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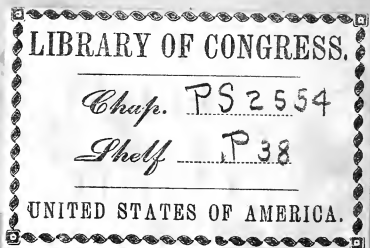
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EMBERS OF THE PAST

W. A. PETERS

1929



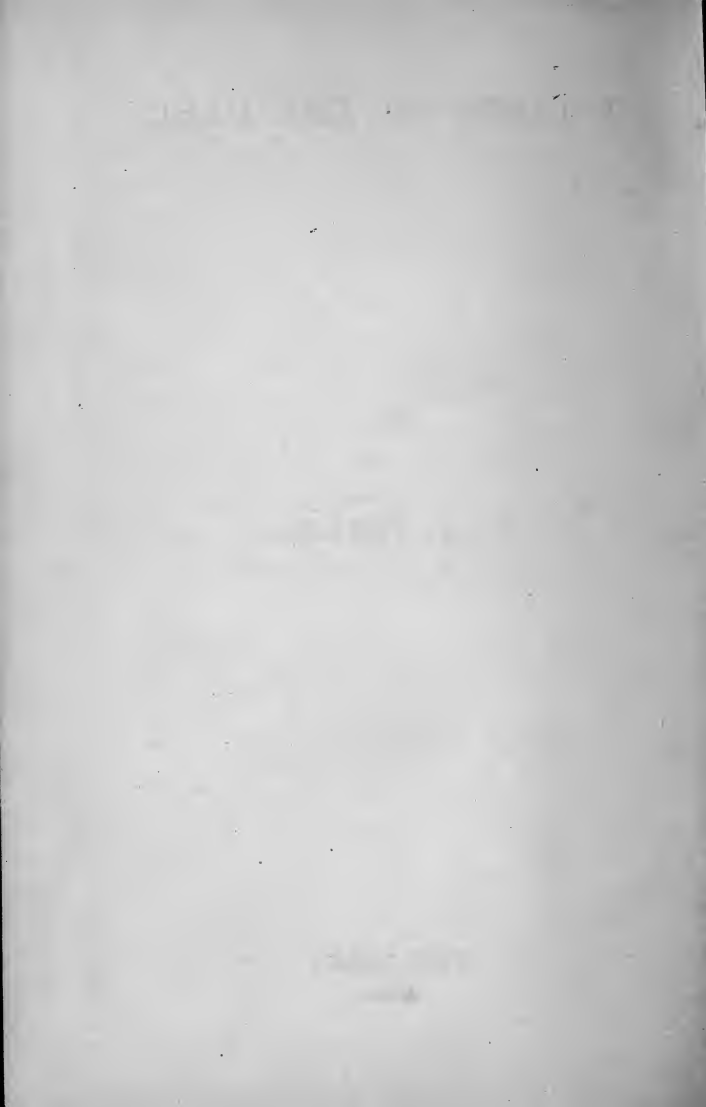
ERRATA.

Page 15, 13th line—for “no” read “in.”

“ 15, 14th “ —for “no” read “in.”

“ 37, 20th “ —for “trided” read “tinted.”





EMBERS OF THE PAST.

BY

W. A. PETERS.

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NEW YORK:

1866.

PS 2554
P38

PREFACE.

IN this offering of "Embers of The Past" to the public, "The Pilgrimage of Memory" is respectfully inscribed to those who—like the author—have wandered away from the fire-light of home, and whose memories love to linger around the "embers that have smouldered in the past"—hoping that its sentiments may touch those chords of harmonious unison which vibrate with a pure and tender feeling to the remembrance of other days.

W. A. PETERS.

NEW YORK, Dec. 8, 1866.

Our early days—how often back
We turn on life's bewildering track,
To where, o'er hill and valley, plays
The sunlight of our early days.—GALLAGHER.

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Embers of the Past.



THE PILGRIMAGE OF MEMORY.

MEMORY hath gone a pilgrimage
Back to the scenes of youth,
Where we do love to wander
Old paths, along ;
As o'er these scenes of youth so bright
We love so much to ponder,
Through which in childhood's halcyon days
Its brightest hours we've lingered.
Oh ! how these memories soften
The ills of life we bear,
As in the twilight-hours
O'er us they do come stealing.

How well doth Memory guide us
Back to the dear old home ;
And as we come along the lane,
Strange feelings do steal o'er us ;
There are the stiles, how low they seem,
Though ma'be we've grown taller

Since those bright days we on them played,
And whiled away life's morning.
Now comes in view the old well,
And the well-sweep,
From whose clear depths, and stones so mossy,
Bright waters we have hoisted.
But dearer still the old home seems,
As up the path we hurry,
And wishful look, as though we thought
There would be some one to greet us.
The old oak door is open wide
Where mother used to stand,
And give us greetings of kind words
When we came home from school.
We hasten in and as our footsteps fall
Upon the floors of its deserted rooms,
Echo doth answer back
That all are gone.
Oh! it was in this sacred home, that first
The patter of our feet did fall;
Here first by that fond mother's knee
We lisped our infant prayer.
No wonder now when lights are gone!
That burned upon its altar,
That we no longer tarry,
But hurry on in search
Of other by-gones.

Fond Memory now is seeking
For the old path to the mill,
Which, though grown up in brambles,
Its course we know full well;

O'er this old path, how often
 We boys have rode together,
 And with our corn sacks laid aside
Waited our turn for grinding.
 Of the old mill, of our boyhood,
 There is no relic left us,
 For betwixt the years of now and then
 It hath to ruin gone.

We seek the path through the old meadow
 That led down to the brook ;
 The meadow is not there now,
 But the brook runs on the same.
 How oft, the summer evenings
 We spent within the shade,
 That clustered o'er its waters,
And in the old stream bathed.
 The trees seem larger now,
 And thicker is the shade,
 But all is still and silent where
 Our voices gladness made.

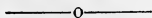
We look now for the path that led
 To the schoolhouse on the hill—
 We know it by the names that mark
 The beech trees by its side—
 How often up this path we've gone,
 We boys and girls together,
 And from our kind schoolmaster,
 So many lessons learned.
 It was here we met at singing-school,
 And met as young debaters,

And once a month to preaching came
To this our Alma Mater.

The crumbling logs now but remain
Of the old schoolhouse standing.

There's but one path that's plainer
Than when we all were here;
Oh! 'tis that path that leads us
Just over yonder's hill,
Where gravestones of the household
Mark where loved ones lie sleeping.
Upon one spot hath Memory
Thrown herself in tears,
'Tis father's grave, and mother's by his side;
The next is sister's, sweetly sleeping
Under the moss-green mound:
She was the only sister we ever had
To soften down life's sorrow.
The next grave is a brother's, so tiny and so sweet;
While here and there the stones among,
The names of friends appear.
Oh! here the "silver cord is loosed;
"The golden bowl lies broken;
"The pitcher broken at the fount;
"Wheel broken at the cistern."
Oh! 'tis the time for tears to flow
From sorrow's fountain;
For cheeks that thrilled with life and health,
And eyes that beamed with gladness,
And hands that too our ills hath soothed,
Have long with dust been mingled.
Oh! may the tears that from us flow,

By angels' hands be gathered,
And in the golden chalice, changed
To streams of gladness.



LINES :

INSCRIBED TO MISS ALICE CAREY.

Lady, whilst within my spirit,
Thought's most radiant angels throng;
Their pinions, sweeping o'er the chords,
Shall woo for thee a song.—ANON.

I'VE dreamed while listening to thy song,
As its spirit of beauty bore me along,
On its minstrel pinions soaring,
That out somewhere, in the boundless deep,
I've found an isle, like beauty asleep,
With the ocean round it roaring.

And that this isle, in its beauty rare,
Hath a cloudless sky, and the softest air
Within its fair groves playing;
And streams that ripple o'er golden sand
As they hasten on to the ocean strand,
Like beauty going a Maying.

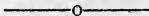
Where the fairest flowers, in fragrance spring,
At the gentle touch of some harp string,
By fairy fingers played.

While mermaids strew the shore with shell,
Which, like some sweet-voiced minstrel, tell
Of the coral home of the naiad.

And I've built for thee a palace fair,
Brighter than castles in the air,
In this beauty haunted isle ;
In dreams, I've crowned thee its fair queen,
And thy minstrel bird, in its silvery sheen,
The happy hours beguile.

The fairies, thy attendants bright,
And elfins dancing in the light
Of this rosy, tropic clime ;
And joyous birds, of plumage gay,
Their love-songs sing, 'till the closing day
Rings memory's bells for a vesper chime.

I've dreamed that at thy minstrel shrine
My captive spirit worshipped thine,
With its golden, radiant beam ;
And as thy lyre still bore along
Sweet strains, I 'woke, and found thy song
Brighter than the dream.



LINES TO

A LOVELY YOUNG GIRL SMILING IN HER DREAMS.

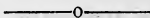
SWEET girl, who in thy dreams doth smile,
As if bright visions from a golden shore
Around thee hover.

A shore from whose fair groves the breezes come,
 And play at hide and seek, in the brown curls
 That o'er thy young brow cluster.
 Whose flowers spring at thy enchantment wand,
 And pour their fragrant sweets to thee
 In floreal libation.
 While musical delights, their softest airs inspire
 In sweetest strains from lute and lyre
 As incense to thy radiant soul ;
 And warbling birds of plumage gay
 Their songs do sing alone for thee.
 While through these groves of bright majestic vision,
 Pure fountains spring, and flash no light ;
 And onward flow no streams of fond forgetfulness,
 In whose clear depths thou doth so often bathe
 Earth's tears away,
 And o'er its ills in these bright dreams of thine,
 Doth rise triumphant.

So, lovely girl, thy smile reflects,
 Like sunset on the clouds, ere night,
 The light of purity and grace
 That o'er thy heart comes flowing
 In golden rays of gladness.

Oh ! may thy dreams these visions bring,
 Down to life's rosy twilight eve ;
 And may thy fancy's pinions bear thee
 Along its golden shores, and shades
 Of lofty palm trees waving ;
 Where fragrant sweets, and songs of birds
 Thy young soul charm to holy wooing.

So when these fairy shores grow dim,
From the mists of Death's old river,
Oh! from this smiling trance of life
May you awake in Heaven.



IN MEMORIAM

OF THE LATE MISS ALICE RIGGS.

Her life hath flowed,
From its mysterious urn, a sacred stream
In whose calm depth the beautiful and pure
Alone are mirrored; which though shapes of ill
May hover round its surface, glides in light,
And takes no shadow from them.—TALFOURD.

GONE for ever! fading away
Like the lingering light of a summer's day,
As it softens into twilight's hour;
Or like the sweet tones of some harp strings near,
As they melt away from the listening ear,
Or the fragrance of some sweet flower.

'Fading away in the light so sweet,
Where the silver stars and the sunbeams meet,"
Beneath the gilded dome.
Fading away in the golden light,
That comes through the gates like sentinels bright,
To lighten the wanderer home.

Gone from Earth's fair beauty and bloom,
 Through the portals of Sorrow, the shades of the Tomb,
 Where mortality moulders away—
 To a home beyond Time's swelling flood
 Redeemed from death by a Saviour's blood,
 To live in eternal day.

Sweet strains of music floating o'er
 The breezes from that radiant shore,
 Are borne to the raptured ear ;
 And as rosy eve its shadow brings,
 We seem to hear the rustling wings
 Of her spirit pinions hovering near.

And o'er the mourning household dear,
 Her silent vigils keeping, near
 The sad and lonely home.
 Oh ! she's watching and waiting on the golden shore,
 To lead them through Death's gloomy door
 To Eternity's bright dome.

We never knew her, yet we write
 This tribute to her memory bright,
 And hope that on that radiant shore
 We'll meet and know each other there,
 And live in its immortal air—
 Beyond the breakers' roar.

HAPPY MOMENTS.

There are some happy moments in this lone
And desolate world of ours that well repay
The toil of struggling through it, and atone
For many a long sad night and weary day.
They come upon the mind like some wild air
Of distant music, when we know not where
Or whence their sounds are brought from, and their power,
Though brief, is boundless.—HALLECK.

Oh! how these moments come and go,
Like the lone sea's silent ebb and flow,
Or like the glad waves that kiss the fond shore,
And roll back to ocean to return no more.

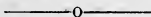
And as we stand watching along the gray beach,
To catch at the wrecks as they come within reach—
The wrecks of bright moments the breakers bring in ;
We grasp all in vain for the prize we would win.

And as we look back on life's rushing river,
The eyes dim with tears and the rosy lips quiver,
As we think of the moments that quickly have fled,
To come back no more like the arrow that's sped.

Oh! are there no moments but these that are gone?
To cheer with their gladness life's journey on,
Give joy to the heart and a smile to the lip,
As from their own sweetness life's nectar we'd sip?

Oh! yes, there are bright ones which o'er us do linger,
And the fair angel Hope, with an unforeseen finger,

Is pointing us on to eternity's goal,
Where forever bright moments encircle the soul.



MUSINGS,

ON THE BANKS OF TIME'S RIVER.

"Let Fate do her worst—there are relics of joy,
Bright dreams of the past which she cannot destroy.
Long, long be my heart with such memories filled,
Like the vase in which roses have once been distilled:
You may break, you may scatter the vase, if you will,
But the scent of the roses will cling round it still."

In fancy's mood, as we wander along
The banks of this old river,
We see the floating shadows come,
Of life that's faded and gone,
And with them bring, in solemn array,
Their train of memories blighted;
As, in the mirror of the past,
Imagination looks and sees
The fancies of her own creation.

Remembrance of the past,
Which in oblivion's dust
Soon will lie buried;
Time's mouldering ruins, which
In their grim phantasy have reared

Their shadows darkly o'er the pathway
Of a lifetime—
How well they mark the change
That hath rolled by, since earth was younger,
And in her virgin beauty, sported with
Gay Nature's charms.

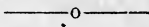
It was in those festive days,
That Rome, a queen, was crowned,
And in her might of power,
The prestige of her conquering star
Lifted on high.
Her banners in proud triumph borne,
By countless legions, forth,
Into a world which well did act
The part of fawning courtier.
We look once more upon the scene,
And find her glories gone.
She's crownless now, and doth no sceptre wield;
The sombre shades hang o'er her ruins grim,
And to her crumbling walls
The ivy firmly clings.
Unshrouded there she lies,
Uncoffined, and without a tomb;
She lies unburied on the hills
Of her own shame.

There's but a like example
In the fate of Greece,
Shrine of poetic brightness
In the world's dark gloom:

She which did rock the cradle of the Muse,
 And sing unto Philosophy
 Her lullaby,
 She too hath gone, and like a ship
 Gone down in storm, we last do see
 Her signal at the masthead.

So thus it is the wreck of years
 Comes drifting down the tide of time ;
 The pride of all man would achieve
 Lies shattered, broken, and undone.
 Then let us turn to fonder theme,
 And sing of childhood's happy hours :
 Time's billowy tide has swept along,
 And borne its happy scenes away.
 We'll draw the snowy curtains by,
 And in the old halls wander,
 Its scenes among, by Memory's rills,
 Where recollections, fond and tender,
 Of childhood's days lie sleeping ;
 And in their dreams bright visions rise
 Of flowery fields we've wandered over ;
 Of homes once bright, and days once squandered :
 'Tis there the tendrils of the heart
 Lie twined in youth's fair bowers ;
 While oft in dreamland's sunny realm,
 To its fond scenes we are carried,
 To where affection's fountains spring,
 And down life's pathway flowing,
 To refresh the weary spirit,
 And its sorrow soften.

Oh, we should con life's lesson well,
For its records teach us sadness,
So that when by the stream of Time
We will no longer wander,
We'll have the prestige of a hope
That conquers all life's sorrows.



TO MAGGIE.

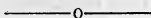
THOU art lovely as the sunlight,
When it falls upon the flowers,
Thy brow as fair, thy smile as bright ;
Thy cheeks like twilight's rosy hours ;

Like twilight's rosy hours that part
Sunshine from night, daylight from dark ;
Thine are bright charms unlearned of art,
On which deception hath no mark.

There's music in thy voice that thrills
" Like sunset dreams that linger " o'er us,
When o'er the scene life's gathering ills
Come stealing one by one upon us.

When sorrow revels in the heart,
Or when by gloom bewitched we stray,
Thy gentle sweetness doth impart
Its charms to drive the spell away.

In whate'er pathway thou mayest roam,
 Or where in life thy footsteps stray,
 May thy soul rest in that bright home,
 Where twilight never ends the day.



LIFE'S VESPER HOUR.

WHEN vesper comes stealing
 O'er our bright summer dreams,
 Then fancy goes launching
 Her bark down the streams.

The waters come drifting
 The light boat away—
 While twilight is throwing
 Her veil o'er the day—

And in the bright waters,
 As she goes dancing on,
 We see the fair features
 Of scenes that are gone.

We see the loved faces,
 In its waters so deep,
 That seem as if wak'ning
 From a long night of sleep.

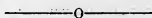
And in the soft evenings
 Sweet voices we hear,
 With their tones so familiar,
 And so very dear.

Sweet words that we've spoken,
And snatches of song,
Sang 'way off in childhood,
Oh ! how very long !

The harp strings are broken ;
The lute is unstrung,
Whose sweet notes did soften
The songs that we sung.

Oh ! these are the visions
That rise o'er the soul,
As life's bark goes drifting
To eternity's goal.

So when twilight deepens
Into night of deep sorrow,
May the star of hope guide us
To a brighter to-morrow.



TO HALLIE.

I'm thinking of thee, Hallie,
So young and so fair,
And the bright smile that round thee plays
With purity's own sweet air.

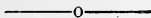
And of thy girlish sweetness blest
With beauty's pears so rare ;
The softest blush upon thy cheek ;
The rose of health you wear.

And thy young heart so pure and free
 · From care, and ills, and sorrow ;
 Whose beams that shine so bright to-day,
 Will brighter be to-morrow.

And I'm wishing that thy life may flow
 As pure as that bright river,
 Which in the Orient tales we're told,
 In shining light doth quiver ;

That when the lingering day hath fled,
 Its diamonds glow the brightest ;
 O'er golden sands and jewels rare,
 Its waters gleam the lightest.

So when time's straggling sunbeams hide
 Behind the clouds of night,
 May life's pure stream to thee then flow
 In loveliness most bright.



BY AND BY.

“Like the sunrise of Ossian,
 Pleasant, but mournful to the soul.”

ON what lullaby of song
 These little words do bear along,
 The smile of Hope, the sunlit joy,
 That from life's moments they decoy.

Sometimes a smile, sometimes a sigh,
Is found in this queer By and By ;
Sunshine and shade, like phantoms, chase
Each other in a phantom race.

We heard it first within the door
Of life, as through it we stepped o'er
Those guileless, thoughtless, happy years
Of baby prattlings, smiles, and tears.

And then in boyhood's fleeting hours,
The prestige of its hope was ours,
Of all that manhood years would win us,
The coats, and hats, and boots they'd bring us.

And now in manhood when the gleam
Of life's noontide's o'er us, we dream
Of the bright morn and its sweet smile,
These little words did then beguile.

So from the cradle to the grave,
O'er life's lone meteoric wave,
We steer our frail and trembling bark
For some Ignis Fatuus in the dark.

So this lone star-beam "By and By,"
Is flitting still before the eye,
And for the love of days now gone,
In its bright rays we'll still hope on.

SUNLIGHT.

OH! the golden sunlight
 Hath a charm so bright,
 As it falls over hill and dale,
 And awakes the fair sleepers,
 And Earth's harvest reapers,
 From the slumbers of night's dreamy veil.

And as it goes creeping
 Through the lane bars, peeping,
 The urchins go climbing over ;
 To scamper and play
 The bright hours away,
 'Till twilight comes back, the gay rover.

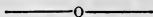
As they clamber along
 With laughter and song
 So careless, and happy, and free,
 May they never borrow
 From life's ills a sorrow,
 But ever as light-hearted be.

And as its bright beams
 Bathe in the glad streams,
 That hide under leafy cover ;
 Some rosy cheeked beauty,
 A truant from duty,
 Is here awaiting her lover.

With a smile of delight,
The schoolboy so bright
Goes tripping along to school,
And will not return
When noon-tide rays burn,
But await the evening's cool.

While through the red clover,
The butterfly-rover—
Goes merrily sipping the dew ;
The wheat and the corn
Wave in the bright morn,
And ripen in its golden hue.

Oh, how much its worth !
To our glad Earth,
Is the sunshine, bright and warm ;
With its rays to cheer
Our journey here,
And soften life with its charm.



THE FOUNTAIN OF THE FAIRIES.

THERE is a fountain rippling
In some long sought vale,
Where't has been for ages trickling—
So goes the olden tale.

Its waters smoothly flowing,
So brightly in the sun ;
As with bright tints they're glowing,
O'er golden sands they run.

'Tis in this vale, so often,
The Elves and Fairies come,
Where these bright waters soften
The shades of life's humdrum.

And like fair nuns they yearly
Take veil, and vow, anew,
In the tasks they love so dearly,
New pleasures to pursue.

Each hath their charming duty
Apportioned to perform ;
Out in the world of beauty
To soften down life's storm.

Open the flowers to drink the dew,
And close them from the sun ;
The birds to wake, their songs renew
In the early morn begun.

And thus from morn to twilight's hours
O'er nature's fields they roam,
The incense of their Fairy powers
Flies dove-like to each home.

VISIONS FROM THE OTHER SHORE.

I DREAMED of children playing
By the margin of Time's stream,
And a glorious, radiant vision,
Was the spirit of the dream.

And as they strayed along the shore,
Careless as childhood can be,
Their sweet songs floated upon the air,
From their guileless hearts so free.

And here and there in little groups
They were stooping o'er the strand,
Gathering up the pebbles rare,
Drawing pictures in the sand.

Some gathered up the tinted shells
That were borne upon the shore—
Like sweetest memories that come up
From out the days of yore.

A little group were standing
With shells up to the ear,
In an attitude of listening
For the sounds that they might hear—

As from these shells of memory
Come up the words once spoken
By friends, who now in silence sleep,
Of whom these shells are token—

So while these children were listening,
 Down by the wave-washed shore,
 The clouds and mists were lifting,
 And music came floating o'er.

A glorious vision of beauty
 Came floating o'er the soul,
 As angels, in shining raiment,
 Were touching their harps of gold.

The glitter of shining raiment ;
 The fanning of angel wings ;
 The fragrance of flowers there springing,
 Too bright for earthly things.

The group of little children
 Have dropped the tinted shells,
 In which their tears fast flowing,
 Have filled the vacant cells.

They are crying to go over
 To the radiant, shining shore ;
 To leave Earth's vale of sorrows,
 They thought so bright before.

Oh! could the veil be lifted
 That hides that spirit land,
 As eagerly we'd be waiting
 To join its radiant band.

ADONIS TRANSFORMED.

"Adonis, a youth, the offspring of Cinyras and Myrrha, was very beautiful, and beloved by Venus, and dying from a wound received whilst hunting, he was changed by her into the beautiful and fragrant Anemone."

GAY nature was adorned
In her most beauteous robe ;
Imperial beauty crowned
Our fair terrestrial globe.

The Moon came tripping up
The star gemmed path of Night,
And in the waters rippling by
Saw her own image bright.

Nature was looking lovely
As though she were a bride,
With Night, in moonlit beauty,
Sweet bridesmaid at her side.

And Night, by stars though guarded,
Like Danae, fair and bright,
Hath oft received her lover
In the showers of moon-light.

While fragrant breezes wafted
Their incense o'er the scene,
And every where bright flowers sprang,
Fit for the gods, I ween.

Through these fair groves so lovely,
 Venus came tripping early,
 In search of her Adonis fair,
 The boy she loved so dearly.

And summonsing the Wood Nymphs,
 Who o'er these groves preside,
 She bid them go and call him
 Right quickly to her side.

The Wood-land Nymphs so airy
 Went searching through the flowers,
 And hunting for the lover fair
 Through all the brightest bowers.

In answer to their calling,
 A hunter's winding horn
 Sends up its feeble echoes,
 Just ere the break of morn.

And guided by the dying notes,
 In fear they sped along ;
 On, on into the dark woods,
 Uncheered by Fairy song.

And lo! within the wild wood,
 Just by a stream he lay,
 And from a wound, so near his heart,
 His life ebb'd fast away.

Oh! 'twas in grief most dire
 That Venus did embrace him,

And with fond words and tearful eyes
Begged some last word or look from him.

With water from the brook she strove
To bathe the death-damp from his brow ;
One lingering farewell look he gave,
But oh, he's dying now !

So just when he was breathing
His life's last breath away,
She changed him to the Anemone,
Which sprang from where he lay.

The remnant of his life was changed
Into this modest flower,
Giving to it its fragrant sweets,
With beauty for its dower.

And to this spot she ever
Came through the after years,
And this fond relic of her lover
She watered with her tears.

BEAUTIES OF CREATION.

To sit on rocks, to muse o'er flood and fell,
 To slowly trace the forest's shady scene,
 Where things that own not man's dominion dwell,
 And mortal foot hath ne'er or rarely been;
 To climb the trackless mountain all unseen,
 With the wild flock that never feeds a fold;
 Alone o'er steeps and foaming falls to lean;
 This is not solitude; 'tis but to hold
 Converse with Nature's charms, and view her stores unrolled.

BYRON.

Oh, noblest Muse, who doth inspire
 To loftier theme than yet we've sung,
 Lend us thy pinions that we may soar
 To realms divinely bright and pure,
 Whose scenes have yet a lingering hue
 Of brightness that was lent to Eden,
 In that bright morn of primal loveliness,
 When Adam wandered forth, Eve at his side;
 While Nature blushed in all her full completeness
 Of roseate hue, and tints of golden orient.

Oh! in the inspiration thou would'st pour upon us,
 There is a theme that's fit for lofty soaring:
 Of Nature's brightest charms, which have enrobed
 Earth in her virgin beauty,
 And in her scenes of noblest pride and grandeur
 Would raise the soul to lofty contemplation.
 Her grand old mountains, around whose lofty summits
 The lightnings flash, and gleam in mystic brightness;

And thunders roll among the clouds
That ride at anchor on their craggy tops,
On these old tops the storms break their wild fury,
And on their sides Time's breakers roll,
And perish at the base.
Old Ocean, too, in pride rolls on,
In her unfathomed boundless deep;
While in fierce storms the breakers beat,
And dash in madness on the shore;
While far at sea the ship goes down,
And ends in death the mariner's dream of home.
In these old scenes of nature's grandeur,
That seem like monuments of her anger,
There's all to strike the harp to lofty melody—
But 'tis not of her frown we'd sing,
'Tis of the smile of beauty round her playing,
Which doth display her charms
In all their blushing beauty.

There is a beauty of a softer type,
Seen from the stretch of valleys bright—
Not where from ancient crags o'erhanging,
The waterfall goes tumbling over
The time-worn rocks, that seem as striving
The waters to restrain from their impetuous leap,
Where broken in the depth beneath,
They rush like vanquished armies fleeing,
To where all danger past they then resume
Their wonted calmness, and go marching on
In quiet order—
But from the sloping banks of green,
Where lilies spring in modest sweetness,

And water-cresses kiss the stream ;
 While blue-eyed violets, drooping, see
 Their image fair within the mirrored depths.
 Sweet scenes of rural beauty,
 Which all around are teeming
 With verdure green, and dewy freshness ;
 The woodland streams flow gently,
 O'er sands and pebbles run ;
 While waving forests on their banks
 Their evening shadow flings,
 And on their leafy tops, till closing day,
Bright warblers joyous sing.
 We'll wander forth to view a sunset scene,
 Where over field, and hill, and stream,
 His last fond rays come beaming
 To bid the day farewell,
 And now beyond the softly parting clouds,
 His golden pinions folded ;
 Oh ! have you never viewed a sunset scene,
 Where fleecy clouds with rosy hue are trided,
 And softly melt into the airs of heaven,
 Seeming as if the rosy tints
 Came through the open portals peeping,
 Where golden light for ever sheds
 Its radiance round the throne ;
 And as the rosy twilight hours melt dreamily away,
 The moon comes forth to lead
 The young night to her throne ;
 While all the planets bright,
 Prime ministers to her obeisance pay,
 And millions more of distant stars
In twinkling beauty glow.

In meditation's robe we're wrapped,
With contemplation o'er,
Of all we've viewed since early morn
Her crown of light shed o'er us :
Then "look from nature up to nature's God,"
And say, "Thy works are perfect."



HOMESICK.

"Oh! shall I ever be going
Back any more ;
Back, where the green woods are blowing
Close by the door."—ALICE CAREY.

Oh! yes, we will be going
Back once more,
Where memory's winds are blowing
O'er days of yore.

Where little paths are winding
Through long ago,
And softly o'er us binding
Fond recollection's glow,

Where homeward of eves,
We tripped along,
As the rustling leaves
Echoed the bright song.

By the rippling streams,
Whose waters are past,
We dreamed the fond dreams,
Too happy to last.

And as Time's stream did float
By the old home door,
We lightly stepped into Life's tiny boat,
And were borne away from the shore.

Oh! the vigil lights
On the cottage hearth burn,
Long days and nights
For our return.

And through the long years,
Loved ones in the door,
Seem asking in tears,
Will you come back no more?

Oh! yes, we will be going
Back once more,
Where memory's winds are blowing
O'er days of yore.

LINES,

IN ANSWER TO MISS S. F. RICE.

You sigh for some bright magic;
Some wand of marvellous power,
To bring again those scenes so bright,
Of childhood's guileless hour;

To roam once more its flowery fields;
In its bright sunshine bask;
Return again those days of yore,
Is all that you would ask;

To stroll once more beside the stream
That glides like happiness by;
And to sit beside the orchard wall
Where the evening shadows lie;

And to wander along the shady path
That led to the old stone mill,
That dashed the sparkling waters away
With its wheel that wouldn't stand still.

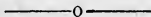
And sadly you sigh for the mother
Who hath kissed your tears away,
And sang your evening lullaby
At the close of each bright day;

And watched your childish footsteps
As you laughingly strayed along,
Chasing the golden butterfly,
Singing some little song.

Oh ! since these scenes have vanished,
 You sigh for their return,
 As you in their dead shadows
 Life's saddest lessons learn.

Oh ! let your fondest longings
 Be not for hours long gone ,
 But for the gilded future
 So rapidly hastening on,

Where, beyond life's closing portals
 You may see each loving form,
 That seems so eagerly waiting
 To gather you out of the storm.



CROWNING THE HERO.

OH, have you forgotten that radiant joy
 That lit the old home up when you were a boy ?
 Where you 'neath the green branches, when the day's
 work was o'er,
 Sipped the nectarine sweets that life had in store ;
 And the golden-fringed shadows 'neath the elms used to
 play
 Ere the weird barque of Fate had borne you away.

For so it may be that remembrance is fraught
 With so glowing a picture as here we have wrought,

Of green fields and meadows, of hill and of glen,
O'er which Time hath frolicked between now and then ;
Or e'en of some farm-horse, so faithful and true
In bearing life's burdens, and oftentimes you.

So lovely a picture you've scarce ever seen
As this rustic home, half hid in the green
Of its old elm trees, whose branches meet
And waving kiss the sunbeams sweet :
Flinging their shadows at eventide,
Across the old lane green and wide ;

While on the low porch where the trellised vines cling—
And in their thick clusters the little birds sing—
The farmer sits smoking and thinking together,
Now puffing his pipe, then prospecting the weather—
So while he is smoking and looking about
Lest you'd not see him we've pointed him out.

Now the mellow lights of evening hours come on,
And the lingering sunlight plays o'er the lawn,
And the children shout in their joyous glee
As the tinkling cow-bells they hear o'er the lea ;
While the gathering cattle and fowls begin
Their usual evening barn-yard din.

And now the evening meal is spread,
And the children rush in to their milk and bread ;
And then they go merrily romping away
The beautiful hours of closing day :
Chasing them, golden-winged, over the heath,
Gathering wild flowers to make up a wreath.

Now here they come marching, and leading old Gray,
And they've voted to crown him a hero to-day ;
A faithful old farm-horse in seasons gone by,
Now hobbling, lame-footed, and blind of an eye—
But these are his honors, the glorious scars
That he hath received in his ruralic wars.

With the garland of flowers in triumph he's crowned,
While in good-natured wonder he's looking around ;
As slow the procession, ovation in state,
Comes marching in at the old farm-gate,
Where, now that they've halted within the yard,
Regardless of honors, he's browsing the sward.

And now, at the beat of a pan for a drum,
The inmates of the home have come
To hear the young orator, so eloquent, tell
How the garland of flowers was earned so well
By the dutiful life of faithful old Gray—
Toiling from morn to the closing day ;

How that he'd carried the children to school,
And brought them home in the evenings cool ;
How he had drawn the plow o'er the field,
Helping to make the harvest's rich yield,
And how he had carried its products away
To the nearest town on market-day.

Ah ! well, all this, and how much more
In life he did, in days of yore,
'Twere useless that we here should tell—
Peace to the manes, he hath done well ;

Such be the epitaph we soon must write
O'er his old bones, when bleaching white.

'Twas a beautiful thought of the childish mind,
Crowning the old horse, maimed, gray, and blind,
For his part in life was nobly performed,
As though a proud warrior some castle had stormed ;
And now a life-pension, in an equine way,
He deserves just as much—though it be corn and hay.



DEATH OF THE OLD SCHOOLMASTER.

"Very touching and beautiful were the words of the old school-master, as life passed away: 'It is growing dark—the school may be dismissed.' Down to the very gates of an unseen world he carried his love and regard for the children whom he had trained."

STILL ! he lies there dying,
Life's light is fading away ;
"Reason is drifting a wreck,"
"It is growing dark," he would say.

"The school may be dismissed,"
The children may go home,
As in Life's waning twilight
He sees them around him come.

Close the school-house shutters,
 Lock the old oak door :
 For there in his gentle kindness
 He will never teach any more.

Ah, school on earth is ended,
 Life's long session is past !
 Vacation to the old schoolmaster
 Has brought its rest at last.

Life's labors are ended and over,
 And beneath its twilight dome,
 As the darkness around him gathers,
 He's taken the path that leads home.

Here, 'mid the scenes of his labors,
 Is all that on earth he holds dear ;
 The school is the last he remembers,
 As the light flickers out it draws near.

Oh, how much love and devotion !
 For the children who gather around,
 There is in his last words spoken—
 How sadly touching they sound.

While passing the gates and receiving
 Death's signet-seal and mark,
 He looks through the half-closed portals,
 And says, " It is growing dark."

LITTLE BARE-FEET IN THE SNOW.

DEEP lies the snow in an alley
That runs through a tumble-down row ;
No marks are there on its pure whiteness,
Save some little bare-feet in the snow.

They have wandered out from that ruins
Of—a home shall I call it? oh, no !
For within its bleak walls are no comforts
For the little bare-feet in the snow.

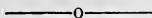
Old rags are stuffed in the windows
Through which the piercing winds blow ;
And that pallet of straw in the corner,
Is for the little bare-feet in the snow.

There's nothing to eat, "no oil in the cruse,"
No fire gives out its warm glow ;
And that frail dying form over there's the mamma
Of the little bare-feet in the snow.

She's dying, a death from starvation,
In this hovel so humble and low ;
And the last little morsel she's saving
For the little bare-feet in the snow.

Out in the snow she's gone begging—
Little waif on the wide sea of woe ;
Launched out on tears of deep sorrow—
Poor little bare-feet in the snow.

In this city's gay scenes of splendor,
 That surge like the tide's ebb and flow,
 From attic and cellar there wander,
 Many little bare-feet in the snow.



MUTANDUS.

SOME rare and lovely gems we find ;
 Some pearls and shells of gorgeous kind,
 Upon life's silvery shore ;
 And sometimes on its glistening sand,
 With sullen roar the breakers land,
 Some shattered wreck, or broken oar.

Soft trade-winds from the tropics haste
 To bring their fruits, so rich of taste,
 Fragrance of spice, and gorgeous flower ;
 While 'neath the glare of burning sun
 The blasts of deadly simoom run,
 Or fatal upas breathes its power.

And sometimes in a desert wild,
 We find oases green and mild
 As young Spring kissed by sunny May ;
 And then its burning wastes we tread
 Amid the whitening bones of dead,
 That mark the caravansa's way.

Some magic harp vibrates the desert air ;
Some fragile flower breathes its fragrance there—

Its incense dies, the harp's sweet notes none hears—
While sorrow's Niobian statues stand
Like milestones, o'er the burning sand,
To mark the dreary waste of years.

As some gay butterfly, of golden wing,
Takes life's first voyage o'er the fields of Spring,
To sip the blooming clover sweet,
And then 'tis chased by some rude boy away,
And in his careless, thoughtless play,
Lies dying at his feet.

The pearls we gather from the white shore there,
Are but the frozen tear-drops of some peri fair,
An exile of that once bright race ;
The pink sea-shells, with their sad, plaintive roar,
Are but Memory's echoes through her time-worn door,
The rose's fragrance of a broken vase,

That grow articulate, and seem to tell
Of sparkling waters from a rustic well,
From which we quaffed our childish thirst away ;
Something about an old stone mill,
Whose busy wheel would not stand still,
But round and round it dashed away.

They seem to tell us of that radiant time
When our young lives were like some matin chime,
Of silver bells of joyous sound ;
When we first revelled in the light of morn,
And played at hide-and-seek within the corn,
Or slept when weary on the grassy down.

The grape-vine swing beneath the spreading tree,
 Where we with mirth and thoughtless glee,
 Would chase the golden hours away ;
 Or else we'd ride upon the old farm gate,
 Or linger 'till 'twas growing late
 To tumble o'er the new-mown hay.

Or with deep-laid plot within the barn,
 To hide grandmother's ball of yarn,
 And charge it to the playful kittens.
 And then in search industriously we'd go,
 On promise that by the first snow
 We all should have new mittens.

But childhood-days have passed away,
 And like the mellow moonbeams, play
 Their shadows on the wall ;
 And as life's storm is deepening o'er the main,
 The shells breathe forth a sad refrain
 Through Memory's ruined hall ;

They seem to tell us of a trysting spot,
 'Twere better if we had forgot,
 Or that we'd never known ;
 Down where the laughing waters glide
 We sat together side by side
 And vowed to be each other's own.

It were not meet that we should tell,
 Of charms that like some fairy spell
 Were clustered o'er her brow ;
 For eyes that beamed with rapturous ray,
 And voice that had a potent sway
 Are closed and silent now.

But ere the joyous, golden May
That was to bring our bridal day

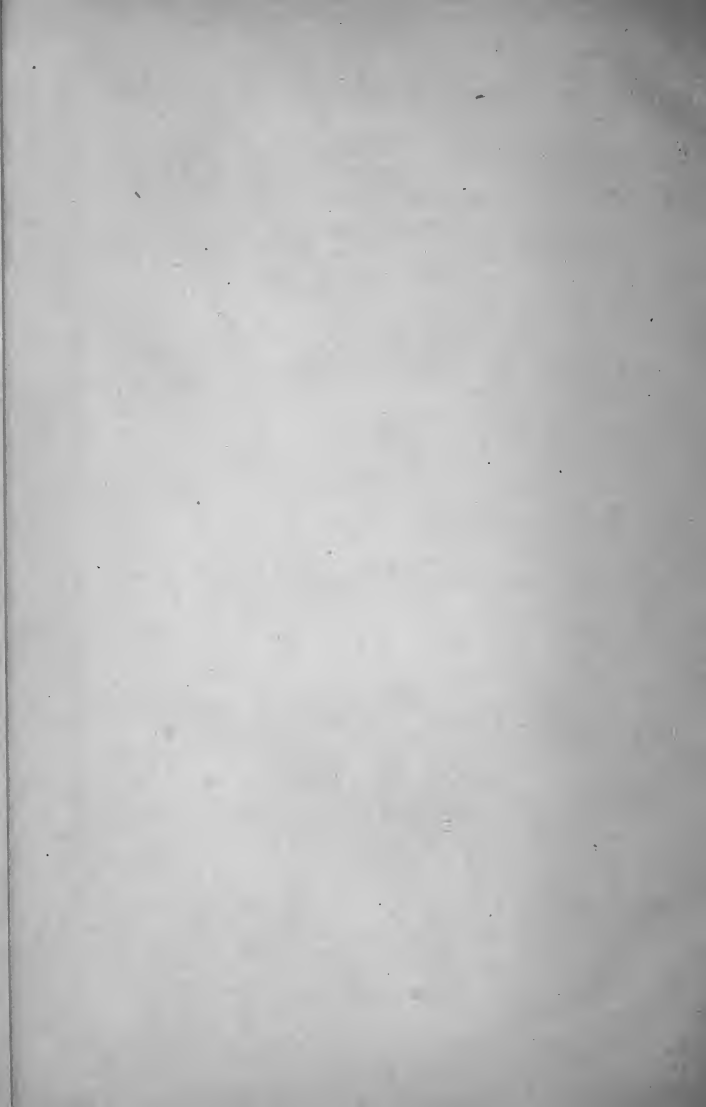
We bore her to the silent grave ;
And when our tears we ceased to shed,
Farewell to home, we wildly sped
Upon the ocean's stormy wave.

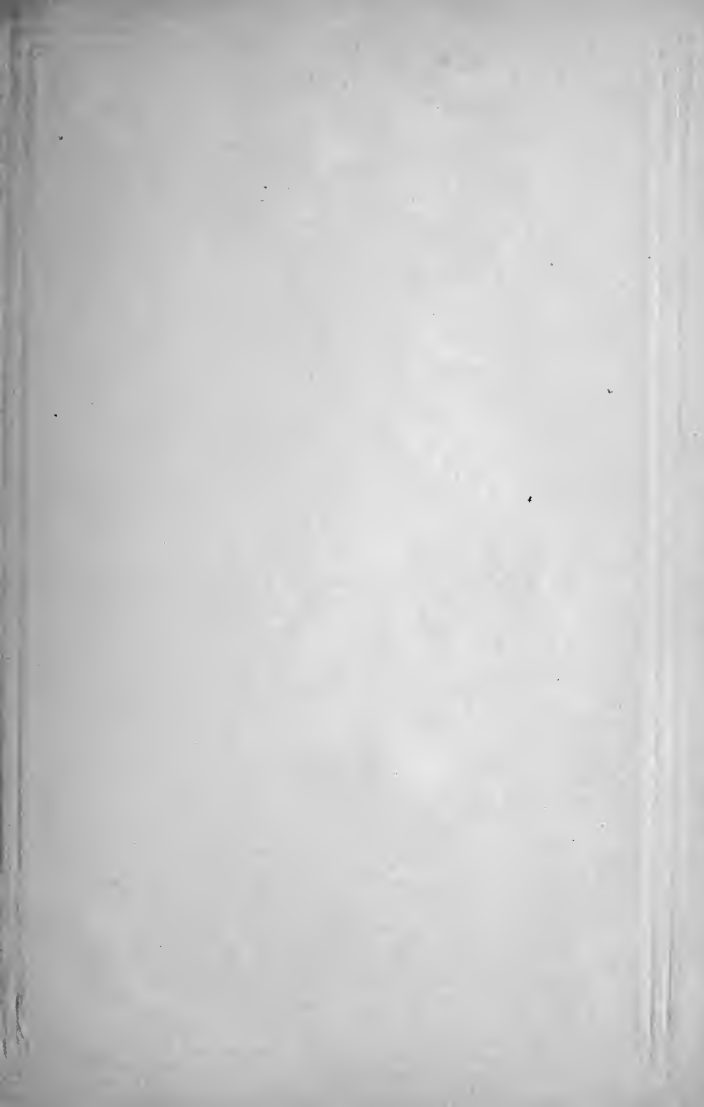
Well, well, some day we'll drift ashore,
Beside some wreck, or broken oar,
Near the spot we fondly love ;
They'll tenderly place us by her side,
Beneath the crust of world outside,
And then we'll meet above.

FINIS.









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