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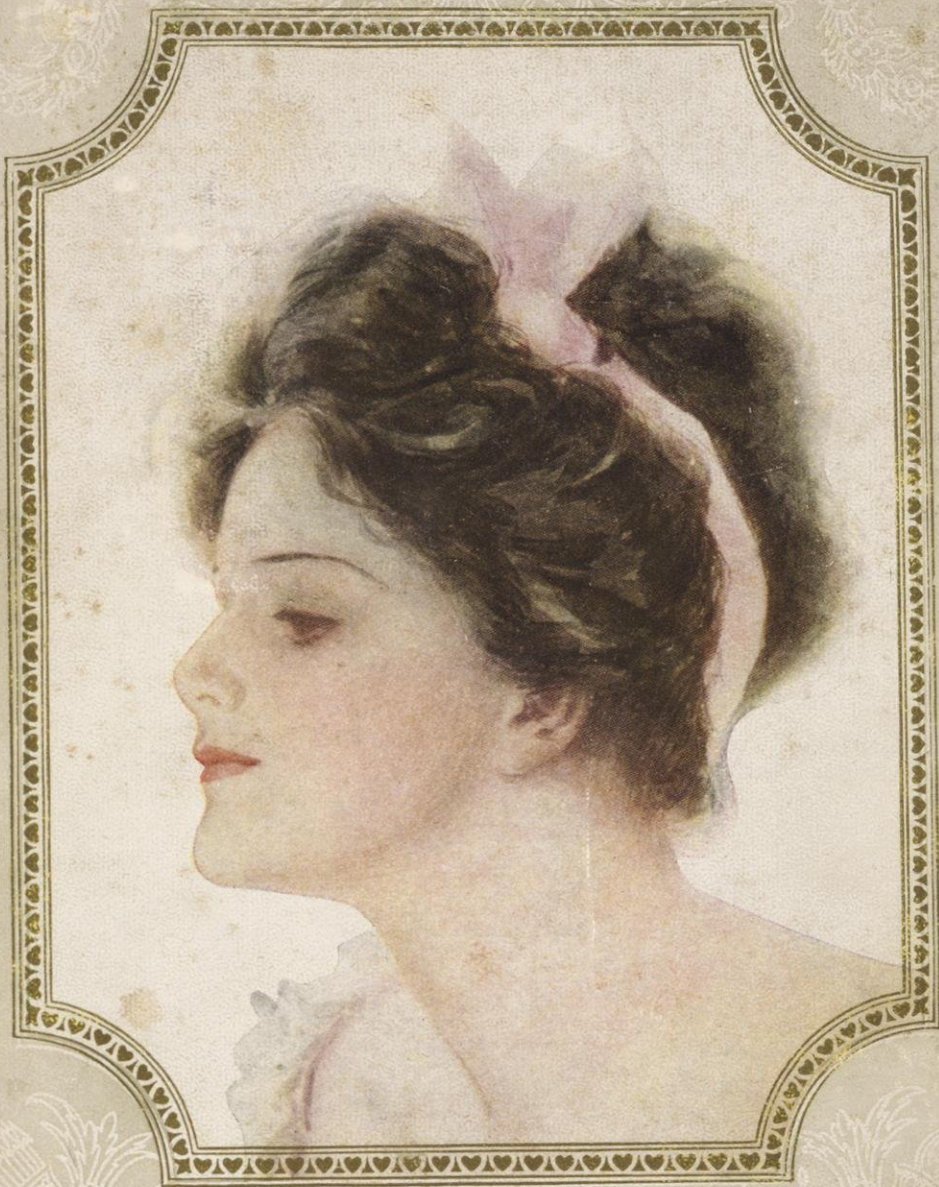
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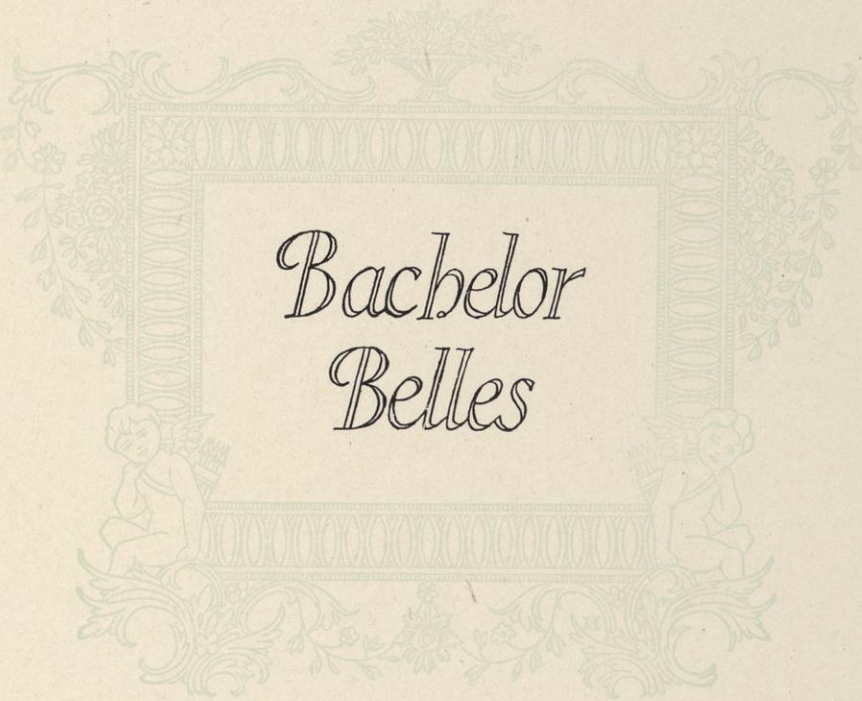
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Bachelor Belles
Harrison Fisher

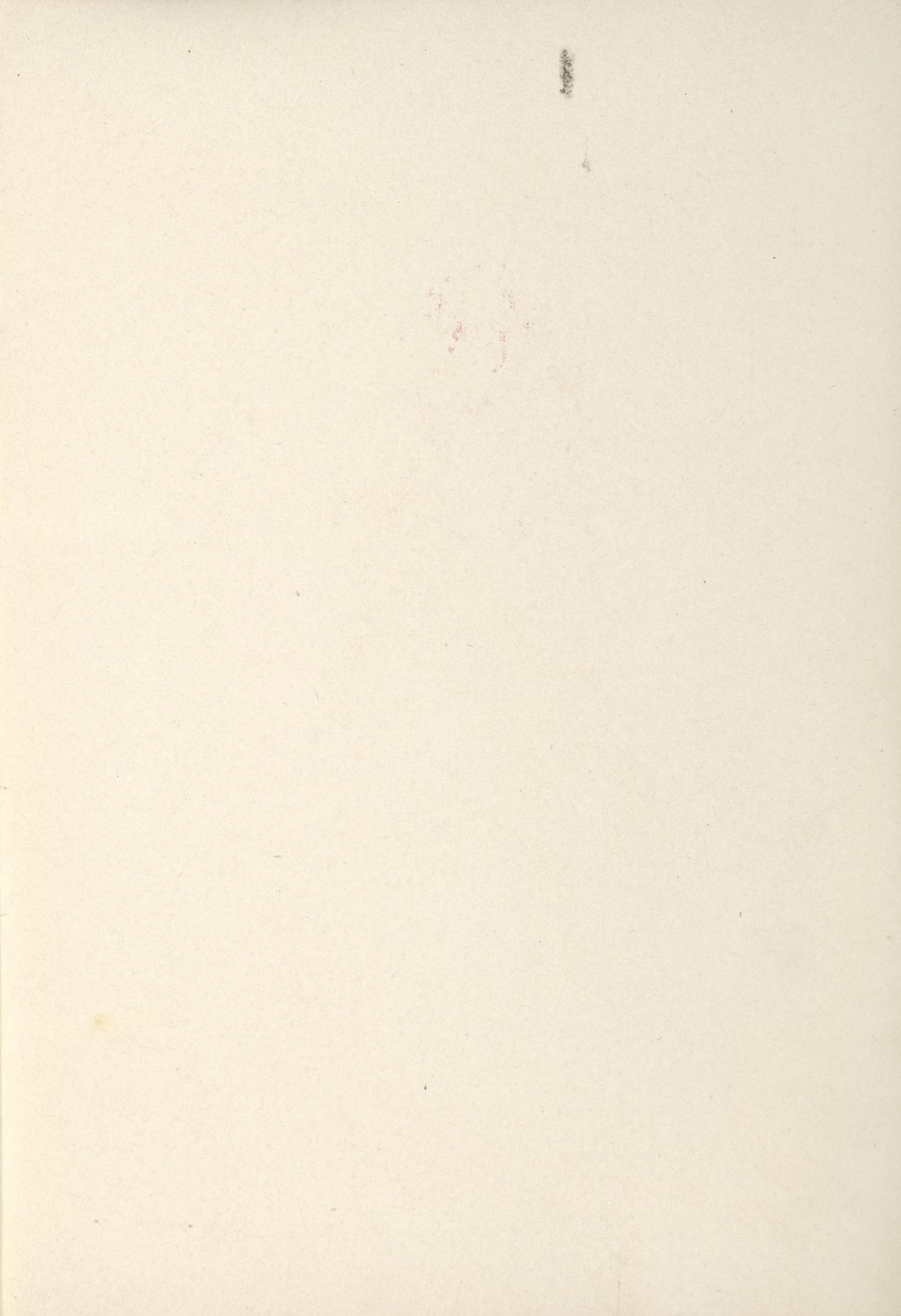


*Bachelor
Belles*



NOTE

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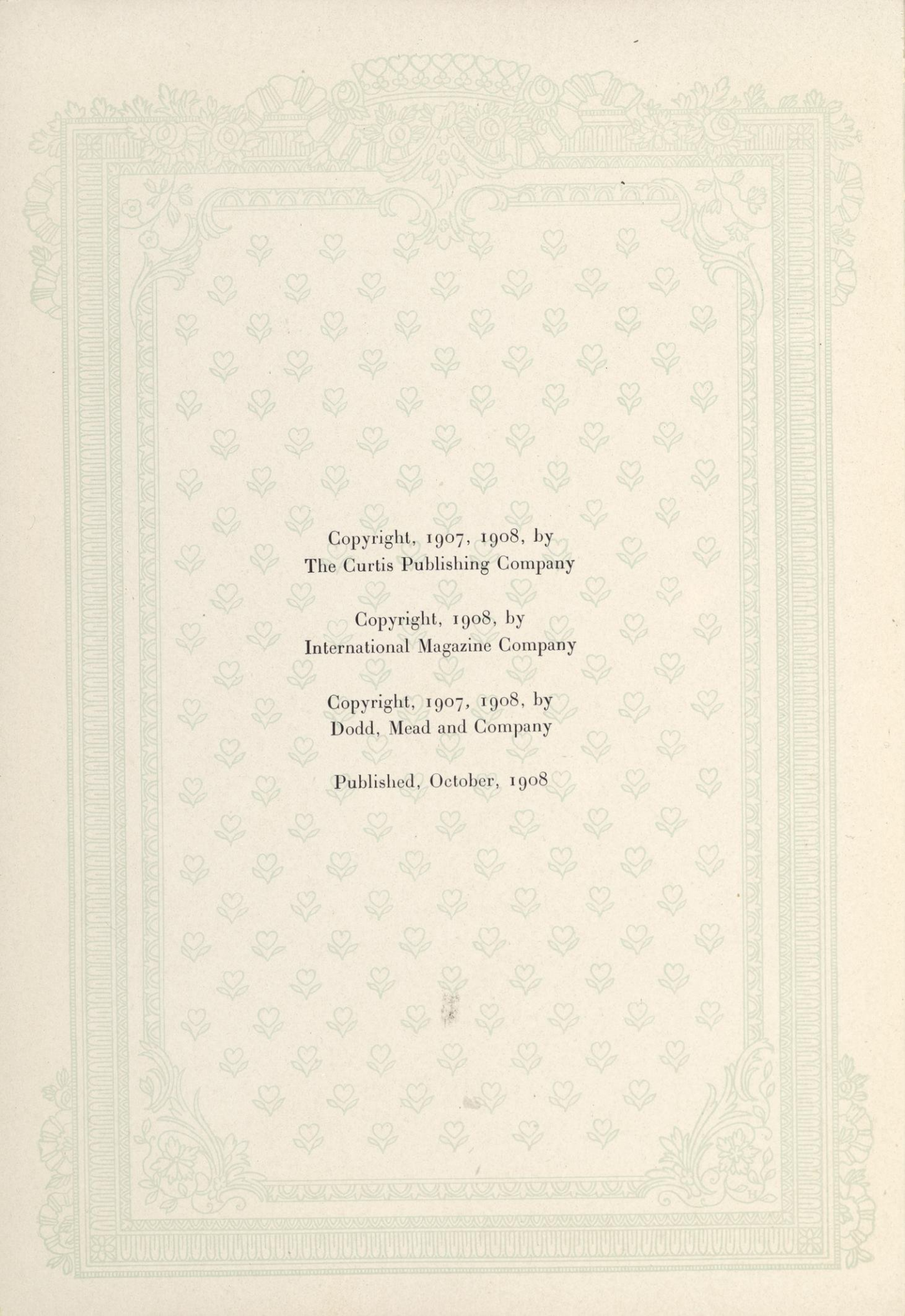


Bachelor Belles

*With Illustrations by
Harrison Fisher*

*Decorations by
Theodore B. Hapgood*

*New York
Grosset & Dunlap*



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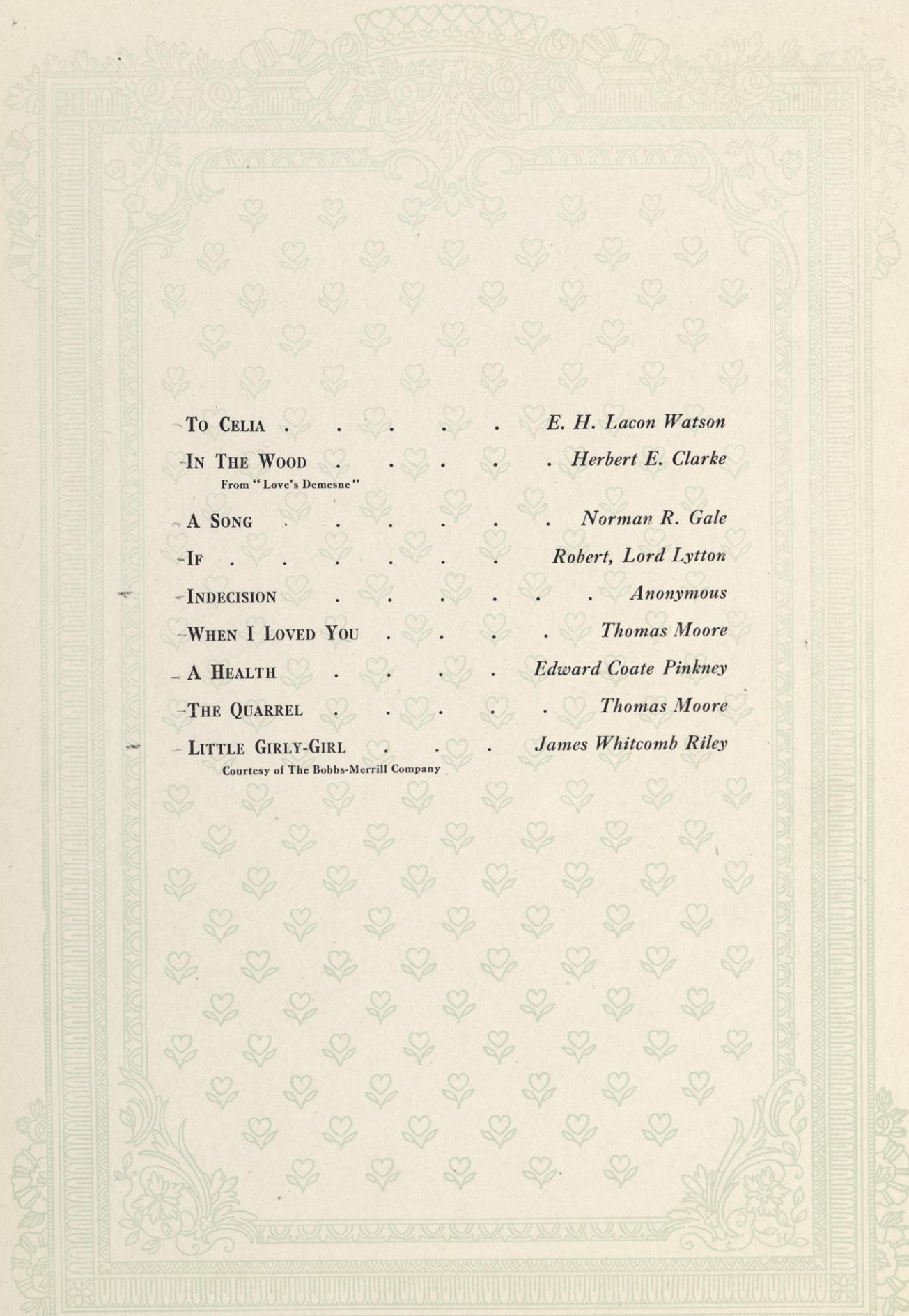
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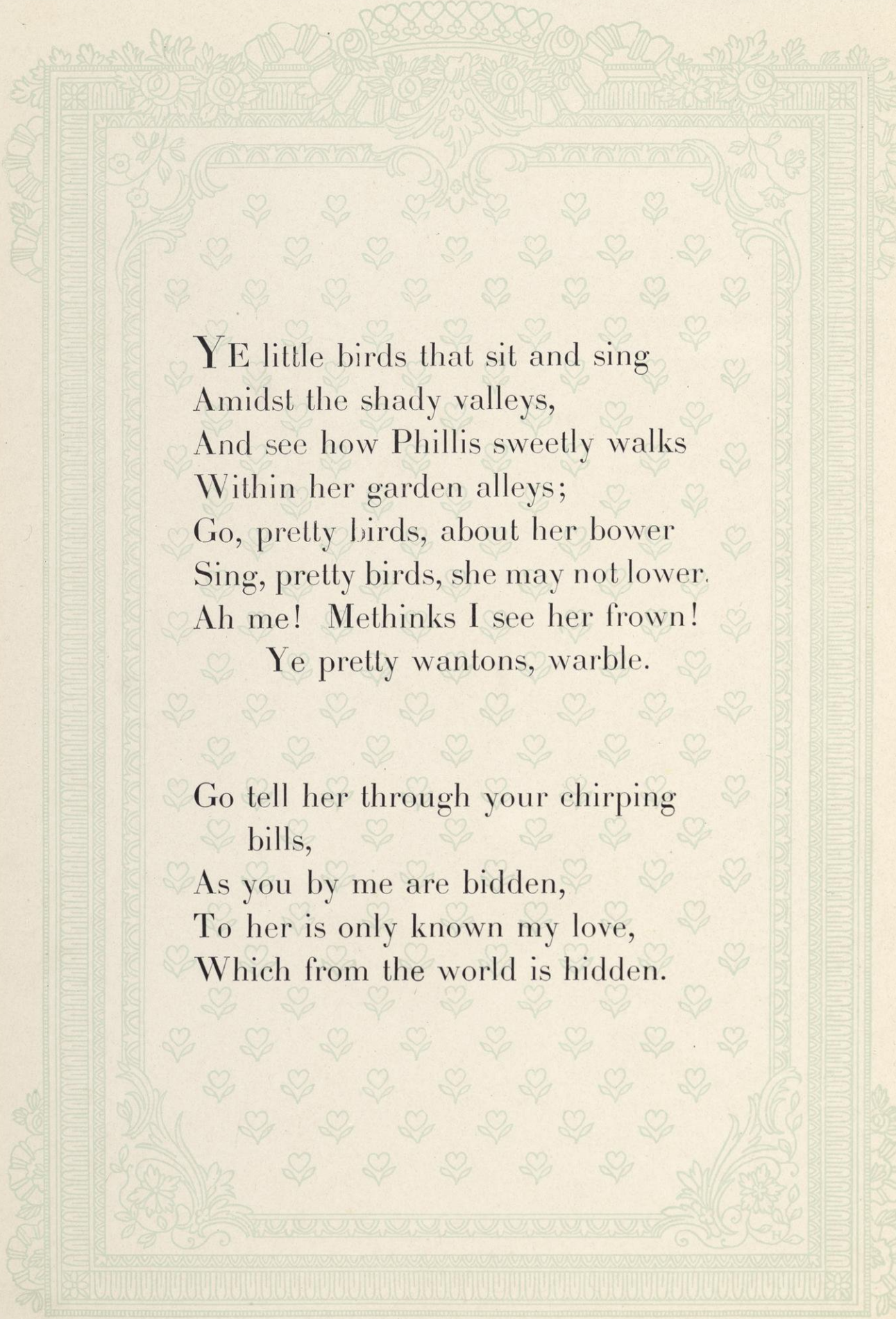
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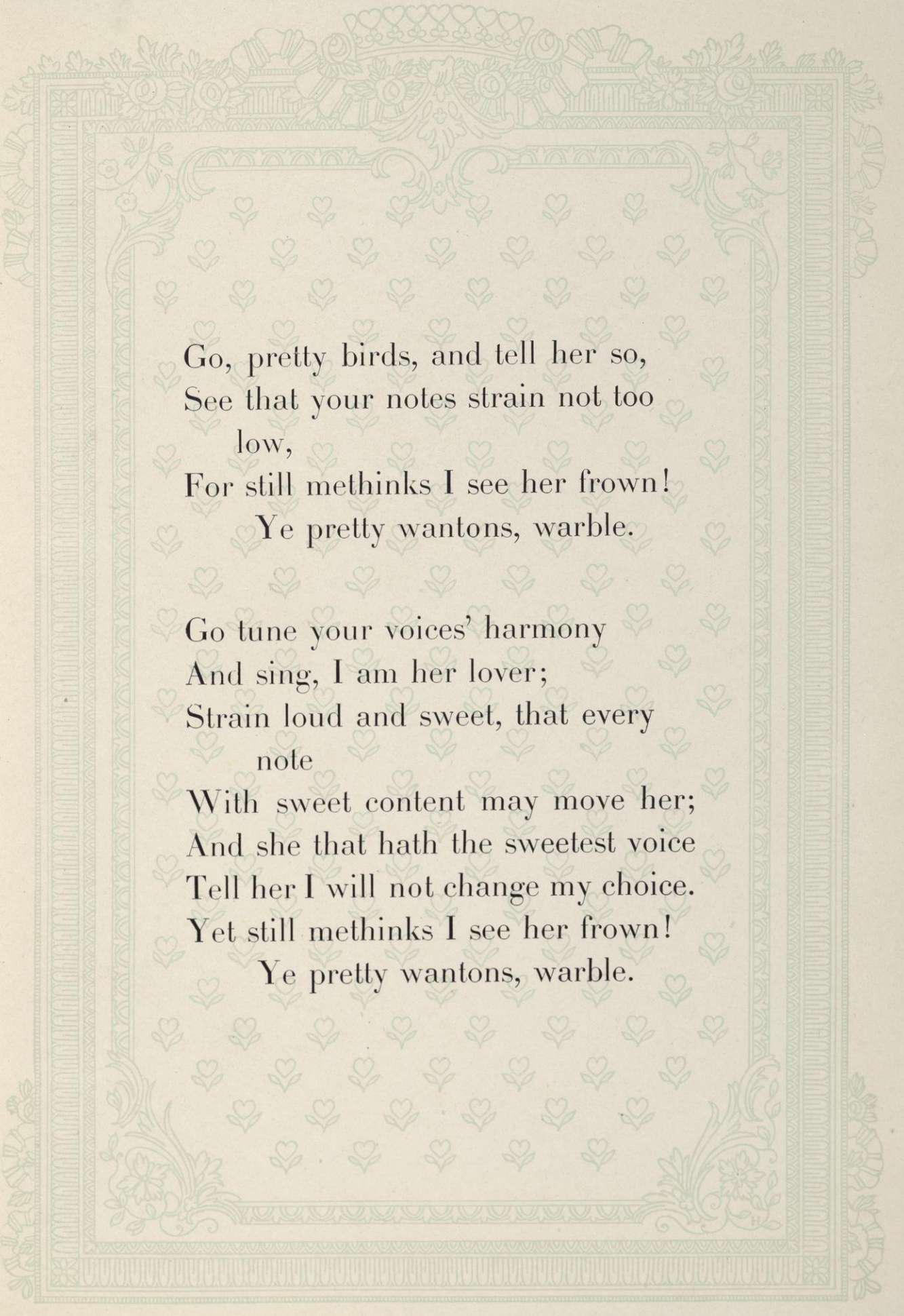


THE MESSAGE



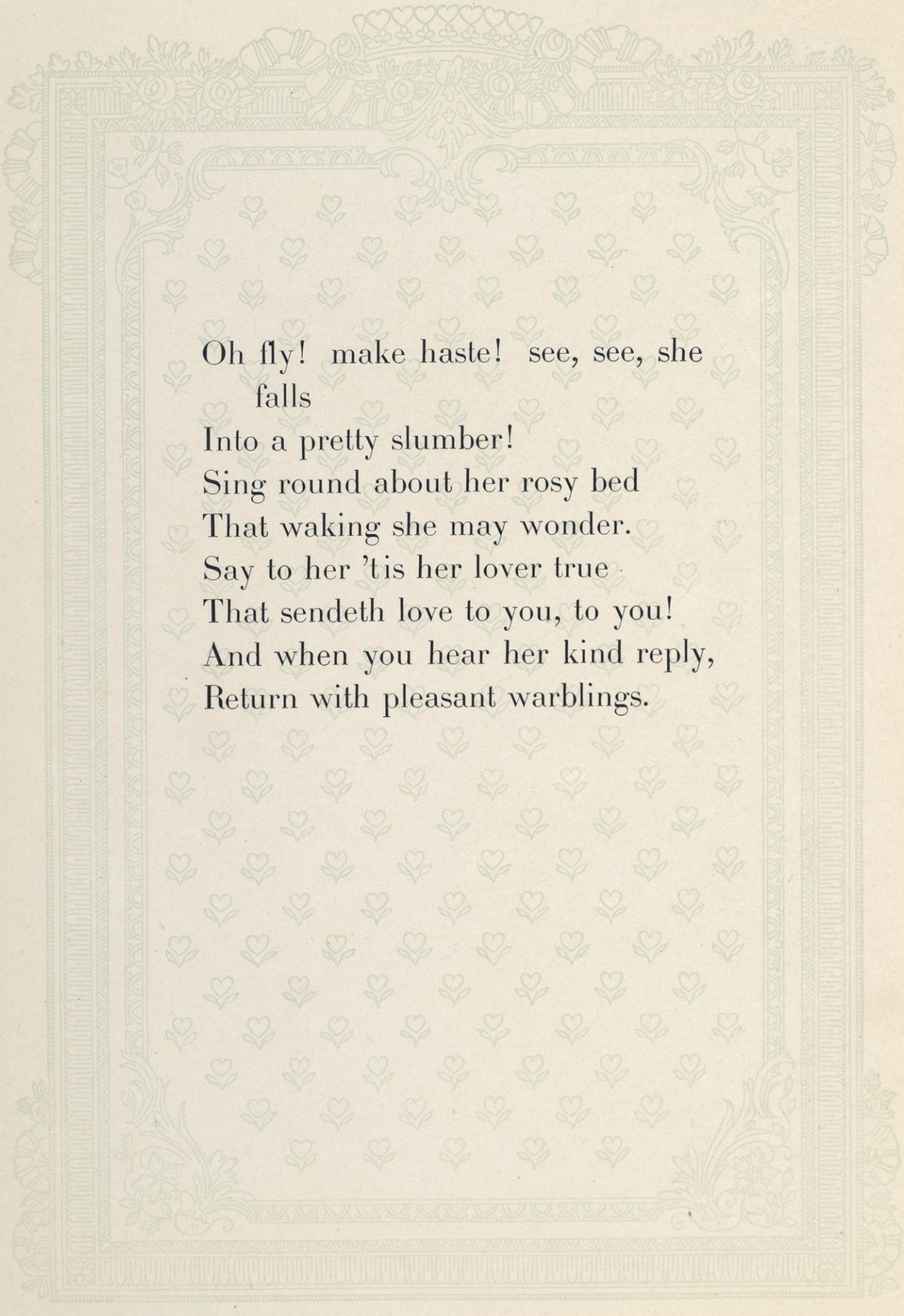
YE little birds that sit and sing
Amidst the shady valleys,
And see how Phillis sweetly walks
Within her garden alleys;
Go, pretty birds, about her bower
Sing, pretty birds, she may not lower.
Ah me! Methinks I see her frown!
Ye pretty wantons, warble.

Go tell her through your chirping
bills,
As you by me are bidden,
To her is only known my love,
Which from the world is hidden.



Go, pretty birds, and tell her so,
See that your notes strain not too
low,
For still methinks I see her frown!
Ye pretty wantons, warble.

Go tune your voices' harmony
And sing, I am her lover;
Strain loud and sweet, that every
note
With sweet content may move her;
And she that hath the sweetest voice
Tell her I will not change my choice.
Yet still methinks I see her frown!
Ye pretty wantons, warble.



Oh fly! make haste! see, see, she
falls

Into a pretty slumber!

Sing round about her rosy bed

That waking she may wonder.

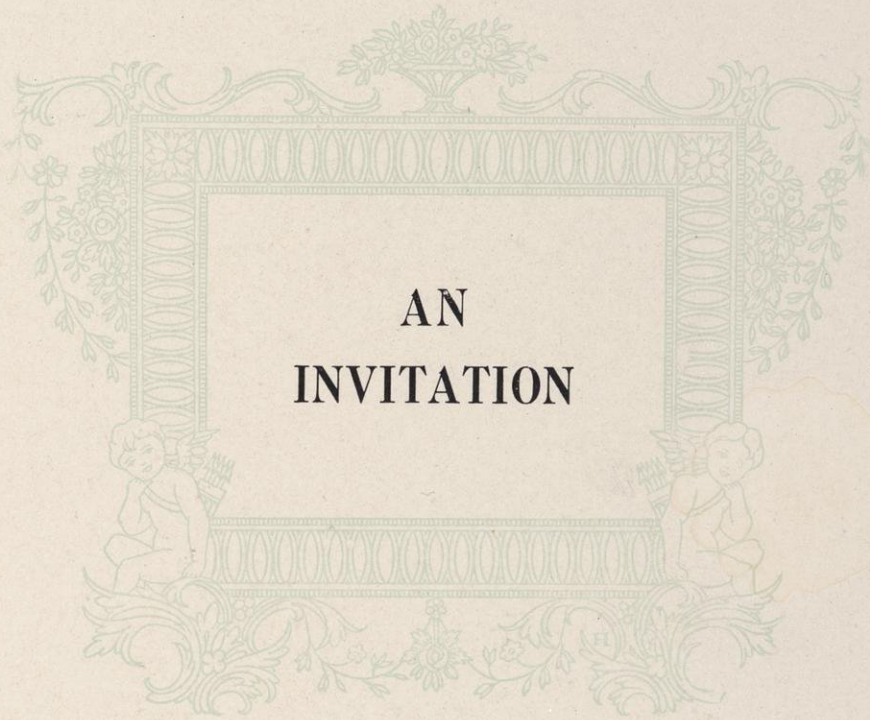
Say to her 'tis her lover true.

That sendeth love to you, to you!

And when you hear her kind reply,

Return with pleasant warblings.





AN
INVITATION



AN INVITATION

TELL me, pretty one, where will you
sail?

How shall our bark be steered, I pray?
Breezes flutter each silken veil,
Tell me where will you go to-day?

My vessel's helm is of ivory white,
Her bulwarks glisten with jewels bright
And red gold;

The sails are made of the wings of a dove,
And the man at the wheel is the god of
love,

Blithe and bold.

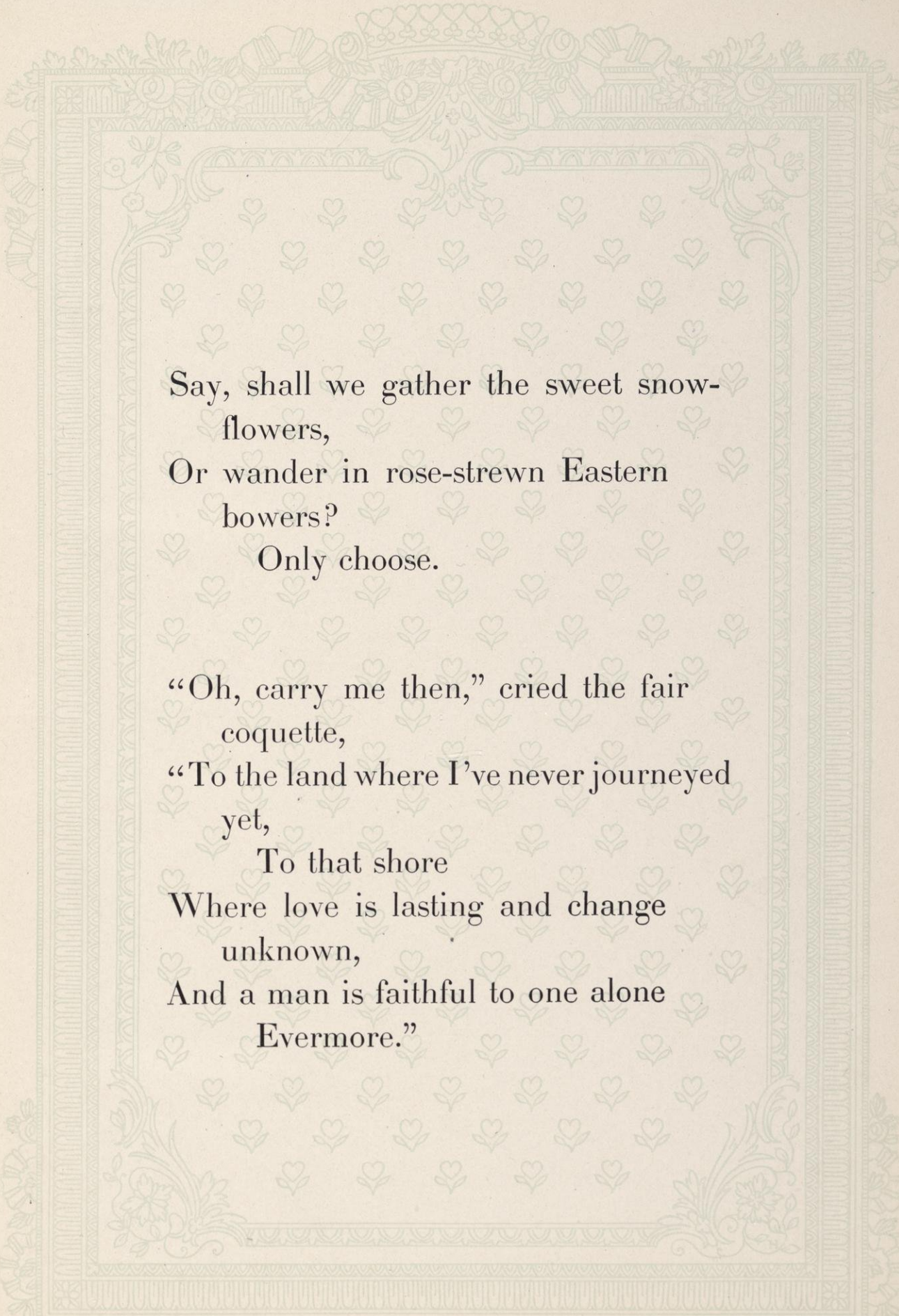
Where shall we sail? 'Mid the Baltic's
foam?

Or over the broad Pacific roam?

Don't refuse!



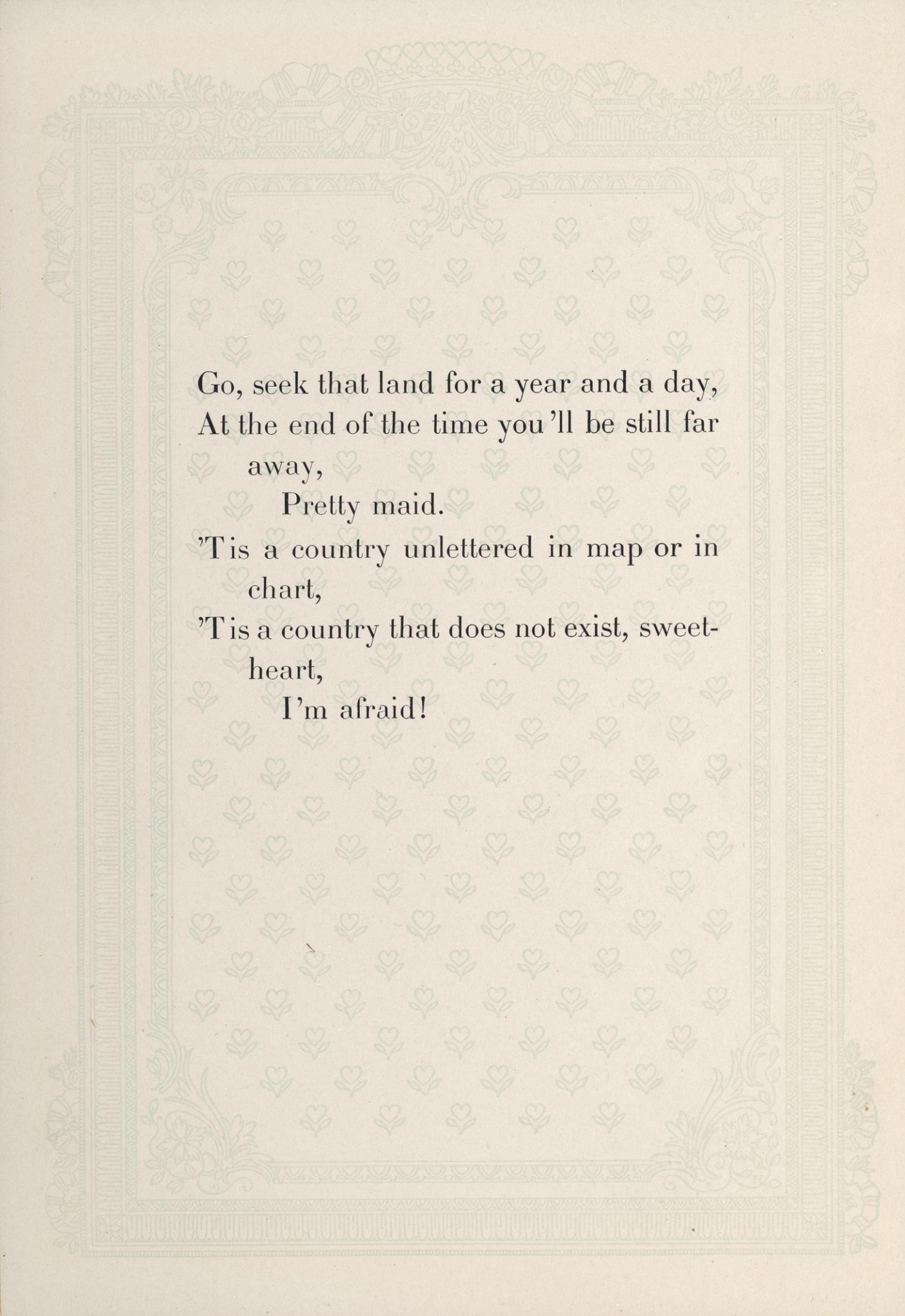
Jarrison
1908



Say, shall we gather the sweet snow-
flowers,
Or wander in rose-strewn Eastern
bowers?

Only choose.

“Oh, carry me then,” cried the fair
coquette,
“To the land where I’ve never journeyed
yet,
To that shore
Where love is lasting and change
unknown,
And a man is faithful to one alone
Evermore.”



Go, seek that land for a year and a day,
At the end of the time you'll be still far
away,

Pretty maid.

'Tis a country unlettered in map or in
chart,

'Tis a country that does not exist, sweet-
heart,

I'm afraid!



DISDAIN



DISDAIN

AT her fair hands how have I grace
entreated

With prayers oft repeated!

Yet still my love is thwarted:

Heart, let her go, for she'll not be
converted.

Say, shall she go?

Oh no, no, no, no, no!

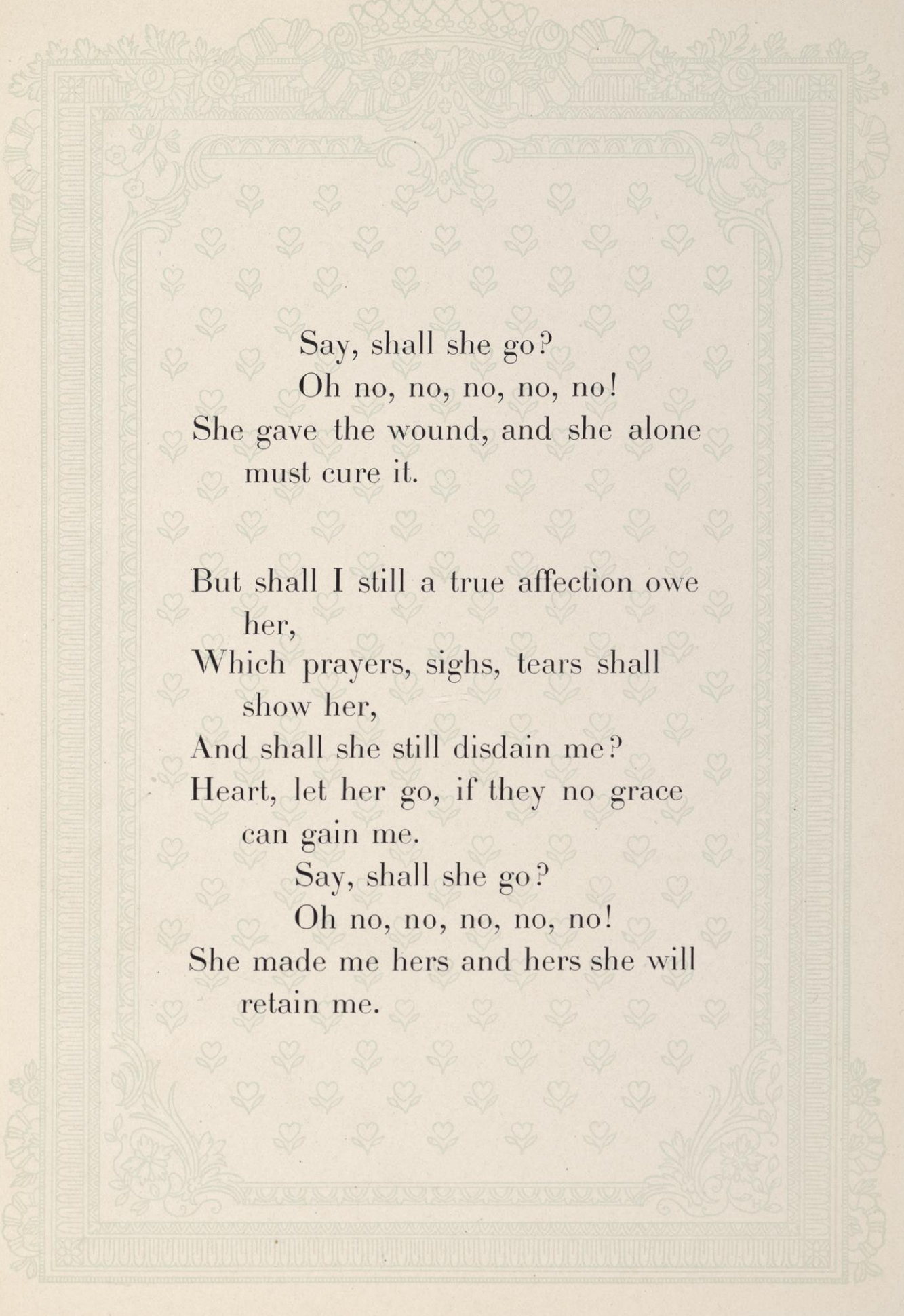
She is most fair, though she be
marble hearted.

How often have my sighs declared
my anguish,

Wherein I daily languish!

Yet still she doth procure it.

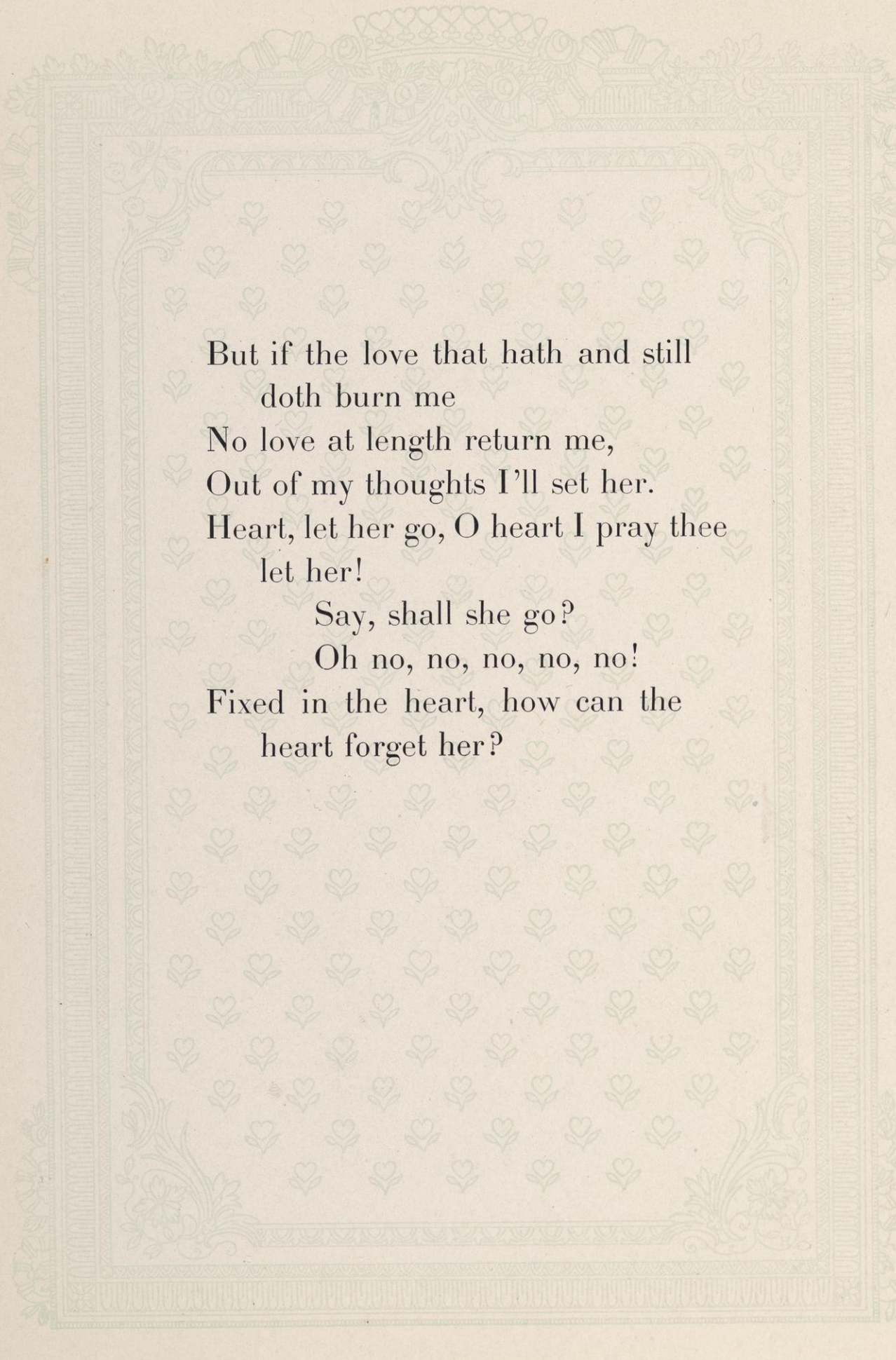
Heart, let her go, for I cannot
endure it.



Say, shall she go?
Oh no, no, no, no, no!
She gave the wound, and she alone
must cure it.

But shall I still a true affection owe
her,
Which prayers, sighs, tears shall
show her,
And shall she still disdain me?
Heart, let her go, if they no grace
can gain me.

Say, shall she go?
Oh no, no, no, no, no!
She made me hers and hers she will
retain me.



But if the love that hath and still
doth burn me
No love at length return me,
Out of my thoughts I'll set her.
Heart, let her go, O heart I pray thee
let her!

Say, shall she go?

Oh no, no, no, no, no!

Fixed in the heart, how can the
heart forget her?





DA CAPO

SHORT and sweet, and we've come
to the end of it—

Our poor little love lying cold.

Shall no sonnet, then, ever be penned
of it?

Nor the joys and the pains of it told?

How fair was its face in the morning,

How close its caresses at noon,

How its evening grew chill without
warning

Unpleasantly soon!

I can't say just how we began it—

In a blush, or a smile, or a sigh;

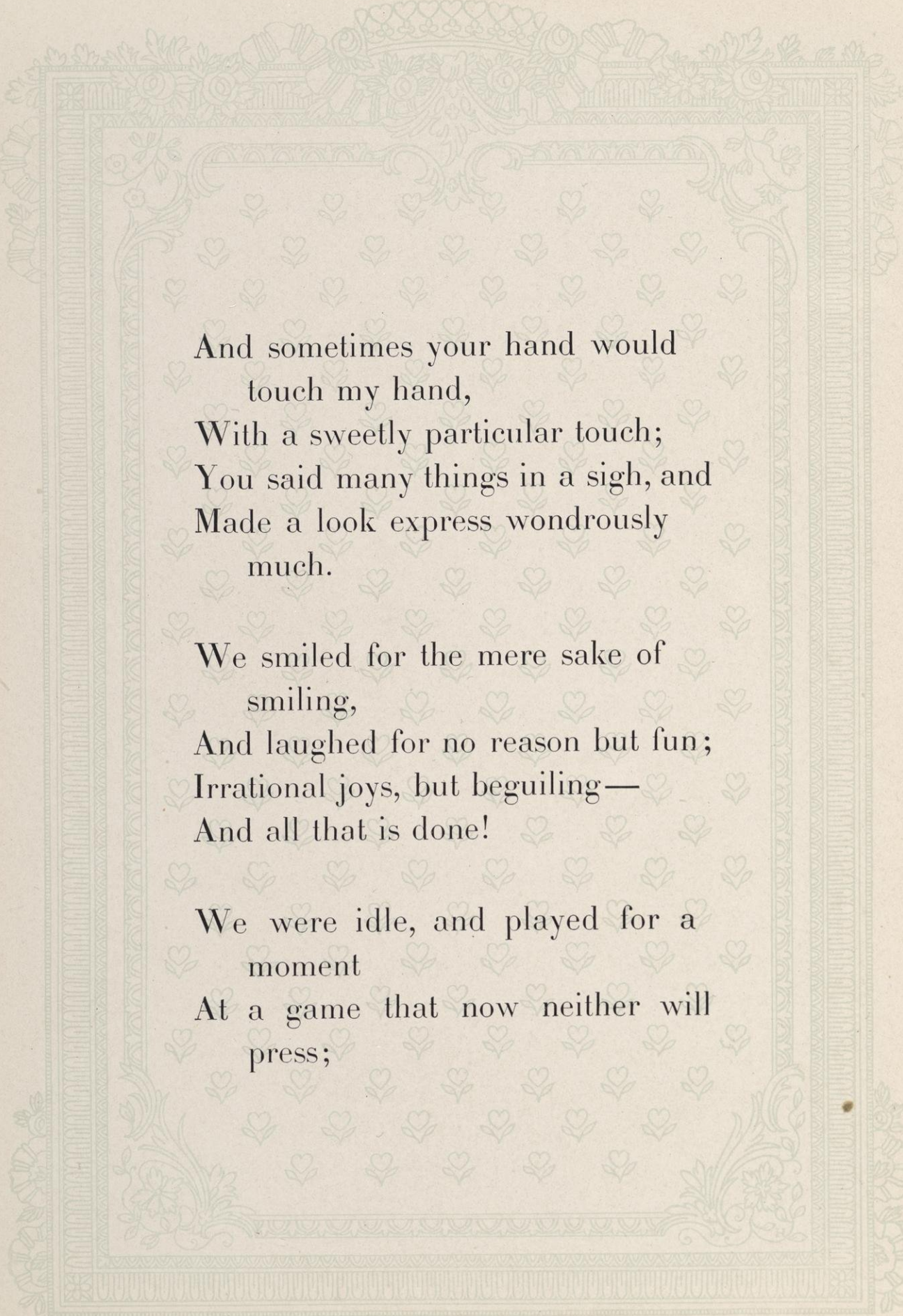
Fate took but a moment to plan it;

It needs but a moment to die.

Yet remember that first conversation,
When the flowers you had dropped
at your feet
I restored. The familiar quotation
Was "Sweets to the sweet."

Oh, then delicate perfume has
haunted
My senses a whole season through;
If there was one soft charm that you
wanted
The violets lent it to you.

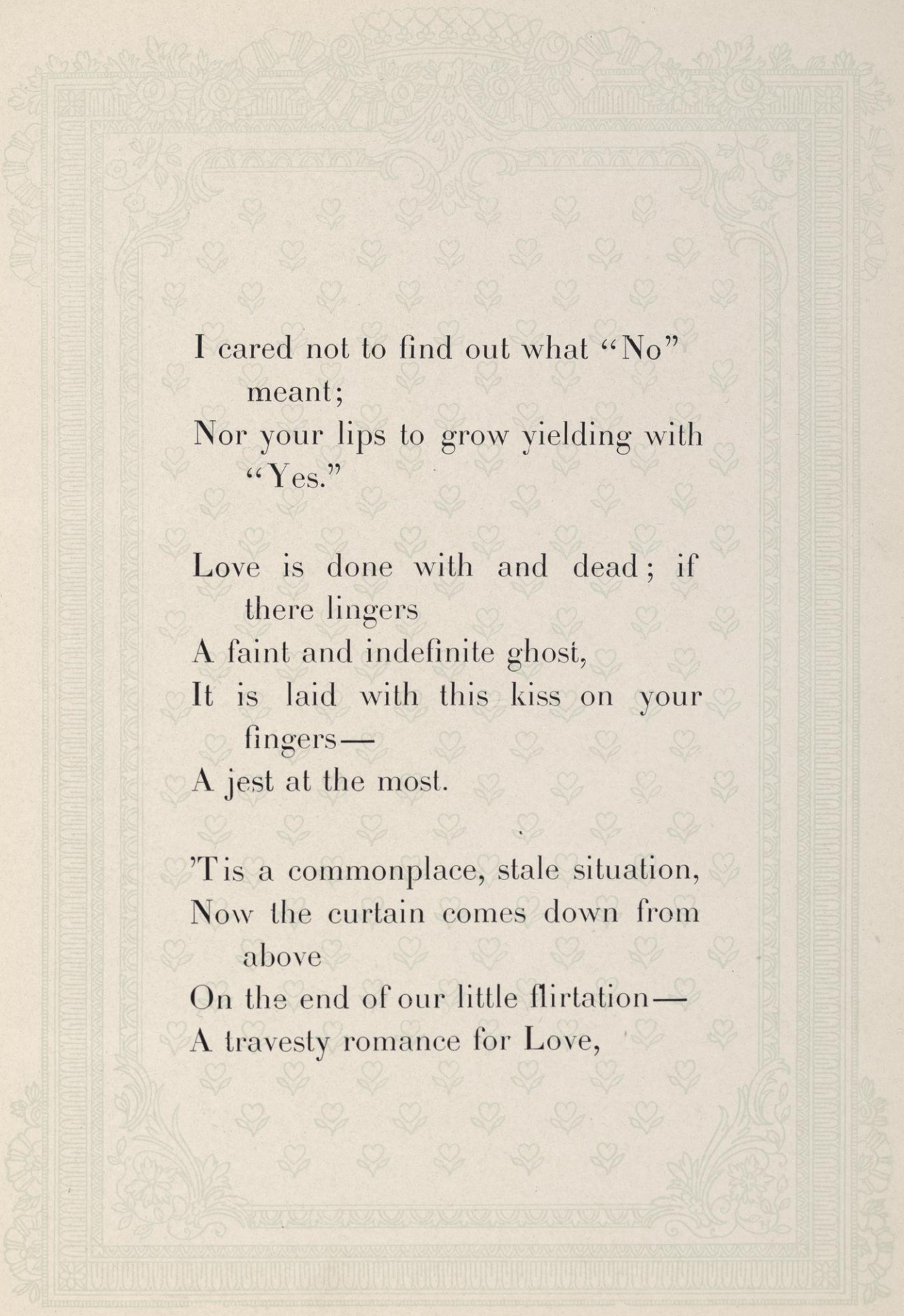
I whispered you life was but lonely—
A cue which you graciously took;
And your eyes learned a look for
me only—
A very nice look.



And sometimes your hand would
touch my hand,
With a sweetly particular touch;
You said many things in a sigh, and
Made a look express wondrously
much.

We smiled for the mere sake of
smiling,
And laughed for no reason but fun;
Irrational joys, but beguiling—
And all that is done!

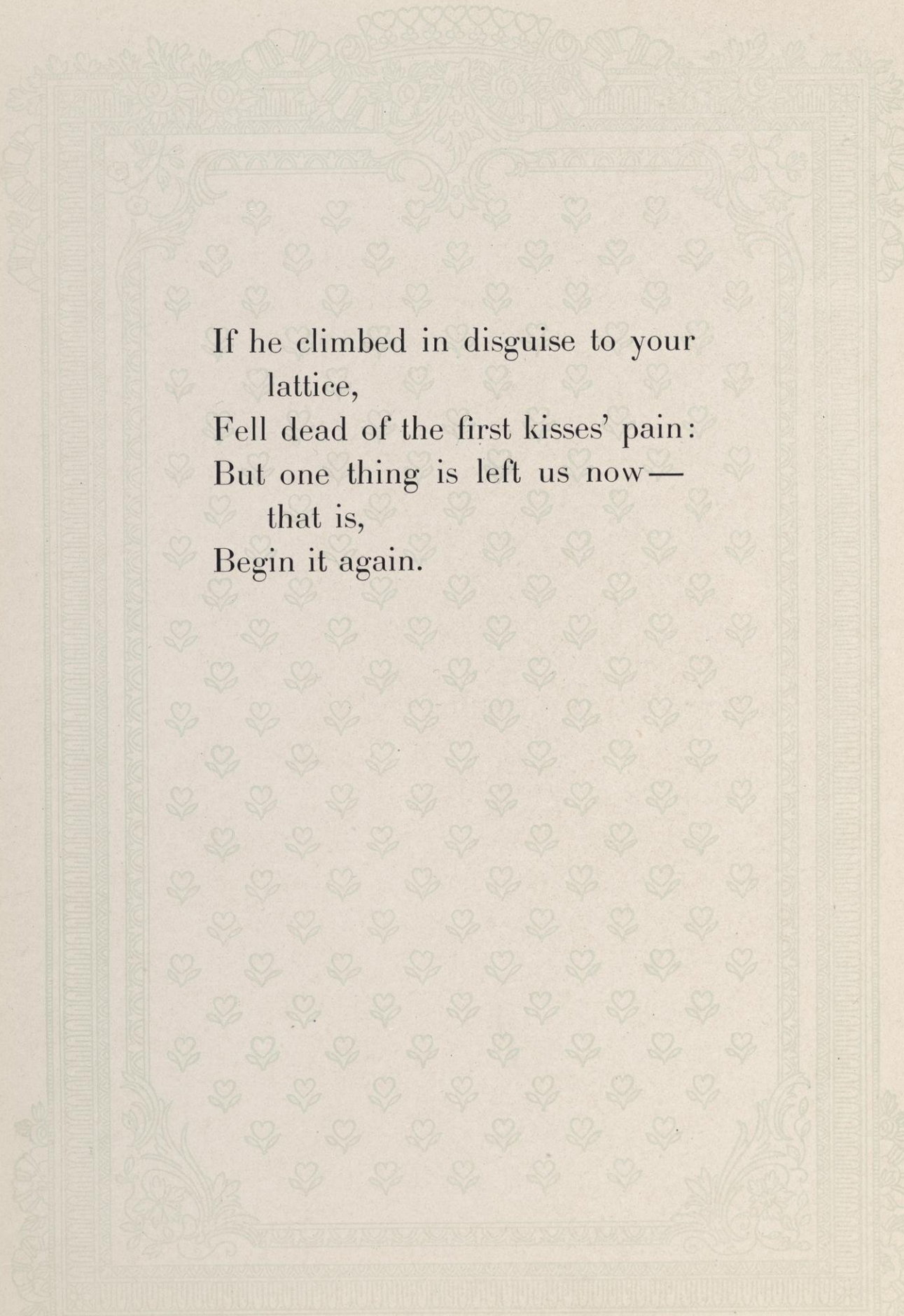
We were idle, and played for a
moment
At a game that now neither will
press;



I cared not to find out what "No"
meant;
Nor your lips to grow yielding with
"Yes."

Love is done with and dead; if
there lingers
A faint and indefinite ghost,
It is laid with this kiss on your
fingers—
A jest at the most.

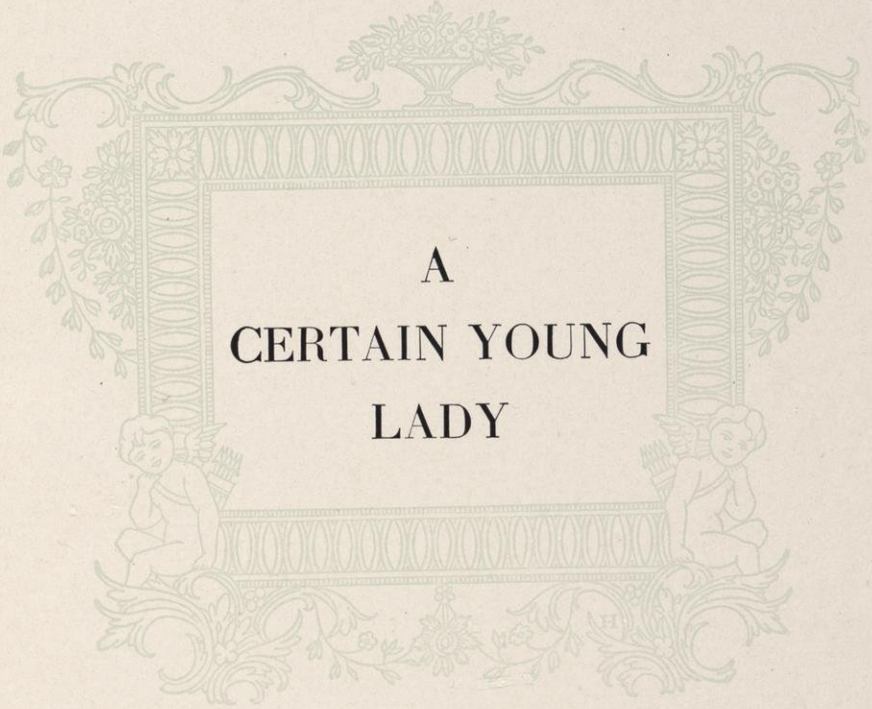
'Tis a commonplace, stale situation,
Now the curtain comes down from
above
On the end of our little flirtation—
A travesty romance for Love,



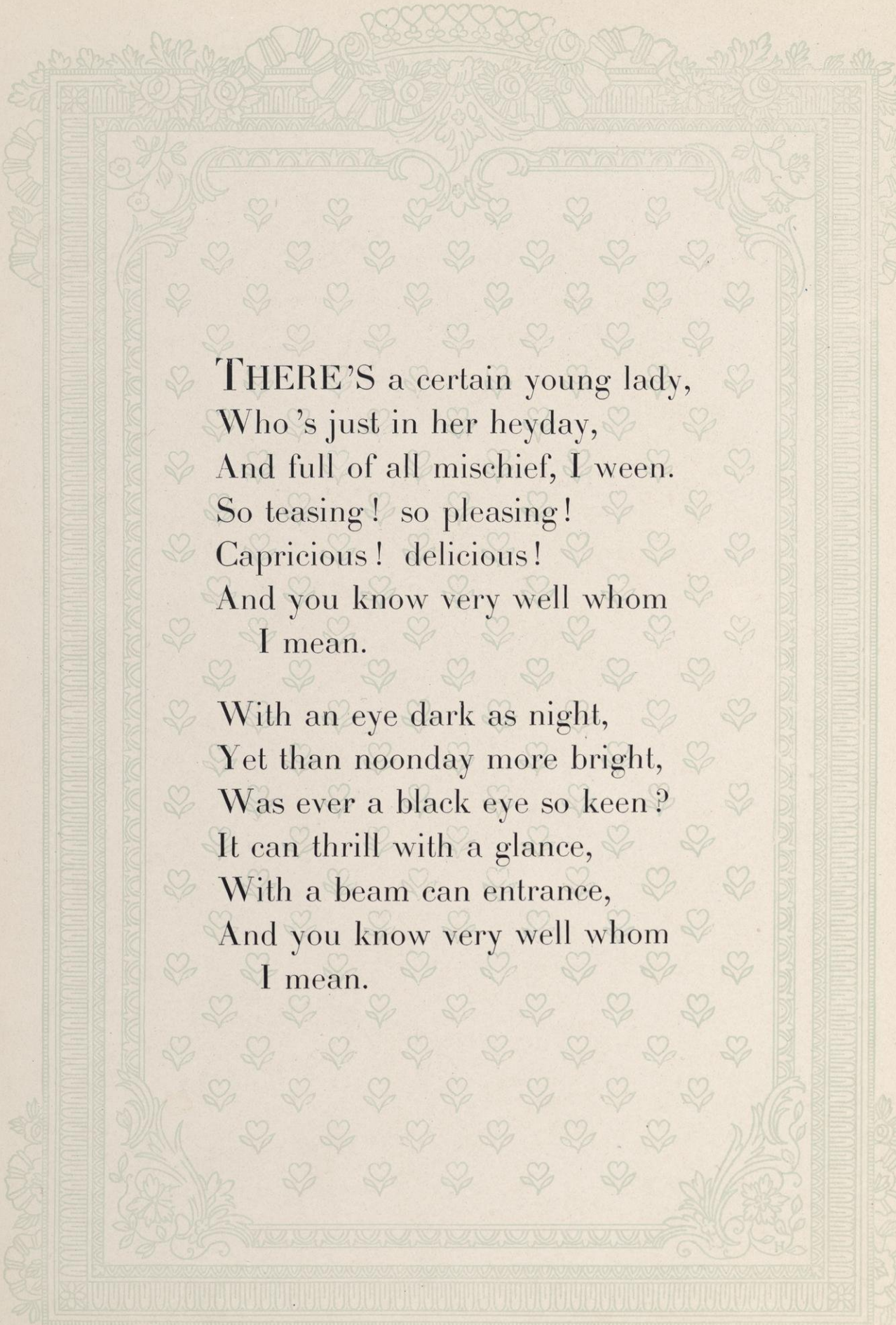
If he climbed in disguise to your
lattice,
Fell dead of the first kisses' pain:
But one thing is left us now—
that is,
Begin it again.



1902



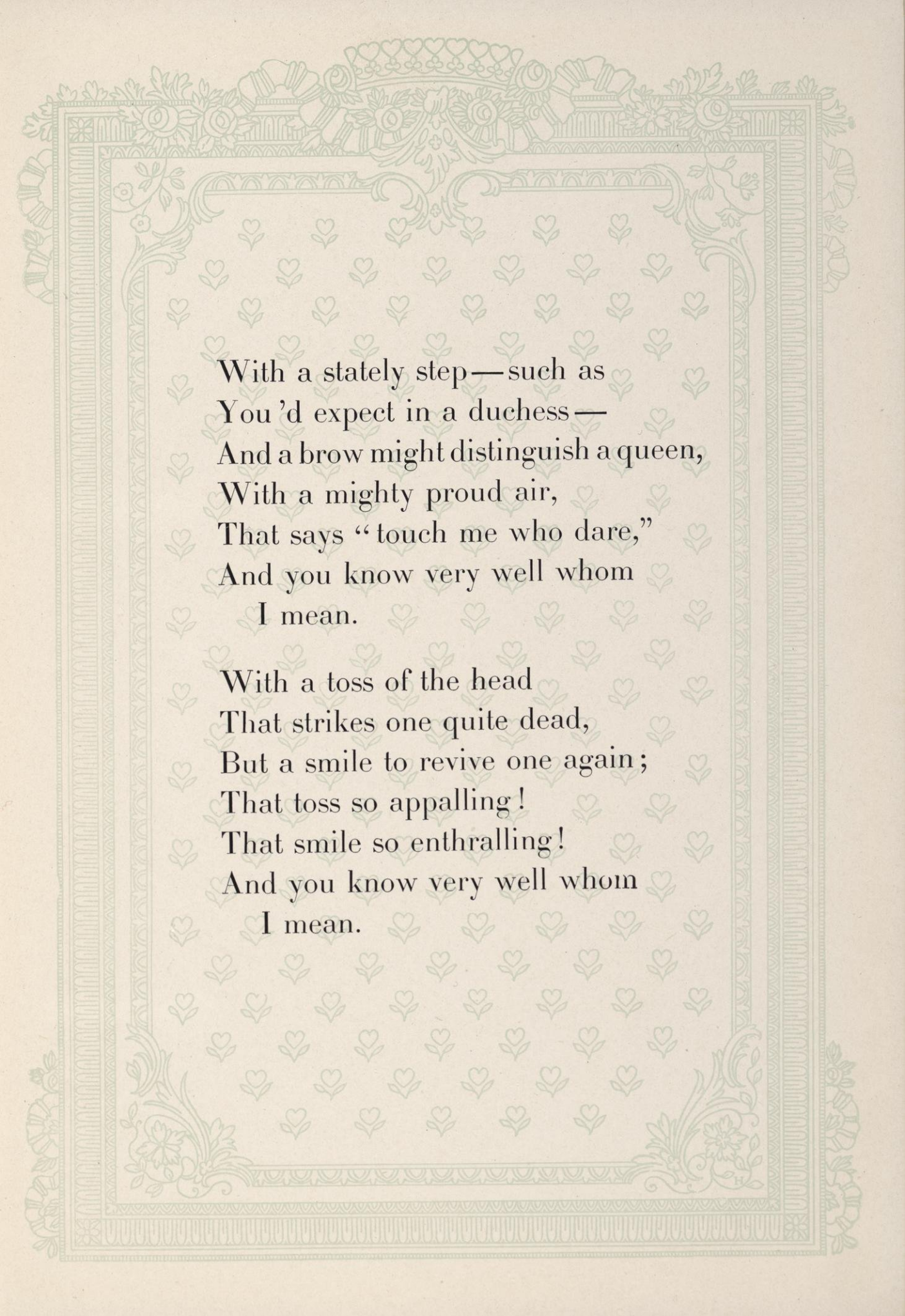
A
CERTAIN YOUNG
LADY



THERE'S a certain young lady,
Who's just in her heyday,
And full of all mischief, I ween.
So teasing! so pleasing!
Capricious! delicious!
And you know very well whom
I mean.

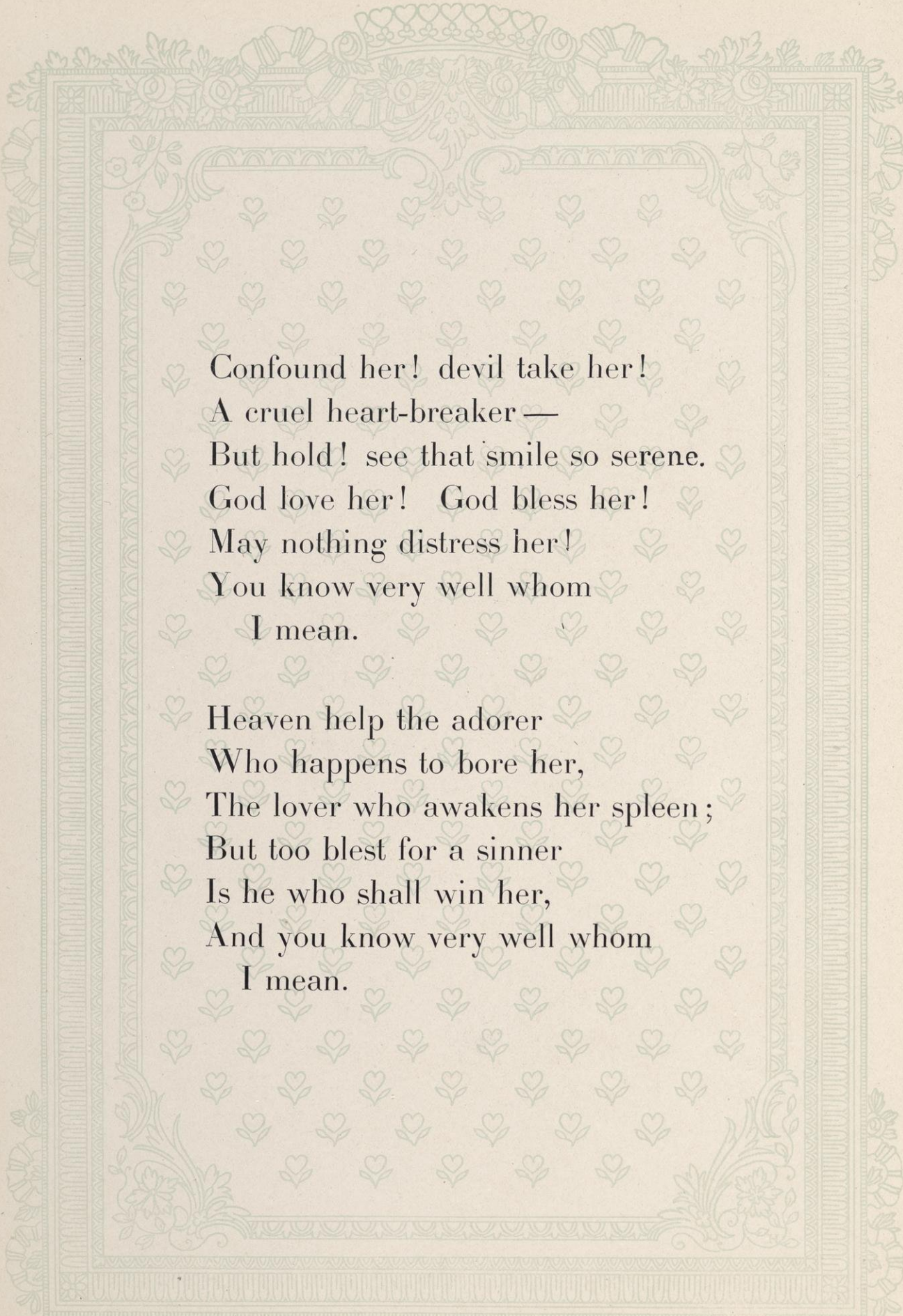
With an eye dark as night,
Yet than noonday more bright,
Was ever a black eye so keen?
It can thrill with a glance,
With a beam can entrance,
And you know very well whom
I mean.





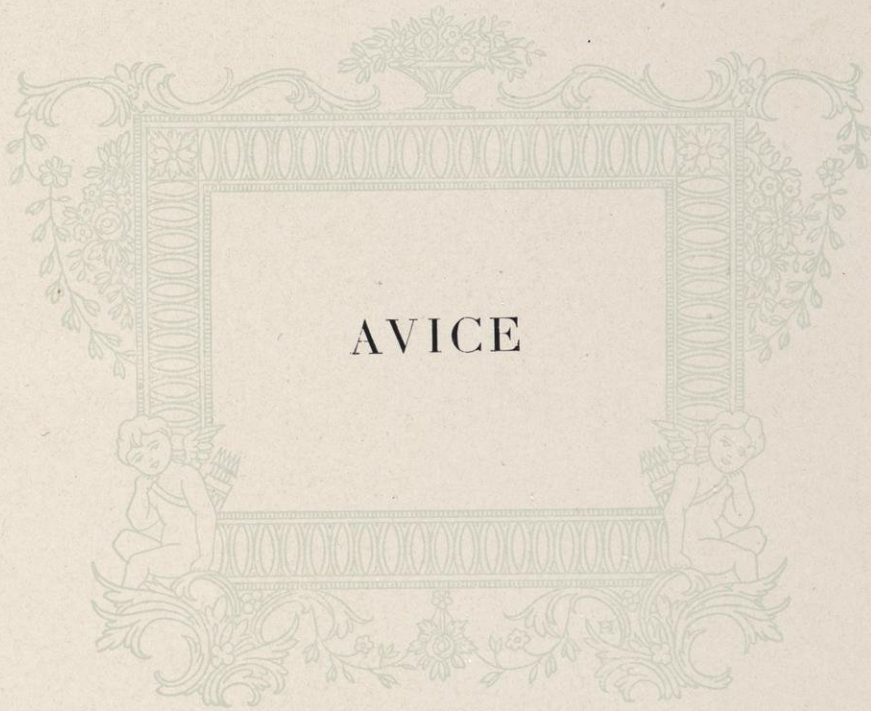
With a stately step — such as
You 'd expect in a duchess —
And a brow might distinguish a queen,
With a mighty proud air,
That says “touch me who dare,”
And you know very well whom
I mean.

With a toss of the head
That strikes one quite dead,
But a smile to revive one again;
That toss so appalling!
That smile so enthralling!
And you know very well whom
I mean.

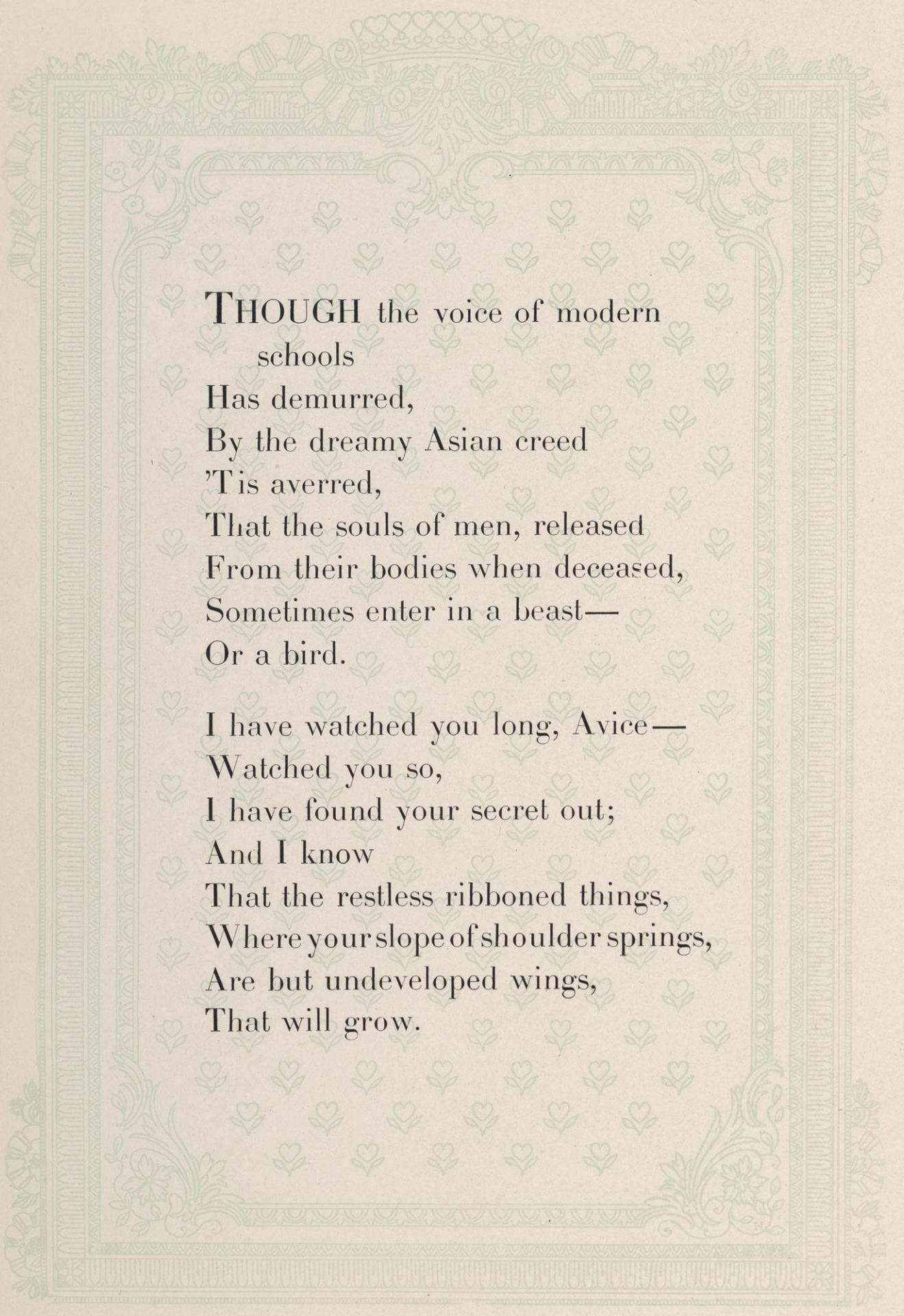


Confound her! devil take her!
A cruel heart-breaker —
But hold! see that smile so serene.
God love her! God bless her!
May nothing distress her!
You know very well whom
I mean.

Heaven help the adorer
Who happens to bore her,
The lover who awakens her spleen;
But too blest for a sinner
Is he who shall win her,
And you know very well whom
I mean.

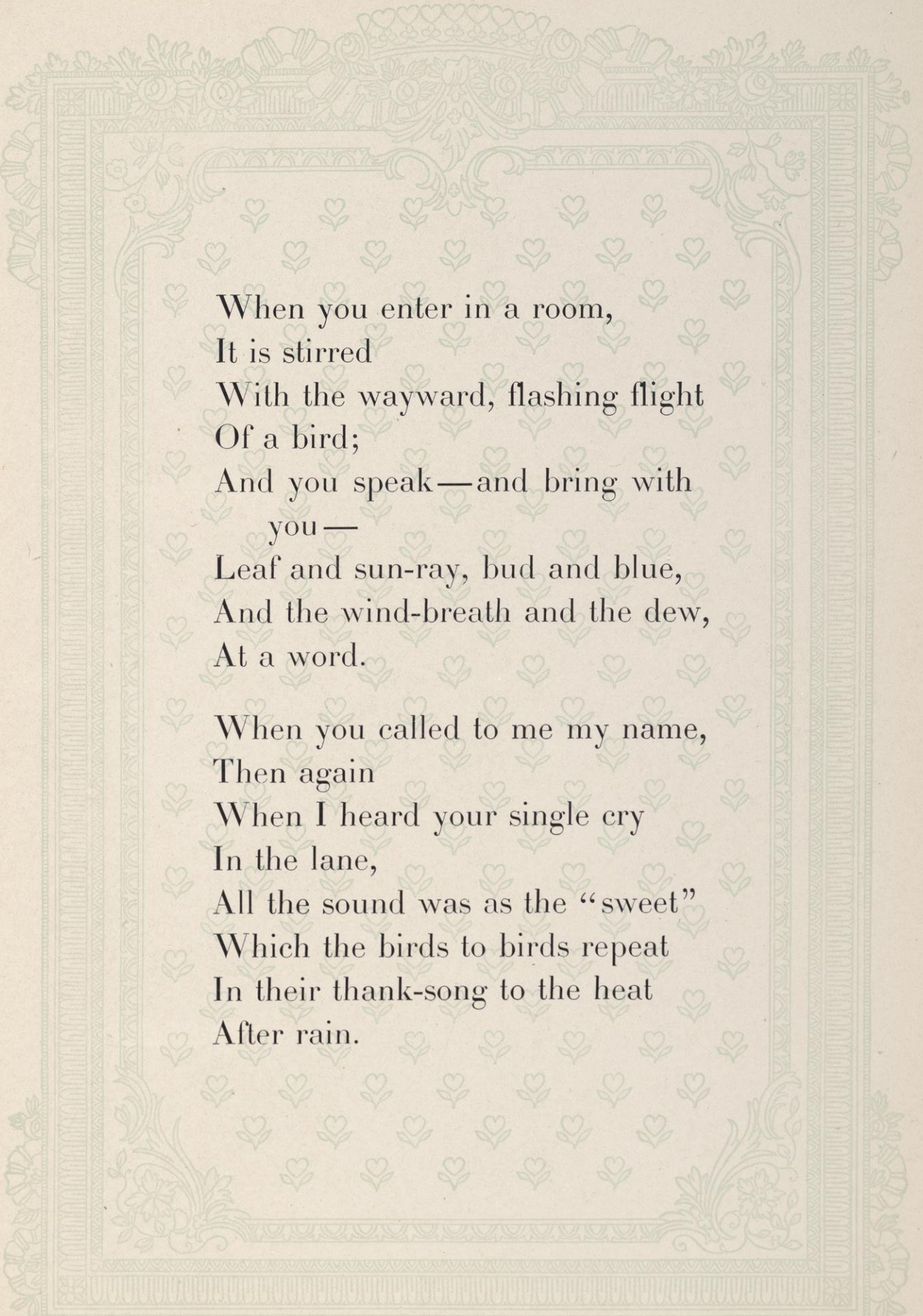


AVICE



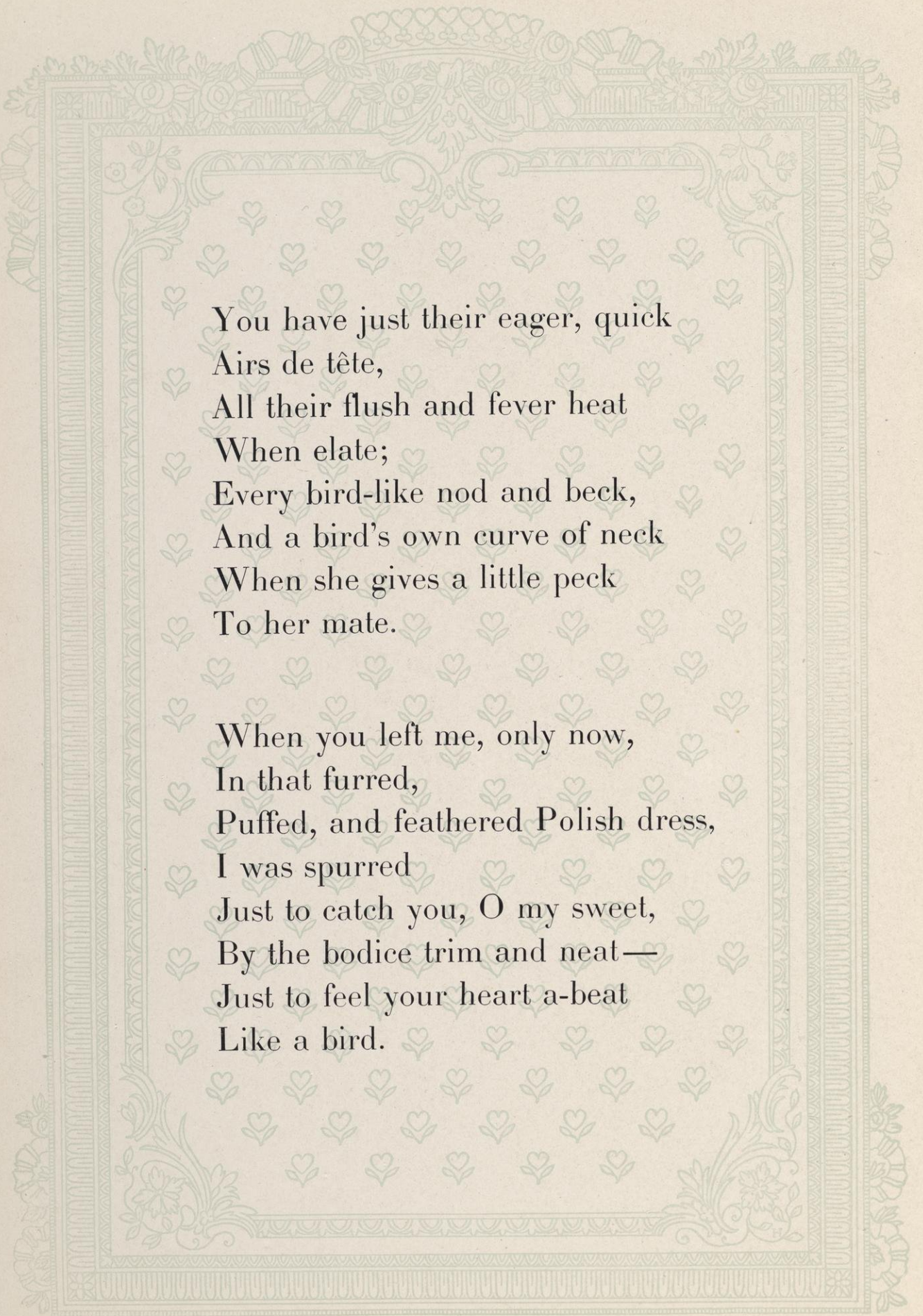
THOUGH the voice of modern
schools
Has demurred,
By the dreamy Asian creed
'Tis averred,
That the souls of men, released
From their bodies when deceased,
Sometimes enter in a beast—
Or a bird.

I have watched you long, Avicé—
Watched you so,
I have found your secret out;
And I know
That the restless ribboned things,
Where your slope of shoulder springs,
Are but undeveloped wings,
That will grow.



When you enter in a room,
It is stirred
With the wayward, flashing flight
Of a bird;
And you speak—and bring with
you—
Leaf and sun-ray, bud and blue,
And the wind-breath and the dew,
At a word.

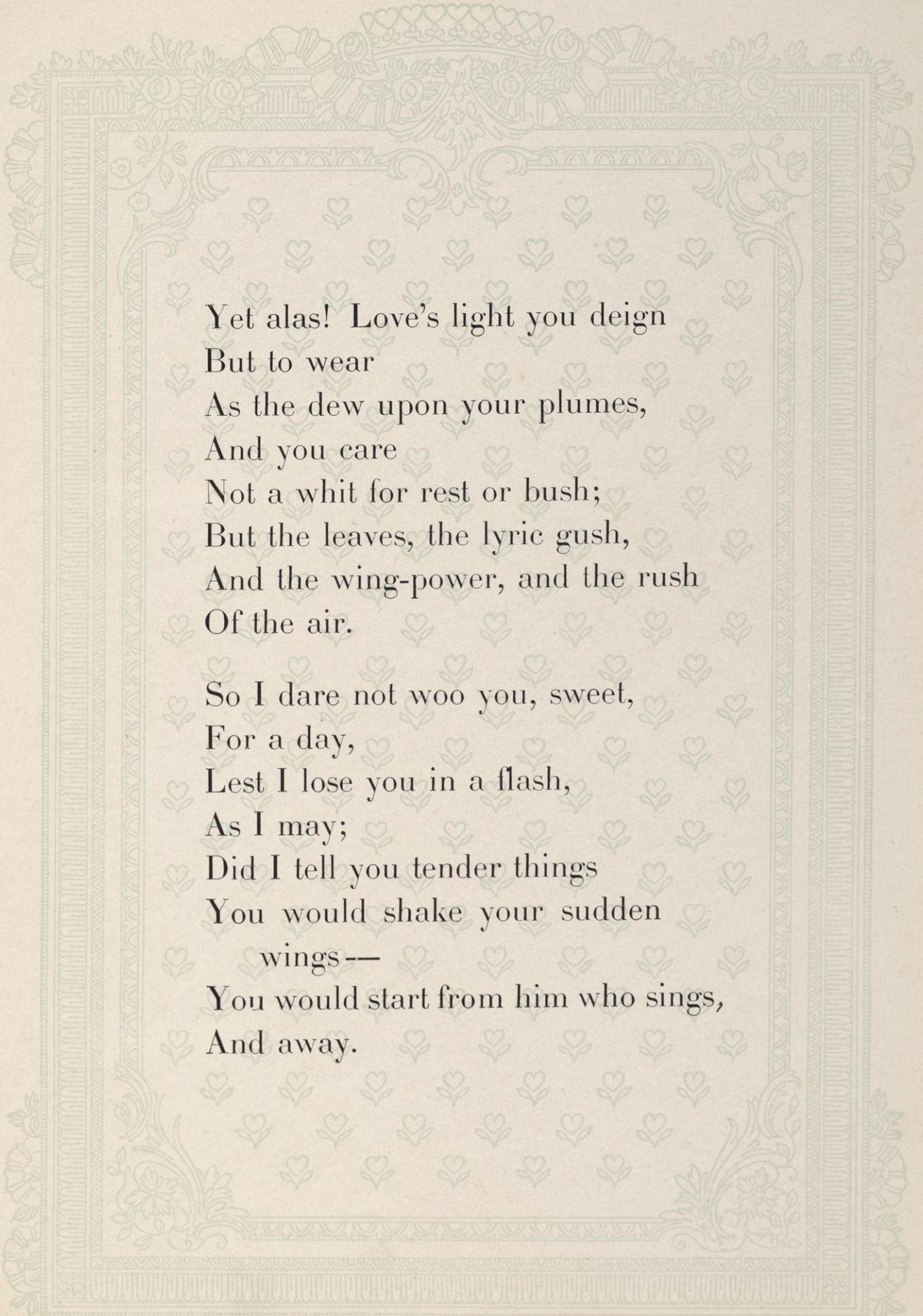
When you called to me my name,
Then again
When I heard your single cry
In the lane,
All the sound was as the “sweet”
Which the birds to birds repeat
In their thank-song to the heat
After rain.



You have just their eager, quick
Airs de tête,
All their flush and fever heat
When elate;
Every bird-like nod and beck,
And a bird's own curve of neck
When she gives a little peck
To her mate.

When you left me, only now,
In that furred,
Puffed, and feathered Polish dress,
I was spurred
Just to catch you, O my sweet,
By the bodice trim and neat—
Just to feel your heart a-beat
Like a bird.





Yet alas! Love's light you deign
But to wear
As the dew upon your plumes,
And you care
Not a whit for rest or bush;
But the leaves, the lyric gush,
And the wing-power, and the rush
Of the air.

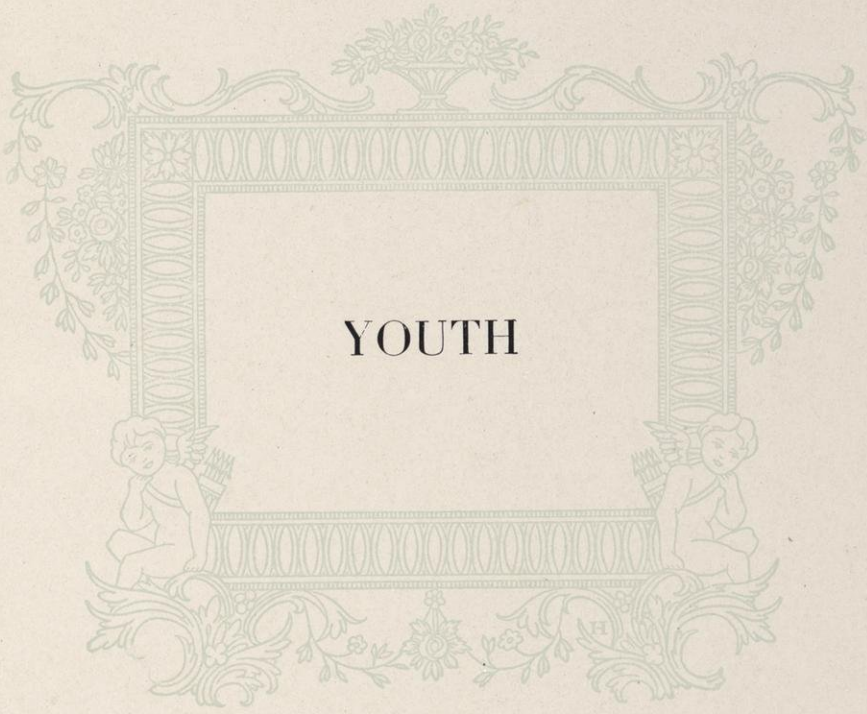
So I dare not woo you, sweet,
For a day,
Lest I lose you in a flash,
As I may;
Did I tell you tender things
You would shake your sudden
wings—
You would start from him who sings,
And away.



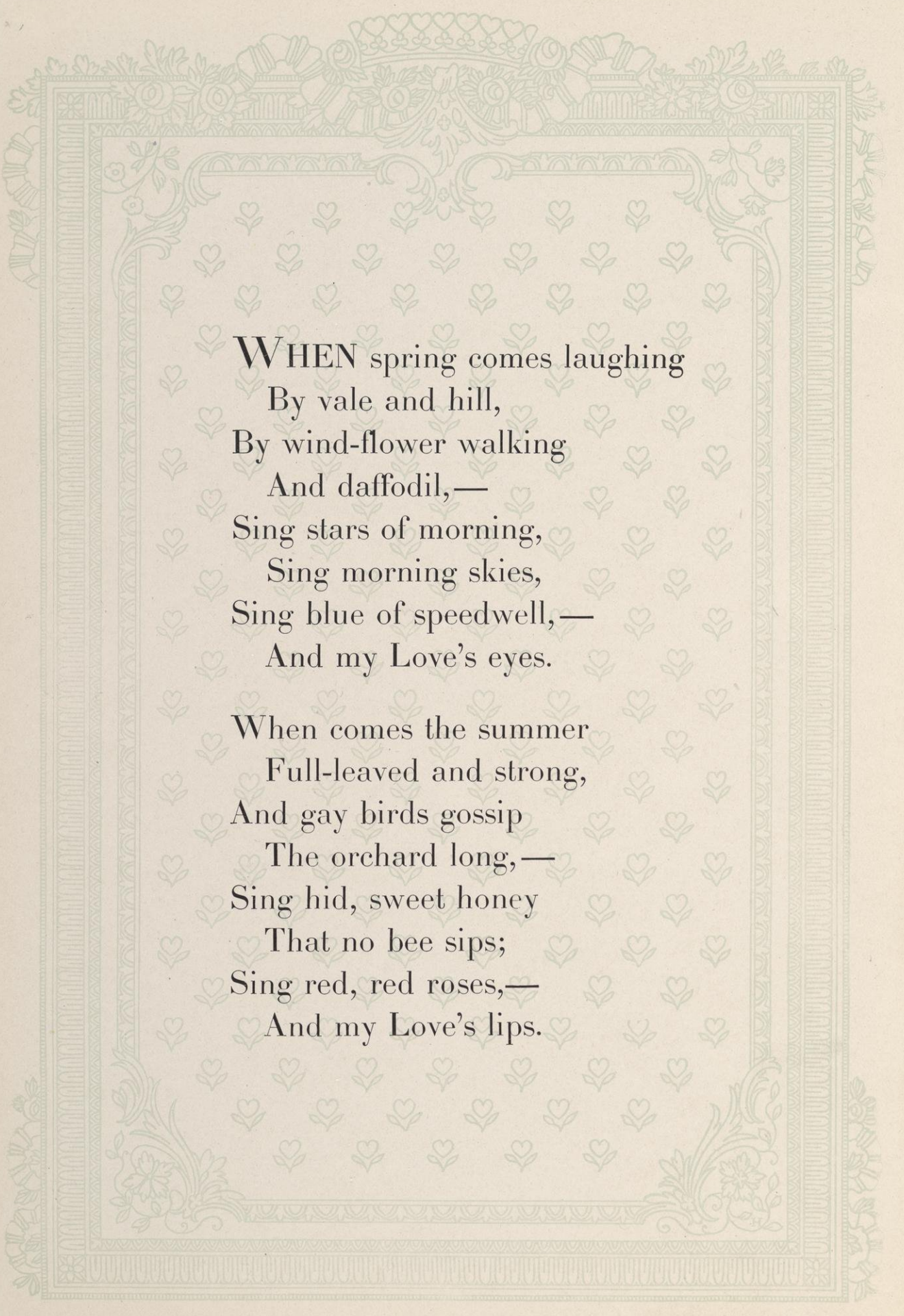
THE GOLDEN FISH

LOVE is a little golden fish,
Wondrous shy — ah, wondrous shy!
You may catch him if you wish;
He might make a dainty dish.
But I —
Ah, I've other fish to fry.

For when I try to snare this prize
Earnestly and patiently,
All my skill the rogue defies
Lurking safe in Aimée's eyes.
Lo, you see,
I am caught, and Love goes free.

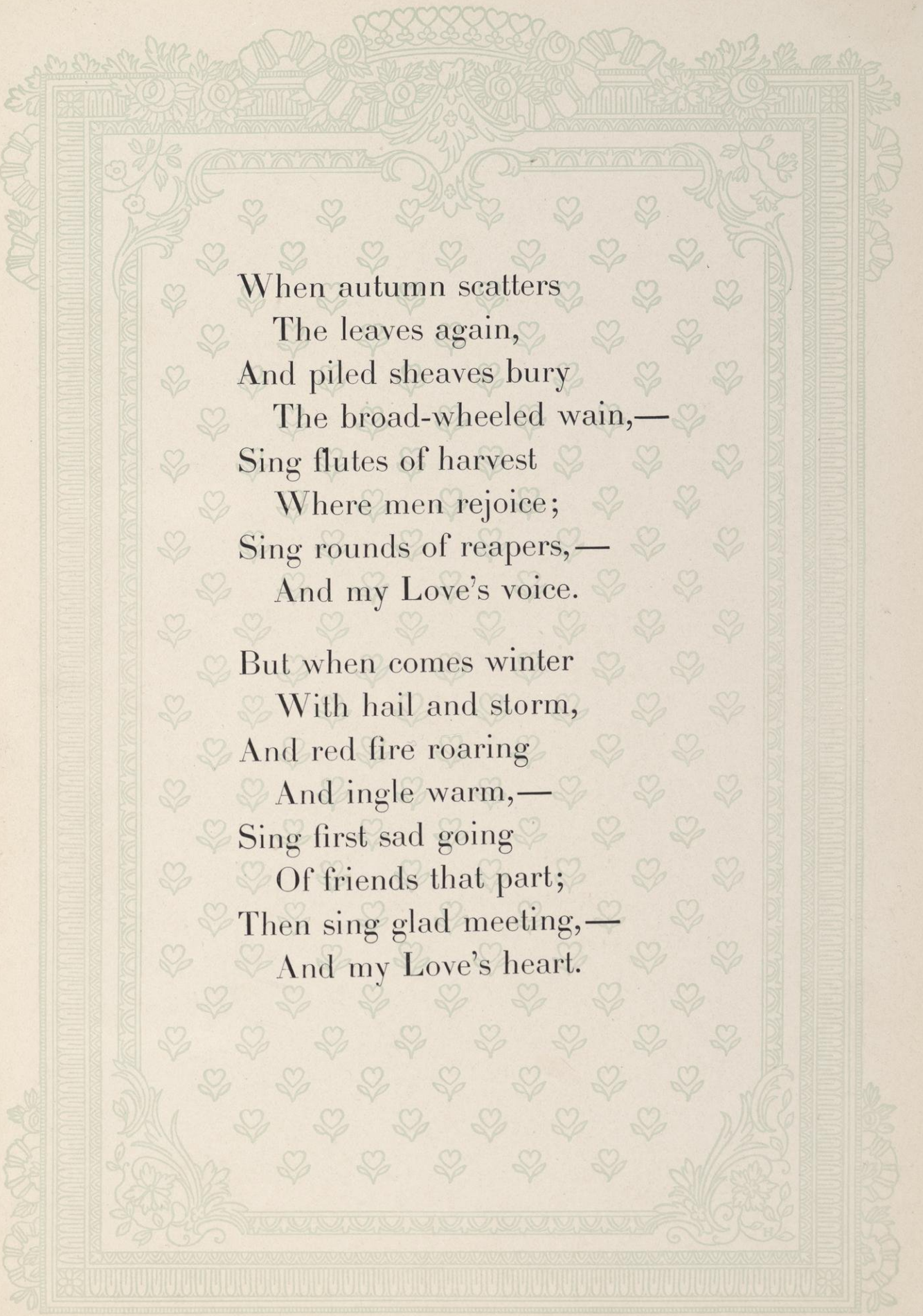


YOUTH



WHEN spring comes laughing
By vale and hill,
By wind-flower walking
And daffodil,—
Sing stars of morning,
Sing morning skies,
Sing blue of speedwell,—
And my Love's eyes.

When comes the summer
Full-leaved and strong,
And gay birds gossip
The orchard long,—
Sing hid, sweet honey
That no bee sips;
Sing red, red roses,—
And my Love's lips.



When autumn scatters
The leaves again,
And piled sheaves bury
The broad-wheeled wain,—
Sing flutes of harvest
Where men rejoice;
Sing rounds of reapers,—
And my Love's voice.

But when comes winter
With hail and storm,
And red fire roaring
And ingle warm,—
Sing first sad going
Of friends that part;
Then sing glad meeting,—
And my Love's heart.

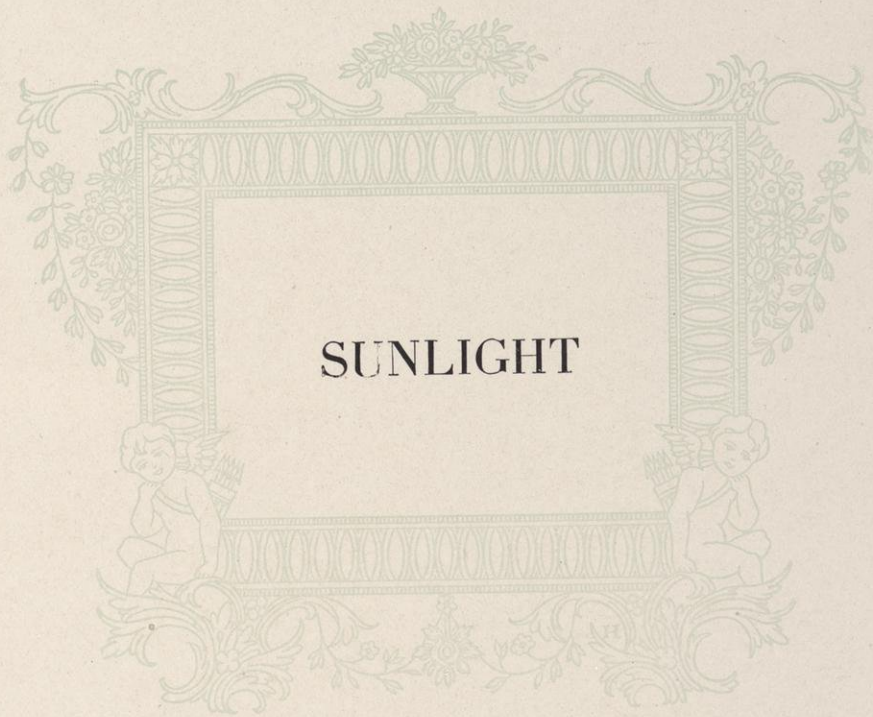


WHY, LOVELY CHARMER

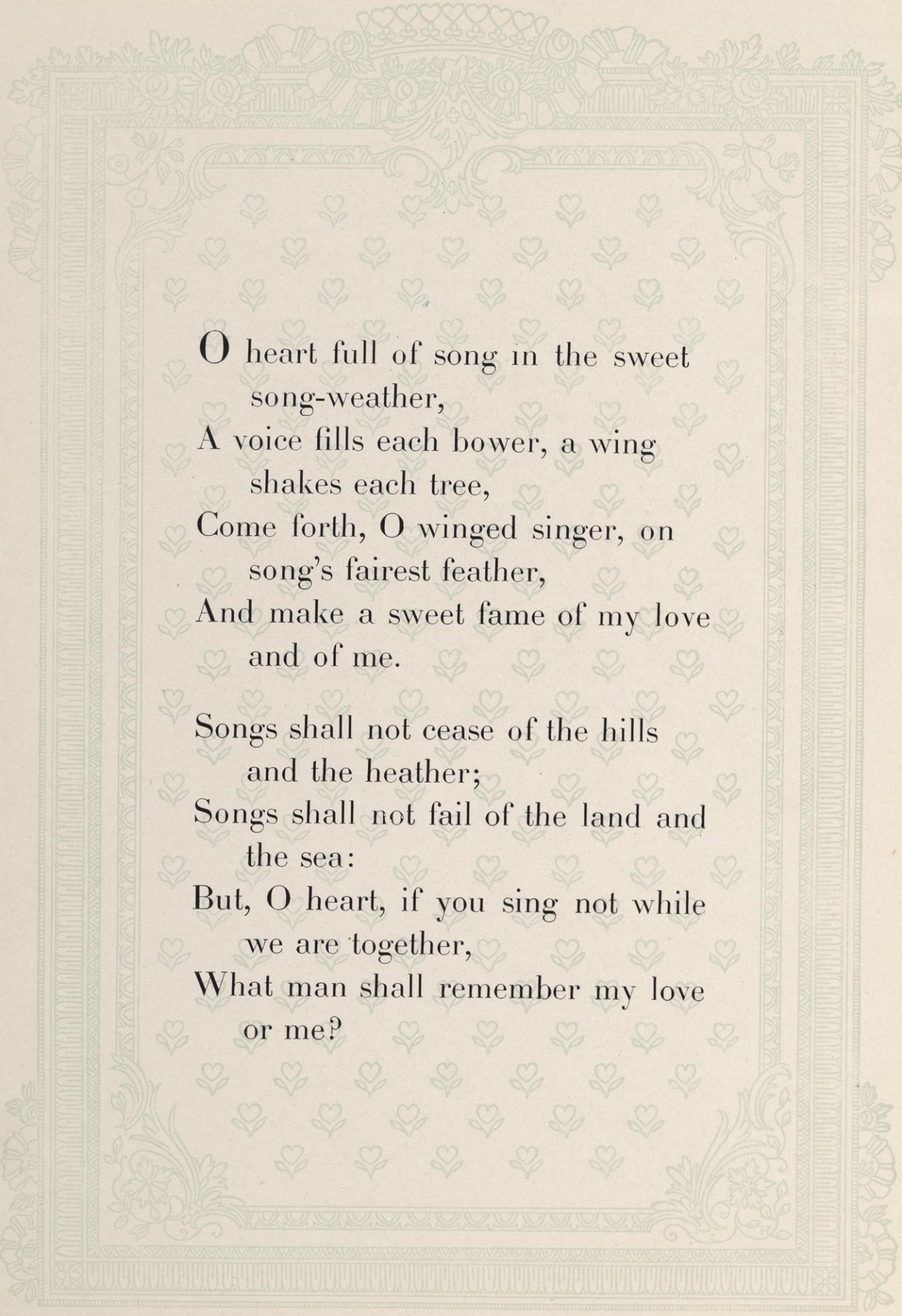
WHY, lovely charmer, tell me why
So very kind, and yet so shy?
Why does that cold, forbidding air
Give damps of sorrow and despair,
Or why that smile my soul subdue
And kindle up my flames anew?

In vain you strive with all your art
By turns to fire and freeze my heart,
When I behold a face so fair,
So sweet a look, so soft an air,
My ravished soul is charmed all o'er,
I cannot love thee less or more.





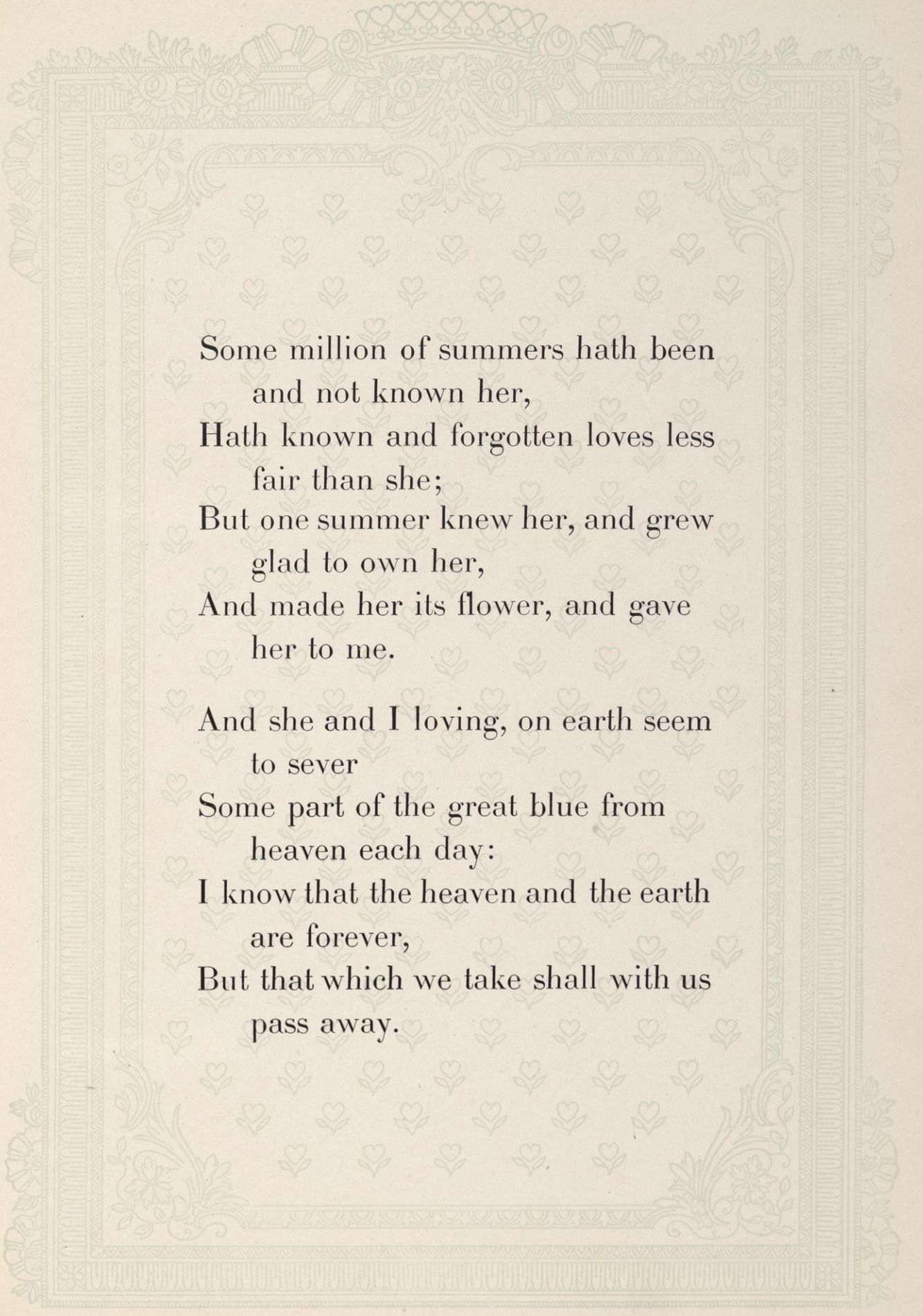
SUNLIGHT



O heart full of song in the sweet
song-weather,
A voice fills each bower, a wing
shakes each tree,
Come forth, O winged singer, on
song's fairest feather,
And make a sweet fame of my love
and of me.

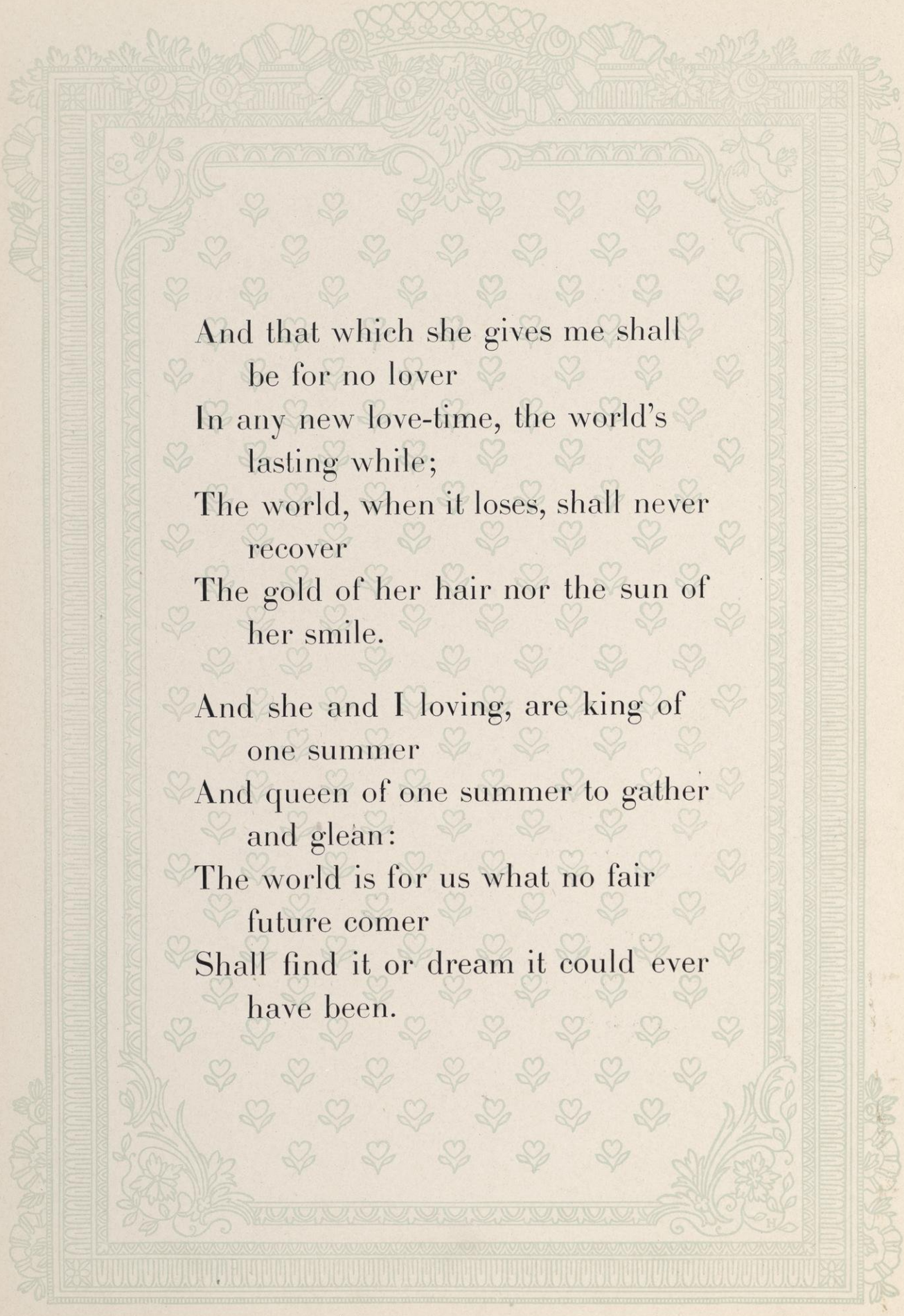
Songs shall not cease of the hills
and the heather;
Songs shall not fail of the land and
the sea:
But, O heart, if you sing not while
we are together,
What man shall remember my love
or me?





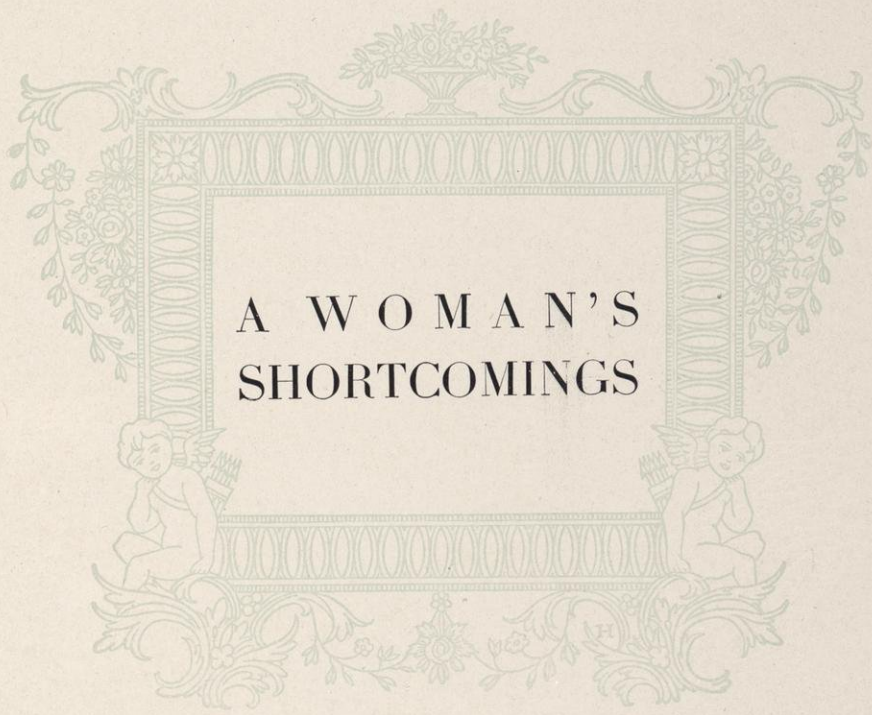
Some million of summers hath been
and not known her,
Hath known and forgotten loves less
fair than she;
But one summer knew her, and grew
glad to own her,
And made her its flower, and gave
her to me.

And she and I loving, on earth seem
to sever
Some part of the great blue from
heaven each day:
I know that the heaven and the earth
are forever,
But that which we take shall with us
pass away.

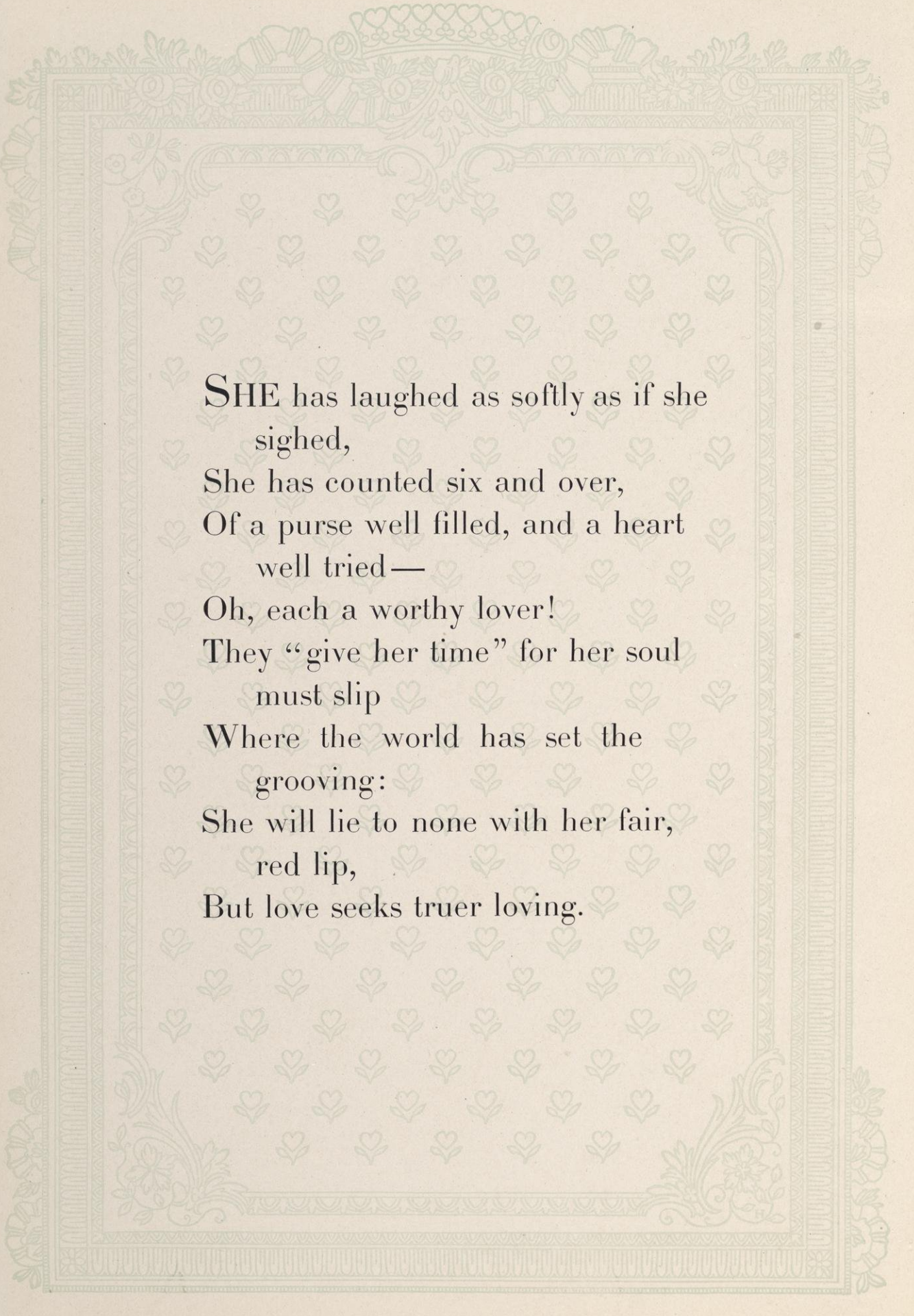


And that which she gives me shall
be for no lover
In any new love-time, the world's
lasting while;
The world, when it loses, shall never
recover
The gold of her hair nor the sun of
her smile.

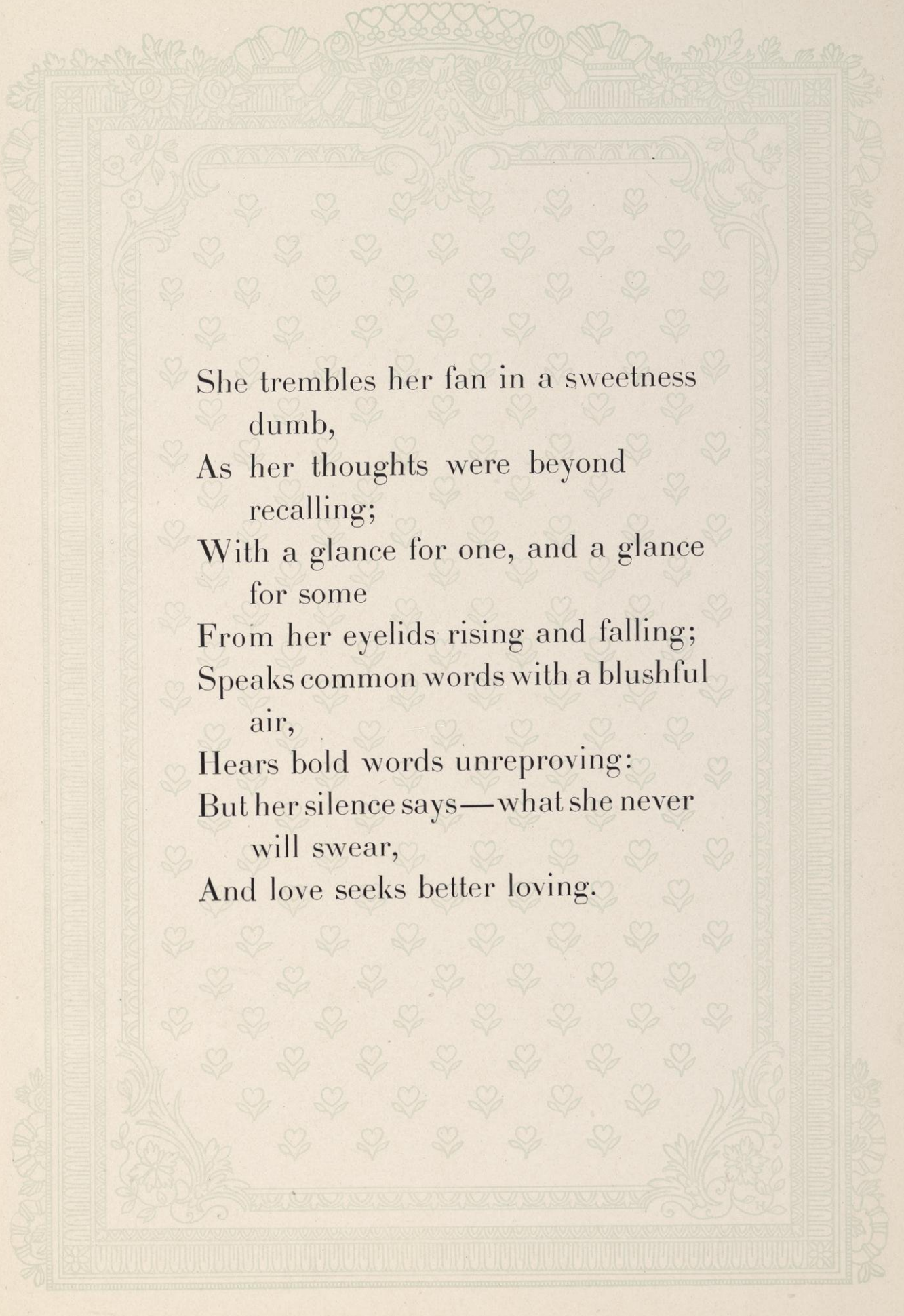
And she and I loving, are king of
one summer
And queen of one summer to gather
and glean:
The world is for us what no fair
future comer
Shall find it or dream it could ever
have been.



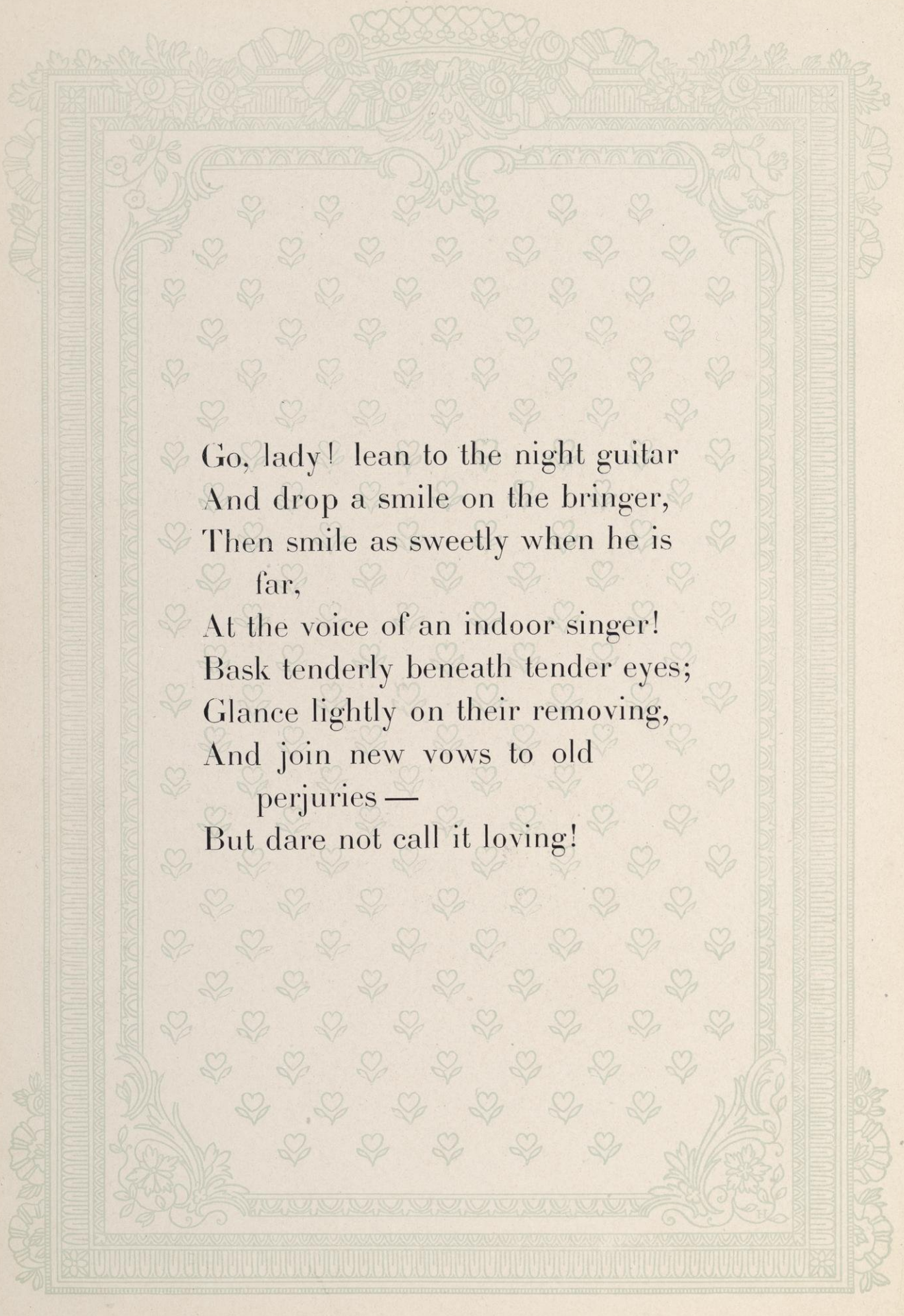
A W O M A N ' S
SHORTCOMINGS



SHE has laughed as softly as if she
sighed,
She has counted six and over,
Of a purse well filled, and a heart
well tried —
Oh, each a worthy lover!
They “give her time” for her soul
must slip
Where the world has set the
grooving:
She will lie to none with her fair,
red lip,
But love seeks truer loving.



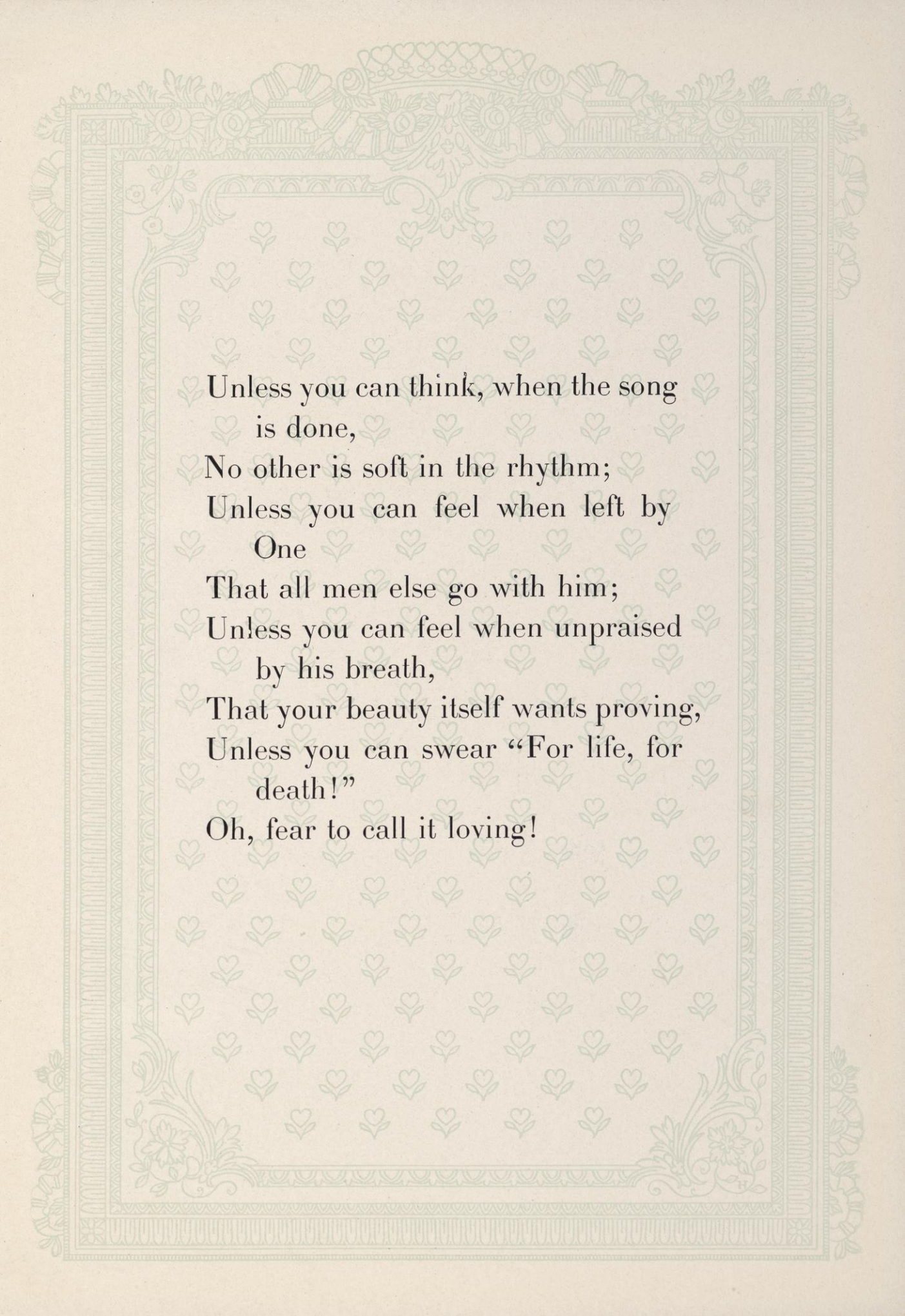
She trembles her fan in a sweetness
dumb,
As her thoughts were beyond
recalling;
With a glance for one, and a glance
for some
From her eyelids rising and falling;
Speaks common words with a blushful
air,
Hears bold words unreproving:
But her silence says — what she never
will swear,
And love seeks better loving.



Go, lady! lean to the night guitar
And drop a smile on the bringer,
Then smile as sweetly when he is
far,

At the voice of an indoor singer!
Bask tenderly beneath tender eyes;
Glance lightly on their removing,
And join new vows to old
perjuries —
But dare not call it loving!





Unless you can think, when the song
is done,

No other is soft in the rhythm;

Unless you can feel when left by
One

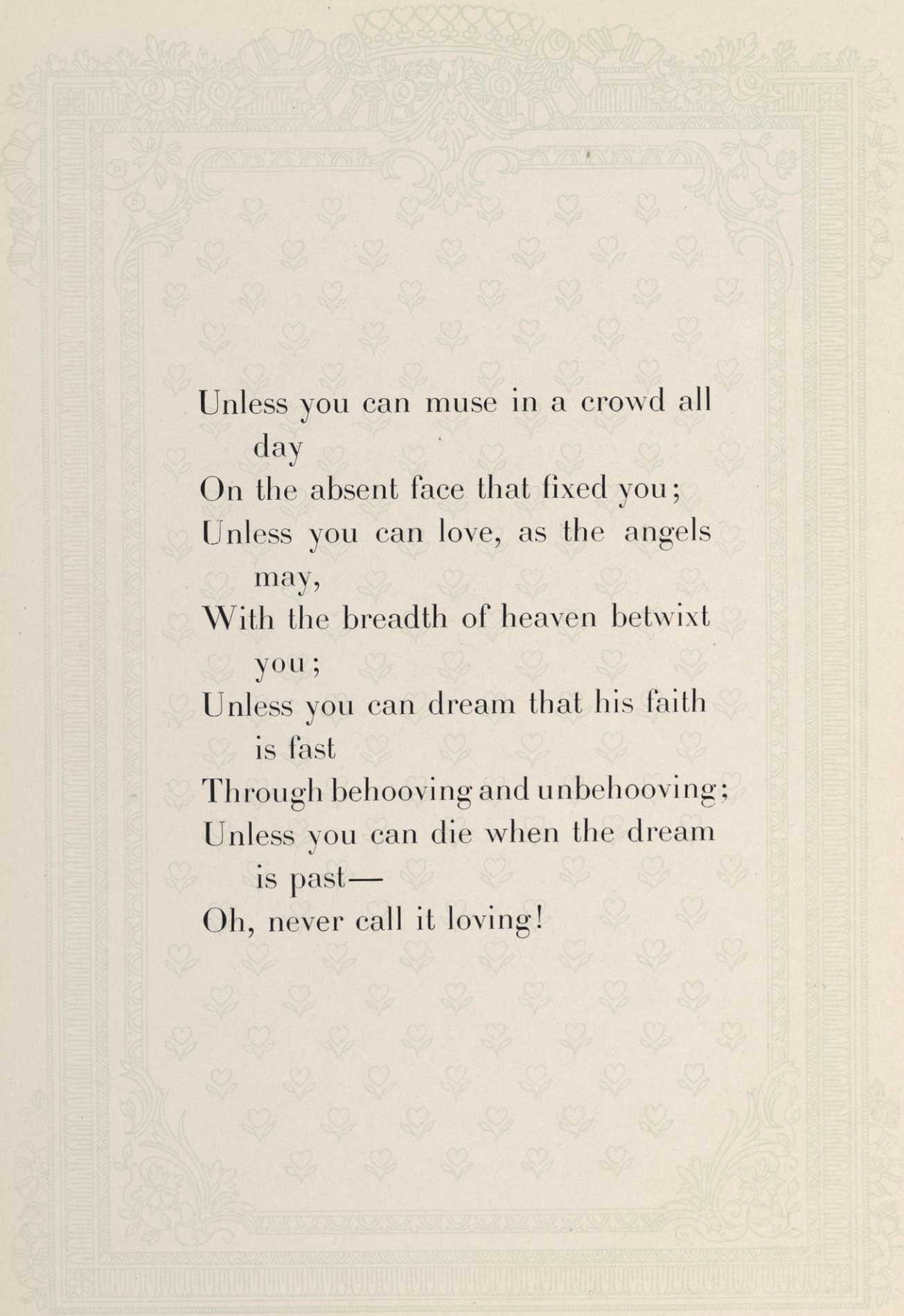
That all men else go with him;

Unless you can feel when unpraised
by his breath,

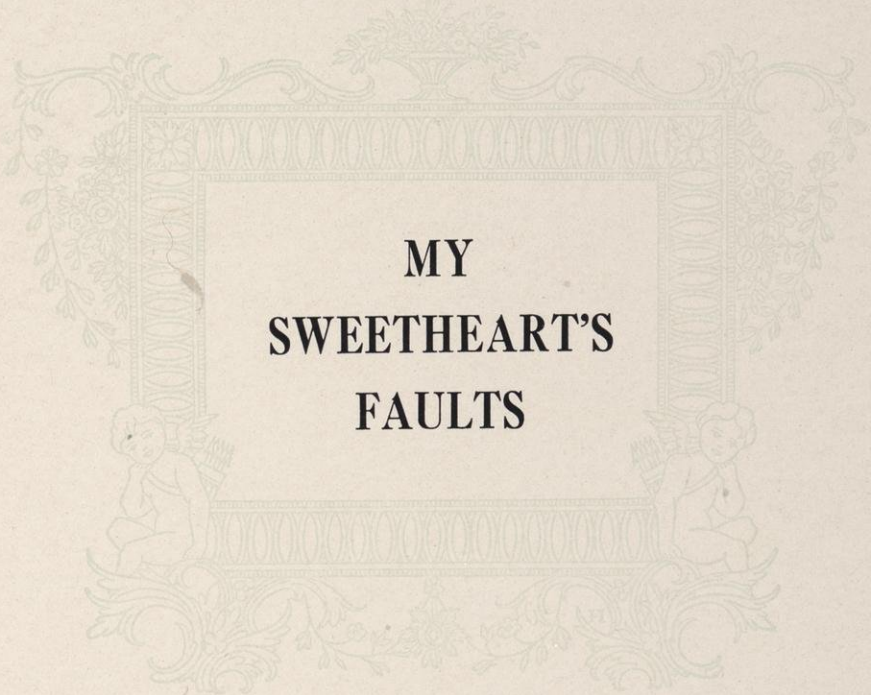
That your beauty itself wants proving,

Unless you can swear "For life, for
death!"

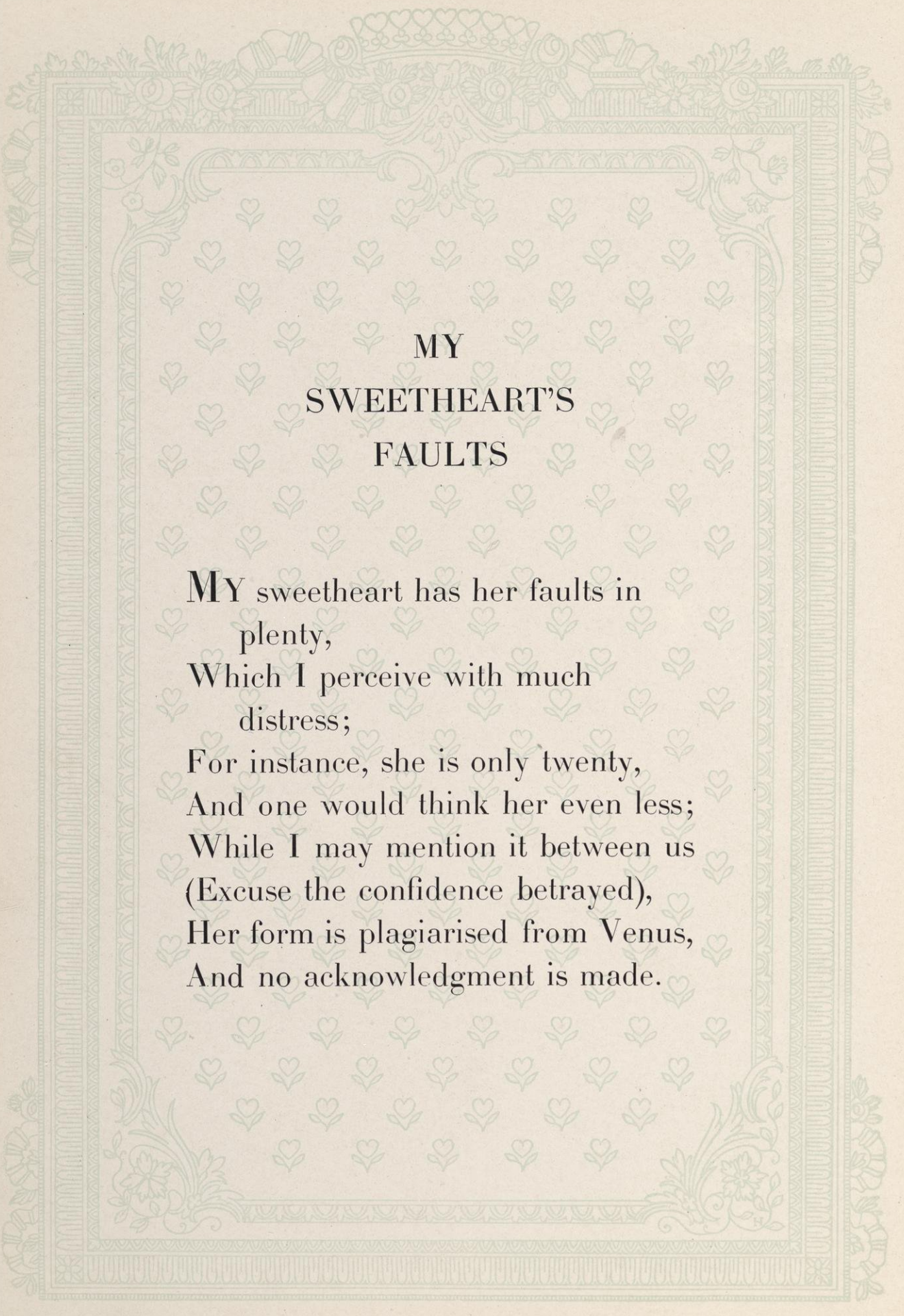
Oh, fear to call it loving!



Unless you can muse in a crowd all
day
On the absent face that fixed you;
Unless you can love, as the angels
may,
With the breadth of heaven betwixt
you;
Unless you can dream that his faith
is fast
Through behooving and unbehooving;
Unless you can die when the dream
is past—
Oh, never call it loving!

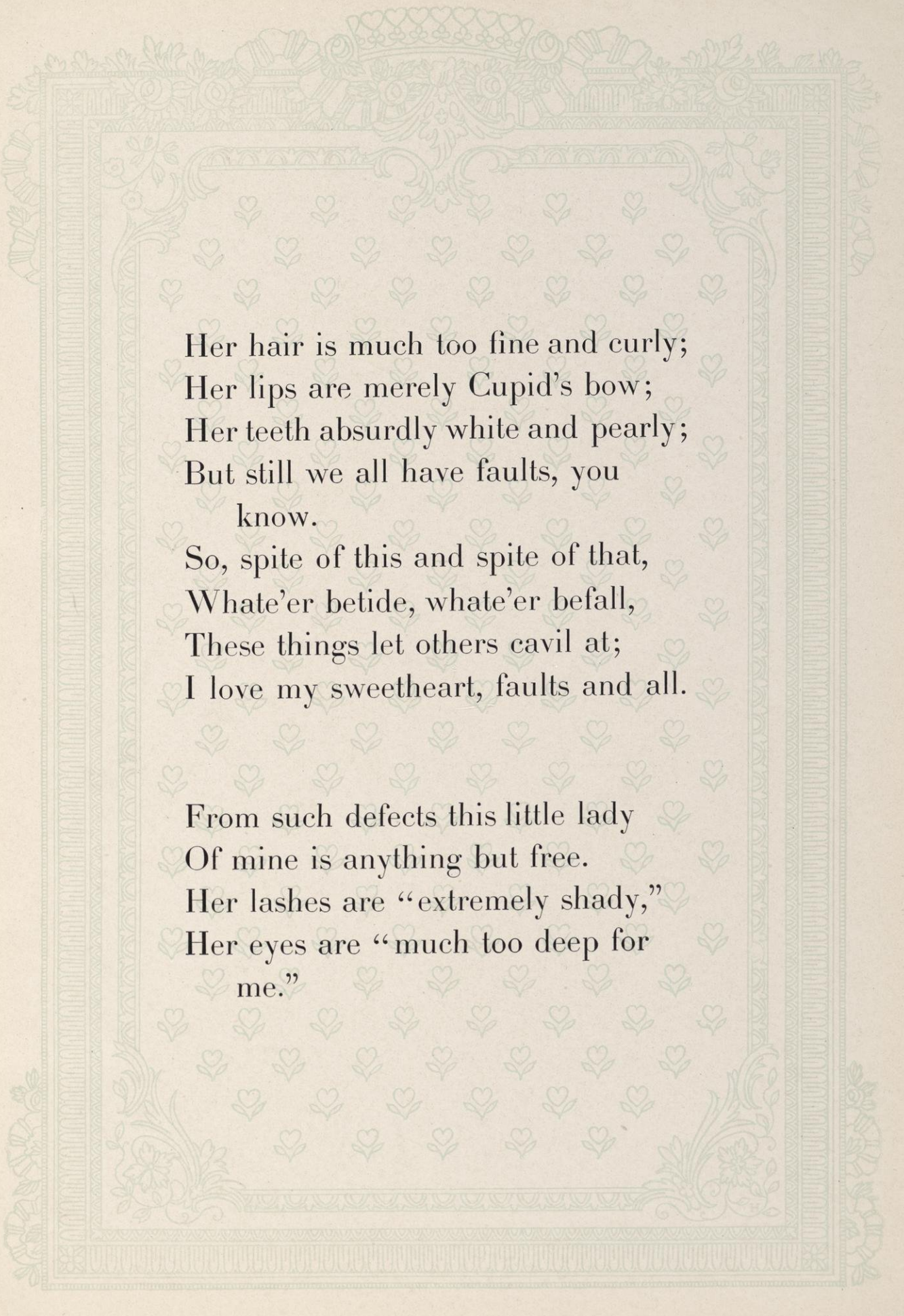


**MY
SWEETHEART'S
FAULTS**



MY
SWEETHEART'S
FAULTS

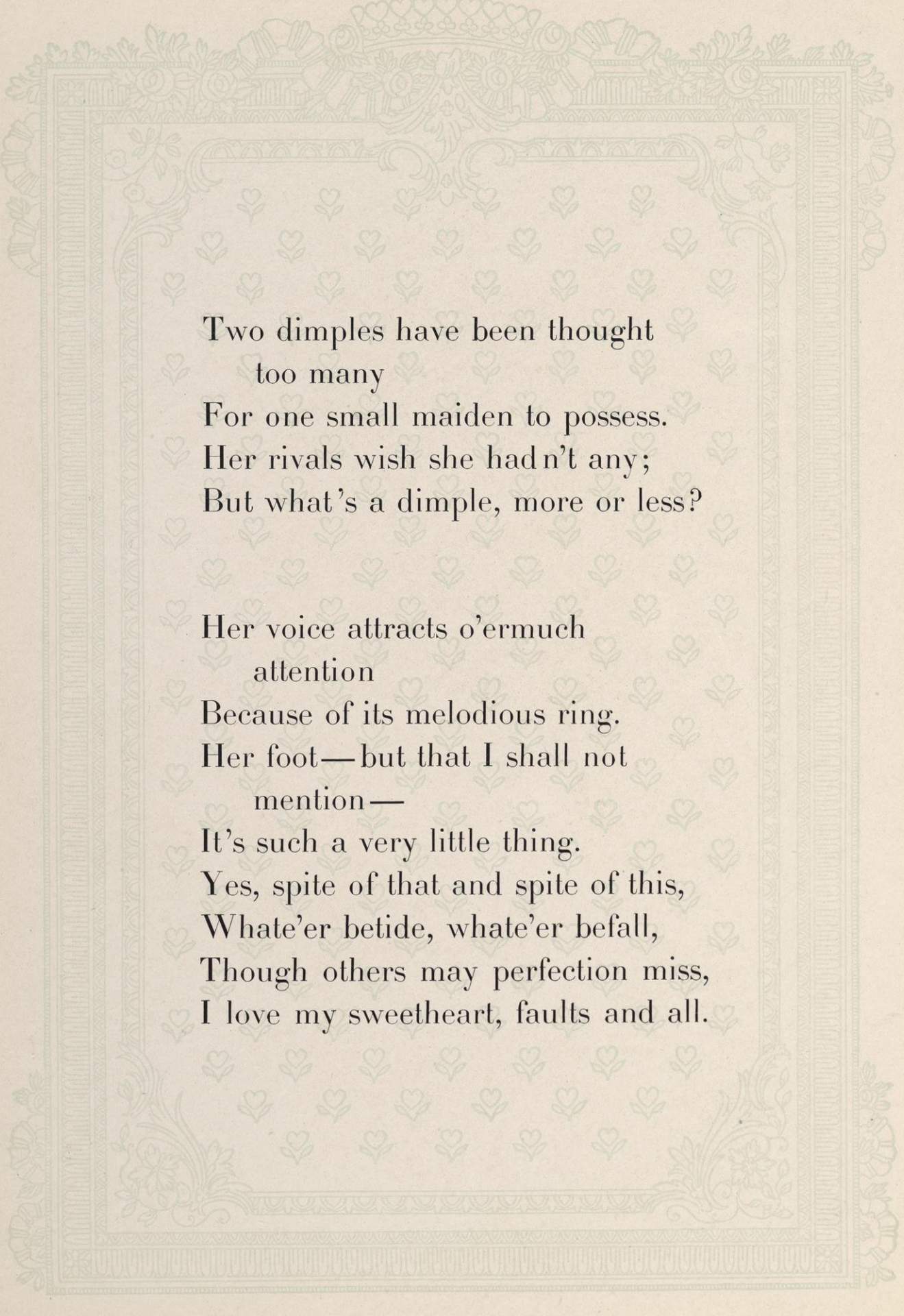
MY sweetheart has her faults in
plenty,
Which I perceive with much
distress;
For instance, she is only twenty,
And one would think her even less;
While I may mention it between us
(Excuse the confidence betrayed),
Her form is plagiarised from Venus,
And no acknowledgment is made.



Her hair is much too fine and curly;
Her lips are merely Cupid's bow;
Her teeth absurdly white and pearly;
But still we all have faults, you
know.

So, spite of this and spite of that,
Whate'er betide, whate'er befall,
These things let others cavil at;
I love my sweetheart, faults and all.

From such defects this little lady
Of mine is anything but free.
Her lashes are "extremely shady,"
Her eyes are "much too deep for
me."



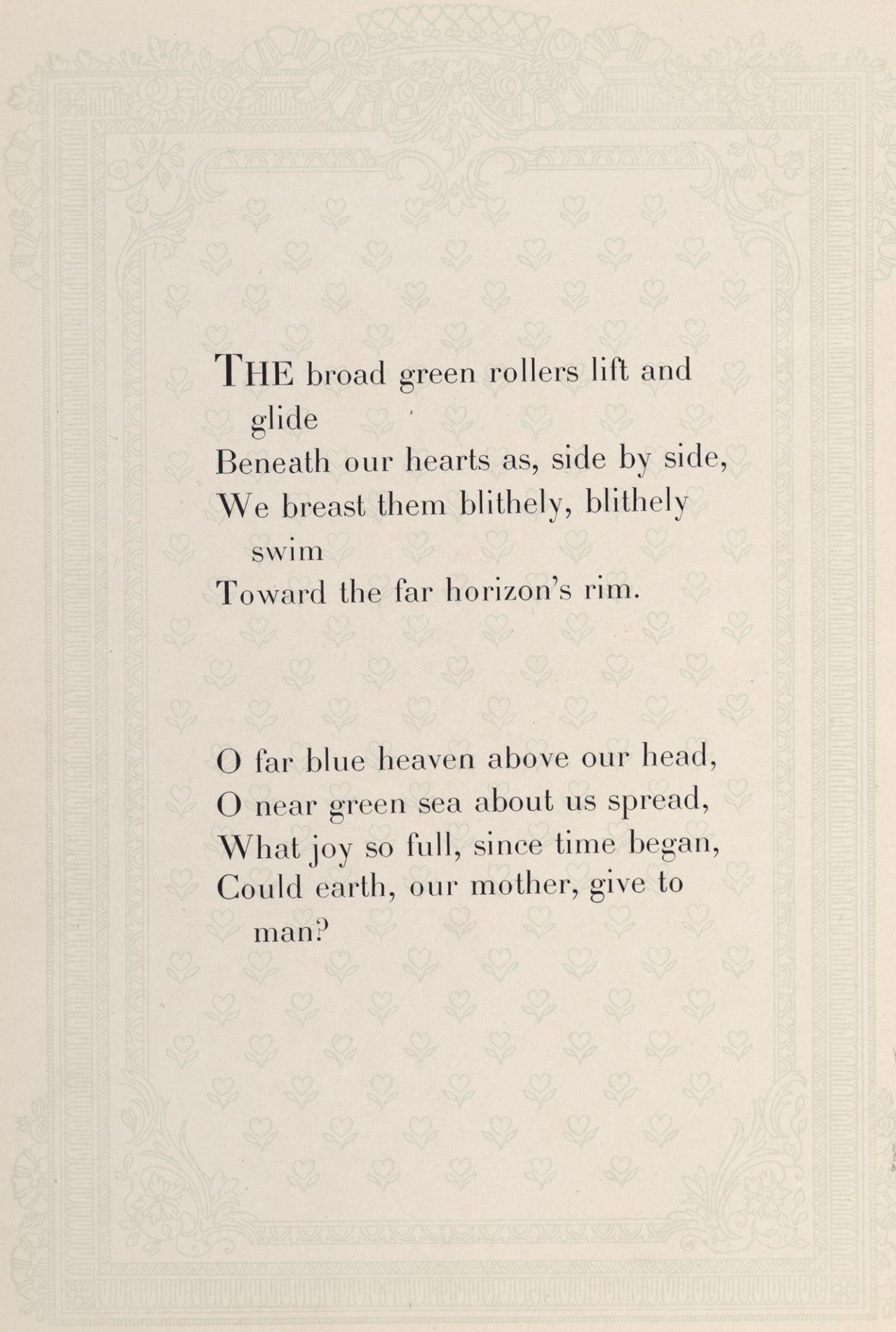
Two dimples have been thought
too many
For one small maiden to possess.
Her rivals wish she hadn't any;
But what's a dimple, more or less?

Her voice attracts o'ermuch
attention
Because of its melodious ring.
Her foot—but that I shall not
mention—
It's such a very little thing.
Yes, spite of that and spite of this,
Whate'er betide, whate'er befall,
Though others may perfection miss,
I love my sweetheart, faults and all.





A SWIMMING
SONG

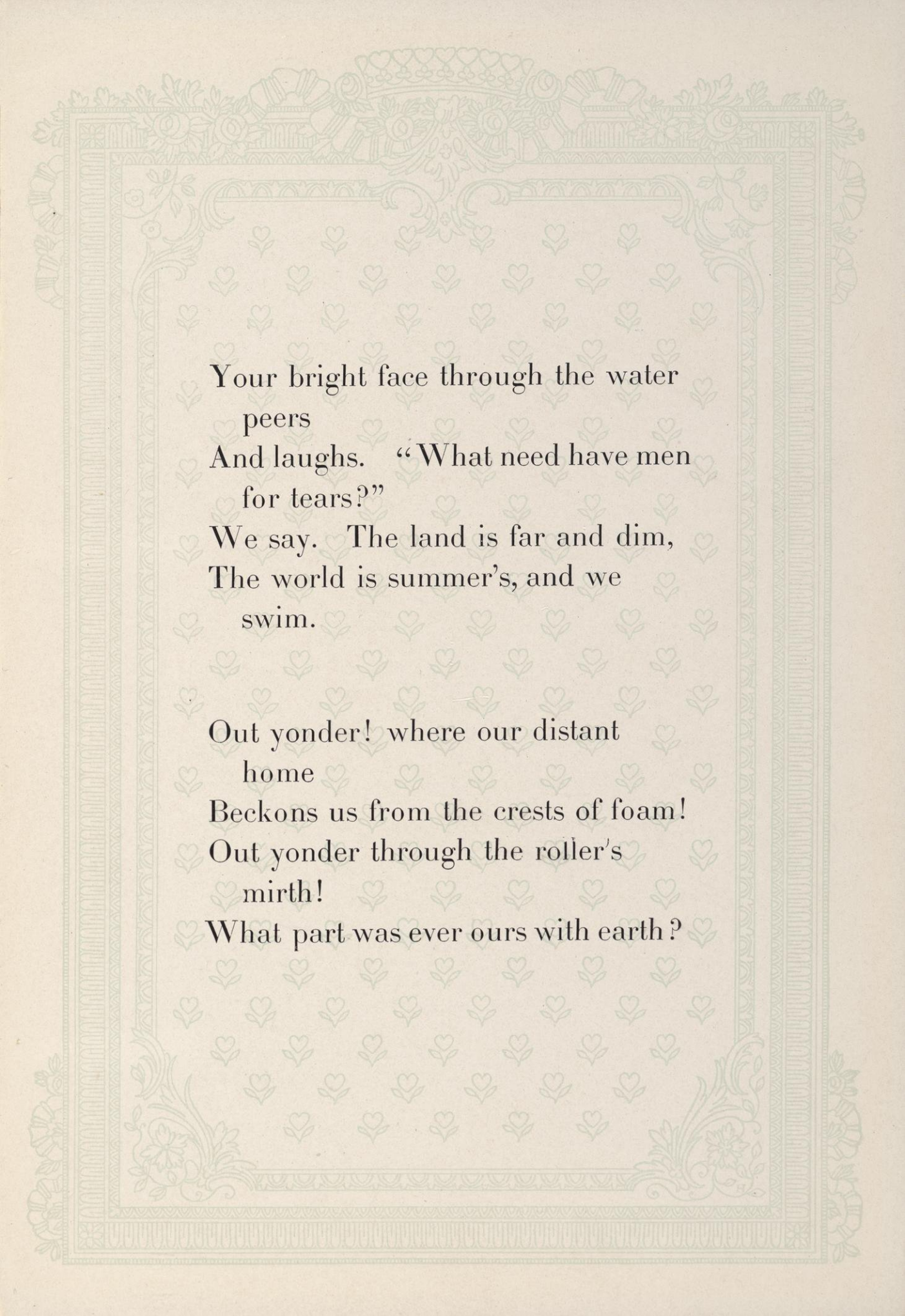


THE broad green rollers lift and
glide
Beneath our hearts as, side by side,
We breast them blithely, blithely
swim
Toward the far horizon's rim.

O far blue heaven above our head,
O near green sea about us spread,
What joy so full, since time began,
Could earth, our mother, give to
man?



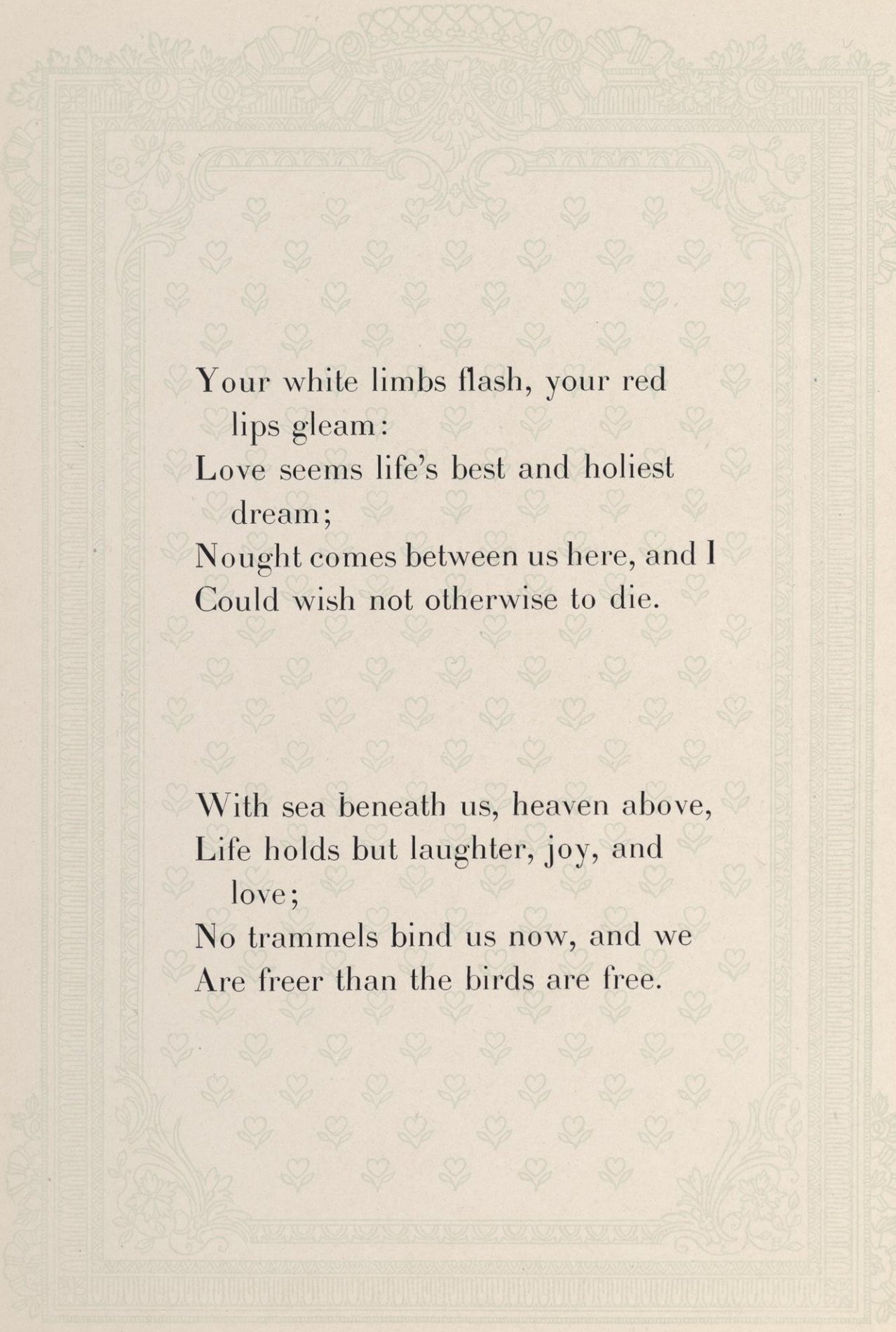
Handwritten signature and date:
J. W. [unclear] 1925



Your bright face through the water
peers
And laughs. “What need have men
for tears?”

We say. The land is far and dim,
The world is summer's, and we
swim.

Out yonder! where our distant
home
Beckons us from the crests of foam!
Out yonder through the roller's
mirth!
What part was ever ours with earth?



Your white limbs flash, your red
lips gleam:

Love seems life's best and holiest
dream;

Nought comes between us here, and I
Could wish not otherwise to die.

With sea beneath us, heaven above,
Life holds but laughter, joy, and
love;

No trammels bind us now, and we
Are freer than the birds are free.

Your face seems sweeter here; your
hair,

Wet from the sea's salt lips, more
fair;

Your limbs that move and gleam and
shine,

Hellenic, pagan, half divine.

Ah, sweet! God's gift is good
enough,

God's gift of freedom, life, and love—

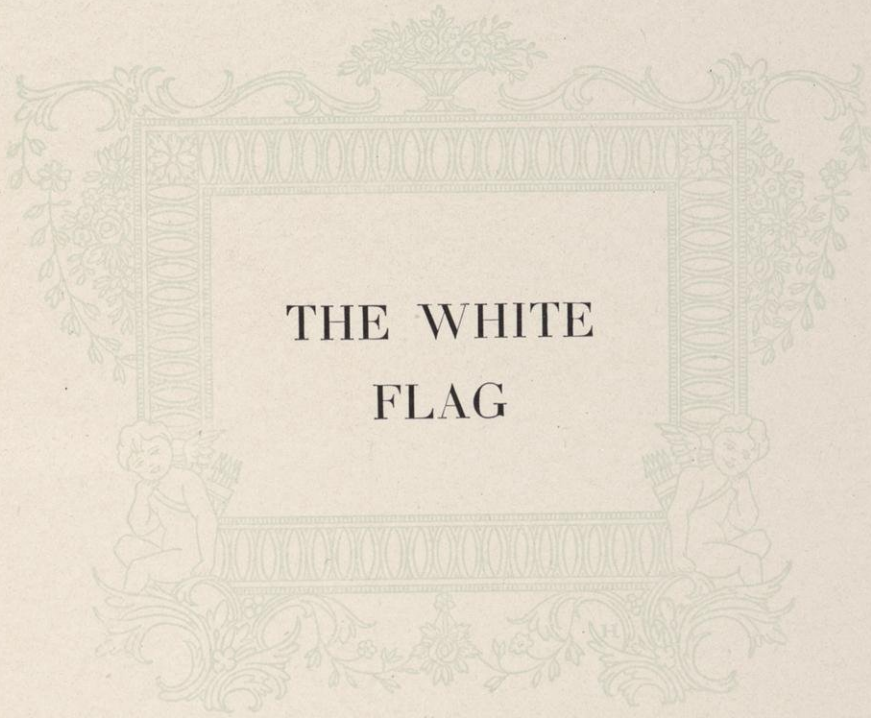
Though but for this brief hour are we
Alone upon the eternal sea.

O MISTRESS mine, where are you
roaming?

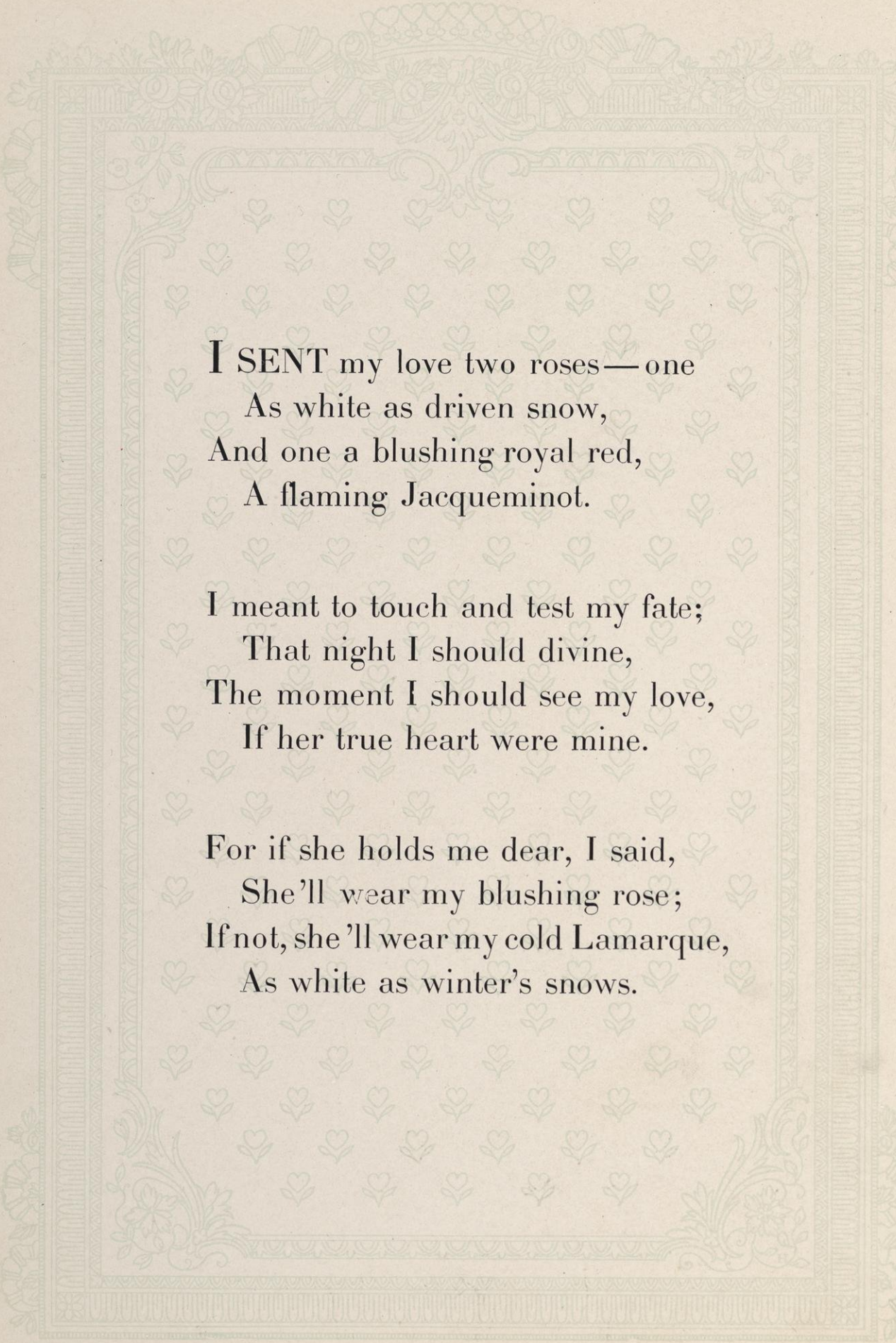
O, stay and hear; your true love's
coming,

That can sing both high and low:
Trip no further, pretty sweeting;
Journeys end in lovers meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love? 'tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure:
In delay there lies no plenty;
Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty,
Youth's a stuff will not endure.



THE WHITE
FLAG



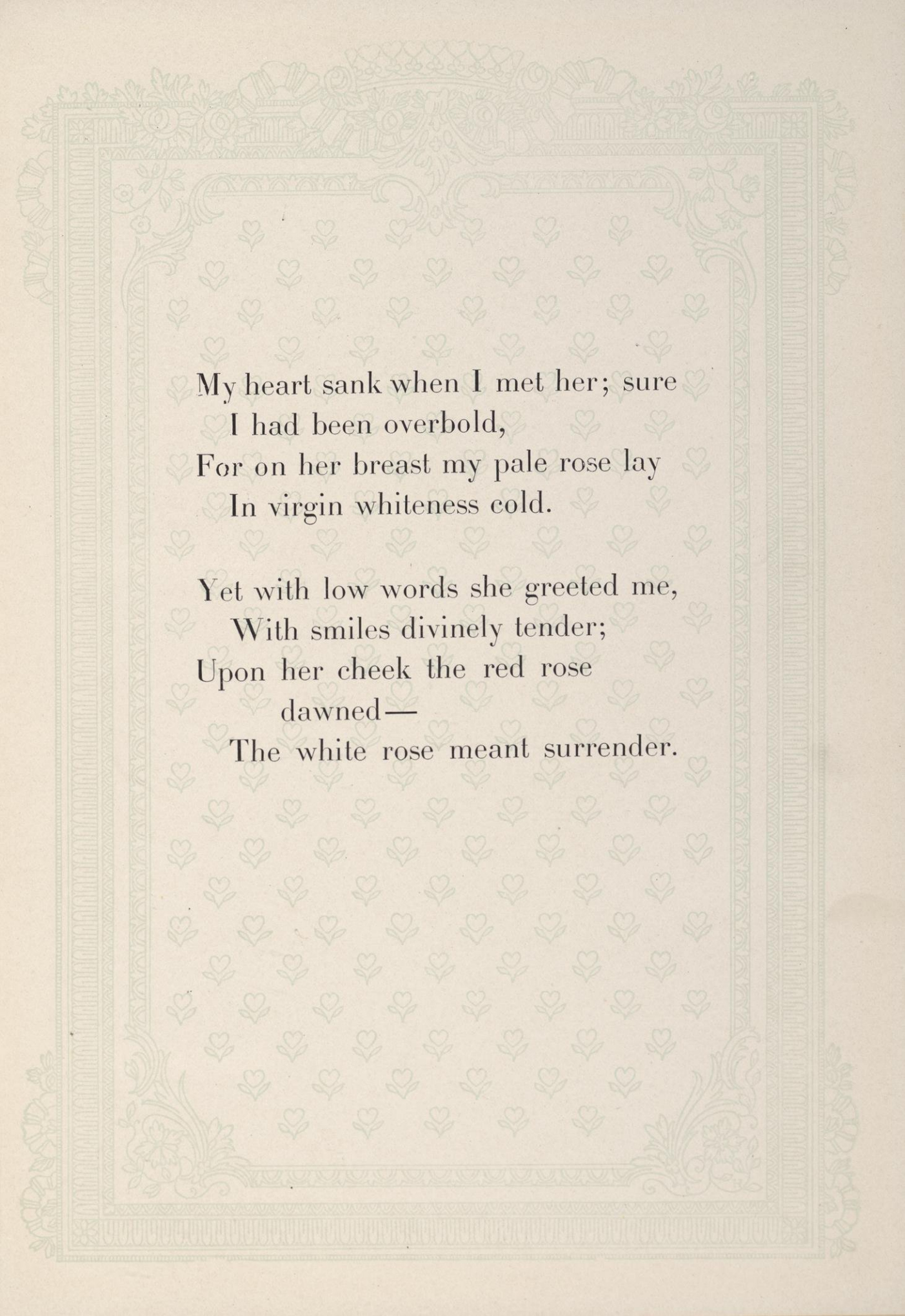
I SENT my love two roses — one
As white as driven snow,
And one a blushing royal red,
A flaming Jacqueminot.

I meant to touch and test my fate;
That night I should divine,
The moment I should see my love,
If her true heart were mine.

For if she holds me dear, I said,
She'll wear my blushing rose;
If not, she'll wear my cold Lamarque,
As white as winter's snows.



C
1903



My heart sank when I met her; sure
I had been overbold,
For on her breast my pale rose lay
In virgin whiteness cold.

Yet with low words she greeted me,
With smiles divinely tender;
Upon her cheek the red rose
dawned—
The white rose meant surrender.

TO CELIA

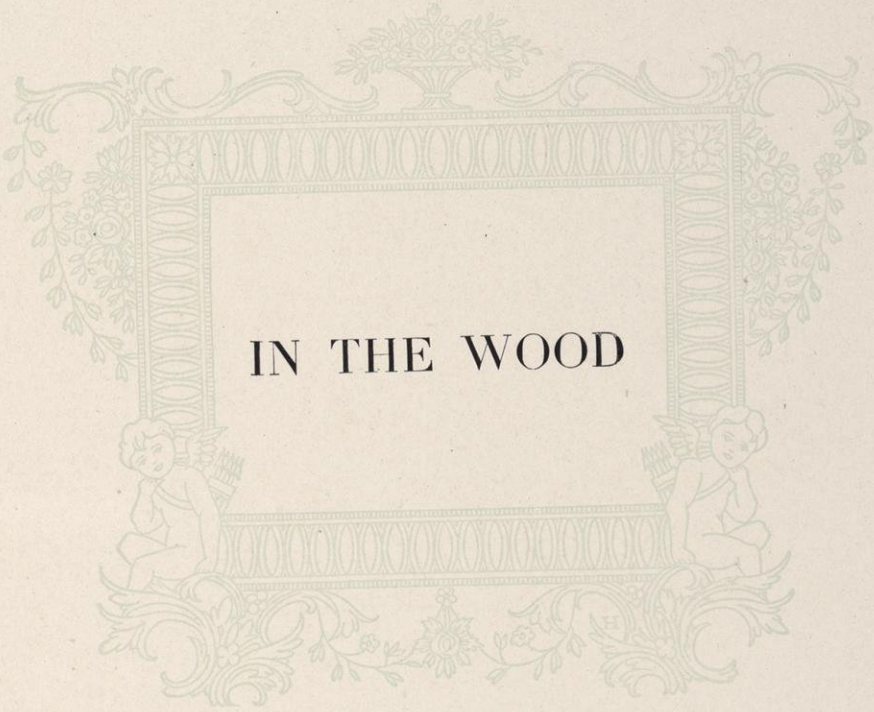
(Who refuses to be drawn into an argument)

DEAR, if you carelessly agree,
With that so irritating air,
To every word that falls from me;
Dear, if you care

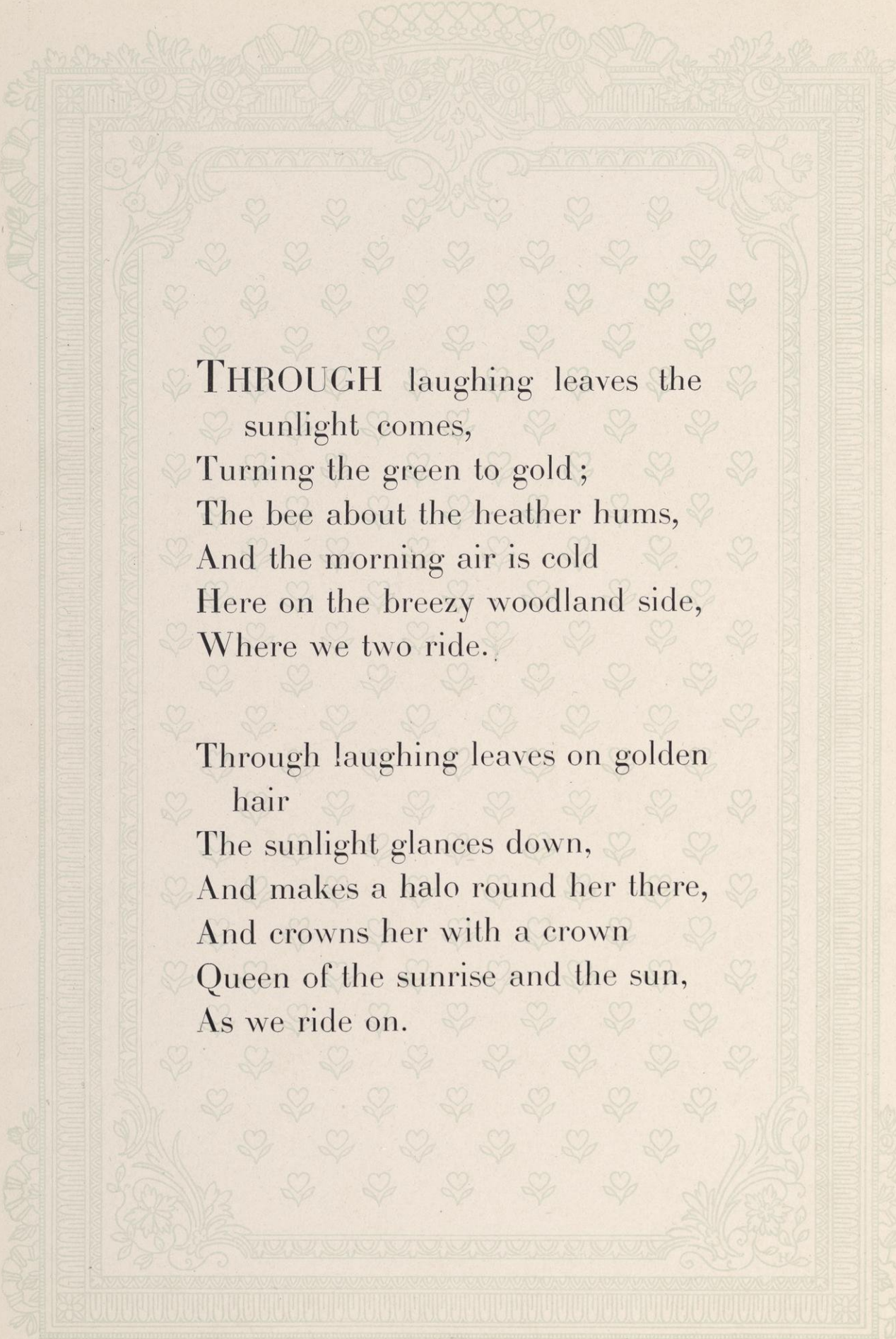
To drive a lover to despair
With bland "Oh, yes" and "Ah,
I see" —

Why, do it, if you like—so there!

It vindicates my theory
No woman's wise as well as fair;
And yet—how clever you can be,
Dear, if you care!

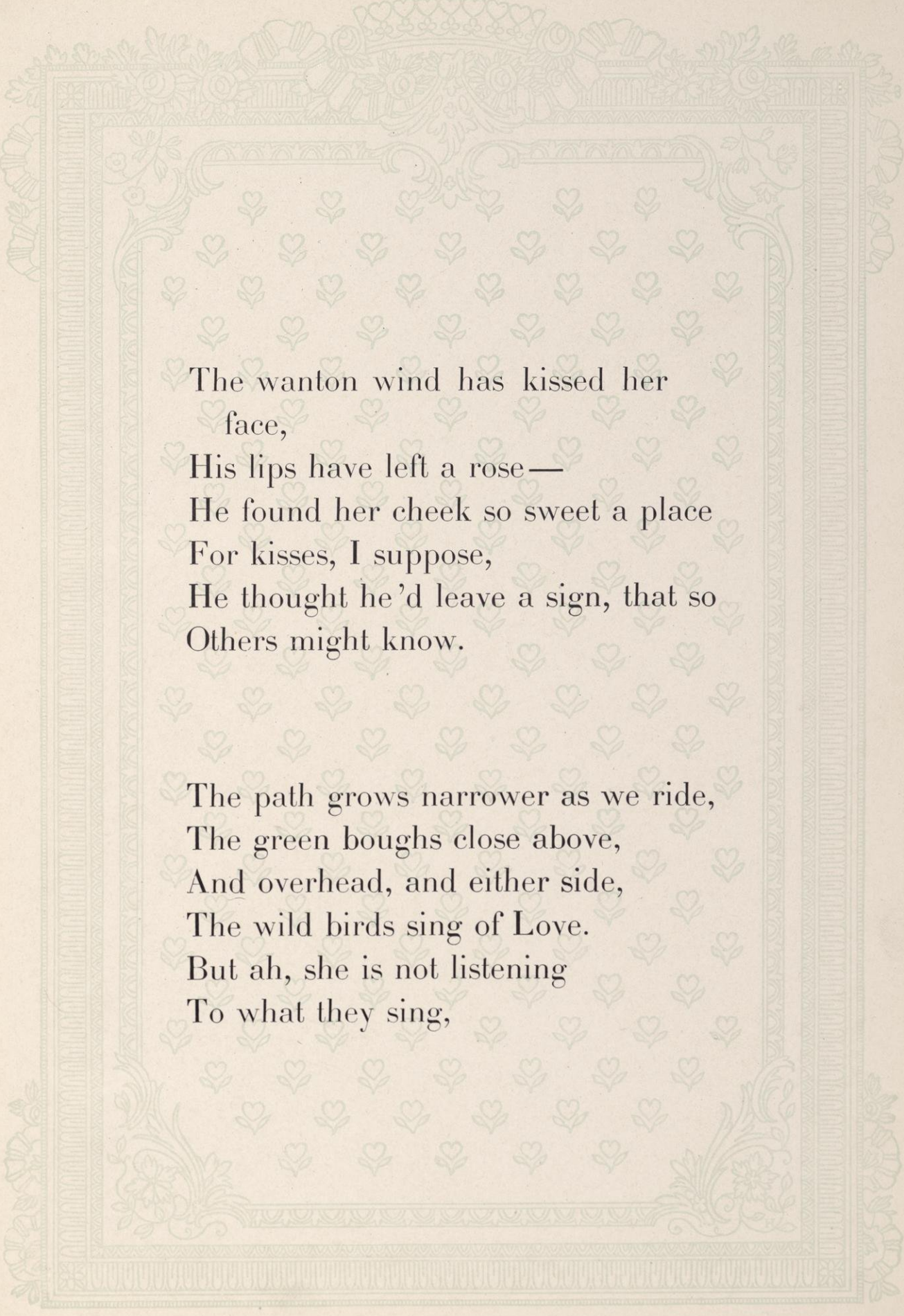


IN THE WOOD



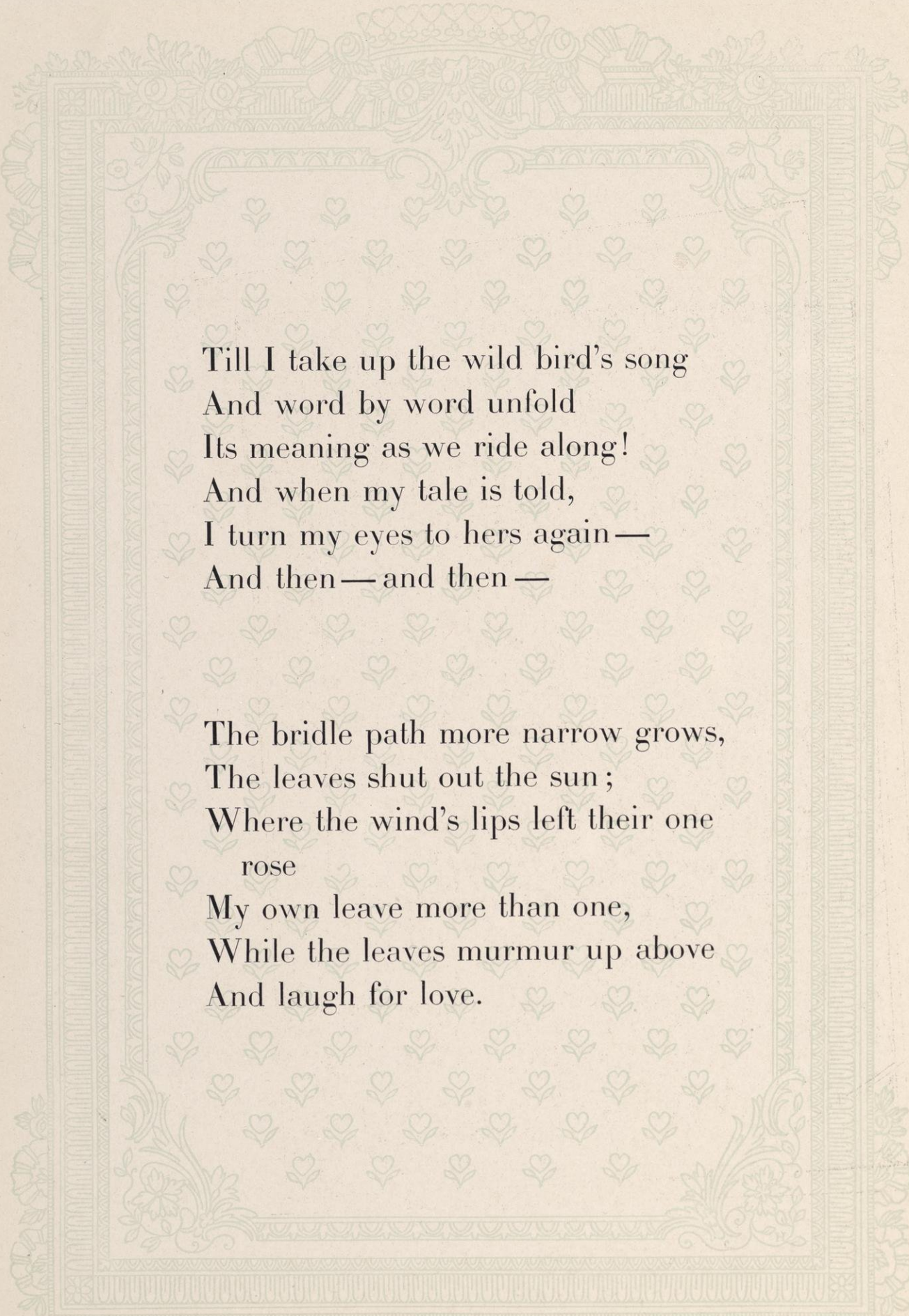
THROUGH laughing leaves the
sunlight comes,
Turning the green to gold;
The bee about the heather hums,
And the morning air is cold
Here on the breezy woodland side,
Where we two ride.

Through laughing leaves on golden
hair
The sunlight glances down,
And makes a halo round her there,
And crowns her with a crown
Queen of the sunrise and the sun,
As we ride on.



The wanton wind has kissed her
face,
His lips have left a rose —
He found her cheek so sweet a place
For kisses, I suppose,
He thought he'd leave a sign, that so
Others might know.

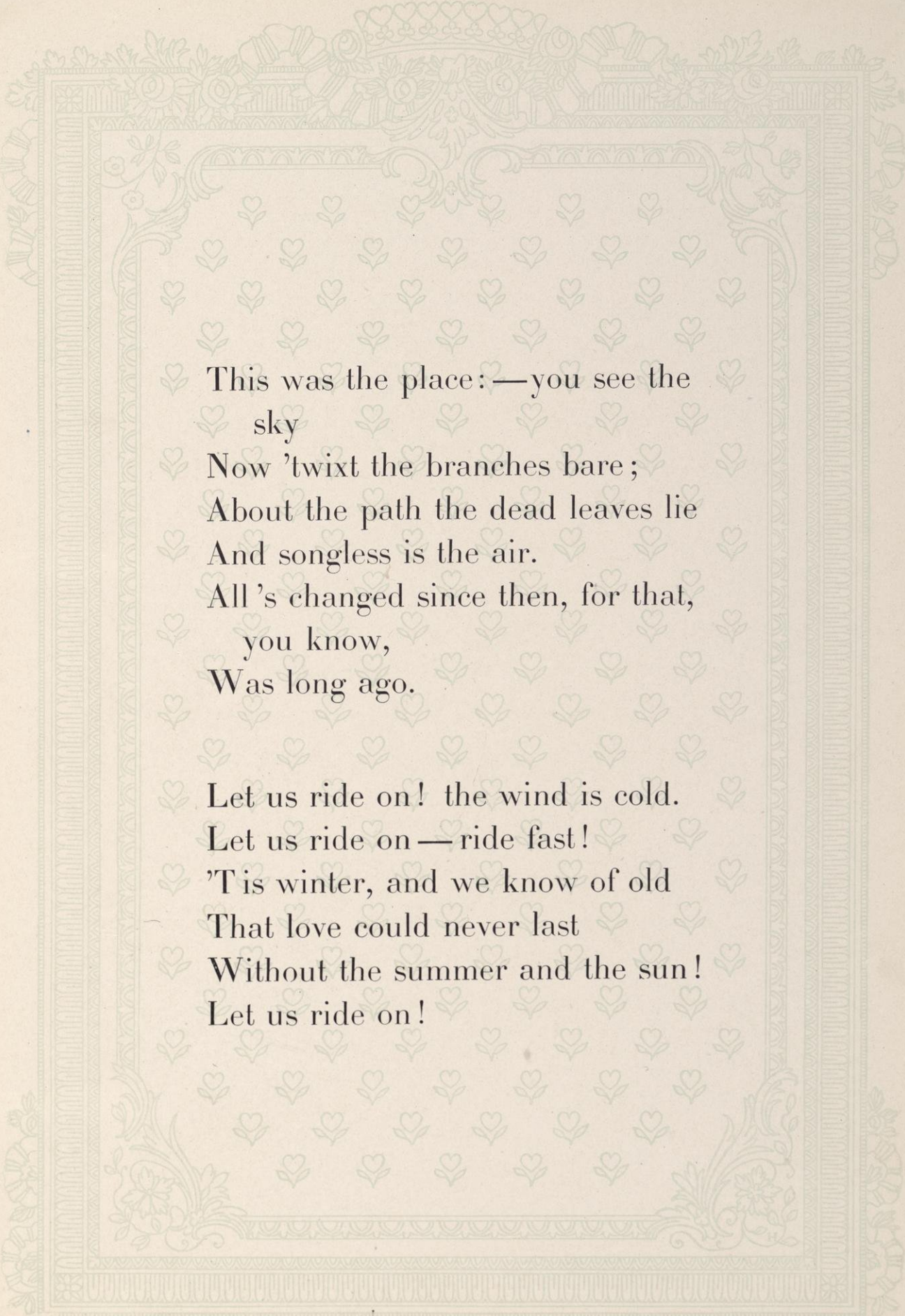
The path grows narrower as we ride,
The green boughs close above,
And overhead, and either side,
The wild birds sing of Love.
But ah, she is not listening
To what they sing,



Till I take up the wild bird's song
And word by word unfold
Its meaning as we ride along!
And when my tale is told,
I turn my eyes to hers again—
And then — and then —

The bridle path more narrow grows,
The leaves shut out the sun;
Where the wind's lips left their one
 rose
My own leave more than one,
While the leaves murmur up above
And laugh for love.





This was the place:—you see the
sky

Now 'twixt the branches bare;
About the path the dead leaves lie
And songless is the air.
All's changed since then, for that,
you know,
Was long ago.

Let us ride on! the wind is cold.
Let us ride on—ride fast!
'Tis winter, and we know of old
That love could never last
Without the summer and the sun!
Let us ride on!

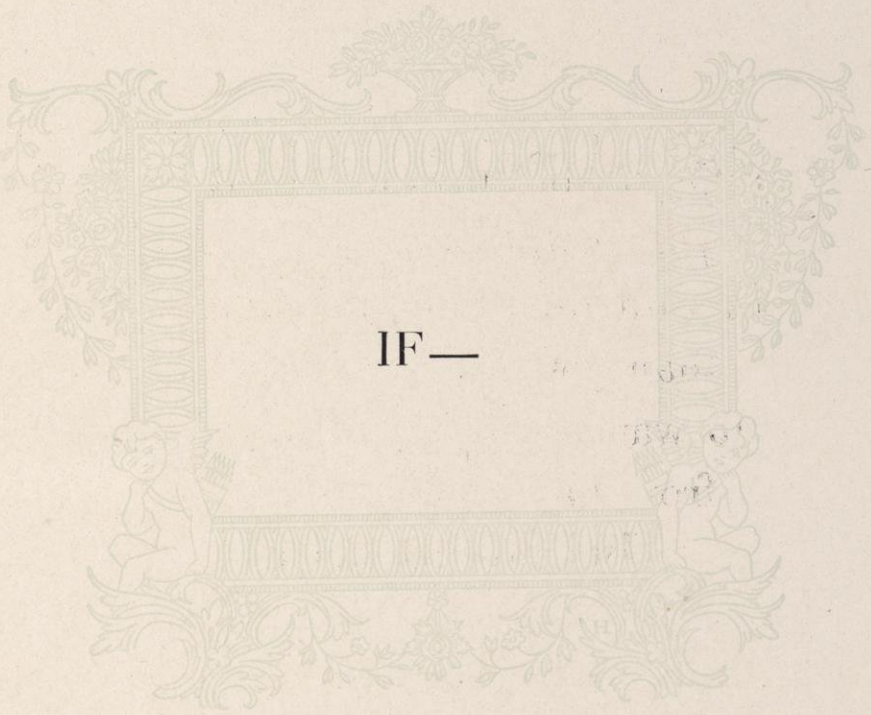


A SONG

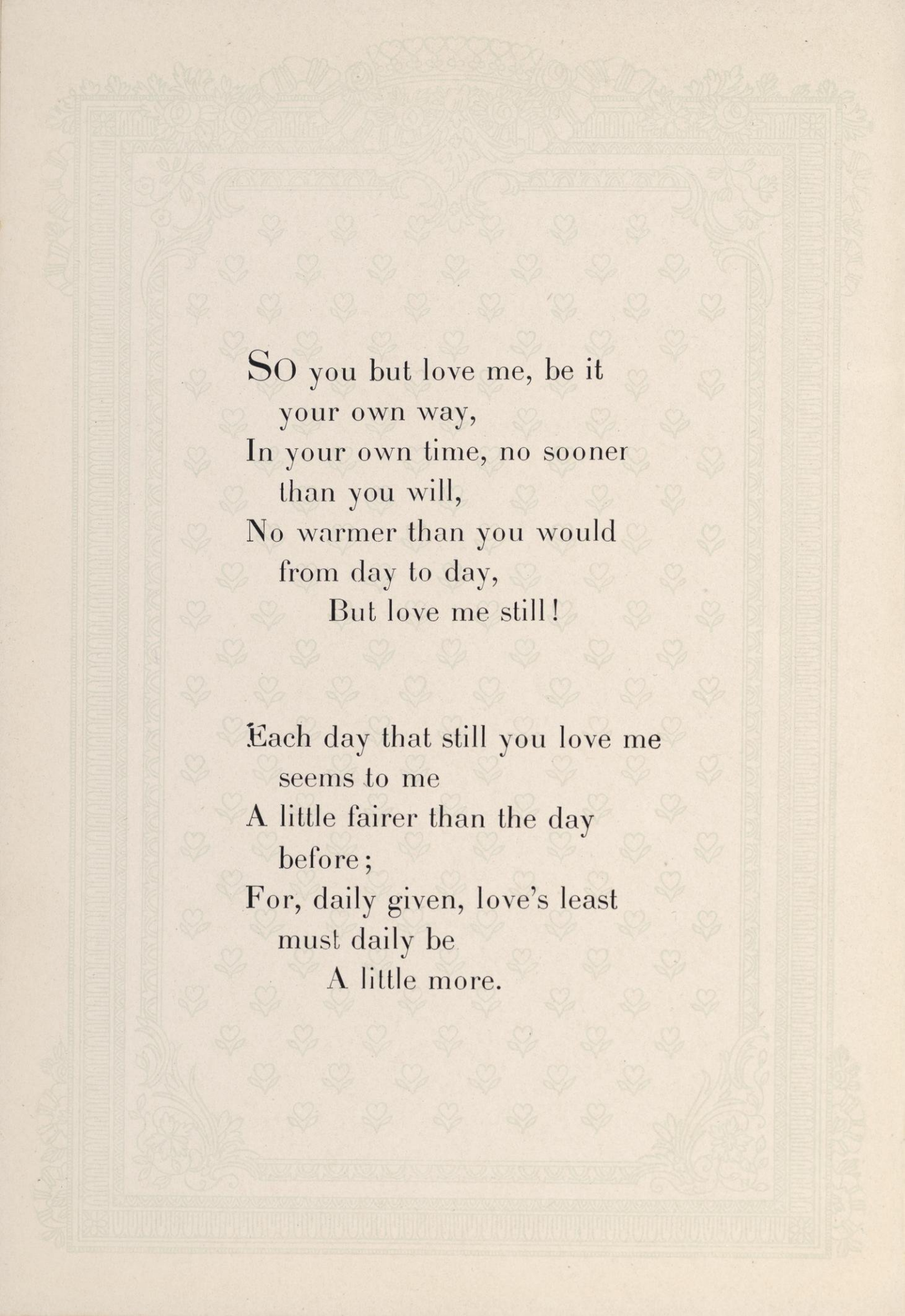
I WILL not say my true love's eyes
Outshine the noblest star;
But in their depth of lustre lies
My peace, my truce, my war.

I will not say upon her neck
Is white to shame the snow;
For if her bosom hath a speck
I would not have it go.

My love is as a woman sweet,
And as a woman white;
Who's more than this is more than
meet
For me and my delight.



IF —

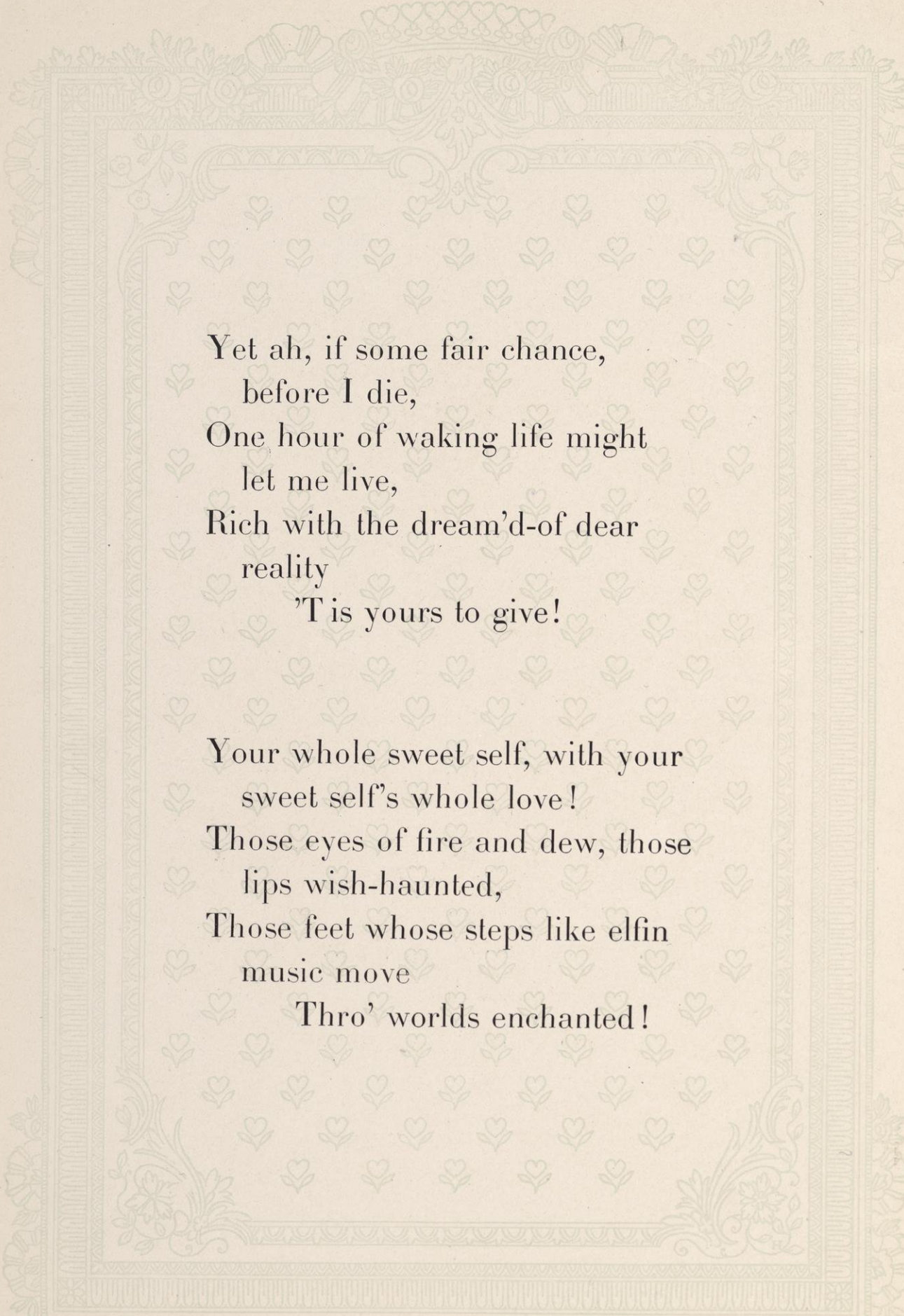


SO you but love me, be it
your own way,
In your own time, no sooner
than you will,
No warmer than you would
from day to day,
But love me still!

Each day that still you love me
seems to me
A little fairer than the day
before;
For, daily given, love's least
must daily be
A little more.

And be my most gain'd your
least given, if such
Your sweet will be! I reckon
not the cost,
Nor count the gain, by little
or by much,
Or least or most.

So you but love me, tho' your
love be cold,
Mine it can chill not. Tho' your
love come late,
Mine for its coming, by sweet
dreams foretold,
Will dreaming wait.



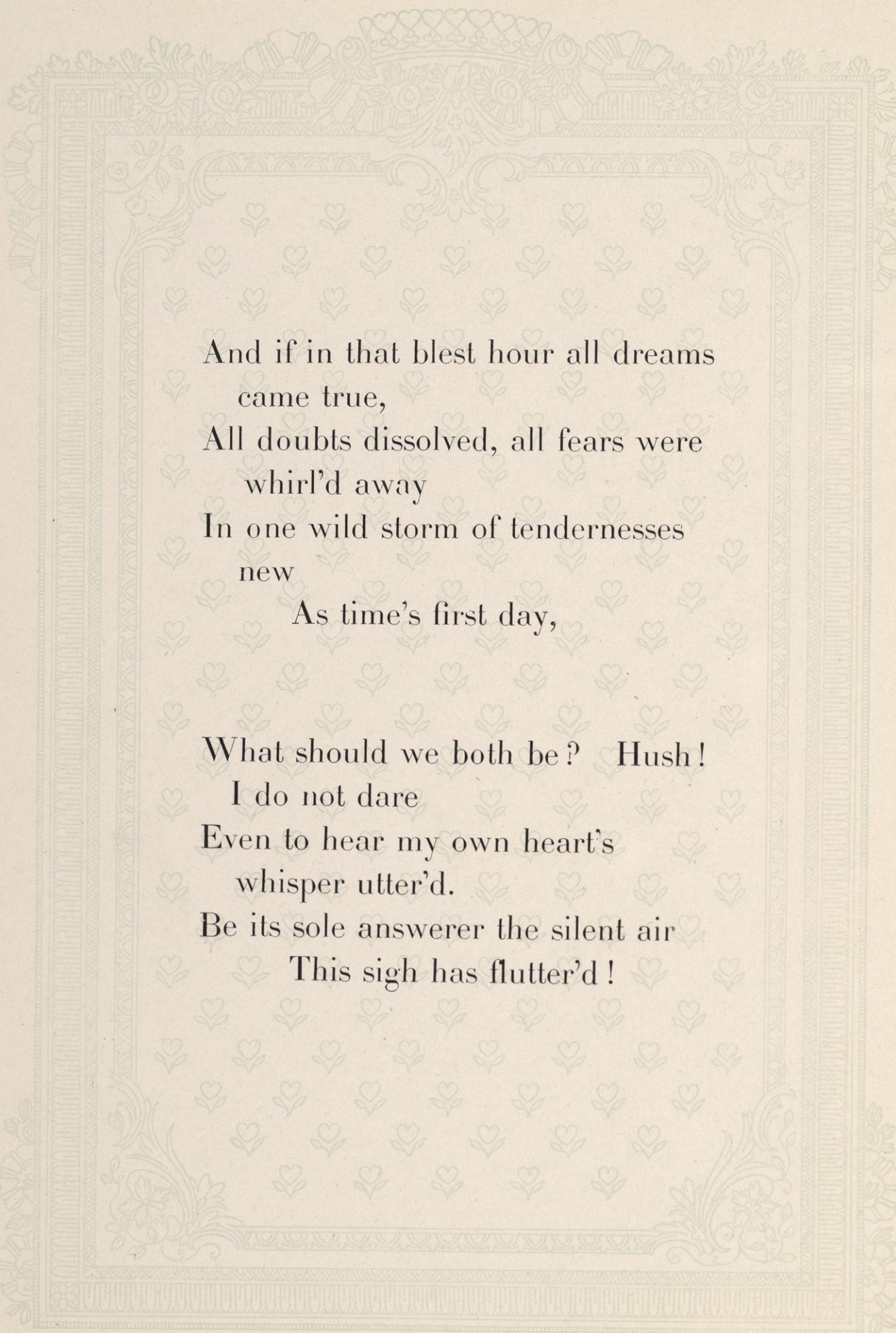
Yet ah, if some fair chance,
before I die,
One hour of waking life might
let me live,
Rich with the dream'd-of dear
reality
'Tis yours to give!

Your whole sweet self, with your
sweet self's whole love!
Those eyes of fire and dew, those
lips wish-haunted,
Those feet whose steps like elfin
music move
Thro' worlds enchanted!



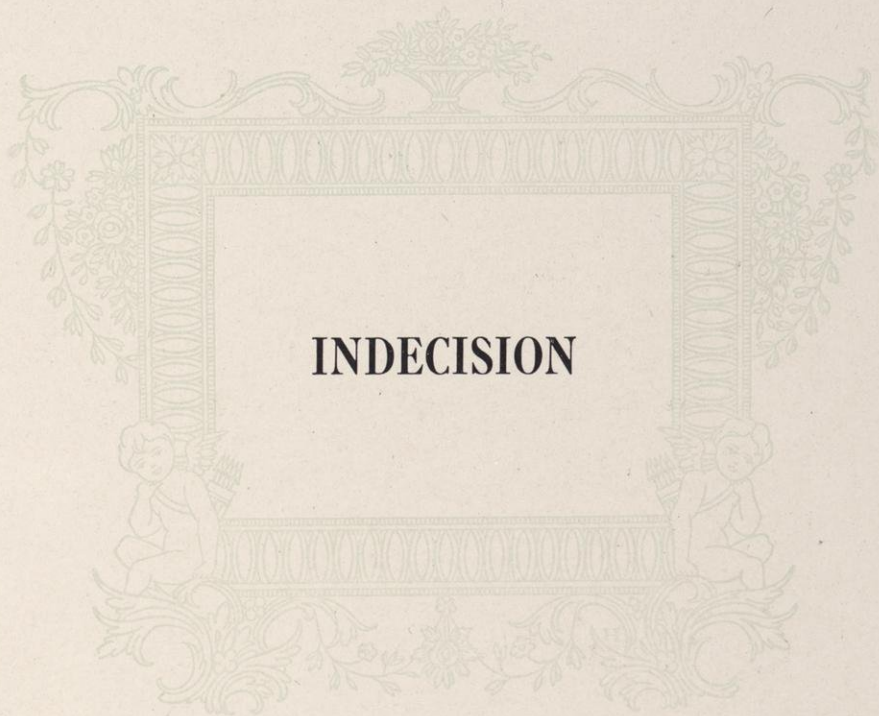
Your whole sweet self, that till
by love reveal'd
Even to yourself still half unknown
must be!
For of the wealth in souls like
yours conceal'd
Love keeps the key.

Ah, if your whole sweet self, by
all the power
Of your sweet self's whole love
in some divine
Far distant hour made wholly yours,
that hour
Made wholly mine,



And if in that blest hour all dreams
came true,
All doubts dissolved, all fears were
whirl'd away
In one wild storm of tendernesses
new
As time's first day,

What should we both be? Hush!
I do not dare
Even to hear my own heart's
whisper utter'd.
Be its sole answerer the silent air
This sigh has flutter'd!



INDECISION



INDECISION

DO I love her?

 Dimpling red lips at me pouting,
 Dimpling shoulders at me
 flouting;

No, I don't!

Do I love her?

 'Prisoned in those crystal eyes
 Purity forever lies;

Yes, I do!

Do I love her?

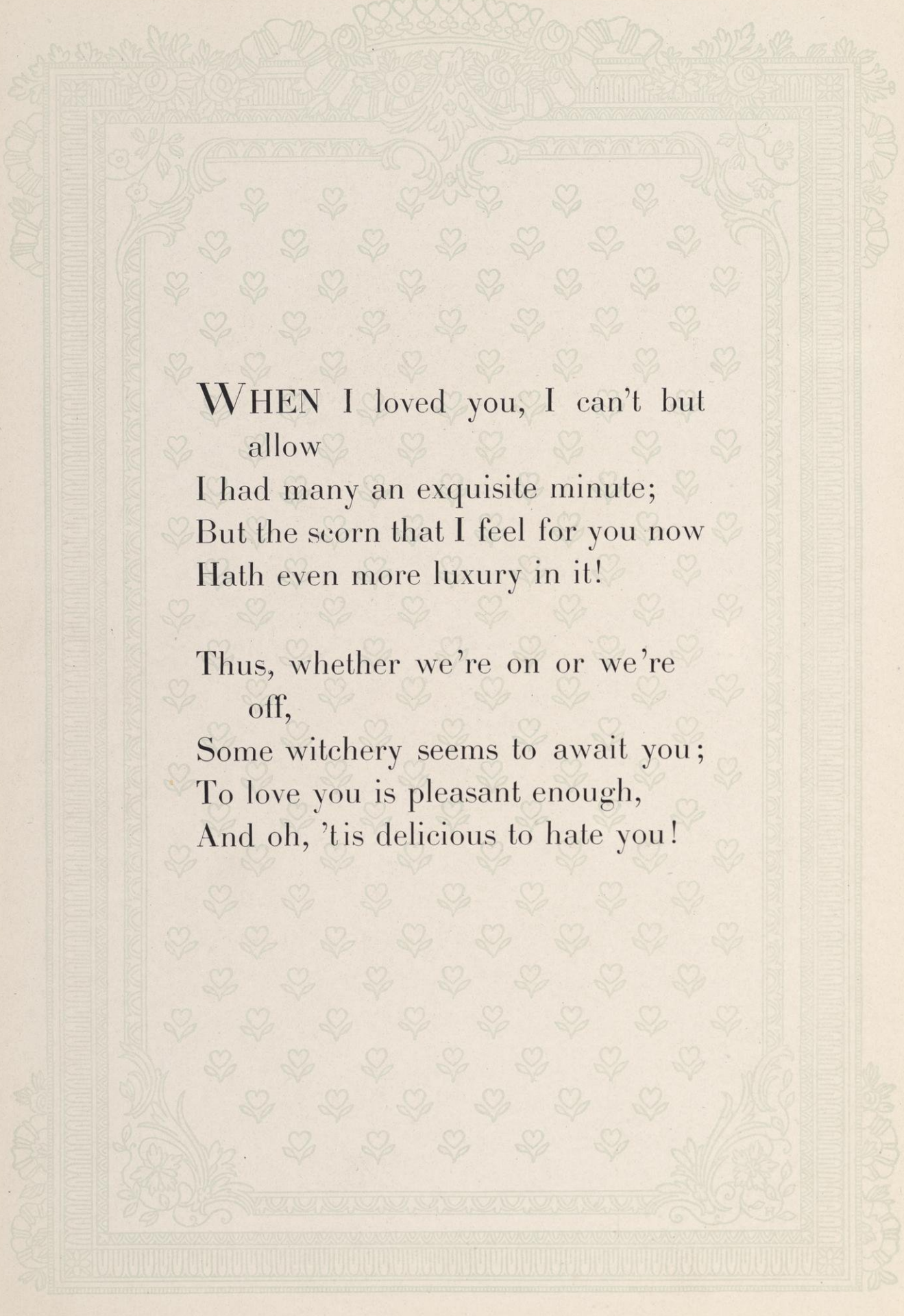
 Little, wild and wilful fiction,
 Teasing, torturing contradiction;

No, I don't!

Do I love her?
With kind acts and sweet words
she
Aids and comforts poverty;
Yes, I do!

Do I love her?
Quick she puts her cuirass on,
Stabs with laughter, stings with
scorn;
No, I don't!

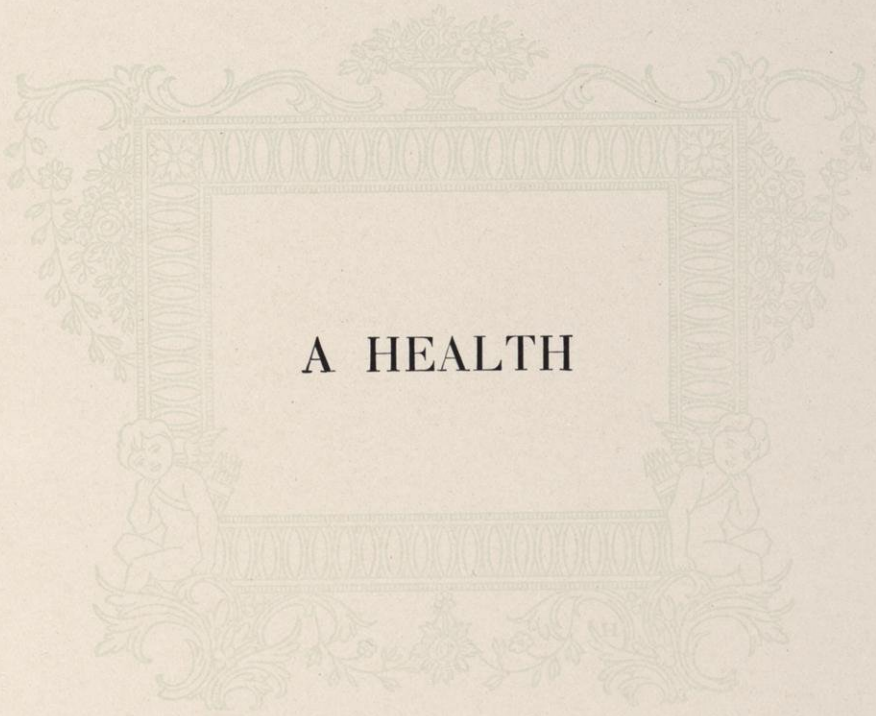
Do I love her?
No! Then to my arms she flies,
Filling me with glad surprise;
Ah, yes I do!



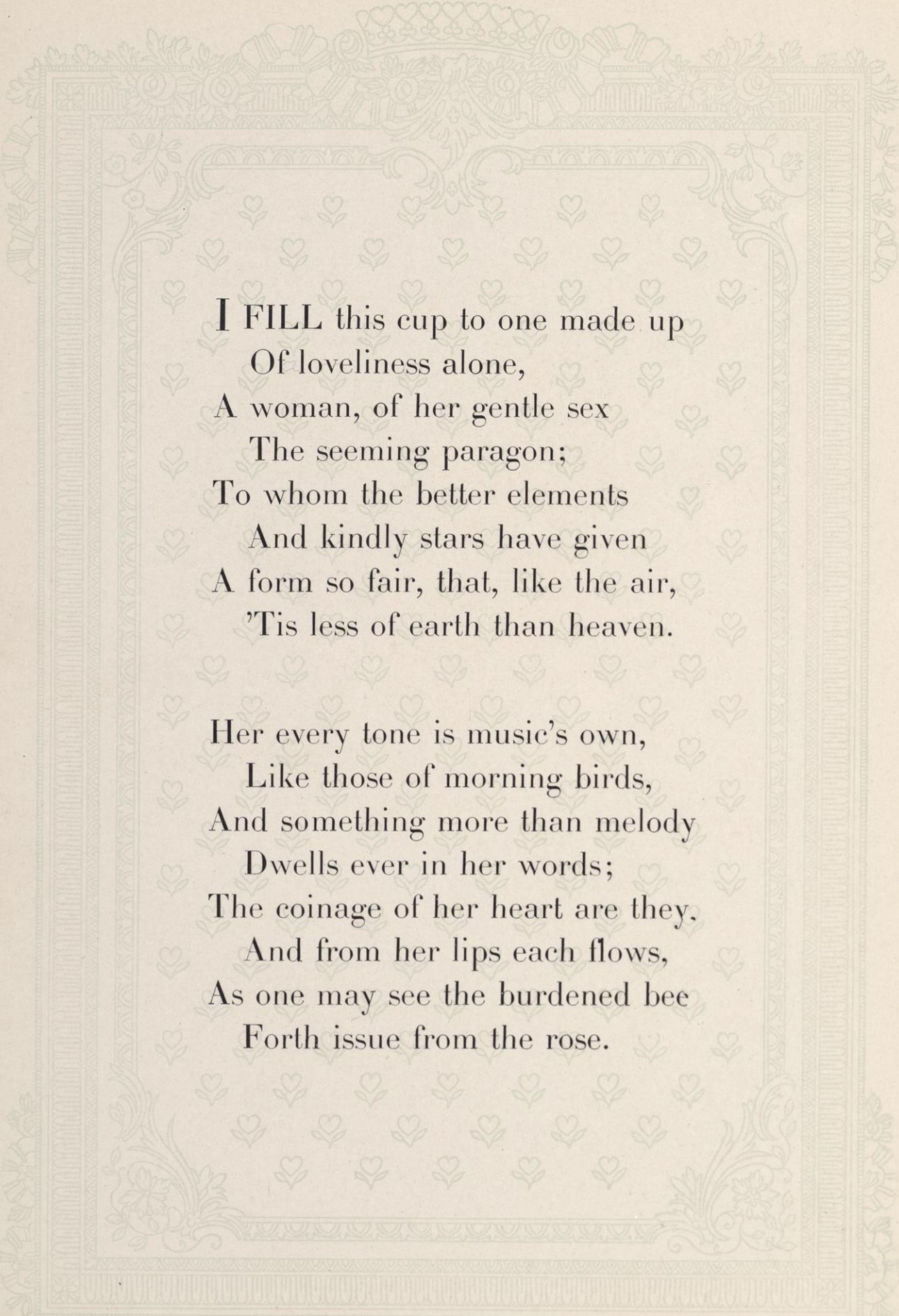
WHEN I loved you, I can't but
allow
I had many an exquisite minute;
But the scorn that I feel for you now
Hath even more luxury in it!

Thus, whether we're on or we're
off,
Some witchery seems to await you;
To love you is pleasant enough,
And oh, 'tis delicious to hate you!





A HEALTH



I FILL this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon;
To whom the better elements
And kindly stars have given
A form so fair, that, like the air,
'Tis less of earth than heaven.

Her every tone is music's own,
Like those of morning birds,
And something more than melody
Dwells ever in her words;
The coinage of her heart are they,
And from her lips each flows,
As one may see the burdened bee
Forth issue from the rose.

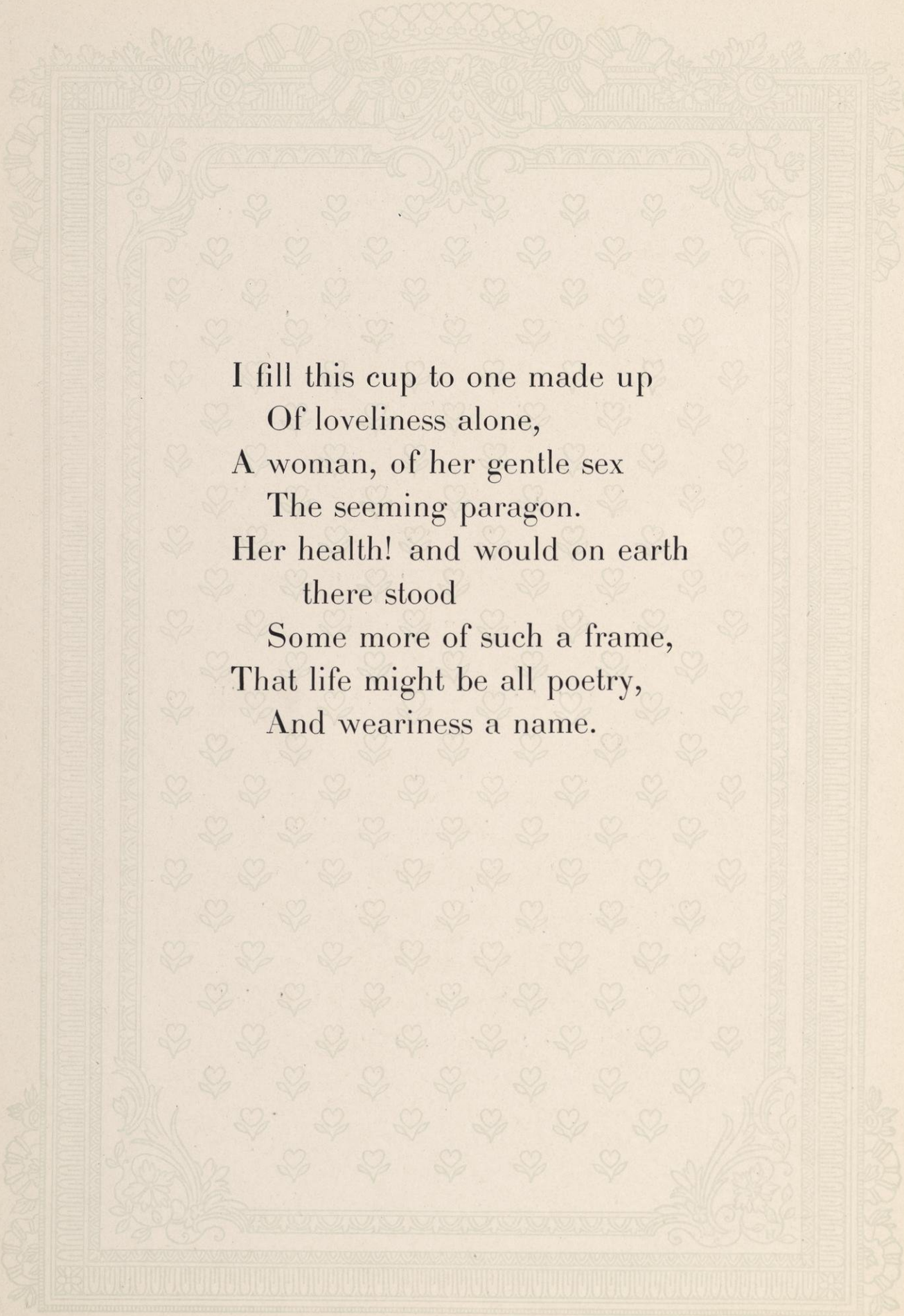


*Miss
1892*

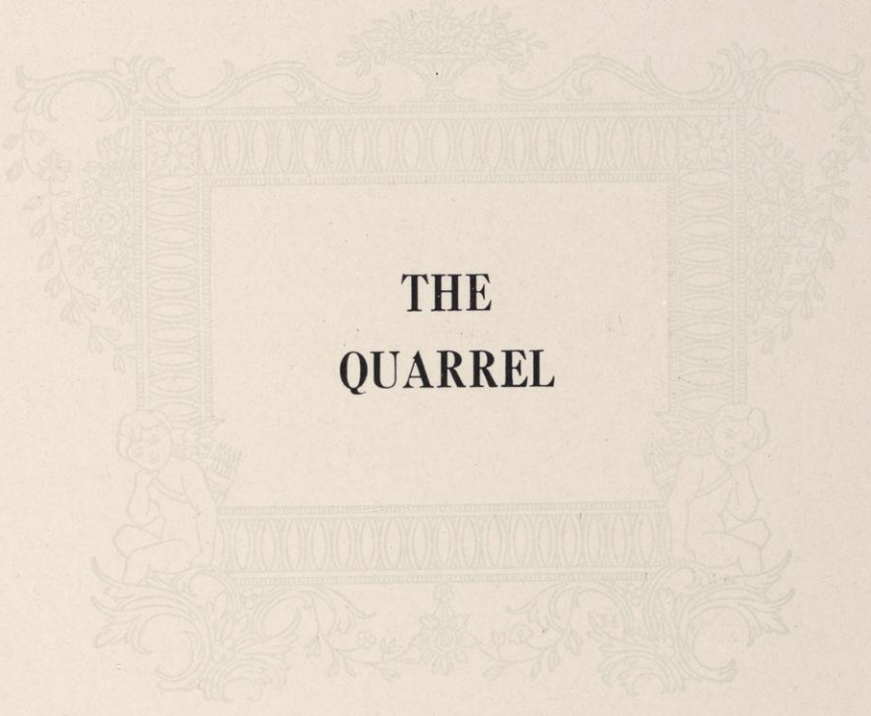
B

Affections are as thoughts to her,
The measures of her hours;
Her feelings have the fragrancy,
The freshness of young flowers;
And lovely passions, changing oft,
So fill her, she appears
The image of themselves by turns—
The idol of past years!

Of her bright face one glance will
trace
A picture on the brain,
And of her voice in echoing hearts
A sound must long remain;
But memory, such as mine of her,
So very much endears,
When death is nigh my latest sigh
Will not be life's, but hers.



I fill this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon.
Her health! and would on earth
there stood
Some more of such a frame,
That life might be all poetry,
And weariness a name.



**THE
QUARREL**

THE QUARREL

ALAS, how slight a cause may
move

Dissension between hearts that love;
Hearts that the world in vain had
tried,

And sorrow but more closely tied.

That stood the storm when waves
were rough,

Yet in a sunny hour fell off;

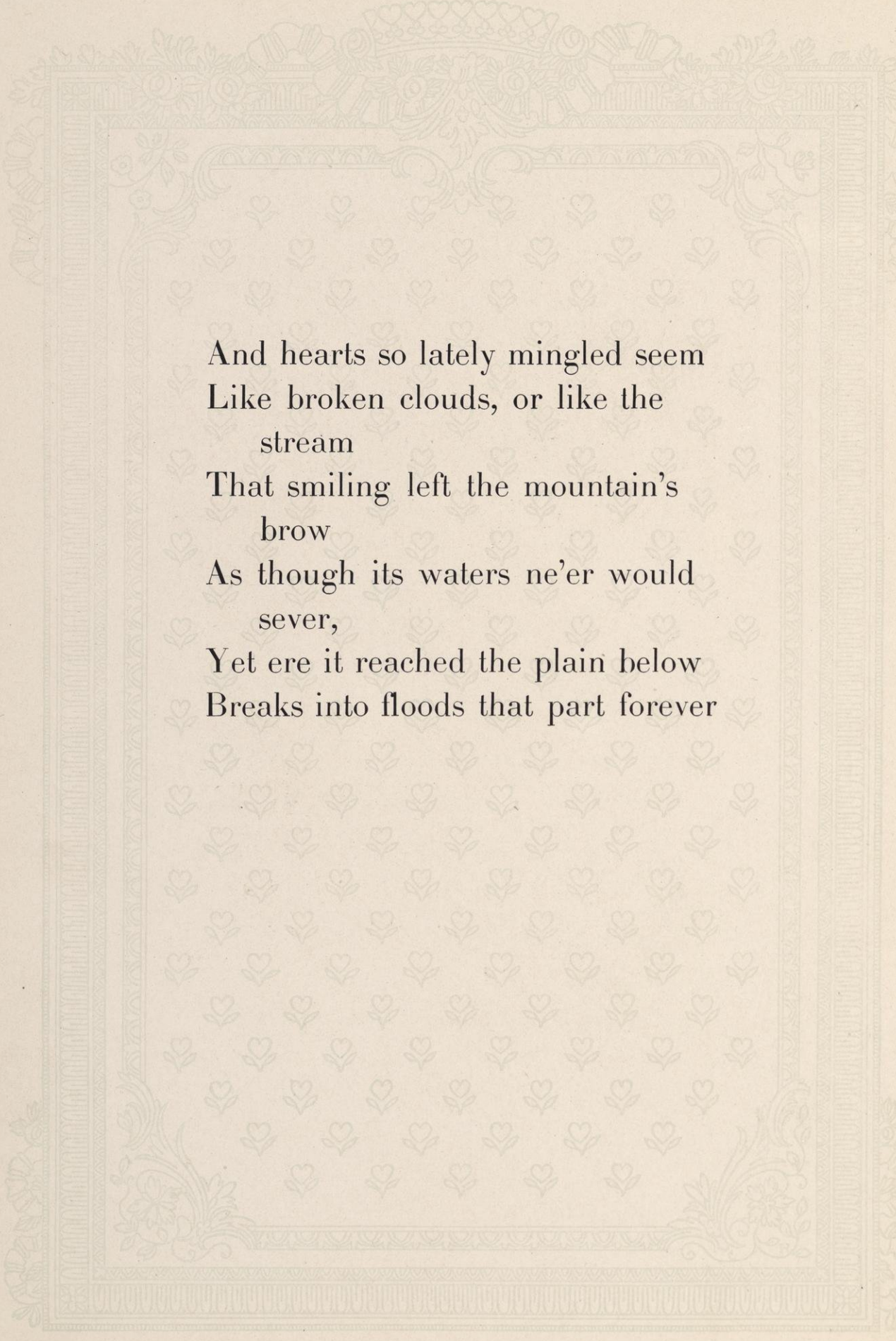
Like ships that have gone down at
sea

When heaven was all tranquillity.

A something light as air, a look,
A word unkind, or wrongly taken,
Oh! love that tempests never shook,
A breath or touch like this hath
shaken.

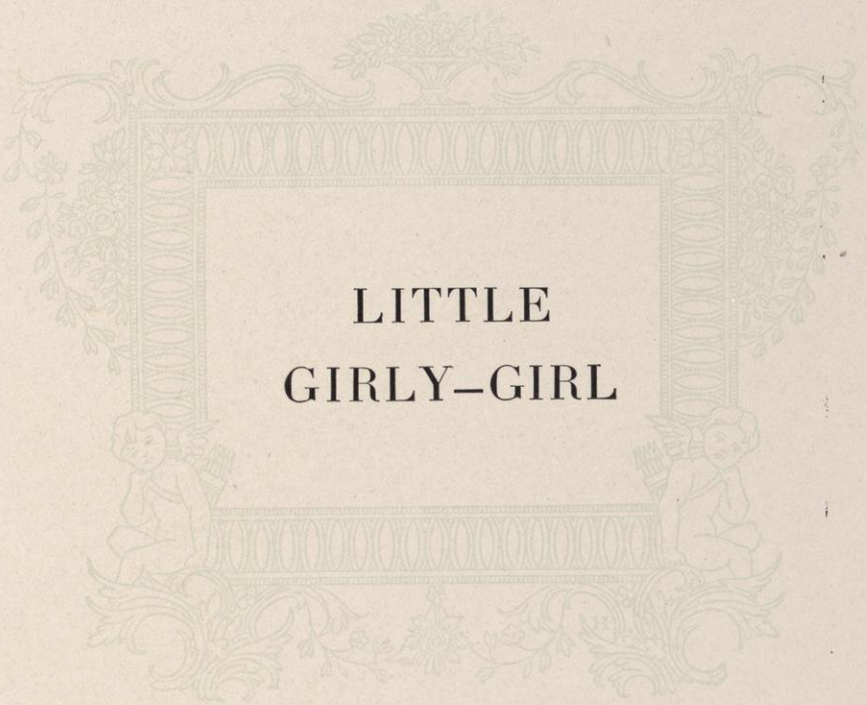
And ruder words will soon rush in
To spread the breach that words
begin,
And eyes forget the gentle ray
They wore in courtship's sunny day,

And voices lose the tone that shed
A tenderness round all they said;
Till fast declining, one by one
The sweetnesses of love are gone.

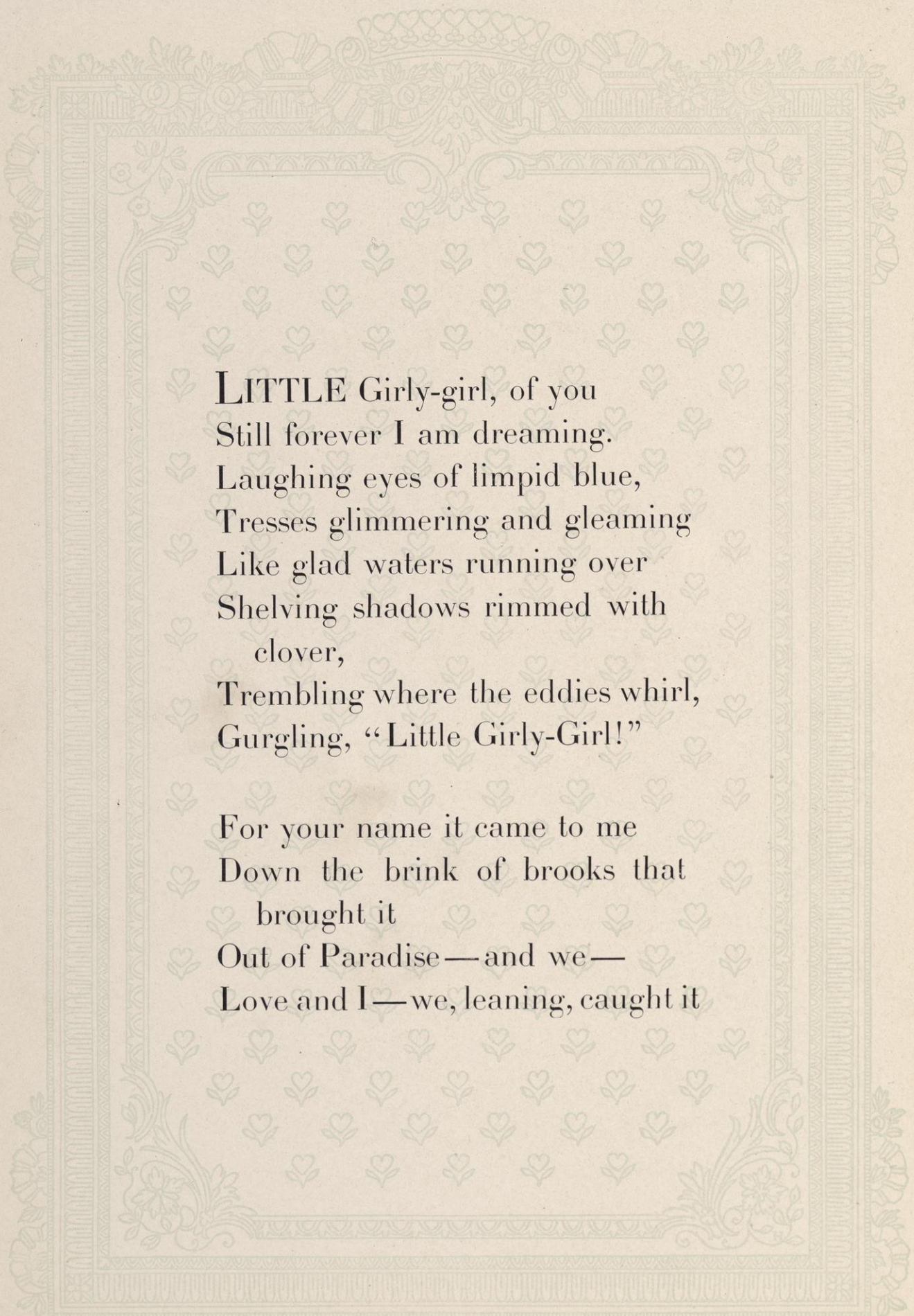


And hearts so lately mingled seem
Like broken clouds, or like the
 stream
That smiling left the mountain's
 brow
As though its waters ne'er would
 sever,
Yet ere it reached the plain below
Breaks into floods that part forever





LITTLE
GIRLY-GIRL

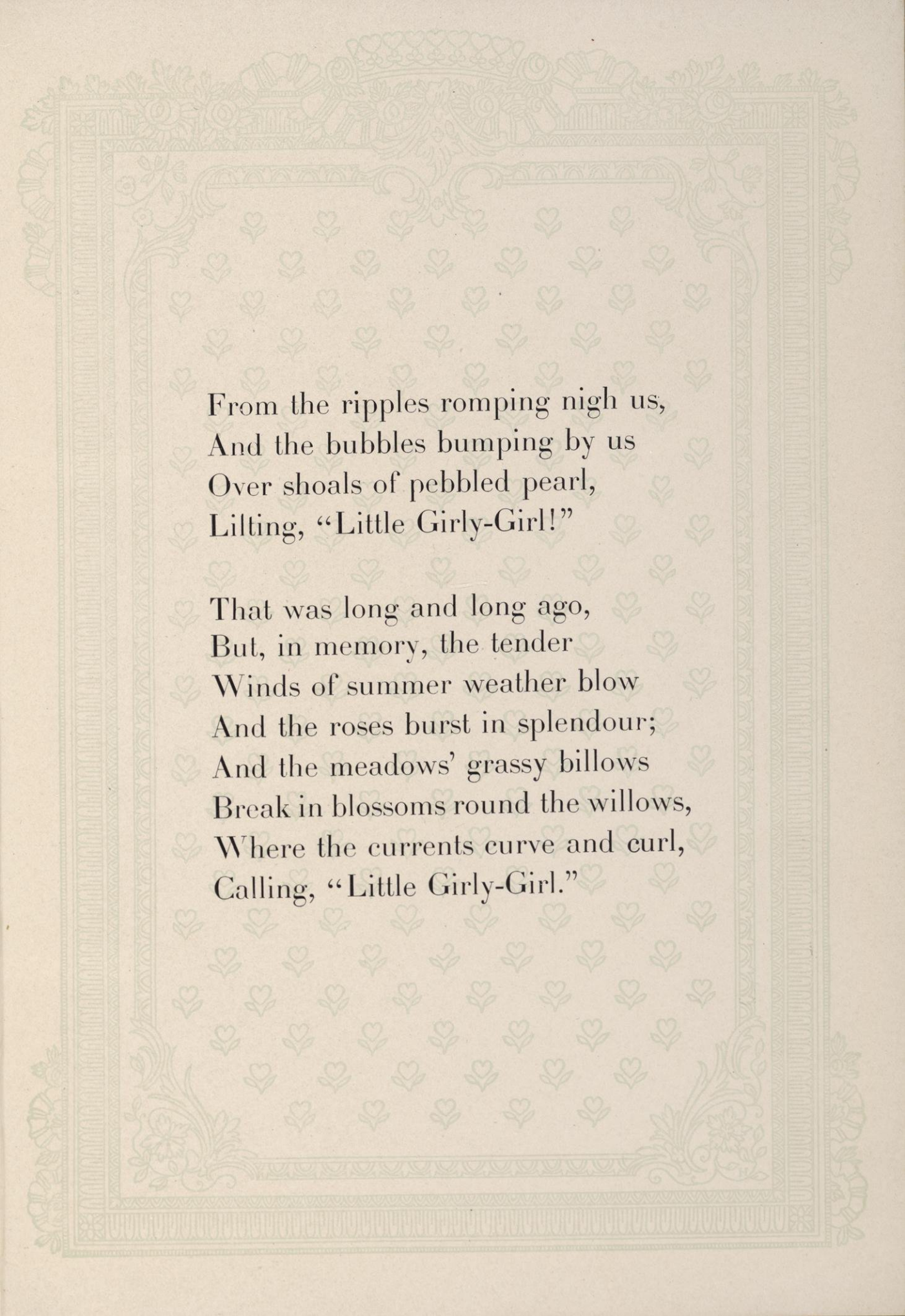


LITTLE Girly-girl, of you
Still forever I am dreaming.
Laughing eyes of limpid blue,
Tresses glimmering and gleaming
Like glad waters running over
Shelving shadows rimmed with
 clover,
Trembling where the eddies whirl,
Gurgling, "Little Girly-Girl!"

For your name it came to me
Down the brink of brooks that
 brought it
Out of Paradise—and we—
Love and I—we, leaning, caught it



Macdonald
1908



From the ripples romping nigh us,
And the bubbles bumping by us
Over shoals of pebbled pearl,
Lilting, "Little Girly-Girl!"

That was long and long ago,
But, in memory, the tender
Winds of summer weather blow
And the roses burst in splendour;
And the meadows' grassy billows
Break in blossoms round the willows,
Where the currents curve and curl,
Calling, "Little Girly-Girl."

