

## THE OLD PRAYER

WHEN the evening shadows fall, oftentimes do I recall other evenings, far away, when, weary of my play, I would climb on granny's knee (long since gone to sleep has she), clasp my hands and bow my head, while the simple lines I said, "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep." Journeyed long have I since then, in this sad, gray world of men; I have seen with aching heart, comrades to their rest depart; friends have left me, one by one, for the shores beyond the sun. Still the Youth enraptured sings, and the world with gladness rings, but the faces I have known all are gone, and I'm alone. All alone, amid the throng, I, who've lived and journeyed long. Loneliness and sighs and tears are the wages of the years. Who would dread the journey's end, when he lives without a friend? Now the sun of life sinks low; in a little while I'll go where my friends and comrades wait for me by the jasper gate. Though the way be cold and stark, I shall murmur, in the dark, "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep."