

So that it live—The Germ! The Germ!  
It matters not to me  
If sheep or tiger, man or worm  
Earth's victor-captain be.

## PROLETARIA

THE sunny rounds of Earth contain  
An obverse to its Day,  
Our fertile Vagrancy's domain,  
Wan Proletaria.

From pole to pole of Poverty  
We stumble through the years,  
With hazy-lanterned Memory  
And Hope that never nears.

Wherever Plenty's crop invites  
Our pitiful brigades,  
Lurk cannoneers of Vested Rights,  
Juristic ambushades;

And here hangs Rent, that squalid cage  
Within which Mammon thrusts,  
Bound with the fetter of a wage,  
The helots of his lusts.

With palsied Doubt as guide, we wind  
Among the lanes of Need,  
Where meagre Hungers scouting find  
But slavered baits of Greed.

The wet-lipped Lamias of Caste,  
Awaiting our advance,  
Our choicest squadrons' fealty blast  
With magic smile and glance:

Delilah-limbed temptations flit  
Among our drowsy rows,  
And on our willing captains fit  
The badges of our foes.

What wonder sometimes if in stealth  
Our starker outposts wait,  
And in the prowling eyes of Wealth  
Dash vitriol of Hate;

Or if our Samsons, ere too late,  
Their treasons should make good  
By whelming in the temple's fate  
Their viper owners' brood!

Our polyandrous dam has borne  
To Satan and to God  
The hordes of Night, the clans of Morn,  
That through our valleys plod.

Ah, motherhood of misery  
For Christ-child as for pest!  
The greater her fertility  
The drier grows her breast!

Too many linger on the track;  
A few outstrip the time:  
Some, God has tatoed yellow, black,  
And some disguised with crime.

Art's living archives here abound,  
Carraras of Despair,  
And those weird masks of Sight and Sound  
The Tragic Muses wear.

Tho' blind and dull, 'tis we supply  
The Painter's dazzling dreams;  
The rolling flood of Poetry  
From our dumb chaos streams.

Nay, when your world is over-tired,  
And Genius comatose,  
Our race, by Nemesis inspired,  
Old Order overthrows:

With earthquake-life we thrill your land,  
Refill the cruse of Art,  
Revitalize spent Wisdom, and—  
Resume our weary part.

The palace of successful Guilt  
Is mortared with our shame;  
On hecatombs of Us are built  
The soaring towers of Fame.

We are the gnomes of Titan works  
Whose throbbings never cease;  
Our unregarded signet lurks  
On every masterpiece.

The floating isles, that shuttling tie  
All peoples into one  
By adept steersmen's sorcery  
Of magnet, steam, and sun;

Religion's dolmens, Sphinxes, spires,  
Her Biblic armouries;  
The helot lightning of the wires  
That mesh your lands and seas;

The viaducts 'tween Near and Far,  
Whereon, o'er range and mead,  
Bacchantic Trade's triumphant car  
And iron tigers speed;

The modern steely crops that rise  
Where technic Jasons sow—  
All these but feebly symbolize  
The largesse we bestow.

And our reward? In this wan land,  
In clientage of Greed,  
Despised, polluted, maimed and banned,  
To wander and—to breed.

I much prefer, and so do you,  
To scorn and rags and chains,  
The pretty moths that flutter to  
The tailored man of brains.

Shall I denounce as traitor to  
The people he would sell,  
The morning rumour-vendor who  
Pays Judases so well?

The soul may have its higher needs  
(As if you pay, I'll show),  
But he who with the mob succeeds  
Must with its current go.

Successful Vice and Force and Fraud  
Can only reach their goals  
When such are what the crowds applaud,  
And covet in their souls.

So I provide the lust that leads  
My maidens hand in hand,  
The rich rogue's praise, and war's red deeds—  
Because they're in demand.

Tho' dreamers warn of moral death  
And ragged Envy brays,  
The Moment is my Muse's breath,  
The Moment 'tis that pays.

I'd rather lure one pouting maid  
To dalliance with a trill  
Than with an epic for my blade  
All Future's tyrants kill.

Why should your starveling's whine dismay,  
Your sweater's wreck annoy,  
When all one's well-tilled moments may  
Be dedicate to joy?

You say my race I'm dragging down!  
Ha! With such nymphs a-knee,  
With gold and wine and glory's gown,  
What is my race to me?

'Tis but a glamour'd dawn you seek:  
The daylight's here and now,  
Its flush is on my lady's cheek,  
Its whiteness on her brow.

And as for query notes of doom—  
If doom is near: why, drink  
With me unto its Sibyl, Gloom,  
And to its Sirens wink.

### THE CITY

THE City crowds our motley broods,  
And plants its citadel  
Upon the delta where the floods  
Of evil plunge to Hell.

Through fogs retributive, that steam  
From ooze of stagnant wrongs,  
The towers satanically gleam  
Defiance at our throngs.

It nucleates the land's Deceit;  
Its slums our Lost decoy;  
It is the bawdy-house where meet  
Lewd Wealth and venal Joy.

Grim wards are here, where Timour Trade  
His human cairns uprears;  
There, silent Towers, where girls betrayed  
Unseen rot through their years.

The City curbs the wrath that bays  
Rebellious in our souls,  
By soothing fumes, and pageant days,  
And sweet Circean bowls.

With Saturnalia of the Serf  
Our discontent it cures;  
Its Fraud, to dalliance of the Turf,  
Hysterical Folly lures.

The Babylonian Venus sways  
In every city park;  
Her idiot niece, Abortion, plays  
Beside her in the dark.

Here, Office fawns fidelity  
When stroked by gilded hands;  
In bramble of chicanery  
Belated Justice stands.

Glib Sophistry our mobs deludes,  
As showman does his beast,  
By serving up their whims as foods  
From wholesome Wisdom's feast:

From craze to crime they bleating rage,  
Pursue what least is wise,  
And, stoning the unselfish sage,  
Impostors canonize.

At times in free-lance echelons,  
Or called, at times, "The State",  
Ubiquitous its myrmidons  
Our foison desolate.

Exactions on its counters perch;  
Our marts Commission raids;  
Sleek Simony, behind the Church,  
Prepares his ambushades.

Dame Rumour, organized, the Press,  
Spirits slander—for a fee;  
Or, masked in Public Welfare's dress,  
She gags or dirks the Free.

Great spider intellects here lurk  
In bank and in exchange;  
And through the feebler folds of Work  
Hyæna sweaters range.

Debt's gargoyles 'neath each eave grimace;  
Debt's mildews sour the soil;  
At all there grins a Shylock face:  
Round all, Debt's suckers coil.

Here Thrift, with Art obscene endowed,  
A sterile haven finds  
Where Malthus-Onan's whey-faced crowd  
Slink from the genial winds.

The Dead's miasma o'er us creeps;  
Their mandates dull our brains;  
Inheritance, their steward, keeps  
The tithes of our demesnes.

Phylacteried ascetics brood  
On their precedence here;  
There, Science tampers with our food,  
Or taints our atmosphere;

And Art spurns Poverty, her spouse,  
To be the courtesan  
Of ogre of the counting-house  
Or ribboned Caliban;

And o'er that hovel-burdened waste  
Where Indigence is pent,  
The Huns of Property have raced  
On withering hoofs of Rent.

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Yet not all black our horoscope,  
For, urged by Guardian Fates,  
On hoyden Disobedience, Hope  
Rebellions procreates;

And awful Exorcists contrive  
The potion and the thong  
That from the City's breast will drive  
Its incubus of Wrong.

Ripe knowledge of our ill and good,  
In fellowship of woe,  
Makes fertile streams of Brotherhood  
From Ego's glacier flow.

The outcast sons of Art and Want  
Tyrtean songs prepare,  
To nerve us 'gainst the guns that daunt  
From bastioned Mammon's lair.

Self-sacrifice averts His frown,  
When, angry, God at last  
Our Gadarenean droves adown  
Disaster's cliff would cast;

And those Bohemians of the mist,  
Arrayed 'gainst Law, 'twould seem,  
Are cleansing for the Harmonist  
The City of His Dream.

#### THE PRESS

I SYLLABLE the thoughts of those  
Who bow the knee to me,  
In every wilderness where grows  
Far-sown democracy.

My crucible with shrewd assay  
To statesmanship refines  
What docile lightnings haul each day  
From crude opinion's mines.

I teach the people what is good  
For them and for—my purse:  
If vice will aid my livelihood,  
Then virtue has my curse.

Impostures simulate the real  
When to my loom I hie;  
With threads of truth it can conceal  
The shoddy of a lie.

I am the arbiter of style,  
And, Caliph-like, decree  
That books which question me are vile,  
And useless which agree.

Omission is the master-word,  
When critics baulk my will,  
With which I blunt Exposure's sword  
Or Competition kill.

To what they loathe I can compel  
My devotees subscribe;  
Can Right distort to spawn of hell  
With venom of a jibe.

With silver pieces I can lead,  
From Honour's narrow way,  
Each Judas with a pliant creed,  
A Saviour to betray.

When Privilege would Progress blast,  
Or Nemesis bid wait,  
O'er goodliest fields of Peace I cast  
The tares of racial hate.

The truth, now lopped to fit my bed,  
Now lengthened to a lie,  
I vend; and for my clients' bread  
The slop of Passion's sty.