

E l e g y :

ON THE DEATH OF THE REV. JAMES SPENCER, M. A.

BY E. H. DEWART.

As one who watches from the wave-worn shore,
A vessel sinking in a stormy sea,
Which love and grief, with vain regret deplore—
SPENCER, I feel for thee.

And can it be, that thou art also passed
Across the dark and melancholy tide?
Swept down unwarned by death's relentless blast,
In manhood's strength and pride.

And shall we see thy manly form no more?
Nor, with warm friendship, grasp thine honest hand:
Until we meet with all life's struggles o'er,
In the bright spirit-land.

Lay him to rest, while Autumn leaves are dying,
And fading glory tints the vernal bowers—
While Autumn winds their mournful dirge are sighing—
Among the faded flowers

Not with a hoary head, at set of sun—
Not with prophetic voice of slow decay—
Long ere to us his mortal work seemed done,
In the lone grave he lay.

At tidings of thy swift and sad decline,
From many a heart warm tears of grief shall flow;
Though thou art gone where deathless glories shine,
We mourn thy loss below.

Though grief cannot our vanished hopes restore,
Let faithful friends with tears embalm his name,
To live enshrined in honest hearts, is more
Than wreaths of earthly fame.

Nor yet with wasting sorrow vainly weep,
When at his post a standard-bearer falls;
But each the lessons in remembrance keep,
Which this sad hour recalls.

Within his breast a manly soul he bore,
That never quailed where truth and duty led;
Upon his path, when darkness gathered o'er,
Celestial light was shed.

Freedom and truth, he loved with fearless love,
Falsehood and guile he scorned with honest hate;
Unbribed by flattery, and by threats unmoved,
Faith nerved for every fate.

He was no man of smooth and silver tongue,
No crouching sycophant to power or pride,
Fearless and stern his honest accents rung,
When justice was denied.

Now, from his loss, we learn his worth sincere—
Secured from suffering, freed from earth-born care,
In all that moves our struggling hope and fear,
He can no longer share.

Thus all the good and true of mortal birth,
Like him have bowed to death's mysterious sway:
All the great souls whose footsteps brightened earth,
Were hastening to decay.

All here is transient—Earth is wet with tears.
The friends we love—the bliss for which we sigh—
The love that gaddens, and the hope that cheers,—
Like summer flowers shall die.

There is another world, beyond the strife,
Where darkening mists dissolve in limpid air;
All the perplexing ills of mortal life,
Shall be unfolded there.

There the deep problems of the spirit-world,
Which here to solve we sadly, vainly, strove,
Shall be to quickened thought unsealed, unfurled,
In the pure light of love.

SPENCER, farewell—would that my broken strains,
Had power to keep thy honoured memory green;
But nobler immortality remains,
Where death has never been.

What e'er thy faults I dare not scan them now,
Thou art with God—let erring man forbear—
And he who weaves this garland for thy brow,
May soon himself be there.

St. Johns, Oct. 16, 1868.