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P O E M S .

BY

MEDITATUS.

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P O E M S .

THE STARTING-PLACE.

I STAND upon a rock. Beneath I see,
Like waves dashed at its base, the troubled world.
Within a small white space they surge and boil,
But their spent roar breaks not the still calm here.
Beyond the ocean stretcheth—smooth, unspecked,
As doth on angel's sight Eternity.
Who raised me to this place? I dwelt beneath,
Tossed on the sleepless billows. Did I climb
By thought or aspiration of my own?
Nay, I knew not there was so blest a height.
'Twas Thou who watched the flood, and pitied me.
This is the height from which the soul first sees,
Like dawn—THE TRUTH. Far thro' her realms of light
It looketh, and the World and Time seem little things.

I had rather be with Thee. Thou who dost search
The Heart thro' all its dark and measureless depths,
As with a glance I search an empty Vial,
Know'st the Goal towards which I, wingless, turn.
Yet, Father, not my will. In this fall'n earth
The worm even, in its vile abhorred shape,
Doth work unfallen angels might not do.
Keep me then banished from thy Beams awhile
If I may serve Thee; only these bestow,
Thy Love and Presence; then thro' all my way,
Deep in humiliation, or upon
The dim, low zenith of this mortal course,
I'll need nor ask for more.

CHRIST CHURCH BELLS.

SECOND STREET, PHILADELPHIA.

I WAS sitting

By my window that opened to the East,
Looking out o'er the dusky roofs, and up
Where burned the stars. There came a gentle breath
Of air, and mingled with it faint far sounds.
I listened: when they came again, more clear,
I heard the ancient chimes of Christ Church bells.
Then sudden thronging thoughts, or feelings not yet
Shaped to sep'rate thoughts, filled all my breast.
Tears rose, and, being alone, I did not
Hinder them, but wept.

What were those feelings?

From what hidden spring gushed up those tears?

O subtile chemist! deep geologist!

Ye cannot analyze or search out here :
No, nor yet thou who 'rt conscious in thyself
Of such emotion and wouldst probe for it.
The Heart to all is an unfathomed mystery.
We may liken it to instruments of music,
To delicate plants that shrink at being touched,
To changing skies, to troubled ocean; yea,
To all things visible; and yet for that,
The viewless seat of joy and woe within,
We have in truth no likeness: 'tis itself
A world deep, hidden, separate, and none
But God can altogether know it.

The sounds that moved me now I 'd listened to
Long years ago: I could remember even,
As it seemed to me, a certain season
When but a little child, I 'd heard those bells.
'Twas recollection then, thou 'lt say, brought tears.
Ah! by what enginery did it touch so deep?
It was most dim remembrance, if not
Some half lost dream or mere imagining.
Beside, I would not be a child again.
Our early years have their small weights of sorrow,
That press as sorely on the tender spirit

As heavy mountains do when we are grown;
Nor is life's upward path so smooth and even
That, like the loiterer in some flowery garden,
We'd turn back to trace the same steps o'er,
But chiefly tho' there be a softened light
To all of us, and to none more than me,
Illumining the path looked back upon,
I crave it not, because He still was strange,
Unknown, unloved, whom now I chiefly love.
Jesus was not accepted. Who could tell,
What prophet of the soul, if this of mine,
Enamored of all sin, would ever yield?

Ye ancient bells! how many more than me
Your chimes have moved! How many more, when I
Am covered with the green and springing sod,
They yet shall move! Nor ye alone, but sounds
That fill the air, and sights unnoted by
The passing crowd, shall to some voiceless heart
Call thoughts, to some averted eye bring tears.
I cannot know, I do not care to know
It now, by what unseen and spiritual touch
Ye thrill me; but I think how unconceived
Are the susceptibilities that fill the soul,

Here torpid, unsuspected, covered up,
But in the milder clime of heaven to be
Perfected in new life, and to become,
Each one, a separate entrance for our bliss.

THE DINING-ROOM OF THE OLD HOUSE.

It is the dusk of evening. All the rest
Are scattered through the house, or have not yet
Come in from walking. I, mid quiet left,
Sit here alone in the old dining-room.
The fire burns in the grate; by its red light
I see each ancient piece of furniture,
Around which now come shadows from the past
Of times and scenes that may return no more.
Upon the sofa that fills this recess
Often I've slumbered, a play-wearied boy.
Beside this table when scarce higher than it,
I had my daily food from gentlest hands.
How different then my thoughts! I did not dream
Time could e'er change, or danger reach this place.
No fortress in the world gives to the soldier
Such sweet sense of security as Home
Hath for the little child.

Is it then changed?

Is not this room—are not these things about me
Still the same? They are the same—the change
Hath been in me. The heart learns many lessons
While mere fragile wood-work scarce grows old,
Or ere the ivy, planted in our youth,
Hath crept to the top o' the wall. And yet
The change in me is not the only difference.
This empty chair before me memory fills
With what is now but an imagined form.
It was my mother's seat. From year to year
Through all my former life I'd seen her there,
Thus sitting in the midst of those she loved,
When suddenly 'twas vacant, and not here,
Nor in her chamber, nor in all the house
Was there one trace of her beloved presence.
O Death! how dost thou blot us out, with fewer
Years, or the threescore and ten, alike,
In one brief moment! Yet we who are left
Muse thus and meditate upon those gone—
They still live in our hearts.

Mother,

'Tis well I should remember thee. I know
That when I came at first, long since,
Helpless into this world, it was thy love,

As a protecting mantle, did receive me.
Through feeble infancy, when to another
I had been a care and weariness,
Thou held'st me in thy tender, soft embrace
With the unutterable yearnings that she feels
Who looks down on her babe in her own bosom.
When I had become a wayward child,
Needing forbearance, gentle teaching, and compassion,
'Twas by thy knee I happy sat; up to
Thy face I looked. And so thro' later years
Thou stood'st between the rugged world and me,
Until I went forth to that world; then didst
Thou follow me with thy love; and still there was
A difference between a mother's love and that
Of others. It is not long since, gathered round
Thy bed, we saw how calmly doth the soul,
When furnished, wait for and receive its call.
Ye who do love your children, and who would not
Rend their hearts to breaking when ye die,
Leave them the sweet and comfortable trust
That ye are safe. In its accustomed place,
Within reach of thy empty seat, I found,
When thou wert gone, thy Bible. It was marked
At certain passages, devout and beautiful,
Of David's Songs, and where, in later time,

The love of God in Christ for us was writ,
How by His precious blood alone we 're cleansed,
And being cleansed, freed from all punishment—
Yet not by work of ours, but by grace given us.

As we stood round thy open grave we felt
How better was th' assurance of thy rest,
Which the remembrance of thy life and death
Then gave to us, than coveted crowns
For an inheritance.

Old Dining-room! as we must change, thou shalt
Be changed at length. These walls, this roof,
That compassed us so long, while the heart's ties
Were made and severed, shall be taken down,
And this small space within, where hidden
From the world hath been sweet intercourse,
Shall be but th' open air again, where the
Wind passes, vacant and without a mark.
But in a better mansion then, I trust,
My soul shall live, and, if it be so there,
Know them again in blest reunion
Whom here I loved.

THE STATE-HOUSE CLOCK.

MEDITATUS.

SPEAK to me! For these fifty years or more
Hast thou been musing in this hermitage,
And yet doth no man ever hear thy voice
Save when it crieth the hours.

CLOCK.

Who calls on me to speak? one of the throng
That daily thus climbs up to my abode,
Seeking a moment's empty entertainment?

MEDITATUS.

Nay, thou old faithful sentinel! I seek
More solid stuff; 'tis for instruction that
I come. Speak, then, and tell me what thou seest

From out these lofty windows, that like eyes
Look ever toward the North and South, the East
And West!

CLOCK.

Stand where thou art, and for a little season
(Yet not long), I'll speak with thee.

This morning, ere my smaller hand reached five,
Out in the east I saw the approach of Day.
He came without a cloud, and soon with light
Filled the horizon, and the arch of heaven.
Then blue wreaths of smoke ascending, rose
O'er the still city spreading far beneath,
Steeple and towers and a waste of roofs,
That cover happy and unhappy homes.
Since then five times my larger hand hath made
His circuit. On each moment hung events
Innumerable, nor could I tell them all,
Though thou shouldst wait until that midnight hour
Revolving comes, when from this height I drop
Each finished year into eternity.
Yet will I lead thee now a few steps o'er
The narrow bounds of thine own daily walk.
Then, when thou shalt consider for thyself
How wide the world is—how unnumbered are

Her populous cities; her wide teeming plains,
Where men do labor, hope, enjoy and suffer, love and
hate,

Thou wilt conceive how full Time's moments are,
And what a mighty Record that must be,
Where there is room to write, at its full length,
The secret history of every heart,
With every word and look that speaks a thought.

The echoes of my voice that told aloud
The hour just gone, have scarce yet died away.
Now doth the sun, uprisen high'r in heaven,
Lighten the busy world. His yellow beams
Flood the broad highway; pierce thro' polished panes
With damask hung, and mid th' luxurious shade
Within, glitter upon the gorgeous chandelier;
Or, creeping thro' some crevice left unstopped
In the closed shutters, lie a spot of gold
Upon the floor of the deserted house.

It is the time appointed, and I see,
Not far from hence through a wide lofty door,
A merry comp'ny gath'ring: chariots stop,
Pouring their treasures out of gay attire.
One giveth there her hand away to-day
With th' unbought riches of a loving heart.

Even as I speak she stands! A snowy bud,
 That drank last night the falling dews of heaven,
 Plucked from its earthen bed, adorns her hair.
 (So mayst thou be, fair bride, when I am done
 Telling the hours, brought to a better clime.)
 With solemn rites and the plain golden ring,
 They bind around them th' invisible thread
 That Death's sharp sickle now alone may sever.
 Crowding then bright faces hem them in,
 And with embraces, smiles, and golden hopes
 Fill up this swift-winged time of happiness.
*Life, to the youthful hearts who do from there
 Look on it, seems like this sunny sky.*

While I thus speak, from a far window
 Over toward the West an anxious face looks out.
 That same voice told the hour when one should come
 With hollow tube that tells each sound within,
 To place his practised ear near to the beating
 Of a much loved heart. The husband looketh
 On the slender form, into the delicate features
 That of late have waned mysteriously.
 "It cannot be—oh no, this cannot be
 The dim cold shadow of Death! Woe may not cross
 The threshold of so blest a home! Here are

Contentment, sweet affections, riches—all
Th' appliances this world can give to happiness.”
May it be so; yet hast thou found, fond one,
How soon man may become as if awaked
Out of a pleasant dream. *Life unto thee
Hath yet its broad blue sky, but with
A rising cloud.*

By Schuylkill's waters,
Where thro' many an age they flowed, hidden
In solitude, the unforgotten dead
Sleep thro' the still cold vaults of Laurel Hill.
(It may be that some form once dear to thee
Thus sleeps—yet not to wound thee do I speak.)
If thou wilt look now toward the oft trod road
That leadeth there, a dark slow-moving train
Of carriages thou'lt see. Next to that, hung
With sable curtains, cometh one whose windows,
With raised blinds, are close shut up from ev'ry
Passer's eye. Within—ah! there within—held
In so small a space, is a whole world
Of woe. I tell thee that between the heart
Of him who stops to gaze and hers who
Followeth there the dead, is an unfathomed
Depth of suffering that swallows up

Youth's freshness, the allurements of this world,
The love of pitying friends—the wish to live.
It is a mother's funeral, her child's thoughts,
Swift messengers to the past, go back
Through many years, then come again laden
With sweet but sad remembrances that wound
The bereaved spirit. *To that desolate mourner
Life seems one dreary cloud, as when the whole
Wide firmament is filled with gloom.*

Where yonder lofty buttonwoods lift up
Their leafless branches, vying with my height,
Standeth apart the ancient Hospital.
A century has almost gone since its
First stone was laid, then in a wilderness.
It is, methinks, a place where Death doth dwell
With all his keen and torturing darts. Yet Mercy
Ministers to those he wounds; she healeth
Him whose strength returns again, and watches
By his bed who dies.

There, in a certain ward
Where many lie, is one who hath trod life's
Lengthened journey o'er, thro' youth and middle age,
Into the winter that lies round the tomb.
In all this wide and many-peopled world

She is alone. Not one from whom to claim
Those sympathies that run in kindred blood
Doth to her knowledge breathe. Within her heart
Shut up are the sweet pictures of her youth
When, in another land, mid its green fields,
Beneath its open sky she played, a child.
Who shall she speak to of these things? It is
But nature thus to turn from the chill snows
Of age, back to the op'ning buds of spring,
And so it seemeth that the dusty space
Between is often most transparent then.
But in these things, as in all else that memory
And meditation summon from the past,
Or that the thoughtful mind thro' every hour
Doth hold in its own world, she is alone.
Alone in the heart's solitude, aged,
And poor, and laid in sufferings. Yet beneath
These gathered elements of misery
That show without and do appal the eye,
There is in her another hidden life,
Unharm'd by them, that the eye cannot see.
The soul hath separate life. In early youth
So close it clingeth to the ruddy flesh,
They seem as one. But when that flesh, grown old,
Begins to shake and totter o'er the grave,

It looseneeth its hold, and doth look out
T'wards that eternal world to which it tends.
If it have then treasure laid up in heaven,
With joy it plumes its eager wings for flight.
So is it with this aged one. She came
O'er a long road, through poverty and toil,
To reach this dying bed. But as she rests
Upon it now, being prepared to die,
Amid the body's sufferings the soul finds peace.
As she looks back upon the desert past,
And forward to the promised land, *life seems*
(Nor seems alone, but is, for she seeth with
An open eye) *as when these skies are filled*
With storms, but from an opening thro' the clouds
Light cometh down, and, looking up, we see
The calm blue heaven o'erspreading all above,
Which storms, nor clouds, nor tempests ever reach.

Thus have I shown thee how this selfsame hour
To these few hearts bring different messages.
What must His view be, who with sleepless eye
Through day and night forever looks upon
The hearts of all mankind bared to his sight?
This know—that not the briefest space of time
Wherein thou sleep'st or wakest but doth hold

Within its narrow compass joy and grief,
Wisdom and folly, virtue, deepest guilt.
Yet God discerns the upright heart and pure
Where'er it be, and watcheth over it.
Amid the infinite turmoil of this life;
He maketh all things labor for its good,
While to all others ev'n prosperity
Is but a foe clothed in a fair disguise.
Live not for Time! Its slow revolving years,
Its hours, its moments, all that fill them up,
Whether of the world without or of the heart,
Must cease. But for the soul that useth time
Aright, believing what hath been revealed of it,
A better state, when it is done, remains.

AN HALF HOUR WITH AN ANGEL.

METHOUGHT it was near to the edge of twilight
On a summer's evening. I was rambling
In the forest and had come to a lone glen,
Where, from the thickly wooded height above,
Some hidden spring poured forth its waters
O'er the wild, steep rocks. They dripping fell
From ledge to ledge in countless tiny streams,
And gathered at the base again, murmured
A rivulet away. Here, being weary,
On the velvet moss beneath my feet
I laid me down, still looking on the scene,
And wrapt in meditation. "Surely," thought I,
"This place speaketh of the Lord; He hath
Arrayed it in this goodly dress, adorned
With ornaments no other but His
Can fashion, that his worshippers may look
Upon it and rejoice: for where we love,

And cannot yet behold the one beloved,
How dear is any sign or visible evidence
That he hath left upon our path, telling
Of his affection! So I view these traces
Of my Father's hand. I love his works
Not chiefly for their own attractiveness;
They're pledges given to my falt'ring soul,
Confirming it in faith. To me, the field
Yields more than grain, the garden more than flowers,
And all th' events of daily Providence
Bear voiceless hidden messages from God."
While musing thus, I thought a spirit stood
Before me. "I am sent to thee," he said,
"Thou who dost seek the path of wisdom. Rise,
And cast aside thy covering of clay,
For thou shalt go with me whither thy body
Cannot go; it shall rest here unharmed,
Slumbering till thou return to it again."
He spread his wings, rising above the earth
In swiftest flight, and I, delivered from
The flesh, a spirit too, rose by his side.
I felt no fear, nor was it difficult,
That steep ascent.
We did not climb, as earthly pilgrims do,

But passed thro' many a purple-tinted cloud,
Ascending far above the golden hues
That gather round the setting sun, until,
In the blue vault, we rested on the wing.
Evening had dropped her dusky veil, and Night
Was letting fall a darker curtain o'er
The distant world. I saw lights glimmering
From the abodes of men, and floating on,
Passed o'er the ocean's stormy flood, or forest's
Wide-spread gloom: but not a murmur reached us:
Silently thro' those sublime aerial wastes
We winged our way. "Now shalt thou have such sight,"
The spirit said, "as we, who in love's work
Are ever ministering to mankind.
That dim and narrow circle of dull light
On the far bosom of the earth beneath
Is a vast city. Seest thou not amid
Its thousand dwelling-places there is one
O'ershadowed by a small bright cloud?
Thither we will descend, that thou mayst know
How different to the spiritual eye
Terrestrial things appear, and how far short
Of the reality man's vision stops."
Then in my dream I turned towards earth again.

Methought I entered

The silent chamber where a sick man lay
In his unfinished slumber, ere the dawn
Of morning. Not a star had faded yet
From heaven; no light told of th' approach of day;
Yet I found waiting there other spirits
Before me. They knew not of my presence,
It was hidden from them. Then passed I
Noiselessly the soul's great adversary
And an angel of the Lord. On either side
His couch they stood, silently gazing in
The sleeper's face and watched for his awaking.
Now I saw how Satan is transformed and
Robed in treacherous light; for he did shine
More brightly than the other, but 'twas with
A red and fiery glare. Yet was he gorgeous
To behold, and underneath his burning wings
Were chains and torturing manacles concealed.
Then did I turn to look upon the angel.
His mantle fell in many radiant folds,
Down o'er his breast about his lovely form,
Trailing around his feet; and I beheld
His countenance, but cannot speak its beauty.
Bright beams from the Throne still clung to his locks;
His serene features shone with softer light;

A golden harp hung by his side; he bore
A garment glistening, spotless and new,
Washed in redeeming blood. So these two watched
For the lone sick man's waking; but I saw
That Satan feared to look upon the angel,
Though his eye burned as a quenchless fire,
And the angel's beamed celestial love.
Thus I beheld the impotence of Evil,
And the mild majesty of Holiness.
The slumb'rer's sleep was sweet; there seemed within
No cloud amid the sunshine of his soul.
Then turned I to my spiritual guide and asked
Whither he'd led me, and what these things meant.
"Thou art," he said, "with a departing servant
Of the Lord. This ministering spirit
Hath been sent to guard him from all evil,
And to give him, dying, perfect peace.
The Enemy can harm him not; this hour
His power is gone; for this man listened to
The Gospel's call, and yielded up his heart
To Christ. His path hath rugged been; his feet
Have bled, and oft he bore his heavy cross
At heat of day; but now, his labors o'er,
He rests upon the utmost borders of
A toilsome life, and on the brink of heaven.

Angels wait beyond thy sight to bear him
Hence. Ere one brief hour is past he will be
With his God."

The scene was changed.

Methought I passed into another chamber,
And beheld the evil spirit watching
By another bed of death. Then sought I for
The angel guardian, but found him not;
The adversary stood in uncurbed power, alone.
He was not gorgeous now, to look upon,
But hung above that dying couch, shrouded
In deepest gloom, like some risen cloud from hell.
Then, while I wond'ring gazed, another form
Appeared: it was of woman's shape, clothed with
Strange raiment; for in front deep black, like the
Sad mourner's dress, she wore; but from her back
A gorgeous mantle hung, sweeping her footsteps.
Beside the dying bed she knelt, and asked,
"What shall I give thee—riches, or reputation,
Or a crown? all of earth's gifts are thine."
The suff'rer closed his eyes to shut her
From his sight, and with a bitter gesture
Motioned her away. Then I beheld
How lightly she could leave him whom she seemed

To honor. Throwing off her sable veil,
She stood in scarlet clothed, with glitt'ring gems
And tinkling ornaments, and turning as
One turneth from a cast off and forgotten thing,
She passed out from my sight.

Didst thou e'er look upon Despair? or mark
The final flight of Hope when she doth spread
Her azure wings and leave the soul? Oh that
From out the volume of my thoughts this leaf
Were torn! I saw wrath like the lightning fall
Upon that undefended head. The dying man
Was cast out from the universe of good;
Each tie that bound to aught in any measure
Pure or lovely was cut off, and his soul
Trembling hung above the open'd, infinite
Abyss of woe. "Ah, take me hence," I cried,
"Let us not linger here; I die, I die
Another death in looking upon this!"
"Fear not to look," the spirit said, "I brought
Thee hither for thy good; here mayst thou gather
Wisdom in rich harvest to thy soul.
Behold the closing of a life devoted
To the false and transitory world.
Upon this dying bed thou seest the pleasures

And the empty honors of threescore years
Summed up; for he who lies before thee
Loved the world, and she bestowed upon him
Many gifts; but she hath not, in all of her
Vast treasury, one for the parting hour.
'Tis not the world's to deck the bed of death
And make it beautiful; another hand
Must bring the wreaths that fade not there.
Yet oft in seasons past the still small voice
Strove with this heart, persuading it to turn
From fading vanities and live. It strove
In vain! from youth to manhood, and from manhood
To the barren borders of the grave—barren
Unless set out with the transplanted flowers
Of grace—then sweetest vale of life, as nearest
To its close and in full view of heaven.

My brief mission draweth to its close,
And I must part from thee. Thou 'st seen
What blest attendance watches o'er the spirit
At its birth into the blissful realms of rest:
Thou hast seen too, the dread departing of
The soul accurst, in darkness quenched its light
Put out to burn no more.

The veil must fall:
Enough hath been revealed. Go back to earth
Again, and as thou minglest in her cares
Remember—like the withering leaf's
Thy sojourn there; for as the forest to
The wintry wind doth cast its foliage,
So to Death's blasts the earth doth shed her leaves,
And her dead millions gather in the ground.
But there shall be a resurrection of
Them all, and we will meet when reunited
To thy risen body, thou livest to die no more.
Ah! whither then thy way thro' the wide regions
Of eternity?

Salvation's pearly gates
Are open to thee! Wouldst thou enter them?
Know, then, that works or righteousness of thine
Can never win for thee an entrance there;
For God's just law demands obedience,
Not in the act alone, but in the thought,
Even to its source within thy secret soul.
Such perfect service thou canst not perform,
Inheriting a heart enslaved by sin;
In thine own nature thou hast not the power
To love a holy God or do his will:
How canst thou then, child of a fallen race,

Escape the threatened curse awaiting all
Who violate his revealed sovereign Word?
Hear ere I leave thee, what I came to bear,
Glad tidings from on high.

There is, Lost One,
A righteousness, not thine, prepared for thee,
That thou mayst wear it even as thine own :
'Twas bought at a great cost for guilty man,
And all who have it on, in earth or heaven,
Are pure and spotless to the eye of God :
'Tis offered without price (thou 'st naught to give);
It becomes thine, in all its preciousness,
Through childlike faith in Him who purchased it
For thee. By faith thou dost embrace Him
With the arms of love, accepting Him
As God the Saviour, and thine only hope;
United thus thou art made one with Him,
And all the powers leagued against thy soul
Shall never separate thee from his hand.
This faith is God's own gift; 'tis his alone
T' impart, dread Sovereign of all worlds !
Go ask of Him, clothed in humility,
For He refuseth none who rightly seek,

According to that Word of Life which He
Hath given thee."

The spirit ceased. Then, in my dream, I thought
We stood amid the forest's gloom again,
And as the evening's silent shadows fell,
He parted from me on his heavenward flight,
And I encumbered with the flesh once more,
But in his words rejoicing, went upon my way.

THE OLD SWEDES' CHURCH, SOUTHWARK,
PHILADELPHIA.

BUILT IN THE YEAR MDCC.

WHILE we do pass away, and with th' affairs
That have engrossed us are forgot, a simple pile
Of earth or stone, raised by our hands, endures.
I stand within this ancient house, and know
That of the men who reared it there is not
One but hath gone to dust. Can it then be
That what we fashion thus, out of some
Base material, shall outlast the busy thoughts,
The deep keen joys and sorrows that fill up
Our rational life?

They who of old with their
Own labor did build up these walls, when the
Good work was done, sat here and worshipped.
('Twas a different time; the city's hum

Broke not then on this solitude, and o'er
These busy streets stood trees from the
Primeval forest.) But at length those fathers
Of the church, cut off in vigorous prime or
Venerable age, were gathered one by one
And no more seen. Then in their places, even
Where I stand, their children met often
Through many years; some to prepare to die,
Some but to wear an ancient hollow form,
Until they too through gradual decline,
Came to life's verge and laid their gray hairs down
In these still graves a century ago.

Now of all these, and all they felt while here,
What visible trace is left? I do not doubt
But since that Sabbath morn when first these walls
Were filled with sounds of praise, near intercourse
Hath often been between this place and heaven.
True, many came then, as they still do, but
To glitter in the livery of this world
In others' sight; yet ever midst the throng
God hath his worshippers.

Here knelt

The youthful pair who'd nurtured their first born

Through a few tender years, so that her heart
Was but just opening its stores to love,
When the child sickened. Round her couch, stricken,
They stood and saw her languish; hearing her
Feeble cry; looking upon her sufferings
Until the soul escaped, leaving them the
Sweet infant form of flesh, as soft, as round,
As beautiful as when 'twas wont to cling
To them in life, circling with loving arms
Their necks. They buried her, hiding out of
Their sight each little fragment of her dress
Or toys, that in her play she'd left scattered
About their home—then came up here to worship,
And confess that all He doeth is right.

Here bowed the husband, who, few days ago,
Had stooped to catch his wife's faint parting words;
Words fuller, in death, of that unchanging love
Which ever in life had been to him
A wonder and a mystery. He looked
Upon th' immovable pale face, and the
Remembrance of harsh words or of unkindnesses
That once had wounded her meek spirit
Came with such accusations on his soul
As swallowed up his grief in a yet

Deeper agony. He loathed himself, and mourned,
And in this place renewed his vows.

Here came

The tender mother when she 'd heard from one
Skilled to discern the ailments of the body,
That the small spot of pain which but of late
Had troubled her, was the first stealthy step
Of a disease whose dread approach no doctor's
Skill could stay. She sat among her little ones,
And thought of leaving them, feeling the first, worst
Bitterness of death, until her prayer
Was heard, and she was taught, there is a Faith
Stronger than the last dread, or suffering,
Or human love—that tempts us oft—or death.

These, and how many more, what tongue can tell?
Have from this place, thro' days forgotten now,
Offered up various worship. Sighs wet with
Sorrow's tears, prayers winged with burning love:
Yet to these walls no angel hath come down
To write their records here. Are they then perished?
Ye departed ones, come back! Meet us within
This ancient house once more! Tell to
Unthinking men how these things never perish,

But are gathered up from every house of God,
From the shut closet, from the silent woods,
Or crowded ways where Christians walk;
From that hid Temple in each new-born heart,
And written down in heaven. Tell them
How little now ye do esteem this world's
Remembrance, or her coveted riches,
Or the brief sufferings of this fleeting life,
That they may turn from these, for the pure joys
Unto whose blest possession ye are gone—
Beyond the grave.

MY CHILD.

MY child! here on
Her little couch beside my own, unconscious
Of the love that 's brooding over her, she sleeps!
So once I lay, helpless upon life's threshold,
And so once my mother watched o'er me.
What harp, or voice, or tongue can utterance
Give to a parent's love? Th' untaught peasant,
Howsoever rude, if in his rugged breast
There lay a kindly heart, hath feelings oft
That poets cannot tell. Around each fireside
Of the land, where children play and tender
Parents watch, unwritten volumes perish
Day by day. We feel enough each for himself,
Therefore it is that of all thought so little
Is decreed to live. Yet here and there is one
So made by him who fashions all of us,
That with a nicer power he is able

To discern the deep and hidden motions
Of the mind, and bring them forth to language
With their own hues and native colors on.
If such an one be faithful to his trust,
Not marring what in truth is beautiful,
Nor covering with false dress the hideous
And deformed, he doth perform his work,
And with the company of those, who each
In his own day and place has sought alone
His Maker's glory, he at length shall stand.
There will be kings without their royal robes,
And slaves, clothed in like radiant dress;
There genius, beside the intellect that was
But as a child's, shall burn not more with love.

What is the truly beautiful? In Nature
And her visible works it is the impress
Of God's fingers. In the soul this impress
Hath been lost. Thro' her deep caverns where the
Rich ores lie; o'er her wide vales of meditation;
Up her mountain heights of thought sublime,
Thick darkness reigns. But when there cometh forth
From heaven new light, it doth shed beauty
Through this fallen world.

Shine thro' this soul, thou Sun of Righteousness !
Into its hidden places, o'er its wastes,
Until the rocky wilderness shall softened be,
And blossom as the rose.

CRAZY NORAH:

A WELL-KNOWN WANDERER IN THE STREETS
OF PHILADELPHIA.

IF but the mysterious cord be loosed
That bindeth up, as one, our faculties,
They in disorder fallen will become,
As thine. He who created us; who by
His touch did wound the wrestling patriarch,
Hath laid his hand on thee, poor wand'rer.
Yet in unknown wisdom, and no less
Than an eternal purpose, was it done.
Amid the infinite vicissitude
Of place and circumstance—th' array of ages
Past and yet to come—th' innumerable
Generations of mankind, that fill
Up time, as motes, even to its end, thou
Hast the place that at the first was given thee.

I am not made of better clay than thou,
Nor is the spirit that dwells in me
Freer by nature of rebellious thought,
Or all impure desire, than thine. Mercy
Alone, when thou wert wounded, passed me by.

I do remember thee from my early youth,
And still the same thou cross'st my thoughtful path,
With thy strange dress—the old plaid cloak, man's hat,
And men's great boots; bearing thy basket on
Thy arm, filled with thy crazy treasures.
A troop of boys come after thee; thou stop'st
And, looking up, dost talk with some imagined
Being in the air; or, in the silent night,
From some dark lonely spot, with lifted finger,
Countest th' unchanging, ever beautiful stars.

What hast thou sought in these thy wanderings,
Now through so many years? Is it some
Fancied good? some dim and undefined end?
Or doth the spirit of unrest alone,
Unknown to thee, still goad thee on? Poor maniac,
With thy dim lamp of reason quite put out,
Whatever be thy thought, th' enlightened mind
Doth see in thee a world's embodiment.

Thou track'st as well the object of thy search
As many who do pity thee. For what
Is Reason? or, what aid doth she afford
In the soul's search for rest? The light she sheds
Is, at its brightest, but a feeble ray
About our feet: she cannot pierce the gloom
Above us, or dispel the heavy clouds
That darken the immeasurable space
Between us and the throne of God; and yet
Most of mankind, with guilt not thine, lone wand'rer,
Go through this world, and grope into the grave,
Seeking no brighter light than hers.

MILITARY GLORY.

TWO SIDES TO IT.

*SCENE—In this Country—A dining-room ornamented
with flags—The company seated at table.*

MR. PUBLIC OPINION—(*rising*).

I have the honor, gentlemen, to propose
The health of our distinguished guest, who
On a field far different from this, hath won
Of late for us, his country, and his own
Now coveted name, glory of such a
Lustre, that it doth already shine through
This wide land and o'er the sea. (*Cheers.*)

CAPTAIN FAVORITE (*rising amid loud cheers*).

I thank you, gentlemen, for this warm greeting,
Offered one who, not by native or acquired

Merit, could claim such distinction,
Yet being offered, at your hands I do
Accept it, as a thing not earned, but given
Of generosity. We soldiers have our work,
But our rewards are greater than our work;
For, to be honored thus midst smiling peace
Makes us forget the rugged path of war,
Or hold its perils but a scanty price
For such returns.

I do suppose you will
Look to me for some brief account, to-day,
Of that late conflict (*cheers*) in the midst of which
A favoring fortune placed me. I say fortune,
For, my friends, you wear the soldier's brief creed—
Honor and our country—on your hearts, as he
Doth on his sword, nor is there difference
In aught, save opportunity, between us all.
But on the battle-field, each one, intent
Upon his aim, and hidden in the smoke
Of th' combat, sees not far beyond the point
Of his own sword or reach o' his gun (*cheers*).
So each can tell of what he saw; but thus
To make the story perfect, every soldier
Needs must speak—some now from their red graves.

My portion of the great day's work lay in
A narrow compass. I was ordered, with
The brave hearts under my command, to take
Position on the brow of a green slope,
Across which, ere the day was done, might pass
The manœuvering squadrons of the enemy.
Here round our voiceless cannon for awhile
We stood, watching the far-off fight
In th' agony of idleness. Upon the plain
Full in our view, but lessened by the
Distance, our regiments marched to the attack
Or waited in reserve. We heard their shouting.
The lone rocks around sent back the echoes
Of their artillery, and when a white cloud
Covered up each band, we saw them, as it
Rose, with thinner ranks. At length the foe,
Advancing to th' relief, came within range,
And from those narrow chambers where Death sleeps
Within the cannon's mouth, we welcomed him (*cheers*).
Then came their cavalry. They charged
Like the storm-driven thunder-cloud, that flies
To reach the spot doomed by its lightning—
But another tempest met them; not of wind,
Or rain, or the fork'd bolt we can see fall,

But of th' invisible messengers that fill the air
When hostile armies meet, driving them back (*cheers*).

There was a body of the enemy
That had for special service been detached.
These, when their perilous purpose was accomplished,
Sought t' unite again with their main army.
We did intercept and so cut off
Their passage, they could move this way nor that.
At first, with lighter arms and show of courage,
They stood up against our pond'rous metal;
But soon contagious fear ran thro' their ranks,
Loosening the tight bands of discipline,
And in one mixed, bewildered, helpless mass,
Horses and men provoked our batteries.
Then with the ceaseless roar from th' other field
We mingled the dread music of our guns.
Rapid and quick they flashed. O Death! O Death!
'Twas thou didst point their aim. At each discharge
The murd'rous shot tore a wide vacant breach*
From end to end thro' the thick living ranks (*cheers*),
Till, when each blade of grass or trampled flower
Was watered with their plenteous flowing blood,

* This idea is from a late authentic history.

They cried for mercy. 'Twas a moving sight,
After each gun was silent, the strife o'er,
And the fierce fires of hate within our bosoms
Waned, to look upon the wounded. There they lay,
All martial semblance of resentment gone,
Weak, bleeding, dying, o'er the quiet ground.
One begged me, as I passed, for water; but ev'n
As I put it to his lips, he, voiceless, died.
A ball had pierced his breast thro' where,
Upon his scarlet vest, a wreath was worked.
Another looked on me and asked (as tho'
He thought of his) if I had little children?
Th' unfeeling dead methought were the best off.
But glorious
Was the victory our brave armies won.
Small was my part in 't, therefore may I speak.
In the increasing volume where is writ
For those to come the annals of our fame,
That day shall live. It did unfurl our flag
Over the foe's own land. So shall it be
Unfurled while foes do breathe, who would bedim
Its honor's spotless hue, or while such hearts
As yours, my friends, or mine can bleed. (*Capt. F. sits
down amid loud and long-continued cheering.*)

SCENE—A foreign Country—A darkened chamber.

CHILD.

Mother, I will bring you flowers,
And set them here upon your little table,
So that the buds shall open in your sight.

MOTHER.

Thank you, my love.

CHILD.

I will bring books with stories,
And read them to you, sitting here all day,
And never weary of your company;
For, mother, you are all the world to me!

MOTHER.

Thank you, my love.

CHILD.

I will hold your hand in the morning
While the birds sing to us in the woods,
And in the evening on the open path
That looks towards the sunset.

MOTHER.

Thank you, my tender love.

CHILD.

Are they not beautiful, mother? Will you
Never smile again?

MOTHER.

My heart doth smile on you, my child,
But it is wounded in another part,
That gives to joy, ev'n now, the taste of grief.
You cannot know such wounds as yet; oh, that
You may not ever!

CHILD.

Talk to me, dear mother, and tell me of
My father.

MOTHER.

How can I speak of him, of whom each thought
Is th' bitter food of woe? And yet of who
Else can I speak, and to this orphan'd dove?
Your father loved you as I love you.

} (*Aside.*)

CHILD.

Do fathers love such little children as
Their mothers do?

MOTHER.

He had a mother's heart for tenderness!
I've seen him hold you, but a babe, thus
In his arms, and look, and look into your face,
As tho' he thought within himself of all
He'd do for you when you were grown.

CHILD.

He would not make a soldier of me, mother?

MOTHER.

No, my love.

CHILD.

Tell me yet more of my dear father.

MOTHER.

When you were sick, he watched by you. The night
Was not too long for him to watch. Over

Your bed he stooped, and listened to your breath,
Or put his hand upon your burning brow.

CHILD.

Are all fathers so, mother?

MOTHER.

No; you had
Two mothers, and one loving father.

CHILD.

How long is 't since he left us?

MOTHER.

When the snow was on the ground he went,
Before a leaf or flower put forth, and so,
Evermore it will be winter-time to me.

CHILD.

But when died he, mother?

MOTHER.

Oh, child! oh, precious one!
You know not how that innocent, sweet tongue

Doth break my heart. Yet must I tell you all.
Three days ago came word of a great battle.
In it he was slain. None saw him die. Alone!
Ah, of what cruel wound—stretched on the plain,
His tender spirit passed, thinking of thee and me.
Can it be so? this void—this sore, sore famine
In my soul, where 'twas so full before? Would,
Then, that memory were slain!—
I do remember him when he left; as he
Passed thro' that door he turned and looked on me.

CHILD.

Am I not like him, mother?
I've heard you say my hair and eyes were his.

MOTHER.

With one of those yellow locks I worked
A silken wreath of flowers on his vest!
Oh, dreary War! was it unto thy sacrifice
That I was born, and that those clustered blessings
Grew about my former life? I did not think,
As year by year they multiplied and hemmed
Me in, one bitter stroke at length should crush
Them all and me.

CHILD.

Was it a victory, mother, this
Great battle?

MOTHER.

Yes, to some.

CHILD.

And are they glad now, mother?
Do they now rejoice?

MOTHER.

They could not if they knew
How many hearts are broken now, that were
Both whole and full of happiness.

CHILD.

Shall I not learn to be a soldier,
And kill them some day, as they killed
My father?

MOTHER.

No, my love; remember your poor mother's words:
Be not a soldier. Many are who would not e'er;

Yet do they not unfold to its full length
War's list of woes, that they may read them all.
It is, in truth, a trade that prospers most
In making such as you see me; such as
You are. Nor do I know, if we would live
Strict by that Word I daily teach to you,
How we can fit War's spirit and its deeds
To th' written teachings of the Prince of Peace.

THE CHRISTIAN'S WARFARE.

NOT with the giant's sword,
But with the smooth stones from the running brook
The Christian fights. From the bright east, where the
Sun starts at morn, 'neath his whole circle till he
Comes again, lies spread the battle-field.
Foes, leagued with those without, are in his heart;
They couch, like beasts of prey, in his own flesh,
Yet doth he fight alone each warrior,
Winning his way across this wilderness.
It is a war of hidden single combats:
Not, as with the visible hosts of this world,
Gathered in array in gorgeous dress,
Glittering with arms and waving banners:
Th' unmarshalled host of Christ is scattered wide
Through every land; each unknown soldier
To his separate place of trial and of danger:

With the oppressed are they in prisons
And deep dungeons; with the sick in hospitals,
Or laid on lonely beds of languishing;
Or midst the seeming blessedness of the rich
(For not alone in suffering, yet chiefly there
God hath his servants); but, where'er it be,
Each hath his foes forever round him;
Each is oft o'ercome and seems defenceless,
Yet is he armed anew invisibly,
And, by the help of God, keeps fighting on,
Taking his daily part in that great conflict
Which is waged within a million hearts
O'er this wide world, through ev'ry passing hour.

Thou Hero of this world, who from some eminence,
With telescope and eye serene dost watch
The bloody field, ordering the battle;
Pointing, by thy command, ten thousand bayonets
Into ten thousand bleeding hearts; planting
The dread artillery to sweep from earth,
In lifeless, mutilated heaps, warm breathing forms,
That shall be wept for thro' long years to come
In far off, blighted, desolated homes—
Thy victory to me is not like his,

Whoe'er he be, who, shut within his closet,
Wrestles with his own evil heart, and so
By grace doth conquer as to bring it back,
Broken and meek, to Him from whom by sin
It fell, back to his fellow-man, from whom
Thro' sin it was estranged.

1
AFTER DEATH.

METHOUGHT I stood above my own green grave,
My spirit coming back in viewless shape
After this house of mortal flesh was laid
In the damp earth. The myrtle and the blue
Forget-me-not covered the narrow mound.
Then from that sober eminence I looked
Back on my life, as on a vanished dream.
I said: "For this decaying body lying here,
A little dust and a few mouldering bones,
What empty, vain solicitude I felt,
Decking it oftentimes, that it might seem
More comely in men's sight. How daintily
'Twas fed; how richly clothed: each smallest spot
Of earth was wiped off from its costly dress:
It walked with a proud step; it mingled with
Most gentle company (who lie scattered
Around it now). Then I would heap up wealth

For it, and build a palace for its mansion;
So that it had no rest thro' many years.
Poor clod of earth! now buried out of sight—
How didst thou toil, and ache, and suffer
To lie here. O Life! thou fleeting space
Of a few days and hours, given us
Before we come thro' the grave's narrow gate
Into Eternity, had I thee once again,
How diff'rently would I use thee. Looking back,
I see thy harvests of instruction and
Blest opportunity waving unreaped
About my path, while I did gather only
Poisonous weeds, and in the future I behold
A judgment for which I am unprepared.
I am a naked soul without a robe
To wrap me in! my secret sins uncovered,
And the dread of that great day when God
Shall look on me, fills me with terror thro'
This sleepless state of being."

Then I thought

One came to me and asked, with pitying voice,
"Who art thou, and what dost thou here?" I said:
"A disembodied and lost spirit, weeping
Above the grave of that poor flesh which clothed

Me once; for which, alas! I lived alone.
It, buried here, is dead; and, through corruption,
Doth return to its original senseless elements;
But I still live; for me there is no death,
Save that eternal woe for which I wait."

He, looking lovingly, again thus spake:

"If I will now reanimate this dust,
Causing the heart to beat once more, and the
Warm blood to flow, giving thee for a season
Back to life again, wilt thou turn from
That present evil world and follow me?"

I answered: "Art thou He who died for me?"

And as I spake, lo! I beheld his wounds.

Then at his feet I prostrate fell and cried:

"If thou wilt give me back the life I've lost,
And with it grace to follow thee, I will
Be thine alone, and thou shalt be my God.
The world seeking to tempt me, nor the flesh
With its unnumbered evil longings, nor
My spiritual enemy shall ever win me
From thy love."

I waked from my deep vision
To my daily toil, and the returned realities
Of life—yet to a different life, for I —

Had seen, in that mysterious hour, *the End*,
And realized how worthless, then, Pleasure's banquet,
Or the imaginary heights of Fame, or Wealth,
Or station; and how better and how sweet
It was, to have a friend to meet me on
That shore, where the poor soul must land alone
From Jordan's flood. Now, with my cares and labors
Day by day I mingle prayer and praise,
Receiving in return those heavenly influences
Which help the Christian thro' this warring time,
Giving him fortitude and strength, and often
Secret draughts of joy.

THE INTERIOR OF THE HEART.

IN the still night as I lay on my bed,
Thoughts from the day still preventing sweet sleep,
Tho' she waited by my couch with her veil
Of Forgetfulness, willing with gentle hand
To cast it o'er my wearied form, One* came
To my chamber holding a burning light;
He raised it o'er my head, looking down on me,
And motionless stood gazing, as to view
Mine inmost soul. In that strange interview,
As between the voiceless, shrouded dead,
Fear bound my limbs, and troubled thoughts my tongue.
I marvelled whom he was, at dead of night,
Breaking thus uninvited on my rest.
But soon I saw his form, so clothed in majesty
He seemed to wear such dignity from heaven,

* The Spirit that convicts the heart.

The questionings of my heart were turned to awe.
“Not of the earth,” then said I, “but from where
The blue vault shutteth out man’s feeble sight
Thou’rt come to me, who am unworthy of
Thy presence. Command or lead the way,
Thy power is o’er the soul, adoring I obey.”

It was along some unknown path* he led,
Once beautiful, I judged, but blighted now.
There hung the withered vine with shrunken clusters,
And the olive cast her fruit upon the earth.
I saw there multitudes of faded flowers,
Parched, as it had been, in their early bloom—
The lily of the valley and the rose
Of Sharon. No songs of birds came out from
The dead boughs, or insects’ voices from the ground.
I seemed to walk in autumn, but it was
An autumn more intense than that which strips
From Nature’s form her delicate summer robes
Ere Winter cometh with his storms.

Soon came we where an archway thro’ a rock
Rose o’er our path, spanning two brazen gates.

* Our first serious thoughts.

The massive stone frowned down with look impregnable.
As we approached, beneath its gloomy shade
I saw one* watching. Covered o'er with mail
He sat, as of the rock, lone and immovable.
While hidden yet from sight our footsteps fell
Upon his ear. He rose with shield and sword,
But as we came full on his view he fled.
Then, drawing near, my guide knocked thrice upon
The rugged brass. His heavy strokes resounded,
But none came to answer them; at which
I, being fearful, said, "How shall we enter,
Seeing there is none to open to us?"
He answered not, but turned with looks of love
That did illumine all my heart; then led
To where, a little earth removed, revealed
A secret spring.† 'Twas slight, and to the eye
Seemed powerless; but when by his command
I touched it, lo! the pond'rous doors gave way,
Admitting us unharmed.

Now following at his side, on entering,
I saw he covered o'er the lamp he held,

* The sinner's fear of conversion.

† Prayer, as taught by the Holy Spirit.

So that its searching rays were shed upon
My path no more; and then at once darkness
So thick o'ershadowed me, I was bereft
Of sight; but, soon uncov'ring it in part,
Dimly I saw, stretching each way, a plain.
No wall or boundary was visible
On either side, but all round and above
The gloom deepened to utter darkness.
Far in the centre shone a gleam of light.
Thither the angel led, and thro' th' obscurity
We passed, like spirits through the realms of death.
As we drew near the light it flickered round
Our feet. Then I beheld 'twas from a fire
Burning on an altar in the midst.
Beside it there was one* of fiend-like shape,
And hue dark as the night, save where the blaze,
Reflected, lighted all one side his form.
As we approached, not seeing us, he stood,
And with his waving wings did fan the flames.
They rose in crimson wreaths, illumining
A wide, deep circle round and o'er us—
A red chasm in the black abyss.
Here paused we, and I heard his voice thus cry:

* The evil spirit, that reigns in the natural heart.

“Burn, burn, forever burn! no other light
Than thine, dread fire, e'er enter here. I love
This gloom; all evil do I love; all good
I hate. Deep as these depths my love, but deep
As hell my hate.” Then said I to the spirit
Who had led me, “Is not this a mansion
In that dreadful place whither those souls
Are sent who die unreconciled to God?”
He answered, “Not yet may'st thou know all of
The things thou see'st. Gather the sheaves first from
The field, then seek to separate the fruit
Within them hid.” Now, as we silent stood,
The fiend, touched with an inward dread instinctive,
Turned, and as he turned, beheld the angel.
At the beautiful, lovely sight he trembled,
Drawing back as if with horror filled,
Then prostrate fell, and with his wings uplifted,
Covered all his black and hideous length.
I looked upon him prostrate. At my side
The Angel stood, in radiant majesty.
I thought, “O Sin, how fathomless the depths
To which thou 'rt fallen! Holiness, how beautiful
Thy garb, still pure and without spot, in hell
Or heaven!”

T'wards th' impenetrable darkness
That all round set limit to our sight
The angel turned. His lamp shed but dim light,
Not going before or following after us
With piercing ray, but casting o'er our pathway
A pale beam, lighting each step. I followed
Wondering, nor without dread, upon
The unknown track. But with me was no strength
To turn or stay. Drawn helpless, I was taught
There is a Power that, without visible bounds
Or seen restraint, reigns o'er the soul supreme.
Now came we to a broad and winding way
That upward led, by many steps ascending.
Ruinous it was, as though untrod,
Save by the viewless wasting steps of years;
Yet from the vestiges of grandeur there
I knew 'twas worthy once for kings to walk on.
As we reached its summit a wide plain
Stretched in a measureless circle on our view,
And o'er it ghostlike* forms from far and near
Fled thro' the dim light to the deeper gloom.
Upon this plane I walked to its inner verge;
And saw, beneath the altar, He who tended it

* Our natural evil passions and dispositions.

Was risen again, and fed its sleepless fires.
Thence following the angel far back through
The darkness, I was led until a wall,
Like to the barriers of some rocky fortress,
Rose before us, limiting our steps.
Against this wall my guide held up his lamp.
I saw where once it had been covered with
Inscriptions,* but their import now was lost.
Dimmed by the dust of ages and th' erasures
Of decay, I could discern no word
On all its sullied and mysterious page.
Then said I, "May I know concerning this
Which now thou showest me?" He answered, "These
Were words of wisdom, written here in gold.
Thou 'st heard how glorious, on Zion's top,
The temple shone, covered with Ophir's costly offerings?
This was more glorious. The temple's dress
Was of the earth, put on by mortal hands.
Here, as a mantle, heavenly Truth was spread—
Spread by the hand of God. The precious treasures
There shone in dumb splendor; here they spoke
With an inspired tongue. But now their voice
Goeth forth no more—their glory is departed."

* The law of God, as originally written on our hearts.

Passing on, we walking came to where
A beautiful garment* lay spread o'er our path.
'Twas as though he who once was clothed in it
Had by the hand of death been taken away,
Leaving it as he died. I lingered here.
The angel said, "Lay not thine hand on it,
But look upon it, mark it well." His lamp
Then shed its brighter light, and near my feet
I saw a snowy robe. At th' loosened neck
There hung a clasp made of one goodly pearl;
No other ornament it bore through all
Its length, save its own spotless hue. Now as
I gazed a change came o'er it. Gradually
It grew transparent to my sight.
Then I beheld this robe had been a covering,
For underneath, hid by its radiant folds,
Glittered a suit of armor.† There the breastplate
Shone like burnished gold; the girdle lay as it
Encircled him with strength who once had worn it.
I beheld, as laid aside but yesterday,
The helmet, covered o'er with heavenly hues.
The shield was small and white, like to some cloud
That floats, a spot of silver in the sky.

* Man's original purity.

† The protection that was in our original innocence.

Then, when I had looked on it, I said, "Oh! dress
To be desired; would that my soul might here
Disrobe and put it on." "Thou see'st with
An eye of flesh," the angel answered:

"Beautiful it seemeth, but its heavenly temper
Hath all gone. Lay now thy hand upon it;
Know its strength." I stooped to touch it:
At my touch it fell to thinnest dust!

As some once cherished form that long hath lain
Hid in the grave, spared by the wasting worm,
And marred not by decay; keeping the freshness
Of the first days of death, so that when one
With filial love doth come to reincase
The treasured bones, he looks, startled, astonished,
On a father's face, and, ere he mark it well,
Its features, touched by th' air, are lost,
Dissolving into shapeless earth again—
So fell this beautiful garment from my sight!
The eye still sought for it, but found only
A little heap of dust. Over my heart
As a thick cloud a heavy sadness came.

"For a brief space," the angel said, "yet farther
Will I lead. Fear not, but follow in my steps."
Then o'er another wide and ruinous way

We passed, ascending to another plain
Like that we 'd left. Here as we walked I saw
The forms of many harps.* Veiled by the shade,
They seemed most fair, as tho' th' invisible strings
Might utter harmony in all its voices
From those delicate notes, scarce heard, that as
The softened tints of early dawn delight us,
To those deeper tones that thrill the soul
Like richer splendors when departs the day.
I looking on them said, "Oh, thou who know'st
Those sweet celestial songs that angels sing,
Is there not one among these thou may'st strike
And with its music cheer my drooping heart?"
Then as before, his lamp shed brilliant rays—
The harps that in the gloom appeared so fair,
Were ruinous with decay. As the light brightened,
From their tops, with sable wings outspread,
Flew startled birds—unclean birds of the night—
That rested there unseen. The delicate chords
Were all enwrapt with heavy mould. Entwined
About them, serpents, now disturbed, lifted
Their heads, with darting tongues and eyes of fire.
When I found utterance I trembling cried,

* Praise, as offered from the unfallen heart.

“Tell me, O angel, thro’ what mighty wreck
Thou leadest me? where darkness and corruption
Have come o’er such exquisite things, sitting
Triumphant amid ruins not like those
Of earth, the place of their inheritance,
But, as it were, somewhere in heaven’s domain.”
He, speaking not, led on with rapid step
To the plane’s verge. There on the fearful brink
We paused. Far, far beneath, as in the depths
Of hell, I saw once more th’ ascending flames:
Their red glare, struggling up thro’ the abyss,
Scarce reached our dizzy height. “Look now above,”
The angel said. I lifted up my eyes
And saw as ’twere the rayless countenance
Of night spread over us. While I thus gazed
He, turning to me, said, “Light once shone down
As a pure flood where now thou lookest:
Its descending glories then were met
By kindred beams that rose from off the altar;
For where now thou sec’st Sin’s deadly minister
Dwelt One most holy. Those spirits that fled
From thy sight, hiding in darkness,
Then were clothed in robes like that beneath,
Nor feared to walk in th’ sight of God, for he
Had made them pure and saw in them no fault.

Then did these harps resound to their sweet songs.
This place was near to heaven; its blest inhabitants
Dwelt beneath heaven's light, amid its peace.
Such had their happy lot forever been,
But that they turned from Him who did create them.

Shorn of all strength to harm the steadfast soul,
Thither temptation came. The Tempter stood
Without. He might not rend th' etherial bolts
That Power Divine had placed to guard these portals,
But his voice sent in, mingled with th' notes of praise,
Pleading for entrance. Then these spirits listen'd
To his voice, and listening believed: they
Of themselves unbarred the gates no enemy
Might force. Oh, what estate was then to sorrow
Given! God's Spirit took his flight. With power
The Tempter entered. Into bondage he cast
Those who had admitted him, and they became
His slaves; yet not unwillingly. Polluted
By his presence; with his thoughts infused
Into their minds, they learned to love his ways.
Behold the change that sin hath wrought! They who
Once basked in heaven's beams now hate the light,
And it is taken from them. Here, shut up
In darkness with the one they love to serve,

With him they work all evil. Yet do I
Not leave them, as they've chosen thus to perish.
Even in this place my Witness* dwells,
But heeded not, and often quite cast out.
Sometimes I come and preach the words of Life.
Then, if they hear, I bind the Fiend in chains,
Open their windows once again to light,
Which shall at length shine in more glorious streams
Than ere they fell. For that day cometh, when
From ev'ry soul that hath returned to me
All stain and spot of sin shall be quite purged,
And holiness and joy shall fill it full.
But when they will not hear, I do at last
Call hence my witness, and myself return
No more, leaving them to their doom.

* Conscience.

THE TWO GRAVES.

HERE are two graves with flowers overgrown,
No monument doth tell who lies beneath,
Or how the swift-winged years have come and flown
Since they were laid here by the hand of death.

Yet was there once a time when, smooth and green,
This sod unbroken lay in the cool shade—
Renewed each spring its grassy dress was seen,
Till autumn frosts returning, made it fade.

This virgin soil, that ne'er was broke before,
To dust received those who of dust were born,
Then closed again, to be disturbed no more
Till they shall rend it on the Judgment morn.

And I, a wand'rer on a toilsome way,
To view this quiet resting-place am brought,
And lingering here as fades the summer's day,
Find mid its quiet beauties food for thought.

Though still and lonely now, I do not doubt
There has another scene been witnessed here,
When from the stricken heart deep grief flowed out,
And where these flowers spring fell the bitter tear.

But now perchance the stricken heart is gone,
That yearned for those who lie beneath this spot;
Perchance of all who tread the earth, not one
Remembereth their image or their lot.

And this is but the common fate of all;
The world forgets us, though we loved it well;
And the few kindred hearts that weep our fall,
Soon following us, are fallen where we fell.

It is not, then, upon your earthly state,
Ye nameless slumb'ers who lie here at rest,
That lingering thus I muse and meditate
As fades the day along the golden west.

Though ye had many lovers and few foes,
 Though wealth with jewell'd splendor clothed your
 brow,
Though ye were poor, and suffered all the woes
 Of keenest want, what doth it matter now?

Earth's sorrows and her sweetest joys forgot,
 The things ye sought in vain and those ye won,
That pitied and that envied in your lot
 Are now alike all gone, forever gone.

Not to the fleeting things of Time, which die
 As the frail body yieldeth up its breath,
Thought turns her silent retrospective eye,
 But to the soul, the soul that knows no death.

Were ye among the lowly and the meek,
 Whose new-born hearts are filled with heavenly love?
Did ye pass by earth's empty charms, and seek
 A purer portion in the realms above?

It may be that the lowly path of prayer
 Across life's waste these mould'ring feet have trod,
And, cheered by faith, thro' all this night of care
 With joyful steps they hasten'd home to God.

In sweetest slumber rests the weary head,
If Jesus the still watches o'er it keep;
More soft than couch of down this narrow bed,
When here he giveth his beloved sleep.

THE STREETS AT MIDNIGHT.

How still and cold it is to-night!
The moon hath hid her silver light;
But all the lesser hosts burn bright,
From east to west.

Now from the lone, deserted street
There comes no sound of busy feet;
The crowds that here by day I meet
Are gone to rest.

Ah! what a change the night brings on;
She claims all nature for her own:
Nor in the outward world alone
We feel her sway.

He who at morn, in eager haste,
With thronging multitudes here pressed,
Now, thoughtful, o'er a gloomy waste
Pursues his way.

Hark! through the still and wintry air
A sound by day I scarce can hear
Booms through the darkness loud and clear—
The clock tolls one.

And answers from each neighboring bell,
From tower to tower in chorus swell,
Till the last laggard sounds the knell,
And all are done.

Who watches o'er the slumb'rer's bed
While lies at rest his weary head?
Is it the man whose measured tread
I hear draw nigh?

Oh no; there is an unseen Power
That guards this sweet unconscious hour,
And, while night's shadows round us lower,
Stoops from on high.

Now looking on the worlds above,
My thoughts in paths celestial move,
Musing on one whom still I love,
 Though from me gone.

I think how glorious, how bright
That City where she walks in light;
There is no slumber, there no night,
 Her work is done.

Yet was she once a pilgrim here,
Compassed, like me, with many a care;
Clouds round her pathway gathered near,
 The way seemed long.

But, on a dark and suffering day,
As sank the flesh amidst decay,
Angels her spirit bore away
 To join their song.

She spoke not, saw not as she passed,
Death had so dark a shadow cast
O'er the flickering flame at last,
 And quenched her sight.

But by the life that she had led,
We knew, while weeping round her, dead,
When her sweet spirit from us fled,
 Whither its flight.

Not that she sinless lived, or won
Salvation by her works. Alone,
Oh! none shall stand before Thy throne
 And be forgiven.

Wrapt in Christ's Righteousness, by Faith
She lived; she yielded up her breath;
In Him she triumphed over death,
 And entered heaven.

TO HIM WHO LOVES TO MEDITATE.

WHEN pausing by the wayside, filled with thought,
The inner chamber of thy heart is still,
And by the whisp'ring spirit thou art taught
They are the blest who do their Maker's will—

When as it were by some celestial hand
The veil is lifted up which hides from sight
The hill of Zion and that pilgrim band
Who climb its pathway towards the realms of light—

And as their songs of praise are echoed back,
Thine doth follow them afar, to find
Among the trav'lers on that heavenward track,
Brothers and friends who have left thee behind—

When thy soul's rescue seems almost begun,
Looking aloft, she craves a portion there,
And, stretching forth her arms, she longs for one
Of those white robes which Jesus' followers wear—

Know that it is not of thyself they spring,
These deep unearthly longings; to thy heart
Full messages of love from One they bring,
Who woos thee thus "to choose the better part."

WIER AND BERTHA.

SCENE—The open country beside a river.

WIER.

From this place let us watch the setting sun—
There is a glory in his slow departing
That brings to mind the bright path of the soul
Thro' death's dim twilight to a better world.

BERTHA.

These sunset beauties do give heavenly colors
To our thoughts. Yet of those thoughts how little
Can we speak! Language draws not the veil
From th' inmost heart; much is left hidden there.

WIER.

'Tis kindly ordered so. By utt'rance, and
That deep discerning sympathy which springeth

From inward likeness, both in good and evil,
We look as far into each other's breasts
As tendeth to our happiness. Our nature
Is fall'n. There are dregs in bottom of
The cup best unrevealed, save to His eye
Who 'th more than human charity for our faults.

BERTHA.

Yet from the heart that is regenerate,
Enough of good doth overflow to nourish
Warmest affection—love that sweetens life—
Such love as I bear thee.

WIER.

I know thou lovest me. Not as
The ignorant youth who falls before some idol,
A phantom of his own imagination—
But invested with some fair familiar
Form of flesh. Such love hath no real substance;
Touch it with th' rude hand of actual life,
It fades. But we may number now our years
Of wedded union; thou know'st my faults,
And lovest me still.

BERTHA.

Ah! well we know the secret of
This difference. Our love, at its first spring
Nurtured in prayer, now in its later summer
Hath become like a fair vine planted by
Living waters, daily bearing fresh fruit,
And springing up more beautiful. If ever,
For an hour, some leaf upon it fades, through
Nature's imperfection, grace soon restores
Its hue, and, from its topmost tender bud
Even to the root, 'tis green.

WIER.

Here, then, together let us lift our hearts
To Him who reared for us this vine.

BERTHA.

It is a fitting place, amid his visible works,
Which, though they have no voices, glorify
His name.

WIER.

Even voiceless nature would teach man, and she
Doth lure him from th' unquiet world into
Her solitary haunts, that he may learn of her.

Each object hath instruction for him here,
And every leaflet is a mute example.
Look on these waters flowing at our feet—
They have their mission, and from age to age
Fulfil it, nourishing their fruitful borders.
And most delicate and varied moss
Doth cloak the barren rock that guards the stream.
Bring the proud man t' this little blade of grass;
A thousand years ago one such as it
Grew here, and, withering, dropt its seed
Into the ground, from whence this sprang.
Can he boast such a line?
Ah! what a poor foundation doth he build
The towering structure of his pride upon!

BERTHA.

And yet how many, thinking they love Nature,
But learning not ev'n the first of all those lessons
She would teach them—that there is a God—
Do worship her; raising her to the place
Of Him she points to.

WIER.

There are such, but unto them
How has the crystal stream turned stagnant,

And the bloom and smile that earth puts on
Changed to a frown! Th' eloquent and fair face
Of Creation loseth its beauty, and is
Meaningless to him who loves not God.

This morning, as I climb'd the mountain top,
Following th' steep path, scarce discernible,
In the deep shade upon its rugged side
I found a smooth green spot where wild flowers grew.
Thick branches met above it, and all round
At a brief distance I was quite shut in
By varied foliage. The evening's rain
Had freshened all the herbage of the wood;
No sound was there save nature's, and I knew
No human eye looked on it but my own.
'Twas perfect solitude! I deeply felt,
Yes, beyond utterance, the beauties of the scene,
And, as with opened lips, my spirit breathed
And drank them in. But after the first draught
Came a revulsion and a thirst. Canst thou
Tell whence they came? 'Twas even thus.
Having looked upon God's works, I longed for Him;
And to the touching charms that filled the place
I said: "Ye impart a joy the purest earth
Can give me, but earth has not that to give
Which nourishes and satisfies the soul."

And here the blind idolator of nature
Had fall'n into despondency and grief,
As having tasted of her purest fount,
And climbed unto her most exalted summit,
Only to find there dearth and barrenness:
But thro' these natural bowers I passed
To higher scenes, ev'n to commune with Him
Who did create them. There I worshipped him,
And sang his praise, alone, in that sweet solitude,
Until the leafy covert did become
A hallowed temple, spiritualized and filled
With his most Holy Presence.

Blest is his discourse with nature
Whom Faith accompanies as interpreter.
Her beauties, all uncovered to his view,
Stand witnesses of infinite love and power;
And in their midst, as in a higher world,
He adores with burning, purified desires,
Compared with which these words of mine to thee
Are cold as th' falling snow. But thou need'st not
To hear them from my lips; thou 'st felt them in
Thy heart, and know'st them all.

BERTHA.

Truly in my lone walks among these hills
I've worshipped oft, rejoicing in the hope
That when their wooded heights shall bloom no more
For me, I then shall be with Him of whom
Each flower as in a whisper, and each bold
Terrific precipice as with a louder voice
(But not more moving to my heart) doth speak.
Sometimes I walk in heaviness, weeping
Beneath my load of sin; but there is joy
Even in thus weeping at my Master's feet.
Who that hath known it but would choose
Religion's tears before all others' smiles?
If God hath made a world of sin so beautiful,
Then what must heaven be?

WIER.

How doth the Spirit give to us new sight,
That penetrates within the mere outside
Of things about us! We behold the mystery
Of which all visible things are but the covering,
And of which, to the new opened eye, all
Speak. I love to walk with thee beside
Truth's placid stream, tracing it to its source.

New views break in upon our upward path,
And precious jewels lie about our feet.
He gathers more of Wisdom, tho' unlearned,
Who searches for her in humility,
Spreading the net of prayer with faith towards heaven,
Than all who seek her by some prouder way.
How many a midnight hour of deep research,
How many a lofty flight on Fancy's wing
Hath been in vain! Ye who in other days
Soared on the pinions of sublimest thought
Till all the earth looked up and gazed
In admiration, tell us, doth the fame
Ye won console and comfort now? Is it
A pillow or a downy couch beyond
The grave? Ah! 'twas not worth the price ye paid.
Truth learned too late! Ye've grasped a phantom, thrown
Away a soul. Genius, how hast thou sold
Thy more than golden heritage for naught!
When I look on thy monuments, and thine
Sweet poesy, whom I love, I mourn so few
Among the laurelled columns thou hast reared
Are dedicated to the Lord. Gorgeous
Thy Temple, but to other gods than He
Who gave to thee each talent; not that thou
Shouldst thus exalt and beautify thyself,

But with angelic power tell of his glory
To thy fellow-men.

Thou ever first in song! who climbed so well
Fame's loftiest height, and still unreached dost stand,
In thy lone grandeur, on that cloudy peak,
Envied as thou art, and idolized from age to age,
I had rather be in this green vale below,
An unknown little child in Christ, than thee.
True wisdom is a second birth, and separate
From that by which the intellect, arrayed
In fallen splendor, waketh into being.
He who is richest in mere gifts of mind,
Hath no more skill to guide his soul aright
Than he who's poorest: both are destitute
Of that renewing beam, which, shed from heaven
Into the heart, illumines it with light,
And without which all walk in darkness,
Never finding out the way of life. Here
Is the condemnation, that this light
Is offered us, but we love darkness more.

Of all th' unnumbered ways
We choose to walk in, one alone is right;
And this one seems to be the steepest
And most barren of them all. But those

Who follow it, tell of its wondrous beauty,
And declare that cooling fountains and
Celestial fruit spring all along its course.
Yet men believe them not. It is a way
Narrow, hemmed in, and hidden from the world.
One walked there long ago, who in his day
Was filled with grief. Men hated him, and all
His offence was, love. They crowned him with sharp
 thorns,
And led him forth bearing his cross in pageantry
Of shame. Yet was he meek and unresisting,
Even to the gates of death; but as he
Passed thro' them, his bonds fell off, and he became
A King. Now on his throne, the Conqueror
Of Death, the Prince of Life, he reigns in heaven.
His followers have ever walked upon
This path; they share the sufferings he bore,
But, all enduring to the end, are glorified
With him. This is the path, my love, whereon
I trust we walk; and is it not, ev'n with
Its cross, the path of happiness?

LOVE.

WHEN I look around and see
The glories that encompass me—
The earth, with beauty mantled o'er;
The sea, that rolls from shore to shore;
 The starry sky above—
Then when I look within and find
T' enjoy all these a deathless mind,
 My heart is filled with love.

When by the grave I thoughtful stand,
Gazing towards that far-off land
Whither, when these are lost to sight,
My soul must wing its silent flight
 Beyond the sky above—
Then when I think that, waiting there,
I have a home than this more fair,
Prepared for me without my care,
 My heart o'erflows with love.

Who did prepare all these for me—
The blooming earth, the heaving sea,
The mind that marks each beauty here,
And waits in faith, from year to year,
 For better things above?
'Twas Thou, O Saviour of my soul,
Who, ere this earth began to roll,
Guided through space by thy control,
 Hadst chosen me in love.

Oh, precious love! it marked my way
Thro' trials to eternal day,
And now I feel its unseen hand
Guiding me to that calm, blest land
 This vale of tears above.
What are these trials, then, to me?
Beyond their fleeting space I see
A blissful, pure eternity
 Of perfect, perfect love.

GRIEF,

WITHOUT THE LIGHT, AND WITH IT.

SCENE—A closed room—A dead child lying upon a couch.

THE FATHER (*alone*).

How far the rumbling in the street sounds off!
The world has changed to me since yesterday.
Death puts his dart into the tenderest spot,
And leaves it there. The deep foundations of
My soul are jarred and shaken out of place.
I saw a wall of loose worn stones. A vine
Grew on its top. Its tender roots had filled
The crevices that time had emptied. When
I rudely sought to snatch it, the wall fell.
So am I fallen. This dead lovely vine
Grew thus on the bare summit of my years,

And thus was torn from me. I do not live;
'Tis but the outward semblance; in my soul
'Tis cold!

Speak, precious one; cheat robber Death!
I loved thee with a love he could not reach
With the keenest of his quiver to give 't a wound.
Why then shouldst thou, the embodied, taintless form
Of the soul's pure, undying passion, yield?

Here lies her little hand, so yielding to
My will. Where'er I place it, there it rests.
Her sweet soft fingers, each a separate death,
Lie still in one of mine, yet clasp it not.
Her lips are closed. Methinks if 'twere the lips
Of one grown up, tho' dearest in the world,
They would not break the mourner's heart like these:
For all who 're grown we 've sometime seen look sad;
But these I never saw look sad before.
They called me "Father" yesterday, and smiled.
Oh, 'tis unnatural! If 'twere but that
My right arm were torn off, and then my left,
And my limbs maimed, that I might never rise,
And all my wealth, to its last cent, were gone,
I had not cared. But thou hast found me out,
Op'd the deep sanctuary of my soul,

And robbed it! In my fold I had one lamb;
 One tender flower made lovely all my earth.
 Who art thou, Death, that tookest them? or why,
 In taking, didst thou leave their semblance decked,
 To kill ev'n grief, and not sweep rather all?
 Is there no king o'er thee? O blank, blank, blank,
 This is the cloud that shuts out all the light!
 As one stone blind, I roll my eyes in vain,
 Seeking the clue! The reins of Providence
 Are tangled, or else held by hands in hell.
 What shall I do? oh! whither shall I turn?
 Do I live? Am I an endowed being?
 Or, in truth, a thought—some bitter, wand'ring thought?
 I nothing know but this, that off from life
 The painted, shallow covering hath been taken,
 And beneath a black gulf yawns upon me.
 To its unknown depths I'll her consign,
 And so at death leap in myself.—

O clod

That lieth in the valley, would that I
 Were thee! O creeping worm—O anything
 That cannot feel or think, would I were thee!
 For I am in the dark. Some unknown hand
 Bears rule o'er me, and is a tyrant. Life
 And Death are met within my soul,
 And, like two rayless floods, do overwhelm me.

*SCENE—The same.*THE MOTHER (*alone*).

The last rays lie the softest on a cloud,
And so they lie on thee! I might ev'n think
'Twas life, or rather some sad spirit that,
When thine took flight, crept in thy vacant form.
To this sweet shape thou grewest in my arms,
And on my breast. Oh! every part calls back
Some hours gone, till all the multitude
Seems here with me. I watched a winter's sky
After a stormy day: 'twas shrouded all
In black, save one small spot that each cloud shunned.
There burn'd one constant star. But while I gazed
'Twas covered suddenly, and not a ray shone down.
Thus unto me earth's last light is gone out.
O grief that is not told, but secret kept
In mothers' hearts, how shall I find thee room?
From out these closed-up eyes a spirit looked
That loved me: not with gradual decay,
Which is the hist'ry of most human love,
But more and more it loved me each blest day.
About this time each morning on my knee

She smiling sat. I combed her hair. I dressed
Her tender form. Methinks that love and grief,
Like sisters, wait by turns upon us here.
Three nights ago—only three nights ago—
Her gentle voice entered my slumb'ring ear.
It trembled and seemed fearful. I arose,
And thro' the darkness deep stole to her bed.
When by her side I laid she crept up close,
And, confident, all fear gone, said, "Dear mother!"
Can it be? So great a change so soon?
It was a living, beautiful form of flesh,
Holding within its bosom a loved soul:
Death now hath one; the other is quite gone!
Here, by the dumb, cold witness of my grief
I'd lay me down and die, but—thro' the dark
I see. No doubt or speck obscures my gaze
When I look up. The vast machinery
Is perfect, and Death has his own small space.
I do believe that He hath ta'en this soul
Who said: "Forbid them not—of such is heaven."
Is it so sweet a world, oh aching heart,
Thou wouldst have had her live to taste of it?
What was that faithless thought of thine each day,
But that when Death should stand beside thy couch
'Twould be the point o' his dart to leave her here?

Oh! 'twas a faithless thought! 'tis shown to me.
Cease, foolish tears! Yet 'tis a deep, wide void.
Ah! ye may flow; but cease, my soul, to weep;
Thou hast lost nothing. Since 'twas told to thee
She should be born, she was born in thy prayers.

In her young mind there seemed one special beam
That lighted up such depths of holy truth
As tender years not often look into.
I told of the new-born heart, and oft
She knelt and prayed for it. I held the glass
To conscience, and she looked in it and wept.
Tho' all that men have added to 't was hid,
Yet in clear light it seemed to me she saw
The simple cross, and loved him who hung there.

Away then, ye dark hosts that, thronging up
From the abyss, would compass me. Heaven opens!
Grief is a golden key that lets me in
To nearer converse. I did fear this was
A most rude shock to shake faith from its place;
But I beheld it is a Master's hand
Settling it firmer—fixing as a rock.
O sorrow! that would crush the oppressed spirit,
Thou 'rt made to be th' unwilling messenger

Of healing. While I weep, yet more do I
Rejoice, for all thy wounds shall be restored,
Ev'n with the balm that thou thyself dost bring;
And on my new and spiritual body
No scar of thine, or this sad war's remain.

IS THERE WITHIN THE MOUNT.

Is there, within the mount that covereth
From sight all thy fore-ordered purposes,
Some vein of silver or of golden ore
That I must give my brief life to dig out?
I am thy servant—lead me to my work.
Help me, O Father! I am but a servant.
Let me not forget when, midst lone labor,
Some rich mass first glitters in my sight—
Or later, when I shall have brought it forth,
And men applaud me, that I'm but a servant.
The gold is not mine, nor did I place
It there. At thy appointed time I come,
As a day lab'rer, to uncover it,
And then go to my place. What matters it
Where lies my task? Sweet is thy service,
Whether in the vale, or on the mountain height.
Yet in time past I've trembled to look up,

Danger seemed clinging to the far-off steep;
 But I have learned that earthly heights or depths
 Are nothing in thy sight: thine angel campeth
 On the untrod snows, as mid the low flowers
 Of the valley, round him who serves Thee.

Come, then,
 Ye feeble train, ye powers of my mind,
 However feeble, and however few,
 Come! unto Him who calleth you do reverence.
 And thou, Imagination, doff the coat
 Of fleeting, gaudy colors thou lov'st to wear,
 And, Reason, unbend thou thy haughty brow;
 And, ye soft Sentiment and Sensibility,
 No more sit weeping thus at fancied woe;
 For every hand or subtile faculty
 That God hath made there is some work to do.

O World! how little thou know'st of the heart
 That hath been changed! Believe it not—I know
 Thou wilt believe it not, for argument
 Cannot take the film off from the blind eye;
 Yet will I tell thee that to such a heart
 Those motives that to thee like giant trees
 Spread thro' all space and seem to pierce ev'n heaven,

Are withered to poor weeds! Not that they have
No lodgement; but they are as things rank, vile,
That by the roots we would obliterate
From newly watered, cluster-bearing soil.

THE RIVER.

FAR down the pebbly beach I walk alone;
The deep, wide river floweth by my side;
Green boughs bend o'er me. Oh, loved Solitude!
Hark from the boughs! 'tis the wood-robin's note.
Sweet bird, thou speakest unto me; I know
Who sent thee here.

Over the river now
The meadows look like velvet, and the woods
In rich dark clusters stretch to th' edge of sight,
Crowned all with gold by the low sinking sun.
Lifting my eyes up to the cloudless heaven
I see the crescent, slender and new-born.
Ye burning worlds that lie t' the other side
Of the veil round me, ask I yet of you?
'Tis nothing—I am but a worm—enough
Is shown to me.

Close by the water's edge,
Deep bedded and worn smooth by th' ceaseless tides,
Lies a bare stone. I'll rest on it awhile.
Far out amid the stream a vessel lone,
With snowy sail, floats noiseless towards the sea.
The bird hath ceased, and now there's not a sound
But gentle ripples, whisp'ring 'long the shore.
The crescent has grown brighter; dim pale light
Marks out, in a faint line, the rest o' the moon.
I gaze up in the blue, sublime abyss. Ye stars!
Unmoved and changeless thus have ye looked down,
From age to age, shedding the same calm ray
Where joy hath been, or grief hath crushed the heart,
As where in some deep, desert wilderness,
Dumb rocks lay strewn as on creation's morn.

Our life, in its mortality, is brief:
This soil I step upon—these slender boughs
That overhang my steps—yes, things all round, now
Senseless or despised, shall be here when I'm gone.
How many more like me have paced this shore,
Brim full of thought! Where is the trace of them?

Thus, still from day to day I think and think,
But to what profit? In my early youth

Thought, tho' unuttered, yet did seem to me,
When she did put her regal vestures on,
Some way akin to immortality.
But as I grew, and meditation came
And went, like summer sunsets o'er my mind,
Leaving no mark, I learned that as t' this world,
It was a place of action: that to feel
And think was not enough, if we'd bear fruit.
Oh, then, to bear, and bear naught but good fruit!
We toil in many fields, for many minds;
I here, thou there—nor yet have we our choice.
God portioneth man's work, nor asks of him.
Yet to that portion some refuse to come,
Choosing their own. Some do th' appointed task,
But do't unwillingly. He's blest who waits
The Master's voice, and when it calls obeys,
Where'er it leads.

THE END.

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