

The Portfolio.

Vita Sine Literis Mors Est.

VOL. 1.

HAMILTON, JANUARY, 1879.

No. 2.

BEYOND.

ONE eventide I stood beside the gliding stream,
Low purling songs of sweet content among
The reedy banks and slender bushes tall,
And in my hand a twining silken cord
Fast to a tiny boat that idly lay
In calm repose, soft rocking at my feet ;
And in that bark I tenderly had laid
A heart bound round with breathéd hopes and prayers.
I stood and dreamed of sunny days to come—
Days lying off so far, so far beyond,
That only sometimes in my dreams there came
A glimpse—a sweet, short glimpse—
And when my eyes still further would be blessed,
It seemed as though a spirit's shadow hand
Did veil my eyes, and 'twixt that land and me
Drew down a film of radiant mysticism ;
And then, though clouds of earth thought float between,
I know it lieth there—beyond ! beyond !
And when my boat some day shall sail away,
I on the shore shall slowly follow on,
Still holding in my hand the strong, pure, silken cord,
Till when the sea, white curling at my feet,
Shall tell me that I need no longer stray,
But with my bark, and all that it doth bear,
Sail swiftly to my glorious dream-land on.

My boat is gone !

'Twas years ago, and just on this same shore
I, with my thoughts and treasures, was alone ;
The day, like some fair eastern princess robed
In all her garb of glorious majesty,
Passed slowly through the golden gates ajar,
But e'er they closed the tender, grey-robed form
Of evening softly through the portals came,
And paused awhile in thought 'twixt earth and heaven,
Then calmly floated to the waiting world.
The nodding flow'rets lifted faces glad
To meet the offered kiss of her good-night.
Then, heavy with the dew from her sweet lips,
Droop slowly down to soft and dreamless sleep ;
The ocean's roar, borne to me on the wind,
Like hoarse-voiced monks at evening vespers seemed,
And sweetly chimed the brooklet's silver tone
Like gentle pleadings of a holy nun ;
The stars were slowly lighted one by one,
And, like the ears of fluttering angels, seemed
Soft laid against the azure floor above
To catch each sound of evening prayer and praise.
As there I stood, the swift, belated wing
Of whip-poor-will rough frightened from its rest
A tiny breeze that nestled in among
The grasses bending o'er the water's edge ;
Half waked it started, trembling in its fear,
Across the brook, rough pushing as it lay
My slumbering bark adown the rippling stream :
The cord so softly slid from out my hand

I missed it not—till when I wished to sleep
And bent for one more look ere I should say
"Good-night!" to what there fondly lay,
I turned, I gazed, as in a dream—'twas gone !
And now I wander to the ocean's shore alone,
And know that when again my vision comes
It, too, will come and carry me—Beyond !

ART IN THE HOME.

THE craving appetite of man may be satisfied by food, the burning thirst by water. The mind's aspirations are nurtured by every simple act or familiar scene, by deeper works of science, by subtler forms of literature. Provision is also made for the great soul-longings; there is no spiritual necessity which has not its correspondent satisfaction, there is no spiritual desire which may not be fulfilled. The objective thus answers to the subjective—the world without to the world within. Yet, in moments of excitement, when some greater power calls us out of ourselves, when Nature is presented in her most appalling forms, or Art in its wonderful perfection; when a mind of greater degree plays upon our own, *then* it is that we long for something, we know not what—a desire comes over us for which there seems to be no provision: we are *hungry*, but there is no food; *thirsty*, but there is no water. We have caught, it may be, an instant's view of something higher, nobler, than we have known; and what there is of high and noble within us, though half-buried, perhaps, with ignorance and selfishness, yet aroused into sympathy by that moment's view, *cries out* in its passionate desire to throw off its load and soar upwards. What we have seen was but half seen, we long for brighter light; yet, dazzled and bewildered, that we had was almost more than we could bear. The glimpse is momentary, but its memory remains, and Imagination, with its varied tints, embodying as it may the half-caught vision, presents to us a model, the copy of which may ennoble our entire lives.