

away; the ice melted from the river, the snow from the lawn, and every day gave some sign, in bud or leaf or flower, that spring was clothing the earth with new beauty. The blossoms had not yet fallen from the trees, when we welcomed our wanderer home, and before that spring had ripened into summer, I gave away my sweet Agnes to him whom she had chosen, and in a long and happy union he has found that the fond and faithful daughter is only surpassed by the loving and devoted wife.

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TO MY WIFE.

THERE may be romance in that gentle feeling
Which visiteth my heart, when, at my side,
I feel a soft hand through mine quietly stealing,
Yet there is something real in a bride!

For love hath music in it far more pleasing
Than the old romance of the feudal line,
Whose dames, in verse, were taught the art of
teasing
Their red-cross knights to trudge to Palestine.

It is the romance of fresh thoughts which
waken

Sweetly amid the visions of young years,
Heart-fraught with love, the long tried and
unshaken,
Too pure for passion and too true for tears.

Yet gazing on thee, sweet, how thrills my
bosom,

As to my heart I clasp thy yielding form,
For life bereft of thee would wear no blossom,
Nor would hope's rainbow span my spirit-
storm.

Doubt I that thy young heart will ever falter?

Doubt I mine own will ever love thee less?

Thou, who didst give me at the bridal-altar,
Thy heart's deep wealth of untold tender-
ness?

Oh! never dearest, never, 'till the beating
Of this poor heart, which throbs for thee, is
o'er!

Never until my soul, from life retreating,
Takes up its death-march to the spirit shore!

Then as thy lips shall kiss me to my slumber,
As on life's verge I say the long good night,
How will thy love my struggling spirit cumber,
While the world reels and fovers on my sight.

Yet in that distant bourne, where, broken-
hearted,

Thou shalt deem haply that my soul hath
rest,

Can I but meet thee, when life hath departed,
My sin-sick spirit shall be doubly blest!

THE FIXED STARS.

EVERY one who is possessed of even a moderate acquaintance with astronomy, is aware that the distances of the fixed stars far exceed even the most remote of the planets yet discovered in the solar system. Indeed, so great is the disproportion between them, that the distance of Herschel, contrasted with the distance of the nearest of the fixed stars, sinks almost into absolute insignificance. Herschel is *eighteen hundred millions of miles from the sun*, and no fact has been more satisfactorily demonstrated, than that the law of gravitation operates, positively, from the sun to this planet. The fixed stars are considered by all modern astronomers as suns shining by their own native light, and most probably the centres of other systems, of greater or lesser degrees of magnitude and numbers. In the course of the last hundred and fifty years, some of the fixed stars appear to have moved. The star Arcturus has moved three minutes and three seconds; in seventy-eight years, it is therefore probable that all the heavenly bodies which are discoverable with telescopes of the greatest power are in subjection to some vast, inconceivable vast central globe, self-balanced somewhere in celestial space; and that may be the resplendent throne of God. This sentiment advanced by a distinguished philosopher whose lecture I had the pleasure of attending during a short residence in the United States, is calculated to fill the mind with wonder and astonishment, and to convince us of our insignificance, and the imperfect view we take of the astonishing works of the Divine Architect.

The nearest of the fixed stars yet observed is supposed, on good grounds, to be not less than 41,040,000,000,000, (or forty one billion and forty thousand millions of miles distant). A distance so great that even light itself, travelling as it does at the rate of twelve million miles a minute, would not traverse in less time than six years and a half! Indeed it has been thought by some astronomers, that some of the fixed stars are so distant that their light has not reached us yet, supposing six thousand years to have elapsed since they were created. How astonishing and overwhelming are numbers like these! The human mind is not formed to grasp them, and hardly, perhaps, can any finite intellects conceive them. When we speak of the comparative remoteness of certain regions of the starry heavens beyond others, and of our own situation in them, the question immediately arises, what is the scale