

Now stored with cameos, china, shells,
In this old closet's dusty cells."

And the portrait of her who "once was
mistress here :"

"Her mind was calm, its sunny rest
Shone in her eyes more clear than mirth.

"And when attired in rich array,
Light, lustrous hair about her brow,
She yonder sat ; a kind of day
Lit up what seems so gloomy now.

* * * * *

But what around looked dusk and dim,
Served as a foil to her fresh cheek ;
Her neck and arms, of hue so fair,
Eyes of unclouded, smiling light,
Her soft, and curled and floating hair,
Gems and attire, as rainbow bright."

The author's love of Nature, and sympathy with her in all her varied moods, whether pensive, glowing or terrible, displays itself repeatedly :

"How soft the day
O'er waveless water, stirless tree,
Silent and sunny, wings its way !
Now as I watch that distant hill,
So faint, so blue, so far removed,
Sweet dreams of home my heart may fill."*

Again,

"That sunset ! Look beneath the boughs,
Over the copse—beyond the hills !

How soft, yet deep and warm it glows,
And heaven with rich suffusion fills

With hues where still the opal's tint
In gleam of prisoned fire is blent,
Where flame through azure thrills."†

Again,

"Deep in her isle-conceiving womb,
It seemed the ocean thundered."‡

The author's susceptibility to the supernatural, controlled only, as we know, by her strong religious belief, appears in the following :

"I sometimes think when late at even
I climb the stair reluctantly
Some shape that should be well in heaven
Or ill elsewhere will pass by me."

Her sorrowful fate in after years is foreshadowed with wonderful though unconscious accuracy in the following :

*The Teacher's Monologue.

†The Wood.

‡Gilbert.

"All fades away ; my very home,
I think, will soon be desolate.

I hear at times a warning come
Of bitter partings at its gate ;

And, if I should return and see
The hearth fire quenched, the vacant chair,

And hear it whispered mournfully
That farewells have been spoken there,

What shall I do, and whither turn ?
Where look for peace ? when cease to mourn ?"

While Emily's, that inexorable, idolized sister of whom Charlotte in her love and anguish wrote, "I think Emily seems the nearest thing to my heart in the world," is predicted in these lines :

"I'm on a distant journey bound,
And if, about my heart,
Too closely kindred ties were bound,
'Twould break when forced to part.

"Soon will November days be o'er
My own forebodings tell me more—
For me, I know by presage sure,
They'll ne'er return again."

But of all her poems, the "Missionary" must perhaps rank highest. Its fervid religious spirit and the natural grandeur and eloquence with which the purpose of the imaginary speaker is expressed entitle it to the front rank amongst religious poetical compositions.

An extract or two will suffice as evidence :

"What other tie yet holds me fast
To the divorced, abandoned past ?
Smouldering on my heart's altar lies
The fire of some great sacrifice,
Not yet half quenched. The sacred steel
But lately struck my carnal will,
My life-long hope, first joy and last,
What I loved well, and clung to fast ;
What I wished wildly to retain,
What I renounced with soul-felt pain ;
What, when I saw it, axe-struck, perish—
Left me no joy on earth to cherish ;
A man bereft—yet sternly now
I do confirm that Jephtha's vow :
Shall I retreat, or tear, or flee ?
Did Christ, when rose the fatal tree
Before Him on Mount Calvary ?"

* * *

"I know what war the fiend will wage
Against that soldier of the cross,
Who comes to dare his demon rage,
And work his kingdom shame and loss.
Yes, hard and terrible the toil
Of him who steps on foreign soil,
Resolved to plant the Gospel vine,