

XII.

XANTIPPE

SWEET, do you scold? I had rather have you scold
Than from another earn a million kisses.
The tiger rapture on your skin's Greek gold
Is worth a million smiles of sunken cold
And Arctic archangelic passion rolled
From any other woman. Heaven misses
The half of God's delight who doth not see
Some lightning anger dart like love and strike
Into the sacred heart its iterant glee
Of scathing tortures worth Hell's agony
To melt — ah, sweet, I know! in foam and free
Lustre of love redoubled. Come to me!
I will avenge the anger, like to like
With gentle fires of smitten love, will burn
Into your beauty with the athletic rush
Of conquering godhead; and you cheek shall burn
From red of wrath to shame's adorable blush,
And so in tears and raptures mix the cup
Of dreadful wine we are wont to drain and — well! —
Needs but one glance to lift the liquor up,
One angry grip to wake me, and to swell
The anguish into rapture — come, to sup
The liquid lava of the lake of Hell!