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A HANDFUL OF PEBBLES

BY ABBY HUTCHINSON PATTON

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# A HANDFUL OF PEBBLES

BY

ABBY HUTCHINSON PATTON

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*Gerit — Crucem — Fortiter*



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Dedicated

TO

JESSE AND MARY LEAVITT HUTCHINSON

BY

THEIR LOVING DAUGHTER.



*As we near the mystic river,  
And our hands hold nothing more,  
Save some small and well-worn pebbles,  
We have found along the shore  
Then we say to one beside us,  
" Take this little gift from me :  
May it be a sweet remembrance,  
Till I come again to thee."  
Thus, dear friends, I give, unbroken,  
These few words from heart and brain :  
May they be to you the token  
Of sweet hope to meet again.*



HE is our friend who helps us to one new thought,  
or who inspires us to one noble action.

The best men are those who bear a large share of  
their mother's nature, and the best women those who  
combine traits, both masculine and feminine.

Passion without affection is a pool filled with mi-  
asma and death; but when the springs of a true love  
run through it, it becomes clear and translucent, and  
is a sweet and living water.

The world is more sick than wicked.

I awake in the morning, and find a snow-mantle  
thrown over all the dark and gloomy ways of the city.  
It is like God's care for his children, covering their  
faults, but making their virtues white and radiant in  
the sunlight of his love.

It is necessary for a large soul to love largely ; but wisdom can enter into all love, making it a blessing instead of a curse.

Some natures are too lavish, and empty their store-houses so freely as to leave bare husks for themselves : when one gives thus largely, one must eat the bread of heaven, or perish.

When we give our very best wheat to our friends, we are not satisfied to take chaff in return.

To have found one friend is vastly more than to have discovered a thousand new planets.

We sail out to a distant port, leaving behind our loved ones ; God and our own souls go with us ; how important that we find companionship in these.

Some natures, like mignonette, give out delicious fragrance when left to their own sweet wills, but one touch of a selfish hand crushes out the sweetness, and leaves behind but a soulless weed.

Thought, fully formed, pecks through its shell, and becomes a bright winged creature, flying with glad tidings to the uttermost parts of the earth.

TWO REQUESTS GRANTED.

A white-haired pilgrim by the sea  
Spake thus in tones most tenderly :  
“Wouldst thou from pain and death be free?  
Then cross with me.”

And by my side, as fair as day,  
A little child who led my way  
Cried, “Leave not this sweet land, I pray ;  
Dear papa, stay.”

Then to the pilgrim, with a smile,  
I cried, “’Tis but a little while ;  
When these small feet have stronger grown,  
And this sweet child can walk alone,  
Then, pilgrim, come again for me,  
I ’ll cross with thee.”

Why should we envy the skylark whose wings take him far from human sight; do not we, on wings of thought, soar higher than the lark can ever go?

No friendship is real which cannot sacrifice something for the good of its friend.

Human eyes are windows of the soul through which imprisoned angels look, longing for freedom.

We should keep the paths of our hearts free from weeds, would we perfect therein bright flowers and pleasant fruits.

The great want of this age is reverence.

Woman without woman's love lives but half a life ;  
man without the confidence of man is not a fit companion for woman.

The soul, as well as the body, must have its growing pains.

The physician may have the body to dissect as far as he and science demand, but God alone is to be trusted with the scalpel for the soul.

However low or debased a man may seem, he never gets quite away from God; on looking closely one is sure to find the divine spark where at first one sees ashes only.

Snow, like charity, covers all imperfections.

An earnest Christian said to me, If you take away the divinity of Christ, what will be left for us? I replied, I would not take away Christ's divinity, I would rather believe there is divinity in all men.

Another Christian said, If you only had faith in Christ, you would be happy. I replied, My faith in the truth everywhere is so great I cannot long be unhappy.

THE COZY CORNER.

In a cozy corner,  
Safe and snug and warm,  
Lies a little birdling,  
Sheltered from the storm.

Little shining forehead,  
White and pure and fair,  
Little wavy tresses  
Of bright silken hair.

Little pearly eyelids,  
Shading eyes of blue,  
Little smiles and dimples,  
Little mouth so true.

Little rosy fingers  
Reaching for the light,  
Catching at each shadow  
Passing out of sight.

And a mother singing  
Soft and low and sweet,  
Father, keep my darling,  
Guide his little feet.

Many steps and weary  
In his path may be ;  
• Lead him gently, Father,  
To his home and Thee.

In a cozy corner,  
Safe and snug and warm,  
Lies a little birdling,  
Sheltered from the storm.

And this cozy corner  
Is a mother's heart,  
Warm and pure and holy,  
Of God's love a part.

One can live quite alone in the midst of a multitude of people.

We may thank God for all things, for suffering as well as for joy ; for how can we truly know the sorrow of others, except we ourselves first taste the bitter waters ?

I would like a new form of ethics, which would permit us to criticise our friend in his presence, and to speak no ill of him in his absence.

The souls of some people are shut up in cells with just a ray of light looking out of them ; others are all soul, and radiate warmth and sunshine wherever they go.

A soul without passion is like unripe fruit, not until the sunshine of a real love touches it does it develop sweetness and perfection.

There comes a time when one sweet child face is more to us than all the world beside.

DAISIES AND CLOVER.

Oh, welcome me home, my dear daisies and clover,  
Give greeting to me;  
Lift up your sweet heads, and welcome your lover  
From over the sea.

I love your dear faces, my daisies, my clover;  
My long sorrows flee,  
As near you in mist of the morning I hover,  
Just home from the sea.

My pure, honest daisies, my honey-bee clover,  
No welcome can be  
More sweet or more warm to a world-weary rover  
Than that you give me.

When I am sleeping, dear daisies and clover,  
    Will you bend over me,  
And say you are glad the long journey is over,  
    The voyager free ?

My own starry daisies, my pink and white clover,  
    Oh, will you not know  
The long-wearied heart which your fresh blossoms  
    cover  
    Is resting below ?

Then welcome me, daisies and dew-dripping clover,  
    As I bend low the knee ;  
I am sure you must know that your old-fashioned lover  
    Is home from the sea.

Many are the poets whose poems are written only  
in the heart.

The rich man gives gold and silver, the poor man  
gives himself.

Without friendship we are unhappy, with it we are  
still unsatisfied, reaching ever for an ideal which we  
can only find in heaven.

A sweet sinner is far more attractive than a sour  
saint.

When speaking with my friend  
We disagree,  
When silent, our thoughts flow  
In harmony.

Were it not for the impatient people, the world would soon stand still.

The body is circumscribed in many ways, but the spirit is free, and reaches ever upward toward the light of eternal day.

All the great work and good deeds accomplished on earth are instigated by ambition or love.

The scientists, philosophers, and inventors are the wise rulers and reformers of this age.

I have heard men say that women know nothing of love, but there are depths and depths in a great woman's heart which few men have ever yet sounded.

When a man's brain is wide as the sea, and his heart as deep, then may a woman launch her richest freighted ships, knowing that they will be borne steadily on, and at last find safe anchorage.

The man of sentiment who is not sentimental is the noblest Roman of them all.

ONE NAME.

Upon the silver shining sand,  
A maiden wrote, with loving hand,  
    One name — no more.  
The waves crept up with steady aim,  
And washed away the little name,  
    Far from the shore.

Then with a pen of finer art,  
She wrote again, deep in her heart,  
    One name — no more.  
But fear and doubt and wounded pride  
Soon drowned within the crimson tide  
    The word she bore.

“Yet,” said the maid, “through grief and pain,  
Still will I write on living brain  
    One name — no more.”  
But want and care and added years  
Buried in depths of bitter tears  
    The sign she wore.

Then cried the maid in wild despair,  
“Is there no safe place anywhere,  
    By sea or shore,  
In brain or heart?” The answer came,  
God keepeth safe thy true love’s name  
    Forevermore.

We can never be sure that we are spirits, until we can go to the bottom of the sea and not drown, or until we can float from a mountain top without being destroyed.

There are days when our feet take wing and skim along the earth as do the swallows.

No man can do well the cold work of the world who starts not warm from the fire of a true woman's heart.

We should cherish the mothers of the land, making them the great high priestesses and saints.

It is said that God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb; it would be more true to say that God teaches the shorn lamb, as best he may, to temper himself to the wind.

Sooner or later, I believe that we suffer all that we have ever caused others to suffer.

In the presence of sweet liars, it is refreshing as a breath of ocean air to hear a well-timed epithet from the lips of an honest man.

Love is Heaven, jealousy Hell; both can exist in one mind.

The smallest words often give us the deepest sorrow.

In supreme moments we believe there is no death.

We trouble ourselves greatly because we cannot see into a distant future; but what know we of the future of the next hour, or even of the next moment? A greater power is guiding us, as we guide ships at sea.

The greatest proof I have of immortality is this constant longing of the mind for something better. I do not believe physical elements have aspirations akin to this.

One arrow-tipped word from a venomous tongue will poison the sweetness of a whole day.

The greatest skeptics often become the greatest believers.

When we are happy, all the people we meet look beautiful to us ; but when an eclipse is over us, we see faces as through a glass darkly.

We sometimes live a thousand lives in one day ; again we die a thousand deaths.

We all hate shams in general, but in reality we all have our pet shams.

I.

Come thou sweet Psyche, haunt my spirit ever,  
Threads of thy hair are sunbeams to my heart ;  
Weave them, and wind them round my soul forever,  
From thy sweet presence I no more would part.

II.

Be thou the sunshine to my heart of sorrow,  
Thine be the noontide, mine the evening hour ;  
Thus mingled in one stream, the glad to-morrow  
Of light and shade brings forth the perfect flower.

On leaving friends, we have a sense of deep loneliness, but we would be more lonely had we no friends to leave.

Some days I would give all I possess for a run on the mountains. When the city walls me in, then I build mountains of fancy, and dwell on them.

We love sunshine, but the wildest storms are more akin to some moods of the mind.

In this age of high living, we need more days of fasting and prayer.

When men count their riches as greater than human hearts, they are growing poorer every day.

God bless the poets and singers, yea, and all those who cannot sing, but whose work, be it ever so humble, is full of music to the ear of God.

With extreme radicals I have always felt myself conservative, with extreme conservatives, a thorough radical.

In Florida one dreams all the day long, and day after day the dream lasts until one asks himself when he shall waken to a sharp reality.

To-day we found the yellow jasmine. It is subtle, and rich in odor, and makes one dreamy as a lotos-eater.

Some memories have the fragrance of flowers, but no language ever yet described the fragrance of flowers.

How many can say that they have in one day accomplished all the work they have planned to do?

A HANDFUL OF FLOWERS.

PANSY (PENSÉE).

A penny for your thought, I cried  
To a sweet maiden yesterday ;  
*Je pense, je pense à vous*, she sighed,  
Then quick as thought she ran away.

MARGUERITE.

He loves me, he loves me not,  
Slowly the daisy petals fell ;  
And while she lingered, lost in thought,  
A rich voice echoed from the dell,  
Sweet Marguerite, he loves you well.

FORGET-ME-NOT.

I wandered late one summer day  
Beside a purling meadow brook ;  
Blue eyes were leading me away,  
Blue flowers from fairy hands I took.  
And this the rhythm, this the tune  
I heard that balmy day in June,  
Will you forget me, — oh, forget me not.

Forget you, never, though I go  
To lands far distant as Cathay ;  
The eyes, the flowers, the sunset glow,  
Will ever in my memory stay.  
And still I hear the self-same tune  
I heard that blessed day in June,  
Will you forget me, — oh, forget me not.

NEW YORK, *May 7, 1888.*

Never yet have I come in possession of facts worth knowing, that I have not wished to impart the same to others.

We are students, or teachers, all through life.

Music is a universal language, and it needs no interpreter to make it understood by all nations.

One hour of deep belief is worth a lifetime of skepticism, yet one must nearly always be a skeptic before one becomes a full believer.

Why are weak men always called effeminate, and strong women masculine? Cannot a woman have strength of character, and yet be womanly, and a man be gentle, and yet thoroughly manly?

In a long lifetime I have seen but few men who are thoroughly just to women.

He who created man and woman made them to be forever enigmas to each other. The wisest philosophers of all ages have found this problem too deep for solution.

A friend says to me that we have in Jesus a revealed religion. I reply that from the beginning the Creator has in many ways revealed himself to man, and that his revelations do not begin or end in the person of one human being.

Were Jesus to visit the earth now He might be surprised to find how many strange creeds and dogmas have been promulgated in his name.

The simple religion of the Sermon on the Mount is broad enough to embrace all nations.

A few through suffering grow unselfish, but often the bitterness of life will make sweet natures hard and bitter also.

Jesus was not the only one who carried the cross.

Man's life on earth is so short that he needs not war to hasten his own or his neighbor's destruction.

In this age of enlightenment nations should go to war no more.

I believe in life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all, and in the greatest good for the greatest number.

The only way we can forgive some people is to think that God is willing to forgive us.

As the pebble on the sea,  
So, my love, my love to thee;  
Rings its circles far and free,  
Widening through Eternity.

Some natures, like autumn foliage, grow deeper toned as they ripen, and bear with them a glory which even the freshness of youth cannot take away.

In the town we are crowded like trees in the forest ; we need open fields would we spread our branches and grow symmetrical in every direction.

One who is fully occupied in doing good has no time in which to do evil.

Temperance in all things is religion.

Some people *talk* of the great deeds they are going to do, others *do* them.

He who has large ideals must suffer more than he whose life runs ever on in the even tenor of commonplace.

Flattery is more agreeable to most ears than truth; and the strongest man is hardly proof against sweet-sounding words."

Those are so-called happy families where the man is tyrant, and his meek little wife stands by like a sheep not daring to say Baa.

It is difficult for many positive people to dwell together except they are positively broad minded.

When a woman is encouraged to fill her mind with the jewels of thought, she will need less personal adornment to make herself attractive.

In a half century I have seen many more heroic women than men.

I have also seen quite as many practical Christians out of churches as in them.

The mind can always plan more than the body can perform.

It is more easy to sympathize with the sorrows of others than it is to be brave and patient with the sorrows of our own hearts.

One great friendship is parent to a thousand smaller friendships.

It is better to improve our own time than to trouble ourselves about how our neighbors spend theirs.

The best religion is that which makes the best society.

TO MARY.

Into a calm, fresh, woody place,  
I roamed to-day,  
Far, far away;  
And near me, in its own sweet grace,  
I saw your face.

A daisy by the roadside grew,  
Free, but not bold,  
With heart all gold,  
And there, dear child, I thought of you  
Whose heart is true.

Sweet summer stirred in every breeze;  
And leafy June  
Was full atune  
To song of birds and hum of bees  
And waving trees.

I heard the river flowing by,  
Songful and free,  
Down to the sea;  
It sang of life and love, and joy  
And purity.

When weary with the haunts of men,  
The noise and strife,  
You seek new life,  
Come, find within this leafy glen,  
Sweet rest again.

Men fear men more than they do God, and they dread opinions of the daily press more than they do all the wrath in the sacred writings.

Man disguises himself before man, but he is not afraid to show his real nature to his God.

It is not for us to judge our brothers ; we judge from our own imperfect knowledge ; the Creator alone is judge of his own handiwork, whether it be good or evil.

I have always been a hero worshiper, and have never been able to make mammon stand for man.

We accomplish but little in life by trying to do too many things. It takes one lifetime to learn how to live.

When a man says he wishes his wife had tact, we may be sure that he does not wish her to have a mind of her own, but always to agree with him.

Tact oftentimes means deception.

We forgive most those whom we most love.

## THE OLD, OLD STORY.

Two children wandering hand in hand by the sea, singing songs of praise. The wind blowing fresh in their faces, and the beautiful green waves dancing in the light of the morning sun. No sound came from the rude world, not even the song-bird's note was heard—only the voices of the noble youth and the pure and truthful maiden. At their feet were white and lovely shells, which they gathered and tossed into the sea. Yet no shell was whiter than the souls of the youth and maiden, and no water purer than their words to each other. When the sweet song of praise ended, the youth said, "Little maiden, shall I tell you a very old, old story?" and the maiden, looking into his deep, honest eyes, replied, "Tell me the story." In a voice low and musical he repeated to her the old, old story. She bent low to catch the words, and at the sound her own voice died away and she heard his

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voice alone and her own beating heart ; but the little waves listened and caught the words intended for the maiden's ear, and they ran down to the large waves, and said, "We heard the old, old story," — and the large waves said, "Tell us, and we will take it to every shore." The winds also, that played in the hair of the maiden, heard and said, "We too will carry this story on the wings of air to all the world." And the sunbeams said, "We will travel faster than wind and waves, and flash this truth into the hearts of all mankind." And the waves and winds and sunbeams danced in glee, as if new life had possessed them. But above all, the hearts of the youth and maiden sang a song so full of praise and joy that the spirits of the air caught it, and more swiftly than wind, or waves, or light, they flew with it to the angels and cried, "We have brought you an old, old, story;" and the angels, smiling, said, "*We already know it. It is old, yet new forevermore.*"

In all our wanderings through foreign lands. we have found a sweet song to be the open sesame to all hearts.

It seems a strange paradox, that when the heart is set in motion, it beats one more and one less beat until life closes.

The education of woman has been too much in the home, that of man too much away from home ; a fair exchange of occupations may make a better society.

How can a man truly love his neighbor except he first loves and respects himself.

Whittier and Lowell, Emerson and Bryant, have taught men a better love of nature, and a greater faith in God.

How much better to take up the burden of life cheerfully than to go mourning along the road; when we learn to bear our cross bravely, it seems transformed into a crown of light.

There appears to be a touch of insanity about most intensely earnest people; he who sees more wrongs than he can possibly right must ever seem to be more or less fanatic.

One half the trouble in life comes through misrepresentation or misunderstanding.

Socrates may have been a great philosopher, but he was a very poor provider for a family.

Xantippe has been a very much abused woman because she made objection to Socrates for talking and dreaming all day in the streets of Athens, while his children needed bread at home.

It is a difficult matter to feed the souls of men while their bodies are starving.

One should have a fund of truth and accurate knowledge to draw upon, when one becomes a teacher of little children.

Truth will stand when all things fail ; and could we be taught it in childhood we would not have to unlearn at sixty what we learned at six.

A little song, a little story,  
A little fame, a little glory;  
And man moves forward in the race,  
To let another fill his place.

Agassiz once said that he could not spare the time to make money; yet the scientific truths he has left to the world have made it richer than if he had left to us gold and silver.

A man who has but few wants cannot understand the man who would grasp and hold the universe.

When we can accept the good of all religions and discard the superstition, we may found a church broad enough to embrace the whole world.

We *know* that after winter comes spring, and after night comes morning, after sleep comes awakening, and we *hope* that after death will come eternal life.

George Eliot and George Sand, two of the greatest and noblest among women, have been maligned and persecuted for having dared to be true to themselves.

Some persons need to have laws made for them, others are laws unto themselves.

We live a dual life, one the practical, and one of imagination and fancy.

To most poetic persons the real is unreal and the ideal the real.

A blesséd trinity :  
Father, Mother, Child.

Charlotte Cushman in her last visits to the theatre said that fine clothes were taking the place of good acting; in the rags of Meg Merrilies, Charlotte Cushman was greater than are many who walk the stage in velvet and diamonds.

To give a child a strong body and a well-trained mind is better than to make him heir to millions.

One who has lived half a century can count more friends who have crossed to the other side of the silent river than he can find around him here.

We never know how dear our friends are to us, until we see them departing on the long journey from which no traveler has ever yet returned.

In sleep we dream of the *Past*: we are again in the home of our childhood, where we join our voices in song with father, mother, sisters, and brothers.

On waking we dream of the *Future*, when we hope to sing again with those who have gone to join the "choir invisible."

It is better to be away from your friend and care for him, than to be near him and wish yourself away.

It is not always the happiest man who commands our highest respect; a great melancholy nature calls forth corresponding depths of tenderness from his fellow-men.

One who drinks at the fountain of eternal life can never die.

LOOKING TOWARD SUNSET.

Oh, when the long day's work is done,  
And we clasp hand at set of sun,  
Loved friends we meet,  
In concourse sweet,  
At even.

So, when for us has passed away,  
The last bright hour of earthly day,  
Then may we meet  
In converse sweet,  
In Heaven.













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