

**FAVORITE POEMS.
[BOSTON-1877]**

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Favorite Poems. [Boston-1877] by Owen Meredith

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OWEN MEREDITH

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[BOSTON-1877]**



Madame la Marquise.

FAVORITE POEMS.

BY

OWEN MEREDITH.

Illustrated.



BOSTON:
JAMES R. OSGOOD AND COMPANY,
Late Tickner & Fields, and Fields, Osgood, & Co.
1877.



Favorite Poems.







**FAIR YOLAND WITH THE YELLOW
HAIR.**



KNIGHT that wears no lady's sleeve
Upon his helm from dawn to eve,
And all night long beneath the throng

Of throbbing stars, without reprieve
My moan I make, as on I ride
Along waste lands and waters wide,
The haunts of bitterns ; smoky strips
Of sea-coast where there come no ships ;
Or over brambly humpbacked downs,
And under walls of hilly towns,
And out again across the plain,
Oft borne beneath a hissing rain
Within the murmur of the wind,
That doth at nightfall leave his lair
To follow and vex me ; till I find
Fair Yoland with the yellow hair.

On a field azure, all pure or,
A fountain springing evermore
To reach one star that, just too far
For its endeavor, trembles o'er
The topmost spray its strength will yield,
For my device upon my shield
Long since I wrought; and under it
Along a scroll of flame is writ
The legend, thus . . . "I SHALL ATTAIN."
In letters large: albeit "In vain!"
My heart replies to mock mine eyes;
For where that fountain seems to rise
Its highest, it is back consigned
To earth, and falls in void despair,
Like my sad seven-years' hope to find
Fair Yolaud with the yellow hair.

Seven years ago (how long it seems
Since then!) as free as summer streams
My fancy played with sun and shade,
And all my days were dim with dreams.
One day — I wot not whence nor how
It flashed upon me, even now
I marvel at the change it wrought! —
My whole life leapt into one thought,

Which thought was made my lifelong act ;
 As, dashed in dazzling cataract,
 From its long sleeps, at last outleaps
 Some lazy ooze, which henceforth keeps
 One steadfast way ; so all my mind
 Was in that moment made aware
 That henceforth I must die, or find
 Fair Yoland with the yellow hair.

Since then, how many lands and climes
 Have I ransacked, — how many times
 Been bruised with blows, — how many foes
 I have dealt to death, — how many crimes
 Avenged, — how many maidens freed !
 And yet I seem to be, indeed,
 No nearer to the endless quest.
 Neither by night nor day I rest :
 My heart burns in me like a fire :
 My soul is parched with long desire :
 Ghostlike I grow : and where I go,
 I hear men mock and mutter low,
 And feel men's fingers point behind, —
 "The moon-struck knight that talks to air !
 Lord help the fool who hopes to find
 Fair Yoland with the yellow hair !"