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UDIA PROCULA
and Other Verses

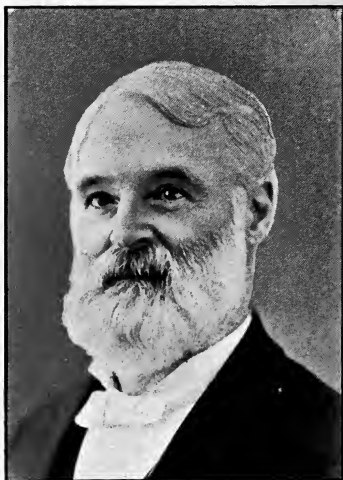


Archibald A. E. Taylor

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The Author
A. A. Taylor

March 1899.





Claudia Procula
and Other Verses



By ARCHIBALD A. E. TAYLOR

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1869

Received of the
Hon. Secy of the
Treasury
the sum of \$1000
for the purchase of
land in the
District of Columbia
for the use of the
Department of the
Interior
This receipt is
not valid unless
it is countersigned
by the Secretary
of the Treasury
and the Secretary
of the Interior
Witness my hand
at Washington
this 1st day of
January 1869

Religious

Claudia Procula,

or

The Dream of Pilate's Wife.

THE waning light of the full paschal moon
Fell like a plaintive requiem, on the
walls
And silent streets of doomed Jerusa-
lem.

Faint streaks of dawn crept over Gilead's heights;
The breath of Spring rose fresh upon the slopes
Of Olivet; sweet birds sang joyous in
The olive groves of sad Gethsemane,
And on the branching palms of Kedron's vale,
Where flowers smiled above the verdant sod.
All earth lay calm and beauteous, but alas!
What reeked the Spring, or bird, or flower, for
Him
Who groaned beneath the sorrows of the world!

Within their council chamber sat High Priest
And Pharisee, with Scribes and Lawyers grave,—
The Sanhedrin, or sacred Senators,
The Seventy who ruled Judea's realm,
Subordinate unto the rod of Rome.

The name is either "Procula" or "Procla."

Before them stood, rejected, mocked and scorned,
The patient Nazarene, a prisoner bound;—
In God's own holy name the Son of God
Condemned, who claimed to be Messiah, King.
Yet death was held a penalty reserved
By conqueror hands for Roman signature,
In token of supreme control. And thus
Before the Eagle must the Lion cringe,
And unto Pilate's seat Judea's court
Resort, for sanction of its false decree.

The quiet streets grew boisterous as the mob
Attendant on the obsequious Senate ranks,
Betook themselves to Herod's palace, where
Amid resplendent show and vanities,
The Governor was lodged and held assize.
Before his gates tumultous, the throng
Loud clamored, nor would deign to entrance
make,
Lest they in Gentile walls should stand defiled,
And thus by holy law, debarred the feast.
Oh! hypocrites, with blood-stained hands and
hearts,
To halt and parley lest their feet be soiled.

Awaked from burdened slumber and enraged,
Now Pontius Pilate, Procurator proud
Of all Judea and Samaria, gruff,
Severe, a veritable Roman knight,
Full conscious of the prowess, martial fame,
And dignity of rich, imperial Rome,—
Responded to the untimely summons sent.
Forth from his door unto the judgment-seat
He passed, and on the tessellated pave,
Fixed high above their heads, in curule chair
Sat down, and sullen bade them urge their cause.

With outcry harsh and frenzied hate and rage,
Where turbulence like some mad billow rolled,
They charge their captive with seditious speech
As claimant to the throne of David's race.
The threat that He their temple would destroy,
They hold disloyalty and crime confessed.
"A peace disturber and fanatic foe
"Of Rome and Israel," they fiercely cry.
Before him bowed, unmoved, the suffering Christ,
With royal grace, a monarch in disguise.

By mystery of the unwonted interview
His superstitious terrors all aroused,
Into the inner hall the ruler led
The way, that he might secret session hold,
And learn what charge could justly be preferred
Against this victim of hot Jewish zeal.
Perplexed and wondering, over-awed, afraid,
Aside from all the clamorous multitude,
The legate of the Tiber conference holds
With his mysterious prisoner, silent, calm,
Who claimed to be a king without a crown,
Or sceptre, or prerogative of earth.

The pride of military, Pagan Rome
Confronted there the greater majesty
Of Him who holds all power in heaven, on earth.
Serenely Jesus stood and viewed His judge,
Himself the Judge before whose bench all kings
And magistrates shall stand arraigned. Yet now
He condescends to take the criminal's place,
And under Pontius Pilate, suffer death.
But still no fault, in Him, the Roman finds,
Who stands arrayed in robe of innocence.

Then forth stern Pilate strode and sat again
Upon the seat without; when lo! attired
In livery of the Herod house, a page
Drew near, and stealing to the Ruler's side
Into his hand an ivory tablet thrust,
With characters in woman's script inscribed.
Unto the lines one moment's glance he gave,
Then trembling, while his cheek grew pale,
He thrust them in the bosom of his robe,
And bowed his head in contemplative thought.

These were the words upon the disc outlined:—
"Most noble Pilate, Claudia Procula,
"Thy wife, her anxious greeting sends, and prays
"Her lord, have nothing thou to do with that
"Just man of Galilee, a seer inspired
"And mighty king of miracles; for I
"This day have suffered many things because
"Of Him, and of a dream that haunts my soul."
The message this that gentle Procla sent;
As if a dream of superstitious spouse,
By visions of the murky night disturbed,
Admitted evidence should stand beside
The facts, with one on trial for his life.

Yet much the world hath wondered what that
dream
Might be, that taught her heart the Lord to know.
For surely angels speak to us in dreams,
And whisper secrets plain to them, but hid
Beyond the range of our poor, earth-born ken.

A famous painter once, himself inspired
By dreams perchance, his genius bent to limn
On canvas, and in colors chaste and rare,
That dream of Procula.

A stairway broad,
Of marble deftly wrought and white as snow,
With columns high, winds up the stately hall
Of Herod's palace, wherein Pilate lodged.
The feeble light of Grecian lamps around
The space their lustre shed, like twilight glow.
Amid this fairy scene, a matron form
In richest costume of the day enrobed,
Of noble aspect, gentle, courtly mien,
And radiance rare to look upon—a queen
Of grace and beauty,—on the staircase halts,
With something of the hauteur of her race,
Deep-wrapped in meditation, like some nymph
Uplifted in a trance, she clasps her robe,
Arrested in her movement by her mood,
As though her sandaled feet were dreaming too,
And gazes pensively into the air,
The while she listens to some fancied tread
Invisible. Behind her, like a cloud
In hazy outline faint, an angel form
With folded wings, on tiptoe, glancing o'er
Her shoulder leans; with soft solicitude
Into her startled ear, a whispered word—
A secret caution, breathes; while overhead
His hand outstretched, a benison distils
As if to wreath a favorite of heaven.

Such was the pictured dream of Procula,
And these the words divine that thrilled her soul,
Set underneath by dash of artist brush:—

“A GOOD MAN AND A JUST, THE NAZARENE!”

Oh! blessed dreamer she who dreams the truth,
And hears through seraph lips, the voice of God.

A faithful wife one's second conscience is;
And happy he who gains the insight keen,

That instinct wise and judgment just and true,
Of one from prejudice set free, and bent
Of wayward will and warp of tastes depraved,
A good wife from the Lord to Pilate sent,
Was like an angel bending from the skies,
Whose hint unheeded, doomed to infamy,
And endless scorn, the hated Pilate name.

Tradition tells that Procla was of late
A proselyte, who to Jehovah gave
Her heart; who heard the fame of Mary's son;
In secret a disciple, followed Him,
And held Him just, and righteous and of God;
One who in after days His love confessed.
Among its saints her name the Greek church
writes,

As surely God hath writ her name in heaven.
For this we know, that only she of all
The world a warning sign and earnest plea
In His behalf did venture, when our Lord
Stood charged and bleeding at the civil bar
Where only execution might be stayed.

Oh! blessed woman! "Last at cross, and first
At sepulchre"; who bore and nourished Christ;
Who followed Him in all his weary steps;
Who spilled the box of spikenard on his feet,
And made her hair the napkin of her love;
Who gave Him hid retreat at Bethany,
And washed away His sorrows with her tears;
Who fragrant spices for His burial brought,
And saw Him risen with the angels near;
Alone thy prayer at the Praetorium heard,
His innocence defends, for justice speaks,
And throbs in sympathy and tearful grief,
When His forced footsteps turned to Golgotha.

Found Sleeping.

"Lest coming suddenly, He find you sleeping."

I was sleeping
When suddenly the Master came !
All day long I had been keeping
Holiday, with an idle heart,
Blessed in a thankful restfulness.

The week had done its weary part,
And the message for the Holy Day
Was writ, and laid aside with prayer ;
And, strange enough to tell,
This was the text, resolved with care ;—
"Behold ! I stand and knock."

Ah ! little did I deem it meant myself,
And at my door the shock
Of stranger feet and unfamiliar raps should fall.
And so in the sweet, calm eventide,
When Nature folded all her hands,
Lifting her myriad eyes to heaven—a bride
Long tarrying for the bridegroom's brow—
"The whole creation groans together until now"—
I laid me down to rest, with all
My Maker's trustful handiwork, and slept,
Waiting to waken at the Sabbath's call.

There was no dream, no dread, through all the night.
He gave me no presentiment
That His footsteps were nigh, or that He might
Salute me e'er the night were spent.
And so it fell that I was sleeping
When the Master came!

He came when the soft dawn stole, creeping
Silently up the East,
And quite as gently stepped.
At first a thrill, whose pain increased,
Broke the slumber ;
And straight a growing number
Of pangs, fast ripening to agonies,
Wracked this wretched frame,
And emptied out my soul in sighs !
Then, as for hours small respite came,
While mortal strength fast fled,
This feeble pulse faltered,
As one who beats a requiem for the dead.
Ah ! now the look of life was altered,—
For it was the Master's knock, they said.

Yet soon upon my misty sight
Rose th' entrancing light
Of His royal face.
There was no wrath in it, nor terror,
Only grace—exceeding grace.
And this He seemed to say :—
“ Behold ! I stand and knock,
But enter not today ;
Another day I shall come in.
Return to live more earnestly :
Return to speak more faithfully
To those who die, yet live,
To those who live, yet die ;
The Story of the Cross still give
And of the Crown and Victory ;
And be thou ever ready,
Lest, coming suddenly,
I find thee sleeping.”

The quiet tones did scarcely cease
When came relief, and a strange, sweet peace,
And I knew that He was gone,
And to my life a longer lease,
The threatened limit to earth's race withdrawn.

Now, therefore, Master, help me wake—
Help me to toil
For periled souls and for Thy sake ;
Oh ! quicken me to watch and pray ;
Thus day by day,
To stand as in the vestibule
Of that grand shrine, where Thou dost rule .
The Sanctified :
Where breaketh
No sea, nor lurketh sin, nor death ;
Where no heart acheth.

And ever while I draw my waiting breath,
I'll cry, as softly cried
Thy Church, personified
Of yore as the repenting bride :—
“ I sleep, but my heart waketh.”

So coming suddenly, while keeping
Watch for His sake,
He shall not find me sleeping—
But awake !



Greeting the Sun.

DID Xenophon speak true
Among the Persian kings
A curious custom grew,
Devout as it was beautiful.

When morning ribbed with rings
Of light the girdle of the horizon,
The monarch from his couch of wool
And ermine, rose
And reverently put on
The purple robe and crown,
As one who joyful chose
To pay his early orison ;
Then from the palace passing down
He, to his chariot straight
Ascended, by famed chargers drawn,
Sacred, milk-white and swift of feet.

Thus worshipful, alone,
Rode forth the king,
Forgetful of his throne,
From Eastern gate,
To meet his greater Lord, and bring
A kingdom's reverence in royal state.
And as Apollo, mounting, glanced
With blazing eye above the plain,
This sceptered man of clay
Alighted and advanced
Along the broad highway,
With arms adoring on his breast,
To bow and humble service pay.

Brother ! regard this type of truth,
Sweet hint of Nature's light :—
A heathen teaching us, forsooth,
Whose way in error, sheweth us the right !

Great Sun of Righteousness !
Thro' the bleak night of doubt
Pining for Thee, whose rays alone can bless,
I catch no matin shout
" Behold the king—the king cometh."

Mine eyes with tears prevent the dawn ;
For as the sparrow watcheth
Upon the housetop all alone,
And morning light first catcheth,
So bides my heart for thee,
Till I thy glorious vision see.

But when bright morn seems like to break,
And spangled banners spread their folds
On Sorrow's loftiest mountain peak,—
Faith's standard flung o'er sin's strong holds—
Then leaps my love from night's despair
Into its chariot-heart, and hastes
With consecrated steeds of sense,
To drive thro' gates of darkness, where
His beams of greeting to dispense
My monarch rides across the wastes.

And when at length thy radiance pours
Its blessing on my soul that waits,
Entranced I cry :—
" Unfold ye everlasting doors,
Lift up your heads, ye gates ;—
For lo ! on high,
To fill our sky,
Above the mountain-tops of sin,
The King of Glory shall come in."

Thus prone before that Sun divine,
My spirit homage brings,
Who comes when night is done, to shine
With healing in His wings !

The Widow's Mites.

THE chest of tribute in the temple stood
While Jesus and the Twelve sat opposite.
Now hither strides a lordly Pharisee,
High-headed, grand, with garments plucked
aside,
Phylactered, complacent in the thought
How God would smile to note his liberal alms.

As one who dares to patronize high heaven,
With jingling haste he sweeps his talents in,
And cries :—"Take tithes of all that I possess ;
Twice in the week I fast. Thanks be to God
That I am not as other men, unjust."
But as he passed, the Master's searching glance
That followed swiftly, would have smitten through
An armor less complete than saintly steel.
And so he sauntered out, self-worshipping,
But offering tithes to heaven for compromise.

Thereafter stole a woman, meek, obscure,
Whose mean attire marked her lowly life ;—
A widow comforted, since by the hand
A barefoot boy, she drew, whose lagging eyes
Drank in the wonders of the temple wealth ;
A mother's burden, yet a treasure far
Outstripping mines of Pharisaic gold.

One anxious glance upon the lad she threw,
Slow from her girdle drew the mites—two mites,
One for herself and one for love of him—
And dropped them noiseless in the chest ;
Then forcing back the threatening tear, low bent
Her head and sighed ;—"Give us this day our bread."
With faith she paid the price to God in hope
For food, but clasping tight the little hand.

The loving words of Christ immortalized
This sacrifice ; though dead she speaketh yet.
And thus she passed, unconscious of the Lord,
While with her went the blessing evermore.

The Pharisee and widow differed thus :—
He paid a tithe but took it back in pride
Of giving, while he paid to God no love ;
He held an open hand,—a bolted heart.
The widow gave her living—gave her heart ;
These her two mites.

“ She, of her penury
Hath cast in more than all.” The chest was filled.



Daybreak.

FOUR heart-sick watchers, by our fading father's
side,
Sat out the murky, sorrow-breeding night ;
We waiting prayerfully the flow of morning
tide,
But he, some glimpse of Heaven's unfading light.

At length his Day-Star rose, and glory lit his face
With radiant beams, whose splendors still increased ;
And as he soared, transfigured, to God's holy place,
Lo ! sunlight kindled in our mournful East.



Aspiration.



H! how this wasting spirit faints
With thirst for things divine ;
Deep cravings nought may satisfy,
But draughts of Christ's new wine.

And yet earth's master appetites
Exhaust their utmost art,
With shrivelled husks of sin, to feed
This prodigal—my heart.

Might I aspire Thy will to do,
As now they tempt to stray,
My winged feet should shape their course
Straight up the King's highway.

Dear Saviour, slay each flesh-born taste,
Destroy these grovelling aims ;
'Till on the altar of my life
Burn only holy flames.

Lift Thou my trembling, learning faith
Beyond this dome of blue,
And wide before its clay-touched eyes,
Spread some assuring view.

Show me Thyself upon the throne. —
I've loved Thee on the tree ;
The plait of thorns I know, but now
I would Thy true crown see.

Oh ! let the song the ransomed sing,
Come ringing through the gates ;
For long and weary wears the day,
To him who far off waits.

At least, O Lord, with radiant light,
Thine image here impressed,
Let me the wedding garment wear,
A welcome, chosen guest.

Then loving Thee, and like to Thee,
My soul with peace shall beam,
As once the face of Moses shone,—
And earth fade, like a dream.



Storm-spent.

THE clouded azure of his child-heart eyes
Grew big with rain and black with tempest
fears.
A mother's kiss!—the rainbow crowned his
skies;—
Lo! heaven's sunshine radiant on earth's tears.



Sunrise.

THE sun hath risen! hath risen!—At midnight
We feared it never more could rise;
The heartache so profound, our hid sight
Despaired of resurrected skies.
So faithless we;—our guardian God, so wise!

“The Son of Thine Handmaid.”

BLUE eyes and golden hair ;
Pale cheeks that late were fair ;
Two years ago a bride,
Tonight swept out on the tide,
Drifting fast to the farther side.

Her babe upon her breast—
Sweet birdling in soft nest—
O'er whose unconsciousness
She lifts her hand as to bless,
While her lips whisper tenderness.

And these the words she said :—
“The son of Thine handmaid,
“O Jesus, let him be,
“But a messenger for Thee,
“And I lay me down peacefully.”

The son of Thine handmaid
Am I, for whom she prayed ;
O Lord, regard her tears,
For now through these three score years,
Have I struggled midst foes and fears.

And while I preach the Word,
Is not her praying heard,
Her soul's outcry answered?
Ah ! let me stand afraid,
Lest from Thy path I have strayed,
Save the son, Lord, of Thine handmaid.

My One Song.



RIGHT I but sing one saintly song
That would not fade out on the air,
I'd count it monument more proud,
Than fane e'er built for brave or fair.

One little song that still should sing,
When I sleep 'neath the violet roots ;—
Still echoing on from age to age,
Like music of celestial flutes.

It would not be a chant of mirth,
For idling minds in merry mood ;—
No trivial glee for trifling souls,
That sound no depths in solitude.

Nor should it be a dirge, to wail
O'er barren hopes or blighted love ;—
No requiem that with staid despair,
Laments what may be healed above.

I'd sing me just some gentle strain,
Sweet Peace herself with nature's art,
Would softly hum in dreamy frame,
And breathe in mine own ear apart.

My song should sing of His dear name,
Whose love changed life to love for me ;
A song in hearing which, the world
His life with mine entwined could see.

So glad with gratitude and grace,
I'd make my one undying song,
That men my rhyme would read and cry :—
"The Master's love is deep and strong."

In the Night Watches.

AMID the watches of the night startled, I wake ;
Some gentle touch hath stirred and quick-
ened me.

Was it the passing brush of incorporeal wing ?
An immaterial finger's weight ? the breath
Of some low-swooping spirit, on my burning cheek ?

Sweet Guardian Angel, art thou hovering near ?
What blessed message, therefore beareth thou from
Him

On whom my soul is fixed ? Pray hath His heart
Still left one little nook for poor unworthy me ?
Doth Jesus still my prayer regard,—call me
His own ? Still doth He intercede for erring me ?
Assure me of His love, and rest is near.
If He is mine and I am His, no dread I'll know ;
Then may I close my lids in peace and dream.
Wilt tell Him this, thou Ministering One ? Wilt bear
Aloft my vows renewed , my life repledged ?

Communing thus with mine own heart upon my bed,
And meditating on His grace, again
I rest, while radiant visions flood my soul with calm ;—
For so He giveth His beloved sleep !



The Vision of Isaiah.

A Christmas Jubilee. Isaiah XI.

SING Peace on Earth ! Good-will to Men !
Sing Peace to Men ! on Earth Good-will !

How the morning stars pipéd jubilees when
Immanuel, King, throned the Bethlehem hill,
And the sons of God shouted together, until
The herdsmen bent low to th' angelic strain,
While valley and peak echoed song and refrain.

The stealthy wolf crept from his lair in the glen,
To dwell with the lambkin by pasture and rill ;
And the child put his hand on the cocatrice' den.
Young lion and fatling together crouched still,
While the lion ate straw with the ox in the pen ;
The leopard drowsed near, and the kid without
fear ;

The cow and the bear in one provender share ;
The sucking child played on the hole of the asp ;—
For Mary her Christ-child did lovingly clasp !

Lo ! the glory to earth swift-returning again ;
They destroy not, nor hurt, in God's holy hill,
Sing Peace on Earth !—Good-will to Men !
Sing Peace to Men ! on Earth Good-will !



The Heavenly Sign.

CHE Roman Emperor above his head
Beheld the cross, a wondrous, flaming sign ;
It filled the heavens with its golden beams,
And made all earth with borrowed glory shine.

Awe-struck and trembling, down upon his knees
Fell that wide-ruling monarch, Constantine,
While on his bent and aching ears there fell
The stern command:—" Go, conquer in this sign."

The mighty legions, mustered in array,
Interpreted the lesson of the light divine,
Forth into battle rushed, with lifted cross,
And fought to conquer in that blessed sign.

The kingdom of our Lord, to win the world,
Goes forth up-bearing this memorial sign :
And when faint, fearful hands delay their toil,
It lifts its cross, O Christ, for strength to thine.

My soul in darkness lay, by sin o'erwhelmed,
Against my life all forces foul combine ;
I raised my drooping heart to view the cross,
And caught the whisper:—" Conquer in this sign."



The Christian Graces.

THERE is a PEACE that like a river flows ;—
Within my heart its placid current glides,
No terror in its mirrored surface hides ;
It is the Peace of heaven—my Lord's repose.

There is a JOY that like the sunset gleams,
When cloudless, droops the day to twilight shades ;
My Joy, unlike yon sunlight never fades,
But radiant glows in pure perpetual beams.

There is a FAITH that like a mountain stands
Unshaken, with the granite depths beneath ;
Nor shock, nor storm, nor lightning from its sheath,
Can stir my spirit, restful in His hands.

There is a HOPE that like an anchor holds,
Whose flukes cling fast on rocks beneath the tides ;
The vessel of my future calmly rides,
Where Eden's harbor safely all enfolds.

There is a LOVE that like a golden field
Awaiting harvest time, serenely stands,
And trembling not, salutes the reaper bands ;—
The Lord, my God, He is my sun and shield.



What is Your Life?

[A lyric for the New Year.]

THE flight of birds,
A rippling stream,
The trail of a falling star ;
A poet's words,
Some twilight dream,
The sail of a ship afar;

Sure **THIS** is time,
And this is life,
The year but a passing tale ;
What hope sublime,
What hero strife,
Lie back of the shadowy veil?

A heaven of grace,
The ransomed throng,
A rainbow around the throne ;
Our Father's face,
With Moses' song,
Where Jesus knoweth his own :

Ah ! **THIS** is time,
And this is life,
The year is no drifting story ;
Its heights sublime,
Its godlike strife,
Emerge in th' infinite glory.

The Stars and the Daisies.

(Child Verses.)

THE stars are tiny daisies high,
Op'ning and shutting in the sky,
While daisies are the stars below,
Twinkling and sparkling as they grow.

The star-buds blossom in the night
And love the Moon's calm, tender light ;
But daisies twinkle in the day,
And watch the strong Sun on his way.

Yon stars are worlds of mighty size,
Peopled perchance with good and wise,—
These daisies but poor fragile weeds,
That live to bloom and cast their seeds.

But stars and daisies, great and small,
Are made and kept in being all,
By Him whose love will run as far
To guard a daisy, as a star.

Know then that angels in the sky,
And weak earth children, born to die,
Are precious both, in His dear sight,
With whom alike are day and night.



Miscellaneous

A Child's Grave at Arlington.

WHERE full in view the towering, solemn
dome,
Proclaims afar pure Freedom's palace-
home ;

Where slow Potomac's tide with noiseless waves,
Creeps low beneath twelve thousand soldier graves ;
Where Arlington with proud, majestic Heights,
Received their slain from scores of frenzied fights,
There treading tenderly, with hearts oppressed,
A Captain's treasured babe we bore to rest.

Around, with mournful rows of gentle mounds,
Like weary flocks reclining o'er their grounds,
Wide acres, decked with fadeless honors wait,
Till God's own porter swing the iron gate.
But Oh ! to lay one lonely cherub head,
Amidst whole regiments of warrior dead !
No child companion nestling at her side,
Nor woman's sheltering form from harm to hide.

THEY had come down from stormy fields of gore,
The cannon's stifling smoke and frightful roar ;
Or where in hospital or camp, the moans
Of sick and wounded thrill like spirit tones ;—
SHE—but unclasped from tender, loving arms,
Where never ventured terror's rude alarms,
She—fallen asleep upon the mother breast,
So from the earthly to the heavenly rest.

Yet turn, blind Rachel, to thy distant home
Nor dread to let thy torn heart hither roam.
Amid these tombs no halting sentinel stands,
Nor glitter treacherous weapons in stark hands ;
Alone, above these prostrate ranks arrayed,
Long spirit-columns sweep in grand parades ;—
That glittering host the prophet's servant viewed
Forbids that strife should ever here intrude.

No gentler slumber falls than midst the brave,
Who offered life, the cause they loved to save ;
Here speaks the voice that erst did prophesy ;—
“ The lamb shall with the docile leopards lie ; ”
And when the trump proclaims the rising day,
And these stand marshalled forth in old array ;
When silence breaks its bands and death shall cease,
“ A little child shall lead them ”—up to peace !



Let Us Have Peace!

LET us have Peace! No more of strife
Our stricken hearts may e'er endure;
No wrangling words, no rumors rife,
Nor passions roused to wrath impure;
No wasteful hemorrhage of life,
With ills and griefs time cannot cure;—
LET US HAVE PEACE!

No more let fierce red-handed war,
With torch and terror homes invade;
Nor Sorrow, showing wound and scar,
Lament the ball or flashing blade;
Nor Love 'mid carnage near and far,
Stand weeping while Hate's price is paid;—
LET US HAVE PEACE!

Enough the voice of brother's blood
From Christian ground to heaven hath cried;
Enough in Conflict's purple flood
Columbia's guilty skirts are dyed;
Enough fierce Anger's hateful brood
The hopes of Freedom crucified;—
LET US HAVE PEACE!

Nor in our ears again shall ring
The widow's groan, the orphan cry;
Nor fond affection weeping bring
The wasted prisoner home to die;
Nor solemn requiem brothers sing,
Where youthful limbs unconscious lie;—
LET US HAVE PEACE!

Gen. Grant's celebrated phrase, after the close of the war of Secession.

Our flag, its crimsoned stripes complete,
Shall bid its golden stars shine forth ;
Its sky outspread God's sky to meet,
Entreating peace of heaven for Earth ;
While out its gentle folds to greet,
Shall swarm defenders South and North ;—
LET US HAVE PEACE !

Great God ! Thou sole omniscient guide,
Our steps confirm in wisdom's way ;
Bid rage its huge proportions hide
Perpetuate the Nation's day ;—
Soothe harsh contention's swelling pride,
And grant Thy blessing while we pray ;—
LET US HAVE PEACE !



Uncertainty.

NOW, while December's drowsy minute-hand
Ticks off the failing hours of the year,
Watch, like some sentinel, detailed to stand
Not knowing whether cometh Hope or
Fear,
Or morning bringeth smile or tear.



Ever Do Your Best.

WHENEVER work you have to do,
Yield not to sluggish rest ;
What matter tho' success seem sure,
The work best wrought will best endure ;
To make all thorough and secure ;—
Ever do your best !

Whatever work you have to do,
Go forth with eager zest ;
Plain duty may not pleasant be,
Smooth paths to right men seldom see,
Yet greater far life's victory ;—
Ever do your best !

Whenever work you have to do,
Put courage to the test ;
Tho' foe outnumber friend by far,
Tho' singly you stride forth to war,
Tho' Doubt eclipse Hope's Morning Star ;—
Ever do your best !

Whatever work you have to do,
Stand to your purpose, lest
One faltering all the line may shake,
One falling may the full ranks break,
And thus thy foe the field may take ;—
Ever do your best !

Whenever work you have to do,
Each hindering thought detest ;
No man can fill another's place ;
One for himself must duty face ;
Be true, and trusting to God's grace ;—
Ever do your best !

Whatever work you have to do,
Make not the task a jest ;
True deeds are worth the doing well,
More solemn each than time can tell ;
For soon will toll Life's funeral bell ;—
Ever do your best !



The Sparrow.

THE sparrow, on her sheltered bough,
Dares not the storm or mountain brow ;
She clasps her twig, 'mid darkness round—
No sparrow falleth to the ground.

O lowly soul, with trembling wing,
Earth's sky is not thy sphere to sing.
The lark may soar ! Do thou abide
Where meekness hastes in God to hide.



Clearing Up.

THEY have sent for the West wind to help them
While they chase the storm clouds from
the sky ;
He comes driving their scattered flocks
sternly
And affrighted they go scudding by.

Far too long in our fields you were grazing,
You beloved of the shepherdess Moon :
'Round the peaks of our mountains the daisies
Will be cropped and out-trodden full soon.

Yonder skips a ewe-cloud, with her lambkins
Leaping gaily along at her heel ;
Yonder strides on the patriarch father ;
Do the clouds parent dignity feel ?

Farther down on the Eastern horizon
One bolder than all, takes the lead ;
Fear-stricken the rest follow blindly,
As if children of old Adam's seed.

Heigho ! swift wind, Hesperian drover,
Whither hunt you them down out of sight ?
Move their feet, like the heavenly purpose,
Ever onward, nor once halt for the night ?

When in distant rich pastures they linger,
But to browse and to rest for a day,
Do you press on their tracks thus relentless,
And so hound them, still panting, away ?

Look you northward ! the gayly clad Iris
Now hath thrust in her great scythe to mow ;
For the Sun hath come down to the haying,
And 'twas time for those stray folds to go.

Wait an hour ! God's token hath vanished,
Neither cloud nor the wind may be found ;
And the sky, like a mead freshly watered,
Reacheth down on all sides to the ground.



Exit and Advent.

1898—VALE !

A group of mournful watchers on the strand,
Whose wistful eyes hold fast a ship—
A heavy-laden ship, that speeds from land ;
Its fluttering sails slow rise and dip,
As wafting signals from a waving hand,
A last farewell, to cheer the lingering band.

1899—SALVE !

Lo ! hovering on the blue horizon rim,
A white sheet rises in the sun !
Its dawn the watchers greet, with eyes yet dim.
And joyful leap and shout, as one
Who cries : *The king is dead—long live the king.*
Meanwhile yon sail grows broader while they sing.



Deceitful Snow.

SOME love to greet thee, Snow ;
And when thy chill and pallid pall,
Doth soft and still, like ermine fall,
To cloak Earth's truth and life withal,
Then children dance with gleeful call,
And lovers merry grow.

O ! fair but heartless Snow !
Thy face is mask of sculptured stone,
Whose beauty on the surface grown,
Displays thy charms to sight alone,
While underneath no veins are shown,
Where life's warm currents flow.

Ah ! false and treacherous Snow !
When smiles the Sun with chaste embrace,
Thy fairness melts before his face ;
When hastes the Frost thee to entice,
Then harden all thy flakes to ice,
While fierce thy harsh winds blow.

Too fitful art thou, Snow !
At noon thou dancest gaily down,
Like some sweet maid with dainty gown ;
E'er noon thy robes lie soiled and brown,
Trode neath the feet of all the town ;
Thy virtue failing so.

I do not love thee, Snow !
I fear the arrows in thy breath,
I dread thy touch, the touch of death,
My widowed heart with sighing saith,
When cometh Summer's living wreath,
To hide this wintry woe?

My hopes are like thee, Snow !
Their promise floateth light and fair,
And glist'neth while they hang in air ;
They fill my life with chilling care,
They shroud my soul in still despair,
Then sudden melt—like snow !



The Northern Lights.

A CROSS the heavens there lies a lurid crimson
belt—
Some bloody path of one who doth the
angry wine-press tread ;
Behind the North, fierce fires th' eternal pil-
lars melt,
Whose streamers mount and flash, in rival glories
overhead.

What means this spectral lighting of the frozen pole—
This blazing tumult, flaming through the Midnight's
silent heart?
Is Time fast pressing on to find his final goal?
Hath Life's long tragedy attained its last, millennial
part?

Doth Prophecy her old mysterious silence break?
Shall War now clasp the world in his red cincture of
despair ;
God's glory thrill the skies, till sleeping saints awake?
Oh ! speak your solemn summons, ye strange Por-
tents of the air.

Second Childhood.

Awounded lad lay on the field,
The battle field of death ;
I, crouching low to catch the word
Borne on his parting breath,
Hear : *Now I lay me* ; but no more
The fainting sufferer saith.

With closed eyes he moans in pain,
A moan for every throe ;
Quick tremors flash through all his frame,
When, muttered faint and slow,
I pray Thee Lord, falls on mine ear ;—
Nor thought may further flow.

His empty flask, fast-filled, I press
Close to his parched lips ;
A smile flits o'er his lifted face,
As weariedly he sips ;
But while, *If I should die*, he lisps,
The rest from memory slips.

Scarce breathing now he seems to sleep,
With pulsing sunken cheek,
Exhausting life ebbs like a stream
Hast'ning the gulf to seek ;—
Yet suddenly, *My soul to take*,
He summons strength to speak.

Poor lad, I cry, a mother's prayer
Lived in thy heart of yore ;
A mother's love attends her child
E'en to the farther shore ;—
For Jesus' sake, he gasps aloud,
Then sighs—and breathes no more.

Little Prophets.

(An April idyl.)

THE lilac-buds now burst their bands ;
Poor captives bound in Winter's chains,
They scent the footsteps of the Sun,
And catch the song of joyous rains.

Kindling in saffron, purple, white,
The crocus lifts its timorous flame ;
Come Chemist with thy spectrum test,
Tell whence these royal splendors came.

The green swords of the hyacinth,
Stand guard around their pillared king ;
Rich waxen clusters form his crown,
Whose loyal buds sweet incense bring.

Two honey-bees with trembling wings,
Flew far to sip my flowers today,
Then sank within the velvet bloom,
Too weak to bear their wealth away.

The warm, pure light on sleeping life,
With mild, persuasive vigor falls ;
While frost and snow have fled the fields,
And sped to frigid Arctic halls.

I vowed I'd tangle not my pen,
In tatters of this threadbare theme,
But Spring's soft fevers flush my veins,
And while I muse, they voice my dream.

In Memoriam.

HENRIETTA LEWIS JAMISON.

HER hand is still.—We know that she loved Art;
And Art loved her—its comely veil entwined
About her form and every movement, till
It robed her with artistic grace, and filled
Her atmosphere with pictures of rare charm
And loveliness, to all who marked her steps,
Or strolled within the gallery of her life.

O sweet and saintly soul, whose thoughts and dreams,
Like subtle essence of some fragrant rose,
Exhaled to float in purer realms than earth ;—
The most enduring canvas thou hast wrought
Is not the labor of thy brush.

It is

The penciled outline of thine excellence,
Filled in with dash of tint, and color touch,
From every gentle hue of character,
Where Love and Truth, Resolve and Earnestness,
With Aspiration, Patience, Peace, unite
In portraiture of beauteous womanhood.

And this shall be the picture that we hang
On our heart-walls,—a rare memorial of
The mournful Past,—as we thy name recall.

For the Columbus Art Association.

Twilight by the Sea.

THE tender twilight, like some misty veil,
Falls o'er the face of day ; the sun's red trail
Fades far behind horizon and the hills.
The piping call of the swift-darting whip-
poorwills

Defies the silence that hath seized the birds,
And soothed to rest the slow home-trudging herds.

Out from the lighthouse tower softly streams,
Far off to sea, a pathway of life-saving beams.
Its waves the smoothed main bids gentle music play,
In concert with the dying zephyrs of the day ;
With fairy fingers on the harp-strings of the shore,
They strike the tuneful measures o'er and o'er.

Alone walk forth a man and maid, heart-bound ; to
them

Twilight is not, of one dead day, the painful requiem,
But love's unspoken prophecy of days unborn—
The harbinger of hope for sure-returning morn.

Oh ! thus when sorrows fall, or sufferings throng the
way,

Shall our heart-twilights whisper of the break of day ;
Out o'er life's falling shadows shall our eyes
Watch, with love's searchlight, for the kindling skies ;
For that which breaking hearts call Even-tide,
Is but, of heaven's revolving light, the shaded side.





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