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1581



POEMS

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN,"  
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## P R E F A C E .

 ANY of these Poems, extending over a period of several years, have appeared anonymously in Chambers's Journal and elsewhere. The frequent reprinting of them, here and in America, has induced the author to collect, select, revise, and claim her errant children.

Whether they were worth collecting, and are really "Poems," public opinion must decide.


The present edition in the "Blue and Gold" series contains many pieces not heretofore collected.







## CONTENTS.

	Page
 HILIP my King . . . . .	1
Thoughts in a Wheat-Field . . . . .	3
Immutable . . . . .	5
Four Years . . . . .	7
The Dead Czar . . . . .	9
The Wind at Night . . . . .	11
A Fable . . . . .	14
Labor is Prayer . . . . .	16
A Silly Song . . . . .	18
In Memoriam . . . . .	19
An Honest Valentine . . . . .	20
Looking Death in the Face . . . . .	24
By the Alma River . . . . .	28
Rothesay Bay . . . . .	30
Living : after a Death . . . . .	32
In our Boat . . . . .	34
The River Shore . . . . .	35
A Flower of a Day . . . . .	36
The Night before the Mowing . . . . .	38
Passion Past . . . . .	39
October . . . . .	41
Moon-Struck. A Fantasy . . . . .	42
A Stream's Singing . . . . .	46

A Rejected Lover . . . . .	48
A Living Picture . . . . .	49
Leonora . . . . .	52
Plighted . . . . .	55
Mortality . . . . .	56
Life Returning. After War-Time. . . . .	58
My Friend . . . . .	59
A Valentine . . . . .	61
Grace of Clydeside . . . . .	64
To a Beautiful Woman . . . . .	65
Mary's Wedding . . . . .	67
Between Two Worlds . . . . .	69
Cousin Robert . . . . .	72
At Last . . . . .	75
The Aurora on the Clyde . . . . .	76
An Aurora Borealis. Roslin Castle . . . . .	79
At the Linn-Side. Roslin . . . . .	80
A Hymn for Christmas Morning . . . . .	82
A Psalm for New Year's Eve . . . . .	84
Faithful in Vanity-Fair. I. and II. . . . .	86
Her Likeness . . . . .	89
Only a Dream . . . . .	90
To my Godchild Alice . . . . .	92

## SONNETS.

Resigning . . . . .	94
Saint Elizabeth of Bohemia. I. and II. . . . .	95
A Marriage-Table . . . . .	97
Michael the Archangel. I. and II. . . . .	98
Beatrice to Dante . . . . .	100
Dante to Beatrice . . . . .	101

*CONTENTS.*

ix

A Question. I. and II. . . . .	102
Angel Faces. I. and II. . . . .	104
Sunday Morning Bells . . . . .	106
Cœur de Lion. I. and II. . . . .	107
Guns of Peace . . . . .	109
David's Child . . . . .	110
A Word in Season . . . . .	111
The Path through the Snow . . . . .	112
The Path through the Corn . . . . .	113
The Good of it. A Cynic's Song . . . . .	115
Mine . . . . .	117
A Ghost at the Dancing . . . . .	118
My Christian Name . . . . .	120
A Dead Baby . . . . .	122
For Music . . . . .	124
The Canary in his Cage . . . . .	125
Constancy in Inconstancy . . . . .	127
Buried To-day . . . . .	130
The Mill . . . . .	131
North Wind . . . . .	132
Now and Afterwards . . . . .	133
A Sketch . . . . .	134
The Unknown Country . . . . .	136
A Child's Smile . . . . .	137
Violets . . . . .	139
Edenland . . . . .	141
The House of Clay . . . . .	142
Winter Moonlight . . . . .	143
The Planting . . . . .	145
Sitting on the Shore . . . . .	148

Eudoxia. First Picture . . . . .	149
Eudoxia. Second Picture . . . . .	151
Eudoxia. Third Picture . . . . .	153
Benedetta Minelli. The Novice . . . . .	155
Benedetta Minelli. The Sister of Mercy . . . . .	157
A Dream of Death . . . . .	160
A Dream of Resurrection . . . . .	162
On the Cliff-Top . . . . .	164
An Evening Guest . . . . .	165
After Sunset . . . . .	167
The Garden-Chair. Two Portraits . . . . .	169
An Old Idea . . . . .	170
Parables . . . . .	171
Lettice . . . . .	173
A Spirit Present . . . . .	174
A Winter Walk . . . . .	176
“Will sail To-morrow” . . . . .	178
At Even-tide . . . . .	180
A Dead Sea-Gull. Near Liverpool . . . . .	181
Looking East. In January, 1858 . . . . .	183
Over the Hills and Far Away . . . . .	185
Too Late . . . . .	186
Lost in the Mist . . . . .	187
Semper Fidelis . . . . .	191
One Summer Morning . . . . .	193
My Love Annie . . . . .	194
Summer Gone . . . . .	195
The Voice calling . . . . .	198
The Wren’s Nest . . . . .	200
A Christmas Carol . . . . .	202
The Mother’s Visits. From the French . . . . .	203

*CONTENTS.*

xi

A German Student's Funeral Hymn . . . . .	204
Westward ho! . . . . .	205

POEMS SINCE 1860.

Our Father's Business . . . . .	209
An Autumn Psalm for 1860 . . . . .	212
In the June Twilight . . . . .	214
A Man's Wooing . . . . .	216
The Cathedral Tombs . . . . .	221
When Green Leaves come again . . . . .	223
The First Waits . . . . .	225
Day by Day . . . . .	226
Only a Woman . . . . .	228
A "Mercenary" Marriage . . . . .	232
Over the Hillside . . . . .	234
The Unfinished Book . . . . .	236
Twilight in the North . . . . .	238
Cathair Fhargus . . . . .	240
A True Hero . . . . .	244
At the Seaside . . . . .	245
Fishermen — not of Galilee . . . . .	248
The Golden Island: Arran from Ayr . . . . .	249
Fallen in the Night! . . . . .	251
A Lancashire Doxology . . . . .	253
Year after Year . . . . .	255
"Until her Death" . . . . .	256
The Lost Piece of Silver . . . . .	258
Outward Bound . . . . .	259









## P O E M S .



### PHILIP MY KING.

“Who bears upon his baby brow the round  
And top of sovereignty.”



LOOK at me with thy large brown eyes,  
Philip my king,  
Round whom the enshadowing purple  
lies

Of babyhood's royal dignities :  
Lay on my neck thy tiny hand  
With love's invisible sceptre laden ;  
I am thine Esther to command  
Till thou shalt find a queen-handmaiden,  
Philip my king.

O the day when thou goest a wooing,  
Philip my king !  
When those beautiful lips 'gin suing,  
And some gentle heart's bars undoing

Thou dost enter, love-crowned, and there  
 Sittest love-glorified. Rule kindly,  
 Tenderly, over thy kingdom fair,  
 For we that love, ah! we love so blindly,  
     Philip my king.

Up from thy sweet mouth, — up to thy brow,  
     Philip my king!  
 The spirit that there lies sleeping now  
 May rise like a giant and make men bow  
 As to one heaven-chosen amongst his peers :  
 My Saul, than thy brethren taller and fairer  
 Let me behold thee in future years ; —  
 Yet thy head needeth a circlet rarer,  
     Philip my king.

— A wreath not of gold, but palm. One day,  
     Philip my king,  
 Thou too must tread, as we trod, a way  
 Thorny and eruel and cold and gray :  
 Rebels within thee and foes without,  
 Will snatch at thy crown. But march on, glorious,  
 Martyr, yet monarch : till angels shout  
 As thou sit'st at the feet of God victorious,  
     “ Philip the king ! ”

THOUGHTS IN A WHEAT-FIELD.

“The harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels.”



IN his wide fields walks the Master,  
In his fair fields, ripe for harvest,  
Where the evening sun shines slant-wise  
On the rich ears heavy bending ;

Saith the Master : “ It is time.”

Though no leaf shows brown decadence,  
And September’s nightly frost-bite  
Only reddens the horizon,

“ It is full time,” saith the Master,

The wise Master, “ It is time.”

Lo, he looks. That look compelling

Brings his laborers to the harvest ;

Quick they gather, as in autumn

Passage-birds in cloudy eddies

Drop upon the seaside fields ;

White wings have they, and white raiment,

White feet shod with swift obedienee,

Each lays down his golden palm-branch,

And uprears his sickle shining,

“ Speak, O Master, — is it time ? ”

O'er the field the servants hasten,  
 Where the full-stored ears droop downwards,  
 Humble with their weight of harvest :  
 Where the empty ears wave upward,  
     And the gay tares flaunt in rows :  
 But the sickles, the sharp sickles,  
 Flash new dawn at their appearing,  
 Songs are heard in earth and heaven,  
 For the reapers are the angels,  
     And it is the harvest time.

O Great Master, are thy footsteps  
 Even now upon the mountains ?  
 Art thou walking in thy wheat-field ?  
 Are the snowy-wingèd reapers  
     Gathering in the silent air ?  
 Are thy signs abroad, the glowing  
 Of the distant sky, blood-reddened, —  
 And the near fields trodden, blighted,  
 Choked by gaudy tares triumphant, —  
     Sure, it must be harvest time ?

Who shall know the Master's coming ?  
 Whether it be at dawn or sunset,  
 When night dews weigh down the wheat-ears,  
 Or while noon rides high in heaven,  
     Sleeping lies the yellow field ?  
 Only, may thy voice, Good Master,

Peal above the reapers' echorus,  
 And dull sound of sheaves slow falling, —  
 "Gather all into My garner,  
 For it is My harvest time."

## IMMUTABLE.

"With whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."



UTUMN to winter, winter into spring,  
 Spring into summer, summer into fall,—  
 So rolls the changing year, and so we  
 echange ;

Motion so swift, we know not that we move.  
 Till at the gate of some memorial hour  
 We pause — look in its sepulchre to find  
 The east-off shape that years since we called "I" —  
 And start, amazed. Yet on! we may not stay  
 To weep or laugh. All which is past, is past  
 Even while we gaze the simulated form  
 Drops into dust, like many-centuried corpse  
 At opening of a tomb.

Alack, this world  
 Is full of change, echange, change, — nothing but  
 change!

Is there not one straw in life's whirling flood  
 To hold by, as the torrent sweeps us down,  
 Us, scattered leaves ; eddied and broken ; torn  
 Roughly asunder ; or in smooth mid-stream  
 Divided each from other without pain ;  
 Collected in what looks like union,  
 Yet is but stagnant chance, — stopping to rot  
 By the same pebble till the tide shall turn ;  
 Then on, to find no shelter and no rest,  
 Forever rootless and forever lone.

O God, we are but leaves upon Thy stream,  
 Clouds on Thy sky. We do but move across  
 The silent breast of Thine infinitude  
 Which bears us all. We pour out day by day  
 Our long, brief moan of mutability  
 To Thine immutable — and cease.

Yet still

Our change yearns after Thine unchangeableness ;  
 Our mortal craves Thine immortality ;  
 Our manifold and multiform and weak  
 Imperfectness, requires the perfect ONE.  
 For Thou art ONE, and we are all of Thee ;  
 Dropped from Thy bosom, as Thy sky drops down  
 Its morning dews, which glitter for a space,  
 Uncertain whence they fell, or whither tend,  
 Till the great Sun arising on his fields  
 Up-calls them all, and they rejoicing go.

So, with like joy, O Light Eterne, we spring  
 Thee-ward, and leave the pleasant fields of earth,  
 Forgetting equally its blossomed green  
 And its dry dusty paths which drank us up  
 Remorseless, — we, poor humble drops of dew,  
 That only wished to freshen a flower's breast,  
 And be exhaled to heaven.       •

O Thou supreme

All-satisfying and immutable One,  
 It is enough to be absorbed in Thee  
 And vanish, — though 't were only to a voice  
 That through all ages with perpetual joy  
 Goes evermore loud crying, “God! God! God!”

## FOUR YEARS.



AT the midsummer, when the hay was  
 down,  
 Said I, mournfully, — My life is at its  
 prime,  
 Yet bare lie my meadows, shorn before the time,  
 In my seorehed woodlands the leaves are turning  
 brown.  
 It is the hot midsummer, and the hay is down.

At the midsummer, when the hay was down,  
Stood she by the streamlet, young and very fair,  
With the first white bindweed twisted in her hair, —  
Hair that drooped like birch-boughs, — all in her  
simple gown.

For it was midsummer, — and the hay was down.

At the midsummer, when the hay was down,  
Crept she, a willing bride, close into my breast:  
Low piled the thunder-clouds had drifted to the  
west, —

Red-eyed out glared the sun, like knight from  
leaguered town,

That eve in high midsummer, when the hay was  
down.

It is midsummer, — all the hay is down ;  
Close to her bosom press I dying eyes,  
Praying, “God shield thee till we meet in Para-  
dise!”

Bless her in Love’s name who was my brief life’s  
crown, —

And I go at midsummer, when the hay is down.



## THE DEAD CZAR.



LAY him beneath his snows,  
 The great Norse giant who in these last  
                   days  
 Troubled the nations. Gather decently  
 The imperial robes about him. 'T is but man, —  
 This demi-god. Or rather it *was* man,  
 And is—a little dust, that will corrupt  
 As fast as any nameless dust which sleeps  
 'Neath Alma's grass or Balaklava's vines.

No vineyard grave for him. No quiet tomb  
 By river margin, where across the seas  
 Children's fond thoughts and women's memories  
                   come  
 Like angels, to sit by the sepulchre,  
 Saying: "All these were men who knew to count,  
 Front-faced, the cost of honor, nor did shrink  
 From its full payment: coming here to die,  
 They died —like men."

                                  But this man? Ah! for him  
 Funereal state, and ceremonial grand,  
 The stone-engraved sarcophagus, and then  
 Oblivion.

Nay, oblivion were as bliss  
 To that fierce howl which rolls from land to land  
 Exulting, — “ Art thou fallen, Lucifer,  
 Son of the morning ? ” or condemning, — “ Thus  
 Perish the wicked ! ” or blaspheming, — “ Here  
 Lies our Belshazzar, our Sennaacherib,  
 Our Pharaoh, — he whose heart God hardenèd,  
 So that he would not let the people go.”

Self-glorifying sinners ! Why, this man  
 Was but like other men : — you, Levite small,  
 Who shut your saintly ears, and prate of hell  
 And hereties, because outside church-doors,  
 Your church-doors, congregations poor and small  
 Praise Heaven in their own way ; — you, autoerat  
 Of all the hamlets, who add field to field  
 And house to house, whose slavish children cower  
 Before your tyrant footstep ; — you, foul-tongued  
 Fanatie or ambitious egotist,  
 Who thinks God stoops from His high majesty  
 To lay His finger on your puny head,  
 And erown it, — that you henceforth may parade  
 Your maggotship throughout the wondering  
 world, —  
 “ I am the Lord’s anointed ! ”

Fools and blind !  
 This Czar, this emperor, this disthronèd corpse,

Lying so straightly in an icy calm  
 Grandeur than sovereignty, was but as ye, —  
 No better and no worse ; — Heaven mend us all !

Carry him forth and bury him. Death's peace  
 Rest on his memory ! Mercy by his bier  
 Sits silent, or says only these few words, —  
 " Let him who is without sin 'mongst ye all  
 Cast the first stone."

THE WIND AT NIGHT.



SUDDEN blast, that through this si-  
 lence black  
 Sweeps past my windows,  
 Coming and going with invisible track  
 As death or sin does, —

Why scare me, lying sick, and, save thine own,  
 Hearing no voices ?

Why mingle with a helpless human moan  
 Thy mad rejoices ?

Why dost come gently, as good angels come  
 To souls departing,

Floating among the shadows of the room  
With eyes light-darting,

Bringing faint airs of balm that seem to rouse  
Thoughts of a Far Land,  
Then binding softly upon weary brows  
Death's poppy-garland ?

O fearful blast, I shudder at thy sound,  
Like heathen mortal  
Who saw the Three that mark life's doomèd bound  
Sit at his portal.

Thou mightst be laden with sad, shrieking souls,  
Carried unwilling  
From their known earth to the unknown stream  
that rolls  
All anguish stilling.

Fierce wind, will the Death-angel come like thee,  
Soon, soon to bear me  
— *Whither?* what mysteries may unfold to me,  
What terrors scare me ?

Shall I go wand'ring on through empty space  
As on earth, lonely ?  
Or seek through myriad spirit-ranks one face,  
And miss that only ?

Shall I not then drop down from sphere to sphere  
Palsied and aimless ?  
Or will my being change so, that both fear  
And grief die nameless ?

Rather I pray Him who Himself is Love,  
Out of whose essence  
We all do spring, and towards Him tending, move  
Back to His presence,

That even His brightness may not quite efface  
The soul's earth-features,  
That the dear human likeness each may trace  
Glorified creatures ;

That we may not cease loving, only taught  
Holier desiring ;  
More faith, more patience ; with more wisdom  
fraught,  
Higher aspiring.

That we may do all work we left undone  
Here — though unmeetness ;  
From height to height celestial passing on  
Towards full completeness.

Then, strong Azrael, be thy supreme call  
Soft as spring-breezes,

Or like this blast, whose loud fiend-festival  
 My heart's blood freezes,

I will not fear thee. If thou safely keep  
 My soul, God's giving,  
 And my soul's soul, I, wakening from death-sleep,  
 Shall first know living.

## A FABLE.



SILENT and sunny was the way  
 Where Youth and I danced on to-  
 gether :  
 So winding and embowered o'er,  
 We could not see one rood before.  
 Nevertheless all merrily  
 We bounded onward, Youth and I,  
 Leashed closely in a silken tether :  
 (Well-a-day, well-a-day !)  
 Ah Youth, ah Youth, but I would fain  
 See thy sweet foolish face again !

It came to pass, one morn of May,  
 All in a swoon of golden weather,  
 That I through green leaves fluttering  
 Saw Joy uprise on Psyche wing :

Eagerly, too eagerly  
 We followed after, — Youth and I, —  
 Till suddenly he slipped the tether :  
 (Well-a-day, well-a-day !)  
 “Where art thou, Youth ?” I cried. In vain ;  
 He never more came back again.

Yet onward through the devious way  
 In rain or shine, I recked not whether,  
 Like many another maddened boy  
 I tracked my Psyche-wingèd Joy ;  
 Till, curving round the bowery lane,  
 Lo, — in the pathway stood pale Pain,  
 And we met face to face together :  
 (Well-a-day, well-a-day !)  
 “Whence comest thou ?” — and I writhed in vain —  
 “Unloose thy cruel grasp, O Pain !”

But he would not. Since, day by day  
 He has ta'en up Youth's silken tether  
 And changed it into iron bands.  
 So through rich vales and barren lands  
 Solemnly, all solemnly,  
 March we united, he and I ;  
 And we have grown such friends together  
 (Well-a-day, well-a-day !)  
 I and this my brother Pain,  
 I think we 'll never part again.

## LABOR IS PRAYER.



LABORARE est orare :

We, black-visaged sons of toil,  
 From the coal-mine and the anvil  
 And the delving of the soil, —  
 From the loom, the wharf, the warehouse,  
 And the ever-whirling mill,  
 Out of grim and hungry silence  
 Raise a weak voice small and shrill ; —  
*Laborare est orare :*  
 Man, dost hear us ? God, He will.

We who just can keep from starving  
 Sickly wives, — not always mild :  
 Trying not to curse Heaven's bounty  
 When it sends another child, —  
 We who, worn-out, doze on Sundays  
 O'er the Book we strive to read,  
 Cannot understand the parson  
 Or the catechism and creed.

*Laborare est orare : —*

Then, good sooth, we pray indeed.

We, poor women, feeble-natured,  
 Large of heart, in wisdom small,



Who the world's incessant battle  
Cannot understand at all,  
All the mysteries of the churches,  
All the troubles of the state, —  
Whom child-smiles teach "God is loving,"  
And child-coffins, "God is great":  
*Laborare est orare* : —  
We too at His footstool wait.

*Laborare est orare* ;  
Hear it, ye of spirit poor,  
Who sit crouching at the threshold  
While your brethren force the door ;  
Ye whose ignorance stands wringing  
Rough hands, seamed with toil, nor dares  
Lift so much as eyes to heaven, —  
Lo ! all life this truth declares,  
*Laborare est orare* ;  
And the whole earth rings with prayers.

## A SILLY SONG.



HEART, my heart!" she said, and  
heard

His mate the blackbird calling,  
While through the sheen of the garden  
green

May rain was softly falling, —  
Aye softly, softly falling.

The buttercups across the field  
Made sunshine rifts of splendor :  
The round snow-bud of the thorn in the wood  
Peeped through its leafage tender,  
As the rain came softly falling.

" O heart, my heart ! " she said and smiled,  
" There 's not a tree of the valley,  
Or a leaf I wis which the rain's soft kiss  
Freshens in yonder alley,  
Where the drops keep ever falling, —

" There 's not a foolish flower i' the grass,  
Or bird through the woodland calling,  
So glad again of the coming of rain  
As I of these tears now falling, —  
These happy tears down falling."

IN MEMORIAM.

Obit 1854.



HEAVEN rest thee!  
We shall go about to-day  
In our festal garlands gay;  
Whatsoever robes we wear

Not a trace of black be there.  
Well, what matters? none is seen  
On thy daisy covering green,  
Or thy pure white pillow, hid  
Underneath a coffin lid.  
Heaven rest thee!

Heaven take thee! —  
Ay, heaven only. Sleeps beneath  
One who died a virgin death:  
Died so slowly, day by day,  
That it scarcely seemed decay,  
Till this lonely churchyard kind  
Opened, — and we left behind  
Nothing but a little dust; —  
Heaven is pitiful and just:  
Heaven take thee!

## AN HONEST VALENTINE.

Heaven keep thee :  
 Nevermore above the ground  
 Be one relie of thee found :  
 Lay the turf so smooth, we crave,  
 None would guess it was a grave,  
 Save for grass that greener grows,  
 Or for wind that gentlier blows  
 All the earth o'er, from this spot  
 Where thou wert — and thou art not.  
 Heaven keep thee !

## AN HONEST VALENTINE.

Returned from the Dead-Letter Office.



HANK ye for your kindness,  
 Lady fair and wise,  
 Though love 's famed for blindness,  
 Lovers — hem ! for lies.  
 Courtship 's mighty pretty,  
 Wedlock a sweet sight ; —  
 Should I (from the city,  
 A plain man, Miss —) write,  
 Ere we spouse-and-wive it,  
 Just one honest line,

Could you e'er forgive it,  
Pretty Valentine ?

Honey-moon quite over,  
If I less should sear  
You with eye of lover  
Than of mortal man ?  
Seeing my fair charmer  
Curl hair spire on spire,  
All in paper armor,  
By the parlor fire ;  
Gown that wants a stitch in  
Hid by apron fine,  
Scolding in her kitchen, —  
O fie, Valentine !

Should I come home surly  
Vexed with fortune's frown,  
Find a hurly-burly,  
House turned upside down,  
Servants all a-snarl, or  
Cleaning steps or stair :  
Breakfast still in parlor,  
Dinner — anywhere :  
Shall I to cold bacon  
Meekly fall and dine ?  
No, — or I'm mistaken  
Much, my Valentine.

*AN HONEST VALENTINE.*

What if we should quarrel?  
     — Bless you, all folks do : —  
 Will you take the war ill  
     Yet half like it too ?  
 When I storm and jangle,  
     Obstinate, absurd,  
 Will you sit and wrangle  
     Just for the last word, —  
 Or, while poor Love, crying,  
     Upon tiptoe stands,  
 Ready plumed for flying, —  
     Will you smile, shake hands,  
 And the truth beholding,  
     With a kiss divine  
 Stop my rough mouth's scolding ? —  
     Bless you, Valentine !

If, should times grow harder,  
     We have lack of pelf,  
 Little in the larder,  
     Less upon the shelf ;  
 Will you, never tearful,  
     Make your old gowns do,  
 Mend my stockings, cheerful,  
     And pay visits few ?  
 Crave nor gift nor donor,  
     Old days ne'er regret,

Seek no friend save Honor,  
Dread no foe but Debt ;  
Meet ill-fortune steady,  
Hand to hand with mine,  
Like a gallant lady, —  
Will you, Valentine ?

Then, whatever weather  
Come, or shine, or shade,  
We 'll set out together,  
Not a whit afraid.  
Age is ne'er alarming, —  
I shall find, I ween,  
You at sixty charming  
As at sweet sixteen :  
Let 's pray, nothing loath, dear,  
That our funeral may  
Make one date serve both, dear,  
As our marriage day.  
Then, come joy or sorrow,  
Thou art mine, — I thine.  
So we 'll wed to-morrow,  
Dearest Valentine.

LOOKING DEATH IN THE FACE.



Y, in thy face, old fellow! Now's the time.

The Black Sea wind flaps my tent-roof,  
nor wakes

These lads of mine, who take of sleep their fill,  
As if they thought they'd never sleep again,  
Instead of—

Pitiless Crimean blast,  
How many a howling lullaby thou'lt raise  
To-morrow night, all nights till the world's end,  
Over some sleepers here!

Some? — *who?* Dumb Fate  
Whispers in no man's ear his coming doom;  
Each thinks — “not I — not I.”

But thou, grim Death,  
I hear thee on the night-wind flying abroad,  
I feel thee here, squatted at our tent-door,  
Invisible and incommunicable,  
Pointing:

“Hurrah!”

Why yell so in your sleep,  
Comrade? Did *you* see aught?

Well — let him dream:  
Who knows, to-morrow such a shout as this



He 'll die with. A brave lad, and very like  
His sister.

\* \* \* \* \*

So! just two hours have I lain  
Freezing. That pale white star, which came and  
peered

Through the tent-opening, has passed on, to smile  
Elsewhere, or lost herself i' the dark, — God knows.  
Two hours nearer to dawn. The very hour,  
The very hour and day, a year ago,  
When we light-hearted and light-footed fools  
Went jingling idle swords in waltz and reel,  
And smiling in fair faces. How they 'd start,  
Those dainty red and white soft faces kind,  
If they could but behold my visage now,  
Or his — or his — or some poor faces cold  
We covered up with earth last noon.

— There sits

The laidly Thing I felt on our tent-door  
Two hours back. It has sat and never stirred.  
I cannot challenge it, or shoot it down,  
Or grapple with it, as with that young Russ  
Whom I killed yesterday. (What eyes he had! —  
Great limpid eyes, and curling dark-red hair, —  
A woman's picture hidden in his breast, —  
I never liked this fighting hand to hand.)  
No, it will not be met like flesh and blood,  
This shapeless, voiceless, immaterial Thing,

Yet I *will* meet it. Here I sit alone, —  
 Show me thy face, O Death !

There, there. I think

I did not tremble.

I am a young man ;  
 Have done full many an ill deed, left undone  
 Many a good one : lived unto the flesh,  
 Not to the spirit : I would rather live  
 A few years more, and try if things might change.  
 Yet, yet I hope I do not tremble, Death ;  
 And that thy finger pointed at my heart  
 But calms the tumult there.

What small account  
 The All-living seems to take of this thin flame  
 Which we call *life*. He sends a moment's blast  
 Out of war's nostrils, and a myriad  
 Of these our puny tapers are blown out  
 Forever. Yet we shrink not, — we, such frail  
 Poor knaves, whom a spent ball can instant strike  
 Into eternity, — we helpless fools,  
 Whom a serf's clumsy hand and clumsier sword  
 Smiting — shall sudden into nothingness  
 Let out that something rare which could conceive  
 A universe and its God.

Free, open-eyed,  
 We rush like bridegrooms to Death's grisly arms :

Surely the very longing for that clasp  
Proves us immortal. Immortality  
Alone could teach this mortal how to die.  
Perhaps, war is but Heaven's great ploughshare,  
driven

Over the barren, fallow earthly fields,  
Preparing them for harvest; rooting up  
Grass, weeds, and flowers, which necessary fall,  
That in these furrows the wise Husbandman  
May drop celestial seed.

So let us die ;  
Yield up our little lives, as the flowers do ;  
Believing He 'll not lose one single soul, —  
One germ of His immortal. Naught of His  
Or Him can perish ; therefore let us die.

I half remember, something like to this  
She says in her dear letters. So — let's die.  
What, dawn? The faint hum in the trenches  
fails.

Is that a bell i' the mist? My faith, they go  
Early to matins in Sebastopol! —  
A gun! — Lads, stand to your arms; the Russ is  
here.

*Agnes.*

Kind Heaven, I have looked Death in the face,  
Help me to die.

## BY THE ALMA RIVER.



WILLIE, fold your little hands ;  
     Let it drop, that "soldier" toy :  
 Look where father's picture stands, —  
     Father, who here kissed his boy  
 Not two months since, — father kind,  
 Who this night may — Never mind  
 Mother's sob, my Willie dear,  
 Call aloud that He may hear  
 Who is God of battles, say,  
 "O, keep father safe this day  
     By the Alma river."

Ask no more, child. Never heed  
     Either Russ, or Frank, or Turk,  
 Right of nations or of creed,  
     Chance-poised victory's bloody work :  
 Any flag i' the wind may roll  
 On thy heights, Sebastopol ;  
 Willie, all to you and me  
 Is that spot, where'er it be,  
 Where he stands — no other word !  
*Stands* — God sure the child's prayer heard —  
     By the Alma river.

Willie, listen to the bells  
    Ringing through the town to-day.  
That 's for victory. Ah, no knells  
    For the many swept away, —  
Hundreds — thousands ! Let us weep,  
We who need not, — just to keep  
Reason steady in my brain  
Till the morning comes again,  
Till the third dread morning tell  
Who they were that fought and *fell*  
    By the Alma river.

Come, we 'll lay us down, my child,  
    Poor the bed is, poor and hard ;  
Yet thy father, far exiled,  
    Sleeps upon the open sward,  
Dreaming of us two at home :  
Or beneath the starry dome  
Digs out trenches in the dark,  
Where he buries — Willie, mark —  
Where *he buries* those who died  
Fighting bravely at his side  
    By the Alma river.

Willie, Willie, go to sleep,  
    God will keep us, O my boy ;  
He will make the dull hours creep  
    Faster, and send news of joy,

When I need not shrink to meet  
 Those dread placards in the street,  
 Which for weeks will ghastly stare  
 In some eyes — Child, say thy prayer  
 Once again; a different one:  
 Say, “O God, Thy will be done  
 By the Alma river.”

## ROTHESAY BAY.



U' yellow lie the corn-rigs  
 Far down the braid hillside;  
 It is the brawest harst field  
 Alang the shores o' Clyde, —  
 And I'm a puir harst-lassie  
 That stan's the lee-lang day  
 Shearing the corn-rigs of Ardbeg  
 Aboon sweet Rothesay Bay.

O I had ance a true-love, —  
 Now, I hae nane ava;  
 And I had ance three brithers,  
 But I hae tint them a';  
 My father and my mither  
 Sleep i' the mools this day.

I sit my lane amang the rigs  
Aboon sweet Rothesay Bay.

It 's a bonnie bay at morning,  
And bonnier at the noon,  
But it 's bonniest when the sun draps  
And red comes up the moon :  
When the mist creeps o'er the Cumbrays,  
And Arran peaks are gray,  
And the great black hills, like sleepin' kings,  
Sit grand roun' Rothesay Bay,

Then a bit sigh stirs my bosom,  
And a wee tear blin's my e'e, —  
And I think o' that far Countrie  
What I wad like to be !  
But I rise content i' the morning  
To wark while wark I may  
I' the yellow harst field of Ardbeg  
Aboon sweet Rothesay Bay.

## LIVING :

## AFTER A DEATH.

“That friend of mine who lives in God.”



LIVE !

(Thus seems it we should say to our  
beloved, —

Each held by such slight links, so oft  
removed ;)

And I can let thee go to the world's end,  
All precious names, companion, love, spouse, friend,  
Seal up in an eternal silenee gray,  
Like a closed grave till resurrection-day :  
All sweet remembrances, hopes, dreams, desires,  
Heap, as one heaps up sacrificial fires :  
Then, turning, consecrate by loss, and proud  
Of penury — go back into the loud  
Tumultuous world again with never a moan —  
Save that which whispers still, “My own, my own,”  
Unto the same broad sky whose arch immense  
Enfolds us both like the arm of Providence :  
And thus, contented, I could live or die,  
With never clasp of hand or meeting eye  
On this side Paradise. — While thee I see  
Living to God, thou art alive to me.



O live !

And I, methinks, can let all dear rights go,  
Fond duties melt away like April snow,  
And sweet, sweet hopes, that took a life to  
weave,

Vanish like gossamers of autumn eve.  
Nay, sometimes seems it I could even bear  
To lay down humbly this love-crown I wear,  
Steal from my palace, helpless, hopeless, poor,  
And see another queen it at the door, —  
If only that the king had done no wrong,  
If this my palace, where I dwelt so long,  
Were not defiled by falsehood entering in : —  
There is no loss but change, no death but sin,  
No parting, save the slow corrupting pain  
Of murdered faith that never lives again.

O live !

(So endeth faint the low pathetic cry  
Of love, whom death has taught love cannot die,)  
And I can stand above the daisy bed,  
The only pillow for thy dearest head,  
There cover up forever from my sight  
My own, my earthly all of earth delight ;  
And enter the sea-cave of widowed years,  
Where far, far off the trembling gleam appears  
Through which thy heavenly image slipped away,  
And waits to meet me at the open day,

Only to me, my love, only to me.  
 This cavern underneath the moaning sea ;  
 This long, long life that I alone must tread,  
 To whom the living seem most like the dead, —  
 Thou wilt be safe out on the happy shore :  
 He who in God lives, liveth evermore.

## IN OUR BOAT.



**S**TARS trembling o'er us and sunset be-  
 fore us,  
 Mountains in shadow and forests  
 asleep ;  
 Down the dim river we float on forever,  
 Speak not, ah, breathe not, — there 's peace on  
 the deep.

Come not, pale Sorrow, flee till to-morrow,  
 Rest softly falling o'er eyelids that weep ;  
 While down the river we float on forever,  
 Speak not, ah, breathe not, — there 's peace on  
 the deep.

As the waves cover the depths we glide over,  
 So let the past in forgetfulness sleep,

While down the river we float on forever,  
Speak not, ah, breathe not, — there 's peace on  
the deep.

Heaven shine above us, bless all that love us,  
All whom we love in thy tenderness keep!  
While down the river we float on forever,  
Speak not, ah, breathe not, — there 's peace on  
the deep.

THE RIVER SHORE.

For an old tune of Dowland's.



WALKING by the quiet river  
Where the slow tide seaward goes,  
All the cares of life fall from us,  
All our troubles find repose :

Naught forgetting, naught regretting,  
Lovely ghosts from days no more  
Glide with white feet o'er the river,  
Smiling towards the silent shore.

So we pray in His good pleasure  
When this world we 've safely trod,  
We may walk beside the river  
Flowing from the throne of God :



All forgiving, all believing,  
 Not one lost we loved before,  
 Looking towards the hills of heaven  
 Calmly from the eternal shore.

## A FLOWER OF A DAY.



OLD friend, that with a pale and pensile  
 grace  
 Climbest the lush hedgerows, art thou  
 back again,  
 Marking the slow round of the wond'rous years?  
 Didst beekon me a moment, silent flower?

Silent? As silent is the archangel's pen  
 That day by day writes our life chronicle,  
 And turns the page, — the half-forgotten page,  
 Which all eternity will never blot.

Forgotten? No, we never do forget:  
 We let the years go: wash them clean with tears,  
 Leave them to bleach, out in the open day,  
 Or lock them careful by, like dead friends' clothes,  
 Till we shall dare unfold them without pain, —  
 But we forget not, never can forget.

Flower, thou and I a moment face to face —  
My face as clear as thine, this July noon  
Shining on both, on bee and butterfly  
And golden beetle creeping in the sun —  
Will pause, and, lifting up, page after page,  
The many-colored history of life,  
Look backwards, backwards.

So, the volume close!

This July day, with the sun high in heaven,  
And the whole earth rejoicing, — let it close.

I think we need not sigh, complain, nor rave;  
Nor blush, — our doings and misdoing all  
Being more 'gainst heaven than man, heaven them  
                  does keep  
With all its doings and undoings strange  
Concerning us. — Ah, let the volume close:  
I would not alter in it one poor line.

My dainty flower, my innocent white flower  
With such a pure smile looking up to heaven,  
With such a bright smile looking down on me —  
(Nothing but smiles, — as if in all the world  
Were no such things as thunder-storms or frosts,  
Or broken petals trampled on the ground,  
Or shivering leaves whirled in the wintry air  
Like ghosts of last year's joys :) — my pretty flower,

I'll pluck thee — smiling too. Not one salt drop  
 Shall stain thee : — if these foolish eyes are dim,  
 'T is only with a wondering thankfulness  
 That they behold such beauty and such peace,  
 Such wisdom and such sweetness, in God's world.

THE NIGHT BEFORE THE MOWING.



ALL shimmering in the morning shine  
 And diamonded with dew,  
 And quivering in the scented wind  
 That thrills its green heart through, —  
 The little field, the smiling field,  
 With all its flowers a-blowing,  
 How happy looks the golden field  
 The day before the mowing !

All still 'neath the departing light,  
 Twilight, though void of stars,  
 Save where, low westering, Venus hides  
 From the red eye of Mars ;  
 How quiet lies the silent field  
 With all its beauties glowing ;  
 Just stirring, — like a child asleep, —  
 The night before the mowing.

Sharp steel, inevitable hand,  
 Cut keen, cut kind! Our field  
 We know full well must be laid low  
 Before its wealth it yield:  
 Labor and mirth and plenty blest  
 Its blameless death bestowing:  
 And yet we weep, and yet we weep,  
 The night before the mowing.

## PASSION PAST.



WERE I a boy, with a boy's heart-beat  
 At glimpse of her passing adown the  
 street,  
 Of a room where she had entered and  
 gone,  
 Or a page her hand had written on, —  
 Would all be with me as it was before?  
 O no, never! no, no, never!  
 Never any more.

Were I a man, with a man's pulse-throb,  
 Breath hard and fierce, held down like a sob,  
 Dumb, yet hearing *her* lightest word,  
 Blind, until only *her* garment stirred:

Would I pour my life like wine on her floor?  
No, no, never: never, never!  
Never any more.

Gray and withered, wrinkled and marred,  
I have gone through the fire and come out un-  
scarred,  
With the image of manhood upon me yet,  
No shame to remember, no wish to forget:  
But could she rekindle the pangs I bore? —  
O no, never! thank God, never!  
Never any more.

Old and wrinkled, withered and gray, —  
And yet if her light step passed to-day,  
I should see her face all faces among,  
And say, — “Heaven love thee, whom I loved long!  
Thou hast lost the key of my heart’s door,  
Lost it ever, and forever,  
Ay, forevermore.”



## OCTOBER.



T is no joy to me to sit  
 On dreamy summer eves,  
 When silently the timid moon  
 Kisses the sleeping leaves,  
 And all things through the fair hushed earth  
 Love, rest — but nothing grieves.  
 Better I like old Autumn  
 With his hair tossed to and fro,  
 Firm striding o'er the stubble fields  
 When the equinoctials blow.

When shrinkingly the sun creeps up  
 Through misty mornings cold,  
 And Robin on the orchard hedge  
 Sings cheerily and bold,  
 While heavily the frosted plum  
 Drops downwards on the mould; —  
 And as he passes, Autumn  
 Into earth's lap does throw  
 Brown apples gay in a game of play,  
 As the equinoctials blow.

When the spent year its carol sinks  
 Into a humble psalm,

Asks no more for the pleasure draught,  
 But for the cup of balm,  
 And all its storms and sunshine bursts  
 Controls to one brave calm, —  
 Then step by step walks Autumn,  
 With steady eyes that show  
 Nor grief nor fear, to the death of the year,  
 While the equinoctials blow.

## MOON-STRUCK.

A FANTASY.



**T** is a moor  
 Barren and treeless; lying high and  
 bare  
 Beneath the archèd sky. The rushing  
 winds  
 Fly over it, each with his strong bow bent  
 And quiver full of whistling arrows keen.

I am a woman, lonely, old, and poor.  
 If there be any one who watches me  
 (But there is none) adown the long blank wold,  
 My figure painted on the level sky

Would startle him as if it were a ghost,—  
 And like a ghost, a weary wandering ghost,  
 I roam and roam, and shiver through the dark  
 That will not hide me. O for but one hour,  
 One blessed hour of warm and dewy night,  
 To wrap me like a pall — with not an eye  
 In earth or heaven to pierce the black serene.  
 Night, call ye this? No night; no dark — no  
 rest —

A moon-ray sweeps down sudden from the sky,  
 And smites the moor —

Is 't thou, accursèd Thing,

Broad, pallid, like a great woe looming out —  
 Out of its long-sealed grave, to fill all earth  
 With its dead, ghastly smile? Art there again,  
 Round, perfect, large, as when we buried thee,  
 I and the kindly clouds that heard my prayers?  
 I'll sit me down and meet thee face to face,  
 Mine enemy! — Why didst thou rise upon  
 My world — my innocent world, to make me mad?  
 Wherefore shine forth, a tiny tremulous curve  
 Hung out in the gray sunset beauteously,  
 To tempt mine eyes — then nightly to increase  
 Slow orbiting, till thy full, blank, pitiless stare  
 Hunts me across the world?

No rest — no dark.

Hour after hour that passionless bright face  
 Climbs up the desolate blue. I will press down

The lids on my tired eyeballs — crouch in dust,  
And pray.

— Thank God, thank God ! — a cloud has hid  
My torturer. The night at last is free :  
Forth peep in crowds the merry twinkling stars.  
Ah, we 'll shine out, the little silly stars  
And I ; we 'll dance together across the moor,  
They up aloft — I here. At last, at last  
We are avengèd of our adversary !

The freshening of the night air feels like dawn.  
Who said that I was mad ? I will arise,  
Throw off my burthen, march across the wold  
Airily — Ha ! what, stumbling ? Nay, no fear —  
I am used unto the dark, for many a year  
Steering companionless athwart the waste  
To where, deep hid in valleys of white mist,  
The pleasant home-lights shine. I will but pause,  
Turn round and gaze —

O me ! O miserable me !

The cloud-bank overflows : sudden outpour  
The bright white moon-rays — ah ! I drown, I  
drown,  
And o'er the flood, with steady motion, slow  
It walketh — my inexorable Doom.

No more : I shall not struggle any more :  
I will lie down as quiet as a child, —  
I can but die.

There, I have hid my face :  
 Stray travellers passing o'er the silent wold  
 Would only say, "She sleeps."

Glare on, my Doom ;

I will not look at thee : and if at times  
 I shiver, still I neither weep nor moan :  
 Angels may see, I neither weep nor moan.

Was that sharp whistling wind the morning breeze  
 That calls the stars back to the obscure of heaven ?  
 I am very cold. — And yet there is a change.  
 Less fiercely the sharp moonbeams smite my brain,  
 My heart beats slower, duller : soothing rest  
 Like a soft garment binds my shuddering limbs. —  
 If I looked up now, should I see it still  
 Gibbeted ghastly in the hopeless sky ? —  
 No !

It is very strange : all things seem strange :  
 Pale spectral face, I do not fear thee now :  
 Was 't this mere shadow which did haunt me once  
 Like an avenging fiend ? — Well, we fade out  
 Together : I 'll nor dread nor curse thee more.

How calm the earth seems ! and I know the moor  
 Glistens with dew-stars. I will try and turn  
 My poor face eastward. Close not, eyes ! That light  
 Fringing the far hills, all so fair — so fair,  
 Is it not dawn ? I am dying, but 't is dawn.

*“Upon the mountains I behold the feet  
Of my Beloved: let us forth to meet” —*  
Death.

This is death. I see the light no more;  
I sleep.

But like a morning bird my soul  
Springs singing upward, into the deeps of heaven  
Through world on world to follow Infinite Day.

#### A STREAM'S SINGING.



HOW beautiful is Morning!  
How the sunbeams strike the daisies,  
And the kingcups fill the meadow  
Like a golden-shielded army  
Marching to the uplands fair; —  
I am going forth to battle,  
And life's uplands rise before me,  
And my golden shield is ready,  
And I pause a moment, timing  
My heart's pæan to the waters,  
As with cheerful song incessant  
Onwards runs the little stream;  
Singing ever, onward ever,  
Boldly runs the merry stream.

O how glorious is Noon-day!  
With the cool large shadows lying  
Underneath the giant forest,  
The far hill-tops towering dimly  
    O'er the conquered plains below; —  
I am conquering — I shall conquer  
In life's battle-field impetuous:  
And I lie and listen dreamy  
To a double-voiced, low music, —  
Tender beech-trees sheeny shiver  
Mingled with the diapason  
    Of the strong, deep, joyful stream,  
Like a man's love and a woman's;  
    So it runs — the happy stream!

O how grandly cometh Even,  
Sitting on the mountain summit,  
Purple-vestured, grave, and silent,  
Watching o'er the dewy valleys,  
    Like a good king near his end: —  
I have labored, I have governed;  
Now I feel the gathering shadows  
Of the night that closes all things:  
And the fair earth fades before me,  
And the stars leap out in heaven,  
While into the infinite darkness  
    Solemn runs the steadfast stream —  
Onward, onward, ceaseless, fearless,  
    Singing runs the eternal stream.

## A REJECTED LOVER.



YOU "never loved me," Ada. These  
 slow words,  
 Dropped softly from your gentle wo-  
 man-tongue

Out of your true and kindly woman-heart,  
 Fell, piercing into mine like very swords  
 The sharper for their kindness. Yet no wrong  
 Lies to your charge, nor cruelty, nor art, —  
 Ev'n while you spoke, I saw the tender tear-drop  
 start.

You "never loved me." No, you never knew,  
 You, with youth's morning fresh upon your soul,  
 What 't is *to love*: slow, drop by drop, to pour  
 Our life's whole essence, perfumed through and  
 through  
 With all the best we have or can control  
 For the libation — cast it down before  
 Your feet — then lift the goblet, dry for evermore.

I shall not die as foolish lovers do:  
 A man's heart beats beneath this breast of mine,  
 The breast where — Curse on that fiend-whispering



“*It might have been!*” — Ada, I will be true  
 Unto myself — the self that so loved thine :  
 May all life’s pain, like these few tears that spring  
 For me, glance off as rain-drops from my white  
     dove’s wing !

May you live long, some good man’s bosom-  
     flower,  
 And gather children round your matron knees :  
 So, when all this is past, and you and I  
 Remember each our youth-days as an hour  
 Of joy — or anguish, one, serene, at ease,  
 May come to meet the other’s steadfast eye,  
 Thinking, “He loved me well!” clasp hands, and  
     so pass by.

## A LIVING PICTURE.



O, I’ll not say your name. I have said  
     it now,  
 As you mine, first in childish treble,  
     then

Up through a soere and more familiar years  
 Till baby-voiees moek us. Time may come  
 When your tall sons look down on our white hair,

Amused to hear us call each other thus,  
 And question us about the old, old days,  
 The far-off days, the days when we were young.

How distant do they seem, and yet how near!  
 Now, as I lie and watch you come and go,  
 With garden basket in your hand; in gown  
 Just girdled, and brown curls that girl-like fall,  
 And straw hat flapping in the April breeze,  
 I could forget this lapse of years — start up  
 Laughing — “Come, let’s go play!”

Well-a-day, friend,

Our play-days are all done.

Still, let us smile:

For as you flit about your garden here  
 You look like this spring morning: on your lips  
 An unseen bird sings snatches of gay tunes,  
 While, an embodied music, moves your step,  
 Your free, wild, springy step, like Atala’s,  
 Or Pocahontas, careless child o’ the sun —  
 Those Indian beauties I compare you to —  
 I, still your praiser, —

Nay, nay, I’ll not praise,

Fair seemeth fairest, ignorant ’t is fair:  
 That light incredulous laugh is worth a world!  
 That laugh, with childish echoes.

So then, fade,

Mere dream. Come, true and sweet reality:

Come, dawn of happy wifehood, motherhood,  
Ripening to perfect noon ! Come, peaceful round  
Of simple joys, fond duties, gladsome cares,  
When each full hour drops bliss with liberal hand,  
Yet leaves to-morrow richer than to-day.

Will you sit here ? the grass is summer-warm.  
Look at those children making daisy-chains,  
So did we too, do you mind ? That eldest lad,  
He has your very mouth. Yet, you will have 't  
His eyes are like his father's ? Perhaps so :  
They could not be more dark and deep and kind.  
Do you know, this hour I have been fancying you  
A poet's dream, and almost sighed to think  
There was no poet to praise you —

Why, you 're flown  
After those mad elves in the flower-beds there,  
Ha — ha — you 're no dream now.

Well, well — so best !  
My eyelids droop content o'er moistened eyes :  
I would not have you other than you are.

## LEONORA.



LEONORA, Leonora,  
 How the word rolls — *Leonora* —  
 Lion-like, in full-mouthed sound,  
 Marching o'er the metric ground

With a tawny tread sublime —  
 So your name moves, Leonora,  
 Down my desert rhyme.

So you pace, young Leonora,  
 Through the alleys of the wood,  
 Head erect, majestic, tall,  
 The fit daughter of the Hall:  
 Yet with hazel eyes declined,  
 And a voice like summer wind,  
 And a meek mouth, sweet and good,  
 Dimpling ever, Leonora,  
 In fair womanhood.

How those smiles dance, Leonora,  
 As you meet the pleasant breeze  
 Under your ancestral trees:  
 For your heart is free and pure  
 As this blue March sky o'erhead,  
 And in the life-path you tread,

All the leaves are budding, sure,  
All the primroses are springing,  
All the birds begin their singing —  
'T is your spring-time, Leonora,  
May it long endure.

But it *will* pass, Leonora :  
And the silent days must fall  
When a change comes over all :  
When the last leaf downward flutters,  
And the last, last sunbeam glitters  
On the terraced hillside cool,  
On the peacocks by the pool :  
When you 'll walk along these alleys  
With no lightsome foot that dallies  
With the violets and the moss, —  
But with quiet steps and slow,  
And grave eyes that earthward grow,  
And a matron-heart inured  
To all women have endured, —  
Must endure and ever will,  
All the joy and all the ill,  
All the gain and all the loss —  
Can you cheerfully lay down  
Careless girlhood's flowery crown,  
And thus take up, Leonora,  
Womanhood's meek cross ?

Ay! your eyes shine, Leonora,  
Warm, and true, and brave, and kind:  
And although I nothing know  
Of the maiden heart below,  
I in them good omens find.  
Go, enjoy your present hours  
Like the birds and bees and flowers:  
And may summer days bestow  
On you just so much of rain,  
Blessed baptism of pain!  
As will make your blossoms grow.  
May you walk, as through life's road  
Every noble woman can, —  
With a pure heart before God,  
And a true heart unto man:  
Till with this same smile you wait  
For the opening of the Gate  
That shuts earth from mortal eyes;  
Till at last, with peaceful heart,  
All contented to depart,  
Leaving children's children playing  
In these woods you used to stray in,  
You may enter, Leonora,  
Into Paradise.

## PLIGHTED.



MINE to the core of the heart, my beauty!  
 Mine, all mine, and for love, not duty:  
 Love given willingly, full and free,  
 Love for love's sake — as mine to thee.

Duty's a slave that keeps the keys,  
 But Love, the master, goes in and out  
 Of his goodly chambers with song and shout,  
 Just as he please — just as he please.

Mine, from the dear head's crown, brown-golden,  
 To the silken foot that's scarce beholden;  
 Give to a few friends hand or smile,  
 Like a generous lady, now and awhile,  
 But the sanctuary heart, that none dare win,  
 Keep holiest of holiest evermore;  
 The crowd in the aisles may watch the door,  
 The high-priest only enters in.

Mine, my own, without doubts or terrors,  
 With all thy goodnesses, all thy errors,  
 Unto me and to me alone revealed,  
 "A spring shut up, a fountain sealed."  
 Many may praise thee — praise mine as thine,

Many may love thee — I 'll love them too ;  
 But thy heart of hearts, pure, faithful, and true,  
     Must be mine, mine wholly, and only mine.

Mine! — God, I thank Thee that Thou hast given  
 Something all mine on this side heaven :  
 Something as much myself to be  
 As this my soul which I lift to Thee :  
     Flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone,  
 Life of my life, whom Thou dost make  
 Two to the world for the world's work's sake —  
     But each unto each, as in Thy sight, *one*.

## MORTALITY.

“ And we shall be changed.”



**E** dainty mosses, lichens gray,  
     Pressed each to each in tender fold,  
 And peacefully thus, day by day,  
     Returning to their mould ;

Brown leaves, that with aerial grace  
     Slip from your branch like birds a-wing,  
 Each leaving in the appointed place  
     Its bud of future spring ; —



If we, God's conscious creatures, knew  
But half your faith in our decay,  
We should not tremble as we do  
When summoned clay to clay.

But with an equal patience sweet  
We should put off this mortal gear,  
In whatso'er new form is meet  
Content to reappear.

Knowing each germ of life He gives  
Must have in Him its source and rise,  
Being that of His being lives  
May change, but never dies.

Ye dead leaves, dropping soft and slow,  
Ye mosses green and lichens fair,  
Go to your graves, as I will go,  
For God is also there.

## LIFE RETURNING.

After War-time.



LIFE, dear life, with sunbeam finger  
touching

This poor damp brow, or flying freshly  
by

On wings of mountain wind, or tenderly  
In links of visionary embraces clutching  
Me from the yawning grave —  
Can I believe thou yet hast power to save ?

I see thee, O my life, like phantom giant  
Stand on the hill-top, large against the dawn,  
Upon the night-black clouds a picture drawn  
Of aspect wonderful, with hope defiant,  
And so majestic grown  
I scarce discern the image as my own.

Those mists furl off, and through the vale re-  
splendent  
I see the pathway of my years prolong :  
Not without labor, yet for labor strong :  
Not without pain, but pain whose touch transcen-  
dent

By love's divinest laws  
Heart unto heart, and all hearts upwards, draws.

O life, O love, your diverse tones bewildering  
Make silence, like two meeting waves of sound ;  
I dream of wifely white arms, lisp of children —  
Never of ended wars,  
Save kisses sealing honorable scars.

No more of battles! save the combat glorious  
To which all earth and heaven may witness  
stand ;  
The sword of the Spirit taking in my hand  
I shall go forth, since in new fields victorious  
The King yet grants that I  
His servant live, or His good soldier die.

## MY FRIEND.



Y Friend wears a cheerful smile of his  
own,  
And a musical tongue has he ;  
We sit and look in each other's face,  
And are very good company.  
A heart he has, full warm and red  
As ever a heart I see ;

And as long as I keep true to him,  
Why, he 'll keep true to me.

When the wind blows high and the snow falls fast  
And we hear the wassailers' roar —  
My Friend and I, with a right good-will  
We bolt the chamber door :  
I smile at him and he smiles at me  
In a dreamy calm profound,  
Till his heart leaps up in the midst of him  
With a comfortable sound.

His warm breath kisses my thin gray hair  
And reddens my ashen cheeks ;  
He knows me better than you all know,  
Though never a word he speaks : —  
Knows me as well as some had known  
Were things — not as things be.  
But hey, what matters ? my Friend and I  
Are capital company.

At dead of night, when the house is still,  
He opens his pictures fair :  
Faces that are, that used to be,  
And faces that never were :  
My wife sits sewing beside my hearth,  
My little ones frolic wild,  
Though — Lillian 's married these twenty years,  
And I never had a child.

But hey, what matters? when those who laugh  
 May weep to-morrow, and they  
 Who weep be as those that wept not — all  
 Their tears long wiped away.  
 I shall burn out, like you, my Friend,  
 With a bright warm heart and bold,  
 That flickers up to the last — then drops  
 Into quiet ashes cold.

And when you flicker on me, old Friend,  
 In the old man's elbow-chair,  
 Or — something easier still, where we  
 Lie down, to arise up fair  
 And young, and happy — why then, my Friend,  
 Should other friends ask of me,  
 Tell them I lived and loved and died  
 In the best of all company.

## A VALENTINE.



There are twa laddies unco gleg,  
 An' blithe an' bonnie:  
 As licht o' heel as Anster's Meg; —  
 Gin ye 'd a lassie's favor beg,  
 I' faith she couldna stir a peg  
 Anee lookin' on ye!

He's a douce wiselike callant — Jim :  
 Of wit aye ready.  
 Cuts aff ane's sentence, 'tither's limb,  
 An' whiles he's daft and whiles he's grim,  
 But brains? — wha's got the like o' him  
 In's wee bit heidie?

Dear laddie wi' the curlin' hair,  
 Gentlest of ony :  
 That gies kind looks an' speeches fair  
 To dour auld wives as lassies rare, —  
 I ken a score o' lads an' mair,  
 But nane like Johnnie!

And gin ye learn the way to woo,  
 Hae sweethearts mony,  
 O laddie, never say ye loe  
 An' gie fause eoin for siller true ;  
 A lassie's sair heart's naething new, —  
 Mind o' that, Johnnie.

An' dinna change your luve sae fast  
 For ilk face bonnie,  
 Lest waefu' want track wilfu' waste,  
 And a' your youthfu' years lang past,  
 Ye get the crookit stick at last,  
 Oehone, puir Johnnie!

But callants baith, tak tent, and when  
Bright e'en hae won ye,  
Tak each your jo — and keep her — then  
Be faithfu' as ye 're fond, ye ken,  
Or — gang your gate like honest men,  
Young Jim and Johnnie.

Sae when auld Time his crookit elaw  
Sall lay upon ye,  
When, Jim, your feet that danee sae braw  
Are no the lightest in the ha',  
An' a' your eurlly haffets fa',  
My winsome Johnnie, —

May each his ain warm ingle view,  
Cosie as ony :  
A gudewife sonsie, leal and true,  
O' bonnie dochters not a few,  
An' lads — sie lads as ye 're the noo —  
Dear Jim and Johnnie !

## GRACE OF CLYDESIDE.



H, little Grace of the golden locks,  
The hills rise fair on the shores of  
Clyde.

As the merry waves wear out these rocks  
She wears my heart out, glides past and mocks :  
But heaven's gate ever stands open wide.

The boat goes softly along, along,  
Like a river of life glows the amber Clyde ;  
Her voice floats near me like angels' song, —  
Ah, sweet love-death, but thy pangs are strong!  
Though heaven's gate ever stands open wide.

We walk by the shore and the stars shine bright,  
But coldly, above the solemn Clyde :  
Her arm touches mine — her laugh rings light —  
ONE hears my silence : His merciful night  
Hides me — *Can* heaven be open wide ?

I ever was but a dreamer, Grace :  
As the gray hills watch o'er the sunny Clyde,  
Standing afar, each in his place,  
I watch your young life's beautiful race,  
Apart — until heaven be opened wide.



And sometimes when in the twilight balm  
 The hills grow purple along the Clyde,  
 The waves flow softly and very calm,  
 I hear all nature sing this one psalm,  
 That "heaven's gate ever stands open wide."

So, happy Grace, with your spirit free,  
 Laugh on! life is sweet on the banks of Clyde;  
 This is no blame unto thee or me;  
 Only God saw it could not be,  
 Therefore His heaven stands open wide.

## TO A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN.

"A daughter of the gods: divinely tall,  
 And most divinely fair."



SURELY, dame Nature made you in  
 some dream  
 Of old-world women — Chriemhild, or  
 bright  
 Aslauga, or Boadicea fierce and fair,  
 Or Berengaria as she rose, her lips  
 Yet ruddy from the poison that anoints  
 Her memory still, the queen of queenly wives.

I marvel, who will crown you wife, you grand  
And goodly creature! who will mount supreme  
The empty chariot of your maiden heart,  
Curb the strong will that leaps and foams and chafes  
Still masterless, and guide you safely home  
Unto the golden gate, where quiet sits  
Grave Matronhood, with gracious, loving eyes.

What eyes you have, you wild gazelle o' the plain,  
You fierce hind of the forest! now they flash,  
Now glow, now in their own dark down-dropt shade  
Conceal themselves a moment, as some thought,  
Too brief to be a feeling, flits across  
The April cloudland of your careless soul —  
There — that light laugh — and 't is full sun —  
full day.

Would I could paint you, line by line, ere Time  
Touches the gorgeous picture! your ripe mouth,  
Your white arched throat, your stature like to Saul's  
Among his brethren, yet so fitly framed  
In such harmonious symmetry, we say  
As of a cedar among common trees  
Never "How tall!" but only "O how fair!"

*Who* made you fair? moulded you in the shape  
That poets dream of; sent you forth to men  
His caligraph inscribed on every curve  
Of your brave form?

Is it written on your soul?

— I know not.

Woman, upon whom is laid  
Heaven's own sign-manual, Beauty, mock heaven  
not!

Reverence thy loveliness — the outward type  
Of things we understand not, nor behold  
But as in a glass, darkly ; wear it thou  
With awful gladness, grave humility,  
That not contemns, nor boasts, nor is ashamed,  
But lifts its face up prayerfully to heaven, —  
“Thou who hast made me, make me worthy  
Thee!”

MARY'S WEDDING.

February 25th, 1851.



YOU are to be married, Mary ;  
This hour as I wakeful lie  
In the dreamy dawn of the morning,  
Your wedding hour draws nigh ;  
Miles off, you are rising, dressing,  
Your bridemaids gay among,  
In the same old house we played in, —  
You and I, when we were young.

Your bridemaids — they were our playmates :  
Those known rooms, every wall,  
Could speak of our childish frolics,  
Loves, jealousies, great and small :  
Do you mind how pansies changed we  
And smiled at the word “ forget ” ? —  
'T was a girl's romance : yet somehow  
I have kept my pansy yet.

Do you mind our poems written  
Together ? our dreams of fame —  
And of love — how we 'd share all secrets  
When that sweet mystery came ?  
It is no mystery now, Mary ;  
It was unveiled, year by year,  
Till — this is your marriage morning ;  
And I rest quiet here.

I cannot call up your face, Mary,  
The face of the bride to-day :  
You have outgrown my knowledge,  
The years have so slipped away.  
I see but your girlish likeness,  
Brown eyes and brown falling hair ; —  
God knows, I did love you dearly,  
And was proud that you were fair.

Many speak my name, Mary,  
While yours in home's silence lies :

The future I read in toil's guerdon,  
 You will read in your children's eyes :  
 The past — the same past with either —  
 Is to you a delightful scene,  
 But I cannot trace it clearly  
 For the graves that rise between.

I am glad you are happy, Mary !  
 These tears, could you see them fall,  
 Would show, though you have forgotten,  
 I have remembered all.  
 And though my cup may be empty  
 While yours is all running o'er,  
 Heaven keep you its sweetness, Mary,  
 Brimming for evermore.

## BETWEEN TWO WORLDS.

Parting for Australia.



HERE sitting by the fire  
 I aspire, love, I aspire —  
 Not to that "other world" of your  
 fond dreams,  
 But one as nigh and nigher,  
 Compared to which your real, unreal seems.

Together as to-night  
 In our light, love, in our light  
 Of reunited joy appears no shade :  
 From this our hope's reached height  
 All things are possible and level made.

Therefore we sit and view —  
 I and you, love, I and you —  
 That wondrous valley o'er southern seas,  
 Where in a country new  
 You will make for me a sweet nest of ease ;

Where I, your poor tired bird,  
 (Nothing stirred? Love, nothing stirred?)  
 May fold her wings and be no more distress :  
 Where troubles may be heard  
 Like outside winds at night which deepen rest.

Where in green pastures wide  
 We'll abide, love, we'll abide,  
 And keep content our patriarchal flocks,  
 Till at our aged side  
 Leap our young brown-faced shepherds of the rocks.

Ah, tale that's easy told !  
 (Hold my hand, love, tighter hold.)  
 What if this face of mine, which *you* think fair —  
 If it should ne'er grow old,  
 Nor matron cap cover this maiden hair ?

What if this silver ring  
 (Loose it clings, love, yet does cling :)  
 Should ne'er be changed for any other ? nay,  
 This very hand I fling  
 About your neck should — Hush ! to-day 's to-  
 day :

To-morrow is — ah, whose ?  
 You 'll not lose, love, you 'll not lose  
 This hand I pledged, if never a wife's hand  
 For tender household use  
 Led by yours fearless into a far, far land.

/ Kiss me and do not grieve ;  
 I believe, love, I believe  
 That He who holds the measure of our days,  
 And did thus strangely weave  
 Our opposite lives together, to His praise —

He never will divide  
 Us so wide, love, us so wide :  
 But will, whate'er befalls us, clearly show  
 That those in Him allied  
 In life or death are nearer than they know.

## COUSIN ROBERT.



COUSIN Robert, far away  
 Among the lands of gold,  
 How many years since we two met? —  
 You would not like it told.

O cousin Robert, buried deep  
 Amid your bags of gold —  
 I thought I saw you yesternight  
 Just as you were of old.

You own whole leagues — I half a rood  
 Behind my cottage door ;  
 You have your laes of gold rupees,  
 And I my children four ;

Your tall barques dot the dangerous seas,  
 My “ ship ’s come home ” — to rest  
 Safe anchored from the storms of life  
 Upon one faithful breast.

And it would eause no start or sigh,  
 Nor thought of doubt or blame,  
 If I should teach our little son  
 His cousin Robert’s name. —



That name, however wide it rings,  
I oft think, when alone,  
I rather would have seen it graved  
Upon a churchyard stone —

Upon the white sunshining stone  
Where cousin Alick lies :  
Ah, sometimes, woe to him that lives !  
Happy is he that dies !

O Robert, Robert, many a tear —  
Though not the tears of old —  
Drops, thinking of your face last night  
Your hand's remembered fold ;

A young man's face, so like, so like  
Our mothers' faces fair :  
A young man's hand, so firm to clasp,  
So resolute to dare.

I thought you good — I wished you great ;  
You were my hope, my pride :  
To know you good, to make you great  
I once had happy died.

To tear the plague-spot from your heart,  
Place honor on your brow,  
See old age come in crownèd peace —  
I almost would die now !

Would give — all that 's now mine to give —  
 To have you sitting there,  
 The cousin Robert of my youth —  
 Though beggar'd, with gray hair.

O Robert, Robert, some that live  
 Are dead, long ere they are old ;  
 Better the pure heart of our youth  
 Than palaces of gold ;

Better the blind faith of our youth  
 Than doubt, which all truth braves ;  
 Better to mourn, God's children dear,  
 Than laugh, the Devil's slaves.

O Robert, Robert, life is sweet,  
 And love is boundless gain :  
 Yet if I mind of you, my heart  
 Is stabbed with sudden pain :

And as in peace this Christmas eve  
 I close our quiet doors,  
 And kiss "good-night" on sleeping heads —  
 Such bonnie curls, — like yours :

I fall upon my bended knees  
 With sobs that choke each word ; —  
 " *On those who err and are deceived*  
*Have mercy, O good LORD !*"

AT LAST.



DOWN, down like a pale leaf dropping  
Under an autumn sky,  
My love dropped into my bosom  
Quietly, quietly.

There was not a ray of sunshine  
And not a sound in the air,  
As she trembled into my bosom —  
My love, no longer fair.

All year round in her beauty  
She dwelt on the tree-top high :  
She danced in the summer breezes,  
She laughed to the summer sky.

I lay so low in the grass-dews,  
She sat so high above,  
She never wist of my longing,  
She never dreamed of my love.

But when winds laid bare her dwelling,  
And her heart could find no rest,  
I called — and she fluttered downward  
Into my faithful breast.

I know that my love is fading ;  
 I know I cannot fold  
 Her fragrance from the frost-blight,  
 Her beauty from the mould :

But a little, little longer  
 She shall contented lie,  
 And wither away in the sunshine  
 Silently, silently.

Come when thou wilt, grim Winter,  
 My year is crowned and blest  
 If when my love is dying  
 She die upon my breast.

*THE AURORA ON THE CLYDE.*

September, 1850.



H me, how heavily the night comes down,  
 Heavily, heavily :  
 Fade the eurved shores, the blue hills'  
 serried throng,  
 The darkening waves we oared in light and song :  
 Joy melts from us as sunshine from the sky ;  
 And Patience with sad eye  
 Takes up her staff and drops her withered crown.

Our small boat heaves upon the heaving river,  
Wearily, wearily :  
The flickering shore-lights come and go by fits ;  
Towering 'twixt earth and heaven dusk silence sits,  
Death at her feet ; above, infinity ;  
Between, slow drifting by,  
Our tiny boat, like life, floats onward ever.

Pale, mournful hour, — too early night that falls  
Drearly, drearily,  
Come not so soon ! Return, return, bright day,  
Kind voices, smiles, blue mountains, sunny bay !  
In vain ! Life's dial cannot backward fly :  
The dark time comes. Low lie,  
And listen, soul. Oft in the night, God calls.

\* \* \* \* \*

Light, light on the black river ! How it gleams,  
Solemnly, solemnly !  
Like troops of pale ghosts on their pensive march,  
Treading the far heavens in a luminous arch,  
Each after each : phantasms serene and high  
From that eternity  
Where all earth's sharpest woes grow dim as  
dreams.

Let us drink in the glory, full and whole,  
Silently, silently :  
Gaze, till it lulls all pain, all vain desires : —

See now, that radiant bow of pillared fires  
Spanning the hills like dawn, until they lie  
    In soft tranquillity,  
And all night's ghastly glooms asunder roll.

Look, look again! the vision changes fast,  
    Gloriously, gloriously :  
That was heaven's gate with its illumined road,  
But this *is* heaven ; the very throne of God  
Hung with flame curtains of celestial dye  
    Waving perpetually,  
While to and fro innumerable angels haste.

I see no more the stream, the boat that moves  
    Mournfully, mournfully :  
And we who sit, poor prisoners of clay :  
It is not night, it is immortal day,  
Where the One Presence fills eternity,  
    And each, His servant high,  
Forever praises and forever loves.

O soul, forget the weight that drags thee down  
    Deathfully, deathfully :  
Know thyself. As this glory wraps thee round,  
Let it melt off the chains that long have bound  
Thy strength. Stand free before thy God and cry —  
    “ My Father, here am I :  
Give to me as Thou wilt — first cross, then crown.”

AN AURORA BOREALIS.

Roslin Castle.



STRANGE soft gleam, O ghostly dawn  
That never brightens unto day;  
Ere earth's mirk pale once more be  
drawn

Let us look out beyond the gray.

It is just midnight by the clock —  
There is no sound on glen or hill,  
The moaning linn adown its roek  
Leaps, but the woods lie dark and still.

Austere against the kindling sky  
Yon broken turret blacker grows;  
Harsh light, to show remorselessly  
Ruins night hid in kind repose!

Nay, beauteous light, nay, light that fills  
The whole heaven like a dream of morn,  
As waking upon northern hills  
She smiles to find herself new-born, —

Strange light, I know thou wilt not stay,  
That many an hour must come and go

Before the pale November day  
Break in the east, forlorn and slow.

Yet blest one gleam — one gleam like this,  
When all heaven brightens in our sight,  
And the long night that was and is  
And shall be, vanishes in light :

O blest one hour like this ! to rise  
And see grief's shadows backward roll ;  
While bursts on unaccustomed eyes  
The glad Aurora of the soul.

### AT THE LINN-SIDE.

Roslin.



LIVING, living water,  
So busy and so bright,  
Aye flashing in the morning beams,  
And sounding through the night ;  
O golden-shining water --  
Would God that I might be  
A vocal message from His mouth  
Into the world, like thee !



O merry, merry water,  
Which nothing e'er affrays ;  
And as it pours from rock to rock  
Nothing e'er stops or stays ;  
But past cool heathery hollows  
And gloomy pools it flows ;  
Past crags that fain would shut it in  
Leaps through — and on it goes.

O fresh'ning, sparkling water,  
O voice that 's never still,  
Though winter lays her dead-white hand  
On brae and glen and hill ;  
Though no leaf 's left to flutter  
In woods all mute and hoar,  
Yet thou, O river, night and day  
Thou runnest evermore.

No foul thing can pollute thee ;  
Thy swiftness casts aside  
All ill, like a good heart and true,  
However sorely tried.

O living, living water,  
So fresh and bright and free —  
God lead us through this changeful world  
Forever pure, like thee !

A HYMN FOR CHRISTMAS MORNING.

1855.



It is the Christmas time :  
And up and down 'twixt heaven and  
earth,  
In glorious grief and solemn mirth,  
The shining angels climb.

And unto everything  
That lives and moves, for heaven, on earth,  
With equal share of grief and mirth,  
The shining angels sing : —

“ Babes new-born, undefiled,  
In lowly hut, or mansion wide —  
Sleep safely through this Christmas-tide  
When Jesus was a child.

“ O young men, bold and free,  
In peopled town, or desert grim,  
When ye are tempted like to Him,  
‘ The man Christ Jesus ’ see.

“ Poor mothers, with your hoard  
Of endless love and countless pain —

Remember all her grief, her gain,  
The Mother of the Lord.

“Mourners, half blind with woe,  
Look up! One standeth in this place,  
And by the pity of His face  
The Man of Sorrows know.

“Wanderers in far countrie,  
O think of Him who came, forgot,  
To His own, and they received Him not —  
Jesus of Galilee.

“O all ye who have trod  
The wine-press of affliction, lay  
Your hearts before His heart this day —  
Behold the Christ of God!”

A PSALM FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE.

1855.



FRIEND stands at the door ;  
In either tight-closed hand  
Hiding rich gifts, three hundred and  
three score :

Waiting to strew them daily o'er the land  
Even as seed the sower.  
Each drops he, treads it in and passes by :  
It cannot be made fruitful till it die.

O good New Year, we elasp  
This warm shut hand of thine,  
Loosing forever, with half sigh, half gasp,  
That which from ours falls like dead fingers' twine :  
Ay, whether fierce its grasp  
Has been, or gentle, having been, we know  
That it was blessed : let the Old Year go.

O New Year, teach us faith !  
The road of life is hard :  
When our feet bleed and scourging winds us scathe,  
Point thou to Him whose visage was more marred  
Than any man's : who saith

“ Make straight paths for your feet ” — and to the  
opprest —

“ Come ye to Me, and I will give you rest.”

Yet hang some lamp-like hope  
Above this unknown way,  
Kind year, to give our spirits freer scope  
And our hands strength to work while it is day.  
But if that way must slope  
Tombward, O bring before our fading eyes  
The lamp of life, the Hope that never dies.

Comfort our souls with love, —  
Love of all human kind ;  
Love special, close — in which like sheltered dove  
Each weary heart its own safe nest may find ;  
And love that turns above  
Adoringly ; contented to resign  
All loves, if need be, for the Love Divine.

Friend, come thou like a friend,  
And whether bright thy face,  
Or dim with clouds we cannot comprehend, —  
We 'll hold out patient hands, each in his place,  
And trust thee to the end.  
Knowing thou ledest onwards to those spheres  
Where there are neither days nor months nor years.

## FAITHFUL IN VANITY-FAIR.

Suggested by one of David Scott's illustrations of "Pilgrim's Progress."

## I.



THE great human whirlpool — 't is seething and seething :  
 On! No time for shrieking out — scarcely for breathing :  
 All toiling and moiling, some feebler, some bolder,  
 But each sees a fiend-face grim over his shoulder :  
 Thus merrily live they in Vanity-fair.

The great human caldron — it boils ever higher :  
 Some drowning, some sinking ; while some, stealing nigher  
 Athirst, come and lean o'er its outermost verges,  
 Or touch, as a child's feet touch, timorous, the surges —  
 One plunge — lo ! more souls swamped in Vanity-fair.

Let's live while we live ; for to-morrow all's over :  
 Drink deep, drunkard bold ; and kiss close, maddened lover ;

Smile, hypocrite, smile ; it is no such hard labor,  
While each stealthy hand stabs the heart of his  
neighbor —

Faugh ! Fear not : we 've no hearts in Vanity-  
fair.

The mad crowd divides and then soon closes after :  
Afar towers the pyre. Through the shouting and  
laughter

“ What new sport is this ? ” gasps a reveller, half  
turning. —

“ One Faithful, meek fool, who is led to the burn-  
ing,

He cumbered us sorely in Vanity-fair.

“ A dreamer, who held every man for a brother ;  
A coward, who, smit on one cheek, gave the other ;  
A fool, whose blind soul took as truth all our lying,  
Too simple to live, so best fitted for dying :

Sure, such are best swept out of Vanity-fair.”

## II.

SILENCE ! though the flames arise and quiver :  
Silence ! though the crowd howls on forever :  
Silence ! Through this fiery purgatory  
God is leading up a soul to glory.

See, the white lips with no moans are trembling,  
Hate of foes or plaint of friends' dissembling ;  
If sighs come — his patient prayers outlive them,  
“*Lord — these know not what they do. Forgive them !*”

Thirstier still the roaring flames are glowing ;  
Fainter in his ear the laughter growing ;  
Brief will last the fierce and fiery trial,  
Angel welcomes down the earth denial.

Now the amorous death-fires, gleaming ruddy,  
Clasp him close. Down drops the quivering body,  
While through harmless flames ecstatic flying  
Shoots the beauteous soul. This, this is *dying*.

Lo, the opening sky with splendor rifted,  
Lo, the palm-branch for his hands uplifted :  
Lo, the immortal chariot, cloud-descending,  
And its legioned angels close attending.

Let his poor dust mingle with the embers  
While the crowds sweep on and none remembers :  
Saints unnumbered through the Infinite Glory,  
Praising God, recount the martyr's story.



HER LIKENESS.



GIRL, who has so many wilful ways  
She would have caused Job's pa-  
tience to forsake him ;  
Yet is so rich in all that's girlhood's  
praise,

Did Job himself upon her goodness gaze,  
A little better she would surely make him.

Yet is this girl I sing in naught uncommon,  
And very far from angel yet, I trow.  
Her faults, her sweetnesses, are purely human ;  
Yet she's more lovable as simple woman  
Than any one diviner that I know.

Therefore I wish that she may safely keep  
This womanhede, and change not, only grow ;  
From maid to matron, youth to age, may creep,  
And in perennial blessedness, still reap  
On every hand of that which she doth sow.

## ONLY A DREAM.

“I waked — she fled : and day brought back my night.”



ETHOUGHT I saw thee yesternight  
 Sit by me in the olden guise,  
 The white robes and the palm foregone,  
 Weaving instead of amaranth crown  
 A web of mortal dyes.

I cried, “Where hast thou been so long ?”  
 (The mild eyes turned and mutely smiled :)  
 “Why dwellest thou in far-off lands ?  
 What is that web within thy hands ?”  
 — “I work for thee, my child.”

I clasped thee in my arms and wept ;  
 I kissed thee oft with passion wild :  
 I poured fond questions, tender blame ;  
 Still thy sole answer was the same, —  
 “I work for thee, my child.”

“Come and walk with me as of old.”  
 Then camest thou, silent as before ;  
 We passed along that churehyard way  
 We used to tread each Sabbath day,  
 Till one trod earth no more.

I felt thy hand upon my arm,  
Beside me thy meek face I saw,  
Yet through the sweet familiar grace  
A something spiritual could trace  
That left a nameless awe.

Trembling I said, "Long years have passed  
Since thou wert from my side beguiled;  
Now thou 'rt returned and all shall be  
As was before." — Half-pensively  
Thou answered'st — "Nay, my child."

I pleaded sore: "Hadst thou forgot  
The love wherewith we loved of old, —  
The long sweet days of converse blest,  
The nights of slumber on thy breast, —  
Wert thou to me grown cold?"

There beamed on me those eyes of heaven  
That wept no more, but ever smiled;  
"Love only *is* love in that Home  
Where I abide — where, till thou come,  
I work for thee, my child."

If from my sight thou passedst then,  
Or if my sobs the dream exiled,  
I know not: but in memory clear  
I seem these strange words still to hear,  
"I work for thee, my child."

## TO MY GODCHILD ALICE.



ALICE, Alice, little Alice,  
 My new-christened baby Alice,  
 Can there ever rhymes be found  
 To express my wishes for thee  
 In a silvery flowing, worthy  
 Of that silvery sound ?  
 Bonnie Alice, Lady Alice,  
 Sure, this sweetest name must be  
 A true omen to thee, Alice,  
 Of a life's long melody.

Alice, Alice, little Alice,  
 Mayst thou prove a golden chalice,  
 Filled with holiness like wine :  
 With rich blessings running o'er  
 Yet replenished evermore  
 From a fount divine :  
 Alice, Alice, little Alice,  
 When this future comes to thee,  
 In thy young life's brimming chalice  
 Keep some drops of balm for me !

Alice, Alice, little Alice,  
 Mayst thou grow a goodly palace,

Fitly framed from roof to floors,  
Pure unto the inmost centre,  
While high thoughts like angels enter  
At the open doors :  
Alice, Alice, little Alice,  
When this beauteous sight I see,  
In thy woman-heart's wide palace  
Keep one nook of love for me.

Alice, Alice, little Alice, —  
Sure the verse halts out of malice  
To the thoughts it feebly bears,  
And thy name's soft echoes, ranging  
From quaint rhyme to rhyme, are changing  
Into silent prayers.  
God be with thee, little Alice,  
Of His bounteousness may He  
Fill the chalice, build the palace,  
Here, unto eternity !





## EIGHTEEN SONNETS.

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### RESIGNING.

“Poor heart, what bitter words we speak  
When God speaks of resigning !”



**C**HILDREN, that lay their pretty gar-  
lands by  
So piteously, yet with a humble mind ;  
Sailors, who, when their ship rocks in  
the wind,  
Cast out her freight with half-averted eye,  
Riches for life exchanging solemnly,  
Lest they should never gain the wished-for shore ;—  
Thus we, O Father, standing Thee before,  
Do lay down at Thy feet without a sigh  
Each after each our precious things and rare,  
Our dear heart-jewels and our garlands fair.  
Perhaps Thou knewest that the flowers would die,  
And the long-voyaged boards be found but dust :  
So took'st them, while unchanged. To Thee we trust  
For incorruptible treasure : Thou art just.

## SAINT ELIZABETH OF BOHEMIA.

“Would that we two were lying  
 Beneath the churchyard sod,  
 With our limbs at rest in the green earth’s breast,  
 And our souls at home with God.”

KINGSLEY’S *Saint’s Tragedy*.

## I.



NEVER lay me down to sleep at night  
 But in my heart I sing that little song :  
 The angels hear it as, a pitying throng,  
 They touch my burning lids with fin-  
 gers bright

As moonbeams, pale, impalpable, and light :  
 And when my daily pious tasks are done,  
 And all my patient prayers said one by one,  
 God hears it. Seems it sinful in His sight  
 That round my slow burnt-offering of quenched  
 will

One quivering human sigh creeps wind-like still ?  
 That when my orisons celestial fail  
 Rises one note of natural human wail ?  
 Dear lord, spouse, hero, martyr, saint ! erelong,  
 I trust, God will forgive my singing that poor song.

## II.

A YEAR ago I bade my little son  
Bear upon pilgrimage a heavy load  
Of alms ; he cried, half-fainting on the road,  
“Mother, O mother, would the day were done !”  
Him I reproved with tears, and said, “Go on !  
Nor pause nor murmur till thy task be o’er.” —  
Would not God say to me the same, and more ?  
I will not sing that song. Thou, dearest one,  
Husband — no, brother ! — stretch thy steadfast  
    hand  
And let mine grasp it. Now, I also stand,  
My woman weakness nerved to strength like thine ;  
We ’ll quaff life’s aloe-cup as if ’t were wine  
Each to the other ; journeying on apart,  
Till at heaven’s golden doors we two leap heart to  
    heart.



## A MARRIAGE-TABLE.

W. H. L. and F. R.



HERE was a marriage-table where One  
 sate,  
 Haply, unnoticed, till they craved His  
 aid :

Theneeforward does it seem that He has made  
 All virtuous marriage-tables conseerate :  
 And so, at this, where without pomp or state  
 We sit, and only say, or mute, are fain  
 To wish the simple words "God bless these  
 twain !"

I think that He who "in the midst" doth wait  
 Oft-times, would not abjure our prayerful cheer,  
 But, as at Cana, list with graeious ear  
 To us, beseeching, that the Love divine  
 May ever at their household table sit,  
 Make all His servants who encompass it,  
 And change life's bitterest waters into wine,

## MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL.

A Statuette.

## I.



Y white archangel, with thy steadfast  
 eyes  
 Beholding all this empty ghost-filled  
 room,  
 Thy clasped hands resting on the sword of doom,  
 Thy firm, close lips, not made for human sighs  
 Or smiles, or kisses sweet, or bitter cries,  
 But for divine exhorting, holy song  
 And righteous counsel, bold from seraph tongue.  
 Beautiful angel, strong as thou art wise,  
 Would that the sight of thee made wise and  
 strong !  
 Would that this sheathèd sword of thine, which  
 lies  
 Stonily idle, could gleam out among  
 The spiritual hosts of enemies  
 That tempting shriek — “ Requite thou wrong with  
 wrong.”  
 Lama Sabachthani, — How long, how long.

## II.

MICHAEL, the leader of the hosts of God,  
Who warred with Satan for the body of him  
Whom, living, God had loved — If cherubim  
With cherubim contended for one clod  
Of human dust, for forty years that trod  
The gloomy desert of Heaven's chastisement,  
Are there not ministering angels sent  
To battle with the devils that roam abroad,  
Clutching our living souls? "The living, still  
The living, they shall praise Thee!" — Let some  
    great  
Invisible spirit enter in and fill  
The howling chambers of hearts desolate;  
With looks like thine, O Michael, strong and wise,  
My white archangel with the steadfast eyes.

## I.

## BEATRICE TO DANTE.

“Guardami ben. Ben son, ben son.”\*



REGARD me well: I am thy love, thy  
love;  
Thy blessing, thy delight, thy hope,  
thy peace:

Thy joy above all joys that break and cease  
When their full waves in widest circles move:  
Thy bird of comfort, thine eternal dove,  
Whom thou didst send out of thy mournful breast  
To flutter baek and point thee to thy rest:  
Thine angel, who forgets her crown star-wove  
To come to thee with folded woman-hands  
Pleading, — “Look on me, Beatrice, who stands  
Before thee; by the Triune Light divine  
Undazzled, still beholds thy human face,  
And is more happy in this happy place  
That thou alone art hers and she is thine.”

\* Suggested by a statue of Beatrice, bearing this motto.

## DANTE TO BEATRICE.

## II.

I SEE thee, gliding towards me with slow pæe  
Across the azure fields of Paradise,  
Where thine each footstep makes a star arise.  
So from this heart's onee void but infinite space  
Each strange sweet touch of thy eelestial graee  
In the old mortal life, struck out some spark  
To light the world, though all my heaven lay dark.  
O Beatrice, cypresses enlace  
My laurels : none have grown save tear-bedewed —  
Salt tears that sank into the earth unviewed,  
And sprang up green to form a crown of bays.  
Take it! At thy dear feet I lay my all,  
What men my honors, virtues, glories, call :  
I lived, loved, suffered, sung — for thy sole praise.

## A QUESTION.

## I.



S OUL, spirit, genius — which thou art —  
that whence

I know not, rose upon this mortal frame  
Like the sun o'er the mountains, all  
afame,

Seen large through mists of childish innocence,  
And year by year with me uptravelling thence,  
As hour by hour the day-star, madest aspire  
My nature, interpenetrate with fire  
It felt but understood not — strong, intense,  
Wisdom with folly mixed, and gold with clay; —  
Soul, thou hast journeyed with me all this way.  
Oft hidden and o'erclouded, oft arrayed  
In scorching splendors that my earth-life burned,  
Yet ever unto thee my true life turned,  
For, dim, or clear, 't was thou my daylight made.

## II.

SOUL, dwelling oft in God's infinitude,  
And sometimes seeming no more part of me —  
This *me*, worms' heritage — than that sun can be  
Part of the earth he has with warmth imbued, —  
Whence camest thou? whither goest thou? I,  
subdued

With awe of mine own being — thus sit still,  
Dumb, on the summit of this lonely hill,  
Whose dry November-grasses dew-bestrewed  
Mirror a million suns — That sun, so bright,  
Passes, as thou must pass, Soul, into night:  
Art thou afraid, who solitary hast trod  
A path I know not, from a source to a bourne,  
Both which I know not? fear'st thou to return  
Alone, even as thou camest, *alone*, to God?

## ANGEL FACES.

“ And with the dawn those angel faces smile  
That I have loved long since, and lost awhile.”

## I.



SHALL not paint them. God them  
sees, and I:  
No other can, nor need. They have no  
form,

I may not close with human kisses warm  
Their eyes which shine afar or from on high,  
But never will shine nearer till I die.  
How long, how long! See, I am growing old;  
I have quite ceased to note in my hair's fold  
The silver threads that there in ambush lie;  
Some angel faces bent from heaven would pine  
To trace the sharp lines graven upon mine;  
What matter? in the wrinkles ploughed by care  
Let age tread after, sowing immortal seeds;  
All this life's harvest yielded, wheat or weeds,  
Is reaped, methinks: at last my little field lies bare.



## II.

BUT in the night time, 'twixt it and the stars,  
The angel faces still come glimmering by ;  
No death-pale shadow, no averted eye  
Marking the inevitable doom that bars  
Me from them. Not a cloud their aspect mars ;  
And my sick spirit walks with them hand in hand  
By the cool waters of a pleasant land :  
Sings with them o'er again, without its jars,  
The psalm of life, that ceased, as one by one  
Their voices, dropping off, left mine alone  
With dull monotonous wail to grieve the air.  
O solitary love, that art so strong,  
I think God will have pity on thee erelong,  
And take thee where thou'lt find those angel  
faces fair.

## SUNDAY MORNING BELLS.



FROM the near city comes the clang of  
bells :

Their hundred jarring diverse tones  
combine

In one faint misty harmony, as fine  
As the soft note yon winter robin swells. —  
What if to Thee in Thine Infinity  
These multiform and many-colored creeds  
Seem but the robe man wraps as masquers' weeds  
Round the one living truth Thou givest him —  
Thee ?

What if these varied forms that worship prove,  
Being heart-worship, reach Thy perfect car  
But as a monotone, complete and clear,  
Of which the music is, through Christ's name,  
Love ?

Forever rising in sublime increase  
To "Glory in the Highest, — on earth peace ?"

## CŒUR DE LION :

Marochetti's Statue in the Great Exhibition of 1851.

## I.



RICHARD the Lion-hearted, crowned  
 serene  
 With the true royalty of perfect man ;  
 Seated in stone above the praise or ban  
 Of these mixed crowds who come and gaping lean  
 As if to see what the word "king" might mean  
 In those old times. Behold ! what need that rim  
 Of crown 'gainst this blue sky, to signal him  
 A monarch, of the monarehs that have been,  
 And, perhaps, are not ? — Read his destinies  
 In the full brow o'er-arching kingly eyes,  
 In the strong hands, grasping both rein and  
 sword,  
 In the close mouth, so sternly beautiful : —  
 Surely, a man who his own spirit can rule ;  
 Lord of himself, therefore his brethren's lord.

## II.

“ *O Richard, O mon roi.*” So minstrels sighed.  
The many-centuried voice dies fast away  
Amidst the turmoil of our modern day.  
How know we but these green-wreathed legends  
hide  
An ugly truth that never could abide  
In this our living world’s far purer air? —  
Nevertheless, O statue, rest thou there,  
Our Richard, of all chivalry the pride ;  
Or if not the true Richard, still a type  
Of the old regal glory, fallen, o’er-ripe,  
And giving place to better blossoming :  
Stand — imaging the grand heroic days ;  
And let our little children come and gaze,  
Whispering with innocent awe — “ *This was a  
King.*”

## GUNS OF PEACE.

Sunday Night, March 30th, 1856.



HOSTS of dead soldiers in the battle  
 slain,  
 Ghosts of dead heroes dying nobler far,  
 In the long patience of inglorious war,  
 Of famine, cold, heat, pestilence, and pain, —  
 All ye whose loss makes our victorious gain —  
 This quiet night, as sounds the cannon's tongue,  
 Do ye look down the trembling stars among  
 Viewing our peace and war with like disdain?  
 Or wiser grown since reaching those new spheres,  
 Smile ye on those poor bones ye sowed as seed  
 For this our harvest, nor regret the deed? —  
 Yet lift one cry with us to Heavenly ears —  
 "Strike with Thy bolt the next red flag unfurled,  
 And make all wars to cease throughout the  
 world."

## DAVID'S CHILD.

—“Is the child dead?”— And they said, “He is dead.”



IN face of a great sorrow like to death  
 How do we wrestle night and day with  
 tears;  
 How do we fast and pray; how small  
 appears  
 The outside world, while, hanging on some breath  
 Of fragile hope, the chamber where we lie  
 Includes all space. — But if sudden at last  
 The blow falls; or by ineredulity  
 Fond led, we — never having one thought cast  
 Towards years where “the child” was not — see  
 it die,  
 And with it all our future, all our past, —  
 We just look round us with a dull surprise:  
 For lesser pangs we had filled earth with cries  
 Of wild and angry grief that would be heard: —  
 But when the heart is broken — not a word.

## A WORD IN SEASON.



HIS is a day the Lord hath made." —

Thus spake

The good religious heart, unstained,  
unworn,

Watching the golden glory of the morn. —  
 Since, on each happy day that came to break  
 Like sunlight o'er this silent life of mine,  
 Yea, on each beauteous morning I saw shine,  
 I have remembered these your words, rejoiced  
 And been glad in it. So, o'er many-voiced  
 Tumultuous harmonies of tropic seas,  
 Which chant an everlasting farewell grand  
 Between ourselves and you and the old land,  
 Receive this token : many words chance-sown  
 May oftentimes have taken root and grown,  
 To bear good fruit perennially, like these.

## THE PATH THROUGH THE SNOW.



ARE and sunshiny, bright and bleak,  
 Rounded cold as a dead maid's cheek,  
 Folded white as a sinner's shroud,  
 Or wandering angel's robes of cloud. —

Well I know, well I know  
 Over the fields the path through the snow.

Narrow and rough it lies between  
 Wastes where the wind sweeps, biting keen :  
 Every step of the slippery road  
 Marks where some weary foot has trod ;  
     Who 'll go, who 'll go  
 After the rest on the path through the snow ?

They who would tread it must walk alone,  
 Silent and steadfast — one by one :  
 Dearest to dearest can only say,  
 “ My heart ! I 'll follow thee all the way,  
     As we go, as we go,  
 Each after each on this path through the snow.”

It may be under that western haze  
 Lurks the omen of brighter days ;  
 That each sentinel tree is quivering  
 Deep at its core with the sap of spring,



THE PATH THROUGH THE CORN. 113

And while we go, while we go,  
Green grass-blades pierce thro' the glittering snow.

It may be the unknown path will tend  
Never to any earthly end,  
Die with the dying day obscure,  
And never lead to a human door:  
That none know who did go  
Patiently once on this path through the snow.

No matter, no matter! the path shines plain;  
These pure snow-crystals will deaden pain;  
Above, like stars in the deep blue dark,  
Eyes that love us look down and mark.

Let us go, let us go,  
Whither heaven leads in the path thro' the snow.

THE PATH THROUGH THE CORN.



WAVY and bright in the summer air,  
Like a pleasant sea when the wind  
blows fair,  
And its roughest breath has scarcely  
curled  
The green highway to a distant world, —

Soft whispers passing from shore to shore,  
 As from hearts content, yet desiring more —  
     Who feels forlorn,  
 Wandering thus down the path through the  
     corn?

A short space since, and the dead leaves lay  
 Mouldering under the hedgerow gray,  
 Nor hum of insect, nor voice of bird,  
 O'er the desolate field was ever heard ;  
 Only at eve the pallid snow  
 Blushed rose-red in the red sun-glow ;  
     Till, one blest morn,  
 Shot up into life the young green corn.

Small and feeble, slender and pale,  
 It bent its head to the winter gale,  
 Harkened the wren's soft note of cheer,  
 Hardly believing spring was near :  
 Saw chestnuts bud out and champions blow,  
 And daisies mimic the vanished snow  
     Where it was born,  
 On either side of the path through the corn.

The corn, the corn, the beautiful corn,  
 Rising wonderful, morn by morn :  
 First, scarce as high as a fairy's wand,  
 Then, just in reach of a child's wee hand ;

Then growing, growing, tall, brave, and strong :  
 With the voice of new harvests in its song ;  
     While in fond scorn  
 The lark out-carols the whispering corn.

A strange, sweet path, formed day by day,  
 How, when, and wherefore, we cannot say,  
 No more than of our life-paths we know,  
 Whither they lead us, why we go ;  
 Or whether our eyes shall ever see  
 The wheat in the ear or the fruit on the tree ;  
     Yet, who 's forlorn ? —  
 He who watered the furrows can ripen the corn.

## THE GOOD OF IT.

A Cynic's Song.



SOME men strut proudly, all purple and  
     gold,  
     Hiding queer deeds 'neath a cloak  
     of good fame ;  
 I creep along, braving hunger and cold,  
     To keep my heart stainless as well as my name ;  
     So, so, where is the good of it ?

Some clothe bare Truth in fine garments of words,  
 Fetter her free limbs with cumbersome state :  
 With me, let me sit at the lordliest boards,  
 " I love " means *I love*, and " I hate " means  
*I hate*,  
 But, but, where is the good of it ?

Some have rich dainties and costly attire,  
 Guests fluttering round them and duns at the  
 door :  
 I crouch alone at my plain board and fire,  
 Enjoy what I pay for and scorn to have more.  
 Yet, yet, where is the good of it ?

Some gather round them a phalanx of friends,  
 Scattering affection like coin in a crowd ;  
 I keep my heart for the few that heaven sends,  
 Where they 'll find their names writ when I lie  
 in my shroud.  
 Still, still, where is the good of it ?

Some toy with love, lightly come, lightly go,  
 A blithe game at hearts, little worth, little  
 cost : —  
 I staked my whole soul on one desperate throw,  
 A life 'gainst an hour's sport. We played ;  
 and I — lost.  
 Ha, ha, such was the good of it !

MORAL: ADDED ON HIS DEATH-BED.

TURN the Past's mirror backward. Its shadows  
 removed,  
 The dim confused mass becomes softened, sub-  
 lime :  
 I have worked — I have felt — I have lived — I  
 have loved,  
 And each was a step towards the goal I now  
 climb :  
 Thou, God, Thou sawest the good of it.

## MINE.

For a German Air.



HOW my heart is beating as her name  
 I keep repeating,  
 And I drink up joy like wine :  
 O how my heart is beating as her name  
 I keep repeating,  
 For the lovely girl is mine !  
 She's rich, she's fair, beyond compare,  
 Of noble mind, serene and kind —

And how my heart is beating as her name I keep  
repeating,  
For the lovely girl is mine !

O how my heart is beating as her name I keep  
repeating,

In a music soft and fine ;

O how my heart is beating as her name I keep  
repeating,

For the girl I love is mine.

She owns no lands, has no white hands,

Her lot is poor, her life obscure ; —

Yet how my heart is beating as her name I keep  
repeating,

For the girl I love is mine !

*A GHOST AT THE DANCING.*



WIND-SWEPT tulip-bed — a colored  
cloud

Of butterflies careering in the air —

A many-figured arras stirred to life,

And merry unto midnight music dumb —

So the dance whirls. Do any think of thee,

Amiel, Amiel ?

Friends greet each other — countless rills of talk  
Meander round, scattering a spray of smiles.  
Surely — the news was false. One minute more  
And thou wilt stand here, tall and quiet-eyed,  
Shakespearian beauty in thy pensive face,  
Amiel, Amiel.

Many here knew and loved thee — I nor loved,  
Scarce knew — yet in thy place a shadow glides,  
And a face shapes itself from empty air,  
Watching the dancers, grave and quiet-eyed —  
Eyes that now see the angels evermore,  
Amiel, Amiel.

On just such night as this, 'midst dance and song,  
I bade thee carelessly a light good by —  
“Good by” — saidst thou; “A happy journey  
home!”

Was the unseen death-angel at thy side,  
Mocking those words — “*A happy journey home,*”  
Amiel, Amiel ?

Ay, we play fool's play still; thou hast gone home.  
While these dance here, a mile hence o'er thy  
grave  
Drifts the deep New Year snow. The wondrous  
gate  
We spoke of, thou hast entered; I without

Grope ignorant still — thou dost its secrets know,  
Amiel, Amiel.

What if, thus sitting where we sat last year,  
Thou camest, took'st up our broken thread of talk,  
And told'st of that new Home, which far I view,  
As children, wandering on through wintry fields,  
Mark on the hill the father's window shine,  
Amiel, Amiel ?

No. We shall see thy pleasant face no more ;  
Thy words on earth are ended. Yet thou livest ;  
'T is we who die. — I too, one day shall come,  
And, unseen, watch these shadows, quiet-eyed —  
Then flit back to thy land, the living land,  
Amiel, Amiel.

### MY CHRISTIAN NAME.



My Christian name, my Christian name,  
I never hear it now :

None have the right to utter it,  
'T is lost, I scarce know how.

My worldly name the world speaks loud ;  
Thank God for well-earned fame !



But silence sits at my cold hearth, —  
I have no household name.

My Christian name, my Christian name,  
It has an uncouth sound ;  
My mother chose it out of those  
In Bible pages found :  
Mother, whose accents made half sweet  
What else I held in shame,  
Dost thou remember up in heaven  
My poor lost Christian name ?

Brothers and sisters, mockers oft  
Of the quaint name I bore,  
Would I could leap back years, to hear  
Ye shout it out once more !  
One speaks it still, in written lines,  
The last fraternal claim :  
But the wide seas between us drown  
Its sound — my Christian name.

I had a long dream once. *Her* voice  
Might breathe the homely word,  
And make it music — as love makes  
Any name, said or heard.  
O, dumb, dumb lips ! — O, silent heart !  
Though it is no one's blame :  
Now while I live I'll never hear  
Her speak my Christian name.

## A DEAD BABY.

God send her bliss, and send me rest !  
 If her white footsteps calm  
 Should track my bleeding feet, God make  
 To them each blood-drop balm !  
 Peace — peace. O mother, put thou forth  
 Thine elder, holier claim,  
 And the first word I hear in heaven  
 May be my Christian name.

## A DEAD BABY.



LITTLE soul, for such brief space that  
 entered  
 In this little body straight and chilly,  
 Little life that fluttered and departed,  
 Like a moth from an unopened lily,  
 Little being, without name or nation,  
 Where is now thy place among creation ?

Little dark-lashed eyes, unclosèd never,  
 Little mouth, by earthly food ne'er tainted,  
 Little breast, that just once heaved, and settled  
 In eternal slumber, white and sainted, —  
 Child, shall I in future children's faces  
 See some pretty look that thine retraces ?

Is this thrill that strikes across my heart-strings  
And in dew beneath my eyelid gathers,  
Token of the bliss thou mightst have brought me,  
Dawning of the love they call a father's ?  
Do I hear through this still room a sighing  
Like thy spirit to me its author crying ?

Whence didst come and whither take thy journey,  
Little soul, of me and mine created ?  
Must thou lose us, and we thee, forever,  
O strange life, by minutes only dated ?  
Or new flesh assuming, just to prove us,  
In some other babe return and love us ?

Idle questions all : yet our beginning  
Like our ending, rests with the Life-sender,  
With whom naught is lost, and naught spent  
vainly :

Unto Him this little one I render.  
Hide the face — the tiny coffin cover :  
So, our first dream, our first hope — is over.

## FOR MUSIC.



LONG the shore, along the shore  
 I see the wavelets meeting :  
 But thee I see — ah, never more,  
 For all my wild heart's beating.

The little wavelets come and go,  
 The tide of life ebbs to and fro,  
 Advancing and retreating :  
 But from the shore, the steadfast shore,  
 The sea is parted never :  
 And mine I hold thee evermore,  
 Forever and forever.

Along the shore, along the shore,  
 I hear the waves resounding,  
 But thou wilt cross them nevermore  
 For all my wild heart's bounding :  
 The moon comes out above the tide  
 And quiets all the billows wide  
 Her pathway bright surrounding :  
 Thus on the shore, the dreary shore,  
 I walk with weak endeavor ;  
 I have thy love's light evermore,  
 Forever and forever.

THE CANARY IN HIS CAGE.



ING away, ay, sing away,  
Merry little bird,  
Always gayest of the gay,  
Though a woodland roundelay  
You ne'er sung nor heard ;  
Though your life from youth to age  
Passes in a narrow cage.

Near the window wild birds fly,  
Trees are waving round :  
Fair things everywhere you spy  
Through the glass pane's mystery,  
Your small life's small bound :  
Nothing hinders your desire  
But a little gilded wire.

Like a human soul you seem  
Shut in golden bars :  
Placed amidst earth's sunshine-stream,  
Singing to the morning beam,  
Dreaming 'neath the stars ;  
Seeing all life's pleasures clear, —  
But they never can come near.

Never! Sing, bird-poet mine,  
As most poets do; —  
Guessing by an instinct fine  
At some happiness divine  
Which they never knew.  
Lonely in a prison bright  
Hymning for the world's delight.

Yet, my birdie, you're content  
In your tiny eage:  
Not a carol thence is sent  
But for happiness is meant —  
Wisdom pure as sage:  
Teaching, the true poet's part  
Is to sing with merry heart.

So, lie down thou peevish pen,  
Eyes, shake off all tears;  
And my wee bird, sing again:  
I'll translate your song to men  
In these future years.  
"Howsoe'er thy lot's assigned,  
Bear it with a cheerful mind."

CONSTANCY IN INCONSTANCY.

AN OLD MAN'S CONFESSION.



HE has a large still heart — this lady of  
mine,  
(Not mine, i' faith! nor would I that  
she were :)

She walks this world of ours like Greecian nymph,  
Pure with a marble pureness, moving on  
Among the herd of men, environed round  
With native airs of deep Olympian calm.  
I have a great love for that lady of mine :  
I like to watch her motions, trick of face,  
And turn of thought, when speaking high and wise  
The tongue of gods, not men. Ay, every day,  
And twenty times a day, I start to catch  
Some look or gesture of familiar mould,  
And then my panting soul leans forth to her  
Like some sick traveller who astonished sees  
Gliding across the distant twilight fields —  
His lovely, lost, beloved memory-fields —  
The shadowy people of an earlier world.  
I have a friend, how dearly liked, heart-warm,  
Did I confess, sure she and all would smile :  
I watch her as she steals in some dull room

That brightens at her entrance — slow lets fall  
 A word or two of wise simplicity,  
 Then goes, and at her going all seems dark.  
 Little she knows this : little thinks each brow  
 Lightens, each heart grows purer with her eyes,  
 Good, honest eyes — clear, upward, righteous eyes,  
 That look as if they saw the dim unseen,  
 And learnt from thence their deep compassionate  
     calm.

Why do I precious hold this friend of mine ?  
 Why in our talks, our quiet fireside talks,  
 When we, two earnest travellers through the dark,  
 Grasp at the guiding threads that homeward lead,  
 Seems it another soul than hers looks out  
 From these her eyes ? — until I oftentimes start  
 And quiver, as when some soft ignorant hand  
 Touches the barb hid in a long-healed wound.  
 Yet still no blame, but thanks to thee, dear friend,  
 Ay, even when we wander baek at eve,  
 Thy careless arm loose linked within my own —  
 The same height as I gaze down — nay, the hair  
 Her very color — fluttering 'neath the stars —  
 The same large stars which lit that earlier world.  
 I have another love — whose dewy looks  
 Are fresh with life's young dawn. I prophesy  
 The streak of light now trembling on the hills  
 Will broaden out into a glorious day.  
 Thou sweet one, meek as good, and good as fair,



Wise as a woman, harmless as a child,  
 I love thee well! And yet not thee, not thee,  
 God knows — *they* know who sit among the stars.  
 As one whose sun was darkened before noon,  
 Creeps patiently along the twilight lands,  
 Sees glow-worms, meteors, or tapers kind  
 Of an hour's burning, stops awhile to mark,  
 Thanks heaven for them, but never calls them  
 day —

So love I these, and more. Yet thou, my sun,  
 Who rose, leaped to thy zenith, sat there throned,  
 And made the whole earth day — look, if thou  
 canst,

Out of thy veiled glory, and behold  
 How all these lesser lights but come and go,  
 Mere reflexes of thee. Be it so! I keep  
 My face unto the eastward, where thou stand'st —  
 I *know* thou stand'st — behind the purpling hills,  
 And I shall wake and find morn in the world.

## BURIED TO-DAY.

February 23, 1858.



BURIED to-day.

When the soft green buds are burst-  
ing out,

And up on the south wind comes a  
shout

Of village boys and girls at play  
In the mild spring evening gray.

Taken away

Sturdy of heart and stout of limb,

From eyes that drew half their light from him,

And put low, low, underneath the clay,  
In his spring — on this spring day.

Passes away

All the pride of boy-life begun,

All the hope of life yet to run ;

Who dares to question when One saith "Nay."  
Murmur not — only pray.

Enters to-day

Another body in churchyard sod,

Another soul on the life in God.

His Christ was buried — and lives alway :  
Trust Him, and go your way.

THE MILL.

For an Irish Tune.



WINDING and grinding  
Round goes the mill :  
Winding and grinding  
Should never stand still.

Ask not if neighbor  
Grind great or small :  
Spare not *your* labor,  
Grind *your* wheat all.

Winding and grinding round goes the mill :  
Winding and grinding should never stand still.

Winding and grinding  
Work through the day,  
Grief never minding —  
Grind it away !  
What though tears dropping  
Rust as they fall ?  
Have no wheel stopping —  
Work comforts all.

Winding and grinding round goes the mill :  
Winding and grinding should never stand still.

## NORTH WIND.



**F**RESH wind, strong wind, sweeping o'er  
 the mountains,  
 Fresh wind, free wind, blowing from  
 the sea,  
 Pour forth thy vials like streams from airy foun-  
 tains,  
 Draughts of life to me.

Clear wind, cold wind, like a Northern giant,  
 Stars brightly threading thy cloud-driven hair,  
 Thrilling the blank night with thy voice defiant,  
 Lo! I meet thee there.

Wild wind, bold wind, like a strong-armed angel,  
 Clasp me and kiss me with thy kisses divine;  
 Breathe in this dulled ear thy secret sweet evan-  
 gel —  
 Mine — and only mine.

Fierce wind, mad wind, howling o'er the nations,  
 Knew'st thou how leapeth my heart as thou go-  
 est by :  
 Ah, thou wouldst pause awhile in a sudden patience  
 Like a human sigh.

Then opes a rift and lets thee enter in ;  
And with thy beauty shining on its breast,  
Feels no more its own blackness — *thou art fair.*

Dost thou thus love me, O thou all beloved,  
In whose large store the very meanest coin  
Would out-buy my whole wealth? Yet here thou  
                  comest

Like a kind heiress from her purple and down  
Uprising, who for pity cannot sleep,  
But goes forth to the stranger at her gate —  
The beggared stranger at her beauteous gate —  
And clothes and feeds; scarce blest till she has  
                  blest.

Dost thou thus love me, O thou pure of heart,  
Whose very looks are prayers? What couldst  
                  thou see

In this forsaken pool by the yew-wood's side,  
To sit down at its bank, and dip thy hand,  
Saying, "It is so clear!" — And lo, ere long  
Its blackness caught the shimmer of thy wings,  
Its slimes slid downward from thy stainless palm,  
Its depths grew still that there thy form might rise.

O beautiful! O well-beloved! O rich  
In all that makes my need! I lay me down  
I' the shadow of thy love, and feel no pain.

The cloud floats on, thee glittering on its breast,  
 The beggar wears thy purple as his own :  
 The noisome waves, in made calm, creep to thy feet  
 Rejoicing that they yet can image thee,  
 And beyond thee, God's heaven, thick-sown with  
 stars.

### THE UNKNOWN COUNTRY.

To a German Air.



HERE is the unknown country ? ”

I whispered sad and slow, —

“ The strange and awful country

To which I soon must go, must go,

To which I soon must go ? ”

Out of the unknown country

A voice sang soft and low : —

“ O pleasant is that country

And sweet it is to go, to go,

And sweet it is to go.

“ Along the shining country

The peaceful rivers flow :

And in that wondrous country  
The tree of life does grow, does grow,  
The tree of life does grow."

Ah, then into that country  
Of which I nothing know,  
The everlasting country,  
With willing heart I go, I go,  
With willing heart I go.

A CHILD'S SMILE.

"For I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."



CHILD'S smile — nothing more ;  
Quiet, and soft, and grave, and seldom  
seen ;

Like summer lightning o'er,  
Leaving the little face again serene.

I think, boy well-beloved,  
Thine angel, who did grieve to see how far  
Thy childhood is removed  
From sports that dear to other children are,

On this pale cheek has thrown  
The brightness of his countenance, and made  
A beauty like his own —  
That, while we see it, we are half afraid,

And marvel, will it stay?  
Or, long ere manhood, will that angel fair,  
Departing some sad day,  
Steal the child-smile and leave the shadow care?

Nay, fear not. As is given  
Unto this child the father watching o'er,  
His angel up in heaven  
Beholds Our Father's face for evermore.

And he will help him bear  
His burthen, as his father helps him now;  
So may he come to wear  
That happy child-smile on an old man's brow.



## VIOLETS.

SENT IN A LITTLE BOX.



LET them lie, yes, let them lie,  
 They 'll be dead to-morrow:  
 Lift the lid up quietly  
 As you 'd lift the mystery  
 Of a shrouded sorrow.

Let them lie, the fragrant things,  
 Their sweet souls thus giving:  
 Let no breezes' ambient wings,  
 And no useless water-springs  
 Lure them into living.

They have lived — they live no more:  
 Nothing can requite them  
 For the gentle life they bore  
 And up-yielded in full store  
 While it did delight them.

Yet, poor flowers, not sad to die  
 In the hand that slew ye,  
 Did ye leave the open sky,  
 And the winds that wandered by,  
 And the bees that knew ye.

Giving up a small earth place,  
And a day of blooming,  
Here to lie in narrow space,  
Smiling in this sickly face,  
This dull air perfuming?

O my pretty violets dead,  
Coffined from all gazes,  
We will also smiling shed  
Out of our flowers witherèd,  
Perfume of sweet praises.

And as ye, for this poor sake,  
Love with life are buying,  
So, I doubt not, ONE will make  
All our gathered flowers to take  
Richer scent through dying.

EDENLAND.

For Music.



DOU remember where in starlight  
We two wandered hand in hand,  
While the night-flowers poured their  
perfume,

And night-air the still earth fanned? —  
There I, walking yester even,  
Felt like a ghost in Edenland.

I remember all you told me,  
Looking up as we did stand,  
While my heart poured out its perfume,  
Like the night-flowers in your hand;  
And the path where we two wandered  
Seemed not like earth but Edenland.

Now the stars shine paler, colder  
Night-flowers die without your hand;  
Yet my spirit walks beside you  
Everywhere, unsought, unbanned.  
And I wait till we shall wander  
Under the stars of Edenland.

## THE HOUSE OF CLAY.



HERE was a house, a house of clay,  
 Wherein the inmate sat all day,  
 Merry and poor ;  
 For Hope sat with her, heart to heart,  
 Fond and kind, fond and kind,  
 Vowing he never would depart, —  
 Till all at once he changed his mind :  
 “ Sweetheart, good by ! ” He slipped away  
 And shut the door.

But Love came past, and, looking in,  
 With smile that pierced like sunbeam thin  
 Through wall, roof, floor,  
 Stood in the midst of that poor room,  
 Grand and fair, grand and fair,  
 Making a glory out of gloom : —  
 Till at the window mocked grim Care :  
 Love sighed ; “ All lose, and nothing win ? ” —  
 He shut the door.

Then o'er the close-barred house of clay  
 Kind clematis and woodbine gay  
 Crept more and more ;  
 And bees hummed merrily outside,

Loud and strong, loud and strong,<sup>l</sup>  
 The inner silentness to hide,  
 The patient silence all day long ;  
 Till evening touched with finger gray  
 The bolted door.

Most like, the next step passing by  
 Will be the Angel's, whose calm eye  
 Marks rich, marks poor :  
 Who, fearing not, at any gate  
 Stands and calls, stands and calls ;  
 At which the inmate opens straight, —  
 Whom, ere the crumbling clay-house falls,  
 He takes in kind arms silently,  
 And shuts the door.

## WINTER MOONLIGHT.



LOUD-VOICED night, with the wild  
 wind blowing  
 Many a tune ;  
 Stormy night, with white rain-clouds  
 going  
 Over the moon ;  
 Mystic night, that each minute changes,  
 Now as blue as the mountain-ranges

Far, far away ;  
Now as black as a heart where strange is  
Joy, night or day.

Wondrous moonlight, unlike all moonlights  
Since I was born ;  
That on a hundred, bright as noonlights,  
Looks in slow scorn, —  
Moonlights where the old vine-leaves quiver,  
Moonlights shining on vale and river,  
Where old paths lie ;  
Moonlights — Night, blot their like forever  
Out of the sky !

Hail, new moonlight, fierce, wild, and stormy,  
Wintry and bold !  
Hail, sharp wind, that can strengthen, warm me,  
If ne'er so cold !  
Not chance-driven this deluge rages,  
ONE doth pour out and ONE assuages ;  
Under His hand  
Drifting, Noah-like, into the ages  
shall touch land.

THE PLANTING.

“I said to my little son, who was watching tearfully a tree he had planted, — ‘Let it alone: it will grow while you are sleeping.’”



LANT it safe and sure, my child,  
Then cease watching and cease  
weeping;

You have done your utmost part:  
Leave it with a quiet heart:  
It will grow while you are sleeping.

“But, O father,” says the child,  
With a troubled face up-creeping,  
“How can I but think and grieve  
When the fierce wind comes at eve  
Tearing it — and I lie sleeping!

“I have loved my young tree so!  
In each bud seen leaf and floweret,  
Watered it each day with prayers,  
Guarded it with many cares,  
Lest some canker should devour it.

O good father,” sobs the child,  
“If I come in summer’s shining

And my pretty tree be dead,  
How the sun will seorch my head,  
How I shall sit lorn, repining !

“ Rather let me, evermore,  
An incessant watch thus keeping,  
Bear the cold, the storm, the frost,  
That my treasure be not lost —  
Ay, bear aught — but idle sleeping.”

Sternly said the father then,  
“ Who art thou, child, vainly grieving ?  
Canst *thou* send the balmy dews,  
Or the rich sap interfuse  
Through the dead trunk, inly living ?

“ Canst thou bid the heavens restrain  
Natural tempests for thy praying ?  
Canst thou bend one tender shoot,  
Urge the growth of one frail root,  
Keep one leaflet from decaying ?

“ If it live to bloom all fair,  
Will it praise *thee* for its blossom ?  
If it die, will any plaints  
Reach thee, as with kings and saints  
Drops it to the cold earth’s bosom ?



“Plant it — all thou canst! — with prayers :

It is safe 'neath His sky's folding  
Who the whole earth compasses,  
Whether we watch more or less,  
His wide eye all things beholding.

“Should He need a goodly tree

For the shelter of the nations,  
He will make it grow : if not,  
Never yet His love forgot  
Human love, and faith, and patience.

“Leave thy treasure in His hand —

Cease all watching and all weeping :  
Years hence, men its shade may crave,  
And its mighty branches wave  
Beautiful above thy sleeping.”

If his hope, tear-sown, that child

Garnered after joyful reaping,  
Know I not : yet unawares  
Gleams this truth through many cares,  
“*It will grow while thou art sleeping.*”

## SITTING ON THE SHORE.



HE tide has ebbd away :

No more wild dashings 'gainst the adamant rocks,

Nor swayings amidst sea-weed false that mocks

The hues of gardens gay :

No laugh of little wavelets at their play :

No lucid pools reflecting heaven's clear brow —

Both storm and calm alike are ended now.

The rocks sit gray and lone :

The shifting sand is spread so smooth and dry,

That not a tide might ever have swept by

Stirring it with rude moan :

Only some weedy fragments idly thrown

To rot beneath the sky, tell what has been :

But Desolation's self has grown serene.

Afar the mountains rise,

And the broad estuary widens out,

All sunshine ; wheeling round and round about

Seaward, a white bird flies.

A bird ? Nay, seems it rather in these eyes

A spirit, o'er Eternity's dim sea

Calling — “ Come thou where all we glad souls be.

O life, O silent shore,  
 Where we sit patient ; O great sea beyond  
 To which we turn with solemn hope and fond,  
 But sorrowful no more :

A little while, and then we too shall soar  
 Like white-winged sea-birds into the Infinite Deep :  
 Till then, Thou, Father — wilt our spirits keep.

## EUDOXIA.

## FIRST PICTURE.



SWEETEST my sister, my sister that  
 sits in the sun,  
 Her lap full of jewels, and roses in show-  
 ers on her hair ;

Soft smiling and counting her riches up slow, one  
 by one,

Cool-browed, shaking dew from her garlands —  
 those garlands so fair,

Many gasp, climb, snatch, struggle, and die for —  
*her* every-day wear !

O beauteous my sister, turn downwards those mild  
 eyes of thine,

Lest they stab with their smiling, and blister or  
 scorch where they shine.

Young sister who never yet sat for an hour in the  
cold,  
Whose cheek scarcely feels half the roses that  
throng to caress,  
Whose light hands hold loosely these jewels and  
silver and gold,  
Remember thou those in the world who forever on  
press  
In perils and watchings, and hunger and naked-  
ness,  
While thou sit'st content in the sunlight that  
round thee doth shine.  
Take heed! these have long borne their burthen —  
now lift thou up thine.

Be meek — as befits one whose cup to the brim is  
love-crowned,  
While others in dry dust drop empty — What,  
what canst thou know  
Of the wild human tide that goes sweeping eter-  
nally round  
The isle where thou sit'st pure and calm as a statue  
of snow,  
Around which good thoughts like kind angels con-  
tinually go?  
Be pitiful. *Whose* eyes once turned from the an-  
gels to shine  
Upon publicans, sinners? O sister, 't will not  
pollute thine.

Who, even-eyed, looks on His children, the black  
 and the fair,  
 The loved and the unloved, the tempted, untempt-  
 ed — marks all,  
 And metes — not as man metes ? If thou with  
 weak tender hand dare  
 To take up His balances — say where His justice  
 should fall,  
 Far better be Magdalen dead at the gate of thy  
 hall —  
 Dead, sinning, and loving, and contrite, and par-  
 doned, to shine  
 Midst the saints high in heaven, than thou, angel  
 sister of mine !

## EUDOXIA.

## SECOND PICTURE.



DEAREST my sister, my sister who  
 sits by the hearth,  
 With lids softly drooping, or lifted up  
 saintly and calm,  
 With household hands folded, or opened for help  
 and for balm,

And lips, ripe and dewy, or ready for innocent  
mirth, —

Thy life rises upwards to heaven every day like a  
psalm

Which the singer sings sleeping, and waked, would  
half wondering say —

“I sang not. Nay, how could I sing thus? — I  
only do pray.”

O gentlest my sister, who walks in at every dark  
door

Whether bolted or open, unheedful of welcome or  
frown ;

But entering silent as sunlight, and there sitting  
down,

Illumines the damp walls and shines pleasant  
shapes on the floor,

And unlocks dim chambers where low lies sad  
Hope, without crown,

Uplifts her from sackcloth and ashes and black  
mourning weeds,

Re-crowns and re-clothes her. — Then, on to the  
next door that needs.

O blessed my sister, whose spirit so wholly dost  
live

In loving, that even the word “loved,” with its  
rapturous sound,

Rings faintly, like earth-tunes when angels are  
 hymning around :  
 Whose eyes say : “ Less happy methinks to receive  
 than to give.” —  
 So whatsoever we give, may One give to thee  
 without bound,  
 All best gifts — all dearest gifts — whether His  
 right hand do close  
 Or open — He holds it forever above thee ; — He  
 knows !

## EUDOXIA.

## THIRD PICTURE.



**S**ILENT my sister, who stands by my  
 side at the shore,  
 Baek gazing with me on those waves  
 which we mortals call years,  
 That rose, grew, and threatened, and climaxed,  
 and broke, and were o'er,  
 While we still sit watchng and watching, our  
 cheeks free from tears —  
 O sister, with looks so familiar, yet strange, flit-  
 ting by,  
 Say, say, hast thou been to those dead years as  
 faithful as I ?

Have they cast at thy feet also, jewels and whiten-  
 ing bones,  
 Gold, silver, and wreck-wood, dank sea-weed and  
 treasures of cost ?  
 Hast thou buried thy dead, sought thy jewels  
 'midst shingle and stones,  
 And learnt how the lost is the found, and the  
 found is the lost ?  
 Or stood with clear eyes upturned placid 'twixt  
 sorrow and mirth,  
 As asking deep questions that cannot be answered  
 on earth ? —

I know not. Who knoweth ? Our own souls we  
 scarcely do know,  
 And none knows his brother's. Who judges, con-  
 temns, or bewails,  
 Or mocketh, or praiseth ? In this world's strange  
 vanishing show,  
 The one truth is *loving*. O sister, the dark cloud  
 that veils  
 All life, lets this rift through to glorify future and  
 past.  
 "Love ever — love only — love faithfully — love to  
 the last."



BENEDETTA MINELLI.

I.

THE NOVICE.



T is near morning. Ere the next night  
fall

I shall be made the bride of heaven.  
Then home

To my still marriage chamber I shall come,  
And spouseless, childless, watch the slow years  
crawl.

These lips will never meet a softer touch  
Than the stone crucifix I kiss ; no child  
Will clasp this neck. Ah, virgin-mother mild,  
Thy painted bliss will mock me overmuch.

This is the last time I shall twist the hair  
My mother's hand wreathed, till in dust she lay :  
The name, her name, given on my baptism-day,  
This is the last time I shall ever bear.

O weary world, O heavy life, farewell !  
Like a tired child that creeps into the dark

To sob itself asleep, where none will mark, —  
So creep I to my silent convent cell.

Friends, lovers whom I loved not, kindly hearts  
Who grieve that I should enter this still door,  
Grieve not. Closing behind me evermore,  
Me from all anguish, as all joy, it parts.

Love, whom alone I loved ; who stand'st far off,  
Lifting compassionate eyes that could not save,  
Remember, this my spirit's quiet grave  
Hides me from worldly pity, worldly scoff.

'T was less thy hand than Heaven's which came  
between,  
And dashed my cup down. See, I shed no tears :  
And if I think at all of vanished years,  
'T is but to bless thee, dear, for what has been.

My soul continually does cry to thee ;  
In the night-watches ghost-like stealing out  
From its flesh-tomb, and hovering thee about ;  
So live that I in heaven thy face may see !

Live, noble heart, of whom this heart of mine  
Was half unworthy. Build up actions great,  
That I down looking from the crystal gate  
Smile o'er our dead hopes urned in such a shrine.

Live, keeping aye thy spirit undefiled,  
 That, when we stand before our Master's feet,  
 I with an angel's love may crown complete  
 The woman's faith, the worship of the child.

Dawn, solemn bridal morn ; ope, bridal door ;  
 I enter. My vowed soul may Heaven now take ;  
 My heart its virgin spousal for thy sake ;  
 O love, keeps sacred thus forevermore.

## II.

## THE SISTER OF MERCY.



Is it then so ? — Good friends, who sit and  
 sigh  
 While I lie smiling, are my life's sands  
 run ?

Will my next matins, hymned beyond the sun,  
 Mingle with those of saints and martyrs high ?

Shall I with these my gray hairs turned to gold,  
 My aged limbs new clad in garments white,  
 Stand all transfigured in the angels' sight,  
 Singing triumphantly that moan of old, —

*Thy will be done?* It was done. O my God,  
 Thou know'st, when over grief's tempestuous sea  
 My broken-wingèd soul fled home to Thee,  
 I writhed, but never murmured at Thy rod.

It fell upon me, stern at first, then soft  
 As parent's kisses, till the wound was healed;  
 And I went forth a laborer in Thy field:—  
 They best can bind who have been bruised oft.

And Thou wert pitiful. I came heart-sore,  
 And drank Thy cup because earth's cups ran  
 dry:  
 Thou slew'st me not for that impiety,  
 But madest the draught so sweet, I thirst no more.

I came for silence, heavy rest, or death:  
 Thou gavest instead life, peace, and holy toil:  
 My sighing lips from sorrow didst assoil,  
 And fill with righteous thankfulness each breath.

Therefore I praise Thee that Thou shuttest Thine  
 ears  
 Unto my misery: didst Thy will, not mine:  
 That to this length of days Thy hand divine,  
 My feet from falling kept, mine eyes from tears.

Sisters, draw near. Hear my last words serene:  
 When I was young I walked in mine own ways,

Worshipped — not God : sought not alone His  
praise ;  
So he cut down my gourd while it was green.

And then He o'er me threw His holy shade,  
That though no other mortal plants might grow,  
Mocking the beauty that was long laid low,  
I dwelt in peace, and His commands obeyed.

I thank Him for all joy and for all pain :  
For healèd pangs, for years of calm content :  
For blessedness of spending and being spent  
In His high service where all loss is gain.

I bless Him for my life and for my death ;  
But most, that in my death my life is crowned,  
Since I see there, with angels gathering round,  
*My* angel. Ay, love, thou hast kept thy faith,

I mine. The golden portals will not close  
Like those of earth, between us. Reach thy  
hand !

No *miserere*, sisters. Chant out grand  
*Te Deum laudamus*. Now, — 't is all repose.

## A DREAM OF DEATH.



HERE shall we sail to-day?" — Thus  
 said, methought,  
 A voice, that only could be heard in  
 dreams :

And on we glided without mast or oar,  
 A wondrous boat upon a wondrous sea.

Sudden, the shore curved inward to a bay,  
 Broad, calm, with gorgeous sea-weeds waving slow  
 Beneath the water, like rich thoughts that stir  
 In the mysterious deep of poets' hearts.

So still, so fair, so rosy in the dawn  
 Lay that bright bay : yet something seemed to  
 breathe,  
 Or in the air, or from the whispering waves,  
 Or from that voice, as near as one's own soul,

"*There was a wreck last night.*" A wreck? then  
 where

The ship, the crew? — The all-entombing sea  
 On which is writ nor name nor chronicle  
 Laid itself o'er them with smooth crystal smile.

“*Yet was the wreck last night.*” And gazing down  
Deep down below the surface, we were ware  
Of ghastly faces with their open eyes  
Uplooking to the dawn they could not see.

One moved with moving sea-weeds : one lay prone,  
The tinted fishes gliding o’er his breast ;  
One, caught by floating hair, roeked quietly  
Upon his reedy cradle, like a child.

“The wreck has been” — said the melodious voice,  
“Yet all is peace. The dead, that, while we slept,  
Struggled for life, now sleep and fear no storms :  
O’er them let us not weep when heaven smiles.”

So we sailed on above the diamond sands,  
Bright sea-flowers, and white faces stony ealm,  
Till the waves bore us to the open main,  
And the great sun arose upon the world.

## A DREAM OF RESURRECTION.



O heavenly beautiful it lay,  
 It was less like a human corse  
 Than that fair shape in which perforce  
 A lost hope clothes itself away.

The dream showed very plain : the bed  
 Where that known unknown face reposed, —  
 A woman's face with eyelids closed,  
 A something precious that was dead ;

A something, lost on this side life,  
 By which the mourner came and stood,  
 And laid down, ne'er to be indued,  
 All flaunting robes of earthly strife ;

Shred off, like votive locks of hair,  
 Youth's ornaments of pride and strength,  
 And cast them in their golden length  
 The silence of that bier to share.

No tears fell, — but with gazings long  
 Lorn memory tried to print that face  
 On the heart's ever-vacant place,  
 With a sun-finger, sharp and strong. —



Then kisses, dropping without sound,  
And solemn arms wound round the dead,  
And lifting from the natural bed  
Into the coffin's strange new bound.

Yet still no farewell, or belief  
In death, no more than one believes  
In some dread truth that sudden weaves  
The whole world in a shroud of grief.

And still unanswered kisses ; still  
Warm clingings to the image cold  
With an incredulous faith's close fold,  
Creative in its fierce "*I will.*"

Hush, — hush ! the marble eyelids move,  
The kissed lips quiver into breath :  
Avaunt, thou mockery of Death !  
Avaunt ! — we are conquerors, I and Love.

Corpse of dead Hope, awake, arise,  
A living Hope that only slept  
Until the tears thus overwept  
Had washed the blindness from our eyes.

Come back into the upper day :  
Pluck off these cerements. Patient shroud,  
We'll wrap thee as a garment proud  
Round the fair shape we thought was clay.

Clasp, arms ; cling, soul ; eyes, drink anew  
 The beauty that returns with breath :  
 Faith, that out-loved this trance-like death,  
 May see this resurrection too.

## ON THE CLIFF-TOP.



FACE upward to the sky  
 Quiet I lie :  
 Quiet as if the finger of God's will  
 Had bade this human mechanism " be  
 still ! "

And sent the intangible essence, this strange *I*,  
 All wondering forth to His eternity.

Below, the sea's sound, faint  
 As dying saint  
 Telling of gone-by sorrows long at rest :  
 Above, the fearless sea-gull's shimmering breast  
 Painted a moment on the dark blue skies —  
 A hovering joy, that while I watch it flies.

Alike unheeded now  
 Old griefs, and thou  
 Quick-wingèd Joy, that like a bird at play  
 Pleasest thyself to visit me to-day :

On the cliff-top, earth dim and heaven clear,  
My soul lies calmly, above hope — or fear.

But not — (do Thou forbid  
Whose stainless lid  
Wept tears at Lazarus' grave, and looking down  
Afar off, upon Solyma's doomed town.)  
Ah, not above *love* — human yet divine —  
Which, Thee seen first, in Thee sees all of Thine!

Is 't sunset? The keen breeze  
Blows from the seas:  
And at my side a pleasant vision stands  
With her brown eyes and kind extended hands.  
Dear, we 'll go down together and full fain  
From the cliff-top to the busy world again.

## AN EVENING GUEST.



F, in the silence of this lonely eve,  
With the street lamp pale flickering  
on the wall,  
An angel were to whisper me, "Be-  
lieve —  
It shall be given thee. Call!" — whom should I  
call?

And then I were to see thee gliding in  
Clad in known garments, that with empty fold  
Lie in my keeping, and my fingers, thin  
As thine were once, to feel in thy safe hold :

“ I should fall weeping on thy neck and say,  
“ I have so suffered since — since — ” But my  
tears  
Would stop, remembering how thou count'st thy  
day,  
A day that is with God a thousand years.

Then what are these sad days, months, years of  
mine,  
To thine eternity of full delight ?  
What my whole life, when myriad lives divine  
May wait, each leading to a higher height ?

I lose myself — I faint. Beloved, best,  
Let me still dream, thy dear humanity  
Sits with me here, my head upon thy breast,  
And then I will go back to heaven with thee.

## AFTER SUNSET.



EST — *rest* — four little letters, one short word,

Enfolding an infinitude of bliss —

Rest is upon the earth. The heavy clouds

Hang poised in silent ether, motionless,  
Seeking nor sun nor breeze. No restless star  
Thrills the sky's gray-robed breast with pulsing  
rays,

The night's heart has throbbèd out.

No grass blade stirs,  
No downy-wingèd moth comes flittering by  
Caught by the light — Thank God, there is no light,  
No open-eyed, loud-voiced, quick-motioned light,  
Nothing but gloom and rest.

A row of trees  
Along the hill horizon, westward, stands  
All black and still, as if it were a rank  
Of fallen angels, melancholy met  
Before the amber gate of Paradise —  
The bright shut gate, whose everlasting smile  
Deadens despair to ealm.

O, better far  
Better than bliss is rest! If suddenly

Those burnished doors of molten gold, steel-barred,  
 Which the sun closed behind him as he went  
 Into his bridal chamber — were to burst  
 Asunder with a clang, and in a breath  
 God's mysteries were revealed — His kingdom  
                   came —

The multitudes of heavenly messengers  
 Hastening throughout all space — the thunder quire  
 Of praise — the obedient lightnings' lambent gleam  
 Around the unseen Throne — should I not sink  
 Crushed by the weight of such beatitudes,  
 Crying, "Rest, only rest, thou merciful God!  
 Hide me within the hollow of Thy hand  
 In some dark corner of the universe,  
 Thy bright, full, busy universe, that blinds,  
 Deafens, and tortures — Give me only *rest!*"

O for a soul-sleep, long and deep and still!  
 To lie down quiet after the weary day,  
 Dropping all pleasant flowers from the numbed  
                   hands,  
 Bidding good-night to all companions dear,  
 Drawing the curtains on this darkened world,  
 Closing the eyes, and with a patient sigh  
 Murmuring "Our Father" — fall on sleep, till  
                   dawn!

## THE GARDEN-CHAIR.

## TWO PORTRAITS.



PLEASANT picture, full of meanings  
deep,

Old age, calm sitting in the July sun,  
On withered hands half-leaning — fee-  
ble hands,

That after their life-labors, light or hard,  
Their girlish broideries, their marriage-ringed  
Domestic duties, their sweet eradle cares,  
Have dropped into the quiet-folded ease  
Of fourscore years. How peacefully the eyes  
Face us! Contented, unregretful eyes,  
That carry in them the whole tale of life  
With its one moral — “ Thus all was — thus best.”  
Eyes now so near unto their closing mild  
They seem to pierce direct through all that maze,  
As eyes immortal do.

Here — Youth. She stands  
Under the roses, with elastic foot  
Poised to step forward; eager-eyed, yet grave  
Beneath the mystery of the unknown To-come,  
Though longing for its coming. Firm prepared

(So say the lifted head and close, sweet mouth)  
 For any future: though the dreamy hope  
 Throned on her girlish forehead, whispers fond,  
 "Surely they err who say that life is hard;  
 Surely it shall not be with me as these."

God knows: He only. And so best, dear child,  
 Thou woman-statured, sixteen-year-old child,  
 Meet bravely the impenetrable Dark  
 Under thy roses. Bud and blossom thou  
 Fearless as they — if thou art planted safe,  
 Whether for gathering or for withering, safe  
 In the King's garden.

## AN OLD IDEA.



STREAM of my life, dull, placid river,  
 flow!  
 I have no fear of the ingulfing seas:  
 Neither I look before me nor behind,  
 But, lying mute with wave-dipped hand, float on.

It was not always so. My brethren, see  
 This war-stained, trembling palm. It keeps the  
 sign



Of youth's mad wrestling with the waves that drift  
Immutably, eternally along.

I would have had them flow through fields and  
flowers,  
Giving and taking freshness, perfume, joy;  
It winds through — here. Be silent, O my soul!  
— The finger of God's wisdom drew its line.

So I lean back and look up to the stars,  
And count the ripples circling to the shore,  
And watch the solemn river rolling on  
Until it widen to the open seas.

## PARABLES.

“Hold every mortal joy  
With a loose hand.”



W e clutch our joys as children do their  
flowers;  
We look at them, but scarce believe  
them ours,  
Till our hot palms have smirched their colors rare  
And crushed their dewy beauty unaware.

But the wise Gardener, whose they were, comes by  
 At hours when we expect not, and with eye  
 Mournful yet sweet, compassionate though stern,  
 Takes them.

Then in a moment we discern  
 By loss, what was possession, and, half-wild  
 With misery, cry out like angry child :  
 "O cruel ! thus to snatch my posy fine !"  
 He answers tenderly, "Not thine, but mine,"  
 And points to those stained fingers which do prove  
 Our fatal cherishing, our dangerous love ;  
 At which we, chidden, a pale silence keep ;  
 Yet evermore must weep, and weep, and weep.  
 So on through gloomy ways and thorny brakes,  
 Quiet and slow, our shrinking feet he takes  
 Led by the soiled hand, which, laved in tears,  
 More and more clean beneath his sight appears.  
 At length the heavy eyes with patience shine —  
 "I am content. Thou took'st but what was thine."

And then he us his beauteous garden shows,  
 Where bountiful the Rose of Sharon grows :  
 Where in the breezes opening spice-buds swell,  
 And the pomegranates yield a pleasant smell :  
 While to and fro peace-sandalled angels move  
 In the pure air that they — not we — call Love :  
 An air so rare and fine, our grosser breath  
 Cannot inhale till purified by death.

And thus we, struck with longing joy, adore,  
 And, satisfied, wait mute without the door,  
 Until the gracious Gardener maketh sign,  
 "Enter in peace. All this is mine — and thine."

## LETTICE.



SAID to Lettice, our sister Lettice,  
 While drooped and glistened her eye-  
 lash brown,  
 "Your man's a poor man, a cold and  
 dour man,

There's many a better about our town."

She smiled securely — "He loves me purely :

A true heart's safe, both in smile or frown ;  
 And nothing harms me while his love warms me,  
 Whether the world go up or down."

"He comes of strangers, and they are rangers,  
 And ill to trust, girl, when out of sight :  
 Fremd folk may blame ye, and e'en defame ye, —  
 A gown oft handled looks seldom white."

She raised serenely her eyelids queenly, —

"My innocence is my whitest gown ;  
 No harsh tongue grieves me while he believes me,  
 Whether the world go up or down."

“Your man’s a frail man, was ne’er a hale man,  
 And sickness knocketh at every door,  
 And death comes making bold hearts cower, break-  
 ing —”

Our Lettice trembled ;— but once, no more.  
 “If death should enter, smite to the centre  
 Our poor home palace, all crumbling down,  
 He cannot fright us, nor disunite us,  
 Life bears Love’s cross, death brings Love’s  
 crown.”

### A SPIRIT PRESENT.



F, coming from that unknown sphere  
 Where I believe thou art, —  
 The world unseen which girds our  
 world

So close, yet so apart, —  
 Thy soul’s soft call unto my soul  
 Electrical could reach,  
 And mortal and immortal blend  
 In one familiar speech, —

What wouldst thou say to me ? wouldst ask  
 What, since did me befall ?

Or close this chasm of cruel years  
Between us — knowing all?  
Wouldst love me — thy pure eyes seeing that  
God only saw beside?  
O, love me! 'T was so hard to live,  
So easy to have died.

If, while this dizzy whirl of life  
A moment pausing stayed,  
I face to face with thee could stand,  
I would not be afraid:  
Not though from heaven to heaven thy feet  
In glad ascent have trod,  
While mine took through earth's miry ways  
Their solitary road.

We could not lose each other. World  
On world piled ever higher  
Would part like banked clouds, lightning-cleft  
By our two souls' desire.  
Life ne'er divided us; death tried,  
But could not; Love's voice fine  
Called luring through the dark — then ceased,  
And I am wholly thine.

## A WINTER WALK.



**W**E never had believed, I wis,  
 At primrose time when west winds stole  
 Like thoughts of youth across the soul,  
 In such an altered time as this,

When if one little flower did peep  
 Up through the brown and sullen grass,  
 We should just look on it, and pass  
 As if we saw it in our sleep.

Feeling as sure as that this ray  
 Which cottagè children call the sun,  
 Colors the pale clouds one by one, —  
 Our touch would make it drop to clay.

We never could have looked, in prime  
 Of April, or when July trees  
 Shook full-leaved in the evening bree  
 Upon the face of this pale time,

Still, soft, familiar ; shining bleak  
 On naked branches, sodden ground,  
 Yet shining — as if one had found  
 A smile upon a dead friend's cheek,

Or old friend, lost for years, had strange  
In altered mien come sudden back,  
Confronting us with our great lack —  
Till loss seemed far less sad than change.

Yet though, alas! Hope did not see  
This winter skeleton through full leaves,  
Out of all bareness Faith perceives  
Possible life in field and tree.

In bough and trunk the sap will move,  
And the mould break o'er springing flowers;  
Nature revives with all her powers,  
But only nature; — never love.

So, listlessly with linkèd hands  
Both Faith and Hope glide soft away;  
While in long shadows, cool and gray,  
The sun sets o'er the barren lands.

## "WILL SAIL TO-MORROW."



HE good ship lies in the crowded dock,  
 Fair as a statue, firm as a rock :  
 Her tall masts piercing the still blue  
     air,  
 Her funnel glittering white and bare,  
 Whence the long soft line of vapory smoke  
 Betwixt sky and sea like a vision broke,  
 Or slowly o'er the horizon curled  
 Like a lost hope fled to the other world :  
     She sails to-morrow, —  
     Sails to-morrow.

Out steps the captain, busy and grave,  
 With his sailor's footfall, quick and brave,  
 His hundred thoughts and his thousand cares,  
 And his steady eye that all things dares :  
 Though a little smile o'er the kind face dawns  
 On the loving brute that leaps and fawns,  
 And a little shadow comes and goes,  
 As if heart or fancy fled — where, who knows ?  
     He sails to-morrow :  
     Sails to-morrow.

To-morrow the serried line of ships  
 Will quick close after her as she slips



Into the unknown deep once more :  
To-morrow, to-morrow, some on shore  
With straining eyes shall desperate yearn —  
“This is not parting ? return — return !”  
Peace, wild-wrung hands ! hush, sobbing breath !  
Love keepeth its own through life and death ;  
    Though she sails to-morrow —  
    Sails to-morrow.

Sail, stately ship ; down Southampton water  
Gliding fair as old Nereus' daughter :  
Christian ship that for burthen bears  
Christians, speeded by Christian prayers ;  
All kind angels follow her track !  
Pitiful God, bring the good ship back !  
All the souls in her forever keep  
*Thine*, living or dying, awake or asleep :  
    Then sail to-morrow !  
    Ship, sail to-morrow !

## AT EVEN-TIDE.

C. N. — Died April, 1857.



WHAT spirit is it that doth pervade  
 The silence of this empty room?  
 And as I lift my eyes, what shade  
 Glides off and vanishes in gloom?

I could believe this moment gone,  
 A known form filled that vacant chair,  
 That those kind eyes upon me shone  
 I never shall see anywhere!

The living are so far away:  
 But *thou* — thou seemest strangely near;  
 Knowest all my silent heart would say,  
 Its peace, its pain, its hope, its fear.

And from thy calm supernal height,  
 And wondrous wisdom newly won,  
 Smilest on all our poor delight,  
 And petty woe beneath the sun.

From all this coil thou hast slipped away,  
 As softly as a cloud departs  
 Along the hillside purple gray —  
 Into the heaven of patient hearts.

Nothing here suffered, nothing missed,  
Will ever stir from its repose  
The death-smile on her lips unkissed,  
Who all things loves and all things knows.

And I, who, ignorant and weak,  
Of love so helpless — quick to pain,  
With restless longing ever seek  
The unattainable in vain,

Find it strange comfort thus to sit  
While the loud world unheeded rolls,  
And clasp, ere yet the fancy flit,  
A friend's hand from the land of souls.

A DEAD SEA-GULL.

Near Liverpool



ACK-LUSTRE eye, and idle wing,  
And smirchèd breast that skims no  
more,  
White as the foam itself, the wave —  
Hast thou not even a grave  
Upon the dreary shore,  
Forlorn, forsaken thing?

Thou whom the deep seas could not drown,  
Nor all the elements affright,  
Flashing like thought across the main,  
Mocking the hurricane,  
Screaming with shrill delight  
When the great ship went down.

Thee not thy beauty saved, nor mirth,  
Nor daring, nor thy humble lot,  
One among thousands — in quick haste  
Fate clutched thee as she passed ;  
Dead — how, it matters not :  
Corrupting, earth to earth.

And not a league from where it lies  
Lie bodies once as free from stain,  
And hearts as gay as this sea-bird's,  
Whom all the preachers' words  
Will ne'er make white again,  
Or from the dead to rise.

Rot, pretty bird, in harmless clay : —  
We sing too much poetic woes ;  
Let us be doing while we can :  
Blessed the Christian man  
Who on life's shore seeks those  
Dying of soul decay.

## LOOKING EAST.

In January, 1858.



LITTLE white clouds, why are you flying  
 Over the sky so blue and cold?  
 Fair faint hopes, why are you lying  
 Over my heart like a white cloud's  
 fold?

Slender green leaves, why are you peeping  
 Out of the ground where the snow yet lies?  
 Foying west wind, why are you creeping  
 Like a child's breath across my eyes?

Hope and terror by turns consuming,  
 Lover and friend put far from me, —  
 What should *I* do with the bright spring, coming  
 Like an angel over the sea?

Over the cruel sea that parted  
 Me from mine own, and rolls between; —  
 Out of the woful east, whence darted  
 Heaven's full quiver of vengeance keen.

Day teaches day, night whispers morning —  
 "Hundreds are weeping their dead, while thou

Weeping thy living — Rise, be adorning  
 Thy brows, unwidowed, with smiles." — But  
 how ?

O, had he married me ! — unto anguish,  
 Hardship, sickness, peril, and pain ;  
 That on my breast his head might languish  
 In lonely jungle or scorching plain ;

O, had we stood on some rampart gory,  
 Till he — ere Horror behind us trod —  
 Kissed me, and killed me — so, with his glory  
 My soul went happy and pure to God !

Nay, nay, Heaven pardon me ! me, sick-hearted,  
 Living this long, long life-in-death :  
 Many there are far wider parted  
 Who under one roof-tree breathe one breath.

But we that *loved* — whom one word half broken  
 Had drawn together close soul to soul  
 As lip to lip — and it was not spoken,  
 Nor may be while the world's ages roll.

I sit me down with my tears all frozen :  
 I drink my cup, be it gall or wine :  
 For I know, if he lives, I am his chosen —  
 I know, if he dies, that he is mine.

If love in its silence be greater, stronger  
Than million promises, sighs, or tears —  
I will wait upon Him a little longer  
Who holdeth the balance of our years.

Little white clouds, like angels flying,  
Bring the spring with you across the sea —  
Loving or losing, living or dying,  
Lord, remember, remember me!

OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY.



LITTLE bird flew my window by,  
'Twixt the level street and the level sky,  
The level rows of houses tall,  
The long low sun on the level wall;  
And all that the little bird did say  
Was, "Over the hills and far away."

A little bird sang behind my chair,  
From the level line of corn-fields fair,  
The smooth green hedgerow's level bound  
Not a furlong off — the horizon's bound,  
And the level lawn where the sun all day  
Burns: — "Over the hills and far away."

A little bird sings above my bed,  
 And I know if I could but lift my head  
 I would see the sun set, round and grand,  
 Upon level sea and level sand,  
 While beyond the misty distance gray  
 Is "Over the hills and far away."

I think that a little bird will sing  
 Over a grassy mound, next spring,  
 Where something that once was *me*, ye 'll leave  
 In the level sunshine, morn and eve :  
 But I shall be gone, past night, past day,  
 Over the hills and far away.

## TOO LATE.

"Douglas, Douglas, tendir and treu."



COULD ye come back to me, Douglas,  
 Douglas,

In the old likeness that I knew,  
 I would be so faithful, so loving, Douglas,  
 Douglas, Douglas, tender and true.

Never a scornful word should grieve ye,  
 I'd smile on ye sweet as the angels do ; —



Sweet as your smile on me shone ever,  
 Douglas, Douglas, tender and true.

O to call back the days that are not !  
 My eyes were blinded, your words were few  
 Do you know the truth now up in heaven,  
 Douglas, Douglas, tender and true ?

I never was worthy of you, Douglas ;  
 Not half worthy the like of you :  
 Now all men beside seem to me like shadows —  
 I love *you*, Douglas, tender and true.

Stretch out your hand to me, Douglas, Douglas,  
 Drop forgiveness from heaven like dew ;  
 As I lay my heart on your dead heart, Douglas,  
 Douglas, Douglas, tender and true.

### LOST IN THE MIST.



THE thin white snow-streaks pencilling  
 That mountain's shoulder gray,  
 While in the west the pale green sky  
 Smiled back the dawning day,  
 Till from the misty east the sun  
 Was of a sudden born

Like a new soul in Paradise —  
How long it seems since morn !

One little hour, O round red sun,  
And thou and I shall come  
Unto the golden gate of rest,  
The open door of home :  
One little hour, O weary sun,  
Delay the threatened eve  
Till my tired feet that pleasant door  
Enter and never leave.

Ye rooks that fly in slender file  
Into the thick'ning gloom,  
Ye 'll scarce have reached your grim gray tower  
Ere I have reached my home ;  
Plover, that thrills the solitude  
With such an eerie cry,  
Seek you your nest ere night-fall comes,  
As my heart's nest seek I.

O light, light heart and heavy feet,  
Patience a little while !  
Keep the warm love-light in these eyes,  
And on these lips the smile :  
Out-spced the mist, the gathering mist  
That follows o'er the moor ! —  
The darker grows the world without  
The brighter seems that door.

O door, so close yet so far off;  
O mist that nears and nears!  
What, shall I faint in sight of home?  
Blinded — but not with tears —  
'T is but the mist, the cruel mist,  
Which chills this heart of mine:  
These eyes, too weak to see that light —  
It has not ceased to shine.

A little further, further yet:  
The white mist crawls and crawls;  
It hems me round, it shuts me in  
Its great sepulchral walls:  
No earth — no sky — no path — no light —  
A silence like the tomb:  
O me, it is too soon to die —  
And I was going home!

A little further, further yet:  
My limbs are young, — my heart —  
O heart, it is not only life  
That feels it hard to part:  
Poor lips, slow freezing into calm,  
Numbed hands that helpless fall,  
And, a mile off, warm lips, fond hands,  
Waiting to welcome all!

I see the pictures in the room,  
The figures moving round,

The very flicker of the fire  
 Upon the patterned ground :  
 O that I were the shepherd-dog  
 That guards their happy door !  
 Or even the silly household cat  
 That basks upon the floor !

O that I sat one minute's space  
 Where I have sat so long !  
 O that I heard one little word  
 Sweeter than angel's song !  
 A pause — and then the table fills,  
 The harmless mirth brims o'er ;  
 While I — O *can* it be God's will ? —  
 I die, outside the door.

My body fails — my desperate soul  
 Struggles before it go :  
 The bleak air 's full of voices wild,  
 But not the voice I know ;  
 Dim shapes come wandering through the dark :  
 With mocking, curious stares,  
 Faces long strange peer glimmering by —  
 But not one face of theirs.

Lost, lost, and such a little way  
 From that dear sheltering door !  
 Lost, lost, out of the loving arms  
 Left empty evermore !

His will be done. O, gate of heaven,  
 Fairer than earthly door,  
 Receive me! Everlasting arms,  
 Enfold me evermore!

And so, farewell

\* \* \* \* \*

What is this touch

Upon my closing eyes?  
 My name too, that I thought to hear  
 Next time in Paradise?  
 Warm arms — close lips — O, saved, saved, saved!  
 Across the deathly moor  
 Sought, found — and yonder through the night  
 Shineth the blessed door.

### SEMPER FIDELIS.

“Mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted.”



HINK you, had we two lost fealty, some-  
 thing would not, as I sit  
 With this book upon my lap here, come  
 and overshadow it?

Hide with spectral mists the pages, under each fa-  
 miliar leaf

Lurk, and clutch my hand that turns it with the  
 icy clutch of grief?

Think you, were we twain divided, not by distance,  
time, or aught  
That the world calls separation, but we smile at,  
better taught,  
That I should not feel the dropping of each link  
you did untwine  
Clear as if you sat before me with your true eyes  
fixed on mine ?

That I should not, did you crumble as the other  
false friends do  
To the dust of broken idols, know it without sight  
of you,  
By some shadow darkening daylight in the fickle  
skies of spring,  
By foul fears from household corners crawling over  
everything ?

If that awful gulf were opening which makes two,  
however near,  
Parted more than we were parted, dwelt we in each  
hemisphere, —  
Could I sit here, smiling quiet on this book within  
my hand,  
And while earth was cloven beneath me, feel no  
shock nor understand ?

No, you cannot, could not alter. No, my faith  
builds safe on yours,

Rock-like ; though the winds and waves howl, its  
foundation still endures :

By a man's will — “ See, I hold thee : mine thou  
art, and mine shalt be.”

By a woman's patience — “ Sooner doubt I my  
own soul than thee.”

So, Heaven mend us ! we'll together once again  
take counsel sweet ;

Though this hand of mine drops empty, that blank  
wall my blank eyes meet :

Life may flow on : men be faithless, — ay, forsooth,  
and women too !

ONE is true ; and as He liveth, I believe in truth  
— and *you*.

### ONE SUMMER MORNING.



T is but a little while ago :

The elm-leaves have scarcely begun to  
drop away ;

The sunbeams strike the elm-trunk just  
where they struck that day —

Yet all seems to have happened long ago.

And the year rolleth round, slow, slow :  
 Autumn will fade to winter and winter melt in  
     spring,  
 New life return again to every living thing.  
 Soon, this will have happened long ago.

The bonnie wee flowers will blow ;  
 The trees will re-clothe themselves, the birds sing  
     out amain, —  
 But never, never, never will the world look again  
 As it looked before this happened — long ago !

## MY LOVE ANNIE.



SOFT of voice and light of hand  
 As the fairest in the land —  
 Who can rightly understand  
 My love Annie ?

Simple in her thoughts and ways,  
 True in every word she says, —  
 Who shall even dare to praise  
 My love Annie ?



Midst a naughty world and rude  
 Never in ungentle mood ;  
 Never tired of being good —  
 My love Annie.

Hundreds of the wise and great  
 Might o'erlook her meek estate ;  
 But on her good angels wait,  
 My love Annie.

Many or few the loves that may  
 Shine upon her silent way, —  
 God will love her night and day,  
 My love Annie.

## SUMMER GONE.



MALL wren, mute pecking at the last  
 red plum  
 Or twittering idly at the yellowing  
 boughs

Fruit-emptied, over thy forsaken house,—  
 Birdie, that seems to come  
 Telling, we too have spent our little store,  
 Our summer 's o'er :

Poor robin, driven in by rain-storms wild  
    To lie submissive under household hands  
    With beating heart that no love understands,  
And scared eye, like a child  
Who only knows that he is all alone  
And summer's gone ;

Pale leaves, sent flying wide, a frightened flock  
    On which the wolfish wind bursts out, and  
    tears  
    Those tender forms that lived in summer airs  
Till, taken at this shock,  
They, like weak hearts when sudden grief sweeps by,  
Whirl, drop, and die : —

All these things, earthy, of the earth — do tell  
    This earth's perpetual story ; we belong  
    Unto another country, and our song  
Shall be no mortal knell ;  
Though all the year's tale, as *our* years run fast,  
Mourns, " summer 's past."

O love immortal, O perpetual youth,  
    Whether in budding nooks it sits and sings  
    As hundred poets in a hundred springs,  
Or, slaking passion's drouth,  
In wine-press of affliction, ever goes  
Heavenward, through woes :

O youth immortal — O undying love!

With these by winter fireside we 'll sit down  
Wearing our snows of honor like a crown;  
And sing as in a grove,  
Where the full nests ring out with happy cheer,  
"Summer is here."

Roll round, strange years; swift seasons, eome and  
go;

Ye leave upon us but an outward sign;  
Ye cannot touch the inward and divine,  
While God alone does know;  
There sealed till summers, winters, all shall cease  
In His deep peace.

Therefore uprouse ye winds and howl your will;  
Beat, beat, ye sobbing rains on pane and  
door;  
Enter, slow-footed age, and thou, obscure,  
Grand Angel — not of ill;  
Healer of every wound, where'er thou come,  
Glad, we 'll go home.

## THE VOICE CALLING.



IN the hush of April weather,  
 With the bees in budding heather,  
 And the white clouds floating, floating,  
 and the sunshine falling broad :  
 While my children down the hill  
 Run and leap, and I sit still, —  
 Through the silence, through the silence art Thou  
 calling, O my God ?

Through my husband's voice that prayeth,  
 Though he knows not what he sayeth,  
 Is it Thou who in Thy Holy Word hast solemn  
 words for me ?  
 And when he clasps me fast,  
 And smiles fondly o'er the past,  
 And talks, hopeful, of the future — Lord, do I  
 hear only Thee ?

Not in terror nor in thunder  
 Comes Thy voice, although it sunder  
 Flesh from spirit, soul from body, human bliss from  
 human pain :  
 All the work that was to do,  
 All the joys so sweet and new  
 Which Thou shewed'st me in a vision — Moses-  
 like — and hid'st again.

From this Pisgah, lying humbled,  
The long desert where I stumbled,  
And the fair plains I shall never reach, seem equal,  
clear and far :

On this mountain-top of ease  
Thou wilt bury me in peace ;  
While my tribes march onward, onward, unto Ca-  
naan and war.

In my boy's loud laughter ringing,  
In the sigh more soft than singing  
Of my baby girl that nestles up unto this mortal  
breast,  
After every voice most dear  
Comes a whisper — " Rest not here."  
And the rest Thou art preparing, is it best, Lord,  
is it best ?

" Lord, a little, little longer !"  
Sobs the earth-love, growing stronger :  
*He* will miss me, and go mourning through his sol-  
itary days.  
And heaven were scarcely heaven  
If these lambs which Thou hast given  
Were to slip out of our keeping and be lost in the  
world's ways.

Lord, it is not fear of dying  
Nor an impious denying

Of Thy will, which forevermore on earth, in heaven, be done :

But the love that desperate clings  
Unto these my precious things  
In the beauty of the daylight, and the glory of the sun.

Ah, Thou still art calling, calling,  
With a soft voice unappalling ;  
And it vibrates in far circles through the everlasting years ;  
When Thou knockest, even so !  
I will arise and go. —  
What, my little ones, more violets ? — Nay, be patient — mother hears.

### THE WREN'S NEST.



TOOK the wren's nest ; —  
Heaven forgive me !  
Its merry architects so small  
Had scarcely finished their wee hall,  
That, empty still, and neat and fair,  
Hung idly in the summer air.  
The mossy walls, the dainty door,  
Where Love should enter and explore,

And Love sit carolling outside,  
And Love within chirp multiplied ; —  
I took the wren's nest ; —  
Heaven forgive me !

How many hours of happy pains  
Through early frosts and April rains,  
How many songs at eve and morn  
O'er springing grass and greenening corn,  
What labors hard through sun and shade  
Before the pretty house was made !  
One little minute, only one,  
And she 'll fly back, and find it — gone !  
I took the wren's nest :  
Bird, forgive me !

Thou and thy mate, sans let, sans fear,  
Ye have before you all the year,  
And every wood holds nooks for you,  
In which to sing and build and woo ;  
One piteous cry of birdish pain —  
And ye 'll begin your life again,  
And quite forget the lost, lost home  
In many a busy home to come. —  
But I ? — Your wee house keep I must  
Until it crumble into dust.  
I took the wren's nest :  
God forgive me !

## A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

TUNE — "God rest ye, merry gentlemen."



OD rest ye, merry gentlemen ; let nothing you dismay,  
 For Jesus Christ, our Saviour, was born on Christmas-day.

The dawn rose red o'er Bethlehem, the stars shone through the gray,  
 When Jesus Christ, our Saviour, was born on Christmas-day.

God rest ye, little children ; let nothing you fright,  
 For Jesus Christ, your Saviour, was born this happy night ;  
 Along the hills of Galilee the white flocks sleeping lay,  
 When Christ, the Child of Nazareth, was born on Christmas-day.

God rest ye, all good Christians ; upon this blessed morn  
 The Lord of all good Christians was of a woman born :



Now all your sorrows He doth heal, your sins He  
takes away ;  
For Jesus Christ, our Saviour, was born on Christ-  
mas-day.

THE MOTHER'S VISITS.

From the French.



LONG years ago she visited my chamber,  
Steps soft and slow, a taper in her  
hand ;  
Her fond kiss she laid upon my eyelids,  
Fair as an angel from the unknown land :  
Mother, mother, is it thou I see ?  
Mother, mother, watching over me.

And yesternight I saw her cross my chamber,  
Soundless as light, a palm-branch in her hand ;  
Her mild eyes she bent upon my anguish,  
Calm as an angel from the blessed land ;  
Mother, mother, is it thou I see ?  
Mother, mother, art thou come for me ?

A GERMAN STUDENT'S FUNERAL  
HYMN.

“Thou shalt call, and I will answer Thee : Thou wilt have  
a desire to the work of Thine hands.”



ITH steady march across the daisy  
meadow,  
And by the churchyard wall we go ;  
But leave behind, beneath the linden  
shadow,

One, who no more will rise and go :  
Farewell, our brother, here sleeping in dust,  
Till thou shalt wake again, wake with the just.

Along the street where neighbor nods to neighbor,  
Along the busy street we throng,  
Once more to laugh, to live and love and labor, —  
But he will be remembered long :  
Sleep well, our brother, though sleeping in dust :  
Shalt thou not rise again — rise with the just ?

Farewell, true heart and kindly hand, left lying  
Where wave the linden branches calm ;  
'T is his to live, and ours to wait for dying,  
We win, while he has won, the palm ;  
Farewell, our brother ! But one day, we trust,  
Call — he will answer Thee, God of the just.

## WESTWARD HO!



E should not sit us down and sigh,  
 My girl, whose brow a fane appears,  
 Whose steadfast eyes look royally  
 Backwards and forwards o'er the  
 years —

The long, long years of conquered time,  
 The possible years unwon, that slope  
 Before us in the pale sublime  
 Of lives that have more faith than hope.

We dare not sit us down and dream  
 Fond dreams, as idle children do :  
 My forehead owns too many a seam,  
 And tears have worn their channels through

Your poor thin cheeks, which now I take  
 'Twixt my two hands, caressing. Dear,  
 A little sunshine for my sake!  
 Although we 're far on in the year.

Though all our violets, sweet! are dead,  
 The primrose lost from fields we knew,  
 Who knows what harvests may be spread  
 For reapers brave like me and you ?

Who knows what bright October suns  
May light up distant valleys mild,  
Where as our pathway downward runs  
We see Joy meet us, like a child

Who, sudden, by the roadside stands,  
To kiss the travellers' weary brows,  
And lead them through the twilight lands  
Safely unto their Father's house.

So, we'll not dream, nor look back, dear!  
But march right on, content and bold,  
To where our life sets, heavenly clear,  
Westward, behind the hills of gold.

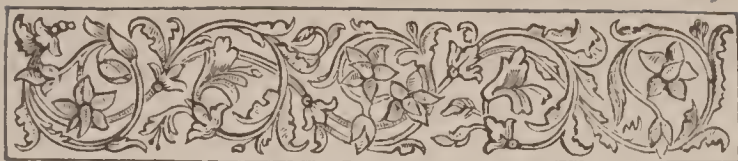




POEMS SINCE 1860.







## OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS :

HOLMAN HUNT'S PICTURE OF "CHRIST IN THE  
TEMPLE."



CHRIST-CHILD, Everlasting, Holy  
One,

Sufferer of all the sorrow of this world,  
Redeemer of the sin of all this world,

Who by Thy death brought'st life into this world, —  
O Christ, hear us !

This, this is *Thou*. No idle painter's dream  
Of aureoled, imaginary Christ,  
Laden with attributes that make not God ;  
But Jesus, son of Mary ; lowly, wise,  
Obedient, subject unto parents, mild,  
Meek — as the meek that shall inherit earth,  
Pure — as the pure in heart that shall see God.

O infinitely human, yet divine !  
Half clinging childlike to the mother found,

Yet half repelling — as the soft eyes say,  
 “How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not  
 That I must be about my Father's business?”  
 As in the Temple's splendors mystical,  
 Earth's wisdom hearkening to the all-wise One,  
 Earth's closest love clasping the all-loving One,  
 He sees far off the vision of the cross,  
 The Christ-like glory and the Christ-like doom.

Messiah! Elder Brother, Priest and King,  
 The Son of God, and yet the woman's seed;  
 Enterer within the veil; Victor of death,  
 And made to us first fruits of them that sleep;  
 Saviour and Intercessor, Judge and Lord, —  
 All that we know of Thee, or knowing not  
 Love only, waiting till the perfect time  
 When we shall know even as we are known —  
 O Thou Child Jesus, Thou dost seem to say  
 By the soft silence of these heavenly eyes  
 (That rose out of the depths of nothingness  
 Upon this limner's reverent soul and hand)  
 We too should be about our Father's business —  
 O Christ, hear us!

Have mercy on us, Jesus Christ, our Lord!  
 The cross Thou borest still is hard to bear;  
 And awful even to humblest follower  
 The little that Thou givest each to do



Of this Thy Father's business ; whether it be  
Temptation by the devil of the flesh,  
Or long-linked years of lingering toil obscure,  
Uncomforted, save by the solemn rests  
On mountain-tops of solitary prayer ;  
Oft ending in the supreme sacrifice,  
The putting off all garments of delight,  
And taking sorrow's kingly crown of thorn,  
In crucifixion of all self to Thee,  
Who offeredst up Thyself for all the world.  
O Christ, hear us !

Our Father's business : — unto us, as Thee,  
The whole which this earth-life, this hand-breadth  
span  
Out of our everlasting life that lies  
Hidden with Thee in God, can ask or need.  
Outweighing all that heap of petty woes —  
To us a measure huge — which angels blow  
Out of the balance of our total lot,  
As zephyrs blow the winged dust away.

O Thou who wert the Child of Nazareth,  
Make us see only this, and only Thee,  
Who camest but to do thy Father's will,  
And didst delight to do it. Take Thou then  
Our bitterness of loss, — aspirings vain,  
And anguishes of unfulfilled desire,

Our joys imperfect, our sublimed despairs,  
 Our hopes, our dreams, our wills, our loves, our all,  
 And cast them into the great crucible  
 In which the whole earth, slowly purified,  
 Runs molten, and shall run — the Will of God.  
 O Christ, hear us !

*AN AUTUMN PSALM FOR 1860.*

“He that goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.”



O shadow o'er the silver sea,  
 That as in slumber heaves,  
 No cloud on the September sky,  
 No blight on any leaves,  
 As the reaper comes rejoicing,  
 Bringing in his sheaves.

Long, long and late the spring delayed,  
 And summer, dank with rain,  
 Hung trembling o'er her sunless fruit,  
 And her unripened grain ;  
 And, like a weary, hopeless life,  
 Sobbed herself out in pain.

So the year laid her child to sleep,  
Her beauty half expressed ;  
Then slowly, slowly cleared the skies,  
And smoothed the seas to rest,  
And raised the fields of yellowing corn  
O'er Summer's buried breast ;

Till Autumn counterfeited Spring  
With such a flush of flowers,  
His fiery-tinctured garlands more  
Than mocked the April bowers,  
And airs as sweet as airs of June  
Brought on the twilight hours.

O holy twilight, tender, calm !  
O star above the sea !  
O golden harvest, gathered in  
With late solemnity,  
And thankful joy for gifts nigh lost  
Which yet so plenteous be ; —

Although the rain-cloud wraps the hill,  
And sudden swoop the leaves,  
And the year nears his sacred end,  
No eye weeps — no heart grieves :  
For the reaper came rejoicing,  
Bringing in his sheaves.

## IN THE JUNE TWILIGHT.

Suggested by Noel Paton's Picture of "The Silver Cord  
Loosed."



N the June twilight, in the soft gray  
twilight,  
The yellow sun-glow trembling through  
the rainy eve,  
As my love lay quiet, came the solemn fiat,  
"All these things forever — *forever* — thou must  
leave."

My love she sank down quivering, like a pine in  
tempest shivering —

"I have had so little happiness as yet beneath  
the sun :

I have called the shadow sunshine, and the merest  
frosty moonshine

I have, weeping, blessed the Lord for, as if day-  
light had begun ;

"Till He sent a sudden angel, with a glorious  
sweet evangel,

Who turned all my tears to pearl-gems, and  
crowned *me* — so little worth ;

*Me!* — and through the rainy even changed my  
poor earth into heaven,  
Or, by wondrous revelation, brought the heav-  
ens down to earth.

“O the strangeness of the feeling! — O the infi-  
nite revealing —  
To think how God must love me to have made  
me so content!  
Though I would have served Him humbly, and  
patiently, and dumbly,  
Without any angel standing in the pathway  
that I went.”

In the June twilight — in the lessening twilight —  
My love cried from my bosom an exceeding bit-  
ter cry :

“Lord, wait a little longer, until my soul is  
stronger, —  
O, wait till Thou hast taught me to be content  
to die.”

Then the tender face, all woman, took a glory  
superhuman,  
And she seemed to watch for something, or see  
some I could not see :

From my arms she rose full statured, all transfig-  
ured, queenly featured —  
“As Thy will is done in heaven, so on earth  
still let it be.”

\* \* \* \* \*

I go lonely, I go lonely, and I feel that earth is  
only

The vestibule of palaces whose courts we never  
win :

Yet I see my palace shining, where my love sits,  
amaranths twining,

And I know the gates stand open, and I shall  
enter in.

### A MAN'S WOOING.



YOU said, last night, you did not think  
In all the world of men  
Was one true lover — true alike  
In deed and word and pen ; —

One knightly lover, constant as  
The old knights, who sleep sound :  
Some women, said you, there might be —  
Not one man faithful found :

Not one man, resolute to win,  
Or, winning, firm to hold  
The woman, among women — sought  
With steadfast love and bold.

Not one whose noble life and pure  
Had power so to control  
To tender humblest loyalty  
Her free, but reverent soul,

That she beside him gladly moved  
As sovereign and slave ;  
In faith unfettered, homage true,  
Each claiming what each gave.

And then you dropped your eyelids white,  
And stood in maiden bloom  
Proud, calm : — unloving and unloved  
Descending to the tomb.

I let you speak and ne'er replied ;  
I watched you for a space,  
Until that passionate glow, like youth,  
Had faded from your face.

No anger showed I — nor complaint :  
My heart's beats shook no breath,  
Although I knew that I had found  
Her, who brings life or death ;

The woman, true as life or death ;  
The love, strong as these twain,  
Against which seas of mortal fate  
Beat harmlessly in vain.

“Not one true man”: I hear it still,  
 Your voice's clear cold sound,  
 Upholding all your constant swains  
 And good knights underground.

“Not one true lover”: — Woman, turn;  
 I love you. Words are small;  
 'T is life speaks plain: In twenty years  
 Perhaps you may know all.

I seek you. You alone I seek:  
 All other women, fair,  
 Or wise, or good, may go their way,  
 Without my thought or care.

But you I follow day by day,  
 And night by night I keep  
 My heart's chaste mansion lighted, where  
 Your image lies asleep.

Asleep! If e'er to wake, He knows  
 Who Eve to Adam brought,  
 As you to me: the embodiment  
 Of boyhood's dear sweet thought,

And youth's fond dream, and manhood's hope,  
 That still half hopeless shone;  
 Till every rootless vain ideal  
 Commingled into one, —



You; who are so diverse from me,  
And yet as much my own  
As this my soul, which, formed apart,  
Dwells in its bodily throne;—

Or rather, for *that* perishes,  
As these our two lives are  
So strangely, marvellously drawn  
Together from afar;

Till week by week and month by month  
We closer seem to grow,  
As two hill streams, flushed with rich rain,  
Each into the other flow.

I swear no oaths, I tell no lies,  
Nor boast I never knew  
A love-dream — we all dream in youth —  
But waking, I found *you*,

The real woman, whose first touch  
Aroused to highest life  
My real manhood. Crown it then,  
Good angel, friend, love, wife!

Imperfect as I am, and you,  
Perchance, not all you seem,  
We two together shall bind up  
Our past's bright, broken dream.

We two together shall dare look  
    Upon the years to come,  
As travellers, met in far countrie,  
    Together look towards home.

Come home! The old tales were not false,  
    Yet the new faith is true;  
Those saintly souls who made men knights  
    Were women such as you.

For the great love that teaches love  
    Deceived not, ne'er deceives:  
And she who most believes in man  
    Makes him what she believes.

Come! If you come not, I can wait;  
    My faith, like life, is long;  
My will — not little; my hope much:  
    The patient are the strong.

Yet come, ah come! The years run fast,  
    And hearths grow swiftly cold —  
Hearts too: but while blood beats in mine  
    It holds you and will hold.

And so before you it lies bare, —  
    Take it or let it lie,  
It is an honest heart; and yours  
    To all eternity.

## THE CATHEDRAL TOMBS.

“ Post tempestatem tranquillitas.”

*Epitaph in Ely Cathedral.*



THEY lie, with upraised hands, and feet  
 Stretched like dead feet that walk no  
 more,  
 And stony masks oft human sweet,  
 As if the olden look each wore,  
 Familiar curves of lip and eye,  
 Were wrought by some fond memory.

All waiting : the new-coffined dead,  
 The handful of mere dust that lies  
 Sarcophagused in stone and lead  
 Under the weight of centuries :  
 Knight, cardinal, bishop, abbess mild,  
 With last week's buried year-old child.

After the tempest cometh peace,  
 After long travail sweet repose ;  
 These folded palms, these feet that cease  
 From any motion, are but shows  
 Of — what? *What rest? How rest they? Where?*  
 The generations naught declare.

Dark grave, unto whose brink we come,  
 Drawn nearer by all nights and days ;  
 Each after each, thy solemn gloom  
 We pierce with momentary gaze,  
 Then go, unwilling or content,  
 The way that all our fathers went.

Is there no voice or guiding hand  
 Arising from the awful void,  
 To say, "Fear not the silent land ;  
 Would He make aught to be destroyed ?  
 Would He? or can He? What know we  
 Of Him who is Infinity ?

Strong Love, which taught us human love,  
 Helped us to follow through all spheres  
 Some soul that did sweet dead lips move,  
 Lived in dear eyes in smiles and tears,  
 Love — once so near our flesh allied,  
 That "Jesus wept" when Lazarus died ; —

Eagle-eyed Faith that can see God,  
 In worlds without and heart within ;  
 In sorrow by the smart o' the rod,  
 In guilt by the anguish of the sin ;  
 In everything pure, holy, fair,  
 God saying to man's soul, "I am there" ; —

These only, twin-archangels, stand  
Above the abyss of common doom,  
These only stretch the tender hand  
To us descending to the tomb,  
Thus making it a bed of rest  
With spices and with odors drest.

So, like one weary and worn, who sinks  
To sleep beneath long faithful eyes,  
Who asks no word of love, but drinks  
The silence which is paradise —  
We only cry — “Keep angelward,  
And give us good rest, O good Lord !”

WHEN GREEN LEAVES COME AGAIN.

SONG.



WHEN green leaves come again, my love,  
When green leaves come again, —  
Why put on such a cloudy face,  
When green leaves come again ?

“Ah, this spring will be like the last,  
Of promise false and vain ;

And summer die in winter's arms  
Ere green leaves come again.

“So slip the seasons — and our lives :  
'T is idle to complain :  
But yet I sigh, I scarce know why,  
When green leaves come again.”

Nay, lift up thankful eyes, my sweet !  
Count equal, loss and gain :  
Because, as long as the world lasts,  
Green leaves *will* come again.

For, sure as earth lives under snows,  
And Love lives under pain,  
'T is good to sing with everything,  
“When green leaves come again.”

THE FIRST WAITS.

A MEDITATION FOR ALL.



O, Christmas is here again! —

While the house sleeps, quiet as death,  
'Neath the midnight moon comes the  
Waits' shrill tune,

And we listen and hold our breath.

The Christmas that never was —

On this foggy November air,  
With clear pale gleam, like the ghost of a dream,  
It is painted everywhere.

The Christmas that might have been —

It is borne in the far-off sound,  
Down the empty street, with the tread of feet  
That lie silent underground.

The Christmas that yet may be —

Like the Bethlehem star, leads kind :  
Yet our life slips past, hour by hour, fast, fast,  
Few before — and many behind.

The Christmas we have and hold,

With a tremulous tender strain,

Half joy, half fears — Be the psalm of the years,  
 “ Grief passes, blessings remain ! ”

The Christmas that sure will come,  
 Let us think of, at fireside fair ; —  
 When church bells sound o’er one small green  
 mound,  
 Which the neighbors pass to prayer.

The Christmas that God will give, —  
 Long after all these are o’er,  
 When is day nor night, for the LAMB is our Light,  
 And we live forevermore.

### DAY BY DAY.



VERY day has its dawn,  
 Its soft and silent eve,  
 Its noontide hours of bliss or bale, —  
 Why should we grieve ?

Why do we heap huge mounds of years  
 Before us and behind,  
 And scorn the little days that pass  
 Like angels on the wind ?



Each turning round a small sweet face  
As beautiful as near ;  
Because it is so small a face  
We will not see it clear :

We will not clasp it as it flies,  
And kiss its lips and brow :  
We will not bathe our wearied souls  
In its delicious Now.

And so it turns from us, and goes  
Away in sad disdain :  
Though we would give our lives for it,  
It never comes again.

Yet, every day has its dawn,  
Its noontide and its eve :  
Live while we live, giving God thanks —  
He will not let us grieve.

## ONLY A WOMAN.

“She loves with love that cannot tire :  
 And if, ah, woe ! she loves alone,  
 Through passionate duty love flames higher,  
 As grass grows taller round a stone.”

COVENTRY PATMORE.



O, the truth 's out. I 'll grasp it like a  
 snake, —  
 It will not slay me. My heart shall not  
 break

Awhile, if only for the children's sake.

For his too, somewhat. Let him stand unblamed ;  
 None say, he gave me less than honor claimed,  
 Except — one trifle scarcely worth being named —

The *heart*. That 's gone. The corrupt dead  
 might be

As easily raised up, breathing — fair to see,  
 As he could bring his whole heart back to me.

I never sought him in coquettish sport,  
 Or courted him as silly maidens court,  
 And wonder when the longed-for prize falls short.

I only loved him — any woman would :  
But shut my love up till he came and sued,  
Then poured it o'er his dry life like a flood.

I was so happy I could make him blest !  
So happy that I was his first and best,  
As he mine — when he took me to his breast.

Ah me ! if only then he had been true !  
If for one little year, a month or two,  
He had given me love for love, as was my due !

Or had he told me, ere the deed was done,  
He only raised me to his heart's dear throne —  
Poor substitute — because the queen was gone !

O, had he whispered, when his sweetest kiss  
Was warm upon my mouth in fancied bliss,  
He had kissed another woman even as this, —

It were less bitter ! Sometimes I could weep  
To be thus cheated, like a child asleep : —  
Were not my anguish far too dry and deep.

So I built my house upon another's ground ;  
Mocked with a heart just caught at the rebound —  
A cankered thing that looked so firm and sound.

And when that heart grew colder — colder still,  
I, ignorant, tried all duties to fulfil,  
Blaming my foolish pain, exacting will,

All — anything but him. It was to be :  
The full draught others drink up carelessly  
Was made this bitter Tantalus-cup for me.

I say again — he gives me all I claimed,  
I and my children never shall be shamed :  
He is a just man — he will live unblamed.

Only — O God, O God, to cry for bread,  
And get a stone ! Daily to lay my head  
Upon a bosom where the old love 's dead !

Dead ? — Fool ! It never lived. It only stirred  
Galvanic, like an hour-cold corpse. None heard :  
So let me bury it without a word.

He 'll keep that other woman from my sight.  
I know not if her face be foul or bright ;  
I only know that it was his delight —

As his was mine : I only know he stands  
Pale, at the touch of their long-severed hands,  
Then to a flickering smile his lips commands,

Lest I should grieve, or jealous anger show.  
He need not. When the ship's gone down, I trow,  
We little reck whatever wind may blow.

And so my silent moan begins and ends.  
No world's laugh or world's taunt, no pity of  
    friends  
Or sneer of foes with this my torment blends.

None knows — none heeds. I have a little pride;  
Enough to stand up, wife-like, by his side,  
With the same smile as when I was a bride.

And I shall take his children to my arms;  
They will not miss these fading, worthless charms;  
Their kiss — ah! unlike his — all pain disarms.

And haply, as the solemn years go by,  
He will think sometimes with regretful sigh,  
The other woman was less true than I.

## A "MERCENARY" MARRIAGE.



HE moves as light across the grass  
 As moves my shadow large and tall ;  
 And like my shadow, close yet free,  
 The thought of her aye follows me,  
 My little maid of Moreton Hall.

No matter how or where we loved,  
 Or when we 'll wed, or what befall ;  
 I only feel she 's mine at last,  
 I only know I 'll hold her fast,  
 Though to dust crumbles Moreton Hall.

Her pedigree — good sooth, 't is long !  
 Her grim sires stare from every wall ;  
 And centuries of ancestral grace  
 Revive in her sweet girlish face,  
 As meek she glides through Moreton Hall.

Whilst I have — nothing ; save, perhaps,  
 Some worthless heaps of idle gold,  
 And a true heart — the which her eye  
 Through glittering dross spied, womanly,  
 Therefore they say *her* heart was sold !

I laugh — she laughs — the hills and vales  
Laugh as we ride 'neath chestnuts tall,  
Or start the deer that silent graze,  
And look up, large-eyed, with soft gaze,  
At the fair maid of Moreton Hall ; —

We let the neighbors talk their fill,  
For life is sweet, and love is strong,  
And two, close knit in marriage ties,  
The whole world's shams may well despise, —  
Its folly, madness, shame, and wrong.

We are not proud, with a fool's pride,  
Nor cowards — to be held in thrall  
By pelf or lineage, rank or lands : —  
One honest heart, two honest hands,  
Are worth far more than Moreton Hall.

Therefore, we laugh to scorn — we two —  
The bars that weaker souls appal :  
I take her hand, and hold it fast —  
Knowing she'll love me to the last —  
My dearest maid of Moreton Hall.

## OVER THE HILLSIDE.



AREWELL. In dimmer distance  
 I watch your figures glide,  
 Across the sunny moorland,  
 The brown hillside ;

Each momentarily up rising  
 Large, dark against the sky,  
 Then — in the vacant moorland,  
 Alone sit I.

Within the unknown country  
 Where your lost footsteps pass,  
 What beauty decks the heavens  
 And clothes the grass !

Over the mountain shoulder  
 What glories may unfold !  
 Though I see but the mountain  
 Bleak, bare and cold, —

And the white road, slow winding  
 To where, each after each,  
 You slipped away — ah, whither ?  
 I cannot reach.



And if I call, what answers?  
Only 'twixt earth and sky,  
Like wail of parting spirit,  
The curlew's cry.

\* \* \* \*

Yet, sunny is the moorland,  
And soft the pleasant air,  
And little flowers like blessings,  
Grow everywhere.

While, over all, the mountain  
Stands sombre, calm, and still,  
Immutable and steadfast,  
As the One Will.

Which, done on earth, in heaven  
Eternally confessed  
By men and saints and angels,  
Be ever blest!

Under its infinite shadow  
(Safer than light of ours!)  
I'll sit me down a little,  
And gather flowers.

Then I will rise and follow  
After the setting day,  
Without one wish to linger, —  
The appointed way.

## THE UNFINISHED BOOK.



TAKE it, reader, idly passing,  
 This, like other idle lines ;  
 Take it, critic, great at classing  
 Subtle genius and its signs :

But, O reader, be thou dumb ;  
 Critic, let no sharp wit come ;  
 For the hand that wrote and blurred  
 Will not write another word ;  
 And the soul you scorn or prize,  
 Now than angels is more wise.

Take it, heart of man or woman,  
 This unfinished broken strain,  
 Whether it be poor and common  
 Or the noblest work of brain ;  
 Let that good heart only sit  
 Now in judgment over it  
 Tenderly, as we would read, —  
 Any one, of any creed,  
 Any churchyard passing by, —  
 “ *Sacred to the Memory.* ”

Wholly sacred : even as lingers  
 Final word, or last look cast.

Or last clasp of life-warm fingers,  
Which we knew not was the last.  
Or, as we apart do lay,  
The day after funeral-day,  
Their dear relics, great and small,  
Who need nothing — yet win all:  
All the best we had and have,  
Buried in one silent grave.

All our highest aspirations,  
And our closest love of loves;  
Our most secret resignations,  
Our best work that man approves,  
Yet which jealously we keep  
In our mute heart's deepest deep.  
So of this poor broken song  
Let no echoes here prolong:  
For the singer's voice is known  
In the heaven of heavens alone.

## TWILIGHT IN THE NORTH.

“Until the day break and the shadows flee away.”



THE long northern twilight between  
the day and the night,  
When the heat and the weariness of  
the world are ended quite:

When the hills grow dim as dreams, and the crystal river seems  
Like that River of Life from out the Throne where  
the blessed walk in white.

O the weird northern twilight, which is neither  
night nor day,  
When the amber wake of the long-set sun still  
marks his western way:  
And but one great golden star in the deep blue  
east afar  
Warns of sleep, and dark, and midnight — of oblivion and decay.

O the calm northern twilight, when labor is all  
done,  
And the birds in drowsy twitter have dropped  
silent one by one:

And nothing stirs or sighs in mountains, waters,  
skies, —  
Earth sleeps — but her heart waketh, till the rising  
of the sun.

O the sweet, sweet twilight, just before the time  
of rest,  
When the black clouds are driven away, and the  
stormy winds suppressed :  
And the dead day smiles so bright, filling earth  
and heaven with light, —  
You would think 't was dawn come back again —  
but the light is in the west.

O the grand solemn twilight, spreading peace from  
pole to pole ! —  
Ere the rains sweep o'er the hillsides, and the wa-  
ters rise and roll,  
In the lull and the calm, come, O angel with the  
palm —  
In the still northern twilight, Azrael, take my  
soul.

## CATHAIR FHARGUS.

(FERGUS'S SEAT.)

A mountain in the Island of Arran, the summit of which resembles a gigantic human profile.



WITH face turned upward to the change-  
ful sky,  
I, Fergus, lie, supine in frozen rest;  
The maiden morning clouds slip rosily  
Unclasped, unclasping, down my granite  
breast;  
The lightning strikes my brow and passes by.

There's nothing new beneath the sun, I wot:  
I, "Fergus" called, — the great pre-Adamite,  
Who for my mortal body blindly sought  
Rash immortality, and on this height  
Stone-bound, forever am and yet am not, —

There's nothing new beneath the sun, I say.  
Ye pigmies of a later race, who come  
And play out your brief generation's play  
Below me, know, I too spent my life's sum,  
And revelled through my short tumultuous day.

O, what is man that he should mouth so grand  
 Through his poor thousand as his seventy  
 years ?

Whether as king I ruled a trembling land,  
 Or swayed by tongue or pen my meaner peers,  
 Or earth's whole learning once did understand, —

What matter ? The star-angels know it all.  
 They who came sweeping through the silent  
 night

And stood before me, yet did not appal :  
 Till, fighting 'gainst me in their courses bright,\*  
 Celestial smote terrestrial. — Hence, my fall.

Hence, Heaven cursed me with a granted prayer ;  
 Made my hill-seat eternal : bade me keep  
 My pageant of majestie lone despair,  
 While one by one into the infinite deep  
 Sank kindred, realm, throne, world : yet I lay  
 there.

There still I lie. Where are my glories fled ?  
 My wisdom that I boasted as divine ?  
 My grand primeval women fair, who shed  
 Their whole life's joy to crown one hour of  
 mine,  
 And lived to curse the love they coveted ?

\* "The stars in their courses fought against Sisera."

Gone — gone. Uncounted æons have rolled by,  
 And still my ghost sits by its corpse of stone,  
 And still the blue smile of the new-formed sky  
 Finds me unchanged. Slow centuries crawl-  
 ing on  
 Bring myriads happy death : — I cannot die.

My stone shape mocks the dead man's peaceful  
 face,  
 And straightened arm that will not labor  
 more;  
 And yet I yearn for a mean six-foot space  
 To moulder in, with daisies growing o'er,  
 Rather than this unearthly resting-place ; —

Where pinnaeled, my silent effigy  
 Against the sunset rising clear and cold,  
 Startles the musing stranger sailing by,  
 And calls up thoughts that never can be told,  
 Of life, and death, and immortality.

While I? — I watch this after world that creeps  
 Nearer and nearer to the feet of God :  
 Ay, though it labors, struggles, sins, and weeps,  
 Yet, love-drawn, follows ever Him who trod  
 Through dim Gethsemane to Cavalry's steeps.

O glorious shame ! O royal servitude !  
 High lowliness, and ignorance all-wise !



Pure life with death, and death with life imbued ; —  
 My centuried splendors crumble 'neath Thine  
 eyes,  
 Thou Holy One who died upon the Rood !

Therefore, face upward to the Christian heaven,  
 I, Fergus, lie : expectant, humble, calm ;  
 Dumb emblem of the faith to me not given ;  
 The clouds drop chrism, the stars their mid-  
 night psalm  
 Chant over one, who passed away unshriven.

*“ I am the Resurrection and the Life.”*  
 So from yon mountain graveyard cries the  
 dust  
 Of child to parent, husband unto wife,  
 Consoling, and believing in the Just : —  
 Christ lives, though all the universe died in strife.

Therefore my granite lips forever pray,  
 “ O rains, wash out my sin of self abhorred : ‘  
 O sun, melt thou my heart of stone away,  
 Out of Thy plenteous mercy save me, Lord.”  
 And thus I wait till Resurrection-day.

## A TRUE HERO.

JAMES BRAIDWOOD: Died June 22, 1861.



NOT at the battle front,—writ of in  
story ;  
Not on the blazing wreck steering to  
glory ;

Not while in martyr-pangs soul and flesh sever,  
Died he—this Hero new ; hero forever.

No pomp poetic crowned, no forms enchained him,  
No friends applauding watched, no foes arraigned  
him :

Death found him there, without grandeur or  
beauty,  
Only an honest man doing his duty :

Just a God-fearing man, simple and lowly,  
Constant at kirk and hearth, kindly as holy :

Death found — and touched him with finger in  
flying : —  
Lo ! he rose up complete — hero undying.

Now, all men mourn for him, lovingly raise him  
Up from his life obscure, chronicle, praise him ;

Tell his last act, done midst peril appalling,  
And the last word of cheer from his lips falling ;

Follow in multitudes to his grave's portal ;  
Leave him there, buried in honor immortal.

So many a Hero walks unseen beside us,  
Till comes the supreme stroke sent to divide us.

Then the LORD calls His own, — like this man,  
even,  
Carried, Elijah-like, fire-winged, to heaven.

AT THE SEASIDE.



SOLITARY shining sea  
That ripples in the sun,  
O gray and melancholy sea,  
O'er which the shadows run ;

O many-voiced and angry sea,  
Breaking with moan and strain, —

I, like a humble, ehastened ehild,  
Come back to thee again ;

And build ehild-eastles and dig moats  
Upon the quiet sands,  
And twist the ehiff-ehonvolvulus  
Once more, round idle hands ;

And look aehross that ocean line,  
As o'er life's summer sea,  
Where many a hope went sailing once,  
Full set, with eanvas free.

Strange, strange to think how some of them  
Their silver sails have ehurled,  
And some have ehitelly ehlied down  
Into the under ehorld ;

And some, ehismasted, ehossed and ehorn,  
Put ehack in ehort once more,  
Thankful to ehide, with ehreight still ehafe,  
At ehanchor ehnear the ehore.

Stranger it is to ehie at ehase  
As ehnow, with ehoughts that ehfly  
More ehlight and ehandering ehthan ehsea-ehbirds  
Between the ehwaves and ehsky :

To play child's play with shells and weeds,  
And view the ocean grand  
Sunk to one wave that may submerge  
A baby-house of sand ;

And not once look, or look by chance,  
With old dreams quite supprest,  
Across that mystic wild sea-world  
Of infinite unrest.

O ever solitary sea,  
Of which we all have found  
Somewhat to dream or say, — the type  
Of things without a bound —

Love, long as life, and strong as death ;  
Faith, humble as sublime ;  
Eternity, whose large depths hold  
The wrecks of this small Time ; —

Unchanging, everlasting sea !  
To spirits soothed and calm  
Thy restless moan of other years  
Becomes an endless psalm.

FISHERMEN—NOT OF GALILEE.

(After reading a certain book.)



THEY have toiled all the night, the long  
weary night,  
They have toiled all the night, Lord,  
and taken nothing:—  
The heavens are as brass, and all flesh seems as  
grass,  
Death strikes with horror and life with loathing.

Walk'st Thou by the waters, the dark silent  
waters,  
The fathomless waters that no line can plumb?  
Art Thou Redeemer, or a mere schemer—  
Preaching a kingdom that cannot come?

Not a word say'st Thou: no wrath betray'st  
Thou:  
Scarcely delay'st Thou their terrors to lull;  
On the shore standing, mutely commanding,  
“Let down your nets!”—And they draw them  
up, — full!

\* \* \* \* \*

Jesus, Redeemer, — only Redeemer!

I, a poor dreamer, lay hold upon Thee :  
Thy will pursuing, though no end viewing,  
But simply doing as Thou biddest me.

Though Thee I see not, — either light be not,  
Or Thou wilt free not the scales from mine  
eyes,

I ne'er gainsay Thee, but only obey Thee ;  
Obedience is better than sacrifice.

Though on my prison gleams no open vision,  
Walking Elysian by Galilee's tide,  
Unseen, I feel Thee, and death will reveal Thee :  
I shall wake in Thy likeness, satisfied.

THE GOLDEN ISLAND: ARRAN FROM  
AYR.



DEEP set in distant seas it lies ;  
The morning vapors float and fall,  
The noonday clouds above it rise,  
Then drop as white as virgin's pall.

And sometimes, when that shroud uplifts,  
The far green fields show strange and fair ;

Mute waterfalls in silver rifts  
Sparkle adown the hillside bare.

But ah! mists gather, more and more;  
And though the blue sky has no tears,  
And the sea laughs with light all o'er, —  
The lovely Island disappears.

O vanished Island of the blest!  
O dream of all things pure and high!  
Hid in deep seas, as faithful breast  
Hides loves that have but seemed to die, —

Whether on seas dividing tossed,  
Or led through fertile lands the while,  
Better lose all things than have lost  
The memory of the morning Isle!

For lo! when gloaming shadows glide,  
And all is calm in earth and air,  
Above the heaving of the tide  
The lonely Island rises fair;

Its purple peaks shine, outlined grand  
And clear, as noble lives nigh done;  
While stretches bright from land to land  
The broad sea-pathway to the sun.



He wraps it in his glory's blaze,  
 He stoops to kiss its forehead cold;  
 And, all transfigured by his rays,  
 It gleams — an Isle of molten gold.

The sun may set, the shades descend,  
 Earth sleep — and yet while sleeping smile;  
 But it will live unto life's end —  
 That vision of the Golden Isle.

## FALLEN IN THE NIGHT!



**T** dressed itself in green leaves all the  
 summer long,  
 Was full of chattering starlings, loud  
 with throistles' song.  
 Children played beneath it, lovers sat and talked,  
 Solitary strollers looked up as they walked.  
 O, so fresh its branches! and its old trunk gray  
 Was so stately rooted, who forbode decay?  
 Even when winds had blown it yellow and almost  
 bare,  
 Softly dropped its chestnuts through the misty  
 air;  
 Still its few leaves rustled with a faint delight,  
 And their tender colors charmed the sense of sight,

Filled the soul with beauty, and the heart with  
peace,  
Like sweet sounds departing — sweetest when they  
cease.

Pelting, undermining, loosening, came the rain ;  
Through its topmost branches roared the hurricane ;  
Oft it strained and shivered till the night wore  
past ;  
But in dusky daylight there the tree stood fast,  
Though its birds had left it, and its leaves were  
dead,  
And its blossoms faded, and its fruit all shed.

Ay, and when last sunset came a wanderer by,  
Watched it as aforetime with a musing eye,  
Still it wore its scant robes so pathetic gay,  
Caught the sun's last glimmer, the new moon's  
first ray ;  
And majestic, patient, stood amidst its peers  
Waiting for the spring-times of uncounted years.

But the worm was busy, and the days were run ;  
Of its hundred sunsets this was the last one :  
So in quiet midnight, with no eye to see,  
None to harm in falling, fell the noble tree !

Says the early laborer, starting at the sight  
With a sleepy wonder, " Fallen in the night ! "

Says the schoolboy, leaping in a wild delight  
Over trunk and branches, "Fallen in the night!"

O thou Tree, thou glory of His hand who made  
Nothing ever vainly, thou hast Him obeyed!  
Lived thy life, and perished when and how He  
willed; —

Be all lamentation and all murmurs stilled.  
To our last hour live we — fruitful, brave, upright,  
'T will be a good ending, "Fallen in the night!"

#### A LANCASHIRE DOXOLOGY.

"Some cotton has lately been imported into Farringdon, where the mills have been closed for a considerable time. The people, who were previously in the deepest distress, went out to meet the cotton: the women wept over the bales and kissed them, and finally sang the Doxology over them."

*Spectator* of May 14, 1863.



RAISE God from whom all blessings  
flow."

Praise Him who sendeth joy and woe.  
The Lord who takes, — the Lord who  
gives, —

O praise Him, all that dies, and lives.

He opens and He shuts his hand,  
But why, we cannot understand :  
Pours and dries up his mercies' flood,  
And yet is still All-perfect Good.

We fathom not the mighty plan,  
The mystery of God and man ;  
We women, when afflictions come,  
We only suffer and are dumb.

And when, the tempest passing by,  
He gleams out, sun-like, through our sky,  
We look up, and through black clouds riven,  
We recognize the smile of Heaven.

Ours is no wisdom of the wise,  
We have no deep philosophies :  
Childlike we take both kiss and rod,  
For he who loveth knoweth God.

YEAR AFTER YEAR :

A LOVE SONG.



YEAR after year the cowslips fill the  
meadow,  
Year after year the skylarks thrill  
the air,  
Year after year, in sunshine or in shadow,  
Rolls the world round, love, and finds us as we  
were.

Year after year, as sure as birds' returning,  
Or field-flowers' blossoming above the wintry  
mould,  
Year after year, in work, or mirth, or mourning,  
Love we with love's own youth, that never can  
grow old.

Sweetheart and ladye-love, queen of boyish pas-  
sion,  
Strong hope of manhood, content of age begun ;  
Loved in a hundred ways, each in a different  
fashion,  
Yet loved supremely, solely, as we never love  
but one.

Dearest and bonniest! though blanched those  
 curling tressés,  
 Though loose elings the wedding-ring to that  
 thin band of thine, —  
 Brightest of all eyes the eye that love expresses!  
 Sweetest of all lips the lips long since kissed  
 mine!

So let the world go round with all its sighs and  
 sinning,  
 Its mad shout o'er fancied bliss, its howl o'er  
 pleasures past:  
 That which it calls love's end to us was love's  
 beginning: —  
 I clasp my arms about thy neck and love thee  
 to the last.

"UNTIL HER DEATH."

I.



UNTIL her death!" the words read  
 strange yet real,  
 Like things afar off suddenly brought  
 near: —

Will it be slow or speedy, full of fear,  
 Or calm as a spent day of peace ideal?

II.

Will her brown locks lie white on coffin pillow?  
Will these her eyes, that sometime were  
called sweet,  
Close, after years of dried-up tears, or meet  
Death's dust in midst of weeping? And that  
billow, —

III.

Her restless heart, — will it be stopped, still heav-  
ing?  
Or softly ebb 'neath age's plaeid breath?  
Will it be lonely, this mysterious death,  
Fit close unto her solitary living, —

IV.

A turning of her face to the wall, nought spoken,  
Exchanging this world's light for heaven's;  
— or will  
She part in pain, from warm love to the chill  
Unknown, pursued with eries of hearts half-  
broken?

V.

With fond lips felt through the blind mists of  
dying,  
And close arms clung to in the struggle  
vain; —

Or, these all past, will death to her be gain,  
Unto her life's long question God's replying?

VI.

No more. Within his hand, divine as tender,  
He holds the mystic measure of her days;  
And be they few or many, His the praise, —  
In life or death her Keeper and Defender.

VII.

Then, come He soon or late, she will not fear Him;  
Be her end lone or lovable, she'll not grieve;  
For He whom she believed in — doth believe —  
Will call her from the dust, and she will hear  
Him.

*THE LOST PIECE OF SILVER.*

A PRAYER.



**H**OLY Lord Jesus, Thou wilt search till  
Thou find  
This lost piece of silver, — this treasure  
enshrined  
In casket or bosom, once of such store;  
Now lying under the dust of Thy floor.



Gentle Lord Jesus, Thou wilt move through the  
room —

So empty — so desolate ! and light up its gloom :  
The lost piece of silver that no man can see,  
Merciful Jesus ! is beheld clear by Thee.

Defaced and degraded, trampled in the dust,  
Its superscription Thou knowest still we trust :  
And Thou wilt uplift it and make it re-shine,  
For it *was* silver — pure silver of Thine.

Loving Lord Jesus, Thou wilt come through the  
dark,

When men are all sleeping and no eye can mark.  
Though “clean forgotten, like a dead man out  
of mind,”

This lost piece of silver Thou wilt search for —  
*and find.*

## OUTWARD BOUND.



UT upon the unknown deep,  
Where the unheard oceans sound,  
Where the unseen islands sleep, —  
Outward bound.

Following towards the silent west  
O'er the horizon's curved rim, —

Or to islands of the blest,  
— He with me and I with him —  
Outward bound.

Nothing but a speck we seem  
In the waste of waters round,  
Floating, floating like a dream, —  
Outward bound.

But within that tiny speck  
Two brave hearts with one accord  
Past all tumult, grief, and wreck,  
Look up calm, — and praise the Lord, —  
Outward bound.









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