

# SEA - CHANGE

By JAMES H. COUSINS

... Nothing of him that doth fade  
But doth suffer a sea-change . . .  
The Tempest.

GANESH & CO., MADRAS

1920

*To*  
*Yone Noguchi*

# SEA-CHANGE

May 1919—April 1920

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*To*  
*Yone Noguchi,*

# **SEA-CHANGE**

**May 1919—April 1920**

# A Nuptial Ode

*For the Marriage of Wave and Cloud*

*(commonly called a Waterspout)*

*in the Bay of Bengal.*

We that in ships unto the sea go down,  
Lord it in pride  
Over the tied  
Untravelled town.  
Yet, for all upon our tongue,  
Still have we left unsung  
To the high utmost of its song-estate,  
Morn's blinding signal from an opened gate  
And midnight's myriad-candled rites  
Whereof we, acolytes  
Into deep mystery initiate,  
Chant not at all, or only in symbol chant.

Hush! even now,  
Touched by vision's hierophant  
On panting breast  
And rapt interpretative brow,

We part the chamber-curtains of the west,  
And in the trance of twilight see  
The primal mystery:

Lo! vastly there  
The fathering Cloud, eager from sleep,  
Shakes out his knotty hair,  
And toward the naked couchant mothering Deep  
Puts forth an arm thrilling and tentative  
With what may live  
Of solace, agony and bliss  
In his tremendous kiss.  
And she,  
Fruitful yet ever virgin Sea  
Moves toward the whirling flameless fire  
In his arm's irresistible desire;  
Yet falls away  
In swooned reluctance from his passion's sway,  
With heaving breast and breath  
Pulled 'twixt the lure and horror of life and  
death.  
For She who of her being gives



Life's plasmic substance unto all that lives,  
Out of this hour's wild consanguinity  
Of twin-born Cloud and Sea.  
Shapes elemental life to be ;  
And in dim ages past the figuring mind  
She shall from earth's long barrows thief away  
The silent generations of our clay  
Hearsed by the body-snatching rain and wind ;  
Yea for our dust  
(Her own that she has given us in trust)  
Shall be the ultimate urn  
Whatever way our deathless Pilgrim turn.  
So heaveth she with doubtful breast and breath,  
Lured and repelled by life and death ;  
Even as a bride  
Who on her marriage morning, prophet-eyed,  
Sees ghostly, in her path with blossoms spread,  
Her unbegotten offspring old and dead.

Oh! there a sudden twilight star  
Throws from afar  
A barrier of silence to our chant,

And holds it hesitant  
This side of the starry uttermost of song  
That only to the Spirit doth belong,  
Nor rudely may be bent  
Unto that dissonant accompaniment  
That now affrights the ear,—  
No sweet celestial choiring, angel-clear,  
Nor the persuasive Orphic note  
To man and beast and tree heart-intimate;  
But elemental music, rude, remote,  
Round which dread swooping issues wait;  
The awful pipe of a sea-hooféd Pan  
Rutting through weedy glades  
And monster-haunted shades  
Native no more to God-awakened man.

Ah! unto thee,  
Most fiercely wooed, most marriageable Sea,  
Who toward thy fiery moment now dost pant,  
Goes not the last abandon of our chant;  
For though stooped Science dredge thy dark  
abyss

And stalk the worm upon thy fretted brink  
For our beginnings, lo! our Spirit's reins  
Know the sure inward pull  
Of hands made steady and cool  
From washings in a calmer wave than thine,  
And a less heady drink.  
Yea, though through all men's veins  
Runs yet the lustful tincture of thy phlegm,  
Haunting their dreamings like a poisonous wine  
With Paphian memories that pluck their being's  
hem;

Not unto them or thee  
Bend we the final knee,  
Or yield the immortal Spirit's anadem,  
We the twice-born  
Of thine old night and a still shrouded morn

Yet must we dedicate,  
Unto the ultimate measure of thy state,  
Full share of praiseful song  
To thee, so vastly patient at the thong  
Of thy great Binder; thee who hast

Borne our amœbæan protoplast.  
On thy swiftly turning gyre  
Thou hast upswung our slow compounded clay,  
Nor whimpered underneath the dire  
Aeonian labors of the shaping Soul  
Through and beyond the fingers of thy spray  
Toward ah! what dim, what distant goal,  
What moulded vessel with what godlike stamp  
Though our ascension's gradual ramp  
Bear us beyond thy trouble, still to thee  
Goeth the grateful heart  
For thine ungrudging part  
In those high pawns of heaven's wizardry—  
Hands that thy rapture, soul-transmuted, stirs  
To toil as heaven's artificers,  
Feet that to spirit-purposes have climbed,  
Lips that celestially have rhymed ;—  
For these, for these, our head is bent,  
Even as player for fair instrument,  
In thankfulness to thee,  
O primal Undine! void of soul  
Till through thy hollow heart shall roll

A subtler urge  
Than moves the slow prismatic surge\*  
On golden, long irradiant sands  
In sleepy Indian lands.

Yet wherefore even our song's most vain  
pretence  
Of songful precedence,  
When each responsive throat  
But resonates unto one mystic Note  
As the dark Master, for his bliss, has willed ?  
Now let our chant be filled  
With joy that each may echo unto each  
A syllable of that majestic Speech !  
What if 'tis man's high privilege to float  
On yet unsprouted pinions of the Soul  
About life's hidden pole ;  
And thou bestride life's dim circumference  
Till life and we and thou go hence  
At a deep inward Call ;  
Lo ! at the ultimate Bacchanal  
A festive cosmic Lip

Shall happily take shape  
From man's ripe rounded grape,  
And from thy pledging chalice sip,  
Yea, to the seas drink of the seas  
Even to their lees!

Oh! now 'tis meet that every head be bowed  
While from yon palpitating cloud  
Appalling urgency feels to and fro;  
And unto it at last, at last doth go,  
Past all alarm,  
In great surrender utterly,  
Tremblingly white of arm,  
The upstrained invitation of the Sea  
Unto some fanged immeasurable bliss  
Whose word of rapture is a mighty hiss,  
As Wave and Cloud,  
Vast coiled with vast, to reeling passion vowed,  
In awful nuptials madly blent  
Are clasped and spent!

*May, 1919.*

# A Planetary Conjunction

*Over the Pacific Ocean*

Venus and Jupiter sat side by side  
On a cloud-bank above the buried sun,  
But in the silver mirror of the tide  
Their sea-washed limbs were mingled into one  
And yet, if this was really so  
I do not know ;  
For suddenly my eyes  
(Duped by the protean wizardry  
Of the image-changing sea  
And magic-making skies)  
Saw instead a stem upshoot  
From a deeply hidden root ;  
Shoot in silver up the sea  
(Cooling the tropic ardour of the tide  
Round Asia's dimly folded hem)  
And find its consummation, godly-proud,  
On a soft bank of cloud,  
Where, loverly,  
Two silver flowers upon a single stem

On a cloud-bank above the furrowed tide,  
Venus and Jupiter bloomed side by side.

But whether this was so,  
Or whether this  
Was but the frail caught shadow of the bliss  
That moves and gleams  
When the Mage-Master's fingers throw  
The vast reticulation of His dreams  
Across these windows of our outer night  
To lure us to the veritable Light,  
I cannot say. But this I know,  
That godlike Ones have bathed Their shining  
limbs  
In the thick turgid sea  
Of our mortality,  
Not only in divine theophany,  
But verily themselves, yea verily.  
For in the hour when thought's red signal dims,  
And the blood's flickering whims  
Make of themselves a white  
And steady light,  
Then have They crossed my sight,



Even as seer and prophet saith.  
That this is so,  
My lifted hand here witnesseth.  
Yea, I do know  
The feel of Them about me in the day.  
Their footfall friendly makes the loneliest way.  
Deep in the sevenfold furnace of despair  
Another Form is there ;  
And in the mystic cavern of the night,  
Behind the doors of sound and sight,  
My spirit joins Their high austere delight,  
And knows that our pale wavering planets are  
Conjunct with an unwavering Star.

But not alone Their shining limbs They lave  
In our thick turgid wave ;  
Oh ! I have tasted sap in our harsh stem  
Would push us up to Them,  
Even to Their native heavenly place,  
Had we but grace  
To set our pulses to the rhythmic thrill  
Of that importunate Will,  
And climb into great silence silverly

Out of the muddy rootings of our deep,  
Where the blind ravening monsters creep,  
Up to the mirroring surface of the sea.  
Oh! we might unto heavenly stature spring;  
Yea, loverly,  
(As Jupiter and Venus, side by side,  
High symboling across the tide,)  
Godlike with godlike hold great whispering  
On Love's rare-footed dizzy crest,  
And, heart with deep Heart satisfied,  
Fulfil the Spirit's ancient quest,  
Immortal bridegroom with immortal bride.

# The Volcano Asamayama

## I

Asamayama lifts a quivering lip  
And breathes his heart's wild hell in heaven's  
face.

Old angers round his mouth have left their  
trace.

Chained passion shakes him like a labouring  
ship.

Bald as a monk, he cracks his lightning's whip  
And scars his flesh, that falls from humble  
grace,

Vexed that his unrepentant pride's red mace  
Calls ash and cinders only to his scrip.

Aye, and not he alone, if truth were told,  
Not he alone, but each aspiring heart,  
Lips with high song unsung made sharply  
sweet,

All whom old wizard Life gives lead for gold,  
Wince at as low an end to hope's high start—  
Cinders and ash under oblivious feet.

## II

“Hast Thou no throb responsive to our trust,  
Eternal Power who crushest us to wine  
For Thy delight, yet dost to us assign  
Out of life's baking but a blackened crust ?  
Nay, nay ! Despite our tale of moth and rust,  
Still have we hope our eyes shall yet divine  
Thy purpose ours, and see thine emblem shine  
On our scarred banners—even in the dust,”  
I said ; and there a wayside Buddha stood  
Graven in cinder ! Ruin and peace were wed,  
Sealed with so Godlike impress, that I cried :  
“ All that life could not, when the spirit would,  
Shall yet prevail ! ”—Asamayama said :  
“ Lo, in its ash my flame is justified.”

### III

*From the French of Paul Richard*

Is this on Earth's fair flesh a noisome sore  
From which dark humours pour ?  
Or trickling stream and horrid fumes that float  
Out of some monstrous throat ?

No ! but a wound upon the Mother's breast  
From which is pressed  
Red blood of earth, blood of her heart's desire,  
And love's most ardent fire ?

Yes, here has Light sprung up a Godward stair ;  
Faith holds aloft her flare ;  
And where dense clouds of prayer toward  
    heaven roll,  
Drop the dead ashes of a winging soul.

*Oiwake, Japan.*

# Before a Golden Lily

*On the slope of a volcano.*

From life's dark wind-swept woods I came,  
A moth to Beauty's altar doomed.  
I flit about your throbbing flame—  
Yet I am not consumed !

Nay, for one purpose here doth meet :  
Out of life's clay I lift my wing,  
As you of buried fires the sweet  
Apotheosis spring.

O all whose hearts have known eclipse,  
Come ! barefoot stand on hallowed sod,  
And take from Beauty's holy lips  
The very Kiss of God.

## Millwheels

A Miller stood beside his mill  
Under a larch-clad, pine-topped hill,  
And heard, or fancied he could hear,  
From his two millwheels, rumbling near,  
Words with their creaky gurgling blent  
That sounded like an argument.

One wheel, upon whose sparkling head  
Power from above was richly shed,  
Moved with a patronising bow,  
And scattered largesse from his brow,  
And offered to the thirsty lands  
The gift of water from his hands.  
One gathered from his look and tone  
He deemed these riches were his own.

The other wheel, about his feet  
Felt life resistless, cold, and fleet,  
A stream that bore him from the ground  
And whirled him in a fruitless round.  
No drop for self his toil could save  
Between the cradle and the grave ;

And always in his ceaseless grind  
He turned a threat in his dark mind.

Then, as they argued swift and pat  
That This is this, and That is that,  
And bandied all the foolish lies  
That men and millwheels hold as wise,  
The listening Miller set his head  
Sideways, and subtly smiled, and said :  
“ My friends, high up the larch-clad hill  
From one deep spring your life doth spill ;  
And miles beyond my farthest crop  
One sea your brawling mouths will stop.  
Yea, boast you high, or mourn you low,  
One Power is in your seaward flow ;  
And while you scatter praise and blame,  
You do my grinding all the same.”

And then the millwheels seemed to cease ;  
And on the world there fell great peace,  
As if a back had dropped a load ;  
And I went thinking down the road



Under the larch-clad, pine-topped hill  
Where stood the Miller by his mill •  
Smiling with eyes of jewelled flame.  
I quite forgot to ask His Name.

*Kutsukake, Japan.*

# A Poet has a Dialogue with a Cicada

*In a Japanese garden.*

*Poet*

What a funny song you sing  
In the giant sungi tree :

*Me me me me meeeeeee!*

Always, on your lofty shelf,  
Are you thinking of yourself?

*(Me me me me meeeeeee.)*

Does not something thrill your wing  
For another brown blind thing  
Singing in another tree

*Me me me me meeeeeee?*

Cool of twilight, heat of noon,  
Till the death of sun and moon  
Will you never, never, never,  
Never change your tune—

*Me me me me meeeeeee?*

*Cicada*

What a funny song *you* sing,  
Poet! in your tree of life;  
Joy, sorrow, sweetheart, wife,  
Or some distant misty thing.  
Aye, for all your haughty airs,  
Swung 'twixt blasphemy and prayers,  
Who sings nearer to the truth?—  
Not your burning lie of Youth,  
Or your Age's mumbled tooth;—  
Morning spent in blind desire,  
Evening grudging morn its price,—  
Fire, that has contempt for ice,  
Turned to ice contemning fire!  
Morn or night or heady noon,  
Always *you* are in your tune,—  
“Whence *we* come,” or “Whither go,”  
Or “We know not what *we* know.”  
Chut! your versing, rhymed or free,  
Rings but changes on *me me!*  
Who then has the braver breath,  
You whose song is one long strife

With some shadow you call Death,  
I who nothing know but Life?  
Who is wiser—you or I?

*Poet*

I shall think of a reply.

# Fuel

*A Zen legend of the Woodiness of Wood.*

Paper windows—bugling cracks,  
Lips gone blue and nose gone red,  
Takuanwosho took his axe,  
Split his Buddha through the head,  
Saying, between puffs and whacks,  
“God, who made the winter cruel,  
Snowing up the pine-wood tracks,  
Finds fit nemesis as fuel.”

“Sacrilege!” yelled one who stood  
Blinking at the axe’s flashes.  
...“Nay, I seek the jewels strewed  
In cremated Buddhas’ ashes.”  
...“Meditation strains your mood!  
Here, O fool! you’ll find no jewel!”  
...’Tis no Buddha, then, but wood!  
Come! thaw fingers at my fuel.”

# The Crookedness of Love

*A Song for Japan at midnight and India at sunrise  
simultaneously—or vice versa.*

When my love wakens full of zest  
I sleep the hours away ;  
And when she lays her down to rest  
I tread the wheel of day.  
Now, while her mind's bright blade is stilled,  
Mine flashes quick and keen.

Oh ! love is very crooked willed  
—With half the world between.

When my true love looks kind on me  
My face away I turn.  
When I in cold shake leafly  
Her hands in yearning burn.  
Now, while her sky with stars is pied,  
My earth is sunny green.

Oh ! love is very crooked eyed  
—With half the world between

## A Very Lonely Song

Life is not life without thee, O beloved!  
Nothing its utmost music uttereth  
As when of old my soul with thy soul movéd  
Life, lacking thee, is death.—

Not the sweet exhalation of the spirit  
Into Great Life, but vast unanswered need.  
Oh! to my soul, if thy soul were not near it,  
Death would be death indeed!

## Love and Spring

What is this perfume soothing the harsh air,  
This living glow  
Stirring the pallid snow  
That shuffles like a serpent to its lair?  
No cherries bloom yet for a woman's hair,  
Yet on love's business to and fro  
The sparrows come and go,  
And chirp derision while dull poets sing  
"Love comes with spring."

Nothing they know of love who only know  
Love's phantom in their passion's twisted glass.  
Love that with spring doth come, with spring  
shall go;

But love, true love, with seasons cannot pass.

Love is no wheel-slave to a tyrant's cars;

Speeds not a tittle more at gaze of light,

Nor one more pang doth feel

When the uncoiling dragon of old Night

Pants forth his flaming stars.

Nay, Love itself doth turn the cosmic wheel:



It is God's hand, and spring its changing glove.  
So chirp the sparrows to and fro,  
“ ‘ Love comes with spring ’  
You sing !  
Ah no, no, no !  
Love comes not with the spring  
Or any passing thing.  
Spring comes with love !”

*Tokyo, March 1920*

## A Song in Time of Rain

I wondered why the rain  
Fell in such haste,  
And why the river raced  
With such melodious pain  
Down to the fan-spread plain,  
Out to the vast Pacific main ;  
Till at a pine-log bridge,  
Where fly and midge  
Circled in dervish dance,  
I caught her conquering glance,  
The pink and slender Meadowsweet  
That, on light elfin feet,  
Stretched from her grass-green bank,  
And, in a boldly bashful maiden prank,  
Where the chaste River, knightly dressed  
In steely glitter, coldly past her pressed,  
His bright young cheek mischievously caressed  
With passionate pink finger-tip  
Through which did slip  
Such bliss, that from it there was no dissembling ;

He trembled—and she trembled at his trembling.

Alack!

There was no turning back,  
For, fast behind,  
Instant-made suitors crowded, blind  
To all desire save one—  
To reach the sea-set ladder of the sun,  
And climb the walls of cloud, and spring  
With eager wing  
On to the hunched volcano's back,  
And seek again the zigzag track  
Down to that pine-log bridge  
Where dances fly and midge,  
And touch again the elfin feet  
Of the pink passionate Meadowsweet,  
And feel again with happy sigh  
That wonderful caressing finger-tip  
Through which, from Beauty's soul, doth slip  
Such bliss that (I confess it without shame)  
Were I that river, I  
Would do the same.

Yes,  
Here I will confess  
That this my song doth press  
On pilgrimage as fleet  
To end as sweet.  
For I as perfect bliss  
Have known as this ;  
Not for a moment, nay, but in a pool  
Of green ecstatic quiet, spirit-cool,  
Known love's long rule  
Unto the rapturous full ;  
Till came a sudden spate  
Out of dim hills of fate,  
And swept me forth, singing in exquisite pain,  
Down to the separating plain,  
Out to the lonely main.  
Oh ! I have swarmed up ladders of high prayer  
Into faith's upper air ;  
And I have yearned me cloudlike toward a land  
Stained by no faithless hand ;  
And I do think  
That on the cloistered brink

Of love's ecstatic pool,  
Heart-ardent, spirit-cool,  
The noble sister of the Meadowsweet,  
Gold-hearted Marguerite,  
Feels the premonitory shake  
Of winds that soon will break  
In language rumourous of coming rain  
That seeks its home again.

## L'Envoi—Love's Return

One throbbing cloud on ocean glows  
Toward one that broods on land.  
From each to each the lightning throws  
An eager fire-veined hand.

O heart! whose prophet-vision plumbs  
Bliss deep ev'n unto pain,  
We know from what high rapture comes  
This wild relief of rain—

Then peace...Beloved! glad rivers haste  
Toward their great love, the sea,  
But, after dance and shouting,—taste  
Fulfilment silently.

So, when our yearning reaches goal,  
Forgive my lips their wrong  
If in the clasp of soul and soul  
Dies out the need for song.

*April, 1920.*

## OTHER POEMS

## Three White Eagles

Three white eagles looked at me  
From a tall palmyra tree.  
That was all. But suddenly  
I went dark with lightning glaring  
In my head; and thunder blaring  
Shook me to my bended knee  
At the foot of some strange tree,  
Bare, save for one criss-cross bough  
Where, with spikes about each brow,  
God the Father, God the Mother,  
God the Son and Elder Brother,  
Three in One and One in Three,  
Looked and looked and looked at me.  
...I woke, and with new washen eyes  
Saw the last wrinkle of disguise  
Fold on a Face that hid away  
Behind the vizer Night-and-day...  
And from the tall palmyra tree  
Only three eagles looked at me.



## Half Past Five

Beetles with midriff ringed with red,  
Pendulous bodies, sunset stains  
In flickering wings, and overhead  
Leftward and rightward-spreading planes,  
Bursting the day's hot brassy gyve,  
Buzz briskly forth at half past five.

Round here lies Arcot. History's sleeve  
Wipes out the mark of sword and flame.  
They came, they saw—they went; and leave  
India and beetles much the same.  
These chant an older name than Clive  
As they fly forth at half past five.

Rivers that never knew a fish,  
Bone dry, save once or twice a year.  
When heav'n crowds seaward with a swish,  
Hold for these hosting clans no fear.  
"God wills we soar, while others dive."  
We cross the stream at half past five."

“Om ! Over ! Out ! Who whimpers ‘ Night,  
Night comes with rain and jackal’s yell ’ ?  
God gave us wings to give Him flight.  
That our sole care is.” Which is well,  
For swift birds punctually arrive  
Whose dinner-time is half past five.

Beetle and river-bed and bird,  
And goat-boy with his bamboo flute,  
In a lone poet’s heart have stirred  
Things that are wild to be afoot ;  
High dreams and songs that ache and strive  
To find their wings at half past five.

## A Showery Sunset

Tear-jewelled lashes of a cloud  
Droop on the sun's slow closing eye.  
Humbled are trees that noon made proud.  
The loud wind softens to a sigh.

Tears...and a last look's golden dart  
On day's past bliss, too brief to cloy ;  
And, mirrored in my quiet heart,  
Sadness that sweeter is than joy.

# Abelard to Heloise

*Notre Dame, Paris, Twelfth Century*

A fool sang past the cloister wall :

“ Ask all of love, for love knōws all.”

And lo! my questions of the Soul

(The how and when, the source and goal,

And why this bubble blown of space?)

Are asked and answered in your face.

Love puts the wise man's heart to school

To learn the wisdom of the fool !

“ Ask not the skies, delve not the land ;

Love's answer lies within your hand,”

The fool sang on. Oh! very sweet

The shuffle of the brethren's feet

Along the floors: a woman's dress

Was in the sound; the *no* and *yes*

Of all desire; and in the swerve

Of the swung bell a bosom's curve ;

And ruin in your dream-found eyes

For the proud folly of the wise !

# A Master-Fiddler

*To Henry Eichheim of Boston*

God drew His bow across a cloud  
In token of departed ire,  
Yet for the nations' warning vowed  
When next he speaks he speaks in fire.

So be it. Fortified I go  
High kinship with that fire to claim,  
Since on your strings you set your bow  
And turned my blood to flame.

*Nikko, Japan.*

# The Boon

## *The Supplication*

“ A boon, O God! a boon I pray,  
Grant me no dwarfed and cloudy guess,  
But eagle eyes in flaming day,  
Sheer summit vision, nothing less !”

## *The Reply*

“ Child I ere the breakless pact we close,  
Weigh thou the rare exalted stress,  
For with the boon of vision goes  
My dreadful gift of loneliness.

# Vox Populi—Vox Dei

1914-1918

“The People’s voice,  
It is the Voice of God.”  
O ancient boast!  
Fulfilled in bleeding host  
And cross-crowned sod.  
Yea, from thy piercéd side  
Whence blood and water flow  
From death and grief, we know,  
People! we know  
Thou art a God—and crucified  
Twixt thief and thief,  
Shape-changing Lust  
And blindness called Belief.

# The Two Crosses

*In celebration of the occasion of a Christian prelate's  
not refusing the croix de guerre.*

“Take up thy cross,” Christ said,  
“And follow me.”  
But He has long been dead,  
And, wiser, we,  
For that peace-giving Rood  
He meekly bore,  
Take, as the prize of blood,  
The Cross of War.

Shame was *His* meed for blows  
In Peter's day ;  
But Peter's servant knows  
A better way :—  
Not now war's blade he sheathes,  
As said the Lord,  
But with his blessing wreathes  
The murdering sword ;



Yea, for the humbled head,  
And thorn-pierced brain,  
Proudly doth wear instead  
The sign of Cain!

# Brahma

Lovingly now I come into your midst, my sisters  
and brothers,

For the time of love's forgetting again comes  
round.

I shall draw you close to my heart as the hearts  
of unborn children to the hearts of their  
mothers;

And of all you were, I shall lose the sight and  
sound.

We shall be as one; yea, you the mesh shall  
be one with me the encircling net,

And, being one, forget.

But when again I am wishful to know  
you as you are,

And, knowing you, to know myself as I am,

I shall roll between us a dark and a flaming star,

And a whirlwind's dance, and a grey sea's  
ghastly calm;

I shall find me a hiding-place in a shattered rock,

And a dark place under a blasted tree ;  
And there your daylit assurance shall tease and  
mock

With my twilit mystery.

For I am the Voice that calls, and I am the  
Silence that, after the Voice, denies ;

The Shade that allures you to search, and the  
Blaze that darkens your eyes ;

The Anchorite who scar my flesh (that is yours)  
with my whips of joy and pain,

Till out of my depths I turn my face to the  
height (that is yours) again.

Then lovingly shall I come into your midst,  
my sisters and brothers, as the blood to the  
heart,

When love's white night of oblivion dawns  
beyond the sundering day that sets ;

For love that remembers is love that is driven  
apart,

But love at one, forgets.

# A Passer-by

*on the bank of the Suez Canal at sunset.*

Out of some old old volume, legend-eyed  
He comes, with lonely deserts in his stride,  
Head up as one whom some far vision charms.  
The sun plays searchlights through his swinging  
arms.

Locusts whom Pharaoh knew for hungry things  
Flicker and shine on myriad mica wings  
About him ; and the sunlit desert dust  
Spirts from his heels in glittering jets.

I must,

Yes, from this deck, across that muddy span  
Of water, speak to that lost ancient man.

“Sir! (if our speech have meaning for thine ears,  
And we and thou be each what each appears)  
Turn unto us thy dusky face, and tell  
What dream of what Rebecca by what well  
Glimmers below thy turban ; or perchance  
Not yet has Miriam danced her triumph-dance

For Egypt drowned? At daybreak may we spy  
Chariots of Pharaoh's captains floating by?  
Or—has thy long white garment somewhere hid  
A chisel for the Sphinx's stony eye  
Or mallet for the growing pyramid?"

No answer!

"Say, what art thou?... What are we?—  
Things yet unborn? shadows thou canst not see?  
Or have we through some magic gateway sailed  
Into a spectral world?..."

In vain I hailed;  
For that lost ancient ghost, or man, or priest,  
Aureoled with the mystery of the East,  
Through the gilt closing covers of the night  
Into some old old book slipped out of sight.