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1920



AUTUMN LEAVES



ANNIE LOUISE SIMPSON



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AUTUMN LEAVES

VERSES BY

FANNIE LOUISE SIMPSON

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PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR

1920

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BY
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Dedicated

IN LOVING MEMORY,
TO THE FRIENDS OF MY YOUTH,
MANY OF WHOM,
LIKE AUTUMN LEAVES,
ARE "GATHERED HOME."

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Apology	7
Altruism	9
Attributes of the Red Cross	10
Begin Right	72
Birthday Toast, A	62
Bugle Boy, The	56
Castles in Spain	73
Cove Springs	85
The Camp Ground.	
The School House.	
The Springs.	
Cynic's Reverie, A	32
Departures	96
"Gethsemane"	20
Growing Old	21
Happiness	71
Hard Hit	63
Hope Deferred	47
How I Earned My Dollar	16
If Wishes Came True:	52
The Little Girl.	
The Little Boy.	
Impromptu Verses	69
In Loving Memory	39
Innocence	71
June Glories	25
Just a Little Kid	67
Keep Moving	13
Kindness	72
L'Envoi	100
Life's Best Endeavor	69
Love's Invisible Soul	31
Love's Requiem	43

	PAGE
Lullaby	14
Ma Chere Amie	73
May Queen's Response, The	92
Morning and Evening of Life, The	29
My Enemy	61
Ode to February	59
Peace	72
Plea for Boys, A	48
Prologue, A	50
Purity	70
Reflex Action	26
Shakespeare's Lovers	74
Silver Wedding, The	41
Speeches for Little Folks	50
Sunset Glow, The	23
"Sweet Sorrow"	18
That Still Small Voice	54
The Truly Great	70
Then and Now	58
"They Say"	18
"Though Lost to Sight".	27
Toast to the Soldier Boy	12
Toast to Father, A	65
Toast to Little Girls	66
Trail Thro' the Woods, The	93
True Love's Recompense	45
"Unkindest Cut, The"	17
What Love Is Like:	36
The Woman.	
The Man.	
Would You?	98

APOLOGY

'Tis just a line to let you know
The why and wherefore of these rhymes:
Some were written long years ago,
Or, I should say, in former times—
School-days, when life was full of zest;
When one indulged in “Fancy’s flight,”
Or verse was written “per request,”
Or, otherwise, we had to write,
Now and then, the hours to beguile;
Thoughts came crowding for expression;
Should critics find one line worth while,
This booklet has found its mission.

PART I

ALTRUISM

A Star that gleams with steady beams,
 Guides pilgrims to their journey's end;
With visions clear, they need not fear,
 If on this light they will depend.
It waneth not, and to him who pray'th
Ever grows more brightly. This is Faith.

When weary worn, and brier-torn,
 The wanderer stumbles over the road,
There cometh Aid, a smiling maid,
 With helping hand, who lifts the load,
Drives Despair back, in gloom to grope,
And cheers the fainting soul. This is Hope.

A Spirit bright, a heart's delight,
 Fills the world with laughter and song;
It stoops and lifts the human drifts
 From waves of sin, that float along;
It is noble in giving, and far above
All selfish, time-worn creeds. This is *Love*.

ATTRIBUTES OF THE RED CROSS

"O woman, in our hour of ease,
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please.

.

When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou!"

.

"The quality of mercy is not strained."

Mercy is ever thine.

"Love casteth out fear!" How much is at-
tained

Guided by Love divine!

We find, "Ever the right comes uppermost,
Ever is Justice done:"

Let Justice weigh, and whatever the cost,
Victory will be won.

"Small service is true service, while it lasts;"
To serve is royalty.

And "Fidelity thy cause overcasts
With truth and loyalty."

"True Hope is swift, and flies with swallows'
wings,"

To brighten dull despair,
The cheerful countenance sweet comfort
brings
To lighten every care.

A "Ministering angel," to the sick
Thou comest to relieve;
Hastening on with footsteps soft and quick,
The wounded to receive,
Unwearied, and with pilgrim devotion,
You seek to dedicate
Soul and fortune, and with valiant emotion,
Pain to alleviate.
"Your tenderness shall force more than your
force
To tenderness move;"
Your kindness will adopt the wisest course
Your methods to approve.
Though "Excellent as the strength of a giant,"
Your strength is, and has been,
It shall not be used as does the tyrant
Some selfish gain to win.
"Honor will keep the weather of thy fate,"
And teach thee to endure
As "heart of oak." Thy fortitude will make
Endurance "doubly sure."

TOAST

TO THE SOLDIER BOY

The soldier boy to the war has gone!
His country calls him.
His manhood's armor he has buckled on;
Nothing appals him.
His noble courage we depend upon,
Whate'er befalls him,
So, here's to the boy who marches forth,
To the beat of the drum!
We know he'll win, for we know his worth;
His reward will come:
He fights for freedom of all the earth,
As well as for *Home*.

KEEP MOVING

When a lazy feeling seizes you,
And you would like to mope around,
And the thought of work displeases you,
And ev'ry week you gain a pound;
Get up and go! with merry jest,
Grab rake or hoe and do your best
To keep moving.

When you look pale or tongue is coated,
Or head is heavy, light or dizzy,
If you are thin or somewhat bloated,
Breathe pure air, and just get busy:
Take no potions, powders and pills;
Use no lotions; don't nurse your ills,
But keep moving.

When you're down and out, and feeling blue,
And failure stares you in the face,
Don't hug your woes, whatever you do;
If discouraged, in any case,
Don't take to booze, or dope; don't shirk,
But rather choose some honest work,
And keep moving.

The germs of old age, disease or care
Are conquer'd by the pow'r of will
To live, to work, to do and to dare;
Who in the scheme of life fulfil
The great design, if they take heed,
Will always find 'tis work we need:
So, keep moving.

The sick are seeking for health, you know,
And while some few for wisdom pray,
So many prefer great wealth you know:
Why not have all? Just find the way.
With lilting song, all things mend;
Just move along, until the end
Still, keep moving.

LULLABY

Dear little child, come to my heart!
Lisp with your baby accents sweet
Your little words, with meanings great,
Nor say them once, but oft repeat.

Come, twine your loving arms around,
With all your tiny "might and main";
And say, "I love you," precious one,
Oh, say it once, and yet again!

O, silken hair, all in a muss,
Rosebud lips and dark velvet eyes!

You rosy, pearly-tinted sprite,
Fit only for celestial skies!

What fancies strange you oft awake,
What thoughts of pleasure mix'd with pain!
Your soft caresses call forth tears
That fall like show'rs of summer rain;

Tears that freshen the arid heart
Like those the warrior wept alone,
Which the Peri caught—a passport,
That won her way to Allah's throne.

O, cherub mine, like the flowers,
The daisy and the violet shy,
That cheer the wastes in early spring,
You brighten life, that Heav'n seems nigh.

Come, with your pretty, stamm'ring speech,
And charming, sweet, confiding air,
All nestled here within my arms,
I'll lull you into dreamland fair.

Shut your eyes, my little star!
Now with your baby life content,
The flowers that scent the evening air.
Have sweetness not more redolent.

Into the heart, like strains half-hush'd,
Feelings bitter-sweet doth stray;
The chords are touch'd, the tones now fall
Like music faint and far away.

HOW I EARNED MY DOLLAR

My Muse, descend! O, help my rhyme,
With rhythm, measure, cadence and time!
In accents low, I would repeat
No false note bars me from defeat.

My music comes in natural tones;
Poetic art poor me disowns;
I brace myself, make sharp my wit,
Take up my staff, and write a bit.

Accompani'd with one hundred cents,
These lines will go, if naught prevents;
I'm told the club will never take it,
Unless I tell them how I make it.

'Tis easy quite—that is to tell
How I my little hoard do swell:
I tie myself in Patience's chair,
And trill and count and beat the air

For little girls who sometimes try
To run the scales, and sometimes cry;
They miss the flats, play "A" for "G,"
And accidentals never see!

One calls a crotchet, semiquaver,
And leaves at home the "piece" I gave her,
Time and spaces become a blur;
Notes that are *tied*, one calls a slur,

Confuses major and minor chords,
Murders time and forgets the words,
Doesn't know *loco* from *dolcemente*—
O, what I say and *do* is plenty!

I talk and teach, and oft show sign
Of patience lost; and so in fine,
It's sometimes tragic, oft times funny;
And that's the way I earn my money.

THE UNKINDEST CUT

Over him the angry surges
Oft did roll,
But left no impress on his
Radiant soul:
But when the lightning stroke, that came
From a friend,
All unexpected, struck deep within,
Then the end
Of life's drama came; and the
Powerful beam
Topped o'er like the "baseless fabric
Of a dream."

"SWEET SORROW"

I'll think of you at morn
When nature wakes from rest,
When cares of day come on
To fill my troubled breast.

And, dearest one, at noon,
My thought of you will be;
And O, that precious boon
Will cheer and comfort me.

When twilight hour draws near,
And all the world is still;
And shades of night appear,
Mem'ries my heart will thrill,

With thoughts of you, my own;
And O, my soul will dwell
Upon those mem'ries fond
Beyond my words to tell.

"THEY SAY"

"I shot an arrow into the air:
It fell to earth, I know not where.

.
Long, long afterward, in an oak,
I found the arrow, still unbroke."

'Twas a flippant remark,
A thoughtless, unkind word,
But fraught with meaning dark,
And a scandal was stirred:
The arrow, idly sent, sped away,
And hearts were wounded by what "they
say."

I'm sure I cannot tell
Why we don't know or care,
Just where that arrow fell,
That was shot into the air;
But the import comes to us some day,
That evil is wrought by what "they say."

The careless word is spoken,
The thought is sent along:
And friendship's tie is broken—
What have we done that's wrong?
The evil results we did not weigh,
We only repeated what "they say."

We are glad to know the truth,
A lie is most unkind;
But when there's smoke, forsooth,
Some fire we'll always find,
And, though we would our doubts allay,
Still we are biased by what "they say."

"What they say mayn't be true,
We hope it isn't, God knows!"

“I’m trusting this to you!”
 And on the story goes:
 The victim is wrong’d and has to pay
 All the penalty for what “they say.”

The absent, let’s defend;
 Ever is justice done;
 And we, some day, my friend,
 May be the absent one,
 When *innocent* gossips our paths waylay,
 Let us pay no heed to what “they say.”

GETHSEMANE

To EVELYN

I’m weary, dear heart, I’m weary,
 O, stay a little while longer!
 Speak no words; they could not cheer me,
 Your presence will make me stronger.

I’m sad, kind heart, you’ll never know—
 O, bear with me patiently now;
 Stroke my hair with your gentle hand,
 And kiss my fever’d, throbbing brow.

I’m tired, sweet heart, O, so tired
 Of burdensome life and its guile;
 I wish in the solitude here, only
 To weep on your bosom awhile.

I'm crushed, gentle heart, so lowly,
O, pity my weakness and pain!
I'm human, and suffer we will
When fond dreams and hopes are all vain.

I'm lonely, true heart, so lonely,
In the merry, happiest throng;
The blithesome laughter is not for me;
I envy the bird its gay song.

I'm troubled, blest heart, so troubled,
Calm me with your gentle will;
Look on me with your pure, sweet eyes,
And whisper only, "Peace, be still!"

GROWING OLD

"It seems to me the wind's a little cold!"
Said an old man, drawing nigher
The blazing fagot. "Am I getting old,
I like so well the warmth of fire?"
Gazing on his gnarl'd, trembling hand,
He mus'd, "I'm not strong as I uster be;
For the time was when I could stand
The roughest gale you ever see.

"I did not uster mind the sleet and rain,
And little winds like this to-day;
For I had no thought of rheumatiz pain—
Well, well, I must be givin' 'way,

I reckon I am gettin' purty old—
Let's see, nigh on to eighty year;
And that's longer, so we are told,
Than we are 'lowed to live down here.

"I have lived and worked a long, hard spell;
But it seems a short while ago,
Since we boys hoed out the bottom field—
I always took the longest row;
And I have had a long, hard row thro' life;
But comforts many, I confess;
I've had a loving, faithful wife,
And children, too, my life to bless.

"I'm all that is left now out of four—
Tho' I was oldest of them all,
How strange it is that there should be in store
A lot so diff'rent; now I recall
The lives of Tom and Bill and Joe;
The last, poor fellow, died while young,
And never knew the weight of woe
That o'er our lives since that has hung.

"There was Tom, he was the family pet,
The brightest boy that was in school!
But then he took to evil ways, and let
Himself be made a villain's tool.
And Bill from home, stray'd far away
To hunt his fortune in the West;
Return'd a wreck, worn out and gray,
And died at last, alone, unblest.

“Oh well! It’s time I, too, should be gone,
Since all the rest have pass’d away;
I know I can’t much longer stand the storm,
I don’t believe I care to stay.
I’ve tried to live a Christian life,
Be friend to all, and foe to none;
In every care and worldly strife
My prayer’s been, ‘Thy will be done!’”

THE SUNSET GLOW

Come, and watch with me the sunset
That’s glowing all over the west;
Shadows spread and lengthen around,
And ’tis a blessed hour of rest.
Come, watch each crimson, golden ray,
Before its beauty fades away.

Clouds of pale gold and ruby red
Have brightened the western sky;
And now piled in easy, idle grace,
The skillful pow’rs of art defy,
Soon they will blend and pass away—
The curtain falls on one more day.

Down in the shadowy pine grove,
A murmuring plaint resounds,
Pleasant as mournful memories,
And soft as Memnon's fabled sounds.
As blessings low from sainted lip
The lingering rays the mountains tip.

Calmed by the influence of this hour,
What dove-like peace to us it brings;
What holy half-hush'd strains that seem
Born on imagination's wings.
Dearest love, let's dream o'er what we will,
With mem'ries fond our fancy fill.

The shadows deepen across the vale;
The darkling water, down the stream,
No longer reflects departing day,
But Venus' chaste and lambent beams.
Stars, thro' clouds like purple heather,
Shine, as when first they sang together

Day is done! No clang of trumpet—
No martial music now proclaims
The exit of Phœbus' splendor;
O'er nature's stillness, soft refrains,
Like tones unuttered, gently roll,
And in cadences reach the soul.

JUNE GLORIES *

(NO APOLOGY)

The sweet June mornings now are here,
With air so pure, and skies so clear,
With warbling birds and full-blown roses,
On which the tremulous dew reposes.

Along the margin of the stream,
The butterflies like fairies gleam;
From flow'r to flow'r they gaily pass,
And hover o'er the dewey grass.

List to the bees! with drowsy hum,
From fields of tasseled corn they come;
Out so soon? Ere the sun's first ray,
Distilling sweets, they wend their way.

Why is the turtledove so prone
To sit and moan, "I'm all alone!"
While other birds with songs are gay,
More blithe than in the month of May?

The varying moods of nature each,
Some true lesson to us will teach.
Each season displays something rare;
Beauty and melody are ev'rywhere.

In all her moods, her adornings
Are not so rare as these mornings;
Creation's works never attune
As on these lovely days of June!

*These verses were written before the writer ever heard of Lowell.

REFLEX ACTION

“It’s well that every heart alone
 Knoweth its own bitter draught;
Others laugh at grief not their own,
 And friends are not devoid of craft.
The world’s deceitful, most unkind;
 Friendship! Oh! ’tis only a name;
A holy passion love’s defined
 By some; but ’tis a transient flame!”

Thus the sad misanthrope muses
 On the world’s deceit and folly;
Mankind he freely abuses,
 Until he grows quite melancholy;
Nor reckons why the cause of this,
 Why life oft wears a leaden hue,
And thinks, “Alas! no earthly bliss
 Is ever known, ’cept by a few.”

The world is a truthful mirror;
 Frowns or smiles, as the case may be,
Are reflected; ’tis our error,
 If no bright smiles we ever see.
So, when we frown upon the world,
 We find the frown comes back again;
But greet it with a pleasant smile,
 We’ll surely never smile in vain!

"THOUGH LOST TO SIGHT"

THE FLIRT

I've seen the glory in the west
Grow dim at sunset hour,
When the golden rays of sunlight fell
On treetop, hill and tow'r;
I've watched the clouds of varying hue,
I've sadly watched, and thought of you.

When "night asserts her silent reign,"
And gently fall fair Luna's beams,
When the wearied world seeks repose,
And wanders through the Land of Dreams;
I've watched the stars in the heavens blue,
In my lonely watch I've thought of you.

I've heard the rustle of the breeze,
And felt the magic of its spell,
As it fann'd my fevered brow,
And toss'd the curls you lov'd so well;
I madly thought—Oh, were it true!
It brought me words of love from you.

At early morn, I've watched the light
Spread over all the earth and sky;
Then everything was fresh and fair,
But I could not repress a sigh;
For flowers, birds and sparkling dew,
All, all reminded me of you.

Long years have passed; I cannot say
 That I'm the same; for when time fled,
I-did not yield to dull despair
 Nor pine away, nor wish me dead;
I led a life to me quite new,
My best companions thoughts of you.

I've tried to win some other hearts,
 And in return to give them mine;
I've sometimes won, but never lost:
 For my heart is forever thine.
Yes, I have trifled with a few,
Just because I would think of you.

For I have heard your thrilling tones,
 And caught the sparkle of your eye
From some devoted lover; then,
 I loved awhile;—and that is why.
But this I know to be quite true,
I've never ceased to think of you.

Some may think me fickle-minded,
 And worse—I may be false to some;
But could they blame me if they knew
 Why heartless, now, I had become?
And, though, I'm vain and silly too,
I'll ne'er forget to think of you.

THE MORNING AND EVENING OF
LIFE

I

MORNING

The rosy dawn is enchanting,
The hilltops reflect the bright glow;
Who now minds the upward slanting,
And the winding paths that we go?
The flowers are blue and golden,
Or as white as the drifted snow;
The glory of morn is unfolding
The varied tints of the rainbow.

Dewdrops like diamonds are gleaming,
When they are caught in the sun's first ray;
The air is vibrant and teeming
With melodious sounds of day;
The fleecy clouds are inviting,
The shadows are tenderly gray,
And eyes uplifted are sighting
The promis'd land of Far Away.

The world with laughter is ringing,
And with songs of childish glee;
Until Love's sweet notes come bringing
Promise replete of joys-to-be.
When we've gained the noontide glory,
And the Present is all we see,
We've reached the climax; life's story
From Halcyon youth forever is free.

II

EVENING

The sun is setting; his wintry beams
Are lighting the bare trees above;
We turn and sadly watch the gleams,
And length'ning shadows of the grove.
At the foot of the hill we pause,
With weary heart and aching void,
And backward look to find the cause:
Why is happiness so alloyed?

The shades grow long, the somber pines
Send to the ear a mournful strain;
The leafless trees sway'd by the winds
Assist to make the sad refrain.
A dismal gray creeps over all,
The song-bird's hush'd; we try in vain,
Morning's melodies to recall:
The flush of youth comes not again.

The sun has set; the darkling stream,
Death's cold water, must be crossed;
The stars come out with steady gleam.
Why look back? The chilling frost
Of age has blighted youthful charms;
In murky haze the landscape's lost.
The dead Past never has alarms;
We go to join the Heavenly Host!

LOVE'S INVISIBLE SOUL

The mocking-bird is singing, love,
The wild flow'rs bloom again;
I miss you, dear one, I miss you!
My heart is fill'd with pain.

The carol of that little bird
Brings thoughts of you, my sweet;
My eyes are blinded with tears, love,
That we no more should meet.

No more! The glowing sunlight falls
On meadow, field and hill,
Just as it shone one year ago
I see it shining still.

One year ago the scene was bright—
But sorrow dims it now;
The songs of birds, the whisp'ring breeze
Don't clear my clouded brow.

I see once more your eyes so blue
Beam with love's trusting glance;
Oh! is that trust unshaken still,
That did my soul entrance?

Sweet trust! O, fond, beguiling trust
That lives in friendship's tone;
I would not have you ever know
How false are some, my own.

There is a hope, a ling'ring hope
That cheers my sadden'd heart:
In Eden's rest beyond the grave,
We'll meet and never part.

A CYNIC'S REVERIE

I stood on the mountain-top
And gazed around me,
The world was at my feet,
Smiling in all its beauty.
Beneath me lay the valley.
Like a filmy veil the purple mists
Rolled away in the distance—
Distance, that "lent enchantment."

The toiling, plebeian multitude
I had left behind me;
And to free myself from intrusion,
I had climbed the barren mountain side,
To meditate on perplexing problems
Of life here and hereafter.

For ages the world had revolved,
And thro' cycles of future ages,
It might still revolve,
Burdened with human hopes,
Anxieties, and miseries.

I had studied the poet-philosophers;
I had admired
The intellectual growth of man;
I had thought how high and mighty,
And how capable is the mind
That can grasp the Universe;
But there, in the presence of the Infinite,
How paltry and insignificant
Seemed the pomp, glory, and pride
And all else of man's achievements!

How puny is the strength
Of the boastful athlete's arm,
Compared with the force of nature!
So latent and subtle it is,
That it can in a moment
Palsy that arm forever.

I reverted to youth's roseate dawn,
With its tender sympathies,
And its noble aspirations;
And I pondered long,
To gather the full scope and meaning
Of that magnetic word *aspirations!*

From the cradle to the grave
It is thrust upon us;
The longing, restless feeling,
Up-lifting though it may be,
Is never filled.

But recently,
I walked in the flowery paths
Of that peaceful vale,
With the birdsongs thrilling my heart.
I looked afar off,
At the mountain's azure hue,
And fancied I could be happier
On some peak sublime;
And find that rest and quiet
That my soul craved and needed.

But the insatiable longing
Still pursued me; as I stood
Amid that wild and rugged scenery.
In that solitary waste,
I sighed for beauties unattainable.
My heart cried for the fellowship
That I had forsaken.

.

So, thirsting for fame and glory,
We turn from home and duty
And fond endearments of love.
Wishing only to make our names immortal,

That we may stand proudly eminent,
We burst the shackles that bind us
To a lower plane, with the common herd.

“O, Ambition, thou art a glorious cheat!”
For when we reach the cold, calm heights
Of superior wisdom, and look
With contempt on the groveller below,
What have we gained?

We miss the flowers,
The genial warmth of companionship;
All these we have forfeited! We find,
Too late, that, with our own hand,
We have ostracized ourselves,
In choosing the glittering crown,
Offered by ambition. In disgust or despair
We say “O, Life, thou art full of nothing
But sweet hopes, and sweet delusions!”

WHAT LOVE IS LIKE

THE WOMAN

When I kneel down to say my prayer,
To ask the Lord to bless us all,
One name comes first, all unaware;
And then again, as I recall,
It comes the last;
And all between
The lines are cast
That name, I ween.

On Sabbath day I go to church,
To hear the Scriptures propounded;
In vain to me, the deep research;
They say the Gospel truth is founded
On Love alone;
And I agree:
My love for one
Sufficeth me.

The preacher says, "Let nothing come—
No idol—'tween thee and his Word";
Say, do I sin? Are my pray'rs dumb?
Or, loving him, I love the Lord?
If I my faith
To this truth pin,
When my heart pray'th,
Say, do I sin?

When the choir sings, "I'm nearer Home,"
My happy thoughts translated, mean,
"His heart's my home, never to roam,
There I shall reign, his loving queen."
My eyes grow bright,
My heart is thrill'd;
With love's sweet light
My soul is fill'd.

O, Faith and Hope and Charity,
And the Golden Rule combined,
And the Gospels Four, there's no disparity
Found in all these and love refined!
When storm-clouds roll,
When light grows dim,
Love fits the soul
To dwell with Him.

THE MAN.

Well, well, well! I never thought
I could be rattled so,
Or, is it that my fancy's caught
Just as one year ago?
Gee! Belle was nothing to compare
With winsome Winnie Brown;
For such a flirt one couldn't care—
I'm glad she turn'd me down.

But now, I've found the only girl
To whom I'd link my fate:
A woman true—a priceless pearl!
For me she says she'll wait;
Wait for me till I win a place,
Till I can shield her right.
I've gone to work, and by God's grace,
I'm ready for the fight.

A woman whom a man can trust,
I've found at last, I know.
I feel unworthy as the dust,
And yet she loves me so!
If I blunder, she will forgive,
For me she'll always pray;
I hope together we may live
"Forever, and a day!"

IN LOVING MEMORY

"OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM"

The evening shadows gather 'round,
And slowly yet the night comes on,
And summer breezes whisper low
In the solitude, "They are gone."

Gone, little hearts, to realms unknown;
Their voices are hush'd; the vacant chair
Recall that they no more repose
In home's tender and watchful care,

For 'mid the circling household band,
Warm beamed their smiles to others,
Stealing like sunshine to the hearts
Of parents, sisters and brothers.

Little footsteps are heard no more
Their busy, prattling tongues are still;
Their loss is ever felt with void
That time and change can never fill.

O, tears, relieve the hearts bereav'd!
Hope, with cheering beam, bless them now!
And Peace, with calm and tender touch,
Soothe the troubled, care-lined brow.

Years with varying scenes will bring
Sweet comfort to the soul at last;
Though soon life's dearest dream is gone,
Sooner earth's keenest woe is past.

I think it was in olden time,
There was a legend, quaintly told—
And told in language most sublime—
How the Lord through his garden stroll'd,

And pluck'd the rarest, sweetest flow'rs,
Gath'ring them for his own to cherish;
So thus the fair and lov'd of ours,
In God's own care will never perish.

THE SILVER WEDDING

The years have come, the years have gone,
Till fifty years are cleft in twain,
Since then we met in youth's fair dawn,
At Hymen's altar; and once again
We meet. Who meet? The merry band
That gathered *then* are not all here:
The smiling lips, the welcome hand
Of some have pass'd this mundane sphere.

The hearts that throb'd, the eyes that shone,
The cheeks that glowed with buoyant health,
The forms we loved as just "our own,"
Old Time has stamped with noiseless stealth.
Time, like the tide that waits for none,
Has ebb'd and flow'd, impress'd on all
The lines of care—escaped not one—
Into each life some sorrows fall.

"There is a Reaper"—you know the rest—
Whose "sickle keen" comes round at last:
But pause and think how very blest
You two have been, as years have pass'd.
Afflictions sad, and fierce despair
Have come to nearly every home;
But Death has made no inroads there,
Into thine own no shadow's thrown.

The wishes kind, the gentle kiss,
The parents' prayer, "God bless you both!"
Were not in vain; and wedded bliss
Has crown'd your life; the sacred oath,
Sustained amid life's trying hours,
Was strengthen'd by that Power above;
And now your path is strewn with flow'rs
Of friendship and of filial love.

The summer glow of life is over,
And left behind no vague regret;
May the mellowing light of Autumn cover
The years to come; nor ever let
Sorrow blight, but only ripen
The golden sheaves in youth you've sown.
May the burdens and cares still lighten,
Till Winter's twilight calls you home.

By work and faith in days gone by
You've conquer'd, and have prosper'd, too;
The clouds that flecked your youth's bright sky
Have melted in cerulean blue.
May joy yield ever-abiding Spring
While sweet contentment with you dwells;
May friends' congratulations ring
In sweeter tones than "silver bells"!

LOVE'S REQUIEM

To M. C. H.

Across the fields of russet brown,
The Autumn winds are sighing low;
And shadows gray are flitting 'round
As o'er the west fades evening's glow.
The shades of night, the plaintive sounds
Are come like ghosts of Long Ago.

Unbidden guests they come to me,
In sombre garb and rueful mien,
Bid me review what I'd not see—
The fault's not mine as it may seem;
Not all I trust—it should not be
That I should fail in your esteem.

This life is like a tangled maze,
Through which we wander, on and on,
Without a clue; and 'mid the haze,
Oft one misguided steps alone;
Oh! fatal step that leads through ways
So drear and void and all unknown.

These Autumn winds now like a wail
Of a lost spirit from afar,
Once bore to me the oft told tale
Of love; and the evening star
Shone brightly; but now it is pale—
Then the gates of heav'n did unbar.

The dying year then like a queen,
Drew her gorgeous robes around;
And jubilant winds sang out a pæon
Of triumph; and in every sound
Was harmony grand; and ev'ry scene,
With beauty and glory was crown'd.

On youthful dreams we should not dwell;
They swift as morning dew depart;
But there are times I can't repel
The weird pathos; like you I start,
When some remembrance weaves its spell,
And cry, "My heart, my human heart!"

'Tis passing sweet to have a friend,
Endowed with grace and virtues rare,
In whom to trust, when the sad end
Is told, and solemn truths laid bare;
When hearts together in friendship blend,
And know no change in joy or care.

TRUE LOVE'S RECOMPENSE

THE GOLDEN WEDDING.

Both were young, and she was fair,
Her eyes of gentian blue;
The gleam of gold was in her hair;
And he was handsome, too.

She rode and walked with perfect grace
Her voice was soft and clear;
He was the kingliest of his race—
His soul without a fear.

Joy and health beamed in their eyes,
That lovely April day,
As man and wife to their Paradise,
They journey'd on their way.

The intervening years have wrought
Great changes; bear in mind,
They've borne their part; their lives are fraught
With good and ill combined.

By children ten their lives were blest:
The birdlings all have flown;
And there, within the old home-nest
They live, once more, alone.

As time pass'd on, the long, long years
Have taught them to endure;
Their eyes are dim with age and tears;
The change was slow but sure.

Her form is bent, her hair is gray,
Her face is seamed with care;
Her toil-worn hands, day after day,
Of work, have had their share.

She's waiting for him at the gate,
Just as she waited, when
As a young wife, to greet her mate,
She thought him best of men.

Although he's stooped and rather bald,
And has to step with care,
To her he is not old at all;
To him, she still is fair.

The light is bright within their home;
They hear the angels' call;
To them no night of death will come:
Love triumphs over all.

HOPE DEFERRED

Sometimes we wait and linger here,
 Repressing many a weary sigh,
Oft forcing back the scalding tear,
 And living on, we know not why,
With life's pulse beating low and slow,
 And with heart-strings quivering, too;
While lights and shadows come and go,
 We vainly ask, "What shall we do?"

"No aims in life?" O, patience grant!
 What mortal aims are ever reach'd?
"Excelsior!" the ambitious chant;
 "Never give up!" the wise have preach'd.
Each heart's delight a poison proves
 More deadly than the Upas tree;
Alike resolve all joys and woes,
 From which our souls are never free.

We're waiting as for a reprieve;
 Waiting for the billows to roll
In quick succession, but to leave
 A lonely, struggling, homesick soul.
Our pigmy buildings in the sand
 Are effac'd by the hungry tide,
As if it were, by stern command,
 To cast our puny strength aside.

O, vainly wise the moral muse
That tells of Duty's strong behests!
Frowning Duty, that turns to refuse
The wayward, wilful heart's requests,
And speaks of pleasure rare that's found
In maxims trite, as "*hoc age*";
Or points to learning's depth profound,
As source of joy in high degree.

So ends my strain, as endeth life,
In broken rhythm and jangled measure;
Still we crowd on through toil and strife,
And find pain, while seeking pleasure.
Cheer up, faint heart, it will not last,
These weary sighs and yearnings vain;
And when the years of life are past,
We'll wait no more for loss or gain.

A PLEA FOR THE BOYS

You are ambitious for your sons?
Well then, what would you have them be?
Just like yourself, or greater ones
In your excellent fam'ly tree?
If higher ideals they should attain,
Then find ways and means that are safe and
sane.
They'll follow your footsteps to a letter;
Precept is fine, but example's better.

Mothers may pray, teachers lecture,
Preachers preach *ad infinitum*,
'Tis a truth beyond conjecture,
They'll follow you in ev'ry item;
You say, "Not so"? But think for a minute,
And you'll admit there is something in it:
You are their guardian, friend, and model,
And in your steps they will always toddle.

You may not be just what you seem,
But they'll be sure to find it out;
They will condone, and will not deem
You less a hero, for no doubt,
You may have deceived and stood the test,
Evaded the law; now, they'll do their best
To emulate their hero some other way;
Then don't complain if they should go astray.

Some day, perhaps, their fault annoys;
Some day may bring a painful crisis—
O, paradox strange! You wish'd your boys
To love *you*, but not your *vices*,
"Be temperate, be honest, and work," you say,
"Study to be men!" Yes, that is the way.
And try to keep evil out of their reach:
But better still, *just practice what you preach.*

PART II

SPEECHES FOR LITTLE FOLKS

A PROLOGUE.

Often there are times when 'tis hard to find
Something exactly suited to the mind

Of the speaker or hearer; 'tis confess'd
What is bad to some, to others is best.

And when I pondered early and late,
On what would most a sensation create—

(As ladies study with consummate art
To dazzle the eye or to strike the heart),

“Eureka!” cried I, at last with a roar,
As Archimedes shouted long before,

“I'll give what's called *prologue* in play;”
'Tis like the *prelude* in music, or—stay!

Some know it better as the “Bill of Fare,”
That always contains something odd and rare;

A great deal of stuff unfit for digestion,
(Whether that is our case, may be a question).

Though all in a nutshell we might comprise,
Things are not always valued for size.

The serious and comic both, we'll attempt;
Should we fail, 'tis known we're not exempt

From imperfections that fall to each lot,
And that ofttimes serve to ruin a plot.

We hope you'll not get tired and go to sleep;
Or find nothing to make you laugh or weep;

We've done our best and studied hard to please,
And truly hope you'll not be ill at ease.

And if we should your approbation gain,
Of all our trouble we will not complain,

But if you should declare it all a "hoax,"
Without a doubt we shall be unhappy folks.

There's one thing more, I wish you all to try it,
And that is, *do keep the babies quiet!*

That will do, for fear I should too far go,
Since our motto is "Multum in Parvo!"

IF WISHES CAME TRUE

I

THE LITTLE GIRL

A happy angel I would be
All clad in glory bright;
From every pain and sorrow free,
I'd dwell in endless light.

They tell me that this beauteous earth
Is filled with grief and care;
And shadows always hover o'er
Our every prospect fair.

Then I would quit this dreary world
Of sin and toil and strife,
Before my young and happy soul
Grows wearied of this life.

They tell us there's a home above,
Where the holy angels stay;
A land where beauty, peace and love,
And truth fade not away.

And where flowers forever bloom,
And music sweet and rare
Is heard from harps the angels tune.
O, Father, take me there!

II

THE LITTLE BOY.

I'd rather be a soldier boy,
And fight like all possess't,
Than be a little angel joy,
And up in feathers drest.
An Indian is not so bad;
He takes *his* feathers off;
It makes me tired, sick and sad,
To hear that angel stuff.

I'd rather be a great, big man
And have a lot to do—
Not too much work; just what I can
In a short while get through.
I'd have a lot of fun, you bet!
Get rich and live at ease;
I wouldn't worry or ever fret,
I'd do just what I please!

I'd live a hundred years or more;
I'd never want to die
Till my time comes, and not before—
No use to tell a lie.
Gee! when I think how very much
There is to see and do,
Working, trav'ling, fighting, and such,
I want to live. Don't you?

Life's hard when a boy is little,
Sometimes, I mean it is,
When we can't romp, sing or whittle,
But must *behave*. Gee whiz!
Wish I was a man of my own
And then I'd have my way;
That I am glad I'll soon be grown,
Is all I've got to say!

THAT STILL SMALL VOICE

After a long and play-spent day
Johnny Junior, with bath complete,
Was scrubbed and brushed the usual way,
And then dressed up in nighties neat.
He was tucked in bed by his tired mother,
Who wearily went to help another.

Just as she had sat down to rest,
There came to her a whimpering sound
From Johnny's bed. Now, what possessed
That boy? What trouble had he found?
"I haven't said my prayers," he softly cried,
"I can't go to sleep, and I've tried and tried."

With patient sigh and lagging air,
She sat down by his little bed,
And while she heard his evening prayer,

She gently stroked his curly head.
Once more released, at last, she did rejoice;
But soon again, she heard that sobbing voice.

“What’s the matter now?” again she called,
“Why don’t you go to sleep?” “I can’t,”
Wailed Johnny, and then he bawled;
“I’m afraid I’m goin’ to see a *hant!*”
“Something he et for supper!” Grandma said;
And then she kindly went to Johnny’s bed.

“No ’tain’t!” said John, “It’s Joe Bings’ agate,”
“You swallowed it?” she cried, in fear;
“No; it’s in my new pants’ pocket!”
“You forgot to return it, dear?”
“No; I jes’ took it, and kep’ it, and Joe,
He thought it lost; but I knowed better, though.”

“Oh! you’ve done wrong, my little man;
Well, sin always brings its sorrow,
Now, go to sleep, quickly as you can,
We’ll make it all right tomorrow.”
Relieved and soothed by his soul’s confession
John Junior, in sleep, forgot his transgression.

THE BUGLE BOY

OF 1815

Jackson and the British, quite early one day,
Had their forces drawn up in battle array.

The generals of both were indeed very brave,
They would anything dare their country to save.

The British had stationed in a pecan tree,
A boy quite small, I s'pose just about like me.

Then a bugle was given for him to blow,
When command was proclaimed for them to go

When the commander sounded loud the charge,
How sounded then the bugle, quite as large!

The smoke rolled on, and yet he would not go:
He knew it was his duty for him to blow.

Determined he was to desert not his post,
If he, his bugle, and his country were lost.

The cannons boomed, and still he louder blew,
As madder and fiercer the carnage grew.

He was like the boy, who, on burning deck,
Left not his place amid ruin and wreck.

And serve his country he willingly would,
If blowing the bugle would do any good.

His general soon fell; but he undismayed
More shrilly blew, as advanced the "Aid."

But the British lost the day; at last he found,
An ignoble retreat he would have to sound.

But brave was he as a Wallace or a Bruce;
And finally, when his bugle sang a truce,

That boy—that minstrel boy—nowhere was he,
But in the middle of that old pecan tree.

And at last he gave one long, loud, piercing blast,
For, only too well he knew 'twould be his last,

And then by his foes, he was captur'd, I'm told;
That's the last I've heard of this hero so bold.

THEN AND NOW

1918

“Children, the milk is scarce, to-night,”
Their Granny said,
As she served to three little tots,
Their milk and bread.

Then baby Bob, just two years old,
In tones like silk,
Said, “Please, Granny, will you dess gim’me
Some more scarce milk?”

A merry laugh went around the table,
None so happy
As baby, Granny, Frank and May Belle,
And dear “Pappy.”

.
On the hillside the old folks sleep
’Neath marble stone;
And Bobby boy, across the deep,
To war has gone.

To the sick and wounded he gives
Medical skill,
Striving anew each day he lives
To combat ill.

What mem’ries crowd along the way,
Dear Past! So much
Are happy homes made sad today,
By War’s dread touch.

AN ODE TO FEBRUARY

Hail February! (Sometimes it does hail, too!)
A hearty welcome I extend to you!
One most remarkable month of the year,
Let the welkin ring with cheer after cheer!

Some things about it, I will try to tell:
The first is, it's hardest of all to spell;
And when we pause to think, in doubt,
The abbreviation "Feb." will help us out.

And then the next item I can recall,
It is the shortest month we know, of all,
Which has only "twenty-eight days in fine,
Till Leap-year comes, and gives it twenty-nine."

One pleasant event, too, it is, perhaps,
Vacation to us little country chaps;
Tho' that is just as it may be to some,
To others it may not be so welcome.

The first day of Feb. is St. Bridget's day,
And from that the word "bride" is said to stray.
The second is Candlemas—what that may mean
In any dictionary may be seen.

On the seventh, Ground Hog comes to decide
What sort of weather he'll have to provide:
A doubtful fact; but we lean to that date,
'Stead of the *second*, for the weather's fate.

But the dearest of all that enters our hearts,
Is Valentine Day with its Cupids and darts.
And why to me is this month so pleasant?
It brings my annual birthday present!

And then the twelfth, my father's natal day,
Is the same as Abraham Lincoln's; and say,
There are Lowell and Longfellow! I find
That another great man comes to my mind:

Listen! this chill season yearly brings the morn
When our greatest of men, Washington, was
born!

February twenty-second! Honoring the same
As Arbor Day, we'll celebrate his name!

MY ENEMY

They came and told me that she was dead,
My enemy, who had wrought my woe.
“Would you care to see her?” some one said.
And I replied, “Yes, I will go
To see one whose long years have been spent
In selfish ease, and worldly pride.”
Into the darkened room of death I went,
Quiet and alone, and stood beside
The casket lighted by a single ray
From the curtained window stealing;
It was the closing hour of day,
And softly, vesper bells were pealing.

Bitter memories came crowding, forsooth:
She'd blighted my prospects for good,
She'd banished the lover of my youth,
In jealous and vindictive mood.
Ambitious schemes she had thwarted, too,
She'd crossed my path, time after time;
The plans of her sordid soul, I knew
Caused much evil done to me and mine.
Dead at last! Could I forgive, this late,
And I a victim of her worthless pelf?
I lifted the shroud; with stoic hate
I paused, I looked, and beheld myself!

A BIRTHDAY TOAST

TO EUGENE

Nine years ago, on June twenty-second
Nineteen hundred and seven,
The stork brought us this little boy; no doubt,
He straightway came from Heaven,
And many of us "have a sort of hunch,"
Without a dissenting voice,
That out of all that crying baby-bunch
He was then the angels' choice.

And when were blooming the roses of June,
The fairest of all the year,
He was wafted down with the butterflies
And the katydids so dear.
He has grown from blue-eyed babyhood,
To a romping, wholesome boy;
Let us hope he will grow to golden youth,
And manhood, without alloy.

Just a single figure now tells his age,
Then the last digit is gone;
So after this, it's a combination,
As the coming years roll on.
Every passing year we hope to meet him
As we've always done before.
Here's wishing he may live to nine times nine,
Or longer, and then—and then—some more!

HARD HIT

Yes, she is stunning, I'll admit;
But a fellow needn't "throw a fit,"
If a pretty girl has a face
Like a lily, with just a trace
 Of rosy, blushing pink:
 Well, what of it?
Paint? So some may think;
 I *know*, not a bit!

Her eyes are soft, brown, and merry;
Her mouth is like a red-ripe cherry;
Her hair—it matches well her eyes;
Her nose is just a "moderate size."
 And when her young face
 With bright smiles is lit,
 And the dimples race—
 Artful? Not a bit!

I am smoking less ev'ry day,
Since old man Hardy passed away:
He had tobacco-heart, I'm told—
Eighty? That's not so very old.
 Nellie hates it, too;
 I think I shall quit;
 It's not hard to do—
 Oh, no! Not a bit!

Since I've been going with Nell Birch,
I, sometimes, have to go to church;
Mother thinks—just like a mother—
I'm under conviction. Brother,
 Who is worldly wise,
 And full of his wit,
Shuts both of his eyes,
 And says, "Not a bit!"

And he says, "No need to bother."
So says sister, likewise father,
Who adds, "It is a better plan
To leave alone a love-sick man."
 Pshaw! She's fond of me;
 But I'll never commit
Myself far, you see!
 Hard hit? Not a bit!

A TOAST TO FATHER

While thinking of our mothers,
We must not forget
How much to our dear old daddies
We are in debt.
Our mothers are fine, but they
Cannot stand alone,
For our fathers are the "Powers
Behind the throne."
And 'substantial aid, and their
Guardian care
Are not all they give to us;
They claim a share
Of our unselfish devotion,
And thoughtful love.
We are his very own, and should
Not ever shove
Him aside. And now, although
Our dear, good mother
Is so loving and kind, still,
There is another
Who is silently suffering;
Whose heart is sad,
For the girls that are leaving him—
Our dear old dad!

TOAST TO LITTLE GIRLS

TO THOSE BORN IN JUNE

They call us little "June bugs," humph!
Because we came in June:
But all the same, we like this month,
For "ev'rything's in tune."

The summer skies are now so blue,
The butterflies so gay;
And the little humming-birds, too,
Are with song-birds today.

Now, do you think it so absurd,
If when they wish to tease,
They would call us a "bird"?
Just tell me, if you please!

Now, we have roses and posies;
Everywhere they grow!
Why don't they call us "June roses"?
Is what I'd like to know!

There's something for which our hands reach,
Something that's good to eat.
Just why can't they call us a "peach"?
I'm sure that's hard to beat.

Never mind now, what they call us,
In hope our faith abides;
If nothing ill e'er befall us,
We will all be "June brides"!

JUST A LITTLE KID

The hand look'd so fearful,
When she rais'd it to strike
Her baby boy, tearful,
And lips quivering like
His heart was truly brok'n;
For the little fault he did,
What cruel words were spok'n!
For he was just a "kid."

"I didn't go to do it!
I dess forgot," he said,
"It was bad, I knew it;
But dess put me to bed!"
Would she his plea regard?
Tears trembl'd on each eye lid.
"Mummy, don't whip me hard,
I is such a little kid!"

O, little boy, so wistful,
With pleading eyes and sad,
Why shouldn't youth be blissful?
Why are you sometimes bad?
O, mother of the little child,
Who doesn't do as he's bid,
Why not with loving smile
Chide such a little "kid"?

The tender years pass by,
And hither away to school,
The boy with spirits high,
Hastens to learn each rule,
And knowledge gain'd from books;
And things that are forbid
Have such attractive looks
To the prying little kid.

The path of learning goes
Along temptation's way;
He must submit to blows;
For mischief he must pay.
Does training make him lose
Sweetness? O, God forbid,
That in our zeal, we choose
The wrong way with the "kid."

Boyhood's years are over,
His childish ills have flown,
Gone from, he'll discover,
The known to the unknown;
Now, he still meets all kinds
Of trouble; and amid
The combat, he yet finds
Himself a "little kid."

IMPROMPTU VERSES AND
ACROSTICS

To J. T. S.

The keynote of happiness is Love;
Let its sweet melodies soothe life's cares
And preserve thy soul pure
From folly and sin.

.

No greater boon I wish thee
Than a loving faithful wife;
No earthly bliss surpasses
A happy married life.

LIFE'S BEST ENDEAVOR

To CORINNE

You ask me to write, you dear little elf!
There's nothing sweeter and better than yourself.
To write, I must say, I'm not in the mood;
I've tried to think of something fine and good
To write you: but I do not know
Of anything finer or better than this:
Be kind and true, as on you go,
And nothing will ever come amiss.

THE TRULY GREAT

Rust not in idleness; but to zeal awake,
"Onward and upward," for your motto take.
Be steadfast in friendship, faithful in love,
Eager to win the prize, but always above
Reaping and not sowing; striving for gain;
Tho' pleasure it brings, 'twill end in pain.

Drink deep at the crystal fountain of Truth!
Short and swift as a dream passes our youth,
In sunshine and shadow, like an April day;
Many the hopes that flatter; and many may
Prove blessings to us; while foolish and frail,
Some of our cherish'd plans may be, and fail;
Others less prized may happily end:
No one knows the designs of God, my friend.

PURITY

Joyful and pure thy fresh, young heart
Exultant beats, as the years advance;
No dream of woe, or tempter's art,
No falsehood dims thy sweetest glance,
If the future's fair as thy soul is bright
Even Heaven's thine before Death's dark night.

HAPPINESS FOR THEE

Could I form a wish for thee,
Or write one loving line,
'Round thy fair form I'd see
A rosy wreath entwine.

Hope and Love and Faith attend,
All life's purest treasures
Remain with thee unto the end,
Distilling sweetest pleasures,

Even as the darksome shade
Makes way for sunbeams bright,
All thy sorrows quickly fade
'Neath Heav'n's own perfect light.

INNOCENCE

Let thy life forever be,
In mirthful hall or home's retreat
Like the fairest flower we see,
Like the lily, pure and sweet;
Innocence and love to thee are given,
Ever to make thee bloom for earth and Heav'n.

BEGIN RIGHT

Look upward, my boy, in life's perilous hour,
Ever trusting to Him who watches on high;
And whenever clouds of misfortune may lower,
Know that the sun shines bright in the sky,
Emblem of God's infinite love and power.

Adhere to the right, shun temptation's voice;
Youth's follies disdain and you will grow strong;
Regret and remorse are never one's choice;
Early mistakes may make all things go wrong;
So make a good start, that your heart may
rejoice.

PEACE

Dear friend, you ask me to write
One verse—a token of love.
Vainly I search for one to indite:
I only ask you, be like the dove,
Emblem of peace and sweet delight.

KINDNESS

Hearts have been crushed by lightest speech,
And lives have been shadowed by cruel ones;
Loving souls have been lost beyond reach,
Listening in vain for sympathy's tones:
If we knew the good or ill our actions tell,
Even in our least we would strive to do well.

CASTLES IN SPAIN

Judge not unkindly, O friend of my early days,
As we journey onward; for life's devious ways
Can never change the memories of the past,
Kept sacred in the heart as long as time shall
last.

Long, long ago, when joy beamed everywhere
Our hopes of future weal we oft were wont to
share;
Vainly we, builded, our hopes were ropes of
sand,
Eternal, tho', our friendship; 'tis all we under-
stand.

MA CHERE AMIE

Come back to me in Mem'ry's hour,
O, friend of mine, in future days,
'Round thy life, tho' clouds may lower,
Affection's light forever stays.

Memory's hour! O, blessed boon!
As the days pass on, one by one,
Sunlight with shadow blends, till soon
The long road's behind, and life is done.

SHAKESPEARE'S LOVERS

AN IDYLLIAD

Once upon a time there came a rumor,
That it had appealed to the humor
Of all "Shakespeare's Lovers" to grace,
In some sequestered, idyllic place,
A Summer Fete with the merry union,
And with one another hold communion.
"What place!" each and every one began to
propose,
And then at once an argumentum arose,
Whether Arcadia, or Athenian Grove,
Or Mantuan Woodland. For each they strove.
After much discussion by them *pro et con*,
The Forest of Arden was decided upon;
With permission that others might go who'd
care to.
Presto! Lo and behold, I found myself there,
too!
What magical means had brought us there,
I did not know and I did not care.
In the checkered, arborescent shade,
An Olympic feast was deftly laid;
Happy man and maid here and there were flit-
ting,
Each one arrayed in costumes befitting.

“O, wonder!
How many goodly creatures are there here!
How beauteous mankind is!

O, brave new world
That has such people in it!”

How smoothly and swiftly pass'd the time away;
“A fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind,”
they say;

For sweet Annie Page,
The English maiden,
With a happy heart,
And words love-laden,

While strolling along with her fiancé, Fenton,
Greeted two: one Lorenzo, whose mind seem'd
bent on

Winning the truest
And best of her race:
Jessica, the Jewess,
Full of wit and grace.

And Romeo and Juliet sat near,
Like turtle-doves, cooing without fear;
And Juliet did tease him;
Thinking it would please him,
She with coquettish mien,
Twitted him about Rosaline,
Just to hear him say in accents low,
“You're a dove and Rosaline is a crow.”

Vincentio, dignified and highly elated,
With Isabella, pensive, nun-like and pale,
Conversed, contented and happy, so he stated,
That she'd so wisely declined to "take the veil."

Mirth-loving Beatrice,
 With her piquant beauty,
Most flippantly talked—
 Thought quarreling a duty;
Especially with Benedick,
 (Styled "the Prince's jester,"
By her in her sallies,)
 Whom she loved to "pester."
Tho' he tried to be funny,
 Called her "Dear Lady Disdain,"
Her manners so sunny,
 Caught his heart in her train.

There was that "admirable young lady," Hero,
 Who had been so sadly misunderstood,
Had been wrongly judged by her lover, Claudio,
 But who now was doing all he could
To repair the wrong that he had done her;
Thus for the second time he had won her.

Two there were who saw no portents
 Of their dreadful future sorrow;
Bassianus and Lavinia spent their moments
 Planning for a glad tomorrow.

 Playing with her rings, still,
Away from the noisy crowd sat Helena,

Whom Bertram seeing, at once left Diana,
Because he wished to tell
That he loved "her dearly, very dearly,"
When she, smiling, replied most sincerely,
"All is well that ends well."

Julia watched with furtive glance
Protheus' demeanor, if perchance,
She might descry a jealous eye,
As Sylvia and Valentine pass'd by.
The "Two Gentlemen of Verona"
Deserved each a diploma,
For avoiding the wrangle
In love's strange tangle.

Beneath the blooming hawthorn's shade
Stood Hamlet with gloomy brow;
And gazed upon the lovely maid,
Ophelia. And he with solemn vow
Declared his suit with melancholic air,
As she twined a wreath for her golden hair.

Miranda with innocent, wide-awake eyes,
Was gazing on Ferd'nand in timid surprise,
As they paused in the shade of the maples;
And with polished air,
He did boast and declare
That he was heir to the crown of Naples,
His princely graces and courtly phrases
Caught Miranda in love's tangl'd mazes.

Standing near the monarch beech,
With the charming Rosalind near by,
Orlando scrawled within his reach;
She, gazing with admiring eye,
For he had a silly knack
Of rhyming and carving names;
With many an ugly whack,
The smoothest beech-tree he maims.

With Celia it was "love at first sight," on her
part
When she met Oliver, the eldest brother;
He had had a most miraculous "change of
heart,"
This was her choice, and never another.
Such a magical change
Did true love make,
"A Roland for an Oliver
She would not take."

The summer air was with fragrance laden;
Orsino, the Duke, and Viola the maiden
Stood where a bed of violets grew,
O'er which the south wind sweetly blew;
Repeating low,
The tale oft told;
Love's sweet story
That's never old.

Sebastian and Olivia

So happy seemed,
He wondering asked her
If still he dreamed.

“Let fancy still my sense in Lethe steep,
If it be thus to dream, still let me sleep.”

And King Henry the Fifth

Once the “Charming Prince Hal,”
Courtied Katherine of France,

In English good, but French *de mal*.
While she understood only that he wooed
And fancied her funny English “vare good.”

Proud Henry the Sixth with regal mien,
With Margaret of Anjou, made a royal scene.

Sobered and tamed by Petruchio, her mate,
Who strutted near by, sat the shrewish Suf-
fragette, Kate,

According to some,
(A popular fallacy,)

She had now become
(A mild sort of lunacy,)

No longer “heart-whole and fancy free,”
But-just-what-a-woman-ought-to-be.

Lucentio had laid aside his pedantic air,
And softly conversed with Bianca sweet and
fair.

Entranced, Prince Florizel gazed
At Perdita, the flower girl, amazed

At such superior beauty and grace,
That now no longer seem'd out of place,
 Restored to her own,
 With flower-wreath crown,
She merrily flitted joyous and proud,
Throwing bouquets to the passing crowd.

“All went merry as a marriage bell;”
 Even Theseus the Grand,
Overcome by the magic spell,
 Declared it was fairy-land.
Hippolyta his bride elective
Found flaws in the perspective,
And said it could have been better;
He decided it best to let her
Have her own sweet way about it;
 She became quite witty,
 And said, “What a pity
There's no more to say about it!”

Hermia and Lysander, maiden and lover,
Gathered wild flow'rs. Their troubles being
 over,
 They laughed in childish glee
At their queer nose-gays of pansies and rue,
Of yellow primroses with violets blue,
 And wild anemone.

Happy Helena, leaned upon the arm
Of recreant Demetrius, whom the fairy charm
 Had restored to his senses.

For "the course of true love was now running
smooth,"

And *amo te* was conjugated, forsooth,
In all its modes and tenses.

And there, somewhat apart
From the joyous crowd,
Othello, brave and smart,
In winning tones, not loud,
Made Desdemona sigh,
And now and then cry,
That heaven had not made her
Such a man, nor Fortune play'd her
Fantastic "tricks." Oh, dear!
She dried the silent tear.

But to those who were looking on,
Oh, how passing strange it seemed!
How pitiful to look upon,
How wondrous pitiful 'twas deem'd,
That Cleopatra, the brazen wooer,
That star-eyed Egyptian woman,
Hadn't caught the Blackamoor,
'Stead of Anthony the Roman,
And Desdemona been consoled
With a warrior brave and bold,
And not made such a blunder.
Each had found a mate deserving,
Each found a fate that brings
A happy end, just by observing
"The 'ternal fitness of things,"
(You know people will wonder).

The noble Portia, whose lofty brow betray'd
 A most superior, and a learned maid,
 With eyes that did shine
 Like diamonds in a mine,
 Or "like good deeds in a naughty world,"
 Made Bassanio understand
 That she gave *wealth* with her hand.
 Gladly then he listened
 As his sparkling eyes glistened,
 While his riotous thoughts twitter'd and
 twirl'd.
 For he, just out of college,
 With head cramm'd full of knowledge,
 Knew that this money would help him win the
 goal;
 For he was "broke," busted flat
 With fast living—worse than that,
 He was three thousand ducats in a hole.

And last of all came trooping in
 The Princess with Ferd'nand King of
 Navarre;
 The well-accomplished, virtuous Dumain with
 Katherine;
 Longaville, man of sovereign parts with
 Maria;
 Biron, the merry, mad-cap lord, with Rosaline;
 The twelve months being pass'd and not a sign
 Of "Love's Labor Lost." Each one had filled
 the bill;
 And "every Jack had surely found his Jill."

When the sun had passed the meridian line,
Gratiano suggested it was time to dine.

And with Nerissa's aid
Final touches were made;

And then Silvius, who
Had had nothing to chew

But "the cud of sweet and bitter fancy," call'd
Phebe

To pass the viands 'round. She made a lovely
Hebe,

They all did declare.

"Trip Audrey, trip! Attend"

Chided Touchstone, ere

The banquet did end.

The nectar, ambrosia, and angel food
Were all pronounced exceedingly good.

The toasts were drunk, both witty and refined;
Then it happily occur'd to the mind

Of some in the throng,

That a Shakespearean song

Would help matters along.

Soon all were agreed

A medley would succeed,

And meet the common need;

This silenced ev'ry tongue.

The lines contributed,

Were then distributed,

And thusly the song was sung:

"Jog on, jog on, the foot-path way,
While you here do snoring lie;

Now, until the break of day,
Where the bee sucks there suck I.

“Pardon, goddess of the night,
Tell me where is fancy bred;
Do me right and dub me knight,
Where is the life that late I led?”

“On a day, alack the day!
Under the greenwood tree;
Take, O take these lips away!
Who is Silvia? What is she?”

“Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more!
Fill the cup. A cup of wine!
Come hither, come hither, come hither,
And drink unto the leman mine.

“The God of love that sits above,
Will he not come again?
Then up he rose and donn'd his clothes,
Heigh-ho! the wind and the rain!

“Be merry, be merry my wife and all,
A merry heart goes all the day;
Women are all shrews both great and small.
Nonny heigh-ho! come away, come away!”

The music arose full and clear, then far away
did seem,
As I awoke to find, 'twas all a mad summer
night's dream!

COVE SPRINGS

THE CAMP-GROUND

It is well understood
A reminiscent mood
Amuses, refreshens, or saddens the mind;
When memory calls back
To by-gone days, alack!
Recollections sad or diverting we find.

So, to hills far away,
In forests green we stray!
Where the gray sand is deep, and gigantic trees
Cast their shadows around
On the old "Camp-Ground,"
Known and lov'd by all of high or low degrees.

A brush arbor was made,
Which afforded a shade
And protection 'gainst showers, as well as sun.
The rude tents were then stretch'd,
And provisions were fetch'd:
Some prepared for two weeks, and others for
one.

They gather'd far and wide,
And came from ev'ry side
To hear the gospel songs and sermons profound:
For on these occasions
Protestant "persuasions"
Were united, except on "*doctrinal ground.*"

The talented "big guns"
Would help the little ones
To fight "Apollyon" and the "Castle of Doubt."
A spiritual union,
And happy communion
Strengthened the soul and put Satan to rout.

There were some who would go,
Their fine dresses to show;
Some with "political bees in their bonnets";
And there was some flirting,
A great deal of courting,
And exchanging of *billet doux* and sonnets.

The darkness was baffled
By torches on scaffold,
And tallow candles, a fitful light making.
They shouted and prayed,
And oftentimes stayed
At the altar, until the dawn was breaking.

The hills re-echoed 'round
With praise and pray'rful sound:
Hosannas and hallelujahs reached to Heav'n.
On wings of holy love,
They were wafted above;
While foes were forgotten, and friends forgiven.

Year after year Camp-meeting
Came with joyful greeting
From friends for hundreds of miles away, per-
haps,

It was so widely known,
And tho' so famous grown,
Strange to say, it was never found on the maps.

As the years advanced,
The place was enhanced
With a tabernacle and cemetery,
And the neighborhood grew,
Boasted a fine school, too,
Sunday-school, pray'r-meeting and picnics
merry.

Now, deserted and lonely—
A wilderness only—
A funeral air hovers over the scene;
There is a ghostly tone
In the low, hollow moan
Of the wind that murmurs, "*It's just a Has
Been.*"

But invisible choirs
Chant on their golden lyres;
"O, glory! there's room enough in Paradise
To have a home in glory!"
"I love to tell the story,"
And other songs that call us from death to rise.

COVE SPRINGS

THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE

The old school house was built of logs,
That were hewn from the native pine,
With no regard to pedagogues'
Or an architect's design.

Walls were weather-boarded outside;
Benches were long and mortis'd well;
The rough-laid floor had cracks quite wide,
Thro' which the pens and pencils fell.

Two large windows faced the south, but
They were guiltless of sash or pane;
And hung with shutters (that ne'er shut,)
To shield from winter's cold and rain.

'Tween these windows a pulpit stood
In which the week-day lunch was stor'd,
On Sundays the spiritual food
Was issued from the pulpit board.

The one door, north, was wide but low,
And the tallest boys had to stoop;
Warped and latchless the shutter, so
It was made secure with a loop.

Sloping shelves, hand-dressed and wide,
And smooth, were fasten'd to the wall,
Where children learn'd to write, or *tried*;
As to desks, there were none at all.

And the fireplace! O, wondrous art,
That e'er contriv'd it! Both wide and deep;
Of the house, it took a large part
Of one end. To fill it, a "log-heap."

There was no ceiling overhead;
They knew no fear of dire disease;
The whole room by pure air was fed,
And germs (unknown) hurt not their peace.

Later, a building modernized,
With double doors and windows tall,
For church and school house both suffic'd,
Which filled with pride the hearts of all.

Home-made desks and tables, a chair,
Blackboard, chalk, and a dunce's seat,
A hand-bell; of switches, a pair,
Made "school apparatus" complete.

What strides they made in learning's path!
And high-school work, (some do affirm,)
With Latin, physics and higher Math,
Were master'd in a ten-months' term.

COVE SPRINGS

THE "SPRINGS"

Oh, yes, those Springs! and therein lay
The origin of the name, they say:
Three little coves shaped like shells,
Form queerly pretty, dingle dells;
At the foot of a hillside steep,
Toward the west, the waters creep.

The first little cove, sandy, white,
Contains the spring of water bright;
Pure, pellucid, it ever flows,
Bubbling, sparkling, as on it goes;
One just kneels down upon the brink
To quench the thirst with cooling drink.

The second cove is quite close by,
Where streamlets dark, half-hidden lie
'Neath mosses, ferns and other plants,
So curious that they enhance
The elfin nature of the glen,
Where moccasin snakes have their den.

Honeysuckles, with blossoms sweet,
Bear strange fruit, some like to eat;
The garter snakes romp thro' the brake,
And crawfish rude constructions make.
Bay blossoms shed their fragrance 'round,
Insects and birds make cheerful sound.

Now the third cove! a place worth while:
Imagination could beguile
The youthful mind with tales of elves,
And goblins disporting themselves.
And Will-o-the-Wisp is known to grace,
With its weird light, that darksome place.

But danger lurks and lures within
The center of that little fen:
A quivering quagmire blocks the pass,
O'erspread with green and luscious grass,
That tempts the daring ones to doom
And sure death, in that marshy gloom.

.

All things conspired to make this place
A rendezvous for social grace.
They came together, one and all,
Where God and nature did enthrall.
Their worldly cares forgotten quite,
Their souls were lifted to higher height.

And now when comes October days,
(Camp-meeting time 'twas then always,)
The sand-hills gray, and trees of oak,
To song and pray'r no more invoke.
All things change, and friendships sever,
But these Springs flow on forever.

MAY-DAY CELEBRATION

THE QUEEN'S RESPONSE.

Words can't express my gratitude, I fear,
In my being selected the Queen of May
By my best friends, and schoolmates dear,
On this most gladsome and beautiful day.

Here where we have played in the years gone by,
Here where we have "conned our lessons
o'er,"
And built air-castles that tower'd so high,
The like of them was never known before.

Here in this "forest primeval," we find
The sun shines brightest, the birds sing
sweetly,
The wild flowers bloom, and all things combined
Fill this occasion with joy completely.

O, youth, and love, and joy, and life so fair,
That you might with us perennial stay!
O, day like this so radiant and rare,
That you should ever have to pass away!

The songs you sing, and the good cheer you
bring
Make us happier now, than e'er before;
No greater boon I'd ask than this, that I
Might reign your Queen of Love, forever-
more!

The joyous band is scattering afar,
That once met here; as Time his flight will
wing,
Bright thoughts will gleam through "Gates
Ajar,"
When we recall days spent at old COVE
SPRING.

THE TRAIL THROUGH THE WOODS

Let us leave the highway a little while;
It is commonplace—we have weary grown
Of fields and pastures for many a mile;
Of houses, cabins, landmarks so well known:
Scenes that suggest the weariness of labor,
Of debts we owe to ourselves and neighbor.

The road is muddy, or else too sunny,
Or dusty; fit only for traffic or travel,

Suggesting, too, the value of money;
Of the march of Progress whose loud gavel
Calls to order, that we marshal our forces,
To ponder over next year's resources.

See! there it is—the little winding road
That turns off from the teeming thorough-
fare.

No creaking vehicle, with pond'rous load,
Or puffing motor-car, this way would dare:
Inviting, reposeful, whither it goes,
We ask not, we think not, nor care who knows.

To the child, it may lead to fairyland,
Thro' woody dells, where nymphs and elves,
Dryads and naiads, or a scary band
Of goblins and monsters disport themselves.
To minds mature, it breathes now here, now
there,
Of poems and dreams and silent prayer.

While weird fancies, flitting to and fro,
And like light and shade, fantastic move;
Messages are whispered soft and low
By the restless, murm'ring breeze above,
On no errand we go—no aim in view—
Our musings, kaleidoscopic in hue.

Ecstatic we grow over mosses and ferns,
Or stoop to gather a little wild flow'r.

And here, just where the narrow wood-path
turns,
 Enchanted, we rest in a sylvan bow'r.
That squirrel scolds bravely, where the boughs
part,
While birds in trees echo songs in the heart.

Then on we go, revelling in delight;
 The charms, though illusive, give life anew;
All things seem wonderful, good and bright,
 And to care, for awhile, we bid adieu.
The little trail winding is almost lost—
Again grows plain, when this pool is crossed.

Look! a paper in this wood so lonely!
 Perhaps a fairly story or a fable,
Lost by some wand'ring child. No; 'tis only
 A leaf of "Multiplication table!"
Crumpled and soiled, it tells of study. Bah!
And so this path leads to the school-house, Ah?

A miniature temple of learning, where
 Little bare-foot children, day after day,
Are conning their lessons with busy care,
 That teach them how they may soon get
 away
From this enchanted realm, and claim their
part
Of greed and gain, in the world's busy mart,

Where life's all a tangle, toil and a fray;
Yet in the struggle midst vice and self,
There may be moments when one gets away
In fancy's flight, and forgetful of self,
He dreams again; and in these quiet woods,
He'll ofttimes recall the "Trail thro' the woods."

DEPARTURES

I

They were all up, ere break of day,
For some one was going away;
The trunk was packed the night before,
And was carried to the front hall door.
Each one felt a suppress'd gladness,
With an underlying sadness;
Each one was thrill'd with the knowledge,
That big brother was going to college.

The little mother's heart was aching;
For her eldest born's leave-taking
Meant more than they could understand,
More than sev'ring the household band.
Father was proud, and look'd so strong,
For this moment he had worked so long.
All was ready, good-byes were said;
Into the world the boy was sped.

II

Now wherefore all this merry-making,
So much bustle and decorating?
Father seems doing a lot of thinking,
But mother's eyes with tears are blinking,
The whole house is in joyous mood,
And mischief-makers try to be good:
Big sister gets married today,
And far from home she goes away.

III

With mirthful jests, and happy song,
The genial guests have tarried long,
So pleasant has been their visit!
But a passing cloud! Oh, what is it?
Why comes the parting of the ways?
Why should end these blessed days?
Lingering farewells soon are over,
Away they go, friend and lover!

IV

When proud nations for freedom call,
And war involves the fate of all
And buoyant youth must march away,
To death or victory; Oh, say,
Where can there be a greater curse?
What parting sorrow can be worse?
What sadden'd homes, what breaking hearts
Are seen, when soldier boy departs!

V

The crape is hanging on the door:
One has pass'd to the other shore.
What mournful weeping! Grief has come,
And settled in some happy home.
"Death, the black camel," has knelt today,
To carry a soul away, away
To the "Land o' the Leal," that bourne,
From whence there is no glad return.

WOULD YOU?

If you could recall the years gone by,
And live your life over again,
For all the sunlit past, would you try
To endure the shadow and pain?

Were the days full of laughter and songs,
So dear to you they would outweigh
Unpleasant facts and terrible wrongs
That brought heartaches many a day?

For the mother's smile and home's retreat,
Where, in childhood's hours you played,
Would you care just once more to repeat
The sad mistakes you oftentimes made?

For "Love's young dream," and visions it brought
Of future bliss and cloudless sky,

Would you endure the agony wrought,
When love smiled, and pass'd you by?

For zeal you felt in work well-plann'd,
To help some cause to you so dear,
But with failure had met, could you stand
Again to face the critic's sneer?

Would you have the pulsing stream of life
Run riot in the veins of youth,
And in Poverty Flat, 'mid toil and strife
Live over it all? Tell the truth!

Would you, to feel pleasure's thrill anew,
Go down to Death's portals again?
Would you such experiences go through
To meet disappointment and pain?

To enjoy power of successful work,
And honors that came to your hands,
Would you mind ignoble tasks that irk,
And vigils that success demands?

If health and wealth and beauty's dower
Have left you stranded on the shore,
Does your heart throb, in your lonely hour,
To live that same old life once more?

If, in efforts to be wise and good,
You've met with only ridicule,
And by best friends been misunderstood,
Then would you try again Life's School?

If life has been but a "bitter pill,"
That purged your soul of its dross;
Do vainest regrets your bosom fill,
When you reckon the gain or loss?

For one event so big, in the past,
It moved the great deep of your soul,
Would you traverse life's desert so vast,
With that oasis your only goal?

If all these have come along your way,
And still you would try it again,
You have not failed, but won the day:
Verily, you've not lived in vain!

This life determines our future fate;
If no glimpse of Heaven we've known,
God pity the soul's worthless estate,
With nothing but evil o'ergrown!

L'ENVOI

The elms are swaying in the Autumn breeze,
Drifting and falling are the withered leaves;
Springtime sweet, Summer's heat, and the har-
vest time are past;
The sheaves are garnered, be they many or few:
There is not much more left for old age to do,
And soon, like leaves, downward we shall fall,
at last.

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