



Songs of the
Helderberg.

BY
MAGDALENE I. LA GRANGE.

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Journal

Washington in Canal,



MAGDALENE I. LA GRANGE.

SONGS OF THE HELDERBERG

POEMS

BY

ms MAGDALENE I. LA GRANGE *Merritt*

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ALBANY, N. Y.
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. 1893.

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BY MAGDALENE I. LA GRANGE

Dedication.

TO

MY MOTHER,

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED, AS AN EXPRESSION OF
RESPECT AND AFFECTION.

M. I. LA GRANGE.

Guilderland, Feb. 23rd, 1893.



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POEMS.

COMING HOME.

Over the ocean the east winds steal,
Over the Atlantic's foam,
They kiss the waters that wash the keel
Of a steamer coming home.

A steamer hastening on its way,
A vessel trusty and true,
And from morn till night each livelong day
One watches the waters' hue.

He watches and murmurs soft and low,—
“ We are one day nearer the shore,
Aye, blow us along, strong east wind, blow,
Till I see my loved once more.

Long I have wandered afar from home,
Through lands that are old in fame,
But at last my feet have tired to roam,
And home is the sweetest name.

The old grey farm-house where I was born
Stands up in an ivy glen,
Does its gabled roof still greet the morn,
As cheerily now as then ?

Its front windows faced the rising sun,
And glistened like burnished gold,
When after the milking had all been done,
We came up the path so old.

Ben milked old Brindle and Mollie Brown,
And I milked the mully cow ;
Her coat was black and as soft as down,
With a white spot on her brow.

We could smell the scent of the garden pinks,
And the phlox so brave and tall,
And Ben would say, "How that sun-flower winks
Out there by the garden wall."

The grass was 'most always damp and wet,
The cows all covered with dew,
And Ben and I would forever bet,
Just how swift the swallows flew.

They'd sail around in a perfect stream,
Through the crisp pure morning air;
The sun on their shining wings would gleam
Like jewels glistening there.

We could hear the song of the bob-o-link,
And the turtle-dove's sad note;
Then again brave Lincoln's sweet 'tink-tink,'
Would float from his happy throat.

Mother would stand in the old south door,
With the vines above her head;
And her shadow fell on the yellow floor,
As she called, 'Come Ben! come Ned!'

My mother! her wavy dark brown hair
Was lighted with strands of gold,
And her beautiful face so calm and fair
Shone out with a love untold.

And while we were trudging up the path,
With our milk pails briming o'er;
'Twas music to us to hear her laugh,
As she stood there in the door.

She would laugh so gay in the brightest days,
And 'twas always like a song;
And I've heard her too, when troubles maze,
Had trundled grim care along.

My mother ! 'tis years since I've seen her face,
Her hair must be silver now;
I wonder if sorrow has left a trace
On her high unwrinkled brow.

But little Lena, with flaxen hair;
Has passed to the better land;
How often I've seen her standing there,
Holding fast to mother's hand.

And father ! grand old noble-man,
How my heart flies out to you;
Your years now number three-score-and-ten,
And every one has been true.

Aye, saintly and pure has been your life,
The life of a man all through;
And many a tangled knot of strife
Has been straightened out by you.

The dear old folks must be feeble now,
And they looked so strong that day,
When they sadly watched a vessel's prow
That went sailing down the bay.

The vessel that bore me out to sea,
In the early morning light;
And I saw them wave their hands to me
Till I faded from their sight.

Yes, I left the happy home of my youth,
Left the scenes I loved so well;
And out on life I started in truth
When I said to them, 'Farewell!'

But Ben has stayed with them all this while—
Ben with the bonnie blue eyes;
And his honest, frank and winning smile,
And a heart both true and wise.

We were always chums, were Ben and I,
We shared each others joys;
And the days with a magic spell flew by,
When Bennie and I were boys.

Ah, yes, we had many happy times,
Out there on the old home farm;
I've since seen the joys of many climes,
But not one had such a charm.

So blow us along, strong east wind, blow,
And hasten me quickly home;
For my heart is aching and longing so,
And my feet have tired to roam."

THE MOTHER.

I see her every Sunday morning
 Standing in the old church door,
With her bonnie little daughter,
 And a bright boy aged four;
She is young and very winning,
 And I always watch to see
How her gray eyes dance and sparkle,
 When she smiles and bows to me.

Up the isle she moves so quiet,
 And with gracious gentle mien,
Leads her rosy little children,
 As she slowly walks between;
Ah, this world has many treasures
 But their's not one half so fair,
As that dear devoted mother
 With her children sitting there,

And there's not a gem that glistens
 Half as bright as in her shines,
Nor yet gold that can out-weigh her
 In the deepest of all mines;
For she shows the highest wisdom
 In her tender mother love,
When she leads her precious children
 To adore that from above.

And some day when we have drifted,
 Into that great untried sea,
And have reached the farther haven
 Where the ransomed mortals be;
Mother's praises will be chanted,
 By the whole enraptured throng,
And the sky's of Heaven will echo
 With the gladness of the song.

WHAT LIES BEYOND.

Oft when a child I used to rove
 Among the meadows fair,
And dreamily my fancies wove
 Bright castles in the air,
Beyond the blue rimmed mountains I
 Transported seemed to be,
And other lands and other climes
 Were open unto me.

But now when all those visions fair
 Have come to me in truth,
Still dream I on of other lands
 Just as I did in youth;
These wonderous scenes that come and go
 Before my longing eyes,
Are not of places known on earth—
 They are of Paradise.

TRUST IN GOD.

Trust in God:

You can see his kind face beaming,
A bright radiance from it streaming,
If you turn to him when troubles o'er you roll;
For he watches near you ever,
And his love will fail you never,
He will comfort, soothe, and strengthen your tried
soul.

Trust in God:

Do not look to earth for healing
Of the wounds you feel are stealing
In, and all around your heart with nameless woe;
For though friends are a rich blessing,
And the need for help is pressing,
'Tis safest to go where life's healing fountains flow.

Trust in God:

Do not chafe if clouds still hover,
With their dark and dreary cover,
So near they almost touch your bowed and droop-
ing head;
For behind God's love is shining,
Where it makes a silver lining,
And in due time all its beauty will be on you shed.

Trust in God:

Give him praise and true thanksgiving—
Give him your best love while living—
Give him thanks for blessings past when present
joys are gone,
For his tender heart is bleeding,
That so many are not heeding,
The hope Jesus gave to men upon that Easter
dawn.

Trust in God:

So that when your life is ended,
And the shades of death are blended,
With the beauty and glory that flows from out the
throne,
He will come himself to meet you,
And his loving voice will greet you,
With the message that eternal joys are all your
own.

BE TRUE TO YOURSELF.

Friend, give not up your noble purpose,
Cling to it good and strong,
For after the hard and well fought struggle
Will come the victor's song;
What if the outlook seemeth dreary?
What if the way be dark?
Cannot God guide to harbor in safety
The lightest and frailest bark?

No man yet hath lived well and truly
Whose aim was to weak to win,
And the soul that coldly gives up its purpose,
Committeth the greater sin;
Easy it is to float with the current,
A struggle to stem the tide,
And not much trouble for a life's existence,
For the world is great and wide.

But oh, for the soul that sees above it
A beautiful prize to win,
And eagerly hopes for the bow of promise
When the darkness of doubt shuts in;
God sees, and He bends in tender mercy
To strengthen the weary heart,
For lo while the tears may still be falling
The darkness and clouds depart.

So friend keep true to your noble purpose,
God hears and will heed your prayer,
To even the smallest bird that liveth
Is watched by the father's care;
And the hope of your soul is known and treasured
By one who careth for you,
And he will help you to win and wear it,
If you keep to it firm and true.

BLUE-BIRDS.

Oh the blue-birds have come again,
And the sun shines bright in the sky,
And the alders bend by the old stone wall
As the wind rustles softly by;
And a blue-bird flutters among,
Like a bit of heaven on wings,
And I wonder if ever the angels hark
To the blithsome note he sings.

A white cloud floats in the sky,
And a white swan floats on the lake,
And a long white seam on the other side
Where the rippling wavelets break;
And over and above it all
Flows the birds glad melody,
Till the echoes repeat on the soft spring air
Its music again to me.

O my soul, if the blue-bird's note
Speaks a heart in love with the earth,
Hast thou not a voice that can gladly tell
The raptures of heavenly birth;
Of the peace of eternal spring,
When the soul feels the hand of God
Stretching out over all life's joys and woes
His blessed comforting rod.

When the heart grows so white and true
That it weeps for the wrongs of men,
And loves with a love that is all divine
The weakest and poorest of them;
And its tender words of faith,
And its tender song of love,
Will soar like the blue-bird's happy strain
To the heavenly courts above.

I AM CONTENT.

I am content.

Whatever shadow clouds my earthly way,
As darkness of the night excludes the light of day,
I am content.

I see God's will in everything;
I see it in the winds that blow, the birds that sing;
I see it in the changing seasons as they come and
go,
The heat of summer and the chill of winter's snow.

The glorious wonders of the sky
That hold the attention of the mortal's eye,
Are but the workings of the mighty will,
That bade the storm-tossed sea, "be still."

The mountain heights whose heads, sublime,
Are lifted in the face of time,
Are statues built by the same hand
That doth alone deal out life's sand.

The famine and the direful flood,—
The thoughts of which can chill the blood—
Are but the prophecies of the past,
The will of God, while earth shall' last.

I see the life of Christ again
Reflected in the lives of men;
I see their great achievements rise
Like mighty wonders to the eyes;
I see the will of God in new-born babes—
I see it in the mounds of new-made graves—
I see it in the rush of mortal life,
The wearing pain, the struggle and the strife;
 For in the faces that I meet,
 Along the busy street,
I see the self-same conflicts that are mine,
And thus I know that it is will of thine,
 And rest content.

WORK.

How well God knew the needs of mortals here,
When work was the decree He sternly gave
The disobedient pair, whom He did save,
Despite their awful crime and lack of fear;
Yet that command proves He but held them dear—
For from man's birth until he fills the grave,
His sweetest hours are when the sweat-drops lave
The brow, and he doth know success is near.
For work and labor all through life is sweet,
And harvest that returns is sweeter still;
But drones can never know the joy those meet,
Who do complete, the maker's given will;
Nor earth, nor life, nor heaven were half so dear,
If work were less the lot of mortals here.

PRAISE.

Friend, stint not praise to the deserving one—
For it thrills the soul with a warm desire
To nobly strive for heights that are higher,—
When praise is given for a deed well done,
Success for a greater is half-way won,
For the soul mounts up with a lofty fire
To scorn mean, petty, things that are life's mire,
As it aims for truth, while its race is run.
And a few loving words will cost you naught,
But will bring you instead a sense of bliss,
For true praise is something that is not bought,
And such is the kind heart's oftenest miss;
Oh whenever you can, gladly speak praise,
For oft you may thereby cheer saddened ways.

REST.

Oh how I long for rest—a peaceful rest—

Free from the sting of pain and cankering
care—

Free from the dread of evil and its snare—

Instead of this great load that weighs my breast ;

I would find sweet unconsciousness, so blest,

And calmly wait in quiet places where

Naught comes but what is calm, and good,^{er} and
fair,

For such a realm my soul makes earnest quest,

For then this saddened, weary, heart of mine

Would seek new, higher, aims of truth and bliss ;

And revel in a love that is divine,

While my few present joys I would not miss ;

Such is the rest for which my soul doth pray,

And trusts will come to it at some glad day.

ICH DIEN.

Aye, Father, God, I serve, nor question why,
My labors seem sometimes so much in vain ;
For far beyond the disappointing pain
I see the laborer's reward, since I,
O Father, trust in thee, and sole rely
On thy sure promises ; thou hath the gain
Of service mete, and if there still remain
Work for my hands, I serve, since thou art nigh ;
Since thou art nigh to bless, and help, and cheer,
And smile and lead me on to fields anew ;
To plant in me a faith that knows no fear,
Altho' the way be dark, nor dangers few ;
Ich dien ! aye Father, lead me ! lead me ! till
In Heaven I further may perform thy will !

LIFE'S STRIVINGS.

I.

Away.

Avaunt ye horrid darksome shape, away !
Your awful presence bringeth gloom and fear ;
Woes, sorrows, troop around when thou art near ;
Satan thy name, ye turn to night the day,
And shroud the night in an infernal way
With ghostly fancies, till it seems more drear
Than e'en the tomb, and when thy face doth leer
Above the dark, ye tempt weak souls to lay
Rash hands upon the flesh, if so they may
'Scape from thy power ; despair doth thou bestow—
Vile thoughts, vile acts,—one doth himself betray
Who dares to tend the seed that thou doth sow ;
For Heaven turns e'n blacker than thy power,
O Satan, when one takes for theirs thy dower.

II.

Come.

Come Peace, come Holy Spirit, dove of rest,
And shed thy perfect calm upon my soul,
For faith hath caused the clouds of doubt to roll
In one grand sweep away, leaving my breast
A place mete for thy presence, gracious guest ;
Come joy divine, come foretaste of the whole

Bliss that awaits to crown faith's final goal,
In God's immortal kingdom of the blest ;
The day grows brighter for thy presence here,
The night more beautiful, more calm and still ;
And life becomes so wonderfully dear,
That death is quite forgot to do God's will :
Oh peace, thou peace of God, no tongue can tell
How blessed is the heart where thou doth dwell.

IGNORANCE.

Did Satan, when he fell from that high state,
Reserve for man somewhat of his own self
Other than that of awful deviltry,
And crimes, and wickedness, beyond compare—
Except in those hot regions where he reigns—
That ignorance fell on poor mortals here,
Black Ignorance, that silliest of crimes?
Methinks 'tis but the cloak that he had worn,
And 'twas its work alone that made him wise
To see the sorrow it had wrought for him;
And then he hated it the worst of all,
And cherished it until the mortal race
Were formed to know the beauties of the earth;
His rage that he might never know its joys
Could know no bounds, and then that cloak of his
Was thrown with devilish cunning on to men.

EVIL SPEAKING.

Only a word ! but the meaning fell
 With the coldness and weight of a stone ;
And nothing more was there need to tell,
 For the seeds of distrust were sown ;
But the sweets of one life's undertone
 Was cruelly scared by that malice,
For sad as death comes the bitter groan,
 When a soul must drink such a chalice.

The crushed may rise in their might and tell
 By a life of purity alone,
That the one who lied, was the one who fell,
 The one from whom honor had flown.
But the soul has never yet outgrown,
 Though it dwells in cottage or palace,
The scar that burned with the broken moan—
 When it drained hate's bitter chalice.

The world goes on ; we may buy and sell,
 While our blossoms of pleasure full blown,
Will grow to fruit where the magic spell
 Of prosperities sunlight has shone.
But there comes sometimes a somber tone,—
 And we sigh for the wrong of malice,
When the scar is felt that came with the groan
 Through the dregs of that bitter chalice.

ENVOY.

The tongues that mortals bear are their own ;
If charity ruled them, not malice,
Would not the lips more fitly be grown
To drink from the Heavenly chalice.

THE DRILL.

To Rev. W. W. Belden, D. D.

Dear Sir :—This effort of mine to tell in *verse* the simple yet beautiful custom among our country folks, of the still more beautiful Normanskill Valley, and its dedication to you, I trust, most honored sir, will be accepted by you in the spirit in which it is tendered: that of gratitude and esteem for the kindly and true friendship you have always shown me.

I am conscious that by inscribing this poem to you I can add no luster to your already spotless reputation and life, but rather find myself truly humble that I can thus associate myself with your name. Grateful for your counsels which have always proved kind and judicious, I am respectfully and sincerely yours,

MAGDALENE I. LA GRANGE.

THE DRILL.

'Twas in May, "May fair, in the fair month of
May."—

And the sun was shining most brightly that day—
A pair of young folks (not very young, I know,
But so they are termed, I will let the phrase go),
Were merrily chatting in manner most gay,
Of people and things, 'twas a late holiday ;*
The place was a grave-yard, ye gods! save the
mark!

That people can tread in that most sacred park,
With never a thought how that some day they,
too,

Will lie cold and stark 'neath the cypress and yew ;
And little they think as they act out their spites,

* Memorial Day

That soon in the future when came the dark
nights—

The dark nights and dark hours that come to all
hearts

When trouble, and sickness, and sorrow and smarts,
Come near to themselves, they'll look back with
regret,

On the days when they loved to worry and fret.

Someone who had never, in thought, word, or deed,
The least injured them — but had kept for their
creed —

“Do unto others as they would be done by”—

And who never the least had acted a lie.

II.

Well, these young folks (the title I decry it !)

But then you don't know them — 'twould do not
a bit

Of good were I now to tell what their age is;

But she I am sure is the younger, while his

Must certainly tell him that mid-life is near,

That is past now that point to which we all

stear —

That one great turning point in these lives of ours

That tells if the rest will be spent in sweet bowers,

Sweet bowers of peace, proof 'gainst the storm

clouds of life,

Peace, that follows a conscience removed from
strife —

A life filled with deeds of charity and love,

A life such as only is given from above.

Or that point too, it tells, ah, the other side,

Once turned from the right little good can abide,

Oh the world it may please and charm for a day,

But the time will come when they'd glad turn
away,

Away from the darkness and sorrow and sin,

And delusions that bring them but achings
within;

And their wasted lives, they will groan and regret,

Times when they turned the spirit away, Forget?

Can they ever forget how with them it had pleaded

In tones sweet and mild, ah, had they but heeded,

Instead of their vain and useless repineing,

A calm sweet and pure around their souls twine-
ing,

Would tell them their lives had been useful to some,

And glad would they hear the dear Saviour say

“Come,

Come, enter the rest I have prepared for thee,

Come, enter this heaven and dwell here with me !”

III.

Now for the story, if I can keep to it,
(O for the brains of a Homer to brew it !)
Well, as these young people looked up with sur-
prise,
Before them a maid stood, whose flashing gray eyes
Spoke plainly her great love of mischief and fun,
But, when she made blunders seemed never undone.
This would she answer when questioned upon it —
“ Why, what were the use if, when trying my wit,
I often made blunders and seem to stumble
On things that should make a person most humble ;
What then were the use to show plainly my fright,
And is it not better to keep from their sight,
The thrill of horror and desire to tear,
Right straight out by its roots, my glory, my hair ?”
And thus, as you see very plainly no doubt,
Her wit and her mischief will surely creep out,
E’en in the presence of persons of honor,
Who cannot the least cast an awe upon her.
Where is the person, either prophet or sage,
Who are living to-day, or who in the past age,
Thrilled with awe sublime, with their wonderful
minds,
The nations and kingdoms, and e’en to-day binds
Our souls to their thoughts which will live for ages;

Is the name of that one writ on time's pages,
 That one who in life never made a mistake,
 Save the Lord? but then you know his life did
 partake
 Of Divine — while we all the rest are mortal —
 E'en though we may enter at the same portal,
 The same portal of Heaven that He entered in,
 Yet all through this life we feel deep, deep, within,
 Our great lack of faith and our many grave faults,
 That sets us far back with such heartrending halts,
 But then at such times if we cheerfully go
 Ask comfort of Jesus, He will never say, "No ;"—
 He will never refuse to aid and to cheer
 Us, His children ! Ah, no, He holds us too dear !

IV.

Well this girl, when mutual greetings were over,
 Sat herself down on the ground like a rover ;
 And these were a part of the words that she said:—
 (Strange conversation in the home of the dead !)
 "Oh, say, are you going to-night to the Drill?
 You know its to be held at French's old mill,
 Where twelve nice young ladies, with brooms in
 their hands,

Dust caps on their heads, on their backs their dust
 pans,
Will prove to the folks that altho' they can sweep
And do other housework, they also can keep
As good time in marching as real soldiers do,
Whether dressed in gray or dressed in the blue.
There's Nellie, the tallest, a beautiful girl,
She will march ahead and she'll make her broom
 whirl,
While the rest follow on, Flora, Effie, Lou,
With their brooms and their dust-pans so bright and
 so new ;
Anna, and Lillie, who is the smallest one,
Will march at the end with her broom for a gun.
The rest of the girls I've not time to mention,
But certain I am they'll draw strict attention
From the crowds that are always sure to be there,
For our girls are noted for being most fair."

V.

And what was this Drill she was talking about?
I think if we go there we will surely find out,
So away to old French's hollow we go,
But as nearing the place we drive very slow,
For it looks like a bit of enchanted land,
With its rushing of waters and air so bland,

While the few lowly cottages quiet air
Make us think some elves must surely dwell there ;
The steep rugged banks that o'erhang the stream
Are covered with spruce; at their roots softly gleam
The rich splendor of moss, and the dainty fern,
While far up the stream we hear the mill-wheel
turn ;

We follow the sound till we stand at the door,
And listen to its song as it calls for more —

More, more, O Miller,
I'm like the sands of life,
Going, going, going,
In pleasure or in strife,
Going — never stopping —
Except by thy hand,
Sands of life stop flowing
At the Divine command.

More, more, O Miller,
More of the golden grain,
Fling it down in the hopper,
While I crush it again, again ;
For I am here to do the work,
To make the finest flour,
While yours the hand, O Miller,
To guide my awful power.

More, more, O Miller,
It matters not to me,
Whether coarse or fine the gage is
If it only pleases thee;
The coarse corn meal must needs be
ground,
As well as flour fine,
And thine the hand to fix the gage,
Thine, O Miller, thine.

More, more, O Miller,
The waters rush along,
I hear their roar like thunder,
And their never ending song:
Miller, once past they ne'er return,
Oh, use them while you may,
Hark! hear their call so loud and strong
As they swiftly pass away.

More, more, O Miller,
I must not stop to rest,
And do not let the grain run low,
To keep it full is best;
The precious moments of to-day,
Like waters pass away,
And then, my Miller, ah, you know,
They are gone indeed for aye!"

VI.

Oh, Normanskill, sweet gurgling stream,
How often thy banks have I trod with delight,
How often have watched the clear moonlight gleam
On thy waters, when Cynthia reigned over the
night.

There, too, on thy banks on a fair spring-time day,
When the sun was full shining with splendor of
May,

Loves sweet olden story then learned I full well,
The fullness of which no one ever could tell;
Oh, the gladness, the sweetness, the joy, the
content,

Oh, the exquisite pleasure that from Heaven is sent,
When two souls in unison bind heart unto heart,
Two souls that through life will ne'er again part !
Oh, Normanskill, on thy banks divine.

This joy, this bliss, this gladness was mine,
And we'll love through life, aye, love till death.
Love as long as God lendeth us breath.

Should a mountain of fate in its cruelty rise,
And take thee away from the light of my eyes;
Then love in its power shall triumph full well,
And weave firmly then its own magical spell;
Heart will say unto heart—"where are you dear?"
And quickly the answer will come "I am here!"
For love such as ours equals Heavens own powers.

VII.

And old factory, three stories high, a basement
below.

(They built them so a hundred years ago.)

Made entire of brick, it firmly withstands

The ravage of time's relentless hands;

The color once red, is nearly gone.

At the front and sides is a smooth green lawn;

While at the back the Normanskill,

Rushes swiftly along with its musical trill;

'Twas to this place the merry crowd,

With boisterous shouts and laughter loud,

Were wont to gather on Holidays.

For social chats and merry plays,

The basement held the different rigs,

The staid old wagons and fancy gigs,

The graceful "side-bars", then the style,

From which the beaux's with many a smile

Had helped their sweet-heart to alight,

For all came there on a festive night.

The lower floor was cleanly swept

For there the eatables were kept,

The long rough tables made of boards

Were laden with the house-wife's hoards,

And busy matrons, knife in hand,

Cut cakes and pies, with smiles so bland,

They almost tempted one to snatch
A goodie from that bounteous batch.
At dusk the girls, with nimble feet,
Commenced to set the table neat,
The linen was so pure and white
They covered the tables with that night,
It almost lightened up the room,
So big and broad in its dusky gloom,
Same dear old lady with heart so large,
She held the whole town in her charge,
Had sent some dishes that her mother,
It may be, indeed, 'twas her grand mother —
At any rate, they were on an heir-loom,
She safely cherished in her home.
The sandwiches, biscuits, pie and ham,
The cake, the preserves, the jelly and jam,
The pickles and crullers, the coffee and tea,
Were good enough for a king or me.
There was plenty, too, for all the crowd and more,
That boisterously clamored at the door.

VIII.

Away back of the mill, and along the race-way
Is a spot where the shadows stay all the long day,
For the banks on each side are a hundred feet high,
And they seem oftentimes to reach to the sky

As you stand on the ground and look up from below,
Where the lillies, and ferns and the soft mosses grow,
Here too, are the willows, the wild birch, and
grapevine

That grows through their tops, where its branches
close twine;

Oh this spot is so lovely it seems like a dream
As we pass up the path in the twilight's soft sheen,
And the notes of the sad and mourning dove
Comes softly to us from the tree-tops above,
While the fall of the water comes sweeter, comes
clearer,

That silent night draws its veil nearer and nearer
To welcome the song of the sweet nightengale,
That floods with its rapture the hill and the dale,
And its notes it prolongs as it sings loud and long,
Until all the valley re-echoes the song;
While the murmur of water that sounds through
the gloaming

Calls many birds to come in from their roaming
To seek near its banks a place for their sleeping
Where Normanskill watch all the night will be
keeping.

The enchantment grows on, and we wander along,
Until of a sudden we find daylight is gone,

So then we turn back, and we grope through the
gloom,

To the friends that we left in the festival room,
But reaching the building we find there a change
And it looks to us now so weirdly strange
That we pause in our wonder, and gaze with delight,
On the place now all bathed in the moons fair
light.

The windows are open, the lamps lighted within,
And out on the night comes the mirth and the din
From the crowds who are taking their fill of the
pleasure

That comes to them here without stint, without
measure.

IX.

We climb the stairs to the second floor
And pause a moment at the door,
For the sight that meets the astonished eye
Is far too quaint to pass quickly by,
Fastened to the rafters the lanterns glow
And shed their light on the scene below,
It seems like a hall both deep and wide,
With curtainless windows at either side,
At the farther end is an open door,
Through which we hear the waters roar,

A crowd passes idly to and fro
While along the wall straight in a row,
The benches stand to invite to rest,¹
Those wearied with walking and laughter and jest.
There is a fair young mother with babe asleep—
A corner where lovers their tryst can keep,
An old grandfather with hair like snow,
And strong young men in their primes ripe glow—
There are little maids rigged out in fancy style
And young men sporting their first silk tile —
There are jolly old maids who buzz around
And the shyest old bachelors that ever were found.
But taken as a whole, they seem to be
A pretty good looking company.
In one corner is stationed a cornet band.
And the leader with a smile most bland
Beckons to his men to start up a tune,
And soon the strains of "Bonnie Doon,"
Quiets the noise of the merry throng
And some would fain join in the song.

X.

Twelve young ladies dressed in white
Composed the drill we saw that night,
Each dress was trimmed with a little red
And a dust cap crowned each bonnie head,

To their backs was strapped their bright dust pans
And brooms they held up in their hands ;
The tall sweet leaders name was Nell.
And of all the girls she was the belle.
Her eyes were large and soft and blue,
And as clear as a summer sky's bright hue,
Her hair was a bright and wavy brown,
And her cheeks were as soft as a peaches down,
While her clear cut lips and modest chin,
Showed a sweet and saintly soul within,
Tall and slender with a languid grace,
Her figure matched her angel face.
The one who marched behind sweet Nell,
Was the kind of a girl ne'er known full well
Large and dark and brown were her eyes,
That never gave forth a gleam of surprise,
Straight and thin was her well shaped nose,
And her face ever showed a calm repose,
There was the minister's daughter, starry eyed Lou,
Big Ada, little Ada, and Ceressa, too,
Flora, Edna, Etta and Lill,
Laura and Ida, and they marched with a will,
They were as sweet and pretty and fair a band,
As could be found in this broad land,
Not a miss-step in their marching was made.
Nor could old soldiers have looked more staid,
Then did these girls in their broom brigade.

XI.

Sweet girls, dear girls, in the springtime of life,
Little of sorrow and little of strife,
Presses hard on the heart at that happy age
When the leaves of lifes book turning page after
page,

Seem to them but a myth, so lightly they turn,
So swift pass the days, that they eagerly yearn
For the time when woman-hood's seal crowns the
brow,

And oft they forget the true saying that, now,
Now, is the time to know pleasure or pain,
Now, is the time to feel losses or gain,
Now, not in the future must duties be done,
In the future come honors that now must be won.
O, how yearns the heart for the days of our youth,
Those days of such gladness, such peace and such
truth,

The burdens of life that so heavily roll
Seem like billows of ocean to wash out the soul,
To wash out the sin that has entered each heart
With its cruel, its treacherous, its poisonous dart;
Yes, glad would we turn to those days that have fled,
And feel once again the old peace that is dead,
For no thought of sin then could give us one
sorrow,

Or one dream of sinning a fear for the morrow,
So glad was that time so sweet and so pure,
Alas, why was it, it could not endure !

MY BEACON.

I have a star,
It shines for me
Through a mystery,
Afar.

It shines for me
At lonesome times,
And when sunny climes
I see.

It glows alway—
My one bright star!
I see though afar
Its ray.

And it doth know
All my fond love,
Though so far above
It glows.

My one bright star !
No more afar,
When there comes to me
Life's bar!

THE TRIED AND TRUE.

Read before M. H. Barckley Post, No. 198. G. A. R., on Memorial Day, 1890, at Prospect Hill Cemetery, Guilderland, New York.

We come to-day remembering the loved, the tried,
and true,
To deck the place, where lie in pace, the boys
who wore the blue;
Our boys who died that we might live in rest and
peace to-day,
Who shouldered arms at war's alarms and marched
to join the fray,
They saw the dreadful bayonets, they heard the can-
nons roar,
They fought like brave our land to save—and they
marched home no more;
They died, — they rest in tranquil peace — and we
our tributes pay,
The flowers fair we place with care o'er where our
soldiers lay,
We love those heroes, every-one, they well deserve
our praise,
Nor can be said of our dear dead enough of thank-
ful lays;
They bore the sublime part of life and duties call
obeyed,
They knew the end but did not bend when their
resolve was made;

'Tis well that we remember now, and give all
honor due,
For as to-day we bend to pray, our hearts are
made more true.
But, friends, there lives to-day somewhere, it may
be at your side,
A hero true who wears the blue — a heart both
brave and tried —
For oft the path of human life that upward leads
to God,
Is danger bound more than the ground our dear
loved soldiers trod;
They knew the fray would not be long, the battle
soon be o'er,
Eternal life would crown the strife if they returned
no more;
But, oh, the ones who war to-day, their lives a
battle field,
'Gainst sin are they to fight and pray nor ever dare
to yield;
And all through life the strife remains, on guard
they ever stand,
Nor pause to rest till they are blest in the eternal
land.
Oh, shed sweet flow'rs on those who live, the flow'rs
of love and praise,

Though heroes, they when in the fray find many
darkened days;
Yes, praise the living, tried and true, they stand
on every side,
Their battle call the ones who fall, their field the
whole world wide;
And then at last when we are called to answer
heaven's roll,
The echo clear, "aye ! I am here !" will roll from
soul to soul.

STANLEY. 1890.

His hair is silvered now—white as the snow
That caps the wonderous mountains of the
Moon,
Nor has his crown of glory come too soon—
For men will turn wherever he may go,
And watch this one who in his prime's ripe glow,
Gave up a home and all its joys and bloom,
To save his brothers from a dreadful doom,
While in his soul un-numbered blessings flow.
For through those dark untrodden, awful ways,
When hid from sight was e'en the sky's bright
face,
Jehovah's presence led him thro' the maze,
And stamped on him a saintly look of grace:
And now when ope'd are all those paths untrod,
His lips pour praises to his faithful God.

SAYWA'S SPEECH.

An incident in the Stanley expedition of 1887.

Another man had disobeyed, the bravest of them all,
And must the penalty be paid, must bold Uledi
fall ?

He who had saved a hundred lives, their leader's
with the rest,

And could that grateful hand be raised to hush
Uledi's breast,

Behind, the awful solitudes; dangers unknown
ahead;

Ah, could they live to fight them through with
brave Uledi dead ?

"Come, men," their leader's voice was sad, "council
with me to-day.

Uledi heard my stern decree, he chose to disobey,
But he is noble, good and kind, and true as he is
brave,

Can other punishment be found, Uledi's life to
save ?

I cannot still the faithful heart that beats so loyally,
Nor can I bid you to perform a task too hard for
me;

What shall it be ? Come, men, decide. I leave it
to your will,

What e'er it is, I promise you your wishes to fulfill."

Then silently the vote was cast, while through the
dreadful hush
The words were spoke, "He must be flogged."
Ah, could an Arab blush?
The whip was brought and there before the council
gathered round,
Uledi waited for the blows, while crouching on
the ground,
When one whose life he'd bravely saved, stepped
from the group alone,
"Master, give half the blows to me," he spake in
trembling tone,
And then another, while the tears started and
quickly fell,
Said faintly, "master, may I speak?" he gently
answered "well!"
He came and knelt by Uledi, and raised his tearful
eyes
Up to that kind face looking down, "dear master,
thou art wise,
All that has been thou know'st well, but naught is
known to me,
Much of what passed but yesterday, has slipped
my memory;
But thou hast writ it in a book, the record of each
day,

Let thy slave, master, fetch the book, to find what
it will say!
May be some words of Uledi is written somewhere
there,
May be 'twill tell how Zaidi he saved from dark
death's snare.
He saved Ben Ali, Mabruki and Koni-kusi, too,
How many more I do not know, no one can know
but you,
But worthier than any three of us poor slaves is he,
He listens for thy every word and flies so swift for
thee;
We are but poor black slaves of thine, while master
thou art white,
Whatever thou dost do or say we know is always
right.
Aye, master, look now in the book, and if the
blows must be,
Then Shumari will take one-half, and give the rest
to me."
Ah, god-like were the Arab's words, and Stanley's
eyes grew dim,
While gazing on the dusky face meekly upraised
to him,
And threw away the knotted cord, while "Uledi is
free,
And Shumari and Saywa both are pardoned now
by me."

THE WEST WIND.

What is it comes tripping the meadows over,
Sweeping the butterfly's golden wings,
Nodding the heads of the deep purple clover,
Catching the perfume the lily flings:
 Sweet and shy
 From the sky,
Mellowly floating through the air,
Unseen, unheard, yet everywhere;
 'Tis the west wind.

The timothy slowly rises and falls,
And an ox-eyed daisy lifts its head,
To welcome the gray-bird that gently calls
Its nestlings down in their soft warm bed;
 Faint they peep,
 Grasses deep
Bending over the lowly nest,
Sigh and swell like a mother's breast
 In the west wind.

A gray falcon soars afar in the sky;
No motion quivers his great wide wings;
He gracefully moves and he seems to fly
As easily as a light cloud swings;
 Slow he sweeps—
 Still he keeps

Motionless up in the empty air,
And the unseen power that holds him there
Is the west wind.

The turtle-dove coos from the orchard's green,
Softy and mellow her plaintive notes;
And her shining robe like a silver sheen,
Among the sweet blossoms gently floats;
Bird of love,
Turtle-dove !
Frail and light is her dainty nest ;
Of all the birds she is loved the best
By the west wind.

Two lovers are wading the meadows over—
Two bonnie lovers happy and gay;
And they tread the sweets from the purple clover,
That tangles over the fragrant way;
Happy pair
Young 'and fair,
Nobody knows the bliss they feel,
Nobody saw their love's sweet seal
But the west wind.

A cloud hangs gracefully up in the sky,
As pure and white as a drift of snow;
It quivers and moves, then seems to fly
As easily as the waters flow;
Ah, away !
Who can say
What sends it floating thro' the air
Airily, lightly, gaily there
But the west wind.

The orioles gaily warble and sing,
And the meadow-lark trills its blithsome note;
While down where the waterfall jewels fling,
A little dip floats a dancing note;
There is song,
All day long,
Out in the meadow where birds are,
And all the birds from near and far
Love the west wind.

The air is rare like a beautiful dream,
The violets shed their rich perfume,
And shining o'er all is the sun's bright beam,
Weaving a web from his golden loom;
Soft the light
Warm and bright
Over the meadow, sweet and fair,
But the sweetest thing that lingers there
Is the west wind.

THE SOUTH WIND.

Oh, the beautiful world ! the beautiful world !
My soul with rapture thrills,
As I gaze on the calm and clear blue sky,
And the dark green lasting hills.

The meadows stretch far and are dotted o'er
With the daisies so pure and fair;
And a meadow-lark trills his gladsome note
As he floats through the balmy air.

The soft south wind with gentle touch,
Ruffles the tops of the trees;
And it seems some-way, as I watch the sight,
There's a magic hand in the breeze.

Life, it is real but 'tis sad enough,
E'en when our duty we do;
When least expected, sweets turn to gall,
And naught in life seems true.

Oh tell me ye soft and murmuring winds
The secret I long to hear;
And as I listen now with bated breath,
These words seem breathed in my ear,—

“Nature to-day seems glad and gay,
As the sun so brightly shines;
Blessing with light that seems divine,
The fields and the solemn pines;

But think you now is it always so,
Is it always so calm and still ?
Are there never storms to darken the sky,
Storms that come at the Maker’s will ?

So when troubles come and your heart is wrung,
If your faith is sadly weak,
Turn to the lesson that nature teaches,
And not in vain will you seek;

For after the storm has passed away,
Is not the sky more clear ?
And does the sun less brightly shine,
Because of the storm so drear ?

So all through life it is just the same,
Now clouds then sunshine clear;
And after your sighs and your tears are spent,
The Lord will be more dear.”

The whispers cease, and in vain I look
For a sight of the angel band;
Thou hast borne them away thou sad south wind,
Away to the better land !

THE EAST WIND.

Oh, east wind! cruel sleet, how harsh ye blew
 On that November day when a frail one,
 A human flower whose life had but begun,
Chilled with thy breath left earth for regions new;
Cold is your touch, ye hide the sky's own blue
 With a thick mantle of a dreary dun;
 Ye love no pleasant things, not e'en the sun,
But revel o'er the graves of those ye slew.
For life cannot withstand thy cold embrace,
 The buds that promise fruit blast at thy touch;
And wreck and ruin, leave a lonesome trace,
 Where you have passed and grimly laughed
 too much;
Blow less, ye dreadful, cruel, cold east wind,
Or else henceforth, I pray thee blow more kind.

THE NORTH WIND.

Blow, blow, blow, wind of the north, blow !

Bring the storm, the cold and the sleet,

Wrap the lakes in an icy sheet,

Send beautiful snow to fall at our feet—

Blow, north wind, blow.

Blow, blow, blow, wind of the north, blow !

Waft the jolly old king along,

The king of laughter, mirth and song—

The king who bids sorrow and care begone,

Blow, north wind, blow.

Blow, blow, blow, wind of the north, blow !

Sweep o'er the rabbits' soft warm nest,

Go with the partridge in her quest—

Lead her to berries the ripest and best,

Blow, north wind, blow.

Blow, blow, blow, wind of the north, blow !

The hunter seeks his baying hound,

Who springs away with joyous bound,

To follow the fox's trail he has found—

Blow, north wind, blow.

Blow, blow, blow, wind of the north, blow !
Blow o'er the snow-bound meadows drear—
Blow with the gust of winter's cheer.
Old winter, whose head is silvered and sere—
Blow, north wind, blow.

Blow, blow, blow, wind of the north, blow !
Sweep the sound of the bells afar,—
Bells that ring with the evening star;
How happy the hearts of the lovers are !
Blow, north wind, blow.

Blow, blow, blow, wind of the north, blow !
Whistle around the chimnies tall—
Flicker the shadows on the wall,
Bring frolicking mirth to the great and small—
Blow, north wind, blow.

Blow, blow, blow, wind of the north, blow !
Stay with us yet a little while,
Spring will the gray old king beguile—
She will melt the snow with her sunny smile,
Blow, north wind, blow.

MARCH.

It snows and it blows!
But the spring is coming, my darling,
And even now the flowers fair,
That fill with perfume the sweet spring air,
Are beginning to grow under the snow.

SUMMER RAIN.

Thank God, even our God for the rain !
The gladdening rain that falls so gently,
Filling the air with a fragrance sweet,
 As it falls on the flowers,
 These wonderful showers,
That pass through the air so quick and fleet.

THE WILD BIRD'S LOVE.

Oh, I woo my love when the breezes blow,
On the breath of the fair sweet spring;
And with rapture of song my love notes flow
To the flight of her glancing wing;
She will pause to rest on a waving bough
I follow with tender suing,
Then up and away all the livelong day
She flies with me still pursuing,
O, my love so fair,
O, my love so sweet,
Through the balmy air
To her flight so fleet,
I follow along with a burst of song
Till my love will heed my wooing.

When the buds have burst into blossoms fair
To the sun's soft caress at noon;
And the air is filled with a perfume rare
And the woodlands are all in tune;
My love's shining wings she will fold at rest—
She will list with gentle sighing,
To the love that floats with my pleading notes,
As she heeded not when flying.—
O, a sky of blue
And a world so sweet—
O, a love as true

And a life complete,
For its ah ! away ! to the woods that day,
My love and I will be hieing.

Oh, happily then we will make our quest
Through the beautiful woodland bowers,
Till we find a corner to build our nest,
And we work through the blissful hours;
And the gladsome days, how they fly away,
With the sunlight softly streaming
On my bonnie mate who with heart elate,
Bides the passing hours with dreaming;
O, I sing all day,
Joyfully and long,
For my heart is gay
With its wealth of song,
And the days grow bright in the lovely light,
Sweet joy of the future beaming.

NATURE'S VOICES.

Sunny summer morning
Sweet and fair,
Birds are singing gaily
Matins on the air,
Robins, wrens, and thrushes,
One full chorus raise,
Till the air is laden
With their praise.

Roses shed their perfume
All around,
Flinging dainty petals
On the mellow ground.
Roses red and yellow,
Pink and white and blush,
Till the garden seemeth
All aflush.

Lightly gentle breezes
Kiss the trees,
Drowsy sounds the humming
Of the busy bees,
All of sweets seem blended
To the sense and sight,
On this clear cool morning
Fair and bright.

Cometh all this beauty
From above,
Kind and good and gracious
Is our God of love;
Nature's countless voices
Ever speak his praise,
Human hearts ! repeat it
All thy days.

ARBUTUS.

A sunny bank and a rill of water,
Trickling down to the stream below;
A fragrance of birch and a breath of willow,
And the sweet arbutus delicate glow.

These we saw when the sun was slanting
His golden rays in the western sky;
Flooding the earth in a radiant glory,
While softly the winds breathed a peaceful sigh.

We kneeled at the foot of a drooping willow,
On the bank where the sun shone warm and bright,
And the perfume arose to us from the flowers,
That were almost hidden from our sight.

But we parted the leaves from off the blossoms,
And drew them up from their mossy bed;
And a wedding we had that day on the hill-side,
For the creeping pine and arbutus were wed.

And a fairy sat on the leaf of a cowslip—
A cowslip with leaves as yellow as gold;
And she sang a song of wondrous sweetness
While the cowslip reared its head so bold.

And another fay in a robe of silver,
With a veil of mist 'round her graceful head;
Arose from the cup of a pure white lily
And these were the wonderful words she said:—

“The creeping pine is a thing of beauty,
In these woods it has lived an age or more;
And now it deserves a wonderful bridal,
Such as fairies gave in days of yore.

See where it grows in all its glory,
Low at the foot of that Linden tree?
Now pluck it and place it among the flowers,
That this beautiful bridal may be.”

And so we did as the fairy bade us,
And plucked a spray of the beautiful pine;
When, lo! as soon as it touched the flowers
Its arms around it began to twine.

As soon as this wonderful bridal was over,
The woods seemed filled with a flood of song;
And we saw the forms of myriad fairies
That the wind had softly borne along.

And they danced on the murmuring shining water,
And swung in the boughs of the willow trees;
And all the while their song was ringing
To the air that was played for them by the breeze.

Oh, never before had I seen such a wedding
As had the arbutus so modest and sweet;
And never before had I seen such fairies
As were gaily dancing with nimble feet.

And while I gazed in awe-struck wonder,
A strange thing happened to me;
It seemed as if I awoke from slumber,
For not a fay could I see.

But all the while the breeze was ringing
Its soft and sweet and musical tune,
And all the while the sun was shining
As bright and warm as it does in June.

Yet I do believe there was a wedding,
For the flowers and pine I softly hold,
And I do believe the fays were present,
And that they turned into sunlight gold.

THE HOUND.

Hark ! hear the sound of the baying hound,
 Along the side of the mountain.
The echo calls then it falls and falls
 Like the water of a fountain;
Oh, mournfully sad and strange and deep,
The voice of the hound along the steep.

The bare cliffs rise till they touch the skys,
 With the thin white mists upon them,
And cedar trees in the morning breeze
 Wave spectral like adown them;
Oh, hear it from out the woods again
The cry that commingles joy and pain.

The white clouds float like a phantom boat,
 Till farther and farther going
Toward the sky they airly fly
 In the west wind gently blowing;
And clearer the hounds deep bay rolls down,
While from crag to crag the echoes bound.

THE BUTTERFLY.

A butterfly while fluttering low,
Lit on a rose as white as snow,
He kissed her stamens creamy yellow,
Then whispered soft, the saucy fellow,
 "I love, I love, I love you, Rose,
 The sweetest flower of all that grows."

Then off he flew to light again
Upon a lily moist with rain,
He danced upon her waxen rim,
And sang another dainty hymn—
 "Oh, fairer flowers cannot grow,
 Than golden lilies, ah, I know."

The honeysuckles trumpet cup
Next held this fickle fellow up,
She gave him of her nectar sweet
To stay a spell his flying feet.
 "The honeysuckle is more dear
 Than any flower I've e'er met here."

But off he flew with languid grace
Straight in a pansy's upturned face,
He soft caressed her leaves of gold
Then breathed again the story old;

And while the south wind softly blew,
The fair young pansy thought it new.

And so from flower to flower he went
Each with that same old message bent.

THE WHIP-POOR-WILL.

Midnight ! The clock had struck the hour,
And I leaned out over the window-sill;
When sharp and quick and clear there rang out
The hurried notes of the Whip-poor-will.

“Whip-poor-will,
Whip-poor, whip-poor-will !
Whip-poor-will,
Whip-poor-will !

The water trickled down from the mountain,
And sped away o'er its rocky bed;
And I heard the music of the fountain
As I harked to the words the night bird said.

Was poor Will a bonnie country lad,
Whose laugh and song on the winds were borne?
Does the night bird miss on the mountain the echo
And now for him doth ceaselessly mourn?

Would he whip poor Will that he came not home ?
Does he think he is back and his laugh is still ?
Or did he die and his rollicking spirit
Hover around in the midnight chill ?

Methinks 'tis the last, and the night bird knows it,
That is near the one they love so well ;
But they chafe that his laugh and song is quiet,
And so their plaint they evermore tell ;
 "Whip-poor-will,
Whip-poor, whip-poor-will ?
 Whip-poor-will,
Whip-poor-will !"

VOICES OF FALL.

I went a-walking one day in the wood,
In the crimson and gold of October ;
The stream's dark tide flowed smoothly on,
And a flock of wild geese flew over :
All around the leaves were lying, lying,
Soft the winds were sighing, sighing.

I paused me a bit in the shade of a tree,
Whose leaves were as yellow as sunlight,
And I thought of the fair and sweet spring days
And the summer so balmy and bright,

As I list to the voices calling, calling,
As I watched the bright leaves falling, falling.

The voices I heard were chanting a song—

“The sweet spring days have fled;
The summer tune has passed away,
And the autumn is almost dead:
Away to winter we are hying, hying,
The year is dying, dying, dying,”

The boughs of the trees looked bare and gray,

The grass all parched and dry;
And the voices grew clearer, more weird and sad
As I harked to their words with a sigh:
“The year is flying, flying, flying,
’Tis dying, dying, dying !”

“Youth like the spring soon reaches the summer,

The summer the autumn weather;
And when they reach that full ripe season,
They die, they die together—
As the year is dying, dying,
So life is flying, flying, flying.”

But as I heard these mournful words,

I dropped mine eyes to the ground;
When lo, I saw full many ripe seeds,

Were scattered all around;
There I saw them lying, lying,
In the bright sun drying, drying.

“Ah,” I thought, “There’s nothing dying,
But will live and thrive again;
Though the shuck may wither, shrivel,
There is life within the grain;
And the spring will find it growing, growing,
To the world its life be showing, showing.”

“Though in life we reach the autumn,
Like the shucks our bodies die;
Yet within us dwells a spirit,
That like seed lives by and by;
In the clime of heaven be growing, growing,
All life’s mysteries be knowing, knowing.”

TO A GIRL.

*April showers, April flowers,
Ever are together;
As life's sadness and its gladness
Are not parted from each other.*

Some of joy and some of sorrow,
Is our destined end and way;
But the Saviour for the morrow
Giveth strength to meet the day.

Giveth strength to meet the gladness
With a smiling thankful face;
Giveth strength to meet the sadness
With an all obedient grace.

So dear heart faint not in doing
Duties that are plainly thine,
Thou will find while thus pursuing
Blessings from the hand divine.

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW, 1891 - '92.

Look not back with mournful faces

On the dear old year,

With its hopes, its joys, its graces,

Dying here.

Here where springs up sweeter pleasures,

Dearer joy and richer treasures,

That time gaily, freely, measures,

With the glad new year.

Time will smooth away the sadness —

What we knew of care,

And a memory of the gladness,

Sweet and fair,

Will bring back the vanished hours

Like the faint perfume of flowers,

Blooming in lost Eden bowers, —

Blooming everywhere.

We will give thee needful slumber

Loved and dear old year !

Naught but all our dreams can number

Of thy cheer,

Shall disturb thy peaceful sleeping,

When our hearts thy vigil keeping,

From the past new courage reaping,

Greet the opening year.

DEMETER'S DAUGHTER.

A bright, a pretty, a merry lass,
Went tripping the meadows over ;
While the bees around with a buzzing sound
Were sipping the sweets from the clover.

Her hair was bright as the sun's own rays,
And her form was straight and slender ;
While her beautiful eyes were as blue as the skies,
And her lips were sweet and tender.

And Sicilly's meadows bloomed more fair
Whenever they heard her singing ;
And the birds all day sang their sweetest lay,
To keep time with her clear notes ringing.

And Demeter's daughter, so sweet and fair,
Was happy without a lover ;
So what made her one day, so blithe and gay,
To over the daffodil hover ?

She plucked a bud with a happy laugh —
Then a full bloom flower with a sigh —
But she gave a start with a fainting heart,
For the coal-black horses drew nigh.

“Oh, mother Demeter !” she cries, she cries,
“The darkness of Hades appears;
Oh, is it farewell and must I dwell
Away from thee so dear ?

Oh, light of day, farewell ! farewell!
My destiny I fulfill;
Thou gave the dower thou fateful flower,
Thou daffodil, thou daffodil !”

The night fell soon but she came not home,
And Demeter seeks her child;
And over the plain in mortal pain
She flies in anguish wild.

“O, Phersephone! O, Phersephone !”
But echo answers the call;
“I am seeking thee, O come to me,
Thou art my life, my all !”

With a gloomy brow and an aching heart,
She searched for her far and wide;
She took no rest in her weary quest,
From morn till the even tide.

“ O, meadows of Enna, no longer the rain
Or dew shall refresh thy flowers;
Thy beautiful rills and thy daffodils,
Shall fade for the want of showers.

Shall fade away and droop and die,
For Phersephone has flown;
On this very lea was taken from me
And left me so sad and alone.”

But the king of Hades that fateful day
Had seen the maiden fair;
His home was night with never a light
And he took her to dwell with him there.

But this dreadful king heard a voice one day
In his dark domain below;
And it spake as loud as a thunder cloud—
“Let Demeter’s daughter go !

For Demeter flies from sea to sea
And from land to land she flies,
The grain in her wake for her sad sake,
Is parched by her sighs.

The rainless seasons come and go,
And the whole world heaves a groan;
The flowers die the kine fainting lie,
While for Phersephone they moan.”

The king of Hades paused a while,
Then gathered of magic seeds;
"Love, eat with me as I give to thee—"
Then he called for his coal black steeds.

Low he laughed, the dread dark king,
As the black pair sped to the plain;
"She will return to me my Phersephone,
My wife will come back again."

Once more on the meadows of Enna she stands,
Demeter's daughter so sweet;
She sees in a maze with a dazzled gaze,
The parched earth and the flowers at her feet.

Demeter sees her and flies to her side—
"My Phersephone is it thee?
What caused thee away on that fateful day
To leave thy maids and me?"

And Phersephone wept sad and long,
But Demeter soothed her still;
While to her mother's breast her head she pressed
As she murmured "my fate to fulfill."

O, mother Demeter, short the time,
That I may stay with thee;
On his throne below, where I must go,
My dark king waits for me.

The plains of Sicily are not for me,
Nor the meadows of Enna dear;
So call back the rain, refresh it again,
For it looks so sad and drear."

Demeter gazed with longing eyes
On the face upon her breast,
For in that face with changing grace,
Love's markings seemed to rest.

"Oh, Phersephone, thou lovest thy lord,
And the cares of a wife I see;
Is a shade on thy brow? but go to him now
It surely is best for thee."

Close they clasped in a last embrace.
For the coal black steeds drew nigh;
And they parted again on Enna's plain,
With a sad and last good-bye.

Oh, Phersephone sure, sure, 'tis well
To fulfill thy destiny;
Thou still art there in that region where
Thy dark king reigns with thee.

But they say that Demeter mourns her still,
Whenever she visits the lea;
But she called again the needed rain,
While she sigh'd for Phersephone.

And the maidens of Enna chant alway,
Beside the murmuring rill ;
And the theme of their song the whole day long
Is "The daffodil ! The daffodil !"

TOLD A LIE.

Told a lie. Oh, heaven, a lie !
And told it, too, without a sigh,
Or a passing thought for the sorrow wrought
To the angel hovering nigh.

Yet the faithful angel was there—
And her beautiful face so fair
Grew woefully pale, and she drew like a veil
The mists of her flowing hair.

But the fiends laughed and clapped their hands,
And sped to the infernal lands ;
Another had fell, they hastened to tell,
As they brandished their fiery wands.

Yes, told a lie, a lie ! a lie !
Winds through the tree-tops make reply,
They wearily moan and they howl and groan
For the one who told the lie.

WHOM LOVEST THOU THE MOST?

“Whom lovest thou the most?”

I asked a little maid of seven;

A serious look o'er spread her bonnie face;

Then whispering with a sweetly modest grace,

She said, “I love my parents next to God in heaven.”

“Whom lovest thou the most?”

I asked a youth; no need for guessing;

A brightening of the eyes, a flush that told

More plain than words could tell the story old,—

While trembling lips said softly, “Alice”—all confessing.

“Whom lovest thou the most?”

I asked a man when life is golden;

He paused, then as his steady gaze met mine,

He said, “alas, too hard a question thine !”

Can sage or prophet tell the thought from his heart holden?

“Whom lovest thou the most?”

I asked a saintly aged woman,

With wrinkled hands tight clasped and lifted eyes,

She said, with mind and heart by time grown wise,

“My Saviour, for He knows the woe so sadly human.”

“Whom lovest thou the most?”

Whom lovest thou the most; there liveth
Somewhere within the circling space of time,
An answer to each soul, whose silvery chime
Will bring the rest, the peace, that true love only
giveth.

A BACKWARD LOOK.

A backward look bound him alway;
If new joys came to gild the day,
 That one cold face, alluring, fair,
 With steady eyes and wavey hair,
Returned to ever bar the way.

“I need thee not !” I heard him say,
And yet the present calmly lay
 Aside, to ever give with care
 A backward look.

Folly of one long vanished may
When hearts with youthful loves are gay !
 Alas ! that strong souls may not dare
 To break forever from the snare,
And give as one would in a play,
 A backward look.

MY LADY.

TO R. B. S.

My lady fair has golden hair,
And eyes of deepest blue;
And her cheek shows like damask rose,
The flush of love's own hue.

Her pouting lips where cupid sips
The dew to tip his dart;
Are sweeter far than lilies are,
Or orange blossoms heart.

My lady's voice so rare, so choice,
Rivals the mellow lute.
Aye, one soft note doth lightly float
Far sweeter than the flute.

Her happy laugh the fairies quaff,
To make their hearts grow light;
They sing her praise in joyous lays,
Through fairy-land so bright.

My lady love ! fair dainty dove !
I love thee so, my sweet;
With my own heart, I gladly part
To lay it at thy feet.

HER FACE.

I watched her face one blissful night
When mellow rays were thrown about;
We two alone within the light,
The world without.

The room was languid warm and bland,
The pictures gleamed upon the wall,
And on the table her slim hand
Did lightly fall.

A silence fell between us two—
Her face so wondrous sweet and fair
Was half averted from my view—
I watched her there.

She felt the look: a vivid blush
Crept up her cheek in quick surprise,
And in the soft and radiant hush
She raised her eyes.

Oh, Heaven! when life is done our goal,
Our earthly bliss comes from above;
I felt a thrill that shook my soul,
Her look was love!

TO POLLY.

TO M. F. M.

A Diana, in a faded calico wrapper,
A Diana, with a face as sweet as a dream;
And the tones of her voice like a silver clapper,
Or the musical notes of a flowing stream.

Her form had the grace of a willow bough,
As it bends and blows in the summer breeze;
And ner silvery laugh, ah, I hear it now,
As the autumn winds roar through the leafless trees.

Dear girl, when I think of the world and its sorrow,
Of the sadness that fills many aching hearts;
I tremble to think that at some near to-morrow,
Thine, too, may be filled with sickening smarts.

Sweet Polly! dear Polly! I hold thee a treasure,
God in his goodness grant thy life to be,
A dear one of love, and a long one of pleasure,
As befits such a beautiful being as thee.

MY LOVER.

I wondered why my lover was
To me a perfect goal;
Until this thought flashed through my heart—
He is my other soul.

COMPLETE.

Unsatisfied we live along
Though the world be at our feet,
Until love comes with light and song,
Then life is all complete.

A SIGH.

Like winds that drift the autumn leaves,
Whose force is hidden to the eye;
So hid from sight when our bosom heaves,
Is the thing we call a sigh.

THE POET.

The poet's soul that puts in rhyme
Imaginations flight,
Is lifted to a height sublime,
Ne'er reached by common sight.

SORROW.

'Tis true God doeth all things well;
But does that ease the present pain?
We know the clouds will lift some day;
But, ah, they sink so quick again.

THE PRESENT.

Fret not for joys that now have fled:
Live, live in the living present,
Where is one who can look ahead,
And know if its dark or pleasant.

LOVE.

Oh, love! thou light of life, its only bliss;—
No pleasure of the earth can equal thee,
Or words describe the thrilling ecstasy
Of those whose lips meet in a lover's kiss:
They glow with joy — nor ever pause to miss
Their sweet unconsciousness, but only see
Thy fond alluring face bent lovingly,
To hear, “No past joy ever seemed like this!”
Thou love! Heaven's brightest, dearest boon to
man —

As roses spread their leaves to greet the sun,
So human hearts all through life's little span
Open their depths till thy pure peace is won:
How lone, how drear, were life if from above,
Thou hadst not come to bless our hearts, sweet
love!

LOVE'S CHIDINGS.

Love said to Duty one day,
"O, duty, I pray thee to tell me
What sad thing is this has befell me,
For the maiden's heart is shutting me out.
Oh, duty she ever is thinking about—
'For humanity's sake,' she sighs o'er and o'er
'Gainst love I surely must close the door;
If I work for the needy, the sick and the poor,
I will make my entrance in Heaven sure,
And did help others as well to gain the throne,
So, love, go 'way leave my heart alone,'
But to hold my place I valiently fight,
Oh, duty give way, leave me still the right
To reign full and free in the maiden's heart,
And plant firmly there my own true dart."
Love said to pride—

"Oh, pride in my dear ones heart you abide—
You keep the true lover from her side,
For she hardly can brave what the world would say,
Her beautiful world so bright and gay,
If they knew she loved one who was quite unknown,
But whose brave honest heart was all her own;
O, pride, go 'way, leave the maiden's heart—
Go, keep the true lovers no longer apart—
For the secret of human hearts is this,—

To love and be loved is their greatest bliss,
And pomp and wealth sinks to nothingness then,
Or the scoff, or jeers, or the scorn of men,
For they find from life's petty things release,
In their wonderful consciousness of peace."

ONCE.

You said you loved me once, my dear,
I thought you loved me true;
The summer winds were in the air
And summer skies were blue,
But when the winter came, my dear,
And all the flowers were dead,
I found that with the balmy hours
Your love as well had fled.

Oh, had you loved me then, my dear,
And had you loved me true,
I had not felt the winter's chill,
Nor felt a want of you;
For hearts that keep the summer's glow
When winter comes apace,
Grow lone, if that which quickened once,
Has vanished into space.

TO THEE.

I question not why flies my heart to thee,
And finds therein such wondrous peace and rest,
That perfect faith dwells now within my breast,
I question not why thou didst come to me,—
Nor why, since thou hast come life seems to be,
So changed, that what I used to hold the best
Sinks into naught beside the strange, new quest,
That wills me evermore thy face to see.
No reasonings, no doubts, nor fears, are mine;
No anxious thought for what the morrow brings;
My soul hath found at last its goal in thine,
And dwells with thee, borne there on spirit wings.
I pray, dear life ! and love ! this heart of mine,
May bring still greater peace and rest to thine.

SOME DAY.

You will hear some day that I am dead,
My love! my darling!
You'll hear it and a chill will strike your heart;—
And all the past we loved so well together,
Will rise up as the tears, the burning tears will start,
When first you hear that I am dead,
My darling.
Never again the face to see
My darling.

The face you loved so much in days long past;
But will I know the grief that you are feeling,
When death has locked my lips so tight and fast?

You've never known a sorrow, darling,
But that I shared the grief with you;
How will you bear it then, to see me lying,
So still, so calm, so strange, so new,
The lilies that we loved to gather,
Darling,

Will shed their perfume on my pulseless breast,
And all your groans of anguish, dearest,
Will not awake my peaceful rest,
And I will lie so still and quiet,
Who never saw a sorrow start,
But that I flew in haste, my darling,
To weep with you upon your heart.

'Twill break your heart,
My love, my darling,

To walk along life's path alone;
And know that one you loved so dearly,
Can never sooth your broken moan;
Can never come and say, hush, loved one,
Why weep, the clouds will pass away;
We still have one another, sweetheart,
And that sufficeth for the day."
But when you hear that I am dead,
My love! my darling!

Remember ever, could it be,
 That we could dwell again together,
 I'd fly back from eternity,
 I'd fly back just to dwell with thee!

IN MAY.

O, meadows, why look ye so fair in the morning?
 O, meadows, why bloom ye so sweet in the May?
 O, song birds, why trill ye so gay at the dawning
 When my heart is crying the whole live-long day?

Ye care not at all for the heart that is breaking;
 Ye care not to note my sad tears as they fall;
 Ye wist not the far deeper woe ye are making
 As softly the echoes re-answer your call.

Ah, fond was my heart once; as gay as the morning,
 Its hopes were as sweet as the flowers of spring;
 It woke with a thrill when the first rays were
 dawning,
 Of all the sweet rapture that loving can bring.

O, loudly it sang from the morn till the eve-tide—
 O, dear were its dreams through the hours of night;
 And all its deep chambers where life's love and
 joy hide
 Were opened to let in the radiance bright.

As dark shadows creep when the sun sinks to
westward,
As gray mists foretell the sure coming of rain;
There 'rose in my heart once a moaning, and I heard
A voice that gave warning of on-coming pain.

Alas ! But I strived me to hush the sad warning—
And oh, how I struggled to banish the woe;
But who can prolong the bright hours of morning,
Or keep from the night its grim darkness to know.

When shade comes can love do ought else then
but languish ?

Can shadows do other than welcome the night ?
And so my poor heart cried aloud in its anguish,
When vanished the sweets of its love's dear delight.

O, sky draw a veil o'er the meadows bright gladness,
O, winds hush the note of the lark as it sings;
O, clouds gather up to keep time to the sadness,
To weep with the dews of my breaking heart-string.

TO WAIT.

O, long to watch and wait,
O, long to weep and sigh,
For hope that comes not soon nor late,
Though days are fleeting by.

Though days flee like the wind,
That sweeps across the lea,
That goes nor leaves a trace behind
That watchful eye can see.

A heart once filled with praise,
Now gives full place to one
Whose voice no merry song can raise
Till blessed hope were won.

Sorrow ! come hither, stay !
Bring mournful face and sad;
For such were mete along the way
Till hope can make me glad.

Give for the rose the myrrh;
Bring bitter rue to me;
Keep not; nor ever once deter,
For I give place to thee.

I welcome thee in love,
And love must have its way;
It lives on earth, though born above,
And cannot choose but stay.

And sorrow, for thy care,
I'll give a song to thee !
A song that—thou cans't anywhere
Sing, sorrow friend, to me.

A song of light and love,
And joy, and peace, and rest,
For when they could no longer move,
I brought thee for my guest.

Aye, sorrow sing my lay;
Help me to bear thee well,
So if thou go at any day
I'll bid thee, sad, farewell.

BROKEN LIGHT.

“Words unwanted?” Ah, yes, I know,
But can a rushing, swelling stream hold back its
overflow,
When far away, countless drops that gleam
Almost unnoticed to the sight,
Join pitylessly as fate together;
Then rush beyond their bounds in their quick flight.

“Hands uncared for?” yes, ’tis true:
Yet angels e’en might covet their pure touch;
But they are worse than naught to you,
For they are mine.
And when with pitious pleading they clasped thine,
They were released, though gently, it is true.

Tears welling up in eyes already dim with weeping
That shed their dew in waking or in sleeping—
“Dont cry,” ah, no! when that dear voice is speak-
ing tenderly.

That proves the heart is feeling sad for me;
Sad only, not like the love that I had given—
Not like the love that broke all bounds away,
And wrung two tender hearts upon that day.

“Lips?” Ah, what tales those lips could tell;
But they are mute as is the rose
When soft south winds caressed it in the dell,
Then passed away and left it in repose;
And, tho, they took away the dew that made its fragrance
 sweet,
Yet, without them its life were incomplete;
And so these lips of mine the story ne’er will tell,
Yet bend thee down to hear the whisper, “It is well !”

SIMPLE DEEDS.

They two were walking along the street,
And from my windows I saw them meet;
The one in a gown of the richest stuff,
And elegant seal-skin cloak and muff,
"Twenty bright years" told her lovely face,
And sorrows had left thereon no trace—
Hers was the beauty of youth and health,
And that other boundless treasure, wealth.

The other one, too, was young in life,
But her pale face showed the care and strife
That comes to the love a mother knows,
A love that is pure as the driven snows—
A tiny babe was clasped to her breast
And sleeping there in peaceful rest,
While a two year-old boy in sturdy pride
Toddled along at the mother's side.

Someone in that busy hurrying throng
Had stepped on her dress as they rushed along,
And it dragged through the dirt the countless
feet,
Had carried along from the muddy street;
Many, no doubt, had seen as they passed,
And some perhaps had covertly laughed;
What business had she to be out that day,
With her two little babes in the street that way?

They met—the one and her babe in arms
Seemed to draw the other with tender charms,
For she turned to look as they passed her by,
And that rent in the dress then caught her eye;
Quick as a flash she hurried back,
And pinned it up with skillful tact,
Then resumed her walk, nor seemed to heed
Further, that simple and gentle deed.

Only a little thing do you say?
I know it, but at the last great day,
The little things that was done in love,
While we lived below, will be known above;
And I sometimes think that God will give
To those who do little deeds while they live,
A crown that will equal in its bright gold
That won by the mighty heroes of old.

WHICH WAY.

Grown up ! I am not a child any more—
My playthings are thrown away;
And I'm standing here at an open door,
Which way shall I go, I pray ?
For this door looks out on a thousand ways,
They all are open to me;
And I gaze out on them as in a maze,
For which is my path to be;
I can choose but one, it must be for life,
And I start on it to-day—
And how can I tell betwixt peace or strife,
For they point out everyway.

There [are numerous ones that lead to fame,
That palace with towers tall,
But most of the highways that bear that name,
Do not reach the goal at all;
And the throngs that steadily move along
Are a queer looking company,
Some go with a sigh, and some with a song,
And they all seem calling to me;
But each one is bearing a load of care.
And their eyes with fever burn,
For danger of failure lurks everywhere,
And they know there is no return.

Ah! wealth is the end of these crooked ways,
And how very crooked they are !
I wonder if treading them ever pays
When is reached the golden star;
For the crowds that jostle each other here
Seem to move so unlovingly,
That to enter their ranks I almost fear
For there seems no room for me;
They are pushing and tripping each other, too,
And some are so slow to rise,
That ere they think what the strong ones do,
They have won the coveted prize.

And "pleasure, pleasure, these roads marks bear,
They stand all along the way,
One could not well miss his bearings there
At night any more than at day;
For a million lights are ready to shine
When the darkness of night sets in,
But I dare not choose these paths for mine
For they hint too plainly of sin,
Aye, they hint too plainly of sin for me.
For the faces that pass along,
Bear traces of something not good to see,
As if all their peace was gone.

And here is a long, straight, narrow way,
 Without a turn or a bend,
And 'tis lit by a strange, peculiar ray,
 Still I cannot see the end;
There are many walking here side by side,
 Without seeming to crowd at all,
Nor mind the dangers that lurk and hide,
 Till one of them chances to fall;
Then they haste to help till he stands again,
 And lead him gently along,
And if he happens to be in pain,
 They soothe till the pain is gone.

Yes, open are all these paths to me—
 Wealth, pleasure, and even fame,
And that one whose end I cannot see
 Though heaven I think is its name;
They beckon, they call, their voices are sweet,
 But someway I cannot start,
For something seems to be holding my feet,
 And pulling the strings of my heart;
Aye, the path of life lies beyond this door,
 This door that is open wide;
And when once I start, I return no more,
 God help me to decide !

ON THE STREET.

I've stood upon a busy street
To watch the people as they meet,
The long procession too and fro,
Moving along now fast, now slow,
The young, the old, the great, the small,
The rich, the poor—I see them all;
The minister of Christ is thine;
The belle, young, beautiful and fair;
The grand dame in her stately pride
Scarce sees the lowly at her side;
The business man steps quick along,
The lover hums a sweet love song;
The imbecil may jostle one
Whose thoughts will live till time is done,
And my heart broke to see them go
For each face showed a trace of woe.
The washerwoman strives for bread.
That helpless children may be fed;
The rich oft know a weight of pain,
That calls forth tears to fall like rain;
The minister whose saintly face,
Beams with an almost god-like grace,
Could tell of battles fought with sin,
Great battles, such as heroes win.
The doctor's face that ever shows

The tenderness that through it glows,
Could tell how his great heart can ache,
With sorrow for the sufferer's sake.
The merchant hurrying along
Thinks everything but care is gone,
And so they come, and pass, and go,
Each with an untold weight of woe.
For in the bell's fair dainty face
Grim discontent doth leave a trace,
While with the lover's humming song
A minor note is borne along;
The learned man sees far ahead
New heights to reach ere life has fled,
While the poor imbecile's weak soul
Strives vainly for an unknown goal;
Alas;—there is so much in life,
So much of care, of pain and strife
That could the wise but pause to see
The nearness of eternity,
Their hearts would break to mend again
The thousands bleeding with life's pain,
Would mend and lead them back to God
Whose feet hath too, this dark earth trod.

WHEN CHURCH BELLS RING.

At ten o'clock when church bells ring,
When from the high steeples the sweet notes sing,
The country roads if you look to see,
Show a wonderful goodly company
Of folks who will pass through the old church door,
Just as they have done so often before,
When the church bells rang out the hour of prayer
And called the good people to worship there.

At ten o'clock when the church bells swing,
When sweetly and joyfully they ring,
The heart of the faithful seems to be
More filled with praise at the melody,
For they feel sweet peace as they stand once more,
Just below the bell in the sacred door,
And a wonderful blessing meets them there,
As the bells ring out on the clear pure air.

But when instead of the bells that ring,
From the high painted steeples where they swing,
God's trumpet shall sound over village and lea,
And from land to land and from sea to sea;
Will the people come then to heaven's door
As glad and prompt as they did before,
When the church bells rang out on the air,
And called them to come to the house of prayer?

AT REST.

She is at rest,
 For her all care is past—
 Sweet peace is hers at last—
 The home of the blest
 Now holds that gentle soul;
 Life's billows cannot roll,
 And wake her rest.

 How sweet she sleeps !
 Closed are the lovely eyes
 To tears and sad good-byes;
 She will never weep—
 Her tender, loving heart
 Will ne'er be called to smart,
 In death she sleeps.

 Is she at rest ?
 She, in the shining band
 For in the heavenly land,
 At love's behest,
 Doth praise the Saviour's name,
 With sweet and clear acclaim—
 She needs no rest !

REPENTENCE.

Grant me again, Thy peace, Father,
I sinned, and now return to Thee,
For through this gloom I cannot see—
It hides Thy face from me, Father.

The tempter came! alas, too strong—
I fell, and straight-way through my heart,
There cut like knife a piercing dart,
And carried all this dark along.

I dare not face the morrow so—
Until again Thy face I see
And Thy dear love returns to me,
No rest or peace my soul can know.

For in Thy presence life is sweet,
And hearts are full of joy and rest;
While nestling deeply in the breast
Is praise that life is so complete.

But when a soul hath known Thy grace,
And sin has grimly entered there;
Oh, darkest hell cannot compare
With all the horror of that place.

BEYOND.

I seem to be wrapped in a veil,
Invisible to mortal eyes;
And if my hands could but prevail
I'd tear away this strange disguise.

For just beyond it lies a place
Of such exquisite peace and rest,
That could I see it face to face
My soul would be supremely blest.

Sometimes the veil is almost drawn,
And my heart springs in glad delight,
To greet the first rays of the dawn
That opens in that vision bright.

But earthly darkness comes again—
“Not yet, my child, this bliss for thee”—
And my sad tears they fall like rain,
As that soft whisper comes to me.

Not yet, but soon, I know it well
The shadow of the veil will cease
And then, O, sighs of earth, farewell!
Welcome, my heaven of perfect peace.

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