COPLAS DE DON JORGE MANRIQUE POR LA MUERTE DE SU PADRE

 I

 Recuerde el alma dormida,

avive el seso e despierte

 contemplando

cómo se passa la vida,

cómo se viene la muerte

 tan callando;

 cuán presto se va el plazer,

cómo, después de acordado,

 da dolor;

cómo, a nuestro parescer,

cualquiere tiempo passado

 fue mejor.

 II

 Pues si vemos lo presente

cómo en un punto s'es ido

 e acabado,

si juzgamos sabiamente,

daremos lo non venido

 por passado.

 Non se engañe nadi, no,

pensando que ha de durar

 lo que espera

más que duró lo que vio,

pues que todo ha de passar

 por tal manera.

 III

 Nuestras vidas son los ríos

que van a dar en la mar,

 qu'es el morir;

allí van los señoríos

derechos a se acabar

 e consumir;

 allí los ríos caudales,

allí los otros medianos

 e más chicos,

allegados, son iguales

los que viven por sus manos

 e los ricos.

 INVOCACIÓN

 IV

 Dexo las invocaciones

de los famosos poetas

 y oradores;

non curo de sus ficciones,

que traen yerbas secretas

 sus sabores.

 Aquél sólo m'encomiendo,

Aquél sólo invoco yo

 de verdad,

que en este mundo viviendo,

el mundo non conoció

 su deidad.

 V

 Este mundo es el camino

para el otro, qu'es morada

 sin pesar;

mas cumple tener buen tino

para andar esta jornada

 sin errar.

 Partimos cuando nascemos,

andamos mientra vivimos,

 e llegamos

al tiempo que feneçemos;

assí que cuando morimos,

 descansamos.

 VI

 Este mundo bueno fue

si bien usásemos dél

 como debemos,

porque, segund nuestra fe,

es para ganar aquél

 que atendemos.

 Aun aquel fijo de Dios

para sobirnos al cielo

 descendió

a nescer acá entre nos,

y a vivir en este suelo

 do murió.

 VII

 Si fuesse en nuestro poder

hazer la cara hermosa

 corporal,

como podemos hazer

el alma tan glorïosa

 angelical,

 ¡qué diligencia tan viva

toviéramos toda hora

 e tan presta,

en componer la cativa,

dexándonos la señora

 descompuesta!

 VIII

 Ved de cuán poco valor

son las cosas tras que andamos

 y corremos,

que, en este mundo traidor,

aun primero que muramos

 las perdemos.

 Dellas deshaze la edad,

dellas casos desastrados

 que acaeçen,

dellas, por su calidad,

en los más altos estados

 desfallescen.

 IX

 Dezidme: La hermosura,

la gentil frescura y tez

 de la cara,

la color e la blancura,

cuando viene la vejez,

 ¿cuál se para?

 Las mañas e ligereza

e la fuerça corporal

 de juventud,

todo se torna graveza

cuando llega el arrabal

 de senectud.

 X

 Pues la sangre de los godos,

y el linaje e la nobleza

 tan crescida,

¡por cuántas vías e modos

se pierde su grand alteza

 en esta vida!

 Unos, por poco valer,

por cuán baxos e abatidos

 que los tienen;

otros que, por non tener,

con oficios non debidos

 se mantienen.

 XI

 Los estados e riqueza,

que nos dexen a deshora

 ¿quién lo duda?,

non les pidamos firmeza.

pues que son d'una señora;

 que se muda,

 que bienes son de Fortuna

que revuelven con su rueda

 presurosa,

la cual non puede ser una

ni estar estable ni queda

 en una cosa.

 XII

 Pero digo c'acompañen

e lleguen fasta la fuessa

 con su dueño:

por esso non nos engañen,

pues se va la vida apriessa

 como sueño,

e los deleites d'acá

son, en que nos deleitamos,

 temporales,

e los tormentos d'allá,

que por ellos esperamos,

 eternales.

 XIII

 Los plazeres e dulçores

desta vida trabajada

 que tenemos,

non son sino corredores,

e la muerte, la çelada

 en que caemos.

 Non mirando a nuestro daño,

corremos a rienda suelta

 sin parar;

desque vemos el engaño

y queremos dar la vuelta

 no hay lugar.

 XIV

 Esos reyes poderosos

que vemos por escripturas

 ya passadas

con casos tristes, llorosos,

fueron sus buenas venturas

 trastornadas;

 assí, que no hay cosa fuerte,

que a papas y emperadores

 e perlados,

assí los trata la muerte

como a los pobres pastores

 de ganados.

 XV

 Dexemos a los troyanos,

que sus males non los vimos,

 ni sus glorias;

dexemos a los romanos,

aunque oímos e leímos

 sus hestorias;

 non curemos de saber

lo d'aquel siglo passado

 qué fue d'ello;

vengamos a lo d'ayer,

que también es olvidado

 como aquello.

 XVI

 ¿Qué se hizo el rey don Joan?

Los infantes d'Aragón

 ¿qué se hizieron?

¿Qué fue de tanto galán,

qué de tanta invinción

 como truxeron?

 ¿Fueron sino devaneos,

qué fueron sino verduras

 de las eras,

las justas e los torneos,

paramentos, bordaduras

 e çimeras?

 XVII

 ¿Qué se hizieron las damas,

sus tocados e vestidos,

 sus olores?

¿Qué se hizieron las llamas

de los fuegos encendidos

 d'amadores?

 ¿Qué se hizo aquel trovar,

las músicas acordadas

 que tañían?

¿Qué se hizo aquel dançar,

aquellas ropas chapadas

 que traían?

 XVIII

 Pues el otro, su heredero

don Anrique, ¡qué poderes

 alcançaba!

¡Cuánd blando, cuánd halaguero

el mundo con sus plazeres

 se le daba!

 Mas verás cuánd enemigo,

cuánd contrario, cuánd cruel

 se le mostró;

habiéndole sido amigo,

¡cuánd poco duró con él

 lo que le dio!

 XIX

 Las dávidas desmedidas,

los edeficios reales

 llenos d'oro,

las vaxillas tan fabridas

los enriques e reales

 del tesoro,

 los jaezes, los caballos

de sus gentes e atavíos

 tan sobrados

¿dónde iremos a buscallos?;

¿qué fueron sino rocíos

 de los prados?

 XX

 Pues su hermano el innocente

qu'en su vida sucesor

 se llamó

¡qué corte tan excellente

tuvo, e cuánto grand señor

 le siguió!

 Mas, como fuesse mortal,

metióle la Muerte luego

 en su fragua.

¡Oh jüicio divinal!,

cuando más ardía el fuego,

 echaste agua.

 XXI

 Pues aquel grand Condestable,

maestre que conoscimos

 tan privado,

non cumple que dél se hable,

mas sólo como lo vimos

 degollado.

 Sus infinitos tesoros,

sus villas e sus lugares,

 su mandar,

¿qué le fueron sino lloros?,

¿qué fueron sino pesares

 al dexar?

 XXII

 E los otros dos hermanos,

maestres tan prosperados

 como reyes,

c'a los grandes e medianos

truxieron tan sojuzgados

 a sus leyes;

 aquella prosperidad

qu'en tan alto fue subida

 y ensalzada,

¿qué fue sino claridad

que cuando más encendida

 fue amatada?

 XXIII

 Tantos duques excelentes,

tantos marqueses e condes

 e varones

como vimos tan potentes,

dí, Muerte, ¿dó los escondes,

 e traspones?

 E las sus claras hazañas

que hizieron en las guerras

 y en las pazes,

cuando tú, cruda, t'ensañas,

con tu fuerça, las atierras

 e desfazes.

 XXIV

 Las huestes inumerables,

los pendones, estandartes

 e banderas,

los castillos impugnables,

los muros e balüartes

 e barreras,

 la cava honda, chapada,

o cualquier otro reparo,

 ¿qué aprovecha?

Cuando tú vienes airada,

todo lo passas de claro

 con tu flecha.

 XXV

 Aquel de buenos abrigo,

amado, por virtuoso,

 de la gente,

el maestre don Rodrigo

Manrique, tanto famoso

 e tan valiente;

sus hechos grandes e claros

non cumple que los alabe,

 pues los vieron;

ni los quiero hazer caros,

pues qu'el mundo todo sabe

 cuáles fueron.

 XXVI

 Amigo de sus amigos,

¡qué señor para criados

 e parientes!

¡Qué enemigo d'enemigos!

¡Qué maestro d'esforçados

 e valientes!

 ¡Qué seso para discretos!

¡Qué gracia para donosos!

 ¡Qué razón!

¡Qué benino a los sujetos!

¡A los bravos e dañosos,

 qué león!

 XXVII

 En ventura, Octavïano;

Julio César en vencer

 e batallar;

en la virtud, Africano;

Aníbal en el saber

 e trabajar;

 en la bondad, un Trajano;

Tito en liberalidad

 con alegría;

en su braço, Aureliano;

Marco Atilio en la verdad

 que prometía.

 XXVIII

 Antoño Pío en clemencia;

Marco Aurelio en igualdad

 del semblante;

Adriano en la elocuencia;

Teodosio en humanidad

 e buen talante.

 Aurelio Alexandre fue

en desciplina e rigor

 de la guerra;

un Constantino en la fe,

Camilo en el grand amor

 de su tierra.

 XXIX

 Non dexó grandes tesoros,

ni alcançó muchas riquezas

 ni vaxillas;

mas fizo guerra a los moros

ganando sus fortalezas

 e sus villas;

 y en las lides que venció,

cuántos moros e cavallos

 se perdieron;

y en este oficio ganó

las rentas e los vasallos

 que le dieron.

 XXX

 Pues por su honra y estado,

en otros tiempos passados

 ¿cómo s'hubo?

Quedando desamparado,

con hermanos e criados

 se sostuvo.

 Después que fechos famosos

fizo en esta misma guerra

 que hazía,

fizo tratos tan honrosos

que le dieron aun más tierra

 que tenía.

 XXXI

 Estas sus viejas hestorias

que con su braço pintó

 en joventud,

con otras nuevas victorias

agora las renovó

 en senectud.

 Por su gran habilidad,

por méritos e ancianía

 bien gastada,

alcançó la dignidad

de la grand Caballería

 dell Espada.

 XXXII

 E sus villas e sus tierras,

ocupadas de tiranos

 las halló;

mas por çercos e por guerras

e por fuerça de sus manos

 las cobró.

 Pues nuestro rey natural,

si de las obras que obró

 fue servido,

dígalo el de Portogal,

y, en Castilla, quien siguió

 su partido.

 XXXIII

 Después de puesta la vida

tantas vezes por su ley

 al tablero;

después de tan bien servida

la corona de su rey

 verdadero;

 después de tanta hazaña

a que non puede bastar

 cuenta cierta,

en la su villa d'Ocaña

vino la Muerte a llamar

 a su puerta,

 XXXIV

 diziendo: "Buen caballero,

dexad el mundo engañoso

 e su halago;

vuestro corazón d'azero

muestre su esfuerço famoso

 en este trago;

 e pues de vida e salud

fezistes tan poca cuenta

 por la fama;

esfuércese la virtud

para sofrir esta afruenta

 que vos llama."

 XXXV

 "Non se vos haga tan amarga

la batalla temerosa

 qu'esperáis,

pues otra vida más larga

de la fama glorïosa

 acá dexáis.

 Aunqu'esta vida d'honor

tampoco no es eternal

 ni verdadera;

mas, con todo, es muy mejor

que la otra temporal,

 peresçedera."

 XXXVI

 "El vivir qu'es perdurable

non se gana con estados

 mundanales,

ni con vida delectable

donde moran los pecados

 infernales;

 mas los buenos religiosos

gánanlo con oraciones

 e con lloros;

los caballeros famosos,

con trabajos e aflicciones

 contra moros."

 XXXVII

 "E pues vos, claro varón,

tanta sangre derramastes

 de paganos,

esperad el galardón

que en este mundo ganastes

 por las manos;

e con esta confiança

e con la fe tan entera

 que tenéis,

partid con buena esperança,

qu'estotra vida tercera

 ganaréis."

[Responde el Maestre:]

 XXXVIII

 "Non tengamos tiempo ya

en esta vida mesquina

 por tal modo,

que mi voluntad está

conforme con la divina

 para todo;

 e consiento en mi morir

con voluntad plazentera,

 clara e pura,

que querer hombre vivir

cuando Dios quiere que muera,

 es locura."

[Del maestre a Jesús]

 XXXIX

 "Tú que, por nuestra maldad,

tomaste forma servil

 e baxo nombre;

tú, que a tu divinidad

juntaste cosa tan vil

 como es el hombre;

tú, que tan grandes tormentos

sofriste sin resistencia

 en tu persona,

non por mis merescimientos,

mas por tu sola clemencia

 me perdona".

 FIN

 XL

 Assí, con tal entender,

todos sentidos humanos

 conservados,

cercado de su mujer

y de sus hijos e hermanos

 e criados,

 dio el alma a quien gela dio

(el cual la ponga en el cielo

 en su gloria),

que aunque la vida perdió,

dexónos harto consuelo

 su memoria.

Jorge Manrique, 1477

The Coplas on the Death of His Father,

 the Grand-Master of Santiago

 The Introit

Let from its dream the soul awaken,

 And reason mark with open eyes

 The scene unfolding,—

How lightly life away is taken,

 How cometh Death in stealthy guise,—

 At last beholding;

What swiftness hath the flight of pleasure

 That, once attained, seems nothing more

 Than respite cold;

How fain is memory to measure

 Each latter day inferior

 To those of old.

Beholding how each instant flies

 So swift, that, as we count, 'tis gone

 Beyond recover,

Let us resolve to be more wise

 Than stake our future lot upon

 What soon is over.

Let none be self-deluding, none,—

 Imagining some longer stay

 For his own treasure

Than what today he sees undone;

 For everything must pass away

 In equal measure.

Our lives are fated as the rivers

 That gather downward to the sea

 We know as Death;

And thither every flood delivers

 The pride and pomp of seigniory

 That forfeiteth;

Thither, the rivers in their splendor;

 Thither, the streams of modest worth,—

 The rills beside them;

Till there all equal they surrender;

 And so with those who toil on earth,

 And those who guide them.

 The Invocation

I turn me from the praise and singing

 Of panegyrists, and the proud

 Old poets' stories;

I would not have them hither bringing

 Their artful potions that but cloud

 His honest glories;

On Him Alone I lay my burden—

 Him only do I now implore

 In my distress,—

Who came on earth and had for guerdon

 The scorn of man that did ignore

 His Godliness.

This world is but a highway going

 Unto that other, the abode

 Without a sorrow;

The wise are they who gird them, knowing

 The guideposts set along that road

 Unto tomorrow.

We start with birth upon that questing;

 We journey all the while we live,

 Our goal attaining

The day alone that brings us resting,

 When Death shall last quiétus give

 To all complaining.

This were a hallowed world indeed,

 Did we but give it the employ

 That was intended;

For by the precepts of our Creed

 We earn hereby a life of joy

 When this is ended.

The Son of God Himself on earth

 Came down to raise our lowly race

 Unto the sky;

Here took upon Him human birth;

 Here lived among us for a space;

 And here did die.

Behold what miserable prize—

 What futile task we set upon,

 Whilst greed awakes us!

And what a traitor world of lies

 Is this, whose very gifts are gone

 Ere Death o'ertakes us!

Some through increasing age deprived,

 Some by unhappy turn of fate

 Destroyed and banished,

Some, as with blight inherent rived

 At topmost of their branching state,

 Have failed and vanished.

Yea, tell me shall the lovely blason,

 The gentle freshness and contour

 Of smiling faces,—

The blush and pallor's sweet occasion,—

 Of all—shall one a truce secure

 From Time's grim traces?

The flowing tress, the stature slender,

 The corporal litheness, and the strength

 Of gallant youth,—

All, all,—to weariness surrender

 As o'er them falls the shadow's length

 Of age in truth.

The Visigoths whose lineage kingly

 Whose feats of war and mighty reign

 Were so exalted,—

What divers ways did all and singly

 Drop down to the obscure again

 And were defaulted!

Some through their worthlessness (How lowly

 And base among the rabble came

 Their estimation!)

Whilst others as a refuge solely

 In offices they only shame

 Maintain their station.

Estate and luxury's providing

 Can leave us pauper—who may doubt?—

 Within an hour;

Let us not count on their abiding,

 Since there is nothing sure about

 Dame Fortune's dower.

Hers are the gifts of one unstable

 Upon her globe as swift as light

 Revolving ever;

Who to be constant is unable,

 Who cannot stay nor rest from flight

 On aughtsoever.

And though, say I, her highest favor

 Should follow to the tomb and heap

 With wreaths her master;

Let not our solid judgment waver

 Since life is like a dream and sleep

 Flies nothing faster.

The soft occasions of today

 Wherein we find our joy and ease

 Are but diurnal;

Whilst the dread torments that must pay

 The cost of our iniquities

 Shall be eternal.

The pleasures light, the fond evasions

 That life on troubled earth deploys

 For eyes of mortals,

What are they but the fair persuasions

 Of labyrinths where Death decoys

 To trap-like portals?

Where heedless of the doom ensuing

 We hasten laughing to the snare

 Without suspicion.

Until aghast at our undoing,

 We turn to find the bolt is there,

 And our perdition.

Could we but have procured the power

 To make our faded youth anew

 Both fresh and whole,

As now through life's probation hour

 'Tis ours to give angelic hue

 Unto the soul,—

What ceaseless care we then had taken,

 What pains had welcomed, so to bring

 A health but human,—

Our summer bloom to re-awaken,

 Our stains to clear,—outrivalling

 The arts of woman!

The kings whose mighty deeds are spacious

 Upon the parchments of the years,

 Alas!—the weeping

That overtook their boast audacious.

 And swept their thrones to grime and tears

 And sorrow's keeping!

Naught else proves any more enduring;

 Nor are the popes, nor emperors,

 Nor prelatries

A longer stay or truce securing

 Than the poor herdsman of the moors

 From Death's decrees.

Recount no more of Troy, or foeman

 The echo of whose wars is now

 But far tradition;

Recount no more how fared the Roman

 (His scroll of glories we allow)

 Nor his perdition;

Nor here rehearse the homely fable

 Of such as yielded up their sway

 These decades gone;

But let us say what lamentable

 Fate the lords of yesterday

 Have fallen upon.

Of fair Don Juan the king that ruled us,—

 Of those hight heirs of Aragon,—

 What are the tidings?

Of him, whose courtly graces schooled us,

 Whom song and wisdom smiled upon,

 Where the abidings?

The jousts and tourneys where vaunted

 With trappings, and caparison,

 And armor sheathing,—

Were they but phantasies that taunted,—

 But blades of grass that vanished on

 A summer's breathing?

What of the dames of birth and station,

 Their head-attire, their sweeping trains,

 Their vesture scented?

What of that gallant conflagration

 They made of lovers' hearts whose pains

 Were uncontented?

And what of him, that troubadour

 Whose melting lutany and rime

 Was all their pleasure?

Ah, what of her who danced demure,

 And trailed her robes of olden time

 So fair a measure?

Then Don Enriqué, in succession,

 His brother's heir,—think, to what height

 Was he annointed!

What blandishment and sweet possession

 The world prepared for his delight,

 As seemed appointed!

Yet see what unrelenting foeman,

 What cruel adversary, Fate

 To him became;

A friend befriended as was no man—

 How brief for him endured the state

 His birth might claim.

The golden bounties without stinting,

 The strongholds and the lairs of kings

 With treasure glutted;

The flagons of their wassail glinting,

 The sceptres, orbs, and crowns, and rings

 With which they strutted;

The steeds, the spurs, and bits to rein them,

 The pillions draped unto the ground

 Beneath their paces,—

Ah, whither must we fare to gain them?—

 That were but as the dews around

 The meadow places.

His brother then, the unoffending,

 Who was intruded on his reign

 To act as heir,—

What gallant court was round him bending,

 How many a haughty lord was fain

 To tend him there!

Yet as but mortal was his station,

 Death for his goblet soon distilled

 A draught for draining;

O Thou Divine Predestination!—

 When most his blaze the world had filled

 Thou sent'st the raining!

And then, Don Alvaro, Grand-Master

 And Constable, whom we have known

 When loved and dreaded,—

What need to tell of his disaster,

 Since we behold him overthrown

 And swift beheaded!

His treasures that defied accounting,

 His manors and his feudal lands,

 His boundless power,—

What more than tears were their amounting?

 What more than bonds to tie his hands

 At life's last hour?

That other twain, Grand-Masters solely,

 Yet with the fortunes as of kings

 Fraternal reigning,—

Who brought the high as well as lowly

 Submissive to their challengings

 And laws' ordaining.

And what of all their power and prize

 That touched the very peaks of fame

 That none could limit?—

A conflagration 'gainst the skies,

 Till at its brightest ruthless came

 Death's hand to dim it.

The dukes so many and excelling,

 The marquises, and counts, the throng

 Of barons splendid,

Speak, Death, where hast thou hid their dwelling?

 The sway we saw them wield so strong—

 How was it ended?

What fields upon were they engaging,—

 What prowess showing us in war

 Or its cessation,

When thou, O Death, didst come outraging

 Both one and all, and swept them o'er

 With desolation.

Their warriors' unnumbered hosting,

 The pennon, and the battle-flag,

 And bannered splendor,—

The castles with their turrets boasting,

 Their walls and barricades to brag

 And mock surrender,—

The cavern's ancient crypt of hiding,

 Or secret passage, vault, or stair,—

 What use affords it?

Since thou upon thy onslaught striding

 Canst send a shaft unerring where

 No buckler wards it!

O World that givest and destroyest

 Would that the life which thou hast shown

 Were worth the living!

But here, as good or ill deployest,

 The parting is with gladness known

 Or with misgiving.

Thy span is so with griefs encumbered

 With sighing every breeze so steeped,

 With wrongs so clouded,

A desert where no boon is numbered,

 The sweetness and allurement reaped

 And black and shrouded.

Thy highway is the road of weeping;

 Thy long farewells are bitterness

 Without a morrow;

Adorn thy ruts and ditches keeping

 The traveller who doth most possess

 Hath most of sorrow.

Thy chattels are but had with sighing;

 With sweat of brow alone obtained

 The wage they give;

In myriads thine ills come hieing,

 And once existence they have gained,

 They longest live.

And he, the shield and knightly pastor

 Of honest folk, beloved by all

 The unoffending,—

Don Roderic Manrique, Master

 Of Santiago,—Fame shall call

 Him brave unending!

Not here behooves to chant his praises

 Or laud his valor to the skies,

 Since none but knows them;

Nor would I crave a word that raises

 His merit higher than the prize

 The world bestows them.

O what a comrade comrades found him!

 Unto his henchmen what a lord!

 And what a brother!

What foeman for the foes around him!

 His peer as Master of the Sword

 There was no other!

What precious counsel 'mid the knowing!

 What grace amid the courtly bower!

 What prudence rare!

What bounty to the vanquished showing!

 How 'mid the brave in danger's hour

 A lion there!

In destiny a new Augustus;

 A Caesar for his victories

 And battle forces;

An Africanus in his justice;

 A Hannibal for energies

 And deep resources;

A Trajan in his gracious hour;

 A Titus for his open hand

 And cheer unfailing;

His arm, a Spartan king's in power;

 His voice, a Tully's to command

 The truth's prevailing!

In mildness Antoninus Pius;

 A Marc Aurelius in the light

 Of calm attending;

A Hadrian to pacify us;

 A Theodosius in his right

 And high intending;

Aurelius Alexander stern

 In discipline and laws of war

 Among his legions;

A Constantine in faith eterne;

 Gamaliel in the love he bore

 His native regions.

He left no weighty chests of treasure,

 Nor ever unto wealth attained

 Nor store excelling;

To fight the Moors was all his pleasure

 And thus his fortresses he gained,

 Demesne, and dwelling.

Amid the lists where he prevailed

 Fell knights and steeds into his hands

 Through fierce compression,

Whereby he came to be regaled

 With vassals and with feudal lands

 In fair possession.

Ask you how in his rank and station

 When first he started his career

 Himself he righted?

Left orphan and in desolation

 His brothers and his henchmen dear

 He held united.

And ask you how his course was guided

 When once his gallant deeds were famed

 And war was ended?

His high contracting so provided

 That broader, as his honors claimed,

 His lands extended.

And these, the proud exploits narrated

 In chronicles to show his youth

 And martial force,

With triumphs equal he was fated

 To re-affirm in very sooth

 As years did course.

Then for the prudence of his ways,

 For merit and in high award

 Of service knightly,

His dignity they came to raise

 Till he was Master of the Sword

 Elected rightly.

Finding his father's forts and manors

 By false intruders occupied

 And sore oppressed,

With siege and onslaught, shouts and banners,

 His broad-sword in his hand to guide,

 He re-possessed.

And for our rightful king how well

 He bore the brunt of warfare keen

 In siege and action,

Let Portugal's poor monarch tell,

 Or those who in Castile have been

 Among his faction.

Then having risked his life, maintaining

 The cause of justice in the fight

 For law appointed,

With years in harness spent sustaining

 The royal crown of him by right

 His lord anointed,

With feats so mighty that Hispania

 Can never make account of all

 In number mortal,—

Unto his township of Ocaña

 Came Death at last to strike and call

 Against his portal:

 Speaketh Death

“Good Cavalier,”—he cried,—“divest you

 Of all this hollow world of lies

 And soft devices;

Let your old courage now attest you,

 And show a breast of steel that vies

 In this hard crisis!

“And since of life and fortune's prizes

 You ever made so small account

 For sake of honor,

Array your soul in virtue's guises

 To undergo this paramount

 Assault upon her!

“For you, are only half its terrors

 And half the battles and the pains

 Your heart perceiveth;

Since here a life devoid of errors

 And glorious for noble pains

 To-day it leaveth;

“A life for such as bravely bear it

 And make its fleeting breath sublime

 In right pursuing,

Untainted, as is their's who share it

 And put their pleasure in the grime

 Of their undoing;

“The life that is The Everlasting

 Was never yet by aught attained

 Save meed eternal;

And ne'er through soft indulgence casting

 The shadow of its solace stained

 With guilt infernal;

“But in the cloister holy brothers

 Besiege it with unceasing prayer

 And hard denial;

And faithful paladins are others

 Who 'gainst the Moors to win it bear

 With wound and trial.

“And since, O noble and undaunted,

 Your hands the paynim's blood have shed

 In war and tourney,—

Make ready now to take the vaunted

 High guerdon you have merited

 For this great journey!

“Upon this holy trust confiding,

 And in the faith entire and pure

 You e'er commended,

Away,—unto your new abiding,

 Take up the Life that shall endure

 When this is ended!”

 Respondeth the Grand-Master

“Waste we not here the final hours

 This puny life can now afford

 My mortal being;

But let my will in all its powers

 Conformable approach the Lord

 And His decreeing.

“Unto my death I yield, contenting

 My soul to put the body by

 In peace and gladness;

The thought of man to live, preventing

 God's loving will that he should die,

 Is only madness.”

 The Supplication

O Thou who for our weight of sin

 Descended to a place on earth

 And human feature;

Thou who didst join Thy Godhead in

 A being of such lowly worth

 As man Thy creature;

Thou who amid Thy dire tormenting

 Didst unresistingly endure

 Such pangs to ease us;

Not for my mean deserts relenting,

 But only on a sinner poor,

 Have mercy, Jesus!

 The Codicil

And thus, his hopes so nobly founded,

 His senses clear and unimpaired

 So none could doubt him,—

With spouse and offspring fond surrounded,

 His kinsmen and his servants bared

 And knelt around him,—

He gave his soul to Him who gave it,

 (May God in heaven ordain it place

 And share of glory!)

And left our life as balm to save it,

 And dry the tears upon our face!

 His deathless story.

 —Thomas Walsh (translator).

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