

**ROMANCES, LYRICS, AND
SONNETS FROM THE POETIC
WORKS OF ELIZABETH
BARRETT BROWNING**

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Romances, Lyrics, and Sonnets from the Poetic Works of Elizabeth Barrett Browning by
Elizabeth Barrett Browning

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ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

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BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
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THE SOUL'S EXPRESSION.

*With stammering lips and insufficient sound
I strive and struggle to deliver right
That music of my nature, day and night
With dream and thought and feeling interwound,
And inly answering all the senses round
With octaves of a mystic depth and height
Which step out grandly to the infinite
From the dark edges of the sensual ground.
This song of soul I struggle to outbear
Through portals of the sense, sublime and whole,
And utter all myself into the air :
But if I did it, — as the thunder-roll
Breaks its own cloud, my flesh would perish there
Before that dread apocalypse of soul.*



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ROMANCES AND LYRICS.



RHYME OF THE DUCHESS MAY.

 O the belfry, one by one, went the
ringers from the sun,
Toll slowly.
And the oldest ringer said, "Ours is mu-
sic for the Dead,
When the rebecks are all done."

Six abeles i' the churchyard grow on the
north side in a row,
Toll slowly.
And the shadows of their tops rock across
the little slopes
Of the grassy graves below.

On the south side and the west a small
river runs in haste,
Toll slowly.

8 *Rhyme of the Duchess May*

And between the river flowing and the fair
 green trees a-growing
Do the dead lie at their rest.

On the east I sate that day, up against a
 willow gray :

Toll slowly.

Through the rain of willow-branches I
 could see the low hill ranges
And the river on its way.

There I sate beneath the tree, and the
 bell tolled solemnly,

Toll slowly.

While the trees' and river's voices flowed
 between the solemn noises, —
Yet death seemed more loud to me.

There I read this ancient rhyme, while the
 bell did all the time

Toll slowly.

And the solemn knell fell in with the tale
 of life and sin,
Like a rhythmic fate sublime.