

A SPRING SNOWSTORM IN
WASTDALE.

ON rocky mountain bare
Of grass, and meadows fair,
Angels their trumpets blow upon the night,
While o'er the shrinking dale
The insatiable gale
Roars with unconquered and impassive might.
Their robes of snow they rend,
And their deep voices blend
With tempest, like that angry Amphitrite,
His hair blown wild and loose
On windy Syracuse,
Lashing the waves with words of wrath, a terror
of bright light.

Here the thick snowflakes fall,
Till mountain in their pall,
And stream beneath their curtain are em-
braced ;
They drive and beat and hiss,
Till their cold maiden kiss
Touches the lake's intolerable waste,
And from the wave is born
A maiden like the morn,

In sudden foam, an Aphrodite chaste,
Clean as the cold wind blown
From each abyss of stone,
Where the north whirlpool rushes down with
wreckage interlaced.

Where on the bank I stand
In this grey barren land
Of winter, and the doubtful glint of spring,
If on the hills there glow
Through the thick mist of snow
Sunshine from westward in the evening ;
While in a dell appear
Violets and snowdrops clear,
Buds of the larch, and swallows on the wing,
Till once again the storm
Lofty and multiform
Close the bright glimpse of summer and the hope
of everything.

Silence her throne assumes,
Stars mount the sky, and looms
The misty monarch of the dale on high :
About the silver feet
I worship, as is meet,
The warrior God that fixed the curved sky,
Rent the cavernous earth,
Moulded in awful birth
The terror of the cloudy canopy,
And tore from underground

The lake's immense profound,
And clad the mountains now with this faint snow
embroidery.

Now the white flakes decrease,
Wastwater lies in peace,
Kissed by the breezes where the wind once bit ;
Gable alone doth stand,
A Pyramid more grand
Than Pharaoh's pride exalted, or the wit
Of magian shepherds built
Who sought his land and spilt
Blood of ten million slaves to conquer it.
Clad in sparse robes of white
The mountain beckons Night
Her tracery of azure with the cold moon-rays to
knit.

Armoured with secret might
I stand on earth upright,
Strong in the power of Him who welded earth,
Barred in the sky with steel,
And breathed upon the wheel
Of this vast scheme of stars, and made Him mirth
In the poor dreams of us
Who strive mysterious
To pierce the bands of sense, and break the girth
Of our own minds' desire,
Till He relume the fire

Lost at our fall, not kindled fresh till that diviner
birth.