



THE BEST OF ALL

GIVE me wine of the ruby hue,
One sweet love, and a friend or two—
Wine and a Woman and one true Friend,
These are best, to the world's end!

Then I drank of the wine-cup, rich and deep,
I drank like a god, and I fell asleep :
And out of the cup a serpent crept
And stung my soul, while my body slept.

I trusted my Love and I had no fear,
But gazed in her eyes that shone so clear :
And out of their depths the soul of Sin
Sprang like a fiend, and drew me in.

I loved my friend, and I knew not why,
I asked no token to love him by :
But only I knew him for my friend—
And that was good, to the world's end.

W. MACDONALD.