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POEMS:

BY

E. F. A. SERGEANT.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

ADELINE.

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INTRODUCTION.

It seems desirable that the following pages should be prefaced by a few words, both explanatory and deprecatory.

I can readily imagine doubts arising in some minds respecting the propriety of allowing one so young as the writer to appear before the public. Possibly a somewhat satisfactory answer may be found in the fact, that from earliest childhood she has been accustomed to see others writing, despatching through the post, and has afterwards herself read in print those same compositions. Thus all that is novel and exciting in authorship has been, with her, such a daily familiarity, that it has lost its otherwise dangerous influence.

Whilst the readers of the following pages will expect something worth perusal, they will not of course anticipate the productions of mature thought or long

experience. Some of the pieces were composed when the writer was only eleven years old; the others between that age and her fourteenth year. It may be right to say that her first compositions date from a much earlier period. For some two or three years, every device was resorted to—by recreation, employment, and school duties, to divert the mind. Those efforts, however, were unsuccessful; and what was evidently the gift of nature has been allowed—with less interruption—to develop itself. Some of her pieces having already appeared in print, it has been thought desirable to offer the following selection from great numbers both in prose and poetry, to the perusal of her young friends. I express an earnest hope that her readers may find interest in the poems now before them.

As physical strength is increased by constant use of the various physical organs, so mental gifts demand for their expansion and growth the stimulus of judicious cultivation and exercise. Mind—untrained and undisciplined,—the sport of every vagrant thought and wild imagination,—overrun by the rank weeds of sloth and indcision,—is a curse and not a blessing. But cultured by the hand of love;—enriched and brightened by rays from the Sun of Righteousness,—kept and

tended "with all diligence," and ever fragrant with the dews of a holy consecration to Heaven;—then, how radiant become its flowers of truth and purity;—how sweet the influence of its odorous grace;—how bright the beauty of its upspringing plants of celestial wisdom!

Let not the young reader fail to remember that every power vouchsafed is capable of growth and increase, and that for the improvement of every talent, youth is responsible to ONE who says in tones of love and warning, "Occupy till I come."

"Never," as one writes, "does the flower of youth appear more beautiful than when it bends towards the Sun of Righteousness." "Therefore, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

ADELINE.

HAMPTON VILLA,

WESTON-SUPER-MARE,

November, 1866



CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THOUGHTS BEFORE MY FIFTEENTH BIRTH-DAY	1
SUNBEAMS	3
MADELINE	8
THE MARCH WIND	14
QUEEN MARION: A Song	16
SIR ROLAND OF THE RHINE	18
SONG	20
'NEATH THE PALM-TREES OF THE DESERT	23
THE FURZE	25
WISHES	27
A SONG OF THE OCEAN	29
LILLIAN LEE	33
A SPIRIT'S SONG	39
DAISY CHAINS	41
THE GOLD LOCKET	42
THE SINGER AND THE PLAYER	43
SONG OF A FAY	46
AN OYSTER IN AN INDIAN SEA	47
MY WAKING DREAM	48
THE LEGEND OF SAINT CHRISTOPHER	49
IN THE FIRE-LIGHT	54
THE WATCHMAN	67
GOD'S HEROES	68
MY LIFE	69
SUMMER WISHES	70
HAVE FAITH IN GOD	71
BIRDIE, BIRDIE, WHYTHEY AWAY	73
THE BRAMBLE-VINE	74
SCYLLA	76
A LETTER	79
ON THE MARTYRS OF THE SCOTTISH COVENANT	81
THE RIVER SPRITE	88
MY LYRE	88

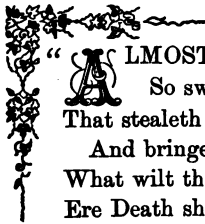
ERRATA.

Page 21, last line, for *faithfully* read *faithful*.

Page 31, last line but one, for *murmurs* read *murmurs*.



*THOUGHTS BEFORE MY FIFTEENTH
BIRTHDAY.*



“ALMOST fifteen!” O Time, that runs
So swiftly on with youth and age!
That stealeth round with myriad suns,
And bringeth death to fool and sage!
What wilt thou bring to me,—to me,
Ere Death shall give Eternity?

Bring me, O bring me, in those years,
Whate'er thou wilt of joy or pain,
Of bitter anguish, or of tears,
(Through which God's smile should break again;)
But with them bring one lofty good,—
The gift of noble Womanhood.

In warlike ages past away,
We see at times some gentle form
Of woman, throw a softer ray
O'er blood-stained tales of woe and storm;
Whose truth has won a brighter fame
Than that which decks the hero's name.

Some lovely dame of high degree,
 Who, always constant to the end,
 Would never flinch, and never flee
 From some beloved, ill-fated friend.
 Fulfilling evermore, her high
 And holy woman's ministry.

Such gifts, such graces would I gain ;
 Such holiness and purity,
 That wants nor fame, nor praise to win,
 Save that of God, the Judge most high.
 Down before Him my soul to lay,
 And cast myself entire away.

I would be gracious, noble, free
 From selfish thoughts and shrinking pride ;
 Full of the pure, sweet chivalry,
 That casts its own desire aside ;
 And steadfast bends with spirit meek
 To help the poor, to aid the weak.

Of self-devotion and of faith,
 Of patient faith, I ask a part,
 That I may love in life—in death—
 Those who are dearest to my heart.
 To love and trust for evermore ;
 Till sorrow's " death in life " is o'er.

Such gifts, I ask thee, Time, to bring
 To me, just leaving childhood's years ;
 And though withal, the powers I sing
 Should bring me agony and tears,—
 Yet still I ask that lofty good,
 A perfect, noble Womanhood.



SUNBEAMS.

* * THE WRITER WAS ONLY ELEVEN YEARS OF AGE WHEN THIS
* POEM WAS WRITTEN. - [Ed.]

SUNBEAMS were streaming brightly o'er the trees,
And o'er the woods and flowers, the streams, and rills:
Making the grass and moss like velvet seem.
The sky for canopy, the stile for throne,
With firs for sentinels, the maiden stood,
A regal queen amidst the solitude.
Her hair was golden as the bright sunbeams,
Her face was fairer than the dewy morn,
And with a sweet and rosy blush upon it.
Her eyes were darker than the azure sky,
And ever shining with her spirit's joy.
Ten summers only had pass'd o'er her head,
Yet her young life, and every thing she did
Was consecrated to her Lord and God,
On all was placed the seal of consecration.
She quarrelled not with her companions,
But tried to lead them to her Saviour Christ.
Jested not much, for life was serious,
And ne'er a moment passed unimproved.
Of all the books she read, the one she loved
Was that which told her of the Saviour's love
To her,—to all,—to every thing created.

She sought the ones that loved the way she trod,
 And many an hour she passed in converse sweet
 With those whose pilgrimage was nearly o'er.
 And oft she passed the threshold of her home
 At eve, to wander forth, and think, and pray.
 No father had she,—but a mother dear ;
 No sisters,—but a brother young in heaven :
 She had not many playmates, so the birds
 And flowers and streams were her companions.
 Thus Lily passed her days in solitude.—
 Yet not in solitude, for she was known
 Of God, and all His holy angels bright.

Her hands were filled with blossoms wild and sweet ;
 (But she herself the sweetest of them all,)
 And as she onward went, she spoke aloud,
 Saying, “ God I thank thee for these fragrant flowers,
 I thank thee for the sunbeams, for the woods,
 I thank thee, Lord, for all !”

Then down she knelt
 Upon the daisied turf : and dropt her buds,
 And clasped her little hands, upraised in prayer :—
 “ Father, I thank Thee now for *every thing* ;
 Sorrow or bliss, dark clouds or sunshine bright,
 All come from Thee, and so for *all* I thank Thee.
 Give me which pleases Thee, but with it, Thy grace ;
 And when I die, receive me to the place
 Where flowers ne'er die,—trees never, never fade,—
 Where all is life eternal.” Then she rose,
 And homewards trod her solitary way,
 Alone, and yet not lonely, God was with her.

* * * *

The sunbeams are not bright in autumn. When
 The autumn came, a hectic crimson flush
 Had ta'en the place of the soft rosy bloom
 That once o'erspread her cheeks ; and she was thin
 And languid ; for the spoiler, Death, had marked
 Her for his prey. She did not fear the grave,
 She almost *wished* to go ; only one thing
 Would hold her back to life, and this thing was
 Her mother—who had been her guide to Christ ;
 She did not wish to leave her all alone.

The sunset rays were streaming brightly o'er
 The fading Lily as she lay upon
 Her couch, beside the casement open wide,
 Watching the golden light upon the trees,
 The tall and solemn trees,—illuminating
 Their splendid aisles in glory rich and pure :
 By her, her mother sat, watching her sweet
 Young face so beautiful. The time went on,
 The glory was more soft and indistinct ;
 The sky a darker blue ; and o'er the west
 Where the red sun had sunk, appeared one star,
 Just like an angel's eye when looking down
 Upon the world now sinking into rest.
 Along the garden path a white-haired man
 Came slowly—slowly to the cottage door ;
 They knew him, and a welcome warm was giv'n.
 It was a man of holiness and God,
 Who loved his Saviour more than all beside :
 " Fervent in prayer," because he prayed always.
 So in he came, and sitting down, he spake
 Sweet words of wisdom, and of love to God.
 And then they sang an evening song of prayer
 And praise, unto the holy, holy God :—

“Father, we come to Thee,
 As close the shades of night,
 And pray that Thou wilt be
 With us in dark or light.
 We fear no ill when Thou art nigh,
 For Thou wilt all our wants supply.

“Father, through this long day,
 Thou hast preserved us all ;
 Preserve us still, we pray,
 Lest from Thy grace we fall.
 Through the long watches of the night,
 Keep us for ever in Thy sight.

“Whether we wake or sleep,
 Whether we live or die ;
 If wrapped in slumber deep,
 Or sleeplessly we lie ;—
 Be with us, Lord,—be with us still,
 And give us grace to do Thy will.”

The voices died away ; then the old man,
 And Lily's mother, knelt beside her couch,
 And thus he prayed :—“Father, Almighty God,
 We ask Thy blessing through the silent night ;
 Bless the departing one, and grant that she
 May reign in endless glory, Lord, with Thee.
 Fit us for heaven, so that when we go,
 We may go hence in confidence and hope ;
 Leaning on Christ, who is our Saviour now
 And ever will be. For his sake. Amen !”
 He went. The soft sweet moonlight lay in lines
 Drawn on the floor, and the red flickering fire
 Made shadows dance along the quiet walls.

All very still, save when the nightingale
 Poured out its song in floods of melody,
 Like to the brook, rippling o'er pebbled sand,
 Or like the rushing of the waterfall,
 That tiny waterfall behind the house,—
 That glistened so beneath the moonshine fair.
 All very still. But Lily broke the pause,
 And said, "Mother, I leave you all alone,
 And yet you will not be alone, for Christ
 Will still sustain, will comfort, and will bless.
 I go to him ;—Oh start not mother dear,
 I go to Him, and you will come to me ;
 And I shall see my father, and the one
 With whom I once did play among the flowers.
 Weep not, my mother, I shall happy be,
 And so will you, when Christ calls you to come."
 She stopped awhile. "Mother, I'm going *home*."
 And fell asleep.

The sunbeam bright had gone.
 'Twas lighting up the heav'n above ; and *there*
 The sunbeam *there* grew brighter. Oh to be
 A sunbeam, first on earth and then in heav'n !





MADELINE.

TO EDITH.

THE winter evening closes in,
So let the cheerful lamp be lit,
While by the fire I silent sit,
And watch the blaze rise blue and thin.

I see a vision of the past,
A vision of the summer days ;—
(Oh, quickly rose that yellow blaze,
As mocking at the passing blast !)

The sun shines dim amid the leaves,
There is a canopy of gold,
And velvet green upon the mould
Lie the soft mossy stones, where weaves

A busy spider his white net,
Which hangs beneath the arching tree,
Like a white sail on yonder sea,
On which the crimson sun will set.



I hear the tide among the rocks,
 The foam falls lightly into air ;
 I think I see a mermaid there,
 As some bewildered fish she mocks.

The fog is dim o'er yonder town
 Which in the sunshine silent lies ;
 I see a pale star o'er it rise,
 I see the crimson sun go down.

And fades the glory from the trees,
 And loud the waves fall on the rocks,
 And loud the cruel mermaid mocks,
 As she the shining fishes sees.

But darkly blue the sky above,
 And bright the star shines o'er the sea,
 Down stream the moonbeams over me,
 It is an hour for peace and love.

And with the word the dream is past,
 Summer has long ago been gone.
 The little blaze leaps wildly on,
 As fiercely drives the howling blast.

So light the lamp and stir the fire,
 And let me sing, and speak, and dream ;
 And sweeter let the story seem,
 As the blue blaze leaps high and higher.

The dream has passed away from me ;
 I tell a tale of forests wild,
 Of one who was a forest child ;
 And may the rhyme be sweet to thee.

THERE dwelt a maiden in a forest wild ;—
 Graceful as floweret ;—lovely as the May
 That blossoms in the hedges, and the child,
 The *only* child,—the comfort and the stay
 Of a rude gipsy with one grace alone,
 And that was love of her ; for she had won

That tribute from all hearts, and for her sake,
 In circuit round of miles some eight or nine,
 Was many a one, who would his thievings take
 Without complaint ;—because of Madeline !
 And many loved her, but *she* loved not one,
 She could not leave her father all alone.

It happened in her walks she met a youth,
 Whose footsteps followed her where'er she named,
 He spoke, she answered :—she with simple truth
 Guided him oft where waters dashed and foamed ;
 And where the wild ferns grow, and wild birds rove :
 They talked ;—and friendship ripened into love.

She nothing knew of what his state or birth,
 He came to see her father,—spoke to him ;
 The neighbours said that he was nothing worth,
 But never could their love and faith grow dim :
 He said no word, she gave not glance nor sign,
 But still he knew that his was Madeline.

At last ! He came one starless cheerless night,
 When fiercely round the cold hut roared the wind,
 And on the snow gleamed forth the red fire-light,
 Which cast a glow on the dark trees behind.
 She opened wide the door for him, but—“Nay,
 Nay,” said he, “Madeline, I cannot stay.”

She lifted up her eyes ; " Why not ? " said she.

He answered, " I am going far away ;
A very long-long journey will it be,
Nay, Madeline, you must not bid me stay.
Our love—our friendship—will have stronger grown,
When I come back again to claim my own ! "

He might perhaps have meant to utter not
These words, for then his brow and cheek grew red ;
She turned away ; he murmured, " I forgot ;
Forgive me ; yet one word again : I said
' My own, ' O tell me ! will you be my own ? "
She answered softly " Yes, " and he was gone.

It was no time for any maiden's fears
His farewell kiss lay burning on her hand ;
She tried to cool it with the shower of tears
That would not cease to fall at her command.
She smiled and joyed that he had told his love,
She wept, and thought how absence would it prove.

And after many a day, it so fell out,
Across the hills there came a lordly knight,
Who bent his way towards that lonely hut,
Where all around the forest made a night.
Young—handsome—seemed he, and 'tis strange to say,
Although at dusk, he turned his face away

Whene'er he spoke to lovely Madeline ;
And at their hut he stayed the summer through ;
At dawn he wandered forth, and when the pines
Had hung their dark green leaves, oppressed with dew,
Returned. Ere long, he looked and spoke and sighed,
And asked the maiden to become his bride.

Her father, too, was sick and near to death,
 And spoke to Madeline before he died :
 " I counsel you, e'en with my latest breath,
 Become, my child, yon Baron's beauteous bride !
 And, never giving of her love a sign,
 So did as he desired sweet Madeline.

After her father died, she gave her hand
 Unto the lordly knight, and they were wed,
 Obedient to her father's last command,
 She spoke not of the dreary life she led :
 But as she journeyed to his home she knew,
 A heart might break its vows and yet be true.

For a long time they journeyed slowly on
 Over the hills, and past the forest wide.
 When many many weary months were gone,
 One morning, very near them, they espied,
 An old grey castle on a gentle hill,
 Which watered was by many a rushing rill.

Loud rang the shouts from every servant round,
 " Long live Sir Hubert," cried they, " and his bride."
 And long the mountains echoed back the sound,
 While brave Sir Hubert drew his wife aside,
 And whispered gently, " Fear not, Madeline !
 Behold, my own one, what is yours and mine !

" I know of whom you think. A gentle youth
 Left you one eve, when he had told his love,
 Yet think not, dearest, you have broken troth
 With him,—you have not :—nothing *now* can move
 Or jar upon our happiness. Alone,
 And by strange means, I came ' *to claim my own.*' "

He ceased : she looked upon him, 'twas the same,—
 The gentle youth who long had won her heart,
 And altered only but in dress and name.

“ My Hubert ! nothing now but death shall part
 Us twain ;” then, as these words she fondly cried,
 She sank upon his breast, and swooned and died.

She bore her sorrow with a woman's strength,
 And spoke to no one of her silent grief ;
 But when—as a reward—her joy at length,
 Burst on her—('twas when May-buds' scattered leaf,
 Strewed all the hedges)—she to rest sank down
 And left her lordly knight to weep alone.

He wept and said, “ Oh, joy ! be ever gone,
 Since thou has killed a flow'r so sweet as mine ;
 For never Nature made in time rolled on
 So sweet—so frail a flower—as Madeline !
 And never yet than hers, was love more pure,
 Which sorrow bore, but joy could not endure !”

He kissed the brow of Nature's forest-child,
 Then looked up praying to the changeless skies :—
 “ Angel ! look on me lovingly and mild,
 And let thy spirit whisper mine to rise !”
 He spoke, she heard, and ere next autumn sheen
 Was o'er, they laid him down by Madeline !



THE MARCH WIND.

(SUGGESTED IN THE SCHOOL ROOM, AT 7, ROYAL CRESCENT, WESTON-SUPER-MARE, WHILST LISTENING TO THE MARCH WIND.)

THE wild March wind; the wild March wind goes
 sweeping, sweeping by;
 The young spring sun shines bright and warm amidst the
 azure sky;
 And bold bright birds, with merry notes, fly with their
 strongest wing,
 And swell their loudest, sweetest tones, to hail the joyous
 spring.

But no free breath of air is mine, I may not roam away,
 And feel the sweeping wild March wind around me sport and
 play.

I hear the songsters call me forth, sweet birds ye call in vain!
 I cannot join you in your mirth, till summer comes again.

The sweet spring days will soon fleet by, the wild March
 wind be past;

For months I shall not hear again the music of its blast;
 And when again they call me forth, unto their sounding voice,
 I may not answer, and they pass on, blithely, and rejoice.

I hear their voices call me forth, the pen and books were nigh;
 I could but sigh, and wish, and on they passed and so swept by;
 They called me forth impatiently—but no! it might not be;
 I gazed from casement wistfully, and wished that I was free.

Nay, call me not, thou gay March wind, sweep onward and be
glad ;

I hear thee, and to answer not, thy voice will make me sad :
Oh, wild March wind, thou sweepest on, yet still thy voice I
hear !

Why art thou, O mad spirit, to me so very dear ?

No answer ! ah, 'tis fitting, wind, I do not answer thee ;
And when I call upon thy name, thou wilt not answer me :
Sweep on, wild wind, sweep on, wild wind, I say to thee, begone,
Dance onward, in thy hearty mirth, and leave me all alone !

Go, call the flowers, the primroses, the which I love so well ;
Go, call the early violets and then the pale blue-bell ;
Go, call the May-buds on the hedge,—go call the flowers to
bloom :

But not in careless mockery, call those who cannot come !

And let some loving friend, these flowerets to me bring,
Since I cannot obey thy call and join the mirth of spring ;
And when the chaplet see I, of woodland blossoms wove,
I will repay that friend threefold, by heart's fond tribute—love.

Go on, wild wind, go on, wild wind, with blessings on thy wing,
To drop on all the trees and flowers that come forth with the
spring :

I will not sigh, but I will smile, though I am left behind ;
With music on thy voice, go on, thou sweeping wild March
wind !

QUEEN MARION.

A SONG.

I.

THERE dwelt a lady by a stream,
 Where fairy elves at midnight stray ;
 Where underneath the soft moonbeam,
 The listening waters sweetly play.

“ Oh, Lady Marion ! by the stream,
 Where elves dance light and full of glee,
 'Midst all that dance beneath the beam—
 Are none so fair and sweet as thee ! ”

So sang a gentle elf one night,
 And soft the sweeping wind bore on ;
 A murmured wish to have the sight
 And love of Lady Marion !

And all the fairies listening stood,
 To hear the song, till night was gone,
 And all the fairies in the wood,
 Thought but of Lady Marion !

II.

The Lady Marion sat alone,
 Beneath the shadow of a tree ;
 When long the gay day light was gone
 Beneath the linden still sat she.

A youthful knight, on a steed milk white,
 Came slowly riding up the way ;
 He looked upon the vision bright,
 That seem'd so like a dream of night,—
 Of, lovely—lovely Lady May !

She felt not fear as he drew near,
 Said to her,—“ I am sad and lone,
 Lo, I am here ! I come for cheer ;
 I come for thee, my Marion ! ”

Oh, he to her was lovely too,
 As knelt and said he, soft and slow,
 “ I am thine own good knight and true : ”—
 What followed, mortal ne'er might know.

But vain the search and vain the look
 Was made for Lady Marion,
 They searched the forest round the brook,
 But lost was Lady Marion.

And there were some that summer night
 Had seen, but feared to speak indeed ;
 The noble maiden clothed in white
 With a knight upon a milk white steed.

III.

Loud sang the fairies by the stream,
 Sang, when the summer's search was done,
 “ Of all who play beneath the beam,
 The fairest is Queen Marion !

“ Oh, long her reign 'neath Luna's beam
 While years, as mortals count, roll on,
 For fairest—sweetest by the stream,
 Is our beloved Queen Marion ! ”



SIR ROLAND OF THE RHINE.

A SOLDIER steer'd a boat upon
Venetia's sparkling sea,
And sang of battles lost and won
Of love and victory ;
When suddenly he changed his theme ;
" A golden course was thine,"
He sang, " Thou wert a splendid dream,
Sir Roland of the Rhine !

" I came unto these foreign lands,
From lovely Germanie,
For sake of one who lifts her hands
Both day and night for thee.
I hear she's in the convent yet,
If so, ' tis but a sign,
She never, never can forget
Sir Roland of the Rhine.

" I often sang thy glorious deeds,
Thy works so pure and high ;
But now my heart within me bleeds,
I find that man can die !
I was thy servant true and brave ;
I would have given mine—
My life and blood thy life to save,
Sir Roland of the Rhine !

“ And while the lovely, lonely maid,
 Erminia, sits and weeps
 In yonder gloomy convent shade,
 And never, never sleeps ;
 I came away ;—all fruitlessly,
 I left that country mine,
 And came to seek my master, thee,
 Sir Roland of the Rhine !

“ If thou art living, let there be
 Thy guardian angel near ;—
 If dead, thy spirit come to me,
 And think not I shall fear.
 I wait, to take thy lady home
 Some news of history thine ;—
 Wherever thou mayest be, O come,
 Sir Roland of the Rhine !”

He waited ; from the plashing sea
 A form rose, and stood near,
 A pale form did the soldier see,
 A voice said, “ I am here.”
 The shadow stood, the soldier true,
 Said, “ Master, master mine !
 O tell me, do I truly view
 Sir Roland of the Rhine ?”

The voice said, “ Take this golden ring,
 And give it to my love ;
 I often hear her pray and sing—
 Those prayers ascend above.

I hover round her night and day,
 So she is ever mine ;
 And tell her that was drown'd at sea,
 Sir Roland of the Rhine !”

Over the form the purple sea
 Closed, and the boat went on,
 The soldier steer'd it silently,
 And all his song was done.
 But to a maiden sorrowing,
 Where grows the cluster'd vine,
 He told the tale and gave the ring
 Of Sir Roland of the Rhine.

SONG.

O'ER the beautiful, beautiful, sounding sea,
 I'm coming, I'm coming, my love, to thee !

I have been in foreign lands,
 Where, o'er golden shifting sands
 All the merry waters flow,
 And where brightest flowers blow ;
 Where amidst the gliding dance,
 Afric's dark-eyed daughters glance ;
 Yet amidst that revelrie,
 I have faithful been to thee.

O'er the beautiful, beautiful, sounding sea,
I'm coming, I'm coming, my love, to thee.

Blow, ye breezes, swiftly blow,
And sweet vessel, quickly go !
Smiling stars, upon me shine
With an influence divine !
And look sweetly on my love,
All ye heavens that are above !
Love, look in my heart and see,
I have faithful been to thee.

O'er the beautiful, beautiful, sounding sea,
I'm coming, I'm coming, my love, to thee !

I have but one golden tress,
Of thine hair love, me to bless ;
And one single lock of thine
Hast thou to kiss and twine.
Soon thou wilt be wholly mine,
Soon I shall be wholly thine ;
For whatever chance may be,
I will faithful be to thee.

O'er the beautiful, beautiful, sounding sea,
I'm coming, I'm coming, my love, to thee !

Many years have passed away,
Since that dark unhappy day,
When I left, thee, love, to take
Death, or fortune, for thy sake.
For if thee I could not gain
I should die I knew with pain
Yet, in all adversity,
I have faithfully been to thee.

faithful

O'er the beautiful, beautiful, sounding sea,
I'm coming, I'm coming, my love, to thee!

We shall happy be and gay
In that nearing future day,
When she looks into my eyes
With a joyful glad surprise ;
When she reads the story there,
Which to tell I shall not dare,
And that story true shall be . . .
"I have faithful been to thee."

O'er the beautiful, beautiful, sounding sea,
I'm coming, I'm coming, my love, to thee.

My love is sad and drear,
And her breast is full of fear,
And I know she thinks of me
All sad and hopelessly.
I shall soon be by her side,
And whatever woes betide,
Thou wilt list I know to me,
For I still am true to thee.

And I know o'er the beautiful sounding sea
My lady is waiting,—is waiting for me,
And I'm coming, I'm coming, my love, to thee,
O'er the beautiful, beautiful, sounding sea,
Love, think of the lover, now coming to thee!

'NEATH THE PALM TREES OF THE DESERT.

THE bloody fight is over,—the battle lost and won,
 'Neath the distant blue horizon slowly sinks the
 blazing sun.

It hath shone upon us all the day with fervour of the East,
 Now it sinks in golden beauty as we bear the dead to rest.

But 'midst the dead in friend or foe, was not a single one,
 Whose end was half so glorious as our Arab Chieftain's son !
 He alone was like the orb that now sinketh in the sky,
 He alone was like the sun of all who laid them down to die.

Oh his course was bright and glorious, but his course was
 quickly run ;—

Like the radiant ball that shines there, was our Arab Chief-
 tain's son !

O that one so young and fair, should so soon lie down
 to sleep !—

'Neath the Palm-trees of the Desert, we will sit us down
 and weep.

Who will tell his aged mother, that her only son is gone ?
 Who will soothe his Arab father, who sits there so sad
 and lone ?

Weep, O weep not, aged mother, though he fell in youth and
 might !—

Mourn not, mourn not, Arab father, for he fell in gallant
 fight !

For ourselves, behold ! we weep not, we will lay him in a grave ;
 And then we will avenge the death of one so young and
 brave !

We have won the battle, say ye ? But our gain is all
 undone ;

We have conquer'd in the battle . . . but have lost our
 Chieftain's son !

In the red sand of the Desert, we have made for him a grave ;
 ' Neath the branches of the Palm-trees, O sleep well ye young
 and brave !

The sun has sunk in th' golden, the evening star shines bright,
 O'er the living and the dead are spread the ebon wings of
 night.

And thy horse, O my beloved, impatient snuffs the breeze,
 That blows gently on thy face, as we lay thee 'neath the trees.
 There ! heap the red sand on him ;—he is gone for evermore,—
 He has left the Arab's Desert,—perhaps to seek a brighter
 shore.

And, O Angel of Remembrance, take these our bitter tears,
 And with them blot the sins out that he sinn'd in bygone
 years !

But who will *now* supply his place, in all our gallant band ?
 We have laid our bravest warrior underneath the Desert sand !

And who will cheer our Chieftain, now that *he* the loved—
 is gone,—

Now the Palm-trees of the Desert, wave their branches o'er
 his son !

Alas ! that he of all of us, should sleep his last long sleep ! . .
 ' Neath the Palm-trees of the Desert, let us still sit down
 and weep !

THE FURZE.

THE moorland here is blank and drear, as ever a moor
 can be,
 For many a mile,—a weary mile,—there is nor house nor tree,
 But oh! for the furze, the golden furze, it aye seems glad
 to me.

I wandered along;—with woe and wrong, my heart had grown
 so sore
 I sadly thought, whate'er time brought, I'd lift my eyes no more,
 Until, at last, Death's stream I'd passed, and reached the farther
 shore.

I heard a bird—a bonny bird,—from his low nest upspring,
 I cast no sight to his lofty flight,—I scarcely heard him sing,—
 For, as of yore, oh! nevermore, could my heart's echoes ring!

The moorland pools,—the clear brown pools,—with sunlight
 all a glow,
 Flashed upwards in my downward eyne, as sadly I did go,
 I waited not,—I listed not, the water's ripple low.

Full bright and well,—the sweet blue bell, did swing upon the
 wind,
 I gathered one,—but one!—but one!—then threw it far behind;
 It look'd so glad;—I was so sad;—I thought it mocked my mind.

I threw it by without a sigh, I wandered—wandered on,—
 I gathered nought of cheering thought from bird, or flower, or sun,
 I wished that life with all its strife, and all its woe were done !

But oh, the furze ! the bonny furze ! the bush was growing near
 I heard its tale deny my wail, and comfort all my fear ;—
 I heard its song—“ Storms have been strong, but, mourner, I
 am here !”

The moorland pool, the clear brown pool, dries up in time of
 heat,
 In careless hour is plucked the flower,—and dies beside your
 feet ;—
 In winter time, when cold the rime, the bird doth sing not sweet :

But oh ! the furze, the bonny furze,—it braves the winter cold,
 The tempest's roar has passed it o'er ; it has not quitted hold,—
 It still lifts high its golden eye, from midst the barren wold.

I passed along ; I heard the song that echoed through the sky,
 I plucked anew the flow'ret blue, that I had thrown to die,—
 I gazed adown the waters brown that shone so cheerily.

But oh ! the furze, the prickly furze,—with flowers upon its
 breast,
 Its flower and leaf like love and grief, one marring th'other's
 rest,—
 Oh, moorland furze ! Oh, golden furze !—I love thy blossoms
 best !

WISHES.

IF I were a tree,
 I would be a branching palm,
 Standing lonely in the desert I would be
 Lifting many a leafy arm,
 With a blessing for the quiet and the calm.

And all the long day,
 I would give my mighty aid
 To the fainting wand'ers passing by the way.
 Softly throwing down my shade,
 Upon them, when beneath me they were laid.

Little sparkling streams,
 Quietly should round me rest ;
 And many dancing silvery sunbeams,
 Should play upon my crest,—
 And I should bless them all, and so be blest.

If I were a flower,
 I would be a lily white,
 Not growing in the 'midst of fairy bower ;
 But pure, and sweet, and bright,
 Growing 'midst thorns, . . and stately to the sight.

For 'mongst briar and thorn,
 And within a dreary place,
 E'en that wild wilderness I should adorn ;
 So that those who saw my face,
 Should feel them cheered, and strengthened by my grace.

And as they passed by,
 They would look, and smiling say,
 "O, lily gentle, how did'st thou come nigh
 Me, who am sad and gray?"
 And thus they would be cheered by my soft ray.

If I were a bird,
 I would be a nightingale,
 My song in all the darkness to be heard ;
 With a soft and plaintive wail,
 Ringing over mountain, hill, and vale.

And some mournful heart,
 Weeping all the darkness thorough,
 Should lift its eyes and bid its woe depart ;
 And say, " Go from me, my sorrow ;
 Sing through the darkness ; light comes with to-morrow."

But being not a palm,
 Bending with soft tenderness,
 O'er every fainting wand'rer with cool calm,
 Or a lily with wild grace,—
 Or a bird that lives to sing, and so to bless ;—

I must like each be,
 Give to others love and rest,
 Bloom e'en 'midst thorns, brightly tho' mournfully ;
 Sing—although with heavy breast,
 And blessing others, evermore be blest.



A SONG OF THE OCEAN.

ON—on—on—
Dashes the gray-blue sea !
It speaks not with voice of those that are gone,
Yet ever itspeaks to me.

Solemnly roar'd the wind,
And fiercely did it blow,
A fisherman put out from the land
A many years ago.

The sun sunk large and red,
It dropp'd beneath the cloud,
And nought was heard but the plash of the oar,
And waters moaning loud.

Sailed they slowly on,
Far from the land away ;
The winds did moan, and the light was gone,
Twilight dark and gray.

Rowed he on his boat,
All thro' the foaming sea,
The silent snow began to fall,
Silently stood he.

The clouds were heavy and dark,
 A mist was gathering fast,
 He shivered in his "seaman's coat,"
 As blew the icy blast,

In his "seaman's coat" he shivered,
 And he trembled lips and hands,
 He turned the little vessel's course,
 And strove to reach the land.

But the storm rose loud and strong,
 The waves were wild and high ;
 And never—never—a star did shine,
 To lighten the gloomy sky.

Never a star in the sky,
 To lighten the storm's unrest ;
 And he felt this unsteady star of hope,
 Die away in his breast.

The star of hope was gone ;
 Never a star in the sky ;
 He looked at the raging boiling sea,
 And felt that he must die.

Alone it might be borne,
 He thought ; but he was not lone,
 He had brought another out with him,
 His youngest—best loved son.

Their hands were clasped once more,
 And 'midst the "wild waves roar,
 And 'midst the water's moan,
 He heard—' *Is there danger my father ?* '
 And he answered—' *None my son !* ' "

But fiercely shone the flash,
 Of lighting o'er the deep ;
 The lad was held in his father's arms,
 And slept a long—long sleep.

A long—long sleep !
 The sea-birds shrilly cried,
 The waters' roar on the rocky shore,
 Will awaken the sleeping boy no more ;
 In his father's arms he died.

' My boy ! ' He was not heard !
 Another flash of light,
 Gleamed—to show death on the child's calm face,
 Then closed in heavy night.

On,—on,—on !
 Dashed the sea with an angry roar,
 But the boat with its dead and living freight,
 The sea-birds saw no more.

Silently died the storm,
 The loud wind whistled ^u no more,
 And the waves in murmurs soft and sweet
 Fall on the rocky shore.

And the sea looks calm and blue,
 And plays with tangle and shells!
 It seems so like to a laughing child,
 You would dream of nothing else.

But in yon cottage old,
 There dwelleth a lonely one,
 Who saith, "O sea! thou art cruel and cold
 To rob me of husband and son!"

But on—on—on,
 Dashes the careless sea.
 Little—little—wild Ocean, thou reck'st
 What the widow says to thee!

On—on—on!
 Dash ever, thou gray-blue sea;
 'For cursing thee Ocean,' the widow saith
 Will not bring back those dear ones to me!





LILLIAN LEE.

COME hither—nearer to me Minnie Lee
I am old and feeble and shall soon be dead.
And ere I die I wish to say to you
Some words about your mother, when she was
A girl like you. Come nearer to me, dear.

Years roll on years ; I count them day by day
That I, (for each is longer than the last)
May thus be certain that they are not ages.
Yet only thirty years have gone. My soul
Could count each year as hundreds. Thus it is
That I am counted wise,—for nightne'er closed,
But sometime in the day I had been taught
Something by sorrow ; and they call it wisdom.
A grey old man am I ; with frowning brow,
And harsh unbending face ; yet, in my life
E'en I have loved : . . . t'was many years ago.
One, though unconscious, was my guiding star,
On earth, the while she lived ;—and now she's dead,
I think her spirit in the upper skies
Must know that still I love her, and must look
Down on me with a pitying tenderness,
As angels look on mortals ; and I think
That when we meet in heaven, this my love
Purified by affliction's fire below,

Shall all be satisfied. And thus the years
 Roll onward after years ; and still I count
 The slowly passing days, for each does bring me
 Nearer to her. In heaven, does she remember
 When we first met each other ? I was then
 Full twelve years older than herself ; and she
 A maiden of eighteen. A schoolmaster
 Was I, first come into this rustic spot ;
 This little village on the banks of Severn,—
 So many little houses clustering round
 The ivie'd church ; so many little streets ;
 The squire's, the parson's, and the doctor's houses,
 My house and schoolroom ; . . . it is larger now.

I was the schoolmaster, I said, I was
 Unsocial, and I know now, unattractive.
 I loved my books alone, and if at eve
 I wandered forth, I sought no other friends
 Than woods, and streams, and flowers ; if I stood
 Upon the children's playground, I ne'er joined
 In any sport, but, gazing on them smiled
 Faintly to see them pleased . . . and turned away.
 T'was thus one lovely autumn holiday
 Returning from a stroll, I stood behind
 A clump of shady oak-trees, to behold
 A rose-embowered cottage. Not at first
 Did I perceive who sat within the door,
 A vision, such as never had I seen
 And never more shall see. A maiden, young
 And fair, with a sweet face as calm and pure
 As if 't were carved in marble ; and her hair
 Shone brightly like a halo of sunbeams.
 Her eyes were jewels—gems ; yet unknown depths
 Of thought and poetry lay there. E'en they,

They . . could have told me that she was destined
 For heaven, not for earth. You, Minnie Lee,
 Have the same face, but you have not the eyes
 Your mother had : yet sorrow not for that ;
 You are a damask rosebud meant for life
 And happiness ; but she was like a pale
 White moss-rose, which with the first breath of wind
 Scatters its fragile blooms. Not so for you ;
You will not see your mother yet, my dear,
I shall behold her first. Lillian, my own !
 Your mother's name was Lillian, Minnie Lee,
 Her other name I never heard, until
 I stood within the church and saw her wed,
 So she is ever Lillian Lee to me . . .
 But I was telling you about her, when
 She sat before the cottage door and spun,
 Her little hands went flashing to and fro,
 Her face was downcast, but 'twas beautiful ;
 Her simple garb became her like a queen's,
 I could not fancy her in any other.
 And there I stood delighted, tranced, enchained,
 Till a lad's voice came shouting o'er the green,
 "Lillie put by your work, and come away
 With us to gather juicy blackberries ;
 Mother has gi'en us leave to go across
 The common." Looking up with smiling face,
 She stopped her wheel, and walked out with a group
 Of merry rosy children clinging round her.

I watched her very often after that,
 She always stood amidst that laughing tribe
 Of sisters and of brothers, and I saw
 How patient was she, and how good and sweet.
 And then I loved her ;—first, I think, because

Of that same patience, which I never had.
 My books were laid aside, I wandered out,
 In all spare moments, that perchance I might
 See her again, and sometimes, I did see her,
 But oftener I did not ; and then I came
 Back with a heavy heart, and frowning eye,
 Scarring the little children from me. Thus
 Three years passed on : I loved her all the time.
 You, Minnie Lee, have loved too, have you not ?
 I half forget, but still I think that you
 Are now a wife and mother, and your name
 Is not now Minnie Lee. What is it then ?
 Hush ! tell me not. As long as here I live,
 I still would have you—"little Minnie Lee."
 I loved your mother, Minnie, years ago,
 But for a time I "never told my love :"
 (You never read Will Shakespere, did you dear ?)
 Strange how old snatches of his words will still
 Ring in my dying ears ! I ought to think
 Of better things, at least the clergyman
 Who came to see me yestermorn said so.
 Say, can you tell me what is this ?—"The course."
 Something about true love,—ne'er mind. . . . I know
 "The course of true love never did run smooth."
Those words of his are truthful, Minnie Lee !

Well, I was telling you : At last I spoke,
 As she was walking home from church one eve,
 —A sunny, balmy Sunday eve in June—
 I joined her—walked with her—and told my love.
 I half expected words of gentle scorn.
 That I—so poor,—so weak,—so ignorant,
 Compared to her, should dare to seek her love,
 She turned her eyes upon me, and said low

And with a sweet and simple artlessness—
 “Do you not know that Wednesday three weeks,
 (She said)—I then shall marry William Lee.”
 She spoke : I gazed at her, and answered not.
 I had not heard it spoken of before,
 And I stood silent for a space of time,
 And then I think I spoke ; but what, I know not.
 I left her, full of deepest woe and pain ;
 Over the field I roamed for many an hour,
 Alone with sorrow. I had raised a hope
 Of winning that sweet maiden for my wife ;
 And thought the airy castle was so strong !
 . . . And yet it was so weak ! . . . Ah me ! Ah me !
 I never lost the woe that then I felt.

Minnie, I felt a tear fall on my hand ;
 What, is it you are weeping Minnie Lee ?
 And why ? I soon shall be in happiness,
 And see her once again. I always think—
 I cannot help it—that she is my own,
 My Lillian ; and that in the worlds above
 We shall be happy. All of us, my dear !
 For you will come at last, you know, to join,
 Your mother, and your father, aye and me ! . . .
 I saw your mother wed young William Lee.
 Then came to them a space of happiness,
 Within the which were you born, Minnie dear
 And then there came, that fever in the place
 And first your father went, and after that
 Your mother sickened . . . died. Oh the dread woe,
 The anguish of the time when first I heard
 That she was gone !—that Lillian Lee was *dead* !

And you were left alone, sweet Minnie Lee !
 And I received you, hoping, you would be
 An angel sent to keep up the communion
 Between me and my Lillian evermore.
 I feel that you were sent to comfort me,
 And you have well performed your mission, dear.
 God bless you, Minnie Lee ! In heav'n—in heav'n,
 I soon shall see your mother, and she now
 Is looking down upon me. God of heaven !
 In mercy take thou me, to where thyself,
 And Christ, and angels. . . and my Lillian Lee. . .
 Do dwell through ages everlasting ! Years
 Have passed away—and years of toil and grief—
 Since first I saw her at the cottage door ;
 And yet those thirty years of suffering,
 Have been a blessing to me. Up in heaven
 You, you have not forgot me, Lillian Lee ?
 And that I think of you for evermore !
 The days go on : I'm each day nearer you,
 And I shall join you very soon to sing
 Psalms to our God. And if you have forgot me,
 (Still I cannot believe that, Lillian Lee !)
 Then I shall tell you all my love again.
 You will love me in heaven, and I you,
 For heaven could not be happy without love.
 I pray to go ; and yet . . . Oh, God of love !
 Thou alone knowest what is best for us.



A SPIRIT'S SONG.

THE nightingale is singing by the fountain,
The fountain brook is warbling sweetly ever;
 The poplars shiver softly on the mountain ;
 'Neath the mountain wildly moans the rushing river.

The moonbeams quiver gently, softly, coldly,
 The stars shine out and tremble in the sky,
 As they did on the night when rashly, boldly,
 To the haunted Abbey ruins I drew nigh.

On that night as the stars so brightly glistened,
 I heard something like the swelling of a song,
 Oh, I thought but little of it, yet I listened,
 And still nearer the sweet music came along.

And as it came so near, I felt that round me
 A magic spell was drawn to keep me still,
 It like a chain of roses softly bound me,
 Yet ere I knew it overpowered my will.

I listened to a strain of witching sweetness,
 So silvery that it hushed the nightingale
 And as the midnight swept by in its fleetness
 That voice did still re-echo down the vale.

Oh, it was sweeter than the rushing river,
 Such a gush of music swelled in every tone !
 Oh, I almost thought that I could listen ever,
 While the daylight and the midnight were but one !

Then suddenly it ceased, and I was frightened,
 The stillness was so deep and so profound ;
 My joy was fled, my spirit seemed benighted
 To think of living on without that sound.

For nevermore I knew that I should hear it,
 Unto another world it did belong ;
 And I said,—“ It is sweet I need not fear it,
 Although I may have heard a spirit's song ! ”

Then from the darkness dimly, dimly gleaming,
 A moment I beheld the singer's face ;
 With a soft and solemn smile upon me beaming ;—
 As suddenly it vanished from my gaze.

The earth did then whirl round with dizzy motion,
 The stars, the trees grew dim and far away ;
 They rose and fell like countless waves of ocean,
 And I knew not if 't'were darkness or the day.

Since then I wander up and down in sorrow,
 Longing and listening for what is gone,
 Waiting until there comes a brighter morrow,
 When that sweet spirit shall be all my own.

For I long to hear that music o'er me stealing,
 I long to see that saintly face again,
 Why did it come ? A glimpse of joy revealing
 To be followed ever by a life of pain !

And as I walk, I look into all faces,
 Trying that look of love again to see ;
 But where I look I find but earthly traces,
 And never so much of the Heavenly.

They say it is a dream ;—but still I linger,
 And think, and watch, and long to fly to Heaven ;
 For there I know will be a sweeter singer,
 And satisfaction to my want be given.

DAISY CHAINS.

WHEN I was a tiny maiden,
 In the meadows flower laden,
 Walked I under sun and rains,
 And I made me daisy-chains.

Daisies blossomed all around me,
 And with chains of them I bound me ;
 Rising then to show my gains,
 There I broke my daisy-chains.

No more weave I flowers to-day,
 No more weave I daisies gay,
 And I know by that same token,
 Childhood's daisy-chains are broken.

THE GOLD LOCKET.

I LOVE this little piece of gold ;
 Its hue is dimmed, its form is old,
 But yet I think, 'twould break my heart
 With this gold locket now to part.

Long years ago, when all was bliss
 And happiness, *he* gave me this :
 He gave it as a pledge of faith,
 “ Nothing should part us twain but death.”

And death has come : the loved, the brave,
 Is resting now within a grave,
 This curl of hair alone I hold
 Of him, who gave the locket gold.

The hair is dark and black as night :
 (It tells me of my life's dark blight ;))
 The gold once bright, is dim at last :
 (It tells of bright days which are past.)

I love this little piece of gold ;
 I love it ;—be it thin and old !
 And for *his* sake, who it did give,
 I'll love it till I cease to live.



THE SINGER AND THE PLAYER.

IN the gentle days of old,
When earth and man were young,
Ere birds their music roll'd,
Or shepherd poets sung ;—

A-wandering by a stream,
Upon whose sunlit breast,
Snowy water lilies gleam,
In an ever-smiling rest,—

Came two youths of noble mien ;
One with sunny hair and bright,
Eyes that fervent were and keen,
And face like rainbow light.

A soul changing evermore,
Now strange, and soft, and sad,
Then,—all its sadness o'er,—
Smiling merrily and glad :—

And one,—with dim dark eye
Lifted up as if he prayed,
Lifted steadfast to the sky—
Walked beneath the willow shade ;

And as on his face the leaves
Their shadows downward bent,
You could read imprinted there
A soul trustful and content

The youth with sunny hair,
And the youth with lifted eye,
Knelt them softly down to prayer
As the day began to die.

And as they prayed, behold !
They saw the heavens part,
The gates of pearl and gold,
Each saw with longing heart.

And the song the list'ners heard,
'Was one of Heavenly birth,
Such as neither man nor bird
Could sing upon our earth.

And the youth with praying eyes
Listened to the end of day,
When the song of joyous bliss,
And the light both died away.

Then, with soul all rich and ripe
For the music of the sky,
From the reeds a sounding pipe
Made the youth with dim dark eye.

He *played* his music there,
Playing sweeter than a bird ;
But the youth with sunny hair
 Sang the song that he had heard.

And to each other, they
Spoke—" You are in the wrong ;"
" *This*, I heard," the one did say,
The other,— " I heard this song."

God sent His angel down,
 " Ye both are right," said he.
" The gift of song take one,
 And one of melody."

And thus it shall belong
Till we reach Time's farthest bound ;
With some remain the song,
And with some the music's sound.



THE SONG OF A FAY.

MORNING breaks, morning breaks, flee far away !
 Fairies, flee homeward at dawning of day ;
 For gently the breezes swept close by my ear,
 And whispered in passing : "The morning is near."

Spirits, close veiled in golden and red,
 Stand ready the sunshine and showers to wed,
 Till all are absorbed in the broad light of day ;
 Morning breaks, morning breaks, flee far away ! .

We have stolen the dew-drops from young fragrant flowers,
 That grow in our beautiful haunted bowers ;
 Gather them up, each elf, each fay,
 Morning breaks, morning breaks, flee far away !

Each moment the shadows grow slender and far,
 Each moment grows paler the morning star,
 Look up gay elves, and behold the day,
 Morning breaks, morning breaks, flee far away.

Haste ! leave the dance, and break off the rhyme,
 We'll reach a new world in a moment of time.
 The sunbeams e'en now glitter bright on the bay,
 Morning breaks, morning breaks, flee far away.

Bright pathways of gold o'er the glancing waves quiver,
 In morning's wild breezes the aspen leaves shiver.
 Yon rosy tinged cloud is the herald of day,
 Morning breaks, morning breaks, flee far away !



AN OYSTER IN AN INDIAN SEA.

OH, I could wish to be
 An Oyster in an Indian sea !
 No fear, no care, no toil, no strife,
 With nothing to enjoy but *life*.
 Down buried in the smooth soft sand,
 A thousand miles away from land,
 While all around
 Me, in mad whirls would bound
 Fishes of every brilliant hue ;
 Red, green, and blue.
 And I should silent lie
 With opening shell and sly,
 Soft feelers, stretched forth into the slow
 Resistless force of waves—above—below :—
 Green phosphorescent waters with a gleam
 Of ghostly moonlight shadow in the beam ;—
 And tangled chains,
 Of seaweed, waving o'er the stains,
 Of red red—coral ;
 Like garlands floral,
 All destitute of sense and thought,
 Of what the foretime brought ;
 Or what the morrow morn would bring :
 But revelling
 In the soft swash of water; neither weal
 Nor woe to come, nought to do but to *feel*
 The exquisite sensation
 Of the never stayed gyration ;

Of all things, but myself ; so free from harm ;
 Living for nought but to enjoy *the calm* ;
 A passive life,—a negative, painless life,
 Free from joy, woe, or strife.
 Oh I could wish to be
 An oyster in an Indian sea !

MY WAKING DREAM.

I LAID down and dreamt a dream without sleeping,
 I thought that my love was dead,
 The sunshine was smiling, the raindrops were weeping
 On the daisies over his head.

I looked into the dreary future of living
 With nothing to do or say ;
 No love receiving, and no love giving,
 Because he had flown away.

No—no ! he is living, and living to love me,
 Thank God it was but a dream ;
 For if he had gone to the heavens above me
 How saddened the earth would seem !



THE LEGEND OF SAINT CHRISTOPHER.

I.

“**H**O!” quoth the giant. “I am strong :
To no man doth my strength belong.
Whom shall I serve ? For I am worth
The greatest monarch on the earth.
Where is he ? I will even go
And seek a mighty master now ;
For I am strong and most men weak :—
If I would find what I would seek
I must go forth ; for he shall be
One that can do more mightily
Than I, or never else can he
Be lord and master over me ;
To none but to the mightiest kings
Great Christopher his tribute brings !”
He took his staff and journeyed forth
To east, and west, and south, and north,
Until he came unto a king
Whose praises all mankind did sing.
“Greatest of all great kings art thou !
Before thy footstool see me bow.
Behold ! I offer willingly,
My strength and service unto thee !”—
He said, and bent his mighty knee.

"Rise up!" then quoth the king, "Oh, rise!
 Thou hast found favour in my eyes;
 Thou shalt my trusty servant be.
 Come! fill the goblet! drink the wine!
 Nor care, nor sorrow, shall be thine:
 Come! we will hear the minstrel sing,
 And pass the night in revelling!"

The minstrel came at close of day,
 He sang a wild and mournful lay;
 While high upon his golden throne
 The king sat listening, great and lone,
 Until there came the name of One,
 At which the king in short unrest,
 Did cross himself upon his breast.
 Then quoth the giant—"Why that sign?"
 "To save me from the ill design
 And power of Satan; whom I fear,
 More, than all kings of earth and air."
 "Then," said the giant, "There is one
 Whom thou dost fear? This dost thou own?
 Unto his presence, I go now,
 For I have made a solemn vow
 That I will only homage give
 To greatest monarch that may live."

II.

Then went he forth upon the plain
 And wandered up and down again,
 Till, marching towards him, did he see,
 A band of soldiers merrily.
 And at their head he saw a man
 Like none since first the world began.

"Whom seek'st thou," said he, "Christopher?"
 "Satan I seek."—"Behold him here."
 Then fell the giant to his knee,
 And what he said before : said he
 Quoth Satan, "Rise and follow me."
 They travelled on for many a day,
 Through many a wild and dreary way;
 Until one morn, the giant eyed,
 Erected by the green wayside
 A cross; which, when the fiend did know,
 He turned and would no farther go :
 Said Christopher, "Why do ye so?"
 "I fear Christ Jesus," Satan cried,
 Who for all sinners bled and died."
 "What! dost *thou* at another quake!
 To Him my service will I take."
 So left he Satan from that hour,
 And never served that master more.

III.

He sadly wandered to and fro,
 Knowing not whither he should go :
 Thus he approached a hermit's cell,
 From whence he heard a tinkling bell;
 And found a holy man, who there
 Had vowed to spend his life in prayer.
 Said he : "If thou wilt Jesus find,
 Thou must strive well with heart and mind.
 And he will give thee duties hard,
 For which thou must be well prepared;
 So thou must fast," said he, "Now nay,
 For so, my strength I cast away."

“Then make thy prayers to him all day.”

Said he, “I know not how to pray.”

“Then stand upon yon river brink,”

The hermit said, “And thou wilt see

Many in crossing, fall and sink ;

To save them let thy duty be.”

The giant did the monk’s command ;

He many saved and brought to land,

Guiding the weak with trusty hand.

All the day long, and all the night,

Saving men’s lives by wondrous might,

In storm and sunshine, dark and light.

So that the Lord of Heaven looked down,

And looked no more with dreadful frown,

But with a smile ; and said, “Lo, he

Hath found the way of serving me !”

IV.

The night was dark, and cold, and grey,

The waters moaned upon their way ;

And Christopher, with ne’er a fear,

Sat by the firelight warm and cheer.

And as he watched, he heard a lone

Soft voice mix with the waters’ moan,

“Christopher,” said it, “take me o’er !”

And yet no form the giant saw.

He heard again,—“Oh, Christopher !

Carry me o’er the waters drear.”

He looked, and saw a little child

Stand by the waters dark and wild,

With out-stretched hands, and garments bright

As stars which gem the skies at night.

He took the child upon his arm,
 And vowed to keep it safe from harm ;
 Then plunged into the waters cold,
 While heavier grew the infant-hold
 Upon his shoulders : on he went,
 Tho' winds and waters fiercely blent,
 As if to stay his bold career,
 And force his stedfast heart to fear.
 And heavier still his burthen grew,
 Yet not a doubt his spirit knew ;
 And with his staff, and nigh-gone strength,
 He struggled to the shore at length.
 " Who art thou, child ? Thou art to me,
 As heavy as the world might be !"
 The child made answer, " Christopher,
 Thy service is accepted,—here,—
 Go, plant thy staff ; it shall take root,
 And blossom, bearing leaves and fruit."
 The child then vanished from his sight,
 And in the dark and silent night,
 Saint Christopher fell on his face,
 And worshipped in the holy place :
 For he had carried o'er the Lord ;
 And whom he *served*, he now *adored* !





IN THE FIRELIGHT.

IN the firelight, in the firelight,
Sat a woman, bent and aged,
Softly spinning with her distaff,
And as all the fibres snowy
Silently fell in there places ;
And as every fleet-winged moment
Saw the weavēd yarn grow larger,
Also dropped from tongue of wisdom,
A forlorn and mystic story
Told, with deep and passionate utterance ;
That was but half-comprehended,
By her reverential list'ners ;
And as every fleet-winged moment
Saw the snowy yarn grow larger,
So each moment grew the story,—
Woven were they with each other,
Every thread and every fibre,
Now so regular and lifeless.
Then were instinct with the motion ;
And the life her tale threw in them !
Thus she sat on in the firelight,
Weaving, weaving, ever weaving,
In a wonderful conjunction,
Snowy yarn and mystic legend,—
That old woman bent and aged !

Thus I tell to thee her story,
 It, perchance, may have no meaning,
 Or, if so,—is gone the prophet
 That might one time have revealed it !
 Love, intense and unrequited,—
 Intercourse 'tween kindred spirits,—
 Angel warnings, signs, and omens,
 Are not studies for the curious,
 Rather leave them in a rev'rent
 Loneliness ;—like precious jewels
 In a never opened casket,
 To be given to our Creator
 On our knees at morn and even,
 Who will some time show them to us.

In the frozen land of Norway,
 In its forests wild and trackless,
 Live young hearts, as bold and fearless,
 Capable of resolution,
 Deep revenge, and deep affection,
 As in any other country.
 Search the earth—the whole earth thorough,
 Of such spirits is this story :—
 Listen,—listen when I tell ye
 Of my Eric, brave and faithful ;—
 Of my Max the stern,—the loving :
 Of my beautiful—deceitful
 Peasant-maiden, fair-haired Thora ;—
 Of their playful, guileless childhood,
 Of their youth, with all its passions,
 And their deaths upon the snowdrift,
 When they were again as children.
 All the three once more united !

For in infancy and childhood
 Played they merrily together,
 In the winter—in the summer,
 Played they evermore together.
 When the snowstorms of December,
 Built up walls around their dwellings,—
 When the wildwood flow'rs were springing
 In the sunny month of August ;—
 Loving voices rang the changes
 On three names,—fore'er united :
 Ringing— “ Eric, Max, and Thora ! ”
 Bell like,—“ Thora, Max, and Eric ! ”
 Everyone of them connected
 With each other, in the neighbours,
 Prophesying thoughts and fancies :—
 Eric, with his bold Norwegian
 Brow, and haughtiness of bearing !—
 Wild blue eyes, that had a flashing
 Gleam, as of the constellations
 Lighting Northern skies at midnight.
 And his lion locks of golden
 Flung back proudly on his shoulders.
 Max, the thoughtful, and the dark-eyed,
 Sternly resolute of purpose,
 Thora, careless and lighthearted,
 Full of joy, and full of beauty,
 Loving to be queen of others,
 Mistress o'er the hearts of others,
 By the charm of her long tresses,
 Fair and waving as the sunbeams,
 And her sunlit eyes of azure.
 Thus the three grew up together.
 And the fair-haired Thora's beauty
 Was the net, within whose meshes
 Both of them were fast entangled.

For—how was it ?—Max and Eric,
 Friends and brothers from their childhood,
 When they came to years of manhood,
 Found they loved the self-same maiden,
 Loved their old companion Thora !

Ah ! when those, like Max and Eric,
 Who have been as friends and brothers
 From their childhood to their manhood,
 Come to love the self-same maiden,—
 Then ;—what remedy ? for rivals
 Are they, and what man could ever
Love the one who crossed his pathway,
 And attempted to steal from him,
 The fair treasure he so prized ?
 Verily their love and friendship
 Must be strong indeed and mighty,
 If it can withstand this touchstone !
 Thus it was, that Max and Eric,
 Who had heretofore been brothers,
 Felt a strange constraint upon them
 When they met alone together ;
 And a mutual separation
 Marked that each,—though half unconscious,—
 Jealous, guessed the other's secret.
 Max loved on, and wooed in silence,
 Wooed by tones, and sighs, and glances,
 Telling more than words and language.
 Scarce he knew if Thora loved him,
 But her voice was low and tender,
 And her glances soft and gentle,
 When they spoke to one another.
 So he fed his foolish spirit
 With fond hopes of being loved.

And his eye grew softer—brighter,
 And his step more quick and buoyant,
 When he thought of love and Thora.

Thus at evening, when the starlight
 Fell down dimly through the pine trees,
 And the white snow still was lying
 Soft and deep upon the mountains :—
 As Max sat within the firelight,
 Resting after daily labour,
 Something whispered within him,
 “Go forth now into the forest
 And behold the termination,
 And the downfall, and the ruin
 Of thy hopes the best-belovèd !”

Half believing and half doubting
 Straight he rose up from the fireside,
 And went out into the forest,
 Where the silent stars shone dimly,
 Down between the rough pine-branches.
 Then said Max :—“The love of Thora
 Is to me more than my life blood,—
 More than any other passion
 I have ever felt or dreamt of ;
 Nothing seemeth to be worthy
 In my eyes of thought or action,
 Save in what I see my Thora,
 As a goal set forth before me.
 This is love,—but love were nothing
 Were it not the love of Thora ;
 She alone of love is worthy ;
 She alone my heart enshrineth,
 As its best beloved idol,

As the centre for its fancies,
 And its passions to encircle.
 Oh, that I were not unworthy
 Of the love and grace of Thora."

Sudden shining down upon him
 Came a beam that was not starlight ;
 Where the pines had clustered darkly
 But a moment since before him,
 Stood a building, dim and distant,
 With a weird and strange resemblance
 To some grand and lofty angel,
 Who had just come forth from heaven.
 And a vast blank space extended
 From it to the brave Norwegian.
 All around, the waving pine-trees
 Cast their shadows, black and ghost like ;
 But in front . . . the long dim vista
 With the faintly grey Cathedral,
 Dimly and yet clearly standing
 Up against the winter heavens.
 Pinnacle and pillar ; basement,
 Statue, carving, clear and lofty,
 As it would be in the Reäl ;—

But withal that strange unearthly
 Dimness, darkness ;—overshadowing
 Every solemn tow'r and turret,
 Rising heav'nward. And while gazing,
 Suddenly away it vanished
 Like a flash of summer lightning ;
 Fainted from his 'wildered vision
 Into the dark winter twilight ;

And the while he leanèd breathless,
 Up against a hoary pine-trunk,
 In the place of that same building,
 Saw he,—Was his eyesight failing?
 Was that Eric with his golden
 Locks, toss'd wildly, like a lion's?
 Was that Thora, who reclinèd
 Her fair head upon his bosom?—
 Yes, t'was Eric, and t'was Thora!

As he looked, he felt his spirit
 Born again to life within him;
 Felt how now the earth and heavens
 Seemèd with this revelation.
 Then before him;—though unconscious
 Of his musings, thus he mus'd,—
 “Lo! my life is changèd, truly,
 And with it are changèd all things;—
 See how strange the earth appeareth,
 And the heav'ns are surely sadder!”
 He had heard of love unanswered,
 And of spirits desolated,
 But the things seem'd new unto him;
 And he started with the feeling—
 That the woes which he had heard of,
 Now by him were *provèd* réäl!

As he looked, he saw that Thora
 Drew her head from Eric's bosom,
 And they stood with hands united,
 Perchance, vowing love eternal!
 And Max thought of Thora's glances,
 And her voice, so low and tender;—
 Thought how Thora had deceived him,

And was goaded into madness ;—
 Driven on by evil demons
 To rush forward to the lovers,
 And tell Thora how he loved her !
 What he said,—that Max knew never,
 For his brain was hot, and reeling,
 And his words were wild and angry ;—
 So whate'er he said, he knew not,
 Eric paled, and Thora trembled,
 But Max paused not, nor waited,
 Till, said Eric sternly, harshly,—
 “ Hold, a moment ! Hold, I tell thee,
 Thora, didst thou ever love him ? ”
 Then said Thora,—“ Never, Eric ! ”

If the holy stars had glanced
 For a moment down the forest,
 They would then have seen a maiden
 Flying wildly up the pathway ;
 And two men engaged in combat
 For the love of that fair maiden.
 And if, when the noise was silent,
 Once again the stars had glanced
 Down the depths of that pine-forest,
 They would, then, have seen the maiden
 By a fair-haired man's hand holden,
 While another, 'neath the pine-trees,
 Motionless, lay like a statue,
 With the drops of red blood trickling
 From a deep wound in his forehead—
 Trickling down upon the snowdrift.
 When he rose, the sun was shining ;
 And as he his eyes did open,
 Like a flash of summer-lightning,

Passed again the vision steady
 Of the dimly-grand Cathedral
 . . . (Standing, like a lofty angel,
 Up against the clear blue heavens,
 'Fog his eyesight, and then vanished,
 While a voice did seem to whisper
 "Max, thou hast been near to dying!"

Rise up, Max, and rise up quickly !
 Harken to those hurrying voices !
 What portend they, "Eric," "Thora" ?
 Friends and parents, calling, seeking,
 List and hear their explanation—
 "Eric, missing from the village—
 Thora, also—Thora missing !"
 Then his brow grew dark and moody,
 And was turbulent his spirit,
 As he muttered, "Let *me* seek them—
 I will track them to their hiding !"
 Then he turned, and left the village,
 And they never saw him after,
 Though they watched and waited for him
 Through the winter and the springtime,
 Through the summer and the autumn,
 Till again returned the winter,
 When the three were in the snowdrift—
 Eric, Max, and fair-haired Thora !

Harken to the merry sleigh bells,
 O'er the snow-drift as they tinkle,
 In the winter wind that whistles
 Wildly o'er the snow-clad mountain !
 Let the merry sleigh-bells tinkle !

Max, who never can be merry,
Sitteth listening to their music.
Dark browed is he—dark and thoughtful—
Sorrowful and desolated—
Seeking evermore for Eric,
Seeking evermore for Thora !
He has tracked them o'er the mountains,
Through the valleys and the forests,
Longing yet to speak to Thora—
To tell Thora how he loves her—
Tell her how she has deceived him.
Thus he waits, and thus he looketh,
While his heart doth feel the sickness
Of the hope that is deferred—
And is sad, and grave, and patient,
Living but in expectation
Of his once more seeing Thora ;
Thora, who has so deceived him !
And his eyes again are strainèd,
Looking o'er the snow-drift vainly,
Where are Eric, and the maiden !
On and on, still on he travels,
Till he feels he travels vainly,
And his tears are well-nigh springing.

Ah ! those black spots in the snowdrift,
What are they ? Ho, drive on quickly !
Is't the sleigh, and is't the reindeer,
With the brave and lovely burden,
That they carried yester-morning ?
Every nerve and muscle straining,
Max is leaning—leaning forward :
Is it Eric ? Is it Thora ?

On the snow, two forms are lying,
 And there are nor sleigh nor reindeer.
 One a form of strength and beauty
 Nearly hidden in its sables :
 But with golden locks that floating,
 Backwards, show like locks of Eric.
 One, a slighter form, half buried
 In the snowheaps all around it,
 And the long and flaxen tresses,
 Gleam like those of lovely Thora :
 But the face is of the dying.
 “ Ay ! tis true, and I have found her
 Resting dead upon the snowdrift,
 Thora ! Thora ! Oh, my Thora ! ”
 And the strong man sank beside her,
 Weeping heavy tears and bitter.
 Then said Eric, rising slowly,—
 “ Ah, what see I ? Max—with Thora ? ”
 Then his voice grew soft and gentle,
 “ Ay, you see her in the snowdrift,
 Lying dead and cold as marble !
 Wolves have torn her, and have killed her ;
 They,—behold ! have torn me also,
 But, alas ! they have not killed me,
 They have left me here to see her
 Lying silent in the snowdrift,
 Never are the wretched taken ! ”
 Then Max answered,—“ I have suffered,
 I have borne my many sorrows ;
 But, through all, have hoped for vengeance,—
 Vengeance on thy fair-haired Thora,
 All because she did not love me !
 Great, my sin, I do confess me :
 But now standing in the snowdrift,

By the body of thy Thora,
 I do ask thee, old friend Eric,
 These my errors, to forgive me,
 And, as now we feel the death chill
 From the frozen air around us,
 Creeping to our hearts, and spirits :—
 Let us die in peace and friendship,
 Once more loving one another.”
 Hands of old friends met together,
 And said Eric,—“ Max, my brother,
 We will once more be as children,
 Thus my last ‘good-night,’ I give thee.”
 So, the names of Max and Eric,
 Can be once more named together,—
 For the last ‘good-night’ of Eric
 Fell on Max as with a blessing.—
 Never more a word he uttered.
 Then said Max,—“ So thus ’ tis ended,—
 All the love and all the sorrow,
 All the losing, all the seeking,
 And thus ended all the finding.
 God is just, and God is holy :—
 I have prayed to find my Thora,
 Lieth she dead in the snowdrift !
 Oh, my Thora ! Oh, my Eric !
 I have loved ye both sincerely,
 I have hated ye as truly ;
 Now I love ye—with a loving
 Like to that I give God’s spirits.
 Ah, what see I ? That same building
 That I saw within the forest,
 Ere I fell by hand of Eric !
 Dim it stood then ; now I see it
 Shining out in clear effulgence,

Still with all its soften'd grandeur ?
Then I thought t' was like an angel,
Now I see it God resembleth.
 It is formed by God's finger,
 And resembleth its Creator.
 ' . . . Lo ! within the lofty doorway,
 See I standing there, two spirits,
 And one form is like to Thora,
 And the other like to Eric.

Hark, they call me, ' Max,'—they call me :
 I will even go and join them ;
 I will enter in that building,
 Which once seemed to me so mystic.
 Passion, sorrow, trial, anguish,
 All, farewell. . Now, like when children,
 We will be again together,
 Once more—' Eric, Max, and Thora !' ”

Once more, ' Eric, Max, and Thora !' ”
 Thus he died. And like when children,
 All the three were then united :
 Dying in the snow together,
 Max and Eric—ay, and Thora !

In the firelight,—in the firelight,
 Thus the bent and aged woman
 Told to us the solemn story,
 Till her spinning was all ended :—
 Having listened reverently,
 Then we rose and went our courses,
 Made more sorrowful and gentle
 By the tale of love and sorrow,
 Woven by the agèd woman
 In the firelight,—in the firelight !

THE WATCHMAN.

THE Watchman waketh all the night ;—
Gay But in the first grey glimpse of dawn,
 The coming foe appears in sight,
 And none the sleeping city warn.
 Or else he watcheth towards the north,
 And sees not in the silent west
 The band of warriors marching forth
 With shining spear and mail-clad breast.
 Except the Lord keep the city,
 The watchman waketh but in vain.

The watch-dogs raise no cry of fear ;—
 The watchman paceth on the walls ;—
 Gay mirth and music doth he hear
 From yonder marble palace halls.
 He paceth dreamily along,—
 Perchance he thinketh of the dead :—
 And, list'ning to the plaintive song,
 He heareth not the foeman's tread.
 Except the Lord keep the city,
 The watchman waketh but in vain.

The foeman cometh with his band,
 And campeth in the desert plain :
 If absent God's restraining hand,
 The earth is heaped with bodies slain.
 All vain the spear, and lance, and sword ;
 The conqueror enters,—flushed with gain :
 Here God doth not the city guard,
 O armed men ye fight in vain !
 Except the Lord keep the city,
 The watchman waketh but in vain.

O God, do Thou our city keep,
 The while a foeman draweth nigh,
 Then, even should the watchman sleep,
 We still are safe if Thou art by.
 And should'st Thou will that warriors come,
 And strive our country's throne to gain,
 Lord, make our citadel Thy home,
 And so we shall not watch in vain.
 Except the Lord keep the city,
 The watchman waketh but in vain.

GOD'S HEROES.

GOD'S heroes are God's workers,
 With whom his blessings rest ;
 He binds them with a chain of love,
 And holds them to his breast.

God's beauty's on the face of those,
 Who, all their lifetime long,
 Do lift their souls to him on high,
 In holy prayer and song.

God's strength is in the hearts of those
 Who do His word's commands ;
 The Lord Jehovah fights for them,
 When feeble grow their hands.

But for the dead, who lie in graves,
 With green turf o'er them spread ;
 God's strength,—God's beauty,—come not there ;
 God's *peace* is with the dead.

MY LIFE.

NAR be it from me I should choose
 A life of constant light,
 For where the shadows are not deep,
 The sunshine is not bright.

To speak, to touch another's heart,
 We must have felt the woe ;
 And words that heal another's smart
 Proceed from those who *know*.

Experience teacheth us alone,
 What joy can never do ;
 We cannot comfort, ere we feel
 The loss and sorrow too.

To have no grief were but to fill
 Our lives with dreary joy ;
 Lone we should stand, if nought we met
 Our comfort to destroy.

Each one has met with woe ; and I
 Shun not the general fate ;
 I would not fear to meet the storm,
 But calmly turn and wait.

I would not have *all* joy—*all* woe,
 I ask for dark and light ;
 For where the shadows are not deep,
 The sunshine is not bright.

SUMMER WISHES.

IN the meadows gay I have been to-day,
 And I lay down 'mid the flowers,
 And thinking and wishing, I whiled away
 The sultry summer hours.
 The things I wished as I lay there,
 Fairies, I'll tell to ye,
 Those beautiful things that there I wished,
 Prythee give, dear fairies, to me !

I wished as I lay among the flowers,
 It were summer all the year,
 That the birds, and the music, and the bowers,
 And the sunshine were ever here.
 O fairies, that live in your haunted groves,
 'Twill be easy to give me this ;
 When the winter-time comes, send down from above,
 Sunshine and blossoms and bliss.

I wished— oh fairies, hearken to me !—
 That together all flowers might blow,
 That roses, and violets, and dahlias gay,
 The flowers of August, the flowers of May,
 No difference of season might know.
 Oh, hasten fairies, from fairy land,
 These favours grant to me.
 I have but asked sunshine, and birds, and flowers,
 So gracious and bountiful be.

I wished again, and this last, last wish
 Is easier than all beside ;
 Fairies ! ye come to the meadows green,
 And among my flowers hide ;—

And 'mid the flowers, and 'mid the bowers,
 As merrily there ye be,
 Dancing as light as the sunbeams bright,
 Oh, show yourselves to me !

* * * *

In the meadows no longer do I lie down,
 But these wishes I wish every day ;
 For summer is gone, and the leaves are brown,
 And the flowers no longer gay.
 The sweet nightingale and the cuckoo are flown,
 The rooks most mournfully caw ;
 But the seasons roll on, and the sunshine is gone,
 And a fairy I never saw.

“ HAVE FAITH IN GOD.”

OH mourner, why that downcast eye ?
 Oh wherefore is the heavy sigh,
 Wrung from thy heart when none are nigh ?
 “ Have faith in God.”

Check it, thou unbelieving one !
 Behind the cloud, still hides the sun,
 In darkness or in light hope on :
 “ Have faith in God.”

What though the darkened world be cold ?
 Thou too art one of Jesu's fold,
 Be prayerful, vigilant, and bold.

“ Have faith in God.”

Say not I have no sympathy,
 With all thy troubles and with thee ;
 The waves have too encompassed me.

“ Have faith in God.”

What though the bitter cup be hard ?
 Our Father gives thee great reward :
 And if He aids, what can retard ?

“ Have faith in God.”

Christ helps thee. Mourner, wilt thou fear,
 When thy dear Father God is here,
 Oh mourner he is ever near.

“ Have faith in God.”

His grace refreshes like the dew,
 And 'tis not much the world can do,
 If thou art ever good and true.

“ Have faith in God.”

Then mourner weep not ; neither sigh
 For sorrow which will soon pass by,
 Thy Father is for ever nigh,

“ Have faith in God.”

Then tell me, why that downcast eye ?
 And wherefore is that heavy sigh
 Wrung from thy heart when none are nigh ?

“ Have faith in God.”

BIRDIE, BIRDIE, WHITHER AWAY?

BIRDIE, birdie, whither away?
 Over mountains and dales?
 Over the sea-foam wild and gray,
 Or where the rivulet softly wails?

Birdie, carry a message for me
 Over the mountains blue:
 Over the forests waving free,
 And meadows shining with morning dew!

Birdie, whisper a message of love,
 To a heart that thinks of me;
 Fly quickly and tell it, birdie: above
 Each hill and plain, each valley and lea!


For I know the heart thinks ever,
 Fondly birdie, of me;
 Tell it to doubt my true love never;
 Birdie, I trust my message to thee.

Birdie, birdie, onward fly,
 Over the mountains above;
 Birdie, birdie, hasten to fly,
 With cheer to the heart of one I love.

Birdie, birdie, whither away?
 Fly to my best-loved one!
 Thy song shall tell what I fain would say,
 Take the course that my hand hath shown.

THE BRAMBLE-VINE.

(SUGGESTED BY AN ARTICLE IN THE DAILY TELEGRAPH.)


 HO loveth not the bramble-vine,
 As, in the joyous spring,
 Over the mossy stones, it throws
 Its purple blossoming ?
 O'er rugged rocks,—o'er barren heath
 It everywhere doth twine ;
 No careful hand doth tend and rear,
 The humble bramble-vine !

We love it for its lowliness,
 Which deems not ought *too* low
 Or common, for its carelessness,
 To wave about and grow.
 And when in autumn-time we see
 Its berries grow and shine,
 Who loves not then with all his heart
 The humble bramble-vine !

Ye wealthy men, may think it well
 To turn away in pride,
 From the ripe blackberries with which
 In youth, your lips were dyed.
 Ye mind not how the light of youth,
 Its glamour and its shine,
 Didthrow a gild of beauty o'er
 The humble bramble-vine !

Ye played at truant from the schools,
 Ye wandered in the wood,
 Ye tore and stained your eager hands,
 Till red with juice and blood,
 And have ye not *one* tender sigh,
 One tear to leave your eyne,
 As ye remember in your state
 The humble bramble-vine ?

The laughing children run around
 And all their words are bright ;
 "The blackberries are all so ripe,
 So large ;—and black as night !"
 But 'midst the wealth of fruit, we sigh
 For those where peach and pine,
 Supply the place of berries from
 The humble bramble-vine !

As ye would be true men, do not
 Your youthful joys despise ;
 The time when everything was good,
 And lovely in your eyes.
 Ye talk about old things, and friends
 And " days of auld lang syne,"
 But keep one loving memory for
 The humble bramble-vine !



SCYLLA.

THE sky is gorgeous in its depth of blue,
The flowers unfold their leaves
 To show their graceful forms, and varied hue,
 Birds sing beneath the eaves :
 Oh, wherefore am I sad ? For all around,
 From the bright sky unto the grassy ground,
 Is life, and love, and melody of sound.

I know not how ; I feel that I am changed ;
 Ever since yester-morn
My dearest friends have fled from me estranged,
 And fled from me in scorn.
 I the once loved ! (How sad it seems to say !)
 I, the once loved, the beautiful, the gay,
 Am left in scorn and solitude to-day.

Th' enchantress told me when I drank her cup,
 It would make me more fair ;
 I longed more beauty ; and such wish I hope
 Could all things do and dare.
 Now, on my beauty is nor stain, nor spot !
 Is it because my face has thus forgot
 Its former image, that they know it not ?

When I went to my friends, they all did start,
 And fled from me in fear ;
 I went to them with proud and joyful heart,
 Their love and praise to hear,



But they took all my joy away from me ;
 I went that they might my full beauty see,
 And nought is left, but they must start and flee !

Let me look down into this water clear
 And see my wondrous change ;
 Let me look down, for I shall sure see here
 What makes my best-loved change.
 What do I see ? What is it I behold ?
 Instead of Scylla, with her locks of gold,
 I see a monster, wrinkled, louring, old !

Is this the fruit of the enchanted draught ?
 Which, when I raised and drank,
 I looked down into, looked and gaily laughed
 As bubbles rose and sank !
 Oh, fool was I ! I, who was once so fair,
 To wish more beauty, and without a care
 To drink the goblet Circe's hand did bear !

How can I live with all my beauty gone ?
 The days will be so long ;
 No friends will love me, and I shall love none,
 Now that I bear this wrong :
 The flowers, the earth, the sunshine, and the sky,
 The birds, all will be beautiful save I ;
 Beauty alone should live ;—and I should die !

The one whom I love more than all the rest.
 And who did once love me,
 He does think now, I make no doubt, t'were best
 If I should cease to be !
 The mad blue waves, with sunset all a-glow,
 Look up to me, and beckon from below
 The rock ; but they are lovely ;—shall I go ?

Ay, I will go ; for 'neath the sparkling waves,
 And waters clear and bright,
 Lie hidden, deep and lone, the sandy graves,
 Of those, whose days in night
 Ended ; as mine—alas !—as mine will end ;
 For death is now to me my only friend,
 And he alone his aid to me will send.

I was so full of beauty, and of youth ;
 Was lionlike, my heart,
 In its rich strength of constancy and truth,
 Of wisdom and of art !
 But now ! Oh, I am changed, and everything
 Is changed with me ; e'en when the birds do sing,
 They cause no merry echoes *now* to ring.

Oh, changéd earth ! Oh, friends that love no more !
 Take Scylla's last farewell ;
 O'er her bent form the sea shall make its roar,
 And ring her burial bell.
 And when the earliest flowers of spring ye cull,
 Or when the boughs of cyprus tree ye pull,
 Remember her who *was* so beautiful !



A LETTER.

DDARESAY you'll wonder to see, Lettie May,
 That I've dared to you even to write ;
 I've no doubt, but you'll shrug your fat shoulders, and say,
 That it's quite an impertinence—quite !
 But I thought I would write, just to say, Lettie May
 That, though Willie's your husband to be,
 'Fore ever you came to these parts, Lettie May,
 Willie Morris came courting to me !

I would you were old for my sake, Lettie May
 I would that your fair curls were white,
 That your laughing blue eyes were small, dim, and gray,
 And your step not so bounding and light.
 For you danced yourself into a heart, Lettie May,
 Where you have'nt a right to be !
 'Fore ever you came to these parts, Lettie May,
 Willie Morris came courting to me.

He told me he liked my black eyes, Lettie May,
 And my black hair was better than gold ;
 But I saw him, ('t was only the other day),
 And a fair curl of yours did he hold !
 I don't think I "*cursed*" you in heart, Lettie May,
 (Nelly Hall cares for none such as he !)
 But 'fore ever you came to these parts, Lettie May,
 Willie Morris came courting to me.

I have plenty of sweethearts at hand, Lettie May,
 I tell you, I don't care for him !
 'Tis only,—I hope (for the fun) that you may
 Soon find your blue eyes growing dim.
 For him I don't break my heart, Lettie May,
 I'm glad that again I am free ;
 For all that, 'fore ever you came to these parts,
 Willie Morris came courting to me.

The small-pox is here in the town, Lettie May,
 I hope you may catch it to-night ;
 It would'nt do much harm to you, Lettie May,
 Except leave you a nice pretty fright !
 Why, Willie would soon pluck up heart, Lettie May,
 He looks at me when you don't see,
 'Fore ever you came to these parts Lettie May,
 Willie Morris came courting to me.

I dare say you'll show him this note, Lettie May,
 When you're quite in the height of your bliss.
 And then you will both laugh together, and say,
 " Poor Nell, what a tempest she is !"
 Pray spare all that trouble of heart, Lettie May,
 (Though I don't wish to stop any glee)—
 But 'fore ever you came to these parts Lettie May,
 Willie Morris came courting to me.

Oh no ! I don't quite despair, Lettie May,
 For plenty of lovers I've won ;
 I've a dozen, if any,—and you, Lettie May,
 Have Willie, and that's only one !

But when you are married, and growing old,
 (What an ugly old thing you will be !)
 Then Willie Morris will think, Lettie May,
 How once he came courting to me.

Don't be jealous; I pray you, my dear Lettie May,
 I would never do *you* any harm ;
 When I meet him, I'll make him a curtsy,
 —not speak,

But look most bewitchingly, calm.
 It isn't the first time he's made a mistake,
 I'll say that for him, once for all !—
 You'll hear of my wedding soon, sure, Lettie May,
 I won't be *too* long,—

Nelly Hall.

*ON THE MARTYRS OF THE SCOTTISH
 COVENANT.*

HAIL noble martyrs of the past !
 Faithful, and firm, and true,
 Holding your heart's religion fast ;
 All praise be giv'n to you !
 While hiding in the sunless glen,
 Or in the dark morass :
 Or when, in dripping cave or den,
 Ye heard the pursuers pass ;

And clasped your Bibles to your breasts,
 And drew your flashing swords,
 While sounds of footsteps brake your rest,
 And ye oft heard cruel words :—
 Say, did you see the martyr's crown
 Which would to you be given,
 When you had left the cold world's frown,
 And gone to rest in Heaven ?

We cannot tell : but this we know,
 They fought for Jesu's sake ;
 And when they died, and left the foe
 They went to Him ; and took
 The palm of vict'ry in their hands,
 And cried aloud the name
 Of Him who broke their bodies' bands,
 And called them from earth's shame.
 We know that they will ever live
 With Him who reigns above,
 And that He them shall ever give,
Freedom, and life, and love.
 And shall we mourn for these few sighs
 And sorrows, that we've here ?
 Nay ! rather look to God on high,
 And meet those martyrs there !

THE RIVER SPRITE.

THE SONG OF A WITCH.

THE river sprite came up to-night,
 And danced a dance with me ;
 The stream so bright with ghosts was white,
 And merrily danced we !

The river sprite came up to-night,
 And walked beside the river ;
 Where 'tween the blocks of stony rocks,
 It moaneth softly ever.

The river sprite was sad to-night,
 His face was ghastly fair ;
 And on the wind, before— behind—
 Did wildly float his hair.

Amidst the trees—amidst the breeze
 That bitterly did wail,
 He told what he did think to be
 A very woeful tale.

The river sprite had stayed last night,
 Within his palace halls,—
 Beneath the stream where stars do gleam,
 Cold on the waterfalls ;—

When a bark did come above his home,
 And glided on and on ;
 And it he eyed, as it did glide
 The quiet stream adown.

“ That lovely maid within the shade,”
 (He said,) “ She shall be mine !
 And her yellow hair, with sea-weeds fair,
 I, in my halls shall twine.

“ And you gay child, with ringlets wild,
 Shall be my trumpeter ;—
 So rise, ye wind ! and thick mist, blind
 Their eyes, till they be here ! ”


The river sprite raised storms that night,
 I aided him alsò ;
 But a fairy-maid came to their aid,
 And safe the boat did go.

So the river sprite is sad to-night,
 As by the water side,
 And in the breeze that shakes the trees,
 We two do dance and glide.

And his large dim eyes like spectres rise
 Between the shadowy locks,
 That as a veil hang long and pale,
 Like sea-weed from the rocks.

The river sprite came out to-night,
 And danced right solemnly,
 And waves did moan, and winds did groan,
 At what he told to me.

MY LYRE.

ITHIN my hand is a little lyre
 And anon I strike its chords ;
 Though I cannot sing in words of fire,
 The poets' thrilling words ;
 But I raise my fingers willingly
 And what I think I sing,
 And words that are felt come thrillingly,
 And an echo often bring.

My lyre may not be rich and sweet,
 But yet one thing I know,—
 It is not tunèd to repeat
 Alone, these things below.
 For though so oft an earthly strain,
 May mingle with my song,
 My voice shall not be spent in vain,
 It does to God belong.

The strings are feeble, poor, and weak,
 But they are beloved by me,
 Some time perchance, they too shall break,
 But in eternity,
 I know my lyre will speak again.
 And ne'er will break its strings,
 It shall speak in the land where is no pain,
 Where angelic music rings.

My lyre is not an idle thing,
 It does not idly lie,
 That the wind alone may make it sing
 Or on it breezes die.
 My lyre :—I cannot lay it down,
 So ask us not to part ;
 'Tis my solace from the world's cold frown,
 To warm and cheer my heart.

And in my hand I hold this lyre,
 If music from it come,
 Pray that I soon may hold it higher,
 In my eternal home.
 My lyre :—it is a precious boon ;
 And midst the world's cold art,
 There needs some precious boon to cheer
 And sanctify the heart.

So tell me not that I must lay
 From me this precious thing ;
 But what I fancy, think, and say
 Oh, give me leave to sing !
 For, when within my hand I hold
 This lyre, though low and faint,
 It will reach that city pure of gold,
 And the ears of God and saint.

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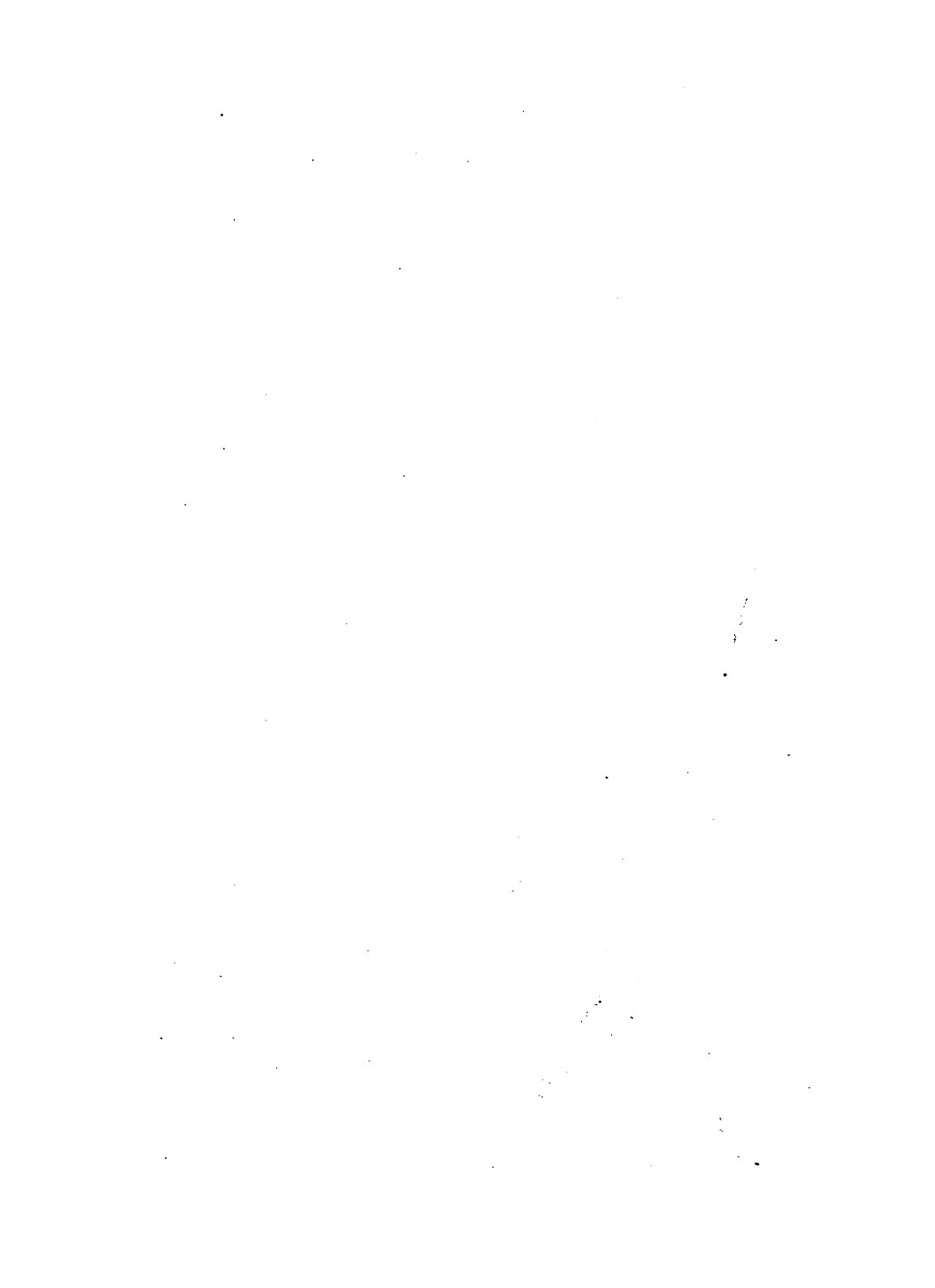
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the 1990s, the number of people with a disability in the United States has increased by 25% (U.S. Census Bureau 2000).

As a result of the increase in the number of people with disabilities, the need for accessible information has become more acute. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 (Public Law 101-354) has provided a legal framework for the development of accessible information. The ADA requires that information be accessible to people with disabilities, and that the information be presented in a format that is accessible to people with disabilities.

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