

## NIGHTFALL.

THE seas that lap the sand  
Where lilies fill the land  
Are silent, while the moon ascends to span the  
    curvéd leaves.

The lordly stars arise  
With pity in their eyes  
So large and clear and wise,  
And angels yearn toward the world that wonders,  
    wakes, and grieves.

Sleep holds the hand of life,  
And, as a loving wife  
Moves not for fear the sufferer should wake before  
    his hour,  
So sleep is deadly calm,  
And fills with perfect balm  
The night's unquiet psalm  
That wanders all too trembling up, and quivers as  
    a flower.

The wise man opens wide  
His casement, as a bride  
Flings her bright arms to meet her spouse home-  
    ward who hasteneth ;  
He trims his lamp, and brings

The books of many kings  
To spread their holy wings  
About his head, and sing to him the secret ways  
of death.

His eyes are fixed, he sees  
Men dimly, like to trees  
Walking, and guesses they must be the angels of  
the Lord :  
His hand is strong to hold  
The talent of fine gold,  
The wand so clean and cold ;  
His altar has a lamp divine, his girdle has a  
sword.

He knows, and doth not fear ;  
His will is keen and clear ;  
His lips are silent to protect the secret mysteries.  
No tempter spreads his net  
So that his thoughts forget  
The glory they have set  
Before their face, nor loose their hold upon the  
perfect prize.

My hands no longer write :  
Communion with the night  
Is built, a bride of fiery truth across the subtle  
mind.  
God's angels, and His fire,  
Consume the soul's desire,

And strike a lighter lyre.

I seek; the angels lead me on, all light and truth  
to find.