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THE
QUEEN'S DOMAIN;

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

WILLIAM WINTER.



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T O L — .

WHERE the poet's love has flown,
There the poet's songs may fly :
And, as that is all thine own,
Take thou these to know it by !

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THE QUEEN'S DOMAIN.

THE QUEEN'S DOMAIN.



WHAT time the sinking sun with gorgeous dye
Stains the cloud curtains of the western sky ;
When quiet broods o'er all the sylvan scene,
And twilight cometh, gentle and serene ;
When the cool wind of evening, light and free,
Breathed from the far-off waste of purple sea,
Murmurs in slumb'rous music ; when the rare,
Sweet smell of buds is floating in the air ;
And flowers are sleeping — so to dream by
 night
How lovely they will be in morning light ;
When in the broad, blue arch steal out above,
The stars, which are God's jewel lamps of Love ;

Who hath not known the holy calm that brings
Such kind oblivion of all meaner things !
A gentle rapture, ardent, pure and high ;
A glorious thrill of heavenly ecstasy ;
A blissful foretaste of that perfect peace
We hope, when storms are past and earthly
trials cease !

On such a night as this, so mild and still,
When silence slept o'er Zion's holy hill,
While purest starlight bathed each earthly
thing,
The list'ning shepherds heard the angels sing.
Sweet were the accents, trembling from afar,
As the soft music of a falling star,
And still we hear them as they heard them
then —
' O'er the earth, Peace, and good-will unto
men !'

So ever Nature teaches. Still by day
The grand old sun keeps his appointed way ;
And still by night the gentle moon returns,
And still with stars the empyrean burns :
Th' eternal stars that, calm and voiceless, see
All things which have been, are, and yet shall
be !

Still come the seasons on and still they pass ;
The earth is glad in trees, and flowers, and grass ;
Still Nature hath her growth and her decline —
A life perpetual and a law divine.

But man is weary. As the years sweep by,
He lives a mourner, yet he dreads to die.
By hopes exalted and by fears deprest,
He knows no refuge and he finds no rest.
As some frail bark, by angry billows tost,
Her sails all shivered and her compass lost,
Borne frantic o'er the wild and wildering wave,
From danger flies, to safety — in the grave ;

So he, by waves of fierce ambition hurled,
Longs for the spoils and triumphs of this world ;
Strives, with blind rage that will not let him
rest,

To clasp those airy phantoms to his breast
Which still elude him : till at last, worn out
With sin, and suffering, and toil, and doubt,
He hears and thrills at some mysterious call —
Death takes his trembling hand — and that is
all !

Throw back the pall ! there is no anguish
now !

A frozen silence clothes the marble brow.
No flush of hope, no anxious shade of fear,
But only cold, calm beauty slumbers here.
Closed are the eyes, the lips are cold as stone —
But oh, how eloquent that face has grown !
Past all his troubles, past the long suspense,
The strife of aspiration and of sense —

Safe in a sacred peace forevermore —
The heavenly radiance of the farther shore ;
Through those pale lips a voice yet seems to say,
' Strive not to govern — learn thou to obey !
God's righteous laws close all creation in,
And mortal sorrow comes by mortal sin.
Not Pride it is, but Love, that gives mankind
The priceless treasure of a peaceful mind :
All else is dross, the creature of decay,
But this, once gained, shall never pass away.'

So the dead Past speaks to us : on its face
A solemn starlight veils convulsion's trace.
The glow of former triumph there appears,
And traces linger yet of former tears.
Long strifes of care those pallid cheeks avow ;
No star of empire glimmers on the brow ;
The glance of power is dimm'd in time's
eclipse ;
The rose of beauty faded on the lips ;

The voice is hushed ; but silence here can reach
A shrine of feeling closed to human speech :
And, as we gaze, we feel it did not know
Rest from its strife in all that outward show ;
And whatso'er the secret that it keeps,
It found no peace in life, though now it sleeps

High are the hopes which proud Ambition
 bears,
But dark the vesture Disappointment wears :
That pursues phantoms, luring to betray !
This follows on, and claims and takes its
 prey !
For, though th' ascent be rough, and steep the
 fall,
Ambition has but one reward for all :
A little power, a little transient fame,
A grave to rest in, and a fading name !
But never, never since the world began,
Did that delusion *bless* the life of man.

With fainting heart, at Fra Hilario's gate,
Once did a wan and way-worn Pilgrim wait!
Praying, ere death should give his soul release,
What all this world had failed to grant him —
Peace!

And still, though centuries have rolled be-
tween,

That voice is heard, that solemn face is seen —
Pale, worn and haggard — and those awful
eyes,

Wild with the light of sleepless agonies!
For matchless genius could not save from
wrong

The grand old father of the Tuscan song!

So, when the cares of empire weighed him
down,

The royal Spaniard put away his crown;
In Yuste's cloisters buried all his woes,
And sought the peaceful grandeur of repose:

And, as when 'reft the pomp of regal state,
Though great at all times, never seemed so
great!

So all these idle struggles close with pain :
So life decays while peace is sought in vain :
So, in delusive toil, the moments fly,
And hearts the best and gentlest droop and
die :

And the dark shadow writes upon her scroll
A name — a word — which comprehends the
whole !

Ye pallid phantoms — oh ye forms sublime
That throng the shadowy galleries of Time —
Ye mighty souls whose labors now are o'er —
Ambition's votaries — will ye speak no more ?
Oh, looking downward from a loftier sphere,
How seem the ancient toils and triumphs
here ?

Where are the old, deceitful glories gone —
The brilliant meteor lights that led ye on ?
Do ye not mourn that thus our souls obey
A treacherous hope, a blind ambition's sway ?
Alas, ye speak not : clouds are in the skies,
And still oblivion's tides grow blacker as they
rise.

What star shall guide us through the wildering
maze ?

What sunshine gladden these inglorious days ?
What power protract this little lease of breath ?
What magic veil the awful eyes of death ?
What sacred influence grant us, while we
live,
A peace as pure as Heaven itself could give ?

Once, in this western clime, a child of song,
Too poorly honored and forgot too long —
Sang, in sweet accents, such as love alone

Wins from the realm where first its joy was
known,

Pure words of tenderness and sacred truth,
Which live forever in the glow of youth !
And still, whene'er our holiest memories rise,
With glad and grateful tears in dewy eyes ;
When purest feelings win our souls to know
How much of heaven we compass here below ;
Those simple words, those gentle tones reveal
The deep, the earnest tenderness we feel !
And howsoe'er life's fortune may be cast,
That fond affection lingers to the last ;
And wakes in beauty, wheresoe'er we roam,
At the sweet, simple melody of " Home ! "

Oh, sacred hearth-stone, where the cheerful
blaze

Glowes yet with incense of departed days ;
Oh, sacred refuge of our childhood bless'd,
We give you tears that cannot be repress'd !

While from the past the shadows rise and
grow,

In fancy's vision flitting to and fro ;

And smiles, like moonbeams from a far-off
sky

Which the full moon lights up so gloriously,

Strike through the mist and reach us where we
stand ;

And once again we clasp some cherished hand ;

And kind words thrill our hearts, and Hope's
glad wings

Fan round our way with joyous murmurings ;

In that pure haven where all strife is still,

Which fears no danger and believes no ill.

This is her temple — this the Queen's Domain !

Here tender Love and sacred Virtue reign ;

Here airs from heaven breathe music all the
while,

And sunshine brighter is for woman's smile :

Here the swift days are winged with new
delights,
And blissful dreams enchant the quiet nights;
While worldly care relaxes every thrall,
And Peace, an angel, watches over all!

Here the soul's pure affections have their
sway:

Here artless childhood learns to love and pray:
Confiding youth, in generous hope secure,
Gains here the simple faith that shall endure
Through after years — not fading, wan and
cold,

Because the world deceives as he grows old:
Here gentle girlhood tries its pretty wiles,
With thought is pensive or is gay with smiles;
Hears in the heart a strange, melodious chime,
And yearns for mysteries of the coming time:
And Love — the heart's religion — folding round
Its wings of silence, makes this holy ground.

This be it woman's mission to maintain —
Protect through peril and support in pain ;
And, thus pursuing nature's vast design,
To charm, ennoble, strengthen and refine !
In this calm refuge from the storms of fate,
Still may she guide us to our high estate ;
Redeem our souls from rude ambition's strife,
And mould us to a broad and perfect life !
And may all stars of promise light the dome
That rises beauteous o'er her sacred home !
All kindly influence hover round the spot
Where pain is soothed away and care
forgot !

All hues of heavenly hope and solace blent,
Bathe its pure atmosphere of calm content !
For else this world is weary, cold, and drear,
And Peace a stranger, if it dwells not here.

Kind Nature scatters with a liberal hand
Her gifts of beauty over every land :

Spring comes in sweetness, Summer moves in
pride,
Sunlight and shadow, flowers and fruits abide ;
And diamond morns, and noons of quiet rest,
And ruby splendors in the golden west !
All sights are lovely, for all things are good
By Nature ordered in her perfect mood ;
But nicer laws, in lovelier traits defined,
Have decked the temple of the human mind,
And grander strains of statelier music roll
Through the vast chambers of the human soul !
The soul, which loyal to her high behest,
By Woman's love is formed, ennobled, blest ;
While to her magic loveliness it thrills,
Mourns when she bids, rejoices when she
wills ;
Her special charge, to whom the power is
given
To bless us here on earth and lead us up to
heaven.

Sweet is the starlight of our summer skies,
But sweeter starlight sleeps in those pure
eyes!

The summer wind has music in its moan,
But richer music thrills her gentle tone!

Within her heart Love's altar-lamps are lit,
And sacred warders at the portal sit;
Before that shrine do white-robed angels kneel,
And on that brow Faith sets her beauteous
seal.

So, child-like, queen-like, weak at once and
strong,

In regal innocence she moves along,

The heart's ideal — simple, but sublime —

A true, sweet woman, purest born of time!

Not hers the path to glory's icy height,

Not hers the pomp of poor ambition's fight,

Not hers the grovelling strife of worldly
things,

Nor all the woe such life-delusion brings;

But hers the sunlight of a peaceful mind,
A trusting nature, cheerful and resigned :
By fickle fortune's buffets all unmoved,
She only lives to love and be beloved !

THE EMOTION OF SYMPATHY.

In memory of many happy days, this poem — first delivered before the High School Association, at Cambridge — is now, with kind regards, inscribed to the companions of my school life.

THE EMOTION OF SYMPATHY.

I.

WHEN, after many a weary year has flown,
He turns from foreign climes to hail his own,
What soft emotions thrill the exile's heart!
What kindly tears of tender gladness start!
How from the past the shadowy shapes arise,
While memory's pictures flit before his eyes,
And every sound and every step betray
Remembered tokens of some happier day.

Here the old mansion where his early years —
Youth's rosy dawning flecked with silver
tears —

Went by so smoothly it would almost seem
As the mild memory of a pleasing dream.
Here a kind father reared his cherished boy ;
A mother's love here watched a mother's joy ;
The artless prattle of an infant voice
Here waked their smiles and bade their hearts
rejoice :

And day by day they watched and strove to
trace

The mind awak'ning in his youthful face ;
Upon his brow saw deeper thoughts arise,
And wilder meaning tremble in his eyes,
As various feeling variously exprest
The strife of nature in his little breast.

But time went ceaselessly : joy's rosy hour
Grew dim with clouds, and storms began to
lower.

New joys there were for him, but grief and pain
Taught their sad lesson — never learned in vain !

And, as with sober steps and much delay,
He moves along the unfrequented way,
On every side some little tokens tell
The sweet, old story, still remembered well.

Here, when a boy, he played ; here first he met
Those cherished friends he never can forget ;
Here a good mother taught him to be blest —
There is the churchyard where she lies at rest !
And other graves are there — names no less dear
Spring to his lips and claim the exile's tear.
Where are they now, the joyful and the free,
The merry voices, only heard in glee,
The hands so warmly clasped, her plighted
 heart
With whom 'twas heaven to live and death to
 part, —
Where are they all ? Alas, the echoes say,
These things have been, but these are past
 away.

Perchance 'tis evening : In the western sky,
Deep drawn the tints of God's own splendor lie.
Soft are the airs that stir the rustling grain,
And sweet the odors rising from the plain.
But not for him is beauty's veil withdrawn,
Whose heart is lonely and whose hope is
gone !

The blended hues that tint the glowing west ;
The purple clouds that wrap the mountain's
crest ;

The liberal fragrance of the scented air
That cools the brow and lifts the waving hair ;
The leaves, low whispering, when the silver
light

Of the young moon streams through the startled
night,

And all the beauty of the earth is spread,
With that of heaven, around and overhead —
All these but turn his wearied heart to pray
For what once was, but now has passed away.

So here to-night we come, and memory's spell
Wakes thoughts which human language cannot
tell.

Gathered in friendship here — not sad, like
him —

No heart beats coldly and no eyes are dim.

The joyful greeting and the glad reply,

Hope in each heart and life in every eye,

These tell a different tale, for these declare

No lingering sorrow that is like despair.

And yet, full sadly must our hearts avow

Some *were* with us who are not with us now.

Thoughts of the dead are always sad, and yet,

Those we have loved we never can forget.

Kind eyes look sweetly through the shadowy
gloom,

And mournful voices whisper from the tomb,

While, with low tone and mildly pensive eye,

We speak their names whose doom has been to
die.

To-night the starlight of affection falls
In memory's cloisters and her storied halls ;
And scenes of pleasure past, and scenes of
 pain,

In that mild lustre wake to life again :
Old days come back, remembered joys assume
The rosy freshness of their earlier bloom ;
All hearts are glad, and e'en the brow of care
Wears the rich glow it once was used to wear.
In every heart a sense of pleasure lives,
And friendship gladdens by the joy it gives :
While reigns o'er all — now worldly trials
 cease —

The gentle spell of pure and heavenly peace.

II.

Whence flows this tide of feeling ? whence
 arise

These kindly thoughts, these sympathetic sighs ?

What mystic influence thus controls the mind,
To vice repugnant and to virtue kind?
Scatters all blessings where the good have trod,
And lives from man to man, and thus from man
to God?

In the beginning, when th' Eternal's word
Pealed through the deeps and startled chaos
heard,
Confusion changed and grew beneath his eye
To perfect concord and sweet harmony.
Fast fly the trembling shades, and now arise
The morning glories born of Paradise!
Rich floods of light the formless void reveal,
Through which fair shapes and gradual beauties
steal!
The stately orbs in solemn silence pace
Their circling courses through th' eternal space!
A perfect system circumscribes the whole,
And God the union is, and God the soul!

So harmony pervades the general plan,
But finds perfection in the soul of man.
The stars may burn, the moons may wax and
 wane,
The circling seasons pass and come again --
Yet all these changes, beautiful though they be,
Can faintly type the eternal unity :
While, in the mighty human soul we find
Some index of the universal mind.

Of what avail the various force of man
Life to explore and nature's God to scan ?
Fair science fails and reason cannot stray
Beyond the precincts of her trivial day ;
Else all is dark, the ocean and the sky —
Loud rings her challenge, but there's no reply !
Still, in the promptings of the soul we know
His power, who made and governs all below ;
And Nature's voice, to those who comprehend,
Gives blessed assurance of one steadfast friend.

Go, ask the ocean bursting on the shore —
It answers proudly with its hollow roar!
Ask the broad heaven, and all your murmurs
cease —

Its calm brow awes you into perfect peace.
The stars come forth, in golden splendor shine,
And sweetly whisper of the life divine.
In all that thrills the ear or meets the eye
There lives a beauty which is mystery ;
And thus with silent influence they show
What reason cannot teach and does not know.

Take here your stand when night is coming
down,
And dusky shadows wrap the silent town :
Erewhile the dying sun flushed all the west
With his rich crimson blood, and sunk to
rest.

But now the moon a gentler light distils,
And silence broods o'er all the misty hills ;

Soft through the trees the wind of evening
sighs,
And soft the murmurs of the sea arise ;
Far up the beach, spread forth on either
hand,
The moonlit water beats the silver sand ;
Light wreaths of foam curl up with snowy
sheen,
And music thrills the air, and charms the
heavenly scene.

Or come when midnight clothes the dusky hill,
And the dark forest slumbers, deep and still ;
Save — as the restless sleeper heaves a sigh —
The brown leaves murmur when the winds
sweep by ;
And the pure stars, with holy lustre bright,
Shed their rich glory o'er the peaceful night.
There the calm river slowly murmurs by :
Along this plain the sleeping hamlets lie :

The small, white houses couched upon the
plain :

The meadows, rough with sheaves of golden
grain :

Some little spires here rise and intervene —

There the low, misty hills close round and shut
the scene.

III.

What gentle thoughts, what tender memories
rise,

When scenes like these engage our raptured
eyes!

How throned the silent years, how rise again

The phantom shapes of pleasure and of pain!

How fondly do our memories haste to dwell

With those dear ones whom we have loved so
well!

How ardently our longing souls recall
Whom death has taken from this being's thrall!
And then how gradual and how sure the pause
To ponder of God's government and laws;
To ask of brighter, happier worlds than this
And awful secrets of the dark abyss!
Thus all that's beautiful, or soon or late,
Leads us to question of a future state.

What do we live for? whence those hopes and
fears
Which nerve us to the conflict of our years?
What after all remains, when life is sped,
And man is gathered to the silent dead?
Home to the narrow house, the long, long sleep,
Where pain is stilled, and sorrow doth not
weep.

Tossed on the ever-ebbing tide of time —
A stream resistless, rapid and sublime —

One moment seen, man flits from wave to
wave,

Then sinks forever in the treacherous grave :
Sinks, and is seen no more ; no more is known ;
Sleeps the dark, dreamless sleep, unmourned,
but not alone.

What then remains to tell that he hath been ?
What record shows his virtue or his sin ?
What power reviews the life which ebbs away,
Bursts the thick darkness and leads on the
day ?

Adjusts the balance, weighing every deed —
Was evil spurned, or virtue doomed to bleed ?
Did he great objects in his life attain,
Or was existence given him in vain ?
And this to answer, summons to its place
Each thought, each action of his earthly race ;
Applies them all, and, to the general plan
Makes one subservience of the life of man ?

Perplexing questions! How shall we decide?
Invoke what counsel and entreat what guide?
Life, unexplored, is hope's perpetual blaze —
When past, one long, involved and darksome
maze :

But, that some mighty power controls the whole,
A secret intuition tells the soul.
No longer then in wandering doubt to grieve,
We cannot demonstrate, and yet believe!

If he one generous act performed on earth;
If to one noble thought he e'er gave birth;
If one kind word, to suffering weakness given,
Fell from his lips as manna fell from heaven;
If e'er his eye one pitying tear distilled;
One throb of sympathy his heart has thrilled;
If he hath bowed beneath the chastening rod,
Forgive the weakness of a child of God!
Spare, spare the follies of an erring brain,
Judge not his faults — he has not lived in vain!

IV.

See now — but calmly see, if you are wise —
The tender beauty of those sweet, blue eyes !
See all the soul, informed with modest grace,
Those eyes suffuse and mantle in that face :
The rosy cheek behold, the damask glow,
The soft, warm lips, the pearly teeth below :
Lips, that with words bewitchingly will part —
Words — music, gushing from her gentle heart :
See the full bust, the fairly rounded arm,
The tapering figure and the *peering* charm !
What lends that mystic grace ? What thrills
the soul ?
The nameless mystery that enshrouds the whole :
That mystery which wakes whene'er it will
The natural throb, the sympathetic thrill.

Shall woman's love, of mother, sister, wife —
The richest blessing of this mortal life —

Receive no tribute, humble though it be,
For so much truth and so much purity ?
No! while the heart can feel, or lips can speak,
Our words shall fail not, though our words *are*
weak :

Weak to express what bends each noble soul
In glad submission to its sweet control ;
Which smooths each wrinkle from the brow of
care,
And sets eternal youth in beauty there ;
Makes life a rosy landscape opening wide,
And lights the waters of death's dismal tide !
For, as sometimes, the murky clouds between,
The moonlight falls, a quiet holy sheen,
So love illumines that wild and awful way
With golden splendors of the rising day ;
Pierces the gloom of death and points the
road
To our celestial home and God's divine
abode.

Content with this our lives might glide along
Smoothly and sweetly as a fairy song.

In vain we seek to know our future fate,
And scarcely comprehend our present state :
But this we feel — that while our hearts are
pure,

Our lives are happy and our peace is sure :
Though sorrow's tears may sometimes dim the
eye,

Love dries the tear and checks the lingering
sigh.

And while this world such varied beauties
bless —

Rare youthful grace, and maiden loveliness,
Stern manhood's power, and noble woman's
charm —

All pain to soothe and every care disarm :
While friendship glistens in the happy eye ;
While hope remains — and hope should never
die ;

While there's one cheek from which to wipe
the tear;

One lonely heart to cherish and to cheer;

While there's on earth one noble deed to do,

We sin to murmur at the good and true!

For all things are of God to mortal man,

His the high law and His the heavenly plan!

THE MESSENGER.

“Astra regunt homines, sed regit astra Deus.”

As one, who, at a summer twilight sky,
Looketh long and solemnly ;
Noting, in their slow decay,
How the sunbeams glance and play,
As the daylight wanes away ;
How the stars come out and shine
Over the departing day ;
How all shapes, of various dye,
Glimmer, glimmer, wandering by ;
 Till he loses every hue
In one deep and stainless blue,
Where the stars are gleaming through ;

And, while the cool wind of the west
Breathes upon his brow and breast,
Whispering, as it passes on,
Of the spirits that are gone ;
Hearkens if his soul may gain
Knowledge of the far domain,
Where the souls that God has blest,
Dwelling in celestial rest,
Never know this mortal pain
And this longing wild and vain ;—

So, into those eyes of thine,
Beauteous with a love divine,
Lighting up with saintly grace
All that calm and patient face,
Shining as the pale stars shine —

Do I gaze and strive to see
What thy hidden thought may be ;
What the music in thy heart
Thou didst bring with thee from heaven ;
What thy perfect nature's art,

By white angels given ;
What revelations God has sent with thee,
And all thy pure soul's wondrous mystery.

Deep, glorious eyes, which thrill the night
And glad the brightest day,
My poor heart trembles in your sight,
I cannot read your spells aright,
I know not what ye say !
My spirit shrinks beneath your light
And half forgets to pray.
For, like the holy stars ye are,
Which shine through heaven in the
lone midnight hour ;
I bend and worship them afar,
And ask the secret of their steadfast
power :
They hold me in their mystic thrall,
They shine — but they are silent all !

Upon that brow so white and fair
There is not any line of care ;
Upon that clear pearl cheek of thine
Tears have not left a single stain.
Thy face is sweet with heavenly calm,
And lightest word of thine is balm
And comfort for the heart of pain :
But ah, this iron self-control.
Is sorrow's lesson to the soul —
Once learned and never taught again !
And can it be that one so pure,
So good, so noble as thou art,
Has felt this fire sweep through the
heart
And so become secure ?
I will not think it ! Sin alone
Brings sorrow's blight and sorrow's moan,
And power to endure :
But I will think thy spirit sent
Awhile to pine in mortal frame,

Seeking us in our darkness pent,
And agony of doubt and shame :
Awhile in this cold world to roam,
A messenger from God on high,
To win us to that blissful home
His love can grant us when we die !
And, with that thought, I will not weep
When death has sealed those eyes in
sleep.

It would be sad to think thee gone
Did I not know,
The way that thou shalt journey on,
I too must go.
And ever as the swift days glide,
My hope will be
To cast this weary life aside
And rest with thee.
For sometimes, when the strife is loud,
And angry voices harsh and wild,

I shrink from the bewildering crowd
And wish I were a little child ;
Or — sweeter, surer hope — were laid
In the still grave, by friendship made !
For there the birds would come and go,
And there the whispering grasses grow,
And there the idle winds would blow —
Nor should I be afraid :
For gentle peace is ever there,
And calm repose from worldly care.

LOUISE.



PALE she was as a lily leaf,

My poor Louise!

And we knew, from the calm of her saintly eyes,

And the gentle tone of her sweet replies,

And her kindness, that flooded the heart with
surprise,

That her bosom was laden with secret grief—

Deeply hidden, beyond relief—

My poor Louise!

Ever the same from morn till night,

Pensive and mild!

In her gentle ways there was nothing of art,
And her kindness, it was of the breaking heart,
Or that which is broken quite.

Sometimes her dark blue eyes grew dim
And dreamy with excess of pain,
And tears seemed rising to their brim —
And then her sorrow ebbed again :
And so she smiled —

A smile delirious, ghastly, wild —
My poor Louise !

A thing she was of perfect grace,
Of angel beauty in form and face —
My poor Louise !

Soft, golden hair in many a curl
Shaded a sweet brow, pure as pearl,
And fell in an airy, graceful flow
On the delicate bosom, white as snow,
Of poor Louise.

Her lips in a beauteous curve of pain

Were bent and formed to a pretty pout ;
And in her eyes the smile was vain
To hide the sorrow looking out ;
 But we never heard
 A murmuring word,
And though we saw in those eyes so fair
 That same sweet smile,
 Yet all the while
We knew that death was lurking there.

At sunset of an August day
Her sad eyes closed, and tranquilly
She breathed her sweet young life away —
 My poor Louise.

That heart no longer to and fro
Beat with the heavy throb of woe ;
Nor did those tender eyes, as once,
Give to it joyless utterance ;
 But all was hushed and still.
Her features, calm in perfect rest ;

The marble stillness of her breast,
On which her thin white hands did lie
Crossed and folded peacefully ;
The flowers, with hues of beauty warm,
Strewn on the pall that wrapped her form ;
The last fond kiss — 'twill never fly
Thy solemn haunts, Oh memory !
The forms around in sable dress ;
 The mournful tone ;
And then the sense of dreariness,
 And being all alone ;—
Ah, how these phantoms haunt me yet !
These, these I never can forget,
 Nor poor Louise.

THE STAR OF LOVE.



'THERE hangs a star in the western sky —
Merrily blows the wind by night!
It twinkles and glows like an angel's eye,
And the sky is blue, and the snow is white,
And merrily blows the wind by night.

'Tis the star of love that I gaze on there —
Merrily blows the wind by night!
And it speaks to my soul of the good and fair
That forever and ever have left my sight;
Ah, drearily sobs the wind by night!

Some in the graveyards lie asleep —
Merrily blows the wind by night!
Over them snows are drifted deep,
Cold as their bones, and pure and white,
While merrily blows the wind by night.

And some there are whose haughty hearts
Are frozen hard in shame and sin;
No tone of music e'er departs,
No ray of sunlight enters in;
Cold like the snow, but not so white —
While the merry wind shakes the pall of night.

This life of ours is wild unrest,
And light and shadow, and joy and woe,
And then the sod is over us prest,
And merrily on the winds do blow:
And the self-same stars that shine to-night,
Will shine on our graves when we are gone;
And the snow will cover us, tranquil and white,

And the musical wind blow merrily on :
For the sky is blue, and the snow is white,
And merrily blows the wind by night.

Shine on thou beautiful star, shine on,
In thy brilliant beauty bold and bright !
For the world in darkness waits the dawn,
And merrily blows the wind by night.
Let hearts grow cold that once were glad,
And eyes once bright grow dim and sad,
And cheeks turn pale, and slow decay
And fever waste our lives away ;
Yet, in thy radiant home above,
Shine on — and hear us talk of love !
Shine on, o'er all this ghastly sight,
And hark to the wind that sings by night —
To the jolly old wind that sings by night !
For the sky is blue, and the snow is white,
And merrily blows the wind by night.

MEDITATIONS.



I TURNED, and from my window towards the
west

Beheld the setting sun
Slowly and gently sinking to his rest,
For now the melancholy day was done.

Slowly he sank and faded, and I saw,
Riding upon the blast,
A shadowy form, the phantom storm-king, draw
A veil of cloud behind him as he pass'd.

Thus, said I in my heart, the promise fades
Whereby our youth is cheered ;
Thus, said I, gather sorrow's gloomy shades,
When this hath faded and hath disap-
peared.

Life, said I in my heart, is dark and cold ;
With thorns its pathway strewn :
We only live, in suffering to grow old,
And each one journeys to the grave alone.

Man, said I in my heart, is full of sin,
And woman of deceit ;
There is no joy without, no peace within,
And human misery is alone complete.

So through the dreary night I paced the floor
Solemnly to and fro ;
Turning the varied leaves of memory o'er —
Those silent records of the long ago.

Till through the casement streamed a silver
light,
Shed from the rising moon,
And broadly on my dim and dazzled sight
Blazed the rich radiance of the midnight
noon.

I hailed the omen — but, with deep unrest,
Still sneered that gloomy pride ;
When suddenly, within my troubled breast,
A soft and sweetly murmuring voice re-
plied ;

‘ Lo ! as beneath the clouds those moonbeams
make
Rich splendor o’er the whole,
So through the clouds of doubt and error
break
The rays of truth that stream upon the
soul.

Your life is what you make it ; to your hands
That sacred trust is given ;
And you too oft with treason break the bands
That would unite you blissfully to
heaven.

Then droop not yet, nor quench the light of
hope
In the heart's wild despair !
If many cares there are with which to cope,
God gives us strength to conquer, or to
bear !

And God is just. This world is plain to
him ;
Love is his potent spell ;
And though to you the glorious plan be
dim,
Have faith, and trust that all shall yet be
well !

See far across the mountain peaks of time
An awful light arise —
The glow ethereal and the hope sublime,
In that eternal land beyond the sunset
skies.'

A VISION OF THE STREET.

I.

THROUGHOUT all the livelong day,
In the highways, up and down,
You can see them take their way —
Stately prince and shabby clown.

One with proud, majestic head,
Flashing eye and waving hair ;
One with heavy, slouching tread,
And a sullen look of care.

Here the trader hurries by,
Bustling at a nervous pace,
With a cold and glittering eye,
And a sallow withered face.

There the portly man of wealth,
Unctuous, mellow, fat and free ;
Rubicund with rosy health —
Who so vast a man as he !

Here the starveling totters on,
Hung with rags and flecked with mud ;
Fainting, fainting, weak and wan,
In among the multitude.

Here is flaunting fashion's glare,
Here is modesty sedate :
Sin and sorrow everywhere —
Everywhere is pride and state.

Every varied phase of life
Rich and poor, and great and small —
Man and boy, and maid and wife, —
But, one God is over all !

II.

Wherefore comes it things are so ?

Why so different in degree ?

Do not all life's currents flow

To the same Eternity ?

Wherefore all the strife and pain

And the evil 'neath the skies ?

Springs it not from wishes vain,

And from fools who fight to rise ?

For these things all men should pray —

Quiet heart and quiet head :

Turning from his thorny way,

"*Peace*" the stern Italian said.

Wherefore fret your soul for gain ?

'Tis not long that you shall stay,

Ere this little vital pain

Fails, and then you drop away.

Wherefore fret your soul for fame?
When to life you've said adieu,
Whosoever speaks your name
Will be mortal, even as you.

Man is little at the best —
Narrow both in heart and brain;
And if Love hath never blest
Then his life is all in vain.

Still sometimes, as in the past,
Souls Miltonic flash and flame;
Brows are reared which speak the vast,
Dome-like brain of Verulam!

These the men to whom 'tis given
Truth to champion and sustain!
These make clear the way to heaven,
Suffering all the deeper pain.

Noble as the men of old —
Lo, the Laureate of the Isle!
And the proud, majestic, bold,
Hero spirit, stern Carlyle!

Such the men who lead the van :
Such the men who toil for you :
Trust in these, thou weaker man,
Trust, and render them their due !

You have not the soul to cope
With this mighty iron age!
Trust, for in them lies your hope
Of a quiet pilgrimage.

Lesser law should govern you
Than the law which governs them :
Lesser toil you have to do
For the self-same diadem.

“ Each thing in its place is best,”
Sings the noblest of our bards :
In your lowliness have rest —
Love and Peace are your rewards.

All the past this truth inspires ;
Unto this is wisdom bent ; —
Bound your life with few desires,
Humble hopes and calm content.

THE COQUETTE.



No, you are not happy now,
 Though you seem so gay and proud ;
There's a shadow on your brow,
 And your laugh is quick and loud.
Do not tell me I am wrong,
 For deceit is never well :
Having worn the mask so long,
 All it covers I can tell ;
And I see you've come to know
Love's swift ebb and misery's flow.

Was she generous, free and brave,
 Yet affectionate and meek ?
Did she, when her hand she gave,
 Sweetly smile and softly speak ?
Did her mild eyes blind you quite,
 And, as you were all alone,
Was her bosom, full and white,
 Gently pressed against your own ?
Tell me, is the picture true ?
Has she practiced thus with you ?

Did you think that all was well,
 When you held her in your arms ?
Did you never doubt the spell ?
 Had your heart no cold alarms ?
When she murmured sweet and low
 Of the love that thrilled her breast,
Did you then *believe* it so,
 Thinking you were richly blest ?
Ah poor soul, 'twas nothing new,
She has cheated others too.

You are sad, or I mistake !

All this world seems dark and chill ;
For you think your heart will break —
And 'tis like enough it will.

She has torn your peace away,

But her own peace she has kept :
Have you heard her mother say
How surprisingly she slept ?
She is of the tranquil kind —
Very easy in her mind.

And her life-stream will flow on

O'er the same unvaried flat ;
And, should you be dead and gone,
She won't care a straw for that.

By and by her life will fade,

And she'll ornament a pall ;
And, although the paltry jade
Never had a heart at all,
Should you live, you'll go and weep
Where her worthless ashes sleep.

Let the happy children shout!

Shadow comes with sunny token :

Let the merry bells ring out!

Yet shall hearts be seared and broken.

Let the tide sweep on its way,

In the shade, or in the sun,

In the night or in the day,

Death is rest when life is done ;

And beyond it — wherefore care ?

Souls there are which go not there!

BEAUTY.



I HAD a dream one glorious summer night
In the rich bosom of imperial June.
Languid I lay upon an odorous couch,
Golden with amber, festooned wildly o'er
With crimson roses, while the silent stars
Wept dews of love upon their clustered leaves.
Above me soared the azure vault of heaven,
Vast and majestic ; cinctured with that path
Whereby, mayhap, the sea-born Venus finds
A way from higher spheres ; that path which
seems
A band of silver, gemm'd with regal stars,
And bound upon the forehead of young night.

There as I lay, the musical south wind
Shook all the roses into murmuring,
And poured their fragrance o'er me in a shower
Of purple mist. Anon, upon mine ears
Came a low, sweet and silvery melody ;
Which with delicious languor filled the air,
And, like the sunset-colored water, broke,
And floated into labyrinths of sound.

Then rose a shape, a dim and ghostly shape,
Whereto was neither form nor feature given ;
A shadowy splendor, seeming as it came
A pale and pearly cloud shot through and
through
With faintest rays of sunset : yet within
A spirit dwelt ; and, floating from within,
A murmur trembled softly into words :

' I am the ghost of a most lovely dream
Which haunted, in old days, a Poet's mind !

And long he sought for, wept and prayed for
me ;
And searched through all the chambers of his
soul,
And searched the secret places of the earth,
The lonely forest and the lonely shore,
And listened to the voices of the sea,
What time the stars were out, and midnight
cold
Slept on the dark waves whispering at his feet ;
And sought the mystery in a human form,
Amid the haunts of men, and found it not ;
And looked in woman's sweet and tender eyes,
And mirrored there his own, and saw no sign !
But only in his dreams I came to him,
And gave him fitful glimpses of my face,
Whereof he after sang in sweetest words ;
Then died and came to me. But, evermore,
Through weary days and lonely, wakeful
nights —

A life of star-lit gloom — do Poets seek
To rend away the veil which covers me!
And evermore they grasp the empty air.
For only in their dreams I come to them,
And give them fitful glimpses of my face,
And lull them with the music words of hope,
That promise sometime to their ravished eyes
A vision of the absolute Beautiful!’

Then the voice ceased, and only on mine ears
The shaken roses murmured and the wind!

THOUGHTS OF LIFE.

[TO W. O. H.]

I THINK, though life is not too long,
Its scenes are not too gay ;
That thickly as our hopes may throng,
They fleetly fade away ;
That youth a radiant season is —
Supremely, sweetly blest !
And when the heart's bereft of this,
'Tis darkness all the rest !

I think this world a weary scene ;
That life is sorrow's thrall ;
That nothing is but what has been,
And God is over all.

I think the task our lives supply
Is, learning to forgive :
And when a man's prepared to die
He just knows how to live.

And therefore, since our life is so
Perplexed with pain and care ;
And joys as fleetly come and go
As unsubstantial air ;
I think the hopes for this world made,
Not worth a single sigh ;
And though they flourish fair, or fade,
Nor more nor less care I !

I think, dear friend, that while to you,
Its many strifes among,
My heart still beats as fond and true
As when that heart was young,
That life is not without its sun
Nor truth without its charm ;

And pray the friendship thus begun
Our God may keep from harm.

The rolling years may bear us far
From one another's view ;
Our lives already separate are,
Our hopes are separate too :
But I shall not forget the while
Your honest, manly eye,
Your generous heart, your ready smile —
Forget not till I die !

I think that if I try to live
As truly as I can,
My Heavenly Parent will forgive
A weak and erring man ;
I think his wisdom is supreme,
His dispensation best ;
And wait to end my fevered dream,
And go with Him to rest.

MANHOOD.



Look thou upon the outward life,
The active, restless, seething sea,
The one tempestuous, ceaseless strife
From which the world is never free!

Look thou into the heart of man
When toss'd and torn by wild desire —
The toil to do what manhood can,
The aspiration pointing higher!

Think thou upon his weary days,
His anxious, watchful nights of gloom,
And see the wreath of withering bays
That crowns at last an early tomb.

Then, if a single generous tear
Is wept for him, in grief sublime,
And thou dost deem it very dear —
This meed of glory paid by time ;

Still, still think not that thou hast known
The all in all this life should be !
To toil, to mourn, to die, alone
Make not a man's divinity !

Poor are the honors of the earth,
And poorer yet its paltry praise ;
And not for this does honest worth
Toil out its few, but glorious days.

Is empty praise of brazen clown,
Fit offering for the man whose soul
Lived all ignoble passions down,
And went to God unstained and whole ?

No — Heaven forbid! his glance discerns,
Dim through the future's cloudy pall,
A higher, purer light that burns
Surmounting and encircling all!

There is a nobler life within,
A life of soul to which if true,
He tramples out the sparks of sin,
He seeks his God and meets him too!

Then hush the throbs of this vile clay,
Fit but to moulder 'neath the sod!
Live firmly, nobly, gloriously,
True to yourself and true to God!

FIRST LOVE.



I REMEMBER her well, in the rose-light of morn,
Ere I learned that a promise could ever
betray ;
When I played with the roses and laughed at
the thorn,
And my life, heart, and hope were all brilliant
and gay.
I remember her well in her youth's early bloom,
And rarely such beauty to mortals is given —
For her brow never wore any shadow of gloom,
And her eyes were lit up with the sunshine
of heaven.

I remember the smile that would steal o'er her
face,
And her cheeks that would flush with a lovely
surprise ;
And still by the starlight of memory I trace
The sweet little mouth and the gentle gray
eyes.

I remember — ah, how can I ever forget
When I fondly and timidly stole my first kiss.
And it softens and sweetens my tender regret
To recall the bright hour in a moment like
this.

In the light of her love I saw clearer and clearer,
And my heart thrilled with joy when she gave
me her vow ;
And life seemed far brighter, and better, and
dearer,
Than e'er it has been or can be to me
now.

For the currents of fate part us wider and wider,
And around us the winds and the waves are
at strife ;

And I see her no more, am no longer beside her,
But drifting alone o'er the ocean of life !

Still I cherish her memory to solace and guide
me ;

And oft, when I'm weary in heart and in brain,
Her dear little form seems to nestle beside me,
And I hear the sweet voice of the old time
again.

Oh 'tis well here on earth that the pure, early
feeling

From the depths of the soul cannot wholly
depart ;

And there's joy in our tears as they flow when
revealing

That the first faith and hope are not dead
in the heart !

THE MURMUR OF THE RAIN.



I AM sitting by my window
While the night is coming down,
And I watch the darkness settle
Upon the silent town ;
The sky is dull and dreary,
And the softly-falling rain —
It tinkles like these little thoughts
That drip from out my brain.

Now denser grow the shadows
And the night is still around,

Save that the gentle rain-drops
Patter slowly on the ground ;
And now throughout the darkness
A distant echo steals,
From the trampling of the horses' hoofs
And rumbling of the wheels.

Now it dies away in silence
But anon returns again ;
And all the time I hear the chime
Of softly-falling rain.
While the shivering wind it murmurs
With demoniac delight :
Oh I'm sure it moans with the dying groans
Of the hearts that break to-night!

There is something very mournful
In this solemn, ceaseless sound !
But it tells of peace that will never cease,
In the caverns under ground.

Ah, the sweet young rose of hope is dead —
'Twill never bloom again !
And the tears I shed for the beautiful dead,
They fall like the desolate rain.

THE PRAYER OF A HEART.



FATHER, to thy supernal view
How small a single life must be!
Yet I have dared to think it true
My soul has something born of thee.
I would not deem this life in vain,
Nor useless any single hour;
But in my pleasure and my pain
See tokens of thy glorious power.

Amid the solemn woods I muse,
Lit by the starlight pure and pale:

The pleasant dropping of the dews
And the sweet south wind's whispering wail,
Stirring the leaves, make music there,
Soft as a love-lorn maiden's sigh ;
And night's rich radiance everywhere,
Tells me, O God, that thou art nigh !

I wander on the vacant shore
When twilight deepens far at sea,
While madly now the wild waves roar
And toss the white foam heavily :
The sea-breeze gently lifts my hair
And kindly cools my fevered brow,
The while I breathe an humble prayer,
O Father, as I breathe it now.

Protect me, for my will is weak !
Protect me in this world of sin !
Leave not my lonely heart to break,
Through care without and grief within !

Temptations strong beset my way,
And passion points my wild career :
Be with me in my prosperous day,
And in the midnight of my fear !

A NIGHT IN JUNE.

[BY THE SEASIDE.]

THE moonbeams on the water sleep
In radiant light,
And radiant thoughts and visions keep
My soul to-night.

Shades of sweet hours that now are gone
Come all unsought ;
And silver waves of joy dance on
The stream of thought.

A dreamy influence seems to rise
From other years ;
A quiet bliss which dims the eyes
With happy tears.

Life wears that glow of rosy grace
Which once it wore ;
And smiles are lit on many a face
That smiles no more.

The genial friends I used to greet,
All, all are here :
All forms are fair, all voices sweet,
All memories dear !

All happy thoughts, all happy dreams
That have been mine,
Rise with a tender light that seems
Of auld lang syne.

But something in the heart is wrong
That once had sway ;
Some echo of the ancient song
Has died away.

These winds that on their cloudy cars
Sweep through the sky ;
These wandering, watching, deathless stars
My prayer deny.

These low, sweet murmurs from the land
And from the sea ;
These waves that kiss the silver sand
Speak not to me.

And not to me that voice shall speak
Forevermore ;
Though the same waves in beauty break
On the same shore.

Alas! to peaceful hearts alone,
Which love her well,
Does Nature make those secrets known
She loves to tell.

To them her sweetest songs are sung
Of Love and Peace :
But when the heart's no longer young,
Those voices cease.

MEMORIES.



Now 'tis night; the sun descended,
Darkness drear is all around;
Flaps the wing of hidden raven,
Chirps the cricket on the ground!

How the silent hours are burdened —
With what grief and with what pain!
While the solemn glance of memory
Wanders o'er the past again.

Shadowy visions flit before me,
Phantoms of the long ago;
And I sit and watch them sadly,
While my tears begin to flow.

And their voices thrill the darkness
 With a soft, reproachful tone ;
And they leave me in my sadness,
 Feeling all the more alone :

Till there comes a sweeter memory,
 Chasing all my gloom away,
Of a maiden dearly cherished,
 And a ne'er forgotten day :

One calm day of mist and sunshine
 When we sat beside the sea,
And the great waves rolling inward
 Broke and murmured mournfully.

Sad thou wert — I knew thy sorrow !
 Yet, oh brave and gentle one,
Yet thy pure lips softly whispered,
 “ Let our Father's will be done.”

And although this world be dreary,
While such hearts as thine remain
Let me nevermore grow weary
In the restless strife and pain.

But with meek and humble spirit,
Till the sands of life are run,
Let me feel that sweet submission,
Saying, " May Thy will be done ! "

THROUGH THE DARKNESS.



IF the road grow dark before you reach
The home where your true love waits for you
Will you linger within the light, and preach
Of the danger you may perchance go
through ?
Or will you go on, as you ought to do ?
You will go. You will care not for darkness
and storm ;
For her dear love will shield you and keep you
warm.

What sort of a life, I would like to know,
Will any man lead who does not love? —
The frozen earth is cold below,
And the freezing stars are bright above:
But let him lie under the frozen mould,
For his heart and the stars and the earth are
cold.

The night comes down with an angry frown,
And the fierce wind shrills on the lonely
moor:
Look back — to the lights in the distant town!
Look on — to the dreary waste before!
Who waits for you when the journey's
o'er?
She will give you a sweet, sweet kiss, you
know —
Let the darkness come and the fierce wind
blow!

In the path of duty grows many a thorn,
And bleak is the scorn of a selfish world;
But there never was night without its morn,
And after the tempest the clouds are furled.
For over all spreadeth the broad blue sky,
And we trust in our God who is always nigh.

MY PET THAT WAS.

A REMINISCENCE.

Slow stealing through the twilight haze
A cloud of slumber droppeth o'er me ;
I dream to-night of other days,
As many a fool has done before me.
And from the crowd of phantoms there,
One sweet, pale face looks out above me —
Alas the flower I used to wear !
Alas the heart that used to love me !

Your eyes were gray when last we met —
I wonder if they're any grayer !
I used to pray to them, my pet,
But now I'm nothing of a prayer.

Your voice I think was very sweet —
'Twould sound to-night a great deal sweeter !
And ah, the hours were very fleet,
Told gently off by Love's repeater.

Your heart was hardly true, my pet —
I cannot say that mine was truer ;
For I, who used to woo, forget
Sometimes that e'er I've been a wooer.
But you forgot your vow, my pet,
Even in the moment when you gave it!
So it were idle to regret
The sorry chance that did not save it.

I think I never saw you sad —
They tell me that you still are merry ;
With eyes that sparkle, gay and glad,
And lips that have the tint of cherry :
That all your pretty, winning ways,
So arch and wayward, wild and wilful,

Remain as in the golden days —

Except that you are grown more skilful.

Fade gentle vision from my sight!

I do not trust — I do not doubt you :

But I am happier far to-night,

My darling little pet, without you !

I warrant me you have no lack

Of lovers now to teaze and worry ;

So could I call the old days back,

I would'nt do it in a hurry.

LIGHT AND SHADOW.



You who judge by what you see
Often fail to judge aright!
Stars are shining solemnly
In the day as in the night:
All the day they lie concealed
By the glory of the sun;
But at eve they shine revealed
In the azure, one by one.

So the daylight of a smile
May but veil the human face,
Hiding for a little while
Doubt and care and sorrow's trace:

So when shadow clouds of woe
O'er a happy face arise,
Still beneath the shadows glow
Stars of joy in gentle eyes.

Life is arched with changing skies :
Rarely are they what they seem :
Children we of smiles and sighs —
Much we know, but more we dream.
Look beneath the outward show,
To the shadow or the light !
And, from what you surely know,
Learn to see and judge aright.

G O O D - B Y E .



Now, little one, 'tis time to part!

With half a smile and half a sigh
Come let me fold you to my heart,
And softly whisper, Love, Good-bye!
And let me hear the gentle tone
Of that same sad, but sweet reply,
Which I shall dream on, when alone,
So mournfully, Good-bye! Good-bye!

Ah well, there's something in the word
That speaks a spirit kind and true;
And sweeter sound I never heard
Than when I heard it first from you!

For that sad tone came winged with power
To tell me what I longed to know :
I had your secret from that hour ;
I knew you loved me long ago !

But now it dims my eyes with tears
And thrills my heart with nameless pain,
For all the moments will seem years
Till you and I shall meet again :
But whisper it once more, my love,
With half a smile and half a sigh ;
And may our Father, from above,
Look down and bless you, dear — Good-
bye !

TO ONE WHO IS ABSENT.



I FELT that when we parted, my sweet friend,
It was forever : and my thought is still
That we shall meet no more this side the
grave ;
That I shall never look upon your face,
Nor hold again your gentle hand in mine.
Others shall see your quiet, sunny smile,
And hear the silver ripple of your voice,
Telling pure thoughts that speak a soul as pure ;
And many a chilled and dusty heart shall be
Warmed back again to life, and youth, and joy,
By your sweet presence ; and when you have
passed

Into the bloom of perfect womanhood,
There's one, perchance, shall win you for his
 own,
And know through life the bliss of being loved
By one whose love will make him more a man,
And lift him nearer to the home of God.
But we shall meet no more ; and it is well
This should be so ! Unquiet is my heart
With many dark and bitter memories,
And wild ambition : therefore is it fit
That I should dwell alone ; and, from afar,
Remember you with grateful reverence —
A child of heaven, all innocence and truth,
And consecrate by God's especial love !

A BRIDAL SONG.



Put on the laughing brows of youth
A coronal of roses,
White as the pure and steadfast truth
On which the heart reposes.

Give to the summer noon its heat!
Give summer all its glory!
Those happy hours are always fleet
When young Love tells his story.

But autumn shall not need the glow
Of early springing roses;
For the life which love hath guarded so,
Grows brighter as it closes.

The storm-clouds soil December's skies,
But dim their sunshine only ;
For Faith shall gently close the eyes
On all that's dark or lonely.

Happy as husband and as wife,
With tender hearts to love you, —
Yours is the crowning bliss of life,
With God and heaven above you.

SABBATH IN AUTUMN.



How gently tolls the village bell,
This quiet Sabbath afternoon ;
With now a pause, and now a swell
Of solemn music, all in tune !

How calmly, through the deep blue sky,
The little fleecy clouds are borne !
How soft the winds which murmur by,
While all the leafless branches mourn !

It is the still and lifeless peace
That tells the course of false decay ;
That changeful Nature's pulses cease
And strength and beauty fade away.

'Tis thus our little lives decline,
So pass our few and fleeting years;
While stars of hope delusive shine
Dim through the misty vale of tears.

But when the weary days are gone,
And sorrow's mournful dream is o'er,
Our eyes shall see a holier dawn
And nobler glory than before.

A VOICE OF THE DEAD.



THE autumn wind is wild in all the leaves,
And the long grass is rustling on my grave ;
Ah, would you have me think your heart still
grieves
For one you would not save ?

For I am dead ! Know you not I am dead ?
Why do you haunt me in my grave to-night ?
Standing above and listening overhead,
Where I am buried deep, and out of sight !

Have you not wine and music in your home,
And the fair form and eyes so pure and proud
With love of you? — and wherefore do you
 come
To vex me, lying silent in my shroud?

Seek your new love! she calls you, and the
 tears
Are warm on her pale face, and her young
 breast
Is full of doubt and sorrow, and she hears
Low whispered words that warn her from her
 rest.

In from the night! the storm begins to stir!
I will be near, and ghostly eyes shall see
How you will kiss her lips and say to her,
“Thine always, Love,” — as once you said
 to me!

THE LONELY FLOWER.



ON the bank of a woodland stream it grew,
Fed with light and with silver dew ;
Yet was its life, or more or less,
Sustained by its own soft loveliness.

And the stream flowed on through a lonely dell
Where the softened sunlight loved to dwell ;
Wrapped in a robe of forest trees,
And lulled by the sigh of the summer breeze.

And so it grew from day to day,
A beauty and a mystery ;
Till, at the last, in its sorrowful pride,
It sickened and faded and drooped and died.

But the sunlight came and smiled in the wood,
And still by the stream the dark trees stood ;
And the stream itself flowéd peacefully on,
Though the beautiful flower of love was gone.

TO ONE IN HEAVEN.



IF angels wait the appointed end
Which to this feverish life must be,
Angels shall smile on thee, my friend,
And heavenly hands shall welcome thee.

Nor shall thy memory pass away
From hearts that long have loved thee here ;
But we'll remember, day by day,
That thou wert kind as thou wert dear.

And when, with worldly care forlorn,
We seek thy grave in silent pain,
Forgive us if we idly mourn
And wish thee back from heaven again.

Be with us in our darkness! Come,
And stretch to us thy gentle hand;
And guide us through the gathering gloom,
To join thee in the eternal land!

R E S T !



SORROW is pitiless,
Rest from thy sorrow !
Sleep while thou may'st,
There is pain for the morrow.

Close, close thine eyes
On the dark world around thee !
Shake from thy spirit
The chains that have bound thee !

Rest while thou may'st,
There are angels beside thee :
Rest in our love,
We will guard thee and guide thee.

Calm be thy sleep

As the stars are above thee !

Pure be thy dreams

As the souls are that love thee !

S N O W - D R O P S .



FILLED is the air with driving snow,
And the wind in the chimney moaneth free,
And the frozen ground is white below,
And the snow-drops gem each haggard tree.

I stand at the window and watch the snow,
Coming down from the clouds, on its desolate
way,
In a ceaseless, wild and tumultuous flow,
Borne along on the wind like the ocean's
spray.

And I think that we, like the flakes of snow,
Are strangely wafted by fortune's breath ;
Restlessly eddying to and fro,
Till we sink at last in the waves of death.

ONE OF THREE.



Do you remember her smile, my friend ?

Yes, you remember it : so do I.

Think you that ever our God doth send

An angel down from the upper sky ?

Where are the pleasures that used to be ?

Where are our moments of happiness gone ?

The joys of our youth were swift to flee,

But the light of that smile still shineth on.

Words we forget, but looks remain, —

Better and truer things are they !

And so I think it is not in vain

That the light of her beautiful smile will
stay !

A L O N E.



WITH a faint, dim flickering on the wall,
The mellow sunlight dies away,
And a sort of drowsy, dreamy thrall
Comes down on the soul at the shut of day.

The rising moon, with a golden glare,
Laves all the emerald ground ;
But a gloom is in the summer air,
And a heavy sadness all around.

For one who should be here to-night
Comes not, and will not come again :
And the maiden weeps in the still moonlight,
And her heart is weary and full of pain.

THE LAST SCENE.



HERE she lieth, white and chill :

Put your hand upon her brow !

For her heart is very still,

And she does not know you now.

Ah, the grave's a quiet bed !

She shall sleep a pleasant sleep,

And the tears that you may shed

Will not wake her — therefore weep !

Weep — for you have wrought her woe :

Mourn — she mourned and died for you :

Ah, too late we come to know

What is false and what is true.

MY FAITH.



I HOLD it well our hearts should know
The full extremes of joy and woe ;
To feel this mortal life not made
In all of sunshine nor of shade.

I hold it well that we should give
Our joys the right they claim, to live ;
Nor sink in childish weakness down
At sorrow's chill or fortune's frown.

I hold it true, whate'er we do,
In mask of mirth or suffering's thrall,
That, lapsed in years our smiles and tears,
We have but shadows for them all!

F O R T I T U D E .



THE brightest hopes the heart can cherish
Are always first to fade away ;
The loveliest things are first to perish,
And life itself is but decay.

Still, suffering tries the human soul,
While patient firmness hopes release,
And urges to a heavenly goal,
Where nothing is save endless peace.

Then faint not on the thorny road
Which many a weary foot hath trod :
It leads thee to a blest abode,
It leads thee to thy father, God.

HOPE IN SORROW.



COLD is the night and the weary wind is sighing,
Solemnly and sadly it murmurs and it grieves ;
Low in the west the red moon is dying,
And dead upon the earth lie the sere and
yellow leaves.

But when the spring-time, goldenly breaking,
Blushes like the morning, ere it deepens into
day,
Then shall the glad earth, its sadness forsaking,
Weep in its joy o'er the rosy feast of May.

S O N G .

[FOR A SILVER WEDDING.]

BE crowned with flowers the rosy hours, —
The breezes glad and gay
With the music that wells from the silver bells
That beat in our hearts to-day!

From the merry rills, from the breezy hills,
From the woods and the meadow lea,
Let the echoes rise to the brilliant skies
And faint o'er the sapphire sea!

For joy attains its sweetest strains
And life its natural bliss,
When souls allied are sanctified
In union such as this:

When day and night make one delight
To hearts that shall not sever :
For true love binds accordant minds
Forever and forever !

WHAT THE STARS WHISPER.



IN the blue heaven, so coldly bright,
The harvest moon shines fair to-night ;
And calmly, sweetly, from afar
Falls the pure light of each pale star :
Silent, serene, they shine and move
By God's eternal power and love.

So should it be with us, to whom
Are hours of joy and hours of gloom :
Patient our hearts should still beat on
Till this world's changing dream is gone :
Pure and serene our souls should be
Till mercy's summons sets them free.

AT MIDNIGHT.



Am I alone? I see no form,
I hear no voice nor footstep nigh;
Only the howling of the storm
And angry winds that shake the sky:
But, through this dim and ghostly gloom,
What unseen eyes may gaze in mine!
What viewless phantoms fill the room,
And speak no word and make no sign.

Ah well, these striving thoughts are vain:
We cannot pierce the mystery through,
But patiently must wear the chain,
And suffer, and be pure and true.

No power in mortal gift can reach
The secrets of the grave, or show
What will be plain when death shall teach
All that we long, yet dread to know.

A T D A W N .



SEE, the crimson moon above
The long, low clouds that throng the west,
Thrilleth them through, as a smile of love
Thrilleth the dark, despairing breast.

But, as fades that smile from a beautiful face,
So fades the crimson moon away ;
While the ashen twilight wanes apace,
And ushers in the conquering day.

TO H. W. L.



IF ever envy in my heart could dwell,
 (And, God be thanked, I do not think it can)
Thy glorious calm I might desire well,
 Which, trusting Heaven, shrinks not for any
 man.

For, by such intellectual self-control,
 Such cheerful patience to endure and act,
Comes that vast power and majesty of soul
 Which greatest men on earth have never
 lacked.

And in thy dignity of thought and mien,
 And thy serenity and gentleness,
Still have I seen, and gloried to have seen,
 How great soe'er they were, thou art no less!

So when my heart is bound in sorrow's thrall,
And restless beats, and burns with inward
 pain,
Let but the light of thy example fall
 Upon my life, and I am strong again!

THE TRUE WAY.

[FOR A FESTIVE OCCASION.]

BE these true words on every lip,
Through all this maze of joy and pain, —
' Let not the fair occasion slip
Which never, never comes again !'
We bear not long this being's thrall,
Nor will the flight of time delay ;
And whosoe'er would take at all,
Must take his chances while he may.

For all things fade : The breath of spring
Shakes the frail blossoms to the earth ;
And summer waves her sultry wing,
And smites the flowers with fatal death ;

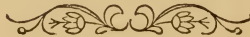
The autumn fruits mature and fall,
The storm-winds gather in the sky,
Till winter spreads a leaden pall
And knells the solemn hour to die.

And we, whose faces here to-night
Are gay with smiles, and wit, and wine,
Shall, by and by, with altered sight,
Count o'er the joys of auld lang syne.
Our hearts, where hope is singing now,
To other music then shall beat ;
When anxious thought clouds every brow,
And only memory's dreams are sweet.

So let us, in life's generous spring,
In all its merry, genial hours,
Be happy as the birds that sing,
And brilliant as the early flowers ;
That sometimes in the sterner age,
When care has claimed us for its own,

We may read o'er the earlier page,
And catch again the earlier tone ;

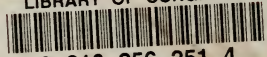
And say — albeit with quivering lip —
Through all this maze of joy and pain,
I let no fair occasion slip,
I knew it would not come again !
But happy with an honest heart,
Gave every hour its proper due ;
And strove to play a noble part,
To Truth and Love and Friendship true !



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