

THE SCATTERED HOUSEHOLD.

BY JANE E. LOCKE.

MOTHER, thou wast happier early,
When thy little ones were near—
When they gath'ring to thy bosom,
With a heavenly trust and fear.

Thou did'st think then that the future
Would a glorious presence bring;
And thou longed'st for the summer
Of that brightly opening spring;

Ay, thou longed'st for the manhood,
Of the infants at thy knee;
In thy soul how sweetly dreaming
Full-ear'd harvest it should be.

But, alas! a cheating vision,
Never wast thou blest as then;
Children are the mother's treasures,
And the world's when they are men.

Now how often look'st thou tearful,
To thy empty cradle-bed,
Yearning there again to pillow
In sweet sleep each wanderer's head.

Sighing, weeping, almost praying,
That e'en backward yet may turn
The dark shade upon the dial,
And their infancy return.

Never had thy soul such sorrow,
Never loneliness as now,
With thy heart's fond one beside thee,
And his kiss upon thy brow.

For a mighty void is round thee,
That not e'en his heart can fill;
Lost to thee the tender nurselings,
Whose soft pulse to thine did thrill.

Souls of thy soul, dearer to thee,
Than all earth could give beside;
And thy heart looks yearning for them,
Over sea and kingdom wide.

Far off, o'er the shining gold dust
On the Sacramento plains,
One is stooping, half forgetting
Thee, amid the glittering grains.

And another on the billows
Of the ocean deep and dark,
Linketh to that life his heart-chords—
Dearest *home*, the sheeted bark.

Others, from the south isles, scattered,
To the Kremlin's ashes far—
In the pride of earnest manhood,
Worshipping some brighter star,

And around thy hearthstone never
Shall the truants group again;
In one circle as in childhood,
Tho' thy tear-drops fall like rain.

But remember, thou art selfish,
Thus to hold them to thy breast;
All abroad God's world doth need them,
Laboring to make it blest.

And I tell thee trust in Heaven,
Its bright *home* is near at hand;
There thou yet may'st gather round thee,
Thy loved wanderers in one band.

AUTUMNAL MORNING.

The rill afar sings out its song,
There is no motion in the air,
But busily it winds along,
And stirs the clattering mill-wheel there.

Down in the pool the forest lies,
Scarce wrinkled sleeps the tremulous floor,
Round the smooth brim the swallow flies
And stirs it as he flutters o'er.

The cricket singing in the grass,
Time's drowsy hum that fills the ear,
Mark the calm moments as they pass—
Like the white clouds serene and clear.

Upon the green bank sitting here,
Loving, like nature calm and still,
Drinking the warm, pure atmosphere,
And making music of the rill.

Spend we our hours in peace together,
In the cool, moist autumnal morn,
Letting each thought a wimpling feather
Along the stream of life be borne.

The busy miller now and then
Comes out into the sunshine clear,
Unconscious he of cloud or glen,
Or we two idly dreaming here.

And round and round the mill-wheel goes,
The drops drip down in silver rain,
Smoothly the stream beneath it flows,
Then rising, foams along again.