



AMONG THE HILLS.

WHITTIER

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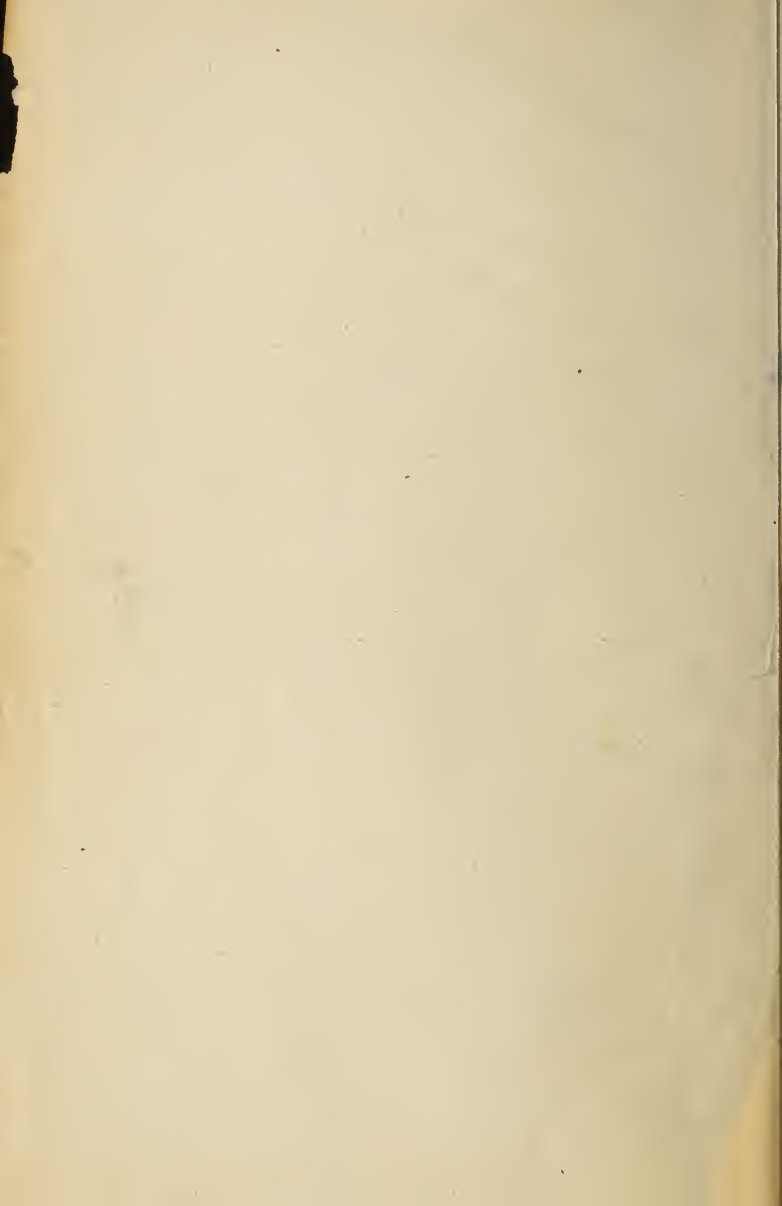
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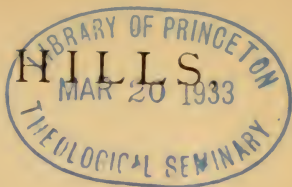




May 5/15  
C. L. Higgins



✓  
AMONG THE HILLS.



AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.



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TO  
ANNIE FIELDS,

This Little Volume,

*DESCRIPTIVE OF SCENES WITH WHICH SHE IS FAMILIAR.*

IS

GRATEFULLY OFFERED.



AMONG THE HILLS.





## PRELUDE.

A LONG the roadside, like the flowers of gold  
That tawny Incas for their gardens wrought,  
Heavy with sunshine droops the golden-rod,  
And the red pennons of the cardinal-flowers  
Hang motionless upon their upright staves.  
The sky is hot and hazy, and the wind,  
Wing-weary with its long flight from the south,  
Unfelt ; yet, closely scanned, yon maple leaf  
With faintest motion, as one stirs in dreams,

Confesses it. The locust by the wall  
Stabs the noon-silence with his sharp alarm.  
A single hay-cart down the dusty road  
Creaks slowly, with its driver fast asleep  
On the load's top. Against the neighboring hill,  
Huddled along the stone wall's shady side,  
The sheep show white, as if a snow-drift still  
Defied the dog-star. Through the open door  
A drowsy smell of flowers — gray heliotrope,  
And white sweet-clover, and shy mignonette —  
Comes faintly in, and silent chorus lends  
To the pervading symphony of peace.

No time is this for hands long overworn  
To task their strength; and (unto Him be praise  
Who giveth quietness!) the stress and strain  
Of years that did the work of centuries  
Have ceased, and we can draw our breath once  
more

Freely and full. So, as yon harvesters  
Make glad their nooning underneath the elms  
With tale and riddle and old snatch of song,  
I lay aside grave themes, and idly turn  
The leaves of Memory's sketch-book, dreaming o'er  
Old summer pictures of the quiet hills,  
And human life, as quiet, at their feet.

And yet not idly all. A farmer's son,  
Proud of field-lore and harvest craft, and feeling  
All their fine possibilities, how rich  
And restful even poverty and toil  
Become when beauty, harmony, and love  
Sit at their humble hearth as angels sat  
At evening in the patriarch's tent, when man  
Makes labor noble, and his farmer's frock  
The symbol of a Christian chivalry  
Tender and just and generous to her

Who clothes with grace all duty ; still, I know  
Too well the picture has another side, —  
How wearily the grind of toil goes on  
Where love is wanting, how the eye and ear  
And heart are starved amidst the plenitude  
Of nature, and how hard and colorless  
Is life without an atmosphere. I look  
Across the lapse of half a century,  
And call to mind old homesteads, where no flower  
Told that the spring had come, but evil weeds,  
Nightshade and rough-leaved burdock in the place  
Of the sweet doorway greeting of the rose  
And honeysuckle, where the house walls seemed  
Blistering in sun, without a tree or vine  
To cast the tremulous shadow of its leaves  
Across the curtainless windows from whose panes  
Fluttered the signal rags of shiftlessness ;  
Within, the cluttered kitchen-floor, unwashed



(Broom-clean I think they called it) ; the best  
room

Stifling with cellar damp, shut from the air  
In hot midsummer, bookless, pictureless  
Save the inevitable sampler hung  
Over the fireplace, or a mourning-piece,  
A green-haired woman, peony-checked, beneath  
Impossible willows ; the wide-throated hearth,  
Bristling with faded pine-boughs half concealing  
The piled-up rubbish at the chimney's back ;  
And, in sad keeping with all things about them,  
Shrill, querulous women, sour and sullen men,  
Untidy, loveless, old before their time,  
With scarce a human interest save their own  
Monotonous round of small economies,  
Or the poor scandal of the neighborhood ;  
Blind to the beauty everywhere revealed,  
Treading the May-flowers with regardless feet ;

For them the song-sparrow and the bobolink  
Sang not, nor winds made music in the leaves ;  
For them in vain October's holocaust  
Burned, gold and crimson, over all the hills,  
The sacramental mystery of the woods.  
Church-goers, fearful of the unseen Powers,  
But grumbling over pulpit-tax and pew-rent,  
Saving, as shrewd economists, their souls  
And winter pork with the least possible outlay  
Of salt and sanctity ; in daily life  
Showing as little actual comprehension  
Of Christian charity and love and duty,  
As if the Sermon on the Mount had been  
Outdated like a last year's almanac :  
Rich in broad woodlands and in half-tilled fields,  
And yet so pinched and bare and comfortless,  
The veriest straggler limping on his rounds,  
The sun and air his sole inheritance,

Laughed at a poverty that paid its taxes,  
And hugged his rags in self-complacency!

Not such should be the homesteads of a land  
Where whoso wisely wills and acts may dwell  
As king and lawgiver, in broad-acred state,  
With beauty, art, taste, culture, books, to make  
His hour of leisure richer than a life  
Of fourscore to the barons of old time,  
Our yeoman should be equal to his home  
Set in the fair, green valleys, purple walled,  
A man to match his mountains, not to creep  
Dwarfed and abased below them. I would fain  
In this light way (of which I needs must own  
With the knife-grinder of whom Canning sings,  
"Story, God bless you! I have none to tell you!")  
Invite the eye to see and heart to feel  
The beauty and the joy within their reach, —

Home, and home loves, and the beatitudes  
Of nature free to all. Haply in years  
That wait to take the places of our own,  
Heard where some breezy balcony looks down  
On happy homes, or where the lake in the moon  
Sleeps dreaming of the mountains, fair as Ruth,  
In the old Hebrew pastoral, at the feet  
Of Boaz, even this simple lay of mine  
May seem the burden of a prophecy,  
Finding its late fulfilment in a change  
Slow as the oak's growth, lifting manhood up  
Through broader culture, finer manners, love,  
And reverence, to the level of the hills.)

O Golden Age, whose light is of the dawn,  
And not of sunset, forward, not behind,  
Flood the new heavens and earth, and with thee  
bring

All the old virtues, whatsoever things  
Are pure and honest and of good repute,  
But add thereto whatever bard has sung  
Or seer has told of when in trance and dream  
They saw the Happy Isles of prophecy !  
Let Justice hold her scale, and Truth divide  
Between the right and wrong ; but give the heart  
The freedom of its fair inheritance ;  
Let the poor prisoner, cramped and starved so long,  
At Nature's table feast his ear and eye  
With joy and wonder ; let all harmonies  
Of sound, form, color, motion, wait upon  
The princely guest, whether in soft attire  
Of leisure clad, or the coarse frock of toil.  
And, lending life to the dead form of faith,  
Give human nature reverence for the sake  
Of One who bore it, making it divine  
With the ineffable tenderness of God ;

Let common need, the brotherhood of prayer,  
The heirship of an unknown destiny,  
The unsolved mystery round about us, make  
A man more precious than the gold of Ophir.  
Sacred, inviolate, unto whom all things  
Should minister, as outward types and signs  
Of the eternal beauty which fulfils  
The one great purpose of creation, Love,  
The sole necessity of Earth and Heaven!

## AMONG THE HILLS.

FOR weeks the clouds had raked the hills  
And vexed the vales with raining,  
And all the woods were sad with mist,  
And all the brooks complaining.

At last, a sudden night-storm tore  
The mountain veils asunder,  
And swept the valleys clean before  
The besom of the thunder.

Through Sandwich notch the west-wind sang  
Good morrow to the cotter ;  
And once again Chocorua's horn  
Of shadow pierced the water.

Above his broad lake Ossipee,

Once more the sunshine wearing,  
Stooped, tracing on that silver shield  
His grim armorial bearing.

Clear drawn against the hard blue sky  
The peaks had winter's keenness ;  
And, close on autumn's frost, the vales  
Had more than June's fresh greenness.

Again the sodden forest floors  
With golden lights were checkered,  
Once more rejoicing leaves in wind  
And sunshine danced and flickered.

It was as if the summer's late  
Atoning for its sadness  
Had borrowed every season's charm  
To end its days in gladness.



I call to mind those banded vales  
Of shadow and of shining,  
Through which, my hostess at my side,  
I drove in day's declining.

We held our sideling way above  
The river's whitening shallows,  
By homesteads old, with wide-flung barns  
Swept through and through by swallows, —

By maple orchards, belts of pine  
And larches climbing darkly  
The mountain slopes, and, over all,  
The great peaks rising starkly.

You should have seen that long hill-range  
With gaps of brightness riven, —  
How through each pass and hollow streamed  
The purpling lights of heaven, —

Rivers of gold-mist flowing down  
From far celestial fountains, —  
The great sun flaming through the rifts  
Beyond the wall of mountains!

We paused at last where home-bound cows  
Brought down the pasture's treasure,  
And in the barn the rhythmic flails  
Beat out a harvest measure.

We heard the night-hawk's sullen plunge,  
The crow his tree-mates calling :  
The shadows lengthening down the slopes  
About our feet were falling.

And through them smote the level sun  
In broken lines of splendor,  
Touched the gray rocks and made the green  
Of the shorn grass more tender.

The maples bending o'er the gate,  
    Their arch of leaves just tinted  
With yellow warmth, the golden glow  
    Of coming autumn hinted.

Keen white between the farm-house showed,  
    And smiled on porch and trellis,  
The fair democracy of flowers  
    That equals cot and palace.

And weaving garlands for her dog,  
    'Twixt chidings and caresses,  
A human flower of childhood shook  
    The sunshine from her tresses.

On either hand we saw the signs  
    Of fancy and of shrewdness,  
Where taste had wound its arms of vines  
    Round thrift's uncomely rudeness.

The sun-brown farmer in his frock  
Shook hands, and called to Mary :  
\* Bare-armed, as Juno might, she came,  
White-aproned from her dairy.

Her air, her smile, her motions, told  
Of womanly completeness ;  
A music as of household songs  
Was in her voice of sweetness.

Not beautiful in curve and line,  
But something more and better,  
The secret charm eluding art,  
Its spirit, not its letter ;—

An inborn grace that nothing lacked  
Of culture or appliance, —  
The warmth of genial courtesy,  
The calm of self-reliance.

Before her queenly womanhood  
How dared our hostess utter  
The paltry errand of her need  
To buy her fresh-churned butter?

She led the way with housewife pride,  
Her goodly store disclosing,  
Full tenderly the golden balls  
With practised hands disposing.

Then, while along the western hills  
We watched the changeful glory  
Of sunset, on our homeward way,  
I heard her simple story.

The early crickets sang ; the stream  
Plashed through my friend's narration :  
Her rustic patois of the hills  
Lost in my free translation.

“More wise,” she said, “than those who swarm  
Our hills in middle summer,  
She came, when June’s first roses blow,  
To greet the early comer.

“From school and ball and rout she came,  
The city’s fair, pale daughter,  
To drink the wine of mountain air  
Beside the Bearcamp Water.

“Her step grew firmer on the hills  
That watch our homesteads over ;  
On cheek and lip, from summer fields,  
She caught the bloom of clover.

“For health comes sparkling in the streams  
From cool Chocorua stealing :  
There’s iron in our Northern winds ;  
Our pines are trees of healing.

“She sat beneath the broad-armed elms  
That skirt the mowing-meadow,  
And watched the gentle west-wind weave  
The grass with shine and shadow.

“Beside her, from the summer heat  
To share her grateful screening,  
With forehead bared, the farmer stood,  
Upon his pitchfork leaning.

“Framed in its damp, dark locks, his face  
Had nothing mean or common, —  
Strong, manly, true, the tenderness  
And pride beloved of woman.

“She looked up, glowing with the health  
The country air had brought her,  
And, laughing, said : ‘ You lack a wife,  
Your mother lacks a daughter.

“‘To mend your frock and bake your bread

You do not need a lady :

Be sure among these brown old homes

Is some one waiting ready, —

“‘Some fair, sweet girl with skilful hand

And cheerful heart for treasure,

Who never played with ivory keys,

Or danced the polka’s measure.’

“‘He bent his black brows to a frown,

He set his white teeth tightly.

‘‘T is well,’ he said, ‘for one like you

To choose for me so lightly.

“‘You think, because my life is rude,

I take no note of sweetness :

I tell you love has naught to do

With meetness or unmeetness.



“ ‘Itself its best excuse, it asks  
No leave of pride or fashion  
When silken zone or homespun frock  
It stirs with throbs of passion.

“ ‘You think me deaf and blind : you bring  
Your winning graces hither  
As free as if from cradle-time  
We two had played together.

“ ‘You tempt me with your laughing eyes,  
Your cheek of sundown’s blushes,  
A motion as of waving grain,  
A music as of thrushes.

“ ‘The plaything of your summer sport,  
The spells you weave around me  
You cannot at your will undo,  
Nor leave me as you found me.

“ ‘ You go as lightly as you came,  
Your life is well without me ;  
What care you that these hills will close  
Like prison-walls about me ?

“ ‘ No mood is mine to seek a wife,  
Or daughter for my mother :  
Who loves you loses in that love  
All power to love another !

“ ‘ I dare your pity or your scorn,  
With pride your own exceeding ;  
I fling my heart into your lap  
Without a word of pleading.’

“ She looked up in his face of pain  
So archly, yet so tender :  
‘ And if I lend you mine,’ she said,  
‘ Will you forgive the lender ?

“‘Nor frock nor tan can hide the man;  
And see you not, my farmer,  
How weak and fond a woman waits  
Behind this silken armor?’

“‘I love you: on that love alone,  
And not my worth, presuming,  
Will you not trust for summer fruit  
The tree in May-day blooming?’

“Alone the hangbird overhead,  
His hair-swung cradle straining,  
Looked down to see love’s miracle,—  
The giving that is gaining.

“And so the farmer found a wife,  
His mother found a daughter:  
There looks no happier home than hers  
On pleasant Bearcamp Water.

“Flowers spring to blossom where she walks  
The careful ways of duty ;  
Our hard, stiff lines of life with her  
Are flowing curves of beauty.

“Our homes are cheerier for her sake,  
Our door-yards brighter blooming,  
And all about the social air  
Is sweeter for her' coming.

“Unspoken homilies of peace  
Her daily life is preaching ;  
The still refreshment of the dew  
Is her unconscious teaching.

“And never tenderer hand than hers  
Unknits the brow of ailing ;  
Her garments to the sick man's ear  
Have music in their trailing.

“And when, in pleasant harvest moons,  
The youthful huskers gather,  
Or sleigh-drives on the mountain ways  
Defy the winter weather, —

“In sugar-camps, when south and warm  
The winds of March are blowing,  
And sweetly from its thawing veins  
The maple's blood is flowing, —

“In summer, where some lilled pond  
Its virgin zone is baring,  
Or where the ruddy autumn fire  
Lights up the apple-paring, —

“The coarseness of a ruder time  
Her finer mirth displaces,  
A subtler sense of pleasure fills  
Each rustic sport she graces.

“Her presence lends its warmth and health

To all who come before it.

If woman lost us Eden, such

As she alone restore it.

“For larger life and wiser aims

The farmer is her debtor ;

Who holds to his another's heart

Must needs be worse or better.

“Through her his civic service shows

A purer-toned ambition ;

No double consciousness divides

The man and politician.

“In party's doubtful ways he trusts

Her instincts to determine ;

At the loud polls, the thought of her

Recalls Christ's Mountain Sermon.

“He owns her logic of the heart,  
And wisdom of unreason,  
Supplying, while he doubts and weighs,  
The needed word in season.

“He sees with pride her richer thought,  
Her fancy's freer ranges ;  
And love thus deepened to respect  
Is proof against all changes.

“And if she walks at ease in ways  
His feet are slow to travel,  
And if she reads with cultured eyes  
What his may scarce unravel,

“Still clearer, for her keener sight  
Of beauty and of wonder,  
He learns the meaning of the hills  
He dwelt from childhood under.

“And higher, warmed with summer lights,  
Or winter-crowned and hoary,  
The ridged horizon lifts for him  
Its inner veils of glory.

“He has his own free, bookless lore,  
The lessons nature taught him,  
The wisdom which the woods and hills  
And toiling men have brought him :

“The steady force of will whereby  
Her flexile grace seems sweeter ;  
The sturdy counterpoise which makes  
Her woman’s life completer :

“A latent fire of soul which lacks  
No breath of love to fan it ;  
And wit, that, like his native brooks,  
Plays over solid granite.



“How dwarfed against his manliness  
She sees the poor pretension,  
The wants, the aims, the follies, born  
Of fashion and convention !

“How life behind its accidents  
Stands strong and self-sustaining,  
The human fact transcending all  
The losing and the gaining.

“And so, in grateful interchange  
Of teacher and of hearer,  
Their lives their true distinctness keep  
While daily drawing nearer.

“And if the husband or the wife  
In home's strong light discovers  
Such slight defaults as failed to meet  
The blinded eyes of lovers,

“Why need we care to ask? — who dreams  
Without their thorns of roses,  
Or wonders that the truest steel  
The readiest spark discloses?”

“For still in mutual sufferance lies  
The secret of true living :  
Love scarce is love that never knows  
The sweetness of forgiving.”

“We send the Squire to General Court,  
He takes his young wife thither ;  
No prouder man election day  
Rides through the sweet June weather.

“He sees with eyes of manly trust  
All hearts to her inclining ;  
Not less for him his household light  
That others share its shining.”

Thus, while my hostess spake, there grew  
    Before me, warmer tinted  
And outlined with a tenderer grace,  
    The picture that she hinted.

The sunset smouldered as we drove  
    Beneath the deep hill-shadows.  
Below us wreaths of white fog walked  
    Like ghosts the haunted meadows.

Sounding the summer night, the stars  
    Dropped down their golden plummet;—  
The pale arc of the Northern lights  
    Rose o'er the mountain summits,—

Until, at last, beneath its bridge,  
    We heard the Bearcamp flowing,  
And saw across the mapled lawn  
    The welcome home-lights glowing;—

And, musing on the tale I heard,  
'T were well, thought I, if often  
To rugged farm-life came the gift  
To harmonize and soften ; —

If more and more we found the troth  
Of fact and fancy plighted,  
And culture's charm and labor's strength  
In rural homes united, —

The simple life, the homely hearth,  
With beauty's sphere surrounding,  
And blessing toil where toil abounds  
With graces more abounding.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.



## THE CLEAR VISION.

I DID but dream. I never knew  
What charms our sternest season wore.  
Was never yet the sky so blue,  
Was never earth so white before.  
Till now I never saw the glow  
Of sunset on yon hills of snow,  
And never learned the bough's designs  
Of beauty in its leafless lines.

Did ever such a morning break  
As that my eastern windows see?  
Did ever such a moonlight take  
Weird photographs of shrub and tree?

Rang ever bells so wild and fleet  
The music of the winter street?  
Was ever yet a sound by half  
So merry as yon school-boy's laugh?

O Earth! with gladness overfraught,  
No added charm thy face hath found;  
Within my heart the change is wrought,  
My footsteps make enchanted ground.  
From couch of pain and curtained room  
Forth to thy light and air I come,  
To find in all that meets my eyes  
The freshness of a glad surprise.

Fair seem these winter days, and soon  
Shall blow the warm west winds of spring  
To set the unbound rills in tune,  
And hither urge the bluebird's wing.



The vales shall laugh in flowers, the woods  
Grow misty green with leafing buds,  
And violets and wind-flowers sway  
Against the throbbing heart of May.

Break forth, my lips, in praise, and own  
The wiser love severely kind ;  
Since, richer for its chastening grown,  
I see, whereas I once was blind.

The world, O Father ! hath not wronged  
With loss the life by thee prolonged ;  
But still, with every added year,  
More beautiful thy works appear !

As thou hast made thy world without,  
Make thou more fair my world within ;  
Shine through its lingering clouds of doubt ;  
Rebuke its haunting shapes of sin ;

Fill, brief or long, my granted span  
Of life with love to thee and man ;  
Strike when thou wilt the hour of rest,  
But let my last days be my best !

2d Month, 1868.

## THE DOLE OF JARL THORKELL.

THE land was pale with famine  
And racked with fever-pain ;

The frozen fiords were fishless,  
The earth withheld her grain.

Men saw the boding Fylgja  
Before them come and go,  
And, through their dreams, the Urdar-moon  
From west to east sailed slow !

Jarl Thorkell of Thevera  
At Yule-time made his vow ;  
On Rykdal's holy Doom-stone  
He slew to Frey his cow.

To bounteous Frey he slew her ;  
    To Skuld, the younger Norn,  
Who watches over birth and death,  
    He gave her calf unborn.

And his little gold-haired daughter  
    Took up the sprinkling-rod,  
And smeared with blood the temple  
    And the wide lips of the god.

Hoarse below, the winter water  
    Ground its ice-blocks o'er and o'er ;  
Jets of foam, like ghosts of dead waves,  
    Rose and fell along the shore.

The red torch of the Jokul,  
    Aloft in icy space,  
Shone down on the bloody Horg-stones  
    And the statue's carven face.

And closer round and grimmer  
    Beneath its baleful light  
The Jotun shapes of mountains  
    Came crowding through the night.

The gray-haired Hersir trembled  
    As a flame by wind is blown ;  
A weird power moved his white lips,  
    And their voice was not his own !

“The Æsir thirst !” he muttered ;  
    “ The gods must have more blood  
Before the tun shall blossom  
    Or fish shall fill the flood.

“The Æsir thirst and hunger,  
    And hence our blight and ban ;  
The mouths of the strong gods water  
    For the flesh and blood of man !

“Whom shall we give the strong ones?

Not warriors, sword on thigh;

But let the nursling infant

And bedrid old man die.”

“So be it!” cried the young men,

“There needs nor doubt nor parle”;

But, knitting hard his red brows,

In silence stood the Jarl.

A sound of woman's weeping

At the temple door was heard;

But the old men bowed their white heads,

And answered not a word.

Then the Dream-wife of Thingvalla,

A Vala young and fair,

Sang softly, stirring with her breath

The veil of her loose hair.

She sang : " The winds from Alfheim  
Bring never sound of strife ;  
The gifts for Frey the meetest  
Are not of death, but life.

" He loves the grass-green meadows,  
The grazing kine's sweet breath ;  
He loathes your bloody Horg-stones,  
Your gifts that smell of death.

" No wrong by wrong is righted,  
No pain is cured by pain ;  
The blood that smokes from Doom-rings  
Falls back in redder rain.

" The gods are what you make them,  
As earth shall Asgard prove ;  
And hate will come of hating,  
And love will come of love.

“ Make dole of skyr and black bread  
That old and young may live ;  
And look to Frey for favor  
When first like Frey you give.

“ Even now o'er Njord's sea-meadows  
The summer dawn begins ;  
The tun shall have its harvest,  
The fiord its glancing fins.”

Then up and swore Jarl Thorkell :  
“ By Gimli and by Hel,  
O Vala of Thingvalla,  
Thou singest wise and well !

“ Too dear the Æsir's favors  
Bought with our children's lives ;  
Better die than shame in living  
Our mothers and our wives.



“The full shall give his portion  
To him who hath most need ;  
Of curdled skyr and black bread,  
Be daily dole decreed.”

He broke from off his neck-chain  
Three links of beaten gold ;  
And each man, at his bidding,  
Brought gifts for young and old.

Then mothers nursed their children,  
And daughters fed their sires,  
And Health sat down with Plenty  
Before the next Yule fires.

The Horg-stones stand in Rykdal ;  
The Doom-ring still remains ;  
But the snows of a thousand winters  
Have washed away the stains.

Christ ruleth now ; the Æsir

Have found their twilight dim ;

And, wiser than she dreamed, of old

The Vala sang of Him !

## THE TWO RABBIS.

THE Rabbi Nathan, twoscore years and ten,  
Walked blameless through the evil world, and  
then,

Just as the almond blossomed in his hair,  
Met a temptation all too strong to bear,  
And miserably sinned. So, adding not  
Falsehood to guilt, he left his seat, and taught  
No more among the elders, but went out  
From the great congregation girt about  
With sackcloth, and with ashes on his head,  
Making his gray locks grayer. Long he prayed,  
Smiting his breast ; then, as the Book he laid  
Open before him for the Path-Col's choice,  
Pausing to hear that Daughter of a Voice,

Behold the royal preacher's words: "A friend  
Loveth at all times, yea, unto the end ;

And for the evil day thy brother lives."

Marvelling, he said: "It is the Lord who gives  
Counsel in need. At Ecbatana dwells

Rabbi Ben Isaac, who all men excels

In righteousness and wisdom, as the trees

Of Lebanon the small weeds that the bees

Bow with their weight. I will arise, and lay

My sins before him."

And he went his way

Barefooted, fasting long, with many prayers ;

But even as one who, followed unawares,

Suddenly in the darkness feels a hand

Thrill with its touch his own, and his cheek fanned

By odors subtly sweet, and whispers near

Of words he loathes, yet cannot choose but hear,

So, while the Rabbi journeyed, chanting low  
The wail of David's penitential woe,  
Before him still the old temptation came,  
And mocked him with the motion and the shame  
Of such desires that, shuddering, he abhorred  
Himself; and, crying mightily to the Lord  
To free his soul and cast the demon out,  
Smote with his staff the blankness round about.

At length, in the low light of a spent day,  
The towers of Ecbatana far away  
Rose on the desert's rim; and Nathan, faint  
And footsore, pausing where for some dead saint  
The faith of Islam reared a domed tomb,  
Saw some one kneeling in the shadow, whom  
He greeted kindly: "May the Holy One  
Answer thy prayers, O stranger!" Whereupon  
The shape stood up with a loud cry, and then,

Clasped in each other's arms, the two gray men  
Wept, praising Him whose gracious providence  
Made their paths one. But straightway, as the sense  
Of his transgression smote him, Nathan tore  
Himself away: "O friend beloved, no more  
Worthy am I to touch thee, for I came,  
Foul from my sins, to tell thee all my shame.  
Haply thy prayers, since naught availeth mine,  
May purge my soul, and make it white like thine.  
Pity me, O Ben Isaac, I have sinned!"

Awestruck Ben Isaac stood. The desert wind  
Blew his long mantle backward, laying bare  
The mournful secret of his shirt of hair.  
"I too, O friend, if not in act," he said,  
"In thought have verily sinned. Hast thou not read,  
'Better the eye should see than that desire  
Should wander?' Burning with a hidden fire

That tears and prayers quench not, I come to thee  
For pity and for help, as thou to me.

Pray for me, O my friend!" But Nathan cried,  
" Pray thou for me, Ben Isaac!"

Side by side

In the low sunshine by the turban stone  
They knelt; each made his brother's woe his own,  
Forgetting, in the agony and stress,  
Of pitying love, his claim of selfishness;  
Peace, for his friend besought, his own became;  
His prayers were answered in another's name;  
And, when at last they rose up to embrace,  
Each saw God's pardon in his brother's face!

Long after, when his headstone gathered moss,  
Traced on the targum-marge of Onkelos  
In Rabbi Nathan's hand these words were read:

*“ Hope not the cure of sin till Self is dead ;  
Forget it in love’s service, and the debt  
Thou canst not pay the angels shall forget ;  
Heaven’s gate is shut to him who comes alone ;  
Save thou a soul, and it shall save thy own ! ”*



## THE MEETING.

THE elder folk shook hands at last,  
Down seat by seat the signal passed.  
To simple ways like ours unused,  
Half solemnized and half amused,  
With long-drawn breath and shrug, my guest  
His sense of glad relief expressed.  
Outside the hills lay warm in sun ;  
The cattle in the meadow-run  
Stood half-leg deep ; a single bird  
The green repose above us stirred.  
“What part or lot have you,” he said,  
“In these dull rites of drowsy-head ?  
Is silence worship ? — Seek it where  
It soothes with dreams the summer air,

Not in this close and rude-benched hall,  
But where soft lights and shadows fall,  
And all the slow, sleep-walking hours  
Glide soundless over grass and flowers!  
From time and place and form apart,  
Its holy ground the human heart,  
Nor ritual-bound nor templeward  
Walks the free spirit of the Lord!  
Our common Master did not pen  
His followers up from other men;  
His service liberty indeed,  
He built no church, he framed no creed;  
But while the saintly Pharisee  
Made broader his phylactery,  
As from the synagogue was seen  
The dusty-sandalled Nazarene  
Through ripening cornfields lead the way  
Upon the awful Sabbath day,

His sermons were the healthful talk  
That shorter made the mountain-walk,  
His wayside texts were flowers and birds,  
Where mingled with His gracious words  
The rustle of the tamarisk-tree  
And ripple-wash of Galilee."

"Thy words are well, O friend," I said ;  
" Unmeasured and unlimited,  
With noiseless slide of stone to stone,  
The mystic Church of God has grown.  
Invisible and silent stands  
The temple never made with hands,  
Unheard the voices still and small  
Of its unseen confessional.  
He needs no special place of prayer  
Whose hearing ear is everywhere ;  
He brings not back the childish days

That ringed the earth with stones of praise,  
Roofed Karnak's hall of gods, and laid  
The plinths of Philæ's colonnade.  
Still less He owns the selfish good  
And sickly growth of solitude, —  
The worthless grace that, out of sight,  
Flowers in the desert anchorite ;  
Dissevered from the suffering whole,  
Love hath no power to save a soul.  
Not out of Self, the origin  
And native air and soil of sin,  
The living waters spring and flow,  
The trees with leaves of healing grow.

“ Dream not, O friend, because I seek  
This quiet shelter twice a week,  
I better deem its pine-laid floor  
Than breezy hill or sea-sung shore ;

But nature is not solitude ;  
She crowds us with her thronging wood ;  
Her many hands reach out to us,  
Her many tongues are garrulous ;  
Perpetual riddles of surprise  
She offers to our ears and eyes ;  
She will not leave our senses still,  
But drags them captive at her will ;  
And, making earth too great for heaven,  
She hides the Giver in the given.

“ And so, I find it well to come  
For deeper rest to this still room,  
For here the habit of the soul,  
Feels less the outer world's control ;  
The strength of mutual purpose pleads  
More earnestly our common needs ;  
And from the silence multiplied

By these still forms on either side,  
The world that time and sense have known  
Falls off and leaves us God alone.

“ Yet rarely through the charmed repose  
Unmixed the stream of motive flows,  
A flavor of its many springs,  
The tints of earth and sky it brings ;  
In the still waters needs must be  
Some shade of human sympathy ;  
And here, in its accustomed place,  
I look on memory's dearest face ;  
The blind by-sitter guesseth not  
What shadow haunts that vacant spot ;  
No eye save mine alone can see  
The love wherewith it welcomes me !  
And still, with those alone my kin,  
In doubt and weakness, want and sin,

I bow my head, my heart I bare  
As when that face was living there,  
And strive (too oft, alas ! in vain)  
The peace of simple trust to gain,  
Fold fancy's restless wings, and lay  
The idols of my heart away.

“ Welcome the silence all unbroken,  
Nor less the words of fitness spoken, —  
Such golden words as hers for whom  
Our autumn flowers have just made room ;  
Whose hopeful utterance through and through  
The freshness of the morning blew ;  
Who loved not less the earth that light  
Fell on it from the heavens in sight,  
But saw in all fair forms more fair  
The Eternal beauty mirrored there.  
Whose eighty years but added grace

And saintlier meaning to her face, —  
The look of one who bore away  
Glad tidings from the hills of day,  
While all our hearts went forth to meet  
The coming of her beautiful feet!  
Or haply hers, whose pilgrim tread  
Is in the paths where Jesus led;  
Who dreams her childhood's sabbath dream  
By Jordan's willow-shaded stream,  
And, of the hymns of hope and faith,  
Sung by the monks of Nazareth,  
Hears pious echoes, in the call  
To prayer, from Moslem minarets fall,  
Repeating where His works were wrought  
The lesson that her Master taught,  
Of whom an elder Sibyl gave,  
The prophecies of Cumæ's cave!



“ I ask no organ’s soulless breath  
To drone the themes of life and death,  
No altar candle-lit by day,  
No ornate wordeman’s rhetoric-play,  
No cool philosophy to teach  
Its bland audacities of speech  
To double-tasked idolators  
Themselves their gods and worshippers,  
No pulpit hammered by the fist  
Of loud-asserting dogmatist,  
Who borrows for the hand of love  
The smoking thunderbolts of Jove.  
I know how well the fathers taught,  
What work the later schoolmen wrought ;  
I reverence old-time faith and men,  
But God is near us now as then ;  
His force of love is still unspent,  
His hate of sin as imminent ;

And still the measure of our needs  
Outgrows the cramping bounds of creeds ;  
The manna gathered yesterday  
Already savors of decay ;  
Doubts to the world's child-heart unknown  
Question us now from star and stone ;  
Too little or too much we know,  
And sight is swift and faith is slow ;  
The power is lost to self-deceive  
With shallow forms of make-believe.  
We walk at high noon, and the bells  
Call to a thousand oracles,  
But the sound deafens, and the light  
Is stronger than our dazzled sight ;  
The letters of the sacred Book  
Glimmer and swim beneath our look ;  
Still struggles in the Age's breast  
With deepening agony of quest

The old entreaty : ' Art thou He,  
Or look we for the Christ to be ?'

" God should be most where man is least ;  
So, where is neither church nor priest,  
And never rag of form or creed  
To clothe the nakedness of need, —  
Where farmer-folk in silence meet, —  
I turn my bell-unsummoned feet ;  
I lay the critic's glass aside,  
I tread upon my lettered pride,  
And, lowest-seated, testify  
To the oneness of humanity ;  
Confess the universal want,  
And share whatever heaven may grant.  
He findeth not who seeks his own,  
The soul is lost that's saved alone.  
Not on one favored forehead fell

Of old the fire-tongued miracle,  
But flamed o'er all the thronging host  
The baptism of the Holy Ghost ;  
Heart answers heart ; in one desire  
The blending lines of prayer aspire ;  
'Where, in my name, meet two or three,'  
Our Lord hath said, 'I there will be!'

"So sometimes comes to soul and sense  
The feeling which is evidence  
That very near about us lies  
The realm of spiritual mysteries.  
The sphere of the supernal powers  
Impinges on this world of ours.  
The low and dark horizon lifts,  
To light the scenic terror shifts ;  
The breath of a diviner air  
Blows down the answer of a prayer :—

That all our sorrow, pain, and doubt  
A great compassion clasps about,  
And law and goodness, love and force,  
Are wedded fast beyond divorce.  
Then duty leaves to love its task,  
The beggar Self forgets to ask ;  
With smile of trust and folded hands,  
The passive soul in waiting stands  
To feel, as flowers the sun and dew,  
The One true Life its own renew.

“ So, to the calmly gathered thought  
The innermost of truth is taught,  
The mystery dimly understood,  
That love of God is love of good,  
And, chiefly, its divinest trace  
In Him of Nazareth's holy face ;  
That to be saved is only this, —

Salvation from our selfishness,  
From more than elemental fire,  
The soul's unsanctified desire,  
From sin itself, and not the pain  
That warns us of its chafing chain ;  
That worship's deeper meaning lies  
In mercy, and not sacrifice,  
Not proud humilities of sense  
And posturing of penitence,  
But love's unforced obedience ;  
That Book and Church and Day are given  
For man, not God, — for earth, not heaven, —  
The blessed means to holiest ends,  
Not masters, but benignant friends ;  
That the dear Christ dwells not afar  
The king of some remoter star,  
Listening, at times, with flattered ear  
To homage wrung from selfish fear,

But here, amidst the poor and blind,  
The bound and suffering of our kind,  
In works we do, in prayers we pray,  
Life of our life, he lives to-day."

## THE ANSWER.

S PARE me, dread angel of reproof,  
And let the sunshine weave to-day  
Its gold-threads in the warp and woof  
Of life so poor and gray.

Spare me awhile ; the flesh is weak.

These lingering feet, that fain would stray  
Among the flowers, shall some day seek  
The strait and narrow way.

Take off thy ever-watchful eye,  
The awe of thy rebuking frown ;  
The dullest slave at times must sigh  
To fling his burdens down ;



To drop his galley's straining oar,  
And press, in summer warmth and calm,  
The lap of some enchanted shore  
Of blossom and of balm.

Grudge not my life its hour of bloom,  
My heart its taste of long desire ;  
This day be mine : be those to come  
As duty shall require.

The deep voice answered to my own,  
Smiting my selfish prayers away :  
" To-morrow is with God alone,  
And man hath but to-day.

" Say not, thy fond, vain heart within,  
The Father's arms shall still be wide,  
When from these pleasant ways of sin  
Thou turn'st at eventide.

“‘Cast thyself down,’ the tempter saith,  
‘And angels shall thy feet upbear.’  
He bids thee make a lie of faith,  
And blasphemy of prayer.

“Though God be good and free be Heaven,  
No force divine can love compel ;  
And, though the song of sins forgiven  
May sound through lowest hell,

“The sweet persuasion of His voice  
Respects thy sanctity of will.  
He giveth day : thou hast thy choice  
To walk in darkness still ;

“As one who, turning from the light,  
Watches his own gray shadow fall,  
Doubting upon his path of night,  
If there be day at all !

“No word of doom may shut thee out,  
No wind of wrath may downward whirl,  
No swords of fire keep watch about  
The open gates of pearl ;

“A tenderer light than moon or sun,  
Than song of earth a sweeter hymn,  
May shine and sound forever on,  
And thou be deaf and dim.

“Forever round the Mercy-seat  
The guiding lights of Love shall burn ;  
But what if, habit-bound, thy feet  
Shall lack the will to turn ?

“What if thine eye refuse to see,  
Thine ear of Heaven's free welcome fail,  
And thou a willing captive be,  
Thyself thy own dark jail ?

“O doom beyond the saddest guess,  
As the long years of God unroll  
To make thy dreary selfishness  
The prison of a soul !”

“To doubt the love that fain would break  
The fetters from thy self-bound limb ;  
And dream that God can thee forsake  
As thou forsakest him !”

G. L. S.

**H**E has done the work of a true man,—  
Crown him, honor him, love him.

Weep over him, tears of woman,  
Stoop manliest brows above him!

O dusky mothers and daughters,  
Vigils of mourning keep for him!  
Up in the mountains, and down by the waters,  
Lift up your voices and weep for him!

For the warmest of hearts is frozen,  
The freest of hands is still;  
And the gap in our picked and chosen  
The long years may not fill.

No duty could overtask him,  
No need his will outrun ;  
Or ever our lips could ask him,  
His hands the work had done.

He forgot his own soul for others,  
Himself to his neighbor lending ;  
He found the Lord in his suffering brothers,  
And not in the clouds descending.

So the bed was sweet to die on,  
Whence he saw the doors wide swung  
Against whose bolted iron  
The strength of his life was flung.

And he saw ere his eye was darkened  
The sheaves of the harvest-bringing,  
And knew while his ear yet hearkened  
The voice of the reapers singing.

Ah, well! — The world is discreet ;  
There are plenty to pause and wait ;  
But here was a man who set his feet  
Sometimes in advance of fate, —

Plucked off the old bark when the inner  
Was slow to renew it,  
And put to the Lord's work the sinner  
When saints failed to do it.

Never rode to the wrong's redressing  
A worthier paladin.

Shall he not hear the blessing,  
" Good and faithful, enter in ! "

## FREEDOM IN BRAZIL.

WITH clearer light, Cross of the South, shine  
    . forth

In blue Brazilian skies ;  
And thou, O river, cleaving half the earth  
    From sunset to sunrise,  
From the great mountains to the Atlantic waves  
    Thy joy's long anthem pour.  
Yet a few days (God make them less!) and slaves  
    Shall shame thy pride no more.  
No fettered feet thy shaded margins press ;  
    But all men shall walk free  
Where thou, the high-priest of the wilderness,  
    Hast wedded sea to sea.



And thou, great-hearted ruler, through whose mouth

The word of God is said,

Once more, "Let there be light!" — Son of the

South,

Lift up thy honored head,

Wear unashamed a crown by thy desert

More than by birth thy own,

Careless of watch and ward; thou art begirt

By grateful hearts alone.

The moated wall and battle-ship may fail,

But safe shall justice prove;

Stronger than greaves of brass or iron mail

The panoply of love.

Crowned doubly by man's blessing and God's grace,

Thy future is secure;

Who frees a people makes his statue's place

In Time's Valhalla sure.

Lo! from his Neva's banks the Scythian Czar

Stretches to thee his hand

Who, with the pencil of the Northern star,

Wrote freedom on his land.

And he whose grave is holy by our calm

And prairied Sangamon,

From his gaunt hand shall drop the martyr's palm

To greet thee with "Well done!"

And thou, O Earth, with smiles thy face make

sweet,

And let thy wail be stilled,

To hear the Muse of prophecy repeat

Her promise half fulfilled.

The Voice that spake at Nazareth speaks still,

No sound thereof hath died;

Alike thy hope and heaven's eternal will

Shall yet be satisfied.

The years are slow, the vision tarrieth long,  
And far the end may be ;  
But, one by one, the fiends of ancient wrong  
Go out and leave thee free.

## DIVINE COMPASSION.

LONG since, a dream of heaven I had,  
And still the vision haunts me oft ;  
I see the saints in white robes clad,  
The martyrs with their palms aloft ;  
But hearing still, in middle song,  
The ceaseless dissonance of wrong ;  
And shrinking, with hid faces, from the strain  
Of sad, beseeching eyes, full of remorse and pain.

The glad song falters to a wail,  
The harping sinks to low lament ;  
Before the still unlifted veil  
I see the crownéd foreheads bent,

Making more sweet the heavenly air,  
With breathings of unselfish prayer;  
And a Voice saith: "O Pity which is pain,  
O Love that weeps, fill up my sufferings which  
remain !

"Shall souls redeemed by me refuse  
To share my sorrow in their turn?  
Or, sin-forgiven, my gift abuse  
Of peace with selfish unconcern?  
Has saintly ease no pitying care?  
Has faith no work, and love no prayer?  
While sin remains, and souls in darkness,  
Can heaven itself be heaven, and look unmoved  
on hell?"

Then through the Gates of Pain, I dream,  
A wind of heaven blows coolly in ;

Fainter the awful discords seem,  
The smoke of torment grows more thin,  
Tears quench the burning soil, and thence  
Spring sweet, pale flowers of penitence ;  
And through the dreary realm of man's despair,  
Star-crowned an angel walks, and lo ! God's hope  
is there !

Is it a dream ? Is heaven so high  
That pity cannot breathe its air ?  
Its happy eyes forever dry,  
Its holy lips without a prayer !  
My God ! my God ! if thither led  
By thy free grace unmerited,  
No crown nor palm be mine, but let me keep  
A heart that still can feel, and eyes that still  
can weep.

## LINES ON A FLY-LEAF.

I NEED not ask thee, for my sake,  
To read a book which well may make  
Its way by native force of wit  
Without my manual sign to it.  
Its piquant writer needs from me  
No gravely masculine guaranty,  
And well might laugh her merriest laugh  
At broken spears in her behalf ;  
Yet, spite of all the critics tell,  
I frankly own I like her well.  
It may be that she wields a pen  
Too sharply nibbed for thin-skinned men,  
That her keen arrows search and try  
The armor joints of dignity,

And, though alone for error meant,  
Sing through the air irreverent.  
I blame her not, the young athlete  
Who plants her woman's tiny feet,  
And dares the chances of debate  
Where bearded men might hesitate,  
Who, deeply earnest, seeing well  
The ludicrous and laughable,  
Mingling in eloquent excess  
Her anger and her tenderness,  
And, chiding with a half-caress,  
Strives, less for her own sex than ours,  
With principalities and powers,  
And points us upward to the clear  
Sunned heights of her new atmosphere.

Heaven mend her faults! — I will not pause  
To weigh and doubt and peck at flaws,



Or waste my pity when some fool  
Provokes her measureless ridicule.  
Strong-minded is she? Better so  
Than dulness set for sale or show,  
A household folly capped and belled  
In fashion's dance of puppets held,  
Or poor pretence of womanhood,  
Whose formal, flavorless platitude  
Is warranted from all offence  
Of robust meaning's violence.  
Give me the wine of thought whose bead  
Sparkles along the page I read,  
Electric words in which I find  
The tonic of the northwest wind,—  
The wisdom which itself allies  
To sweet and pure humanities,  
Where scorn of meanness, hate of wrong,  
Are underlaid by love as strong ;

The genial play of mirth that lights  
Grave themes of thought, as, when on nights  
Of summer-time, the harmless blaze  
Of thunderless heat-lightning plays,  
And tree and hill-top resting dim  
And doubtful on the sky's vague rim,  
Touched by that soft and lambent gleam,  
Start sharply outlined from their dream.

Talk not to me of woman's sphere,  
Nor point with scripture texts a sneer,  
Nor wrong the manliest saint of all  
By doubt, if he were here, that Paul  
Would own the heroines who have lent  
Grace to truth's stern arbitrament,  
Foregone the praise to woman sweet,  
And cast their crowns at Duty's feet ;  
Like her, who by her strong Appeal

Made Fashion weep and Mammon feel,  
Who, earliest summoned to withstand  
The color-madness of the land,  
Counted her life-long losses gain,  
And made her own her sisters' pain ;  
Or her, who in her greenwood shade,  
Heard the sharp call that Freedom made,  
And, answering, struck from Sappho's lyre  
Of love the Tyrtæan carmen's fire ;  
Or that young girl, — Domrémy's maid  
Revived a nobler cause to aid, —  
Shaking from warning finger-tips  
The doom of her apocalypse ;  
Or her, who world-wide entrance gave  
To the log-cabin of the slave,  
Made all his want and sorrow known,  
And all earth's languages his own.

## H Y M N

FOR THE HOUSE OF WORSHIP AT GEORGETOWN,

ERECTED IN MEMORY OF A MOTHER.

THOU dwellest not, O Lord of all !  
In temples which thy children raise ;  
Our work to thine is mean and small,  
And brief to thy eternal days.

Forgive the weakness and the pride,  
If marred thereby our gift may be,  
For love, at least, has sanctified  
The altar that we rear to thee.

The heart and not the hand has wrought  
From sunken base to tower above

The image of a tender thought,  
The memory of a deathless love !

And though should never sound of speech  
Or organ echo from its wall,  
Its stones would pious lessons teach,  
Its shade in benedictions fall.

Here should the dove of peace be found,  
And blessings and not curses given ;  
Nor strife profane, nor hatred wound,  
The mingled loves of earth and heaven.

Thou, who didst soothe with dying breath  
The dear one watching by thy cross,  
Forgetful of the pains of death  
In sorrow for her mighty loss,

In memory of that tender claim,  
O Mother-born, the offering take,  
And make it worthy of thy name,  
And bless it for a mother's sake!

THE END.

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“The well-curb had a Chinese roof;  
And even the long sweep high aloof  
In its slant splendor seemed to tell  
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