

LOVE UNEXPRESSED.

The sweetest notes among the human heart-strings
 Are dull with rust ;
 The sweetest chords adjusted by the angels,
 Are clogged with dust ;
 We pipe and pipe again our dreary music
 Upon the self-same strains,
 While sounds of crime, and fear, and desolation,
 Come back in sad refrains.

On through the world we go, an army marching,
 With listening ears,
 Each longing, sighing for the heavenly music
 He never hears ;
 Each longing, sighing, for a word of comfort,
 A word of tender praise,
 A word of love, to cheer the endless journey
 Of earth's hard, busy days.

They love us, and we know it ; this suffices
 For reason's share,
 Why should they pause to give that love expression
 With gentle care ;
 Why should they pause ? But still our hearts are aching
 With all the gnawing pain
 Of hungry love that longs to hear the music,
 And longs and longs in vain.

We love them, and we know it ; if we falter,
 With fingers numb,
 Among the unused strings of love's expression,
 The notes are dumb.
 We shrink within ourselves in voiceless sorrow,
 Leaving the words unsaid,
 And, side by side with those we love the dearest,
 In silence on we tread.

Thus on we tread, and thus each in silence
 Its fate fulfills,
 Waiting and hoping for the heavenly music
 Beyond the distant hills,
 The only difference of the love in heaven
 From love on earth below,
 Is : Here we love and know not how to tell it,
 And there we all shall know.

—*Constance F. Woolson.*