

TO RHEA.

THEE, dear friend, a brother soothes
 Not with flatteries but truths,
 Which tarnish not, but purify
 To light which dims the morning's eye.
 I have come from the spring woods,
 From the fragrant solitudes,
 Listen what the poplar tree
 And murmuring waters counselled me.

If with love thy heart has burned,
 If thy love is unreturned,
 Hide thy grief within thy breast,
 Though it tear thee unexpressed.
 For when love has once departed
 From the eyes of the falsehearted,
 And one by one has torn off quite
 The bandages of purple light,
 Though thou wert the loveliest
 Form the soul had ever drest,
 Thou shalt seem in each reply
 A vixen to his altered eye,
 Thy softest pleadings seem too bold,
 Thy praying lute will seem to scold.
 Though thou kept the straightest road,
 Yet thou errest far and broad.

But thou shalt do as do the gods
 In their cloudless periods;
 For of this be thou assured,
 Though thou forget, the gods secured
 Forget never their command,
 But make the statute of this land.
 As they lead, so follow all,
 Ever have done, ever shall.

Warning to the blind and deaf,
 'T is written on the iron leaf,
Who drinks of Cupid's nectar cup
Loveth downward, and not up.
 Therefore who loves of gods or men,
 Shall not by the same be loved again;
 His sweetheart's idolatry
 Falls in turn a new degree.
 But when a god is once beguiled
 By beauty of a mortal child,
 And by her radiant youth delighted,
 He is not fooled, but warily knoweth
 His love shall never be requited,
 And thus the wise Immortal doeth.
 It is his study and delight
 To bless that creature, day and night,
 From all evils to defend her,
 In her lap to pour all splendor,
 To ransack earth for riches rare,
 And fetch her stars to deck her hair;
 He mixes music with her thoughts,
 And saddens her with heavenly doubts;
 All grace, all good, his great heart knows
 Profuse in love the king bestows;
 Saying, "Hearken! Earth, Sea, Air!
 This monument of my despair
 Build I to the All-Good, All-Fair.
 Not for a private good,
 But I from my beatitude,
 Albeit scorned as none was scorned,
 Adorn her as was none adorned.
 I make this maiden an ensample
 To Nature through her kingdoms ample,
 Whereby to model newer races,
 Statelier forms and fairer faces,
 To carry man to new degrees
 Of power and of comeliness.

These presents be the hostages
Which I pawn for my release ;
See to thyself, O Universe !
Thou art better and not worse.”

And the god having given all,
Is freed forever from his thrall.
