

Lyra Australis

Or, Attempts to Sing in a Strange Land

Leakey, Caroline W. (1827-1881)

A digital text sponsored by
Australian Literature Electronic Gateway

**University of Sydney Library
Sydney, Australia**

2003



<http://setis.library.usyd.edu.au/oztexts>

© University of Sydney Library. The texts and images are not to be used for commercial purposes without permission

Source Text:

Prepared from the print edition published by Bickers and Bush London 1854

All quotation marks are retained as data.

First Published: 1854

setis australian etexts poetry 1840-1869

Lyra Australis
Or, Attempts to Sing in a Strange Land
London
Bickers and Bush
1854

Preface.

There, perhaps, may be due to my readers some explanation of the titles chosen for the first and second chapters of this volume. "Shadows of Death" are a series of thoughts which were presented to my mind during a long illness in Tasmania. Some of the poems perhaps are—or rather appear—of a wild and wilful nature; but I give them a place here, in order to show to greater advantage those which breathe the better spirit of resignation and trustfulness.

As a whole I lay them before the public, with a timid hope that they may prove a faint "Footprint in the sands of Time, which some forlorn and shipwrecked brother seeing, may take heart again."

"Boa Vista; or, Songs of the Balcony," my kind friends in Tasmania will at once recognise as the selection that I dedicate immediately to them.

My English readers must know that the chapter is named after a house in which I resided for a short time, and in the balcony of which many an hour of suffering was soothed into cheerfulness and song by the pleasant voice of Nature, heard and *seen* in the lovely landscape stretching for miles before and around me.

London, *February*, 1854.

Contents

	page
Shadows of Death.	
Sonnet	1
“One looked within a book and read”	2
“But stay, O Sorrow, stay	7
The Music of the Rills	10
“There cometh then to me, she said”	12
Three Sonnets	15
“Death beckons from afar”	18
Falling Asleep	21
“Oft have I sighed to labour, Lord, for Thee”	22
“A sunbeam stooped and kissed a wave”	26
A Bouquet for a Sick Chamber	28
The Dying Girl's Complaint	32
Thankfulness	35
“Times there are I love to wander”	36
The Music of Moonlight	39
“As reapers cut the yellow sheaves”	41
Songs of Death's Ferrymen	43
“Never more! O never more!”	48
Sonnet	51
“O Death, these visitings of thine”	52
The Struggle	54
“Her ways are ways of pleasantness”	57
“Flowers for the early grave”	61
The Old Man's Dream	63
“Oh! there are thoughts when living forms are missed”	68
“Oh, many-tonèd voice of man”	70
Boa Vista; or, Songs of the Balcony.	73
The Rock of Martin Vaz	75
Pale Oleander of the South	82
Morning and Evening	92
The Muezzin's Cry	97
Clouds	99
Rest	102
Queen Ina	105
Winter Flowers	109
A Calm at Sea	111
The Ocean Isle	112

“Man goeth to his long home”	114
English Wild Flowers	117
They have taken away my Lord	120
The Prisoner's Hospital	121
A Tale of Conscience	125
Who sweetest sing their Songs of Home?	129
The Homeward Bound	133
Poor Nannie's Return	135
Home, Sweet Home	138
Song—to a Young Lady	140
The Early Snowdrop	144
My Father's Birthday	147
The Little Birthday King	148
Ode on Pleasure	151
Young Mother to her Infant	156
Tasmania's Writ of Freedom	161
A New Light on an Illumination	163
Thou art thy Brother's Keeper	166
A Sleeping Infant	172
Friendship	174
Half-uttered Thoughts	175
A Child listening to Music	180
Blanche, and Other Tales.	181
Blanche	185
The Messenger Knight	193
Dora	201
The Crisis	217
Cui Bono?	221
“Sad thoughts will come”	228
The Evening Star and Miscellaneous Poems.	231
The Evening Star	235
Little Mary	244
“Oh! paradox most rare”	247
Where? Where?	248
The Year	251
Cathedral Bells	252
Moonlight	258
What is he smiling at?	260
The Silent Rebuke	264
Luxury	266
“And art thou weary with the strife?”	267
The First of May	270
The Fallen Jasmine Blossom	271

Florence Stuart Agnew	273
“When hath past that grand ablution”	274
Sonnet on being called Romantic	276
“The child that 'neath the summer tree”	277
“Who can dwell with everlasting burnings?”	279
Resignation	281
“The desert hath its patch of green”	283
Little Children	285
Without Him was not anything made	286
Sleep and Death	292
“O little birds upon the tree”	295
Finis	297

First Chapter

Shadows of Death

The shadow passeth when the tree shall fall. — Tennyson

This chapter of poems is dedicated to the Rev. J. Arundell Leakey, B.A., by his affectionate sister, the Authoress.

I.

OFT have I sought in vain a cause to trace,
That to mine anxious heart would kind reveal,
How it can be that I should saddest feel,
When gazing on fair Nature's lovely face,
Bright with the sunny smile of innocence;
How it can be that yon rich sloping field,
Pleasing mine eye, should to my spirit yield
Fresh dreams of sadness—a still deeper sense
Of emptiness; and how the flowers' bright glow,
The joyous song of birds, the murmuring bee,
The laugh of childhood ringing merrily,
Should all bring heaviness. But now I know,—
For Death doth ever linger on the stair
Of earth's best beauties and of things most fair.

II.

ONE looked within a book and read,
Then paused, and gazing up did sigh,
As slowly to himself he said,—
A time to die!

Clouds were chasing one the other, through the bright cerulean sky;
Clouds were fading in the ether, till they seemed to melt and die.
Birds among the trees were singing, with a plaintive melody;
Birds upon their way were winging, and they sang,—A time to die!

Young flowers beautiful did seem, lying down beneath the sky,
Each smiling to a bright sunbeam, telling of a time to die.
Brooklets by their side did glance, and they murmured out reply,
With a tuneful utterance,—Sweet flowers, there is a time to die!

One looked within a book and read,
Then paused, and gazing round did sigh,
As sadly to himself he said,—
A time to die!

Autumn leaves were falling round—autumn leaves all pale and sere,—
Falling, falling to the ground, whirling, whirling there and here;
Ere unto the earth they fell, to each other they did sigh,
To each other they did tell,—All things have a time to die!
Winds were calling one another, wind to wind did loud reply;
With hollow voice told each the other,—Yea, there is a time to die!
Wave to wave did madly rave, and their stifling voice did cry,
As they sank in ocean grave,—O, there is a time to die!

One looked within a book and read,
And as he read, anon did sigh,
As sadly to himself he said,—
A time to die!

An infant on its mother's breast, slept beneath her tender eye,
And sweet did smile from out its rest, dreaming of a time to die.
Children, in a graveyard straying, looked upon a tombstone nigh,
As they read they ceased their playing, for they saw a time to die!
On a bier with beauty laden, with a soft and tearful eye,
Gazing, sat a fair young maiden, learning of a time to die.
Young men hurrying on turned pale, as a bell tolled out on high;
They heard in it a mournful tale, telling of a time to die.

One looked within a book and read,
And as he read did pause to sigh,
Then slowly to himself he said,—
A time to die!

Old men, very old and grey, unto themselves did deeply sigh,
Tottering on their grave-bound way, thinking of a time to die.
Pilgrims journeying on through strife, to each other did reply,—
Oh, soon will end this weary life, for there is a time to die!
Sinners, looking terrified, with a loud and bitter cry,
Fled along a dark road-side, flying from a time to die.
Christians, full of joy and love, stood gazing up unto the sky,
They were looking up above, longing for a time to die.

One looked within a book and read,
And gladness glistened in his eye,
As slowly to himself he said,—
A time to die!

III.

BUT stay, O Sorrow, stay,
Nor think because I weep I bid thee hence away,
So pale-faced though thou art,
Though shrunk thine eye, though tear-worn is thy cheek;
Thy foot falls gently, and thy smile is passing meek—
O stay, we must not part.

Thy robe is darkly drear,
And yet I love thee well; to me thou art most dear,
Dearer than earth-born friend—
A faithful friend, a monitor most true;
For thou hast taught to me, what erst I never knew,
In lowliness to bend.

Upon the mystic signs,
The dark handwriting on the wall, thy taper shines,
And I interpret all.
Pale almoner of heaven, thou bringest gifts,
Though oft invisible, until Faith's arm uplifts
The boon from 'neath the pall.

My soul, to erring prone,
Dares not, O Sorrow, walk through life's dark road alone,
She may forgetful prove.
No more upraised thy warning finger, prest
To check the murmuring sigh or thought ere yet exprest,
I may not heed thy love.
O, then, till death abide;
Then we must part, for thence beyond, my faithful guide,
No step of thine may stray:
Back to my God me brought, will be thy mission o'er.
For He hath said, from that bright land, that sinless shore,
Sorrow shall flee away.

IV. The Music of the Rills.

SWEET, silver tongues unbound
Around a thousand hills,
A life-returning sound
Bursts from the valleys up;—
'Tis the music of the rills,
Singing their first—their first!

Sweet Spring is come again,—
Her voice creation fills
With many a gladsome strain;
The sweetest that she brings
Is the music of the rills,
Singing their first—their first!
There's many an early lay,
From woodland warblers' bills;
The cuckoo far away
Striketh her herald note;
But the music of the rills
Is still the first—the first!

The summer bird is gone,—
The voice of Winter stills
All voices but his own;
Yet up the valley comes
The sweet music of the rills,
Singing their last—their last!

Soft, silvery tongues are bound
Around a thousand hills;
The silence is profound
In valleys lying deep,
For the music of the rills
Away hath past—hath past!

V.

THERE cometh, then, to me, she said,
 No spring upon the gale,
Though well I know is winter fled
 From mountain, hill, and vale.
There cometh up no spring for me
 Upon the mountain breeze,—
The leaf is budding on the tree,
 The primrose o'er the leas.
There cometh spring to all but me,
On all its blessedness I see.

To th' old it cometh pleasantly,
 With warmth, and sunshine cheer,
And gladly with its songs of glee
 O'er jocund childhood's ear.
No warmth upon my death-chill'd brow
 Comes on the spring-time ray,
Though by my window-pane I know
 It passeth on its way:
And, oh! the sweet spring-breath I see
 Stirring the leaf upon the tree.

Flowers and fragrance for the earth,—
 A gift for all but me;
A voice of pleasant spring-time mirth,—
 A song for all but me.
A voice of gladness is abroad,
 Around a thousand hills,
And rises from the daisied sward
 The music of the rills.
I hear their voices from afar,
But only from this prison bar.

The gentle primrose' placid face,
 Its own sweet smile doth wear;
The rose's witchery doth chase
 All thought of grief and care;
The daisy peepeth from the mound,
 'Neath which I long to be;—
New life and joy for all around,
 But only death for me.

VI. First Part.

How walk along yon rugged path? I asked,
But found that none, not one would answer me.
How meet the thousand evils there may be,
Beside the dangers to the light unmasked?
How, friendless, unaccompanied, venture forth
Alone, defenceless, on a dreary way,
Unhoused, to droop beneath the tyrant sway
Of battling elements, and storms' wild wrath?
How journey on in solitude so drear,
No kindly smile my loneliness to cheer?
How shall I venture on? Oh! who may tell?
A still small voice then bade me cease to fear,
And gently whispered to mine anxious ear,
"As seeing Him who is invisible!"

VII. Second Part.

But, oh! I said, what hope, what joy have I?
Each onward step leaves farther still behind
My house, my home, where Love did ever bind
Bright garlands; spreading to my raptured eye
Luxuriant scenes of Nature's revelry.
No verdant beauty clothes this naked floor;
A barren landscape all that lies before—
Bleak wold, dark vale, and steep acclivity;
Low wailing of the wind, discordant cries
Of unclean birds, which startled, screaming rise,
The only sounds to break monotony.
What hope for me 'mid scene so sternly wild?
A voice replied, "O worse than wayward child,
A bright hope full of immortality!"

VIII. Third Part.

So from that unknown voice I courage found,
And girding close my pilgrim garb, with speed
Went on, nor to the thorns beneath gave heed,
Nor seemed to know how cold th' uneven ground;
The dreary road ceased to affright me now.
What if the gloom is deep, how brighter far
Will shine my heavenly home; as yon pale star,
O'erhung by heavy clouds, will purer show
Resting alone upon the fair blue sky.
If harsh the sounds, upon this wearied ear
Will sweeter break the song, so full and clear,
The rich, deep swell of angel melody.
So I sped on, nor thought of further care,
Till whispered that soft voice, "Watch unto prayer."

IX.

Death beckons from afar,
Come, come away:
His eye looks on me as a blood-red star,
That beareth sway
Alone, when all the heavens are wrapt in cloud,
Save the lone star which peereth through his shroud.

He calls again—he calls
Me to his arms.
I may not stay, but, as the bird that falls
'Neath hellish charms
Of serpent's syren stare, so I must go;
To his stern voice none ever answered, No.

Nor all unfriendly seems
His step to me:
Oft have I heard it in my midnight dreams
Stealing towards me.
As serpent stealthy coils beneath the trees,
With surer aim unwary prey to seize.

And dimly burns his lamp
A scull within,
Shedding foul glare along his charnel camp,
With horrid grin;
By its dull glare his scanty shadow falls,
Rattle his bony footsteps by my walls.

Again he calls—his voice
I must obey;
His bold behest leaves mortal man no choice
To go or stay.
A king he reigns omnipotent o'er all,
Till one arise and break his mighty thrall.

Alone I cannot tread
His lonely stair;
But, O my God, I'll nothing know of dread,
If Thou be there.
Me gently lead into his cold, cold arms,
Nor leave me, Lord, till safe from his alarms.

I shall not feel his breath
So icy chill,
If Thou wilt guide me through the shades of death,
And by me still
Thy presence bright, when this dimm'd sight shall fail,
And trembling flesh pass through his noisome vale.

X. Falling Asleep.

FADING, fading into mistiness,
A sweet half-conscious blessedness
 Of love and loved ones round;
A murm'ring yet a soothing sound
 Of pleasant voices falling:
Dropping asleep beneath a song of love,
To waken—singing it above,
 Upon a Father's breast!
Bright angel forms, and faces blest—
 Happy cherubs clustering!
And only thus awakening to know
Of having fallen asleep! So may I go,
 And so awaken!

XI.

OFT have I sighed to labour, Lord, for Thee,
To win the guerdon of Thine husbandry;
But now I see it wrongeth Thee, the wise
Disposer of all mortal destinies,
To wish for that Thy wisdom doth withhold,
Though it may be to labour in Thy fold.
So I would wait, in reverential fear,
Until, my God, Thy bidding voice I hear!

And I have seen not only those are Thine,
Nor only work for Thee who bear Thy sign,—
Those white-robed messengers, with spirit's sword
Begirt, who, armed and shod by their own Lord,
Go forth to raise His blood-stained banner high,—
The bleeding Lamb and cross of Calvary:
The sweet insignia of a Prince of Peace,
Who fain would bid a world-wide warfare cease.

Nor they whose earnest spirits all by love
Enlarged, in their dear Saviour's footsteps move,
And with blest charity walk hand-in-hand,
The willing servants of their Lord's command,—
Mercy's kind almoners and ministers
Throughout the earth: oft on the narrow stairs
Of want and foul disease, where sons of care
In squalid misery famish on despair;
Pouring to wounded hearts the oil and wine
Of consolation and of hope divine;
Weeping with those who weep, the lonely sad;
Laughing with those who laugh, the holy glad.

But they are Thine who noiseless move each day
Along their lowly and appointed way;
Each at his duty found, with heart content
To walk with God beneath his humble tent;
Who bear their daily cross unpraised, unseen—
Enough for them to go where He has been;
Who meekly follow where He gently leads,
No thought for present care nor future needs.

And they are also thine whose days are spent
In dreary gloom, sickness, and banishment;

Who nothing do but suffer all Thy will,
Commune with Thee, and in their beds are still.
Deep pains to them lead on the weary day,
And day brings up the night so laggardly—
Night which knows not sweet sleep's restoratives,
But still in nervous vigilance back gives
The hours in creeping stages to the light,
To weave another weary thread to night.
Yea, these, O Lord, are Thine—Thy martyr saints—
Whose strength in adverse hour nor scorns nor faints;
But still the heart's meek voice, "Thy will be done!"
Until on bed of thrones life's woof is spun.

XII.

A SUNBEAM stooped and kissed a wave
That rippled o'er the sea,
And seemed its crystal cheek to lave
With roseate brilliancy.
The wave in gladness danced away,
Far, far adown its stream,
And, laughing, cast a pearl-white spray
Up to the bright sunbeam.

A ray of light shot o'er my way,
And I began to sing;
My heart as uncaged lark away
Upborne on joy's gay wing.
But why I sung I cannot tell,
Nor why my heart felt light,
Save that along my pathway fell
That little sunbeam bright.

But while such joy my heart did fill,
That I went singing on,
The sun had sunk behind the hill,
The little beam was gone!
And then I could no longer sing,
But this one feeling had,—
Joy's own fair form may shadows fling,
In thoughts funereal clad.

XIII.

BRING flowers for the wearied one,
The wearied one of pain;
Bright flowers from the glorious sun,
Will give her joy again.
But, oh! seek them not from gardens,
Nor from the gay parterre,
Wander far into the woodlands,
For blossoms hiding there.

Bring her flowers from the mountains,
And wildlings from the hills,
From the happy sparkling fountains,
And from the quiet rills.
And of the sweet "Forget-me-not,"
Be sure your lap to fill,
'Twill tell her, though so hard her lot,
Of One that loveth still.

If there breathes sweetness in the air,
Go trace it to its source,
Thou'lt find the lowly violet there,
Bent o'er the streamlet's course.
And thence the primrose thou must bring,
With pallid tranquil face,
So quietly acknowledging
A deep supporting grace.

And lilies, lilies of the vale,
With fragrant snowy bells;—
Oh, what a rare and soothing tale
The valley lily tells!
Go gather them, and take them her,
Those little gems of love;
With silver voice to chime to her
Of One that cares above.

And bring the little daisy,
It quietly doth bloom
Where the sun his parting rays, aye
Sheds on the grassy tomb.
Bring the gold and purple pansy,
That whispereth of peace;

The flower, in sweetest fancy,
Love calls her own Heart's Ease.

Bring the woodbine, the pale woodbine,
And the blue bell of the heath,
And from the forest oak untwine
The broad, gloss'd ivy wreath.
And bring that gentle, bright-eyed flower
Which smiles from out its thorn,
'Twill tell her that affliction's hour
Can cheerfully be borne.

And go seek the lovely snowdrop,—
Ah, pity! it is gone;
A thing too fragile far to stop,
When spring's first ray hath shone.
But tell her that this beauteous gem,
Of fair and spotless form,
Like Faith, bows on its slender stem,
And smileth to the storm!

But bring her not that dark, dark flower,
The deadly, blue nightshade,
For oh! beneath its noxious power
The purest blossoms fade.
And yet—ah, yes—go bring it here,
Though it hath deadly breath;
What flower should her heart so cheer,
As that which speaks of death?

So hasten to the woods away,
To valleys and to dells;
But bring not from the gardens gay
Their bright and showy bells.
Seek from the woodlands hidden flowers,
For the wearied one of pain;
They'll sing to her of fadeless bowers,
Where grief comes not again.

XIV.

AND there shall be no more pain—they tell me so;
And yet they will not let me go
To where such blessedness can be,
Where not one sigheth wearily,
And none say, I am sick!

And they tell me of a country bright, a land
Afar beyond yon shining band,
That pathway of a million stars,
Which spreads through heaven its glorious bars,—
Yon galaxy of light!

The blest inhabitants from thence go out no more,
But white-robed, on its shining floor,
Walk gladly up and down its street,
And ever doth them kindly greet
A loving Saviour's smile.

They tell me so, and of a thousand blessed things,
Until my soul hath almost wings,
And fluttereth heavenward to expand,
Yet still they hold me by the hand,
And say,—Abide with us.

They beg for longer tarrance in a world,
Darkling o'er which is wide unfur'd
The banner of distress; an earth
Whose very air is but the breath
And sighs of human woe.

Since they will not let me go, I ask of Him
That can, and say,—“Mine eye grows dim;
Both night and morn I anxious wait,
Till Thou shalt open me the gate,
And bid me enter in.”

But all is love,—if on the heavenly road
Delays the message of my Lord,
'Tis till the last the goal doth win,
Until to Him be gathered in
The last soul to be saved.

Thy chariot-wheels, Lord, tarry as Thou wilt,

If some poor lingering child of guilt
Reach by that hour thy mercy-gate,
And enter ere it be too late,
Ere Love's bright door be closed!

XV. Thankfulness.

OH, crowning mercy of all blessings poured
With lavish hand from Love's unminished fount!
Oh, blessing best! (without thee, no account
Were all good things in heaven's high-treasury stored,)
A thankful heart, which takes—and God adored—
The smallest daily boon as from above;
A new sweet pledge of undeservèd love,
Requiteless, save from Gratitude's full hoard.
Whate'er Thou dost, O Lord, from me refrain
Of what the world calls good, withdraw not this,—
A grateful heart, which all alone is bliss;
A rich possessing,—without which are vain
All things possessed. A thankful soul finds wing
To soar upon the storm, and sweetest sing.

XVI.

1

TIMES there are I love to wander,
But all lonely let me be;
Each such hour I grow the fonder,
Holy Solitude, of thee!

2

When the dew, like gems of beauty,
Falls beneath the cloudless sky;
And the flowers have done their duty,
Save the wakeful primrose*' eye.

3

When the birds have ceased to twitter
From the old church-tower, and grey;
And the vane hath ceased to glitter,
That hath glittered all the day.

4

When the aspen chil-ly shivers,
When the pallid moonbeams play,
Looking down upon the rivers,
Purling on their sea-bound way.

5

When the alder faintly whispers,
Sighing to the summer eve—

That the bird hath sung his vespers,
And hath ta'en his nightly leave.

6

When the willow, worn with weeping,
O'er the brook hath fallen asleep,
And her streamers slow are sweeping,
In a slumber sad and deep.

7

Times are these I love to wander,
But all lonely let me be;
Each such hour I grow the fonder,
Holy Solitude, of thee!

8

Oh, what are these hidden feelings,
Which no human eye can see,
But the spirit's pure revealings,
Searching, craving, Lord, for Thee!

9

What the burst of joyous thrilling,
When for loneliness I seek,
But Thyself this bosom filling
With Thy thoughts, too deep to speak!

10

With Thy thoughts, Thine own and only,
Fill, Lord, fill this longing heart;
'Tis for this I would be lonely,

'Tis for this I go apart.

11

That the feelings Thou hast planted
Deep within this aching breast,
Which for utterance have panted,
Finding Thee may find their rest!

XVII. The Music of Moonlight.

A VOICELESS melody around,
 Hearken! hearken!
Not of music, not of sound,
A sweet, silver tongue unbound,
 Doth waken—waken!

It falleth silently from heaven,
 Profound! around!
Not of music, not of speech;
Earth-born ear it cannot reach,—
 Earth-born! earth-born!

It striketh deep into the soul,
 Thrilling!—filling!
Music of the silver rays.
The silent moon from heaven doth gaze,
 Sadd'ning!—gladd'ning!

Till the full soul cannot reply;
 Feeling—feeling!
A bewildering delight!
Music of the pale moon's light,
 Profound! around!

The shivering aspen hath turned pale,
 Heark'ning, heark'ning!
There is a trembling in the trees,
Whispering leaves seem ill at ease,
 Quiv'ring, quiv'ring!

And the brooklet hasteth onward,
 Murm'ring, murm'ring:
Music of the still moonlight,
Mighty in its own sweet might
 Of silence—silence!

XVIII.

As reapers cut the yellow sheaves,
As fall the sere and autumn leaves,—
 The ground their bed of death;
As snows beneath a winter sun,
As fades the light when day is done,
 As melts the vapour's breath;—
So would I die, so pass away:
I could not, would not live away!

But in my breast a restless thing,
As fluttering bird that beats her wing,
 Strikes hard to burst away.
It would not be content to die,
It longs and strives to soar on high,
 To bright and fadeless day!
To where the sky gains brighter hue
Than that which stays the earth-bound view!

For flight, uncaged and free, it longs,
To sing on high its native songs—
 More clear and animate.
Its heaven-plumed wing it could not stoop,
As meaner things of earth, which droop
 And are annihilate;
But circling wide, would farther sweep,
Beyond yon starried ether deep!

XIX. Song of Death's Ferrymen.

First Ferryman.

DEATH hath two ferrymen, and this is their song;
They sing as they sail his dark river along:
The one singeth sweetly, his way to beguile,
And he hath on his face a heavenly smile;
It seemeth as though his soft voice had found wings,
For it soareth on high this song that he sings:—

Song.

I am sailing adown the river of death,
O sweet unto me is the balmy breath
 That blows from the heavenly shore;
No silvery music could sweeter be
Than the dash of the water seems sweet to me,
 And the gurgling splash of the oar.
Death looketh at me, and mine eyes grow dim;
But I tremble not—I can look at him,
 Nor shrink from his quivering hand.
He seemeth more like to a dear old friend,
At whose gentle voice life's sorrows all end,
 And Grief bursts her shadowy band.
He beareth me on to my own true home,
For which I have pined in my desolate roam—
 O'er the sky spreads a fervent glow!
I near it, I near it—that beautiful land!
And the sun-rays flash on the golden strand
 More bright than the covenant bow.
Death plyeth the oar with all his might,
My head grows dizzy with a strange delight,
 My pulses and heart throbbing high;
And the bands of heaven to the festalry come,
They guide me with song to my beautiful home,
 My spirit it striveth to fly.

I hear them, I see them—that heavenly host!
They throng the sedge of the glittering coast,
 And they wave their glorious wing;
They wave their wing with a jubilant noise,

That another shall share their endless joys,—
 The bride of Eternity's King!
But brightest of all in that light-clad throng
Stands He whom they laud with the ceaseless song,—
 The fairest where all are fair.
He waiteth for me when I step on the shore,
To lead me unto His mansion of yore,
Up far and beyond yon glittering light,
Where the sun is drowned in the ray-floods bright;
 My Beloved, all-lovely there!
And now, O Death, it but waiteth for you
To give me away to my bridegroom true;
Then adown, O Death, o'er thine own dark sea,
Here never a place may be found for thee,—
 No place in Heaven for thee!

Second Ferryman.

Death hath two ferrymen, and this is their song,
For they sing as they sail his river along:
The one singeth sweetly, his heart doth rejoice,
But despairing and dread the other one's voice;
The dew-damps of terror hang o'er his deep frown,
He shudders to sail the cold waters adown;
And seemeth his song of most terrible things,
For he wringeth his hands as this song he sings:—

Song.

I am sailing adown the river of Death,
He bloweth me on with his icy breath,
 In his dark and spectral boat;
He spreadeth the sail with his skinny hand,
I am off—I am bound for the Deadman's land,
 On the blackened waters I float.
And Death sitteth alone, a helmsman dread;
Ah! he shaketh at me his eyeless head,
 And darker the dead sea grows.

It shrinketh mine eyeballs that distant blaze,
Spreading far o'er the sky a fiery haze,
 And foetid the air that blows.
I near it, I near it,—that horrible place!
Where Hope showeth never her beautiful face.

I hear them,—that ghastly band!
I hear them—I see them, on that blank shore!
They hail me from thence with a fiendish roar;
With a curs'd delight toss their scathèd arms,
That another comes to their black alarms,
 And shriek on the burning sand.
Save me, O save, even now at the last!
Save me, ere yet mine anchor be cast,
And Death sets me down on that direful shore,
From whence who puts in, cometh out never more,—
 O save, even now at the last!

XXI.

NEVER more! O never more!
Saith the hollow-sounding wave,
As it sinketh to the shore,
Hushed beneath a traceless grave.
Never more! O never more!
The heart of man replieth;—
Thus are loved ones found no more,
And life all lonely sigheth.

Evermore! O evermore!
Sing the happy stars at night;
Shining as they shone of yore,
O'er a thousand ages' flight.
Evermore! O evermore!
The heart of man replieth;
Life may be wrecked upon the shore,
But Love she never dieth.

Thus two voices through our life,
Awake the heart's responding:
One starteth from the din and strife,
An echo of desponding;
The other to our day of toil,
As God's day to the seven,
Soundeth o'er the heart's turmoil,—
A voice of love from heaven.

Never more! O never more!
The hollow wave out sigheth;
Evermore! O evermore!
The happy star replieth;
Life may be wrecked upon the shore,
But Love she never dieth;

She is the dove that soars above
The flood's avenging slaughter,
And unto grief, the olive-leaf
She bringeth o'er the water.

XXII.

BUT, oh, upon the sky to look again!
Not when the lordly sun enthroned does reign
In gaze-defying state—proud pompous glare
Imparting, till broad heaven's cerulean dye
Taunts with its ardent stainlessness the eye,
Which longs to dwell upon a scene so fair;
But I would stand beneath the sky, when there
The twinkling stars are thronging up and round,
Where still the moon, in quietness profound,
Walks through the ethereal field, as maiden fair
By far-off stream, in some deep lonely vale,
Her lingering way at eventide may wind;
While happy thoughts come crowding up her mind,
Like stars at night, each with its pleasant tale.

XXIII.

O DEATH, these visitings of thine,
They leave us in a wondrous state;
We know not if to smile or pine,
Or if thou comest in love or hate.

Less as a foe than as a friend
We mark thine entrance to our room,
While tears and smiles so softly blend
With chastened gladness—gentle gloom.

Thou hast thy dart, but hidden so,
It seems more like a love-tipt plume,
Dropt from some angel wing below,
Whilst soaring from its earth-made tomb.

Thou mak'st us feel as children feel,
When some strange visitant draws nigh;
We know not if for woe or weal,
And hesitate to stand or fly.

Half peace inclined, we stretch the hand,
To bid thee welcome as a guest;
But weep when from our little band
Thou tak'st the fairest and the best.

Oh, when we see thee gently fold
The bleating lamb within thine arm,
We hear, in heart, that voice of old,
Which bade the rising storm be calm.

And then we know that thou art one
Who waitest at our Father's door,
To lead us, when the day is done,
To where our brethren went before;

To bid us wish the world good-night,
And like a tender nurse to bear,
And lay us to a slumber light—
Then leave us to a Father's care.

XXIV. The Struggle.

MY LITTLE babe, I prayed for thee—
I struggled for thy life.
“But, nay,” they said, “it may not be,
It hath no strength for strife;

And what avails thy useless prayer?—
Thine infant is for death.”
I knelt and watched in wild despair
Thy faintly-flickering breath.

I cried,—“My God! what shall I pray?
My voice it will not cease.”
Thy languid eye it seemed to say,
In mild reproach,—Release!

I prayed—but not for self again—
All, only for thy sake,
That God would take thee from thy pain,
Although my heart should break.

To kiss thy dewy brow I knelt,
One feeble breath me pass'd,
Its warmth upon my cheek I felt—
My babe, it was thy last!

I gazed, but only on the dead.
Dear babe, thou wert in bliss!
I sealed thine eye, so lustre-fled,
With one long farewell kiss.

I gazed. “Is this the one,” I said,
“They call dark Terror's king?
This he, so beautifully arrayed—
O Death, where is thy sting?”

I took thee to my lonely breast,
Where thou fore-time hadst lain;
When thou wouldst wake from out thy rest,
To smile on me again.

I placed thee on thy cradle bed—
I could not on thy bier;
And when they laid thee with the dead,

My babe, I sought thee here!

XXV.

“Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.”

1

THERE were roses in her path, and she said,— O life is fair,
A summer of delights, with bright garlands everywhere!
Death breathed upon those roses, and a wailing voice came up,
As he pledged to Desolation, in an overflowing cup.

2

Oh! that grave was very small, and they laid an infant there;
Its shroud seemed all of flowers and long waves of golden hair.
There, in morning's dewy freshness, and there, at silent eve,
All amid the fragrant stillness, a watcher came to grieve.

3

The roses bloomed again around,—she never knew them there,
That little grave was in her path—that grave was everywhere;
For all the lovely things of earth, it only met her sight,
There still it lay within her heart at morning and at night.

4

There were gentle waters yonder, that lay so calm at eve,
With a quiet rise and fall, that would scarce their bosom heave;
A voice came o'er those waters, and that wailing tone did cease,—
“Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.”

5

And ever and anon, as still beside that little grave,

The watcher all from weariness would cease her bitter rave,
The voice came o'er the waters, and those words it still would say,
Till they died in silvery circles, in echoes far away.

6

There were roses in her path, and she loved them well again;
She looked on their bright beauty, and she heard that spirit strain.
Oh! her dreams were very sweet, and the roses spread that night,
Till in the morn that little grave—'twas hidden from her sight!

7

The summer winds made music all among the leafy trees,
And Nature clapped her joyous hands amid the scented breeze.
“For I shall go to him,” she said;—the wailing voice did cease,
And for despair was pleasantness, and for repining, peace.

XXVI.

FLOWERS for the early grave—the grave of infancy!
When the sweet babe is hushed to rest,
 In the cold arms of Death;
When to the earth's cold bosom prest,
 Has slept away its breath—
Ere it had breathed of sin one thought,
 Ere it had heaved one anguished sigh,
Ere drooped its eye with dimness fraught,
 By heart-drawn tears of agony—
 Say, shall we weep for such?

Flowers for the late, late grave—the grave of hoary age!
When the poor pilgrim, worn with pain,
 Hath reached Death's shrine of rest,
Finished his course, and peaceful lain
 Upon its sheltering breast;
For ever freed from earth's turmoil,
 For ever hushed his weary sigh,
For ever past his days of toil,
 For ever with his Lord on high—
 Say, shall we weep for such?

XXVII.

1

MY BRIGHT and blessed home, he said, that old and dying man,
Is brighter far than you may know—than mortal eye may scan.
You may not know, you could not go to whither I have been;
You may not see, you could not see the things that I have seen.

2

All in the darkness of the night there came a bright One down,
He made the very darkness light with the glory of his crown;
Oh! how he came I cannot tell, I heard no footstep fall,—
I saw a stream of radiance sweep just by the old church wall.

3

He drew aside mortality—he bade me with him fly,
And in a voice of sweetness said, “Come up, come up on high.”
He unbarred my prisoned soul and unlocked my mortal sight,
And straight I followed up in his quick and glorious flight.

4

We flew I know not whither, but I soon shall know again,
For this very, very night, when the moon is on the wane—
The bright One said “I’ll come again!”—I will go with him away,
And not return again to earth, but in my new home stay.

5

I heard a deep, deep swell of joy burst from the heavenly legions,
And it was all to welcome me unto those golden regions.

One sat upon an emerald throne, within that glorious place,
So I looked upon my Saviour—I saw Him face to face.

6

The air of earth falls heavily, it chills upon my brow,—
Oh! tell me, is the night come up?—mine eye is darkened now.
Go sleep ye all as heretofore, nor watch beside my bed,
And in the morning when ye come, you will look upon me dead.

7

If in the night ye wake, and hear strange whisperings around,
Ye may not move, ye may not stir,—it will be holy ground;
Ye may not speak nor stir, till, from the old church-tower, the bell
Outswells upon the stillness with its deep and solemn knell.

8

Then haste, and look on high, ye may behold a radiant light,
'Twill be the passing of my soul upon its heavenward flight;
But ye must hasten, in a moment it will have passed by,—
More rapid than the lightning's flash athwart the evening sky.

9

Now rest ye all as heretofore, nor draw high unto my bed,
Until upon my soulless breast the sun's first ray is shed.
Nay, fear not, such delight is mine as ye have never known;
So rest ye all as heretofore, and leave me all alone.

10

The sun arose in beauty, the birds sang on as aye—
It seemed a couch of glory whereon the old man lay;
So beautiful to look upon, each trembled there to gaze,

And thought there stood an angel form beside the bright sun-rays.

11

Each saw that from the old man now the soul had gone to rest,
Beheld that all untenanted was the bosom of its guest.
Each trembled with a holy joy, and none knew what to say,
It seemed as though a heavenly one entranced before them lay.

XXVIII.

OH! there are thoughts, when loving forms are missed,
And smiling lips, that warm and tender kissed,
And gentle hands, that softly fondling pressed,
And eyes that looked what never words expressed.

Oh! there are thoughts, when first we start to know
That these are not, and drop beneath the blow!
When the cooled eye can take a calm review,
Then first the dead, dull blank stands full in view,
And that we feared to know is found too true.
That which we fondly tried to disbelieve—
Cheated by hope that we did too much grieve,
All vainly thinking day would night relieve,
Lies in the morning light more cruel revealed—
O kinder darkness that had it concealed!

XXIX.

OH! many-tonèd voice of man,
That since this world of ours began,
Hath onward, from thine inner source,
With restless unimpeded force,
Borne circling heavenward through the air
The cries of anguish, hope, despair.

How art thou changed, O voice of man!
Since first in God-tuned accents ran
Thy breath through all life's living chords,
Sweeping from thence harmonious words;
No need were then sounds to express
Of suffering, sin, and bitterness!

Of all the sounds through Eden heard,
Which sweetly its mild fragrance stirred,
Touched by Love's finger soft, divine,
None rang so clear a peal as thine;—
Death on thy golden chords within
Breathed from the tainted lips of sin.—

O harp of God! thou shalt be changed,
When God, from man no more estranged,
Shall re-attune each cold, dead string,
In more than Eden bliss to sing;
Each tone shall swell its noblest art,
To bear in song cherubic part.

O voice of man! God's unstrung harp!
No more shall then Death's cold touch warp
To grating dissonance thy chords,
Arousing thence grief-burdened words;
Nor need shall then sounds to express
Of suffering, sin, and bitterness!

* The OEnothera.

Second Chapter

Boa Vista or, Songs of the Balcony.

TO
LADY DENISON,
THIS CHAPTER OF SECTION IS, WITH MUCH RESPECT,
Dedicated
BY HER OBLIGED,
C. W. LEAKEY.

The Rock of Martin Vaz.

WE PASSED it at early dawn, and the moon was still on high—
She seemed so sweet and pale, in the beautiful morning sky!—
We passed it at early dawn, and the sun at last awoke,
And up from the golden sea with a flush of glory broke.*

We stood 'neath a beauty rare, with a crimson flood around,
And left and right, in that sea of light, all living things were drown'd;
And we gazed on that roseate veil o'er heaven's deep azure thrown,
And the moon's own placid face, through that veil of beauty shown.

She looked, through that morning light, like bride from her lattice-pane,
When the cheek that joy hath paled, with a blush grows bright again;
And she seemed, through that halo bright, like gaze of unuttered love,
That tells, with untiring glance, it will die, its own depth to prove.

But her lamp it waxèd dim, and her crescent paler grew,
Till, with a speechless grace, Heaven's virgin queen withdrew;
For she knew her lord right well, and her eye it waxèd dim,
For she was aweary quite, with her watching long for him.

We passed it at early dawn, and we wondered what it could be,
Alone on the ocean's breast—a thing so strange to see;
A form so rude and bare on the ocean foam appeared,
With wild fantastic dome to the bright blue sky upreared.

'Twas the rock of Martin Vaz, by the hand of Time upreared,
Till out of the ocean foam those craggy tops appeared;
But no blade of grass is seen—for a flower in vain we gazed;
For the touch of Time hath seared what his hand at first had raised.

So we passed it at early dawn, and we no good could see
Why a rock so lone and sere on the desolate wave might be;
'Twas the home of the wild sea-bird, the weary-winged exile,
And the God of Love had set on the briny vast that isle!

O thought! that Heaven's great God should care for the lonely bird,
Which cries from the rugged rock, where no other voice is heard.
O thought! that God's own love set that isle on the ocean-breast,
That there the wild sea-bird might drop, his weary wing to rest.

So we passed it at early dawn, and the God of Love we blest,
That we left on the far-off wave the exile bird a rest;
And we prayed that that rock might stand the brunt of wind and wave,

A home for the wandering bird—for the wandering bird a grave!

* To describe this scene as it was baffles my poor pen. Just fancy, on a summer morning in the southern hemisphere, issuing from the gloomy twilight of a little cabin, to be greeted by such a sight—the moon, Southern Cross, Venus, and several larger stars, all in the sky with the sun! The sky was of an exquisitely delicate and opaque blue, when— more suddenly than one could imagine possible—it became deluged with a crimson glory, which *put out* the stars at once; but the moon more gradually faded to silver, and then from view. The bold and rugged rock, as it stood in clear relief before us, presented a very pleasing variety to the eye, which was almost bewildered with the blaze of beauty above and around.

Pale Oleander of the South.

A Digressive Poem.

LONG had I wished to see that tender flower
They call the Oleander pale;
Of all its beauty, in its first, fresh hour,
Long had I heard, but as a tale
That told not half its beauty—when my hand
Grasped its fair loveliness in pride,
A long-sought treasure from some far-off land,
Where Nature's fairest gems do hide.

It had the rose's tints, but not the health
That dyes the cheek of that bright flower;
So frail, that if a summer breath, by stealth
O'er passing, kissed, in blushing shower
'Twould droop and weep itself away,
In the fair dawn of its too lovely day.

I love the oak, with his gigantic arms,
Outspread against the fiercest storm;
Daring, with sturdy front, conflicting harms
Of heaven to smite his rugged form.
I love that tree, whose top shoots far on high,
Ambitious o'er his brethren tall
To towering stand the nearest to the sky,
Surpassed by none, admired by all.

But, oh! I love the willow best, still bent
To weeping o'er her stream by day;
And still by night, when all her tears are spent,
Bowed down to sigh the hours away.
All that is weak I love. The gayer flower
I'd pass, to gather to my breast
The frailer one, that hath of strength no dower,
Alike by gale and beam opprest.

Sweet Oleander! oh, I love the brave!
The hero, with his storied fame,
And all great men; and o'er each grave
Have tears for each emblazoned name.

And, oh! I love the wise, with every wave

Of that great enterprising thought,
Whose onward roll some brighter gem doth lave,
Till to our shores the jewel is brought.
Again the wave back rolls—oh! who may tell
What treasure next it will upheave;
Deep and unfathomed yet, we know full well
That sea—the rest we trembling leave.

Sweet Oleander! oh, I love these all!
But most are moved my tears and heart,
When fading frailty o'er my path does fall,
And sorrow o'er my way does start.
All that is weak I love. The tender child,
With his dear helplessness and fears,
And artless smiles, that have so oft beguiled
The heart of sorrow and of tears.

Woman! they call thee weak. I love thee more
Than heroes of historic page;
Whoe'er, where'er thou art, how scattered o'er
Soe'er the scenes of this vast stage,
On every phase of life I love to dwell
With thee, an actor in the scene!
Bright fireside moments could their secrets tell,—
Sorrow is glad where thou hast been!

Woman! thy trials are deep—the half not known;
Thy sufferings many and untold.
Thine is the patient durance; thine the tone
Of meek endure; the arms that fold
In calm submission to the smiter's will;
Thy tears in secret silence flow;
Thine are the lips that kiss the hand, which still
Is raised to drop the last death-blow!

Where'er thou art, meek sufferer, whate'er
Thy sufferings—if from wrongs of man,
Or trials of God in love—I feel thy care,
And pray with all the might I can.
Thou shalt not alway suffer—gathered in
Unto the Eden of God's love,
Thou shalt not longer weep thy mother's sin;
But free, and unconstrained above,
Once more in Paradisian light shall move.

The world teems with the records of the great,
 But numbers yet remain untold;
Unnoticed, with the bad they have one fate—
 Both doth Oblivion's pall enfold.
The soldier's valour on the battle-field,
 The victor from the plain of death,
Have filled our shelves; to them applauding yield
 The blasts of Fame their loudest breath.

But there are deeds achieved, where Fame comes not
 To tempt with trumpet and with crown;
Bright deeds, done in many a lonely spot,
 Passed o'er unheeded by renown.
Oh! could the eye of man, as God's true sight,
 Read all these records of the good,
The unknown, humbly great, what purer light
 O'er earnest hearts and homes would brood!

Sweet Oleander! now I look on thee,
 And know I've seen thee once before.
When first I looked on thee (how could it be!)
 A thought came by of days of yore,
And of a maiden bright that once I knew;
 Till as of other days a dream,
A pleasing record, didst thou meet my view,
 And part of some lost past didst seem.

All is returned! Now Mem'ry tells her tale.
 Yes—I have known thee once before,
But not by name; sweet Oleander, pale!
 I was not skilled in thy small lore:
And so it was, that to those dear old hours
 Thou didst unconscious lead me back,
To that fair girl, in her once home of flowers,
 Where tears alone now leave their track.

'Twas on her own pure breast I saw thee first,
 Cradled with love and harmless pride;
For she had watched thy growth, thy wants had nursed,
 And thou her hopes hadst not belied.
But she, the fairer flower, did not the same,
 Though deeper love and care she'd known,
And to her mother's ear was Mabel's name
 A hope-fraught watchword of Love's own.

She bloomed awhile more beautiful, and still
 Fresh beauty gathered, day by day;
She was the household pride—her joy did fill
 Each heart, and so all hearts were gay:
But passers-by would shake their head, and tell
 So bright a thing was not for earth.
Still Mabel's step was light, her voice still fell
 A sound of gladness and of mirth.

The winds were bleak—they smote her, and she dropp'd,
 In all her beauty, to the earth;
Dumb-struck surprise the voice of wailing stopp'd,
 In fearful pause; until the birth
Of sorrow came in stern, sad truth, with throes
 That rent the widowed mother's heart;
And the new-comer Grief, from calm repose
 Bade Reason, with rude voice, depart.

Thus far—sweet Mabel—I have told of her,
 Only as Beauty's fav'rite child.
The world has had its beauties—no small stir
 They made whilst here; but soon beguiled,
The ungrateful world, of grief for former loss,
 When some fresh vision sweeps along,—
All adoration hers; to her they toss
 The incense, and pour out the song.

If beauty then alone were all her claim,
 Poor Mabel had been soon forgot;
But hosts of recollections with her name
 Arise, like fresh-blown buds in spot
By Mem'ry hallowed, and green kept by tears,
 How oft soe'er the cherished word may fall
From lips that still, through life's long, grief-drawn years,
 Bless the dear sounds that thoughts of her recall.

She seemed a stone well polished, to adorn
 That temple gloriously wrought
For the Great King—then, by bright angels borne,
 To fill her place within His court.
Sweet Oleander! thou hast plumed my soul
 For flight from earth, to higher sphere;
And soaring, now she mocks thy small control,
 And sky-ward fain would disappear.
Was it for this we met, my long-sought flower?

For this thou ledst me on and through,
Threading the mazy past, which, by thy power,
Obedient opened to my view?

Already withered! while mine earnest gaze
Full on thee bent, unto my heart
Brings back blest thoughts of her, and those dear days,
When thou, unconscious, bor'st that part
Which makes thee now so loved;—thine ev'ry leaf
Is some new tale of Mabel's day,
In all its brightness,—oh! so passing brief,
That while we looked it passed away!
As a fair cloud that on the summer sky
Fades from the watch of some admiring eye.

Morning And Evening.

First Part. Morning.

HE peeped into my lattice-pane,
A rosy cherub child,
And, laughing, said, "I'm come again,
With all my pranks so wild."

Then, with a roguish grace, he threw
Sunbeams against my glass;
And off he danced amongst the dew
That hung upon the grass.

"The sun is climbing up on high,
From out his golden hall;
And shooting up the eastern sky,
A red-hot cannon ball.

"And I have waked the birds to sing
Their matins from the tree;
Hark! how the hills around now ring
With their wild minstrelsy.

"I have aroused the little bee—
He is gone humming out;
But drones go by so lazily,
And nothing do but pout.

"Oh! I have strung a chain so bright,
All of the pearly dew;

And wove a wreath of roseate light,
And filled the sky with blue.

“See! glory sits ón all the hills,—
A golden mantle spread;
While fragrance on the air distils
From rose and lily bed.

“And I have kissed the tear away
From the sad violet's cheek;
And, with the butterfly so gay,
Now go, play hide and seek.”

Second Part. Evening.

HE homeward, weeping, ran to me,
A wearied cherub sprite,
When the wee gnat danced high in glee,
In the soft evening light.

The beetle boomed his well-known air
To the waltzers gay and small;
While blackbird sung his song so rare,
And kine lowed in the stall.

The moon had ridden up her car
Through the pure azure deep,
And from her canopy the star
Came out, her watch to keep.

But his bright golden locks were dank
With subtle dew, fresh fall'n,
And to a tranquil sleep he sank,
With dreams of fancy born.

And breezes sung a lullaby,
While silent ran the river;
The bat it flitted timidly,
The aspen-leaf did shiver.

Sleep, little one, and let thy pranks
Lie still till morrow morn,
When thou must up, the summer banks
With blossoms to adorn.

Sleep, little one; for all in vain
Will peep thy rosy face,

To-morrow at my lattice-pane,
With beams and roguish grace.

And I will sleep in spite of thee,
Thou merry urchin bold;
For on my new-hung tapestry
Shall fall thy glance of gold,

The Muezzin's Cry.

A VOICE cometh down, where the moon's pale light
Rests on the mosque and minaret's height—
A twofold cry from one voice alone,
Thrilleth the heart with its solemn tone.
The muezzin cries loud, slowly, and deep,—
Awake! for “prayer is better than sleep.”

On his darkened form plays a fitful gleam—
A spirit-like light from warmthless beam;
He standeth beneath the full blue sky,
And the stars are twinkling silently,
As though they had heard that voice so deep,—
Awake! for “prayer is better than sleep.”

Where the crescent waves o'er the proud mosque's dome,
From the Moslem land, this cry doth come.
But, oh! that in Christian land might be,
Where drops to the cross the bending knee,
A voice to the heart, in its stillness deep,—
Awake! for prayer is better than sleep.

Awake—awake! there cometh a day,
When the voice of prayer must pass away;
When ye must sleep, to wake no more,
Or wake but once, and for evermore!
Jesu, O Saviour! may Heaven's grace keep
All slumbering souls from that prayerless sleep!

Clouds.

* Written on reading a work concerning the laws which govern the movements of the clouds.

OH, let them wander as they will, the beautiful, the free!—
The Arabs of the heavens—oh, bright vagrants let them be!
They harm us not, but do to us as did old Robin Hood;
They take where it is never missed, to do another good.

Now right across the azure deep their fleecy fleet they steer,
In such slow and stately movements, a squadron brave appear.
Now scudding right before the breeze, like fairy barks are driven,
Then fading to dim sail-like specks, in utmost coasts of heaven.

Now piling high their snowy heaps, the Alpmounts of the sky;
And now Aladdin palaces spring up before the eye;
Now resting on the mountain-tops, as though they wearied were
Of all their wild vagaries—truant children of the air.

Now pitching on the ether field a thousand tiny tents,
Then throwing up, with magic speed, gigantic battlements;
Now fleeing, with their swiftest speed, as from a hidden foe,
Then marching on, a phalanx bold, with haughty steps and slow.

Now making of the sky's broad plain a spacious battle-field,
Come driving through their battle-cars, full charged with ill concealed;
And gathering their frowning fronts in terrible array,
Making the earth resound again to their wild cannonry.

Oh! let them wander as they will, unknown to second cause,
The erratic tribes of heaven, who never bowed to laws;
Save His, who made the Arab wild, unfixed to any home,
Since first the outcast Ishmael went upon his world-wide roam.

Rest.

ALL speaks of rest! the fisher's oar is heard
Plashing, with pleasant chime, his way homeward;
Now safely moored, his boat rocks idly slow
Upon the lake, calm with eve's mellowed glow.
All sounds of rest! the leaflet scarcely stirred
By lulling breeze; his farewell song, the bird
Pours to the wearied woodman's ear, whose axe
Rests on his shoulder broad, nor song he lacks,
But whistles on his way that lay of home
Beloved of all, but most by those who roam.
Sights—are of rest! The cottage-door flung wide,
A rosy maid, with eye of tender pride,
Leads her old mother forth, to fill the chair
Set by the woodbined walk. Oh! the sweet air
Of gentlest summer eve is loved by all;
But to the old how soothing does it fall.
The glad young mother hums her lullaby,
Till the small fears of nestling infancy
Are hushed to calm and sleep: cradled in soft,
Snug bed, now gently left. But, oh, how oft
The thankful mother creeps to watch her boy,
And drink her fill of love's unfathomed joy!
The older child now by her knee bends low,
With small, clasped hands, in solemn tones and slow,
Follows his mother's voice in humble prayer,—
New blessing stored for days of future care.
All points to rest! where the tall shadows creep,
Yonder the churchyard lies in quiet deep,
With all the graves that heave its breast, and rise
In green succession, and of varied size.
See, there an old man sleeps—his rest, how calm!
There a sweet infant, on its mother's arm,
Is laid in undivided, rapt repose—
Its life one breath, unfettered by death throes!

Night closes round! Silent unto the sky
Yon hoary finger points the light-tired eye—
Its rest on high; and to the heart gives strength,
With its sure hope, to bear the toilsome length
Of life, and those long days and hours of ill,

Which, step by step, appointed spaces fill.
Night has closed round! A sleeping earth— watched o'er
By myriad eyes, that all her depths explore—
Rests on the arm of God!

Queen Ina.

NOT here; far away,
Where the dolphins play,
She sitteth alone,
On a coral throne,
With string of pearls,
Her golden curls
 Adorning;
And she gaily sings,
And her voice hath wings,
And flieth away,
On the pearly spray,
 To rosy morning.

 She loveth to dress
 Her sunlit tress
With flowers of ocean-birth,
 From a briny bed,
 By salt spray fed,—
She scorneth flowers of earth!
 Rare jewels she finds,
 And of dripping gems,
 For her hair, she binds
 Bright diadems.
 O royal and rare,
 Queen Ina fair,
The Mermaid of the South!

 She chaseth away
 The dolphin gay
 From his weedy lair,
 By her liquid stair.
 She loveth to ride
 By the nautilus' side,
 When his graceful boat
 On the wave doth float;
And she sings him a song,
 As they sail along!
 And as she sings,
 Her hair she flings,
Spreading a golden sail,
 To catch the gale.

Queen Ina, she
A life of glee
Leads on the southern sea.

Not here; far away,
Where the dolphins play,
Beneath the wave,
In a crystal cave,
In the coral land,
By her mermaid band,
Doth Queen Ina rest.
She lieth in state,
And the mermaids wait,
 All silently;
She lieth alone
By her empty throne,
 All silently.

And the mermaids weep—
They a vigil keep.
Hark! now they sing,
And their voices ring
 A solemn dirge.
It soundeth below,
And riseth above,
On a gentle surge,
Wave after wave,
Doth onward lave;—
A tuneful sweep
O'er the mighty deep:
In storm or in calm,
Like a voice of love
That weepeth a woe,
It soundeth below,
And riseth above.
And the sailors know,
'Neath that tuneful wave,
In a crystal cave,
In her ocean land,
By her mermaid band,
Queen Ina is laid to rest.

Winter Flowers.

SWEET spring-time flowers are all too fair,
And seem of hopes too fond;
As though they knew no day of care,
Nor thought of blight beyond.

And bright, too bright, are summer flowers;
They mock the heart of grief,
And Memory taunt with faded hours,
As bright—but all too brief.

Meek autumn flowers too placid seem;
As eye that never wept,
And only closed in pleasant dream,
Or dreamless, peaceful slept.

But flowers of the wintry earth,
With scarce a shelt'ring leaf,
Have something in their sunless birth
So like the heart of grief;

They seem as they had nothing here,
Beneath the cold grey sky,
And wait but for the snow-drift's bier
To lay them down and die.

A Calm at Sea.

AND we upon that boundless lake alone!
The still air girt as with a sapphire zone;
Above, a field of ardentness,—the hue
The sailor loves to call his own true blue:
The sea, entranced as 'twere by some pure thought,
In silent gazing up, from heaven had caught
A deeper dye of loveliness and grace,
A thousand quiet smiles upon its face;
 Until almost wearied we
 Of the sweet monotony,
 Did wish some spirit would arouse
 The slumbrous ocean, from repose
So calm, so like the hush of mighty Death,
When he hath stayed the last faint struggling breath,
And left, where erst was warm vitality,
A cold but beautiful mortality!

The Ocean Isle.

AWAY, far away, where the sea-bird wheels,
High, high in the air his giddy reels,
Where the wind lifteth up its voice on high,
Hailing the blast with a fearful cry;
Where the Tempest hurls his fiery spear
Fore the wheels of his thund'ring charioteer.

Away, far away, where the storm-cloud flies,
Dragging darkness over the bright blue skies,
Till below they look, as in sullen dread,
On the mountain seas of molten lead;
And the petrel hooteth the sailors' dirge,
Sweeping along o'er the foaming surge.

There, away, far away, on the ocean's breast,
Lieth an isle, and it seemeth blest—
An isle of peace on the watery waste,
A verdant spot on the briny vast.
As there it had fallen from God's own love,
Smiles this Eden child to its home above.

There the storm is lulled, and the wild winds stop,
Or to balmy sigh of love they drop;
And the clouds dispart from its heaven aloof,
The sun looks down from his azure roof,
And the white waves kiss its emerald shore,—
Adoration kneeling at Beauty's door.

'Tis an isle of peace! for never hath trod
The foot of man its flowery sod;
'Tis an isle of peace! for never a word
Of strife hath its fragrant breath disturbed:
There it lieth alone, a happy exile,—
For a spot of love is the Ocean Isle!

“Man Goeth to his Long Home.”

“MAN goeth to his long home!”
And the mourners they are come,
With a very bitter wail,—
Each one has a doleful cry,
For there is a loved one dead!
Sit the old men on the ground,
Casting ashes on their head,
And they gaze all sadly round:
And the women rend their hair.
Cometh there a bitter cry,
“Why do all the loved ones die,—
The loved ones of the earth?”

“Man goeth to his long home!”
And the mourners they are come,
And they raise a bitter wail,
Each one, with a doleful cry,
For there is a fair one dead!
Deeply do the young men sigh,
And all joy of heart is fled;
Children, they go softly by;
And the maidens flowers bring,
Coming sadly on, and slow;
“Why do all the fair ones go.—
Fade, fade from off the earth?”

“Man goeth to his long home,”
And the mourners they are come,
And the solemn mutes all stand,
And there is proud pomp and state,
For it is a great man dead!
There are weepers in the street,
And the old men shake their head,
Sadly one the other greet;
Plaintive swells the fitful dirge;
Tolls a muffled bell on high;
“Why do all the great men die,—
The great men of the earth?”

“Man goeth to his long home!”
But the mourners are not come,

And there is no bitter cry;
Is it that they do not know
That there is a poor man dead?
Why do things the same appear?
Where are all the mourners fled?
Men are hurrying to and fro,
But not one doth stop to ask,
But to know doth care not one,
For it is a poor man gone,—
 A poor man of the earth!

English Wild Flowers.

1.

YE MAY tell me of flowers bright and gay,
Blooming in Eastern lands away,
And of climes beyond the beautiful sea,
Where all fair things and glad may be;
Where the tropical sun shines ever light,
And flowers seem born to dazzle the sight.
Ye may boast of beauties across the main,
But give, oh! give me, from England again,
The wild red rose, as it used to bloom
Round my father's door, with its sweet perfume.

2.

Ye may tell me of flowers of crimson hue,
And glorious tints of gold and blue,
That sunnier heavens have brought to birth,
And strewed like gems o'er thankless earth;
Where the sevenfold dye of the rainbow rests
On starried crowns and glowing crests.
But oh! for the meadows of England's green,
Set thick with the golden kingcups' sheen;
That the grass might seem a hidden deep,
Where the gods of Nature their treasure keep.

3.

But, oh! for the daisy of English ground,
That loves to grow on churchyard mound;
For the primrose that looks up everywhere,
From bowery lanes to the scented air;
For the flower that hangeth so wavily
Its own soft silver tracery,
And calleth the bee from afar to sip
Nectar which hangs on its delicate lip;
And bring me the bright-berried eglantine,
To weave me the wreath that I used to twine.

4.

Oh! dearer to me are the sweet wild flowers
A hand unseen on England showers;
That are born unknown, and all unknown fade,
Far and away in woodland shade;
And dearer to me are those lesser gems,
Peeping from earth on tiny stems,
Than the vaunting glow of rare Eastern lands,
And the gorgeous show which in proud pomp stands;
For they have a voice, and they speak to me,
With their eyes so full of Love's mystery!

[“They have taken away my Lord]

“They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.”—JOHN xx. 13.

OH! sweet complain of disappointed love,
Thy faithful tone, dear voice of hallowed Grief,
Is writ for thee on an eternal leaf,—
Recorded high in court supreme above,
That so it may have lasting memory;
A mild reproof to me is in thy tone,
For when I wake to find my Lord is gone,
I never ask who Him has borne away,
Though well I know of mine own house are they;—
Foes still within, who pillow on this breast,
Where but the head of my true Lord should rest,
Are they that would my lost love thus betray.
O faithful Grief! teach me thy tender plain,
And chance I, too, may find my Lord again.

The Prisoner's Hospital, Van Diemen's Land.

O PRISON-HOUSE of sighing!
Where the weary and the worn,
The long-pent and the dying,
Lie friendless and forlorn;
Where sickness preys on weariness,
And prey they both on life;
The mother weeps in dreariness,
And pines the lonely wife.

Where tender babe and wasted child
Look eagerly around,
And wonder why the face that smiled,
Can nowhere *now* be found.
Where on the sickly little one
Rests no kind eye of love;
Its pleading moan there heark'neth none,
Save God, who dwells above.

Meet old and young together,
Each their numbered days to fill;
One grudging still the other,
And all fretting at God's will.
The widow mourns her widowhood,
All childless and alone;
The old man dies in solitude,
None near to call his own.

The piercing shriek of madness,
And the hollow face of care,
Meet tears and sighs of sadness,
And the wailings of despair.
Where the captive exile hasteth,
And striveth to be free,
For the bitterness he tasteth
Of sin's deep misery.

The restless cry for morning,
The weary pine for night,
But darkness nor the dawning
Cometh e'er to them aright.
Where Time, so heavy dragg'd with strife,
On wheels of grief moves slow;

Bearing the wretched on through life,
Up paths of human woe.

O'er the dead there is no weeping,
By the dying none to pray,
That Death's dark shade o'er creeping,
Be illumined by Love's ray.
But cold, they watch each other die,
Still shuddering to see
Yon ruthless hand close up each eye,
As theirs must closèd be.

Oh! ere Death's heavy bolt be drawn
Upon life's gate for ever,
And deeps of black perdition yawn
Beneath their souls for ever,
Thou who sweet mercy lov'st to show,
Look down! forgive—relent!
Haste, Lord, ere sealèd this worst woe,
On earth's long banishment.

A Tale of Conscience.

'T WAS done, the dark and murd'rous deed,—
By whom none knew long time;
Till, in his hour of deepest need,
The wretch confessed his crime.

He told how when poor Mona slept,
He drew the murd'rous blade,
And how she woke, and how she wept,
And hard for mercy prayed.

How all her tears unheeded were,
And how in vain she cried.
He said, "I stifled her poor prayer,
When she for mercy cried.

"And then she uttered with a groan,
When I would give no heed,
'No mercy shown—no mercy known,
In thy great time of need!'

"Oh, God! I thrust with this, this hand
The blade, with fiendish care;
The blood shot up, and seemed to stand
Right midway in the air.

"And there it stayed, and there it stood,-
It gained both light and sight;
Till, like a fierce great eye of blood,
It glistened hot and bright.

"It winkèd not, it movèd not,
But with a hellish glare
It fixed on me, all burning hot,
A deep, unearthly stare.

"I shrieked, and fled with all my might,
A mad thing in despair;
Still ever met my guilty sight,
That eye in midway air.

"And ever came, in mournful tone,
Poor Mona's dying cry,—
'No mercy shown—no mercy known,

As thou didst it deny.'

“I fled—still fled o'er land and sea,
The eye ne'er seemed to move;
And yet—oh, strange! it still would be
All full and red above.

“O joy, the thunder-clap to hear!
Methought 'twould drown that cry;
But louder, as the peals rolled near,
The voice shrieked out on high.

“O joy, the thunder-storm to see!
Methought that eye 'twould shroud;
But oh, it glared more horribly
From out the dense black cloud!

“And God he set a mark on me,
He would not let me die,
That I might feel the misery
Of that all-following eye.

“I sleep, but in my sleep it seems
That eye more large and close;
I dream, but in my fevered dreams
Shrieks still that dying voice.

“I see it now—I see it now,
It groweth larger still;
It moveth now—it cometh slow,
My very bed to fill.

“I hear it now, in thund'ring tone,—
Oh, God, the murderer's meed!—
‘No mercy known—no mercy shown
In my worst time of need.’ ”

Who Sweetest Sing Their Songs of Home?

WHO sweetest sing their songs of home—
Wand'ers in their cheerless roam,
 Or they who in it still,
Know nothing of the sweet relief
It bringeth to the exile's grief
 To rest by wayside hill,
To sit and sing his songs of love—
To sit and tell to God above,
How many wild and rude waves foam
Betwixt himself and love and home?

Who truest hold bright thoughts of Love—
They who did ever round her move,
 Still holding her kind hand,
Know not if, when by absence tried,
She ever faithful will abide;
 Or, in a foreign land,
Exiles, who find love grows more deep,
The farther does the distance sweep;
Who find that, borne by ocean waft,
The voice of Love comes yet more soft?

Who loudest sing their songs of glee—
The captives set from prison free,
 When just has come reprieve;
As in dark dungeon they did wait
To bear of sin and guilt the fate,—
 Home's loved ones all to leave,
And go to endless banishment,
With heavy load of punishment;
Or they who liberty ne'er lost,
In hopeless anguish never tost?

Thus angels, that have never known
The bitterness of sin we groan,
 Can never, never know
The sweetness of the thought which steals
Unto the heart that deeply feels
 Its sinfulness and woe;
The joy with which the soul doth spring,
When comes that voice on silver wing,

And bids the heart, so sorrow-riven,
To go in peace, with sins forgiven.

Thus happy angels, in their rest,
Who ever were and still are blest,
 In sinless home above;
Who ever did, and still abide
Around and by their Father's side,
 Know nothing of the love—
That love which we so well do know,
In weary wandering lost in woe;
That love which we so full have tried—
Love that for us was crucified!

Thus angels, who have wandered never,
But THERE have dwelt, and are for ever,
 Around their Father's home,
Know not the sweetness of the song,
With which in exilement so long,
 We while our cheerless roam;
Know not the gladness of the thought
That comes to us so comfort-fraught—
Thoughts of returning and of rest,
Wherewith He makes the weary blest!

The Homeward Bound.

HO! a sail in sight—there's a ship in sight,
And she is homeward bound;
With a fairy breeze, from the southern seas,
She seeketh English ground.

There's a ship in sight,—on her wings of light,
She skims the ocean's face;
She leaves us behind, like the forest hind
That mocks the huntsman's chase.

She is scarce in sight, we have tracked her flight,—
She fadeth quick from view;
She's a speck of light in the sunshine bright,
On the far horizon's blue.

She is out of sight, we have lost her quite,—
She seeketh English ground;
With many a prayer we'll follow her there,
For she is homeward bound!

Poor Nannie's Return.

NOT mine, poor helpless wanderer, to twit thee with thy roam,
Enough for me it is thou art returned unto thine home;
All other hearts are closed on thee, but mine will let thee in,
Though wide thy wayward wanderings adown the paths of sin.

Enough for thine own mother 'tis thou art returned at last,
Though but driv'n here for shelter from the keenly-cutting blast;
Come back unto thy mother's hearth, as now unto her heart,
And never from her true love more, poor Nannie, shalt thou part!

Thou art sadly, strangely dearer, than e'en foretime could be,
When thou wert all a mother's prayer or pride could wish to see;
When village dames would look on thee, and bless thee on thy way,
Then straight for their own maidens would turn aside to pray.

Oh! so strange a thing is love, and so wayward is the heart,
That it prizes aye the dearest, the cause of keenest smart;
Through days of weary weepings, when I mourned as for the dead,
I take thee to thy home again, with blessings on thy head.

Not mine to slay the dainty calf, well fattened in the stall,
I'll spread for thee my snow-white board, poor Nannie, with my all;
Not mine the golden chain to seek, the gorgeous robe to bring,
Nor the merry mirthful maidens with tabrets call to sing;

For songs my heart is all too full, its well-springs lie too deep;
I could fall upon my Nannie's neck, and all for gladness weep!
Come back unto thy mother's hearth, as now unto her heart,
And Nannie, oh, bright angels in our joy will bear a part!

“Home, Sweet Home!”

THE BIRDS in winter-time that roam,
Return again with spring's soft ray,
And warble out their “Home, sweet home!”
 Each on his native spray.

But I upon the future gaze,
And hope still farther seems to light,
While birds, on bright ethereal ways,
 Speed on their homeward flight.

The mirthful wind, in summer trees,
Plays till each stirring leaf seems glad,
'Mid ruined haunts as wintry breeze
 Sweeps sonorously sad.

And so that strain, which erst to me
Came softly, summer-like, and sweet,
Now, as some plaintive melody,
 Swells low in tones unmeet.

Then sing it not, till I may tear
From Memory's soil the deep-struck root;
Ah! Love knew not—she set it there—
 These tears would be the fruit;

Or, till my heart hath learnt the task,
That earth's cold reasonings press on it;
Learnt in the world's false smile to bask—
Learnt its stern watchword—to forget!

Song.

Addressed to a Very Young and Beautiful Lady.

LADY, lady, hearken now!
Youth and Gladness on thy brow
Each their brightest gems have set,
Wreathing such a coronet
For thy golden wavy hair,
As only Innocence may wear.

Lady, lady, hearken, pray!
While it is thy summer day;
Leave awhile thy wreathèd flowers
To their fragrance and their bowers;
Let thy tresses as they may
With their sister sunbeams play.
Age will bid thee bind them up,
And from out her frosted cup
Scatter whiter pearls than thine,
Amid thy golden locks to shine.

Earth will have a smile for thee,
Bright as sun rays on the sea;
Changeful and as false as they,
Lady, trust it not a day:
Life will seem a joyous thing—
Light of heart, of lighter wing,
In the world's apparelling.
Lady, lady, have a care,
Things are *not* that *seem* most fair.

Lady, summer beams are bright,
Can they aught of evil bring?
Heaven-sent angels, born of light,
What can lurk beneath their wing?
Are not summer beams, though bright,
Weapons, in Death's hand, of might,
Subtle arrows, plumed with smiles,
Slaying with their radiant wiles?
Like the prisoned fountain sprite,
On the perjured bridal night,
Killing with a false caress—

Death imparting with a kiss.

Lady, turn not thus away,—
All unmindful of my lay;
For I dare not tune my voice
To the World's key-note—Rejoice!
She will tell thee all her joys,
With ready hand, her gilded toys
Display unto thy dazzled sight,
And whisper, “Thus are all things bright.”
Lady, lady, have a care,
Things are *not* that *seem* most fair.

Life will sing her sweetest songs,
All of gladness, none of wrongs;
Still one monitory note
Through her gayest sounds shall float;
Still this voice, as of a friend,
With her revelry shall blend,—
“Lady, lady, have a care,
Things are *not* that *seem* most fair.”

To a Very Early Snowdrop.

Addressed to Catherine B R.

WHENCE, on a day so darkly dull,
Fair fragile form, art thou?
Whoe'er so frail a thing could cull
To deck chill Winter's brow?

In slender robe of green thin clad,
Thou bendest o'er thine earth,
Like some meek spirit humbly glad,
Though lonely from her birth.

Oh! dearly prized of all the year,
Glad tidings thou dost bring;
The knell thou art of winter drear,
The matins of the spring!

Thou yet beholdest not the day,
Sweet flower, we fondly prize;
Thou passest on thy cheerless way
'Neath coldly sullen skies.

No place there seems for selfish thought
Within thy soft sad eye;
To us the welcome message brought,
Thou art content to die!

Oh! fraught within thy tiny sphere
With holy truths profound,
Meseems almost thy voice to hear,
As though thou speech hadst found.

“Who placed thy lot so frailly fair,
In hour so seeming stern,
Knew best that there, and only there,
Life's lesson thou couldst learn.

“Who laid thee on thy cheerless bed,
Can guide the storm aright,
Or bid the wind sweep overhead,
That else thy form would blight.

“Thus, whereso'er thy lot may be,

Be sure His choice it is;
And Peace will find her way to thee,
When all thy will is His.”

My Father's Birthday.

OH! day most sacred in Love's calendar,
Most hallowed day in my domestic year,
How shall I meet thee now?—how greet thee still,
Thou, that joy-laden erst were wont to come?
How heavy falls thy step anear my home,
As tread of one that bringeth news of ill,—
As one whose heart is very heaviness.
But stay thou in Love's calendar, dear day,
And o'er my lonely hearth a silv'ry ray
Down shed from the bright crown of hoariness
Circling that placid brow, where righteousness
Her own mild glory leaves, lightning the face
With softened lustre, in which Heaven may trace
A title-deed to lasting happiness!

The Little Birthday King.

REIGN, baby, reign,—we own thy sway,
And crown thee Beauty's king this day;

Thy subjects we,
On bended knee,
Do proffer thee
Our loyalty.

Reign, baby, reign,—we hail this day,
To crown thee Beauty's king for aye.

Rule, baby, rule,—our hearts are true;
We render thee all homage due,

Thy throne our love;
And from above
Doth earthward move
The white-winged dove,

Bearing wherewith to wreathe thy brow,
Brighter than jewels,—an olive-bough!

Wield, baby, wield thy sceptre wand,
Ne'er monarch reigned o'er hearts so fond;

Than thee before,
Ne'er monarch bore
A name so pure;
Ne'er royalty wore

A crown so beautiful as thine,—
Wild flowers from a woodland shrine.

Reign, baby, reign,—both Love and Hope
Have cast for thee a horoscope;

No augur's dart
Hath dared to start,
Nor sybil's art
Hath borne a part;

But Faith hath looked into the sky,
And drawn from thence thy destiny.

Rule, baby, rule,—thy life's short day
Will pass too quickly all away.

But Love shines bright
In Death's dark night,—
He hath no might
To quench her light:

But fear not thou, our love will last
When sceptre, crown, and all are past.

Wield, baby, wield, ere yet it fade,
Thy sceptre wand our love has made;
 For pomp or state,
 For good or great,
 It may not wait,
 But meet its fate.

Now reign and rule, our infant royal,
Thy subjects we are true and loyal.

Ode on Pleasure.

ADDRESSED TO J. W. A W.

OH! sought of all, but rarely found,
Because not sought aright,
We seek it on forbidden ground,
When, lo! it withers in our sight.
It bloometh by the leafy hedge,—
A god with us—a wayside pledge,—
And yet we wander to the edge
Of a far-distant shore.

And then, ashamed, to spoilless turn,
When all the world would flock to learn
The wage so hard a race should earn:
Like the renownèd prince of Rome,—
A sea-smoothed pebble from the coast,
A shell-fish long-deserted home,
Is all we have to boast!

It hideth in the daisy's cup;—
Art thou thirsty? drink it up:
There is enough for thee and me,
And after us may come the bee,
And rifle as he will.
Still art thou thirsty? drink again,
For Nature hath a generous hand,
And loveth, for wayfaring men,
In God's highway to stand.
She hath a draught for every whim—
A draught she hath for every taste;
And, lo! it sparkleth to the brim,
Yet runneth not to waste.
Hers is a very widow's cruise,
That faileth not, though we may use
Our last to-morrow's share.

Behold, it lieth at thy feet!
Then wherefore, in the dust and heat,
Toilest thou up yon weary steep,
Making thine every pore to weep,
While at each step the parchèd soil

Beneath thy wounded foot gives way,
As it would mock thy bootless toil.
“Ah! it will be a dreary day,
Before thy rest from labour won;
For even now the westward sun
Is hasting to be gone.”

She sitteth by the chimney stone,
She smileth there,—thy very own!
Wilt thou leave her there alone,
To search for her without?
The little children find her out,
And, with a merry laugh and shout,
Clap their small hands in glee!
Whilst thou dost lead a weary chase,
A fable's phantom steps to trace.

A dainty maiden she may seem,
The long-sought spirit of a dream,
Which thou hast dreamed, and dreamt again,
And said, “If such a creature be,
I'll rifle valley, mountain, plain,—
I'll search o'er ocean, land and sea,
Till I have made her mine.”

A dainty maiden she may seem,
Aye, lovely as those beings bright
Which shine amid the fairy light,
When mimic sun-rays beam;
Those short-lived heroes of a night,
Those painted visions of the stage,
Which show beneath the broad daylight
The lines of discontented age.

She is not true unto her oath,
For what she vows to be to thee,
Not long erewhile she was me.
Believe her not—she'll leave us both,
And laugh at us to boot!
Then off to lead another foot
The same rewardless chase.

In the mine there may be treasure,
And the world may call it Pleasure;
But kindleth there her subtle lamp,
Unseen, the treacherous Fire-Damp.
Scarce the sentry calls—Beware!

Than swift into the upper air
She speeds upon Destruction's wings,
And, lo! their fair and pleasant things,
Unrecognised, are strewed around,
Or borne unto some far-off ground,
 In scattered fragments lie

What to-day hath Pleasure been,
Brings "Woe is me!" to-morrow;
Gladness in the distance seen
Betokeneth nearer sorrow.

The Young Mother to Her Infant.

ADDRESSED TO LOUISA M. A.

THOU knowest not, my little one,
The world that thou art in;
Thou knowest not, my pretty one,
That it is full of sin.
Thou knowest not, O treasure mine!
That grief and sorrow here,
From eyes that once shone bright as thine,
Draw down the silent tear.

But, oh! sweet babe, a time is there,
A time of joy for thee,
Ere yet the withering touch of Care
Hath chilled thy young heart's glee;
The few bright years of infancy,—
Oh, happy, happy time!
When everything will gladden thee,
And Mirth be at her prime.

And thou wilt think the earth is thine,
And only made for thee,
To revel in its glad sunshine
The livelong day, so free.
The sun above and starry host,
And firmament and moon,
The blue, deep sea, the shell-strewn coast,—
Thou'lt call them all thine own.

Sweet Spring will come, with singing birds,
And bleating lambs will play;
Through flowery meadows will be heard
Blithe voice of childhood gay.
And Summer, too, will come to thee,
With all the fruit she yields,
With butterfly and humming-bee,
And scented sweet hay-fields;

With waving corn, and golden sheaves,
And reapers' merry noise.
Then Autumn's yellow, rustling leaves

Will add unto thy joys.
Old Winter, wreathed with holly red,
Will bid the snowflake fall,
And robin-rebreasts, to be fed,
Will at thy window call.

Thus, thus a year will pass o'er thee,
Like one long pleasant day;
Still thou a merry child wilt be,
And sing thine hours away.
But oh! fair babe, not thus for long
Time and his train move on;
He'll bid thee cease thy joyous song,
His dreary task to con.

And pale-faced Care will onward creep,
And Grief, with tear-steeped eye,
And Pain her feverish vigils keep,
And Death stalk grimly by.
But bless thee, bless thee, baby dear!
I'll pray to One above,
To make thee, in this desert drear,
An oasis of love.

There, safe amid the storms of sin,
And from the wailing wind,
Still calm amid the tumult's din,
A refuge thou mayst find;
There from the fierce sirocco's breath,
And from the wintry blast,
There from the tempest-scattering death,
Till it be overpast.

And this bright oasis, my child,
This spot of calm retreat,
This covert from the storm so wild,
This shadow from the heat,
Is thy dear Saviour's arm of love,
His tender gentle breast.
Oh! flee thee there, my trembling dove,—
Oh! flee thee there and rest!

On Tasmania's Receiving the Writ of Freedom.

FAIR Virgin of the South, we call on thee;
Receive with smiling courtesy the writ
Which bids thee now from childhood's thrall be free;
Thy mistress Self—oh, task most hard! while yet
Thy ray-crowned brow with youth's bright bloom is fraught.
But, oh! fair maid, as thou dost take the gift,
Spare from thy varied joys one gentle thought,
In quiet prayerfulness, on high to lift;
And let thy lips in heartfelt murmurs break
On festal voice around, with words inspired
By Him who spoke as never man yet spake,—
“Where much is given, there much will be required.”
Thou'rt free!—behold, where spreads thy sun-blest land,
A glad inheritance—a grateful soil;
Whence Plenty springs to kiss the roughest hand
That courts her cheerful smile with honest toil.
Oh! be not this thy curse:—a garnered store,
While patient Lazarus, all fainting, waits
At the dark portals of thy Divè's' gates,
To vow against thee at God's justice-door.

A New Light on an Illumination.

*To celebrate Tasmania's Writ of Freedom.

IT WAS to be a festal night,—
Had been a festal day,—
Each pane, in hanging forth its light,
Proclaim'd a holiday.

I need not tell the cause of joy,
My story lies not there,
But with a little bright-haired boy,
Who was the sight to share.

The livelong day had been one treat
Unto his youthful heart;
He'd witnessed many a wondrous feat
Of juggler's cunning art.

But now the day unto a close
Is drawing rapidly;
He mourns it not—oh! well he knows
Night comes a queen of glee.

He is to see the fairy sight
From every window-pane,
Until his heart, with loyal delight,
Throbs through each swelling vein.

But one hour yet ere it shall come,—
Oh! how the moments lag;
His voice of mirth is growing dumb,
His joy begins to flag.

And now his mother's knee he seeks,
His eyes begin to close,
The language soon of sleep he speaks,—
To dream-land off he goes.

At last he whispered, “All, good-night;
I'm tired, I'll to bed.”
“My child, but what of this grand sight?”
The wond'ring mother said.

“Lo! the joy of all the nation
Now begins on yon mount's brow;

The general illumination,—
See! hath lit its first lamp now.”

“But, nay, I'm tired now,” said he,
In evident confusion;
“I'd rather go to bed than see
The general delusion!”

Off went the fair unconscious sprite,
Unwitting of the speech,
Which, for its truth and satire, might
Philosophers well teach.

Thou Art Thy Brother's Keeper.

An Irregular Poem

First Part.

I GO not with that maxim cold,
Which saith kind words are vain,
To him who flings me of his gold,
I fling it back again;
But the poor widow's scantest dole,
Bestowed in Pity's tone,
Yea, rather than the rich man's whole,
A God-gift I would own.
That born of God, to God again
Which straightway goeth up,
Will *it* be satisfied to drain
Dregs of a gilded cup?
Be lavish of your kindly words;
For, as the voice of June,
That waketh up the little birds
To a long-forgotten tune,
They may arouse some weary heart
To a heaven-directed strain—
And Mary, to her better part,
Looks up with joy again.
Or, as the genial step of Spring,
Which goeth through the earth,
And fanneth with her gentle wing
The flowers into birth;
So from some cheerless barren ground
Bursts beauty unaware,—
The unexpected answer found
To a long-offered prayer.

Ye know not of the flowers that lie
Beneath the soul's dry sod,
Until there bloweth from on high
The bidding breath of God.
Who knows what nursling of the sky,
From yonder hardened clod,
May spring and bloom eternally

In the paradise of God?
And ye may be His ministers,
As the sweet vernal air,
To call them forth—these hidden flowers—
From the soil of sin and care.

Second Part.

Oh! brethren, ye with treasure,
As countless as the sand,
Who may, at thought's quick pleasure,
Dispense, with lavish hand,
Golden bounty without measure
To the hunger-stricken band,—
Each one thy fellow-creature,
And each on God's own land;
Will your gold allay the thirsting
Of the soul's pure inner life,
Ever throbbing unto bursting,
With rival actings rife?

Is that all unto your brother
Your bounty cares to give?
Can your gold the feelings smother
Which struggle still to live
Amid the grief and anguish,
Like dry dust in the fire,
That threatens to extinguish
The spark that would aspire?
One breath of heart-true feeling,
With kindred impulse rife,
Would bid that spark concealing
Break forth to warmth and life.

So a soul to life's long living,
By that one kindly breath,
May arise, with deep thanksgiving,
From the dreary sleep of death,
And once more to its Maker
Fly as a loosèd dove;
For that breath was the awaker
Of thoughts of creature love.
And the heart which wakes to blessing
Its fellow of the dust,

Will ere long to God, confessing,
Look up with childlike trust.

Oh! brethren, why so niggard?
It can you little cost;
And while ye are so laggard
Your brother may be lost.
A word of loving-kindness
May save a soul from sin,
And disperse the guilty blindness,
To let God's light shine in;
And the heart which, by oppressing,
Was choked with pain and care,
Would follow you in blessing,
And voice of new-born prayer.
Will ye—your neighbour dying—
The voice of old renew?
Shall the blood of Abel crying,
Awake to call on you,
Till, in accents dread and deeper,
It reach God's judgment-throne,—
“Thou art thy brother's keeper!”
The thunders of its tone?
Then onward, and be earnest;
If ye work not, Time will.
Shall that wheel with which thou turnest,
Oh, man, for thee stand still?
Nay, the ceaseless, swift revolving
Of each death-toward roll,
Nears the distance to dissolving
In thy eternal goal.

A Sleeping Infant.

OH! lovely bark,
Becalmed upon a sea of holy peace,—
So bathed in soft pure light, thou seem'st to rest
A star upon the broad blue ocean's breast,—
A ray of heavenly sunshine, and at rest
 Upon the slumbering deep!—
I cannot bear to think such raptured calm must cease.

It pity seems,
While fondly gazing on thy deep repose,
That e'er the breeze should fill thy little sail,
To bear thee onward o'er a way unknown,—
A traceless path of which no chart's laid down;
 Or blowing to a gale,
Break up fair ocean's dream, the lingering storm arouse.

But peace, be still!
He made thee beautiful, He launched thee forth;
Though tossed with tempest, though proud billows foam,
Unseen—by all but thee, the storm above—
On flood of glory broods the Holy Dove,
 A loadstar to thy home
On yonder side. Speed on, nor fear the tempest's wrath!

Friendship.

OH! store it well, this best and holy grant,
God's kindest gift to man exiled on earth!
And yet how few—O sad!—will learn its worth,
And know it is a delicate transplant,
A rare exotic from a brighter land;
How few will learn to nurse it tenderly,
And guard it from the harsh rude scrutiny,
And careless grasp of rough unthinking hand.
Alas! to most by name it is but known—
A name profaned, because not understood;
Oft on an act of servitude bestowed,
Performed to answer purpose of its own.
But Friendship never bloomed perfection here,
Earth's air is cold,—it loves a warmer sphere.

Half-Uttered Thoughts.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPIRIT LANGUAGE.

First Part.

DEEP voices, undefined and dread,
There are which meet the soul at night,
When silent stars are overhead,
And sails the moon by cloud-capt height.

Low whispers from a distant land,
That speak unto the spirit's ear,
A message from her sister band,
Dwelling in shadowy regions near;

And she hearks, in trembling wonder,
To the solemn tones and deep,
And strives the chains to burst asunder,
That her flight still earth-bound keep.

Conscious of a proud communion
With all glorious things afar,
Who knows what mysterious union
'Twixt herself and yon fair star?

Each lingering orb that rolleth by,
Seems, with a glance significant,
To beckon, with its speech-full eye,—
“Thy home is here—Earth-militant!”

Second Part.

As sunlit clouds that onward roll,
And melt in shapeless mists away,
Ofttimes come crowding o'er the soul,
Half-uttered thoughts in wild array.

Thoughts that we could not think again,
When once their dim forms pass away;
Their scattered fragments that remain
Kaleidoscopic antics play.

Thoughts that come o'er us like a dream

Of some great past and blissful state,
But transient as the fitful gleam,
Which meteors of the night create;

Or, sudden, on a passing gale,
A fragrant breath of Eden flowers,
Brings back a long-forgotten tale
Of sinless ante-natal hours.

The soul starts up, as to retrace
Her wandering footsteps back once more
To that blest Eden dwelling-place,
And says, "I'll stay there evermore."

Third Part.

But when she nears the hallowed ground,
And thinks to find free entrance there,
The seraph guards still stand around,
Waving their fiery blades in air.

They drive her back in vain to weep,—
A twice made exile from the gate,—
And doubly feel the sins which keep
Her wand'ring yet, and desolate.

And then it is that gentle voice,
The "Mary!" by the soul is heard:
Oh! how are made her depths rejoice,
By that one well-known, cherished word.

She turns her Saviour to behold,
And meets his mild, reproachful eye;
Then, like the weeping one of old,
"Rabboni!" is her rapt reply.

Behold! her Paradise is free,
And wide its once-closed portals stand;
The bleeding might of Calvary
Hath triumphed, and the curse unbanned!

The gardener's lowly garb beneath,—
She knows her Eden's Lord is nigh;
Their flaming swords the seraphs sheathe,
And kneel to let the ransomed by!

A Child Listening to Music.

HE stood upon his mother's knee, a child
Most fair and beautiful to look upon;
One dimpled arm around her neck was thrown,
In winning tenderness,—love undefiled!
But as the full, deep tone did higher swell,
He slow relaxed that fondly-clasped embrace;
He drooped his head, then hid his blushing face
Beneath his tiny hands, which ere long fell,
And back he sunk, as to unconscious rest.
It seemed almost that he had ceased to breathe,
But that his full heart's throb did beat and heave
Convulsively against his mother's breast,
Until, o'erburdened with his inly load,
He sobbed, “Oh, mother! tell me—is it God?”

Third Chapter.

Blanche, and Other Tales.

Dedicated,
WITH GRATEFUL REGARD,
TO
MISS CAROLINE GEORGIANA KINDERSLEY,
BY
THE AUTHORESS.

Blanche.

The good die first.—WORDSWORTH.

A silent grief seldom speeds well.—BISHOP HALL.

SHE died of grief, they say; and oh! to me
It seemeth like enough that one so fair,
So sensitively wrought within, should be
Death-struck at last by such a blighting care,
And like a withered thing lie down to die.
You know a tender plant, when torn away
From 'neath the gard'ner's ever-watchful eye,
And left to struggle as it feebly may,
In alien soil ungenial, 'gainst the blast
Or cold night air, or fierce meridian sun,
Must surely pine and wither at the last,—
Care comes too late when is the mischief done.
Such was poor Blanche—a gentle, fragile thing,
Nurtured within a lap of fondness rare;
While Joy, that gay-winged bird, seemed aye to sing
His songs of gladness to her own sweet air,
And all around, with eager step and light,
Love ever moved intent but how to add
Another bliss unto a life too bright,—
For earth already far too blest and glad.
Poor Blanche! seems Memory now to see her still,
With step light as her own light heart within,
Go singing on, her daily round to fill
Of pleasurable toil, from morn to e'en;
For she was one that could not bring her mind
To live in idle elegance, nor waste
Life's precious gift in luxury refined.
Oft she would gaily say she longed to taste
The lawful pride the honest labourer feels
Over his self-earned pence, and grateful rest,
When, day's long hiring o'er, kind Evening steals,
Folding tired nature to her welcome breast.

Too bright to last!—Ah, so it proved, indeed!
For, with the fleetness of a summer dream,
Her sun of gladness set; or, in his speed
To bring up darkest night, did rather seem

Behind the hills of cold neglect to fall,
And, unpremonished, leave her all too soon,—
Night o'er her head, and darkness over all,
Uncheered alike by light of stars or moon.

In one short day it came—both parents died!
And they with whom her after lot was cast,
Of sordid mould, their tender trust belied,—
Too meek to struggle, and too frail to last.
Ill match were they with Blanche, whose very life
Was love. Cold from the first, their coldness grew—
Grew deeper yet, till, as a keen-edged knife,
It gashed her heart, froze up its well-springs too.
Then they would call it sullenness or pride,
That unto silence and herself she crept:
But, oh! they knew not that she sought to hide
A grief that unto death would fain have wept.

And love to her did seem so contraband,
That if one spoke a word which savoured aught
Of love, she'd gaze intent to understand
If still of kindness there for her was thought.
And then would o'er her come a sadder tone,
As though within her breast that speech had stirred
The hopeless memory that love, quick flown,
Had left her naught to feed on but a word!
Then, in fresh sorrow, she would turn aside,—
Fearing to weep, lest undeserved reproof,
With bitter taunt, should scoff her grief's full tide,
Till Night, kind friend of misery, aloof
Should beckon her, to pour to God unseen
The tears she dared not shed in open light.
Unloosed at last, the floods that pent had been,
Found bursting freedom in her Saviour's sight.

'Twas at this time we met; yet once again
We met. She knew me not, or did not see,—
So long accustomed to look round in vain.
“There is nothing now,” she'd say, “of love for me.”
Oh! could it be the same?—that maiden glad,
Who seemed to be of joy the better part?
Methought mine eyesight failed—oh, would it had!
But no—'twas Blanche bereft of Blanche's heart;
Her own sweet eyes, but all their light wrung out
By midnight tears, or tears too long confined;

Her step was listless as she moved about,
With slow, abstracted air, in deep thought lost—
Thoughts that she could not to herself unwind,
In such confusion were they round her toss'd.
Nor need to tell how palely wan her cheek;
But there was this that pained me to the heart,
The measured speech, in hollow accents weak,
And lips that foretime ruddy hung apart,
And every impulse of the soul obeyed,
Compressed, as though in firm resolve to bar
From passage there some trust, which, if betrayed,
Should memory sear with unrelenting scar.

Time dragged his weary wheel; unto her last
Sad days poor Blanche quick drew. Now was all done,
In frighted haste, to remedy the past;
And Conscience plied her busy work, begun
Long since, less urged by dread of cold disdain,
Than dark suspicion hovering round her roof.
All remedies were brought—all tried in vain;
For, oh! what antidote from heaven aloof
Is there to reach, with healing power, the heart
Grief-broken quite? And she would meekly say,
“Oh, let me go! Why would you longer part
Me from the love that beckons me away?
Oh, let me go!—there's nothing for me here:
My hope and joy of life have long since fled
To where my God shall wipe the mourner's tear.
So heavy lies the pain within my head,
A sense of strife so weary at my breast,
And oh! so numbed and cold my poor heart is,
That joy could never enter more; and rest,
If only rest, would be a heaven to this.
But oh! 'tis there my mother is, and there
My reverend father waits—there would I be,
For there my Saviour is; and only where
He dwells, my soul, as frighted dove, would flee.”

I saw her once again, drawn to her end.
Dear Blanche! she fixed her gaze, with dying eye,
Then recollection told her that a friend,
To catch her heart's last wish, stood eager by;
But her sweet lips were ever closed on speech,
And what I know I gathered from her face,

Whose look of meekness, now beyond the reach
Of hopeless grief, had not one lingering trace,
Which eye of keenest search could read as aught
That to stern memory could past scenes recall.
All was forgiveness, love, and peace; no thought
Seemed there of just reproach—no thought at all—
But such as saints upon the very brink
Of heaven might pause, and unprofaned might think.

So passed poor Blanche from out her weary life.
But she has left a record graven here,
Not easily forgot, even amid the strife
Of thickly gathering cares, year upon year.
Though sad her tale, a sweet refreshment oft
Its memory yields; for in her sorrow still
Her sore-tried soul bowed down to God, but soft,
Weak nature drooping fell beneath that will.
The God-supported soul may higher rise,
As lower sinks mortality depressed;
Stretched to her last, frail Nature snaps and dies,—
The soul, unloosed, bursts to her goal of rest!

The Messenger Knight.

IN the dim moonlight, the Messenger Knight,
From his castle by the dark sea,
Hath ridden out, and before him a scout,
Both gaunt and grim to see.
From turret and tower, from bank and from bower,
Like a mist of the night,
Spreads the cry of affright,—
“Ho! ho! 'tis the Messenger Knight!”

With a ghastly grace he rideth apace,
On his tall and stately steed;
He hasteth for none, and where is the one
That would dare to stay his speed?
Like a maid that is shriven, her sins all forgiven,—
By a cloud overcast,
The young moon hurries past,
With her veiled eye wan and downcast.

'Neath the lordly home of a castle dome
The banquet all ready is set;
To honour this night the heir of Rothlight,
Proud lord and fair lady are met.
Now, who bids it stay?—the song melts away;
Sudden silence doth fall,
Like a funeral pall,
And spreads its cold panic o'er all.

Horror's pale shade makes the life-roses fade
From the soft bed of Beauty's bright cheek;
While each noble lord, unaware, grasps his sword,
But none of their terror dare speak.
There sad glances blend from lover and friend,
And that voice of affright
Thrills the dimness of night,—
“Ho! ho! 'tis the Messenger Knight!”

The knight rideth on, and aye and anon
A blast bloweth deep from his horn,
So loud and so shrill, that each startled hill
With echo its neighbour doth warn.
Distinct and yet drear, it spreads far and near,
And the white moon-rays quake,

As they fall on the lake,—
The dew-laden tree boughs all shake.

* * * * *

She was the brightest, her garments the whitest
Of all in that beauty-dowered throng;
But she stood aloof, 'neath revelry's roof,
Alike from the dance and the song.
Some said,—“She doth keep a love sorrow deep,
And a dark stream of woe,
Through her breast's hill of snow,
With life's flood doth mingle and flow.”

While some did thus mourn, said others, in scorn,—
“Nay, nay, 'tis hypocrisy's feint;
Oh, how should with us join mirthfully thus
So rare and unsought-for a saint?
Cross arms on thy breast, O fair stranger guest!
We will canon thee here
Lady Saint of the Bier,
With thy funeral visage and gear.”

Then arose from the board the castle's brave lord,
And cried,—“To the guests bear the wine!
Let the red liquor leap, like stars in the deep,
Till the goblet may seem a jewel-mine.
And let each lady bear in her arms the young heir,
As thrice over to-night,
In his proud mother's sight,
We pledge—To the heir of Rothlight!”

“Nay, nay, lady fair, think not we can spare
From the banquet a nurse such as thou;
We choose thee the first—dost think thyself curst?
What ails thee—hast taken death's vow?
Now, by my good sword, vouchsafe us some word.
Sweet stranger, be calm,
We mean thee no harm,—
Bring hither the babe in thine arm.”

Lovely and meek, not a word did she speak,
But the tear-pearl hung on her eye,
As sadly and slow towards the babe she did go,—
At its own mother's breast it did lie.

So tranced doth she seem,—oh! say, doth she dream,
Or her wounded heart bleed,
On that calm face to read
Some black future story decreed?

She gazed there awhile, the infant did smile,
And stretched its small arms in its sleep.
The maiden drew near—“Oh, be of good cheer!”
Said the mother; “why dost thou weep?”
“But they are not mine—these tears are thine;
'Tis for thee my lips pale,
As they linger and fail
To utter their mission's sad tale.”

The babe laughed outright,—a laugh of delight,
And clung to the strange maiden's heart.
Why doth that shiver make her arm quiver,
And from its bright dimpled form start?
Oh, trusting mother, would it were other
Than this lamb of thy love,
From thy bosom to rove,—
Thou see'st not the prey-bird above!

The mother but smiled to see how the child
Played with the gold waves of her hair.
Oh, fond one, betrayed! though lovely that maid,
What, trust thy babe to her care!
Is no angel near to whisper thine ear,
“The dread forest-ranger
Ne'er bringeth more danger,—
Beware, oh, beware of this stranger!”

Oh, maiden divine! what power is thine,
The grace of this infant to gain?
Thy beauty is rare, but others as fair
Have sought him and wooed him in vain:
Hast some hidden charm to win to thine arm
The bloom-bud of my pride,
In thy bosom to hide,—
A boon to all others denied?”

Then, soft as a sigh, did the maiden reply,—
The mother but thought it a prayer,—
“Take him I must, gentle mother, thy trust
Shall be safe 'neath a fonder one's care.

May this thy heart cheer—thy babe hath no fear:
I must bear him away,
In first purity's day,
But would for thy sake he might stay!”

From the child concealed, to the mother revealed,
Stood forth a form of affright;
All lovely arrayed, to the babe still the maid;
To the mother the Messenger Knight!
As a grey twilight gloom that hangs o'er a tomb,
O'er that banqueting scene,
Where the maiden had been,
Wreathed upward a mist faintly seen.

A terror-fraught sound, as it smote the ground,
Was the clang of that steed's rushing hoof,
As it bore the Knight, in the dim moonlight,
With speed from the lord's castle roof.
To the babe from above it seemed of sweet love,
Like a song of delight
Was that voice of affright,—
“Ho! ho! 'tis the Messenger Knight!”

Dora.

“Oh, Gertrude, Gertrude, when sorrows come, they come Not single spies, but in battalions.”

THE hour of midnight! and a cold, cold night;
And yet still feebly shines that taper's light
Within yon latticed pane; what can it be?
What shadow that, which lone and stealthily
Moves to and fro so oft? There! once again
Its outline dim falls thwart the frosty pane.
For three long nights within that silent room
Has this scant shadow cast its form of gloom.
Thrice has that flame, with faint and fitful ray,
Outshone the stars of heaven; watching away
Each paling orb, until the first grey dawn
Streaks like a line of thought the brows of morn.

The hour of midnight! and the door opes slow,
And softer still than slow; and voices low,
In earnest tone, come through the widening space.
“Haste, tarry not; and, as you hope for grace
In your worst hour of need, bid him be here
By morning's break, by all that he holds dear.
Tell him she longs to have that blessing poured
On her poor drooping head, so long implored
In vain; she longs to feed her eyes on him,
Ere their fast-failing sight in death grows dim,
To close for evermore. Tell him, his child
Will not now long be his; her thoughts grow wild,
And rave of mercy shown by all beside,
Yea, e'en by God!”

Her prayer is not denied.

The faithful servant, love impelled, swift sped;
And the o'er-burdened mother to that bed
Of pending death, returned to watch and weep
O'er her heart-blighted hopes; by one foul sweep
Of the Destroyer's art laid prostrate there.
Stay, eye of pride, that glance triumphant spare!
Stay, mouth of scorn, too pliant aye to curl,
Ere yet you cast on yon poor with'ring girl
Your proud, full-meaning'd lip, with bitter taunt
And boastful word, of vainly empty vaunt,

Of righteousness untried;—or tried, who knows?—
Perchance to fall 'neath the first wind that blows.
Where God forgives, shall you your anger keep?
Where He withholds, your puny vengeance sweep?
Where He bids comfort take, shall you, more just,
Refuse the fainting soul the trembling trust
She dares to take on that kind hand, stretched forth
To save her from the tempest-tossing wrath?

Her guilt was great; it she seeks not to hide,
But meekly says, “For it my Saviour died!”
And, Mary-like, forgiven much, loves much
The blest Forgiver. Dora she was such.

Hers is a tale, alas! too often told,
To need afresh its records dark unfold,—
Where Death and Sorrow their sad pages blend;
A tale 'twere vain to hope might have an end,
While there are those—oh, mark them as they stand,
The blasting curse, pollutions of our land!
Who care not for the graves they early fill
With those who trusted, for they feared no ill;
Who care not when they drive the hoary head
To sink in sorrow to the earth's cold bed;
Who care not when deluded Madness sings
Her wild unmeaning glees, nor when she rings
Her savage laughter through the grated pane,
Which bounds the sceptre of her fancied reign;
Who know not, care not for the hearts they break,
The homes they enter, and what havoc make
Within her sacred bounds, her hallowed halls.
Hark! how the ling'ring footstep lonely falls,
Where once the airy trip sweet music made
To happy parents' ears. The lights now fade,
Where once bright faces gaily crowded round;
O'er social hearths sad silence reigns profound.
While there are these—oh, Mercy! can it be
That such can dwell in very sight of thee?
Where is thine arm outstretched to shield or save
These victims from their daily, hourly grave?
While there are these, these plague-spots on thy breast,
Oh, earth! 'twere vain to hope might unmatched rest
Poor Dora's tale—a solitary leaf
Torn from the annals of a sin-bred grief.

She, unrequited, loved—she loved too well;
She too much trusted, and, alas! she fell.
Her father cursed—and still his ev'ry breath
Some new curse breathed, to her more dread than death.
The blow was heavy, and the mother lay
Long time 'twixt life and death; but love bore sway,—
For her fallen daughter's sake she lived again,
Though what to her life now but one long pain?

Too soon for all the dreaded time came round,
And in her arms the weeping mother found
A guiltless babe, loved for poor Dora's sake,—
Who said, “Oh, how I wish that God would take
This little lamb unto his fold again!
It cannot have a mother long, and then,
If you should go, who would its shepherd be?
Oh! who would nurse the tender thing for me?”
Her prayer was heard. The little babe was brought
Up to its God, within His holy court;
Scarce on its brow the sacred sign was made
Than on the arms of Jesus it was laid,
For ever safe within that Shepherd's care,
Who on His breast the weakest lambs does bear.

A father's curse! Oh! where on earth that heart
That feels not at the words alone, a start
Of chilling horror through his trembling frame?
How, then, for that fair girl! the very same
Who erewhile was that doting father's pride,
To him her name with all glad things allied,—
How would *she* bear the awful, cruel reverse?
With such a heart as hers, than death far worse
A thousand times! but, oh! to her her sin
Was such a scalding memory within,
That she e'en said, “I'll bear the curse, the blast,
Though its dark burden sink me down at last,
Yes, I will bear it, till of God I've found
Pardon for that which at my breast is bound,
Prometheus-like;—gnawing, by night and day,
My peace of mind and hope of heaven away!”
But Nature drooped at last; she could not bear
The inner struggle,—Faith against Despair.
Faith was the victor—forth she stretched her hand,
And touched the blood-stained hem, He bade her stand

Free and forgiven!

Now sweet Peace again

Was hers, for all her sin; 'twas then, oh, then,
She felt the curse, with all its weight and care!
Early and late, with heart-wrung tears and prayer,
She sought her father's face, but sought in vain:
They had not met, nor ever once again,
Since the dark hour of her discovered shame,
From his stern lips had passed poor Dora's name.
But, oh! the grief—nay, grief is all too weak
Such ecstasy of woe as hers to speak,—
A whisper ran, from lip to lip did go,
Till back to her its widened way did flow;
It told her father was an altered man,—
Worn to a shadow, ghastly and most wan;
His head had hid the work of winters there,—
White as the drifted snow had left his hair.
His gates were closed on all, entrance allowed
To none, not e'en to those to whom was vowed
His livelong friendship true.

Thus time went on,—

Till Dora's hope of reconcilment gone.
Still the proud father kept his sullen grief
Within himself; scorning to seek relief
Alike from heaven and earth; smiting the thing
He still, though all unowned, loved best with sting
Of fierce remorse, which turned his heart to smite
With twofold malice, and more deadly might.

And now the trusty messenger returns.

Oh! how the anxious mother's heart, by turns,
Sickens and brightens as she knows him near.
Oh! how she kneels to God, her prayer to hear;
And then soft steals unto her Dora's bed,
And breathless bends to hear if life be fled.
“Poor Dora, worn with raving, thou'rt asleep!
My child, how will thy father o'er thee weep—
His faded flower—his best and brightest flower,
Strewn on a bed of death in vernal hour.
He comes—oh, joy! him I must haste to meet,
Lest, in his eager speed and hope to greet,
He frighten out thy few last sighs of breath,
Sweet garnered up to yield him in thy death.
How wilt thou raise thine eyes, thine hands to heaven,

When from his lips shall burst 'Thou art forgiven!'
How wilt thou, half adoring, cross those hands
To meekly take his blessing—then the bands
Of life and love unloosed, upon this breast
Thy weary soul shall sigh itself to rest,
And flee for evermore!"

Poor hope-beguiled!
Love-blinded one! look on thy sleeping child
Yet once again. That slumber sweet is Death!
She wakes no more;—she has no garnered breath
For her stern father's cheek; the last is heaved,
And on it sped her world-tired soul and grieved.
No more she'll raise those soft, meek eyes to heaven,
Nor hear the long-hoped voice, 'My child forgiven!'
What earth denied,—a father's tear-sought love,—
She now has found in perfectness above."

Scarce had one shriek, one lengthened shriek of woe,
Rung through the chamber to the vaults below,
Than stealthy opes the gate; as one that fears
His entrance known, or fancies that he hears
His own death-warrant in the creaking hinge,—
'Twas so, it seemed, the huge gigantic wings
Of that tall iron gate departed slow.
A step is heard,—the old man waits below.

* * * * *

"My master comes not,—nay, he cannot come;
Like his own Dora, too, his voice is dumb:
Alike to blessing and to cursing hushed,
By his own hand lies prostrate in the dust,—
Self-murdered lies, drowned in his own life tide;
A crimsoned corpse which his own heart hath dyed.
His chamber tells a tale of fearful strife,
Hotly pursued against himself and life:
Barred against all, alike his heart and hearth,
None dared his presence cross, or straight thenceforth
A heaping curse, by venom'd rage exprest,
Was hurled malignant on th' unwelcome guest.
He dwelt beneath a self-made night. The sun,—
Bright friend to all,—as some foul evil one,
Was shunned; perpetual twilight, gloomy sway
Bore through the heaven-closed pane; the light of day

Ne'er lent its kindly aid to chase afar
The deep'ning shadows which his soul did mar.
Dim and unearthly shapes, like spectres grim,
Filled up his path until they haunted him,
To their own black abode,—deep, dark Despair!
Where he their bidding all obeyed, and there
Laid down his life with their unnumbered dead,—
Another victim on their altar dread.”
The old man paused; from every widened pore
The large cold drops their silent witness bore
To the keen struggle that his bosom rent,—
Heart against man, whose every nerve was bent
Unto the unequal strife.

But where was she?—

What throes were hers? what tears on earth could be
The signs external of her inner strife,—
That childless mother, and that widowed wife?
With calm, unmeaning gaze and steadfast eye,
She stood transfixed, mute, blank and tearlessly.
And still erect, she seemed in that dim light
A clay-cold statue to the old man's sight,
Who hasting now the silence dread to break,
In trembling tones unto the mother spake,
Same time withdrawing from his close-wrapp'd vest
A blood-stained scroll:—“See, lady, here exprest
My master's heart's last wish.” “But what is this?—
O God! where Vengeance calls, that may not miss
Her death-directed aim,—'tis writ in blood!
His pen hath drunk its message from that flood
His sacrilegious hands have dared unchain
From their appointed bounds,—with bold disdain
To Heaven's best gift, bidding the earth drink up
The red oblation from a God-filled cup.
‘Tell her, my child,—my still-loved, best-loved child,—
I die by mine own hand, but reconciled;
Tell her, I die blessing, forgiving all,
But that destroyer foul; on whom still fall
A blighted father's curse, a daughter's shame,—
Around his heart may cling the very same!
What could there worse? deep and o'er-burdening woe,
That nerved this hand to strike its own death-blow,
And send my soul, uncalled, before her God,
To lasting writhe, perchance, beneath the rod

Of his unquenching ire!" ”

Dora, poor child!

'Twas love indeed, in forethought keen and mild,
That with her gentle hand thine eye did close,
Ere added this to thine unnumbered woes;
Ere to thy full-galled cup had ruthless fallen
This last, worst drop; and thy struck heart fresh torn,
Had left new trails of grief to mark the way
It sadly moved through young life's dreary day.
So dark a day, that we thy God now bless
For its untimely end, that thou the less
Of all its bitterness might taste; one brief
Hour's length had withered up thy hope's last leaf.
God called thee home, frail wounded child of care,
Thy bleeding breast this soul-deep gash to spare.
How would thy spirit, ere she passed away,
Have paused upon life's verge to earnest pray
That awful curse to naught, ere it should light,
With its dread train of ills, that one to blight,—
Still loved by thee with love that would not break
With thy poor heart. “But now, for thy sweet sake,”
Thy sorrowing mother meekly said and smiled,—
Smiled through her lonely tears, “for thee, my child,
I live—I live for thy sweet sake alone—
To do what thou, if living, fain hadst done:
In that blest book which bids the sinner live,
To look and learn to pray—‘Father, forgive!’ ”

The Crisis.

WITH what an anguished sufferance I watch,—
O God, if he should wake to sleep no more!
O God, if he should sleep to wake no more!—
Striving his faint heart's slowest throb to catch,
 Mine own hath ceased to beat.

My child, what at the hour,
If thou shouldst wake — but not for *my* caress,
And unto Death shouldst breathe thyself away,
As the frail flutter of a summer day,
That we scarce feel, for very languidness,
 That stirreth not a flower,
 Nor drooping leaf:
Not so the flutter of thy passing soul,
Though fainter than the summer breath, which stirs
Never the nest-strayed feather caught on burs,
For it would in me rouse a tempest-roll
 Of never-ceasing grief!

 He stirs! Lie still, my heart.
Thou who through these long hours hast quiet lain,
Till I did think the fate that for this child
Is feared had passed on thee—why now be wild,
Leaping within my breast, as thou wert fain
 From thy pained sleep to start?

 Hagar, poor weeping one!
How many hearts like thee have turned away,
From where some treasured hope doth fading lie,
And breathed thy prayer,—“Let me not see him die!”
He now may hear my voice, Who heard thee pray,
 And gave thee back thy son.

 He wakes—my blessed boy!
And turns his eye inquiringly on me.
Life is within that gaze! and from that look
I read, as from an eloquent-writ book,
My bliss restored—and fold it silently
 Unto my breast for joy.

 Twice-loved, twice-given child!
How shall I take thee from thy Father's hands?

When as a weeping babe I pressed thee first,
Thou wert a cooling stream to my soul's thirst,
That sank as rain unto its hot dry sands
 Until the desert smiled.

 But now I take thee back,
A pledge renewed, a link more firmly driven
Of the eternal world, and of His love,
Who took thee gently from my arms to prove
That thou wert not *all* mine; nor only given
 To fill my soul's deep lack.

 For this re-granted bliss,
Is not a sacrifice to God meet now?
What shall it be, my heart—thy first, best gift?
Ah! now thou shrink'st for God a hand to lift
On thine own Isaac; and to plight the vow
 Which seals him ever His,

 And thy faith-trial completes.
But rear thine altar, and thy lamb lay there;
Uplift thy slaying arm—when, lo! behold
Thy God, heard in that angel voice of old,
Directs thine eye unto the thicket where
 Thine Isaac's ransom bleats.

 It would be ever thus,
If we, O God, our heart-wills unto Thine
Could learn, ungrudgingly, to bring; the deed
Might then be spared which makes us so to bleed:
Love is the priest that standeth at Thy shrine
 To intercede for us.

Cui Bono?

Is it an hour of joy or weeping?
Behold, the tender babe is sleeping,
Profoundly, calmly, sweetly still,—
Is it a time of good or ill?
Oh! let it sleep, disturb it not,—
So safe within its little cot,
Fresh from its God, and hours of Eden bliss;
Oh! wake it not, though with a mother's kiss.
For it would sorely weep to wake and find
Itself a stranger in so strange a land,—
New sights around, new faces undefined,
With none its feeble wail to understand.
Oh! let it dream its last farewell,
To days of bliss it may not tell,
But the fondest smile prepare
That a parent's lip can wear;
It will forget its home above,
In earth's best heaven—a mother's love

Is it an hour of joy or weeping?
Behold, the tender babe is sleeping,
Profoundly, calmly, sweetly still,—
Is it a time of good or ill?
Choose mother, choose—which shall it be?
The choice thy God hath left to thee.
Though love's rapt eye refuses to discern
In that fair face what could to evil turn,
The root is there which may spring up a tree,
To twine its wormwood branches over thee;
The root is there which may burst forth a plant,
That God may to His own bright field transplant.
In the soft features of thy child,
So infantile, unformed, and mild,
The undeveloped lines of Care
Trace the faint watchword,—O beware!
Thou seest it not? then, mother, pray
To have thy darkness turned away;
Many a tale of sad surprise
Thou'rt saved, if in youth's time thine eyes
Descry where sleeps the cradled harm,

Ere it shall sound its own alarm.

Is it an hour of joy or weeping?
Behold the rosy child is creeping,
With flowers, unto his mother's knee,
Where throned he reigns in infant glee,
Caressing and again caressed,—
A thousand times the child is blest.

The mother weeps!—is it for joy or grief?
Is it to grant her heart's full throbb relief?
Her tears are for a bud of present joy,
Which some dark Future may at once destroy.
She weepeth well: a mother's tears have weight
To turn to mercy's side the scale of Fate.

Love, little child! the angels love,
And thou art come from them above;
Flowers are like thy smiles of mirth,
The purest, brightest things of earth.
Thy mother is a god to thee,
Her God thy homage loves to see;
She takes the tribute from thine hand,
Until before His altar thou,
To offer up thy faith's own vow,
With daily sacrifice shall stand.

Is it an hour of joy or weeping?
Behold, the ardent boy is steeping
His soul in new, untried delight,—
Kindles his eye with soul-drawn light.
Who tasteth once will taste again,—
The tempted lips cannot refrain;

When once the sparkling goblet he hath quaffed,
His spirit yearneth still towards the draught.
The soul must thirst; but bid it drink and live,
Since God hath made its language, "Give, O give!"
A spring there is, whose waters He hath curst,—
A spring there is that cools that fevered thirst.—

Drink, ardent boy, the well is deep,
Thine unseen angel watch doth keep,
And loves thee in thy unstained youth,—
And, lo! it is the stream of truth,
Which he hath oped thine eye to see;
How flow its waters pleasantly!
Seek not to trace its source too far,

'Twill lead thee on a wanderer;
Or leave thee on some shallow strand,
Error or Doubt on either hand.

Is it an hour of joy or weeping?
Behold, the earnest man is reaping
Ripe summer fruits of spring-time toil,—
Rich harvest of youth's grateful soil.
Who well hath reaped, must well have sown,—
The reaper by his sheaves is known;
Who well hath reaped will sow again once more,
To add unto his golden garnered store.
Youth works for prime, and prime lays up for age,
Who is too weak to claim the lab'rer's wage.
A mother works for all! for good or ill;—
Two worlds there are eternally to fill.
Two fields to sow, with grain or tares,
The first the harvest of her prayers;
The last is more what she did not,
Than what she did—for she forgot
That what her hand refrained to do
Another did—and lo! tares grew,
The rude rank culture of neglect,—
Mother, what more couldst thou expect?

Is it an hour of joy or weeping?
Behold, the tender babe is sleeping,
Profoundly, calmly, sweetly still,—
Is it a time of good or ill?
Choose, mother, choose—which shall it be?
Thy God hath left the choice to thee:
And bless Him now, if He has shown thee there
The hidden harm beneath a brow so fair,—
An evil known is a half-conquered wrong.
Delilah may outmatch the hero strong,
Philistia's terror, with a single blade,
When once the spot of secret strength betrayed.
Mother, while thy child doth sleep,
Use well thy time,—pray, watch and weep.
Pray, for a mother's prayers are strong;
Watch, for thy babe will wake ere long;
And weep, for they who sow in tears
Shall reap in joy in coming years.
Pray *it* into the loving child,

Like the bright angels, undefiled;
Pray *him* into the ardent youth,
Deep drinking from the stream of truth;

Pray *him* into the earnest man,
That worketh with the might he can,
And liveth so that all men give
High praise to God that he doth live.
Pray, mother, pray! all precious things
Are borne from heaven on Prayer's white wings:
Ask largely, freely, God is there,—
Step not from off His mercy's stair.
Oh! why did Abram stay at ten?—
Six less had saved a race of men.
Why did the king but three times smite?—
Thrice more had nerved his hand with might,
To deal unto his Syrian foe
The conqueror's last, exulting blow.
Mother, stay not thy voice nor hand,
For—Ask, is still thy God's command.

[Sad thoughts will come]

Sad thoughts will come, I bid them not,
Nor them I'd drive away,—
By me shall never be forgot
The things of yesterday;

Though they may darken Memory's home,
And ope a gate of tears,
Through which must pass the time to come,
With all its sweeping years.

The passing of one day can wake
One sad, short day alone,
A theme o'er which the heart must make
For evermore her moan.

Sad thoughts will come, when least we know
Or think that they are near;
The heavens have on their brightest glow,—
The sun shines full and clear.

I look upon the stainless sky,
So far off and so deep,
The tear springs up into mine eye,—
Yet I meant not to weep.

Unconscious children in their play
May touch this chord of pain,
And rouse a sleeping memory,
That else had quiet lain;

Till vibrates through the whole heart's string
This solitary tone,
And back a thousand echoes wing,
That else had onward flown.

Nor yet this recollective power
Alone brings childhood's mirth;
A worthless stone, a fading flower,
May start it into birth.

The bird that singeth in his tree,
To me may draw a tear;
While, in the same note singing, he

Another heart may cheer.

And thus it is sad thoughts arise,
Though we may bid them not;
Mute voice of yesterday, that sighs
O'er memories forgot!

Fourth Chapter.

The Evening Star, and Miscellaneous sections.

Dedicated
TO THE
REVEREND JOHN RASHDALL, A.M.,
(VICAR OF MALVERN,)
In Remembrance
OF THE
DAYS THAT ARE NO MORE,
BY
THE AUTHORESS.

To the Evening Star.

Bright and lonely,
Thou art only
Lady regnant of this hour;
Thou alone,
On heaven's high throne,
With illimitable power,
Unresisted o'er the soul,
Rulest with the deep control
Of beauty and of love.

Gleams of gladness,
Through the sadness
Of thy silent-speaking eye,
Like a maiden,
Sorrow-laden,
Smiling through her oft-heaved sigh,
Round thee an halo radiate,
Until thou seem'st, oh, rare estate!
A saint as well as queen.

And in thine eye
Doth hidden lie,—
As of the maid that loveth,
Whose heart conceals
What glance reveals,
And with her bosom heaveth,—
An unfolded history,
Lying in Love's mystery,
And that within a dream.

Half reproving,
But all-loving,
Are the glances of thine eye
We cannot look
On thee and brook
Sorrow in such sanctity;
Dost thou for fall'n mortality
Sigh in unuttered sympathy,
O'er-watching all our ways?

Form of Beauty,
To our duty

Thou dost seem to call us back;
 Warning finger,
 Thou dost linger,
Pointing to the soul's lost track.
For Beauty is of holy birth,
And if she resteth on the earth,
 'Tis as an angel wing.

 The soul bound in
 Cerements of sin,
Feeleth still its noble worth;
 And beauty's beams
 Awake its dreams
Of a once angelic birth.
And then it owns a kindred link,
Which draweth it unto the brink
 Of all pure lovely things.

 The subtle toil,
 And shameful soil
Of sorrow, sin, and strife
 Cannot out blot
 The purer lot
With which it started into life;
And not wholly is destroyed,
But with baser dross alloyed,
 The holy thing within.

 The gold is dim,
 But still of Him
The glorious image beareth;
 There yet is breath,—
 It is not death,
Chill semblance though it weareth.
It is not dead, but sleepeth,
And angel eye o'er-keepeth
 A watch of love and prayer.

 Till o'er the bed
 Of the seeming dead,
Talitha Cum! soundeth;
 It hath no choice,
 But as that voice
Through its dark depths resoundeth;
From its grave-clothes and its gloom,

To arise to beauty's bloom,
And its primeval state.

Thus reproving,
But all loving,
Seemeth thy soft eye above;
Yet not in thee
Rebuke could be,
Mournful though as widowed dove:
Searching to our hearts within,
We could not answer void of sin,
So shrunk beneath thy gaze.

The self-same word
Oft Adam heard,
Telling that his Lord was near.
From him estranged,
Is the voice so changed,
That he trembleth now to hear?
What hears he in its tones anew?
Conscience to itself is true,—
Where art thou?—thou hast sinned!

And was it thus,
That God for us
Forms of loveliness did frame?
To charm and win
Our souls from sin,—
Earth's erring children to reclaim:
All that seemeth pure and holy,
Looking on a guilty thing,
To its breast, forlorn and lowly,
Thoughts of sinfulness doth bring.
How so loving e'er it looketh,
Though in sorrow, not reproof,
Conscience deeming it rebuketh,
Standeth farther still aloof.

Driven, by the sad comparing
Of its past and present state,
To the verge of dark despairing,
Dreary, deep, and desolate,
It crieth loud and bitterly,—
“Form of beauty, veil thy face,
For worse my soul's deformity
Showeth by thy godlike grace!

Was not I, in life's young morning,
Framed to fairness such as thine,—
Purity, my soul's adorning,
In the sun of truth did shine?
Had not I that heaven within me
Shining through thy sinless eyes,
With its glory-depths upon me,
Like a spirit from the skies?
Until of the thing forbidden
Plucked my lust-directed hand,
And on me the gates of Eden
Closed by Justice' stern command.
Form of beauty, gazing on thee,
Cometh there a voice within,
Saying,—‘She is sister to thee,
Separate though by shame and sin.
Thou amid the husks art lying,—
She among the stars doth shine;
Yet the spark is never dying
Which uniteth hers to thine.’ ”
Then ere long the better feeling,
Struggling like an ice-bound stream
To burst its bonds, so cold congealing,
Starteth from its deep sin-dream.
And towards its Father yearning,
Saith, “I will arise and go,”—
Lo! the prodigal returning,
Penitentially and low!
Straight it riseth on the morrow,
Toward the beauteous form above,
Weeping, as does child in sorrow,
On its mother's breast of love.

And it is thus,
That God for us
Forms to loveliness did dower.
Bright and lonely,
Thou art only
Lady regnant of this hour;
Half adoring,
Still exploring
The blue vastness for thy peer.
None contendeth,
None pretendeth

As thy rival to appear;
Still, in lovely loneliness,
Thou, in peerless onliness,
Art spirit of this hour!

To Little Mary

THOU tiny, fairy, joyous thing,
Thou seem'st to be the wedded wife
 Of pure light-heartedness;
So bright thy countenance with life
 And tender artlessness,
That every laugh of thine doth ring
 An echo in my heart.

And yet each laugh doth draw a pain,
That all away has past my day
 Of lawful gaiety;
Woe worth the heart that thinks it may
 Keep mad festivity,
When all around a doleful strain
 Of strife and sin is heard.

Thou art all unweeting yet, bright thing,
How many a weary heart doth ache,—
 How far abroad the dearth
Is spread, and man not yet awake!
 Or else thy bird of mirth,
Methinks, would droop her joyous wing,
 And cease her trilling song.

And, if I read thy mind aright,
Thy sunny brow would cloud soon o'er
 Ere weeping time came on;
Thy little breast would feel so sore,
 And make such bitter moan,
If it could see the wretched plight
 That souls within do show.

But tell me, hast thou understood,
And thou, in mock solemnity,
 Dost shake thy curly head?
Or, hath my sad look frightened thee,
 And so thy mirth is fled?
Or, first time now do o'er thee brood
 Mysterious thoughts and dread?

Nay, Joy to thee is mated well,
He fitter bride could never choose,—

So Sadness thou must hence!
And, glad-voiced thing, thy song unloose,—
Melodious Innocence
(If music may) will sure dispel
Impending gloom awhile.

[OH! paradox most rare, most strange, and sad]

OH! paradox most rare, most strange, and sad,
Men love not sorrow, yet will not be glad;
They fear the dark, and yet they shun the light,
Groping for day amid the shades of night;
Refuse to live, and yet they dare not die;
Still pant for truth while giving truth the lie,
Searching for wisdom in blank folly's page;
They sigh for peace, and yet foul warfare wage;
Grasp at the shadow while the substance flies,
Then wonder much how they did miss the prize;
They sing of liberty and freedom's day,
While crushed beneath the fiercest tyrant's sway.
Oh! paradox most sad, most strange, and rare,—
Lord, who will bid these blinded souls beware?

Where? Where?

“A tale that is told.”

AN universal voice is heard,
Till every sleeping breath is stirred,
And till the unfilled heart's watchword
To every hill an echo flies,
Which to the insatiate soul replies,—
Where? Where?

The sun may hang his ardent shield
Above the green and grassy field,
The groves their sweetest minstrels yield;
Sounds and sights of beauty still
The ear and eye with wonder fill,
Yet looks the heart o'er Future's hill,—
Where? Where?

The weeping infant at its birth,
The child amidst his play and mirth,
Have each this changeless voice of earth:
'Tis still the young man's earnest cry
And burden of the old man's sigh,—
Where? Where?

Alike in gladness and in gloom,
In trembling age and youth's young bloom,
By festal board and by the tomb,
The heart and eye in keen look-out,
Their restless glances cast about,—
Where? Where?

Alike in hours of good and ill,
A something beckons onward still,
And bids the soul to take her fill;
But as she follows, on it flies,
A shadowy mist before her eyes,—
While Mockery to her grief replies,—
Where? Where?

The mirage lights still farther on,
The spot is reached—where is it gone?—
A harder race ere it is won.

The wearied soul sinks down at last,
To weep the future, mourn the past,
While o'er the desert's fiery vast
A voice is hurried on the blast,—
 Where? Where?

In prayerfulness, the tearful eye
Hath fixed its anguished gaze on high,
And, fainter, once the fainting cry
Is breathed toward the evening sky:
'Tis changed! the voice hath soared above;
An angel tone of pitying love
Falls gently on a hope-bright ray,
And points the soul its upward way,
As slowly melts that voice away,—
 Here! Here!

The Year.

EACH season, bringing beauty, yields back praise
To its kind God,—the God of all the year!
Nature ne'er flags, but brings fair vernal gear
To deck her sweetest child—young Spring-time days,
And Summer's brilliant garb and golden tress,
Entwined with flowery gems and jewels of dew,
And rich Autumnal robe of blended hue;
Then chastened Winter's frost-bespangled-dress,—
Each in succession beautiful! and each,
To those who learn, this silent lesson teach,
That we, in our estate from youth to age,
Are still beneath the care of Nature's Lord,
And through our life His love will still afford
Pleasures befitting to each different stage.

Cathedral Bells.

DEEP-TONED bell,
Sonorously swell;
Rive the air asunder,
Like a clap of thunder.
Thy music is so real,
Whether peal or knell,
It doth o'er me steal
Like a soothing spell;
My spirit calming down
From earth's forbidding frown.

Thy song so ever new,
Thy melody so true,
Soft vibrations ringing,
Harps Eolian bringing
To earth rich harmony.
Some angel choir singing
Celestial minstrelsy,
Sweeping their golden lyres,
Above yon hoary spires.

Thine echoes, let them bound
Yon towers and spires around;
Among yon turrets grey,
With the light breezes play,
Rippling the summer air
In circles spreading far,
Till they may scarcely stir
The sleeping atmosphere;
Then to a whisper drop,
And in the distance stop.

At pensive eventide
Thy voices seem to chide,
Calling to memory
Sins of the day gone by.
Deep-toned, each one doth warn
My erring soul to pray,
That guilt that it doth mourn
May quick be washed away,
Ere the Dark Angel come,

Calling my spirit home.

When the retreating light
Brings the pale moon to sight,
And, with a gentle smile,
She on yen ancient pile
A soft pellucid shower
Of silver beam pours down,
Bathing the spired tower
In beauty, all unknown
Beneath the proud sun's sway,
And glaring pomp of day,

Then one full thrilling bell
On the calm'd air doth swell;
 One solitary note,
On stillness sent afloat,
Like an ancient memory,
Enthralled by spirit power,
To wander through the belfry
At each lone curfew hour,—
Warning of Time's quick flight,
 Day into night.

But hush! that drear sad tone,
It makes me feel alone;
Mine inliest heart doth fill
With thoughts so icy chill,—
Freezing the gathering tear,
Cold on my paling cheek,
Blanched with the sound of fear,
That to mine ear doth speak,—
“That voice must one day knell
For those thou lov'st so well.”

Still changeful are thy chimes,
With all earth's changing times;
 Now 'tis a festival,
 And like a madrigal,
 Oh, how they swell!
Now a sad company
 Each one doth knell.
Hark! a low monody
 Waileth the dead;
Strains valedictory

Through the air spread.
Oh! how thy changes tell
Life's passing moods so well.

But, oh! I love thee best,
When, on earth's day of rest,
Thy sweetest sounds outswell
To ring a glad farewell
 To weekly care;
And toilworn hearts rejoice,
 When on the air
Outbursts thy Sabbath voice,
And all thy lesser chimes unite
To a loud chorus of delight.

O voice of many tones!
The poor man hears and owns
Thy seventh an angel call
 To a glad festival.

 O voice of love!
 The poor man blesses thee,
 When from above
Thou biddest him be free;
He hides thine ancient story
 Within his breast:
O soul of yon spire hoary,
Be this thy proudest glory,
Thou bring'st the weary rest

Moonlight.

SHINE on, thou lovely moon, shine ever!
While, like a playful child and shy,
Yon restless, struggling, leaping river
From what it loveth best doth fly;
While are thy brightest beams o'er dancing
Its fairy flow of molten glass,
It now to meet thee seems advancing,
Then straightway hideth in the grass.

Faint stars, the chastened pride of even,
It is such joy to see you blink;
As though ye still in your blue heaven
Kindly of mortal man did think.
Oh! happy stars, ye seem to tremble,
As with an unexpressed delight;
Why do ye thus your bliss dissemble?—
Ye are the very joys of night.

The day may come with sun and flowers,
With pleasant voices all around,
Like gilded garlands bring her hours,
All ushered in to tuneful sound,
And beams, as though the orb of glory
Were beaten into golden bars;—
The day may have a prouder story,
But Night, she hath her moon and stars!

What is He Smiling At?

AND smile, sweet babe, if thou in dream
Dost see some angel, blest and bright,
And I shall know a heavenly gleam
Breaks on my sleeping infant's sight.
They say that infants' sinless eyes
Can pierce the mysteries of the skies;

But that their tongues are speechless sealed,
Until the memory by hath past,
And o'er the things to them revealed
Oblivion's darkened shade is cast.
What all have known, yet none may tell,—
The present does the past dispel.

'Twas yestermorn, when all alone,
I laid thee on thy cradle bed,
And sat, when thou didst think me gone,
To watch thee sink in sleep thy head.
I saw thee in such keen delight,
Thy features bathed in radiant light;

And as I softly neared thy bed,
I saw thy tiny, active feet
And arms with energy outspread,
As thou didst strive to spring and meet
Some holy vision that did shine,
But dark to every eye but thine.

Me feared almost thy rest to break,
Thy lonely rapture to dispel,—
Thy heavenly guest his flight might take,
If o'er thy sight my presence fell;
And so I, longing, lingered nigh,
To watch thy fixed ecstatic eye.

'Twas not that thou my step hadst heard,—
Thou didst not know thy mother near;
Yet, as a joyful summer bird,
I heard thee chirrup, full and clear,
A note that told thy heart a nest
Of thoughts, earth-words ne'er yet exprest.

Oh, sure, methinks 'twas more than life,
In first fresh gladness, thou didst feel;
Thy glowing features seemed so rife
With that they cared not to conceal.
Me loves to think, sweet sleeping boy,
It was a purer, deeper joy.

Say, didst thou know thine angel near,
That God in love hath granted thee,
In ministering arms to bear
Thee through thine helpless infancy?
Or holier yet the vision bright,
Which rapt thee in untold delight?

Me loves to fancy o'er thee still
Some blessed memory lingers nigh,
As though thou once didst drink thy fill
Of Love, and Light, and Deity!
And round thine angel-guarded way,
From heaven still shines a loit'ring ray.

The Silent Rebuke.

MY heart was sullen, proud, and cold,
Mine eye refused to shed
The hot tear that it scarce could hold
Within its briny bed.

One plucked for me a little flower,—
It was a simple weed,
Which sprang, in some neglected bower,
From a wind-scattered seed.

“My Mother's Favourite” I styled
This bud of skyey blue;
She loved it when I was a child,—
So I had loved it too.

Oft had I seen it on her breast,—
Nay, oft had placed it there,
And thought the little wildling blest,
So sweet a rest to share.

Enough! I felt my heart unfreeze,
The tear dropp'd from mine eye;
I stood like Adam 'mid the trees,
When his great God drew nigh.

It seemed as though my mother near
Called gently on my name;
But with that voice that sprang the tear
Straightway forgiveness came.

Oh, faithful bud, what power was thine!
I'll love thee all my days;
My heart, determined to repine,
Was turned by thee to praise.

Luxury.

UNFOLD thy crimson banners to the wind,
And 'neath their gorgeous blazonry will flee
That saint on earth, sweet heaven-born Charity.
Fair vagrant! she will flee; nor leave behind
A trace to tell that she her home did find
In thy proud citadel, save that lone man,
Who erewhile was her guest, now sitting wan,
The Lazarus of thy gate—the out of mind!
Uprear thine upas head, and 'neath its shade,
Our gentlest things, all of a higher birth,
Which heaven in kindness planted on this earth,—
Calm Peace, true Love,—will droop away and fade:
Such with'ring might, O Luxury, such death
Exhaleth with thy poison-perfumed breath!

[AND art thou weary with the strife?]

AND art thou weary with the strife?
Oh! brother, faint not, there is life
Beyond our mortal span;—
A very babe but dies the oldest man!

We do but set upon our race,
When, lo! we reach the resting-place,
And Death it is that dies:
Life suns herself beneath far brighter skies.

Can we not bear for one brief day
Earth's worst dark load of misery?
Nor utterly forlorn,—
For we may think of a to-morrow morn.

A thousand lives grow pale and sere,—
Lives long as old Methuselah;
Yet to eternity
Are less than is one drop unto the sea.

The youth but strives to reach the man,
He counts it long since life began;
So bent upon the mark,
The present light to him but seemeth dark.

He knoweth not the bright stars' fate,
To reach the height and culminate,—
His hopes ascendant are;
They touch the point, and perish with the star.

He smileth at all petty ills;
The voice of discontent he stills
With promised bliss beyond.
Shall we rebuke, or call his dreamings fond?

Shall we not rather of him learn
To smile, when to his funeral urn
Time lays our brief to-day,
As one that marks night shadows pass away.

Yet we, with keener sight, discern
We may not from our present turn,
In anger or disgust,—

Merging from youth's rapt worship to distrust;

But looking from our present state

To one that it doth ante-date,

As children to the last,

Our hoped-rayed glances towards the future cast.

The First of May.

SCARCE had the dewy lips of morn
Breathed incense on sweet May new-born,
Than from a thousand fragrant bowers
Slily peeped forth the long-pent flowers,
And from a thousand trees along
Gushed out a stream of liquid song,
To welcome in the fairest day
Of joyous Nature's holiday;
And in the fields and lanes around,
A pleasant tramp and cheering sound
Of little feet and voices free,
Of children, in their hottest glee;
Of dark-eyed boy and tiny lass,
So early on the spangled grass,
And shouting, each one with his might.
WHY feeling such a strange delight,
If you should ask, not one could say,
Save, "Oh, it is the first of May!"

The Fallen Jasmine Blossom.

FALL'N, fall'n, thou little silvery star!
 Fall'n from thy happy skies;
 Left the fairy multitude,
 And thy starry sisterhood,
 With bright and loving eyes,—
Innocents sin may never mar.

Fall'n, fall'n, thou little silvery star!
 Fall'n lowly and unmeet;
 Thou who hadst thy spotless birth
 High above this nether earth,
 Now art withering at my feet,
And left thine own loved world afar.

Fall'n, fall'n, thou little silvery star!
 And in thy fall I see
 Truths which wisdom cannot teach,—
 Truths which deeper lie than speech,
 Lie on the earth with thee,
Telling a message from afar.

Fall'n, fall'n, thou little silvery star
 As all our fairest fall.
 So our loveliest things of earth,
 So our things of noblest worth,
 Like thee, fade all, fade all,—
Thou little fall'n silvery star!

Set, set, thou little silvery star;
 Set, never more to rise!
 And, one by one, each sister thine
 Will cease in yonder light to shine,
 And from her happy skies
Fall down to thee, sweet fairy star

Florence Stuart Agnew.

WATCHING thy lovely face, I find relief
From weariness and pain. Thou art to me
A wreath of hope upon a cypress tree;
A tear of joy upon the cheek of grief;
A rose-bud, cradled in its mossy berth,
Blushing into its first bright peep of morn,
Unconscious all how near it hides the thorn;
A dew-drop glistening on Life's parchèd earth;
A spot of verdure on the desert wild;
A sweet soft spring, new burst from mountain side,—
A spring of love, when other streams are dried.
But most my heart is pleased to look, dear child,
On thee, as one for whom Love's flood-gates wide
Drew back, and sent Him forth who for thee died!

[WHEN hath passed that grand ablution]

WHEN hath passed that grand ablution,
And the soul breathes other breath,
Untainted by the grave's pollution,
Or the noxious gales of death,
Round a centre Life revolving,
She shall shine from Sin's eclipse,—
Earth's long mystery resolving
In that bright apocalypse.

Truth, the mighty prescient, o'er her,
With the Unsealed Book, shall stand;
She, the wonder-rapt adorer,
Kneeling, takes it from his hand.

She shall spheres of love inherit,
Robed in immortality!
Pristine beauty,—pure, purged spirit,
Loosened from all mortal tie,
In that blaze of light expanding,
One by one her powers unfold;
Intuitively understanding
Sights her dazzled eyes behold.
Cycles, cycles, still concealing,
All their wondrous depths disclose,
Still and ever depths revealing,
As the flood of glory flows.
One vast Present,—no to-morrow,—
With God's name upon its brow;
From death regenerate and sorrow,—
One redeemed, unclouded NOW!

Romantic.

AND if to be romantic is to gaze,
With throbbing heart and tearful eye, intent
On ocean's breast, where, tremulously bent,
The moon in liquid glory hides her rays,
And see in each soft ray another string
On which, in silvery tone, God's praise to sound,
Till every beam with His high name resound,
And the calm air one peal of gladness ring,—
I only ask to be romantic still!

Israel's sweet singer, whom God's heart did fill,
Touched his rapt harp on lowly Bethlehem;
And, save when song yet nobler strains required,
To swell enraptured some love-lauding theme,
He sweetest sung when Nature's voice inspired.

[THE child, that 'neath the summer tree]

THE child, that 'neath the summer tree
Pours out his lonely lay,
Thinks not a heart on earth can be
So light as his, and gay;

He loves in sylvan solitude,
To pour his artless song,
While some wild warbler of the wood
Responds from leaves among.

Still dear his little spot will be,
When summer days are fled,
And scattered leaves upon the tree
Droop o'er their brethren dead.

Anon, when hangs old Winter's hand
His brilliants on the bough,
He'll shout for joy, "'Tis fairy-land,—
Oh! what is Spring to now?"

Oh, happy child! I envy thee
That young glad heart of thine,
Which culls fresh joys from every tree,
From snow and summer shine.

Farewell, fond Nature's child, farewell!
Shout on thy gladsome glee;
I would not break the fairy spell
That hangs o'er thine and thee.

[“WHO can dwell with everlasting burnings?”]

“WHO can dwell with everlasting burnings?”

Hell shrieked to earth with piercing cry,
But never, never answer won;
For ever as the voice did come,
Earth and her thousand tongues struck dumb,
Like an astonied, frightened one,
With naught but silence could reply.
But the mountains echo found,
And, unremitting, gave the sound,—

“WHO? WHO? WHO?”

God! shall their wail of agony
Come up in vain, in vain to Thee?

“Who can dwell with everlasting burnings?”

And forth a fiery vapour rushed,
Casting o'er earth its sickly hue.
Spell-bound towards the lurid flame,
With maddened speed, straightway there came
A ghastly, desperate, self-urged crew,
Who wildly shrieked, “*We must! We must!*”
Then all was fearful hushed around,
Save once again from nether ground,—

WHO? WHO? WHO?

And up the fiery vapour rushed,
One stifling cry, “*We must! We must!*”

Resignation.

WEEP on, frail tenant of the earth thou art,
Nor think that God thy tears will chide,
Which, flowing, ease thy heart,
And cool thy aching head.

Weep on: those tears within their crystal bed
God's loving-kindness placed,
To wash adown thy grief,
To bring to thee relief,
To wipe from off thy cheek those lines by sorrow traced.

Weep on, frail man: Nature must weep, and will.
The mourner's tear God will not chide,
So that the heart be still,
And heavenward upborne.

The stroke fell keenly, and thy soul was torn;
A creature not of earth,
And she was all to thee,
And fair surpassingly,—
So pure, she seemed a being of angelic birth.

So bound her heart to thine, so closely wrought
And wove by silver cord of love,
So knit by kindred thought,
So brighten'd by the same

Sweet sympathies and true religious flame,
Oh! could it wonder start,
That thou didst love her well,—
That thou in her didst dwell?

Weep on: God will not chide, if thou resignèd art.

[THE desert hath its patch of green]

THE desert hath its patch of green,
Amid its fevered plain,
That smileth o'er the burning scene,
As smileth Hope on pain.

No spot so utterly unblest,
By God so wholly bann'd,
That hath no blade where sight may rest,
Nor bud t' invite the hand.

Nor wholly without antidote
Is Life's drugg'd cup of grief;
The tree of which the Prophet wrote
Hath still one healing leaf.

Pass on: and as it cometh, take
Life's uncontinuous lot;
Nor think, if mercy tarrying make,
Ye ever are forgot.

Pass on: for what ye have not, wait;
Nor ever vainly deem
There comes to you a joy too late,
Or ill-timed cloud or beam.

Ofttimes may lead the gate of tears
To Joy's bright harvest-ground;
And we behold the plenteous ears
Spring, unaware, around.

Lo! yonder, in the golden field,
Now smiling Ruth doth stand;
See, how the willing reapers yield
Their treasures to her hand!

Little Children.

OH! sure these gentle beings are
A voice that calleth from afar
Unto forlorn, backsliding men,—
“Return ye to your God again;
For, lo! your heritage is fair,
With outstretched arm Love waiteth there!”
And this sweet voice of hope and peace
Can never from our sin-world cease,
While do these loving creatures come
From out their Father's holy home,
To call unto blacksliding men,—
“Return ye to your God again!”

Without Him was not Anything Made.

I SEE God dwelleth everywhere with the creatures he hath made;
I see Him in the upland's sun, and in the woodland shade.
He smileth on the sunny bank, where violets meekly hide,
And gently o'er the peaceful glen, at sweet pale eventide.
He sweepeth o'er the corn-field, and she heaves her golden breast;
The rosebud blusheth at His glance, and bursts its mossy nest.
Where dance the beams of yellow light upon the laughing rills,
That play beneath the verdure bright of yonder glowing hills;
Where dash the roaring cataracts all wildly down the rock,
And where flow the still, still waters, amid the tethered flock;
And where those living creatures bright, like stars among the deep,
All fill the sea with glory, till the waves with radiance leap,—
Alike o'er stormy ocean and o'er the broad green land,
In these His trusting creatures, still I see His mighty hand.

Where roams the lordly beast of prey the jungle depths throughout,
And where dwells the cunning beaver within his loam-built hut;
Where wandereth the albatross, that homeless weary one,
Or where the swallow spreadeth wing to seek a summer sun;
Where watcheth still the hungry shark; where sports the giant whale,
And armeth him leviathan in scaled coat of mail;
Or where sails the rosy nautilus upon the silver wave,
Or sleeps the lonely dormouse within his wintry grave,—
There still His care extendeth, and His eye is over all,
From the rock-implanted eyrie to the nest within the wall.

He rideth on the wings of wind, He sitteth on the storm,
He standeth on the thunder-cloud, so terrible in form;
He bloweth with the hurricane, He blasteth with His breath,
And graspeth in His mighty palm the bands of life and death;
The thunderbolt His cannonry, and lightning flash His sword,—
The swift-destroying messengers of His commanding word.

Thus have I seen Him everywhere on Nature's face portrayed,—
His lines are run through all the earth, in loveliness arrayed;
Have seen that that which God hath said abideth ever true,
From when His bidding voice at first thrilled sleeping Nature through.
The sun and moon, the snow and heat, and times to sow or reap,
As when He first commanded them, appointed seasons keep;
The stars, that glorious multitude, which sung at Nature's birth,
Still set a brilliant coronal above the calmèd earth.

Now bless Him, ye His creatures all, and ye His hosts above;
Bless Him, ye full recipients of His overflowing love.
And thou, my soul, oh! be not mute,—His gift is great to thee,
To turn from Nature's living page a deeper love to see;
Bless Him that thou, amidst these all, alone hast breath to give
The praise right due unto His name—thy sole prerogative;
A soul to live,—a life for it, prepared by Him on high,—
A Saviour's blood to ransom thee, for thou shalt never die.
But bless Him above measure for that star which shineth bright,
Through clouds of human reasoning, and darkness of life's night,—
The ray of His revealèd word, like Bethlehem's star of old,
To lead thee from thy wandering, thy Saviour to behold.

And, oh! to see Him as He is, upon His face to gaze,
To stand for ever at His feet, and the glad anthem raise;
And, oh! to see Him as He is, His righteousness to wear,
I'd stand the lowest in the throng, so I might enter there!

Sleep and Death.

THEY tell me of a pleasant thing,
Which cometh on a silent wing,
And flappeth o'er the weary,
Till it fanneth them to sleep,—
I am, oh, how weary! but it passeth o'er my head.

They tell me of a gentle one,
That cometh when the day is done,
And singeth by the weary,
Till she singeth them to sleep,—
I am, oh, how weary! but she will not sing to me.

And they tell me of a finger,
Which doth o'er walls of darkness linger,
Pressing down the heavy eye,
Till it falleth off to sleep,—
Mine eye is, oh, how heavy! but no finger sealeth it.

They tell me of a cup so cool,
With water from a slumbrous pool,
Right pleasant to the thirsty,
For it lulleth them to sleep,—
I am, oh, how thirsty! but that cup is drainèd dry.

They tell me of another thing,
Which hath a still more silent wing,
And it flappeth o'er the weary,
Till it fans away their breath;
Its shadows are upon me,—I feel that fluttering wing

They tell me of another one,
That cometh when the day is done,
And singeth by the weary;
But he singeth them to death!
Ah! He hath mercy on me,—hark! He singeth by me now.

They tell me of another finger,
Which o'er darker walls doth linger,
Pressing down the heavy eye,
But sealing it for ever!
Mine eye is, oh, how heavy! that touch will seal it soon.

They tell me of a cup so cool,

With water from a slumbrous pool,
Unpleasant to the thirsty,
For it chills them unto death,—
I am so very thirsty, I will drink of even it

[O LITTLE birds upon the tree!]

O LITTLE birds upon the tree!
Is it a sin to envy ye
 Your full unfettered strain?
O children sporting on the green!
A heart that once like you hath been,
 Looks on with care and pain,
And prays that long may yet delay
The darkened and the evil day,
 When ye must learn to sigh.
Sweet flowers, meek hiding in the grass,
Ye seem to smile on all that pass,—
 To-morrow ye will die!
But that is as a joy to me;
Far worse to live in misery,
 Than in the grave to lie.

O ardent skies! repelling gaze,
Mine eye may turn a thousand ways,
 Ye only answer me,—
“Hither is rest, hither is peace;
But wait awhile, and thou shalt cease
 To weep so bitterly.”
O faithful skies! in childhood's love,
Ye were as gentle friend above,
 O'erwatching all my ways;
And now, through all my grief and pain,
Ye teach me how to trust again,
 And hope for brighter days.

Finis.

MY little lamp, farewell!
My nights have passed away
Like a quiet day,
And thou their gentle sun.

Farewell to midnight hours,
Pleasant through all their pain;
In gladness I have lain
Watching thy tiny ray.

Farewell, thy kindly aid!
With thee must go along,
My time of secret song,
And tuneful solitude.

Farewell! I'll not forget
What once thou wert to me;
Now thou no more mayst be
Companion of my song.

Farewell! thy friendly ray
Shall linger round my heart;
And oft a fond thought start
Of scenes together shared.

Farewell! my joy in grief;
Thy light shall ever be
A voice to tell to me,—
“No pang without relief.”

Farewell, my little lamp!
I wake this parting strain
To hours of pleasant pain,
And thee, their gentle sun.
