

Once that Homestead rung with voices—
Sounds of busy, nimble feet;
Then the parents and their children.
Mingled oft in converse sweet.

Ere the lapse of years had changed them
From the innocence of youth;
Ere their feet were taught to wander
From the paths of love and truth.

Peace and plenty were their portion
'Till their childhood passed away,
And the finger of contention
Touched the blossoms with decay.

As I tread the empty chambers,
Once the scenes of busy life,
Memory points, with tearful sorrow,
To the consequence of strife.

Ah! my heart, restrain thy beating.
Here are relics of the past—
Dear mementoes of my girlhood—
Of those hours too bright to last.

Strange that, after years of absence,
I should find a treasure here,
Causing one bright beam of sunshine,
Drying up the falling tear.