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THE DESTRUCTION OF THE WORLD.

AND OTHER POEMS.



THE  
DESTRUCTION OF THE WORLD.  
AND OTHER POEMS.

BY  
JOHN J. <sup>↓</sup>McGIRR.

*Ars longa, vita brevis.*

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## P R E F A C E .

IT seems to be customary for authors, especially poets, to state that their writings are but the "children of an idle hour," and were not originally intended for publication.

I cannot claim the leniency of the public on this ground, and I wrote with the intention of publication, and hoping to obtain at least a small share of that *ignis fatuus* — fame. If my song seems at times disconnected or inharmonious, I beg the reader to remember the circumstances under which it was written. In my struggle for bread, I am compelled to work from early morn until late at night; so most of my writing was done while "the world was asleep," and when my mind, weary from work and ill health, was not fit for the task laid upon it.

Therefore I beg the reader's charity; and if my work brings me neither wealth nor fame, I shall be content if the perusal of this book shall awaken in one human heart a greater love and respect for the Holy Church.

McKEESPORT, PENN., July 17, 1886.



THE  
DESTRUCTION OF THE WORLD.

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AND now the hour has come, as was foretold  
By Christ our Saviour, in the days of old :  
When earth shall pass away and cease to be,  
And time be swallowed in eternity.  
For many thousand years the world has run  
In the same circuit, as it had begun, —  
The day succeeding night, and night the day,  
While ages rolled so silently away.  
But now, at night, the stars within the skies  
Grow dim, and flicker, as a lamp that dies :  
The moon gives forth a weak and sickly light,  
Which fails to banish the dark shades of night :

And when the morning breaks in eastern sky,  
The birds in welcome give no joyous cry,  
But hushed and silent, and with drooping crest,  
Seemed filled with sorrow, and by fear oppressed.  
And now, when e'en the sun is at his height,  
Dark ominous shadows will obscure his light,  
And long before the hour of day is past,  
The shades of darkness gather thick and fast ;  
The beast of burden, on his weary way,  
Doth start and tremble in the light of day ;  
The savage brutes forsake the field and wood,  
And gather near man's home in search of food.  
And man, the creature of a Father's love,  
For whom the Saviour left his home above, —  
Proud man ! he only of all living things  
Sees not the coming of the King of Kings,  
Hears not upon the wind Jehovali's voice,  
Which tells all slumbering Christians to rejoice ;



For now their night of death shall soon be past,  
And beauteous morning dawn for them at last ;  
Hears not that same great voice, which, to the dead  
Who 've died repentless, speaks with meaning dread --  
That their vile bodies now must join the soul,  
And pass to darkness, their eternal goal.  
Man sees the fading of the moon and stars,  
The bitter famines and the cruel wars ;  
He sees the sun itself grow pale and dim,  
And feels the very earth shake under him :  
Yet scoffs and jeers, and has some specious name,  
Some word of science, to these things explain.  
For since the time when Luther's teaching died,  
The daughters, Infidelity and Pride,  
Outside the Church have ruled with iron rod,  
And men now worship Science as their God.  
The ties, so sacred, of the marriage state  
Are snapped at pleasure, and mankind doth mate

Like beasts, his passions wandering as the wind ;  
No God to govern, and no home to bind.  
The bark of Peter only as of yore  
Sails steady onward, midst the tempests' roar ;  
Her beacon star of truth gleams fair and bright  
Amidst the darkness of this heathen night.  
With her, the marriage state is sacred still,  
And all her children bow unto her will ;  
The cross of Jesus still is here to save,  
And light her votaries to a Christian grave.  
But soon the scoffing voice of Science dies,  
For now more ominous grow the threat'ning skies ;  
The stars, like flaming brands, flash o'er the sky,  
Then fade in darkness and obscurity ;  
While loud the ocean breaks upon the shore  
With giant fury and with hollow roar,  
And from the caverns of the mighty deep,  
With staring eyeballs, swift the fishes leap,

And in their terror rush upon the land,  
And quickly perish in the burning sand.  
For though the sun gives forth but scanty light,  
The heat is stifling, both by day and night.  
The wind no longer blows, the cloudless skies  
Refuse e'en cooling dews, and Nature cries  
Aloud in anguish for her friend, the rain,  
Who now, alas ! shall never come again.  
No more the forests sweep in proud array,  
Their banners flashing in the light of day,  
But, bent and shrivelled, on the hills they stand,  
And gaze in sorrow o'er the cheerless land.  
No more the meadows, clad in verdure green,  
Lie bright and smiling 'neath the sunlight's sheen,  
But, like to fire-swept plains, stretch hot and bare,  
And seem to stifle in the heavy air.  
No more the rivers, as they onward run,  
Like molten silver, flash beneath the sun ;

But unto stagnant pools they slowly shrink,  
When man and beast both gather, fierce for drink.  
Now from the earth there comes a sullen roar,  
Like waters breaking on a rocky shore ;  
The giant mountains, which the storms have borne  
Of years and ages, shake from base to dome ;  
And man, no longer proud, forgets to jeer,  
But, seized with terror and an awful fear,  
Cries out for mercy on his sins and pride,  
And asks the hills to fall on him and hide  
His guilty body from an angry God,  
Who comes to judge with Justice's iron rod.  
And now up from the east, like ghosts of dead,  
Two white-robed figures come with noiseless tread,  
And each one scatters, with a shadowy hand, —  
One plagues, one famine, throughout all the land.  
As snow beneath the rays of noonday sun,  
Or leaves in autumn, when the storm-kings come,

So from the earth mankind is swept away  
As near approaches the last fated day.  
The cry of children for their daily bread,  
The wail of women o'er their lovéd dead,  
Goes up unceasing ; but the pitiless skies  
Seem closed to human woes and miseries.  
And still the white-robed figures onward go,  
And scatter ever suffering and woe.

Deep in a valley opening to the west,  
Which seemed the birthplace of both peace and rest,  
A little cottage nestled all alone,  
Near trees, old, gnarléd, and with moss o'ergrown.  
Here came a blushing bride, one year ago,  
Arrayed in garments whiter than the snow ;  
With cheeks of roses and a brow so fair,  
With lips of carmine and bright golden hair, —  
She seemed a being of another sphere,  
So pure and lovely did she then appear.

Here bound together with the silken cord,  
How swift the happy day passed with her lord !  
How bright and lovely seemed this quiet place,  
When rosy morning showed his smiling face.  
At first, far in the east, the faintest glow  
Lights up the heavens with a wand of snow.  
Now in the shadow of a wood, hard by,  
A bird awakens with a startled cry ;  
Then all again is still ; no sound is heard  
Except the forest by the east wind stirred.  
But now the glimmer in the eastern sky  
Grows bright, and tinges with a crimson dye  
The fleecy cloudlets, those white ships of air,  
The hills and forests and the mountains fair.  
And as the flashing spears of the King of Day  
Above the hilltops gleam in bright array,  
With noisy twitter and with rustling wing  
The birds awaken from their slumbering.

Then when the fiery King appears in sight,  
With mien majestic and with flashing light,  
The birds, rejoicing at returning day,  
Pour forth in greeting a loud, happy lay.  
Here, too, at noonday, when the burning heat  
Drives man and beast to seek some cool retreat,  
How sweet and pleasant 'neath the shady trees  
Fell on the ear the hum of thrifty bees,  
The buzz of insects, and the crickets' song,  
Which from the meadow rose the whole day long :  
While from a distant wood, the cooing dove  
Called to his partner in a voice of love.  
And then, at evening, when the shadows cool,  
Like peace from heaven, fall on God's footstool,  
How calm and holy seemed this valley fair,  
With breath of roses scenting all the air.  
Here at their cottage door, when day was done,  
Sat wife and husband, while the setting sun

Bathed all the hilltops in its golden light,  
While in the valley crept the shades of night.  
Then when the sun's great queen, with beauteous face,  
Bathed in her splendor all this lovely place,  
Here in the valley, clasped their wedded hands,  
This couple wandered to a bridge that spans  
A little streamlet, flowing toward the sea,  
As our lives speed unto eternity.  
Here, standing on the bridge, what lovely scene  
Lay just before them 'neath the moonlight's sheen :  
High in the cloudless sky the moon rode bright,  
And filled the valley with her silver light,  
As waves of ocean, flashing 'neath the sun,  
Above all brightness, while beneath is none ;  
So stood the forest, white beneath the moon, —  
Above all glory, while below was gloom.  
Here through the valley, whispering soft and low,  
Where maiden daisies on its banks did grow,



A little streamlet, with its low refrain,  
Swift hurried onward to the distant main,  
While from the branches of a tree near by,  
The bird of sadness\* uttered his weird cry.  
The hour so witching and the scene so fair  
Threw spell of sorrow o'er this wedded pair, —  
Such sadness as we feel when day is done,  
And slowly sinks to rest the lordly sun ;  
A sense of loss, yet deep and sweeter far  
Than all the joy when we triumphant are.  
This shade of sadness brought into each heart  
A dim remembrance that we all must part ;  
And as our loved ones grow dearer still  
When any danger threatens them with ill ;  
So did this shadow of the coming years,  
Which in each soul roused many hopes and fears.

\* Owl.

Fill these two hearts with transports fierce and new,  
And cause their love to grow more strong and true.  
But now, how changed the scene ! No lordly trees  
Wave their great branches in the passing breeze,  
But, stript of foliage and with branches dead,  
They stand decaying, all their beauty fled.  
The little streamlet laughs no more in glee,  
While babbling onward to the restless sea ;  
Its waters long have dried and passed away  
Beneath the brightness of the rainless day,  
And now the pebbles, once cool 'neath the stream,  
Lie white and scorching in the sun's fierce gleam,  
While, hot and dusty in the noonday glare,  
The valley lies, of flowers and grasses bare.  
The chirp of cricket or the song of bird  
From field or forest is no longer heard.  
A silence awful, like unto the tomb,  
Broods o'er the valley, filling it with gloom.

There at the cottage door the husband lies,  
The seal of death upon his upturned eyes ;  
With hand firm clasped in his, the once fair bride  
Lies cold and pulseless by her husband's side,  
While on her bosom rests a baby fair,  
Which, seeking nurture, found its death, too, there.  
And still through all the land, like breath of fire,  
The famine sweepeth, and the plague so dire.

And now, the fated day ! O God above,  
Disarm Thy justice by Thy depthless love !  
But, no ! sweet Mercy now hath fled away,  
And stern-browed Justice holds imperial sway.  
Like to the calm which falls upon the earth  
Before the labors of the hurricane's birth,  
So now there falls upon the land and sea  
Silence so awful, that poor humanity  
Withers and faints away in fear and dread  
Of what shall happen ere the day is fled ;

And now dark shadows flit across the sky,  
Each one grown blacker than the one passed by,  
Until no glimmer of the blessed light  
Cheers with its presence mankind's strained sight.  
The deep, dread silence now is broken by  
The hiss of reptile and the wild beast's cry,  
And from the ocean comes a hollow roar,  
Like waters beating on a rocky shore ;  
More hot and stifling grows the heavy air,  
And in the darkness stalks the fiend, Despair.  
The earth now shudders, like a stricken deer  
When in its heart the hunter plants his spear ;  
And down comes crushing, with a mighty roar,  
Palaces and hovels of both rich and poor ;  
The hoary temples, at whose walls in vain  
The hand of time had smote and smote again,  
Now sway and tremble and go crumbling in,  
With noise resonant and terrific din.

And, too, the roaring of the ocean wild  
Grows loud and louder, wave on wave is piled,  
Until the waters seem about to fall  
Upon the land, and so envelop all.  
Like to a streamlet, clogged within its course,  
Until its waters back up to its source,  
And seem about to break from their true course,  
When quick, the waters, gathering new force,  
Burst from their bondage, and sink down once more,  
Until they reach the stage they were before ;  
So sinks the ocean from the terrified sight  
Of those who watch it on this awful night :  
Then with a roaring and tumultuous sound,  
The waters seem to rush beneath the ground.  
Upon the shore, o'ercome with deadly fear,  
Kneel men and women, who no longer jeer,  
But with loud wailing, now they humbly crave  
That Christ would pardon, and that Christ would save :

And to these people, kneeling thus in fear,  
Wild beasts and reptiles gather close and near,  
And oft a mother reaching for her child,  
In the great darkness clasps a panther wild,  
Or, finding her sweet babe upon the ground,  
Finds, too, a serpent round its body wound.  
Again a maiden falls, o'ercome with dread,  
And on her body reptiles make their bed.  
And now deep thunder rolls along the sky,  
And lightning flashes oft and luridly,  
And in the gleaming of its dazzling light  
Those by the ocean see an awful sight.  
The troubled waters now away have fled,  
And far, far down, lies bare the ocean's bed ;  
Here towers a mountain far up in the sea,  
There yawns a valley, dark, forbiddingly,  
And in the valleys lie the wrecks of ships,  
Gone down, unsung by any human lips.

And white and ghastly, on the mountain side,  
Lie strewn the bones of those who here have died.  
Here too lie stranded, midst the fleshless dead,  
Things of such shapes as fill the heart with dread.  
Here struggle in great heaps the lordly whale :  
The sneaking shark, with fins and belly pale :  
There snakes and lizards, and black creeping things,  
And horrid creatures with great scaly wings.  
Now from the darkness of the valley deep,  
A hideous monster slowly 'gins to creep,  
And soon he struggles upward to the shore,  
While from his mouth drips froth stained red with gore.  
His head is monstrous, and his fiendish eyes  
Excel the devil fish's in cunning, size :  
And from his forehead spring three powerful horns,  
Each one in shape like to the crab-tree's thorns :  
Two fin-shaped feet support his head and chest,  
His hinder quarters on his belly rest.

He seems a serpent of a monstrous size,  
With head of demon, and with demon eyes.  
But he, too, trembles on this awful night,  
And with loud roaring, and in wild affright,  
Seeks, too, the presence of poor helpless man,  
Who at his coming grows more pale and wan,  
And vainly struggles to arise and flee,  
But terror holds firm, relentlessly.  
And so, with creeping flesh and bated breath,  
He stands and 'waits his fast approaching death.  
The awful monster only crouches near,  
And seems, like man, o'ercome with deadly fear.  
And now the lightning, as a storm of rain  
Pours from the heavens, making all things plain :  
The cowering millions kneeling on the ground,  
The beasts and reptiles gathered close around ;  
The awful secrets of the mighty sea,  
Which now are shown so plain and vividly ;



The falling houses and the bursting rocks ;  
The trees uprooted, as by tempest shocks, —  
All, all the horrors of this awful night  
Stand out distinct before poor mankind's sight.  
Oh, God of mercy ! listen to that cry, —  
That cry of anguish unto Thee on high !  
That Thou wouldst end the lives of those below,  
And thus cut short their agonies and woe.  
As if in answer to that fearful cry,  
The lightning streams the faster from the sky,  
The earth in places opes in fissures deep,  
Where man and beast sink in a writhing heap.  
Then from th' abyss there come despairing cries :  
Then a faint moaning, which in silence dies.  
Near where that monster of the ocean stands,  
Kneel men and women, holding burning brands ;  
A bishop, mitred, stands among them there,  
And lifts his voice to God above in prayer ;

Then sprinkles with the water each bowed head,  
Before he feeds them with the Blessed Bread.  
Then in a moment all sink 'neath the ground ;  
The beast so horrid 'mongst the people wound ;  
And now fire wraps the trembling, desolate world,  
Which round and round is fast and faster whirled  
Until all things are on its face destroyed ;  
Then die the flames, and in the lightless void,  
Where awful silence as a king doth reign,  
The earth takes up its olden course again.

The Stygian darkness now is broken by  
A gleam like sunlight in the eastern sky.  
And soon the snowy wings of an angel fair  
Flash as a meteor in the stagnant air.  
Bright silver raiment his fair shape enfolds ;  
A golden trumpet in his hand he holds ;  
And quick alighting on this blackened sphere,  
He blows four trumpet blasts aloud and clear.

At once from every grave the dead arise, —  
Those who have slumbered long, and those whose eyes  
Have lately closed, and whose warming breath  
Has just grown cold upon the lips of death :  
Those who have rested 'neath the marble stone,  
And those whose graves were humble and unknown :  
From depths of ocean and from desert waste,  
All, all arise in wonderment and haste,  
And like great flocks of birds flit through the air,  
All to one centre seeming to repair.  
Now the heavens roll back, and a mellow light  
Dissolves the darkness of this starless night,  
Disclosing mankind hurrying, wan and pale,  
Unto the confines of Jehosaphat's Vale,  
Where soon all gather, numberless as sands  
Upon the ocean's long and narrow strands :  
Here wait all peoples who have lived and died,  
To hear the fate which Christ shall soon decide ;

Here stands the builder of that ship renowned,  
Where in the Deluge only life was found ;  
And there the one whose grave on Moab's height  
Remained forever hid from mortal sight :  
And he who, in obedience to God's word,  
Prepared to kill his son, and ne'er demurred ;  
That mighty giant whom the shepherd slew,  
And he whom Deliah to his death didst woo :  
There the Precursor, with his face aglow,  
And body flashing as the moonlit snow ;  
Here all the peoples who abode on earth  
Before the day that ushered in Christ's birth ;  
While separate from these stand those who died  
After the Saviour had been crucified.  
Here are the apostles, with great Peter first,  
And 'mongst the number Judas the accursed ;  
With face malignant, and a devilish leer,  
He shakes and trembles as with deadly fear,

Close clutched within his hand the accurséd pay  
Which caused the craven to his Lord betray.  
Next to the apostles, stand the popes who reigned  
Since Peter first the crown of martyrdom gained ;  
Then priests and bishops in a mighty throng,  
And hooded monks in lines both deep and long ;  
While in the background stand the rest who died  
Since Christ the Saviour had been crucified.  
In that vast army every face is white  
With the reflection of their soul's alright :  
For even those who on this earth did die,  
Rather than live and the true faith deny,  
Feel that but little have they done to earn  
Exemption from the lot of those who burn :  
While those who followed where their passions led,  
Now fall upon the earth in terror, dread,  
And veil their vision with extended hand,  
And fear to look up towards the heavenly land.

Now in a moment, far up in the skies,  
A cross appears, so bright that human eyes  
Cannot withstand the glory of its light,  
Which far exceeds the sun's, as day the night.  
The cross is but of wood, — the same, indeed,  
On which our blessed Saviour once did bleed ;  
Yet now it flashes, like to burnished gold,  
While the spots of blood no eye can firm behold ;  
They gleam and glitter as the lightning, keen,  
When in the night its blinding flash is seen.  
And now the fluttering sound of many wings  
Is heard in Heaven, while loud the anthem rings  
Of " Joy and glory to the Lamb who died,  
The Lamb who suffered and was crucified."  
And soon there flashes through the startled air  
Great bands of angels, glorious and fair ;  
They come in two great lines, a space between,  
Where, in the distance, plainly can be seen

A sacred Wafer, changed not in the least  
From that which daily brake the earthly priest ;  
It gently resteth on great clouds of snow,  
Whose edges soften in a crimson glow,  
While countless angels just in front lie prone,  
And on the left there stands a great white throne ;  
While near the Wafer, just upon the right,  
The Virgin Mother sits, with face so bright, —  
Not all the glory of the angels fair,  
Nor cross combined, can to her light compare :  
A sparkling circlet of bright, golden stars  
Rests on her head, — a crown for those deep scars  
Which were inflicted on her heart, on earth,  
From the great moment of our Saviour's birth :  
A robe more spotless than the winter's snow  
Falls from her shoulders to the knee below,  
While a bluish garment, fleecy as the clouds,  
Beneath the robe her holy form enshrouds.

Upon a wondrous throne like crimson light,  
But of a substance strange to human sight,  
She queenly sits, while angels hover near  
In humble homage to their mother dear.  
And now the angels cease their carols sweet,  
And all lie prostrate at the Wafer's feet,  
Which soon assumes the form that Christ on earth  
Didst carry with Him from the hour of birth,  
And Christ, the Saviour, mounts the great white throne,  
While loud the angels their grand hymn intone  
Of "Joy and glory to the Lamb who died,  
The Lamb who suffered and was crucified."  
Like to a person who has been confined  
Where rays of sunlight ne'er their way can find,  
And in a moment rushed into the light, —  
His eyes are dazzled, and refuse their sight,  
So doth the brightness of the Saviour's face  
Strike dark and sightless all the human race.



But soon the eyesight is restored again  
To those who are with Jesus Christ to reign,  
And they are able to withstand the glare,  
And awful grandeur of his face so fair ;  
But they who wasted their short lives in crime,  
And soon must pass to darkness for all time,  
Bow low the head, and shield the dazzled eye,  
And loud and piteously for mercy cry,  
And now an angel leaves the shining band,  
And quick advancing, with a sword in hand,  
He humbly prostrates at the Saviour's throne,  
Then turns about, and in an awful tone,  
Which fills the heavens, bids the human race  
To come to judgment, then retires apace,  
And close unto the throne takes up his stand,  
With the bright falchion still within his hand.  
Now from the multitudes in Jehosaphat's vale,  
A single figure, with face ashen pale,

Wings his flight upward to the great white throne,  
Where at the Saviour's feet he kneels alone,  
The glorious angel, with the sword of flame,  
Now calls aloud that Adam is the name  
Of him who, kneeling at the Saviour's feet,  
For pardon, mercy, humbly doth entreat.  
Slow steps an angel from the radiant band,  
Who near to Adam draws, and takes his stand.  
Then the great angel, with the sword of flame,  
Turns to the Lord, and begins the sins to name  
That Adam did, when in the earthly sphere,  
But so low the voice none but God can hear.  
The guardian angel, close where Adam lies,  
Unto the Saviour, in these words, replies :  
" O Sovereign Master ! Adam, true, did fall,  
And by his weakness sin polluted all :  
But yet he suffered many years below  
The pangs of conscience and great earthly woe ;

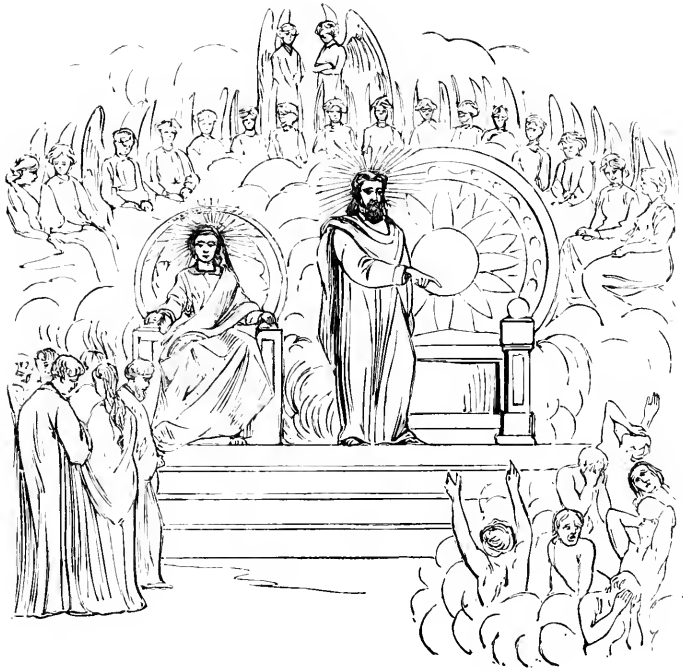
The death of Abel and the crime of Cain  
Filled up the goblet of his earthly pain :  
And then the awful years from when he died  
Until the hour that Thou wast crucified,  
Remember, Lord, that humbly for his sin  
He bore these pains and long-drawn suffering.”  
Then the Great Master, with voice low and sweet,  
Addressed the creature lying at his feet :  
“ Arise, O Adam ! Though thy sin was great,  
Yet thou hast borne the hardness of thy fate  
With humble patience and firm faith in Me :  
And faith, and suffering, with true charity,  
Are three great weapons in the hands of man  
To appease My justice and remove My ban.  
Therefore arise, and pass unto My right,  
Among the children of everlasting light.”  
And now another figure wings its flight,  
And at the Saviour’s feet doth quick alight.

This is the woman through whom sin and woe  
First burst upon the innocence below.  
She, too, has suffered, but in more degree  
Than Adam, for the greater sinner she ;  
And she, too, passed unto the Saviour's right,  
Among the children of everlasting light.  
Thus, singly, in the order of their birth,  
Pass unto judgment the children of the earth.  
Some, like to Adam, turn unto the right,  
With joyous footsteps and with faces bright ;  
But, oh ! how many to the left, and woe,  
With savage curses, slow, reluctant, go.  
Now those who pass unto the Saviour's right  
Have their sins hidden from all human sight ;  
But those who pass unto the damned crowd,  
Have their sins heralded, distinct, aloud.  
And now before the throne there kneels the form  
Of one to honors and to kingships born.

Loud on the earthly air, the trump of fame  
To all the people had blown wide his name :  
He on the nations mighty armies hurled,  
And when he died, was master of the world.  
The mighty angel, with the sword of flame,  
As to the rest, begins his crimes to name :  
How for ambition and insatiate greed,  
He caused a million hearts to pain and bleed :  
And that he might engrave himself a name,  
High on the pillar of poor earthly fame,  
How many creatures fell beneath his sword,  
How like to water human blood was poured,  
His guardian angel now to his defence  
Comes quickly forward, and with words intense,  
With pleading fervor, low ennumber o'er  
His many acts of kindness to the poor.  
Then when he ends, a cry for vengeance flows  
From thousands on the left ; and some 'mongst those

Who stand upon the right, take up the cry  
'Gainst him who sent them to eternity.

\* And then the Master, sorrowful and low,  
Speaks to the culprit: " 'T is true, below  
You oft befriended those who were in need,  
Yet 't will avail thee not ; for every deed  
Performed to win the praise of men on earth,  
And not for Me, is void and little worth.  
Thou art a murderer of thy fellow-man ;  
For he who, without a cause, shall cut the span  
Of human life, before My justice stands  
As doth the murderer fresh with blood-stained hands,  
And this, though he himself strike not a blow  
To cause his fellow-creatures' blood to flow.  
My very nature loathes and doth abhor  
Him who, without just cause, unchains cursed war.  
Therefore, unto the left, join those who stand  
Doomed evermore, a cursed, despairing band ! "



"DEPART, YE CURSED, TO YOUR AWFUL DOOM."





He ceases ; to the left, with bitter cries,  
The kingly culprit slow and sadly lies.  
Now from the earth another creature wings,  
And at the Saviour's feet his body flings,  
As when a serpent, scaly, clammy, cold,  
But touch a creature, be he ever bold,  
A thrill of horror darts through all his veins,  
And deep abhorrence swift his mind enchains.  
So doth the presence of this culprit now  
Cause deep disdain to sit on every brow :  
A face of loathing wears each angel there,  
And this same feeling seem the just to share.  
Then loud the angel with the sword of flame  
Calls out that Judas is the kneeler's name.  
Then those upon the left, with upraised hand,  
Sly beckon Judas to come join their band.  
Aloud the angel, as with those before,  
Calls out the sins that Judas did of yore ;

How being chosen to an high estate,  
A position lofty and supremely great ;  
One of the twelve, designed for noble deeds,  
In heathen lands to sow the gospel seeds ;  
And spread the faith that Christ to Peter gave,  
And countless souls to gladden and to save ;  
And then, to round a life so nobly spent,  
The martyr's death and glorious crown were meant ;  
And how, thus honored, yet did vilely sell  
His Lord and Master."

He ceases. Looks of anger and of scorn  
Are cast by angels on the cringing form  
Of that vile traitor, who lies speechless there,  
Bowed down with horror and a dread despair.  
And then the Saviour, sorrowful and low :  
" Why didst thou, Judas, bring on thee this woe ?  
Thy awful crime, when, at that supper last,  
With treacherous heart thou joinedst in the repast,

And, too, thy treason at the garden gate,  
Mightst been forgiven, — though thy sins were great, —  
If thou hadst trusted in My love for thee,  
And, filled with sorrow and humility,  
Had asked for pardon ; but thy deep despair  
Drove thee to murder, and without a prayer  
Upon thy lips, you passed the portal dim  
Which leads to joy or awful suffering.  
Therefore, unto My left I bid thee go,  
And with proud Lucifer rule the courts below.”  
With face of terror and malignant hate  
Judas joins his now eternal mate.  
And now comes Peter, the apostle chief,  
Who, too, kneels down, but for a moment brief,  
For with a smile so tender and so sweet,  
The Saviour bids the figure at His feet  
To rise. “ O Peter ! thou the yieldless rock  
Of my loved church, first pastor of my flock,

Well didst thou guard the trust I gave to thee,  
And for my sake didst die upon the tree ;  
Therefore, O servant tried ! pass to the right,  
To receive the tiara in My Father's sight."  
The other ten now to the judgment pass,  
Then to the right ; and now comes John, the last,  
He who, of old, with weariness opprest,  
Pillowed his head upon the Saviour's breast.  
" Oh, my loved Master ! " breaks the trembling cry  
From the apostle's lips, " again my mortal eye  
Dost see my Saviour, who so long ago,  
With tender pity, eased my bitter woe.  
O Master ! Master ! More fair and bright Thou art  
Than when I rested on Thy loving heart.  
But yet I feel Thou lov'st me as of old,  
And will forgive my words, presumptuous bold."  
" Rise up, O John ! still loved by Me the same  
As when we walked upon Judea's plain ;

And as on earth, so still thou shalt be known  
As John the lovéd, and stand near My throne."

And now once more the circle is complete :  
The chosen twelve, with joy each other greet.  
Now swift there comes from out the crowd below  
One who on earth did heinous doctrines sow :  
Who taught that war was holy and was just,  
And that high heaven was but a home for lust,  
'Tis he of Mecca, who with blasphemous speech  
Proclaimed that he the Saviour did o'erreach,  
And was the greater : he whose horrid creed  
Caused wreck and ruin, and made thousands bleed.  
Now as with Judas, so no guardian there  
To plead exemption or to breathe a prayer,  
While wild with terror, brave Mahomet falls  
Before the throne, and loud for mercy calls.  
Dark as the clouds that gather 'fore the storm,  
And fill all hearts with terror and alarm,

So grows the Saviour's brow, and thus he speaks :

“ He who shall dare upon himself to take  
The awful pride to claim that his poor mind  
Than God's is greater, and who leads the blind  
To paths of error, by his self-made creed,  
And dying thus, his words take root and breed, —  
No pain too great for such a wretch as he,  
No suffering equal to his blasphemy.  
Thus didst thou, Mahmoud, and eternal woe  
Shall be thy portion in the realms below.”

Then thousands follow, but each one alone,  
And kneel for judgment 'fore the great white throne.  
Some have been famous in the earthly life,  
But many known not in the daily strife.  
But, strange indeed ! the peasant here is known  
And honored more than he who wore a crown  
Upon the earth ; the lowly and the poor  
The brightest crowns and greatest thrones secure ;

And many owe admission 'mongst the blest  
To earthly cares and a life with grief oppressed,  
Here comes an one, unknown upon the earth,  
Poor and humble from the hour of birth :  
No well-fed knaves his ears with flatteries charmed,  
But rigid want, with scoffs and jeering armed,  
Dispelled all pride, and showed him true and clear  
The world's deceptions and its phantoms drear.  
The rich and powerful passed him by in scorn,  
As one unworthy and one lowly born.  
But he, the greater, headed not their scorn,  
But only pity in his heart was born  
For their great blindness, and he humbly prayed  
That God would give them light and heavenly aid.  
He lived amongst trade's turmoil and its noise,  
Yet was not of it ; great and higher joys  
Filled his great soul.

He loved to wander by the river's side  
When fell the shades of peaceful eventide,  
And in the rhythm of the water's flow  
Heard voices whisper tenderly and low ;  
He loved the forest, with its gloomy shades,  
Its rippling streamlets, and its grassy glades ;  
And when the trees by rushing winds were stirred,  
His spirit trembling, sweetest music heard ;  
He loved the fields where swayed the golden grain,  
All things in nature told him God did reign ;  
He loved the Holy Church, and sweet to him  
Were its great rites and simplest offering.  
How dear to him the mass at break of day,  
Before King Trade resumed his noisy sway.  
The morning air, fresh from the dewy field,  
Unto the service doth its perfume yield,  
While sweet, melodious, from the forest near,  
The song of birds fell on the listening ear.



Upon his heart, like dews upon the earth,  
God's peace did fall and holy thoughts have birth.  
Then, when the forest trees cast shadows tall,  
And peaceful evening threw her spell o'er all,  
How sweet to him the holy chapel then,  
Its silence broken not by tongues of men ;  
The setting sun, through windows stained and rare,  
Flashed on the altar and the dead Christ there,  
And threw a halo round the Saviour's head  
Of gold and crimson and a purplish red ;  
And then the day grew into night and gloom,  
But still he lingered till the rising moon  
Looked through the windows ; then arising, he  
Turned from the chapel, slow, reluctantly.  
And now he kneels before the Saviour's throne,  
But not as one unhonored and unknown.  
The angels bow their heads as he goes by,  
And saints with them to do him honor vie.

The Saviour bids him on the right to stand  
Amongst the children of the heavenly land.  
And now there rises from the crowds below  
One who, like Mahmoud, heresies did sow.  
He to the cloister in the morn of life  
Was called by God from out the worldly strife.  
Thus hedged from sin within the convent wall,  
No need for him to stumble or to fall.  
One winter's night he looked from out his cell  
Upon a scene, where bright the moonlight fell.  
He saw the hillside covered deep with snow,  
And in the shadow of the vale below,  
From out the windows of a castle there  
The firelight streamed with hospitable glare.  
He saw, within, the soft, voluptuous form  
Of a fair woman, radiant and warm.  
At first this picture served but to dispel  
The love he bore unto his humble cell ;

But as he gazed upon the woman there,  
With form so splendid and with face so fair,  
The demon Envy crept into his heart,  
And with fair words and with demoniac art  
Portrayed the difference 'tween his humble state  
And of the prince who was this woman's mate ;  
How he, the monk, before the break of day,  
Must to the chapel go, in cold to pray,  
While still the prince beside his lovely wife  
Slept on, oblivious to the ills of life ;  
How he lived only on the coarsest fare,  
The prince on costly wines and viands rare.  
Then as he gazed, that demon whose hot breath  
Wilts human souls, as flowers by warm hands pressed,  
Crept to his side and spake : " O fool ! how blind !  
Who tasteth not the charms of womankind.  
See that fair creature in the castle there,  
With eyes of azure and with golden hair,

With teeth of ivory and with lips of fire :  
What more could one expect, what more desire ?  
And many such as she await the call  
To marital joys." Swift as the meteors fall  
Adown the walls of the bespangled sky,  
So fell the monk, supinely, miserably.  
Then from that hour fierce burned the lustful fire, —  
A wife his only aim, his one desire.  
And then, to hide his purpose, claimed the church  
Had fallen in error, and that he must search  
And find the golden links lost from tradition's chain,  
And bind the past and present once again.  
And so he scattered with a curséd hand  
The seeds of heresy throughout the land.  
At last, within the sacred convent wall,  
He found a woman waiting for his call.  
She, too, had taken holy vows, as he,  
Of poverty and holy chastity.

Both broke these vows, and lived vile, perjured lives,  
Sunk deep in lust and horrid blasphemies.  
And now the monk before the judgment seat  
Kneels, and for mercy humbly doth entreat.  
Then, like the tempest, low and rumbling first,  
And then like it, in awful roar did burst,  
A cry of rage from thousands ranged below,  
Upon whose heads the monk had caused to flow  
The wrath of God. For these, the monk's creed held  
As true and holy, forgetting he rebelled  
Against the Church which Christ Himself had built,  
For which His precious blood was freely spilt.  
And now the accusing angel loudly speaks  
The crimes of him, who now for mercy seeks :  
"How God's great mercy led him to the cell,  
And how for lust and gain he did rebel,  
And broke his vows and heresies proclaim,  
And millions led to everlasting pain."

He ends ; but no defending voice is there  
To lift the monk to hope, from black despair.  
Dark as the heavens when the tempests sweep,  
Fierce as the storm upon the heaving deep,  
So grows the Saviour's brow, and thus he speaks :  
" Oh, thou ! who for accurséd lust did break  
Thy solemn promise, and didst dare to preach  
The Church taught error, when Myself didst teach  
That I was with her even to the end,  
And 'gainst hell's gates would ever her defend.  
Oh ! awful blasphemy ! accurséd pride !  
To say that *I* had promised, and had *lied*.  
And then the thousands thou hast led away  
From holy church, and from the narrow way, —  
How many souls, most precious in My sight,  
Have followed thee into eternal night !  
What pain too great for one who thus destroyed  
The souls for whom I died and whom I *loved*.

Therefore unto the left, accurséd, go ;

Thy lot an endless night, eternal woe !”

Before the throne a noble warrior kneels,  
Whose name his guardian angel loud reveals :  
“ Godfrey of Bouillon, Oh, my Lord ! is he  
Who at Thy footstool kneels for clemency.  
He is the glorious chief who led the war  
Against Mahomet, whom Thou dost abhor ;  
And in that struggle, to uphold the right,  
Thy sacred honor was his beacon light.  
He hated war, and mourned for those who died ;  
Refused a crown where Thou wast crucified.  
Within his breast, that flower so loved by Thee,  
Forever bloomed, — the flower of chastity.”  
And thus the Lord : “ Well done, O faithful son !  
Thy trials past, eternal joy is won.”  
Now comes a warrior, who by Godfrey’s side,  
Fought fore Jerusalem, and in fighting died.

Then speaks the accuser : " 'Mongst the knights of old  
Who followed Godfrey in his crusade bold,  
Was one whose only thought, whose one desire,  
Was to win glory and to wealth aspire.  
He in the thickest of the fight was seen,  
And like a brand of fire, his falchion keen  
Flashed in the faces of the Moslem foe,  
And many a life went out beneath his blow.  
Hard and cruel as his shining blade,  
Was his own heart. Kind Pity never stayed  
His lifted arm ; and then, when won the day,  
He, like a jackal seeking for its prey,  
Searched 'mongst the dying and the dead for gold,  
And tore the rings from fingers not yet cold.  
He now for mercy kneels before the throne,  
He who in life to mercy was unknown."  
And then the Master : " Oh, my son, my son !  
What glorious kingdom couldst thou not have won,



Hadst thou, like Godfrey, sought but to fulfil  
Thy sacred vow, and killed against thy will,  
For he who, in a war however just,  
Fights but for glory, or for golden lust,  
Or for a motive other than the right,  
He, killing, is a murderer in My sight.”  
Then to the left the warrior paces slow,  
His features horrible with his awful woe.  
And thus they pass, — some happy, to the right,  
But many, many to the left, and night.  
For, oh! how searching is the Saviour’s eye;  
How strict the judgment, keen the scrutiny,  
Works seeming holy to the eyes of man,  
To Christ are sinful, and fall ’neath his ban.  
His justice sifteth every word and thought,  
The deeds performed, and those performed not,  
And many, many lose a throne above,  
Because of holy deeds, done through self-love.

Among the wretches, many owe their doom  
To children murdered in their mother's womb.  
O God! how many to impurity owe  
The loss of heaven and eternal woe.

Now ends the judgment, and in two great bands,  
The lost and saved, before the Saviour stand.  
There on the right, 'mongst those described before,  
Columbus stands, his trials and sorrows o'er.  
Upon his head a glorious crown of light,  
Each wrong he bore but making it more bright.  
This crown of lasting glory did he gain,  
Not by his valor on an unknown main,  
Nor yet because his heart was noble, grand,  
Nor that he found a great and fertile land;  
But that his only thought in every deed,  
Was that it glorify God, and his great creed.  
There, too, amongst the just, that poet grand,  
Who sang of Godfrey and his valiant band;

And by his side stands Daute, now at last  
At peace forever, his long exile past.  
There Don Alonzo leads the knights of Spain,  
He who by bold Ben Estephar was slain ;  
There Ferdinand, and Isabella fair,  
And many, many, whom their wars did share ;  
There Cadiz' marquis, standing close beside  
One who, on earth, served as his menial tried ;  
There Don Fernando, kingly as of old,  
And thousands of his cavaliers bold.  
There many from that island of the sea  
Where faith was bright "fore Henry's heresy" :  
There Patrick leads the hosts from that green isle  
Which suffered persecutions deep and vile ;  
St. Martin leads the saints from that fair land  
Of sunny France a great and glorious band :  
There monks and nuns, who, in the lowly cell  
Upon the earth, both builded deep and well ;

The glorious martyrs, a great band of light,  
Their faces radiant, their garments white, —  
Some of the rich, and thousands of the poor,  
Temptations past, and heaven at last secure.  
And now the Saviour turns unto the lost, —  
Dark as the ocean when by tempests tossed,  
Black as the clouds when fierce the storm doth break,  
Still as the air before the dire earthquake :  
So grows the heavens. Oh ! what awful fear  
Falls on the lost, as now their doom draws near.  
With bitter cries they on their faces fall,  
And unto Jesus loud for mercy call,  
And unto Mary lift their wretched hands,  
In supplication and in mute demands.  
But she, so happy, in the days gone by,  
To plead with Christ for poor humanity,  
Now turns a deafened ear to their appeals,  
Heeds not their sorrow, and no pity feels.

Oh ! stern and awful grows the Saviour's brow,  
While, dumb with terror, fall the lost ones now  
Flat on their faces, and a quivering fear  
Runs through their veins, as they this sentence hear ;  
Which, as 't is given, doth the Saviour rise  
Upon his feet, while blacker grow the skies :  
" Depart, ye curséd, to your awful doom,  
Where My absence maketh hopeless gloom :  
For when I hungered and with thirst was faint,  
Ye heeded not My cry, My humble plaint ;  
Ye scorned My mercies and defied My power.  
Now Mercy 's dead, and this is Justice's hour ;  
Therefore, away, into eternal fire,  
Where hope is not, and suffering is dire."  
Then downward, downward into endless night,  
With awful cries, the damned disappear from sight.  
The Saviour quickly turns unto the blessed,  
His face aglow and joy thereon expressed ;

Then kneel the just, and humbly bow their heads,  
While Christ above them his pierced hands outspreads.  
Quick change the clouds from black to colors bright,  
And all the heavens fill with glorious light.  
As waves of ocean rushing on the strands  
Remove the figures drawn by human hands ;  
So on the souls of those low kneeling there,  
A wave of joy effaces earthly care.  
Ecstatic love for God fills every heart,  
So that 't were fullest bliss to ne'er depart  
From where they kneel, so only Christ would stay  
And be the sun of their eternal day.  
Soft as the southern wind on summer eve,  
Sweeter than any sound man can conceive,  
So speaks the Saviour : " O Peter ! now I take  
From out thy hands the power to bind and break,  
For now the mission of My church is done ;  
Through many storms at last she reaches home."

And then, addressing all, he thus did speak :  
"Come, my beloved, come now to partake  
Of endless joys, in heaven above with Me,  
When you shall see the mystery of the Three,  
And things forever dark to human eyes  
To you shall be as bright as summer skies.  
Your short probation in the vale of tears  
Shall be rewarded in eternal years,  
And pain or sorrow never more shall come  
To soul or body in your heavenly home.  
Therefore, My children ! 'rise and follow Me  
Into the glories of Eternity."

Then all rise upward : first the angel bands ;  
Then Christ, the Saviour, at whose side now stands  
The Virgin Mother, and St. Joseph blest,  
While just behind comes Peter and the rest ;  
And then the glorious hosts, who 've won the fight,  
Their faces flashing with supernal light.

Then ope the heavens and the flashes come,  
And all pass in to their eternal home ;  
While sweeter far than heard by mortal ear,  
Their voices blend in anthem loud and clear,  
Of " Glory to the Father and the Son,  
And Holy Spirit, three, yet only one."



## THE WIND OF THE WINTER NIGHT.

OH, Winter Wind! why goest thou,  
With moaning voice, across the snow?  
Dost seek for friends of other days  
In lone and unfrequented ways?  
Or dost thou mourn for days gone by,  
When, 'neath the warm, bright summer's sky,  
Thou wooedst the sweet, sad violet,  
Or pansy with the eyes of jet;  
Or on some calm, pellucid stream,  
With folded wings didst idly dream,  
And list unto the bluebird's call  
And ripple of the waterfall?

Oh, Winter Wind ! thy wild unrest  
Doth wake an echo in my breast ;  
I, too, bemoan the bright days fled,  
And friends now numbered 'mongst the dead,  
And vainly seek through devious ways  
The summer joys of other days.

THE STORM.  

---

**H**OT and stifling broods the summer day  
    Upon the landscape ;  
The dust lies deep upon the winding road  
    And bordering bushes ;  
The patient sheep within the sun-burnt field  
Seek shelter 'neath the neighboring forest trees ;  
The leaves hang motionless, save a quivering slight,  
    Within the heated air ;  
No living sound from forest or from field :  
    All hushed and silent.  
And now there rises 'bove the western hills  
    A fleecy cloudlet,

And like a solitary ship on ocean vast,

Sails o'er the heavens.

Now speeds another, and the rumbling sound

Of distant thunder breaks upon the ear :

And now more frequent sail the aërial ships,

But changed from white to dark and leaden hue.

Then slowly from the west majesticly

The storm-king rears his dark and angry head :

The thunder rumbles louder, and the lightning keen

Flashes from out the bosom of the storm :

Great gusts of wind, like couriers in advance,

Scatter the dust along the winding road :

Light leaden clouds outstrip the storm's advance,

And veil the sun ;

With startled cries the birds flit through the air,

And seek their nests.

Now dark as midnight grows the leaden sky,

The lightning flashes oft and luridly,

And the deep thunder shakes the rock-bound hills ;  
The forest bends within the storm-king's grasp,  
And with the rushing of the mighty wind,  
The waters burst upon the parchéd earth.

## MY FATHER'S GRAVE.

[Written Oct. 25, 1883, after visiting my father's grave in St. Mary's  
Cemetery, Pittsburg, Pa.]

---

**D**EEP within the cemetery walls,  
Where the golden sunlight falls  
In silent wave ;  
There where the flow'rets sweet arise,  
And fill the air with perfume, lies  
My father's grave.

Near by stand monuments grand and fair,  
Raised up by wealth, whose friends lie there  
In lasting sleep ;

Symbols oft'ner of living pride,  
Than love for those they stand beside  
    And watches keep.

No sculptured column rears its head  
Where father lies in lonely bed,  
    Till day of doom ;  
Only a plain white marble stone,  
With name and date engraved thereon,  
    Marks out his tomb.

Yet deep within my heart there stands  
A monument not of human hands,  
    But fairer far, —  
A flame of love so fierce and bright,  
Not winter's storms nor summer's blight  
    Its beauties mar.

What tender love did not father show,  
The while he journeyed here below,

Unto the poor ;

They were to him as children dear,  
As God's own loved ones, toiling here

In paths secure.

The senseless joys and foolish mirth,  
So loved by many on this earth,

He did despise ;

But nature, in her changing forms,  
Had ever deep and lasting charms

Unto his eyes,

And ever in her presence found  
That peace and rest which doth abound

In solitude.

So here, indeed, he must sleep well,  
In this lone and quiet dell,

Beyond the crowd,



The vulgar and the selfish throng,  
Who crowd the paths of life along  
    With clamor loud.

Here on the breast of Mother Earth,  
Free from the passions of our birth,  
    Removed from strife ;  
He, sweetly 'neath the cooling sod,  
Resteth in the peace of God,  
    Awaiting life.

## ALL-SOULS-EVE.



I SIT within my chamber,  
On this hallowed eve ;  
Within the firelight glimmers,  
Without the winds low grieve.

Now strikes the hour of midnight  
Upon the old town clock ;  
The winds grow cold and fiercer,  
And at the casement knock.

Within the flickering embers  
    On my chamber hearth,  
I see forgotten faces  
    Of friends long passed from earth.

Then I recall the legend,  
    That on this night, 't is said,  
One can upraise the spirits  
    Of the departed dead.

And quick I bid the soul  
    Of one most dear to me,  
To come from out the shadows  
    Of eternity.

Then slowly through the chamber  
    A cold, dark shadow falls :  
My hands and feet grow numbéd,  
    And terror me appals.

Within the dark, dread shadow,  
I see the face of one  
Who loved me as a brother,  
In days now long since gone.

But, oh ! what awful sadness  
Is stamped upon the face,  
And eyes that once spake laughter,  
Seem sorrow's bidding-place.

" Oh ! why, my friend and brother,"  
Unto the face I spake, —  
" Why is this awful sadness,  
What seems thy heart to break ? "

" For answer look beyond me,  
Into the shadows deep,  
Where Purgatory opens  
For many of those who sleep."

I looked, and there saw thousands

Who seemed to suffer dire, —

Some by remorse, and others

By fierce, consuming fire,

And one I noticed smiling,

His face so joyous, fair,

And eyes turned, longing, upwards,

And hands upraised in prayer.

And following his vision

I saw a monastery, old,

Uprear its moss-grown towers,

Beside a lonely wold.

And looking through the windows,

I saw a priest prepare

To offer the holy Sacrifice

For the soul with face so fair.

And when the mass was finished,  
I saw that soul take flight  
From out that awful dungeon,  
To realms of heavenly light.

Then spake my friend and brother :

“ Thou seest why I mourn ;  
For many weary ages  
I’ve Purgatory’s suffering borne.

“ Of all the friends I cherished  
When in the earthly strife,  
Not one so much as prayeth  
For my eternal life.

“ And here I’m forced to linger  
For ages yet to come,  
Because mankind forgetteth  
The souls of those who ’re gone.”

And then the vision faded ;

I started as from sleep :

The clock within the belfry

Struck one, sonorous, deep.

THE OCTOBER DAY.  

---

**O**H, perfect day ! when but to live is joy,  
And on the mind all active pleasures cloy,  
When but to lie above some purling stream,  
And watch the clouds float by, and idly dream,  
Is sweetest peace.

When all the woods stand clothed in brightest hue ;  
The golden maple and the blood-red yew,  
And purple grapes hang from the forest vine,  
Which round the oak its clinging form entwines  
In close embrace.

When soft and purple stand the distant hills,  
And purple haze the peaceful valley fills,



And o'er the sweet, sad silence of the scene  
The golden sunlight falls in softened sheen,  
    And tender light.

O God! how bright must be the day above,  
Which Thou hast promised those who share Thy love!  
When this, the image, is so sweet and fair,  
That one could live, without a thought or care  
    For all things else.

SUNDAY, Oct. 21, 1883.

LINES ON GLADSTONE'S INTRODUCTION INTO THE  
BRITISH PARLIAMENT,

OF THE BILL FOR THE "FUTURE GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND."

---

**O**H, patriot sons of Erin!  
The longed-for day is near,  
Swift flee the deadly shadows  
Of the night so drear.

Upon the head of Ireland  
The dawn is breaking now,  
And soon the sun of freedom  
Shall flash upon her brow.

Arouse, ye friends of justice,  
And let your warning cry  
Be heard across the ocean,  
Be heard within the sky.

And he who dares to hinder  
The dawning of the light,  
Shall hear your voice and tremble,  
And flee in wild affright.

Then shall the cry of freemen  
Be heard upon the blast,  
And "God save poor old Ireland!"  
Be answered then at last.

CHRISTMAS MORN.  

---

**N**OISELESS o'er the midnight world  
Fall the snowflakes down,  
O'er the forest and the plain,  
And the sleeping town.

Softly in the forest dell,  
Where the strong winds sleep ;  
Furiously upon the plain,  
Where the tempests sweep.

Clothing all the earth in white,  
In a garb so fair  
That the dark and gloomy night  
Turns in dread despair.

And the light of coming day  
    In the East appears,  
Banishing the night away,  
    And nocturnal fears.

Cheerily across the snow  
    Comes the Christmas bell,  
Setting every heart aglow  
    With its happy knell.

Ringling to the winter's sky  
    The words that angels sang :  
" Glory be to God on high,  
    Peace on earth to man."

Ringling unto hearts of stone,  
    Human sympathy :  
Ringling unto every home,  
    Christian charity.

Ring loud and louder, happy bells,  
And may your joyous tone  
Be heard wherever mankind dwells,  
Wherever grief is known.

And may the echo of your voice  
Ring through the coming years,  
And angels hearing will rejoice,  
And mankind cease to jeer.

McKEESPORT, PA., CHRISTMAS EVE, 1883.

## GLENWOOD FOREST.

[Written on the occasion of a visit to Glenwood, 23d Ward, Pittsburg, Pa., in the  
Spring of 1884.]

---

O II. friend of other days, how changed thou art !  
And yet what mem'ries stir within my heart,  
When once again I press beneath my feet  
Thy woodland ways, and smell thy flow'rets sweet,  
Which lift their tender heads from out the grass,  
And seem to greet me as I onward pass.  
How oft, O forest ! in the long ago,  
Beneath thy shadows and with footsteps slow,  
I've paced at evening, while the autumn sun  
Just sank to rest, and I the only one

Within thy borders. Oh! what lessons, fraught  
With deepest wisdom were unto me taught  
By thy sad voices, while thy leafless trees  
Swayed to and fro, stirred by the evening breeze.  
How like a requiem o'er some lovéd dead,  
The zephyrs moaned through branches overhead,  
And low and solemn heard I on the wind :  
" As fall the leaves, so perish all mankind."  
And then in springtime, when the morning sun  
Dissolved the shadows, and the night was done,  
What joy, O forest ! seemed to fill thy heart,  
And youth and vigor to thy limbs impart.  
The buds burst forth from every shrub and tree,  
And low thy voices whispered unto me :  
" The night is past, the day returns once more ;  
So God to man shall life again restore."  
And then in summer, when the golden day  
Like smile of God upon the landscape lay,





"AT ONCE FROM EVERY GRAVE, THE DEAD ARISE."



How oft I've stretched beneath some favorite tree,  
In sweet content and dreamy ecstasy.  
The forest flowers, with shy and tender eyes,  
Raised their sweet faces to the bending skies :  
The birds in trees o'erhead sang low and sweet,  
The silver streamlet murmured at my feet,  
While drows'ly from the fields the hum of bees  
And chirp of crickets came upon the breeze.  
Then sweet thy voices sounded in mine ear :  
" Dispel all doubts and put away thy fear,  
For unto thee a summer's day shall come  
Beyond the skies within thy Father's home."

AVE MARIA.  

---

A VE Maria ! the evening shadows fall ;  
Ave Maria ! We pray thee guard us all.

Over the land and sea the night is coming on ;  
Ave Sanctissima ! guard us till the dawn.

Star of life's stormy sea, hear our humble prayer,  
And when the tempests rise, save us from despair.

Guide our wand'ring footsteps through this world aright ;  
Safely through the darkness upward to the light.

Ave Sanctissima ! hear our earnest cry !  
Ave Maria ! draw near us when we die.

LONGFELLOW.  

---

OIL, poet ! gentle as the whispering wind,  
    And like it, soaring high above thy kind ;  
We lowly greet thee on thy natal day,  
In humble and in reverential lay.

'T is true, thou 'st passed beyond the midnight sea  
Which flows 'tween this life and eternity,  
Yet still thou seemest to be ever nigh ;  
'T is truly said : Great poets never die.

CHRISTMAS EVE.  

---

OH, night ! so joyful unto fallen man,  
Since that blest night when Christ his reign began  
Upon the earth.

Through all the ages past this night has been  
One of great joy and happiness to men.  
Then strife did cease, the armor laid aside,  
And white-winged peace came for a time to bide.

Then open swung the convent's massive door  
In friendly greeting to the blessed poor,  
And loud did voices through cathedrals ring  
In praise and greeting to their new-born King.

The monks who filled those convents long ago,  
Are dust to-night beneath the winter's snow,  
And those young voices now forever stilled,  
Which with sweet music the cathedrals filled.

Yet still upon this night I seem to hear  
Their happy voices ringing in my ear,  
And feel the holy dead rejoice with us  
Upon this eve of peace and happiness.

CHRISTMAS EVE, 1885.

## GOOD FRIDAY.

---

OH, day forever sad, yet ever blest !

When for this fallen world the Saviour died,  
And the pearly gates of heaven ope'd wide  
To the sin oppressed.

Distinct from out the ages of the past,  
This vision rises up within my mind ;  
A night so calm and still ; the languid wind  
Scarce stirs the leaves upon the drooping palm,  
And o'er the earth there broods an awful calm,  
Like that which falls ere sweeps the hurricane's blast.



No moon lights up the broad expanse of sky,  
The stars alone look downward from on high,  
Where Christ the Lord, o'erwhelmed with anguish, falls  
Upon the earth, within Gethsemane's walls.  
His brow, and e'en his body, dank and wet,  
In horror of our sins, with bloody sweat.

And now the silence of that awful night  
Is profaned by tramp of men and flash of light ;  
And Judas, followed by the soldier bands,  
Appears, and gives his Lord to brutal hands.  
And now, my soul, thy God, for love of thee,  
Begins the painful way of Calvary.

How meekly doth He bear the ruffian's blow,  
The crown of thorns, which starts His blood to flow,  
And all the insults of that rabble throng,  
Who jeer and scoff, and hurry Him along ;

Until, o'ercome with weariness and pain,  
He falls to earth, but is forced to rise again.

And faint and dizzy from the dreadful loss  
Of blood, He 's forced to bear the heavy cross,  
While every footstep with His gore is stained,  
Until the top of Calvary is gained,  
Where to the cross He 's nailed, and raised on high,  
Between two thieves, to languish and to die.

Approach, my soul, unto this holy place,  
And see the anguish of thy Saviour's face!  
His hands and feet pierced through by cruel nails,  
Great wounds from which his virgin blood exhales,  
While from His side there flows in crimson flood  
A precious stream of water and of blood.

And now there falls upon the trembling earth,  
Darkness, like that which reigned before the birth

Of light ; while from their graves the dead arise,  
And lightning flashes from the darkened skies,  
Grim terror seizes on the rabble throng,  
And in wild rout, quick hurries them along.

Oh, sinful soul ! Upon this blessed dawn,  
Draw near with Mary and the lovéd John,  
And 'neath the cross where hangs the Saviour, dead,  
Humbly ask pardon for thy sins so red, —  
Those sins which sharped the lance that pierced God's  
    side,  
For which He suffered and for which He died.

And Christ will see thy deep and poignant grief,  
And pardon thee, like to the dying thief ;  
So to a life of grace thou wilt be born,  
And rise with Jesus on the Easter morn.

McKEESPORT, March 23, 1883.

## COMING FROM CONFESSION.

---

**S**LOWLY, and with feet reluctant,  
From the church I go ;  
Peace upon my heart lies couchant,  
Banishing all woe.

For the words have just been spoken  
By the holy priest,  
And my soul from bondage broken,  
From all sin released.

Tender seems the moon above me,  
Sweet the crickets' call,  
And the wind says, oh ! so softly,  
" God doth love us all."

MY KINGDOM.  

---

I HAVE neither wealth nor titles,  
I have neither house nor lands,  
Yet I dwell within a castle  
Fair as reared by mortal hands.

There the summer ever lingers,  
There the flowers forever bloom ;  
Death or sickness never enter,  
Nowhere gleams the marble tomb.

There the sound of purling waters  
Drows'ly falls upon the ear ;  
There the wind is perfume freighted,  
And the birds sing low and clear.

There true love, on golden pinions,  
    Hovers o'er this castle fair,  
And the spirit of contentment  
    Broods upon the ambrosial air.

But you ask me, "How can this be?  
    Where can one this castle find?"  
But I answer, "'Tis far distant,  
    In my kingdom of the mind."

## TWO PICTURES.

-----

**L**OUND rings vain laughter in the city's street,  
And loud the echo of the hurrying feet ;  
The lamps glare brightly on the crowded throng,  
As, bent on pleasure, quick they hurry on.  
Thoughts of the present only fill each heart ;  
None of that moment when we all must part.  
  
Still lies the graveyard, mystical and white,  
Beneath the glamor of the moonlit night :  
A silence reigns supreme, no sound is heard  
Except the cypress, by the night wind stirred ;  
No noise, nor turmoil, nor quick, hurrying tread,  
Disturbs the slumbers of the blessed dead.

McKEESPORT, PA., July 16, 1884.

THE LAST DAYS OF AUTUMN.  

---

WHEN the spirit, weary

With incessant strife,

And the body broken

By the cares of life ;

Then as breath of winter,

On a sultry day,

Is the fresh'ning perfume

Of the leaves' decay.

Go into the forest,

Ye who live within

The city's crowded precincts,

The city's glare and din ;



Go into the forest,  
On a day like this,  
And her subtle spirit  
Will fill thy heart with bliss.

McKEESPORT, Nov. 22, 1885.

THE CHILD'S CHRISTMAS GIFT.  

---

**D**ARK falls the winter evening  
Upon the city's glare,  
The blesséd eve of Christmas,  
That eve so bright and fair  
To fallen man.

Within an humble cottage,  
Back from the crowded street,  
A little child lies dying, —  
Faint on her ear doth beat  
The noises of the street.

The glimmering firelight only  
Lights up the gathering gloom,  
Throwing grotesque shadows  
About the cheerless room.

Unto the widowed mother,  
Who kneels beside the bed,  
The dying child slow turneth  
Her weary, restless head.

"O mamma! hear the people  
Hurrying by so fast,  
So happy and so joyful  
That Christmas' come at last!

"Don't you remember, mamma,  
The Christmas' long ago,  
Before poor papa left us,  
Before God sent us woe?

“How you would send me early  
Up to my trundle-bed,  
While you and papa waited  
For Santa Claus and his sled?

“How happy were we, mamma,  
Papa, you, and I,  
When Christmas bells were ringing  
So joyous, merrily.

“I wish that God, O mamma !  
Would take us both to-night,  
And we again with papa  
Would spend our Christmas night.”

The mother strove to answer,  
But bowed her stricken head ;  
Fast fell her tears, as raindrops,  
Upon the sick child's bed.

But see ! What is that shadow  
That hovers in the air,  
And with its hands, soft touches  
The heads of the sorrowing pair?

The morning sunlight streaming  
Through the window-pane,  
Falls on the peaceful faces  
Of two, at home again.

CHRISTMAS EVE, 1885.

CHRISTMAS EVE.  

---

**P**EACEFULLY the daylight fades

Over land and sea ;

Shadows gather in the glades

And upon the lea.

One by one, the stars come out

In the sky above,

Seemingly to sing and shout

Of the Saviour's love.

Noiselessly the night toils on

To the midnight hour,

When Christmas bells ring joyous, out

From the high church tower.

Again the shepherds lowly  
Guard their flocks by night,  
While angels, pure and holy,  
Fill the air with light.

While sweetly, in the ringing  
Of the Christmas bell,  
I hear the angels singing  
In triumph over hell.

Again I see the manger,  
And the God of all,  
Exposed to cold and danger,  
To raise us from the fall.

And o'er my heart swift stealing,  
Repenting waters roll,  
Bringing peace and healing  
To my troubled soul ;

With firm resolve, that never  
Shall I sin again,  
But worship Christ forever,  
The "Peace on earth to men."



## AN INDIAN LEGEND.

---

“Laborers digging near the new skating rink to-day unearthed a human skeleton. It is supposed to be the remains of some Indian who was buried here before the white man invaded this region.”—*McKeesport Daily Press*.

WHERE Youghiogheny's mountain stream  
Flows, lovely as a poet's dream,  
'Tween sloping hills ;  
Where broad Monongahela sweeps  
By meadows fair and wooded steeps  
And purling rills.  
  
Here in the years now dead and gone,  
A hunter built his cabin home  
Upon the shore ;

And weirdly through the forests deep,  
On winter nights the winds did sweep,  
    And sob and roar.

And here, when broken winter's sway,  
On summer morn at break of day,  
    The winds sang low ;  
The birds the morning sun did greet,  
While on the ear fell soft and sweet  
    The river's flow.

One morn the hunter, seeking game,  
Upon an Indian maiden came,  
    Who knelt in prayer ;  
She, startled, would have fled away,  
But he with courteous words did stay,  
    And hold her there.

Lavois, the hunter, lost his heart,

Ere from the maiden he did part,

    Upon that morn :

And she, too, felt that rapturous thrill,

That sweet unrest which soul doth fill,

    When love is born.

And often in the summer days,

They met by stealth, in hidden ways,

    And forests dim ;

For fiercely did the maiden's sire

The paleface hate, and vengeance dire

    Had sworn 'gainst him.

One night, as bright the moonlight fell

On wooded height and shaded dell,

    And rippling wave,

Upon the outskirts of the wood,  
Lavois before sweet Dove Wing stood,  
Her hand to crave.

“O Dove Wing! oh, my wild flower sweet!  
My heart lies bleeding at thy feet,  
Pierced through with love.  
Oh, be my radiant star of light,  
My helpmate in the daily strife,  
My own, my love.”

Then spake the maiden soft and low:  
“My heart, Lavois, is thine, I know,  
And has been long;  
Yet would I leave my father's side,  
To be thy own too willing bride,  
'T would do thee wrong.

"For fierce as storm on mountain height,  
And cruel as the frosts that blight,

Is father's hate ;

And if I'd leave his home for thee,  
Thy life would be the penalty, —

So fierce his hate.

"Then, too, thou know'st we cannot wed,  
Until the waters bathe my head

From priestly hands."

"Tis true thy sire the paleface hates,  
And his wild heart with joy dilates,

To do him harm ;

But yonder lies my trusty boat,  
And guarded by the night, we'll float

Beyond his arm.

“And where the Beautiful River flows,  
There in the fortress, safe from foes,

We'll speak our vows,

And Holy Church will wash away

Thy primal stain, — do not delay,

My own loved spouse.”

Dove Wing gave her hand to him ;

“ I follow thee, my lord; my king,”

She simply said.

But, hark ! whence comes that twanging sound,

And, see, the maid falls to the ground.

With painful moan.

Dove Wing's father, lurking near,

His heart alive with jealous fear,

Suspicious grown,

Had heard the lovers' plan to flee,  
And from the covert of a tree,  
    Had launched a dart ;  
But anger shook his brawny arm,  
And that which meant the hunter harm,  
    Pierced Dove Wing's heart.

Fierce as the tiger robbed of young,  
So on the savage Lavois sprung,  
    With gleaming knife ;  
Fierce was the struggle, fierce and brief,  
Then heavily fell the Indian chief,  
    Bereft of life.

Then flinging down his gory blade,  
The hunter turned into the maid,  
    With anxious eyes ;

And kneeling by the maiden's side,  
"Oh, my loved spouse!" he wildly cried,  
"Look up, arise."

Then slowly Dove Wing's eyelids part,  
And her sad glance to Lavois' heart  
Pierced sharp and keen ;  
And struggling hard for speech, she said :  
"O Lavois, pour upon my head  
The sacred stream !"

Unto the river flowing near,  
The hunter, urged by love and fear,  
Swiftly sped ;  
And soon returned with beaver filled  
With sparkling water, which he spilled  
On Dove Wing's head ;



And slowly made the sacred sign,  
And spake the words of life divine  
    With heavy sighs :  
With smile to him of tenderest love,  
The soul of Dove Wing passed above,  
    Beyond the skies.

Through all the long hours of that night,  
As one bereft of sense and sight  
    And power of speech,  
The hunter knelt, with bended head,  
Beside the form of his loved dead  
    Upon the beach.

Then when the long night passed away,  
And in the east the coming day  
    Began to break,

The hunter started, as from sleep,  
Upraised his bended head, sighed deep,  
And seemed t' awake.

Then seeing Dove Wing lying dead,  
He raised his hands unto his head,  
Dumfounded, dazed ;

Then quick as sweeps the rushing wind,  
The awful truth burst on his mind,  
As still he gazed.

"O God of heaven !" fierce he cried,  
And flung himself by Dove Wing's side  
In wild despair ;

"O God of heaven, hear my cry,  
And let me with sweet Dove Wing die,  
Her lone grave share."



"A BISHOP MITRED. STANDS AMONG THEM THERE."



Then when the morning grew apace,

He sought a quiet, shady place,

To lay his bride ;

And by the ever-mourning wave,

Beneath a tree he dug a grave

Deep and wide.

And bore poor Dove Wing's body there,

With many a kiss and many a prayer

And bitter moans ;

Then lowered it in this house so dark,

And gently covered it with bark

And heavy stones :

And filled the grave of his loved dead,

And placed a rude cross at her head,

To bless her sleep.

Then falling on his knees beside  
The new-made grave, he loudly cried  
In anguish deep :

“No more, O Dove Wing! nevermore  
Shall thy glad footsteps, as of yore,  
Bring joy to me ;  
But lone and friendless I must go,  
My heart a prey to bitter woe  
And misery.

“The days shall drag as weary years ;  
The nights be filled with bitter tears  
And fruitless dread.  
And every hour I'll live again  
The anguish of that moment when  
Thy spirit fled.

“Yet like a star o’er wind-swept sea,  
This hope shall ease my misery  
    And cheer my heart ;  
That when my pilgrimage is o’er,  
I’ll meet thee on that other shore,  
    No more to part.”

Slowly and with saddened mien,  
The hunter left the mournful scene  
    Of this great woe.  
The forest sighed o’er Dove Wing’s grave :  
There rose from out the rippling wave  
    A requiem low.

In after years a thrifty town  
Upon the river’s bank had grown  
    And spread around.

Here, on an Indian summer day,

Laborers, digging in the clay,

A skeleton found ;

And wondering whose these bones might be,

They dug a new grave reverently

Beside the way.

And here, where trade goes thundering by,

The bones of Dove Wing patiently

Await the day.



THE AUTUMN EVENING.  

---

SADLY dies the autumn day,  
In moaning winds and sunset gray ;  
The forest trees, with branches bare,  
Upraise their arms as though in prayer,  
While at their feet the dead leaves lie  
Hushed and sad and silently.

The gray squirrel from his dizzy height  
Perceives the fast approaching night,  
And with quick and startled leap,  
Scrambles to his nest and sleep,  
While deep within the wood is heard  
The plaintive cry of the midnight bird.

Now just above the western hills,  
The dark clouds part, and sunlight fills  
The forest, and the saddened scene  
Is glorified in the golden sheen  
Of the setting sun.

So, sweetly on my saddened life,  
Dark with sickness and with strife,  
There falls the sunlight of God's love,  
With hope that in His home above,  
When life and sorrow both be past,  
My weary feet will rest at last.

## AUTUMN.

[Written on a Sunday, in the woods above St. Stephen's Church, Hazlewood.]

**H**OW sad, yet glorious, is thy short-lived reign !

On every hill thy flaming banners gleam

So bright and gay ; yet, as the hectic flush,

Sure presage of the dark and silent tomb.

Of all the seasons of the changing year,

I love thee, Autumn, best of all.

How sweet and soothing are thy dreamy days,

When o'er the valley hangs thy purple haze,

And the languid wind scarce stirs the fallen leaves.  
How our poor hearts, tossed by conflicting thoughts,  
And weary with the fury of life's storm,  
Grow calm and tranquil 'neath thy saddened rule,  
And casting off the cares and joys of life,  
Learn from thy lips the fate of all mankind.  
Thy bright and gorgeous banners soon shall lie  
Deep buried 'neath the coming winter's snow,  
And the sweet days which now enfold the land  
In lovers' clasp, shall droop and fade away.  
E'en so with man, who in his pride and strength  
Forgets that he is but a child of time,  
And that the day which opes so bright for him  
May close upon his dead and mangled form,  
His riches fled, and house and lands laid waste.

All, all must die, the rich and poor alike ;  
The king raised high upon his golden throne,  
And the poor peasant in his lowly hut ;  
All, all must pass again unto the dust  
From whence they sprung.  
Where are the kings and warriors, poets,  
And the long line of great, illustrious men  
Who've lived since our great Father made the world?  
The countless millions who have trod the earth  
Since Adam ate the fated fruit ?  
Fallen like thy leaves, O Autumn ! and mouldering into  
dust.  
Did we but often ponder on this truth,  
*That we must die*, and that our bodies, which  
We pamper so, and clothe in finest garb,

Would one day be the food of worms, —  
Think you that we would pass our fellow-man  
In scorn because his coffers were not filled  
With lustful gold, or that upon the sea  
Of life, tossed fiercely by tempestuous waves,  
And beaten down by cruel storms, he drifts  
A sad and helpless wreck?  
Nay, rather would we not with humble feet  
Walk meekly down the path of life, and know,  
Without our loving Father's care, that we  
Would also sink beneath the storm?  
So let us often ponder on this thought,  
*That we must die.* And then our lives will be,  
As are the autumn leaves, bright and glorious  
With the light of Christian deeds.

Then, when the autumn of our life shall come,  
And our last day have dawned upon the earth,  
When we must render back again to God  
The soul he gave to us in sacred trust,  
Then, sweet and peaceful as this autumn day,  
Our soul shall pass from earth and care, away.

## ALL-HALLOW-E'EN.

---

ALL-HALLOW-E'EN has come again,  
And, in the distant woodland glen,  
The merry squirrels with chattering great  
Resolve the night to celebrate.

Upon a log which lieth near,  
Where purling waters ripple clear,  
The squirrels have spread their festive board  
With all the bounteous woods afford.



There, in the centre, is a mound  
Of largest nuts that can be found, —  
The butternut with coat so sleek,  
And hazel-nut with face so meek ;  
  
The walnut and the hickory, too,  
And many strange to me and you,  
While round the table, purple grapes  
Lie piled in odd fantastic shapes,  
  
Above, the lovely queen of night  
Lends to the feast her silver light,  
While sweetly 'mongst the forest trees  
Is heard the music of the breeze.  
  
And now the squirrels come trooping down  
In coats of gray and coats of brown,

And soon all gather at the board,

Where, after quiet is restored,

An ancient squirrel, in coat of gray,

Lifts up his hands and 'gins to pray,

And every little squirrel there

Bows down his head and joins in prayer.

At first the ancient squirrel in gray

Holds firm and undisputed sway,

And at a look or frown from him

The squirrels cease their chattering.

But when they all begin to eat

The luscious grapes and nuts so sweet,

Their little hearts so fill with glee,

They laugh and chatter merrily.

No more they bow to Ancient Gray,  
But spring upon the board for play ;  
And round and round, with hands enclasped,  
They dance until the night is past,  
When they all scamper to their beds,  
With weary legs and aching heads.

WOMEN'S TEARS.  

---

**M**ORE powerful than the sword or pen,  
More potent than the frowns of men,  
More touching than a lover's sighs,  
Are the tears that flow from women's eyes.

NICHOLAS LOUDEN.  

---

IN a little village, far away removed  
From the noise and bustle of this restless world,  
Dwelt Nicholas Louden.  
His cottage stood beneath the shadow of  
A giant oak, upon whose branches in  
The summer-time the robins built their nests.  
The yard stretched downward to a little stream,  
Which through the long, still summer days filled all  
The air with babbling laughter :  
The roses clambered up the porch, and to

The gables of the cottage.

Here in this humble cot, with wife and child,

Lived Nicholas Louden.

He had been married just two years before ;

The fruit thereof, a baby girl, with long,

Bright golden curls, and sunny, laughing eyes,

A sunbeam cast athwart his shadowed path ;

His wife, comely and fair, yet one not meet

For his poetic nature.

She saw no beauty in the field, nor heard

The many voices of the whispering forest,

But found her pleasure only in the dance

And glitter of the ball-room ;

Yet she was good and true, and loved her lord,

And was a saving housewife.

Of medium height and frail was Nicholas Louden ;  
His face no one would say was beautiful ;  
Yet there was that about his features and  
Within his saddened eyes, that seemed to lift  
Him up above his fellow-men. His brow  
Was broad and white :  
His hair, dark as the stormy clouds, fell down  
Upon his shoulders.

The head man of the town was Richard Dent.  
His house stood on the outskirts, large and grand,  
And was surrounded on all sides by fields  
And smiling meadow lands.  
Near to the house, his mill, which ground the flour  
For all the village.  
Here labored Nicholas Louden, as a clerk,

And keeper of the books for Richard Dent ;  
And often did he work till late at night ;  
For Richard was a hard and cruel man,  
And would by every means try to increase  
The labor of his servants, and prolong  
The hour of their departure from the mill.

Yet one soft spot there was within his heart, —  
He loved, as his own life, his only child,  
A girl of twelve, and for her sake he planned  
And labored to increase his store of wealth ;  
And just one year before the time  
That Nicholas Loudon had gone there to work,  
He 'd sent her to a distant convent school,  
To have her reared as now became his wealth  
And station in the town.



His wife had died the year his child was born,  
And her green grave, surmounted by a shaft,  
Lay just beside the chapel door.  
And here his child, before he sent her to  
The convent school, was wont to come and say  
Her prayers above her mother's grave ; for e'en  
When Genevieve was a little child,  
She loved to think of those who 'd gone before,  
And often at some nameless grave her nurse  
Would find her praying for the soul of him  
Who slept beneath.

And slowly in the quiet town the years  
Toiled on, till Genevieve six years at school  
Had been ; and now within the month of June,  
She was to come again unto her home.

And every morn the villagers looked to see  
The lumbering coach go by and her within.

Nicholas Louden, bent with many cares,  
And weary with his long and ceaseless work,  
Heard not nor cared for village talk, and so  
Knew not that Genevieve was to return,  
Until one eve he met her at the church.

The sun was sinking down behind the hills,  
And all the western sky one sea of gold ;  
The birds were joining with the Holy Church  
In vesper hymn to God, and passion seemed  
To have fled away from earth.

The heart of Nicholas Louden filled with peace,  
That peace of God which passeth human ken,  
And as the " O Salutaris ! " floated through

The quaint old church, his heart o'erflowed with love  
For God and man.

'T was as he slowly left this holy place,  
His eyes first saw the face of Genevieve,  
Her father at the door, proud, introduced  
His child to Nicholas and his wife.  
As soon as Nicholas looked into her eyes, his heart  
Stirred strangely in his breast, and all along  
His homeward way her face did rudely break  
Upon his thoughts,  
But now the turmoil of another day  
Dispelled all thoughts save those of work : and as  
The days went by, with Genevieve seen no more,  
Her face fled from his mind and haunted him not,  
Until one day, she, coming to the mill

To see the work, was given to Nicholas' care ;  
And as he took her through the various rooms,  
They wandered from the theme of flour and grain  
To poetry and books, and to the grand  
In nature ; and he found her mind, as his,  
Loved solitude, the silence of the woods,  
And nature in her many changing forms.

Then often after, by her father's side,  
Did she come to the mill.

In Nicholas' heart, not conscious of the thing himself,  
There grew a strong and tender love for her,  
So that the world seemed bright when she was near,  
And dark and cheerless when she was away.

But Nicholas, busied at his daily toil,  
Stopped not to question of his heart the fact

His home was losing all its charms for him,  
And Genevieve's bright face and chestnut hair  
Was oft'ner in his mind than thoughts of her  
To whom his troth was plighted unto death,  
And thus, unconscious of the chain that was  
So swiftly binding him within its folds,  
He loved to see his wife and Genevieve  
Become fast friends, and thought within himself:  
She'll teach my wife to think on higher things,  
And change her to another Genevieve,  
And Genevieve, she, quick as women are  
In reading their own hearts, well knew her heart  
Was Nicholas Loudon's, and she oft resolved  
To shun his presence, in the hope that thus  
His absence would abate this sinful love.

But when she saw again his saddened face  
And heard his tender voice, her good resolves  
Would fade away as mists before the sun ;  
And then again, she thought, he loves me not,  
And if his presence I would shun,  
He, wondering at my actions, might surmise  
And learn my secret.  
Thus love and pride combined to fight against  
Her good resolves ; and she, though good, was weak  
As women are, and could not both subdue her love and  
pride.

And though she struggled bravely 'gainst this sin,  
She felt her heart, yea, e'en her very soul  
Belonged to Nicholas Louden.

And thus her love, grown stronger than herself,

Disdaining her control, betrayed itself

To Nicholas Louden.

She and Nicholas, with his wife and child,

Were rambling through the woods one summer's day :

And as they passed a clump of birchen trees,

A monstrous snake crawled out across their path,

And raised its shining head as though to spring

On Genevieve. "O Nicholas, save me!" loud

She cried, and threw herself within his arms.

His snakeship, frightened by her screams, dropped

down

His head, and quickly fled away.

In that wild cry, and Genevieve's pleading eyes,

Nicholas Louden read that he was loved,

And in that knowledge also learned that he

Returned this love.

Oh ! what a wave of sorrow and remorse  
Swept o'er his noble heart, when this stern truth  
Broke in upon his soul ; that he, who loved  
His honor far above his very life,  
Should faithless be to her he 'd vowed to love  
And cherish even unto death.

Down on his heart there fell a gloom as deep  
As that which shrouds the earth before the storm,  
And all the light and beauty seemed to die  
From out the summer day.

When Nicholas Loudon knelt in prayer that night,  
He firm resolved to crush this passion down :  
But little did he know how strong this love  
Had grown, and what a fierce and bitter fight



He yet must make, ere peace would come again

Unto his soul.

Then followed days of strife and misery.

The more he tried to shun, the oftener did

It seem he met sweet Genevieve ; and though

He showed not of his love, by word or look,

Her presence added fury to the storm

Which, in his bosom, fierce and ceaseless raged

'Tween duty and 'tween love : and love would seem

The stronger of the two when she was near.

Yet did he bravely fight against this sin,

And strive to overcome this Christless love,

And change its course from Genevieve to his wife.

But she, his wife, cared only for the joys

And senseless whims of fashion, and therefore

Hindered more than helped his good resolves ;  
And often would she wound him sore by words  
Of cruel anger.

And thus the days went by in misery.

More stern and silent to the outside world  
Grew Nicholas Louden, — yet to wife and child  
More true and tender, his one thought to make  
Their lives one happy, glorious summer day,  
And not like his, a dreary winter's waste.

One morn his child fell ill, and ere two days  
Had fled, its soul passed unto God.  
When Nicholas Louden knelt beside its bier,  
He felt 't was but the judgment of his God.  
"I have been false to her I swore to love,  
And God has taken my beloved child.

O God, Thy ways are just ! " he humbly said :

" I bow beneath Thy rod."

How quick his cup of sorrow seemed to fill

And overflow ; and then he thought, 't is best.

Her life has been a bright and joyful one,

And she has gained the crown without the cross.

And so the sunlight faded from his path,

And shadows gathered darker on his way.

    Within the graveyard of the village church,

Upon a hillside sloping to the west,

Nicholas' child was laid ; and here, when day was done,

And shadows dark and cool fell o'er the earth,

Nicholas and his wife were wont to come

And say their prayers above their loved child's grave :

For since the death of this, their only child,

Nicholas' wife had lost her love of dress,  
And all the vanities of her olden life,  
And now would often think upon her death,  
And of that other life beyond the tomb.

Two months had come and gone since Nicholas' child  
Had passed beyond the midnight sea which flows  
Between this life and that which is to come,  
When now his wife fell sick, and slowly death  
Approached her feverish couch.

Fierce 'gainst his touch she fought without avail ;

And so one afternoon, when Nicholas sat  
Beside her couch, and strove to cheer her up,  
She spake :

" Nicholas, I fear that my poor life shall end  
To-night. Something doth seem to press my soul

Low down, and tell me that my dream of life  
Is o'er: so hasten for the minister  
Of God, that I may make my peace before  
I die."

When Nicholas Loudon, leaning o'er her bed,  
Perceived the death dews gathering on her brow,  
He quickly stooped and pressed his lips to hers,  
And hurried for the minister of God.  
Then, when the sun dipped 'neath the western hills,  
And daylight slowly faded from the earth,  
She, strengthened with the rites of Holy Church,  
Passed with the day unto eternity.

As Nicholas looked upon the silent form  
Of his dead wife, the scales of his self-love  
Dropped from his eyes, and in its hideous phase

He saw his crime ; and, crushed with sorrow and  
Remorse, he vowed to spend his future life  
In prayer and penance, and in holy deeds.

Then, when two days had passed, his wife was laid  
Beside her babe, within the churchyard gates.

Then slowly passed the days in daily cares ;  
But when the quiet of the evening fell,  
Unto the churchyard Nicholas took his way,  
And knelt beside the graves of wife and child,  
And prayed most fervently for their repose.

One evening, as he entered at the gate,  
He saw a maiden kneeling by the tombs,  
Her hands upraised and clasped, as though in prayer,  
And face uplifted to the bending skies.  
A thrill of pleasure flashed through Nicholas' veins ;

For in the form, low kneeling at the graves,  
His lover eyes discerned sweet Genevieve.  
He started forward, as to reach her side ;  
Then quickly stopped, and pressed his hand unto  
His head, like one struck with a sudden pain,  
And slowly sank into a rustic seat.  
" My vow, my vow," he said ; " O God, give strength !"  
Then had he fled from out the cemetery grounds,  
But that he feared he would be seen by Genevieve.  
Like one who stands within a city's street  
In rags and hunger on a winter's night,  
And looks into the palaces of the rich,  
And sees the fire, and smells the hungering scent  
Of cooking food ;  
So Nicholas sat and gazed on Genevieve,

His heart a-hungering for the love he knew  
Was his, but for the wall that he had reared  
By his own acts.

And now he heard his name on Genevieve's lips,  
Which, as 't was said, made roses on her cheeks :

"O Nicholas, Nicholas! How my inmost heart  
Yearns for thy love, thy sweet companionship.

O God! forgive my sin in loving him

When he was wed, and let us yet be one."

What awful anguish pierced to Nicholas' heart,

As fell these words from out his loved one's lips.

"O God!" he moaned, "I cannot live without

Sweet Genevieve! I cannot pluck this love

From out my heart, unless with it my life.

So if I claim her not, I cannot live,



And I will be my own dark murderer."

And then his angel whispered, "Rouse, be strong!

For he who sins must suffer for his crime :

Such is the law of God.

And then thy vow, remember well thy vow."

Fierce was the struggle in his soul : great beads

Of sweat stood out and rolled from off his brow,

And in his anguish he sank on the ground.

Now Genevieve rose, and slowly passed the spot

Where Nicholas lay, her footsteps sounding on

His ear like clods thrown on his coffin lid.

Awhile he lay, prone flat upon the ground :

Then roused himself, and struggled to the church,

And humbly kneeling at the altar rail,

Poured out his soul to God in earnest prayer :

“O Christ, my Saviour! hearken to my cry;  
Give me the strength to suffer for my sins,  
And grant me never to forget my vow!  
O Holy Mother! pray for thy poor child,  
And guide his footsteps through the desert wide.”  
Like dews of heaven on the parchéd earth,  
So God’s sweet peace fell on his troubled heart.  
Strong grew his purpose, to devote his life  
To penance for his sin; and thus he prayed:  
“Father, I vow to Thee my future life;  
Accept it as a penance for my sin.  
I will renounce the world, and her I love,  
And give my life to prayer and holy deeds.  
Accept my sacrifice, O God!  
And pardon me.”

And then he turned from the Great Presence there,  
With peaceful soul, and firm resolve to part  
At once, forever, from sweet Genevieve.

How lovely seemed the night, as slow he walked  
Back to the cottage where he still did dwell.  
The air was heavy with the breath of flowers,  
For 't was the month of June, the same sweet month  
In which he first had met his Genevieve ;  
The crickets chirped from 'neath the wayside stone ;  
The frogs croaked in the brook, and from the fields  
The ceaseless grasshopper's hum fell on the ear ;  
And soft the landscape stretched beneath the moon.  
The quiet of the scene stirred Nicholas' heart,  
And at his cottage door he turned again,  
To view it o'er.

The village church stood dark against the sky,  
While at its base the graveyard stretched away,  
The tombstones gleaming 'neath the moonlight's sheen ;  
And one he noticed, rising near the church,  
Which marked the spot where gently slept his wife  
And child.  
A wave of sadness swept across his heart,  
And stirred the chords, and tears burst from his eyes.  
" O God, have mercy on my wife and child ! "  
Fell from his lips, while faster rained his tears ;  
And then, " Forgive me for the wrong I've done  
To her, my wife, my poor unlovéd wife."  
And then he turned and oped his cottage door,  
But stopped and looked once more upon the scene,  
Then passed within his house and closed the door.

Unto the woman, keeper of his house,  
Who stood within the kitchen kneading bread,  
He spake : " Eliza, I will leave this place  
To-morrow, as the sun peeps o'er the hills,  
To thee I give this cottage and the grounds,  
And all within, to do with as thou wilt,  
But ask no reason : this alone I give,  
That I but do what seems both just and right."  
Then to his room. Eliza ceased her work,  
Took up her lamp, and to her chamber passed :  
But not to sleep. The thought that she must part  
Forever from this man she'd learned to love,  
As mother loves her son, filled her old heart  
With anguish keen.  
Beside the open window of her room

She sat and listened through the lonely night,  
For fear that Nicholas might soft steal away,  
And she not see his face again.

When faint the dawn appeared in eastern sky,  
Then Nicholas Louden oped his chamber door,  
And with valise in hand, crept down the stairs.

Eliza heard his step and followed him.

“O Nicholas, Nicholas, leave us not, I pray!”

Eliza cried. “What drives thee from thy home?”

But he: “Eliza, ’t is God’s holy will.

Why dost *thou* grieve? I never knew that I  
Had won the favor to be loved by thee.”

And she: “Yes, Nicholas, thou ’st been kind to me,  
And I do love thee with a mother’s love.

Oft have I pitied thy sad loneliness,

And wished another love would fill thy heart,  
Another wife dispel thy saddened moods ;  
And oft to Genevieve Dent have I discoursed,  
In seeming jest, yet serious in my heart,  
That she would set her cap to win thy love ;  
And though she seemed to notice not my words,  
Yet her deep blushes told what fain she 'd hid."  
But he : " Enough, enough ! thou wrong'st her ;  
So ' Fare thee well," he said, and kissed her brow,  
And quickly strode away ; but at the gate  
Stopped to caress his dog, which followed him.  
And now he hears the sound of rumbling wheels,  
And hurries to the street through which the stage  
Goes through the town.  
The driver, at a nod from him, draws up,

And Nicholas enters.

Sharp cracks the whip, the horses yet are fresh,  
And the great stage goes thundering through the town.  
Few are astir, and those at household cares ;  
So, as the stage approaches to the house  
Where Genevieve resides, no fears that she  
Shall see him, flit through Nicholas' mind ;  
No one is seen within the spacious grounds  
Or at the windows as the stage goes by ;  
And Nicholas feels the stronger for this fact,  
For he yet fears the light of Genevieve's eyes,  
Yet fears to look into her gentle face.  
But, see ! a maiden turns yon skirting hedge  
Just as the coach goes by. She lifts her eyes,  
And Genevieve and Nicholas meet again.



She flushes quick ; then sees his travelling dress,  
And all the blood seems rushing to her heart,  
So pale she grows.

He, flushing scarlet, notes but this, and then  
Her form fades from his sight forevermore.  
That night, within an humble convent cell,  
Nicholas Louden told his beads in prayer,  
And ere a year had passed became a monk,  
And known among the rest as Brother James.

And daily Genevieve gazed down the road  
To see the stage come lumbering into town,  
But vainly looked among the passengers  
For Nicholas' face.

Eliza, listless at her household cares,  
Would start at every footstep in the street,

And pause and listen for the opening gate.

· E'en Nicholas' dog grew thin, refused to eat,

And for his master cried the livelong night ;

And in the day would trot unto the gate,

Place his front paws high in the paling fence,

Look up and down the road, and piteous cry ;

Then slowly, and with drooping head, again

Back to the porch, where, with his nose between

His outstretched paws, he 'd lie through all the day,

And when Eliza passed him in her work,

He 'd lift his great brown eyes unto her face,

And sadly whine.

And now the day of rest breaks in the east ;

And soon the chapel bell calls to the mass

The faithful in the town and country round.

Among the worshippers, Eliza sees  
Genevieve Dent within her pew, alone ;  
And when the mass is o'er, Eliza stands  
Outside the chapel door and waits for her,  
With sad, pale face, yet firm and haughty tread,  
Genevieve Dent comes down the narrow aisle,  
Eliza, seeing her proud, haughty air,  
Feared to address her ; but another look  
Served to convince her that this mien was false,  
And but assumed to hide an aching heart ;  
And so she spake : " Miss Genevieve, wilt thou  
Come to my cottage, — I would speak with thee ?  
I am alone ; do not deny me this,  
For I would talk of something near my heart."  
" Why, yes, Eliza : certainly I will,"

Spoke Genevieve ; then slowly down the road  
They went, no word from either's lips.  
Tumultuous beat the heart of Genevieve ;  
A thousand fancies flitted through her brain,  
As once again she stepped within the room,  
Where, in the happy days so long ago,  
She and Nicholas' wife had talked and planned,  
Before the shadow of forbidden love  
Had shut the sunlight ever from her life.  
Eliza spoke : " Sit down, Miss Genevieve.  
I wish to ask thy counsel and thy help.  
Six days ago did Nicholas Loudon leave his home ;  
The night before he left he 'd been to see  
The grave of his poor wife, as was his use.  
He was away much longer than his wont ;

And when he came, his face was very pale.  
And then he said ; ‘ Eliza, fare thee well,  
For I must leave this place forevermore.’  
And then this cottage he did give to me  
And all within.” Then husky grew her voice,  
And tears rolled down her cheeks unto the floor.  
“ And now, Miss Genevieve, what would you do,  
And do you think he will return again ? ”  
Then Genevieve ; and as she spoke, her voice  
Seemed hard, and sounded strange unto herself :  
“ Indeed, I know not ; how can I foretell  
His acts ? for he has shunned me since he lost  
His wife and child.”  
And then Eliza : “ Pardon, me I pray ;  
But I did think, for thee, he left his home ;

That he had asked thy hand and been refused,  
For oft I've heard him murmur in his sleep,  
Thy name."

Soft grew the heart of Genevieve ; her pride  
Dissolved, as snow beneath the sun's warm rays,  
And with a flood of tears, she bowed her head  
Upon the window-sill. Eliza rose,  
And put her arm about poor Genevieve's waist,  
And kissed the tear-drops from her face.

Then Nicholas' dog came in the room, and stuck  
His nose between the pair, and whined.

"Poor dog, poor dog!" sighed Genevieve; "e'en thou  
Dost mourn for thy poor master's face."

Then to the room where Nicholas slept they went.

Here everything was as it had been left

By him upon the morning he had gone,  
Upon the hearth a pile of ashes lay,  
Remains of letters burned by him that morn ;  
There drawers were standing open, here some clothes  
Lay on a chair, some collars on a stand ;  
The bed, alone, was undisturbed, for he  
Had slept not in it on that night,  
A marble crucifix, which was his wife's,  
And which had hung above the mantelpiece,  
Alone was gone, of all the fixtures of the room.  
" Why here, Eliza ! " broke from Genevieve, —  
" Here is a letter, and it is for me ! "  
Then eagerly she grasped the missive up,  
And tore it open with quick, trembling hands,  
Eliza watched her closely while she read.

At first a flush of fire lit up her face,

And then the color faded from her cheeks,

Until the marble on the dresser there

Was not more white.

The letter dropped from out her trembling hands,

And with a moan she sank upon the floor.

Eliza raised her, bore her to the bed,

Threw water in her face, and chafed her hands ;

And soon her dark eyes opened once again.

In a short time she raised up from the bed,

And picked the letter up, which on the floor still lay.

“ Miss Genevieve, sit down and rest thyself,

Until you gain more strength,” Eliza said.

“ No, no, Eliza ; I must now go home.”

And then Eliza : “ Dost the letter say



That Nicholas will come back?"

"No: Nicholas has abjured the world, and joined

A band of monks, so the letter says,

And he will ne'er return to you or me."

Then Genevieve slipped the letter 'neath her dress,

And slowly homeward walked.

Within the spacious grounds about her home,

She sought a quiet nook, again to read

The letter o'er, and thus it ran:

"Dearest Genevieve, thou knowest that our love

Was sown in crime: for then I had no right

To love but my own wife, my poor dead wife!

The more I think of this, the greater seems

My crime: so I have vowed to spend my life

In convent walls, in penance for my sin.

For weeks and months I've struggled 'gainst my  
love, —

To pluck it from my heart; but all in vain.

And when, last night, within the churchyard grounds,

I saw thee praying at my poor wife's grave,

My heart rebelled, and struggled to be free,

To fly to thee, and there to find its rest.

And so I clearly saw but these two paths :

To go away, and bind myself by vow ;

Or to remain, and yield unto my heart.

The latter course I could not take, e'en though

'T was strewn with sweetest roses of thy love,

And with all earthly happiness to me.

Because, beside the form of my dead wife,

I'd sworn to pass my life in prayers for her,

In penance for my sin.

Then, too, because our love, conceived in crime,

Would likely cause the anger of our Lord

To smite us both.

And, Genevieve, my love for thee is such

That I would bear all ills of this poor life,

All temporal losses, e'en the loss of thee,

To save thy fair young life from any woe.

Think of me as one dead : mourn not for me :

And yet thy loving heart will find a mate

More fit than I, across whose life there falls

No shadow of a crime of other days.

And now, sweet Genevieve, good-by, good-by !

No more I'll meet thee in this mortal life :

But I would ask thee, now and then, to pray

That God would pardon me, would give me peace.  
And when, in weary vigils passed in prayer,  
In rigorous fasts, and charities to the poor,  
My soul grows pure, and free from earthly taint,  
Then often will I pray to God for thee,  
And then presume my prayers be gracious heard.”

Six months had passed since Nicholas left ;  
And Genevieve grew paler, day by day.  
No sigh escaped her lips ; no external sign  
Told to the world the secret of her life.  
She had a cheerful word for every one ;  
A happy smile lit up her lovely face ;  
And ne'er by word or look did she disclose  
The blighting sorrow eating at her heart.  
But when alone, away from prying eyes,

A shade of sorrow blotted out the smile,  
And she would clasp her hands and heavily sigh,  
And murmur, "God have mercy! let me die."  
All idle time she spent within the church,  
For there alone she found surcease from pain:  
For as a mother to a sorrowing child,  
So Holy Church dispels the haunting fears,  
And wipes the tear-drops from her children's eyes.

Slow dragged the weary Winter, and the Spring  
Just roused from her long sleep, when Genevieve,  
Grown weaker day by day, took to her bed,  
And slowly ebb'd her fair young life away.

It was a lovely evening in the month  
So dear to Mary, when the summons came,  
Through all the morning Genevieve had lain

In deadly stupor.

Beside the bed her father sat as one distracted.

Whatever love was in his stony heart

Had twined itself around his only child ;

And now that he must lose her drove him mad.

" O God ! O God ! " he cried, " wilt Thou not save

My only child, my only joy in life ? "

Just then the eyes of Genevieve unclosed,

And low she whispered : " Father, is the priest

Not here ? " " Not now, my daughter ; but he said

He 'd soon return. I think I hear him now

Speak to the servant in the hall below.

Yes, here he comes. "

An aged man now entered at the door,

The seal of sanctity upon his brow.

'Tis true, his features were not handsome : yet

His holy soul looked from his eyes, and threw

A lofty grandeur o'er his face.

His hair, white as the snow, fell o'er his neck,

And seemed to add a majesty to his mien.

"God bless all here !" he said, and made the sign ;

Then walked unto the bed, took Genevieve's hand,

And for a moment looked into her face ;

Then said : " My child, God wills that all shall die ;

And — " " Yes, father," interrupted Genevieve :

" I know my hour has come. Fear not to say

What well I see is written on thy face ;

For death to me is but release from pain.

For well thou knowest the story of my life.

To thee, alone, I oped my inmost heart ;

And thou didst teach me to upbear my cross,  
That cross so well deservéd for my sin.  
But I would now confess my sins to thee,  
That God would show me mercy when I go.”  
Then to the father, who, with bended head,  
Knelt near the door, the priest, in low voice, said :  
“ Please quit the room a moment, till I hear  
Thy child’s confession.”

And then the priest sat down  
Beside the bed, and humbly Genevieve  
Confessed her sins.  
Then, too, the father, at the priest’s command,  
Returned again, and knelt beside the bed ;  
And took his daughter’s hand in his, the while  
The priest administered the Holy Bread,



And gave to Genevieve the last rites of the Church.  
Then, when the priest had finished, he sat down  
Beside the bed.

The village doctor, who had tried in vain  
His skill on Genevieve, quick entered now,  
One look into the patient's face, and then  
He too sat down beside the watchers there.  
No word was spoken ; that great sense of awe  
Which fills the heart when we look on the face  
Of one who 's passing through that awful change  
Of life to death, checked every rising word.  
Upon a little stand beside the bed  
Two candles burned ; a crucifix stood between.  
Outside, the moon had risen, and her light  
Streamed through the windows full on

Genevieve's face.

The curtains at the casement heavily stirred

Within the air ; the rippling of the stream,

The sighing of the wind among the trees,

And all the voices of the night came through

The open windows, to the watchers' ears.

Now Genevieve turned her head, and faintly spoke :

" Dear father, call the servants. I would say

A word to them before I die."

Then when they came, she took each by the hand,

And said : " Good-by, good-by ! God bless you all,

And don't forget to often pray for me."

Then to her father : " One request I make.

It is my last ; I know thou 'lt not refuse."

And he : " Not if it were my very life."

"Then, father, once a month have masses said  
For the repose of Nicholas Louden's wife."  
Then spake the priest: "She 's passing fast away,  
Kneel down and say the litany for her,  
That she may have a happy passage hence."

And then he rose,  
Took Genevieve's hand, and stood beside the bed,  
While whispered Genevieve: "Into Thy hands,  
O God! my spirit I commend this night.  
Have mercy, Jesus, on my soul!"  
Then, while the priest above her head did make  
The sacred sign, a tremor shook her frame,  
And then a shadow passed across her face,  
And she had gone unto the judgment seat.

Five years have passed since Nicholas Louden left

His native village, for a poor monk's cell.  
Among the brothers he was noted for  
His strict obedience to the slightest rule,  
His great humility, his love for prayer,  
And for his charities unto the poor.  
And when the abbot passed to his reward,  
The brothers asked that Nicholas take his place ;  
But he, remembering his former sin,  
And loathing it the more as years went by,  
Declined the honor with, " I am not fit ;  
Take one more worthy."  
But still they pressed him to accept, and said :  
" Thou art the worthiest among us all."  
But he was firm, and so another ruled  
The humble monks.

And now the blessed Christmas time drew near,  
And Nicholas lay upon a bed of pain.  
One cold and stormy day he went abroad  
To bear relief unto the neighboring poor,  
And meeting on the way a man ill clad,  
Has given his own cloak to cover him,  
And thus took cold, and now lies sick to death.

'Tis Christmas eve ; the monks through all the day  
Have been within the chapel, gracing it  
With boughs of palm.  
One brother had been left in Nicholas' room  
To watch him, and to give him medicine ;  
But now he leaves the room, and Nicholas  
Is alone.  
He lies upon his pallet, gazing out

Upon the wintry sky and snow-clad earth.  
The wind, which blew a gale through all the day,  
Is sinking as the evening shadows fall,  
And now moans sadly through the leafless trees,  
And whistles round the convent walls.  
Now Nicholas speaks : " O God ! I thank thee for  
Thy mercy unto me ; that Thou hast brought  
Me to this harbor, from the stormy sea  
And perils of the worldly life ;  
That Thou didst strengthen me, upon that night  
So long ago, and brought me here to peace.  
How little now appears the sacrifice  
Which seemed so crushing then.  
And now I feel Thou hast forgiven me,  
And soon will grant me everlasting rest."

And now the monk returned, and with him came  
The abbot, bearing in his hands the Bread  
Of Life.

Behind him walk the monks, ranged two by two.  
Then all kneel down, except the abbot, who  
Approaches to the bed, and thus to Nicholas speaks :

“ My son, I fear that thou art growing worse :  
So ’t would be well that thou confess thy faults,  
And, too, receive the last rites of the church.”

And Nicholas : “ Yes, father, such is my wish.”

In a few moments Nicholas’ sins are told,  
For his were such that we within the world  
Would think them but good deeds.

The while the monks recited in low voice  
The church’s last prayers for her departing sons,

The abbot gives the last great rite  
Of Extreme Unction to the dying monk,  
Who bids them all farewell, with "Brothers dear,  
Weep not for me ; my sufferings are o'er.  
And when the clock tolls out the midnight hour,  
Join, as thy wont, to-night in song of praise  
To Christ, the new-born King, and let thy hearts  
O'erflow with joy, and sorrow not for me."  
Then, with profession of his faith, he sleeps,  
To wake no more within this mortal life.

'Tis midnight in the town  
Where Nicholas dwelt, so many years ago.  
The harvest moon rides in a cloudless sky,  
And bathes, in her weird light, both hill and dale ;  
The moonlight lingers fondly round the tombs.



Within the graveyard of the village church,  
Three graves lie side by side, upon a hill,  
And these the moonlight seems to touch  
With gentlest hand.

On the first stone, carved deeply, runs the tale :  
"Marie, Nicholas Louden's wife." Then, too :  
"Lucille, his well beloved child."

Upon the next, the legend, "Genevieve Dent."  
The other, "Richard Dent, aged sixty-five."

Far from this spot, within a lonely dell,  
A monastery rears its walls unto the sky.  
Upon its roof the mystic moonlight sleeps,  
And casts great shadows on the grassy sward.

No sound disturbs the stillness of the night,  
Save the low voices of the forest near.

Back from the monastery, on a rising knoll,  
Within a well-kept hedge, the graveyard lies  
Where sleep the monks, with folded hands, and wait  
The resurrection morn.

An humble cross, with name engraved thereon  
Of him who sleeps beneath, marks out each grave.

In a far corner, 'neath a mighty oak,

An iron cross above a grassy mound

Proclaims that here another brother sleeps.

The moonlight falls in broken wavelets through

The leafy branches of the mighty oak

Upon the humble grave, and gilds the name

Upon the metal cross, — "Brother James."

















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