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FROM THE PRAIRIE

EDITH PALMER PUTNAM



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Edith Palmer Putnam

FROM THE PRAIRIE.

A COLLECTION OF VERSE

BY

EDITH PALMER PUTNAM.

33
" *Putnam, Mrs. Edith F. A. U. (Palmer)*

“The book is completed,
And closed like the day;
And the hand that has written it
Lays it away.

“Dim grow its fancies,
Forgotten they lie;
Like coals in the ashes,
They darken and die,”
—Longfellow.

BIGELOW, MINN.
E. F. CLOWER,
PUBLISHER.

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TO MY HUSBAND.

PARALLEL ENT
CORRESPOND TO

new Aug. 28 '13.

INTRODUCTION.

There is nothing poetic in the scenery and surroundings of Rushmore, a small rural town in Minnesota, unless it is in the far-extending prairie lands, laughing in fruitfulness and beauty. Yet there resides in this quiet town one whose poetic writings should have a wider circulation than they have hitherto attained. Mrs. A. A. Putnam was born in Vernon, Mich., Nov. 22 1878, where she was known as Edith Marie Palmer. When very young she moved with her parents to Corunna, Mich., where she resided for some years. There she graduated from the High School in June 1896; and in December 1897 she was married to Mr. A. A. Putnam, now of Rushmore, Minn.

Mrs. Putnam began to write poetry when she was twelve years of age, and then gave promise of a bright future. When still a school girl she made her first appearance in the public prints in "The Old Oaken Ruler," which is, as the reader will observe, a parody on "The Old Oaken Bucket." This poem was published in the Corunna INDEPENDENT. It excited great interest among the readers of that paper and called the attention of the public to the school girl poetess. The work then begun has been continued, more than a hundred of her poems have appeared in different periodicals. The youthful writer soon became well known and very popular, especially in religious circles, and as she has ever been ready to respond to appeals for help, she has very frequently been asked to read "An original poem," at

INTRODUCTION.

golden weddings, on Memorial Day, Fourth of July and at many public celebrations. When only fourteen years of age she wrote for the pages of the WAR CRY, of New York, the gem, "Hope," and without her knowledge or permission this little poem was given the place of honor in the TEMPLE BUILDERS, a paper used on Children's Day of this year in some of the churches. In the years of 1896-7 she wrote a serial poem under the caption of "A Modern Magdalen" which appeared in the columns of "THE VOLUNTEER GAZETTE," of New York. This poem is really a work of art. It is too long to find a place in this volume.

Dryden says that "A poet is a maker, as the word signifies; and he who cannot make, that is invent, hath the name for nothing." The reader of this volume will see that its author has more than the name,—that she is truly a maker and possesses in large measure the poetic genius,—one who, as she herself declares, "writes because she cannot help it,"—one in whose heart dwells some effluence of wisdom some tone of the "eternal melodies."

RUSHMORE, MINN.

NOVEMBER, 1901.

REV. A. F. THOMSON,

PRESBYTERIAN PASTOR.

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POEMS.

"An original poem"—'twas this they requested,
 "But what," pondered I, "might that article be?"
 So I strained to the utmost each power in me vested,
 But not an available theme came to me!
 "Ah me!" then I sighed; "has the Muse me forsaken?
 Has she gone from me now to return not again?
 If she from my soul hath her ministry taken,
 Can I ever again sense a pleasure or pain?"
 I touched upon every conceivable notion,
 But nothing of suitable interest could find,
 Till my brain grew so weary of troubled commotion
 I slept, and this thought came to quiet my mind.

Each heart and each life in itself is a poem,
 Though seldom we think of the words as we write,
 But the angels above as we form them can know them,
 And some day their meaning will dawn on our sight.
 There are some full of pathos, and some songs of gladness
 While some are unspeakably tender and sweet;
 There are some where each measure beats nothing but sadness,
 That are laid, penned in tears, at a kind Saviour's feet.

There are some cut so short we must guess at their meaning,
 The rhythm so broken we can't comprehend;
 While others so long that for hidden thought gleaning,
 The first is forgot ere we get to the end.
 We find some devoid of our interest forever,
 So dull they appear, and to us common place;
 But some one may read what our eyes discern never
 And find in the rudeness much beauty and grace.

Some of them are deep, oh, so deep in their beauty!
 We cannot glean half of the truths that they hold;
 Some of them are stern, full of action and duty,
 In grand, stately blank verse their story is told.
 While some trip along in the gayest of meter,
 So frivolous, light, there seems nothing below;
 We scan them in haste while we wish they were sweeter,
 Perhaps they've a beauty that we cannot know.

Alas! there are some we find sadly immoral,
 We search them in vain for one word that is pure;
 There seems not one thought to be worthy of laurel,—
 Let us hope that their vileness may yet find a cure.
 Every breath that we draw we a line more are writing,
 And words that no power of the earth can erase;
 In blood, every line we are firmly inditing,
 And many the blots that the pages deface.

How many an error we make in the meter!
 How often the words that we use fail to rhyme!
 But oh, it will all be immeasurably sweeter
 When the angels shall set it to music and time.
 It is then we shall read them in all their completeness,
 It is then we shall know what we now cannot guess,
 We will find in the scorned one the unlooked-for sweetness
 And wonder our blindness on earth to confess.

When the great Publisher shall search out every feature
 He'll weigh every syllable justly and well;
 He'll mete out the payment to each human creature,
 And each worthy thought in the balance will tell.
 What judgment will He pass on mine, oft I wonder,
 I know He will not carelessly pass it by,
 But will patiently bear with each failure and blunder,
 (I'll trust it to Him without even a sigh!)

I know He has passed through the struggle before me,
 He knows just how hard every line is to form;
 Let the harshness of critics pass ruthlessly o'er me,
 For greater the triumph when great is the storm!

God grant it be such He may write on its pages,
 'Way down at the bottom in ink red with blood,
 "Accepted!"—atoned for in long-buried ages,
 Corrected by Christ with His soul-cleansing flood.

Oh, Heaven help the one who so sorely has blotted
 His lines, that God's love no atonement can find,
 But must pen, at the close of the sheet, soiled and spotted,
 That word that no eye could read calmly, "Declined!"
 O friends, let us write every stanza through praying,
 And make divine love and its sweetness their trend,
 That when we present them, He without delaying
 May write us His check that avails to the end.

MY HOME.

Lovingly dedicated to the dear ones at home.

Ah yes! it was only a dream of the past,
 Only a vision too sweet to last,
 Only the scenes I would oft recall—
 The sweet old pictures from memory's wall!
 How plainly I saw the little place
 Where I was reared, and each old-time face
 Arose before me distinct and clear,
 Defying the flight of each faded year!

Each street in the town passed before my view,
 And the cot on the corner my school days knew,
 Seemed to rise again from the vanished past;
 And I sighed for the youth that had flown so fast!
 Dear faces of friends did my dream recall,—
 The kindly old pastor, school-teachers, and all
 Whom so oft I met, passing up and down;
 For once more I lived in the dear old town.

I was in the old home so cosy and neat,
 That stood on the corner of that old street,
 And I lived again every happy day
 That all too speedily sped away.
 I was almost a child, for I wondering stood
 Between my girlhood and womanhood,
 Peering out into the great unknown,
 Longing, yet fearing, to start alone.

My mother's sweet face was as clear to my gaze
 As ever it shone in the old happy days,
 And her gentle blue eye beamed as kindly as then;
 Oh! what would I not give to see her again!
 And Father—how dear was this vision to me!
 It showed me a form that I never more see,
 And it brought me a glance from the twinkling black eye,
 That so oft gleamed with mischief in times long gone by.

Every time-hallowed scene that I loved to behold
 Returned to me, and I could see as of old
 My mother go oft to that sacred old drawer
 Where was lain every garment the little one wore
 Who dwelt here below only three days in all,
 And then went to answer the Good Shepherd's call,
 Who only had lent him that we might behold
 How lovely the lambs that are found in His fold!

Dear Baby! we mourned for him deeply and well,
 But the Father knew best when He took him to dwell
 Where no evil can come and no sin can allure,
 But where he will e'er be kept guiltless and pure.
 Another old scene brought a thrill to my breast:
 For Mother again in the pleasant home-nest
 Was sitting with me in the fast-fading light,
 Awaiting dear Father's return for the night.

And when she discerned old "Kits's" fast-coming pace,
 What a smile would illumine that dear, patient face,
 As she flew with a welcome so sincere and bright
 Methinks that the angels must smile at the sight!

Then I saw all at home at the close of the day,
Perhaps some friend in, and the work all away,
While the evening soon passed with the converse so meet,
And the singing of songs, old, but so quaintly sweet.

I saw others come on whom coldly they smiled;
—There were none over-welcome who came for their child:
There was only the one who was spared them, you know,
And they shrank from the time when she also might go,
There were brave lads and true I had known in those days
But it seemed there was none who could win all their praise.
I can see it all now, as in fancy I rove:
I had thought it reproof, but I learned it was love.

I saw how the neighbors dropped in for a chat
On the fortune of this one, the failure of that;
And there rose to my mind as they looked long ago
Every one of the faces that home used to know.
I saw dear old Grandma, with hair tinged with grey,
Who oft came to visit us out for a day,
And brighten our lives with her kind words of cheer,
Her noble advice, and her comforting tear.

And I saw just another old face in my dream—
'Twas the face of an aunt who upon me did beam,
Who sometimes made visits of quite an extent,
And visits I hailed as a royal event.
Her dear, kind old face smiled as sweetly on me,
And her jokes seemed to fill me with such harmless glee
As followed her words in the dear days of yore
And I sobbed that her face I should see never more.

But the scene which around me the richest lig'it shed,
And lingered long after the bright dream had fled,
Was that where dear Father and Mother were bowed,
And offering their prayers to the throne of their God.
'Twas the dearest of pictures I knew in the past,
And I know in my memory it ever will last,
Like a strain of sweet music we heard long ago,
That thrills through our being and never will go.

Is it strange that the dream was as saddening as dear,
 When I know but too well it can ne'er re-appear!
 Is it strange that I wake but to tenderly yearn
 For the days that 'tis folly to hope might return!
 Ah, how oft I have longed when a burden I bore
 To creep to the shetlering arms, as of yore,
 Of that dear one—my comrade in all that was done
 Who proved herself mother and sister in one!

Ah why," says my heart, "was it only a dream?
 Or why was it sent but to give me a gleam
 Of the bright happy past that saw so little pain.
 But that while I live I can ne'er know again?"
 God grant that the memory shall never depart,
 But that it shall linger to brighten my heart;
 Until when from this earth my freed spirit flies,
 I may find that old home all renewed in the skies!

ON THE PRAIRIE.

I am looking o'er the prairie, spread before me like a sea—
 Just one broad, unbounded meadow, fettered not by fence or tree;
 And it brings a sense of freedom to the chambers of my soul,
 And the vision of God's greatness sweeps away my self-control.

Somehow, life seems something grander than it ever did before,
 Almost seems to know no limit, but to broaden more and more,
 Reaching higher heights and deeper depths than fancy could unfold
 Full of mysteries unfathomed, full of glories unextolled!

Oh! the prairie, like God's mercy, seems to realize no end;
 Miles and miles, as rods appearing, may before our gaze extend,
 Just as to the Father's vision may be spread a thousand years,
 That to His divine conception as a single day appears.

Oh! 'tis grand to feel the thrilling of the wind through every vein,
 As it sweeps with mighty force across the never-ending plain;
 Grand to watch the vegetation wave as far as eye can reach,
 And to ponder o'er the lessons that no other clime could teach!

At to-night a sense of loneliness through all my musings steals,
 And a longing for the home life that no voice of nature heals;
 As I'm looking in the distance, home seems far beyond my ken,
 And I feel myself an exile, wandering from the haunts of men.

Home! there's something in her borders, tho' so small and close they be,
 That somehow these broadening acres yet have failed to bring to me:
 Tho' the prairie may inspire me, yet it wakens in my breast,
 Yearnings for the unattainable, till my spirit knows no rest.

"Here one needs must be broad-minded," this to me in jest they say,
 And I smiled to them an answer, but my thoughts are far away;
 And I wonder, in the old home, where oft-times our only care
 Was the sorrow of our neighbor, were we "narrow-minded" there?

Narrow-minded? Well, perhaps so, for no evil thoughts we knew,
 And our neighbor's imperfections seemed to us to be but few;
 We had not the minds to gather vile suspicions from the air,
 For we bore each other's burdens, and were friends through foul or fair.

Oh! the world of God is wondrous, and His workings are sublime!
 HERE is lofty inspiration; THERE is peace and rest for time;
 And whate'er He have in keeping for our portion by-and-by,
 We can trust Him, for He knows us, and will all our need supply.

SINCE BABY CAME.

Before she came, sometimes my heart seemed weary:

My poor feet shrank from pebbles in the way;

Oft-times the sky seemed overcast and dreary;

The day was long—I sometimes failed to pray.

My lot was bright, but I ungratefully

Refused my glorious happiness to see;

Accepted life's best gifts as if my due,

Dissatisfied with all the joys I knew;

Thus life went on, but ah!—no more the same

Since baby came!

Before she came, I felt that I was doing
 The will entire of Christ, our Saviour King:
 I thought, there was no aim of my pursneing,
 That did not with His blessed sanction ring.
 But now my poor unworthiness I see:
 I wonder how such joy could come to me
 Who was so cold, so sinful, and so weak—
 So far from all the glory I would seek!
 Yes, yes! I now can see my fault and blame
 Since baby came!

Since baby came my heart is over-flowing
 With gratitude to God for all His care;
 I feel He blesses me beyond all knowing
 In giving to my trust this treasure rare:
 Her little fingers lead me to His throne.
 And as they gently twine about my own,
 I shudder at the trust reposed in me,
 And long more faith, more righteousness to see!
 With untold love my heart is all aflame,
 Since baby came!

Since baby came I often sit and wonder
 What may the future hold for her in wait;
 What joys may bless, what griefs may tear asunder
 The little heart that now fears not its fate?
 Oh! if I only could but stand between
 My darling, and the trials all unseen
 That some day are so sure to cross her way,
 How gladly I would bear them all for aye!
 Oh, how I long to shield that tiny frame
 Since baby came!

Since baby came, the tiniest of creatures,
 My life seems almost to be made anew
 I look into those little angel-features,
 My eyes o'er flowing with a happy dew:
 And pray "O God, help me to lead aright

These little feet so tender and so white!
 May I present her at the last great day
 Spotless and perfect as when first she lay
 Within my arms my mother-love to claim
 When baby came!"

Since baby came I ask no other treasure;
 No other gift from Heaven do I crave;
 The rapture in my heart now knows no measure;
 I have the richest blessing God e'er gave:
 The way no more seems cold or dark or drear;
 I see the sun when only clouds appear;
 I can appreciate my boundless bliss,
 And seek to know no brighter world than this;
 O no! this life can never be the same
 Since baby came!

FEBRUARY 1899.

A LULLABY.

Nestle snugly in my arms and close those drowsy eyes,
 For the birdies now are sleeping in the tree,
 And the posies, too, are drooping 'neath the dark'ning skies,
 While you lie and prattle stiff upon my knee.
 Weary nature calls for rest,
 Cuddle closer to my breast,
 Go to sleep and be renewed for morning joys;
 Off to Dreamland steal away,
 Back again at break of day,
 Wake again to laugh and play with tiny toys.
 Sleep then in peace, my baby dear;
 Mother is ever, ever near!
 Sleep, my little one, sleep!
 Sleep, my pretty one, sleep!
 The angels are near and their vigil will keep,
 Sleep, oh, sleep!

Creep up closer to my heart, my babe, and speak to me,
 Of a love that shaped itself a tiny queen;
 One who signals oft, assured her call obeyed will be,
 Little despot of our home, Eileen!

But suspend your sovereign sway,

Rest in peace until the day.

Even queens must lay at eve the scepter down;

Close those little eyes of blue;

'They are growing heavy, too!

Rest them now, my little queen without a crown.

Sleep then in state, my baby queen,

The day is done—sleep sweet, Eileen!

Hush-a-bye-baby-bye!

Rock-a-bye-baby-bye!

Bye-oh-by-baby-by-baby-oh-bye!

Bye-oh-bye!

Many hearts are crushed with sorrow, do not let it mar your rest;
 All the world may mourn, yet you sleep sweetly on!
 Though beside you some are hiding bleeding wounds within
 the breast.

Never mind, pet, what know you of sob or moan?

All too soon you'll learn it, dear.

Learn it with a bitter tear.

Learn that life is full of heartache and of care;

Oh, if it might only be

You no deeper griefs might see,

Mother's heart a double load would gladly bear!

But every heart must know its pain—

And every cheek its tear drop's stain.

So sleep, my happy one, sleep,

Sleep, my precious one, sleep!

God grant it be long ere the heart-shadows creep,

O'er your sleep!

Near and nearer fall the lids that guard those bonny eyes
 Veiling orbs of beauty fresh from Heaven's blue;
 Deep and deeper grows the warm sweet breath as still she lies,

Folded to my mother-heart so warm and true.
 Little eyes, so loath to close,
 Still would watch, nor seek repose.
 But they must give up when sleepy-time is here,
 Soon, all silent on my knee,
 Off in Dreamland wanders she,
 With the music of the fairies in her ear.
 Rest now in peace, my little one—
 Sleep till the rising of the sun,
 Sleep, my baby, on sleep!
 Sleep, my darling, oh sleep!
 The angels about you their watch-care will keep,
 Sleep, sweet, sleep!
 (1899.)

A GIFT.

Down through a wilderness of woe,
 Down through a gloom you cannot know,
 Through blackest darkness I must go,
 My soul and God alone;
 And there 'twixt Heaven and earthly land,
 In sight of the eternal strands,
 This soul was given in my hands
 To be my very own.

Back through the valley then I came,
 Back through the shadow, worn and lame,
 Bearing this life that knew no name
 To home, dear heart, and you;
 Yes, all the way from Heaven's gate,
 Where life and death together wait
 I brought her in this sinless state
 As pure as Heaven's dew.

VISIONS.

Ah, she is mine, sir! you might be
 A father all unknowingly;
 But I, earth's sharpest pangs must see
 A mother's crown to wear;
 Yet is she your -,—my heart can trace
 Your likeness in her little face,
 And gives her yet a warmer place
 Who doth your features bear.

Ah, she is OURS! how grand to know
 That from our love this life should grow,
 And that our lives together flow
 For ages yet removed;
 That when we twain are dead and gone,
 Our lives may yet live on and on;
 A nation yet may be begun
 Because we two have loved.

Yes, love, I bring you at its start,
 This dearest offering of my heart!—
 A life of our own lives a part
 Into our charge is given,
 That you and I together, dear,
 Though all unworthy of a share
 Shall find amid a life of care
 A little bit of Heaven.

(April 1901.)

VISIONS.

Once I was a creature of visions,
 And I dreamed of a future so great,
 And aimed at a fortune so brilliant
 That I felt myself stronger than Fate;
 'Twas a fairy-like life I had painted,
 So rosy with poetry's glow,
 And the secrets of all of Earth's splendor,
 Seemed to open to me as I'd go.

But the years came and went; and the glory
 Seemed just as far off as of old;
 Though just as enticing as ever
 'Twas a will-o'-the-wisp in my hold.
 The Muse would not dance to my music
 But played the bewitching coquette,
 And eluding my grasp stood and mocked me
 With the dreams that I could not forget.

But now, all those visions have faded,
 And, somehow, they leave no regret,
 For my life has been filled up with loving.
 And the dreams that are lingering yet
 Are hopes for the future of nestlings
 Whom God has consigned to my care,
 And my life work is mapped out before me—
 A work that my loved ones can share.

I sometimes recall the old visions,
 And I smile at the way they have passed
 And merged in the form of a housewife
 That future— too dream-like to last;
 'Tis a phantom that flutters before me
 As I'm busily moulding my bread,
 Or peeps at me out of the corners
 Through the dust that I sweep o'er my head.

Think not Earth has lost all her brightness;
 She hath glories I never had guessed,
 And daily new beauty discloses
 In the eyes of the ones I love best;
 There are melodies never yet fathomed
 From the heart of the Poet above,
 Whose touch is the sweetest perfection,
 Whose theme is the purest of love.

Yet, sometimes the old spell comes o'er me,
 And the old visions surge through my brain

And I grasp at my pencil to catch them
 Before they have vanished again;—
 But I find that committed to paper,
 The thoughts are not what I suppose
 And that I am by far more successful
 In "composing" my babies some clothes.

So I turn to the pathway of duty,
 But I find it so smooth to my feet,
 That I wonder if that which I longed for
 Could ever have been half so sweet;
 Then I look in the dear little faces
 So trustingly lifted to mine—
 And my heart answers—"No, God was wiser;
 No 'career' could be fairer than thine."

It is strange as I look at those ashes
 That lie all around me so low
 That I have not one sigh for the castles
 That I filled full of hopes long ago;
 But perhaps in some far-away spring-time
 When the labor of living is less,
 I may walk as of old through my Dreamland
 And pick up some crumbs of success.

THE STORY OF LIFE.

The twilight shadows deepened into night,
 In Fairyland—the fairy land of earth—
 The breeze of even, soft and warm and light
 Seemed in some fairy bower to have its birth,
 As stealing in, it fanned with kiss serene
 The lovely cheek of Life, the fairy queen.

So soft, so glorious, had existence been
 To Life, she scarce had dreamed of aught beside;
 She hardly knew of Care, of Grief, or Sin,
 For all her house was pure, and earth was wide;
 With Love, the king, and Friendship, next of clan,
 Her cup with happiness and joy o'erran.

The lovely queen two tiny servants kept
 Invisible to all save her alone:
 When Consciousness, the younger, sometimes slept,
 The queen slept, too, upon the fairy throne;
 And if he wandered from her, for that day
 The queen was lost, till he resumed his sway.

The elder, Realization, seldom slept;
 At times, the queen were happier if he would;
 And yet the day so full of sunshine kept
 That Life could only murmur, "It is good!"
 The fairyland of Earth was very fair
 For God's own glory ever lingered there.

** ** ** **

But now, as shadows darkened, and the night
 Seemed settling as a veil o'er Fairyland,
 The fairy Grief beside her did alight
 And wave before her face his magic wand;
 Her heart was touched—her happy face grew white
 And drawn; she shrank and shuddered as in fright.

She grew more faint, more wan; her head was dazed;
 For Grief, allied to Sin, had left his stain;
 At last, when heart and brain were nearly crazed,
 Her servant, Realization, left her train
 And fell asleep. Oh! what a blessed balm!
 For then poor Life grew inwardly more calm.

Love tried so hard to comfort her sad heart,
 And Friendship, too, had done the best he knew;
 And when they saw her storm of sobs depart,
 They felt they had succeeded, and that through
 Their deeds, the spell had from her spirit passed,
 And peace and happiness returned at last.

Alas! how could they know her heart was sore
 And ached as on the night when first Grief came;
 Two fairies she had never known before
 Were keeping it from bursting into flame:
 Two tiny ones, Resolve and Self-Control,
 Had wiped her tears, and calmed her voice and soul.

But even they could not have done so well,
 Had Realization not in pity slept;
 E'en now, Life suffered more than they could tell,
 And must, while Consciousness his vigil kept;
 Though Love and Friendship now could but rejoice
 To miss her tearful eyes, and trembling voice.

** ** ** **

Thus time passed on, and days—yes, years—had sped
 When Realization waked to life again;
 And then she suffered as in days long fled,
 And more than when Grief first had brought her pain;
 So long it had been since that fatal night
 That Love and Friendship had forgotten quite.

And why should they remember? Why, indeed?
 Resolve and Self-Control were weary, too;
 It grew so hard to minister to her need
 That oft times it were more than they could do.
 When Love and Friendship looked on her, they sighed;
 They could not guess her heartache if they tried!

Sometimes, poor Life would try to tell them all,
 But Pride forbade—that naughty fairy, Pride!—
 And so alone she suffered, none to call

And so the pain was heavier than before
When Love and Friendship had a portion bore.

And once she spake, and sought to let them know,
But every word she said was misconstrued;—
They were so busy—yet they loved her so!—
Her heart was crushed:—and no one understood!
Poor Life! She felt herself condemned each day
To henceforth walk a solitary way!

At last, Resolve and Self-Control no more
Could serve to drive the tremor from her voice;
Then Resignation volunteered to pour
Her comfort, and Life soon learned to rejoice.
She rested then—poor Life so long had sighed
For just such rest! but it had been denied!

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Once more they all rejoiced in Fairyland!
But soon the darkest of all fairies came
To Life, and waved before her face his wand,
As Grief had done, and gently called her name.
She followed him unto a crystal stream,
As fair and lovely as a poet's dream.

Across its way is, he gently rowed the queen—
A river which no one could cross alone;
They glided to a land of richest sheen;
'Twas Heaven—the brightest fairy-land e'er known.
She had left Love and Friendship on the shore,
Who watched their loved one till they could no more.

Their straining eyes could see so little ways;
And when they caught the last glimpse of her form,
Grief came to them, as in the golden days
He came to Life; and now the racking storm
Of anguish taught them as no words could do
How Life had suffered when they little knew

How can we, in our joy at well-earned peace
 Forget the grief that comes, when cannons cease
 To those who are to bitter loss allied
 Upon the other side!

And so, in other of the walks of life;
 We struggle onward towards a happy goal;
 We pass competitors within the strife,
 And joy to think our triumph will be whole;
 We hardly give a thought to those we pass,—
 Whose grief at losing may our joy surpass!
 O, let us pause one moment in our pride
 To view the other side!

THE POETS' LICENSE.

What is the license of poets, you say?
 Free use—and abuse—of the language? Nay!
 Though so to you it may seem to be,
 Not such is the license that God gives me.

To hold communion with wraiths of air;
 To see a picture when none is there;
 To find a grace in the poorest clod;
 To trace in the meanest the hand of God.

To hear the whispers from lips unseen;
 To catch the song of the babbling stream;
 To read the sermon in every stone;
 To see in the rose not a rose alone.

To give a meaning to mystic signs;
 To read between all of Nature's lines;
 To find a strength where all seems weak;
 To listen in silence and let God speak,

To rescue from filth some priceless gem
 All trodden beneath the feet of men;
 To place it where all mankind can see
 Where the Maker intended that it should be.

To note how the "chances" that come to man,
 Are only a part of God's great plan;
 How all men are brothers who earth have trod:
 And bow to the fatherhood of God.

To open the heart to receive all truth
 To see in the aged the spring of youth;
 To interpret the writing of God's own hand;
 To find His message, and understand.

To fearless soar to the loftiest height,
 And bring down treasure from fancy's flight;
 To delve to the depths of the darkest dream;
 And bring up the lowest to form a theme.

To reject the false, and accept the true;
 To see—what is shown to all too few—
 The halo that hath God's own adorned,
 For all is sacred that He hath formed.

To have a heart whose sympathies,
 Are moved to tears, by all that lives;
 Its strings drawn tight thrill at each touch,
 Yes oft are dumb, they feel so much.

This be the license that poets gain,
 That places their feet on a higher plain
 And helps them perceive 'neath the self-same sky,
 A glory that hides from the common eye.

In the poet's soul doth a voice abide
 That quick responds to a call outside;
 And earth itself by his magic hand
 Is oft transformed to a fairy land.

There's a richness in all growth below,
 That Nature meant her sons should know;
 And the breeze bears music that all may hear
 For ALL are poets when God is near.

TO MY FIRST LOVE.

A Valentine

Sweet, sad eyes of dearest blue,
 Hair of golden brown;
 Form the proudest Earth e'er knew
 Might be glad to own.
 Thus of old she looked to me.
 Thus she lives in memory.

Not for that I loved her so—
 Not that she was fair;
 More because of pain, you know,
 She and I must share;
 More because her heart was true
 And its matchless worth I knew.

Always busy—fitting 'round
 At a task undone;
 Always at some kindness found
 For a burdened one—
 'Twas for this I loved her so
 With a love that could not go.

Some might choose a younger face,
 Though not half so fair;
 Some might seek a grander place
 All their love to bear;
 But I know where mine is sent,
 And I'm more than well content.

Friends have come and gone again,
 Love has proved untrue;
 But her love will yet remain
 While the heavens do.
 And no other's love could be
 Half so dear as hers to me.

Yes, I know the years have flown,
 But my heart is true,
 And I'm sending it, dear one,
 Every bit to you.
 Little mother, far away,
 Be my valentine to day,

BY THE SHIAWASSEE.

I am sitting alone in my room to-night,
 With the coal fire bright, and the lamp turned low;
 And I'm wandering back through flickering light
 To the past that shines with a golden glow.
 Some scenes arise that are brilliant yet,
 While some I see through a mist of tears;
 There are others 'twere better by far to forget,
 That happened there, in the far-off years
 On the banks of the Shiawassee.

I remember a day—and what a day—
 We wandered by the streamlet's tide:
 There were four of us who had stolen away
 For a ramble down by the river side;
 There were whispered words, there were low replies,
 But the faithful river never told,
 And the magic spell of those tender eyes
 I learned to forget in the days of old
 As I stood by the Shiawassee!

Once I stood on the bridge with a sweet girl friend,
 And watched the water go rippling by,
 While we pledged a friendship that should not end
 Till the dear old Shiawassee was dry!
 Oh, what it was, dear, that came to part
 Our hearts so soon I will never know,
 But I'm glad I forgave you with all my heart
 Before you were lying beneath the snow
 By the side of the Shiawassee.

There were fishing and boating and days of glee,
 That pass in review through my mind to night;
 I can hear the songs—I can almost see
 The old-time faces so happy and bright:
 And mingling with the song of the stream
 Comes another voice that I used to know,
 But I said "good-bye" to that girlish dream
 As I sat alone in the long ago
 On the bank of the Shiawassee.

One night I stood on the bridge alone
 And wished I were sleeping within its bed,
 For my heart was sad, and as hard as stone,
 For an unkind word that a friend had said;
 The morning came and the sun was bright;
 I had told her I could not forgive nor forget,
 But all was atoned for before the night.
 For we by chance (or design) had met
 On the bank of the Shiawassee!

The Shiawassee is mad to night,
 And she rushes on with a weird, wild song;
 But the air is soft and the moon is bright,
 As with the current we drift along.
 Can it be it was I who promised to be
 As true as the stars that were shining bright?
 Would he care, I wonder, if he could see
 How I had forgotten until to night
 That ride on the Shiawassee?

How well I remember one far-off day
 When I was a child by the river there!
 At a school picnic we were glad and gay,
 For our hearts were young and the world was fair!
 In a boat we rowed for the lilies white—
 Ah, the summer was young and so were we all!
 But the romance died ere the coming of night
 When I took a sudden prosaic fall
 In the waves of the Shiawassee!

'Tis winter; and over the ice to-night
 There glides a merry and gladsome throng;
 Are their hearts as free as their words are light
 As over the surface they slip along?
 I wist not, for all that remains with me now
 Is a face that returns to me o'er and o'er
 That went out of my life with that winter's snow,
 While I dropped a tear that he came no more
 In the stream of the Shiawassee.

Old Time has wrought his change it is said,
 And of the old faces my school days knew
 Nearly all have wandered, while some have fled,
 To the Crystal Stream beyond the blue.
 It is strange indeed that the friends of old
 So few of their youthful dreams retain!
 It is strange indeed that as years have rolled,
 So few of my girlhood's companions remain
 By the banks of the Shiawassee!

Why all along her shores are found
 Some land mark that might a story tell;
 And a thousand memories are clustering 'round
 Each point on the river I knew so well!

There's not such a stream in the world to day—
 You may smile, if you will, but she's dear to me!
 And sometime in the future I'll wend my way
 Again to the river I long to see—
 The dear old Shiawasse!

OUR MARTYRED PRESIDENT.

In the pride of perfect manhood,
 With a smile for all around,
 Beaming with the joy of living
 And, a Christian grace profound,
 Loved by all the loyal people
 Whom one word of his could sway,
 The "observed of all observers,"
 There he stood that autumn day.

Suddenly without a warning
 Rang a shot upon the air,
 And the news that he was wounded
 Thrilled the anxious people there.
 Then he staggered blindly backward
 Though his mind retained its sway
 And with words of hope and comfort
 Thus he fell—that awful day.

Though the pain his form was racking
 And his heart was stirred within,
 Yet his thoughts were still for others
 As they ever yet had been.

He could see his vile assailant,
 In the hands of justice lay:
 "Stay!" he cried—"let no one hurt him!"
 Thus he spake—that dark, dark day.

Later all a nation's future
 Seemed to hang upon his fate—
 He alone was brave and hopeful—
 He—the noble, and the great,
 Patiently the pain he suffered,
 Tried to drive their fears away:
 With a firm Christlike endurance
 There he lay—that long, long day.

But the stricken, weeping nation
 Had to face the worst at last;
 And the world bowed down in sorrow
 For a noble life had passed,
 From the martyr's lips a whisper—
 "Good bye all, it is God's way!"
 Then "His will be done!" he added—
 Thus he spake—that fatal day.

See! the dying lips are moving!
 Listen: what the end may be;
 Ah! his saintly soul is singing
 "Nearer, oh my God to thee!"
 And that brave, strong life is passing
 As befits its earthly stay:
 With a song and prayer 'tis over;
 Thus he died, that last sad day.

With the noblest of all ages
 He—the worthy—lies at rest:
 Peacefully, the turmoil ended—
 Nature folds him to her breast:
 Where the sins and griefs of others
 Can no more have power to slay,
 With the martyrs gone before him
 There he sleeps in peace to day.

When to rest we sad'y laid him,
 All the world was dark and drear;
 Once the sun peeped out through rain-drops—
 Nature struggling with her tears!
 But not long—a mother's sorrow
 Must in some mood have its sway;
 And the rain came down in torrents—
 Truly, Nature wept to day.

North and South hands clasped together
 Stand beside that open grave
 And their tears unchecked are mingling
 For the man no art could save.
 In our sorrow can we echo
 What his dying lips could say?
 Ah! with tears,—with prayer—with anguish,—
 Thus we mourn our chief to day.

Not alone in courts of glory
 Lives again our loved and lost,
 Not alone in song and story
 Though they still may paint the cost.
 But forever in the memory
 Of the nation he will stay;
 And in all the hearts who loved him,
 There he lives, indeed, to day.
 (September 19, 1901.)

MY JUNE.

June—month of roses, month of sun,
 Of clondless skies and clear;
 A twelve-month's glories meet in one
 As June draws near;
 The songsters' sweetest cadences
 Are kept to form her symphonies.

Till all the melody that is
 Is blended here!

I knew a June—a perfect June
 When hill and dale and plain
 Were bathed in lights that yonder moon
 Might seek in vain;
 When Nature doffed her vernal dress
 And decked herself in loveliness
 That ne'er before her charms could bless,
 And ne'er again!

A June that even now my heart
 Recalls with all its grace;
 A June that ever stands apart
 In one sweet place;
 The Master-Painter touched it well;
 His brush had magic in its spell,
 And all its richest beauties fell
 On Nature's face!

I wonder why through all the years
 They never come again!
 Though many another June appears
 I look in vain
 To catch one tint of all those hues,
 To catch one sparkle of those dews,
 To hear one note my June would choose
 For her refrain.

Yes, call her fair—I answer not
 Nor even breathe a sigh
 For all the radiance unforgot
 That passed me by!
 Aurora bears a frowning face;
 The sylvan sheen is commonplace;
 And there is dearth of floral grace,
 And blue of sky!

Love well your June—I carry mine
 Within my inmost soul,
 And there forever will it shine
 As seasons roll;

You could not match it if you tried,
 With all a whole year's wealth beside,
 This June that came but once and died
 While fresh and whole!

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'Twas in the June-tide of my life
 When trifling care, and petty strife
 Had led me through besetments rife
 Unto a perfect prime;
 'Twas then, when I was well-prepared
 For all the life for which I cared
 Fate willed that with me should be shared
 Life's grandest summertime!

June came—how could I know that she
 Should bear an offering to me
 That would forever after be
 Apart, in hallowed state!
 No word of warning reached my ear,
 No strange foreboding lingered near,
 But blindly, without hope or fear,
 I rushed to meet—my fate!

I met her— that is all I know—
 Mayhap 'twas June that willed it so
 That she herself should then bestow
 Her lovely namesake, June;
 A daughter of the month was she,
 With all the mother's purity,
 And all the others paled to me
 As stars beside the moon!

They told me that her face was fair,
 That rose and lily blended there,
 That glossy was her dusky hair,
 And lustrous her brown eyes;
 I could not say how this might be;
 I knew that she was fair to me
 Though in her eyes I could but see
 The light of Paradise.

I thought that Heaven had viewed the state,
 Of death and sorrow, sin and hate,
 And opened wide its crystal gate
 And sent an angel down;
 I could not see how one could stand
 So free from stain in this dark land;
 I scarcely dared to touch her hand,
 Or meet those orbs of brown!

And yet I sought her o'er and o'er,
 And looked and longed to know her more,
 And wished, as never wished before
 To be a nobler man;
 And somehow, all along my way
 Her new—found presence seemed to stray
 And guide me, as from day to day
 The pure in spirit can!

Ere long in some mysterious way,
 Unconsciously I learned to pray;
 My soul grew clearer every day,
 And nearer to its God;
 I could not meet with such as she
 Without absorbing purity,
 And an intense desire to be
 Upon the plain she trod.

Some times, by habit's curious force
 My feet would lead some old-time course,
 My hand would touch some pitch no worse
 Than thousands handle free;
 But some vague power my touch would stay,
 A gentle voice would murmur "Nay!"
 And I would guilty turn away
 And know not why it be.

Thus did the thought of her intrude,
 And form a strange, sweet interlude
 Between me and the careless mood
 I hitherto had known:

Thus did her goodness mantle me
 That I a true manhood might see,
 And grow in strength of soul to be
 Not far below her own.

'Twas not the love that poets sing
 That gave my heart that brave new ring;
 It seemed an angel's ministering;
 To teach me to be good;
 I felt unworthy to be near
 When her light footfall should appear;
 And had they whisper'd she was dear
 I had not understood.

The Heaven that seemed so far from here
 Began to gradually grow near,
 And all its mysteries seemed clear
 Beneath her dulcet tone;
 The God whom as a god I knew
 But half-believing, now came true,
 And I could say, "My Father," too,
 Who had no father known!

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There came a change—my heart began to love
 With less of heavenly fire, and more of earth;
 She pointed me as then to One above,
 Yet imperceptibly new flame found birth.
 'Tis true I had not come to man's estate
 Without the thoughts and fancies that must come,
 But they were but the usual fleeting eight
 Before the ninth hath knottd them in one.

And this was different—she, my guiding star,
 Had lightened up the pathway from the grave;
 Had shown the way to all the heights that are,
 And satisfied desires that all men crave;

And how I loved her! It were easy said,
 And yet I wonder why these things should be
 That one, of all the millions around me spread
 Should seem so far above the rest to me.

“Affinity!” you say, and I assent—
 ’Twill do as well as aught that I could say:
 I only know a “something” sweet is sent
 That one touch thrills us as no other may.
 I saw her then the fairest of the fair,
 And crowned her there my soul’s eternal choice:—
 She bound me in the meshes of her hair;
 She held me spellbound with her velvet voice.

Unknowingly, she held a willing slave
 Whose overflowing heart was strangely dumb;
 Who would the simplest recognition crave
 Yet dare not ask what might so freely come.
 I trembled ’neath the glances of her eye;
 It was so very hard to understand
 How all my spirit could so passive lie
 Within the fingers of her small white hand!

I knew I loved her, but I never knew
 In what light those dear eyes had looked at me;
 I lived within an Eden where but few
 Earth-lovers have the awful power to be.
 I do not think Earth knew a love like mine;
 I’m sure she never knew a June so fair;
 The very sunbeams seemed for her to shine;
 The breath of Heaven filled the balmy air.

The birds sang o’er and over, “June! my June!”
 The streamlet, too, took up the tender strain;
 The zephyrs of the evening joined the tune.
 The very hours laughed to the refrain.
 I since have often wondered if she heard
 The melodies that filled the summer air!
 dared not mar their grandeur by a word—
 A discord then were more than I could bear.

I did not ask her heart nor care to know,
 Enough it was to drink her every smile,
 And I content to love her, love her so,
 And just be near her all the rapturous while.
 No future thought or hope appealed to me;
 Thank God my love was free from every taint!
 I did not even dream of what might be
 If I should find the woman in the saint.

With strange new awe my spirit bowed before,
 And poured its deepest treasures at her shrine;
 And knew not would my love be less or more
 To find in her more human, less divine.
 I did not speak in idle compliment,
 As others who love less, nor were it wise,
 But reverence with love so sweetly blent
 She must have read my secret in my eyes.

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I let her go, and made no sign—
 I could not speak of love or longing;
 I dared not dream she might be mine,
 Nor voice the heart-throbs that were thronging!

As well might I an angel seek
 And bid to leave the court of glory;
 'Twere just as easy then to speak
 The words that form Earth's sweetest story!

She never knew—her pure sweet eyes
 Were never dimmed by loves confessing;
 Her pathway leads beyond the skies,
 And I have lost my only blessing.

Somewhere, to day, she walks apart,
 And makes some cloudy sky grow clearer;
 Nor guesses how one lonely heart
 Is panting wildly to be near her!

I look back and those moments seem
 To be the fancies of a vision,
 Or like the Lotus-eater's dream
 On some far shore of joys Elysian.

You read it and it well might be
 A page of fascinating fiction.—
 'This brief, sweet joy that mantled me
 As Heaven's richest benediction.

'Twere well the light of those clear eyes
 For such a little while was given,
 Lest Earth become a Paradise
 And I should seek no other heaven.

And yet, not so—'twas she alone
 That pointed out a soul's true setting;
 She taught me all I've ever known,
 But now—God help me!—I'm forgetting.

That summer stands apart to me,
 A leaf from out the book eternal
 On which awakened eyes may see
 The mysteries of joys supernal.

Alas! the autumn came so soon,
 And left this lesson to remember—
 No year can know a second June,
 And roses bloom not in September.

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The winter is here with its frost and snow,
 As cold as the hopes that I cherished so;
 Earth holds no beauty 'neath sun or moon:
 Her glories died with the passing of June.
 I see no good in the hearts of men,
 I'm moved by nothing of tongue or pen;
 There's not one word that the best can say
 Can drive the clouds of my doubt away.

They sing of a God to the old sweet tune,
 But--a loving father had left my June!
 They talk of a bliss that can never die,
 But my gloom-wrapt soul voices no reply.
 There was only one preacher in God's great land
 Who ever could speak and my heart understand,
 For, June, I had looked at my Maker through you,
 And when I had lost you, He went from me too!

I seek for the waters of Lethe in vain,
 And drink deep of Marah's again and again,
 And in the new moisture that spring to my eyes,
 The last feeble spark of my manliness dies.
 "Oh June! my June!" is my soul's constant cry,
 And the mocking of Echo its only reply,
 Till all of the hopes and ambitions of years,
 Are melted away in a passion of tears.

I look down the vista of long, lurid years,
 That seemed to hold only the old deathless fears;
 I picture a Heaven to welcome me soon,
 But all I conceive is perpetual June!
 Did I worship the creature? God pardon the sin!
 But a jealous Creator will not let me in,
 And I'll stand just outside all the bliss I would share,
 And realize only that Junia is there!

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The Junes they come, and Junes they go,
 They're all alike to me;
 The June of old, too well I know,
 Cannot return to me.

I reach my hands to catch the rose,
 But find them full of rue;
 And only bitterest wormwood grow:
 Where once the violet grew.

I look into the deepest eyes,
But turn away and sigh;
For there are none where solace lies
For love that passed me by.

I seek oblivion in the wine,
And dissipation's snare.
But see the lights of memory shine,
And know she still is there!

I long to have this madness roll
With all its sin away;
But chaos reigns within my soul,
I know not how to pray.

Ah, June! I'm powerless to forget,
Nor would I if I could;
God's hand may touch my spirit yet,
And teach me to be good!

They say He chastens for the best,
But what was there to win
By driving virtue from my breast,
And filling it with sin?

Yet June, to read your eyes once more
And find there trust and love,
Might even now my faith restore
In peace and rest above.

For when in dreams they meet my own,
Humid with sympathy,
I wake forgetting all is flown
Till memory maddens me.

God grant us each the power to hold,
And treasure what he hath;
For there are hopes when once grown cold
That know no aftermath.

LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM.

“There's nothing half so sweet in life
As love's young dream”

—Thomas Moore

What caused the sun that summer day
To shine with such a glorious ray?
Why did the flowers beneath my feet
On that day bloom so much more sweet?
Why did the birds their music pour
In warblings never heard before?
And what should make the sky so fair,
And give all Nature hues so rare?

I knew not—neither know I now
What lured that sheen to Nature's brow
I only knew that you were there,
And why should not the earth be fair?
I only knew that on my ear
Fell words like music, soft and clear,
That o'er me cast a magic spell,
And caused my heart with joy to swell

You wondered why I turned my head
At every tender word you said.
You guessed not 'twas to hide the glow
That flashed my cheek;—how should you know
That love was filling every vein
With such a throb of bliss, yet pain,
It seemed no human heart could hold
That burst of rapture—wild, untold.

I knew not then what made my heart
 Stir in my breast with that glad start;
 Nor why your lightest touch should fill
 My bosom with that subtle thrill;
 I only knew that you were near
 And fast became to me so dear
 That every toudril of my soul
 Was twined around you, past control.

How fleeting did that morning seem!
 I asked myself "Is this a dream?
 If so, and all must shortly break,
 I pray that I may ne'er awake;
 But still sleep on, and on, and on,
 Till months have fled and years are gone
 And angels come to waken me,
 And call me to eternity."

And when the sun gave up his place
 And yielded to the paler face,
 When stars began to dot the sky,
 E'en then Earth's beauty did not die;
 The moon had never seemed so light,
 The stars had never shone so bright;
 The balmy air was ne'er so sweet,
 The summer evening was complete.

And when you told me of your love,
 I thought the angels there above
 Must look in envy on our bliss,
 And long to leave their world for this!
 I trembled,—could not meet your gaze,
 And showed in many teil-tale ways,
 How gazing in your deep brown eyes
 I'd found my earthly Paradise.

And thus I dream, and pray to sleep
 Forever on, if that would keep
 This flame alive within my breast
 With which the gods my fate have blessed,

I know not now that life is drear,
 I know no grief, no doubt, no fear;
 I only know that my skies shine;
 I only know that you are mine.

(1895)

FOR THEE.

I live for thee! yet 'twas not long ago
 That I bemoaned a love so cold and dead,
 Methought no earthly voice could stir its bed,
 And call to life the slain. But now I know
 That when I looked into thy deep brown eye
 That love awoke as if from sleep, and I
 Was forced to own thee then my king to be--
 I live for thee!

I sing for thee! Yes, I, who knew no song
 Beneath thy sway have learned to trill a note
 Far sweeter to my soul than man e'er wrote
 With pen. My love has grown so fierce, so strong
 That over heart and voice I've no control,
 But the rich music that now floods my soul
 Bursts from my lips in words in spite of me,—
 I sing for thee.

I long for thee! Yes, dearest, when thou go
 Away, the bright sun seems to cease to shine,
 And leave my soul in darkness to repine
 Thine absence. No contentment do I know
 Save in thy presence. Nothing sweet, no rest
 Comes in to make more calm my troubled breast
 Untill thou once more dost return to me.
 I long for thee!

I weep for thee! For when I see thee sad,
 And know that trials seem to rend thy soul
 A flood of sadness o'er my heart does roll
 And not e'en thou, my love, canst make me glad,
 Until the grief has passed from thee away
 And smiles appear—those smiles that make my day.
 While thou art sad, no joy can come to me.
 I weep for thee!

I pray for thee! When night her mantle spreads.
 Around us, and calls weary souls to rest
 And thoughts of God's great watch-care fill each breast
 I look to Him who watches o'er our heads,
 And with a yearning that I cannot tell,
 I pray to Him that all may yet be well,
 And that o'er thee and thine He e'er may see,
 I pray for thee!

I'd die for thee! If I could smooth one care
 From thy dear heart by giving up my life,
 How willingly I'd do it! Care and strife
 No more should vex thee. Sin should ne'er
 Across thy pathway lurk. My heart's best blood
 Poured at thy feet in one unceasing flood
 Were all too poor a gift to come from me.
 I'd die for thee!

YOU AND I.

Midst a February snow,
 When the moon forgot her glow,
 And one lonely star was set
 In the sky:
 When the world seemed very drear,
 And no brightness lingered near—
 Then it was that first we met,
 You and I.

Ah! how soon that sad old earth
In our bosoms had new birth
And began to grow so bright
 And so fair!
How for me the old sky shone
That had seemed so bleak and lone;
E'en the darkness of the night
 Was not there.

We were learning to repeat
That "old story," still so sweet,
And we told it every day,
 O'er and o'er;
Life had no temptations then
As beset the paths of men;
All was glorious and gay
 Evermore!

Swift the happy months went by,
Months of blue and cloudless sky,
Till at last a shadow fell
 On each heart:
Life no more could be so bright,
Change had come our joys to blight,
And the soul of each knew well.
 We must part.

So we went our ways alone,
Making no complaint or moan,
Though the once bright days became
 Black as night;
Not a pleasure came to bless,
Although neither would confess
That the world was not the same,
 Gay and bright.

But there came a change to you,
And the heart I thought so true,
Ceased awhile to cry aloud,
 Or to sigh;

All but they who knew you best,
Thought your heart once more at rest,
For at another's feet you bowed,
 You—not I.

Do not think that I condemn,
You did not mislead me then,
And 'twas pity that I felt
 More than blame:
You were striving to forget
What no man has conquered yet;—
Could you find the place you knelt,
 Quite the same?

Ah! I knew it could not last;
In the light of all the past,
Nothing could your starving soul
 Satisfy;
There were chords within your heart
That no touch save mine could start,
You could never be heart-whole,
 Nor could I.

I remember how you came
With the autumn, to reclaim
All the past that we had lain
 In its grave;
But in ashes there it lay,
And no word your lips could say,
Could one hour our hands had stain
 Ever save,

Vainly then your accents plead,
Vain was every word you said,
Why recall to life a flame
 Born to die?
Love could never more be deep
That had known so long a sleep,
You might find it still the same,
 But not I.

Then you said, "Not thus it ends;
So rely we may yet be friends!"
But we knew it was not true,
 Eye to eye;
Friendship's tie could never be
As a bond for you and me;
Never, dear, "while you are you
 And I am I!"

Looking backward thro' the years,
Even now I see your tears,
Even yet I hear your voice
 With its pain;
But I trust that boyish grief,
Found ere long a sure relief,
And the heart learned to rejoice,
 Calm again.

It was hard to bear it then,
Hard to stifle all the pain
That seemed shattering my heart
 At a blow;
Life was empty for awhile,
But— well, see, dear, I can smile;
Ah! forgotten was the smart
 Long ago,

Sweetest peace has come to me,
Joys I never hoped to see,
And my life is better now
 For that pain;
But sometimes a deep regret,
Stirs my inmost spirit yet,
For a love that I can know
 Ne'er again.

But I do not grieve—'tis best;
For the love our youth confessed,
Though it ne'er may be forgot,
 Could but die:

FORGET ME.

And tho'we shall meet no more,
 God has better things in store;
 We shall find a happier lot,
 You and I,

(1896.)

FORGET ME.

AN ACROSTIC.

Forget me! Seek not to recall
 One tender thought of me;
 Remember not one happy hour
 God willed that we should see
 Even my face and form forget,
 'Twill be far better so.
 My life is severed far from thine,
 Each day this truth I know.

Forget me! Yet think not that I
 One heart-throb can forget.
 Remembrance will not down at will—
 God knows that living yet,
 Enshrined within my heart's deep core,
 True, faithful as of old.
 Memory still holds thine image dear,
 E'en though the heart be cold.

(1896.)

ONE WOMAN'S LAST WORD.

Must we part,

Dear heart?

Must we part?

Yes, those dreams of bliss were vain,

And our joy was born of pain.

We were conscious at the start

That it must not be,

Dear heart!

We must part,

Dear heart!

We must part!

Far from yours my pathway lies,

And the witchery of your eyes,

Must no more my fancy start

From its true abode,

Dear heart!

There's a smart,

Dear heart!

There's a smart!

Children who with fire will play,

Can but bear a wound away,

And the poison of that dart

Left its sting behind,

Dear heart!

Where's the art,

Dear heart!

Where's the art?

That can make of wrong a right,

Or can soften to the sight

Pain we carelessly impart

To a trusting soul,

Dear heart?

Now to part,
 Dear heart!
 Now to part!
 Better far we ne'er had met
 Than to know this hour's regret,
 Ah! I gave a single heart
 Till you crossed my way,
 Dear heart!

On the start,
 Dear heart,
 On the start,
 Would that I had bid you go,
 Ere I learned to love you so,
 Better tear my soul apart
 Than to find it false,
 Dear heart!

Let us part,
 Dear heart!
 Let us part!
 Oh, I must forget you, dear!
 Duty marks our pathways clear,
 And she lays them far apart,
 For 'tis better so,
 Dear heart!

When we part,
 Dear heart.
 When we part,
 I will suffer, and I should,
 That one thought of you intrude,
 But a scar alone will mark
 Where the wound was made.
 Dear heart!

Then we part ,
 Dear heart,
 Then we part.

Could our joy atone to me
 For another's misery.
 If my hand had crushed his heart
 For the love of you,
 Dear heart?

Nay—we part,
 Dear heart!
 Yes, we part,
 True, it was a childish vow;
 But it binds as closely now,
 And shall not be torn apart
 Though it wreck my life,
 Dear heart!

So—we part,
 Dear heart;
 Now,—depart.
 Future days look dark to-night,
 But God always shields the right,
 And we—ah, the tear drops start
 While I say “good-bye,”
 Dear heart!

(1897.)

A WORD OF THANKS.

For thoughts and feelings yet unfathomed
 For motives not quite understood;
 For flights of thought and secret fancies
 I would not picture if I could;
 For all the honest aspirations
 That claim disaster as their fate;
 For all the prayers and the ambitions
 That always seem to come too late;
 For all for which my soul is yearning,
 And that my pen could never trace;
 For all that I could be and would be
 In any other time and place;

For all the good I've ever thought of;
 For all the past that's dead to-day;
 For all the present—all the future
 I thank you, dearest, far away.

Yes, I thank you—though I could not,
 Dear, if you were here to-day;
 For the sweet words you had welcomed
 Always were so hard to say!
 But for every inspiration,
 Every impulse, sweet and true.
 Every triumph, I am grateful,
 For I trace them all to you.

Once I felt that life was worthless
 If it were not shared by you;
 Now I know you still are moulding
 As no other's hand could do,
 Strange, though time and space divide us,
 That you still should have a part,
 And should yet, through slippery byways,
 Guide the workings of my heart.

Had you proved to be less worthy,
 Had you shattered my ideal—
 All the world would now be hollow,
 All its goodness seen unreal;
 But I did not find you wanting,
 And I thank you that I can,
 Though the long gray years of shadow,
 Still have faith in God and man.

Not a single bitter feeling
 Enters in my thought of you
 Fate apportioned us our measure
 Better far than we could do,
 Where you are, I know nor care not,
 For I feel you always near;
 Think—would Earth hold hope of Heaven
 If she gave us Heaven here?
 (March 1897.)

THE KATY-DID.

“Katy-did!—Katy did!”

Yes, I hear you, little one,
 In your leafy bower hid
 Crying out what Kate has done.
 Tell me, little Katy-did,
 What the awful sin can be,
 That you always keep repeating
 As the soft twilight is fleeting,
 From your nook in yonder tree!

“Katy-did!—Katy-did!”

You would tell me if you could
 How sweet Katy came with others
 Nutting to the hazel wood;
 How she softly stole away,
 Leaning on a manty arm;
 Vowing low deathless devotion
 Love as deep as is the ocean
 If he'd shelter her from harm.

You would tell me all you saw
 From your little hiding place,
 Tell me of each tender kiss
 Pressed upon that fair young face;
 You would chirp it in my ear,
 How she promised she would be
 Faithful till the last, and never
 Though the Heavens fall, would sever
 Those deep vows of constancy.

“Katy-did! Katy-did!”

Yes, I know what you would tell;
 How, when scarce a year had fled,
 Once more Katy paced the dell.
 How again you took a peep,
 And another’s arm was pressed
 Close around that waist so slender
 And his voice was low and tender
 As he drew her to his breast.

You would tell me how she vowed
 To another to be true,
 With no thought of him who sailed
 Far across the ocean blue,
 Through the day and in his sleep,
 Dreaming of the maiden there
 Thinking still that she must love him
 Truly as the sky above him,
 Deeming her as true as fair.

“Katy-did! Katy-did!”

Yes, I know she did, my dear:
 But there are things done and said
 That you should not see and hear
 And although it seemed unkind,
 You should not fair Katy blame!
 What if she should prove false-hearted
 To the one from whom she parted,
 Other Kates have done the same!

You would tell, you sly eavesdropper,
 How the birds one morning sang,—
 How old Sol looked down through smiling
 While the church bell gaily rang,
 How, securely hidden there,

You had watched fair Katy go
 (While the skies were blue above her)
 On the arm of this new lover,
 Heart and hand to there bestow.

“Katy-did! Katy-did!”

Yes—I’ve heard the tale before;
 ’Tis as old as are the mountains
 Yet they tell it o’er and o’er:
 And methinks they always will
 While the earth shall yet remain,
 If two men and one fair woman,
 Who are altogether human
 Shall their life and breath retain.

You would tell me how the months
 In their gladness sped away,
 Till another shadow fell
 On a dark and dismal day.
 When you watched a spot below,
 Where a noble sailor lad,
 Kneels within the waving grasses,
 And in bitterest anguish passes
 All the night—while there in ashes
 Lies the perfect trust he had.

“Katy-did! Katy-did!”

Keep your counsel, little one;
 I can guess what you would say,
 Girls such deeds have always done.
 It is not, sweet Katy-did,
 Woman-nature to be true;
 Always faithless, but so charming,
 We forgive them all the harming
 For “they know not what they do.”

CONDEMNED.

He was fresh from a home and a fond mother's care,
 And the ideal he cherished was all that was fair;
 He deemed that the whole race of women was true
 Because of the pure loving mother he knew.
 Yes,—“only a boy”—and the easiest prey
 By one of your charms to be guided astray.
 For he took every ravishing smile that was given
 To be a divine revelation from Heaven.

Small wonder that he with his dreams, pure and bright,
 Should think you were really an angel of light,
 And be ready to swear at one glance from your eyes
 That you were the queen of the stars in disguise!
 How should he with no insight at all in the game,
 Be able to keep his young heart from the flame,
 Or how, when he saw that the casket was rare,
 Should he guess that the jewel was only a snare?

There were others, who might be your toy for an hour
 And be none the worse for the test of your power;
 There were men of the world who would come at your claim
 And play, tit for tat, every card in your game.
 Where then was the triumph to ruin that life
 So free from all guile when it entered the strife?
 Did it better your life that the gauntlet he ran
 That shattered forever his trusting in man?

Somewhere in the world there is waiting to-day
 A heart that had loved him forever and aye,
 That had entered his life and new ardor instilled,
 Till the promise of youth had been grandly fulfilled;

But because of your smiling, he never will see,
 How noble a factor a woman my be,
 But will live all his days with the look in his eye
 Of one whom the beauty of life has passed by.

To be sure, it is foolish—but men often are—
 And a wound of this kind is more fatal by far
 When it comes to one early who seeks only good,
 And he finds out how false is the light that he viewed.
 It is natural you know, if we find as we pass
 What we think is a gem, but we find to be glass,
 That we pass by the real, which we see by the way,
 And measure its worth by the one thrown away.

True,—the wound may be healed—did you hope it still bleed?
 But the poison is there though the pain may be dead.
 And oft in the night, though the heart seemeth cold,
 The scar that's remaining may ache as of old,
 O count up your "conquests" and gloat o'er the past,
 But a just retribution will find you at last,
 And the waves of a conscience awakened yet roll
 For the demons of hell you unchained in that soul.

THE END OF THE PLAY.

Our drama has an end at last,
 The climax hastens on us fast,
 And soon the last act will be past,
 And we away;
 'Tis growing hard to act our part,
 And hide the bitterness of heart
 That triumphs over every art
 Within the play!

Too late we learn not to aspire
 To parts whose lines are full of fire!
 I might have guessed that you would tire
 Of all some day;
 We were but children and forgot
 To leave the passion from the plot,
 And changed the course of all our lot
 By this one play.

The world looked on, as worldlings must,
 And laughed to see our childish trust:
 They knew it all must turn to dust
 With youth's decay;
 They smiled, and called it comedy
 Who were too short of sight to see
 The bitter lines of tragedy
 Throughout the play!

It was our first appearance there,
 Behind the footlight's dazzling glare;
 The stage to us appeared as fair
 And bright as May;
 We played the lead and played it well,
 While not a whisper came to tell
 That something soon would break the spell
 And end the play!

It was the same old plot that all
 Can look back somewhere and recall—
 A love that held two hearts in thrall
 The same old way;
 A fair soubrette that came between,
 And changed the setting of the scene—
 That oft-told tale that long has been
 An old, old play!

We've played it through, and stand apart;
 "The world applauds, the actors' art,"
 But this new pain that fills my heart
 Has come to stay:

You must already have forgot
The lines of passion in the plot;
What matters it if I have not?

'Twas but a play!

I watch them putting out the light,
And sadly smile to see the sight;
The whole thing seems a farce to-night

With you away;

The role was mockery, I see
That promised so much bliss to me;
How could I know that it might be
A bitter play?

My heart is sinking at the thought
Of all the happiness I sought
That faded there and left me naught

But pain to-day;

I smiled and wore my make-up well,
And none of all the cast could tell
What happened when the curtain fell

After the play!

I wonder, if you from the start
Deliberately played this part.
Or did I truly touch your heart

Some far off-day?

Far better change, as do the rest,
Than coolly plan so cruel a jest
On one who never dimly guessed

It was a play!

You did not think that there might be
A taste of sorrow there for me;
It was but pastime—we were free,

And it was May!

It was a love that lightly came
And flashed up as a sudden flame;
Why should it not depart the same?—

'Twas but a play!

DIVIDED.

I stand in silence at the wings
 And look my last on happier things,
 While every voice in Nature sings
 Of bleak decay:
 Why was I not at first to know
 That all that joy must leave me so?
 Why does my heart cry wildly, "Oh!
 Too long the play!"

God help me! I have found the role
 Too heavy for my self control;
 My voice must falter through the whole
 I try to say;
 The lines of pathos are too strong;
 Ring down the curtain, dear-'tis wrong
 To seek one moment to prolong
 So cruel a play!

The curtain falls—now play your part
 With someone older in the art.
 Or lightly win another heart
 To throw away!
 And I? Ah, I shall not forget,
 But in my sleep with strange regret
 Will dream that we are acting yet
 That sweet old play!

DIVIDED

There are two who walk on either side a stream—
 A river that so narrow doth appear,
 Their hands are clasped across it, and they seem
 To scarce remember it divides them here.
 A brilliant sun illumes a cloudless sky;
 The air is sweet, and birds are full of song;
 Sweet flowers bloom; the days flit gaily by;
 The stream between forgotten glides along.

he streamlet gradually grows wider now,
 Their clinging hands, unconscious loose their hold;
 Their words are sweet, but laughter comes more slow
 A cloud across the sun has dulled its gold.
 The bird-songs hold a sadder note to day;
 Unconsciously they sigh and know not why;
 They pause to pluck a rosebud by the way—
 A hiddden thorn calls from the lips a cry.

Their paths diverge a little day by day;
 Now drag the days that lately were so dear;
 No longer hold they converse by the way—
 They can but shout across the waters drear.
 The air is heavy; all the flowers are dead;
 The birds are often silent now and still:
 The clouds hang thick and heavy overhead;
 A roaring, wintry wind is threatenng ill.

At last their paths have led so far away,
 They are beyond all sound of straining voice;
 They can but wave their longing hands to-day
 In mute acknowledgement of old love's choice
 Their eyes are fixed upon the form across
 And straining every muscle to discern
 The well-loved features, conscious of their loss,
 And longing for a happy past's return.

But while they watch, the form has gone from view
 They stretch their empty arms across the stream;
 Life's load is heavy but what can they do
 When all that's left is memory's maddening dream!
 The birds are chirping—calling for a mate—
 All nature seems to join the bitter cry!
 Why murmur? 'Tis the changeless stream of Fate,
 And life and love forever have passed by!

MY KING.

What is his kingdom?—One heart and life!
 Who is his subject?— His "little wife!"
 What is his scepter?— Love's mystic charms!
 What his dominion?—Two loving arms.
 What may his crown be?—Love—only love.
 Whence comes his power?—From One above.
 Where is the throne placed? Deep in one soul!
 What means his reigning? Supreme control.

Seeks he new conquest? Nay—all's complete!
 All of his world lies low at his feet.
 Fears he rebellion?—How could it be?
 When love is ruling, subjects are free.
 Wars in the distance bring no alarms
 Sure of his shelter in those two arms;
 Smiles he as shadows 'round him may creep
 Laughs when the storm-clouds over him sweep.

But though the subject bows to his sway,
 Should she command him, he would obey!
 Love to be perfect, must be complete—
 Often the king bows low at her feet.
 Hers then the scepter, hers, too, the crown,
 He, all too gladly, bows humbly down.
 Angels in Heaven smile at the scene—
 Sometimes a subject—always his queen!

(December, 1897.)

SACRIFICE.

Is the road our feet must run
By the mountain side?
Does it lay where wind and sun,
Thorns and stones abide?
Take the shady path, dear one—
I'll be glad outside.

Is the dwelling we must see
Dark and black as night?
Never mind,—one spot will be
Clear and almost bright;
Let the clouds envelop me—
You must have the light.

What! your eyes must droop with shame
For a sin you see?
Men, you say, will curse your name?
Nay, it shall not be!
Mine alone shall be the blame,
You must yet be free!

Do you say that rain and heat,
Worked their punishment,
That to us the bread and meat
Sparingly were sent?
Let me hunger,—you must eat
I shall be content.

A SONG OF FAME.

Do not say, "Too great the price!"
 Love would be but vain,
 Were it worth no sacrifice
 For another's pain.
 Every loss for you I prize
 As the truest gain.

Doth the evil day draw nigh
 One death hour declared?
 Tremble not, my love; tis I
 All your sorrow shared,
 And a thousand deaths I'd die
 That your life be spared.

Must one soul for earthly sin
 All atonement make?
 Then God grant I enter in
 Fearless for your sake:
 Dearest, Heaven you must win
 Though my heart should break.
 (1901.)

A SONG OF FAME.

What do I care for the world, dear?
 Let it go carelessly on!
 I have my share of the world here—
 All else begone!

What is its glory to me, dear?
 All my desires are so few—
 Just the two babes by my knee, here:
 They, love, and you!

Once I was striving for glory—
 Glory was not to be won!
 Now all those longings pass o'er me,
 And they are gone!

Fame is the goal of so many,
But she abideth with few:
If I am famous to any,
Let it be you!

That is the glory for me, dear,
Just to be great in the eyes
Of the dear faces I see here
Where I most prize!

Scorn for the world as a giver!
Her gifts are but for a day;
Mine be the glory that never
Knoweth decay!

May the two souls God hath given
Ever be kept from a stain!
If I but lead them toward Heaven,
That be my gain!

That the career then I covet,
Just in my home to be dear,
That they more truly may love it
When I am near!

That be the work that I live for—
Moulding those natures aright;
What is there then I would give for
Glory less bright?

So let the world and its treasure
Pass to its music along!
I shall be blessed beyond measure
By one sweet song.

Just one, dear love, if you give it—
None else were sweet to my ear!
Mine be your life as you live it—
What else were dear?

What do I care for the world, dear?

Let it go carelessly on!

I have my share of the world here—

All else begone!

(1901.)

NOT DEAD.

It is not dead—I thought it buried deep—
 That bitter, bitter pain that crushed my heart:
 But oh! I see its life did not depart,
 But only for the time, was lulled to sleep,
 That I might just forget, for one short hour
 The deadly grief that held me in its power—
 Grief for a happy love-dream long since fled!
 It is not dead!

It is not dead! though others still may think
 Because the wound is hidden from their gaze
 That life flows onward as in olden days
 Before my spirit had been taught to drink
 The cup of gall. They do not see the tears
 That dimmed my eyes within the earlier years,
 For I have learned to force a smile instead,
 Though 'tis not dead!

It is not dead! Sometimes I lay rough hands
 Upon it, trying oh so hard to kill
 The faithful thing! but it is living still,
 And will not die at any one's commands
 Save His who sent it. Wrestling makes it strong,
 And when I've struggled with it hard and long,
 I've found it has with a new strength been fed:
 Nay 'tis not dead!

It is not dead! sometimes I think it so,
 And really, feel half joyous and 'most gay:
 But ah! some little word a friend may say
 Forgot as soon as uttered, makes me know

It was not dead!—it leaps to life again
 And overwhelms me. Oh! I cannot pen
 How rank the poison from that arrow sped,
 For 'tis not dead!

It is not dead! but pride conceals it deep,
 Where even none who know me best could guess
 How full my poor heart is of bitterness,
 That, spite of all my struggles, will not keep
 In my control. Oh, could I but forget
 The love that I have never conquered yet,
 This grief would die, for pain to love is wed;
 But 'tis not dead.

It is not dead! and oh, it will not die
 Until I pass from this sad earth away;
 And there, in mansions of eternal day,
 Where love is true, and none must say "good-bye"
 I know at last the pain that fills my soul
 Will from my over-burdened spirit roll,
 And I may know it has forever fled,
 When I am dead!

EARTH'S EDEN.

To Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Wemple on the
 43d anniversary of their marriage

Friends, they tell me time has beaten
 One more measure from life's strain,
 And to-night, all jarring discords
 Blend in harmony again.
 Forty years! ah; oft the minor
 Must have dulled the melody,
 Till the tones again were mingled
 Into perfect harmony!

There's a time in every life-time
 When no thought of earth is known;
 When the world becomes an Eden,
 Formed for two, and two alone.
 God was kind—He took the Garden
 But He left our hearts the bliss
 That we might in love's first dawning
 Make another out of this.

True, that dream is brief! yet waking
 Does not always bring us pain!
 Earth is sweeter; life is never
 Quite the same to us again
 Every joy seems sent from Heaven
 Just to form the bond anew,
 Every sorrow seems a blessing
 As it firmer knits the two.

Time and change cannot dissolve it,
 It grows stronger with each breath,
 And will hold through storm and shadow
 Even beyond the gates of death;
 And at times though years have dimmed it
 The old vision comes again,
 And the world once more is Eden
 When the two alone remain.

Forty years! 'tis sweet to ponder
 O'er the past, its joy and pain;
 Both alike appear so trivial
 Now the heart is calm again.
 Even hopes that disappointed,
 All the half-forgotten fears,
 Seem so small to look upon them
 In the light of added years.

There's not much that I can wish you
 God is good and wise indeed!
 He who led you thus far safely
 Will not fail you in your need.

Forty-three long years have faded,
 Yet their sacred scenes are bright,
 And the Eden of your vision
 Must seem very near to-night.

May the love that years have strengthened
 Lead you onward, hand in hand,
 Growing deeper at the entrance
 Of that brighter, better land,
 Where in Heaven's celestial beauty,
 You, with youth renewed, may know
 All the glories of that Eden
 You but tasted here below.
 (Jan. 17, 1901.)

A WOMAN'S ANSWER.

You come to me with burning tone,
 Your true soul shining in your eyes
 You seek to claim me for your own
 To live for you, and you alone
 Till all that's mortal in us dies.

You tell me that your heart is mine—
 You did not need to tell me so,
 For I had long learned to divine
 The tale your eyes had flashed to mine:
 We women can be wise, you know!

You say you ever will be true—
 I did not ask so trite a vow:
 I find no faithlessness in you,
 And I have read you through and through
 Your soul stands bare before me now

You say you have a buried past,
 You can't uncover even yet—
 Ah! let it lie, secure and fast,
 It shall be yours until the last;
 I do not ask that you forget!

You are not young—no more am I,
 And we have seen our share of life:
 Let all your past in ashes lie!
 Why should you rake it over? Why?
 I should not be a better wife!

Man's love is but a passing flame,—
 Nay!—no protesting! it is true;
 Although I say it not in blame,
 Nor seek to put your words to shame,
 For I was thinking not of you.

Yet I repeat,—the loves of man
 May come and go, and come again.
 And when their force is spent, he can
 Still work and worry, think and plan
 At most they were but passing pain—

Not so with us—a woman's love
 Is all the life she cares to know;
 It means so much men wot not of,
 It holds her hopes in God above,
 And keeps her faith in man below.

Why do I speak of this, you say?
 Ah! now you touch the hardest part
 Before I tell you Yea or Nay,
 There is a past I've locked away,
 That must be driven from my heart.

You say "Still keep it from our sight!"
 You are so kind, but I must say
 The words that force themselves to-night
 Lest they should rise in all their might
 To come between our souls some day.

You must know all I can bestow,
 And all the power at my command;
 Then when my little worth you know,
 If you should still desire it so,
 I'll freely give to you my hand.

For I can give a hand that's pure,
 And free from stain in every part;
 A paltry prize that to allure,
 When it is all I can assure,
 For oh, my friend, I have no heart!

I can be to you comrade,—friend,—
 Such you might seek the whole world o'er
 And as your wife you might depend
 On me as faithful to the end—
 But ah! I can be little more!

There was a time—long, long ago—
 So long it seems another life
 When I had not this heart of snow
 Where flesh and blood are needed so—
 I then had made a better wife.

I loved with all a girl's first love,
 And idealized, as maidens can;
 There were no heights I dreamed not of
 There was no hint of cloud above—
 I only saw and heard the man!

They told me that I had misplaced
 My trust, and blindly was deceived;
 I laughed—their words were thrown to waste
 And all their fears with scorn I faced;
 There was but one that I believed!

'Twas long—so long— I know not how
 That he himself revealed the truth;
 That anguish! oh, I feel it now
 When I was forced at last to bow
 Above the dead ideal of youth!

Thank God I learned the truth at last,
 Before eternally too late;
 Else all the memories of the past,
 Had choked the breath of life so fast
 That I had died of scorn and hate!

For long, long months, the days are blank,
 Thank God, I'm powerless to recall
 That awful time when first I sank
 Into the depths of woe and shrank
 From pitiless memories of it all!

I gradually came back to see
 There was a life that I must live:
 But a new self awoke in me,
 A self that God meant not to be,
 Who had not learned the word "forgive."

The childish faith in all I knew
 Was shattered to return no more:
 I'd trusted all, and when he slew
 That trust, I doubted e'en the few
 Who were so dear to me before.

For years I laughed at love and truth
 I worked and aimed at highest art;
 All tenderness had fled with youth,
 I doubted even god's own truth
 And bitterest rancor filled my heart!

And for the one who worked my woe,
 Words cannot voice my scorn and hate
 Old love make strongest hate, you know,
 And he had struck so cruel a blow,
 It crushed to death my trust in fate.

I wonder at that madness now,
 For calm and quiet came again,
 With trust in God—I know not how
 He touched my heart—, but this I know,
 He gave me peace instead of pain!

A peace of soul, but never rest,
 A calm, but never a content!
 The storm was driven from my breast,
 But in its stead was born a zest
 For glory's bright embellishment.

Her laurels came with their renown

Yet they could only do their part;

They in a way replaced the crown

My love had ruthlessly torn down—

They could not give me back my heart.

I've learned that love, though it is best

Of life—if true— is not the whole!

I've put my nature to the test,

Though but a woman like the rest,

And man could seek no higher goal!

It is not all of life, indeed

To sink one's nature in a man's,

Love often calls the heart to bleed,

And my career has known no need,

Save in perfecting nobler plans.

When first you came into my life,

I had not learned man can be true

My soul was yet in doubt's dark strife,

And over-flowed with broodings rife,

Until you taught me trust in you.

It was so new then to depend

Upon a human frame once more,

That I was glad to call you friend,

Without one inkling of the end,

Until your face its secret wore.

Since then I've loved to watch the play

Upon your features at a word;

O call me cruel if you may,

But it was new life day by day,

To learn that trust so long deferred.

Friend, I am weary—all the pain

That fought to death my woman's heart

Is dead,—but toil and hope remain

For there are higher heights to gain,

And I have lived alone for art.

This is the end--if you would take
 So cold a heart into your life,
 With God's help I will pull the stake
 And all my whole life long will make
 To you a true and faithful wife!

The ambitions that led me on
 For all these years, and knew no end
 Shall not by any means be gone
 But live as firmly for the one
 Who blends the husband in the friend.

All my respect is yours to-day
 And faith is born against my will;
 Through unbelief you fought your way,
 And though my thanks no words can say,
 My heart has yet no answering thrill

You say your fire must melt the snow,
 Until the love that died in me
 Shall rise from out the past to know
 Again the power of long ago;—
 I, doubting, smile—yet it may be!

Since all my woman's power began
 To bring its consciousness at last,
 I've gloried there, and never can
 Bow to supremacy in man;
 I yet am an iconoclast!

But there are thoughts we both may think,
 And there are hopes we both may hold:
 My soul may never learn to sink
 Itself in yours, but on the brink
 May hover till it grows less cold.

I owe you all my life holds dear;
 It is not very much, 'tis true!
 But no one else could come so near,
 And break down all the barriers here?
 I shall be all I can to you!

Are you content? So be it then!
 I'm weary of the world, and you
 Shall hold me from the haunts of men
 Until some spark may wake again
 A little warmth to yet renew.

You stake so much,—your faith is great
 God grant you all your wish in me:
 All I desire is to control
 The aspirations of your soul
 Till all you long for, you may be.

My past is yours—I give my hand,
 And you shall teach me to forget!
 I worked and conquered all I planned
 Yet somehow failed to understand
 The artist was a woman yet!

THE OLD OAKEN RULER.

A little after Wordsworth.

How dear to my heart are the scenes of my school-days,
 When loving remembrance brings them to my view!
 The play-ground, the well, and the cold, cheerless lunch-room
 And every loved spot that in school days I knew
 The glossy old blackboard, the duster near by it,
 The waste-paper basket, the platform, and all;
 The desk of the teacher, the old arm-chair nigh it,
 And e'en the old ruler that hung on the wall.
 The old, oaken ruler, the long, well-worn ruler,
 The much-dreaded ruler that hung on the wall!

That old oaken-ruler I hailed as a nuisance,
 For often of yore when some trick I had played,
 I found it the source of an unloved sensation,
 The keenest and sharpest that e'er ruler made.
 How sadly I eyed it with eyes that were weeping

As quick to my hand it would heavily fall!
 Then when I was thought quite sufficiently punished,
 That much-dreaded ruler returned to the wall.
 The old oaken ruler, the long, well-worn ruler
 The much-dreaded ruler returned to the wall.

How reluctant my arm would reach out to receive it,
 As aimed at my hand it was poised just o'er-head!
 Not a blow it inflicted was gentler or tender,
 But each stroke was fraught with deep feeling instead,
 And now, far away from the school of my childhood,
 A sigh of relief my past sufferings will tell.
 As Fancy returns to the dear old brick school-house,
 And shows me the ruler we all knew so well.
 The old oaken ruler the e'er-ready ruler,
 The hard-working ruler we all knew so well.

LIFE'S SCHOOL.

With apologies to Edgar Allen Poe.

Once upon an evening dreary,
 I was wrestling weak and weary,
 With some geometric problems
 I had never seen before;
 Problems that all toil resisted,
 Though I gropingly insisted,
 And all mental powers enlisted
 As I never had of yore;
 But the problems all unravelled
 Lay there calmly as before:
 Only this, and nothing more!

Quite distinctly I remember,
 It was in the chill November,
 And I was a humble member
 Of the Senior class of yore;

Eagerly I wished the morrow,
When I hoped that I might borrow
Demonstrations from a classmate
 Who had helped me oft before;
Who had loaned me his assistance
 When in swampy paths before;
"Yes," I whispered, "just once more!"

As I sat, some rule repeating,
All my brain in madness beating,
While my heart and throat were meeting
 And my wan eyes scanned the floor
While I wearily sat gaping'
Suddenly I heard a tapping,
And I knew some one was rapping,
 Rapping gently at the door;
"Oh!" I cried; "if some assistance
 Brings the stranger to my door,
He is welcome, evermore!"

In he came on invitation;
"Here" I thought; "is my salvation;
He will have the demonstration
 As he always has in store;
For 'twas he whose kind assistance
Helped me often in the distance,
Though I half-feared more resistance
 To my plea than heretofore
And I shrank from it on seeing
 What a troubled brow he bore,
And the wearied eyes he wore!

But at last my soul grew stronger;
Hesitating, then, no longer;
"Friend," said I to him, "most truly
 Your forgiveness I implore,
But it is my one salvation

That I make this application,
 So—have you the demonstration.”—
 Here he bent his head and swore,
 “No, I came to get assistance
 on those problems, too,” he swore
 “Only this and nothing more!”

Now that every plank was falling,
 The to-morrow looked appalling,
 And I sadly sat recalling
 How old vials of wrath did pour
 Could I face an angry teacher
 With a calm and unmoved feature,
 With those unsolved problems
 Staring in my face forevermore
 Staring wickedly and wildly
 In my face forevermore
 In the manner I deplore?

Long I sat there, madly yearning,
 All my soul within me burning,
 Longing, thinking thoughts no student
 Ever dared to think before.
 “Oh! begone all demonstration!
 How I wish my education
 And the hour of graduation
 Were a memory of the yore!
 How I long to look back thinking
 They will bother me no more—
 Free from care, forevermore!”

But the years in their rotation
 Finished High School education,
 And the longed-for graduation
 Is a thing to come no more;
 But I find I now am vexing
 Over problems as perplexing
 As the ones I on that evening
 Fought of geometric lore,

Just as stubborn and unflexing .
As of geometric lore
Trouble me forevermore.

Thus, when school life is completed,
When all lessons are repeated,
And we are no longer seated
 In the class room as before;
Still, life's school is just before us,
And its rule is quickly o'er us,
And we look for graduation,
 But 'tis not till life is o'er;
And our spirit, from its burden
 And its lessons, as of yore,
Shall be lifted—nevermore!

A TALE OF THE KANARANZI.

Yes, that is the Kanaranzi—not so wonderful a
river
As you might expect to find it, rather more a creek
I fancy;
But it has its turbulations when no visitor whatever
Could have recognized the torrent as our quiet
Kanaranzi.

True, she looks so calm and peaceful in the sunlight
of the morning,
You might easily mistake her for a clear and
waveless mirror;

But at times she grows rebellious, all our law and
order scorning,

And I often think we find her in those wilder moods,
the dearer.

All the whole year round we trust her, and she never
has betray'd us.

But in June we hold her treacherous, like the maiden
of the summer,

For 'tis then that she so many a mad and merry
prank has play'd us,

When no skill the farm could muster had the power
to overcome her.

All the road along her borders with her water
overflowing,

Every bridge completely covered, and indeed, no
passage to it!—

Then we stay just where she found us till she
gives the right of going,

For experience has taught us that's the way
we'er quickest through it.

Once the flood came on so swiftly that we had no
word of warning,

And our sheep were on a hillock grazing on the
other side;

With the waters all around them, there we saw
them in the morning

On the only spot about them that was spared
them by the tide.

There they stayed in patient waiting for the children
who should tend them;

But there was no way to reach them, till for three
long days they lingered;

When a bridge the flood had brought us drifted down
and we could send them.

So we polled them over slowly by the angry current
hindered.

There is one amusing instance—'twas a happy
summer bridal;

HE lived on this side the water while his
bride lived on the other;

'Twas at noon,—and after dinner, the young
husband left his idol,

To ride home before the evening on an errand
for his mother.

It was dangerous, they told him; it was June—
a storm was brewing,

And the Kanaranzi, listening, threatened with
an angry murmur;

But he laughed and hastened over, while the
maddened storm pursuing,

Came so quickly that it caught him, as he
grasped the bridle firmer.

How it rained! on, on he hastened, glad to reach
the house for shelter,

Banished all hope of returning till the tempest
had abated,

And his active mind went wandering hither, thither,
helter-skelter,

But could form no plan of rescue, and impatiently
he waited!

All night long the storm continued, and next day
it still was raining;

Could he hope to cross the river ere the way was
barred?—he wondered;

Through the storm he struggled onward, every nerve
and muscle straining,

But too late:—the bridge was flooded and his wife
and he were sundered.

Then he thought him of a crossing that was several
miles below him—

Strange he had until that moment all the thought
of that unneeded!

He would haste and get across it—they might laugh
who did not know him;

He would show the Kanaranzi that he knew as
much as she did!

But alas for all his flurry, and alas for all his
boasting!

When at last he reached the crossing, very wet,
and cold, and weary,
It was but to find the bridge was down the rapid
river coasting,
And he might as well return unto his home,
so lone and dreary.

Near a week the water kept him on the one side—
her, the other:

And the tearful little bride had found it hard to
keep brave-hearted;
Hardly two whole miles between them, yet as far
from one another
As they could have been, if oceans had their
lives asunder parted.

Every day he sought some rescue—every night to
end by failing,

Boats there were none—rafts were useless in that
swiftly-flowing current;
Swimming was a feat beyond him—so he spent the
time in railing
At the fate that sent him over in the face of that
wild torrent.

Well that week seemed more like fifty, but of
course at last it ended;

And he crossed a plank-like passage while the
river laughed beneath him;
And the bride he had deserted welcomed him with
arms extended,
While his friends and kin with jesting and with
laughter came to greet him.

Yes, that stream—that creek you see there—worked
 the mischief I have told you;
 And there's many an evil deed its floods must answer
 for, I fancy,
 Dear old streamlet! we forgive you, for within our
 hearts we hold you!
 We who live upon the borders "of the raging Kana-
 ranzi!"

THE SOUL OF AUTHORSHIP.

You say you're wearied of the strife
 That toil has brought you day by day;
 You seek to find some smoother way,
 And turn to try the author's life!

You say you have secured in part
 A mind to grasp, an eye to see,
 And you would be a devotee
 Of that fair Muse, the poet's art!

I laugh to see so bold a start
 Into the sea of blood and tears;
 And wonder through the fleeting years
 If you have found the poet's heart!

It is the heart, and not the mind
 That makes the poet of to-day;
 Yet there are gems along your way
 Had you the skill to seek and find!

You say, your life has known no care,
 And no love-dream has found your heart
 While toil could only teach in part
 That life might always not be fair!

Yet you would speak of human fears:
Love lightly won to lightly go:
Of parted friends; of death's cruel blow,
To move some tender heart to tears!

Surely you jest!—how could a man
Who ne'er had seen the sunset shine
Spread on a canvas line for line
As only the true artist can?

As well might I who ne'er had known
The stars, their mysteries explain,
As you to sing of love and pain,
Who never had them of your own!

Wait till you've learned to build for years
A castle high in yonder air;
To people it with dreams most fair,
And then to see it melt in tears!

To lose all longings and all strife
And hardly care what comes or goes
To smile at death as one who knows
There is no death like death in life!

To know what others seldom may
That time is measured not by years,
But some in heart-throbs and in tears
May live a century in a day!

To lose all faith in things above
And call life the revenge of Fate:
To nurse in solitude a hate—
That awful hate that once was love!

To look upon an earth so drear
That it might be a desert waste;
And feel that grief might be embraced
When such a void is left you here!

To learn when some unsparing cloud—
 Has left no room for your defence
 The boundless depths of loneliness
 Of one alone in some vast crowd!

To almost long to feel again
 The sweet, mad pain of love's decay;
 To watch the shadows by the way
 Without a thought that they are men!

(For when The One hath crossed your lot,
 The race of men as well were gone:
 You glance upon them one by one
 With eyes that look, but see them not!)

Then turn with eyes half fixed on Fame,
 And try to paint in words of fire
 These fancies that so soon expire
 And give those shadows form and name!

Do you not know though you might steal
 Words of a power that could not die,
 Unless your heart sent out the cry—
 You could not make another feel!

Have you not learned to wisely read
 Between the lines that gleam with tears,
 How through the agony of years
 That poet's soul had learned to bleed?

'Tis but when life's first dawn departs
 And love with youth has passed away
 That one can faithfully portray
 That hungry cry of famished hearts!

How could you make the pulse beat fast
 Through lines and lines of empty rhyme
 Unless you too, some far-off time
 Had felt the "horror of the last!"

How could you run throughout the whole,
The heart-ache and the note forlorn,
Unless it had sometime been born
In bitterest travail of your soul!

How could you speak of lips that call
To souls that have no ears to hear
Had you not some time held most dear
Someone who owned another's thrall!

How dare you sing of One above,
When only those whose feet have trod
O'er mountain and through vale with God
Can sound the depths of all! His love!

How could you even sing of cheer
Who never knew the gloom of night!
Could one be sure the earth was bright
Who had not first learned it was drear?

How could you make the verse ring brave
With heart-ache round some sombre pall,
Unless you, too, had buried all
Of life within some loved one's grave!

They say that some live on and on
But to their bosom still to hold
Old words that burned, yet soon grew cold,
And memory kisses that are gone!

They say some wounds will never heal
That there are loves whose dying pain
Kills every thought of love again
And leaves one powerless to feel!

That there are some hearts strangely numb,
That never found relief in tears,
Through all the servitude of years,
But bled, and bled, yet still were dumb

That even eyes which laugh the most
May hide within their inmost part
The look of one whose haunted heart
Holds nothing but a grinning ghost!

They say that dire old demons dwell
In many a soul that once was gay
And sported all its youth away—
Unless you know, how can you tell?

You'd sing of some departed dream,
But tender fancies have no part
Within a cold and pulseless heart
That has not learned what love may mean.

You'd even sing of faithful love—
I laugh in mockery at the thought!
Such inspirations must be sought
And found in lanes you know not of!

You may not even understand
The glory Nature spreads around,
For all her beauties are not found
Till Love hath touched them with his hand.

Until the sleeping soul finds birth,
No murmuring stream is understood;
No majesty in yonder wood;
Nothing sublime in all the earth!

You may not voice the laborers' cries
Who missed the music of the spheres,
Till your hands, too, have toiled for years
And, hopeless, learned to sympathize!

Don't think in idle thought again
The path is one where roses bloom,
For I can see along it loom
The thorny penance of the pen.

You work so hard to catch the song
That sings its sweetness in your ear,
Yet comes and goes, and sounds not clear
Till you have followed far and long.

You learn how hard amid the din
Of all the rushing world without
To close the ear to sounds without
That jar on melodies within!

And then when all the work is wrought
You mark the weakness of the words
And feel through all your spirit surge
The bitter scorn of afterthought!

You see how powerless the lines
The soul's divining to portray,
When Nature, all along her way
Has filled it full of mystic signs!

You see the truest fancies die
Within the cold and formal frame
Of words, so commonplace and tame
They could not voice so deep a cry!

You find results so far below
The smallest standard you could raise
And then you list to idle praise
Of that whose worthlessness you know!

Your heart o'erflows with tenderness,
Or in the depths fights fierce despair:
Yet heart-throbs vainly beat the air
In words too weak to half express!

Then when the pen has seemed to flow
More close unto the goal you sought
You find that some one else's thought
Hath compassed all that years ago!

(Oh for a taste of that glad mood
That was the Maker's afterthought
Who when the work of worlds was wrought
Looked on it and pronounced it good!)

The critic comes—the truest friend—
And kindly as the surgeon's knife,
Probes to the vitals of your life
To watch its blood ooze to the end!

You loathe him for it in the breast
He robbed of its creative joy,
But learn the hand that could destroy
Such dreams was his who loved you best!

You follow the inspiring ray
Your soul in heavens of delight;—
You turn, to fall in blackest night
Where beams no hope of dawning day!

Some fantasy is vainly sought;
You eager chase false lights about,
Only to lose your pathway out
And tangle in a web of thought!

The Muse will lead you here and there
To find the rainbow's pots of gold,
Only to plunge you in the cold
And cruel waters of despair!

This, Man is the inspiring art
Your eye's so blindly covet now!
The laurels twined about your brow
Must come as thorns to pierce your heart!

Yet even this will sometime cease,
And strife will find its recompense
When Fame shall turn to lead you hence
And crown you on the Mount of Peace!

Ah, she is jealous, Mistress Art,
 And almost vainly is pursued
 By him who comes in idle mood
 To bring her a divided heart!

Yet he who giveth up her charms
 Too sore-discouraged to pursue
 The light it seems so vain to woo,
 May turn to find her in his arms!

But wait, my friend, until you see
 Your fond hopes failing one by one;
 Come at the setting of your sun
 And you may turn to poetry!

Come with drawn lips and lashes wet,
 For God will love you better so;
 Then smile, for some time you may know
 You were not happier to forget!

For, but for loss we'd prize no gain:
 And but for pain, scarce welcome joy:
 It is when grief our loves destroy
 We learn how sweet to smile through pain!

And they who laugh amid their tears,
 Who smile beneath a barren sky,
 And force a song to drown the sigh,
 Have blended youth with all their years!

You say the years may teach the spell
 And you, in time, may gain the power:
 Ah, friend, it comes in one short hour—
 First learn to FEEL and then to TELL.

For by the whole wide-world of art,
 And all the minds that ever thought
 The power of grief could not be taught,
 The heart alone can speak to heart!

Some day your heart will hear a song
 That thrills so madly through each vein,
 It never can grow calm again—
 It may come soon—it may be long!

But then--and not till then--your throat
 Can voice the rapture of that strain;
 Rapture so soon to turn to pain
 When it shall sound its dying note!

It will be brief—a moment's bliss,
 And you will learn to sing of Heaven'
 Another moment, and is given
 The power to sing of all life's miss!

You see it cometh on you fast,
 That power that was so long unknown;
 But you will hold the undertone
 Of that sweet song while life shall last!

If you would write of sorrow then,
 And sing some song of human woe,
 Just tell of that of which you know,
 And you may touch the hearts of men!

For triumphing o'er every art
 And all the classics of the years,
 To those whose souls have known their tears,
 Appeals the language of the heart!

MY HERITAGE.

To me was given before I came to earth
 A boon that many a spirit is denied—
 Of Love begotten, found I welcome birth,
 And floated on Love's current to Life's tide,
 My mother was a dreamer and a poet,—
 Not one who pens, as I, at idle rhyme,
 But one whose soul was filled, and did not know it,
 With songs unsung, and cadences sublime.

She longed to pierce the mysteries of ether,
 And yearned for all that noble is, and true:
 She loved sweet verse and song, yet aimed at neither,
 Though they illumined all she tried to do.
 Before I came, she poured o'er many a poet,
 And dreamed his dreams through all that happy wait,
 And thus it was—though still she did not know it,—
 That she herself had marked for me my fate!

I grew from babyhood an idle dreamer,
 I could not be content with commonplace;
 In fancy's field I longed to be a gleaner,
 And gather bloom of sweet and lasting grace.
 I did not understand the spell that bound me,
 For others near me seemed so satisfied;
 I looked in wonderment at some around me
 Who seemed to miss so much on every side!

I could not love, as others can, so lightly;
 My loves were full of fire—my hates as strong;
 Such loves, they tell me, never can end brightly—
 Their fires consume them, ere they burn for long!
 Ah, mother, had you seen it when you bore me—
 That such a power for love or hate were mine,
 Would you not trembled at the path before me
 That could be safe but by a Guide divine?

Now, I am bound to earth by many a trammelling,
 Yet not one moment wish I otherwise;
 For in the wildest spasms of my rambling
 I glory most, thank God, in human ties!
 I know I never by the best endeavor,
 Can reach the heights I aimed at long ago,
 Yet God hath given me for mine forever
 A little song that clings and will not go!

I can but be a rhymer and I know it,
 But if some soul from me hath gathered cheer,
 I shall have filled the mission of a poet—
 To send some hope where all seems void and drear!

And if the feeble rhyme and faulty meter
That I am sending from me far and wide,
Shall reach one heart and make its life seem sweeter,
I shall, indeed, be more than satisfied!

THE HAMMOCK ON THE LAWN.

Oh it hung beneath the apples
On the carpet of the lawn,
Where the bird of summer babbles
Of its joys from early dawn,
And when all the trees were laden
With the tender blooms of May,
It was there I met the maiden
Whom my heart recalls to day.

It was there I learned to love her;
It was there I told her so:
With the blossoms sweet above her
And the grass so green below;
There, when all the listening meadows
Put their robes of silence on,
And we sat and watched the shadows
In the moonlight on the lawn!

Oh, I told her she was fairer
Than the dainty blooms above,
That the moonlight was not rarer
Than the glory of my love
And her answer—oh, I hold it
In my heart though years are gone
Since the evening when she told it
In the hammock on the lawn!

She was lithe as any feather
 And I called her my "Child-wife,"
 As we sat so oft together
 Planing all our future life.
 Ah! an unseen cloud was o'er us,
 That would burst while yet 'twas dawn
 And the joy we thought before us
 Died in sorrow on the lawn!

Oh, the years rolled on and left me—
 And the lawn is far away
 But the struggle that bereft me
 Comes as clear as then to-day,
 When we stood so heavy-hearted
 Knowing well that all was gone,
 While in bitter tears we parted
 By the hammock on the lawn!

She returned my ring with kisses,
 But she said I would forget
 In the power of coming blisses
 That we two had ever met;
 True;—I since have loved another
 Just as she herself has done,
 But no later love could smother
 All the memories of that lawn.

Once since I have wandered over
 All the scenes we loved so well,
 But the lawn was grown with clover,
 And the trees had lost their spell,
 While the girl I loved so madly,
 Had from all those landmarks gone,
 And I missed her there as sadly
 As the hammock from the lawn.

Now my "child-wife" is another's,
 And complete again her life;
 While I—well, I'm like all others,
 I have won myself a wife;

So you see I should forget t—
 That sweet past so surely gone;
 It were madness to regret it—
 And that summer on the lawn!

Yet I'd give much to discover,
 Though it were not well, I know,
 If she thinks of her old lover,
 And the swing of long ago,
 Time has made a long endeavor,
 And her charms may all be gone,
 But my memory sees her ever
 As I left her on the lawn!

And if I should sudden meet her
 In some path of life to-day,
 How, I wonder, should I greet her—
 What the first words we would say?
 Ah! if all her youthful glory
 Be forever from her gone,
 Let me keep instead before me
 My wee fairy of the lawn!

Oh, I love my own most dearly,
 And my spirit does not tire,
 But I sometimes see most clearly
 That I've lost the olden fire;
 And--God help me!--th it 'twere sweeter
 If these new-formed ties were gone
 And I might go back and meet her
 By the hammoek on the lawn!

ISABEL.

I sit trying a new cigar.
 While my wife in a room beyond
 Is bending above our baby there,

And tenderly humming a dreamy air
 With a look that is more than fond;
 And something about her my fancies start
 To a memory in which she has had no part.

It may be the style of her hair,
 Or the glow of her crimson gown.
 Or it may be the music upon the air
 Or a song that we one time had thought so fair
 That I caught as I hurried down;
 I cannot say what has brought the spell,
 But, I'm thinking of you—you, Isabel!

It is strange! For the past I have small regret,
 Yet, to-night, you seem very near:
 My wife, and the present, and all I've met
 In the smoke and its magic I seem to forget,
 And only the past is here—
 The past, when life seemed an unending song
 With your thrilling alto to help it along!

My wife and her lullaby vanishes quite,
 And I see but your dark brown eyes,
 And I hear but the music we thought so bright
 That we sang together on many a night
 When the world was a paradise,
 And our warm young hearts into one were blent,
 For love and music were all life meant!

I think of it all, Isabel—
 The bliss of those years that we knew;
 Then I think of the shock that had broken the spell,
 When I learned I had loved you too fondly and well,
 And I was deceived in you!
 O, Isabel! all of that madness lives yet,
 That I fondly believed I had learned to forget!

Perhaps I was hard, Isabel,
 But I hated with such a hate!
 Perhaps I was hard, and it had been well
 To deal more kindly, I cannot tell,
 For the question is all too late.
 Oh, I know that my anger was like the wind,
 Yet you might have been sinned against more than you
 sinned.

Had I loved you less, Isabel,
 My grief had been less, I know;
 But my love had been such as the angels tell,
 And my suffering was as the fires of hell,
 Though it burned to death long ago!
 And I think of the time as men often do
 When you lived for me and I lived for you.

Oh! you might have made, Isabel,
 Such a man as God meant of me;
 But the years have taken that holy spell
 And nothing more sacred has come to dwell
 In the heart where you used to be.
 It is strange though I know you were false to the core,
 That to-night I am longing to clasp you once more!

Oh, have you, too, learned to prize
 The bitter of that last kiss
 More than all the love-light in other eyes,
 And all of the honey that for you lies
 In the holds of a later bliss?
 We have both formed ties that are sweet and true,
 Yet to-night, I am wasting a dream on you!

Sometimes, in the night, Isabel,
 You come to me, fair as of old:—
 With the tall, slim figure I knew so well
 And the dark brown eyes with the olden spell,
 You come back to my eager fold;

And then I forget all that lies between
Till the morning tells me 'twas only a dream!

Oh, why, why, Isabel,
Did I find you as false as fair?
I trusted more truly than I could tell;
I loved you—as men seldom do—too well,—
In the years that have vanished there!
Oh, why did God make you in form so sweet,
And give you a heart that was false beneath?

Oh, my life would be better yet—
I am sure of it, Isabel,—
If God had but willed that I had not met
The face that to-night I cannot forget
As it comes with its sweet, sweet spell,
And casts such a shade on the joys that I see,
As it threatens to come 'twixt the present and me.

Yet I'm thinking, O Isabel,
That perhaps, were our lives made one,
We had learned to regret it—ah, who can tell?
For I'm sure in my memory always would dwell
The thought of the wrong you had done!
I might have forgiven—I could not forget,
And all of our days had been filled with regret.

* * * * *

The babe is asleep at last
And my little wife comes away;
My cigar goes out, and it takes the past
With all of its fancies away so fast,
As I turn to her eyes of grey;
And I look in their depths where the wife-lights swell
And murmur, "Thank God for it all—'tis well!"

HAPPINESS

From day to day, whate'er we say,
We hold one common quest;
And be our aim for wealth or fame
We've one goal with the rest:
For toward all ends we eager press
That we may find there happiness.

One search is told as shining gold;
Another looks for fame;
With eyes above, some look for love;
But all remain the same;
We seek alone our lives to bless
That gift that seemeth happiness.

Oh, oft it be to you and me
A phantom, still beyond;
And when at last it meets our grasp,
No happiness is found
That turns to loss we thought was gain
And joy, long-sought, has come as pain!

I question, too, as many do,
Can happiness be sure?
It rests too much upon the touch
Of souls to be secure;
We all are mirrors of others' moods
And feed our lives on borrowed foods!

When just one frown can cast me down
Into the gloom of night;
And just one smile that beams awhile
Can make the whole world bright;
How can I call them happy years
In which one word can start the tears?

One old-time tone has power alone
 To fill my day with song;
 And but to miss one parting kiss
 Makes all my world go wrong; —
 My happiness can only be
 When I have you, and you have me.

Yet there's a peace that shall not cease
 While earth and heaven stand;
 That joy that flows in one who knows
 He does the best he can;
 For be the outcome dark or bright
 We will find joy in doing right.

And all the song that must belong
 To earth and earthly bliss,
 Must fail and die when joys draw nigh
 The Master marks are His!
 For that alone can last all-while
 Which comes from God's approving smile.

CHANGES.

I walked through an old garden-spot to-day;
 Sweet flowers grew there as in days gone by;
 Some birds were singing in the same glad way;
 The sun smiled brightly in the azure sky.

Yet not one bit the same it seemed to me
 As in the days we passed so sweetly there;
 There was a lack—I know not what it be—
 But flowers, nor songs, nor skies seems half so fair!

All—all—was changed as all things earthly must,—
 Our tastes, our needs are changing constantly;
 And while I smiled at old hopes lost in dust,
 I felt the greatest change was that in me!

Our hearts outgrow the dreams of early youth,
 Just as the year outgrows the flowers of May;
 And you and I, as others, learned the truth,
 That all things live their time and pass away.

Sometimes we cry aloud when change appears,—
 We miss familiar glories of the old;
 Yet soon—ah soon, indeed!—the new endears,
 And we forget the silver for the gold.

For Time—kinder than cruel—loves a change,
 And while we yet nurse pain, he brings us balm
 That ere we realize that aught is strange,
 Floods all our spirit with its healing calm!

We love our griefs; we cling to all our tears,
 And revel in the luxury of regret;
 And rather choose the agony of years
 Than that hour when we learn we can forget!

And so amid the garden of the past,
 The olden memories fade in scenes grown new;
 I miss you, dear, there where I saw you ast,
 Yet miss my olden self as much as you!

All,—all the hopes and aims I cherished then
 Appear so frivolous to me to-day;
 And you,—the nearest of my world of men—
 Have grown to be so very far away!

We were but children, playing there at life,
 Without a thought that life was not all play;
 We needed all the years of growth and strife
 To make the man and woman of to-day!

Let it was Spring—thank God we all have Spring!—
 And we were happy,—were we not?—those days;
 Ah! never have I heard the robin sing
 With half the sweetness of those early lays!

We loved the violets truly, you and I;
 And thought, of course, to find them always there;
 We stood at May's decline and watched them die
 With that sweet woe we children called despair.

We wept of course when first we saw them die,
 But soon the Summer brought a richer lot;
 And then apart we revelled, you and I,
 In July splendor, and the Spring forgot.

Summer is sweet—yet you have had no part
 In this rose-garden where I walk at noon;
 And all the thrilling fragrance in my heart
 Finds for the humble violet little room!

So let them go! I keep a withered few
 Hid deep within my heart of hearts to-day;
 You plucked them—do you mind it?—when the d
 Yet sparkled on the grasses where they lay.

Ah! well it is to change when seasons do,
 And waste no glory though our looking back:
 That Spring that stole the violets, took you, too;
 And yet—forgive me, dear—I feel no lack!

I might, I know, have found the rose too red,
 Or all its fragrance heavy for the air;
 But no! my heart was born again, not dead,
 To wonder that it thought the violets fair!

You must not chide me—can you think it strange
 When earth itself takes on so many hues,
 That hearts should heed the same fixed law of change,
 Beneath a sky that shows us varied blues?

Truly you cannot mean you still would cling
 To all of which maturer souls must tire,
 You cannot mean that you would hold to Spring,
 When you might know the heat of Summer fire!

“Do I not miss it?—” sometimes, to be sure,
 When some sweet whiff of violet scents the air;
 But turning to the rose I find a cure
 And soon forget the violets seemed so fair!

AN EGOTIST.

You say I have shown that I love you
 Because as a friend I have sought
 In the passage of light words to prove you,
 And thrown you back thought for your thought,
 Why, Man, that alone should have showed you
 How cold were the words that would come;
 For the lips of the one who had loved you
 You had found to be tremblingly dumb!

You say I can never forget you
 For you’ve learned in a moment’s surprise
 When sometimes by chance I have met you
 To read my delight in my eyes!
 You are blind—if my heart’s introspection
 Had showed me your face holding thrall
 My eyes, turned another direction,
 Would never have seen you at all!

You say you have this other token,
 That I, in the warmest of ways,
 When your name has by others been spoken
 Have heartily joined in its praise.
 Ah! sir, if my heart at “Attention!”
 Had learned you as hearts only may,
 Be sure, when your name was in mention,
 I had not found a word I could say!

You think by a rhyme I had written,
 That colored your virtues so high,
 (And passed o'er the faults) that I'm smitten
 By some trick of voice or of eye.

 Ah, fool, would a heart ope its fountain,
 And cry out its secrets aloud?
 As well might I stand on a mountain,
 And preach to a listening crowd!

Don't you know that we rhymers like sketching,
 And search for some form to admire:
 Then enlarge on the best in our etching
 And purge out the bad, as by fire?

 So be sure, though you think it seems brighter
 Than the rosy ideal of a friend,
 If it came from the heart of the writer
 It had never—oh, never!— been penned!

You say I've been warm in my greeting,
 As though I found much to admire,
 Have claimed you as friend since our meeting,
 Which tells you of warmer desire!

 Oh, how strange that you should not discover
 That a man may forever depend
 That a woman who craved him as lover
 Could never have called him a friend!

Oh, how could you think a pure woman
 Could wear all her heart in her cheek?
 Don't you know, be she ever so human,
 It is only the man who can speak?

 She may spend all her life-time in dreaming
 But until HE has made life a whole,
 She must cloak in the vesture of seeming,
 The innermost thoughts of her soul!

O I laugh, and I laugh at your follies!
 You Egotist, why don't you start
 And fathom that holy of holies,
 The shrine of a true woman's heart!

Then learn that no eyes that could meet you,
 And smile back the glances of yours,
 Are the windows where ever shall greet you
 That love-light that deathless endures!

Now go! Nay, look not so accusing,
 I've the heart of a true woman, yet;
 And though I am firm in refusing,
 I deny that I've played the coquette!
 I have made you a friend, sir, as truly
 As Plato himself might inspire
 With never a thought that unduly,
 Some glance might breed deeper desire!

No—no! do not speak so insanely—
 You wrong all the woman within!
 Had I shown you my favor less plainly,
 You then might have called it a sin!
 There are things that no woman discloses,
 But you wrong me—now hear what is true,
 That if men were as scarce as blue roses
 My heart could not open to you!

PELL.

In idling with old souvenirs to-day
 I found some letters long since lain away;
 Letters whose sheets are yellow now with age,
 Yet waken sleeping memories with each page;
 Letters whose words are varied grave and light,
 With veins of tenderness, and veiled delight;
 Whose fires yet burn with all the power of old,
 Although the hand that penned them all is cold!

I see a promise here,—a pleading there,
 With now and then a blessing or a prayer;
 And depths of thought and feeling in each line
 That left the writer's heart and sank in mine:
 Hopes that were kindled but to burn so fast
 Into the smoke and ashes of the past;
 The words alone survive the change of years,
 And these are blurring through a mist of tears.

They bring a sad old story back again
 That I had buried in its robe of pain—
 The memory of a life, so brave and strong,
 Just testing its young pinions in the throng;
 A life that closely touched on mine of yore,
 That was so much, and might have been much more;
 A life that seemed so far removed from death,
 And yet could be extinguished with a breath!

To night some fascination holds me here;
 An unseen presence seems to linger near:
 Some shadow I but dimly understand
 So close I almost touch it with my hand;
 And in the spell, I live the past again
 With all its happiness and all its pain,
 Though even yet I shudder to recall
 The story with the sorrow of it all!

An evening's sport upon the tempting lake,
 A boat with dire disaster in its wake;
 An accident—but one of many more,
 Though none had so appealed to me before!
 The waters closed upon a manly form
 That was no more to breast life's changing storm;
 That's all!—a tale we almost daily see,
 But oh! the vital difference to me!

I sit and think of all he might have won,
 And all the noble deeds he might have done;
 Recalling the integrity and truth
 And all the promise of his pure sweet youth:

I think of all it meant to me at last,
And all the possibilities of the past
And through my spirit rings the worn-out cry,
That ever-present, never-answered "why?"

And yet I feel his life was not in vain;
The loss was ours alone, and ours the pain;
His mission here was done as God had willed
Else his life-song had not so soon been stilled.
My life is better for the little time
That his true nature left its print on mine,
And throughout all my years I shall be glad
For all the sweet communion then we had.

My life is even better for the grief
That drowned the hopes so promising and brief;
For in the deepest woe some solace lies.
And such a sorrow surely purifies.
Without the shadows, would we prize the light?
And who would love the morn who knew no night?
Perhaps that pain in some way came to bless
And yet may prove a source of happiness.

'Tis true I buried much that I could crave
Within the humble shadows of his grave:
And with him died in me a sacred part
Of all the youthful yearnings of my heart;
'Tis sweet to miss some part of life to-day
That followed out the soul that passed away;
'T is sweet to feel that some freed breath may be
With him to whisper tender thoughts of me.

Sometimes I pause to murmur "It is well!"
When heavy trials cast o'er me their spell:
There is a sweet contentment just to know
Our dead are ours, secure from all below;
Though true he was, he might have changed some day;
Though pure he was, the best are led astray;
I've lived to learn as many another hath,
That there are partings that are worse than death.

I often wonder if our dear ones know
 What passes in the world of men below,
 And if, remembering all their earthly track,
 They sometimes pause and wistfully turn back,
 To follow some beloved one on the way,
 Or clear some threat'ning sorrow from the day,
 That we may find some hours filled full of cheer,
 Unconscious that the old-loved form is near.

Sometimes so heavy grows the load of care
 That it seems more than human hands can bear;
 And then I almost envy him the bliss
 That took him far from weariness like this.
 It was so sweet to close a happy eye
 And open it on beauties in the sky;
 To leave amid a laugh of boyish cheer
 Before the world had shown it could be drear.

If we could fathom God's infinitude,
 And all His plans for us were understood,
 We then should see He takes our own away
 To keep them spotless for some happier day;
 We then should see the good that He denies
 Would not be good in His all-seeing eyes,
 But as a mother takes a harmful toy,
 So doth our Father take forbidden joy.

We cling too closely to the husks of earth,
 And spend our time in revelry and mirth;
 We love, as sons of men have ever done,
 And drift away from the Eternal One;
 'Tis then that He must stretch His chastening hand,
 That we once more awake to understand
 That those we love for but a time were given,
 And turn our wandering thoughts from earth to Heaven.

It is not meet that we should e'er depend
 So surely on the vigor of a friend:

We women stake too much, and lose it all,
 Forgetting that the strongest one may fall.
 Our lives are shaped too much by those we love;
 We cling in weakness that we know not of
 Till the support is rudely torn away,
 And we are left to thrive as best we may.

Then do we say our lives in ruins lie,
 And all our hopes and aims perforce must die,
 We weep above the wreck of life's ideal
 That seems so very far above the real;
 The goal that seemed so near our grasp before
 We say is possible for us no more,
 Forgetting that the strength of God is sure,
 And His support forever shall endure!

We are too prone to rail at Fate and say,
 "I might have soared so high that other way!"
 How do we know the ideals of the past
 May not by effort be attained at last?
 Why do we sit and mourn for hopes that fled,
 And seek to call to life a dream that's dead?
 Life need not lose through change of time and scene;
 We yet may be all that we might have been!

The star that beckoned on in days of youth
 May shine for us to day in very truth;
 But we are gazing on a distant sphere
 And disregard the glory that is near.
 We are but human that we value most
 The old companion, or the love that's lost;
 We are but worldlings, and we dearly prize
 The gift that just beyond our effort lies!

To-night I say, "This dream must be the last;
 Forever be it buried in the past!"
 To-morrow comes—the dream awakes with day,
 Refusing to be coldly lain away.

FORGET YOU?

There are some echoes from the unsea shore
 That force themselves upon me o'er and o'er,
 And voices that have ceased to greet me here
 Still sound their cadences within my ear.

I turn—the letters rustle, and at last
 I force aside this vision of the past;—
 It seems I did not fully understand
 The power of that well-remembered hand.
 I lay them back again within their place,
 Together with a pictured boyish face,
 And turn away to check the tear-drops' flow,
 For—these are all of him that's left me now.

Thank God that Duty and her servitude
 Sternly forbids indulging every mood!
 The past is ours no more—'tis God's alone;
 The future beckons, and it is our own,
 Then may we take the "will" to find the "way."
 And make the "might have beens" our own to-day,
 With hopeful eyes upon the bye-and-bye,
 So sure that Heaven holds all for which we sigh!
 (1896)

FORGET YOU?

Do I forget you?
 My heart answers, "No!"
 From the day of our parting
 Till this one, I know
 That memory is stronger
 Each hour that I live,
 And I cannot forget
 Though I freely forgive.

Should I forget you?
God knows that I should,
If I care to be happy
Or wish to be good;
For memory but lashes
My heart to rebel,
And fills it with fires
That no coldness can quell!

Would I forget you?
Sometimes I would, dear,
When the burden grows heavy,
And skies seem more drear;
But it's often and oftener
I love to recall
Those brief hours of pleasure,
The sorrow, and all!

Must I forget you?
Do you wish it so?
There's nothing now left me
But memory, you know;
The cup of our love-dream
You drained of its best;
Save the dregs in the bottom—
Oh, leave me the rest!

Can I forget you?
Nay, love, nevermore!
Your image is stamped
On my heart's very core,
And though living must be
But an endless regret,
Until life ends forever
I cannot forget.

(1895)

THE SHOOTING OF A WELL.

They tell me you are here a-looking 'round!
 Well, how d'you like the region you have found?
 There's lots of things that must look strange to you,
 And heaps of places full of danger too,
 It's not the finest spot on earth I know,
 But you'll find drawbacks every where you go;
 And, stranger, it will average pretty fair—
 It's men are honest, and their dealings square.

This morning they have planned to shoot a well;
 That were a sight worth seeing, let me tell!—
 A sight that's thrilled through all I've ever met.
 A sight that none, once seeing, could forget.
 So get your nat, and walk across with me,—
 Whose eyes are open, mighty things may see!
 And far from being sorry that you went,
 You'll say the morning was indeed well spent.

That is the lease a mile towards the right;
 You mark it not; so many rigs, in sight!
 Look out! now walk this plank behind me here—
 A. B. S. ditch to cross!—there! now we're clear!
 Now duck your head a bit or you may fall—
 No danger, sir—a surface-rod that's all!
 Just see the rigs,—some far away, some close—
 We might count eighty odd from here. I s'pose!

That noise you hear is from that engine there;
 It must be hard for untaught nerves to bear;
 But I could sleep beside it and not hear
 Except to miss it, should it disappear.
 You see, we are accustomed to its call
 Who know we are dependent on it all;

For that gas-engine, mindless of its power,
Puffs dollars in our pockets every hour.

You do not like the odor of the oil,
But we who live on well-producing soil
Take in new life with every breath we draw,
For oil means money here, and wealth is law.
Here is a tank—climb up and peep within;
That dark stuff may no admiration win
But you may like it better when I say
It brings in fifteen dollars every day!

That's royalty, you know, and varies some:
Sometimes a higher rate by far may come;
And sometimes less—but one can live you know
Awhile on TEN if it should happen so.
Here is a power-house that's run by steam;
Not many of them now are ever seen;
They make less noise but gas is not so dear,
And does the work, and so we use it here.

Those storage tanks upon the other lease
Hold fifty thousand barrels of oil apiece;
Eight of them burned one day,—that was a sigh;
The country here for miles ablaze with light!
'Twas awful, too—so great a loss—but stay!
What do you think of every night's display?
When all the B. S. fires and gas-lights shine
Can you look on and not pronounce it fine?

Well here's the well they're going to shoot to-day;
The driller's done his work, and gone away;
Down in the ground for fifteen hundred feet,
He's worked his way, and all is now complete;
Complete as far as he has power to go,
And ready for the crowning test you know;
The test that serves the hole's truth worth to tell!
And makes of it at once a full-fledged well.

Yes that's the derrick, that wind-mill affair
That reaches fully seventy feet in air;

To look up there might make your senses whirl,
 But all these fellows climb it like a squirrel!
 The crowd seems anxious, but that's not so queer;
 A cool two thousand's represented here.
 There comes the superintendent back of you,
 And there's the shooter with his wagon, too;
 Not quite so close,—there's nothing to be seen;
 Look out! why, man, that's nitro-glycerine!

The field-boss stands across there to your right,
 There's roustabouts and tool-dressers in sight;
 And there's a pamper—before many an hour
 He may be stationed here, a "running tour!"
 You see that women, too, are turning out,
 And crowds of children, gathering about;
 It is a sight, familiar though it be,
 That somehow, we are always glad to see.

You see those can-like pipes within the cart?
 That's tubing, and they fill it part by part
 With nitro-glycerine, then very slow
 'Tis lowered in the hole for rods below.
 I believe the fellows work with bated breaths;
 One slip, you know, might mean a hundred deaths;
 And though they may have worked at it for years,
 Methinks they cannot wholly stifle fears.

Sometimes, just to protect the crops about,
 They cap the well in—this they shoot without;
 They're ready now; the go-devil goes in—
 A piece of iron like a coupling-pin.
 They're lowering it—run back to safer ground,
 For woe to him who may too close be found!
 There may be little danger—we can't know;
 I wouldn't run the risk—'tis unwise so!

We are as careful as the best of men,
 But accidents have happened even then!
 This is no place where danger can be dared,—
 By any one who wishes to be spared.

There! hear that thud that seems to shake the sod
 Around us here for many and many a rod?
 'The go-devil has reached the bottom now,
 And that's the warning from the world below.

There! There! look now! but isn't that a sight?
 A splendid shot indeed! that well's all right;
 Just see the oil and rocks come gushing there—
 Methinks they shoot a hundred feet in air!
 No w, friend—is not the sight beyond all praise?
 And one you will remember all your days!
 Yes, that is all! now go back home and tell
 Your neighbors how those oil men shoot a well!

THE FIRE-WHISTLE.*

In the darkness of the night,
 Silence reigning everywhere,
 We are 'wakened in a fright
 By a cry upon the air
 Like some dying soul's despair;
 Calling, calling from a distance;
 Pleading, praying for assistanee
 Sighing, crying, soft and low
 In a sadness more than human
 Like the last deep cry of woe

* This composition is an attempt to reproduce the sensations aroused at night by the "Wild Cat" Whistle, used in many places as a fire-alarm.

From the heart of some lost woman!
 Oh! the depths of bitterness
 In that struggle of distress,
 Moaning,
 Groaning,
 Wrestling there—
 Fighting for a draught of air!
 Sobbing,
 Throbbing,
 As for breath
 In the gasping hour of death!
 Till our listening spirits bleed
 For that suffering creature's need!

* * *

Hear the call rise high and higher
 Like the ravage of the fire!
 Almost frantic grows the air
 With that startling warning there
 From the spirit of despair;
 Sounding on those hours of slumber
 Like the resonance of thunder
 Turning to the mocking laugh
 Of a cyclone in its wrath!
 Then a howling,
 And a growling
 Sounds about us o'er and o'er,
 Like a hungry lion's roar,
 While the cry comes through the air
 Of some victim in his lair!
 Oh, that shrill, shrill cry for mercy
 From a throat all parched and thirsty!
 Oh, that piercing, piercing shriek,
 That would make the strongest weak!
 It might be delirium's fear
 When the pestilence is near,
 For the fury of that scream
 It its madness well might seem
 Wrong from some demented dream

Muttering,
 Sputtering,
 Hissing there
 All its curses on the air!
 Jangling
 Wrangling
 In the fold.
 Of some lusty vampire's hold
 Till the clashing
 And the crashing
 Of those shrieks upon the wind,
 Almost madden us who listen
 Till the eyes of Vengeance glisten
 And we think, "I, too have sinned!"

* * *

Yet the threat'nings fiercer roll
 Turning to some fiend's howl
 And a long, blood-curdling hoot
 From some angry demon's throat
 Seems to turn the night-air red
 With the gore of murdered dead!
 Oh! the horror of that sound
 As it echoes all around
 Where the souls of men are found!
 Oh! the terror of that screech!
 It might almost seem to reach
 With its wild unearthly cries,
 Where the fire of Hades lies!
 Sure that maniacal strain
 Issues from some madman's brain.
 For it seems a fiery yell
 From the very mouth of Hell!
 * And demoniacal eyes
 From the darkness seem to rise,
 While a diabolical leer
 Sounds within our very ear,

And a profane imprecation
 Settles over all the nation
 Till the flames of Hell surround us,
 And the world of men around us
 Seem but devils where they be.
 While the jeering
 And the sneering
 Of the ghouls in their glee
 Echo through that torturing night
 Like some grim and ghostly spirit
 And we feel we understand
 All the torments of the damned!

* * *

Swelling,
 Yelling,
 On and on,
 Soon it sinks in anguish down,
 And it seems to softly rave
 Like the requiem o'er a grave,
 And with low reverberation
 Do its monodies yet surge
 Like the mourners' lamentation
 Blending with the funeral dirge!
 Then a long moan of despair!
 And a sharper note of air—
 Like a muttered malediction
 Of some savage hiding there,
 And throughout the awful sadness
 Comes a fiendish cry of gladness
 As the painful changes roll,
 Like the chuckling voice of Satan
 O'er the ruin of a soul!
 Oh, he gloats in all his glory
 Though the fields so grim and gory
 Lashing, while he laughs, the tenants

Of that hideous lake of penance
 Still they swell and swell, and swell,
 In a long heart-rending knell
 Till they die away in sadness
 In the whispering of the ghouls,
 And the thrilling note of madness
 In its wailing of lost souls!
 Oh, our brains are fired with visions
 That have found us in that fright;
 And we cower beneath the bedding
 Shuddering at the sound and sight,
 Praying, "God help any creature
 Who is shelterless to-night!"

MY CREED.

"As other men have creed, so have I mine,"
 —Theodore Tilton.

Nothing is COMMON — the hand of God
 Hath modelled the lowest in earth's domain;
 He hath fashioned to suit Him the meanest clod,
 And all that defiles is the human stain;
 He hath mingled the elements wisely and well;
 And defieth the greatest to re-create,
 For the masterly efforts that seek the spell
 Can only imperfectly imitate.
 There is something grand that will ever lurk
 In all that to our weak eyes seem crude,
 For He who completed the handiwork
 Hath looked upon it and called it good!

Nothing is GRACELESS — all Nature's own

Has some where a line that is pure and fair,
 For the Master-Hand traced upon every stone,
 And left some mark of His pencil there.
 You may seek to copy the sunset's hues,
 But something beyond your reach is found,
 Till in awe the artist removes his shoes
 To acknowledge he stands upon holy ground.
 In the sin-dyed soul there abides some spark
 Of a thought divine that is hidden there,
 For the likeness of God cannot quite depart,
 And the germ bespeaks, that it once was fair.

Nothing is WORTHLESS—the God who p'anned,
 A boundless universe, knew His art;
 And every atom that left His hand
 Hath in His service a vital part.
 We tear up the weed and we throw it by;
 We frown when the thistle and tares appear,
 While someone beside us may pine and die
 Unconscious of remedies placed so near.
 The mind of man in its narrow cell
 Finds out so slowly what God hath wrought,
 And the old earth keepeth the secret well,
 But in God's own time it will all be taught.
 Even the weakest and lowliest life
 Hath a work that no one else can do,
 And the smallest hand in the battle's strife
 Hath its own particular mission, too.
 There's a niche prepared for us each and all,
 And a work laid out for our hands alone',
 And we shall not hear the last great call
 Till the work assigned has been fully done.

Nothing is LOST— not the smallest grain
 Of God's great field will be lost to Him;
 Through the course of ages it shall remain,
 Till the wonderful harvest is garnered in.

Though a million forms may the atoms pass,
 And back through the million forms again,
 But they each shall be part of the one great mass
 So long as the earth and the heavens remain.
 E'en the Utopian dreams of old,
 That came so quickly, and quickly passed,
 Have not been lost, but in God's sure hold
 Shall all be sweetly fulfilled at last.

Nothing is MEANINGLESS—here and there,
 Are fragments of life that seem incomplete,
 Some sudden meeting, some fleeting care,
 Or a stranger's face that awhile we greet,
 We say "A strange thing happened to day!"
 Then turn aside, and as soon forget!
 But we little know what we careless say,
 For nothing has ever "happened" yet!
 Each little fragment, though small it be,
 Has a part completing in God's great plan,
 And in the perfected web we will see
 How He guided the destinies of man,
 Methinks throughout life's vicissitude,
 'Twere far more easy to be content,
 If we only more surely understood
 That God hath fixed our environment.

Nothing is HOPELESS—though hard words part,
 And the boundless ocean rolls between,
 God's hand may guide the heart to heart
 And the future be all that the past has been.
 The vilest soul may again be pure,
 For in man, who was made in the image of God
 His faintest breath shall endure—endure—
 To whisper of hope in the foulest clod.

Nothing is VAIN—not a word or thought
 Shall ever be utterly thrown away,
 But under God's guidance shall all be brought
 To bring forth fruit some appointed day.
 Not a cheeing smile, not a kindly deed,

Not a single note of a hopeful strain,
 But we shall find in some hour of need
 Was not to be altogether in vain.
 The sincere resolve you so soon forgot,
 The effort that seemed so barren of fruit,
 Shall know its effect in some happier lot,
 For the Source of all Goodness was at the root!
 Even our moments of joy and pain
 Have come as angels to work His will.
 And when they have vanished and gone again
 The prints of their feet shall be with us still
 There is no good impulse in man to-day.
 There is no true yearning, no noble aim,
 But God hath inspired in His own sweet way,
 And no thought of His can be all in vain!

ALL EARTH IS KIN—there is but one God,—
 The great All-Father of life below
 Who with human feet though our pathways trod,
 As an Elder Brother our trials to know,
 One law is spoken for high and low;
 A law universal—the law of love;
 And the lives of all men in one current flow,
 To the fountain of love in the Heart above.

Nothing is PERFECT—God leaves some lack
 That we may not find the earth complete,
 But may feel some need that will draw us back,
 To a place of rest at the nail-pierced feet;
 We should not dream of a better land
 If here perfection were widely given.
 And the secret of all we will understand
 When we find its counterpart in Heaven!

Nothing's IMPOSSIBLE—God's great power
 Hath known no limit on land or sea;
 And none can conceive in this early hour
 The marvelous wonders that yet shall be;

For Progress walks with a mammoth stride
 When God's omnipotence wields the rod;
 Let the weakness of man in His power abide,
 For all things are possible with God!

Nothing is MORRAL—no leaflet sere
 But buds again in some brighter day;
 Not a flower goes but to re-appear
 With the same sweet grace for another May.
 Our words and deeds shall live on and on,
 When these frail bodies have ceased to be,
 And our lives yet speak when our souls have gone
 To enter on immortality!

The one great lack in the world to-day,
 Is abiding faith in the love of God;
 And a perfect trust in a Father's way
 When that way leadeth beneath the rod
 Oh, the life that is lost in Eternal Love
 Is the only life that is sweet and whole,
 And the heart finds joys that we know not of
 When it lies submissive in God's control.
 When the human in man to divine submits.
 Then warring and wrangling will have to cease;
 Till the hand of the Master-Love firmly knits
 All hearts in a universal peace.
 There is much that's corrupt and there's much impure,
 And only one Conqueror wot we of,—
 Whose power and courage forever endure
 Till the universe sways to the power of love!
 And the hour must come and the day must dawn
 If we anchor our faith to the surest rod,
 When the evil of Earth shall have melted and gone,
 And man be once more in the image of God!
 When all shall be purged from the world of men,
 That offendeth the Purity shining above,
 And all shall be goodness and virtue again
 Through the might of the King who is Love in Love

HOW THEY GROW.

“Consider the lilies of the field how they grow.”
Matthew 6: 28.

“The lilies”—“how they grow”!
Do they with murmurings and discontent
Shrink from the mission on which they were sent
To blossom here below?

Are they not satisfied
Just where they stand their mission to fulfill?
To grow and bloom as is the Father’s will
By hill or river side?

Yes, they are well content;
They raise to Him their heads in voiceless praise
That He has placed them in such pleasant ways.
And such bright sunshine sent.

Their fragrance fills the air,
And scents the space around the slender stalk,
That some one, in his solitary walk,
May say the earth is fair.

They know not they are fair;
They only strive to do their duty here,
Not thinking how, in form, they may appear
As they His message bear.

They stand so humbly sweet,—
And speak to all of peace, and trust, and love,
Turning our thought from earth to things above
God’s goodness to repeat!

They know His way is best;
That where He places them ’tis best to grow,
That when He clothes them, they are better so—
They leave to Him the rest.

Ah! may we all not turn,
 We who are murmuring at our Heaven-sent lot,
 And from the lilies in their humble spot
 A needed lesson learn?

Why say we, when He calls,
 "I wonder what the world would have to say
 if I should follow Him that humble way?"—
 'Tis then our spirit falls.

We ask how we'd appear
 In worldly eyes if we such steps should take;
 But is it for THEIR smile our lives we make?—
 Seek we their words of cheer?

Surely He knows the best,
 And He who clothes the lilies loves us more,
 Places our feet, apportions us our store,
 As we may most be blest.

Oh! let us take our stand,
 Just as the lilies in their simple sphere,
 That we—when all fulfilled our mission here,—
 May sit at His right hand.

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

"Ye are the light of the world."--Math 5; 14

Christ hath said, "I am the light!"
 And we marvel not to hear;
 He, indeed, hath blessed with sight
 All the blindness of a sphere
 Where seemed everlasting night!

2

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

Now He saith, "YE are the light!"
And we marvel at the word;
We, who stray so far from right
That the name Himself preferred
Seems a mockery in His sight.

ARE we light?—then how? just so
As the moon appears at night,
Which, itself is dark we know,
But reflects the brilliant light
Of the sun's eternal glow.—

Thus are we—no light we bear,
Of ourselves—ah, no, not one!
Yet the Father saith we share
In the glory of the Son,
And His heavenly image wear.

But the day doth lose the sun
Ere the moon hath light to give:
So from earth the Christ hath gone
Ere His likeness we could live
That His will might yet be done!

What doth light?—Makes mystery clear
Well, the word of God is ours;
Do we make its truths appear
In the light of all their powers?
Nay?—then vain our mission here!

What doth light?—Points out the way
Which the darkness hath obscured!
Do we point to perfect day
Souls that are in blackness lured
Striving from its sin to stray?

Light attracts!—how many souls
Are attracted by our beam?
Some, alas! seek other goals!
We repel them--can that gleam
Be the light the Christ extols?

Light reveals defects!— do we
 By the light of our own lives
 Lead our fellow-man to see
 All the fault that in him thrives
 And the goodness that might be?

Oft the light is dull and dim,
 Not well-trimmed, or partly filled;
 Better than no light for Him,
 But not half what He hath willed
 Who would fill it to the brim!

Oft the light we think is truth
 Seems to send misleading beams,
 And give false views to the youth
 Who was drawn in by its gleams
 As the candle draws the moth!

Oft the light is hidden low
 Where its rays few lives can cheer;
 Those are better who can know
 That it shines obscurely here;
 But He doth not will it so!

Ah! how miserably we fail
 In the mission He hath given!
 How deficient and how pale
 Are the lights we hold for heaven
 The world's darkness to assail!

Let us pray for all the light
 That is well for us to bear!
 Let us keep it burning bright,
 That we yet may have a share
 In dispersing sinful night!

THREE CHRISTMAS EVES.

A tale of Three Sorrows.

Tw'as Christmas Eve—two mothers sat
 Their babes upon their knee;
 One of the twain of thoughtful mien,
 The other light and free;
 While a third was there with empty arms,—
 A childless wife was she.

They were children of one family,
 Those women gathered there:
 The first was graver and serene—
 The second, young and fair,—
 While the third, of gentle, winsome cast
 With neither did compare.

In silence sit those women three,
 And swift the evening flies;
 The first one's child in slumber rests,
 The other frets and cries.
 The mother chafes beneath the care,
 And often deeply sighs.

Methinks her nature was not formed
 To have a care so deep—
 It wearied her to hold so long
 The babe who would not sleep;
 At last she cried out pettishly,
 "He's such a trial to keep!"

Again a silence— deep and long;
 The child grew quiet, too;
 The fair young mother for a while
 A little rest time knew;
 Then spake the third— the childless one,
 As only she could do:

“It would not be a trial to me
 That little form to hold;
 I long within my empty arms
 Your treasure to enfold;
 The care of him were worth to me
 Far more than gems or gold!”

Again a silence— they who held
 Their babes upon their knee
 Clasped closer yet the little forms,
 And shuddered meaningly,
 The blaze grew dim— the midnight hour
 Was passed unconsciously.

*** ***

A year had passed—’twas Christmas Eve;
 The sisters sat again,
 Around another Yule-tide log
 Whose light was clear and plain;
 And two were there with empty arms,
 And one was crushed with pain.

The youthful mother’s careless lip
 Had found the cup of woe:
 Her little boy was sleeping now
 Beneath the Christmas snow,
 His little cries forever stilled—
 No trial to keep him now.

Her form was bent— her face was drawn
 And fevered was her brain;
 No voice could speak one hour’s relief,
 All sympathy was vain;
 At last she wet her lips to speak—
 Her voice was choked with pain:

“The punishment that comes to me
 Is more than I can bear—

THREE CHRISTMAS EVES.

Oh, if I had my boy to-night,
 He would not be a care!
 I did not mean to fret—the words
 Escaped me unaware.

“The world is blank—how can I live
 Without that little boy!
 How could I ever let his cries
 My weary nerves annoy!
 Oh! he might fret the whole day now
 And I would count it joy!”

She shook with sobs—but not a tear—
 To ease that tortured heart!
 The sisters looked upon her grief
 And felt their tear-drops start
 Then asked of Heaven to send some word
 That might relief impart.

The first to speak was she who held
 Her babe upon her knee:
 She of the calm and thoughtful brow
 Whose face 'twas rest to see,
 She held her child in closer clasp
 And murmured tenderly:

“’Twas God, poor heart, that took your child
 ’Tis true, we wonder why!
 But surely you can trust to Him
 The life He blessed you by;
 Be sure ’twas all through such a love
 As you know not, nor I!”

The poor bereaved young mother sat
 Her head bowed in her hand;
 She heard the words as one who hears
 But does not understand.
 Again deep silence settled o’er
 The little mourning band.

At last, with voice so sweet and low
 It seemed the night-wind's sigh,
 The other spake—the childless one—
 Whose blood ran warm and high—
 Her heart seemed formed for mother-love
 But God had passed her by.

‘Ah! he is waiting, dear, for you,
 And Heaven has one link more
 To bind your broken spirit here
 To the Eternal Shore!
 Oh! think of him as one who is
 ‘Not lost, but gone before!’

We cannot choose our lot in life,—
 What use to question why?
 You're richer yet than I, you know,
 With treasure in the sky!
 You're ‘mother to an angel’ now—
 No child to lose have I!”

The flood-gates opened—with a rush
 The tears come thick and fast;
 The sorrow of another's heart
 Had touched her own at last.
 She wept until the bitterest hour
 Of that life—grief had passed.

* * * *

Now thirty years are left behind;
 'Tis Christmas Eve once more;
 Again the three are sitting 'round
 The fire as in the yore;
 But all now sit with folded arms
 As one had done before.

The mother's arm that loosed their clasp
 So many years ago

Had never held a child again
 To ease that awful blow,
 But all her life her heart had cried
 For joys she could not know.

The pain had left her face more fair,
 Had made her heart more pure;
 Those empty arms had twined around
 The cross to find a cure;
 And God had spoken words of peace,
 And taught her to endure.

The childless one was childless still,
 And yet her heart was filled;
 Her love for all the human race
 Had many a sorrow stilled,
 And oft had helped a fallen soul
 On firmer rock to build.

'Twas she whose arms had held their own
 Who mourned that Christmas night;
 Her soul was racked with hopeless grief
 That crushed her with its might;
 For he, the lad whom all these years,
 She prayed to lead aright,

Had fallen neep in blackest sin
 And gone beyond recall;
 Was in his youth a cast-away
 Behind a prison wall.
 Small wonder that the woman's heart
 Was overflowed with gall.

To-night, her memory wandered back
 And stirred to life again
 The smouldering embers of a past
 Of mingled peace and pain;
 She turned to those who knew her grief,
 But tried to speak in vain.

They understood: their sad eyes met;
Alas! what word could send
One ray of light into the heart
That sin had served to rend!
Helpless they bowed before a grief
They could not comprehend.

Then she whose child was with the blest
Looked on that stricken soul,
And saw the love that took from her
The child while pure and whole
And kept him safe where waves of sin
About him could not roll.

And, too, the heart that knew no child—
Beheld that voiceless woe.
And knew that nothing tongue could say
Would ease that bitter blow:
At last she could thank God that she
Such grief should never know.

'Tis hard to live our lives alone
When God ordains it so;
'Tis harder yet to give our own
Whom He hath called to go;
But to know our child is a fallen soul
Is by far the bitterest blow.

'Tis God alone can mark our paths—
O let us not complain!
He knows how much our lives may bear
Of pleasure or of pain;
And if we trust it all to Him,
It shall not be in vain.

AN ANGEL-VISITANT

A Fragment

Gently as the morn draws nigh,
 To a sombre, sleeping earth,
 Came the angels from the sky
 And a human soul found birth.

Softly as the wing of dove
 Beats the air in wanton play,
 Angel-feet return above,
 Bearing mother's soul away.

Grew the child for three short years,
 But his tiny infant hand
 Seemed to reach beyond the spheres
 Some one's clasped in spirit-land,

E'er his eyes were fixed above,
 Always seemingly to see
 Visions of eternal love
 Where his spirit yearned to be.

One hand in his father's here;
 One, in mother's, far above;
 Seemed to hold their two hearts near
 In a bond of deathless love!

But the light within his eyes
 Grew each day more bright and clear;
 Firmer one hand clasped the skies
 Looser grew the other here.

Softly as the sun's last ray
 Did his star of life grow dim,
 And the matins of his day
 Blended with the vesper hymn!

Comes a whisper through the air
 As the father sits alone;
 "He is with his mother there;
 She has called him—he has gone!"

MOTHER-THOUGHTS.

Rondeau.

I

What shall I say? What shall I say
 When all those questions come some day
 From tiny lips; and from my home,
 The baby goes no more to come
 And the growing girl has come to stay?

The first sweet dew must pass away,
 And knowledge will assert its sway:
 Dear God, my lips are strangely dumb!
 What shall I say?

Oh could I keep her all the way
 As ignorant as she is to-day
 Of all the life that can but come,
 And all the sin outside the home!
 Oh, teach me, Father, teach I pray—
 What shall I say?

II

What shall I do? What shall I do
 When all the happiness I knew
 In motherhood has strangely flown,
 Because the little ones have grown,
 And taken up life's burdens, too!

Some other love will seem more true
 Than that in baby-days they knew,
 Some other heart will claim its own,
 What shall I do?

A SONG FOR THE LIVING.

Those tender kisses that I knew
 Shall all be for another, too,
 And all the love that I have known
 Shall pass to him, and I alone,
 Shall find the day so full o' rue—
 What shall I do?

III

What could I do, if some dark day
 The pattering feet should wander 'way
 And I should miss the clinging touch
 That sometimes hinders me so much,
 And all the laughter loud and gay?

If all those questions ceased some day
 To come up in the baby play,
 And trouble that wee mind so much,
 What could I do?

Alas! I'd then no need to say
 To little footsteps, "Run away!"
 Nor, sometimes in my haste, with such
 A quick impatience loose the touch;
 O, Father, spare me this, I pray—
 What could I do?

A SONG FOR THE LIVING.

I sang sweet songs for the loved ones gone,
 And poured out the love of my aching heart;
 I sounded the praise of the sainted one,
 And dwelt upon every winning art;
 But I thought how prized would the words have been
 Had they only been sung in the living ear!
 And I said, "Their reward they have entered in!
 I will sing for the loved ones with us here!"

O why do we wait till the hands are cold
 Before we clasp them so tenderly?
 And why do we hide the look of old
 Till the eyes we love can no longer see!
 Why do we keep back the tender word
 To needlessly pour in the deafened ear?
 And why are our kisses so long deferred
 When the dear beloved one is with us here?

There are friends around us day by day,
 As dear as the ones who have passed and gone;
 And how they would cherish the word we say
 In memory of the departed one!
 There is many a faithful and tender heart
 That is aching for words of love and cheer;
 If we only could spare them a little part
 While still, thank God! they are with us here!

L' ENVOI

O turn we to-day from the loved one gone
 Who needs no more our words of cheer,
 And pour out our hearts to the lonely one—
 The one we love who is with us here!

A SONG OF CHEER.

The world sometimes is dark and drear
 But do not paint it ever so!
 There's always sorrow somewhere near
 Without our adding to its woe.
 The joys of life outweigh the pain,
 And God is near us when we call:
 Then let us sing out clear and plain,
 "The world's a good world after all!"

The grass is green, the flowers are bright,
 The sky is blue;— now tell it so!
 The birds are voicing their delight
 So let us, too, sing as we go!
 O sing through tear-drops if you can,
 And your despondency will fall,
 For happiness is yet for man—
 This world's a good world after all!

Some one behind may hear our strain
 When almost ready to give in,
 And with new hope catch the refrain,
 And press on still the fight to win.
 A merry word and laughter gay
 Well all the heaviest clouds appall,
 So drive your trials and cares away—
 This world's a good world after all!

L' ENVOI

So scatter abroad the words of cheer,
 Laugh, and the world gives back the call;
 Sing, so the whole wide earth can hear.
 "The world's a good world after all!"

IN PRAIRIE SKIES.

SUNRISE.

A solemn hush has settled over all,
 Unbroken save by waking life afar:
 While here and there peeps out a lonely star
 As loath to fade. Then, slowly, like a pall,
 The darkness lifts as by an unseen hand,
 So gradually we scarcely mark its way.
 A blend of red and gold athwart the gray;

While one lone beam darts from that strip of land
 So far across the broad expanse of earth
 It seems the border of another world.
 It spreads; and more are bit by bit unfurled,
 Until the sun, renewing daily birth,
 Appears, his gold face peeping o'er the gray
 And smiles a greeting to the new-born day.

SUNSET.

The golden chariot rides the distant blue,
 And comes at night a blazing blood-red ball
 Of living fire; a roseate flush o'er all
 The western sky; a brilliant few
 Of sparks of gold are scattered through the rose
 Like jewels. The shadows long and longer seem
 As swiftly falls the orb of day to beam
 On other skies, and seek new worlds. The glows
 Of light departing kindle in the West
 A fire no brush could trace; the purple sky
 Deepens to blackness as the king rides by
 The far horizon, smiling earth to rest;
 While streaks of golden light alone at last
 Remain to speak of glories that have passed.

MOONLIGHT,

The just are sleeping. Calm in yonder sky
 The full moon shows a face of perfect peace.
 The hour has come when honest men must cease
 Their wrangling and lay work and worry by.
 The dome is studded with a million gems,
 With now and then a comet's trail of light;
 Bright gems that rob those jewels of their light;
 That glorify earth's richest diadems.
 Eyes, firmly set to guard a sleeping earth
 Yet what a world of eyil in their view!

What crimes beneath their gaze are born anew
 When holy thoughts alone should find a birth!
 Those steadfast eyes a warning yet should be,
 That we remember "Thou God seest me!"

THE HOLY SHADOW.

—An old legend.—

There's a sweet old legend that comes to me
 When I'm weary and heavy-hearted;
 A tale of a country beyond the sea
 In the days that have long departed,

Once a dear old saint in those far-off days,
 Was so noble, and pure, and holy,
 That the angels came from above to gaze
 At the worth of a life so lowly.

"How is it?" they asked, "that mere man can be
 So godly amid such sinning?
 How knows even one such purity
 In a world that is just beginning?"

But they found no wonder—he went his way,
 Rejoiced to be simply living;
 He gave as he gained, and day by day,
 He was loving and all-forgiving.

His tender smile, and his cheering word,
 And his kindness to all around him,
 Were all to be seen, and all to be heard
 When the wondering angels found him.

Yet wherever he went, and whatever he did,
 Some burden was made the lighter:
 And he never guessed what a joy he spread
 To make darkened lives grow brighter.

Then the angels said "O God we pray
 For this saint the gift of wonders;
 For his life each hour and his toil each day
 Stamps even our deeds as blunders!"

And the Lord replied, "Aye, I consent—
 Let him ask what he will 'tis given!"
 And the messengers on their mission went,
 And spak: to the child of Heaven!

"Would you care," they asked, "to have power to heal
 By the touch of your hands?"— "Ah no!
 That is God's own work, and I do not feel
 It were well to be gifted so."

"Would you like the power to convert lost souls
 And res ore from their guilt and sinning?"—
 "Nay! that is the mission the angel holds;
 My work is a weak beginning.

"Let me have God's grace—that is all I crave;
 What more could be mortal's blessing?"
 And the angels grew perplexed and grave
 At this meek old saint's confessing.

"You must ask a mirac'e," still they plead,
 "Or one will be forced upon you!
 Some power the world knows not,"—they said,
 "This the worth of your past hath won you!"

"Very well," said he, "may my life be true,
 With the love of my God o'er-flowing
 If it wonder must be, grant that I may do
 A great deal of good, unknowing!"

Then the angels marveled how that might be,
 At last, this plan revealing:
 When his shadow fell not where he could not see,
 It should bear the power of healing.

So it came to pass, as we walked along,
 That his shadow restored the ailing;
 Turned grief to joy, and tears to song;
 Removed every earthly failing;

Gave fresh, clear water to dried-up brooks,
 And new bloom to the withered flower;
 Renewed in the cheek its youthful looks,
 In the aged frame, new power.

Thus he spread new life, though he knew it not
 As the star its light bestowing;
 Thus he glorified earth's vilest spot
 With his virtue, all unknowing.

And the people followed day by day,
 That his shadow might enfold them,
 But they knew his wish, and they went their way,
 And the miracle never told him.

So about his toil, he went and came,
 Till the place was one verdant meadow,
 And they came to forget his very name,
 And called him "The Holy Shadow."

This is the legend that comes to me
 When I'm weary and heavy-hearted—
 This tale of a country beyond the sea
 In the days that have long departed.

EN MASQUE.

1 Samuel XVI: 7.

How oft the life we think so pure,
 Is dark and filled with sin!
 Behind a mask is hid secure,
 The heart so vile within;

A bold, bad face deceives us all—
 We think the soul shines there;
 But God, who sees each sparrow fall,
 Can trace each hidden snare.

Sometimes our nights are filled with grief
 Naught can our woe beguile;
 The morning brings us no relief,
 And yet we force a smile:
 The world must never know our pain—
 Though tears unbidden start,
 We force them bravely back again!—
 Thank God, He knows the heart!

Sometimes a life seems black and vile,
 We see no goodness there;
 We cannot even spare a smile
 To lift that sinner's care;
 Alas! the motive who can know
 That led that soul to sin?—
 'Tis God alone who looks below,
 And sees the good within.

And oft we scorn our daily task;
 We long for something great:
 The world may think we do not ask
 For any higher state;
 But discontent is in the soul,
 However calm the brow,
 And God can look 'neath the control,
 And all our longings know.

The world looks on from day to day,
 And watches word and deed;
 Too quick the smiting word to say,
 Or evil thoughts to read;
 And yet its searching, blighting eye
 Can only guess a part;
 'Tis only God who reigns on high,
 Can read the hidden heart.

THE MAN OF GALILEE.

Then let us to ourselves be true;
 The world may criticize,
 But what may its opinion do.
 As formed through human eyes?
 Let it applaud, let it condemn,
 It only sees a part;
 We yet may win our diadem,
 For God can see the heart.

(1896.)

THE MAN OF GALILEE.

Amid His fierce oppressors
 He stood at Pilate's side,
 And they cried, "Away with Jesus!
 Let Him be crucified!"
 But His courage did not flee,
 Though the end He could foresee,
 And He meekly bore their hatred,
 The Man of Galilee.

Many false accusations
 They brought against Him there,
 But His face ne'er lost its glory,
 As His lips moved in prayer.
 They thought it strange to see
 How silent He could be,
 For He made to them no answer,
 The Man of Galilee.

Upon His holy forehead,
 They placed a thorny crown,
 And o'er His blessed features,
 The sacred blood ran down.
 He knew it soon would be
 From all His anguish free,
 And his crown would then be golden,
 The Man of Galilee.

They brought the cross to Jesus
That Barabbas should fill,
And without the slightest murmur
He bore it up the hill.
Though cold and wet was He,
No sigh, no moan there be,
As He sank to earth and trembled
The Man of Galilee.

The mob still urged Him forward,
Till He reached Cavalry,
Then unto the cross they nailed Him,
Think friend, for you and me!
Though suffering agony.
He raised the cruel tree
And endured it all with meekness,
The Man of Galilee.

'Twixt heaven and earth suspended,
His sacred lips did sue,
"Father, I pray, forgive them,
They know not what they do,"
The people all could see
That God's own Son was He,
When He whispered, "It is finished!"
The Man of Galilee.

Joseph begged the Saviour's body
And laid it in the tomb,
But He rose from all its horrors,
Conquering death and gloom;
He who walked upon the sea;
Had gained the victory;
And He now reigns King of Glory,
The Man of Galilee.

A TALE OF THE CHRIST.

Oh, we ponder the life of our Savior,
 And our hearts burn within as we read,
 How He spread to the humblest His favor,
 How He yearned o'er the lowest in need,

We are thrilled even yet by the story
 Of the miracles daily He wrought;
 We partake even now of His glory
 As we dwell on the lessons He taught,

Those were marvelous deeds that the Lord did
 That with awe and with love we recall,
 But there's one that is unrecorded
 That appeals to me more than all.

It is told how one day in the spring-time
 Some children were busy at play,
 When they found in the heat of the sunshine
 A poor little bird dying lay.

They had wounded it, carelessly throwing
 Some bright-colored stones through the tree;
 Now they laughed as its life-blood was flowing,
 And ran off again in their glee.

Till one little maiden espied it,
 And came at its last feeble cries,
 And knelt in the green grass beside it,
 The pitying tears in her eyes.

Then 'tis said, in that sweet, tender story
 How a Boy came and found her in tears—
 A Boy in the spring of His glory,
 The age of the maiden in years.

He bent, filled with pity, above it,
 And took the poor bird in His hand—
 He loved as He only could love it,
 Its pain He could well understand.

Then He whispered in tenderness to it,
 And He breathed in the wee gasping throat,
 And the breath of His life thrilling through it
 Came out in one glad, joyous note.

One moment it gratefully fluttered
 On the palm of the Boy's gentle hand,
 And a thrill of thanksgiving it uttered
 Ere it flew away over the land.

Ah! its voice has new notes in its singing,
 Its plumage with new beauties shine,
 Inspired, while so happily winging,
 By the breath of the Christ-Child divine.

And the children who gathered around Him,
 Knelt low, ere the Boy had passed by;
 Though they knew not what spell it was bound them,
 Cried "Master," but could not tell why!

This then, of the wonders the Lord did,
 That with awe and with love we recall,
 Is the one that is unrecorded
 That appeals to me more than all.

TRUST.

I know not if the way I tread
 Be dark or very bright;
 I know not whether most severe
 Or easy is the fight;
 I only know my Saviour guides,
 And always guides aright.

I'll murmur not if oft I find
 The thorn within the flower;
 For He who guides me all the way
 Has healing in His power.
 How can I murmur while I've Christ
 To share each gloomy hour!

Nay, I can trust my life to Him—
 All His great power is mine;
 And though the path be rough, I ne'er
 Will murmur or repine,
 While I am guided onward by
 A hand that is divine.

O Father, lead me all the way
 Until my race is run,
 Lest I should stray away from Thee
 Before my crown is won:
 And help me through the clouds to say,
 "Thy will, not mine, be done!"

Teach me to lean upon Thine arm,
 And hourly follow Thee;
 To meekly follow all Thy paths,
 Whate'er my cross may be;
 And realize that Thou dost know
 Just what is best for me!

(1893.)

IDOLATRY

Long ago, I had an idol made of clay,
 And I worshipped at its altar every day;
 Jesus came and sought admission to my heart;
 But this thing of clay pervaded every part.

Had one called me then a heathen I'd have cried
Out against the accusation and denied;
But no Pagan e'er bowed lower at the shrine
Of an image than my spirit bowed to mine

I was blind in adoration of this clay,
And I seemed to see less clearly every day;
I lost sight of my Creator in the gloom,
And could only see the creature in its bloom,

But the Saviour came in mercy to my soul,
Where so long that molten god had held control;
And he showed how false the pathway that I trod,
And he said, "A soul must worship only God!"

Then I turned my eyes upon Him, and could see
All the glories of the Lord who died for me;
Then my hardened soul grew tender, and with moan
Cried I "Help me, Lord, to worship Thee alone!"

Then how quickly He found entrance to my heart,
And that false god I had loved He tore apart:
While He showed me all its meanness in the clay,
And He said, "No more, Beloved, look that way!"

So I kept my eyes on Jesus till His love
Filled my heart with such a rapture from above,
That I gazed in wondering scorn upon the clay
That had led my heart from such a love astray!

Then I gathered up the fragments of that clod,--
And I buried them forever 'neath the sod,--
For I felt I could not throw them lightly by,
But I turned, and lo: forgot that they were nigh!

Now my heart is ever bowing at a shrine,
Where I know that all is holy and divine.
God has rid my heart of idols, and I know
That He cleansed it of that worship long ago,

Father! now I fall before Thee on my knee!
 Do Thou keep all earthly idols far from me!
 I have caught one glimpse of Thee, Lord, and I can
 Never turn aside again to look at man.

(1895.)

GLAD TIDINGS.

Fly away,
 Angel of light,
 To the courts
 Of glory!
 Speak to all the
 Shining host
 Of the earth's
 Great story!
 Bid the millions
 Gathered there
 Banish thoughts
 Of sadness,
 For on earth
 A sinner won
 Fills all hearts
 With gladness!

Tell to all
 The wond'rous tale
 How poor and
 Forsaken,
 He knelt at the
 Saviour's feet
 And by Him
 Was taken;

Tell that mother
Now with God
That her only
Treasure,
Has at last
Surrendered all,
And has found
True pleasure.

Angel, go,
The tale unfold,
Move the hearts
To pity,
Of the glorious
Throng above
In the Golden
City!
Bid the court
Of Heaven rejoice!
Fill their hearts
With singing!
While above the
Shouts of joy
Heavenly bells
Are ringing!

One more soul
Hath found true rest—
One who long
Had sought it,
But who, when
The spirit called,
Bitterly
Had fought it
Yes; to all
The tidings bear—
Fly away,
Bright angel!

And to each
 On Heaven's street,
 Sound the great
 Evangel!
 (1893.)

AN EVERY-DAY HERO.

You may boast if you will of the heroes of old,
 And dwell on some story that often is told;
 You may print deeds of valour in letters that glow
 In honor of noble ones now lying low;
 I sing of a hero no poet hath sung,
 A hero as brave and as noble as young,
 Whose soul even now in the hey day of youth
 Stands firmly revealed in its manhood and truth.

You see that proud form giving others the shine,
 So boldly concealing its weakness of frame;
 You see the dark locks falling over the brow
 That add even more to the pallor below:
 You see the dark eye filled with fire at a word
 As by some subtle impulse the deep soul is stirred,
 And you never would guess that the hand of destiny
 Had dared yet to threaten this hero of mine.

You are waiting to hear what brave deed he hath done!
 Know, then; he above all the rest, is a son—
 The son of a mother whose idol is he,
 And for whom he appears as a hero to me!
 To give up what most of the world's gifts we crave
 For the sake of another—that call ye not brave?
 To part from the lips the yet untasted bliss—
 Can you tell of more heroism than this?

You may smile if you will— he would, too, if he guessed
 That I deemed him of any more worth than the rest!
 But I hold that that mother is richer than queen
 In the truest devotion my eyes have yet seen.
 There's not much of greatness there now to be seen
 Unless you can see what he once might have been:
 There's not much of courage that now is displayed
 Unless you can know all the part he hath played.

There was once a bright future that seemed just ahead,
 There were wonderful heights where his footsteps were led
 There were rich aspirations within his firm clasp,
 And the goal of his aims was so near to his grasp;
 There was glory, indeed, for his portion— but stay!
 Where are all those hopes and achievements to-day?—
 Ah! gone in the dust of oblivion to lie:
 At the need of a mother, he brushed them all by!

There was once, too, a love that had brightened his life;
 There were dreams of a home and its treasure— a wife;
 There was, too, that heart-hunger not yet recognized
 For the touch of wee fingers so tenderly prized.
 Why, then, is he lonely and restless, you say,
 And where are the old cherished longings to-day?
 Ah! gone in a twinkling, beyond all recall:
 At the need of a mother, he turned from them all!

At last came a struggle and all hearts were stirred
 With compassion for brothers oppressed; at a word
 The sons of our union spring up, brave and strong;
 And crossed o'er the water to conquer the wrong—
 Among them, my hero, so gallant and brave,
 But that glorious deed all but found him a grave;
 And he came back to mother again, all bereft
 Of the health and the strength so pronounced when he left.

He lives— but he feels in his living a lack
 Of the young manly vigor that never came back;
 And the greatness of soul so outmeasures the frame
 That it bursts out sometimes in the flash of a flame,

And we marvel, the spirit so quick is to speak
 To think that the flesh is so wofully weak:
 And we wonder to think how so brilliant a mind
 Within its frail casket may still be confined!

So boast of your heroes of old if you will—
 I cling to this one of my own choosing still;
 Speak on of the strength that was valiant to die—
 I'll think of the power 'neath the fire of that eye!
 Sing yet of the valour surmounting the wall,
 I'll sing of the bravery ronouncing it all,
 Till you turn from the brightest in history that shine,
 To recognize, too, this young hero of mine!

GRANDMOTHER.

I look upon that dear old face to-day
 And shudder when I think how soon decay
 Must come to wipe all human trace away.

That visage, though it seamed with Time appears,
 Has something through it all that helps and cheers;
 As it hath done throughout these many years.

The faith and love that followed all her way
 Shine through the features with a sweeter ray
 And make it seem an angel's face to-day.

Her feet that always knew so firm a tread
 Seem still on many a busy mission led,
 Yet longing for the golden streets ahead

There is a sweeter love-light in her eyes;
 And in their depths a strange new glory lies
 As they had pierced the veil of Paradise!

I love to seek her side and bid her tell
 Of all the joys and sorrows that befell
 The youthful days she still recalls so well.

'Tis strange that she can still look clearly back
Upon the love and loss along her track,
And yet her quiet heart should feel no lack!

I try to picture her in infancy
With wondering eyes just opening to see
The strange new world of light that was to be!

I try to picture her in later days
With all a child's delight in simple plays,
And all of childhood's sweet, unconscious grace!

I try to picture her in maiden's hour
Just wakening to the knowledge of her power
And revelling in girl-hoods richest dower!

In vain!—somehow, I fail to catch the spell
And every fancy where I seek to dwell
Melts in the sweet old face I love so well!

'Tis strange to think she had such dreams as I
And all the same old milestones to pass by,
And all the same, sweet hopes to come and die!

To think the heart could beat so quick and
Only to grow so torpid at the last
With every thrill of fire and passion past!

To look upon some buried love with ease
And feel all of the olden yearnings cease,
And leave the heart in calm and perfect peace.

Ah me! it seems that all my soul would tire,
And all my heart-strings quiver and aspire
With fierce, mad longing to the olden fire!

Methinks I could not let the passion die
And know it all forever had passed by
Without a wild and long- protesting cry!

But she has seen the best of earth depart
And buried many a memory in her heart
Yet still moves on with gentle, winning art!

Yet is it strange that far-off days come near
And shine for her to-day so bright and clear.
While she forgets the daily action here?

She sits and listens to my tales of bliss,
And softly smiles at that, or sighs at this.
Dreaming I know, of by-gone happiness.

How queer through me to live her life again!
God grant she has forgotten all the pain,
And only tenderest memories remain!

Some day a gentle voice will call her name
And all her soul will quicken into flame,
And pass from earth as softly as it came.

Then shall we look around with tear-dimmed eyes,
And in our lonely hearts will realize
How much of sweetness in that dear form dies!

Then shall we turn to all our labors here
And miss so much her helpful presence near
And find so hard earth's toil without her cheer!

Dear sweet old face! you cannot guess how fair
To me are all the lights and shadows there
Framed by the waves of soft and silvery hair!

I should not dread old age as now I do
Could I but walk as gracefully as you
Adown the years that seem so short and few!

I shall not murmur if God's love assures
To me that beauty that through life endures,
And marks my latter days to be like yours.

PRISCILLA ABBOT.*

A tale of Washington.

It was back in seventeen eighty-nine,
 When the land was new, but the manners fine
 And the people were breathing everywhere
 The first sweet draughts of Freedom's air,
 There was much to learn and much to do,
 But the men were brave and their hearts were true
 And they felt secure on the side of Right,
 For no one doubted Jehovah's might.

In the days of Washington!

In far Andover, that quaint old town,
 Now touched with a measure of fair renown,
 There was bustle and stir one November day,
 And hurry and flurry in every way;
 While the battle-flag waved its tattered folds,
 Secure in the glory that victory holds,
 And the children were quivering with eagerness
 For the town had put on its gala dress

In honor of Washington!

There were old men and young men and little boys,
 Awaiting their share in the great day's joys;
 There were matrons and maidens and little girls,
 In the quaintest of dresses and fairest of curls;
 There were great folks and small folks all thronged in the street;
 There were grave folks and gay folks as ever we meet;
 And they all crowded on through the busy old town
 Arrayed in their very best waistcoat or gown

In honor of Washington!

*This incident which occurred in Andover, Mass. November 5, 1789, is found recorded in Bailey's "Sketches of Andover."

Brave soldiers were there in their "rebel blue,"
 To cheer their commander so loyal and true;
 He had cheered them oft when their hopes were dim
 He had marched and fought, and suffered with them
 He had won their love in the hardships passed,
 And they felt in their bosoms their hearts beat fast
 As mingling with the resonant cheers
 Old memories flooded their eyes with tears
 As they waited for Washington!

There stood at her father's tavern door
 In the quaint sweet garb our grandmothers wore
 Priscilla Abbott, a fair young maid,
 As sweet as the bloom in the distant shade,
 Her heart o'erflowing with maiden-dreams
 And rippling with mirth like the near-by streams
 Her eyes filled full of a wonder and pride,
 And girlishly eager to see the ride
 Of the wonderful Washington!

A cloud of dust and the tramp of feet,
 And fast and faster their brave hearts beat,
 Then the boom of a gun and the cry "They come!
 All hail to the General Washington!"
 As he rode on up to the eager throng,
 With a hundred eyes he was guided along,
 And they crowded about him to grasp his hand,
 While many a veteran was all unmanned
 By the clasp of Washington!

His stately figure no years had bent,
 His deep blue eye no light had spent;
 He was still the general they loved so well
 In the days of the dangerous shot and shell;
 And Andover town with welcome thrilled,
 While the hearts of the people with reverence filled
 As they floated the banner of Bunker Hill
 And cheered o'er and o'er with a lavish will
 For the welcome of Washington!

With the drum and the fife and all martial din
 They escorted him on to the Abbott Inn:
 Where the best of fair that the town could find
 Was served to this general, the best of his kind;
 With the tenderest of service they filled every need
 For the guest of the town was thrice welcome indeed,
 And the inn was a bower of festal display
 For Andover claimed as a holiday
 The visit of Washington!

When the wonderful banquet at last was o'er,
 And Washington started away from the door,
 He stopped in surprise when he saw in his glove,
 A rent that his quick eye had noted not of;
 And he turned to Priscilla most courteously
 And asked, "My fair maid, would you mend it for me?"
 She took it and mended it swiftly and neat,
 Though trembled the fingers so white and fleet
 For she did it for Washington!

He took it completed and smiled at the place,
 Then gallantly turned to the fair maiden's face,
 As she courtesied before him he bent his proud head
 And placed on her forehead a warm kiss instead;
 She blushed and she trembled,— but thoughtful was he,
 And turned from her quickly and feigned not to see
 And far from the tavern so stately and gray
 With proud soldier bearing, rode swiftly away
 The General Washington!

The story soon spread as all stories soon go,
 For the flight of all gossip is speedy you know;
 And the fair maiden found there as sure a renown
 As her puritan namesake of Plymouth town
 And often she stood in the tavern door
 And mused on the general who came no more,
 And they laughed when the silent and still would get
 And declared she was foolishly dreaming yet
 Of the kiss of Washington!

LINCOLN'S PRAYERS.

Oh, a century now has passed away
 Since the soldier from Andover rode that day,
 But the pretty tale has been handed still
 Through the years that have mingled the good and ill;
 And Priscilla's grandchildren love to till
 The sweet old story they know so well,
 And though over and over and over 'tis told,
 It is one of the memories that never grow old
 For it tells us of Washington!

LINCOLN'S PRAYERS.

It was the time of blood and fire,
 Of scenes of suffering dark and dire,
 That lighted many a funeral pyre
 'Neath Southern shade;
 In lonely homes brave women sought
 In toil to drown all fearful thought,
 While facing foes, their dear ones fought,
 And Lincoln prayed!

Through all the storm of shot and shell
 Through all the years when brave men fell
 He watched the bloody conflict well,
 All undismayed;
 For when the fire was raging clear,
 When black defeat seemed all too near,
 And all the land was sick with fear,
 Then Lincoln prayed!

"Is God on our side?" Some one cried;
 "I don't know that," our chief replied,
 "If we are only on His side
 I'm not afraid!"

He knew that right must gain the day;
 And triumph over wrong some way,
 But there was little he could say,
 So Lincoln prayed!

Sometimes the sky was overcast,
 And great defeats came on them fast,
 While every battle seemed the last
 That could be played;
 Men's faces blanched with sore despair;
 The drummer played a solemn air,
 For death and gloom seemed everywhere
 But Lincoln prayed!

No other hand could peace bestow;
 'T here was no help to seek below:
 He knew no other place to go
 To seek for aid:
 And so to God he took it all,
 And poured his whole soul in the call;
 Ah! something surely had to fall
 When Lincoln prayed!

'Tis said by some of whispering kind,
 His was an infid'lic mind,
 But who more perfect faith could find
 Than he displayed,
 Who when the land was veined with blood
 And over swords his people trod,
 Held firm the promises of God?—
 Thus Lincoln prayed!

Perhaps those heart-wrung prayers did more
 To change the course that ran before,
 Than all the musketry of war,
 And cannonade.
 Though death and loss marked all the way
 And conflicts thickened every day,
 They could not wholly lose the fray
 While Lincoln prayed,

Ah! who of all of us can tell
 How many bullets powerless fell,
 How many a sword-thrust aimed so well,
 Were some way stayed;
 How many a fight our forces won,
 How many a noble feat was done
 Because away in Washington,—
 Our Lincoln prayed!

Now white-winged peace has settled here,
 And dried is every bitter tear,
 And all forgotten every fear
 That struggle made:
 The feud of years has passed away,
 And all are brothers here to-day
 And so, "Thank God! Thank God!" we say,
 "That Lincoln prayed!"

GARFIELD.

Lincoln was dead; and sorrow swept
 From East to West of a mighty land;
 Men bowed their faces and women wept
 For the loss that none could understand,
 There was fierce commotion in many a heart;
 And cries for vengeance here and there;
 For the nation throbbed in every part,
 And bloody rumors were in the air.

Panic was threatening everywhere
 For men were wild and desperate;
 The mutterings of riot thrilled the air,
 And seemed the certain turn of fate,
 Then was it that o'er the maddened crowd
 A brave, strong voice a message gives,
 As General Garfield cries aloud,
 "God reigns, and the Republic live

Toward Heaven he raised his strong right arm;
 And by his power the crowd was held;
 His fearless voice dispersed alarm,
 And all the noisy riot quelled;
 It turned to God the popular thought
 That craved the triumph vengeance gives;
 And home to all this solace brought,
 "God reigns, and the Republic lives."

Years passed and then there came a day
 As cloudy and as desolate;
 When Garfield fell where Lincoln lay,
 The victim of a dastard's hate.
 And as we mourn for Garfield dead,
 No other word such comfort gives,
 As that his own brave lips had said,
 "God reigns, and the Republic lives!"

VICTORIA.

I

Up through the tender years of growth
 Her nature broadening rose,
 With all the gaiety that youth
 When full of vigor knows;
 Guided and trained by mother-love
 That knew its mission well,
 She mined some truths men think not of
 And roamed where sages dwell.
 Far, far from pomp and pride, and pelf
 This princess learned to govern self.

All through the happy girlhood days
 She knew what lay before:
 And, true to duty, led her ways

Where she might gain the more,
 As full of life as any are,
 As full of girlish glee,
 Yet ever following fast and far
 Where higher growth might be.
 Thus, through the years of maiden joy
 She found the wealth no worlds destroy!

She did not need the purple then;
 Her dignity alone
 Placed her above the walks of men
 In by-ways of her own.
 She knew that England's eye was turned
 On her through hopes and fears;
 And thoroughly she her England learned
 Through those preparing years.
 She stood where all the world could see
 Crowned in her maiden purity.

II

It came so soon— that looked— for day
 That she had learned to dread;
 The aged king had passed away
 With all the crowned dead.
 And there, within his vacant place,
 They crowned the youthful queen;
 In all the bloom of girlish grace,—
 A maiden of eighteen!
 "I am so young-- so young!" she cried;
 "Do, God in heaven, be my guide!"

Between the living and the dead,
 Amid a glittering crowd,
 Where peers and princes proudly tread,
 And stately heads were bowed,
 She left her childhood in the past,
 And bravely vowed to reign
 As He would give her grace at last
 Whose promise ne'er is vain.

Ah! young she was to walk unshod
That throne whose steps had flowed with blood!

The crown upon her tresses fell
So heavily that day
That girlhood lost its sweetest spell
In duties in the way.
So powerless she felt to reign
Her heart was filled with fears
And all her weakness seemed as pain
That spoke in woman-tears.
So humbly there she bowed her down,
And prayed for grace to wear that crown!

The nation loved the bonny maid
And welcomed her with cheers;
And in their favor unafraid,
She bravely dried her tears.
She knew the darkness now so near
Was heralding the light
And all her girlish weakness here
She blended in God's might;
While all around the touching scene
True voices shout, "God save the queen!"

III

Three years had passed: she stood once more
Before her people there;
A little older than before
In years, in thought, in care;
She stood to give her heart and hand
As maidens only may.
For love she scarce could understand
Had glorified her way.
Blushing she looked about the scene,
No less a woman for the queen!

She was the princess of the land,
And bards her praise might sing;

But humbly there she took her stand,
 Acknowledging a king,
 "How will you have the service read?"
 In wonderment said they;
 "No doubt 'twould better be," they said
 'To cut the word 'obey'?"
 "Ah, noble sirs, I wish to wed
 As WOMAN, not as queen!" she said.

More meet the vows her lips must say
 For one so fair as she;
 More meet her bridal-wreath that day
 Than the crown of royalty!
 God grant Prince Albert by her side
 So smiling and serene
 Was proud to claim his fair young bride
 Forgetting she was queen!
 For love alone our households need
 And she who loves is queen indeed!

Her girlish heart was not subdued
 By purple or by crown!
 But beat as fast as maiden's would
 Who stood in peasant gown,
 The vows were said- the tender vows
 That pledged her womanhood;
 And deeper lights beneath her brows
 Shed radiance where she stood.
 She clasped his hand, and looked above
 For God had crowned her there with love.

IV

A year; and then that youthful bride
 Became a mother too;
 What then was all her realm beside
 The tiny form she knew?
 Through all her glorious diadem,
 And all her jewelled crest,

There was not one to match the gem
 That lay upon her breast.
 The angels smiled down on the scene
 And ranked her then as more than queen!

Through all the years that followed fast
 Her mother-care was true;
 And longer than her throne shall last
 The joys the mother knew.
 All England pointed to her home
 As such as English prize,
 Where she had lain the scepter down,
 Obeying manly eyes.
 For there the queen was but a wife
 And as a peasant lived her life.

The years passed on— the children grew
 Around her, one by one
 And by her training, firm and true,
 There childhood's course was run.
 The mother's guidance faltered not
 Through years of war and strife,
 For in the nursery she forgot
 The perils of her life—
 She held supreme o'er every other
 The duties laid upon the mother.

V

There came a day—a dark, dark day;
 She knelt beside a bier,
 Where cold in death the husband lay
 Her soul had held so dear;—
 Her best adviser, closest friend,
 Her consort and her king
 On whom alone she could depend
 When all seemed tottering.
 Ah! all alone a woman mourns,
 And England's crown seems made

She mourned as only wives can mourn
 Whose hearts are crushed with pain;
 And long it was ere she could turn
 To take up life again:
 Yet when at last her work renewed
 It was with added grace
 That all her sterner lines subdued
 And glorified her face.

She wept her people's tears to see,
 With deeper, surer sympathy.

Her children wedded in their time,
 And left her one by one;
 She saw her dear ones, in their prime
 On many a foreign throne;
 Yet still she served her people well
 And held all hearts in thrall;
 And on and on the long years swell—
 The longest reign of all!
 The longest reign—aye, and the best;
 In all good things above the rest

Her course was wise; her court was pure,
 Her dignity, serene;
 Her sympathy was true and sure,
 Her sight was far and keen,
 Her people first— her own self last,
 She gave to them her best,
 And though some storm-clouds gathered fast
 She knew no thought of rest.
 They loved, as few realms understand
 This queen who mothered all her land!

Old age came on, yet found her brain
 Yet firm, alert, and clear;
 As though the years had tried in vain
 To wreck the brilliance here!
 Her form lost not its stateliness
 Through all the griefs that came.

Nor did she loose that kindness
 That marked her very name.
 Into the last, no storm could fade
 This royal woman, queenly made!

VI

As calmly as the scepter came,
 Her tired hand laid it down,
 And gladly left her throne to claim
 In Heaven a brighter crown;
 Rejoicing that her head should wear
 The glory she had dreamed;
 A glory angels cannot share—
 The crown of the redeemed.
 Her reign on earth forever done—
 Her reign in Heaven just begun!

No one asks her at that portal
 If she peasant were, or king,
 For the gift of life immortal
 Rests upon a greater thing.
 She has left all rank below her
 And no royal trophy brings;
 By her soul alone they know her
 When she meets the King of kings.
 Who speaks to her the great "Well done!"
 He gives to every faithful one.

No! 'tis not for crown or title
 She is welcomed there to-day
 Where her lips join the recital
 Of God's love along the way;
 For one name o'er every other
 On the roll of Heaven is seen,
 Where God writes her "Wife and Mother,"
 And forgets we called her "Queen"
 THAT she never shall lay down—
 Womanhood's divinest crown!

Not all alone did England weep
 Above the sacred bier
 Where lay at rest in her last sleep
 The form they revered here.
 The whole wide world has shed a tear
 For this lost potentate
 Who proved herself through many a year
 To be most truly great,
 Ah! choked with tears, brave voices ring,
 "The queen is dead — long live the King!"

PRINCE HENRY OF PRUSSIA.

He comes to the land of the proud and free,
 This prince of the house of kings;
 And the guest of the nation indeed is he,
 As the street with his welcome rings.
 He comes, and he speaks as a friend to friends
 Of a feeling that shall not fade,
 And America's hymn with the German blends
 Wherever his path is laid!

He bows to the masses that, watching stand,—
 This kin of a potentate;
 And as man and man he grasps the hand
 Of our democrat magistrate.
 He stands in the pride of his royal light
 By a man of as proud a birth,
 Who wears no crown but his manhood's might
 Yet ranks with the first of earth!

He visits the tomb of the nation's dead, —
 This man with the regal air;
 And he reverent stands with uncovered head
 While he paces his emblems there!

That man who rose to a country's needs
Wore no signet of royalty,
But he grew by the power of his own great deeds
To as mighty a man as he!

From east to west, he takes his way
And the freedom of all is his;
His ranks is of little to him to-day
Where he's measured for what he is!
He wins all hearts by his genial air,
And the grasp of his cordial hand,
And the people are gathering everywhere
To greet in the prince, the man!

There is somehow, a closer clasp to-day
In Columbia's mighty hand
As she warmly extends it across the way
To the court of the Fatherland;
And the friendly tie shall be binding yet
Through the course of the years to be,
In the nation whose people cannot forget
This meeting with royalty.

Then we give three cheers for the gallant man,
Who came from across the sea
And walked in, as only the noblest can
To the hearts of the proud and free!
Forgetting his rank, we will cling to that
While the truest of welcome rings
For the prince who comes as a democrat
To a nation where all are king!

THE DRUNKARD'S DAUGHTER.

'Twas Christmas Eve. Adown the street,
With bare, cold head and naked feet.
Her tattered dress scarce to her knee.
A girl but fifteen passed by me.
A faded, well-worn shawl was thrown
About her shoulders, while there shone
A half-starved look within her eye,
And I could scarcely pass her by—
She peered into the windows there
So eagerly, but with despair
She turned her famished eye away,
And with a groan I heard her say:

'Alas! ah, no! they're not for me!
The only gifts that I will see
Will be a curse, a kick, a blow!
No other portion could I know,
For poverty and misery wild
Are always for the drunkard's child.
O father! if you only knew
One sober moment, I think you
Would pity your poor outcast girl,
And would forsake the maddening whirl
Of drink! A single crust of bread,
One little place to rest my head,
One softened word, would be so rare
Gifts for poor me, I should not care
For any of these grand things here!
But father killed my mother dear
With his abuse, and soon I know
I too, shall lie beneath the snow:

God knows I hope 'twill not be long
 Before I sing the angels' song
 For life on earth is worse than hell
 To me! yet—God—does—all things—well!

“Move on, you bergar! Move, I say!
 Why stand you blocking up the way?
 This place is not for such as you!”
 And a rude fellow pushed her through
 The crowd.

I saw her wildly seek
 A corner, but she did not speak,
 Till kneeling on the snowy sod,
 She raised her eyes unto her God.

“O Father of the fatherless!
 Look down on me I pray and bless
 Me by removing this foul curse
 From my poor life. Could hell be worse
 Than my life here? O Father kind,
 I do not seek or ask to find
 A home of luxury or ease;
 I only beg Thee on my knees
 For bread to save my soul from death,
 Or a bed to soothe my dying breath.
 No other Christmas gift I crave,
 Excepting, Lord, that Thou wilt save
 My father from a drunkard's fate,
 And cleanse his soul before too late!”

Her prayer had ceased, just as the bell
 Proclaimed the midnight hour. A swell
 Of joy passed o'er her face and then
 She fell to earth.

Oh sons of men,
 Can you stand by and see such woe
 Unfeelingly?

With step quite slow
I sought her side. Her soul had fled
To the blest regions of the dead.
Upon the holy Christmas morn,
The day on which our Lord was born;
Another soul had fled this earth
And at the Throne had found new birth
To spend beyond the starry skies,
Her Christmas Day in Paradise.

(1896)

FINDING JESUS.

A corner of a bare, chill room;
A woman lying in the gloom,
With wasted form and sunken eye,
And the look of one about to die.
A little girl bent o'er her there,
And gently smoothed her rumpled hair,
And eagerly watched every breath,
As though she felt that it was death.
At length the mother's poor dim eye
Unclosed, and the pale lips did try
So hard to make their utterance heard,
But almost vainly. Just one word
Came to the poor child's listening ear,
And that was this, "Find Jesus, dear!"
Then with a gasp her spirit fled,
And Bessie knew that she was dead!

She threw herself upon the floor,
 And sobbed and cried an hour or more;
 "Oh, what will now become of me?
 What can I do? What shall I be?
 I have no other friend I know—
 O where I wonder, can I go?"
 The grief of this poor, ignorant child
 Soon spent itself in moanings wild,
 And as she dried her tears, she heard
 Again her mother's dying word.

"Find Jesus!" thought she, "who is He?
 Some friend of mother's He must be!
 I never heard of Him before,
 But I will find Him!"

From the door
 She went, and wandered down the street
 To ask whom ever she might meet
 Who Jesus was, if they could tell
 And if they knew where He might dwell.

She chanced to pass by a saloon;
 A young man staggered out. As soon
 As he beheld her, he let slip
 A fearful oath from his bloated lip.
 The child caught the word eagerly,
 And cried, "O tell where is He?"
 The man asked wildly, "where is who?"
 "Why Jesus Christ! I thought that you
 Just spoke His name," the child replied,
 "And where is He?,"—

The young man cried
 With sobered face and awe-struck air
 "My little child, I don't know where!"

The disappointed child ran fast,
 And through the noisy city passed
 In search of Jesus—where was He?
 At length her quick eye chanced to see

A Jewish woman standing nigh,
Selling her wares to who would buy,
"O lady!" Bessie's young voice cried;
"Please, where is Jesus? I have tried
To find Him all the morning long,
But no one knows Him in this throng!"

The woman turned a look most wild
Upon the poor untutored child
Then with a sneer she fiercely said
Unto her, "Jesus Christ is dead!"

Poor Bessie ran on down the street,
Almost crushed down beneath the feet
Of passers-by, Just then a sleigh
Dashed on; she could not clear the way,
And she was tramped beneath the tread
Of maddened horses, Almost dead,
They carried her into a house,
But nothing seemed to her arouse.
Although she had the best of care,
God did not will her life to spare.
But just before she drew the breath
That gave her spirit up to death,
She opened her poor, pale lips wide,
And with a voice of rapture cried,
While waves of joy her marred face passed
"Oh Jesus! I've found you at last!",

No other word the orphan said,
And soon her youthful spirit fled,-
To be with Him her soul had sought,
And Who, in answer to her thought,
Had taken her where she could know
The Jesus she found not below.

(1896)

N OSCE TEIPSUM.

We do not know ourselves—sometimes we feel
 So full of power to conquer every aim;
 So sure of reaching all our life's ideal
 And winning wealth, position, rank or fame,
 We strive—we toil—and all our senses reel
 In the delight of all we see ahead—
 We aimed too high, and when we clasp the real,
 It is a stone when we had reached for bread!

We do not know ourselves—we feel so strong
 Sometimes to grapple with the worst of life;
 We pass some week one daily in the throng,
 And pity all his failings and his strife!
 We could not err as he—ah, no, indeed;
 We are so steadfast, and can muster all!—
 Temptation comes—we, boasting, do not heed,
 And in the worst of weaknesses we fall!

We do not know ourselves—we think we know
 All of the thousand mysteries of earth;
 Science and art have opened all below,
 And we can prate of everything of worth!
 Some master comes—he speaks an unknown tongue,
 So full it is of truths beyond our own,
 And all our boastings back to us are flung—
 We learn how little we have really known!

We do not know ourselves—sometimes we think
 We are so happy in some new-found joy;
 We hover carelessly on Pleasure's brink
 And sing that nothing can our bliss destroy;
 Some word is said—some "trifle, light as air,"
 That one who masters us has careless dropped;
 We rush into a mood of deep despair,
 And all our song is most abruptly stopped!

We do not know ourselves—we think we love,
 And all our hearts about anothes's twine;
 We swear our souls were kindled from above,
 And all the fire that warms us is divine
 Then something comes between, and we apart,
 Look back without a very long regret;
 Those vows we made were really from the heart,
 But we forgot how soon hearts can forget!

We do not know ourselves—some sudden pain
 Has cast a shadow over all our day
 Our wounded hearts can never hope again
 For all the world is comfortless, we say.
 Vain word! Time soon has laid his soothing hand
 Upon the bruise and it is healed once more;
 We laugh and sing, and all forgetting stand
 Unscathed, while life flows round us as before.

We do not know ourselves—we feel resigned
 And say whatever cometh, shall be well;
 Then God calls home some loved one, and we find
 How soon our hearts are ready to rebel!
 And then we say, we wish we, too, might die;
 That we are tired of our rounds each day;
 Yet—when we think the Death Angel is nigh,
 We shrink and shudder, and for life we pray.

We do not know ourselves—sometimes we rise
 So far above the human in the soul
 We feel so near to God and His blue skies,
 That sin and folly far beneath us roll!
 We pray—we talk of things of God alone.
 And was so high o'er all that near us lies!—
 Alas! one little word, and all is flown,—
 Our holiness melts down before our eyes!

There lives in each two forces—good and ill—
 And each is striving for the master's place,
 Sometimes the good controls our poor weak will;
 Sometimes—and oft, I fear—the evil sways!

Sometimes a wrong has come from good intent,
 And good from evil thought misunderstood;
 Thank God,— He ruleth our environment,
 And can all evil use to work His good!

Our souls are God-made, and they are divine;
 'Tis but the flesh that keeps them from their flight
 They rise and glow in other realms to shine,
 Till human passions swell and claim their right;
 Weighed down by fetters we cannot control,
 There comes an end to even the grandest aim,
 And all the best achievements of the soul
 Are hampered by the weakness of the frame!

Then KNOW THYSELF, O Heart, and be ye strong;
 Love God, be grand, and live for God and man,
 If sad, be brave, and force a little song,
 This body cannot long defeat your plan!
 So let it do its very worst to-day,
 And its demands be harassing and sure,—
 We know, at most it soon must pass away,
 And doubly free, the spirit shall endure!

CONSOLATION.

To a Friend on the death of a loved one.

I do not come, dear friend, as many another,
 With old familiar words of sympathy;
 I feel your loss too deep, so sure no other
 Can half the yearning of your spirit see.
 I do not try to offer words of healing;
 I point your wounded heart to One above,
 Whose deep compassion round you now is stealing—
 For God is love!

THE FIRST ROBIN.

I know though now the sky is dark and leaden
 The sun will sometime pierce the clouds again,
 And Duty—sweet, stern nurse—will partly deaden
 The bitterest memories of this crushing pain.
 We cannot see the good that lies behind it;
 The angel comes— but is not understood;
 But something yet will lead us on to find it,
 For God is good!

I do not say "Mourn not!" for it were vainly;
 The one you loved was of your life a part,
 It were not sin to grieve nor would I pain you
 By banishing old memories from your heart,
 The human spirit must recover slowly,
 When of its dearest gifts it is bereft;
 So mourn, sad heart! for even grief is holy
 Since Jesus wept!

Yet think you more of that to-come reunion
 When you shall meet again to part no more;
 When love complete shall hold such sweet communion
 As hearts can never know on earthly shore.
 Yes, weep; but mingle tears with hope and singing
 Until you stand tomorrow side by side;
 Remembering, Death itself hath lost its stinging
 Since Christ hath died!

THE FIRST ROBIN.

Little Redbreast, why, oh, why
 Have you left your Southern sky!
 Winter reigns as proudly here
 As he means to stay the year!
 Idly, we await the call
 Of the Spring-time, while we all
 In these gray, gray days remember
 All the dreariness of November!

All our thoughts are sluggish now,
 Every pulse is ebbing slow,
 And the grayness of the sky
 Colors all that meets the eye.
 Nothing seems to rouse our fire,
 Pleasure only comes to tire
 And the dull, dull hours are dragging
 While the tardy Spring is lagging.

Yet, wee warbler, you are here
 Pouring out a song of cheer,
 Perching on a bare old spray,
 Trying hard to pierce the gray,
 As you tell of days of old
 When the skies were full of gold,
 And you bring the heaviest-hearted
 Thoughts of brighter days departed.

'Tis a sorry welcome here.
 In this sleep-time of the year;
 You must find the Northland cold,
 And regret the suns of old;
 You may lose your cheer some day,
 And like us may hopeless say,
 "Better chill March winds than these,
 Better tears that April sees!"

Sing on, if you can, brave bird!
 Every heart is glad it heard;
 For such silence wraps us all,
 That we hear the heart-beats fall,
 Panting for an hour's release
 From the shadows that increase.
 Longing for some breake to be,
 In the day's monotony.

Would that I could sing of cheer
 When the world is bleak and drear!
 Would that I could sing alone
 When the shadows hasten on!

TWO VIEWS.

What is there such notes to start
 From your solitary heart?
 All the rest are waiting still
 For the coming daffodil!

When the gray gives place to blue,
 And the golden sun peeps through
 When the crocuses appear
 In the barren meadows here,
 Then your mates will gather, too,
 But less welcome, sir, than you;
 All there cheer is easy won—
 We can all sing in the sun!

Yes, thrice welcome, warbling throat,
 Pour out yet that hopeful note!
 All the stupor of the gray
 Has one streak gold to-day:
 For your notes, so brave and true
 Almost teach us courage too,
 As you carry far and near
 Word that Spring must soon be here.

TWO VIEWS.

I

The world was bright; my heart was light;
 The joy of love was mine;
 So young and gay, I thought my day
 Forever so must shine;
 All skies were clear; no cloud was near;
 My soul was full of song;
 And glad to be, I sighed "Ah me!
 Life cannot linger long!"

II

Years come and go — I learn to know
 That thought is one with pain:
 Storms thick and fast my heart-flowers blast
 To blossom not again.
 All joys pass by; all wishes die;
 In clouds of grief and wrong:
 And 'neath the rod, I cry "Thank God!
 Life cannot linger long!"

LIFE.

He sought for Wealth — he sought it long
 In every channel where men find it.
 But every effort, firm and strong,
 Had dismal failure just behind it.
 He saw how others won success
 Without much struggle while he could not;
 He cried, "Come, Wealth, my life to bless!"
 Wealth would not!

He sought for Fame — he followed far
 The bursting bubbles of earth's glory;
 He longed to stand where great men are;
 And hear the whole world sing his story
 He wished — oh, how he wished! — to see
 His name immortal, yet he could not;
 He cried, "Come, Fame, abide with me!"
 Fame would not!

He sought for Love — Love seemed so near
 He almost clasped it in his longing;
 He reached his arms, — it was not here,
 And all his soul seemed mad with wronging!

His sore heart ached with wounded pride
 For love that failed him when it should not
 "O Love, dear Love! come here," he cried,
 Love would not!

He sought for Joy — where'er is found
 Earth-happiness, he eager sought it:
 When and wherever joys abound
 He vowed to follow till he caught it:
 But where he wandered, Joy was not —
 He reached to take her, but he could not
 "O Joy, come now and bless my lot!"
 Joy would not!

He then sought Death — "if life has not
 The gifts for me that most I'm craving
 Then what but pain is earthly lot,
 And what is there for me worth saying
 A dreary madness filled his breast;
 He sought to part with life but could not
 "O Death," he cried, "Come, bring me rest!"
 Death would not.

When years had gone, and hopes long fled
 One day into his life there entered
 Wealth, Fame, and Love he thought was de
 And all in which his hopes once centered
 And then came Joy to crown his day,
 Most freely, now that he pursued not;
 He thought, "Ah! when I craved their sway
 They would not!"

That same night, Death came knocking t
 The heart so full at first not hearing:
 But louder yet he smote the air
 With that deep call the world is fearing
 "O Death," he cried, "I called one day
 Upon you when I knew I should not;
 But leave me now a while, I pray!"
 Death would not!

GOD IN NATURE.

When the dust of life is gathering fast,
 And you are not understood;
 When nothing comes but grief to last,
 Go,— seek some distant wood,
 And reverent step o'er the verdant sod,
 Alone with Nature and Nature's God!

The fragrance God's own breath might be
 Birds warble of His love;
 The trees proclaim His majesty,
 And point your soul above;
 Oh, drink in the freshness of all the wood proclaim
 And revel in sylvan solitude!

Think not in that sorrow that weighs you down,
 That nobody cares at all;
 But wonder away from the care-worn town
 Where the voices of Nature call,
 And hear God sigh through the forest wind
 His sympathy for all mankind!

Mourn not that the world is beyond recall
 In its sin and its unbelief;
 And say not that God has forgotten all
 He has promised for its relief;
 But hear Him weep through the dripping rain
 For a world beloved in its sin and pain!

See the cloud-frowns gather across His face
 Where His smile is wont to shine;
 See the darkness gathering every place
 From the heart of a King divine;
 And hear Him sob through the cold westwind
 For a suffering people who will be blind.

Doubt not that His mighty heart is wrung
 By creation's unbelief:
 See His world all parched by a burning sun
 And almost choked with grief:
 And note what a blessing the rain appears
 As His suffering heart finds relief in tears.

Then know that His heart is the father heart
 And His love you can never trace;
 Look bravely up,—see the clouds part
 And the bright blue take their place;
 Then see Him smile in the noonday sun,
 O'er a victory gained or a duty done!

O never give your grief its sway,
 Be sure it is somewhere bright,
 And bravely turn your face away
 As a sunflower to the light,
 And find in each flower His power and grace,
 And some thought of His goodness in every place.

Lose not the song from your weary life
 Though it seems so nearly dead;
 For he who sings through the daily strife,
 Is sooner to sunshine led;
 Go,—hear God's song in the babbling stream
 Of a joy to come, and a peace supreme.

Do you feel so blackened with earthly stain
 So blotted with sin and care?—
 Go out on the hills and a cleansing gain
 In the purity of the air;
 Or far on a prairie where few have trod
 Drink, drink of the life-giving fullness of God!

Do you dare to doubt a Creator's might?—
 Go forth when the Spring is near,
 And watch the sprouts as from dark of night
 They gradually re-appear;
 See the grass come forth, and the flowers of the wood;
 And know 'tis creation thus oft renewed.

When you know the bitter of trust betrayed,
 And cruel dis-illusions come;
 When you lose the faith your fondness made,
 And declare you believe in none,
 Then lift your eyes quickly to Heaven's blue
 And rest in the Love that is sure and true.

But if sin and guilt and crime's despair
 Are tempting you astray,
 Feel in the sultry August air
 Your condemnation lay,
 And be warned in the midsummer's withering heat
 That the wrath of God shall be sure and fleet.

Commune with Nature, and all her soul
 She will open to you alone;
 She will whisper sweet solace to make you whole
 And claim you as Nature's own;
 Then feel God's kiss on your heated brow
 When the gentle zephyrs of evening blow!

Oh, the mountains stand as monuments,
 Of His grandeur, mound and mound;
 And the ocean tells of a Providence,
 And a love we cannot sound;
 Every blade of grass, every moth that wings
 Some thought of its Creator brings!

No lives that are human are wholly kin;
 No heart can commune with heart;
 There is always something untold within
 That must ever remain apart!
 No soul another's can quite understand
 Till God hath blended them in His hand.

But out in the solitude with God,
 There the heart can be wholly bare;
 There the soul may whisper and all unawed
 Catch the answer in the air;
 There it sweet communes with the Father's heart
 And feels His presence in every part!

A BENEDICTION.

And out in the evening when twilight flies,
 And our spirit hath found its cure;
 We stand, bare-souled, 'neath the perfect skies,
 And feel so pure,—so pure!
 For God hath spoken the heart's sure ease
 And the stars are smiling us sweet sweet peace.

Oh, you who are sick of the dust of years,
 And sick of the wars of men:—
 Go, study the lesson that Nature bears,
 And learning take heart again;
 For the glory of God rests over all,
 And He is near when His children call!

A BENEDICTION.

God keep thee! May His loving arm,
 So gentle, tender, strong and warm,
 Forever shelter thee from harm!
 God keep thee!

God lead thee! Through whatever woe
 May fall to thy lot here below,
 His light be thine where'er thou go!
 God lead thee!

God love thee! May His love so pure,
 All 'round thee, hold thy soul secure,
 That come what may thou mayst endure
 God love thee!

God help thee! May He ever make
 Wide way for thee, for His own sake,
 In all that thou shall undertake;
 God help Thee!

God bless thee! May His blessing sweet
 Rest with thee, guide thy wayward feet
 Until on Sea of Glass we meet!
 God bless thee!

In Memoriam.

GOD'S WAY:

In memory of Grace Eveleth.

We stood beside the dark, draped bier
 Where one we loved was lying;
 A month ago we had no fear
 That she'd so soon be dying;
 'Twas hard—so hard—in that dark day
 To see the hand divine,
 Yet we had heard the Father say:
 "My ways are never thine!"

A broken family knelt around
 The bier that mournful day;
 'Twas all of Grace that could be found
 That piece of lifeless clay!
 A lover's heart was breaking there;
 The sun refused to shine;
 Yet through the clouds a whisper clear,
 "My ways are never thine!"

A school was left to moan a light
 That could not shine again;
 Small use to whisper, "It is right!"
 In that first hour of pain.
 We were not brave enough to lay
 Her calmly on His shrine;
 Ah, Grace, we prove the words to-day—
 "My ways are never thine!"

Not ours, indeed! 'Twere ours to hold
 The one we loved so dear,
 The place is vacant in the fold
 He filled so nobly here;

A MOTHER'S GRIEF.

How many a heart is pierced with woe
 How long and sad the hours!
 No need to tell us that— we know
 His ways are never ours!

We try to tell that she was dear—
 That noble little woman!
 We say she was an angel here
 Yet altogether human!
 We cannot say a word of praise,
 For sorrow overpowers;
 We only cry, "Good-bye, dear Grace!
 His ways were never ours!"

True, time will pass,—but this one place
 Will stand here vacant still—
 The corner that our precious Grace,
 And no one else could fill,
 Perhaps when we have met again
 Amid celestial bowers,
 We will forget this hour of pain,
 And His way then be ours.
 1894.

A MOTHER'S GRIEF.

In memory of Flora May Jones.

Dedicated to her mother.

I sit with lonely heart to-night,
 And pray that I be led aright,
 And taught to live it down—
 This grief that nearly drives me wild,
 The loss of Flo, my darling child,
 Who wears the angel's crown,

But nineteen years ago she came,
A tiny form without a name,
 Around our hearts to twine;
A little bud as white as snow
That seemed too pure, too fair to grow
 Upon an earthly vine.

But God had placed her in our care,
To guard from every earthly snare,
 Her soul so pure and white;
We watched her older grow in years,
We shielded her with anxious fears,
 From every form of blight.

An angel could not purer be,
A sily no more beauty see
 Than she, our darling Flo;
Her heart, so loving, kind and true
Won friends of every one she knew,
 Wherever she might go.

Her lovely spirit knew no stain,
Her tender soul was racked with pain
 To see another sin;
How she would raise her eyes of blue,
In prayer that those she loved so true
 Would let her Saviour in!

The light of God shone in her eyes
The blessed light of Paradise
 Went with her on her way;
We loved her— oh, too well! too well!
It was not meet that she should dwell
 Where sin and grief hold sway!

We loved her— aye, but God loved best
And wisely took her from our breast
 The streets of gold to roam.
He saw her soul was all too fair
For such a world of constant care,
 And whispered, "Child, com : home!"

At last we realized the truth,
 That she, in all her spotless youth,
 Was going from our home;
 We saw the end draw slowly near,
 We saw the hand of death appear,
 And knew the hour had come.

She raised her little hand on high,
 And pointed upward to the sky,
 Where she so soon would dwell;
 And then her spirit took its flight
 Where God hath said, there is no night,
 And all with her is well.

The gates of Heaven were opened wide;
 We fancied we could see inside,
 When that white soul winged through;
 "Praise God!" we cried, "this is not death!"
 For only by the struggling breath
 The bitter truth we know.

Oh! when that sainted soul had fled,
 And I could realize her dead,
 My heart grew hard as stone;
 I could not see how God could call
 My darling one, my Flo, my all,
 And leave me here alone.

I could not feel His ways were just;
 Why did He claim her, and why must
 I stay, if she must go!
 How could I live if this must be?
 How could I live and never see
 My precious little Flo!

I hated life— I prayed to die:
 To dwell in that fair land on high,
 With her, so wondrous dear;
 I did not pause to think that death
 Could only come when every breath
 Had 'filled its mission here.

I questioned God's goodness to me
 How this was kind I could not see
 I hardly dared to pray;
 How could I kiss the smiting rod;
 How could I raise my heart to God,
 Who took my child away!

Friends came to me with words of cheer
 But all fell heedless on my ear:
 How little did they know!
 They never had a mother's heart,
 Were never called upon to part
 With such a child as Flo!

At last, God's angel came to me
 To teach me that it would not be
 If 'twere not for the best;
 God's love for me was oh, so great!
 While Flo was in a happier state
 Where all is peace and rest.

I knew that had she lived below,
 She might not always have been so,
 So pure, so good, so fair;
 While not a sorrow can come near
 Nor any taint of earth appear
 To mar my darling there!

And so 'tis wrong to wish her back,
 To wish her feet to walk the track
 Where angels sometimes fall;
 And yet, at times, my selfishness
 E'en yet, would seek from all that bliss
 Her spirit to recall!

I've learned to see how God knew best,
 But oh, how bitter was the test!
 How merciless the dart!
 Sometime, I may live down the grief
 And time, in God's hand bring relief
 To soothe my tortured heart

But oh! not now; three years have passed
 Since that dark night she breathed her last
 Within this dreary clune;
 And still the wound is open yet:
 It seems I never can forget,
 Whate'er the lapse of time.

I used to say, "God's will be done!"
 I dare not say it now! oh, none
 Can realize the blow!
 We say we'er to His will resigned,
 But when the test comes, then we find,
 How little did we know!

'T was wicked, Lord, Thy love to doubt,
 But brain and sense were put to rout, —
 I knew not what I did:
 Forgive me, Father, for the wrong,
 Forgive, I pray, and make me strong,
 To do as I-am bid.

And Lord, how good Thon wert to me—
 Refusing then to grant my plea
 And let me die with Flo!
 For hadst Thon granted it, I fear
 My soul was fit not to appear
 Where I my child might know.

Dear Flo! she waits above for me;
 Her face will be the first I see
 Upon that glittering strand;
 Sometimes; my eyes can almost trace
 Her form in that celestial place
 And see her beckoning hand.

Her room is just as when she died;
 I could not change it if I tried,
 Each trinket is in place:
 Each dress she wore is hanging there!
 And there's her bed, and here's her chair,
 But oh, where is her face?

"At heaven's gate!" a voice replies,
 And then my broken spirit cries,
 "She's there, my angel one!"
 O Father, help me trust Thee more!
 Teach me whatever lies before,
 To say, "Thy will be done!"

1897

TRANSPLANTED.

In memory of Rose Schaar.

Within our garden grew a thornless Rose;
 We tended it each day with loving care;
 We guarded it— we felt that it was rare,
 And feared we foes!

We knew sometimes the frosts of earth have chilled,
 And summers heat has withered to the ground;
 And so with great anxiety we found
 Our days were filled!

And so it grew— and fair it was to see;
 With pride we watched each opening leaf expand;
 With joy we loved, yet could not understand,
 So fair was she!

Our garden grew in sweetness day by day,
 Her fragrance made the air like breath of Heaven;
 We wondered why so fair a plant was given,
 To cheer our way!

Alas! the eye of God was on our Rose—
 He saw that she was fit His fields to grace
 He took her from our care unto a place
 Where come no foes!

No frost, no heat, no careless foot can soil,
 The beauty of the flower we kept so fair;
 Transplanted to a garden far more rare
 Than where we toil!

God saw some ruin come to interpose—
 Perhaps he saw the hand of lover dare
 To dream that he might pluck the bud, and wear
 The blossomed Rose!

We do not think of her as in the tomb;
 No, no! the bud that did not open here
 Had only found a brighter atmosphere
 To burst in bloom!

We find the garden now has lost its grace;
 Her fragrance gone, there seems so little cheer!—
 Yet leaflets there, and fallen petals here,
 Endear the place!

We know that when our days of toil shall close
 We, too, shall find the garden spot above,
 And there, still fresh and sweet, the bud we love
 A full blown Rose!

1898.

GONE BEFORE.

In mémoire of Harriet M. Hamé.

"She is dead!" they say with grief-bowed head:
 "We'll never see her more!"
 I cannot think of her as dead,
 But only gone before;
 For she has reached a land more fair,
 And only waits to greet us there

I see her now as in the past. —

That gentle, sweet young face;
 Those eyes of blue, too clear to last;
 That form of lithesome grace;
 That quick, brisk step; that tender smile
 So full of love and free from guile!

O no! I CANNOT have it so!

I will not think that she
 We loved so tenderly below
 Lives but in memory;
 She lives as truly as of yore
 Although we see her here no more—

There's not a single charm of soul,
 There's not a grace of form
 But in that land, as years may roll,
 Secure from earthly storm,
 Will brighter, holier beauty see,
 Enhanced by immortality.

Her soul was always turned to God;
 Her thoughts of Heaven's light;
 Her mission while on earth she trod,
 Was pointing souls to right,
 We loved her, but we never knew
 How well the angels loved her, too!

The shadow fell so gradually
 We scarcely marked its way;
 We closed our eyes, and would not see
 Her fading, day by day.
 It seemed we could not have it so;
 She was too sweet, too pure to go!

Dear Hattie! I recall the day
 We gathered at the train
 To see it bear her form away
 New health and strength to gain.
 Alas! God did not will it so,
 Although His plans we could not know!

We hoped,— tho' hope was wed to fear,
 That in that western clime,
 The form of her we held so dear,
 Might in a little time
 New life from God's own nature gain,
 And come back well and strong again.

We said "good-bye" with many a tear,
 And many a heart-felt prayer;
 Our hearts were torn 'twixt hope and fear,
 And burdened deep with care,
 We could not bear to see her go.
 And yet we hoped 'twas better so.

Alas! she never reached that clime;
 God called to Heaven His own;
 They brought to us in two week's time
 Her still cold form alone;
 The gentle soul had taken flight
 To realm of everlasting light.

Not as she left she came again —
 No word of greeting sweet;
 No clinging clasp; no tear-drop's stain:
 No smile our hearts to greet
 God help us! we must bear the blow,
 And try to say "God wills it so!"

We wonder often if she knew
 How near the edge she trod;
 How soon the gate she should pass through
 And go to meet her God.
 At parting, were those tears of pain
 To think we ne'er should meet again?

Her life seemed very fair and bright,
 But God could see ahead;
 He saw some shadow mar its light,
 And so in love He led
 Where nothing earthly e'er could be
 To bring one thought of misery.

'Twere sweet to do for her below;
 To smooth away the rough,
 To wipe her tears, to bathe her brow;
 But God said, "'Tis enough!"
 And now in fields of beauty rare
 She needs no more our tender care.

Why weep we? In that land of light
 Her joy will never sleep;
 But grow eternally more bright—
 'Tis not for her we weep.
 We weep for those left here to mourn
 The loved one who can ne'er return.

Return! and would we wish her to
 Return our life to share!
 To know again the griefs she knew
 And feel the load of care?
 Ah no! 'tis best that we alone
 Should know the pain, and make the man.

'Twas scarcely eighteen years she dwelt
 Our weary hearts to cheer,
 But oh! the blessings that were felt
 Because she lingered here!
 The earth was brighter where she trod
 The friends she chose were nearer God!

And if the spirit ever may
 Look back to earthly scene,
 Will she not often on our way
 Walk with us all unseen,
 And though we wist not, hover near
 When clouds of doubt and gloom appear!

We miss her, aye, we miss her so!
 Her smile so pure and bright
 Dispelled so much of gloom below,
 We miss the rays of light,
 There is a shadow on the day
 Her face no longer charms away.

We miss her at each old-time place
 Where she was wont to go;
 We pass her home, and miss her face
 And cheery greeting so.
 Unconsciously, we linger nigh
 To hear again her sweet "good bye!"

But God is just: He loved her best;
 And bore her home to dwell;
 And though we walk with vague unrest
 The olden pathway still,
 We'll meet her there, ah labor o'er,
 To part again— ah, never more!

We know now she will always be
 As pure as when she came;
 Angels sometimes a fall may see,
 And sink beneath the shame.
 Ah! better far to lose her now
 Than know that sin might cloud her brow.

Farewell, dear Hattie! life is drear
 Since thou hast left our side;
 But when God calls us to appear
 In His courts to abide,
 We'll gladly come with thee to dwell
 And hear no more the word "Farewell!"

BEREAVED,

In memory of Aggie Nichols.

What can I say, beloved—
 What can I say?
 You we so dearly loved
 Faded away!

I cannot realize
All that pertains—
Wait till I learn to prize
That which remains!

Words are so weak, beloved —
Words are so weak!
Where is the word of love
That I should speak?
Life will flow on again,
That I've no doubt!
Wait till I see it plain
With you without!

I would speak cheeringly
To loved ones left;
Whisper endearingly
To hearts bereft!
Aggie, forgive me, dear—
This is my cross!
Wait till I learn to bear
Calmly my loss!

Then to your mother, dear,
Gladly I'll go!
Then to that other, there,
Missing you so!
But— just a little while
Let me wait here,
Till I can learn to smile
Without a tear!

Then, my farewell I say—
Dear, did you know
Through all your earthly way,
I loved you so?
Now in eternal day,
Sweetly you dwell,
But oh how sad to say,
“Aggie, Farewell!”

(1899)

A CONSULTATION.

Lines to the memory of Louie Duff Thorne.

The Angel of Life and the Angel of Death
 Together were watching a sick bed one day.
 When the Life Angel spake with a sweet pleading breath
 "Oh, leave her a little while longer I pray!
 Spare that young husband there who would mourn for his bride
 For what would life be if she left him alone?
 He needs her to travel earth-paths by his side;
 And earth will be empty when she shall have flown.
 See that beautiful babe—can you look in his face,
 And deny him forever a fond mother's care?
 Must he grow into manhood, and enter life's race?
 Deprived all his life of that sweet mother there?
 O think what it means ere you take her away,
 And spare her a little while longer I pray!"

Spake the Angel of Death, "'Tis because she is fair
 And because I would keep her forever unstained,
 That to-night I shall enter that door open there
 And take her to claim the reward she has gained.
 To lovely by far in this dark world to stay,
 I shall take her where ail that seems strange will be clear
 But think you she ever can wander away
 From those she has loved in her pilgrimage here?
 Not so!— she shall guard them and guide them each day
 With the power of one who can see far ahead,
 Unknowing they'll follow her lead all the way,
 And she shall be near, though they say, 'She is dead!
 There are dangers unseen, she can lead them around
 There are pitfalls their feet, but for her, would have found?"

"Oh, but listen a moment," the Life Angel plead,
 "Let me beg once again for the babe at her breast!
 Her hopes have been centered about that wee head,
 And how could she leave him and yet be at rest?
 Will he be so much better equipped for the strife
 That she should surrender for his, her young life?—
 That life just beginning in all of its pride,
 But three days a mother, and ten months a bride!
 Why the mother has not become used to that loss?
 And how can you add so much heavier a cross?
 To call her just now would be cruel indeed;
 Do leave her yet longer to them in their need!"
 But the Angel of Death only motioned dissent,
 And cut from the chamber with bowed heads they went.

That night for his treasure the Death Angel came,
 And bore her forever from earth and its care;
 So gently he entered and whispered her name,
 That the loved ones around scarcely knew he was there,
 But the tears and the pain will not wholly be o'er,
 Till she welcomes them home— there to part nevermore,
 (1901.)

RENUNCIATION.

In memory of Dr. Loretta J. Baird.

There's a hush of solemn meaning;
 There's a softly-whispered name;
 There are tear-drops brightly gleaming,
 There are sobs that rack the frame;
 There are crushed hearts vainly trying
 To keep back the bitter tear;
 There are white lips bravely crying,
 "Take her, Lord, but she is dear!"

She is gone— her gentle pity
 Can no more our sorrows cheer;
 She has found the Golden City,
 And a home is empty here,
 She, the savior of so many,
 Could herself no healing find;
 (When God summons, is there any?)
 Take her, Lord, for she was kind!

There's a gloom o'er many a dwelling
 Where her tender heart was known;
 Tears in eyes unused are swelling,
 And not woman's eyes alone!
 Think not ye alone are weeping
 Who are bound by kindred ties—
 We, too, mourn while she lies sleeping.
 Take her, Lord, her ways were wise!

Well we knew her worth, not dreaming
 That her work was ended so;
 There was much, indeed, yet seeming
 To await her hand below;
 But not so! May He who chastens
 Give the power to endure!
 Pray we, though a dark hour hastens,
 "Take her, Lord, for she was pure!"

Time alone can still the anguish;
 Earth can ne'er the loss restore!
 Now in bitter pain we languish
 For a voice that speaks no more.
 Of such lives as hers just ended,
 Earth indeed hath all too few,
 And our grief-wrung prayers are blended,
 "Take her, Lord, for she was true!"

When the Christmas anthem raises,
 We will listen, choked with pain;
 She will join the angel's praises,
 "Peace on earth, good-will to men!"

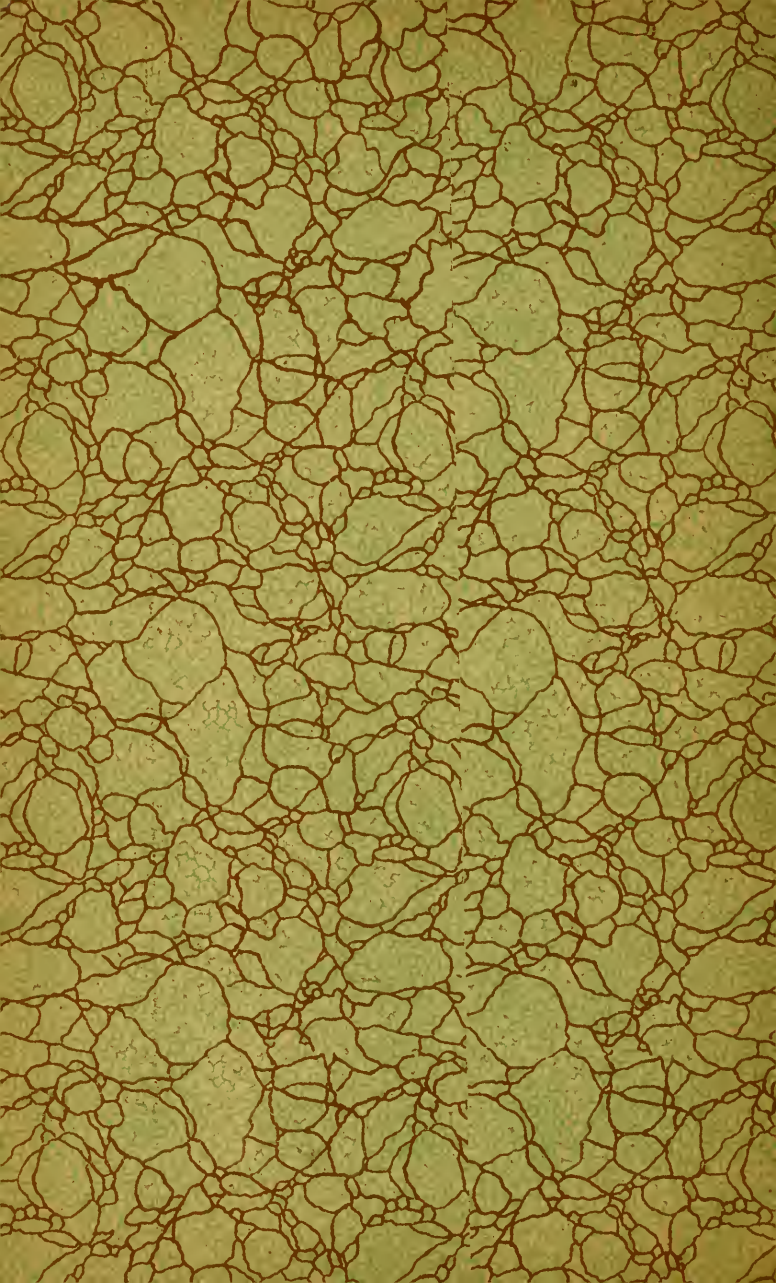
Back to God we render purely
His own gift, as all earth must;
Thankful we can say so surely,
"Take her, Lord, for she was just!"

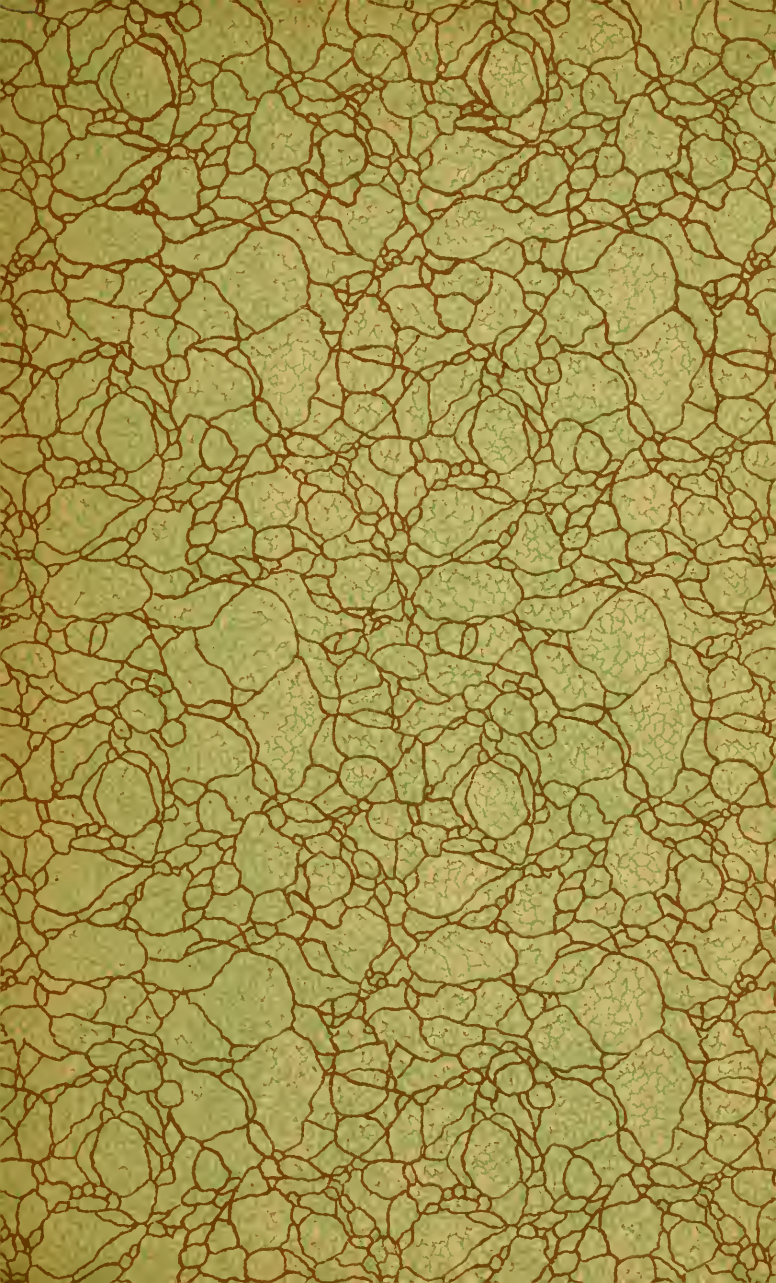
What avails this burst of sorrow?
What avail these tears that sway?
WE can do no more; the morrow
Is to her a perfect day!
We can only to the keeping
Of her God her soul resign,
And say bravely through our weeping
"Take her, Father; she is Thine!"
1901.



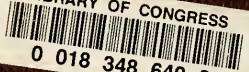
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