

BY-AND-BY.

There's a little mischief-maker
That is stealing half our bliss,
Sketching pictures in a dreamland,
That are never seen in this—
Dashing from the lips the pleasures
Of the present while we sigh;
You may know that mischief-maker,
For his name is By-and-by.

He is sitting by your hearthstone,
With his sly, bewitching glance,
Whisp'ring of the coming morrow
As the social hours advance;
Loitering 'mid our calm reflections,
Hiding forms of beauty nigh;
He's a smooth, deceitful fellow,
This enchanter, By-and-by.

You may know him by his winning,
By his careless, sportive air;
By his sly obtrusive presence,
That is straying everywhere.
By the trophies that he gathers
Where his sombre victims lie;
For a bold, determined fellow
Is this conqueror, By-and-by.

When the calls of duty haunt us,
And the present seems to be
All the time that ever mortals
Snatch from dark eternity,
Then a fairy hand seems painting
Pictures on a painted sky,
For a cunning little artist
Is this fairy, By-and-by.

"By-and-by," the wind is sighing,
"By-and-by," the heart replies;
But the phantom just above it
Ere we grasp it ever flies.
List not to the idle charmer,
Scorn the very specious lie—
Oh, do not believe or trust in
That deceiver, By-and-by.