

THE SEAMSTRESS'S VISION.

'Twas midnight! Haggard and wan,
A widowed seamstress dropped in her chair;
Her candle was dying, her fire was gone,
And her arms were clasped in despair,
"O God! I am weary," she cried,
"Of a labor that never is done;
'T were better for me had I died
Ere the pauperish task was begun."

She sat and thought of the days
Of her childhood, all sunny and fair,
Ere the dimness came over her eyes,
And the silver was streaked in her hair,
She thought of her children—the dear;
Of husband and parents—the dead;
"Why struggle with beggary here:
Why live we thus orphaned?" she said.

Exhausted and sickened, and sore,
She sat at her slavish toil;
O, life! is there naught in thy store
But anguish, and hunger and moil?
Nothing but stitch at an endless seam,
With palsied hand and dimming eye?
Is this the measure of life's young dream?
'T were better to starve and die.

She sat, and her aching head drooped low,
With its burden of grief and pain;
A burden none but the toiling know,
Whose rest is dreaming of toil again.
Her fingers relaxed and her eyes grew dim;
And her task faded out of her sight;
No fire on the hearth, no candle to trim,
Nothing left but a Vision of night.

A Vision—for lo! she dreamed,
Ay, dreamed she was happy and free:
No longer her fingers wearily seamed
Till her swollen eyes scarcely could see.
A needle she held, and she thought it grew
To a fair flowering tree;
Each flower a garment finished and new,
And fair as a garment could be.

O, wondrous Vision! The needle seemed
As if thousands of fairy hands
From out its flowering branches gleamed,
Stitching hems, and gussets, and bands;
So noiselessly stitched that never a sound
By the sleeper's ear was heard,
And the garments dropped like ripened fruit,
Which never a wind had stirred.