul within the centre held,
 And with the Eternal Spirit Which is Christ
 Made one therein, far past all images
 And individual forms of him and her,
 Knew QUÆSTOR DEI and BEATA fix'd
 Henceforth and perfectly contain'd therein,
 While in the Immanent and Transcendent God—
 By hypostatic union and the bond
 Of love between Them, Which is Spirit of all—
 They all, and Christ together, render'd up
 The Kingdom of separate things—from time's divorce
 And substitution finally redeem'd—
 Into the Father's hands. And this is that
 Wherein God's end of being and of things
 Describes the perfect circle and returns
 To that beginning where the circle falls
 Within the centre.

Having seen and known
 The eternal hope for those he led in truth,
 That centre gave the Master back to life,
 While in the East the red and saffron dyes

Brought in another morning, breaking forth
Upon a sleeping world.

The Master hail'd
With reverential eyes and worshipful
Heart, the new glories of God's day proclaim'd,
And took and did God's business in the day.

GLORY of cosmic pageants, glory and grace of all :

Have I not dwelt among them ? How should they
weary or pall ?

The great processions go on, in their rhythm of stately
joy :

I walk among them and with them, or stand for a space
aside,

In a contemplation deep—perchance where the ways divide.
In truth I am looking for Thee ; and where the banners
deploy—

Is it there that Thou art ? Or else in the gulf as of fire,
Where the orange and purples open out the heart of their
great desire ?

Or the starry dark of a sacred night eastward suddenly
lightens ?

Who knows ? I listen, I hear : the music crashes and
heightens.

There are seasons also of stillness, the pause of a peace
that falls,

And the only voice in the silence is that of the heart which
calls.

A sleep comes over the pageant ; the mystery-plays
suspend :

It is Thou perchance in the stillness : is it Thou, at the
journey's end ?

Ah, no ! Save only in rumours, in portents behind a veil,
I do not reach Thee in pageants, and their pomp at last,
like a tale

That is told, has given its message. Behold, I have lived
in their light :

Beyond these symbols, my End, my Need, call me to worlds
of sight.

XIV

Priest and Priestess

BEFORE the rood-screen and the veil thereof
The Pyx and Chalice of the Bearers stood,
Clear-shining in the light which pierced the Veil,
For now there rose upon its hither side
A double cube of well-white marble, graved
In gold with words and names and hidden signs,
A mystic Altar by the Holy Place ;
And prompted by the monitor within
They set their vessels down.

As when they met

On life's awakening side for that first time,
Remembering a vigil in the past,
Wherein the other side of life in sleep
Forth-issued out of sleep—and what is named
Deep dream—into a being-state of soul,
Whereof all waking they had known should count
Mere shadow of reality, so now—
In vision and its open images—

Their souls recall'd that meeting in the world
 Of outward icons, what it proved for them
 Beyond the doubting foresight of the heart ;
 How mortal flesh began to feel and see
 The wonder and the glory of the world ;
 And how the mind incorporate therein
 Itself had entered on a being-state,
 Of which all measures through the past made known
 Were also shadows of reality.
 They, standing therefore upon either horn
 Of that white Altar, and themselves in light,
 From living light which dwelt beyond the veil,
 Began to realize that both the states
 Were at their root of purpose one within.
 Yet some swift-flying question pass'd through both :
 Whether the waking state of body and soul,
 With union reached therein, while soul and soul
 Preserved but rarefied the outward part,
 Had not a wholeness which the vision state
 Wanted, and whether individual will—
 Which shaped its ends on earth—were not for them
 A truer state than this most ghostly scene.
 Herein they moved as something not themselves
 Directed, whether from them apart or not,
 And—in the high Rite integrated—shared
 No forming purpose midst activities
 Thereof. Only when motived pageant ceased

Their part with one another intervned.
 Then it was will, activity, a state
 Of seeing in worlds on worlds, opening out
 And into one another, while the things
 Beheld—ineffably, essentially—
 Were one with that which saw ; and in a mode
 Beyond all time the Everlasting Love
 Was its own object.

But this moment pass'd,
 While that which follow'd ravish'd from their
 souls

All notion of the personal part in them,
 All speculation of the mind, all sense
 Of place, of motive, operation there.
 They knew thenceforward that the Master-Lord
 Was in the many-mansion'd House, a still,
 Abiding Presence ; and with one intent—
 To find Him, see Him, worship Him therein—
 They went on quest, scarce knowing what they
 did,
 As inly spurr'd, unconscious that they moved—
 In being's keen awareness, stripp'd of self.
 The Temple grew before them ; but its halls,
 Chapels and chambers, vast scriptoria,
 Its stairways—often as to height of stars
 Ascending—and its secret doors which gave,
 At unsuspected angles, upon roofs

Like platforms stretching through uplifted planes—
 To them concentred, burning for the end—
 Were not the mighty measures of a House,
 Whether by hands erected or drawn out
 In spiritual spaces, but the states
 And pregnant epochs of the master-quest—
 How long pursued who knows, Master and Lord ?

They met with spokesmen of the Mysteries
 Who saw the Master daily in the House,
 And said : Lo, here or there, turning to East
 And West, proclaiming gospels in His Name
 And bearing certain warrants in their hands,
 A proof of embassy ; while other some
 On ancient books depending saw therein
 His first and final message, whence they preach'd
 Obedience, witnessing of penalties
 And great rewards. For such the Master's House
 Was not alone a Temple built with hands
 But raised by them or their progenitors.
 A few upon some spiritual side
 Of lower grooves depended. These affirm'd
 The earth His Temple, and that which seem'd a
 House
 All profitless till spiritually known,
 When chancel, altar and the Holy Place,
 With any Rites enacted these within,

Would pass like shows and leave the soul with
God—

Not seen or realized, but joined in thought
By moral bonds together. There and here—
Rarest of all—a few with faces seal'd
By perfect stillness, and with light thereon
Forth shining, like the light behind the Veil,
From inward source, the arms upon their breasts
Folded, went up and down, speaking no word,
Or in the Veil's glow waited, worshipping.
These also, often on their knees received
From Pyx and Chalice, at the Bearer's hands,
The Bread and Wine, in recollection merged ;
And then the lambent flickering of light
About the vessels got another mode
Of lustre—a fix'd, penetrating glow—
As if all sunbeams had been focuss'd there.

Two vessels looking like two Graals of grace,
Two Bearers, a procession of the Graal
Concentred, priest and priestess of a Rite
According to Melchizedek—Priest and King—
Kept secret age on age, were here and now
Made in the holy hiddenness manifest
To two or three, in the Great Name and Word
Gather'd together. But a thousand pass'd
For whom the Veil was just a curtain's height ;

The man and maid were priests in ritual-guise
 Performing sacramental ministries ;
 And these meant little. Of such questers, some
 Beyond the ceremonial and its form
 Had pass'd in thought ; some held them worshipful
 But done in memory ; and when the Graals
 Swept down the chancel, in the Bearer's hands
 Uplifted, shedding the strange light of them,
 Some saw the works of miracle and cried
 With open mouths. These follow'd from behind,
 Looking beyond the portals, where the crowd
 Were fed with Wine and Bread, or mix'd them-
 selves

With these, thereafter—up and down the land—
 Preaching the Kingdom and the coming Christ,
 But understanding little in the heart,
 And hence from one distraction over soon
 To other flowing, like a shallow stream,
 At every point diverted.

Now it came

To pass, after a day of many days
 Perchance, that QUÆSTOR DEI and the Maid,
 BEATA MEA, on the Guide within
 Depending, ceased their quest about the House
 To find the Blessed Master and High Lord,
 But waited—watching over Pyx and Cup—
 Because when toiling feet of body or soul

Have wearied, vainly seeking up and down,
The air about them as the heart within
May with a holy suddenness give up
The Blessed Master and the end of quest.

I HAVE borne my part in the Temples,
The solemn state of each ;
I have shared in the lyrical dramas
By action, song and speech.
I have follow'd the holy functions
Wherever their Rites have call'd,
As one for those ends anointed,
Exalted and install'd.
I have held both Warrant and Charter,
And where Grand Masters sat,
Throned high in the eastern quarter,
I have join'd the debate on that
Which attests the Mastery.
It is all of it great and good
To share and hear and see ;
And if in the heart—as now—
I ask whether these are Thine,
The answer is : Surely Mine.
But when I proceed : Is it Thou ?
A stillness falls on the vibrant halls
And a hush on the Holy place :
They have echoed from roof to base,
But only with rumours of Thee.

O House and Temple and Lodge,
Upon all your craft and art
I crave the grace of a blessing
And join with thankful heart,
Or ever we take the Closing
And so from such walls depart.
I have dwelt in your shaded spaces,
Have shared their guerdons and graces
To the very end and the essence ;
True signs of the grand totality
Are raised up in divers places :
But Give me, O God, the reality,
One light of all in the Presence.

A Golden Veil of Doctrine

THEY are with their Master in the waking state :

He sits again betwixt them and—with hands
Uplifted—teaches in the vesper-time.

A humble country chapel's chancel steps
Are now the place of meeting. Whether he
Was priest therein they did not ask or know.
Far other speculation fill'd their minds,
While on his head the Sanctuary Lamp
Cast faint and peaceful light through ruby glass,
Weaving an aureole about his face
And wool-white hair. As they in life assumed
But in the sleep-state and its dreams laid flesh
Aside, yet were the same—one self in each
Amidst all variations in their mode
Of being and changes of environment—
So Christ, the Master, Whom they sought in soul
Perchance was he, no other, who without
Had come of his own will into their lives.

Shaped he their paths of vision who show'd forth
 True ways of practice in the daily round ?
 When they should meet him in the hidden world
 Would he be other than he seem'd and was
 Betwixt them, seated in the twilight-tide ?
 And would the hallows of the Pyx and Cup
 Shine at his presence with another light
 Than earth's or soul's, a very light of God
 Dwelling with man ?

Now from the Sacred Host

Within the tabernacle's silken veil
 There fell upon them that which was not light
 But influx—out of holy heaven sent down—
 Or rather upon him it seem'd to fall
 And from two centres, at his heart and head,
 Was ray'd within them. Such a Presence fill'd
 The Church of Nature when he sat before—
 Green vistas round them. But even more than
 then

His words transfigured all things : so of old
 At Cana, water from the springs of earth
 Became a wine which never in the world
 Gave forth the vintages of Galilee.
 Light from the Graal about them, words of God
 Exhibited His Mysteries in speech
 Of man, nor ever any human speech
 Was simpler. Like a blessed gospel-text

Which holds the high vibrations of the life
 From the life-source outpour'd, it held the tones
 And chants and breathings of the world within—
 High sanctuary of hidden heart of things.
 So therefore drew the music wrought in words
 Into a single sense of harmony,
 Even as the Spirit Divine draws human souls
 And makes a oneness of eternal state
 Which is the perfect poem of each soul
 And its life-ode.

Of that most sacred House
 Which seem'd their House of Vision and perchance
 Was of its modes and aspects shown in part—
 So mighty texts of old in modern tongues
 Are put by moderns—again the Master spoke,
 Of its high rumours moving down and up
 The realms of thought and history. Betwixt
 That side of things wherein the letter rules,
 Nor ever of itself uplifts a veil—
 Because the veil it is, which cannot pass
 Beyond its nature—and that other mode
 Lying behind, spirit and inward sense,
 The Holy House is poised, as on a space
 Which serves for borderland where the two worlds
 Converge, itself an interlinking bond.
 There type in antitype dissolves and there
 The simple letter is itself a sign.

O central point and sacred meeting-place
 Of all the sacraments, there falls the Bread,
 Broken within the Wine-Cup, and from both
 Issues one living Spirit of Life Divine.
 Never was place or house more deeply hid
 Within the souls of those who dwell therein.
 No temple ever was a part of mind
 As thou, mind-sphered in pure intelligence !
 No secret palace is enshrined like thee
 Within the heart, for thou art love thereof,
 Lo, in this House of God, soul, mind and heart
 Are found in oneness at the root of each—
 One vesture of that Spirit which is God,
 One eye which looks on God—but turn'd within—
 One fire by God enkindled, evermore
 Burning in Him, consumed, renew'd by Him,
 But He the substance, He the flame and He
 The kindling spark.

Hereof the Secret House

And its deep searching. So beneath the fields—
 Yellow with harvests under a bright sun—
 Lie hid the gold and jewels of the mine,
 Crypts and great treasure of the under-world.
 See then, till all the images dissolve—
 Their order and their laws fulfill'd in God—
 Here is the common ground of those who pass
 Beyond the veils into the first great sense

Which lies behind. This is the Holy House
 In sacramental things externalized
 And sum as such of all the sacraments.
 The signified is not without the sign
 Therein. The inward and the outward make
 A marriage, integrated more and more
 In one another while the worlds endure,
 Till that which now is the without for us
 Becomes by sanctity's dissolving work
 That which we call within. Then God's great end—
 Which stands and knocks without the cosmic gates—
 Shall find all gates are open and come in.

The House is theirs who have attain'd in Christ,
 By His own blood redeem'd, for blood is life,
 Eternal life, and so is understood
 In the deep symbols of this mystery.
 He leads the sons thereof from state to state
 Of that Divine Experience within
 Forth shadow'd once in holy, holy veils—
 The pageant of the Life in Palestine.
 A Birth Divine, a hidden life in God,
 And then the witness of an outward call ;
 The mystic passion, cross and death thereon ;
 The resurrection and ascent in God :
 Herein stands forth the story of the soul,
 From that first moment which is second birth

150 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

To that last stage ineffable when man
Goes back to God.

The Many-Mansion'd House
Presents in type the state before the end,
The resurrection-life attain'd in Christ.
So is it Holy Zion in the Heights,
Palace of Peace and the Great Prince of Peace,
The Paradise and Highest Court of Heaven.
Those dwell therein who may have tasted death
In bodies of earth or may in fleshly bonds
Abide and wait upon deliverance ;
But mystic death has made them free in Christ.
So is the end assured, and thus they dwell
In unity, knowing their part in Him,
The present which is He, the state to come
And consummation of their life in God.

Within the Sacred House there also dwell
That Company of Spiritual Chiefs
And Hierarchs, through the ages set to watch
And through continued ages guard and guide
The long succession of a royal race
Whose secret once was mask'd as David's line—
A priestly work which, when the days were full,
Brought Joseph forth, the heir in fine of all,
And from another dynasty, to earth
As earth unknown, in Blessed Mary found

For him a virgin mate, with mystic yoke
 Of nuptials in the Holy Heart of things,
 Not in the heart of flesh. So came in fine
 That Incarnation which was Birth Divine,
 An union of the Spirit and the Bride
 In earthly house of man—or body of God—
 Made manifest. So He Who is the Word
 In flesh abode among us, and the types
 Of this substantial union are in Church,
 In wayside Chapel and in mighty Fane
 Shown forth—a true analogy of things—
 By Bread and Wine. The Secret Church above
 Is antitype of all the speaking signs
 And sacraments, the treasury of grace
 And power which fills them, permeates, overflows
 In the recipient's heart.

Because of grace,
 Of sanctity, of thinking in the heart,
 Of Eucharistic Life Divine, which some
 Reach'd there and here, ascending from the world
 Of symbols to the power and glory held
 Within, a rumour went about the earth
 And bare its witness to the Holy House
 In many modes of doctrine and of thought,
 In many miracles of Wine and Bread,
 After the mode of legend told from one
 To other. In most sacred openings

Of sacramental veils, whereat dissolved
 The elements, exhibiting behind
 Divine communions and the Word therein,
 Some part was given of God's grace and truth
 To hidden life of soul.

Hereby began

Great inquests up and down the Christian world.
 High reason follow'd them in holy schools
 Of doctrine, though the letter overlaid
 That witness. There were also secret ways
 Of league and fellowship—in open words
 Some speaking, other some a hidden tongue
 Of symbol. There was more than all that school
 Of saintship lifted into sovereign realms
 Of a Divine Experience reach'd within,
 And this left glorious records, shining still—
 Beacons to those who in this narrow path
 Can follow and ascend the Mount of God.
 Such was in fine the spirit in that past
 Of single-hearted centuries, that the quest
 Was follow'd also and the tidings came
 Through great imagination's shaping modes,
 And—out of expectation—fair romance
 Became a vehicle and thus put forth
 The Holy Graal. I think—the Master said—
 Old stories now are preface to a new
 Romance of soul, which shall be told henceforth

Of yesterday, to-day and evermore,
With all the Mystery disclosed therein.

So fell the Master's teaching once again
To silence, and his hearers' hearts were fill'd
With that high worship which election brings.
But evermore they wonder'd—each with each,
Or inwardly, in humbleness of heart—
What power and mercy should have singled such
As they, two children of obscurity,
For so high ends. Now in the outward ways
Full often meeting—since the walls of things
Dissolved about them upon every side
And brought the pair together day by day—
They heard the Holy Masses of the Church,
And peace was with them. Many graces stood
Around them, enter'd through their open doors
And vivified. Yet of the secret things
Behind the Eucharist—the while endured
This further space of interlude between
The teaching of the Blessed Master's mouth
And that of vision—no great message came,
Fair intimations to the mind at work
Or held in stillness.

Knowing as they did
That in their other, hidden side of life
They served an Altar, like the priest on earth,

But out of earthly things to those of soul
 Raised up, and were enring'd on every side
 With witness of the Presence ; knowing too
 How in the spiritual House they bare
 The self-same elements of Bread and Wine ;
 What hidden bond subsisted at the root
 Between the sacred work imposed on them
 And that of ministers in outward ways
 Ordain'd ? No ordination save of work
 Imposed by service had the active life
 Of their strange sleep set as a seal on them.
 No consecration had their lips or hands
 Perform'd, though since the Many-Mansion'd House
 Roll'd back its portals and receiv'd them in,
 They knew what sacro-saintly life abode
 Within the Bread and Wine they bare and gave
 To crowds of worshippers who knelt without
 And some who follow'd on the quest within.

Now, both were conscious—in distinctive ways—
 Of inward trouble, dwelling on the place
 And pageant of their vision life, and all
 Its purpose, in comparison with that
 Which earthly paths had in these later days
 Assumed. How also did the House within
 Stand in relation to the visible Church
 Of God ? And seeing that in deeper states

Within they found the well of images
 Reduce its wealth of parabolic modes,
 While on the threshold of a time they seem'd
 To stand when all the pageants and the forms
 Should cease, and knowledge of the noumenal
 Be reach'd in being-state—pure, simple, free
 And undiversified, the old mental sight,
 The tactions and auditions set aside
 Once and for all—perchance at end of things
 The speaking drama of the world of dream
 Would into teaching parable resolve
 And so discharge its purpose. Who should say?
 But only when the waking world dissolved,
 The words which spoke within them still convey'd
 That counsel, Patience, and that caution, No :
 Not yet.

Now, whether in the part of flesh
 I know not, or in that half-seeming state—
 Say, after lips had sever'd, holy hands
 Still interlock'd—when the white ivory gates
 Began to open, while all thoughts and things
 Strangely converged and mix'd, it matters not :
 I do not know ; but in each other's arms,
 After a pure and spiritual mode,
 They fell asleep into a world unknown,
 And reach'd, apart from any sense of place,
 Another state of vision, soul to soul

Reveal'd, and each as an unspotted glass
 Wherein they look'd together and beheld
 Not deeps of one another, but their own.
 By such a perfect interchange of love,
 Out of the House of Life and House of Sleep,
 They knew the oneness, waking one with dream,
 One soul in twain, and at the root conjoin'd
 With one Christ-Spirit of the Word and God,
 Looking in Him to reach all end of quest.

For QUÆSTOR DEI and BEATA may
 The veils lift further. May their sleep indeed
 Be fill'd with vision. May they find within
 One Spouse of both, and so for evermore
 Be and continue one in each and Him :
 Not QUÆSTOR DEI and BEATA now—
 In that great, timeless, everlasting now—
 Not Christ and they, or Christ and one from them
 Begotten by the motherhood of love,
 But union, unity and oneness, Christ
 As they in Him, and He in them, yet God
 In all ineffably, and all in God.

THEY taught me many doctrines, and I made
Due acts of faith in loyalty and laid
Their freight upon me, till a Voice arose
And said : All blessing on the man who knows
The matter of the one true faith and thence
Draws sacred doctrine of experience.
Now, since my hope was in one Source and End,
I held that Voice a Comforter and Friend.
So, having put aside all yokes, I sought
In sacred licence of untrammell'd thought
On mountain-heights of mind to reach my Goal.
And past all peaks of thought I saw the soul,
And in her hidden world I strove to find
That which exceeds all altitudes of mind.
Ah, but the soul that Presence may confess
Through intimations which their seals impress,
As light on earth impinged from furthest star.
Hence from the soul herself the Goal was far,
Till in her heart of love a certain door
I open'd, with a permit to explore ;
And there the Goal my efforts could not win—
O Master-Goal—reach'd out and took me in.

Christ Mystical

THE waiting inquest in the House of Sleep
And House of God continues—not in vain.
Apart from outward sign or inward word
By still assurance silently infused,
They knew that as the Master seen on earth
Was in His proper time and mode declared,
So too the Temple's Master—not on earth
Or in the Temple's outer court of heaven
Beheld—must in a fitting hour and way,
After the order of the things of soul,
To them be manifest, and then should lead
To whatsoever hiddenness of God
Abides behind the glory and the veil
Of gold. The lesser pageants of the quest
Moved round them in the many-sided House;
Their own great Rite continued day by day,
As days are counted in the world of dream.
Yet in the midst of all, from all apart,

160 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

Far and still farther they explored in thought
And in that loving contemplation which
Suspends most highest thought—upon the gulf
Poised, tranced and quivering—their sphere of soul,
And an ineffable nature-unity
They found in deepest heart of their desire
To know the Master and attain in Him.

How should He stand between them, who from vast
To vaster world of union, each with each,
Have daily, hourly travell'd? Does He come
To separate or offer surface yokes
And signs of marriage—say, in joining hands—
Like outward Masters, bound by outward ways?
Or shall He stand indeed as if without
Who dwells within? So therefore, while the rich
Experience ripen'd, magnified and grew,
They learn'd that never as that Master came
On earth would He Whom only hearts discern
Be seen by them.

Thus up from grade to grade
The Presence sent its splinter'd shafts above
The verge of conscious being. So it wax'd,
At first a glimmering point, a notion first,
An intuition, a new sense realized,
Then living message of unutter'd Word,
That time abiding when the twain-in-one

Should hear the Word in all its fullness spoken,
Being themselves the utterance.

Meanwhile

Full many worshippers without the gate,
And some who went upon the quest within
Seeking a term, and some who on the call
Tarried, but ever for a Lord without
Look'd only, saw the Blessed Master stand
Between the Bearers of the Pyx and Cup,
Hailing with joyful hearts the King to be
In this most holy Church of living men.

So all about the Many-Mansion'd House
They said no longer, May Thy Kingdom come,
But bless'd the Master and the King Divine,
And all the worlds renew'd in joy with Him.

SAY : Peace be thine, when I go forth at length ;
But pray ye never for my soul's repose :
Commend it rather to the Source of strength
For other work, as sense of mission grows.
The ways are vast, Amen : the worlds extend
World without end.

When after work achieved from star to star
And all the missions in His Name fulfill'd,
God draws me where the Halls of Silence are
And at the heart of things the soul is still'd,
Give me that active centre's rest—ah, then
Such sleep. Amen.

XVII

Within the Veil

ON QUÆSTOR DEI and BEATA came
So great an opening of inward ways
That when so e'er the earthly Master sat
Between them, in a silence more than words
He taught. All evil of the world within
Had pass'd from both. The very word of it
Perish'd.

 Their bodies and the needs of these
Struck in no note of discord through the pure
Tone-poem of two souls express'd henceforth
In one great organ flood of melody.
Their flesh itself, into the Law Divine
Caught up, was after its material mode
A perfect matter for the work of soul.
So clarified, so shining, so transform'd,
No outward change survened, as if a man
Should pass them and behold with normal eyes
Some sudden raying of a nimbus-light,

166 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

Or even those who shared their home and board,
Talk'd with them, took their hands or kiss'd at night
And morning. From within the change of veils
Came, and the light of it to soul alone
Was visible.

The Master saw and knew,
Marking with joy the progress of the work,
And now upon the dual plane of life
All things grew perfect towards a perfect end.
He in rare moments, amidst the silence, seem'd
A spirit, an unembodied Word within,
Which ever on the verge of utterance
Paused, and a joy of expectation fill'd
The twain, as if he should be yet declared
In full. Moreover, if he spoke it seem'd
Ever an echo of the waited Word,
As though some virtue very far away
Its last reverberations at dim gates
Of sense expended and resounded there :
A wisdom, crown'd and clothed in regnant speech.

So were they led without in unity.
Within, without the transformation grew
And interlock'd, at once in man and maid,
All modes by which the things unseen and seen
Are realized—in flesh, in vision life
Of sleep, and in awaken'd ways of mind.

Activities of each on either side
To stillness tended, but the stillness rose
From heart and centre of activity,
An all ineffable continuance
Of vibrant being. Uplifted in the ways
Of vision through the sacred gates of sleep,
Or drawn 'twixt these again to waking life,
One life was theirs, one sense of end at hand.

But after many intervening days,
There came a Mass-Time when with Pyx and Cup
They stood before the Portal of the House,
While all the world about that sacred place,
With many known and precious from the streets
Of cities or the embosom'd country-side,
Knelt on the steps and far and far away
Stretch'd through the shining distance. Not as once
They fed them by dispensing Wine and Bread ;
But Pyx and Chalice to their arms' full height
Were raised in blessing on the multitude ;
And from those Sacred Vessels came a light
Which was not light but flood of life outpour'd,
Yet like a thousand suns. No word of all
The heart's high Mass-Words did the Bearers speak,
But through the still, quick air Words which were
light
And Life of life spoke in the soul of each,

For Christ on that high morning was with those
 Who worshipp'd. All of them received from Him
 That which is He after the highest mode
 Whereto the individual soul could make
 An answer.

So the holy work imposed
 Upon the Bearers to the end thereof
 Was brought. The Word received into the heart
 Abode therein. The people from their knees
 Rose up in silence : then a great hush'd cry
 Roll'd over, echoing from end to end
 And lifted quickly to a pæan's point,
 An acclamation, a triumphal song,
 While in the sight of that vibrating crowd
 The Pyx and Chalice in a blaze of light
 Were caught into the violet vault of heaven.
 Together growing in the altitude
 They seem'd one Cup, shone over by a Host's
 White disk, which slowly—so a star might set—
 Sank in the Chalice. In the rays thereof
 This melted, and a Spiritual Sun
 Over the Sacred Spiritual House
 Ray'd, emblematic of the Sun of Christ,
 And all the world beneath it burst in buds
 And blossoms ; all the sparkling water-ways
 Scream'd music, singing of the River of Life ;
 And all the orchard closes glow'd and groan'd

In gladness, heavy laden with rich fruit,
Like to the Tree of Life.

Divested thus

The Bearers stood, with arms upon their breasts
Cross'd and heads bow'd, while on them fell the
rays

Of that most glorious Sun, till every hair
Which crown'd them and their garments' every
thread

Were interwoven with its aureate light.

So stood the twain transfigured, and midwise

In the first line of worshippers they saw

Their leading Master of the outward ways

Clothed in the simple habit of a monk,

Nor otherwise distinguish'd from the crowd.

But when their eyes met, then he raised his hands

In benediction, and they saw thereon

The marks stigmatic of the mastership

Shine faintly and a pallid nimbus round

His brows, but looking like a crown of thorns.

So he fell back among the crowd, which closed

About him unawares, and so they knew

Their Master's work upon the life of them

Was finish'd. Therefore in a hush of hearts

Thankful and gladden'd, conscious that they too

Relinquish'd office in that hour and place,

The twain turn'd inward and with reverent steps

Went back into the Many-Mansion'd House :
The portals closed upon them silently.

Wrapp'd in a purely spiritual state,
The House gave back to them no sense of quest,
And—they so close upon attainment's verge—
No human presence. Even theirs dissolved
Into that single mode of being-life
Which ever and again their souls had touch'd
In most deep moments. They beheld alone
The golden veil, the glory passing through
And them possessing ever more and more.
They did not seem to traverse aisle or nave ;
These also had dissolved—at least for them :
Only the veil remain'd and they thereby,
As heart to heart is close—two flames of love
And white desire in utter whitest heat
Rarefied : two as one, one flame, one love
Drawn inward. Whether in or out of time
I know not, but in state which lies beyond
Duration's sense, upfolded, still'd in love,
They knew the Master and the Word Divine
With and within them.

Then the Golden Veil
Was parted, as another bar dissolved.
O golden light, far shining, all within :
O light beyond all light : O Life of life

And Life exceeding life : O very God
Of very God : a moment, and with eyes
Of soul, upon the object and the end
Of all soul's love they look'd. The Word made flesh
In Palestine, as prototype of all
Union between the Immanence within
The cosmos and the souls abiding there,
Shone glorious in the high heart of the light—
Spirit and soul inwoven. A time-flash,
And this had pass'd ; but now—apart from form
Or aught distinguish'd as the sight of mind—
All in a keen awareness, they discern'd
The omnipresent universal soul
Of all humanity made one in Christ,
The spirit of the cosmos. This in turn
Gave way ; even the universal soul
Dissolved in union with the cosmic Christ
And conscious realization therewithin.
One moment ; then the Immanence Divine
Dissolved in the Divine Transcendence. Then
It was as if a Voice—which was no voice
Of earth but like the heavens together run
And flowing into utter'd harmony—
Cried All in All. And the Great Mystery
For QUÆSTOR DEI and BEATA reach'd
Its consummation. The love-object drawn
Within, to their own selves they died in love.

172 THE BOOK OF THE HOLY GRAAL

Their separation pass'd in mystic death,
And Godly-conscious in the Source and End,
They knew as they were known henceforth in God.

The Sacred Bread of manifested forms
And things fell, sweetly broken and dissolved,
Into the Wine-Cup of Eternal Life.

Now I, who witness in humility
Of these high things in nuptials of the soul,
Thereafter left the Holy House and came
To my own dwelling, looking to return
To-morrow as the Keeper of the Gate.

Give me that gracious morrow, Lord of All,
Or the Eternal Now attain'd in Thee.

A THOUSAND thresholds of the Church of God
In chapels and hermit-houses by the way :
In these as substitutes our feet have trod,
 Poor pilgrims, fain to worship, waiting day.
And the great minsters rise into the blue
 Of holy heaven, as our own hearts aspire ;
The solemn Rites perform their service due,
 Recording varied notes of our desire.
O music, majesty, resounding prayer,
 Beyond the Churches that we build and see,
Beyond those forms which we have made so fair,
On some Lord's day, in spirit, transplant us where
 The Priest and Master of the Rite is He.
Lord Christ, high term of every sacred vow,
The Church within the Church—that Church is Thou.

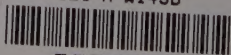
XVII

Valete

LAST symbol, very sacrament, last type
Before all types dissolve upon the verge
Of one unveiled reality, I bring
The speaking witness of the inward eyes
That, once encompass'd by your Godward arm,
Beheld its meanings and—from eyes to heart
More deeply held within—have known its life,
Which compasses and penetrates and fills.
A House of Many Mansions, built of God,
Wherefrom the protoplasts and types go forth ;
High Palace of the Presence ; fountain-point
Which sanctions delegates and calls them back,
Commissions priests and yet again withdraws
Beyond all Rites ; foundation-seat of grace
Outflowing, salving the elect ; and souls,
Transmuted by that grace, in fine return
Where the hush'd stillness keeps them : I, who stand
And watch and pray within the Holy Place,

Have caught beyond all voices and beyond
All image-making of your sanctuary
A wordless call to follow where it leads—
Thither whence none return. On that dread brink
I look to lay my human nature down,
Bear all I am into the All of All,
And in a last attainment of the self
Set self aside for ever. Having learn'd
The grievous lessons of the Thou and I,
Take me within, that I may know in Thee,
Lord, but in Me no more. So, standing thus
On Thine unimaged threshold—while the bonds
Begin to slip, the longing to be done
Quivers within, the deep of Thine abyss
Draws—I turn once to witness of Thy House,
For others call'd thereto. Hear in the heart,
Ye who have ears within. May open doors
Receive you, may the Temple of the Light
Lift broider'd veils and let the secret place—
Wherein the Master of the House abides—
Give up the Presence and the Mystery
Of Thee and Him, face unto face and eye
To eye. So only, never else, unfolds
The undeclared, the infinite state beyond
Both Him and Thee, God and man's end therein.

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