

## SPRING.

A flush of green is on the bough,  
A warm breath panteth in the air,  
And in the earth a heart pulse thro'  
Throbs underneath her breaths of snow.

Life is astir among the woods,  
And by the moor, and by the stream,  
The year as from a torpid dream  
Wakes in the sunshine on the buds;

Wakes up in music as the song  
Of wood bird, wild, and loosen'd rill,  
More frequent from the windy hill  
Comes, greening forest aisles along;

Wakes up in beauty as the sheen  
Of woodland pool the gleams receives,  
Through bright flowers, over braided leaves,  
Of broken sunlight, golden green.

She sees the outlaw'd winter stay  
Awhile, to gather after him  
Snow robes, frost-crystal'd diadem,  
And then in soft showers pass away.

She would not love rough winter well,  
Yet cannot choose but mourn him now;  
So wears awhile on her young brow  
His gift—a gleaming icicle.

Then turns her, loving, to the sun,  
Upheaves her bosom's swell to his,  
And, in the joy of his first kiss,  
Forgets for aye that stormier one.

Old winter's pledge from her he rears—  
That ice-cold, though glittering spar—  
And zones her with a green cymar,  
And girdles round her brow with leaves.

The primrose and wood-violet  
Ho tangles in her shining hair,  
And teaches elfin breezes fair  
To sing her some sweet canzonet.

All promising long summer hours,  
When she in his embrace shall lie,  
Under the broad doom of bright sky,  
On mossy couches starr'd with flowers.

Till she smiles back again to him  
The beauty beaming from his face,  
And, robed in light, glows with the grace  
Of Eden-palaced cherubim.

'O Earth, thy growing loneliness  
Around our very hearts has thrown  
An undimmed joyance all its own,  
And sunn'd us o'er with happiness.

## MARIAN CROSS.

All that dark, cloudy November day I had been listlessly gazing out at the sullen looking sky, vainly hoping to get a glimpse of a single ray of sunshine, or at least one little, bright cloud to relieve the general dreariness,—but no, it still kept raining, raining. Turning moodily from the window, I caught up the fragment of an old newspaper, and as I read the words, blotted and almost effaced by age and use, I forgot the day was "dark, and sad, and dreary." In thought I went back to the time when I made one of the merry group at the old red school-house upon the hill. I had seen the fading leaves of only twelve Autumns then, the days all seemed bright, and very joyous to me, yet I had learned that it was not so all, I knew that among the youthful band who gathered

there day after day there were some who trod the life-path wearily—despairingly. And as I read

"She was not beautiful, poor girl,  
Her figure or her face  
Had none of all the charms that giv'  
To maidenhood its grace,—  
One of those beings upon whom  
All sorrows seem to fall,  
Deformed and homely, poor and sad,  
And mind to feel it all,"

the pale, sad, thoughtful face of Marian Cross, came up before me, as, seated alone at her desk, she industriously committed to memory lesson after lesson, heedless of the busy hum around her; or, standing a little apart, watched us in our noisy sports at play hours. Now and then our lively sallies would cause a faint smile to light up her face, but it quickly faded, and the same mournful look would again take its place. We sometimes wondered *why* she was sad, yet never paused to consider whether *we* could do aught to make her life more pleasant.

Once, at her request, I went with her to her home, and from that hour her sad face was no mystery to me. I will not attempt to describe that home,—I felt that its very atmosphere was enough to chill every joyous impulse. I wondered if the sunshine ever entered there,—sure was I that the sunshine of love never did, or it would have been a happier one.

Her harsh, unfeeling, intemperate father; rough, clownish brothers, and careless, selfish sisters, had no sympathy for the timid, sensitive child; and her patient, over-tasked mother had no time to devote to her, and from others

She never sought a smile  
To cheer her lonely heart,  
But by herself, with shrinking step,  
She struggled on apart.

After a time the gloomy old house she had so long called her home was exchanged for a pleasanter one, but more agreeable associations, or all the glowing beauties of earth that surrounded her, had no power to bring happiness to her desponding heart. There came also a change in the household, some had found other homes, death had removed the mother and a sister, leaving of the group that once gathered at the homestead only Marian and her father.

Many a long, long day—yes, even weeks,—she spent them alone, sorrowful and disheartened. Friends endeavored to cheer her with words of kindness and encouragement, yet her pale cheek grew paler, her step slower, and her slender form bowed beneath the crushing weight of sorrow which rested upon her young heart, slowly, surely wearing her life away.

The look of quiet, patient endurance which was ever upon her face, we felt, as we stood beside her last resting place, came not from a meek, forbearing spirit, or she would have waited patiently until God called her to a happier world.

Poor Marian! she was alone in the hour of death; none knew when it came. A friend hearing that she had been many days alone, and wishing to spend a little time with her, entered the house on a beautiful autumn morning, and found her sleeping—sleeping the peaceful, dreamless slumber of death. By her side stood the cup that had contained the deadly draught; the hand that prepared it yet remained clasped over the heart, which had ceased to beat; around the cold lips still lingered a smile,—the weary one was at rest.

In tearful silence friends gathered as they learned the sad story, but there was none that could answer the half-uttered words of inquiry that rose to every lip—none but the Searcher of all Hearts knew how deep was the anguish, how strong, how alluring the temptation which caused her to commit the dreadful deed. Slowly, sadly they bore her to her last resting-place, gently they laid her down to repose beneath the green turf, and now but few can tell

Where blooms the clover, white and red,  
That fate kindly rears  
To guard the slumbers of the child  
Of poverty and tears.

VERY TOUCHING.—Mr. Backus, the editor of the *Canajoharie Radian*, is a deaf-mute; but how eloquently he gives voice to the language of grief in the following passage from his last paper:

We cannot this week fill our usual column—every time hitherto, before this, that we have sat in the old place, to the now regular recurring duty, we have had dear little fingers rambling along our knees, or making stray snatches at the paper. A little head, nodding, as it shook its curls, a mock "by-by, papa," and turning back again to the sweet childish teasing. But now, alas! the little fingers are no longer here; the little eyes are dim with a dimness that shall never know the old lustrous again, and the little curls are yonder, beneath that sod that gleams so greenly beneath the trees and the glimmering white tombstones.

Value the friendship of him who stands by you in the storm; swarms of insects will surround you in the sunshine.