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PLANS FOR THE PEOPLE
GEORGE SANDS JOHNSON



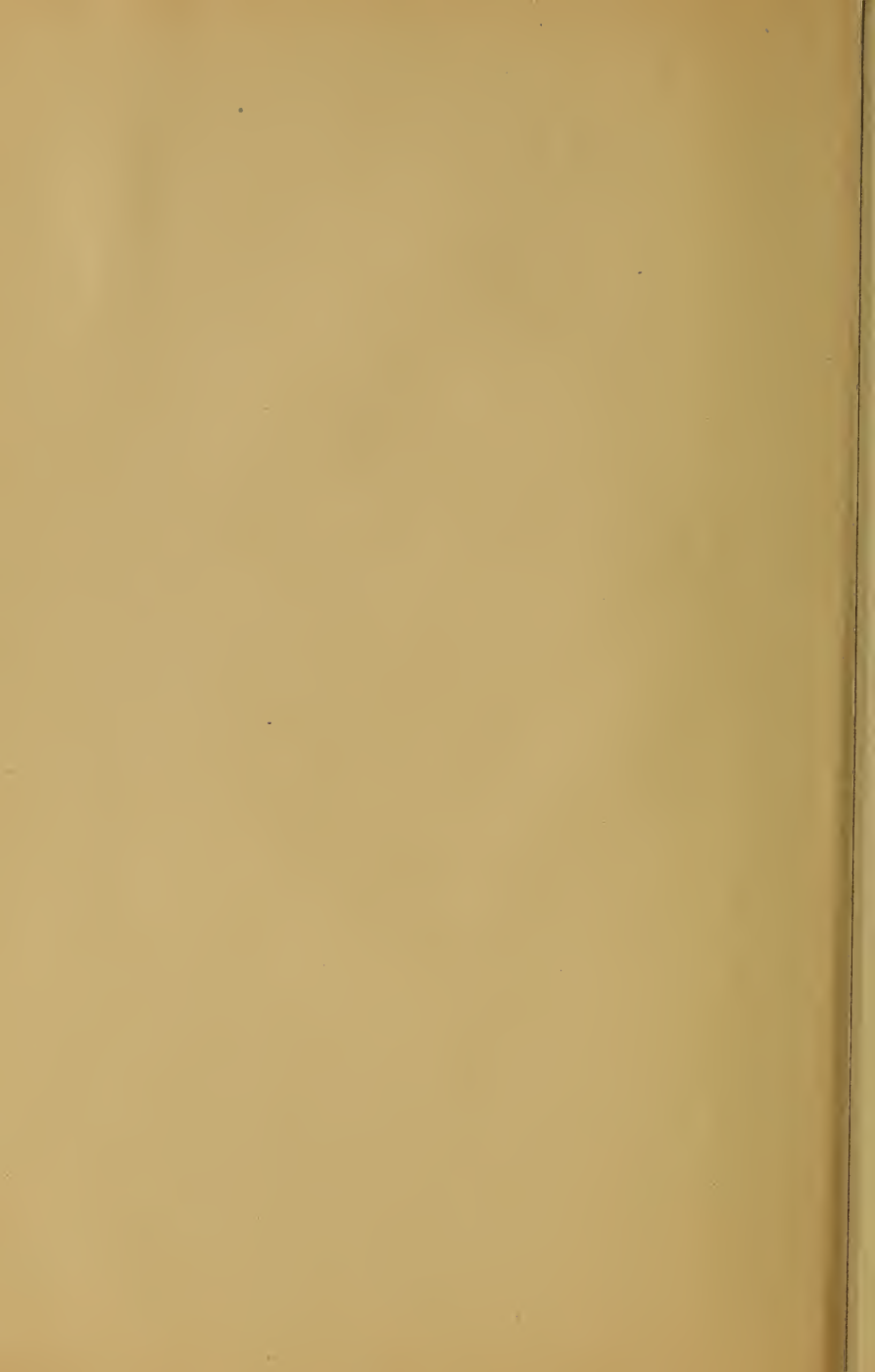


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GEO. S. JOHNSON

Poems for the People

BY
GEORGE SANDS JOHNSON



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GEORGE SANDS JOHNSON



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AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PREFACE.

In presenting my Poems for the People in book form, I, as is usually customary, will give a brief description of my genealogy. I was born June 15th, 1861, at Darien, Conn. My mother also was a native of Darien. My grandmother, whose maiden name was Edith E. Wickes, was born in Huntington, Long Island. She was the daughter of Captain Nathaniel Wickes of Huntington, Long Island. My mother's father, Peter Lineburgh, was a miller, owning and operating the first grist mill in Darien. The mill of course being of the old-fashioned kind that in the early pioneer days of Connecticut was propelled by wind and water, with long, sweeping arms that revolved in the air and a huge wooden wheel similar in looks to the stern wheel on the Mississippi packets or the side wheel that still may be seen on the New York and Norfolk ferryboats. My ancestors on my mother's side of the family were, in the main, descendants of the old Huguenot stock that blazed and paved the pilgrims' trail of religion through the wilderness of the new world—America. My descendants on my mother's side were very devout and pious; they being staunch and loyal advocates and supporters of old Blue Laws of Connecticut. They owned slaves during the time that slavery was in vogue in the New England states, but set their slaves free long before the Civil War. The Wickes and the Dennis, both early settlers of Huntington, L. I., and the first of that name to come to America, can be called the foundation of my early ancestry on my mother's side. The Dennis as well as the Wickes were seafarers and planters, there were three brothers of the prime Dennis family, of which one of the brothers settled in Huntington, L. I. The second brother located in New

Preface

Jersey and the third went to Maryland. I met, quite by accident, a descendant of the Maryland branch of the first original Dennis family of America. He is one of Chicago's most able and prominent editors. It is needless to add that my mother's kindred were of the staid and stanch brand of patriotic war stock of the early days. A far-off cry between then and now.

My father, Jacob Garrison Johnson, was born in Greensburg, near Yonkers, Westchester County, N. Y. His father was born in Schoharie County, N. Y., where the first Johnson, Sir William Johnson, of whom I am a direct descendant, settled among the Indians and became a firm friend and wise counselor of the original Six Nations. Sir William Johnson married an Indian maiden—a daughter of Joseph Brant, the principle of one of the main Chiefs of the noted red tribes. He labored untiringly and faithfully in behalf of establishing peace and free understanding between the Indians of the Six Nations and the pioneer white settlers of New York State, and, in fact, all of America at that time and epoch. My father's mother was of the original family of Wood that first settled in America. The Wood and Garrison blood were merged in the family on my father's side long before the Revolutionary War. The Garrison family, like the Wood pioneers, were among the first settlers of Westchester County, New York. John, Jacob, and Peter Garrison were seafarers and carried on an extensive trade in ocean commerce during the early days. John Garrison ran and established the first regular boat line on the Hudson River, plying between New York and Yonkers. The Garrison family in the early days joined issue with the Hoyt's, Patrick's, Tinsley's and Peyn's. The name Patrick descended from Daniel Patrick, who purchased from the Indians a large tract of land along the Connecticut River in the locality where Greenwich, Conn.,

Preface

stands to-day. A distant wail which the sea gives back. My ancestors on my father's side, as on my mother's lineage, were loyal and sturdy patriotic army stock and fought in all the American Wars. My father was a soldier, both a volunteer and a regular, in the sad misunderstanding of proud and patriotic freemen who let the force of valor get the best of sober strength and reason that knew no limit in American mightiness which redounded to the benefit and blessing of Europe and destroyed the pristine charm of a sublime brotherhood in the land where the pilgrim fathers discovered freedom. The war among Americans was the direct cause of throwing me at an early age in the whirlpools of the world, to be buffeted about by adverse waves of rough experience, which I may frankly confess, was not without some value. I was speaking a piece in the old traditional little red, one-room country schoolhouse, when I was nine years of age, at the last day of the term. At the conclusion of my monologue, when I, on resuming my seat or desk, a rude wooden affair, a lady by the name of Mrs. Depew came to me and sat down in my seat and plied me with questions concerning my nationality and relations. She asked me if I had a sister by the name of Mary Elizabeth Johnson. I knew not how to reply to her query, and became more or less confused and embarrassed. I stammered out the words in answer to her questions; that I did not know for sure, but thought I had. Mrs. Depew was right in her infinite wisdom. She had been drawn to me by the strong and decided resemblance between my sister and me. I had lived about three years within seven miles of where my sister resided, and both she and me were unconscious of the fact until Mrs. Depew sought me at my seat on the last day of school. She, when a Miss Storms, went to school with my sister and lived a near neighbor to the people with whom my sister dwelled. I

Preface

went with Mrs. Depew and saw my sister, but there was no recognition until Mrs. Depew, after a few general remarks to the family, with tacit words led up to the matter and subject of her discovery. There was no mistaking the truth at the moment of revelation. Captain Nathaniel Wickes, my mother's grandfather, of Huntington, Long Island, ran the first line of vessels sailing from that place to the Battery, New York. My mother's sister, Martha Ann, married a man by the name of Allen Jimmerson, who for many years was president of the East Broadway and Battery Railroad in Old New York; he also invented the first snowplow for railroads. My mother, aunt, and great-aunt, Ruth Hester Dennis, were untiring and faithful religious workers in the Old Five Points Mission of New York. My aunt's second husband was a brother to her first. Nehemiah Jimmerson's oldest daughter by his first marriage was married to a man by the name of Newell. A son was born to them who was named Major Newell, otherwise known as "Admiral Dot." The Admiral married Minnie Warren of the celebrated dwarf family, a sister of Tom Thumb's wife, now Countess Magri. I have nothing of interest which may be worth while saying as regards my mastering the scribber's tact or learning the art of writing; suffice to admit that two years was the extent of my school days, and the strong inner desire for knowledge led me to take advantage of every opportunity that gave me a chance to study and learn what I could from both good books, careful observation, and sensible old people. Some of the poems, in my birchen group, which I thus designate this volume, have wandered in wide and winding byways and paths of the press twenty years or more. I have called the roving orphans of my muse together and will now send them forth anew in the world arrayed in a more modest and presentable collection.

POEMS FOR THE PEOPLE

GREENWOOD PATHS OF JUNE.

The peaceful charm of June lends fascination!
When greenwood scenes are wrapped in
dreams divine,
That twine the thoughts in wreaths of medi-
tation,
Round rosy views of nature's treasure
shrine.

Each muffled rustle seems like trailing visions,
That wander through the leafy avenues
And whisper soothing secrets of glad missions,
In shady nooks that woo the sylvan muse.

We seem to hear and feel the thrill of voices,
Breaking the stillness of the mild June days,
Where nature in her golden realm rejoices,
With those who court the peace of rustic
ways.

Poems for the People

The greenwood paths of June resound with
gladness,
That echo through the inner solitudes—
Unlocked by mystic hands that cleave the sad-
ness,
Cankers the heart with dull and listless
moods.

Amid cool canopies of nature's harbors,
A deep and wondrous current flows serene,
While rills of music rush through airy arbors,
And softly sweep on silent floods unseen.



THE CARAVAN OF LIFE.

We are blind travelers wending desert trails!
Leading through sunny slopes and sombre
waste,
Where wrecks are strewn like leaves in autumn
gales,
And skeletons revert to foolish haste.

All pass along and each plods on his way
In swift succession until lost from sight.
The course seems long and fraught with dark
dismay,
To those, alas, who wander in the night.

Poems for the People

Full many grow weary, footsore and complain,
Others are dauntless, hopeful, calm and
strong!
Onward all stave through darkness, dust and
rain,
As time sweeps Life's vast caravan along.



A SEPTEMBER TWILIGHT.

The whip-poor-will trills in his thatched
retreat,
Where soft sable shadows of twilight frown
In the silken gleams while glad crickets greet
And herald the night as the sun goes down.

A murmuring tremor of rustling sounds
Steals through the welkin and muffles the
hush,
While velvet-clad vigils, on peaceful rounds,
Through mystic pavilions of nature rush.

Mild resonant echoes and dreaming tones,
Blend in a medley of musical keys
And startle sweet voices of unseen zones—
That chime in quaint, wavering melodies.

Poems for the People

Each mellow note seems a beautiful psalm
To the twilight splendor while gauze wings
In the stillness flutter and lend a calm—
Revert to grand rapture of holy things.

As the landscape fades in the dappled haze,
The trees reach out with a comforting way
And hold mute communion where roving fays,
Seem seeking the charm of the vanished day.

A concert of praises all nature holds,
While fancy is trailing in hidden halls—
Where fireflies sparkle in silvery scrolls,
And spirits climb over sequestered walls.

The glory and grandeur of twilight scenes,
God in His infinite grace hath given,
Shine and reflect through invisible screens,
And lighten the way of mankind to Heaven.



POWER OF LITTLE THINGS.

Little things have wondrous power!
To rule or swerve the human heart!
A soft sea sob or wayside flower,
Oft causes tender thought to start.

Poems for the People

The lonely sigh of straying breeze,
Will croon in peace the restless mood
And soothe the spirit, vain of ease,
Amid the charm of solitude.

A parting glimmer of the sun,
When twilight vows are sweetly heard,
Quaint tremors through deep silence run,
All speak of forces strangely stirred.

In reaching high, with selfish aims,
The little things of love are lost;
Our thoughts are sparks of brilliant flames,
That soon grow dim when crushed and
crossed.

What is a world of steel and brass
And outward glitter when the soul
Loses the little things, alas,
Which give to life its golden toll.

The harsh remark, or undue haste,
Is followed by an after-sting,
Oft leaves behind a bitter taste,
That spoils the good in every thing.

Each calm, appealing voice within
Are echoes of the little things—
Which passing visions twine and spin
In garlands of enchanted springs.

Poems for the People

A CHRISTMAS RHYME.

Come with me and you may see,
Santa Claus' factory!

Where he makes his dolls and drums,
Picture books and sugar plums,
All nice things serene and gay,
That make glad each Christmas day!

It will thrill you with a joy—
That delights each girl and boy—
When on Christmas Morn they see
Tender gifts of love and glee.

You must promise to keep still,
And not make a noise until
Santa Claus has dropped asleep,
Then you may all softly peep
Through a tiny crack and see
This most wondrous factory!
Where he shapes with loving pride,
Emblems for the fireside.

You must never say a word,
Nor tell anyone, I heard,
If I show you where to see
Santa Claus' factory.

It is like a great big ball,
With a stairway and a hall,

Poems for the People

And a high fence all about,
With a gate where he goes out.
Now remember! hurry back
When you see him through a crack,
As he soon will wake and yawn,
And around the world be gone.



THE DEPARTED BARDS.

Within thine old, time-hallowed, laureled
tomes,
Is many a noble lay
Which rose from hearts that dwell in grander
homes,
Than those made out of clay.

Departed friends! though you I never met,
I know and feel your love;
The deep emotion that your views beget,
Are drawn from founts above.

Jewels of thought more bright than polished
gems,
In every verse reflect;
No royal crowns, nor brilliant diadems,
On earth are so select.

Poems for the People

I breathe the essence that your thoughts
impart
And quaff from unseen springs
A draught which cools and soothes my restless
heart,
In its lone wanderings.

Though you shall woo no more the mystic
muse,
Nor tread the paths of earth,
The words that you have spoken all peruse,
And praise thy matchless worth.

The love that you have voiced and left behind,
Like mountain brooklets flow,
To quench the thirst and pacify mankind,
Whose course is lined with woe.

Well worth thine muse, dead friends! for all
to read,
Who value home and love;
A precious balm for those who seldom heed
True beauty spoken of.

My humble words but poorly eulogize
Your gifts of Godly grace,
Still such as I can feel deep thrills that rise
In lines your pens did trace.

Poems for the People

If all your gentle counsel were obeyed,
The earth would be more bright!
Through endless time your thoughts will stand
portrayed,
In glows of lasting light.

While changing trains of Time are rushing
past,
Your words will cheer the home;
The lessons that you taught will always last,
And guide new souls to come.



WHERE WILD FLOWERS BLOOM.

Flowers are vows that virgins speak,
Among green fields and wood,
While elves of love in rapture seek,
'Midst halls of solitude.

In those bright spots serene and still,
The voice of beauty woos
And charms the gaze with scenes that thrill,
Each mood with joyous views.

How grand it is to feel the balm,
Flowing in ways divine,

Poems for the People

To know the peace and restful calm,
Round nature's jeweled shrine.

The spirit of sweet mystery,
Seems twining round the mind,
And strewing gems of memory,
That leave bright gleams behind.

Blithe cherubs rustle in the green,
And whisper to the flowers—
Breathe in the heart a bliss unseen,
To cheer the summer hours.

God gave the holy gift of love,
Which shines in nature's eyes,
To lift the thought in ways whereof—
The charm of true joy lies.

All things of beauty God inspires,
With happy views and tones,
In symbol of sublime desires,
To twine round cherished thrones.



OLD SANTA CLAUS' PACK.

Old Santa Claus' pack, so nice,
Is curious and wide;

Poems for the People

It is a wonder how he can
Down smoky chimney slide.

The chimney is sometimes so long,
So narrow, rough and black,
It must be all that he can do,
To squeeze through with his pack.

Perhaps he often feels fatigued,
From trips to little folk,
And briefly pauses, now and then,
To rest and take a smoke.

It is, indeed, a mystery,
How much his pack can hold,
And Santa Claus can be so spry,
He is so grey and old.

It is so strange how Santa Clause
Can carry such a pack,
So heavy and so full of things,
So far upon his back.

He is a kind and jolly soul,
And loves good girls and boys;
He gladly comes, on Christmas Eve,
To bring them sweets and toys.

His merry eyes and cheery face,
And cap and coat, so queer,

Poems for the People

Are looking tidy, bright and clean—
The very same each year.

It seems a journey hard and cold,
Quite fraught with bumps and falls,
Descending chimneys dark and small,
And scaling frosty walls.

Who could but plump old Santa Claus,
So many things achieve,
And visit all the universe,
On merry Christmas Eve?

It is quite hard to understand!
Still, you can see at dawn,
By candy, nuts and picture books,
He has been here and gone.

His reindeer are so light and fleet,
You never hear a hoof,
When in the stillness of the night,
They halt upon the roof.

The runners of the cozy sleigh
Used by Old Santa Claus,
When on his Christmas Evening jaunt,
Are wrapped with drowsy floss.

So ruddy boys and rosy girls,
All hushed in sweet repose,

Poems for the People

Will not be roused when Santa Claus
Arrives and fills their hose.

Perhaps he puts the fire out,
Or has some secret mode
To fill the stockings, hung in rows,
With presents from his load!

But children seem to soundly sleep,
And they cannot perceive
Just how Old Santa Claus comes down,
The flue on Christmas Eve.

I guess where Santa Claus resides,
And makes so many toys,
There is a big book full of deeds,
And names of girls and boys.

How else could he remember all
The homes, year after year,
Where big and dainty stockings hang,
When Christmas Eve is here?

Of all the quaint and happy things,
Which cause the heart to heave,
Naught can compare with Santa Claus
On merry Christmas Eve.

When girls and boys are all supplied,
He quickly shuts his pack,

Poems for the People

Then nimbly leaps into his sleigh,
And gives the whip a crack.

Then far away the reindeer speed,
With lithe and sprightly hoofs,
As silent as a soaring kite,
Across the gleaming roofs.

While Santa Claus is going home,
He chuckles in his sleeve
About the wondrous trip he takes,
On merry Christmas Eve.



WHEN LOVE WENT WOOING.

When love went wooing the day dawned
bright,
All the sweet flowers danced with delight,
The birds in the hedges revelled in glee;
Each merrisome voice bespoke a bliss—
Ripple in dreams where June roses kiss
And whisper a message of ecstasy.

The sea swept grand and the sky shone clear,
Fancy soared high through blithe atmosphere,
When love went wooing in emerald aisles!

Poems for the People

Quaint echoes of charming music broke
And drifted in tremors rose and woke
 Deep glory that blended in starry smiles.

Through jeweled passes of unseen heights—
Visions seem strolling on moonlight nights
 While bathing in basins supremely fine.
When love went wooing and lightly tripped
In gardens of stars that cherubs dipped
 In gorgeous dye of a beauty divine.



DOUBLE TRACK OF TIME.

Time is a double track through dales and
 ridges,
 Where trains of life are speeding all the
 while
Through rocky cuts and tunnels, over bridges,
 Past sunny landscapes cheer each fleeting
 mile.

The scenes and grades are rugged, bright and
 solemn,
 With brooks and rivers smiling in the sun;
Many a dark abyss and craggy column
 Are crossed and dodged meanwhile the trip
 is run.

Poems for the People

Round curves and bends the scheduled trains
are trailing,
Meeting and parting on their journeying
way,
Passing through space, rejoicing and bewail-
ing,
Leaving behind the charm of yesterday.

Through hamlets, cities, groves and rustic
reaches,
Onward the sweeping trains pursue and veer,
Rushing past mile-posts while the whistle
screeches
At crossings and stations quickly disappear.

The double track of time is odd and magic,
With thickets, fields and woods on either
side,
That join and blend in views sublime and
tragic,
Until all trains have reached the great
divide.



THE DESTINY OF LIFE.

The keen edge of Time's scythe,
Mows down, alas, all things that grow,

Poems for the People

A short duration at best!
The fleet, uncertain years in which the child
Advances to the station of age.
Smiles and tears are fruits and flowers of
 experience,
Allotted at various periods;
And the days are as piers,
Extending across the years,
Which serve as stepping stones from infancy
 to age,
And onward to the grave.
The golden present comes but once,
And then it speeds away
In rays of flashing light,
More swift than startled deer,
Leaving life groping like a wounded wolf,
In vacant darkness and unknown surround-
 ings.



DREAMING AMONG SUMMER SHADOWS.

While cool shadows roll in billows
And refresh the mossy pillows,
 Under gently swinging boughs,
That is just the place to loiter,

Poems for the People

Where shy naiads reconnoitre,
And rejoice in nature's vows.

Listen to the charming story
Fraught with peace and inner glory,
Tree and water seem to tell;
Note the joy that seems to triple
When the leafy echoes ripple,
Through the wooded loft and dell.

In green heights coy sylphs are rocking,
While the fancy seems unlocking
Secret doors of hidden shrines—
That fly open as a shutter
Lifts and falls while visions flutter
Out of sight through leaves and vines.



WILDWOOD HARPS OF ANGELS.

A sweet, majestic anthem seems
To lull the thought in pleasant dreams,
When nature strikes quaint keys
In rustic chapels that awake
Those soothing thrills so oddly break
And croon the sighing trees.

Poems for the People

When a child I crept and listened,
As the dew at sunrise glistened,
 Along the pasture brook,
A magic flood of charming tones,
Like angels playing xylophones,
 My eager fancy took.

The sounds grew sweeter till at last
They softly ebb'd, then rustled past,
 And left me charmed in thought;
Then as the spell was borne away,
A train of visions seemed to stray
 Through realms I coyly sought.

When lost in space with wondrous views,
A seeming voice would oft amuse
 And wrap me in a maze;
Methought those things so grand of sound,
Were harps of angels strolling round,
 In aisles of mystic ways.

Each dainty echo spoke to me,
And flushed my soul in silent glee,
 While I beheld the glow
Flashing between the airy strings
Seemed touched by tips of jeweled wings
 That fluttered sweet and low.

Poems for the People

GATHERING NUTS IN AUTUMN.

The merry shout and laughter gay
Now wakes the Autumn quietude,
While festive nutters seek and stray,
Through dappled fields and mottled wood.

Anon the startled echoes rise,
That tell of joy which freely rings;
From heart and throat while wistful eyes,
Are prying where the ripe nut clings.

A stick, or stone the nutter heaves
And hits, with telling force, the mark,
The falling nuts and withered leaves,
Then rattle on the boughs and bark.

The leaves in showers softly fall,
And rustle as they flutter down
In listless glides to weave a pall
That hides the gems in nature's crown.

Among the gray and crimson halls,
Where Spring made merry, all seem dead,
Save when a voice in shrillness calls
And meet blithe answers overhead.

Poems for the People

The tempting nuts with coat so brown,
Seem smiling in a winsome way,
As from the high limbs looking down
They nod and blink as if in play.

With rambling course from tree to tree,
The nutters gather as they stroll,
And fill their sacks while bursts of glee
Through vale and gully leap and roll.

The boost to reach the grinning stub,
And gain a handhold thence to climb,
With flexible pole the limbs to club,
Is fraught with sport in nutting time.

Among the dozing nooks and dells
Where beauty flaunts her scarlet hood,
Loud voices break the silent spells,
And footfalls rouse the pensive wood.

'Midst gala Autumn's golden scene,
The musing note of crow and jay
Mingles with flights of mirth careen
Across the hills throughout the day.

Along the Summer's fading trail,
A host of flashing visions drift,
While nutters seek and gladly hail
The glory of the harvest gift.

Poems for the People

AN AUTUMN SUNSET.

The sun descends amidst floods of glory,
And tinsels the trailing skirts of Night
Edged with ruffles of roseate beauty,
Dotted with tints of a milder light.
A dismal bank of dark clouds, gray crested,
Loop up the west with a sombre fold,
While brilliant ripples seem pouring over
The glowing space, in wide streams of gold.

The trees in the twilight look forsaken,
Like haunted castles in foreign lands;
Time's silent roundsmen, in dusky garments,
Seem saying good-night and shaking hands.
The gates of the sunset blaze and sparkle,
Like burning oil over water spread,
But the glows soon change and then grow
sombre,
And fade like mirth when life's blush has
fled.

Like the brilliant scene I have depicted—
Flooding the sky with entrancing views!
Youth has its merry glows and colors—
Alas, soon vanish like sunset hues.

Poems for the People

With age comes a change in the charms of
 beauty,
Then fancy fades like frosted flowers;
Vicissitudes of stern Time cause shadows
 To dim the glow of life's sunset hours.



A PSALM.

Behold, the golden field of Time!
 Yielding God's loving gift of grace,
Wherein mankind may sow sublime,
 And reap the bliss of souls in space,
All are soon called to lay the head,
 Upon the cloistered breast of Earth!
It may with truth be freely said,
 The world is what each makes it worth.



THE COMBINATION LIFE.

Into the city during the day,
 Back to the country at eventide,
Courting the charm of the simple way,
 Casting the tumult of greed aside.

Poems for the People

The dual course lends calm vim to life,
Wherein the spirit of mortal seeks
Free and refreshed in the path of strife,
Cool and serene with the ending weeks.

Life in the City seems paved with faults,
The soul is lashed to a fretful spray,
Caught in the crush of a seeming waltz,
That sweep in swirls of a jumbled way.

The daily struggle and endless grind,
Winds wearily on in a turbid stream
Churning the City till human-kind,
Snatches at straws in a fitful dream.

With the flow and ebb of time and fate,
Nature relieves the burden and stress
In gardens that all may cultivate—
To bloom with roses of happiness.

The task of turmoil, each heated trail,
Is left behind when the day is done,
Where hymns of peace in the country hail,
And soothe rude roars through the cities run.

The bright salutes of the rustic sounds,
Mingled with greetings of cheery scenes,
Lighten the bosom of weary rounds,
Cool the commotion of mind machines.

Poems for the People

Alas! the lack of a sturdy will,
Make countless thousands repine and sigh,
Drear shadows harass the heart until,
The hope sees only a cloudy sky.

Into the City and back at night,
Breathing true essence of rural glee,
Whence nature smiles with sublime delight,
And tunes her harp in the greenwood tree.



THE OLD RUSTIC MILL.

Hard by the tall elms and a wooded hill,
There stands an antique water mill;
A tramway leads from the public road
Down to the arch where the teams unload.
Close by the mill is a massive wheel,
Making the grain into bran and meal,
And all day long comes a droning sound,
As the belts and buhrstones whirl around.

The farmers drive up before the door
And leave their grists on a wide plank floor;
Then to the hamlet, not far away,
They hie and tarry until the day
Ere they, to the mill, return from town.
Is nearly spent and the sun gone down,

Poems for the People

The water flows from the wooded hill,
And turns the wheel of the antique mill.

The husbandmen, all the country round,
Bring grists to the mill and have them ground.
And set in place, at a sudden jog,
Is a trough hewn from a huge oak log.
The men draw rein on the way from mill,
While they, and the horses, drink their fill
Of the sparkling water, pure and clear,
That flows from the hillside all the year.

Into a hopper the grain is poured,
Filling, with flour, each bag that is scored
And tied and tagged with the owner's name,
And set aside to await his claim.
Huge cobwebs hang to the beams and posts,
Which grin and appear like sullen ghosts;
And even the dust on the miller's beard,
And his hat and hair, make him look weird.

His ways are kind and his deeds are good,
He has the esteem of the neighborhood;
And those who come to the old grist mill,
Speak well of the miller and praise his skill.
The wheat and corn, and various kinds
Of grain that the truthful miller grinds,
Are taxed with a toll, not very great,
To pay him for labor and honest weight.

Poems for the People

The crumbs and chaff that fall to the floor,
Are swept outside through the big front door;
And chickens and doves oft come and eat,
Feasting like kings at a festal meet
Under the eaves, which are long and low,
Each summer the swallows come and go.
The song birds always come in the spring,
And build their nests in the elms and sing.

The grain that comes to the mill each day,
To be ground in flour and taken away,
Is raised in the valleys, far and near,
Planted and garnered, year after year;
And sown on hills that are steep and rough,
Where the sun is warm and calm winds sough,
And ripens the grain that comes to mill,
Hard by tall elms and a wooded hill.

Life is the same as the antique mill,
Gladness and grief are the grists that fill,
Time's hopper grinding the hours away,
Death is a toll that each life must pay,
Ever so long as life's spark shall last,
The years like water are rushing past
Through darkest nights and the brightest
days,
God's mill is grinding a grist always.

Poems for the People

BEYOND THE BEATEN WAY.

Resolve to make the best of life,
And strive to mount, each day,
A little higher in the strife—
Beyond the beaten way.

Life is too short and full of hope,
To waste in sigh and tear;
Yield not to fear nor faintly grope,
As mourners pass a bier.

The weakling to the brave gives way,
And sinks in sands of doubt;
It always pays, though dark the day,
To keep the bright side out.

Be in the right then forge ahead,
Determined and resigned;
So shape a course wherein may tread
The souls that come behind.

It is not long—the misty span—
That holds the heart to earth!
Plod on and do the best you can
And rise on honest worth.

Poems for the People

All cannot reach a golden height,
Still each may toil and climb
To where the star of hope shines bright
And cheers the path of Time.

As dawn unlocks the cave of Night,
And lets the sunshine out,
Thus will true effort put to flight
The darksome clouds of doubt.

The hope that wavers soon grows cold,
And shivers in the blast,
While those who struggle gain and hold
A cozy place at last.

Those shadows which oft seem forlorn,
Are blessings changed about,
In common things that make life mourn,
Just keep the bright side out.



A REQUIEM OF PEACE.

King Edward passed! the world with bowed
head stood,
And paid due homage to the pearl-less
crown!

Poems for the People

The startled spirit of the multitude—
Heavy with sorrow, sunk back and settled
down.

Great kings must die and share the common
lot,
Which wraps in final darkness each and all!
Time lifts the latch of castle, hall and cot
With equal ease and makes a farewell call.

Soon honor, fame and glory, grand renown,
Is lost in deep seclusion of the grave.
The dust of those who wear a jeweled crown,
Shall mingle with the mold of chief and
slave.

The avenue of fate is strange and steep,
On either side are arches, gates and screens,
That ope and close while visions glide and
sweep,
Like ocean currents through revolving
scenes.



A HYMN OF HOME.

With summer comes the wish to go away!
Where will we go and hide a single doubt

Poems for the People

This side of Mars, forgetful of the day?
That seems to turn the spirit wrong side out.

Those merry-magic spots that fancy craves,
Are floating islands in a restless mind,
The inner currents are the soothing waves,
Lulling the thoughts in paths of peace
divined.

Full oft the hope will flit with wild delight,
On rambling journeys, never satisfied,
To come back home and find all things look
bright,
And feel the cheerful charm of grateful
pride.

There is no other place this side of Mars,
That calms the weary, yearning heart like
home!
Though one may travel far in ships and cars,
The soul on homeward flights will always
roam.

When summer comes the feelings sink and
swell,
In restive moments, while the longing view
Roves forth and back for reasons none can
tell;
Be true to home and joy will come to you.

Poems for the People

ROSY REALMS OF SPACE.

In those quaint trails where thought alone may
 wander,
 Through waving mazes that enchant the
 gaze,
A charm majestic makes the heart grow fonder
And seek the blissful isle of nature's ways.

Round odd, celestial heights of rosy rapture,
 Sweet spirits dream in crystal realms of
 space,
Soft echoes climb sequestered stairs and cap-
 ture,
 The seeming souls that guard each hidden
 place.

Grand hymns seem sung behind a jeweled cur-
 tain,
 (That glows with fitful flashes, strangely
 bright,
While rustling robes of visions sweep uncer-
 tain,
 Through cool cathedrals of entrancing light.

Poems for the People

As those deep tones ring through the silent
spaces,
Whence all seem solaced by a mystic chime,
The fancy roves amid exalted places,
Where paths lead through the golden gate
of time.



AT THE EBBING TIDE.

While the tide goes out and the sough sub-
sides,
A lull seems soothing the sobs to sleep,
A softening tinge on the harbor glides
And smoothes the swells of the drowsy
deep.

The breakers grow dim and the setting sun
Throws listless rays on the barren bars,
Where belated sounds through the corals run,
While night is studding her breast with
stars.

A lispng tremor is trailing among,
The twilight vestries that softly fall
And muffle the water's murmuring tongue,
That seems to speak with a pleading call.

Poems for the People

In the sun-kissed calm of the dying day,
The seagulls circle with idle swings,
Through the silvery dusk lone echoes stray
And blend into peaceful whisperings.

A vesper bell wakes blithe, wavering tones,
That wander away through realms of space
Where spirits seem roving in unseen zones,
Guiding each thought to a hallowed place.

A flush of crimson sweeps over the sky,
Then fades in mellowing golden tips,
As the day goes out with a parting sigh
And hides faint sails of the distant ships.

In the purple pallor the stranded hulls
Exposed by the ebb show here and there,
The plaintive note of the wandering gulls
Lends quaint repose to the dreaming air.

Those mystic voices that gladden the night,
Are holding communion over all
And wrapping the silence in sweet delight,
While magic curtains of Heaven fall.

With a seeming rapture the sea and sky,
Are telling fond secrets to the moon
That smiles through the dark and ascends half
shy
The stairway of stars while visions croon.

Poems for the People

A QUIET SHADY POOL.

One day, beside a woodland pool,
I paused to note the peaceful hush,
Wide boughs leaned over free and cool
And made the water soft as plush.

A leafy vista now and then
Swung open and a golden shaft
Shot bright spots where the shade had been
Rocked in ripples that cooed and laughed.

Shadows and beams, alternately,
Came and went, as they rose and fell,
The leaves seemed lulled in drowsy glee,
Wrapped the pool in a mystic spell.

Meanwhile I watched each come and go,
The view took thought how much akin
They were to earthly gloom and glow,
As life is ushered out and in.

Rushes and reeds along the rim,
Shook and sighed while a muffled breath,
Blended in murmurs on the brim,
As of deep awe that follows death.

Poems for the People

Lone, passing birds paused in the trees,
To break the stillness with a song,
Borne away by the rambling breeze,
Lapsing in echoes sweet and long.

The shade and sunshine on the pool,
Dreaming in freedom through the day,
Seemed to speak when the limbs swung cool,
And voiced a charm both grave and gay.



BY THE PASTURE BARS.

I stood by the bars at evening,
And I watched the crimson West;
While the shadows, gray and mottled,
Trailed over the mountain crest.

I beheld the sunset flashes,
As they slowly changed and died;
And the landscape faded from me,
Into darkness stretching wide.

I heard in the mellow distance,
The note of a vesper bird,
And the noise of drowsy tinkling
Arose from the grazing herd.

Poems for the People

In the zephyrs softly floated
The sobs of the restless sea,
And my young heart drank, in silence,
All the sounds that came to me.

And the katydids in chorus,
Piped their evening roundelay,
While my spirit flushed and ardent,
Seemed to rise and soar away.

O'er the hills the moon rose blushing,
And began to climb the sky;
While the hazy valley glimmered,
While the phantoms rustled by.

Like a silver mantle, gleaming,
Did the earth appear to me,
As I gazed with boyish rapture,
On the objects I could see.

By the bars I fondly lingered,
Gazing on the scenes sublime;
When the cows were in the pasture,
Grazing, after milking time.

How my thoughts came rushing to me,
Wafted by some mystic wand;
How the vigils of my fancy
Seem to lead me by the hand.

Poems for the People

And the dew from Heaven falling,
Made more sweet the evening breeze,
And in fancy I heard whispers
Stealing through the maple trees.

And bright visions rose within me,
In the tranquil eventide,
Weaving round my soul quaint pictures,
While the twilight voices died.

Oft methought how grand the beauty,
Nature gave all to enjoy,
While beside the bars I lingered,
When I was a barefoot boy.



CHRISTMAS RECOLLECTIONS OF CHILDHOOD.

The glory of Christmas is fondly remembered.
In after years Santa Claus memories cling
Round Christmas Eve pleasure and fancy of
childhood,
When Christmas bells echo and merry
chimes ring.

Poems for the People

What rapture a toy or some trinket created,
And thrilled childish eyes with bright jubi-
lant beams,
With coming of Christmas each day would
seem longer,
Till night's holy mercy brought peace and
sweet dreams.

How slow the time passed a short while before
Christmas,
And restless with waiting the heart often
grew—
In the eager desire to hang up our stockings,
With wild, airy wishes we hoped would
come true.

Near Christmas gay pictures in fancy were
painted,
All glowing with tokens and treasures in
view;
Old Santa Claus visions would set the mind
roving
With many quaint thoughts as to what he
would do.

It was hard to be good and not do any mis-
chief,
To plainly remember the things you were
told,

Poems for the People

At no other time, only just before Christmas,
Was minding so nice that nobody would
scold.

The task was a struggle as viewed in mild mo-
ments,
But somehow or other the time passed away;
The day before Christmas at last came through
dragging,
Till shadows of night-fall grew solemn and
grey.

The time was at hand then to hang up our
stockings,
With never a doubt in the heart's hopeful
way,
Then scamper to bed, but calm sleep was slow
coming
From thinking that Christmas would be
here next day.



TELEPATHY.

Through mystic recesses of Time,
A current invisible flows
Whence forces, both odd and sublime,
Seem sweeping in deep undertows.

Poems for the People

The power which pilots the view
To grasp at a thought and behold
A mirage revealed to be true—
When life's after mazes unfold.

In aisles of telepathy hides,
A vision that dazzles the eye—
While gazing where mystery glides
Round objects both distant and nigh.

It shapes the quaint magnet of sight,
And draws with an all mighty will,
Dense scenes and events dark and bright,
Wrought out by some sovereign skill.

The spirit oft feels at a glance
And knows what no tongue may foretell,
Truth strangely seems guided through chance
To view a fact ere it befell.

Telepathy flits like a dart,
Through hidden dominions of space,
Where voices commune with the heart,
And wondrous thought flashes apace.

Those things that seem queer to the gaze,
Are glimpses of power revealed
To souls that see clear through a maze
The glory of wisdom concealed.

Poems for the People

IN MEMORY OF LIBERTY.

Alas! the brave blood that our forefathers
gave,
As heirlooms of freedom to deeply engrave
The symbol of glory in hearts of the free,
Forever to reign in sublime liberty.

The life of the true that in battle was given,
While ties of affection and friendship were
riven,
Seems gone and forgotten and peace is de-
filed,
By footsteps of strangers grow reckless and
wild.

Each niche of the nation with laurels en-
twined,
Cries out in the darkness and censures man-
kind
In foreign confliktion of freedom's affairs—
Grow choked and polluted with nettles and
tares.

The Blue and the Gray in the twilight of life,
Join souls and reflect on past epochs of strife,

Poems for the People

Both proud of a valor that lightened the world,
Wherever Old Glory is known and unfurled.

While onward the tide of new fashions and
schemes
Is surging and sweeping in wavering streams,
The old-fashioned habits of freedom and
peace,
Are ebbing in customs that wildly increase.



THE WONDROUS SPIRIT FORCES.

The human brain is a vast machine,
Running in deep, mysterious grooves
Beneath the surface of things unseen,
Hidden by veils that God removes.

And those strange channels that oft confuse
The outer gaze with fancied gleams,
Blending in visionary views,
Above the clouds of worldly themes!

They are but the power over life!
That, swept away, would soon decline
Below the hopeful events of strife,
Shape the faith in a source divine.

Poems for the People

At times, with a glance, we seem to see
Through mystic space where vanished souls
Speak through a thought of eternity,
Guiding the heart to tranquil goals.

The brief sojourn on this mundane sphere,
Is merely an echo ere life leaps
Out of its coil and shall disappear,
Leaving no clew—save where death sleeps.

There is a supreme and Ruling Force—
Lifts the spirit to noble heights,
Who firmly follows a loyal course,
Breathes in the world far-reaching lights.

The fear and doubt of frivolous thought—
That scorns the grave and holds all things
As final when death's grim task is wrought,
Repents amid dire happenings.

Aye! when death threatens life in the face,
How soon the voice will cry aloud
In wild despair, beseeching God's grace
To spare the soul—too worldly proud.

The vain pursuits of the earth but lead
In paths that soon misguide the mind
And warp the will with desires impede
The happy growth which uplifts mankind.

Poems for the People

VISIONS AMONG THE LEAVES.

The fairy-like shadows play tetar-tater
And chase each other across the water
In frolicsome rounds of glee,
While visions of elfins with sunbeams
gambol
Under bright arches where breezes ramble
Half lost through the startled tree.

Those shadows and sunbeams, together
playing,
Seem, I opine, mystic messengers straying
Near realms of sequestered souls,
As if they would tell of a hidden glory!
Nature is weaving round song and story
And writing in charming scrolls.

The spirit of mortal beholds but faintly
Each precious prize of beauty that quaintly
Seems dreaming in unseen shrines—
Where wonders of ages, methinks, must
hover
And wait till heralds of time uncover
All doubt and uncertain signs.

Poems for the People

VOICES OF THE WAVES.

The tide comes in with a listless moan,
That blends in a muffled monotone,
 As the waves recede and rise;
Methinks the crags, that are gray and bold,
Seem listening to the sea-tales told—
 When the water lisps and sighs.

Among the seaweed I seem to see,
A vision that calmly speaks to me,
 While my thought drinks in the deep,
The trembling tones of the plashing brine,
Breaking in beads on the surf-stained line,
 Seem lulling the sobs to sleep.

Thus time soon wears proud mortal away,
As the tide is gnawing night and day—
 The sands on the ocean's shore.
Those holy greetings of sounds serene,
Cradle the thought in the grand unseen
 Where eyes of the soul explore.

Poems for the People

A DREAM OF RAPTURE.

Hope is a dream of rapture!
Sublime as a robin's lay
Trilled in a distant tree top
Kissed by the sun's last ray,
When in a drowsy moment,
A bass or a frisky trout
Whisks your line through the water,
And proudly you pull him out.
The heart beats time to music,
Seems played on the reel and line
Carving the dimpled ripples—
In many a grand design.
The seconds seem enchanted,
Joy leaps with majestic bounds
While guessing in the landing,
The beauty will weigh two pounds.



THE AMERICAN INDIAN.

The American Indian fled with grief,
When the strange white wave rolled in,
While peaceful trails of the braves and chief,
Were drowned in a foreign din.

Poems for the People

He grasped in peace with inborn dismay,
The hand of the bold white guest,
That came as a huge sea-fowl one day,
All gaunt and in need of rest.

The paleface joined in the happy feast,
Round the redman's princely board,
Sharing the blessings of bird and beast,
And reaping a rich reward.

The longed for realm had at last been found,
Full hearts of the Pilgrims welled,
As they kneeled and kissed the blissful ground,
Where nature in rapture dwelled.

Each bosom flooded with gratitude!
While a fervent prayer arose—
To the Giver of all things grand and good—
Through a wondrous channel flows.

This was, forsooth, the temple of dreams!
Where life could be lived sublime!
Thus spirits mused while religious schemes
Were plighted with God and time.

The forest rang with entrancing notes,
As music by angels played,
Each echo echoed a thousand throats,
That flashed in the pleasant shade.

Poems for the People

Here was a land of divine surprise,
Designed for the redman's choice,
Where Freedom roamed amid paradise,
And the Pilgrims may rejoice.

All things seemed free as the virgin air,
God wisely had set apart
This land of glory where doubt and care
Would never distress the heart.

Thus thought the zealous and faithful throng,
As they viewed with Christian light
The western wild that had been so long
A stranger to truth and right.

The Indian gazed with a kindly smile,
On the faces white and strange,
And welcomed each to his domicile,
To hunt through his charming range.

His manner of life was crude, still grand,
Full many a noble deed
Gushed as a spring through his heart and hand,
With never a thought of greed.

He loathed false friendship and cowardice,
And sneered at a sullen threat,
Quick to remember kind deeds precise,
Foul motive was slow to forget.

Poems for the People

As a cyclone sweeps a field of wheat
And wallows the ripe grain low,
Thus sadly the redman met defeat,
By a foreign, selfish foe.

Alas! the doom of a mournful grief,
Soon followed the forest trail,
That echoed with joy of braves and chief,
Through mountain, morass and vale.

Beauty of nature from coast to coast,
Was crushed by the vast white wave;
Only a withering shrub, at most,
Reverts to the Indian's grave.

The forest moans with a hollow sound,
Where rapture once reigned supreme,
Round many a lone and barren mound,
Drear visions of silence dream.

No Eden of souls could be more grand,
Than realms of the long ago,
When nature ruled with a calm command
And the redman knew no foe.

Lone spooks bewail in a dismal tone,
Few echoes ring sweet and clear,
In paths where gladness of yore has flown,
And beauty is false and sear.

Poems for the People

With woeful peril the rash white wave
Swept on in relentless force
And swallowed the mirth that nature gave,
To gladden the redman's course.

The charm of thicket and marsh is gone,
No carols break free and wild
To cast a hint of the gorgeous dawn—
When nature woke fresh and mild.

Along the ridges, lagoons and streams,
The flutter of wild-fowl wings
Made music that lulled the soul in dreams,
Still cluster round vanished things.

Alack! those symbols which nature cast,
In shrines of the long ago,
Seem swept away and forever past,
Lend a sombre after glow.

A solemn spectre seems clinging round
Old ruins of ancient mirth,
Where silence hovers with rueful sound,
And voices the gloomy dearth.

Free echoes of glee are heard no more,
Where the deer and bison strayed
And grazed in freedom on slope and shore,
Through many a blithe decade.

Poems for the People

Along the course of the rash white wave,
A current of crimson flowed
And changed the trail that the redman gave,
From a glad to a grave abode.

The cheerful charm of the campfire's glare,
Illumined the knoll and dell,
Kindled a spell of contentment there,
Which only the dead can tell.

The great white wave swept onward until
It flooded the scarlet trail,
Rushing through valley and over hill,
With many a clash and wail.

Vaguely, the tide with a sullen roar,
Is flowing and washing back.
But the vanished bliss will come no more,
In the redman's olden track.

The happy feast of the scarlet trail
Is finished and one by one
Bright hopes of the strange white guest grow
pale,
And sink with the setting sun.

Prime bowers and plains rich treasures held,
Rare jewels of joy shone bright
With dazzling lustre no crown excelled,
Or dreamed by the second sight.

Poems for the People

Life of the forest reigned unconfined,
Mirth wooed the ravines and slopes,
A healthful vigor spurred soul and mind
With views and majestic hopes.

Still the queer white wave surged wild and
wide,
And raged with devouring greed,
Till all grew changed as the restless tide
Rose higher with reckless speed.

All! All is gone of the redman's wealth,
A shadow of joy remains,
Even the blessings of rugged health,
Still sadly the world complains.

Life sweeps along with a restless roar,
That seems like a mighty wail,
As if in sorrow it sought once more,
The joy of the Indian's trail.



OLD OCEAN'S FURROWED CRAGS.

The battling waves dash in passion,
And break on the sobbing beach,
While the crags repeat quaint sermons,
That the ocean seems to preach.

Poems for the People

With wonder the crags seem noting,
Deep prints of the water's teeth—
That gnaw at the frowning ledges—
 Embossed with a sea-moss wreath.

As the rushing, raging billows
 The sides of huge rocks attack,
They moan as if growing weary
 In forging and falling back.

While the crags beat back the breakers,
 That sally and splash in spray,
I hear through the jeweled niches,
 A voice that seems far away.

Among the gray clefts and fissures,
 A murmuring, muffled throb
Sweeps in as the dying current,
 Subsides with a weary sob.

Then the seaweed seems to whisper
 Through spaces of magic zones,
That echo as old cathedrals,
 In musical monotones.

Quaint visions with soothing voices,
 Seem wandering to and fro,
And sweeping, like trailing sashes,
 Through rifts of the rocks below.

Poems for the People

Like the restless, tossing billows,
When the tide is flowing strong,
Thus life with ardent emotions,
Is fretted and whirled along.

Doth the ages come and vanish,
As the ocean's changeful moods,
With currents that surge and eddy,
Through fleeting vicissitudes.

While the seething water clashes,
When the tide is lashed in spray,
The crags seem sadly reflecting
On the years that pass away.

Fond wishes and hopes of mortals,
Are wrecked on the crags of Time,
While the waves of Fate keep dashing,
And breaking in mournful rhyme.



WHEN THE RIPPLES CHIME.

Blithe feet away to the river hie,
Where boughs loop over the grassy rim,
And water mirrors a cheerful sky,
While sunbeams over green shadows skim.

Poems for the People

A pond or river, lake, brook and rill,
Nestled in rapture of emerald hues,
The idle songs of sea-choirs will thrill
And kindle a spirit of peaceful views.

Joy lingers around each longing thought,
That breaks in glee, as the ripples chime
In tuneful notes and the line draws taut,
With swishes that sweetly rhyme with time.

Amid quaint currents bright visions leap
And brim life's goblet with rosied gleams,
Seem crooning all worldly care to sleep,
In golden cradles of pleasant dreams.

A quiet charm wraps in soothing spells!
The purling water which fancy twines
With gems of glory while crystal bells,
Seem swinging and ringing round magic
shrines.

The flight of time holds entrancing sway,
In realms of beauty with soaring wings,
When fish bite good in a lusty way,
And none escape save the little things.

Each thought seems tuned to a charming key,
Wavers in chime to the waters flow,
Lulled by sweet voices in harmony,
That leave behind a bright after glow.

Poems for the People

THE PEACEFUL SUMMER HOURS.

When the sunbeams climb the woodland,
And the brook croons laughing lays,
Nature seems to press a button
And unlocks the inner gaze.

Rapture comes and pleasure lingers,
In soft shadows of the trees,
Where the dancing leaves, half drowsy,
Lend repose and charming ease.

There is rest and tranquil silence,
In the peaceful summer hours,
Roaming through the sylvan chambers,
Charmed with chimes of unseen towers.

Fraught with fond anticipation,
Thought takes wings and seems to fly
From the tumult of the city,
To green paths that woo the eye.

There is in the soul a something,
Which the tongue would fain explain,
Weaves round life a magic circle,
When the woods grow grand again.

Poems for the People

Leafy boughs engrave a message,
That coy elfins bear away
And commune to roving spirits—
Hail with joy each wild wood lay.

When the sky is crowned with glory,
Then the fancy lightly strays,
Where cool woods and waters mingle,
And make glad the Summer days.



I AM GROWING OLD.

I am growing old, but memory lingers
'Mong the sunny fields of other years;
Fancy weaves anew, with agile fingers,
Olden joy, which to me reappears.
I behold once more the birds and flowers
Which my careless feet e'er sought to find
In the woodland's cool sequestered bowers,
Where I've roamed for hours unconfined.

In the brook I wade and wildly splatter,
Carlo joining in the sport with me;
And the speckled trout and horn-dace scatter
'Neath the roots of an old basswood tree.

Poems for the People

With my shirt-sleeves rolled up to my
shoulders,
And my trousers high above my knees,
I extend my hands among the bowlders
And the fish I quickly strive to seize.

In the pasture teeming full of pleasure,
Where the cows are grazing here and there,
I am tripping through some blithesome
measure,
Whistling a light fantastic air,
Faithful Carlo plans our course of ramble,
Gayly bent on seeking after fun,
'Mong the tangled copse and matted bramble,
Where the woodchuck burrows from the
sun.

By an old log house, stood many ages,
That once sheltered yoeman long ago,
I have rambled in the steps of sages
Who disputed foeman, blow by blow.
On a mossy stone I paused and wondered
Of what wild adventures it could tell,
Of the faithful ties so rudely sundered,
When the gloom of sorrow sadly fell.

In the orchard, ripe with fruit suspending,
Where the songsters built their summer
home,

Poems for the People

Joyous notes with mine are gladly blending
As among the trees I climb and roam.
Just beyond a field of fragrant clover,
Where the marsh is near the riverside,
I have sought the muskrat and the plover
In the purple haze of eventide.

About the ruddy fire-place we're sitting,
Gazing at the fitful ember-glare;
Mother, patient soul, is calmly knitting,
In her old accustomed rocking chair.
She is telling some amazing story,
How they used to do in by-gone days,
Of the daring deeds, oft fierce and gory,
When the redman roamed in friendless
ways.

While enchanted by her words of valor,
Footfalls softly echo from the room;
And the forms, that were, seem lost in pallor,
Leaving me alone in pensive gloom.
Life is growing old and steps are wending
Lightly, slowly, feebly down the road;
Where the twilight shadows are descending
On the weary Pilgrim's last abode.

Poems for the People

UNCLE SAM'S SOLILOQUY.

They say I am harsh and haughty
And not like I used to be;
Since I drifted west and settled
And raised a big family.

The fellows that used to know me
Are jealous of my success;
And vainly inclined, I fancy,
To envy my happiness.

I have striven late and early
In hope to amass some wealth;
My children are bright and robust,
Ambitious and blessed with health.

I like to see people prosper
And try to do what is right,
Living contented and happy,
Like willing and good folk might.

I struggled and planned and labored,
When this was a wilderness;
And now I am independent,
Moreover quite rich, I guess.

Poems for the People

Some of my neighbors are friendly,
To those I am true and kind;
Some of my neighbors are artful,
To those I am cold and blind.

I hate to see people suffer
With hunger, disease and woe;
And always have been and will be
Opposed to a fiendish foe.

My children are brave and faithful,
Still, gentle if not misused;
They are never prone to quarrel,
Unless assailed and abused.

I seldom will stand an insult,
Nor bear an injury;
And those intolerant Spaniards
Had better beware of me.

My valiant marines and sailors,
Who lost their lives on the Maine
Wrecked and destroyed at Havana,
Must be atoned for by Spain.

They perished for Cubans' freedom!
And Cuba shall henceforth be
Released from all Spanish bondage,
Enlightened with liberty.

Poems for the People

I have a few faults and failings
And everyone else, I ween;
But I never stoop to conquer
In a manner low and mean.

I truly believe in freedom,
And like to see things done right;
Although I am calm and peaceful
I can and know how to fight.



DEACON BROWN'S CONCLUSION.

Good old, honest Deacon Brown
Sold his farm and moved to town;
Country life had grown to be
Out of date; it seems that he
Thought the glare and hustling vim
Just the very thing for him.
He sold all his sheep and cows,
Horses, wagons, tools and plows,
Hogs and poultry, fat and nice,
At a downright sacrifice.
In the city there would be
Nothing needed such as he
Had to have in country life,
With its weary rounds of strife.

Poems for the People

Thus he mused and pictures drew
Round the mind that seemed so true,
As he drove, through sun and rain,
Off to town and home again.
While in town, before he moved,
He often fancied how improved
Life and things in town would be
For himself and family.
All in town seemed having fun,
To old Deacon Brown and son.
While there was no seeming charm
Half so joyous on the farm.
"Nothing lost!" said Deacon Brown,
To the neighbors that came down
And attended the vendue,
Which was held and hurried through.
The old farm was sold at last!
Turkeys, geese and ducks went fast,
Brahmas, leghorns and Plymouth Rocks,
All were sold in pairs or flocks.
Then to town the Deacon went,
Seeking work and paying rent;
Things seemed grand and caught his eye,
As the first few months sped by.
Time passed on! The bank account
Soon became a small amount;
Milk and butter, eggs and meat,
Were too princely high to eat:

Poems for the People

Such steep prices, he averred,
Soared too fancy and absurd;
With the cost of coal and wood,
Vegetables more stale than good,
Quite upset his rugged zest.
Still he bravely stood the test.
Such things that he now must buy
Kept him busy thinking why
In the name of common sense
Life in town was so immense.
In the country he could raise
With less splutter and swift ways,
More to eat and better, too,
Than the city mailers knew.
Thus the Deacon oft would say,
In a frank and kindly way,
When he talked about the farm,
And compared the city's charm.
He had tried the life of each,
And no man need scoff or preach
That the country was no good
When a willing mortal could
Make a better living there
Than is made by those who bear
Heavy burdens in the town,
Going through life with a frown.
Then the good old Deacon vowed
Many people were too proud,

Poems for the People

Since the cities grew so big,
And that he would rather dig
In the soil and raise his food
Than to fare so scant and rude
As poor mortals in the town,
Being trimmed and trodden down.
Good old Deacon Brown returned
To the country when he learned
Things were not as they did seem
In the city's gala stream.
He soon saw the sad mistake
That poor, struggling mortals make!
When they think a life in town
Is the best, but not for Brown.



HYMN OF THE WESTERN STRAND.

A voice appeals from the other side,
Over the raging flood wild and wide;
To a land where loyal patriots vied
In affixing a mighty nation.
It speaks in a manner frank and bland,
To valiant hearts on this Western strand,
And craves the clasp of a friendly hand,
Of a distant, yet near relation.

Poems for the People

The Star of the West shall always glow
With tranquil lustre, and calmly throw
A gracious glow; and benignly show
A welcome flame undiminished.

So-long as the ocean ebbs and flows,
So long as goldenrod blooms and grows,
The eagle shall triumph over foes,
Till the course of its flight is finished.

The manly deeds of our Nation's own
Stand undisputed from zone to zone;
Prowess and courage is like a stone,
In the valley of maize and cattle.
Breezes and billows cannot retard,
The voice of the zealous British bard;
He has the pose of a faithful guard
Who is seldom confused in battle.

He that is worthy, no matter who,
Is always welcome to join the crew
Of Uncle Sam and staunch canoe,
And drift down the bay of life's ocean.
North, South, East and West are true and
brave,
Like massive columns no force can stave;
The Stars and Stripes shall forever wave,
Through epochs of peace and commotion.

Poems for the People

AT COMING OF EVENTIDE.

When the daylight has departed,
And the tumult is subdued,
Then comes a hush that bewitches
The thoughts into quietude.

Then life's struggles are suspended,
And the mind becomes becalmed,
And our worriments diminish
And the burdens seem embalmed.

The forms that were once familiar
Now visit us for a while,
And voices of youth awaken
Old memories free from guile.

As a foe yields and surrenders,
When the sword has pierced his side,
Thus cares of the day relinquish
At coming of eventide.

The fibers of life unravel
And loosen the tangled ways,
While beacons of hope illumine
The shadows of future days.

Poems for the People

Then the real seems belated,
And the silence lends repose,
And from wells, in quaint seclusion,
That sweet balm of slumber flows.

Then lips, that are sealed forever,
Seem to call our names once more,
As we roam through paths unfettered
Where the feet have trod before.



IF WE TRY.

Ever upward like a kite,
Rightly balanced, rises high;
Thus will each attain the height
Of sublimeness, if we try.

With unflagging faith and skill,
Coupled with unswerving zeal,
We can mount life's pinnacle
And enjoy intrinsic weal.

Time is but a narrow groove,
Life is quickly passing through;
Every bar that we remove
Makes more light the tasks to do.

Poems for the People

It is in the midst of strife,
That the heart its strength attains,
In pursuit of nobler life
All may rise to lofty planes.

Life is brief and Time is swift
And the days we cannot keep,
If we would reach heights of thrift,
We must toil while sluggards sleep.



THE SUNKEN BATTLESHIP MAINE.

A woeful recollection clusters round the
sunken Maine,
Sobbing in Cuban waters as a mother in
despair;
Weeping in awful anguish who fain would
revive again,
The spark of life that nestled on her breast
till death came there.

In ghoulish glee the vandal waves are gnawing
at her side,
While Neptune hisses at the moans that
issue from her keel;

Poems for the People

The martyred lives whose rattling bones make
playthings for the tide
Hold solemn vigil in deep grief as coils of
Time unreel.

They did a duty, daring death in Freedom's
noble cause,
Each brave life sniffed in ghastly haste ap-
peals to true mankind—
Basking beneath the banner which inspires
enlightened laws,
Threaded through gloom and hardship to
the star of hope divined.

Think ye a grave in battered hull submerged
in foreign foam,
A just reward for loyalty, or fitting to the
free?
Lift her up with the faithful dead and bring
the relic home,
To mingle with the hallowed dust that made
for liberty.

In this broad age of grand desires, how selfish
is the thought
That passes lightly over a terrific, doleful
gloom!
Where men all flushed with triumph on a mis-
sion calmly sought,

Poems for the People

Are hurled as gale-tossed atoms to a dire,
infernial doom.

The savage zest in human form leaves mourn-
ful ghosts behind,
Which haunt the peace of future years! yea,
stunt the heart and brain
Of rising generations that in folly shape the
mind
Through heathen grooves where sordid
views are running wild and vain.

The price of peace was sadly paid that Cuba
may arise
And walk in ways of freedom, which the
martyred Maine and souls,
Ill-fated off Havana, shall forever symbolize
In honor of Old Glory and the people it
upholds.

O, war! where lies the glory of thine brutal,
hellish thirst?
That leads the noble action down through
dungeons of despair,
Whence wisdom has no reason and affection
feels accursed,
And phantoms dog the vision as a hound
pursues a hare.

Poems for the People

THE CHARM OF CHRISTMAS.

The charm of Christmas moves the world as
by some mystic power
To mingle in supreme delight, unmixed
with selfish aims;
A tender thought creeps in mankind and beau-
tifies each hour,
That flashes with triumphant glows burns
bright with inner flames.

The toddling child and callow youth, all of
life's varied throng,
Join in the grand communion, as if spurred
by unseen force,
To meekly yield the stubborn will and frown
on earthly wrong,
And be as children filled with hope which
springs from some deep source.

It matters not where erring feet may wander
rash and wild,
Or treat with scorn those blessings which
are given unto all.
A thought will come in moments when the
craving heart grows mild,
And stir a childish longing for a Merry
Christmas call.

Poems for the People

In this vast scheme of human life where all
are swept away,
As fallen leaves, a duty clings, unshaken,
round the years,
And thrills the soul with inborn zeal on each
glad Christmas Day!
Reverting to the wondrous Love which
rules this gulf of tears.



VISIONS OF THE WILDWOOD.

The silence woos my thoughts, and
Seems to check the rushing hours,
When I, in fancy, rove amid
The green, sequestered bowers.

I courted nature's loveliness,
In bright anticipations,
When I in careless days enjoyed
Full many wild sensations.

The birds, the butterflies, and bees,
Oft ran me breathless races;
Squirrels and chipmunks scolded me,
And made reproachful faces.

Poems for the People

Through paths where brambles interlaced,
And rabbits shyly gamboled,
I, proud as any sportsman bold,
With bow and arrow rambled.

And like a sudden glow of light,
That flashes unexpected,
I oft gave chase in wild pursuit
Of something I detected.

Through tangled bushes I would rush,
Unmindful of the scratches,
And hurt my face and tear my clothes,
Oft sewed and fixed with patches.

Yet when I think of happy times,
I had within the wildwood,
A vision takes me by the hand,
And leads me back to childhood.



SPRING'S INVITATION.

O come with me,
And roam care free
Within my blissful bowers!

Poems for the People

Where all is peace and melody,
The merry flitting hours;
There my rapture you may learn,
Oft for which thy soul doth yearn
And with ardent cravings burn,
To explore the magic powers
That chime in harmony.

Thou will then know,
The still calm flow
That glides in a winsome maze,
Unruffled by no blasts that blow
Along the world's highways
My sylvan zithers, you and me
May play in happy unity,
The while we seek in simple glee,
With silent and secret gaze,
Through paths of long ago.

My airy lyres,
And fairy choirs,
Resound with inspiring strains—
From swaying domes and swinging spires
While beauty spins quaint chains
Out of each rich color known.
That reflects a charming tone
Round sweet shrines of Nature's throne.
Twines the thought with mystic skeins,
Thrills the heart with fond desires.

Poems for the People

SOME PERTINENT PHILOSOPHY.

He who lifts a hand in defense of nature's protection and preservation, not only sets an example worthy of imitation, but champions a cause essential to human happiness.

Every bird shot during the brooding period not only maltreats and mars the beauty of the universe, but the finger that pulls the trigger perhaps destroys a nest of helpless fledglings.



SPRING BLOSSOMS.

The gardens and meadows are freighted with
splendor,
The beautiful blossoms, so charming and
fair,
Are bright and bewitching, delightful and ten-
der,
And sweetly perfuming the earth and the
air.

They greet us wherever the footsteps may
wander,
And smile like old friends who are faithful
and true;

Poems for the People

I wonder if blossoms can think and can ponder,
And if they feel sad over what mortals do.

In thicket and cranny is many a flower,
Whose fragrance and beauty is matchless
and sweet,
Quite hidden away, like a mouse in a tower,
For ever concealed from the sky and the
street.

How little we care for the comforts of others,
Who strive, uncomplainingly, day after day,
To lighten the sorrow that dampens and
smothers,
The embers of life's loves, slow burning
away.

The joy of to-day by to-morrow may languish;
Fond hopes in a moment forever be lost;
The spirit soon soars, from its dungeon of
anguish,
Far over still waters full many have crossed.

Then always embellish Life's garden with
flowers;
And strew them in paths that are dreary
and bare,
And hoe each weed lest it strangle and sours
The beauty and sweetness which ought to
bloom there.

Poems for the People

CHILL NOVEMBER DAYS.

How sad and solemn is the dying year,
While brown and hectic flushes tinge the
trees!

No flowers fringe the highway nor the mere,
Nor joyous songs float wide on welkin seas.

Naught cheers the heart nor greets the listless
eye,

Each hill and vale a pensive stillness holds;
The flocks wing far away across the sky,
Veiled with a vapor formed in leaden folds.

The pulseless breast of earth is gray and bare,
Stripped of all gladness once so widely
spread,

And dead leaves fall and scatter everywhere,
When chill November days are blear and
red.

Thus will all things, alas, grow sear and die,
And mingle with each other evermore!

As through Time's course Life's current soon
runs dry,

Absorbed by sands inhabited before.

Poems for the People

Pale gossamers obstruct the distant gaze,
And melancholy noises come and go;
Beauteous scenes the lips were wont to praise,
In summer, have now lost that cheery glow.

Yet in the days to come—bright vernal days—
Fair blossoms and green leaves will reappear;
And spring will welcome back the joyous lays
That thrill the bosom with abounding cheer.



LINES TO A TORTOISE.

With patient plodding, firm of will,
Ye humble creature born of God!
Thou hast no claim on art or skill,
Save meek content that seems so odd.

No pride of vanity or wit
Is noted in the slightest trace,
As nature willed and fashioned it,
To be a model in its place.

Long years are thine allotted gift,
Frail human life in vain desires,

Poems for the People

A seeming sign that roves adrift,
As contrast to where man aspires.

There is an emblem wise and clear
Made manifest in simple sense;
No vain unrest of doubt and fear
Disturbs thy lowly excellence.

Thy peaceful, plodding course, though slow,
Sets an example to the world,
Rushing along in ways of woe,
Like chaff in wild confusion hurled.

Thy uncomplaining lot of fate
Is not for mankind to despise,
But in meek faith to imitate
And learn to plod serene and wise.

What is there gained by selfish strife,
When all are equal in the grave?
The calm pursuit in paths of life
Full many sighs of sorrow save.



THE SHOW OF LIFE.

The world is a vast amphitheater strangely
planned and built upon the shifting sands of

Poems for the People

time; a surging and mingling multitude speedily carry on a continuous show.

The curtain never descends, as the stage is so arranged with ample room that each allotted rôle can be performed. New actors are always appearing and fill the vacant places of those who have acted their part and taken leave.

Tranquility and tumult is a companion piece which age and youth unite and quickly play; the plot is fraught with jocund situations, perplexing incidents and solemn events.



FIRESIDE FANCIES.

The silence of the evening upon my heart-strings plays,
And embers, glowing in the grate, seem calling up the past;
Shadows flutter on the floor, as if to taunt my gaze,
While visions of my fancy enchain and hold me fast.
Scenes of childhood pleasures unfold before my gaze;

Poems for the People

Among the embers faces seem to waver to
and fro;
I roam once more the woodland and hear the
birds' sweet lays;
I wander by the brookside, where ferns and
rushes grow.

I ramble through the meadows and pluck the
fragrant flowers,
I listen to the echoes that startle at my word;
I see a barefoot urchin explore the glades and
bowers,
His boldness being censured by some ex-
cited bird.

An old elm tree is standing beside a crumbling
wall,
Where orioles each summer so quaintly
swing their nest,
And birds of passage southward, when leaves
began to fall,
Would often pause, as if to plan a better
course and rest.

The woodchuck and the chipmunk, they frolic,
half afraid;
Once more the barefoot urchin, with rolled-
up pantaloons,
I see him softly creeping and peering through
the glade,

Poems for the People

As if to catch them napping, on sunny after-
noons.
I see the village schoolhouse and hear the bell
resound;
I see the teacher standing beside the open
door,
And near by is the graveyard, with paths that
wind around
The mounds, where solemn tombstones
guard eyes that weep no more.

I hear the children's voices and see them skip
and play;
I see the barefoot urchin among the girls
and boys;
Their ruddy faces beaming as bright as days in
May—
'Tis recess and the playground is overflowed
with noise.
The ember glow is fading, the visions disap-
pear.
A silence drear and mockful about me seems
to fall;
I wonder where they went to, those faces that
were here;
A mystic voice gives answer: "They passed
beyond recall."

Poems for the People

ON VIRGINIA'S STORIED COAST.

Where blithe waves in peace are breaking,
On Virginia's storied coast!
And old Chesapeake bay is speaking—
Of our nation's gloried host.

There the grand fleet rides at anchor,
In the old roadstead at last,
Each gray ocean beacon dreaming,
Like a watch-dog on the past.

And the water leaps and surges,
With a charming, prattling sound,
As if greeting the home-coming—
Of the fleet with honor crowned.

Lo! the fleet with dazzling wonder,
Casts a bright, reflective spell,
On the shores of Old Virginia,
And 'round Plymouth Rock, as well.

Visions cluster 'midst the warships,
And revert, with mother-pride,
To Old Glory's world-rare voyage,
Far from freedom's fond fireside.

Poems for the People

Dream in peace! ye ocean eagles!
On the bosom of the Roads,
Lulled by lapping waves seem crooning,
Sacred hymns of deep abodes.



BATTLE OF MANILA.

Ere the sun gilded the Philippine Islands,
And burnished the bay with a radiant sheen;
Bold Dewey's squadron as still as a phantom
Steamed skillfully into Manila unseen.

The harbor was planted and mined with torpedoes,
And forts of the enemy grumbled and frowned;
The Spanish armada was ready for action,
Its officers watching and noting each sound.

At daybreak a vision arose in the darkness,
Like some horrid monster dropped out of the skies;
The Spaniards were startled, dumbfounded and puzzled,
Manila filled with dismay and surprise.

Poems for the People

Our grim Asian squadron and noble defenders,
Whose love for Old Glory is strong and sincere,
Outwitted and baffled the Spanish commanders
Who rallied their sense as brave Dewey
drew near.

Surrounded by foemen on coast line and ocean,
Out-numbered in cannon and battleships, too,
Commodore Dewey, determined and nerry,
Revealed to the Dons what the Yankees
can do.

The battle waged hot, both shot and shell
rattled
And beat a tattoo on the battleships' decks;
Fire tongues from the cannon hissed over the
water,
And lapped the life's blood from Spain's
naval wrecks.

The Spanish armada was riddled and shattered,
The water was stained with the blood of
the slain;
Brave Commodore Dewey, in true Yankee
fashion,
Defeated the Dons and "Remembered the
Maine."

Poems for the People

When the din ceased and the furious conflict—
Commenced by the Spaniards—was over
and won
The Star Spangled Banner, serene and majestic,
Was gracefully waving its folds to the sun.



THE WARBLERS AND WILDFOWLS.

When nature awakes from the dull repose
Of winter, all clad in bewitching clothes,
The soul of the universe swells with praise,
And heralds the pleasure of happy days.
Then melodies mingle and gently float,
Into blithesome dreams, from the warbler's
throat;
Rapt chords of emotion are lulled and
swayed
A kiss to a harp that is sweetly played.

The warblers and wildfowls, blossoms and
trees,
Are voices of nature, and magic keys,
Thrilling and gladdening humanity:
Wandering midst mazes of mystery.

Poems for the People

Leave warblers and waterfowls wander free
And bring up their brood in tranquility!
Their beautiful plumage and mirthful lays
Make brighter and gladder the summer
days.

The wilds of the mountains, the fenceless lots,
Would seem to the traveler lonely spots,—
And even the rivers and lakes and streams
Bereft of wildfowl—like unpleasant dreams.
The creatures inhabit the air and earth,
In humble pursuance of food and mirth
Are servants of nature, both great and small,
Allied and combined for the good of all
While crossing Time's rapid and narrow
strait—
Fretted with waves of disaster and fate.

Customs and methods and humane designs,
Can aid and promote what nature divines;
Never destroy nor disfigure nor curse;
The creatures which gladden the universe,
This rolling sphere, in which human excels,
Abundant in greetings and sad farewells,
Is only a transient abiding place,
Allotted and loaned to each tribe and race.

How often, when straying in woods and fields,
A spiritless silence to me appeals;

Poems for the People

I fancy gay ballads of ecstasy
Are not so sublime as they used to be.
The conscience of mortals seems cold and vain,
Mute of emotion, and deafly disdain.
The sermons and teachings of simple facts
Of folly, of evil and selfish acts.

True beauty seems waning, the human race
Have deepened the wrinkles in nature's face;
Moreover, through terror and languid fear,
The warblers and waterfowls disappear
From haunts that were wont in by-gone
days,
To airily echo with tuneful lays.
The birds have a right to follow their bent
Of rapture in freedom and calm content!
Their songs of affection and merry moods
Enliven the shades of vicissitudes.

The language of nature—ideal and grand—
How little we know and can understand,
A trip in the woods when the day is bright,
Kindles the feelings with charms of delight;
Visions of hope and reflections of peace,
Contentment and happiness, soon would cease,
—The world would be merely a murky
void—
If nature was dumb and her charms de-
stroyed.

Poems for the People

Leave warblers and waterfowls soar and fly
And wander in freedom and multiply;
Their hues of beauty and carols of song
Enraptured the world as it rolls along.



A NEW YEAR PSALM.

Hearken! hear the happy New Year bells?
How the air with midnight music swells!
While each merry, roving echo tells—
To a waiting world, the joyful news,
In the heart of Life now spring anew
Strong and eager wishes to pursue,
With a burning will to dare and do,
Hail the New Year full of hopeful views.

Bury in the past Old Year's woe,
Grasp the fleeting moments ere they go,
Time is but a moving picture show!
Lo! the New Year is a golden scene
Cast upon the world—a curtain wide—
Where meek mortals, rich and poor abide
For awhile and wander side by side!
Down the path where memories grow green.

Poems for the People

THE BATTLE-SCARRED OF FREEDOM.

Grand warriors were they who in days of long
ago

Resolved to perish or henceforth be free;
Freedom! was the watchword when they grap-
pled with the foe
To struggle for the cause of Liberty.

Young Glory tower'd swan-like amid the
throbbing air

As ably each brave heart—at life's sweet
cost—
Plunged in the tide of battle which meant
death or despair
To Freedom if the victory was lost.

Those patriots disputed and challenged to the
last

The foe of Liberty with matchless might;
Amid the roar of cannon the die of Peace was
cast
In molds that shall not rust, nor ages blight.

Peace is the fruit of valor—Old Glory's herit-
age—

Plucked from the tree of Freedom and pre-
served.

Poems for the People

The courage of our fathers shapes each succeeding stage
Of life to guard the Stars and Stripes unswerved.

Could they who fought and suffered—those patriots of old—
Return and note the change has taken place—
Since buds of Freedom blossomed—they would with awe behold
The wondrous progress of a dauntless race.

Those patriots unwaver'd, when Liberty seemed lost
And hope hung in the balance like a reed,
Rose as a spark from ashes thought dead, then boldly crossed
The bridge of death to vanquish foreign greed.

Long will the prime upholders of Yankee principle
Be cherished by Old Glory's modern throng,
Dear Liberty be guarded with that same pluck and skill
That paved the way that made a nation strong.

Poems for the People

The torch of time illumines the memory of
these
Who crossed into the peaceful border land
In answer to the roll call the unseen trumpet
blows
When life is marshaled to its last command.
Unsullied shall the symbol of Freedom broadly
wave,
In firm defiance to a foreign foe,
Until the Hosts of Heaven unlock each hero's
grave
And crown the battle-scarred of long ago.
America's broad landscapes, grand peaks and
harbors fine
Reflect the prowess of the loyal horde
Who carved—with deep impression—Old
Glory's staunch design,
As keepsake to those who came afterward.



THE SOLDIER'S REVERIE.

Night's African role is descending,
Far over the landscape and bay;
The silence of bivouac seems lending
A pensive calm after the fray.

Poems for the People

The hill lends a mood of reflection,
And quickly my thoughts seem to flee
And visit, midst scenes of affection,
My home in the land of the free.

While visions of loved ones surround me,
Impart a fond fancy of joy,
War's grave recollections around me,
My mystic thought-pictures destroy.
Brave soldiers gaunt, wounded and weary,
And haggard from fighting all day,
Are wrapped in repose, feeling dreary,
And dreaming of home far away.

The hillside—the scene of commotion—
Is hushed in a funeral calm,
And, in the quaint stillness, the ocean
Seems chanting a singular psalm.
The battle waged fierce and undaunted,
Dense smoke and flame clouding the hill,
Still upward, with steps firmly planted,
Each warrior forged with a will.

Bold officers lustily shouted,
Brief orders with fervor and skill;
Not one in the valiant charge doubted
His strength as he mounted the hill.
When comrades were wounded and reeling,
Yet aiming and firing a gun,

Poems for the People

The troopers were seized with a feeling
Of frenzy, and charged on the run.

Up, up, through a steep, rugged valley,
The soldiers disputed the way,
Repulsing the foe, in the rally,
Retreated like tigers at bay.
The Banner of Freemen is floating,
In triumph on top of the height,
Its rubicund colors denoting
A signal of glory and might.

When news of the battle is given,
Announcing the wounded and dead,
Full many fond hearts will be riven,
And eyes will grow swollen and red.
When reveille sounds in the morning,
Arousing the soldiers once more,
Not all will respond to the warning,
And fall into line as of yore.



CHRISTMAS AT THE OLD HOME.

Mirandy, we will, if you say the word,
Have an old-fashioned time on Christmas
Day;

Poems for the People

These still rooms will ring as in days of yore,
When the children were small and full of
play.

The homestead seems lonesome when Christ-
mas time comes,
And mute as the flight of a mouse or a rat,
With no one but you and me, left alone,
Grown thoughtful with age—like the dog
and the cat.

I remember the children's Christmas mirth,
And how we together did fix and plan
Just before Christmas, arranging to have
A merry good time, same as now we can.

Mirandy, we will indite a brief note
Just stating our warmest and fullest desire
For friends and kindred to share a big feast
At the old homestead, 'round a rousing good
fire.

The garret shall echo with youth's mirthful
chimes,
Joy of the children free to explore;
We'll build a neat bower of fresh evergreen
And straw dyed pink, as we used to before.

Poems for the People

A Christmas tree will add zeal to the feast,
And polish big eyes of the girls and the
boys,
Just like it did when our children were tots
And shared in the harvest of Christmas-
time joys.

Then let us prepare for an old-fashioned time,
In honor of Christ—in pure gratitude,
For favors received and blessings enjoyed,
Our hearth will rekindle a happier mood.

Our twilight of life begins to descend,
And age, like a hulk, is drifting away
To the westward of youth, farther and fast,
While Time plucks swifter the moments
each day.

So let us indite, as I say, a brief note,
Just stating our warmest and fullest desire—
For friends and kindred to share a big feast
At the old homestead, 'round a rousing good
fire.



BRIGHT STARS OF LIBERTY.

In the land of great resources!
Where the Redman pitched his tent,

Poems for the People

In the wild and tangled courses,
That the axe and plow soon rent
And transformed in cheerful bowers,
Fraught with weal and free repose,
Sweetens the charm of life's brief hours,
Since the star of freedom rose.

Prize the peace wrought from commotion!
By brave men whose deeds of might
Stained with blood both land and ocean,
For their flag's and country's right.
Frame the names of noble masters!
Shaped the destiny of peace
Out of war's severe disasters—
Grow less dire as years increase.

Hail with pride and veneration,
Grand Old Glory's faithful sons!
Who explored and paved a nation,
At the point of swords and guns.
Since, America has flourished!
Through the watchful care of those
Who the spark of glory nourished,
While the storms of Time arose.

There may be a time, soon coming,
When the arsenals and forts
Will with calm pursuits be humming,
And the world have open ports.

Poems for the People

By new births of independence,
Kingdoms change and forts decay,
Peace shines forth in wide resplendence,
And rude customs pass away.



CHASING THE FOX.

Light and noiseless as the shadow,
Of a cloud sweeps through the meadow,
On a bright December day;—
Flees the fox in all his cunning,
While the hounds are swiftly running
And in ringing tones give bay.

Up and down through gorge and hollow,
In mad haste the hot hounds follow
Artful reynard's changeful track;
Through the tangled brush and briars,
Caring naught for what transpires,
Onward rush the baying pack.

Over knolls and stony ridges,
Leaping brooks and crossing bridges,
Reynard, hounds, and sportsmen flee.
Now and then the hounds cease baying,

Poems for the People

As if scheming and surveying,
Where the fox leaped from a tree.

In and out of brambly hedges,
Racing over rocks and ledges,
Hounds and sportsmen gaily speed;
Every sinew, nerve, and muscle,
By the lively chase and bustle,
To its highest pitch is keyed.

For a ways the course is level,
Then the shrewd and crafty devil
Sharply veers and fools the hounds;
Up a rugged hill he sallies,
Then he crosses two small valleys,
Full of stumps and scrubby mounds.

Several hounds behind are falling,
For the chase grows long and galling,
Over rough and hilly ways.
Reynard shows some signs of lagging,
To the end the chase is dragging,
And the sportsman joy betrays.

Ah! the fox has gone to cover,
All the hounds around him hover
And in triumph yelp and bay.
All fatigue of limb and muscle,
Is forgotten in the tussle
While the hounds round up the prey.

Poems for the People

Naught excels the exultation,
Though it be of brief duration,—
Of the wild and final rush.
Though the chase was long extended,
Joy seemed sweeter when it ended,
And the sportsman waves the brush.



THE COURSE OF A YEAR.

What changes take place in the course of a
year,
Which gladden or sadden the heart of man-
kind!
Life's flickering moments, both cloudy and
clear,
Leave visions of rapture and sorrow behind.
Time's cortege sweeps on with no pause or
delay,
Through scenes everchanging, as paths in
the snow,
While faces that beam with enjoyment to-day,
To-morrow are missed from the family
row.

Poems for the People

A few happy months! but what changes may
be,
Which alter the plans that were molded in
hope—
Oft shattered and dashed, as a vessel at sea
That strikes a huge rock and goes down
with a slope.

Full many a tie of ambition and bliss
Were riven and shivered in days that have
fled,
Fond lips freely pressed with a reverent kiss
Are silenced and sealed in the realms of
the dead.

The swift, foaming tide of discordant events
Bears wearily on in a wavering way,
And tosses the world in a spray of suspense
That weaves a chill mist over life's buoyant
bay.



THE REIGN OF NATURE.

Nature repairs to her secret lodge,
In silence and then retires,
To dream through the darkness of winter
And cherish her dead desires.

Poems for the People

Drear phantoms lone paths are patrolling,
Through the lonesome hours of gloom;
The lyres of the greenwood are tuneless,
As voices that haunt the tomb.

How brief is the beauty of Nature,
Ere it withers and declines!
The charm of her joy is soon broken,
When summer decays and pines.

Just a little while waves the splendor
That cheers the meadows and woods,
And gladdens the spirit of mortal
With happy and peaceful moods.

The tasks of the soil are soon ended
And the orchards yield their fruit,
Then the duty of time is finished,
Until spring retunes her lute.

All things, save mankind, have their seasons,
To labor, flourish and rest,
Each follows a purpose or system,
Mapped out by a plan that seems best.

But man, with his fitful emotions,
Is rushing along, like mad,
Unmindful of Nature's wise teachings,
Guiding the world to be glad.

Poems for the People

BROKEN THOUGHTS.

There is joy in the glow of a rose,
And grief in its thorn hidden near,
No burden but finds a repose
In hope buried under a tear.
The pleasure in fancy we crave,
Is often a wound in disguise,
And fades like the light in a cave
Whose mouth strangely dazzles the eyes.

A way that is sunny and gay
May soon become cloudy and drear;
True friends are not found in a day,
Nor lost in the course of a year.
Contentment is greater than wealth,
And thrives on affection and grace;
Love brightens the path of ill-health;
Hope softens a care-hardened face.

Pure thoughts are the secret of peace,
And peace is the jewel of life;
Embellished with colors increase
In beauty, through trials and strife.
Care comes like a feather; is tossed
And swept by a tempest through space.

Poems for the People

A tender faith, once it is lost,
Will never regain its sweet grace.

A hovel, with love, is more grand
Than castles where bliss is unknown,
And splendor is common as sand
Assailed by a raging cyclone.
The secret of happiness lies
In simple and trivial things
From which gentle sources oft rise
And flow in sublime happenings.



A SONNET.

When Christmas comes round, with its blessings and mirth,
The heart of the world beats with friendship and love—
And feels a fond awe for this wonderful earth!
Given each mortal to make something of.
The duty of life is to follow the guide,
Which teaches the spirit to hallow the birth
Allotted to foster the peace of a dove,
And rekindle calm wisdom in fires that burn

Poems for the People

With motherly patience and fatherly worth—
Shall exalt and enlighten the vision of pride
And illumine the path to the great divide,
Whence the pilgrim wanders with many a
turn,
Through darkness of doubt, amid shadows that
hide
The sunshine of joy which in sorrow all
learn.



SEASIDE REFLECTIONS.

The night was still and vexed billows
Swept over the rocked-ribbed bars,
And the light-house gleamed and flickered
Like the glint of distant stars.

Among the murmuring breakers,
How the water seethed and sobbed,
As if the heart of the ocean
With grievous emotion throbbled.

The waves seemed chiding the shadows
That crept over the grinning hulk,

Poems for the People

Surrounded by tangled seaweed,
Where the night winds came to sulk.

The moon trailed over the water
In a hazy, listless way,
And prattled among the seaweed,
As spry as a child at play.

I gazed on the sullen current,
In droll and wavering moods,
And sketched on a fancied canvas
Life's scenes and vicissitudes.

I likened the fretful billows,
To the countless restless hearts—
In the world's quaint human ocean,
Ebb and flow through crowded marts.

And thoughts too deep for expression
Arose and fell like the sea,
While I pictured in the water
The woes of humanity.

The billows rose and descended,
Like hopes of the human breast
When life with care is encumbered
And the heart in vain seeks rest.

Poems for the People

WISDOM.

Wisdom flashes as a light,
In the stillness of the night,
Like an echo in dense wood,
To relieve the solitude.

Through the darkness of despair,
As a sunbeam cleaves the air,
Thus the cheerful thought will spring
Out of space with mystic wing.

It is wafted in a trice
As a shout glides over ice,
And departs with silent haste
On its way through starry waste.

Wisdom is the spirits' voice!
In odd moments doth rejoice
With the heart, then speed away,
To return some other day.

Coming, going, all the while,
Through a strange, majestic aisle,
Pause here and there to write
A brief message of delight.

Poems for the People

Wisdom is the mighty force
Shaping life's exalted course!
It is vigor to the soul—
Fain would gain a lofty goal.

Oft mistaken, or unknown,
In its passage fleet and lone,
Many blindly let it pass
To bewail with grief, alas,
When the knowledge comes too late—
And reveals a blighted fate.



THE BANNER OF FREEMEN.

Majestic and bright is the banner of freemen,
A glorious beacon of justice and might,
Its rubicund folds thrill the breast with emotion,
In mem'ry of those who have fought a good fight.

In hearts of our country's heroic defenders,
Wherever its staff is in battle held high,
It kindles a fervor of zeal and devotion
Unfailing and fixed as the orbs in the sky.

Poems for the People

It flushes with ardor the spirit of manhood,
And strengthens the pulse midst the can-
nons' fierce roar,
In bitter engagements its radiant splendor,
Spurs on and conduces to triumphs of war.

'Midst din of the fray it is royally waving
A signal of faith all unmingled with doubt,
Full many a brave-hearted fellow adored it,
And uttered its praise as life's crimson
oozed out.

We love to extol the fair banner of freemen,
And always will fervently cherish its hue;
The group of bright stars and grand stripes
proudly herald
A nation of freemen brave, ardent and true.



LITTLE BABY.

O, you priceless little bother,
What a nuisance you can be,
Ever getting into trouble
Over things you long to see.
Full of gay and tireless chatter,
Ever asking something new,

Poems for the People

Roguish eyes are ever seeking
In their cunning depths of blue.

Brimming full of ceaseless questions
Which for answers are in quest,
None may hope to flee your teasing
Till your thoughts are lost in rest.
You are ever in your glory,
When on mischief you are bent,
Romping, racing, hither, thither,
To thy little heart's content.

Careless of the many scoldings
For the naughty things you do,
Heedless of the promised whipping
For which you often pass review.
Oh, your little mind's a puzzle
In a thousand different ways,
Try how hard we may to read it,
More in vacancy we gaze.

Little hands are making mischief
In their prying noiseless way,
Finding lots of baby treasures
In its innocence at play.
Rumpled stockings out of order,
Bare legs dauntless to the view,
Little marvel, do I wonder
If there's any more like you!

Poems for the People

Golden ringlets topsy turvy
On a little hatless head,
Chasing through the busy hours,
Never quiet till abed.
Tiny footsteps, tired and weary,
Toddling through the live-long day,
Making mirth and merry laughter,
Giving cuteness every way.

After all your many trials
Are at evening laid aside,
And you slumber on the bosom
Of a peace-begetting guide.
In the morning bright and early
You arise to meet the day,
Going through the same rehearsal
While your life is made of play.



A COSY COUNTRY HOME.

¶The balm of peace for which the heart is
seeking
Is not in crowded marts,
But may be found where Nature's voice is
speaking,
In calm, contented parts!

Poems for the People

Whence songs of birds in merry tones are
ringing
With mirth that sweeten all,
While smiling trees and sky all day seem
flinging
A blithe, inviting call.

Where soothing breezes lisp in winsome
places
And cheer the soul and mind,
That see in nature bright and charming faces
Peer through a seeming blind.

The rustling leaves and grass, in joyous
splendor,
Cast over all a spell
Which weaves a peaceful gladness pure and
tender
Round meadow, wood and dell.

In bursting bud, awaking sprout and vision
The charm of rapture glows
And courts companionship with true elysian,
Which free contentment knows.

A cosy country home within the border,
Where God extends a line
Between the path of peace and vain disorder,
In Nature's chosen shrine!

Poems for the People

There may the spirit dwell in simple beauty,
Beyond the din and broil
Which frets the thought in earnest ways of
duty,
Fraught with distress and moil.

The cheerful hope round country scenes grows
fonder,
Green beauty and pure air
Regales the gaze with happy views that wan-
der
In pleasure fresh and fair.

A cosy country home in green seclusion
Is charming and by far
Lends brighter views of life, with less con-
fusion,
Than in the city's jar.



MAKING UP THE MIND.

There is many a golden venture wasted
That may have ended well;
The bitter dregs, by baffled spirits tasted,
Alas! sad moments tell.

Poems for the People

How oft is thrown away, in thoughtless seconds,

The precious present chance,
Which, when too late, with taunting finger beckons,
And grieves the backward glance.

Many a hope is lost and prospects blighted
While making up the mind;
The passing whim which for the nonce delighted,
Oft leaves regret behind.

A soul that shirks and wavers in the balance,
When it should bravely act,
May miss the valued gift of fleeting talents
That reach success through tact.

The priceless jewels of Time are vainly squandered
By vague and tardy ways,
Waiting in doubtful action, viewed and pondered,
Till life becomes a maze.

A task devised and finished is far better
Than half a dozen things
Suggested and outlined, then left to fether
The thought with wonderings.

Poems for the People

It is the clear gaze that becalms the vision
With views of firm intent,
A swerving mind soon leads to indecision
That ends in worriment.

A course half planned, with sallies of am-
bition,
And feebly carried out,
Becomes a haunting ghost of life's condition,
Pursued with fear and doubt.

The true desire and faith in execution
Soon leaves the lax behind,
To waver in the march of evolution,
While men make up the mind.



JUST A LITTLE WHILE.

Only a little while the leaves and flowers—
Gladden the earth, then die!
The charm of mirth that thrills the summer
hours,
Alas! soon passes by.

In field and wood, reflects with autumn's
lustre,
A ghostly stillness falls

Poems for the People

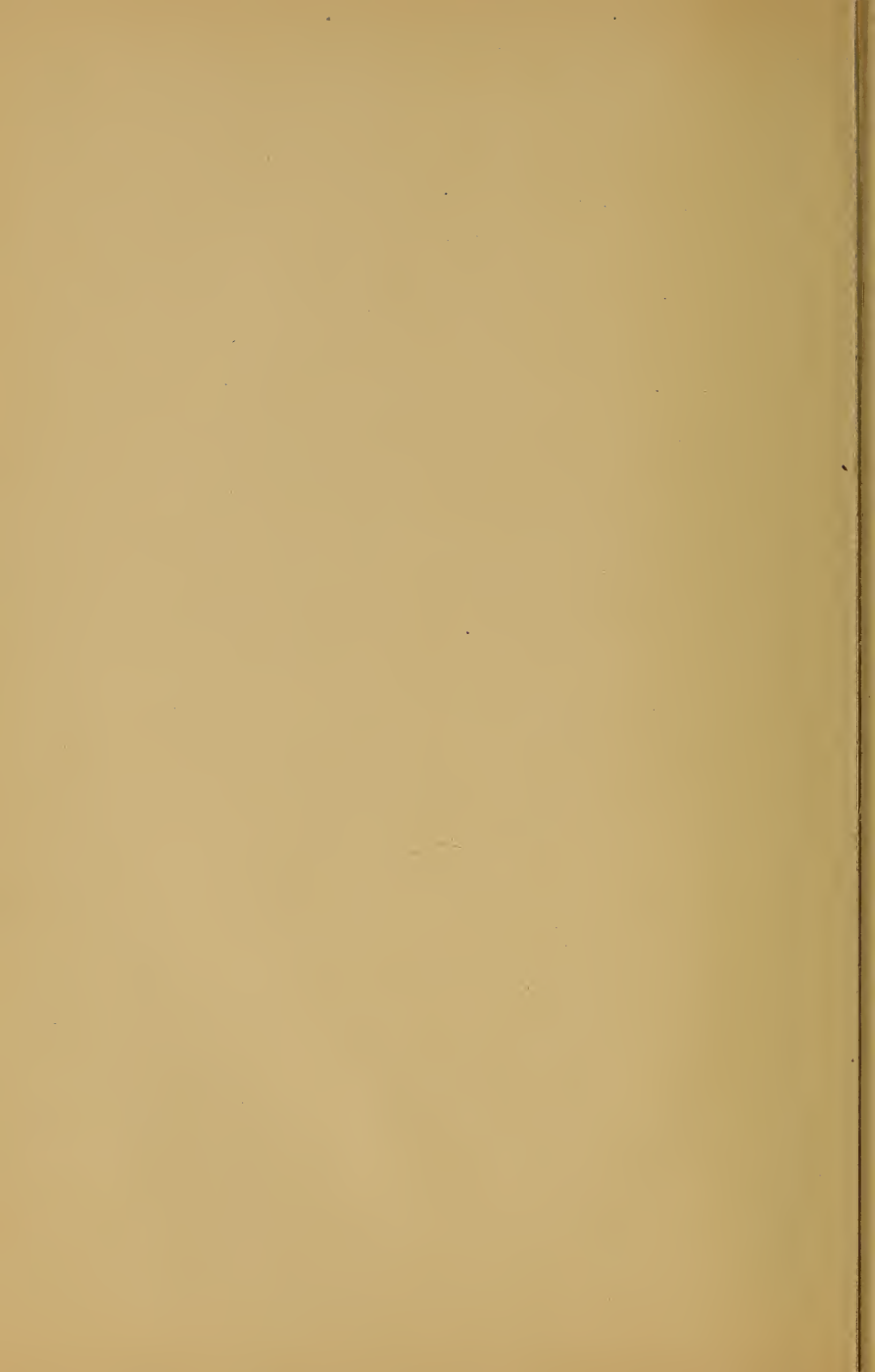
And lulls the dreaming sighs of rapture
cluster,
On memory's jeweled walls.

The glowing hope to-morrow may be
blighted,
Youth has its festive fling,
While age roams pensive paths no more de-
lighted,
With magic scenes of spring.

Just a little while and time's task is ended,
Brief triumphs laid aside,
Each golden prize for which the hope con-
tended,
The future fates divide.

Those rosy paths of wealth that seem so
splendid,
Are not all what they seem,
All trails but lead to grief, by mortals
wended,
Joy is a fleeting dream.

THE END



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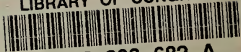
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