

*AT THE MAY SHRINE.*

O tender and so pure--so womanly—  
 Before thy flower-strewn shrine we bow the knee  
 And hail thee, Mary mother of our God !  
 Our griefs and troubles vanish utterly,  
 None could be sad upon thy festal day,  
 Thou solace of our life, loved Queen of May ;  
 Albeit thou sighedst on this sin-racked sod  
 And drank resigned its chalice'd misery.

The sun that lights the heavens his brightest sheen,  
 Flings o'er the flowers set in the vernal green,  
 To rob them in rare beauty for thy sake ;  
 And bands of happy children may be seen  
 Bearing the fragrant blossoms all day long  
 Unto thine altar, where they join in song,  
 Then, glad, their parting genuflexions make,  
 They know a loving mother thou hast been.

And one who once a child is child no more,  
 But bears his lightless life with pantings sore,  
 Has hither come a suppliant to thy feet  
 His soul out in his prayer to meekly pour.  
 "Forgive them for they know not what they do,"  
 Those words thou'st heard, beneath the cross of rue,  
 In broken voice our dying Lord repeat,--  
 Bethink thee now, nor let His justice lower.