

## AU BAL

*To Horace Sheridan-Bickers*

A VISION of flushed faces, shining limbs,  
The Madness of the music that entrances  
All life in its delirium of dances!  
The white world glitters in the void, and swims  
Through infinite seas of transcendental trances.  
Yea! all the hoarded seed of all my fancies  
Bursts in a shower of suns! The wine-cup brims  
And bubbles over; I drink deep the hymns  
Of sorceries, of spells, of necromancies  
And all my spirit shudders; dew bedims  
My sight—these girls and their alluring glances!  
Their eyes that burn like dawn's lascivious lances  
Waking all earth to love—to love! Life skims  
The cream of joy. If God could see what man sees,  
(Intoxicating Nellies, Mauds, and Nances!)  
I see Him leave the sapphirine expanses,  
The choir serene and the celestial air  
To swoon into their sacramental hair!