

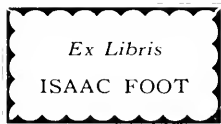
# PICTURES OF TRAVEL

& OTHER POEMS

MACKENZIE BELL

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PICTURES OF TRAVEL

AND OTHER POEMS









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70a, Grosvenor Street, London, W.*

*Mackenzie Bell*

# PICTURES OF TRAVEL

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

MACKENZIE BELL

AUTHOR OF

"SPRING'S IMMORTALITY AND OTHER POEMS"

"CHARLES WHITEHEAD: A BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL MONOGRAPH"

"CHRISTINA ROSSETTI: A BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL STUDY"

ETC.

WITH SIX ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON

HURST AND BLACKETT, LIMITED

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1898

1898  
K 3

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TO  
WILLIAM MACDONALD SINCLAIR  
ARCHDEACON OF LONDON  
IN MEMORY OF MANY HAPPY HOURS  
SPENT AT THE CHAPTER HOUSE  
ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL



## PREFATORY NOTE

I AM obliged to the editors of *The Pall Mall Magazine*, *The Churchman*, *Black and White*, *The Lady's Realm*, *The Literary World*, and other periodicals, for permission to include in this volume poems which originally appeared in their pages, and to Messrs. Hutchinson & Co. for their courtesy in allowing me to include the two sonnets, "To a Lady Playing the Harp in her Chamber," which were first published in the third series of *The Savage Club Papers*.

In Stanza V. of "The Battle's Pause," one of the poems in this volume, an attempt is made to paint a picture of what in other times was very familiar in the estuary of the Mersey—the sailing out of many merchantmen which had long been wind-bound. This must indeed have been a singularly beautiful sight as viewed from such a coign of vantage, for example, as Seacombe beach opposite to Liverpool. What marine spectacle in

## PREFATORY NOTE

these days of steam can equal in picturesqueness that of the sailing-ships of the early part of the century, imposing in their proportions, and moving majestically through the water under favouring conditions? With reference to other lines in the same stanza, it may be mentioned that St. Nicholas, the ancient parish church of Liverpool, is near the river and a noticeable object from it, and that in the early part of 1814 there was an extraordinarily severe frost in the neighbourhood of Liverpool with ice-floes on the Mersey.

“A Plea for Faith” was written, and its title chosen, before I read, both in manuscript and in proof, my friend Dr. George S. Keith’s treatise *A Plea for a Simpler Faith. A Plea for a Simpler Faith* was not suggested by my poem.

MACKENZIE BELL.

LONDON, September 1898.



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<sup>1</sup> For the first series of "Pictures of Travel," see the author's previous volume, "Spring's Immortality and Other Poems" (third edition 1896).

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PICTURES OF TRAVEL  
SECOND SERIES



## After Sunset off Pauillac

(GIRONDE)

THE day is gone, but yonder fading streaks  
Of light still fleck the bosom of the sky.  
Swart Night comes swiftly. Hark, that sound  
bespeaks  
My nearness to the ocean, 'tis the cry  
Of some belated sea-bird, and I hear  
The ripples at my feet. A low sweet song  
Monotonous, yet musical and clear,  
Is breeze-borne from a vessel's deck along.

*AFTER SUNSET OFF PAUILLAC*

The crew raise anchor quickly, and away

She glides into the gloom, while growing low  
And ever lower sounds the roundelay.

What now may be her fortune none can know.  
Like her, o'er Life's strange, trackless sea we sail,  
Nor know if calm or tempest will prevail.



## Evening in the Forest of Meudon

(SEINE ET OISE)

RETURNING sometimes from the fields of sleep,  
I seem to see that twilight once again,  
That twilight as mysterious, rich, and deep,  
As yonder blackbird's strain.

I see the sombre loveliness around ;  
I feel the sense of awe, the enthralling peace,  
Of Nature's woodland silence, for no sound  
Makes here that silence cease.

*EVENING IN THE FOREST OF MEUDON*

Anon I see the waters of the lake

Gleam in the last hues of the sunset glow,  
While here and there the lazy cattle slake  
Their thirst, and homeward go.

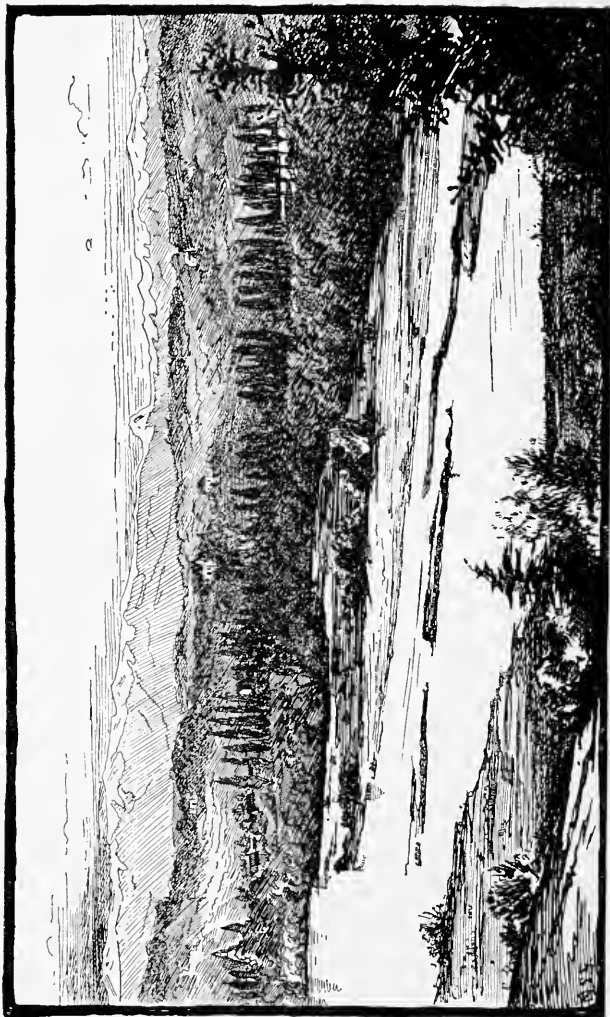
But hear, O hear that sudden burst of song,  
At last it is the full-voiced nightingales !  
While mellow cuckoos sing, and so prolong  
Music as daylight fails.

\* \* \* \*

Long hours have passed, and man and beast and  
bird

Rest ; yet my heart is filled with pure delight ;  
And lo, a single nightingale is heard  
Amid the moonless night.





"... where a valley closes  
'Mid mountain heights up-piled"

## Wild Roses and Snow

(BASSES PYRÉNÉES)

How sweet the sight of roses  
In English lanes of June,  
When every flower uncloses  
To meet the kiss of noon.

How strange the sight of roses—  
Roses both sweet and wild—  
Seen where a valley closes  
'Mid mountain heights up-piled.

*WILD ROSES AND SNOW*

Upon whose sides remaining  
Is strewn the purest snow,  
By its chill power restraining  
The tide of Spring's soft glow.

Yet God who gave the pureness  
To yon fair mountain snow,  
Gives also the secureness  
Whereby these roses blow.

At Sea—Off the Mouth of the  
Garonne—Sunset

A TWILIT halo gilds the troubled sky,  
And gilds the heaving waters far and nigh ;  
About me here is some strange loveliness  
Which, as the shadows deepen, grows not less.

Hark ! Now, not once or twice, but o'er and o'er,  
In solemn grandeur comes the deep-voiced roar  
Of strong Atlantic surges ; where I stand  
I look, but see no welcome speck of land.

*OFF THE MOUTH OF THE GARONNE*

How beautiful is yonder distant sail  
Illumined yet ; but soon my eyes must fail  
To trace its further course, for it will be  
Lost in the glory of the sunset sea.

And as I gaze, and gaze, dim thoughts arise—  
Thoughts of Man's destiny ; these callous skies  
Seem types of earthly cruelty, and now  
The sea, like man, is sad—I know not how.

The air is still ; no wingéd wanderer cleaves .  
The silence in his flight, as Night receives  
Ere long her stately queen the crescent moon,  
Whose glimmering beams show all the billows  
soon.



## Near St. Sauveur

(HAUTES PYRÉNÉES)

Lo, what a glorious prospect is revealed—  
Mountains and snow, and pine-trees beauty-clad !  
Upon the sloping sides of monarch heights  
Reposes gracefully a misty veil  
In wreaths almost transparent ; but ev'n now  
Its mass divides, and clear against the sky  
Rises each giant summit, calm and grand,  
Proud that its lone, its vast, its God-wrought  
strength

*NEAR ST. SAUVEUR*

Defies so long decay. I needs must feel  
Nature is great, and Man is impotent,  
Yet still how much his art hath made increase  
To this rare store of beauty. Each small patch  
Perceived upon the mountain side, reclaimed  
From barren wilderness, what power it hath  
To cheer the eye. To me it often seems  
As though no prospect reached perfection till  
It showed some kindly trace of human toil.





"... waters of the waveless lake "

## On the Lake of Geneva

A SILVERN haze is over all. At hand  
Are gently swaying poplars, rippling larches,  
And firmly rooted firs, while further off  
Gleam azure waters of the waveless lake.  
Beyond again are mountains ; not, as oft,  
Gaunt snow-capped monarch peaks, but bright  
with verdure.

The rocks throw shadows quaint upon the grass ;  
White *chalets* peep among the clustering vines ;  
Gay boats glide smoothly on with placid sails  
Widely outspread.



THE BATTLE'S PAUSE





## The Battle's Pause

(AN IMAGINARY EPISODE AT WATERLOO)

### I

At daybreak on a lonely sea  
Strange is the silence ; heavily  
The louring clouds loom dim and dun,  
Till comes at length the far-off sun ;  
Strange is the silence of the day  
Where waves are hushed in some fair bay ;  
Strange is the silence of the night  
Where throned in space the stars give light ;

*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

Strange is the silence that oft-times  
Broods o'er the city's shame and crimes ;  
Strange is the silence of the room  
Where lingering sickness hangs in gloom ;  
Strange is the silence after death  
Where anguished sound departs with breath ;  
But stranger is the silence when  
The moans are stilled of wounded men,  
Where stilled an instant are the cries  
That from wild scenes of strife arise  
As noise of rapid volleys cease,—  
As God grants here and there release,—  
As suddenly the senses yield  
To silence on the battle-field.

*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

II

In these fleet moments interposed  
Ere yet once more the foemen closed,  
In inner vision every man  
Lived o'er again his whole life's span.  
Only of plunder many thought,  
But here and there was one who caught  
Swift glimpses, borne on spirit-wings,  
Of God, of Heaven, of holy things—  
Who felt his courage no less high  
Because he was prepared to die.

*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

III

One dreams of his betrothed in France,  
A dark-eyed girl with laughing glance,  
And wonders if he soon shall meet  
Her tender looks, her smile so sweet.  
“ Ah, ma Lucille,” with tears he cries,  
“ Fain would I see the glad surprise  
Break the calm gaze of your dear eyes,  
As with high hope I come once more,  
Unwounded from the field of war.  
Fain would I see your rippling curls,  
More precious than those lustrous pearls  
My gift to you—that sometimes deck  
The stately beauty of your neck—

*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

That on your bosom rise and fall,  
White rivals of its whiteness, all  
Eclipsed in utter loveliness.

Fain would I see again that dress ;  
Its dainty hue of mellow brown  
Sets off the clustering curls that crown  
Your shapely head. Fain would I see  
The happy village revelry  
That joyous day which makes you mine—  
When underneath the ancient vine  
Around Saint Etienne's porch we pass  
Just coming from the wedding Mass,  
And leaving near to the altar stair  
The *curé* with his silvery hair,

*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

Low kneeling now in holy prayer,  
To crave a blessing on us there,  
His guileless, gladsome, saintly soul  
As spotless as his pure white stole."

IV

Another soldier sees a room  
O'ershadowed by a partial gloom,  
As heavy curtains shade the light  
From a wan sufferer's weakened sight,  
And on a couch is seen a boy,  
Whose wasted face, all flushed with joy,  
Looks on a portrait, newly there,  
Of a tall youth with raven hair,  
Clad in a garb of martial hue.  
And then in accents heartfelt, true,

*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

He speaks the words : "Would that I too  
With my dear brother still could be  
Where Valour leads to Victory."

V

A Scotsman here among "The Greys"  
Chafes inly now at war's delays,—  
Would but the bugle sound the charge !  
Would that he were once more at large  
Among the flying cuirassiers !  
He knows no pity, knows no fears,—  
For him each instant passes slow  
Passed not in fight against the foe,—  
'Tis hard to stand, nor give one blow—

## THE BATTLE'S PAUSE

It suits his fiery humour ill  
To be a living target still  
Nor use his good sword at his will.

Near him "The Inniskillings" share  
A post of danger,—everywhere  
True soldiers they,—who greatly dare.

## VI

Before an English soldier lie  
Down-trodden fields of wheat and rye,  
But his tired vision does not meet  
These blood-stained fields of rye and wheat.  
He sees not how his comrades here  
Reveal no sign of craven fear ;



*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

While they with bandaged hand or face,  
Still struggle on, nor quit their place.  
He sees not, as in many rifts  
The smoke of battle, rising, lifts,  
How everywhere all undismayed  
Still firm they stand as on parade,  
Although their thinning ranks disclose  
How hard with them the conflict goes.  
He sees the Mersey ; fresh and cool  
The east wind blows from Liverpool  
To Seacombe beach, where, loitering,  
He stood one early morn of spring  
A month or two before. The day  
At first had seemed but chill and grey  
Till brilliant sunshine suddenly  
Had flooded all the estuary.

*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

For weeks the west wind had prevailed—  
No ship, if outward bound, had sailed ;  
But now the fickle wind had veered,  
And now the sailors' hearts were cheered,  
While a whole fleet—a gallant show  
Of eager ships—was free to go.  
Full many a vessel, towards the bar  
Across the waters near and far,  
Moves buoyantly. With what delight  
He looks upon the goodly sight  
Of canvas spread to catch the breeze  
That dances o'er the rippling seas !  
How shapely are the skiffs which pass  
Between him and St. Nicholas !  
How graceful is the distant town,  
Which gaily o'er the waves looks down !

*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

Changed is the scene since 'mid the snow  
He saw it scarce a year ago.  
Then many a white and large ice-floe  
Reared its strange shape on every side,  
While tossing idly on the tide.

VII

Another soldier sees his home  
Where whirls the wild Biscayan foam ;  
Where surges beat with sullen roar  
Upon a dreary pine-clad shore.  
There his good mother yet must wait  
For many a month disconsolate,  
Waiting, still waiting for her child,  
With heavy heart unreconciled

THE BATTLE'S PAUSE

To his long absence—her distress  
At times most pitiful to guess.  
He sees her in her peasant's dress  
At household duties, at her door  
At eve and morning, evermore  
Thinking with heavy heart of him ;  
With unshed tears her eyes grow dim,  
Looking, aye looking constantly,  
Across the same sad, dreary sea.  
Again he hears the gleeful noise  
And chatter of the village boys,  
He even hears the sound once more  
Of *sabots* on a cottage floor.  
Again it seems that mournful day  
When he, alas, was called away ;  
Again he sees the fishing-boat

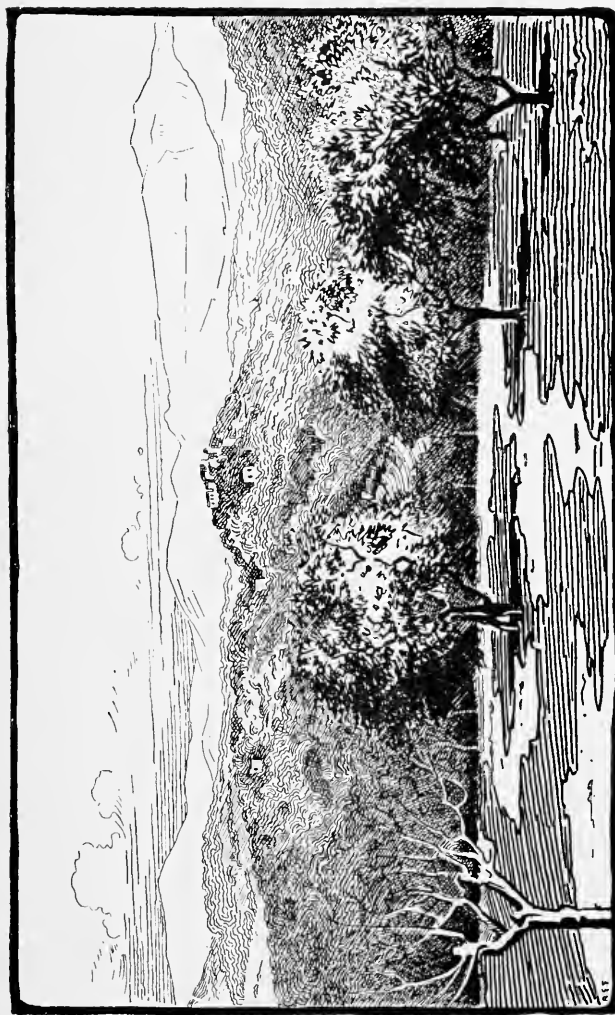
*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

That comes to bear him to the town ;  
Again his home grows more remote  
As o'er the sea the sun goes down.  
Still he beholds his mother's face,  
And still he feels her warm embrace,  
He knows her anguished doubts, her fears,  
And would-be smiles, he feels her tears.  
He hears the heaving waters nigh—  
He sees above, an angry sky,  
Dark, yet with streaks of mingled grey,  
Fading while swiftly dies the day.  
He passes to the gathering gloom  
As though to some impending doom ;  
Drear seems the earth, the sky, the main—  
He feels that Nature knows his pain.

*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

VIII

A youthful soldier looked around  
Upon the ghastly battle ground.  
He was a conscript, ne'er before  
Had he beheld the face of War,  
He saw not all its deeps of pain,  
For former scenes arose again.  
Once more he was a child at play,  
In that steep village street which lay,  
Crag-perched, 'mid tree-boles gnarled and grey  
With age. It was the close of day.  
Was that the church he knew of old,  
That the rude cross where he was told  
The story of the ancient time  
So full of mystery, lust, and crime ?



"... that steep village street which lay,  
Crag-perched, 'mid tree-boles gnarled and grey  
With age"





THE BATTLE'S PAUSE

Ah, how he loved yon olive wood,  
To him how sweet its solitude,  
How oft on many a summer night  
He watched from there the fading light,  
Till grew more bright and yet more bright  
The distant lamps of great Marseilles,  
And when at length the daylight fails,  
Fair seem the stars, fair seems the sea,  
Ah, how at once his memory  
Brings back for him these moonlit hours  
'Mid fragrance of the orange flowers.  
Fresh is the air, and soft and still,  
Save when the *mistral* brings its chill.  
Once more he feels the morning breeze  
Which gently curls the azure seas  
Around his father's fishing-boat,

*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

That like a live thing seems to float.  
Lovely it looks with dark brown sail,  
Outspread to catch each gentle gale.  
And when the noontide comes at length  
The crew refresh their waning strength  
By frugal meal, or merry jest,  
By games, or cheerful talk, or rest.  
One man had fought where waned the star  
Of France in fight off Trafalgar ;  
Another speaks of Austerlitz,  
And shows the combat as he sits.  
With eager words, with eyes aflame,  
He tells the tale, " The Emperor came  
To our right flank when sore distressed :  
We needed succour, needed rest,  
Yet better was his presence then

*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

Than of a thousand untired men.”  
So, early stirred the martial fire  
In the boy's breast—the fond desire  
To win the soldier's honoured name,  
To win the soldier's meed of fame.

To him an order comes ere long  
To join the army ; 'mid a throng  
Of youths he gains a barrack square,  
Strange seems the ceaseless bustle there.  
Here well-groomed horses drink their fill ;  
Here is an active squad at drill ;  
Here words of gaiety he hears ;  
And here a mother stands in tears ;  
Here stands a veteran hale, erect,  
In garb that points to no neglect,

*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

Though he has marched full many a mile,  
In blazing sunshine all the while,  
A faultless soldier he has been,  
No chance of war could change his mien;  
Here stands a youth with shambling gait,  
In soldier's dress, yet unelate,  
With stupid look, and vacant face,  
As though his garb were some disgrace ;  
Here agile gunners clean a gun ;  
And here, his day's work nearly done,  
A driver of the army train  
Brings in his store of food and grain.  
The conscript thinks with what glad heart  
In scenes like these he took a part.  
With joy his boy's heart overflows,  
He longs to smite his country's foes,

*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

Of what he leaves he scarce takes heed,  
Civilian clothes he doffs with speed,  
To him his uniform brings life,  
He thinks of glory in the strife.  
He thinks, as now the sun goes down,  
Of lasting honour and renown ;  
To him War is not sad, but strange—  
It gives him motion, stir, and change.

\* \* \* \*

Through all the long, the happy marches  
Across Provence, now bright with spring,  
He sees the gay triumphal arches,  
He hears once more the joy-bells ring.  
And then one day, through beat of drums,  
He hears the cry, "The Emperor comes,"

*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

“ The Emperor comes ”— on every side  
They pass the word with looks of pride.  
Each soldier feels his courage rise,  
Fresh pleasure sparkles in his eyes,  
And while he stands the more upright,  
Sees his accoutrements are bright,  
And hopes his bayonet, sword, or lance  
Will seem to that all-piercing glance  
As sword or bayonet ought to look.  
For who could bear the sharp rebuke  
Or face his comrades' words or jeers,  
Or worse, his comrades' covert sneers,  
At one the Emperor deigned to chide ?

An hour has gone ; the corps espied  
The staff approaching, near a wood.

*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

It stood to arms. Kind Nature's mood  
Was peaceful : there the stock-dove coo'd ;  
The dreamer sees one purple flower,  
Which decked the spot that sunny hour.  
“ The Emperor is an altered man  
Since Leipsic,” says a veteran.  
And yet the great Napoleon seems  
The ideal of a soldier's dreams,  
As now he passes on his course,  
Erect upon his snow-white horse  
Amid his marshals. Soult and Ney,  
Heroes of many a well-fought day,  
Ride near him now, in gayest trim.  
They jest, and sometimes speak with him—  
Yet never seem to lose the sense  
Of that strange man's strange influence—

## THE BATTLE'S PAUSE

Of that magnetic, cruel power  
By which Napoleon, hour by hour,  
Until his fiery race was run,  
Remorselessly swayed every one.  
Firm are his lips, stern are his eyes—  
Hard eyes, where naught of gladness lies ;  
Yet signs there are of wasting life,  
Wasting through care and lust of strife,  
That drooping lip, that haggard cheek,  
Of pain, of ebbing force, they speak.  
But none, save veterans here and there,  
Perceive his chill, his altered air ;  
The troops, o'erjoyed to see his face,  
See in his glance a sign of grace :  
His presence cures their every ill,  
And "Vive l'Empereur !" their shout is still.



*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

IX

A tranquil, sunlit village green  
Sees one young Englishman : between  
A row of elms he catches sight  
Of one dear cottage ; to the right  
Lies the grey rectory, and beyond  
Old Farmer Granger's ricks and pond,  
Just where the high road quickly dips.  
Here as a child he sailed his ships,  
While loafers from the alehouse near  
Gladdened his heart by words of cheer,  
And showed him how to set his sail,  
To woo the soft, the favouring gale.

\* \* \* \*

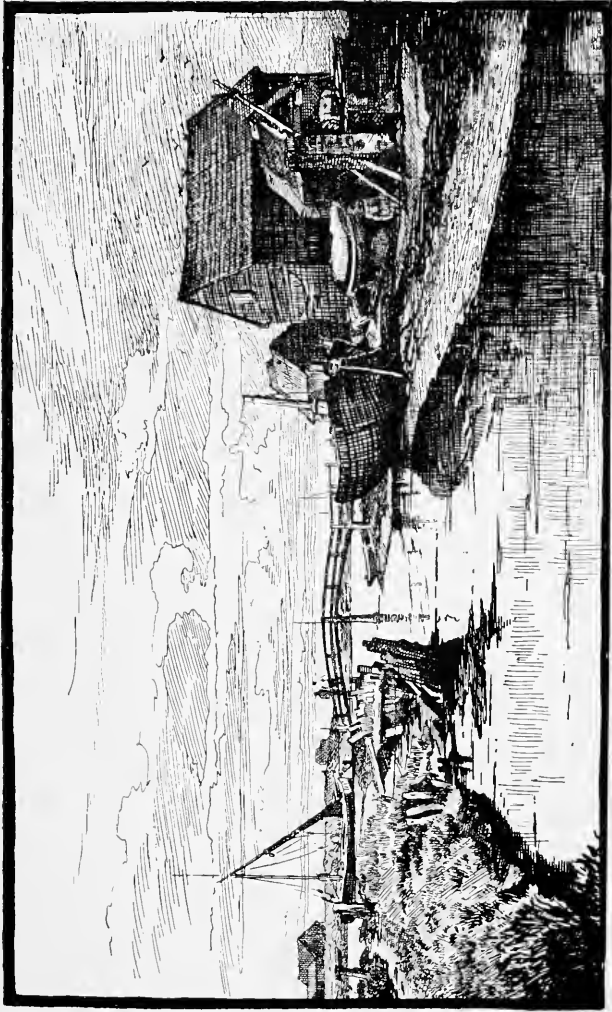
He sees again the long sea beach  
A mile or two from home ; the reach

*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

The farm-folk call the Little Broad  
Gleams in the sun, while boys applaud  
His feats of strength ; or on the sea  
Perchance he rows right merrily,  
While myriad skylarks, singing, soar  
Above the sand cliffs on the shore ;  
Or looking seaward from the land  
He views the sunset vague and grand.

X

A Frenchman thinks with many a fear  
Of his one sister—very dear  
Is she to him, a girl most fair.  
He sees e'en now her dark-brown hair,



“ . . . the reach  
The farm-folk call the Little Broad ”



*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

And inly speaks, " Herself a flower  
She hawks sweet blossoms hour by hour  
Through many a parched Parisian street,  
Gladly, though oft with toil-worn feet.  
'Tis she who wins the daily bread  
And shelter for my father's head,  
Since age and sickness disallow  
Him strength to earn his living now ;  
While *I*, who should have been their stay,  
Without appeal am forced away,  
Simply because some men—whose aims  
I do not know and scarce their names—  
Have fixedly resolved on War.  
And I—one of their human store—  
Am made to face death at their will  
Till kings and emperors have their fill."

*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

How strange are we ! he who so dreamed  
And all unpatriotic seemed,  
When fierce again began the strife,  
Fought with the best—cared not for life.

The vision changes, and he sees  
The comely, the beloved trees  
That droop in summer's sultry blaze,  
Along the white Parisian ways.  
In one old street he sees a spot  
Shaded by lime-trees : there is not  
A cooler nook, and side by side  
An old man and a maid abide  
In sweet affectionate converse there,  
To rest, to breathe its fresher air.

*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

'Tis those he loves, and for a space  
He treads himself that well-known place,  
So keen his inner sight. And soon  
His sister starts through afternoon  
Long hours, and near the Tuileries  
She stays, then moves along the quays.  
She is so fair, so pure, so sweet,  
She seems to gladden all the street.  
And many glance at her, and smile ;  
They note her brave looks all the while,  
They know her toil of every day,  
Toil such as wears her youth away.  
And one, an honest artisan,  
A homely, upright, thrifty man,  
Poring o'er some long-cherished plan,  
Passing, thinks, " Would she were my wife,

*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

Happy were I though hard my life."  
And with a Frenchman's frugal care  
He saves, and saving, dreams of her.  
Although from childhood's earliest days  
She knew the drear Parisian ways  
(Gay to the rich, drear to the poor),  
From every harm she walks secure,  
From virtue none her steps allure.  
In thought, in actions, she is good,  
Kindness her constant habitude.  
She raises soft and pleading eyes  
With something of a chaste surprise  
At many a word, at many a sight,  
That comes to her by day, by night.  
All innocence without, within,  
She sees, yet sees not, all their sin.



*THE BATTLE'S PAUSE*

XI

Thus runs each hapless soldier's dream  
In that short pause—that restful gleam  
Of blesséd peace.

But, hark, there comes  
The gathering roll of distant drums  
Beating the charge, and then the sound  
Of musketry. Men gaze around  
Half in surprise—then hear again  
The clash of arms, the cry of pain,  
The wounded horse's neigh ; and so  
Fateful with pain the gaunt hours go.



TO A WORKER AMONG THE POOR



## To a Worker among the Poor

COURAGE like yours has still a mighty power  
To purify the mind from hour to hour,  
To permeate with thrilling force the soul,  
To give new confidence, new self-control,  
To make each faulty faculty so clear  
That, though you plainly see the danger near,  
You scorn to dread it—scorn to turn aside,  
Duty your first, your chief, your only guide.

The soldier 'mid the scenes of deadly strife  
Thinks of his country—thinks not of his life ;

*TO A WORKER AMONG THE POOR*

And shall we then in these degenerate days  
Speak of him lightly, cease to give him praise ?  
Yet Glory has for him her ancient charm,  
Excitement nerves for him his stalwart arm ;  
When bullets whistle in the dread advance,  
For him there comes the touch of old Romance.  
War has its use : sometimes it keeps alive  
Those qualities that make a nation thrive ;  
In certain minds it checks the love of self ;  
It teaches self-control, and scorn of self ;  
Once and again it seems to make for good,  
By teaching patriotism and fortitude—  
That love of country flippant scribes deride  
As but a foible—but a foolish pride—  
That love of country which a nation's fame  
Exalts, whose absence brings a nation's shame.

*TO A WORKER AMONG THE POOR*

Yet War, alas ! not seldom seems to be  
Only a form of licensed butchery—  
One of the ills that from our passions spring—  
The warrior's courage but a puny thing.

Yes ; yours is truer courage, for it comes  
Not from the fife's shrill note, nor roll of drums,  
Not from the maddening energy of pain  
Where Horror, heedless, stalks among the slain,  
But from that hidden strength which has its birth  
In some sublimer sphere beyond this earth.  
That bravery is not yours which men acclaim ;  
That bravery is not yours which gives men fame ;  
Yours is the courage which but few suspect ;  
Yours is the courage which can bear neglect ;

*TO A WORKER AMONG THE POOR*

Yours is the courage which can suffer long,  
The courage of the man whose soul is strong,  
Who labours on, still doing silent good,  
Nor stays his hand for Man's ingratitude.

Although you seem to till a thankless soil,  
Your prayers are never vain, nor vain your toil ;  
Some fruit you yet may have to cheer your heart,  
In some new epoch you may bear a part ;  
But ev'n if now, through your short span of years  
Your work be weary, and no fruit appears,—  
Though, in humility, you look within,  
Deeming your failure the result of sin,—  
It is not so ; for still our Father knows  
What each requires—on each He still bestows



*TO A WORKER AMONG THE POOR*

The discipline most needed ; still He weighs  
Our work with Heavenly scales ; our purblind  
gaze

Finds failure often where He knows success.

All are His instruments, and so the less  
His need of one man for the world's great need ;  
Righteous He is, to all He gives their meed  
Of praise or blame ; yet not like us He scans—  
We see results, by them we make our plans,  
And trust or trust not men. Men's character  
He reads with searching glance that cannot err,  
And thinks not of results, but values still  
Patience and faith, and will to do His will.  
So to His best beloved oft gives He trial,  
As to His Blesséd Son, of base denial,

*TO A WORKER AMONG THE POOR*

And haply most will honour near His throne  
Some humble follower by the world unknown.  
Blurred is perspective by our earthly view—  
To God perspective aye is clear and true.

Effort like yours ever to do the right  
Will raise your soul from height to nobler height,  
And gives at last that guerdon, full, unpriced,  
The "Well done" of your life-long master, Christ.

A PLEA FOR FAITH



## A Plea for Faith

LIFE ! How mysterious does it seem, how strange  
Its grief, its happiness, its shame, its sin !  
How hard its changes are ! Can we believe  
In a great God of kindness infinite  
Who yet can daily leave His hapless world  
To be—for so it seems—the home of pain,  
Pain often useless, often showered on those  
Who seem to need it least ? Can we believe  
In Perfect Goodness and Omniscient Power  
Permitting Evil to possess and spoil

*A PLEA FOR FAITH*

His fair dominions, and to bring a curse—  
An ageless and unceasing curse—upon them ?

Alas, to our poor minds our futile years  
Seem but a clueless maze. When happiness  
Is ours, a hidden canker-worm reveals  
Its hateful presence, and too soon there comes  
Something to vex the spirit, or to jar,  
Something to cloud or check our perfect joy.

One man has buoyant health, and feels delight  
In living merely, yet he finds how hard  
Is poverty to bear ; it oftentimes  
Hangs round him as a changeless destiny.  
Too rich is he to rank among the poor,  
Too poor is he to rank among the rich ;  
Of neither class, he knows the ills of both.

*A PLEA FOR FAITH*

Another man has ample wealth, and friends  
Who love to do him honour, and to give  
To him the zest in living which such friends  
Alone can give. Yet look !—alas, 'tis clear  
Disease's curse is on him, fell disease  
For which weak human skill affords no cure  
And scarce alleviation. He is doomed  
To pass a joyless life despite the joys  
Surrounding him.

Another man we see  
With riches and with pulse of flawless health.  
With steadfast, cheerful face he fronts the world,  
And all seems well ; yet could we look within,  
Some grief we should perceive which saps his life  
And makes it full of care—a grief that springs  
Not from his fault ; or oftentimes we see

*A PLEA FOR FAITH*

Innocent children suffer for the sake  
Of guilty parents, or a mother's heart  
Guileless and pure, that bleeds for some loved son  
Or daughter who, alas, has gone astray.  
Not seldom in despondency we feel  
As though the wrong is victor o'er the right,  
As though our life were but a flake of foam  
Cast by some cruel sea on some bleak shore,  
A moment seen, and then for ever lost.

And yet, if we deny that God exists  
As perfect in His goodness as His power,  
If we deny that Death, God's angel, brings  
To man a nobler life, what do we gain  
To compensate us for the hopes we lose ?  
For still we must endure the woes of life,



*A PLEA FOR FAITH*

Still must we feel the longings which arise  
For rest and peace amid our daily toil.  
These we must still endure, and yet perceive  
Beyond the grave no gleam of gathering light,  
Nought save the gloom of nothingness before us.

But if we greet kind Faith, and let her hand  
Lead us through all our years, though at the last  
We find that hope of happier life is vain  
(That 'twere so would not change the argument)  
Faith's guidance will have given a mighty boon  
To us, in gladdening all our days on earth.  
So even if we wholly set aside  
Faith's fervent pleading with the intellect—  
A pleading ever present, ever strong,  
'Tis wiser far to guide our minds to view

*A PLEA FOR FAITH*

The problem still in some such wise as this,  
'Tis true amid our earthly life there runs  
A tangled thread of strange perplexity  
And much injustice ; yet comes by-and-by  
A nobler state of being, when that which seems  
Unjust will be explained or set aright.  
'Tis best to hold that there exists a God  
Who made Man's mind with marvellous powers,  
    though He,  
In His deep wisdom limited the scope  
Of what He made, wherefore our reason's sphere  
Of thought is swiftly reached, and so it seems  
To us so frequently that human life  
Hath such injustice in its fleeting years ;  
That He decrees that it is well for us  
In humble trust to tread "the path of sorrow,"

## *A PLEA FOR FAITH*

Perchance as discipline for some high scheme  
Of joy hereafter, or perchance to show  
To others how the brave can conquer pain ;  
That Life's dark mysteries do but transcend,  
Not contradict our reason, and when soon  
Our earthly life shall close, there dawns a life  
When He endows us with new gifts of mind.  
Then chief among the pleasures it can give  
Will be the thrill of joy when first we feel  
That now we understand those mysteries  
Which vexed our souls before—when first we find  
That many “ themes with which we cannot cope ”  
Grow clear, and “ Earth's worst phrenzies ” are at  
length  
Forgotten in the joy of Hope's fruition.



MISCELLANEOUS POEMS



To ——

(A SUMMER EVENING IN THE WOODS)

I

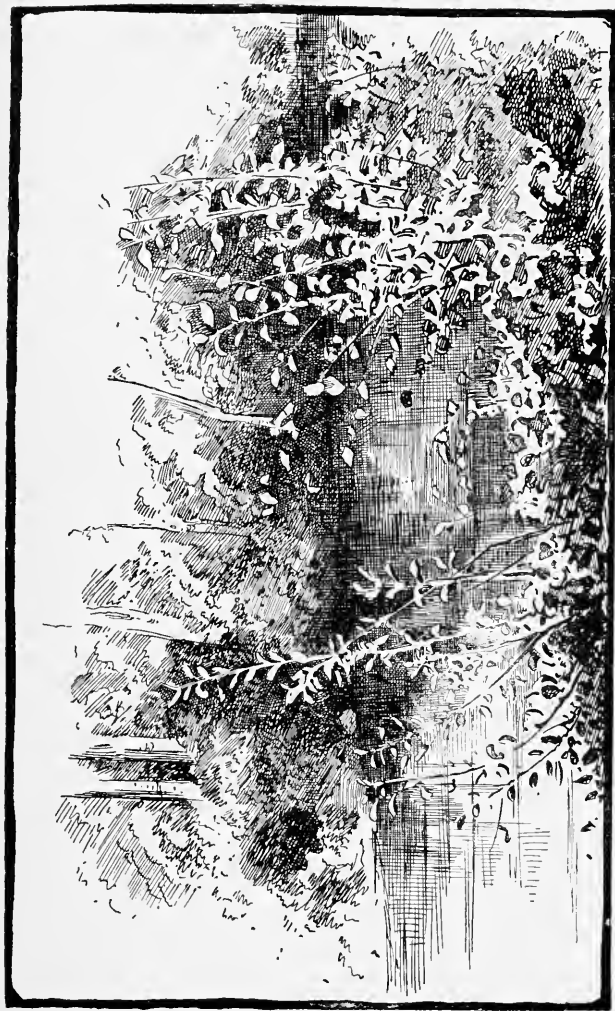
How lovely are the woodland glades to-night,  
The boughs slow moving in the balmy air,  
As birds sing now and then from pure delight  
With melody low-pitched, though scarce aware  
They sing. The branches, erewhile gaunt and  
bare,  
Have donned their daintiest dress ; the insects  
keep

A dreamy revel, murmuring everywhere ;  
In these dear glades, so still, so dim, so deep,  
Save for these lulling sounds kind Nature seems  
to sleep.

II

The voiceless stars shine out, and all too soon  
The calm delicious summer twilight ends ;  
Yet but a little space, and lo ! the moon  
Has ris'n, and thence a flood of light descends,  
While she among the clouds, majestic, wends  
Her queen-like way ; obsequious stand they  
near,  
Like courtiers round a throne ; each object  
lends  
Fresh beauty to the landscape made so clear  
In this rare light that all its richer hues are here.





“ . . . each object . . . made so clear  
In this rare light ”



III

Now in this evening walk there lives anew  
That joyous summer evening long ago,  
Sweet as to-night, when first I walked with  
you—

When, as the westering sun was sinking low,  
I first knew all your love for me ; and so  
Each year since then more swiftly than the last  
Has gone, for Time but made our love to grow.  
Yes, while the years are hurrying to the past,  
My one regret it is that still they fly so fast.

## The Boy Chatterton to Himself

“Sublime of thought, and confident of fame”

COLERIDGE, *Monody on the Death of Chatterton.*

THAT dotard soul I cannot comprehend,  
Who knows no hope that, after many years  
His name shall be preserved by other means  
Than by an entry in the parish books—  
The soul who never knew the proud desire  
To be remembered in far days unborn  
By some great deed accomplished.

Therefore here

*THE BOY CHATTERTON TO HIMSELF*

I make a vow—a vow unchanging, strong :  
I will redeem the time, and, though the days  
Are evil, yet it will be my delight  
To toil unceasingly, that at the last  
It shall be seen I have not lived in vain.  
Men's hours are passed as sacred Scripture  
saith—  
“They eat, they drink, are merry, and they die.”  
Few daily doings are of much account  
In fifty years ; then let my mind be set  
On some theme worthy of my noblest powers.

## The Boy Coleridge to Himself

“O capacious soul!”

WORDSWORTH, *The Prelude*, Book xiv.

“I WONDER wherefore?” is the soul-stirred cry  
Which wells up from the depths of human hearts  
In every sphere of life—from lowly homes  
And princely palaces—from hermit cells  
And seething crowds—from youth and riper age  
And longest length of years—from rich and poor  
From all who have the manliness to think—  
In health or sickness—happiness or woe—

*THE BOY COLERIDGE TO HIMSELF*

In Life's supremest moments or its trifles  
Which often make men ponder most. And this  
Incessant questioning is surely meant  
As greatest food for hope—a token given  
That, notwithstanding its abyss of sin,  
Within man's soul the germs of good abide.

Mysterious are the links that firmly weld  
Our trains of thought together. First we brood  
On some small trivial matter—now the germ  
Of musings somewhat loftier—then behold  
A thread is woven with our thought, and lo  
It leads to higher themes!—vast vistas new  
For serious contemplation :—and we gain  
Sublimest heights, as God-reflected thoughts  
Transcending reason throned on our kindled minds.

## The Philosophy of our Feelings

'Tis strange that what seems grief to-day  
Should seem like joy to-morrow,  
That present bliss should pass away  
And seem, in future, sorrow.

Yet in the web of life we find,  
While its vague threads we measure,  
The pattern of our mood of mind  
Traced out in pain or pleasure.



## The Philosophy of Frequent Failure

IN Youth's glad morning hours of strenuous life  
Great contemplations often fill the mind  
With noblest aspirations, while it seems  
To us, as yet scarce touched by sordid care  
And blighting prejudice, quite possible  
Through our unaided strength to win at last  
Some shining goal which glitters in our sight—  
A goal which, when 'twas won, would crown with  
good

The Universal Brotherhood of Man.

*THE PHILOSOPHY OF FREQUENT FAILURE*

But as the years roll on we find the dream  
Less easy of fulfilment,—for we feel  
Our ardour less intense—our weary feet  
Glide gently into that poor old-world groove  
We so despised of yore,—and we are fain  
To use fast-failing energy in strife  
'Gainst daily troubles ; higher aims forgotten.

## Wind Fancies

MURMURING winds vague fancies carry

To the heart while sweeping by,

And the fancies often tarry

Though the winds that brought them die.

Now the fancies are of gladness,

Life itself seems one delight ;

Now the fancies are of sadness,

Life itself seems dark as night.

## To Frederick Tennyson

(Died February 26, 1898, in his ninety-first year)

ELDEST of your august, poetic race,  
You go the last to your calm resting-place ;  
Yet though you pass from out our earthly view,  
Your work remains, and Time shall give your due.

Whether beneath the tranquil Tuscan skies  
You mused as all too soon the daylight dies,  
Whether you watched from your far island home  
The English Channel's eddying miles of foam,

TO *FREDERICK TENNYSON*

Or whether in your mild declining days  
You sojourned 'mid our London's clamorous  
ways,

Yours was the poet's life through length of years,  
Yours were the poet's joys, and hopes, and fears ;  
Yours were the tender ministries of song,  
Yours were the pleasures which to bards belong  
Who, dwelling in the world, yet "dwell apart,"  
And think but of their God and of their art.

Our gain from lives like yours no verse can tell :  
Eldest of English poets, fare you well.

LONDON, February 26, 1898

To a Lady Playing the Harp  
in her Chamber

(The Countess Rosalie von Sauerma-Zülzendorf,  
niece of Spohr)

I

LADY, whose conscious fingers sweep the strings  
With all the true musician's living power,  
I watch your hand, your gentle hand, which  
clings  
To that loved harp which has your touch for  
dower.

*TO A LADY PLAYING THE HARP*

How perfect is your skill, the fruit of years—

Years full of labour, years of patient thought !

Such tones as yours can move the heart to tears :

With keen delight such tones as yours are  
fraught.

Now while the soft notes in their sweetness rise,

Now while the wave of music dies away,

I seem to see the soul which lights your eyes—

The soul which lends the magic while you play.

To Music's self how deep is your devotion !

Your strains are not mere Art—they are Emotion.

*TO A LADY PLAYING THE HARP*

II

You told me once of that dear mother's love  
Whose goodness was the sunshine of your  
youth,  
Whose smile "made paradise" for you, who  
strove  
To point the way to happy paths of Truth.  
You told me how through Life's dark days of  
grief—  
Through all Life's dreary days of changeful  
care—  
The thought of her fond love could bring relief,  
The thought of her fond love could quell  
despair.



*TO A LADY PLAYING THE HARP*

And now I know that in your music's sweetness,  
In its most subtle power to move the heart,  
In its true grandeur, in its rare completeness,  
Your mother's hallowed influence has a part—  
An influence present yet and ceasing never,  
An influence gathering strength and beauty ever.



RELIGIOUS POEMS



## To Christina Rossetti

Great as a Poet, greater as a Woman

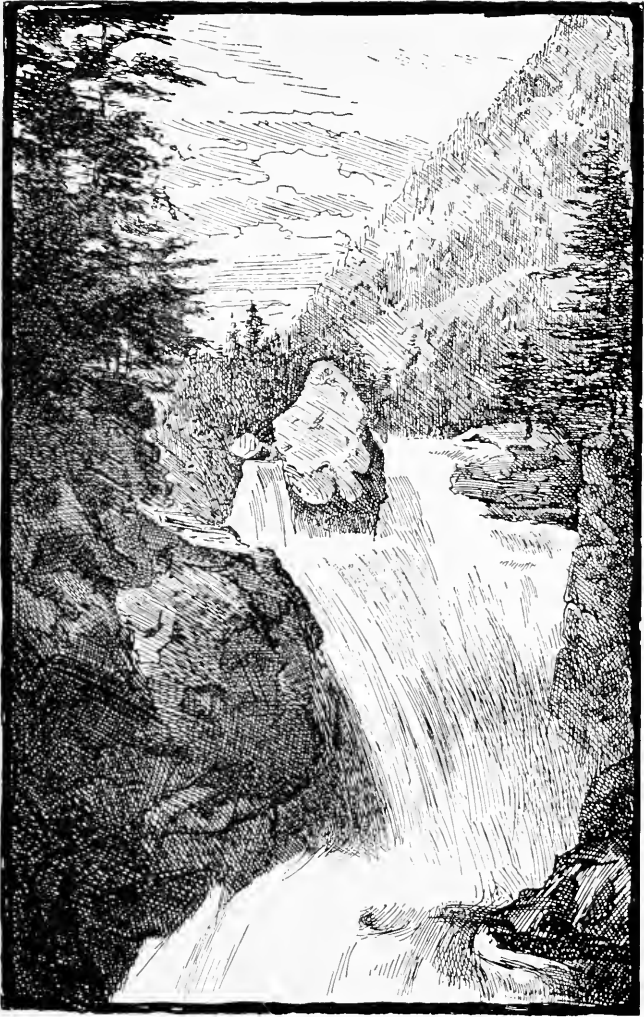
(Died December 29, 1894)

I MARVEL not that God hath called away  
Thy peerless soul to where His saints abide ;  
Rather I praise Him that He bade thee stay  
On earth so long—to be a heavenward guide.

## A Sunrise in Early Summer

### I

Now lagging black-browed Night at last is  
gone,  
And fair and happy Dawn at length is here.  
How sweet the sights which now I look upon—  
The sights of summer beauty growing clear !  
The meadows yonder and the lawn appear  
Glittering with dewdrops—dewdrops silvery,  
white,



"The sights of summer beauty . . ."





*SUNRISE IN EARLY SUMMER*

Touched by the sun's first beams ; while far  
and near

Each bird, each flower awakes, and hails the  
sight

Of coming morn : to them like me it brings  
delight.

II

To eastward lies a mass of sable cloud  
Made glorious by the rising sun, who flings  
His rays athwart its depths. I hear the loud  
Yet mellow thrush's note—a blackbird sings  
With sudden burst of song—a lark up-springs  
From that wide field of wheat ; so more and  
more

Sounds Nature's orchestra of myriad strings.

*SUNRISE IN EARLY SUMMER*

I watch the apple-bloom, while May-buds pour  
On all the gentle air their matchless, fragrant  
store.

III

O, who at sunrise could be aught but glad—  
Sunrise, the prototype of perfect day,  
When we shall wake to bliss, nor weak nor sad,  
And, feeling swiftly the seraphic ray  
From God's effulgence, cast the fears away  
Which still cleave to us, and with rapturous soul  
Know that black Trouble can no longer stay  
In His blest presence—know the precious goal  
Where all Earth's grievous wounds are made for  
ever whole.

## Her Boy Just Dead

(A MOTHER SPEAKS)

MY darling dead ! Is all the long endeavour  
To vanquish Death in vain ? These wistful  
eyes,

So Truth-illumed and loving, will they never  
Check by a look again my futile sighs ?

And shall I weep—although for him the gladness  
Of this world's many pleasures now is o'er,  
And I am left with this my load of sadness,  
Which here on earth is mine for evermore ?

*HER BOY JUST DEAD*

A cripple's lot were his, had he, remaining,  
Here ta'en his part where grief and care are  
rife—

Little of sinless happiness obtaining,  
Feeling all miseries of earthly life.

To shorten that hard period of probation  
Given to such as he so often here—  
To raise him soon to an immortal station  
Where comes no thoughtless word, no taunt,  
no jeer—

The Master, in His mercy, gently made him  
Fitter among His ransomed ones to be—  
And day by day more perfectly arrayed him  
In His own peerless robe of purity.

*HER BOY JUST DEAD*

Then shall I cherish an abiding sorrow

For him whom God in goodness calls away ?

Nay, rather let me muse on that blest morrow

Which joins in bliss our severed souls for aye.

## Miracles

CHRIST'S wondrous miracles were signs indeed  
Of wondrous power ; yet every miracle  
Of His had moral purpose, and was wrought  
To show this moral purpose : and perchance  
Thus is it that no longer we possess  
The power to do such deeds. Had you or I  
Such gifts, we still should heal unceasingly,  
Nor judge of the effects were cures but made.  
Where then would be God's discipline of pain ?  
Where His just government of all His world ?  
Where then would be His discipline of sorrow ?

*BY THE SAME AUTHOR*

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