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Table of Contents

The Polar Star	Volume 55, Pages 28 to 29	4
Night at Sea	Volume 55, Pages 30 to 32	6

THE POLAR STAR.

This star sinks below the horizon in certain latitudes. I watched it sink lower and lower every night, till at last it disappeared.

A STAR has left the kindling sky—
A lovely northern light—
How many planets are on high,
But that has left the night.

I miss its bright familiar face,
It was a friend to me,
Associate with my native place,
And those beyond the sea.

It rose upon our English sky,
Shone o'er our English land,
And brought back many a loving eye,
And many a gentle hand,

It seemed to answer to my thought,
It called the past to mind,
And with its welcome presence brought
All I had left behind.

The Polar Star.

29

The voyage it lights no longer, ends
 Soon on a foreign shore ;
 How can I but recall the friends,
 Who I may see no more ?

Fresh from the pain it was to part—
 How could I bear the pain ?
 Yet strong the omen in my heart
 That says—We meet again.

Meet with a deeper, dearer love,
 For absence shows the worth
 Of all from which we then remove,
 Friends, home, and native earth.

Thou lovely polar star, mine eyes
 Still turned the first on thee,
 Till I have felt a sad surprise
 That none looked up with me.

But thou hast sunk below the wave,
 Thy radiant place unknown ;
 I seem to stand beside a grave,
 And stand by it alone.

Farewell !—ah, would to me were given
 A power upon thy light,
 What words upon our English heaven
 Thy loving rays should write !

Kind messages of love and hope
 Upon thy rays should be ;
 Thy shining orbit would have scope
 Scarcely enough for me.

Oh, fancy vain as it is fond,
 And little needed too,
 My friends ! I need not look beyond
 My heart to look for you !

L. E. L.



(30)

NIGHT AT SEA.

THE lovely purple of the noon's bestowing
 Has vanished from the waters, where it flung
 A royal colour, such as gems are throwing
 Tyrian or regal garniture among.
 'Tis night, and overhead the sky is gleaming,
 Thro' the slight vapour trembles each dim star ;
 I turn away—my heart is sadly dreaming
 Of scenes they do not light, of scenes afar.
 My friends, my absent friends !
 Do you think of me, as I think of you ?

By each dark wave around the vessel sweeping,
 Farther am I from old dear friends removed,
 Till the lone vigil that I now am keeping,
 I did not know how much you were beloved.
 How many acts of kindness little heeded,
 Kind looks, kind words, rise half reproachful now !
 Hurried and anxious, my vexed life has speeded,
 And memory wears a soft accusing brow.
 My friends, my absent friends !
 Do you think of me, as I think of you ?

The very stars are strangers, as I catch them
 Athwart the shadowy sails that swell above ;
 I cannot hope that other eyes will watch them
 At the same moment with a mutual love.
 They shine not there, as here they now are shining,
 The very hours are changed.—Ah, do ye sleep ?
 O'er each home pillow, midnight is declining,
 May some kind dream at least my image keep !
 My friends, my absent friends !
 Do you think of me, as I think of you ?

Yesterday has a charm, to-day could never
 Fling o'er the mind, which knows not till it parts
 How it turns back with tenderest endeavour
 To fix the past within the heart of hearts.
 Absence is full of memory, it teaches
 The value of all old familiar things ;
 The strengthener of affection, while it reaches
 O'er the dark parting, with an angel's wings.
 My friends, my absent friends !
 Do you think of me, as I think of you ?

Night at Sea.

31

The world with one vast element omitted—
 Man's own especial element, the earth,
 Yet, o'er the waters is his rule transmitted
 By that great knowledge whence has power its birth.
 How oft on some strange loveliness while gazing
 Have I wished for you,—beautiful as new,
 The purple waves like some wild army raising
 Their snowy banners as the ship cuts thro'.
 My friends, my absent friends!
 Do you think of me, as I think of you?

Bearing upon its wing the hues of morning,
 Up springs the flying fish, like life's false joy,
 Which of the sunshine asks that frail adorning
 Whose very light is fated to destroy.
 Ah, so doth genius on its rainbow pinion,
 Spring from the depths of an unkindly world;
 So spring sweet fancies from the heart's dominion,—
 Too soon in death the scorched up wing is furled.
 My friends, my absent friends!
 Whate'er I see is linked with thoughts of you.

No life is in the air, but in the waters
 Are creatures, huge and terrible and strong,
 The sword-fish and the shark pursue their slaughters,
 War universal reigns these depths along.
 Like some new island on the ocean springing,
 Floats on the surface some gigantic whale,
 From its vast head a silver fountain flinging
 Bright as the fountain in a fairy tale.
 My friends, my absent friends!
 I read such fairy legends while with you.

Light is amid the gloomy canvass spreading,
 The moon is whitening the dusky sails,
 From the thick bank of clouds she masters, shedding
 The softest influence that o'er night prevails.
 Pale is she like a young queen pale with splendour,
 Hunted with passionate thoughts too fond, too deep,
 The very glory that she wears is tender,
 The eyes that watch her beauty fain would weep.
 My friends, my absent friends!
 Do you think of me, as I think of you?

Sunshine is ever cheerful, when the morning
 Wakens the world with cloud-dispelling eyes;
 The spirits mount to glad endeavour, scorning
 What toil upon a path so sunny lies.

Night at Sea.

Sunshine and hope are comrades, and their weather
 Calls into life the energies of earth ;
 But memory and moonlight go together,
 Reflected in the light that either brings.
 My friends, my absent friends !
 Do you think of me then ? I think of you.

The busy deck is hushed, no sounds are waking
 But the watch pacing silently and slow ;
 The waves against the sides incessant breaking,
 And rope and canvass swaying to and fro.
 The topmast sail seems some dim pinnacle
 Cresting a shadowy tower amid the air ;
 While red and fitful gleams come from the binacle,
 The only light on board to guide us—where ?
 My friends, my absent friends !
 Far from my native land, and far from you.

On one side of the ship the moonbeams shimmer
 Inluminous vibration sweeps the sea,
 But where the shadow falls, a strange pale glimmer
 Seems glow-worm like amid the waves to be.
 All that the spirit keeps of thought and feeling,
 Takes visionary hues from such an hour ;
 But while some fantasy is o'er me stealing,
 I start, remembrance has a keener power.
 My friends, my absent friends,
 From the fair dream I start to think of you !

A dusk line in the moonlight I discover,
 What all day long vainly I sought to catch ;
 Or is it but the varying clouds that hover
 Thick in the air, to mock the eyes that watch ?
 No ! well the sailor knows each speck appearing.
 Upon the tossing waves, the far-off strand
 To that dusk line our eager ship is steering.
 Her voyage done—to-morrow we shall land.

August 15.

L. E. L.

