

STYX

(TO M. M. M.)

“The number nine is sacred, as the Oracles inform us, and attaineth the summits of philosophy.”—ZOROASTER.

NINE times I kissed my lover in her sleep :
The first time, to make sure that she was
there ;
The second, as a sleepy sort of prayer ;
The third, because I wished that she should weep ;
The fourth, to draw her kisses and to keep ;
The fifth, for love ; the sixth, in sweet despair ;
The seventh, to destroy us unaware ;
The eighth, to dive within the infernal deep.

The last, to kill her—and myself as well !
Ah ! joy of sweet annihilation,
The blackness that invades the burning sun,
My swart limbs and her limbs adorable !
So nine times dead before the night is done,
Even as Styx nine times embraces Hell.