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THE STORY

OF

RAYMOND HILL,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

JOHN DENNISON BALDWIN.

Und, was die innere Stimme spricht,
Das täuscht die hoffende Seele nicht.



BOSTON:
WILLIAM D. TICKNOR & COMPANY.

M DCCC XLVII.

PS 1059
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1847

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PRINTED BY THURSTON, TORRY AND CO.
31 Devonshire Street.

THE STORY
OF
RAYMOND HILL
AND
OTHER POEMS,

Respectfully Dedicated

TO

MRS. MARY HOWITT,
Of England,

IN TOKEN OF ADMIRATION

FOR HER CHARACTER,

AND

GRATITUDE FOR THE PLEASURE

DERIVED

FROM HER VOLUMES.

P R E F A C E.

THESE poems are firstlings. They are published, not because I suppose they have any very extraordinary merit, nor because I have no hope of writing something better ; but because I think they will find friendly readers, and, imperfect as they are, do something to encourage others to love Truth and Beauty, — and love them, not as abstractions merely, but as realities to be felt and manifested all along the ways of human life.

Excepting one of the shorter pieces, the first and second parts of the Story of Raymond Hill, were chiefly written sometime earlier than the rest of the volume. This may be a reason why I regard them as the most imperfect portions of it. The other parts were written, partly to finish what was begun, and partly because I saw no reason to distrust the thoughts and feelings with which I began the story.

I think there are loving ones, in the world around me, who will sympathize with the thoughts and feelings I endeavor to express; and who, if they find my expression quite imperfect, will nevertheless treat me kindly, believing that my thoughts and feelings are not altogether affected.

J. D. B.

KILLINGLY, CONN.
FEBRUARY 5, 1847.

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STORY OF RAYMOND HILL.

RAYMOND HILL.

PART FIRST.

'T is spring, the time when skies are flushing
With richer smiles and warmer hues, —
When rainbow-color'd life is gushing,
Where balmy winds their breath diffuse.
The meadows feel the blossoms springing
To drink the light of vernal skies,
And all the happy birds are singing
As if they lived in Paradise.
The all-pervading Life, effacing
The touch of winter's drear annoy,

On forest, field, and sky, is tracing
The anthem-airs of summer joy.
How Nature, with a smile divine,
Dispels the very thought of sadness,
Forbids the loving heart to pine,
And fills it with a rapturous gladness !

The sunset, beautiful as ever,
Is goldening valley, hill, and stream, —
And all things fair, with glad endeavor,
Return the kiss of every gleam.

With quivering light

The air is bright ;

Waves of lingering sunset shimmer,
Through the murmuring forest glimmer,
And seem, the trees and leaves among,
A visible, shining spread of song.

The lake in azure stillness lies,
Communing with the clouds and skies.
The spire-like mountain's broken crest,

And rocky sides, are gaily dress'd,
 With foliage green
 And glittering sheen,
And hang beyond the valley forth,
Picture-like against the north.
Those fleecy cloudlets seem to shun,
In dread, the coming dark of even,
And stand around the setting sun,
Like souls before the gate of heaven.

In Weston dale, one creature only
Beholds the sunset, sad and lonely.
Beside the brook so gay and hale,
That wanders singing through the vale,
Beneath the shade of clustering vines,
A solitary youth reclines.
His cheek is resting on his hand ;
His eye, that turns without command,
Has not a gleam that shows delight,
Though every thing around is bright.

Too busy with itself, his soul,
Of eye and ear, has no control ;
His working features, well revealing
The inward stir of mighty feeling,
Of some great anguish tell too plainly,
With which his spirit struggles vainly ;
And when, a moment, thought is given
To aught beneath the smiling heaven,
His darken'd soul repels the light,
And broods as in the gloom of night.

The light and loveliness of Nature,
With sweet enticement, charm and grace
The life of every loving creature,
That feels and breathes in her embrace.
And yet, the all-o'erflowing splendor,
Through every sight and every tone
Forever melting, warm and tender,
Flows not from outward shows alone.
The landscape shineth, in its glory,

To such as inwardly rejoice ;
The blossom tells an angel's story,
To such as know the angel's voice.

Poor Raymond Hill ! he does not glow,
With Nature's loveliness enchanted ;
He sees his soul in every show,
And that, he feels, is spectre-haunted.
And why has he this look of wo,
When life should have a sparkling flow ?
And why has pain this stern dominion ?
When thought should sail on careless pinion,
 Soaring, gleaming,
 Seeking, dreaming,
Through Fancy's strange delicious sky,
Entranc'd, yet hardly knowing why.
Though later years may wear the token
Of many a hope forever broken,
Our twentieth birthday seldom brings
Much more than light upon its wings.

Not so with Raymond ; on the page
Of his young life, the last two years
Have left the traces of an age,
And steep'd his very soul in tears.
His eye is alter'd, yet how well
Remembers all before its gaze !
For every rock and tree can tell
Full many a tale of other days,
Those heavenly days of boyhood's life,
With such exquisite raptures rife,
When dreaming boyhood's graceful ways
Made being seem a hymn of praise,
Disturb'd by no inwoven sorrow,
By no foreboding of to-morrow.

Not always, as an evening star,
Does Memory shine serenely, far
Along the past, on days of gladness ;
Too oft, she wakes the rage of madness.
As busy memory brings anew,

To Raymond's thought, all warm and true,
His former self, as then, in dreams
Of golden exhalations wove
From boyhood's heart, along the streams
And through the fields, he loved to rove,
The sense of what he must be now,
Works fury-like along his brow.

Near where the spire looks through the trees,
His widow'd mother's roof he sees ;
Longs to be there ; but, cannot frame
A resolution strong as shame.
State-prison ! quivering with the word,
The chords of agony are stirr'd,
Till madness through his soul is stealing
With every thought and every feeling.
No glaring lineaments of sin,
Englow'd by teeming hell within,
So fiercely rouse the swift demand
Of scorn, as this terrific brand,

By which we deem the sinner awful,
And doubt if charity be lawful.

The sweet enchantment hovering round,
The gentle grace of sight and sound,
Along his brooding spirit flow,
And thrills of tender warmth bestow.

Some soothing touches gently win
Their way along the dark within.

Ah! how he yearns for hearts to love him,
As, in the branches there above him,
Her evening hymn the robin sings,
And wakes a dream of holy things:—

“Bosom'd in a glow of beauty,
Being's happy pulses move,
Sweet as music, feeling duty
Means the radiant ways of love.
Oh! we robins, fleeing sadness,
Study music every day,
Drink at every fount of gladness,

Hear what smiling spirits say : —
And we sing our heavenly Father,
Full of bliss among the flowers,
Seeking round our nests to gather
All the light of sunny hours.”

The robin glistening through his mood,
A flow of tearful longing brought ;
A keener sense of solitude
Gush'd in, to edge his painful thought.
How he would strive to merit love,
Redeem his tainted life, and be
Unstain'd ! but tears cannot remove
The blighting curse of infamy.

In early childhood, Raymond grew,
To every kindly impulse true ;
His mother's love his only guide ;
And she had little else beside.
Of father, dead ere he could frame
Sufficient speech to say his name,

He nothing felt or cherish'd, save
The lessons gather'd at his grave.
It may be, that, in motherhood,
A feeling dwells, not understood
By him who could not have the part,
To bear his child so near the heart ;
Yet, true and holy from above,
Was sent the father's different love,
And childhood's guidance best is done,
Where both unite and act as one.

As Raymond grew beside his mother,
Her yearning love, that had no other,
Did much to keep his childhood sweet,
And free from many a noxious heat,
Tho', oft, indulgent tenderness
Prevailed to make its wisdom less.
Within the boy, as soon he show'd,
A high, impetuous nature glow'd ;
A nature, over which should rule

A wiser hand and truer school.
To see him bounding to his plays,
One's eye grew loving with the gaze,
Such beauty on his face was blushing,
Such warmth in every glance was gushing.
Yet, blood so swift, on poisonous food,
Too soon becomes a fiery flood,
Burns every tie of right control,
And works perdition through the soul.
The mother's tireless care of love,
Entirely fruitless, could not prove;
The boy drew in, from each caress,
Some virtue from its holiness;
But on his life, too much neglected,
By reinless impulse oft directed,
Some lines began to show their trace,
That marr'd its fair enchanting grace.
A dusky mist began to blight
His early childhood's lustrous light,
That dimly gather'd into haze,

All o'er his sweet and winning ways ;
For, springing there, the good to kill,
Were intermingled germs of ill.

But 't was not merely absent care
That gave to wrong its growing sway ;
Grim vice had busy teachers there,
With subtle skill to lead astray,
Whose wizard, thought-bewildering lips,
That breath'd around the listening youth,
Within his fancy, worked eclipse
All o'er the dawning glow of truth,
And made the paths of evil seem
The garden ways of joy extreme,
With every sweet enchantment glowing,
With rosy radiance overflowing,
Whose murmurs through the senses sing,
And every warmest rapture bring.

Among these teachers, there was one,

Who chiefly shap'd in Raymond's heart,
An evil mood, that, when begun,
Went on to play an evil part.
For many a year, old Jacob Green,
Afar by sea and land, had roved ;
All poisonous forms of vice had seen, —
All poisonous forms of vice had loved.
And he had roved in many a clime,
Where men had made the very air
Ablaze with every lurid crime,
And every desperate passion's glare.
His heart, that early went astray,
There flung the last restraint away,
With evil form'd the strictest union,
And liv'd with fiends in close communion.
In every sin, he stood the first ;
Was never led, but led the worst,
With desperate will, whose dreadful trace
Was graven deeply on his face.
In every feature, was discern'd

What fires of guilt had inly burn'd.
He came a stranger ; none could tell
The history of his league with hell.
But some, around whose shuddering thought,
His look a sense of evil wrought,
Believ'd that Green, for many years,
Had sail'd with lawless buccaneers ;
And many whisper'd their belief,
That he had been a pirate chief.

He wished the meed to honor paid ;
With surly courtship sought to win
But every voice a tone betray'd,
That had not honor's reverence in it.
He dwelt among them, quite apart,
By many fear'd, and lov'd by none ;
He never met an open heart ;
In every crowd he seem'd alone.
His sullen eye and daring gait
Oft woke a shudder where he went,

And yet, that eye could fascinate,
When guilefully on Raymond bent.
Perhaps it was not serpent guile,
That lit his features with a smile,
Lurked in his voice, and charm'd his lip,
To win the boy's companionship.
Perchance it was a better feeling,
His sense of loneliness revealing,
A yearning wish, that would intrude,
And brood amid his solitude,
A trusting fellowship to find
In one at least of human kind.

Nor all in vain, did he employ
His wiles, to win the guideless boy, —
Who ceased to fear, began to love,
And, with confiding spirit, strove,
Ere long, to emulate the mood,
That flushes crime with hues of good.
Long hours, the pair, in sunny weather,

Wander'd or sat alone together,
Within the woods that skirt the vale,
While Jacob told some thrilling tale
Of dire adventure, crime, and blood,
In which he made it understood,
That lofty manliness requires
The soul to burn with lurid fires.
Perhaps he did not mean to wake
The demons there ; but, while he spake,
His words, like slimy vipers, stole,
Unhinder'd, through the listener's soul,
Diffusing venom, where they went,
To nurse the germs of dark intent.

The stains of evil grew apace,
While men beheld, with boding face,
From Raymond's soul, to which were given
Such glowing lineaments of heaven,
The health and beauty disappear,
In Jacob's festering atmosphere.

The poison work'd ; at length, the flood
Of livid passion's angry blood,
Arous'd by such incessant art,
Rose, steaming, sweltering, round his heart.
His fancies grew degenerate ;
He caught the vengeful tone of Hate ;
His teeming blood, as evil grew,
The livid mood began to brew,
That fiercely glares vindictive strife,
Nor cares if red with human life.

It was not, that his soul within,
Disown'd the grace of Love and Duty ;
Nor, that a seated love of sin,
Expelled all inward Light and Beauty.
The fascinating spell, that bound him
And made his evil passions start,
Was nursed by noxious things around him,
And not by fiends within his heart ;
From Jacob's tongue the poison filtered,

In which his thought and fancy sweltered.
But, through a baleful air refracted,
The holy light was very strange ;
And, what he felt, alas ! he acted ;
He gave his troubled passions range,
And, ere his eighteenth summer came,
Was doom'd to wear a branded name.

RAYMOND HILL.

PART SECOND.

ALONG the churches' holy places,
A golden glow of living graces,
The light of thoughts and lives divine,
Should, evermore, serenely shine.
But Form its chilling shadow flings,
To quench the light of holy things,
That mourn, amid the darkness lying,
Like voices in a desert crying.
How many virtue's honor claim,
Because they loudly cry her name,

With show of utterance very holy,
Enton'd with pious melancholy !
How many bid us reverence them,
Because along a mantle-hem,
Quite free from sullying touch or stain,
Some holy words are written plain ; —
Or bid us stand, rebuked, to see,
In them, the holiest men that be,
Because they always find, with ease,
The wardrobe of the Pharisees,
And, every week, their foreheads garnish
With glossy Pharisaic varnish ;
While earnest hearts are throbbing sadly
To see these fashions greeted gladly,
Within whose many-tinted murk
The busy fiends are all at work.

In Weston lived a man, whose name
Was snugly shelter'd in the fame
Of forward zeal, to make religion

Respectable through all the region ;
And yet, his ever-yearning greed
Could filch the blood of pallid need,
And wring the sickest heart for spoil,
His tongue, the while, as smooth as oil.
His golden greatness was respected ;
His dire rapacity protected,
By many a cunning art to draw
An endless sanction from the law.
With guile, no conscience rose to smother,
This man had injur'd Raymond's mother.
In form of law, he made the deed
Of cruel robbery succeed,
While yet, the first hot hours of mourning
Around the widow's heart were burning.

The boy had often heard the tale,
From lips whose language could not fail
To wake and nurse a swift pulsation,
Alive with keenest indignation.

At length, as Jacob shap'd his thought,
With darker glow, this feeling wrought,
Until the smooth oppressor's name
Would stir his blood's intensest flame.
His poison'd feelings, swift and strong,
Flow'd in around the sense of wrong,
And, settling there, a purpose lent,
That every thought and feeling bent
To schemes, whose violent execution
Would force an ample restitution.
In phrase of Jacob learn'd, he swore,
The saintly villain should restore
The gains of greed so merciless,
And make his mother full redress.

Many a fiery word he mutter'd ;
Many a wild menace he utter'd ;
He said, it were a deed to bless,
To punish pirate-wantonness ;
And glowed the oft-repeated threat,

That he would scourge the robber yet.
As once they met, a word or look
His morbid spirit would not brook,
Was answer'd with a curse and blow,
And hatred's fiery overflow.
And now, his eyes and features play,
Alive with glaring fury's sway ;
The passions sweltering in his soul,
Burst lava-like from all control.
To hot rebuke he gives reply,
Convuls'd to passion's hoarsest cry,
And swiftly deals the frantic blows,
And fiercely struggles, when they close
In furious fray, but falls, at length,
As fails his wild unequal strength.
Rage boils his brain ; — “ the painted knave !
The sanctimonious devil's slave !
The steaming stench of rotten life ! ”
He screams, and swiftly draws a knife,
Which, Jacob said, with hot delight,

Had gleam'd in many a fatal fight.
His quivering hand is phrenzy driven ;
He strikes — a ghastly gash is given.

Oh mystery ! then in Raymond's soul,
Come heavenly things to win control !
Rage goes, as goes a sudden storm,
To which succeed the gushes warm
Of mildening winds, that gather there
To soothe and clear the troubled air,
And flow, the blackened sky-arch under,
To charm away the breath of thunder.
A shivering throb, a shuddering start,
Stirs deeply through his slumbering heart.
Oh, that it were a dreadful dream !
He feels his fingers redly stream ; —
With hurrying look surveys the wound ; —
And then, from faces gathering round
A fearful blaze of human eyes,
Away, as fiend-pursu'd, he flies,

Appall'd, in every pulse to feel
Self-horror's first experience steal.

The bleeding man, to people nigh,
Who swiftly question, makes reply :—
“I was not any way in fault ;
The creature made a foul assault ;
He us'd a knife, and had the will,
I think, to rob as well as kill.
You know the fellow's recent mood ;
But, hasten, let him be pursued ;
The wound is large, but not severe ;
There need not many tarry here.”
In furious mood the crowd recruit,
And madly urge the hot pursuit.
Vindictive rage alone has sway,
And Raymond, seiz'd and dragg'd away,
Is left in misery's tearless spell,
Within a felon's bolted cell,
And feels the stir of horrors, creeping

Where bolts the iron ward are keeping.

Ah ! then no thrill compassionate
Melts through the glaring eye of Hate,
That comes the criminal to scan,
As if a monster, not a man ;
And he is painted black with evil,
As early leagued to serve the devil ;
And Jacob's scholar, all agree,
Belongs to crime and infamy ;
While Raymond, shuddering in his cell,
With feelings language cannot tell,
And fast emotions, that forsake
And loathe his tempter, longs to wake
And shed the dream, again to be
All bright with childhood's purity.
If now a god-like faith in man
Spoke out from eyes and hearts around him ;
Ah ! would they spurn the cruel ban,
With which un pitying scorn has bound him ;

If stern-faced law would deign to borrow
The blessed tones and tears of sorrow,
His swelling heart would quickly melt
With every pure and good emotion,
And holy thoughts, before unfelt,
Would have henceforth his life's devotion.
But every tongue rings out the strain, —
“The bloody fiend must wear a chain!”
Some shake their heads and whisper, sighing,
“How good and great he might have been!”
But feel no stir of faith replying, —
“Go, love and save his soul from sin!”

While curious horror's thirst they slake,
None dream his better heart can wake.
They peer in silence, all intent
To work a murderer's punishment;
Or speak with such self-righteous tone,
As mercy's angels never own.
And, staring round his deed of ill,

Those kinder eyes are dark and chill,
That, else, all warm and dewy bright
With gushing love, would send their light,
Like genial sun-gleams, through the gloom,
That girds him in his ironed room.
His mother's voice is low and broken,
While others look with chilling eye;
Her love, with sobs of anguish spoken,
He feels, and groaning, longs to die.

With frown terrific speaks the law,
And love is sternly hush'd in awe:—
“The desperate fiend to check and tame,
We brand ‘State-Prison’ on his name;”
But oh! ’t was not a fiend, whose tears
Of shame and sorrow, through the years
Of punishment, so wildly fell,
Unnotic'd in his lonely cell;—
Unnotic'd, save of Him, whose eye
Beholds all secret misery.

His days of punishment are ended : —
And who can tell, with what despair
He feels, around him is extended
A scorn, that darkens earth and air,
As forth he comes, with footstep fearful,
Once more to tread the ways of men ;
The very sunlight is not cheerful ;
He scarcely knows the world again.
Men shrink away, or whispering meet him,
Or gaze with eyes of holy wrath ;
Or loud with stinging mockery greet him,
And hiss contempt along his path.
Away from scowling human faces,
He turns, with madness in his mood,
To seek a forest's lonest places,
And find a lighter solitude.

He gains the shelter ; there reclin'd,
He sits with undirected mind.
Ah ! how escape the cruel ban,

And still, in any haunt of man,
Encounter loving eyes and hearts,
And fellowship that love imparts !
Again in Weston, once so dear,
Can he, the branded wretch appear ?
Alas ! the world of golden light,
In which his former days were bright, —
The sky, that shone with radiant gleams
Of early hopes and early dreams,
Their glad array no longer wear ;
For him, 'tis starless midnight there.
No, no, away beyond the sea,
To far off regions, must he flee ;
A strange and distant race among,
Must dwell, and learn another tongue.
Or why not, outcast as he is,
Make reckless crime and riot his ;
Seek out a crew of buccaneers,
Whose fortune desperate daring steers,
With them at home, a vengeance study,

Accept the war and make it bloody,
Glare back on men a scorn as great,
And fearless give them hate for hate !

His blood awakes, and through his soul,
A fiery flood begins to roll ;
Along his brow, the stir and flush
Of fierce emotions, wake and rush ;
Swift fires dilate his drooping eyes ;
“ Yes ! hate for hate ! ” he fiercely cries,
And, madly rushing onward, speeds,
As if to write the vow in deeds.
But soon a softer mood ensues,
And better yearnings fast diffuse
Their soothing sway, as gently come
The changeless memories of home ;
And, turn'd by this increasing spell,
Whose power his heart cannot repel,
His steps no longer aimless stray,
But on, to Weston, take their way.

The vale is reach'd : — and now, he sees
His mother's roof, among the trees,
Beyond the spire, that rises bright
And glimmering with the sunset light ;
His soul to passion's war delivering,
With pain in every fibre quivering,
Looks home awhile, so dark his eye,
That all is dark beneath the sky ;
And then, beneath the bower of vines,
In lonely misery reclines.

But ah ! one teeming thought is his,
That works with clustering memories,
To stir and soothe, and yet oppress
With overwhelming tenderness.
He feels delicious, starry light,
All o'er his spirit's cheerless night,
All o'er the gloom around him, trace
His suffering mother's pleading face.
By this prevailing force within,

At length, the sweeter passions win.

The days come back, when, like a spring
Whose brimming waters sweetly sing,
With crystal life, as on they run,
Glittering, gleaming with the sun,
Her brimming love, too bright with gladness
To keep one hour a shade of sadness,
Was gushing o'er his boyhood's life,
That grew with fairest promise rife ;
The days, when radiant with the joy
That grew with him, her darling boy,
His mother's heart went clear and strong
In music, like an angel's song,
From earliest morn to latest even,
And made her humble home a heaven ;
Those blessed days, alas ! that never
On them may shine again forever ;
Her paradise whose glory vanished,
When he to infamy was banished,

In whose dark ruins, sad, and broken
With grief that cannot all be spoken,
Her steeping eyes with anguish dim,
She kneels alone and prays for him.

Not always does the soul betoken,
By quivering lip and brimming eye,
True chords that tremble yet unbroken,
Or holy founts that are not dry.
With every holy chord unstrung,
With the blackening blight of crimeful years,
The heart, by desperate madness wrung,
May shed its oozing grime for tears.
Hot streams from demon eyes that ache,
Fast down the livid cheeks may roll,
When baffled passions, raging, break
In lurid tempest, through the soul.

Not thus is Raymond's tearful glow,
As now the quick emotions flow

Within, like sweetest winds that bring
The earth-renewing life of spring.
He feels the disenchanting call
To strength and clearness, break his thrall ;
His fancies warm and warmer come,
Like angels from their love-bright home,
And stir the blessed founts of feeling
Whose waters down his face are stealing ;
Despair gives way ; a holier aim,
Than wild and lonely flight from shame,
Begins his brightening soul to employ,
And wakes a beaming thrill of joy ;
New, gladdening fancies round him crowd ;
Smiles dawn ; and thus he thinks aloud : —

“ Dear mother, yes ! I still can be
Light, life, and gladness — all, to thee !
Though shame my life has darkly cross'd,
Thy love remains ; I am not lost.
Thy face, so dark and wet with pain,

The smile of joy shall light again.
Far in the west, I 'll seek a home,
And make old pleasures round it come ;
And there, with wiser heart, for thee
I 'll toil ; and there, for thee and me,
Shall life be beautiful once more,
Aye, truer, better than before.
One night beneath thy roof I 'll sleep ;
I 'll go and bid thee cease to weep,
 Feel thy love in thy embrace,
 See, all o'er thy grief-worn face,
 Coming smiles begin to play,
 Take thy blessing, — and away !

RAYMOND HILL.

PART THIRD.

It was a tranquil summer eve,
Whose smile forbade the sad to grieve ;
The bustling winds were all at rest ;
The glow of day had left the west ;
The bushes grey and grasses green
All swam in whitest evening sheen ;
The trees, with outline grand and fair,
Stood listening in the living air,
To hear the wandering spirits' hymn
Flow through the silence, far and dim.

It seem'd, the skies, for perfect bliss,
Were gently bending down to kiss
The dreaming brow of glorious June ;
A magic from the stars was stealing,
To charm the fancy, like a tune
Or tale, that wakes a bright forefeeling
Of ecstasy, beneath the skies
That charm the vales of Paradise.

The Cuyahoga's waters bright
Were whispering music to the night,
That told their yearning dream of rest,
In Erie's great maternal breast.
And there, along the forest valley,
His fancies moving musically,
Went Raymond, glad as any gleam
That danc'd on blossom, leaf, or stream.

Before the day began to fail,
He went to meet the lagging mail,

And, singing, dreaming through the vale,
With radiant heart he now returns ;
In every pulse, serenely burns
A joy, that nothing comes to smother, —
The joy of tidings from his mother.
His glad demeanor seems to say,
“ Ah ! better things on earth have sway,
Than gloaring hate and killing scorn !
We need not walk the earth forlorn.
The ways of human life are bright
With loving hearts, whose gentle light
Can chase away the blackest sadness,
And fill the darkest heart with gladness,
As now the starry spell beguiles
And makes the world alive with smiles.
I ’ll toil and wait another year ;
And, mother, then shalt thou be here !
Our home will be a place of joy,
That sin shall not again destroy ;
And oh ! if Jane will see me then,

With smiles, and soft consenting eyes,
Nor let me urge my suit in vain,
'T will seem a bower of Paradise."

With shining hope communing now,
He feels her radiance round his brow ;
And light whose quickening beams impart
A heavenly verdure, fills his heart.
By timid trust in strangers drawn,
He came, two years and more ago,
To hide from howling infamy,
To seek for human sympathy,
To find a home and earn esteem
Where Cuyahoga's waters gleam,
Below the forest-cover'd hill,
Whose circle shelters Allanville.

Our God-related human heart,
Whose beat the demons seek to fetter,
Though oft it plays a mournful part,

Forever yearns for something better.
Its league with holy things may seem,
By crimes and lies entirely broken ;
Or, like a dim remember'd dream
Of pretty words in childhood spoken,
May come, with songs of golden ages,
And sing to fancy, weirdly toned,
May gild our talk of holy sages,
And seem in every deed disowned.

Meanwhile, the bandages of lies
Cannot entirely still its beating ;
And, sometimes, scar'd to see it rise
The demons round it fly retreating.
And, though a holy wall around it,
Would fence it out from earth and sky ;
Though bigots in their fens have drown'd it,
Its godlike craving will not die.
How oft divine emotion graces
This poor old heart, when grief is seen,

Till Pharisees, with gloaring faces
And great philacteries, get between!

Oh! scorn is mighty; when its flame
Has burn'd and blackened through a name,
How oft the heart of manhood dies,
In him who suffers; through the eyes,
Where looked a soul whose kingly might
Of self-respect enforced its right,
There looks an abject creature, peering,
Beseeching, hating, crouching, fearing;
"My royal birthright," this its whine,
"Is canceled, if 't were ever mine."

Oh, scorn is mighty! Pharisee,
Thy devil-triumph oft we see;
And yet, thy brethren's trampled souls,
O'er which thy carriage proudly rolls,
On holy journeys through the town,
To show the world thy saintly crown,

Though crouch'd in ashes, smear'd with sin,
And black as blind despair within,
Compar'd with thine, are clean and white, --
Aye, lustrous with a radiant light.

If Raymond's shrinking spirit quailed,
When scorn with furious bolts assailed,
'T was not that goodness, justly proud,
His soul beneath a thunderous cloud
Of scorn, had plac'd, to curse his sin,
Till all his manhood died within ;
'T was not that conscience bade him take
An outcast's robe, for human sake ;
For, gilded sin, whose bosom wears
Our smiling favors, ever dares
To talk of honor, ride at ease,
Assume the proudest robe it sees,
Proclaim the grandest soul its mate,
And sit with lords of church and state.
No, Raymond's suffering contrite spirit

Requir'd a loving voice to cheer it,
Like His, whose love-transfigured tone,
Through sinful bosoms sweetly shone,
And, where its sternest utterance went,
A lingering, clinging music lent,
That gave rebuke a power to win, —
A charm to change the mood of sin.

To Allanville he came alone,
A youthful stranger, quite unknown,
Whose humble aspect, earnest eye,
And voice that won they knew not why,
To every heart, unhinder'd, plead,
Till kindly welcome round him spread.
Meanwhile, he thinks, with timorous mind,
All hearts are far too greatly kind.
He pines for love; but, if they knew him,
Their scowls and curses would pursue him.
And shall he thus, in silence, take
The love whose warm embraces wake,

Within his breast, a hope so thrilling,
Its mournful deeps with music filling ;
And aim, this cheering love to merit,
To live forever with the spirit,
That wins to every smallest duty,
The heavenly grace of Truth and Beauty ?
And thus, by years of merit, build
A name, like honor's palace, filled
With sumptuous light, that, purely glowing,
Like sweetest rhyme is ever flowing.

Alas ! how soon a fatal word,
That hunts him always, demon-stirr'd,
May scent his steps and hurry here,
To shake his rising hope with fear,
Cave in the hollow earth below it,
And, deep in darkness, overthrow it !

How many a time, the flashing pain
Of these misgivings, through his brain

And heart, their sudden lightning shed,
To strike his trembling purpose dead !
Ah, ye, whose souls, with inward power,
Go shining on, though darkness lour,
And move, the ways of truth along,
In heavenly self-reliance strong ;
Who, heart-entranc'd, for goodness' sake,
The loneliest ways of conscience take ;
Ye will not angrily despise
His weaker spirit ; no, your eyes
Become alive with Christian meekness,
To see a trembling brother's weakness.

'T is thus arrang'd ; — an aged pair,
With faces mild as summer weather,
Have room and little weight of care,
So he and they will dwell together.
And now he glows with happy mood,
To feel again the little pleasures,
So sweet, of home and neighborhood ;

And, having duly taken measures
To own a little tract of land,
That lies not far above the village,
Begins, with strenuous heart and hand,
To clear and fit the soil for tillage.
Meanwhile, to make his purpose thrive,
He toils among his busy neighbors,
With axe or plow, no arm alive,
With more unwearying gladness labors.
The life within his bosom clears,
By joy's inspiring music aided,
Whose deepening tones dispel the fears,
By which his downcast soul was shaded.
The welcome warms ; fancies cease
To see his human claims so meanly ;
He feels a gathering glow of peace,
And days begin to flow serenely.

Oh ! men, my brothers, 't is not well,
To be so much in league with hell ; —

It is not good, when human eyes
Give out no light of Paradise,
To charm away the darkness, where
The death of hope has gloom'd the air.
How good is kindness, when its breath
Awakes a shrouded hope from death,
To smile and sing, without a fear,
Within a love-bright atmosphere !

When thus withdrew the cloud of pain,
His heart in brightness mov'd again,
With all its former fervor glowing,
With youthful gladness overflowing ;
Though earnest now, with graver thought
Than former sunny hours had brought,
A shining air his spirit lent,
To charm all places where he went ;
At toil or pastime, none could be
So full of beaming life as he ;
And none more wakeful, stern, and strong,

To shun the tempting ways of wrong ;
None shrunk with keener dread of blame
From every thought that led to shame,
Or tried so many graceful ways,
To win and keep the crown of praise.

And praise he won ; its music came
From every tongue that spoke his name ;
Its flowers around him sprung and grew,
With dyes of every fairest hue ;
For, human life, in Allanville,
Unlearn'd in *rank*, was simple still.
No gilded pride had won dominion,
And they were prais'd, who charm'd opinion,
By greatly honoring all its law,
With decorous mien and sleepless awe.
At every hearth a welcome guest, —
By every neighboring eye caress'd, —
His gleaming mirth, and gentle face,
And mien so full of modest grace,

Became to many a bosom dear,
And part of many a homestead cheer.

Sometimes, his secret would intrude
On joyous hours, so drear a mood,
That shuddering peace forsook her throne ;
And many a time, the startled tone
That gave his dread of wrong expression,
Showed not serenest self-possession ;
But, like the sound of coming feet,
That gaily move to music sweet
Of lutes and viols, through a grove,
Where birds enraptur'd sing of love,
Within his bosom worked the dream,
That made the approaching future seem
A world of rising suns, a heaven,
From whose enchanting bowers are given
All joys and lovely things, that come
To bless a happy mortal's home.
The shadows ceased and went away,

Before the growing power of day ;
And all the dreams his spirit knew,
To fast-embodiment visions grew,
Whose gleamy glow along the air,
Declar'd them almost present there ;
And all his thoughts and all his fancies
Were steeped in dear delicious trances.

For now appear'd, within his soul,
A thought that work'd with bright control,
And grew to passion's deepest glow,
The dearest, sweetest mortals know ;
A thought, whose lustrous flow of light
Made heaven and earth divinely bright ;
A growing thought, that seem'd to be
A universe of melody ;
Whose sweetness, keen as sharpest pain,
Trembling and sparkling through his brain,
Through all his being seem'd to melt,
In every smallest fibre felt.

Oh love ! how many souls entomb
Thy bounteous glory, in the gloom
Of self ; or, in its greedy mire,
Soon trample out thine altar-fire !
Oh love ! how many blush to name thee,
And, seeming wise, attempt to shame thee,
Whose souls in thine embraces quiver,
And know thee life of life forever !

Near Raymond's home, a neighbor dwelt,
Whose only daughter, Jane, he felt,
Had the sweetest smiles and brightest eyes,
That ever shone below the skies.
And fair as rosy June was she ;
As fair as maidenhood can be,
When purely blooming, clear and white,
In graceful nature's thrilling light,
Away from fashion's hothouse air,
And far from dainty folly's care.
Her comely form and modest face

Were rich in every winning grace,
And spoke of streams, and wild-wood bowers,
And dalliance with the summer flowers.
Her smile, alive with spirit-gleams,
Would fill your heart with azure dreams
Of June in Paradise, and make
Your voice a music-murmur take.
Her motion, free from fettering art,
Was born within her radiant heart ;
And, keeping still its changeful beauty,
In gleeful dance, or household duty,
It seem'd a visible melody.
And yet, it was not, could not be,
That every grace to her had flown,
To make her beautiful alone :
With rarest charms of beauty laden,
Is every pure, true-hearted maiden.

But Raymond's growing worship knew
No other maid so fair to view.

No other's step, no other's touch,
Could thrill his heart and brain so much ;
No other eyes gave out such glances,
To wake delight's ethereal dances,
Or so beseem'd a vernal morn,
When flowers in sweetest dews are born ;
No tones such impulse could impart,
To stir his pulses, trance his heart,
Or charm away the world's eclipse,
As those that glow'd around her lips.
He thought, one holy place on earth,
Was close beside her father's hearth :
And how, for him, her presence dear
Enhalo'd all the atmosphere !
In any place, if she were nigh,
The hours as still as stars went by,
And feelings moved as musically,
As dreams in some enchanted valley.

And soon, with trembling hope, he felt

Love's promise through her glances melt ;
A gush of light would overbrim
Her eye and smile, to welcome him.
And now the cares of timid love,
Within his bosom sweetly strove ;
Dawn-music murmur'd everywhere ;
His spirit swam in purple air,
And gave embrace and greeting truer,
To all that came to make it pure ;
It grew to forest ways, and flowers,
To rosy clouds, and glittering showers,
To every happy bird's refrain,
To every thing that spoke of Jane.

Two years, that grew at length so bright,
Enthrill'd with love's delicious light,
Till hopes, as stars, before him swum,
He toil'd to shape his future home.
And now, it seem'd, a sure success
Was near, his earnest toil to bless.

How dear, to his caressing view,
His modest little farmstead grew,
Emerging, like the brow of peace,
Among the glorious forest trees !
The swarming days to come, with noises
Of bliss that sung with million voices,
A throng of glories, hovering round it,
In spells of joy and beauty bound it.
Ere summer's bright and dreamy songs
Again awake the million tongues
Of forest, mountain, stream, and plain,
That yearly celebrate her reign,
His mother's eyes will see the place ;
Her voice will lend completing grace ;
And then, along the forest vale,
Some moonlit hour, becoming bolder,
His tongue will tell to Jane the tale
His eyes so many times have told her.

RAYMOND HILL.

PART FOURTH.

OH! land of streams, and forests hoary,
Where through the darkness still and vast,
Unvoic'd by any song or story,
From earliest time, the ages pass'd,
Thine awful solitude, of dreams
To yearning Memory never spoken,
No more with dusky silence teems;
The spell that held thee dumb, is broken.
Oh! when the life, that, westward flowing,
Moves on with swift, resistless sway,

The reign of silence overthrowing,
Has swept thy forests all away,
With every savage tribe and herd,
By which their endless shade is haunted,
How weirdly, then, will hearts be stirr'd
By Memory's talk of thee enchanted !

And then, the charm of fix'd abode,
May win the wandering homes to rest,
That now, forever on the road,
Are all exploring through the west ;
With every tale he left behind,
Pursuing surely, every where,
The wretch, by sin or pain inclin'd
To hide in any corner there.

The autumn winds were gentle still,
With lingering summer ; Allanville,
By forest hemm'd, within its niche,
Was smiling goldenly, and rich

In sounds as sweet as perfect rhyme,
And hearts that glowed to feel the prime
Of busy bounteous harvest time ;
When came a stranger, whose (untold
But rumored) quantities of gold,
And high demeanor, swiftly drew
All eyes, as wonder round him grew.

He stayed and talked of rising towns ;
Of great success, that surely crowns
The fearless aim of him, who tries
The world with boldest enterprize.
He came to Allanville, he said,
By well-consider'd purpose led ;
His wealth was boundless ; if he could
Employ it there in doing good,
(For ah ! he lov'd religion well !)
'T would please him much with them to dwell.
His wealth and enterprize should render
Some place a seat of trade and splendor.

Around their village, every spot
Might soon become a city lot ;
And, as it grew, the golden spoil
Would quite emancipate from toil
All those, whose happy fortune found them,
With such a city rising round them, —
And brought them wealth, perhaps too much,
So charmed by his Aladdin-touch.

To plan the town he will not venture : —
But then, suppose we make the center
A splendid park, completely planned ;
Around it must the churches stand,
A bordering row, and greet the eye
With steeples, very, very high ; —
Broadway shall bound it on the north,
And, like a palace, shining forth
To front the fountain, there may swell
On high, the city's chief chief hotel ; —
The railroad's double track will go

Along the river bank below ;
The marble-walled Exchange must be
Far from the University ;
The bank, the jail, the printing press
Will grace the city's sumptuousness.
When rapid skill the plan completes,
The villas, avenues, and streets,
Will flourish, all the vale embracing,
Its vulgar show of farms effacing.

He'd stay awhile and look around ; —
Their modest village might be found,
Perhaps, unworthy quite, that he
Should give it such a destiny.

The stores of wealth he will prepare,
Must none but Christian people share,
Who can get rich with spirit lowly,
And make their grandeur very holy.
He must, with self-denying aim,
Preserve an honor'd Christian fame.

His soul on doing good is bent ;
His future city, Rome outvying,
Must rise as Zion's battlement,
The pope, and hell itself, defying.

The stranger's stay appeared the dawn
Of Eldorado hastening on ;
For, Eldorado-bringing schemes,
That swim in wild, fantastic dreams,
Far shrewder hearts bewitch and fill,
Than ever beat in Allanville.

The stranger, while he tarried there,
The impressive semblance sought to wear,
Of one, whose mighty powers can make
Creation any fashion take ;
And bade them see, with awe extreme,
A mighty soul with cities teem.
He met the morning's earliest beams,
Among the hills, along the streams,

Or down the vale, and twilight found him,
Somewhere, with busy schemes around him.
What burning words he spoke of rest
In drowsy bowers of ease, caressed
By velvet-strokes of dreamy fingers,
Till sleep in every fibre lingers !
His body, restless, grim, and gaunt,
The thrills of lightning-motion haunt,
That swarm and glow, as now he tries
To seem ablaze with enterprise.

His face appeared to Raymond's view,
Familiar, like a face he knew.
And when the stranger's glances, set
On him, at length, he fully met,
A throb awoke within his heart,
That gave his blood a shivering start.
That face a full assurance bore,
That he had seen the man before.
He shrunk, to feel, in every sense,

The stranger stare intelligence,
And see, around his working eyes,
A spreading scowl of scorn arise,
That swift a thunderous darkness took,
And blackly hung on every look.

To those who stood observant near,
The stranger cried, "This fellow here!
I thought the creature went to Texas,
Where villainy a slough commixes,
Whose mire with reeking vermin stirs,
A stench of rotten characters!"

"What! Raymond Hill!" at once exclaim'd
Together, those who heard him blam'd;
"You err! there is, in Allanville,
No better man than Raymond Hill."

Their guest replied, — "Ye blindly foster
In Allanville a base impostor ;

Or, is it felt as no disgrace,
To be a felon's hiding-place?
No better man your people know!
I saw him, — not three years ago, —
And saw him, not with honest men;
State-prison had the fellow then.
If doubt completer proof require,
Your reverend pastor may inquire."

As when, within a shining valley,
With many a heart unfolding sally
Of sparkling song and brimming glee,
A bright and various company,
Amid the purest summer weather,
Are keeping holiday together,
(A kind of wild flower festival,
Whose perfumes sweetly trance them all,)
Where winds, with murmurs sweet and low,
And thrilling touches, gently flow
Along the valley's breast, caressing

The flowers, and all the verdure blessing ;
If sudden cries of "*serpents*," there,
"*Crawling and hissing*," shock the air,
The sudden shivers swiftly run
Through heart and brain of every one,
Awakening doubt, dismay, and dread,
Till every gleam of joy is dead ;
So now, a wild and devilish thrill
Went through the life of Allanville.

At once, with zeal that made them dizzy,
Were Rumor's swiftest tongue-pads busy,
Hither and thither hurrying fast,
With mouths aglow and eyes aghast ;
In strife, the freshest listeners seeking ;
On every tongue to utterance reeking,
"Well, who would think it ! can it be !
Was ever villain smooth as he !"

The shifting passions fiercely work,

Like whirlwinds wrestling through a wood ;
Although in many a bosom, lurk
Some throbs of human brotherhood,
That faintly stir, and strive to bring
The feelings, that will closely cling
Around the friendless victim, now,
And Hatred's curses disavow.

But ah ! quite through the brother-heart,
The fatal throes of palsy dart,
As garnish'd scorn, with angry mien
And furious gesture, cries " Unclean ! "

And busily works the fiendish thirst
Of souls that love to think the worst,
Whose feelings breed in carrion-slime,
And greedily feed on basest grime.
How sad, that stirs of quick delight
Should blind the heavenly sense of Right,
In any soul, and put the sway
Of loving kindness, quite away,

When scandal blows her trumpet loud,
Till answering furies round her crowd ;
Or bids her gibbering demons dim
A shining name, or make it swim
In slander's spilth, or plunge it down,
In loathsome infamy to drown.
How many tremble thro' and thro',
Lest scandal's story prove untrue !
They love to feed the fattening lie,
And, if it fail, their pleasures die.
Oh ! Slander's crew, for victims raving,
And Honor's sweetest life-blood craving,
Fear every tale their whispers try,
And every hint, will prove a lie.
When Truth her shield defiant hangs,
Like shriveling demons how they pine,
To see a name escape their fangs,
And far above their malice shine !

Two years and more, had Raymond shown,

In Allanville, a character,
Whose purity had daily grown
In all that truthful aims confer ;
A character, whose growing charm
Had kept the general welcome warm,
And gently round opinion twin'd
Until 't was felt in every mind,
That none more truly sought to be
Enrich'd with social grace, than he.
But this was nothing ; Hate could mould
All feelings, when the stranger told,
With scornful eye and fierce expression,
The mournful tale of one transgression.
Yet 't was not, now, against the sin,
The angry flood of scorn rolled in.
Oh no ! un pitying law had lent
The blackest brand of punishment ;
And, thirst for highest moral merit,
Enjoin'd them all, with ardent spirit,
To reverence well the holy mark,

And keep its awful traces dark.

His worth, which all so clearly knew,
In swathing shadows, left the view,
As darkness work'd in every eye,
And "Vile impostor!" was the cry.
Some hearts with faint relentings yearn'd ;
Some rays of pity faintly burn'd ;
But every sound of pity's tone,
So very chill and hoarse had grown,
So dull, beneath the smothering dress
Of lofty-brow'd self-righteousness,
So edg'd with pious horror's glare,
That gloom'd and heated all the air,
That pity made him more forlorn,
Than e'en the loudest curse of scorn.

Oh ye, whose goodness is serene
As moonlight slumbering over snow, —
Whose glistering graces, always seen,

Along your mantle's surface glow ;
And ye, whose dark intensity,
And hissing virtues, make us see
How easily the curses start,
When pious hatreds stir the heart ;
Ye too have human hearts, beneath
The heavily swathing folds of death,
Whose disentangled, mighty beat,
Aglow with spirit-cleansing heat,
Would lighten thro', and disenchant
The soul-bewildering gloom of Cant.
Oh set them free ! and hear them tell,
What silent agony befel
Poor Raymond, when the rising day,
Around his spirit, sunk away.
The soul-warm gush of human feeling,
Through brain and bosom softly stealing,
Instead of Pharisaic leaven,
Will bring the sweetest air of heaven.
Oh ! let the Holy Spirit's grace

The Pharisaic scowl efface,
And win your souls to follow Him,
Whose pity-tones were never dim.

Around his finished cottage, where
Bliss-bringing promise grew so fair,
And made the future show a vision
Of homestead loves and cares elysian,
The evening hovers, starry-mild,
With love-sweet hum of insect-vespers,
And toneless flow of spirit-whispers ;
But homeless there, and unbeguiled
From crowding thoughts of hope o'erthrown
In darkness, Raymond sits alone.
His little clearing seems a place,
Where dreary shapes of madness pace
The ground, with endless sighs of sorrow,
And seek a never-found to-morrow.
The evening voices come around
His senses, with the saddest sound, —

In every feeling sharply stay
And die in keenest thrills away ;
His aching eyes a darkness bring,
To shadow every beamy thing ;
And all the light is drunk with gloom,
Like funeral vapors round a tomb.

Oh God ! 't is not a dreamy trance,
Whose dreadful shadows round him dance !
For days, in agony, his thought
Against this dark eclipse has fought,
Which still, a heavier shadow shows,
And, every moment, blacker grows.
His homestead world, whose verdure greened
And grew, by million dreams o'ersheened,
Lies there, by human scorn benighted,
Its gushing bloom forever blighted ;
And, all the sounds, the breezes wake,
The sobbing murmurs seem to take,
In which the struggling farewells languish,

Whose tones betray a swooning anguish.
“Farewell!” his feelings swell to say.
He cannot longer bear to stay;
For, hope will never more appear,
With sun-lit eyes, to greet him here.

She must be told; he must impart
The tale to break his mother’s heart.
He has essayed, but has not power;
He’ll wait, and write some other hour.
He would, but cannot, now, fulfil
This duty, here in Allanville.
He must escape this burning glare,
This deathly dark, so hard to bear.

He went, his neighbors knew not where;
But, when his face they saw no more,
Before his mournful cottage door
They paused, and, moralizing, said,
With long, grave faces, “He has fled!”

Ah well ! behold the fruit of crime !
Let every youth be warned, in time,
That Providence is round about
The sinner's path, to find him out,
And ever keeping holy ward,
To show transgressors' ways are hard."

Three years went by ; the stranger schemed,
With speech persuasive, till, it seemed,
Swift glories round them would unfold,
And turn their very soil to gold.
Then came the issue ; fiercest curses
Proclaimed their bankrupt hopes and purses.
The stranger won the spoil, and went,
(On "doing good" with ardor bent,)
To find some other simple men,
And build his cities o'er again.

And where is Raymond ? Rumors came,
That, farther west, he changed his name,

And sought to find a home, once more,
With toil as useless as before.
And some whose thought with fancy mixes,
Believe he lives retired in Texas,
Unrecognized; but others say,
He died unknown at Monterey.
The gravestone tells us where the grief,
That crushed his mother, found relief.
With love-warm voices, full and sweet,
And gladdest words, we might complete
His tale, and that of many others,
If all would learn that men are brothers,
And let the power, of Jesus born,
Expel the demon-glare of scorn
From human souls and human ways,
And make its hallowing radiance blaze
Around our being, till we knew,
That Truth, if stern, is loving too.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

RED JACKET, AT THE OLD HUNTING GROUND.

THE beautiful vale of the Genesee,
Where the deep old woods were high and dim,
Ere the white men's axes spoiled a tree,
Was memory's holiest ground to him.
It seemed a wondrous realm of joy,
When he hunted there, with the braves, a boy.

On its shadowy paths he chased the deer,
When his heart was young and his fancy warm,

And heard, in its deeps, with a charmed ear,
The trees sing awful songs to the storm.
His youth went to school, in its haunted shade,
Where the voice of the long gone ages strayed.

With a teeming heart, he came again,
A white-haired chief, to chase the deer,
And, from each time-hallowed tree and glen,
The tales of his father's time to hear.
What tales of the olden time abound,
In the whispering shade of the hunting ground!

He came; and he gazed with burning eyes;
In blazing piles were the sacred trees;
The white men were there to civilize;
The noises of builders filled the breeze;
Plows were at work on the treeless hills;
The wildwood rivers were turning mills.

This fearful race! could he feel they wrought
That ground to a field with ruins rife,
In the mastering power of a higher thought,
Than ever worked in the red man's life?
He wept for his archive trees and streams, —
For his world so changed to spectral dreams.

Oh! never again, by the forest streams,
When the stars are tranced by the breath of
June,
When the vale is still in impassioned dreams,
And the breeze is weird as a dreaming tune,
Will he walk in the sheen of enchanted air,
And talk with the souls of his fathers there.

On the hills no more, while autumn weaves
Her gorgeous bowers, will he sit, and hear
The plaintive song of the dying leaves,
Till his soul goes forth, through eye and ear,

To the radiant Islands, down the west,
Where the buried braves are all at rest.

He weeps, for his holy things have flown.

From afar on the hills, a departing voice,
Comes low to his heart, with the saddest tone,

Like a soul's that will never more rejoice, —
“The hunting ground by the happy river,
Is gone to be found no more forever!”

GOD'S LIGHT BRINGER.



I.

WHEN his morn of life had risen,
 With its bands of singing hours,
 As amid the sheen he shouted,
 As he roved among the flowers,
 Flowing dimly through his bosom,
 Then there came as sweet a voice,
 As ever told a seraph's longing,
 Or as ever said "Rejoice."

II.

'T was, at first, so very dreamlike,
 'T was so very sweet and dim,
 That it seemed the wandering phantom
 Of a holy spirit's hymn.

But the ever-haunting music,
 Soon, to clear expression grew,
Till, through every pulse within him,
 Its melodious touches flew.

III.

Oh ! it sang of Truth and Beauty !
 And its singing made him feel
Every evil thing dissolving,
 That could trouble human weal ; —
And, an earth-embracing city,
 Built by human brotherhood,
Seemed to rise, a glorious wonder,
 Where the thrones of darkness stood.

IV.

Oh ! it sang its music through him,
 Like a flame of holy fire,
Till it woke and lit within him,
 All the heaven of great desire.

How the beauty, like a passion,
Creeping swiftly through his veins,
Stirred his soul to tell the vision,
And repeat the trancing strains !

V.

Then the earthen voices, near him,
Swift to sharpest utterance broke ;
Speaking low, or muttering fiercely,
Each its maniac anger spoke.
“ Ho ! ” they cried, “ behold a dreamer ! ”
Fancy-drunk and finely mad !
See ! his eyes are quite romantic,
When he calls the world so bad ! ”

VI.

Deeply stirred by love and pity,
How his yearning bosom, then,
What the Holy Spirit told it,
Strove to tell misdeeming men !

How he strove to make them listen,
Till the voice their spirits filled,
And their being gave responses,
Heart and senses beauty-thrilled !

VII.

But against him rose an army,
From To-Day's o'erflowing marts ;
There were men with empty foreheads ;
There were men with empty hearts ;
There was every serf of Custom ;
There was every priest of Ease ;
There were all the cunning Lawyers ;
There were all the Pharisees.

VIII.

They declared the shining vision,
Which his soul, enchanted, saw,
All a shadow-play of demons,
And a crime against the Law.

And, they said, an evil spirit
Had within his bosom crept,
Else, he would not make disturbance,
When the holy Rabbis slept.

IX.

In their laws, they said, was treasured
Every syllable of Right,
And, within their garnished temples,
Every beam of holy Light.
Then, they gathered round to brand him, —
Called him infidel and liar ;
Then their hatred thundered at him,
Like a roaring storm of fire.

X.

Oh ! he felt his heart was human,
When the crown of praise withdrew, —
When the honored many left him
With the much dishonored few ;

But, 't was only for a moment,
That a starting throb of pain
Quivered through, along his forehead ;
All was quickly bright again.

XI.

With the sacred Voice communing,
Now he learned its deepest song,
And assailed, with heart heroic,
Every consecrated wrong : —
And, the age that followed after,
Called him beautiful and brave ;
How it loved and did him honor,
Shone in marble on his grave.

THOUGHTS AT A BRIDAL.



FAIR Bride, the light, that through thine eyes
We feel to-night out-shining,
Has not a dream of clouded skies, —
Shows not a bramble twining
Among the wreaths of smiling flowers,
That hang so thickly round thy bowers.

And he, whose eyes so fondly meet
Thy lustrous love-look, holds thee
The soul and crown of bliss complete,
As thus his heart enfolds thee.
May this embrace, unwearied never,
Unite and thrill you both forever.

A fairy singing bird, a dawn
As fair as angels see,
A light from lustrous Beauty drawn,
Thou art to him, and he
To thee, a bright, infolding heaven,
From which all evil things are driven.

But ye are human ; would ye be
Conformed to love's ideal,
And in experience daily see
Its holy dream made real ?
When aught to chill or part you tries,
Look deeply down each other's eyes.

The years, whose coming footsteps, now,
Your bridal rapture drowns,
Will try the love, whose shadeless brow
This bridal radiance crowns ;
And floods of earthly dark will pour,
To quench your hearts forevermore.

Love on, through all the sternest years ;
 Preserve, in changeless beauty,
Each look and tone that now endears ;
 And, finding bliss in duty,
Meet any touch of blight or shade,
With hearts whose brightness will not fade.

Love on, but not with heart or mind
 In selfish trances dumb ;
Be true to God and human kind,
 And make your love a home,
Whence deeds, like angels, to and fro
On mercy's holy errands go.

Love on, all earthly mark above,
 The fulness comprehending
Of that transfiguring life of love,
 With which, are ever blending
All feelings beautiful and good,
That glow within the realm of God.

Love on, in every sweetest way
The spirit-wed may know,
With hearts that wear eternal May,
With ever-deepening glow ;
And, one forever, pass the portals,
Where death reveals the bright Immortals.

Our hearts, more clearly, deeply bright,
Shine out with hues Elysian,
The bridal altar glows, to-night,
So like a heavenly vision.
The soberest pulse of wedded bliss,
Runs almost wild, at scenes like this.

AN HOUR OF SADNESS.



I.

THE winds against my windows sweeping,
Like dreary spirits moan,
(Their tones along my blood are creeping,
My very soul in sadness steeping,)
“ Alone ! alone ! ”

II.

Another weary year is dying
Amid the wintry gloom,
And all the pallid hours are sighing,
And all the stormy air replying,
“ Behold his tomb ! ”

III.

His tomb ! how many withered roses
Of hope, are gathered there !
There, many a form of joy reposes, —
There, many a dream the dark encloses,
That tranced the air.

IV.

Oh, hopes, whose bloom, so late, was filling
The world with light !
Oh, joys, whose trances were so thrilling !
Your frozen brows, so pale and chilling,
My soul affright.

V.

Your drear dead eyes, no longer wearing
The dream of endless May,
From out the ghastly dark are glaring,
And, through my very soul declaring,
“ All things decay ! ”

VI.

How, year by year, becometh weary
 Each shining way we go !
Hard circumstance makes life uncheery,
So heavily comes her shadow dreary
 On all we know.

VII.

My soul, for Light Undying, pineth,
 Its clouded sphere to fill,
And evermore such light divineth ;
For Love, amid the darkness, shineth
 In beauty still.

VIII.

I sit beside the pallid corpses,
 And tears my vision drown ;
And yet, from all their radiant courses,
The holy stars, with sweetest forces,
 Are shining down : —

IX.

And Truth, the lutanist, is calling
From skies serene and clear ;
Her tones, like seraph glances, falling
Through cloud and murk, are quite entralling
The souls that hear.

X.

How blind to feel thus darkly fated !
The gloom my spirit sees,
Was all within itself created ;
My soul in aims too low has waited
For holy peace.

December, 1846.

THE DARK ROOM.



At dead of night, he reads, aghast,
The book his soul would spurn,
While blackest memories, crowding fast,
The crimeful pages turn.
Like spirits dire, in deathless fire,
The letters burn.

His life began, a dawn of glory,
Whose faded trace of smiles,
Appears a dream of some old story
Of far-off blessed Isles,
Where angels sing, and virtues bring
The Houris' wiles.

His God-beholding heart he sold ;
He gave his glorious dower,
At Satan's price, for lying gold,
And witching dreams of power.
Ah, Beauty's throne, he could disown,
And leave her bower !

He let his soul to Pride and Scorn ;
He loved the tenants well ;
And there beneath its roof, was born
A brood of hell.
All passions evil, that please the devil,
The godless man befel.

With weary blood and weary breath,
He reads, and, through his brow,
Glares out the pallid smile of death.
It shudders through him now,
How the hellish grime of lies and crime,
A soul endow.

Oh drearily there, at dead of night,
 The gathering spirits throng: —
From out the yawning future, dight
 With horrors black and strong,
And gathering fast from out the past,
 They float along.

He feels the silent air is stirred,
 Within his lonely room,
By drearful things, like breathings heard
 At midnight in a tomb.
No grave can be so dark as he,
 With his ghastly dower of gloom.

And oh, it seems, all things without,
 With hideous laughter thrill;
And gloaring eyes, all round about,
 The sky and valley fill;
And the moon, a great red eye of Hate,
 Sits glaring on the hill.

His fancies shape his grave, and see
The coffin rotting slow, —
The crawling litten-worms, in glee,
About the body go,
And the moaning soul, without a goal,
In darkness walk below.

Oh Sin! how soon they lose the vision
Of rainbows round the gate,
The souls who leave the light elysian,
To dwell with thee in state!
Thy rainbows bright are witchfire light,
Where furies wait.

LITTLE MARY—A SKETCH.



WITHIN a vale, a cottage white,
From out its nest of vines and trees,
Stole, picturelike, upon the sight,
And spoke of simple life and peace.

And there, each morn, the dewy air,
With many-scented fragrance fraught,
To hearts that lightly beat with care,
A fresher life of joyance brought.

There dwelt a pair, whose daily strife
Of mutual love and careful duty,

Kept always fresh, around their life,
The rarest charms of homestead beauty.

Their life, that, far from panting noon,
In morning freshness round them lay,
First felt complete its richest boon,
When little Mary came with May ;

Then all their being glowed and gushed,
With music that had slept before,
And light, whose radiance all things flushed,
Till earth and sky their gladness wore.

In every sweet, delicious claim,
That round the parent spirit coils,
The baby brought a gladder aim,
And firmer strength for daily toils.

In bliss, they watched its waking gaze
Of curious wonder, vague and dim,
And smiles, the spirit's dawning rays,
Till oft their eyes would overbrim.

And when, at length, in utterance broken,
They heard the little creature's voice,
No angel's song could so have spoken
To wake the answering choir of joys.

She grew, a beauteous sibyl flower,
From whose unfolding breast, it seemed,
The singing spirits, every hour,
With fuller, brighter beauty gleamed.

Five years she grew, and ever made
Their home with bosom-fragrance rife;

It seemed, with them an angel stayed,
To move the sweetest founts of life.

Joys grew ; with daily deepening glow,
Around them spread the morning light ;
Days went with more melodious flow,
And wearying toil was rich delight.

Their life appeared a wondrous song,
That spoke response to all things fair,
Whose mystic tones, the air along,
Came gushing soft from everywhere.

But flowers of loveliness and grace,
That wear so bright and sweet a bloom,
Seem yearning for their native place,
And always earliest vanish home.

And Oh ! how oft we fail to see
The holiest things, until appears,
When joy's delicious raptures flee,
The sacred ministry of tears.

The glad, away from others, steal,
Too oft, and higher claims dismiss,
In close-shut bowers of self to feel
The ecstatic trance of earthly bliss.

Ah, yes, we mortals seek to spend,
Entranced in bliss, our force divine ;
We leave our awful task, to bend
Our souls before an idol's shrine.

Therefore the aching heart is sent,
To give the light of wisdom birth,

And waken truth, in souls intent
To build a paradise on earth.

They felt a darkness in the sky;
The summer winds all sang of sorrow;
The flowers for something seemed to sigh,
That would not come again to-morrow;

For every sight and every sound
Had caught a swooning sense of gloom,
Thrilled through with air that flowed around
The mournful place of Mary's tomb.

How still in waxen beauty lay,
With faded rose buds on its breast,
The little form, when borne away
To lie alone in confined rest.

At length they saw, around them, melt
All through the gloom that hung so drear,
A lovelier light, by which, they felt
Her radiance in a brighter sphere.

But Mary's name, a holy thing,
Kept warm by many a long caress,
Has undiminished power to bring
The pangs of hallowed tenderness.

Her little garments, books, and toys,
Preserved like things a saint reveres,
Remembrance often, still, employs
To wake the tenderest flow of tears.

THE CHILD'S GRAVE.



SLEEP, little one ! the summer winds are breathing
A gentle hymn, to lull thy quiet rest ;
Around thy tomb, with mournful beauty wreath-
ing,
The ivy creeps, in freshening verdure drest.

Sleep on, my love, the summer flowers are spring-
ing,
In holy peace, above thy mouldering head,
To guard thy dust, and from their bosoms flinging
A mingled sweetness o'er thy silent bed.

We miss thee, love ! thy joyous face, once blushing
With rosy light, death-shades have overcast ;

And ah ! how oft these heart-felt tears are gushing,
To think our eyes on thee have looked their last.

We miss those hours, when thro' our hearts was
stealing

The merry music of thy fairy feet ;

We miss those hours, when every pulse of feeling
Thrilled quick and warm, thy trusting eyes to
greet.

We miss our babe, when evening gathers round us ;

Thy place is vacant on thy mother's breast !

We wake no more to feel the spell that bound us,
When, once, to ours thine infant lips were
pressed !

Sleep, blesséd one ! no more for us awaking !

The worm feeds sweetly on our faded flower ;

We laid thee here ; but, oh, our hearts were break-
ing —

Breaking to feel Death's unrelaxing power.

Where art thou now ? the soul, that once was
pouring,

Through this still dust, a quick, mysterious
glow,

Lives somewhere yet ; it vanished, heavenward
soaring,

Far from all pain and blight, all earthly wo.

Where dost thou dwell ? It must be thou art
wearing

A radiant light, on thy enfranchised soul,
In some bright world, thy part with angels bearing,
Where hymns of holy joy forever roll.

To that deep life, God's love hath surely borne thee,
Our cherished one ! — nor seek we to reclaim ;
How much we loved, how much we miss and
mourn thee,

He knows alone — and blessed be his name !

HOLY LAND.



I.

THERE is a valley, where abides
 A dream of all the richest Junes ;
 A valley, where a river glides,
 Whose waters swim in fairy tunes ;—
 And there the flowers, in summer hours,
 In a world of sweetest music born,
 Have deeper eyes, and holier dyes,
 And more ethereal dews, at morn.
 O vale ! I would forever be
 Enhalo'd with a dream of thee !

II.

This vale had always seemed to me
 The haunt of blissful loneliness ;

But ah! how darkly did I see, —
How poorly feel its bright caress!
No thing could grieve, the summer eve
I went with Jane, along the stream;
Around her form, was floating warm,
A radiance, born of glee, and dream,
And witching tone, and magic motion,
And radiant thought in tranced devotion.

III.

Her lightest cadence seemed to swim
In tearful dreams of Holy Land;
Her eyes looked music, like a hymn
Of angels, on the far-off strand:—
How strangely new the valley grew!
Ah! then my charméd ears and eyes,
Away from night, on azure light,
Seemed going into Paradise!
Baptized in purest beauty, then
Were all my senses born again.

IV.

At length, within our vale divine,
The song of every bird was tearful,
The very sunlight seemed to pine ;
The very flowers were sad and drearful,—
And quivered thro' their beads of dew,
Like a skeleton's shivering kiss,
A ghostly glare, as wandered there
The pale remembrances of bliss.
Oh ! drearily moaned the gloomy river,
For she would come no more forever !

V.

Like clouds around a seraph's brow,
The ghastly gloom transfigured grew ;
A glorious temple music now
Are winds that all so sadly blew ; —
She meets me there, she charms the air ;
And earth becomes a far-off shore
Of misty dreams, as round us gleams

The world that shines forevermore.
No form but hers, must ever stand
With me, in this our holy land.

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