

LOST YEARS.

“ We always may be what we might have been ”

—ADELAIDE PROCTER.

“ WE always may be what we might have been,”—
These words look true upon the surface seen,
But, read beneath the lines, though fair it seem,
'Tis a fool's paradise, youth's idle dream,
The life we've lost we never can redeem.

We dally in the glowing morn of youth,
Play battledore and shuttlecock with truth,
And waste bright days, then sadly amid fears
The training lost mourn o'er with bitter tears,
But wisdom's offers go with passing years.

The ways of sin we tread, and oft return,
A better path, a nobler life we yearn,
Regret the past, claim pardon in Christ's name,
But bygone purity can ne'er reclaim,
The hand that sows “ wild oats ” must reap the same.

The noble vessel with the billows tost,
Her anchor, rudder, sails, and compass lost,
May in a day of calm seas reach the shore—
A battered wreck, not glorious as of yore—
Safe home, but beauty gone for evermore.