

I.

NIRVANA.

TOSSED on the shoreless sea of life,
 'Mid surging waves of pain and strife,
 Where mountain high the billows roll,
 The wearied eye discerns no land,
 Discerns no outstretched helping hand,
 That brings not death unto the soul.

All life is struggle, life is pain,
 E'en life renewed is strife again
 On other seas that give no rest ;
 Yet, held by Baddha's four-fold way,
 We calmly watch the billows play,
 Though tossed upon their seething crest.

No more we plead with tearful eyes,
 Or craven fears, the brazen skies,
 But laugh to scorn their boasted powers ;
 Though demons curs'd and gods divine
 Against us all their arts combine,
 We heed them not,—the battle's ours !

Let weaklings bend the knee and fall
 Prostrate in worship to the All ;
 The soul of man, self-centred, free,
 No goal can know not infinite,
 Must claim o'er all a victor's right,
 Then fade into Infinity.

II.

THE MODERN NIRVANA.

ARE we immortal? Do we live for ever,
While round and round the countless cycles run?
Is there no goal that we by high endeavor
May reach to find some setting of life's sun?
Why cherish life, if souls of greatest merit
For conflict here must conflict still inherit,
And find the path which leads from sense to spirit
Leading to deeper anguish, pain, and strife?
For Life e'er sees our bonds more firmly riven,
E'er sees our souls in denser darkness driven;
For, though it be within the walls of heaven,
Eternal struggle is the doom of lite.

Why is the path by which mankind has risen
Traced in the life-blood of its martyrs slain?
Must life to souls refined e'er prove a prison
Till Death can loose the captive from his chain?
Is Life then but a larger convict station,
And sorrow part of mankind's condemnation,
Where Death alone brings final reparation,
And wrong'undone in other worlds than this?
Blind leaders of the blind! Life's full fruition
Lies not in self; no soul of high ambition
E'er listens to your warnings of perdition,
Nor yet your selfish bribes of future bliss.

Although in ceaseless file men pass Death's portal,
With all his art Death ne'er can Man efface;
For, like the mountain brooklet, every mortal
Swells the majestic stream—the Human Race!
The martyr's zeal for selfhood's immolation,
The dying hero's shout of exultation,
The exile's strain of mournful lamentation,
Survives the evanescent glow of fame.
And *ours* the wealth of all the countless ages,
Increased by deeds unknown to history's pages;

For *us* the wealth of prophets, heroes, sages,
To use for Man—his honor or his shame.

Heirs of the past! All thought and aspiration,
Like troubled ghosts, still haunt the human soul,
Thrilling with their touch each heart's pulsation
With mystic impulse toward a common goal—
Humanity!—within whose fond embraces
In unison are fused earth's warring races.
Be ours the task to leave still deeper traces,
Forgetting self that Man alone may gain;
That through our lives we leave the standard higher,
And touch men's souls as with celestial fire,
Until all men with one accord aspire
The limits of man's stature to attain.

DYER D. LUM.