

The Old Door-Stone.

BY FRANCES D. GAGE.

A song, a song, for the old door-stone,
To every household dear;
That hallowed spot, where joys and griefs
Were shared for many a year.
When sank the sun to his daily rest,
When the wild bird's song was o'er,
When the toil and care of the passing day
Annoyed the heart no more;
Then on that loved and time-worn spot
We gathered one by one,
And spent the social twilight hour
Upon the old door-stone.

How sweet to me do memories come
Of merry childhood's hours,
When we sped blithely through the fields
In search of budding flowers,
Or gathered berries from the bush,
Or bending greenwood tree,
Or chased the light-winged butterfly,
With pealing shouts of glee:
The freshest hour in Memory's book
Was spent at set of sun,
My weary head on mother's knee,
Upon the old door-stone.

That mother's face, that mother's form,
Are graven on my heart,
And of life's holiest memories
They form the dearest part;
Her council and instructors given
Of friendship, love and truth,
Have been my guardians and my guides
Through all the ways of youth;
And yet I seem to hear again
Each loved and treasured tone,
When I in fancy sit me down
Upon the old door-stone.

Long years have passed since mother died,
Yet she is with me still,
Whether a toiler in the vale,
Or wanderer on the hill;
Still with me at thy morning care,
Or evening's quiet rest,
The guardian angel by my side,
The kindest and the best.
A mother now, I often strive
To catch her thought and tone,
For those who cluster round my knee,
Upon my own door-stone.

And oft beneath those clustering vines
Have kindred spirits met,
And holy words breathed softly there—
Vows all unbroken yet,—
And friendships formed, and plans devised,
And kindly pledges given,
And sweet annunciations there begun,
Far-reaching into Heaven!
Oh! those who met, in love, 'lang syne,'
In life's wide paths ere thrown,
Yet many turn with longing hearts
Back to the old door-stone.

Years, years have flown since those bright days,
And all the world is changed,
And some who loved most kindly then
Are by the world estranged;
Some fond hearts, too, they full of joy,
Are cold and still this day!
Forsaken plans and withered hopes
Lie strewn o'er all the way,
And strangers' feet tread those old halls
Where pattered once our own,
And spend the pleasant twilight hour
Upon the . . . door-stone.

The old door-stone, the clustering vine,
Oh! may they long remain—

And may the household band that's left
Meet there but once again;
Meet, not to weep o'er pleasure's past,
Or canvass joys to come—
Meet to revive the sacred loves
Once centred in that home:
A brother and a sister sleep,
Our parents both are gone;
Oh! it would be a saddened hour
Upon that old door-stone.

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