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THE
FORTNIGHTLY
REVIEW.

EDITED BY

JOHN MORLEY.

VOL. IV. NEW SERIES.

JULY 1 TO DECEMBER 1, 1868.

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1868.

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THE TWO SIDES OF THE RIVER.

THE YOUTHS.

O winter, O white winter, wert thou gone
No more within the wilds were I alone,
Leaping with bent bow over stock and stone ;
No more alone my love the lamp should burn,
Watching the weary spindle twist and turn,
Or o'er the web hold back her tears and yearn.
O winter, O white winter, wert thou gone !

THE MAIDENS.

Sweet thoughts fly swiffler than the drifting snow,
And with the twisting thread sweet longings grow,
And o'er the web sweet pictures come and go ;
For no white winter are we long alone.

THE YOUTHS.

O stream, so changed, what hast thou done to me,
That I thy glittering ford no more can see
Wreathing with white her fair feet lovingly ?
See in the rain she stands ; and, looking down
With frightened eyes upon thy whirlpools brown,
Drops to her feet again her girded gown.
O hurrying, turbid stream, what hast thou done ?

THE MAIDENS.

The clouds lift, telling of a fairer day,
When through the thin stream I shall take my way,
Girt round with gold, and garlanded with may.
What rushing stream can keep us long alone ?

THE YOUTHS.

O burning Sun ! O master of unrest !
Why must we, toiling, cast away the best,
Now when the bird sleeps by his empty nest ?

See, with my garland lying at her feet,
 In lonely labour stands mine own, my sweet,
 Above the quern, half-filled with half-ground wheat.

O red task-master, that thy flames were done!

THE MAIDENS.

O love, to-night across the half-shorn plain,
 Shall I not go to meet the yellow wain,
 A look of love at end of toil to gain?

What flaming sun can keep us long alone?

THE YOUTHS.

To-morrow, said I, is grape-gathering o'er;
 To-morrow and our loves are twinned no more.
 To-morrow came, to bring us woe and war.

What have I done, that I should stand with these,
 Harkening the dread shouts borne upon the breeze,
 While she, far off, sits weeping 'neath her trees?

Alas! O kings, what is it ye have done?

THE MAIDENS.

Come love, delay not, come and slay my dread;
 Already is the banquet-table spread,
 In the cool chamber flower-strewn is my bed.

Come, love; what king can keep us long alone?

THE YOUTHS.

O city, city, open thou thy gate;
 See with life snatched from out the hand of fate,
 Still on this glittering triumph must I wait.

Are not her hands stretched out to me? her eyes,
 Are they not weary as each new hope dies,
 And lone before her still the long road lies?

O golden city, fain would I be gone!

THE MAIDENS.

Ah ! thou art happy amid shouts and songs,
 And all that unto conquering men belongs ;
 Night hath for me no fear, and day no wrongs.

What brazen city-gates can keep us lone ?

THE YOUTHS.

O long, long road, how bare thou art, and grey ;
 Hill after hill thou climbest, and the day
 Is ended now, O moonlit endless way !

And she is standing where the rushes grow,
 And still with white hand shades her anxious brow,
 Though 'neath the world the sun has fallen now.

O dreary road, when will thy leagues be done ?

THE MAIDENS.

O tremblest thou, grey road, or do my feet
 Tremble with joy thy flinty face to meet
 Because my love's eyes soon mine eyes shall greet ?

No heart thou hast to keep us long alone.

THE YOUTHS.

O wilt thou ne'er depart, thou heavy night ?
 When will thy slaying bring on the morning bright,
 That leads my weary feet to my delight ?

Why lingerest thou, filling with wandering fears
 My lone love's tired heart ; her eyes with tears,
 For thoughts like sorrow for the vanished years ?

Weaver of ill thoughts, when wilt thou begone ?

THE MAIDENS.

Love, to the East are thine eyes turned, as mine,
 In patient watching for the night's decline ?
 And hast thou noted this grey widening line ?

Can any darkness keep us long alone ?

THE YOUTHS.

O day! O day! is this a little thing
That thou so long unto thy life must cling
Because I gave thee such a welcoming?

I called thee king of all felicity,
I praised thee that thou broughtest joy so nigh—
Thine hours are turned to years; thou wilt not die.

O day so longed for, would that thou wert gone!

THE MAIDENS.

The light fails, love; the long day soon shall be
Nought but a pensive, happy memory,
Blessed for the tales it told to thee and me.

How hard it was, O love, to be alone.

WILLIAM MORRIS.