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ASPIRATIONS

AND OTHER POEMS

By JULIA M. BURNETT





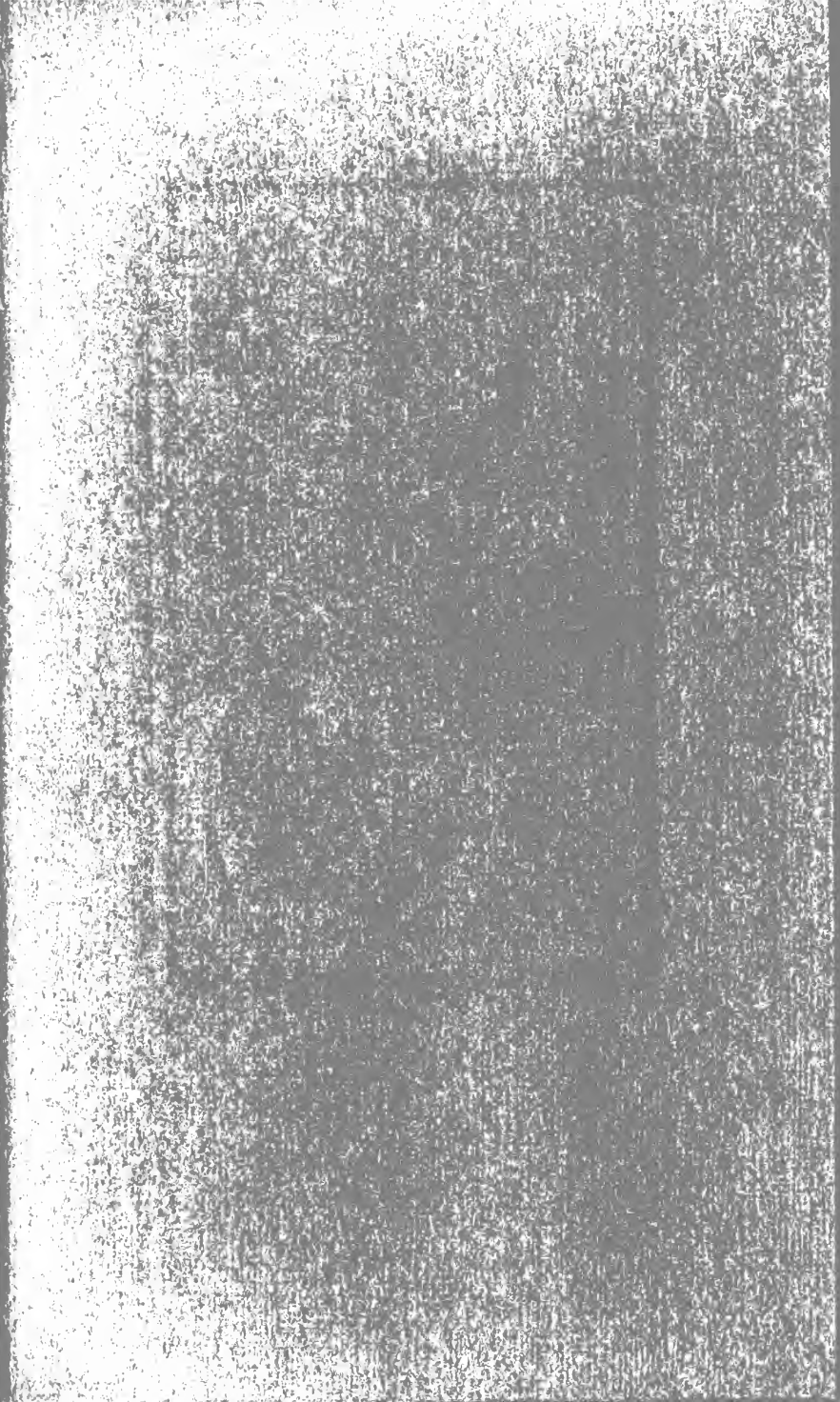
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Julia M. Burnett.

ASPIRATIONS

AND OTHER POEMS

By JULIA M. BURNETT



REDONDO BEACH
CALIFORNIA
1907

*Press of
Reflex Publishing Co.
Redondo, Cal.*

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INTRODUCTION

For some years it had been my mother's intention, at my earnest request, to gather together her poems for publication in book form. She had already commenced this work when overtaken by her last illness, and I have now picked it up where she left it, and have prepared this little volume as a "legacy of rhyme" to those who loved her and whom she loved.

In arranging the poems I have placed "Aspirations" first because it seems to me to strike the keynote for the whole book, and in fact for her entire life. The others I have tried to place, as nearly as possible, in the order in which they were written, and to include only those which she considered of permanent value, or which were connected with events or persons held in fond remembrance. I have also included notes and explanations from her scrap-book which give the poems an added interest, and at times afford an insight into her life

at a period of great grief and stress and struggle—a period on which I do not like to dwell except to recall those whose love and friendship and helping hands smoothed some of the rough places, and who are so beautifully referred to in the poem entitled “He Will Give His Angels Charge Concerning Thee.” These loving hearts and loyal souls were always remembered by my mother with the deepest affection, and will ever claim my undying gratitude.

Most of the poems in this volume were published, at about the time they were written, in *Harper's Magazine*, *Scribner's Magazine*, *Christian Union*, *Christian at Work*, *Hearth and Home*, *Baldwin's Monthly*, *New York Graphic*, and other periodicals. Many of them were widely copied in the daily press and received high praise from such editors and critics as Dr. J. G. Holland, Henry M. Alden, Oliver Johnson, William Winter, and others. Aside from their delicacy of sentiment and true poetic expression, they all bear evidence of having been written from the heart, and they seem to have reached the great heart of the public. They were in too sad a strain ever to attain great popularity, but in those who had suffered deeply they found a responsive

chord, and she received many letters from people to whom they had brought hope and comfort. One thing is very noticeable in all the poems—and it was very characteristic of her—that even in her deepest sorrow there was always a note of hope and faith, a determination to look upward, and an abiding belief in Divine Love and the absolute reality of the future life.

JULIA MARIA CHIPP was born in Kingston, New York, May 9, 1840. Her parents, Charles Winans Chipp and Eleanora Deyo Chipp, both died during her infancy, leaving four small children to the care of relatives. My mother was adopted by an uncle, Warren Chipp, also of Kingston, and brought up as one of his children, his devoted wife tenderly taking the place of the mother the little orphan had never known.

Her girlhood at "Brookside" was a happy one, and there she met my father, James Gilbert Burnett, and they were married on June 7, 1865. Although he was twenty years her senior, the union proved to be an ideal one, and their short married life of five years was marked by complete and perfect happiness.

Never have I read words of such tender love and devotion as in her journal, and in their letters to each other during brief periods of separation. The only cloud upon their happiness was the death of their first child when little more than a year old, but this only served to draw them closer together, if such a thing were possible.

Three children were born to them—Chauncey Linderman, born April 26, 1866, died September 15, 1867; James Gilbert, born August 5, 1868, died April 20, 1895; and Charles Howard, born August 11, 1870.

My father was an actor and manager of ability and reputation, in the old days of stock companies. He played leading parts with Edwin Forrest and other notable stars of that day, and was manager, at different times, of theatres in New York, Chicago and St. Louis. His friends and contemporaries were Joseph Jefferson, E. A. Sothern, W. J. Florence, Charles W. Couldock, J. H. Stoddart, John T. Raymond, and many others long since passed away. He was stage manager of Laura Keene's theatre in New York at the time both Jefferson and Sothern made their first great hits there, and it was he who

cast Sothern for the part of Lord Dundreary in *Our American Cousin*, in which he became famous. Sothern was at first deeply offended at having to play the part, and it was not until after he had scored such a triumph in it that he publicly apologized for not having trusted more fully to my father's judgment.

Strangely enough, my mother was never inside of a theatre until after her marriage, and then only as a spectator.

My father died suddenly March 19, 1870, leaving my mother pitifully crushed and helpless. Soon after his death the small means he had left were swept away in ill-advised investments, and from having been sheltered and protected at every point from life's struggles, she was suddenly forced to face the world and wrest from it a livelihood for herself and her two babies. In those days women had no place in business, and there was little that a woman of culture and refinement could do to earn money.

It was then that she commenced to turn her "gift of song" to account, and to timidly offer for publication the verses which had been written for

my father's pleasure, and those others which later had been the involuntary cry of a broken heart. Meeting with success, she followed it up with other poems, short stories, newspaper correspondence and contributions to the children's columns of various periodicals. She also organized classes for the study of Shakespeare, Browning and other English poets, taught elocution, and gave very successful dramatic readings. The returns from work of this kind are usually meagre and uncertain, and it speaks well for her success that she was able to support herself and children in this way for ten long years.

During a part of this time it was my privilege to help her, both as a child elocutionist and also by playing the part of Little Hendrik in *Rip Van Winkle*, for several seasons, with Joseph Jefferson. It was a source of great regret to my mother that I should be called to her assistance as a breadwinner at the early age of six years, but upon expressing this feeling one day to Joaquin Miller, the poet, he gave her great comfort by saying, "Madam, would you deprive him of one of the sweetest memories he will have when he is a man?"

During these years we lived in New York City;

Bath, Long Island (now Bensonhurst); Newark, New Jersey, and West Haven, Connecticut; and in all these places my mother made many warm friendships which endured through life.

In 1882 she obtained a position in the Patent Office at Washington, and was subsequently promoted, through the personal kindness of President Arthur, to the duties of Assistant Librarian of the Department of the Interior. This work was pleasant, congenial and remunerative, and she held the office for about six years, while my brother and I were going to school and fitting ourselves to assume the burden of the family support. At last came the proud day in 1889—the proudest of our lives—when we were able to assume that burden, and my mother retired from office, followed by the congratulations and good wishes of every official and employe of the Department.

Those were happy days in Washington for all of us, and never was there a closer tie between mother and sons than existed between us then and always.

Then came my brother's brief but brilliant career at the bar, his long illness, the alternate hope and fear, and finally his lingering death in 1895, which

left my mother crushed and broken and overwhelmed under the third great sorrow of her life. From this blow she never fully recovered, and soon was forced to face another grief and anxiety in the uncertain condition of my own health, which finally compelled us, in 1901, to seek a change of climate in the west. Here I regained my health, and here she passed several happy years, keenly enjoying our out-of-door life and nature studies, and our travels to Mexico, the Grand Canyon, Yosemite Valley, Alaska, and other scenes of beauty and interest. It is a source of unspeakable satisfaction to me—the silver lining to the cloud of ill health that hung over me so long—that I was able to make these last years of her life happy and peaceful, and that when we were finally parted, on June 21, 1905, it was not she who was called upon to bear the pain and grief and desolation of being left behind.

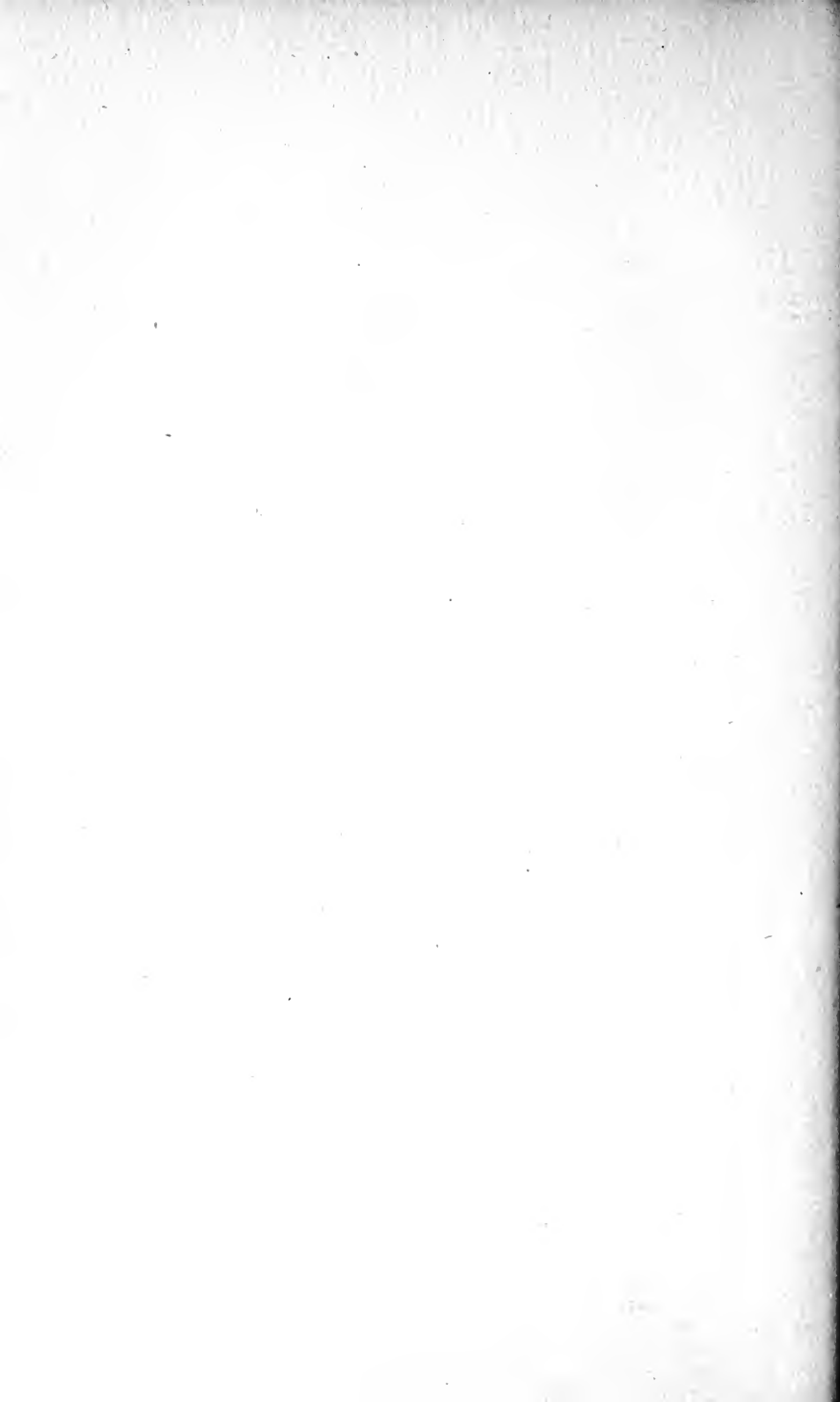
I wish I could here place on record an adequate appreciation of the wonderful beauty of my mother's character. I have never known a soul of such pure ideals, such lofty standards, such wonderful courage, or such complete unselfishness. I have never known

a more sincere or diligent seeker after truth, or a firmer believer in Divine Love, and that good is to be found in all things. I have never known a nature so delicately sensitive and sympathetic, or one so ready to share the burdens and griefs of others. I have never known a more youthful spirit, a keener capacity for enjoyment, a more abundant energy, a greater love of nature, or a deeper compassion for all suffering creatures. I have never known—and never hope to know again in this world—such deep and pure and tender love, such absolute trust and confidence, and such complete sympathy and understanding, as existed between us without break or shadow or variation for nearly thirty-five years.

Such love can never die, and though we may be separated for a time by the change called Death, I know well that she is living a life even more real and full and vital than the one she lived here, that she is reunited to the dear ones she mourned so long, and that they are “watching and waiting” to welcome me to that happy home where we will all be together once more, in God’s appointed time.

*Redondo Beach,
December, 1907.*

C. H. B.



ASPIRATIONS

AND OTHER POEMS



ASPIRATIONS.

O SPIRIT of wisdom! O spirit of light!
Spirit of mystery, round me, above,
That I long for by day, that I dream of by night,
Bright spirit of beauty! Sweet spirit of love!

You hide in the dewy green grass at my feet,
In daisy and buttercup, lily and rose;
You wave your fair hands from yon billowy wheat;
You smile from the heights where the tall cedar
grows.

You whisper, you touch me; I turn at your call,
To behold and to worship, but, lo! you are gone;
I hear in the distance a far echo fall,
And catch but the hem of your garment alone.

You signal and beckon me, wooing me on
From the cloud-palace gates of a sunset sky;
You steal through my chamber, where weary, alone,
On my thought-haunted pillow I sleeplessly lie.

You look down from the stars, you look up from
the sea,
You ride on the storm, in the zephyr you sigh;
The song of the bird and the hum of the bee
Your voice's sweet echo, your step passing by.

On the wave of some melody carried afar,
To your holy of holies I seem to have come,
Yet no nearer to you than is yon northern star
To the night-wearied traveller it guides to his
home.

You speak to my soul in great thoughts that breathe;
I bow down before you with rapture that burns;
But, lo! in my heart a keen sword you ensheathe,
On my brow at your feet leave a crown of sharp
thorns.

You look into mine from an eye's soft caress,
You whisper to mine from hearts where I cling;
You call me, elude me, you torture, you bless,
O mighty, mysterious, tyrannous King!

I stretch out my hands to you, cry and entreat,
Rising up from the dust, follow on at your call,
Ever striving and struggling, till, low at your feet,
Starving, thirsting, and yet never hopeless, I fall.

From Nature without and from spirit within
Your messengers speak to my tempest-tossed soul ;
But they mock at my woe while they're bidding
me win
That far, unattained, unattainable goal.

Ah, tell me that only 'tis here unattained,
Here in vain that I call to you, seek and not find ;
That 'tis only while in this earth-prison enchained
I am halt, sick, and maimed,—I am deaf, dumb,
and blind!

Ah, tell me that, freed from this bondage of clay,
Far brighter than stars all these sweet hopes shall
shine,
I shall find you and hold you forever and aye,
O spirit immortal! O spirit divine!

A WEDDING DAY SONG.

TO MY HUSBAND.

COME again the happy dawning
Of earth's brightest day for me,
Counterpart of that blest morning
That pledged heart and hand to thee!

Sweet with scent of June's first roses,
Fresh with night's benignant showers,
In my heart that day reposes
Crowned with Memory's fadeless flowers.

For she brought to me the treasure
Of a love vouchsafed to few,
Measureless beyond all measure,
Tender, patient, fond and true!

Brought me strength to guard my weakness,
Wisdom to direct my way,
Filled my life to full completeness,
Generous, blessed, happy day!

Balmiest zephyrs aye caress her!
Future years still bring her praise!
True hearts welcome, love and bless her!
Hail her ever day of days!

New York, June 7, 1866.

BERTIE.

COME to me my new-found treasure,
Let me clasp you to my breast,
To the heart not ceased its aching
For the darling gone to rest.

Baby, did your angel brother
In that world from whence you come,
Bid you bring new light and gladness
To this desolated home?

Did your little kindred spirits
Mingle with each other there,
Till your earthly form and features
Now the same dear image bear?

Tell me, did you catch the sweetness
Of his baby looks and tone,
Of his winning ways and graces?
Baby, are these too your own?

And as days and months go by us
Will you the sweet gifts retain,
Till we almost think our darling
Moves and lives with us again?

Shall we see the dainty figure,
Soft blue eyes and golden hair?
Shall we hear his lisping prattle,
See sweet looks he used to wear?

Oh, I hold you close and closer,
Thinking what you yet may be,
Likeness of my angel first-born
Sent to bless and comfort me!

New York, August, 1868.

OUR BABY IN THE COUNTRY.

PASSAGE FROM A LETTER IN RHYME TO MY HUSBAND
WHEN BERTIE WAS A YEAR OLD.

HE is out every day, and the fresh country air
Has ruddied his cheek with the kiss it leaves
there,

While the sunbeams have tangled themselves in his
hair.

Not a child in the village but knows him by name,
Not a dog or a cow but his friendship may claim;
He has room in his dear little heart for each one,
And many will miss his sweet face when we're gone.
He is gay as a bird, and from morning till night
Of mischief as full as the day's full of light,
Yet perpetrates all with an archness so winning
We love him the better for all his sweet sinning.

He climbs like a monkey. I call out, "Take care!"
Before I have spoken he is up on a chair,
And saucily echoes my warning, "Tate ta-are!"
He seizes my work-box, upsetting it all;
Takes my tapes for his horses, my spools for a ball,
While thimble and buttons and needles and pins,
As useless encumbrance, are thrown to the winds.
But his forte is mechanics—he'll labor and plan
With his cards and his blocks by the hour, and a man
With a shop full of tools couldn't make as much noise
As he'll hammer out with his sticks and his toys.

But the funniest trick of the dear little elf
Is the fervor with which he denounces himself
For some little freak of his mischievous fun,
Or perhaps when no mischief at all has been done,—
Says he's a "bad boy" with such comical gravity,
As if fully convinced of his utter depravity,
And would seek to ward off by this honest confession
The fearful results of his heinous transgression.
I call him a "good boy," a "sweet boy," in vain,
He but shakes his wee poll and repeats it again,
"A bad boy," "a bad boy," till at last I give o'er
And I love the "bad boy" only so much the more.

He just has been helping me eat a large pear,
Much grieved that a cow within sight couldn't
share,—

For whatever his portion, and however small,
There's some for the "Mooeys" and "Bow-wows"
and all.

Oh, dear little heart, full of generous love,
And simple and pure as the angels above,
Can it be that this beautiful world we are in
Could stain thy sweet spirit with folly and sin?
Could teach thee these graces of heart to discard;
Make thee haughty and cruel, or selfish and hard?
No, never, my darling, such fate could be thine!
On the innocent face looking up into mine—
Index of a soul without blemish or stain—
The light of God's image must ever remain.

* * * * *

He would ride all the day, but his crowning delight
Is to go and meet papa on Saturday night.
So patient he sits till the bright hair is curled
(His heaviest trial, as yet, in this world),

Surveys his blue ribbons with satisfied air,
And feels on his head if his hat is yet there.
Then, handkerchief waving, and glad expectation
Upon his sweet face, we set off for the station,
Giving voice to his joy in his sweet little song
Of "pa-pa" and "pa-pa" as he trundles along.
At last his quick ear catches sound of the train,
And with renewed vigor he's waving again;
The thundering engine comes near and more near,
And the dear one so watched for and welcomed is
 here!

Near Chicago, 1869.

MY LITTLE LABORER.*

A TINY man, with fingers soft and tender,
As any lady's fair;
Sweet eyes of blue, a form but frail and slender,
And curls of sunny hair.
A household toy, a fragile thing of beauty,
Yet with each rising sun
Begins his round of toil—a solemn duty,
That must be daily done.

Today he's building castle, house and tower,
With wondrous art and skill,
Or labors with his hammer by the hour,
With strong, determined will.
Anon, with loaded little cart, he's plying
A brisk and driving trade;
Again, with thoughtful, earnest brow, is trying
Some book's dark lore to read.

Now, laden like some little beast of burden,
 He drags himself along,
And now his lordly little voice is heard in
 Boisterous shout and song;
Another hour is spent in busy toiling
 With hoop and top and ball,
And with a patience that is never failing,
 He tries and conquers all.

But sleep at last o'ertakes my little rover,
 And on his mother's breast,
Toys thrown aside, the day's hard labor over,
 He sinks to quiet rest;
And as I fold him to my bosom, sleeping,
 I think, 'mid gathering tears,
Of what the distant future may be keeping
 As work for manhood's years.

Must he, with toil, his daily bread be earning,
 In the world's busy mart,
Life's bitter lessons every day be learning,
 With patient, struggling heart?
Or shall my little architect be building
 Some monument of fame,
Whereon, in letters bright with glory's gilding,
 The world may read his name?

Perhaps some humble, lowly occupation,
 But shared with sweet content ;
Perhaps a life in loftier, prouder station,
 Both well and wisely spent ;
Perchance these little feet will cross the portal
 Of learning's lofty fane,
His life work be to scatter truths immortal
 Among the sons of men !

Whate'er thy lot, O blessed little sleeper,
 Where'er thy feet may roam,
When life is done, and Death, the world's great reaper,
 Shall call thy harvest home,
Mayst thou go then as sweetly to thy slumbers,
 Earth's toys lay gladly down,—
Then rise, to wear 'mid heaven's angelic numbers,
 A starry, radiant crown !

* "My Little Laborer" is especially prized by myself, not so much that it is one of my best efforts, and has been more widely copied than almost any other, as for the associations connected with it. Bertie was a wee thing. His dear father bringing him to me one evening for his bath, said laughingly, "Look at his dirty little hands! They are like a blacksmith's. Indeed he works as hard as any day laborer. There's a subject for you—My Little Laborer." He kissed the boy and me, and left us.

As I hushed the child to sleep my thoughts followed the path laid out for them, and when our beloved returned "My Little Laborer" was ready for his reading. He prized and praised it much. I heard it first as he read it aloud. That occasion, and the beauty of his voice, gave it a charm in my ears that has always remained.

MY TWO SONS.*

LINNIE AND BERTIE.

TWO little lives my earthly life have blessed,
Two little forms have stood beside my knee,
Warm baby kisses on my lips have pressed,
Or on my bosom sunk to quiet rest,
Or played about me in their childish glee.

Like two fair lilies drooping from one stem,
Two alabasters taken from one mould,
The sunny hair, soft eyes, and slender frame,
Each baby grace and feature still the same—
But ah! what contrast does their future hold!

To one is given a pledge that must remain
Unchanged as heaven's eternal, living truth,
That sorrow ne'er shall wring his heart with pain,
No thought of sin his guileless spirit stain,
Nor death nor sickness ever blight his youth,

But in an atmosphere all love and peace,
His little life goes calmly, sweetly on,
'Mid purest pleasures that will never cease,
In grace and beauty that must still increase,
When earth's best gifts are long since past and
gone.

While to the other comes earth's common fate
Of pain and sickness, care and toil and woe;
The sins and sorrows of our lost estate,
The thousand ills that on life's pathway wait,
The aching heart earth's happiest mortals know.

O, baby-brow, illumed with heaven's own light,
Must time and sorrow plough deep furrows there?
O, guileless spirit, plumed for angels' flight,
When sin's dark hosts assail thee in their might,
How wilt thou the unequal conflict bear?

Yet did an angel, e'en my angel child,
Come whispering in my awe-struck ear tonight,
And plead that now, while pure and undefiled,
Unstained by sin nor racked with passions wild,
His hand might lead thee to the realms of light,

My mother-heart, weak in its selfish love,
In vain would seek for grace to let thee go;
Aye, knowing all that waits for thee above,
Unequal to the sacrifice would prove,
And be, perchance, thy doom to death and woe.

Oh, God of goodness and of love divine,
Whose wondrous ways no mortal tongue can tell,
In this, as all things else, Thy will, not mine!
Thine is the past, be all the future thine,
And, life or death, all must and will be well.

Chicago, 1869.

*The last verses of mine their father read, and only the first two stanzas did he see. The second line of second verse, "Two alabasters," etc., is his idea. I asked him for a second simile, quoting "Two fair lilies," telling him the necessary rhyme, and he instantly suggested the line as it stands. The poem refers to my eldest boy, then passed on to the life beyond, and Bertie, my now oldest boy,—Charlie, born after his father's death, not being included.

MY LOT.*

WITH stumbling, bleeding feet, so tired and
lonely,
To struggle on o'er life's rough, stony road;
Where hitherto sweet flowers have blossomed only,
And dear, dear feet with mine the way have trod—
Feet walking now the golden streets of God.

With patient, but, ah! me, such weary fingers
Life's tangled threads to ravel day by day;
While still on mine the loving pressure lingers
Of hands that ever led me on my way—
Strong, tender hands that never led astray!

With weeping, blinded eyes to look before me,
Tho' strange the way, and dark the prospect be;
When every cloud gained brightness that came o'er
me,
From eyes whose love-light bade all shadows flee—
O eyes, that now the King in beauty see!

With aching, broken heart to find my duty,
And bravely grasp it tho' sharp thorns entwine,
Tho' from my life all light and joy and beauty
Have vanished with the heart knit one with mine—
Dear heart that never doubted Love Divine!

Sometimes e'en now, when most heart-sick and
weary

A well-known whisper seems to greet mine ear—
"Take courage, dear one; tho' the way be dreary
There's much still left thy stricken heart to cheer,
And love and peace and joy all wait thee here.

"Life's journey ended, there will haste to meet thee
The same dear feet that walked with thine before,
The same true eyes in loving welcome greet thee,
The same hands clasp thee as in days of yore,
The same fond heart claim thine forevermore."

New York, 1870.

* The first written after my widowhood, in Twenty-fifth Street, New York—Charlie a baby. Not published till long after, when I had to turn my most sacred thoughts into money.

LOOKING OVER.*

O AM I so near the bright river
That flows by yon heavenly shore?
Have sorrow and tears fled forever?
Pale Grief, shall I know thee no more?

To my heart thou hast not been a stranger
In all the long years that are past,—
Ah, bright Joy, thou fair, fickle ranger,
I give thee a welcome at last!

Come, fold thy still fluttering pinions,
And make thee a home in my breast,
For in yonder bright, starry dominions
Each dweller may claim thee as guest!

And open thy portals of glory,
Ye angelic warders, I come!
Forgotten my life's anguished story
In the light and the welcome of home!

For waiting there, waiting to greet me,
Are dear ones I love to recall,
And hasting with swift feet to meet me
The one that is dearer than all!

O, life of my life, husband, lover,
My heart throbs with rapture and glee,
As I feel the strong waves bear me over
To life, and to love, and to thee!

When once more thy strong arm shall enfold me,
And I know that we never shall part,
When thy dear lips once more shall have told me
My love is the life of thy heart,

When heavenly love shall have brought me
The grace to be worthy of thine,
And thine, in its turn, shall have taught me
The better to know Love Divine—

Thy dear hand shall then lead me over
The path thou must often have trod,
To the feet of the gracious Jehovah,
The Saviour, the Incarnate God!

And while we are vainly expressing
 The bliss that we scarcely can bear,
 We will plead for His Infinite blessing
 On the life that is waiting us there!

* * * * *

But, e'en as I sing, I am nearing
 The shores of the bright summer land,
 The mists from the mountain tops clearing,
 All purple and azure they stand!

Soft breezes sweet perfumes are bringing;
 In the sunlight the silver sands gleam;
 And see! there are baby hands flinging
 Bright roses far out in the stream!

Each wave is now deeper and stronger—
 Each one bears me nearer the shore,
 O, mortals, I see thee no longer!
 O, friends, I can tell thee no more!

Montrose, 1870.

* Impromptu. Sang it to Bertie as I rocked him to sleep at Montrose, and then wrote it down in the moonlight. In the morning it was as new to me as if written by some one else.

CHARLIE.

WRITTEN AT HIS BIRTH.

O CHILD of my sorrow, O child of my fears,
Whose life has been nurtured in anguish and
tears,
Why open thy eyes on earth's desolate night
When thy father's, dear baby, are closed to its light?
Why claim thy sad heritage, orphan forlorn?
O why, my poor innocent, why wast thou born?
That I might have something to hold to my heart
Of my own stricken being so real a part
Thou dost echo my sighs and give voice to my woe
In grief as such innocence never should know?
By thy pure little presence to teach me the faith
That can pierce through this darkness that mortals
call death?
Then to flutter thy pinions and fly away home?
Almost better, my baby, thou never hadst come!
That I might see in thee, albeit through tears,
The hope and the stay of my desolate years?

In thy dear form familiar lines to trace,
Once more in thine behold thy father's face,
Then trembling watch to see some daring sin
Assail my castled hope and entrance win,
Stain the pure soul and mar the fair clear brow?
O baby, better far to leave me now!
Or is thy infant soul the garden where
I yet must learn to bury grief and care,
With patient hand sow seeds of hope and trust
And, knowing God is love and love is just,
Look down the years and see the bloom of thine
Shed grace and beauty on the blight of mine?
All this my child thou shalt be—aye, and this:
A living link between my soul and his
Whose life and love hath left thee to my care
To sow for both the seeds that blossom there!
Dear heart, I take the trust in God's own way,
And faithful will I prove till that blest day
When Death's soft hand shall close my waiting eyes
And thy dear voice wake me in Paradise!

Kingston, August, 1870.

PAPA'S GARDEN.

INCIDENT CONCERNING BERTIE THAT TRANSPIRED
JUST AS WRITTEN.

THROUGH Greenwood's sorrow-trodden paths,
With aching heart I wandered on,
Seeking the sacred little spot
I love, yet weep, to call my own.
Small hands to mine confiding clung—
Poor little hands, so frail, so young.

They laid their freshly-gathered flowers,
At my behest, upon the mound,
And then, in quest of newer play,
Like butterflies they fluttered round,
Lighting at times upon my face,
With comforting, caressing grace.

Hopeless I sat beside that grave,
The while my prattling, three-year boy
Ran laughing o'er the pebbled path
And grassy slope in childish joy.
"More flowers!" he cried, "O mamma, see!
Whose pretty garden can this be?"

That here his father's form lay deep,
I hid with ever watchful care,
Yet long had wished some thought of him,
Some pleasant thought, might meet him there.
I kissed the nestling, orphaned head—
"It's papa's garden, dear," I said.

"My papa's? Mine, that lives in heaven
With all God's sweet and pretty flowers?
Oh, how I wish he'd leave some here
Next time he comes to gather ours.
Mamma, do you think God would care?
Tonight I'll ask him in my prayer."

"Out of the mouths of babes," I cried,
"Doth God his loving comforts bring!
Teaching my sore and sobbing heart,
That by His grace may sweetly spring
E'en here, where all is claimed by death,
The heavenly flowers of hope and faith."

Papa's Garden.

As home we turned, my little lad
Kept looking back, with earnest air,
"To see if papa yet had come
To take the flowers we left him there."
O baby heart of simple faith,
How thou dost triumph over death!

Sweet comforter, that speaks to me,
With lips and eyes thy father's own,
Teach me to look from death and dust
To where that dear one liveth on.
So, with "God's flowers" upon my breast,
My anguished heart shall find its rest.

New York, 1872.

“TILL DEATH.”

UPON her upturned face the moonlight streams,
Love's written message flutters from her hands;
Within her happy eyes the light still gleams
From words that only love quite understands.
“Thine own till death,” he signs. “Till death my
own!”

And love's securest rapture thrills her tone.

Each word upon her ear in music falls,
As when some heavenly aria is sung;
The melody alone our soul enthralls,
The words may speak to us in foreign tongue.
Till death! till death! Love never spake till now,
Or breathed in sweeter words a stronger vow.

* * * * *

A few short years, and by the waning light
Of a September's rainy afternoon,
She mutely sits beneath the chilling blight
That fell upon her happy life so soon.

Her looks are bent in longing, yet in dread,
 Upon the faded letter that she holds,
 While tears like rain fall on the nestling head
 That hides its gold amid her sable folds.

O Love, thou know'st not time! She reads, and lo!
 The years departed open like a scroll;
 The old-time flush creeps o'er her cheek of snow,
 Love's flame relights the window of her soul.
 She nears the end, and with one heart-wrung cry,
 The last of hope, the first of long despair,
 "Till death!" she sobs; "O God, since he could die,
 The world's a grave, and hope lies buried there."

* * * * *

O Love! O Death! forever still at strife!
 O stricken ones! wherefore can ye not hear
 What omnipresent, all-pervading Life
 Still seeks to whisper in your earth-dulled ear:
 "There is no death! All life fore'er abides!
 The shadow ye so dread and trembling see
 Is but the veil that mercifully hides
 The glory of my immortality."

Bath, April, 1873.

THE SLEEP OF SORROW.

HOW blessed it is that the dews of sleep
So swiftly fall on eyelids wet with tears.
"He found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy."
And not alone in sad Gethsemane,
But everywhere that Grief and Sorrow go,
Comes pitying Sleep, with soft and gentle hand
To scatter seeds of slumber, and to bathe
The weary spirit in a sea of rest.
The weeping eyes are closed, the throbbing head
Extorts no more weak nature's tortured moan;
The aching heart is still; all troubles lost
In sweet forgetfulness. Thrice-blessed Sleep,
That, like to One Divine who walked the waves,
Comes on the surging billows of our grief,
And in a voice whose heavenly music thralls
Our senses in a sweet, subduing spell,
Hushing to rest each troubled wave of thought,
Says, "Peace, be still!"

LOVE'S APPEAL.

LOUISE AND MR. HUNT.

O LAND of birds! O land of flowers!
Of balmy airs and sunny hours!
Land of the vine and orange grove,
Blest land that holds my life, my love!
Bright land of bloom, sweet land of song,
Keep not my soul's dear love too long.
Hide not within thy leafy bowers
That fairest of thy countless flowers,
For though it blooms a while for thee
Its budding life belongs to me.

O land of frost! O land of snow!
Of wintry winds that cheerless blow!
O desert land, O frozen sea,
Where she is not, yet I must be!
Haste, haste to break your chains, ye rills!
Burst from your cerements, ye hills!

Whisper once more, O summer breeze,
To blushing flowers and fluttering trees,
That I may woo, nor woo in vain,
My love to come to me again!

And O, blest land all lands above,
Bound not by space,—sweet Land of Love!
Bright, beauteous isle of life's rough sea,
How turns my waiting soul to thee!
Afar thy sun-crowned summits rise,
Thou Mecca of my longing eyes;
Thy melodies float down the years
Sweet as the music of the spheres.
My all of heaven on earth thou art,
Break not thy promise to my heart!

New York, January, 1872.

TO A CHILD'S PICTURE.

A PICTURE OF CHARLIE WHEN TWO YEARS OLD.
CHATTIE NAMED IT "INNOCENCE."

SWEET "Innocence!" You could not claim
A fitter, sweeter, better name;
Would that its light upon your brow
We still might see long years from now,
And call you by the same!

Fair, tiny hands, that scarce can hold
The little garment's dainty fold;
What weary tasks ye yet must do!
What heavy burdens wait for you,
Within those years untold!

Sweet eyes that now may look upon
God's angels smiling in the sun,
Must ye see earth's dark places,
Its tear-stained, sin-stained faces,
Mine even seek to shun?

Rose-blossom feet, ah, not unshod,
Must ye essay life's stony road;
For thorns and pitfalls will ye meet
Before ye walk the golden street
Or vine-clad hills of God!

Fast-beating heart, that throbs within
The baby breast, unstained by sin;
In God's dear hand I leave the pain,—
Life's bitter cup you needs must drain
Before His heaven you win!

Bath, 1872.

AN AUTUMN CAROL.

TO JESSIE BROWN BARLOW.

WHEN we twined sweet blossoms,
 Some few months ago,
Bridal blossoms, blooming
 In the frost and snow,
Minstrel then or listener,
 On that golden night,
Scarcely dreamed the summer
 Could have brought to light
Such a beauteous floweret,
 Born of those sweet hours,
Softer than their snow flakes,
 Fairer than their flowers.

And of all the offerings,
 Brought then to thy shrine,
All the joys and pleasures
 That have since been thine ;

Happy bride and mother,
Tell me, hast thou known
Aught of bliss or rapture,
As this hour hath shown?
Worn upon thy bosom
Gem as undefiled,
Radiant and precious
As this little child?

May it brim with sweetness,
All the coming years;
May the smiles it wakens
Banish all the tears!
And, when winter coming
Brings again the day
When thy hand gave gladly
Heart and life away,
And, with smiles, dost number
All the flowerets wove
By the hand of heaven
In thy crown of love;
O, with lips of blessing,
Surely thou wilt call
This sweet bridal blossom
Fairest of them all!

THE WRECK OF THE "ATLANTIC."

APRIL, 1873.

PITILESS Atlantic, 'neath whose surging waves
Youth and strength and beauty sleep in name-
less graves,
From thy deathly roll-call why couldst thou not
spare
Thine own beauteous namesake, young and strong
and fair?

If no throb of pity for her woe couldst feel,—
Quivering heart of iron, straining ribs of steel,
Racked to save the thousand on her bosom thrown,
Holding each life dearer even than her own—

Thou rapacious monster, couldst man's agony,
Woman's cry nor childhood's, find no grace with
thee?
Vain, all vain, their pleadings, as the curses hurled
Now upon thy treachery by a stricken world!

"Fair and false," proud ocean! Yet not all by thee
Are the thousands shipwrecked that go down at sea—
Lured by lying beacons to a rock-bound shore,
Lashed on hidden dangers, sunk to rise no more!

O, thou Power Almighty, Love we name thee still,
Since nor soul nor body suffers by Thy will;
By Thine erring creatures oft misunderstood,
Out of all life's evils wilt Thou still bring good!

MY JEWELS.*

C. H. L. M.

TO clasp my matron-girdle fair
Sweet Love to me hath given
Three jewels bright beyond compare,
Fresh from the courts of heaven.

They gleam and glow within my sight
In all their radiant beauty;
To keep undimmed their heavenly light
Is life's beloved duty.

My Jewels.

My jewels three! My fair, brave boys!
Brighter than diamonds glowing,
Their sparkling young lives are to me
In beauty daily growing.

Now 'mongst my treasures drops a pearl,
Gem of the purest water,
Love's last sweet gift, my baby-girl,
My little blue-eyed daughter!

And when, dear Lord, my trust is o'er,
Back to their native heaven
May I these living gems restore—
The children Thou hast given.

Bath, 1873.

* A trifle. Written for Chattie, and prematurely,
for the "blue-eyed daughter" was another boy!

NEIGHBOR WILLIE.

LITTLE Willie's a cunning and dear little boy,
Brimming over with frolic and mischief and joy ;
I think it's not once in a month that he cries,
And that is the reason he has such bright eyes !

He's a stout little fellow, cheeks rosy and red,
And hair like his papa's, cut close to his head.
He wears panties, too, although pretty young,
And has such a little French twist of a tongue !

Sometimes to our house on an errand he's sent,
And back we must go to find out what is meant.
He'll jabber away just as fast as can be,
But Dutch, French, or English, it's all Greek to me.

My two little fellows, named Bertie and "Bud",
Their breakfast once over, like young deer will scud
In search of this Willie ; for seas you might stem,
Yet fail, if you tried, to part Willie and them.

One morning for breakfast they scarcely could wait,
For Willie was swinging away on his gate,
And shouting out lustily over the way,
"I tay, id ou dorn a ad dum-pe a tay?"

"My dog a stump-tail?" calls Bertie in fun,
"Why no, that can't be, for I haven't got one."
"No, no!" answers Willie, and laughing away,
"I tay, id ou dorn a ad dum-pe a tay?"

"A stone coming this way? Well, it just better not.
That's not what you say? Well, who can tell what
You mean by such gibberish lingo as that?
A 'dorn,' and a 'dum-pe,' a 'tay' and a 'at'!"

At this Master Willie grew "mad" as could be,
And Bertie came running and laughing to me;
"O mamma," he said, "do come and find out
What Willie is trying to tell us about."

So I went to the gate and said, with a smile,
"Come over here, Willie, and play for a while.
Can't you come, and why not?" But all he would say
Was, "I tay, id ou dorn a ad dum-pe a tay?"

“Well, Willie,” said I, “you speak pretty plain,
But a little too fast; now, we’ll try it again.”
So over he went with it, much in this way,
“I—tay—id—ou—dorn—a—ad—dum—pe—a—tay?”

Well, I looked at Bertie, and Bertie at me,
As we puzzled and pondered on what it could be,
While Willie’s looks said—he’s as sharp as a knife—
“Such dunces I never did see in my life!”

I’ve not time at present to tell you about
The way that we managed to make it all out,
But we had some visitors spending the day,
And his mother had said that when they went away,

He could come and see Bertie and “Buddy” once
more,
But mustn’t go plaguing their mamma before.
So what the dear baby was trying to say
Was, “*Are you going to have company today?*”

Bath, 1873.

CHARLIE BY THE SEA.

LITTLE Charlie last summer went down by
the sea,
And there for six weeks kept a grand jubilee
With Bertie his brother and Archie his cousin,
And friends they met there, boys and girls by the
dozen.

They gathered bright pebbles and shells on the
strand,
Built houses and castles and forts in the sand;
Made rivers and wells that had real water in,
Dug oysters and clams;—but what use to begin,

Expecting to tell you the fun that they had?
There's one way to tell you, and I should be glad
Could I do it that way. Guess how it would be?—
I would take you all there, and then you would see!

But Charlie's first bath I must tell you about—
First how he went in and then how he came out!
He was but a wee fellow—past three but not four—
And as he came scampering down on the shore,

So cunning he looked, as he ran in such haste—
Nothing on but a towel just tied round the waist,
His curls flying back, little arms like wings spread.
And his laugh ringing out on the wind as he sped:

Then his dear little feet, with their dear *weesey* toes
Just as pink as the shells and as pretty as those.
Oh, he was as proud and as brave as could be,
And thought it was fine to be bathed in the sea.

He remembered his own little bath-tub at home--
How he spluttered and splashed and got covered
with foam.

Well, on he went cautiously down to the strand,
Leaving dear little footprints behind in the sand;

But at the first dip of his foot in the wave,
Such a quick little cry of dismay as he gave;
"I ain't doe-in in," he cries; "didn't know it was
told—
And there's such a lot more than a baf-tub will
hold."

But when they all shouted and would not desist,
He rubbed his dear eyes with his fat little fist,
Looked round at the ones that were laughing, and
then
Was just getting ready to try it again,

When in came a wave rolling on to the shore.
Poor Charlie ran faster than ever before,
But the wave could outrun him, and spite of his
haste,
It caught him and buried him up to the waist;

And the poor little man, with the fright he was in,
Got covered with water way up to his chin!
It was but a moment, and when from the land
The waters rolled back again, out on the sand

Ran poor little Charlie, and once on the track
That led to the bathing-house, never looked back!
Each dear little foot in turn kicked out behind,
But his curls were too wet to fly back on the wind.

The children all shouted in mischievous glee,
But I was as sorry as sorry could be,
Yet I laughed at the darling when, "Mamma," he
said,
"I fought it was doe-in right over my head."

He learned to bathe nicely before he went home,
And liked it as well as the bath-tub's white foam,
But I dare say he'll hear, perhaps till he's old,
Of "*I ain't doe-in in—didn't know it was told.*"

Bath, 1873.

SONNET.

To L. P.

O FRIEND—dear title and dear object, too—
Take from me all my heart so poor can give!
My gratitude and friendship while I live
Must ever be your just and honest due.
A new light on my life I owe to you,
A smile on lips whose sole prerogative
Has been but sighs and sobs—but, ah, forgive
That this is all, all, dear, that I can do.
For cold as lies my hand in your warm palm,
Passive and silent in your loving grasp,
Its quick, responsive signals all forgot,
E'en so my heart moves never from its calm,
Still, quiet, even beat—so, friend, unclasp
My poor tired fingers—yet, O leave me not!

RECEIPT FOR PUFFS.

LOUISE ALLEN AND CHARLIE.

BEFORE the glass our Beauty stands
The while her hair she dresses,
In rolls and curls, in braids and bands,
She twists her flowing tresses.

Our little "Bud" across the floor
All day is making trains go;
We might, with whistle, snort, and roar,
As well live in a depot.

"Oh, what a plague," she cries, "are boys!
I don't know what I'm doing!
Do stop that everlasting noise
Of tooting and chu-chu-ing!"

"Toot! toot!" cries "Bud," "chu-chu; all wight!"
Off goes the rushing train.
"These puffs," frets Beauty, "won't go right,
And I shan't try again!"

“I tell 'ou 'bout 'em—how 'ou makes
De puffs,” quoth “Bud.” “I know!
One puff is to put on de bwakes,
And two to let 'em go!”

Bath, 1873.

MRS. BROWNING.*

O POET-SOUL, that walked among the stars,
And caught the music from the world beyond,
In youth thy glowing pages oft I conned,
Where not one wrong-struck chord the anthem
mars;
And, free in those bright days from all life's scars—
My heaviest chain, Love's soft and silken bond—
I cried with reverent soul in accents fond,
"Her song the very gate of heaven unbars!"
Since then I've climbed steep paths, and walked
alone
Through Grief's dark night, haunted by haggard
Care,
Life's youth departed, Love's sweet vision flown;
But as in joy, so now in my despair,
To Heaven's portal dost thou lead me on,
And leave me weeping, but not hopeless, there.

Bath, September, 1873.

* Pronounced by literary friend of good judgment to "stand high as a sonnet." A favorite of my own, whether from love of the subject or the lines themselves, I don't know.

A VISION.*

"It was the hour for angels—there stood hers!"

—MRS. BROWNING.

TWO hours there are within the twenty-four
My trembling heart goes forth each day to
meet,

When Grief her full and bitter tide doth pour
In cruel waves around my shrinking feet,
And almost washes from my hands away
The staff of faith on which I lean all day.

The first one greets me with each morning's light,
When from sweet dreams of love, so fond and
true,

I wake to sorrow's chill and cheerless night—

Meeting my cruel fate each dawn anew,
And on my lonely pillow, sobbing, say,

"O, aching heart, how shall we bear this day?"

The other comes with still more torturing power
At eventide, for in sweet days gone by
He knew and loved it as "the children's hour,"
And saw with them its happy moments fly.
Now their sweet laughter I would not control
Wakes mournful echoes in my widowed soul.

To-night their play is done, and at my knee
Both sunny heads are bent in baby prayer,
When through the dusk my wondering eyes can
see
A hand of light upheld in blessing there!
And as they lift to mine their faces bright,
A soft voice whispers low a fond "Good night."

O, best-beloved, life of this sad heart,
How often in bright days forever flown
Thy fond lips told me if grim Death should part
Our happy lives, and leave me here alone,
Of Heavenly Love the boon thou wouldst implore
To guide thee to my waiting side once more!

And though no eyes but mine the vision see,
No ears but mine the whispered words may hear,
And though dear friends may, doubting, smile at me,
I know thy blessed presence, ever near,
Has come still closer, and thy heart to mine
Thro' childhood's holy sphere gives word and sign,

In blessed token thou art living still,
Tho' flesh and sense divide us for a while,
And thankfully the gracious Master's will
My patient heart can meet with happy smile.
Aye, bend a humble and repentant ear
To the reproof my waiting soul can hear:

"O, thou of little faith!" He seems to say,
"How couldst thou doubt? The blessing that I
give
I give, nor ever, ever take away.
Because I live thy dear ones also live!
Blessed are they who can this truth receive,
And blessed they who see not, yet believe."

Evening of February 10, 1874.

* By this poem made the acquaintance of Mrs. Ella Connell, a young widow of Houston, Texas, who wrote to me concerning it, and in 1876 came North to the Centennial and came to Newark, N. J., to see me. A lovely little brunette she was, young and so pretty.

KINSHIP.*

O GRASSES green, beneath my feet
So shyly, softly growing,
I hear your airy voices greet
My coming and my going.

O sighing, murmuring leaves, that live
So far and high above me,
Down through the tender shade ye give
Ye're whispering that ye love me.

O sweet, sweet flowers, I hold the while
More fondly to my bosom,
I see an answering, soul-lit smile
On each fair, fragrant blossom.

O swift, bright stream, that sweeps along,
With merry, rippling laughter,
You echo back my happy song,
And woo me to come after.

O stream and flowers! O leaves and grass!
By all you each have given,
You make this world a fairer place
For human hearts to live in.

Sweet friends ye are—nay, I will call
Ye brethren,—sisters, rather,—
For are we not the children all
Of one dear Heavenly Father?

And though to that great, loving Heart
Man holds himself the dearer,
Ye well may claim the better part
Of living to Him nearer.

Bath, 1874.

* After the children's illness, when the world looked bright, and I was happy. Published in Christian Union.

A SHADOW.

To L. P.

THE leaves and grass are just as green
 This springtide as the last,
And this year's flowers as bright and fair
 As those of any past.
The breezes come and go as fresh,
 The brooklet runs as free,
But naught is bright, or sweet, or fair,
 Or fresh or green, for me.

I find a blight on every flower,
 A cloud on every scene,
And in the birds' most joyous notes
 A thrill of woe between.
For, O, each voice that Nature hath
 Doth take from ours its tone,
And every form of life the hue
 And shadow of our own.

The niche was small, O vanished friend,
Thou in my life didst fill;
Yet, as the weary months go by,
I miss and mourn thee still.
For thus, ungrateful, we misprize
The blessings that we gain,
Until we reach out empty hands
And sigh for them in vain!

Bath, 1874.

SEA-WEED.*

O BEAUTEOUS foliage of the ocean world,
Torn from the parent stem and rudely hurled
By adverse fate upon our foreign shore,
Weep ye your sea-deep home forevermore,
Poor dripping things about my fingers curled?

Nay, shrink not at my touch; the leaves, the flowers,
And all your kin in this bright world of ours
Make me their friend, and whisper in my ear
Their dearest secrets, without thought of fear—
Secrets of wood, and field, and garden bowers.

And yours I know! You, weeping o'er my hand,
Are a huge tree down in your elfin land;
Above your envious fellows towering there,
As oak or elm here in our upper air:
You see how well your words I understand!

And these, of leaf-like form and emerald sheen,
Are meadows for your fairy fetes, I ween;
Where nymph and naiad dance the hours away,
Nor seek their sea-shell couch till dawn of day;
Guess I not wisely what your whispers mean?

And these, that to my giant vision seem
Transparent lace-work, fragile as a dream,
Your pigmy hunters find a trackless maze,
Whose labyrinths their dizzy senses daze;
Nay, but I know ye better than ye deem!

And this, of thread-like stem and feathery bough,
Hath hearkened oft your sea-folk lover's vow;
And these, your drooping willows, sadly weep
Your loved and lost that mid the coral sleep:
Ah, sweet my friends, will ye not trust me now,

And go with me, as far from hence I roam,
Fair blossoms plucked from the wild ocean's foam?
Your briny fragrance to my heart shall bring
Thoughts sweet as summer, fresh as balmy spring—
Embodied memories of my ocean home!

Bath, 1874.

* My "sea-weed fancy," as a friend called it. Written at Bath, and a favorite of mine.

COMPENSATION.

INCIDENT AT BATH, 1874.

I WALKED adown my leaf-strewn garden-path
Whereon a vine, torn from its fastenings there,
Lay bruised and trailing on the autumn leaves.
My heart was sad, with griefs it ever hath
Since my life's summer fled and left all bare
The sweet green fields, ungarnered all my sheaves.

"Ah, vine," I said, as with my foot I moved
Its clinging tendrils from my path away,
"Fit emblem of my broken life thou art!
And even thus, as all too well I've proved,
Do happier lives pass mine, or only stay
To thrust me from their greener ways apart.

"Yet art thou blessed beyond me. I, alas,
Would count it bliss beneath God's sunshine warm
To sleep away in death my weary days."

When stooping, lo, beneath the leaves and grass
All wet with tears of the last night's wild storm,
Two purple clusters met my wondering gaze—

The while two chubby arms about my neck
Drew down my face to meet an eager kiss,
And other two as fondly held me fast.
And there with tears I could not, would not, check,
"Ah, vine," I murmured, "for such fruit as this
Well may we both forget the summer past!"

UNAPPRECIATED.

L. P.

A FRIEND some blooming crocus bulbs
Brought to my hand one day ;
I, little prizing friend or gift,
Unheeding went my way.

Another day, and lo, the flowers
Had dropped, the friend was fled.
Ah, then, above the clay of both,
What bitter tears I shed !

While, springing from some hidden root
Among those withered flowers,
One sweet, blue violet droops its head
Beneath my eyes' hot showers.

So, in my heart, O misprized friend,
There springs at last for thee,
From the unvalued, vanished past,
A tender memory.

Bath, 1874.

TO CHATTIE.

O SAY, dost remember, my sweet sister-friend,
A fancy we had in our far youthful days,
That fate e'er to each the same boon did extend,
That, rugged or smooth, our feet walked the same
ways?

Nor grief of your childhood, nor joy, but in mine
Some counterpart found, on mine left some trace;
No light on my girlhood e'er fell, but in thine
'Twas caught and reflected with lovelier grace.

How blue was the sky that did arch o'er us both,
How green was the path that stretched out to our
feet,
When into our lives came sweet love's plighted
troth
And earth with all heavenly joy seemed replete!

And when each to her heart held a babe all her
own—

Shared only with him who was dearer than life,—
Nor childhood nor youth e'er such raptures had
known

As those that we then knew as mother and wife.

But alas, here the parallel lines cease to run—

Death came, all my hopes and my sweet joys to
blight ;

While love's day for you hath but scarcely begun
My sun has gone down in the darkness of night.

SONNETS BY THE SEA.

ON LEAVING BATH, AUTUMN OF 1874.

O CALM and placid, bright and beauteous sea,
Smiling beneath the radiant sunset sky,
While many a snow-white sail, afar and nigh,
Reflects the glow above them down on thee—
Entranced I gaze, and wonder can it be
That storms could lift thy waters mountains high,
And send to death yon barks that peaceful lie.
Yet sweet the thoughts which thou dost bring
to me—

For O, my life is rough and tempest-tossed
As thy smooth waves oft have been in the past;
Its fair hopes wrecked, and vanished every one,
I still shall see—tho' now I call them lost—
Reflecting Heaven's glory at the last
In the clear light of Life's calm setting sun.

Farewell, O tuneful, trustful, helpful sea!
I go to dwell far from thy well-known shore.
Thy "voice of many waters" nevermore
Shall moan or murmur, sigh or sing, for me,
Thy whispering waves in seeming sympathy
Steal up to kiss my weary feet no more,
Nor thy cool spray my cheek, bedewed before
With tears as salt and wet as thine can be.
Dear, soothing, cheering, *speaking* friend, farewell!
I weep to leave thee, and hide not my tears;
A ministering angel unto me
Thou long hast been, and, certes, who shall tell,
As on I journey down the weary years,
How much I owe these last two, spent near thee?

WATCHING AND WAITING.*

FROM my upper window, at the close of day,
 Sadly watching passers on their homeward way ;
Sadly, sweetly thinking of the joy and glee
When one came, my babies, home to you and me !

In the dusk, with faces close against the pane,
Peered we thro' the starlight, snow or summer rain—
Happy hearts and faces watching thro' the gloom
For the blessed footstep that was sure to come.

Hark! I hear its echo, babies mine, once more!
Hear the latch-key turning in the opening door!
From my knee you're springing, fearless in the
 gloom,
While I flood with radiance all the darkened room.

Swift you fly to meet him, open wide the door,
Closely are we gathered to his heart once more ;
Tender kiss and blessing greet your childish glee,
But the warmest, babies, always was for me.

Fast my tears are falling o'er the memory sweet,
While I catch the echo still of passing feet ;
But, thro' summer starlight, or thro' wintry rain,
Never, O my babies, will he come again !

We are now the wanderers in the dusk and gloom,
He the one that's waiting in the happy home ;
From his upper window, tho' we may not see,
He's watching, O my babies, to welcome you
and me.

* My most successful poem,—that is, most widely copied and most commented on. It was written in ten minutes or less, on a snowy twilight in March, 1875, Orchard Street, Newark. "From my upper window" refers to the second floor on which I lived alone with "my babies." I had been writing all day to finish a story which had long occupied me, and looking upon the snow falling and the passers by, while my little lads prattled beside me, these words came to me. When the children, clamoring suddenly for their supper, were set down to their bread and milk, I hastily wrote in pencil the verses, and, slipping them in the morning in the envelope that carried my story to Harper's, asked the Editor's opinion of the lines. Many hopes hung on the story—the verses I thought little about—but the story was returned and a check for fifteen dollars for the poem! The story, "True," was afterward sold to the Christian Union for seventy dollars.

“HE SHALL GIVE HIS ANGELS CHARGE
CONCERNING THEE.*

STUMBLING I walked through sand and miry
clay,

Bearing two lambs of my far-scattered flock—
And lo! an angel met me in the way
And set my weary feet upon a rock.

Across my path, as trembling there I stood,
There roared a torrent, dark and deep and wide—
And lo! his strong hand bridged the raging flood,
And brought us safely to the other side.

Through a dense wood I fled, contesting hard
With hungry wolves the burden sweet I bore—
And lo! his hand clasped mine, bleeding and scarred,
And led me out into the light once more.

For Care and Fear and Want no spectres are,
O, thoughtless children ye of joy and mirth!
And loving heart and helping hand by far
The brightest angels that come down to earth!

* Written in Orchard Street, Newark, where I spent
some dark days in 1875.

THE REGATTA.*

SWIFT as an arrow from the archer speeding,
Up the smooth stream they dart toward the
goal;

And now the Red and now the Blue is leading—
Ah! which shall Fame upon her lists enroll?

On, on, with flash of oar, and pennons streaming,
Like wild birds on the wing they skim the wave;
And crimson cheeks and blue eyes brightly beaming
Hang proudly forth the colors of the brave.

Mid shout and cheer, and snowy kerchiefs flying,
Now, men of muscle, show what you can do!
And vigorous arms the ashen oars are plying
Of Grey, and Crimson, White and Red and Blue.

Honor to all we yield in loyal duty,
To stout young arms and stouter hearts within;
On every color smiles fair youth and beauty,
Nor are the bravest always those who win.

Ah! youth and strength, life's longer, harder races
Are yet before you,—up then, and away!
Spring to your oars with these same earnest faces,
And pull as bravely as you do to-day.

Off with all trammels and life's vain disguises—
To lofty, noble aims your spirits bend!
Snatch from the hand of Fate her proudest prizes,
And in with flying colors at the end!

*To which I was invited as the guest of the "Blues," and, as poet of the occasion, to celebrate in verse, their victory—which they didn't win! Nothing remained for the minstrel but to detract (most ungenerously) from the honor attained by the rival crew. See last line of the fourth stanza.

THE CRYSTAL WEDDING.*

TO MR. AND MRS. J. DEYO CHIPP.

1860—1875.

WHILE gathering near with festive cheer
Your bounteous board's fair spreading,
The task is mine to pour the wine,
Our toast—The Crystal Wedding!

How crystal clear the years appear
As ye two look them over,
Since pledged was youth and love and truth
To happy bride and lover.

The while ye gaze ye see no haze
Of storm or cloudy weather,
O'er all doth shine the love divine
That brought ye then together.

The tears that fall, the cares that all
Must know, howe'er repining,
Like mists that pass from off the glass
Beneath the sun's bright shining.

O blessed love, that lives above,
All earthly change and sorrow,
Drives clouds away, and makes to-day
Sweet promise of to-morrow!

Though youth has fled, with some joys dead,
Since that fair summer morning,
Lo, time doth bring a sweeter spring,
And sweeter hopes are dawning.

The little band that 'round you stand
With dearer joys have crowned you;
And each that came your love to claim
Brought troops of angels 'round you!

These crystal souls your life controls
Are surely love's best token;
And few, aye few, can claim, like you,
A circle still unbroken.

Let youth here see what love can be,
Nor hearts nor tongues be idle!
And crystal eyes give sweet replies
For many another bridal!

And now to you, O happy two,
Love's flowery path still treading,
With joy we come to fill your home,
And keep your crystal wedding!

And much we pray, this marriage day,
Joining new years and olden,
May bid love wait to celebrate
The silver and the golden!

And when at last earth's love is past
All told the fair, sweet story,
Lift up your eyes where crystal skies
Reveal love's brighter glory!

Kingston, June 23, 1875.

* Written for my brother and his wife. Something of a jingle, but, read on the occasion in crowded parlors, passed off very well.

THE CLEANING OF THE IVY.*

OVER the land swept a great desolation,
That carried destruction and death through
the world—

The dear little word of the wingéd creation,
That dwelt where the ivy leaves twisted and
curled.

Around the old church, through the winter so weary,
The sparrows had fluttered, their neighbors to tell
Of what they would do when the snow king so
dreary
Had fled on spring breezes in Greenland to dwell.

At last came the sunny and bright April weather—
What a musical twitter there was in the air,
As the dear little housekeepers clustered together,
Their joys and their sweet little secrets to share.

Then away on swift wing they would wander, and
certain
With thread or with straw would each wanderer
come,
And slip it in slyly beneath the green curtain
That hid from rude gazers each dear little home.

And passing the church on a bright sunny morning,
With a heart sorely troubled and aching with
pain,
Lo! a new and sweet peace on my darkness seemed
dawning,
And I learned from the birds to be happy again.

But when I next went to my dear little teachers, '
To ask a new lesson and learn to be led,
I found that the helpless and innocent creatures
Needed comfort and help from their pupil instead.

For lo! a rude man on a towering ladder
Was cleaning the ivy with brush and with broom!
Not a whit did he care, indeed he seemed gladder,
If each sweep of his hand tore away a wee home.

O the dear little birds, how they scolded and
pleaded!

What a sorrowful twitter there was in the air!
But the rough, cruel man not a note of it heeded—
What mattered to him all their grief and despair?

As down in the grass each little nest tumbled,
A new little cry seemed to come from each heart,
And I felt in their presence as shamefully humbled
As if in the outrage my hand had a part.

O, dear little spirits of song and of gladness!
Hard fate has been cruel to you and to me;
But you will forget, little friends, all your sadness,
And build a new nest in yon new greener tree.

But alas! In my heart cruel Fate's sharper arrows
Have left deeper wounds, and my night has no
dawn,
Ah, would it be wiser, if hearts, like the sparrows,
Could build a new nest when the old one is gone?

Newark, 1876.

* Written for the children. The chief interest attached to it is the fact that, introduced to a stranger some time after, he took a copy of the verses from his pocket-book, not knowing till then the author.

GREETING TO A SOUTHERN BRIDE.

MRS. B. W. HUNT, OF GEORGIA.

WELCOME Northward with the Springtime
Filling all our land with bloom,
Singing birds and balmy zephyrs,—
Welcome, Southern stranger, home!

Fair your land, and rich the treasure
Nature's lavish hand bestows;
But here also gleams her beauty,
Waves her green and blooms her rose!

Northern fields have donned their brightest
Emerald robes to welcome you!
Northern skies now smile as sunny
As your cloudless dome of blue!

Northern hands can clasp as warmly,
Northern hearts can love as well;
Northern lips the same sweet story
With the same fond fervor tell!

Trust the Northron, then, sweet stranger,
Lay your hand in his and come—
Welcome, welcome to the Northland!
Welcome, dear, to love and home!

Newark, May, 1876.

ROSES AND CYPRESS.*

FLOATING on Broadway's lazy tide
Mid thoughts that idly rove,
There sweeps in beauty by my side
A young and fair and girlish bride,
Wearing her robes with royal grace,
And bearing on her sunny face
The light of happy love.

And close beside her, sad and slow,
With wearied step and air,
Another's garments shadows throw,—
The trailing weeds of widow's woe,
Declaring with a mournful grace
The fate that on her sweet, young face
Pale Grief has written there.

And, as with tearful glance, yet kind,
She passes on her way,
Her sweeping veil floats out behind,
And, caught upon the morning wind,

Enshrouds within its gloomy fold
The radiant brow whose locks of gold
Sweet Love but crowned today.

And as I see the bright, young thing
Look out with laughing eye,
Yet closer to his side still cling
Who from all ills defence can bring,
I tremble lest on that fair brow
Where orange blossoms flutter now,
The widow's crepe may lie.

And walking on in gloom apart
Life's mystery to prove,
"O, Love!" I cry, "O, woman's heart
Whose very life and soul thou art,
Wait ye for heaven's 'diviner air,'
Ye'll surely find your rapture there,
For God himself is Love."

* Dr. Holland thought he would take it for Scribner's, and then he thought he wouldn't! Published in Christian at Work, Dr. Talmage's paper.

UNTIMELY.

O CLOUDY skies, still weeping on
From morn till noon, from noon to night
Still from your dark and gloomy height
Pouring your ceaseless tear-drops down,

Hath some great grief o'ertaken thee,
O spirit of the stormy wind?
And dost thou consolation find
Sweet Nature's sympathy to see?—

Poor mother earth drenched with thy woe,
The tear-wet grass, the dripping trees,
The drooping grain, the moaning breeze,
The broken-hearted flowers bowed low?

O, spirit of the storm, forgive
That my heart cannot share thy pain!
Mid all thy gloom and tears of rain
I find it sweet and fair to live.

There was a time my tears did flow
As fast and free as thine to-day;
I wept the days and nights away—
Thou hadst no pity for my woe.

The mocking sun shone thro' the trees,
The skies with clearest blue were spread,
While hope and joy for me seemed dead;
Why were not those days like to these?

Why did my grief not waken thine?
Why, with bright life, face my dark death?
Why foundst not then thy sobbing breath,
And mingled thy wild tears with mine?

But when I am no longer sad,
And life once more with hope doth bloom,
Lo, thou dost shroud me with thy gloom,
And frown and weep to see me glad.

Come, drive thy gloomy clouds away,
And look with brighter eyes in mine;
For I am glad, come rain or shine—
I cannot weep with thee to-day!

LEFT FROM THE WRECK.*

COME hither, my baby, my sweet yearling lamb,
My poor rain-drenched blossom, my storm-
gathered pearl;

All broken and blighted and wrecked, as I am,
I've a remnant of life still in thee, baby girl.

Yet the fine gold is dimmed of each fair flossy curl,
And the tears in my eyes shadow thine in eclipse:
Would Heaven each tear were ten curses, to hurl—
Nay, kiss me, my baby, and seal my rash lips!

Aye, kiss me, my beautiful; soothe my wild heart,
And cling, O sweet burden, cling close to my
breast,

Where nothing shall part us—nay, why dost thou
start?

Dost catch from within the turmoil and unrest?
And now thou art laughing as 'twere some gay jest,
Such frolic as mother and baby delight

Who watch with glad eyes for the one they love
best,

Whose coming makes day of each love-lighted
night.

None come to us, darling; so rest thee again,
While softly I sing in the fast-fading light,
To the tune of the sorrowful, pattering rain,
Of one star that rose bright on my desolate night;
Of one blossom snatched from the storm and the
blight;
Of one treasure left on my young life's bleak
shore,
When the tempest swept o'er it in terror and might,
And youth, hope, and happiness fled in an hour.

The garden, my blossom, where first thou didst
bloom,
Was sunny and verdant as Love ever grew;
Its roses, the reddest, shed sweeter perfume
Than the vale of Cashmere in its glory e'er knew.
And laving the sward with their shimmering blue
Were the sun-lighted waves of a radiant sea,
Where I gathered the blossoms, all wet with the
dew,
Or laughed with the ripples that broke on the lea.

But an Eden like this ne'er to mortal was given
But the curse on earth's children would find it at
last;

Its blossoms were swept to the four winds of
Heaven,

And the wild waters echoed the shriek of the blast,
As I fled, tempest-driven, forlorn and aghast,

One flower to my heart I held thornless and sweet ;
As the mad waves pursued me, remorseless and fast,
I stooped for one pearl they had left at my feet.

Calm now, and passionless—hope itself fled—

I gaze on my garden's bare, desolate ground,
With eyes that no longer have tears to be shed,
With heart that no other can torture or wound.

Like a beggar in rags, with a diadem crowned,

I sit with my child on my desolate hearth ;
And, with all I have lost, thank God I have found
One link of the chain that binds Heaven to earth!

* Thereby hangs a tale of my literary experience. In the first place, it was my first effort to write "outside" of my own experience. "Come out of yourself," said an editorial friend, "and give us something new." A divorced wife with a little daughter was about as opposite an experience to my own as I could find. Under the title of "Divorced," I sent it to Harper's, and it was returned. Disappointed, I threw it in my desk, and a year after sold it to Baldwin's Monthly for \$10. The editor desiring a new title, I sent it to the editor of Harper's, who was a personal friend by that time, and requested him to name it, telling its destination. He immediately wanted it for the Magazine, and declared it impossible that he had ever rejected it. Baldwin's, however, would not give it up, and thereby I lost in both money and so much of fame!

IN TWO WORLDS.*

WHILE in this bleak world I tarry,
 In another world I live;
While this life's sore cross I carry,
 Wear the crown that life doth give,
There I find in full completeness
 All the joys that cheat me here;
There life's flowers keep all their sweetness,
 Blighted not by frost or tear.

There the light is ever golden;
 There no night with chilling dew;
There the happy years and olden
 Meet the happy days and new;
There no storm clouds ever gather,
 Drenching all my garden ground;
There the sunny summer weather
 Of the heart is ever found.

There the true and tender-hearted
 Meet me from the farther shore;
There the loved and long departed
 Take me to their hearts once more;

There the ties that years have broken
 (Life, like death, can part as well)
Are renewed, and sweet words spoken
 Mortal tongues may never tell.

There are hearts and souls unfettered,
 Earth's conventions far above;
There the wise and the unlettered
 Meet upon the plane of love;
There to prisoned souls is given
 All the truth that sets them free;
There is light and warmth and Heaven,
 There is love and liberty.

Blessed land of the ideal!
 Blessed life my soul doth live!
Blessed world! the true, the real;
 This the shadow that doth give.
Spread, O human hearts, your pinions!
 Rise to all that's fair and sweet!
That is Life's own bright dominions,
 This the clouds beneath our feet.

* A favorite with me once—it seems rather transcendental now. It has more meaning to myself, probably, than another, as I understand all the references made, many friends being thought of in the third and fourth stanzas.

REMEMBRANCE.

*“If on my grave the summer grass were growing,
Or cheerless wintry winds around it blowing,
Through joyous June or desolate December,
How long, sweetheart, how long would you remember?
How long, dear love, how long?”*

FOR years, dear love, the grasses have been
growing
Above thy grave, and wintry winds been blowing,
Through joyous June and desolate December,
And still I weep, still love, and still remember—
So long, dear love, so long.

And on through all the coming years so dreary,
Life's long, lone path, so rough, sweetheart, and
weary;
Life has no June, but, through its bleak December,
So long, sweetheart, so long will I remember—
So long, dear love, so long.

Until I reach that shore where naught shall sever
Hearts that love once and that once is forever ;
The summer land where comes no chill December,
So long, sweetheart, so long will I remember—
 So long, dear love, so long.

A CURL.*

WHEN BERTIE WAS SHORN OF HIS LONG CURLS ON
HIS EIGHTH BIRTHDAY.

A TWINING ringlet of golden hair,
Soft and silken and bright and fair,
Lies in my open hand.
And my eyes grow dim as I see it there—
That beautiful curl of sunny hair,
Each thread a golden strand.

'Twas cut from a brow where many more
Clustered and gathered, a golden store
A miser's coffers might fill;
From a fair young head that oft was blessed
By "a vanished hand," and hushed to rest
With the sound of "a voice that is still,"—

The hand so tender, true and strong,
That gently guided mine along
Life's bright and flowery way;

The voice I never more may hear,
In tones of love to smooth and cheer
The path so rough to-day.

“And the child is not?” you softly say;
Nay, Death when he blighted my life that day,
In pity left one joy;
And close to my lonely pillow to-night
Will nestle the golden head so bright
Of my fair-haired, fatherless boy.

Newark, August 5, 1876.

* In connection with this poem my mother used to relate an incident which illustrated the wonderful unselfishness of my brother's character. As a child he wore long, golden curls, which she so loved that she would not let them be cut off until he was eight years old—not realizing the terrible trial and mortification they were to him. His eighth birthday, when the curls were to be shorn, was long looked forward to, but on the way to the barber's he noticed how sad mother was, and, stopping at the door, he drew her back and said, “Mamma, if you feel so very badly about it, I guess I can stand it to wear them another year!” Mother was always glad to remember she did not take advantage of this offer.—C. H. B.

ANOTHER WAY.

PERHAPS you've heard the story
Of Little Benny Gray,
Who learned 'twas sad and shocking
Such naughty words to say,
(A habit much to be deplored
In any, old or young),
And how his mother cured him,
Putting mustard on his tongue?

This drew out all the poison
The naughty words left there,
But the process was so painful
Master Benny didn't care
To have it oft repeated;
And so, you see, 'tis plain
He never let the wicked words
Come near his lips again.

Now I know of another way,
And I will tell it here,
For those who think the mustard cure
A little too severe;
It is not pleasant, though, of course;
But then, you may be sure,
The disease not being pleasant,
Why, so neither is the cure.

There is a little boy I know—
Indeed, I know him well;
His name, for certain reasons, though,
I do not care to tell—
Whose mother heard him say, one day,
While playing on the floor,
Some words that from his little lips
Had never dropped before.

I sprang up from my chair—
At least his mother did, I mean—
Such fear and horror in her face
Had never there been seen!
She dashed out from the room in haste,
Returning on the spot
With basin, soap-dish, brush and sponge,
And water steaming hot.

Another Way.

Meanwhile the little boy looked on
 With wondering surprise,
Wide open was the little mouth,
 Wider the big blue eyes.
Then mother's soapy fingers caught
 The pretty dimpled chin,
And straight between the rosy lips
 The smoking sponge went in!

And soon with suds the little mouth
 Was brimming, bubbling o'er,
And covered all his cheeks and chin
 Like sea-foam on the shore;
While great big tears fell from his eyes
 Like drops of morning dew,
And still his mother rubbed and scrubbed
 With sponge and tooth brush, too.

At last, with one full breath that seemed
 A sigh of hope, or fear,
She rinsed it well with water
 That was pure and bright and clear;
Then took the towel from his neck,
 Where she had tucked it in,
And wiped the brimming eyes, wet cheeks,
 And quivering little chin;

And kissing close the rosy mouth,
That now was sweet and clean,
"I hope," she said, "it never will
Need such a bath again!"
"Oh, no, mamma, I'm sure it won't,"
And then upon her breast
The little sobbing head was laid,
And warmly, closely pressed.

'Twas very hard and sad, I know,
But of this, too, I'm sure:
It wrought, with some outlay of soap
And tears, a perfect cure.
And when you want to see a mouth
"Just sweet enough to kiss,"
Look where you like, you will not find
A sweeter one than this!

HEART SEARCHINGS.

THERE hangs a picture in my little room
Of a face that is tender and strong and true,
Where in wintriest days sweet roses bloom,
And in summer violets wet with dew,—
Love's dearest, purest, holiest shrine,
The one bright spot in this room of mine.

To-day, a friend before it, soft and mild,
In words as soft and mild did sweetly speak,
" 'Tis better to have loved and lost"—she smiled,
And left the rest in tears upon my cheek—
Her fate than mine still being bitterer far,
As drops of gall than common tear-drops are.

To-night, alone, beneath that pictured face,
I'm gazing back into my blessed past,
Live o'er those days, so brief, of "tender grace"
(Love's dream when perfect rarely long doth last),
Then lift again the present's heavy cross,
This weight of loneliness and grief and loss.

Nay, nay, my heart, be just in all thy woe,
And here, to-night, take measure of thy pain!
All joy from life hath fled? Full well I know
That bliss like thine can ne'er return again,
Thy sun hath truly set; but through the night
The clear o'er-arching blue with stars is bright!

Strong hands grasp thine, and tender voices still
Make soft the wind with words of holy cheer,
And little hearts and hands their life fulfill
By bringing Heaven's life to thine more near,
As lily-cups may shed night's purest dew
Upon the parent stem from which they grew.

Nay, shrink not from me yet, but at my feet
Own all thy selfishness with all thy pain;
Own with thy griefs thy compensations sweet,
Nor call that loss that I shall prove thy gain.
Can love be lost? Can light, can truth, can Heaven?
If love be lost, then 'twere not love was given.

But love's expression, and its tender care?
Nay, even these, poor heart, are still thine own!
Rise from earth's damps to Heaven's "diviner air;"
Breathe, live, and know thou never art alone!
That watchful love doth guard and guide thee still,
Let tired feet go wandering where they will.

And failing thus to lift thy spirit thence,
This same dear love, in pity for thy woe,
Doth pierce at times the blinding veil of sense,
And teach thee, thou of little faith, to know
By touch and tone, though soft as zephyr's breath,
Both life and love may pass unchanged thro' death.

No loss, then, hast thou suffered. And thy gain?
Learning to walk by faith, and not by sight!
Transmuting into heavenly joys earth's pain!
Battling with self and conquering in the fight!
Then by death's golden ladder to arise
From heaven on earth to Heaven beyond the skies!

IN MEMORIAM.*

“Set my shoes where I will find them when I wake in the morning,” said the child, going to his night’s rest after the first “getting up,” and happy with childish delight at the prospect of convalescence.

O LONELY little shoon that wait
In vain the owner’s waking,
Oh, dreary dawn of cloudy morn
Where lonely hearts are aching.

Oh, boyish feet that skipped alike
O’er grassy path or gravel,
Ye cast off soon your little shoon,
Weary of earthly travel.

Oh, empty little shoon that tell
The empty home’s sad story,
Tell how the feet walk now the street
Of heavenly, golden glory.

Speak, empty shoon, and tell sad hearts
Where now the child is staying,
Speak of the Hand in that bright land
That keeps the feet from straying.

Oh, happy, happy little feet;
Oh, happy children taken!
For those that stay may walk a way,
Of hope and Heaven forsaken.

A rugged path is life at best,
The heavenly heights ascending,
With toilsome steep and pitfalls deep
Between us and the ending.

Then guard, O parent heart, and love
The children God hath given,
But scarcely dare to shed one tear
For those He takes to Heaven.

* Little Ted Reeves, who died of scarlet fever just as my boys were recovering; their playfellow and little neighbor—Vanderpool Street, Newark, 1877.

A SEPTENNIAL SONNET.*

MARCH 19.

ONCE more comes round the dreaded day,
Beloved,
That rent my happy, loving heart in twain,
And taught me all the bitter, bitter pain
Of that dear love, whose joys I scarce had proved
When from my straining sight thou wast removed,
And my wild heart God's goodness did arraign.
Yet hath not the hard lesson been in vain,
Since now I see how well it Him behooved
To put Himself between us, and so stand
That my heart, turning to the same dear place
It ever turned to hearken love's command,
Should meet, instead of thine, His close embrace;
Content to know He yet will lay my hand
Once more in thine, and bring us face to face.

Newark, 1877.

*Pronounced by critic friend of Harper's, "as a piece of literary work simply faultless"! "Approbation from Sir Hubert Stanley is praise indeed"! I wrote it however, with my heart, not with my head.

JOSEPH JEFFERSON.

BLOW gently, breezes soft and fair,
Roll westward, waves of foam,
Guard well, O ship, the treasures rare—
Bring the long absent home!

Within the Empire City's gate,
With hearts that beat as one,
Ten thousand loyal people wait,
To welcome Jefferson.

Lovers of art, who only know
The artist and the name,
Who fondly crowned him years ago
With laurel wreath of fame,

And hundreds of warm eager hands
That claim him for a friend,
Far out beyond the ocean's sands
Their loving welcome send.

And could we put a greeting song
On lips that fain would sing,
From what a mixed and motley throng
Would the loud welcome ring!

Orphaned and widowed, helpless, poor,
The friendless and forlorn,
Would stand in groups upon the shore
To welcome Jefferson.

And viewless spirits of the air,
In beautiful array—
But *they* are with him everywhere
And guard him night and day—

Spirits of Love and Faith and Hope,
The pure, the true, the good,
That taught his kindred heart the scope
Of man's true brotherhood.

O, we are proud who love him well,
That honors he hath won
Will yet to future ages tell
The name of Jefferson,

But better than all earthly fame,
In Heaven's diviner air,
Is writ in light the radiant name
By which they know him there.

Newark, 1877.

THE LAST SNOW MAN.

O UR garden was covered with snow one March
day,

And my two little boys, on the carpet at play,
Cried, "Let us go out, mamma—say that we can—
And build on the lawn there a great big snow man!"

So, muffled in mittens, and leggins, and tippets,
And what little Bud calls their "welwet ear-clappets,"
In full winter harness, my gay little span
Went off on a gallop to "build" their snow man.

With many a tumble and loud, merry shout,
They rolled the big snow-balls around and about,
Till Jack Frost had pinched both their fingers and
toes,

And little Bud's cheeks were as red as—his nose!

Then coming in, "Now he is all done," they said,
"If Uncle John only would stick on his head."
So Uncle John made him a head, and a hat,
And eyes, and a nose, and a mouth, and all that,

Put buttons of charcoal all down his white vest,
And a stick in the hand that was crossed on his
breast ;
And the boys went as happy as kings to their bed—
“Our snow man shall stand there all summer,” they
said.

But next morning old Sol—that, you know, means
the sun—
Peeped out from the sky, “Now,” said he, “I’ll have
fun ;
Just look at that white slave of winter! How dare
He be chilling and spoiling my balmy spring air?”

So he broke both his arms, and he bit off his nose,
Shot his bright arrows through him way down to
his toes,
Then poured water over him, too, till he ran
As fast as he could out of sight, the poor man !

And when my two laddies came home the next day—
For they had been gone on a visit away—
What do you suppose (now just guess if you can)
They thought had become of their great big snow
man?

THE ANGEL'S GIFT.

TO MRS. F. W.

A BRIGHT and gleaming angel
Stopped on his starlit way;
There, on her peaceful pillow,
A happy dreamer lay.

"Sweet heart," he softly whispered,
"A mighty power is mine;
Ask what thou most desirest—
Speak, and the boon is thine!

"I'll deck thy hand with diamonds,
Place gems upon thy brow,
Within thy home the tokens
Of boundless wealth bestow;

"Or, brimming high with pleasure,
I'll fill thy cup each day,
And scatter thornless roses
Along thy happy way.

The Angel's Gift.

“Or speak, and I will weave thee
That crown of woman's life—
A happy love—and hail thee
A loved and loving wife.”

Then first she made him answer,
“O angel bright and fair,
That best of all life's treasures
Is given to my care.

“Love, too, has blessed with plenty
My basket and my store,
And crowned my days with gladness
Till I can ask no more.

“My happy heart forever
One long, sweet song is singing,
No gift you now could bring me
Seems worthy of the bringing.”

Smiling, the angel vanished,
And with the parting gleam,
Waking, she softly murmured,
“O strange and happy dream!”

Months passed, and when June's roses
Scented the dewy morn,
Unto this wife so happy
A little babe was born.

Unseen, the same fair angel
 Within the chamber stood,
And thus was consecrated
 The gift of motherhood.

Months passed again, and daily
 The child in beauty grew,
Until from eyes of azure
 The soul is looking through ;

Then as the happy mother
 Hums o'er some baby air,
She turns, and lo! the angel
 Of her sweet dream is there!

“Drawn by the heavenly sweetness
 Of this new song you're singing,
I come to ask if love's last gift
 Proves worthy of the bringing.”

With eyes by love enkindled,
 With heart to rapture woke,
Both heart and eyes o'erflowing,
 The happy mother spoke :

“O angel, ever blessed,
 No words that tongue can frame
Can tell my soul's deep rapture,
 Or give this joy a name,

The Angel's Gift.

“Which came when all was brightness,
To bless my life still more,
And fill to overflowing
The cup so full before !

“O, tell me, blessed spirit,
While at thy feet I kneel,
What gift my hands can offer
To speak the praise I feel !”

“Nay, He who gives, gives freely,
And asketh no return,
Yet let this holy lesson
Thy grateful spirit learn—

“Yea, let it come with mighty
And all-prevailing power,
And this sweet baby-teacher
Impress it every hour—

“That if ye, being evil,
Such tenderness can know,
How much more shall thy Father
His wealth of love bestow !

“And this that floods thy spirit,
Vast as the boundless sea,
Is but the dim reflection
Of what He feels for thee !”

MY MOTHER CHURCH.

MY Mother Church! That heard my early vows,
Guarded my youth and blessed my riper
years,

Laid thy kind hand upon my children's brows,
Heightened my joys and sanctified my tears,—

Far have we wandered from thy sheltering arms,
At stern behest of life's and duty's call;
Yet in the midst of cares and all alarms
We feel thy blessing still upon us fall.

Lengthen thy cords and strengthen all thy stakes!
Forever still thy life and power increase!
Still soothe the hearts that sin or sorrow breaks,
And to life's weary ones bring rest and peace.

AN EASTERN LEGEND.

FROM Esdraelon to Nazareth
The lowly Jesus meekly trod,
Walking with weary, sandalled feet
The hilly, hot and dusty road.

His eyes were raised where Hermon rears
Its snow-crowned head against the blue,
With thoughtful, earnest gaze that seemed
To pierce the distant azure through.

The crowd that followed for the sake
Of signs and wonders to be seen,
"Murmured among themselves," or walked
With doubting, curious, sullen mien.

At last, with Pharisaic pride
They turn with scornful feet away
Where a dead dog across their path
Beneath the evening shadows lay.

The Master paused, the uplifted eyes
Turn from the distant vision sweet,
And shed their heavenly, glorious light
On the dead carrion at His feet.

Nothing too low to win His gaze,
Nothing too vile His heart to move,
On lowest forms of life there fall
The beams of heavenly light and love.

Words of disgust and loathing scorn
By Jewish lips are freely shed,
The Savior turns with gentle smile,
"How white its teeth," He softly said.

Teach us, O human Heart divine,
To follow in Thy gracious ways,
And in all human forms, at least,
To find some good, some cause for praise.

APRIL, SNOW.

O VER the maple buds drifts the cold snow,
Chilling the life that was ready to bloom,
O'er upspringing grasses the icy drifts blow,
Driving them back to their dark wintry tomb.

Birds from their sunny lands hasting away
Turn on the wing as they meet our chill air.
Sunbeams that brightened the fair April day
Trembling through clouds and then vanishing
there.

So, in my heart buds of hope were upspringing,
Fresh in the sunlight, and fair to behold,
Joy in the distance was timidly singing,
Clear dawned the morning in purple and gold.

But, ah, chilling clouds heavy shadows have brought,
Shrouded in death the sweet hopes of a day,
Hushed is the song whose far echo I caught,
Vanished the light that had gleamed on my way.

EASTER.

WITHIN kind Joseph's new made tomb
The form of Jesus lay,
His anguished, broken-hearted friends
Were gone in tears away.

The lonely, rocky, silent tomb,
Closed with the heavy stone—
Within, the weary form at rest,
The patient spirit gone.

They thought of all his heavenly deeds
Among the sons of men;
Oh, can it be that blessed friend
They ne'er shall see again?

What were those words he spake, so strange,
Of rising from the dead?
"Could such things be?" they whispered round,
With mingled hope and dread.

Two sleepless nights had passed away,
The third day now drew nigh;
The stars were fading in the light,
Day tinged the eastern sky,

When Mary came unto the grave
With tear-stained, pallid face,
And lo, the stone was rolled away!
An angel in its place!

His face was dazzling as the sun,
His raiment white as snow,
She hid her face within her hands,
And, trembling, turned to go.

But with a voice so sweet and kind,
"Fear not," he gently said:
"He is not here; why should you seek,
The living with the dead?"

And as she ran in haste and joy
The wondrous news to tell,
Lo, Jesus met her in the way,
The Lord she loved so well.

Oh, blessed and first Easter day!
And, day almost as fair,
When those we love whom Christ has called
Shall meet us over there!

West Haven, 1882.

TO MAY.

MOST sweet, charming time in the march of the
seasons,

In the long year of life it is surely the same ;
And these, I suppose, my young friend, are the
reasons

It was given to you as your most fitting name!

THE SPIRIT OF SONG.

SPIRIT of beauty, poesy and song,
How have I wandered from thy reach so long?
Where are the days, when, on thy lifted wings,
I soared above all earth's inglorious things,
From gloom and grief, regret and brooding care,
Into a purer, a "diviner air?"

Now like some wretch behind his cruel bars,
I catch no glimpse of heaven's sun or stars,
To my dark soul no inspirations come,
My eyes are blinded and my lips are dumb.
And tho' I've found that sought-for stone of old
That daily transmutes brain and nerve to gold,

Must I give all e'en for this magic stone,
And learn to live on bread—or husks—alone?
Strike off my fetters! Clear my earth-dulled sight,
And lift my face to the celestial light!
O, give me back the joy of vanished years—
The voice, though weak and often full of tears,

That made no discord in that heavenly strain,
Which thou didst teach me, in the glad refrain
Earth sends abroad on waves of melody
To join the grand celestial harmony—
That breath of life I've missed and mourned so
 long;—
Sweet spirit, give me back the gift of song!

Washington, 1884.

WITH A BUNCH OF ROSES.

IF "like unto like" be the law everywhere,
 (And philosophers say it is true);
If "sweets to the sweet" and flowers for the fair,—
 These roses bloomed, surely, for you!

TO A YOUNG FRIEND.

WHEN Nature with her wondrous brush
Has tinted with their rosy flush
The clouds at sunset overhead
And painted all the roses red,
“Tell me,” she cries, “what else to do
With this, my fairest, brightest hue?
What other lovely thing shall I
Match with the roses and the sky?”
Thus for a moment softly speaks,
Then lays her color on your cheeks.

TO MRS. AUGUSTUS JORDAN.

ON HER SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY.

FRIEND of the youthful heart and silvery hair,
How shall I greet thee on this golden day?
What form of speech shall my glad welcome bear?
How put in words the thing I fain would say?

Thou of the cheery heart and merry tongue,
Thy secret first—come, tell us truly, whether
These charms beguiled old Time to keep thee young
Thro' all these years that ye have walked together?

Tell us, O pilgrim with the placid brow,
How looks life's path from heights that thou hast
gained?
Like Christian's burdens are thine fallen now?
Forgotten, thorns that pierced and griefs that
pained?

As down the vista of the long, long years
Thine eyes look back, O tell us, dost thou see
Still the deep graves all wet with bitter tears
Where pale-faced Grief kept thy sad company?

Tell us, O friend of seventy summers gone,
That all dark spots in these poor lives of ours
Are left behind us as we journey on,
Grown green with verdure, overrun with flowers.

And tell us, friend in years and love grown wise,
Life's choicest blessings come to us at last,
Its chastenings seen as mercies in disguise,
Its hardest storms all safely overpast.

Dear fellow traveler, going on before,
Tell us who follow in life's devious way,
The same long path thy feet have journeyed o'er
Will lead us safely to as fair a day!

Washington, January 31, 1886.

TO MAY BELLE CHIPP.

ON HER WEDDING DAY.

YOUR wedding day, bright May,
Your wedding day!
What shall I sing or say, sweet May,
That will portray
The many thoughts that swell,
The hopes that would foretell
The joys that in the mystic future stay,
For you, dear May?

Your lovely face, fair May,
Your girlhood grace.
Time may, alas, erase, dear May:
He does efface
The loveliest things that live;
Yet may he ever give
All better things that we could wish or pray
For you, sweet May.

The loyal heart, dear May,
The better part,
No outward grace or art, sweet May,
Can counterpart;
 The love and truth and faith
 That outlive even death—
Be these the precious things that ever stay
 With you, bright May.

And all we crave, sweet May,
Young hearts would have;
The best that earth e'er gave, bright May,
May kind Fate save
 And shower upon your path
 The fairest things she hath;
Till like this happy, cloudless, summer day
 Your life, dear May.

Your wedding day, bright May,
Your wedding day!
God bless you and the day, sweet May!
Your fair hair gray
 May you look back to this
 Bright day of youth and bliss,
And find that long, long years did not betray
 Its hopes, sweet May!

Washington, July 22, 1886.

LIFE AND DEATH.

After a long and serious illness from typhoid fever, Mr. Levi Bacon, one of the most popular officials of the Interior Department, returned to his desk and met with a hearty welcome and numerous congratulations from both the gentlemen and ladies of the Department. One of the latter expressed the universal sentiment in the following greeting.

—WASHINGTON CAPITAL.

BESIDE a couch pale Love, untired,
Watched many a weary day,
And Hope and Fear together saw
The long hours creep away;
With Pain and Patience, pale-faced guests,
Peace could no longer dwell,
And troubled Thought in Fever's grasp
No more her wants might tell.

To this sick-bed and this sad group,
Two bright-faced angels came,
And one was strong and still and pale,
And Azrael was his name;
His face shone as the moonlight shines,
With purest peace profound,
And, like a garment, majesty
Encompassed him around;

The other, keen, clear-eyed, with life
And light upon his brow,
But meekly did his stately head
In silent reverence bow
When Azrael, calm, commanding, came
With gentle, noiseless feet,
While fell on all a breathless hush—
For Life and Death did meet.

Then Azrael spake, and with the words,
Across his heavenly face
A look of love and pity swept
That lighted up the place ;
“I come to break the cruel chains
Laid on this suffering soul,
And from his worn and weary frame
Your heavy burdens roll.

“His hair has whitened in your cause,
His eyes grown dim with tears,
Your stern behests he patiently
Has followed all these years.
Content in slavery, it may be,
But once I loose his chain
Think you he would return to what
Mortals call life again?

“I come to burst his prison doors,
I come to set him free,
To tear earth’s bandage from his eyes
And bid him truly see;
To lift him from this bed of pain,
To end the weary strife,
I come to give him health and strength
And never-ending life.

“O! fools and blind, these men of earth,
That hug their house of clay,
Unknowing to what heavenly heights
My hand can lead the way!
Angel of Life, that dost beguile
These helpless sons of men,
Why should I to thy service give
This passing soul again?”

And Life bent low; he had few words
To answer, but his plea
Was earnest, tender, passionate,
To change Death’s dread decree:
“O, brother mine, most wise,” he cried,
“If it indeed be true
That mortals live in deeds, not years,
The good that they can do,

“I grant thee this beloved son
Has reached earth’s longest span,
For he has lived alone to help
And bless his fellow man.
His eyes are dim, but ’tis with tears
Of others made his own ;
The lowliest may call him friend,
And meet no grief alone.

“The snow upon his brow is not
What Time alone has shed,
It is the bloom of blessings showered
Upon his gracious head.
Kind thoughts look ever from his eyes,
Kind words dwell on his tongue,
And if it be the heart that keeps
The spirit ever young,

“Then his, so full of love for all,
Of childlike faith and truth,
Will bless him with the summer time
Of a perpetual youth.
In thy bright realms, thou canst not lack
These souls of heavenly birth,
But not too many find their way
To this dull, selfish earth.

“In pity, then, return in peace
To thy fair land again,
And leave this gracious life to bless
And cheer his fellow men.”
And Azrael, smiling, left the couch
Where Love bent low to pray—
And thus it is we greet with joy,
Dear friend, this happy day!

Washington, 1886.

A WINTER BLOSSOM.

LITTLE Helen, winter's blossom,
Coming with the snow,
Surely 'tis in summer only
Such sweet flowers should blow;
When the lilies and the roses
Find their mortal birth,
Then should children, like the flowers,
Come to gladden earth.

But thy snow-white guardian angels
Chose to send thee, dear,
On the first and happy morning
Of a glad New Year,—
Fragile little human snow-drop
Falling from the skies,
Their rosy flush upon thy cheek,
Their blue within thine eyes.

Pure and fair forever, darling,
As thy native snow,
On through summers and through winters
Mayst thou gladly go!
Hearts and home to bless and brighten,
Sorrowing lives to cheer,
And to all who love thee bringing
Many a glad New Year!

LOVE'S INDIAN SUMMER.

TO JUSTICE AND MRS. L. Q. C. LAMAR.

IN those Mountains of Delight
Known in life as Love and Youth,
On the hills of that sweet Far-away,
Where are visions ever bright,
And their fairest dreams are truth,
On whose soft enchanted air
Never falls the shade of care,
From whose fountains' crystal draught
Nectar of the gods is quaffed,
Where the roses ever bloom,
Night and winter never come,
But all blithe, and glad, and gay,
Youthful feet forever stray
In the dawn of one long
And unclouded summer day,—

In that land of Long Ago,
In the golden summer weather,
Two bright streams meet and laugh in the sun;

And they sparkle as they flow,
And they murmur on together
Amid apple blooms and flowers
And the leafy, verdant bowers,
Through the daisies and the dew,
Under skies of heavenly blue,
While the birds on every spray
Sing the golden hours away ;
They are dancing as they run,
And they sparkle in the sun,
And they meet and they greet,
As they seem to melt in one.

'Tis a pebble or a straw
That has turned their course aside,
As they flow all aglow in the sun ;
And this slight dividing flaw,
Lo, it parts them far and wide
As o'er crag or through morass
Or the waving meadow grass,
Fanned by zephyrs, strewn with flowers,
Swept by sudden gusts and showers,
On they flow through miles of years ;
And they scatter drops like tears,

Or they sparkle in the sun,
But, ah, never more as one
Do they meet, do they greet,
As they travel, travel on.

There's a vale that lies midway
'Twixt those mountains and the sea,
And its charms dwellers there only know,
But its happy people say—
Howsoever strange it be—
That those Mountains of Delight
Have no visions half so bright,
That the harmony profound
Knows not jarring breath nor sound,
While a sweet and dreamy haze
Fills the Indian Summer days
With the glory and the glow
Of the golden Long Ago,
And a peace that doth increase
With the glad years' happy flow.

To this valley still and sweet,
With its golden vintage crowned,
Flow those streams from the uplands so fair;

Here their placid waters meet,
Here their resting place is found ;
Each unto the other brings
Wealth of all its wanderings,
And upon the brimming tide
Freighted barks in safety glide ;
Precious fabrics of the years,
Diamond gems that gleam like tears,
Costly treasures rich and rare,
Their united waters bear,
As they flow in the glow
Of the peaceful autumn air.

'Round this calm, serene retreat,
Open only to the sky,
Purple peaks, veiled in mist, silent stand ;
On their slopes the golden wheat
And the fragrant vineyards lie ;
Echoing o'er hill and dell
Sounds the mellow vesper bell,
Lighted by the evening star
Youth's fair Mountains shine afar—
Cloud-kissed their highest eastern hill,
But here the heavens bend lower still,

And to those who, hand in hand,
By the radiant arch are spanned,
There is given foretaste of Heaven,
In this its gate and border-land.

Washington, January, 1887.

A SOLILOQUY.

UPON RECEIVING A VERY YOUNG LADY'S CARD.

AND who is this, I'd like to know—this Eleanora
Lord?

A regal, lordly title, too, it is, upon my word.

No dainty little damsel, she, or fairy sprite, I ween;
The very name would indicate a grand, majestic
mien;

The lady of some lordly knight; some old-time,
vanished queen.

Yet on my recognition she would seem to make
some claim,

And with condescending graciousness she sends to
me her name.

With a strange air of dignity her card comes to my
door;

And yet not strange. I have it now! She has been
here before!

Lived as some high-born dame perchance, or queen
of old renown;
Her card is now her sceptre, and her name her regal
crown.
Depend upon it she's lived here in some form or
another;
Perhaps she's my—or, stranger yet, her own—
great-great-grandmother!
It makes me feel so young and queer—why, I'm a
child beside her!
Dear me! I must be careful in no way to wound
her pride, or
Be slow to send my greeting for this unexpected
honor,
For she'll not brook, you may be sure, the least
slight put upon her.
And when I meet her I must guard my every look
and word,
And with old-time sweeping curtsy greet—Eleanora
Lord!

Washington, March, 1889.

TO MRS. RHODES.*

A CROSS your portal, O my friend unknown,
My wandering feet unwitting have strayed,
And as I paused, reluctant and afraid,
Lo, every thing about me seemed my own!
The plants and pictures, atmosphere and tone,
And artist touch, to you just tribute paid,
Yet all, familiar, for my use seemed made.
And you, I pray, this trespass will condone;
For as the traveller who no more would roam,
In dreams comes back to kindred and to home,
So I, a stranger in your golden land,
Not having seen your face or clasped your hand,
Into your home-place have thus wandered in,
To find myself at home, and claim you kin!

San Francisco, 1903.

* Arriving in San Francisco from the Yosemite Valley a day or two sooner than expected, the rooms reserved for us at the Hotel Colonial were not available, and the proprietor kindly accommodated mother in a very pretty and homelike room belonging to a permanent guest of the hotel, who happened to be absent. Upon leaving these cosy quarters, mother left this sonnet for her unknown hostess.—C. H. B.

TO GALEN CLARK.*

ON HIS NINETIETH BIRTHDAY.

O FRIENDS, how shall we greet this friend of
ours?

How fitly celebrate this golden day?
We need the brimming cup enwreathed with flowers,
And garlands green of laurel and of bay!

For who that comes to four-score years and ten
With tireless zeal can still his powers employ,
Moving alert among his fellow men,
With mind of sage and spirit of a boy?

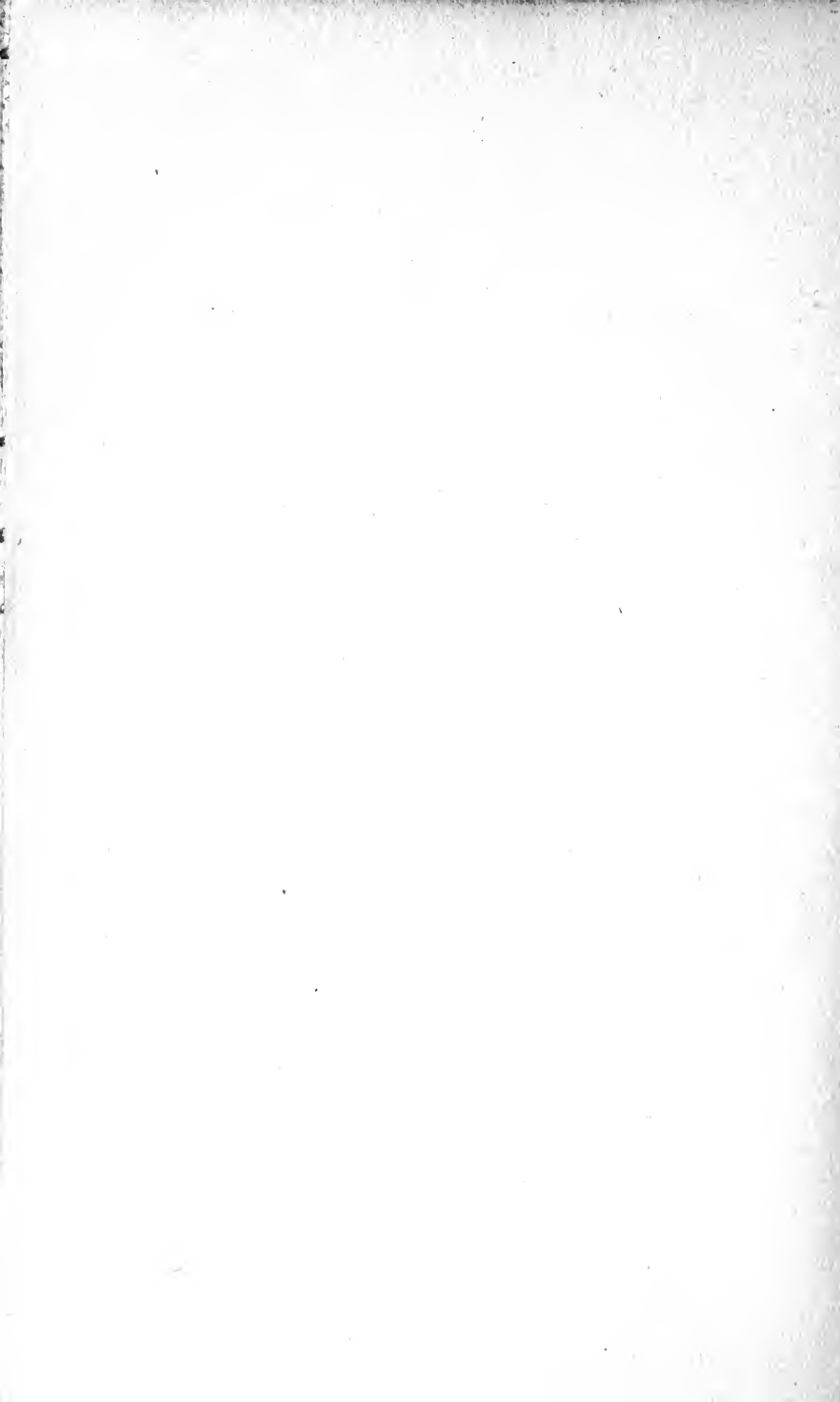
And though he has already richly won
More honors than his gentle soul would claim,
At ninety has a new career begun
That adds the title "Author" to his name.

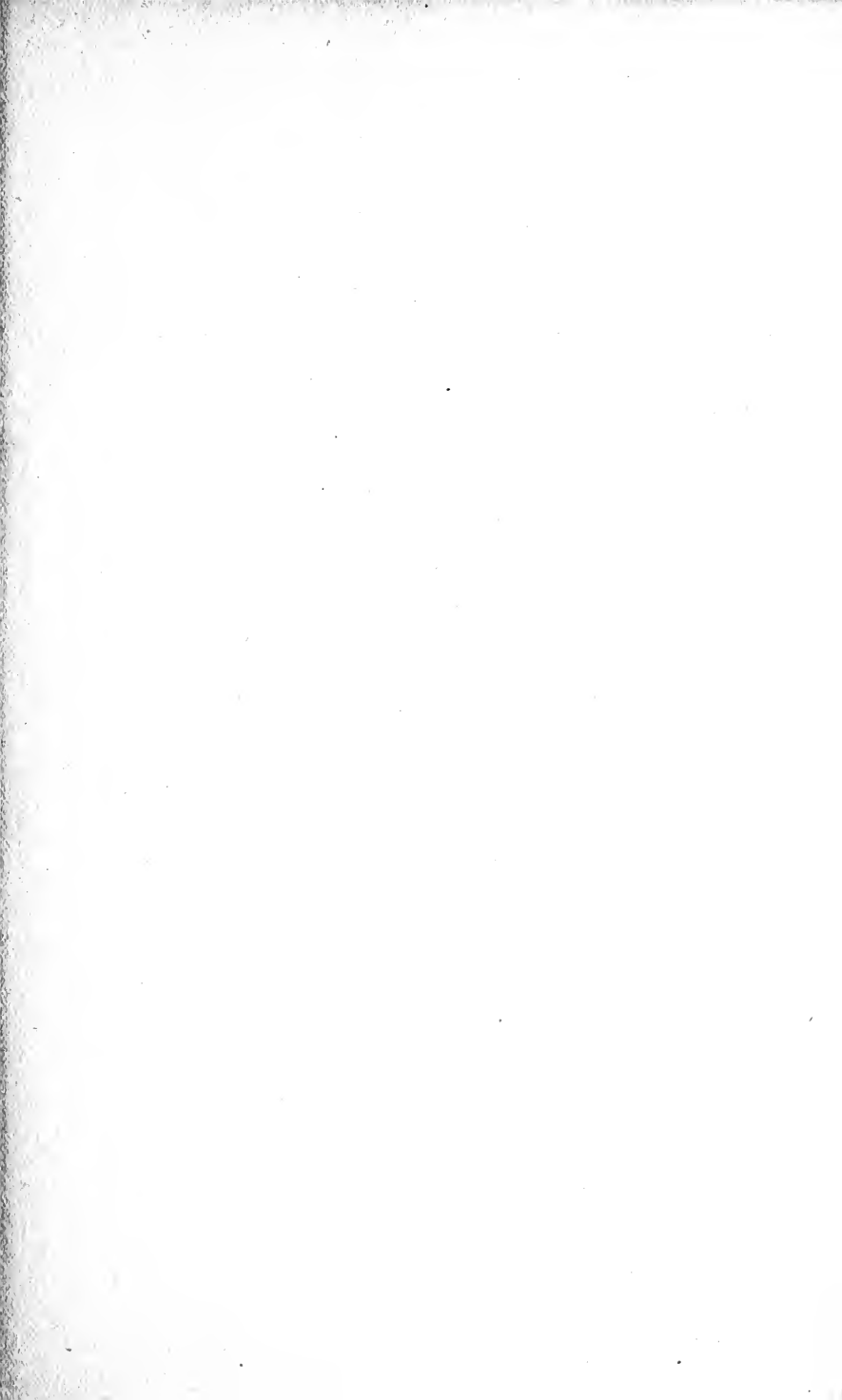
The vital life that speaks through tongue and pen,
The soul serene, aglow with love and truth,
The modest worth, that asks not praise of men,—
All these shall crown him with eternal youth.

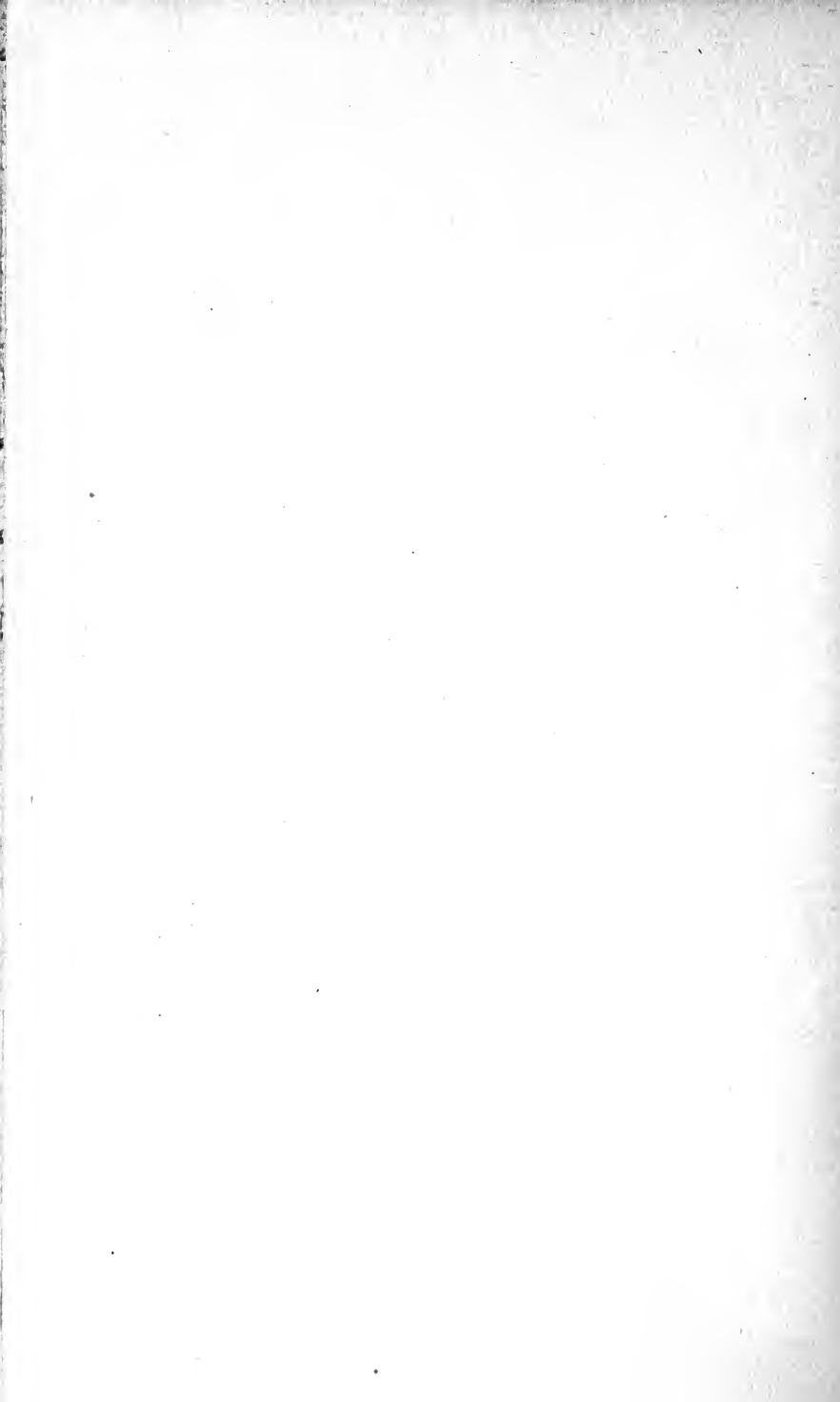
Thrice honored friend, we have no words to speak
All that our hearts with love and pride would say;
We only know, a white, white stone we seek,
To mark this most unique, auspicious day!

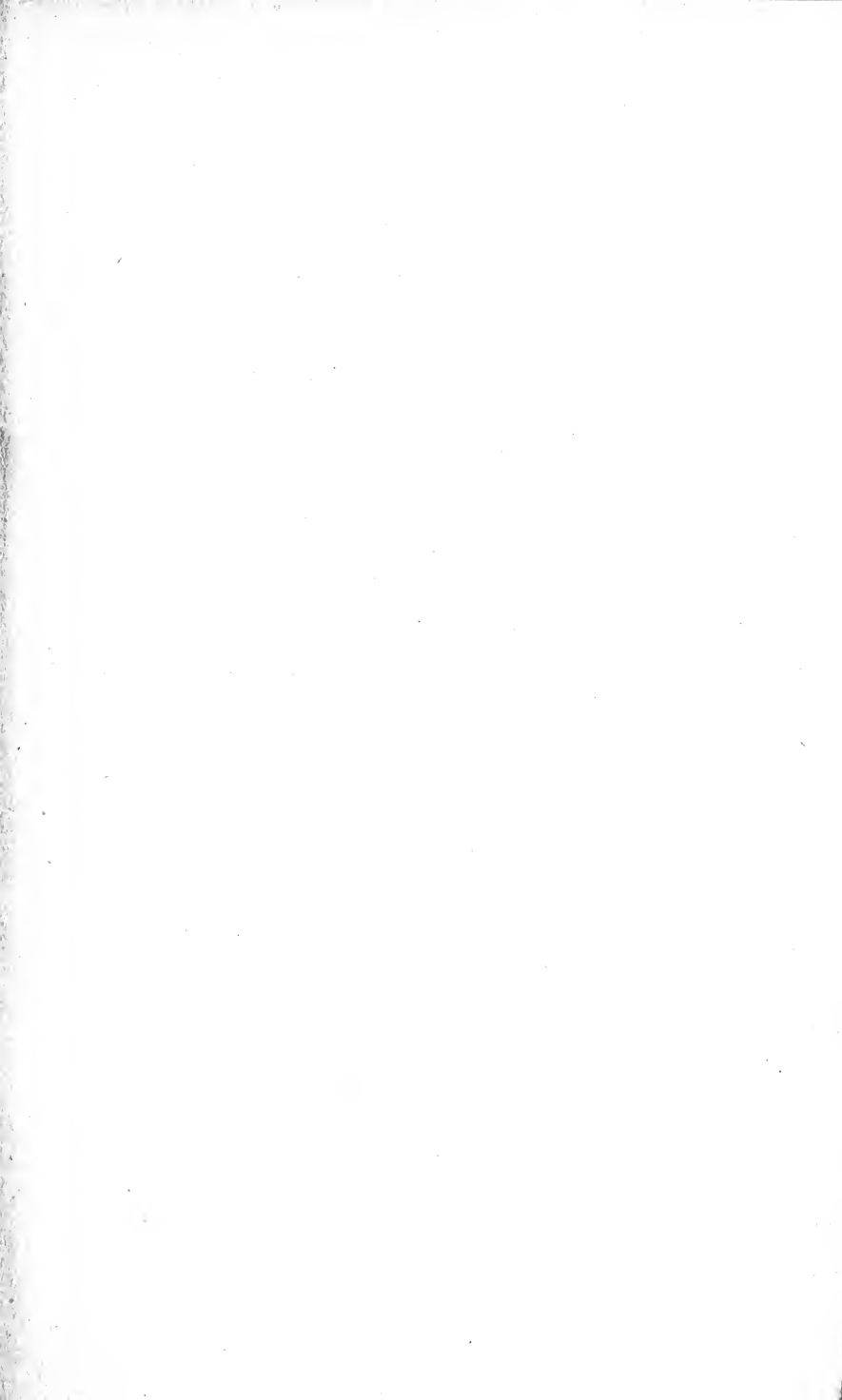
San Francisco, March 28, 1904.

* Read at a gathering of Mr. Clark's friends at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Chris. Jorgensen, in San Francisco, to celebrate his ninetieth birthday and the publication of his book on the "Indians of the Yosemite."—C. H. B.











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