

THE GLEANER
POEMS & SONGS
BY
JOHN FAWCETT SKELTON



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THE GLEANER

A SELECTION OF

POEMS AND SONGS

BY

JOHN FAWCETT SKELTON

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PREFACE.

DEAR READERS,

It is with feelings of a rather pleasurable than otherwise sort of anxiety that I venture to lay before you, in book form, what I suppose I may be allowed to call my poetical works. The writing of them has extended over a period of about a dozen years. A great number of the pieces have already appeared in the several newspapers of Bolton, and it is the simple fact that I am still alive after that, which has emboldened me to present you with those again, together with about as many more original ones, in a more lasting and fingerable fashion.

The Poems and Songs of "THE GLEANER" do not presume to teach; for the author himself has not yet learned by heart to put to practical use *all* the good moral and social hints they contain. Yet he hopes, nevertheless, they will be allowed not only to convey their own lessons, but also to strike them "home." They do, however, aspire to please and amuse you, dear Readers, and if they do that they do much, and I shall feel amply remunerated thereby.

Some were written in Bolton, some in Hawkshaw-Lane, some on the bracing hill-tops and in the beautiful valleys of my native land, some were penned at sea, some in Australia, some in joy, others in sorrow, some in the sunshine, and many in the shade.

The selection is laid before you respectfully, and without any regard to classification, order, or arrangement. I launch them upon the sea of your intelligence, your honourable criticism, and your justice, blended, if so please you, with your lenient forbearance, on the ground that no two men think alike; and I fondly hope that *some* of the poetical waifs may reach the happy haven of your approbation. But each must sink or swim as it can, and as its merit (or the want of it) deserves.

I have nothing further to do with them, except to commend them tenderly to you, and to own them—they are mine—God bless them!

There are only One Thousand copies (all at your service) and whatever profit may accrue from the sale and disposal of the said number of copies only, I shall be glad to hand over to the Infirmary of my native town of Bolton.

Permit me to express especial pride and gratitude to those of you, dear Readers, whose faith in and friendship for me induced to be subscribers for "THE CLEANER," and I hope you will not regret presenting me with your autographs, which I beg to preserve.

In conjunction with the printer, my dear friend, Thomas Cunliffe, I have spared neither pains nor pelf to make the book presentable, and worthy your acceptance.

In conclusion, dear Readers, I wish you all, sincerely, a happy new year, and beg to subscribe myself

Your obedient servant,

THE AUTHOR.

Hawkshaw-Lane, Tottington, near Bury, Lancashire,

New Year's Day, 1876.

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THE GLEANER.



THE RANSOM OF THE PAINTER.

FROM THE FRENCH.

“ Rude sentinel of countless years,
How grand this rock abrupt appears !
Methinks Prometheus here was bound,
While famished vultures wheeled around
His quivering limbs, and glaring eyes
And foaming mouth, whence yells arise
To scare those hellbirds from his heart,
Which throbs as though in twain 'twould part !
Methinks these gloomy caves were built
When frail mankind began to sin,
To be the hiding-dens of guilt,—
They seem so dark and deep within !
And yet yon distant sylvan glade
Was surely but for angels made,
Overlooked by yon ærial tower,
The stronghold of some princely power.
O glorious landscape ! Beauty's home !
Thy spirit to my soul doth come,
To steal me from my load of care,
And wean me from my deep despair.
O glorious landscape ! if 'twere mine
To paint thee as I see thee now,
Beflooded in this light divine,
Cold Death might kiss my happy brow !”
Thus spoke a handsome bright-eyed youth,
The child of Genius and of Truth,
Struck with the wondrous mountain-spot,
High o'er his mean Italian cot.

So wrapt and so entranced was he
 In this delicious reverie,
 He heard not footsteps in the wood
 Till by his very side there stood
 A brigand—arm'd with gun and knife,
 Who liv'd with all mankind at strife.
 “ Your money, signor, or your life.”
 The youth felt something touch his cheek,
 And yet thus fearless did he speak :
 “ My money ? go demand it of
 The last innkeeper by the road ;
 My life's the only thing I have—
 Take it, 'tis but a weary load.”
 What bitterness was in his voice !
 What heartfelt sadness in his eye !
 The brigand saw he would rejoice
 To know the moment he should die.
 Down fell the pistol ; and the blade
 Was sheath'd deep in its scabbard, bare ;
 A suff'ring human instinct made
 A brother of the robber there.
 “ Thou art unlappy, youth, thy hand ;
 Would'st like to join our mountain band ?
 A word, and thou art quick enroll'd
 To share our freedom and our gold.”
 Sudden there burst upon the scene
 The lawless rest, led by their queen,
 Who flew into his arms that first
 Upon the wanderer's reverie burst.
 “ Thou art not wounded, Pietro, dear ?”
 She anxious whispered in his ear.
 “ Wounded, my Marietta, sweet ?
 'Tis but an unarmed boy, whose face
 Have thoughtless trespass'd our domain ;
 Some painter-student from the plain,
 For, see, his pencil and his book
 Are lying in yon rocky nook.”

A strong old man now stepp'd between,
 And changed the aspect of the scene.
 The chief, he, of the robber horde,
 And life or death was in his word.
 “ Death, death ! no foolish mercy show ;
 These painter-dogs come from below

As spies, to reproduce our faces
 And sketch our mountain hiding-places ;
 Which curséd works, with open hand,
 They freely scatter o'er the land,
 Till none of us this moment dare
 Appear at any house of prayer.
 The holy Virgin holds the list
 Of all the masses I have miss'd
 Through fear of pictures up and down
 In ravine, hamlet, and in town.
 Death, death ! no quarter for this one,"
 The chieftain cried in terrible tone.
 But Pietro said, " The youth doth seem
 Quite disenchanted with that world
 From which we all were basely hurl'd
 Through fighting for our rights supreme.
 Thou knows't one of our band is dead,
 Francesco, with the fair young face,
 His spirit would not all be fled
 If this young stranger fill his place."
 " Thanks," said the youth, and undismay'd
 Turn'd to the chief and gently said,
 " I have no fancy for your trade."
 " What, art thou not from Naples fled ?"
 The monarch bandit sternly growl'd—
 (His words like muffled thunder roll'd)—
 " And bear'st thou no revengeful hate
 Against our Spanish tyrants great,
 Who persecute Italia's sons
 And force them into slavish bonds ?"
 " Yea," cried the youth, with kindling brow,
 " I hate the Vice-roi more than thou ;
 And when the time shall come to drive
 Our tyrants back (be I alive)
 I'll not be last to draw the sword,
 Of that take thou my solemn word.
 But if thou dream'st that under cloak
 Of even tyranny's fell yoke
 Which lays my country bleeding low,
 I'd strike an inoffensive foe
 To rob him of his life or gold,
 Thou'rt not so wise as thou art old."
 " Shoot him !" the old man yell'd in rage,
 And none to thwart him dare engage.

Now many a carbine marks that breast
 Full and aglow with high desire,
 While, glancing at their chief, the rest
 Wait but the fatal sign to fire.
 The woman notes with pitying eye
 The victim of the chief, uncouth,
 But dare not speak, or even sigh
 In favour of that noble youth.
 "I ask but one small grace," he said,
 "Then lay me with the peaceful dead :
 Let me but once again behold
 This glorious landscape bathed in gold,
 For, see ! the sun, like beauty, proud,
 Throws off the veil of yon white cloud,
 Illumines, with his bold bright eye,
 Earth, ocean, and the azure sky.
 Oh, let me, for the last time, trace
 The lineaments of Nature's face !"
 "Thou shalt," the softening chief replied ;
 " 'Twere meanness to refuse thy prayer,
 Go to yon beetling mountain side,
 And for thy speedy doom prepare.
 Thou canst not if thou wouldst escape,—
 Make but one step beyond, and thou
 Hast lost at once all human shape,
 Smash'd on the spiky rocks below."
 "Thanks," said the youth, with glistening eye,
 "Sweet lady, thou canst after tell
 That, all content, I went to die.
 Farewell, sweet lady ; friends, farewell !"

His pulse made not an extra beat,
 As calmly there he turn'd his feet
 Towards the fatal mountain spot,
 Nor cruel did he think his lot ;
 But thus he spoke on bended knee,
 While gazing on that bright creation,
 Nor thought of sudden death, for he
 Was lost in holy admiration :—
 "Oh, heaven, how shall I thank thee that mine eyes
 Have looked again upon these glorious skies !
 This earthly paradise of hill and dale,
 With golden river twining through the vale ;
 While giant rock, and sombre, deep ravine

Add further beauty to the charming scene.
 Where'er the ravish'd eye can piercing reach
 'Tis beauty, glory, far too grand for speech !
 Voluptuous Nature opening wide her arms
 While amorous sunbeams revel in her charms !
 To gaze a moment on a scene like this,
 Were worth the longest life of earthly bliss !"
 'Twas Providence, sure that bade him bend
 An humble and a reverent knee,
 Else had his life been at an end,—
 His spirit in eternity.

The robbers now impatient grip
 Their murd'rous instruments of death ;
 The word to fire hangs on his lip,
 But, turning, thus the chieftain saith :—
 " Stop, comrades, see ye not he prays !
 Let us respect his last devotion,
 'Tis but a moment more he stays,
 Ere launched into the unknown ocean."
 The moment pass'd, and then another,
 And many, still the stranger knelt ;
 Scarce could the robber-captain smother
 Th' impatience he so keenly felt.
 " Sacristi ! but his prayer is long,
 'Twould serve a dozen at their needs ;
 I had not thought that one so young
 Need count so many pious beads."
 Then stepping where the young man kneels,
 A single rapid glance reveals
 The nature of the artist's prayers,—
 A pencil gracefully he bears,
 And in his book with skilful hand
 Is sketching all that beauteous land.
 From out a thickly-wooded spot
 There peeps forth an abandon'd cot
 Thrown picturesquely on the swell
 Of hill that looks adown a dell.
 No sooner did the old man see
 The sketch upon the artist's knee,
 Then in quick tones of glad surprise
 Which from his harden'd bosom rise,—
 " Our house !" he cried, " our own dear home
 Where first I saw the morning light !

Red ruin to that roof has come,
 The soldiers sack'd it in a night !"
 "Methinks 'twas once a charming place,"
 The youth replied with careless grace.
 "A charming place !" (and as he spoke, a tear
 Fell from the old man's eye into the ground).
 "A charming place ?" "Yes, twice in every year
 A thousand roses bloom'd and rock'd around,
 And fresh and fragrant honeysuckles there
 The modest, rustic portal thickly bound ;
 That portal which the rising sun
 Kiss'd with his first and brightest rays ;
 More peaceful home he shone not on
 In those, my young and happy days.
 My father liv'd there like a king,
 Contented as the birds in spring,
 Till failing once to pay a tax
 Most odious, by our tyrants laid,
 They came, with soldiers at their backs,
 And of our home a ruin made.
 Kill'd was my father by the door ;
 My mother never look'd up more.
 I fled into these mountain caves,
 And oft have changed them into graves,
 For 'gainst mankind my hate is sworn,
 My oath re-utter'd every morn.
 This heart into a stone I turn'd,
 And laughed at sounds of grief and woe,
 Full many a noble mansion burn'd
 And caus'd broad streams of blood to flow.
 I am revenged ! but yet I feel
 A tender reminiscence steal
 Athwart my heart to see once more
 The ruins of that home of yore."

The hard old bandit stepp'd aside,
 Two glittering, scalding tears to hide ;
 But quickly turn'd again to see
 The sketch upon the painter's knee.

Ye Gods ! what is it meets his sight,
 And gives that thrill of strange delight ?
 No ruin'd hut is lying there
 To tell of death and blank despair ;

But in its place a cottage fair,
 On which a thousand roses shine,
 And honeysuckles thickly twine
 Around the peaceful rustic door,
 With early sunbeams streaming o'er.
 And all is beautiful and gay,
 The spot to pass a life away,
 Without one thought of sin or shame,—
 Without one prayer for wealth or fame !
 Rapid as magic had the youth
 By genius changed the sketch, forsooth.
 “ Yes ! that is it,” the old man cried,
 “ Our cot, before my father died ;
 The home wherein my mother’s joke
 Was heard, before her heart was broke.”
 He took the painter by the hand,
 And call’d unto his savage band,
 Who, wond’ring, gaz’d upon the scene
 All thought was to have bloody been.
 They spar’d his precious life, and more,
 An everlasting friendship swore,
 And prais’d his talent and his art
 In eulogies that pierc’d his heart.
 The youth with sweet emotions rife
 Then told the story of his life :—

Though scarcely eighteen summers old,
 Strange had his earthly page unroll’d,
 His father, Antonia Rosa nam’d
 (A painter, poor, unknown to fame),
 Would have his son a priest become,
 And early sent him from his home
 To live with monks and friars grey,
 To learn to fast, and preach, and pray.
 “ All well enough,” the artist cried,
 “ Had Nature, too, been on their side ;
 But soon I felt within my breast
 I was not born to be a priest,
 Except when Nature, all divine,
 Calls me to worship at her shrine.
 Far dearer than the monk’s lone cell
 Is rock, and mead, and flowery dell ;
 And, to enjoy this mountain sun,
 Ye know, my friends, what I have done :

All fearless brav'd the brigand's gun."
 "Dear youth," said Pietro, by whose side
 Stood Marietta—lovely bride!
 "Have thou for us no further fear,
 For, from to-day, thou'rt welcome here,
 And our protection shalt thou have
 Among these mountains thou dost love.
 I was a painter once, like thee,
 And inward felt the poet's fire,
 Dream'd that my humble name would be
 Sung to an everlasting lyre.
 Would'st know the reason I forsook
 The canvass, and its colours fair,
 And to this brigand-life betook,
 To dwell in cave and mountain lair?"
 "'Twas love for Marietta here,
 The daughter of our chieftan old.
 Seest thou her eyes so soft and clear?
 Seest thou her hair in masses roll'd?
 Seest thou the features of that face,
 Pure as the saints from Raphael's brush?
 That form that monarch's throne would grace!
 Nay, nay, my own, thou needst not blush;
 My sacrifice has been but small,
 In gaining thee, I gain'd all."

"'Tis true," the youthful artist said,
 "Her beauty would inspire the dead!
 No richer ransom could I give
 Than (by this gracious lady's leave)
 Her portrait. Say, shall I commence?"
 "Ay, ay!" the brigands cried at once,
 For truer homage ne'er was given
 To queen or to a saint in heaven
 Than these rude outlaws gave to her,
 Pietro's wife, so young and fair.
 Her sparkling eyes a secret told
 Of something lurking in her blood.
 Vain as her mother Eve of old,
 And quite as beautiful she stood.
 Her stern old father grimly smil'd;
 No tender thought had he save what
 Clung round his young and blooming child,
 And round his old domestic cot.

" Good youth, thy proposition I
 At once accept," the old man said,
 " A thick gold frame for thee shall lie
 Around the sketch of her fair head ;
 One day thou shalt be own'd by Fame,
 And every land shall know thy name ;
 And pay, ay, for thy lightest touch
 Of brush or pencil, riches such
 As now thou would'st not dream to ask,—
 So get thee now to thy sweet task."

Th' inspir'd youth at once began.
 And o'er the sheet his pencil ran,
 And quickly caught each noble line
 Of that grand face, almost divine.
 Amazement beam'd in every eye
 Of every robber standing by.
 Delight, and e'en enchantment sprung,
 As on the ground their arms they flung,
 And not one of that rebel band
 But fondly press'd the painter's hand ;
 And then down at his feet they rolled
 A very stream of various gold.

Then grateful tears rose bright into his eyes,
 And with indignant voice the painter cries :—
 " Oh, paltry brokers of my native town,
 Ye stole my pictures for a pittance, vile ;
 No help, no kind encouragement, was shown
 Until I found these men and mountains wild.
 Henceforward do I consecrate my life
 Unto the glorious art ! and as it sav'd
 Me from a cruel death by stranger's knife,
 (Whose power, wantonly, perhaps, I brav'd)
 When next my works are seen, be't soon or later,
 Each one shall bear the grateful name—' Salvator.'"
 " Good," cried the chieftain, conquer'd now complete,
 While from the lady's eyes there gently flows a
 Sweet stream of tears, " all ages shall repeat
 Thy name aloud with pride—Salvator Rosa !"



THE TINGLE-DINGLE-MAN.

Oh ne'er go seeking sorrow, for it comes too soon at last,
 And rather to the future look than on the cruel past ;
 For when I do—but, come, I'll tell my secret if I can,
 'Twixt you and me—the postman and the tingle dingle-man.

The tingle-dingle-man, the tingle-dingle-man,
 'Twixt you and me—the postman and the tingle-dingle-man.

Jemima Clementina was a pretty London-lass,
 A lively hupper 'ousemaid to some folks of hupper class ;
 And hup and down those winding stairs how joyfully she ran
 To meet me, in the days we knew no tingle-dingle-man.

No tingle-dingle-man, &c.

We were to be united on a certain Monday morn ;
 A wreath of orange peeling by my Jem was to be worn.
 The golden ring was ready, and a little pocket fan,
 For 'twas in June he robbed me, did the tingle-dingle-man.

The tingle-dingle-man, &c.

But Friday (previous) to the gate some evil spirit sent
 That tingle-dingle fellow with his grinding instrument.
 Jemima was a-polishing a copper warming-pan,
 But she dropt it and ran out to hear the tingle-dingle-man.

The tingle-dingle-man, &c.

Now what bewitching tunes he played I'm sure I cannot name,
 But ah ! he played the hangman with my poor Jemima Clem' !
 The solemn vows she made to me are broken every one,
 For she's off and gallivanting with that tingle-dingle-man.

That tingle-dingle-man, &c.

What could she see in this Italian loafer on the town ?
 His eyes were nasty black ones, and his skin was dirty brown.
 Besides, he spoke a language which she could not understan',
 So I blame the drawing organ of that tingle-dingle-man.

That tingle-dingle-man, &c.

I think she's not in London, though the town's a straggl'ing place,
 For since her cruel conduct I have never seen her face.
 Perhaps that dreadful organ's in some foreign railway-van
 With Jemima—little monkey !—and her tingle-dingle-man.

Her tingle-dingle-man, &c.

And now my song is over you may praise me or condemn,
 But I cannot love another girl like false Jemima Clem'.
 That's why my heart's so heavy and my 'wisage' is so wan,
 'Twixt you and me—the postman and the tingle-dingle-man.
 The tingle-dingle-man, &c.

TO A BUTTERFLY.

What art thou but a wingéd flower ?
 A two-leaf'd blossom blown away ?
 Where is thy native sunny bower ?
 Come, tell me, if thou hast the power,
 Tell, and oblige a friend, I pray.

On what sweet bed didst thou repose,
 Thou and thy spotted mantled mother ?
 Thy cradle, was't the rocking rose
 Or honeysuck', whence nectar flows ?
 Or swinging blue bell, or what other ?

How many eggs in earthy nest
 Thy caterpillar parent hatch'd ?
 What, silent ? Well, thou knowest best ;
 Forgive my rather rude request ;
 In wisdom I am overmatch'd.

Babe of the sunlight ! to and fro
 Drifted around by wanton wind,
 Like single, flying flake of snow,
 Tempting the schoolboy's stealthy toe,
 To leave him luckless far behind.

Enrag'd, his cap and jacket warm,
 His satchel, big with book and ball,
 Are hurled straight at thy fragile form,
 To do thee grievous, mortal harm,
 While flitting o'er the garden wall ;

Or worse the mischief, chasing thee
 With thoughtless feet through waving wood,
 Stumbling across some fallen tree,
 Or tript-up by its branches, he
 Flops to his middle in the mud !

With smarting knees, and bleeding nose,
 His spirit drops again to earth,
 And as he looks upon his clothes,
 His sentiments of thee are those
 That sweep away all thoughts of mirth.

Catch him imagining that thou
 A living, fairy spirit art,
 Sent flutt'ring from above to show
 That pleasures but a moment flow,
 Yea, as we taste them, they depart !

A few more years, and he'll regard
 Thy passing form with other eyes.
 The hand of a creating Lord
 Even in a butterfly is bared
 As plain as in the starry skies !

TO THE RIVER.

How sweet to watch thee, flowing river,
 So smoothly glide along,
 And know, too, that thou tunest ever
 Thy low and liquid song
 To Nature's all harmonious pitch,
 Above, below, around ;
 And deaf is he who cannot catch
 The grand and grateful sound !
 'Tis sweet to trace thee on and far
 Right to the tiny spring,
 Up high above yon rocky bar
 Where moss and lichen cling :

That little fount which gives thee birth,
 Waveless and clear and white,
 From whence thou stealest o'er the earth
 Till lost in ocean-light.
 That shepherd's hut on mountain-brink
 Thou cheerest with thy ripple,
 And fain is he thy wave to drink,
 Yon poor forsaken cripple,
 (Which is, whate'er old topers think,
 The sweetest, safest "tippic.")
 Then see thee as thou flowest past
 That good old English farm,
 'Twould make one think that thou hadst cast
 O'er it some fruitful charm.
 And as thou movest proudly down,
 Enlarged by flood and rain,
 Perchance thou passest through a town
 Which gives to thee that stain
 Thou carriest to the main,
 Like erring maid whose one false turn
 For ever causeth her to mourn
 And weep, but all in vain !
 And when at last thy mighty arms
 Embrace a thousand sails,
 Thy beauty and thy thousand charms
 Would fill a thousand tales.
 And yet thou art but little when
 Thou sleepest in the sea,
 Like to the lives of mortal men
 When in Eternity !
 But little ! yea, but yet not lost,
 Thy globules glad the ocean,
 As souls of good men swell the host
 Of angels in devotion.

 THE LOVERS.

By a river slowly flowing,
 Sat a youthful, loving pair,
 Gentle evening winds were blowing
 Through the purple, balmy air.

On a mossy mound they rested,
Twin'd each in the other's arms,
O'er and o'er again they tasted
All a summer evening's charms.

Setting was the sun in glory,
Shooting upward crimson beams,
Giving thus my simple story
What bright spirits give to dreams.

Golden-fringed clouds were creeping,
Creeping slowly on the sky,
And, afar, 'twas twilight peeping
From the east with dusky eye.

Happy hour for youth and maiden !
Each to each a treasure sweet ;
Bosoms, theirs, with rapture laden,
As they closely, warmly meet.

'Then he tells in accents winning,
O'er and o'er again his love,
How he felt its strange beginning,
Wand'ring once in shady grove.

How her eyes, like stars, bedazzle,
With their full and melting light,
How their rich, deep tint of hazel
Haunts in dreams his every night.

How her brow is like white marble,
Lightly bound with faint blue ties,
And her voice sweet as the warble
Of the birds of Paradise !

How her hair, of colour golden,
Woven is into his soul,
Hair the richest yet beholden
Since the seasons 'gan to roll.

How her lips are like to roses ;
How her hands are like to snow ;
How her heaving breast discloses
Tender secrets hid below.

How her breath hath all the sweetness
Of the garden-haunting air,
And her form a ripe completeness
Which is far beyond compare.

How the trees have richer colour,
And the streams more tuneful glide ;
How all things with joy are fuller
When she sits thus at his side.

How her beauty that bewitches
Is but half her maiden worth,
For her heart and mind have riches
Rarer than the gems of earth.

How her presence ever bringeth
What his inmost soul doth crave ;
How his love is that which springeth
Fresh, and blooms beyond the grave.

Happy as an angel dreaming
Listens she to all he says,
For she knows his heart is teeming
With the love which ne'er betrays.

He, with true, yet timid, courage
Asks her, oh, to name the sun
Which shall set upon his marriage
With his well-belovéd one.

In his breast she hides her blushes,
Tells him, though with coy delay,
And the breeze its sighing hushes
As she names the wedding day.

Soon it came, with music laden,
And kind words from every mouth,
Then they sail'd, that youth and maiden,
To the warm and sunny south.



SONG.

THE SIGNATURE IN BLOOD.

We stood beside a waning fire,
 I and a casual friend ;
 A midnight moon clomb high and higher,
 Our hearts did meet and blend.
 Fair-spoken was he, and polite,
 And soon my sorrowing soul
 Laid bare itself unto his sight,
 He read my secrets all !
 'Twas then and not till then I knew
 Who at my elbow stood,—
 The Tempter, and his words were few—
 “Thy signature in blood !”

And then he slowly did unfold
 A parchment, broad and fair,
 Would give me fame, and health, and gold,
 If I would sign it there !
 I paus'd—and fought a silent fight,
 How long I never knew,
 Then bade my friend begone that night
 And take his parchment too.
 He'll offer it, perchance, to thee,
 When in a fitting mood,
 Then struggle, but ne'er let him see
 Thy signature in blood !

For do thou sign, and soon or late,
 With eyes that fearful roll,
 He'll ask and have, without debate,
 Thy everlasting soul !
 That is his modest price, forsooth,
 For gold, and health, and fame,
 With which he tempteth age and youth
 And good and bad the same.
 Then with thy forfeit he descends
 Into the fiery flood,
 And tosseth to his laughing fiends
 Thy signature in blood !

BEECH'S HOTEL.

THE BOLTON "LOCK-UPS."

How useful all over the world, to the rover,
 Are inns and hotels when away from one's home,
 On business or pleasure, you go at your leisure,
 Quite certain of comfort wherever you roam.
 For a few paltry guineas, no Royal Prince in his
 Own palace so cozy as you, up or down,—
 But one that is local, now bids me be vocal,
 That's Beech's Hotel, in a Lancashire town.
 Of all the queer shops that a traveller stops at,
 The queerest and dearest is Beech's Hotel.

Though one of the oddest, the building is modest,
 With windows and carriage-gates bolted and barred;
 'Tis no feudal castle of lord and of vassal,
 But still it can boast of a stony court-yard.
 And though no high turret, no battlement o'er it,
 No broad, sweeping terrace, nor vista in view,
 Ye find, should ye enter, in summer or winter,
 An awful bad "keep," and a "donjon" or two.
 Of all the queer shops that a traveller stops at,
 The queerest and dearest is Beech's Hotel.

Rich soup or fresh fish is ne'er seen on its dishes,
 Its joints and its game will not give you the gout;
 Its pudding and pies, sirs, to tell you no lies, sirs,
 Are quickly digested without any "stout."
 Your simple reclining-room, making your dining-room,
 Boasts of few luxuries, good heaven knows well!
 And folk that go ofttest, say, none of the softest
 Are the eider-down couches in Beech's Hotel.
 Of all the queer shops that a traveller stops at,
 The queerest and dearest is Beech's Hotel.

The servants are numerous, drowsy and humourous,
 Dress'd all alike, but still not in neat blacks,
 Their livery's a blue one, and every year new on,
 Provided it has not been ripp'd off their backs.
 For they sometimes delight in rule squabbles and fightin'
 With poor peaceful citizens, here and there,

But if they're not eaten, these servants get beaten,
 And sent home to Beech's with knobs in their hair.
 Of all the queer shops that a traveller stops at,
 The queerest and dearest is Beech's Hotel.

And Beech's fine fellows are awfully jealous
 Of every hotel in the town, good or bad,
 And after each closes, they poke in their noses
 To see if there's any more drink to be had.
 Though soapy and civil, they lie like the devil,
 And mortally hate every decent man's brow ;
 But if you would please 'em, just steal an old besom,
 Or lie in the street drunk as David's old sow.
 Of all the queer shops that a traveller stops at,
 The queerest and dearest is Beech's hotel.

The switches they dandle are stout to the handle,
 And ring like a bell, on a pavement—or skull !
 O blest is the city knows none of their pity,
 And happy the hamlet where their trade is dull !
 Their nicknames are “ nobby ”—some christen them “ Bobby,”
 Some, “ Rabbit-pie-Warriors,” “ Bluebottles,” and “ Sneaks ;”
 While some call them “ Peelers,” and some simply, “ Stealers,”
 And some give new names to them every three weeks.
 Of all the queer shops that a traveller stops at,
 The queerest and dearest is Beech's Hotel.

And yet “ Robert's ” trade is (whatever his grade is)
 No loitering pastime, nor much of it play ;
 We are apt to imagine his work is but “ cadgin' ”
 While strutting full dress'd, like a peacock, all day.
 'Tis through the small hours of night, 'mid the showers
 Of lightning-lit tempests he guards your repose
 'Gainst robber and flame ! then methinks 'tis a shame
 To stop the “ two-pen'-orth ” he takes for his woes.
 Of all the queer shops that a traveller stops at,
 The queerest and dearest is Beech's Hotel.

Mr. Super. Beech now is renown'd for his prowess
 As landlord and chief of this famous hotel ;
 He's shapely in figure, and plump as a nigger,
 And brave, or he'd be a bad egg in the shell.
 Though handsome his face is, beware his embraces !
 He's not too polite if you go there to sleep ;

His chambermaid's crusty, and though you be lusty,
 The sight of your bed strikes you all of a heap !
 Of all the queer shops that a traveller stops at,
 The queerest and dearest is Beech's Hotel.

Despite your excuses, he you introduces
 Next morn to some Magnates of this "glorious land,"
 Who sit upon "benches" to "try" lads and wenches,
 And gentle folk, too, if before them they stand,
 And should their big phaeton for you be in waitin',
 It's good-bye, my pippin, for many a sad day ;
 It's "Jacob's long ladder," or (what makes one sadder)
 A trip o'er the fluke-pond to Botany Bay.
 Of all the queer shops that a traveller stops at,
 The queerest and dearest is Beech's Hotel."

So now more's the pity, if, from my rude ditty
 You don't glean a warning to keep you from wrong ;
 In every large town, sirs, there is to be found, sirs,
 A curious hotel like this one in my song.
 Whatever you're doin', look sly on "blue ruin,"
 Or else these "Bluebottles" will cork you up tight,
 And blown out with "skilly," you'll look rather silly,
 Though you should leave Beech's in freedom at night.
 Of all the queer shops that a traveller stops at,
 The queerest and dearest is Beech's Hotel.

PEEL'S MONUMENT.

Now let your fancy leap and show her skill,
 From "Stanley Rake" to top the "Holcombe Hill,"
 Where for a while we wait to catch our breath,
 To see the gorgeous picture spread beneath.
 But ere we sweep the vale with ravish'd eye,
 A moment mark the masonry hard by,
 And let your hearts, if not your bodies, kneel
 Before the monument to glorious Peel !
 Noblest and best of all the lordly band,

Who sway'd the stomachs of a starving land,
 How well he knew by heart and boldly said,—
 "My country needs it, and must have cheap bread!
 Cheap bread! despite the nation's angry strife;
 Cheap bread! for is it not the 'staff of life'?
 Come, help me, and we'll wrench away with scorn
 The crushing crown with many an iron thorn,
 That tyranny hath welded to be worn
 Upon the weeping brow of golden corn!"
 And he had "help" from man and from his God,
 And eas'd his country of her shameful load.
 Then let your hearts, if not your bodies, kneel
 Before this shrine to great Sir Robert Peel!
 Long may it lift its stern commanding head,
 And lofty column from their "wimberry" bed;
 Long may the nibbling sheep in safety swarm,
 Wrapt in its shade from sunshine, rain and storm.
 And should some freak of Nature overthrow,
 And playful hurl it to the plain below,
 May grateful sons of many a grateful sire
 But build it all the bolder and the higher,
 To tell to generations yet unborn
 Who took the devil's tax off bread and corn!

A MORNING SONG.

See! the sun is in the sky,
 And his beams like lightning fly,
 Chasing with their glorious light
 Lingerin' remnants of the night.
 Hark! th' aërial songsters gay
 Hail with hymns this new-born day!
 And the hum of golden bee
 Fills the air for thee and me.
 Come, then, come!
 Leave for awhile thy couch of sorrow
 And bid our bonnie earth "good morrow!"

Misty mantle spreading there
 Soon will quit the fresh'ning air,
 And the breath of thousand flowers
 Brightly peeping shall be ours.
 Jealously the amorous sun
 Bids the dew-drops all begone ;
 Haste, and we will, ere 't be past,
 Catch the glory of the last.

Come, then, come !

Leave for awhile thy couch of sorrow,
 And bid our bonnie earth "good morrow !"

Twinkling brooks go laughing by
 Blue-bell knolls where we may lie,
 And from off their summits see
 Distant ocean, broad and free.
 Then with myeroscopic eye
 Watch the insects as they fly ;
 Or (though we our folly learn)
 Seek for fairies through the fern.

Come, then, come !

Leave for awhile thy couch of sorrow,
 And bid our bonnie earth "good morrow !"

E'en the glad leaves on the trees
 Murmur, joyous, in the breeze ;
 And the rugged rocks themselves
 Smile from out their barren shelves.
 Yea, yon deep, dark-cavern'd grot,
 Where the sunbeams enter not,
 Feels the joy from all around,
 To its core of gloom profound.

Come, then, come !

Leave for awhile thy couch of sorrow,
 And bid our bonnie earth "good morrow !"



SONG.

THERE'S A HOPE IN THE FUTURE FOR THEE, BROTHER.

—

Tune :—" There's a light in the window for thee, brother."

—

There's a hope in the future for thee, brother,
 There's a hope in the future for thee,
 For in spite of our fall
 There is mercy for all—
 There's a hope in the future for thee.

CHORUS :

A grand reformation is nigh
 If drink thou wilt promise to flee,
 A promise unbroken to lie,
 Then there's hope in the future for thee.

Though degraded by drink to a brute, brother,
 And thy case as forlorn as can be,
 Yet look up again,
 For we firmly maintain,
 There's a hope in the future for thee.
 A grand reformation, &c.

Then cheer thee, for all is not lost, brother,
 Thou yet mayst escape and be free !
 Come and sign us the pledge,
 And in truth we allege
 There's a hope in the future for thee.
 A grand reformation, &c.

Be thou faithful to that, and to God, brother,
 And whatever thy destiny be,
 In sickness or health,
 In want or in wealth,
 There's a hope in the future for thee.
 A good reformation, &c.

ANTI-TOBACCO.

To Mr. Wilbraham Stead, in answer to his "Lay of Tobacco," March 1875.

Your twenty verses—'mon cher' Stead,
 (Thanks to our friend A. C.)
 I have with curious pleasure read—
 Your charming 'jeu d'esprit.'
 I know you for an artist rare,
 With pencil, paint and brush,
 And now the Muses too declare
 The poet's pen you push.

A rhyming artist! Bless my soul!
 How clever some men are!
 But verses pay a heavier toll
 Than pictures do by far.
 So, brother rhymester, 'bide a wee,
 That we may have a run at
 Your poem with a pen, d'ye see?
 Or point a pistol-pun at.

I'll don the critic's 'seedy' gown,
 And jot with critic ink
 A few uncurb'd opinions down
 By way of what I think.
 Now verse is like your oakum stuff—
 The more its worth increases,
 The more 'tis ripp'd up in the rough,
 And pick'd and pull'd to pieces.

But, coming to the point and cream
 Of your sublime effusion,
 'Tobacco's' but a doubtful theme—
 Its 'sweetness' a delusion.
 For my poor part, methinks we're more
 Indebted to Charles Hallé,
 Whose music floods our peaceful shore,
 Than to Sir Walter Raleigh.

That doughty knight I'd rather praise
 In true tin-pot afflatus
 That he was first to plant and raise
 In Ireland, new potatoes!

The scrumptious 'tater'—blessed 'spud,'
 Ripening in fields and bogs,
 Whose wondrous virtues all are good
 For kings as well as hogs.

But 'bacca,' bah ! tis useless muck,
 Except to swell the taxes,
 And set one dreaming in 'the nook,'
 While every sense relaxes ;
 Till apathy o'erwhelm the soul ;
 Till duty be forgotten,
 Till every breath grow rank and foul,
 And every tooth be rotten !

Till every screen and curtain fade,
 And every carpet smell ;
 Till all the house the stink pervade
 Far worse than I may tell.
 Till e'en the fairer, softer sex
 Are happiest when they miss you,
 And, tho' your arm be round their necks,
 Would rather slap than kiss you.

Till all your manly strength ooze out
 In vile expectoration ;
 Till sharp diseases, worse than gout,
 Bring death, if not damnation !
 Now think it over, calm and cool,
 And don't get in a passion ;
 I'm sure you'll say a man's a fool
 To act in such a fashion.

To set on fire some bitter leaves,
 And then through pipes to suck 'em !
 The thought alone my spirit grieves :
 Out on the dunghill chuck 'em !
 Of all the monarchs of the land
 Our James the First was first
 To mark with his destroying brand
 This foreign plant accurst.

Ay, James the First was first and last
 Of all earth's kings indeed, sir,
 Who blew a royal 'counterblast'
 Against this dangerous weed, sir ;

For smoking dryeth up the throat,
 Then throat it longs for liquor ;
 Then jumps the devil in the boat,
 And steers it all the quicker.

Now therein James the King was wise,
 For smoking's a disaster :
 In hell its reeking fumes arise
 All sanction'd by its master,
 Not that I've been down there to see,
 (Nor ever hope to go,)
 But if there *is* a misery,
 They'll have it down below.

Now misinterpret not, dear Stead,
 This grim Plutonian joke ;
 I merely mean what I have said,
 That hell is filled with smoke.
 Not rising from Ralph Winward's 'shag'
 Or Kelsall's 'Limerick roll,' sir,
 So valued by the high 'tag-rag-
 'And-bobtail' of the 'bowl,' sir ;

Nor Johnson's 'rough cut,' nor, 'returns,'
 Nor 'golden-leaf,' nor 'twist,'—
 Ah, no ! 'tis something worse that burns—
 'Tis a 'fire-and-brimstone' mist !
 'Mais revenons à nos moutons'—oui—
 Tobacco and its history.
 There's not a shore beyond the sea
 Where smoking now's a mystery.

But in old times 'twas e'en forbid
 Your public men to use it :
 The nasty pipe or filthy quid !
 ('an common sense excuse it ?
 This was a rule
 Of Chigwell-school
 (Built 'sixteen twenty-nine,' sir) :
 I nothing add
 Of good or bad,
 The rhythm alone is mine, sir.

'The schoolmaster must be a man
 Of sound religious savour ;
 Nor Papist be, nor Puritan,
 Yet of a grave behaviour.
 To sober speech and labour given ;
 Of honest conversation ;
 A man of conduct good and even,
 As any in the nation.
 No haunter of the alehouse door,
 No lover of old Sack, O ;
 These must he be, and furthermore,
 No puffer of tobacco.'

You see, sir, in that wiser time,
 How solid sense outspoke,
 Half hinting that the way to crime
 Was through tobacco-smoke.
 Grave teachers and brave public men,
 The free, the patriotic,
 The stalwart Saxon, and the Dane,
 Eschew'd the strong narcotic.

But now, in this degenerate year
 Of eighteen seventy-five, sir,
 Tobacco filthifies the air,
 Half poisoning men alive, sir.
 Yea, in this most enlighten'd age
 Of folly, sin, and waste,
 Tobacco-muck is all the rage !
 So much, alas, for taste !

A vicious taste, for I maintain
 With no man it agrees ;
 Pro tem. it stupifies his pain,
 But sows some fresh disease.
 And be he hale, robust, and strong,
 In sloth and sleep it wraps him ;
 Beclouds his brain, chains up his tongue,
 And into debt entraps him.

I do defy ye, every one,
 Slaves of the 'ethereal weed,' sirs,
 To tell me any good it's done
 The body of man, indeed, sirs,

It serves the State (and hell) I know,
 Like drink and other evils,—
 (Your smoke and drink together go—
 Two most successful devils!)

But, barring this—and, well, we'll add,
 Helping the sale of matches—
 There's nothing in't but what is bad—
 Down with it under hatches!
 O, yea, there is—the precious stink!
 That keeps away the vermin;
 So far, so good—but that, I think,
 Is all I can determine.

Go, count the yearly millions lost
 Through this pernicious smoking;
 Go, sum up its enormous cost,
 You'll have no time for joking;
 Go, think if all this wealth were spent
 On food in place of folly,
 How grand would be the great event!
 How general and how jolly!

Go, Stead, but take the hand I hold;
 Forgive this friendly peltin';
 My 'pipe is out'—my tale is told—
 Yours truly, JOHN F. SKELTON.

TO AN ORDINARY SEA BISCUIT.

WRITTEN AT MELBOURNE, 1862.

To thee, flat mockery of "our daily bread"—
 To thee, fit food for Egypt's mummied dead,
 (For 'twould just take a thousand years to chew
 One of thy tribe, and to digest it, too),
 To thee, these half sarcastic lines I give
 To warn those of thee who "at home" do live.

Most pitiously tie, 'll run with stinging jowl,
 Which erst munch'd blissfully hot breakfast roll,
 If for thy wither'd carcase they forsake
 Sweet muffin, crampet, and divine spice-cake.
 Dry subject thou, for poesy or prose !
 At thee a beggar would turn up his nose
 In horror, and the most refined disgust,
 That God should send thy petrified old crust
 As punishment for all his lazy sins.
 Much rather had he had two wooden shins,
 Or that his Poll had brought him thumping twins.
 Stale subject for my sentimental verse ;
 Thou art not worth a human's honest curse,
 Yet cursèd art thou, and hast been by scores
 Whom Fate hath driven from their native shores.
 The dimples in thy brown and oven-burnt phiz,
 Possess no charms—create no jealousies.
 No palate dost thou please, no stomach cheer,
 E'en starving wretches tackle thee with fear.
 Small damage would be thine were I to roll
 Thee rudely o'er the earth from pole to pole !
 Cohesion proudly chooseth thee to prove and show
 His mighty power upon the atom world below.
 Full many a white tooth hast thou ruthless torn
 From its companions, that for aye must mourn
 The lost link from their snow-enamell'd chain,
 With them to feast and smile, ah, ne'er again !
 Through many a gaping breach in walls of pearl
 Queen Vanity doth down upon thee hurl
 Her stony maledictions as her duty,
 For thou didst rob her face of perfect beauty.
 Foul waste of water pure, and golden grain :
 Delicious as a brick of clay and rain ;
 Sapless and tasteless as my leathern pouch,
 And as nutritious, too, I safely vouch.
 May I again, nor friends have need to sweat
 In swallowing thee, but soft provisions get
 If they should leave the comforts of their **home**
 To sail to lauds where comforts rarely come.
 There's just one use to which thou mightst be put
 With profit and with ornament to boot,—
 Let streets of busy towns with thee be pav'd,
 And tens of thousand pounds will then be saved,
 For rolling wagon-wheels and trampling crowds,

Will never harm thee ! nor the bursting clouds,
 Big with loud rain, thy round proportions melt, —
 Thou'lt over-wear macadam or asphalt.
 How much I love thee I may not express,
 Yet, though no Catholic, this much I confess
 Thy very shadow makes my jaws to ache,
 Much less thy substance, O infernal cake !
 So now with joy I bid thee an adieu,
 Thou beastly food, unfit for man to chew.

UPON THINKING OF THE AMERICAN WAR.

When shall the nations of the earth
 From east to west, from south to north,
 Unanimously raise above
 The flag of universal love ?
 Convert the sword and murd'rous spear
 Into the pruning-hook and shear ?
 When shall their grasping passions cease ?
 Their love of bloody power decrease ?
 When shall the black man and the white
 (Heirs to the one Eternal light)
 Embrace on earth ? for soon or later
 They will before their great Creator.
 When shall man own each man his brother
 As tho' twinn'd from the self-same mother,
 And not assault with deadly steel
 As if he were a fiend from hell ?
 When shall the last dread cannon volley
 (Foul argument of sin and folly)
 Peal to the blood-reflecting sky
 And echoing once, for ever die ?
 When shall this glorious advent dawn ?
 And when the silver trump be blown
 Declaring to each conscious wind
 Peace and good-will to all mankind ?

SONG.

PADDY AND THE PIG.

" Oh phat'll I do ?" says Paddy,
 Says Paddy to me one day,
 " For the pig that was the glory
 Of us all is gone away !
 Oh wirra ! wirra ! murther !
 Sure I'm sinking in despair,
 For the childer all are flying,
 Disconsolate and crying.
 And my poor ' old woman ' sighing
 ' Oh where's the pig, oh, where ?"

" He slept inside the cabin
 Wid the childer and us all ;
 Where the ducks and perchin' poultry
 Have their nests by ev'ry wall,
 The best mimber of the family
 Was the purty pig I ween ;
 But by the childer nor their mother,
 Nor myself (and that's another),
 For many's the day together,
 Has the pig at all been seen."

Then says I to troubled Paddy,
 " Sure it's curious out and out ;
 Have you got suspicious persons,
 Or any thieves about ?"
 " Go along !" says Pat, indignant,
 " Sure there's nothing of the kind ;
 Ours are all most dacent naybours,
 And it's useless is our labours,
 For I tell you, sir, by jabers !
 That the pig we'll never find."

There was in the tone of Paddy,
 Struck me that Paddy knew,
 More about the missing porker
 That was causing such ado ;
 So, says I, " Now, Paddy, tell me,
 Where's the pig ? you know, I'll swear."

“ Ah, sir,” says he, “ how funny
It should slip my mind, my honey !
Sure I sold him, and spent the money
In whisky at the fair !”

“ Ah, Paddy.” says I, in sorrow,
“ You well may blush red hot,
And the pig may well be missing
Down the throat that you have got !
But when next you go to market
Remember this with care
(While the money-bag you jink it),
Sure you cannot, though you think it,
Both keep a pig and drink it
In whisky at the fair !

THE FLY .

A FACT.

WRITTEN AT BALLAARAT. 1865.

A sultry January sun had, glaring, sunk
Behind the gum-clad ranges of a land
Between which, and mine own beloved one
Distance itself and space terrestrial come,
T’an end abrupt. No farther can they stretch.

I was alone within my little room,
With window open’d wide, from which I lean’d,
And, thoughtful, gazed into the deep, dark night,
Thinking a thousand unconnected thoughts
Which in the aggregate, made up a life.

My tiny lamp of crystal Kerosene
(Just newly trimm’d) illuminating stood :
Alluring with its netted rays the moths
And flying insects of the warm night air,
And, certes, swarms had ended their career
In flames, save that the tall transparent glass,
(A tower they see not) shields them from all harm.

All heedless of them, and while wrapp’d in thought,
A something “ buzzes” by my affrighted ear,

And, whether bent upon its own destruction,
 (Perchance an exile from its world of wings),
 Or come t'investigate the light mysterious,
 I know not ; but, as t'were a knight in arms,
 Dashes itself against the guardian glass
 Which, ringing, totters at the rude attack.

And now I see what the intruder is,
 (Insensible upon the table lying),
 A fly but not like those that lively swarm
 In myriads when the day is bright and hot,
 Revelling incessant in the saffron sun,
 Or trembling round each dangerous light at eve,
 But a gay giant of the insect race.

Sure ne'er was seen a fly so gorgeous, nor
 So curiously and wonderfully form'd !
 His large but graceful wings are golden gauze,
 And o'er his body, rainbow-colours, rich,
 Harmoniously blend ; and his strange eyes
 (The chief attraction of the wondrous thing)
 Shine with a startling lustre all subdued,
 Like lights within thin horn, and red as blood.

The open window and the door I clos'd
 And made a prisoner of my wingèd prize,
 Which, now reviving, flew the room around,
 Not caring to attempt a second rush
 Seeing his first had such a hard reception.

But how secure him to preserve intact
 His beauties and proportions evermore !
 Methought of various plans and methods new,
 All harmless, but the Devil, ever ready
 To act and to suggest for wavering minds,
 Said—" Pin him to the wall and let him die ;
 " 'Twill soon be o'er—a trifling pang or two—
 A few convulsions he will barely feel,—
 See, here's the very thing you need, and then
 The envied curiosity is yours."

I turn'd my sickening eyes, and lo ! there lay
 Within my reach a long, straight, shining pin,
 With broad, smooth head, and point fine as the sting
 Of the arch-serpent, whose insidious words,
 Tingling like syren-music o'er a gulf,
 Had made my blood to boil and brain to burn.

My heart within me sank e'en at the thought ;
 My mind revolted at so cruel a deed :

But he alas ! “ that hesitates is lost”
 When Satan’s at his side. Poor doomèd fly !
 I caught him carefully, and laid his wings
 With hollow tenderness down his smooth form,
 And, with averted head, took up the pin
 The Devil had surely made upon the spot.

But no ! I could not do it there : the light
 Of my small lamp was an accuser keen ;
 And with its glistening eye was searching through
 And through my heart for some soft place of pity,
 But found none, for the prompting Fiend was there,
 And drove the light of mercy from my soul.

So, to a far-off gloomy dell I fled
 With my already trembling, beauteous fly,
 And—pinn’d him to a tree ! Kind heaven forgive !
 For oh ! the thrill that simultaneous ran
 Of anguish, through us, th at poor fly and me,
 As, crash ! the murderous weapon sought his heart,
 Is punishment sufficient and for ever.

I heard his cry—’twas little short of human
 And felt his powerful pinions beat my hand.
 Again I fled, but left him there “ to die,”
 E’en as the non-compunctious Prince had said.

’Twas Saturday night. A noble action, truly,
 Was mine with which to close the passing week,
 And well did I repay by such a deed
 The flowing blessings of my God to me !
 I sought my couch, but where to find sweet sleep
 That falls but on temples of the good ?
 Yet o’er mine eyes there fell a film of pain
 Through which perturbing dreams broke on my sight,
 And kept me tossing, like a ship at sea.
 I thought the fly was pinn’d upon my brow,
 And felt his powerful pinions beat my face :
 Then crucified upon each hand and foot.
 Next, falling loose, would ring into mine ear
 The cry when I impaled him in the dell.
 ’Twas dreadful ! and I rose to rest no more
 That night. All Sunday saw me pale and sad,
 Though calmer, for I knew that he was dead ;
 But with the night perturbing dreams return’d.

At early daylight and with beating heart,
 I slowly wander’d to the fatal spot.
 There was my victim. Not one sign of life !

No fluttering of those graceful gauze wings now,
 They droop in death across those flabby limbs ;
 Nor with them will he woo again the breeze
 That linger'd longest round the fairest scenes ;
 Nor proudly dart into the bright blue sky
 To flaunt his charms to the admiring sun.

His suffering's past. And yet those rainbow-hues
 Harmoniously blend, and his strange eyes,
 (The chief attraction of the wondrous thing),
 Shine with a startling lustre all subdued,
 Like lights within thin horn, and red as blood.

I touch'd the murd'rous pin,—merciful powers !
 He lives—he did not die—he is not dead—
 Oh horror ! do I yet dream ? no, for I feel
 Again his powerful pinions beat my hand.
 Again that thrill, all simultaneous runs
 Of anguish, through us, that poor fly and me.
 For six-and-thirty hours thus had he liv'd
 In torture, and for what ? (oh shame !) to glut
 A wish ignoble, and a foul desire
 To buy a pleasure with the blood of pain.

I snatch'd him from the tree, and with my foot
 Swept him to atoms—not a limb remain'd,
 Nor vestige of that once most gorgeous thing,
 And not an agony—except mine own.
 Long afterwards, when morally reflecting
 On this, alas, too true and sad event,
 I pinn'd this golden truth close to my heart,
 And happier dreams, thereby, enrich'd my sleep :—
 'Tis folly to expect a prize, or treasure,
 Or aught, indeed, that's worth the careful keeping
 By violating Nature's simple laws,
 Which, in His love and wisdom, one Good God
 For all things made—for insects as for men.



SONG.

POLLY DORNING.

Come, dearest, thou shalt have a song,
 Though years have we been mated ;
 'Tis not the wine-cup red and strong
 My soul makes so elated ;
 'Tis looking back on our long life
 Of love in every stage—
 'Tis seeing thee, my darling wife,
 Thus happy in thy age.
 Then true unto the faith I swore
 To thee, one bright May-morning,
 As years roll on, I love thee more
 And more, my Polly Dorning.

I don't forget the golden times
 We pass'd in summer bowers,
 When mellow came the evening chimes
 In those young days of ours.
 Thy virgin form again I see
 Fair as the forms above,
 But oh, how dearer now to me
 Through years of mutual love !
 Then true unto the faith I swore
 To thee, one bright May-morning,
 As years roll on, I love thee more
 And more, my Polly Dorning,

Not always has our path been strewn
 My Polly, dear, with roses ;
 How many a thorn and flinty stone,
 More than the world supposes !
 And oft, methinks, I had rebell'd
 And scowl'd up to the sky,
 Had not thy gentle voice withheld—
 Hadst thou not, love, been by.
 Then true unto the faith I swore
 To thee, one bright May-morning,
 As years roll on, I love thee more
 And more, my Polly Dorning.

A DREAM.

WRITTEN AT BALLAARAT, 1864.

I dream'd I had been far abroad
 And many weary years had fled,
 Since last I meditative trod
 The ever-green, tho' gloomy sod
 Where lay my native dead.

A beauteous land that burial ground,
 Soothing the sorrowful heart and eye
 And as I pac'd it slowly round,
 Keen glancing at each rising mound,
 I ask'd myself with love profound,
 Where does my mother lie ?

I knew I follow'd, clad in woe,
 Some years agoe her coffin'd clay,
 And saw her laid, ah me ! below,
 While tears of anguish freely flow
 As dust upon her dust they throw.
 I st that the yard is alter'd so
 I cannot find as on I go,
 Or stepping quick or loitering slow
 Where is her grave to-day ?

I sought, I may not say how long,
 But all in cruel vain I sought,
 Those melancholy tombs among
 Where souvenirs of affection hung
 In garlands, or in simple song
 By loving lone ones wrought.

Here bronzen statues mournful bent
 Above the world's once wealthy race,
 And, with the speckled granites blent
 White emblematic marbles lent
 An air of rich embellishment
 Unto that solemn place.

And there a simple wooden cross,
 Begirt by simpler wooden rails
 Arises from its bed of moss
 To speak to men of some one's loss;
 (Perchance as good as any of us) ;
 And saith proud ostentation's gloss,
 In rudely home-cut letters, thus,
 Some sad bereavement tells.

Name, after name, I, starting, saw
 Of friends but lately left in life,
 And stood transfix'd with sudden awe
 As tho' I felt Death's clammy claw,
 Piercing my vitals like a knife.

None seem'd forgotten—even whom
 Where poor and scorn'd whiles in the flesh,
 (God's chosen at the Day of Doom)
 Had some kind hand to chase the gloom
 From off their insignificant tomb
 With a lone rose, or whatever bloom
 The seasons bring afresh.

And then I smote my heavy breast.
 And, weeping, wond'ring, asked me what
 She, whom her little world confest
 Was of all mothers, wives, the best,
 Had done, while our dear earthly guest,
 That she was thus forgot.

Were drops of blood, but drops of gold,
 I'd pierce my throbbing heart that I,
 When here again I lonely strolled
 Through Bolton's burial acre, cold,
 Might know without the being told
 Where does my mother lie.

And yet there is a strip of soil
 Trampled by crowds of impious feet,
 From which instinctive I recoil,
 With loudly-beating pulse the while,
 As though before some sacred pile
 Ablaze with precious, holy oil,
 For there, freed from all grief and toil,
 Methinks she lies in winding-sheet.

And there I crouch'd me low and laid
 Deep in my hands my burning face,
And though the bitterest passions stray'd
Adown my bosom's deepest glade,
Like spirits in th' eternal shade,
I wrestled with myself and prayed,
And when I raised my aching head,
 All changèd was the place.

A fleecy vapour floated where
 Was hitherto that barren ground,
And as it left the perfum'd air
A Mausoleum, (oh, how fair,
And far beyond this world's compare !)
Rose o'er my mother's ashes there :
 And hark ! a low, sweet sound

Across my spell-bound senses steals,
 For 'tis her thrilling, tender tone
That with a heavenly rapture fills
Mine inmost heart, as it reveals
The where her body peaceful dwells,
And in reproachful accents tells,
 A nobler duty to her son.

How calmer, wiser, better I
 Awoke from that celestial dream !
Which will life's dark futurity
Elluminate, sweeten, beautify,
Until in fated turn I lie,
Shut out from earth, air, sea, and sky.
But o'er them all my soul shall fly
(If God do not the boon deny)
With my good mother's to enjoy
 An endless bliss supreme.



CRISPIN AND THE MONKEY.

A village cobbler lived alone
 On this terrestrial ball;
 Besides himself there was not one
 To guard his open stall;
 So 'twere an easy task, I own,
 To rob him of his awl.

But Crispin he was all awake,
 Was witty, wary, wise;
 A clever human would it take
 To take him by surprise;
 Or (vulgarly) to do a "fake"
 Before his open eyes.

Now Crispin had a neighbour, and
 A soldier-man was he,
 Who'd fought on many a foreign strand
 'Till wounded in the knee—
 Discharged, had brought t' his native land
 A monkey o'er the sea.

A monstrous and unruly brute
 That plagued poor Crispin sore,
 For mischief far beyond compute
 It did him o'er and o'er,
 And spoiled him many a handsome boot
 Through grinning at the door.

A shoe he could not cut and frame,
 Nor give his "last" a crack,
 Nor light his morning kitchen flame,
 Nor cook his breakfast snack,
 But "Jacko" 'd do the very same
 When Crispin turned his back.

'Twould imitate him day by day
 Minutely to the least,
 And jump and jabber, pluck and play
 To Crispin's woe and waste;
 Till he at last hit on a way
 To rid him of the beast.

He sat before the looking-glass
 And lather'd all his chin,
 Then on a hone with rapid pass
 Whet up his razor keen ;
 (The monkey, for its fate, alas !
 Awatching all the scene.)

His head upstretch'd, with secret gloat
 He drew the razor's *back*
 A time or two across his throat
 With swift and skilful knaek,
 Then left his stall awhile to note
 The upshot of the quack.

The meddling monkey in a trice
 Leapt through the open door,
 Sat down before the tempting glass
 And soap'd its face all o'er,
 Then slashed the razor right across
 As Crispin did before !

Off went its——no, no, not its head,
 To that I cannot swear,
 But its poor monkey throat instead
 Was cut from ear to there !
 For, by the skin its skull, 'tis sad,
 Hung dangling in the air !

Said

MORAL.

Ye mischief-makers, men and apes,
 Seldom your handy work escapes
 Self-retribution's deadly scrapes :
 Yea, to be brief,
 Though it assume no bloody shapes,
 'Twill come to grief !

Ye little envious critics, too,
 Ye "nattle," peevish, monkey-crew,
 Come, let us see what ye can do
 With blade or pen ;
 Ye'll ape your betters, that is true,
 But ah ! what then ?

A PROLOGUE.

Spoken at an Entertainment given on behalf of the Edgworth Temperance
Brass Band, in the Congregational School Room, Edgworth,
January 30th, 1875.

It was the fashion in the good old days,
To write some kind of preface to their plays—
Some pointed prologue, like a herald sent
To trumpet forth the coming great event :
Some introduction— some keen rhyming scout
To clear the way for the performing rout,
In order that the people, far and near,
Might not be taken by surprise and fear ;
And that the pompous usher might declaim
On the grand purpose of their play, or game ;
Leaving their gracious audiences to be
Best judges of the things they hear and see.

So, please you, like those done in ancient time,
Take this your Chairman's speech, done up in rhyme,
Seizing th' advantage of this kind of " chorus,"
To tell you why we're here, and what's before us.

We all, to-night, most clearly understand
We've come to help " The Edgworth Temperance Band."'
Now if that's not a worthy object, why
On earth you cannot find one, far or nigh :
For music is and ever was a charm,
In voice, or brook, or string, or trumpet form :
A subtle, soothing something undefin'd
That lifts the drooping heart and cheers the mind,
When Sorrow and Despair are prowling round
(Like skulking thieves) our bosom's open ground.

But sweetest is the melody that floats
Into our ears from sober human throats,
Or through what instrument soever known—
Or by whose mortal breath soever blown
Free from the fiery fumes of ale and rum,
Though but the man's who blows the mighty drum !
'Tis true your " wine" excites both fool and sage
In frenzied flights of music to engage ;
But ere 'tis e'en begun, the music's o'er,—
Another glass—and all is rant and roar !

But water-drinkers' music, band or voice,
 Is steady to the end, cheap, chaste, and choice.
 Its morning echoes bring no pangs of pain :
 We curse it not but long to list again.

And yet there's nought so dismal in the land
 As young beginners in a new "Brass Band !"
 What dire and dreadful noises fill the air !
 Enough to fright a vestal from her prayer,
 Or make St. Peter quit his easy chair !
 Or set a troop of ghosts with envy grinning,
 'Tis such a thoroughly unearthly dinning !
 Who can forget th' excruciating tune
 Pump'd from the belly of a big bassoon
 At th' edge o' dark ? or the Satanic groan
 Push'd from the stomach of a long trombone ?
 Who has not heard at peaceful eventide
 The frightful sounds of some fat ophicleide ?
 Or, on the breezes of the midnight borne,
 The doleful ditty of a deep French-horn ?
 And who, I ask, once hearing, can forget
 The learner on his wheezing clarionet ?
 Or on the screaming cornet ? or the fife ?
 Mercy upon us ! no one during life !
 Some or another of these brazen fiends
 Haunts every nook of Edgworth's fairy scenes.
 No matter where, in twilight hour you roam,—
 Up, round the rocky precincts of her "Home,"
 Or down her ferny glens, or by her lakes,
 Some innocent infernal echo wakes
 (To which a bullock's bellowings were sweet,
 Dying by inches for the want of meat)
 To scare the living wanderers back to bed,
 And give a rude turn over to the dead !

But, by-and-bye, there comes the happy day
 When each performer's told that he can pley ;
 Then right into a march, in measure smooth,
 Together are they led by Leader Booth.
 And now your Band, of six months old (no more)
 Might lead to victory on, from shore to shore,
 A volunteer or brave militia corps !

Most favour'd Edgworth of all hamlets near !
 Thy joyful satisfaction should appear
 To own a band to glad thee with its strains
 Heard from thy hill-tops and well-water'd plains.

Oft shall thy children run with boisterous glee
 To track its echoes over rock and lea ;
 Thy men and matrons strong, with moistened eye
 Oft cheer it as it, playing, passes by ;
 Oft shall thine aged sit o' summer eves
 In cottage-porch, festoon'd in climbing leaves,
 Or amble down their little garden-patch,
 Thy Band's most dear though distant sound to catch,
 Hinting of sweeter harmonies of love
 Soon to burst on them in the realms **of** above :
 Oft shall the wide-spread country round be lull'd
 To drink its music over lake and wold.

Then, Edgworth, stretch thine own parental hand
 And pat the back of thy young Temperance Band,
 For thou wilt feel most of its magic power
 Borne by thy zephyrs of the evening hour.
 Most generously its patrons great and small
 Promptly have answer'd to its infant call ;
 And soon it hopes to count the needful sum
 To purchase trumpets, note-books, and big drum ;
 For 'tis its ultimate approv'd design
 No man to say "that drum" or "trumpet's mine."

And now, concluding, let th' ambitious Band
 Th' attention of the world at large command
 A moment, that its gratitude and pride
 Be spoken and proclaimed on every side.
 Loudly and proudly shall its ready ranks
 Blow out to all its friends right hearty thanks
 For all their gifts of money, prayer, and praise
 That help it, in their several useful ways,
 To grow to be, to Bacchus's vexation,
 Most useful in its day and generation.

Our duty's done. But where the "Prologue" ends,
 The "Programme" of the evening but begins.
 So now we ask the Band with heart and soul,
 To strike up for us,—“As the moments roll.”



VOTES.

A ring of changes on the " Bells " of Poe,
Presented to our Borough Mayor and Co.
16th November, 1875.

I.

Here they come! and with their votes—
Precious votes!
What a world of consequence their hubbub denotes!
How the people push and push
For the booths of Bolton town!
While the cabs all madly rush
O'er the populace and crush
Many a man and woman down
In the slime, slime, slime,
At this busy Boro' time,
When a million horrid noises, in a single clamour floats
From the throats, throats, throats, throats,
Throats, throats, throats,
Of the owners and the donors of the votes!

II.

Here they come! unworthy votes—
Sneaking votes!
What a world of rottenness their humbuggy denotes!
Lift but up the flimsy mask,
How they savour of the cask,
And the broth-of-barley butts,
All drunk and soon,
What a demon's ditty floats
Past the Ram, the Bull, the Heavenly-Twins (see Astronomic notes)
To the Man a-picking sticks or planting oats
In the moon!
Hark! on every passing air
What a mass of music's murder'd meanly everywhere!
Here Here it rise
To the skies!
On the breezes how it flies
Laden with emphatic lies
To the scandal of the land all
Of the votes, votes, votes,
Of the votes, votes, votes, votes,
Votes, votes, votes,
To the blame all and the shame all of the votes!

III.

What's the value of a vote !

Golden vote !

What a string of instances in answer could I quote !

See yon lady, proud and bright,

From her family-coach alight—

'Tis to kiss yon farmer's snotty child off-hand !

For her husband means to be

At any cost, a great M.P.

Of the land.

And their tenants—ah, their tenants,

For their votes must she do penance

By command ;

And who smiling, smiling, smiling,

Takes the ploughman's horny hand.

While with honeyed words beguiling

Which he scarce can understand,

(O that clever, clever woman,

She's a topper, she's a rum 'un !)

Wins the day !

And to her lord she drives away

Light and gay, gay, gay.

Gay.

As a pauper in a coat,

New, that cost him ne'er a groat,

Or a wild young mountain-goat ;

And it's easy to believe

She is laughing in her sleeve

All the time, time, time,

Keeping up a rolling rhyme

For the vote !

Keeping up a running rhyme

All the time, time, time,

For the vote, vote, vote, vote.

Vote, vote, vote,

For the "setting" and the getting of the vote.

IV.

Here they come ! the noble votes—

Glorious votes !

What a sense of truth and joy their presence now promotes

In the bosom of the land !

What a most important band !

Ever dignified and proud
 It thunders loud and loud
 And condemns.
 With what earnestness appealing to the wisdom of mankind—
 With what wonderful persuasiveness to every thoughtful mind !
 Leaping higher, higher, higher,
 Flames the patriotic fire,
 With a most determin'd meaning,
 To demand a thorough cleaning
 In the " houses " now or never,
 Where the members are so clever,—
 In those architectural gems
 On the margin of the Thames.
 Oh such votes, votes, votes,
 Are the surest antidotes
 Of disease !
 How they probe, and purge, and cure,
 When the nation is impure,
 And there's treachery abroad upon the seas !
 And the Queen but truly knows,
 By beholding
 Their unfolding
 Which her friends and which her foes.
 How the honest workman gloats,
 In a manner,
 O'er the banner
 Which politically floats
 O'er the country now embellish'd with untrammell'd ballot-votes !
 Priceless votes !
 Sacred votes, votes, votes, votes,
 Votes, votes, votes !
 He will die before he'll traffic with his votes !



MY MOTHER.

WRITTEN AT SEA.

Calmly thou sleepest in thy tomb profound,
 Lightly above thee lies the sodden ground ;
 Truly we mourn thee with a grief unfeign'd,
 Yearly thy worth and loss are more explain'd.
 Meekly thou borest thy cross of cares below,
 Brightly thou wear'st thy crown and robes of snow.
 Daily thy mission on the earth was love,
 Nightly thy conscience might thine acts approve.
 Goodly thou wert as on the earth there be,
 Lovely, confiding, faithful, tender, free.
 Humbly thy virtues, true and rare, I sing,
 Dearly thine image to my heart doth cling.
 Kindly, and ever feeling, towards thy race,
 Sorely we took thee to thy resting-place.
 Sadly no weeping willows o'er thee wave,
 Richly no mouldering art surrounds thy grave.
 Nobly no chissel'd stone above thee towers
 Simply thy name is writ in wild field flowers.
 Only thy kindred know where thou dost rest,
 Lowly in dust which God and man have blest.
 Sweetly we dream of thee, and hear thy words,
 Clearly like notes of spring-time's happy birds.
 Lonely I feel without thee, Mother mine,
 Coldly all loves do burn compar'd with thine.
 Gladly would I thy beckoning hand obey,
 Closely beside thee evermore to stay.
 Firmly I know thee glorious there on high,
 Holy thou livedst, and holy didst thou die.

WOMAN'S FINGER.

FROM THE FRENCH.

God took His finest heavenly clay
 And made a fragile jewel then,
 And how mysterious none can say
 It wheedleth and cajoleth men.

The finger of a woman ! O,
 August and charming work of love !
 God's masterpiece to touch and show
 The soul—and firmament above !

What light celestial there remained
 From young Aurora's diadem,
 With smile divine and joy unfeigned
 He added to this beauteous gem.

The shadow of the sorrowing veil,
 And tremors of the cradle, are
 Moulded within this finger, frail,
 With something of the bird and star.

And very firm and spotless white
 Yet tinted with cerulean blue
 Our Father made it that it might
 Be ever tender, pure, and true.

And very soft, so that it can
 Perform no evil o'er the sod
 And made it to resemble man,
 The little finger of his God.

He with it deck'd the hand so chaste
 Of virgin Eve—that hand, which now
 Like some sweet dream is ever plac'd
 Upon the burning human brow.

This humble and untutor'd hand,
 Guide of uncertain man to be,
 Doth trembling and transparent stand
 Upon the lamp of destiny.

An angel, thou, with downcast eyes,
 O, Woman, in thy holiness !
 Thy beauty, is not all we prize
 And not sufficient is thy grace.

Love, love we must ! for all things sigh,
 The wave—the flower—the bird of peace—
 Beauty and grace may fade and die,
 But love immortal shall increase

When rose Eve's faultless form and face,
 On our rude path by God's command,
 For love He made her soft caress,
 For her caress—her softer hand.

God, when this finger (choicest theme) !
 Had triumph'd over clay, thought fit
 T'applaud Himself, for the supreme
 Is proud to create what's exquisite.

When finished was this work of His,
 God to the angels said "Behold !"
 Then sank into the blest abyss
 Of heaven, to slumber—so 'tis told.

But while He there in shade repos'd
 Leaving that rosy finger, frail,
 Black from the east the Devil rose,
 And, smiling, fix'd thereto—A Nail.

RAIN-DROPS.

They're coming, they're coming, those bright, welcome drops !
 See ! heaven's face full with her tears,
 As though she were weeping to see the parch'd crops
 And the green grain hang low its young ears ;
 But now they prick up as it patters and falls ;
 The rain, oh, and what can surpass
 In beauty or brightness those sweet little balls
 That roll down the blades of the grass ?
 Those little round globes, if we look but anear,
 Contain all the tints of the sky,
 Ay, e'en the gay shades of the rainbow appear
 Surprisingly plain to the eye.
 Each drop is itself a small mirror of truth,
 For not as you black cloud comes on,
 A deep shadow falls on it, like sin on our youth,
 And its beauty and brightness are gone ;
 But not till the cloud in the distance has burst,
 And blest with its riches you plain,
 That rain-drop of ours, begloom'd and accurst,
 Shines out in its glories again.
 For the sun has moved up the blue steeps of the sky,
 And is blessing the earth with his rays ;
 So is youth, should the dark cloud of sin but sweep by,
 How the sun of joy brightens our days !

THE SOUTHERN CROSS.

WRITTEN AT BALLAARAT, AUSTRALIA.

How beauteous are these clear nocturnal heavens !
 These skies of Australasia wrapp'd in night !
 Where nests of stars and constellations strange,
 And curious nebulae 'mid "milky ways,"
 (Stretch'd like thin veils of silver far and wide,
 Through which those twinkling eyes look still more bright,)
 Make it a constant joy to gaze thereon ;
 And, gazing, see the Hand that loving made
 Those grand mysterious orbs, sustaining now,
 And in sweet order gently moving all !
 Oh, how I wish my British friends could look
 Upon these glories, sans the painful price
 Of breathing "Fare-thee-well, my native land !"
 Or braving death, under its ghastliest forms,
 Amid the billows of ten thousand seas !
 But ever do mine eyes turn to the gem
 Of all celestial the most glorious, and
 The most befitting the imperial brow
 Of Southern night, so soft, so warm, so fair !
 Four lovely stars, large, lustrous, and serene,
 Set with strange accuracy i' th' upper air,
 And truly named for their peculiar form,
 "The Southern Cross"—Nature's resplendent jewel,
 Out-shining all the firmament besides !
 My fancy fills the space from star to star
 And draws the golden lines, until a cross
 As true and palpable hangs down the sky
 As ever blest the martyr in his dreams,
 To give him strength to meet the coming fire,
 Which but releas'd his heaven-awaiting soul.
 And there, above it, in their snow-white robes
 I see the bright angelic spirits hovering ;
 And as they chant in low, melodious strains
 Their ceaseless and triumphant hymns of praise,
 They strew the garlands of Eternal Flowers
 Around "The Southern Cross."

SONG.

LITTLE CLARA KING.

I know she'll scold me, but I must confess
 The joys that in my bosom hide,
 For she, my love, hath softly whisper'd, "Yes,
 I will become thy bride."
 But who my charmer is there's none would know
 Did fondest love not bid me sing ;
 Then list, ye zephyrs that do gentlest blow,
 It's little Clara King.
 Ye gods, ye know I tell no lies,
 I scorn the coward thing,
 The fairest maid beneath the skies
 Is little Clara King,

'Twere nothing but a perfect waste of time
 To seek with what she doth compare,
 There's nothing like her in terrestrial clime,
 In sea, or land, or air.
 Romantic lovers with their light guitar
 Of moons, and stars, and flowers sing,
 But sweeter than a host of these, by far,
 Is little Clara King.
 Ye gods, ye know I tell no lies,
 ('Twere better not to sing)
 The fairest maid beneath the skies
 Is little Clara King.

But though she's fair, she's good, and kind, and true,
 Which is, alas ! not always so,
 For oft the fairest maid turns out a shrew--
 Her temper hot as--no,
 I will forgive them all for her sweet sake,
 For whom I bought this wedding-ring,
 And best of earth's superior wives she'll make,
 Will little Clara King.
 Ye gods, ye know I tell no lies,
 How would my conscience ring !
 The fairest maid beneath the skies
 Is little Clara King.

TIT FOR TAT: OR THE COCKEY-MOOR PARISH CLERK.

A FACT.

There liv'd, 'twas once upon a time,
 On "Cockey-Moor" a parish clerk,
 Whose life was blameless and sublime
 As any in the self-same work.

As oft as Sabbath sun arose,
 Whether he show'd or hid his face,
 Our hero, John, in spotless clothes,
 Was ever in his wonted place ;

A slightly elevated station
 Just 'neath the parson's wagging chin,
 Whence he could see his congregation,
 And snuffle out his loud Amen !

Whatever else, truth must be told,
 That we be put not to the blush,—
 Though genuine, and good as gold,
 John had his leanings toward the "flesh."

This frail and faulty flesh of ours,
 Which perisheth like summer grass !
 He lov'd the "Maypole," with its flowers,
 His stomach and his pipe and glass.

One Sunday was the annual "wakes,"
 Where merry "morris-dancers" hied,
 And nut-brown ale, with meat and cakes
 Were offer'd freely, far and wide.

In all his life, this kind of "spree,"
 Of "rush-bearing," or wedding-feast,
 Clerk John had never miss'd, not he !—
 In snowy tie and fancy vest.

Fate will'd it that he doubly long'd,
 With smacking lips and greedy tooth,
 This year to join the festive throng,
 And eat and drink with giddy youth.

But fickle fate had will'd it, too,
 That he should long, but long in vain ;
 The parson had a trick in view
 Which overturn'd John's rolling train.

The sports were to commence at "one,"
 Precisely as it struck the hour,
 The clerk to start the village fun,
 As was his wont in times before.

In vain the rustics call and search,
 Clerk John is nowhere to be seen,
 Alas ! he's still within the church,
 The parson preaching, all serene !

The turret-clock at length struck "one,"
 And slowly chim'd three-quarters in ;
 Still went the solemn sermon on,
 Much to th' impatient clerk's chagrin.

'Tis striking "two !" the sermon's done !
 His sleeping flock the priest surveys ;
 And, smiling, bends to whisper,—“ John,
 Give out the usual hymn of praise.”

Uprose the clerk, in nowise vex'd,
 For he'd been adding this to that,—
 And, looking just beyond the text,
 He saw and smell'd the parson's rat.

John's education was but slight,
 His speech full rude, but void of cant ;
 And now he spoke with all his might,
 Thus giving out the daily chant :—

“ Dear hungry friends, all good and calm,
 Sing (and fro' sinful thoughts be clean'd)
 The hundred and the nineteenth psalm—
 And sing it reet fro' eend to eend.”

“ John, John,” the parson cried, aghast
 At what his clerk so boldly states,
 “ That chapter will to tea-time last,
 And, up at home, my dinner waits.”

“ And so does mine, you well may say,”
 Said John, “ but mine is spoil'd complete ;
 Why mon, yo'n preich'd o th' blesséd day,
 So now we'll sing o th' blesséd neet.”

FORGET THEE ?

Forget thee ? But not till the Spring
 Has forgot to come after the snow,
 And from her sweet bosom to fling
 Her young leaves and bright flowers below.
 Forget thee ? But not till the hymn
 From yon woodland grove cease to be heard
 When the sun from his life-giving rim
 Throws his light on the wing of each bird.

Forget thee ? But not till yon bow
 Of the Lord spreading out in the sky,
 But one colour to mortals can show,
 Or its curve horizontally lie.
 Forget thee ? But not till the ocean
 Hath cast its last wave on the shore,
 And its wild and incessant commotion,
 Be still'd as if frozen all o'er.

Forget thee ? But not till the hand
 Of beauty be lifted from earth,
 Or the sea-star depart from its stand,
 Upon high at the motionless north.
 Forget thee ? But not till the sun
 Has forgot in the heavens to rise.
 Forget thee ? Death, baffled, shall own,
 He but sends us to meet in the skies.

A BOWTON TROTTER'S LOINES UPO' TH' SLAVE QUESTION.

What ? what ? what's that yo sen ?
 That eawr Admiralty men
 Sez that slaves are noan free when they gett'n on board
 Onny vessil that sails
 Fro Greit Brit'n or Wales ?
 Why aw never yerd nowt i' mi loife so absurd !
 Good God ! mun a tothri hard-hearted foine folk
 Because they'r'n greit Lords, trample deawn an' revoke
 Eawr grand English laws, full o' freedom an' love ?
 Never, Betty ! up, Britons, an' give 'em a shove !

Oh, bi far t' breetest spot
 That eawr standard has got,
 As it floats o'er its millions on lond an' on wave,
 Is that wheere aw read
 I' goold letters indeed
 That under its shadow treids never a slave !
 An to lern that some thickeyed has gin it for law
 That a slave that creeps under it is noan free at e' !
 Nay, a hinsult so certin to shame an' degrade
 To eawr grand Constitution there never wur made.

Yo poor slaves ov o' londs,
 Drop yor uplified honds,
 An' cover yor faces an' weep o' yor days ;
 For sin eawr flag is furl'd
 Yo'n no frend ith woide world,
 An' no ship 'll protect yo that swims upo th' says !
 Full twenty good million o' money we paid
 To free yo' an' cut off that horrible "trade."
 But it's o' gone for nowt ! So let's e'en watch an' pray
 For t' slave chap may come an' tak' *us* omny day.

An' yo singers o' sungs
 Yo may cut eawt yor tungs—
 We'n done wi bowd, national sungs o' the wave,
 For eawr preawd British Flag
 Is ript up to a rag,
 An' we'n freedom no hunger to offer a slave.
 Hang yor yeds deawn an' snivel some funeral tune,
 An' howl at yor Queen, loike a dug at th' full moon ;
 But durn't sing no moore, except i' yor graves,
 Sich sungs as " Britannia-a-roolin'-the-waves."

There's nowt that aw kno
 That's gin sich a blo
 To eawr country, an' caused so mich blushin' an' bother ;
 Mon, aw'd just as soon yer
 Ov a new civil war,
 Or freish Mon-o'-war-ships runnin' t'one again t'other.
 Eh, folk, but it's razzort me gradely to read
 That eawr Lady Britannia's fair bosom mun bleed
 Through cowardly stabs fro eawr Admiralty Lords ;
 But we'll make 'em reet fain to eight o' their feaw words.

Aw've axed for his name
 That's moast to blame,
 An' a bonny foine foo an' a traitor he is !
 So yo Britons durnt stop
 Till he's eawt ov his shop,
 An' if he demurs, pur 'im eawt wi' a whiz.
 Yo'n no need to tell me to moind what aw say,
 For awm better nor thuse sort o' chaps onny day.
 Had it bin yo an' me that 'ad meddlt, awm dang'd
 If lung afore this toime we shouldn't a' bin hang'd.

An' sarve us reet too,
 Ay, an' onny ship's crew
 That would turn a slave up to his owners again
 When he fled for his loife
 From the whip an' the knoife
 From the bully and bloodhound, the dungeon an' chain.
 An' mun England put up with this breach ov her law ?
 An' swallow for gospel this "circular" saw ?
 If it wur but one gradely to cut him i' bits
 That had gin sich a horder, 'twould nobbut be quits.

Neaw aw think that Ward Hunt
 Just deserves to be brunt
 In blazin' fat effigies every wheere ;
 He's noan fit, is he hec !
 To walk onny ships' deck,
 Mich moore to be t'yed o'er o'th' mariners theree.
 Aw'd just pitch him i't' say in a howd prato bag
 If he'll not poligize to eawr sorrowful flag—
 That beantiful banner o' red, white, an' blue,
 But whoever disgraces it surely shall rue.



A LETTER TO LIBERTY.

Oh, Liberty ! where art thou hiding thy face !
 Come, let all thy national thunders resound ;
 Thy castle's besieg'd, and the enemy base,
 His CANNON hath fix'd on thy heavenly ground.

His regiments ! — “ rowdies ” and ruinous “ roughs,”
 The “ tag-rag-and-bob-tail ” of every “ slum : ”
 For weapons they rifle the gutters and soughs,
 And borrow false courage from beer and rum,

Come, and “ do ” for our magistrates, every one ;
 Despatch them to glory, or send them to pot !
 Thou canst but despise them for what they have done,
 And so does the world. Let us have a new lot !

We cannot have worse — should the worst come to pass
 They could do but as these who have broken the faith,
 And shamefully shiver'd the Temperance glass
 While e'en at our lips — and have stoned us to death !

For is not to prevent such a barbarous scene
 They who had all the time and the power to do't,
 Not morally worse than that each should have been
 Caught in the red act ! Let the nation refute.

Oh Liberty ! blow them thy loudest alarms,
 And “ drum ” them far “ out ” of thy Temple of State ;
 Retain undishonour'd thy glorious charms,
 The worship and pride of the good and the great.

How dare they have Tory or Radical views
 When mischief is brewing the barrough about !
 Methinks when his judges their power abuse
 'Tis time for a Briton to arm and turn out.

Oh give a new leader, sweet Liberty, do,
 To rule o'er Boltonians with justice for all,
 Sharing freedom alike to the “ red ” and the “ blue,”
 To play with the peaceful political ball.

Oh grant a new conclave to sit on the “ bench,”
 For this is unworthy an Englishman's praise :
 Its features are hideous, its breath is a stench,
 Its vitals are rotten, its head is acraze.

Then, Liberty ! rouse thee, the foe is at hand,
 A cowardly army of killers-by-night ;
 Its leaders, one-sided J.P.'s of the land,
 Who should be the champions for God and the Right !

Come, and drive every tyrant far back into hell
 Who would tie up the tongue of his fellowman free :
 Again o'er the earth let thy melody swell
 As high as the mountains, as broad as the sea.

Great Spirit ! resplendent in garments of fire,
 Assume, we beseech thee, mortality's mould,
 That thy face and thy form may thy children inspire,
 As thou rid'st on the clouds in thy chariot of gold.

Bolton, January. 1872.

SCHOFIELD, THE MARTYR !

Slowly the solemn, sombre, Sabbath train,
 A throbbing and an almost endless chain,
 Bears to " God's acre " the most foully slain,
Schofield, the Martyr !

A thousand sympathising Liberals glide
 In grand procession at the victim's side,
 For one of them he liv'd, and one he died,
Schofield, the Martyr !

Woe, woe unto thy murderers, even woe !
 Thy blood shall follow them where'er they go !
 The hand is withering now that laid thee low,
Schofield, the Martyr !

Whom hadst thou wrong'd that they should spill thy blood ?
 Thy Queen ? thy town ? thy neighbour ? Ah, thy God
 Knows thou wert far too honest and too good,
Schofield, the Martyr !

Ye mourners weep ! but let your jewels fall
 Rather in joy than sorrow o'er his pall,
 Whose name sheds glory round the Temperance Hall.
Schofield, the Martyr !

For politics, sobriety, and truth,
 Shall all be gainers by his death, forsooth,
 And though entomb'd, shall speak with scathing mouth,
Schofield, the Martyr !

The nation mourns the man and hails his cause
Which renders homage to her peaceful laws,
And he shall have her pity and applause,
Schofield, the Martyr !

See ! how they wind along with muffled tread,
And near the confines of the gather'd dead !
But thine shall be the most illustrious bed,
Schofield, the Martyr !

And now the Cemetery's alive again
With thousands of the town's deep-thinking men,
Who execrate thy Tory brother—Cain—
Schofield, the Martyr !

Anon, the mighty, rolling, human wave
Drops its ten thousand tears into the grave
Dug by the blatant bully for the brave
Schofield, the Martyr !

But ere they leave the trebly-trampled sod,
A prayer, unanimous, they breathe to God
That He avenge thy death with flaming rod,
Schofield, the Martyr !

And so He will ! Already His decree
Worketh within the minds of millions, free
To glorify the Liberal cause, and thee,
Schofield, the Martyr !

When Mayor and Magistrates are dead and gone
To answer God the deeds their flesh hath done,
Thine honour'd name shall rise with every sun,
Schofield, the Martyr !

And now his little tale of life is told,
A deathless, mighty moral to unfold !
Freedom, and all her patriots cry—" Behold,
Schofield, the Martyr ! "

Peace for his ashes—pardon for his soul.
Schofield, the Martyr !

 TO MY FRIEND, ON THE BIRTH OF A SON.

A year ago, thou plantedst in thy breast
 A virgin rose of beauty and of worth,
 To shed around thy path a perfume blest,
 And make thy home the happiest home on earth.

And now to greet thy raptur'd eye there springs
 A fair young bud to grace the parent bloom,
 To breathe Eolian zephyrs o'er the strings
 Of thy fond heart and dissipate thy gloom.

To be thy pride, beyond the pride of gold,
 Beyond the pride of title or of fame ;
 To be the lambskin of thy guardian fold,
 And a bright honour to thy roof and name.

But oh ! 'tis something more than thing of joy
 That God to thee and thine hath lately given.
 A something full of awe surrounds thy boy,
 'Tis an immortal soul—an heir of heaven !

And thine the charge to fit it for above.
 Or thine the curse to start it on the path
 That leads to where is neither hope nor love,
 And where the greatest mercy would be death !

Oh, train it in the proper way, and then
 As it shall grow it shall not thence depart,
 And though its fate (like Daniel's) be a den
 Of deadly snares, it shall escape unhurt.

Never withdraw thy tender hand and kind
 From its young head, nor hush thy loving voice,
 And on the pure page of its yearning mind
 Stamp words of truth, and ye shall both rejoice.

Oh, teach him that the world is full of sin,
 With but few joys to keep us from despair,
 And that a conscience, pure and white within,
 Is what alone can ward off every care.

Oh, teach him to do right, whate'er the cost,
 Right to himself, to man, and to his God ;
 If thou neglect, perchance he may be lost,
 And thou be stained with his guilty blood.

And tell thy sinless dove before it wing
 Its way across life's waters, deep and dark,
 There is no rock of peace to which to cling
 Till it return to whence it flew—the ark.

The ark ! yon heaven, the one bright home of all,
 The starting point, the mid-way house, the goal,
 Oh, may thy son, when ruthless death shall call,
 Find that the home of his immortal soul.

Accept the blessing of a humble friend,
 It shall not fruitless rest with you entirely,
 And oft as fondly thou dost o'er him bend
 Give my warm kiss to Walter Henry Brierley.

SONG.

SWEET PEARLY EYES OF BLUE.

Sweet pearly eyes of blue,
 They haunt me every hour ;
 Whose eyes they are need never wish
 For other earthly dower.
 Bright pearly eyes of blue.
 I think I see ye peep
 Through every inch of yon blue sky
 Spread o'er the tranquil deep.

Cruel pearly eyes of blue,
 Why burst ye on my sight
 A moment, like yon falling star,
 Then left me lost in night ?
 Rare pearly eyes of blue,
 Farewell, a long farewell,
 While I can feel will ye reveal
 Your fascinating spell.

A SERENADE.

Lady, lift thy lattice high
 That thy lover standing by
 Send to thee the tender sigh
 On wings of love.
 See ! the moon, with silver eye
 Looks out above.

But methinks his silver rays
 Fall not where yon fountain plays,
 Nor upon the watery maze
 Of streamlet there,
 Thee they seem to kiss and praise
 O lady fair !

Thee night's silence seems to woo,
 And each drop of diamond dew
 Shows, methinks, thine eye of blue
 Upon its breast.
 Cast thine eye upon me, too,
 To make me blest.

All is hush'd at this sweet hour
 Save where from yon darkling tower
~~While hells~~ cry above the bower
 With jealousy,
 For there they saw me pluck this flower
 I hold for thee.

This sacred, fragrant, blushing rose
 Whose leaves are folded in repose,
 It can a tender tale disclose
 To thy lone heart—
 Pour balm upon its secret woes
 And sooth its smart.

Then, love, oh step thee from thy stair,
 And we will walk i'th' moonlit air
 Sweet, yet nothing to compare
 With thy sweet breath ;
 Come, and hear me fondly swear,
 My faith till death.

White owls

ST. VALENTINE.

St. Valentine may now be seen
 Triumphant riding o'er the land ;
 Our gracious lady Vie. the Queen
 Holds not such absolute command.
 His are most gorgeous, glittering pages,
 With words that make ye maidens weep,
 And, fluttering round his gilded cages
 Ye think them dear that cost so cheap.

What lovely flowers ! what quaint device
 Where, hidden, chubby angels lie ;
 What dainty shells and mosses nice
 To lure the unsuspecting eye.
 What landscapes beautiful abound
 With jasmimed eots where love might dwell
 With, or without the base " five-pound
 " A year," that peevish poets tell.

There, too, on marge of cozy nest—
 Models of faith for me and you—
 Soft turtle-doves with breast to breast
 Their songs of bliss for ever coo.
 'Tis polish'd all, perfumed and bright,
 Nothing of vulgar, rough, or rude :
 Well-pleasing, truly, is the sight,
 'Tis nature as by fairies viewed.

See, little churches 'mid the trees
 Tempt one to tie the fatal knot ;
 The more one looks, the more one sees
 That nothing, nothing is forgot
 Except reality and truth !
 No longer keep thine eyelids shut
 Thou fond and over-trusting youth.
 'Tis but a shell without the nut.

And ye fair maids, too, ye may start,
 Yer Valentines are ropes of sand ;
 Fools, if ye think them from the heart—
 They're manufactured but by hand.
 And this the simple reason why
 I'd let such hollow things alone,—
 Though e'en so poor a poet as I,
 'Twere better, far, to make one's own.

But yet I rue me that I wrote
 Such saintly blasphemy as this,
 For Valentine, thy scented note
 Oft brought me joy and many a kiss.
 Forgive me, Cupid, and ye jades ;
 Forgive me, postman, knocking now ;
 Forgive me, Muses, modest maids,
 If not, ther'll be a jolly row.

February 14th, 1869.

A STORMY FRAGMENT.

The cracking thunder deep and sharp,
 Booms basso on the wild storm-harp.
 While piping winds, loud, long, and shrill,
 The diabolic cadence fill.
 At times in the unearthly strain
 Is heard the oily, splashing rain,
 The which relieves the awful note
 Around as from a demon's throat.
 Hark ! now and then to swell the bruit
 A lordly tree snaps at the root,
 And, crashing, falls to rise no more,
 Pride of the forest as of yore.
 Then the loud lashings of the sea
 Fit sounds are for such melody.
 Making the welkin wildly ring
 With song t'appal each living thing.
 Masses of rock, with deafning roar
 Leap down the mountains to the shore,
 Or plunge into the boiling deep
 Unseen for evermore to sleep.
 And now a shrill, continued shriek
 The eagle adds from lofty peak,
 While over all with vivid sweep—
 A hellish kind of time to keep—
 Is seen the lightning bâton red,
 Quick wielded by the storm-king dread,
 From whose fell presence mortals flee
 To seek in vain security.
 For ah, his throne is everywhere,
 In earth, and sea, and upper air.

SONG.

THE VILE MOUSTACHE.

My love is young, my love is bold,
 My love he is supremely gay ;
 My love hath heaps of tempting gold
 To deck me out in bright array.
 My love is of the gentlest blood,
 Yea, I may speak and not be rash,
 My love is handsome as a god,
 But oh, he wears a vile moustache !

His are the manners of a prince,
 His voice, alas ! too sweetly woos,
 It won my heart, and ever since
 I tremble in my virgin shoes.
 Oft doth he pass my humble cot,
 And from behind my window-sash,
 I weep to see he still hath got
 On his fair face, that vile moustache !

And when at night I dream, 'tis he
 Who gilds the visions 'neath mine eye,
 When bent, adoring, on his knee
 Thus could I live, thus could I die.
 But ah, full soon those visions fade,
 Down fall my " castles " with a crash,
 Sure never liv'd unhappy maid
 Was kiss'd by such a vile moustache !

For such it is ; my thoughts declare
 'Tis neither colour'd, black nor white
 I wonder handsome men will wear
 Such ugly things—sad, sorry sight !
 Ye little clipping sprites above,
 Oh pity me, nor skit nor scoff,
 But flutter round my manly love,
 And cut his vile monstachios off.



WHAT THE EARLY DAISY SAID.

All early in the budding spring
 A quiet walk I took ;
 The birds were trying hard to sing
 Upon their winter-crippl'd wing
 Down by the babbling brook.

A busy ploughman working by
 Upon a daisy trod ;
 Alone it look'd into the sky
 With little, golden, modest eye
 From out the emerald sod.

The heedless fellow, worse than blind,
 Pass'd on his whistling way ;
 But how I gladly stay'd behind,
 That little bruised flower to bind
 In its low cot of clay !

With what a gentle mother's touch
 I rais'd its trampled head !
 And made a tiny prop, or crutch,
 Out of a twig, and knelt to watch
 Beside the daisy's bed.

Anon, the slender, drooping stem
 Returning strength received,
 And, crown'd with its blooming gem
 Fairer than royal diadem
 Stood up as one relieved.

And said—(indeed the daisy spoke,
 At least it did to me,
 And thus the silence sweetly broke,
 Beneath an overspreading oak,—
 A patriarchal tree:—

“ Ah ! stranger of a thoughtful race,
 A daisy's thanks receive,
 For thou hast rais'd my wounded face
 To see again my native place,
 Belov'd thou may'st believe !

“ Such men as you, beneath whose foot
I crush'd and bleeding fell,
See not the treasures God hath put
For man who is not all a brute
In every field and dell.

I'm here full soon upon the earth,
But my huge acorn-friend
Whisper'd, if I would but come forth
He'd shield me from the icy north,
And like a father tend.

Through all the winter, long and wild,
He'd watch'd for me below,
As though I'd been a mortal child
By sunny ray too soon beguil'd
And lost among the snow !

He said he yearn'd to see me peep
Beneath my crimson lid,
And that his rough brown arms would keep
Me warm whene'er I went to sleep,
And what he said he did.

I knew he lov'd me in his heart—
That brave old heart of oak !
And wish'd the winter would depart
That loving he and I might sport
Down by the babbling brook.

He said that when the rose's bloom
Should scent the earth and sky,
His limbs would all be clad in gloom,
And every blast proclaim his doom,—
His leaves would 'gin to die !

And that is why at his request,
My monarch of the woods !
I glimmer'd out to see him drest
In all his pride of coat and crest
Of green and amber buds.

But ah ! though he's so strong and fair,
So brave and watchful too,
To guard his love from every snare
Which falls upon it unaware,
Is more than he can do !

Yet blame him not, my dear oak-tree.
 Nor call his wishes vain,
 For if another year I see
 Oh, how delighted I shall be
 To spring for him again !^b

JOTTINGS BY THE BROOK.

Leave the din of crowded cities,
 Leave their mud and marts and mills.
 Leave their dry and dull committees
 For a brook among the hills.
 By one do I wander often
 When I would be sooth'd and calm ;
 Wondrous is its power to soften
 Worldly wounds with healing balm.
 Now upon its banks reclining
 Where the cones of clover teem.
 Now by willows (intertwining
 With each other) do I dream.
 Or I rest me on green mosses,
 Softer than the monarch's bed ;
 Then beneath the golden gorses
 Watch the insects overhead.
 Now repose on quaint old bridges.
 Nature's faded fallen trees ;
 Then upon the higher ridges
 Catch the bracing mountain breeze.
 Where the bluebell thickest groweth
 Where the pale primroses lie,
 Where the water-lily bloweth,
 Where these treasures, there am I.
 Or I sit me 'neath the holly
 Where the thistle hath her nest,
 And a happy melancholy
 Floods my warm impulsive breast
 But my most approved retreat is
 On a certain giant stone,
 For the elevated seat is
 With soft verdure overgrown.
 Round its base the water singeth
 Ever in low plaintive song, c

Save when mountain torrent bringeth
Louder melodies along,
Rugged rock ! I must confess it,
Though it make the milliou smile,
Oft do I in terms address it
Somewhat in the following style :—
“ Tell me, O thou mighty boulder,
How it is thou hiest here,
Startling every keen beholder
Passing by this brooklet clear !
Human hands could never lift thee,
Fairie fingers were too light,
Magic skill, perchance, might shift thee
From some cloud-capt mountain height.
As more closely I survey thee
My amazement greater is,
Thousand tons would fail to weigh thee,
Granite rock of mysteries.
Yet thou art a mass together
Smooth as schoolboy’s marble taw,
Rising through the lovely heather
Without blemish, fleck, or flaw.
When the world was wrapp’d in waters
At the dreadful deluge time,
Did earth’s doomed sons and daughters
To thy barren summit climb !
Wert thou, when those awful fountains
Burst asunder o’er the plain,
Highest point of all the mountains
Which those wretches strove to gain ?
Did the last man, pale and horrid,
Strongest and most selfish too,
Stand alone upon thy forehead,
As God hurl’d thee down below ?
Or did Noal’s bird of promise
Touch thee with its peaceful mark
When it flew for ever from his
Open hand within the ark ?
But though vain this harmless musing
Whence thou cam’st and what thou art,
Thou befit’tst a poet’s choosing,
Speaking both to head and heart.
Pretty brook ! for ever gliding,
And for ever teaching too,

That on earth there's no abiding,—
 Brooks and men their ways pursue ;
 These to one of two strange places,
 One above, the other, where ?
 Those in slow or rapid races
 To the same blue deep repair.
 Sweet brook ! how thy wavelet flashes
 In the sunlight ever free,
 How in miniature it dashes
 Like a billow of the sea,
 'Gainst each small presumptuous pebble
 That o'er-tops the limpid plain,
 Mocking with its little treble
 Lashings of the roaring main !
 How thy tiny crystal bubbles,
 Float and burst and rise anon,
 Like men's speculation troubles
 Bright, but empty every one !
 Many a broken, wither'd flower,
 Many a bud of grace supreme,
 Once the pride of lovers' bower,
 Sinketh in thy passing stream.
 So beneath life's rough old river
 Many an unknown worthy lies
 Lost, despite his best endeavour,
 Till he's found above the skies !
 As thou twinest thro' the wildwood,
 Thro' the meadow and the vale,
 Thou art like to happy childhood
 Ere the wicked world assail.
 Both sing out your simple carols
 Sweet and sparkling as the dew,
 And alike your gay apparels
 With bright blossoms ever new.
 Yet, how swiftly both are going,
 Like the clouds the breezes waft ;
 Childhood into manhood growing
 By a bad world ruin'd oft !
 Thee, pure brook ! thy end is flowing
 Into yonder bleaching-croft !



A REMINISCENCE.

'Twas a night in autumn,
And the moon was red,
When, deep to the bottom
Thrill'd my soul with dread.
Sounds fell on mine ear
Long and loud and clear
Filling me with fear.

Sounds my soul affrighting—
Sounds brim full of woe.
As of demons fighting
'Mong themselves below.
Now they shrieking rise
Ringing to the skies ;
Now the horror dies.

Fluttering like a sparrow
At the dismal tones
Cold became the marrow
In my quaking bones.
What, then, could it mean ?
Whence arose the din
Of that ghostly scene ?

Turning round in terror,
Up my glances stole ;
Quick I saw the error
Error of my soul :
Wasn't I a muff ?
There I saw enough—
Cats upon the roof.



SONG.

DREAMILY AT EVE RECLINING.

Dreamily at eve reclining
 On the white sand by the sea,
 Sweet and sad is the divining
 Where thy home on earth may be.
 Leagues of billows roll between us
 Crown'd with many a snowy crest,
 Worlds of cruel waters screen us
 From each others wounded breast.

Oft I ask the whispering ocean,
 Rolling, rippling to my feet,
 Where art thou, my youth's companion
 Whom I never more may greet?
 Can it tell me art thou living!—
 Art content and blest and gay!—
 Dost thou still betimes remember
 Thy lone friend so far away!

Were I free as yonder sea-gulls
 I would skim the ocean o'er:
 Or mine eyesight like the eagle's,
 At a glance see every shore:
 Till I found my more than brother,
 (Be he hidden where he may)
 For I ne'er can love another
 With the love he took away.

Friendship, though, is ever scornning
 Fate and distance, time and tide,
 Human hearts and lives adorning
 Till into the tomb we glide.
 Dreamily at eve reclining
 On the white sand by the sea,
 Sweet and sad is the divining
 Where thy home on earth may be.



THE DYING YEAR.

(WRITTEN AT BALLAARAT, AUSTRALIA, 1866).

The old year lies a-dying. Poor old year!
 What tortures indescribable are his,
 As, with his little load of Time, he steps
 Beyond the earth, to swell th' already grand
 Great aggregate of full Eternity!
 The poor old year! whose limbs invisible stretch
 From pole to pole, and round whose ample loins
 Th' imaginary equatorial band
 Is fast and indis severably tied.
 What an anomaly must be his couch
 Of final dissolution, when the hands
 Of all the earth in simultaneous grief
 Bedeck't as is with each his nation's wont.
 You, in cold Britain, hang it round with snow
 Through which your glittering icicles protrude
 And pierce the quivering moribond within;
 And on his pale blue forehead firmly set
 Your prickly holly, with its scarlet tears,
 While shivering minstrels with blue noses chant
 His requiem 'neath the frosty, star-lit sky.

Not so with us, hot-blooded Australasians;
 Half naked crowd we round his blistering form,
 And for his sweltering brow in sorrow weave
 A garland from the sun's most scorching rays,
 And make his dying bed a furnace, that
 The spots and blemishes of his short life
 Be burnt away, that he, all purified
 May shine for ever in the long to come!

And Nature, too, here all consistent mourns
 Around the "stretcher" of the dying year.
 The "hot winds" from th' interior, sighing, rush
 Across the arid land, and, all spontaneous,
 Woods and high mountains light their farewell fires,
 Hiding the burning sun so fierce they shine
 Like mighty torches blazing round the bier
 Of him, Time's dearest, latest-born, now dying—dead!



SONG.

THE OLD DRIPPING WELL.

The old dripping well in the garden at home
 I can never forget, tho' the wide world I roam,
 For my childhood's sweet visions it opens to me
 And a bright panorama again do I see.
 Many an hour would I sit where its green mosses grow
 Till the stars twinkled down on its waters below,
 And my innocent bosom with rapture would swell
 As I sat all alone by the old dripping-well.

And the quaint oaken-pail, with its iron-bound side,
 Which at pleasure I dropt in the crystaline tide,
 Gave my heart warm emotions too dear to reveal,
 As it fell with the rope from the rude wooden wheel.
 But the broad willow-tree hanging gracefully o'er
 With its treasur'd bird-nest shall enchant me no more ;
 Yet deep down in my soul doth a joy ever dwell
 When I think of my home and the old dripping-well.

Oh the world with its cares hath entangled me now
 And hath darkened with sorrows my once happy brow ;
 I have found a fell thorn under life's blooming rose
 And the hard hand of Fate hath destroyed my repose.
 But it cannot, thank God, drive bright mem'ry away
 Which beams o'er my life like a heaven-born ray,
 And whispers in secret, " No power can dispel
 The fond charm round thy home, and the old dripping-well."

HAPPY HOURS.

There are some hours in which we own
 That after all, this life's delicious !
 Around them, like a diamond-stone,
 A halo circles, bright and precious.
 We set them from the rest apart
 To be our blessings and our guides,—
 To soothe and cheer us when the heart
 Refuses everything besides.

Ye happy hours! mysterious stars
 That shine in spite the day's proud King;
 This life has not a cloud that mars
 Your lustre,—strange but glorious thing!
 O Memory, what a treasure thou!
 Best spirit of this world of ours!
 How oft we see thee bind the brow
 Of lov'd ones, gone! with living flowers!

And though thou strangely storest all
 Pell-mell within thy little room,
 Thou pick'st the God-illumin'd wall
 On which to hang those hours till doom,
 Like pictures, faithful, fresh and fair,
 In colours from the world of joy,
 No accident can reach them there,—
 No touch of Time their lines destroy!

We close our eyes, and lo, they come!
 Those pictures of past happy hours,—
 The loves and lights and lays of home,
 (That garden of the sweetest flowers)—
 The floods of friendship and of love,—
 The times of social mirth and glee,—
 The bosoms, warm, to which we cleve
 In childhood and in infancy,—

The musings of a higher state
 Of grandeur, purity and bliss,—
 The moments of a heart elate
 With thoughts of better worlds than this,—
 Communion with undying souls
 Of men and women of the past,
 Who gave the world their varied scrolls
 Of burning treasures, deep and vast,—

Gay fancy's flights to fairie-land,
 Where beauty reigns supreme and rare,
 Whose spirits take us by the hand
 To show the changing wonders there:—
 And when—t' obey the will of God,
 An evil spirit touches whom
 We love, and with its mystic rod
 Entices them nigh to the tomb.

Oh happy hour to meet again
 The conscious eye—the grateful glance—
 To see the brow releas'd from pain
 And smoothly placid as 'twas once !
 And that in which (each season come)
 We gaze enraptur'd o'er our isle
 Now dimpling 'neath a silver dome,
 Now golden 'neath a sunny smile ;

Betimes enwrapt in sparkling snow,—
 Anon enrich'd with fruit and flowers,—
 Again—but not for me to show
 All things which cause us happy hours.
 The gentle word, though, gives us one
 When dropt into the troubled heart,—
 The kindly look,—the friendly tone,
 Can place a happy hour apart.

But when we have a wrong forgiven,—
 A sin atoned,—a hate suppress'd,
 Oh such are as the hours of heaven—
 Such peace and joy they give the breast !

SONG.

W I N T E R .

Methinks, O Winter ! thou art fairer far
 Than Spring and Summer with their flowers are :
 Thy breath is chilly, but thine eyes are bright,
 Thy cheeks are glowing with a rare delight.
 Thy pearls what are they, vain and wealthy maid,
 To those that hang from yon congeal'd cascade ?
 Thy purest diamonds dull, compared with these
 Old Winter scatters on his rocks and trees !

O Winter cold ! O Winter old !
 Yet young as when Time's wheels first roll'd !
 O Winter rare ! O Winter fair !
 O Winter welcome every year !

'Neath thy red holly and pale mistletoe
 What hopes are fostered and what bosoms glow !
 What happy faces crown thy Christmas cheer
 For friends thou mak'st of whom were foes all year !
 Thy greatest glory is thy spotless snow
 Which veils thy breast, and warms the earth below ;
 And yet 'tis but the dust by angel-hands
 Swept from the threshold where their palace stands.

O Winter cold ! O Winter old !
 Yet young as when Time's wheels first roll'd !
 O Winter rare ! O Winter fair !
 O Winter welcome every year !

THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK.

Mysterious man ! how his unhappy tale
 Touches with pity every listening soul ;
 How oft his phantom rises dim and pale,
 Wrapped round with wonderment and matchless dole !
 Few are the simple facts that history gives
 This nameless victim to an unknown ire ;
 But, though for centuries dead, his memory lives
 Smouldering, ne'er to outburst in tongue of fire.
 I well nigh weep, oh, " L'homme au masque de fer,"
 To read in French his most romantic story ;
 It may be 'twas his native language, dear,
 Which lends it, let me say, more ghostly glory.
 But all's enwrapt within the densest cloud—
 His very name, his nation and his blood ;
 A living man already in his shroud—
 A mortal all unknown but to his God ;
 And yet faint whispers from high places fell
 His face bore semblance to the kings of France,
 And that the reigning Louis knew full well
 The why and wherefore of the sad romance.
 That great and glorious Louis call'd " Le Grand,"
 Who (when his long, long reign was at its close,
 And all triumphant Death stood nigh at hand
 Waiting this goodly Monarch to depose)

Turn'd to the mourners round his royal bed
 E'en as his soul passed through the icy portal,
 And with sweet, dying voice distinctly said,—
 "Why weep ye? did ye deem I was immortal?"

But whatsoe'er the king in secret knew,
 If aught he knew indeed, was never told;
 And now each curious century wondereth who
 The mystery of "the mask" will e'er unfold.
 Was he some royal prince? some patriot good?
 Some pirate king, or envied naval chief?
 Some merchant Croesus? some dread man of blood?
 Some lordly lunatic, or high-born thief?
 Or was he snatch'd from every family scene,
 Cruelly bemask'd and thrust in dungeon dim
 To satisfy some fell imperial spleen,
 Or pamper some unnatural lordly whim?
 Or did he nobly give himself to death
 As hostage for another, like a God?
 Qui sait? for what and whence he was beneath
 Are things o'er which oblivious ages nod.

And yet conjecture, ever on the wing,
 Made of him this and that illustrious man;
 Now, own twin brother to the reigning King—
 Now, English Oliver Cromwell's exiled son.
 Then Duke of Monmouth, and one Matthioli,
 Count of Mantua, who through State affairs
 Of plot and crime, or some ambitious folly,
 Was doom'd thus to breathe his dungeon prayers.
 But whosoe'er he, these few facts are all
 Upon the page of history sublime
 Concerning this distinguish'd son of thrall—
 This man or victim (which!) of nameless crime.
 We know not when they 'gan, but dreary years
 Chased dreary years—the slowest of them fleet—
 And still he lay shut out from human tears
 In island dungeon of St. Marguerite.
 Peering athwart the Mediterranean sea
 To catch the distant sail upon her wave,
 Or listening to her waters loud and free
 Lashing the pillars of his living grave;
 Or gazing from the loophole of his cell
 With longing eyes, like saint up to his God,

Up to the lovely hills of Esterel,
 Whose winding paths dissect the sloping sod :
 These, or to watch some sea-bird cut the air
 Or note the fleecy clouds steal on above,
 Were all the outward joys fell to his share,
 Cut off from human sympathy and love.
 And yet his life within his prison-walls
 Was all a guilty (?) captive could desire ;
 His jailer but with cap-in-hand ne'er calls
 His every wish to do and to enquire.
 Except that he, poor prisoner ! was compell'd
 To wear a mask of metal night and day,
 And pen and ink and parchment were withheld,
 And every hope of freedom swept away
 His treatment was as kind as kind could be,
 His viands dainty and on silver served
 As though to one of princely pedigree
 Whom fulsome meed of honour had deserved.
 But ah ! how bitter were the richest feast
 Of rarest morsels and of nectar drinks
 If Liberty be not the honoured guest,
 Beneath whose eye the eye of Sorrow sinks.

There came a day the captive's love for men
 Would have them know his history and his doom,
 And though deprived of parchment and of pen
 Sought and found out the means within his tomb,
 Would all the world have made as wise as he,
 His name divulged and all his curious tale
 Had not some treacherous spirit of the sea
 Cast back again his story to the jail.
 And this the manner. With a pointed knife
 He scratch'd upon a silver platter bright,
 The leading items of his chequered life
 And threw it, unobserv'd, with all his might
 From out the window of his lonely cell,
 And though into the greedy deep it fell,
 'Twas lost not, for a fisher, in his net
 Receiv'd the curious tell-tale. But, anon,
 (Unskill'd in th' magic of the alphabet)
 Return'd it with its secret pattern done
 To stern St. Mars, the jailer of the "The Mask,"
 And barely 'scap'd imprisonment for his task.

Soon after was the victim ta'en and thrust
 Down in the Bastile's deepest dungeon den,
 And left alone to die, to rot, to rust
 Unsought, unseen, unsung of mortal men.

In seventeen-eighty-nine, a terrible year
 When Frenchmen for their freedom fought and won,
 They stormed that stronghold to their tyrants dear,
 And pull'd the dread and dismal Bastile down
 Then, as with yells of wildest rage they tore
 The ponderous stones from the foundation deep,
 And smash'd the locks from every prison door,
 Oh God ! what sight makes all their flesh to creep !
 A skeleton in chains ! fast to the rock
 From whence was hewn the chamber, dark and dull,
 And, starting forward, sec, with horror struck,
 An Iron Mask still on its crumbling skull !

This tale is awful. But more awful are
 The life and times of him, who, to o'erglaze
 His rottenness of soul, to cheat and mar
 Self-dons and wears a *moral* mask all his days,
 More hideous, for its comeliness betrays.
 But God, who knows and doeth all things well,
 Will rip the metal and the moral mask away ;
 That lift to heaven, perchance, this cast to hell,
 After the solemn sentence of the Judgment Day !

SONG.

FANNY'S FIB.

I waited 'neath the trysting tree,
 But had not waited long
 Before fair Fanny came to me,
 My Fanny gay and young.
 But ah ! a gloom spread o'er her,
 A tear dimm'd her bright eye,
 And I stood so mute before her
 That she thought I was not by.
 That she thought I was not by to give
 One sigh with her, my pride,
 As she told in tones of anguish'd love
 She was another's bride !

"Another's bride!" ah! none can tell
 The woe that wrung my breast,
 Those words fell on me like a knell
 From her whom I lov'd best,
 I clasped her wildly to me,
 To stay my breaking heart,
 O! that laugh's yet ringing through me
 As she burst my arms apart.
 'Twas to try me if I lov'd her true
 That thus she feign'd grief,
 And told the fib I sing to you
 In music sweet and brief.

SONG.

UP, MEN!

My fellow travellers through this life.
 Oh! take a friendly word,
 And let the simple truths I sing,
 Cut like a two edg'd sword.
 That man is happiest of us all,
 Who loves his fellow man,
 And kindly raises those that fall,
 After his Maker's plan.

CHORUS.

Then up, men! though ye don't like the look of it,
 Rouse up your pluck a bit,
 And though ye may be shook a bit,
 The brave go happiest all through life.
 The faint but lick the lowly dust:
 The faint but lick the dust.

Oh covet not the rich man's gold,
 Ye know not what's behind.
 Perchance a hard and selfish heart,
 Or grief of some sad kind.
 But labour on with gay content,
 And God will fill your store
 With bread as sweet as e'er was sent
 To high, low, rich or poor.

CHORUS.

Then up, men ! though ye don't like the look of it,
 Rouse up your pluck a bit,
 And though ye may be shook a bit,
 The strongest win the game of life,
 The weak go to the crumbling wall :
 The weak go to the wall !

We shall not be for ever here,
 We're hasting fast away,
 Then let us do the good we can,
 Though little, day by day.
 We'll cheerful, too, start life anew,
 And be but what we seem,
 For the Poet's words you'll find are true,
 " Life is no idle dream."

CHORUS.

Then up, men ! though ye don't like the look of it,
 Rouse up your pluck a bit,
 And though ye may be shook a bit,
 Faint heart never won fair dame,
 And they but laugh who work and win ;
 And they but laugh who win !

A LETTER TO A. C.

Which it's hardly the thing
 To speak ill of one's kind ;
 But in rhyme let me tling
 Just a bit of my mind,
 Which I'll write a few rooted opinions,
 And we all know that words are but wind.

But the wind of a breeze,
 And the wind of a storm
 Are of different degrees :
 This I beg to inform,
 In words the most plain and emphatic,
 Which I own that my feelings are warm.

But before I proceed—
 Which I now make a start—
 I'm indebted indeed
 For my style to Bret Harte,
 Which the same is so very far after,
 That it's only a pale counterpart.

Perhaps you'll call me a thief,
 Picking other men's brains.
 Well, if that's a relief,
 There is no one complains ;
 So continue to call till you're weary,
 Which that's all my permission contains.

There be fellows about,
 I well know them by name ;
 But get rid of your doubt,
 I'll not mention the same,
 Which my lips would be only polluted,
 And that's not a part of my game.

My two eyes are my own,
 And my tongue, too, as well,
 And my pen's rather prone
 My experience to tell ;
 Which I care not for Dick, Tom, or Harry,
 While aringing the truth from my bell.

“ Which I wish to remark,
 And my language is plain,
 That for ways that are dark,
 And for tricks that are vain,”
 Some natives of Bolton are famous,
 Which the same I proceed to sustain.

For they'll drink till all's blue,
 And stop long out o' nights,
 And most gladly pursue
 All the devil's delights ;
 And they care not the toss of a button
 For any man's wrongs or his rights.

And they'll pile up their lies,
 And their scandal and mud,
 Till it reach to the skies,
 If one tries to be good ;
 Which it's plain to be seen they'd much rather
 Be damn'd than attempt it — they would.

Let a man wish to mend,
 (Which it's rarely the case),
 No assistance they lend,
 But they laugh in his face ;
 Which the same is right hard to endure,
 Or they hunt him like wolves in a chase.

This I tell to their teeth
 Is a sin and a shame,
 Very far, far beneath
 Men, at all worth the name,
 Whose cards should be played in a better
 Than such a contemptible game.

Which I've something else yet
 To remark in my rhyme :
 Let a man once forget
 His engagements sublime,
 They make of a mole-hill a mountain.
 And call but a weakness a crime.

As for charity—why
 Which they have not as much
 As there's green in your eye,
 Or there's flesh on a crutch ;
 And one truly kind word they can utter,
 No more than a donkey can Dutch !

Now, such fellows I say,
 Are deceitful and base ;
 So let's turn right away
 Both our feet and our face
 From the haunts of such devils incarnate,
 Which their friendship is but a disgrace.

Which it's hardly "the cheese,"
 To speak ill of one's kind,
 But in verse, if you please,
 Here's a bit of my mind ;
 Which I've writ a few rooted opinions,
 And we all know that words are but wind.

SONG.

THE FORGET-ME-NOT.

There's a bonnie little flower
 Bending graceful o'er the water ;
 Running smoothly by the bower,
 Shading Britain's fairest daughter.
 See ! she plucks and hides the bloom
 In her bosom heaving hot—
 Happy mortal he for whom
 That blue, sweet, wee Forget-me-not !

Love and friendship with the gem
 Deck the brows of dearest ones,
 Letters hold its slender stem
 Valued more than brightest suns.
 Choicest of all flowers that grow,
 Cheering hill, or vale, or grot,
 Joy to exiled hearts below,
 The blue, sweet, wee Forget-me-not !

ON SEEING MY LITTLE CHILD ASLEEP.

Ah ! if I had not seen thee give,
 That heaving motion to thy breast,
 I should have thought thou didst not live,—
 That thou hadst touch'd thy long, last rest.
 Not frozen lake kiss'd by the moon
 More still and pale than thy fair face,
 And scarcely can I think that soon
 Will leave thy head each deathly trace.

How strange the contrast ! Scarce an hour
 Has fled since thou wert wild with breath ;
 How strange, O Sleep ! to show thy power
 Of giving life by feigning Death !
 Sweet child ! that heavy sigh of mine,
 Has broke the charm around thy form ;
 Oh come, and on my breast recline,
 And whisper, smiling, thou art warm.

SONG.

TEACH YOURSELF TO DO WITHOUT THE THINGS
YOU CANNOT GET.

This world would make a dead, full stop,
 If all were rich alike,
 And life itself would soon become
 A dull and stagnant dyke ;
 All would command, but who obey ?
 Of workers there'd be none ;
 No healthy competition,
 And no business to be done.
 What would the face of nature be,
 Did mountains not arise
 To screen the fruitful valleys
 From the fury of the skies ?
 There must be hill and dale in life ;
 But still you need not fret—
 Go teach yourself to do without
 The things you cannot get.

Envy not the rich man's gold,
 'Tis not what it appears,
 'Tis haunted, and is oft baptised
 With blood and bitter tears.
 Nor grudge their power who stand aloof
 And sway the hearts of men ;
 It hath been bought, and precious made,
 By years of toil and pain.

A cheerful and contented mind
 Is of all things the best,
 Accompanied by Faith and Hope
 And Honour in the breast :
 Four things that wealth can never buy !
 Then cast aside regret,
 And teach yourself to do without
 The things you cannot get.

Yet rest not slothful by the way,
 Thou honest working man ;
 Watch well the times, speak boldly out,
 And get the things you can.
 Have sympathy and thought for your
 Employer "millionaire,"
 But tell him that your drops of sweat
 Enrich him every year.
 Your home, your wife, your children—oh,
 For these first toil and pray—
 For these look to your wages,
 And provide for rainy day.
 You'll find it easy work to do
 The duty God hath set,
 If you teach yourself to do without
 The things you cannot get.

You say you are obliged to do !
 Then do it with good grace,
 And never hide a poison'd soul
 Behind a smiling face ;
 Nor lug within your inmost heart
 To plague you like a ghost,
 The shapes of things beyond your reach,
 The things you covet most.
 What Providence doth daily give,
 For that give daily thanks :
 Oft where a carriage it denies,
 It giveth sturdy shanks.
 But work and wait, and you shall find
 There's "corn in Egypt" yet,
 If you teach yourself to do without
 The things you cannot get.



TO MY "M.D."

Of doctors how varied the types !
 How mix'd their professional men !
 One gives a sick body the gripes
 The moment his phizog is seen.
 So solemnly serious and sad,
 It causeth a horrible thrill ;
 No wonder the " patient " goes mad
 Of this mixer of bolus and pill !

 Or dies like a dog in a dyke,
 Fairly poisoned by glances so glum :
 The devil a doctor such like
 To my dwelling ever shall come !
 No, no ! When my bowels demur,
 Or thick and short cometh my breath,
 I shall very much rather prefer
 To die me a natural death !

 But when in my anguish I see
 A jolly-faced doctor like you.
 'Tis almost a pleasure to be
 Laid up with my gruel and stew.
 A merry physician's the best,
 Yea, though he were lacking in skill :
 The hangman take me all the rest
 Of the mixers of bolus and pill !

 But you are of those, my " M.D.,"
 Who labour from motives of love,
 Yet not altogether above
 Receiving your moderate fee.
 Why should you ! Though physic is bad.
 Still premature dying is worse ;
 Then heal us, and I shall be glad
 To pay for yourself and your horse.

 There's something uncommonly nice
 In your treatment of me and of mine,
 Who follow your able advice.
 And swallow your physic and w(h)ine !
 As early as safety permit,
 Please send me your visiting bill.
 Oh joy, once again to be quit
 Of the mixer of bolus and pill !

MY HOBBY.

Most men have their hobbies—and women as well—
 Some of them harmless ; alas ! and some not at all,
 Some are suggested by Satan in hell
 To those who of wisdom retain not a jot at all.
 But mine you'll admit is a hobby of taste,
 The care of it healthy and sweet and excusable,
 Whose sides and high summit are equally grac'd
 With beautiful flowers and plants that are useable.

Its body is mainly of boulders of stone
 And blocks of grey granite laid roughly together,
 While metals and marbles and tree-roots are thrown
 Into studied confusion and tufted with heather.
 But ere I proceed with this rugged romance,
 I'll dispense, if you please, with all mystical mockery,
 Showing the pith of the matter at once
 By begging to say that my hobby's a rockery.

So now that I've "let the cat out of the bag,"
 I hope for a moment you will not deem that a clog ;
 And if, while perusing, the interest flag,
 Oh, lay not the fault to this wonderful catalogue,
 The mouser will give her additional *claws*
 To this pit-a-pat poem, not void of variety,
 And should it displease you, 'tis simply because
 You're unfit for a humorous poet's society.

My hobby's chief feature's a thickly-clad holly-tree,
 Trimm'd with inverted old bottles of glass,
 While figures grotesque, fit for heathen idolatry,
 Stare at you out of the tall lady-grass.
 Some red-throated shells of dimensions enormous,
 Add ornament finely from far off Pern
 At least so conchologists choose to inform us,
 If wrong, then I leave contradiction to you.

Red peonies gorgeous, call'd "Roses of Pentecost,"
 Used to embellish the Catholic Church :
 'Tis said they've a virtue, but that's but an empty boast,
 Likely to leave a poor soul in the lurch.
 There are crocuses, primroses, foxgloves, and bettany,
 Hardy king-feathers and lupins so blue,
 With a handful of nettles, for whoso would get any,
 Bearing like Britons, a stinging or two.

And more, when I look at my hobby again,
 It hath flowery types that are strangely symbolical
 Of much that is sinful and sad among men,
 To say nothing of conduct we rightly may folly call.
 There's the deadly, fell nightshade grows up by the side
 Of "modesty," sweet in her blooms and humility,
 Like a devil that seeks with an angel to bide,
 To blast her fair life had he but the ability.

There's a skull, that I found where the wimberry grows,
 Of some human or beast, a most curious section ;
 To whom or to what it belonged, Goodness knows !
 And perhaps she will tell at the great resurrection !
 'Tis little I know of the science anatomy,
 Or else I might give you a rattling of bones.
 Not those of *my* body (you could not think that o' me).
 But such as I place on my rockery stones.

At the base of my hobby, through winter's inclemency,
 Dozens of bonnie birds flutter and feed,
 And, whatever fine ladies and grand city gem'en say,
 Th' investment gives rare satisfaction indeed.
 You may chaff as you please, skit, scoff, and bamboozle, too,
 Deeming it childish to feed little birds,
 But I love the robin, the thrush, and black-ousel, too,
 Which, with my sparrows, give me my rewards.

To the right is a large leather-leaf'd rhododendron,
 A stumpy green willow, and prickleless broom,
 To the left, a young poplar, a tall and a slender 'um.
 An ash, and laburnum all golden with bloom.
 'Tis backed by an ivy luxuriantly evergreen,
 Hiding a cottage for lumber and coals,
 And numberless articles such as were never seen
 Elsewhere between the terrestrial poles.

You perceive in these rhymes there is something eccentric,
 And your pardon I crave if that troubles you much,
 For I'm partly compelled to resort to a pen-trick
 That twists the Queen's English almost into Dutch.
 If I write about daffodils, snowdrops, and pansies,
 Moss-roses, carnations, and purple auriculas,
 And squeeze huge bouquets int' a few stumpy stanzas,
 Then what can I do but say something ridiculous ?

I presume 'twould amuse you to see me at work
 On my hobby, with every conceivable implement,
 My wife looking on with a smile and a smirk,
 The which I opine, to encourage is simply meant.
 For mine, you must know, is a sensible mate,
 Proverbial for goodness, and taste, and civility,
 And knows, quite as well as King Alfred the Great,
 The wisdom of work and hard-labour's utility.

There is that in theselines my two friends, Dick and Tommy, call
 Rather original, pleasing, and pat,
 And say if *you* too see not where it is comical.
 Dullard you are, and as blind as a bat.
 So now, patient reader, I bid you adieu.
 And if this effusion you should not think capital,
 I'm heartily sorry, and this you may do,
 Drive my pastoral Muse back again to her "rappit-hole!"

SONG.

HALF-PAST SEVEN.

I'm longing for that happy hour,
 That slow-foot half-past seven.
 I'm longing as the opening flower
 Longs for the dew of heaven.
 I'm longing for't, for I shall press
 Her tell-tale hand in mine,
 Who stole my heart so merciless,
 Yet smil'd a smile divine.

I'm longing for't, for I shall hear,
 That tender voice once more,
 That, music-like, low, soft, and clear,
 Stole to my bosom's core.
 I'm longing for't, for I shall meet
 Another melting glance,
 So passion-full from eyes replete,
 With something to entrance.

I'm longing for't, for care will fly,
 And sorrow from my breast.
 Nor while my love is standing by
 Will they return to rest.
 I'm longing for that happy hour,
 That blesséd half-past seven :
 Yea, as the opening, tender flower
 Longs for the dew of heaven.

NIGHT.

I saw two Sisters, fair and fond,
 Whom life will not forget :
 Blanche was a sweet, bewitching "blonde,"
 With temperament to correspond,
 But Edith—a "brunette,"

Maidens more beautiful were none
 Cast in our mortal mould ;
 Blanche was a daughter of the sun,
 A thing of light and joy and fun,
 With hair of gleaming gold.

The beams that slept within her eyes,
 Were languishment and love,
 He who has woo'd and won the prize
 Does only less than idolise
 His wedded human dove.

No jewel decked the peerless blonde
 Save on her bosom white,
 A single, costly diamond,
 Suspended by a silken band,
 Reflecting every light.

But Edith, grave and grand brunette,
 Was fairer in my "een,"
 With massive locks of raven jet,—
 With orbs of deepest violet,
 And carriage of a queen!

Full many a glittering, precious stone
Adorn'd her pensive brow ;
And now, in after years, I own,
Dark Edith, it was thee, alone
I worshipp'd of the two.

So glorious Night ! 'tis unto thee
I dedicate my lay,
For when thy myriad gems I see,
Oh, thou art more belov'd by me
Than thy pale sister, Day—

That noisy, laughing, romping jade
Whose tongue has never done,
Until thou risest from thy shade,
Sweet Night ! my melancholy maid !
After the setted sun.

She and the world confess thy power,
And conquer'd fall asleep ;
Yet, in thy soothing midnight hour,
There's *one* who walks the moonlit tower,
Or by the murmuring deep.

'Tis then that sorrow seems to fly,
And tumult sinks to rest,
While thy lit lamps illumine the sky,
And gentle, fragrant zephyrs sigh
In wafting o'er thy breast.

Thy sleeping roses scent the air
From mountain-top to dell :
Thy dews are falling everywhere,
As if to-morrow's burning glare
Somehow they could foretell.

The deep-mouth'd mastiff, now and then,
Bays thee with peaceful howl,
The nightingale from yonder glen
His anthem rings o'er field and fen,
To flood my ravished soul.

Thou raisest my desponding heart,
And pluckest out its thorn ;
But though thy wondrous healing art
Awhile removes the burning smart,
It pricks again at morn.

But that is not a fault of thine,
 My sombre-hooded friend,
 Thou workest out a deep design,
 Obedient to the will, Divine,
 We cannot comprehend.

The world may love the golden Day,
 That lights the land and sea,
 But oh ! the starry "milky-way"—
 The moon, the oceans all obey—
 The splendid Night for me !

For then my soul is overjoyed,
 And thought is her delight,
 And, with her Maker for her guide,
 Explores all the teeming void
 Of grand and glorious Night !

A NAME.

A name ? ah, yes, there is a name,
 A short, but sweet as virgin honey,
 And, as I tell it, do not blame
 Me that I love it more than money.

The ring of which may, for a time,
 Seduce my heart from care and sadness,
 But this dear name—oh, thought sublime !
 Will ever fill my soul with gladness.

I breathe it oft when all alone
 Across the barren mountain straying,
 And to the winds I trembling own
 It leads me, like a child obeying.

I tell it to the stars at eve,
 And to the early morning planet :
 Ah, though you're laughing in your sleeve,
 Your heart can never blame me, can it ?

For what were life but drear and dull,
 Without some sentiment to cheat it !
 With this one name my heart is full,
 But yet I must not now repeat it.

An angel rings it in mine ear,
 When noisy friends around are pressing ;
 And loud o'er all, but richly clear,
 This name falls on me like a blessing.

At night when sleep has bound my eyes,
 With soft, transparent, curious covering,
 Bright legions o'er my pillow rise,
 And speak it on their pinions hovering.

I know a thousand happy sounds,
 And music-names, yea, more than many :
 But that which from my heart rebounds
 Most sweetly, is the name of JENNY !

TO YOU.

WRITTEN IN A LADY'S ALBUM.

Come, need no inviting,
 Who open these pages,
 Leave here your handwriting
 To please future ages.
 Be not too fastidious
 In giving your mite,
 She is not invidious
 For whom you will write.
 But lenient and kind
 And forgiving to all,
 Who here leave behind
 One thought free from gall.
 Yet oh, it would give her
 More joyful surprise,
 If from your *own* quiver
 The arrow-thought rise.
 Then let me beseech you
 In her name and mine,
 (In the kindest of speech) you
 Will here leave a line.

A SIMILE.

Just as a skilful blackberry-picker's eye:
 Stay not upon the berries doom'd for pies,
 But scan the bush in search of other sweets
 While cautious hand the prickly work completes,—
 So does the busy brain leave thought for thought,
 Whether immortal pen record or not,
 For if the soul a moment trifling stay
 It loseth earthly beauties by the way.

MY CHILDREN'S ACROSTIC.

J ust what two little unfledg'd birds at rest
 A re to their parents flying round their nest,
 N ot one iota are ye less to me,
 E ndear'd by ties of love and sympathy.
 A ll that a father's heart can feel I feel,
 N ew every morn, and when the shadows steal
 D own from the sunless and deserted skies ;
 A nd through each night, though sleep lock up mine eyes,
 M y senses seem to seek you and to find
 E ach of your persons pictur'd to my mind.
 L et me now hope, my darlings, you'll become
 I n every sense the treasures of our home,
 A nd as you sow your lives with seeds of love,
 S o shall you reap a hundred-fold above.
 K eep this in mind until you're women grown,—
 E ach hour of youth is worth a diamond-stone !
 L et none be wasted, for they're all but few
 T o make you fit for earth and heaven too,
 O f my fond love, and of your Ma's as well,
 N e'er let a doubt within your bosoms dwell.

Sept. 30th, 1875.



SONG.

THE LAND, THE LAND WHERE I WAS BORN.

They speak in raptures of the lands
 Beyond the billow'd deep blue sea,
 Of myrtle groves and coral strands
 Where pearls and queenly diamonds be :
 Where fadeless flowers bloom and throw
 An all-eternal fragrance round,
 And sparkling streams of crystal go
 Meand'ring, singing o'er the ground—

They speak of clondless azure skies
 Which canopy Enchantment's plains,
 Where heavenly harmonies arise,
 And peaceful Beauty ever reigns :
 Where night is but continued day
 In robes of silver 'stead of gold,
 And fairies in the moon's soft ray
 Their merry, magic revels hold—

They speak in raptures of the lands
 Beyond the billow'd deep blue sea,
 But oh ! there is a spot demands
 A sweeter, holier love from me :
 Richest in treasures of the soul
 To comfort "man that's made to mourn,"
 It is the dearest of them all—
 The land, the land where I was born !

Then, come, I'll pledge thee, land of mine,
 With bounding blood and hand on high,
 And quaff to thee a cup divine—
 Yea, though I were to drink and die !
 For after heaven's, thy name would most
 My lips of life or death adorn :
 This, then, my song, and echoing boast,—
 The land, the land where I was born !

THE SONG OF THE SEA.

I am widely spread o'er my rough rocky bed,
 And my feet run all around :
 In how many a place, to the plummet's disgrace,
 My depths it cannot sound !
 I leap and I roar the round earth o'er,
 And I ripple on every strand,
 And beautiful ships, that stars eclipse,
 I bear to every land.

Deep down in my breast are hid all the best
 Of pearls and corals and stones,
 And bleach'd with my salt, in their watery vault
 Lie quiet the mariner's bones.
 And shining shells, in slippery cells,
 I hoard with tender pride,
 For my pets are they below the spray
 Of my bounding, restless tide.

And the beautiful weeds my rich brine feeds,
 I hang in garlands above
 The mermaid's nest by Neptune caress'd
 In his melting hours of love.
 My lullaby waves through grottoes and caves
 Their cadences ever ring,
 And my billows at times, with their horrible chimes
 Appall each living thing.

O'er my boundless face the wild winds chase
 And hunt each other in play ;
 Both slow and fleet are their million feet
 Which kick up my snowy spray.
 I laugh at the rock which giveth the shock
 Of death to stoutest keel :
 Around him I thread, leap high o'er his head,
 And make the proud giant to reel.

My forehead is crown'd with icebergs round
 That cut the clouds wandering by,
 Of crimson and gold and all colours unroll'd
 Is the woof of my northern sky.
 And there do they grow, right out through the snow,
 Strange trees no mortal hath seen,
 And the dread polar-bear, from his icieled lair
Bays loudly the lunar queen

Wherever he run the print of the sun
 Falls warm on my bosom of light,
 And every morn his brow I adorn
 With beauties I rattle at night.
 And the moon bright as brass, in my crystalline glass
 Steals a glance at her monthly face,
 And when the stars peep, bonnie diamonds leap
 On my surface from place to place.

How short is your life, and that full of strife,
 O ye sons of the children of men !
 What are ye to me—the everlasting sea,
 And your wealth what to mine but a grain !
 Yet oh ! what am I, before the Most High,
 Creator of ocean and land :
 With my thousands of miles girting thousands of isles,—
 With my winds and my waves, and my rocks and my caves,—
 With my numberless dead on their cold, slimy bed ?
 A *drop* in the palm of His hand !

THE HENPECKED HUSBAND.

There's one more contemptible object in life
 Than the man that is henpeck'd at will by his wife,
 And only one more, or I'm willing to be
 Tarr'd, feather'd, and toss'd headlong into the sea !
 And that is the lady herself, be it known,
 Whose name to a butt and a byeword has grown.
 Poor fellow ! his life is the life of a slave,
 A mute and a dummy, instead of a brave !
 He cannot pass over his threshold, I ween,
 But Madam must quickly know where he has been,
 And whom he has met, and to whom he has spoke,
 With whom had a laugh, or a glass, or a joke ;
 For jealous as jealous can be is his wife
 Who has henpeck'd her husband, and poison'd his life.
 Ah ! has he presumed to exchange a bank-note
 For a pair of new boots, or a hat, or a coat,
 Without her permission ? the lash of her " jaw "
 Cuts deeper, I trow, than the " cat " of the law.
 And if he account not for every cent.
 He has toss'd, lost, or won, borrow'd, given, or spent,

The "t'unders of Sinai" were music beside
 The gentle complaints of his loveable bride ;
 But if he has dared to have sup'pl'd with a friend,
 'Twere better his life had been brought to an end
 With a rope, or a pistol-shot under his lug,
 Or a razor to skilfully sever the "jug,"
 Or a long draught of laudanum to sleep in his veins,
 Or a river to leap into out of his pains !
 The double-tongued Jezebel calls him " My dear,"
 When persons of wealth and importance are near,
 Yet lays down the law-matrimonial so plain,
 That these plainly see she's the cock of the twain,
 And laugh in her face, while despising at heart
 The woman for playing the *husbandman's* part !
 To the world she appeareth as sleek as a cat,
 As mild as new milk or new ale in a vat :
 'Tis only to him that her temper is shown,
 To him that her whims and her humours are known.
 He smiles like a man on his way to the " block,"
 Or like a new criminal plac'd in the dock,
 Or like a vile traitor about to be hung,
 Or like a rich Jew bloody handits among.
 Oh, yes ! his exuberant spirits arise,
 And manly emotions shoot out of his eyes,
 For he knows he's a Lord of Creation, you see,
 With a soul like an eagle, unfetter'd and free !
 (That's if he ask Madam may it be allow'd
 To soar, for a moment, alone to a cloud :
 Or to think for himself independent of her,
 But Madam's reply is—" Ay, do, if you dare !")
 Poor devil of a man ! He is feeling the flame
 On earth of the place we had better not name ;
 So when he's repriev'd *with an order to die*,
 He'll go, happy widower, singing on high !
 While she, " the grey-mare, the best horse" of the pair,
 Shall sink to her father's, below, and live there
 A century or two. After which, I've no doubt,
 The King of these noisy dominions will shout—
 " Catch that talkative woman, and tumble *her out*."



HONOUR.

Give me the man whose sense of honour, strong,
 Guideth in every thought and word and deed,
 And he shall have the glory of my song,
 And I, in loving him, my more than need.
 His is the only safe and glorious creed
 Befitting men for brethren here below ;
 And souls at heaven's high gate in vain shall plead
 Admittance from a world of sin and woe,
 If Honour, by the threshold, say not—"Let them go."

Oh, what a sensitive and fragile flower
 This honour-blossom in the hearts of men !
 Slight its existence for a single hour,
 And a whole life may be embitter'd then !
 It shineth more through trivial things than in
 The great "demonstrations" of our earthly play.
 For these are only "few and far between,"
 While those, unnumber'd on our mortal way,
 Shine out, like lamps, to light us to eternal day.

For being only honest, small the praise ;
 The law will largely interfere in this,
 And give a man, in spite of him, a glaze
 Of goodness, which the world translates amiss.
 But honour is a sentiment of bliss
 Too fine and fair a thing for human law,
 Like love, it lighteth up the dark abyss
 Of fleeting life, and aideth us to draw
 The golden grains of wheat from out a world of straw !

Men of the times, well may ye envy him,
 Whose honour walks with conscience, hand-in-hand
 Free from the slavery of unbridled whim,
 Or selfish pride. A blessing to the land
 Which claims him, and his fellows understand,
 Yea, to the humblest creature of his ken,
 His word with him's an ever-sacred bond !
 Oh, for a nation of such glorious men !
 But search where'er you will, you find but one in ten.

THE MIDSHIPMAN.

The sad event told in the following verses happened on board Money Wigram's ship, "Lincolnshire," of the Blackwall Line (Captain Charlton), during her homeward passage from Melbourne to London, 1866, and was witnessed by the Author.

A "three-week" out, far on the main,
From Melbourne homeward bound,
Trusting in God to see again
Old England, safe and sound!

Soft was the bracing, briny breeze;
Glorious the morning sun;
Our noble vessel o'er the seas,
White-wingéd, scudded on.

Abaft, within the gay saloon,
Were peace, and joy, and hope;
While, "for'ard," many a measured tune
O'ercame the stubborn rope.

'Twas "eight bells," and the bo's'n's pipe
The "starboard watch" had roused,
'Mong which was many a manly type
As e'er the sea espoused.

Earth boasted not a nobler form
Than our Midshipman's there,—
A youth of eighteen summers warm,
And features fine and fair.

His disposition, sweet, had won
The hearts of all on board;
So free, so frank, so full of fun,—
Almost he was adored.

Sudden as blasted oak is rent,
Up rose a furious gale:
"All hands aloft!" and up they went,
To reef th' o'erwhelming sail.

The merry "middy," 'mong the rest,
Upon the main-yard stood,
While wrestling, roaring winds contest
Above the seething flood.

The whistling cordage strongly strained,
And bent was every mast,
As though ten thousand devils, chained,
Were tugging on the blast !

But brave and skilful were the crew,
The captain, and his mate,
To bring the plunging vessel "to,"
But, oh ! not till too late !

Loos'd from its thongs, one flapping sail,
Though monstrous in its size,
Seem'd but a ribbon in the gale
Which hurried through the skies.

One corner, with a single blow,
As strong as giant's are,
Fell on our midly's head, and lo,
It struck him from the spar !

But not at once the yawning sea
Clos'd o'er the gallant lad ;
Ah ! were it but for him and me,
I would to God it had !

Right out, down from the sloping "yard,"
With single hand he hung,
And then from every breast aboard,
A cry of horror rung !

How well he held out for a while !
(Eternity to me !)
But, ere the ship had made a mile,
He dropt into the sea !

My God ! if Thy red lightning keen,
Had shewn a yawning hell,
My horror had not greater been
Than when the midly fell !

Just as the loosen'd anchor shoots
Down-darting 'neath the wave,
His heavy clothes and ocean boots
Down-dragg'd him to his grave !

Or when into the sea you hurl,
 By hand, a cannon ball—
 A hiss, a globule, and a swirl—
 Oh God ! and that was all !

No swimmer's stalwart arms were spread !
 No sign of life ! ah me ;
 He sank, as sink the shotted dead, —
 As those who die at sea !

Now, from a hundred tongues was heard
 The deeply-thrilling shout ;—
 " Man overboard ! man overboard !
 Quick ! get the lifeboat out ! "

Then e'en as is the flying horse
 Turn'd round with bridle rein,
 So was our vessel in her course
 Turn'd round upon the main.

An albatross, with wings at rest,
 Asleep upon our lee,
 And rock'd upon the billow's breast,
 Mov'd on as much as we.

Meanwhile the Captain from the poop,
 A seaman worth his rank,
 Threw out the life-preserving hoop
 Just where the middy sank.

And to the sailors, as they swing,
 And in the lifeboat fall ;—
 " Come back," he cried, " with yonder ring,
 Or come not back at all ! "

" Ay, ay, sir." And the conscious boat
 Went speeding o'er the wave,
 To find the merest speck afloat,—
 That ring thrown out to save.

But all in vain ! The buoy they find,
 But not of flesh and blood,
 For him, alas ! they leave behind,
 Beneath the fatal flood !

Now slowly do the rowers dip,
 And linger in the storm,
 As though they fear'd to near the ship
 Without the middy's form.

O'er every bosom, old and young,
 Throughout the voyage "home,"
 In that ill-fated ship, there hung
 A cloud of sorrowing gloom.

Thou brave young sailor, fare thee well ;
 Down in the ocean vast !
 Thou wilt within my memory dwell,
 While life and memory last.

Thy kith and kin of nearest tie
 Shall weep for aye for thee.
 And ask — but who shall tell them — why
 Their boy was lost at sea !

SONG.

WHY WANDER WEARILY THROUGH LIFE ?

Why wander wearily through life,
 And keep a downcast eye ?
 Why probe thy bosom with a knife ?
 Or heave the wrenching sigh ?
 Thy cares, like eggs, are wholesome when
 New laid in Fortune's nest,
 And should be "cook'd" while fresh, and then
 Of food they are the best.

Best food for body and for mind,
 Of rich and poor and all—
 Best nourishment thou e'er canst find
 For thy immortal soul.
 But, brood upon them, and, like eggs,
 Though sweet and still before,
 Cares start to life with armèd legs,
 And scratch thy heart the more.

NO SOLITUDE.

Oh, live not alone in the land,
 Nor bury thyself, like a hermit, alive ;
 Nor be, like a drone, the contempt of the hive—
 The butt of the busy, brown band.

Oh, keep not thyself all aloof,
 For solitude fitteth not mortals, I know,
 And pride of seclusion's a terrible woe—
 The print of Old Somebody's hoof !

And think not that thou art too good,
 Too clever, too learned, rich, noble, or grand,
 To give to thy fellows thy heart and thy hand
 While stemming mortality's flood.

The braver, the brighter art thou,
 The more shall thy brethren look upward to thee
 For love and for guidance on life's stormy sea,
 Majestic and firm on the prow.

Should thine be the riches of books,
 The sciences, travels, the arts, and the rest,
 How selfish to keep them locked up in thy breast,
 Like waters locked up from the brooks !

A fig for the fellow—the fool—
 Who, with every advantage of person and mind,
 Deliberately shuts himself up from mankind,
 Nor listens to reason or rule.

He need not go into the woods
To dig him a dwelling, like Timon, alone ;
'There's many a carpeted cavern in town,
Where none but a hermit intrudes.

Thy soul heedeth not thy excuse ;
No trouble can sanction desertion of men ;
For each bears his burthen of sorrow and pain,
And much undeservèd abuse."

A pitiful coward is he
Whom earthly misfortune drives into a cell ;
The voice of mankind in his ears a knell,
Cut off from the happy and free.

'Then mingle with men and be wise :
Thy presence, commanding, shall stimulate all,
Thy fears and fetters shall go to the wall,
And love be the light of thine eyes.

Thou dost not expect at the last
To live all alone in elysium or hell,
Or in any mid-way where the spotted ones dwell,
Awaiting the heavenly blast ?

Ah, no ! there's no solitude there,
In the fiery glens of the bottomless pit,
Where millions of *lost* through eternity flit,
Incessantly crying—" Despair ! "

Ah, no ! there's no solitude yon,
In the beautiful plains of the City of Love,
Where angels unnumber'd, sing praises above
To God and the glorified Son !

Alone on eternity's shore ?
Ah, no ! pass away from the earth, and you go
To myriads of spirits ! Then practice below
To live with your like evermore !



EVENING IN THE COUNTRY.

Down in the watery west,
Cover'd with beautiful skies,
Sinketh the sun to his glorious rest,
Closing his fiery eyes.

Shorn of his burnishing beams,
Fatal though golden and grand,
Then his right round, ruddy frontispiece seems
Like the lov'd face of a friend.

Slowly the bellowing kine
Shipponward gratefully tread ;
Crows in a black, but irregular line
Fly to their nests overhead.

Twinkling starlights appear,
Waiting the Queen of the Night ;
See ! she ariseth, majestic and clear,
Planet of beauty and light !

Zig-zag the leather-wing'd mice
Flit o'er the deep purple sky,
Goggle-eyed sleepy gray owls they entice
From the old belfry high.

Few are the sounds that are heard—
All of them mellow and sweet—
Now 'tis a love serenade ; now a bird
Sings from its hidden retreat.

Still and quieter yet
Groweth the evening hours,
Gentle dews droppeth, perfumèd, and wet
All the sweet slumbering flowers.

Memory waketh, and brings
Back again scenes that are fled ;
Happiest moments, and loveliest things
Rise from Oblivion's bed.

EVENING IN THE TOWN.

Up in its shaky old cell,
 Covered with cobweb and dust,
 Ringeth the welcome-ton'd "six-o'clock-bell,"
 Rousing up many a host.

Grimy and dirty and dark,
 Dripping with honesty's sweat,
 Gliding by thousands all home from their work,
 Through the wide factory gate.

Horribly bad German-band,
 Murders our popular airs ;
 Why for did you leave your belov'd Faderland ?
 Back ! you old duffers of players !

Carriages rattle along,
 Fill'd with the gaudy and gay ;
 Dancing awaits them, with supper and song,
 Till the broad break of the day.

'Stead of the glorious sun,
 Gas doth its glimmer diffuse ;
 Merry-mouth'd, rosy-cheek'd, wild urchins run,
 Crying, "*The Evening News*."

Constables' echoing feet,
 Drawn out in Indian file,
 Tramp o'er the pavement till "Bob" on his "beat"
 Resteth from duty awhile.

Now is the time when arise
 Children of Sloth and of Sin,
 And with much evil intent in their eyes,
 Dark depredatious begin.

Little it mattereth where
 People are scatter'd and born ;
 Let them but finish the evening with prayer,
 Peacefully breaketh the morn.

A VISIT TO "TH'-HALL-I'TH'-WOOD" PAPER MILL.

Refresh'd with pale and rosy wine,
 In which, 'tis said, the gods do lurk,
 We rose at Andrew's friendly sign,
 To see his Paper-Mill at work.

Oh, would I were an engineer,
 And understood the use of steam,
 My willing Muse should not appear
 To labour on as in a dream.

I'd show the why of this and that,
 The wherefore, too, of all display,
 And how they did it, ay, as pat
 As though I were John Hick, and gray.

But poets have but little sense
 In joiners' shops or foundry yards ;
 Loud laughs are rais'd at their expense,
 So foolish are their fancy words.

So, do not deem I can describe
 A paper maker's rolling gear,
 Which is of that uncommon tribe
 Justly denominated " queer."

Old rags, and ropes, and cotton waste
 Are first into the " duster" dropt ;
 Then sorted out, and then in haste,
 Sent to the " devil " to be chopt.

(A fell machine, with iron guns,
 In which are fix'd a hundred teeth ;
 A moment ! and its food becomes
 A million-atom'd mass beneath !)

Thence taken to be boil'd, in what
 You seldom see in any hotel—
 A huge revolving iron pot—
 Fill'd full of steam as hot as—Well.

The pudding is then wash'd quite clean ;
 Next into pulp all smoothly ground ;
 Then run into a long machine
 On which, at last, is paper found.

'Tis then cut into shape and size,
 That you, as customers, require,
 Who, if you pay for your supplies,
 May set them, if you like, on fire !

That's paper-making in a pill,
 The process simple, short, and funny ;
 All that you need to start a Mill
 Are patience, tact, and brains, and money !

A BEAUTIFUL THOUGHT.

Thou grey-beard alchemist, shaking and old,
 While bending thy furnace and crucible o'er,
 I'll tell thee of something more precious than gold,
 Or the gems and the jewels that Solomon wore.
 As sudden as lightning it darts in the soul,
 Its exquisite essence from Paradise caught ;
 'Tis born, and then writ on Eternity's scroll
 For ever !—old man, 'tis a beautiful thought.

Thou youthful adorer just starting in life,
 While leading thy love through the midsummer glade,
 I'll tell thee what give her before she's thy wife,
 To add a new charm to the eyes of the maid.
 'Twill make her more lovely and dear to thy heart
 When she to be thine to the altar is brought ;
 'Tis this—while as lovers ye wander apart,
 Just whisper her, sweetly, a beautiful thought.

Oh ! is it indeed not a beautiful thought,
 That a beautiful thought when embodied in speech
 For ever and ever with pleasure is fraught,
 And of death and of devils far out of the reach ?
 'Tis the breathing of God in His dwelling of love—
 A lesson by angels all purified taught—
 A courier despatch'd from the palace above
 With a letter of peace, is a beautiful thought.

It smooths the dark brow, furrowed over with strife.
 And calls up a smile to the languishing lip :
 It sweetens the dull occupations of life
 In the mill or the meadow, the shop or the ship.
 Wealth, honour, position, and glory and all
 Such things may depart you, so eagerly sought ;
 Great monarchs and kingdoms may tremble and fall,
 But lasting as love is a beautiful thought.

It pierceth the firmament, sprinkled with stars,
 And down to the core of the earth it descends ;
 It throweth a veil o'er the bloodiest wars,
 And mercy with murder mysteriously blends.
 It lighteth betimes, and it lingereth where
 A thousand to one you would think it was not ;
 For e'en o'er the dungeon of dirt and despair
 Are seen the white wings of a beautiful thought.

It leadeth the soul gently out from the flesh
 Into far fairer fields of enchantment and joy,
 And shows it unlimited regions afresh
 Where never a sorrow was known to annoy.
 Then prize it, and scatter wherever you can
 O'er threshold of castle, and cabin, and cot ;
 For sweet in the mouth of a child or a man
 Are the wonderful words of a beautiful thought.

TO MY COMPANIONS IN ENGLAND.

WRITTEN AT MELBOURNE, 1862.

Bright is the link which binds ye to my soul.
 Companions dear of youth and early prime :
 Not all the waves of ocean deep, that roll
 In scornful grandeur o'er the brow of Time
 Can dim its brilliancy, or dash the bowl
 Of memories sweet, undying and sublime,
 From my warm lips, whence daily leaps the prayer
 That I again your hearts and joys may share.

Some of ye know the secrets of my heart ;
 Its thoughts of purity and shades of sin ;
 Can trace the rocks of temper on the chart
 Of my poor nature, where sad wrecks have been :
 But, oh ! ye were so kindly that the smart
 Of censure and reproof stung not within.
 Far distant sods may yield me bread and gold,
 But none can give me friends like those of old.

With some I trod the bracing mountain-height,
 And cull'd the gems from Nature's rich bouquet ;
 With others, wonder'd why the pale moonlight
 Should kiss the waters of yon treacherous bay ;
 Or golden stars rain down their bliss at night
 Into the eyes of those who never pray.
 And from full many a breast I've drawn relief
 When my best blood ran thick with gall and grief.

Have ye not shared with me the wild romance
 Of early love, and headstrong passion, both ?
 And felt with me the rapture of a glance
 From eyes asparkle both with love and wrath ?
 And been my second self in many a dance
 'Mid maidens blooming with red health and youth ?
 How can I, then, forget ye, comrades dear ?
 Or think of ye without a rolling tear ?

For we knew all things (!) when a dozen met,
 To smoke and chat around the private fire ;
 The world-at-large we caught as in a net,
 And knew its shape was rounder than 'twas square.
 O ! ne'er was known so truly wise a set
 As we, since Babel tower'd high and higher !
 Love, Music, Law, the State, the Stage—each came in turn,
 To make us angry, silly, or with rapture burn !

The arts and sciences ; all secret signs—
 All things mysterious, pooh ! we knew by rote—
 The virtues (!) of all spirits, ales, and wines,
 That e'er bepainted nose or burnt a throat ;
 Knew where (to hear us talk) the richest mines
 Yielded the mare-spur gold and big bank-note ;
 Could build the loftiest castles (in the air) ;
 And tell you what to woo—of what beware !

But, oh ! those days were happy ones indeed !
 Fate had not laid his hand on us to sever
 Our social ties, nor caus'd each heart to bleed,
 By whispering we should meet again, ALL, never !
 Oh, cruel Fate ! why didst thou thus exceed
 Thy mission, parting us, alas ! for ever ?
 Yet we'll forgive thee, if thy thorny rod
 But whip and guide us to the home of God.

Though dwelling friendless in a foreign land,
 'Tis sweet to think I shall not be forgot,
 But feel, in spirit, the warm heart and hand
 Of each of ye, whatever be my lot,
 And catch a gleam of friendship's pearly wand,
 When eyes of mine are dim, and brain is hot.
 Farewell, dear comrades ; one and all farewell !
 My heart is full ; but, oh ! I may not tell
 All my deep grief to leave ye far behind,
 Where England's queenly rose perfumes the wind.

CHURCH AND STATE.

All hail to the latter, the glorious old State,
 The pride and the prop of Britannia the Great !
 Where riseth as powerful a throne, and as pure
 As God in His wisdom to man would secure.
 But the Church ! by my faith ! that's another affair—
 An edifice built not at all “ on the square ; ”
 'Tis the talk of the times and the nations around,
 As a thing quite unjust—like a *crown* in the *pound*.

Now the Church and the State, in these honest days,
 Is a very unmar and a sorrowful phrase,
 And cuts at the roots with unchristian-like sword
 Of other good Churches beloved of the Lord.
 Come, here's an amendment, as simple as love,
 And a name that should every one's grievance remove—
 The glory of God and broad Britain were great,
 If ye make it and call it, “ The *Bible* and State ! ”

For the Church is a harden'd and selfish old Dame,
 Who deems that to heaven she alone has the claim.
 On her runaway children (Dissenters at large),
 Who could not sail on with the Dame in her barge,
 She thunders anathemas worthy a Pope,
 And robs them of almost all heavenly hope.
 Oh, what a grand change in her breast would create
 This national watchword, "The Bible and State!"

"The Bible and State!" what a beautiful pair!
 What a river of love! what a power were there!
 What a din of delight in the ear it rings
 Of the Protestant Briton wherever he sings!
 For the State is his property granted at birth,
 While the Church and himself may be strangers on earth.
 But the Bible is every man's friend and his fate,
 So singeth he heartily "Bible and State!"

Let that be the point universal agreed,
 The one, only solid foundation indeed,
 Where Churchmen and he who is not one may raise
 Any altar he please for his prayer and his praise.
 Think not that the smile of our God only falls,
 To bless the proud dome of imperial St. Paul's;
 He is just, and appointeth it only its share,
 According to genuine worshippers there.
 Ten-fold would the favours of heaven dilate,
 Were the song of the country "The Bible and State!"

How rich is the soil, and how wide is the room.
 The Bible unfolds for all flowers to bloom!
 From the grand, but the gaudy cathedral rose,
 To the primitive daisy divine as it grows
 In the highways and byeways all modest and pure,
 The comfort and guide of the ignorant poor;
 Then pray the Almighty to hasten the date,
 When the shout of the land shall be "Bible and State!"

The Church's hard (h)articles, thirty and nine,
 Should be prun'd to the ten plain Commandments divine;
 Yet add the eleventh, the Christian obeys,
 (We give it verbatim in Testament phrase),

“ Another commandment I give unto you,
That ye love one another ” (that’s what we should do)
But how that command has been slighted of late
By brethren whose text should be “ Bible and State ! ”

Instead of a brotherly feeling and kind,
With a charity chastening the heart and the mind—
Instead of devotions at eve and at matin,
One curses another for using bad Latin,
While trying to prove through his careful research
That Christ upon earth was no priest of the Church,
As if that were the grand theological test
To know whether *Walter or Robert’s the best !*
How few would engage in ignoble debate
Were the cry of their consciences, “ Bible and State ! ”

If this were the sentiment, principle, word,
Then light were the labours of love for the Lord ?
All God-fearing mortals together would gain
A title and power resistless. Amen !
The nations of earth would rejoice and be glad
That Britain at last was with charity clad ;
Regarding the Church and the Chapel her twins—
Extolling their virtues—bemoaning their sins—
Far-sweeping behind her all envy and hate
While unfurling the banner of “ Bible and State ! ”

God give it to Gladstone, the great “ Merrypebble,”
A clean disestablishment all for his trouble.
Bid the Queen and her Ministers go hand-in-hand
To deal out impartial their grants o’er the land,
That Thy good Christian vessels (whoever has got ’em)
Stand, each on its own individual bottom ;
But that shall not be, though for ages we wait,
Till this be our motto—The “ Bible and State ! ”



THE BOLTON NEW TOWN HALL.

Hurry ! toilers, brave and good men,
 Labouring at my royal feet ;
 Hurry ! masons, and ye woodmen,
 For I long to be complete.
 Hurry ! painters and designers,
 Sculptors, architects, and all ;
 Workers rough, and ye refiners,
 Hurry me up—The Grand Town Hall !

“ Now 'tis finish'd ! Let us cheer it !
 Drop the hammer, tool, and knife ! ” --
That will be the (when I hear it)
 Proudest moment of my life.
 Take my word, I shall not shame ye,
 Mayors and Corporations bold ;
 Heed them not, the few that blame ye
 That I've cost a mint of gold !

Tell each rate-complaining Burgess
 Briefly this, without disguise :
 'Tis the times that strongly urges
 Buildings such as mine to rise.
 Present ages pay the fiddler,
 That the future free may dance ;
 But why and wherefore is a riddler
 Hard for me to solve at once.

From my tall cathedral tower
 Fitted with gigantic clock,
 Proudly shall I chime the hour
 O'er my busy Bolton flock.
 How I long to hear the ringing
 Of the complimentary bells,
 In each native turret swinging,
 As the grand procession swells,

With the men of every station,
 Clergy, lay, and rich and poor—
 Every honest occupation
 Represented at my door.

Odd and Mason-Fellows shining
 With the symbols of their craft,
 All fraternal, intertwining
 Arms and banners gay aloft !

How I long to ope my portal,
 To his Worshipful the Mayor,
 And the merry crowds which hurtle
 Round about me everywhere !
 How I long to feel my people
 Thronging through me glad and gay,
 O'er my basement—up my steeple,
 On my glorious opening-day !

Oh, my builders, I beseech ye,
 Ere ye leave me every one,
 Harken to this truth I teach ye
 From my melting heart of stone :—
 Man, himself, is frail and fleeting,
 'Tis his works immortal are—
 Good, or bad, or both repeating,
 These must answer at The Bar !

Leave good monuments behind ye,
 Works that men can understand,
 Whatsoe'er your genius find ye,
 Fit for head, or heart, or hand.
 When, within my finished temple,
 Ye, my townsmen, proudly move,
 Set the world a high example
 By your justice and your love.

Soon shall every hand so gifted,
 Raising now my princely dome,
 By the waves of time be drifted
 Into the forgotten tomb !
 Hurry ! then, ye great designers,
 Finish well each ample wall ;
 Workers rough, and ye refiners,
 Hurry me up—The Grand Town Hall !

THIS "FUNNY WORLD."

Dear Albert, what a funny spot
This world is, to be sure !
Where some are rich, and some are not,
And some both rich and poor !
Where some are fair as fair can be,
In person, heart, and mind ;
While some, 'tis very plain to see,
Are nothing of the kind.

Where some are soft, and others hard,
While some are just between ;
Where some can't live unless the card
They play be King or Queen.
Where some can tell in honey'd tones
Their thoughts of lore or love,
At which the very sleeping stones
Almost are made to move.

While others utter not a word
In kindly mood or speech,
And listening, all our blood is stirred
As hit by poisonous leech !
Where passions burn, and boil, and rage,
And mild affection glows—
The charmer of our youth and age,
And soother of our woes.

Where white is black, and black is white,
And green a common shade ;
Where true-blue friends are rare to cite,
As is a constant maid.
Where bad men prowl about, and keep
Their sinful eyes in play,
To wrong and rob while others sleep,
And when 'tis broad noon-day.

Where good men, as one single man,
Are striving to convert,
But, somehow, 'tis as if they can
Do neither good nor hurt ;

The precious seed by storm is blown,
 And little taketh root ;
 Not e'en a tenth of what is sown
 Beareth its flower and fruit—

Except the deil's, *his* nervous hands
 With searching seeds are full,
 And wide he spreads them o'er the lands
 Round every human soul.
 And should *one* fail to germinate
 From out a thousand sown,
 It is that God, the Good and Great,
 Hath pity on His own !

Here heaven with hell incessant strives,
 And blood like water runs ;
 Here husbands put away their wives,
 And fathers curse their sons !
 Here liberty and the rights of men
 Are cut down by the few
 Who call themselves "the upper ten"—
 Ye millions, rouse ye ! do !

Good folks and bad each year we miss,
 And both come daily hither ;
 We've often pain, and seldom bliss,
 Except they're both together.
 But do not ask the how and why—
 God chooseth not to tell—
 But rest assured that in the sky
 He doeth all things well.

Here king and beggar, sage and sot,
 And dames with stinking pride,
 With these I've named, and those I've not,
 Are jostled side-by-side.
 Some speak the truth, and some all lies,
 And *some* nor one nor t'other ;
 While *some* with tears and heavy sighs
 Our poor hearts almost smother.

Here Vice, upstretcheth like a lord,
 A tyrant, and a strong ;
 While Virtue, with its own reward,
 Back-shrinketh from the throng.

Here Gold is made a very god,
 And Brain almost a drab ;
 Here some are covered with the sod,
 And some the marble slab.

All things of beauty and of joy
 Seem ever floating near
 The hateful things of gross alloy
 That fill us full with fear.
 But, Albert, were I e'en to write
 From June to New Year's Day,
 I could not tell each funny sight
 I meet with on my way.

SONG.

OH, TELL ME, SWEET ONE.

Oh, tell me, sweet one, tell me true,
 Do you love me as I love you !
 For flame like mine can bear no doubt,
 It must burn bright, or must burn out.
 I give thee all and would give more ;
 My love wells out at every pore.
 Then tell me, sweet one, tell me true,
 Do you love me as I love you !

As crown of dew to daisy-bud—
 As angel-face 'neath sombre hood—
 As sparkling wave to barren beach—
 As food and warmth to starving wretch—
 As these and more that I could name
 Would be to me thy loving flame.
 Then tell me, sweet one, tell me true,
 Can you love me as I love you !

I see a something in thine eye
 That gives my breast a hopeful sigh ;
 A rosy cherub on thy cheek
 There bids me manfully to speak.
 I feel a thrill of love to flow
 Through mine from thy soft hand of snow ;
 I feel, at last, you love me true,
 You love me, ay, as I love you !

TO MY FIRST GARDEN SNOWDROP, 1875.

Sweet welcome from me,
 Lovely snowdrop for thee,
 The first of my favourite flowers ;
 How many days past
 I've been out in the blast,
 And look'd for thee hours and hours !

For is not thy form
 A sure sign that the storm
 Is halting and falling behind,
 Which scattered its woes,
 As well as its snows,
 O'er the hearts and the homes of mankind ?

But art not too bold ?
 For 'tis yet mighty cold,
 To rise from thy bed by the path ;
 If Old Winter—my eye !
 But thy blossom espy,
 He'll roar again round thee in wrath ;

And he'll deluge thy bed
 Till thy poor shattered head
 Droop again to its prison of clay,
 And he'll swear at the snow,
 To fall on thee, I know,
 As thick as a wagon of hay.

For he's awfully " riled "
 When a flowery child
 Like thou art, his power defies,
 And the sight of thy cup
 Cuts so dreadfully up,
 That his terror he cannot disguise.

But, Beauty, fear not,
 For I'll shelter thy spot
 From his blast that is now on the wing,
 Till thy army of blooms
 All arise with their plumes,
 To fight for their monarch—the Spring.

Thy sovereign so fair,
 With thy gems in her hair,
 Oh, how she's belov'd on the earth !
 For her presence is rife
 With the beauties of life,
 And her footsteps are music and mirth.

No anguish defies
 The light of her eyes —
 No pain but she sootheth the while,
 Life takes a new lease,
 And its sorrows decrease,
 When the earth is bewitch'd with her smile.

Lady Spring comes along
 With her exquisite song,
 Re-echoed in chorus by birds,
 And we catch from afar
 The dear din of her ear,
 And the scent her sweet bosom affords.

She hath sent thee to say
 She is not far away,
 And my heart is delighted to hear :
 So, sweet welcome from me,
 Herald Snowdrop for thee,
 And my love, with a kiss, every year.

SONG.

DASH IT DOWN.

Dash it down ! down ! down ! if thy goblet contains
 The drink that destroyeth soul, body and brains ;
 For the drunkard ne'er hopes to sing glory ! in heaven,
 With his flesh and his mind to low revelry given.

CHORUS :

Dash it down ! down ! down ! if thy goblet contains
 The drink that destroyeth soul, body and brains,
 Wine, spirits, or ale,
 Brown, bitter, or pale,
 For such liquors but sorrow and ruin entail.

Oh, God ! must it be to the finish of time
 That this drink shall appall with his folly and crime !
 That like some fell Goliath whom devils attend,
 He shall ruthlessly stalk o'er the earth to the end !
 Dash it down ! down ! down ! &c.

Or shall we soon see the broad banners unfurled
 Of temperance and love ! conquering kings of the world !
 God grant it ! for then we may welcome the blast
 Of the trumpet of Heaven and our Saviour at last !
 Dash it down ! down ! down ! &c.

Then my dear fellow-mortal and brother to love,
 Come and help us to rear these grand banners above ;
 Thy joys will increase, and thy future be bright,
 If thou join the teetotalers and march to the fight.
 Dash it down ! down ! down ! &c.

FLOWERS.

Ye are stars of the earth !
 And white winter to you
 Is as day to yon gems
 In yon casket of blue.
 White winter and day
 Hide ye both from our sight,
 But wait till they pass
 And ye burst into light !

Sweet flowers ! to me
 Ye are dimples and smiles
 On the fair cheek of Nature
 That in loving beguiles.
 Ye are voices from heaven
 Speaking low to the breast
 That harbours one wish
 To be happy and blest.

To the wise ye are thoughts
 Far too rich for confession
 Ye are balms for the heart
 In its saddest condition.
 Ye are liveried spirits
 That usher the soul
 Into God's holy presence,
 The blessed ones' goal.

Ye are eyes of the earth
 Looking ever above
 Through tears of dew
 Which are tears of love.
 Ye are checks to the vain
 Be they never so fair.
 For with beauty like yours
 What is to compare?

Ye are pearls scatter'd free
 O'er the rock and the sod
 By the hand of a friend—
 By the hand of a God !
 Almost are ye rents
 In the veil that enshrouds
 The face of your Maker
 That smiles through the clouds.

And the lessons ye teach
 To the willing to learn,
 Are many and full
 With the highest concern.
 Fair flowers ! I love ye,
 And shall till I die.
 I wonder do flowers
 Bloom up in the sky ?

IN THE SHADE.

A sea of sorrow floods my soul,
 Its billows dash against my face ;
 Its winds downrushing from the pole,
 Enwrap me in their chill embrace.
 Beneath me yawns a watery grave ;
 Above, the skies are wild and drear ;
 Ah ! none may guess the pains I have—
 How many an inward foe and fear.
 'Tis known but to myself and Him
 Who gave and who may take my breath ;
 My cup is bitter to the brim :
 " And mine," each fellow-mortal saith.

MISFORTUNES.

Misfortunes rarely singly show
 Themselves to wretches here below,
 But round the first a score alight
 To hasten on despair and blight :
 As when upon the wounded steed
 One vulture swoops with fiendish greed,
 A score are seen to dot the sky
 Ere his strong, sweeping pinions lie
 Around the carrion form. And mark !
 Ere he hath well begun his work
 Deep in the luckless, quivering flesh,
 Black legions now to glut afresh
 From every quarter quickly come
 And give the beast his terrible doom.

THE SUN.

I love to see the morning sun,
 Like a virgin in her youth,
 Peep out above yon mountains, dun,
 Yon margin to the heath.
 I love to see his full round face,
 A foot above the ground,
 Before he dons his fiery dress
 To run his daily round.
 I love him as he burning glides,
 Through noon-day's molten hour,
 When all with life 'neath heaven hides
 From his imperial power.
 I love him in the mellow eve,
 When thought subdues our mirth,
 To see him gently, richly weave,
 That purple veil for earth.
 And last, to see him slowly dip
 Crown'd with his glorious light
 Beneath the sea—then soon they clip
 The world, those arms of night.

A STANZA.

Would you behold a sight sublime,
 Your soul with tranquil joy to fill?
 See yon full moon in glory climb
 The rugged brow of Holcombe Hill.
 And thoughts, perchance, athwart your breast,
 Of Plenty and of Peace may steal,
 While gazing on its towering crest—
 The monument of deathless Peel.

SPRING.

Rude Winter hath bade us his last cold farewell ;
 His last sickly snow-child hath died in the dell ;
 His icicles keen have been dripping away,
 'Neath the breath of a stranger this many a day.
 His mantle hath fallen—and now may be seen
 The bosom of Spring, full, fruitful, and green.
 See ! on her fair bosom, like gems for a bride,
 Rise myriads of flowers in beauty and pride !
 Her face is aglow with the beams of the morn ;
 Her thousand bright eyes laugh all sorrow to scorn ;
 Ten thousand wing'd minstrels are perch'd on her hand,
 But the lark takes the lead in that heavenly band,
 With his silvery pipe so mysteriously loud
 That 'tis heard though the piper be lost in a cloud ;
 Yet his musical mates as they catch the grand strain,
 Re-echo from earth all his gladness again.
 Thy gay garments flutter, sweet Spring, in each breeze,
 And gracefully hang on the hedges and trees ;
 The gentle rains falling, low whispering meet,
 And in murmuring brooks kiss thy beautiful feet.
 The broad glassy lakes look alive in the sun ;
 The mighty streams flow with new majesty on.
 The little lands laugh, and like children rejoice,
 And the rough mountains smile at thy long well-known voice,
 Straight from Heaven thou com'st with thy breath of perfume,
 That snatches the sick from the jaws of the tomb,
 To list yet awhile to the voices they love,
 And give one chance more to make peace with above.

SONG.

ROLL BACK, ROLL BACK, YE STEALTHY YEARS.

Roll back, roll back, ye stealthy years !
 How dare ye crowd upon me so !
 But yesterday I was a boy,
 And yet 'tis thirty springs ago !
 But yesterday, when, like a bird
 I caroll'd out my simple song,
 As light as was the thistle-down—
 "As happy as the day was long."

Roll back ! or give again to me
 The guileless and the trusting breast,
 That sweeten'd every passing hour
 And charm'd each childish woe to rest.
 In everything I something saw
 That made my little bosom swell,
 Down from the shining stars of heaven,
 To daisies in the dingle dell.

I little knew the human heart,
 Or guess'd the wiles of worldly men,
 Their plots and passions strong and deep,
 Their snares and sweet temptations then.
 No grief I knew beyond the loss
 Of bounding ball or soaring kite ;
 These, soon replaced, my life again
 Was one unspeakable delight.

How sound my sleep ! how bright my dreams !
 How lov'd the early-breaking morn !
 I reck'd not that beneath each rose
 There lurk'd the everlasting thorn.
 But fleeting Time tore off the veil
 That hid the world's disfigured face,
 And I, perforce, was made to take
 Among mankiud my selfish place.

There's little now to cheer the heart,
 Save *Nature* in untamper'd guise ;
 Most lovely ever with the light
 Of living truth within her eyes.

Roll back, roll back, ye stealthy years !
 Keep down your overwhelming wave !
 Why heap your numbers on my head ?
 Why haste me towards my waiting grave ?

THE TROUBLES OF LIFE.

Come open thy bosom, my excellent wife,
 And let me creep in from the troubles of life,
 Which bother me, tantalize, plague, and molest,
 But flee at the sight of thy conquering breast.
 They flee, but like bravoës, in ambush await
 The time I shall bid thee adieu at the gate ;
 Then cowardly rush to their kennel again,
 Deep down in my bosom, and there they remain,
 For they know, cunning spirits ! when thou art not by,
 They can do as they like with such mortals as I.
 Despite all my efforts they keep up a revel,
 Kick up a round " rumpus," and play up the devil !
 These cares and anxieties, woes and chagrins,
 With doubts and regrets, and a few petty sins !
 But Lord ! how they fly, like to storm-driven chaff,
 If they catch but the eye of my mild " better-half !"
 They shun the fair face and affectionate eyes
 Of a man's faithful sponse—the best gift from the skies !
 They hate her sweet voice and her arguments too,
 Which spring from good-sense, and a heart ever true.
 They cannot compete with a wife's fond embrace,
 But give up the siege of the soul in disgrace,
 And rush to the bachelor's unshielded breast
 To eat up his heart in revenge for the rest !
 Then who in this daily hard battle of fate
 Would not have the arms of a fond, wedded mate,
 To show her clench'd fists o'er his shoulders so tall,
 And drive all his troublesome foes to the wall ?
 He's certain to gain. If his foes be too strong
 He can join in the chorus of this marriage song :—
 " Come, open thy bosom, my excellent wife,
 And let me creep in from the troubles of life."

SNOWDROPS.

Snowdrops white and snowdrops early,
 Welcome to the earth again,
 With your little faces pearly,
 First of all the flowery train.

With your soft, sweet emerald bosoms
 Shaded by white, leafy arms ;
 Eden had no fairer blossoms,
 Perfect in its earthly charms.

Pale bells ringing " consolation "
 On the lea and in the lawn,
 Hoping on in every station
 For a soon and sunny dawn.

Spring hath waged a war with Winter,
 And between his glittering eyes,
 Sticks a snowdrop, like a splinter,
 And his stormy rage defies.

Snows anew descend and thicken ;
 Wilder winds, more copious rain ;
 But the snowdrop is not stricken,
 All their fury fumes in vain.

Winter—roaring gladiator—
 Bleeding, weak and fainter grows,
 Youthful Spring hath prov'd the greater
 In the battle of the snows.

Soon the blasty monarch dieth,
 And the Spring is crownéd Queen.
 Every vernal zephyr lieth
 To the coronation-green.

Every waving tree's a banner ;
 Brooks and birds sing o'er the plain :
 Flowers be her maids of honour,
 Snowdrops leading in the train.
 Thousand blessings fall upon her,
 Bright and happy be her reign !

SONG.

I WOULD I WERE A SUNNY BEAM.

I would I were a sunny beam
 To kiss thy snowy brow,
 I would I were a pleasing dream,
 I'd haunt thee, lady, now ;
 I would I were the peeping rose
 Just o'er thy chamber blind ;
 I would I were the breeze that blows
 Thy jetty curls behind.

I would I were the chirping bird
 That hops beneath thine eye ;
 I would I were the touching word
 That robs thee of a sigh ;
 I would I were the speaking quill
 Thy fingers move along ;
 I would I were a mountain-rill
 To charm thee with my song.

But ah ! I know I'm none of these ;
 I'm but a faulty man
 Before thee wooing on his knees
 To win thee, if he can :
 Nor beam nor dream nor rose that glows,
 Nor breeze that passes by,
 Nor bird nor word nor quill nor rill
 Would constant be as I !

A THOUGHT AT SUNSET.

Another and again a glorious sun
 Is sinking in the western saffron sea.—
 Once more the heavens their purple garments don,
 And kiss adieu to him in majesty.
 Methinks there's no less beauty now than when
 At first he painted Eden's blushing skies,
 While they, the Mother and the Sire of men,
 Sat in their bridal-bower in paradise.
 Not one iota less his face is grand—
 Not one iota less his kisses scath,
 Than when he, blazing out at God's command,
 First started on his firmamental path.

As fast he ripeneth earth's delicious fruits,
 And breeds his maggot-pestilences foul ;
 As far his arrows, golden-tipp'd, he shoots
 Right o'er the laughing globe from pole to pole.

As soon he riseth from his eastern bed
 To gild as many mountains with his rays ;
 As late he boweth his imperial head
 Amid as many western clouds ablaze.
 As many flowers drink in his precious light --
 As many weeds, alas ! spring where he lies --
 As many insects revel in his sight,
 Like wingéd diamonds 'thwart the glowing skies.

If, then, for six long thousand years at least,
 For man but guesseth when the world was made,
 His glory, heat, and power have not decreas'd,
 Nor e'en one single of his beams decay'd, --
 Methinks so shall it to the end of time,
 How far soe'er or nigh that end may be,
 And thoughts of men range down from Christ to crime,
 When dread millennium rock the land and sea.

Till then, no sign, no graduating scale
 In things of earth or heaven -- sun, moon, or stars,
 Shall e'er anticipate the awful tale
 Spoke through the trump th' Almighty Angel bears.
 Above, the sun shall rise at morn -- at eve
 Be turn'd to blood -- the stars shall reel and drop --
 The blacken'd moon her wonted station leave,
 And like a scroll the heavens be roll'd up.

Below, one moment earth shall jog along
 In its accustom'd manner, unperplex'd.
 Unheeding, unsuspecting that the gong
 To shake the universe shall resound the next.
 If this be so, the trump may sound to-day ;
 The crash to-morrow : or a million years
 All intervene before that final fray
 Fix for eternity our hopes and fears.

A word, then, fellow-mortals and the last
 My trembling muse on wings of love shall bear : --
 Come soon or late the Resurrection Blast
 To startle you in life or death -- **TRILL !**

AN ENIGMA.

Where am I! what am I! come, tell it to me,
 When I'm not in the earth, or the sky, or the sea!
 Yet I lurk on the mountain, and lie on the plain,
 Am hid in the skies, and I sink in the main.
 I hold not with truth, for I revel in lies,
 Yet fools I abandon to mix with the wise.
 I care not for pleasure, I cling unto pain;
 I live not in clouds, though I fall with the rain.
 In the heavens above I am not to be seen,
 Though I shine in the firmament bright and serene.
 I am never in tears, but am always in smiles;
 In no church am I found, though I sleep in the aisles.
 With the gay blooms of summer I never appear,
 Nor with autumn's sad verdure all yellow and scar:
 But in winter you'll find me congeal'd into ice,
 And in spring walking boldly with virtue and vice!
 Ye seek me in good, but in evil I'm found,
 Yet the darkness I shun, for in light I abound.
 Ye seek me in morn, noon, and eve, but 'tis clear
 In twilight alone does my double appear.
 In commerce, peace, war, glory, shame, or in prayer,
 Ye seek me in vain—yet ye find that I'm there!
 I breathe not in heaven, I gasp not in hell,
 Yet with saint and with sinner I constantly dwell,
 And with them at once and for ever shall sit
 In paradisc high, and the bottomless-pit.

TO A SKYLARK, SINGING.

We hear thee, we feel thee, we drink thy sweet sound,
 But we look not, we think not where thou mayst be found,
 For we deem thee (or should) when thy melody's heard
 Something more than a mere little soft-singing bird.
 Thy song is to Him, thy Creator and Joy,
 Who gave thee that music so free from alloy.
 The air is entranced—the green valley beneath
 Sends upwards its thanks in its free, flowery breath
 The shepherd-boy hails thee, but knows, though he tries,
 'Tis useless to seek thee, thou speck in the skies!
 For the sun-cloud is thine, thy haunt and thy home,
 And with it thou flyest 'neath heaven's blue dome.

The child on the meadow, as it catches thy mirth,
 Thinks an angel from heaven is singing near earth,
 And instinctively smiles as it thoughtlessly turns
 Its young eyes to the spot whence thy symphony bursts.
 And the sun-hidden planets that glitter on high
 All know as thy soul-thrilling praises float by,
 That their light and existence with thee and thy song
 Are but tributes of glory to Him they belong.
 Sweet skylark ! oh, mayst thou be sacred to all
 Who have tasted the grief of our first parents' fall,
 For thy lay is a soothing that hovers above,
 A joy and an innocence whispering of love.
 A pointer thou art to yon pure peaceful spot,
 Where the good are admitted, but the wicked are not.

LOVE LINES.

WRITTEN AT MELBOURNE.

Ah ! dear girl, wouldst thou but heed me
 As my words of love I pour,
 Like a captive mightst thou lead me
 Earth's gay garden o'er and o'er.
 Wouldst thou but in pity hearken
 To my stricken bosom's lay,
 Clouds which now my spirit darken
 Would be rent and swept away.
 Yes, I truly, deeply love thee,
 For thou kindly art, and fair,
 And by yon bright heaven above thee
 True will I remain, I swear !
 Oh, be thou to me but plighted,
 And thy hand be placed in mine,
 To remain, till Death hath blighted
 Either my life, dear, or thine—
 Not a care, or pain, or sorrow
 Shall approach thee with my will ;
 Noon and evening, night and morrow,
 Through them all I'll love thee still.

Never a weed, but ever a flower
 Will I pluck for thee to wear.
 Till my hand hath lost the power,
 And my tongue its tender prayer.
 Say then, maiden, wilt thou bless me
 With thy faithful hand and heart,
 And as my sweet bride caress me ?
 Or, oh God ! are we to part ?

 GUESS AGAIN.

When we be sick with weighty matters
 That drive us wellnigh to despair,
 Pulling our peace-of-mind to tatters,
 'Then welcome "trifles light as air."
 Ere now a king hath thrown his power
 And crown (as 'twere) slap out of doors,
 To spend an undistracted hour,
 And ride his children on "all fours."
 Ye overburden'd worldly wretches,
 Whose heads are turn'd with making "brass,"
 Your gold's but worth the joy it fetches,
 Far smaller than a feed of vetches
 Brings to the pulling, patient ass.

I only ask your lolling time, sir,
 To pull me out, dead or alive,
 From underneath this heap of rhyme, sir.
 A simple word of letters five.
 A something used by marksman good,
 To help him to obtain his food
 On hill and plain, in stream and wood,
 When nothing deadlier is at hand
 To hunt the sea, or sky, or land.
 But if I have not told you plain,
 Please further read, and guess again.

A curious and poetic eye,
 If it be patient and do try,
 May o'er a dozen things discern
 As my "five letters" twist and turn
 From one on to another object,
 Just like a parson from his subject.

Yes, o'er a dozen strange transpositions,
 With but my letters five (or less)
 And as we make no catch additions,
 Nor (if you have such-like suspicion)
 Use any letter's repetition,—
 Soon every item you may guess.

1.

Golden fruit, like stars of eyes,
 Hang against a sky of leaves ;
 Or they in the wicker rest
 As dessert for host and guest.

2.

A name by children spoke with joy,
 But most when bringing home the toy,
 That gloated o'er will be by them
 As though it were the costliest gem.

3.

Food dried up in portions small,
 Good for th' "feather'd songsters" all,
 Charming this sad world of ours,
 Warbling from a thousand bowers.

4.

A snake, whose keen envenom'd bite
 Its victim dooms to certain death.
 A tall green tree, whose leaves so light
 Ceaselessly quiver without a breath.

5.

Things which men and quadrupeds
 Carry always with their heads
 To be useful everywhere,
 Else they had not been put there.

6.

A beautiful basaltic column,
 Sparkling, wonderful, and solemn.
 One of those tough and tapering things
 To which they pin a ship's broad wings.

7.

A thing whose teeth, though dead (a wonder !)
Doth bite the metal bar asunder ;
Or you may find it if you drop
Into a busy joiner's shop.

8.

A continental place of pleasure,
Where nobles spend their time at leisure,
And fortunes win or lose at once
By gambling-games of skill and chance.

9.

Luscious seeds of brightest green,
Sometimes set before the Queen,
By the side of water-fowls
In tureens or china-bowls.

10.

Monkeys with their grinning faces,
Curling tails and strange grimaces,
Spring from out my letters five,
Though some are dead and some alive.

11.

Wild and roaring ocean lies
Still and noiseless 'neath your eyes ;
That's if you are good at twiggling
What is meant by all this rigging.

12.

Closer look, and you perceive
That doth make all herbage live,
Drawn like milk from mother Earth,
That her bosom may put forth
Buds and leaves and flowers too,
Of every odour, shape, and hue.

13.

Heinous crimes of brutal men
Startling e'en my very pen,
Stare you in the face to shock
Hearts of adamant rock.

14.

Postmen at your portal leave them :
 Boxers give, ay, and receive them.
 Each, if you are not a muff,
 Is a hint quite broad enough.

There's not another clue to tell
 What doth this long enigma mean ;
 At least there's none I choose to spell.
 My love to all. God save the Queen !
 Of letters five composed am I ;
 So now, dear patient friend, Good-bye.

SONG.

POOR CARLO !

Poor Carlo's dead ! My noble hound,
 More faithful far than human creature.
 Each bounding limb, each speaking feature
 Is dearly to my memory bound.
 But now he's gone, my Carlo brave,
 And I lament above his grave.

He was my true, sagacious guide
 When night upon the hills descended,
 And fearless on our path we wended,
 Like valiant warriors, side-by-side.
 But now he's gone, my Carlo brave,
 And I lament above his grave.

'Twere vain to seek 'mong brutes or men,
 On earth there is not such another ;
 Dear as a friend, lov'd as a brother,
 Would I could bring him back again !
 But now he's gone, my Carlo brave,
 And I lament above his grave.

TO MY WATCH.

With thee, my friend, I'll have a word,
And tell to thee the thought,
Thy ticking has within me stirr'd,—
It may be worth a groat.
'Tis midnight hour. Long have I sat,
My elbow on the table,
For what with this thought and with that
To sleep I am not able.
Like thee, could but my fingers trace
Th' emotion that's within
My living, yet concealing, case
Of bone, and flesh, and skin ;
Oh ! could but something outward tell
Of works that deep are hid
Beneath my face—the fleshy veil—
The warm, mysterious lid ;
How constant, then, would be the flow
Of feeling clad in rhyme ;
How easy, then, like thee to show
A thought or two in time !
Thou hast but one sole end and aim
To tell to careless man
Quick must he build his tower of fame,
For life is but a span !
Quick must he heap his riches up
If Mammon be his god ;
Quick must he drain the pleasure-cup
Ere dash'd upon the sod !
Quick must he make his peace with heaven
If he would reign in bliss
In th' other world with God—forgiven—
For life is short in this !
One sermon only dost thou preach,
One warning only cry,
But to the poles the echoes reach :
“ Mark how the moments fly !”
And oft methinks 'twere almost best
For man one sole idea,
For then his brain would be at rest,
And never try to see a
Thousand things a thousand ways

In a thousand shades of light,
 Which makes a thousand thorny days
 To end in thorny night.
 Would I could ope' myself and see
 The sinful dust conceal'd,
 Which plagues the works of thee and me
 Until it be reveal'd.
 Would I could give myself to Him,
 My Maker, to be clean'd ;
 My soul (the mainspring), life, and limb
 Would then from sin be wear'd.
 And what's to hinder me, friend watch ?
 God made, and loves, my soul ;
 Then let me take it that His touch
 May heal and keep it whole.
 I daily press thy airy spring
 Which gives thee power anew
 To count the moments as they sing :
 " Adieu, adieu, adieu !"
 But ah ! if once life's brittle chain
 Run down until it stop,
 No careful hand can wind again
 That chain up to the top !
 No eye may gaze with mute delight
 Upon our speaking face,
 For then has come death's dawnless night,
 And run our earthly race !
 But ere that be, my golden friend,
 Remind me night and day,
 If I would have a peaceful end,
 Always to " watch and pray."

JOHN BARLEYCORN.

Thou art a mighty one,
 John Barleycorn !
 What mischief thou hast done,
 John Barleycorn !
 Where dost thou not intrude,
 With thine infernal brood ?
 Who hath thy power withstood,
 John Barleycorn ?

Few, ah, too few ! I trow,
 John Barleycorn !
 Who ne'er before thee bow,
 John Barleycorn !
 But I'll be one of them
 Who to the world condemn
 Thy every stratagem,
 John Barleycorn.

Thou art a subtle knave,
 John Barleycorn !
 See, how thou dost behave,
 John Barleycorn !
 T'ward whom so serve thee well,
 Thou hurlest them pell-mell
 Down to a drunkard's hell,
 John Barleycorn !

Thy brandy, wine, and beer,
 John Barleycorn !
 Were at a gift too dear,
 John Barleycorn !
 All health it undermines,
 While intellect declines,
 And heav'n for thee resigns,
 John Barleycorn !

No more I'll sing thy praise,
 John Barleycorn !
 Wine's softest kiss betrays,
 John Barleycorn !
 Water henceforth I'll woo,
 And all thy work undo,
 And never, never rue,
 John Barleycorn !

Yes, with the help of God,
 John Barleycorn !
 I'll break thy cruel rod,
 John Barleycorn !
 Me thou shalt not destroy,
 Nor my dear soul decoy
 From ev'ry sober joy,
 John Barleycorn !

Bold to thy bloated face,
 John Barleycorn !
 I say thou'rt a disgrace,
 John Barleycorn !
 Aye, and the greatest curse
 In the broad universe ;
 Can anything be worse,
 John Barleycorn !

But for thy filth and vice,
 John Barleycorn !
 England were Paradise,
 John Barleycorn !
 Thou art the serpent vile,
 Sliming our beauteous isle !
 From thee our hearts recoil,
 John Barleycorn !

Feel'st thou for want or woe,
 John Barleycorn ?
 Or virtue stricken low,
 John Barleycorn !
 Thy heartless jibe and jeer,
 Thy mocking laugh I hear ;
 Love's deadliest mutincer,
 John Barleycorn !

Hear'st thou our country groan,
 John Barleycorn !
 Her burthen's all thine own,
 John Barleycorn !
 Wert thou but hang'd or drown'd,
 What joy-bells would resound
 The " wide, wide world " around,
 John Barleycorn !

God help the man who sees,
 John Barleycorn !
 Thy shameful treacheries,
 John Barleycorn !
 God give him strength to shun
 Each guise thou puttest on,
 For thou'rt a cunning one,
 John Barleycorn !

God snatch us millions more,
 John Barleycorn !
 From thy too tempting shore,
 John Barleycorn !
 'Till not one soul remains
 Singing the devil's strains
 On thy destructive plains,
 John Barleycorn !

A FABLE.

FROM THE FRENCH.

One day an old, grey, scurvy owl
 Flew feebly from his ivied hollow,
 For foolish whim had seized the fowl,
 To wed a young and charming swallow.
 Alas !
 She pleaded hard, but all in vain,
 To wed one of her youthful kind,
 For love of her had turn'd his brain
 But had not touch'd his selfish mind.
 Fond fool !
 The birds he then invited all
 From Philomel to linnet grey,
 To feast around his wooded hall,
 And sing upon his wedding-day.
 They came,
 But when they saw his ugly head,
 Affrighted far away they flew,
 But *one* remained behind, 'tis said,
 To wish them joy—the sly Cuckoo



FRIENDSHIP.

Friendship, if we must be candid,
 Beats your Love to smithereens ;
 And can ne'er be justly branded
 With Love's false and fiery scenes.
 'Tis the calm and soothing twilight
 Of which Love's the burning day,
 And its duties ever lie light
 As the dew on flowers of May.
 Of Love's rich and heavy meal
 'Tis the wine and fruit and cake,
 And should Love her storms reveal,
 'Tis the bay for which we make.
 Peaceful there our *bark*: we stop :
 Fiery passions vex no more,
 After Love we never mope
 Landed upon Friendship's shore.
 Pray don't think me hard and cruel,
 On Love's sweet, voluptuous head ;
 If you *like* Love in your gruel,
 Take it, and go straight to bed ;
 Or, to thwart a deadly duel,
 Don't believe a word I've said.

LAND, HO !

ON FIRST SIGHTING AUSTRALIA, 1862.

WRITTEN AT MELBOURNE.

“ Land, ho ! land, ho ! ” Great God, the joyful cry,
 Thrills every heart and makes its tide to leap
 In grateful gushes that at last we spy
 Our home, yet but a film beyond the deep.
 But, look ! it clearer grows and still more clear,
 As though some giant-hand, unseen but kind,
 Were lifting it into the upper sphere
 From out the main, and brushing with the wind
 The veil of distance from its purple brow,
 And giving it a somewhat solid shape,

Bewitching to our eyes who throng the prow
 Like captives, wild, that see a way t' escape.
 "Land, ho!" yes, there it is, all green and brown,
 And glossy in the mellow Spring sun-shine,
 Like some sea-monster from his cave adown,
 Basking at leisure in the amber brine.
 We glide along and soon the glowing shore
 Lies spread before us, rocky, wild, and grand.
 Steep grassy slopes that Fancy flowers o'er
 Run down to kiss the shelled and shingled strand.
 Bold, jutting headlands, with deep clefts between,
 Where many a beautiful cascade is seen,
 Dropping from crag to crag in silvery spray.
 Then winding in a limpid stream away
 Amid a vegetation all unknown,
 But not less green and grand than is our own,
 Yet not so loved. And now we nearer glide,
 Smooth-parting with deep keel the emerald tide,
 Where blocks of weeds of rich but sombre hue
 (A sign that land is near, though not in view),
 Silently float into the distant blue
 To glad the eyes of other anxious souls,
 Beneath whose feet yon treacherous ocean rolls.
 The day advances and the land draws nigh.
 Encroaching rapidly on the sea and sky—
 A pleasing change to whom so long have been
 Sole centre of that boundless watery scene,
 Whose only change to break the dread *canni*
 Was lashing storm, or distant sail to see.

What melody comes floating o'er the wave
 As 'twere a welcome from a watery grave!
 The well-known murmur of a human hive,
 With thousand boats and banners all alive.
 Behold! a splendid city, rich and gay,
 Springs on the margin of that lovely bay,
 Where men of every nation, young and old,
 Bear cruel exile for the love of gold.

What means this merry bustle of our crew?
 And what the duty they're about to do?
 They lift the hatch, and from the ship's deep hold
 A long and ponderous chain is soon unroll'd,
 Of seeming strength to keep a mountain firm

When earthquakes mingle with the upper storm,
 Each mighty link itself a strong man's load,
 As one by one they leave their dark abode,
 Each wedded to the other, and at last
 Unto the faithful anchor wedded fast.
 Though reeking red with rust, and foul beside,
 'Tis far more lovely to the eyes of all
 Than diamond-chain bedecking noble bride
 Amid the glitter of a royal ball.
 List ! the glad captain speaks—'tis but a word—
 "All ready !" and from lusty crew is heard
 The loud "Ay, ay, sir." Then, in ringing tone—
 "Let go the anchor !" and the anchor's gone,
 With sudden, seething sound, sunk through the sand,
 Gripping with iron teeth Nep's rocky land.

Safe, safe ! Oh, God, we thank Thee, safe at last !
 The thousand dangers of the sea are past.
 Th' insatiate oceanic fiend behind,
 Impotent loads the mocking, balmy wind
 With one last disappointed, hollow roar,
 Just heard and laughed at on the happy shore
 By friends of ours, who years before have come
 Across these billows to this foreign home.

How little know ye of an ocean storm
 Who read it with your feet on fender warm,
 In peaceful homes on terra-firma dear,
 Where wildest winds raise not a single fear.
 Or guess the billows that like mountains rise
 In madden'd fury to the inky skies,
 As if th' Almighty Judge had drawn adown His face
 The awful black-cap, and upon the human race
 Was thundering loud His sentence, dread and dire,
 Sign'd with His autograph in living fire !
 But yet the slender thread on which the lives
 Of youths and maidens, men and anxious wives,
 For three long dreary months have doubtless hung,
 Has, thanks to Providence, prov'd tough and strong. — *ful*
 And now, light in our all-unbounded mirth,
 We trip again the green, substantial earth ;
 And blush not that we, childlike, kneeling kiss
 The simple wild-flowers with extatic bliss,
 Or feel a loving longing to embrace
 Each unknown human form and foreign face.

Praise be to God, within whose mighty hand
 Lie rolling ocean and the solid land—
 All holy gratitude, and still may He
 As safely guide us o'er the troubled sea
 Of Time, into a bright, new land of peace,
 Fairer, and e'en more welcome still than this !

 A CHARADE.

My *first* is from my second finely made,
 On many a manly face to be displayed,
 Its essence, bitterness—its spirit, fire—
 Its soul a wreath to deck a fairy lyre.
 My *second* falls with tears into the grave
 Round which the mourners weep, or *wildly* rave.
 My *whole* bleacheth you ivied cottage floor
 And greets you as you trip the threshold o'er.
 Go to yon soldier's tent at early morn
 And watch him dress for duty or review,
 I'll wager I his straps and kit adorn,
 To add fresh beauty to his red-and-blue.

wildly

 A NICKNAME.

'Twere curious here to mention by-the-way
 The origin of just one soubriquet,
 Or nickname in our good old mother tongue,
 Keen and expressive as it flows along.
 No sect is sacred from a nickname's knife ;
 Like death it enters every sphere of life.
 Goodness and greatness, wealth, and pomp, and fame,
 All are expos'd, and bloodless, bleed the same.
 The princely merchant and the priest of God,
 The humble turner of the emerald sod,
 The grand, the graceful, yea the poor deform'd,
 Against this coward foe are all unarm'd ;
 For nicknames, with their train of mountebanks,
 Follow through life all stations and all ranks—
 E'en long-legg'd Royalty was dubb'd " Longshanks."

Some are, 'tis true, than others far more keen,
 And some rather an honour than discredit mean ;
 While some, like vengeance with swords of flame,
 Hover for ever o'er some guilty name ;
 While now and then, as 'twere to keep things right,
 Some savour more of fun than peevish spite.
 But all, if not bad taste, at least are rude,
 And by the wise will ever be eschew'd.

* Sir Robert's father—Robert, too, by name—
 The cotton-merchant play'd in life's grand game,
 And play'd it with éclat and great success,
 Like honest, skilful man of good address ;
 For riches and applause from all the earth
 Roll'd in upon him to attest his worth.
 Not only did he weave, but printed, too,
 His calicoes in colours chiefly blue,
 Of patterns of the most unique design,
 But simple as the clusters of the vine.
 One celebrated pattern (to be brief)
 Was nothing but the modest parsley-leaf,
 Which took and sold so well on market-days
 That by it princely wealth did Robert raise,
 Till, in the end, his "hands"—a witty mob
 Baptiz'd their honour'd master—"Parsley Bob!"

† Sir Robert Peel.

LES OMBRES.

The sun bestows his merry light
 On all alike around,
 And is it not a pretty sight
 Those shadows on the ground ?

The shadow from that mossy wall,
 The shadow of that oak,
 The shadow of that chimney tall
 And the shadow of its smoke.

The shadows of the glossy birds
 That skim athwart the sky,
 The shadows of the quiet herds
 That on the fallow lie.

The shadow from that ivied pile,
And you old rustic bridge,
Gliding across the water while
We linger by its edge.

The shadow of the sailing hawk—
Now motionless in air,
Their shadows where the chickens walk,
Ah, little ones, beware !

The shadow of brave chanticleer
Stalking in anxious mood,
He sees the danger hovering near
His young, beloved brood.

The shadow from the distant hills,
The shadow of the vane
That twirls above the roof, and tells
The coming of the rain.

The shadows in the myrtle grove,
And of you thick, white cloud
Which moves in majesty above
Like a beauty mildly proud.

The shadow of the dark, green wood,
And tall, embattl'd tower,
His shadow when the lover stood
Enraptur'd in the bower.

The shadow from the Minster-spire
Deck'd out in curious stones,
And the shadow from the tomb and lyre
Above the poet's bones !

The sun he throws his mellow light
On all alike around,
Oh, is it not a pleasing sight,
Those shadows on the ground !



TO MY LITTLE SISTER.

(THREE YEARS OF AGE.)

Sweet one with the golden hair
 Shining always here and there,
 Darling with the rich blue eye,
 I do love thee tenderly.
 Fair one with a skin like milk
 And a cheek as soft as silk ;
 Pet one, with the perfect form,
 How thou dost my bosom warm !
 Hark ! I hear thy prattle still
 Like the babbling of the rill
 That leaps in laughter down the face
 Of stern and awful precipice.
 When thy mother like a light
 Sank behind the hills of Time,
 Thou wast left t' illumine our night
 And up to our hearts to climb.
 Thou art at home a brighter beam
 Than those which in the sunlight glance
 Upon its walls, which, sparkling, gleam
 In gold beneath their quivering dance.
 Innocent, thy presence throws
 Sweetness round us like the rose,
For thy little heart we know
 Swells with feelings pure as snow ;
 For within thy little breast
 Affection's birdie builds its nest.
 See thee with thy heart elate
 Flying to the massive gate
 With open arms and eyes so kind,
 Thy golden hair loose on the wind,
 To meet thy father, me, or her
 Whom to the world thou dost prefer.
 And the music of thy hands,
 Those clapping hands endimpled o'er,
 Sweeter is than fairy bands
 That hum along the moonlit shore.
 Thou art the very soul of each
 Home-hour that passes o'er our heads ;
 And what in infant life can reach
 The infant grace that o'er thee spreads ?

I hope that little "will" of thine
 And intellect in embryo now,
 Some day will round thy nature shine,
 And with a glory light thy brow.
 Darling, but I love thee well—
 Love thee more than I can tell,
 And aye of thy brother's heart
 Shalt thou have the better part.
 Sister, long may thy sweet breath
 Paralyze the arm of Death.
 But when that monster in his strength
 Shall lay thee, dear one, at full length,
 Cold, white, and lifeless as the snow,
 Oh may thy spirit upward go
 To greet thy mother's in the sky
 Now blessing thee and me on high.

THE COMET.

Long have I gazed upon it,
 That meteor there on high,
 That thing we call a comet—
 That rover through the sky.
 Thank God, to man is given
 To throw a thought as far
 As where in upper heaven
 Shines out a fixed star ;
 And when wild Thought is with it
 It makes of that bright spot
 A firm and centre pivot
 To wheel where stars are not !
 Then, skies which here spread o'er us,
 Like frescoed ceiling neat,
 A carpet is before us,
 Gem-wrought, for thoughtful feet.
 But turn we to the comet,
 With long and fiery tail,
 And learn the lesson from it,
 That God's hand doth prevail.
 His works speak out to tell us
 His mercy and His might ;

Without them it would kill us,
 That terror of the night !
 And yet it is no terror
 To the myriad worlds on high,
 'Tis man's alone the error,
 It scorns the earth and sky.
 Its crooked track is laid it,
 Precise as is the sun's,
 By God, The Great, who made it,
 Accompanying as it runs.
 Fear not a fell collision
 Between it and the earth ;
 'Tis but in madman's vision
 Such follies have their birth.
 God fashions not His wonders
 To turn them then adrift ;
He never maketh blunders—
 'Tis man's that awkward gift.
 There's more substantial danger
 From Etna's boiling vomit,
 Than from yon heavenly ranger—
 The peacock-star—the comet.

SONG.

HAVE A CARE !

Oh, brother of mine, have a care !
 When thou raisest the goblet on high,
 For within it, lo ! lurketh a snare
 That may cause thee to stumble and die.

CHORUS.

Have a care ! have a care !
 Satan's drink worketh ruin, have a care !
 Have a care ! have a care !
 There is mischief a-brewing, have a care !

In earnest I sing, have a care !
 For the wine-cup but muddles the brain,
 While it lashes the soul to despair
 At the loss it can never regain.
 Have a care, &c.

I tremblingly sing, have a care !
For the bondage of Bacchus is strong —
The forfeit of all that is fair
And good that to man should belong.
Have a care, &c.

If proud in thy strength, have a care !
For the Devil is stronger than thee,
And anon he will boldly declare
That thy spirit no longer is free.
Have a care, &c.

“ No longer is free ”—have a care !
To be fettered and bound to the cup
Is to shrink from to do and to dare,
And to give thy grand dignity up.
Have a care, &c.

Wouldst thou lose self-control ?—have a care !
Be not sport for the fool and the drone ;
With the wreck of the drunkard compare
The men who drink water alone.
Have a care, &c.

Wouldst be cast into hell ?—have a care !
For wine hath its millions destroyed ;
The noble, the brave, and the fair
Hath it sunk in that fiery void.
Have a care, &c.

Then while on the earth, have a care !
Let us drink at the beautiful spring,
For nor danger nor death lurketh there,
But all that can happiness bring.
Have a care, &c.



A TEMPERANCE HYMN.

Great God of love and gladness,
 And Maker of us all,
 Look on our country's madness,
 Through thirst for Alcohol !
 Full many mighty forces
 Hath Satan nigh at hand,
 But chief of his resources
 Is *drink* in every land.

This crowds his gloomy regions
 With lost and wretched souls.
 The sport of scoffing legions
 His wicked will controls ;
 This fills with lamentations
 All corners of the earth,
 And robs the proudest nations
 Of rising sons of worth.

Oh, God, in mercy snatch us
 From such an awful fate.
 And to Thyself attach us
 Or ere it be too late !
 And 'stead of deeply drinking
 The cup that sorrow brings,
 Set all the world a thinking
 Of sweet eternal things—

Of angels, heaven, and glory,
 And martyrs good and brave,
 And that all-thrilling story
 Of Calvary and the Grave,
 Where died and where was buried
 The Son of God Himself,
 That we might not be hurried
 Into the burning gulf !

Ah, no, for He would rather
 That all mankind should be
 With Him and with the Father
 Through all eternity !
 Then God of every gladness.
 And Lover of us all,
 Look on our country's madness,
 Through thirst for Alcohol !

A (CERTAIN) MAIDEN'S PRAYER.

Oh, would I were "a rector's wife,"
 And living with my love,
 Far from the city's noisy life,
 Its hurry, skurry, pain, and strife,
 Amid some rural grove,
 Through which, with tiny cross becrow'd
 The ivied spire uprears
 Of *his* dear church, upon whose ground
 The pious villagers are found
 From infancy to years.

How sweet to be their dearest friend,
 The joy of young and old ;
 To have good food and clothes to send
 Where poverty and sorrow blend,
 And life itself is cold ;
 To prop and soothe the aching head,
 And cheer the heart that bleeds ;
 To tend the sick or dying bed
 When hope of earthly life were fled—
 And all such holy deeds.

And to loiter in the woods,
 Leaning on his dear arm,
 When Spring puts forth her emerald bud,
 And birds sing to their nestling broods
 In eaves and hedges warm.
 Or 'neath hot Summer's glaring sun,
 Sit near him by some brook
 That musically glideth on
 While he, in low and loving tone,
 Reads me some favourite book.

Next, when the Autumn leaves all brown
 And sapless, sear and dry,
 Come quivering, shivering, fluttering down,
 And by the cruel winds are blown
 In rotting heaps to lie—
 We'd make up for the cheerless walk,
 By gathering fruits along,
 That cluster on the drooping stalk ;
 Or with the happy gleaners talk
 And join their grateful song.

And when the crispy Winter came
 With roaring breath, or gentle snow,
 We'd love and ramble all the same,
 Kept warm with pure and mutual flame :
 The friends of all without a foe.
 Thus, like the seasons of the year,
 So should the changes of our life
 Be all enjoyed and welcomed here,
 Till Death himself at last drew near.
 If I were but "a rector's wife."

SWEET.

'Tis sweet to follow in the train of kings
 On grand occasions when the clarion rings,
 And bells are pealing loud, and canons roar,
 Till frighted echoes rush from shore to shore,
 And heralds shout the triumphs of our arms
 O'er mighty foemen quelled with brief alarms ;
 When all the city deckt with colours gay
 Turns out and hath a joyous holiday.

'Tis sweet for golden, sunny beams to break,
 And, dancing, glisten in the vessel's wake,
 Till o'er the sea a long, low, line of light
 Is spun out till it overreach the sight.

'Twas sweet, methinks, for noble Robin Hood,
 To follow bounding stag through forest wood,
 And for his "merrie men," all stout of limb,
 What *could* be sweeter than to follow him ?

'Tis sweet for little birds, o'er hill and dale,
 To follow closely at the cuckoo's tail,
 And, jealous, watch where she her nest hath made,
 And her poor solitary egg is laid.

But something's sweeter far for man than this—
 A something that affords extatic bliss ;
 'Tis following in the pleasant wake of one
 Whose form is worshipp'd as it passeth on,
 And gazing on each graceful, swelling limb,
 Till soul with rapture fill up to the brim.

Ah yes, the sweetest thing in mortal life
 Is treading in the footsteps of a wife,
 If she be virtuous, wise, and witty too,
 And good, withal, as ever wore a shoe.
 'Tis like to treading on the softest moss,
 Or peachy velvet pile, or fleecy floss.
 But oh, beware ! and go not thou *too* near,
 Or thy adventurous soul may cost thee dear,
 To learn too late, as on she softly steals,
 That wives, betimes, kick up their booted heels,
 Regardless who or whence he is behind :
 So, *followers* of your wives or maidens—mind !

RETURNED WITH THE GLOVE.

If by dark magician's power
 Laws of Nature I could break,
 For one brief and blissful hour,
 Tiny glove, *thy* form I'd take ;
 To enwrap each small, fair finger
 Of my darling's hand so warm,
 And with it to rove and linger
 Round her soft and graceful form.
 Who can count the honied kisses
 I might steal from her ripe lips !
 Or the thousand nameless blisses
 Which would all of earth eclipse !
 But when fiery pangs were fleeting,
 And when sickly pains would dart,
 Oh, what joy to still the beating
 Of that fond but troubled heart !
 When on her soft bosom lying
 All the world forgot would be,—
 But how vain is wishing—sighing—
 Tiny glove, I envy thee.



THE VILLAGE WELL.

Now comes a natural sequence in our tale
 The change from "bitter" to sweet "Adam's ale;"
 In other words, a merry moment dwell
 Beside a spring of many joys—the well!
 Oh, that mankind (myself among the rest)
 Were but content to drink of drinks the best,
 The drops condens'd from Nature's harmless still
 Whose endless worm is coil'd round every hill,
 Or deep within earth's vaulted caverns lies
 Until it looketh out with sparkling eyes,
 A *spirit*, free from duties of excise.
 Sweet water! from the clear and gushing spring,
 Wherein the lark dippeth his soaring wing
 And moist'neth his mysterious pipe, whose strains
 Fall, flooding, like a hymn from heavenly plains.
 The only drink of fish, and bird, and beast,
 Where man hath not polluted Nature's feast;
 The towering trees, the lowly grass, the flowers
 Live, and are beautiful, by heavenly showers;
 Yon glorious rainbow-bridge so broad and bright,
 Is but the work of water and of light.
 I often wonder how it would appear
 If God had bent it out of sun and beer;
 Or would its glittering arch have been so fine
 Had He constructed it of *rays and wine!*
 Or filter'd from "La Veuve Cliquot" champagne
 Instead of golden beams and crystal rain?
 No, nought would serve to make the glorious thing
 But sun and *water* from the upper spring!
 Therefore is water best in heaven and here,
 'Twill keep your conscience and perceptions clear.
 Would ye enwrap ye in a witching spell?
 Go jingle friendly goblets at the well,
 Our village fount where giddy gossips meet,
 (The younger portion of the she élite)
 'To ease them of their daily load of news,
 Sometimes to praise, but oftener to abuse.
 What poison'd scandals date their early flow
 From this still fountain where the women go
 Brimful of something, anything to tell,
 To keep their names up at the village well!

I fain would think they dead in only truth,
 But blood and tongues and tales fly quick in youth.
 'Tis God alone who knows, not me or you,
 The mischief that a thoughtless tale can do.
 And this may be the reason why, in towns,
 Scandal among the women ne'er abounds ;
 Oh ! no ! they're absolutely free from this
 Exclusive countrified heartrending bliss ;
 Oh, yes ! of course ! that's true ! ah, me ! for each one
 Hath her own well within her own back-kitchen ;
 So her glib tongue hath not a chance to swing
 Like these (with cans) around the meadow-spring.
 See ! when the lads approach, each with a kit,
 How sweet and innocent the lasses sit !
 Or flirt and flatter till th' embolden'd swains
 Get cuffs and kisses for their struggling pains ;
 Or gaily dance around with circling hands
 While one shy milkmaid fills their waiting cans.
 There surely must be some magnetic force
 To draw and keep folks at this crystal course,
 For when the servants are for water gone,
 How many mistresses are left alone
 To do the kitchen-work, and dust the shelves,
 And cook the family dinner by themselves !
 For though the time be known when maids go out,
 Returning-time is quite a thing of doubt,
 And much depends who's at or from the well,
 If they return in time for dinner's bell.
 In vain you scold them, for they all uphold
 They wait but like Rebecca did of old,
 Until some thirsty " messenger " arrives
 Hot on the look-out for some steady wives.
 They cannot all fall into Issac's arms,
 But yet not lost shall be their virtuous charms,
 For some fine fellow, Philip, Frank, or Fred,
 Already woos them, and may some day wed.



THE ALBUM TO THE CONTRIBUTOR.

Like the soul of a child,
 Unstained, undefiled,
 I open my bosom to thee ;
 So thine be the sin
 If thou leave it therein,
 One shade of dishonour for me.

Like the soul of a child,
 Bright, eager, yet mild,
 I look out for thoughts in new guises,
 And if love but pervade
 What here be displayed
 I care not how quaint the devices.

I'm a neck for curls—
 A casket for pearls—
 A field to be planted with flowers—
 A beach for shells—
 A steeple for bells—
 A thirsty land longing for showers.

In colours or ink
 Bestow what you think
 Will add a new charm to the rest ;
 And do not forget
 As my pages you wet,
 That I love what is neatest the best.

Then, mortal, beware !
 Contribute with care,
 For thoughts thou dost herein pourtray
 By the world will be read
 When thy spirit hath fied
 From its cold, earthly prison of clay.



A LETTER.

My dear friend John, I'm fond o' fm
 And jokes I do believe in,
 But on my word I never heard
 Of jokes that led to thievin'.
 Come, throw it up; it's on your crop,
 My pencil-case so "nobby,"
 Or, by the moon! I'll send you soon
 A warrant by the "bobby."

O'er all the things of which he sings
 The poet loves his pencil;
 Give him but this, with wealth and peace,
 All others he will cancel.
 In sorrowing state my Muses wait,
 And some, alas! have fled back,
 Th' impatient—witches, with all their riches,
 Until I get my lead back.

Thoughts come and crowd until a cloud
 Enwraps me while I'm sittin';
 They flash and crash, and push and rush,
 Around me to be written.
 What can I do? Th' immortal crew
 Make noises quite bewild'rin';
 They want to go, all in a row,
 Down to my children's children.

They want to pass in French *en masse*
 Among lead type to revel.
 So, my good friend, let them be penn'd
 For I intend them all to send
 Down to the printer's devil.
 They tug and strain and thump my brain—
 For weeks I shall be hence ill,
 If you, dear Jack, don't send me back
 My pen and blacklead pencil.

In vain I swear to tear my hair,
 Or blow my skull in pieces,
 They only laugh the more by half—
 Their clamour but increases.

What's keen and cool they call me fool
 (Of this you make an entry),
 That I should smoke and drink and joke
 With such light-finger'd gentry.

I tell each one 'twas but in fun
 My neat knick-knack was taken,
 But all uphold the piece of gold
 Is lost, as sure as Satan !
 I hope they lie, or surely I
 Shall do some dreadful action ;
 You cannot guess how much the ease
 Is wrapp'd in my affection.

I do believe you'd sorely grieve
 If you could only know it,
 The loss he feels when some one steals
 His pencil from a poet.
 Take all you choose—his Sunday shoes—
 His bran-new silk umbrella—
 His watch and chain—his stockings twain—
 Or stop his mouth with tallow.—

Take his top-coat—don't let him vote—
 Feed him on bread and water—
 Sit on his hat, or shoot his cat—
 Wed *your* son with *his* daughter—
 Tread on his toes and pull his nose—
 Put powder in his "cutty"—
 And in his wine steal turpentine,
 And make his "dicky" smutty.

Send home a box of cabbage-stalks
 When he has bought cheroots ;
 A lump of fat put in his hat,
 And bird-lime in his boots—
 Each limb in turn with caustic burn,
 Or smash them all and spelk 'em—
 Rob his fair name of honest fame—
 Do all these things and welcome—

Cut down his health, take all his wealth,
 And every house-utensil,
 His bed and wife, yea take his life,
 But oh, take not his pencil !

Then, John, to-day, confess, I pray,
 Where is it? Who has got it?
 And I will send some trusty friend,
 Or go myself and "fot" it.

A LULLABY-SONG.

Sleep! there is no danger,
 Sleep and dream and rest;
 Sleep! thou little stranger,
 Sleep upon my breast.
 Dearer far than gold
 As I thee enfold,
 Babe most beautiful, most lovely,
 Babe of fairest mould.

Deep a parent's passion,
 Pure as falling snow;
 God begun the fashion
 To his sons below.
 Oh, to love the same
 Be our constant aim
 In this world of sweet and bitter—
 In this world of blame!

Sleep! and angels kiss thee,
 Thy red lips apart;
 Sleep! and Jesus bless thee,
 Infant though thou art.
 Oh this love of mine
 At this baby-shrine,
 Surely 'tis a taste of heaven—
 Surely 'tis divine!



IMPROMPTU LINES ON THE HIGH-TOR, MATLOCK.

High, high, the glorious landscape o'er
 Thou risest, grand colossal cliff!
 From time through time to evermore
 Shalt thou remain, sublime High-Tor
 Of Matlock's beauties ever chief.
 How great an l skilful, good and grand
 Is His, th' Almighty's deathless hand,
 From whose deep palm such rocks as these
 Are scatter'd o'er the land and seas!

GLOOM.

Ah! who shall tell the weight of human woe
 Down-crushing us betimes on to the sod,
 Extinguishing e'en hope's pale lights that glow
 Too faintly to disclose the hand of God!
 Or who shall paint the cloud of thick despair
 That spreads in stifling blackness o'er the heart
 When fellest thoughts are brooding, rankling there
 That men should cast thee like a weed apart
 To suck existence from the foulest soil—
 To live uncheer'd by kindness or love—
 To be despis'd because a lowly toil
 Must earn the bread ^{that} quakes thy life-tide move.

What matter though thou hast a soul
 Illumined with the lights of heaven,
 Or bosom with affection full
 As e'er to noblest man was given,
 If Mammon lay not at thy feet
 His godless treasure, red and rare?
 Thy misery shall be complete—
 "Would I were dead!" thy constant prayer.
 What though thy mind be par with those
 Great intellects of men of old,
 Whom God sent downwards to disclose
 What only angels might unfold?

What though thine eye be bright with rarest thought,
 And keen to penetrate life's mysteries,
 If thine exchequer be not golden-fraught !
 Nor thine some riches of the earth and seas !
 What though——! But cease thee, puny pen, to rail,
 All thy outpourings are of no avail,
 For stronger passions dwell *some* hearts within
 Than love of God, or home, or kith, or kin :
 Passions which keep them on the earth *alone*,
 Until they're dead and buried and are gone !
 When, 'stead of *Love* to mourn in glowing gloom,
 Poor *Pity* coldly glances at their tomb.

OUR FORTIETH YEAR.

We've touch'd our fortieth year, my friend,
 We're thirty-nine all told ;
 Our youthful days are at an end,
 And we are growing old.
 Dost hear ? we're growing old, old " chum,"
 As fast as years can make us,
 And by-and-bye the hour will come
 When death must overtake us.

But ere that clammy, grisly thief
 Steal on us unaware,
 May years of joy and ribs of beef
 Fall to our grateful share.
 To-day we've all a man could wish,
 That's not a moral glutton ;
 We've dainties to our daily dish—
 What more's my Lord Mayor gotten ?

How sweet is friendship such as ours !
 What with it can compare ?
 Can choicest of our earthly flowers ?
 Or gems or jewels rare ?
 Nay, e'en huge bars of solid gold
 So precious were, I ween,
 As our cheery friendship, blithe and bold
 Is, and hath ever been.

No mushroom-sentiment, Albert, mine,
 But tough and true and strong,
 For since the tender age of nine
 We've loving jogg'd along.
 And never has a bitter word
 (The prompting of the fiend !)
 From either's guarded lips been heard,
 Or quarrel intervened.

The world shall separate us not,
 The flesh, nor yet the devil ;
 We'll blow up every hostile plot,
 And in sweet friendship revel.
 The petty failings of the crowd,
 Its bickerings and its smarts,
 An entrance have we ne'er allowed
 Into our faithful hearts.

But now we're proven heart and mind,
 Agreed and sworn and true
 Look we around us, Al., to find
 Some good that we may do.
 There's nothing better—naught so grand,
 So pure and sure to last
 Through life and in the heavenly land
 When time and tide are past.

So where we may, seize we the chance
 And do't with holy zest
 The thing's *twice* done that's done at once,
 And more than doubly blest.
 But what we do or don't on earth,
 Oh, may we comprehend
 The moral and eternal worth
 Of looking to *the end*.



 THE BANNER OF FREEDOM.

Up, up with the banner of freedom once more,
 Unfurl it again over every shore ;
 Send out your best woodsman beyond the broad sea
 To find and to fell the most towering tree—
 The fairest and straightest and toughest to stand
 The winds of the ocean and storms of the land.
 And trim it and taper, and kiss it , and then
 Nail our free British Flag to its summit again.

You may add some joy-streamers of bunting to crack
 Like a whip in the wind round our Union Jack ;
 But keep the old Banner itself to the breeze—
 The boast of the nation, the pride of the seas.
 'Tis a century old, but grows fairer with years,
 Though many a scar on its surface appears,
 Where the shots of the foe have gone whistling through,
 O'er the heads of a never-surrendering crew.

Ye maidens of Britain bring needles and thread,
 There's a *patch* to put on our sweet flag overhead ;⁷
 Mark its corners that every nation may see,
 With an H, and a U, and an N, and a T ;
 And plump in the middle these words all alive—
 " One thousand eight hundred and seventy-five,"
 In letters like fire to burn in his brain,
 Who insulted Britannia, the Queen of the main !

Oh God ! the protector, and friend of the free.
 In mercy look down on our flag of the sea ;
 May it fearlessly float o'er every wave,
 A terror to tyrants, a joy to the slave !
 Then up with the sturdy old standard on high,
 And down with the men who its virtues deny ;
 Let us rally beneath it, and come then what may.
 The Banner of Freedom shall flutter for aye.

 THE OLD BAR-PARLOUR BELL.

Of all the things to handle, holding enmity to man
 Your musket, dagger, firebrand, or monster Armstrong gun,
 There's none which for a moment can be plac'd in parallel
 With that simple-looking ornament—the old bar-parlour bell.

You enter, and you need not cast impatient eyes around,
 For in some queer shape or other, oh ! 'tis easy to be found :
 Its absence would be stranger than sea shores without a shell,
 For no "sung" is deemed complete with ne'er an old bar-parlour bell.

'Tis here a most elaborate gong upon the table plac'd,
 A work of art, of rare design, and exquisitely chased ;
 And there an ivory knob on which (I know the feeling well)
 One's thumb and fingers itch to press ! the old bar-parlour bell.

Or o'er the very centre of the free and festive board (!)
 Suspended from the ceiling swings a silken ring'd cord,
 One jerk of which were quite enough to jerk a soul to hell !
 Oh, what a work of mischief is the old bar-parlour bell.

You ring it, and there quickly comes the landlord neat and trim,
 Or a fair, bejewelled barmaid looking anything but grim,
 No time is lost : they seem to fly your orders to fulfil,
 Oh, they're wide awake who wait upon the old bar-parlour bell.

They keep these parlours quite select, that is, they seldom fight,
 Or let the unwash'd multitude within their dens at night ;
 But worse than vulgar tapsters are the lordling and the swell
 Who nightly gather round and ring the old bar-parlour bell.

Alas ! I have been there myself and played the leading fool,
 And like full many more became the cat's-paw and the tool ;
 And seen the oft reflection, with remorse I could not quell,
 Of my drink-distorted features in the old bar-parlour bell.

And yet the mellow music of that little toy at times
 Right through my sinful soul has rung in thunder-pealing chimes ;
 And oft the still, small voice within, like a monk from out his cell,
 Has whisper'd : " Oh, my sou, beware the old bar-parlour bell ! "

Ah ! who shall count the tears and sighs and all the pangs of woe,
 Of wives and children left alone when fathers join the foe ?
 The foe to truth and love, the foe ! whose sire is king of hell,
 And whose most obedient servant is the old bar-parlour bell.

Yea, thanks be to the God of grace, my eyes are open now.
 And I will on His altar place my sacrifice, and vow
 To love and honour evermore the sacred, solemn swell
 Of the Sunday prayer, in preference to the old bar-parlour bell.

REJOICINGS.

(FROM THE BOLTON WESLEY CIRCUIT BAZAAR GAZETTE, ALBERT HALL,
OCTOBER, 1875.)

Well may you, Madam Wesley Chapel, crow,
And cry aloud for joy and clap your hands :
Your brave bazaar has set us all aglow,—
An ever-feather in your cap it stands!
Far future generations shall recall,
Its great success in Bolton Albert Hall.

You dear old Dame, of sorer twenty-three,
You're out of debt at last, you are, you are !
From five per cents. (insatiate vampires !) free !
Thanks be to God and to your grand bazaar.
But—no fond claims upon our bits of gold ;
Ah ! shall we love you as we did of old ?

Your *maiden* speeches, Madam Wesley Chapel,
Are choice and cheering in each day's *Gazette*,
And your arithmetic shows how we grapple
Boldly with foes by which we are beset.
What ! fifteen hundred pounds in two short days ?
And two to come ! it fills us with amaze !

With patient Super. Vercoe at your head,—
With pure and gushing Wells down at your feet,—
With pleasant Rhodes before you, newly spread,—
With Ups and Downes like these, your joy's complete :
If not, it ought to be,—you understand ?
And you the happiest Zion in all the land.

And now, dear Madam, with your body free,
Higher and brighter may your spirit rise ;
Keep up, all round, one joyous jubilee,
And let your grateful anthems fill the skies.
'Tis grand to work for you and your bazaar,
But *winning souls for Christ* is grander far !

SILENCE.

Silence ! ah, it were a boon
 When the battle-demons roar,
 And the din of hell is thrown
 O'er the earth beclot with gore.

Silence ! merciful it were
 When the storm is on the sea,
 Hurling it high in the air
 As it booms in revelry.

Silence ! God ! an untold bliss
 When a wretch is doom'd to hear
 Thunders from a "still, small voice,"
 Telling of a black career.

Silence ! proper, when the soul is leaving
 Earthly tenements to fly and blend
 With the souls above—but, ah ! how grieving
 Is the silence of an absent friend !

TEARS.

Tears are the precious prisms given,
 Through which we catch a glimpse of heaven.
 Men's stony hearts they oft prepare
 That God may stamp His image there.
 They help to wash the soul from sin.
 And quench all evil fires within.
 They drop upon the devil's head,
 Like on our own would boiling lead,
 And make him roar and rage and yell
 Till every devil quakes in hell !

THE THROSTLE.

Eh, mon, if theaw'd nobbut a' yerd it loike me,
 For this last tothri wick abcawt whoam !
 An' to loze it at last, theaw'd a' cried, very nee,
 As theaw'd cry for a friend an' a "chum."
 Aw've a bit ov a gerdin, an' in it, theaw sees,
 There's a tothri, but nobbut a tothri big trees,
 A poplin, a hash, an' aw think it's a barch,
 O'er shadin' a seot--my own honyd-warch.

Aw'm just one o' thuse sort o' chaps after o'
 What *shud* wroite o' birds an' o' spring, *birds*
 For theer's not a mon livin' (nor deed) aw kno,
 That's fonder o' yerin' 'em sing.
 Aw'm surprouist, that aw an, at its musickl ucize.
 An' it sets me atlinkin' t'misel
 O' th' Almighty God, an' His wonderful ways
 O' crommin' so mich in a shell !

Aw wur preawd as a king, it worn't fretnt o' me,
 This sowl-stirrin', beautiful brid,
 As it sung o'er my yed npo' th' branch of a tree,
 Yet it know'd aw wur there, mon, it did.
 But these young country-lads, eh, what beggars they are !
 They're reet nowt an' i' mischeef o'day ;
 They'n fun an' they'n stown my brid-neest, an' what's wur,
 They'n clodded mi throsl away.

Fust thing ov a mornin' this rare throsl-cock
 Would sing for a heawr, mon, or moore,
 An' wakken me up just abeawt foive o'clock,
 Mich better than puncin' at t' door.
 An' it sung an' it whistlt ith' sweet mornin' air
 Till hecho on hecho did ring,
 An' aw wouder't sich melody, gushin' an' rare,
 Could come fro so little a thing.

But its noan o' God's ways to o'erlook little things,
 If little things do what they con ;
 A brid does a lot when its praises it sings,
 But far moore wi' his praise does a mon.
 But durnt yo go thinkin' it's part o' ma werk
 To rob t'other brids o' their due ;
 Ma favrit's a thrush—but a *du* *d* loud lerk,
 An' aw loike every other brid too.

Aw'd a ritten some moore, but a frend droppin' in
 Says aw'm nobbut just wastin' mi toime
 Wi' a mon, an' a tree, an' a brid, an' a din,
 An' a foo to record it i' rime.
 Well, aw may be a foo, an aw'm sorry I spoke,
 But there's mony a mon livin' that's moore to blame
 For th' damage he did wi' his pen an' his joke
 When he soign'd a bank-check wi' another chap's name.

SONG.

YE SOBER SONS OF WISDOM.

(Tune : " Jerusalem the golden.")

Ye sober sons of wisdom,
 Of temp'rance, hope, and joy.
 Wave high your blessed banners
 Of love without alloy.
 Great are your saving numbers ;
 Great is your Helper, God ;
 Great is your holy mission,
 Wherever man hath trod.

Bind up the yielding places,
 And gently raise the weak ;
 Without unkind reproaches
 To fallen brethren speak.
 God knows when each may need it,
 A fond and feeling word,
 To bring us back to duty,
 To temp'rance and the Lord.

Ten thousand are the pitfalls
 That Bacchus and his train
 Have dug and flower'd over
 For feet of thoughtless men.
 Ten thousand, then, my brethren,
 Let our exertions be
 To show these hidden dangers,
 And set the captive free !

Let's rally round our standard ;
 Let's pray to God anew ;
 Let's trust Him altogether
 With souls and bodies too.
 No drunkard ent'reth heaven !
 The Scriptures solemn tell ;
 Then, brethren, let's endeavour
 To save his soul from hell.

A PIC-NIC BENEATH AN OAK-TREE.

Oh, the joys of this life are not many, I ween,
 The brightest from sorrow not free ;
 But yet there is one sweet exception, I mean
 A pic-nic beneath an oak-tree.
 Ten youths and ten maidens (I one of the lot)
 Took a carriage full fit for an Earl
 And rode in the sun to the loveliest spot
 On the face of this beautiful world.

The men brought the liquors, the maidens the meats,
 And jolly fat hampers there were,
 So fat that they would not go under the seats,
 So we hung them outside in the air.
 The ride, though full twenty miles, pass'd like a dream
 For our loves nestled close to our sides,
 And we vowed by their eyes and their beauty supreme
 We would soon turn them all into brides.

'Neath that noble wood-monarch, whose wide-spreading arms
 A murmuring rivulet shade,
 We danc'd and we sung free from care and alarms,
 Or whispered to listening maid.
 But when the fat hampers were open'd full wide,
 And our napkins spread out on the grass,
 With one merry voice simultaneous we cried,—
 " This joy none on earth can surpass."

There were savoury tongues and a small foreign ham ;
 A venison pasty so rare ;
 A young pigeon pie and a shoulder of lamb,
 And of tenderest chickens a pair.
 Some knick-knacky cakelets and bright marmalade ;
 A dessert in profusion from Spain ;
 Some Bass's pale ale and some iced lemonade,
 And a bumper of fizzing champagne.

Soon each couple apart rambles into the wood
 To build up our castles in air,
 And o'er the to-morrow with pleasure well rood,
 And snap our first fingers at care.

'Tis well it is so, for the curtain of life
 Too soon is uplifted for all,
 For there's sorrow behind it, with struggle and strife,
 And a cup that is bitter as gall.

But each cup at the pic-nic with nectar ran o'er,
 And each mouthful was food for the gods,
 For we know not nor cared what dread fate had in store
 So the evens shook hands with the odds.
 Now slowly the couples return as the eve
 Wraps the earth in her mantle of grey,
 And, united again, a gay future we weave
 From the joys and the vows of the day.

Then together with satisfied love in our eyes
 We sing many an amorous tune,
 And not till the midnight, bewitching, arise
 To ride home by the light of the moon.
 Oh, rapturous moments, how rapid they flew !
 But they left their sweet spirit with me,
 For oft in my fancy I fondly review
 That pic-nic beneath an oak-tree.

TO A FRIEND ON NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1862.

I can but wish thee happiness
 With this, the New Year's sun,
 I can but wish it day by day
 Until the year be gone.
 List, lady, how the power I'd wield
 If such a boon were mine ;
 How, were my wishes but fulfill'd,
 My wishes would incline.
 I'd save thee through from misery,
 Thy feet should joyous tread
 The bosom of the enamell'd earth
 And light should lie thy head.
 I'd bind thy life with harmony ;
 The poor should bless thy name,
 The watchful genii of the good
 Should keep thy soul from blame.

A thousand, touching, thou shouldst heal,
 And lift the heavy woe
 From off a thousand hearts that mourn
 Their cruel lot below.
 Each season to thy wondering soul
 Its beauties should expand,
 And each in turn should kneeling place
 Its treasures in thy hand.
 Thine eye should sparkle, cheek should glow,
 Thy step rebound with health ;
 A joy should nestle in thy breast,
 To which the miser's wealth
 Were poor as are the barren stones
 That leap the mountain down
 When mighty winds are out and shake't
 From base to very crown.
 I can but wish thee happiness
 With this, the New Year's sun ;
 I can but wish it morn and eve
 Until the year be gone.

CHILDREN'S TEMPERANCE HYMN.

Children rise ! again united,
 Sing with brave young hearts and tongues
 Heaven's own angels are delighted
 Listening to our temperance songs.

Children, we again beseech thee,
 Hear us, Heavenly Father, now ;
 Let our simple praises reach Thee
 While our hearts before Thee bow.

Humbly ask we thy protection
 Travelling through this world of woe,
 Give us every clear direction
 That we may the Tempter know.

Mark for each his pathway plainly,
 Show the pits on either hand ;
 For without Thy guidance, vainly
 March we toward Immanuel's Land.

Make us right down earnest thinkers,
 Though our years and thoughts be few ;
 Make and keep us water-drinkers,
 Ever fresh as morning dew.

Ever sparkling, ever flowing
 From the hand of God unseen,
 Keeping hearts and cheeks aglowing,—
 Keeping nature evergreen.

Simple ones are we and lowly,
 Teach us, Father, to be wise :
 Thou, Almighty art and holy,
 Up to Thee our spirits rise.

SONG.

WHERE THE LIQUOR-PALACE GLARETH.

Where the liquor-palace glareth
 O'er the foul and gloomy court ;
 Where the thief his plunder shareth !
 Where the vilest men resort.
 Where the brandy-serpent creepeth
 From his dark and slimy bed
 Where the fell Destroyer heapeth
 Up his piles of maniac dead ;—
 There, there the drunkard goes,
 Goes with unsteady gait,
 Though for his dear soul he knows
 Satan lieth there in wait.

On the other hand—where glistens
 Home's bright hearth, with love o'ershed,
 And his wife impatient listens
 For his firm and manly tread ;
 Where his children and his neighbours
 All rejoice to see him come ;
 Where he rests from daily labours
 In his dear and peaceful home ;—
 There, there the wise man goes
 Goes sober, strong and straight,
 Smiling at his worldly woes :
 Such a man is truly great.

MORNING.

Now the sun, the golden axle
Of the silver wheel of day
Umbeth cloudless azure heavens
All his glories to display.

Let the kings of earth together
Move in one procession grand,
Swell'd with all the rank and beauty
And the wealth of every land ;

Royal pageants bright and golden
Deck'd with every gorgeous dye,
What be they but paltry tinsel
To the monarch of the sky ?

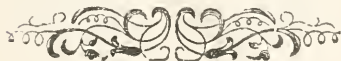
Nature for his coming panteth,
All the earth would catch his smile,
Mighty is his burning power,
Yet how gentle all the while !

Little hills around are laughing,
Mountains, gilded, proudly gleam.
Rivers are to amber turn'd
Bright, yet motionless they seem.

Save the golden light which dances
Ceaselessly atop the waves.
Like to myriad fairy spirits
Summon'd from their watery graves.

Not a bird that is not raising
Happy songs of praise to God,
For the warmth and joy of morning,
And the sunbeams on the sod,

All the earth is glad and grateful,
Let not man, then, stand apart,
But for morns like this be thankful
From the fountain of his heart.



TO MY GRANDFATHER.

WRITTEN AT BALLAARAT, 1864.

Rare, good old man ! full seventy winters shed
 Their snowy graces on thine honoured head,
 And bear white witness as they silent tell
 To the whole world that thou hast livèd well.
 None to reproach thee among all mankind
 With cruel word, or look, or action blind.
 Not e'en one evil human passion can
 Say aught of thee but that thou art a man.
 A man as perfect as a man may be
 Who loves his God and all humanity.
 Thy virtues many, and thy errors few ;
 Thy love all noble, and thy purpose true.
 With conscience white, and hands all free from stain
 To wanton wound or wrong thy fellowmen.
 Thy griefs are those thy God, not man, hath given
 To make thy soul still worthier of heaven.
 He takes thy offspring one by one away,
 Ere yet their lives had reachèd their summer's day.
 And leaves thee but their memory and their dust,
 O'er which thou mournest and for ever must.
 Like to some aged oak which stands alone,
 Decking some plain beneath the beauteous sun,
 Whose branches, one by one, droop down and fall
 Ere yet the noble trunk decay at all.
 But something mournful in its very air,
 Tells of the many green bereavements there—
 A silent sorrow inexpressibly profound
 Enwraps and seems again to drag it to the ground.
 Ah, ne'er again from out its aged side
 May branches shoot in beauty and in pride !
 But ere they fell beneath th' Almighty stroke,
 Those branches bore the seeds of many an oak
 To glad and shelter beings yet to come,
 And be the joy and stay of many a home.

Oft think I of the good you do to men
 With your melodious and your busy pen,
 How many thousands chant your heavenly strains

To lighten burthens and to soother pains—
 To bring them nigher to the Throne of Grace,
 And fill their raptur'd souls with sounds of peace,
 Nor land nor sea enlimits your fair fame ;
 Right round the globe has rung John Fawcett's name,
 Full oft the proud but unseen tear-drop dims
 Mine eye while listening to your well-known hymns
 Out here, on wild Australia's heathen shore—
 Ten thousand miles of waves between us roar !
 Farewell, dear grandfather, and mayst thou glide
 Still tranquil down life's deep and muddy tide,
 Till launched in glory on that stormless sea
 Of endless joy men call Eternity!

 ASK.

 WRITTEN FOR A BAZAAR GAZETTE.

FIRST DAY.

How many thousand ways are there in which
 A man can spend his money ! There's a chance,
 Thou clever statistician, to enrich
 The curious literature of the land at once.

We simply ask because we want to know ;
 We're not too old to learn if you are, friend,
 Nor yet too proud to ask, for asking's O,
 The very shortest route to wisdom's end !

I asked my mam for milk when rather young,
 But did not ask for what I got—the strap,
 For freaks of fancy and unruly tongue,
 And tearing of my sit-upons and cap.

We asked for bat and ball when grown a boy,
 And tops and kites and marbles and for fun,
 And our schoolmaster that he would not toy
 And tickle with his cane for what we'd done—

But 'twouldn't do ! dear Howarth, now dead and gone !
 As time and wisdom's tides roll in and on
 I see thee with two other eyes than those
 With which I trembling gazed upon thee then,
 When tears made quite an island of my nose,
 And ran in rivers o'er the map, my chin.

Oft have I fearful vengeance vowed to take
 On thy dear bones when grown a man ! and said
 But *sotto voce*, " Look here, make no mistake,
 Some day, old boy, I'll punch your learned head."

But now that all the past is bright and clear
 I thank thy memory for the care severe
 Thou tookest with thy wayward lads at school,
 Because (and I confess it with a tear)
 I might have, if I've not, grown up a fool.

I asked, indeed I asked it twice in life,
 Thinking to double, treble, and so on, my bliss,
 One lady at a time to be my wife,
 And both the ladies blush'd a bit, but answer'd " Yes."

And here I ask your patience, reader, mine,
 Forgive, I humbly pray, if not forget,
 Our motley verses dipt in running brine
 To keep them fresh for the *Bazaar Gazette*.

Now, there it goes ! the cat's out of the bag !
 We write, thank God, with joy unfeign'd and thorough,
 And if our poem does not completely fag,
 You ask again for *The Gazette* to-morrow.

SECOND DAY.

Good morning, lady dear, and sir, I see
 You've asked again for *The Gazette*. **That's well.**
 We hope you'll like your penny-worth and be
 Constrain'd to buy as oft as it's to sell.

We thank you. — But perhaps 'tis not to lift
 The lid of this, our second pot of verse,
 Simmering perfumely if you'll take a " sniff " —
 May tempt you to rip up your pregnant purse.

And let those little golden prisoners free
 To sport about from stall to stall at will,
 Mingling and jingling all right merrily
 Till caught and cramm'd within the groaning till.

Now let us ask you with a bow profound,—
 (For asking is the order of the day,
 At least the prices of the things around)—
 A few old-fashioned questions by the way.

Friend, have you bought aught ? If you havn't, go,
 You stingy old cunnudgeon, go and buy !
 Don't whisper in my ear you're poor—you know
 Your conscience tells you that's a wicked lie.

What did you do with that last " pot of money " ?
 The God of goodness gave you last back end,
 Which you from cotton—you from corn and honey,
 And you from gifts from your indulgent granny,
 Put by, and promised God you'd freely spend !

And you in legacies from miser old
 You never work'd for and you ne'er had got
 Had he but had his will with his dear gold,
 For he'd have taken it all to hell, red-hot !

And you in shares—you, oil and wine which fill'd you,
 And you from iron, wood and cheeses (Dutch)
 And you with that your shabby parent will'd you,
 (I know twixt you and me it wasn't much).

And you from coal, and croft, and ships, and size,
 And you from floated companies, newly started ;
 You (much) from liquor ; you from law and lies,
 And you from physicing the dear departed.

You ask the cost to pitch this sacred tent !
 A good round sum, yet barely more than half
 Which on you a'house t'other day was spent—
 The " Bowling Green," or " Bull," or " Golden Calf."

'Tis strange it should be so, but so it is,
 The Devil, than God Himself, seems richer far ;
 That Black One scoffs at grand affairs like this,
 But God, the Holy One, needs our bazaar.

Therefore, dear friends, assist Him, for you can,
 The rich to give, the poor to pray for all.
 Kick up a happy fuss, and sweet ran-tan.
 Think on to-morrow to ask for " Ask " again,
 And make big purchases at every stall.

THIRD DAY.

Asking your pardon, we must now return
 To our primeval verse, to ask if any
 Has found that thing out of so much concern—
 How many ways there are to spend our money.

What ! no one knows ! Then no one needs to ask,
 Like Mrs. Brown said, with her pail and mop,
 To keep the swollen sea back from her shop,
 " My goodness me, the thing's a useless task ! "

But this you may rely upon, my friend,
 As true as God made sun and moon and stars,
 You never will regret whate'er you spend
 (Except it's not your own) in God's bazaars.

Then ask again. There's here just what you want,
 Be you a lord, a lady, or a lascar,
 Wife, mother, widow, or old maiden aunt,
 Nor think because you ask you are an *asker*.

Ask big and little, 'spite of all rebuff,
 To show you every article they've got ;
 And should you fear you have not asked enough,
 Ask everybody what they'll take for t' lot.

Now, ere we " put the askings up " for good,
 We've one thing more to ask, and then farewell ;—
 Have you been washed in the Redeemer's blood,
 The blood which for us all on Calvary fell,
 To save the soul from sin, and death, and hell ?

If not, then go and ask of Christ the way
 To peace and glory and the Home of Light ;
 Go ask at once, while it is call'd *to-day*—
 A beam which but reveals eternal night !

Go, take this promise to thy restless soul,
 Writ in the only Everlasting Word —
 " Knock, and it shall be opened unto all,
 Ask, and it shall be given us." Praise the Lord !

AN ELEGY.

Great theme of themes, and thought of thoughts art thou,
 Oh Death ! whose cold and clammy hand
 Resteth alike upon the royal brow
 And on the meanest in the land,
 The great and good are not too good and great—
 The bad are not too ill—
 No youthful heart too young—no age too late
 For thee to kill !

There's not a corner of the wide, wide world
 Where treads a man, or prowls a beast,
 But thy black banner's there, alas ! unfur'd—
 Thy worms all busy at their feast !
 All this we know : and, yet, how great the shock,—
 How startling the surprise,—
 When our pet lamb is taken from the flock
 Before our eyes !

When worth and wisdom in one youthful form,
 With all the riches of the heart,
 Lie, stricken, like a wreck amid the storm,
 By cruel Fate's relentless dart ;—
 When such a youth is our beloved friend—
 Our brother and our son,
 Ah ! who shall tell the pangs our bosoms rend
 When he is gone !

'Tis then we look on death as something new—
 A cloud for us alone o'erspread—
 That, though we search the world's bereavements through,
 Ours is the only real dead !
 'Tis then our struggling souls are most inclined
 To kick against the rod,
 And fail to see (for sorrow maketh blind)
 The Hand of God !

But what a joy is yours, ye weepers, all,
 For youthful Frederick pass'd away ;
 For nought but good of him can ye recall,
 Whose body now is pulseless clay.

Ye know his now emancipated soul
 Has hastened to the skies ;
 Your bells of mourning, therefore, cease to toll,
 And dry your eyes !

Ye shall not hear his slightly stammering tongue,
 Which made him dearer from his birth ;
 He shall not join you in the holy song
 And solemn prayer again on earth,—
 But ye believe his song, and tongue, and prayer
 Are perfected above,
 To mingle with the million anthems where
 Is deathless love !

How many slumber in a doubtful tomb
 To rack some fond survivor's breast ;
 No face of mercy glimmers through its gloom,—
 No hope relieves its heart deprest,
 While waiting, tremblingly, the time of God
 Through death to make it plain,
 And lift (perchance with pardoning hand) its load
 Of doubt and pain !

But 'tis not thus the friends of Frederick fret :
 A joyous hope of heaven is theirs
 For him, whose sun of brief existence set
 Down in the ocean of their tears.
 Oh fell Consumption ! thou fastidious pest !
 A dainty thief, forsooth !
 Will nought content thee but the fairest, best,
 Of mortal youth ?

Thou mightst have spared a useful life like this,
 In all its flush of nineteen Springs,
 Casting around it seeds of truth and bliss
 And teachings of diviner things
 Thou hast ten thousand lovely victims more
 Than battle, sword and flame :
 Oh may the God of mercy we adore
 Blot out thy name !

Methinks I see the funeral cortege now,
 Approaching, slow, St. Peter's fane,
 While sobbing crowds in sterling sorrow bow
 Around the long, dark carriage train.

Fond fellow-teachers, scholars, all are there,
 Their last of love to show,
 And, as each offers up his parting prayer,
 Fred's laid below !

April, 1872.

LAND AHEAD !

“ Land ahead ! ” The cry is ringing
 From the ships of life, my friend,
 Every hour Old Time is bringing
 Vessels to their journey's end.
 Yours and mine, however strong,
 May be nearer to the throng
 Who have let their anchors go,
 Nearer, nearer than we know.

“ Land ahead ! ” Some hear despairing
 For the looming headlands frown ;
 Not a leaf or blossom bearing,
 All is darkness up and down.
 Lives of theirs, poor souls ! have been
 One unbroken round of sin.
 Now, now comes the awful check,
 And each vessel lies a wreck !

“ Land ahead ! ” With souls delighted
 Others catch the gladsome noise,
 For the shore the watch hath sighted
 Is their promised land of joys.
 Storms and tempests have been theirs,
 And their cargoes pains and cares :
 But all danger now is o'er,
 Christ, their Captain's, on the shore !

On the shore ! for ever vernal,
 Bright with never-fading flowers,
 Countless joys and each eternal,
 And these joys may all be ours,
 Take but Christ our Friend to be,
 Watchful Pilot o'er the sea,
 Warring winds and waves may come,
 He will land us safe at home !

MY NATIVE TOWN.

It hath a charm for me beyond the charms of other towns,
 This town of ours, my native one, where sooty smoke abounds.
 Its spiral wreaths of dusty steam, its mottled clouds on high,
 Bewitch me more, yea ten times told, than Italy's broad blue sky ;
 For 'neath them long ago I drew my first faint breath of life
 From her—but ah ! to heaven she's gone !—my father's faithful wife.
 My mother ! was't not here you taught my infant lips the prayer
 Which even now your spirit seems to whisper from the air ?
 'Twas here you taught my tender foot its first step on the ground,
 And ran to keep me gently up when all was wheeling round.
 'Twas here for years I sweetly bask'd beneath your loving eye,
 And here you drew your last long breath, of brief mortality !
 'Twas here my first free thought flew up to heaven on wings of down.—
 Then how can I help loving it, my own, my native town !

Its hum and bustle, life, and strife ; its noise and rude commotion,
 I welcome as a sea-born soul the music-waves of ocean.
 'Twas here they first enchanted me, those light and thoughtless joys,
 Those darling, wild, and wayward acts, and longings, sweet, of boys.
 'Twas here I grew in youth and strength, and here entwined my brow
 With Friendship's wreath of leaves and flowers, which fresh and green is now.
 'Tis here I've spent my happiest hours, and mus'd with joy upon
 Ten thousand things most beautiful that glitter in the sun.
 My native fields and walks around are dearer to my breast
 Than citron-groves and coral strands, and all the golden rest.
 Yea, e'en the very birds that sing where far away I roam,
 Seem but choice pupils to my ear, of the master birds at home.
 I know each street and church and square, each chimney black and brown,
 Almost each stone that sleeps within my own, my native town !

The guardian hills that round it rise, afford a keener pleasure,
 To me, than those grand Alpine-heights that cleave the crystal azure.
 And though the rain-cloud woos it, as a bee the sweetest flower,
 Its wetted roofs I dearer prize than London in its power.
 Just as a tender mother looks with tears upon her child,
 Her dearest one, lest on in life by sin it be beguil'd—
 So, oft methinks, doth heaven's eye on Bolton look adown
 In moisture, lest in years to come its Bird of Peace be flown.
 Sweet Providence ! for ever hold our town within Thy hand :
 May wrong and discord from it flee before Thy mighty wand !
 And grant it ever may unfold to the eyes of all mankind,
 A page of worth and wealth and work, with a margin rich of mind !
 And when my bosom beats no more, oh, lov'd ones, lay me down
 In peace beneath the burial-sod of my own, my native town !

SOME BRIGHT IDEAS (BUT NOT HIS OWN)

PARAPHRASED BY JOHN FAWCETT SKELTON.

A raven two hundred years will live,
If you, my friend, choose to deny it,
I've only this advice to give—
Go, purchase one yourself and try it.

Time's noiseless engine, bright and strong,
Draws the world's train of events along.

A really good receipt is rare.
Here's one well worth a good round sum :
To make all kinds of fruit trees bear,
Pluck all the leaves off as they come.

Speak of the devil and you will hear
Some chains of his a-rattling near.

Birds in their little nests agree,
And this the reason is, no doubt,
That they, as well as you and me,
Know 'twould be dangerous to fall out.

Musicians oft put on, we say,
More airs by far than they can play.

The mouth that ne'er utter'd a lie,
Belong'd to the man, we suppose,
Who spoke (this between you and I)
Through that wonderful organ, his nose.

Love is a key with which a woman can
Unlock the secret heart of any man.

To preserve a whale. Get your glass bottle,
And put it very carefully in :
Then slowly fill up to the throttle
With spirits of wine, or " Old Tom " gin :
Then cork and seal—and that is what'll
Keep it for ever ! flesh, frame and fin.

Few persons are there, as a rule,
Who spurn the praises of a fool.

Like ocean-waves, however great
Our threatening troubles, when anear,
if we be cool, and calmly wait,
Break at our feet and disappear

The world with all its boastful ken,
Knows nothing of its greatest men.

They greatly err who think to turn
Men's thoughts up to a world of bliss,
By teaching them themselves to spurn,
And think all kind of ill of this.

Who sees not at a glance, or so,
Will scarce by explanation know.

If the monkey were only the lion too,
Good gracious ! what would he *not* do ?

When David swung the simple sling,
 Goliath was surprised, and more,
 At the little stone, for such a thing
 Ne'er enter'd his dull head before.

A miracle the other day
 Took place and was by many prov'd—
 A prisoner, strong, was dragg'd away
 From the Quarter Sessions dock—unmov'd.

A harder thing to get than fame,—
 A Jew to give you his Christian name.

You ask me how to cook a goose !
 Suspend yourself, or sit you down,
 Without a murmur or excuse,
 And baste you in your flowing juice,
 Before a fire, till done quite brown.

You've persecution ! Never mind ;
 Kites rise against, not with the wind.*

Of all earth's animals, the two
 That waste most time in toilet-trimmin',
 Are (if the French say what is true,
 And who can doubt it ?) cats and women.

The lobster of the ocean, some one saith,
 Is a posthumous work—red after death.

Each time a wife her husband scolds,
 She digs a wrinkle in her face,
 Which every smile again unfolds
 And smooths away the angry trace.

When a sudden calamity comes you will find
 That true courage consists of a presence of mind.

Life's like a ploughman's supper leg-of-mutton,
 Enjoy'd a moment ere he go to bed ;
 Or like a helpless bachelor's shirt button,
 Always a-hanging by a single thread.

Your end and the end of a candle's the same,
 To give light, never heeding the size of the flame.

This proverb there is no denying,
 Although it looks so "like a whale,"—
 "There's more than one good way of tying
 A knot upon the devil's tail."

The twelfth commandment's very trite and true,—
 "Mind your own business." (That's for me and you.)

I wish some one who knows would state
 If this be true or something less,
 That our Mother Eve the apple ate
 In order to indulge in dress.

A dog a-playing with its tail, my friend,
 Alas! is trifling with its latter end.

One day a loving, wedded pair
 Rode out to breathe the country air.
 Loud brayed an ass while passing near.
 The lady turn'd her in her carriage,
 "Is't one of your relations, dear?"
 "It is, my love," said he, "by marriage."

If the weight of a horse you would put to the proof,
 Just put your big toe fairly under its hoof.

'Tis easy to say
 A good word by the way ;
 But not to speak ill
 Is easier still.

The world's like a watch-dog, so what he or she says,
 It fawns on you truly, or tears you to pieces.

Show me the man pass'd the decanter
 When there was but one glass within,
 And I will point you out instanter
 A hero, spite of kith and kin.

If the best man's faults were on his forehead writ,
 He'd always get a hat his nose to fit.

Truth seeks the reasons of a thing ;
 But malice ne'er so wisely pauses ;
 Quite satisfied to make a spring
 And fix her fangs into the causes.

Strip majesty of its extremes (m.y.)
And it becomes a jest unto the eye.

When tracking a desert, no matter how broad,
Never give yourself up to despair,
For you cannot well starve on the dangerous road,
Because of the sand-which-is there.

“Suspended hostilities” thus we define :—
Two tail-tied old tom-cats thrown over a line.

The extremes of poverty and wealth,
In any land, or time, or season,
Were always known to work by stealth,
And never found to list to reason.

He who in youth makes dollars fly,
Will beg for farthings ere he die.

Pray once if you're going to war ;
Pray twice if you're going to sea ;
But if you going to be married are,
Let your prayers be one, two, three.

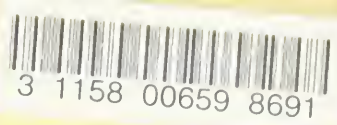


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