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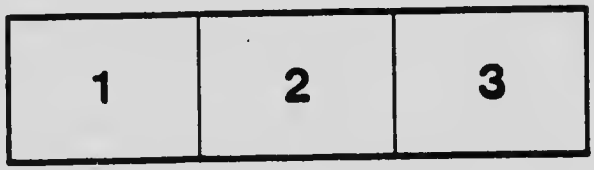

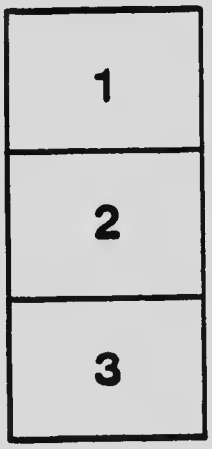

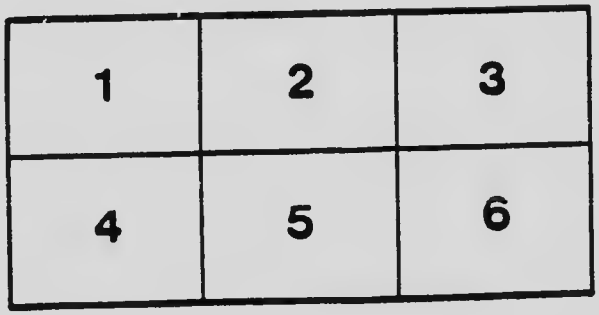

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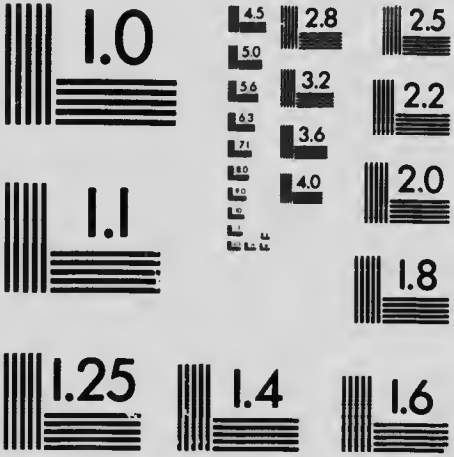
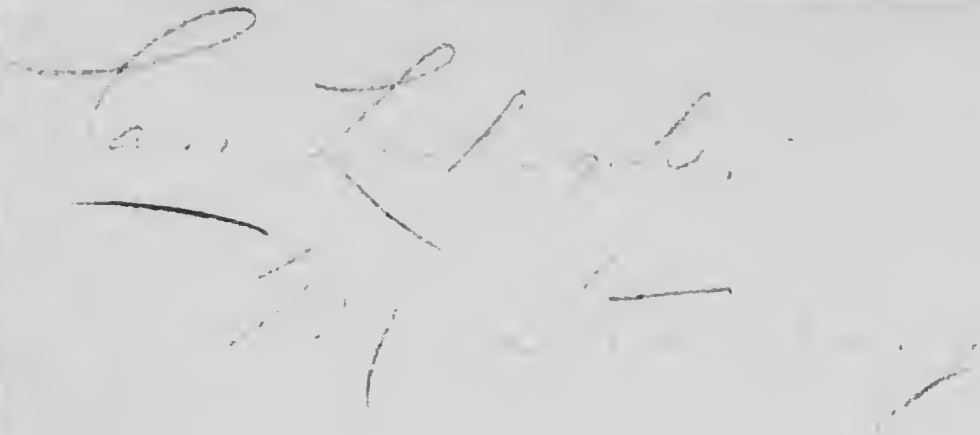


THE TRAIL OF THE SERPENT

RHYMES AND MADRIGALS

M. STANLEY LEHIGH



The Trail of the Serpent,

Rhymes
and
Madrigals

By
M. S. LEHIGH

BROCKVILLE:
RECORDER PRINTING COMPANY
1905

In Memoriam.

MEMORIES.

Round him, in the twilight's stillness,
Throng fond memories of yore ;
" Come back ! O, come back ! " he murmurs.
But the shadows still elude him ;
Fade away and mocking answer,—
" Nevermore ! "

" Ah, these shadows ! How ye mock me !
How ye start from Memory's store,
Where, in happy days, together,
Hand in hand we freely roamed—
Come once more ! " But still the answer,
" Nevermore ! "

In despair he cried out madly :
" Have ye naught to offer more ?
In some purer bright Existence
Will we meet to know each other ? "
Like Heaven's music swells the answer,
" Evermore ! "

THE TRAIL OF THE SERPENT.

(Written the Years 1900-01.)

THE LOVERS.

The mellow lights and shades of eve descend
On silent wings, that fan, with unseen sweep,
The subtle-scented airs of budding Spring;
While, in their shadowy gleams, the poplar leaves
Smile forth in gala dress of gladsome green.
And, just behind, or towering far aloft,
The hues of evergreens—their deeper shades
A background fitting to the others make.
The hills, with love, embrace a winsome dell,
Shut in most snugly from the clamoring world,
The faint halloo, or far-off watch-dog's bay
Are all that give a hint of other scenes.
So soft, it seems but part of Nature's voice,
The red-breast trills its lay 'midst yon thick boughs.
The whip-poor-will attunes to mellowed pitch
His evening notes so lone, but sweet withal.

Here, seated on the fresh green sward, are two—
A youth and maiden. Both are passing fair,
With ardent blood pulsating through each vein;
And life to them, as yet, a happy dream.
Here came they, feeling more in harmony
With 'wakening nature, than man's round of toil;

While glowing, timorous love now fills each breast,
As yet untouched by Passion's poisoned breath.
And Nature lends Her aid these souls to knit
In ties, that give the human some of that
Which is Divine; but, being human still—
The fond embrace, the burning glance, the kiss,
And all their pure and happy joy is turned
To bitter fruits for reaping by and by.

Another round of Time's persistent course,
And Spring again hath decked in gay attire,
The forms of Nature fair. Beside a hedge
Of evergreens that skirts the highway broad,
O'er which the drooping elm trees graceful bend
To listen to the songs of love and praise
From all the throng of feathered songsters gay,
That in their covert flit from bough to bough,
There stands a *youthful* form of maiden fair.
The sun has sunk to rest, while in *his* track
Are sleeping cloudlets bathed in seas of gold;
And Nature, hushed in evening's sweet repose,
Glides gently into Night's deep dreamless sleep.
Expectantly she stands. Upon her cheek,
Fair as the lily's white, two bright red spots
Of fevered thought now burn. Eyes of the blue
That oft at morn the Zenith's dome bepaints,
Or looks forth from the violet's meek gaze
As to the Sun it turns for wakening life—

These now are filled with restless fitful light.
From 'neath her hat the curls of gold stray forth
Upon a brow white as new-fallen snow.
Scarce twenty Summers yet o'er her fair head
Have passed, but now she stands, her Springtime
marred—
That wondrous mystic state of maidenhood,
Unfolding leaf by leaf its beauteous bud,
Till but half-consciously it blossoms forth
Into Creation's flower the sweetest, best—
A woman. In her life this subtle change
Came like a 'whelming flood of dark despair.
Sin crept through one weak spot of that high wall
That guards the priceless gem. Love's hands unbarred
The way. The fortress ta'en lies bruised and crushed
Low at the Conqueror's feet. And now he comes.
Was it an easy conquest? Doth the wound
Lie only with the conquered? Let us look!
On that young brow that once was open, free,
Dark Care now sits. Lines mark the face as one
Who grief hath known—a man before a youth.
Thus Sin doth bruise all 'neath his heel—
Earth's Fairest, Youth or Age, do they but list
To his sly voice. But yet above himself
There is a strength for man to bring him forth
Victor through all, have he but faith to trust.
They drive away into the great Unknown,
She, bride, and mother of a babe unborn;

He with the cares of manhood to confront;
To leave at home another vacant place;
Another hearth invaded by dull Care.

THE POET.

Away within the dark and trackless wood,
  Where ne'er the foot of all-encroaching man
Has pressed its flowers that, in their beauty stood
  In proud humility, while zephyrs fan
Their brows, upraised in a rapt silent gaze
  To heaven's dome of deep unfathomed blue,
There dwells a youth. Softly the sunlight plays
  Among the raven locks, that clustering grew
Above a forehead fair and striking bold—
  The misty shadowy eye of blue most dark
Within whose depth lie wondrous things untold.
  A mouth, where sunny laughter, deep thought mark
A being pliant to his moods and whims;
  Yet these attuned to nature's sweetest tone,
The world's gross offerings never could bedim—
  A spirit that must soar be it alone.
To him the voice of nature sounds on chords
  Somewhat like to the Greek of ancient days,
Alike the whispering winds, or notes of birds,
  Tell him of gratitude in songs of praise.
Wild raptures thrill his being with delight,
  And, as he roams the forest's depths at will,

He sees, and hears, and feels, and knows of truths
  Hidden from nature's coarser, which the world
Of hurrying mortals carries, blind along.

As now he stands upon the mossy bank
  Of a steep mountain-torrent's swollen flood,
Watching the seething eddies whirl and dash;
  And list'ning to the water's silvery voice,
A human cry peals out upon the air,
  Like one in mortal anguish, and he speeds
To where, above the current's mighty rush,
  A fallen monarch of these solitudes,
Resting its base on one side, while across
  Far on the other shore its giant limbs
Extend, thus forms a bridge. Quickly he leaps
  Upon its mighty trunk; his eage eye
Scans all the scene around. Ha! Far below,
  Borne swiftly onward by the stream's great force,
A wealth of golden hair floats on the wave
  Behind a fair white face; while close beside,
To keep the form of her he loved so well
  Above the tide, doth swim Carlo, the dog.
In one quick glance the youth hath seen the plight,
  And, swift as wild [illegible]er, from the tree he springs,
And speeds the bank along, till some above
  The drowning maid. Then, in he boldly leaps,
And with a few strong strokes he nears the form.
  The dog, as though aware his good intent,

Whines gently, as their rescuer firmly clasps
One round white arm. Then man and dog put forth
Their utmost strength and battle fiercely with
The current strong, until, anon, they reach
The welcome shore. Upon the soft green sward
They fall—man, dog, and maiden for a breathing space
Till strength returns. Then tenderly he lifts
His precious burden in his sinewy arms;
Led on by Carlo, hastes to find relief.
Behind, the towering elms and murmuring pines,
As, to and fro, they nod their lofty crests,
Murmur the forest's story to the stream
That roars and rushes o'er its rocky bed;
Till down behind the western tree-tops, bright,
The glowing sun sinks to its evening rest;
And night's vast silence, filled with nameless *tones*,
Broods o'er the sleeping mountain, lake, and wood.

THE HUNTER'S LODGE.

Here stands the stately forest, yet unshorn
Of its primeval grandeur. The dark pines,
Bending from far aloft their crested tops,
Have listened to the gentle whisperings
Of breezes that, for centuries agone,
Had naught to tell, save tales of wanderings
Through forests vast and dim; the haunt of bear,
Or other prowling beast; the restless tribes

Of redmen wild, who lived in happy ease
Amid this wilderness, till o'er their graves
The white men marched, and, like the mists of morn,
The wandering tribes fade into the far West.

Amid this scene of Nature, grand and vast,
Nestles in sweet repose, a cabin small,
Made from the bodies of the kings themselves,
Who, with their brothers, here for ages reigned.
Above the door and window trails a vine
Of ivy wild. O'erhead the maple leaves
Are rustling to the wandering winds of morn;
While, from their shades, sweet harmonies of song
Float out upon the perfume-laden air;
Rich flowers of varied hues gaily bedeck
Each hill and glade. From out some mossy covert starts
The timid rabbit, or the cunning fox;
While from afar the graceful deer looks forth
In startled wonder at the strange abode
Of man. Upon this tranquil scene appears
A man of stalwart frame and eagle eye,
Who bears upon his shoulders broad, a doe,
As trophy of his hunter's prowess tried.
Eager his glance now scans the scene around,
As though in anxious quest. Then loudly forth,
In tones that wake the sounding echoes far,
Prolonging faint and fainter still, as loth
To leave to brooding *Silence* that fair name,

He calls, Esther! Esther! But no reply;
And Silence, with a nameless, voiceless life,
Hovers around, and fast, with unseen hands,
Clutches, with tightening grip, his heartstrings fine,
And fans with vampire wings unseen, the air
So still. With frantic haste, as though to shake
From off his spirit brave, the gathering spell,
He bounds into a path, and soon is lost
Amid the o'erhanging boughs and clustering vines.
Quickly he speeds along, till on the air
Break silvery sounds of water, as it falls
With gentle flow o'er rocks; and as the path
Abruptly breaks from 'midst the trees, he comes
To where, by Nature's hand, a fountain cool
Sends forth its crystal drops—a jutting stream,
That, at its height, at once breaks up into
A hundred sparkling bows that bend to earth,
And there again unite—with laughter gay
Run off and lose themselves among the rocks
And drooping ferns. Again he loudly calls;
But naught replies; though still the waters sing
Their happy song; and overhead the leaves
Are whispering joyous themes. He stays not here,
But, with a swifter stride, again breaks through
The tangled vines that screen the forest-path;
Nor halts he, till once more the water's voice
Breaks on his ear; but this time with a roar
Of noisy battle, as headlong it leaps

Out o'er the precipice, to fall below.
Again he calls, as though upon the words
With trembling cords his inmost heart was hung;
But scarce his voice doth rise amidst the boughs
That bend above his head, till, in the roar
Of the great fall, it all is swallowed up.
He scans with straining eye the mighty tree,
That leans far o'er the torrent's foaming brink,
Where oft he's spied the form of her he seeks;
But now no form is there. Again he speeds
Fast toward the fountain, if perchance he now
May view her seated as oft-times before
Upon its mossy edge—her snowy feet
Laved by its cooling freshness—in her lap
A wealth of forest-flowers of beauty rare,
And subtle perfume; o'er her swan-like neck
A wealth of silken tresses, which the sun,
When softly playing 'mong their flowing waves,
Would light with amber tints of changeful shades;
While, by her side, her ever-constant friend,
A stag-hound large and fierce—Carlo, his name.
But ah! Alas! That picture fair is now
No longer there, save as when Fancy's brush
Maps out the scene. Then forth with frantic haste
He roams all day, o'er hill and dale, the vast
Untravelled forest; and at eve returns
With halting gait, and haggard eye, and head
Bent low with grief. The sun's soft parting rays

Rest on the tree-tops, when with mighty bound
The faithful dog, Carlo, leaps into view;
And, with an eager bark, his master's sleeve
He seizes with his teeth, and pulls as though
To lead him forward. But anon there breaks
The sound of coming footsteps, and the boughs
Are quickly parted, as from thence outsteps
A youth. Within his arms he gently bears
The limp and senseless form of maiden fair.
Her garment dank, and dripping tresses show
That from the flood's dark deathful grasp she hath
Been drawn. A cry of joy, suspense, despair,
Commingling in one rapid changing sound,
Breaks from the hunter, as he hastes to where
The other, with his burden, stands. One look;
And from the stranger's arm he quickly takes
The drooping form. Then leads, with rapid steps,
The way into the cabin. Thus we leave
Them till the changing scenes of life bring back
Their forms again, in other lights and shades.

LLOYD AND ESTHER.

'Tis now the 'witching hour of sunset, when
The winds are hushed to sleep, and all the earth
Smiles with a gladsome brightness, ere the tears
Of evening fall. Upon the still warm air
Break silvery notes of water, as its drops

Fall from the sprouting fountain's drooping crests,
And glide away among the moss and ferns.
Here, at its brink, there rests the form of one,
The lovely naiad of these sylvan wilds;
Upon her brow a misty sadness rests,
As though dull care, to her as yet unknown,
Had filled her with a vague and nameless dread
Of sorrow dimly understood. Here, too,
Upon the fresh green sward a youth,
Half sitting, half reclining, at her feet,
Whose open gaze seeks out her face with all
The eager reverence of some pagan slave,
As, at her shrine, he pours his richest gifts
To his fair goddess. Time has swiftly flown
Since, from the torrent's watery bed, he snatched
Her pure young life. Since then, they've roamed at will
The forest's shades, o'er flowering hill and dale;
Or sat above the great fall's awful verge,
And watched the waters in their maddening rush,
And headlong leap upon the rocks below.
Here, varied discourse held they in the speech,
Not of the Pale-face, but the simpler one
Used by the Redman, roamer of these wilds.
In the bright garb of poetry he'd clothe
A tale of daring by a warrior bold;
Or of the prowess of some hunter-chief;
Or, oft a gentler theme; or how the winds

Would whisper to the leaves forgotten rhymes
Of Peace and Beauty; while, from out the shades,
Fair graceful forms of maidens danced along,
And sang of glowing love. Above their heads
They waved their rounded arms of roseate white—
Their virgin breasts, o'er which a gauzy sheen
The beauty hid but to make more intense,
Heaved gently as they breathe each joyous breath
Of health and careless youth. They paled away;
And next a queenly form alone came forth,
With steps of maiden freedom, yet of grace
Sedate and stately; from her eyes of blue
A soul of wistful thought looked sweetly forth
With steadfast gaze upon the beauteous earth;
A fair broad brow, to which a golden crown
Of silken ringlets clung. With one small hand
She beckoned him away, as its fair mate
Eagerly pointed through the clustering boughs
Far up to where the golden lamps of night
Are hung in heaven's vast dome of blue.
Then, too, she seemed to glide away among
The leafy, trees which op'ed to let her pass,
Then closed again their rustling curtains green.
While in his heart the former peaceful calm
Was stirred and broken, never to be healed;
But in its place an eager vivid joy
That was part pain. Thenceforth a strange sweet force
Seems to impel him onwards without rest.

Thus hath he told her of his youthful hopes,
His dreams and fancies, as with child-like joys
But incomplete, yet having naught of pain,
They while away the golden summer hours.
But ah! Alas! the shuck must all decay,
That holds the germ of life ere, from its bed,
The life wakes from its sleep to newer life
Of Use and Beauty. So the earthly joys
Must break and crumble in the chilling winds
Of dire Adversity, before the soul
Wakes from its peaceful slumber, that the woe
Of others may be felt through its own woe,
And higher strength be reached. Today there came
An Indian runner with a scrap of bark
Torn from the birch-tree's white and upright stem.
On it was cut the figure of a crow
In rapid flight before a hunter's steps
On to the westward; so he reads as plain
As were it writ in letters clear and bold,
That he must haste to reach his father's friend,
An Indian chieftain of the Huron tribe;
And who, since that calm Summer night agone,
When from its earthly hut the Spirit sped
Of his fond Sire, had been to him most kind.

But ah! there comes the cruel parting pain
That darts across the surface, clear and calm,
Of their short dream of bliss. Now needs must be

A break in their bright joy. Their hearts, too full
For words, at each loud stroke beat out a band
That binds them close and ever closer still,
Till speech seems pain. And thus some time they gaze
In silence on the fountain's sparkling gems,
Yet mark them not. Now, with an effort great,
He bounds erect; his labored breath; his cheek
By turns now flushed, now pale; his glistening eye—
All tell of the sharp struggle that he holds
'Tween Love and Duty, till the latter wins.
He stretches forth his hand to bid adieu.
When their hands clasp, like pent-up flood when breaks
An opening in the dam that held it back,
It rushes forth with swirling maddening force,
So now their love sweeps o'er them, and he clasps
Her to his breast, and round his neck she steals
One snowy rounded arm; near to his cheek
Is pillowed her fair head; while o'er the eyes,
As though to curtain their sweet look of love,
The silken lashes droop upon the cheek ·
And thus she yields herself entire to him.

Oh, who, with cold pale words would try to paint
The rich and dainty hues that tint the brow
Of one wee violet? Or who would seek
To stir into the battle's maddening throb
The pulse of one who ne'er had seen the fray?
E'en so, more vain to strive, Love's ecstacies,

To picture forth. And thus, as time takes up
His golden threads, and spins their mazy course,
They mark him not, as the dim shades of eve
Descend upon the forest's voiceless life.
Till forth the moon rides on her silvery throne.

O Moon! How oft I've gazed with raptured eyes
Upon thee, as thy soft and silent tread
Hast glided o'er the bright aerial floor
Of wind-blown fleecy clouds. Thy silvery rays
Touch all the darksome world with mystic light
Of Poesy and Love. The pulse of youth
Beats faster 'neath thy bright and amorous glance;
And when, above the hillock's dome-like crest,
Thou lookest down into the darkling shades
Of the wide forest, then each sleeping leaf
Smiles brightly in its dreams; each blade of grass;
Each feathery fern-leaf—all are sweetly fair
When kissed by thy soft rays. And e'en the trees,
Though gnarled and ugly, take a pictured look
At thy magician's touch. The winding stream
Gives back its likeness from thy surface clear.
Before thy face the earth seems strangely wrapped
In a great wondering silence. On the hills
The sleeping kine look dim and shadowy.
The land-marks loom from out the ghostly light,
As though from earth had sprung to sudden shape.
O moon! As oft o'er lonely hill and dale

My midnight way in pondering thought I take
Wild fancies to my mind thy pictures bring;
My humble steps the Muses deign to 'tend.

The moon has risen from her Orient couch
Of silvered purple; as she looks doth espy
Fair Esther. all alone. Upon a grassy bank
Near where the fountain's sparkling drops doth fall
She sits, or half reclines. A moss-crowned stone
Supports her throbbing head, as round her shower
Her waves of golden hair. Her face upturned,
Looks sad but passing fair; while in her eyes,
That seem to gaze up through the mingling boughs,
A dreamy look of joy, yet understood
But half, hedged in by lashes long, on which
Brignt pearly tear-drops, still unshed, doth hang.
And here, while Lloyd his lonely route pursues
Through forests vast, or over the smooth tide
Of lake or river, Esther sits to dream,
And waken slowly to that wondrous state
Of Love and Womanhood; while at her feet
Lies Carlo, e'er to watch and guard from harm
His mistress dear, till she too seeks her rest;
And Solemn Stillness *rests on* all around.

THE TRAIL.

The pine trees moan before the whirling blast;
The clouds are flying as on wings of fear;

While dimly through their hosts the pale moon shines
Upon the naked earth. The Summer flown,
Gives place to Autumn with its changing scenes
Of richest beauty, filled with subtle charms.
Upon a soft bed made of small pine boughs,
Beneath the wigwam's shelter lies the form
Of Huron's greatest chief. The flickering fire,
That burns within the centre of the lodge,
Casts vaguely-flitting shadows o'er his face
Now stamped with Death's sure mark. But lately gone
The medicine-men, who howled and danced to soothe
The evil Spirit's anger; and there now
Are left but two to watch the waning hours
Of Omegaha's long and prosperous life—
The one an aged warrior, with bent frame
And silvered locks, sits silent on the ground
Before the fire, at which he looks intent,
And speaks not. Near the couch the other stands,
And laves, from time to time, the burning brow
With water cool. No sound breaks from the lips
Of him who suffers with the stoic pride
Of all his race; he bears his pain without
A single groan. Suddenly he speaks to him
Beside his couch; and as our gaze now rests
With more attention, we, with some surprise,
See that 'tis Lloyd. Here then the message bade
That he should come. He bends to hear the words
The chieftain speaks. It is an order, brief,

That fair Istaka, his beloved child,
And last of all his kingly line, be brought
Quick to his side. At once Lloyd hastes away,
And with the Indian maiden soon returns.

Fair, fair indeed this youthful princess seems
Beside the dark-skinned daughters of her tribe ;
Her face more oval, and her rounded limbs
Bespeak both strength and grace ; her lustrous eye
Glows with a mellow softness, that foretells
A temper mild, yet of a latent force
Within her nature, that, when roused to act,
Would do its part, or win a martyr's rest.
Fondly the old chief's gaze upon her rests ;
But none of grief by either is expressed
Save in the bosom's heaving. Hush ! he speaks,
And this the substance of the tale he tells :—
"Moons many now have grown and paled upon
This forest home, since here one night there came
A stranger of the Pale face. In his arms
He bore a baby boy. When scarce his feet
Had reached the council fire, he staggered—fell
Prone on the ground, and there he lay,
Insensible to all. The Redman saw,
And pitied ; warmed, and fed, and cared for him,
As for a brother. Time went by, and still
He dwelt within our villa[illegible]ared our sports
And danger, till he grew t[illegible]aron's chief

As dear as self. Naught of the past he spoke,
And no one asked him ought. His baby boy
Grew fast and stalwart as the mountain pine,
And sported with the children of the race
'Midst whom he lived. But, for a space each day,
His sire would take his hand, and wander forth
To where a murmuring brook its sweet songs sang
To hills and woodlands fair; and there he taught
Him of the sacred lore of the Pale-face;
And sang him warlike lays . . brave deeds
Of their fore-fathers gone; and taught a faith
In one he called Christ, who died for man,
Because He loved him. Thus the boy waxed strong,
But oft-times quiet moods would wrap in clouds
His spirit gay; then, all alone, he'd roam
The pathless forests, 'mid whose darkling shades
A hundred dangers lurked unseen around,
And there, with nature, hold communion sweet.
Ten winters dropped their snowy mantle o'er
The bare cold earth, and not a whisper spoke
The stranger Pale-Face of another life
For him, save this one he now led. One night
He sat beside the fire, and smoked the pipe
With the red brother, and he spoke of death,
And said he'd soon be gone. But for his boy
He would be glad to go. I told him that
I loved him as my own—then how it came
I scarce can tell; but there I promised that

The boy would be my son, and that one day
Would wed with my Istaka, and become
King of the Huron nation in my stead,
When I too would be gone. That night he died.
But e'er, from its frail hut, the spirit took
Its anxious flight, he told me all the tale
Of his young life. In youth he greatly sinned,
And for his sin, with his young wife, he came
Into these northern wilds. A babe was born,
But, being sickly, died soon after birth.
Here time flew by for them on happy wings.
They toiled, their daily b.ead to earn, and met
The ills of life as one in thought and deed;
And Plenty shed its touch beneficent,
Upon their forest home. Another babe
Was added to their joy. At sunset's hour,
When coming from his labors in the fields,
Or from a long chase after the fleet deer,
His wife and child would meet him with a kiss,
And tokens of delight. Before the door,
Upon a table rude, they'd take their meal,
Beneath the maple's boughs of waving green,
As o'er the deep blue sky, the setting Sun
Spreads out his burning plumes.

Then came the end
A deadly sickness seized that lovely form,
And day by day it drooped before his gaze
And paler grew, until it seemed to be

Scarce of this earth. The thin transparent hands,
That used to ply so deftly the house-work,
Now idly lay upon her lap. The eyes
Looked far away, as though her thoughts
Were more of other spheres than our dark earth;
And Time sped on. One lovely autumn eve
He came in haste from where he'd been
In quest of game, and found her lying prone
Upon the bench where oft before she sat
To welcome him. In agony he clasps
Her to his breast, and, as her wandering gaze
Lights on his face, she smiles a gladsome smile
And falls asleep.

Four seasons circle round,
And still he dwelt beside her forest grave
In lonely brooding—toiled but for his boy,
Until one day the Fire King swept across
His lowly dwelling, till around was left
Naught, but some blackened sticks to mark the spot
Where his great joy and mighty grief were known.
Then caring for naught earthly else, he took
His boy, and wandered far until his steps
Rested in Omegaha's wigwam large."

The chieftain stops and bends his fevered gaze
Upon the youth and maiden at his side,
Then speaks again, "The redman's part is done.
The Pale-Face, nourished from his open stores,

And cared for by a father's hand, now stands
To say what he will do. Will he, in turn,
Take her unto his breast, his lawful squaw,
And rule my people with a kindly hand ?"

As one, who, walking on a darksome night
O'er unknown hills, beholds, when forth the moon
Sails from behind a cloud, before his feet
An awful precipice; so Lloyd now sees the brink
Before him, and a smothered cry breaks forth
From 'tween his whited lips. What can he do ?
The old chief's eye, with questioning glance, is bent
Upon him. Fair Istaka's graceful form,
With strong emotion, trembles; while the tide
Of life, upon her cheek, now ebbs, now flows,
As though, to her, the question meant much more
Than she would care to tell. Her downcast lids
Veil eyes with Love a-lit. What can he do ?
Another face, with locks of golden sheen,
And eyes of deepest blue, where trusting Love
Last smiled upon him through the tears
Brought forth by parting, now appears before
His troubled mind. Could he refuse to grant
This one request by him he owed so much ?
His thoughts seem chaos. With an effort great
He begs for time to think; then breaks away,
And rushes madly forth, he cares not where,
Until, prone on the earth, he falls upon

A bed of Autumn leaves, fragrant and soft.
Thus, for a time. he rests, till labored thought
Once more takes active shape ; and now he sees
Before him the dire state of being one :
A faithless lover, or a faithless friend.
And there he fights to know the straight steep way
Where Duty leads to Life and Liberty ;
While in the wigwam all is silent still,
As Thought holds sway over the troubled mind.

LOVE'S SACRIFICE.

The hours pass by, till o'er the eastern hills,
The blazing sun, his golden plumes, outspreads,
When backward to the village, Lloyd now bends
His hasty steps. The battle has been fought ;
And now he hastes to turn to good account
His late decision. Thus he seeks at once
The chieftain's wigwam, that his late found strength
Faint not, to whirl him back again among
The seething waters of Doubt's stormy main.

Within is silence dead ; and, as he lifts
The entrance curtain, from his lips breaks forth
A startled cry. Upon the couch of pines
The chieftain's form lies stretched in the embrace
Of Death. The furrowed lines of toil and age
All smoothed away, he looks as though he were
But fallen asleep. Beside, there sits alone

The Indian maiden. In her small soft hands
She holds the chieftain's broad and sinewy palm,
And looks with anguished longing on the face
That oft had worn a smile of loving pride
For her. This scene of sorrow, Lloyd beholds,
And feels it *far* too sacred for his eyes
To view, and turns him to depart. But soft
The maiden's accents come to him in tones
Of thrilling clearness, as 'twere on each sound
A broken heart-string hung. At its first notes
He turns him to the couch once more, and there
Together view the empty hut of clay
Of him, who once had lived and loved them both.
And now, as silently the weighty moments pass,
Are knit their fresh young souls in heavenly bonds
Of purest sympathy. No passion mars,
No earthly clog drags down their 'spiring wings;
But in the realm of Love, pure from all dross,
Where mortals may, at times, its portals pass,
They, side by side, now tread.

. . . . . .

The last is done.
The Redman's round of ceremonies wild,
With which he buries his illustrious dead,
Have all been held; and now, the chiefs around
The camp-fire sit and smoke, in silence still,
The ponderous peace-pipe. This the council met
Another king to choose. Anon a chief,

Upon whose face the seams and scars attest
A warrior tried and true, upstands from out
The dusky circle; and, in guttural tones,
Speaks thus unto his s ent listeners:—
"O Huron braves! O chieftains, who have led
The Huron warriors oft to triumph o'er
Their hated foes; within whose wigwams hang
Some scores of their torn scalps—we meet to choose
Who next will be our king—the mighty chief
To lead us on the warpath; from whose mouth
Come words of wisdom in the time of peace
To make his people great—a nation strong,
And full of mighty deeds. And who is he
But Onah of the fair skin, who was sent
From out the Spirit land to be our king?
Let him be king!" So spoke the aged chief
And sat him down, and from the dusky ring
Arose a guttural murmur of assent.
Then silence reigns again, till from his place
Stands forth their youthful king: "My brothers good—
My father, who oft led me as a boy
To chase the deer, or taught my childish hands
To ply the dipping paddle 'mong the waves
Of nestling forest-lakes, open your ears,
And also ope your hearts to this my tale!"

"Far off amidst the forest's verdant shades,
Towards where the orb of day his march begins,

There dwells a hunter lone save for one child,
A tender maiden fair. Her I have met
And loved, and to her made my vows
Of faith and love; and now she waits me there.
Were I to break my word I would be worse
Than any Mohawk dog. Therefore I trust
My brothers now will choose a worthier king
To bear the honor I cannot receive,
And let me go my way; now I have said."

A silence, deep and dark as Autumn night,
Broods o'er the council; till a youthful chief,
The nephew of the late departed king,
And would-be lover of the princess fair,
Stands forth, and in the voice of passion fierce—
"O Huron chiefs! Are we but dogs, to let
This stranger pale-face scorn our proffered gift;
And tamely, as he bids, bear our disgrace?
Istaka thrown aside like any squaw?
No, in his heart he means to do us ill;
Perchance the foe may lead our village near,
And fall upon us when our eyes are closed,
And ears are shut within the gates of sleep.
He will not be our king? Let him be slave,
To carry wood and water with the squaws;
And dry our meat, and grind the golden corn
For warriors brave to eat; and choose our king
From out our council—Huron's greatest chief."

A murmur, like the angry sea at night,
Ere yet the storm-cloud lashes it to foam,
Rolls round the circle. Then the hideous yell,
Known as the war-whoop, bursts upon the air;
And forth from out the council-tent there pour
The yelling chiefs; while calmly in their midst,
With face a little pale, Lloyd firmly walks
To what may be his death. Now swells the throng,
By braves from every village, who had come
To celebrate the choosing of their king.
They dance and howl, till Frenzy holds free sway
O'er their untutored minds; and to a tree
The prisoner's limbs are bound. The braves stand back,
And from the crowd the squaws, with brandished knives,
Surround their helpless victim, *and pour forth*
All the most bitter words their speech allows;
And brandish their sharp knives, his flesh to cut.
But hush! A sudden silence falls upon
The outmost circle, and, like hidden waves,
Spreads to the ring of squaws; while through the throng
There glides a graceful form of female fair,
On, on, until beside the death-tree; then
She stands in queenly beauty at the side
Of him, who late refused to be their king,
And her own lord. Forth towards the wondering throng
She *points* one rounded arm, and all is still
As in the summer twilight, when there lowers
Upon the warm horizon, a dark cloud

Of rolling thunder. Then, like silvery bells,
Fall on the air the rich tones of her voice
In the soft speech peculiar to her race.
She tells them they are cowards to harm a guest;
And faithless to her father's memory
To show him aught but kindness while he dwells
Among them. And her words seem to make still
Their surging passions; but from out the crowd
Stands forth Onega, nephew to the king,
And lover of Istaka. Bold he speaks,
And calls them squaws; till once again he wakes
Their evil passions; but the lovely form
Of the fair princess, as she stands between
Him and his foes, saves Lloyd from further harm,
Than that they make him slave, his thongs unbind,
And lead him to a wigwam, while a brave
Stands guard. And o'er the autumn wood the moon
Unchanging shines with a soft ghostly light,
And darts her arrows 'mong the sleeping boughs,
Clad in their Autumn garments, where they light
Upon a bended form with pale cold face,
And eyes, wherein a depth of agony
Unspoken lies. Oh, brave Istaka!
But today you fought so hard to save
The man you love, whose love another holds,
And no one guessed your sorrow. Here alone
Where human eye is none, her grief outpours
To the Great Spirit, and there comes a rest,

Like to the storm at golden sunset's hour,
After a day of driving wind and rain.
Long time she gazes 'tween the sleeping leaves,
Up to the far-off dome of dark blue sky,
Where silently the golden stars peep forth
From out their azured curtain. Thus she finds
Through nature that sweet trust in God's great love
She failed to find through man. O, little man!
Thy purposes? thy highest, noblest aims;
What are they; but a feeble upward glance;
A little raising of the head above
The mire of earth, where mortals love to lie,
And waste their greatest gifts. 'Oh, noble maid,
Strive on! Your life of sacrifice will bring
Delights, far, far above aught earth can give;
A purer, brighter light will shine for aye
Upon thy dusky brow.' Thus speaks the Moon,
And all the leaves wake up and nodding say
''Tis true!' And all the winding aisles, and all
The twinkling stars echo, ''Tis true!' 'Tis true!'

FOUND.

Time speeds his round, nor stays for joy or woe;
Nor hastes, nor tarries. They, whom life doth hold
Some heavy burden, deem its course most slow;
While on the bridal night it wings its flight
Swift as the swallow. So the days to Lloyd,

A slave among the redmen, seem to drag
Themselves to weary years, and so the years
To aching ages. Day by day he toils,
And bears the heavy burden of a life
Near shorn of Hope, though still a ray
Of her pure light shines through the gathering gloom;
Like to the camp-fire's gleam among the trees,
(As faintly, now and then, it comes and goes)
To the lone wanderer lost 'midst night's dark folds.
He watches to escape; but never *chance*
Has opened to him. Oft an unknown hand
Has scattered flowers of kindness o'er his path,
And shielded him from many bitter sneers.
That else he would have *gotten*; and h[illegible]vs
Not whence they came. Istaka always [illegible]s,
When in his presence with some others near,
As cold, and haughty, and unfeeling as
His bitterest foe. But yet it is her hand
(Although he knows it not) that cares for him;
Her watchful eye o'erlooks his toilsome way.

And what of Esther? In her cabin home,
When first she wakens to Life's sweetest theme
Of pure glad love, the old dull life seems fraught
With a strange brightness. All the flowers speak
To her of love; the waters sing this song;
And when at noontide, in the summer time,
Beneath a maple's spreading boughs, she sits,

The leaves whisper to her the self-same theme.
At twilight, when the Day's strong strife has ceased
'Tween winds and forests, when all nature seems
At peace; the whispering leaves all join—
Are blended in one soft sweet harmony
Of sounds; and sing the grandest song of earth
Or sky—the song of love.

But winter comes;
And when the North Wind, loosened from the chains
That bound him in his frozen Arctic home,
Sweeps o'er the lands, till droops the tiny flowers
And dry and sere the grass; and, from the trees,
The soft bright leaves, fall gently one by one;
And still and silent grows the singing brook;
And all the Earth, enwrapped in Her white shroud
Sleeps; while the trees, their gaunt and naked arms,
Wave in the air; then Esther feels at first
So strangely lonesome, and the days seem long,
And then the hours seem days, till budding Spring
Once more the Earth makes glad; then Esther looks
For gladness; but the fragrant flowers no more
Lend her their joy; no more the springing grass,
The budding leaves, the rippling brooklet's song
Make her heart glad; but all their wakening joy
Finds in her heart no echo; and the days
Seem but to grow more sad. Still Lloyd comes not.
And so another year rolls by, and finds
The once bright maiden, full of joyous life,

Now pale and sad. No more the happy song
Bursts from her lips. No more her laughter wakes
The forest echoes; and her father sees,
And ponders over; and his fond heart aches
To see her thus. So in the Springtime bright,
When all the world is wakening to life,
They leave their forest home, and journey far
On to the Westward.
Oft they meet with bands
Of the wild redman, but no harm receive;
And glean some tidings vague of a whiteman,
A slave among their brethren farther west.
And so they wander on and on, sometimes
Through pathless forests; then o'er foaming floods,
Or the still waters of a forest lake,
They float in a canoe; and still the same
Uncertain tidings; till, at length, worn out,
They rest upon a shaded river's bank,
Above a roaring fall; and there he builds
A cabin rude for Esther and himself
To rest a little in their wanderings.

One day, as oft, her father goes at dawn
To hunt the red deer, that they might have food;
And Esther wanders weary, sad, and lone,
To a snug nook near to the fall's steep verge;
Her eyes, with but half-conscious gaze, rest on
The tumbling waters. Then a far-off look

Creeps slowly in those orbs of deep dark blue,
With such a world of longing, sorrow, love,
Beyond the skilful touch of brush or pen ;
And sighs that, mingling with the autumn breeze
That mourns the loss of all the summer's joys,
'Scape from her heaving breast, and trembling lips,
And tell of sorrow deep. And soon the scene
Before her slowly fades—the forest wide ;
The river, fall and shore melt into space ;
And in their place a deeper forest's shade,
Lit by the wandering Moon's soft tender rays ;
Within which on the summer air, there floats
The sound of water gently dropping from
A fountain's branching crest. And, at its side,
A youth and maiden bidding each adieu
With clinging fondness.

What is it that breaks
Her dream; and makes her start, and turn
Her head back towards the path she late had come ?
Was it a falling leaf? A snapping twig?
Or heavy sounding tread? Or was it but
A message sent upon the wires of thought ?
She looks, and standing there before her sees,
As conjured by her dream, her lover lost.
"Lloyd!" "Esther!" That is all ; and with a bound
He nears her side, and in his arms she falls.
No words they speak. An age of love they live
In that one long embrace. They little heed

That other eyes are near, from out whose depths
So dark, a silent agony speaks forth ;
That other lips are pale, and tightly drawn ;
That other hands are clinched, until the nails
Pierce the soft flesh. One long low cry of pain,
No other sound is made ; but, through the shades,
A silent form now glides. It is Istaka.
Was it for this she watched o'er all his wants ?
And shielded him from harm with jealous care ?
And then, at last, renouncing kith and kin,
To help him to escape, and lead him far
From any chance of capture ? Thus it is.

As now she reaches the steep river bank ;
From out beneath a drooping elm's boughs.
She glides in her canoe. A few swift strokes,
And she is in the current's mighty grasp,
Borne swiftly forward to the foaming fall.
Steadfast she looks upon her coming fate,
As round her lips a dreamy smile doth play ;
And then like swan, upon the Autumn air,
In cadence soft, swells her own death-song.

The startled lovers hear, and in a flash
The meaning comes to Lloyd. With frantic bounds
He quickly spans the space that intervenes
Between him and the bank above the fall ;
And there the frail canoe he sees. Within,

Her lovely face illumed with inward joy,
That conquers pain, Istaka sits. Her eyes,
Bent on the glowing forest, all aflame
With the sun's parting rays, a far-off look
Now have. And still the song upon the air
Now swells, now falls; while fast the bark speeds on
Toward the brink. On, on, until the song
Is mingled with the roar of the great fall;
And the canoe, amid a cloud of spray,
Darts like an arrow, fast and faster, till
With a last leap, it shoots far out beyond
The awful verge—is gone; though still it seems,
To the dazed watchers on the bank, as if
It poised there still.

(When first he saw the bark,
With its lone voyageur upon the tide,
With anxious haste Lloyd searched along the shore
To find if there were means, her life to save,
But none were there; and helplessly he stands
At Esther's side, and with what agony
Beholds the end.)

And did she live in vain?
Was not the love of the fair Indian maid
One of earth's sweetest boons? Our lives are made,
Not of the many winter frosts that on
Our heads sprinkle their snowy-colored gems—
But of the inner life's development.
We are not things of Time.

Upon the woods,
That all day echoed to the varying notes
Of feathered songsters, or of prowling beasts,
The Night descends, and all things are at rest.

PEACE.

Life's stream flows like a river—often calm;
While oft the surging flood runs with a rush.
So now with Lloyd and Esther. Love has made,
Into a well of joy, this dark old earth,
That seems to some so sad; to others but
A stage on which one is to play a strange
Fictitious part; and yet to some a mine,
Where all for man to do is delve for gold,
And sink at last to deep oblivion.

To them, Nature in all her moods, seems fraught
With a majestic beauty, wherein lies
A tender sympathy for man, which speaks
To all his nobler feelings—God's great book
To tell to man some lessons of His love,
And lift him from the baser things of sense
To things eternal. In a cabin home
Dwell Lloyd and Esther, in most sweet content.
Still are they screened, by forests circling round,
From the mad bustling world; although the scream
Of the Iron Steed is heard afar, as swift
He rushes o'er his level track of steel.

And at rare intervals a straggler comes
From out the white man's towns, and brings to them
Strange tidings, that a gentle ripple makes
O'er the smooth surface of their happy lives.
Is Lloyd a poet greater far than all
His many brethren, lauded to the skies;
Because through him the voice of Nature sings
In Her most rythmic chords, a song divine?
Their little home a gem of beauty seems;
Although no trace of art bedecks its walls;
Yet Nature—Art's great teacher—lends Her aid
To make a bower Elysian. Thus they live,
Glad bird-like lives; no sin creeps in to mar
Their joy, and leave its scorching marks.
And is their happiness as great as that
Of those who deeply sin, yet are forgiven?
Or of the one that labors day by day
Among the poor and wretched of his kind?
We answer not, but leave them to their lives.
This is their lot, and he who greatest is
Doth fill his place, nor murmur nor complain;
And from it make the best of good he can
In all humility.

This is the day
That once more, after weary waiting years,
These hearts were brought together, and they stand
Upon the self-same bank. Once every year
They make a pilgrimage to this sad spot,

And of Istaka think. Upon the bank
They sit and muse, or talk in low hushed tones ;
And, once more viewing the great roaring fall,
They seem to see Istaka as they last
Beheld her ; and the song unfinished, still
Seems to their vivid fancies wafted o'er
The whirling waters. And their hearts are filled
With sorrow at her strange untimely end ;
While o'er their minds a lonely feeling steals—
A strange dull aching at the heart for days
And scenes gone by. But do they wish to live
Their lives again ? Would they have strength to meet
Again (now that they know) all their past trials ?
Ah, no. Time, at its best, can never satisfy
Man's noblest self. He feels the fruits of sin ;
And what he does is but to leave the past,
And for the future live. We know that here
The Present never holds the best, for we
Must mount or fall.
And now the curtain drops
Upon these varying scenes ; and with regret
We leave this happy wife, and husband proud,
To their sweet lot ; and with one lingering glance,
We go once more to plunge into the stream
Of this world's tide of struggling busy life ;
Where, in what sphere, of Rich or Poor alike
'The trail of the Serpent is over them all.'

THE END.

"ONLY A CUP OF COLD WATER."

"Only a cup of cold water," said a weary lad, one day ;
"I have tramped for miles, on this dusty road ; far, far
on my toilsome way."
I placed in his trembling hand so weak, a cup filled to
the brim,
With sparkling water, clear and cold, while my eyes
were moist and dim.

"Only a cup of cold water," said a woman weary and
and old,
"To wet my parched lips, kind sir, with its freshness,
sweet and cold ;
My children, all, have cast me off, and to the poor-
house, now,
I drag my feeble, tottering limbs—oh, bathe my aching
brow !"

"Only a cup of cold water ;" it seems not much to give;
But oh ! the joy that filled my heart—how blessed 'tis
to live !
The little kind acts, that we do, how amply we are blest;
The love, that goes to other hearts, comes back
with interest.

Oh weary soul, by sin weighed down, so parched, and
dry, and sere,

Come unto Him, who gives you rest, who dries up
every tear;
He'll fill your thirsty souls, at once, from that life-giving
stream
Of living water,—thirst no more! all else but dross, I
deem.

FIFTY YEARS AGO.

(Written 1898).

'Twas on this grassy knoll, Nelly,
'Neath this same maple's bough,
I found you sitting thus, Nelly,
Just fifty years ago.

Your straw hat by your side, Nelly—
The sun was sinking low;
It played among your golden locks,
Just fifty years ago.

It lit the dark blue of your eye;
It touched your brow of snow;
It kissed the warm red of your cheeks,
Just fifty years ago.

Here with a book you'd strayed, Nelly,
As often you would go
Alone to read and dream, Nelly,
Then fifty years ago.

All day out in the field, Nelly,
  I'd been hoeing, row on row,
Of sprouting young green corn, Nelly,
  Just fifty years ago.

Then in the evening's hush, Nelly,
  While seeking to and fro,
I spied you seated here, Nelly,
  Just fifty years ago.

Long time I stood and gazed, Nelly;
  Of naught else did I know,
But the fair picture that you made.
  Just fifty years ago.

Quickly you turned and met my gaze,
  Which told I loved you so,
And then you sent me not away,
  Those fifty years ago.

Of those few moments why need speak?
  Their preciousness you know;
When, our troth, we fondly plighted,
  Just fifty years ago.

The leaves were rustling overhead,
  In whispers, soft and low,
To the song.birds within their shades
  Then, fifty years ago.

The shepherd dog's loud baying voice;
  The gentle herd's deep low
Were to us wafted on the breeze
  There, fifty years ago.

Softly the evening shades, Nelly,
  Dropped o'er the fair earth, low;
As homeward slow we strolled, Nelly,
  Just fifty years ago.

And years have come and gone, Nelly,
  So quickly, scarce we know
Where they have gone; what we have done
  Since fifty years ago.

Our love has deeper grown, Nelly,
  'Mid all life's tempest's blow;
And children's children press our knees,
  Since fifty years ago.

And, as we look back o'er those years,
  With all their joy and woe,
How much more thankful we should be
  Than fifty years ago.

And now time's frost has changed, Nelly,
  Those golden locks to snow;
And lined is that fair face, Nelly,
  Since fifty years ago.

My once strong arm is weak, Nelly;
  My step feeble and slow;
And passed are all those dreams, Nelly,
  Of fifty years ago.

And soon Time's shore's we'll leave, Nelly,
  As to our Home we go,
To meet our loved ones gone before,
  Since fifty years ago.

There with our Saviour e'er to dwell;
  Where all is pure and bright;
Oh, wondrous thought! Oh, wondrous love!
  Love boundless, infinite.

POINT GERALDINE.

Ah, Geraldine! Point Geraldine!
  How oft I've sat beneath the trees
That crown thy rocky brow; while low,
  With whisper soft, the evening breeze
Swept o'er their chords, whose rythmic flow
  Filled all around with melodies.

Stately thou standest! Yet a look
  Of peaceful ease pervades thy place,
No rivals in thy neighbors brook;
  For thou to me in winsome grace

Excellest all. Thy shady nook
  Be my resort from Fame's rough race.

Sweet memories thy every rock,
  And tree, and landmark have for me;
Whether in tempest when the shock
  Of conflict sounds in wind and sea;
When Nature's forces seem to mock
  Man's puny strength—then I loved thee.

Or when the lake's calm peaceful eye
  Gazed wondering at the silvery moon—
The islands sleeping tranquilly;
  All breathing rest—Nature's sweet boon;
Then thoughts came to me, fond and high;
  I dreamed, but ah, to wake full soon.

It seems as now I hear the song
  Of the lone whip-poor-will at night,
Borne gently by the breeze along
  To me. And now in my fond sight
The 'Eagle' stands—the stub—a throng
  Of places dear from memory's night.

And I have loved thee, Geraldine!
  Fond memories thy shores doth bound;
Thy voice whispers 'It might have been;'
  Happy the scenes thy shades surround,
The Past forever gone, unseen
  The Future waits our steps to sound.

Yet, as upon the wing of Time
  The days speed by with ruthless haste,
Let us from memory's sweet chime
  Take lessons noble, deep and chaste;
Until the light of Heaven, divine,
  We enter from Earth's dreary waste.

A TRAGEDY.

'Tis a day in joyous Springtime, when the scented breezes blow,
Laden from the apple-blossoms, that on all around bestow
Their perfume of such rare sweetness, while the bees their honey seek;
And the robins, in the pear-trees, to their mates, are heard to speak.

Slowly now the Sun is sinking 'neath the elms' crested tops,
That tower o'er the deep dark river, with its countless little drops
Flowing on, and on, so calmly, with a silent nameless rush,
That grows on us as we watch it in the evening's restful hush.

Ere the Sun, to wood and river, says "Good Night"
with loving smile;
Through the boughs that seem to sever to let in the
light awhile,
Lights up glade, and wood, and river, in whose mirror,
clear and calm,
Reflects much of its own splendor, as the Good lights
up the Sham.

As his rays spread out their brightness, lighting up the
farther shore,
Two dark figures, now approaching, whom we had not
seen before.
One is of a youthful maiden, with a face so wondrous
fair;
Where the noble thoughts are mirrored, showing naught
of grief or care.

Eyes of unknown depth and softness—of the deepest,
darkest blue;
Hair that hangs in waving tresses, vieing with the raven's
hue;
Sweet the mouth that now is smiling; now in pensive
tenderness,
Over which her fine emotions, vividly themselves ex-
press.

Now a look of sweet contentment fills those dreamy eyes
with light;

As she listens to the other, with a quiet deep delight.
He, as o'er her bends so loving, well deserves a painter's skill
To portrait those noble features, where his feelings play play at will.

Words of hope and love he's speaking; high his asperations soar;
Noble deeds he hopes to accomplish; laurels at her feet to pour:
That for him the chief attraction to set forth on Fame's broad field
Is, that he may all his conquests, to her loving hands then yield.

But, as o'er a fertile country budding forth with fruit and joy,
A dark blight falls slowly downwards, all its beauty to destroy;
So upon this scene of fond joy, from behind that broken rock,
Slowly creeps a head and shoulders, that at all description mock:
How the features writhe in hatred, and the eyes glare wildly forth;
Clinched the teeth upon the thick lips, as if fiends had come to birth.

Now the lovers close are standing to the steep and
rocky brink,
That looks o'er the deep dark river, painted now in gold
and pink;
Hand in hand they stand together, speaking naught,
yet feeling all
That Love has for Youth and Ardor, though night's
shadows start to fall.

Crack! A rifle speaks out sharply; to its mark the
missile's sped;
And the lovers, to the river, in each others arms fall—
dead.
And a little puff of dark smoke, rising slowly o'er the
trees,
Is the only token given—not a living thing one sees.

For the head and shoulders ugly, now no longer are in
sight;
Slowly down upon the fair scene drop the sable folds
of Night;
And the stream flows on in silence, with its secret,
dark and drear,
Telling naught to anxious searchers, of the lovers fond
and dear.

REVERIES.

What fancies loom up from the dim 'beyond our mortal ken;'
As now, far on in an almost forgotten lore I've gone,
Till lost to earth, my vision roams through caverns dark and drear,
To catch such glimpses swift, of forms vague, dread, unknown;
To hear sounds wild and weird; or others soft and wondrous sweet;
While limpid waters ripple o'er the pebbles at my feet.

From far away, so faint, it might be fancy's play, is borne
A rushing, roaring, awful sound, as if from some great waterfall;
Or if, where all the winds, chained in a cavern deep are held,
And struggling to be free, with roarings loud and deep, withal,
And fearful, shuddering still, dreading to venture forth, I feel,
As by some force unseen, drawn or for either woe or weal.

On, on I go, past rocks of most fantastic shape and form,

That tower far, far aloft, beyond the keenest range of sight;
Hanging in wavy folds, or drooping, pointed, ragged cones,
That seem like dangling spears in this uncertain misty light.
When suddenly there floats upon the air above, around,
Such weird sweet music as thereat is hushed all other sounds.

Spell-bound I listen; when there comes with floods of morning light,
A vision fairer far than ought I'd ever dreamed of earth,
With step so buoyant that she seemed to float on waves of air.
Around her form in folds a robe of gauzy silvery sheen.
Adown her neck a wealth of golden tresses fall at will;
Her eyes of deepest blue, as limpid as a mountain rill.

Wondering I gaze, when lo! from wall, and floor, and roof glide forth
A host of crawling slimy things, of many shapes and forms;
Until a heaving mass of wriggling life surrounds her path.
They touch her not; but for her snowy feet, as on she comes,
A way leave clear. She stops till 'tween us one short space
Is left, then, for a time I know not, gazes on my face.

Anon, as from some dreamless sleep, I wake, when lo, are gone
All reptiles great and small. But still the fairy of the place
Doth stand a-near me; then, as if she knew that I had waked,
She turns and beckons, and, with noiseless steps as when she came,
Glides swiftly from me, till with eager haste I follow on,
With outstretched arms, and straining gaze, still, still I follow on.

The pathway narrows, all is dark, save for this vision fair;
The road is steep and rocky, but for naught else I do care,
Save for my guide so radiant, and still I follow on,
On through the night and shadows, till night and shades are gone.
Then from the gloom that wraps our way, we suddenly burst forth
Into a light more dazzling fair, than seen upon our earth.

Prostrate I fall, as in a swoon, while to my mind is borne
Strange sounds of music, wondrous sweet of waters, voices, birds,

All soft commingling in one song of such sweet harmony,
My soul, transported by these airs, in raptures melts away.
And all of sin, and care, and grief have faded from my mind.
Of their dark furrows not a trace, or mark is left behind.

Slowly my sight comes back, and lo, on every side I see
Bright fountains scattering wide their drops o'er beds of flowers fair,
Whose subtle perfumes steal around, till, in the grove, each tree
Seems pregnant with their richness, as it floats upon he air.
W' .e birds of plumage bright, trill their silver-fluted lays,
Their themes of joy and gladness, give to man lessons of praise.

And beings fair, with faces glad, and steps all light and free,
Are tripping here and there at will, or wandering aimlessly
Through fragrant groves all filled with flowers; while some again there be,
Are lying on green mossy banks, beneath a shady tree.

And all is peace, and joy, and song, with ne'er a passing jar;
Where Truth is light, and Innocence reigns without aught to mar.

Still, at my side, the maiden stands, her face lit like the rest,
With beauty transcendental; while from her lovely eyes,
As on my face she rests her gaze, a look my being thrills.
She smiles—ah such a smile—then quickly glides from me away;
And, though I call, stops not, nor turns, still with that 'wildering smile
Points upward with a beckoning hand—is gone—I wake the while.

MADRIGALS.

SPRING IN THE COUNTRY.

Gently the merry Springtime
  Comes, with its wakening life,
Bringing joy in the sunshine—
  The birds, with clamorous strife,
Filling the air with sweet strains
  Of harmonies divine,
That echo through long shaded lanes;
  O'er meadows, green and fine.

    The little rills
    Down the hills
  Glide with merry laughter;
    The lambs, at play,
    All through the day,
  Gambol, each other, after.

    The flowers' bloom
    Lights the gloom
  Of the deep-wood shadows;
    The breezes' breath
    Brings life from death
  In the fresh green meadows.

    The shining plow
    Runs its prow
  Through the crackling stubble;

The plowman, gay,
Works the long day,
Free from care or trouble.
The busy bees
Fill the trees
With their drowsy humming;
The milk-maid's song
Floats soft along,
While the cows are coming.

With memories sweet thy echoing halls abound;
The garden plot, that women watch with care;
The yeeping chicks, that dart for worms just found
By mother hen,—a bug is dainty fare.

At evening, when the sun's broad smiling face,
Behind the western hills, drops slowly down,
A calm sweet peace descends after the race
Of the long day, to stay, or rest, unknown.

Now, too, the snowy blossoms,
Of the dark plum trees,
Fill, with subtle perfumes,
The mild south-western breeze.
Oh, Spring! Thou blessed season!
We hail Thee with delight.
With promise, Thou art laden,
Of joys to come, still bright.
Thus, may we all enjoy thy peerless worth;
And learn thy lesson, Type of the New Birth!

TO AN HEPATICA.

Sweet scented floweret, herald of Spring!
Gladly we welcome the hopes that you bring.
Bright from the dark mould of vanishing years,
Sweetly thy fair face, so modest, appears.

Once more the song-bird pours from the tree
Floods of its soul-reaching sweet melody.
Once more the squirrel, awakened from sleep,
Plays, round the branches, his game of bo-peep.

While, on the hillside, the green grass upsprings
While, 'midst yon cedars, the partridge, its wings,
Drums on a log—there sedately and still,
Sits the wise hedge-hog, to vanish at will.

Mild thy sweet perfume floats on the breeze,
Meekly thy gaze reaches far through the trees
Till, from the sky's blue, a tint dost thou steal;
To Virtue and Modesty ever art leal.

Not yet the Adder's-Tongue put forth its leaves,
Still sleeps the Trillium 'neath the dry leaves;
When, in thy beauty, sweet floweret, so fair,
Thou comest to drive away sorrow and care.

Brightly thou springest from past beauties, dead—
Beauties once fair, but alas, all have fled;

Emblem of happiness born of our tears ;
Joy, sprung from sorrow, and strength, built on fears.

Sweetly thy mission, O, Floweret, fulfil !
Humble thy lot may be—unnoticed—still,
Well, if to some life one fond hope dost bring ;
Well, if from some heart dost cast forth a string.

Naught in this world ever blossoms in vain,
Sweet were thy mission to lessen one pain.
May thy humility, our dull minds, teach
Some higher plain in this dark life to reach.

A MORNING WALK.

Soft the morn of spring is breaking
  O'er the hills, far to the eastward ;
As from out my dreams awaking—
  From my dreams so weird and wayward,

Forth I stroll, to catch the breezes,
  Fresh from off the fragrant May-flowers ;
While their sleepy buds it teases,
  Where they lie low in their green bowers

And I listen to the singing
  Of the birds among the branches ;
Pleasant thoughts to my mind bringing ;
  Subtler lights my fancy catches.

And the twinkle of the cow-bell;
  And the softly rippling water
Of the streamlet, in yon flower-dell,
  Like the music in the laughter

Of the happy hours of childhood,
  Ere there come the cares and sorrows,
That attend the steps of manhood,
  With their deadly piercing arrows.

And the leaves, they gently whisper
  Themes of hope and joy and gladness;
But the dry limbs make for answer—
  "Soon will come your days of sadness."

Then the little grasses speaking:
  "Surely life is joy and sunshine!"
But the dry old mullen creaking:
  "Shadows soon will follow sunshine."

Then the flowers, sweet and lovely,
  "There can be no pain, nor sorrow."
But the dry leaves murmur faintly:
  "Today thou art, but not tomorrow."

In despair from their dark croaking,
  Round I turned me to the streamlet;
From its waters, words invoking,
  Where sweet Hope might find an inlet.

And the murmuring waters whisper,
"All may change, but nothing ever
Lives for naught—its object answered
It may change, but still forever

Lives the truth that it has spoken;
Wave on wave the circle spreading;
Lives, though buffeted and broken,
Through the course of ages, threading.

Worlds may perish; Love will never;
Soul with Soul its cords entwining,
Naught in earth or hell can sever;
Through all clouds its light is shining."

THE SOWING.

Once more the day in early May
Smiles on the dewy earth,
Chasing in play the mists away,
That have in night their birth.

The opening leaves upon the trees,
Coaxed forth by April showers;
And the sun's rays in warm May days
Form shady fragrant bowers.

The farmer now, with his bright plow,
  Works well the land to sow;
With careful heed casts the small seed,
  Then waits to see it grow.

In faith he sows, because he knows
  By sowing he may reap,
Whate'er the seed, or grain, or weed,
  Their fruits at length must reap.

And so in life, 'mid peace and strife,
  The careless words we speak;
The little deeds—these are the seeds—
  Let us the good e'er seek.

Oh, then may we this lesson see,
  And sow our seeds with care!
Till earth's dark night for heaven's light
  We leave—our harvest's there.

THE MOWER'S SONG.

In the lazy Summer hours,
  When, among the fragrant flowers,
Seeks the bee for honeyed sweets the whole day long;
  When all Nature's bright and fair,
  Then, upon the balmy air,
Floats to me, in cadence sweet, the mower's song.

REFRAIN.

Tra la la, la la, la la,
Chick, chick chick, chick chick, chick chick,
As it cuts the heads of grass so tall and strong.
Tra la la la la la la
Chick, chick chick, chick chick, chick chick,
Rings, upon the air, the happy mower's song.

Here, in the meadow grass,
O'er which the zephyrs pass,
As they float, in gentle swells, the earth along.
As I lie in pillowed ease
'Neath the dear old maple trees,
Dreamily I listen to the mower's song.

The clover's perfume, sweet,
My eager nostrils greet,
As I drink in draughts of it, both deep and long.
The meadow-lark's rich notes,
Pouring forth from swelling throats,
Mingle sweetly with the rythmic mower's song.

If, in the future years,
Should come care and bitter tears;
And this world should seem as going very wrong,
Yet, methinks 'twill soothe the pain,
If I yet may hear again,
E'en in dreams, the dear old happy mower's song.

THE THRESHING DAY.

And now the thread of my blithe lay
Leads us unto the threshing-day.
The 'hands' assembled as the sun,
His short day's march had just begun;
And, as we see them now, before
The huge machine begins its roar,
We note their manner; hear their speech;
And thus we these conclusions reach.

The boy is here with down on cheek,
Who, swelling words, doth loudly speak;
And thus to hide his lack of mind,
Such man-like talk doth get behind.
He springs to work like a young colt;
And, like him, is quite apt to bolt.
He orders, shouts, swings fork on high;
Thus arms and tongue at once doth ply.
For, with the men, a man must be;
Apes older ones prodigiously.

And now the men attract our gaze;
And, as around our quick glance strays,
Some seated in a group we see,
Telling cute tales right merrily,
While others wear a sage's face;
Move at their work with measured pace;

Fix loosened bolts, or bolts not loose ;
Give those a share of mild abuse,
Who, idly stand, with mouth agape,
As though a fly-trap they would make.
And now the horses are 'put to' ;
The men are in their places too.
Out leaps the lash ; round go the wheels,
A mild excitement each one feels,
As down the sheaves go one by one,
And the great day is well begun.
Together grain and straw both go
Down in the front, while out doth flow,
Behind, the straw ; the grain below.

Meanwhile in the women's domain
Expectancy and bustle reign.
The matron, anxious of her cheer ;
The maidens' hearts 'twixt hope and fear
If John and Joe, their rustic beaux,
Be in the crowd of men, or no.
Thus 'round a door bright eyes peep forth,
Brim full of mischief and of mirth ;
Until a well-known hat of straw
Comes into view ; then, by the law,
That bids the gentler sex be sought,
Vanish the eyes, and there is naught
To tell the amorous John and Joe
That which they long so much to know,

If Betsey Ann or Sarah Jane
Be found to-day in their domain.
Thus they are seen, but cannot see—
(Women contrive thus constantly)
And, as to work they go in doubt,
The maids trip smilingly about.
A smart new gingham frock thew wear ;
A spray of wild-grass in their hair.
Their small hands, by the warm sun browned,
Work deftly as they move around
From this to that delicious dish—
All that an epicure can wish.
Pies of the pumpkin's luscious meat—
Dish that a king might long to eat ;
While other's made of apples green,
Jellies and Johnny-cake, I ween ;
A roasted porker kept entire
Is steaming o'er a blazing fire.

And thus the cooking still goes on,
Until the men to dinner come.
But John and Joe, though anxious most,
Are last of all that eager host.
Then in they come, with blustering air,
As if the entire weight of care
Rested upon their shoulders broad,
A burdensome and heavy load.
But, as they all to dinner go,

Alas! Where are our John and Joe?
For at the table is no room;
So those two lads have met the doom
Of waiting till the second spread.
Then out we go to the wood-shed,
And there a strange sight meets our eyes,
That fills us with a great surprise.
For John and Joe, those rustic beaux,
A march have stolen, as you know.
Their faces washed, and hair combed sleek,
They then their pretty sweethearts seek
Not far—for as the others go,
The girls come out to John and Joe.
And many tender words are said;
And many vows of fond love made.
Thus we must leave them, hoping aye
To keep in mind the "Threshing Day."

THE ICE-KING.

The Ice-King, from his palace, hath builded last night,
His bowers of crystal clear,
That glisten, when touched by the sun's golden light,
On willow and hedge, far and near.

His floor, he hath laid with a carpet of white;
No echoing tread can be heard.

The walls are all frescoed with pictures so bright,
  The couches, with down, overspread.

All night his blithe workmen, their deft hands have piled—
  Nor hammer nor saw did we hear.
What tools they have used to our sight is denied;
  For, with morning, they all disappear.

THE SNOW STORM.

Gently fall the snow-flakes,
  To the furrowed lands;
To the brown sere meadows;
  To the drifting sands.

To the naked tree-tops,
  Clothing all in white;
To the dark green cedars,
  Fall the snow-flakes, light.

And they make a blanket,
  For the sleeping seeds.
Warm, beneath its shelter,
  Also, sleep the weeds.

Good and bad, together,
  Share God's precious gifts ;
Thus, o'er all, the storm-cloud,
  Jewels bright, it sifts.

While the storm-birds, gaily
  Flitting to and fro ;
Hunting for their dinner
  'Midst the falling snow.

Chirp and sing so blithely—
  This is their delight ;
Gone the birds of Summer
  To warm regions, bright.

Fall then gently, snow-flakes !
  Warm, O seedling, lie !
But your glad awakening
  Greets you by and by.

So a soul may slumber,
  Till the sun of love
Wakes it to the higher
  Life, that is above.