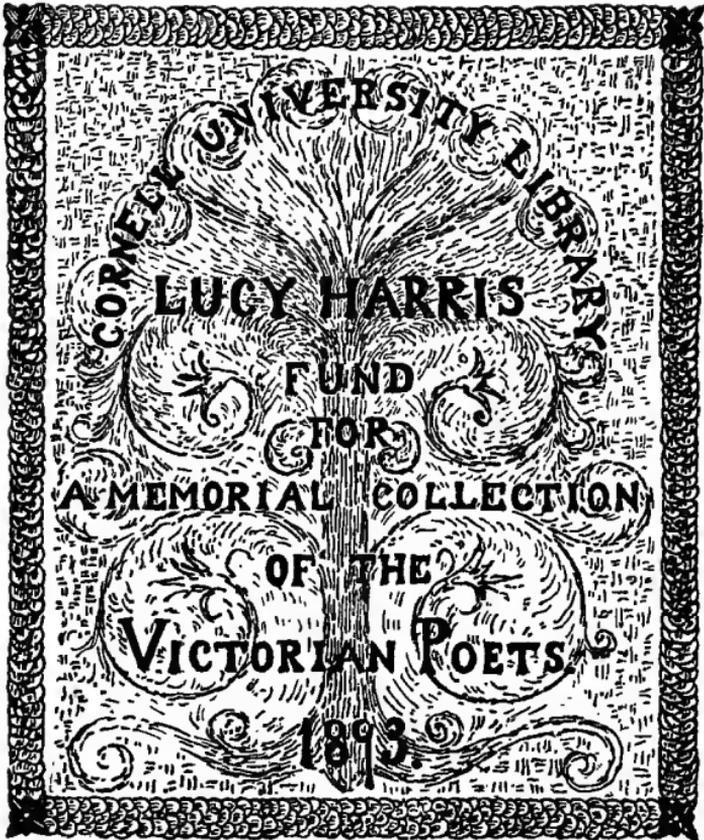




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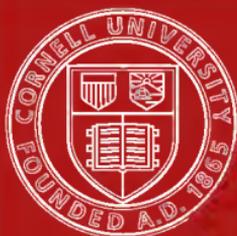
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by
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The Bud

and

The Flower.

[Cleppin, James]



NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE:
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TO

My Sister Lizzie

AND

My Brother Edwin,

IN THEIR AFFLICTION.





THE BUD AND THE FLOWER.



Helen-Sophia.

I.



HEY come and go! But yesternight*
We stood the Household Altar round,
And brought upon that hallow'd ground,
To Jesus' arms a Cherub bright:—

To Christ, who bade His followers not
Forbid the little ones to come
To Him, this tender Bud we brought,
That in His kingdom it might bloom.

With sacred rites, two names we gave
The christen'd Babe:—the name of One
Who walketh yet beneath the sun;
And of Another, in the grave.

We parted then—we Brothers seven
And Sisters twain--who, sever'd long,
Had met, to rank this Child among,
Through Christ our Lord, the Heirs of Heaven.

* October 14, 1855.

We parted—and our several ways
 Retrod into the world again—
 New-nerved to know that through life's maze
 Warm hearts were ours in joy and pain.

II.



AIN waits on Joy. The precious Flower,
 That in God's garden we had placed,
 In fragrance blossom'd for an hour,
 Then died in momentary haste.

A Mother's arms enclosed at night
 The breathing Form that softly lay
 Upon her breast. 'Twas lifeless Clay
 She clasp'd, before the morning light.*

With baptism of tears, she laid
 Her Child in holy earth, and thought
 Of that old lesson, grandly taught
 By pious David, when he said:—

Why should I weep and fast? 'Tis vain!
 I cannot bring him back. But I
 Will go to him when I shall die,
 Though he come not to me again.

* December 14, 1855.



Anne-Gleanor.

1.



SOLEMN Stillness fill'd that Bower
Of Wedded Love, with Roses strew'd—
A whispering Solicitude
Prolong'd the anxious midnight hour.

The Mystery of Birth and Life,
That dignifies the lowliest cot,
Hung brooding o'er the little spot
Where lay that young and gentle Wife.

Lay, in her pain and sorrow, there,
Sustaining Nature's hard decree.—
God grant thee strength thy pangs to bear,
And bring thee through thy travail free!

A feeble cry—an infant wail—
Is from that inner chamber heard;
And through the house the joyful word
Is borne—the ever-welcome tale.

The Child of their desire and prayer—
A Child—Man Child—is born to them :*
Of all their wealth of love the Heir,
And of their lives the priceless Gem.

How blest—her life preserved—is he!
How blest are both, that gracious Heaven
Hath heard them in the Life that's given,
This Brother of fair Sisters three!

* February 2, 1856.

What grateful, proud emotions swim
 In her dark eyes, as from her Boy
 She lifts her loving looks to him,
 Her Bosom's Lord, who shares her joy.

That joy is full:—the hopes and fears
 That broke her peace, are now at rest:—
 Balm-breathing sleeps upon her breast
 The Comfort of their future years.

II.



T was a Dream! The Sun whose light
 Illumes the Better Land, had thrown
 Upon that house its Shadow down:—
 And her pure Spirit took its flight.*

Freed from its fleshly walls, her Breath—
 The Breath of God—return'd to Him;
 And in that chamber, drear and dim,
 Reposed the Mystery of Death.

The Shrine wherein so late she dwelt,
 Lay cold, and motiouless, and fair:—
 Softly the striken Mourner knelt,
 And gazed:—no voice—no life—was there.

Those eyes—those lips—so eloquent
 With love, were elosed, and mute, and still:
 Passive the feet that swiftly went,
 To work her ever-cheerful will.

Gone from her cheeks the summer-bloom,
 The warmth and flush of her young life :—
 Her noontide happiness most rife,
 Came the chill torpor of the Tomb.

The pickaxe and the spade have made,
 Sweet Anne, thy last and softest bed :
 The Earth shall pillow thy fair head,
 Upon her gentle bosom laid.

Ashes to ashes ! dust to dust !
 Above thy head a grass-green sod,
 And at thy heels a stone !—To God,
 In surest hope, thy Soul we trust.

III.



OR ever gone ? It cannot be !
 With love, and life, and being warm,
 So late the Comfort and the Charm,
 The Sunshine of a home of glee !

It cannot be ! We look to meet
 Her image here—her image there :—
 To hear her footstep on the stair,
 To find her in the accustomed seat.

In room, in passage, or in hall,
 We think to see her come and go ;
 And as we wander to and fro,
 We listen for her soft foot-fall.

We seek her in the sacred nest
 Where her young brood securely sleep—
 Where, nightly, daily, she would keep
 Her vigils, when they wake or rest :

We seek her, but we find her not—
 We do not find her even there :
 Not hers is now the watchful care
 That hovers round this orphan'd cot.

Not hers, yet beautiful to see
 The love—the love of Woman still—
 That fondly floweth in, to fill
 The place where she was wont to be.

'Tis Nature's Law, Divine, that brings
 The needed help these lambs among,
 These feeble, frail, forsaken things,
 And makes them by their weakness strong.

IV.



HERE'ER he looks, where'er he turns,
 The Mourner sadly sees, around,
 Not her for whom his vision yearns,
 But others, on her errands bound.

Not thankless for their kindness he,
 But fill'd with grateful feelings warm ;
 Yet O ! what pain to him to see
 Their hands her offices perform !

To see her Household Gods profaned
 By others' touch!—her place of pride
 Another take!—and where she reign'd,
 Some other—not the Lost—preside!

He thinks to see her interpose—
 Her rights reclaim—her throne resume:
 Alas! no part in Earth have those
 Whose tabernacle is the tomb.

With all they proudly call'd their own
 May others deal. No voice have they
 Where once their lightest Yea or Nay
 As undisputed Law was known.

v.



IS done! Her work on Earth is o'er!
 No more, at morning, noon, or night,
 By sun, or moon, or taper light,
 Her form we'll see! No more! no more!

No more with eye of flesh we'll see
 The vanish'd form—the lov'd and lost,
 Who hath the sacred waters cross'd,
 And ever ceased, for us, to be.

With eye of flesh we see no more
 That form; but not so gross and blind
 The inner vision of the mind,
 Which sees her perfect as before.

And through the house, or round the fire,
 Or when at table we sit down,
 Although her name may not transpire,
 Her presence there is felt and known.

Her absence makes her but the more
 In every thought a present Shade,
 A Spirit, that can never fade
 Like her frail body, gone before :

A Spirit that shall grow more bright
 As flesh and sense decay and die,
 And our Enfranchisement draws nigh—
 Our entrance to her Land of Light.

VI.

IME flies with healing on his wings;
 And o'er the woes which make us bleed,
 As hourly, daily, they recede,
 With noiseless hand he beauty flings.

Our joys, our prospects—are they laid
 In dust and ashes?—loving Time
 Steals on—and o'er the havock made,
 The field-rose and the ivy climb.

Through tears we view the ghastly wound
 New-made in earth where lies our Dead;
 But soon the angel Hours will spread
 Enamell'd verdure o'er the mound.

The grave, with fragrant flowers perfumed,
 Will symbol to the Mourner's view,
 The Hopes and Promises which strew
 The Book by heavenly light illumed.

And angel lips those words of cheer
 Shall speak, which scatter'd all the gloom
 Of Salem's consecrated tomb:—
 That "He is risen!—is not here!"

VII.



SAY not that 'tis a Mystery,
 For morning Bud and noontide Flower,
 For Life in blossom, and mature,
 In mortal eyes to cease to be.

Is Man, Divinely taught, so blind,
 That he the lesson cannot read?
 Can fail the secret clue to find
 That shall to Understanding lead?

Death, with its hard Bereavements, weans
 The Child of Earth from Earth and Time;
 And shall we mark the End sublime,
 And marvel at the appointed Means?

When, one by one, the old and young
 Have to the World of Spirits flown,
 And more and more we stand alone,
 With anguish'd hearts and bosoms wrung—

Are we not taught how frail is life—
 How vain this passing show of Earth—
 How mean a thing, how poor its worth,
 Did nought survive its dust and strife ?

Through Suffering heavenward we aspire,
 Through Sorrow are we sanctified :
 Grief is the great Refiner's fire,
 By which His sons are purified.

While smoothly runs the flowing stream
 On which we sail from Birth to Death,
 Fann'd by the Zephyr's dallying breath,
 Our life is but a listless dream.

But buffets of the wind and wave
 Give us their strength. And they who strive,
 And in the troubled waters lave,
 Find health that keeps the Soul alive.

The rod that smites our hearts of stone
 With cleaving blow, doth it not bring
 Refreshing waters from the spring,
 And make the Smiter's goodness known ?

And whom He smiteth, armour wears
 Of proof, and Man of Woman born
 And Earth-begotten cares may scorn :
 A charmed life the Mourner bears.

VIII.



SAY not, then, 'tis a Mystery
 Of Providence, for Bud and Flower,
 For Life in blossom, and mature,
 In mortal eyes to cease to be.

Our Dead our Guardian Angels are :—
 By other eyes than ours unseen,
 They come with grave and solemn mien,
 And tend our footsteps everywhere.

We see them in the broad daylight,
 Amidst the crowded haunts of men :
 We see them fitting round us when
 We pass the watches of the night.

We see them our night-dreams among,
 When to our pillow'd rest we go :—
 Ascending and descending, lo !
 The heavenly ladder now they throng !

They bend their glistering faces down,
 And beckon us the upward way,
 That we, transfigured as are they,
 May wear the amaranthine crown.

'Twas good for them, they bid us know,
 And good for us, who still remain,
 And mourn our 'parted ones with pain—
 'Twas good for all that they should go.

'Tis good for Thee, 'tis good for Her,
That, Brother, she hath gone to dwell
With Him who doeth all things well,
The Chastener and the Comforter.





Margaret-Ann.

(FRAGMENT OF VERSES WRITTEN ABOUT 1830.)



YES! there's a happier world above,
And every opening Flower of Love,
Which perish'd young, shall surely prove
Perennial there.

The sons of Misery there shall find
A balm to heal the wounded mind ;
And hearts which long in anguish pined,
Have rest.

Hail, glorious hope!—away each fear !
My Sisters, Brothers, Parents dear,
Each moment brings our meeting near,
In Heaven.

What though our bark be tempest-toss'd,
Ere life's dark-rolling stream be cross'd,
We'll meet *her* sainted Shade, “ not lost,
But gone before.”

Twilight Musings.

BY THE RUINS OF LEICESTER ABBEY.



OW beautiful is Earth in Eve's dim ray!
How sweet the influence of thy magic spell,
Soft hour of Twilight, as retiring Day,
With lover's fondness, ling'ring bids farewell!

Thee, with a rapt enthusiast's glow I hail,
When grateful Rest succeeds fatiguing Toil,
Where the still River glides along the Vale,
Free from the World's harsh strife, its rude turmoil.

Hark! infant voices float upon the air
From yonder Green, and bear me back to youth—
My distant home—the much-loved beings there—
The blissful days of innocence and truth.

These themes fond Memory loves to wake at eve:—
Now do I see my native fields—the stream,
The rural haunts, the walks I sigh'd to leave,
And dearer charms:—ah! tis a waking Dream!

Here, on this storied Abbey's mouldering wall,
I'll sit and muse upon the Olden Time,
Lull'd by the murmuring, mimic waterfall,
The soothing music of the evening chime.

This once-famed pile—where is its grandeur gone?
Bid the green moss, the ivied wreck, declare!
Here Wolsey sleeps!—where his recording stone—
His narrow bed? Oblivion answers, "Where?"

This modest flower creative Wisdom rear'd,
 And bade it bloom perennial near this spot :—
 Oh, human Art ! how frail, with this compared,
 Thy proudest works !—thou, Man, how soon forgot !

Thy beauties, Nature ! simple or sublime,
 Spread o'er the earth, the skies, the rolling main,
 Endure unhurt the crumbling touch of Time—
 Survive, while empires rise, extend, and wane !

Calm flit yon clouds along the western sky,
 Like homeward-journeying Spirits of the Blest :—
 Fain would my soul from this clay dungeon fly,
 And seek with them a brighter, purer rest.

The Soul aspires—the Body binds it here—
 Chains it a restless prisoner to Earth ;
 Till, freed by Death, it finds a nobler sphere—
 Springs up, rejoicing in its second birth.

* * * * *

What sound awakes me from my reverie ?
 Time's warning tongue from Margaret's ancient tower.
 Night's deepening shades enwrap the flowery lea :—
 Adieu, mild glories of the Evening Hour !



My Father's Hearth.



MY Father's Hearth! my Father's Hearth!

The simple, touching words,
Breathe music of life's early days,
In Memory's sweetest chords.
They fall upon the ravish'd ear
Like melodies that break

The peaceful slumbers of the night,
And heavenly thoughts awake.

Ah, yes! like music of the night
Upon the ear they come,
And wake the mind from troubled dreams
In life's dark hours of gloom.
Revive the sweet remembrance of
The Sabbath's peaceful close,
When from a grateful Father's Hearth
The Evening Hymn arose.

The careless sports of Infancy,
The happiness of Home,
Across the care-worn breast of Man
In after-days will come.
The Earth-tired Pilgrim oft turns back,
When near his journey's close,
To gaze upon the scenes beloved
O'er which life's sun arose.

Oft in my youthful prime I stray'd
 To watch the river roll,
 As in the West the golden sun
 Was hastening to his goal ;
 And when he sunk below the hills,
 And left my world in night,
 I long'd to view the distant scenes
 That with his beams were bright.

Youth pass'd away—I left my home—
 My home of peace and love,
 To mingle with the busy world,
 Through stranger-haunts to rove.
 That world I've found more warm and true
 Than sour misanthropes tell,
 Yet in my inmost heart of hearts
 My Father's Hearth doth dwell.

I've wander'd on the banks of Forth,
 Near "Scotia's darling seat ;"
 By Leven roved in classic vale,
 Where loch and streamlet meet ;
 By stately Clyde, and Lomond's wave
 And Mount, my steps have been ;
 And where thy foaming waters fall,
 Romantic Corra Linn.

By limpid Trent, my native Wear,
 And by majestic Thames
 (Th' unrivall'd Monarch of our Isle's
 Fair sisterhood of streams),

My feet have trod ; and now at eve
 I wander by the Soar,
 Where Wolsey sought a grave when life's
 Ambitious dream was o'er.

Yet never have I gazed on scenes
 So bright, so dear to me,
 As that fair vale through which the Tees
 Meanders wild and free—
 Where Time flew by on lightning wings—
 Where Memory had her birth,
 And love was worshipp'd on that shrine,
 A Father's happy Hearth.

'Tis past ! the dream is o'er ! the band
 Which gladden'd that fireside
 Is snapp'd asunder—o'er the Earth
 Is scatter'd far and wide.
 Yet will the sacred tie which binds
 All kindred hearts in one,
 Endure, while each afar through life
 Must travel lonely on.

The fairest flowers which scent the air
 And charm the raptur'd eye,
 Far from their native soil, if torn,
 Will droop, and withering die :—
 The exiled Swiss, when on his ear
 The *Ranz des Vaches* doth come,
 Pines for his Father's Hearth—his home—
 And sinks into the tomb.

There's anguish in the thought
 To die far in a foreign land,
 The parting pillow never smooth'd
 By Love's dear gentle hand :—
 With friends to cheer, to nerve my heart,
 In Nature's last decay,
 Amid the scenes I loved in youth,
 Oh may I pass away !

Where sleep my Sisters in their bed
 Of Childhood's early death,
 Where friends I love may slumber yet
 The green turf underneath,
 There would I lie, encircled close
 By those who shared my mirth,
 When joyously we gather'd round
 In youth a Father's Hearth.

But far away from that dear spot
 The grassy mound shall rise,
 To mark the stranger's place of rest,
 When this frail body dies.*
 No tearful eye shall dew my grave
 Of her who loved to keep
 Her watch maternal round my head,
 In smiling cradle-sleep.

No Sister drawing near shall breathe,
 In whispers soft and low,
 "Here, Helen, lies our brother — :
 "He cannot hear us now."

* Written in sickness.

No pious hand of faithful love
Shall o'er my early grave
Strew summer flowers, and fondly bid
The weeping willow wave.

Upon the holy day of rest,
When from the churchyard path
Or friends or kindred stray to mourn
Loved objects lost in death,
No step shall pause where low I lie,
Unnoted and unknown,
A nameless stranger midst the dead,
With rank weeds overgrown.

But when the Grave, th' insatiate Sea,
Their long-lost prey give up,
When from the palsied hands of Death
The Ball and Sceptre drop,
The silent Slumberers of the Tomb,
The parted Friends of Earth,
Shall meet where parting tears no more
Will cloud a Father's Hearth!



Steamboat Sonnets

I.

WRITTEN IN THE "LINKS OF FORTH," BETWEEN STIRLING
AND ALLOA.



FAREWELL, old Stirling! I may never see
Thy towers and battlements again. But I,
In what remains of life, will think of thee,
And have thee ever in fond Mem'ry nigh.
* * * * *

Lo! how is this? We backward seem to fly!
Once more thou art before me: once again
Ben Lomond and Ben Ledi meet the eye,
Up towering 'bove the broad and fertile plain!
Like some fond lover, when he bids adieu,
And, oft protracting, turns and turns, to view
The maid he loves, and fold her in his arms;
So do the silver Links of Forth return,
Loth to lose sight of Stirling's thousand charms,
Stirling! whose storied walls make British bosoms burn!

II.

WRITTEN BETWEEN ALLOA AND QUEENSFERRY.



NOW very beautiful! The glorious sun
Shines onward to his blue meridian height;
Earth smiles rejoicing in his beams; and bright
The waters sparkle as they seaward run.
Man gathers in the harvest God hath given,*
The rich abundance of the fruitful soil:
The Grampian peaks, amid his noontday toil,
Direct his heart in thankfulness to Heaven.

* September 21, 1843.

O glorious Earth! offspring of His great love!
 What fairer dwelling-place could Man possess?
 Would that he might no more Thy law transgress:—
 That here below, as by Thy sons above,
 Thy will were done! Then would this lovely scene
 An Eden be, undimm'd its glittering sheen.

III.

WRITTEN BETWEEN QUEENSFERRY AND GRANTON.

DOLD bravely on thy course, O Man! for know,
 All things, in Earth as Heaven, are order'd well;
 'Tis for a season only thou must dwell
 In this abode of error and of woe.

Thou art on thine observed probation here,
 Destined, if well thou play'st thy part below,
 At this life's set of sun to upward go,
 And find, above, a sinless, happy sphere.
 E'en this dark world His hand hath strewn with flowers,
 And made it, to the virtuous, almost Heaven.

But for thy Home, though fair, Earth was not given.
 On high, the Father hath unfading bowers:
 There shall His sons enjoy a world of bliss:—
 Why mourn that Sorrow weans their hearts from this?



The Launch of the Gloriana.

(April 15, 1843).



HOW subtle Mind and cunning Hand have won
Their triumph o'er the grosser things of Earth.
The forest-oak that flourish'd in the sun
(From acorn sprung to tree of goodly girth)—
The iron-ore that had its darksome birth
In the deep bowels of the globe we tread—
From these hath wonder-working Man brought forth
Yon Miracle! to float o'er Ocean's bed,
And England's glory over Earth's wide realms to spread.

The work is done! The huge leviathan prepares
To launch adventurous on the fickle deep.
The rising river on its bosom bears
A restless throng. Now here, now there, they sweep,
Impell'd by oar, or sail, or steam—and keep
Impatient watch. The ancient banks of Tyne
Swarm thick with life. On either hand, the steep
Is breathing with the human form divine.
Well may the sight inspire the humblest poet's line!

The pale-faced student from his books hath come,
To study Life's not less instructive page:—
The lawyer leaves his desk and musty room,
Glad to escape the parchment-wars men wage,
And here, his heart, his mind, refresh, assuage.
The old, the young—man, woman, child—are met;
The same the joy the thoughts of all engage;
Banish'd the while the care, the feverish fret
Of human life—which none, alas! may long forget.

Now hath the tide well-nigh attain'd its height ;
 The waters kiss the lofty vessel's side ;
 So woos the amorous Wave his destined Mate.
 Coyly, at first, receives the virgin Bride
 Her Lord's caress :—then slow begins to glide,
 And sinks at length into his fond embrace.
 Hush'd is the gazing mass, till on the tide
 She floats majestic, with a swanlike grace,
 Towering above her kind, a Monarch of her race.

The general joy then finds exulting voice :—
 The loud huzza, the manly British cheer,
 Fill the vast welkin with their deafening noise.
 Hoarse-throated cannon stun the startled ear.
 O, glorious scene ! to sons of Albion dear !
 How proudly Britain's flag floats from the mast
 Of that huge bark ! which, dwarfing others near,
 Sails in their midst with its proportions vast,
 A noble venture on the treacherous waters east.

High on the prow behold the VIRGIN QUEEN
 (The *Gloriana* of sweet Spenser's line),
 Whose memory lives in England ever green,
 Whose reign for aye will bright in History shine.
 Go forth, thou Glory of time-honour'd Tyne !
 God speed thy course upon the pathless sea !
 May the glad mission be for ever thine,
 To make this sea-girt isle respected be,
 And all men love the MATRON QUEEN ! Queen of the Free !



The "Great Meeting" Revisited.

1853-54.

I.



AS in a Dream the Past is reappearing ;
Again the quaint old Temple shuts me in ;
Familiar forms are round me ; well-known faces
Shine out upon me in th' accustom'd places ;
The solemn organ, and the sacred song
That heavenward rises from th' assembled throng,
Wake up long-slumbering memories in the brain ;
Once more his calm melodious voice I'm hearing,*
Whose words the mind convince, th' affections win ;
And this the life-long burden of his strain :—
Love God and Man. With Him who shed His blood
For you, be found in peace, and without blame.
Who then shall harm ye, if of what is good
Ye followers be, in your great Master's name ?

II.



THE Dream dissolves ! Not as it was, the scene
Appears, but is. Time's heavy hand hath bow'd
The manly form :—the young, to thought subdued.
The almond-tree hath blossom'd, now, in those
Who flourish'd then, in manhood's summer sheen.
Life's moving panorama hath gone round ;
New comers on the shifting stage are found ;

* Rev. Charles Berry, Leicester.

Old friends are gone—gone to their long repose
 In yonder ground, whose naked trees look in,
 And preach of fallen leaves and wintry age.
 Death hath been here, and Change, which ceaseless wage
 Fell war with Man. Yet, Change nor Death can thin
 God's witnesses. Still, as of old, His Word
 Is taught, His Holy Gospel here is heard.

III.



IS Christmas time! The sacred fane is deck'd
 With laurel, holly, and the mystic bough
 Of Druid rites, old England's misletoe.
 One-half its round the century hath run
 Since the mild Pastor here his course begun.
 And now his first and only flock collect,
 With grateful gifts to offer at his feet,
 Emblems of Faith and Hope and Charity,
 The apostolic Christian sisters three,
 Who in his precepts and example meet.
 Offering their thankful tribute to his worth,
 With heartfelt praises, thanks sincere and fervent,
 Heaven its own judgment hears pronounced on Earth
 By Man :—Well done ! thou good and faithful servant !



Mourn, England, Mourn!

1854-1855.



MOURN, England, mourn thy gallant dead,
Thy loyal, brave, devoted sons,
Whose blood for thee was freely shed
Where Alma to the Euxine runs.
From Castle and from Cot they went,
Responsive to their country's cry ;
And Lord and Peasant's blood was blent,
Where Freedmen made the Foemen fly.
Mourn, England, mourn thy gallant sons,
Who slumber with th' heroic dead :
Where Alma to the Euxine runs,
Their blood for thee they freely shed.

Mourn, England, mourn the slaughter'd host
Of Balaklava's frowning steep :
Of them shall History make her boast,
As men who knew their faith to keep
When Honour and when Duty call'd ;
Nor blench'd a certain death to see,
But grandly rivall'd, unappall'd,
The martyrs of Thermopylæ.
Mourn, England, mourn thy noblest, best,
Thy slaughter'd sons, who proudly keep
Their faith in death, and glorious rest
On Balaklava's frowning steep.

Mourn, England, mourn thy thousands slain
On crimson field of Inkermann,
Where Russian hordes came down amain,
To try what countless numbers can.
The shock thy children firmly stood,
And France was there thy true Ally :
They backward roll'd the raging flood,
And made the serfs of Russia fly.
Mourn, England, mourn thy thousands dead,
Who left the Loom and Plough for thee—
Who bravely fought where bravely led,
And, conquering, made the Russ to flee.

Mourn, England, mourn thy loved and lost ;
Yet onward hold thy fearless way,
Nor let the Czar, at Freedom's cost,
O'er Europe spread his tyrant sway.
Shall Alfred, Hampden, Sidney's race,
Resist the God-implanted hate
Of wrong, oppression, and disgrace,
And court the craven coward's fate ?
Mourn, England, mourn, if that shall be
The rule of thy degenerate isle,
And the proud birthright of the free
Fall to the abject and the vile.



The Fair City.



IS Sabbath morn ! All Nature smiles
Beneath the sun. The air is balm.
Above the city dovelike hangs
A holy calm.

The morning mist its fleecy veil
Casts o'er Kinnoull ; and not conceals
Its charms, but adds a bridelike grace—
New charms reveals.

Earth rests from toil. The din and strife
Of labour are no longer heard.
Hush'd is the turmoil of the world.
Man keeps Thy Word !

Unbroken is the silence, save
By the soft cushat's crooning note,
The lowing kine, the matin cock,
The sportive trout.

And thou, fair Tay ! thy voice we hear,
In gushing, gurgling, murmuring song,
As grandly thy full waters roll
Green banks among.

Green, wooded banks, that downward gaze
Into thy mirror, and survey
With pride their shadow'd loveliness
In silver Tay.

Sweet, fertile plain! a Paradise
 By sheltering mountain walls shut in,
 Where men might walk the Earth like gods,
 And Heaven begin!

North Inch of Perth, }
 August 12, 1855. }

The Ruined Fane.*



AT Morn and Eve, on holy Sabbath, came,
 From Hall and Cot, their prayer and praise to blend,
 A little Flock, strong in the faith that where
 But two or three are gather'd in His name,
 He, in their midst, will evermore be there,
 And Heaven to Earth will downward listening bend.—
 Quench'd now the Flame that on the Altar glow'd;
 Silent his Voice who minister'd; and dumb
 The Worshippers. Forsaken God's abode.—
 Who rear'd these crumbling walls—who knelt below
 The roof which now is not—no annals tell.
 Oblivion wraps them in its thickest gloom—
 Wraps them from mortal eyes. But all is well,
 If, here unknown, the Book their names shall show.

* Gibside.



“ Let Me Go Home.”



UPON his dying bed the Old Man lay ;
His conflict with Disease was done ;
The Spirit linger'd with the mortal Clay,
Loth, and yet eager, to be gone.

The world was fading from his closing eyes ;
The greybeard was a child once more ;
Once more he walk'd beneath life's early skies,
Play'd by the well-known cottage door.

They listen'd at his lips, with ears laid down
To catch what parting words might come :—
He slowly syllabled his native town,*
And mutter'd low :—“ Let me go home.”

Over his pillow angel forms were bent ;
His sisters—brothers—mother came ;
And, beckoning back the wanderer who went
From home away, they breathed his name.

“ Let me go home,” he mutter'd once again,
And bow'd his head upon his breast.
The old man's prayer was utter'd not in vain :
He was at home—at home and rest.

* Monkton (Jarrow).



Toll and Wail.



OLL! toll! her Night hath come;
Her Day is spent, her Sun is set;
What now to her
The strife and stir
Of Earth—its fever and its fret?
Toll! toll! and bear her home!

Toll! toll! they bear her home;*
They lay her low in holy earth;
Then ling'ring mourn
Beside the bourne
Which She hath pass'd who gave them birth.
Toll! toll! her Night hath come!

Wail! wail! the first faint breath
Of new-born life is in their ear:—
With feeble grasp
Small fingers clasp
Their skirts, and draw them from the bier.
Wail! wail! in Birth and Death!

Wail! wail! grey hairs are gone:—
Another comes, who seems to say,
Ye've laid her low
Where all must go,
Come! work like her, while 'tis To-day.
Work To-day! the Night comes on!

* February 10, 1851.



Vanity of Vanities.



UNMIX'D enjoyments fall not to the lot
Of mortal man. The cup that to his lips
He lifts with hopeful hand, and eager sips,
Is dash'd with gall—is bitter and is sweet.
How blissful 'tis the friends we love to meet—

Renew the intercourse of bygone years—
Revisit, hand in hand, some hallow'd spot
Of Earth, which faithful Memory endears!
But Time, which brought our Meeting, ruthless brings
Our Parting, too, with swift though silent wings.
We meet, to sunder :—live, that we may die :—
Are cradled for our graves :—be, not to be.
What is our life, that closes with a sigh—
What is our life on Earth but Vanity!





NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE :
PRINTED BY THOMAS AND JAMES PIGG, CLAYTON STREET.

Finchale,
The Holy Isle,
&
other poems

by
James Clephan.

Rinchale,

The **D**oly **I**sle,

Etc.

By the Author of "The Bud and the Flower."



NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE:

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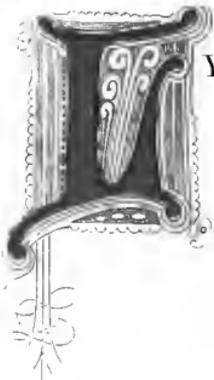
1857.

[FOR PRIVATE DISTRIBUTION.]

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Finchale.



L YING on thy bed, sweet Mother ;
Grassy couch, with flowers bestrewn ;
Curtain'd round in leafy June
By the wooded shades of Finchale ;
Shelter'd from the glare of noon ;
Still there comes the same old tune,
Murmuring from yon restless river,
Wailing, gurgling, onward ever.

Wimpling, babbling, flow thy waters,
Winding Wear, these woods among,
Singing, with familiar tongue,
Notes that lull'd my cradle-slumbers.
Morn and noon, and all day long,
Runs that drowsy, endless song,
Murmuring of the restless river,
Gliding, gushing, gurgling ever.

Symbol of the Ever-Living,
 Ceaseless on its seaward way,
 By the abbey, old and grey,
 Flows from age to age thy current—
 Flows like Time that will not stay!—
 Babbling, dreaming, oft astray,
 Drift we on Life's restless river,
 Murmuring, wailing, gone for ever.

Runs the river as when Godric
 Drownded away his hermit-hours—
 As beneath these time-worn towers
 Prior follow'd passing prior—
 Monks like grass before the mowers
 Fell in Finchale's pleasant bowers.
 Then, and now, and ever, ever,
 Onward rolls the same old river.

Onward rolls, its youth renewing :—
 Past the ivied abbey flows,
 Crumbling, crumbling, to its close :
 Nature young and Art decaying.
 Less and less the shadow grows
 Which the tottering ruin throws,
 By the rushing, rippling river,
 Running on and on for ever.

River ! river ! murmuring, moaning,
Whither, whither have the dead,
From thy winding waters fled ?—
Babbler ! hast thou got no answer ?
Brawling o'er thy rocky bed,
Hast thou countless ages sped,
And shall they, thou mocking river,
Not live on and on for ever ?

Boatman ! bear me o'er thy ferry !
From these shades, wherein I dream,
Take me o'er the crystal stream :
To yon golden sands transport me,
Where the sun with brighter gleam
Shineth—glows with warmer beam :
Shines and glows for ever, ever,
On fair lands beyond the river.

NOTE.

FINCHALE is the supposed "Wincanhale" of the Saxon Chronicles, where councils were held by the Christian Church towards the close of the 8th and early in the 9th century. In the 12th, Godric, a mariner of East Anglia, who had made pilgrimages to Rome and Jerusalem, came to Finchale, and settled down, as a subject of the convent of Durham, on a plot of ground conferred upon him by Bishop Flambard, afterwards (and still) known as "Godric's Garth." A mile further from the cathedral-city, on a peninsula to which the hermit removed, he built, first, a *casa*—then

an oratory (*Capella Beate Mariæ*)—and, finally, to commemorate his deliverance from an inundation of the river, a church, dedicated to St. John the Baptist and the Holy Sepulchre. After the death of Godric (which occurred in 1170), Henry Pudsey, son of the bishop of that name, baffled by the jealousy of the Durham monks in an attempt to found an Augustine monastery on the Browney, a tributary of the Wear, transferred its endowment to Finchale; and the first prior, (Thomas, the sacrist of Durham,) was appointed in 1196. In the next century, on the site of Godric's Norman church, the monks of Finchale reared an Early English structure—which subsequently suffered extensive Decorated changes. The Dissolution came in the 16th century; and the last of a long line of priors, elected about 1530, was swept into matrimony, and survives in a song of the period:—

The prior of Finkela hath got a fair wife,
And every monk will have one:

A prophecy which was probably fulfilled; for the monks of Finchale had got a taste for luxuries. Godric's shirts, of which he wore out three in his lifetime, were of iron:—his degenerate successors fell under rebuke for the effeminacy of substituting linen for linseywoolsey; and, moreover, they kept a pack of hounds. Yet some amongst them must have followed more intellectual pursuits than the chase, or mingled the two; since, about the time that the pack was proscribed, Prior Uthred, a man of distinction in his day, was employing a foreign penman at Finchale in transcribing Jerome's Eusebius and Bede's Ecclesiastical History.

“The ruins of the abbey,” says Surtees, “stand in deep retirement, three miles from Durham, on the brink of the Wear, where the river sweeps over a rocky channel round a level plot almost covered with the buildings.” A later writer, Mr. Sidney Gibson, speaks of the locality as “a sort of Vacluse, which might have delighted the refined and romantic Petrarca.” But, in these railway days, the deserted shrine is a favourite resort of pic-nic parties; and no modern Petrarch would here revive the hermit's cell.

There is no bridge at the spot, but an ancient ferry.

The Holy Isle.¹



PUT off thy shoes—thy daily walk—
 Thy thoughts of earth and of the
 world :

Thou standest here on holy ground,
 Where first the banner was unfurl'd,

The banner of the Cross,² between
 The Bass³ that guards the stormy Forth,
 And Hartness cliffs⁴ that sentinel
 Fair Theisa's gateway on the North.

When o'er Bernicia⁵ Pagan gloom
 Hung thick as night, then hither came
 Iona's glad evangelist,
 And lighted up the Gospel flame
 On this lone shrine of earth and sea,
 Where Nature, tossing to and fro,
 Hangs lost in doubt where she should stay
 The restless ocean's ebb and flow.

From tide to tide, this speck of earth
 She gives in turn to land and wave ;
And every morn and eve, a door
 To Aidan and his monks she gave,
That shut them from the world away,
 And left them seasons to renew
The life divine—the strength within—
 By which their Master's work to do.

And from this isle went Aidan forth,
 As Moses, through the parted flood ;
While by his side a Christian King
 Of Pagan people grandly stood.
Then spoke the monk with tongue of fire,
 And Oswald made the meaning known :
Free course the living Gospel had,
 And heathen gods were overthrown.⁶

Jehovah's holy name was known,
 The Christian symbol stretch'd its power,
From Lindisfarne to Solway shore,
 From Edwyn's burgh⁷ to Gilling tower.⁸
Then conquering Aidan—done his work
 On earth—earth's mortal weakness owns :
Quits the fond shadow of his church
 For sunlight of the Throne of thrones.⁹

Next, from the stormy Hebrides,
 Good Finan of Iona came,
 And rear'd his high cathedral aisles
 In honour of the Sacred Name.
 Then Aidan's bones, which pious hands
 Had brought from Bamborough's royal mount,
 He by the altar low laid down,
 To moulder to the great account.

Here Finan sleeps—here Tuda taught
 Till swept to death by pestilence :¹⁰
 Apostles true, who left no wealth
 On earth, but took their riches hence.
 'Tis holy earth whereon we stand !
 Bernicia's sons, with grateful glow,
 Recal the memory of the men
 Whose dust to dust returns below.

Here Cuthbert slept, when closed the life
 That lives in Christian story still—
 Here slept till Danish spoilers came,
 To work their rude, rapacious will.
 Then, with his bones, fled monks in haste—
 Fled the last lord of Lindisfarne ;
 And Odin's worshippers the church
 Threw down, as Aidan's burial cairn.¹¹

Long years the seamew scream'd in air,
 The isle all desolate below ;
 No orisons at morn or night,
 No prayer at ocean's ebb or flow ;
 No matin song or vesper hymn ;
 No tower that threw its friendly light
 Across the wave, to guide the bark
 Of anxious mariner aright.

But in the after-ages came
 The builders, on the ancient site,
 Of stately priory and church,
 And banish'd Lindisfarne's long night.¹²
 The church remains—by pious use
 Preserved to man through time and rust :
 The prouder pile hath bow'd its head,
 Its splendour hidden in the dust.

The fisher plies his nets—the child
 To strangers sells “St. Cuthbert's beads”¹³—
 Where Aidan and where Oswald wrought
 The noblest of historic deeds.
 The roll of bishops—priors—monks—
 That slowly stretch'd through centuries down,
 Is closed ; yet still the Sabbath bell
 Rings out, and prayer and praise are known.

And still its arms the loving sea
 Throws twice around this Holy Isle,
 As once our planet in its course
 Wheels soft and silent round the while.
 And here, shut in with sacred dust,
 And storied wrecks of change and time,
 Who would not play the monk a day,
 And lose the world in thoughts sublime !

NOTES.

¹ An isle, or "semi-isle," on the coast of Northumberland, the "Lindisfarne" of old, twice a day secluded from the mainland by the sea.

² By Aidan, a Culdee monk of the island of Iona, in the seventh century. "Here stood the first church between the Tees and the Frith of Forth."—(*Raine's History of North Durham.*)

³ The retreat of Baldred, a Culdee presbyter.

⁴ In Tanner's *Notitia Monastica*, under the title "Hartlepoole," it is stated:—"At or near this place was the ancient monastery called Heor-thu, founded, upon the first conversion of the Northumbrians to Christianity, about A.D. 640," by a religious woman named Hieu, or, as some copies have it, St. Bega, a native of Ireland. She was the foundress of a monastery at St. Bees in Cumberland, which derived its name from her residence. Her second foundation was at Monkwearmouth; and afterwards, under the auspices of Aidan, Bishop of Lindisfarne, she founded the monastery at Hartlepool.—(*Sir Cuthbert Sharp's Hartlepool.*)

⁵ The northern province of Northumbria.

⁶ Oswald, King of Northumberland, had embraced Christianity before his accession; and when he came to the throne, he requested Donald, King of Scotland, to send him a missionary to convert his subjects in Bernicia—his southern province (Deira), extending from the Tees to the Humber, being already Christian. Cormac was sent from Iona, in the Hebrides; and soon returned, reporting the Northumbrians to be barbarous and irreclaimable. Aidan imputed his failure to his want of judgment in perplexing and disgusting the natives with mysteries and controversies, while neglecting to teach them the plain rudi-

ments and practical doctrines of Christianity (an error which did not die with Corman). Aidan came himself, and Oswald left him to choose his own place of residence. He fixed upon the semi-isle—of about the same area as his own Iona; and here, about the year 635, was founded the see of Lindisfarne. His labours were successful—Oswald (whose palace was at Bamborough) personally assisting him, and interpreting his words to the people, when they could not otherwise be understood.—(*Bede.*)

⁷ “Édinburgh;” said to derive its name from Edwyn, King of Northumbria, the predecessor of Oswald.

⁸ Oswin, Oswald’s successor in Deira, was slain at Gilling, October 19, 651, in the interest of Oswy, his successor in Bernicia.

⁹ Aidan, the attached friend of Oswin, was sojourning at Bamborough, the village-church of which belonged to him, when he received the news of his assassination; “and here he sickened and died” (October 31), “reclining against a wooden buttress which supported the sacred edifice.”—(*Raine.*)

¹⁰ Upon the resignation in 664 of Colman, the third bishop of Lindisfarne, Tuda, a fourth Scottish monk, was appointed as his successor; and in less than a year he was removed by pestilence, “and almost the whole of his flock.” “Tuda was buried at the monastery of Pægnalach—a place,” says Raine, “now quite unknown.” But, on the authority of a “broken cross” pointing out the burial-place of Tuda, Beckermont in Cumberland is “determined to be the site of the lost monastery.”—(See paper by Rev. D. H. Haigh, *Archæologia Æliana*, i. 149, A.D. 1857.)

¹¹ Cuthbert was Bishop of Lindisfarne 685-688. It was in 875 that Bishop Eardulph and his monks, 241 years from the foundation of the church, fled from Lindisfarne with the remains of the saint. So soon did the Danes arrive after their flight, “that if a monk, *captus dulcedine loci*, had for a while lingered behind the sorrowful train, he might easily have seen, from the hills of Kyloc, the sacred structure enveloped in smoke and flames.”—(*Raine.*)

¹² The priory was founded about 1093-94. The church was built before 1145. “The new settlement was called, no longer Lindisfarne, but Holy Island, in consequence of the sacred blood which had been shed upon it by the Danes.”—(*Raine.*)

¹³ The *entrocki* or “wheelstones” (insulated vertebæ) of fossil encrinites, picked up on the sea-shore. See Scott’s *Marmion* :—

On a rock by Lindisfarne,
Saint Cuthbert sits, and toils to frame
The sea-born beads that bear his name.

The Voice of the Sea.

RESTLESS rolls th' unwearied Ocean,
 Heaving, tossing. Motion, motion,
 Is its life.
 Action, action. Never sleeping.
 Health and crystal clearness keeping.
 Life through strife.

Emerald wavelets gleesome gliding
 Softly over, but not hiding,
 Amber sands ;
 In the golden sunlight flashing,
 Ocean leaping, breaking, dashing
 On Earth's strands ;
 Casting out, with songs and shouting,
 Waif and weed—all things polluting ;
 Preaching, preaching,
 Sermons, as it frets and rages,
 Through the long-resounding ages,
 List the teaching !

Light from Darkness.

“He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth to light the shadow of death.”—*Job*, xii. 22.



HE night-wind held high carnival ;
 Work'd its wild will
 In storm and wrack ; till Nature's
 Lord
 Said, "Peace ! be still !"

Then holy calm from storm came out ;
 And from the shade
 Of night, by angels led, the day
 Stepp'd forth new-made.

Serene and fair the morning broke :
 The God of might
 His daily miracle had wrought,
 And there was light.

At early dawn a mourner left
 His widow'd home,
 And mused on bygone wedded joys,
 Beside her tomb.

The breath of Spring was on his cheek :
 From long repose
Had waking Nature burst ; and gone
 Were Winter's snows.

The clods of Earth were robed in green :
 The infant day
Breathed odours of the graveyard flowers,
 Heralds of May.

He stoop'd, and from the swelling mound
 That mark'd her bed,
A violet pluck'd, which o'er her grave
 Its fragrance shed.

Upon the modest flower he gazed—
 Emblem of her,
The loved and lost—of mem'ry sweet
 As balm and myrrh.

Upward he look'd. The light divine
 Was on his brow :
His light who bringeth day from night,
 Verdure from snow :

Who hangs the beds with beauty, where
 Our loved ones lie ;
And makes the grave the door of heaven
 To those who die :

Who dwells where darkness is unknown,
 In realms divine.—
 Earth's shadows, Lord, are all its own—
 Its light is Thine.

The Body's Guest.

PRISONER of Flesh! whence, with thy
 hopes and fears,
 Thy longings, doubts, unrest—
 Thy strength, thy weakness—thy high-
 reaching thoughts—

Whence camest thou to this breast?

O, whence?

Companion of the Dust! mysterious guest,

That dwellest with the clay!

Thy essence?—errand?—purpose?—business?—what?

Answer, if thou canst say!

O, what?

Pilgrim of Earth! appearing on the scene

At morn—and gone at night—

What unknown goal is thine? At going hence,

Say, whither is thy flight?

O, whither?

Sabbath Song.



MORNING shineth! Sabbath morning!
 Of one other week the birthday.
 Peace within these walls is brooding,
 Rest from weekday toil and struggle.

Hush'd the weary strife of traffic

Calm and still and glad the morning.

Motionless before my window

Stands the tall Briarean windmill :

Listless are its wands, and idle,

Type of giant-arms of labour.

Hush'd the blasts of yonder furnace,

Din and clangour of the forges,

Where the earth in travail yieldeth

Molten floods of regal iron—

Where the fire-horse is engender'd,

And the steam-wing'd ocean dragon—

Where with sweat of brow the craftsman

Rains loud blows on ringing anvil,

And the huge Titanic hammer,

Swung by superhuman forces,

Falls with Thorlike crash of thunder.

Man repositeth for a season :
 Lifts from earth his eyes, and looketh
 On the works divine, and lessons,
 Of the unwearying Master Worker,
 Who nor rest nor slumber taketh,
 But unceasing worketh, worketh,
 Ever, ever, and for ever !



OD in Nature never pauseth.
 Higher climbs the sun, and higher ;
 In the air his beams are dancing ;
 Zephyr bloweth where he listeth ;
 Trees wave to and fro their branches ;
 Songbirds sing their Maker's praises ;
 In the pane the blue fly buzzeth ;
 Flowers give out their balmy odours,
 And the new-mown hay its fragrance ;
 Lengthening, as the day declineth,
 Shadows creep along Earth's dial,
 Stealthy, silent, slow, and solemn,
 Preaching of our moments flying ;
 Clouds in ether softly floating,
 Gather round the sun descending,
 Gratefully his beams attemper,
 And array his throne in glory,
 Image of the throne celestial,
 Seat of Him, the Master Worker,

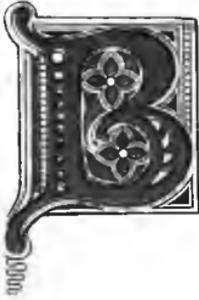
Who nor rest nor slumber taketh,
 But unceasing worketh, worketh,
 Ever, ever, and for ever !

OD, I thank Thee for thy Sabbaths !
 And the lessons which thou teachest
 In these seasons of refreshing—
 Seasons, not for idle pleasure,
 Nor for formal, lifeless service,
 But for rising higher, heavenward,
 By thy Son and Holy Spirit,
 And all ministering angels.
 Sabbath-day must strike the key-note
 Of the week ; and daily labour,
 Like thy work, be done divinely,
 To thy honour and thy glory.
 Thus may we, thy hand sustaining,
 Leap from Sabbath on to Sabbath,
 And from earth bound up to heaven,*
 Throne of Him, the Master Worker,
 Who nor rest nor slumber taketh,
 But unceasing worketh, worketh,
 Ever, ever, and for ever !

* Leaping with thee from seven to seven,
 Till that we both, being toss'd from earth,
 Fly hand in hand to heaven.

George Herbert.

To Effie.



BACKWARD glancing down my years
 of manhood,
 Backward down the lengthening, long-
 drawn vista,
 Beams of sunshine gleam and flash
 athwart it,

Pleasant times of yore :

Times when, o'er flowery-scented Midland meadows,
 'Long winding lanes, I wander'd in Life's summer,
 By the grey abbey and the country churches,
 On the banks of Soar.

Forms of the dead and living fill the picture ;
 Faces that fade-not people the old pathways ;
 Voices come back upon me as an echo,

Echoing times of yore.

Comes once again the gentle little maiden ;
 Comes with her eyes of blue, her locks of auburn ;
 Comes with her smiles, her roses, and her dimples,
 Knocking at my door.

Sits on my hearth the pretty, prattling fairy ;
 Puts her small hand in mine with winning fondness ;
 Sings the old songs of gay and merry childhood,
 Merry songs of yore.—

Annette.



ANNETTE, with her sister Tib,
 By the cottage fireside sits.
 Robin smokes his evening pipe :
 Susan, near him, knits and knits.
 “Hist?”—“’Tis nothing!”—Why
 then flash
 Nan’s dark eyes with brighter glow?
 Why that blush upon her cheek?—
 Tib is at no loss to know.

Ha ! Nanette !

“Knit—knit—knit,” the needles go :—
 “Tick—tack—tick,” the clock replies.
 Through his smoke-wreaths, “Where’s Nanette?”
 Robin to his Good Dame cries.
 Mother knows not. Nor will Tib,
 Cunning little damsel, own ;
 Though she heard the tap, before
 Sister Nan was softly flown.

Where’s Nanette ?

Annette, in the garden-walk,
 Shaded by the woodbine, stands,
 Not alone ! A whisper’d tale,
 Old as Eve, her ear commands.

Hal is gazing in her face :—

Never was there face so fair—
Glistening in the starbeam pale,
Veil'd in woven twilight there.

Sweet Annette !

“ Good night ! ”—“ Good night ! ”—And gently Nan

Lifts up the latch, and to her seat
Demurely glides, her little heart

Almost too full of bliss to beat !—
Ah ! young romance !—that shall in Nan
And Harry, as in Rob and Sue,
Be sober'd down—till calmly they
Shall smoke and knit together, too.

Yes, Nanette !



The Shock of Corn.

“ Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh-in in his season.”—*Job*, v., 26.



IS harvest-time ! The joyous fields
Lie laughing in the sun :
The summer-skies and summer-
showers
Their work divine have done.

Brown autumn's wealth is spread abroad
O'er valley and o'er plain ;
And the reapers thrust their arms with songs
Among the golden grain.

The peasant maids and matrons bind
 Their sheaves with rustic glee ;
 And grateful husbandmen look on,
 Earth's foison glad to see.
 At cottage doors grey patriarchs sit ;
 And in the sunlight play,
 Where the wild-flowers grow, the little ones,
 In life's sweet holiday.



SLOWLY sinks the harvest-sun ;
 Softly shine his evening beams
 Through white-curtain'd window-panes ;
 Shine, in mellow, amber streams,
 O'er the bed whereon is lying
 Hoar and reverend age a-dying.

Eighty winters' snows he bears :
 Eighty summers' roses bloom
 On the old man's youthful cheek,
 Breathing odours for the tomb.
 Ripe old age to Death is calling—
 Shock of corn in season falling.

Softly slumbering out of life,
Hush ! he breathes her maiden name—
Hers, whose dust this moon shall see
Mingling with his mortal frame :
Memory fifty years throws over—
Once again is he a lover.

Round his bed his issue stand—
Children and grandchildren come :
Life, that rounds their own, ebbs out,
In that solemn, silent room.
Never yet was Earth without him,
To the loved ones around about him.

One farewell from glazing eyes,
And the flickering spirit's gone :
His encircling life disparts,
And they stand on Earth alone.
Death the reaper hath removed him
Far from those who fondly loved him.

Last was he of those who slept
Under one maternal wing :
All her sheaves are gather'd now,
By the faithful harvest-king.
Mourners see, in tribulation,
Sunset of a generation.

Evening shadows wrap them round ;
And the hearselike trees at night
Stand against the silent sky,
Where the stars, with borrow'd light,
Whisper in the ear of Sorrow
Of a sun shall rise to-morrow.

Dust to dust ! they lay him down.
In Death's harvest-field he sleeps,
Where the river of his love
Round his sacred ashes sweeps—
Where, afar, his bed embowering,
Cleveland, thy fair hills are towering.



Hareshaw Burn
and
other Poems.

by
James Clephan

Gareshaw Burn,

EVENING ON HEXHAM "SEAL,"

AND OTHER POEMS.

[Stephen, James]

(By the Author of "THE BUD AND THE FLOWER.")

Stockton-upon-Tees :

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To JOHN BLACKWELL, Esq., Mayor of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and GEORGE CRAWSHAY, Esq., Mayor of Gateshead, 1859-60, and the many kind Friends whom they represented in the Hall of the Gateshead Mechanics' Institute, August 29, 1860, this Selection from Verses written in Retirement, is gratefully dedicated, by

JAMES CLEPHAN.

Stockton-upon-Tees, September, 1861.

H A R E S H A W B U R N ,

AND OTHER POEMS.

Hareshaw Burn.

THE infant stream its parent source
Forsook, and went its wilful way :
Now here, now there, its careless course
It took, in wanton, idle play.

Through moss and moor, by leaf and flower,
Beneath the blue, o'erhanging arch,
By night, by day, it kept its way,
Its glinting, glancing, gleesome march.

It sparkled in the mid-day sun ;
No cloud, unpictured, o'er 't could pass ;
It show'd, at night, the stars how bright
Their glories were, as in a glass.

And when this rambling, truant burn,
Caught of the river's track a gleam,
With quicken'd pace it ran its race,
And proudly sought the nobler stream.

On, on it sped, ambitious brook :
With arrowy flight it forward swept,
And cast behind no lingering look,
But to its goal impatient swept.

Now, thoughtless runagate, beware!
 For in thy path lie rocks ahead.—
 Ah! heedless burn! it will not turn,
 But rushes on:—no care, no dread.

With sudden dash, and bound and splash,
 With rout and shout, and roar and din,
 The brook, amazed, alarm'd and crazed,
 Is sprawling into Hareshaw Linn!

'Tween wooded cliffs, fern-fringed, it falls,
 All broken into spray and foam,
 And weeps, with million tears, that e'er
 It left its peaceful mountain home.

From rock to rock, with thundering shock,
 Of brook-life reft, 'tis toss'd and torn:
 In strings of pearls, and eddying whirls,
 Down to th' abyss 'tis frantic borne.—

The worst is o'er! A burn once more,
 'Tis reassured:—and from the linn
 It scampers, babbling as it goes,
 “If nothing venture, nothing win.”

By wood and haugh, with merry laugh,
 'Tis dancing in the glad sun-shine:
 Through Bellingham it blithely trips,
 And tribute bears its lord, North Tyne.—

Its course is run, its work is done:
 The land is water'd, and the stream
 Enlarged that carries further on
 Great Nature's all-embracing scheme.

The waters of the Border burn
 Shall play their part where rivers run—
 Where oceans flow, and come and go
 Our restless race beneath the sun.

And in his jewell'd memory, now,
 Who hither came new health to win,
 Another gem for aye is set—
 The waterfall of Hareshaw Linn.

Evening on Hexham "Seal."*

'Tis summer eve! The murmuring trees
 Cast lengthening shadows on the ground.
 Hush'd is the toiling city's sound,
 Borne hither on the whispering breeze.

The cattle on the flowery lea
 Yield to the milkmaid's pail their streams;
 And in the sun's soft mellow beams,
 Sweet childhood sports with careless glee.

Old age, loquacious of the past,
 Along the pebbled path creeps slow;
 And lovers, musing as they go,
 Their thoughts down golden vistas cast:—

* A public resort, so called, near the abbey.

As from the river yonder haze
 Comes up, and wraps the beauteous vale,
 Their future, while the tender tale
 They tell, enfolds bright coming days :

They mark not how Time's finger steals
 The abbey-dial silent round ;
 Nor list the monitory sound,
 When from his tongue each quarter peals.

Solemn and soft the warning comes
 From Hexham's grey cathedral pile—
 Whose massy tower, o'er pillar'd aisle,
 And over grand historic tombs,

Stands out upon the evening sky,
 Bathed in a shining amber flood,
 And bosom'd in an emerald wood :—
 What scene can hope with this to vie ?

See where the daws above the clock
 Wheel circling round ; and now alights
 Upon the topmost of the heights
 The Wilfrid of the sable flock.*

* Wilfrid, the son of a Thane of Bernicia, closed his chequered life as Bishop of Hexham, in the year 709. "He is generally regarded," says Mr. Hodgson Hinde (*Hist. of Northumberland*, 1858), "as the founder of the monastery of Hexham, of which he was the munificent patron, as well by procuring for its endowment the immense tract of country which is still known as Hexhamshire, as by the erection of a church unrivalled by any previous structure on this side of the Alps. The monastery, however, existed previously to his connection with Hexham, and was assigned as a residence, jointly with Lindisfarne, to Eata, on his appointment to the see of Bernicia." The Saxon church of Hexham, by the line of the Roman Wall, was founded in the seventh century ; and the line of bishops covered a period of about one hundred and fifty years. The Danes brought desolation to Hexham, as to other monastic communities ; and it was not until the earlier part of the twelfth century that the present cathedral was erected, its fabric now incorporating Roman and Saxon, Norman and English work.

Has he, that soaring bird, an eye
 For beauty, that from side to side
 He peers about, and views the wide
 Expanded scenes that round him lie—

Those Heavenly Fields of Beda's page,
 Where Denises' immortal burn
 Its waters from its ceaseless urn
 Pours into Tyne from age to age ?

Looks he upon St. Oswald's fane,
 Where Saxon king the Cross first set,
 Before the British host he met,
 And fierce Cadwalladon was slain.*

Or doth he muse upon the field
 Where paled the Red Rose 'fore the White,
 And Henry and his Queen took flight,
 Compell'd by Edward's hosts to yield ?

Now Roses Red and Roses White
 Their fragrance in this garden blend ;
 As North and South Tyne 'gree to end
 Their separate lives, and here unite :—

Along one bed they flow, between
 The Christian Tower and Roman Wall ;
 'Neath Erinshaw, where, slim and tall,
 Shy St. John Lee is barely seen.

* Oswald being about to engage with the commander of the Britons, "erected the sign of the Holy Cross, and on his knees prayed to God that He would assist his worshippers in their great distress." This was in the year 635, at the Heavenly Field ; where, says Bede (born in 673), the hrethren of the church of Hagulstad (Hexham) "have lately huilt and consecrated a church." The battle, he states, was fought "at a place in the English tongue called Denises-burn : that is, Denis's-brook."

Loth sinks the sun from these fair bowers
 Of Earth, where Acca's spirit pass'd
 Up to the angels, while it cast
 Fond, lingering looks on Hexham's towers.*

Slow sinks the sun ; slow still the hand,
 With motion that eludes the eye,
 Creeps o'er the clock ; yet swiftly fly
 The moments placed at our command.

The silent flight of Time hath borne
 Long centuries of years away,
 Since Acca sung his dying lay,
 And monks their pastor's parting wept—

His parting for celestial plains,
 Which, if more fair than those outspread
 On every side, where'er we tread,
 How glorious Thy unseen domains !

* Acca, Bishop of Hexham from 709 to 732. "Great in the sight of God and man. He much adorned and added to the structure of his church ;" procured for it relics from all parts ; "and erected a most numerous and noble library." He employed a celebrated master, Maban, for the instruction of himself and clergy in music, and was himself "a most expert singer, as well as most learned in Holy Writ." (Bede.) "His spirit passed to the angels, and his body rested on the east of his church of Hexham."

Seaton Sands.

UNREST! unrest! The heaving sea—
The moaning, ever-murmuring main—
The billows, with their foaming crests—
The rising and the falling tide!
No pause, no stay! Nought doth abide.
'Tis ceaseless fret, and ebb and flow.
From hour to hour, from age to age,
No rest the surging waters know.
Unrest! unrest!

The waves now sweep th' expanse of sand
Where forests flourish'd in the past—
Where huntsmen chased the flying deer,
And 'long whose glades the evening chime
Came floating down at twilight time,
To join the music of the main.
The sunlit groves, the browsing deer,
Are gone, and ne'er may come again.

The blacken'd roots of trees, sea-wreck'd,
Peer sadly through the waste of sand;
And rotting antlers of the deer
Lie buried in the marl and peat.
We pace the pebbled beach—our feet
Among the weeds and shells, where flowers
Grew 'neath the oaks, and children wove
Wild garlands in life's morning hours.

Though changed the scene, such fairies still
 Disport upon the ocean shore :
 I saw them, yester-eve, with wreaths
 Of mallow and of poppy crown'd,
 And cherub-faces all sun-brown'd,
 Plying their wooden spades with glee,
 Till sand, and rock, and little hands,
 Had built a palace by the sea.

And when these little ones were laid
 In cot and crib, and lull'd to sleep
 By the hoarse whisperings of the deep,
 The stars came out ; and o'er the waves
 From Hartness Point, the Pharos cast
 Its friendly light—the seaman's mark
 To point the pathway of his bark,
 Or offer shelter from the blast.

Then floated soft, to Fancy's ear,
 Across the bay, the vesper hymn
 Of sainted Heiu, the first to shed
 The Gospel light from Hartness Isle.
 Hark ! from Heorthu's sacred pile,
 High o'er the wailing of the sea,
 The lady-abbess and her nuns
 Send up their song—" *Avè, Marie!*"*

* The monastery at Heortness, called Heorthu, Hereteu, or the Island of the Hart, was founded by the religious servant of Christ, Heiu, who is said to have been the first woman in the province of Northumbria that took upon her the habit and life of a nun, being consecrated by Bishop Aidan ; but she, soon after she had founded that monastery, went away to the city of Calcester, and there fixed her dwelling. (Bede.) In the year 1833, the remains of a cemetery were discovered in the Cross Close, Hartlepool, not far from St. Hilda's church, with gravestones bearing Saxon and Runic inscriptions, and skeletons of women, marking (in all probability) the site of Heorthu.

The music dies ; Time turns his glass ;
 And lo ! St. Hilda, dauntless maid,
 Sails from the Island of the Hart,
 To plant the Cross at Streonshal—
 She whom no perils can appal ;
 And in her train, by Oswy given,
 Elfreda, royal babe, she bears—
 Sweet offering of her sire to Heaven.*

Turn, turn the glass ! The Saxon falls
 Before the all-destroying Dane ; †
 The Conqueror comes ; proud navies ride
 In this wide bay ; th' immortal name
 Of Bruce, which with the Norman came,
 With Hart-in-Pool is link'd for aye ;
 And then again, a second Tyre,
 Doth Hartness crumble to decay.

Unrest ! unrest ! 'tis ceaseless change,
 And ebb and flow ! Now, where her church
 The Saxon lady built of old,
 Once more hath Commerce rear'd her throne.
 Hartness beholdeth far outgrown
 Her ancient greatness. Steam hath lent
 Her trade new wings by land and sea,
 And through all climes her fleets are sent. ‡

* Heiu, who was of noble birth, was succeeded by Hilda, daughter of Hereric and grandniece of King Edwin ; to whom, in 655, in fulfilment of a vow which he had made on the eve of battle, Oswy, King of Northumberland, after his victory over Penda, King of Mercia, gave his daughter Elfreda, then scarce a year old, for dedication to God. Two years afterwards, the Abbess Hilda left Heorthis, and founded a monastery at Streonshal (Whithy), in which Elfreda was first a learner, and then a teacher of monastic life. Here, in the year 680, St. Hilda died, aged 66 ; and also, about 714, Elfreda, aged 60.

† Heorthis was destroyed by the Danes about the year 800.

‡ The manor of Hart, which had been in the family of De Brus from the Conquest, was seized by Edward in 1306 (when Robert claimed the crown

What changes Time hath yet in store,
Are hidden in the mystic scroll
Which, silent as the beating pulse,
His fingers ceaselessly unroll.
List to those wailing waves! They toll
The parting knell of what is gone,
And bring new life from death and change,
As their untiring course they run.

Where now I musing tread the shore,
And bend my way to Seaton Green,
Were fields, and paths, and pleasant homes,
Long conquer'd by the sieging wave,
And buried in an ocean grave;
While, clamorous for new conquests, still
The raging sea assails the cliffs,
And works his wild, remorseless will.

Unrest! unrest!

of Scotland), and granted to Robert de Clifford (slain at Bannockburn in 1314), with also the borough of Hartlepool, and all other lands, tenements, &c., belonging to the earl in the bishopric of Durham. In the same century, when Calais was besieged by the third Edward, Hartlepool contributed 5 ships and 145 mariners to the royal fleet, (London furnishing 25 ships and 662 men). It subsequently sunk to the condition of a fishing village; but with the railway revolution its fortunes turned; and from a population of less than 1,000 at the opening of the nineteenth century, the inhabitants rose to the number of about 12,000 at the recent census; while the new town of West Hartlepool has sprung into neighbouring existence, and numbers upwards of 13,000 souls.

Peace in the Depths.

1.

BELOW the restless, tossing, troubled wave,
Fathoms on fathoms down, where plummet line
Purblind and faint pries through the secret mine
Of Nature's realm, the quiet of the grave
Eternal reigns; and solemnly and calm
Her Beauty rests on Ocean's peaceful bed,
Unruffled by the tempests overhead.
And ever, ever, from the upper sky
Of the green Sea, like snowflakes gently fall
A thousand forms, in quietness to lie,
Serene and silent as the midnight dome
Of Earth, and glorious as that spangled pall.—
Down, softly down, they sink to tranquil sleep,
Thy countless wrecks, thou vast, mysterious Deep!

2.

So, from this sacred mystery of Life,
From the warm, throbbing Present of the hour,
Down from its roar, its unrest, and its strife,
From deafening din and blinding dust and stour,
We pass away, with all our cares and joys,
Our works of wisdom and our idle noise—
Vanish like spectres to the shadowy Past,
Where men and empires from their turmoil cease.
The angel Death comes with his sure release,
And bears us in his loving arms to rest—
Down to the plumbless quiet of the vast
And populous depths of Time, where ages dwell—
Where, 'neath the surface wave with foaming crest,
In Heaven's own silence, all is calm and well.

The Church and the Mill.

By Hartness strand stands Stranton tower,
Strong as it stood of yore,
When Norman hands the church set down
Upon this northern shore.

Change hath come o'er the church, and 'tis
A history writ in stone;
Yet calm and firm it looks around,
And keeps its ancient throne.

The barren sands that lay between
The village and the sea,
Touch'd by a master spirit's* wand,
Have grown a goodly tree—

A crowded mart, with streets and fanes,
And docks, and fleets, and piers;
Yet Stranton church is lordliest still,
And proud its tower uprears.

And by the church the tapering mill
Lifts up its loftier head;
And round and round it flings its arms,
Preparing daily bread.

* Ralph Ward Jackson, Esq., Founder of West Hartlepool.

Six days the honest miller works,
 If heaven give favouring winds.
 "To labour is to pray;" and so
 He worships as he grinds.

And once in seven the village-flock,
 When motionless the mill,
 Go up to prayers, and keep the day
 Which says to Earth, "Be still."

Thus church and mill together work,
 And this great truth make known,
 That man must live by daily bread,
 But not by bread alone.

Seaside Sonnets.

1.

THE wind is up! The coursing billows bound,
 Their white waves blown to mist. Mid feathery spray
 The fleets of commerce cross the heaving bay,
 By wind and fire, to ocean deeps profound,
 Or neighbouring ports. High towering o'er the wave
 Rise the green hills and purple cliffs, whose base
 The flowing waters with glad homage lave;
 And the vast hanging roof above, with grace
 Ineffable is curtain'd. How divine
 The spectacle! how glorious to the eye
 Of man! But ah! if he—(alas the sigh!)—
 With sight sin-darken'd come to Nature's shrine,
 Veil'd, then, to him, with conscience ill at ease,
 The beauty of the land, the glory of the seas!

2.

A STORM! The angry waves rave fierce and loud;
 Louder and wilder the tempestuous roar
 Of ocean breaking on the startled shore;
 The bellowing thunder, bursting from the cloud,
 Outnoises winds and waves; and pouring down
 From the open windows of the o'ercharged skies,
 The torrent comes as though the earth 't would drown.—
 Hush! at His voice th' obedient tempest dies!
 The western gloom disparts, and evening's sun
 Shines out with promise over sea and land.
 His bow is in the clouds! Thou, gracious One,
 Hast Love and Mercy in Thy bounteous hand.—
 Lo! the bright arch is doubled! Welcome sign!
 Forgiveness, Lord, and Love, are doubly Thine!

Roseberry Topping.

1.

O'ER Eston Nab towers Cleveland's highest peak,*
 Proud Roseberry! monarch of the fertile vales;
 And yestermorn the breezes fann'd my cheek
 On that green height; and Nature round me flung
 More beauty and more grandeur than the tongue
 Of poet or of orator can tell.
 Language to paint the wondrous picture fails—
 Its woods, and slopes, and meads, and winding streams
 Sparkling as silver in the sun's bright beams—
 The distant sea through yonder opening dell,
 With glancing sails that bear the reaching mind
 Beyond the horizon's verge—and serpent trains
 Far down below, that sinuous turn and wind,
 With vaporous plumes, across the flowery plains.

* Written at Seaton Carew.

2.

THE tiny bark, a speck upon the wave,
 Scuds round high Huntcliff into Theisa's bay,
 And onward presses on its ocean way,
 Past Marske, where slumbers, in an unmark'd grave,
 The ashes of our greatest seaman's sire—
 That seaman whose exalted monument
 Now courts the eye above the hamlet where
 Young Cook was born, the frugal home to share
 Of the "day-labourer."* And oft, may-be,
 The village boy his hours of childhood spent
 On Roseberry's brow, and nursed his high desire,
 When looking out upon the trackless sea,
 That on its breast his flag might be unfurl'd,
 And borne in triumph round the wondrous world.

3.

STRETCHING from Tees, thy sands, fair Seaton, skirt
 The expanded bay, and guide the wandering gaze
 To jutting Hartness, where it stands sea-girt,
 Prize of the Bruce in England's Norman days—
 Of him who founded, in yon vale below,
 Guisbrough's proud priory, now a heap of stones
 Through which the night wind sympathizing moans;
 And where the smoke-wreaths, rising from the trees,
 Melt into air (as oft our day-dreams do),
 Lies good old Stokesley, whose productive leas
 The conquering Balliols won when Rufus reign'd;
 While, westward, 'yond the fires whose alchemy
 Transmutes these hills to gold, a glimpse is gain'd
 Of Stockton—dearest spot in memory!

* "James, son of James Cook, day-labourer, was baptized November 3, 1728."—(Marton Parish Register.)—The family removed to Great Ayton in his childhood (a neighbouring village), where their cottage still stands, with an inscribed stone over the door, bearing the initials of James and Grace Cook.

4.

OLD Roseberry! thou "everlasting" height!
 Witness of changing fortunes round thy base,
 Long ere the Briton, in his low estate,
 Burrow'd in earth, when here his dwelling-place!
 What art thou, firmly as thou seem'st to stand—
 (As far as seen, the pride of all this land)—
 What but, thyself, a monument of Change!
 Through the long years, ere man began to be,
 Thy silent, solitary life, may range;
 But o'er thy site once roll'd the restless sea:
 Thy substance is compact of ocean death:
 Millions of lives in thine are darkly hid.
 Boast not thy age! To Him 'tis but a breath,
 Who, from the dead, raised thee, proud Pyramid!

The Memorial Flower.

"The *genius loci* does not always disappear when the roof-tree falls. The decaying gardens [of Clints Hall], with their massive walls, still cover the slope of the hill and overhang the brook; and when they fall or are removed, and all other things are lost, the position of Clints may, perhaps, be still remembered. It is wonderful to see how long the hardier flowers of the garden will shoot up and bloom, even when they are neglected and forgotten. I have discovered the site of an ancient manor house, when all other evidence was absent, by the testimony of a few solitary flowers. Three hundred years have passed away since the monks of Durham were removed from Finchale; but, in their deserted garden, there still springs up, year after year, the flower they once planted—the good old English Daffodil."—*Rev. James Raine*, ("MARSKE," *Archæologia Eliana*, N.S., vol. v., page 79).

COCKEN WOODS are green and fair;
 Year to year the wild flowers blow;
 Spring succeeds to Winter's snow;
 Summer follows Christmas bare.

Song-birds from their slumber wake ;
Fill with sound the ravish'd ear ;
Swell the music of the Wear ;
Build their nests in bush and brake.

Where the waters gush and glide,
Leaf and flower of every tinge
Shady footpaths sweetly fringe,
Winding by the river side.

From the cliffs and from the grass,
Nosegays wild the children glean,
Red and blue, and white and green,
Jocund as they gleesome pass.

Cocken Woods are green and fair ;
Year to year the wild flowers blow ;
Spring succeeds to Winter's snow ;
Summer follows Christmas bare.

Finchale Abbey, old and grey,
Ruin'd, roofless, wintry, hoar,
Knows its summer pride no more,
Moulders, moulders, to decay.

Prior Uhtred's shade may haunt
Cloisters once his cherish'd home,
Gliding soft by Godric's tomb,
Listening for the choral chant :

Looking for his letter'd lore—
Jerome, Bede, Eusebius, all
Ready at his beck and call—
Ready once, but now no more.

Silent, now, is Finchale's song ;
 Treasured tomes, of precious cost,
 Scatter'd from her walls and lost ;
Hush'd the abbey bells' ding-dong.

Never more the dying hours
 Finchale's horologe shall knell,
 Echoing the mother-bell,
Sounding from fair Durham's towers.

But these ruins linger still,
 Mutely murmuring "Never more ;"
 And, where planted down of yore,
Blooms the yellow daffodil :

Blooms, and marks the garden site,
 Where the monks grew fruit and flower,
 Root and herb of healing power :—
Cool retreat for calm delight.

Faithful flower! to moth and rust
 Finchale's monks thou wilt not give :
 Thou wilt have their memory live,
Fair and fragrant in the dust.

Thus may we, who fain would fill
 Some small space in human eye
 When entomb'd in earth we lie,
Plant on earth some Daffodil.

Durham Cathedral.

IN August time, long years gone by,
Where wayward Wear winds in and out,
And clasps her loving arms about
The wooded banks that near her lie,

Came Prior, Prelate, King, and all
Their train, to lay the primal stones
Of Dunholm's shrine for Cuthbert's bones,
The base of stately tower and wall.*

In earth they laid them deep and sure,
As men who built to rival Time—
Whose courage high, and faith sublime,
Would bridge the flowing ages o'er.

Their massive pile majestic stands,
Firm-rooted in this solid sphere,
To share Earth's fortunes to her bier,
The work of master minds and hands—

A precious casket, wherein lies
The dust of Bede, with many a page
His fingers writ in long-gone age,
Ere Karileph's church began to rise.

High o'er the city, (o'er its halls,
Its castle, and its churches hoar,)
The high cathedral towers upsoar,
And dwarf it with their lofty walls.

* On the 11th or 12th of August, 1093 or 1094, (for there is a doubt with respect to the day and year,) the three first stones of the present church were laid with great ceremony, in the presence of a numerous concourse of people, by the Bishop [William de Karileph], Malcolm King of Scotland, and Turgot the Prior.—*Raine's Brief Account of the Cathedral.*

Ye grand old Fathers, who uprear'd
 This temple to the living God,
 And bless'd the land on which ye trod,
 Through ages be your name revered !

And may the anthem song of praise,
 Which rose within those walls of old,
 Adown the solemn aisles be roll'd,
 Till Time hath number'd out its days—

Till the bright better age hath come,
 When here shall meet, in glad accord,
 The followers of one common Lord,
 Fit symbol of their common home !

Riddlehamhope.

CALM Riddlehamhope! sequester'd from the crowds,
 The cares, the noise, the strivings of the town,
 High in thy quiet air the summer-clouds
 Float soft and still, and cast their shadows down,
 Solemn and silent, on the lonely moor,
 Where blooms the heather, and the low, glad hum
 Of wandering bee, that hies from flower to flower,
 Alone proclaims that Nature is not dumb ;
 Save that from yonder glen, where merrily flow
 The burn's brown waters, garrulous as they go,
 A murmuring sound steals o'er the tranquil scene,
 Where Silence reigns with Solitude serene,
 And the brown heights rise sombre and severe,
 And, Man being far, God therefore seems more near.

The Garden on the Moor.

It was a sweet, secluded bower,
That bloom'd upon the slope,
With verdant shrub and fragrant flower,
At lonesome Riddlehamhope.

Ta'en from the moor, it smiled before
The open window where
I sat, and felt the genial glow
And breath of sun and air.

All Nature, calm and still, reposed,
Nor sound nor motion stirr'd :
Within that garden on the moor
No voice but His was heard.

The sun, in passing o'er 't, look'd down,
And lent to leaf and flower
New life ; and many a kindly cloud
Let fall a fresh'ning shower.

Beyond the burn which brawl'd below,
Unheard upon the height,
Rose heathery Beldon like a wall,
To shut the scene from sight.

Northumberland and Durham there
Stood gazing face to face,
Serene, majestic, and grand,
And robed in native grace.

My silent Paradise was fill'd
 With fragrance of the flowers ;
 And in mute ecstasy flow'd by
 The sunny summer hours.

The dial mark'd their noiseless flight,
 And bade me keep in thought
 The monarch's cry when day was done,
 And he no good had wrought.*

It touch'd me not—his self-reproach,
 Before me in my chair :
 I communed with my heart, and felt
 'Twas good that I was there.

St. Johnston's Bells.†

FLOATING up to Craigieknowe,
 O'er the city, o'er the plain,
 O'er the sheaves of golden grain,
 Sweet St. Johnston's bells are ringing.

Ringing where thy waters roll,
 Beauteous Tay, with winding turn,
 From the Almond to the Earn :—
 Sweet the mellow bells are ringing.

* "Nil boni hodie ; perdidit diem."

† The city of Perth, anciently called "Bertha," also acquired, from its mother-church (dedicated to the Baptist), the name of "St. Johnston." Among the bells in the tower (which, with their inscriptions, and a discourse delivered in the church, gave rise to these verses), there is one bearing date 1506, cast at Malines.

Ringing, ringing, round Moncreiffe :
 Round Kinnoul, whose rocky brow
 Echoes o'er to Craigieknowe
 Sweet St. Johnston's bells a-ringing.

Listen to their vocal song !
 "Eccè Agnus" (mark the words !)
 "Agnus Dei" (sweet the chords !)
 "Eccè Agnus Dei" ringing.

'Tis the voice of John that speaks :
 Hark the Baptist's solemn cry,
 "Paratè viam Domini !"
 Down the ages ringing, ringing.

Ringing as in days of yore,
 As in Bertha's olden times,
 Comes the music of those chimes,
 Through the morning air resounding.

Hush ! they seem to breathe His words,
 Wafted from the sacred sea,
 From the lake of Galilee :—
 "Follow me," the bells are ringing.

Listen to that gentle call !
 "Follow, follow," hear Him say,
 "Follow me the upward way :
 "Light my yoke, my burden easy.

"Follow, and yourselves deny :—
 "Earth, revived, shall bloom again,
 "Desert turn to flowery plain,
 "And the wilderness shall blossom—

“ Blossom, blossom, as the rose !” —
 Haste ye, all, the coming time,
 Promised by St. Johnston’s chime,
 O’er the city ringing, ringing !

Ringin’ up to Craigieknowe,
 O’er the city, o’er the plain,
 O’er the sheaves of yellow grain :
 Sweet St. Johnston’s bells a-ringing.

The Old Hall Clock.

“ FAREWELL !” and as we spoke the parting word,
 Day was dissolving gently into night.
 Through the dusk air the old hall-clock was heard,
 Sounding the requiem of the dying light.
 Plaintive across the silent fields, that knell—
 The echo of the mournful word—“ Farewell !”
 Our talk had been of the old, old times—old friends—
 The dead—the scatter’d—changefulness of years—
 The world’s old tale, that never, never ends.
 “ Farewell !” with warm hands clasp’d may meet no more ;
 Then slowly leave the hospitable door ;
 Pass the old churchyard—pass the sombre hall ;
 Soft o’er the scene the deepening shadows fall,
 And the moon brightens mid her starry peers.

The Night Walk.*

THE week of toil was near its close,
When passing through the market-square,
Its busy traffic and its glare,
More quiet thoroughfares I chose.

By hallow'd Martin's tower (whose spire
Hath touch'd once more our mother earth,
And waits its new Antæan birth),
I wander'd, pausing to admire :

I wander'd past the fine old fane ;
And by the quaint townhall, where Will
Of Stratford tried, mayhap, his skill,
Our fathers, oft, to entertain.

In Fancy's eye, I saw him walk
These streets, with Herrick and "rare Ben,"
The prince of poets and of men,
With song, and joke, and glorious talk.

I reach'd the market-cross, where hied
The Roman, in his pride of place,
The Saxon, Danish, Norman race,
To have their common wants supplied.

My footsteps took the onward line
Where ran the massive Roman wall,
Whose builders held the world in thrall—
(Italia ! rise once more, and shine !)

* In Leicester.

The ancient way I walk'd across,
And, turning, left it by the site
Where Richard pass'd the anxious night,
With troublous dreams and restless toss.

My pathway lighted by the gleam
Of gas, I safely pass'd the maze
To Austin Freres, and stood to gaze
Where Bow Bridge spans the sluggish stream :

Where Richard, wearing England's crown,
Pass'd, with his host, to Bosworth plain ;
And where came back the monarch slain,
With Richmond crown'd, to Leicester town.

I lean'd upon the broken wall ;
The Soar flow'd idly by below ;
And by me 'gan to come and go,
Historic forms with soft footfall.

Imperial Hadrian comes again,
Returning from the mighty dead ;
And Alfred's daughter, Ethelfled,
Who conquer'd Leicester from the Dane.

Norse Onlaf tries his strength anew,
With Saxon Edmund, for the crown ;
And Norman William storms the town,
The sturdy burghers to subdue.

Now servile John goes slouching by :—
And Edward and his Flemish queen,
And John of Gaunt, are grandly seen,
Before the musing dreamer's eye.

“Time-honour'd Lancaster” surveys
 His Blanche, his Constance, and his Kate ;
 And kingly Chaucer, with his mate,
 Wears on his brow immortal bays.

Along St. Mary's aisles they glide,
 And Wickliffe from the pulpit speaks ;
 And now, by one of Fancy's freaks,
 Comes Latimer to Wickliffe's side.

The air is fill'd with flitting shades
 Of those who, living, here have been :—
 The second Richard and his queen ;
 The brave Godiva and her maids.

Fourth Edward ; and, with swords across,
 Prince Richard and the Tudor King.
 The broken Wolsey, taking wing
 From objects he now counts as dross.

Charles—Mary—and the Lady Jane ;
 Behind, the headsman with his axe ;
 Great Cromwell—Rupert—and Fairfax ;
 And Monk, who Stuart brings again.

The Princess Anne, who flies her sire,
 Takes hurried rest within these walls :
 The Stuarts quit their ancient halls,
 And see their fated line expire.

On, on, the shadows pass and fade ;
 De Montfort, Dudley, barons great ;
 And men, on earth, of low estate ;
 As Bunyan, who his name hath made

A deathless word. John Leland, too,
 With Knighton's patient monkish scribe,
 The honour'd members of a tribe
 Who bring the past to present view.

But list! the curfew breaks my dream!
 I wake, and pace my homeward way.
 Yet still, the potent spell bears sway,
 And things are not what they would seem.

The air is peopled with the dead;
 The streets breathe voices of the past;
 The storied town is but one vast
 Romance of ages that are fled.

And he who makes the tale his own,
 Where'er he turns—by night, by day—
 Will have companions of the way,
 And never walk these streets alone.

Hugh of Thurcaston.

IN Oxford moat, by Balliol's walls,
 Hugh Latimer must die:
 The stake, the faggot, and the fire,
 His martyr-soul must try.

Full fourscore summers he had seen—
 His cheeks were fair and red:
 Full fourscore winters he had braved—
 And white his reverend head.

In green old age, with manful heart,
He shrunk not from the stake ;
But chose the cruel death to die,
For sacred conscience' sake.

Feeble his steps, and bow'd his frame,
As slowly he drew near ;
The body frail, but strong the soul ;
For faith had cast out fear.

With kisses on his ruddy cheek,
His fellow-martyr there,
Encouraged him upon his way—
Help'd him his Cross to bear.

“Be of good cheer!” brave Ridley said :
“My brother, be thou sure
“God will assuage the furious flames,
“Or nerve us to endure.”

With looks of love Hugh Latimer
His grateful answer made ;
And held his course to fiery death,
Feeble, but undismay'd.

Bending beneath his load of years,
He came ; but, stout and bold,
Bound to the stake he rose erect,
And “comely to behold.”

Before his eyes his father's fields,
Where he had bent the bow,
Ere Bosworth's Fight was lost and won,
Or wrinkled was his brow—

Before his sight those fields arose—
 His mother's cottage-door—
 The wayside church upon the knoll,
 Yet standing as of yore.

The Forest Hills which lay beyond—
 The mill that crown'd the height:—
 Sweet Thurcaston! thy homes and haunts
 Came back upon his sight.

His pilgrimage of life—begun
 Beside his father's plough—
 The gallant soldier of the Cross
 Was bravely ending now.

Undaunted he! yet—fill'd his breast
 With thoughts to memory dear—
 Unbidden to the martyr's eye
 Arose one starting tear:

One tear for earth, while round him raged
 The fierce devouring flame:—
 O God! that man such deeds should do,
 In Thy benignant name!

Mark now, with courage both for self
 And comrade in the fire,
 Great Latimer, with dying breath,
 And ready to expire—

“Be of good comfort!” hear him cry:
 “Dear Master Ridley, play
 “The man! and, by the grace of God,
 “I trust we'll light to-day,

“ In England, such a candle as
 “ Shall never be put out !”
 “ Ha ! ha ! the blinded bigot laughs—
 The thoughtless rabble shout.

The scorning priests, who'd pray'd in vain
 Their victims to recant,
 Smiled with derision when they heard
 The bold prophetic vaunt.

They could the body kill, and thought
 The spirit, too, would die
 In Oxford ditch, whence rose the soul
 Of Latimer on high.

But still we see the martyr-flame
 Bright and more brightly shine,
 Kindled by Hugh of Thurcaston,
 And Ridley of the Tyne.

And England, wiping out the crime
 Which blacken'd Oxford fosse,
 Has rear'd, where blazed the shameful fire,
 The graceful Martyrs' Cross.

The Symbol.

THE northern sky was all aglow
 With primrose light. A sea of gold—
 Of golden fleece—fantastic roll'd ;
 And fleets were seen to come and go,

Whose spectral masts shot up on high,
 As to the zenith they would climb ;
 And meteor-marvels lent sublime
 And mystic meanings to the sky. .

Swift Ariel flew, on sportive wing,
 Forth from Aurora's halls, and cast,
 High upward as the topmost mast,
 A wave of wool, and rove a ring

Around the Earth of fleecy white.—
 By brave Orion's belt it came,
 And by Acturus' spark of flame,
 And Jove, great wanderer of the night.

Before me heaved the amber flood
 With fitful gleams ; the circling sky
 Was flossy-arch'd ; and, wondering, I
 Beneath the heavenly glory stood.

What portent of the skies is this,
 That meets me on my starlight way ?
 In vain I ask ! I cannot say.
 But time will draw the veil, I wis.

The vision fades ; and night and day,
 And day and night, each other chase.
 Another week half-runs its race ;
 And then the mystery rolls away.

Upon my tables softly fall
 Two flakes of white. Two kindred souls,
 Whose bosoms conquering Love controls,
 Are join'd in wedlock's silken thrall.

Celestial ring ! I read thy sign !
 The gentle heir of him who sung
 "The Fleece" with sweetest poet-tongue,
 Hath bent the knee at Hymen's shrine.

Bright golden hoop ! be thou as soft,
 As fleecy and as fair a tie,
 As thy grand symbol in the sky,
 Which met my raptured gaze aloft.

Wanlip.

"Here lyes Thomas Walsch Knyght Lorde of Anlip and Dame Katrine his Wyfe whiche in yer tyme made the Kirke of Anlep and halud the Kirkyerd first in Wurchip of God and of Oure Ladye and Seynt Nicholas that God have yer Sowles in Mercy.—Anno Domini M.CCC.XCIII."—*Sepulchral Brass, Wanlip Church, Leicestershire.*

TIME hath dealt kindly with your quiet tomb !
 When the Plantagenets wore England's crown,
 Ye lived, and loved, and shared the common doom.
 Your ashes, then, were tenderly laid down,
 In the fair church your piety had rear'd ;
 Where the great Father, whom ye wisely fear'd,
 With filial awe, and meek, obedient minds,
 Is worshipp'd still. Through Tudor—Stuart—on
 From old to later age, from sire to son—
 The peaceful, calm, sequester'd village finds,
 At Sabbathtide, hope, comfort, holy trust,
 Within these walls, which holds your sacred dust.
 Sweetly on earth is writ your pious love ;
 And God in mercy keeps your souls above.

Birstall Hill.

THE breath of May is in the air—
The joyous song of Spring ;
The throstle with his mellow pipe
Makes tree and hedgerow ring ;
And lesser birds with warbling notes
The pleasant sunshine fill.
How can I breathe the unwilling words—
“ Farewell to Birstall Hill !”

High o'er its sloping walls of green
Rise trees of various shade ;
The sombre fir, the gay green elm,
The oak that rules the glade ;
The warm brown birch, the flowery lime,
With clinging parasites ;
Fair Birstall Hill, thou art a bower
Of infinite delights !

The sheep graze o'er the emerald mead,
With lambs at sportive play ;
The browsing kine to yon green knoll
Slow take their upward way ;
Amidst them stalks the solemn crow ;
The swallow cleaves the air ;
Sweet springtime ! morning of the year !
On Birstall Hill, how fair !

The spectral blackbird shoots across
 The road with meteor flight :
 The peasant child the marvel sees
 With wonder and delight.
 And as I pause on Birstall Hill,
 Its thousand charms to view,
 There breaks upon the enchanted ear
 The dear old cry—"Cuckoo!"

O beautiful Earth! we thought thee dead,
 So long thy wintry sleep ;
 But Nature, though she tarry long,
 Her promises will keep.
 These scenes—these songs—these perfumed airs—
 My breast with transport thrill :
 How can I breathe the unwilling words—
 "Farewell to Birstall Hill!"

Sing on, thou bird of plaintive song!
 Sob forth thy saddest strain!
 I'll echo back those notes of woe
 I may not hear again.
 I go where thou wilt never come :
 Adieu, fond Philomel!
 My bosom on a thorn like thine,
 I breathe the word "Farewell!"

Good Night !

DOWNWARD sinks the setting sun,
Soft the evening shadows fall :
Light is flying,
Day is dying,
Darkness stealeth over all.
Good night !

Autumn garners in her stores,
Foisson of the fading Year :
Leaves are dying,
Winds are sighing,
Whispering of the Winter near.
Good night !

Youth is vanish'd—Manhood wanes—
Age its forward shadows throws :
Day is dying,
Years are flying,
Life runs onward to its close.
Good night !

The Bishop's Raid
and
other Poems
by
James Clephan

4

THE BISHOP'S RAID.

WITH OTHER POEMS.

[Clephian, James]

—)o(—

“The exploit might furnish no bad subject for a Border ballad,
‘THE BISHOP’S RAID.’”—*Surtees’s History of the County of
Durham.*

—)o(—

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To the Memory of ROBERT SURTEES, Esq., of Mainsforth, the Historian of the County of Durham, in obedience to whose hint it was written, this Ballad of “The Bishop’s Raid” is reverently dedicated; and on the Eve of Christmas, 1864, it is presented, with the Compliments of the Season, to the Friends of the Author,

JAMES CLEPHAN.

11, *Saville Row, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.*

.

THE BISHOP'S RAID.

'Twas a woeful time for England !
For famine, pest, and sword
Ruled o'er the land more royally
Than her anointed lord.

There was barrenness in autumn,
And hunger through the year :
The earth had lost its fruitfulness,
The soil was curst and sere :

And the carrion-crow its larder
Must leave to famish'd man :
Babes were a mother's nourishment,
Reversing nature's plan :

Yea ! the babe was known to suffer,
A parent's life to save ;
And thieves in prison greedily
Devour'd some brother knave.

'Twas a woeful time for England,
 The second Edward's reign !
 The Scots swarm'd o'er the Borders, and
 Northumberland lay slain :

It was slain by pest and famine ;
 By edge of sword it bled ;
 The quick could hardly bury all,
 And envied sore the dead.*

Such was the time my story
 Fell out 'twixt Tees and Tweed—
 A time for wail and misery
 None other can exceed.

Brave Richard, count and bishop,
 This sea of troubles rode :
 With sword and crosier reign'd his hour,
 In Durham's ancient mode.

* The year 1317 was marked by a repetition of invasion by the Scots, and of all the horrors attendant on the progress of an exasperated and avenging enemy. Three successive years of sterility had carried the public distress to the highest pitch. The ravages of scarcity and sickness were not confined to the North ; and the general calamities of the times are described by the contemporary historians in terms almost too highly-coloured to meet belief. Prisoners devoured each other in the gaols, and mothers hid their children lest they should furnish a repast equally horrid. (*Surtees.*) The dearth was so great in Northumberland, in 1317, that the people were obliged to eat the flesh of horses and dogs. (*Hutchinson.*) There was a grievous famine and mortality at Newcastle, "insomuch," says Bourne, "that the quick could hardly bury the dead ; and a great corruption of cattle and grass. Some ate the flesh of their own children ; and thieves in prison devoured those that were newly brought in, and greedily ate them half-alive." (*Brand.*)

He died ; and now the Convent
 Must choose another lord.
 The monks were canvass'd by the king,
 The queen their votes implored.

Her cripple-cousin Beaumont,
 The mitre he must wear.
 The Cowl was sturdy 'gainst the Crown,
 And deaf to Edward's prayer.

Earls Lancaster and Pembroke,
 And Hereford, the door
 Besieged ; and Henry Beaumont, too ;
 With lawless ramp and roar.

The savage nobles hector'd,
 To beat the Convent down :
 They swore "that if a monk they chose,
 They'd split his shaven crown."

Bold-hearted monks ! nor baron
 Nor king could make them rue :
 They stood up for their ancient rights—
 Were to their order true.

Henry, the monk of Stamford—
 Of Finchale prior he :
 This was the man the Convent chose
 Of Durham lord to be.

He, not the stranger Frenchman,
 Should reign upon the Wear.
 Fierce raved the royal Isabel,
 Their stern resolve to hear.

The King of France's daughter
At Edward's feet fell down,
And pray'd with tears the Convent's choice
He'd steadfastly disown.

The Kings of France and England,
They hasten'd to Pope John,
That so his Romish Holiness
For Beaumont might be won.

And when on foot monk Henry,
Outrun by royal speed,
Reach'd Peter's chair, he found the Pope
To him no friend in need.

Queen Isabel's proud cousin
Must have the bishop's chair ;
And Henry to his monkish cell
In Stamford must repair.

The learned monk went safely
Upon his modest way :
His vain, illiterate rival—he
Was mark'd for reiver's pray.

With nobles and with gentry,
With knights and squires rode he ;
On either hand a cardinal ;
So Beaumont sought his see.

At Darlington a message
Came to the cavalcade :
The Convent sent the bishop word
Of an intended raid.

But Beaumont scorn'd the warning ;
He would not be appall'd ;
He would, on Cuthbert's festival,
At Durham be install'd.

So, on the rich procession
Pursued the bridle-way,
Past Aycliffe to the Rushy Ford,
In sumptuous array.

On rode the blind lord-bishop,
The cardinals and all,
With richly-laden sumpter-mules,
Whatever might befall.

What might befall, his lordship
Foresaw when 'twas too late ;
For at the ford a cloud of horse
Came down to tell his fate.

Bold men of broken fortunes
Swept down upon the line,
Led on by Gilbert Middleton,
From Mitford 'yont the Tyne.

They captured and they plunder'd,
A sorry sight to see !
The cousin of Queen Isabel,
A woeful wight was he !

Knight, cardinal, and bishop—
Their train was sorely mau'd :
They 'd little thought how Beaumont should
In Durham be install'd.

The cardinals, who 'd journey'd
 His crowning rites to grace,
 Must now for mercy in the dust
 Their scarlet hats abase.

Sir Gilbert gave the order
 The cardinals to spare :
 They and their followers must go free—
 To harm them none must dare.

All then began a-crying
 "The cardinals alone
 "Their masters were : " the prelate-prince
 For leader none would own.

This would not do ! The reivers,
 To put an end to doubt,
 In spite of Rome they rifled all,
 And turn'd them inside out.

The cardinals, they left them
 Their nags to ride away :
 The rest were stripp'd of all they had,
 At breaking of the day.

The bishop was made captive,
 His brother Henry, too,
 And borne away to Wansbeck-side,
 In castle-keep to mew :

To Morpeth and to Mitford,
 To hold to ransom there.
 Queen Isabel was frantic when
 She heard of Beaumont's lair.

Her cousin held in bondage !
 King Philip's daughter said
 Swift vengeance must o'ertake the knight
 Who led the Border raid.

But nothing cared Sir Gilbert,
 The sheriff's near of kin,
 Who 'd suffer'd wrongs at Edward's hands :
 He heeded not a pin.

He heeded not at Mitford
 The anger of the Crown :
 The northern Robin Hood would list
 To nought but money down.

The Church, to win a bishop
 'Twould rather be without,
 Must therefore be prevail'd upon
 To let its treasures out.

Sir Gilbert got his ransom
 (More than his prize was worth) ;
 And from his Mitford lodgings quick
 The bishop he came forth :

Came forth to shock the Convent—
 So ignorant and vain !
 But was he not the kinsman of
 A queen ?—then why complain ? *

* Beaumont was consecrated at Westminster on the 26th of March, 1318. The monks must have been shocked and surprised at the strange mixture of levity and ignorance which their new bishop exhibited during the solemnity. Unable to pronounce the word *metropolitice* in the official instrument, he cried out, in his native French, "Let us suppose it read." Proceeding further, *in enigmitate* stopped him altogether ; when he exclaimed, "By Louis ! it is not courteous to introduce such words." (*Longstaffe's Darlington.*)

The BISHOP'S RAID is ended ;
For Gilbert ends so well,
That soon he has another raid,
Which ends but with his knell.

In arms against weak Edward,
The castles of his shire,
Save Alnwick, Norham, Bamborough,
He seized ; and sword and fire,

From Tweed far o'er to Cleveland,
He carried in his wrath,
With dearth and deadly pestilence
Companions of his path.

The scourge aroused the country,
His ravages to stay ;
And as increased the loyalists,
His followers fell away.

Till, falling back on Mitford,
Within his castle-gate
He shut himself securely there,
A better time to wait.

Secure, but for the traitors
Who ate Sir Gilbert's bread
(However he came by it), and
Who sold their leader's head.

Tried and condemn'd in London,
The king gave word that he
Be through the City dragg'd in shame,
And hang'd upon a tree.

Ere dead to be beheaded—
 His head in London shown :
 His heart, the fountain of his crimes
 'Gainst God, and Church, and Throne—

His heart to be to ashes,
 Where he was hang'd, burnt down :
 His quarters stuck on high, that none
 Might court his dark renown :

One quarter sent to Dover ;
 To York, its dismal share ;
 To Bristol, one ; the fourth, upon
 Tyne Bridge to cry " Beware !"

Such was the bloody lesson
 The royal tutor made,
 By head and heart and limb of him
 Who led the BISHOP'S RAID.

'Twas woeful, then, in England !
 We live in better days.
 To God be glory ; and our lives
 May they express our praise !

 The story of the raid, which is variously told, occupies a page or two of Mr. Hodgson Hinde's volume on "Northumberland." He says (pp. 299-300) :—In 1317, Pope John, who had been placed at the head of the Latin Church the previous year, resolved to make an effort to effect an accommodation between the King of England and, as he expresses himself, "him who pretends to be King of Scotland." With this view, having first, of his own authority, proclaimed a truce for two years, he sent two cardinals, John of Ossa and Luke de Fieschi, to mediate a peace. Their mission was fruitless ; but it claims a place in Northumbrian history in connection with one of the most remarkable outrages ever perpetrated in that county. The weak and indecisive measures of King Edward were topics of loud complaint on the Borders, and were made the subject of a remonstrance, which was addressed to the king himself by Adam de Swinburne, the sberiff of the county. This plaiu speaking was resented by Edward, who committed the sheriff to prison. The flame of rebellion, which had long smouldered among the plundered and perse-

cuted Northumbrians, now burst forth. Having in vain looked to the king for protection, they refused longer to submit to his capricious and violent government. Among the malcontents was Gilbert de Middleton, a near relative of John de Middleton of Belsay, and a cousin of Adam de Swinburne, the late sheriff. In his hands was the strong castle of Mitford, of which he seems to have been constable under Aymer de Valence, the proprietor. This fortress afforded an admirable retreat for the insurgents, who chose Gilbert de Middleton for their chief. Whatever may have been their original intentions, their operations soon degenerated into a system of organized plunder :—and this in a district already impoverished by the repeated ravages of the Scots. In one of their predatory incursions, Gilbert and his associates fell in with the two cardinals as they were travelling from Darlington to Durham, in company with the bishop of the diocese, and his brother Lord Henry de Beaumont. The site of the encounter appears, from an entry in the *Rotuli Scotiæ*, to have been at Hett, in the parish of Merrington, where the ecclesiastics were secured without resistance. The two cardinals were allowed to proceed on their journey; but the bishop and his brother were carried with them, the former being retained at Morpeth, the latter at Mitford, until heavy ransoms were paid for their release. With this daring act the career of Middleton was brought to a close, his capture being shortly afterwards effected by some of his neighbours, who had suffered from his depredations, and laid wait for him. He was conveyed to London, tried, and executed; and his own estates, and those of many of his followers, confiscated. Some of his hand escaped to Horton Castle, where they were received under the protection of Walter Selby, a brother freebooter, who there maintained himself in defiance of the authorities on either side of the Border.

Mr. Longstaffe, after an examination of the evidences, comes to the conclusion, as to the place of capture, "that Rushyford is entitled to the preference." (*Archæologia Æliana*, vi. 66.) He quotes Surtees :— "At the Rushyford, midway betwixt the small villages of Woodham and Ferryhill, the road crosses a small and sullen rivulet, in a low and sequestered spot, well-calculated for surprise and the prevention of escape. In *Rymer's Fœdera*, the robbery is said to have taken place at Aile, perhaps Acle, *i.e.* Aycliffe, three miles south from Rushyford, where the passage over the Skerne would be equally convenient. The exploit might furnish no bad subject for a Border ballad, 'THE BISHOP'S RAID.' "

The ballad is now written; and the writer, in executing a commission which no worthier hand had undertaken, has kept as close as possible to chronicle and history. The same remark also applies to the ballad of "THE DEATH OF WALCHER," and other historical poems, printed on subsequent pages.

THE DEATH OF WALCHER.

It was in the flowering month of May,
Twice winters seven had flown
Since Harold the Saxon king was slain,
By William overthrown.

Earl Waltheof, giant Siward's son,
Lay bloody in his grave
At Croyland; slaughter'd on the block
The Norman's crown to save.

His head upon his shoulders broad,
The Conqueror lived in fear:
At Winchester the axe must fall,
And end the Saxon peer.

And Egelwin—last bishop he
Of Saxondom who sway'd
The crook on Durham's sacred mount—
To peace of death was laid:

A fugitive, contemn'd of all,
Weak, avaricious, sly,
In Norman toils at Abingdon
'Twas his to meanly die.

Old Walcher of Lorraine was now,
North of the winding Tees,
Both prince and bishop too; for so
Did great Duke William please.

Of mild and gentle spirit he,
Not firm in rule and strong—
Wild licence boldly walk'd abroad,
And good men suffer'd wrong.

The Eli of the Church, nor free
From sins that were his own,
He shame and hate incurr'd by deeds
Of men around his throne.

The Saxon noble, Liulph, loved
By his own people all,
To Siward and Gospatric kin,
And reverend in his fall,

Dwelt under Walcher's solemn pledge,
He and his household dear,
O'ershadow'd by the castle walls
Upon the banks of Wear.

With Adelgitha, of the blood
Of Uchtred, dwelt he there,
His "little chickens and their dam"
About him in his lair.

At dead of night came Leofwine,
The bishop's chaplain he,
Who 'd menaced oft the Saxon lord,
And Walcher there to see.

With Leofwine was Gilbert fierce,
 (Kinsman, and sheriff too,
Of Walcher,) and stout men of arms,
 Their lawless will to do.

Lord Liulph, in unguarded sleep,
 With all his household lay :
They slept the sleep of death before
 The peaceful dawn of day.

The horror ran from Wear to Tees—
 To Tyne and distant Tweed :
All native hearts were fill'd with fire,
 And wrathful at the deed.

The treacherous crime must be avenged :
 The Norman must make good,
By his own life, for sacrifice
 Of precious Saxon blood.

The pent-up fire of freeborn men,
 Subdued to foreign yoke,
To open flame that must devour
 Through Liulph's death had broke.

In vain weak Walcher met with words
 The storm of human wrath,
Which rose and raged as though 'twould sweep
 The bishop from its path.

In hope to still the tempest down,
 He sent to South and North,
And West and East, all o'er his see,
 His urgent summons forth.

At Gateshead, where St. Mary's church,
Among the spreading oaks,
O'erlook'd the flowing Tyne below,
A council he invokes,

To deal with Liulph's death, and by
Collective cunning find
Some subtle means to soften down
The outraged Saxon mind.

'Twas in the flowering month of May,
Twice winters seven had flown
Since Harold was at Hastings slain,
By William overthrown.

In May, upon the fourteenth day,
His council Walcher met:
His throne was in Our Lady's church
In Gateshead parish set.

The Norman chiefs in Church and State,
Beside him and before,
Were gather'd there; and loud without
Was heard the angry roar

Of Saxon men, whom Eadulf Rus,
Gospatric's grandson, led,
Descendant of great Uchtred, long
The brave and honour'd head

Of lands that stretch'd from Humber's flood
Far northward to the Tweed—
A stalwart earl, renown'd in war
And peace, by word and deed.

Prince-bishop and the Saxon came
To parley on the spot.
The Norman trimm'd ; and Saxon blood
From warm grew madly hot.

Alarm'd, the prelate was prepared
To make some compromise :
His sheriff Gilbert he would give
For instant sacrifice.

The Saxons with derision heard
The bishop thus propose
To yield a part, when all were there
At mercy of their foes.

Doom'd Gilbert and his band they slew,
And likewise Leofwine ;
Nor yet content that so should end
This council of the Tyne.

Had Walcher not in friendship lived
With Liulph's murderers twain ?
Was not upon his head the blood
Of him so foully slain ?

“ Short red, good red,” the leaders cried :
Short reckoning is the best.
“ Short red, good red : the bishop slay !”
Such was their fell behest.

The trembling Walcher, who before
Urged Leofwine to brave
The storm without—his life, mayhap,
From Saxon steel to save—

Now shrunk within the 'leagured church,
With guard of Norman swords.
Alas! nor wall nor gleaming blade
A safe defence affords!

“Short red, good red! the bishop slay!”
Nought can their purpose turn.
Bring hither, quick, the flaming torch:
He dies, though church must burn.

The brand is brought—the light applied—
St. Mary's set in flame:
The scorching fire and stifling smoke
Around the Norman came.

Now save yourselves! The men of mail
Fled swift from Walcher's side;
And he must choose to die by sword,
Or in the fire abide.

His choice was made. He raised his robes
To veil his aged face,
And from the porch he slowly walk'd,
With dignity and grace.

His finger traced upon his breast
The Christian's sacred sign:
His body he gave up to man—
His soul to the Divine.

No ruth was yet in Saxon hearts:
Not yet appeased their rage
With Gilbert's blood, and Leofwine's:
The bishop's must assuage:—

The bishop's life must close the account ;
And Eadulf Rus stood by,
With deadly spear in hand, by which
The sacrifice must die.

Where, just before, the cross was sign'd,
The thirsting spear was thrust ;
And Saxon swords in meaner hands
Hew'd Walcher to the dust.

“Short red, good red,” was echoed back
When William heard the tale
Of Walcher's death : the land, he swore,
The tragedy should wail.

He swore by Splendour of the Heavens,
The Saxon race should rue ;
And northward sent, to wreak his wrath,
The Bishop of Bayeux.

The land, laid waste from Ouse to Tyne
When Cumin and his men
The Saxons slew with sword and fire,
Must now lie waste again.

And Odo, Bishop of Bayeux,
Half-brother of the king,
Must northward speed, with man and horse,
To do this fearful thing.

Unheal'd the scars of Cumin's time,
The Norman scourged anew
Northumbria's unhappy soil,
By Odo of Bayeux.

And often, in the after-days,
By Gateshead's old Oak Well,
Near where, by Eadulf Rus's spear,
The grey-hair'd bishop fell,

The maids and matrons gossipp'd how,
When Liulph he was slain,
The vengeful Saxon shed the blood
Of Walcher of Lorraine.

And some, who 'd seen both Egelwin
And Walcher, told, and sigh'd,
How one, of Saxon bishops last,
Had in a dungeon died ;

And how the other, first among
The Norman bishops, came
To cruel death at Saxon hands,
By sword and spear and flame.

No longer, round the old Oak Well,
The gossips now are found ;
But still the mournful tale comes down,
Though with uncertain sound ;

Still is it told, in hall and cot,
By many a calm fireside,
How Liulph, Lumley's lord, was slain,
And Bishop Walcher died.

THE CHURCH AND THE CASTLE.

WITH shriek and snort rush'd Vulcan's steed
Along the banks of Tyne,
Past Wylam's classic cot—of George,
Great master-smith, the shrine—
His cradle-shrine, where Nature school'd
The child with wisest skill
Whom she design'd through coming time
A world-wide throne to fill.

And now, with speed that mocks the wind,
We pass on either side
The Norman keep that lies a wreck,
The church that doth abide.
Umfréville's walls on Prudhoe's steep—
Their pride hath pass'd away :
Baronial force, on England's ground, 's
A thing of yesterday.
The ruin on this verdant knoll
Lends beauty to the scene—
A moral points, and tells a tale
Of what in yore hath been.

'Tis but a fragment of the past ;
 While yonder Saxon fane
 Doth still, and with an added grace,
 Its ancient use maintain.

How sweetly on yon sunny bank
 Stands Ovingham's grey tower,
 Where Bewick's bones were laid to rest,
 When past his little hour !
 That scene, more sacred than before,
 Since now his dust it shrines,
 How loved he, with his touch of skill,
 To grave in fairest lines !

And thou, brave monk, once Master here,
 Shall we forget how bold
 Thy stand against the Tudor king,
 In England's days of old ?
 What if thy creed be not our own,
 In all its breadth and length,
 Honour be thine for putting forth
 'Gainst tyranny thy strength :
 All honour that thou took'st thy stand
 By Prior Lawrence' side,
 Last of his line in Hexham, who
 For conscience grandly died—
 Who died on Tyburn tree, before
 He would his faith forswear,
 And to the king, as Lord Supreme
 In Church, allegiance bear.

Let Faith, not Force, the monarch be !
 Speed on, thou car of fire !
 Make the rough places plain, O Steam !
 Work out high Heaven's desire.

Bring down the hills, exalt the vales,
 Make straight the crookéd way ;
 And to and fro let Knowledge run,
 And haste the coming day,
 When Right and Truth and Love shall fill,
 And Faith, not Force, the throne ;
 When done the Church's perfect work,
 The Castle all unknown.

Hexham Abbey, on the 28th of September, 1536, was visited by Commissioners appointed to carry the Dissolution into effect. No prior had been appointed since the death of Lawrence, hanged at Tyburn in 1535 ; “ and the sub-prior appears to have been a timid man ; but amongst the monks was found one possessed of dauntless spirit and resolution, who was determined not to yield without a struggle to the arbitrary exercise of the secular power ; and in this resolution he was vigorously supported by his brethren and their dependents. The name of the leader is not preserved ; but he held the office of master of the cell of Ovingham, founded by the last of the Umfrevilles, barons of Prudhoe.” (*Hodgson Hinde's Northumberland.*) The Commissioners state, in their account of the proceedings preserved in the Public Record Office, that “ a chalone, called the Maister of Ovingham, being in harness, with a bow bent with arrows, accompanied with divers other persons, all standing upon the leads and walls of the house and steeple, which Maister of Ovingham answered these words under written :—‘ We be twenty brethren in this house ; and we shall die all, or that ye have this house.’ ” There is a tradition that the brave monk was hanged in front of the priory, over the gateway, for his resistance to “ the king's most dread commandment of dissolution.” “ It is interesting to detect the traces [in Ovingham] of his dwelling, which comprises the modest schoolroom in which the historian [Mr. Hodgson Hinde], and the wood engraver of Cherryburn, and a host of north-country worthies received their education.” (*Archæologia Æliana*, vi. 124.)

DEATHBED OF ELIZABETH STUART,

CROMWELL'S MOTHER.

A CENTURY of years, or near,
Had run their course away,
Since, softly on her cradle-couch,
The infant Stuart lay.

Born when the Virgin Queen was throned,
And christen'd in her name:—
And now, stretch'd on her bed of death,
Her life a flickering flame.

Beside her dying pillow stands
Great Cromwell, England's lord,
Low bending o'er his mother's lips,
To catch her parting word.

“Dear son!” with feeble breath she says,
“I leave my heart with thee:
“Good night!” and with a smile serene,
Her loving soul goes free.

Tears for the dead—and “dust to dust:”
The last sad tribute give.
Then, Lord Protector, forth again,
To live for those who live.

Forth with thy legacy—her heart—
 Worn warmly in thy own :
 An amulet amid the cares
 That wait upon thy throne.

Unmovable, as standing in
 Thy great Taskmaster's sight ;
 And comforted, in every thing,
 To hear her sweet " Good night !"

Fond farewell word ! " Good night," " Good night,"
 Our loved ones softly sigh,
 As, one by one, they inly feel
 The parting hour draw nigh.

" Good night," they whisper in our ears,
 And gently pass away :
 " Good night !" and sink to sleep of death.
 We 'll meet at break of day.

FLORENCE AND ANNIE.

AN EPITAPH.

" At Stockton, on the 24th of March, 1859, aged 2 years and 2 months,
 Florence and Annie, twin daughters of Mr. Appleby, bookseller."—
Darlington Times.

TWIN-BORN they came. Two years, two months,
 The two to Earth were given.
 Then God reclaim'd his twofold gift,
 Twin-born to Earth and Heaven.

R U I N O U S R I G H T S ,

OR THE BISHOP'S STURGEON.

THE Bishop of Durham, when count-palatine,
Could boast—"The big fishes—whale, sturgeon—are mine.
"If caught in my waters, to me they belong :
"Whoever else keeps them, he does me foul wrong."
And thus it fell out, when five sturgeons were caught
At his manor of Howden, they straightway were brought
To Cosin's glad steward, who largess'd the wight
That gave to his heart such a draught of delight.
Rejoicing as though the good-luck were his own,
His love for his master the bishop was shown.
The sturgeons he placed in the hands of the cook,
Who put his expenses all down in a book.
One, seven, and sixpence for vinegar went,
At twenty the gallon ; and at thirty-two,
One, 'leven, and fourpence for white wine was due.
Scarce less than six pounds altogether was spent,
With dill and rosemary, and other odd things
Used in curing the fishes of bishops and kings.
Five, seventeen, one, to be nice in the count,
Was to an odd penny the total amount.
The sturgeons were cured—preserved were the dues
Of the Church, which some folks are too apt to refuse.
And when the five fishes were duly prepared,
They by the just steward must wisely be shared.
Lord Clarendon—he of the History—got
What a baron might think not too small for his pot.

And so, Lady Gerard and others were sent
 Of sturgeon enough to ensure their content.
 And Cosin had certainly more than his fill,
 When he got from his vigilant steward—the bill.
 The bishop (good soul!) had his temper, and wrote
 To his manor in Yorkshire a peppery note.
 “What mean you, Sir Steward of Howden,” said he,
 “When with dill and rosemary you’re iteming me?
 “A pound and some shillings expended for fish,
 “To send to my lord and my lady a dish!
 “Pray catch no more sturgeons for me, or I’m lost
 “If you’re lucky in fishing at so much of cost.
 “Should you happen to ’light in the Ouse on a shoal
 “Of whales, I’d be certainly swallow’d up whole!”

MALCOLM AND MARGARET.

THE end of all his wars,
 By Percy’s castle walls
 Great Malcolm Canmore, Scotland’s king,
 With his son Edward, falls.

The Saxon Margaret lies
 Upon her bed of pain:
 Her lord and son are long away—
 Why ’come they not again?

Low whispering voices come :
 "The queen—she must not know."
 In vain! Her boding ear is quick
 For faintest note of woe.

"How fares it, boy?" she asks
 Her child; to answer loth.
 "Your father?—brother?—tell me, Sir,
 "How fares it with them both?"

"Dead, mother! slain!" he says.
 To Heaven she lifts her eyes,
 And folds her arms. "Thy will be done,"
 She whispers—and she dies.

THE BISHOP'S MOTHER.

ROBERT DE INSULA—Robert of Halieland—
 The Lindisfarne laddie who answers the call
 Of monk and of prior—a kitchen-boy runabout—
 An urchin who's born to be lord of them all.
 Robin is monk—Robin is prior—
 Prior of Finchale—then a step higher.
 Rob of the Isle is the Bishop of Durham when
 The first of the Edwards is wearing the crown.
 He thinks of his mother—he makes her a lady-grand :
 Fair mansion he gives her in which to sit down.

Servants to wait on her—men-servants, maid-servants :

Whatever a woman might ask or desire.

The bishop—(kind son!)—in care for her happiness,

Would have her enjoy all that life could require.

Robert means well—good is he, very :

Kindness, however, will sometimes miscarry.

Robert is passing : he halts, and he calls on her.

“How fares my sweet mother?” says he to the dame.

“Ne’er worse,” is her answer. Curter than pleasing ’tis.

“And what is it ails thee?” he begs her to name.

“Has she not serving-men—women enough for her?”

Inquires the good bishop; and—“Yes,” then, says she.

“Enough? aye, and more! To one I say, ‘Go, fellow!’

“He runs. To another ‘Come!’ Quick on his knee

“Drops down the varlet. I speak—and they wait on me.

“All goes on so smooth—so unwrinkled my lot—

“My heart’s fit to break for something to spite me with :

“There’s nothing to quarrel with—no, not a jot!”

Robert de Insula—Robert of Halieland—

Why would you make of your mother a lady-grand ?

Why did you take her away from her cottage where,

Keeping one maiden she lived blithe and happy there ?

Sons who get forward, be kind to your mothers dear,

Lift them, however, not quite to another sphere.

Bishops, translated, mayn’t find too much comfort by ’t :

Quarrels with clergy may temper their high delight.

Quiet old ladies, accustom’d to active life,

Make them too easy not—leave them a little strife.

Robert’s reward for a lesson may well suffice :—

Earth mustn’t be made too much of a Paradise.



OUR TRIAL STATE.

(THE THOUGHTS FROM LADY RACHEL RUSSELL.)

WE live on trial here,
Probation is our end ;
Then wonder not some crosses He
Should with His comforts send.

There is no passing through
This world to yon on high,
Without some trials of our faith,
Some clouds across our sky.

And sometimes shifts the scene
So fast, our little day
May end, before we blindly think
That we have gone half-way.

Time flies with rapid wing :
Eternity is near,
Whose happiness depends on how
We spend our moments here.

Live well the allotted time ;
The right, and not the wrong,
Pursue ; you cannot die too soon,
Nor can you live too long.

THE POET'S FUNERAL.*

SILENT and calm the wall'd and sacred garden,
Voice is there none but song of warbling linnet,
Flitting from tree to tree with blossoms laden.
'Mong the green leaves Spring writes with rosy fingers
Promise of Autumn and its rich abundance.
Perfumes of flowers that live but for their beauty,
Float up in incense from the lawn smooth-shaven,
Mingling their fragrance with the luscious odours
Shed by the damask bloom of boughs fruit-fraughten.
From fairy cups of jewell'd gold and silver,
Bees in the sunshine quaff their fill of nectar,
Luxurious draughts of Nature's pure distilment.
Sweet is the air and idle is the Zephyr.
Earth with her children speaks in loving whispers,
God is discoursing in the garden-silence.

Hark ! the deep boom from yonder lofty belfry
Breaks in upon this fair and quiet Eden !
Toll ! toll ! the knell moans, sad and slow and solemn.
Ope fly the doors, and o'er the yellow pathway
Streams the long line of stoled and sable mourners,
Filling with gloom the pleasant spring-time orchard.
Heaven dons in sympathy her mourning garments.
Clouds cast their pall across the dark procession.
Big tear-drops 'mong the branches beat and patter.
Zephyr floats sighing o'er the leaves and blossoms.

* The funeral of Thomas Wilson, Esq., Fell House, Gateshead, author of "The Pitman's Pay," who was born Sunday, November 14, 1773, and died Sunday, May 9, 1858.

Trees wave farewell—trees which his own hands planted,
 Who, from his lifelong home, by son and grandson,
 Kinsmen and neighbours, borne, departs for ever.
 Faces, unseen, are at the shrouded casements,
 Watching and weeping o'er his last outgoing,
 Anguish'd that he, the loved and the lamented,
 Pride of their home, its happiness and honour,
 Whose going and whose coming, morn and evening,
 Day after day, through years of life-domestic,
 Swung to and fro upon the household dial,
 Should come and go no more—for ever—never !

Toll, doleful toll ! Onward from house to churchyard,
 Blinds dim the light in every cottage-window,
 Tribute to him whose death is common sorrow.
 Highway and lane are lined all through the village.
 Gossips are cluster'd at the open doorways,
 Kindling remembrance of his many virtues ;
 Proudly recounting to their wondering children,
 How, in his childhood, he, too, was a pit-boy,
 Toiling for bread there ; but for learning, also ;
 Earnest at book and labour ; striving, rising ;
 Mounting from pitman up to princely merchant ;
 Living and dying where his humble parents
 Gave him his birth and good and honest breeding ;
 True to his village, faithful to his order ;
 Brother and friend to poor and needy alway.

Up in the bell-tower tolls the village-ringer.
 Up to the Silent City climb the mourners.
 Cleric in surplice reads of hope and comfort—
 Faith in the great Hereafter of our being.
 Falters the aged clerk in his responses—
 Moved from the rote and round of daily custom,
 By keen remembrance of his friend and patron.

Now to the yawning grave they bear his body ;
 And as "the voice from heaven" the priest is naming,
 Out bursts the thunder of the answering welkin.
 Earth claims its earth—to ashes give his ashes.
 Heaven takes its own :—and lo ! the serried lightning
 Parts the thick clouds, and peals again the thunder.
 Nature rejoices o'er her child—her poet—
 Eased of the load of more than fourscore winters—
 Borne to the land of never-ending summer.

THE SEASIDE BRIDAL.

THE village-street and green are gay
 With banners bright of every hue ;
 And proudly on the yellow sands
 Floats England's meteor flag, True Blue.

With note of preparation comes
 The all-important morning hour,
 When Lady Blanche, in wedding trim,
 Must leave for church her bridal bower.

The church in ivy-green is clad ;
 The bride array'd in virgin white ;
 In white and pink the bridesmaids fair,
 Four comely pairs, are gaily dight.

Two pretty fairies in the rear,
 Attired in white and blue, are seen ;
 And up the shore, with joyous roar,
 Old Ocean comes in white and green.

And when the bride walks up the aisle,
The clouds dispart, and on her head,
Through all the lancet-window panes,
A flood of sunny light is shed.

Behind the cloud (so Heaven would teach
This maiden on her wedding-day),
However dark, there shines the sun,
Whose beams shall chase the gloom away.

And as the Lady Blanche comes forth,
And quits the church a happy wife,
An aged dame, "who from a child
"Has known her all her maiden life,"

Invokes a blessing on her head,
With praises on her kith and kin ;
And all that hear her say "Amen,"
For they have lived all hearts to win.

Long thus, upon our happy shores,
May rich and poor be knit in one,
And in each other's joys and woes
Have sympathy beneath the sun !

THE SNOW STORM.

THE sun is high, the sky is blue,
I leave at home my paraplue
(I spell it so for sake of rhyme),
 And going forth in crystal air,
 I wander here, I tarry there,
And come not back till midnight time.
How great the change! The sky drops down
In pieces o'er the silent town!
Each moment come, with noiseless fall,
A million marvels over all—
A million flakes of heaven descend!
And as my wintry way I wend,
Like a White Lion March comes in,
Muffled in wool up to his chin.
White is the air, white is the street,
White is everybody I meet.
Be she dress'd in blue or black—
Red or brown the cloak on her back—
Every woman I meet to-night
Flits ghostly by, a Woman in White!
Wilkie Collins, in wild romance,
May lead us through a mazy dance;
Yet what romance so wondrous, say,
As is the life of one short day?
A breath, unseen, is blown; and lo!
The viewless air is full of snow!
Over the table that feeds us all,
 A cloth is spread of purest white,
 Miracle of a winter's night!
Wonderful, beautiful sight, Snowfall!

THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.

FROM out the dark, at curfew hour,
A feeble spark of sullen light
Gleam'd forth upon the old church-tower
That crown'd the crowded living height :

A spark that burst to dazzling blaze,
And scatter'd round a quick surprise,
Arresting footsteps, as its rays
Fell down upon a thousand eyes.

On bridge and bank, in street and square,
The startled wanderer paused to scan
The shining sun which mock'd the glare
Of envious gas, struck pale and wan.

The streaming glory grew, and stretch'd
A widening cone of spectral light—
Phantasmagoric pictures sketch'd
Before the wondering eye of night.

What prophecy of things unborn
Is this, that from the steeple streams—
Of some far-off, or nigh, new morn,
To light our world with nobler beams ?

From dimmest point of fire at first,
 The ray of heavenly science burns ;
 Then comes at last the grand out-burst,
 And darkness into daylight turns.

The spark becomes a glowing star,
 With lengthening and with widening cone,
 Which shineth near—which shineth far—
 And men a brighter glory own.

T H E Y E A R .

BREAK, Year, upon the shore of Time,
 Break, Year, and die.
 Breathe out into the silent Past
 Thy latest sigh.

Close up thy work of good and ill,
 Of light and shade :
 The passing-bell awaits thy death,
 Thy grave is made.

No more the clock shall go its round
 To mark thy flight :
 No sun shall rise again for thee—
 Thou diest to-night.

No respite or reprieve. The earth
 And stars on high
 Bring ruthless round thy parting pang,
 And thou must die.

The beating pulse—the ticking clock—
 The falling grains—
 Count off thy life. Thy days are fled—
 Thy last hour wanes.

Time's swiftest hand shall sweep no more
 The dial's round,
 Till from the old church-tower the clock
 Thy knell shall sound.

“One, two.” The tongue of Time proclaims
 One quarter gone.
 The watch-night flies. No pause. And hark!
 Two quarters flown.

Linger! O linger! silent hand!
 The hour prolong.—
 Remorseless Time! thou mock'st my prayer
 With stern “Ding, dong!”

One quarter left! Old Year, prepare
 To fill thy bier:
 Thy breath is short. And hither comes
 The young New Year.

Give out the hour. Let midwife Night
 Bring in the Morn.
 Pass Death! come Life! The changing Year
 Is dead! is born!

