

## TIME'S CHANGES.

BY DELTA.

I saw her once—so freshly fair,  
That, like a blossom just unfolding,  
She open'd to life's cloudless air,  
And nature joy'd to see its moulding;  
Her smile it haunts my memory yet—  
Her cheek's fine hue divinely glowing—  
Her rosebud mouth—her eyes of jet—  
Around on all their light bestowing.

Oh! who could look on such a form,  
So nobly free, so softly tender,  
And darkly dream that earthly storm  
Should dim such sweet delicious splendour!  
For in her mien and in her face,  
And in her young step's fairy lightness,  
Nought could the raptur'd gazer trace,  
But beauty's glow and pleasure's brightness.

I saw her twice—an altered charm—  
But still of magic richest, rarest,  
Than girlhood's talisman less warm,  
Though yet of earthly sights the fairest:  
Upon her breast she held a chill,  
The very image of its mother;  
Which ever to her smiling smiled,  
They seemed to live but in each other.

But matron cares are lurking woe,  
Her thoughtless, sinless look had banish'd,  
And from her cheek the roseate glow  
Of girlhood's balmy morn had vanish'd;  
Within her eyes, upon her brow,  
Lay something softer, fonder, deeper,  
As if in dreams some vision'd woe  
Had broke th' elysium of the sleeper.

I saw her thrice—fate's dark decree  
In widow's garments had array'd her,  
Yet beautiful she seemed to be,  
Even as my reveries pourtray'd her;  
The glow, the glance had pass'd away,  
The sunshine, and the sparkling glitter:  
Still, though I noted pale decay,  
The retrospect was scarcely bitter.

For, in their place a calmness dwelt,  
Serene, subduing, soothing, holy;  
In feeling which the bosom felt  
That every louder mirth is folly—  
A pensiveness—which is not grief—  
A stillness—as of sunset streaming—  
A fairy glow on flower and leaf,  
Till earth looks like a landskip dreaming.

A last time—and unmoved she lay,  
Beyond life's dim uncertain river;  
A glorious mould of fading clay,  
From whence the spark had fled for ever!  
I gazed, my breast was like to burst—  
And as I thought of years departed,  
The years wherein I saw her first,  
When she, a girl, was lightsome-hearted—

And, when I mused on later days,  
As moved she in her matron duty,  
A happy mother, in the blaze  
Of ripen'd hope, and sunny beauty—  
I felt the chill—I turn'd aside—  
Silent desolation's cloud came o'er me,  
And being seem'd a troubled tide,  
Whose wrecks in darkness swam before me!

## NATURE'S TEACHINGS.\*

I.

GREAT Nature loves the silent tongue,  
The watchful eye, the musing mind;  
For only these her songs are sung,  
From hill to vale along the wind;  
Their burden still; "Ask what ye may,  
And I will answer, yea or nay."

II.

To these she tells her secret laws  
In open field or tangled wood,  
Where all is murmuring of its cause,  
From quiet rill to roaring flood;  
Whispering where hidden waters sleep,  
Or thundering of the mighty deep.

III.

Nor only of today they hear:  
The wondrous tale she tells of earth  
Clear rings upon the th' unsealed ear,  
The ancient story of its birth:  
Grandeur than orphic hymn of old,  
That music sung—that story told.

IV.

Nor rock nor shell nor leaf-marked stone  
To listless souls have ought to tell;  
But to the faithful eye alone  
Reveal how ancient forests fell;  
How waters from their beds were driven,  
Fulfilling each dread 'hest of heaven.

V.

Lo! Time rolls back, and chaos gray  
Stands dawning to the patient eye,  
That sees the long primeval day,  
Its moving things, its misty sky,  
Sudden to wreck and ruin hurled,  
A perished and imperfect world!

VI.

When Mammoth and when Mastodon  
Majestic strode the leafy plain,  
While every leaf they looked upon  
Was theirs, from mountain to the main;  
Unwatched their strength by human guile,  
Undimmed for them the sunlight's stain.

VII.

See, too, the steady earnest eye  
Gaze on the far-off planet world,  
And triumph o'er its mystery!  
To Thought's strong eye the scroll unfurled  
That hidden lies to earth's dim light,  
While gleaning on the inward sight.

VIII.

But dream not thou may'st look and see,  
Or sudden tear the veil away;  
Full oft must thy communing be  
Ere thou shalt hear or "yea or nay,"  
From morning tide to evening-song  
Must be thy watching, calm and long!

IX.

Then bring with thee, to nature dear,  
The loving heart and quiet soul;  
Now and other hath the vision clear;  
On other ear shall never roll  
The oracle and song divine  
She singeth to her God and thine.

\* Knechtbocker.