

WOMAN.

Mothers and Wives and Housekeepers, forsooth !
Great names ! you cry, full scope to rule and please !
Room for wise age and energetic youth ! —

But are you these ?

Housekeepers ? Do you then, like those of yore,
Keep house with power and pride, with grace and
ease ?

No, you keep servants only ! What is more,
You don't keep these !

Wives, say you ? Wives ! Blessed indeed are they
Who hold of love the everlasting keys,
Keeping their husbands' hearts ! Alas the day !
You don't keep these !

And mothers ? Pitying Heaven ! Mark the cry
From cradle death-beds ! Mothers on their knees !
Why, half the children born — as children die !
You don't keep these !

And still the wailing babies come and go,
And homes are waste, and husbands' hearts fly far,
There is no hope until you dare to know
The thing you are !

TO THE YOUNG WIFE.

ARE you content, you pretty three-years' wife ?
Are you content and satisfied to live
On what your loving husband loves to give,
And give to him your life ?

IN THIS OUR WORLD.

Are you content with work, — to toil alone,
To clean things dirty and to soil things clean ;
To be a kitchen-maid, be called a queen, —
Queen of a cook-stove throne ?

Are you content to reign in that small space —
A wooden palace and a yard-fenced land —
With other queens abundant on each hand,
Each fastened in her place ?

Are you content to rear your children so ?
Untaught yourself, untrained, perplexed, dis-
tressed,
Are you so sure your way is always best ?
That you can always know ?

Have you forgotten how you used to long
In days of ardent girlhood, to be great,
To help the groaning world, to serve the state,
To be so wise — so strong ?

And are you quite convinced this is the way,
The only way a woman's duty lies —
Knowing all women so have shut their eyes ?
Seeing the world to-day ?

Have you no dream of life in fuller store ?
Of growing to be more than that you are ?
Doing the things you now do better far,
Yet doing others — more ?

WOMAN.

Losing no love, but finding as you grew
That as you entered upon nobler life
You so became a richer, sweeter wife,
A wiser mother too ?

What holds you ? Ah, my dear, it is your throne,
Your paltry queenship in that narrow place,
Your antique labors, your restricted space,
Your working all alone !

Be not deceived ! 'T is not your wifely bond
That holds you, nor the mother's royal power,
But selfish, slavish service hour by hour —
A life with no beyond !

FALSE PLAY.

“ Do you love me ? ” asked the mother of her child,
And the baby answered, “ No ! ”
Great Love listened and sadly smiled ;
He knew the love in the heart of the child —
That you could not wake it so.

“ Do not love me ? ” the foolish mother cried,
And the baby answered, “ No ! ”
He knew the worth of the trick she tried —
Great Love listened, and grieving, sighed
That the mother scorned him so.