

## BEAUTIFUL SNOW.

Oh! the snow, the beautiful snow,  
Filling the sky and earth below,  
Over the housetops, over the streets,  
Over the heads of the people you meet,  
Dancing—Flirting—Skimming along  
Beautiful snow! it can do no wrong;  
Flying to kiss a fair lady's cheek,  
Clinging to lips in frolicsome freak;  
Beautiful snow from heaven above,  
Pure as an angel, gentle, as love!

Oh! the snow, the beautiful snow,  
How the Flakes gather and laugh as they go,  
Whirling about in maddening fun;  
Chasing—Laughing—Hurrying by  
It lights on the face, and it sparkles the eye;  
And the dogs with a bark and a bound  
Snap at the crystals as they eddy around;  
The town is alive, and its heart in a glow,  
To welcome the coming of beautiful snow!  
How wild the crowd goes swaying along,  
Hailing each other with humour and song;  
How the gay sleighs like meteors flash by,  
Bright for the moment then lost to the eye;  
Ringing—Swinging—Dashing they go,  
Over the crust of the beautiful snow;  
Snow so pure when it falls from the sky,  
To be trampled and tracked by thousands of feet,  
Till it blends with the filth in the horrible street.

Once I was pure as the snow, but I fell:  
Fell like the snow flakes from heaven to hell;  
Fell to be trampled as filth on the street;  
Fell to be scoffed, to be spit on and beat;  
Pleading—Cursing—Dreading to die,  
Selling my soul to whoever would buy;  
Dealing in shame for a morsel of bread,  
Hating the living and fearing the dead.  
Merciful God, have I fallen so low?  
And yet I was once like the beautiful snow.

Once I was fair as the beautiful snow,  
With an eye like a crystal, a heart like its glow;  
Once I was loved for my innocent grace—  
Flattered and sought for the charms of my face!  
Fathers—Mothers—Sisters—all,  
God and myself I have lost by my fall;  
The veriest wretch that goes shivering by,  
Will make a wide sweep lest I wander too nigh;  
For all that is on or above me I know,  
There is nothing so pure as the beautiful snow.

How strange it should be that this beautiful snow,  
Should fall on a sinner with no where to go!  
How strange it should be when the night comes again,  
If the snow and the ice struck my desperate brain!  
Fainting—Freezing—Dying alone,  
Too wicked for prayer, too weak for a moan,  
To be heard in the streets of the crazy town,  
Gone mad in the joy of snow coming down;  
To be and to die in my terrible woe,  
With a bed and a shroud of the beautiful snow.

Helpless and foul as the trampled snow,  
Sinner despair not! Christ stoopeth low  
To rescue the soul that is lost in sin,  
And raise it to life and enjoyment again.  
Groaning—Bleeding—Dying for thee,  
The Crucified hung on the cursed tree!  
His accents of mercy fell soft on thine ear,  
"Is there mercy for me? Will He heed my weak prayer?"  
O God! in the stream that for sinners did flow,  
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

## DEATH OF THE AUTHOR OF "BEAUTIFUL SNOW."

A FEW years ago there appeared in an American paper published in one of the Western States an exquisite poem, entitled "Beautiful Snow." The beauty of the composition secured its republication in numerous journals, and at length it found its way to England, accompanied by the tale that the original had been discovered upon the person of a young woman who was frozen to death in the streets of St. Louis. For a long time the author perserved his *incognito*, and numerous claimants sought to establish their right to its authorship and the honors appertaining thereto. Some one who knew the true history of the poem knew also the cause of its author's reticence in giving the name to the world. Some months since the secret was revealed, and Major Sigourney, nephew of the celebrated poetess of that name, became known as the writer. The April number of *Harper's Mag-*

*azine* contains a companion poem, entitled, "Beautiful Child," which is marked by all the elegance of diction and deep religious feeling characteristic of its predecessor. Who could have thought that in a few weeks its gifted author would fill a suicide's grave? Yet such is the case. We learn from an American contemporary that, on the night of April 22nd, Major W. A. H. Sigourney was found dead in the outskirts of New York, under circumstances leading to the belief that he had shot himself. He had in early life married a Miss ———, a lady of great personal attractions, and with her made a voyage to Europe. During their absence rumors unfavorable to her character reached the Sigourney family. The reports seem to have been well founded, for shortly after her return to New York she showed that the curse of the nineteenth century—the demon drink—had added another name to the list of victims. She abandoned her husband, became an outcast, and was next heard of as an inmate of the penitentiary on Blackwell's Island. Her husband's love was still sufficiently strong to induce him to make another effort to save her, and through his influence she was released, only again to desert her home. In the winter of 1863 the papers spoke of a young and beautiful woman having been found dead under the snow in a disreputable street in New York. Something seemed to tell Sigourney that the body was that of his wife. Upon making inquiries he found his surmises were but too true, and after claiming the remains he had them interred in that picturesque "silent city" which overlooks the busy harbor of New York. The story of that erring wife was told in the touching language of "Beautiful Snow." What wonder that he shunned the publicity that its authorship would have conferred! Henry J. Raymond, then editor of the *New York Times*, was for years the friend of Major Sigourney, and obtained for him employment as a journalist, which failing health compelled him to abandon. The circumstances connected with his death remain a mystery. Not even his child, for whom he always displayed the tenderest affection, can throw any light upon it. The last effort of his genius is displayed in the poem already referred to.

## BEAUTIFUL CHILD.

"Beautiful child by the mother's knee.  
In the mystic future what will thou be?  
A demon of sin or an angel sublime—  
A poison Upas or innocent thyme—  
A spirit of evil flashing down  
With the lurid light of a fiery crown—  
Or gliding up with a shining track,  
Like the mourning star that ne'er looks back.  
Daintiest dreamer that ever smiled,  
Which will thou be, my beautiful child?"

Beautiful child in my garden bowers,  
Friend of the butterflies, birds and flowers—  
Pure as the sparkling crystalline stream,  
Jewels of truth thy fairy eyes beam,  
Was there ever a whiter soul than thine  
Worshipped by love in a mortal shrine?  
My heart thou has gladdened for two sweet years—  
With rainbows of hope through mists of tears—  
Mists beyond which the sunny smile  
With its hale of glory beams all the while.

"Beautiful child, to thy look is given  
A gleam serene, not of earth but heaven,  
With thy tell-tale eyes and prattling tongue,  
Would thou could'st ever thus be young.  
Like the liquid strains of the mocking bird  
From stair to hall thy voice is heard;  
How oft in the garden nooks thou'rt found,  
With flowers thy curly head around,  
And kneeling beside me with figure so quaint  
Oh! who would not doat on my infant saint!"

"Beautiful child what thy fate shall be  
Perchance is wisely hidden from me;  
A fallen star thou may'st leave my side  
And of sorrow and shame become the bride—  
Shivering, quivering, through the cold street  
With a curse behind and before thy feet,  
Ashamed to live and afraid to die;  
No home, no friend, and a pitiless sky.  
Merciful Father—my brain grows wild—  
Oh! keep from evil my beautiful child!"

"Beautiful child, may'st thou soar above,  
A warbling cherub of joy and love;  
A drop on eternity's seas;  
A blossom on life's immortal tree—  
Floating, flowering evermore  
In the blessed light of the golden shore.  
And as I gaze on thy sinless bloom  
And thy radiant face, they dispel my gloom,  
I feel He will keep thee undefiled,  
And his love protect my beautiful child."