

The Haunted Palace

By

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In the greenest of our valleys
 By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace —
 Snow-white palace — reared its head.
In the monarch thought's dominion —
 It stood there!
Never Seraph spread his pinion
 Over fabric half so fair.

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
 On its roof did float and flow —
This — all this — was in the olden
 Time long ago —

And every gentle air that dallied,
 In that sweet day,
Along the rampart plumed and pallid,
 A winged odour went away.

All wanderers in that happy valley,
 Through two luminous windows saw
Spirits moving musically
 To a lute's well tuned law,
Round about a throne where sitting
 (Porphyrogene!)
In state his glory well befitting,
 The sovereign of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
 Was the fair palace door;
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,
 And sparkling evermore,
A troop of echoes, whose sweet duty
 Was but to sing
In voices of surpassing beauty,
 The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things in robes of sorrow,
 Assailed the monarch's high estate!
Ah, let us mourn — for never morrow
 Shall dawn upon him desolate!

And round about his home the glory,
 That blushed and bloomed,
Is but a dim-remembered story
 Of the old time entombed.

And travellers now within that valley,
 Through the red-litten windows, see
Vast forms that move fantastically
 To a discordant melody;
While, like a rapid ghastly river,
 Through the pale door;
A hideous throng rush out forever,
 And laugh — but smile no more.