

"The fact is, my dear, that I fell in with so many old acquaintances, and had so much to say and to hear, that I forgot all about it. But I will certainly attend to it, the first thing in the morning."

This scene was enacted over, twice every day, for a fortnight, at the end of which time the house took fire and was burnt to the ground without a dollar of insurance. A part of the furniture, however, was saved—a smaller house was hired, and the vacant lot sold.

Mr. Saunter had lost a few thousands by "driving off" the operation of insuring his property, but he had still a handsome fortune left, which was all invested in bank stock. When this description of property, in consequence of certain events which have recently transpired in our country, began rapidly to decline in value, he prudently resolved to sell out and invest in real estate; but here his besetting sin of procrastination prevailed again. He put off action from day to day, notwithstanding the earnest remonstrances of his wife; and he is now comparatively a poor man. Such are "the consequences of driving things off."



#### STANZAS, INSCRIBED TO MRS. —

The summer is dawning bright,

And Hope now lights anew her altar-flame;  
Fair visions throng to meet th' enraptur'd sight,  
From Fancy's realm they came.

And deck'd in sweetest smiles,

The future lures us to her flow'ry way;—  
Oh! many a pang that syren voice beguiles,  
And many a weary day.

Yet oft doth boding Fear

Approach, with white and trembling lips to  
tell

That soon, for all we love most fondly here,  
Will sound the mournful knell.

Then shall we faint and fall,

Beneath the weary weight of pain and care?  
No! we will trust the ever-present, All,  
Whatever be our share.

Perchance for us may wave

The golden harvest of sweet peace and joy,  
Love's flowing fountain all our pathway lave,  
And bless each day's employ.

Such be thy lot, my friend!

But o'en tho' clouds arise, thou wilt not fear,  
For while thy spirit to thy Father tends,  
Sweet Peace will crown the year.

#### THE GERANIUM PLANT.

FLOWERS have a magic power, to retouch the associations of other days. Though our path may have led over the steep and thorny places of the world, for many years, yet the unexpected sight of the pale grass flowers, and yellow kingcups, we gathered in childhood, brings back the cool fragrance of life's early morning. If the wearied traveller chance to find in foreign climes such plants as he collected by the singing brook of his native glen, the broad-leaved iris, or the bright crimson lobelia, straitway he is a boy again, and shreds them fondly into his mother's lap. The hoary woman, unto whom there remaineth little save the arm-chair in the chimney corner, and the oft repeated counsel to her shouting grand children,—if she see, among its lustrous green leaves, the pure white Carmella, remember the thrill with which its cool petals drooped over her forehead at her bridal, and is lost amid the wanderings of fairy land.

The smile, or the breath of our familiar home-flowers, restore to us in after life, the careless innocence of those days, when half in ignorance, and half in faith, we planted the rootless stem of some rich blossom, that had been given us,—and heaped the fresh soil tenderly around it, and watered it every moment,—and visited it with hope, until it was a brown and dead as the mould by which it was encompassed. They recall the reckless curiosity with which we dug up the bulb of orange tulip, or tube-rose, and found them busy with their work of germination, which our impatience interrupted,—perhaps destroyed.

Distant places, and absent friends, are brought near, by the touch of the same tall man. The odor of a pressed flower, between the leaves of a long closed book, restores the voice, the form, of the loved one, who placed it there whose home may now be in the tomb. I had sought the sweet trailing arbutus among the wilds of my native place, when life was new, and a box of it recently performed a journey of many miles to visit me. The moment it was opened, while its fragrance almost overpowered every sense, every breathing blossom spoke of the rocks which we used to climb in pursuit of it,—and of the rough, foaming waters that filled every pause in our merry voices, and then suddenly my playmates stood beside me, their baskets overflowing with the gifts of early spring, themselves still young and spring-like, though on the heads of some, I knew that the frosts had settled, and that over others, rested the green sod.