THE SPHINX.

The Sphinx is drowsy,
Her wings are furled,
She broods on the world.
"Who 'll tell me my secret
The ages have kept?
I awaited the seer
While they slumbered and slept."

"The fate of the manchild, —
The meaning of man,—
Known fruit of the unknown,—
Dedalian plan.
Out of sleeping a waking,
Out of waking a sleep,
Life death overtaking,
Deep underneath deep.

"Erect as a sunbeam
Upriseth the palm;
The elephant browses
Undaunted and calm;
In beautiful motion
The thrush ples his wings,
Kind leaves of his covert!
Your silence he sings.

"The waves unashamed
In difference sweet,
Play glad with the breezes,
Old playfellows meet.
The journeying atoms,
Primordial wholes,
Firmly draw, firmly drive,
By their animate poles.

"Sea, earth, air, sound, silence,
Plent, quadruped, bird,
By one music enchanted,
One deity stirred,
Accompany still,
Night veileth the morning,
The vapor the hill.

"The babe, by its mother
Lies bathed in joy,
Glide its hours uncounted,
The sun is its toy;"
Have I a lover
Who is noble and free,—
I would he were nobler
Than to love me.

"Ethereal alternation
Now follows, now flies,
And under pain, pleasure,—
Under pleasure, pain lies.
Love works at the centre
Heart heaving alway,
Forth speed the strong pulses
To the borders of day.

"Dull Sphinx, Jove keep thy five wits!
Thy sight is growing clear;
Hemlock and vitriol for the Sphinx
Her muddy eyes to clear."
The old Sphinx bit her thick lip,—
Said, "Who taught thee to name
Manchild! I am thy spirit;
Of thine eye I am eyebeam."

"Thou art the unanswered question:
Couldst see thy proper eye,
Alway it asketh, asketh,
And each answer is a lie.
So take thy quest through nature,
It through thousand natures ply,
Ask on, thou clothed eternity,
Time is the false reply."

Uprose the merry Sphinx,
And crouched no more in stone,
She hopped into the baby's eyes,
She hopped into the moon,
She spirred into a yellow flame,
She flowered in blossoms red,
She flowed into a foaming wave,
She stood Monadnoc's head.

Seventh, a thousand voices
Spoke the universal dame,
"Who telleth one of my meanings
Is master of all I am."

The trump of reform is sounding throughout the world
for a revolution of all human affairs. This issue we cannot
doubt; yet the cries are not without alarm. Already is
the axe laid at the root of that spreading tree, whose trunk
is idolatry, whose branches are covetousness, war, and
slavery, whose blossom is concupiscence, whose fruit is
hate. Planted by Beelzebub, it shall be rooted up. Abadon
is pouring his vial on the earth.

Reformers are metallic; they are sharpest steel; they
pierce whatsoever of evil or abuse they touch. Their souls
are attempered in the fires of heaven; they are nailed in
the might of principles, and God backs their purpose. They
uproot institutions, erase traditions, revise usages, and ren-
ovate all things. They are the noblest of facts. Extant
in time, they work for eternity; dwelling with men, they
are with God.