# **Classic Poetry Series**

# **Thomas Hood**

- poems -

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# A Lake And A Fairy Boat

A lake and a fairy boat To sail in the moonlight clear, -And merrily we would float From the dragons that watch us here!

Thy gown should be snow-white silk And strings of oriental pearls, Like gossamers dipped in milk, Should twine with thy raven curls!

Red rubies should deck thy hands, And diamonds should be thy dower -But fairies have broke their wands, And wishing has lost its power!

# **Allegory**

I had a gig-horse, and I called him Pleasure Because on Sundays for a little jaunt He was so fast and showy, quite a treasure; Although he sometimes kicked and shied aslant. I had a chaise, and christened it Enjoyment, With yellow body and the wheels of red, Because it was only used for one employment, Namely, to go wherever Pleasure led. I had a wife, her nickname was Delight: A son called Frolic, who was never still: Alas! how often dark succeeds to bright! Delight was thrown, and Frolic had a spill, Enjoyment was upset and shattered quite, And Pleasure fell a splitter on Paine's Hill.

# **Allegory: A Moral Vehicle**

I had a gig-horse, and I called him Pleasure Because on Sundays for a little jaunt He was so fast and showy, quite a treasure; Although he sometimes kicked and shied aslant. I had a chaise, and christened it Enjoyment, With yellow body and the wheels of red, Because it was only used for one employment, Namely, to go wherever Pleasure led. I had a wife, her nickname was Delight: A son called Frolic, who was never still: Alas! how often dark succeeds to bright! Delight was thrown, and Frolic had a spill, Enjoyment was upset and shattered quite, And Pleasure fell a splitter on Paine's Hill.

#### Autumn

I Saw old Autumn in the misty morn
Stand shadowless like Silence, listening
To silence, for no lonely bird would sing
Into his hollow ear from woods forlorn,
Nor lowly hedge nor solitary thorn;—
Shaking his languid locks all dewy bright
With tangled gossamer that fell by night,
Pearling his coronet of golden corn.

Where are the songs of Summer?—With the sun, Oping the dusky eyelids of the south, Till shade and silence waken up as one, And Morning sings with a warm odorous mouth. Where are the merry birds?—Away, away, On panting wings through the inclement skies, Lest owls should prey Undazzled at noonday, And tear with horny beak their lustrous eyes.

Where are the blooms of Summer?—In the west, Blushing their last to the last sunny hours, When the mild Eve by sudden Night is prest Like tearful Proserpine, snatch'd from her flow'rs To a most gloomy breast.

Where is the pride of Summer,—the green prime,—The many, many leaves all twinkling?—Three On the moss'd elm; three on the naked lime Trembling,—and one upon the old oak-tree!

Where is the Dryad's immortality?—
Gone into mournful cypress and dark yew, Or wearing the long gloomy Winter through In the smooth holly's green eternity.

The squirrel gloats on his accomplish'd hoard, The ants have brimm'd their garners with ripe grain, And honey bees have stored The sweets of Summer in their luscious cells; The swallows all have wing'd across the main; But here the Autumn melancholy dwells, And sighs her tearful spells Amongst the sunless shadows of the plain. Alone, alone, Upon a mossy stone, She sits and reckons up the dead and gone With the last leaves for a love-rosary, Whilst all the wither'd world looks drearily, Like a dim picture of the drowned past In the hush'd mind's mysterious far away, Doubtful what ghostly thing will steal the last Into that distance, gray upon the gray.

O go and sit with her, and be o'ershaded

Under the languid downfall of her hair: She wears a coronal of flowers faded Upon her forehead, and a face of care;— There is enough of wither'd everywhere To make her bower,—and enough of gloom; There is enough of sadness to invite, If only for the rose that died, whose doom Is Beauty's,—she that with the living bloom Of conscious cheeks most beautifies the light: There is enough of sorrowing, and quite Enough of bitter fruits the earth doth bear,— Enough of chilly droppings for her bowl; Enough of fear and shadowy despair, To frame her cloudy prison for the soul!

# **Christmas Holidays**

Along the Woodford road there comes a noise Of wheels, and Mr. Rounding's neat post-chaise Struggles along, drawn by a pair of bays, With Reverend Mr. Crow and six small boys, Who ever and anon declare their joys With trumping horns and juvenile huzzas, At going home to spend their Christmas days, And changing learning's pains for pleasure's toys. Six weeks elapse, and down the Woodford way A heavy coach drags six more heavy souls, But no glad urchins shout, no trumpets bray, The carriage makes a halt, the gate-bell tolls, And little boys walk in as dull and mum As six new scholars to the Deaf and Dumb!

#### **Death**

It is not death, that sometime in a sigh
This eloquent breath shall take its speechless flight;
That sometime these bright stars, that now reply
In sunlight to the sun, shall set in night;
That this warm conscious flesh shall perish quite,
And all life's ruddy springs forget to flow;
That thoughts shall cease, and the immortal sprite
Be lapped in alien clay and laid below;
It is not death to know this,--but to know
That pious thoughts, which visit at new graves
In tender pilgrimage, will cease to go
So duly and so oft,--and when grass waves
Over the past-away, there may be then
No resurrection in the minds of men.

#### **Fair Ines**

O saw ye not fair Ines?
She 's gone into the West,
To dazzle when the sun is down,
And rob the world of rest:
She took our daylight with her,
The smiles that we love best,
With morning blushes on her cheek,
And pearls upon her breast.

O turn again, fair Ines,
Before the fall of night,
For fear the Moon should shine alone,
And stars unrivall'd bright;
And blessèd will the lover be
That walks beneath their light,
And breathes the love against thy cheek
I dare not even write!

Would I had been, fair Ines,
That gallant cavalier,
Who rode so gaily by thy side,
And whisper'd thee so near!
Were there no bonny dames at home,
Or no true lovers here,
That he should cross the seas to win
The dearest of the dear?

I saw thee, lovely Ines,
Descend along the shore,
With bands of noble gentlemen,
And banners waved before;
And gentle youth and maidens gay,
And snowy plumes they wore:
It would have been a beauteous dream,—
If it had been no more!

Alas, alas! fair Ines,
She went away with song,
With Music waiting on her steps,
And shoutings of the throng;
But some were sad, and felt no mirth,
But only Music's wrong,
In sounds that sang Farewell, farewell,
To her you've loved so long.

Farewell, farewell, fair Ines!
That vessel never bore
So fair a lady on its deck,
Nor danced so light before,—
Alas for pleasure on the sea,
And sorrow on the shore!
The smile that bless'd one lover's heart

Has broken many more! Thomas Hood www.PoemHunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

# **Faithless Nelly Gray**

<i>A Pathetic Ballad</i>

Ben Battle was a soldier bold, And used to war's alarms; But a cannon-ball took off his legs, So he laid down his arms.

Now as they bore him off the field, Said he, 'Let others shoot; For here I leave my second leg, And the Forty-second Foot.'

The army-surgeons made him limbs: Said he, 'They're only pegs; But there's as wooden members quite, As represent my legs.'

Now Ben he loved a pretty maid, --Her name was Nelly Gray; So he went to pay her his devours, When he devoured his pay.

But when he called on Nelly Gray, She made him quite a scoff; And when she saw his wooden legs, Began to take them off.

'O Nelly Gray! O Nelly Gray!'
Is this your love so warm?
The love that loves a scarlet coat
Should be a little more uniform.

Said she, 'I loved a soldier once, For he was blithe and brave; But I will never have a man With both legs in the grave

'Before you had those timber toes Your love I did allow; But then, you know, you stand upon Another footing now.'

'O Nelly Gray! O Nelly Gray! For all your jeering speeches, At duty's call I left my legs In Badajos's breaches.'

'Why, then,' said she, 'you've lost the feet Of legs in war's alarms, And now you cannot wear your shoes Upon your feats of arms!' 'O false and fickle Nelly Gray!
I know why you refuse:
Though I've no feet, some other man
Is standing in my shoes.

'I wish I ne'er had seen your face; But, now, a long farewell! For you will be my death' -- alas! You will not be my Nell!'

Now when he went from Nelly Gray His heart so heavy got, And life was such a burden grown, It made him take a knot.

So round his melancholy neck A rope he did intwine, And, for his second time in life, Enlisted in the Line.

One end he tied around a beam, And then removed his pegs; And, as his legs were off -- of course He soon was off his legs.

And there he hung till he was dead As any nail in town; For, though distress had cut him up, It could not cut him down.

A dozen men sat on his corpse, To find out why he died, --And they buried Ben in four cross-roads With a stake in his inside.

# **Faithless Sally Brown**

Young Ben he was a nice young man, A carpenter by trade; And he fell in love with Sally Brown, That was a lady's maid.

But as they fetch'd a walk one day, They met a press-gang crew; And Sally she did faint away, Whilst Ben he was brought to.

The Boatswain swore with wicked words, Enough to shock a saint, That though she did seem in a fit, 'Twas nothing but a feint.

"Come, girl," said he, "hold up your head, He'll be as good as me; For when your swain is in our boat, A boatswain he will be."

So when they'd made their game of her, And taken off her elf, She roused, and found she only was A coming to herself.

"And is he gone, and is he gone?"
She cried, and wept outright:
"Then I will to the water side,
And see him out of sight."

A waterman came up to her,-"Now, young woman," said he,
"If you weep on so, you will make
Eye-water in the sea."

"Alas! they've taken my beau Ben To sail with old Benbow;" And her woe began to run afresh, As if she'd said Gee woe!

Says he, "They've only taken him To the Tender ship, you see"; "The Tender-ship," cried Sally Brown "What a hard-ship that must be!"

"O! would I were a mermaid now, For then I'd follow him; But Oh!--I'm not a fish-woman, And so I cannot swim.

"Alas! I was not born beneath The virgin and the scales, So I must curse my cruel stars, And walk about in Wales."

Now Ben had sail'd to many a place That's underneath the world; But in two years the ship came home, And all her sails were furl'd.

But when he call'd on Sally Brown,
To see how she went on,
He found she'd got another Ben,
Whose Christian-name was John.

"O Sally Brown, O Sally Brown, How could you serve me so? I've met with many a breeze before, But never such a blow":

Then reading on his 'bacco box He heaved a bitter sigh, And then began to eye his pipe, And then to pipe his eye.

And then he tried to sing "All's Well,"
But could not though he tried;
His head was turn'd, and so he chew'd
His pigtail till he died.

His death, which happen'd in his berth, At forty-odd befell: They went and told the sexton, and The sexton toll'd the bell.

#### **Flowers**

I will not have the mad Clytie, Whose head is turned by the sun; The tulip is a courtly queen, Whom, therefore, I will shun; The cowslip is a country wench, The violet is a nun; - But I will woo the dainty rose, The queen of everyone.

The pea is but a wanton witch, In too much haste to wed, And clasps her rings on every hand The wolfsbane I should dread; - Nor will I dreary rosemary That always mourns the dead; - But I will woo the dainty rose, With her cheeks of tender red.

The lily is all in white, like a saint,
And so is no mate for me And the daisy's cheek is tipped with blush,
She is of such low degree;
Jasmine is sweet, and has many loves,
And the broom's betrothed to the bee; But I will plight with the dainty rose,
For fairest of all is she.

#### Gold!

Gold! Gold! Gold!
Bright and yellow, hard and cold
Molten, graven, hammered and rolled,
Heavy to get and light to hold,
Hoarded, bartered, bought and sold,
Stolen, borrowed, squandered, doled,
Spurned by young, but hung by old
To the verge of a church yard mold;
Price of many a crime untold.
Gold! Gold! Gold!
Good or bad a thousand fold!
How widely it agencies vary,
To save - to ruin - to curse - to bless As even its minted coins express:
Now stamped with the image of Queen Bess,
And now of a bloody Mary.

# I Remember, I Remember

I Remember, I Remember

I remember, I remember
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn;
He never came a wink too soon
Nor brought too long a day;
But now, I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away.

I remember, I remember
The roses red and white,
The violets and the lily cups-Those flowers made of light!
The lilacs where the robin built,
And where my brother set
The laburnum on his birthday,-The tree is living yet!

I remember, I remember Where I was used to swing, And thought the air must rush as fresh To swallows on the wing; My spirit flew in feathers then That is so heavy now, The summer pools could hardly cool The fever on my brow.

I remember, I remember
The fir-trees dark and high;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky:
It was a childish ignorance,
But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm farther off from Heaven
Than when I was a boy.

#### No!

No sun--no moon! No morn--no noon! No dawn--no dusk--no proper time of day--No sky--no earthly view--No distance looking blue--No road--no street--no "t'other side this way"--No end to any Row--No indications where the Crescents go--No top to any steeple--No recognitions of familiar people--No courtesies for showing 'em--No knowing 'em! No traveling at all--no locomotion--No inkling of the way--no notion--"No go" by land or ocean--No mail--no post--No news from any foreign coast--No Park, no Ring, no afternoon gentility--No company--no nobility--No warmth, no cheerfulness, no healthful ease, No comfortable feel in any member--No shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees, No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds--November!

#### **November**

No sun - no moon!
No morn - no noon No dawn - no dusk - no proper time of day.
No warmth, no cheerfulness, no healthful ease,
No comfortable feel in any member No shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees,
No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds! November!

# On Mistress Nicely, a Pattern for Housekeepers

She was a woman peerless in her station, With household virtues wedded to her name; Spotless in linen, grass-bleached in her fame; And pure and clear-starched in her conversation; Thence in my Castle of Imagination She dwells for evermore, the dainty dame, To keep all airy draperies from shame And all dream furnitures in preservation:

There walketh she with keys quite silver bright, In perfect hose and shoes of seemly black, Apron and stomacher of lily white, And decent order follows in her track: The burnished plate grows lustrous in her sight, And polished floors and tables shine her back.

#### **Past and Present**

I remember, I remember
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn;
He never came a wink too soon
Nor bought too long a day;
But now, I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away.

I remember, I remember
The roses, red and white,
The violets, and the lily-cups-Those flowers made of light!
The lilacs where the robin built,
And where my brother set
The laburnum on his birthday,-The tree is living yet!

I remember, I remember Where I was used to swing, And throught the air must rush as fresh To swallows on the wing; My spirit flew in feathers then That is so heavy now, And summer pools could hardly cool The fever on my brow.

I remember, I remember
The fir frees dark and high;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky:
It was a childish ignorance,
But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm farther off from Heaven
Than when I was a boy.

#### Ruth

Ruth

She stood breast-high amid the corn, Clasp'd by the golden light of morn, Like the sweetheart of the sun, Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On her cheek an autumn flush, Deeply ripen'd;—such a blush In the midst of brown was born, Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell, Which were blackest none could tell, But long lashes veil'd a light, That had else been all too bright.

And her hat, with shady brim, Made her tressy forehead dim; Thus she stood amid the stooks, Praising God with sweetest looks:—

Sure, I said, Heav'n did not mean, Where I reap thou shouldst but glean, Lay thy sheaf adown and come, Share my harvest and my home.

#### **Silence**

Silence

There is a silence where hath been no sound,
 There is a silence where no sound may be,
 In the cold grave—under the deep, deep sea,
Or in wide desert where no life is found,
Which hath been mute, and still must sleep profound;
 No voice is hush'd—no life treads silently,
 But clouds and cloudy shadows wander free,
That never spoke, over the idle ground:
But in green ruins, in the desolate walls
 Of antique palaces, where Man hath been,
Though the dun fox or wild hyæna calls,
 And owls, that flit continually between,
Shriek to the echo, and the low winds moan—
There the true Silence is, self-conscious and alone.

# The Bridge of Sighs

One more Unfortunate, Weary of breath, Rashly importunate, Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly, Lift her with care; Fashion'd so slenderly Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments Clinging like cerements; Whilst the wave constantly Drips from her clothing; Take her up instantly, Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully; Think of her mournfully, Gently and humanly; Not of the stains of her, All that remains of her Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny Into her mutiny Rash and undutiful: Past all dishonour, Death has left on her Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
One of Eve's family—
Wipe those poor lips of hers
Oozing so clammily.

Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses;
Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home?

Who was her father?
Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
Had she a brother?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other?

Alas! for the rarity Of Christian charity Under the sun!
O, it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly, Fatherly, motherly Feelings had changed: Love, by harsh evidence, Thrown from its eminence; Even God's providence Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood, with amazement,
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver;
But not the dark arch,
Or the black flowing river:
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
Swift to be hurl'd—
Anywhere, anywhere
Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly— No matter how coldly The rough river ran— Over the brink of it, Picture it—think of it, Dissolute Man! Lave in it, drink of it, Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly, Lift her with care; Fashion'd so slenderly, Young, and so fair!

Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly,
Decently, kindly,
Smooth and compose them;
And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring
Thro' muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
Fix'd on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurr'd by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest.—
Cross her hands humbly
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast!

Owning her weakness, Her evil behaviour, And leaving, with meekness, Her sins to her Saviour!

#### The Death Bed

We watch'd her breathing thro' the night, Her breathing soft and low, As in her breast the wave of life Kept heaving to and fro.

But when the morn came dim and sad And chill with early showers, Her queit eyelids closed - she had Another morn than ours.

#### The Death-bed

We watch'd her breathing thro' the night, Her breathing soft and low, As in her breast the wave of life Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seem'd to speak, So slowly moved about, As we had lent her half our powers To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears, Our fears our hopes belied— We thought her dying when she slept, And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad, And chill with early showers, Her quiet eyelids closed—she had Another morn than ours.

# The Dream of Eugene Aram

'Twas in the prime of summer-time An evening calm and cool, And four-and-twenty happy boys Came bounding out of school: There were some that ran and some that leapt, Like troutlets in a pool.

Away they sped with gamesome minds, And souls untouched by sin; To a level mead they came, and there They drave the wickets in: Pleasantly shone the setting sun Over the town of Lynn.

Like sportive deer they coursed about, And shouted as they ran,--Turning to mirth all things of earth, As only boyhood can; But the Usher sat remote from all, A melancholy man!

His hat was off, his vest apart,
To catch heaven's blessed breeze;
For a burning thought was in his brow,
And his bosom ill at ease:
So he leaned his head on his hands, and read
The book upon his knees!

Leaf after leaf he turned it o'er Nor ever glanced aside, For the peace of his soul he read that book In the golden eventide: Much study had made him very lean, And pale, and leaden-eyed.

At last he shut the pond'rous tome, With a fast and fervent grasp He strained the dusky covers close, And fixed the brazen hasp; "Oh, God! could I so close my mind, And clasp it with a clasp!"

Then leaping on his feet upright, Some moody turns he took,--Now up the mead, then down the mead, And past a shady nook,--And lo! he saw a little boy That pored upon a book.

"My gentle lad, what is't you read --Romance or fairy fable? Or is it some historic page, Of kings and crowns unstable?"
The young boy gave an upward glance,-"It is 'The Death of Abel.'"

The Usher took six hasty strides, As smit with sudden pain, --Six hasty strides beyond the place, Then slowly back again; And down he sat beside the lad, And talked with him of Cain;

And, long since then, of bloody men, Whose deeds tradition saves; Of lonely folks cut off unseen, And hid in sudden graves; Of horrid stabs, in groves forlorn, And murders done in caves;

And how the sprites of injured men Shriek upward from the sod. -- Ay, how the ghostly hand will point To show the burial clod: And unknown facts of guilty acts Are seen in dreams from God!

He told how murderers walk the earth Beneath the curse of Cain, --With crimson clouds before their eyes, And flames about their brain: For blood has left upon their souls Its everlasting stain!

"And well," quoth he, "I know for truth, Their pangs must be extreme, -- Woe, woe, unutterable woe, -- Who spill life's sacred stream! For why, Methought last night I wrought A murder, in a dream!

One that had never done me wrong -- A feeble man and old; I led him to a lonely field, The moon shone clear and cold: Now here, said I, this man shall die, And I will have his gold!

"Two sudden blows with a ragged stick, And one with a heavy stone, One hurried gash with a hasty knife, --And then the deed was done: There was nothing lying at my foot But lifeless flesh and bone! "Nothing but lifeless flesh and bone, That could not do me ill; And yet I feared him all the more, For lying there so still: There was a manhood in his look, That murder could not kill!"

"And lo! the universal air Seemed lit with ghastly flame; Ten thousand thousand dreadful eyes Were looking down in blame: I took the dead man by his hand, And called upon his name!

"O God! it made me quake to see Such sense within the slain! But when I touched the lifeless clay, The blood gushed out amain! For every clot, a burning spot Was scorching in my brain!

"My head was like an ardent coal, My heart as solid ice; My wretched, wretched soul, I knew, Was at the Devil's price: A dozen times I groaned: the dead Had never groaned but twice!

"And now, from forth the frowning sky, From the Heaven's topmost height, I heard a voice -- the awful voice Of the blood-avenging sprite -- 'Thou guilty man! take up thy dead And hide it from my sight!'

"I took the dreary body up, And cast it in a stream, --A sluggish water, black as ink, The depth was so extreme: My gentle boy, remember this Is nothing but a dream!

"Down went the corse with a hollow plunge, And vanished in the pool; Anon I cleansed my bloody hands, And washed my forehead cool, And sat among the urchins young, That evening in the school.

"Oh, Heaven! to think of their white souls, And mine so black and grim!

I could not share in childish prayer, Nor join in Evening Hymn: Like a Devil of the Pit I seemed, 'Mid holy Cherubim!

"And peace went with them, one and all, And each calm pillow spread; But Guilt was my grim Chamberlain That lighted me to bed; And drew my midnight curtains round With fingers bloody red!

"All night I lay in agony,
In anguish dark and deep,
My fevered eyes I dared not close,
But stared aghast at Sleep:
For Sin had rendered unto her
The keys of Hell to keep!

"All night I lay in agony,
From weary chime to chime,
With one besetting horrid hint,
That racked me all the time;
A mighty yearning, like the first
Fierce impulse unto crime!

"One stern, tyrannic thought, that made All other thoughts its slave; Stronger and stronger every pulse Did that temptation crave, --Still urging me to go and see The Dead Man in his grave!

"Heavily I rose up, as soon
As light was in the sky,
And sought the black accursed pool
With a wild misgiving eye:
And I saw the Dead in the river-bed,
For the faithless stream was dry.

"Merrily rose the lark, and shook The dewdrop from its wing; But I never marked its morning flight, I never heard it sing: For I was stooping once again Under the horrid thing.

"With breathless speed, like a soul in chase, I took him up and ran; There was no time to dig a grave Before the day began: In a lonesome wood, with heaps of leaves,

#### I hid the murdered man!

"And all that day I read in school, But my thought was otherwhere; As soon as the midday task was done, In secret I went there: And a mighty wind had swept the leaves, And still the corpse was bare!

"Then down I cast me on my face, And first began to weep, For I knew my secret then was one That earth refused to keep: Or land, or sea, though he should be Ten thousand fathoms deep.

"So wills the fierce avenging Sprite, Till blood for blood atones! Ay, though he's buried in a cave, And trodden down with stones, And years have rotted off his flesh, --The world shall see his bones!

"Oh God! that horrid, horrid dream Besets me now awake! Again--again, with dizzy brain, The human life I take: And my red right hand grows raging hot, Like Cranmer's at the stake.

"And still no peace for the restless clay, Will wave or mould allow; The horrid thing pursues my soul -- It stands before me now!" The fearful Boy looked up, and saw Huge drops upon his brow.

That very night while gentle sleep
The urchin's eyelids kissed,
Two stern-faced men set out from Lynn,
Through the cold and heavy mist;
And Eugene Aram walked between,
With gyves upon his wrist.

#### The Haunted House

Oh, very gloomy is the house of woe,
Where tears are falling while the bell is knelling,
With all the dark solemnities that show
That Death is in the dwelling!

Oh, very, very dreary is the room
Where Love, domestic Love, no longer nestles,
But smitten by the common stroke of doom,
The corpse lies on the trestles!

But house of woe, and hearse, and sable pall, The narrow home of the departed mortal, Ne'er looked so gloomy as that Ghostly Hall, With its deserted portal!

The centipede along the threshold crept,
The cobweb hung across in mazy tangle,
And in its winding sheet the maggot slept
At every nook and angle.

The keyhole lodged the earwig and her brood,
The emmets of the steps has old possession,
And marched in search of their diurnal food
In undisturbed procession.

As undisturbed as the prehensile cell
Of moth or maggot, or the spider's tissue,
For never foot upon that threshold fell,
To enter or to issue.

O'er all there hung the shadow of a fear, A sense of mystery the spirit daunted, And said, as plain as whisper in the ear, The place is haunted.

Howbeit, the door I pushed—or so I dreamed--Which slowly, slowly gaped, the hinges creaking With such a rusty eloquence, it seemed That Time himself was speaking.

But Time was dumb within that mansion old, Or left his tale to the heraldic banners That hung from the corroded walls, and told Of former men and manners.

Those tattered flags, that with the opened door, Seemed the old wave of battle to remember, While fallen fragments danced upon the floor Like dead leaves in December.

The startled bats flew out, bird after bird, The screech-owl overhead began to flutter, And seemed to mock the cry that she had heard Some dying victim utter!

A shriek that echoed from the joisted roof,
And up the stair, and further still and further,
Till in some ringing chamber far aloof
In ceased its tale of murther!

Meanwhile the rusty armor rattled round,
The banner shuddered, and the ragged streamer;
All things the horrid tenor of the sound
Acknowledged with a tremor.

The antlers where the helmet hung, and belt,
Stirred as the tempest stirs the forest branches,
Or as the stag had trembled when he felt
The bloodhound at his haunches.

The window jingled in its crumbled frame,
And through its many gaps of destitution
Dolorous moans and hollow sighings came,
Like those of dissolution.

The wood-louse dropped, and rolled into a ball,
Touched by some impulse occult or mechanic;
And nameless beetles ran along the wall
In universal panic.

The subtle spider, that, from overhead,
Hung like a spy on human guilt and error,
Suddenly turned, and up its slender thread
Ran with a nimble terror.

The very stains and fractures on the wall,
Assuming features solemn and terrific,
Hinted some tragedy of that old hall,
Locked up in hieroglyphic.

Some tale that might, perchance, have solved the doubt, Wherefore, among those flags so dull and livid, The banner of the bloody hand shone out So ominously vivid.

Some key to that inscrutable appeal
Which made the very frame of Nature quiver,
And every thrilling nerve and fiber feel
So ague-like a shiver.

For over all there hung a cloud of fear, A sense of mystery the spirit daunted, And said, as plain as whisper in the ear, The place is haunted! Prophetic hints that filled the soul with dread, But through one gloomy entrance pointing mostly, The while some secret inspiration said, "That chamber is the ghostly!"

Across the door no gossamer festoon
Swung pendulous, --no web, no dusty fringes,
No silky chrysalis or white cocoon,
About its nooks and hinges.

The spider shunned the interdicted room,
The moth, the beetle, and the fly were banished,
And when the sunbeam fell athwart the gloom,
The very midge had vanished.

One lonely ray that glanced upon a bed, As if with awful aim direct and certain, To show the Bloody Hand, in burning red, Embroidered on the curtain.

# The Song of the Shirt

The Song of the Shirt

With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat, in unwomanly rags,
Plying her needle and thread-Stitch! stitch!
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch
She sang the "Song of the Shirt."

"Work! work! work!
While the cock is crowing aloof!
And work — work — work,
Till the stars shine through the roof!
It's Oh! to be a slave
Along with the barbarous Turk,
Where woman has never a soul to save,
If this is Christian work!

"Work — work — work
Till the brain begins to swim;
Work — work — work
Till the eyes are heavy and dim!
Seam, and gusset, and band,
Band, and gusset, and seam,
Till over the buttons I fall asleep,
And sew them on in a dream!

"Oh, Men, with Sisters dear!
Oh, Men, with Mothers and Wives!
It is not linen you're wearing out,
But human creatures' lives!
Stitch — stitch — stitch,
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
Sewing at once with a double thread,
A Shroud as well as a Shirt.

But why do I talk of Death?

That Phantom of grisly bone,
I hardly fear its terrible shape,
It seems so like my own —
It seems so like my own,
Because of the fasts I keep;
Oh, God! that bread should be so dear,
And flesh and blood so cheap!

"Work — work — work!
My Labour never flags;
And what are its wages? A bed of straw,
A crust of bread — and rags.
That shatter'd roof — and this naked floor —

A table — a broken chair — And a wall so blank, my shadow I thank For sometimes falling there!

"Work — work — work!
From weary chime to chime,
 Work — work — work!
As prisoners work for crime!
 Band, and gusset, and seam,
 Seam, and gusset, and band,
Till the heart is sick, and the brain benumb'd,
 As well as the weary hand.

"Work — work — work,
In the dull December light,
And work — work — work,
When the weather is warm and bright —
While underneath the eaves
The brooding swallows cling
As if to show me their sunny backs
And twit me with the spring.

Oh! but to breathe the breath
Of the cowslip and primrose sweet —
With the sky above my head,
And the grass beneath my feet
For only one short hour
To feel as I used to feel,
Before I knew the woes of want
And the walk that costs a meal!

Oh! but for one short hour!
A respite however brief!
No blessed leisure for Love or Hope,
But only time for Grief!
A little weeping would ease my heart,
But in their briny bed
My tears must stop, for every drop
Hinders needle and thread!"

With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat in unwomanly rags,
Plying her needle and thread —
Stitch! stitch! stitch!
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch, —
Would that its tone could reach the Rich! —
She sang this "Song of the Shirt!"

# The Sun Was Slumbering in the West

The sun was slumbering in the West, My daily labors past; On Anna's soft and gentle breast My head reclined at last; The darkness closed around, so dear To fond congenial souls, And thus she murmur'd at my ear, "My love, we're out of coals!

"That Mister Bond has call'd again, Insisting on his rent; And all the Todds are coming up To see us, out of Kent --I quite forgot to tell you John Has had a tipsy fall --I'm sure there's something going on WIth that vile Mary Hall!

"Miss Bell has bought the sweetest silk, And I have bought the rest -- Of course, if we go out of town, Southend will be the best. I really think the Jones's house Would be the thing for us; I think I told you Mrs. Pope Had parted with her hus --

"Cook, by the way, came up today,
To bid me suit myself -And what d'ye think? The rats have gnaw'd
The victuals on the shelf,
And, lord! there's such a letter come,
Inviting you to fight!
Of course you don't intend to go -God bless you, dear, good night!"

#### The World is with Me

The world is with me, and its many cares,
Its woes--its wants--the anxious hopes and fears
That wait on all terrestrial affairs-The shades of former and of future years-Forboding fancies and prophetic tears,
Quelling a spirit that was once elate.
Heavens! what a wilderness the world appears,
Where youth, and mirth, and health are out of date;
But no--a laugh of innocence and joy
Resounds, like music of the fairy race,
And, gladly turning from the world's annoy,
I gaze upon a little radiant face,
And bless, internally, the merry boy
Who "makes a son-shine in a shady place."

# **Tim Turpin**

Tim Turpin he was gravel-blind, And ne'er had seen the skies: For Nature, when his head was made, Forgot to dot his eyes.

So, like a Christmas pedagogue, Poor Tim was forced to do -Look out for pupils; for he had A vacancy for two.

There's some have specs to help their sight Of objects dim and small: But Tim had specks within his eyes, And could not see at all.

Now Tim he wooed a servant maid, And took her to his arms; For he, like Pyramus, had cast A wall-eye on her charms.

By day she led him up and down. Where'er he wished to jog, A happy wife, altho' she led The life of any dog.

But just when Tim had lived a month In honey with his wife, A surgeon ope'd his Milton eyes, Like oysters, with a knife.

But when his eyes were opened thus, He wished them dark again : For when he looked upon his wife, He saw her very plain.

Her face was bad, her figure worse, He couldn't bear to eat : For she was anything but like A grace before his meat.

Now Tim he was a feeling man: For when his sight was thick It made him feel for everything - But that was with a stick.

So, with a cudgel in his hand It was not light or slim -He knocked at his wife's head until It opened unto him.

And when the corpse was stiff and cold, He took his slaughtered spouse, And laid her in a heap with all The ashes of her house.

But like a wicked murderer, He lived in constant fear From day to day, and so he cut His throat from ear to ear.

The neighbours fetched a doctor in : Said he, "'This wound I dread Can hardly be sewed up - his life Is hanging on a thread."

But when another week was gone, He gave him stronger hope -Instead of hanging on a thread, Of hanging on a rope.

Ah! when he hid his bloody work In ashes round about, How little he supposed the truth Would soon be sifted out.

But when the parish dustman came, His rubbish to withdraw, He found more dust within the heap Than he contracted for !

A dozen men to try the fact Were sworn that very day; But though they all were jurors, yet No conjurors were they.

Said Tim unto those jurymen, You need not waste your breath, For I confess myself at once The author of her death.

And, oh! when I refect upon The blood that I have spilt, Just like a button is my soul, Inscribed with double guilt!

Then turning round his head again, He saw before his eyes, A great judge, and a little judge, The judges of a-size!

The great judge took his judgment cap, And put it on his head, And sentenced Tim by law to hang Till he was three times dead. So he was tried, and he was hung (Fit punishment for such)
On Horsham-drop, and none can say It was a drop too much.

#### **Time of Roses**

It was not in the Winter
Our loving lot was cast;
It was the time of roses—
We pluck'd them as we pass'd!

That churlish season never frown'd On early lovers yet:
O no—the world was newly crown'd With flowers when first we met!

'Twas twilight, and I bade you go, But still you held me fast; It was the time of roses— We pluck'd them as we pass'd!