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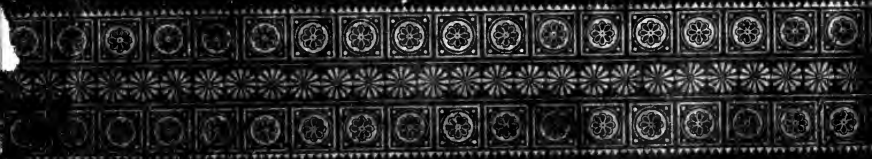
The Trial of Jesus,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY WILL A. DAVIS.

COLUMBIA CITY, IND.
J. W. ADAMS, PUBLISHER.
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Copyright, 1889.
By WILL A. DAVIS.

W. M. W., 1843/44.

To the Rev. Thos. J. Giboney,

WHO, UNLIKE PILATE, FOUND THE TRUTH AND TOLD

IT TO ME.

THIS VOLUME IS GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED.

WILL A. DAVIS.

THE TRIAL OF JESUS.

THE SPHINX.

My Mother Earth !

And thou, fresh breaking Day; and you, ye mountains,
Why are ye beautiful ? I cannot love ye.
And thou, the bright eye of the universe,
That open'st over all and unto all,
Art a delight—thou shin'st not on my heart.

—*Byron's Desolation.*

Where flashes, like the Arabs' scimeters,
The fitful Nile whose turbid waters hold
Dominion over Egypt's field and fold,
Where Nature, all Progression's steps deters;—

Where happiness can find no recompense,
In lissome nomad's dark and restless eyes,
And life drones out it's day 'neath flaming skies
In beggary and listless indolence;—

Where Royal Memphis budded, bloomed and died;
Where Moslems face the sacred Mecca stone,
Where mighty Kings, to history unknown,
In war's wild carnage, have for glories vied;—

Where Retrospection—tangible—of stone,
In form of tombs and temples, scattered wide,
And Egypt's noblest subject, mumified,
Sits like a tongueless queen upon her throne;—

Where gladness to the human soul comes not,
Where verdure is as rare as joy in hell,
Where every day rings like a muffled bell,
The olden story with dull sameness fraught;—

Where suffocating thirst and hunger dwell
Upon dark Egypt's life enthralling dunes,
Where all the records are inscribed in runes,
With shifting pencil Time's mad hands impell;—

Where winds, their blankets thick of heated sand,
About and or'e the tired traveler cast,
Stands Sphinx, the regal monarch of the past,
Without a subject, diadem or wand.

It stands enrobed in deepest mystery,—
A solitary dreamer dreaming, aye, alone;
No word it utters, for its lips are stone,
Nor is it sentient, but it seems to be.

The maniac storms, with rage, grow hoarse and clasp
Their savage arms around its form and press
Their weight against it, then, in hopelessness,
They, vanquished, die away in whispered gasp.

From the exhaustless store-house of the sun
Comes arrowy shafts of penetrating light
That strike upon it in their fiery flight
And glance and sink into the desert dun.

Time cannot harm it with his battling fierce;
Nor its deep story, wisdom's minds evolve,—
No Sampson can the cunning riddle solve;
Its mystery, none but God himself can pierce.

Eternity's invulnerable knight,—
A giant that the desert sands entrapt;—
A monarch with his mighty realm enrapt;
Earth-throned and in a stony mantle dight.

With great sad face, so longing, patient, old,—
With mien majestic, mortal never wore,
Although he were a king of half a score,
Such worlds as this, with palace grand of gold.

There is but one eternal form of stone;
There is but one lorn and abandoned Sphinx
That seems to look beyond the waste and thinks; —
One time-born figure, patient and alone.

But one lone watcher, gazing dreamily,
Beyond the threshold tree of legends hoar,
Decaying on oblivion's farthest shore,
Or outposts, dim, of lost antiquity.

In fifty centuries, slow revolving years,
How many empires flitted like a shade;
How many nature's penalty have paid;
How many joys and sorrows, pains and fears,—

Have passed before those grave and steadfast eyes,—
The innovations awful and sublime;
The flotsam on the ocean vast of time,
Would fill and thrill the whole world with surprise.

Yes, thrill the world with wonderment and fill
The souls of human kind with deepest thought,
Of how the elements their battles fought,
And left that desert dreamer dreaming still;

And left it stand, companionless, alone,
The misty past's accusing memory,
With features of susceptibility,
Without one word, or tear, or sigh, or moan.

And man, to-day, would Sphinx-like blindly gaze,
And watch for light, where white-capped breakers
 roar,
Or Hope's fond eyes along the songless shore,
Or her bright face above the sombre haze;—

Would stand forever, and would Sphinx-like gaze,
Far out across an unknown desert drear,
But hear no rustling wing to calm or cheer,
And see no gleaming star nor beckoning hand;—

Would gaze forever o'er a grassless sod;
Would live a life of feverish, fretful dream,
And hopeless dash into dark Lethe's stream,
But for the Savior, Jesus Christ, our God;—

Would stand upon life's narrow isthmus, frail,
And question two, unknown eternities,
Both clouded o'er with deepest mysteries,
And get no answer but an echoed wail.

And now I'll leave the dreamer in his dream,
I'll speed away from lifeless, seething sands
Of Africa's waste and cross to hallowed lands,
And cull a tale, where Jordon's waters gleam.

I'll walk where He who solved the mysteries,
More deep than those that robe the dreamer, Sphinx;
For Sphinx is stone and has no heart and drinks
No sorrow's cup nor cup of estacies.

I'll leave the runes and come to yesterday;
I'll trudge across the plains of Palestine
And gather thoughts from things I see, and twine
A fastening 'round them, either sad or gay.

I'll wander near the salty, soundless sea;
I'll see Capernaum and Nazareth;
And I shall breathe the oleander's breath
That mingles with the plash of Galilee.

To Bethany and Sechim, I shall go;
To ruined Nain and straggling Bethlehem,
Decapolis and to Jerusalem,
Through Judea's desert and to Jericho;

To Olivet and to Gethsemane,
Where Fancy's throng I know will follow in,
And like dim ghosts, with eyeless skulls and thin,
And fleshless forms will say sad words to me.

And I shall tell of one in Syria's realm,
Whose life is but a synonym of love,
Who is without a peer, in heav'n above,
And wears no lesser shining diadem;—

Who long ago, in tireless wanderings,
O'er the same road for blessed purpose trod,
In form a man, in power and wisdom, God—
The world's great savior—mighty king of kings!

And I shall tell of His sad pilgrimage;
Tell of the heavenly comforts that He brought;
Tell of the mighty miracles He wrought,
And of His admonitions grave and sage;

Tell how His life prepared a heavenly rest;
Tell how He yielded it to envious foes;
Tell how, upon the third day, He arose—
How He appeared to Mary sore distressed;

How He, despised, of hated Nazareth,
O'er grief's frail form a snowy mantle throws;
Gives sadness song and places Sharon's rose
Upon the sable pall of pulseless death.

PALESTINE.

Blest land of Judea! thrice hallowed of song
Where the holiest of memories pilgrim-like throng;
In the shades of thy palms, by the shores of thy sea,
On the hills of thy beauty, my heart is with thee.

* * * * *

I tread where the Twelve in their wayfaring trod ;
I stand where they stood with the chosen of God—
Where His blessing was heard and His lessons were taught,
Where the blind were restored and the healing was wrought.

—*Whittier's Palestine*.

The Janitor of the wide Universe
Pulls slowly to the noiseless door of day,
And lingering beams all Syria's plains immerse
In flood of gold, then slowly slip away
Like curtains, on some hidden fast'ning rolled.
Then eve springs in, like one who waited long
And wakens up her vot'ries manifold.
To snug retreats the gaudy sunbirds throng,
And feet of toil trudge homeward wearily.

Bees leave acacia's yellow, fragrant hearts,
The bulbul fills the wilds with melody
And like a farewell kiss, daylight departs,
And skies are bannered by departing rays,
Bright as the paths of childhood's holy days.

Night steals o'er Syria and, like sportive sheep,
Stars leap into the fields of sombre blue,—
Like silver sheep, in fields of vasty deep,
And send their pictures down in drops of dew.

The moon crawls up, from underneath the sea,
Washed by the salty wave, her languid face;
Crawls up like one who does so lothfully,
Or one grown tired with a lengthened race,
And throws across the sea her silver belts,
That ever fall and rise like long pontoons;
Then reaches out and Syria's kingdom melts
Into a glow as soft as dreamland's noons.

And clothes the cities, towns and mounts and dales,
And fields of grain and streams and vines and trees,
In garments of the woof of fairy tales,
Of tints unseen save in the heavenly leas.

And now there issues, from night's quickened womb,
The distant bleating of some restless kid,
Or nightingale within his leaf built room,
Whose warbling lulls his nestling, safely hid;

Or echoes of wild Jordan's thund'ring strain,
Whose frothy waters labor constantly
To burst their frowning, rocky banks amain,
Then fill the caldron of that bitter sea;

Or lizzard's plaint, from some low ruined walls,
Or lion, in some brambled mountain dell,
That to his mate in startling tones loud calls,
To feast of quivering flesh of the gazelle,
With eyes that glimmer like a smould'ring forge
And send the cony scampering away,—
Or glossy starling, in the Kedron gorge,
Croaking to frighten some intrusive fay,
Or laugh, uncanny, of hyenas foul,
That desecrate the graves of mouldering dead;
Or ominous hoots of many an hungry owl,
Or startled doves in branches over head,
Or prowling wolves with sharp and ringing howl,—

But human kind is silent as the ghosts;
And rest and slumber now, the scepter keep,
And throw around all Syria's mighty hosts,
The cunning toils of sweet, delusive sleep.

Now crows, in chorus, noisy chanticleers,
Whose time-announcing voices, shrilly tell
The hour of night; the drowsy watcher hears,
And from the lofty wall cries, "All is well."

Now woven in the warp and woof of light,
Of stars and moon and gleaming of the dew,
Faint, dainty breath of many an elfish sprite
At play within the night flowers' avenue,
The early day bird wakens from his bed,
And sings his song of joy and thankfulness;
While the low east is tinted faint with red,
Like maiden's cheeks that lips of love caress.
Now dawn's, deft fingers, Eastern skies adorn;
Now palpitates upon the very air,
The matchless music of the harp of morn,
Strung with bright strings formed of Apollo hair.
Now night, with gold-fringed garment, hies away,
And 'round she speeds upon the heels of day,

Then toil refreshed goes forth with muscles strong;
The shepherd, for his sheep, now opes the gate;
The blind, to their accustomed places throng,
And day by day the self same tale relate.

The lepers, from the cities barred and banned,
Now issue from their rocky caverns, mean,
And raise in warning many a festering hand,
And loudly cry their pitiful, "unclean."

With loads of sweet frankincense and of myrrh,
Of gems and merchandise from distant mains;
From Joppa, Akka, Sidon, or from Sur,
Or from across the arid Syrian plains,—
The camel plods along with noiseless feet
Adown the city's narrow, crooked street.

The water carriers now their goat skins fill;
The high priest feeds the sacred alter flame;
The enslaved woman turns the household mill,
And filthy beggars, ragged, old and lame,
Hold out their skinny hands and plead and plead,
And follow with their great, sad, hungry eyes.
The Jewish scribes to the untutored read;
The tithe collector gathers in the tithes.

The fishermen from distant Galilee,
To city marts their wave-born treasures bring.
The 'lum-drum music of low minstrelsy,—
And Jaffa's uproar, whence comes everything
For Palestine from countries far and near,
Through the small openings in her ramparts, string
The cotton cloth, stones, coin and bitter beer,
And human kind—the lorn Circassian slaves,
King, dervishes, and pasha, Jew and seer,
From pious christian to the vilest knaves.

And when toward the East the shadows run,
And the low sun swings o'er the Western sea,
And day's hot, dusty march is nearly done,
The lazy Arab dozes 'neath the tree,
The tired *cadi* leaves the city's gates,
The fakir packs his goods into his shed,
The sheik puts off his royal robes of state,
The barber slowly shaves the Moslem's head.

Fruit venders hawk the purple grape and plum,
The donkey boy chews bits of sugar cane,
The austere dervish sits in silence dumb,
Or whirls and sings his prayer in rambling strain.

The kingly noble with his jeweled fan
Rides slow along within his palanquin,
Borne by his slaves from Cairo or Soudan;
Bare-legged slaves with bodies long and lean.

In every style of garb,--of every hue,
Mankind from every clime beneath the skies
In Palestine, day brings before the view.
Fanatic christian with the Moslem vies,
In fearful orgies to propitiate
For sins they never, never could commit,
For God looks down in pity, not in hate,
On those who have of reason but a whit.

And such are they who shout their prayers and sing
Tumultuously, or fill their flesh with pain,
As if God were a beast or silly thing,
And doted on vagaries wild and vain.

When we, in God's great presence bow, I think,
To ask that he our many sins erase,
That we may of the living waters drink,
We ought to come in-humble, christian grace.

Imagine God, e'en as a human king,
And you would ask some favor at His hand,
Would you your arms in wild contortions fling,
And howl like one of lowest bedlam's band?

You would, I know, approach His royal throne
Decorously, with tremor in each limb,
And in His august presence, there alone,
Would in well chosen words petition Him.

All acts should in great deference be done,—
In proper spirit. He who reigns on high,
In wisdom, is above us as the sun
In radiance is above the fire-fly.

But I must to my subject—I digress.
I cannot show you all of Holy Land
In these few lines; but want and wretchedness,
Like kings, tread all its highways hand in hand.

And where God's chosen did their mighty work,
And for humanity laid down their lives,
Now thrives the lazy, lustful, turbaned Turk,
With Jew and christian in his galling gyves.

There votaries of Buddha too abound;
Of tri-god Bramin and the Confucian.
There Parsees, fire worshipers are found;
In fact, there's everything in shape of man.

The choicest fruits in Holy Lands, we find;
The Syrian apple and the lucious date,
Peaches and lemons of the rarest kind,
And the banana and the pomegranate.

And Palestine is Flora's motherland;
E'en grasses send out shoots of flow'ry flame;
The rose and lily bloom on every hand,
And the Narcissus flow'r, old poet's name;

And ivy, elder, dog-rose, butcher's broom;
The hawthorn, jasmine, on Mount Lebanon;
And higher up burst out the rich perfume
Of modest primrose and rhododendron.

With ravishing perfume the very air,
From sultry lowlands to the snowy heights,
Is dense, while birds with plumage rich and rare,
And wondrous song fill day with gay delights.

The leaping squirrel leaps from tree to tree;
And amble through the bramble, porcupine.
The hunted deer looks 'round him timidly,
And grunt complacently the savage swine;

And nipping closer still the dew-washed grass,
In bits of pasture land at eventide,
The one-humped camel, stubborn mule and ass,
And the Arabian horse with spotted hide.

Dull Palestine, the hub of Christendom;
The nestling place where charming legend breeds;
The fount from whence the vague traditions come,
That fill the world with jangling sects and creeds.

The land where kings of great renown have trod;
Where carnage made her foulest slaughter pen;
Where the eternal, co-eternal God,
Sent angels down to hold converse with men.

Where cities stand on ruins, and beneath
Those ruins lie vast ruins lower still;
What once was garden now is cheerless heath,
The soil that Israel tilled, now heathens till.

'Neath Splendor's mansion in the Orient,
The fox and prowling jackal make their den.
On ruined city's stately battlement,
Owls now are guards instead of armored men.

But Palestine, two thousand years ago,
Is not the Palestine we see to day;
For now she sits in her sackcloth of woe,
Amid sad scenes of ruin and decay.

Men look upon her as a land accursed;-
A land where dreary desolation reigns,
Whose once great nation was by God dispersed,
And desecrated are her tombs and fanes.

The Savior Christ, she drove from place to place,
When His loved presence would have glorified
And made her mighty; then with crimes most base,
He was by her accused and crucified.

O, if He knocks upon the heart's closed door,
Do not, I pray you, let Him knock in vain;
Perchance like Palestine of days of yore,
He may forsake us and come not again.

My tale grows tedious and of little worth;
Digression seems to be a poet's fort.
In following pages I shall give the birth
And life of Christ in a more brief report.

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

Shine on, O Eastern gem,
Bright star of Bethlehem!
Wherever wand'ers are,
In every rayless realm,
Throw thy beams over them.
Shine on, O lucid star!
Shine o'er the Orient;
Shine o'er the Occident;
Shine out across the night;
Make all the darkness light;
Melt down the hidden bar,
That keeps souls from the fold,
That back the timid hold,
O, thou, bright wonder star!

A vine sprang up; a frail and tiny vine
Sprang up where wooing sun and show'r were dearth;
Sprang up and grew until it did entwine
Its mighty branches 'round and 'round the earth.

A light shone out across the darksome night;
Shone out but shed a pale and sickly ray,
Which grew apace into the brightest light
And far outshone the splendors of the day.

Love sat upon the sunken grave of Love,
With cheeks all wet with tears of blank despair,
When lo, a hand reached from the heights above
And placed sweet Hope along beside her there.

The grave became a palace, grand and fair,
Presided over by calm, peaceful Rest,
With colonades of blossoms rich and rare,
A refuge for the weary soul oppressed.

Humanity was in a night of woe
Upon the breast of ocean, tempest torn,
Stuck on the rocks where frothy breakers flow,
When lo, the night resolved itself in morn.

The storm's mad spirt laid aside its flail;
The troubled waters calm and calmer grew
And where the sky and waters meet, a sail
Against the distance, plain, her outlines threw.

In Bethlehem, in distant Palestine,
Within the manger of a stable lorn,
The sheltering place of goat and ass and kine
Long years ago a baby boy was born.

A pretty child, with dimpled cheeks; with eyes,
Full of warmest love; with golden hair,
Soft as reflected beams on evening skies,
When not a cloud is scudding anywhere.

A heavenly child; for on the night that he
Was born, an angel her'dled it afar,
And God placed over him, that all might see,
A guiding light, a new-born, flaming star.

Before his birth, God sent the saintly son
Of Zachariah and Elizabeth,
To pave the way for the anointed one,
Who would spring out of hated Nazareth.

He was a child of noble lineage;
His father had, through all the ages trod,
In Virtue's path with Wisdom, grave and sage,
And held communion with almighty God.

And holy men passed through Jerusalem;
Rich, Eastern magis hast'ning on their way,
To find the stable low in Bethlehem,
Where infant Jesus in the manger lay.

Rich magis with frankincense, myrrh and gold,
Came wearily upon their desert ships;
Came there to see the Christ so long foretold;
Came there with prayers of gladness on their lips.

You know how He the doctors, wise, surprised;
How He could wield the ax and plane and saw;
How He of John in Jordan was baptised;
How by His coming He fulfilled the law.

What mighty power He had at His command;
What Godly power, most wondrously divine,
Was manifest in Him on every hand,
Where e'er He went throughout all Palestine.

But now I'll leave His babyhood and youth,
Not that I seek, by being brief, to shirk
My duty, but I do believe, in sooth,
That you would rather hear of His great work.

CHRIST'S WORKS.

Thy works, O Lord, interpret Thee,
And through them all Thy love is shown;
Flowing about us like a sea,
Yet steadfast as the eternal throne.

Out of the light that runneth through
Thy hand, the lilly's dress is spun;
Thine is the brightness of the dew,
And Thine the glory of the sun.

— *Religious Poems by Alice Cary.*

Into the wilderness, the spirit led
Christ to be tempted of the Evil one;
And forty days and nights passed o'er His head
Before His lonely, trying task was done.

But like a war'ior mailed and helmeted,
He stood against temptation's armament;
And when he finished; angels came and fed
Him with choice foods, by loving Father sent.

And then He walked along on Jordan's strand
And northward to the land of Galilæe,
And there were two who joined Him in that land
And followed him through life devotedly.

From Cana, in the North of Palestine,
A kindly message to the Lord was sent;
And there He changed the water into wine,
And everywhere fame of His virtues went.

And His great name was known throughout the land
And men now praised Him who before were dumb.
From Cana, He, with His disciple band
And nearest kin, went to Capernaum.

He drove from out the sacred temple's halls
All those who sheep and oxen bought and sold,
And leveled low the booths and market stalls,
And overthrew the tables with the gold.

And in Jerusalem a ruler came
To discourse with our Savior secretly,—
A wealthy man who bears the honored name
Of Nicodemus, the learn'd Pharisee.

And in Jerusalem, our Lord, he found,—
Found Him in company with lowly men,
And asked Him how He could in grace abound;
And Jesus said, “Ye must be born again.”

Ay, verily, ye must be born again!
Ay, Nicodemus must be born anew,
Not from thy mother’s womb with travail pain,
But must the purifying flame pass through.

Ye must be of the spirit born of God;
Ye must renounce the fleeting things of earth;
Ye must be chastened by the chastening rod;
Ye must be taught the things of heav’nly worth.

O, soul! ye must, ye must be born again,
Ere ye can see the Father face to face,—
And be made fræe from every sinful stain,
And let your light illumine the darkest place;

Ye must put on an armor that the rust
Can not corrupt, but ever brighter beams;
Ye must from off thy feet shake all the dust
Of every act that most unholy seems.

To Sychar, Jacob's well, next Jesus came
And sat him down to rest, for long he walked.
Came to the well, a woman, low of name
And birth, for water, and with her He talked.

He told her of the fount in His control;
Told her of its bright waters flowing free,
Whose cleansing powers would purify the soul
And give it life on high eternally.

Then publicly He preached in Galilee;
"Repent, for heaven's kingdom is at hand;
Repent ye, and believe for I am He"
Who has almighty powers at My command.

At Cana, by a noble, He was met,
Who begged of Him that He would quickly come
And see his son while life was in him yet,
Down in the city of Capernaum.

And Jesus said unto him, "Go thy way;
Thy son is now no longer near to death,"
And it was so. And Jesus went that day
Again into the town of Nazareth;--

Where in a synagogue on Sabbath day,
With the Mosaic hallowed law He stood,
And read aloud what prophets had to say
Of acts and thoughts that tend to make us good.

But ere he finished reading, loudly came
A murmur, like when bees in anger hum,
And He who bears in heaven the fairest name
Was forced to fly back to Capernaum.

And then He walked along on Galilee
And saw two brothers casting out their net,
Into the waters of the shimmering sea,
But no success had crowned their labors yet.

And loud He called, "Launch out into the deep
And cast your nets." And Simon said, "All night,
We've toiled without a moment's rest or sleep,
And taken nothing that our works requite;"

And lothfully the Savior's bidding done;
When lo, the fishes strained their nets and broke
And water o'er the ships began to run;
Then Simon was afraid, and pleading spoke,—

“Depart from me, for I with sins am fraught;
O, leave me in my poverty again!”
But Jesus said unto him, “Son, fear not,
For henceforth thou shalt cast thy nets for men”

He, in Capernaum, on Sabbath taught,—
Taught as none ever taught but God’s own Son;
And there a mighty miracle He wrought
By casting out a vicious evil one.

He, Peter’s kin of burning fever healed;
Rejoicings came wherever He remained,
For all around He did His powers wield,
And mighty were the virtues He contained.

He healed a leper then at Galilee;
A paralytic at Capernaum;
And thousands came the wonder-man to see
And brought Him sick and lame and blind and dumb.

He healed a man then at Bethesda’s pool;
He plucked the corn while journ’ing through the land;
He gave His fol’wers many a golden rule;
He healed a cripple’s useless, withered hand.

And many, on the shores of Galilee
He healed, who were with sore diseases pained;
The Twelve upon a mountain near the sea
He called unto Him and He them ordained.

Upon a mountain, near Jerusalem,
He preached His most divine beatitudes;
Sublime beatitudes, compared with them,
Man's grandest words are vulgar platitudes.

He healed the slave of the centurion,
Who suffered much with many a grievous pain.
He touched the bier of the lone widow's son
And brought him back to her in quiet Nain.

Upon the sea the elements He yoked;
The devils that a legion did combine,
Were in the Galilee's deep waters choked
And perished in the bodies of the swine.

The dying daughter of a ruling Jew
He raised, and many followed after them,
And of the throng a woman struggled through
To touch in faith His trailing garment hem.

He healed two blind men, set a dumb soul free,—
Rejected, by the Nazarines, His kins,
He circles thrice around in Galilee.
The Twelve's evangelistic work begins.

The Twelve return and with Christ cross the lake,
And there a mighty multitude is fed,—
The multitude that followed in their wake
To catch the loving, tender words He said.

Two tiny fishes and five loaves of bread,
The Savior Christ, Great God personified,
Took up and broke and hungry thousands fed,
And left twelve heaped up baskets-full beside.

And many, many mighty things He done,
And o'er the then known world his praise was sung;
Then Sin's most sinful children, one by one,
Dark accusations brought on lying tongue.

One of His chosen Twelve, Judas by name,
For merited rebuke and love of pelf,
Did all his kith and kin for aye defame
And heaped a world of hate upon himself.

For he did by a treach'rous kiss betray,—
By acting out a dark and dreadful lie,
One who had been his kindest friend alway,
To envious Jews for them to crucify.

I sometimes think, perchance, we are unkind,
For cursing Judas for his treachery,
That in to-day's bright mirror we can find
Souls that are deeper stained in sins than he;

Can find, perchance, where men of our day sold
Their hope of heaven and blest assurance dear,
Not for a purse of silver nor of gold,
But for earth's baubles, that delusive cheer.

And learning more each year of His great love
In this great age, in Wisdom's motherland,
And disregarding thoughts of home above,
They surely do, below vile Judas, stand.

THE TRIAL.

For Brutus as you know was Cæsar's angel;
This was the most unkindest cut of all;
For when the noble Cæsar saw him stabbed,
Ingratitude, more strong than traitor's arm,
Quite vanquished him; then burst his mighty heart.
—*Shakespeare's Julius Cæsar.*

A woman, — Mary, sweetest name on earth—
Came with a precious ointment, in a box
Of alabaster, to good Simon's house,
In Bethany, upon Mount Olivet;
And while the Savior, at the table, sat
She broke the box and poured it on His head;
A costly ointment of the rarest nard,—
As an expression of her love to Him;
For he was, aye, the family's dearest friend;
He had, of leprosy, friend Simon cured,
And brought her brother Laz'rus back to life;
And she believed that he was come of God
To save her people, and she loved Him much.

No other way is there to show our love,
Than by a sacrifice of things we love
And dearly prize, or things that have some worth;
And nothing can devotion's fires keep
More brightly burning than sacrifices of
Something we cherish, be it great or small.

When Mary poured the ointment on His head,
A man named Judas, of the chosen Twelve,
And treasurer of the little company,
Grew covetous and angrily inquired,
Why all the waste of ointment should be made,
When its commercial value was so great;
It would have sold for many Roman coin
That charity could give unto the poor.
And Jesus knew his base hypocrisy
And unto him he said: "Let her alone.
Why trouble her? She hath done what she could."
Her cherished name and act shall never die.
And she is pouring out her ointment still;
Its fragrant, sweet perfume which, at the first,
Filled but the room in distant Bethany,
Now fills the great wide world and faster flows.

And Judas, too, will live eternally;
For Judas, in this day, thy impress is
Imprinted on the miser's worshiped gold.
Thou art the prompter of the covetous;
Thou art a brother to deceitfulness,
And art a synonym for treachery.
I see and hear thee almost everywhere.
Thy spirit in the human soul intrudes,
And in unguarded moments e'en, I feel
Thy arms like tentacles encircling me.

It was the first day of unleavened bread.
The lamb for the passover had been slain,
And in the evening Jesus, with the Twelve,
Sat at the table for the feast prepared;
Sat at the table, and within their midst
Was one already steeped in treachery;
And as they ate the loving Savior said:
"The one who shall betray Me is at hand."
And sorrow came and falt'ring voices asked
One, then another: "Jesus, is it I?"
While, at the table Jesus still discoursed
And prayed for His disciples, deeply grieved,
Vile Judas was arranging the details

Of taking then a ruffian band of men
At midnight and delivering Christ to them.

Now night was deep'ning, and to Olivet
Jesus and His followers slowly walked.
Then leaving eight of them quite near the gate,
With Peter, James and John, went further on
Into the garden of Gethsemane;
And leaving them, he went a pace beyond
And prayed a prayer in awful agony;
For then upon His shoulders weighed the sins
Of the whole world, and to his soul there came
A rush of thoughts greater than he could bear,
And gave He then His mighty sorrows sway
And breathed His prayer with blood upon His brow:
"Father, if it be possible with Thee
Let this cup pass from Me." Then to His soul
A new submission came; He prayed again:
"Not My will, but Thine, be done, O Father!"

Then came an angel bright and strengthened Him.
Now, he who should betray Him, was at hand.
On Mount of Olives; near Gethsemane,
At noon of night, with Luna on the throne,

Came traitor Judas with six hundred men;
When Jesus had returned from His third prayer,—
Came like a thief and with a treach'rous kiss,
Betrayed the Christ unto a ruffian band;
With avarice deep-seated on his brow,
And grasping covetousness within his breast,
And thirty pieces gingling in his purse,—
Angered at the rebuke at Simon's house
Or his desire to be the treasurer of
The mighty kingdom Christ had oft foretold.
But when he saw the hateful thing he'd done,
He did make restitution of the coin;
But that act brought to him no forgiveness.

And injured conscience, like a demon wild,
Drove him upon the precipice's verge
And pushed him o'er into the deepest hell.
And over his unwept and flow'rless tomb
The world has placed a monument of hate;—
A monument of curses merited.
Upon inscribed; "May infamy and shame
Keep ever verdureless thy sunken grave."

After the kiss was given, soldiers knew

The Christ, and He unto their presence came,
And unto them He said: "Whom do you seek?"
They answered; "Him, Jesus of Nazareth."
Then Jesus said unto them, "I am He."
And at those words the fearless soldiery
And Jewish leaders staggered back and fell;—
Fell to the ground before the presence of
The Holy One, that had communed with God.
Then having to them shown His mighty powers,—
That He laid freely down His life and not
Of sheer compulsion He gave up Himself.

His followers had forsaken Him and fled.
They led Him then before the ex-high priest,
Whose name was Annas, a most potent Jew,
Who sent him to the high priest Caiaphas;
Now night's dark curtain dim and dimmer grew,—
Her dewy curtains, bright star-pinned to space,
For the large paschal moon now slowly rolled
Across the tented firmament's wide roof.

Impartial Justice loves the gracious light
Of day; she never bolts or bars her doors,
But when the Savior, Jesus Christ was tried,

She, in the distance, dumb and sightless stood;
For Jesus in the night-time, there was brought
Before the great Sanhedrin, secretly,
To most of Judea's populace unknown;
For they had learned to love the Godly man
And did acknowledge his divinity.

The court, in which they tried Him, was unfair;
It was against the rules of law to hold
A session of the great Sanhedrin or
Council, for the trial of felonies,
In secret places and in the night time;
And they who tried His case were greedy priests,
Whose selfishness He oftentimes reprov'd.
And elders whose hypocrisy He knew,
And scribes whose ignorance he oft exposed.
And worldly Saducees, the worst of all,
Whose empty sap'ence He had refuted.

The Judges sat in Oriental style
With crossed legs and unshod feet, and in
A half circle. Caiaphas as high priest
Sat in the center and before him stood
The Savior Christ, and at the circle's ends

Sat dextrous scribes to write the sentence of
Acquittal or of condemnation; and
The bailiffs, with their cords and thongs, to guard
The accused; then two witnesses, they found,
Whose lying tales in substance did agree,
Who heard Christ say: "I will destroy this fane
And in three days I will another build."
And these same witnesses are living still,
Some of them e'en are professed followers
And bear false witness by unchristian deeds,
By their neglect and by their worldliness.
They did not seek for witnesses for truth;
They could have found of them a vast array,
Of men made well, the blind and lame and sick,
The lepers He had cleansed, demoniacs
Clothed with reason, dead brought to life again,
Hearts comforted and sinful souls redeemed;
Foolish minds made bright, wand'ring ones restor-
ed.
They did not seek to ascertain the truth.
They looked upon Christ as their enemy,
And witnesses they sought to falsely swear
To any words or acts to render Christ
Punishable, under the law, with death.

Joseph Caiaphas, in his priestly robes,
His ephod clasped, with precious onyx stones,
Upon the shoulders: on each stone was 'graved
Six of the names of Israel's tribes, and twined
Around his waist a linen girdle, fair
Of scarlet and of purple, blue and gold;
And just beneath the girdle was a blue
And sleeveless garment, called the robe, and twined
With crimson trimmings, or of red or blue,
Of the pomgranate: bells of gold between
Each woven pomgranate, alternately;
A miter with a golden plate, engraved
With, "Holiness unto the Lord," and held
With showy ribbons of ethereal blue.
Upon the top of the first miter sewn,
Was one of turban shape, also of blue,
Upon which sat a triple crown of gold.

And then, in feigned solemnity, he asked
Jesus, saying: "Answerest nothing, Thou?
What is it, which these witness against Thee?
Art Thou the Christ, the blessed Son of God?"
And Jesus said: "I am, and Thou shalt see
The Son of man on the right hand of Power

And coming in the joy-lit clouds of heaven.”
Then Caiaphas rent his priestly robes,—
The ancient sign the prisoner was condemned, —
And asked, “What need we further witnesses?
What think ye? Ye have heard the blasphemies.”
They all condemned Him to a lingering death.

It was night time still, but on the Orient’s brow
The lustrous, starry gems fled one by one,
And the Sanhedrin then adjourned to meet
At day-break, for the Roman law was such
That sentences pronounced before the dawn
Were invalid.

Then some began to spit
Upon Him, and they covered up His face,
And struck Him with their fists and said to Him:
“Now prophesy whose hand dealt Thou the blow.”
It seems the instinct of low nature is
To trample on the fallen. His powers,
Self restrained, He stood as if He were
The feeblest and most helpless of all men.
The rabble’s terror now was at an end;
They had Christ now within their brutal hands,

And now upon Him fancied wrongs avenged.
The passive hands, they bound, had healed the sick;
That done such kindly acts, had raised the dead.
The lips they smote, had calmed the winds and
 waves.

And they maltreated Him till morning came.
The scribes and priests a consultation held,
And bound Him, and then carried Him away;
To Pontius Pilate they delivered him,
And to the tower of Antonia,
The Roman fortress, near the city wall,
The Christ was sent for condemnation.
Pilate now conferred awhile without
And left them there and spoke again to Christ;
For it was passover time, and they
Would sure defile their saintly souls, if they
Should enter into Pilate's judgment hall.
And Pilate stood within the judgment hall,
And asked of Him, "Art Thou King of the Jews."
For now instead of the charge of blasphemy,
Which charge they knew was groundless and most
 false,
They now accused Him of seditious acts
And prohibition of the payment of

The Roman Cæsar's tribute, money due;
His name was treason under Roman law.
And Jesus answering, said, "Thou sayest it."
And Pilate left Him there and sought the crowd,
And said to them, "I find no fault in Him."
Then Pilate for the second time consults,
Outside the judgment hall, the leading Jews,
And marveled greatly that they sought to take
The life of one as innocent as Christ.
And he, between conflicting interests, stood.
He found no grounds for condemnation of
The Savior, and would have acquitted him;
But he was fearful lest he should offend
The Jewish rulers who, before, had sent
A body of the leading men to Rome,
To Cæsar, and all on account of Him.
Then to escape from his perplexity,
To Tetrarch Herod, who then visited
Jerusalem, they did deliver Christ.
For it was said that in Herod's country Christ
Into sedition had the people stirred;
But Tetrarch Herod found no fault in Him,
And did regard Christ as a fanatic,
And with his soldiers mocked His kingly claims,

And placed a royal robe upon Him then,
And sent Him back to Pilate's judgment hall.

The multitude grew clam'rous for His blood,
And Pilate's efforts, fruitless, were to save
The man, he knew, had nothing worthy done
Of death, and whose pure wife, Procula, had
Suffered much on His account in dreams,
And sent her messengers to say to him
Not to yield up the Holy Man for them
To crucify; and Pilate said to them:
"What will ye that I shall do unto Him,
Whom ye denominate King of the Jews?"
And they cried, "Crucify Him!" loud again.
Then Pilate said, "What evil hath He done?"
And then released Barrabas unto them,
And then delivered Christ into their hands
And washed his hands before the Jews and said:
"Know ye that I'm innocent of this."
Then Christ was placed into assassin's hands --
Without the semblance of a legal tri'l,--
Convicted by apostate persons, who
Feigned themselves just men and friends of His,
Whose evidence was bought by envious priests;

They took him by subtily and fraud,—
Irregularity marked all their acts,—
They bound and dragged Him in the night-time to
Annas, who was not a magistrate,
And at a time when legal acts were null ;
But every murderer of the Holy One
Felt the displeasure of Divinity.

The Jews lost all. Their city was laid low,
And millions perished at its overthrow ;
And since that time they have no homes, no fanes,—
A scattered nation, wandering everywhere.
Judas and Pilate died by their own hands ;
Caiaphas was deposed the following year,
And later on the fine palatial home
Of Annas was destroyed by a fierce mob,
And his own son dragged through the streets and
scourged.

Thus fate to one and all was meeted out ;
But thanks to God His Son has saved the world.

I'll say a word for Coward Pilate's sake :
Pilate, pilloried in history as
The man who crucified the Son of God,

While knowing and confessing him as such.
We cannot please the world, but Pilate tried
To satisfy it by releasing Him ;
The elders by chastising Him, himself
By delivering Him from death. Pilate,
Thy fitful spirit still abides with men.
“What will ye then that I do unto Him ?”
Should have been asked of conscience and of honor,
Of right and truth, not of a frenzied mob.
’Twas thy hand, Pilate, that applied the scourge ;
’Twas thou, O Pilate ! that mocked Him and crowned
His hallowed head with crown of platted thorns ;
The reed thou gav’st Him, and the purple robe.
Thou smot’st Him and the thorny spikes thou
drov’st
Into His flesh, and spit upon Him, and
Thou lead’st Him out, bleeding, scourged and
crowned
With thorns, arrayed in purple robe, into
The presence of the mob, in hopes, perchance,
That Pity lingered near. Then cowardly
Thou gav’st Him to the mob to crucify—
To please the envious and to damn thy soul.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

Shepherd! Who with thine amorous, sylvan song
Has broken the slumber that encompassed me,
Who mad'st thy crook from the accursed tree,
On which thy powerful arms were stretched so long,
Lead me to mercy's ever flowing fountains;
For thou my shepherd, guard and guide shall be;
I will obey thy voice and wait to see
Thy feet all beautiful upon the mountains.
Hear, Shepherd! Thou who for thy flock art dying,
O wash away these scarlet sins, for thou
Rejoicest at the contrite sinner's vow.
O, wait! to thee my weary soul is crying.
Wait for me! Yet why ask it, when I see
With feet nailed to the cross thou'rt waiting still for me.
—*Loufellow's Good Shepherd.*

I see Him bearing now the heavy cross,
I hear the rabble's jeer, and see them toss
Their heads; I hear their mocking, rail,—
I hear the cruel, lacerating nail
Force its way through the tendons and the bone
Of His dear hands and feet, and hear Him groan.

I see Him taste the mingled myrrh and wine,
I hear Him whisper in the ears divine :
“Father, forgive them, for they know not what
They do.” I see the soldiers casting lot,
I see Him naked hang upon the tree—
Mocked and tormented—crucified for me.

I see o'er Judea now the darkness come,
I see mailed soldiers stand, now mute and dumb;
I hear the Savior cry in misery :
“My God! O, why hast Thou forsaken me?”
I see the temple's vail, now rent in twain,
And saints long dead, come back to earth again.

I see in glory Christ, the crucified,
With blood still flowing from His wounded side.
I see upon His pierced and bleeding brow
A crown of bright, eternal radiance now;
I hear Him with the gracious Father plead
That He may all the world to heaven lead.

CARPING CRITICS.

Born near old Eden's garden fair, perchance;—
Away o'er wrecks of misty cent'ries dead.
'Round cities, towns and rural homes and camps,
Like watchful, tireless sentinels they tread;
Marched with the hosts from Afric's lands I ween
And crowned with thorns the lowly Nazarene.

Nothing in heaven or earth escapes their tongues;
They criticise the gray haired sage and Goth,
And votaries who worship at the fanes
Of God; or fanes of Baal and Ashtaroth,
The government of Nations and of States,
The vassals and the kingly potentates.

They jeer at Science when she plumes her wing,
Their ribald jest Art, too, most keenly feels;
They see no beauty lines in Nature's face—
They cumber all Progression's mighty wheels.

They dare assail God's Word with cunning quirks
And suggest changes in His wond'rous works.

They jar with discord Love's ecstatic songs,
They break the woof of Author's webs of gems,
Taunt Poverty and shame the cheek of Wealth,
Steal jewels from the Hero's diadems,
Laugh loud at Lawyers and at church creeds roar,
And write "Quack" over every Doctor's door.

They clutch and cling to fond Ambition's robes;
They fetter him who woos the rhythmic muse,
Embarrass all who wander Wisdom's realms
Shod with Researche's consecrated shoes,
Of all who'd leave their name when life has flown,
On something better than a slab of stone.

As has been said by one in former days,
They're pirates robbing vessels ocean bound,
Or breachy cattle breaking fences down,
And tramping growing grain into the ground,
Or goats grammivorous nipping bud and shoot,
That might have yielded sweetest flower and fruit.

ON THE DEATH OF A YOUNG FRIEND.

It may be best when all is rife with love,
Ere Life's frail bark has scarcely left the shore,
With eager winds hard pressing every sail —
While yet but faintly nearing breakers roar;
It may be best ere we have reached the deep,
To have Death's finger touch us into sleep.

It may be best ere we have battled with
The martialled cares that hem us 'round about
On every side where e'er our pathway leads,—
It may be best to have our lamps sunned out,
And in our graves, with bitter tears, e're wet,
Sleep 'neath the flowers, sweet poems of regret.

So in Life's springtime full of peaceful joy,
So in Life's fair and sunny holiday,
When skies were blue and not one cloud in sight—
When hope smiled sweetly all along the way,

She weary grew beneath the chas'ning rod
And angels took her to their home with God.

Her life, a bud just bursting into bloom,
 Chilled by a breeze from winter's icy wing ;
Her life a song, with goodness so replete,
 That Heaven gave her just one line to sing.
Her life, a glad and merry day in June,
Closed ere the sun had reached his throne of noon.

Sweet spirit, now in fair elysian fields,
 Where none but feet angelic ever trod !
For Dear Christ said upon the mountain top:
 They who are pure in heart shall see their God.
And she was pure as dew on petal tips,
That warmest sunbeams kiss with am'rous lips.

To live and love and be loved fills joy's vase ;
 The longest, happiest life contains no more—
And 'tis enough ! What else is there in life ?
 To part with loved ones fills with anguish sore
The human heart ; but God gave this behest :
"I'll give to souls with burdens weary rest."

AN INVOCATION.

O, shield us, Mighty Ruler wise,
From every thing, that moils and harms ;
And over every rocky steep ;
And over seething waters deep,
O, lead us by Thy kindly hand,
Or bear us in Thy loving arms.

O, show us now within the cup,
The dregs, wherein the adder coils ;
Before its scaly length is wound,
In slimy folds, around and 'round
Some youthful, unsuspecting mind,
And holds him in its tight'ning toils.

O, Lord, from baneful pleasure's form,
Remove her robe of gaudy sheen ;
And make her in loud tones to cry,
To each and every passer by,

Like Lepers in the days of old,
Unclean, unclean, unclean, unclean !

In showy colors and deft hand,
Paint sin and folly as they are ;
Let Vice's throne be overthrown,
And Virtue build one of her own—
And teach us Thy dear self, O Lord,
And Thou shalt be our guiding star.

O, fill our souls with conscious peace,
That permeates like rich perfume !
Forbid that we, like Isreal's king,
Should Thy kind counsel from us fling,
And then invoke some Endor's witch
To call up ghosts to read our doom.

O, blight affliction everywhere !
And take from greedy misers old,
A part and parcel of their wealth,
To fill disease with blood of health,
And place in Poverty's white hand,
A shining piece or two to hold.

O, loud the gospel trumpet blow !
Send the glad tidings near and far,
From land to land, from sea to sea,
Where e'er our human kindred be,
And let refulgence o'er them stream,
From Orient's Bethlehem star !

O, touch and tender wayward souls,
Who deeper sink in Sin's vile fen !
O, give us what Thou deem'st is good ;
Make all the world a brotherhood,
And we will ever give the praise,
To Thee, our Father, God. Amen !

LIFE.

And what is life, that we should cling to it,
As if it were a jewel of great worth,
Whose value could buy out all joys of earth,
When long experience proves it but a whit
Of happiness mixed with a world of woe ;
Whose love is but the treach'ry of a foe ;
Whose ev'ry pleasure woos delusively,
And leaves us solemn as that bitter sea ;
Whose waters hide the sins of ancient time
In grave of sadness fringed with salty rime.
And doubt we still, eternal rest is ours—
That we shall breathe the breath of heav'nly flow'rs?
Think we, our souls sleep e'er in homes of sod,
And never kiss the garment hem of God ?

ON THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

His fame had gone throughout all Syria's land—
Such mighty virtue did abound in him,
That by a touch he made the blind to see,
The leper cleansed, made whole the withered limb—
Had cast out devils, and restored the mind,
Cured all diseases that afflict mankind.

So, from the East across swift Jordan's stream,
And from the North and from the South and West,
From Galilee and from Jerusalem
Came multitudes with many ills distressed—
Came multitudes to hear a teacher teach—
Came multitudes to hear a preacher preach.

Imagine, now, the fane wherein he stood—
Its walls, its ceiling, domed and reaching high,
O'ershadowing all the the gilded fanes of men,
Formed of the wide and deep expanse of sky ;

Its floor the earth, its pulpit mountains proud,
With sounding-board of fleecy, sun-kissed cloud.

Imagine, farther, lowly fishermen,
Who left their homes and friends at his command,
Quite near him, while upon the further seats
Sat multitudes from all the Syrian land,
And further still, ascending tier on tier,
The countless millions of mankind appear.

For words that fell from his untainted lips
Re-echoed over sad Gethsemane
And Kedron's brook and o'er Jerusalem,
O'er Judea's plains far up to Galilee,
And round and round on Time's slow wheels were
 whirled
Till cent'ries carried them around the world.

Philanthropy, the tenor of his text ;
Philanthropy that reaches heaven's estate
And places in man's hesitating hand
The burnished key to open wide the gate,
That places Urim's stone upon the breast
Of him who seeks eternal peace and rest.

O, wonderful, sublime beatitudes !
Short, simple pray'r and admonitions kind
Uttered by one in whom was found no guile,
Touch all harmonious chords within the mind !
Sparkling and pure like gold from Ophir's land !
Caskets of gems fashioned by master hand !

I fancy when he closed, angelic choirs
Sang in sweet tones some grand doxology,
In which the hosts in tuneful chorus joined,
Until the throne shook with the melody,
And thrilled with rapture, heaven's great bosom
 swelled,
Then God His hands in benediction held.

IN THE DEMOCRACY OF DEATH.

In the democracy of death
All is equality.
The wide republic of the grave,
Bounded by mystery,
Knows no prerogative nor rank—
No master, slave nor throne;
At its grim portals mankind leaves
The tear, the sob, the moan.

Researches of Philosophers
Cease at its dark threshold;
The poet's song is silent there,
Dives gives up his gold.

There Lazarus forsakes his rags,
There Wealth o'er Poverty
Is shown no favors; there the proud
Surrender dignity.
There Shylocks lose their usury

And debtor's debts are paid ;
There Honor lays aside her wreath
And Pleasure's hand is stayed.

There invalids can find a cure
And lab'ers rest from toil ;
There Discord's ruffled breast is calmed
Like troubled sea by oil.

The strong have no supremacy,
The weak need no defense ;
Hate finds no cringing victims there,
Love's smiles, no recompence.

But Death, Hope tells us, is not all,—
A morn will surely dawn
Upon the night mysterious ; —
Death's not oblivion.

The epitaph is not the end, —
A Savior hears our pray'r ;
Beyond the "bank and shoal of time"
We'll breathe elysian air.

NOTE.—The above was suggested by Ingalls' eulogy on the death of Representative Burnes of Mo.

RUTH AND NAOMI.

There's a vine needle-leafed, that grows trailing and
strong
On the barren pine lands of our cool northern wold,
And whether, when Summer is full of her song
Or whether, when Winter is shivering with cold,
That plant thrives and grows and forever is green,—
'Tis the most constant plant in the whole world, I
ween.

It reminds me so much, does this ever-green vine,
Of a beautiful tale I have read in a book ;
And you, too, have read the same tale I opine,
In which is detailed what a woman may brook
For humanity's sake when the warm glow of love
Streams into her radiant soul from above.

When Israel's judges with wavering hand
Ruled over the land ; when the Bethlehem star,
Since burst upon night so brilliant and grand,

A husband and wife and two sons journeyed far
To the country beyond the sea's salty rim,
Where Plenty's great horn was full to the brim ;
For in their own land, the hungry eyes shown
Of the skinny wolf famine that gnawed a nude bone.

Now Elimelech was the name of the man,
Naomi the name of the true trusting wife ;
And they lived where Plenty abode but a span,
Till husband and father succumbed in the strife.

Then Chilion and Mahlon, the widow's two sons,
Selected two Moabite women for wives—
Two maidens, and Orpha and Ruth were the ones,
Who mingled their joys and their sorrows and lives,
With the joys and the sorrows and lives of the men ;
But Death's shadowy wings brought sorrow again ;
He looked on the sons, and their vapory lives fled,
And they laid them away with Elimelech, dead.

Then Naomi arose, and her daughters-in-law,
That she might return to her people's domain ;
For naught but regrets, in all Moab she saw,

And nothing but pangs, of remorse's keen pain ;
And it, in the country, of Moab was said,
Her fatherland kindred had plenty of bread.

Wherefore they went forth, from the grief-burdened
place—

That tottering old mother, and Orpha and Ruth,
With sad farewell tears, streaming over each face ;
Went forth feeble age, and fairy-formed youth--
Of husbands, now, Orpha and Ruth were bereft ;
With Naomi, no fruit of maternity left.

“ Turn again, turn again, go your way, go your way,”
The tremulous voice of the old mother said ;
“ Think ye now, I shall bear, at the close of the day,
A Chilion and Mahlon, that ye may yet wed?
And would ye still tarry, and wait till they're grown?
Leave me ! oh, leave me ! my daughters alone,
To return to the land where my youthful feet trod—
The home of my husband, my kinsmen and God !”

Then they lifted their voices and mournfully wept,
And Orpha implanted her kisses, a shower,

Upon those brown cheeks, while tenderly crept
Around that aged form, like a vine 'round a bower,
The warm arm of Ruth, and lovingly pressed
Naomi's bent form to her own throbbing breast.

“Behold now!” Naomi still chidingly spoke,
“Unto kin and her gods, has your sister-in-law gone?
Return with her. Why will ye bear the hard yoke,
And tread the same paths that I tread upon?”
But Ruth had no care for the ones left behind,
And she spoke to Naomi, words wondrously kind.

“Entreat me not, entreat me not!
I cannot leave thee go alone;
With all thy weary weight of years,
How could I for such sin atone?
So where thou goest I will go;
For, mother, thou hast been to me,
And where thou lodgest I will lodge;
Thy kinsman shall my kinsman be,
And where thou diest I will die;
Be burried 'neath the self-same sod,
And I will offer up with thee
My pray'rs to Naomi's God.”

So, onward they journeyed, and tired arrived
At the home of Naomi, in Bethlehem.
And soon among women, the news flew around,
And all of the city was moved about them ;
And they said when they saw her so faded and old :
“Can this be Naomi, whom now we behold ?”
And those dim eyes looked up and in pitiful tone—
Those withered lips faltered between sigh and moan :

“O call me not Naomi, pray—
That name is cruel mockery ;
Call me Mara, call me Mara !
With me the Lord’s dealt bitterly.”

THE LEPER'S PRAYER.

[And behold, there came a leper and worshiped him, saying :
" Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean."—*Matthew xiii*, 2.]

O, Lord, we come, and worship Thee, and say :

Lord if thou wilt, Thou sure canst make us clean ;

O, let us not secluded live away,

Although we know we're lepers poor and mean !

O, let us not in vales of mis'ry live ;

Forgive us our transgressions, O, forgive !

We stand to-day, with many a festering sore,

And cry aloud to Thee with wailing cry,

And ask Thee, gracious one, just one time more

To cast upon us Thy forgiving eye ;

Have mercy on us, for we're lepers mean ;

O, touch us with Thy hand and make us clean.

O, worthy master, hear, O, hear our prayer !

Our feet are deep in shifting sands and clay ;

Let not our pleas be lost in empty air,

But Christward may they wing their falt'ring way ;

Like sailless ships that adverse winds careen,

We wander wayless, crying loud, "unclean."

THE THREE GRACES.

Faith oft is sightless—she may blindly lead
 Into strange paths, through flow'r-spangled leas,
Whose blooms have honey baneful as the bead,
 That exudes e'er, from Upas poison trees—
Be loath to follow every beck and nod,
Unless she wear the signet ring of God.

Hope, sweet and truthful, oft expects too much ;
 She peoples everything with her own thought,
And oft she grasps, when she should only touch,
 The garments that great merit's hands have
 wrought —
Embrace her not too fondly, unless nigh,
A star resplendant shines in glory's sky.

But charity, embodiment of love,
 Embrace and keep her ever near your heart ;
For her white wings reach all the realms above,
 And scatter joy in earth's remotest part.
She knows no hate, save that for worldly pelf,
Her virtues make the very heaven itself.

MUCH BETTER.

Much better and wiser this great old world,
Much better by far than it use to be ;
Much better for you, much better for me,
For humanity's banner is now unfurled.

Now eyes are beaming, that once were dim ;
Now whether on land or whether on sea,
Man knows, wherever his home may be,
A prayer and a blessing follow him.

Now fewer and fewer the passive hands ;
More open purses, more prayerful tongues ;
Now are built broad steps for tiny rungs,
In the towering ladder to heavenly lands.

She embraces, now, like a mother should,
With a fonder heart, with a broader smile ;
And she's striving and striving all the while,
To broaden the bands of our brotherhood.

More deserving subjects charity finds,
And many hearts with her gladness fill ;
Less smut comes now to the noiseless mill—
The tireless mill that incessantly grinds.

The world is reaching, is reaching to clasp,
The **F**ather's great hands in her own broad hands ;
The **F**ather, with smile, expectantly stands,
Ready to grasp with **H**is holiest grasp.

The world grows grander and grander each day ;
Now the thongs are severed and hearts set free,—
Good workmen are working now constantly,
To clear all cumbering debris away.

THE DEAREST NAME.

There is one name that shines and beams alone.
I stand within the closing door and call
The years that form the century's massy hall ;
Each points, with bony finger to a stone --
A monument--whereon engraved I find
Names that have sacred worth and wealth combined.
But not one name among them all, in sooth,
Emits such luster as e'en gleaner Ruth.

So now, away, o'er wrecks of ages tomb
I wander on, from dusty door to door,
And louder call, more loudly than before ;
While spectral tongues within the misty gloom
In whispers low say : "Whom you seek is near,
But further on,—a few doors from here."
I hasten, then—the nineteenth bolt unbar,
And lo, I catch the glimmer of a star ;

A daz'ling star, whose light falls everywhere -
Falls in soft waves upon a cursed tree,

Whereon a God expires in agony—
And falls upon a woman kneeling there,
In pray'rful attitude, beneath his feet :
A woman with a mother's form, and sweet
Sad face, and eyes that say the sadest things,
Ere His great soul flies homeward on swift wings.

“Why farther,” sobbing angels say, “to find
A dearer name? for time ne'er hopes to yield
A dearer one in his most fragrant field.”
Pure Mary! All great virtues in her soul combined!
No queenlier queen e'er ruled than she who kneels
And weeps her spirit out in grief, she feels,
To see expire a Son, whose lips oft pressed
The snowy fountains of her mother breast.

O, kind regards will ever twine and cling
Around the memory of her who bore
The Savior Christ,—the Crucified, who wore
The cruel crown! And fondest raptures spring
From the mere utterance of that holy word
“Mary;” and soft, gladsome trills be heard
All through the heart, like Mercy's tender calls—
“Mary,” mottoed on the Eternal walls!

HOW TO GAIN HEAVEN.

Saint Peter never questions souls,
Concerning their belief in creeds ;
But up the heavenly drawbridge rolls,
And to the softest seat he leads
The soul, if it belong to man.

He does not know "our church" up there,
Of classes there is only one;—
Admittance is not gained by prayer,—
The only way that heaven is won,
Is doing just the best you can.

By doing just the best you can
By doing what you think is right,
By striving, aye, to act the man ;
Have for your motto "honor bright,"
And you will lead the heavenly van.

WINTER.

Enraptured twangs Æolus his loud harp,
Strung with the Northland's strings of piercing
 frosts,
And sends his music fierce and harsh and sharp
In broken wails, like wails of wander'rs lost ;
While childless autumn, for her withered leaves,
In sigh and moan and sore affliction grieves.

Now skies are sad and wear a veil of clouds,
Dark clouds that breathe a frozen, star-shaped
 breath,
That hides for pity grassless dales with shrouds
As white and cold and cheerless as is death ;
And earth, so weary, faint, and icy-bound,
Whirls in sheer anguish gloomily around.

THOSE KEEN REGRETS.

As weird and sad as winds that yell and roar
 'Round sunken graves, when wild and solemn
 night—
Black, inky—sweeps across earth's trembling floor
 And trails her draggled garments in her flight ;
And, deep and mystic as the vap'ry spark
 Of life, in archives memory ne'er forgets,
Low hidden in recesses strong and dark—
 Those things we strive to bury—those regrets.

O bitterness, grow spectral-like and dim!
 O seek and wear obliv'on's shroud of shade!
Flaunt not before us life's past record grim ;
 Send us not sorrow, Grief's tear-burdened maid ;
Fill not our days with cruel, pregnant care,
 Whose travail sob within our spirit frets ;
Moil not our hope, white-blossomed pure and fair—
 O thou revengeful, pangful, keen regrets!

CIRCE, THE WITCH.

Circe, the Witch, changed me into a king,
With the great old Earth for my realm ;
On my finger there shone a signet ring,
On my head was a diadem.

I could see the wants of remotest land,—
Of every isle of the sea,—
And whenever I waved my magic wand,
Men bowed submissively.

Then I sent my couriers, far and wide,
On winged and tireless steeds,
To every land where men abide,
To learn their greatest needs.

Sent couriers here, sent couriers there--
Sent couriers around the world—
Into the hut and the palace fair,
On flying chargers whirled.

I told them to say to everyone,
In the name of their lord and king :
Whatever you ask for 'neath the sun
To better the world, we'll bring ;

To better the world and dry the tears,
That flow like a river vast ;
To better the world and still the fears
Which their clear skies o'er cast ;

To better this dark, benighted land,
To make it grand and good ;
And then I waved my magic wand
As only a great king could, —

And I brought my couriers back again
To hear what they would say—
To hear the thoughts of many men,
At home and far away.

And this is what one brought to me,
From prisons, sunless and cold :
O mighty king, pray set us free
From miseries untold ;

And turn into the gutter deep
The fiend that taught us wrongs ;
And let him through its foulness creep,
Into filth where he belongs.

So I turned the whisky out of the cask,
Regardless of its worth,
And I pulled the cork from the jug and flask
And let it sink into earth ;—

Let it sink down where love is dearth,
Where mortal can not see
The pains of travail at the birth
Of sin and misery.

And then my other couriers came,
And said : O, mighty king !
All human kind has asked the same,
And now their prayers we bring.

Then I said, “O, happy, happy day !
I’ve ruled my kingdom well—
The deamon is on the downward way,
To his home in the depths of hell !”

And then the earth grew rife with song—
Men waved and clapped their hands,
And Heaven came down in a gladsome throng,
In great and joyful bands,

And sang glad songs of joy and mirth,
And the world joined with them then ;
And then Heaven embraced the redeemed earth,
And the angels said, Amen !

LOVE.

And they took the sweetest bird-songs they could
find,
The most fragrant perfume of the flowers,
The scenes from glad days—we've all left behind—
And the wooing of warm Summer showers,
And a gleam of the stars and the moon and the sun,
And the lullaby songs of our mothers dear,
And the dew and the dawn of the day just begun,
And the kiss, the embrace and the farewell tear,
And the raptures that spring from the heavens
above,
Then mixed them together—then called the whole
love.

TO HELEN.

In my life's web there is one golden thread,
One golden thread of happy, peaceful thought,
That far outshines all others, for 'twas wrought,
In youthful days across the years long dead.

O, joyful days,—a cherished monument,
Upon inscribed, deep in its burnished face :
“In memory of the grandest scenes that grace,
The records of a human life well spent.”

Yet, Helen, though my years may multiply
A treble score, those scenes are aye to me
As dear as scenes to thoughtful man could be,
And grow still dearer as the times go by.

It may be fancy, but I do believe,
That heaven is paved with days like our young
days,
And oftimes on the star-lit dome I gaze,

And sweet assurance fills me while I grieve.

I trust you're happy, and may all your life

Be sweet as kisses I implanted on

Your dimpled cheeks in those dear days agone,
Ere time had 'listed me in lines of strife.

WHEN THE FOOL-KILLER COMES.

When the fool-killer comes he'll have plenty to do ;
I know I can show him a dozen or more,
And you can, no doubt, show him more than a
score ;
And each one, I'm sure, can show him a few.
In fact, there's but two that he'll leave high and
dry,
And these two you know, for they're you and I.

When the fool-killer comes, I'll give a sly glance,
As much as to say, you'll find plenty, I know ;
Because men their foolishness will not forego ;
While you will be casting your glances, askance—
But this I can tell you, but tell you, askew,
He'll leave me and you, he'll leave me and you.

When the fool-killer comes he'll have to work late ;
For now, since I've thought of it, few men are
found,

But in whom eccentricities numerous abound.
The land I'm sure he'll depopulate,
Except just two persons, whom I have in view,
And you have them, too, for they're I and
you.

When the fool-killer comes, perchance, we had best
Hide for a while, he might make mistakes,
And include us among the ones that he takes ;
For, perhaps, he won't look, he works with such
zest ;
So let us away till he gets his work through ;
But he would not, knowingly, take me or you.

A MODEL LIFE.

A model life is like a field of grain
That grows apace, from germs to tender stems—
Soft downy stems, that bud and burst amain,
Into bowed heads filled full of precious gems.

Now, thunder clouds scud over it and throw
Upon it shadows, and a vague unrest ;
Anon, the billowed sunbeams ebb and flow
Across the golden of its ripening breast.

The reaper comes with knives on tireless wheels,
And blends his labor with the rustling leaves,
And flying rakes, and dizzy whirling reels,
And cuts and binds the harvest into sheaves.

The crop is gleaned and threshed with frugal care ;
The straw is left to moulder and decay
And mix and mingle with the clay and sand,
But grain of honest worth is kept alway.

ON ECHOES OF SONG.

When busy lips of day are dumb
And night's bright eyes are all agleam,
A murmur of a song steals down
Like Heavenly dew ; and then I seem
To hear the singer as she sings,
And hear a rustle, overhead,
And feel the breath of hov'ring wings,
And catch and hold her loving words :
"May holy angels guard thy bed."

Those words are all the singer sings ;
But ere the echo speeds away
Like lily petals on the stream,
Or dawn before the kiss of day,
I follow, on fleet feet of dream—
Far up the echo's path I tread ;
While low and sad, ring in my ears,
Those cadences that throb and thrill :
Of "Holy angels guard thy bed."

And on and on with fleeter feet
I follow the retreating charm,
Until I see the singer sweet
And strive to clasp her, but an arm
Swings quickly to a golden door,
That hides her, but that sunny head
And saintly form were mother's once—
And mother's voice, that used to sing
“May holy angels guard thy bed.”

“HOME, SWEET HOME.”

“Mid pleasures and palaces, though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there’s no place like home.”

A wand’rer chanted wearily,

In distant lands, as on he strode ;

Then ’rose before him, cheerily,

A picture of a quaint abode ;

Where smoke waved o’er a chimney old,

Like fringed and flutt’ring banners blue ;

Where stars slept in the marigold

At night on jeweled beds of dew ;

But ringing through his heart and brain,

Came burdens of a sad refrain,—

“Home, home, sweet, sweet home,

There’s no place like home ; there’s no place like
home !”

“I gaze on the moon, as I trace the drear wild,

And feel that my parent now thinks of her child ;”

He sang. Then on the moon beams white,

Came softly, gently gliding down,
 A spirit, crowned with heavenly light,—
 With beautiful bespangled gown,—
 Who threw around him as he sang
 A halo radiant as pure gold,
 But from its glorious circle rang
 Refrain, of sadness manifold,
 That came intrusive now again,
 As if to burst his soul amain,—
 “Home, home, sweet, sweet home,
 There’s no place like home; there’s no place like
 home.”

“An exile from home, splendor dazzles in vain;
 O, give me my lowly thatched cottage again.”
 O, roll the pond’rous stone away
 That guards the dead past’s sepulcher,
 And let me live one little day,
 Within the realms of days that were;
 I would not any further seek,
 To find the wondrous city fair;
 For I could see on mother’s cheek,
 And in her black and silver hair,

All that I ever hoped to see ;—
And then he sang so sorrily,
"Home, home, sweet, sweet home,
There's no place like home ; there's no place like
home."

SENTENCED FOR LIFE.

Back, in his youthful bloom;
Back, to a living tomb,
Back, to the prison's gloom,
Fettered, they send him.
Back, where no hope can come,
Back, where love's lips are dumb,
Back, ne'er to usher from
'Till death shall end him.

Oh, what grim fiends of pain
Fret in his throbbing brain,
While on his soul's a stain
That baffles washing.
Infamy on his name,
Branded with Cainish shame,
All curse him and defame,
With fierce anger flashing.

Listen! A human life,

Took he in drunken strife ;
Then was a widowed wife,
Left sad and weeping.
While to her aching breast
A tender infant pressed,
And another sleeping.

But, " Ah," I hear you say,
" Who turned him from the way ?
Who dark'n'd youth's glad day
Bright with love's beaming ?"
Poison'r of human heart
Should bear an equal part—
Should feel this poignant dart
With horror gleaming.

I'M ROAMING NOW THE FAR AWAY.

I'm roaming now, the far away,—

I'm hid in sweets, of years ago,—

I'm back into the dew and dawn

And bud and bloom of childhood's day.

I'm back beneath the threshold tree,

Where hands of tender wooing May,

Shake from the boughs in mirth and play,

A show'r of flow'rs over me.

A show'r of flow'rs with hearts of pink,

With feath'ry petals white as death,

That move with ev'ry breeze's breath,

Like listless drunkards full of drink.

Or move about like things of life,

As sad as human souls bereft

Of virtue's jewel and then left,

Where inhumanity is rife.

Back over withered leaves and lorn,—
Back where brown feet of gladness chase
Joy's butterflies in merry race,
And hope bright-eyed, white-robed is born.

Back at the door of rapture's goal,—
Back, where contentment flaunts and flings
Her snowy banner and loud sings,
And trums the lute strings of the soul.

O, gleam of Glory on life's way,
I've left your blessed dawn and sun!
The darksome part is now begun,
Through cheerless tunnel, cold and gray,—

A tunnel through uncertainty,
Where joy breathes out her last farewell;
Where sprites of all the past do dwell,
And tauntingly they reach for me.

Ghosts of the days mis-spent and gone;
Ghosts of the short glad use to be;
Ghosts of each woods and field and tree,
And sun-kissed hill I've sported on.

My weary feet I cannot rest ;—
I can but turn and look behind
And catch a glimpse of sweets combined,
That make me more and more depressed.

And so I stumble into night,
And wonder where the end will be ;
If in still deeper misery,
Or in high heaven's eternal light ?

THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

When e'er I hear the Christmas bells,
When e'er I see the Christmas tree,
Instinctively my bosom swells
With hidden pain that in it dwells ;
With pain that every Christmas wells
From out its darkest, deepest dells
And floods the halls of memory.

Although 'tis many years ago,
The scene is still quite plain to me
When I and older brother, Don,
Slipped from our home, and 'cross the lawn,
And came out near the grist-mill pond ;
Then took the street, and on and on,
We went to see the Christmas tree.

The snow was falling thick and fast—
Was falling softly, silently,
While now and then a chilling blast

Would hurry crystal clouds apast ;
But nothing daunted, and at last
We, in blank wonderment, aghast,
Stood gazing at the Christmas tree.

“Oh, what a purty sight to see,
So full of purty things,” said Don.
Then looking down, he ser’ously
Said in a husky voice to me :
“I wonder if such things can be
That they will think of ragged we,
’Fore all them purty things is gone.”

“Maybe that them will be our clothes --
Them, over there, that kind o’ shine ;
Maybe them boots with copper toes,
Fur now my feet is nearly froze—
Or caps with holes fur eyes and nose
To stick out through when cold wind blows ;
I wonder which is yours and mine.”

But youths with voices light and gay,
And ladies dressed in rich attire,

Soon bore the presents all away ;
“Nothing fur us,” I heard Don say,
“They’ve took them all,” then in dismay
We let our feelings have full sway,
With little hearts with grief afire.

And other hearts as sad as we,
Poor, ragged, shivering little boys,
And little girls that sorrily
Turned from the naked Christmas tree
With tearful eyes and wonderingly
Asked of themselves, “How can it be
That we cannot share Christmas joys ?”

When I grew up to riper years
I learned the secret of it all --
I learned the cause of sighs and tears --
And as each Christmas evening nears,
My heart grows sad, and nothing cheers ;
For then again to me appears,
That picture ’graved on Memory’s wall.

I learned that serfs of Poverty
In Christmas trees could share no part --

That every gift on every tree
Fed cruel flames of misery ;
And every rippling note of glee
Was echoed by a piteous plea
From some poor, weary, wretched heart.

COASTING.

Be happy, youths, ere time's frost nips

Thy joys—they're blossoms, transient, fleet;—
Pendant with love their petal tips;

Like flowers ere fair Aurora slips
In spring, from off her throne and sips
The sparkling dew with golden lips
And leaves them with'ring at her feet.

From out my window I can see

The youthful, happy coasters go
Adown the hill in merry glee,

Their laughter rippling back to me
In tones akin to melody;

Their hearts as light as hearts can be,
And white as is the drifted snow.

Away, away, like rays of light,

In gladdest merriment they go;
Now up, now down, till Luna bright

Has kissed the South sun out of sight ;
And painted sable wings of night
 In softest tints of silvery white,
And gemmed with glittering gleams the snow ;

And sometimes in the night until
 The hour bids them seek repose.
Then off they go with hearts athrill
 To dream of fun upon the hill ;
When all grows solemn, deep and still,
 With other thoughts my mind doth fill,
That do alternate scenes disclose.

I think of coasting on the snow
 Upon a hillside far away
In childhood many years ago.—
 Our hearts were just as light I know
As those upon the hill below ;
 Our laughter did as wildly flow ;
Our voices were as glad and gay.

But where can those youths now be found?
 Some, 'neath the snow and matted nets

Of withered flowering vines, that crowned,
 In summer's day, their quiet mound ;
Where autumn's scarlet runners wound,
 Their shivering rootlets 'round and 'round
Like tender poems of regrets.

Some strive and strive for worldly fame ;
 Some, whom hope gives her long reprieves
Think now, to write a grander name.
 Some sank to deepest depths of shame.
One died for crime fiends blush to claim ;
 And some, with restless minds aflame,
Drift here and there like winter's leaves.

Be happy then in youthful years ;
 Don't wait for joy in coming days.
To-morrow's peace may end in fears,—
 To-morrow's pleasures end in tears ;
Love's looks may change to hate's wild leers,
 And laughter into mocking jeers ;
Smooth paths be changed to thorny ways.

THE NEW WIFE.

I've many and many misgivings, I know.

I think: "Will he love me forever and aye,
And will all my life be continuous May?
Will my sky remain blue and no storms ever blow?"

My dear girlhood days are but what used to be—
I have mounted the ladder and left them below,
And can have but the picture of them now I know,
And the scent of their roses that climbs up to me.

I believe that he loves me, but will his love last,
If the pathway is covered with bramble and stone?
Will he hold to my arm or leave me alone
To struggle unaided until life is past?

He calls me an angel, but I shall grow old;
While angels forever their youth do retain
And never experience life in its wane,
Nor know of its trials and cares manifold.

Will he clasp me, as tenderly, in fond embrace,
All, all the way down life's great thoroughfare?
Will he love silver hair, as he does auburn hair?
Will he kiss, just as often, my deep-wrinkled face?

Will he ask me to bake like his old mother bakes!
Will he ask me to do all my work as she would,
And to make him his coffee and tea just as good,
And his soup and his biscuit, his pies and his cakes?

And must I him follow with needle and thread,
And fasten on buttons that he may chance lose,
And empty and wash the spittoon if he chews,
And not be his wife, but his servant instead?

Must I open his papers and read him the news?
Will he call me a sorrel-top soon as is o'er
Our short honeymoon, as men have done before?
And will he dare ask me to blacken his shoes?

Well no, I think not; for this thick auburn hair
Does indicate, so I've often been told,
That its feminine owner will forever hold
Dominion over the man anywhere.

O, "HANG TO THE WILLOWS."

O, hang to the willows, the floods are below you ;
They whirl and they seethe and they tumble and
 roar,
And they struggle like fiends in their efforts to throw
 you
From off the frail branch that has roots in the
 shore.

O, hang to the willows while faster and faster
The waters are rising and more loudly roar ;
To loosen your hold would be direst disaster,
Perchance the storm's fury is now nearly o'er.

O, hang to the willows, grasp firmly and tightly,
Don't drop and drift down with the jetsam away !
Those dark, turbid waves will like crystals beam
 brightly—
The roar will soon change to a sweet roundelay.

O, hang to the willows, by Heaven's hands planted,
Wherever care's flood dares to show its white crest.
In substance, God said, and it won't be recanted,
O, hang to the willows, and I'll give you rest.

FEMININE SUPERIORITY.

Man speaks of woman's trifling worth,
In ribald jest and leering scorn,
As if she did but cumber earth,
And for no other purpose born;
While, if he'd stop to think of it,
He'd surely change his mind a bit.

'Twas a woman's money fitted ships
That brought Columbus over here,
And sent the Mayflower on her trips;
She planned the grand old flag so dear,
And then, our nation's bird, I ken,
Is nothing but an eagle hen.

And know, that famous hero bird,—
“Old Abe,” the eagle, brave and proud,
That dins of fiercest frays had heard,
Whose wings had fanned the battle cloud,

Whose eye flashed fire, when men were pale,
Was surely, surely, not a male.

For, when the south submissive grew,
And laid aside the sword and gun,
"Old Abe" sought, with Master true,
The grateful rest his valor won,
And in Wisconsin's northern wold
Found welcome home from storm and cold.

And there he lived, and there he died,—
"Old Abe," the eagle warrior bold,
Was worshipped o'er the country wide ;
But that bird's leisure time, we're told,
E'en when upon his dying legs,
Was spent—oh dear!--in laying eggs."

NOTE.—It is said to be a fact that "Old Abe," the famous war eagle that accompanied a Wisconsin regiment through the war and returned with it, after the war was over, to his former home in Wisconsin, passed his leisure time in laying eggs.

ON THE G. A. R.

Let mirth and joy pervade the air to-night ;
Let ev'ry heart beat gaily and be glad ;
Let's fill, again, the bumpers with delight,
And banish all those thoughts that make us sad—
Those thoughts of scenes, 'neath skies of cloud and
 blue,
And silent stars, where falls the Southern dew.

Let spirits of those grand, though awful days,
Fold their dark wings and their grim shapes forego,
And not upon us with their glazed eyes gaze,
And 'round about us ghastly shadows throw,
Of faces, white and still, of mangled men,
Of hospital and fulsome prison pen.

O, Happiness, now, sweeten Sorrow's cup !
Let thy child, Laughter, stop the fount of tears
That in such mournful-murmurs bubble up
And mingle bitter with the sweet of years,

Since brother met his brother in fierce strife,
Since Liberty was bought with human life.

The old flag, now bright spangled with the stars,
Kisses the breeze of ev'ry land and sea ;
While on its streaming red and snowy bars,
No stain is found—it floats forever free.
North grasps the South with hand of friendship now,
And plights for charity the filial vow.

Unlike the thousands who went forth to fight,
'Way back in falt'ring ages, dim and old,
The countless hosts ; the Godless Midianite,—
You all were warriors tried and true and bold ;
God's spirit journeyed with you through the land ;
His loving spirit guided heart and hand.

The Past is but a tear jug, vast, sublime.
While life is ours, let actions that commend
Fill all the records as in buried time,
And let us strive and struggle, now, to blend
The fragrance of the Southern lilly field

With odors that our Northern roses yield.

Now members of Grand Army Posts, the name
Commemorate of father, brother, son,
Recount the deeds that won you worthy fame,
Make fresh again the laurels you have won ;
But pity's tender words should, whispering, tell
How blinded Southern warriors fought and fell.

May all the Posts on life's great camping ground—
Of every name and mystic speech and sign,
When death shall touch them in his ceaseless round,
March proudly in the foremost victor's line,
With armor fair, and feet by Heaven shod
And join the army, peerless, grand, of God.

SPRING HAS NO JOYS FOR ME.

With cunning fingers, O sweet Spring,
Scatter thy store of treasured gems, —
Thy birds with bright and starry wing,
Thy flowers upon their pendant stems,
On which the dew-drops love to cling
And shine like kingly diadems.

Loose now the streams whose radiant sheen
Impatient grows to hold a star
Upon its bosom. And I ween
It's weary 'neath its icy bar,
For oftimes when the air is keen
I hear its murmurings afar.

Send gentle sunbeams and warm showers
To drive away old Winters' gloom ;
And kiss brown fields and naked bowers
Into fair verdancy and bloom ;

And make the dull and dreary hours
Rife with song and sweet perfume.

But know with all the charms you bring
Your coming now's so sad to me,—
I once was happy in the Spring,
As happy as a soul could be,
And could make echoing woodlands ring
With something like a melody.

But o'er the spirit of my dream
A change has come, as poets say,
And all the glisten and the gleam
That some may see in Spring's glad day
Are blanks ; and now to me does seem
December's fairer far than May.

You think it strange that I should say,
“It makes me sad when Spring draws near ;”
But I can soon explain away
The mystery,—house-cleaning's here.—

Show me a Benedict, I pray,
Who could be filled with best of cheer.

To fix the stove-pipe in the room,
Each joint just like it was before,
After I've cleaned with brush and broom
The dust with which it's covered o'er,
Is something that fills me with gloom
And makes me think life is a bore.

Besides, the carpets are to turn,
And so whitewashing must be done,
The yard trash I must rake and burn,
And I must countless errands run ;
And these are duties I must learn
Now that this double life's begun.

O, youth, light-hearted, merry-eyed,
Procrastinate, procrastinate,
If you would see Spring glorified,
In every lineament. O wait

Until your purse grows deep and wide,
Before you leave the single state.

Then when the season's drawing near
That ushers in house-cleaning time,
Leave ample stores of "worldly gear"
To hire it done, then seek some other clime
Far, far removed, 'mongst scenes that cheer ;
And there, perchance, Spring is sublime.

“IN AIRLY DAY.”

“It ain’t much like it use to be ’round here,”
Said Grandpa Jones, the other day to me,
“W’y, I knowed this here country, fur and near,
W’en ye ked sca’cely see wher airy tree
Hed been cut down, and underbrushes growed,
Ez thick ez tall red clover ’fore it’s mowed.

“Don’t talk ’bout triles and troubles that ye bar ;
Ye don’t know w’at ye’re talkin’ ’bout—that’s all—
W’y I’ve seed triles and troubles thick ez har
’Pon my mar’s back—I know I hev, by goll !
In airy day, all ’round these swamps and lakes,
Confound my skin, ef dogs didn’t hev the shakes.”

“ And purty nigh hull naberhoods abed —
Hed fevers and sich like, in every hut ;
And not much ’tenden’ ’em, fur well uns hed
To hustle ’round, and git the timber cut,

And pull and grub the pesky underbrush,
And plant the'r corn fur hominy and mush.”

“ Consarn it all, I've seed the mud so deep,
 'Long in the spring -and rainin' ev'ry day---
That oxes teams jist hed to crawl and creep ;
 Tha kedn't go in iny other way --
'Ith nothin' viz'ble but thar horns and ears.
(That was afore we hed he'rd tell of keers.)

“ We didn't hev hoss teams to work 'ith then.
 The hosses that we hed, we used ter ride
A visitin' ; fur in the '40's, w'en
 I come here, the hosses, fur and wide,
Wus mighty few, and also mighty rough ;
But ox teams then war plenty good 'nough.”

“ And bells war wored by oldest cow and hoss,
 In grazin' time, tied on thar necks 'ith whang ;
Fur farmers kedn't 'ford to bar the loss
 Of critters, and the clatter and the bang

Of 'em loud bells, tole us jist whar tha'd stay,
And gin thar hidin' place cleau, slick away."

We lived in smoky, round log cabins then,
We hed no barns, jist kind 'o roofs, on stakes,
Fur hosses, and we al'ays hed a pen
Of rails and sich, fur kind 'o weather brakes,
Fur cows and calves, and gin 'em fur thar bed,
Straw—yaller har we'd pulled from Summer's head."

"Stock like we use ter hev, ye never seed ;
Hogs jist growed up, and wild as all git out,
Lived on the masts and iny kind 'o feed ;
And, O, sich tushes and sich p'inted snout,
The elmpeeler head and bristle beard ;
And looked ez mean ez dun on postal keerd."

"Tha wasn't jist a great big gob of fat,
Like all the hogs, that now-a-days is seen ;
We kedn't git mor'n 'nough of that
To greese our shoes, fur tha was mostly lean ;

And sea'cely 'nough w'en fried rale hard to flop
Our buckwheats in, so tha'd show the sop.”

“Tha was no loafin' 'round in airly day,
And shirkin' work, like lots of folkses now.
Work—al'ays work, and never time to play—
'Ith Script'ral sweat streamin' off'n ev'ry brow ;
Fur man did then, by hard licks, airn his bread,
And ev'rything he stuffed into his head.”

“We didn't spa'k the gals, in airly day,
All night long and burn up cords of wood,
Like young uns now —but this, I hev to say,
We didn't da'st to do it, if we could.
'Twas comfort then to squeeze the nat'ral waist,
And kiss the cheeks that hed sich healthy taste.”

“But, oh, sich meetin's--I kin hear 'em sing,
Yit, jist ez plain ez if it war to-day ;
And hear 'em shout w'en old Mariar Swing
Got 'ligion in that good, old-fashioned way ;

And she a shoutin' 'till she's out'n breath—
'Nough to skeer a pussen 'most to death."

"And spellin' schools, and singin' off'n maps,
And shuckin' bees, and lots of rollin's, too,
And all the boys and gals a playin' taps,
And ring and sich, at night w'en work wus through ;
Fur ez I sed afore, we worked all day,
And night war all the time we hed fur play."

"Dog-on the slang that folkses now-days use ;
Be switched if I kin hardly understand
W'at thar a talkin' 'bout, and almos' lose
My senses, tryin' to ketch on ; O, land !
If we'd a talked like all the youngsters do
Now, we'd been skutched till we war black and blue."

"I don't keer if we hev, since '49,
Railroads and steamboats and the 'lectric light,—
And kerriges and barns and houses fine,
And schools and churches, and 'em folks ez fights
Fur money, and that game tha call base ball—
We ked git 'long without 'em, one and all."

“But I shan’t cry fur good old times that’s gone ;
The balance of my years I ’spose I kin
Live ’ith these changes comin’ on and on,
And ’ith ’em all I’ll try and tumble in ;
But ’fore I die, I’d kind ’o like to gaze
Back over times and scenes of airly days.”

MY FRIEND.

I know a man, my friend he is,
Who, half of life, I guess,—
Has spent ; perhaps a few years more,
Perhaps a few years less ;—
He is a bachelor, you see,
And won't his age confess.—
O, I suppose he would, of course,
If we'd upon him press.

It matters not, how old he is,
To either you or me ;—
But this, I want to say to you :
You may search land and sea,
And you can't find a manlier man,
Nor nobler man than he.

I know he's not as beautiful,
In looks, as folks I've seen ;
He's most too small and delicate,

His body's most too lean.
But God, you know, makes granites large
And diamonds very small,
And He gives honey to the flax,
The sunflower, none at all ;
And sometimes, too, fair beauty's charms
Are all in form and face ;
Her heart may hold the evils, dark,
Of sweet Pandora's vase.

He's my friend, I've said before,
And I shall tell you why :
A friend is he, who'll take your hand,
When others pass you by,
And lift you from the gutter, foul,
And place you high and dry ;—
And show you some place in the cloud,
A rift and clear, blue sky,—
Place you upon a smooth, straight path
Where tempter's feet ne'er trod,—
Who takes your hand and places it
In the great hand of God.

He has no coffers full of gold ;
But still my cherished friend
Has ample stores of worldly wealth,
To last him till life's end ;
He has a big, responsive heart,
And his kind prayers ascend
Above his head; I know they do,
And fleetly, heavenward wend.

I said he is a bachelor;—
He is from worldly view,
But in a broader, deeper sense,
He's closely wedded to
That lovely maiden, Charity,
Who pities me and you,
And whose robes cover multitudes
Of sinful deeds we do.

He has a fund of Wisdom's lore,
Stored in his precious mind;
His record is as fair and clean
As any you can find;
And manly principles—a host—

Are in him, all combined,
And in the garden of his heart
Are fragrant flowers, entwined.

Of course, he has some failings, small,
That critic minds may chide;
But who has not? No one, I ween,
In all the great world, wide;—
And e'en "his failings," I believe,
"Lean t'ward fair virtue's side."
He may, too, have some enemies;—
So had the Crucified.

He never has attended, yet,
Hypocrisy's great school,
But this has been, through all his day,
His closely followed rule:
To call things by their proper names,—
An ass is not a mule,—
A man, he designates a man,
A fool, he calls a fool.

And he's a fearless advocate,

Of all that's just and meet ;
No groveling, coward thoughts can find
Within him a retreat.
Dishonesty, in all its forms,
He spurns beneath his feet ;
And plucks whatever tares he finds,
In life's great field of wheat.

Who does not wish to be the friend,
Of such a manly man ?
And he's alive, and lives somewhere,
'Tween Beersheba and Dan.

THE OLD COUNTRY 'SQUIRE.

I always and always will have a desire,
To be as sublime, and as important feel,
In my talk and my walk, and to have half the zeal,
Of the man we all love and respect—the old 'squire.
He's lived in the country of every clime,
From now, to the far immemorial time.

He's the greatest of personages our parents know;
He always prayer meetings and Sunday school
leads,
And can draw up notes, mortgages, contracts and
deeds.

He's grave and sedate—not contemptuously so—
But just quite enough, that a stranger may see,
His mind's far above vain frivolity.

I know you've all seen the venerable 'squire,—
You've seen him, no doubt, an hundred of times ;

Then, too, he's been mentioned in prose and in
rhymes,—

Man holds him in reverence as his own sire;—
He's a pompous old man and walks with a cane,
And generally carries great thoughts in the main.

I can see him e'en now, by the flickering light,
Of the wide fire place, and the smoky greese lamp,
In his split-bottomed chair, in his face the deep
stamp,
Of the man who will do what he deems to be right;
And can hear, now, some litigant counseling him,
As if he were really *lex terra* great limb.

I can see that old 'squire, so stoical—tacit,
Except when he soothes the soul's beaten suit,
By settling the points that seemed open and moot—
Proving, so easy, *lex nil frustra facit*;
And by his clear logic soon friendship retrieve,
And sore, burdened minds of all doubts soon
relieve.

For he's such a wise look, and such wonderful lore;

But little of which, he has learned from the books;
But picked it all up from Life's byways and nooks,
And lips of his fathers long, long years before ;
Yet his friends all admire and praise him and
claim,
His name shall be first on the tables of fame.

It may be the only law book, that he's read,
Is the Biblical law, or some ancient statute,
And yet clients think him extremely astute,
And treasure with pleasure, each word that is said ;
And would think, that the man who would argue
with him
Indulging a most ridiculous whim.

AN ILLUSION.

White as the breast of a swan, is her skin,
 With apple bloom's daintiest pink,
Tinting her cheeks and her ears and her chin ;
 Hair, brown as the fur of the mink ;
White are her teeth as the robes of a saint,
 Eyes, blue as the Summer's blue skies,
A seraphic form, no limner can paint
 Though he tries and forever tries ;
Voice, like the laugh of the grass-bordered brook
 In violet's time of the year,
Or song of a bird in some flow'r-walled nook,
 Entrancing the mother mate, near.—
Ravishing creature ! My joy and my life !
 But,—holy horrors ! She eats with her knife !

IS MERRIDGE A FAL-YER ?

What's all this talk 'bout mer-ridges fer ?

I kent pick up a paper 'thout I see
Som'thin' a-bout, "Is merridge a fale-yer ?"

An' is et jist whut et's cracked up ter be ?
W'y blast my skin, 'f I knowed what tha mean,
I'd anser in a jiffy, slick and clean.

Cos I hev hed some 'sperience uv my own ;

I've now, been merried nigh ter forty yer,
An' I hev chilern, men and wimern, grown ;

An' I'd jist like some un ter show me wher
I've made a fal-yer out'n merried life,
Er thet old lady yender,— thet's my wife.

Don't merry her fur iny thing but love,

An' let her merry ye fur jist the same,
An' shore es stars air in the skies above,
Ye'll never need to bar the blunt an' shame

Uv goin' inter court fer a divorce,
 An' hev the merridge bust by legal force.

The pe'cock is a bird uv plumaj proud,
 But he's not good ter eat, ner nice his song,
 An' em'ty wagons al'ays rattle loud
 While loaded uns run noiselessly along.
 Then merry not fer song er fer dress,
 Er rattlin' talk, fer ye'll wed distress.

Some feller's sed, good wimern's mighty few ;
 Thet none's ez good ez tha 'ud hev men think,
 But air ez 'ceitful ez the fountain seen
 By trav'lers on a desert, skerched fer drink ;
 Them's fellers whut ther boys call sots, I know,
 So full uv whiskey tha kin sca'cely go.

Tha's lots an' gobs uv angles 'thout the wings,
 An' all I know, air 'mongst the wimern kind ;
 Fer come ter think et over now, 'y jings !
 I've sarched the kentry fur an' nigh ter find
 Some men, thet is jist haf ez good ez tha,
 But kent find wher sich men critters stay.

No, merridge han't no fale-yer, —ye kin shake
 Off all kentenshuns, thet 'ud 'round ye come,
 Ef ye ud foller my advice an' take
 A bar an' forbar 'ith ye ter yer hum ;
 An' ev'ry day uv yer merried life,
 Keep on a courtin',—hug an' kiss yer wife.

Throw off yer frown an' buckle on yer smile,
 An' fill yer house 'ith sunshinē ev'ry day,
 Thet out'n doors an' winders shine a mile
 A-round an' 'bout an' 'bove ye ev'ry way.
 Be shure she likes ye, an' that you like her,
 Afore ye tie, then fale-yers 'ont occur.

Don't be ez cross an' surly ez a bar,
 W'en roo-em-at-icks come an' ye git old,
 An' silver strings git tangled in yer har ;
 But be ez full uv love ez ye kin hold ;
 Fer then ye're gittin' nigh wher Jordon roars,
 An' love ye'll need ter open Heaven's doors.

WHERE ?

O, Where can we find us a baby as smart
As dear, doting mothers would have us believe?
Or where can we find us a maiden whose heart
Is not filled with vilest of schemes to deceive?
Or where can we find in this thrilling, old world,
One who has straight hair that don't want it
curled ?

Or where can we find one with eyes that are black,
Who would not far sooner have eyes blue or
gray ?

Or one who can trade in the store and be back
To her home in less than the whole of a day ?
Or one who'd not yell like a pain-stricken cat,
If she caught but the glimpse of a mouse or a rat ?

Or where can we find one that loves household work,
And does not upon her old mother depend ?

Or one who, the cooking and washing won't shirk,
Or does not her time in anility spend;
Can sing and can play with artistical grace,
And uses no powder upon her sweet face?

O, where can we find us a man that is sane,
Who don't think he's versed in political lore,
Especially during a heated campaign,
When the fact is, he doesn't know very much
more

Of the issues at stake than the man in the moon,
And his talk's like the talk of the prating buffoon?

O, where can we find us a man who'll admit
He's not a whit better than Smith, Jones or
Brown ?

Or one who has reason to teach him to quit
Abusing a man who is already down ;
One, who, to his wife's whims will never demur,—
The whims he so much loved when he courted her?

Or where can we find us a sage or a churl ?
Or where can we find us a soul anywhere, --

A matron or maid, or a boy or a girl,

Who, self-satisfied, do life's load bravely bear?
You can find you a host of such people, I trow,
In the city or country wherever you go.

HADES.

Like Dante, I visited, once in my time,
The regions of eternal woe —
Dark Hades,—that hot and sulphurous clime,
Where the souls of the sinful all go ;

Where flames, like huge serpents, throw out lurid
light ;
Where the music is pitiful moans ;
Where the cloven-foot ruler laughs loud with delight
At the dolorous shrieks and the groans.

Many souls that I knew in the flesh, there, I saw,
Sent for the commission of crime,
Laid down in the ancient, Mosaical law,
To suffer for infinite time.

The drunkard, the thief and the murd'rer are there,
Defamers, seducers and thugs ;

Procurers' wild yells seem to rend the foul air,
With that of the low fire bugs.

And they who ne'er practice the things that they
teach,
Were tossing in deep agony,
And drifting in drifts on its bubbling hot shore,
Like the drifts on the storm-driven sea ;

With faces upturned on damnation's red waves,
Most pitiful sight to behold ;
Monopolists, usu'rs, miserly knaves,
Dragged down by the weight of their gold.

But in a remote and a deep cave of Hell,
With snakes squirming over the floor,
In the stench of all sin, where the meanest souls
dwell,
Was a soul that I'd oft seen before.

From a low, murky cloud, on his uncovered crown
A stream was continually poured.
That like liquid phosph'rus burned its way down
To his feet, and in anguish he roared.

And I said to a devil, within the black pale :

What crime did he do in his life ?

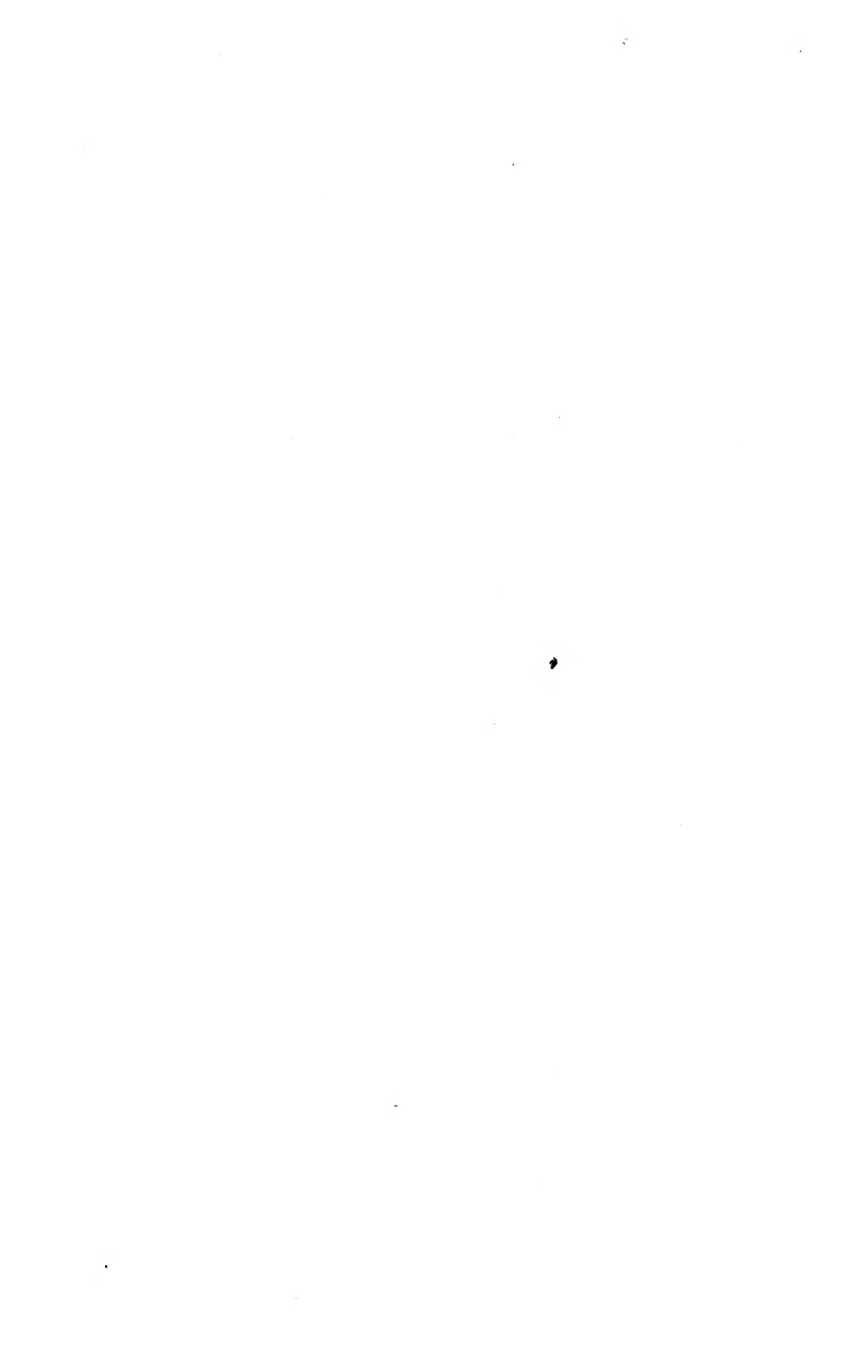
And he said, as he gave him a slap with his tail :

Why, he was unkind to his wife.

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