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## THE PINE TREE.

---



HE pine tree lives within a zone  
Known to its inner heart alone.  
Its roots strike down through damp and  
death.

Its spire inhales a heavenly breath.  
The pine tree's roots have some way found  
Youth's fountain in the under ground,  
In Summer's heat, in Autumn's fire  
The pine tree lifts a changeless spire,  
And clouds of heaven stoop to drop  
A blessing on the pine tree's top.  
Borne high aloft the ether clear  
Becomes the pine tree's atmosphere.  
The pine I love grows from the mold  
Of an old churchyard green and cold ;  
Pressed close around the pine tree sweet  
Wild roses grow and daisies meet.

The grass doth clasp its roots so old,  
The oriole, his wings of gold,

Doth sometimes in the pine tree fold;  
And sometimes when the storm is drear,  
The sad owl finds a shelter here ;  
And all this tree, so grand to see,  
Is full of solemn mystery.  
How many a bird has hid its nest  
Securely in the pine tree's breast.  
By this old pine a mulberry  
Bears crimson berries on its tree,  
A challenge to all birds these be.  
A dogwood sometimes tries to grow,  
Between these trees to part the two.  
It sends a spangle of white flowers  
Scentless to meet the May day showers.  
The pine permits the bush to bloom,  
The mulberry will not give it room ;  
But seems to say come not between  
Me and my love, the evergreen.  
The pine I love through shade and shine,  
The strong, the stately pine is mine.

Beneath the pine and mulberry  
Fell long ago an ancient tree ;  
So long the loveliest moss has grown  
Across, and through, and o'er, and spun  
A mantle thick through many a sun ;  
So that it seems a log no more



But a soft mound with runes writ o'er.  
'Tis pleasant there to sit alone,  
The place with shade is overgrown :  
The ground birds run through clover bloom  
They build their houses on a tomb  
Filled with blue violets' perfume.  
Forever there the pine tree sings,  
A mystic harp with myriad strings :  
It vibrates to the passing wings  
Of birds, and butterflies, and bees.  
It sings unlike to other trees,  
For even sad in Summer shine  
Seemeth the solemn churchyard pine ;  
The living voice of prophecy  
Appears to haunt the stately tree.

This harp that Nature formed her own,  
Moulds air to take the undertone  
Of music sad and half Divine ;  
Of minor notes most sweet and fine,  
Shivering from off each pointed leaf,  
Drop songs whose rythms flow to grief.  
The heart of the old tree doth beat  
Alike through frost or Summer heat ;  
Winter himself doth sometimes set  
On the strong pine a coronet,  
And wraps it in a coverlet

Of flake of frost, of snows and sleet,  
Beneath which living branches show,  
Green, fadeless, through the falling snow,  
And through which runs a tropic heat,  
'That makes the youthful pulses beat.  
The strong brave pine tree chants its hymns  
While icicles hang from its limbs.  
So very strong, 'tis good to see,  
And think upon the churchyard tree.  
Still in heaven's fine expanse to keep  
The music of the upper deep,  
Intent the pine tree will not sleep.  
At every breeze its soul is thrilled,  
But yet the tempest only filled  
In its own mad and ruthless hour,  
The measure of the pine tree's power.





## BOUDOIR.

---



STOLE into an empty room,  
Its owner was not there,  
But on a table, near the fire,  
A book of Common Prayer  
Was open, with a mark upon  
A chapter of the good St. John.

I stole into the empty room,  
And in a crystal vase  
A fair day-lily's soft perfume  
Filled all the room with grace.  
A pair of slippers near the fire  
Were broidered with a vine and lyre.

I saw within the empty room  
A little knot of blue,  
A golden thimble and a thread  
And needle, and I knew  
It was some Christian woman's grace,  
That, lily-like, adorned the place.



## E L M.

---



I was very and very long ago,  
Before all the men and women you know  
Lived, or thought, or began to grow,  
This came to pass  
In a morass  
Full of silken or velvet grass,  
Lichens, and moss and pretty things ;  
A young-elm shook out two pale weak wings  
One day in June,  
And very soon  
Went clambering up on its way to the moon ;  
For, being very and very proud,  
It said to itself, but not aloud :  
“ I do not please  
With things like these—  
Mosses and grasses, things so small  
To stay ; an elm tree must grow tall,  
Up toward the sky and stars so high.”  
The way this tree ;  
Ambitiously

Shot up, was a goodly sight to see.  
It grew by day, it grew in the dark,  
A sapling tall with shaggy bark,  
    Magnificently,  
    As day by day  
And year by year slow rolled away,  
This elm filled her solitary place  
With a sovereign's dignity and grace.  
    Could she have sung,  
    When first she sprung  
To the life of a tree so proud and young—  
"The world shall hear of the elm tree's name,  
My way shall be up the path of Fame,"  
    She would have said—  
    "I will raise my head  
Far from the place where the grass is spread,  
So proud, so high, that the golden star  
May rest on the boughs I will raise so far,  
    And the blue sky  
    Will be glad that I  
Ever sought her companionship so high."  
Yet growing a hundred years, no more  
Near to the sky she seemed than before.  
    Then sighed the tree  
    Quite wearily :  
"I have ever aspired and dwelt alone ;  
The sky so high, the stars that shone

Belonged to a world that was not my own.  
I can never creep  
To that upper deep  
Where the cold, calm stars with light divine,  
Changeless in splendor, steadfastly shine,  
Untroubled by any vain hope of mine.  
I will go down  
Where the grass doth crown  
With a soft green web the lowly earth,  
Where a century since I had my birth.”  
So the great tree crept with boughs that wept  
Down to the grass ;  
But alas ; alas !  
The moss complained that, when it rained,  
The tree, so magnificent and grand,  
Kept the drops of Summer rain so bland  
From off its face.  
Flowers in their place,  
Dandelions, cowslips, every one,  
Complained that the tree kept off the sun.  
“ Nothing loves me, sighed the old elm tree.”  
Yet, birds did swarm  
To her heart so warm,  
And found there a refuge from the storm.  
And the elm had many friends who knew  
Her strength, her worth and her beauty, too.

Mourn not to be  
Alone, great tree,  
Thy life is a goodly thing to see.  
And know thou this ; each star is alone,  
There is no mate for things like the sun ;  
And if men meet,  
For a moment sweet,  
To exchange their friendships and thoughts so high ;  
Yet soon they part and say, " Good-bye ! "  
To complete the human destiny—  
Alone, like thee,  
Thou stately tree,  
To live alone, and alone to die,  
Ever aspiring toward a sky  
Infinitely far away and high.





## ORIOLES.

---



WHEN Northern orchards were in blow  
With buds of pink and flowers of snow,  
Two Orioles came North to school,  
And built their dwellings by a rule  
Within an ancient elm of Yale.  
An arch of orange flashed each tail ;  
    Under each wing  
    • The whole lining  
    Showed quite the same  
Resplendent hue of tawny flame.  
Vermilion, orange on each breast.  
Their cradle swung from East to West,  
A pensile, warm and pretty nest.  
These birds were versed in all the lore  
Of birds that ever lived before ;  
    Of oriole  
Wisdom and craft they new the whole.  
And yet, they came up North to see  
How Yale men teach Geometry.  
    Along the shore  
Of Chesapeake, by Baltimore,



They sang their song a month before.  
Of all Euclid  
No line was hid,  
Of triangle or pyramid,  
From oriole sagacity.  
They had their problem in the eye,  
And hung it high  
Against a blue and sunny sky,  
They built of hemp, or flax, or tow,  
Woven and sewn all tightly, so  
No rain nor any drop of dew  
An interstice might trickle through ;  
With horse hair long,  
And firm and strong,  
A nest all fair  
And graceful hanging in the air.  
Better, yes better far, than you  
To sew, the skillful orioles knew.  
The housewife's thread  
Or skein of silk, or yarn, to spread  
For the young orioles a bed,  
They sometimes stole ;  
But, on the whole,  
Did well for bird, or oriole  
That has not, as you know, a soul.  
And as the Summer term grew long,  
Five young ones sang their tuneful song,

## ORIOLES.

Whistled the same  
As the old orioles in their flame  
Colored and black regalia.

And on the day  
That other schoolmen flocked away,  
The orioles took their Degree  
As Bachelors and Maids to be  
Of Arts and of Geometry.  
For they were taught so very well ;  
It is a story strange to tell,

Such a surprise !

The young ones all had hazel eyes,  
Had bright blue feet,  
And whistles sweet,  
Heads, throats and upper backs and wings  
Of black—the clever, cunning things—

With all linings

Vermilion deep and orange bright,  
Greater wing-coverts all in white,  
With other points of likeness, quite  
Too numerous for pen to write,  
And each could hang a nest in air,  
Pensile and swinging like a pear.

How good they grew,

Listening to

Old Yale's respected chapel bell,  
Is known to all the students well.

They lost a witty class the day  
 The senior orioles flew away  
     On flame-hued wings,  
     The cunning things  
 Who wrought their problem out of strings,  
 And hung their nests so very high  
 Against the blue and Summer sky.

---

## HOPE.



HIS is not all of thy darling,  
 This lock of his hair,  
 These soulless and shrunken garments  
 The child used to wear ;  
 Wings are abroad in the twilight  
 Songs float out on the air ;  
 Have faith to believe, though you see not,  
 For spirit is finer than air.

After life's summer is ended,  
 The frost and the rain ;  
 When all its sorrows are over,  
 All ended its pain ;  
 When all the sere leaves are fallen,  
 Their stems rent in twain ;  
 Thine eyes at last shall be opened  
 To see him again.



## HARVEST APPLE.

---



THE sun was yellow,  
The heart of the harvest apple mellow,  
It grew atop of the tree by its fellow ;  
    Its stem was a twin,  
    And there shut in  
By a robin's nest and a dancing leaf  
Lived this apple, its life so brief.  
    Its life from the spring  
    Was a pleasant thing ;  
It was one of a bunch of flowers,  
Pink and white in the May-day hours,  
    And it grew to be  
A flame and a blush atop of the tree.  
    Full of wine,  
    One cheek did shine  
In gold that was very, very fine.  
    While its other side  
Blushed like a bride ;  
    The Eastern chose  
Color of rose,  
    But the apple's best

Cheek touched the West,  
    Where wines grow sweet,  
And apples very good to eat.  
    Now off the tree,  
In the sultry heat unconsciously,  
    With thud so small  
It scarcely seemed like noise at all,  
    Fell this summer fruit,  
Giving mother earth a faint salute.  
    And earth as sweetly  
    And as completely  
    Answered the need  
    Of the ripened seed  
As that high twin stem  
That held this fruit as a diadem.





## DAY-LILIES.

---



Who love day-lilies, pray  
Gather of my flowers to-day.  
I am passing without sorrow,  
And I shall be gone to-morrow,  
I, the ephemeral flower, am dying,  
I am passing without sighing.  
Ye who love day-lilies, stay,  
Therefore, linger by the way  
To gather of my flowers to-day.

“Who will gather me?  
Who doth love beauty?  
Maiden young and fair,  
Wear me in your hair,  
Let me sparkle there,  
Like a heaven-descended star.  
I also am young and fair,  
I am dower'd with beauty rare;  
Wear me on that breast,  
Never yet by care oppressed,  
Wear me and be blessed.

Let our lives be blent,  
For we both are innocent.

“ Place me in your room,  
There amid its gloom  
I will yield a rich perfume,  
Sweeter than the garden’s bloom,  
Sweet as tears upon a tomb,  
Sweet as sunlight that doth fall  
In a dark day o’er the pall  
Of a passing funeral.  
For my life must be most sweet  
To make its briefness quite complete.  
Would you know my history?  
I will tell it thee,  
I am like to thee.  
Like a phantom seen in dreams,  
Like the quick dissolved sunbeams,  
Dead or living none miss me,  
Death or life who knoweth half their mystery?  
Condensation of the dew,  
Yes, I am like you ;  
For I come and I go  
Like a spirit, so  
Silently men hardly know  
What a miracle of grace  
Sparkles bright on earth’s worn face

For a moment in its place.  
 Look on me and see,  
 The embodiment of mortal history.

“ Learn of me to die.  
 All earth’s passing pageantry,  
 Grandly floating by—  
 I let it pass without a sigh,  
 Being assured that life’s completeness  
 Is bounded by a lily’s sweetness,  
 And that I gather of the whole  
 Universe, in a flower’s scroll.  
 My Creator glorifying,  
 The intense soul’s passion sanctifying,  
 I, the day-lily am, though dying.”

---

## EMBERS.

---



THE tree that lived so long ago  
 Has fallen by the woodman’s blow ;  
 In mounds of gold the embers fall  
 To-night, filling with light the hall.

Over the ashes fairies tread,  
 Bringing again to life the dead ;



In Emberland now to and fro  
The groups of merry dancers go.

But these are Indian girls and boys,  
And other days and other joys ;  
Now through the coal mounds grow and shine  
Great forests, ever green, of pine.

The lake stirs to a birch bark's stroke,  
The chief his pipe of peace doth smoke ;  
Down by lone camp-fires in the night  
The silent squaws weave wampum bright,

Or fashion dolls for Indian child.  
This love makes those stern features mild ;  
The mother-life is not complete  
Without dolls, cradles, kisses sweet.

There, lurking in the coals, do see  
That angry panther glare at thee,  
And watch how softly o'er the moss  
The great bear steals the woods across.

So burns the old pine-tree away  
In pictures of another day ;  
Two hundred years, in embers bright,  
Their history have told to-night.



## CRUCIFIED.

---



HE dead Christ slept upon the bier,  
Made ready for the sepulchre,  
Serene and fair—the suffering day  
Had left no trace of agony,  
The sweat of blood was wiped away.

Yet sorrowing Nature gave her sign  
And witness that He was divine ;  
The sun refused at noon to shine,  
And to this day so dark and long,  
The singing bird refused her song.

And where blood issued from each wound,  
What time the drops did touch the ground,  
Earth felt their sacredness, and lo !  
She quivered at each dying throe,  
And trembled as those drops fell low.

A child, who had been blind, to see  
How fair the dead Christ's face might be,  
Pressed through the crowd : " Can Christ be dead,

That loving, gentle Lamb who said,  
'Receive thy sight, be comforted?'

"I never in my life had seen  
A spear of grass, a leaf of green,  
'Till walking by the sea afar,  
Where other happier children were,  
He dawned upon my life its star.

"He laid his hand upon my head,  
'Receive thy sight, poor lad,' he said;  
Ah, happy day when by the sea  
Of blue and lovely Galilee,  
Christ's pity healed a child like me."

Also, to view his face was seen  
A carpenter, a Nazarine;  
"We worked together, and the beam  
Christ touched, itself to lift did seem;  
This is to me a dreadful dream.

"Ah, wherefore did this cruel dart  
Transfix the gentle Master's heart,  
And wherefore is this kingly head  
Wounded by thorns that should instead  
With roses have been garlanded?"

A smile set on her face of grief:  
The mother of the dying thief  
Came last, and o'er the Lord she shed  
Some bitter tears that comforted  
Those friends who sorrowed for the dead.

“I know it is a dismal day,  
But yet our shame is wiped away;  
Dark shadows cover earth and skies,  
Graves open and the dead arise,  
Awe struck, since the world's Saviour dies.

“Yet through the gloom does hope arise!  
Christ said: ‘To-day in Paradise,’  
And therefore shall I see my son,  
My beautiful, my only one—  
The honored and beloved among.”

And straightway, then, each mourning friend,  
Doth the Lord's burial attend;  
They spread the linen o'er his hair,  
They thought to leave him lonesome there,  
But angels shone upon the air.

And lilies by the garden walks,  
Leaned o'er and whispered on their stalks:  
What is it so doth thrill and stir

Cedar of Lebanon and fir,  
The fig tree and the sycamore?

Still, in the garden angels walked,  
And with the lilies angels talked :  
“Wake us!” the waiting flowers said,  
“For we can never be afraid  
When Christ comes forth in light arrayed.”

The third day's early dawn did break,  
The young men did the flowers awake ;  
The red rose sweet, the lily queen,  
And sad-eyed Magdalene was seen  
Walking amid the garden's green.

But how that tomb's dark door He burst!  
Who saw the risen Saviour first  
Can never any one declare !  
The empty grave clothes folded were,  
And two young men were seated there.





## LOSS OR GAIN?

---



I STOOD beside an old-time grave,  
    Made forty years and more ;  
The long stems of the willows wept  
Above a girl who long had slept.  
The grave was green and sprinkled o'er  
With posies blue and posies red  
    That wove above her head  
A living, glowing diadem,  
A daisy-dotted coverlet,  
Impervious to sun or wet.

In moss-grown letters quaint and old  
    I read her name and age.  
She had died in that happy time  
That gray-beard age and poet's rhyme,  
    And wisdom of the sage  
Proclaim to be the happiest :  
With youth and beauty at their best  
    She had gone to her rest.  
The churchyard gate was half ajar,  
And village boys stole in  
To search for bird's nests in the fir,

The hazel and the sycamore  
That threw their shadows over her,  
Who died so long before.  
And little girls came timidly  
With eyes of blue forget-me-not  
Into this quiet spot,  
The fresh and new-blown flowers to see,  
And gather rosemary.

An aged grandame, leaning on  
Her staff, came in at set of sun ;  
Where her old man was laid to sleep  
She looked with eyes that did not weep,  
And from his lowly place of rest  
She stooped to gather from his breast  
A late blown violet.  
To the carved lilies on the stone  
A lichen's clinging wings had grown,  
And the old dame unmoved of grief  
Her snowy handkerchief  
Unfolded carefully  
And wiped away the moss ;  
Then stepped the trim, neat walk across  
To chat with me of village lore  
And legends of the time before.  
She said the olden stories ran  
That this young girl had died of grief :

(Alas, the fickleness of man !)  
Her youth's bright dream was brief.  
The sadness of the young girl's story  
Crowned all her grave with glory  
And helped to keep it green.

"There is her lover false," the dame  
Cried, as an old man came  
    In through the open gate.  
His hair was white as any snow.  
His feeble, trembling steps were slow.  
We smiled, we could not help it, so  
    Astonishing it seemed,  
    That maiden ever dreamed  
To leave on such a cheek as this  
The tenderness of a girl's kiss.

What hast thou lost thou lovely girl?  
    Nothing that's worth a tear;  
    Only the burden of long life,  
The winter of the year.  
What hast thou gained, thou lovely girl?  
    This—that each shining curl  
Gleams in resplendent beauty yet,  
And cheeks of rose and eyes of jet  
    Remain to memory.  
This—maiden that thou art to-day



No bride for this man, old and gray;  
 For thou hast walked in robes of white  
 In gardens full of all delight  
 For half a century.

---

LOVE.

---



SPRIT, on a luckless day,  
 Strayed out of heaven and lost the way.

Nor could he find, forevermore,  
 A glimmer of its shining shore.

For some Saint Peter's hand did close  
 Heaven's gates at night, as shuts a rose.

Where many a giddy world went round,  
 Circling in space, this child was found.

Until at last each weary wing  
 Drooped, tired with too much journeying—

A lonely spirit of the air,  
 With worlds about him everywhere.

Earth's moon a silver crescent hung,  
 The new world seemed a jewel strung.

Lately adown the starry space,  
A graceful vestal in her place.

And now this lost child flew to see  
What this new moon and world might be.

He found a land of pleasant sound,  
Singing with streams, with flowers crowned.

Adorned with graceful mountain slope,  
Meadow and bird and antelope ;

And spied the bower where Mother Eve  
For her sad loss did weep and grieve.

Love stole into the woman's heart,  
Soothed the sad wound and eased its smart.

Nestling on the first mother's breast  
The lost child found at last his rest.





## APRIL.

---



PRIL is a pettish

Maiden, and coquettish ;

Trust thou not her sunny smile,

She is cheating all the while.

Yesterday a blue bird came

With his wife, a pretty dame.

Have you heard

How each bird

Was treated by the elfin thing ?

Pretending it was warm, and Spring,

She pelted them with such a snow,

Such a rude and cruel blow,

That they knew not where to go ;

But on the grape vine stiff and numb

Sat as we offered them a crumb,

Looking so

Very low

In spirit, that you would have cried

For the poor blue bird and his bride.

Then this vixen coaxes up

The cold crocus' little cup,

Cheating her into believing

That the whole wide world is grieving  
 For the sight of cups of white,  
 Yellow, blue—then changing quite,  
     This elfin sprite  
     Pelts crocus down  
     With many a frown,  
     And many a squall  
     Of snow, till all  
 The crocus' confidence in goodness  
 Is quite destroyed by April's rudeness.

She cheats trusting robin red  
 Out of half his daily bread.  
 Smiling on him sweetly now  
 As he sits upon his bough  
 Prospecting, as in a dream  
 Basking in a warm sunbeam.  
 Then she gives him such a shake  
 That his feathers, all aquake,  
 Make him look as large again  
 As he ought ; this vixen then  
 To the wildwood banishes  
 Her victim, and he vanishes  
     For twenty-four  
     Hours or more.  
     Should you think  
     The birds would wink

At her conduct so coquettish?  
Not a bird seems cross or pettish ;  
They think she has a dreary time  
To prepare our Northern clime  
For the warm and Summer day.  
Birds of russet, blue or gray  
Hopefully do sing and say,  
    That this maiden,  
    Flower laden,  
Struggles with the wintry gales  
Till her sweet wild rose-face pales ;  
    That the sleet  
    Her eyelids sweet  
Beats, and chills her snow-white feet,  
Tangling all her flowing locks ;  
    That the Equinox  
Turns on hinges old and weary,  
That the day must be half dreary,  
Till the old world swing again  
    Freely into silver rain,  
    Sunbeams yellow,  
    Sunset mellow.  
That April is a Purgatory,  
    Through which, alas,  
    The birds must pass  
To Summer Sun and Summer glory.



## QUAIL.

---



OUR note is very sad and sweet ;  
“ More wheat, more wheat ; ”  
Then prithee, quail, come forth and eat.

For, pretty quail, divide we will  
Our treasures still  
With thee, and thou shalt eat thy fill.

The hazel copse is thick and dark ;  
We often hark  
For thee and for thy friend the lark.

And wonder where you do your nest,  
Small speckle-breast,  
Hide in the hedges where you rest.

For if your hiding-place we knew  
We would help you  
With corn or wheat the season through.

You cannot trust us ? That is good,  
For a bird should  
Suspect man when he haunts the wood.

For man hath often carried woe  
 To birds, we know,  
 'Tis this which makes you shun us so.

---

CROCUS.

---



HY dress is cold, half fashioned of thin frost,  
 Transparent, odorless, of little cost,  
 Yet we should sorrow for thy beauty lost.

Thy little breath is tender and refined  
 As if a bank of flowers had sweetened a North wind,  
 And round about thy heart some streaks of gold  
 are lined.

Thou didst incorporate the warmth that fell  
 From sun and star into thy tiny bell.  
 Thy gold lines do the tales of Spring-warmth tell.  
 Hardly for use, not fit for ornament,  
 The half transparent covering of thy tent ;  
 Yet in it confidence and trusting hopes are blent.





## BABY GRAY.

---



WHITE-WINGED angels seem to hover  
Underneath the tiny cover  
Of the basket-cradle where  
Baby slept, milk-white and fair.

John and Betty laid their heads together,  
One was bright and one was brown,  
In deep consultation whether  
They would raise him in the town,  
“Children ought to grow,” said pretty,  
Generous and loving Betty.  
“With the flowers and with the trees,  
With the birds and with the bees,  
And the butterflies,  
Under open skies ;  
Baby shall not grow up in the town,  
Where the smoke falls down  
On a rainy day.”  
Spoke up Betty Gray.  
Then John Gray did say :  
“I will raise this boy of mine



Where the sun can shine,  
Where the child may watch all day  
Birds or squirrels at their play ;  
On a farm where wheat will grow ;  
I will teach my boy to know  
All the treasures of the field,  
All the fruits the forests yield."

"There must be a great tree's shade,  
Where timid fawns have played,  
    Where my boy may play  
    All the Summer day ;  
And a gentle rivulet  
On whose bank the child may sit  
And see his face in it."  
    Answered pretty,  
    Loving Betty.

So they did up baby Gray,  
On an early April day,  
In his worsted comforter,  
In his cloak all trimmed with fur,  
In his pretty scarlet hood,  
    Warm and good ;  
Bright red mittens on his fingers,  
Bright red stockings on his toes ;  
Baby's face was like a rose,

Where the loving sunset lingers,  
Betty pressed the baby to her  
Breast of snow, and off they started,  
    Iron-hearted,  
    For the far frontiers,  
To make a farm where baby Gray  
Might live his infant years.

Both a woolen and a flax wheel  
With a pair of cards and reel  
    Took our pretty,  
    Busy Betty,  
And the sacred seeds of flax.  
John Gray took his good steel axe,  
Two strong oxen and a cow,  
For sweet and rosy baby Gray,  
    Fat and cheerful now,  
    Spirited away  
To a strange existence,  
Was not doomed to pine away  
Lacking his subsistence.

Like a giant John Gray smote the trees  
With an axe whose blows resounded  
Far and near ; soon his little farm was bounded  
    With a zigzag fence of rails,

John and Betty fed on quails  
Like the Israelites.

Their log cabin was all builded  
In a day and night,  
And no house whose walls are gilded  
Could be fairer, in their sight.  
There's no telling  
How this little wildwood dwelling  
Looked to pretty  
Hopeful Betty.

Happy were their nights  
When the birch fires burned so bright  
That the cabin was alight  
Like a palace ; and the glory  
And the hero of our story,  
Little baby Gray,  
Slept the night away.

In the corner purred two kittens ;  
Betty knit her socks or mittens ;  
John Gray, adding to their riches,  
Whittled tables, chairs and dishes.

As the years flew, John and pretty,  
Busy Betty,  
Reaped their harvest.  
All they did was blest.

Jesse Gray grew up the best,  
Of all boys the handsomest ;  
Strong and cheerful, good and healthy,  
Temperate, virtuous and wealthy ;  
For their home within the wildwood  
Gave to baby Gray a childhood  
True and pure ; and blessed Betty  
Still with silver hair was pretty.

---

### HUMMING-BIRD.

---



HUMMING-BIRD had whirled all day  
In a delicious ecstasy,  
For all his way  
Was overflowing with perfume  
And honey ran along the bloom.

So, drinking of earth's sweetest things,  
The bird had all day flashed his wings.

Intoxicate  
With all he drank, with all he ate,  
Was humming-bird, now it was late,

And, by the newly rising moon,  
His wings still beat to rhythmic tune,  
He flew alone—

His way was toward that torrid zone  
Where grew the sheen in which he shone.

Somewhere between the East and West  
This flashing emerald possessed  
A little nest,  
So small no traveler could see  
Where this wee home of love might be.

Now birdie spied along his way  
A young girl fresh as June or May,  
And with his beak  
He kissed the maiden on her cheek,  
And had he owned the power to speak

Most likely birdie would have said :  
"Of all the blossoms, white or red,  
That nod and blink,  
Of lilies, columbines, or pink,  
You are the sweetest flower, I think."





## GRANDDADDY-LONG-LEGS.



GRANDDADDY-Long-Legs loves the ground ;  
He is a dot  
Of breathing body, small and round ;  
A tiny spot,  
With eight legs, or it may be ten,  
As fine as hairs,  
And this is all, in wood or fen,  
He ever wears.

When down he goes the world to see,  
And town below,  
Out of the fragrant fernery,  
To see him go  
The little long legs and his dame  
Cluster about :  
“Grandad don’t tell the boys your name  
While you are out.”

Because they seize and often break  
His fine limbs thin ;  
“Tell me which way my cows do take?”  
’Tis a boy’s whim—

As if granddaddy-long-legs knew  
Which way the cows  
Do take, or for that matter, too,  
Cares where they browse.

And when in dire affright he points  
His leg somewhere,  
With anguish in each aching joint,  
The boys declare  
The spirit of the prophet old  
Informs his mind ;  
They go the way that he has told  
The cows to find,

When wounded, home he slowly goes,  
The kindly toads,  
With spectacles across the nose,  
At the cross roads  
Meet him and with a great concern,  
Escort him home,  
Where from a spider wise they learn,  
Their surgeon gnome,

That he must surely have a new  
Leg moonbeam spun ;  
The broken one will never do.  
They spin him one,  
And hang it on a hazel bush

*GRANDDADDY-LONG-LEGS.*

That it may dry,  
Watched over by a brooding thrush  
That lives near by.

Grandmotherly the toads do sit  
And recommend  
Some syrup that he should try it ;  
The newts do send  
Some soothing tinctures of the fern  
Or sassafras ;  
The glow worms burn their lamps for him  
And yet, alas,

Though all the neighbors are so kind  
The time seems long ;  
And he no more a joy does find  
In cricket's song.  
They sing to him the whole night long  
To soothe his pain,  
But never more shall he grow strong  
Or brisk again.







## VIOLIN.

---



HERE are signs of a storm,  
But the homestead is warm ;  
Though its weather-stained front has been  
    buidled so long  
And beaten back tempest and cold, it is strong.  
    It standeth alone,  
    All moss overgrown ;  
Moss is compassionate even to stone.  
In summer the homestead is folded in song ;  
    The glad swallow weaves  
    Her nest under the eaves.  
And up in the branches of apple trees high,  
That touch with their blush the blue of the sky,  
    Cat-bird or tomtit  
    With Baltimore orioles flit.  
  
    'Tis a festival day ;  
    We will dance and be gay.  
Somebody is come that we did not invite,  
He prayeth for shelter and food for to-night :  
Only a man with an old violin ;

Let him come in ! yes, let him come in !  
 Don't make him wait,  
 But open the gate.  
 The fire is abloom  
 In the old-fashioned room,  
 Gilding the mirrors, gilding the halls,  
 Gilding the pictures, warming the walls ;  
 Cedar and oak, with torches of pine,  
 Give their aroma subtile and fine ;  
 How the flames shine !

There is plenty to eat, honey or meat,  
 Loaves of fine wheat,  
 Ale or metheglin, cider or wine.  
 We will warm him with shine  
 Of billows of fire,  
 That rush like a spire  
 Or like spirits afloat  
 Up the wide chimney's throat.

He is weary and hungry ; let him come in,  
 With the old violin.  
 Some are so warm, while others are cold ;  
 Some men have gold,  
 While others are starving ; give him a share  
 Of holiday fare.  
 How shall we say

Grace to the feast of this festival day  
    If we send him away?  
Old-fashioned doughnuts, nice pumpkin pies,  
    With a turkey that lies  
    Complacently done,  
Ready and brown for this feast of the sun;  
Jellies as sweet as nectarines turned  
Ripe while the ashes of August were burned;  
    Feed him on these,  
    With honey of bees.

    Oh; he is cold,  
    Trembling and old,  
And the white hand that carries the poor violin  
    Is shrunken and thin.  
Time restores nothing of all we have lost;  
The hair of the singer is whiter than frost.

    His grace he has said:  
He only eateth the crust of the bread,  
Nor toucheth the apples, the gold or the red;  
    Nor tastes of the wine,  
    Where through crystals so fine  
It, as the heart of the summer, doth shine;  
    Neither doth eat  
    He honey or meat;  
    He needeth them not—  
He is not half so poor as we thought.

After supper he tuneth each string  
Of the worn violin,  
And now he will sing.

Hauntingly sweet  
As a wood violet

Late in October by all the winds tossed,  
Faded and wan from the breath of the frost,  
There sobbed from each string,  
Lamenting, complaining,  
Stories of daisies, stories of spring,  
Fountain or forest emerald green,  
Buttercups, butterflies, fireflies with sheen  
Of a lantern tucked under a wing of shagreen ;  
A roaring of waves, a ship's heavy boom,  
Long time the wind's sport,  
Resting at last, at last reaching port.  
Of a miller and mill, a wheel and a flume ;  
Of poppies' perfume,  
And day lilies that faint by a tomb.  
And lastly, and saddest and sweetest of all,  
Of a darkened hall with its funeral ;  
Of willows that wave  
Over a grave,  
And of love that, not being able to die,  
Was transplanted to high  
Gardens abloom in the heart of the sky.

As if in a trance,  
The dancers did dance,  
Each foot keeping time  
To the violin's rhyme.  
As their revels they keep,  
He is fallen asleep,  
And the billows of fire like a mantle enfold  
The minstrel in gold ;  
Gilding each string of the sad violin  
And the frost of the silver hair, faded and thin.

In quadrille to and fro  
The gay dancers go ;  
Outside beginneth the north wind to blow,  
Softly descend the cold feathers of snow ;  
Still he is sleeping, lost in repose,  
Yet under his hand, like the wind to the rose,  
Thrilleth each string  
Of the fine violin.

Awake him from slumber, the night goeth fast,  
The dancing is past,  
The candles are flickering down to the last ;  
It is cold, it is freezing, the winds blow a blast.  
The sycamore shrieketh,  
The old casement creaketh,  
And every old post

Of the fence is snow-capped like a ghost ;  
Yet still in the mazes of sleep he is lost  
In the trance of a dream.

Awake him ! now fadeth the fire's golden gleam.  
He will not awake from his slumbrous repose,  
And quivereth not like the wind to the rose  
The old violin

Under the master's hand, shrunken and thin.  
Awake him ! We cannot, for he hath forgot  
Pain and privation—they trouble him not,  
And never again, ah, never again,

Shall the heart of the viol  
Tell tales of sad trial  
Or sob a refrain

Of sadness or sorrow, hunger or pain,  
Of sunshine or rain.  
He has drifted away  
On this festival day

To the land that they tell us in sermon or song  
Shall rectify all earth's sorrow and wrong.

Grief lasteth a night ;  
Joy comes in the morning, heaven crowned and  
bright—  
Singer, good night !  
Give him a shroud and give him a grave ;  
He belongeth to One who is mighty to save.

Let the winds rave ;  
 Let him only have,  
 In his pale hands so thin,  
 That violet faded—the sad violin.

His grave lieth damp  
 With a star for its lamp ;  
 The snow falleth over it for a cover.  
 Shall walk by it never mother or lover.  
 By the light of the moon  
 Perhaps the sad viol is chanting a tune :  
 As the lifting of wings  
 Flies the spirit that sings ;  
 Escaped as a captive from prison and thong,  
 He has flown like a swan to the ocean of song.

---

## MARCH.

---



T is the sighing, sobbing time  
 Of mingled sleet and rain and rime,  
 Tossing his hair, out from his lair  
 The wild, the blustering son of Mars,  
 March, cometh calling on his stars,  
 His buckler and his shield always  
 The golden ram of Aries.  
 The sun is down towards Capricorn,

But must be back by May-day morn.  
March wishes he had not been born  
The blusterer of all the year,  
Driven by hurricane or tear ;  
He calls the winds from East or West,  
Of South and North, and smites his breast,  
For 'tis his giant hand must turn  
The vernal Equinox, and burn  
Pale ghost lights for the violet's urn.  
The snows from off the ice-girt shore  
Of Greenland or of Labrador  
Do smite this giant in the face,  
But still he keeps his southward pace,  
And calling on all feathered flocks,  
Defiant of an earthquake's shocks,  
He gently turns the Equinox ;  
Upon its golden hinge it swings,  
And, lo, there comes a rush of wings.







## MIGNON.

---



HIS is the maiden the Ocean would have,  
Earth shall not keep her nor hold her grave ;  
Earth is too cold for lips of roses and hair  
of gold

And the child shall descend to that inner fold—  
To the palace of pearl where the sea gods hold,  
In shimmering caskets that no man hath seen,  
Their treasure of crystal and ultramarine.

The wild winds did hear what the mermaidens say,  
And drove them out from the slumberous bay ;  
They drove them away to the deep blue sea,  
That Mignon might gather her shells and be free,  
Upon the white beach of the Ocean to play.

But soon as the zephyr or East wind did rest,  
Back came the sea nymphs upborne on the crest  
Of billows, with jewels of pearl on each breast.  
They followed the child as she walked on the sand ;  
They gathered in bays where the sea touched the  
land ;

They sang to the child and their voices were wild :  
This is the maiden the Ocean would have,  
This is the maiden the Ocean would save.

They follow the child as onward she goes,  
With hair like the sunshine and lips like a rose,  
And thus to the gray father Neptune they say,  
We shall bring thee a beautiful maiden some day.  
And to her they talk as they follow her walk :  
'There's a palace of sleep 'neath the waves of the deep,  
So still and so quiet a feather stirs not ;  
As still as the grave—we know well the spot,  
Its walls are as clear as the dew of a tear,  
Its windows are pearl ; come beautiful girl,  
You shall be one of the nymphs of the sea ;  
You shall dance as dance we, as wild and as free.  
Look at the pearls that we coil in our hair,  
Our fair yellow hair, such thou shalt wear.  
The paths of old Ocean are planted with shells,  
                  There hold we our revels  
                  And thou mayest see  
The splendid, the beautiful queen of the sea,  
Who sitteth alone on her opaline throne,  
Her robes are with rarest gems bestrown ;  
We gathered them up where sunbeams have shown,  
Along the wild beach where the tempests moan,  
And Ocean doth strive for her own.

Coiled near to the throne the great sea serpent lies,  
His wings are aflame with the rainbow's dyes,

And his glittering eyes

Outshine the golden stars of the skies ;

Come with us and see

How lovely the emerald serpent may be ;

And come thou and sit where gold fishes flit,

Like winged Aurora making the night

Of deepest mid-ocean beautiful bright,

With lights of purple and violet.

Come with us, Mignon,

Fair flower of the sun,

From pole to pole we are free to roam,

Wherever we will we may chose our home ;

In the north by icebergs frozen and lone,

Or down at the heart of the tropical zone,

We sit in a shade

Of vaulted pearl as our hair we braid,

And all the toilets of Uncine are made

With gems of the earth around us laid ;

For when the whirlwinds did beat the main,

The wealth of the ships fell down like rain ;

Here they lie and their treasures bestrew

The ways of the deep wherever we go.

Of all the earth did lose, we choose, we choose ;

And there as fair and young as you are,

Lie maidens with arms and shoulders bare.

And links of hair of gold, or raven or brown are there,  
 Our beds are laid in halls with lovely lazuli paved,  
 Where never a tempest in madness hath raved,

They sang so long their strange wild song  
 That she stretched her hands to the mermaidens fair ;  
 They reached her braided pearls for her hair,  
 And a new throng sprung from the waves and sung,  
 This is the maiden the Ocean would have,  
 This is the child the sea would save.

She left her hat on the sands one day

By the seaside gray,

She followed the dancing mermaidens gay

O'er the billows away.

And she never came back from these far pearl cells,  
 In the light of the day to gather shells.

Down with the emerald serpent she dwells :

She hath become a wraith of the sea in her young  
 beauty,

And above her trails

The emerald serpent with golden scales,

But the wind that wails

And the tempest that shrieks when earth travails.

She heareth them not, so still is the spot—

So quiet, so still, that never a rose

Would thrill or stir in the deep repose.

And slowly around her all unseen,  
 The nymphs build mansions of ultramarine.  
 And her hair is still of a paly gold,  
 And the arms of Undine about her fold ;  
 And the treasures of earth do fall and sift,  
 Slow gathering o'er her in many a rift,  
 Till she shall be lost in Time's golden drift.

---

 THE LARKS.
 

---



WITH gray head uncovered, the sexton did wait  
 By the elm tree that shaded the churchyard  
 gate  
 For the cavalcade passing in sombre state.

Down the avenue, silent and green and wide,  
 Two rows of tall trees stood on either side,  
 And in them each lark had a home for his bride.

Roses grew there, one tall one grew over  
 A larch, and I saw the nest of a plover  
 With four speckled eggs hid in the red clover.

A white virgin's bower went rioting through  
 A cypress, it said, "let me borrow from you  
 Your stem and your strong boughs to lean on, pray  
 do."

The cypress made answer, "Thou pretty white vine,  
Climb up to the day till you see the sun shine ;  
So thy life shall lighten the darkness of mine."

It was not my time to weep then, for the bride  
Was unknown, I knew not her name who had died,  
So I noticed the roses nod on each side.

And I saw the sunlight stream out of the West ;  
It gilded the birds' wings, it gilded the crest  
Of lily-white blossoms upon the bride's breast.

All was peaceful and bright ; the old birds caressed  
The young ones, who peeped o'er the rim of each  
nest

To see how the bride in her lilies was dressed.

And a home-flying lark sang : " To live and to love  
And to die ;" this is all : the elm tree above  
Our heads stirred with his housekeeping mate, who  
sighed " Love."





## ROBIN.

---



WHO told thee that the roots are stirred  
Beneath the mold, thou merry bird?  
Who is thy ruler, who thy guide,  
Who taught thy warble to divide

The changeful days that roll between  
The days of snow and days of green?  
How knowest thou that soon the tinge  
Of green will touch the alder fringe?

Hast thou the wisdom to discern  
How the soft maples redder turn.  
And how there creeps the softest gold  
Around the willow branches old?

Knowest thou as the days grow long  
The woods will thrill with trill and song?  
When the sleet beats pale April's face,  
Canst thou bend to the storm with grace?

Knowing there is a friend above  
Who thinks of all the birds with love?  
Who always will find daily bread  
For blithesome happy rob'in red?

Rob, thou hast trials ; wise men say  
You never, never, go away.  
But pretty bird, it is not so,  
Your paths the wise men do not know.

You stretch you wings, away from snow,  
Spring's winged Page you come and go.  
Then, selfish men and sordid, quite,  
Hint at the robin's appetite !

Fed by the Lord's most generous hand,  
Poor Rob can never understand  
Man's strange, mysterious, narrow ways,  
His gardens and his boundaries ;

And so, the reddest cherries, sweet,  
The robin red doth choose to eat.  
For, fed by the same Friend divine,  
Rob's right is quite the same as thine.

His title deeds stretch from the pole  
To where the tropic waters roll,  
And East and West, or far or wide,  
Rob might show his estates with pride.

Bright robin red, all incomplete  
Were Spring without thy warble sweet ;  
Welcome, thou guest of sunny wing,—  
Attendant of the pleasant Spring.





## DAFFODIL.

---



ALE and still daffodil,  
In your lustrous satan frill,  
In your amber garments chill,  
Changing slowly from a haze  
Golden to a saffron blaze—  
Foremost of the flowery race,  
Gracefully you fill your place,  
Spirit of the early time,  
Early in the seasons' rhyme.  
Gentle, shining daffodil,  
April's fragrant lips distil  
Dews too cold, that only chill.  
Linger for a genial day,  
For the rosy month of May.  
Welcome, welcome, flowers of gold,  
Though you be so chill and cold,  
Ye are like the nuns who wait  
Early by the chapel gate  
For the opening of the feté.  
Delicate, ethereal, fine

As a vestal by a shrine,  
So is every flower of thine."

"Thou hast called me pale and still  
In my satin garment chill,  
Fashioned for a daffodil.  
So am I, for April day  
Only fashioned, not for May.  
I adorn the olden age,  
Blooming on an earlier page  
In the history of flowers,  
Representative of showers,  
Cloudy days and changeful hours,  
And of dew as crisp and chill  
As the leaves of daffodil,  
Nurtured half of sun and snows.  
I have never seen a rose,  
Glorious spouse of Summer time,  
For I touch the Winter's rime,  
And the year expects me here  
In my season to appear.  
Can you love me cold and still,  
Can you love the daffodil?"  
Starlike after Winter's gloom,  
Peeping forth as from a tomb,  
Sometimes has my heart confessed  
That I love thy flowers best,

Earlier than all the rest,  
 By and by as days grow warm,  
 Many a graceful flowery form  
 Will appear in woodland dim,  
 Or within the garden trim  
 Herald of the flowery dawn—  
 Daffodil you will be gone.  
 Mid the bloom of violet,  
 Lily, rose or mignonette,  
 Thee I never will forget.  
 You are like the babe that died,  
 Blooming by the mother's side—  
 Daughters, sons about her grown,  
 Thinks she of that little one,  
 Telling o'er the winsome ways  
 Of that babe of other days.

---

## GOLDFINCHES.



TOW, all along each meadow way,  
 In stripes of red wild roses,  
 Did swing their goblets of perfume,  
 And daisies by the way did bloom,  
 And buttercups and posies.

'Tis a good day to build my nest,  
Sang goldfinch in his yellow vest—  
It was of satin, and his best—  
He wore a little golden crest.  
His wings were black—a bird so fine  
Scarce floats in paths of sun and shine.

He reared a tiny thatch of hair,  
Enclosed around with fields of air ;  
He hung it on a haw-bush fair,  
Without a compass or a square ;  
He hung it on a bit of stick,  
Where white haw-flowers were very thick.

His little mate was round and soft  
As thistle down that floats aloft ;  
On weekdays as on Sundays dressed,  
How neat she helped to form the nest—  
She moulded it to her soft breast.

It was a pretty sight to see  
These lovers on the hawthorn tree ;  
She sat within the nest in state,  
While by her sang her little mate.

One fine green leaf above them swung,  
It made a roof to shade their young,  
And lyre-like there each tuneful tongue

Sang through the days of summer heat,  
Till travelers stopped the birds to greet,  
Their singing was so clear and sweet.

And when the summer rose was dead,  
On wings away the singers fled,  
Nor waited they the dying year  
To see laid dead upon her bier.  
Not till the grain was in the shock  
Tarried the goldfinch with his flock,  
But swift as golden arrows flew  
These birds that on the sunshine grew—  
Away from snow, away from frost,  
We watched them till their forms were lost,  
And longed to follow in their wake,  
That journey with the sun to take.

---

## WREN'S NEST.

---



MANSION built without a hand,  
And without an inch of land.  
Ravelings and thread and string.  
Bits of fleecy, woolen yarn,  
We will give you, little wren,  
For your house or barn.

No, you shall not have the blue  
Birdie's box—'tis not for you.

Such a shirk,  
Not to work !

You are not in Paradise,  
Where bird's nests grow ready-made.

In a trice

Your foundation may be laid ;  
We will come to your raising  
So amazing !

Try again, with thread and leaf ;  
No baby wren will come to grief.

Tie a leaf and pin a stem

In this fir clump, where baby wren  
Has whimpered time and time again.

Try again,  
Houseless wren !





## ROSE AND BRIER.

---

“ Out of her bosom there grew a red rose,  
And out of Lord Lovel’s a brier.”

---



THEY were lovers once, but were parted long  
Ere Time brought them together ;  
They met at last in a time of song,  
When the birds sang well in the warm days long  
And nights of the sweet June weather.

But the maid stirred not in the couch where she lay,  
In budding, fresh June weather ;  
And the lover no word to the maiden did say,  
Through the star-crowned night or the summer day,  
When the years brought them together.

And the grass o’er her breast with harebells blue  
Nodded not unto her lover,  
And not a red rose any redder grew,  
As they parted the earth to make room for two  
Under earth—man’s last soft cover.

He had been false to the maiden, they said ;  
She died in youth's fair weather ;  
He lived till the snow was white on his head ;  
What did it matter, the lovers were dead,  
When Time brought them together.

But out of her bosom a red rose grew,  
And out of her lover's a brier ;  
The rose touched the brier, and it to her threw  
A tendril—they clasped and together they grew,  
As if striving which should grow higher.

The brier leaned over to warm by the rose,  
Her blossoms were goblets of fire,  
But the spray of the brier was cold as the snow  
That high and afar on the mountain doth glow,  
Unimpassioned by any desire.

A nightingale built in this thicket of love,  
In Summer, a nest for her young ;  
And she sang to the stars as they glittered above ;  
She sang, and the sorrowing song of a dove  
In liquid notes dropped from her tongue.

She sang to complain that the life of the rose  
Its passion and fervor did waste ;  
She wept that the blossom of fire did enclose



The briar insensate and cold as the snows,  
That its ice and its thorns she embraced.

But loving and clasping the blossoms of fire,  
Exuberant gave of her love,  
And close to her heart did she clasp the cold brier,  
And she clung to its thorns as if both should aspire  
Towards the stars that were shining above.

## THE JUDGE'S PIGEONS.



WITHIN the shadows of the law

Two pigeons had their home and grew  
To build their nest without a flaw.

Of title deeds the pigeons knew,  
For, with so much red tape in sight,  
Followed in legal sequence quite,  
The birds were learned and erudite.  
On a stone niche their small house stood,  
And as their title was so good  
'Gainst wind and weather, fire and flood,  
At home within their small abode  
From Term to Term the birds were found;  
And knew the sound of Court House bell,  
Each County Court and Circuit well;  
And knew a lawyer by his face,

His guileless ways and courtly grace.  
Some gleams of brightness seemed to flow,  
Some cheer from sunny wing and breast,  
To light the dull gray courts below,  
Upon the stark dead law to rest—  
O'er Parchments mouldy, dust-stained, old,  
O'er Contracts, Lease or Mortgage fold,  
Traced long ago by hands now cold.

The dreariest, the roughest way  
Will have its little gleam of light.  
Still, through the gray autumnal day,  
Will flash some wing all sunny bright ;  
Soft moss will to the cold rock cling ;  
Sweet buds will grow and bird's will sing ;  
In Winter's snow will bloom the Spring.





## THE PARTRIDGE'S NEST.

---



WHEN the partridge nest she spied  
In the wood, young Betty cried :  
“I have found your nest of grass  
By the budding sassafras ;  
From your nest so full of young,  
Pretty partridge, spare me one.

“ Surely, you will never miss  
Her at all—then give me this ;  
She is like a yellow ball,  
All of down so soft and small ;  
Mother partridge, shy and wild,  
Tell me how to rear your child ?”

As in her affright she fled,  
This is what the partridge said :  
“ Wherefore came you to the wood,  
Where your presence bodes no good,  
Wanting all that you can spy  
Of its treasures, low or high ?

“ Well you know we only find  
Safety far from human kind ;  
Pinching famine very sore  
Will not bring us to your door !  
Naughty girl, did I intrude  
In your presence with my brood ?

“ What hast thou to give my chick  
Better than this coppice thick,  
Where the spice bush lifts her top  
Till the hemlock bids her stop,  
And the two their leaves entwine,  
Yielding each a fragrance fine ?

“ Hast thou carpets soft as moss,  
Spread this wilderness across ?  
Knowest thou the spring that fills  
All the crystal mountain rills,  
Where I go at dawn to drink  
With the roses round the brink ?

“ Hast thou seen the mountain deer  
Bounding in her freedom here ;  
Knowest thou how very good  
Is this temple in the wood ?

“ You intend my chick to steal,  
Listen then as I reveal

Something of the wild-bird's lore ;  
Con my precepts o'er and o'er ;  
Feed my chicken buds of birch  
Take her not into a church.

“ Beech nuts, tender sprouts of grass,  
Feed my chick, thou naughty lass ;  
Let her taste the wintergreen ;  
It is fit for any queen,  
And its crimson berries red  
Grow to yield us daily bread.

“ Never teach my chick to say  
Grace—the partridge does not pray ;  
That is what such girls as you,  
Romping, naughty, ought to do.

“ Of the elderberry fine  
She may drink the purple wine ;  
Temperance you must not speak  
Of to her—she is not weak ;  
When she has enough to eat  
Nothing tempts her, sour or sweet.

“ Not at all will she object  
To a wild plum purple specked ;  
And bearberries also, she,

To dine on, is very free ;  
Whortleberries, too, are food  
For my chicken, very good.

“All the pigeon berries sour  
They are of the wild-bird's dower ;  
Chide her not if she should go  
Where the ferns and roses grow.

“ On her heart the wilderness  
Ever shall itself impress ;  
Visions deep of solitude  
In her memory shall brood ;  
Therefore shall she be possessed  
Of a spirit of unrest.

“ She must wear a speckled dress,  
Sober as a hermitess,  
Teach her foot so light to fall  
That it make no noise at all ;  
Teach her cunning, wisdom, stealth,  
These are needful to her health ;  
So that when a fox goes by  
She shall be as still as I.

“ Tell me, foolish little miss,  
Can you teach my chicken this ?

Are you able? Then will she  
Surely come again to me,  
Turning from captivity  
To her wildwood mansion free."

---

THE NORTHERN LIGHT.

---



O H, the lancers,  
The wild dancers ;  
Aurora borealis  
With heaven for a palace.  
They dance along the night  
Amid the sons of light,  
In an ecstasy of mad delight,  
As if from out an armory.  
All clad in light they come,  
Some clothed in red there be,  
With emerald lustres some.

All corruscate and shiver,  
As a gleaming, shining river,  
The wavering lances quiver,  
As streaming with a mad ambition  
To touch Aldebaran's throne,

Or as joined in one volition,  
To reach the north star lone.

Now gleams upon each lance's tip  
Scarlet, ruddy as the lip  
Of Aphrodite when she rose  
From out the sea foam's snows.  
Those lances must have dipped,  
Amid the crimson gloom  
Of endless fields of poppies,  
In the realms of night abloom.

And now they seem to fade,  
In many a fitful shade,  
Now come they forth arrayed  
More grandly than before  
Burnished and gilded o'er.  
Like golden pinions of the butterflies,  
Of ardent summer kissed,  
And in precious colors of carbuncle,  
Opal, pearl or amethyst.

Red, redder than a rose  
Its shadow each one throws  
Above the Arctic snows,  
Where, with his hardy reindeer,  
All buried deep in fur ;



Like an exaltation of the winter  
    Roams the Laplander.

To be a star or sun,  
Like diamonds that clasp on  
The girdle of Orion,  
This is the mad ambition.  
This the feverish unrest,  
With which this dancing army  
Of midnight seems possessed.

Efflorescence of the sky  
Bloom where no one passeth by,  
Effervescence of the elements,  
Like the wandering Arab's tent,  
Vanishing when night is spent.





## SPIDER.

---



TRAVELER through earth and air,  
Tireless little wanderer.  
Beauty's dream and beauty's dower  
Drive thee on through sun and shower ;  
Thy fiery soul impels thee through  
The sunset's gold, the morning's blue,  
To spread the treasure of thy loom  
Wheresoever there is room ;  
In the thicket's dewy bloom  
Where the sweetest honeys stream  
From the lilies, full of cream  
That overflow  
In the glow  
Of June, and all their sweetness  
Spill, to make the year's completeness,  
A spinner in her coat of mail,  
Noiseless and invincible,  
Watchful, ever on the trail  
Over beds of asphodel,  
Past the springs and past the well,

Out into the flowery dell,  
Roaming over hills of heather  
In the warm and sunny weather.

Seeking budding spiceries  
In bewildering places  
To deck them with rare laces,  
To show a spider's graces  
Where odorless pale flowers unfold  
Their leaves by tombs of violets old,  
To hang them on the daisy's gold.  
    Everywhere thou goest  
    Each flower's haunt thou knowest.  
Where the quivering fern unrolls  
Feathered tips and feathered scrolls,  
And the Indian pipe her bowls  
Of bleached and waxen whiteness,  
To drape them with the lightness  
Of a spider-web attire.  
To hang thy web on elm-tree's spire  
Ambition sets thy soul on fire,  
    Tiny, aspiring wanderer.

Now thou swingest from a bough,  
Confident that thou canst throw  
Thy little highway through the air ;  
Pathfinder where no highways are,

Elfin little wanderer,  
 Architect, whose patient care  
 Shames our needle's broidery,  
 We might learn designs from thee.  
 Who taught thee how to throw the line  
 And hang the thread, so silken fine,  
 And weave thy web of valenciennes  
 Along the evergreens?

Airy stuff,  
 Fine enough  
 For a ruffle or a puff  
 To wear in fairy land,  
 To wear in any elfin land.  
 Silver-bright, pure as white  
 Moonlight over pale pearl streaming  
 When the world is dreaming.

What if the gauzy net be torn,  
 The web of all its beauty shorn!  
 Another morn rises upon a fairer one.  
 With one strong passion overborne  
 To weave from sunset until morn  
 Along the rushes' feathery curls,  
 In the umbels and the whorls  
 Of dill or carroway,  
 On silken tassels of the corn  
 Like a fairy at her play.

The spider hath adorned the morn.  
 Everywhere in earth or air  
 Hath spun the spider fair.  
 The genius that men call divine,  
 And beauty's lovely dreams are thine.  
 Thy patterns haunt thy thinking brain—  
 Whence sprang they through the sun or rain?  
 What other life upholds thy thought?  
 By whom were thy fine patterns wrought?

---

## THE YOUNGEST.

---



DID Juno bring thee in her car  
 With peacocks through gold-spangled air?

Or did she raise in beds of roses  
 This boy, fairer than Summer posies?

A miracle of living grace,  
 A baby with a cherub's face.

'Tis true that you can only stand  
 Upon all four by foot or hand.

And that your English talk is small,  
 Since "dad" and "mam" comprises all.

The bow of promise seems to span  
Thy budding life, fine little man.

We love to watch you at your play  
With kittens, frolicsome as they ;

And almost sigh to think you can  
Grow, little child, to be a man.





## NATURE'S CARE.

---



WALKED amid a place of graves :  
It was the Summer time ;  
Wild ferns had set their rootlets there,  
And maidens' hair and sweet wild thyme  
Ran all together like a rhyme,  
And blushing roses blossomed fair,  
Gold buttercups and daisies sweet  
Starred all the carpet for our feet,  
For Nature wove in many looms,  
Her woof was full of golden blooms ;  
Weaving her webs to deck the tombs,  
Or hillock were slept lass or lad—  
Or maiden fair, or matron sad  
As if a mother's heart she had ;  
She seemed intent to deck  
This still enclosure with the fleck  
Of buttercup, or purpled speck  
Of hare-bell, or of violet.

I passed the quiet graves again,  
And now the Autumn sere  
Did shed, as if a flowery rain

Above the tombs, a scarlet stain.  
How free they were from grief or pain,  
    Those dead leaves of the year ;  
They shamed the sunset with their gold,  
And in a crimson robe did fold  
Each humble hillock cold ;  
And often near the empty nests,  
Birds bearing rainbows on their breasts,  
Or glinting topaz on their crests,  
    Sang of a Paradise  
Far southward by the orange trees,  
Far downward through the golden seas,  
    Of Autumn's sunset skies.

And when the Winter boughs were bare,  
    I passed, and lo, the snow  
There lay like ermines, white and fair  
And beautiful ; no stain was there  
    On any hillock low.

In gems of frost the boughs were wreathed,  
Above the ferns the frost had breathed.  
And o'er the tomb of boy or girl  
The reeds were decked in shimmering pearl,  
And pure as alabaster bright  
The snow lay over locks of white ;  
And gracious Nature seemed to say,  
" My children are asleep to-day ;



Pass on thy way, nor pause to weep,  
 Disturb ye not their slumber deep ;  
 Not any alabaster flake  
 From off my ermines shalt thou take,  
 Nor raise the coverings, lest they wake."

---

### GRANDMA AND JO.

---



HE has snow-white hair and a snow-white cap,  
 And a snow-white ruffle atop of that :  
 And Jo loves to climb on grandmamma's lap,  
 As she sits asleep in her easy chair ;  
 For grandmamma never scolds nor says,  
 "Now, run away, Jo," but softly she lays  
 Her shrunken hand on each glossy curl,  
 And whispers, "Grandmother's own little girl."

Grandma will never let Jo be whipped,  
 Cunning darling and rosy lipped ;  
 For grandmamma's heart is soft as the sun  
 Ripened peaches when summer is done.  
 Mamma says, "Grandmothers spoil children so :"  
 But grandmamma sits in the golden glow  
 Of Heaven and cannot love whips, you know,  
 And that makes it very pleasant for Jo.

If grandmamma ever had any care  
She has laid it down out of sight somewhere,  
And now all she does is to say her prayer  
And sit where the sunshine gilds her hair,  
And play and whisper to little Jo  
As the shadows of evening come and go.

For grandmamma's feet are close to the shore  
Of a river deep, where her friends before  
Have crossed, and her dear beloved gone o'er;  
And being so near to this shining shore  
Of course she never weeps any more;  
She knows that soon she shall see them all,  
And she sometimes thinks she hears them call  
Out of the chamber or sky or hall.

But she only kisses dear little Jo,  
And whispers "Soon we shall know, little sweet,  
How the City looks with the golden street,  
And if our beloved will hasten to meet  
Us who come up with travel-stained feet:  
There are Charlie and Jack, but you did not know  
Any of them, sweet little Jo."





## QUEEN BESS.

---



HE Arab with his blooded steed that spurns  
the desert sands

Has wealth enough; he feeds her as his  
children from his hands;

And when he calls her by her name 'tis with a soft  
caress;

I love you as the Arab loves his steed, my swift  
Queen Bess.

The name of many an ancient horse renowned in  
olden war,

Whose rider bore the shield or sword, helmet or  
scimeter,

Has perished in the lapse of time; this lot, too will  
be thine.

For name of horse and name of man alike have their  
decline.

We leave the haunts of men to-day, their cities'  
strife, Queen Bess,

To prove if Nature holds a balm for souls in dire  
distress.

We are not bound to any mart, we seek not fame  
or gold,

We throw them all as dross away, my good horse,  
fleet and bold.

We seek the Indian in his tent, the haunt of bear or  
deer,

That pathless solitude seek we where no sound smites  
the ear;

Far better if no human form shall meet us in our way,  
For we are done with love and hope; we threw  
them all away.

We ford the river's surging tide, we scale the moun-  
tain side,

We cross the lone wolf-haunted plain, where no  
man dares abide;

Glimpses we catch of the wild horse, the untamed  
and the free,

Companions of the winged winds that seem most fit  
to be;

We hear the whisper of the reeds, the sighing,  
solemn tunes,

They pipe forever in the wastes, amid the broad  
lagoons.

Drink of the mountain spring, Queen Bess, eat of  
the tender grass,

For we are tenants now of Him who owns each  
mountain pass.

At home on mountains free and large, at home  
 beneath the air ;  
 Wrought to a tent, sapphire and gold together  
 folded fair ;  
 Afar from all life's weary care ; and yet it does not  
 cure.  
 Nature is fair, yet the old wound will evermore  
 endure.  
 I feel the mildew on my heart, I know, my good  
 Queen Bess,  
 Some golden morn will dawn ere long to find thee  
 riderless.  
 I give thee back thy freedom, then pass on thou,  
 bold and free,  
 To meadows broad ; let no man lay his hand hence-  
 forth on thee.

---

 L I N N E T.
 

---



HE linnet sang her little song.  
 The gilded wire  
 That built her cage was bright but strong.  
 In her home's spire  
 She had essayed to build a nest ;  
 Three straws, three hairs,

A downy feather from her breast,  
These little cares  
Fatigued her, yet she wrought her best.

And as the April days grew long,  
This small bird's thought,  
Which she had woven with her song,  
Was duly wrought.  
The empty cradle finished hung ;  
Yet all alone  
She sang ; there came no linnets young  
From sun to sun.

Patient, and yet she seemed to need  
The woods and air,  
The fragrance of the thistle's seed,  
The wood fern's hair  
Whereon to rest her velvet feet.  
No sad complaint  
Made linnet, but sang ever sweet  
Her carols quaint.

Till on one late September morn  
They found her dead ;  
Her wings, the hue of ripened corn,  
Bright were outspread ;  
For linnet in the dawn had heard  
The whir of wings,

The rustling of gay troops of birds  
Toward other Springs.

And stretching wide her sunny wings,  
One wild strange thrill  
Of hope swept all those silken strings  
Of life ; a thrill  
So wild it broke this winged lyre,  
Shattered she lay,  
All broken of this vain desire  
To fly away.

Sadly within her empty nest  
We press each wing ;  
Sorry we knew not what was best  
For those who sing.  
Close by a stalk of thistle's seed  
We hide the bird ;  
And sighing, weep for hearts that bleed  
Of Hope deferred.





## MIGRATORY BIRDS.

---



IN dire extremity oppressed,  
A wounded bird sank to earth's breast ;  
With music's soul she was possessed.  
Sadly she chanted with the rest,  
All other notes dropped from the strain,  
Repeating ever this refrain—  
"The year is over, I must fly  
Where Summer roses never die."  
Her soul within her thirsted so  
With the migrating flocks to go ;  
But those soft wings no more on air  
Should spread their silken splendor there.  
This singer wore the outward sheen  
In which her life adorned had been.  
The glitter of a burning zone  
Still o'er the burnished feathers shone ;  
Her shining mantle was of down,  
And seamless was this mantle sewn.  
Of gleaming emerald was her crown ;  
She could not leave her cloak of gold,  
Like the departing seer of old,



The coming prophet to enfold ;  
Nor could her voice of prophecy.  
Her tuneful thrilling minstrelsy,  
Be yielded as a legacy  
To some new singer passing by.

Her young brood lately had outgrown  
Their nest and learned to live alone,  
They sought the ripe wheat's yellow shocks,  
They swung upon the mullein stalks,  
And played with other youngling flocks.  
Leaving the wounded bird alone,  
Their thoughts turned toward that tropic zone  
Where grew the sheen in which they shone.  
They listened for the winged beat  
Of flocks on pinions, strong and fleet,  
Waiting to follow through the air  
The guide to lands of promise fair,  
Some patriarch who the landmarks knew  
Through continents of azure blue.

Now music's daughter nearly dumb  
Felt death's chill breath her soul benumb.  
It almost seemed this chill of death  
Had triumphed o'er the singing breath ;  
Her mate, her brood were quite forgot,  
Yet life's eternal song was not.

A flock of comrades floating by,  
Buoyant along a Southern sky,  
Halted to rest, and so did sing  
Stories of a perpetual Spring.  
She heard them and her answering song  
Replied in accents sweet and strong.  
Life flowed out with song's rushing tide,  
For as the singer so replied  
She quivered like a lyre, and died.

Poor minstrel! How that parting note  
The day with sudden sorrow smote!  
And yet the note of victory rung  
Triumphant in the song she sung;  
As one who met and vanquished death  
And would not yield the singing breath.

After life's fitful wanderings  
Perhaps she felt the Eternal Spring  
Draw near her upon balmy wings;  
And, as the tuneful singer dies,  
Perhaps some new discoveries  
Of shorter paths to vernal skies,  
To where the fadeless country lies,  
Disclose them to her half-closed eyes.



## M A R Y.

---



LL in the early days of Spring,  
Mary with skillful hands did spin,  
Softly singing, softly spinning,  
While meadows sweet were blossoming  
With clover red, or streaked with wing  
Of meadow lark, or bobolink,  
Or other happy birds who think  
They have good right to chirp and sing.

Overhead the pet canary  
Spun very wise and very wary,  
Singing her little song like Mary,  
And wove from out some magic loom  
For four a little downy room.  
The silken hours their course did run,  
The thrice-bleached snowy robes were done  
And wrapped about fair Mary's son,  
An infant full of winsome grace,  
With pretty, smiling, rosy face,  
A baby in his snow-white dress  
To love and kiss and to caress.

Overhead the pet canary's  
Babies sang as well as Mary's.  
Days fly away; the baby walks;  
Months hasten and the man-child talks;  
He grows too fast, time flies too fast,  
Would that his boyish days might last,  
Sighs Mary; but away to school  
He goes from mother's sight and rule.  
'Tis a long sad day for Mary.

Yet, still his face is smooth and fine,  
Unbearded, fair, almost divine,  
And like a flower to Mary.  
Time will not stay, the boy is grown.  
Where are the years so swiftly flown?  
His beard is like the lion's mane,  
And Mary seeketh all in vain  
The fair small face once blossoming  
Amid the robes of linen.

Shedding a tear o'er the robes dear,  
She bids adieu to each lost year;  
She yields her boy unto the world,  
Sees on the distaff softly furled  
The silky flakes of linen,  
But cares no more for spinning.

A wife and children are with him,  
O'er Mary falls life's Winter dim.  
What compensation now hath Mary  
For all her love and care of him ?

None. The golden-winged canary  
Long years hath ceased to ply her loom,  
And left the valleys of perfume  
To other birds and other bloom ;  
And lonesomé gray-haired Mary  
Folds her thin hands upon her breast  
Feebly, and goes away to rest.  
Her last, sad thought remembering  
Those far-off days of spinning  
The little robes of linen.

---

PANSY AND MIGNONETTE.



---

THE world, mignon, begins to weep,  
To weep and sigh before the sleep,  
The frost, that soon will settle deep  
On tender leaf,  
On bud or sheaf ;  
The days that sparkled in the sun,  
The balmy days we loved, are gone.

“ But ere the storms these beds of bloom,  
These valleys full of sweet perfume  
Shall beat, we will haste to our tomb,  
    For mignonette,  
    Nor pansy yet  
Had ever heart for days of grief,  
Nor pleasure in the falling leaf.”

“ And what hast thou or what have I,  
Thou purple flower with golden eye,  
To do when bitter winds go by?  
    No pansy yet,  
    Nor mignonette  
Hath tarried long when earth appears  
All sorrowful and stained with tears.

“ While we shall sleep within the dell  
Some other blooms next year will tell  
That we did blossom quite as well.  
    Life's secret dies  
    Not when our eyes  
Close on superb Autumnal days.  
Nature hath many gracious ways,

“ And keepeth all her patterns well,  
Nor loseth she the asphodel,  
Nor bitter wormwood of the dell,

Nor yet the bold,  
Bright marigold.  
Will she not then as careful be  
That our ripe seeds the year shall see?

“Pansy and mignonette we grew  
Like lovers all the summer through,  
We drank from the same cup the dew,  
Our rootlets met,  
So were they set  
So near together in the mould,  
They clasped and loosened not their hold.

“We shared life’s loveliness and light,  
The days o’erflowing with delight,  
Now let us close for aye our sight  
Before the blight,  
Ere winter’s night,  
For there remains no more to see,  
Sweet sister flower, for you and me.”





## LONG AGO.

---



T was long ago, and the winter snow  
Of age drifteth cold above me now,  
But I walk in the light of a sun that is set,  
For I cannot forget  
My fair young love in her beauty yet.

Those days are fled,  
And my love lies dead,  
With a marble dove above her head;  
For long ago Death's winter cold  
Drifted over her locks of gold.  
But she is not old,  
For my heart doth fold  
That bright young image to have and to hold.

In the pleasant time so long ago  
We walked by the elder hedge, white as snow,  
And the fiery sunset with dazzling glow  
Sifted its gold through the tree boughs low,



And each fiery speck  
Her snow-white neck  
With its ripe red gold and fire did fleck.

The fearless birds of the homestead came,  
Half wild and half tame,  
Like arrows home in the golden flame,  
I see my love now  
With the day's last light on her snow-white  
brow.

She lives for me in that Long Ago,  
She lives and moves in her beauty yet ;  
Other sorrowful eyes with tears may be wet,  
But the eyes of my Dove,  
My darling my love.  
Beam as bright for me in their innocent light,  
As the gleaming stars in the crown of night.

I am not alone,  
Though those days are flown.  
Memory needeth no marble stone.  
I live in the early light that shone  
Over happy days when I was young,  
When a nightingale sung  
For every rose with melodious tongue.  
I live in the clime  
Of youth's summer time,

And under the rifts of the winter snow  
 The nightingales sing and the roses glow,  
 For I loved her so in the Long Ago  
 That her memory warmeth this old heart now.

---

## O A T S.

---



SMALL, mimic boat,  
 Fine, ghostly oat,  
 On such a barge might fairies float ;  
 On a frail thing,  
 Half stem, half wing,  
 Vibrating, trembling, fluttering.

Here ghosts do talk  
 And elves do walk  
 Between yon straws the fauns do stalk ;  
 You tell of Pan,  
 That wild god-man,  
 And all his music-loving clan.

There is a sound,  
 A sigh profound,  
 Of music from the oat-sown ground,  
 All low and sweet,  
 As if the beat  
 Of wings did stir the noonday heat.

Where oats do grow  
'Tis sweet to go,  
To hear their ghostly whispers low ;  
They never will  
Hang mute and still,  
But quaver in a treble shrill.

Of grasses tall  
The fine oat small  
Most music-loving is of all ;  
It loves to sing  
As it does swing  
Upon its stem, the tiny thing !

Smooth, golden straw  
Without a flaw,  
Such burnished shafts man never saw.  
Sail, little oat,  
Thy singing boat,  
Between the sky and earth afloat.





## THE FOUR SISTERS.

---



ERENE and fair of face,  
Old Mother Earth her seat  
Took at the head, beside the bed,  
And Fire stood at the feet.

Wringing her white hands  
Came pale and tearful Water,  
Yet rainbows span'd her dark hair bands,  
God's elder, sad-eyed daughter.

Rosy as clouds that burst at dawn  
In flaming, splendid blossom,  
Rose nymph-like Air on wings all fair,  
Hands folded on her bosom.

So waited they, the sisters fair,  
Each in her place attending,  
To take her own when this frail house  
Should fall yet have no ending.

Fire first stretched forth her hand :  
The dying man grew colder ;

A hue of ashes slowly spread  
From brow and cheek to shoulder.

Water, weeping, faltering cried :  
“ Give me back my dower ! ”  
The tears ran down the woful face,  
And answered in a shower.

Air, the Spirit, gently sighed,  
And bending o'er the breath,  
That change passed o'er this feeble house  
The change that men call Death.

“ All that remaineth now is mine,  
Temple of God, so grand,”  
Said Earth ; she kissed the cold white face,  
The feeble, powerless hand,

And clasped the fallen house of clay  
Lovingly to her breast,  
Whispering “ ever dear to me,  
With me you shall find rest.”

The Earth created of her share  
A pale forget-me-not,  
Fire set her spark, a jewel fair,  
In a star-clustered spot.

And where the dazzling rainbows shine  
Celestial gleams of light,  
The Water hung her dower fine  
Along these arches bright.

But none do know where thin, fine Air  
Hath hid or placed her own,  
Or where abides her subtle share  
In cold or tropic zone.

When all the sisters had their share,  
Remained, that none did claim,  
A stranger with a high born air,  
Without a home or name.

It asked of these old sisters four,  
"Tell me whose share am I?"  
They bowed their heads in silence all,  
None of them made reply.

The voice of the Eternal God  
Answered "The last is mine,  
For which I make of Earth and Air,  
Water and Fire, a shrine.

"Older than ye, my daughters four,  
The Soul belongs to me.

Its home is heaven, its changeless life  
 Shares my Eternity."

VINE.

---



UXURIANT thing,  
 Child of the Spring,  
 'Tis plain to see that your desire  
 Is for the sun, the orb of fire,  
 So high you grow,  
 Your tendrils so  
 Leap upward to embrace some star  
 Thou knowest not from thee how far.

Sweet Summer child,  
 Vine strong and wild,  
 Thou art the emblem to entwine  
 Ambitious brows ; man's soul divine  
 Signals the star  
 Through dusk afar  
 Of slumbrous amethyst that glows  
 Farther away than science knows.

Sweet Summer vine,  
 So high and fine,  
 Alas, alas, what hour the frost

Touches thy tendrils thou art lost ;  
And man so proud  
Does in his shroud ,  
Frost-smitten vine, resemble thee,  
Fine Rambler that outran the tree.

Aspire and grow,  
'Tis better so ;  
The grandeur of a heavenly breath  
Shows through the feebleness of death.  
Hang out your sign,  
Ambitious vine ;  
Live for the sky, and hope and climb  
Through all the sultry summer-time.

And thou, proud man,  
Thy hopes outran  
The most luxuriant summer vine ;  
Thy soul did reach towards things divine ;  
Towards starry glow ;  
'Twas better so,  
For angels read on thy dead face  
High thoughts that had in heaven their place.







## THE AGED MONK.

---

“An aged Monk lived so long alone with a marble  
face of Christ that he grew to be like it.”

---



N the olden time there once lived within an  
abbey dim

An aged man who only read, and prayed,  
and sang his hymn.

In stern seclusion lived he there ; his daily fare was  
bread,

With water, and a wisp of straw pillowed this old  
man's head.

He had not always been a man so weary, wan and  
old ;

His kindly heart, from youth to age, was never hard  
or cold.

But every thought and every hope of life had long  
been given

Unto the high and beautiful, the lordly King of  
Heaven.

He read the story of Christ's birth, within the silent  
room,  
Of garden and of crucifix, and angel-haunted tomb.

Upon the mount whence Christ went up, the lilies  
seemed to bloom,  
For Moses, and Elias too, they yielded their per-  
fume,

And all this mountain of the Lord seemed sweet  
with flowers, and bright,  
As down the heavenward slanting beams come  
wings and forms of light.

And all the company he had, within his cell alone,  
Was Christ's face, that some artist's hand had  
sculptured out of stone.

It was enough ; it was a heaven ; it shone a splendid  
star,  
Fair as the herald that appeared in Bethlehem afar.

And keeping such high company, the old man grew  
to be  
Fair as an angel of the Lord, and beautiful to see.

And men did say, that on his face the lovely image  
there

They saw of Christ's sweet, marble face, all heavenly  
and fair.

Nor principalities, nor powers, nor life, nor death  
could part

These two, the aged man and Christ, the brother of  
his heart.

---

## GRANDFATHER GRAY.

---



MY grandfather Gray has snow-white hair,  
And the top of his head is smooth and bare,  
And I sometimes say to grandfather Gray  
Did the boys of your time wear aprons blue,  
Were they bald on the top of the head like you?  
He smiles, and says when you get to be  
In the seventies, Charlie, you will see.

That is our church on the hillside high,  
The pigeons into its belfry fly.  
On Sundays, holding my grandfather's hand,  
I go there to pray. It is large and grand.  
To keep me quiet, my grandfather takes  
Along with him, Sundays, some apples and cakes.

There once was a girl, her name was Rose,  
She came there dressed in her Sunday clothes,

Her ribbons were blue, such pretty bows  
Nobody ever saw as those ;  
And I never saw such a pretty child  
As she was, when she turned to our pew and smiled,  
For she sat in front of grandfather's seat,  
And I gave her apples and cakes to eat,  
But then one Sunday they brought her there  
In a box, asleep, and they said a prayer ;  
And my grandfather said she had gone away  
Into the Kingdom of Heaven to stay.

My grandfather Gray and I, at night,  
Sit all alone in the fire's bright light,  
But he nods his head and falls asleep,  
As the hands up the great clock creep and creep,  
Like a race up hill till half-past nine.  
And I pat the cat's head, that's a friend of mine,  
My grandfather wakes up by and by,  
Who slept, he says, Charlie, you or I?  
We live alone, for our friends they say,  
Every one of them, all are gone away  
Into the Kingdom of Heaven to stay.





## CARDINAL FLOWER.

---

**O**N the breast of the Summer, vanished and  
ended,  
Thou wilt swoon no more, frail blossom of  
red,  
Perished cardinal flower of desert morasses,  
The bloom of thy brightness and beauty is fled.  
From the heart of the Summer the bud yet unfolded  
That was snatched, keeps forever its secret untold,  
Though rains of the fountains and unstinted measure  
Of sunshine baptise it in dew or in gold.

No power can revive those ephemeral treasures.  
Born to blush on the breast of the Summer an hour,  
The queen is departed, the glory is fading,  
Of bright golden rod and of cardinal flower.  
Purple pale asters, your many shades blending,  
White everlasting and delicate grass,  
Your queen lies asleep in the arms of September,  
And the flowers that she cherished must perish,  
alas!

Her face is untouched by a line of Time's finger,  
She is fallen asleep, amid poppies and wheat ;  
Let none shed a tear for the roses and lilies  
That lie on her mother-breast, stainless and sweet,  
For she came of a race that must die in its glory,  
While reapers with sickles through aisles of the  
grain,  
And ripe loads of wheat tell the vanquished queen's  
story,  
And birds of the wilderness join the refrain.

Corn, rye, wheat and oats, ye battalions of grasses,  
With glittering bayonets holding the land,  
Ye wild organ reeds of the lonesome morasses,  
Bow to her whose scepter now falls from her hand!  
For her sing, ye song birds, the glory is over ;  
Ye thrushes and blackbirds and sweet singers all,  
Sing, children and maidens, sing poet or lover ;  
The voice is now mute that once answered ye all.

But break thou, oh heart ! thou sad desolate mourner  
Alone in the gardens of perishing bloom,  
Where each wind-torn censer that burneth its incense  
Seems a fast-waning taper that shines by a tomb.  
The birds may return and the earth-buried rootlets  
Hold a hope and a life through the long winter's  
frost,

But no Spring brings back the ephemeral treasures  
Of life's early morning, now perished and lost.

---

## GRASS.

---



'LL thank you not to grow so high,  
So thick and fast, thou busy grass,  
For if you do, then how shall I,  
In all the world find room to pass?  
I do not wish to bruise your blade,  
Or crush your humble little bloom  
But every inch of all the glade  
Is full of grass ; there is no room."

"You need not fear to crush my flower ;  
My powerful friends, the dew and rain,  
Will raise me up within the hour.

Pass on ; the grass will not complain,  
The herds, the men, the children pass ;  
They come and go, but cannot kill ;  
No hardship beateth back the grass ;  
Anew it ever springeth still.

"For God hath made the grass to be  
Humble and sturdy, strong to grow.  
And not ashamed if men do see

Me as the poorest friend they know.  
I feel no envy for the high,  
Nor grudge the wayside flower her grace.  
God blesses me, and even I  
Make glad the waste and desert place.

“And yet I bring my small raceme  
Of fairy bloom to bright July.  
Not one of all the flowers does seem  
More graceful then, more fresh than I.  
The rose hath in her garden dwelt,  
The object of a tender care,  
While I the spurning foot have felt  
A thousand times, yet am as fair.”

“Thanks, gentle preacher, for thy song ;  
Thy little sermon of to-day.  
'Tis not too high, 'tis not too long ;  
Thy life adds all that thou would'st say :  
Still, ever, in fresh beauty weave,  
Still brood o'er all the wilding bees,  
Still cover hearts that once did grieve,  
With softest flower-starred tapestries.”







## JEANNIE AND JOHN.

---



LL nature ran into a rhyme :  
It was a day in summer time,  
When hyssop bloomed with mint and thyme ;  
    A day in June,  
    When roses swoon,  
And John and Jean went down to see  
The country, where the air blows free,

Jeannie was turned of seventeen,  
And John was fair as lads are seen ;  
Blue flowers bloomed all the turfs between,  
    The sky above  
    Was warm, and love  
Stole in the hearts of lad and lass  
From blooming bud and vernal grass.

The lovely earth was all aglow,  
And elder hedges showed their snow ;  
They fell in love— alas ! “ You know  
    How ’tis yourself ! ”  
Cupid, the elf,

His arrow shot, and home it sped,  
Wounding the heads of roses red.

And overhead at morn and noon  
Housekeeping robins sang their tune,  
Expecting to be matrons soon.

How could they pray  
On such a day,  
But dream some sweet delightful dream,  
When flowers were out by hedge or stream?

The moral is, as you may know :  
Don't go where roses are aglow,  
Down country paths, by hedge of snow,  
Where elders grow,  
Because I know,  
True as the sky is blue above,  
That you and John will fall in love.

---

## THE ENGINEER.

---



T early dawn the Engineer  
Came down from haunts of fawn and deer.  
Some fragrance of the mountain rose,  
That in the far-off stillness grows,

Some freshness of the mountain stream  
Some crystal waters' dancing gleam,  
Some softness of the velvet moss  
Seemed borne with him the land across

For he came down from heights serene,  
Through leagues and leagues of living green.  
His coal train thundering by in state,  
Seaward, where distant cities wait,

His winged steed, his horse of fire  
Swept past, and shamed the vain desire  
Of action, and the strong unrest,  
By which man's spirit is possessed.

The Engineer stood at his post  
As one in thought absorbed and lost ;  
No pleasure lured him by the way,  
No beauty of the Summer day.

Alert, active and self-possessed,  
He watched a steed that needs no rest ;  
Through meadows, uplands, dale and town,  
It whirled and dashed and thundered on.

Yet once, once in the early June,  
When the wild roses were in swoon,  
Intoxicated with perfume,  
And all the world was red with bloom,

The Engineer looked from his den,  
The early dawn was breaking then,  
And threw a kiss to me before  
The train passed by the cottage door.

And the salute I understood:  
He threw the kiss to womanhood,  
To all the charm and all the grace  
That maketh home a pleasant place.

And I, unto the chevalier,  
Without reproach or without fear,  
Whose life was duty, stern and grave,  
The answering salutation gave.

Man's conquests to the world remain  
When he, frail one is dust again;  
With power to mould the earth at will,  
This hero is a mortal still.





## FIR TREE.

---



HERE do you go, old Sexton gray,  
With your well-worn, spade this winter day?"

"I am going up to the churchyard fir,  
The roots of that ancient tree to stir."

"But the snow is afloat and the winds blow so  
Tempest-like that I would not go."

"The way is pathless and bleak, but I must  
Go to-day or the spade will rust."

"Sprays of diamond are in your hair,  
The sleet flashes bright from the cap you wear.

"Ah, well I know, I can read your brow,  
Speak low old Sexton, but tell me now :

"Who is it waits for the Sexton's spade  
Whose grave this day is to be made?"

"'Tis a little lily, a little girl  
With lips of rose and golden curl."

“Ah, then return, go back, for the day  
Is all too bleak for the child, I say.”

“But the frost and the snow are naught to her,  
And thick is the shelter of the fir.”

“But I tell thee, Sexton, it is too cold  
For lips of roses and curls of gold.”

“Yes, so the mothers of earth have said  
Since first they began to weep for the dead.

“Hark to the words that I whisper my dear,  
Do not weep for the babes, do not have a fear.

“For there comes an hour in the night when the fir  
Flames into gold by the sepulchre.

“And through the boughs of each old tree  
Falls a song of the stars full of melody.

“Come little children, come to me,  
'Tis a Shepherd's song and they hear and see.

“They are gone, all gone, and the cold bleak air  
Of frost does not touch a forehead fair ;

“For the Shepherd comes, in his Shepherd's plaid,  
He gathers them up, little lass or lad,

“And the grave is bare and empty and lone,  
For Shepherd and lamb are together flown.”

---

JACK FROST.

---



WHOSE cunning hand adorns each room,  
Working through night's long hours of  
gloom?

Who guides the loom  
Whose patterns run to woodland ferns,  
Old arabesque and flower-filled urns?

All exquisite,  
Each line doth fit;  
Whose work is it?

Jack Frost, whence came the patterns rare;  
These quaint designs of frozen air?  
For most this dainty genius weaves

Fern leaves:  
Can any tell, in woody dell,  
The sprays that serve for patterns well?

The coruscations of the snow  
In small stars glow, doth any know

How they grew so?  
Hath any mortal entered in

The storehouse of the grim Ice-King,  
Where pearls of ice are glittering  
On everything?  
Jack is a scout  
This king sends out.

In filaments of fine frost spun  
Glitters each splendid star or sun.  
All this is done  
But to adorn one winter night ;  
The frost flowers grow in Orion's light,  
But fade at morning's dawn so bright.  
All exquisite,  
The fair forms flit ;  
No more their lights of crystal burn  
But fern and star and shining urn  
Dissolve and into vapor turn.







## BOHEMIA.

---

**B**OHEMIA, thy cloudland lies  
With all its rare empurpled dyes  
Not far away.  
And any day  
The weary pilgrim o'er the stile  
May step and dream or rest awhile,  
And there he may  
Feel all life's burdens roll away.

Bohemia, thy grapes are sweet,  
Thy gray old trees o'erarch each street  
And half-way meet ;  
Travel-worn feet  
Sink in the moss or grass so deep  
And soft, that any one may sleep,  
As on a bed  
Forever for the weary spread.

Bohemia, thy people all  
Are happy, old or great or small,  
All pleasant, kind,  
All of one mind,

Content with what the land doth yield,  
Each envying not his neighbor's field.  
    And all possessed  
Of one desire for joy or rest.

Bohemia, no real age  
Touches philosopher or sage,  
    Fraternally  
    The young and gay  
Walk hand in hand with men of gray ;  
Their heads are gray, hearts young always.  
    Bohemia  
Gives youth and immortality.

In fair Bohemia no death  
Comes ; when the singer yields his breath  
    They only say  
    He steals away  
Far down into the Boehmer wald  
Of Scandinavian or scald,  
    To learn to sing,  
New songs from birds upon the wing.

They only say the singer sleeps  
And his long dreams in silence keeps  
    Over his lute ;  
    And bird or flute

Would wake him to a sweet surprise,  
Would make him ope his heaven-closed eyes.  
He will not wake  
The dreamer nor his slumber break.

---

## RAIN DROPS.



FROM the cradle of a cloud,  
From the silver of its shroud,  
With the patter and the beat  
Of a thousand fairy feet,  
Drip, drop, drip, drop down the locust leaves  
All the olden roof across,  
Like sad semibreves  
Plashing in the eaves,  
Running down the garden walks,  
Through the stems of hollyhocks,  
And out amid the sheaves.

Falling like a gentle kiss  
From the heaven's tenderness,  
Dropping down so sweet and still  
Over fern and daffodil,  
Drip, drop, drip, drop, but you will not stay.  
Hastening on to form a spring,

Where the birds may splash or sing ;  
    Hasten, haste away,  
    How you love your play.  
To the cadence of a brook,  
Bent to many a curve or crook,  
You dance the livelong day.

Past the spray of birch or beech,  
On beyond the willow's reach,  
Heedless of the flowers that burn,  
In the reeds like star or urn,  
Drip, drop, drip drop, for the lake make room.  
Rolls a river all the noon,  
Rushing on by cloud or moon,  
    Through a desert's gloom  
    Lit by palms abloom.  
On through jungles where may drink  
Leopards from a velvet brink,  
What shapes you do assume.

Now forgetful of thy birth  
Bidding long adieu to earth,  
Gathered, gathering at length  
Into all the Ocean's strength :  
Drip, drop, drip, drop, lo you hold a fleet !  
Men their treasures bear o'er thee  
Tempting the majestic sea,

Pearls and rubies meet  
 Honey, corn or wheat  
 For the ships do represent  
 Every shining continent,  
 Every city's busy street.

---

 P L O V E R S .
 

---



T the side of a lake, where the grass grew  
 the best  
 And warmest, two plovers constructed their  
 nest,

Soft and secure, yet touching the edge  
 Of the deep lakelet, and fanned by the sedge.

And after a little, four eggs, brown and white,  
 Filled the hearts of the bridegroom and bride with  
 delight.

The eggs turned to birds, and with wings and with  
 crest,  
 Four promising plovers filled brimful that nest.

This was the song that the plovers sung,  
 As bride and groom sang it, so sang their young :

“The world is so large, there’s so much to eat,  
That you and I will not toil, my sweet.

“For the water brings to our very feet  
Fishes and flies, and enough to eat.

“Sing thou, therefore, as I sing my sweet ;  
The plovers toil not for their daily meat.

“Men toil and men sweat to harvest the grain,  
The plovers sing through the sun and the rain,

“Men weary themselves to gather the wheat,  
While the plovers sing and the plovers eat.

“For man is little, but God is great ;  
His harvests flow in in a wondrous state

“From woodland, meadow, valley and hill,  
And he biddeth each wild bird to eat his fill.

“Sing little birds, sing the wild birds hymn,  
Giving doth not impoverish Him.”





## MOUSIE.

---



AID one mouse to another mouse :

“ Pray visit me

And see the treasures of my house

And granary :

My mansion is within a sheaf

Of ripest wheat,

And there no mouse can come to grief

For lack of meat.”

“ Oh, happy, fortune-favored mouse :

So rich to be ;

To dwell within such furnished house,

To live so free

From all life's weary cares, the cat,

The many snares

Spread for the homeless mouse or rat

Who illy fares.”

“ I have life's comforts,” said the mouse,

“ Yet I have grief.

By mine, a swallow has her house,

An idle thief

Who eats as though the wheat were her's.  
A saucy bird,  
And from her nest she hardly stirs.  
Who ever heard

“ Such conduct in a naughty bird?  
And then she sings!  
Of hypocrites that I have heard  
That swallow's wings  
Carries the worst. Alas 'tis true,  
Because she looks  
As innocent and guileless, too,  
As if no books

“ Explained to us the me and thou ;  
The Decalogue  
Will some day choke this bird, I know.  
The soulless log !  
To sit and sing while meadows teem  
With fly or bug,  
And o'er her worthless eggs to dream.  
I wish the Thug,

“ That dreary wretch, that small barn owl  
Who hunts for me,  
Would catch this little worthless fowl,  
Glad would I be.



I swear to you, I never do  
Go out to call  
Without the fear that I into  
His clutch may fall.

“So that, my dear, the great or small  
Each has his woe.  
My house is in a wheat rick tall,  
And yet I know  
How in his cell the pris’ner feels ;  
And how he feels,  
Too, when the thief his face reveals  
And boldly steals.

“It is a wicked, wicked world ;  
If little mice  
And yellow wheat made all the world,  
That would be nice ;  
No cat, no trap, no dreadful owl  
To scare a mouse,  
And like a fiend to hunt and prowl  
About the house.”





## CROW.

---



**E**BONY black and beautiful crow,  
Where do you come from, where would you  
go?

You are beleaguered, a captive of snow.  
Bitterly, bitterly,  
From the Northeasterly  
Point of the compass drifteth the snow ;  
And from the Northernmost  
Point of the continent  
Legions of winds, escaping from banishment,  
Sullenly call to the snow.

How the great trees shiver,  
All their fine limbs quiver,  
As each mad wind gives them a blow.  
Do not fly on while the tempest beats so ;  
In the warm citadel  
Of the great barnyard, you will fare well.  
Brindle will let you alight on her back,  
And eat of her grain and share of the stack.  
Stay by our barn, keep your toes warm ;

Papa or Ned from the wheat rick will throw  
Breakfast and supper to you, pretty crow,  
We do not grudge you a bit of our bread,  
The birds have good right as we to be fed.

The snow-birds, pretty things  
With silver lining to ashen gray wings  
The time have found out  
And cluster about,  
For the farm fodderings.  
The little flock all  
Comes at our call,  
They answer our greeting  
With their twee, tweeting,  
And up on the casement  
And down by the basement  
Leave us the cunningest, tiniest speck  
Of footprint or beak.  
The barnyard is full  
Of sheep covered with wool,  
And turkey, and hen,  
And pigs out of pen,  
And lazy old cows  
That dream as they browse ;  
What they're thinking about  
Nobody can know,  
Not even a crow.

Stay with us all winter, beautiful crow,  
 If you are not as white as the snow—  
 All of the feathered race cannot be so.  
     Nor need cynics complain  
     That a crow cannot sing  
     Any song or refrain :  
 With purple black feathers, satin smooth wings,  
     You are as fine as a king.

Is it your fault, as you croak on a tree,  
 That you do not know how to sing Do, Fa, Ra,  
     Me?  
     Song is a gift,  
 We are sure you would lift  
     Your voice to soprano,  
     If rythm would flow  
     At the will of a crow.

---

## SOFT MAPLE.

---



**P**ARDON me for making my adieu so early.  
 But having bloomed so long and bloomed  
     so well,  
 Permit me early in the Autumn days to say, Fare-  
     well!

For having bloomed so long and bloomed so early,  
You know I came in with the hurly-burly  
Of those passionate March days,  
Let me make adieu in days of grace.

For my scarlet limbs were all aglow  
With bloom before the April snow ;  
Do you not remember when in March, for whips,  
The schoolboys broke my branches, redder than  
their lips ?

And my crimson tassels on the breast of Spring  
I laid first the earliest offering.  
I was here to greet the Spring, and blossoming  
Ere the bluebird to the April days displayed her  
wing.

Flash the radiant beauty over dell  
And wilderness and meadow ; yet farewell.  
Let this tender sunset of the year  
Throw its mellowness upon my red leaves growing  
sere.

Burn and wave each torch of red,  
Blood-red crimson, burn and throw  
O'er the world a fiery glow ;  
Spill your splendors in a glare of fitful beauty ;  
Life is over, growth is ended, done is duty ;  
All the work and all the toil is done ;

Dying leaves of dying trees eclipse the sun,  
Toil is over; Saturnalia begun.

Run! run! run! who goes fastest in this race?  
Lo! it is the blood-red maple leads the chase.  
I will run the fastest, in the foremost conflagration  
    keep my place;  
Let me say adieu the first; my comrades, grant this  
    grace!

Shouting in exuberance of wild delight,  
The yellow leaves all drunken, day and night  
Wave the wild splendors of their wondrous light;  
And madly burn yet do not overtake me quite.

I am nothing in this crash of beauty, let me go;  
Feeble leaf and feeble storm, let go!  
Let me float a moment on the wings  
Of the winds before I fall below  
To the bosom of the earth whence beauty springs  
New, out of life's eternal fountains.





## CHRISTMAS-TREE.

---



NOW let us to the woods away  
And choose our Christmas-tree to-day ;  
Which shall it be, hemlock or fir,  
Or pine tree ; which do you prefer ?

Or, cedar, bitter both and sweet ?  
They all, indeed, are very meet,  
For every one hath on the sheen  
Of a perpetual evergreen.

The living tree alone we bring,  
Its green, sweet branches, to our King ;  
The fountain of its life doth flow  
Gently beneath the winter snow.

The earth is decked in stainless white  
In honor of Christ's natal night,  
Strung o'er with many a frosty gem  
Glitters her splendid diadem.

Here sings the evergreen her hymn  
Amid the cold woods, gray and dim ;

Say, have you seen in any path  
Of wood, the beauty Winter hath?

In ice and pearl, and gay cascade,  
Frozen, the woods are now arrayed,  
And piled upon the evergreen  
The ermine of the snow is seen.

Now cut the evergreen and bring  
It home, an offering to our King.  
What says this fresh green tree to thee,  
With boughs so sweet, so fresh to see?

To-night it blooms in many lands,  
An emblematic tree it stands;  
Christ whispers from the Christmas-tree,  
This is my day, remember me!

What says the candle that doth burn?  
Toward light may all thy footsteps turn.  
What say the good gifts on the tree?  
See what my love hath done for thee;

Be kind and good, little earth-child,  
Be like to Jesus, gentle, mild;  
The shining berries of the haw,  
They have a word for thee also.



Also each glittering ornament  
Which to the Christmas-tree is lent,  
These are the pleasures, without harm,  
That lends life loveliness and charm.

And when the candles are burned low  
'There is a word to thee also :  
All things must fail, however fair,  
However sweet and good they are.

But if thy life was like the tree,  
Most lovely will its memory be.  
These are the words the Christmas-tree,  
With its green branches, brings to thee.

---

THISTLEDOWN.

---



THISTLEDOWN, thistledown,  
Fluttering idly through the town,  
Prophet of the waning year,  
Good day to you and good cheer !  
You are like the tolling bell,  
You are like the solemn knell  
In the history you tell.  
From your husk so dry and brown,  
Pilgrims, you invade the town ;

Idly to and fro, whither do you go?  
Don't you know the sleet and snow  
And the Autumn winds that blow  
Will wilt you so, will pelt you so,  
That your very dearest dear  
Best beloved goldfinch, near  
Neighbor to you all the year,  
Will not know you, shrunken so,  
Collapsed, fallen very low?  
In your field with mullein stalks,  
Be content to take your walks;  
You are too ambitious far,  
Tiny little wanderer.  
From the place where you abide  
You can never guess how wide  
Runs the atmospheric tide.  
Shaken, hither, thither tossed,  
'Thistledown, you will be lost!  
Don't go fluttering through this town  
In your silver-colored gown;  
You are such an humble thing,  
Feeble little silken wing,  
You will whirl along the air  
Like a poor adventurer.  
'Thistledown, unfitted quite  
Are you for aerial flight;  
You are only fit to line

Birds' nest with your satin fine,  
Since the Autumn days are hazy  
Thistledown is growing crazy.  
Much of light aerial grace  
In your pretty aimless chase  
After what, Argonaut?  
Have you heard prophetic words  
From the multitude of birds?  
Look and wish and wish again,  
Little thistledown, in vain.  
You will never dare to try  
Wings with children of the sky.  
They would laugh to see you fly,  
Thistledown, so don't you try!"

"Why I go and where I go.  
That is what I do not know.  
The will that launched me in the air,  
And bade me for the flight prepare,  
Has the thistledown in care.  
For this flight my pinions grew  
And my silver garments new.  
If my way lie through the town  
There will float the thistledown;  
If beyond the pine tree's top  
Wherefore should I elsewhere stop?  
Anywhere, through earth or air,

Thistledown has not a care.  
I may fly to far Canary,  
Or sow seed on the Sahara;  
Launched upon my fine balloon  
I may journey to the moon,  
Don't you see 'tis naught to me  
Where my resting-place may be?  
I am fluttering in the sun  
Till my duty here be done,  
Quite assured that, where I drop,  
There will spring a thistle's crop."

"Little fleet, airy fleet,  
Nature's gracious ways are sweet,  
Life and death together meet,  
Death doth make all life complete.  
Take the freedom of the town,  
Little pilgrim thistledown."





## AUTUMN.

---



HE grains are gathered to the barn,  
The weeds hang ripe by pool and tarn ;  
Within the grape the royal blood  
Is ripening in a crimson flood.  
The toil is over ; my desire  
Is now to light a splendid fire ;  
Upon my funeral pyre to spread,  
I'll choose the yellow leaves and red ;  
To gather in the shining leaves,  
I will, while Mother Nature grieves.

Beneath the trees, like flowery rain,  
The leaves have fallen without pain ;  
O'er many a gentler flower's grave  
The golden rod her wand doth wave,  
And everlasting's pale white flowers,  
Fit flame for Autumn's waning hours,  
With sad and widowed aster will  
I burn in purple cap and frill ;  
The burning sumac, golden red,  
As Moses' bush of flame I'll wed,

And braid it with the pink-buckwheat  
And berries of the bittersweet ;  
With spice bush, sassafras and fir,  
And gum drops, sweet as wine or myrrh,  
They all shall burn, and moldering turn  
To cold gray ashes for an urn.

The wheat with which my hair I bind,  
Its way into the fire shall find ;  
Witch-hazel and the chestnut's leaf,  
The corn's husk and the nut's dry sheaf,  
I throw them all into my fire ;  
The year's fine fire of rose and brier,  
With all the glories of my name,  
And Autumn's garniture of flame ;  
And as my fires rise to the sky,  
I, the immortal, seem to die,  
For quickly shall the fires efface  
Each line of beauty from my face.  
Yet, when the bare boughs touch the sky,  
Remember Autumn did not die,  
For with a coming harvest moon  
Shall come the Autumn afternoon.

---

I gather for my beauty's bed  
The shining haws of roses red,  
And from the secret mountain pass  
The flaming boughs of sassafras.

To gather of her berries bright  
The mountain ash doth me invite,  
The apples of the golden haw,  
The golden oats' fine golden straw.

Barley and rye and pink buckwheat,  
The fine flame of the bittersweet,  
The kingly corn's sere burnished sheaf  
The maple's shining yellow leaf.

The withered aster in her frill  
Of purple and dry grasses shrill,  
With weeping sedges that lament  
The Autumn's gusty tournament.

I bind my brow with ripened wheat,  
On withered roses set my feet,  
I gather all to build my pyre,  
I gather all to light my fire.

Such tapestries were never spread  
On any earthly monarch's bed,  
These all shall burn and mouldering turn  
To cold gray ashes for my urn.

I seize each leaf that fluttering flies  
Like a fair bird through lambent skies,

Beech, oak and elm they each do send  
Tokens to me as friend to friend.

Having no need of pattern seed,  
I burn alike the flower and weed ;  
They all shall go to make my fire,  
The year's fine fire of rose and briar.

The tendrils of the swaying vine  
Russet and yellow all are mine,  
And when my bed is fully decked  
With all the hues of Autumn flecked,

Then I with them will seem to die  
And close the Season's history ;  
And yet remember in my urn  
There is a germ that did not burn.

And I will surely bring the moons  
To other harvest afternoons ;  
And you will see me rise again  
Like rootlets sprouting after rain.

Were all forms lost I could as fair  
Restore from sun and dew and air,  
For in my urn of dust did lie  
The germ of Immortality.



And in thy breast there is the same  
Aspiring and undying flame ;  
And were thy mortal fabric lost,  
Thy particles to chaos tossed,  
Still life could weave thy form anew,  
Thy scattered particles renew  
That power which made thy life to be  
Assures its Immortality.

---

Let fall your tear  
Upon her bier.  
Radiant in Tyrian dyes,  
She shames man's agonies  
Roses bloom on her cheek.  
She dared grim Death to break  
Lances with her in a gay tournament,  
And in her languishment  
Was full of blandishment.  
Her beauty's dress is scarlet mixed with gold,  
With dusky purple edge and purple fold.  
Leaves in millions, red vermilions  
Some like amber-hued papilions  
Which the butterflies unfold,  
With each inner fold  
Of darker, duskier gold,  
Keep a waltz about her head,

And a dance about her bed,  
 And thus in state she lies  
 And like a sovereign dies ;  
 With the gathered glories of the year  
 And scarce a tear to stain her royal bier.

---

### WILD VINE.

---



HE stole away :

And left the enclosure, the garden gay,  
 The graceful bunches of lilies trim,  
 A wanderer seeking the moorlands dim,  
 And silently crept through the garden gate,  
 Discoverer seeking a larger estate.  
 The spray of her tendrils she stretched to fall  
 On the other side of the garden wall.  
 As she passed she sang, " Oh, sunbeams fair !  
 I go where thy liberal measures are,  
 Where flowers, too rare  
 For the cultured garden's showy glare,  
 In wild and sweet abundance stand ;  
 I am going forth to a broader land,  
 For I feel the longing within my soul  
 For a life that knoweth no control.  
 I will taste Heaven's dew  
 Under infinite arches of azure blue.

Adieu, blue bell,  
Trim flowers, farewell."

By waysides gray  
The fugitive flower did make her way,  
Discoursing sometimes with a thistle's head,  
And sometimes stealthily drawing her thread  
Through tangles and meadows of clover red,  
To set her roots in a broader place,  
To number herself with an older race :  
A statlier, uncultured, in free wide space ;  
To touch the spray of the bending briar,  
To warm herself in the wild rose's fire :  
This was the wandering vine's desire.

So she shook her bells to each Summer breeze,  
Making her companionship with these.  
She wandered away, where, cool and gray,  
And sullen the heart of the moorlands lay,  
Girt with the shadow of moisture alway.  
She crept to haunts where copious dew  
Ever filtered the woodlands through,  
Where it lay like showers  
In diamond drops over living flowers,  
Broader and deeper her tendrils to twine,  
She lost the look of a garden vine,  
She gathered a largeness of soul divine,

As, sturdy and strong,  
She crept along,  
Having forgotten the garden quite  
She opened her heart to dew and light ;  
Nor feared she the night,  
Traversing the meadows by lanterns of gold,  
Fearing not heat nor shrinking from cold,  
Lawgiver herself,  
This vine was an elf,  
She founded an empire that still does endure,  
Whose roots are set sure,  
Broad, deep and secure.  
In fissures of mountain, on précipice steep,  
In meadows, by great rivers deep.  
Issuing forth from the garden's trim portal  
She relinquished the mortal,  
Laying hold of the life everlasting.





## FARMER HAWTHORNE.

**D**AVID HAWTHORNE was an old farmer  
Who knew, by the tassels on the wild alder,  
When spring, with a knot of green on her  
    shoulder,  
The hedgerows went tripping between.

Hailing the blue bird's wing with delight,  
Herald that winter glides out of sight,  
He made himself ready for work with a might,  
    Whetting old blades,  
Threatening weeds with vigorous raids,  
    As days grew longer  
Farmer Hawthorne was also so strong  
That no Summer day, however long,  
    Could make him stronger.

Axes, scythes, rakes, hoes and harrows,  
Were brought out from winter cover,  
For farmer Hawthorne welcomed work  
As maiden welcomes her lover.  
One odd custom had David Hawthorne,

To pray in all dull weather,  
And work like a giant when the spring-time  
Purpled the soft wild heather,  
When flocks of birds floated up together  
From the South in the fine warm weather,

Thus Farmer Hawthorne communed with himself,  
    “ When I can work I must ;  
There are long, dark days of weeping and praying,  
When the wheat is threatened with rust,  
When the baleful breath of sultry July  
Comes freighted with mildew, weevil and fly,  
And since I cannot do both together,  
I must work when I can and pray in dull weather.”

So he girded himself for his duty,  
And wrought in the sweet soft soil,  
Forgetful of self with the beauty  
    Of a devotion,  
    Such was our notion,  
And the wheat heads filled  
Where the farmer tilled,  
Fuller, rounder and yellower,  
And the earth where he wrought was mellower,  
Than where riotous Tom, Harry or Joe  
Only snubbed Mother Earth with a hoe.

Knee-deep through clover,  
Whose flower ran over,  
With honeyed bloom  
And choice perfume,  
Walked David Hawthorne ;  
Through tassels of corn  
And prairies of wheat,  
And orchards as sweet  
As rose vales where houris trip by on light feet,  
Wherever walked he  
Her food found the bee,  
Soft white clover, blooming buckwheat,  
Plenty of blossoms, plenty to eat.

Plenty and peace sat at his hearthstone  
With happy faced-ease,  
His toil and patience  
Crowned his life with thee.

Songs of robins, murmur of bees,  
Whisper of winds breathing low through the trees,  
Gurgle of spring were music to him,  
Listening to them his eyes grew dim.

In Winter the farmer sometimes would read  
Stories of cattle, vineyards or steed,  
Out of his Bible or almanac,  
Of these last he had a fifty year's stack.

With his gray head bent,  
On his lesson intent,  
The farmer would say  
In his queer quaint way—  
“Them old men of Judeer,  
That’s my ideer,  
Had amasin’ luck with cattle and land,  
And ways of farmin’ I don’t understand.”

When the fall weather  
Had ripened the heather,  
Could you but have seen  
The ricks of barley, wheat and corn,  
Glowing like gold ablaze in the morn,  
Atop of which rode home farmer Hawthorne,  
Triumphant into his corn-house or barn,

’Twould have made your heart warm,  
For his round honest face  
Was aglow with the beauty  
Of well-performed duty,  
And the way he said grace  
Through those harvesting days  
Was, “forty bushels of wheat to the acre,”  
A grace fit for parson, hermit or quaker.

Each in its fashion, the honest heart prays.  
When the farmer’s time came



He slept his last sleep as sweetly and well  
As monks who have prayed in the cloister,  
Or nuns in the sound of its bell.

Folding his strong brown hands together,  
    He talked of fair weather,  
Of jeweled birds, each with jeweled feather,  
Of bullocks, leviathans, goats and rams,  
Of holy doves and of snow-white lambs.

    And when the time came,  
    Waded through the river,  
The dark, mysterious, unknown river,  
    Without death's shiver,

Talking of timothy, oats and clover  
    That he saw over

Waving upon the other side.

If this be death, Farmer Hawthorne died,  
But I have no doubt where the Muscadine  
Drinks of the sun he will yet be seen  
In vineyards sunny and vineyards green  
    Where our Lord hath been.

For what would David Hawthorne do  
When days are sunny and skies are blue  
Without some vine or vineyard to dress  
Or ripening head of wheat to caress? ·

And I expect on some Summer morn  
Again to behold old farmer Hawthorne

On some Aldebaran or Sirius high,  
 Hidden away in a Summer sky,  
 Or where the beautiful Pleiades  
 Swarm like a cluster of golden bees,  
 Or where Andromeda uncurls her hair  
 In the light of a heavenly morning fair,  
     In some far nook of creation  
     On his plantation,  
 Where sweet wines run in a golden sun,  
 Nor blight draws near wheat in the ear,  
 Hid in clover and blossoming thyme  
     In some heavenly clime,  
 Since labor is worship, since labor is prayer,  
 We may be sure that happy and fair  
 Farmer Hawthorne is working somewhere.

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## EPICURE.

---



**I** AM sorry, I am sorry  
 For this temple frail and fair,  
 Painted like a lily rare;  
 Built of earth and fire and air.  
 I am sorry, I am sorry  
 That a painted thing so rare,  
 Celestial in its brightness,

And bird-like in its lightness,  
After all these years of care,  
Fairy changeling of the sky,  
Should fade, and droop, and die.

Therefore now this mansion fair  
Shall have jewels for its hair,  
Topaz burning in the sun,  
Opals mystical with flaming tongue,  
Pearls from out the deep sea wrung,  
Essences of cinnamon,  
Tinctures of the rose from far-off places,  
Snoods and silken veils and laces  
Woven in the air-looms of the Graces,  
Shawls of rainbow-hued Cashmere,  
Growing slowly through the length'ning year ;  
Airy fabrics for the Summer's heat.  
Costly sandals for its feet,  
Sweet or sour as it likes to eat,  
Purple silks for winter wear,  
Wrappings of the Polar bear  
Or other beast that hath the warmest fur,  
Ermine, sable, mink or miniver ;  
Down plucked from the eider's breast,  
Feathers from the peacock's crest,  
All that earth holds rarest and the best,  
Whether from the East or from the West.

I shall have thee go in state,  
Feed thee on the daintiest meat,  
Strawberries or honey sweet,  
That the bees know how to find,  
All amber clear refined,  
In pilf'ring, stealthy ways,  
And the wines of sunny vintages.

Since thou hast but one inheritance  
And must soon go hence,  
You must not fret for paltry pounds or pence,  
Nor shiver with the winter's cold,  
Nor wear rags or garments old,  
Neither faint at Summer's heat ;  
As thou hast but one estate,  
(And the soul will leave thee desolate),  
Thou shalt live in kingly state  
And the world shall on thee wait.

But a high-born gipsy is the soul,  
It would turn its wings upon the whole  
Splendor of the world, and the vine,  
Full of sacramental wine,  
Would fill all its needs divine.  
And it does not care if the poor body  
Be clothed in velvet or in shoddy,  
Neither does it care for any body.

This mansion must have all it needs,  
And my heart is torn and bleeds,  
Thinking that six feet of clay  
And a casket, ashen gray,  
And a snowy winding sheet  
From the eyelids to the feet  
Are all that it may have  
In the melancholy grave,  
And that the Summer's suns,  
In days when thou art gone,  
Shall tint up the luscious clusters one by one  
Of those grapes that lean against the sun.  
That strawberries grow sweet  
But not for thee to eat.  
That the panorama of the sky  
Red and gold shall glisten by ;  
Thou seeing nothing with dull closed eye,  
These things stab my heart and make me cry.

I charge thee, therefore, while thou stayest,  
Live thou the best and be the gayest.





## THE MUSE.

---



HE muse is dead, the heavenly muse.

“What died she of, Apollo?”

“She died of the hexameters  
And sounding measures hollow,  
She died of being so confined,  
So measured, syllabled, and lined.

“Come, maiden, to her funeral  
And cheer us with your sorrow.”

“Yes, we will come and shed our tear  
O'er the celestial maiden's bier,  
When shall we come, Apollo?”

“At twelve o'clock to-morrow ;  
When on the dial of the night  
The brightest star the hour doth smite ;  
For then the high gods can come down,  
Each bright with an eternal crown,  
The arches of the monarch's way,  
The shining, star-paved galaxy ;

Until that hour to-morrow day,  
Maiden, gather flowers and pray."

"What shall we pray, Apollo?  
And for this high-born maid  
What flowers shall be braid?"

"Canadian violets and fern,  
Sunflowers shall be the lamps we burn;  
Also the water lilies urn;  
Wild roses sweet and undefiled  
Gather for this celestial child."

"What shall we wear, Apollo?"

"Oh wear of all thy heart's desire,  
The hues that burn in heaven's fire  
Upraise the lid  
Of colors that the gods have hid,  
Caskets the dearest hearts delight  
The treasures of celestial light;  
Take from the glowing rainbow's arc,  
Take of the diamond's fiery spark,  
Ultramarine, old ocean's green,  
Carbuncle and opals' sheen,  
And colorings no man hath seen."

"Pray tell us where, Apollo,  
Entombed this heavenly maid shall be,

That we may strew marsh-rosemary  
And weeping sprays of willow  
Above her maiden pillow."

" Ah, poet, lover, friend so dear,  
Entombed our muse shall not be here ;  
Her kinsmen shall her dust with them,  
With sceptre and with diadem,  
O'er that high pathway of the sky  
Bear the immortal who did die.  
Nor shall men see this pageantry  
Of midnight and the gods go by,  
Save the few loved ones who do pray  
For the sweet maiden borne away."

" We come unto her funeral,  
And as we come lament we shall ;  
Fair maiden muse, we overstrew  
Thee with the sweetest things that grow,  
The spice-bush, sassafras, and rue,  
Incense we burn, beloved, for you.

" Thy lamp, the sunflower, we set here,  
Thy sweet and pallid features near,  
And culled from many a love-lorn spot  
Are braids of sad forget-me-not.  
In purple tears above thy feet  
Weep the Canadian violets sweet ;



With water-lilies, fairest maid,  
Thy links of pale blonde hair we braid.

“The nightingale has left her nest  
And hovers o'er thy place of rest,  
With some sad sense of loss possessed.  
And hark, ah, hark through midnight dark  
Has woke, to sing her song, the lark.

“Yes, we will pray, for prayer is meet,  
What shall we pray for thee, Muse sweet,  
Who did'st of rose and lilies eat?”

“Oh, pray that we may meet again  
Where music falls as Summer rain,  
Where song's pure fountain has its birth,  
And inspiration knows no dearth,  
Where the immortal sings the song  
That to the immortal doth belong  
Easily as doth float the note  
Out of the singing birds' soft throat.”

“Farewell, farewell,  
A long adieu, Apollo,  
Thy path we may not follow,  
Nor of its glories may we tell.  
Her kinsmen bear the cloth of gold,  
And in its dazzling sheen they fold  
The heavenly muse we loved of old.”



## MOSS.

---



HALF COUSIN to the feathery ferns  
That grow by many hills and burns ;  
The moss, an elfin creature wild,  
Is Nature's cherished fairy child.

Habiliments she ever wears  
To hide a multitude of scars ;  
The signature and mystic seal  
Of losses she will not reveal.

Outward she wears a budding vest  
Of rosebuds fragrant on her breast,  
Folding with care lest it should part  
And show the ashes of a heart.

The velvet mosses on her wait,  
They are the royal robes of state,  
And well they know where they should creep  
To hide the rents and wrinkles deep.

Moss spreads upon the olden roof,  
Year after year, a mystic woof ;

All crisp and bright, all cool and strong,  
She slowly creeps the roof along.

Weaving in every yard the lore  
And legends of the days of yore,  
Along her silken threads do run  
Histories from the ages spun.

Moss seemeth young, yet she is old,  
Moss looketh fresh, yet she is cold ;  
When first she came to earth she found  
Youth's fountain somewhere underground,

Or in the upward rills of dew  
That flow the heavenly pathways through.  
The secret of that fount she keeps,  
And in its balm her roots she steeps.

The moss is Nature's favorite child ;  
A sturdy creature, strong and wild.  
High up the mountain's furrowed side  
She dares to creep and to abide,

Past oak or beech, past larch or fir,  
Where Mother Nature leadeth her,  
Up to the frozen Arctic Zone,  
She loves to grow and dwell alone.

No earthquake's shock, no winds that break  
The oak stems can her courage shake ;  
No foot that crushes to the dust,  
Can shake her confidence or trust.

Perennial in emerald green,  
A link these Continents between,  
Half of the earth, half of the air,  
An elfin creature, strangely fair.

The soft green moss hath overgrown  
The fissure of the furrowed stone,  
Earth hath no spot so bare and poor  
But moss can set her rootlet sure.

In hidden sanctuaries lone,  
In fortresses to men unknown,  
Where not a tree its life can keep,  
The brave, strong mosses dare to creep.

Eternal youth, eternal age,  
These are the mosses heritage ;  
She smiles at man's brief pilgrimage  
And views him as some ancient sage.

The moth that flutters for an hour,  
The ephemeral radiance of a flower ;

And as man's heart to ashes turns  
Moss write her runes on funeral urns.

For moss does stay while men do go,  
For her perpetual summer's glow ;  
She is a friend who will not leave  
Thy tomb when others cease to grieve.

For in eternal solitude  
She loveth best to weave and brood ;  
The sadness of forgotten tombs  
Suits best her noiseless, ancient looms.

---

HEAD OF THE HOUSE.



---

HO will be head of the old house  
When I from it am gone,  
And who will wear my coronet  
And have my ermines on ;  
Who, when warriors call, shall ride  
My old war-horse Don John ?

Who will be head of the old house ?  
I sometimes sigh to think ;  
They care not who the lord is here

Who at my banquets drink ;  
The king is dead, or live the king,  
They heed not which they drink.

Great deeds are more than kingly race,  
In mine, the two were wed ;  
I blush for no stain on the shield,  
For no dishonored head,  
Yet this old race of warriors  
Are resting with the dead.

The last of this heroic race  
'Tis better far to be  
Than shrunken bloom or feeble bough  
To leave upon the tree ;  
My ancient and time-honored house  
Shall fail and die with me.





## THE FLITTING OF THE FLOWERS.



FLYING in my garden.

On a fine September morning,  
With its silver-headed warden,  
The gardener old John,  
The blossoms all gave warning  
Of a wish to fly away.

Stirred by a wild commotion,  
They all had the same notion  
To fly away together  
With the birds in the fine weather ;  
“And they shall not go before us,”  
Sang all the flowers in chorus,  
“They all have on the feather  
Of their flight, from heather  
And from meadow—how they flock to-  
gether—

Robin red, jenny wren, in holiday  
Apparel, golden birds and gray,  
And wings that sweep the sky

From regions far away.

No more gay coquetting,

No more work, no more songs, not a nest.

Let us go before the sun is setting,

“For the birds,” sang the blossoms, “know the best;”

“Yes, I have always noticed,” sang all the flowers  
together.

“In the changing of the seasons that the gay birds  
know the best.”

Flocking from the North and East and West

See the countless wings! Redbreast

Sits upon his apple-tree and sings

Of endless apple-bloom and endless Springs.

And the saucy blackbird sings

With flutter of a flock of raven wings:

“There’s a Heaven for the blackbirds too!”

“I don’t know,” sighs Robin, “can such news be  
true?”

Can there be a Paradise for naughty birds like you,  
And when the others go must you go too?”

“Yes,” their saucy concert rings,

“We will take Heaven with our wings.

Selfish, ugly bird, to think the Heaven blue

For robins and their babies only grew!”

“I have often noticed,” said the aster,

“That in the serenest weather,



When the maple boughs against the sky  
Lie like gold, that the jeweled birds begin to fly;  
Yellower the maples grow, birds wings fly the faster,  
Jeweled wing and jeweled feather!  
Ah, the gay birds, let us go together."

So old that he could look no older,  
With a spade upon his shoulder,  
Walked the aged guardian, singing,  
Softly down the garden walks,  
Of a land where ever springing  
Fadeless on their stalks  
Stand the flowers. "How he talks,"  
Sang together the gay hollyhocks,  
And the fadeless asters and the other flowers  
Sang in concert, "let us flit and find these bowers;"  
For they had caught the mention,  
Without old John's intention,  
Of a land of immortality,  
As he sang it in his hymn  
At morn or evening dim,  
And his sweet song set them crazy—  
Verbena, cypress, daisy,  
Were wild to fly away  
As sang the old man gray.  
His hair was like the lilies  
All wax-white in its bloom

His cheeks were like the peaches  
On the topmost bough that reaches  
To the sky.  
Showing wonderful carnation,  
For John, since his creation,  
Had lived among the flowers.  
Telling time by discs of posies  
And seasons by the roses,  
Arranging all his duties  
By chronometers of bloom ;  
Past the beds of rare perfume  
His spade and hoe he carried  
In perpetual revolution,  
And no worthless, rude weed tarried ;  
They were past old John's solution  
And noxious to his creed ;  
For he thought the elect seed  
Of rose or mignonette  
Or other flowers as fair  
Alone to be entitled  
To dew and sun and air ;  
And the humble weed untitled  
He would let it live nowhere.

Then a radiant morning-glory  
Who had told her charming story,  
How they mix the purple, blue

And carnation all the Summer through,  
Whispered, "Wait a moment, old man, linger,  
I have something I would say,  
I wish to fly away.  
Ah now did you expect it,  
Do you see I have a hectic  
And a sort of good-by look,  
And yellowness about my root.  
Do you really now old man?  
Thou too art growing wan  
And thy well worn spade  
And thy rake and hoe  
Must soon away be laid;  
Come to us, then, old man, come to us if you can."  
The old man answered, sighing,  
"I also with the flying  
Of the birds must go, and with the flitting  
Of the blossoms it is fitting  
That the gardener, old and feeble, should go too.  
And all of us together—blue,  
Gold, raven jackets, altogether;  
Jeweled birds with jeweled feather,  
Robin redbreast, e're the weather  
Change—shall go with the troupes of flowers,  
Silken, softer than the bosoms  
Of the birds, and with tread far softer  
Than the breath of Ariel,

Bright Laburnum and Azalea pale ;  
 Laying down my spade,  
 With folded hands upon my breast,  
 I will follow after all the rest."

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## THE BRIDE.

---



**B**URIED roses, grass, and sweet japonica  
 That must have graced some summer far  
 away.

A faded portrait and a lock of hair,  
 A precious ring that her lost lover used to wear ;

A dress of satin like a moonlit wave,  
 Old yellow laces wrought by hands the grave'  
 Had clasped, sweet poems of frail laces  
 Haunted with a loveliness of strange lost faces,

As in her saint-like beauty she did lie.  
 These were her dower and drapery,  
 And to death's chilly country cold and gray  
 Of dower and wealth enough they were to take away.





## SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

---



N dreams the Christmas lights in cheerful  
homes I see,

Do Christians think of me, and of my lost  
ships three?

Would through the pealing hymns the organ's tone  
Some sigh might breath of him lost, snowbound and  
alone!

My countrymen so brave, my peril could they dream,  
Would fly to my relief on wings of fire and steam.  
But none may tell our tale, and we shall see no  
more.

Our sweet fair Island of the sea,—loved England's  
shore.

There is no sound of life, the storm-bound doors  
between

Us tight ice-bolted stand, and the sweet zones of  
green,

Even the poor snow huts have dropped a little  
down,

Nearer the sunny lands the polar birds have flown,

No reindeer lichen grows, there is no sun to greet,  
Frozen in ice each ship that makes our little fleet.  
Grim rules the Ice-king, all the frozen earth and air,  
Our hearts within our breasts are lead, dumb with  
despair.

Gone, gone at last all hope, no fire, no bread, no  
seal,  
Through the dread Arctic night at last death doth  
his face reveal ;  
But when man cometh to life's end let us thank  
God  
The ice-drift is as soft as velvet daisied sod.

My gentle lady tell by chart and compass well  
Studied, we come to know the tropic's ruddy glow,  
Lies not more near to Heaven than drifts of Arctic  
snow ;  
All ways that lead us home are short howe'er they  
wind and go.

The gentle lady's heart ere this has ceased to beat,  
In some serener land upon some golden street ;  
I hope that long ere this her weary, wandering feet  
Have chanced her lover and her worshiped lord to  
meet.

Bright shines athwart the air that shrouds the frosty  
poles  
His name all deathless fair, and as the old world  
rolls  
Still crushing in its course a thousand loves,  
Her touching story lasting and immortal proves.

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### THE CAT-BIRDS.

---



WO cat-birds in the flush of the spring,  
Straightway to build them a nest did begin.  
Any one would have said that the cares of  
a State

Were hidden beneath those smooth feathers of slate.  
Soon from out of the East and out of the West  
The two brought together the fragments of nest;  
Dry bits of the grapevine and pieces of thread  
In the forks of the elm tree quickly were spread.

With bedroom and kitchen and parlor in one,  
Their building was finished, their mansion was done,  
And then madam cat-bird, with speckled eggs four,  
Her small mansion furnished, just four and no more,  
And then for some days she sat mute and demure  
In her house in the air, serene and secure

While her singing, diligent, slate-colored mate  
Brought delicate morsels of bugs which she ate.

But oh, in the shortest of days and of weeks,  
Round the brim of the nest grew four little beaks,  
And then, happy days, the cat-birds together  
Fed their young ones through sunshiny weather,  
And almost before one could think or could say  
It was time the young ones were up and away.  
And the slate-colored birds, lovers together,  
Floated away in the sunshiny weather.

For leaving behind them the house and its care,  
They swam through the azure, gay tenants of air;  
Their mansion so warm, so snug and so small  
Never did weary with taxes at all,  
And they left it rent free in its primitive state,  
To show how a bird values landed estate.  
Then we said to ourselves, a house in the sky  
Is better than palaces men raise so high.

With basements and kitchen, attic and all,  
Apartments of chamber, parlor and hall.  
The broods of the birds grow up like the flowers.  
The children of men attain not their powers  
Of body and mind till frost has descended,  
And for the parents the springtime is ended,  
And no time remains for old lovers, together,  
To wander away through the sunshiny weather.





## THE SOLDIER.

---



SOLDIER when the war was done  
Slept with his face turned toward the sun,

His sergeant, weary and with grim  
Of blood and sweat, bent over him.

And by his captain's side he knelt,  
Unloosed the sleeping captain's belt,

And to the mute breast bent his ear  
Intent some stifled throb to hear ;

Gazed on the grave, majestic face,  
Strange with a new, a nameless grace,

And sighed, " This man hath thro' the wars  
Fought, yet he bears no wounds or scars.

" Now, when the routed army flies,  
He turns him toward the sun and dies."

But when they came to lay him in  
His robes of royal fashioning,

They found him pinched and wan and thin,  
As one who long bore death within ;

And on his breast were scars so deep  
The stoutest turned away to weep.

“Alas! he suffered and he died,  
Only he made no sign.” they cried.

And still this warrior did keep  
Silence, nor moved his lips to speak.

Seeming, with a superb disdain,  
Able to die but not complain.

“IT IS FINISHED.”



HO sighs when the toil is done ?

Who weeps when the care is over ?

Man, man only, under the sun !

Nature with joy runs over,

Smiles from the flowers, glows from the corn,

Radiant at sunset, radiant at morn,

Singing, rejoicing the year is done ;

And dresses herself in her best,

And goes, at last, to her royal rest

Like the Phœnix, with flaming eyes and crest,  
 Decked with glory from head to breast;  
 So man, at the close of his life's long year,  
 As Jesus went to His sepulchre,  
 Should go, not looking to tarry there.

The peach lets go of its stem,  
 Long days having fed on the sun,  
 The head of the wheat, like a diadem,  
 Is stored when the harvests are done,  
 But man, man only, seems not to know  
 When his life is ripe, though the Winter's snow  
 Glitters all coldly above his brow.

---

 MY BIRD.
 

---



DO NOT hide thy head, my bird,  
 In the silken hood of thy wing.  
 The hours may be weary,  
 The day may be dreary—  
 More need for the singers to sing.  
 When every sad hour as it hurrieth on  
 Seems darker than those that before it have gone.  
 Sing of tropical days that are gone,  
 Of lilies that grew near the Sun ;

If life be too dreary,  
 The hours be too weary,  
 Let us think of the days that are flown ;  
 Let us warm by the embers where once a fire shone,  
 Or sing o'er the ashes whose embers are gone

Thy saddest or sweetest, my bird,  
 It is the last song we will sing,  
 Our last day together,  
 Why heed we the weather—  
 The time is so short, let us sing  
 Through all the long night for the hearts that are  
 breaking,  
 Through all the dark day for the hearts that are  
 aching.

---

## LATE VIOLET.

---



I blossomed on a grave,  
 This little flower with golden eye ;  
 It bent as the wild wind swept by,  
 Then looked above to azure sky  
 From off the moss-grown grave.

The grasses even were dead,  
 And all the tribes of summer flowers

The blushing gracious rose had fled ;  
Yet this frail watcher by this bed  
So lowly, still watched on.

Even a flake was tossed  
Of shrill November's icy sleet,  
Her shining face across,  
And earth did naught but mourn her loss,  
Her lost companionship.

With bird and flower and sedge,  
In wailing wind and tossing leaf  
Thus she expressed her grief,  
Her shrinking from the icy edge  
Of chill December's breath.

How was it that the flower  
Enough of Summer heat could find  
The secrets of her life to bind,  
In their tri-colored bond,  
Her unity of light and shade,

Her golden and empurpled braid  
To wear, all undismayed ?  
It seemed that Mother Nature sought  
Sentinel for this dreary spot  
Whose hope should falter not.

A candle of the waning year  
 To burn beside the mouldering bier  
 The hearts of men to cheer,  
 As if life's dust had struck a spark  
 Of triumph o'er its tomb so dark.

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## IMMORTELLE.

---



THOU lingerest here all dry and sere,  
 By meadow, copse, and hillside drear,  
 Thou tarriest in thy place alone  
 While all thy sister flowers are flown.

Who cares for thee, thou pale and cold?  
 Who loves thee faded flower, and old?  
 I would not tarry here to see  
 The frost and snow if I were thee.

Thou can'st not die! 'tis well to sigh  
 For thine own immortality.  
 Each summer flower has gone its way,  
 But thou, the immortal one must stay.





## HOW LONG, O LORD OF HOSTS, HOW LONG?

---

**H**ERE seems to fall from each mountain peak,  
To rise from the troubled ocean's deep,  
From desert sands of olden lands,  
The solemn chant of the martyrs' cry—  
“How long, O Lord of Hosts, Most High?”  
From winds as they gather together and meet  
In hedges and by-ways of the street;  
From tempest that flies with outstretched wings,  
To the sweetest Summer air that sings  
Over the beds of roses sweet,  
“How long, O Lord of Hosts, shall we lie  
Unavenged of Thee?” the martyrs cry.

No land but has drunk of the martyrs' blood;  
Oh the terrible, awful flood  
That shall make the very earth to shake,  
And the stoutest hearts of men to quake;  
When inquisition for blood is made  
Terrible day that makes earth afraid.  
“How long, O Lord of Hosts, shall it be  
That Thy martyrs sleep forgotten of Thee?”

Out of the cloud a sweet voice fell—  
 “Sleep yet a little, beloved, rest well ;  
 I do not forget the blood of my heart  
 The life of my life ; I will not part  
 With a drop of the treasure shed for me ;  
 Costly the day of reckoning shall be.  
 Earth shall yield again from her inmost deep  
 The jewels I gave to her to keep,  
 From frosty zones of mountains lone,  
 From desert and waste wherever strewn,  
 Your dust shall rise ; God knows His own.  
 I will call to the depths of the troubled sea  
     Till they answer me.  
 I will so avenge that ye shall cry,  
 Stay the sword of thy vengeance, God Most High.”

So the martyrs turned in their graves and slept  
 Till the chimes of a thousand years were tolled,  
 Summer's heat and Winter's cold  
 Labored together above the mould,  
 That like ermines shrouded them fold on fold.  
 As the hands on the dial of centuries crept,  
 Morning and evening over them wept,  
 Over their pillows singing birds slept ;  
 The rose steeped her roots in the Summer rain,  
 And dropped there her blossom again and again.  
 Their pillows were fringed with the russet and gold



Of mosses whose years were not numbered or told ;  
And their dust seemed transposed  
Slowly into the moss and the rose.

They waked again, and again they cried—  
“Are thy martyrs dead who should have died?”  
“Not yet,” from the cloud the sweet voice sighed ;  
“But the time and year are drawing near,  
The last of my martyrs will soon appear.”

The last of Thy martyrs ! O God, to know  
That Thy loveliest have perished so ;  
Burned, beheaded, crucified,  
Dead with thee as Thou hast died.  
Earth was not worth the crimson flood  
Of our crucified Lord's and the martyrs' blood.  
They cried and cried, with one accord,  
Hasten the time, O conquering Lord.  
They cried as valiant soldiers cry,  
Till it struck the ear of the Lord Most High,  
“Thou hast promised to us the golden year,  
That shall rise as a star in the heaven clear.  
The dust of the aged earth is red  
With the blood of Thy martyrs who are dead ;  
And the Church is sprinkled in fiery chrism  
Of martyred blood for its baptism.”

Out of the riven cloud there came  
The shout of an army, fire, and flame ;

And the Captain cried to his warriors slain,  
 "Rest not in your graves, beloved, again  
 The terrible year of God's vengeance is here,  
 And the dawn of eternal day is near."

---

## MEADOW LILY.

---



HOW very fair she sits a queen,  
 Close clasped the spears of grass between,  
 These be her subjects, with the bird  
 Whose passage hath the grass blades stirred.  
 She is embrowned with bistre spot,  
 Tanned with the living sunshine hot,  
 Thirsting, she drinks the sultry heat  
 Of August, as a nectar sweet.  
 Her vestments from the rainbow drawn  
 To greet the sun she putteth on ;  
 The gardens of the Lord are hers,  
 The meadows and the shade of firs ;  
 She flourishes on no man's land,  
 Nor tended is by human hand.  
 In solitude, hid from the world,  
 Alone she hath her flowers unfurled,  
 Having the grace to know her place.  
 She keeps alive her ancient race.



## THRUSHES.

---



WEDDING flight, sing birds and bees,  
And beat time, dancing boughs of trees,  
My little mate, my bonnie bride,  
I feel in you a lover's pride.

Our wedding journey we will take  
O'er jungles overgrown with brake ;  
On swift light wings will we fly through  
These crystal flakes of morning dew.

Our wedding breakfast we will eat  
Of tender birch buds fresh and sweet.  
Dear bride we need no railway train,  
We do not heed the April rain.

For all these early showers that fall  
My bride's dress will not soil at all,  
'Tis of such downy satin fine,  
With brilliant sheen and silver shine.

There is a spot secluded, new  
Created, fresh for me and you,

Of dogwood vine or thorn we may  
Choose our snug home without delay.

This little twig I think will do  
To hang our nest on, what think you?  
Ah, yes, it hangs secure and high,  
And to the mosses it is nigh.

Here cranberries will ripen red  
Near to our homestead and our bed,  
And this will lighten much the care  
Fathers of families must bear.

Now let us look about and see  
What neighbors have we near our tree,  
Goldfinches, yes, the pretty things  
That carry sunshine on their wings.

Linnets, my dear, all linnets are  
Fit company for one so fair,  
But those cat birds will never do  
To call, my little bride, on you.

Look in the moss, see there doth sit  
A pleasant snipe with little wit;  
My little birdie do you know  
I do not like our neighbor crow?

I cannot see, by sun or moon,  
 How earth needs whipporwill or loon,  
 Be wise my love, and have a care  
 Never to gossip with this pair.

We lead the singing wildwood choir,  
 We pitched the tune from our tree's spire,  
 Therefore must we associate  
 With feathered friends of like estate.

The friends we visit all must be  
 A singing goodly company,  
 We have a character to keep,  
 Hark, don't you hear a weak peep, peep ?

---

## ROSES.

---

"They serve who only stand and wait."

---



STAND and wait.

I wait by morning's opening gate,  
 I wait for sunset's golden state,  
 In the night as in the day,  
 I watch and wait in steadfast way ;  
 My roots are knitted in the dust.  
 Yet Heaven gave to me a trust :  
 My work and office is to wait,

And to translate  
The splendors of the infinite  
Into a roses little bloom,  
Into color and perfume.

I gather of the living soul  
To write it in a flowery scroll ;  
A fragment of that living mind.  
Read in my heart and you shall find,  
Find bright a golden sun disc there,  
With golden stamens spangled fair,  
For I reflect the image high  
Of Him whose home is in the sky.

I am blest who only wait,  
Silent by morning's opening gate,  
Silent in evening's sunset state.  
The sun I love does crown my head,  
This love does make my blush so red ;  
And, sweet and cool, the evening dew  
Refreshes all my life anew.  
I love to stand and watch and wait,  
For, as I wait, I give again  
The love I drew from sun and rain.

Therefore I wait,  
Early or late  
To see Him as he draweth near ;

He is in Heaven and I am here,  
 I, the rose, am His sentinel  
 And fond interpreter as well.  
 My office is to watch and wait  
 And to give love by Heaven's gate.  
 The coming in of Heaven's King,  
 The birds their welcoming  
 Give to Him as they sing,  
     But I being dumb  
     To my King come  
     In incenses outpoured,  
     Without a spoken word.

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STRING.

---



HIS is the story of a string  
 That bound an English sparrow's wing.

Some wind had blown it on a tree ;  
 One end was fast and one was free.

You would not credit such a thing ;  
 These birds are prone to quarreling.

And often fight, so it is said,  
 Till one and sometimes both are dead.

Strangest of all, it is the wife  
Of sparrow that occasions strife.

Yet Helen only is intent  
Somewhere beneath the firmament

To hang her little bit of thatch,  
Her house without a roof or latch.

But sparrows are as bad as men ;  
Two loved a little russet wren.

And so they fought until one fell ;  
It is a sorry tale to tell.

But lo, and lo, the conquering  
Was tangled in this silken string.

And there poor sparrow dangling high  
In air, was left alone to die.

But now the vanquished bird appears,  
Moved by the sad complaint he hears,

And rising up essays to loose  
The captive from the silken noose.

And this is all about the string  
That caught an English sparrow's wing.





## FLOWER AND SPRING.

---



T the mountain top we came across  
A clear, cold spring in a bed of moss,  
That bubbled up  
From a pebbly cup.  
In the moss a little flower grew sweet ;  
It bent so low that the two did meet—  
The singing spring and the flower sweet.

Thus the spring to the flower did speak :  
“ Let me kiss thy snow-white velvet cheek  
As we meet to-day,  
For, far away,  
To-morrow I shall dash my spray  
In a dancing cascade, swift and gay.  
Down the mountain’s side so old and gray:

“ I will gather strength when my waves have  
rolled  
Till they glide away where the sunset’s gold  
In a deep blue sea  
Melts silently.

As I go down to the busy town,  
Stay thou here alone, my little one,  
The solitude of this place to crown."

The sweet flower grew there pure and meek  
As the spring ran down the lake to seek,  
Over rock or stone,  
Sometimes with moan,  
Sometimes with a laugh it rippled on,  
But tarrying not from sun to sun  
It soon to the ocean deep had run.

The flower stayed up, the spring ran down  
To the far-off world and busy town,  
And they thought not then  
To meet again.

The flower garnered all her rare perfume,  
In the tiny round of a velvet bloom,  
Always sweet in the light or the gloom.

The winds of Heaven caressed the cheek  
Of the little one so frail and weak.  
And a very far  
Off splendid star,  
By the pale flowers face so beautiful,  
Mirrored itself in the crystal pool  
That ever ran, yet was ever full.

The soul of the flower, a rare perfume,  
Went on the winds to a sky of bloom,  
    Upborne along  
    On these wings so strong.

The soul of the flower, so pure and meek,  
Felt a drop of rain upon her cheek,  
And thus the rain to the flower did speak :

“ Thus thou and I, as perfume and rain,  
Meet, my love and my darling again  
    As at last we met,  
    My love and my sweet,  
Let me kiss once more thy velvet cheek.

We meet as before, only to speak,  
My darling, my little one so meek.

“ In an endless circle everywhere,  
Spring to ocean, ocean to air,  
    The waters run  
    From sun to sun,  
Into silvery vapor, fair and fine.  
Into fleecy clouds that float and shine,  
We shall meet no more dear love of mine.

“ Thou, into infinite space somewhere  
Art exhaled, my sweet, my love, my fair.  
    While I again,  
    As summer rain,

Must soon to the mountain spring descend,  
 With the river, rill and ocean blend ;  
 My life hath not beginning nor end.

“ Will spirit meet, hath the infinite  
 Unmeasured space, trysting places sweet ?

Love will not die.

Our thoughts soar high.

Is it dust alone that to Hope clings,  
 Or does Psyche rise with star-bright wings  
 Into Heaven as she floats and sings ?”

## PARTRIDGE.



HY soul to brood alone hath taught  
 Itself the lesson well,  
 Thou hermit of the lonely grot,  
 Tenant of the secluded spot,  
 Hid in the silent dell.

The mind that framed the hills for thee  
 Knew well the wild bird's want ;  
 The fissures of high rock, the tree  
 And mountain fastnesses, these be  
 Thy solitary haunt.

The incarnation thou dost seem  
Of the untamed and wild;  
In loneliness, alone, to dream  
In thicket and by mountain stream  
Which man hath not defiled.

Embodied shape of solitude  
Thy stealthy footstep falls  
As light as any rustling leaf,  
As softly as the whispering sheaf  
Where thou thy young dost brood.

Appareled in the russet sere  
To match the russet leaf  
Unheralded thou glidest by  
Still as a spirit wild and shy  
As if possessed by fear.





## DEATH AND SLEEP.

---



S travelers from a foreign land,  
Death and sleep came hand in hand,  
And by a cottage door they stand ;  
They waited till the evening lone,  
Her shadows over earth had thrown.  
A vine's strong stems did interlace  
Themselves with leaves about the place ;  
A friendly bird above the door  
Had built her little house for four,  
With this vine's garland shadowed o'er.

The even time had lulled to sleep  
Long since this little singer sweet,  
But she awaked these guests to greet,  
And chiding bade them silence keep ;  
And having young ones in her nest  
She hid her head within her breast,  
And sank again to happy rest.  
It was the angel Sleep who spake,  
" Enter we not while any wake ;  
I will within the lattice creep,  
And Death, thou enter after Sleep."

Within the house the brothers stand,  
Each whispering clasps the other's hand ;  
Upon its mother's breast the babe  
Asleep its little head had laid ;  
The mother's arm embraced the child  
That dreaming in its slumber smiled,  
Death whispered, " I will never part  
This infant from its mother's heart ;  
I recognize an angel lent  
To earth in this child innocent."

But lo! both shudder in their sleep ;  
Each breathe a sigh long, sad and deep,  
As someting cold, aye, bitter cold,  
Mother and child alike did fold.  
Within a little inner room  
The grandsire slept, the almond bloom  
Snow white in wintry beauty fair,  
The crown of age adorned his hair,  
And on his face one read content,  
Such as doth crown a life well spent.

Him gently Death approached and spake.  
" Rise from thy dreams, awake, awake !  
Arise, the waning moon is old,  
Thou hast no treasures here to hold ;  
Pause not for raiment nor for gold,

Nor stay to speak a last adieu,  
 'Tis not permitted unto you ;  
 Our journey lieth very far,  
 Beyond the moor by cloud or star."

Obedient the old man raised  
 Him from his couch, and on Death gazed ;  
 " Long have I waited for this hour ;  
 I fear thee not nor dread thy power."  
 And reaching forth his hand he gave  
 It to the angel of the grave.  
 Like travelers to another shore  
 They passed adown the moonlit moor ;  
 The silvery mists in cloudlets fell,  
 They hid the two, and hid them well ;  
 And fading slowly out of sight,  
 They passed as phantoms of the night.

---

## RAILWAY TRAIN.

---



PEED on through the rain,  
 Through the sun flying train.  
 In the dark,  
 Fiery spark,  
 Like an arrow shoot ahead,



If the moon be overspread  
 All with black,  
 O'er the track  
 Run by faith, not by sight,  
 Through the blackness of the night.

You are never out of breath ;  
 'Tis a race of life and death.

Hurry on,  
 Haste along,  
 Tireless engine, all your fare  
 Is of water, fire and air.

Hasten, pray,  
 Leagues away  
 In a homestead old and gray  
 Anxiously they wait to-day,

---

## GOOD-BY.

---



OUR parting time has come, my friend,  
 The longest day must have its end :  
 Ours long and sweet at last has run  
 Its diamond grains to the last one.

Fate beckons and compelleth me,  
 Dividing me this night from thee ;

The land fogs creep to meet the sea,  
The sea fogs greet them sullenly.

Quick, let me grasp thy friendly hand,  
My ship is loosening from the land:  
Good night, good-by, let thy lips meet  
My own once more in kisses sweet.

Cheer thee, my friend, for leagues away  
From shore the night will turn to-day,  
And summer lands will heave in sight,  
Arrayed in palms or lilies white ;

Fair isles by Southern winds caressed  
And harbors where the sailors rest,  
Where I shall surely wait to see  
Thee, love, for you will follow me.





## A F R I C A .

---



BENEATH a palm's scant shade  
A missionary lay,  
The fever of a tropic land  
Had burned his life away ;  
His feeble, trembling hand  
Was grasped by one of alien race,  
Above him bent a dusky face.

"I leave my work undone,"  
He spake in feeble tone ;  
Cheer thee what thou hast well begun,  
Leave to the dusky sons  
Of Africa, and they will do  
The world's last work better than you.

"Thine was the morning land,  
The realm of ice and snow,  
Our feet do in Time's sunset stand,  
For races come and go ;  
And thine did move in kingly state,  
While mine in abject chains did wait."

He knelt and kissed the Saxon's brow  
And said, "You were a king, I know,  
A lovely statue of the snow;  
But lo the evening's ruddy glow  
Melts thee and all thy ruling race,  
And God appoints us to this place.

"In the last days He bids us rise  
Into a nation's majesty,  
And walls us in this paradise,  
This sea-encircled Africa,  
And saves us from the Saxon race,  
It may not fill our dusky place.

"Thine were the ancient times,  
The eastern light that shone  
Serene upon the mountain heights;  
Those days were thine alone,  
But thou hast tracked thy conquering way  
In blood drops since that early day.

"The energy was thine  
Of heaven's elder Son;  
The battles thou hast made and fought  
For righteousness were won,  
But liberty is won, and rest  
Comes as Time's day dies in the west."

The Saxon turned away his face and wept  
 As the processions of the ages passed.  
 The Saxon with his hand all red with blood  
 A kingly conqueror stood ; but now  
 To close the march of Time another race  
 Arose to rule a brilliant sunset world.  
 The future of the Africa to be  
 Rose on the Saxon's sight like a late star at night,  
 All diademed in light, all radiant with delight.  
 "All hail to thee, majestic Africa !"  
 He cried, as rose the vision bright.  
 "The sandals of thy feet they be of spicewood sweet,  
 Clasped on with amethyst ; thy breath  
 Is full of myrrh and spice and frankincense,  
 Thy garment's broidery is wrought in flowing gem  
     Even to its trailing hem."

Thy rest shall be sweet where the spice islands meet  
 In the bosom of far away tropical seas ;  
 With balm in the breeze under balm dropping trees.  
 The terror is drawn from the cockatrice sting,  
 And over the blossoming world is no thing  
 To molest, there is nothing but rest ;  
 The lambs and the lions do all walk together,  
     For it is fair weather,  
     Fair, oh, how fair !  
 The bow of God's peace, bending, tells of fair weather,

Of ripe, golden weather ; all things dwell in concert  
 together ;  
 Africa leads the way  
 To unbar the gates of that glorious day,  
 For which all souls pray,  
 The millennial splendors shall on her rise  
 And the paradise, that promised hope of all centuries,  
 Shall dawn first on her wondering eyes,  
 So she shall be righted, the last shall be first,  
 And the golden sands of her wonderful land  
 Shall grow shapely in beauty beneath her hand ;  
 And her spires shall rise, cross-crowned, to the skies,  
 And all tears shall be wiped from her eyes.

## OLD MORTALITY.

---



T was thy reverent task to keep  
 The memory fresh of those that sleep,  
 That men upon the tablet fair  
 Might read the record written there,  
 To guard the consecrated dust  
 Of martyrs was thy chosen trust.

Mortality the moss has grown,  
 The lichens overrun each stone ;  
 And all along the graven line

Time hath outgrown that work of thine ;  
 Yet heed it not, for never shone  
 Sun over such substantial stone.

Nature did not forget her son,  
 The Immortality he won,  
 In her own fashion she hath wrought  
 To all the poesy of thought,  
 The wild rose and the heather meet  
 To make the martyr's winding sheet.

He needs no stone, God keeps his own,  
 To every land the deeds are known ;  
 And towering o'er the Pyramid  
 The grandeur of the work he did,  
 Hath now become the whole earth's pride,  
 Blessed was the martyr when he died.

The graver's tools are grim with rust,  
 Long since didst thou resign thy trust ;  
 Years, with erasures subtle, fine,  
 Effaced that pious work of thine.  
 What then ? Those names were set so high  
 In heaven they could never die.

And long ago mortality  
 Was lost in immortality,

For God needs not on graven stone  
 To keep the record of His own.  
 He drops those brave, heroic deeds  
 On human hearts, and there as seeds  
 They sprout and spring to life again,  
 Renewing thus the race of men.

---

## CHICADEE.

---



GRAY CHICADEE, frail chicadee,  
 Chirping thy Winter song to me  
 From the snow-blossomed apple tree,  
 Thy agile wing, thy prattling tongue  
 Be very pleasant company.  
 What carest thou though clouds be hung,  
 What heedest thou though boughs be swung  
 To tempest keeping time?  
 What mind, what sense there is in thee!  
 Thou knowest where the seeds be hid  
 'Neath the weed capsule's tiny lid.  
 Thou knowest well the mystery,  
 The hollows of the beechnut tree;  
 And warm thy tiny inn is bound  
 With soft gray moss festooned around.  
 There is no clime nor any time



But finds a shelter for its bird.  
The bird's soft word  
Is often through the tempest heard.  
The dearest gift that nature gave  
Was when she taught a wing to wave ;  
When first she saw upon the world  
A bird's light wing unfurled,  
A winged poem of the air,  
A cheerful spirit form so fair.  
Now, if I were a bird like thee,  
I would fly far, frail chickadee,  
For neither time nor space should hold  
Or prison me, a traveler bold ;  
For speckled ruff I would find the stuff  
That stars are made of, and my flight  
Should bring me nearer worlds of light.  
And hark to me small chickadee  
I would find where our lost treasures be.  
My wings to try, 'yes, I would fly  
Where youth and beauty do not die ;  
To lands serene and lands unseen  
Where mortal man hath never been.  
Good-by small bird, thou hast said thy word,  
This wintry landscape thou hast stirred,  
The little singing of thy song  
Hath made me for the eternal long.



## BUTTERFLY.

---



HERE do thy pinions dip to dye  
Themselves, light courier of the sky?  
What flowers have kissed thee till each wing  
Tells tales of every flower of Spring?

Thou art of heaven and the sky,  
Fair amber-pinioned butterfly,  
Out from the tomb of the cocoon  
You rise to greet the airs of June.

Fast flying forth on silken wing  
Late of the dust the lowliest thing,  
Now earth's defilements come not nigh  
Thy fairy form, small butterfly.

What taste is thine only to dine  
On daisy, rose or celandine,  
To taste of consecrated wine  
Out of flower flagons deep and fine,

To play with all the amber lips  
And lids the connoisseur bee sips ;

The very fairest flowers of all  
For thee, gay butterfly, do call.

All the pastime, of Summer time,  
The joys of the eternal clime,  
Of sun and shine, these joys be thine  
Little air voyager so fine.

With ladybirds, and moths and bees,  
Buoyant to float upon the breeze,  
Attuned to all the melodies  
Of waving stems and whisp'ring trees.

Thy wings may not with stains be soiled,  
Yet when a worm through dust you toiled  
A wondrous change from dust to rise,  
A gem to float on shining skies.

Illumined texts with you you bear,  
Look on thy wings and find them there ;  
Thou art a spirit these declare,  
Having arisen from dust to air.

The lessons graven on thy wing  
Are what the saints do hope to sing ;  
In peace frail butterfly go by  
For thou belongest to the sky.

Prophet of immortality,  
 In peace, fair Psyche, go thy way,  
 Priest of the radiant Summer day  
 No hand thy little flight must stay.

Seeming to die, thou didst not die ;  
 Out of the chasm man must try  
 Thou hast emerged a jewel bright,  
 Shining and panoplied in light.

---

## THE CHURCHYARD.



COME in, come in, and drop thy tear  
 O'er the first violets of the year ;  
 They who here keep death's endless sleep  
 Never do open eyes to weep.  
 Anointed with a soothing balm  
 Closed are they both to storm or calm.  
 They who here rest with folded arms  
 Never do miss life's fabled charms.  
 Come in, come in, see how the high  
 And mighty, by the lowliest lie.  
 Rank maketh no division here  
 In dust and turf and sod so sere.  
 Alas, lover and loved do part,

Weep here and ease thine aching heart ;  
Come in, thou canst not here intrude  
On death's eternal solitude.

Here underneath its little head  
The babe its tiny hand hath laid,  
And dropped the toy with which it played,  
As on death's slumbrous breast asleep  
It doth its lasting slumber keep.  
Bedecked in all her bridal flowers  
The maid sleeps through the silent hours ;  
The soldier by her side lies down,  
The monarch rests without his crown,  
The priest without his stole or gown.  
Come in, come in, and drop thy tear  
On rustling sedges by the bier.





## SIX-PENNY CALICO.

---



ALL day the burning sun did stream adown the  
dusky room,  
And all day long the giant wheels did drive  
the iron loom,  
And all the day the waters plashed and foamed about  
the flume.

It was a pleasant stream enough, its waters cold  
and clear,  
Did start from out a mountain spring transparent  
as a tear ;  
It ran through tangled rose and fern for more than  
half the year.

It changed its nature when it ran into the mill's deep  
flume,  
Vexed by the wheel it breathed no more of dew-drop  
and of bloom,  
It only as a giant urged the weavers to their doom.

A woman watched beside the warp that ran upon  
the beam,

Her downcast eyes upon the web to gaze alone did  
seem,

As mute and stirless stood she as a statue in a dream.

Her hair had faded till its hue was like the sober  
ash,

Left of the ember of the fire, that faded with its  
flash ;

There dropped upon it one red beam of sunset  
through the sash.

One might a goodly heritage see, were there time to  
look

Out of the window, meadows green, with sheep and  
plashing brook ;

There was no time, for all the mill with whirring  
engines shook.

What time the sunset's crimson light did touch the  
distant hills,

What time in shining threads of gold ran all the little  
rills,

And still the wheel and flume roar on when night  
the wide world fills.

This woman once had only walked in color of the  
rose,

And life was beautiful to her as when in youth it  
glows,

Afar from all life's mountain paths that lead to  
Alpine snows.

Her faded hair in that fair time was of the hue of  
gold,

And in a silver comb and pearl all wound about and  
rolled,

She was too happy then to know that life could ere  
grow cold.

But fortune failed and then youth's friends like birds  
that will not stay,

When autumn comes, but seek a land where flowers  
are always gay ;

Alas ! these gay friends fluttered on like birds that  
fly away.

In time she came to watch a loom that wove a web,  
I think,

They printed afterward in buds and twisted stems  
of pink,

To weave six-penny cloth, sad fate from which one  
well might shrink.

I do not like the cloth too cheap altho' its stems be  
sweet

With rosebuds, for I know the girl had not enough  
to eat ;

With waiting by the noisy loom how weary were  
her feet.





## BUMBLE BEES.

---

**B**OOM, boom, boom, boom, with shrilly drum  
The humble bumble bee is come  
To bang, to beat the locust tree,  
To thump, to suck its sweets comes he.

To thump, to bump the clover bloom,  
To croon through meadows of perfume  
A bimbling, bambling, song of Spring  
The humble bumble bee does sing.

He shakes the thistle's thorny cup  
And bangs the rose and buttercup ;  
Searches through fields of sweet buckwheat  
And from all blossoms he doth eat,

Gathers wild thyme with a sweet rhyme  
And jingle where soft grasses chime.  
Tell us of countries thou hast seen  
Wild bee, of lands where thou hast been.

Repeat to us thy drowsy hymn  
Small wanderer through woodlands dim.

Croon, croon and croon, and still keep time  
To wimbling, wambling, sleepy rhyme.

For if there be some weird songs, these  
Be best known to the wandering bees,  
For don't you see so light the bee  
Floateth o'er land and Summer sea.

And don't you see so many lands  
Visits our bee and understands,  
That he abounds in all the lore  
And legendry of bees of yore.

The flying bee may tell to thee  
His pedigree and history.  
Of Asia or of Moslem flag,  
Of prairie lone or arctic crag,

A bumbling, bambling song of June,  
Of fragrant Summer afternoon,  
A bumping, thumping olden rune,  
A wimbling, wambling, rambling croon.

Of niches where the sunflower burns,  
Of water lily's ivory urns,  
Of chimes of wimble wamble bells  
Soft ringing in the hollow dells.

Of bells of hollyhocks so deep  
Where a belated bee may creep.  
In whose soft tent a bee may sleep,  
And so forget his boom to keep.

Through fragrant swamp by crisp cool brake  
The rambling bee his way doth take,  
Crooning along by beds of balm  
With a swift honey bee's salaam.

Sucking the sweetest flowers of June,  
Loading his honey bags festoon,  
With boom, boom, boom, flower and perfume,  
From morning until evening's gloom.

Now booming home on wings of wire  
Through fields with sunset flame afire,  
With soft low hum as some tired crone  
Her ditty by the wheel doth drone.

At Summer's close he having dipped  
Into all flowers and honey sipped,  
Layeth aside his booming drum,  
Nor on his shrilly flute doth thrum.

Like a tired child he falls asleep  
In peace his Winter nap to keep,  
His boom of Summer is as dim  
To bumble bee as a lost hymn.



## MORAVIAN LOVE FEAST.



THE Moravians keep, in a pleasant way,  
Their harvest feast with a love feast day ;  
When the pumpkins done  
Gold brown in the sun,  
Show their spheres as asteroids, one by one,  
Then the thrifty dame  
Does welcome the flame  
Of each golden rind,  
For the innermost find  
Of these pumpkins is better than any mine.

Each German housewife her loaf doth bake,  
White as snow in its foam and flake.  
For a plentiful feast, raised light with yeast,  
Emulous each to do her best,  
In Sunday clothes dressed  
They meet at the church, with coffee and cake,  
The pleasant feast of the harvest they make ;  
Of the sacrament also they do partake.

Saying their prayer they sing their tune  
In honor of the old harvest moon,

In honor of ripening afternoon,  
Of seed corn braided in long festoon,  
For apples, nuts, and generous wheat,  
Corn and honey and berries sweet.

For the partridge dun,  
Clothed as a nun,  
For birds with feathers bright and pied,  
For rabbits that hide in the mountain side,  
For the sheep that doth at home abide,  
For the gentle cow and for hay in the mow,  
For the hard cord wood so very good  
To burn in the Winter's solitude.

A crumb of the love-feast bread they spare  
To the stranger guest who happens there ;  
And wine is borne from the wine press new.  
Crimson and sweet it comes to you,  
For the Elders bear it in sparkling glass,  
Clear as crystal to lad or lass,  
Symbol of love to thee and thine,  
Sparkles that consecrated wine.

I did not taste of my crumb that day,  
Not being then in the mood to pray ;  
As a paschal lamb, on the palm of my glove,  
It lay as an emblem of death and love,

But from the gothic window came  
 A sunbeam, that turned it to instant flame,  
 And it was transfigured before my eyes  
 By a touch from Paradise.

And I laid it away in a secret place,  
 Carefully hid in a rosewood case,  
 And I like to think of the wondrous shine  
 That fell on that little crumb of mine ;  
 I treasure with care an omen so fair,  
 I hide it away like a crystalized prayer,  
 For a day of extreme distress, I deem,  
 May come when I will be glad of the crumb  
 To warm my failing heart cold and numb.

---

## SEPARATION.

---



LITTLE to us it matters, love,  
 Where our poor bodies lie,  
 Our souls will seek the worlds above  
 To mingle with the sky.  
 'Tis love alone that doth not fail,  
 That mounts above the funeral wail.

When life's frail flame rises on high  
 To mingle with the sun,

Men leave the shattered vase to lie  
Nor heed the broken one,  
Invisible to outward sight  
Burned that alone which fed the light.

Distance and sea may intervene  
Our dust be severed wide,  
Mine with the ocean deep between,  
Thine on the other side ;  
What matters it since love alone  
Can bridge death's awful chasm lone ?

My soul coming thine own to greet  
Through death's stern conquest cries  
This husk of being it is meet  
To leave where'er it dies,  
Encumbrance of the dust must keep  
Its place where kindred dust doth sleep.





## SPRING AND AUTUMN RAIN.

---



HAT embodied spirit comes again,  
'Tis the soft April rain  
Breathing o'er willow bough,  
Brightening it even now.  
'Tis life's strong spirit risen  
Up from the winter prison.  
Hark to the myriad beat  
Of hurrying, pattering feet,  
'Tis the spring rain calling again  
Life's covenant to renew  
With air and sun and dew ;  
    Foretelling, heralding,  
The songs that blue birds sing.  
Gentle voiced prophet to the sere  
And russet remnant of the year  
Forecasting vernal green,  
And flowering mantles sheen.  
The conquest of the world to make,  
To call the waiting brake  
Out from her hidden nook to look



On leaf strewn way on windy day,  
    Fall gently gentle rain.

The whisper of the violet the throb of Summer heat  
These incenses we catch with fleet,  
Swift patter of the drops that beat

    Over the woody stain  
    In rivulets of rain.

Fall gently gentle rain,  
Life's second birth maintain ;  
Sing of earth's treasure hid  
As under closed eyelid

Of vernal equinox, uprising feathered flocks,  
    With thy soft pattering  
    The resurrection sing.

Call to the trout, silver rain shout  
To silver brook in woody nook,  
Bid her cast off the chain  
Of Winter ice, oh, rain.

Call sleeping things, wake slumbering wings,  
And with soft heat and gentle beat  
Life's story to the earth repeat.

Unbind earth's chain of snow, spring rain ;  
Call liverwort and moss,

Weave rushes all the swamps across  
To hide the nests of speckle breasts  
Where they their young caress.

    Crown heaven with the covenant

Rainbow that God hath lent,  
 As its curved prism is bent,  
 It's dazzling glint of life shall hint  
     In dewy firmament.

Speak gently rain with gentle drip  
 To tender lambs that skip ;  
 Drip, drip and drop where promised crop  
 Of wheat still in the mold doth stop  
 The husbandman from sleep,  
 His tryst with earth to keep.  
 Call Spring rain, gently call  
 As thy soft measures fall ;  
 For in thy rhyme is smell of thyme ;  
 Are blent in those small drops of thine  
 Incense of rose and pine.

---

Fall with abated breath,  
 Oh drenching rain of death,  
 Fall sadly Autumn rain  
 Through sorrow and through pain,  
 Until each leaf is riven  
 And woods to bareness given ;  
 Till earth's sad nakedness  
 In sorrow and distress  
 Stands bare, revealed  
 In wood and field ;  
 Till but with tears of rain distilled

Is earth's great tabernacle filled ;  
Till down heaven's darkened way  
Sinks Autumn's gusty day.  
Till where the crown of crimson burned  
Only is found life's ashes urned,  
Only falls down mantle of brown.  
In the low bush the birds' song hush  
    And with monotonous beat  
    Like million skurrying feet  
    Stamp out the violet.  
Blot out the flowers that on the breast  
Of Summer were caressed ;  
    And from his airy home so high  
    Drive thou the butterfly,  
Through the drear woodlands moan  
And chant thy dirges lone ;  
Even the grass let not thou pass,  
But spoil each blade, Fall rain, alas, .  
Like falling tears, on windy days.  
Rush through the leaf strewn forest ways  
And catch thou up on sodden wings  
The remnants of all lovely things.  
Sedges all sweet and desolate  
That died last June, in the old moon ;  
That in their day sang love's sweet tune,  
Low and refined to beating wind,  
And all the Summer incenses

Distilled to hum of singing bees.  
 Though dead, they speak, each violet  
 Doth into lamentation break.  
 Bear thou the aromatic pain  
 Of flowers distilled in Summer rain.  
     Then on each grave  
     That thou dost lave  
 Rub out all words of hope, and find  
 Only the mutterings of the wind.

---

LOVE AND FAME.

---



YOUTH as fair as morning light  
 Went forth a soldier to life's fight ;

And, as he went, his wind-tossed hair  
 Seemed bright as any crown to wear.

So lithe his form, so light his tread,  
 "The youth is winged," you would have said.

And, more than beauty, hope rose high  
 In his man's heart and touched the sky.

And when glowed the meridian heat,  
 Still flew the youth on tireless feet.

But in the war a crimson tide  
Swept o'er him, and the proud youth died.

Then Fame and Love came hand in hand  
By this dead warrior to stand.

Love to Fame's shoulder bent her head,  
And wept: "The youth I loved is dead.

"Fame, it was you who lured him on  
To grasp an unsubstantial crown.

"I, where the blushing roses hide,  
Besought my darling to abide."

Fame sighed: "The heavenly youth was mine,  
Toward me aspired his soul divine.

"Thy rose-forged chain, the common lot;  
Men wear it, but their names live not;

"But oh! to follow after me  
Was to grasp immortality,

"And, falling in the battle's strife  
I crown them with eternal life."

As spake Fame thus to sad Love fair  
A new star filled the evening air.

"Risen into his place!" cried Fame.  
Love sighed, and softly breathed his name.



## MUSIC AND SONG

---



THE glow worm at our feet  
Showed its faint spark  
Of phosphorescence in the dark,  
So pale, so sweet,  
It might have burned  
On Psyche's brow of stainless white  
When night to morning turned.  
Save some bird's trill, the night was still,  
There shivered through the woodland dim  
The ghostly voice of whippoorwill,  
The evening's lonesome hymn ;  
And as we saw the evening fall  
Two sisters glided in the hall,  
Even as Christ entered unseen,  
These strangers came in beauteous sheen.  
When first their heavenly words we heard  
A mighty thrill our spirits stirred,  
For Music and her sister Song  
Came in as rushing wind as strong,  
And both were heavenly sweet and fair,  
Lovelier than embodied air.

They came as crystal mountain stream,  
They came as angels in a dream ;  
They brought a breath of mountain fern,  
They came through lands where roses burn  
Perpetual in Summer's urn.  
They brought the breeze's freshening rush,  
The quiver of the forest bush,  
The plaint of sedge, the swing of grass,  
The breath of moss in the morass,  
And all the voices Summer hath.  
They bore our souls aloft, along,  
As if on pinions fleet and strong,  
Into a wonderland of song,  
Till out of inspiration's cup,  
We drank, so were we lifted up ;  
With them we seemed to smile or weep,  
We drank Song's incenses so deep  
That we forget our mortal frame,  
We saw the lands from whence we came ;  
Music and Song did rend away  
From our closed eyes the veil of clay ;  
They taught us where the soul belonged  
Ere of its birthright it was wronged.  
We were as wax, and felt the power  
Of these bright sisters, for an hour  
We repossessed our former dower,  
Opened our ears to music's strains

That run as gold through mountain chains,  
 We saw the heritage unseen,  
 We saw old worlds, in fiery sheen,  
 Rush by to sounds of tambourine ;  
 We caught melodious sounds afar  
 Onrushing from each distant star ;  
 We heard through old cathedrals float  
 Devotion's low and minor note.  
 We heard where on the flowers dry rim  
 The Autumn breezes play their hymn.  
 Then Music and her sister Song  
 Turned to the clime where they belong ;  
 But from Song's radiant mountain height  
 They bent their forms so airy, light  
 And sang to us " Good-night, good-night."

---

## FALLING LEAF.

---



FALL, yet do not lose my hold,  
 Nor drop I out of life's great fold  
 Knowing that many a darksome way  
 And underground leads up to-day.  
 Often neath the tough fibred sod  
 Earth's inner pathways I have trod.  
 The distillations of the trees  
 I know, and all the mysteries



Of life, who steeps her cups of balm  
And fragrance in eternal calm,  
Where deep volcanic fires keep warm  
Her nurseries through every storm.  
By water brooks where no man looks  
Deep channelled in unfathomed nooks ;  
Oft have I passed these pathways through  
Permeate by eternal dew.  
Here cups of sparkling amethyst  
O'erflow and fill again with mist,  
And crystal bowls hold many a tear  
Down dropping from the blooming year.  
I fall and find life's recompense  
A resurrection centuries hence.  
Leafward again will I arise  
To outward bloom and sun and skies.  
None may omit this darksome way  
That from the dust leads up to day.  
With rest and warmth and fragrant sleep  
I fall to earth my tryst to keep.





## THE DYING THIEF.

---



ORD when Thou comest to Thine own,  
And when Thou Sittest on Thy throne,  
Remember that the dying thief,  
Was filled with sorrow for Thy grief.  
I should not dare approach Thee then,  
Thou King of kings, Thou Lord of men  
The distance then, too great would be,  
Between the Lord of life and me ;  
Nor could I, even should I dare  
Approach Thee then to make my prayer,  
For it would seem as shame to Thee,  
Audience to hold with such as me ;  
They who attend on kingly state,  
Would drive me from Thy palace gate ;  
But in our dire extremity,  
Thou man of grief and mystery,  
I dare beseech Thee, pity me.  
Thou hast not on Thy majesty,  
Thy signet ring, Thy robe and crown ;  
Thou seemest to dread Thy Father's frown,

Thou criest in Thy agony,  
“ My God, hast Thou forsaken Me.”

Lord I shall glory though I be,  
A thief, if Thou dost pardon me ;  
Pity the soul that to Thee cries,  
I know not where Thy kingdom lies,  
But I believe in Thee uncrowned  
And kingdomless, let me be found  
With Thee, my Lord, where Thy estate,  
Thy crown and kingdom for Thee wait.

It is a shame that I should be,  
Thou sovereign, crucified with Thee ;  
I feel the very heaven to shake,  
The earth to tremble for Thy sake  
Thou dying Lamb, well may the flood  
Of ocean shudder at Thy blood ;  
Nature doth seem to wail and cry  
With wonder that her God can die.  
The voice, that storms and winds obey,  
Does that voice die with Thee to-day ?  
Thou canst not die, I feel Thy power,  
Jehovah in this awful hour,  
A tide of life from Thee to me,  
Runs, Saviour, save and pity me,  
The Saviour closed His dying eyes,  
Whispered, “ To-day in Paradise,”

The thief, of all our erring blood,  
 First plunged in the ensanguined flood,  
 That flowed that day for all. A smile  
 Suffused his anguished face the while,  
 Peace, pardon, heaven o'er him beamed,  
 A dying man by grace redeemed.  
 He heeded not the earthquake's shock,  
 Nor how the dizzy world did rock ;  
 The dying thief believed, and blest  
 The uncrowned King whom he confessed,  
 He was transfigured in that light,  
 That love divine and infinite.

---

## SNOW BIRD.

---



HE snow birds come with ruff and crown,  
 Tippets about their throats of down ;  
 Like bubbles blown upon the air,  
 As light these little wanderers are.

Only thy mantle's glossy sheen  
 Thee and the arctic cold between ;  
 And yet thy little form is best  
 For winter and the tempest dressed.

Sifteth the cold snow gently down,  
 Over the meadows and the town ;

Though Winter wears this robe of white,  
The snow birds tarry in their flight.

What treasures have the travelers found?  
What seek the snow birds on the ground?  
Behold, each humble wayside weed  
Is stored with an abundant seed.

These weeds be curious granaries,  
Each hungry bird his storehouse sees,  
Dry and hermetically sealed,  
But to a snow birds sense revealed.

The granary doors open to show,  
How much these arctic wanderers know,  
Responsive to a wing's soft beat,  
Answering to beak and little feet.

The snow bird like a thresher skilled  
In nature's ways, eats and is filled.  
Sing, little bird, thy song falls sweet,  
On Winter's face all blurred with sleet.

Because it is a song of faith,  
Small, gray-winged, silken-robed wraith,  
God's granaries open everywhere,  
Responsive to the earnest prayer.



## IDLERS.

---



IDLE let me be Lord;  
Nor toil within the vineyards of the sun.  
Say that my work is done,  
And give me leave to see  
How the flower clasps the bee,  
How the sun-painted west  
Glowes in its radiant vest  
Of gold and amethyst.  
How nodding leaves are kissed  
By every wandering knight  
Of air invisible to sight.  
With all the idlest things  
Let me be inventoried king of kings.  
The remnant of the feast  
Of crumbs, the very least  
Is good enough for me.  
I seek no workman's wage  
Through life's short pilgrimage.

Yet grant me leave to see  
Sometimes, where clustering be

The ripe grapes in the sun,  
Thy face, Thou Holy One.  
But let Thy strong men bear  
The burden of the day, and take my share,  
My recompense and my inheritance.

Simply to hide within  
Thy glorious kingdom, Thou Eternal King,  
And with the humblest ones of earth to  
enter in

Through the fair gates of life  
Is all I ask. Spare me the anxious strife  
To toil or care for any worldly gain,  
Give me my wealth in sunshine or in rain  
Or waving fields of grain.

Thou, Lord, who hast made all  
Creatures both great and small  
Knowest the flower's face  
Is for the summer's grace ;  
That creeping moss in shady place  
Can with tall grasses run no race ;  
That wheat or rye which grow so high  
Can yet not clamber to the sky,  
As elms which in their stately way  
Give shadow in the sultry day,  
And Lord Thou knowest Psyche fair  
Is never fit for any care.

Then since Thou knowest how flowers grow,  
How weak we are, how frail and slow,  
And knowest why were we to try  
To toil we never should have strength  
Though summer days were twice their  
length ;  
Forbid that frail and idle things  
Henceforth be vexed with vain strivings  
For riches that we do not want.  
Bid us not toil like bee or ant,  
But bid the flower yield her sweet,  
Dear Lord, that idle things may eat ;  
And through life's arduous, toilsome way,  
While strong men work and sweat and pray,  
Keep fresh and green some vale unseen  
Where Thou alone, my Lord, hast been,  
That idle things may enter in,  
All unrebuked, Thy house, my King.  
While strong men say,  
We bore the burden of the day,  
Remember, Thou, how strong they were ;  
Remember, Lord, how weak we are,  
And let us have our little share.







## PUSS.

---



LY, puss, you look so very wise  
With your half-sleeping, waking eyes.

But when you raise each slumbrous lid  
I see the flashing emerald hid.

And oh, how soft the velvet pat  
Of thy foot, leopard-coated cat.

Had I not seen you in the wood  
I might perhaps think you were good.

Your eyes half closed, you seem so calm,  
Half slumbering in the bed of balm.

But well I know neath that eyelid  
There is a world of mischief hid.

Beneath that paw in velvet clad  
The struggling bird you oft have had.

Come here old puss, sit by me now,  
Be grave and still, and make your bow.

Yes, that is right, hold up your paw,  
Now puss recite your moral law :

I must not steal, I must not prowl,  
At midnight I must never howl ;

No matter how distressed I feel  
My sorrow I must not reveal ;

I must not look into the cream  
Nor even of its sweetness dream ;

Nor must I any trespass do  
On the young chicks of neighbor Rew.

And I must very busy be  
From rats and mice the house to free.

I don't like mice, I don't like rats,  
But these be natural food for cats.

Ah puss you are a dreadful thief  
And some day you will come to grief.

You looked into the blue bird's house,  
Now don't pretend it was a mouse.

And then you climbed along the eaves,  
To watch the robins through the leaves.

You rambled in the woods to see  
How large the birds had grown to be.

Well puss now I shall get the stick  
And lay the blows on good and thick.

Poor puss, the promises she makes,  
To-morrow she as surely breaks,

For puss is quite the same as men,  
Repenting but to err again.

## PSYCHE.



THOU needst not care for the rainy day,  
Nor lay stores away ;  
Thou shalt dip thy wings in the rainbow gay  
Where the warm lights play ;  
Thou shalt never know of the darkened way,  
Thou shalt dwell where God is always.

Therefore, since thou fearest no rainy day,  
Toil not for the wine or wheat,

For why should'st thou care or wherefore pray  
For that which thou canst not eat.  
With silken flutter of idlest wings  
Follow after the timbrels of Spring.

Let the toiling bees of honey taste,  
Dripping from golden waste,  
The many petalled and stamened flowers  
To relieve of their loads make haste ;  
But thou the winged one, the divine,  
These are not needs of thine.

To sing and float, to float and sing  
God calleth some natures to,  
And to these He giveth the kingdoms of light  
The realms of sun and dew,  
Life's toilers may gather of golden wheat  
He shall sing who cannot eat.





## PRIMROSE.

---



WHO spreads her banner to the evening gale?

It is the primrose pale.

She caught her saffron hue from Pleiades

And bloometh to greet these.

Not to the sun doth this small blossom's face

Display its fragile grace ;

But for the stars that kindle evening's sky

Primrose opens her eye.

A something mystic o'er her hovereth,

Her breast she covereth

With rays that streamed from out the milky way,

On some forgotten day.

The night bird's cry unto the primrose pale,

And make their wail,

And all the pageant of the upper air

Glides over primrose, where

On grassy mound or meadow, low reposing,

She watches, without closing

Her eye, her stately kinsmen of the sky  
In golden fleets sail by.

Thus quietly, within her star dyed vest,  
She leads her life of rest,  
Saintly, in silentness and in repose,  
And has no part with those

Fair sister flowers whose incenses are cast  
On all winds that go past,  
And if the stars know never that this flower,  
Within night's silent bower,

Lives in their light and loveliness alone,  
Still, it is true, her own  
Life has grown saintly from her steadfast love  
For these bright worlds above.

Transfigured in night's aura doth she shine  
As saint before a shrine  
Loving high things, thinking high thoughts, the sweet  
Flower hath for heaven grown meet.





## ISABEL.

---



THE snows of Winter were shining and white,  
The star of the evening was radiantly bright,  
The moon sailed in a gondola of light

And well, ah well, 'tis a sad tale to tell

The story of Isabel.

So fair and so sweet, so frail, so complete,  
Dimples did meet in the rose of her cheek,  
Isabel had not attempted to speak.

Pink were her fingers, pink were her toes,  
Earth has lost millions of such I suppose.

Buds of the lily, buds of the rose,  
Paly gold was the shade of her hair

As oaten straws are.

Only a nimbus, a faint aureola

Like a saint's glory ;

Like midsummer skies, of deep sapphire dyes,

Such were her eyes ;

All who looked in them said Isabel

Knew a volume of wisdom she never would tell ;

Perhaps she did, but mute as the Sphinx

She died. Who can ever tell what a baby thinks ?

Perhaps they are links  
Of an infinite chain, far nearer the sphere  
Of the angels than we who grow wiser each year  
Through sorrow and tear.

The day of the burial came, and through sleet  
They entered the churchyard to lay at the feet  
Of earth, Isabel; and down the hail beat  
And cut like the sting of a venomous thing  
As it from his wing the cold north wind did fling;  
Thus passed the hail o'er us like death's cold  
river  
And even the tree boughs did shiver.

Then Isabel's mother cried, "Oh Earth  
I bring thee the treasure of home and of hearth."

"'Tis well, I shall give her a second birth,  
I shall keep her warm  
And will give her back in another form  
Winsome and fair to her mother's arm."

Thus answered earth as the dust she pressed  
Soft over sleeping Isabel's breast.

The mother heard, but she heeded not  
Till she came in Spring to a grassy spot



And there, where in Winter they rested the bier,  
 A bird had her nest and birdlings near,  
 And white from the dust of the sepulchre  
     Unstained by a tear  
 A cluster of lilies lifted its spear  
 Where'er tears had fallen in Winter, the year  
 Had closed them around in a fairy ring  
 Set full of some beautiful blossoming.

Nature had spun for the infant a new  
 Cover of sunshine, spring-time and dew,  
 Roots of wild rose, fibres of moss  
 Stretched their tendrils across  
 The blossoming bed, and Nature had wooed  
 The bird and the bee to the sweet solitude.

---

## NIGHT AND STARS.

---



THE paths whereby the eagles tread  
 In shining clouds were panoplied,  
 And all along by pebbly river  
 And meadow, did the sunlight quiver ;  
 And warm and gloriously fair  
 Descended softly, everywhere,  
 The molten treasure of the air ;

Now dripping from the pendant birch,  
Now folding round its spire, the church,  
On distant hill-tops it clung clear  
A shining, radiant atmosphere ;  
Dissolving into golden mist,  
Or rippling into amethyst,  
In glory all the wide sky burned,  
Then sudden into twilight turned ;  
Now mildly through a riven bar  
Of cloud appeared the evening star,  
And rose the moon to silver tune  
As closed the summer afternoon  
Serene and fair o'er man's abode  
The empress of the night she trode.  
The hours passed on, and cold and gray  
Leaden mists o'er the mountains lay,  
And scarce the traveller could discern  
Which way his dusky path might turn ;  
But yet this darkness did reveal  
The turning of heaven's star set wheel,  
Heaven's distant watch fires burning well,  
And many a twinkling sentinel.  
Man read of Time's eternal youth,  
Darkness made visible the truth.  
The air of heaven itself did beat  
To movement of each starry fleet,  
And worlds whose light eternal burned,

Their pale, sad lustres to him turned.  
 High over head old Orion  
 His scabbard and his blade had on,  
 And like a hive of busy bees  
 Clustered the golden Pleiades,  
 And fixed and solemn stood the pole  
 Round which all worlds did seem to roll,  
 Day's golden curtains lifted high  
 Revealed a star bestudded sky.

---

## MY HEART.

---



SOME doleful day I know you must  
 Resign, my heart, thy faithful trust.  
 I sometimes shudder to lie down  
 In sleep that doth day's labor crown,  
 Fearing that with life's fever heat  
 Fatigued you may forget to beat.  
 No slave had ever work to do  
 So constant, faithful heart, as you.

Life's flood-tide ruddy as a flower  
 Pours through thy portals hour by hour ;  
 So as thy gates of valves do close  
 Thou hast short time for thy repose,

Only the fraction of a brief  
Second, poor heart, for thy relief.  
What is a warrior's work to thine  
Muscle so pliant, strong and fine?

Emotion must not add a load  
To thee, my heart, nor passion goad,  
Thou marvel of integrity,  
Diastole and systole  
Exhaustion, friction, all in thee  
Complete and perfect as can be ;  
And endless motion one may see  
Who studies thy machinery.

I shudder often, for I know  
How near thee death and life do flow ;  
One side thy valves the exhausted blood,  
The other, rosy with its flood  
Of bright red blood, touched with the fine  
Scarlet that in the air doth shine.  
I knew thy work must cease at last,  
When man's short seventy years be passed  
As on a distaff all unwound  
The flax that made the thread is found,  
So will it be when life's last thread  
Runs from the wheel which thou hast fed.



## GOOD-BY.

---



OUR parting time is come, my friend,  
The longest day must have an end.

Ours long and bright at last has run  
Its diamond grains to the last one.

And now stern fate compelleth me,  
Divideth me this night from thee.

The land fogs creep to meet the sea,  
The sea fogs greet them sullenly.

Good-night, good-by, let thy lips meet  
My own once more in kisses sweet.

For howsoever sweet love be  
It endeth in death's tragedy.

Quick let me grasp thy friendly hand  
My ship is loosening from the land ;

I hear dire mutterings in the clouds,  
Strange winds are piping in the shrouds.

Cheer thee my friend, for leagues away  
This dreary night will turn to day.

Some new found land will heave in sight  
Arrayed in palms and lilies white,

Fair isles by Southern winds caressed  
And harbors where the sailors rest.

And now farewell, a mighty lift  
From death's great undertow and rift

Impels me toward the unknown shore,  
Good-by, on earth we meet no more.

This bark of mine already dips  
Into death's measureless eclipse.















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