

(ORIGINAL.)

CHARITY, BENEVOLENCE, AND GENEROSITY.

A BAZAAR FRAGMENT—BY ERNEST RIVERS.

Three heaven-born sisters, Charity the first,
The next twin graces, sweet Benevolence
And Generosity, with radiant smiles
Of love, and purity, and inborn peace ;
Ethereal things, in goodness still intent
To bless the world, and by the world be blest ;
Descended from their blissful bowers above,
To aid their earth-born sisters in the task
Of mitigating woe, and grief, and misery.

The Widows' and Orphans' Invocation.

Hail to the sisters of that heaven-born pair,
Seraphic Faith, and Hope, the last best gift
Of God to man, ere innocence had fled
From that sweet paradise where all was peace,
And grace, and truth, and purity, and love :
Hail bright angelic virtues, thou whose mild
And softening influence is felt o'er all
The earth, and through the wide expanse of heaven,
All hail, incomparable spirits, still we sing to thee,
all hail !

Chorus of Maidens.

Come hither, come hither, sweet sisters three,
On earth we have havens of rest still for thee,
When the spring flowers are opening their blossoms
so rare
And all that is beautiful in nature is there,
Where the woodbriar circles its arms round the rose,
Come hither, come hither, and take thy repose.

The Spirits' reply.

We come, we come, from the realms above,
And we bring thee peace, and we bring thee love :
Swift as the flight of the stars bright beam,
Or the changing tide of love's young dream,
Our course has been through boundless space,
And here for a time is our resting place.

And did they there sleep in that heavenly spot,
Their errand of love for one moment forgot ?
And took they their slumbers by light zephyrs fanned,
And lull'd by the strains of a far far off land ?
No ! Charity sleeps not, but rests like a ray
Of light on the earth in a calm summer's day,
Still vivid with life in its light beaming rest
And imparting its gifts to the woe stricken breast.

Invocation to Benevolence.

Spirit with the beaming smile,
Tarry, tarry here awhile,
Here in this sweet sunny spot :
Mortal breasts are bared before thee,
High and low alike adore thee ;

For the wreaths of jessamine,
Bud of myrtle, leaf of vine,
Fairy fingers shall entwine !
Gentle spirit, leave us not.

The reply.

Maiden, twine the rosy flowers,
Lightly weave the silken strings,
Moments spent like these are hours
Stolen from life's fleeting wings—
Sister spirits, let us not
Flee from this sweet sunny spot

But hark ! what sounds are these so near
That steal like magic on the ear ?
United in one cadence long ?
It is the virgins' morning song.

Song of the Virgins.

Oh, if there's one spirit more lofty and great
On earth than another, in man's proudest state,
It is thine, Generosity, thine !
And if there's one spirit than others more mild,
That steals o'er the heart like the smile of a child,
It is thine, sweet Benevolence, thine !
But if there's a virtue more holy and rare
On earth than another, or spirit more fair,
It is thine, blessed Charity, thine !

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Lightly and gracefully the spirits rose
Refresh'd, and to their task contented flew :
And many a cold and rigid heart was touch'd
With pity by their heavenly influence,
And many a young heart beat
With generous rivalry to spread the board
That was to minister to others' woe.
And many an one who had the power to give
Gave freely, and rejoiced that he had given—
At length the spirits work of love being o'er,
Smiling serenely on the joyous scene, they winged
their way to heaven !

AMBITION.

THERE are few men who are not ambitious of distinguishing themselves in the nation or country where they live, and of growing considerable among those with whom they converse. There is a kind of grandeur and respect which the meanest and most insignificant part of mankind endeavour to procure in the little circle of their friends and acquaintances. The poorest mechanic, nay, the man who lives upon common alms, gets him his set of admirers, and delights in that superiority which he enjoys over those who are in some respects beneath him. This ambition, which is natural to the soul of man, might, methinks, receive a very happy turn ; and, if it were rightly directed, contribute as much to a person's advantage, as it generally does to his uneasiness and disquiet.—*Addison.*