



E. WHEELER WILCOX



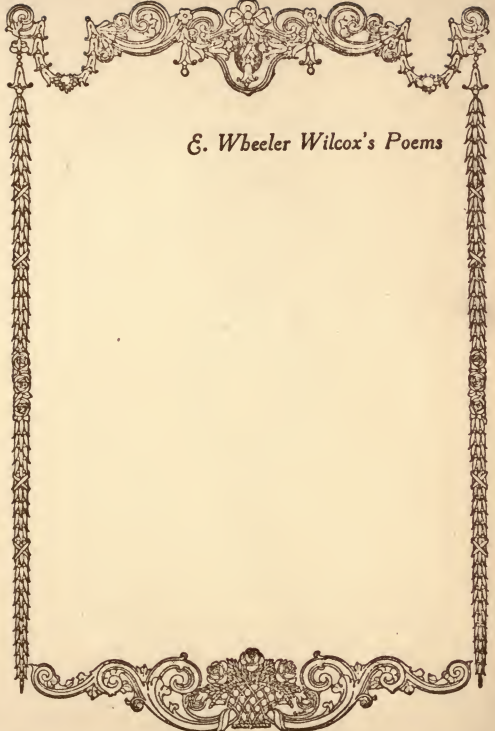













*E. Wheeler Wilcox's Poems*

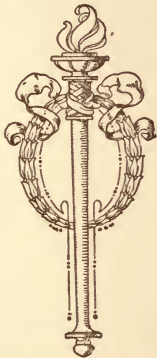







*E. Wheeler Wilcox's*  
*Poems*

*Selected by Cecil Charles*



*J. Hewetson & Son, Hampstead, N.W.*



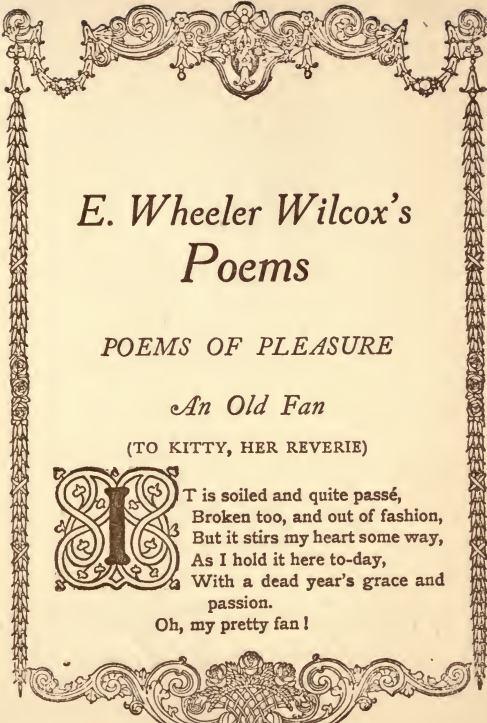
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*E. Wheeler Wilcox's  
Poems*

*POEMS OF PLEASURE*

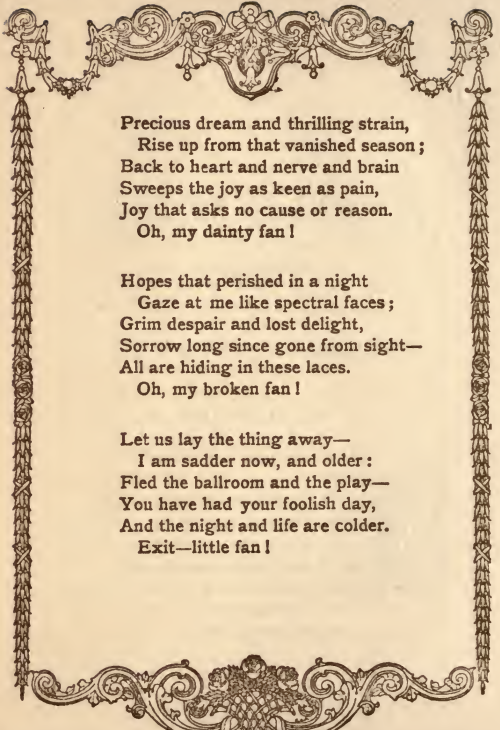
*An Old Fan*

(TO KITTY, HER REVERIE)



It is soiled and quite passé,  
Broken too, and out of fashion,  
But it stirs my heart some way,  
As I hold it here to-day,  
With a dead year's grace and  
passion.

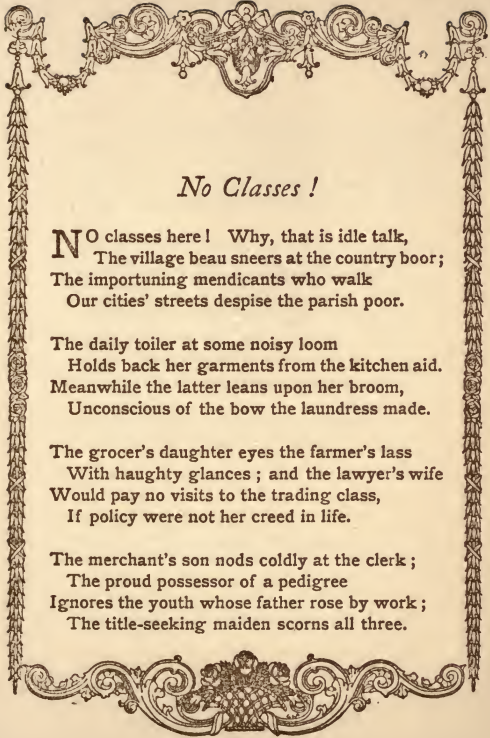
Oh, my pretty fan!



Precious dream and thrilling strain,  
Rise up from that vanished season ;  
Back to heart and nerve and brain  
Sweeps the joy as keen as pain,  
Joy that asks no cause or reason.  
Oh, my dainty fan !

Hopes that perished in a night  
Gaze at me like spectral faces ;  
Grim despair and lost delight,  
Sorrow long since gone from sight—  
All are hiding in these laces.  
Oh, my broken fan !

Let us lay the thing away—  
I am sadder now, and older :  
Fled the ballroom and the play—  
You have had your foolish day,  
And the night and life are colder.  
Exit—little fan !




## *No Classes !*

**N**O classes here ! Why, that is idle talk,  
The village beau sneers at the country boor ;  
The importuning mendicants who walk  
Our cities' streets despise the parish poor.

The daily toiler at some noisy loom  
Holds back her garments from the kitchen aid.  
Meanwhile the latter leans upon her broom,  
Unconscious of the bow the laundress made.

The grocer's daughter eyes the farmer's lass  
With haughty glances ; and the lawyer's wife  
Would pay no visits to the trading class,  
If policy were not her creed in life.


The merchant's son nods coldly at the clerk ;  
The proud possessor of a pedigree  
Ignores the youth whose father rose by work ;  
The title-seeking maiden scorns all three.



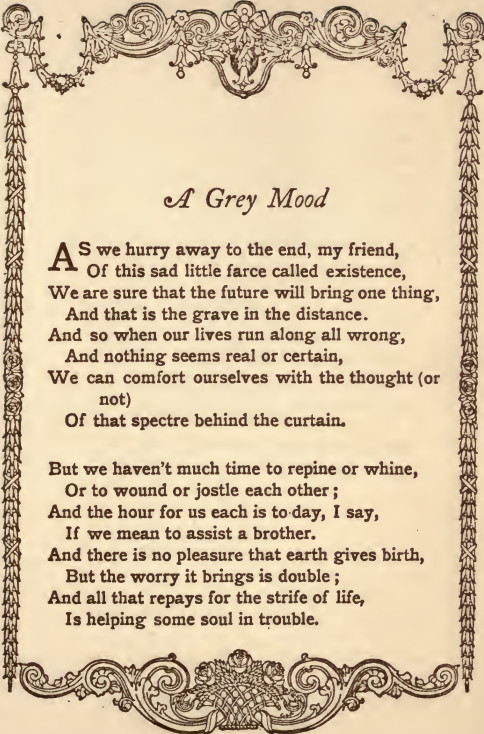
The aristocracy of blood looks down  
Upon the "nouveau riche"; and in disdain,  
The lovers of the intellectual frown  
On both, and worship at the shrine of brain.

"No classes here," the clergyman has said;  
"We are one family." Yet see his rage  
And horror when his favourite son would wed  
Some pure and pretty player on the stage.

It is the vain but natural human way  
Of vaunting our weak selves, our pride, our  
worth!  
Not till the long delayed millennial day  
Shall we behold "no classes" on God's earth.



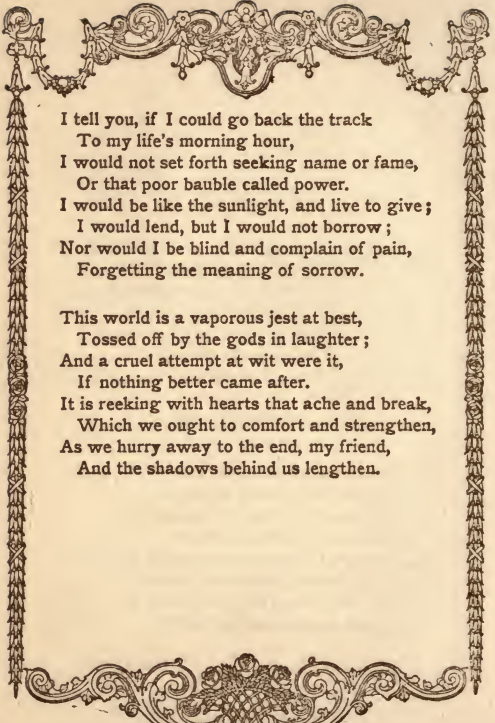




## *A Grey Mood*

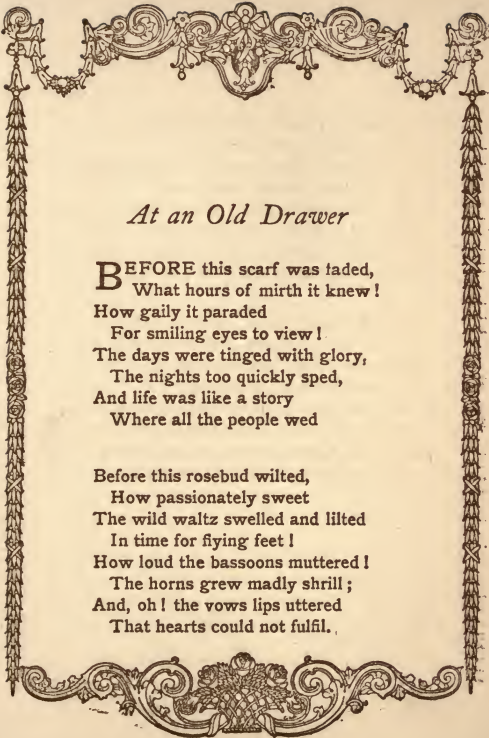
**A**S we hurry away to the end, my friend,  
Of this sad little farce called existence,  
We are sure that the future will bring one thing,  
And that is the grave in the distance.  
And so when our lives run along all wrong,  
And nothing seems real or certain,  
We can comfort ourselves with the thought (or  
not)  
Of that spectre behind the curtain.

But we haven't much time to repine or whine,  
Or to wound or jostle each other ;  
And the hour for us each is to-day, I say,  
If we mean to assist a brother.  
And there is no pleasure that earth gives birth,  
But the worry it brings is double ;  
And all that repays for the strife of life,  
Is helping some soul in trouble.



I tell you, if I could go back the track  
To my life's morning hour,  
I would not set forth seeking name or fame,  
Or that poor bauble called power.  
I would be like the sunlight, and live to give ;  
I would lend, but I would not borrow ;  
Nor would I be blind and complain of pain,  
Forgetting the meaning of sorrow.


This world is a vaporous jest at best,  
Tossed off by the gods in laughter ;  
And a cruel attempt at wit were it,  
If nothing better came after.  
It is reeking with hearts that ache and break,  
Which we ought to comfort and strengthen,  
As we hurry away to the end, my friend,  
And the shadows behind us lengthen.



*At an Old Drawer*


**B**EFORE this scarf was faded,  
What hours of mirth it knew !  
How gaily it paraded  
For smiling eyes to view !  
The days were tinged with glory,  
The nights too quickly sped,  
And life was like a story  
Where all the people wed


Before this rosebud wilted,  
How passionately sweet  
The wild waltz swelled and lilted  
In time for flying feet !  
How loud the bassoons muttered !  
The horns grew madly shrill ;  
And, oh ! the vows lips uttered  
That hearts could not fulfil .



Before this fan was broken,  
Behind its lace and pearl  
What whispered words were spoken—  
What hearts were in a whirl !  
What homesteads were selected  
In Fancy's realm of Spain !  
What castles were erected,  
Without a room for pain !

When this old glove was mated,  
How thrilling seemed the play !  
Maybe our hearts are sated—  
They tire so soon to-day.  
Oh, shut away those treasures,  
They speak the dreary truth—  
We have outgrown the pleasures  
And keen delights of youth.





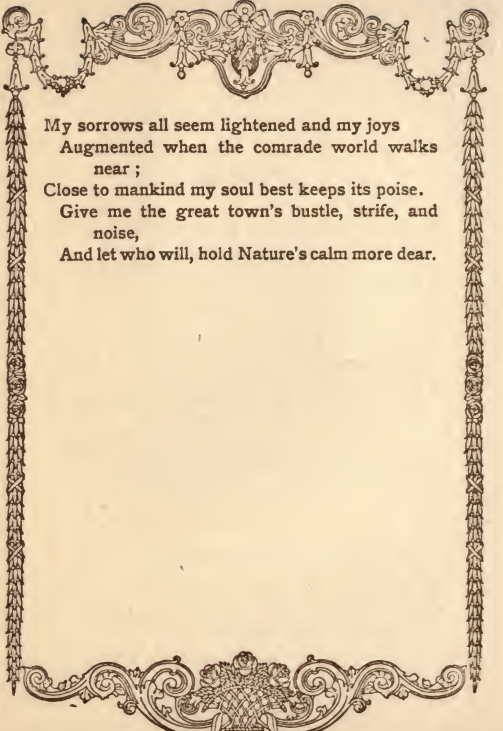
## *The City*

**I** OWN the charms of lovely Nature ; still,  
In human nature more delight I find.  
Though sweet the murmuring voices of the rill,  
I much prefer the voices of my kind.

I like the roar of cities. In the mart,  
Where busy toilers strive for place and gain,  
I seem to read humanity's great heart,  
And share its hopes, its pleasures, and its pain.

The rush of hurrying trains that cannot wait,  
The tread of myriad feet, all say to me :  
"You are the architect of your own fate ;  
Toil on, hope on, and dare to do and be."

I like the jangled music of the loud  
Bold bells ; the whistle's sudden shrill reply ;  
And there is inspiration in a crowd—  
A magnetism flashed from eye to eye.



My sorrows all seem lightened and my joys  
Augmented when the comrade world walks  
near ;  
Close to mankind my soul best keeps its poise.  
Give me the great town's bustle, strife, and  
noise,  
And let who will, hold Nature's calm more dear.



## Woman

**G**IVE us that grand word "woman" once  
again,

And let's have done with "lady": one's a term  
Full of fine force, strong, beautiful, and firm,  
Fit for the noblest use of tongue or pen ;  
And one's a word for lackeys. One suggests  
The Mother, Wife, and Sister ! One the dame  
Whose costly robe, mayhap, gives her the name.  
One word upon its own strength leans and rests ;  
The other minces tiptoe. Who would be  
The perfect woman must grow brave of heart  
And broad of soul to play her troubled part  
Well in life's drama. While each day we see  
The "perfect lady" skilled in what to do  
And what to say, grace in each tone and act  
( 'Tis taught in schools, but needs some native  
tact),

Yet narrow in her mind as in her shoe.  
Give the first place then to the nobler phrase,  
And leave the lesser word for lesser praise,






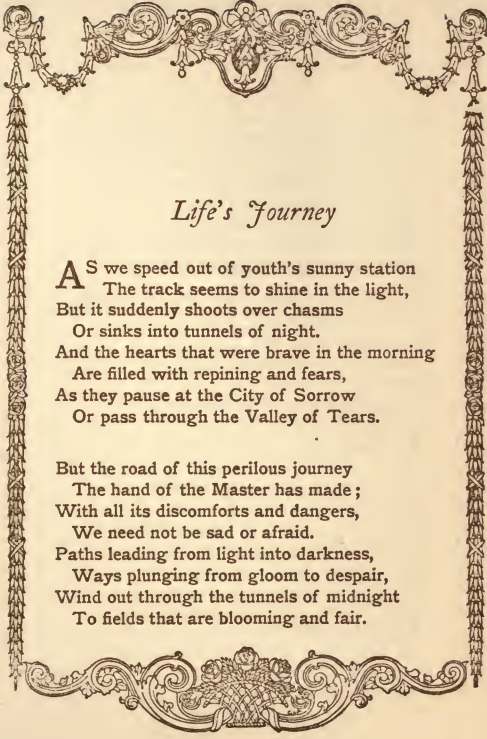
## *The Lost Land*

**T**H**ERE** is a story of a beauteous land,  
Where fields were fertile and where flowers  
were bright ;  
Where tall towers glistened in the morning light,  
Where happy children wandered hand in hand,  
Where lovers wrote their names upon the sand.  
They say it vanished from all human sight,  
The hungry sea devoured it in a night.

You doubt the tale? ah, you will understand ;  
For, as men muse upon that fable old,  
They give sad credence always at the last,  
However they have cavilled at its truth,  
When with a tear-dimmed vision they behold,  
Swift sinking in the ocean of the Past,  
The lovely lost Atlantis of their Youth.



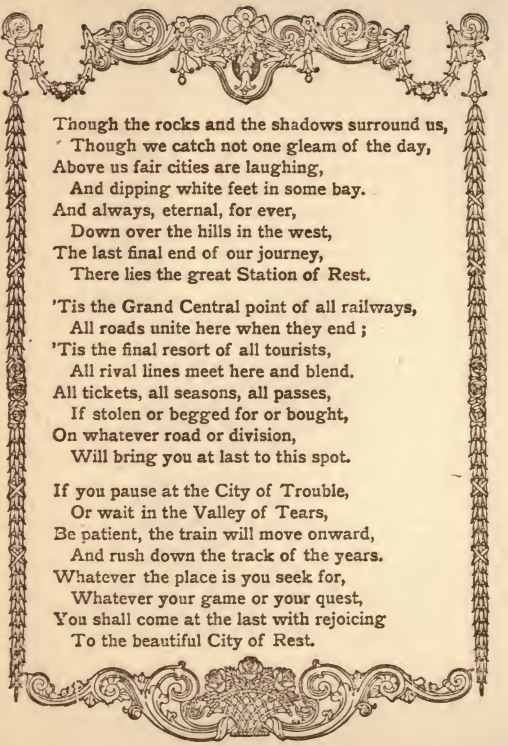




## *Life's Journey*

**A**S we speed out of youth's sunny station  
The track seems to shine in the light,  
But it suddenly shoots over chasms  
Or sinks into tunnels of night.  
And the hearts that were brave in the morning  
Are filled with repining and fears,  
As they pause at the City of Sorrow  
Or pass through the Valley of Tears.


But the road of this perilous journey  
The hand of the Master has made ;  
With all its discomforts and dangers,  
We need not be sad or afraid.  
Paths leading from light into darkness,  
Ways plunging from gloom to despair,  
Wind out through the tunnels of midnight  
To fields that are blooming and fair.




Though the rocks and the shadows surround us,  
Though we catch not one gleam of the day,  
Above us fair cities are laughing,  
And dipping white feet in some bay.  
And always, eternal, for ever,  
Down over the hills in the west,  
The last final end of our journey,  
There lies the great Station of Rest.

'Tis the Grand Central point of all railways,  
All roads unite here when they end ;  
'Tis the final resort of all tourists,  
All rival lines meet here and blend.  
All tickets, all seasons, all passes,  
If stolen or begged for or bought,  
On whatever road or division,  
Will bring you at last to this spot.

If you pause at the City of Trouble,  
Or wait in the Valley of Tears,  
Be patient, the train will move onward,  
And rush down the track of the years.  
Whatever the place is you seek for,  
Whatever your game or your quest,  
You shall come at the last with rejoicing  
To the beautiful City of Rest.



**You shall store all your baggage of worries,  
You shall feel perfect peace in this realm,  
You shall sail with old friends on fair waters,  
With joy and delight at the helm.  
You shall wander in cool, fragrant gardens  
With those who have loved you the best,  
And the hopes that were lost in life's journey  
You shall find in the City of Rest.**




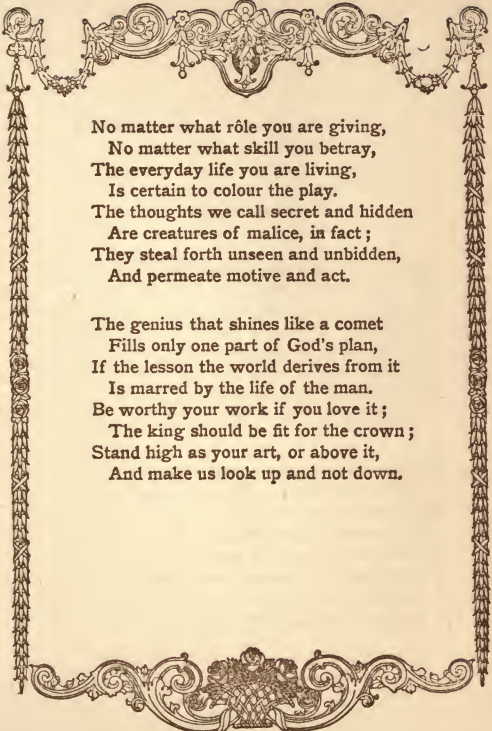


## *The Actor*

**O**H, man, with your wonderful dower,  
Oh, woman, with genius and grace,  
You can teach the whole world with your power,  
If you are but worthy the place,  
The stage is a force and a factor  
In moulding the thought of the day,  
If only the heart of the actor  
Is high as the theme of the play.


No discourse or sermon can reach us  
Through feeling to reason like you;  
No author can stir us and teach us  
With lessons as subtle and true.  
Your words and your gestures obeying,  
We weep or rejoice with your part,  
And the player, behind all his playing,  
He ought to be great as his art.





No matter what rôle you are giving,  
No matter what skill you betray,  
The everyday life you are living,  
Is certain to colour the play.  
The thoughts we call secret and hidden  
Are creatures of malice, in fact ;  
They steal forth unseen and unbidden,  
And permeate motive and act.


The genius that shines like a comet  
Fills only one part of God's plan,  
If the lesson the world derives from it  
Is marred by the life of the man.  
Be worthy your work if you love it ;  
The king should be fit for the crown ;  
Stand high as your art, or above it,  
And make us look up and not down.

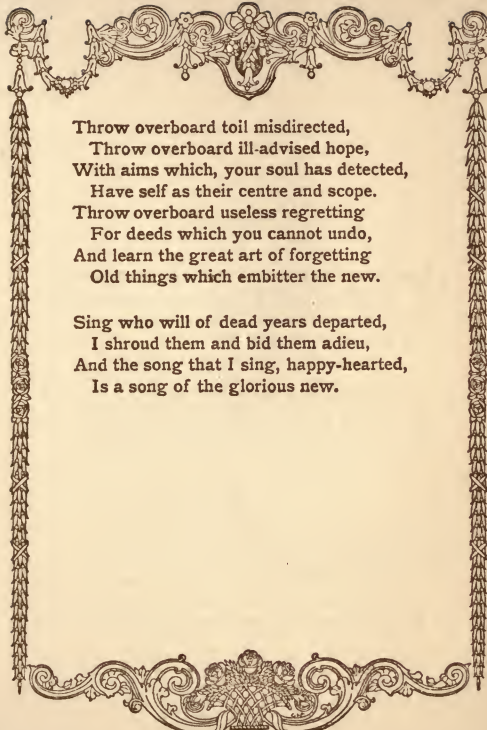


## *New Year*

**A**S the old year sinks down in Time's ocean,  
Stand ready to launch with the new,  
And waste no regrets, no emotion,  
As the masts and the spars pass from view.  
Weep not if some treasures go under,  
And sink in the rotten ship's hold,  
That blithe bonny barque sailing yonder  
May bring you more wealth than the old.

For the world is for ever improving,  
All the past is not worth one to-day,  
And whatever deserves our true loving,  
Is stronger than death or decay.  
Old love, was it wasted devotion?  
Old friends, were they weak or untrue?  
Well, let them sink there in mid ocean,  
And gaily sail on to the new.





Throw overboard toil misdirected,  
Throw overboard ill-advised hope,  
With aims which, your soul has detected,  
Have self as their centre and scope.  
Throw overboard useless regretting  
For deeds which you cannot undo,  
And learn the great art of forgetting  
Old things which embitter the new.

Sing who will of dead years departed,  
I shroud them and bid them adieu,  
And the song that I sing, happy-hearted,  
Is a song of the glorious new.




*Now*

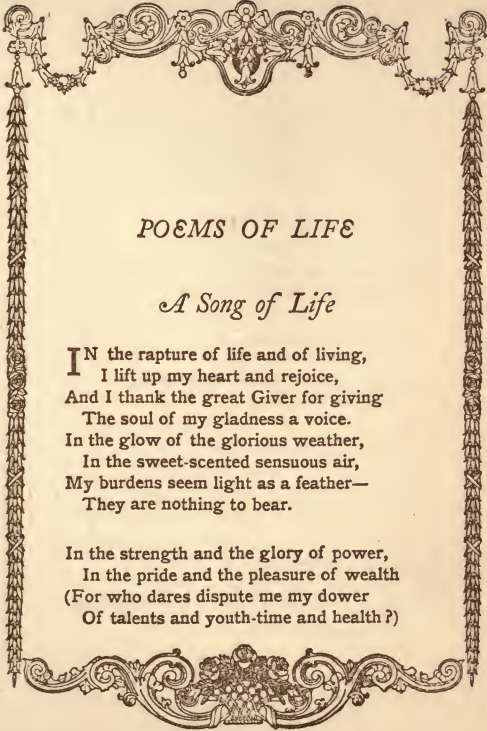
**O**NE looks behind him to some vanished time  
And says, "Ah, I was happy then, alack !  
I did not know it was my life's best prime—  
Oh, if I could go back !"

Another looks, with eager eyes aglow,  
To some glad day of joy that yet will dawn,  
And sighs, "I shall be happy then, I know.  
Oh, let me hurry on."

But I—I look out on my fair To-day ;  
I clasp it close and kiss its radiant brow,  
Here with the perfect present let me stay,  
For I am happy now !








POEMS OF LIFE

*A Song of Life*

**I**n the rapture of life and of living,  
I lift up my heart and rejoice,  
And I thank the great Giver for giving  
The soul of my gladness a voice.  
In the glow of the glorious weather,  
In the sweet-scented sensuous air,  
My burdens seem light as a feather—  
They are nothing to bear.

In the strength and the glory of power,  
In the pride and the pleasure of wealth  
(For who dares dispute me my dower  
Of talents and youth-time and health?)




I can laugh at the world and its sages—  
I am greater than seers who are sad,  
For he is most wise in all ages  
Who knows how to be glad.

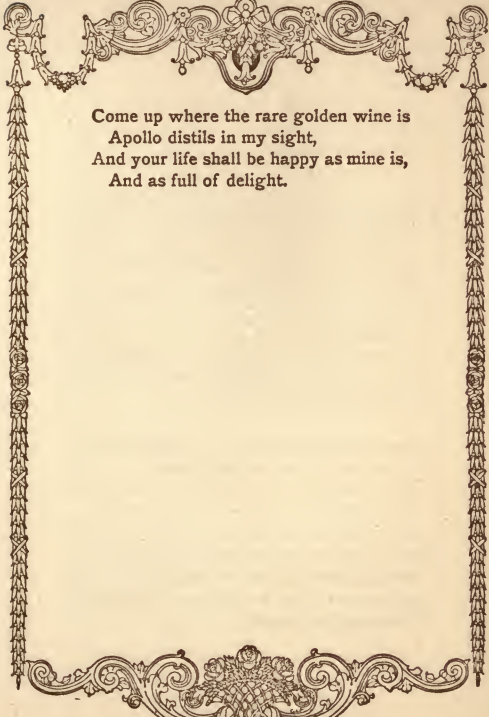
I lift up my eyes to Apollo,  
The god of the beautiful days,  
And my spirit soars off like a swallow  
And is lost in the light of its rays.

Are you troubled and sad? I beseech you  
Come out of the shadows of strife—  
Come out in the sun while I teach you  
The secret of life.


Come out of the world—come above it—  
Up over its crosses and graves.  
Though the green earth is fair and I love it,  
We must love it as masters, not slaves.

Come up where the dust never rises—  
But only the perfume of flowers—  
And your life shall be glad with surprises  
Of beautiful hours.





Come up where the rare golden wine is  
Apollo distils in my sight,  
And your life shall be happy as mine is,  
And as full of delight.



## *Nothing but Stones*

**I** THINK I never passed so sad an hour,  
Dear friend, as that one at the church to-  
night.

The edifice from basement to the tower  
Was one resplendent blaze of coloured light.  
Up through broad aisles the stylish crowd was  
thronging,

Each richly robed like some king's bidden guest.  
"Here will I bring my sorrow and my longing,"  
I said, "and here find rest."


I heard the heavenly organ's voice of thunder,  
It seemed to give me infinite relief.


I wept. Strange eyes looked on in well-bred  
wonder,

I dried my tears: their gaze profaned my grief.

Wrapt in the costly furs, and silks and laces  
Beat alien hearts that had no part with me.

I could not read, in all those proud cold faces,  
One thought of sympathy.

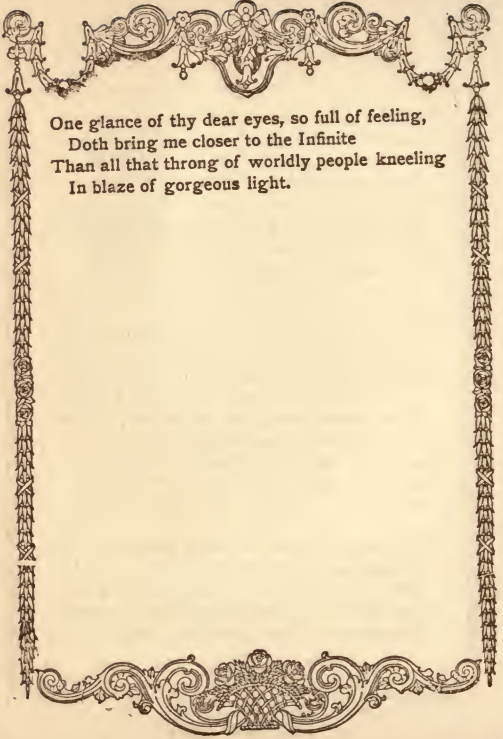





I watched them bowing and devoutly kneeling,  
Heard their responses like sweet waters roll ;  
But only the glorious organ's sacred pealing  
Seemed gushing from a full and fervent soul.  
I listened to the man of holy calling :  
He spoke of creeds, and hailed his own as best ;  
Of man's corruption and of Adam's falling,  
But naught that gave me rest.

Nothing that helped me bear the daily grinding  
Of soul with body, heart with heated brain,  
Nothing to show the purpose of this blinding  
And sometimes overwhelming sense of pain.  
And then, dear friend, I thought of thee, so lowly,  
So unassuming, and so gently kind,  
And, lo ! a peace, a calm serene and holy,  
Settled upon my mind.

Ah, friend, my friend ! one true heart, fond and  
tender,  
That understands our troubles and our needs,  
Brings us more near to God than all the splendour  
And pomp of seeming worship and vain creeds.



One glance of thy dear eyes, so full of feeling,  
Doth bring me closer to the Infinite  
Than all that throng of worldly people kneeling  
In blaze of gorgeous light.





## *Gethsemane*

**I**N golden youth when seems the earth  
A Summer-land of singing mirth,  
When souls are glad and hearts are light,  
And not a shadow lurks in sight,  
We do not know it, but there lies  
Somewhere veiled under evening skies  
A garden which we all must see—  
The garden of Gethsemane.

With joyous steps we go our ways,  
Love lends a halo to our days ;  
Light sorrows sail like clouds afar,  
We laugh, and say how strong we are.  
We hurry on ; and hurrying, go  
Close to the borderland of woe,  
That waits for you, and waits for me—  
Forever waits Gethsemane.


Down shadowy lanes, across strange streams,  
Bridged over by our broken dreams ;






Behind the misty caps of years,  
Beyond the great salt fount of tears,  
The garden lies. Strive as you may,  
You cannot miss it in your way.  
All paths that have been, or shall be,  
Pass somewhere through Gethsemane.

All those who journey, soon or late,  
Must pass within the garden's gate ;  
Must kneel alone in darkness there,  
And battle with some fierce despair.  
God pity those who cannot say,  
"Not mine but thine," who only pray,  
"Let this cup pass," and cannot see  
The *purpose* in Gethsemane.









*Momus, God of Laughter*

**T**HOUGH with the gods the world is  
cumbered,  
Gods unnamed, and gods unnumbered,  
Never god was known to be  
Who had not his devotee.  
So I dedicate to mine,  
Here in verse, my temple-shrine.

'Tis not Aries,—mighty Mars,  
Who can give success in wars ;  
'Tis not Morpheus, who doth keep  
Guard above us while we sleep ;  
'Tis not Venus, she whose duty  
'Tis to give us love and beauty.  
Hail to these, and others, after  
Momus, gleesome god of laughter.

Quirinus would guard my health,  
Plutus would insure me wealth ;




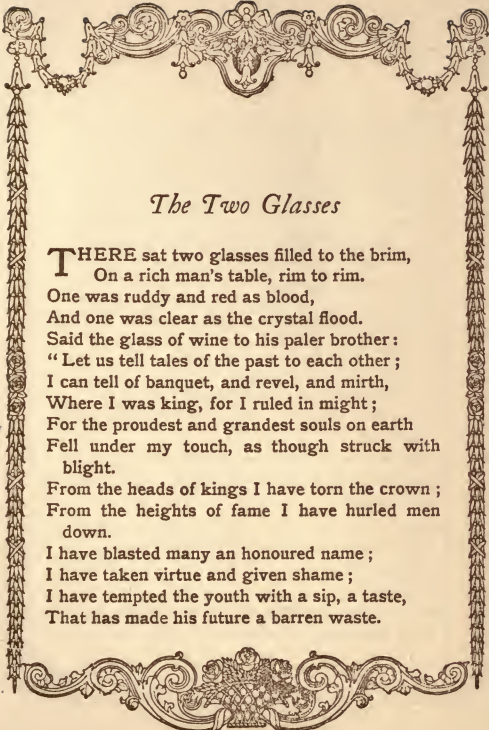


Mercury looks after trade,  
Hera smiles on youth and maid.  
All are kind, I own their worth,  
After Momus, god of mirth.

Though Apollo, out of spite,  
Hides away his face of light,  
Though Minerva looks askance,  
Deigning me no smiling glance,  
Kings and queens may envy me  
While I claim the god of glee.


Wisdom wearies, Love has wings—  
Wealth makes burdens, Pleasure stings,  
Glory proves a thorny crown—  
So all gifts the gods throw down  
Bring their pains and troubles after ;  
All save Momus, god of laughter.  
He alone gives constant joy,  
Hail to Momus, happy boy !







## *The Two Glasses*

**T**HERE sat two glasses filled to the brim,  
On a rich man's table, rim to rim.  
One was ruddy and red as blood,  
And one was clear as the crystal flood.  
Said the glass of wine to his paler brother :  
" Let us tell tales of the past to each other ;  
I can tell of banquet, and revel, and mirth,  
Where I was king, for I ruled in might ;  
For the proudest and grandest souls on earth  
Fell under my touch, as though struck with  
blight.  
From the heads of kings I have torn the crown ;  
From the heights of fame I have hurled men  
down.  
I have blasted many an honoured name ;  
I have taken virtue and given shame ;  
I have tempted the youth with a sip, a taste,  
That has made his future a barren waste.



Far greater than any king am I,  
Or than any army beneath the sky.  
I have made the arm of the driver fail,  
And sent the train from the iron rail.  
I have made good ships go down at sea,  
And the shrieks of the lost were sweet to me.  
Fame, strength, wealth, genius before me fall,  
And my might and power are over all !  
"Ho, ho ! pale brother," said the wine,  
"Can you boast of deeds as great as mine ?"  
Said the water-glass : "I cannot boast  
Of a king dethroned, or a murdered host,  
But I can tell of hearts that were sad  
By my crystal drops made bright and glad ;  
Of thirsts I have quenched, and brows I have  
laved ;  
Of hands I have cooled, and souls I have saved.  
I have leaped through the valley, dashed down  
the mountain,  
Slept in the sunshine, and dripped from the  
fountain.  
I have burst my cloud-fetters and dropped from  
the sky,  
And everywhere gladdened the prospect and eye ;  
I have eased the hot forehead of fever and pain ;







I have made the parched meadows grow fertile  
with grain.

I can tell of the powerful wheel of the mill,  
That ground out the flour and turned at my will.  
I can tell of manhood debased by you,  
That I have uplifted and crowned anew ;  
I cheer, I help, I strengthen and aid ;  
I gladden the heart of man and maid ;  
I set the wine-chained captive free,  
And all are better for knowing me."

These are the tales they told each other,  
The glass of wine and its paler brother,  
As they sat together, filled to the brim,  
On a rich man's table, rim to rim.







*What we Need*

**W**HAT does our country need? Not armies  
standing

With sabres gleaming ready for the fight.  
Not increased navies, skilful and commanding,  
To bound the waters with an iron might.  
Not haughty men with glutted purses trying  
To purchase souls, and keep the power of  
place.


Not jewelled dolls with one another vying  
For palms of beauty, elegance, and grace.  
But we want women, strong of soul, yet lowly,  
With that rare meekness, born of gentleness,  
Women whose lives are pure and clean and holy,  
The women whom all little children bless.  
Brave, earnest women, helpful to each other,  
With finest scorn for all things low and mean ;  
Women who hold the names of wife and mother  
Far nobler than the title of a Queen.





Oh, these are they who mould the men of story,  
These mothers, ofttimes shorn of grace and  
youth,  
Who, worn and weary, ask no greater glory  
Than making some young soul the home of  
truth ;  
Who sow in hearts all fallow for the sowing  
The seeds of virtue and of scorn for sin,  
And, patient, watch the beauteous harvest  
growing  
And weed out tares which crafty hands cast in.

Women who do not hold the gift of beauty  
As some rare treasure to be bought and sold,  
But guard it as a precious aid to duty—  
The outer framing of the inner gold ;  
Women who, low above their cradles bending,  
Let flattery's voice go by, and give no heed,  
While their pure prayers like incense are as-  
cending ;  
*These* are our country's pride, our country's  
need.






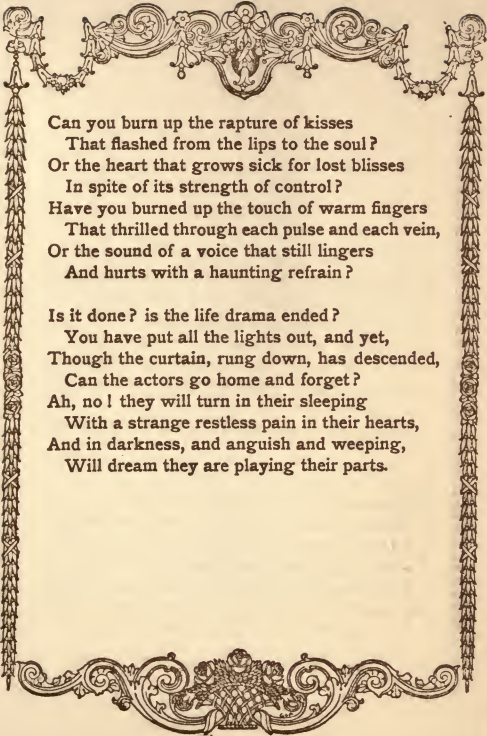
*Is it Done ?*

**I**T is done ! in the fire's fitful flashes,  
The last line has withered and curled.  
In a tiny white heap of dead ashes  
Lie buried the hopes of your world.  
There were mad foolish vows in each letter,  
It is well they have shrivelled and burned,  
And the ring ! oh, the ring was a fetter  
It was better removed and returned.

But, ah, is it done ? in the embers,  
Where letters and tokens were cast,  
Have you burned up the heart that remembers,  
And treasures its beautiful past ?  
Do you think in this swift reckless fashion  
To ruthlessly burn and destroy  
The months that were freighted with passion,  
The dreams that were drunken with joy ?








Can you burn up the rapture of kisses  
That flashed from the lips to the soul?  
Or the heart that grows sick for lost blisses  
In spite of its strength of control?  
Have you burned up the touch of warm fingers  
That thrilled through each pulse and each vein,  
Or the sound of a voice that still lingers  
And hurts with a haunting refrain?


Is it done? is the life drama ended?  
You have put all the lights out, and yet,  
Though the curtain, rung down, has descended,  
Can the actors go home and forget?  
Ah, no! they will turn in their sleeping  
With a strange restless pain in their hearts,  
And in darkness, and anguish and weeping,  
Will dream they are playing their parts.

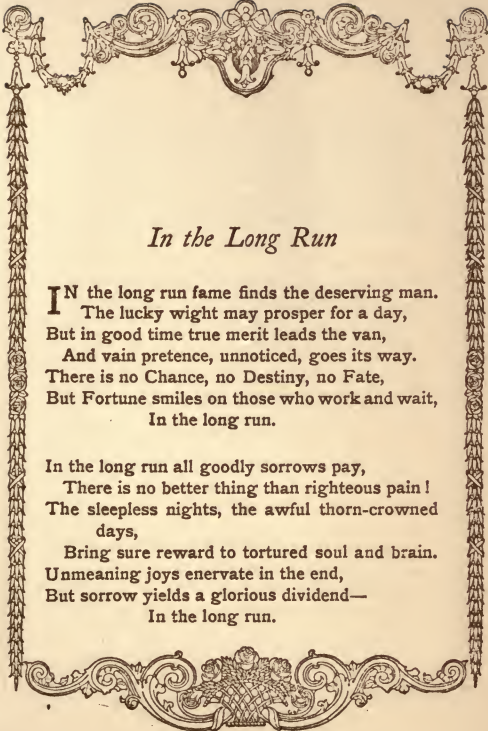


*Burdened*

**D**EAR God! there is no sadder fate in life,  
Than to be burdened so that you cannot  
Sit down contented with the common lot  
Of happy mother and devoted wife.  
To feel your brain wild and your bosom rife  
With all the sea's commotion; to be fraught  
With fires and frenzies which you have not  
sought,  
And weighed down with the wide world's weary  
strife.

To feel a fever always in your breast,  
To lean and hear half in affright, half shame,  
A loud-voiced public boldly mouth your name,  
To reap your hard-sown harvest in unrest,  
And know, however great your meed of fame,  
You are but a weak woman at the best.

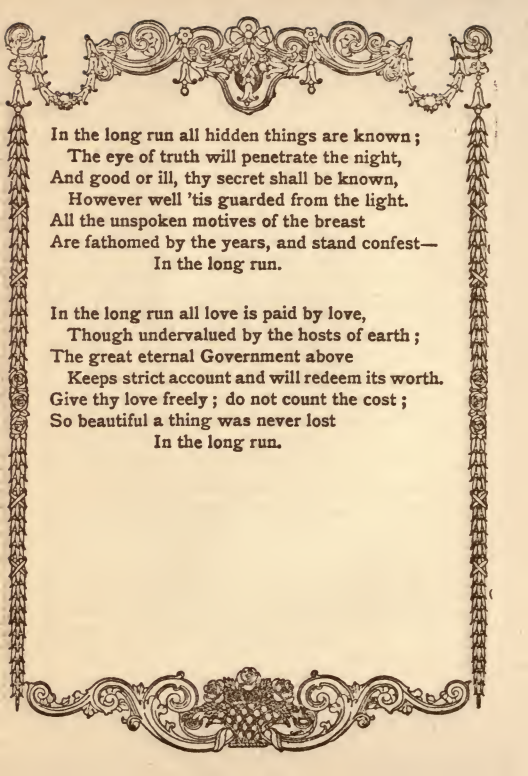




## *In the Long Run*

**I**N the long run fame finds the deserving man.  
The lucky wight may prosper for a day,  
But in good time true merit leads the van,  
And vain pretence, unnoticed, goes its way.  
There is no Chance, no Destiny, no Fate,  
But Fortune smiles on those who work and wait,  
In the long run.

In the long run all goodly sorrows pay,  
There is no better thing than righteous pain!  
The sleepless nights, the awful thorn-crowned  
days,  
Bring sure reward to tortured soul and brain.  
Unmeaning joys enervate in the end,  
But sorrow yields a glorious dividend—  
In the long run.



In the long run all hidden things are known ;  
The eye of truth will penetrate the night,  
And good or ill, thy secret shall be known,  
However well 'tis guarded from the light.  
All the unspoken motives of the breast  
Are fathomed by the years, and stand confest—  
In the long run.

In the long run all love is paid by love,  
Though undervalued by the hosts of earth ;  
The great eternal Government above  
Keeps strict account and will redeem its worth.  
Give thy love freely ; do not count the cost ;  
So beautiful a thing was never lost  
In the long run.




## *A Song*

**I**S anyone sad in the world, I wonder?  
Does anyone weep on a day like this  
With the sun above, and the green earth under?  
Why, what is life but a dream of bliss?

With the sun, and the skies, and the birds above  
me,  
Birds that sing as they wheel and fly—  
With the winds to follow and say they love me—  
Who could be lonely? O no, not I!

Somebody said, in the street this morning,  
As I opened my window to let in the light,  
That the darkest day of the world was dawning;  
But I looked, and the East was a gorgeous  
sight.




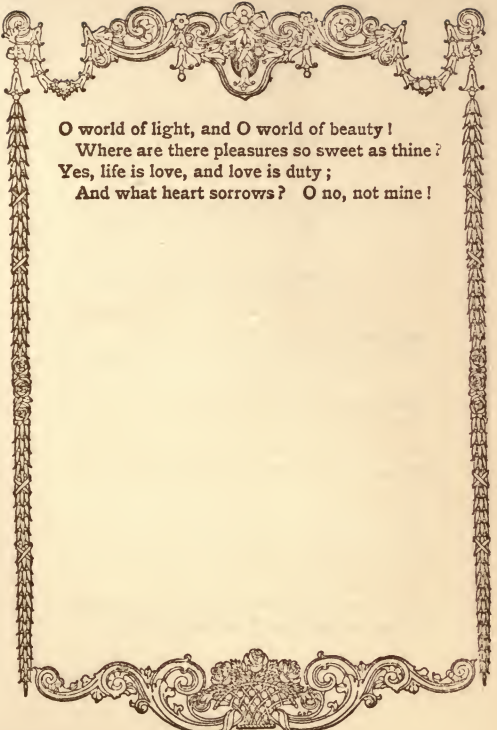
One who claims that he knows about it  
Tells me the Earth is a vale of sin ;  
But I and the bees and the birds—we doubt  
it,  
And think it a world worth living in.

Someone says that hearts are fickle,  
That love is sorrow, that life is care,  
And the reaper Death, with his shining sickle,  
Gathers whatever is bright and fair.


I told the thrush, and we laughed together,  
Laughed till the woods were all a-ring ;  
And he said to me, as he plumed each feather,  
“Well, people must croak, if they cannot  
sing.”

Up he flew, but his song, remaining,  
Rang like a bell in my heart all day,  
And silenced the voices of weak complaining,  
That pipe like insects along the way.





O world of light, and O world of beauty !  
Where are there pleasures so sweet as thine ?  
Yes, life is love, and love is duty ;  
And what heart sorrows ? O no, not mine !



*To Marry or not to Marry?*

*A Girl's Reverie*


**M**OTHER says, "Be in no hurry,  
Marriage oft means care and worry."

Auntie says, with manner grave,  
"Wife is synonym for slave."


Father asks, in tones commanding,  
"How does Bradstreet rate his standing?"

Sister, crooning to her twins,  
Sighs, "With marriage care begins."

Grandma, near life's closing days,  
Murmurs, "Sweet are girlhood's ways."







Maud, twice widowed ("sod and grass")  
Looks at me and moans "Alas!"

They are six, and I am one,  
Life for me has just begun.


They are older, calmer, wiser :  
Age should aye be youth's adviser.

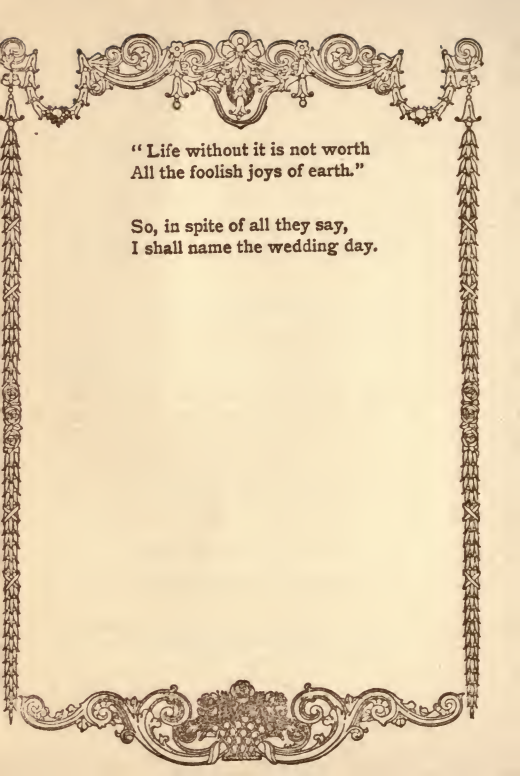
They must know—and yet, dear me,  
When in Harry's eyes I see

All the world of love there burning—  
On my six advisers turning,

I make answer, "Oh, but Harry,  
Is not like most men who marry.

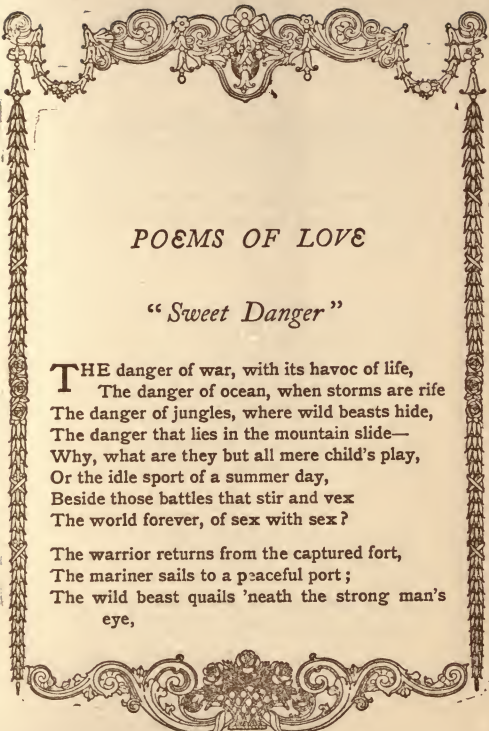
"Fate has offered me a prize,  
Life with love means Paradise.





**“ Life without it is not worth  
All the foolish joys of earth.”**

**So, in spite of all they say,  
I shall name the wedding day.**




POEMS OF LOVE

*“Sweet Danger”*

**T**HE danger of war, with its havoc of life,  
The danger of ocean, when storms are rife  
The danger of jungles, where wild beasts hide,  
The danger that lies in the mountain slide—  
Why, what are they but all mere child's play,  
Or the idle sport of a summer day,  
Beside those battles that stir and vex  
The world forever, of sex with sex?

The warrior returns from the captured fort,  
The mariner sails to a peaceful port;  
The wild beast quails 'neath the strong man's  
eye,




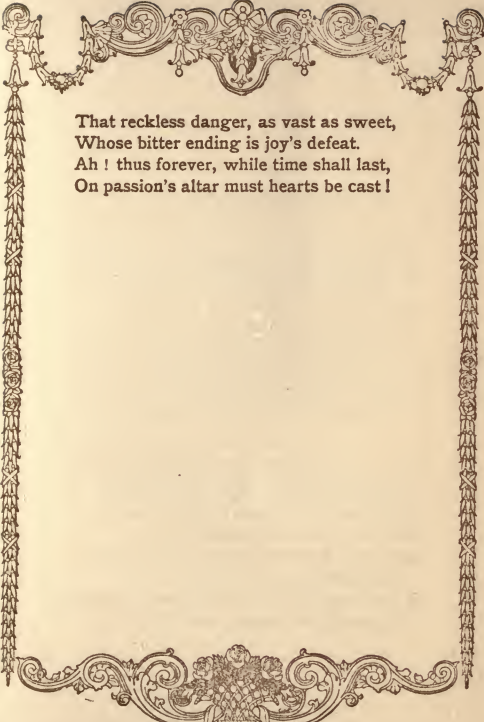
The avalanche passes the traveller by—  
But who can rescue from passion's pyre  
The hearts that were offered to feed its  
fire?

Ah! he who emerges from that fierce flame  
Is scarred with sorrow or blackened with  
shame?


Battle and billow, and beast of prey,  
They only threaten the mortal clay ;  
The soul unfettered can take to wing,  
But the danger of love is another thing.  
Once under the tyrant Passion's control,  
He crushes body, and heart, and soul.  
An hour of rapture, an age of despair,  
Ah! these are the trophies of love's warfare.

And yet forever, since time began,  
Has man dared woman and woman lured  
man  
To that sweet danger that lurks and lies  
In the bloodless battle of eyes with eyes ;






That reckless danger, as vast as sweet,  
Whose bitter ending is joy's defeat.  
Ah ! thus forever, while time shall last,  
On passion's altar must hearts be cast !




*A Maiden's Secret*

**I** HAVE written this day down in my heart  
As the sweetest day in the season ;  
From all of the others I've set it apart—  
But I will not tell you the reason.  
That is my secret—I must not tell ;  
But the skies are soft and tender,  
And never before, I know full well,  
Was the earth so full of splendour.


I sing at my labour the whole day long,  
And my heart is as light as a feather ;  
And there is a reason for my glad song  
Besides the beautiful weather.  
But I will not tell it to you ; and though  
That thrush in the maple heard it,  
And would shout it aloud if he could, I know  
He hasn't the power to word it.






Up, where I was sewing, this morn came one  
Who told me the sweetest stories,  
He said I had stolen my hair from the sun,  
And my eyes from the morning glories.  
Grandmother says that I must not believe  
A word men say, for they flatter ;  
But I'm sure *he* would never try to deceive,  
For he told me—but there—no matter !

Last night I was sad, and the world to me  
Seemed a lonely and dreary dwelling,  
But some one then had not asked me to be—  
There now ! I am almost telling.  
Not another word shall my two lips say,  
I will shut them fast together,  
And never a mortal shall know to-day  
Why my heart is as light as a feather.







*A Baby in the House*

**I** KNEW that baby was hid in that house  
Though I saw no cradle and heard no cry ;  
But the husband was tip-toeing 'round like a  
mouse,  
And the good wife was humming a soft  
lullaby ;  
And there was a look on the face of the mother,  
That I knew could mean only one thing, and no  
other.

The mother, I said to myself, for I knew  
That the woman before me was certainly that ;  
And there lay in the corner a tiny cloth shoe,  
And I saw on a stand such a wee little hat ;  
And the beard of the husband said, plain as could  
be,  
"Two fat chubby hands have been tugging at  
me."








And he took from his pocket a gay picture-book,  
And a dog that would bark, if you pulled on a  
string ;  
And the wife laid them up ; with such a pleased  
look ;  
And I said to myself, " There is no other thing  
But a babe that could bring about all this, and so  
That one is in hiding here somewhere, I know."

I stayed but a moment, and saw nothing more,  
And heard not a sound, yet I know I was  
right ;  
What else could the shoe mean that lay on the  
floor,  
The book and the toy, and the faces so bright ;  
And what made the husband as still as a mouse ?  
I am sure, very sure, there's a babe in that house.















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