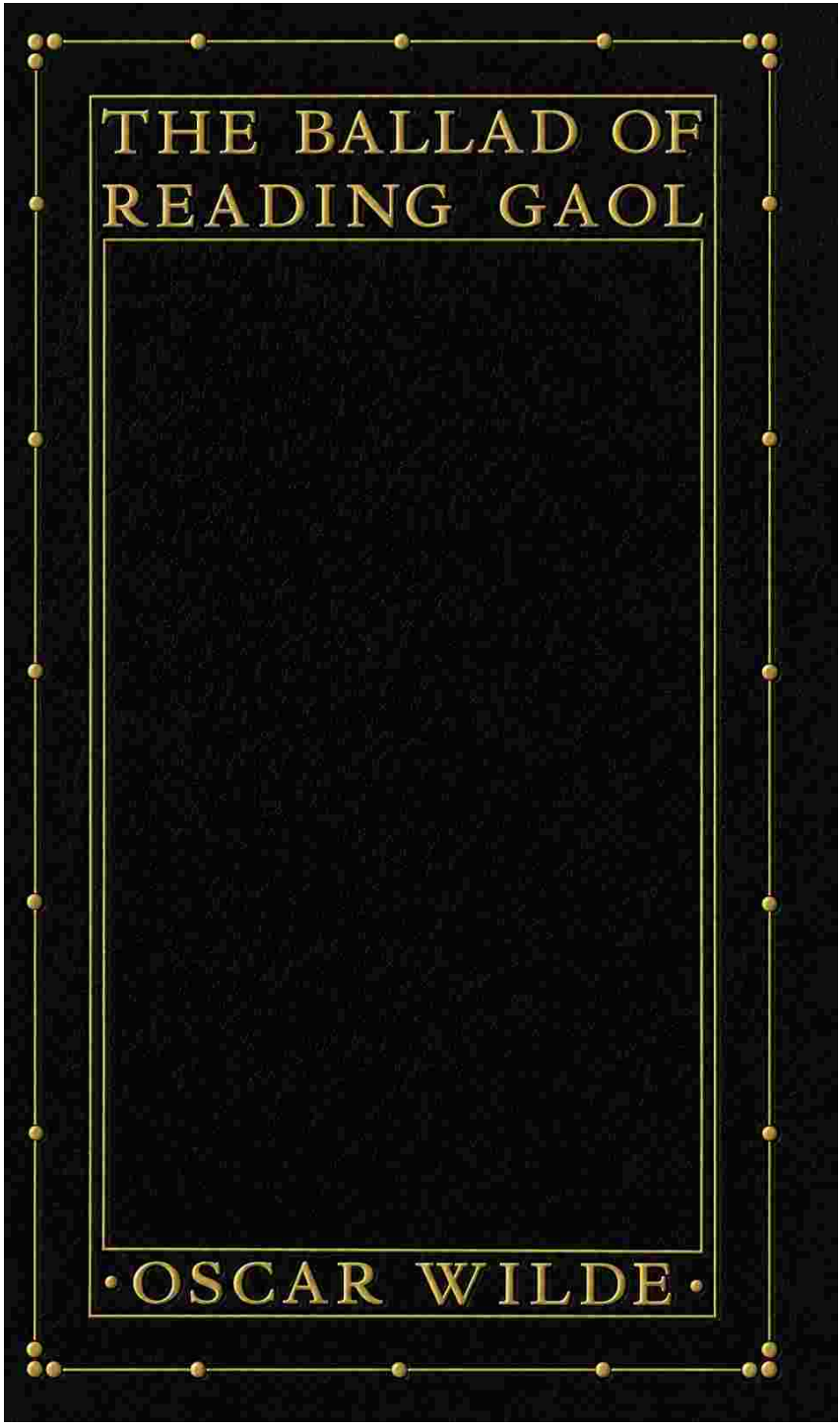

THE BALLAD OF
READING GAOL
·OSCAR WILDE·

The Project Gutenberg eBook of The Ballad of Reading Gaol

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Title: The Ballad of Reading Gaol

Author: Oscar Wilde

Release date: July 1, 1995 [eBook #301]
Most recently updated: July 18, 2026

Language: English

Other information and formats: www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/301

Credits: Produced by Faith Knowles, David Widger, and an Anonymous Volunteer

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE BALLAD OF READING GAOL ***

THE BALLAD OF READING GAOL

By Oscar Wilde

In Memoriam

C.T.W.
Sometime Trooper of the Royal Horse Guards.
Obiit H.M. Prison, Reading, Berkshire,

July 7th, 1896
Presented by Project Gutenberg on the 99th Anniversary.

VERSION ONE

I.

He did not wear his scarlet coat,
For blood and wine are red,
And blood and wine were on his hands
When they found him with the dead,
The poor dead woman whom he loved,
And murdered in her bed.

He walked amongst the Trial Men
In a suit of shabby grey;
A cricket cap was on his head,
And his step seemed light and gay;
But I never saw a man who looked
So wistfully at the day.

I never saw a man who looked
With such a wistful eye
Upon that little tent of blue

VERSION TWO

I.

He did not wear his scarlet coat,
For blood and wine are red,
And blood and wine were on his hands
When they found him with the dead,
The poor dead woman whom he loved,
And murdered in her bed.

He walked amongst the Trial Men
In a suit of shabby gray;
A cricket cap was on his head,
And his step seemed light and gay;
But I never saw a man who looked
So wistfully at the day.

I never saw a man who looked
With such a wistful eye
Upon that little tent of blue

Which prisoners call the sky,
And at every drifting cloud that went
With sails of silver by.

I walked, with other souls in pain,
Within another ring,
And was wondering if the man had done
A great or little thing,
When a voice behind me whispered low,
"That fellow's got to swing."

Dear Christ! the very prison walls
Suddenly seemed to reel,
And the sky above my head became
Like a casque of scorching steel;
And, though I was a soul in pain,
My pain I could not feel.

I only knew what hunted thought
Quickened his step, and why
He looked upon the garish day
With such a wistful eye;

Which prisoners call the sky,
And at every drifting cloud that went
With sails of silver by.

I walked, with other souls in pain,
Within another ring,
And was wondering if the man had done
A great or little thing,
When a voice behind me whispered low,
"That fellow's got to swing."

Dear Christ! the very prison walls
Suddenly seemed to reel,
And the sky above my head became
Like a casque of scorching steel;
And, though I was a soul in pain,
My pain I could not feel.

I only knew what haunted thought
Quickened his step, and why
He looked upon the garish day
With such a wistful eye;

The man had killed the thing he loved
And so he had to die.

Yet each man kills the thing he loves
By each let this be heard,
Some do it with a bitter look,
Some with a flattering word,
The coward does it with a kiss,
The brave man with a sword!

Some kill their love when they are young,
And some when they are old;
Some strangle with the hands of Lust,
Some with the hands of Gold:
The kindest use a knife, because
The dead so soon grow cold.

Some love too little, some too long,
Some sell, and others buy;
Some do the deed with many tears,
And some without a sigh:
For each man kills the thing he loves,

The man had killed the thing he loved,
And so he had to die.

Yet each man kills the thing he loves,
By each let this be heard,
Some do it with a bitter look,
Some with a flattering word,
The coward does it with a kiss,
The brave man with a sword!

Some kill their love when they are young,
And some when they are old;
Some strangle with the hands of Lust,
Some with the hands of Gold:
The kindest use a knife, because
The dead so soon grow cold.

Some love too little, some too long,
Some sell, and others buy;
Some do the deed with many tears,
And some without a sigh:
For each man kills the thing he loves,

Yet each man does not die.

He does not die a death of shame
On a day of dark disgrace,
Nor have a noose about his neck,
Nor a cloth upon his face,
Nor drop feet foremost through the floor
Into an empty place

He does not sit with silent men
Who watch him night and day;
Who watch him when he tries to weep,
And when he tries to pray;
Who watch him lest himself should rob
The prison of its prey.

He does not wake at dawn to see
Dread figures throng his room,
The shivering Chaplain robed in white,
The Sheriff stern with gloom,
And the Governor all in shiny black,
With the yellow face of Doom.

Yet each man does not die.

He does not die a death of shame
On a day of dark disgrace,
Nor have a noose about his neck,
Nor a cloth upon his face,
Nor drop feet foremost through the floor
Into an empty space.

He does not sit with silent men
Who watch him night and day;
Who watch him when he tries to weep,
And when he tries to pray;
Who watch him lest himself should rob
The prison of its prey.

He does not wake at dawn to see
Dread figures throng his room,
The shivering Chaplain robed in white,
The Sheriff stern with gloom,
And the Governor all in shiny black,
With the yellow face of Doom.

He does not rise in piteous haste
To put on convict-clothes,
While some coarse-mouthed Doctor gloats, and notes
Each new and nerve-twitched pose,
Fingering a watch whose little ticks
Are like horrible hammer-blows.

He does not know that sickening thirst
That sands one's throat, before
The hangman with his gardener's gloves
Slips through the padded door,
And binds one with three leathern thongs,
That the throat may thirst no more.

He does not bend his head to hear
The Burial Office read,
Nor, while the terror of his soul
Tells him he is not dead,
Cross his own coffin, as he moves
Into the hideous shed.

He does not stare

He does not rise in piteous haste
To put on convict-clothes,
While some coarse-mouthed Doctor gloats, and notes
Each new and nerve-twitched pose,
Fingering a watch whose little ticks
Are like horrible hammer-blows.

He does not feel that sickening thirst
That sands one's throat, before
The hangman with his gardener's gloves
Comes through the padded door,
And binds one with three leathern thongs,
That the throat may thirst no more.

He does not bend his head to hear
The Burial Office read,
Nor, while the anguish of his soul
Tells him he is not dead,
Cross his own coffin, as he moves
Into the hideous shed.

He does not stare

upon the air
Through a little
roof of glass;
He does not pray
with lips of clay
For his agony to
pass;
Nor feel upon his
shuddering cheek
The kiss of
Caiaphas.

II.

Six weeks our
guardsman walked the yard,
In a suit of
shabby grey:
His cricket cap was
on his head,
And his step
seemed light and gay,
But I never saw a
man who looked
So wistfully at
the day.

I never saw a man
who looked
With such a
wistful eye
Upon that little
tent of blue
Which prisoners
call the sky,
And at every
wandering cloud that trailed
Its raveled
fleeces by.

He did not wring

upon the air
Through a little
roof of glass:
He does not pray
with lips of clay
For his agony to
pass;
Nor feel upon his
shuddering cheek
The kiss of
Caiaphas.

II.

Six weeks the
guardsman walked the yard,
In the suit of
shabby gray:
His cricket cap was
on his head,
And his step was
light and gay,
But I never saw a
man who looked
So wistfully at
the day.

I never saw a man
who looked
With such a
wistful eye
Upon that little
tent of blue
Which prisoners
call the sky,
And at every
wandering cloud that trailed
Its ravelled
fleeces by.

He did not wring

his hands, as do
Those witless men
who dare
To try to rear the
changeling Hope
In the cave of
black Despair:
He only looked upon
the sun,
And drank the
morning air.

He did not wring
his hands nor weep,
Nor did he peek
or pine,
But he drank the
air as though it held
Some healthful
anodyne;
With open mouth he
drank the sun
As though it had
been wine!

And I and all the
souls in pain,
Who tramped the
other ring,
Forgot if we
ourselves had done
A great or little
thing,
And watched with
gaze of dull amaze
The man who had
to swing.

And strange it was
to see him pass
With a step so

his hands, as do
Those witless men
who dare
To try to rear the
changeling Hope
In the cave of
black Despair:
He only looked upon
the sun,
And drank the
morning air.

He did not wring
his hands nor weep,
Nor did he peek
or pine,
But he drank the
air as though it held
Some healthful
anodyne;
With open mouth he
drank the sun
As though it had
been wine!

And I and all the
souls in pain,
Who tramped the
other ring,
Forgot if we
ourselves had done
A great or little
thing,
And watched with
gaze of dull amaze
The man who had
to swing.

For strange it was
to see him pass
With a step so

light and gay,
And strange it was
to see him look
So wistfully at
the day,
And strange it was
to think that he
Had such a debt
to pay.

For oak and elm
have pleasant leaves
That in the
spring-time shoot:
But grim to see is
the gallows-tree,
With its adder-
bitten root,
And, green or dry,
a man must die
Before it bears
its fruit!

The loftiest place
is that seat of grace
For which all
worldlings try:
But who would stand
in hempen band
Upon a scaffold
high,
And through a
murderer's collar take
His last look at
the sky?

It is sweet to
dance to violins
When Love and
Life are fair:
To dance to flutes,

light and gay,
And strange it was
to see him look
So wistfully at
the day,
And strange it was
to think that he
Had such a debt
to pay.

The oak and elm
have pleasant leaves
That in the
spring-time shoot:
But grim to see is
the gallows-tree,
With its alder-
bitten root,
And, green or dry,
a man must die
Before it bears
its fruit!

The loftiest place
is the seat of grace
For which all
worldlings try:
But who would stand
in hempen band
Upon a scaffold
high,
And through a
murderer's collar take
His last look at
the sky?

It is sweet to
dance to violins
When Love and
Life are fair:
To dance to flutes,

to dance to lutes
Is delicate and
rare:
But it is not sweet
with nimble feet
To dance upon the
air!

So with curious
eyes and sick surmise
We watched him
day by day,
And wondered if
each one of us
Would end the
self-same way,
For none can tell
to what red Hell
His sightless
soul may stray.

At last the dead
man walked no more
Amongst the Trial
Men,
And I knew that he
was standing up
In the black
dock's dreadful pen,
And that never
would I see his face
In God's sweet
world again.

Like two doomed
ships that pass in storm
We had crossed
each other's way:
But we made no
sign, we said no word,
We had no word to

to dance to lutes
Is delicate and
rare:
But it is not sweet
with nimble feet
To dance upon the
air!

So with curious
eyes and sick surmise
We watched him
day by day,
And wondered if
each one of us
Would end the
self-same way,
For none can tell
to what red Hell
His sightless
soul may stray.

At last the dead
man walked no more
Amongst the Trial
Men,
And I knew that he
was standing up
In the black
dock's dreadful pen,
And that never
would I see his face
For weal or woe
again.

Like two doomed
ships that pass in storm
We had crossed
each other's way:
But we made no
sign, we said no word,
We had no word to

say;
For we did not meet
in the holy night,
But in the
shameful day.

A prison wall was
round us both,
Two outcast men
were we:
The world had
thrust us from its heart,
And God from out
His care:
And the iron gin
that waits for Sin
Had caught us in
its snare.

III.

In Debtors' Yard
the stones are hard,
And the dripping
wall is high,
So it was there he
took the air
Beneath the
leaden sky,
And by each side a
Warder walked,
For fear the man
might die.

Or else he sat with
those who watched
His anguish night
and day;
Who watched him
when he rose to weep,
And when he

say;
For we did not meet
in the holy night,
But in the
shameful day.

A prison wall was
round us both,
Two outcast men
we were:
The world had
thrust us from its heart,
And God from out
His care:
And the iron gin
that waits for Sin
Had caught us in
its snare.

III.

In Debtors' Yard
the stones are hard,
And the dripping
wall is high,
So it was there he
took the air
Beneath the
leaden sky,
And by each side a
warder walked,
For fear the man
might die.

Or else he sat with
those who watched
His anguish night
and day;
Who watched him
when he rose to weep,
And when he

crouched to pray;
Who watched him lest himself should rob
Their scaffold of its prey.

The Governor was strong upon
The Regulations Act:
The Doctor said that Death was but
A scientific fact:
And twice a day the Chaplain called
And left a little tract.

And twice a day he smoked his pipe,
And drank his quart of beer:
His soul was resolute, and held
No hiding-place for fear;
He often said that he was glad
The hangman's hands were near.

But why he said so strange a thing
No Warder dared to ask:
For he to whom a watcher's doom
Is given as his task,
Must set a lock

crouched to pray;
Who watched him lest himself should rob
Their scaffold of its prey.

The Governor was strong upon
The Regulations Act:
The Doctor said that Death was but
A scientific fact:
And twice a day the Chaplain called,
And left a little tract.

And twice a day he smoked his pipe,
And drank his quart of beer:
His soul was resolute, and held
No hiding-place for fear;
He often said that he was glad
The hangman's day was near.

But why he said so strange a thing
No warder dared to ask:
For he to whom a watcher's doom
Is given as his task,
Must set a lock

upon his lips,
And make his face
a mask.

Or else he might be
moved, and try
To comfort or
console:
And what should
Human Pity do
Pent up in
Murderers' Hole?
What word of grace
in such a place
Could help a
brother's soul?

With slouch and
swing around the ring
We trod the
Fool's Parade!
We did not care: we
knew we were
The Devil's Own
Brigade:
And shaven head and
feet of lead
Make a merry
masquerade.

We tore the tarry
rope to shreds
With blunt and
bleeding nails;
We rubbed the
doors, and scrubbed the floors,
And cleaned the
shining rails:
And, rank by rank,
we soaped the plank,
And clattered

upon his lips,
And make his face
a mask.

Or else he might be
moved, and try
To comfort or
console:
And what should
Human Pity do
Pent up in
Murderers' Hole?
What word of grace
in such a place
Could help a
brother's soul?

With slouch and
swing around the ring
We trod the
Fools' Parade!
We did not care: we
knew we were
The Devils' Own
Brigade:
And shaven head and
feet of lead
Make a merry
masquerade.

We tore the tarry
rope to shreds
With blunt and
bleeding nails;
We rubbed the
doors, and scrubbed the floors,
And cleaned the
shining rails:
And, rank by rank,
we soaped the plank,
And clattered

with the pails.

We sewed the sacks,
we broke the stones,
We turned the
dusty drill:
We banged the tins,
and bawled the hymns,
And sweated on
the mill:
But in the heart of
every man
Terror was lying
still.

So still it lay
that every day
Crawled like a
weed-clogged wave:
And we forgot the
bitter lot
That waits for
fool and knave,
Till once, as we
tramped in from work,
We passed an open
grave.

With yawning mouth
the yellow hole
Gaped for a
living thing;
The very mud cried
out for blood
To the thirsty
asphalte ring:
And we knew that
ere one dawn grew fair
Some prisoner had
to swing.

with the pails.

We sewed the sacks,
we broke the stones,
We turned the
dusty drill:
We banged the tins,
and bawled the hymns,
And sweated on
the mill:
But in the heart of
every man
Terror was lying
still.

So still it lay
that every day
Crawled like a
weed-clogged wave:
And we forgot the
bitter lot
That waits for
fool and knave,
Till once, as we
tramped in from work,
We passed an open
grave.

With yawning mouth
the horrid hole
Gaped for a
living thing;
The very mud cried
out for blood
To the thirsty
asphalte ring:
And we knew that
ere one dawn grew fair
The fellow had to
swing.

Right in we went, with soul intent
On Death and Dread and Doom:
The hangman, with his little bag,
Went shuffling through the gloom
And each man trembled as he crept
Into his numbered tomb.

That night the empty corridors
Were full of forms of Fear,
And up and down the iron town
Stole feet we could not hear,
And through the bars that hide the stars
White faces seemed to peer.

He lay as one who lies and dreams
In a pleasant meadow-land,
The watcher watched him as he slept,
And could not understand
How one could sleep so sweet a sleep
With a hangman close at hand?

But there is no sleep when men must weep

Right in we went, with soul intent
On Death and Dread and Doom:
The hangman, with his little bag,
Went shuffling through the gloom:
And I trembled as I groped my way
Into my numbered tomb.

That night the empty corridors
Were full of forms of Fear,
And up and down the iron town
Stole feet we could not hear,
And through the bars that hide the stars
White faces seemed to peer.

He lay as one who lies and dreams
In a pleasant meadow-land,
The watchers watched him as he slept,
And could not understand
How one could sleep so sweet a sleep
With a hangman close at hand.

But there is no sleep when men must weep

Who never yet have wept:
So we—the fool, the fraud, the knave—
That endless vigil kept,
And through each brain on hands of pain
Another's terror crept.

Alas! it is a fearful thing
To feel another's guilt!
For, right within, the sword of Sin
Pierced to its poisoned hilt,
And as molten lead were the tears we shed
For the blood we had not spilt.

The Warders with their shoes of felt
Crept by each padlocked door,
And peeped and saw, with eyes of awe,
Grey figures on the floor,
And wondered why men knelt to pray
Who never prayed before.

All through the night we knelt and prayed,
Mad mourners of a corpse!

Who never yet have wept:
So we- the fool, the fraud, the knave-
That endless vigil kept,
And through each brain on hands of pain
Another's terror crept.

Alas! it is a fearful thing
To feel another's guilt!
For, right within, the sword of Sin
Pierced to its poisoned hilt,
And as molten lead were the tears we shed
For the blood we had not spilt.

The warders with their shoes of felt
Crept by each padlocked door,
And peeped and saw, with eyes of awe,
Gray figures on the floor,
And wondered why men knelt to pray
Who never prayed before.

All through the night we knelt and prayed,
Mad mourners of a corse!

The troubled plumes of midnight were	The troubled plumes of midnight shook
The plumes upon a hearse:	Like the plumes upon a hearse:
And bitter wine upon a sponge	And as bitter wine upon a sponge
Was the savior of Remorse.	Was the savour of Remorse.
The cock crew, the red cock crew,	The gray cock crew, the red cock crew,
But never came the day:	But never came the day:
And crooked shape of Terror crouched,	And crooked shapes of Terror crouched,
In the corners where we lay:	In the corners where we lay:
And each evil sprite that walks by night	And each evil sprite that walks by night
Before us seemed to play.	Before us seemed to play.
They glided past, they glided fast,	They glided past, the glided fast,
Like travelers through a mist:	Like travellers through a mist:
They mocked the moon in a rigadoon	They mocked the moon in a rigadoon
Of delicate turn and twist,	Of delicate turn and twist,
And with formal pace and loathsome grace	And with formal pace and loathsome grace
The phantoms kept their tryst.	The phantoms kept their tryst.
With mop and mow, we saw them go,	With mop and mow, we saw them go,
Slim shadows hand in hand:	Slim shadows hand in hand:
About, about, in ghostly rout	About, about, in ghostly rout

They trod a saraband:
And the damned grotesques made arabesques,
Like the wind upon the sand!

With the pirouettes of marionettes,
They tripped on pointed tread:
But with flutes of Fear they filled the ear,
As their grisly masque they led,
And loud they sang, and loud they sang,
For they sang to wake the dead.

"Oho!" they cried, "The world is wide,
But fettered limbs go lame!
And once, or twice, to throw the dice
Is a gentlemanly game,
But he does not win who plays with Sin
In the secret House of Shame."

No things of air these antics were
That frolicked with such glee:
To men whose lives were held in gyves,
And whose feet might not go free,

They trod a saraband:
And the damned grotesques made arabesques,
Like the wind upon the sand!

With the pirouettes of marionettes,
They tripped on pointed tread:
But with flutes of Fear they filled the ear,
As their grisly masque they led,
And loud they sang, and long they sang,
For they sang to wake the dead.

"Oho!" they cried, "the world is wide,
But fettered limbs go lame!
And once, or twice, to throw the dice
Is a gentlemanly game,
But he does not win who plays with Sin
In the secret House of Shame."

No things of air these antics were,
That frolicked with such glee:
To men whose lives were held in gyves,
And whose feet might not go free,

Ah! wounds of Christ! they were living things,
Most terrible to see.

Around, around, they waltzed and wound;
Some wheeled in smirking pairs:
With the mincing step of demirep
Some sidled up the stairs:
And with subtle sneer, and fawning leer,
Each helped us at our prayers.

The morning wind began to moan,
But still the night went on:
Through its giant loom the web of gloom
Crept till each thread was spun:
And, as we prayed, we grew afraid
Of the Justice of the Sun.

The moaning wind went wandering round
The weeping prison-wall:
Till like a wheel of turning-steel
We felt the minutes crawl:
O moaning wind! what had we done

Ah! wounds of Christ! they were living things,
Most terrible to see.

Around, around, they waltzed and wound;
Some wheeled in smirking pairs;
With the mincing step of a demirep
Some sidled up the stairs:
And with subtle sneer, and fawning leer,
Each helped us at our prayers.

The morning wind began to moan,
But still the night went on:
Through its giant loom the web of gloom
Crept till each thread was spun:
And, as we prayed, we grew afraid
Of the Justice of the Sun.

The moaning wind went wandering round
The weeping prison wall:
Till like a wheel of turning steel
We felt the minutes crawl:
O moaning wind! what had we done

To have such a seneschal?

At last I saw the shadowed bars
Like a lattice wrought in lead,
Move right across the whitewashed wall
That faced my three-plank bed,
And I knew that somewhere in the world
God's dreadful dawn was red.

At six o'clock we cleaned our cells,
At seven all was still,
But the sough and swing of a mighty wing
The prison seemed to fill,
For the Lord of Death with icy breath
Had entered in to kill.

He did not pass in purple pomp,
Nor ride a moon-white steed.
Three yards of cord and a sliding board
Are all the gallows' need:
So with rope of shame the Herald came
To do the secret deed.

To have such a seneschal?

At last I saw the shadowed bars,
Like a lattice wrought in lead,
Move right across the whitewashed wall
That faced my three-plank bed,
And I knew that somewhere in the world
God's dreadful dawn was red.

At six o'clock we cleaned our cells,
At seven all was still,
But the sough and swing of a mighty wing
The prison seemed to fill,
For the Lord of Death with icy breath
Had entered in to kill.

He did not pass in purple pomp,
Nor ride a moon-white steed.
Three yards of cord and a sliding board
Are all the gallows' need:
So with rope of shame the Herald came
To do the secret deed.

We were as men who through a fen
Of filthy darkness grope:
We did not dare to breathe a prayer,
Or give our anguish scope:
Something was dead in each of us,
And what was dead was Hope.

For Man's grim Justice goes its way,
And will not swerve aside:
It slays the weak, it slays the strong,
It has a deadly stride:
With iron heel it slays the strong,
The monstrous parricide!

We waited for the stroke of eight:
Each tongue was thick with thirst:
For the stroke of eight is the stroke of Fate
That makes a man accursed,
And Fate will use a running noose
For the best man and the worst.

We had no other

We were as men who through a fen
Of filthy darkness grope:
We did not dare to breathe a prayer,
Or to give our anguish scope:
Something was dead in each of us,
And what was dead was Hope.

For Man's grim Justice goes its way
And will not swerve aside:
It slays the weak, it slays the strong,
It has a deadly stride:
With iron heel it slays the strong
The monstrous parricide!

We waited for the stroke of eight:
Each tongue was thick with thirst:
For the stroke of eight is the stroke of Fate
That makes a man accursed,
And Fate will use a running noose
For the best man and the worst.

We had no other

thing to do,
Save to wait for
the sign to come:
So, like things of
stone in a valley lone,
Quiet we sat and
dumb:
But each man's
heart beat thick and quick
Like a madman on
a drum!

With sudden shock
the prison-clock
Smote on the
shivering air,
And from all the
gaol rose up a wail
Of impotent
despair,
Like the sound that
frightened marshes hear
From a leper in
his lair.

And as one sees
most fearful things
In the crystal of
a dream,
We saw the greasy
hempen rope
Hooked to the
blackened beam,
And heard the
prayer the hangman's snare
Strangled into a
scream.

And all the woe
that moved him so
That he gave that

thing to do,
Save to wait for
the sign to come:
So, like things of
stone in a valley lone,
Quiet we sat and
dumb:
But each man's
heart beat thick and quick,
Like a madman on
a drum!

With sudden shock
the prison-clock
Smote on the
shivering air,
And from all the
gaol rose up a wail
Of impotent
despair,
Like the sound the
frightened marshes hear
From some leper
in his lair.

And as one sees
most fearful things
In the crystal of
a dream,
We saw the greasy
hempen rope
Hooked to the
blackened beam,
And heard the
prayer the hangman's snare
Strangled into a
scream.

And all the woe
that moved him so
That he gave that

bitter cry,
And the wild
regrets, and the bloody sweats,
None knew so well
as I:
For he who live
more lives than one
More deaths than
one must die.

IV.

There is no chapel
on the day
On which they
hang a man:
The Chaplain's
heart is far too sick,
Or his face is
far to wan,
Or there is that
written in his eyes
Which none should
look upon.

So they kept us
close till nigh on noon,
And then they
rang the bell,
And the Warders
with their jingling keys
Opened each
listening cell,
And down the iron
stair we tramped,
Each from his
separate Hell.

Out into God's
sweet air we went,
But not in wonted

bitter cry,
And the wild
regrets, and the bloody sweats,
None knew so well
as I:
For he who lives
more lives than one
More deaths that
one must die.

IV.

There is no chapel
on the day
On which they
hang a man:
The Chaplain's
heart is far too sick,
Or his face is
far too wan,
Or there is that
written in his eyes
Which none should
look upon.

So they kept us
close till nigh on noon,
And then they
rang the bell,
And the warders
with their jingling keys
Opened each
listening cell,
And down the iron
stair we tramped,
Each from his
separate Hell.

Out into God's
sweet air we went,
But not in wonted

way,
For this man's face
was white with fear,
And that man's
face was grey,
And I never saw sad
men who looked
So wistfully at
the day.

I never saw sad men
who looked
With such a
wistful eye
Upon that little
tent of blue
We prisoners
called the sky,
And at every
careless cloud that passed
In happy freedom
by.

But there were
those amongst us all
Who walked with
downcast head,
And knew that, had
each got his due,
They should have
died instead:
He had but killed a
thing that lived
Whilst they had
killed the dead.

For he who sins a
second time
Wakes a dead soul
to pain,
And draws it from

way,
For this man's face
was white with fear,
And that man's
face was gray,
And I never saw sad
men who looked
So wistfully at
the day.

I never saw sad men
who looked
With such a
wistful eye
Upon that little
tent of blue
We prisoners
called the sky,
And at every happy
cloud that passed
In such strange
freedom by.

But there were
those amongst us all
Who walked with
downcast head,
And knew that, had
each got his due,
They should have
died instead:
He had but killed a
thing that lived,
Whilst they had
killed the dead.

For he who sins a
second time
Wakes a dead soul
to pain,
And draws it from

its spotted shroud,
And makes it bleed again,
And makes it bleed great gouts of blood
And makes it bleed in vain!

Like ape or clown, in monstrous garb
With crooked arrows starred,
Silently we went round and round
The slippery asphalte yard;
Silently we went round and round,
And no man spoke a word.

Silently we went round and round,
And through each hollow mind
The memory of dreadful things
Rushed like a dreadful wind,
An Horror stalked before each man,
And terror crept behind.

The Warders strutted up and down,
And kept their herd of brutes,
Their uniforms were spick and span,
And they wore

its spotted shroud
And makes it bleed again,
And makes it bleed great gouts of blood,
And makes it bleed in vain!

Like ape or clown, in monstrous garb
With crooked arrows starred,
Silently we went round and round
The slippery asphalte yard;
Silently we went round and round,
And no man spoke a word.

Silently we went round and round,
And through each hollow mind
The Memory of dreadful things
Rushed like a dreadful wind,
And Horror stalked before each man,
And Terror crept behind.

The warders strutted up and down,
And watched their herd of brutes,
Their uniforms were spick and span,
And they wore

their Sunday suits,
But we knew the
work they had been at
By the quicklime
on their boots.

For where a grave
had opened wide,
There was no
grave at all:
Only a stretch of
mud and sand
By the hideous
prison-wall,
And a little heap
of burning lime,
That the man
should have his pall.

For he has a pall,
this wretched man,
Such as few men
can claim:
Deep down below a
prison-yard,
Naked for greater
shame,
He lies, with
fetters on each foot,
Wrapt in a sheet
of flame!

And all the while
the burning lime
Eats flesh and
bone away,
It eats the brittle
bone by night,
And the soft
flesh by the day,
It eats the flesh

their Sunday suits,
But we knew the
work they had been at,
By the quicklime
on their boots.

For where a grave
had opened wide,
There was no
grave at all:
Only a stretch of
mud and sand
By the hideous
prison-wall,
And a little heap
of burning lime,
That the man
should have his pall.

For he has a pall,
this wretched man,
Such as few men
can claim:
Deep down below a
prison-yard,
Naked, for
greater shame,
He lies, with
fetters on each foot,
Wrapt in a sheet
of flame!

And all the while
the burning lime
Eats flesh and
bone away,
It eats the brittle
bones by night,
And the soft
flesh by day,
It eats the flesh

and bones by turns,
But it eats the heart alway.

For three long years they will not sow
Or root or seedling there:
For three long years the unblessed spot
Will sterile be and bare,
And look upon the wondering sky
With unreproachful stare.

They think a murderer's heart would taint
Each simple seed they sow.
It is not true!
God's kindly earth
Is kindlier than men know,
And the red rose would but blow more red,
The white rose whiter blow.

Out of his mouth a red, red rose!
Out of his heart a white!
For who can say by what strange way,
Christ brings his will to light,
Since the barren staff the pilgrim bore
Bloomed in the

and bone by turns,
But it eats the heart alway.

For three long years they will not sow
Or root or seedling there:
For three long years the unblessed spot
Will sterile be and bare,
And look upon the wondering sky
With unreproachful stare.

They think a murderer's heart would taint
Each simple seed they sow.
It is not true!
God's kindly earth
Is kindlier than men know,
And the red rose would but glow more red,
The white rose whiter blow.

Out of his mouth a red, red rose!
Out of his heart a white!
For who can say by what strange way,
Christ brings His will to light,
Since the barren staff the pilgrim bore
Bloomed in the

great Pope's sight?

But neither milk-white rose nor red
May bloom in prison air;
The shard, the pebble, and the flint,
Are what they give us there:
For flowers have been known to heal
A common man's despair.

So never will wine-red rose or white,
Petal by petal, fall
On that stretch of mud and sand that lies
By the hideous prison-wall,
To tell the men who tramp the yard
That God's Son died for all.

Yet though the hideous prison-wall
Still hems him round and round,
And a spirit may not walk by night
That is with fetters bound,
And a spirit may but weep that lies
In such unholy ground,

great Pope's sight?

But neither milk-white rose nor red
May bloom in prison air;
The shard, the pebble, and the flint,
Are what they give us there:
For flowers have been known to heal
A common man's despair.

So never will wine-red rose or white,
Petal by petal, fall
On that stretch of mud and sand that lies
By the hideous prison-wall,
To tell the men who tramp the yard
That God's Son died for all.

Yet though the hideous prison-wall
Still hems him round and round,
And a spirit may not walk by night
That is with fetters bound,
And a spirit may but weep that lies
In such unholy ground,

He is at peace—this wretched man—
At peace, or will be soon:
There is no thing to make him mad,
Nor does Terror walk at noon,
For the lampless Earth in which he lies
Has neither Sun nor Moon.

They hanged him as a beast is hanged:
They did not even toll
A requiem that might have brought
Rest to his startled soul,
But hurriedly they took him out,
And hid him in a hole.

They stripped him of his canvas clothes,
And gave him to the flies;
They mocked the swollen purple throat
And the stark and staring eyes:
And with laughter loud they heaped the shroud
In which their convict lies.

The Chaplain would not kneel to pray

He is at peace-this wretched man-
At peace, or will be soon:
There is no thing to make him mad,
Nor does Terror walk at noon,
For the lampless Earth in which he lies
Has neither Sun nor Moon.

They hanged him as a beast is hanged:
They did not even toll
A requiem that might have brought
Rest to his startled soul,
But hurriedly they took him out,
And hid him in a hole.

The warders stripped him of his clothes,
And gave him to the flies:
They mocked the swollen purple throat,
And the stark and staring eyes:
And with laughter loud they heaped the shroud
In which the convict lies.

The Chaplain would not kneel to pray

By his dishonored grave:
Nor mark it with that blessed Cross
That Christ for sinners gave,
Because the man was one of those
Whom Christ came down to save.

Yet all is well; he has but passed
To Life's appointed bourne:
And alien tears will fill for him
Pity's long-broken urn,
For his mourner will be outcast men,
And outcasts always mourn.

V.

I know not whether Laws be right,
Or whether Laws be wrong;
All that we know who lie in gaol
Is that the wall is strong;
And that each day is like a year,
A year whose days are long.

But this I know, that every Law

By his dishonoured grave:
Nor mark it with that blessed Cross
That Christ for sinners gave,
Because the man was one of those
Whom Christ came down to save.

Yet all is well; he has but passed
To Life's appointed bourne:
And alien tears will fill for him
Pity's long-broken urn,
For his mourners be outcast men,
And outcasts always mourn.

V.

I know not whether Laws be right,
Or whether Laws be wrong;
All that we know who lie in gaol
Is that the wall is strong;
And that each day is like a year,
A year whose days are long.

But this I know, that every Law

That men have made for Man,
Since first Man took his brother's life,
And the sad world began,
But straws the wheat and saves the chaff
With a most evil fan.

This too I know—and wise it were
If each could know the same—
That every prison that men build
Is built with bricks of shame,
And bound with bars lest Christ should see
How men their brothers maim.

With bars they blur the gracious moon,
And blind the goodly sun:
And they do well to hide their Hell,
For in it things are done
That Son of God nor son of Man
Ever should look upon!

The vilest deeds like poison weeds
Bloom well in prison-air:

That men have made for Man,
Since first Man took His brother's life,
And the sad world began,
But straws the wheat and saves the chaff
With a most evil fan.

This too I know-and wise it were
If each could know the same-
That every prison that men build
Is built with bricks of shame,
And bound with bars lest Christ should see
How men their brothers maim.

With bars they blur the gracious moon,
And blind the goodly sun:
And they do well to hide their Hell,
For in it things are done
That Son of God nor son of Man
Ever should look upon!

The vilest deeds like poison weeds
Bloom well in prison-air:

It is only what is good in Man
That wastes and withers there:
Pale Anguish keeps the heavy gate,
And the Warder is Despair

For they starve the little frightened child
Till it weeps both night and day:
And they scourge the weak, and flog the fool,
And gibe the old and grey,
And some grow mad, and all grow bad,
And none a word may say.

Each narrow cell in which we dwell
Is a foul and dark latrine,
And the fetid breath of living Death
Chokes up each grated screen,
And all, but Lust, is turned to dust
In Humanity's machine.

The brackish water that we drink
Creeps with a loathsome slime,
And the bitter bread they weigh in scales

It is only what is good in Man
That wastes and withers there:
Pale Anguish keeps the heavy gate,
And the warder is Despair.

For they starve the little frightened child
Till it weeps both night and day:
And they scourge the weak, and flog the fool,
And gibe the old and gray,
And some grow mad, and all grow bad,
And none a word may say.

Each narrow cell in which we dwell
Is a foul and dark latrine,
And the fetid breath of living Death
Chokes up each grated screen,
And all, but Lust, is turned to dust
In Humanity's machine.

The brackish water that we drink
Creeps with a loathsome slime,
And the bitter bread they weigh in scales

Is full of chalk
and lime,
And Sleep will not
lie down, but walks
Wild-eyed and
cries to Time.

But though lean
Hunger and green Thirst
Like asp with
adder fight,
We have little care
of prison fare,
For what chills
and kills outright
Is that every stone
one lifts by day
Becomes one's
heart by night.

With midnight
always in one's heart,
And twilight in
one's cell,
We turn the crank,
or tear the rope,
Each in his
separate Hell,
And the silence is
more awful far
Than the sound of
a brazen bell.

And never a human
voice comes near
To speak a gentle
word:
And the eye that
watches through the door
Is pitiless and
hard:

Is full of chalk
and lime,
And Sleep will not
lie down, but walks
Wild-eyed, and
cries to Time.

But though lean
Hunger and green Thirst
Like asp with
adder fight,
We have little care
of prison fare,
For what chills
and kills outright
Is that every stone
one lifts by day
Becomes one's
heart by night.

With midnight
always in one's heart,
And twilight in
one's cell,
We turn the crank,
or tear the rope,
Each in his
separate Hell,
And the silence is
more awful far
Than the sound of
a brazen bell.

And never a human
voice comes near
To speak a gentle
word:
And the eye that
watches through the door
Is pitiless and
hard:

And by all forgot,
we rot and rot,
With soul and
body marred.

And thus we rust
Life's iron chain
Degraded and
alone:
And some men curse,
and some men weep,
And some men make
no moan:
But God's eternal
Laws are kind
And break the
heart of stone.

And every human
heart that breaks,
In prison-cell or
yard,
Is as that broken
box that gave
Its treasure to
the Lord,
And filled the
unclean leper's house
With the scent of
costliest nard.

Ah! happy day they
whose hearts can break
And peace of
pardon win!
How else may man
make straight his plan
And cleanse his
soul from Sin?
How else but
through a broken heart

And by all forgot,
we rot and rot,
With soul and
body marred.

And thus we rust
Life's iron chain
Degraded and
alone:
And some men curse,
and some men weep,
And some men make
no moan:
But God's eternal
Laws are kind
And break the
heart of stone.

And every human
heart that breaks,
In prison-cell or
yard,
Is as that broken
box that gave
Its treasure to
the Lord,
And filled the
unclean leper's house
With the scent of
costliest nard.

Ah! happy they
whose hearts can break
And peace of
pardon win!
How else may man
make straight his plan
And cleanse his
soul from Sin?
How else but
through a broken heart

May Lord Christ enter in?

And he of the swollen purple throat.
And the stark and staring eyes,
Waits for the holy hands that took
The Thief to Paradise;
And a broken and a contrite heart
The Lord will not despise.

The man in red who reads the Law
Gave him three weeks of life,
Three little weeks in which to heal
His soul of his soul's strife,
And cleanse from every blot of blood
The hand that held the knife.

And with tears of blood he cleansed the hand,
The hand that held the steel:
For only blood can wipe out blood,
And only tears can heal:
And the crimson stain that was of Cain
Became Christ's snow-white seal.

May Lord Christ enter in?

And he of the swollen purple throat,
And the stark and staring eyes,
Waits for the holy hands that took
The Thief to Paradise;
And a broken and a contrite heart
The Lord will not despise.

The man in red who reads the Law
Gave him three weeks of life,
Three little weeks in which to heal
His soul of his soul's strife,
And cleanse from every blot of blood
The hand that held the knife.

And with tears of blood he cleansed the hand,
The hand that held the steel:
For only blood can wipe out blood,
And only tears can heal:
And the crimson stain that was of Cain
Became Christ's snow-white seal.

VI.

In Reading gaol by Reading town
There is a pit of shame,
And in it lies a wretched man
Eaten by teeth of flame,
In burning winding-sheet he lies,
And his grave has got no name.

And there, till Christ call forth the dead,
In silence let him lie:
No need to waste the foolish tear,
Or heave the windy sigh:
The man had killed the thing he loved,
And so he had to die.

And all men kill the thing they love,
By all let this be heard,
Some do it with a bitter look,
Some with a flattering word,
The coward does it with a kiss,
The brave man with a sword!

VI.

In Reading gaol by Reading town
There is a pit of shame,
And in it lies a wretched man
Eaten by teeth of flame,
In a burning winding-sheet he lies,
And his grave has got no name.

And there, till Christ call forth the dead,
In silence let him lie:
No need to waste the foolish tear,
Or heave the windy sigh:
The man had killed the thing he loved,
And so he had to die.

And all men kill the thing they love,
By all let this be heard,
Some do it with a bitter look,
Some with a flattering word,
The coward does it with a kiss,
The brave man with a sword!

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE BALLAD OF READING GAOL ***

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.
Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.
START: FULL LICENSE

THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG™ LICENSE

PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase “Project Gutenberg”), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg License available with this file or online at www.gutenberg.org/license.

Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg electronic works

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. “Project Gutenberg” is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation (“the Foundation” or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

> *This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.*

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.
1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.
1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg electronic works provided that:

- • You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, “Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation.”
- • You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.
- • You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.
- • You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.
1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain “Defects,” such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the “Right of Replacement or Refund” described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you ‘AS-IS’, WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg

Project Gutenberg is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg's goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at www.gutenberg.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 41 Watchung Plaza #516, Montclair NJ 07042, USA, +1 (862) 621-9288. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at www.gutenberg.org/contact

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations ($1 to $5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet

and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit www.gutenberg.org/donate.

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: www.gutenberg.org/donate.

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg electronic works

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: www.gutenberg.org.

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.