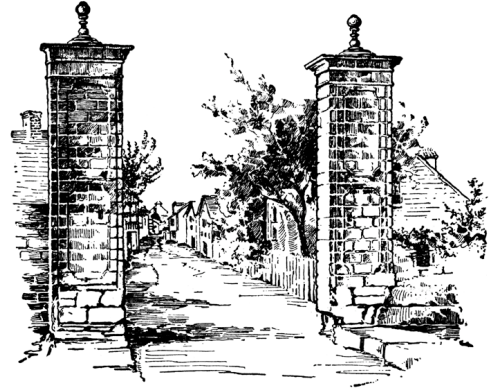


# Moonlight in Old St. Augustine

By  
George E. Merrick



By pitted walls of ancient rose  
Poinsettias' grow the night-noon shows.  
And purple petals sifting fall  
Upon the faded crumbling wall.  
...As if, with vivid youthful glows  
To still enliven time-worn rose!

Alladin-built, Alhambra-towered Inn  
(Granada's wealth transferred by Jinn!)  
Rears domes as for a Khan arose.  
...Apart—from dazzling garish grounds  
Rich jeweled round in elfish glows;  
—As shadows flee—shrink wiser mounds.

Where shrouded San Sebastian seems  
A mystic flow of Long-gone dreams,  
Rustling tongues;—and far deep-voiced roar  
Speak, here, a strangely foreign lore.  
And, here, on walls of ancient rose  
The soft transforming moonlight flows.

A wiser glow; that stirs,—yet calm:  
An older speech sighs through the palms.  
Below,—by crumbling faded wall,  
Old spirits stir, and hush, and call:  
Gaunt gnarled oaks in dreaming breeze  
Cast living reminiscent frieze.

O'er dungeoned dour coquina maze  
Shadows tread accustomed ways,  
And moated tow'rs yield whispered moan:  
Faint rasping clank,—as steel on stone—  
The pond'rous thud of oaken bale:  
...Despairing, deep-entombed wail.

The flood-tide flows above white bars  
Where shadows move of ghostly spars.  
...Up from the channel's reedy growth  
Comes mellow-echoed Latin oath.  
...And halyards rattle—far away...  
...Where day-light shows a crumbled quay.

O'er Anastasia's shifting dunes  
The ever-searching sea-wind croons;  
...Unwilling tool of olden knaves  
Whom, hopeful still, seek treasure graves.  
Responsive sedge yield souging tunes:

...The miser cedars clutch doubloons.

The bougainvilla petals fall  
On dim-remembered trysting wall,  
Their purple sows  
The pitted walls of ancient rose.  
...Faintly falls through scented haze  
Undying echoes  
Of dead forgotten roundelays.....