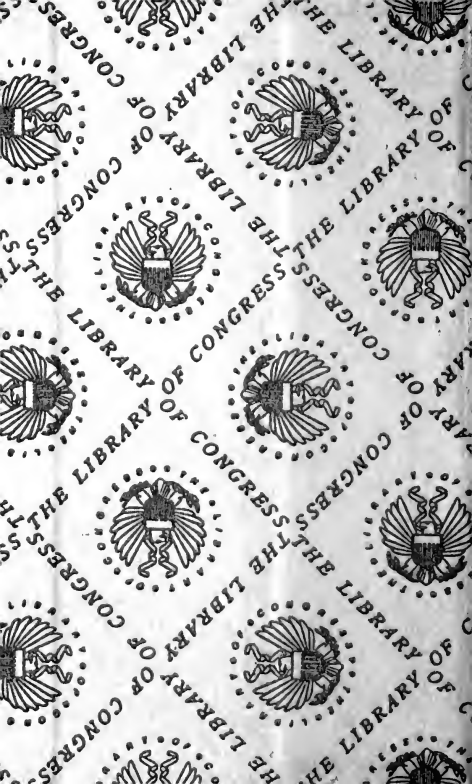
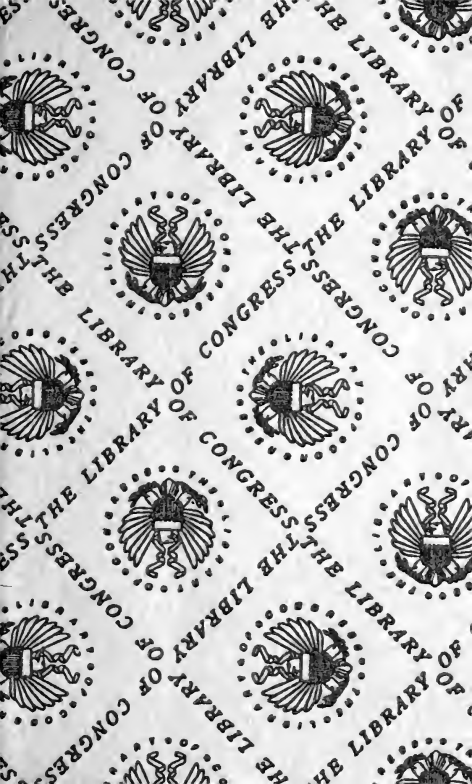


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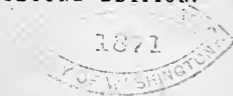
MRS. E. OAKES SMITH.



THE  
POETICAL WRITINGS  
OF  
ELIZABETH OAKES SMITH.

33

SECOND EDITION.



NEW YORK:  
J. S. REDFIELD, CLINTON HALL.

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## P R E F A C E .



THE "Sinless Child and other Poems," by Mrs. SMITH, first published in 1842, was introduced to the public by Mr. JOHN KEESE, editor of "The Poets of America illustrated by her Painters." The volume met with a favorable reception. It is no longer in the market. Since its publication, Mrs. SMITH has written some of her finest pieces. The present more complete and elegant edition of her poetical writings, is issued to meet the general and increasing demand for them.

Mrs. SMITH is a native of Portland, in the state of Maine. Descended, on the father's side, from THOMAS PRINCE, one of the early Puritan governors of the Plymouth colony, and claiming, through the OAKESES, the same early identification with the first European planters of our soil, she may readily be supposed to have that characteristic which is so rarely found among us, *Americanism*; and her writings in their department may be regarded as the genuine expression of an American mind.

At the early age of sixteen, Miss PRINCE was married to Mr. SEBA SMITH, at that time editor of the leading political journal of his native state, and since then well known to his country-

men as the original "*Jack Downing*," whose great popularity has been attested by a score of imitators. The embarrassed affairs of Mr. SMITH, (who, himself a poet, partook with a poet's sanguineness of temper in that noted attempt to settle the wild lands of Maine, which proved so disastrous a speculation to some of the wealthiest families of the state,) first impelled Mrs. SMITH to take up her pen to aid in the support of her children. She had before that period, indeed, given utterance to her poetic sensibilities in several anonymous pieces, which are still much admired. But a shrinking and sensitive modesty forbade her appearing as an author; and though, when in her altered circumstances, she found that her talents might be made available, she did not hesitate, like a true woman, to sacrifice feeling to duty, yet some of her most beautiful prose writings still continue to appear under *Nommes de Plumes*, with which her truly feminine spirit avoids identification.

Seeking expression, yet shrinking from notoriety; and with a full share of that respect for a just fame and appreciation which belongs to every high-toned mind, yet oppressed by its shadow when circumstance is the impelling motive of publication, the writings of Mrs. SMITH might well be supposed to betray great inequality; still in her many contributions to the magazines, it is remarkable how few of her pieces display the usual carelessness and haste of magazine articles. As an essayist especially, while

graceful and lively, she is compact and vigorous ; while through poems, essays, tales, and criticisms, (for her industrious pen seems equally skilful and happy in each of these departments of literature,) through all her manifold writings, indeed, there runs the same beautiful vein of philosophy, viz : that *Truth* and *Goodness* of themselves impart a holy light to the mind, which gives it a power far above mere *intellectuality* ; that the highest order of human intelligence springs from the *moral*, and not the reasoning faculties.

Mrs. SMITH'S most popular poem is "The Acorn," which, though inferior in high inspiration to "The Sinless Child," is by many preferred for its happy play of fancy and proper finish. Her sonnets, of which she has written many, have not yet been as much admired as "The April Rain," "The Brook," and other fugitive pieces, which we find in many popular collections. I doubt, indeed, whether *they* will ever attain the popularity of these "unconsidered trifles," though they indicate concentrated poetical power of a very high, possibly of the very highest order. Not so, however, with "The Sinless Child." Works of *bad* taste will often captivate the uncultivated many ; works of *mere* taste as often delight the uncultivated few ; but works of genius appeal to the universal mind.

The simplicity of diction, and pervading beauty and elevation of thought, which are the chief characteristics of "The Sinless Child,"

bring it undoubtedly within the last category. And why do such writings seize at once on the feelings of every class? Wherein lies this power of genius to wake a response in society? Is it the force of a high *will*, fusing feeble natures, and stamping them for the moment with an impress of its own? Or is it that in every heart, unless thoroughly corrupted by the world, in every mind, unless completely encrusted by cant, there lurks an inward sense of the simple, the beautiful, and the true; an instinctive perception of excellence which is both more unerring and more universal than that of mere intellect. Such is the cheering view of humanity enforced in "The Sinless Child," and the reception of it is evidence of the truth of the doctrine it so finely shadows forth. "It is a work" (says a discriminating critic) "which demands more in its composition than mere imagination or intellect could supply;" and I may add that the writer, in unconsciously picturing the *actual* graces of her own mind, has made an irresistible appeal to the *ideal* of soul-loveliness in the minds of her readers. She comes before us like the florist in Arabian story, whose magic vase produced a plant of such simple, yet perfect beauty, that the multitude were in raptures from the familiar field associations of childhood which it called forth, while the skill of the learned alone detected the unique rarity of the enchanting flower.

RUFUS W. GRISWOLD.

PHILADELPHIA, *June 10th*, 1845.

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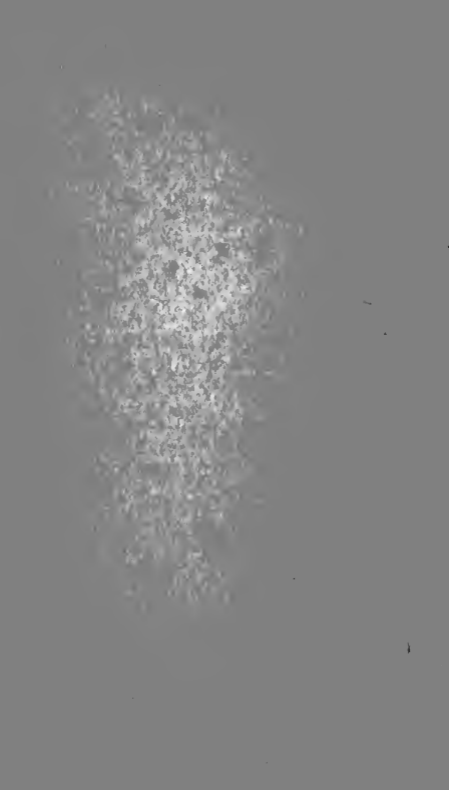
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## THE SINLESS CHILD.

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“I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father, which is in heaven.”—*Matthew*, xviii. 10.



THE  
SINLESS CHILD.

~~~~~  
INSCRIPTION.

SWEET EVA! shall I send thee forth, to other  
    hearts to speak?  
With all thy timidness and love companionship  
    to seek?  
Send thee with all thy abstract ways, thy more  
    than earthly tone—  
An exile, dearest, send thee forth, thou, who art  
    all mine own!  
Thou art my spirit's cherished dream, its pure  
    ideal birth;  
And thou hast nestled in my heart, with love  
    that's not of earth.  
Alas! for I have failed, methinks, thy mystic life  
    to trace;  
Thy holiness of thought and soul, thy wild en-  
    chanting grace.

Thou dwellest still within my heart, thy beauty  
all unsung ;

Like bells that wake the village ear, by echo  
sweeter rung ;

And as thy graces one by one upon my fancy steal,  
There lingereth yet another grace the soul alone  
can feel.

With thee I've wandered, cherished one, at  
twilight's dreamy hour,

To learn the language of the bird, the mystery  
of the flower ;

And gloomy must that sorrow be, which thou  
couldst not dispel,

As thoughtfully we loitered on by stream or shel-  
tered dell.

Thou fond Ideal ! vital made, the trusting, earn-  
est, true ;

Who fostered sacred, undefiled, my heart's pure,  
youthful dew ;

Thou woman-soul, all tender, meek, thou wilt  
not leave me now

To bear alone the weary thoughts that stamp an  
aching brow !

Yet go ! I may not say farewell, for thou wilt  
not forsake,

Thou'lt linger, Eva, wilt thou not, all hallowed  
thoughts to wake ?

Then go ; and speak to kindred hearts in purity  
and truth ;

And win the spirit back again, to Love, and  
Peace, and Youth.

## PART I.

EVA, a simple cottage maiden, given to the world in the widowhood of one parent, and the angelic existence of the other, like a bud developed amid the sad sweet sunshine of autumn, when its sister-flowers are all sleeping, is found from her birth to be as meek and gentle as are those pale flowers that look imploringly upon us, blooming as they do apart from the season destined for their existence, and when those that should hold tender companionship with them have ceased to be. She is gifted with the power of interpreting the beautiful mysteries of our earth. The delicate pencilling traced upon the petals of the flowers, she finds full of gentle wisdom, as well as beauty. The song of the bird is not merely the gushing forth of a nature too full of blessedness to be silent, but she finds it responsive to the great harp of the universe, whose every tone is wisdom and goodness. The humblest plant, the simplest insect, is each alive with truth. More than this, she beholds a divine agency in all things, carrying on the great purposes of love and wisdom by the aid of innumerable happy spirits, each delighting in the part assigned it. She sees the world, not merely with mortal eyes, but looks within to the pure internal life, of which the outward is but a type. Her mother, endowed with ordinary perceptions, fails to understand the high

spiritual character of her daughter, but feels daily the truthfulness and purity of her life. The neighbors, too, feel that Eva is unlike her sex only in greater truth and elevation.

WHILOM ago, in lowly life,  
Young Eva lived and smiled,  
A fair-haired girl, of wondrous truth,  
And blameless from a child.  
Gentle she was, and full of love,  
With voice exceeding sweet,  
And eyes of dove-like tenderness,  
Where joy and sadness meet.

No Father's lip her brow had kissed,  
Or breathed for her a prayer ;  
The widowed breast on which she slept,  
Was full of doubt and care ;  
And oft was Eva's little cheek  
Heaved by her mother's sigh—  
And oft the widow shrunk in fear  
From her sweet baby's eye,

For she would lift her pillowed head  
To look within her face,  
With something of reproachfulness,  
As well as infant grace,—  
A trembling lip, an earnest eye,  
Half smiling, half in tears,  
As she would seek to comprehend  
The secret of her fears.

Her ways were gentle while a babe,  
With calm and tranquil eye,  
That turned instinctively to seek  
The blueness of the sky.  
A holy smile was on her lip  
Whenever sleep was there,  
She slept, as sleeps the blossom, hushed  
Amid the silent air.

And ere she left with tottling steps  
The low-roofed cottage door,  
The beetle and the cricket loved  
The young child on the floor ;  
For every insect dwelt secure  
Where little Eva played ;  
And piped for her its blithest song  
When she in greenwood strayed ;

With wing of gauze and mailèd coat  
They gathered round her feet,  
Rejoiced, as are all gladsome things,  
A truthful soul to greet.  
They taught her infant lips to sing  
With them a hymn of praise,  
The song that in the woods is heard,  
Through the long summer days.

And everywhere the child was traced  
By snatches of wild song,  
That marked her feet along the vale,  
Or hill-side, fleet and strong.

She knew the haunts of every bird—  
Where bloomed the sheltered flower,  
So sheltered, that the searching frost  
Might scarcely find its bower.

No loneliness young Eva knew,  
Though playmates she had none ;  
Such sweet companionship was hers,  
She could not be alone ;  
For everything in earth or sky  
Caressed the little child,  
The joyous bird upon the wing,  
The blossom in the wild :

Much dwelt she on the green hill-side,  
And under forest tree ;  
Beside the running, babbling brook,  
Where lithe trout sported free—  
She saw them dart, like stringed gems,  
Where the tangled roots were deep,  
And learned that love for evermore  
The heart will joyful keep.

She loved all simple flowers that spring  
In grove or sun-lit dell,  
And of each streak and varied hue  
Would pretty meanings tell.  
For her a language was impressed  
On every leaf that grew,  
And lines revealing brighter worlds  
That seraph fingers drew.



The opening bud that lightly swung  
Upon the dewy air,  
Moved in its very sportiveness  
Beneath angelic care ;  
She saw that pearly fingers oped  
Each curved and painted leaf,  
And where the canker-worm had been  
Were looks of angel grief.

Each tiny leaf became a scroll  
Inscribed with holy truth,  
A lesson that around the heart  
Should keep the dew of youth ;  
Bright missals from angelic throngs  
In every by-way left,  
How were the earth of glory shorn,  
Were it of flowers bereft !

They tremble on the Alpine height ;  
The fissured rock they press ;  
The desert wild, with heat and sand,  
Shares too, their blessedness,  
And wheresoe'er the weary heart  
Turns in its dim despair,  
The meek-eyed blossom upward looks  
Inviting it to prayer.

The widow's cot was rude and low,  
The sloping roof moss-grown ;  
And it would seem its quietude  
To every bird were known,

The winding vine quaint tendrils wove  
Round roof and oaken door,  
And by the flickering light, the leaves  
Were painted on the floor.

No noxious reptile ever there  
A kindred being sought,  
The good and beautiful alone  
Delighted in the spot.  
The very winds were hushed to peace  
Within the quiet dell,  
Or murmured through the rustling bough  
Like breathings of a shell.

The red-breast sang from sheltering tree,  
Gay blossoms clustered round,  
And one small brook came dancing by,  
With a sweet tinkling sound.  
Staining the far-off meadow green  
It leaped a rocky dell  
And resting by the cottage door,  
In liquid music fell.

Upon its breast white lilies slept,  
Of pure and wax-like hue,  
And brilliant flowers upon the marge  
Luxuriantly grew.  
They were of rare and changeless birth,  
Nor needed toil nor care ;  
And many marvelled earth could yield  
Aught so exceeding fair.

Young Eva said, all noisome weeds  
Would pass from earth away,  
When virtue in the human heart  
Held its predestined sway ;  
Exalted thoughts were alway hers,  
Some deemed them strange and wild ;  
And hence in all the hamlets round,  
Her name of SINLESS CHILD.

Her mother told how Eva's lips  
Had never falsehood known ;  
No angry word had ever marred  
The music of their tone.  
And truth spake out in every line  
Of her fair tranquil face,  
Where Love and Peace, twin-dwelling pair,  
Had found a resting-place.

She felt the freedom and the light  
The pure in heart may know—  
Whose blessed privilege it is  
To walk with God below ;  
Who see a hidden beauty traced,  
That others may not see,  
Who feel a life within the heart,  
And love and mystery.

## PART II.

THE widow, accustomed to forms, and content with the faith in which she has been reared, a faith which is habitual, rather than earnest and soul-requiring, leaves Eva to learn the wants and tendencies of the soul, by observing the harmony and beauty of the external world. Even from infancy she seems to have penetrated the spiritual through the material; to have beheld the heavenly, not through a glass darkly, but face to face, by means of that singleness and truth, that looks within the veil. To the pure in heart alone is the promise, "They shall see God."

7

UNTIRING all the weary day  
The widow toiled with care,  
And scarcely cleared her furrowed brow  
When came the hour of prayer;  
The voices, that on every side,  
The prisoned soul call forth,  
And bid it in its freedom walk,  
Rejoicing in the earth;

Fall idly on a deafened ear,  
A heart untaught to thrill  
When music gusheth from the bird,  
Or from the crystal rill;  
She moves unheeding by the flower  
With its ministry of love,  
And feels no sweet companionship,  
With silent stars above.

Alas! that round the human soul  
The cords of earth should bind,  
That they should bind in darkness down  
The light—discerning mind—  
That all its freshness, freedom, gone,  
Its destiny forgot,  
It should, in gloomy discontent,  
Bewail its bitter lot.

But Eva, while she turned the wheel,  
Or toiled in homely guise,  
With buoyant life was all abroad,  
Beneath the pleasant skies;  
And sang all day from lightsome heart,  
From joy that in her dwelt,  
That evermore the soul is free,  
To go where joy is felt.

All lowly and familiar things  
In earth, or air, or sky,  
A lesson brought to Eva's mind  
Of import deep and high;

She learned, from blossom in the wild,  
From bird upon the wing,  
From silence and the midnight stars,  
Truth dwells in everything.

The careless winds that round her played  
Brought voices to her ear,  
But Eva, pure in thought and soul,  
Dreamed never once of fear—  
The whispered words of angel lips  
She heard in forest wild,  
And many a holy spell they wrought,  
About the Sinless Child.

And much she loved the forest walk,  
Where round the shadows fell,  
The solitude of mountain height,  
Or green and lowly dell;  
The brook dispensing verdure round,  
And singing on its way,  
Now coyly hid in fringe of green,  
Now wild in sparkling play.

She early marked the butterfly,  
That gay, mysterious thing,  
That, bursting from its prison-house  
Appeared on golden wing;  
It had no voice to speak delight,  
Yet on the floweret's breast,  
She saw it mute and motionless,  
In long, long rapture rest.

She said, that while the little shroud  
Beneath the casement hung,  
A kindly spirit lingered near,  
As dimly there it swung ;  
That music sweet and low was heard  
To hail the perfect life,  
And Eva felt that insect strange  
With wondrous truth was rife.

It crawled no more a sluggish thing  
Upon the lowly earth ;  
A brief, brief sleep, and then she saw  
A new and radiant birth ;  
And thus she learned without a doubt,  
That man from death would rise,  
As did the butterfly on wings,  
To claim its native skies.

The rainbow, bending o'er the storm,  
A beauteous language told ;  
For angels, twined with loving arms,  
She plainly might behold,  
And in their glorious robes they bent  
To earth in wondrous love,  
As they would lure the human soul  
To brighter things above.

The bird would leave the rocking branch  
Upon her hand to sing,  
And upward turn its fearless eye  
And plume its glossy wing,

And Eva listened to the song,  
Till all the sense concealed  
In that deep gushing forth of joy,  
Became to her revealed.

And when the bird a nest would build,  
A spirit from above  
Directed all the pretty work,  
And filled its heart with love.  
And she within the nest would peep  
The colored eggs to see,  
But never touch the dainty things,  
For a thoughtful child was she.

Much Eva loved the twilight hour,  
When shadows gather round,  
And softer sings the little bird,  
And insect from the ground ;  
She felt that this within the heart  
Must be the hour of prayer,  
For even earth in quietude  
Did own its Maker there.

The still moon in the saffron sky  
Hung out her silver thread,  
And the bannered clouds in gorgeous folds  
A mantle round her spread.  
The gentle stars came smiling down  
Upon the brilliant sky,  
That looked a meet and glorious dome,  
For worship pure and high ;



And Eva lingered, though the gloom  
Had deepened into shade ;  
And many thought that spirits came  
To teach the Sinless Maid,  
For oft her mother sought the child  
Amid the forest glade,  
And marvelled that in darksome glen,  
So tranquilly she stayed.

For every jagged limb to her  
A shadowy semblance hath,  
Of spectres and distorted shapes,  
That frown upon her path,  
And mock her with their hideous eyes ;  
For when the soul is blind  
To freedom, truth, and inward light,  
Vague fears debase the mind :

But Eva like a dreamer waked,  
Looked off upon the hill,  
And murmured words of strange, sweet sound,  
As if there lingered still  
Ethereal forms with whom she talked,  
Unseen by all beside ;  
And she with earnest looks, besought  
The vision to abide.

' Oh Mother ! Mother ! do not speak,  
Or all will pass away,  
The spirits leave the green-hill side,  
Where light the breezes play ;

They sport no more by ringing brook,  
With daisy dreaming by;  
Nor float upon the fleecy cloud  
That steals along the sky.

It grieves me much they never will  
A human look abide,  
But veil themselves in silver mist  
By vale or mountain side.  
I feel their presence round me still,  
Though none to sight appear;  
I feel the motion of their wings,  
Their whispered language hear.

With silvery robe, and wings outspread,  
They passed me even now;  
And gems and starry diadem  
Decked every radiant brow.  
Intent were each on some kind work  
Of pity or of love,  
Dispensing from their healing wings  
The blessings from above.

With downy pinion they enfold  
The heart surcharged with wo,  
And fan with balmy wing the eye  
Whence floods of sorrow flow;  
They bear, in golden censers up,  
That sacred gift, a tear;  
By which is registered the griefs,  
Hearts may have suffered here.

No inward pang, no yearning love  
Is lost to human hearts,  
No anguish that the spirit feels,  
When bright-winged hope departs;  
Though in the mystery of life  
Discordant powers prevail;  
That life itself be weariness,  
And sympathy may fail :

Yet all becomes a discipline,  
To lure us to the sky;  
And angels bear the good it brings  
With fostering care on high,  
Though human hearts may weary grow,  
And sink to toil-spent sleep,  
And we are left in solitude,  
And agony to weep :

Yet *they* with ministering zeal,  
The cup of healing bring,  
And bear our love and gratitude  
Away, on heavenward wing;  
And thus the inner life is wrought,  
The blending earth and heaven;  
The love more earnest in its glow,  
Where much has been forgiven!

I would, dear Mother, thou couldst see  
Within this darksome veil,  
That hides the spirit-land from thee,  
And makes our sunshine pale ;

The toil of earth, its doubt and care,  
Would trifles seem to thee ;  
Repose would rest upon thy soul.  
And holy mystery.

Thou wouldst behold protecting care  
To shield thee on thy way,  
And ministers to guard thy feet,  
Lest erring, they should stray ;  
And order, sympathy, and love,  
Would open to thine eye,  
From simplest creature of the earth  
To seraph throned on high.

E'en now I marked a radiant throng,  
On soft wing sailing by,  
To sooth with hope the trembling heart,  
And cheer the dying eye ;  
They smiling passed the lesser sprites,  
Each on his work intent ;  
And love and holy joy I saw  
In every face were blent.

The tender violets bent in smiles  
To elves that sported nigh,  
Tossing the drops of fragrant dew  
To scent the evening sky.  
They kissed the rose in love and mirth,  
And its petals fairer grew,  
A shower of pearly dust they brought,  
And o'er the lily threw.

A host flew round the mowing field,  
And they were showering down  
The cooling spray on the early grass,  
Like diamonds o'er it thrown ;  
They gemmed each leaf and quivering spear  
With pearls of liquid dew,  
And bathed the stately forest tree,  
Till his robe was fresh and new.

I saw a meek-eyed creature curve  
The tulip's painted cup,  
And bless with one soft kiss the urn,  
Then fold the petals up.  
A finger rocked the young bird's nest,  
As high on a branch it hung.  
And the gleaming night-dew rattled down,  
Where the old dry leaf was flung.

Each and all, as its task is done,  
Soars up with a joyous eye,  
Bearing aloft some treasured gift—  
An offering ON HIGH.  
They bear the breath of the odorous flower,  
The sound of the bright-sea shell ;  
And thus they add to the holy joys  
Of the home where spirits dwell.

## PART III.

THE grace of the soul is sure to impart expressiveness and beauty to the face. It must beam through its external veil ; and daily, as the material becomes subordinate to the spiritual, will its transparency increase. Eva was lovely, for the spirit of love folded its wings upon her breast. All nature administered to her beauty ; and angelic teachings revealed whence came the power that winneth all hearts. The mother is aware of the spell resting upon her daughter, or rather, that which seemed a spell to her, but which, in truth, was nothing more than fidelity to the rights of the soul, obedience to the voice uttered in that holy of holies. Unable to comprehend the truthfulness of her character, she almost recoils from its gentle revealings. Alas ! that to assimilate to the good and beautiful should debar us from human sympathy ! Eva walked in an atmosphere of light, and images of surpassing sweetness were ever presented to her eye. The dark and distorted shapes that haunt the vision of the unenlightened and the erring, dared not approach her. She wept over the blindness of her mother, and tenderly revealed to her the great truths that pressed upon her own mind, and the freedom and the light in which the soul might be preserved. She blamed not the errors into which weak humanity is prone to be betrayed,

but deplored that it should thus blind its own spiritual vision, and thus impress dark and ineffaceable characters upon the soul; thus sink, where it should soar.

As years passed on, no wonder, each  
An inward grace revealed ;  
For where the soul is peace and love,  
It may not be concealed.  
They stamp a beauty on the brow,  
A softness on the face,  
And give to every wavy line  
A tenderness and grace.

Long golden hair in many curls  
Waved o'er young Eva's brow ;  
Imparting depth to her soft eye,  
And pressed her neck of snow :  
Her cheek was pale with lofty thought,  
And calm her maiden air ;  
And all who heard her birdlike voice,  
Felt harmony was there.

For winning were her household ways,  
Her step was prompt and light,  
To save her mother's weary tread,  
Till came the welcome night ;  
And though the toil might useless be,  
The housewife's busy skill,  
Enough for Eva that it bore  
Inscribed a mother's will ;

All humble things exalted grow  
By sentiment impressed—  
The love that bathes the way-worn feet,  
Or leans upon the breast ;  
For love, whate'er the offering be,  
Lives in a hallowed air,  
And holy hearts before its shrine,  
Alone may worship there.

Young Eva's cheek was lily pale,  
Her look was scarce of earth,  
And doubtingly the mother spoke,  
Who gave to Eva birth.  
“ O Eva, leave thy thoughtful ways,  
And dance and sing, my child ;  
Thy pallid cheek is tinged with blue,  
Thy words are strange and wild.

Thy father died—a widow left,  
An orphan birth was thine,  
I longed to see thy infant eyes  
Look upward into mine.  
I hoped upon thy sweet young face,  
Thy father's look to see ;  
But Eva, Eva, sadly strange  
Are all thy ways to me.

While yet a child, thy look would hold  
Communion with the sky ;  
Too tranquil is thy maiden air,  
The glances of thine eye



Are such as make me turn away,  
E'en with a shuddering dread,  
As if my very soul might be  
By thy pure spirit read."

Slow swelled a tear from Eva's lid,  
She kissed her mother's cheek,  
She answered with an earnest look,  
And accents low and meek:—  
"Dear mother, why should mortals seek  
Emotions to conceal?  
As if to be revealed were worse  
Than inwardly to feel.

The human eye I may not fear,  
It is the light within,  
That traces on the growing soul  
All thought, and every sin.  
That mystic book, the human soul,  
Where every trace remains,  
The record of all thoughts and deeds,  
The record of all stains.

Dear mother! in ourselves is hid  
The holy spirit-land,  
Where thought, the flaming cherub, stands  
With its relentless brand;  
We feel the pang when that dread sword  
Inscribes the hidden sin,  
And turneth everywhere to guard  
The paradise within."

“Nay, Eva, leave these solemn words,  
Fit for a churchman’s tongue,  
And let me see thee deck thy hair,  
A maiden blithe and young.  
When others win admiring eyes,  
And looks that speak of love,  
Why dost thou stand in thoughtful guise?  
Why cold and silent move?”

Thy beauty sure should win for thee  
Full many a lover’s sigh,  
But on thy brow there is no pride,  
Nor in thy placid eye.  
Dear Eva! learn to look and love,  
And claim a lover’s prayer,  
Thou art too cold for one so young,  
So gentle and so fair.”

“Nay, mother! I must be alone,  
With no companion here,  
None, none to joy when I am glad,  
With me to shed a tear:  
For who will clasp a maiden’s hand  
In grot or sheltering grove,  
If one unearthly gift debar  
From sympathy and love!”

Such gift is mine, the gift of thought,  
Whence all will shrink away,  
E’en thou from thy poor child dost turn,  
With doubting and dismay.

And who shall love, and who shall trust,  
Since she who gave me birth,  
Knows not the child that prattled once  
Beside her lonely hearth?

I would I were, for thy dear sake,  
What thou wouldst have me be;  
Thou dost not comprehend the bliss  
That's given unto me;  
That union of the thought and soul  
With all that's good and bright,  
The blessedness of earth and sky,  
The growing truth and light.

That reading of all hidden things  
The mystery of life,  
Its many hopes, its many fears,  
The sorrow and the strife.  
A spirit to behold in all,  
To guide, admonish, cheer,  
For ever in all time and place,  
To feel an angel near."

"Dear Eva! lean upon my breast,  
And let me press thy hand,  
That I may hear thee talk awhile  
Of thy own spirit-land.  
And yet I would the pleasant sun  
Were shining in the sky,  
The blithe birds singing through the air,  
And busy life, were by.

For when in converse, like to this,  
Thy low, sweet voice I hear,  
Strange shudderings o'er my senses creep,  
Like touch of spirits near.  
How fearful grow familiar things,  
In silence and the night,  
The cricket piping in the hearth,  
Half fills me with affright!

I hear the old trees creak and sway,  
And shiver in the blast;  
I hear the wailing of the wind,  
As if the dead swept past.  
Dear Eva! 'tis a world of gloom,  
The grave is dark and drear,  
We scarce begin to taste of life  
Ere death is standing near."

Then Eva kissed her mother's cheek,  
And looked with saddened smile,  
Upon her terror-stricken face,  
And talked with her the while;  
And O! her face was pale and sweet,  
Though deep, deep thought was there,  
And sadly calm her low-toned voice  
For one so young and fair.

"Nay, mother, everywhere is hid  
A beauty and delight,  
The shadow lies upon the heart,  
The gloom upon the sight;

Send but the spirit on its way  
Communion high to hold,  
And bursting from the earth and sky,  
A glory we behold!

And did we but our primal state  
Of purity retain,  
We might, as in our Eden days,  
With angels walk again.  
And memories strange of other times  
Would break upon the mind,  
The linkings, that the present join,  
To what is left behind.

The little child at dawn of life  
A holy impress bears,  
The signet-mark by Heaven affixed  
Upon his forehead wears ;  
And naught that impress can efface,  
Save his own wilful sin,  
Which first begins to draw the veil  
That shuts the spirit in.

And one by one his lights decay,  
His visions tend to earth,  
Till all those holy forms have fled  
That gathered round his birth ;  
Or dim and faintly may they come,  
Like memories of a dream.  
Or come to blanch his cheek with fear,  
So shadow-like they seem.

And thus all doubtingly he lives  
Amid his gloomy fears,  
And feels within his inmost soul,  
Earth is a vale of tears:  
And scarce his darkened thoughts may trace  
The mystery within ;  
For faintly gleams the spirit forth  
When shadowed o'er by sin.

Unrobed, majestic, should the soul  
Before its God appear,  
Undimmed the image He affixed,  
Unknown to doubt or fear ;  
And open converse should it hold,  
With meek and trusting brow ;  
Such as man was in Paradise,  
He may be even now.

But when the deathless soul is sunk  
To depths of guilt and wo,  
It then a dark communion holds  
With spirits from below."  
And Eva shuddered as she told  
How every heaven-born trace  
Of goodness in the human soul  
Might wickedness efface.

Alas! unknowing what he doth,  
A judgment-seat man rears,  
A stern tribunal throned within,  
Before which he appears ;

And conscience, minister of wrath,  
Approves him or condemns ;  
He knoweth not the fearful risk,  
Who inward light contemns.

“ O veil thy face, pure child of God,”  
With solemn tone she said,  
“ And judge not thou, but lowly weep,  
That virtue should be dead !  
Weep thou with prayer and holy fear,  
That o'er thy brother's soul,  
Effacing life, and light, and love,  
Polluting waves should roll.

Weep for the fettered slave of sense,  
For passion's minion weep !  
For him who nurtureth the worm,  
In death that may not sleep ;  
And tears of blood, if it may be,  
For him, who plunged in guilt,  
Perils his own and victim's soul,  
When human blood is spilt.

For him no glory may abide  
In earth or tranquil sky ;  
Fearful to him the human face,  
The searching human eye.  
A light beams on him everywhere ;  
Revealing in its ray,  
An erring, terror-stricken soul,  
Launched from its orb away.

Turn where he will, all day he meets  
That cold and leaden stare ;  
His victim, pale, and bathed in blood,  
Is with him everywhere ;  
He sees that shape upon the cloud,  
It glares from out the brook,  
The mist upon the mountain side,  
Assumes that fearful look.

He sees, in every simple flower,  
Those dying eyes gleam out ;  
And starts to hear a dying groan,  
Amid some merry shout.  
The phantom comes to chill the warmth,  
Of every sunlight ray,  
He feels it slowly glide along,  
Where forest shadows play.

And when the solemn night comes down,  
With silence dark and drear,  
His cardling blood and rising hair  
Attest the victim near.  
With hideous dreams and terrors wild,  
His brain from sleep is kept,  
For on his pillow, side by side,  
A gory form hath slept."

"O Eva, Eva, say no more,  
For I am filled with fear ;  
Dim shadows move along the wall ;  
Dost thou not see them here ?—



Dost thou not mark the gleams of light,  
The shadowy forms move by?"  
"Yes, mother, beautiful to see!  
And they are always nigh.

O, would the veil for thee were raised  
That hides the spirit-land,  
For we are spirits draped in flesh,  
Communing with that band ;  
And it were weariness to me,  
Were only human eyes  
To meet my own with tenderness,  
In earth or pleasant skies."



## PART IV.

THE widow, awe-struck at the revealments of her daughter, is desirous to learn more ; for it is the nature of the soul to search into its own mysteries : however dim may be its spiritual perception, it still earnestly seeks to look into the deep and the hidden. The light is within itself, and it becomes more and more clear at every step of its progress, in search of the true and the beautiful. The widow, hardly discerning this light, which is to grow brighter and brighter to the perfect day, calls for the material lights that minister to the external eye ; that thus she may be hid from those other lights that delight the vision of her child. Eva tells of that mystic book—the human soul—upon which, thoughts, shaped into deeds, whether externally, or only in its own secret chambers, inscribe a character that must be eternal. But it is not every character that is thus clearly defined as good or evil. Few, indeed, seize upon thought, and bring its properties palpably before them. Impressions are allowed to come and go with a sort of lethargic indifference, leaving no definite lines behind, but only a moral haziness. The widow recollects the story of old Richard, and Eva

enlarges upon the power of conscience, that fearful judge placed by the Infinite within the soul, with the two-fold power of decision and punishment.

“ THEN trim the lights, my strange, strange child,  
And let the fagots glow ;  
For more of these mysterious things  
I fear, yet long, to know.  
I glory in thy lofty thought,  
Thy beauty and thy worth,  
But, Eva, I should love thee more,  
Didst thou seem more like earth.”

A pang her words poor Eva gave,  
And tears were in her eye,  
She kissed her mother's anxious brow,  
And answered with a sigh ;  
“ Alas ! I may not hope on earth  
Companionship to find,  
Alone must be the pure in heart,  
Alone the high in mind !

We toil for earth, its shadowy veil  
Envelops soul and thought,  
And hides that discipline and life,  
Within our being wrought.  
We chain the thought, we shroud the soul,  
And backward turn our glance,  
When onward should the vision be,  
And upward its advance.

I may not scorn the spirit's rights,  
For I have seen it rise,  
All written o'er with thought, thought, thought,  
As with a thousand eyes!  
The records dark of other years,  
All uneffaced remain;  
The unchecked wish forgotten long,  
With its eternal stain.

Recorded thoughts, recorded deeds,  
A character attest,  
No garment hides the startling truth,  
Nor screens the naked breast.  
The thought, fore-shaping evil deeds,  
The spirit may not hide,  
It stands amid a searching light,  
Which sin may not abide.

And never may the spirit turn  
From that effulgent ray,  
It lives for ever in the glare  
Of an eternal day;  
Lives in that penetrating light,  
A kindred glow to raise,  
Or every withering sin to trace  
Within its scorching blaze.

Few, few the shapely temple rear,  
For God's abiding place—  
That mystic temple where no sound  
Within the hallowed space

Reveals the skill of builder's hand ;  
Yet with a silent care  
The holy temple riseth up,  
And God is dwelling there. (*a*)

Then weep not when the infant lies  
In its small grave to rest,  
With scented flowers springing forth  
From out its quiet breast ;  
A pure, pure soul to earth was given,  
Yet may not thus remain ;  
Rejoice that it is rendered back,  
Without a single stain.

Bright cherubs bear the babe away  
With many a fond embrace,  
And beauty, all unknown to earth,  
Upon its features trace.  
They teach it knowledge from the fount,  
And holy truth and love ;  
The songs of praise the infant learns,  
As angels sing above."

The widow rose, and on the blaze  
The crackling fagots threw—  
And then to her maternal breast  
Her gentle daughter drew.  
"Dear Eva! when old Richard died,  
In madness fierce and wild,  
Why did he in his phrensy rave  
About a murdered child!"

“ Dear mother, I have something heard  
Of Richard’s fearful life,  
Hints of a child that disappeared,  
And of heart-broken wife—  
If thou the story wilt relate,  
A light will on me grow  
That I shall feel if guilt were his  
Or only common wo.”

THE STORY OF OLD RICHARD.

“ HE died in beggary and rags, friendless, and  
gray, and old ;  
Yet he was once a thriving man, light-hearted  
too, I’m told.  
Dark deeds were whispered years ago, but nothing  
came to light ;  
He seemed the victim of a spell, that nothing  
would go right.

His young wife died, and her last words were  
breathed to him alone,  
But ’twas a piteous sound to hear her faint,  
heart-rending moan.  
Some thought, in dreams he had divulged a se-  
cret hidden crime,  
Which she concealed with breaking heart, unto  
her dying time.”

“ Ah, mother, tis a fearful thing,  
When human bonds unite  
Unwedded hearts, and they are doomed  
For ever, day and night,

Companionship to hold,  
Yet feeling every hour,  
A beauty fading from the earth,  
Thought losing half its power."

"From that day forth he never smiled; morose  
and silent grown,  
He wandered unfrequented ways, a moody man  
and lone.  
The schoolboy shuddered in the wood, when he  
old Richard passed,  
And hurried on, while fearful looks he o'er his  
shoulder cast.

And naught could lure him from his mood, save  
his own trusting boy,  
Who climbed the silent father's neck, with min-  
istry of joy;  
That gentle boy, unlike a child, companions  
never sought,  
Content to share his father's crust, his father's  
gloomy lot.

With weary foot and tattered robe, beside him,  
day by day,  
He roamed the forest and the hill, and o'er the  
rough highway;  
And he would prattle all the time of things to  
childhood sweet;  
Of singing bird or lovely flower, that sprang be-  
neath their feet.

Sometimes he chid the moody man, with childhood's fond appeal :—

' Dear father, talk to me awhile, how very lone I feel !

My mother used to smile so sad, and talk and kiss my cheek,

And sing to me such pretty songs ; so low and gently speak.'

Then Richard took him in his arms with passionate embrace,

And with an aching tenderness he gazed upon his face ;—

Tears rushed into his hollow eyes, he murmured soft and wild,

And kissed with more than woman's love the fond but frightened child.

He died, that worn and weary boy ; and they that saw him die,

Said on his father's rigid brow was fixed his fading eye.

His little stiffening hand was laid within poor Richard's grasp ;—

And when he stooped for one last kiss, he took his dying gasp.

It crazed his brain—poor Richard rose a maniac fierce and wild,

Who mouthed and muttered everywhere, about a murdered child."



“And well he might,” young Eva said,  
“For conscience day by day,  
Commenced that retribution here,  
That filled him with dismay.  
A girl beguiled in her young years  
From all of youthful joy,  
And unto solitary life,  
Is doomed her stricken boy.”

Nor was this all the widow said, for in his early  
youth,  
There was a tale of love and wrong, of vows  
and perjured truth.  
The storm I do remember well that brought the  
bones to light;  
I was a maiden then myself, with curly hair and  
bright.

Unwedded, but a mother grown, poor Lucy  
pressed her child,  
With blushing cheek and drooping lid, and lip  
that never smiled.  
Their wants were few; but Richard's hand  
must buy them daily bread,  
And fain would Lucy have been laid in silence  
with the dead.

For want, and scorn, and blighted fame, had  
done the work of years,  
And oft she knelt in lowly prayer, in penitence  
and tears;

That undesired child of shame, brought comfort  
to her heart,  
A childlike smile to her pale lip, by its sweet  
baby art.

And yet, as years their passage told, faint shad-  
ows slowly crept  
Upon the blighted maiden's mind, and oft she  
knelt and wept  
Unknowing why, her wavy form so thin and  
reed-like grew,  
And so appealing her blue eyes, they tears from  
others drew.

Years passed away, and Lucy's child, a noble  
stripling grown,  
A daring boy with chestnut hair, and eyes of  
changeful brown,  
Had won the love of every heart, so gentle was  
his air,  
All felt, whate'er might be his birth, a manly  
soul was there.

The boy was missing, none could tell where  
last he had been seen ;  
They searched the river many a day, and every  
forest screen ;  
But never more his filial voice poor Lucy's heart  
might cheer ;  
Lorn in her grief and dull with wo, she never  
shed a tear.

And every day, whate'er the sky, with head up-  
on her knees,  
And hair neglected, streaming out upon the  
passing breeze,  
She sat beneath a slender tree that near the riv-  
er grew,  
And on the stream its pendent limbs their pen-  
ciled shadows threw.

The matron left her busy toil, and called her  
child from play,  
And gifts for the lone mourner there she sent  
with him away.  
The boy with nuts and fruit returned, found in  
the forest deep,  
A portion of his little store would for poor Lucy  
keep.

That tree, with wonder all beheld, its growth  
was strange and rare;  
The wintry winds, that wailing passed, scarce  
left its branches bare,  
And round the roots a verdant spot knew neither  
change nor blight,  
And so poor Lucy's resting-place was always  
green and bright.

Some said its bole more rapid grew from Lucy's  
bleeding heart,  
For, sighs from out the heart, 'tis said, a drop  
of blood will start.(b)

It was an instinct deep and high which led the  
Mother there,  
And that tall tree aspiring grew, by more than  
dew or air.

The winds were hushed, the little bird scarce  
gave a nestling sound,  
The warm air slept along the hill, the blossoms  
drooped around ;  
The shrill-toned insect hardly stirred the dry and  
crispéd leaf ;  
The laborer laid his sickle down beside the  
bending sheaf.

A dark portentous cloud is seen to mount the  
eastern sky,  
The deep-toned thunder rolling on, proclaims  
the tempest nigh !  
And now it breaks with deafening crash, and  
lightning's livid glow ;  
The torrents leap from mountain crags and wild-  
ly dash below.

Behold the tree ! its strength is bowed, a shat-  
tered mass it lies ;  
What brings old Richard to the spot, with wild  
and blood-shot eyes ?  
Poor Lucy's form is lifeless there, and yet he  
turns away,  
To where a heap of mouldering bones beneath  
the strong roots lay.

Why takes he up with shrivelled hands, the riven root and stone,  
And spreads them with a trembling haste upon each damp, gray bone.  
It may not be, the whirlwind's rage again hath left them bare,  
All bare, and mingled with the locks of Lucy's tangled hair."

Of wife, and child, and friends bereft,  
And all that inward light,  
Which calmly guides the white-haired man,  
Who listens to the right ;  
Old Richard laid him down to die,  
Himself his only foe,  
His baffled nature groaning out  
Its weight of inward wo.

Oh there are wrongs that selfish hearts  
Inflict on every side,  
And swell the depths of human ill  
Unto a surging tide,  
And there are things that blight the soul,  
As with a mildew blight,  
And in the temple of the Lord  
Put out the blessed light.

There are, who mindless God hath given,  
To mark each human soul,  
Distinctive laws, distinctive rights,  
Its being to control,

Would, in their blind and selfish zeal,  
Remove God's wondrous gift,  
And, that their image might have place,  
God's altar veil would lift :

They call it Love, forgetful they,  
That 't was this hallowed screen,  
Concealing, half revealing too,  
The seen and the unseen,  
That first suggested deathless love,  
The infinite in grace,  
This inward and seraphic charm,  
That floated o'er the face.

## PART V.

THE storm is raging without the dwelling of the widow, but all is tranquil within. Eva hath gone forth in spiritual vision, and beheld the cruelty engendered by wealth and luxury—the cruelty of a selfish and unsympathizing heart. Her mother tells the story of the neglected children and their affluent stepmother. Sins of omission are often as terrible in their consequences, and as frightful in the retribution, as crimes committed intentionally. Certain qualities of the heart are of such a nature, that, when in excess, they resolve themselves into appropriate forms. The symbol of evil becomes mentally identified with its substance, and the fearful shapes thus created haunt the vision like realities. The injurer is always fearful of the injured. No wrong is ever done with a sense of security; least of all, wrong to the innocent and unoffending. The belief of a Protecting Power watching over infancy, is almost universal; its agency being recognised even by those who have forgone the blessing in their own behalf. The little child is a mystery of gentleness and love, while it is preserved in its own atmosphere; and it is a fearful thing to turn its young heart to bitterness; to infuse sorrow and fear, where the

elements should be only joy and faith. In maturer years, it is ever the state of the soul the prevailing motive—the essential character that involves human peace or wretchedness. “The Kingdom of Heaven is within you,” said the Great Teacher; and as we wander from the innocence of children, and allow selfishness or vice to increase upon the domain of the holy, distrust usurps the place of confidence and joy.

The pair wile away the hours in domestic chat, Eva ever uttering her sweet mission of truth and fidelity to the internal life. The story of the Miser follows. No human law may be violated, all the claims of justice, and the common observances of society respected, and yet the soul be dead to its own real needs: may be defrauded of its “bread of life.” The miser wakes to a perception of these things, and bewildered in his helpless gloom and ignorance commits suicide.

THE loud winds rattled at the door—

The shutters creaked and shook,  
While Eva, by the cottage hearth,  
Sat with abstracted look.

With every gust, the big rain-drops  
Upon the casement beat,  
How doubly, on a night like this,  
Are home and comfort sweet!

The maiden slowly raised her eyes,  
And pressed her pallid brow:—

“Dear mother! I have been far hence:  
My sight is absent now!



O mother! 'tis a fearful thing,  
A human heart to wrong,  
To plant a sadness on the lip,  
Where smiles and peace belong.

In selfishness or callous pride,  
The sacred tear to start,  
Or lightest finger dare to press  
Upon the burdened heart.  
And doubly fearful, when a child  
Lifts its imploring eye,  
And deprecates the cruel wrath  
With childhood's pleading cry.

The child is made for smiles and joy,  
Sweet emigrant from Heaven,  
The sinless brow and trusting heart,  
To lure us there, were given.  
Then who shall dare the simple faith  
And loving heart to chill,  
Or its frank, upward, beaming eye  
With sorrowing tears to fill!"

'T was thus young Eva silence broke,  
While still the dame, intent  
On household thrift, crouded at her work—  
Her sounding needles blent  
With flapping of the eager flame,  
Nor raised she once her eyes,  
But to her daughter's musing thought,  
In answering tale replies.

## THE STEPMOTHER.

You speak of Hobert's second wife, a lofty dame  
and bold,  
I like not her forbidding air and forehead high  
and cold,  
The orphans have no cause for grief, she dare  
not give it now,  
Though nothing but a ghostly fear, her heart of  
pride could bow.

One night the boy his mother called, they heard  
him weeping say,  
"Sweet mother, kiss poor Eddy's cheek, and  
wipe his tears away."  
Red grew the lady's brow with rage, and yet  
she feels a strife  
Of anger and of terror too, at thought of that  
dead wife.

Wild roars the wind, the lights burn blue, the  
watch-dog howls with fear,  
Loud neighs the steed from out the stall : what  
form is gliding near ?  
No latch is raised, no step is heard, but a phan-  
tom fills the space—  
A sheeted spectre from the dead, with cold and  
leaden face.

What boots it that no other eye beheld the shade  
appear !  
The guilty lady's guilty soul beheld it plain and  
clear,

It slowly glides within the room, and sadly looks  
around—

And stooping, kissed her daughter's cheek, with  
lips that gave no sound.

Then softly on the step-dame's arm she laid a  
death-cold hand,

Yet it hath scorched within the flesh like to a  
burning brand.

And gliding on with noiseless foot, o'er winding  
stair and hall,

She nears the chamber where is heard her in-  
fant's trembling call.

She smoothed the pillow where he lay, she  
warmly tucked the bed,

She wiped his tears, and stroked the curls that  
clustered round his head.

The child, caressed, unknowing fear, hath nest-  
led him to rest;

The Mother folds her wings beside—the Mother  
from the Blest! (c)

“Fast by the eternal throne of God

Celestial beings stand,

Beings, who guide the little child

With kind and loving hand:

And wo to him who dares to turn

The infant foot aside,

Or shroud the light that ever should

Within his soul abide.

All evils of the outer world,  
The strong heart learns to bear,  
Bears proudly up the heavy weight,  
Or makes it light by prayer ;  
But when it passes through the door,  
To touch the life within,  
God shield the soul that dared to give  
An impulse unto sin."

'T was thus the pair the hours beguiled,  
In lowliness content,  
For Eva to the humblest things,  
A grace and beauty lent,  
And half she wiled the thrifty dame  
From toil and vapid thought,  
To see how much of mystery  
In common life is wrought ;

And daily learning deeper truth,  
She Eva ceased to chide ;  
Whose simple mission only sought  
The lowly fireside ;  
To cleanse the heart from selfishness,  
From coldness, pride, and hate ;  
That Love might be a dweller there,  
And Peace his dove-eyed mate.

She saw that round her daughter grew,  
In all her guileless youth,  
The depth and grace of womanhood,  
The nobleness of truth ;

And coarser natures shrank away,  
Awed by a strange rebuke,  
That lived within the purity  
Of every tone and look.

And something like instinctive light,  
Broke feebly on her mind,  
That Love, the love of common hearts,  
Might not young Eva bind ;  
That she was made for ministry,  
To lofty cheer impart,  
And yet live on in tranquillness,  
And maidenhood of heart.

And thence content around her grew,  
Content, that placid grace  
That clears the furrows of the cheek,  
And smooths the matron face ;  
And now she laid her knitting by,  
And quaint old legends told,  
About a miser years ago,  
A miser dull and old.

## THE DEFRAUDED HEART.

For fifty years the old man's feet had crossed  
the oaken sill,  
No human eye his own to greet—the room is  
damp and chill—

Silent he comes and silent goes, with cold and  
covert air,  
Around a searching look he throws, then mounts  
the creaking stair.  
He's a sallow man, with narrow heart, and  
feelings all of self—  
His thoughts he may to none impart; they all  
are thoughts of pelf.  
But now he enters not the door, he lingers on  
the stone,  
What think you has come the old man o'er, that  
he loiters in the sun?

“Come hither, child,”—he stretched his hand  
and held a boy from play—  
“The green old woods throughout the land—  
are they passing all away?  
I remember now 't is a bye-gone joy since birds  
were singing here—  
'T was a merry time, and I a boy to list their  
spring-time cheer.”  
And then he loosed the wondering child, and  
fiercely closed the door,  
For there was something new and wild, that  
come his nature o'er—  
A crowding of unwonted thought, that might  
not be repressed,  
An inward pang that aching sought a sympa-  
thizing breast.

The long-lost years of sullen life apart from human kind,  
Long torpid powers awaked to strife are struggling in his mind :  
The child still near the threshold stays and ponders o'er and o'er,  
With a perplexed and dull amaze the words of him of yore.  
A stealthy foot beneath the sill—a dry hand pale and thin—  
And thus the old man hushed and still has drawn the boy within.  
“How long is't, child, since that cross-road the greenwood severed wide?  
A pool there was—'twas dark and broad with black and sluggish tide.

It seems but yesterday that I was hunting bird's eggs there—  
To-day it chanced to meet mine eye, a dusty thoroughfare.”  
Breathed freely once again the child, “That road was always so.”  
And half in fear the urchin smiled, and made as he would go.  
“Nay once a goodly wood was there—wild blossoms in the spring,  
And darted thence the crouching hare and bird upon the wing,

But now a lengthened dusty way—a cross-  
road—mile-stone too—  
Things that to you have been alway, to me are  
strange and new.”

“I have not slept these long blank years, for store  
of gold is here,  
Apart from joy, apart from tears, with neither  
grief nor cheer,  
And never on my conscience left the stain of any  
wrong,  
Why should I feel as one bereft, with yearnings  
new and strong?  
Why hear a voice for ever cry, ‘Unfaithful  
steward thou!’  
Come tell me, child, the sun is high—do chills  
oppress *thee* now?”  
The boy glanced wistfully about the damp and  
lonely place,  
Then at the warm bright sun without, then in  
the old man’s face.

A moment shook his wasted frame as by a palsy  
touch,  
The white hair thither went and came, the bony  
fingers clutch  
Each other with an eager speed; and then his  
thin lips part—  
“Come, child, canst thou the omen read? cheer  
up an old man’s heart.”



The boy, half pitying, half in dread, looked in  
his pale cold face,  
"My grandam says, when footsteps tread upon  
our burial-place,  
Tread on the spot our grave to be, we feel a sud-  
den cold ;  
She's often said the thing to me, and she is very  
old."

"Now get thee hence," the old man cried, "thou  
bringest little cheer."  
And then he thrust the boy aside as with a  
deadly fear ;  
Who wondering cast his eyes about to drink in  
life and air,  
And burst his lips in one wild shout, for both  
were buoyant there.  
Three days from thence a mound of earth the  
cross road marked anew,  
And children stayed their voice of mirth when  
they beside it drew—  
Unhallowed though the old man's rest, where  
men pass to and fro,  
The rudest foot aside is pressed from him who  
sleeps below. (e)

## PART VI.

IT is the noon of summer, and the noonday of Eva's earthly existence. She hath held communion with all that is great and beautiful in nature, till it hath become a part of her being; till her spirit hath acquired strength and maturity, and been reared to a beautiful and harmonious temple, in which the true and the good delight to dwell. Then cometh the mystery of womanhood; its gentle going forth of the affections seeking for that holiest of companionship, a kindred spirit, responding to all its finer essences, and yet lifting it above itself. Eva had listened to this voice of her woman's nature; and sweet visions had visited her pillow. Unknown to the external vision, there was one ever present to the soul; and when he erred, she had felt a lowly sorrow that, while it still more perfected her own nature, went forth to swell likewise the amount of good in the great universe of God. At length Albert Linne, a gay youth, whose errors are those of an ardent and inexperienced nature, rather than of an assenting will, meets Eva sleeping under the canopy of the great woods, and he is at once awed by the purity that enshrouds her. He is lifted to the contemplation of the good—to a sense of the wants of his better nature. Eva awakes and recognises the

spirit that for ever and ever is to be one with hers ; that is to complete that mystic marriage, known in the Paradise of God ; that marriage of soul with soul. Eva the pure-minded, the lofty in thought. and great in soul, recoiled not from the errors of him who was to be made meet for the kingdom of Heaven, through her gentle agency, for the mission of the good and the loving is not to the good, but to the erring.

'T is the summer prime, when the noiseless air  
In perfumed chalice lies,  
And the bee goes by with a lazy hum,  
Beneath the sleeping skies :  
When the brook is low, and the ripples bright,  
As down the stream they go ;  
The pebbles are dry on the upper side,  
And dark and wet below.

The tree that stood where the soil's athirst,  
And the mulleins first appear,  
Hath a dry and rusty-colored bark.  
And its leaves are curled and sere ;  
But the dog-wood and the hazel bush,  
Have clustered round the brook—  
Their roots have stricken deep beneath,  
And they have a verdant look.

To the juicy leaf the grasshopper clings,  
And he gnaws it like a file,  
The naked stalks are withering by,  
Where he has been erewhile.

The cricket hops on the glistening rock,  
Or pipes in the faded grass,  
The beetle's wing is folded mute,  
Where the steps of the idler pass.

The widow donned her russet robe,  
Her cap of snowy hue,  
And o'er her staid maternal form  
A sober mantle threw ;  
And she, while fresh the morning light,  
Hath gone to pass the day,  
And ease an ailing neighbor's pain  
Across the meadow way.

Young Eva closed the cottage-door ;  
And wooed by bird and flower,  
She loitered on beneath the wood,  
Till came the noon-tide hour.  
The sloping bank is cool and green,  
Beside the sparkling rill ;  
The cloud that slumbers in the sky,  
Is painted on the hill.

The spirits poised their purple wings  
O'er blossom, brook, and dell,  
And lingered in the quiet nook,  
As if they loved it well.  
Young Eva laid one snowy arm  
Upon a violet bank,  
And pillowed there her downy cheek,  
While she to slumber sank.

A smile is on her gentle lip,  
For she the angels saw,  
And felt their wings a covert make  
As round her head they draw.  
A maiden's sleep, how pure it is!  
The innocent repose  
That knows no dark nor troublous dream,  
Nor love's wild waking knows!

A huntsman's whistle; and anon  
The dogs come fawning round,  
And now they raise the pendent ear,  
And crouch along the ground.  
The hunter leaped the shrunken brook,  
The dogs hold back with awe,  
For they upon the violet bank  
The slumbering maiden saw.

A reckless youth was Albert Linne,  
With licensed oath and jest,  
Who little cared for woman's fame,  
Or peaceful maiden rest.  
Light things to him, were broken vows—  
The blush, the sigh, the tear;  
What hinders he should steal a kiss,  
From sleeping damsel here?

He looks, yet stays his eager foot;  
For, on that spotless brow,  
And that closed lid, a something rests  
He never saw till now;

He gazes, yet he shrinks with awe  
From that fair wondrous face,  
Those limbs so quietly disposed,  
With more than maiden grace.

He seats himself upon the bank,  
And turns his face away,  
And Albert Linne, the hair-brained youth,  
Wished in his heart to pray.  
He looked within his very soul,  
Its hidden chamber saw,  
Inscribed with records dark and deep  
Of many a broken law.

For thronging came his former life,  
What once he called delight,  
The goblet, oath, and stolen joy,  
How palled they on his sight!  
No more he thinks of maiden fair,  
No more of ravished kiss,  
Forgets he that pure sleeper nigh  
Hath brought his thoughts to this!

Unwonted thought it was for him  
Whose eager stirring life,  
Panted for action and renown,  
High deeds and daring strife ;  
Who scorning times of work-day zeal  
When thought may power impart ;  
In manly pastime sought to quell,  
The beatings of his heart.

Unwonted thought, unwonted calm,  
Upon his spirit fell ;  
For he unwittingly had sought  
Young Eva's hallowed dell,  
And breathed that atmosphere of love.  
Around her path that grew ;  
That evil from her steps repelled,  
The good unto her drew.

Now Eva opes her child-like eyes,  
And lifts her tranquil head ;  
And Albert, like a guilty thing,  
Had from her presence fled.  
But Eva marked his troubled brow,  
His sad and thoughtful eyes,  
As if they sought, yet shrank to hold  
Their converse with the skies.

And all her kindly nature stirred,  
She prayed him to remain ;  
Well conscious that the pure have power  
To balm much human pain.  
There mingled too, as in a dream,  
About brave Albert Linne,  
A real and ideal form.  
Her soul had framed within.

And he whose ready jest had met  
The worldling in her pride,  
Felt all his reckless nature hushed,  
By hallowed Eva's side ;

And when she held her wavy hand,  
And bade him stay awhile ;  
He looked into her sinless eyes,  
And marked her child-like smile :

And that so pure and winning beamed,  
So calm and holy too,  
That o'er his troubled thoughts at once  
A quiet charm it threw.  
Light thought, light words were all forgot,  
He breathed a holier air,  
He felt the power of womanhood—  
Its purity was there.

And soft beneath their silken fringe  
Beamed Eva's dovelike eyes,  
That seemed to claim a sisterhood,  
With something in the skies.  
Her gentle voice a part became  
Of air, and brook, and bird,  
And Albert listened, as if he  
Such music only heard.

O Eva ! thou the pure in heart,  
Why falls thy trembling voice ?  
A blush is on thy maiden cheek,  
And yet thine eyes rejoice.  
Another glory wakes for thee,  
Where'er thine eyes may rest ;  
And deeper, holier thoughts arise  
Within thy peaceful breast.



Thine eyelids droop in tenderness,  
New smiles thy lips combine,  
For thou dost feel another soul  
Is blending into thine.  
Thou upward raisest thy meek eyes,  
And it is sweet to thee ;  
To feel the weakness of thy sex,  
Is more than majesty.

To feel thy shrinking nature claim  
The stronger arm and brow ;  
Thy weapons, smiles, and tears, and prayers,  
And blushes such as now.  
A woman, gentle Eva, thou,  
Thy lot were incomplete,  
Did not all sympathies of soul  
Within thy being meet.

But Faith was thine, the angel gift,  
And Love untouched by earth,  
For Albert was the crown affixed  
To thine immortal birth ;  
And not for thee the heavy pangs  
Of those, who, doomed by fate,  
Learn, through the lapse of weary years,  
To love, to watch, and wait.

Oh not for thee for such as thee,  
To tremble with dismay,  
Lest baser hands pollute thy crown,  
And rieve its light away.

Oh not for thee, the anguished prayer,  
The struggle long and late,  
The pleading of the still small voice,  
That bids thee trust and wait.

Thou didst o'er-step this fleeting space,  
And grasp the higher world ;  
And angel-like thy pinions here,  
Their glory half unfurled.  
All evil to thy clear, calm eyes,  
Was but of transient date.  
'Tis not for such, like us to sit,  
And weep, and love, and wait ;

Wait with a vain and mournful gaze  
For feet that linger long,  
Wait for the voice more dear to us,  
Than aught of mirth and song ;  
And grieving much, lest over-wronged,  
The spirit lose its mate ;  
And sit in deathful solitude,  
Alone, to watch and wait.

No, Eva, for those eyes, that brow,  
That proud and manly air,  
Have often mingled with thy dreams,  
And with thine earnest prayer !  
And how hast thou, all timidly,  
Cast down thy maiden eye.  
When visions have revealed to thee  
That figure standing nigh !

Two spirits launched companionless  
A kindred essence sought,  
And one, in all its wanderings,  
Of such as Eva thought.  
The good, the beautiful, the true,  
Should nestle in his heart,  
Should lure him by her gentle voice,  
To choose the better part.

And he that kindred being sought,  
Had searched with restless care  
For that true, earnest, woman-soul  
Among the bright and fair—  
He might not rest, he felt for him,  
One such had been created,  
Whose maiden soul in quietude  
For his all meekly waited.

And oft when beaming eyes were nigh,  
And beauty's lip was smiling,  
And bird-like tones were breathing round  
The fevered sense beguiling ;  
He felt this was not what he sought—  
The soul such mockery spurned.  
And evermore with aching zeal,  
For that one being yearned.

And she whose loving soul went forth  
Wherever beauty dwelt ;  
Who with the truthful and the good  
A genial essence felt,

Oh! often in her solitude,  
By her own soul oppressed,  
She fain had nestled like a dove  
Within one stronger breast.

Though higher, holier far than those  
Who listening to her voice,  
A something caught of better things,  
That make the heart rejoice ;  
Yet *teaching* thus her spirit lone  
Aweary would have knelt,  
And *learned* with child-like reverence,  
Where deeper wisdom dwelt.

And now that will of stronger growth,  
That spirit firmer made,  
Instinctive holds her own in check,  
Her timid footsteps stayed ;  
And Eva in her maidenhood,  
Half trembles with new fear,  
And on her lip that strange, deep smile,  
The handmaid of a tear.

Oh, Eva, child of life and light,  
Did angel missions part,  
When half way in its flight to God,  
Was stayed thy maiden heart ?  
Thine eyes, that unarrested sought  
Their kindred in the sky,  
Now, with a gentle searchingness,  
Read first brave Albert's eye.

And was their glance undimmed from thence ?  
Was heaven as near to thee ?  
Did folding pinions guard thee still,  
Thou child of mystery ?  
Did no dim shadows from without  
Darken thine inner light ?  
Didst thou in thy white meekness stand,  
As ever, calm and bright ?

Oh, human Love ! thou seal of life,  
Link to the good and true,  
Strength to the fainting and infirm,  
And youth's perpetual dew ;  
So oft art thou allied to tears,  
To deep and hidden pain,  
That in our weakness we are prone,  
To deem thy mission vain :

Too much remembering of thy griefs,  
Thy wildness and despair,  
We seek to God with streaming eyes,  
And agony of prayer.  
Far better did we fold our hands,  
The blessed boon above,  
Nor, heeding incidental pangs,  
Shield thus the gift of Love.

While doubting thus, a seraph stayed  
His radiant course awhile ;  
And with a heavenly sympathy,  
Looked on with beaming smile :

And thus his words of spirit-love  
Trust and assurance brought,  
And bade her where the soul finds birth,  
To weakly question not.

“Content to feel—care not to know,  
The sacred source whence LOVE arise—  
Respect in *modesty of soul*,  
This mystery of mysteries:  
Mere mind with all its subtle arts,  
Hath only learned when thus it gazed  
The inmost veil of human hearts,  
E'en to themselves must not be raised!”

But Eva doubted, questioned not,  
Content to only feel,  
The music of a manly voice,  
Upon her senses steal—  
To find one heart instinctive learn  
The beatings of her own,  
And read afar unuttered thought  
Known unto his alone.

And firmer grew her heavenward life,  
Thus with another blent;  
They, twin-born souls, the wedded twain,  
One in God's covenant:  
And she in modesty of soul,  
Received the seal and smiled;  
The crowning grace of womanhood,  
Upon the sinless child.

Her trusting hand fair Eva laid  
In that of Albert Linne,  
And for one trembling moment turned  
Her gentle thoughts within.  
Deep tenderness was in the glance  
That rested on his face,  
As if her woman-heart had found  
Its own abiding place.

And evermore to him it seemed  
Her voice more liquid grew,  
"Dear youth, thy soul and mine are one;  
One source their being drew!  
And they must mingle evermore—  
Thy thoughts of love and me,  
Will, as a light, thy footsteps guide  
To life and mystery."

There was no sadness in her tone,  
But Love unfathomed deep;  
As from the centre of the soul,  
Where the Divine may sleep:  
Prophetic was the tone and look,  
And Albert's noble heart,  
Sank with a strange foreboding dread,  
Lest Eva should depart.

And when she bent her timid eyes  
As she beside him knelt,  
The pressure of her sinless lips  
Upon his brow he felt,

And all of earth, and all of sin,  
Fled from her sainted side ;  
She, the pure virgin of the soul,  
Ordained young Albert's bride.

Low were her sweet and heart-breathed words,  
Low was her voice of prayer,  
Balmy and gentle was her love,  
Like dew in summer air ;  
And Love, unto the Infinite,  
Like Eva's is allied,  
We say of such, "'tis gone before,"  
But not that it hath died.



## PART VII.

EV<sup>A</sup> hath fulfilled her destiny. Material things can no farther minister to the growth of her spirit. That waking of the soul to its own deep mysteries—its oneness with another—has been accomplished. A human soul is perfected. She had moved amid the beings around her one, but unlike them—in the world, but not of it. Those who had felt the wisdom of her sweet teachings, yet felt repelled, as by a sacred influence. They dared not crave companionship with a spirit so lofty, and yet so meek. And thus, though the crowd, as it were, might press upon her, she was yet alone in her true spiritual atmosphere. To them she became a light, a guide, but to Albert Linne alone, was her mission of Womanhood. In her he learned that no one seeketh in vain, the good and the true—that as our faith is, it is given unto us. He confidently sought for the Divine, and it was given unto him. He but touched her garment and she perceived the soul test.

Sorrow and pain—hope, with its kin-spirit, fear, are not for the sinless. She hath walked in an atmosphere of light, and her faith looked within the veil. The true woman, with woman's love and gentleness, and trust and childlike simplicity, yet with all her noble aspirations and spiritual discernments, she hath known them all without sin, and

sorrow may not visit such. She ceased to be present—she passed away like the petal that hath dropped from the rose—like the last sweet note of the singing-bird, or the dying close of the wind harp. Eva is the lost pleiad in the sky of womanhood. Has her spirit ceased to be upon the earth? Does it not still brood over our woman hearts?—and doth not her voice blend ever with the sweet utterance of Nature! Eva, mine own, my beautiful, I may not say—farewell.

'T WAS night—bright beamed the silver moon,  
And all the stars were dim ;  
The widow heard within the dell  
Sweet voices of a hymn,  
As loitering winds were made to sound  
Her sinless daughter's name ;  
While to the roof a rare toned-bird  
With wondrous music came.

And long it sat upon the cot  
And poured its mellow song,  
That rose upon the stilly air,  
And swelled the vales along.  
It was no earthly thing she deemed,  
That, in the clear moonlight,  
Sat on the lowly cottage roof,  
And charmed the ear of night.(d)

The sun is up, the flowerets raise  
Their folded leaves from rest ;  
The bird is singing in the branch  
Hard by its dewy nest.

The spider's thread, from twig to twig,  
Is glittering in the light,  
With dew-drops has the web been hung  
Through all the starry night.

Why tarries Eva long in bed,  
For she is wont to be  
The first to greet the early bird,  
The waking bud to see ?  
Fresh as the dew of rose-lipped morn  
Her sweet young face was seen,  
Early amid the clustering blooms,  
And woodbine's tendrilled screen.

Why tarries she in secret bower,  
Where lightly to and fro,  
The curtain rustles in the air,  
And shadows come and go ?  
Why stoops her mother o'er the couch  
With half-suppresséd breath,  
And lifts the deep-fringed eyelid up ?—  
That frozen orb is death !

Why raises she the small pale hand,  
And holds it to the light ?  
There is no clear transparent hue  
To meet her dizzy sight.  
She holds the mirror to her lips  
To catch the moistened air :  
The widowed mother stands alone  
With her dead daughter there !

And yet so placid is the face,  
So sweet its lingering smile,  
That one might deem the sleep to be  
The maiden's playful wile.  
No pain the quiet limbs had racked,  
No sorrow dimmed the brow,  
So tranquil had the life gone forth,  
She seemed but slumbering now.

They laid her down beside the brook  
Upon the sloping hill,  
And that strange bird with its rare note,  
Is singing o'er her still.  
The sunbeam warmer loves to rest  
Upon the heaving mound,  
And those unearthly blossoms spring,  
Uncultured from the ground.

There Albert Linne, an altered man,  
Oft bowed in lowly prayer,  
And pondered o'er the mystic words  
Which Eva uttered there.  
That pure compassion, angel-like,  
Which touched her soul when he,  
A guilty and heart-stricken man,  
Would from her presence flee;

Her sinless lips from earthly love,  
So tranquil and so free;  
And the low, fervent prayer for him,  
She breathed on bended knee.

As Eva's words and spirit sank  
More deeply in his heart,  
Young Albert Linne went forth to act  
The better human part.

Oft in the stillness of the night  
Sweet Eva's dove-like eyes,  
Beamed through the darkness of his room,  
Like stars in dusky skies.  
Oft came a tranquil light diffused  
The darkness to beguile,  
And Albert felt within his heart,  
It was but Eva's smile.

Not lost, his Eva, though her form  
The elements concealed,  
Within the chambers of the soul,  
Her meek form stood revealed ;  
And there he felt her heavenly eye,  
Her downy arms caressed,  
And like a living presence there,  
She stole into his breast.

Oh not alone did Albert strive ;  
For, blending with his own,  
In every voice of prayer or praise.  
Was heard young Eva's tone.  
He felt her lips upon his brow,  
Her angel form beside ;  
And nestling nearest to his heart,  
Was she—THE SPIRIT BRIDE.

The sinless Child, with mission high,  
Awhile to Earth was given,  
To show us that our world should be  
The vestibule of Heaven.  
Did we but in the holy light  
Of truth and goodness rise,  
We might communion hold with God  
And spirits from the skies.

## NOTES

## TO THE SINLESS CHILD.

(a) "There was neither hammer nor axe, nor any tool of iron, heard in the house while it was building."—1 KINGS, vi. 7.

(b) It is a common belief among the vulgar, that a sigh always forces a drop of blood from the heart, and many curious stories are told to that effect; as for instance, a man wishing to be rid of his wife, in order to marry one more attractive, promised her the gift of six new dresses, and sundry other articles of female finery, provided she would sigh three times every morning before breakfast, for three months. She complied, and before the time had expired, was in her grave. Many others of a like nature might be recorded. The old writers are full of allusions of a like kind, particularly Shakspeare, "blood-consuming sighs," &c.

(c) The worship of the Madonna is in the true spirit of poetry. She became to the Christian world what the Penates had been to the classical. In confining ourselves to the abstractions of religion, we run the hazard of making it one of thought rather than of emotion. A woman must always

worship through her affections, and one may readily conceive the comfort which the household faith in the presence of the Madonna is likely to inspire.

(*d*) We are indebted to the Aborigines for this beautiful superstition. The Indian believes that if the wekolis or whippoorwill alights upon the roof of his cabin and sings its sweet plaintive song, it portends death to one of its inmates. The omen is almost universally regarded in New England. The author recollects once hearing an elderly lady relate with singular pathos, an incident of the kind. She was blest with a son of rare endowments and great piety. In the absence of his father he was wont to minister at the family altar; and unlike the stern practices of the Pilgrims, from whose stock he was lineally descended, he prostrated himself in prayer in the lowliest humility. It was touching to hear his clear low voice, and see his spiritual face while kneeling at this holy duty.

One quiet moonlight night, while thus engaged, the mother's heart sank within her to hear the plaintive notes of the whippoorwill blending with the voice of prayer. It sat upon the roof and continued its song long after the devotions had ceased. The tears rushed to her eyes, and she embraced her son in a transport of grief. She felt it must be ominous. In one week he was borne away, and the daisies grew and the birds sang over his grave.

(*e*) I need not say that this is to illustrate the well-known superstition of the vulgar, that when a foot treads upon the spot that is to be our future resting-place in death, we feel a strange unaccountable shiver.



SONNETS.



## SONNETS.

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THE POET'S LIFE, IN SIX SONNETS.

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I.

P O E S Y.

WITH no fond, sickly thirst for fame, I kneel,  
Oh, goddess of the high-born art to thee ;  
Not unto thee with semblance of a zeal  
I come, oh, pure and heaven-eyed Poesy !  
Thou art to me a spirit and a love,  
Felt ever from the time, when first the earth,  
In its green beauty, and the sky above  
Informed my soul with joy too deep for mirth.  
I was a child of thine before my tongue  
Could lisp its infant utterance unto thee ;  
And now, albeit from my harp are flung  
Discordant numbers, and the song may be  
That which I would not, yet I know that thou  
The offering wilt not spurn, while thus to thee  
I bow.

## II.

## THE BARD.

It can not be, the baffled heart, in vain,  
May seek, amid the crowd, its throbs to hide ;  
Ten thousand others kindred pangs may bide,  
Yet not the less will our own griefs complain.  
Chained to our rock, the vulture's gory stain,  
And tearing beak is every moment rife,  
Renewing pangs that end but with our life.  
Thence bursteth forth the gushing voice of song,  
The soul's deep anguish thence an utterance  
    finds,  
Appealing to all hearts: and human minds  
Bow down in awe: thence doth the Bard be-  
    long,  
Unto all times: the laurel steeped in wrong  
Unsought is his: his soul demanded bread,  
And ye, charmed with the voice, gave but a  
    stone instead.

## III.

## THE UNATTAINED.

AND is this life? and are we born for this?  
To follow phantoms that elude the grasp,  
Or whatsoe'er secured, within our clasp  
To withering lie, as if each earthly kiss  
Were doomed death's shuddering touch alone  
to meet.

O Life! hast thou reserved no cup of bliss?  
Must still THE UNATTAINED beguile our feet?  
The UNATTAINED with yearnings fill the breast,  
That rob, for aye, the spirit of its rest?  
Yes, this is Life; and everywhere we meet,  
Not victor crowns, but wailings of defeat;  
Yet faint thou not, thou dost apply a test,  
That shall incite thee onward, upward still,  
The present can not sate, nor e'er thy spirit fill.

## IV.

## RELIGION.

ALONE, yet not alone, the heart doth brood  
With a sad fondness o'er its hidden grief;  
Broods with a miser joy, wherein relief  
Comes with a semblance of its own quaint mood.  
How many hearts this point of life have passed!  
And some a train of light behind have cast,  
To show us what hath been, and what may be;  
That thus have suffered all the wise and good,  
Thus wept and prayed, thus struggled and were  
free.

So doth the pilot, trackless though the deep,  
Unswerving by the stars his reckoning keep,  
He moves a highway not untried before,  
And thence he courage gains, and joy doth reap,  
Unfaltering lays his course, and leaves behind  
the shore.

## V.

## A D R E A M.

I DREAMED last night, that I myself did lay  
Within the grave, and after stood and wept,  
My spirit sorrowed where its ashes slept !  
'T was a strange dream, and yet methinks it may  
Prefigure that which is akin to truth.  
How sorrow we o'er perished dreams of youth,  
High hopes and aspirations doomed to be  
Crushed and o'ermastered by earth's destiny !  
Fame, that the spirit loathing turns to ruth ;—  
And that deluding faith so loath to part,  
That earth will shrine for us one kindred heart !  
Oh, 'tis the ashes of such things that wring  
Tears from the eyes—hopes like to these depart,  
And we bow down in dread o'ershadowed by  
death's-wing !

## VI.

## AN INCIDENT.

A SIMPLE thing, yet chancing as it did,  
When life was bright with its illusive dreams,  
A pledge and promise seemed beneath it hid ;  
The ocean lay before me, tinged with beams,  
That lingering draped the west ; a wavering stir,  
And at my feet down fell a worn, gray quill ;  
An eagle, high above the darkling fir,  
With steady flight, seemed there to take his fill  
Of that pure ether breathed by him alone.  
O ! noble bird ! why didst thou loose for me  
Thy eagle plume ? still unessayed, unknown  
Must be that pathway fearless winged by thee ;  
I ask it not, no lofty flight be mine,  
I would not soar like thee, in loneliness to pine !



## VII.

## E R R O R.

A CHILD of thine, a wildered boy once lived  
In cottage rude beside the restless sea.  
A slip of land where scarcely even thrived  
The wildest plants, samphire and rosemary :  
Little was there to lure the steps aside,  
There the hoarse breaker and the heaving sand ;  
And yet I marked when inward swelled the tide,  
And the loud tempest surged upon the strand,  
Urging the shelterless to shelter nigh,  
The sea-bird beat his wing upon the cot  
And sank exhausted for the storm was high.  
Allured by that strange light he sought the spot  
With drenchéd wing, and found it but to die,  
And wildly through the night arose his lonely  
cry.

## VIII.

## MENTAL SOLITUDE.

THERE is a solitude the mind creates,  
A solitude, of holy thought, profound—  
Alone, save there the "Soul's Ideal" waits,  
It maketh to itself a hallowed ground.  
Lo! the proud eagle when he highest soars,  
Leaves the dim earth and shadows far behind—  
Alone, the thunder cloud around him roars,  
And the rest pinion flutters in the wind—  
Alone, he soars where higher regions sleep,  
And the calm ether owns nor storm nor cloud—  
And thus the soul its upward way must keep,  
And leave behind the tempest ringing loud—  
Alone, to God bear up its heavy weight  
Of human hope and fear, nor feel "all desolate."

## IX.

## DISTRUST.

A REVERENT worshipper, oh, Truth! of thee,  
I bow, with foot unsandalled, wheresoe'er  
Thy voice may whisper "holy ground is here."  
Amid uncertain paths, thy light may be  
Dim to my wavering feet; yet unto me,  
Intently waiting, once again, more clear,  
More tranquil, doth thy holy light appear,  
As minding me how dreary earth were left,  
A dark, bewildering waste of thee bereft.  
Should not thy temple be transparent, Truth?  
Should not thy undimmed altar-fires arise  
Brightest in human hearts? In our first youth  
Unchecked we worship there, with fearless  
    eyes!  
Thou art not exiled thence, oh, spirit of the  
    skies!

## X.

## ILLUSTRATION OF A CAMEO:\*

The device a female figure writing, while an Angel feeds the Lamp.

STEAL softly in, for she, who sitteth there,  
Pale in her watching, mindless of the night,  
Alone with that faint taper's gleaming light,  
Thus findeth refuge from a world of care.  
Oh! twine no chaplet for her brow; no voice  
That tells of fame can make her heart rejoice!  
She giveth form to visions of delight,  
That throng the simple hearth-stone, and the  
soul  
Alive to genial promptings, and would ask  
Requitance of the same for her sweet task.  
And should a cadence born of sorrow roll  
Along a voice she may not all control,  
Yet not the less an angel lurketh nigh,  
To feed life's flickering lamp, and heavenward  
lift the eye.

\* The Cameo was an anonymous gift from one who professed a warm approval of the SINLESS CHILD, "who believed that this proof of womanly recognition would not be displeasing to the Author."

## XI.

## THE RUSTIC.

## IN TWO SONNETS.

OF tattered robe all recklessly the while  
She climbed the rugged hill with eager feet,  
Caught the first waking of the morning smile,  
And felt her heart with joyous wonder beat,  
As slowly past the mountain vapor swept,  
Lifting itself in fleecy folds away  
From lake, and stream, and grove, and vale, that  
slept

Within its down, like weary child from play.  
A lisping girl she was, yet fair withal,  
Who with the buttercup and wild brook played,  
Till labor claimed her for his daily thrall;  
And she, in kirtle short and gown arrayed,  
Left far behind her home in that sweet dell,  
Blest with the hum of bees and song of whip-  
poorwill.

## XII.

## THE RUSTIC.

## 2.

POOR was the girl, yet still to grief unknown,  
Save when a jagged stone she careless pressed,  
Or trod on humble-bee, withouten shoon,  
Or thorn projecting pierced her sun-burnt breast  
Or tore the ringlets from her brow away,  
Which after lined the active robin's nest,  
Who sang for her a more melodious lay.  
What though those tangled locks might half dis-  
guise  
The speaking lustre of her soul-full eyes!  
What though were darkly stained her childish  
brow;  
No inward pang its form of grace had riven;  
And though its hue be fairer, softer, now,  
Oh, doth it turn as innocent to Heaven!  
Doth it now bend in prayer as sure to be for-  
given!

## XIII.

## W A Y F A R E R S.

“My Kingdom is not of this world.”

EARTH careth for her own—the fox lies down  
In her warm bosom, and it asks no more.  
The bird, content, broods in its lowly nest,  
Or its fine essence stirred, with wing outflown.  
Circles in airy rounds to heaven’s own door,  
And folds again its plume upon her breast.  
Ye, too, for whom her palaces arise,  
Whose Tyrian vestments sweep the kindred  
ground,  
Whose golden chalice Ivy-Bacchus dies,  
She, kindly Mother, liveth in your eyes,  
And no strange anguish may your lives astound.  
But ye, oh pale lone watchers for the true,  
She knoweth not. In Her ye have not found  
Place for your stricken heads, wet with the  
midnight dew.

## XIV.

## T W I L I G H T

THE rude and garish light, that all day long  
With half-oppressive gladness walked the earth,  
The bud to beauty forcing till it droops  
Athirst, o'er-fraught with life ; the bird of song,  
Made weary with its own exulting mirth :  
Now, softly o'er the vale and hill-side stoops  
To gather back its beams ; well-pleased to spread  
A downy mantle o'er the exhausted land.  
Sweet dew-distilling hour ! though joy be fled  
We mourn it not, thy balmings are so bland.  
Thus fadeth life to her by whom I kneel,  
Watching the pulse aweary of their play.  
Thus twilight fancies o'er her senses steal  
And life's unquiet visions fade away.



## XV.

## TO THE OPAL.

"The Opal is liable to spontaneous decomposition, becoming dull, opaque, and adherent to the tongue."—*Cleveland.*

OH, gem of beauty! borrowing from the day  
All hues to crown thee in thy fleeting grace,  
Why should a trace of sadness find a place,  
Where all is brilliant, beautiful, and gay?  
Thy sister gems endure, but thou dost feel  
The touch of dissolution on thee steal,  
Wasting thy brightness in a slow decay.  
Thou art befitting type of human souls,  
That in the cold, the glittering, fleeting dwell;  
Whose hopes the present fill, whom sense con-  
trols,  
And earth binds down with strong delusive spell.  
Things that in use decay. Oh, dying gem!  
Passing though fair, burning thyself away,  
While we bewildered gaze, thy likeness is to  
them.

## XVI.

## D U T Y.

It was the custom of the ancients, to deck their portals with garlands when they gave a feast.

GUEST after guest departs! the heart that erst  
Seemed a bright portal all in garlands dressed,  
To which the rosy-crowned and joyous pressed,  
Findeth ere long that each a thorn had nursed  
With which to pierce the too unwary breast.  
Vainly we fold a mantle o'er each guest  
Willing to bide the thorn, if through it may  
A nobler gladness in the soul arise.  
Vainly we hope their footsteps to delay,  
They leave the pang and one by one depart,  
Till cold and desolate the portal lies.  
Yet not all desolate—a calm pale face  
Looks in, then enters the despoiled heart,  
And all is hushed and still, for Duty fills the place.

## XVII.

## THE PILGRIM.

“ Some fell by the wayside.”

NOT yet, not yet, oh, pilgrim! cast aside  
The dusty sandal, and the well-worn staff;  
Athirst and fainting, yet must thou abide  
One peril more, and strength in thy behalf  
Shall once again be born—it is the last!  
Thou sinkest by the lonely way-side down,  
And life o'er-spent, and weary, ebbeth fast—  
The lengthening shadows on thy path are  
    thrown,  
And thou wouldst rest, forgetful of life's dream,  
Deluding, vain, and empty, and here die.  
Not yet, not yet, there still is left one gleam  
To onward lure thy too despairing eye:  
Gird on thy staff, the shrine is yet unwon,  
Oh, lose not then the prize, by this last work  
    undone.

## XVIII.

## SYMPATHY.

## 1.

OH, leave me not alone! the monarch bird,  
Comes from his cloud-encompassed height again  
To listen where affection's voice is heard,  
"And stirreth up his nest!" nor yet in vain!  
The wing, that steadied upward in the noon-  
day sun,  
And spurned the tempest with a cold disdain,  
From Love alone that high empyrean won:  
Home-luring love, when that proud flight is done.  
Gently as dove he foldeth up the wing,  
And tames the fierceness of the burning eye,  
Where the loved one hath heard the breezes  
ring  
Around the swaying pine, and deemed him nigh.  
Warm from the nest he takes his heavenward  
flight,  
For Love hath lent him wings to soar where all  
is bright.

## XIX.

## SYMPATHY.

## 2.

OH, leave me not alone ! dost thou but find  
A dying echo to thine own dear voice,  
Like that the zephyr-wing may leave behind,  
When music bids the desert rocks rejoice,  
Waking a sad low cadence, that when passed  
Makes but the solitude more heavy weigh ?  
Yet stay ! be thou responsive to the last,  
To all, that this poor heart may rightly sway.  
What though each day a newborn grief dis-  
close,  
And clouds return, although the rain be o'er ;  
The cloud its fold of "silver lining" shows,  
Which hope reveals more brightly evermore.  
Oh, hush not thou this last impulsive thrill,  
Oh, leave me not alone, to silence, deathful, still.

## XX.

## SELF RENUNCIATION.

SHAKE thou thy spirit free ; first learn to feel  
That love doth bring its own exceeding good.  
Cry not the "give," this selfishness of mood,  
Will bind thee down with bands of tempered  
steel.

Renounce thyself ; from every loop-hole spurn  
The dustiness of care ; fresh as thy youth,  
Child-like as in thy primal years, oh, learn  
The meekness and the majesty of truth !  
Thus unto thee shall light arise ; thy trust,  
Thy reverent lodgement of a holy guest,  
Shall bring a blessing to thee ; and the dust  
Of earthly care no more shall on thee rest.  
Thy love pure and eternal thus shall be  
Perchance to bloom on earth—most sure in  
heaven for thee.

## XXI.

## TO THE HUDSON.

[The writer's first passage up the Hudson was on a tranquil night at the close of summer, a clear moonshine making the stars pale in the deep sky. Nothing could exceed the loveliness of the scene, as doubling point after point, the river at each turn revealed a new aspect of beauty. It was no longer the majestic Hudson, sweeping its proud waters to the ocean, bearing a fleet upon its bosom, and making a grand highway for wealth and luxury; but a graceful, sentient creature, with an onward purpose, gliding amid the hills and smiling as it overcame the obstacles in its path.]

OH! river, gently as a wayward child,  
I saw thee 'mid the moonlight hills at rest;  
Capricious thing, with thine own beauty wild,  
How didst thou still the throbbings of thy breast!  
Rude headlands were about thee, stooping round  
As if amid the hills to hold thy stay;  
But thou didst hear the far-off ocean sound,  
Inviting thee from hill and vale away,  
To mingle thy deep waters with its own;  
And, at that voice, thy steps did onward glide,  
Onward from echoing hill and valley lone.  
Like thine, oh, be my course—nor turned aside,  
While listening to the soundings of a land,  
That like the ocean call invites me to its strand.

## XXII.

## LIFE.

SUGGESTED BY COLE'S FOUR PAINTINGS REPRESENTING THE VOYAGE OF LIFE.

## CHILDHOOD.

THOU poet-painter, preacher of great truth,  
Far more suggestive thine than written tome—  
Lo, we return with thee to that vast dome,  
Dim cavern of the past. Visions uncouth,  
Vague, rayless, all impalpable in sooth,  
Send back the startled soul. The waters come  
All tranquilly from that dim cavern forth,  
The mystic tide of human life. A child,  
Borne on its bosom, sports with blossoms wild.  
A Presence, felt, but still unseen, the boat  
With gentle hand guides onward, and beguiled  
With music lost in other years, they float  
Upon the stream. The hours unfelt, for life  
Is joy in its first voyage, with light and blossoms  
rife.



## XXIII.

## Y O U T H.

ALAS, the Spirit lingers, but its hand  
No more the barque sustains. The daring youth  
Has seized the helm, and deeper launches forth,  
His eye amid illusions of ideal land—  
Bright castles built in air, that seem to stand,  
Though still receding—while from rosy bowers  
Each laurel-crowned appears, Fame, Glory,  
Worth.

He sports no more mid blossoms of green earth;  
He hears no more the music of his birth;  
The future lures him, pinnacles and towers.  
And half he chides the lagging of the hours,  
Unheeds their sunshine, blessedness, and mirth;  
For onward is his course, he asks not where,  
Since fancy paints the prospect passing fair.

## XXIV.

## M A N H O O D.

STILL onward goes the barque—the tide  
Bears it along where breakers foam and roar,  
And oaks unbending, riven, line the shore;  
Dense vapors rising, all the future hide;  
And how shall he that fearful peril bide?  
The guiding helm he eager grasps no more;  
Time weighs the prow, the wave is deep beside;  
Swift flows the current, fierce the gathering  
    strife,  
The struggle and the buffetings of life.  
Half he recoils, yet calmly bides the test,  
With hands clasped firmly on the unconquered  
    breast;  
Nor meets alone that hour with peril rife;  
Forth from on high the guardian Spirit bends  
With ministry of love, and holy valor sends.

## XXV.

## O L D A G E.

THY mission is accomplished—painter—sage,  
Look to thy crown of glory—for thy brow  
Is circled with its radiant halo now.

No more earth's turmoil will thy soul engage,  
Its hopes unquiet, littleness, or rage.

With thine own voyager thou hast heard the  
    sound

Of that vast ocean, waveless, rayless, dread,  
Where time's perpetual tribute, circling round,  
Drops silent in, all passionless and dead.

When thine own voyage is o'er, and thou shalt  
    near

The eternal wave, thus, thus above thy head  
May opening glories shield thy heart from fear ;  
A child again, but strong in faith and prayer,  
Thou shalt look meekly up—behold thy God is  
    there !

## XXVI.

## LIFE-LONG MARTYRDOM.

"Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul?"—*Job*.

GOD shield us in our weakness! I had said  
To meet the fagot or the blade—to die  
For that accounted holy, for the truth,  
Were but a festal doom—a tribute paid  
By the poor outward form, that it may lie  
A slave, and not a master of the soul.  
But, harder far to bear a life-long test;  
To feel the weight of wrong in spring-time  
youth,  
Crushed heavier down as lagging winters roll;  
Benumbing thought and feeling in the breast,  
While selfishness and callous discontent  
Blight all the aspect of God's blessed earth,  
And tear from out our soul, that which He lent,  
Its freshness, homage, freedomness of birth.

## XXVII.

## CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

“Where is thy brother?”

THINK better of thy fellows—ye who dare  
Stop the warm current of a brother's heart ;  
'T is not to mark the death-damp of his fear  
And mortal agony, when ye shall part  
The soul from its strong tenement—not this—  
Not this doth call them from their secret ways,  
From haunts of crime, and nature's seats of bliss,  
Toil-worn and travel-stained for many days :  
No ! even we, in chambers pent, like them,  
Feel the wild anguish of a fellow's pang—  
The pleading of a pulse, which ye condemn,  
That calls us forth as if a bugle rang.  
The wronger is the wronged, such impulse lies  
In every human heart when *thus* a brother dies.

## A T H E I S M,\*

I N T H R E E S O N N E T S.

XXVIII.

F A I T H.

"They which shall be accounted *worthy* to obtain that world, and the resurrection of the dead."—*Jesus*.

BEWARE of doubt—faith is the subtle chain,  
Which binds us to the Infinite: the voice  
Of a deep life within, that will remain  
Until we crowd it thence. We may rejoice

\* I have not found it possible to convey the idea as clearly as I could wish, in these Sonnets. I have sometimes thought that the very construction of the soul, so to speak, rendered it impossible for a man to be an Atheist. Farther thought leads to a belief that a state of Atheism may exist; but that in proportion as the doubt of a Deity is suffered to make its way into the soul, it destroys it, not morally, but in fact; and when a man announces his disbelief in a God, he announces his own annihilation of soul. He has lost the last link that binds him to the spiritual world; he is as a beast, which can think, but not adore.

With an exceeding joy, and make our life,  
Ay, this external life, become a part  
Of that which is within, o'erwrought and rife  
With faith, that child-like blessedness of heart.  
The order and the harmony inborn  
With a perpetual hymning crown our way,  
Till callousness, and selfishness, and scorn,  
Shall pass as clouds where scatheless lightnings  
    play.  
Cling to thy faith, 'tis higher than the thought  
That questions of thy faith, the cold external  
    doubt.

## XXIX.

## R E A S O N .

“For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.”—*Jesus*.

THE Infinite speaks in our silent hearts  
And draws our being to Himself, as deep  
Calleth unto deep. He, who all thought im-  
parts,  
Demands the pledge, the bond of soul to keep:  
But reason, wandering from its fount afar,  
And stooping downward, breaks the subtle  
chain  
That binds it to itself, like star to star,  
And sun to sun, upward to God again:  
Doubt, once confirmed, tolls the dead spirit's  
knell,  
And man is but a clod of earth, to die  
Like the poor beast that in his shambles fell—  
More miserable doom, than that to lie  
In trembling torture, like believing ghosts  
Who, though divorced from good, bow to the  
Lord of Hosts.



## XXX.

## ANNIHILATION

“What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”—*Jesus.*

DOUBT, Cypress crowned, upon a ruined arch  
Amid the shapely temple overthrown,  
Exultant, stays at length her onward march.  
Her victim, all with earthliness o'ergrown,  
Hath sunk himself to earth to perish there;  
His thoughts are outward, all his love a blight,  
Dying, deluding are his hopes though fair—  
And death, the spirit's everlasting night.  
Thus, midnight travellers, on some mountain  
steep,  
Hear far above the avalanche boom down,  
Starting the glacier echoes from their sleep,  
And lost in glens to human foot unknown—  
The death-plunge of the lost come to their ear,  
And silence claims again her region cold and  
drear.

## THE ACORN.

"If there be an interpreter, one among a thousand."—*Job.*

LONG years ago, when our headlands broke  
The silent wave below,  
And bird-song then the morn awoke  
Where towers a city now—  
When the red man saw on every cliff,  
Half seen and half in shade,  
A tiny form, or a pearly skiff,  
That sought the forest glade,

An acorn fell from an old oak tree,  
And lay on the frosty ground—  
"Oh, what shall the fate of the acorn be!"  
Was whispered all around,  
By low-toned voices, chiming sweet,  
Like a floweret's bell when swung—  
And grasshopper steeds were gathering fleet,  
And the beetle's hoofs up-rung—

For Puck-wud-jees\* came careering past  
In the pale autumnal ray,  
Where the forest leaves were falling fast,  
And the acorn quivering lay;

\* "Puck-wudj-ininees—literally, little vanishers, or little wild men of the mountains [and which we have abbreviated into something a little more pronounceable], were believed by the Indians to inhabit rocky crags and dells, frequenting the pinnacles of cliffs, and delighting in romantic glens, and points of land upon lakes, rivers, and bays; especially if crowned with pine trees. The Algonquins describe them as flitting among thickets, vanishing, and reappearing and running with a whoop up the mountains. Puck-pa-wis, their leader, carries a magic shell, or tosses a ball before him."—

SCHOOLCRAFT.

It is a curious fact, that the word "Puck," which has been thought so Shaksperian, and which has puzzled so many commentators upon the great dramatist, is a generic term in the Algonquin dialect. It requires no very great stretch of fancy to suppose that the ready ear of Shakspeare caught the peculiar and most daintily appropriate term from the relations of those accomplished navigators, with whom he was undoubtedly familiar, and who, according to Gallatin and other researchers, had been for more than thirty years before the death of the great poet, intimately acquainted with that part of the coast where the Algonquin dialect was spoken, and had even attempted to colonize so early as 1585, on the coast of North Carolina, at the small island of Roanoke, which, as elsewhere on the coast, was inhabited by the Algonquin tribes.

They came to tell what its fate should be,  
Though life was unrevealed ;  
For life is a holy mystery,  
Where'er it is concealed.

They came with gifts that should life bestow ;  
The dew and the living air—  
The bane that should work it deadly wo,  
The little-men had there ;  
In the gray moss-cup was the mildew brought,  
The worm, in a rose-leaf rolled.  
And many things with destruction fraught,  
That its doom were quickly told.

But it needed not, for a blessed fate  
Was the acorn's meant to be—  
The spirits of earth should its birth-time wait,  
And watch o'er its destiny.  
To HIM OF THE SHELL\* was the task assigned  
To bury the acorn deep,  
Away from the frost and searching wind,  
When they through the forest sweep.

'T was a dainty sight, the small thing's toil,  
As bowed beneath the spade,  
He balanced his gossamer wings the while  
To peep in the pit he made.

\* "You shall be called Wa-dais-dis-imid, or he of the little shell."—SCHOOLCRAFT.

A thimble's depth it was scarcely deep,  
When the spade aside he threw,  
And rolled the acorn away to sleep  
In the hush of dropping dew.

The spring-time came with its fresh, warm air,  
And gush of woodland song ;  
The dew came down, the rain was there,  
And the sunshine rested long ;  
Then softly the black earth turned aside,  
The old leaf arching o'er,  
And up, where the last year's leaf was dried,  
Came the acorn-shell once more.

With coiled stem, and pale green hue,  
It looked but a feeble thing ;  
Then deeply its root abroad it threw,  
Strength from the earth to bring.  
The woodland sprites are gathering round,  
Rejoiced that the task is done—  
That another life from the noisome ground  
Is up to the pleasant sun.

The young child passed with a careless tread,  
And the germ had well-nigh crushed,  
But a spider, launched on her airy thread,  
The cheek of the stripling brushed.  
He little knew, as he started back,  
How the acorn's fate was hung  
On the very point in the spider's track,  
Where the web on his cheek was flung.

The autumn came,—it stood alone,  
And bowed as the wind passed by—  
The wind that uttered its dirge-like moan  
In the old oak sere and dry;  
The hollow branches creaked and swayed  
But they bent not to the blast,  
For the stout oak tree, where centuries played  
Was sturdy to the last.

But the sapling had no strength as yet  
Such peril to abide,  
And a thousand guards were round it set  
To evil turn aside.  
A hunter boy beheld the shoot,  
And an idle prompting grew  
To sever the stalk from the spreading root,  
And his knife at once he drew.

His hand was stayed; he knew not why:  
'T was a presence breathed around—  
A pleading from the deep-blue sky,  
And up from the teeming ground.  
It told of the care that had lavished been  
In sunshine and in dew—  
Of the many things that had wrought a screen,  
When peril around it grew.

It told of the oak that once had bowed,  
As feeble a thing to see,  
But now, when the storm was raging loud,  
It wrestled mightily.

There's a deeper thought on the hunter's brow,  
A new love at his heart,  
And he ponders much, as with footsteps slow,  
He turns him to depart.

Up grew the twig with a vigor bold,  
In the shape of the parent tree,  
And the old oak knew that his doom was told,  
When the sapling sprang so free.  
Then the fierce winds came, and they raging tore  
The hollow limbs away;  
And the damp moss crept from the earthy floor  
Round the trunk, time-worn and gray.

The young oak grew, and proudly grew,  
For its roots were deep and strong;  
And a shadow broad on the earth it threw,  
And the sunshine lingered long  
On its glossy leaf, where the flickering light  
Was flung to the evening sky;  
And the wild bird sought to its airy height,  
And taught her young to fly.

In acorn-time came the truant boy,  
With a wild and eager look,  
And he marked the tree with a wondering joy,  
As the wind the great limbs shook.  
He looked where the moss on the north side  
grew,  
The gnarled arms outspread,  
The solemn shadow the huge tree threw,  
As it towered above his head:

And vague-like fears the boy surround,  
In the shadow of that tree ;  
So growing up from the darksome ground,  
Like a giant mystery.  
His heart beats quick to the squirrel's tread  
On the withered leaf and dry,  
And he lifts not up his awe-struck head  
As the eddying wind sweeps by.

All regally the stout oak stood,  
In its vigor and its pride ;  
A monarch owned in the solemn wood,  
With a sceptre spreading wide—  
No more in the wintry blast to bow,  
Or rock in the summer breeze,  
But draped in green, or star-like snow,  
Reign king of the forest trees.

A thousand years it firmly grew,  
A thousand blasts defied,  
And, mighty in strength, its broad arms threw  
A shadow dense and wide.  
Change came to the mighty things of earth—  
Old empires passed away ;  
Of the generations that had birth,  
O Death ! where, where are they ?

Yet fresh and green the brave oak stood,  
Nor dreamed it of decay,  
Though a thousand times in the autumn wood  
Its leaves on the pale earth lay.



It grew where the rocks were bursting out  
From the thin and heaving soil—  
Where the ocean's roar, and the sailor's shout,  
Were mingled in wild turmoil—

Where the far-off sound of the restless deep  
Came up with a booming swell ;  
And the white foam dashed to the rocky steep,  
But it loved the tumult well.  
Then its huge limbs creaked in the midnight air,  
And joined in the rude uproar :  
For it loved the storm and the lightning's glare,  
And the wave-lashed iron shore.

The bleaching bones of the seabird's prey  
Were heaped on the rocks below ;  
And the bald-head eagle, fierce and gray,  
Looked off from its topmost bough.  
Where the shadow lay on the quiet wave  
The light boat often swung,  
And the stout ship, saved from the ocean grave,  
Her cable round it flung.

A sound comes down in the forest trees,  
An echoing from the hill ;  
It floats far off on the summer breeze,  
And the shore resounds it shrill.  
Lo! the monarch tree no more shall stand  
Like a watch-tower of the main—  
A giant mark of a giant land  
That may not come again.

The stout old oak !—'T was a worthy tree,  
And the builder marked it out ;  
He smiled its angled limbs to see,  
As he measured the trunk about.  
Already to him was a gallant bark  
Careering the rolling deep,  
And in sunshine, calm, or tempest dark,  
Her way she will proudly keep.

The chisel clicks, and the hammer rings,—  
The merry jest goes round ;  
While he who longest and loudest sings  
Is the stoutest workman found.  
With jointed rib and trunnelled\* plank  
The work goes gayly on,  
And light-spoke oaths, when the glass they  
drank,  
Are heard till the task is done.

She sits on the stocks, the skeleton ship,  
With her oaken ribs all bare,  
And the child looks up with parted lip,  
As it gathers fuel there—  
With brimless hat, the barefoot boy  
Looks round with strange amaze,  
And dreams of a sailor's life of joy  
Are mingling in that gaze.

\* An "Ancient Mariner" tells me this is properly tree-nail, being bolts of wood by which the timbers are secured.

With graceful waist and carvings brave  
The trim hull waits the sea—  
She proudly stoops to the crested wave,  
While round go the cheerings three.  
Her prow swells up from the yesty deep,  
Where it plunged in foam and spray ;  
And the glad waves gathering round her sweep  
And buoy her in their play.

Thou wert nobly reared, oh, heart of oak !  
In the sound of the ocean roar,  
Where the surging wave o'er the rough rock  
broke,  
And bellowed along the shore—  
And how wilt thou in the storm rejoice,  
With the wind through spar and shroud,  
To hear a sound like the forest voice,  
When the blast was raging loud !

With snow-white sail, and streamer gay,  
She sits like an ocean-sprite,  
Careering on her trackless way,  
In sunshine or midnight :  
Her course is laid with fearless skill,  
For brave hearts man the helm ;  
And the joyous winds her canvass fill—  
Shall the wave the stout ship whelm ?

On, on she goes, where icebergs roll,  
Like floating cities by ;  
Where meteors flash by the northern pole,  
And the merry dancers fly ;

Where the glittering light is backward flung  
From icy tower and dome,  
And the frozen shrouds are gayly hung  
With gems from the ocean foam.

On the Birman sea was her shadow cast,  
As it lay like molten gold,  
And her pendent shroud and towering mast  
Seemed twice on the waters told.  
The idle canvass slowly swung  
As the spicy breeze went by,  
And strange, rare music around her rung  
From the palm-tree growing nigh.

Oh, gallant ship, thou didst bear with thee  
The gay and the breaking heart,  
And weeping eyes looked out to see  
Thy white-spread sails depart.  
And when the rattling casement told  
Of many a perilled ship,  
The anxious wife her babes would fold,  
And pray with trembling lip.

The petrel wheeled in her stormy flight,  
The wind piped shrill and high;  
On the topmast sat a pale blue light,  
That flickered not to the eye:  
The black cloud came like a banner down,  
And down came the shrieking blast;  
The quivering ship on her beams is thrown,  
And gone are helm and mast.

Helmless, but on before the gale,  
She ploughs the deep-troughed wave;  
A gurgling sound—a phrensied wail—  
And the ship hath found a grave.  
And thus is the fate of the acorn told,  
Which fell from the old oak tree,  
And HE OF THE SHELL in the frosty mould  
Preserved for its destiny.



## MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

## THE APRIL RAIN.

THE April rain—the April rain—  
I hear the pleasant sound ;  
Now soft and still, like little dew,  
Now drenching all the ground.  
Pray tell me why an April shower  
Is pleasanter to see  
Than falling drops of other rain ?  
I'm sure it is to me.—

I wonder if 'tis really so—  
Or only hope the while,  
That tells of swelling buds and flowers,  
And summer's coming smile.  
Whate'er it is, the April shower  
Makes me a child again ;  
I feel a rush of youthful blood  
Come with the April rain.

And sure, were I a little bulb  
    Within the darksome ground,  
I should love to hear the April rain  
    So gently falling round ;  
Or any tiny flower were I,  
    By nature swaddled up,  
How pleasantly the April shower  
    Would bathe my hidden cup.

The small brown seed, that rattled down  
    On the cold autumnal earth,  
Is bursting from its cerements forth,  
    Rejoicing in its birth.  
The slender spears of pale green grass  
    Are smiling in the light,  
The clover opes its folded leaves  
    As if it felt delight.

The robin sings on the leafless tree,  
    And upward turns his eye,  
As loving much to see the drops  
    Come filtering from the sky—  
No doubt he longs the bright green leaves  
    About his home to see,  
And feel the swaying summer winds  
    Play in the full-robed tree.

The cottage door is open wide,  
    And cheerful sounds are heard ;  
The young girl sings at the merry wheel  
    A song like the wilding bird ;

The creeping child by the old worn sill  
Peers out with winking eye,  
And his ringlets rubs with chubby hand,  
As the drops come pattering by.

With bounding heart beneath the sky,  
The truant boy is out,  
And hoop and ball are darting by  
With many a merry shout—  
Ay, sport away, ye joyous throng,  
For yours is the April day;  
I love to see your spirits dance  
In your pure and healthful play.



## THE WATER.

How beautiful the water is!  
Didst ever think of it,  
When down it tumbles from the skies,  
As in a merry fit?  
It jostles, ringing as it falls,  
On all that's in its way—  
I hear it dancing on the roof,  
Like some wild thing at play.

'Tis rushing now adown the spout  
And gushing out below,  
Half frantic in its joyousness,  
And wild in eager flow.  
The earth is dried and parched with heat,  
And it hath longed to be  
Released from out the selfish cloud,  
To cool the thirsty tree.

It washes, rather rudely too,  
The floweret's simple grace,  
As if to chide the pretty thing  
For dust upon its face.

It showers the tree till every leaf  
Is free from dust or stain,  
Then waits till leaf and branch are stilled,  
And showers them o'er again.

Drop after drop is tinkling down,  
To kiss the stirring brook,  
The water dimples from beneath  
With its own joyous look ;  
And then the kindred drops embrace,  
And singing on they go,  
To dance beneath the willow-tree,  
And glad the vale below.

How beautiful the water is !  
It loves to come at night,  
To make us wonder in the morn  
To find the earth so bright ;  
To see a youthful gloss is spread  
On every shrub and tree,  
And flowerets breathing on the air  
Their odors pure and free.

A dainty thing the water is,  
It loves the blossom's cup,  
To nestle 'mid the odors there,  
And fill the petals up ;  
It hangs its gems on every leaf,  
Like diamonds in the sun ;  
And then the water wins the smile  
The floweret should have won.

How beautiful the water is !  
To me 'tis wondrous fair—  
No spot can ever lonely be,  
If water sparkle there—  
It hath a thousand tongues of mirth,  
Of grandeur, or delight ;  
And every heart is gladder made  
When water greets the sight.



## THE PARK FOUNTAIN.

SNOWY fountain upward gushing  
Like a spirit birth of glee,  
From thy cold, dark pathway rushing\*  
Thus rejoicing to be free;  
On my cheek thy spray is falling,  
Rock, and dell, and songful bird,  
Echoes on each other calling,  
In thy melody are heard.

Thou dost owe thy birth, O, fountain,  
Far away by wood and dale,  
Silver streamlets from the mountain  
Steal to thee in lonely vale ;  
Still amid thy falling water,  
Mirrored in thy crystal sheen,  
Frolic wood-nymphs, wild with laughter,  
Lured by thee from woodland green.

\* The Croton water is brought to the city of New York through pipes, from a distance of forty miles.

Home of light and glory leaving  
For a pathway dim and drear,  
Struggling, hoping, inly grieving,  
Thou rejoicest to be here ;  
Yet a sorrow minglcth ever  
With the joy that set thee free ;  
Thou art falling, fountain, never  
Shall thy hope be given thee !

Thus through darkness, doubt, and sorrow,  
Struggling in our pathway on,  
Hoping brighter things to-morrow,  
Sorrowing when the goal is won ;  
Thus like thee, do we, O fountain,  
Half in memory of the past,  
Look once more for bower and mountain,  
Visions bright, too bright to last.

Thus like thee are upward mounting,  
Hopes for earth too fair and bright ;  
Perished hopes the hours are counting  
With a promise of delight ;  
Yet we give them kindly greeting,  
Till the heart itself be riven—  
Visions fond, and frail, and fleeting,  
Bathed like thee in hues of heaven.

## THE LAST SHOT.

"The Prince had never been known to fail of his aim; he raised his bow, and a beautiful bird fell bleeding to the earth, which uttered at the same time the mournful words, 'Why did you aim at me sitting.'"—*Arabian Nights*.

AN archer who ne'er drew his bow  
Except at bird upon the wing,  
Once bent it at the dancing spray,  
Where lurked a bird but born to sing!  
The flutter 'mid the glancing boughs,  
The herd of vagrant shooters near,  
Misled the veteran of the field,  
Who thought his wonted quarry here!

And even when the songster fell  
Wounded before his very eyes,  
Still, still confused the archer gazed  
In feeling half, and half surprise;  
The stricken bird might beat its wing,  
From pain that he of all would rue—  
How could he trace its radiant plume,  
Flitting amid that common crew?

A note—a throb—a gush of song!  
“That wildwood music! God of grace!  
'Tis heaven's own warbler that I hear—  
The spirit-song my soul would trace!”  
Half-cursed, half-blessed he then the aim,  
Which wounded, but still spared the bird;  
*Cursed*, that he blindly thus should shoot,  
But, weeping, *blessed* the song he heard.

And rapt by that pure spirit-strain,  
Away from all that charmed before,  
He knelt upon his shattered bow,  
And vowed that he would shoot no more.  
That bird, fresh plumed, with vigorous wing,  
More rich in melody they say,  
To him in greenwood bower will sing,  
Who loves to list the live-long day.

## "THOU HAST LOVED."

DEAREST, in thine eye's deep light  
Is a look to tears allied—  
Sorrow struggling with delight,  
Each the other seeks to hide ;  
Thou, the freighted ark of life  
Lonely floating on the sea,  
With thy being's treasure rife—  
Thou hast wearied thus to be.

Thou hast sent thy dove from thee—  
Forth hast launched thy dove of peace,  
And the branch, though green it be,  
Can it bid thy doubtings cease ?  
Though it speak of hope the while,  
Verdant spots and sunny bowers,  
Can it bring thee back the smile  
That beguiled thy vacant hours ?

Take thy dove and fold its wing—  
Fold the ruffled wing to rest :  
Deluge airs around it ring :  
Let it nestle on thy breast.



Dearest, all thy care is vain—  
Mark its trembling, weary wings ;  
But it comes to thee again,  
And an olive branch it brings.

Take it, bind it unto thee,  
Though the leaves are dim with tears ;  
Such thy woman lot must be—  
Love and sorrow, hopes and fears.  
Bind the branch of promise ever  
To thy heart, with fear oppressed,  
Let the leaves of hope, oh! never,  
Withered, leave their place of rest.

## P R E S A G E S.

THERE are who from their cradle bear  
The impress of a grief—  
Deep, mystic eyes, and forehead fair,  
And looks that ask relief;  
The shadows of a coming doom,  
Of sorrow and of strife,  
When Fates conflicting round the loom,  
Wove the sad web of life.

And others come, the gladsome ones,  
All shadowless and gay,  
Like sweet surprise of April suns,  
Or music gone astray;  
Arrested, half in doubt we turn  
To catch another sight,  
So strangely rare it is to learn  
A presage of delight.

## THE LOVE OF LADY ANN.

In her bower the lady Ann  
Wept her love apart,  
"Why so much of pride, ladye,  
With a loving heart!

Broad and fertile are thy lands,  
Stately is thy hall,  
But a faithful heart, ladye,  
Far outweighs them all.

Thou mayst choose thy gilded bower,  
Nursing grief within,  
And thy lover will forget  
Love he failed to win.

Thou mayst sit in gilded bower,  
I the free woods roam;  
Never should a lingering bride  
Share with me a home.

Truth of heart and strength of arm,  
These I bring to thee ;  
But thy pride hath spurned the gift—  
Fare-thee-well, ladye."

On the latchet is his glaive,  
Scarce he deigns a sigh ;  
But the maiden's gushing tears  
Tremble in her eye.

In the stirrup is his foot—  
Thus do lovers part—  
He to bear his pride alone,  
She a breaking heart.

Trembling, doubtful, Lady Ann,  
Half in fear arose ;  
Then with beating heart she sped,  
And her arms she throws,

Clasping him with wild embrace,  
Pride and home forgot,  
She hath left her stately towers  
For a lowly lot.

## CHILDHOOD'S LAUGH.

A LAUGH ! a brimming laugh of joy—from child-  
hood's lip it peals,  
And every ear on which it falls, a thrill of rapture  
feels—

Stern brows relax, and lips will curl, with some-  
thing like a smile,  
Although the cause of that wild mirth be all  
unknown the while.

For there is something in the glee, the laughing  
of a child,

That speaks to e'en the coldest heart, it rings  
so free and wild ;

'T is like the music of a bird, that hath no tone  
of care,

But poureth its exceeding joy upon the summer  
air.

'T is like the odorous breath exhaled from out  
the dewy flower,

That telleth of a quiet bliss in every sunlight  
hour—

Or like the insects' ceaseless hum from grove or  
verdant spot,  
Where they are telling all day long their joy-  
abounding lot.

It is a free, a guileless laugh, that brings a pang  
to none—  
And welletth from a crystal heart, that hath no  
sorrow known—  
And wheresoe'er that laugh shall fall, it will a  
dream restore  
Of by-gone glee, and careless mirth, and child-  
hood's days once more.

Up springing by the dusty way, rise many a joy-  
ous group—  
The kite soars high, the ball rebounds, and darts  
the merry hoop—  
The woods re-echo once again, to boyhood's  
noisy glee,  
And tiny mills beside the brook are turning rap-  
idly.

And by-gone pranks, forgotten long, return till  
each has smiled,  
To think how very smart he was, and witty  
when a child—  
And retrospective sighs are heaved, so sadly  
boys have changed  
Since they along the forest way, or by the sea-  
shore ranged.

The gay child's laugh is everywhere, and sad  
indeed were earth,  
If never on the weary ear came childhood's  
voice of mirth.  
Oh! were that hushed, a murky gloom on ev-  
erything would rest,  
And heavy press the weight of care upon the  
human breast.

Then never check that sinless joy, but freely let  
it swell,  
For 'mid the pleasant sounds of earth this works  
the holiest spell—  
It tells of hours of innocence, when love and  
trust were given,  
And it may whisper yet again the words of peace  
and heaven.

## THE CHILD AND THE ROSE.

WHEN stirring bud and songful bird  
Brought gladness to the earth,  
And spring-time voices first were heard  
In low, sweet sounds of mirth;

A little child, with pleasant eyes,  
Reclined in tranquil thought,  
And, half-communing with the skies,  
His pretty fancies wrought.

He turned where cased in robe of green  
A rosebud met his eye—  
And one faint streak the leaves between,  
Rich in its crimson dye.

The warm light gathereth in the sky—  
The bland air stirreth round—  
And yet the child is lingering by,  
Half-kneeling on the ground:



For broader grew that crimson streak,  
Back folds the leaf of green—  
And he in wonder still and meek  
Watched all its opening sheen.

"'Tis done, 'tis done!" at length he cried,  
With glad amazement wild—  
The rose, in new-created pride,  
Had opened for the child.

Oh! had we hearts like thine, sweet boy,  
To watch creative power,  
We too should thrill with kindred joy  
At every opening flower.

## T O A B A B E .

PRECIOUS baby, rest thee here,  
Nestle thus about my heart :  
Child, devoid of guilt and fear,  
What a mystery thou art !  
'T is a pleasure, little one,  
On thy sinless brow to look ;  
Life to do, and nothing done—  
Nothing written in thy book !

Link art thou 'twixt me and heaven ;  
Blessed ministry is thine ;  
Unto thee a power is given  
To renew this heart of mine—  
Childhood's fearless love renew—  
Childhood's truth and holy trust ;  
And of youth bring back the dew,  
Lift the spirit from the dust.

Mothers may not know on earth,  
Half the deep and holy spell  
Wrought by infant tears and mirth,  
Meanings strange that few may tell.

Deeper grows the mother's eye  
With its look of love and prayer—  
Holiest duty, promptings high  
Mingle with maternal care.

Careless thou as blossoms wild  
Growing in the light of heaven ;  
Thou, a meek and trusting child,  
Faith like theirs to thee is given :  
And for thee I will not fear  
In the perils that await—  
Thought and will, the prayer, the tear,  
Arm thee strong for any fate.

## THE CHILD'S BENEDICTION.

I KNEW it not, sweet child, or I  
Had smothered that desponding sigh,  
For it hath checked thy joyous song;  
Thine eye with tears it filleth now,  
A shadow resteth on thy brow—  
My child, my child, I did thee wrong!

What dost thou whisper in mine ear?  
Sweet words "God bless thee, mother dear!"  
My own fond one, thou art to me  
A hope, a blessing, and a guide—  
No more shall doubt and fear abide;  
I'll meekly learn my faith of thee.

"God bless thee!" gentle words and kind,  
The offspring of a trusting mind—  
They bear a pledge, when lips like thine,  
Forgetting childhood's random speech,  
Do thus a higher lesson teach,  
And mystic words like these combine.

God shield thee, for a heart like thine,  
Where truth and tenderness combine,  
Alas! is doomed too much to know  
Of sympathies all vainly spent—  
Of love to blinding worship lent—  
And all life's strange and hidden wo.

God shield thee, my poor, gentle boy!  
Would that the cup of life and joy,  
Dashed from thy mother's lips away,  
Might with thine own of fate be blended,  
And all the ill for thee intended,  
Upon her bosom only prey.

## LOVE SHELTERED.

“Love came to my window one day.”

A BIRD, escaped the fowler's snare,  
Sought refuge in my breast—  
Alas! too fondly cherished there,  
It robbed me of my rest.

Awhile its ruffled wing it drest,  
Content it seemed awhile—  
Close to my throbbing bosom prest,  
I never dreamed of guile.

I never dreamed my sheltered dove  
Would weary of its home,  
That it would seek another love,  
And from my bosom roam.

I felt it struggling in my hand—  
It struggled to be free ;  
I tighter drew the silken band  
That bound it unto me.

Alas! how drooped the joyous thing ;  
Its sorrow touched my heart—  
I loosed the bond—it poised its wing ;  
How could my dove depart ?

How leave a trusting heart to pine,  
In solitude and pain !  
Oh bird, new perils will be thine ;  
Come to my breast again.



## THE GUARDIAN ANGEL.

ILLUSTRATION OF BRACKETT'S ANGEL WATCH-  
ING THE SLEEPING CHILD.

CHILD of earth, and child of heaven!  
Each alike in form and face,  
Save that wings to one is given—  
Something too of loftier grace.

Yet the trustful and the true  
Dwell in meekness with the other—  
These alone it was that drew  
From the skies its angel brother.

Half in blindness, half in trust,  
Guardian arms around him prest,  
Sleeps the child of time and dust,  
Shielded by his cherub guest.

Angel-child! and child of earth!  
Semblance ye of hidden things;  
One hath reached its spirit-birth—  
One but waiteth for its wings.



## THE FIRST LEAF OF AUTUMN.

I SEE thee fall, thou quivering leaf, of faint and  
yellow hue,  
The first to feel the autumn winds, that, blight-  
ing, o'er thee blew—  
Slow-parted from the rocking branch, I see thee  
floating by,  
To brave, all desolate and lone, the bleak au-  
tumnal sky.

Alas! the first, the yellow leaf—how sadly falls  
it there,  
To rustle on the crispéd grass, with every chil-  
ly air!  
It tells of those that soon must drop all withered  
from the tree,  
And it hath waked a sadder chord in deathless  
memory.

Thou eddying leaf, away, away, there's sorrow  
in thy hue;  
Thou soundst the knell of sunny hours, of buds,  
and liquid dew—

And thou dost tell how from the heart the blooms  
of hope decay ;  
How each one lingers, loath to part, till all are  
swept away.



## MINISTERING SPIRITS.

WHITE-WINGED angels meet the child  
On the vestibule of life,  
And they offer to his lips  
All that cup of mingled strife ;  
Mingled drops of smiles and tears,  
Human hopes, and human fears,  
Joy and sorrow, love and wo,  
Which the future heart must know.

Sad the smile the spirits wear,  
Sad the fanning of their wings,  
As in their exceeding love  
Each a cup of promise brings ;  
In the coming strife and care,  
They have promised to be there ;  
Bowed by weariness or grief,  
They will minister relief.

Lady, could the infant look  
In that deep and bitter cup,  
All its hidden perils know,  
Would it quaff life's waters up ?

Lady, yes, for in the vase,  
Upward beams an angel-face ;  
Deep and anguished though the sigh,  
There is comfort lurking nigh—  
Times of joy, and times of wo,  
Each an angel-presence know.

## FAREWELL TO FANCY.

WITH thee no more, oh Fancy, can I stray,  
My dreamy eye through thee all things be-  
holding,  
No more with loitering feet, and hands en-  
folding,  
I seek the bower where flickering sun-beams  
play.  
Farewell, oh changeful spirit, we must part,  
Thou hast no portion in a weary heart.

Farewell, the dew within the blossom's cup,  
An angel's face no more to me revealing—  
Glad voices now no more around me stealing,  
Fanned by thy wing may lift my spirits up;  
My world is all too drear for thee, sweet sprite,  
And I will bid thee, one long, last good night.

Yet linger thou, oh! when the stars are out,  
Let thoughts of thee, the weak, lone heart be-  
gailing,  
Steal gently in, and lure the lip to smiling;

Though darkness and distress may be about,  
The waving of thy robe I fain would see,  
Though thou art lost, for ever lost to me.

I know that thou art deemed a lesser sprite,  
Thy rainbow wing unfit for lofty soaring ;  
Yet not the less for thee was my adoring.  
I, who have shrank in terror from a flight  
That leaving lowlier things, too oft hath left  
The aching heart of all its love bereft.

Thou wilt not bide, thy shadowy form each day  
More faint and faintly on my vision gleaming,  
May not the real screen, with thy sweet seem-  
ing ;  
And yet thou canst not turn thy face away—  
Though form be lost, thy saddened eyes remain,  
Fond, gentle eyes, that lure me from my pain.

Farewell, in all the ministry of life—  
Though visions fade, and such as once were  
keeping  
Bright vigils round, vigils that knew no sleep-  
ing,  
May leave their place for others armed for strife,  
Yet blessed ones, 'tis sweet to think that ye,  
And such as ye, have watched our destiny.

## THE ELEVENTH HOUR.

THERE are no times nor seasons unto Him  
Who fashioned forth this universal frame,  
The stars revolving weary grow and dim,  
The Pleiad leaves on high no lingering flame,  
Creations spring to birth, in age decay,  
And as a scroll the heavens shall pass away :

And as a point to Him man's fearful life—  
Not by revolving sun nor changeful moon—  
Mark not by these his agony and strife ;  
Oh ! not by these his youth, his fervid noon,  
Thronged by emotions crowded to a span,  
Ages centred in the life of man :

And Thou, to whom all seasons are the same,  
Though blindly erring, devious in our way,  
Remember thou the weakness of our frame,  
Forgive, though late we bow to thee and pray ;  
Though at the eleventh hour the offering be,  
Spurn not the spirit seeking thus to thee ;  
For unto thee, oh God ! a thousand years  
Is as man's yesterday of smiles and tears.

## THE APPEAL.

I had rather have one kisse,  
Childe waters of thy mouth;  
Than I woulde have Cheshire and Lancashire bothe  
That lye by north and south.

*Old Ballad.*

I CAME to thee in workday dress  
And hair but plainly kempt,  
For life is not all holyday,  
From toil and care exempt;

I met thee oft with glowing cheek,  
Thus love its tale will tell;  
Though oft its after paleness told  
Of hidden grief as well.

My eyes that drooped beneath thy glance  
To hide their sense of bliss,  
Let fall too oft the tears that tell  
Of secret tenderness.

I sought for no bewildering lure  
Thy senses to beguile,  
But checked the woman playfulness,  
The witching tone and smile.



With household look and household word,  
And frank as maidens meet ;  
I dared with earnest homely truth,  
Thy manliness to greet.

For oh ! so much of truth was mine,  
So much of love beside,  
I wished in simple maidenhood  
To be thy chosen bride.

Alas ! the russet robe no more  
Of humble life may tell,  
And thou dost say the velvet gear  
Becomes my beauty well.

'T was thy dear hand upon my brow  
That bound each sparkling gem,  
But dearer far its slightest touch,  
Than all the wealth of them.

Oh ! tell me not of gorgeous robes,  
Nor bind the jewel there ;  
And tell me not with those cold eyes,  
That I am wondrous fair.

I will not chide, I will not blame,  
And yet the thought is here,  
The thought so fraught with bitterness,  
It yieldeth me no tear.

I gave thee tenderness too deep.  
Too deep for aught but tears,  
And thou wouldst teach the world's cold rule  
Which learned, the heart but sears.

I gave thee all, the soul's deep trust,  
Its truth by sorrow tried ;  
Nay start not thou, what hast thou given ?  
Alas ! 'tis but thy pride.

Give back, give back the tenderness  
That blest my simple love,  
And call me as in those dear days,  
Thine own, thy gentle dove.

## THE JEWISH CAPTIVE.

Lo! where Euphrates in his tranquil bed  
Scarce swells his heaving bosom to the light,  
While from the west a thousand hues are shed,  
To deck his waters, ere the sombre night  
Shall on his gorgeous palaces come down,  
And shroud each glory in his darkened frown.

The stately obelisk has caught the ray,  
The sunset trembling on its graceful head,  
And the light winds come stealing on their way,  
To kiss the lily in its liquid bed ;  
The flexile willow bends unto the stream,  
And seems more lovely in the twilight gleam.

A thousand flowers, that, through the scorching  
ray,  
Their sweetness from the sense had treasured  
up,  
Lavish their wealth upon the dying day  
And make an offering pure of every cup,  
As if they bowed in worship to the sun,  
And offered incense when the day was done.

Forth from a marble fount the waters plash,  
 And twinkle down in many a mimic fall—  
 That ever in the light like diamonds flash ;  
 And in their melody they seem to call  
 To old Euphrates, as he wanders by,  
 And spreads his waters to the golden sky.

A group of maidens by the willows bend,  
 And weave their tresses by the twilight sky,  
 While ever on the air glad voices blend,  
 And many a song and laugh are floating by  
 To mingle with the sound of chiming waters,  
 That lave the feet of dark-eyed Syrian daughters.

“Lo! here,” cries one, “the captive Mara tends,  
 Mara, the Jewess, queen-like in her wo ;  
 Though many a victor to her beauty bends,  
 The smile no more her gentle lips may  
 know.  
 Not for her own she weeps, but Judah’s wrongs,  
 And pours her sorrows in their mystic songs.

“Didst ever hear the music strange and high,  
 The Jewish captives from their harp-strings  
 bring,  
 While Zion-ward they turn the kindling eye ?  
 Mara, approach ; we fain would hear thee  
 sing  
 A song of Zion—such as once ye sang  
 When Jordan’s waters to the music rang.”

The captive flung her tresses from her brow,  
And upward raised her dark and tearless eye,  
Clasped her pale hands in agony of wo,  
And heaved her breast with many a smothered  
sigh;  
Quick thronging visions o'er her spirit passed—  
She lived again where childhood's lot was cast.

Lo! sad Judea's vine-clad hills are there,  
And fruitful Jordan, with its many streams,  
Proud Lebanon, with cedars tall and fair,  
And, midst her desolation, sadly gleams  
Lone Zion, widowed, childless, and oppressed,  
A Rachel, for her first-born son distressed.

There, 'neath a cottage, where the trailing vine  
In many a festoon o'er the lattice clings,  
An ancient matron seems alone to pine,  
And calls her children, while her arm she  
flings,  
To clasp the shadows that her fancies raise,  
The cherished offspring of her happier days.

But what is grief like hers—that matron old,  
Who spreads her white locks to the evening  
sky,  
When Zion stands bereft—her altars cold!  
And all her exiled children turn their eye  
To where the happier swallow builds her nest,  
And in the courts of God has found her rest.

O'er Mara's soul the power of music rushed,  
Her harp the maidens from the willows bring:  
Forth from her lips high thoughts and feelings  
gushed,

"How can I Zion's songs, a captive, sing?  
How sing of Jordan, here by Babel's strand?  
How sing of Judah, in this dark, strange land?"

"Oh Zion! if I cease for thee  
My earliest vows to pay—  
If for thy sad and ruined walls  
I ever cease to pray—  
If I no more thy sacred courts  
With holy reverence prize,  
Or Zion-ward shall cease to turn  
My ever-longing eyes—  
Or if the splendor round me thrown  
Shall move this Jewish heart,  
And make me cease to prize thy joy  
Above all other art—  
Or should I cease for Zion's courts  
To pray on bended knee,  
Or dare to bow to these blind gods,  
Forgetful, Lord, of thee,  
Oh may this hand no more with skill  
This sacred harp-string sweep,  
And may this tongue cleave to my mouth  
In death's cold, silent sleep."

## S O N G.

## I.

THE bird the summer air that skims,  
A pathway leaves in space,  
Though it were vain the path it leaves,  
With human eye to trace ;  
The blossom that awhile looks up  
In gladness to the eye,  
Makes for its own bright, fragrant cup,  
A home within the sky.

The bird flies on to other skies  
Its pathway all forgot,  
The flower yields up its many dies,  
The place as it were not ;  
And thus, 'tis thus will love depart,  
Nor leave behind a trace,  
Save urn-like from the broken heart,  
An incense marks the place.

## S O N G.

## II.

THOU art free as the air, I prithee away,  
Like a bee overburdened with sweets,  
Who roving mid blossoms, a moment will stay,  
To sip of each one that it meets.

I would not detain thee if lured to depart,  
Thou cravest a love light and free,  
The rapture, the thrill, the doubt of the heart,  
Then why tarry longer with me ?

I spurn from me vows which another may share,  
The smile that is lavished on all—  
This proud heart may battle with death or des-  
pair,  
It will not be longer thy thrall.

Go revel in smiles—I blame thee, no never !  
Win hearts that are fickle as thine,  
And forget, oh forget, both now and for ever,  
The truth and the fervor of mine.



## S O N G.

## III.

WHISPER love at star-light hour  
When the hush is deep around,  
And the dew upon the flower,  
Calleth incense from the ground.  
Whisper love when recent tears  
Dim the lustre of the eye,  
When the smile delaying fears,  
Sorrow may be lurking nigh.

Whisper love at holiest eve,  
When the lips are fresh from prayer,  
Never woman may deceive  
Him who kneels beside her there.  
Truth is hid in every star,  
Grief hath no deluding tone,  
And the holiness of prayer  
Blends two spirits into one.

## THE BROOK.

“WHITHER away, thou merry brook,  
Whither away so fast !  
With dainty feet through the meadow green,  
And a smile as you hurry past.”  
The brook leaped on in idle mirth,  
And dimpled with saucy glee ;  
The daisy kissed in lovingness,  
And made with the willow free.

I heard its laugh adown the glen,  
And over the rocky steep,  
Away where the old tree's roots were bare  
In the waters dark and deep ;  
The sunshine flashed upon its face,  
And played with flickering leaf.  
Well pleased to dally in its path,  
Though the tarrying were brief.

“ Now stay thy feet, O restless one,  
Where droops the spreading tree,  
And let thy liquid voice reveal  
Thy story unto me.”

The flashing pebbles lightly rung,  
As the gushing music fell,  
The chiming music of the brook,  
From out the woody dell.

“ My mountain home was bleak and high  
A rugged spot and drear;  
With searching wind and raging storm,  
And moonlight, cold and clear.  
I longed for a greeting cheery as mine,  
For a fond and answering look ;  
But none were in that solitude  
To bless the little brook.

“ The blended hum of pleasant sounds  
Came up from the vale below,  
And I wished that mine were a lowly lot.  
To lapse, and sing as I go ;  
That gentle things, with loving eyes,  
Along my path should glide,  
And blossoms, in their loveliness,  
Come nestling to my side.

“ I leaped me down ; my rainbow robe  
Hung shivering to the sight,  
And the thrill of freedom gave to me  
New impulse of delight.  
A joyous welcome the sunshine gave,  
The bird and the swaying tree ;  
The spear-like grass and blossom start  
With joy at sight of me.

“The swallow comes with its bit of clay,  
When the busy spring is here,  
And twittering bears the moistened gift,  
A nest on the eaves to rear.  
The twinkling feet of flock and herd  
Have trodden a path to me,  
And the fox and the squirrel come to drink  
In the shade of the alder tree.

“The sunburnt child, with its rounded foot,  
Comes hither with me to play,  
And I feel the thrill of his lightsome heart,  
As he dashes the merry spray.  
I turn the mill with answering glee,  
As the merry spokes go round,  
And the gray rock takes the echo up,  
Rejoicing in the sound.

“The old man bathes his scattered locks,  
And drops me a silent tear ;  
For he sees a wrinkled, care-worn face  
Look up from the waters clear.  
Then I sing in his ear the very song  
He heard in years gone by,  
The old man’s heart is glad again,  
And a joy lights up his eye.”

Enough, enough, thou homily brook ;  
I’ll treasure thy teachings well,  
And I will yield a heartfelt tear  
Thy crystal drops to swell ;

Will bear like thee a kindly love  
For the lowly things of earth,  
Remembering still that high and pure  
Is the home of the spirit's birth.



## THE SLEEP OF PLANTS.

The leaves of plants are observed to take a different position in the night season, being folded over the germ, and the whole presenting the appearance of rest. A species of the acacia, the common locust, is a beautiful example of this; whence a child once prettily said, "It is n't time to go to bed, till the acacia goes to sleep!" Linnæus elegantly terms this property, "The sleep of plants."

AWAY, pretty zephyr, away, away,  
The flowerets all are sleeping,  
The moon is out with her silver ray,  
The stars, too, watch are keeping;  
It is all in vain, thou silly thing,  
To lavish the incense from thy wing;

They will not awake from love of thee,  
Gay idler from sunny skies,  
Who dippest thy wing in the glassy sea,  
Stealing along with quick surprise,  
Bending the grass, and bowing the grain,  
A moment here, and away again.

Nay! toss the leaves, it is useless all,  
For closed is each dewy eye,  
The insect-hum, and the water-fall,

Are singing their lullaby;  
And each in folding its mantle up,  
An incense pressed from its perfumed cup.

The blushing bud is but lightly stirred,  
The pendent leaf is at rest,  
And all will sleep, till the little bird  
Springs up from its dewy nest;  
And then the blossom its head will raise,  
To greet the morn with a look of praise.

## THE FLOWER OF INNOCENCE,

HOUSTONIA CÆRULEA.

It comes when wakes the pleasant spring,  
When first the earth is green,  
Four white or pale blue leaves it hath,  
With yellow heart between.

It grows about a heap of stones,  
For there the dew will stay,  
It springs beside the dusty road,  
Where children are at play.

It dots with stars the grassy bank  
That slopes adown the brook,  
And there it takes a deeper blue,  
And there a gayer look.

On upland sod when doomed to bloom,  
Its leaves are small and white,  
As if it shrank within itself,  
And paled amid the light.



A dweller in a common path,  
With myriads of its kind,  
Yet doth its unpretending grace  
A oneness bring to mind :

Like household charities that seem  
So native to the heart,  
That we forget, in seeing all,  
That each is fair apart.

We call thee Innocence, sweet one,  
And well it thee beseems,  
For thou art cherished in the heart,  
With childhood's sinless dreams.

## THE OLD MAN.

OLD man, gray man, who sittest there  
In the shadow of the tree,  
The winds at play in thy scattered hair,  
What may thy visions be ?  
Vacant, and lone, and aimless, thou,  
God pity thee, thou old man, now.

There is no sound by the cottage hearth,  
To thrill thy heart again,  
Thy dull ear greeteth no voice of mirth,  
Thine eye may seek in vain  
The kindly look of the loving heart ;  
Too soon do such from the earth depart.

Thou shakest, old man, thy hoary head,  
The fitting past to recall ;  
Let it fade, let it fade, thy heart is dead,  
Why shouldst thou lift the pall ?  
What is now to thee the bustle and strife,  
That lured thee on in thy early life ?

Let the record fade—it is naught to thee,  
Its mission hath long been o'er,  
'T would puzzle thy brain, could these strange  
things be  
Revealed to thy sight once more,  
Thou wouldst wonder and ask if this were all,  
That kept thy spirit so long in thrall.

It is well for thee, that blunted now  
Are the pangs that pierced thee through,  
The griefs that have blanched thy sunken brow,  
Vain hopes thy young heart knew ;  
'T is a blessed thing, old man, for thee,  
That lost is the page of memory.

## THE DROWNED MARINER.

A MARINER sat on the shrouds one night,  
    The wind was piping free,  
Now bright, now dimmed was the moonlight  
    pale,  
And the phosphor gleamed in the wake of the  
    whale,  
    As he floundered in the sea ;  
The scud was flying athwart the sky,  
The gathering winds went whistling by,  
And the wave as it towered, then fell in spray,  
Looked an emerald wall in the moonlight ray.

The mariner swayed and rocked on the mast,  
    But the tumult pleased him well,  
Down the yawning wave his eye he cast,  
And the monsters watched as they hurried past,  
    Or lightly rose and fell ;  
For their broad, damp fins were under the tide,  
And they lashed as they passed the vessel's side,  
And their filmy eyes, all huge and grim,  
Glared fiercely up, and they glared at him.

Now freshens the gale. and the brave ship goes  
Like an uncurbed steed along,  
A sheet of flame is the spray she throws,  
As her gallant prow the water plows—  
But the ship is fleet and strong :  
The topsails are reefed and the sails are furled,  
And onward she sweeps o'er the watery world,  
And dippeth her spars in the surging flood ;  
But there came no chill to the mariner's blood.

Wildly she rocks, but he swingeth at ease,  
And holds him by the shroud ;  
And as she careens to the crowding breeze,  
The gaping deep the mariner sees,  
And the surging heareth loud.  
Was that a face, looking up at him,  
With its pallid cheek and its cold eyes dim ?  
Did it beckon him down ? did it call his name ?  
Now rolleth the ship the way whence it came.

The mariner looked, and he saw with dread,  
A face he knew too well ;  
And the cold eyes glared, the eyes of the dead,  
And its long hair out on the wave was spread.  
Was there a tale to tell ?  
The stout ship rocked with a reeling speed,  
And the mariner groaned, as well he need,  
For ever down, as she plunged on her side,  
The dead face gleamed from the briny tide.

Bethink thee, mariner, well of the past,  
A voice calls loud for thee—  
There's a stifled prayer, the first, the last,  
The plunging ship on her beam is cast,  
Oh, where shall thy burial be?  
Bethink thee of oaths that were lightly spoken,  
Bethink thee of vows that were lightly broken,  
Bethink thee of all that is dear to thee—  
For thou art alone on the raging sea :

Alone in the dark, alone on the wave,  
To buffet the storm alone—  
To struggle aghast at thy watery grave,  
To struggle, and feel there is none to save—  
God shield thee, helpless one!  
The stout limbs yield, for their strength is past,  
The trembling hands on the deep are cast,  
The white brow gleams a moment more,  
Then slowly sinks—the struggle is o'er.

Down, down where the storm is hushed to sleep,  
Where the sea its dirge shall swell,  
Where the amber drops for thee shall weep,  
And the rose-lipped shell her music keep,  
There thou shalt slumber well.  
The gem and the pearl lie heaped at thy side,  
They fell from the neck of the beautiful bride,  
From the strong man's hand, from the maiden's  
brow,  
As they slowly sunk to the wave below.

A peopled home is the ocean bed,  
    The mother and child are there—  
The fervent youth and the hoary head,  
The maid, with her floating locks outspread,  
    The babe with its silken hair,  
As the water moveth they lightly sway,  
And the tranquil lights on their features play;  
And there is each cherished and beautiful form,  
Away from decay, and away from the storm.

## THE SUMMONS ANSWERED.

“To sleep—perchance to dream.”

SHAKSPERE.

STOUT men and bold were the bacchanals three,  
Who left the inn that night—  
And they were trolling a merry glee  
Out under the clear starlight.  
To steady themselves their home to reach,  
They placed a hand on the shoulder of each—  
In friendly mood were they ;  
The white owl starts with a quivering screech  
At the midnight roundelay.

Waning and dim is the cloudless moon—  
The solemn trees move not ;  
Yet the dry leaf stirs, where it hangs alone,  
On the autumn branch to shiver and moan,  
A thing wellnigh forgot.  
The slippery leaves are damp to the tread,  
Yet they crush beneath the foot,  
With a sound that now is a sound of dread,  
That blends with the white owl's boot.



Long is the lane that the bacchanals go,  
And they have ceased the song—  
For the still night stilleth their hearts also,  
And whispereth of wrong ;  
The thin moon shineth dim below  
On a moss-green oaken door—  
Above is the shivering, withered grass,  
Beneath is a mouldy floor ;  
But the dead are hushed by prayer and mass,  
And they will stir no more.

There paused the three at "the dead of night,"  
'T were strange to tell the why—  
The shadows crept in the wan moonlight,  
Yet they lingered there, and felt no fright,  
Till one more bold drew nigh,  
And loud he knocked, and an oath he swore ;  
Aghast then fled the two—  
For slowly opened the moss-green door,  
And within a hand him drew.

Damp, damp is the room—a glow-worm ray  
The reeking vault revealing,  
Shows where the dead in their old shrouds lay,  
Solemn and hushed in their slow decay,  
The worm around them stealing,  
With a stillness, stillness pulseless there—  
A stillness deep and cold :  
How still and lone is the heavy air,  
Where the dead their slumber hold !

He sat him down on a mouldy seat,  
No strength had he to flee ;  
And the white worm crawled to Richard's feet,  
He felt its touch on his fingers meet,  
Small heart had he for glee ;  
And the stillness, stillness deeper crept ;  
It seemed on his heart to lie.  
All night with the dead young Richard slept,  
Yet awake was the inner eye.

The dead moved not, but dreamless slept,  
With their faces upward turned ;  
They who had wearisome vigils kept,  
Hoping and loving, though all was wrecked,  
No more with tenderness yearned.  
Pleasant they slept, from their sorrow at rest,  
And Richard feared them not ;  
For the anguish borne in his own dark breast,  
Seemed a far more dreary lot.

This restless life, with its little fears,  
Its hopes, that fade so soon,  
With its yearning tenderness and tears—  
And the burning agony, that sears—  
The sun gone down at noon ;  
The spirit crushed to its prison wall,  
Mindless of all beside ;  
This young Richard saw, and felt it all—  
Well might the dead abide !

The crimson light in the east is high,  
The hoar-frost coldly gleams,  
And Richard, chilled to the heart wellnigh,  
Hath raised his wildered and bloodshot eye,  
From that long night of dreams ;  
He shudders to think of the reckless band,  
And the fearful oath he swore ;  
But most, when he thinks of the clay-cold hand  
That opened the old tomb door.

## THE TWICE-TOLD SEAL.

THE MOTTO BEING "GOD BLESS YOU."

THE letter was a common one,  
A business letter too,  
Announcing some commission done,  
And thence its words were few.  
I read it idly, tossed it by,  
And then a pretty seal  
And kindly motto met my eye,  
That gave my heart to feel

A something more than business air,  
As if for gentle dame  
A dash of chivalry were there,  
Half blended with her name,  
And made the slightest office seem  
A genial one to do—  
It might have been a woman's dream,  
Which she from knighthood drew ;

It might have been ; perchance the seal  
Was carelessly applied—  
"God bless you," has a look of zeal,  
Of earnest truth beside—

I lingered on the words awhile ;  
They alway touch the heart,  
And oft, too oft, a tear beguile,  
When the beloved depart.

Days passed away the seal once more  
I read with sweet surprise—  
Not careless now, if so before,  
“ God bless you ” meets mine eyes ;  
Some gentle hand the words again  
Beneath the seal repeats,  
And my heart feels nor idle, vain,  
The blessing that it meets.

I know not whose the gentle hand,  
If ever pressed in mine,  
If often met in social band  
Where honor, truth combine ;  
I only feel, howe'er unknown,  
Though drear life's path may be,  
A quiet joy that there is one  
Who thus remembers me.

## THE VOICE OF THE AGE.

## THE SIGNERS OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

THOU mighty ocean ! meetly art thou made,  
A type of human ages—thy great voice  
The tumult of a people roused to act—  
Thy waves incessant beating to the shore,  
Weak in their first assay, yet gathering strength  
And volume as they rise, till one vast wave  
Surging with mountain-height o'er-leaps the  
strand,  
A semblance fitting man's progressive thought.  
Ages on ages doth he onward toil,  
The dim lights shielding that his pathway  
cheer—  
Crushing with his gyved hands the clanking  
chain  
That might reveal the progress of his feet,  
Until his hour is come, and then like thee  
He leapeth to the rock, amid the roar  
Of breakers, on the vantage ground he stands  
With planted foot, assured of his own strength.

And ye stern men, whose names are here affixed,  
God-like although ye were, Freedom's last  
hope,

Her "forlorn-hope," prayer-armed, and mar-  
shalled forth

Her banner to uphold, and firmly plant  
Upon the citadel of human rights,

I honor ye far less than man's great thought.

Ye did become his utterance—ye his voice.

Emerging from his gloom, with giant force ;

He spurned the barriers in his pathway hid,

And tore the shackle from the free-born limb—

His proud brow bearing free to the free  
heaven,

And as he moved a sound tumultuous rose—

For his great spirit cried, yet words had not—

It shouted to the mountain and the wave—

That fetterless were left—the wild old woods,

And the free dweller there—to winds that go

And wait no bidding. 'Twas the uncurbed voice

Of nature calling fiercely for her own,

It was the heating of the human mind,

Against the battlements of power.

Then were ye marshalled forth, and man's  
great cry

A language found. Ye stood upon the vantage  
field,

His arm had won, and like a trumpet tone

Your voice became the utterance of his thought.

Man fixed his footing there, and he grew calm

In his own might—the strong limb stronger  
grew—

The nerve was firmly braced—the wild pulse  
beat,  
A calm and measured flow, that told of health.  
And thus upon the citadel of thought  
Ye proudly stood the voice of human-kind,  
And ye are made immortal—thus should be—  
Ye have become the watch-word of the free—  
And long, O! long, shall man's great soul  
move on,  
Concentring thought, like wave succeeding  
wave,  
To seize on higher truths and holier rights  
Ere such as ye shall speak—and then afar  
In the long lapse of ages shall arise,  
From some high battlement which he hath won,  
A trumpet cry, which ye shall answer back  
With hearty cheers, that stronger heights are  
gained.

THE above poem is one of those things, which a writer at all capable of separating the conceptions of his own mind from the suggestiveness of another, is puzzled to know how to dispose of. It was written immediately after an animated discussion with a nobly-endowed friend, to whom the writer is willing to acknowledge many a mental obligation, and the thought therein contained belongs less to herself, than to her companion.



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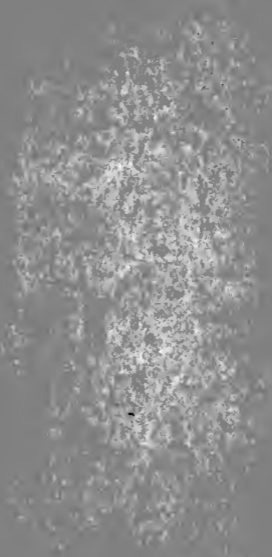
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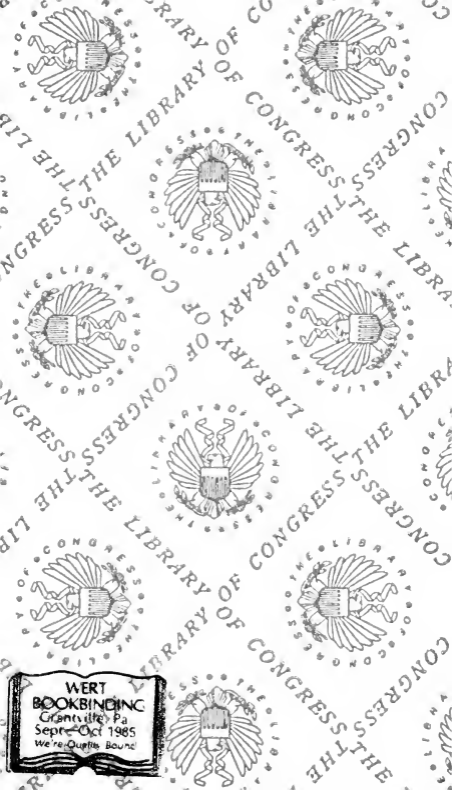
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