



POEMS

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P O E M S

BY

SARAH E. CARMICHAEL.

A BRIEF SELECTION, PUBLISHED BY PERMISSION OF THE
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INTRODUCTORY.

THE selection of verses to which this introduces the reader is published with the consent—somewhat reluctantly given—of the authoress, by a devoted circle of her friends and admirers, who design thus to preserve an early memento of her talents and genius as a writer; and by its circulation among kindred spirits, who as yet are strangers to her muse, secure for her poems a more extended acquaintance and recognition.

It will hardly be deemed a matter of local prejudice merely, that this friendly alliance dotes upon the fact that so gifted a child of song has been vouchsafed to the remote and obscure region of country known as the Valley of Great Salt Lake. It is indeed regarded by them as worthy of more than ordinary note, that, in such a secluded spot—shut out from the world at large by the frowning barriers of the Rocky Mountains; without the advantages of books and intellectual training; without the soul-expanding influences of a cultivated and liberal public sentiment; away from the softer elements of natural beauty, and having nothing but her own heart to commune with—her songs have taken so wide and glorious a flight; ever loyal to truth and humanity, ever sweet and melodious as the voice of nature.

Introductory.

That the authoress does not share in the high appreciation of her efforts entertained by others, is evinced by the following fragment from an apologetic poem, recently published.

“Ah! woman’s quick, impulsive thought
Hath an impatient wing;
Yet, in the grasp of reason caught,
’T is but a fragile thing—
* * * * *
Ephemeral thing! unwisely sought!
Who cares to win a woman’s thought?”

To this, the liberty is taken of replying in the cheering language of an intimate and sympathetic female friend.

“Trust thou thy muse, and let
Thy thought untrammelled soar;
Our souls would drink with pleasure
The music of each measure
Thy spirit shall outpour.
* * * * *
Trust still thy woman heart,
That love and truth holds dear;
And still thy woman thought,
With so much beauty fraught,
Shall echo far and near.”

GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, June 1st, 1866.



APRIL FLOWERS.

PALE flowers, pale flowers, ye came too soon ;
The North, with icy breath,
Hath whispered hoarsely through the skies
A word that spoke of death.
Ye came too soon — the Spring's first glance,
In this cold clime of ours,
Is but the shine of Winter's lance —
Ye came too soon, pale flowers !

Pale, rain-drenched flowers, ye came to greet
The young Spring's earliest call,
As untaught hearts leap forth to meet
Loved footsteps in the hall :
Ye came — beneath, the snow-wreath lies ;
Above, the storm-cloud lowers ;
Around, the breath of winter sighs —
Ye came too soon, pale flowers.

April Flowers.

Pale, blighted flowers, the summer time
Will smile on brighter leaves ;
They will not wither in their prime,
Like a young heart that grieves ;
But the impulsive buds that dare
The chill of April showers,
Breathe woman-love's low martyr prayer —
I kiss your leaves, pale flowers.



SIXTY-FOUR AND SIXTY-FIVE.



“Good bye, old friend!” and the bright young year
Sprang through his palace door,
And grasped the cold, unsteady hand
Of the dying sixty-four :
Mournfully glittered the young king’s tear,
On the old king’s locks of snow—
“You are passing fast from the world, old year,
Yet bless me ere you go.

“Your eye is dim, and your hand is cold,
Yet in the ‘Auld lang syne’
Your breast had a measure of life’s red gold
As wide and deep as mine ;
And you know, old king, I only ask
Of the world a place to stand—
Room for my head, room for my heart,
Room for the sweep of my hand.

Sixty-Four and Sixty-Five.

“Yet I kneel with reverence at your feet,
For I feel that a life well done
Towers far, in majesty complete,
O'er the brightest of lives begun :
I kneel at your feet, old year, I kneel,
Bent by my strength of pride ;
I am proud, most proud, of the power to feel
Honor for talents tried ;

“Honor for lives that have proved their strength ;
Honor for aims attained —
Many can boast of an arrow's length,
Few of a target gained :
You are passing fast from the world, old year,
Your pulse is ebbing low ;
Yet look on the young life kneeling here,
And bless me ere you go.”

The old year smiled yet mournfully,
For his lips were growing cold ;
He said : “I bless thee — thou shalt be
Revered when thou art old —
And this I deem the proudest thing
Existence can bestow ;
The pearls that crown earth's greatest king
Are honored locks of snow.

Sixty-Four and Sixty-Five.

“I do bless thee, young year — thy glance
Shines to my failing sight
Like flashing steel of a fearless lance,
Uplifted for the right ;
Thy hand is warm, and firm, and strong,
And the bright head bowing here
Will never bend before the wrong —
I do bless thee, young year !”



LAKE TAHOE.*



Lake Tahoe, sweetest lake of lakes!
The vision of thy beauty breaks
With startling power upon the eye!
A sheen of water gleaming high
Above the tall dark-pointed pines:
Apparently thy wave inclines
Toward the sun, who pauses there
To dress his long, bright amber hair;
And many a loose, thick, shining tress
Twines round thee in a warm caress;
Nor does thy bosom's picture slight
His most impassioned glance of light;
The day, whose smile thy mirror takes,
Hath named thee sweetest lake of lakes.

Lake Tahoe, sweetest lake of lakes!
The crescent moon oft overtakes
And tramples on the soft white feet
Of day, unwilling to retreat

* A beautiful crystal lake, situated on the summit of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, which separate Nevada from California.

Lake Tahoe.

From the deep tide that charms its sense
By a heart-worship so intense :
Oh, pale amethyst gem that shines,
Clasping the leafy crown that twines
The proud sierra's cold, pure brow —
Shine on, forever, fair as now !
Glow, many-tinted water, glow !
There is no brighter wave below —
The night, that mournfully forsakes,
Hath named thee sweetest lake of lakes.

Lake Tahoe, sweetest lake of lakes !
A thought of awe intense awakes
Within the heart that lingers where
Thy tranquil bosom slumbers fair,
Like a bright tear of pitying love,
Wept warm from heavens that lean above,
When the white stars come out to see
How lovely this hushed world can be ;
And view, with tranced and wondering eyes,
Thee, looking upward to the skies,
So beautiful, they half forget
That earth is not an Eden yet —
I, in whose dreams thy beauty wakes,
Have named thee sweetest lake of lakes.



D E A D.

...

Weep for the dead! Not those who gave
The dust that fills a patriot's grave ;
Not for the true arm still and cold ;
Not for the breast that the grasses fold ;
Not for the bright form under the mold ;
Not for the heart that bled.
But weep, O weep for the coward vein !
Dead, for it had no pulse to drain ;
Dead, for it could not feel a pain ;
Dead to the core — dead !
Dead as a soulless sentence spoke ;
Dead as a useless promise broke ;
Dead as a sightless eye awoke :
Dead !

Weep for the dead! Not those who went
Home by the stab of a traitor sent ;
Not for the smile we see no more ;
Not for the love on the Aiden shore ;

Dead.

Not for the life whose pain is o'er ;
Not for the spirit fled.
Yet weep for the bosom numb and still !
Dead, for it felt no patriot thrill ;
Dead, for it had no life to spill ;
Dead to the core — dead !
Dead as the hate of an idiot glance ;
Dead as the steel of a broken lance ;
Dead as a last neglected chance :
Dead !

Weep for the dead ! Not those who claim
Immortal life on the scroll of Fame ;
Not for the soul that feared but shame ;
Not for the life that reached its aim ;
Not for the step that marked in flame
Print of a hero's tread.
Weep for the dead that breathe and speak !
Dead, with a life bloom on the cheek ;
Dead, for they have no aim to seek ;
Dead to the core — dead !
Dead as the use of a wasted hour ;
Dead as the dew on a poison flower ;
Dead as a soul's crime-palsied power :
Dead !

NIGHT AFTER THE BATTLE.



I waited there on the battle field when the tumult of
 strife was done ;
There with the dead, while the black-browed earth
 reeled dizzily over the sun,
And the sullen moments crept away, with a noise-
 less, ghostly tread ;
There, with the pallid poppy leaves of slumber around
 me spread
On the hand, and brow, and lip, and heart, of the
 dying and the dead.
The wound on my head ached wearily ; the wound
 on my bosom bled,
Till I scarce could pray with the fainting lip, where
 the passionate fever fed.
Yet, oh ! how I longed for a drop of dew from the
 clear, cold, starry skies,
To cool the heavy lids that pressed hot on my sleep-
 less eyes.

Night after the Battle.

A boy — ah, yes, he was little more — slept in a
death-trance there,
So near that his rigid fingers twined a lock of my
matted hair ;
And one, in the form of a manhood's prime, threw
his strong arm over my breast ;
It thrilled me once with its power of pain, then
crushed with its weight of rest ;
And I heard, in the silence, the low drip, drip, of a
heart that was weeping near,
And struggled — but vainly — to stir my lip, and pray
for a deafened ear.

Oh! ye who waltz with the jeweled night to pleasure's
quick music-beat,
And find the day where its fingers white strew blos-
soms around your feet,
Ye never can make your moments reach, by eking
them out for years,
A power of expression to meet the speech of a night
like that appears :
I know that the strong, deep pulse of Time quietly,
steadily throbs,
Though its breath is shortened to laughter's trills, or
drawn to the length of sobs ;

Night after the Battle.

Yet, oh! that fathomless gulf that surged between
two shores of light,
Seemed like a century's pain compressed and coiled
up into a night.

I thought, while I stayed on that battle field, of the
waste around me there,
And bared my bleeding heart, that God might read
its muttered prayer ;
A prayer that asked for a fiery rod of lightnings in
His hand,
To strike the sod where the traitor trod, and burn
his track from the land ;
A prayer that sued for the drops of rain in the eyes
of the coming years,
To quench the sensuous smile of earth with a weight
of heaven's pure tears.

Columbia — oh! my country, weep! — weep! — thou
art blind, insane!
Thy dear eyes stare, and thy hollow laugh is worse
than a shriek of pain.
Why is the voice of thy revelry ringing through home
and hall,
While lustrous drops of thy precious life bleed on
thy joys' black pall?

Night after the Battle.

Why does thy forehead hide its woe under a weight
of gems,

While every hour treads down the worth of a thou-
sand diadems ?

Where are the sacred, beautiful words — sister, moth-
er, and wife ?

And the prayer of faith, valor's white shield, that
strengthens the arm in strife ?

Seek for the words where a painted cheek blossoms
out in the bowers,

Where the atmosphere of a putrid mirth withers all
purer flowers ;

Seek for the prayer where a mimic phrase copies a
sentiment,

And goes up from a lip mechanically moved to an
ear unheeding bent.

Columbia, weep for the heartlessness, the selfishness,
the pride,

That bridges thy billowy wave of life, and scatters
its surges wide !

Thy triumph waits on the farther shore ; but, oh !
till thy conquest comes,

Mix not the tremble of ivory keys with the passion-
ate throb of drums !

Night after the Battle.

Let every pulse in the nation's heart beat to the
same deep strain—

War, strong war, while it must be war—peace that
we can retain ;

Let us have no soulless pageantry, let us have no
mimic strife,

We do not fence for a jeweled glove— we fight for
a nation's life.



PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S FUNERAL.



Toll! Toll!

Toll! Toll!

All rivers seaward wend.

Toll! Toll!

Toll! Toll!

Weep for the nation's friend.

Every home and hall was shrouded,

Every thoroughfare was still ;

Every brow was darkly clouded,

Every heart was faint and chill.

Oh! the inky drop of poison

In our bitter draught of grief!

Oh! the sorrow of a nation

Mourning for its murdered chief!

Toll! Toll!

Toll! Toll!

Bound is the reaper's sheaf—

President Lincoln's Funeral.

Toll! Toll!

Toll! Toll!

All mortal life is brief.

Toll! Toll!

Toll! Toll!

Weep for the nation's chief!

Bands of mourning draped the homestead,
And the sacred house of prayer ;
Mourning folds lay black and heavy
On true bosoms everywhere :
Yet there were no tear-drops streaming
From the deep and solemn eye
Of the hour that mutely waited
Till the funeral train went by.
Oh! there is a woe that crushes
All expression with its weight!
There is pain that numbs and hushes
Feeling's sense, it is so great.

Strongest arms were closely folded,
Most impassioned lips at rest ;
Scarcely seemed a heaving motion
In the nation's wounded breast ;
Tears were frozen in their sources,
Blushes burned themselves away ;

President Lincoln's Funeral.

Language bled through broken heart-threads,
Lips had nothing left to say.
Yet there was a marble sorrow
In each still face, chiseled deep ;
Something more than words could utter,
Something more than tears could weep.

Selfishly the nation mourned him,
Mourned its chieftain and its friend ;
Eye no traitor mist could darken,
Arm no traitor power could bend ;
Heart that gathered the true pulses
Of the land's indignant veins,
And, with their tempestuous spurning,
Broke the slave's tear-rusted chains :
Heart that tied its iron fibers
Round the Union's starry band ;
Martyr's heart, that upward beating,
Broke on hate's assassin hand !
Oh ! the land he loved will miss him,
Miss him in its hour of need !
Mourns the nation for the nation
Till its tear-drops inward bleed.
There is one whose life will mourn him,
With a deep, unselfish woe ;
One who owned him chief and master
Ere the nation named him so.

President Lincoln's Funeral.

That the land he loved will miss him,
Does she either think or care?
No! the chieftain's heart is shrouded,
And her woman's world was there :
No! the nation was her rival ;
Let its glory shine or dim,
He hath perished on its altar —
What were many such to him?

Toll! Toll!

Toll! Toll!

Never again — no more —
Comes back to earth the life that goes
Hence to the Eden shore!

Let him rest! — it is not often
That his soul hath known repose ;
Let him rest! — they rest but seldom
Whose successes challenge foes.
He was weary — worn with watching ;
His life-crown of power hath pressed
Oft on temples sadly aching —
He was weary, let him rest.
Toll, bells at the Capital!
Bells of the land, toll!
Sob out your grief with brazen lungs —
Toll! toll! toll!

THE STOLEN SUNBEAM.



There's a light that burns with a quenchless glow,
In the wide, deep caverns of earth below ;
Like the fire that lives on the Parsee's shrine,
Is the amber torch of the lighted mine.
Burning forever, steadily bright ;
Flickering never, a changeless light ;
Proud and passionless, still and fair ;
Burning forever without a glare ;
Burning forever, so still and deep,
A quenchless flame in a dreamless sleep ;
And Time's broad ocean may roll its waves
While space hath room for the centuries' graves ;
It hath not billows to dim the shine
Of the wizard fagot that lights the mine.

Beware ! beware ! of a starless beam !
The nightmare spell of a miser's dream.
Emotionless ever, its subtle art
Tugs at the strings of the world's strong heart.



The Stolen Sunbeam.

The stars of the earth at its bidding stoop ;
Awed by its menace, life-roses droop ;
And the fairest blossoms that earth can twine
Fade near the taper that lights the mine.

The Fallen looked on the world and sneered :
“ I guess,” he muttered, “ why God is feared ;
“ For eyes of mortals are fain to shun
“ The midnight heaven, that hath no sun.
“ I will stand on the height of the hills and wait
“ Where the day goes out at the western gate,
“ And reaching up to its crown will tear
“ From its plumes of glory the brightest there ;
“ With the stolen ray I will light the sod,
“ And turn the eyes of the world from God.”

He stood on the height when the sun went down —
He tore one plume from the day's bright crown ;
The proud orb stooped till he touched its brow,
And the marks of that touch are on it now,
And the flush of its anger forever more
Burns red when it passes the western door !
The broken feather above him whirled,
In flames of torture around him curled,
And he dashed it down from the snowy height
In broken masses of quivering light.

The Stolen Sunbeam.

Ah! more than terrible was the shock
Where the burning splinters struck wave and rock ;
The green earth shuddered, and shrank, and paled,
The wave sprang up and the mountain quailed.
Look on the hills—let the scars they bear
Measure the pain of that hour's despair.

The Fallen watched while the whirlwind fanned
The pulsing splinters that ploughed the sand ;
Sullen he watched, while the hissing waves
Bore them away to the ocean caves ;
Sullen he watched while the shining rills
Throbbled through the hearts of the rocky hills ;
Loudly he laughed : " Is the world not mine ?
" Proudly the links of its chain shall shine ;
" Lighted with gems shall its dungeons be ;
" But the pride of its beauty shall kneel to me !"
That splintered light in the earth grew cold,
And the diction of mortals hath called it " GOLD."



MOONRISE ON THE WASATCH.*



The stars seemed far, yet darkness was not deep ;
Like baby-eyes, the rays yet strove with sleep ;
The giant hills stood in the distance proud —
On each white brow a dusky fold of cloud ;
Some coldly gray, some of an amber hue,
Some with dark purple fading into blue ;
And one that blushed with a faint crimson jet —
A sunset memory, tinged with cloud-regret.
Close to my feet the soft leaf shadows stirred ;
I listened vainly, for they moved unheard —
Trembled unconsciously ; the languid air
Crept to the rose's lip, and perished there.
It was an hour of such repose as steals
Into the heart when it most deeply feels ;
When feeling covers every shred of speech
With one emotion language cannot reach.

*The "Wasatch" is a rugged range of mountains forming the eastern boundary of Great Salt Lake Valley.

Moonrise on the Wasatch.

And Nature held her breath and waited there,
An awed enthusiast at the shrine of prayer ;
Like a pale devotee, whose reverent lips
Stifle the breath that burns her finger-tips.

The crimson-tinted cloud paled, with a start,
As though new hope chased memory from its heart ;
A gleam of whiteness stirred the vapors pale,
As beauty's finger moves a bridal veil ;
A fleecy mass, wide fringed with silver light,
Drooped on the summit of the proudest height ;
Then, floating northward, swept in folds of grace
From the white beauty of the moon's meek face.
How still ! how pure ! that chastened luster bowed
Its glance of radiance from its veil of cloud !
How meek the loveliness, how kind the power,
Whose arm of purity embraced the hour !
How beautiful the misty robe that trailed
O'er bloom that brightened, over stars that paled—
Though its white fold caught in a dusky cave,
Or swept its fingers o'er a gleaming wave,
Piled on the sward a moss of woven gems,
Or dragged in tatters through the forest stems !

A wave of beauty, only too complete,
Surged o'er my head and widened at my feet ;

Moonrise on the Wasatch.

The skies seemed bowing with their wealth of light,
Yet earth sprang heavenward, 't was so more than
bright :

My heart found no expression — sought for none ;
Why analyze the bliss it fed upon ?

All its sensations blended into one —

Solemn, yet shadowless — most glad, yet deep ;

I could not smile, yet had no wish to weep.

My restless thoughts seemed into one compressed,
Yet in that one all others were expressed ;

The eloquence of all things seemed possessed,

Yet no expression narrowed to my breast ;

My soul seemed to expand, my heart to melt,

Blending with all that could be reached or felt ;

I had no wish unsatisfied, because

My mind's volition felt superior laws.

It seemed a ripple moved upon a tide,

Whose heaving billow bade me onward glide ;

A breath borne upward by a tempest weight —

A trifling circumstance controlled by fate ;

Something of little worth when moved apart —

One trembling fiber in Creation's heart.



CALIFORNIA.

Cheer for the queen of the western wave!—

California!

Where the sunbeams walk on a golden pave,
And the moonlight hides in a silver cave—

California!

Where the day that comes to this land of ours
Finds the brightest gems and the rarest flowers ;
Where the lingering day, when it must depart,
Leaves the last red pulse of a broken heart—

California!

Cheer for the Italy of the West!—

California!

With a wide, warm heart in a jeweled vest,
And a regal brow by a rose crown pressed—

California!

From the burning gold of her shining sand
Is the scepter forged for the nation's hand,

California.

And the sword that cancels a traitor's guilt
Hath her diamond stars in its flashing hilt—
California!

Cheer for the coast where the billows sing!
California!

The proudest plume of an eagle wing;
The brightest ray of a starry ring—
California!

Pouring the wealth of her yellow veins,
And her ruby gems, on the battle plains—
True, to the core of her deep, warm breast:
All hail! thou beautiful queen of the West—
California!



WILD-WOOD BLOSSOMS. .



Beautiful buds from the wild-wood brought ;
Leaves that the sun would fade ;
Born where the zephyrs, with fragrance fraught,
Linger amid the shade ;
Where the day looks forth with a reverent eye,
The wave hath a murmur low,
And the soft winds steal, with a balmy sigh,
Through the blossoms of pink and snow.

Beautiful buds from the wild-wood brought ;
Lilies so slight and pale,
Like breathing plants that the world hath taught
Meekness in sorrow's gale ;
Delicate mosses, and long, clinging sprays
Of beautiful, flowering vine ;
Dew blossoms, that close to the streamlet stays,
With the sweet, blue columbine.

Wild-Wood Blossoms.

Beautiful buds from the wild-wood stole —
Many a human flower,
Whose gentle spirit and wealth of soul
Furnished its earthly dower,
Hath learned, when the weight of the proud world's
scorn
Hath trampled it down to fade,
That sensitive hearts and delicate plants
Should blossom amid the shade.



THE WOUNDED BIRD.



Never again in the wild-wood bowers
Will thy trembling notes be heard ;
Never again will the branches sway
Under thee, sweet little bird !
The breath of the spring upheld thy wing,
And the summer drank thy strain ;
But the plumes that fluttered the blossoms then
Never will perch again.

Never again! — in the dear, old woods
The flowers will bloom and die,
And many a shining pinion flit
Over the sun-bathed sky ;
And many a note on the soft winds float,
As pure in its melody
As the frozen tones in thy fluttering heart—
But never again for thee !

The Wounded Bird.

Never again! — there are crimson drops
 Quivering on thy breast ;
Thy pulses curdle around the shaft
 Under thy soft wing pressed.
Ah! it is well, thou has breathed thy song—
 If its low, wild gush hath stirred
One heart's deep waves, thou hast done thy part,
 Beautiful, wounded bird !



ASHES TO ASHES.

“Master, —”

“Do not call me master ;
For, I tell thee, I am none ;
Dark-browed freeman, there 's no master
In this land of ours, but One.”

“Friend, —”

“Still better — call me brother !
We are dying, side by side ;
For one cause, beneath one banner,
Mingling here life's ebbing tide.
Say it after me — ‘*Our Father!*’ —
Now, then, are we not allied ?”

“Brother, —”

“Aye ! thou needst not falter ;
Speak it boldly ! — say it loud ! —
Look ! the Land's torn breast is bleeding,

Ashes to Ashes.

But its brow is calm and proud ;
Yonder, see, the stars are shining,
 Though the blossoms here are bowed.
And I tell thee, dark-browed brother,
 That our Land is better now
Than when roses, on its bosom,
 Blushed beneath a frowning brow.
Call me brother ! — call me brother !
 Reach thy true hand nearer mine —
It is cold, but mine is colder ;
 Let them freeze, and, freezing, twine !”

“ Brother, — ”

“ Yes, I listen, brother.”

—— “ I have thought, how can this be ?
For the Lord, who gave us stations,
 Knows I do not equal thee !”

“ Needs it that we should be equal ?
Souls have stature as He wills.
Yonder, the night’s silvery pulses
 Roll in wide and narrow rills,
Yet no one hath right to trample
 On the space another fills.”

Ashes to Ashes.

“ Brother, — ”

“ Yes, I listen, brother.”

— “ Say ‘ *Our Father* ’ once again ;
For a strange, new light seems dawning
On the stupor of my brain ;
And my soul seems reaching upward,
With a motion new and bold.
Brother, — Oh ! his hand hath frozen !
And my own is freezing cold.”

Dark and fair, they slumbered there ;
New England boy, whose golden hair
Trailed on a forehead cold,
That glimmered through gold meshes, wet
With red life-jewels framed in jet ;
And many a shaggy Afric curl
Touched red life-jewels framed in pearl ;
And the same vail of moonlight glow
Swept sable cheek and throat of snow,
With its pale, silver fold.
Dark and fair, they slumbered there —
Young face serene and pure as prayer,
Where death could not eclipse
The beauty that more radiant beamed
Because its white enchantment seemed

Ashes to Ashes.

To hold the smile that went and came
In life, a bright but fitful flame,
 Frozen upon its lips ;
And a dark, dull, time-withered face,
Where feeling never left a trace,
Nor beauty shaped a curve —
A narrow and unlovely brow,
Whose mold proclaimed it formed to bow ;
 A creature fit to serve.

And there were fingers, white as pearls,
And slight and dainty as a girl's,
That with a rigid clasp caressed
A sable hand, that coldly pressed
And held them to a frozen breast.

Two mortal brothers, hand in hand,
Slept on the bosom of the Land ;
And Heaven's meek brow seemed leaning down
To fasten in its starry crown
The soul-gems it had won
Since the pale hour of twilight passed
The portal of existence last,
To curtain out the sun.
And, maybe, in that crown they shine
Two stars, whose rays would dare to twine ;
 It may be that the curse

Ashes to Ashes.

Of blackness fades from off the soul
That reaches its eternal goal
Unstained by deeper dyes of crime,
Unsullied by the feet of Time,
That trampled on a dusky breast
And slowly crushed it to its rest.
But so, or not, He knoweth best
Who rules the Universe.



THE PATRIOT DEAD.

...

No tears for them! — they never knew
The shrinking, coward pain
Of hearts that know a fetter's weight,
And beat beneath a chain ;
They hallowed with their earliest breath
The land for which they bled ;
Chant honor's pæan-note to Death
Above the patriot dead.

No tears for them! — the lofty-toned !
The beautiful ! the high !
There is no sorrow in the voice
That summons such to die.
Oh ! loop our country's ensign where
Its starry folds may spread
The glory that they died to guard,
Above the patriot dead.

The Patriot Dead.

No tears for them! — the bright! the brave!
Weep for the coward life,
That dares not go where honor calls,
And, shrinking, shuns the strife;
But speak of *them* with reverent eye,
Awd voice, and low-bowed head,
And teach your babes 't were proud to die
Like them — the patriot dead.



THE FLAG AT SUMPTER.



Yes, they have raised the Flag again —
Who dares to strike it low?
Its light burns into every vein
That hath one pulse to glow;
It is the same bright Flag that rose
Above oppression's frown,
Our Land's first challenge to its foes —
Who dares to strike it down?

The same proud Eagle turns his gaze
To freedom's rising sun;
Those sacred stars first lit their blaze
O'er deathless Washington:
That Flag! — it is our honor's vest —
It is our glory's crown,
A heart-thrill in the Nation's breast —
Who dares to strike it down?

The Flag at Sumpter.

That Flag is Union's jeweled belt,
It girds Columbia round ;
Each motion that her life hath felt,
That starry sash hath bound.
Our wars have bathed it with red tears,
Our peace will fadeless glow,
The pledge of past to future years —
Who dares to strike it low ?



THE MINES.



Bring the Nation's wealth to the Nation's need!
Let the golden veins of the mountains bleed!
Bid the pallid pulses of silver start
From the sordid depths of the earth's black heart.
There are burning rubies that gem the sod;
There are trampled pearls where the battle trod;
There are brilliants throbbing with glorious life,
Scattered like chaff on the field of strife;
Yet the passive hand of the Nation sleeps
Cold on the key of the treasure heaps!
And Columbia's need is in whispers told
Where her rivers dash on a shore of gold;
Where her regal hills in their pride look down
On the golden fringe of their mantle brown;
Where the sunbeams glitter on sand as bright,
And the sod is spangled with silver light.
Is the warm, true life of the Nation's veins
Less than the dust of the yellow plains,

The Mines.

That we hear the cry of the Treasury's need
Where trampled bosoms exultant bleed?
Heart-eloquence, are thy bright lips dumb?
Soul-power, is thy arm of puissance numb?
Open the vaults where the gold dust shines!
Give us the key of the silver mines!

Was the treasure stored by the Nation's God,
In the mountain cave and the valley sod,
To purchase a circlet of diamonds rare
For the snowy brow of a millionaire?
Was it hidden away in the mountain ledge,
Lapped under the hem of the streamlet's edge,
To trail brocade through a festive place,
Or cover a shoddy breast with lace?
Was it sifted in ashes of golden light,
O'er blossoming valley and rocky height,
To wrap pollution in tissues fine,
Or sparkle and fade in the blush of wine?
Oh! is it not rightly the Nation's dower,
A treasure kept for the stormy hour,
To help our hope to its lofty aim —
To free our Land from the blush of shame —
To strengthen the power of the crimson wave
That cancels, forever, the name of SLAVE —

The Mines.

To make the belt of the Union strong,
To uphold the right, to redress the wrong?
Speak, lips that boast of a patriot right!
Act, arms that thrill with a patriot might!
Open the vaults where the gold dust shines,
Give us the key of the silver mines!

Wealth, wealth, wherever a thought can go,
From Arizona to Idaho ;
Where the silver feet of Nevada light
A pathway under the sod ;
Where the finger white of the Wasatch height
Points to the throne of God ;
Where the young Montana, lifting up
The wine of life in a golden cup,
Pledges the queen of the sunset sea
Who crushed the grapes for the revelry ;
Where California, the Ocean bride,
Wears crimson roses with brilliants tied ;
Where the wild sage stems of the desert die
In the cold, white marshes of alkali,
There are nerves and pulses that trembling start
To quicken the throb of the Nation's heart.
Oh! speak to them, Eloquence! softly speak
Of the faded lip and the withered cheek ;

The Mines.

Of the patriot bosoms that bleed and die
For a cause so holy, an aim so high!
Do they share no part of the glorious claim?
Hath their life no thrill for Columbia's fame?
They answer, they answer, their true hands reach
A better language than empty speech!
They open the vaults where the gold dust shines,
They give us the key of the silver mines!



AMPUTATED.



Good bye, right arm! 'Tis hard to part
With one as true and tried;
One that so long hath served my heart,
And waited at my side:
Thy work is done—thy pain is o'er;
When tear drops dim mine eye
Thy hand will dash them forth no more—
Good bye, right arm—good bye!

Good bye, right arm! On battle field
Thy strength hath served me well,
And thou hast been my bosom's shield
Where blows like rain drops fell;
But never more amid the strife
Thou wilt be lifted high;
Thy last blow saved this heart its life—
Good bye, right arm—good bye!

Amputated.

Good bye, right arm! No more thou'lt start
Eager to greet my friend ;
But this poor one that's near my heart
No colder clasp will lend ;
And should my country ever need
A guard so maimed as I,
It would be just as proud to bleed —
Good bye, right arm — good bye!

Good bye, right arm! I should not grieve,
For thou hast done thy part ;
Yet I can scarcely bear to leave
Thee, senseless as thou art :
My poor, scarred hand! I hold thee near
To lips that trembling sigh,
And gem thee once more with a tear —
Good bye, right arm — good bye!



ONLY ONE.



Only one! Yet one may be
Sometimes welcome, where
Valor needs to strike one blow,
Faith to breathe one prayer.
Yet it is not much, I know,
When the work is done ;
Standing high or standing low,
'T will be only one.

Only one! When some must die
For the weal of all,
Matters it where life's last sigh
Breaks its earthly thrall?
To the length of mortal breath
Though a life be spun,
Freezing on the lip of death,
'T will be only one.

Only One.

Only one! Yet one may be
Something more than naught;
One whose life intensity
Breathed in deed and thought.
Many stars flash on the night—
When their race is run,
Seek the morrow's source of light,
'T will be only one.



SORROW.



There are many tones of sorrow,
But its saddest voice to me
Is the mocking laugh that triumphs
In another's agony :
I could weep for those who suffer,
But the souls that woe can please —
Whose joy is wrung from others' pain —
I pity, *pity* these.

There are many tones of sorrow
Poured upon the chords of life —
Murmurs of its ceaseless changing,
Murmurs of its restless strife ;
But to live till pity's pleading
Changes to a mocking hiss,
Till feeling withers to a sneer,
Oh ! Father, spare me this.

PASSAGE OF THE RED SEA.



The Prophet stood beside the sea ;
Looked calmly to the sky :
“ Our God, in need we call to Thee,
Make Israel’s pathway dry ! ”

He smote the waters with his hand ;
The waves reeled back at his command,
The foam-wreaths curled from the wet sand,
 Flung back on either side ;
The surges piled a mountain height,
Two icy glaciers, still and white,
 Showed Israel’s pathway dried.
The pillow of the wave, left bare,
Disclosed what years had garnered there,
To make the deep sea-grottoes fair ;
 Bright shells and shining sand
Lay glittering in the summer ray,
Whose braided glory wreathed the day,
And lit the pulseless tide that lay
 Piled backward from the strand.

Passage of the Red Sea.

That startled people lifted one
Quick, wondering glance toward the sun,
 Then looked upon the sea ;
They only felt that God had spoken —
The tide of vassalage was broken,
 And Israel was free !

The Prophet whispers, “ Come ! ” — they go —
 Men with time-whitened hair,
Matrons, bright youths, and timid girls,
 And little children fair —
They hasten through that parted tide,
 Haste to the farther shore,
As though they knew the chilled depth sighed,
 Impatiently, to roar.

And Pharaoh, too, has dared to come
Through those plowed waters, chained and dumb—
 That ocean thoroughfare ;
What though the clouds above his head
 Breathed thunder-mutterings low ;
What though the lightning, fiery red,
Flashed forth at times, as though it said,
 “ Man, *darest* thou to go ? ”
What though he felt the firm earth shake,
And saw the hills with terror quake —
 He dares to follow there !

Passage of the Red Sea.

The steed leaps shuddering on the path,
Urged by his rider's spur of wrath ;
Proud plumes are tossed where frozen spray
Hangs white and feathery o'er their way ;
 Those rippl'd waters lean !
But Pharoah's hand is on his sword,
His haughty lip its breath has poured,
 " There 's room to pass between !"
Haste, Israel, haste ! — they reach the strand,
The Prophet turns and waves his hand —
 A quick-drawn, shuddering breath —
A deafening sound, as though the sky
Had flung its thunders from on high
 In one wild shriek of death !
And then the sea lay calm and still,
As though its heart recalled no thrill
 Of the wild tumult passed ;
And the low murmurs of the wave
Were sweet as though it held no grave
 Within its bosom fast.
There is a solemn hush of prayer
 Where Israel bows the knee ;
The glance of God beholds them there,
 The ransomed and the free ;
Then from a people's heart upsprings
The hymn of praise that Miriam sings :

Passage of the Red Sea.

“Tyrant and slave,
Under the wave
Rest on the same cold pillow ;
The Lord looked down,
His smile and frown
Parted and closed the billow ;
He pushed the wave from His people’s path,
And dashed it back on their foe in wrath.
Hail ! mighty One, and just !
Hail, Israel’s trust !
Our God !

“The skeptic proud
Hath found a shroud,
Wove of the foaming surges ;
His people sleep
In the wild deep,
Lulled by its tempest-dirges ;
And Israel’s sandal hath brought no stain
From the trodden depth of the parted main.
Hail ! mighty One, and just !
Hail, Israel’s trust !
Our God !”

LACHAON'S LAMENT.



The white chieftain came when my warriors were
sleeping —

The fume of the fire-water lulled them to rest ;
The white chieftain went, but he bore in his keeping
The wild forest blossom I wore on my breast.

The voice of my people is weary with calling ;

My braves trod the blossoms of forest and plain ;
But the last flower is pale, and the sear leaf is fall-
ing,

Yet the child of Lachaon, she comes not again.

The day-god will rise from his couch on the morrow,

The eagle will soar to his nest on the height ;

But, when shall I rise from the pillow of sorrow —

And when will the Lodge of Lachaon be bright ?

The sons that went forth with my people to battle —

My lip quivered not when I knew they were slain ?

Lachæon's Lament.

They bared their bold hearts to the death-thunder's
rattle —

But the wild blossom lives, and she comes not
again !

I had laid her bright head where the dark willows,
leaning

Above the still waters, a dim shadow throw ;

And told them of grief — that I knew not its meaning,

For the sun-spirits smile when the beautiful go.

I'd know, when the snow-flakes were piled on her
pillow,

That the stilled heart beneath was as void of a
stain ;

There are shadows of life that could darken death's
billow —

And I mourn that she lives, and comes not again.



PERSEVERANCE.



Rouse thee, while thou 'rt idly dreaming,
Precious hours are hastening by ;
And each moment, as it fleeth,
Whispers, "Mortal, thou must die !
While thine arm retains its vigor,
While thy cheek is flushed with health,
Thou must strive, if thou wouldst ever
Claim thy part of fame or wealth."

Say, what hast thou done worth naming?
Does the world owe aught to thee?
Or, art thou a worthless atom
Whirled upon life's stormy sea?
Brightest gems of thought lie sleeping,
Resting dormant in thine heart ;
Call them forth !— a world will laud thee ;
Bid thy lethargy depart.

Perseverance.

Every hour and every moment
Brings its work for thee to do ;
Strain each nerve to its full tension,
Thou may'st nobly struggle through.
Canst thou claim a hero's laurel
If thou shrinkest from the fight?
With the shield of truth before thee,
Up, and onward, for the right !

Every conquest that thou gainest,
Every prize that thou canst claim,
All the good that thou attainest,
Addeth luster to thy name.
Onward ! for thou hast the power ;
Onward ! hast thou not the will ?
Would'st thou claim a prize worth winning,
Thou must struggle onward still.



ALLIE'S PRAYER.

We listened — 't was a little foot,
Placed lightly on the stairs ;
“What is it, darling?” — “I forgot —
Forgot to say my prayers.”
The mother took the little hand,
And kissed the meek, low brow,
And watched the tiny, white-robed form,
Close down beside her bow.
Ah! pride-chilled hearts were beating near,
World-darkened eyes were there ;
But every head was bowed to hear
Sweet Allie's baby prayer.

And I have knelt where holy words
By earnest lips were spoke ;
Have felt the burning gush of thought
Their eloquence awoke ;



Allie's Prayer.

Have listened when the pleader's voice
Sank quivering to a sigh,
And I have bowed my head and thought
'T were beautiful to die ;
But never have I seen the awe
Whose robes were folded there —
Whose stainless fingers wove the threads
Of Allie's baby prayer.

It went away — that little foot —
As lightly as it came ;
The sweet lips spoke a low "Good night,"
And syllabled a name,
And then a glimpse of sunny hair
Flashed through the open door ;
We caught a glimpse of the white robe
The angel pleader wore.
Then eye met eye, and souls bowed down
In deep contrition there ;
Stern hearts were melted by the breath
Of Allie's baby prayer.

WILD WINTER WINDS.

Wild winter winds, go, rave, if ye please,
O'er the snow covered earth, and the ice-mantled trees;
Shout in the forest and scream on the lea,
Touch the cold waves of the boisterous sea;
But, spare the chilled heart and the shuddering form
Of the poor little child that is forth in the storm!

Wild winter winds, ye are welcome to rest
Where the turf on the heart of the sleeper is press'd;
Your hands may be cold as the lips of despair,
Still they wake not a pang for the slumberer there;
But, spare, kindly spare, the poor tenants of earth,
Where the embers are fading on poverty's hearth!

Wild winter winds, go, dance on the plain!
Whirl the white snow 'gainst the echoing pane;
Whistle and shout in the dark mountain pass,
Sigh through the blades of the tall, withered grass;
But, touch not in anger, speak not in wrath,
To the wandering foot in the snow-covered path!

THE WRECKED.



The sun went down as gorgeously,
 Wrapped in his crimson vest,
As though the lamps of night were placed
 As watchers o'er his rest ;
But with the shades of midnight came
 The storm-king's clarion blast,
And tempests gathered at his call,
 And whirlwinds hurried past.
There was a sound of rushing winds,
 A sound of hastening waves —
Strong waters stretched their arms to snatch
 Bright spoils from ocean's caves ;
Then came the crash! — the long, wild shriek! —
The dash of waves on the white cheek —
The aimless clutch — the smothered prayer! —
And wild winds sung a requiem there.

The morning woke, serene and bright ;
 The sunlight on the deep

The Wrecked.

Dwelt, like a smile upon the lip
Of innocence asleep ;
The light winged zephyrs gently swept
Sweet breathings o'er the sea
So lately parted by the strong
Wild plunge of agony ;
But the lone sea bird flapped his wings
Above the laughing wave,
And screamed forth tales of tempest doom —
Death, and an ocean grave ;
Of trembling hands, outstretched to hold
The shuddering heart from waters cold —
The dizzy brain and shivering breath,
When frenzied horror strove with death.

But all are sleeping calmly now —
The coward and the brave,
The earth-stained and the beautiful,
All shrouded by the wave.
What forms of breathing loveliness,
What hearts of throbbing worth
Were laid in those cold depths, to leave
Grief-darkened homes for earth.
Ah, me! — but wherefore do we twine
Soul fibers round the dead —

The Wrecked.

Why hoard the casket, when we know
The precious jewel fled?
Oh! why o'er broken life-threads weep?
Save tears — hot tears — for those who steep
Their souls in crime's waves, dark and red;
These are the lost, the wrecked, the dead!



FAITH.

An angel came from her far, bright home,
 Wrapped in the robes that moonbeams wear ;
Her hand was white as the lily leaves,
 The light of her eye was the soul of prayer :
She ever smiled, but her sweet lips wore
 A strange expression that was not mirth ;
A pleading beauty that seemed to draw
 The gazer's heart from the thoughts of earth.
And much they wondered, who saw her pass,
 That her shining sandal never bore
A stain from the sod it lightly trod—
 That dust clung not to the robe she wore.

'T was strange!—she flashed like a gleam of light
 Through the drear abode of shame and woe,
To lay her hand on the outcast's brow,
 And breathe in his ear a whisper low.

Faith.

And lines of pain from his face would fade ;
His eyes would fill with an eager thought ;
And his paling lips would part, to breathe
Some low child-prayer that his mother taught.

And then, away to the cheerless home
Where age and indigence toiled for bread,
Where the widow's eyes looked wildly down
On the dear, dear ones! that must be fed ;
And, oh! if the niggard wage should fail!
"What shall I do, if they pay me not?"—
The angel visitor calmly smiled,
And, softly whispering, told her **WHAT!**
Her pale cheek flushed with a sudden start,
Though the tear-drops gleamed there all the while ;
The angel passed, but the widow's heart
Mirrored forever her holy smile.

And still the garments around her flung
Were stainless from the touch of clay ;
And still the smile that her pure lip bore
Beautiful shone as the early day!
And would you see her, the angel, Faith?—
When life seems dark to your tear-dimm'd eyes,
Ye may catch a glimpse of her snow-white hand,
Pointing aloft to the far, bright skies.

STANZAS.



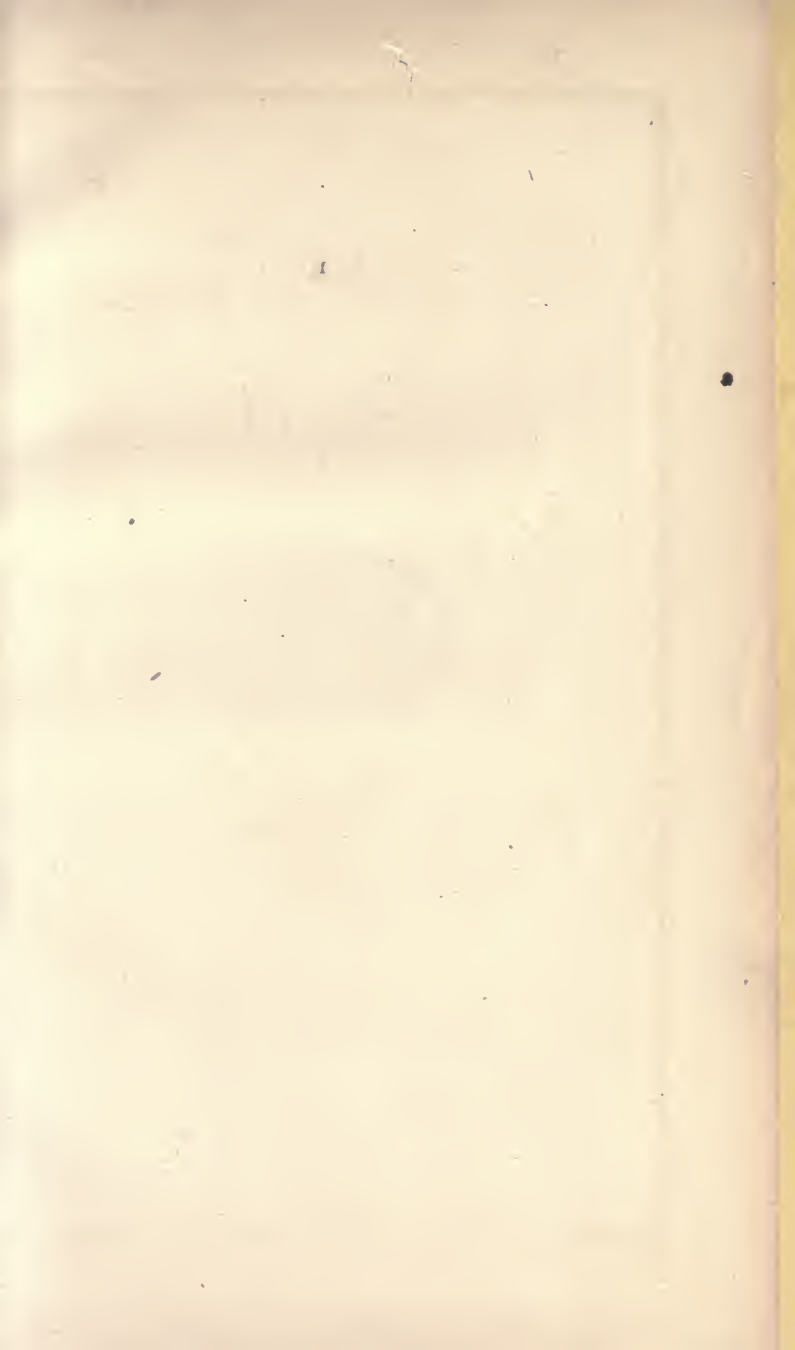
I love the music of the wave,
I love the night wind's song ;
I love to hear the storm king cheer
His frenzied host along ;
I love all nature's thrilling tones,
I love the notes of art —
But better far, than all, I love
The music of the heart.

I love the tints of beauty laid
Softly on leaf or flower ;
The trembling light that gilds the night,
And wraps the midnight hour ;
I love the sunny warmth and light
From the glad sunbeams stole —
But better far, than all, I love
The beauty of the soul.

Stanzas.

I prize all heaven's precious gifts,
Laid on the earth or sea ;
The lowliest flower that decks life's bower
Is beautiful to me :
I value every ray of light
That gleams below — above ;
But, oh ! I value more than these
The smiles of those I love.









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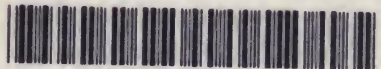
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