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... A ...

BOOK OF POEMS

... BY ...

MRS. NANNIE P. HANCOCK.







[An invalid's poems, on
miscellaneous subjects]

A


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... BY ...

MRS. NANNIE P. HANCOCK

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1900

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Introduction.

THE generous public will, I trust, pardon me for introducing myself and this little volume to the world.

I, Nannie P. Hancock, was born in Patrick County, Virginia, July 14th, 1857. My parents were Jabez T. and Ruth Emerson. When I was only seven years old my father died from the effects of a deep cold, contracted while serving in the war between the States, leaving me virtually an orphan of the Confederacy. His death, of course, materially affected my childhood and rendered my future prospects less hopeful. I was given the best of moral instruction by a pious mother, and received a limited education in the free schools of Virginia.

I shall ever feel grateful to such proficient teachers as "Judy Peyton" Ross, Mrs. Pencie J. Preston, Miss Mary Moir, Miss Mary Jefferson (now Mrs. John T. West), and others, who proved not only competent instructors, but faithful friends, and who strove to make out a plan for my success.

It is, perhaps, just to my mother's family (the Price family) to say that for several generations there seems to have been a gift for verse-making among them, although, like the poets described by Byron, they "have never penned their inspirations."

Being, as I was, of a very delicate constitution, the trials and hardships incident to the life of an orphan fell very heavily upon me; consequently, the bloom of my youth and riper years of womanhood passed away, and my name was still unknown to the literary world. I often felt the force of the beautiful lines written by the Poet Gray:

"Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

In the year 1894 I was visited by Rev. P. B. Hylton, of Ballard, Virginia, and was advised by him to dig up what was called by him my "buried talent," and use it for the benefit of others. This led to the publication of numerous poems in the public prints. I omit to say that I was married to W. J. Hancock, December 16th, 1886. Our three children now play around me. To them I dedicate this little book, hoping that the sale of it may prove a factor in their education and help to launch their tiny crafts on the mystic ocean of life.

Although afflicted, I try to exercise a spirit of submissive endurance, knowing that "all things work together for good to them that love the Lord."

How sweet, though Fortune's fickle hand
May seem to deal unfair,
To have the doctrine of the cross
To shield us from despair.

NANNIE P. HANCOCK.

CONTENTS.

Introduction	7
Sketch of Early Family History	9
The Author's Prayer for Divine Guidance	11
An Invalid's View	12
My Morning Walk	13
Revelations xiv : 13	15
The Evening Dew	16
Kindness	17
Gospel Compass	18
The Dying Advice	19
Mamma's Sermons	20
The Coming Spring	21
Grandma's Rehearsal	22
Christian Experience	23
The Sweetest Girls	25
A Word of Prayer for the Danville District	26
The Emblematic Evergreen	27
Christ in the Garden	28
The Wounded Lark	29
The Old Playground	30
Jesus Wept	31
An Infant's Grave	32
The Kiss of Judas	33
Passage of the Potomac through the Blue Ridge	34
My Mountain View	35
Misfortune Will Not Bring Disgrace	36
Geography of Life	37
There is no 'Morrow	38
The Voice of the Rill	39
Our Solar System	40

Christ a Pattern of True Humility	41
A Christmas Poem	42
The Three P's	43
Naval Battle in Manila Bay	44
Three Reasons for Patriotism	45
The Ragged Robe	46
Mother's Grave	47
Autumn Leaves	48
Poetical Prayer for the United States	49
The New Moon	50
'Tis the Last Red Rose of Summer	51
A New Year's Poem	52
Lines on the Death of Mrs. Ruth Emerson	53
The Sin of Mother Eve	54
Work Begun in Prayer is Apt to End in Praise	56
The Pipe of Peace	57
The Rainbow	58
The Partridge	59
The Colors of Our Flag	60
Lee and Jackson	61
Lines Composed from the Last Words of Miss Mary Light	62
The Christian's Help in Time of Trouble	63
Advice to Wayward Children	64
The Oblong Oven	65
The Whippoorwill	66
The Honey Bee	67
A Prayer for Temperance	68
Lines on the Life of W. F. B. Taylor	69
The Christian Warfare	70
Week-Day Piety	71
Madam Rumor	72
Poetical Prayer for Orphans of the Danville District	73
Mother's Meditation	74

SKETCH OF EARLY FAMILY HISTORY.

We've thought the merry butterflies
That flit among the flowers,
Are not more happy than were we
In early childhood hours.

But soon, alas! there came a change.
The first of grief we knew,
Was when the coffin cover hid
Our sister from our view.

Our father's health was in decline,
When sister passed away ;
And soon 't was evident to all
That here he could not stay.

One night we woke to find his form
Wrapped in a winding sheet,
And tapers dimly burning at
His head and near his feet.

We wept, though friends for comfort said,
"Your father is at rest."
Our widowed mother mourned her loss ;
We orphans were distressed.

To bear our many griefs aright,
Although bereaved, we tried ;
But soon our sorrows woke afresh,
When little brother died.

Thus father and two children went,
To try the world unknown;
While sister and myself were reared
By mother all alone.

We often o'er these bygone years,
A backward glance extend,
And offer up our thanks to God,
The lonely orphan's friend.



**THE AUTHOR'S PRAYER FOR DIVINE
GUIDANCE.**

Thou God of love and mercy, we
Most humbly look for aid to Thee.
If we've a work or mission here,
Be pleased to make our duty clear.

If we our feeble lays must sing,
Our shattered harp repair and string;
Attune afresh our quivering lyre,
And help us raise our sonnets higher.

Thy heavenly muses hovered o'er
Pope, Homer, Milton, Scott and Moore;
Their lofty harps divinely strung,
For us immortal anthems sung.

If thus with love Thou didst baptize,
And make Thy former poets wise,
Thou still, we hope, wilt blessing send
To those who on Thy strength depend.

AN INVALID'S VIEW.

Declining health is warning me
To make my calling sure ;
To trim my lamp and ready be,
And to the end endure.

For at a not far distant day,
I view the trying hour,
When I shall meet death hand to hand,
And grapple with his power.

I sometimes hope that I shall be
Released from pain and strife,
When I have gone through sorrow down
The avenue of life.

A brilliant luster from the cross
Alone can light the road,
As we traverse the barren strand,
To Jordan's stormy ford.

But if the pearl of precious worth,
Is made by faith my own,
My soul shall bask in rays of love,
Before the shining throne.

MY MORNING WALK.

One morning in the month of May,
When all the world was bright,
I wandered forth among the flowers,
Which gave my soul delight.

The bee sipped nectar from the blooms,
The mock-bird sang his lay,
And all the world seemed fair and bright,
That lovely morn in May.

In the impressive solitude,
I thought of youth's gay hours,
And of the opening path of life,
So often strewn with flowers.

Yet, as I plucked a thorny rose,
The thought it brought to mind,
That on life's road we may expect
Corroding thorns to find.

And as the petals of the rose
Upon the ground must lie,
So many an ardent youthful hope
In after years must die.

How fitting are our childhood hours!
How soon they pass away!
Our transient Summer days give place
To Autumn's dim decay.

How wise are they who yield their hearts
To God in youthful prime,
And ever spend their after years
In efforts all sublime.

Though flowers may fade and piercing thorns
Abound on every side,
The "Rose of Sharon" shall with them
Forevermore abide.



REVELATION XIV : 13.

St. John, while on the Patmos Isle,
Led by the Spirit all the while,
Permitted was to know and see
The bliss divine which dwells with Thee.

And others, since his day and time,
Have written on this theme sublime ;
Still pens nor tongues have e'er expressed,
The glories of Thy promised rest.

Blessed are the dead that in Thee die ;
Their labor done their spirits fly
To realms of bliss, of light and love,
To dwell with Christ and saints above.

Could mortals here but understand
The rest prepared at God's right hand,
The chorus of all hearts would be,
Bless'd the dead that die in Thee.

THE EVENING DEW.

How wondrous are the works of God!
How charming Nature's views!
How lovely are the gardens when
Embalmed with evening dews.

The landscape tells His wonders great,
The flowers His love disclose;
'T is He who with the dewdrop decks
The petals of the rose.

The dews of evening symbolize
The Holy Spirit's power,
Which resteth on the trusting heart,
Like dewdrops on a flower.

Yet all unlike the evening dews,
Which vapors waft away,
The sacred dews of grace shall with
The trusting spirit stay.

Then when the night of death is near,
May the Lord in love diffuse,
His blissful spirit on our hearts,
Like gentle evening dews.

KINDNESS.

A gentle smile, when we are sad,
Doth tend to cheer and make us glad ;
A kindly word, a loving tone,
Does much to comfort those who mourn.

Words of kindness little cost,
And deeds of kindness are not lost ;
For if we serve in little things,
It to the suffering solace brings.

When one from any cause is sad,
'T is not enough to say " 'T is bad,"
Or in a scornful tone to chide,
Or silently to turn aside ;

Nay, we our brother's woe should feel,
His broken spirit strive to heal—
Should seek to give him some relief,
Or share with him his pain and grief.

Though life is fraught with many a care,
It still behooves us to beware,
And strive at every time and place,
To show a gentle, cheerful face.

THE GOSPEL COMPASS.

The needle pointeth to the pole,
While angry waves of ocean roll,
The storm-tossed seaman's bark to guide
Aright in time of wind and tide.

So God, in wisdom, hath designed
A needle true for human kind :
By light of faith His saints can view,
His Word, their compass, tried and true.

Then, oh my soul, when storms arise,
When clouds and darkness veil thy skies,
Let God's sure Word thy compass be,
Upon life's dark and wintry sea.

When near the haven of our home,
Though sorrows' billows seethe and foam,
God's Word, our compass, shall not fail
As through the gates of death we sail.

When all these trying scenes are passed,
When anchored safely home at last,
We'll praise the love that first designed
The gospel compass for mankind.

DYING ADVICE.

MRS. BETTIE ROSS TO HER CHILDREN.

Dear children, now that death is near,
And I must soon depart,
A deep solicitude for you
Still presses on my heart.

To you I've often talked and read
Of Christ, the living Way.
This consolation of my life
Is now in death my stay.

The Holy Spirit's pleading power,
Dear children, early heed;
And seek the pardoning grace of God,
Which helpless mortals need.

Forever shun the sinful snares,
That lead the soul astray;
And humbly seek for strength to tread
In wisdom's narrow way.

My feeble, dying breath I spend
In one incessant prayer—
That God will take me home to rest,
And you may meet me there.

MAMMA'S SERMONS.

Ma's pulpit was an old armchair—
From this she often did declare,
Unto an audience of seven,
The Scripture truths 'bout Christ and heaven :
Which would excite an interest
In every tender youthful breast.

She taught us of the fall of man,
Then read to us Salvation's plan ;
By whom achieved she showed us plain,
And how His help, through prayer to gain—
Forgetting not the Holy Ghost,
Whose aid in prayer doth strengthen most.

She told us in her gentle way,
About the coming judgment-day,
And that our lamps should burning be
When called into eternity.
These solemn words which mamma said,
Engaged each youthful heart and head.

Sam Jones, the great revival man,
We've heard declare Christ's gospel plan ;
We've listened to Schoolfield and Lee,
With reverence and humility.
Yet still our hearts a preference bear,
For sermons from ma's old armchair.

THE COMING SPRING.

Never is my heart so light,
And never are my hopes so bright
As when the birds, in early spring,
First begin to coo and sing.

O, how I long to see the hours,
When bees shall hum among the flowers ;
And I can hear the notes I love—
I mean the gentle cooing dove.

Birds and bees and tangled flowers,
Do much to cheer our lonely hours ;
They soothe our griefs, and lend a charm
To country life upon the farm.

Then may the sunshine come again,
To chase away the clouds and rain,
And warm the earth so prospects bright
May fill us with serene delight.

GRANDMA'S REHEARSAL.

- Teardrops show through grandma's glasses,
Though her spirit tranquil seems,
As she speaks to us of childhood,
And of love's delightful dreams.
- "Once I was a child," says grandma,
"Then I ran and played like you,
While my gay, untarnished vision
Brought no sorrow to my view.
- "When I grew to be a woman,
I was taught the sacred truth:
We should serve our great Creator,
In the sunny days of youth."
- Grandma's tears from 'neath her glasses,
Thickly fall upon the ground,
As she speaks of pardoning mercy,
Which she early sought and found;
- And she tells us of our grandpa,
Smitten by her youthful charms;
Of the marriage and of mamma,
Once a babe in grandma's arms.
- Grandma, in her tenderest language,
Speaks to us of olden times,
Ere the angel called our grandpa
From the earth to fairer climes.
- "I am waiting," says our grandma,
"Death can bring no great surprise;
Watching, praying, for the angels,
To conduct me to the skies."

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

I never, never have forgot,
Through all these weary years,
The days when first, I trust, were shed
My penitential tears.

A something which I can't describe—
The seeds of mercy sown,
Or pressure of the spirit's power,
Made my condition known.

It was the springtime of my life,
When roses round us bloom;
Yet when I saw myself the view,
O'ershadowed all in gloom—

I saw my soul for sin condemned,
And felt that I must go,
When called, to dwell among the lost,
In endless wrath and woe.

For though the burden of my guilt
Lay heavy on my mind,
I did not know that they who mourn
May comfort seek and find.

Yet later, when again I sought
The Holy Spirit's aid,
It seemed that Christ unto my soul
His pardoning love portrayed.

These strong convictions now were gone :
My heart it felt no pain,
And I could not believe that I
Should suffer here again.

Though life has been a warfare since
This journey I begun,
I hope to have sustaining grace,
Until my race is run.



THE SWEETEST GIRLS.

Girls of rank or noble birth
Are not perhaps the best on earth ;
For birth and rank can naught avail,
If they in pleasant manners fail,
And make it not their foremost thought
To be at home just what they ought.

In early youth, while hopes are bright,
What girl a mother's wish can slight,
Or ever dare to disobey
What loving parents kindly say?
How sad when girls by tempers ill,
Their parents' hearts with sorrow fill!

How wise are those who daily seek,
To cultivate a spirit meek,
Which shall in after life secure
Them happiness, which will endure.
Yea, they a recompense shall find,
Who, while at home, are true and kind.

The sweetest girls we've ever met,
Are those who never do forget
Their parents' wishes to obey
And serve them kindly every day ;
Though they may be of humble birth,
They are the sweetest girls on earth.

**A WORD OF PRAYER FOR THE DANVILLE
DISTRICT.**

Thou God of love, of light and truth,
The Pilot of the feet of youth ;
Our Guide and Guard on every stage
Of life from youth to ripe old age ;

We, of the Danville District, now,
Collectively before Thee bow :
Wilt thou not cleanse and purify
Thy people who to Thee draw nigh?

As we do have a name to live,
Wilt Thou Thy vital spirit give,
That, dead to sin, alive to Thee,
We may Thy favored people be?

Good works, O Lord, may we effect,
As Thou in wisdom shalt direct ;
And may the light of love divine
Forever on our district shine.

THE EMBLEMATIC EVERGREEN.

Of all the lovely things that grow,
The sweetest plant of which I know,
Among the many herbs I 've seen,
Is winter's sturdy evergreen.
Though chilling winds upon it blow,
It bravely bears the sleet and snow.

The rose and pink may bring delight,
When weather's fair and skies are bright ;
The daisy and the lily, too,
My add a charm to every view ;
Yet they, unlike the evergreen,
On wintry days can not be seen.

These plants of nature, to my mind,
Are emblems of the friends we find ;
Some seem sincere when all is fair—
When trouble comes they are not there ;
While others near us still are seen,
Unchanging as the evergreen.

CHRIST IN THE GARDEN.

Sweet garden of Gethsemane,
Thy sacred sod I ne'er shall see,
Yet oft have I in fancy been
Where Jesus agonized for sin.

While in this garden Jesus knelt,
What throes of grief His spirit felt ;
The woes He knew no tongue can tell,
As on the ground His blooddrops fell.

No language can express aright,
The silent sadness of that night
When Christ His lonely vigil kept,
While His disciples near Him slept.

Still all who bear His holy name,
Who feel their souls with love aflame,
Must to this garden sometime go,
And share their Saviour's mental woe.

Yet when the saints are deeply tried,
May Jesus' strength for them provide,
And angels near to quell their woes,
Their blissful presence them disclose.

THE WOUNDED LARK.

Once a wounded lark I found ;
'T was fluttering helpless on the ground.
Though oft it made a mournful cry,
It seemed no help for it was nigh.

The lark no more could fly and sing.
It tried in vain to raise its wing ;
The fractured member kept it bound,
Though all unwilling, to the ground.

We trace a mournful emblem here,
And o'er the lark we drop a tear ;
For many born to soar afar
By circumstances wounded are.

Their noble powers must dormant lie ;
They flutter, yet they can not fly.
Thus maimed, perchance they die alone,
Ere they the world their gifts have shown.

Still aspirations hampered down,
As was the crippled lark I found,
Should teach our hearts to patient be,
And trust for what we can not see.

THE OLD PLAYGROUND.

I know I never can forget,
 Until my dying day,
The dear old playground where in youth
 We used to romp and play.

It was not decked with shrub or flowers,
 Or anything that way.
Oh, no; 't was but a woodland grove
 In which we used to play.

Yet memory kindly keeps for us,
 The words we used to say,
And childish thoughts which filled our brain,
 While there we used to play.

I dreamed a dream while there I played,
 Or viewed it in my mind;
That somewhere as I journeyed on,
 True happiness I 'd find.

But though I 've searched the walks of life,
 From then until this day,
I 've found no better earthly joy,
 Than childhood's romp and play.

“JESUS WEPT.”

When Christ was on this mundane shore,
He many griefs and sorrows bore ;
His Father's holy laws He kept,
Yet oft, methinks, our Saviour wept.

Our gracious Lord, so good and wise,
Knew how with man to sympathize.
When called He came where Laz'rus slept,
And there, we 're told, the Saviour wept.

The prophets had fortold His birth
And griefs and troubles while on earth ;
While here He bathed in sorrow's deep
And o'er our sins, perchance, did weep.

O matchless love ! O grace divine !
That He for guilt like this would pine ;
The fruit of my transgressions reap,
And o'er my sins would mourn and weep.

When on a Roman cross He bled,
Ere He was numbered with the dead ;
While haughty Jews their vigil kept,
Methinks our dying Saviour wept.

AN INFANT'S GRAVE.

I stood beside an infant's grave,
And there I bowed my head,
And dropped a silent tear, because
The little one was dead.

Then on the wings of faith my soul
Arose and took its flight
To regions where good spirits dwell,
In endless love and light.

While thinking on its happy state,
I dried each falling tear,
And thought, 't is better it should go,
Than live and suffer here.

The mother, when death takes away
The infant from her arms,
Doth mourn, and feel that life has lost
Its best and sweetest charms.

True, time may partly soothe their woes,
And wear away their grief;
But faith in God's eternal love,
Will prove their best relief.

THE KISS OF JUDAS.

The kiss of charity of which
God's Holy Writ has spoken,
Is not the kiss which Judas gave
To Jesus, as a token.

We humbly fear that Judas is
Abroad on earth to-day ;
If so, they err who fail to watch,
As well as to cease to pray.

We've thought—though some may deem it
wrong—
That even at this day,
Full many a kiss is given with
Intention to betray.

We do not say or think it wrong
For persons when they meet,
To give the kiss of charity
And thus each other greet.

Still it is best to thoughtful be,
In such a land as this,
And never be betrayed by those
Who give the Judas kiss.

**PASSAGE OF THE POTOMAC THROUGH THE
BLUE RIDGE.**

The Shenandoah's waters
To the Potomac flow ;
Their junction rends the mount in twain,
Then on to sea they go.

This is a most stupendous scene.
Here Nature breaks her way
And guides the waters through the mount
Towards the placid bay.

Perhaps the mountains first were made
By the Creative Hand,
And then, perchance, the waters rose
And overflowed the land.

We've thought, perhaps for ages here,
The billows fought in vain
To gain an opening through the mount,
Ere it was rent in twain.

The signs of an avulsion here,
Corroborate the theme—
That Nature's struggles ended with
A vic'try for the stream.

The rugged mount asunder torn,
Must monumental be
Of how the grand Potomac gained
His exit to the sea.

MY MOUNTAIN VIEW.

I went far up the mountain side,
One pleasant day in June,
When with the merry songs of birds,
The forest was in tune.

When near the summit of the mount,
I paused and looked below,
And gazed upon the verdant grains
Which in the valley grow.

I heard afar the bleating sheep,
The cattle, too, were seen
In quietude to idly graze
Upon the pastures green.

A distant cataract was heard,
Although 't was not in sight ;
Withal the scene imposing was
And filled me with delight.

I meekly kneeling, bowed my head,
And offered words of praise
To Him who thus in Nature's works,
His wondrous love displays.

I offered thanks ; then asked of God,
In my imperfect way,
To help me live above the world,
While here on earth I stay.

For only they are truly blest,
Who humbly act their part,
And keep the world beneath their feet,
And Christ within their heart.

MISFORTUNE WILL NOT BRING DISGRACE.

The many avenues of life
Are full of hurry, change and strife,
And poverty and want and care,
Upon our way are nothing rare ;
Yet it is plain in every case,
Misfortune does not bring disgrace.

Financial troubles oft assail,
And men of business sometimes fail ;
They leave their dwellings rich and rare,
And humbler homes their children share ;
Still this is true in every place,
Misfortune does not bring disgrace.

The mourning widow can't forget
Her bridal robe and jewels set,
The smiling groom, the rich display,
Upon her happy wedding day ;
Though she alone life's ills must face,
Misfortune will not bring disgrace.

Devoted parents while they live,
Their children kind attention give ;
But when parental care is o'er
The orphan's heart with grief is sore.
Yet though alone he runs his race,
Misfortune does not bring disgrace.

Misconduct 't is which strikes the blow,
Yea, sin it is which leads to woe ;
Still if we will not be misled,
But in the way of duty tread,
No matter how forlorn our case,
Misfortune can not bring disgrace.

GEOGRAPHY OF LIFE.

The surface of this earthly sphere,
Its plains and mountain ranges,
In emblematic language tells
Our life's eventful changes.

We've been across the Rocky range,
The Andes' peaks we've counted;
Still all the mountains yet we've tried,
Through grace we have surmounted.

We've camped on Afric's desert sand,
Where dangers dark abound;
And yet the rugged Alps of life,
We've nowhere ever found.

Our former trials kindled hope,
Which lingers still in mind,
That though we'll high obstructions meet,
No Alps we'll ever find.

“THERE IS NO 'MORROW.”

Children, there is no to-morrow—
Wisely grasp the present day.
Learn to use the passing moments,
Ere from you they flit away.

'Morrow is a myth, a shadow,
Which we can not overtake ;
Then let us proceed to action,
And our best endeavors make.

Fatal is procrastination,
Oft, too oft, it brings us sorrow ;
Many a loss we bear by waiting,
Simply waiting, for to-morrow.

Let us never lose by idling,
Hoping future time to borrow ;
Let us never chase the phantom
Which the people call to-morrow.

THE VOICE OF THE RILL.

I went into the meadow green,
And there I took a seat ;
I listened to the little rill,
Which murmured at my feet.

It came from up the mountain side—
On to the brook it went ;
It hastened rapidly as if
Upon a mission sent.

Of course the waters did not speak,
And yet I seemed to hear
A voice from out the tiny rill,
Which whispered, “ Persevere—

“ There is a work for all to do,
And none should idle be ;
Though I am but a tiny stream
I hope to reach the sea.”

This language of the lovely rill
My drooping heart did cheer,
And I resolved on duty's path,
To humbly persevere.

OUR SOLAR SYSTEM.

We worship God in loving fear,
For all His works and wonders here;
And yet we can not understand
The strength of His creative hand.

'T is by His power the planets run
Within their orbits round the sun;
For nought but His unbounded might,
Can guide the heavenly orbs aright.

We wish it could be understood,
If beings there are wise and good;
We wish, yet wish in vain to know
If there they sin, as we below.

Yet most we wonder if they share
The loving Saviour's watchful care;
Or if the dear Redeemer's been
To worlds afar to die for sin.

In future, science may unfold
A depth of knowledge yet untold,
And unto us may be revealed
Full many a secret now concealed.

We mortals in this earthly state,
Must "learn to labor and to wait,"
While all existing worlds proclaim,
Their great Creator's holy name.

CHRIST A PATTERN OF TRUE HUMILITY.

The Christian of the present day,
Of every type or name,
Has turned aside too oft through pride,
And sought for worldly fame.

The meek and lowly Nazarene,
Our pattern and our stay,
Did not require a rich attire ;
He made no false display.

But clothed in sweet humility,
At ev'ry time and place
He did fulfil His Father's will,
And teach His love and grace.

Come then in spirit, O our God !
And cause Thy scattered sheep
To seek Thy face, to know Thy grace,
And Thy commandments keep.

A CHRISTMAS POEM.

LUKE II : 8-14.

While Eastern shepherds watched their flocks,
An angel from the skies
Came down with sweet salvation news
To earth from Paradise.

Fear not, we bring you tidings good,
Of great, of lasting joy ;
For unto you a Saviour 's born,
Who 'll sin and death destroy.

Then suddenly a multitude,
Sang sweetly of the grace
Provided by redeeming love
For Adam's fallen race.

On Christmas time by faith we view
That bright celestial throng,
And listen to the angel choir,
Which sings redemption's song.

In every age, in every clime,
Salvation is the same ;
Behold, what wonders God has wrought
For man, through Jesus' name.

In vain we strike our earthly harps ;
In vain our church-bells chime ;
We fail to honor as we would,
The blissful Christmas time.

THE THREE P'S.

Patience is a virtue sweet,
While we the storms of life must meet;
With calm endurance by our side,
We 'll bravely stem the swelling tide.

With Prudence we can not dispense,
For though our trials be immense,
Discretion in our darkest hours
Will shield us from Satanic powers.

'T is Perseverance brings success;
For God doth constant efforts bless,
When by His spirit we are led,
In wisdom's way to meekly tread.

If Patience with us doth abide,
And we have Prudence for our guide,
While Perseverance clears the way,
We shall in paths of duty stay.

NAVAL BATTLE IN MANILA HARBOR.

'T was in the lovely month of May,
And early, at the dawn of day,
Our squadron which had crossed the billow,
Was seen within the bay, Manila.

The Spanish flagship opened fire,
The Cavite forts displayed their ire;
Our fleet replied—soon all engaged,
And loud and fierce the battle raged.

The ship which had their colors borne
So proudly, now was rent and torn,
Till, taking fire, they saw her burn
In angry flames, from stem to stern.

Montejo, who 'd planned their fight,
For safety from his ship took flight.
From ship to ship he fled in vain:
Destruction followed in his train.

And when the bloody strife was o'er,
Spain's glittering war fleet was no more.
'T was thus she tried our naval powers,
And found the famous victory ours.

Our Dewey won the honors fine,
Which history round his name shall twine,
While Spain's proud navy mourns the day
She fought us in Manila Bay.

THREE REASONS FOR PATRIOTISM.

While listening to the call for troops,
We pause and drop a tear ;
Yet we resolve to face the fight—
Our father's tombs are here.
We can't allow invasive feet
Upon their graves to tread.
Should we not go, a foreign flag
Might float above our dead.

This country is our birthplace, too,
Our cradle, as it were ;
She may have rocked us roughly, still
Our mother-land is dear.
Though we deplore the ills of war,
We can not idly stand
And see a foul intrusive foe
Oppress our native land.

A birthright for our children, too,
This western clime's to be ;
Then let us nobly face the worst,
For our posterity :
That they may get this land from us,
Free from oppressor's rod,
As we received it from our sires,
Who sleep beneath the sod.

THE RAGGED ROBE.

Some people dress in fabrics fine,
When fortune doth bequeath them ;
Yet optics keen have sometimes seen,
A ragged soul beneath them.

Yes, there 's a threadbare texture which
Is causing sore disgraces ;
'T is character known to be worn
And broken through in places.

When sin and folly bring us shame,
'T is vain to twist or wheedle,
For Time can not this tear repair,
Though dex'trous be his needle.

Then let our garments spotless be,
As on through life we travel ;
Yea, never dare this robe to wear,
Which tends to tear or ravel.

MOTHER'S GRAVE.

Unless my fluttering heart could speak,
Its troubles to reveal,
I can't express my feelings when
At mother's grave I kneel.

Yet, often when my heart's oppressed,
By sorrow, grief, or care,
I'll lay my work aside and go
To bow in secret there.

'T is sad and yet 't is sweet to think
Her trials here are o'er,
And she is gone, we trust to rest
On "Canaan's happy shore."

I entertain a hope that we,
When our suff'rings all are past,
Shall meet in that delightful land
Of peace and rest at last.

My pen will not depict my mind,
And yet I often crave
To tell my thoughts and feelings when
I visit mother's grave.

AUTUMN LEAVES.

When fair October dons her crown,
Oh, what a lovely view ;
The autumn leaves in turning brown,
Show many a brilliant hue.

When thus October takes the place
Of summer's rosy bloom,
We feel a deep solemnity,
Yet have no cause for gloom.

For though the fading leaves depict
This fleeting life's decline,
By faith we view the opening spring,
Celestial and divine.

A happy land of vernal day,
And ever blooming flowers,
Where chilling blasts shall never blight
Those blissful Eden bowers.

Then let us haste while yet we may,
To bind our golden sheaves,
Ere precious moments pass away,
Like transient autumn leaves.

**POETICAL PRAYER FOR THE UNITED STATES
IN VIEW OF FOREIGN TROUBLE.**

Thou God of light, of love and might,
Hear Thou our fervent prayer ;
Lord, wilt Thou smile upon us while,
The nations at us dare.

To men of state wilt Thou dictate
The course they should pursue ;
May they reflect, all wrong reject,
And timely service do.

Give Thou relief to our ruler chief,
From all perplexing care ;
If war he must, teach him to trust
In Thee and to prepare.

We may equip with battleship,
And well prepared may be,
Yet strength, we own, O Lord, alone
Must come to us from Thee.

Then let us all, whate'er befall,
Supremely in Thee trust ;
To pray for peace may we not cease,
Yet fight when fight we must.

March 9th, 1898.

THE NEW MOON.

One evening as around my form,
The soft spring zephyrs blew,
I stood and watched the pale new moon,
Just coming up in view.

Both grand and solemn was the scene ;
I waited late and long,
And the impressive silence broke
By chanting forth a song.

And as the hills an echo gave,
Which mocked my feeble tone,
A cloud swept o'er this fair young moon,
Which had so gently shown.

Perhaps the scene prophetic was,
For in my latter days,
I find that troubles oft obscure
And darken pleasure's rays.

And many, as they journey on,
Will find, perchance full soon,
That clouds bedim their earthly hopes
Like shadows o'er the moon.

'T IS THE LAST RED ROSE OF SUMMER.

'T is the last red rose of summer—
And in language all sublime,
Speaks unto our hearts and tells us
Of approaching autumn time.
Tells us that the season 's ended,
Tells us that the frost is nigh ;
Seems to say " Our mother, Nature,
Bids us tell our friends good-bye."

Linger yet awhile, sweet flower,
Youthful hearts to cheer and please ;
We shall miss thy soothing fragrance,
Wafted on the morning breeze.
Stay awhile, dear rose, we pray thee,
Say not that thy work is done ;
Let us see again thy petals,
Dew-decked, sparkle in the sun.

Hark ! we hear the rose's answer,
" Friends, entreat me not to stay ;
I must heed the wooing voices,
Which are calling me away.
But I 'd leave you now this message :
Take the counsel which I give,
And like the rose be free from blemish
While your fleeting lives you live."

A NEW YEAR'S POEM.

The dear old year of ninety-six,
Forever 's from us gone ;
And blest are we, indeed, to see
Another New Year's morn.

Yet on the threshold of a year
That 's new and all untried,
We pause and tremble, for we fear
That evils may betide.

What crosses shall we daily meet,
What trials, what distress?
Who will our many wants supply?
Who will our wrongs redress?

We not the least assurance have,
Of safety or of ease,
On flow'ry paths which fancy paints
So oft our minds to please.

Still, there 's a safety road which leads
Through time to realms of light ;
On this the humble saint doth " Walk
By faith and not by sight."

January, 1897.

LINES ON THE DEATH OF MRS. RUTH
EMERSON.

Our mother's strong maternal love,
A blessing was from God above.
How faithful was her constant care,
How oft for us she knelt in prayer.
We mourn her loss since He who gave,
Has called her to her silent grave.

Yes, she has spent on earth her day,
And from the world has passed away ;
Still let us tread where once she trod,
And ne'er forget our mother's God :
Who taught her with a faith sublime,
To look beyond the shores of time.

Religion, oh thou balm for grief,
How oft in thee she found relief
From sore distressing cares of life,
With which her pilgrimage was rife ;
She leaned on God's supporting power,
Through many a dark and trying hour.

Servant of God, we say, well done,
Thy battle's fought, thy victory's won ;
Thy sainted soul, we trust doth shine
Before the throne of God divine.
Why should we of this earthly dell
Thus shudder when we say farewell?

THE SIN OF MOTHER EVE.

Almost six thousand years ago,
Six thousand miles away,
Our Mother Eve in Eden-land,
With Adam used to stay.

Imagination doubtless fails
To paint the trees and flowers,
Or show aright the beauteous scenes,
They saw in Eden's bowers.

As all that 's bright and pure and good
Was concentrated there,
Methinks they had the privilege,
Of dainties rich and rare.

How sad to think of Satan's wiles,
Of how he did deceive,
And through the serpent did beguile
The heart of Mother Eve.

Poor erring Eve, our Mother Eve,
What would this world have been
Had Satan's plans a failure proved
In introducing sin?

Then would this earthly home of ours,
So pleasant to our sight,
Have been, were Satan but expelled,
A land of pure delight.

Yet since there is a balm for sin,
We hopeless need not grieve,
For Jesus died to rectify
The wrongs of Mother Eve.

How wondrous was the wisdom which
For sin salvation gave,
That saints may in an Eden rest,
Beyond the silent grave.



**WORK BEGUN IN PRAYER IS APT TO END IN
PRAISE.**

The Master gives his trusting saints
A glimpse of mercy's rays,
And any work begun in prayer,
Is apt to end in praise.

Then, O how sadly do we err,
When we on self depend,
And do not seek the heavenly care
Of Christ, who doth befriend.

No matter what our work may be,
Ere we begin the task,
'T is good for us to look above,
And loving favor ask.

For only when our God protects,
Are we from harm secure ;
He reconciles our minds and gives
Us patience to endure.

So let us seek His needed help,
Through all our earthly days,
Beginning all our works in prayer
And ending all in praise.

THE PIPE OF PEACE.

When Indian warriors deemed it best
That cruel strife should cease,
The tomahawk they buried first,
Then smoked the pipe of peace.

Though introduced by savage tribes,
This custom should abound ;
How happy is the home in which
The pipe of peace is found.

In union there is lasting strength,
Divisions make us weak ;
We 've therefore thought our churches, too,
This pipe of peace should seek.

The blest millennium of love,
By faith afar we see,
When all assemblies here on earth,
In quietude shall be.

When shall the happy day appear,
When bloody war shall cease—
All nations in one council join
And smoke the pipe of peace?

THE RAINBOW.

A rainbow spanned the spacious earth,
With colors fair and bright,
While baby gazed upon the scene,
Evincing great delight.

“ Dear mamma,” said the little child,
Now crouching at my feet,
“ Who made the rainbow in the sky,
Which looks so bright and sweet?”

’T was God, my child, ’t was He who rules
The drifting clouds on high :
With humble hearts we should survey
These wonders of the sky.

The rainbow is a token that
God’s ways are ever sure,
And all His steadfast promises,
Forever shall endure.

Then may you on each promise lean,
Which Holy Writ makes known,
And in the future ever view
The “ rainbow round the throne.”

THE PARTRIDGE.

How we love the birds of summer,
How their thrilling notes admire;
When we hear the partridge whistle,
Pleasant thoughts it doth inspire.

When our fields are brown for harvest,
Teeming with the wheat and rye,
“Old Bob White,” the partridge, whistles
While the sickle we apply.

Some may have no ear for music,
On the sultry harvest days;
But to me the partridge whistle
Soundeth like a note of praise.

Oft, perchance, some other songster,
Cheers us with his charming strain,
As we glean among the reapers,
Binding up the fallen grain.

As these notes from native minstrels
Ring from out the verdant leaves,
“Old Bob White,” the partridge, whistles
While we gather up the sheaves.

THE COLORS OF OUR FLAG.

Our flag, the symbol of our strength,
Which floats o'er sea and land,
Doth bear her sacred colors bright,
Which nations understand.

The red which glitters on our flag,
Speaks of the many braves
Who for our grand old Union fought,
Now resting in their graves.

The blue in emblematic words,
Upon our banner flying,
Speaks of fidelity and truth,
And liberty undying.

By white upon this ensign bold,
Our purity is known ;
Sincerity of purpose, too,
Is by this color shown.

Forever may our standard wave,
O'er land and o'er the seas,
Our dear old flag, our grand old flag,
That flutters on the breeze.

LEE AND JACKSON.

Our Southern flag, which knew no stain,
Has long been furled to so remain ;
Again the North and South unite,
No more, we trust, to strive and fight.
Yet Southern hearts must e'er retain,
Their love for those who fought in vain.

The grand achievements which were done
By " Light-horse Harry's " gallant son,
Our coming heroes will do well
To equal and can not excel ;
While Jackson, as his strong right arm,
To all his movements lend a charm—

While Jackson o'er the river crossed,
The South a valiant hero lost ;
Yet happier was his lot to go,
Than stay, the final end to know :
To see the cause for which he fought,
Crushed down and come at last to naught.

Of all who love the Southern cross,
Our Lee most keenly felt our loss.
It was his lot to end life's toil
On old Virginia's sacred soil ;
And time shall not obliterate
His memory from his native State.

LINES COMPOSED FROM THE LAST WORDS OF
MISS MARY LIGHT.

Oh, the precious ties of nature—
How they bind our hearts as one;
Yet they must be torn asunder,
For on earth my work is done.

Yes, the tide of life is ebbing,
Cold in death my form must lie;
Let my loved ones gather 'round me,
Let us kiss the last good-bye.

Soon my suffering will be o'er,
I am going home to dwell—
Where there are no painful partings,
Where they never say farewell.

Mother, put the cherished presents,
Which my friends have given me,
In the casket when I 'm buried—
Ever let them near me be.

Kiss me once again, dear mother,
Press me fondly to your breast,
And when I 'm gone may this console you,
Little Mary is at rest.

THE CHRISTIAN'S HELP IN TIME OF TROUBLE.

The Christian of these latter days,
We humbly fear, too seldom prays ;
He trusts too much to earthly means,
And on his God too lightly leans.

Howe'er perplexing be our task,
He 'll aid, if we in faith will ask,
And unto Him our wants will bring,
And trust to Him for everything.

Then let us go as Esther went,
And to the King our cause present ;
The touch of mercy we shall gain,
And shall not seek for help in vain.

The prayer of faith our God will heed,
And aid extend in time of need ;
And though perplexed, we ever must
On Him alone for comfort trust.

Though sorrows like the ocean rage,
Which earthly hands can not assuage,
The billows ne'er can rise above
The mercy of the God of love.

ADVICE TO WAYWARD CHILDREN.

When children see the shrouds of death
O'er loving parents thrown,
'T is customary, then, for them
To bow their heads and mourn.

Now we 've a word of kind advice,
For those who soon must bow.
'T is this: Take a second thought,
And do your mourning now.

Mourn o'er your parents' broken hearts,
While they your grief can see ;
And bring your reformation round,
Ere they in death shall be.

Don't crush their hearts by manners ill,
Nor sundry evil ways,
But gently lead them by the hand
In their declining days.

Then when the monster death is near,
And they their course have run,
You 'll have the pleasant consciousness
That you 've your duty done.

THE OBLONG OVEN.

Among the many family relics,
Which remind us of the past,
You will find an oblong oven,
In some ancient foundry cast.

While I gaze upon this token,
Youthful mem'ries crowd my head,
For 't was in this oblong oven,
Mother used to bake our bread.

At the sight of mother's oven,
Childhood's dormant fancies wake,
For 't was in that oblong oven,
Oft she fried our breakfast steak.

Modern cooks can't make their cookies
Taste to us as once they did,
When mother baked our Christmas dainties
Underneath the oblong lid.

About the present mode of cooking,
Words of praise are truly said,
Yet we prefer the old-time oven,
And the oblong loaf of bread.

THE WHIPPOORWILL.

Of all the songsters on the way,
That round us coo, chirp, twitter, sing,
The one that doth my heart most thrill,
Is the well known whippoorwill.

When we know that spring is near,
By notes familiar which we hear,
It doth my soul with pleasure fill
To hear the welcome whippoorwill.

While the sparrow twitters nigh,
Or if I hear the robin's cry,
I love their notes, yet I must still
Prefer the plaintiff whippoorwill.

He trills in melancholy tone
Yet naught doth give to make us mourn;
No more the wintry storms we fear,
When once the whippoorwill we hear.

L. of C.

THE HONEY BEE.

The active little humming bee
Which oft we in our garden see,
Doth wisely spend her summer hours
In sipping nectar from the flowers ;
While all the world is bright and fair,
For wintry days she doth prepare.

She builds her many rooms aright ;
She spreads her wax to make them tight ;
Then visits forests, fields or bowers,
Or any place where there are flowers,
And brings into each tiny cell,
The food with which she stores it well.

The energetic honey bee,
Gives counsel wise, it seems to me ;
She speaks as plainly as she may,
And bids us in our sphere to stay ;
Whate'er our work, she gives us cheer
And urges us to persevere.

A PRAYER FOR TEMPERANCE.

O Lord, we come to Thee for help,
In humbleness of heart,
Wilt Thou our supplications heed,
And aid divine impart.

Excessive drinking causeth man
To sin against Thy name ;
It dissipates his mind and brings
Him into open shame.

Wilt Thou arouse us, one and all,
An effort to exert,
To check this deadly evil and
Its dangers to avert.

Oft liquor drags the father down,
Though noble, true and brave,
From high position ; then at last,
He fills a drunkard's grave.

Thus liquor makes the widows mourn,
O'er hopes forever dead,
While friendless orphans wander forth,
To seek their daily bread.

Lord, in Thy strength alone we strive,
May help in Thee be found,
Till liquor and its baneful wrongs,
Shall here no more abound.

LINES ON THE LIFE OF W. F. B. TAYLOR.

Suggested by the loan of a book from his son, John S. Taylor.

As backward through a mist of years
I gaze, I view again
Your generous father's manly form
Which fills my heart with pain.

How sad that we can hope to meet,
With one so kind no more,
Till we, perchance, his face may see,
Upon the farther shore.

A benefactor to the poor,
Or guide to orphan feet,
Was surely not rejected at
The common mercy seat.

Shun thou them, if in earlier years,
He follies had displayed,
And copy virtues rare in which
His old age was arrayed.

The father's image in his son
Reflected may we view ;
Yea, may you be as wise as he,
As useful, just and true.

THE CHRISTIAN WARFARE.

Life is a warfare, oh, my God,
Life is a battlefield,
And we must fight the fight of faith,
Or else the cause must yield.

The weary spirit longs for peace,
Yet finds no lasting rest,
For discord is so often near,
To rack the Christian's breast.

The world, the flesh, and Satan—all
Their fiendish strength unite,
And strive against the feeble saint,
Who would maintain the right.

Beyond the Christian's weary march,
O'er life's combatant ground,
"The Soldier of the Cross" shall rest;
There peace at last is found.

Then let us gird our armor on,
And strive with ardor brave,
To gain the rest which faithful saints
Shall know beyond the grave.

WEEK-DAY PIETY.

Professing Christians oft display
Sweet virtues on the Sabbath day,
Who on the six succeeding days
Have very worldly, sinful ways.

Now this is wrong; 't is right that we
Should on the Sabbath pious be,
Yet He who gives us Sabbath grace,
On Monday will not hide His face.

On Tuesday He will aid extend,
And Wednesday still will blessings send;
Thursday He will by us stand,
And Friday lend a helping hand.

On Saturday we still shall find
A solace for our weary mind;
So every day in every week
The trusting soul should comfort seek.

Then while we pray that grace divine
May on the Sabbath round us shine,
Let 's ever e'er we close our prayers,
Beg strength for week-day works and cares.

MADAM RUMOR.

When Madam Rumor findeth fault,
Or whispereth words of slander,
'T is well for us to watchful be,
And try to understand her.

For, if the madam, Judas-like,
Her neighbor is betraying,
We should not give her credit for
The evil she is saying.

When Madam Rumor speaketh false,
The wise and good disdain her ;
She can not standing long remain,
With nothing to sustain her.

Yet, sometimes Madam Rumor finds
Bad truths in people's matters.
'T is here she strikes a fatal blow,
And reputation shatters.

Then let us ever careful be
To show a goodly humor,
That no bad truths may e'er be told
Of us by Madam Rumor.

**POETICAL PRAYER FOR ORPHANS OF THE
DANVILLE DISTRICT.**

O Thou who hear'st the orphans' cry,
In pity wilt Thou now draw nigh ;
Wilt Thou some sweet assurance give,
That our enfeebled hopes may live?

Wilt Thou our hearts and hands engage,
To build for them an orphanage ;
That children may no longer roam,
Our district o'er without a home?

Thine own inspired writers penned
Thee ever as the orphan's friend ;
This sacred truth, please verify,
And unto them in love draw nigh.

Thou, Father of the fatherless,
Our thoughts for them please aid and bless ;
Send one like Moses forth to lead
And organize the plans we need.

This office, Lord, if 't is thy will,
Let our Presiding Elder fill ;
Thus may DeShazo's mental powers,
Press forward this grand work of ours.

October 1st, 1895.

MOTHER'S MEDITATION.

I feel that I can not grow old,
Although my hair is gray,
While little children on me lean,
Or round me romp and play.

The merry pranks, the prattling voice,
The lisping infant tongue,
Doth cheer my heart and make me think
That I again am young.

Thus children teach me to forget
Life's mystic chain so long ;
Though I am feeble, still my heart
Doth bear affection strong.

But, oh, when they have older grown,
And dropped their gleeful ways,
I fear we 'll sadly miss their mirth,
And pine in future days.

Yet let us offer present thanks,
For pleasures we possess,
And pray the God of youth and age,
Our little ones to bless.

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