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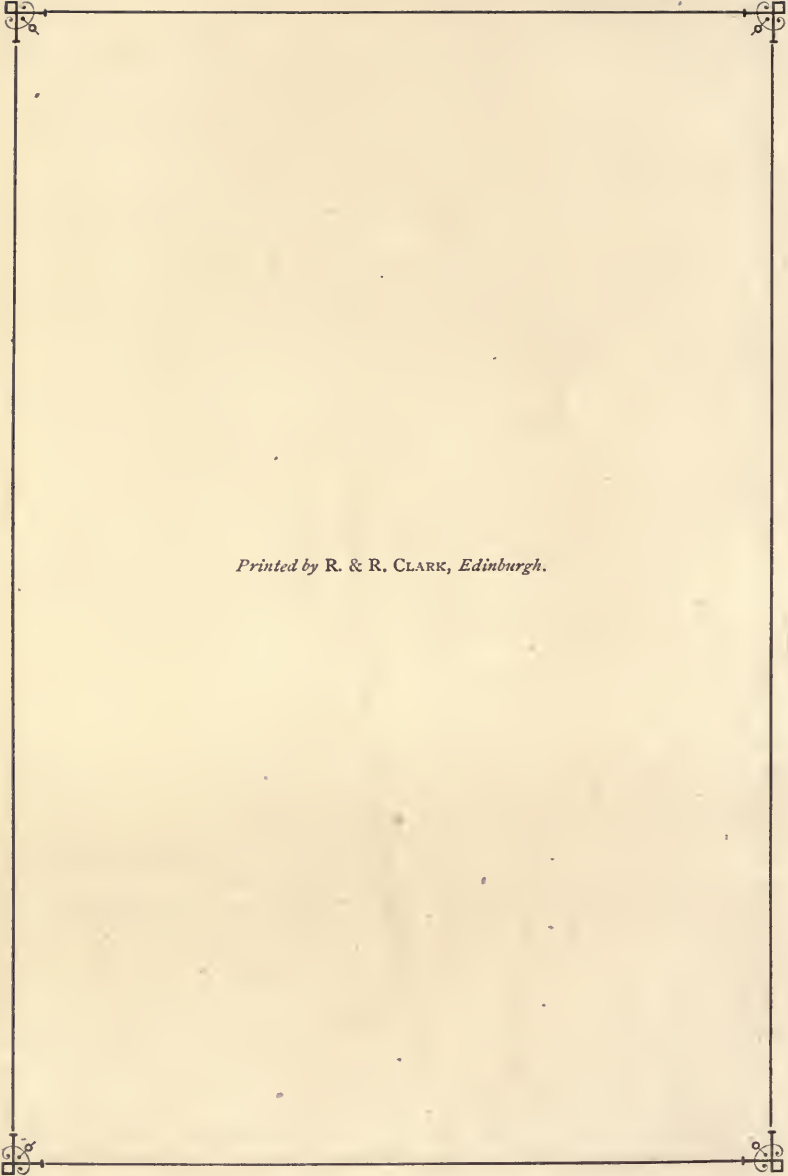
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A CENTURY OF EMBLEMS



Printed by R. & R. CLARK, Edinburgh.

A

Century of Emblems

BY

G. S. CAUTLEY

VICAR OF NETTLEDEN,
AUTHOR OF 'THE AFTERGLOW,' AND 'THE THREE FOUNTAINS.'

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

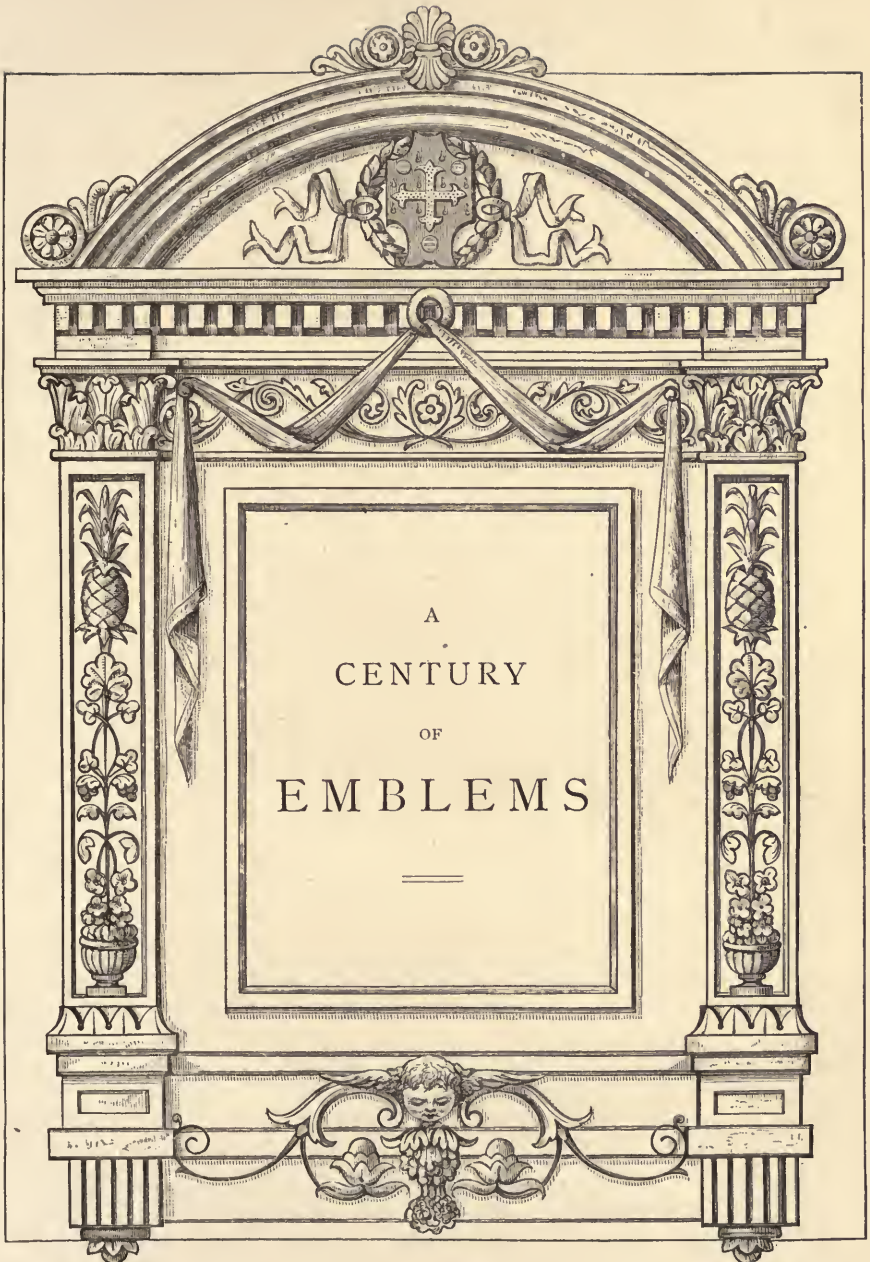
By the Lady Marian Alford, Rear-Admiral Lord W. Compton,
Venble. Lord A. Compton, R. Barnes, J. D. Cooper,
and the Author

London

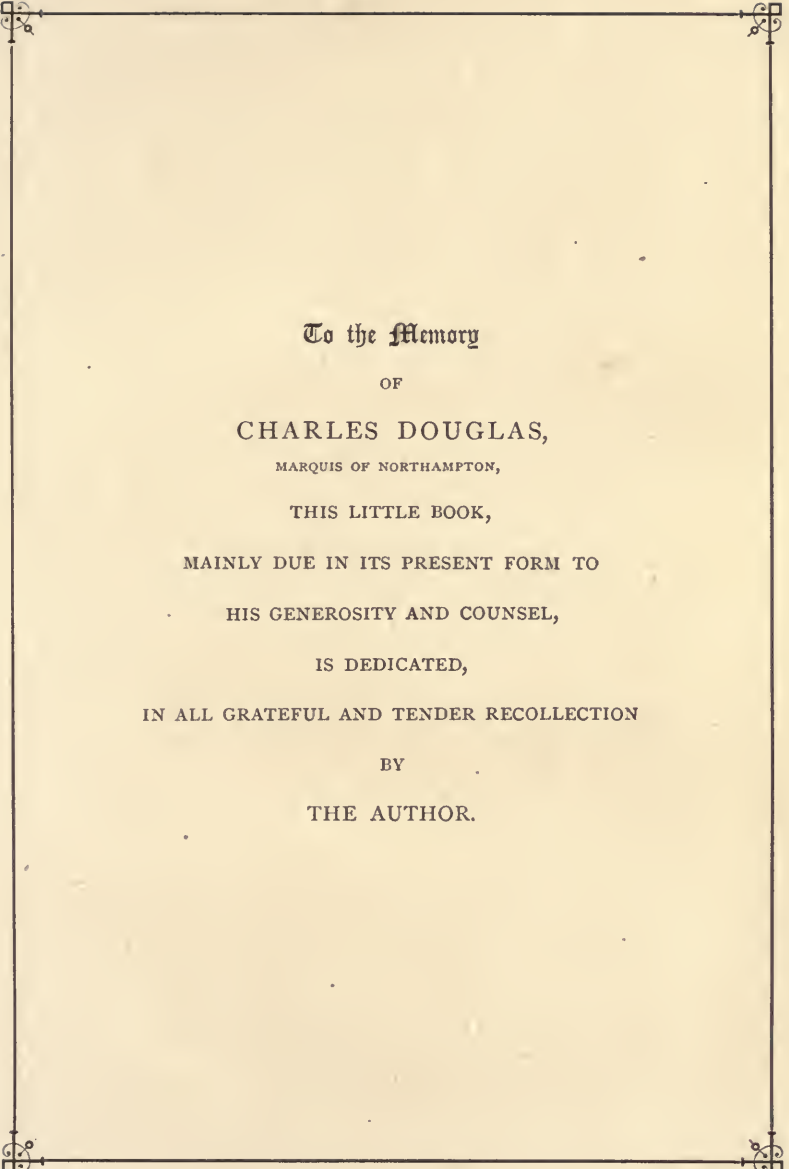
MACMILLAN AND COMPANY

1878





A
CENTURY
OF
EMBLEMS



To the Memory
OF
CHARLES DOUGLAS,
MARQUIS OF NORTHAMPTON,
THIS LITTLE BOOK,
MAINLY DUE IN ITS PRESENT FORM TO
HIS GENEROSITY AND COUNSEL,
IS DEDICATED,
IN ALL GRATEFUL AND TENDER RECOLLECTION
BY
THE AUTHOR.





PREFACE.

THIS small volume is the latest of above three thousand¹ of a similar kind, which, under the general title of "Books of Emblems" have followed in the wake of the *Libellus Emblematum*,² a work, much resembling a child's primer in outward appearance, published at Augsburg in A.D. 1532, and composed by Andrea Alciati, a famous lawyer, antiquary, and litterateur of Milan.

This book consisted of nearly a hundred Latin Epigrams, some original, some translated or paraphrased from the Greek, and each accompanied by a

¹ See p. 8 of Preface to "Andrea Alciati and his Book of Emblems," etc., by Henry Green, M.A.; London, Trübner and Co., 1872, in which the learned writer states he has "formed an index of Emblem Books of which the titles number upwards of 3000, and the authors above 1300.

² This little book was followed by another of the same description published at Venice 1546. These two were afterwards combined into one volume.

rude woodcut illustration. Alciati was the first author who gave the name of Emblem to this form of expressing his ideas : and the notion for so doing was suggested by the original meaning of the word Emblem, which signifies anything inserted. The Greeks and Romans used to insert small pictures or bas-reliefs in the sides of vases, drinking-cups, and various other utensils : these little works of art were called Emblems : they were sometimes accompanied by mottoes or verses, and often made removable at pleasure, so that they formed no necessary part of the article which they adorned.

Alciati, therefore, considering that the illustrations formed no necessary portion of his book, and that they were only inserted, as he says himself, to make his moral and philosophical teaching more attractive, gave to his collection of poems and pictures the name of "Book of Emblems."

This idea took greatly with the public of his day, and for upwards of two hundred years afterwards, and generated a class of books now reckoned among the fossils of literature, which may be dug out of ancient libraries, or procured by chance here and there through the agency of those useful purveyors, the publishers of Catalogues of second-hand works.

Now Emblem books have had their day, and are no longer regarded as a means of instruction or delight. They have done their duty as ornamental wits and lively educators, and now make way for others more suited to the age. There will be found very few theological teachers of our day who would, like Sebastian Stockhamer,¹ not only advise a patron to have the Emblems of Alciati always at hand at home and abroad, but suggest that he should do as Alexander did with the works of Homer, sleep with them under his pillow.

He, therefore, who ventures to put forth his own conceits, clothed in this old-fashioned dress, before the present world of critical thinkers and impatient novel readers, must apologise for his intrusion and crave indulgence. Some, perhaps, who may look into these pages, will sympathise with the Author in the pleasure he has enjoyed in following the footsteps of the ingenious Emblematists of old, and will accept the subjoined Emblem as an illustration of their common feeling upon the subject:—

Though the new be gold, some love the old.

¹ See p. 5 of his edition of A. Alciati Emblemata, 1556.

“THEY have wrecked the old farm with its chimneys
so high,
And white flashing gables—my childhood’s delight,
The old home is gone, and the sorrowing eye
Shuns the blue-slatted upstart that glares from its
site ;”

So flowed my fresh feeling, when loud at my side
Rose the voice of a stranger arresting the tide :

“What an emblem is here of the glories of change,
Which purges and pares the old world to its quick ;
Transforming that rat-hole and ricketty grange,
With its plaster and laths to a mansion of brick.”
The prose chilled like ice,—I sank into my skin,
And felt my poor sentiment almost a sin.

The Author thinks it necessary to say, that circumstances over which he had no control prevented him from carrying out his original idea, which was that every set of verses should be accompanied by an illustration ; and it is only by the assistance of many friends, to whom his best acknowledgments are due, that he has been able to provide the comparatively few accompanying woodcuts.



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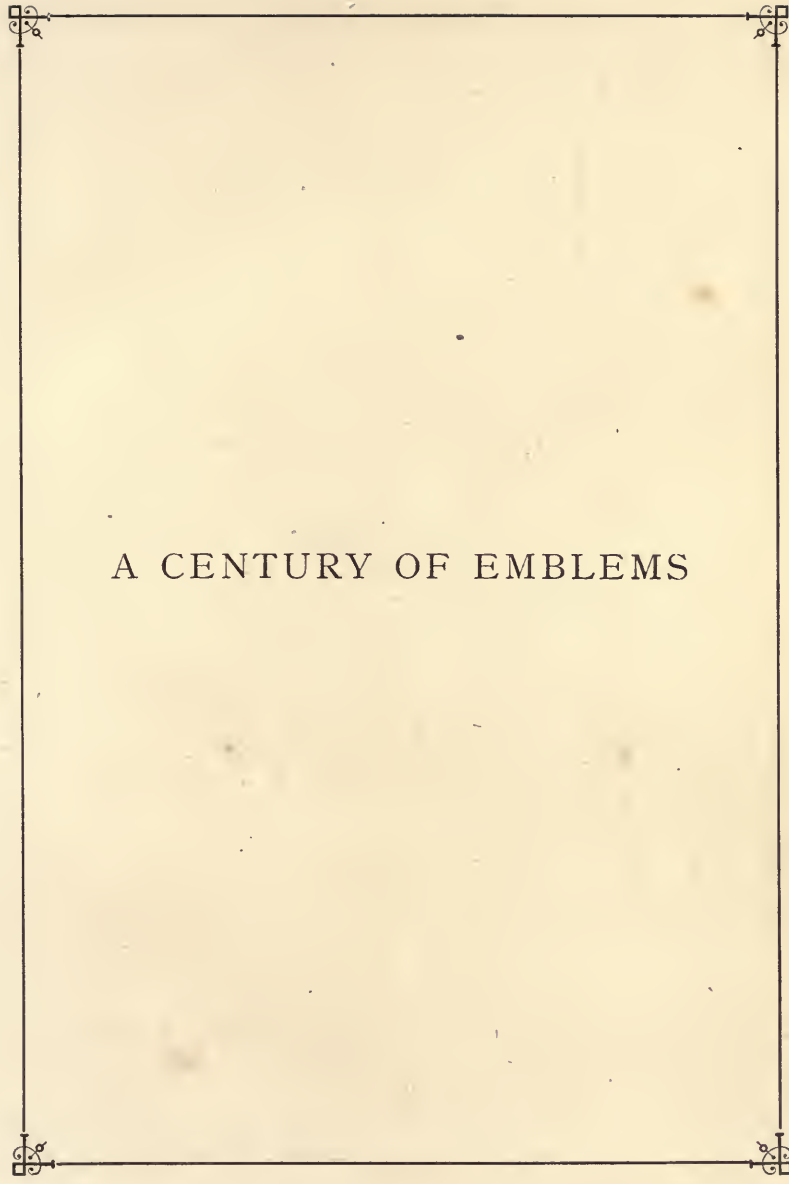




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A CENTURY OF EMBLEMS





PROEM.

I HAD not breathed such notes as these,
Save to myself in field or wood,
But for the venial hope to please
Some spirits of the wise and good.

For honest mirth that sings the truth,
And shakes a bell in Folly's ear,
May serve a crumpled hour to smooth,
And whisk away a peevish tear ;

While haply to the heart may go
Some tones amid the fall and rise,
And stir the silent springs below
Of deeper, holier sympathies.

So now into the streets of life
I venture forth, but not alone,
Too well aware its roar and strife
Would drown my feeble undertone.

And mindful of the world's disdain,
I mimic him of Rhodopé,*
And start, escorted by a train
Of beast, and bird, and flower, and tree ;

For lack of these, his guardian brood,
The poet in his lonely woe,
By Thracian dames was torn and strewed
Upon the Hyperborean snow.

Were these the critics of the day ?
And does this ancient tale, forsooth,
Symbol the perils of his way
Who seeks to win by tuneful truth ?

Thrice welcome, then, O sister art !
Divert the eye with pictured spell,
Assume your own attractive part,
And share the wrath you may not quell.

* Orpheus.





EMBLEMS EVERYWHERE.

A SIMPLE faith, if fancy fed
Is girt with holy signs,
And common sights are seen and read
As writ in holy lines.

A fish, a ship, the night and day,
Some Christian truth declare,
And e'en the winging crows display
Black crosses in the air.

Nor blame thou this simplicity,
For love is at the core,
Which only sees what others see,
But feels a little more.

THE SUN AN EMBLEM OF THE CREATOR.

'MID the glow of the dawning and dew of the mist,
The valley awakens in beauty and tears,
For the life-bringing day-star the ridges hath kiss'd,
And the presence is felt ere the splendour appears.

Now the cloud-curtain parts—from pavilion of gold
The monarch goes forth with tiara of flame,
And his banners abroad to the zenith unrolled,
Reflect on our hearts the Ineffable Name.

O emblem of Godhead ! majestic, supreme,
Life drinks at thy fountain, its wave is our breath,
While in rapturous awe of the glory we dream
Whose glance is creation, whose absence is death.

SUNSET ON CAMPAGNA OF ROME.

WHEN bathes the sun his burning crown,
 Within old Ostia's main,
He sends transforming angels down
 Upon the Roman plain.

Bright threads they fling of iris hue,
 And scatter crimson plumes,
As if all nature to renew
 With showers of fiery blooms.

See flashing out in golden grace
 A thousand arches rise,
And bridge the violet depths of space
 To mountains of surprise.

To mountain waves of amethyst,
 All flaming up carmine ;
Upon each crest the angels rest
 Who tend the sun's decline.

But soon the subtle pomps of light
 Evade us like a dream,
And with a breath the greys of night
 Envelop every gleam.

The fires are dead, the gold is stone,
The mountains, shadowy ghosts :
Ah, whither are the angels gone
With all their radiant hosts ?

They travel on from height to height,
In splendour to diffuse
The truth that earth's divinest light
Hath no abiding hues.





CUPID REFORMED.

LOVE TRAINED IS HEAVEN GAINED.

You say he wounds both good and naught,
Both old and young in wanton play,
Was never brat so badly taught,—
There, take his feathery stings away :

Now send him to the Sunday school,
With decent frock o'er shoulders small,
There let him learn the golden rule,
He'll prove a cherub after all.



COLOSSAL HAND IN MUSEUM AT ROME,

A.D. 1856.

THIS hand colossal from Colossus torn,
This idol fragment pedestal'd on high,
Fulfils a nobler purpose now forlorn,
Than in the pomp of its integrity.

It heartens love, that finger pointing ever
Up towards the heavenly many-mansioned home,
Where members of one Lord no creed shall sever,
Though sundered here, alas ! in papal Rome.



PURITANS AND RITUALISTS.

IN robes symbolical, through incensed air,
Some pray in temples amid lights and hues,
While some in tabernacles simply bare,
Beauty's bright aid mistrustingly refuse.

Pray, Christians, as ye will, by nurture swayed,
Habit, tradition, phantasy, or youth—
With faith is all ; our Lord hath only said,
He will be served in spirit and in truth.

But, brethren of a brotherhood divine,
So dear to Him on whom ye daily call,
Why darken with the dust of strife malign
The sunshine of that love that blesses all ?





THE BEACON CREST.

TO THE MEMORY OF SPENCER, MARQUIS OF
NORTHAMPTON.

A BLESSING on the beacon's name,
Our guide across the midnight sea ;
Who bears for 'crest that guardian flame,
Himself a burning light should be.

And such thou wert, my patron dear,
Thy beams were justice, faith, and love ;
Ah ! may we by their memory steer,
Since thou art with the lights above.

ROOKS.

O ROOKS, I love to watch through quiet eve
Your mystic circles in the golden air,
And in your solemn monotones conceive
The instinct of a universal prayer.

Welcome then, wide-winged blackamoors, who poise
Inverted wigwams in the swaying heights,
And cheer the windy March with clanging noise,
Long may fate spare your labour and delights,

Toilers and teachers strenuously good
Like you I see life's gusty hours defy,
Like you from earth they win their daily food,
Like you they build their hopes and homes on high.



UNA.

WE thank thee, gentle Spenser, for thy song
Of Una, virgin Una brave and sweet,
Whose eloquence subdued the Satyr throng,
And bowed the tearful monsters to her feet.

Nor song alone but prophecy was thine,
Forecasting many a Una wise and mild,
Who spends her loving life in toil divine,
Taming street Arabs petulant and wild,

The gutter offspring of a race obscure ;
Cheerly to these within their noxious dens
The Cross she brings, nor doubts its shining pure
Grace through the gloom and mercy will dispense,

And though to scare the ribald from her way
No guardian lion by her side doth move,
*The shield of faith she bears hath sovran sway,
And the strong spirit of all-conquering love.



LIGHTHOUSE BUILT LIKE A CHURCH.

THAT tapering Pharos pierces night
As would a church bell tower ;
And far and wide its streaming light
Symbols the Church's power,

Which flinging many a radiant clue
O'er life's bewildering foam,
Guides weary souls the darkness through
To their celestial home.



CHURCH IN THE VALLEY.

A TREE of life from Eden far,
O lowly church, you stand !
So stood the Lord whose sign you are,
And blessed the barren land.

A tower of strength you show to all
Who recognise His grace :
The tender lights which round you fall
Write heaven upon your face.

Your bells down in the hollow lea
Cry as from sheltering nest,
"Come all ye labouring men to Me,
And I will give you rest."

CHURCH BELLS AND SHEEP BELLS.

THE sheep bells tinkle from the knoll
Faintly and sweet 'twixt far and near,
But hark! at hand the funeral toll
How solemn and how clear

Each wafts a hint to faithful love
Of ever-mingling wealth and woe,
The energy of life above,
The requiem below.

Now sweeps the wholesome evening breath
As tho' a voice from Heaven should fall,
Blending the notes of life and death,
And harmonising all.





THE BROOK AT SUNSET.

COULD Pison or Pactolus old
Eclipse our little stream to-night?
What grape might yield a glossier gold,
Such amber streams,
And ruby gleams

Fringed all along with dazzling light
That ripples down thro' emerald meadows bright ?

Brief pageant ! minions of the sun,
With him the hues in gloom decline ;
Then think on the Eternal One,
Sun of the soul,
At whose control
Outpours the living light divine,
The grace that turn's life's water into wine.

THE CHURCH TOWER AT SUNSET.

SEE with a radiance noontide never gave
Our little tower fling back the evening gold !
Like to a sunlit rose upon a grave,
Like to a star upon the midnight wave,
When all of earth that was so bright and brave
Is waning into dusk obscure and cold.

So in the nightfall of that dread decay
When worlds their borrowed lustre shall resign,
They who o'erlooked her on her lowly way,
They who despised her in her robes of clay,
Shall in the glory of her opening day
Bow down abashed before the Bride Divine.

SUMMER SUNSET.

I SAW the summer sunset die
 On golden clouds beyond the rain,
I saw the dying Christian lie
 Bright-eyed amid a weeping train.

I read on evening's roseate pile
 Hope of a lovelier day than this ;
I hailed in that expiring smile
 Assurance of eternal bliss.





THE COMET.

LONE one, wilt thou no signal pass,
Thy mission to declare,
Whether a world-destroying mass,
Or flame-flower of Elysian grass,
Or seraph's burning hair? .

Or may be torch from hearth unknown
Upheld by powers unseen,
Each pacing their appointed zone
In mute procession one by one
A thousand years between.

Let Time shake out my dribbling sand ;
Who would not die to see
The eternal treasures of a land
Whose glories shine above a strand
With waifs and strays like thee !



THE ROCKET.

THE child who sees the rocket fire
Its arch of stars o'er tower and plain,
Laments to find them all expire,
And but a worthless wand remain.

And such with all its soaring sound
Is eloquence despite of art,
Whose flashy flights the ear astound,
But leave no light within the heart.

THE GIRANDOLA AT ROME.

O SUNS ! O founts ! O domes of fire,
O palaces of seraph kings !
O shining ones who all aspire
To fan the stars with flaming wings !

My soul, what gracious glorious power
To hue and radiance God hath given !
I felt as though for half-an-hour
I stood before the gates of Heaven.

Now all is dark, and so I bring
With joy my splendid memories home,
And think of heaven whene'er I sing
The bright Girandola of Rome.





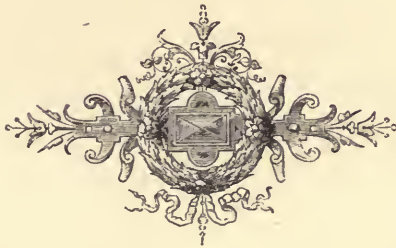
THE MOON

ON EARTH DISOWNED, IN HEAVEN ENTHRONED.

WHEN first behind the woods arose
The moon with red distempered fire,
We feared beyond the hilly close
Some conflagration dire.

But see her now enthroned on high,
Clear of the thwarting trees,
She glows upon the watchet sky
God's seal of golden peace.

So spirits rich in grace divine
Misunderstood, distorted, here,
Shall with unsullied lustre shine
In Heaven's congenial sphere.



HEAVEN LIGHTS AND HOME LIGHTS.

PALE broken lights that close our heavenly view
Caressing eve ere weeps the twilight dew,
Tender ye are as love smiles shining through
Life's parting hour : adieu, dark day, adieu !

Ye cheer our footsteps on the wintry way,
Kind hints from Heaven when earth is cold and gray.
Heaven is our home ; and we but wanderers through
This glimmering vale : adieu, dark day, adieu !

Short is our journey now, nor steep the road ;
Sound still our limbs and light our daily load ;
Chill night we leave behind, and hasten through
Home's glowing door : adieu, dark day, adieu !

Dear emblems, these we cherish till the last
Deep nightfall on our brows the shadow cast,
And we by faith see glory shining through
The door of death : adieu, dark day, adieu !

CLOUD EMBLEM.

BENEATH the vault of yonder clouds
A lake of sunshine lies,
The rent between those shifting shrouds
Reveals it to our eyes.

The glory of its amber light
Clasped by an opal shore,
Melts me to joy I cannot write
And makes my heart adore.

I feel as if the great white throne
Rose dazzling there above,
Nor inaccessible its zone
To those that feel and love.

Beneath, the elders all bow down
Each in his radiant stole—
Each in the lake hath cast his crown,
The homage of a soul.

Emblem of Heaven ! sublime device !
No air can thee retain :
Read in the Word, the Heart, the Skies,
Thee we shall meet again.



COTTAGE SMOKE ASCENDING.

THE silent smoke in column true
Streams from the poor man's hearth,
Right up into the ether blue,
Uniting heaven and earth.

From lowly hearts thus quiet prayer
Sends up a golden cord
To God's right hand, uniting there
The labourer to his Lord.



SMOKE NOT ASCENDING.

THE lolling smoke which clouds the noonday skies
And mars the outline of our orchard trees,
Smirching the buds and blossoms, here supplies
An emblem of the gross ignoble ease

Of apathetic souls, which lost in sloth,
Lifting no thought to heaven, with sordid care
Infect young hearts around, and check the growth
Of aspirations craving purer air.





THE CARELESS SHEPHERD.

How like the world these flowery leas
On which fantastic shadows play ;
And, lo, the shepherd sleeps at ease,
And sheep like sinners go astray.

The night mist broods o'er yonder mere ;
Wake, slumberer ! lest thy Lord complain
When the dim folding hour draws near,
And thou shalt seek His lambs in vain.





CHILD AND SNAKES.

HASTE ! ere the simple infant die
Which, lured by glistening strakes,
With tender fingers would untie
That knot of tangled snakes.

Thus man with a perverted skill,
In his own darkness blind,
The mystic coil of Fate and Will
Seeks madly to unbind.

Guide Thou aright his questing zeal,
Teach him in Thy bright word
Content Thy perfect love to feel,
O Spirit of the Lord !



INNOCENCE.

WE children shuddered when we heard
Of many a pretty painted bird
 Held by the glittering eye
Of cruel serpent, fold on fold,
Close gliding, till with blood run cold
 The victim dropt to die.

But we revived when friends would say
How rustling leaf, or broken spray
 Might foil the poisonous snare,
And how the bird, untranced and free,
Shoots like a meteor from the tree
 Into the azure air.

So innocence may be beguiled
By sensual spirits masked and mild,
 And feigning pure delight ;
But dropt the mask,—on wings of prayer,
O'er mists of earth and clouds of air
 She gains her holy height.

HILARION.

SEE at Hilarion's saintly sign
The serpent mount the pyre,
And all its scaly strength resign
To the consuming fire.

Such is the miracle of Grace
Which on the pilgrim's way,
Ordains that hell's malignant race
Should work its own decay.

Let but the faithful suppliant urge,
God will His fire impart,
The serpent coils of sin to purge
From every willing heart.





THE FOOLISH COLT.

THIS discontented colt, full fed,
Aweary of its pasture rich,
Half dislocates its brainless head
For nettles in the dusty ditch.

Skills not the amplest range of joys,
What we have not is our desire ;
This proved amid his golden toys
The little prince who screamed for mire.



TROUTS.

WITH poising fins against the stream,
Their heads the shadowy troutlings set,
Though vain their patient instincts seem,
For chilly April's mirrored gleam
No fly disturbs as yet.

And 'so against ill-fashion's tide,
With faithful wills untaught to swerve,
Though cold philosophy deride,
The saints hold on and calmly bide
His season whom they serve.





THE PLATYPUS.

A TRIPLE monster here is shown
Which old Chimera mocks,
Bird, fish, and quadruped in one,
The duck-billed Paradox.

Emblem of him whose every wish
Concentres in a feast ;
Like duck he gobbles, drinks like fish,
And proves himself a beast.





THE RAPE OF PROSERPINE.

SWEET Proserpine you here behold
Far from her corn-crowned mother's care,
Dragged down by Pluto, swart and old,
His dismal throne to share.

She figures many a one the prey
Of passion's ill-resisted powers,
Who, spurning all that love can say,
Seeks but for earthly flowers.

Ere these you gather, maiden mine,
With faith's pure lilies wreath your soul,
Then fear not any art malign
Shall work thee mortal dole.

GIRLS RUNNING.

As yet they make of life a dancing race,
Rarely they pause to pant, still less to think ;
They have not met the dark ones face to face,
They have not shuddered o'er the ghastly brink.
Life's holiday is theirs ;—how sweet to hear
The gay young laughter rippling down the wind ;
Ah ! who would breathe the name of care or fear,
Or hint that fortune could be less than kind !

They skim gazelle-like pitfalls set in flowers,
Too glib their ankles for the serpent's bite,
Yet on and on they rush to meet the hours
Of dimness and perplexity and night.

Yes, each must suffer, and some too will fall,
But not for aye need sin and grief o'ercast ;
May He who knows His lambs, and loves them all,
To His own fold ingather them at last.



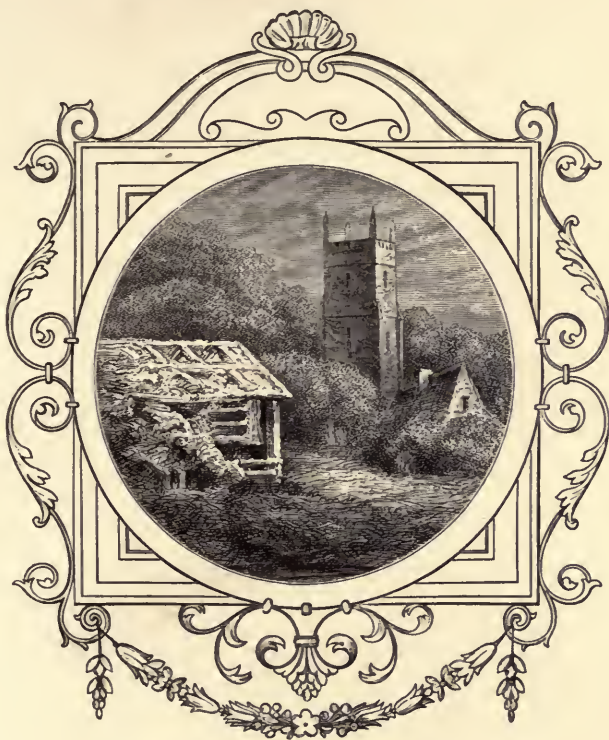
THE SIREN.

A SIREN on a rocky isle,
A youth upon the cliff is seen ;
She tries his fancy to beguile,
The deep dark water moans between.

“ Gentle thou art,” he saith, “ and fair,
Yet nought thine azure eyes avail,
Amid the golden coils of hair,
Gleams weirdly forth the fish’s tail.”

Yet still he gazed, she smiled the more :
She sang a wondrous witching strain ;
He groaned and sighed, he laughed and swore,
Then plunged into the deadly main.





THE STRANGE CHOICE.

How grim the woods, the tower how pale ;
The landscape colourless and cold,
While all the hovel foul and frail,
The ragged thatch and battered sail,
Are gorgeous in the sunset gold !

Such seems the girl's capricious part,
Who flouts the noble, wise, and true,
And wastes her loving burning heart,
And glorifies with doting art
The basest of her courting crew.



THE PUDDLE.

THIS shallow pool which ruffling in the breeze,
Spurts gold and azure at the morning sun,
Ere night will be a blot of slimy lees,
By the absorbing heat and wind foredone.

Thou dost with glittering surface, puddle fine,
Of fools and prodigals the fate pourtray,
Who in the transient flattery swell and shine
Of knaves who suck their substance all away.



THE MIRY LANE.

WE looked o'er the gate on a wearisome lane,
Tracked afar by cold gleams of the new fallen rain ;
An emblem it seemed of that oft-trodden road,
The sorrowful life, and its final abode,
With its mire of transgressions and furrows of care,
Its pools full of tears, and its sloughs of despair ;
And we sighed to perceive it was lost to our view
Amid desolate wilds and vague ridges of blue.
But there flamed up the welkin a ravishing change,
That engulfed in its splendours the misty cloud range,
And the path that we shuddered at caught the sky's fire,
The pools flushed in silver, and gold was its mire ;
And we smiled in our hearts when we saw that it led
Right into the sunset 'neath streamers of red.
Faith's path will reflect the celestial glow,
And bring heaven to the heart wheresoever we go ;
Deep and rough it may be, yet they sing on the road
Who know that it ends in the welcome of God.





THE DOUBTFUL RACE.

BEYOND the hill his vessel lies,
Would he were safe upon its side,
Who now through brake and thicket flies
To gain the ferry in his stride.

Loitering at first, though well he knew
That time and tide for no man wait,
He dreads to think what ills pursue
The idle seaman all too late.

Nelson, himself a nation's power,
Victor of hosts in every clime,
Stood ready aye before the hour,
Nor ever deigned to race with time.



THE SLIDING BOY.

HE shouts, he slides, my rosy boy,
A moment, then comes rattling down ;
Youth's type is here, a slippery joy,
A sudden fall, a bleeding crown.

He rises, brushing off the tears
In silence as he glides again ;
And typifies through all our years
The soberer course which follows pain.



YOUTH.

THAT thoughtless child of sport and truth,
I cannot with reproaches stone,
O loving, laughing, trusting youth,
For ever, ever gone !

Sin taints, alas ! the old and young,
And thou hast duly borne the rod ;
And often for a venial wrong,
Thou sweetest gift of God.

I love to muse upon the boy,
And his sublime aspirings trace,
When hand in hand with Hope and Joy
He challenged Fate to race.

Still in my heart I fain would bear
Some flowers of his beyond the tomb,
Perhaps the crystal waters there
May renovate their bloom.





THE FERRY OF DEATH.

WHEN o'er death's ferry youth departs,
Upbraid not his reluctant moan ;
Think of the loved and loving hearts
He leaves, to cross the gulf alone.

But when life's sun is low i' the west,
Calmly we may our turn abide,
For most of those we love the best
Are shining on the other side.



THE FORGE AND THE SUNSET.

THE sunset pales along the height,
The smithy flashes free below,
And ever in the thickening light
The forge emits a lustier glow.

As Faith declines, with grosser flame
Earth's passion thus our being fills ;
And Heaven becomes a fading name,
A glimmer o'er death's shadowy hills.



THE UNDERGROWTH.

IN yonder grove the woodman's bill
The pillared trees by scores hath laid,
But Nature every gap will fill,
The springing undergrowth will spread,
And we shall half forget the ill,
So rich the greenery overhead.

Thus Death, the hewer, down may smite
Into the depths where all must blend,
The dearest from our daily sight,
Yet love shall never lack a friend ;
Still proffer us the young and bright
Such kindly escort to the end.





WINTER IN MAY.

WINTER ! black-browed and bearded with the snows,
We thought thee vexed with April's wanton ways
Brooding afar amid the Arctic floes,
Or with new icebergs fringing dreary bays.

Loyal we honoured thy appointed time,
And crowned thee January's lawful king ;
Why falls thy crushing sceptre edged with rime
Upon the verdant loveliness of spring ?

We think of Holbein's pencil, quaint and coarse,
And that weird skeleton in ghastly pride
Haling to doom with such superfluous force
All in her flowery youth the virgin bride.

THE SOLITARY.

AWEARY of his worldly life,
The tempter to elude,
The hermit flies from work and strife
To desert solitude.

But there, alas ! finds no repose
From Fancy's Comus crew,
Since dream he must, where'er he goes,
With nothing else to do.

Would'st drive such imps from heart and brain,
Take, then, the ancient way,
Prescribed in many a holy strain,
And work as well as pray.

THE GOLDEN MEAN.

ALL inaccessible a Tree arose
Amid the shining mountains of Cathay,
Its head was capp'd with numbing mists and snows,
Around its root a fiery whirlpool lay ;

But midway 'twixt the furnace and the cloud
Bright fruits were by the keen-eyed watchers seen ;
“ There,” cried the sage to the excited crowd,
“ Behold the treasures of the Golden Mean.”

Then girt he some with wings, and won to skill
Through many a fall between the earth and sun,
The wings bore names—th' indomitable Will,
And Faith—by these the glorious prize they won.





AUTUMN.

HE sat among the yellowing trees,
Low winds to beech and oak did call,
Murmuring of Nature's old decrees
And yearly tribute to the Fall.

Now is there silence all around,
And you may hear the branches cast
Their offerings on the fragrant ground,
'Tis here an acorn, there a mast.

And thus in life's autumnal grove,
At intervals, with bated breath,
We hear the ripe ones whom we love
Drop to the quiet home of death.



JUSTISSIMA TELLUS.

DEAR mother Earth, no usurer thou,
Since all who heed thy liberal law,
For every dint of spade or plough
On vale or heath or mountain brow,
A full and punctual interest draw.

And still thy richest sheaves are they
Which, in the ripeness of the years,
The angel-reapers bear away
To glory and eternal day,
When nought of thee but dust appears.

Thrice happy they who trace the line
In every quickening field and grove
Of heaven's munificent design,
The recompense of life divine
For toiling days of faithful love.



THE FLINTY FIELD.

You scorn our hill of glittering flints
As though 'twere sown with dragon's teeth,
For that the surface gives no hints,
No hopes of genial growth beneath.

Judge not the surface, bide the hour
When He, whose grace can melt the rock,
Shall bid o'er every flint to tower
A hundred-headed golden shock.





HOME AND ABROAD.

BLACK and white in a windy war—
Lo ! wave devouring wave,
And wilder as we look afar
The ocean monsters rave.

But here, within this sheltering bight,
A glossy sheet upcurls
In whispering cadence low and light,
Its rainbows fringed with pearls.

Secluded thus from outer brawl,
In unambitious ease,
Be ours the lowly home where all
Is tuned to love and peace.

DISTANT SOUNDS.

THE children at their evening play
Shout from the village street ;
The wind blows all that's rude away,
The rest is gay and sweet.

So from our garden seat on high,
We love the sound to hear,
For distance that enchants the eye
Can fascinate the ear.

Trills that distract us from the cage
Were in the woods a joy ;
Who scans too narrowly life's page
Will many a boon destroy.

THE FRIENDLY THORN.

I THOUGHT an asp had stung my hand
While thridding Narnis' fragrant wood,
When lo! in purpling blushes grand,
As if my homage to command,
The queen of all wild roses stood.

The captive beauty soon I bound
My lady's bosom to adorn,—
Beauty whose joy I ne'er had found,
Upon that tangled briery mound,
But for the sharp and friendly thorn.

So hearts that slept from hour to hour,
Pierced to the quick by sorrow's cry,
Awake to fresh inspiring power,
And clasp Faith's brightest purest flower,
The rose divine of Charity.





HAPPINESS.

To figure true felicity
This picture doth intend,
A pleasant road, sweet company,
And God's house at the end.

BRIDEGROOM TO BRIDE.

To the happy all things are heavenly.

WHERE'ER I turn this blessed day,
'Tis heaven and sunshine every way ;
With heavenly songs and heavenly hues,
Mingle the birds, and flowers, and dews.
Lo ! here within the crystal moat
Heaven's clouds like radiant islands float,
And high above the golden hill
Smiles heavenly summer blue and still.
I gaze into thy loving eyes,
Heaven there in twofold azure lies ;
And when I glance into my heart,
'Tis heaven indeed—for there thou art !



THE EAR-RING.

AN ear-ring you devise
For your affianced girl ;
No diamond will suffice,
Nor wealth of lustrous pearl,
But call her "dearest dear,"
Swear nought your love shall sever,
If true, you deck her ear
With gems that shine for ever.



THE GARDEN POOL.

CHARMED by the lily's golden eye,
I rest upon this margin cool,
And think what leagues of azure sky
Are mirrored in the tiny pool.
Delicious emblem of the mind
Whose fancy rules this bright parterre,
Ever 'mid sweetest flowers I find
The depths of heaven reflected there.



THE SCARECROW.

“O BELLA! what strange wight is there,
Dark on the evening sky,
With flowing cloak, and streaming hair,
And head so grandly high?”

I feel a throbbing at my heart,
For William 'tis too soon ;
See how he waves his arms apart
Saluting the new moon !

Oh, clear as daylight is the truth,
Blinder than bats were we,
It is the long-haired foreign youth
Who sang last night to me.

He sang of Fatherland and Rhine ;
Hush, O provoking cow !
I heard the sweet preluding line,
The whispering notes, I vow."

But nearer as they drew to see,
O phantasy forlorn !
They find for love and melody
A scarecrow in the corn.



WE JUDGE OTHERS BY OURSELVES.

HERE within this golden grove,
Paved with many a purple flower,
Here I sit and wait my love
Through the May-day's parting hour.

Where the budding gnomons throw
Lengthening shadows far and near,
Mute I sit as man of snow,
Till my darling's voice I hear.

Ah ! your mirth my passion stirs,
Mine who am so old and frail ;
Bear with me, O lusty sirs !
For my love's the nightingale.



THE LAY FIGURE.

Vanità che par persona.—DANTE, *Inf.* 6.

THERE smirks in many a painter's room,
With padded limbs and varnished face,
A quaint machine that can assume
Each attitude that art would trace.

This doll adult, when feately tired,
Can all that's great or fair display,
Warrior, or dame, or saint inspired,
Prince, troubadour, or lovely may.

And far beyond the studio's bound,
In court and camp, in church or mart,
Living machines like this are found,
Which lure the eye but mock the heart.

On wooden-headed soulless guys
We see such draping splendours thrust ;
But raise the robe, and all surprise
Closes in pity and disgust.





THE WINDMILL.

THAT windmill with its sails at rest
A thing immovable appears,
And o'er the little hamlet nest
The symbol of Salvation rears.

But when its arms the breezes spurn,
'Tis Fortune's wheel we image there ;
Reared and depress'd they show in turn
Hope, joy, dejection, and despair.

Unstable souls, the Church at peace,
Seem steadfast thus in high resolve,
But in her storms and perils—these
Through many a shifting phase revolve.



FAIRIES AND FACTORIES.

THEY crush with piles and tear with thundering wheel
The rainbow arches from the torrent's spray ;
The frightened Fairies, sure of no appeal,
Pair off in mournful minuets away.

So drudging life stamps out with daily pain
Our brightest, lightest fancies one by one ;
Oh, may we hope to see them shine again
Beyond this working world, beyond the sun !

RIGHTEOUS OVERMUCH.

THE youthful Furius sped so fast
Before his folly's roaring wind,
His wildest mates he overpass'd,
And health and sense were left behind.

Now turned fanatic devotee
He deems his mother church too slow,
So charters some new craft that he
A readier way to Heaven may go.

Take heed, my Furius, lest you sail
For love and patience all too fast,
Without their convoy faith may quail
A prey to pirate pride at last.





INEXPERIENCE.

Eye of stranger magnifies danger.

“ADOWN the dreadful glaxis madly borne,
Against that foaming barricado cast,
The barque is doomed! and with a hissing scorn
The surge will dance upon the foundering mast.”

The landsman thus ; the seaman smiles, quoth he,
 " The barque and wave together mount and fall ;
 The horse upholds his rider, so will she
 Career in triumph o'er the watery brawl.

" Oft inexperience brandeth for a bane
 That which for noble uses wisdom gave ;
 The path I hail to glory or to gain
 To you, untried, reflects an ocean grave."

THE SUNKEN IRON-CLAD.

O CONCENTRATION of brute force !
 Rhinoceros of the deeps !
 O ugly Delos on whose shores
 No soft Latona sleeps !

Scant room in thee for birth or love
 'Mid monsters furnace-born,
 The iron-throated guns above,
 Below, the ripping horn.

Heaven grant ere long we find in thee
 An emblem of all war
 Beneath the waves of Time's deep sea
 Buried for evermore !



THE MASTER'S WILL.

Two Caravels to sea were gone,
Two striplings passed the city gate ;
A shattered hull returns alone,
A brother wails a brother's fate.

But who elects for good or ill?
Distrust not mercy though bereft ;
Though storm winds shriek the Master's will,
One taken and the other left.





NOW OR NEVER.

He who loses luck abuses.

We stalked the great stag down the glen,
Once more, alas ! I failed to kill ;
Such is the lot of luckless men,
Despite their energy and skill.

And now he's safe beyond our ken
Upon the steep and misty hill.

He'll come again, but not to-day,
Where meet in one the foaming burns,
While I in fortune's windy play
Am tossed afar from braes and ferns,
So plaineth he who throws away
The happy chance that ne'er returns.

LABOUR LOST.

THE roads were rock, the sky was flame,
The seething mob filled strand and quay,
Where came an ancient curious dame
Three leagues afoot the launch to see.

Now as she stooped amid the crowd,
Stooped to remove a galling stone,
She heard a shouting rash and loud ;
She raised her head—the launch was gone.

O dame ! as thou art such are they
Who after years of care and cost,
The burning hope of many a day
By one ignoble stoop have lost.



THE LOST FISH.

“ AH !” cries the boy, “ was never seen
A fish like that which broke my rod,
Such weight, such breadth of scaly sheen,
A sucking whale he might have been,
A grampus or Newfoundland cod.”

Thus in our aims we all are boys,
And Fortune’s present grace abuse ;
For, ever of all earthly toys,
Love, honours, triumph, gain, or joys,
The richest is the one we lose.





STRIKING THE TENT.

THIS quaint round bower, this sheltering canvas cave,
In which we ate and slept, and prayed, and planned,
Falls in a moment, when to yonder slave
Expectant of the sign my hand I wave,
All limp and shapeless on the desert sand.

Depart in peace, O wanderer of Useit !
Rejoicing in thy strength the mountain tread,
Yet never may'st thou this memento slight ;
Erect to-day for labour and delight,
To-morrow prone among the dusty dead.



THE TURKISH BRIDGE.

WHENE'ER we saw the arches gleam,
We shouted trending down the ridge,
" Better by far to ford the stream,
Than trust the doubtful Turkish bridge."

Such, are false promises believed ;
Such, confidence and love betrayed ;
Such those who having once deceived
A warning offer, not an aid.





THE CROCODILE.

THIS monstrous Effet on the solid ground
Right on and on can work his easy way,
But in his cramping plates of armour bound,
Slowly and sorely wheels his length around,
And so eludes him every nimble prey.

So have we known through prejudice and use,
A mind that crawls in one pernicious groove,
A dreary tunnel with the narrowest views,
A cumbrous mind inflexibly obtuse,
Which reason cannot turn nor feeling move.





THE MOUNTAINS OF EL TIH.

THE pilgrim on the bleached El Tih
Stares at the rocky wall awhile,
Nor through the shadeless glare can see,
Rift, pathway, or defile.

Yet, just one burning corner past,
Behold the glittering cliffs dispart ;
He finds himself ascending fast
Into the mountain's heart.

When troubles thus a barrier raise,
Oh, yield not to despair or wrath,
Press for the turn ; by His own ways
Great God will show the path.

DAMASCUS IN THE EVENING.

THE dream of an enchanted home
Set in an emerald frame,
Peach bloom, and topaz walls, and dome,
And minarets of flame ;
So the great city flashed on us,
Descending Antilibanus.

From lower slopes a change we see ;
The towers, like white-stoled maids,
All bleached to purest ivory,
Arise from purple shades :
So the great city smiled on us,
Descending Antilibanus.

But soon within her gates we found
The grace and glory gone :
Darkness for splendour all around,
And clay for precious stone.
Was this the joy that beamed on us,
Descending Antilibanus ?

Again a change—a door we pass—
O magical surprise !
Fount, lamps, divans, arcaded glass,
A traveller's paradise !
Emblems of life and death with us
We brought from Antilibanus.

THE TWO GOATS.

Two goats met on an Alpine ridge,
Sharp, sheer, and horrible to see ;
One crouched and formed a living bridge,
And so they passed unscathed and free.

That both might prosper one must bend,
Oh, learn the lesson, reader mine !
So shalt thou compass mercy's end,
And so conform to love divine.



THE ARAB WELL.

AH me ! it is a cruel spell
For Truth as for mankind,
If to the depth of yonder well
The goddess be consigned.

For there the sex in daily rout
With scandal taint the air ;
No lying rumour runs about
But hath a mother there.

Dumb Truth the while in that dark place
A laughing-stock is laid ;
They dash the bucket in her face,
Widow, and wife, and maid.

THE DEAD CROCODILE.

UPON the bank of ancient Nile,
A shoal of Arab boys
Belaboured a dead crocodile,
With oriental noise.

They cursed his mother and his beard,
They cursed his spotted sire,
They kicked, and smote, and spat, and jeered,
And pelted him with mire.

They lashed a cord around his jaws,
They sat astride his back,
They twisted round his webbed claws,
And made the sinews crack.

When all at once the cold dead thing,
As by Galvani's art,
Its flabby tail appeared to swing
With momentary start.

Away, away, fled every one,
Round corners and up trees,
And left the monster all alone
In death's unbroken peace.

Emblem of cowardice is here,
Patent to mind and eye :
What they deserve such wretches fear,
Without a danger nigh.

THE HYÆNA.

I SAW a foul hyæna led,
Two slaves his snout had bound,
Captured within a tomb they said,
And showed his jaws still reeking red
With blood from holy ground.
Vile scribblers in their greed of gold,
Thus through death's cerements thrust,
'Mid scandals there obscene and old,
And tales of darkness best untold,
Battening on filthy dust.



GRATITUDE.

THE Moslem who accepts your alms
Thanks God alone, the kind and true ;
The Frank, if guerdon cross his palms,
Thanks only you.

Both kindness here, and grace above,
Duly should every heart confess ;
And they who slight a brother's love,
Slight God's no less.



THE NUBIAN BOATMEN.

THESE bronze-armed slaves so lithe and strong,
Row on for many a glassy mile
Through burning hours, and all the while
They praise in sweet recurring song,
"The Lord that brings the Nile."

O thou, recumbent traveller, note
Approval of their simple ways,
Who lighten toil with pious lays ;
'Twere ill adown life's stream to float
Without or work or praise.



THE CHRISTIAN PILGRIM.

Now the Christian pilgrim wanders
'Mid ravines of sin and care ;
On the craggy ledge he ponders,
Probing all with staff of prayer.

Freshened by the wayside fountain
With the flag of peace still furled,
Lo ! he hails the shining mountain
O'er the ruins of the world.

There upon the heights of glory,
Lettered on the golden clay,
He shall read Earth's complex story
And his banner float for aye.





THE FORGET-ME-NOT.

AMONG the meadow-grasses dank
That fringe the running stream,
This little flower begets the bank
With turquoise-coloured gleam.

Emblem of many a mortal's lot,
Who, tracking bygone years,
Still finds the sweet Forget-me-not
Fast by the fount of tears.



TEXTS ON TOMBSTONES.

WHERE round our church the pious stones
Watch the green pillows of the dead,
Pass not, but read in reverent tones
The silent Scripture overhead.

From desert peak the storm-cloud poured
Light on the tables of the Law,
But sunshine here o'er flowers and sward
Reveals the grace that softens awe.

And faith will greet on many a tomb
An emblem of His loving speech
Who said, if every mouth were dumb
The very stones His truth would teach.

ROSE GARDEN AT ASHRIDGE.

SOFTLY at noontide one reposes
When sunshine melts the thought to dream,
Within this labyrinth of roses
Whose centre is the fountain's gleam.

We match our mortal life and beauty,
With this ineffable array
Of creatures free from sin and duty,
Delicious even in decay ;

And love, in you, O blooms and fountain,
A brilliant emblem here to own
Of souls upon the shining mountain,
Exulting round the Mercy throne,

Where, lovelier than the loveliest flowers,
And all like you in God's employ,
They shine their everlasting hours,
And shed around a glorious joy.





THE HEIFER DEPRIVED OF HER MATES.

FOR absent friends and interrupted loves
See yonder solitary heifer mourn,
As questing vainly round the close she roves,
Of all her spotted yoke-fellows forlorn.

Quickened like us this thing of kindred clay
Frets with our passions, trembles with our fears,
But lacking spirit-wings it finds no way
To hopes that shine above the fount of tears.



DUCKS AT PLAY.

THEY flirt and flounce with many a quack and blow,
Those ducks intoxicate with summer rain ;
Then deeply dive, and hidden long below,
From unexpected places rise again.

Thus our old playmates in life's widening stream,
Amid the crossing currents disappear,
Yet haply show again as in a dream
With startling gladness after many a year.





THE TAME HARE.

Was never beast so cautious seen
As Tiny our pet hare ;
He sniffs at dado, chair, and screen,
With such suspicious care.

Yet when his nightly quest is o'er,
Each rift and corner scanned,
He'll spring around and snatch his store
Of parsley from my hand.

With Puss let all suspicion end ;
The jealous heart will rue ;
Ah ! never doubt an ancient friend,
Though wary with the new.





THE WATCHFUL DOG.

ONE ear he held, a flapping dockleaf, low,
The other pricking like a horn on high ;
This heeded all around that come and go,
And this the larks careering up the sky.

Smile, twofold man, yet own your emblem here,
Spirit and flesh alert for duty's call ;
And, 'mid the discords of this earthly sphere,
Hearken the voice of Heaven above them all.



THE PUPPIES AND THE THUNDER.

WE heard the puppies madly scold,
When crashed on high the thundering peal ;
They leaped aloft, as though to hold
The lightning by the heel.

And as the flashes followed fast,
Still sharper rang the yelping tone,
Till hoarse and worn they sank at last,
Yet rolled the thunder on.

So worth above detraction's rout
Maintains its even lofty course,
And clamour ceases, wearied out
With its own futile force.

EMBLEM OF TRUE PHILOSOPHY.

At fashion's call with cruel shears
They cropped poor Tray's superfluous ears ;
Twice shrieked the mutilated pup,
Then sniffed and ate the fragments up,
Nor stayed his losses to deplore,
But wagged his tail and craved for more.
Here, without Tupper, we may see
The marrow of philosophy,
The how and where with natural ease
To stow away our miseries ;
Nor simply to gulp down our pain,
But turn disaster into gain ;
And when her scissors shear our pate
To batten on the spoils of Fate.





THE GUIDE-POST.

VAINLY, unlettered youth, you come
And scrutinise each painted word,
No aid those arms all fixed and dumb,
To your perplexity afford.

God's ministers life's guide-posts are,
And to the people roundly tell
At each cross road and thoroughfare,
The track to Heaven, the ways to Hell.
Still more, they purge the darkened mind
With helping hands and tongues of fire ;
What boots the guide-post to the blind,
Or paralytic in the mire ?



THE WAYSIDE MONITOR.

To one of Nature's loving tricks
Chance lent a solemn power,
A skull beneath a crucifix
Upheld a shining flower.
This by the road a traveller saw,
And wondering could not chuse
But nearer still and nearer draw,
In silence then to muse.
To faith he owned with bated breath
An emblematic call ;
Life blooming in the jaws of death,
And Jesus over all.

THE BOOMERANG.

ON isles within a distant zone,
Where bows are slighted or unknown,
Of toughest wood they say is made
A missile with a curving blade,
Which at an angle cleaves the air,
And smites its victim unaware.
But, should a hand unskilful throw,
It works an unexpected woe,
Swift on its owner whirling back
Like levin on its deadly track.
So from malicious lips slung forth,
False words of calumny or wrath
Recoil upon the utterer's heart,
Inflicting with remorseful dart
The festering wound, so slow to heal
In breasts that are not brass or steel.





THE WRONG PLACE.

FRIEND Colin reared his country seat
Close to a group of noble trees,
He blessed their shadows in the heat,
He blessed their music in the breeze.

Grown old and sere, he dreads their fall,
'Tis safety waging war with taste ;
He cries, " Down with them one and all,
Were never wych elms so misplaced."

So they who neither thought nor planned
Hold for secure some transient good,
And having built upon the sand,
Declain against the wind and flood.

THE WRONG TIME.

SOME indiscreet Abderite boys
Within a limpet's hollow,
Offer'd in laurel-juice blue flies
As victims to Apollo.

The god appeased will bless, they thought,
Our tasks of prose and rhyme ;
So they the fitting insects caught,
But lost the fitting time.

When Pedagogue their progress tries,
Nor finds the lesson done,
In vain they plead the sacrifice,
He whips them every one.



TRAVELLING FOR EXCITEMENT.

I HEARD the great gorilla roar,
My icy blood did curdling creep,
Astride the Erymanthian boar,
The brute came crashing through my sleep.

I woke, and there all fleecy white,
My dainty dog in sunshine played,
His feathery paw, which caused the fright,
Upon my bosom gently laid.

“Thank heaven,” I gasped, and quivering cried,
For still the roaring shook my ear,
“Why seek Gaboona’s deadly tide,
When I can thrill in safety here?”





THE HAWSER.

We saw a crew in bygone years
Bear out a hawser long and good,
Which to the tune of mighty cheers
That stirred our hearts and stunned our ears,
Drew forth a barque from shoal and mud.

Large-hearted love thus flies to save
Some victim of life's treacherous sea,
From the oppressor's deadly cave,
From calumny's o'erwhelming wave,
Or sordid sink of poverty.



TRAINED CORMORANTS.

THESE cormorants bear a metal ring,
The channel of their greed to stay,
So trained—they are not taught to sing—
They dive at will and catch and bring,
But cannot gorge the prey.

When orators in their excess
Blab forth what prudence would conceal,
Say, could their partisans wish less
Than for a ring their throats to press,
And throttle half their zeal?





THE BAT.

O PLUMELESS bird, O legless mouse ;
Between the night and day,
Flitting around my summer-house
In quest of insect prey.

In thee a type of man is seen,
Half ape, half angel he,
Hope chases the dim hours between
Blank and eternity.

But when his twilight course is o'er,
Freed from the bestial clay,
Above the angels he shall soar
In everlasting day.





WATERFALL BY THE SEA.

THIS little fountain night and day
So far from all the flowers,
Chants to itself, and flings away
A wealth of diamond showers.

Incessantly without demand,
Here Nature's purest gift
Moistens the unproductive sand,
Or floats the base sea-drift.

So from the living Rock above,
On stony hearts and ears
The message falls of Gospel love,
Where not a fruit appears.

Judge not, O stranger, thus, but know
There many a thirsty fleet
Has filled its casks to overflow,
And found the water sweet.

Though hearts awhile may stony prove,
And fruitless as the main,
God's mingled stream of truth and love
Has never flowed in vain.

THE DYING SWAN.

Host.

TELL me, O pilgrim ! for my soul is stirred,
On what far shore the willing winds prolong
The melody of that imperial bird
Which sings to chill-eared death its only song.

Pilgrim.

Not mine Ogygian secrets to impart ;
But this they said where vague Meander shone,
That only he who hath the poet's heart
May hear the music of the dying swan.



THE PEACOCK.

O PARAGON of feathered grace,
What charms thy neck enfold,
Backed by that glorious orb'd space
Thick starred with eyes of gold.

Though Philomela soothe the night,
'Tis thine to paint the day ;
And each a splendour and delight
Sheds on our earthly way.

So in thy beauty I rejoice,
Nor flout thy tuneless cries ;
Peacocks with Philomela's voice,
Sing but in Paradise.



THE HUNTER.

True Faith.

A ROYAL boon for man's delight
We deem this noble steed,
So great in his enduring might
Of courage, spring, and speed.

And as from coronet to crest
I muse the creature o'er,
There rises freely in my breast
One happy emblem more.
'Tis Faith, the spirit-steed so strong,
God's gift to our poor race,
Which bears the soul of man along
Through duty's arduous chase.
With reason's rein his fervour guide
O soul, he'll carry thee
Safe up the jagged mountain's side
As on the level lea.
Alike to him the morn outspread,
Or midnight on his way,
The fields of light where he was bred
Know neither night nor day.
The floods in vain lift up their voice,
No slough makes him despond ;
His rider smiles at ocean's voice,
And cries, " Beyond ! beyond !"
He leaps with a sublime delight
O'er æther's flaming zones,
And cheers the rider with the sight
Of Heaven and all its thrones.

Best at the last, he knows not death ;
And when the chase is o'er,
Changes the simple name of " Faith"
To " Joy for evermore."



THE RACER.

WHILE to the racer swift and strong,
Inexorable fate
Assigns the weight, the spur, the thong,
The choking struggle sharp and long,
The owner wins the plate.

Falls to the hind rasped down by toil,
And prematurely old,
The scanty dole his only spoil
From lifelong battle with the soil,
The master wins the gold.

Now comes a crying through the air,
The peasant's righteous call ;
Lords of the land in liberal care
Earth's profit with the workers share,
And we'll be winners all.



THE SYBARITES.

Valour, not ornament, Wins the life tournament.

THE silken Sybarites, we know,
In their superfluous elegance,
To measured music, swift or slow,
Had trained their battle steeds to dance.

'Twas thus they fell before the flutes
Of that sagacious Spartan crew,
For with the caracoling brutes
What could such dainty riders do?

O tutors! nerve your pupils' hearts
With energy for strenuous deeds,
Or all your sciences and arts
May prove but Sybaritic steeds.





FRANCIS PERRIER THE ENGRAVER.

With our needs change our deeds.

THAT coinless youth who left his home
Was wealthy in an ardent soul,
For, failing other ways to Rome,
He led the blind and shared his dole.

But when the guidance reached its end,
The sacred seat of art and fame,
His skilful burin stood his friend,
And won him competence and name.

He leads no more the poor and blind,
His walk in life is altered quite ;
The rich he guides to art refined,
And caters for the keenest sight.



ROME.

THREE symbols in one sketch combine
The charms, O Rome, we find in thee,
The dome, the monument, the pine,
Nature, and Art, and Memory.





THEODORIC.

“Conscience makes cowards of us all.”

A TALE grotesque in old-world story read
Of conscience in its dread fantastic force,
Tells at a banquet how a fish's head
Wrought in the tyrant an insane remorse.

For great Theodoric with blood imbrued,
Blood of the guiltless, was to death struck down,
When in the dull-eyed sturgeon's face he viewed
Stark murdered Symmachus' avenging frown.



SOCIAL LIFE A PICNIC.

By many an image, saint and sage
Have figured human life ;
A mart, a maze, a pilgrimage,
A race, a battle strife.

And many another he might phrase
Who studies as they pass
The human emmet's social ways,
Through observation's glass.

So in my emblem I compare
Life to that summer feast
Where every guest supplies a share,
The greatest and the least,

In this wide hall which God hath built
And hung with landscapes round,
Whose belted dome at night is gilt
With stars on azure ground.

And here beneath the varying sky,
'Mid meadows, streams, and trees,
I place my motley company
Reclined in summer ease.

In circles set by chance or choice,
Custom, or birth, or creed ;
Yet none so wide but hand or voice
May minister at need.

To live and let live their intent,
And viands interchange,
Piquant, and sweet, and succulent,
The homely and the strange.

Bitters and acids some supply,
And some the loving cup,
While some exhibit wondrously
A zeal for stirring up.

Lo, where apart by fount and rock
Sit lovers all in pairs ;
Here grin buffoons, here cynics mock
Our follies and our cares.

See too the bores, expect no less
From any crowd on earth ;
These teach us patience, we confess,
And give them ample berth.

Now let us range from group to group,
And mingle where we may ;
Let no one scoff, or scorn to stoop,
It is but clay to clay.

Here all may gain, and all rejoice
Beneath the genial law
Proclaimed by Nature's loving voice
From Siam to Loch Awe.

"Mingle," she cries, "a glance, a tone
May play an angel's part,
And serve to pulverise the stone
Which chills the lonely heart."

"Mingle," she cries, "Who loves us best,
Society decreed ;
And inequality the test
Of love in every need."

Here some are grand in gems and silk,
Some grim in ragged grey,
Poor parents bring but "mother's milk,"
And millionaires Tokay.

Some as if empty-handed come ;
Yet with brave sound and show
Add to the brilliance and the hum ;
Life scarce might these forego.
And faithful guests will aye believe
The poor who nought afford,
Welcomed, bring more than they receive,
In blessings from the Lord.

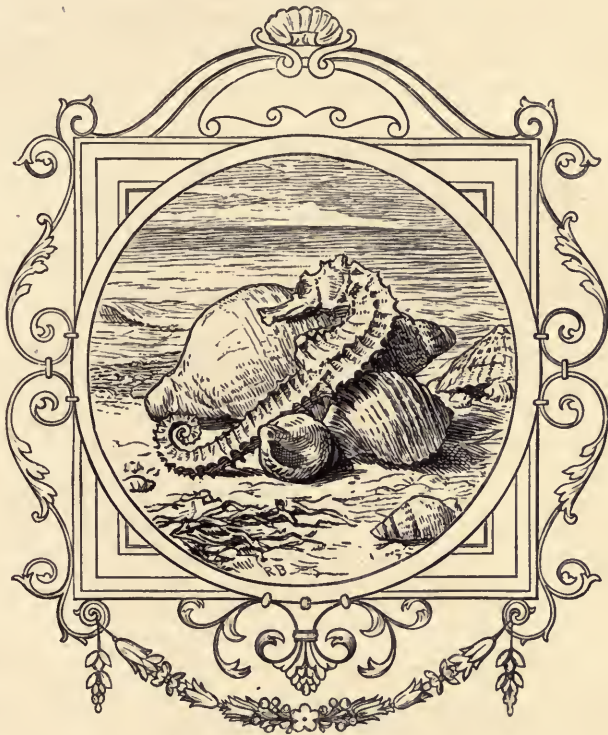
And surely 'twere a godless roll
Whose record should exclude
The hearts that feed the hungry soul
With spiritual food.

The cates that wit and science bring,
Beauty, and art, and joy,
The arms that toil and tongues that sing
Might Homer's lyre employ.

My emblem briefly would express
The wealth of deed and speech
Man brings to man, wherewith to bless
All hearts within their reach,

So they observe as they approve,
The golden rule divine,
His sacramental law of Love
Who blessed the bread and wine.





THE HIPPOCAMPUS, OR SEA-HORSE.

SEA minnow this with pony's crest,
Just one of Amphitrite's toys,
With which her Nereids coax to rest
The little stormy Triton boys ;

In truth, a tiny twisted thing
Which cast upon that golden shore
The dark-eyed boys to strangers bring
Where sang Parthenope of yore.

Device befitting sculptured page
Quaintly with whiffs of song entwined,
Waif from the ebbing tide of age,
A Hippocampus of the mind,

Which seeks from out the old and new,
A happy cento to compile,
Whose signs and words around may strew
The soothing of a quiet smile.

Now in the fish some hearts may claim
A symbol ever dear to us ;
And some the pony pet, though lame,
A little mule of Pegasus.

Then haste, thou atom of a book,
To young and old with cheery call ;
In town, or train, or pastoral nook,
Thy message has a word for all.



BIVALVES







BIVALVES.

ABSTINENCE AND TEMPERANCE.

PROUD Abstinance the gifts of Heaven denies ;
But Temperance the Giver justifies.

AFFECTATION AND RUDENESS.

Affected manners irritate we know,
But rudeness hurts us like a clumsy blow.

ALMSGIVING.

Deny yourself how much let no one see ;
God loves a secret costly charity.

ARCHITECT.

O Architect ! beware how you begin :
Who founds in error elevates a sin.

ART.

When Genius took fair Nature to his heart,
She bore a daughter, and her name is Art.

ART.

Five powers combine for Art's successful course :
Truth, beauty, passion, unity, and force.

BEAUTY.

A stream to feed love, joy, and wonder given ;
It blesses Earth, but springs and ends in Heaven.

BOOKS.

Books I prefer, for when not to my mind,
I shut them up ; not so with human kind.

CANDOUR.

You speak out what you think, I hear you boast ;
To think out what you speak would profit most.

CANDOUR.

You always speak your mind ; then cautious be ;
No mind from prejudice is always free.

CERTAIN PREACHERS.

He preaches like those thorn trees which men say
Pierce to the quick, and hold you half the day.

CHRISTIAN LOVE.

A loving nature is a lovely prize,
But Christian love all nature beautifies.

COMMUNISM.

Equalise all men ! let a year go round,
And where will your equality be found ?

COMPARISON OF POETS.

Comparison of poets nought avails :
Eagles with pards, gazelles with nightingales !

CONTROVERSIALIST'S USE OF THE BIBLE.

An armourer's store they make the Book ; O scandal !
Where each may find a blade to suit his handle.

COWARDICE.

Alone, the coward is his shadow's slave :
Spectators make the vain enact the brave.

CRITICISM.

Truth, taste, and learning, twine the living three,
And thou, O critic, shalt my Hermes be.

DELUSION.

For seven years only will this world be seen,
Says one ; but hires a mansion for fourteen.

DETRACTION.

Like a bad habit oft this vice prevails,
Some nibble characters as some their nails.

DIFFERENCE IN JUDGING OTHERS.

The bad condemn with savagery and sneer,
The good arraign in sorrow and in fear.

DREAMS.

Sleep hath drugged Reason ; Fancy Memory weds ;
Lo, the wild offspring with a hundred heads.

DUTY TO GOD.

What frenzy dreams of an unpunctual sun ?
Lord, as in Heaven, on Earth Thy Will be done.

EARTH.

To him who sets on earth his only care,
Life is idolatry, and Death despair.

ELEVATED NONENTITY.

Through all these years attendance thus to dance,
To gain a public insignificance !

ENTHUSIASTS.

But for such flight, although it frantic seems,
Spirits would crawl ; no mean without extremes.

EXPERIENCE.

The hard-won fruit of failure and of sorrow,
The wisdom many buy, but few will borrow.

FACTS AND IDEAS.

We cherish our ideas like hot-house flowers,
Fact, stubborn ass, breaks in and all devours.

FACTS AND IMAGINATION.

In facts amassed a world chaotic lies,
Imagination bids the Kosmos rise.

FAITH.

Faith prays more fervently for love than light ;
Love's voice will guide to Heaven though all be night.

FAITH WITHOUT LOVE.

Who loveless faith imbibes, that devil's drink,
Makes life a mad-house, death a fiery sink.

FAITH AND REASON.

Reason, God's revelation shows to Faith,
Faith, Reason arms for sorrow or for death.

FAITH'S EFFECT.

Pierced hearts by faith may light and cheerful be ;
Pure gold admits the finest filigree.

FEAR OF PEDANTRY.

Scared by the name of pedant, many flee
Into pert slang or tedious levity.

FIRE-EATER.

The roar of cannon-balls delights his ears,
To him it is the music of the spheres.

FOOLHARDINESS.

Take sense away and men won't dare the less,
But courage then we call foolhardiness.

FRIENDSHIP.

Scan not a friend with microscopic glass ;
You know his faults, then let his foibles pass.

GENIUS

Draws like Prometheus from the heavenly hearth
Creative fire that glorifies our earth.

GENIUS AND TALENT.

This, Talent reproduces to a turn,
Brightly it shines, but ah ! it will not burn.

HALF BETTER THAN THE WHOLE.

Share happy fortune with thy friend, my soul,
So shall thy half be better than the whole.

HAPPINESS.

Isle of our hopes beyond the sea of tears,
Reefed round with sin and woe, delays and fears.

HEARTLESS FUN.

Her rattling mouth-peals yield me no delight,
She laughs but with her teeth, and means to bite.

HISTORY.

Fragments of fact mosaic-like combined,
All toned and tinted to the artist's mind.

IGNORANT ANTAGONISM.

Wise opposition challenges advance,
But we recoil from arguing ignorance.

ILL-NATURED SATIRE.

It wears away all love this trenchant art ;
Whittling with keen-edged wit the hearer's heart.

IMPARTIALITY.

Justice is easy, barring love or grudge ;
But to thyself, that proves the righteous judge.

IMPENITENT TEARS.

'Tis not for sin he droops his tearful eye,
'Tis not for sin, but the discovery.

INCONSTANCY.

From love to love the heart inconstant veers
As passion fills the sail, and fancy steers.

INJUDICIOUS PRAISE OF A PICTURE.

He praised the scarlet cap ; this vexed my soul.
To praise a portion thus—condemns the whole.

JEALOUSY.

Strange freak of selfishness which fiends approve,
With love intoxicate it murders love.

JOKING.

Join in his joke against himself and friends,
But do so mildly or your friendship ends.

JUST AND GENEROUS.

Art just? be more—be generous all the while;
Dost give? give quickly with a loving smile.

LIFE.

Life is a task which takes a life to know;
How it is learnt another life must show.

LIFE.

Life is a long enigma; true, my friend;
Read on, read on, the answer's at the end.

LIFE'S GARDEN.

Life's garden tilled with toil and tears we see;
No Paradise, sometimes Gethsemane.

LIGHT AND SHADE.

He never marked the sunshine on his track,
Till from the chilly shadows he looked back.

LITERARY QUARRELS.

Hard thrusts and ink shed mark the scribbler's strife,
Charge, counter-charge, war to the paper-knife.

LIMPNESS.

Your feeble minds and self-indulgent wills,
Are patients ready to gulp Satan's pills.

LOVE.

Let not Love sleep cocoon-like, self-infurled,
Spin the fair silk, O man, and clothe the world.

LOVE THE TYRANT.

Sweet playfellow is Love, but let him rule,
A tyrant he becomes, and you his fool.

LOVE AND TRUTH.

Love without Truth is but a bubble fair ;
Burst through the glitter, and your joy is air.

MAN'S VIEW OF PROVIDENCE.

What suits their turn is providential all ;
That which does not by other names they call.

OBSCURE SPECULATION.

If "fools rush in where angels fear to tread,"
When wise men follow what is to be said ?

ORIGINALITY.

A dexterous following is admired by all,
But few dare praise the brave original.

PAINTERS.

Painters are men, and haply Claude and Titian
Discussed as we brown pink, and composition.

PEACE AND WAR.

Broken is many a heart by war accurst ;
Some think by peace and plenty they would burst.

POINT OF VIEW.

He views all subjects from one point alone ;
Need it be said that point is just his own ?

PRE-RAFFAELITES.

Make to the whole subservient every part ;
Your piecemeal excellence shows skill not art.

PRIDE.

"I have no pride, not I," the donkey cries ;
"What can an ass be proud of?" fox replies.

PRIDE IN SMALL MATTERS.

"How splendidly I milk !" you make me laugh ;
Who milks a cow the best must be a calf !

PROOF OF WORTH.

Slight not the world, but still console thy breast
When those esteem thee most who know thee best.

RECRIMINATION.

Do not recriminate ; that biting strain
Backward and forward will saw love in twain.

SCHOLARSHIP.

For scholarship few read, not one in twenty ;
But make it Fellowship, and you'll find plenty.

SCRIPTURE AND PRIDE.

Who weighs his worth by God's eternal word
Finds pride a curse, and vanity absurd.

SELF.

On your own merits to descant be shy,
Or false, or true, the end is vanity.

SELF-LOVE.

Monimia's constancy we all must feel,
She loves herself, and is as true as steel.

SHAKSPEARE AND MILTON.

A lofty Christian shrine our Milton is,
But Shakspeare is the world's metropolis.

SLOW WIFE AND FAST HUSBAND.

On his wild ways as calmly smileth she,
As the May moon upon a roaring sea.

SORROW.

Sorrow's dark storm he blesses through all years
Who finds the priceless pearl among his tears.

TENNYSON AND PETRARCH.

Love's laureate crown Italian Petrarch won ;
Friendship's we twine for British Tennyson.

TERROR.

The quivering flesh ignores the will's control,
Unnerved beneath the palsy of the soul.

THE EPIGRAM.

Who for an epigram would try, nor fail,
Puts Attic salt upon his verse's tail.

THE MOROSE MAN

Carries within his heart a little hell,
And all his phrases of the sulphur smell.

THE PROUD MAN

Failing to rule shuts up his swelling breast ;
Himself he cannot please, and scorns the rest.

THE VAIN MAN

Craves to seem first in matters great or small ;
Always, in short, to be admired of all.

THE LIKENESS BETWEEN THEM.

In this at least the proud and vain agree ;
Each in his heart cries, " Fall and worship me !"

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM.

This, praise devoureth howsoe'er exprest,
This, starves in sullen fast denied the best.

TO A TEAR.

O symbol dubious of mirth or woe !
Is't wit, or grief, or onions makes you flow ?

TRUTH AND LOVE.

Truth without Love its mark must often miss,
It gives a cuff when you expect a kiss.

WAR.

Thousands on distant fields endure and die ;
Thousands at home can give no reason why.

WEAK AND STRONG.

Some by the strength of others keep alive ;
But full as many on their weakness thrive.

WISDOM.

Queen of all knowledge, thou, in every age !
Science thy counsellor, and Art thy page.

WIT AND HUMOUR.

Wit from the mind, and Humour from the mode,
And each helps Mirth to cheer life's weary road.

WIT, HUMOUR, AND COMEDY.

Humour is mode and form, Wit thought and sprite ;
Both to combine is Comedy's delight.

WIT, BEAUTY, AND PRONUNCIATION.

Like Cupid's bow her vermeil lip she bends,
And with a twang her flashing wit descends.

WOMAN LOVES MAN OF RENOWN.

Dearer his name than beauty, youth, and pelf ;
She'd be his Fame, and blow the trump herself.

YOUTH AND AGE.

About the world Youth loves to peer and cruise,
About the world Age loves to hear and muse.



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