

THE HONOURABLE ADULTERERS.

I.

HIS STORY.

I LOOKED beneath her eyelids, where her eyes
 Like stars were deep, and dim like summer
 skies ;

I looked beneath their lashes ; and behold !
 My own thought mirrored in their maiden gold,
 Shame drew to them to cloud their light with lies,
 And shrank back shamed ; and Love waxed bright
 and bold.

The devilish circle of the fiery ring
 Became one moment like a little thing,
 And Truth and God were near us to withdraw
 The veil of Love's unalterable law.
 We feared no fury of the jealous King,
 But, lest in honour love should find a flaw.

Only our looks and trembling lips we dread,
 And the dear nimbus of a lover's head,
 The dreamy splendour and the dim delight
 That feels the fragrance fallen from the night,