

Revelation

In a vale of light and laughter,
Smiling 'neath the friendly sun,
Where fulfilment follow'd after
Ev'ry hope or dream begun;
Where an Aidenn, gay and glorious, 5
Beckon'd down the winsome way;
There my soul, o'er pain victorious,
Laugh'd and linger'd—yesterday.

Green and narrow was my valley,
Temper'd with a verdant shade; 10
Sun-deck'd brooklets musically
Sparkled thro' each gorgeous glade;
And at night the stars serenely
Glow'd betwixt the boughs o'erhead,
While Astarte, calm and queenly, 15
Floods of fairy radiance shed.

- There amid the tinted bowers,
 Raptur'd with the opiate spell
 Of the grasses, ferns, and flowers,
 Poppy, phlox, and pimpernel, 20
 Long I lay, entranc'd and dreaming,
 Pleas'd with Nature's bounteous store,
 Till I mark'd the shaded gleaming
 Of the sky, and yearn'd for more.
- Eagerly the branches tearing, 25
 Clear'd I all the space above,
 Till the bolder gaze, high faring,
 Scann'd the naked skies of Jove;
 Deeps unguess'd now shone before me,
 Splendid beam'd the solar car; 30
 Wings of fervid fancy bore me
 Out beyond the farthest star.
- Reaching, grasping, wishing, longing
 For the pageant brought to sight,
 Vain I watch'd the gold orbs thronging 35
 Round celestial poles of light.
 Madly on a moonbeam ladder
 Heav'n's abyss I sought to scale,
 Ever wiser, ever sadder, 40
 As the fruitless task would fail.
- Then, with futile striving sated,
 Veer'd my soul to earth again,
 Well content that I was fated
 For a fair, yet low domain; 45
 Pleasing thoughts of glad tomorrows,
 Like the blissful moments past,
 Lull'd to rest my transient sorrows,
 Still'd my godless greed at last.
- But my downward glance, returning, 50
 Shrank in fright from what it spy'd;
 Slopes in hideous torment burning,
 Terror in the brooklet's ride;
 For the dell, of shade denuded
 By my desecrating hand,
 'Neath the bare sky blaz'd and brooded 55
 As a lost, accursed land.