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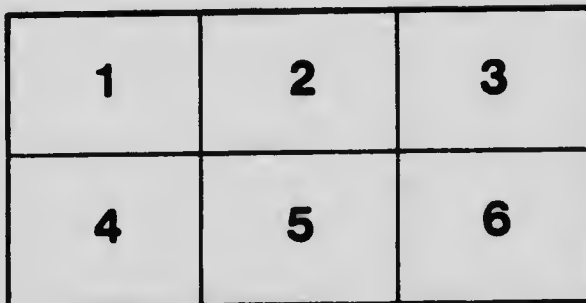
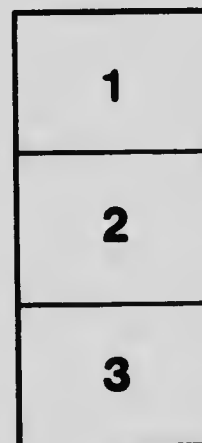
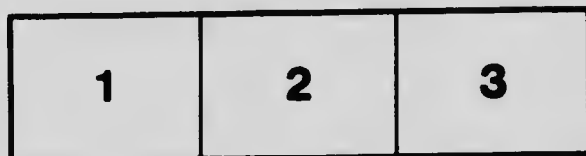
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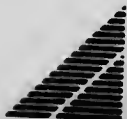
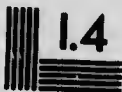
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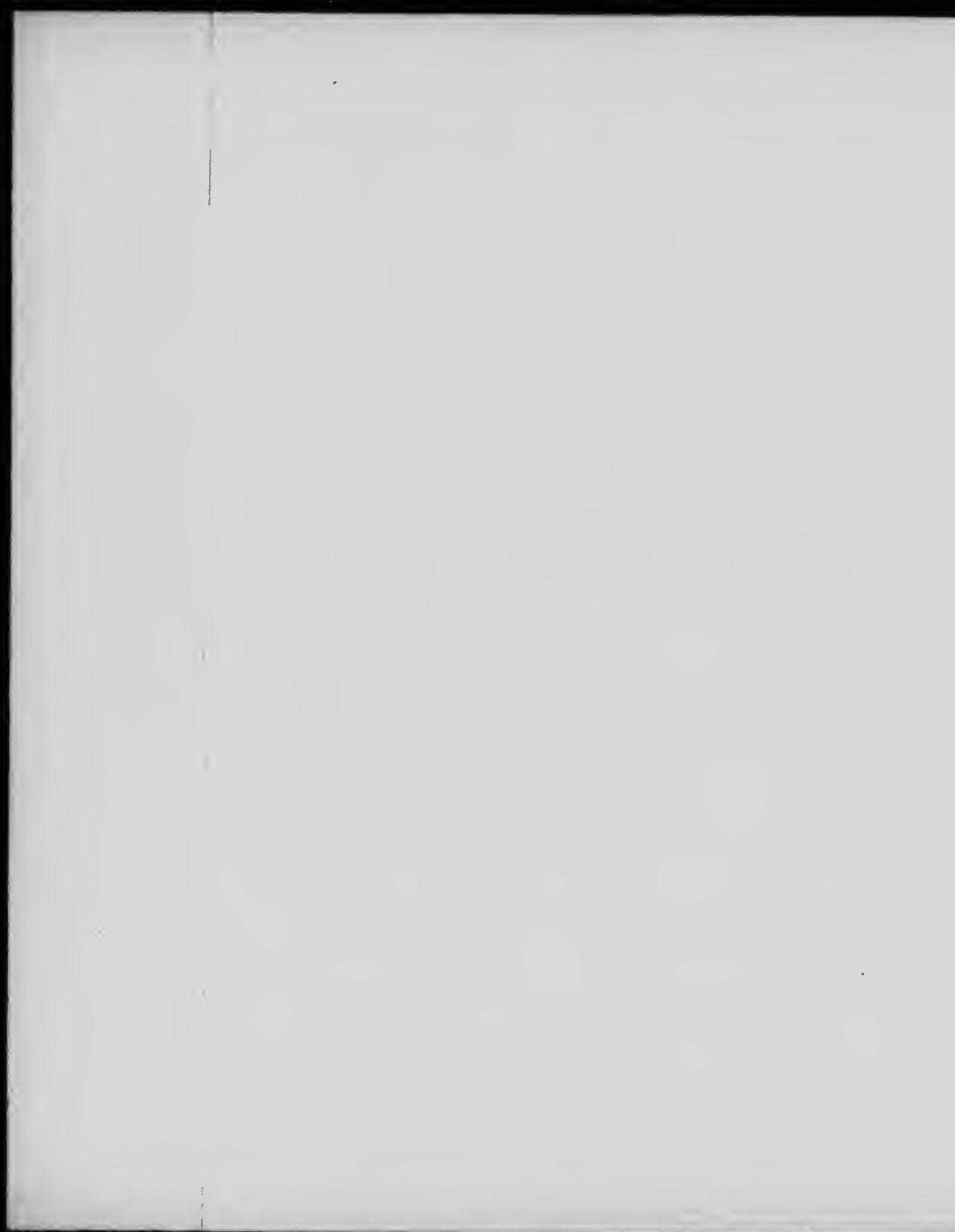
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The Art of
Living

And other Sermons



BY
REV. H. R. STEVENSON, M.A.
Rector of St. Philip's Church, Montreal, West



152
Mr. & Mrs. Ross Clarkson
from their friend & Rector
H. R. Thomson

Xmas 1915.

5084

✓✓
THE ART OF LIVING

And other Verses.



BY

✓
REV. H. R. STEVENSON, M.A.
Rector of St. Philip's Church, Montreal West.

1911.

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The Higher Aim.

MY soul! Thine Aim!
What is thine aim my soul! To lift
On high thy flame
In noble effort? or to drift
Idly in shame?

My soul! Essay
Of these the nobler and the surer,
While 'tis To-day,—
Leave someone better, truer, purer
For thy brief stay.

My soul! Arise
And struggle to express a thought;
Waft to the skies
Ideas half-formed, words fondly sought,
Unletted'd cries.

And when that sleep
Creeps o'er thee in the midst of toil,
Hushed in the deep,
Thy life seed sown on fertile soil
Others shall reap.

The Art of Living.

AN artist sat by his easel
His canvas before him spread,
And he asked himself
Was it fear or pelf,—
Fear that he would not make his bread,
Pelf that would see him splendidly fed,—
That lured him on to his task.

What was his motive he asked,
And the answer he hardly knew.
The answer was near,
Neither pelf nor fear,
But a love that bounded towards his art,
And a love that well'd from out his heart,
Enthralled with what it could do.

So he rose a man inspired,
And drew from his soul a flame.
A touch from his brush
Made the canvas blush,
And the red and the gold of a noble aim
To his masterpiece made a fitting frame,
And the task was a wonderful love.

Just so with the art of living :
The man stands facing life,
Will he strive to do right
From the ghost of a fright
That such is safe from the prisoner's cell,
And leads away from the portals of Hell,—
And the motive is that of a coward.

Or the motive may be reward,
The character growing better.
No artist paint
Can make a saint
When the strongest motive is heavenly greed :
And desire to be saved may oft mislead
To selfishness of life.

Then what is the highest motive
To practice the art of living?
Just work ahead
On life as its spread,
The artist's spirit expressed thro' you.
Enthralled with the good that you can do
Losing your life to find it.

Happiness.

IN the life that you live in your present state,
When others are rising and you have to wait,
Are you happy!
When much seems to pass you and hope seems afar,
Oh, learn to be happy wherever you are,
Learn to be happy!

Til you rise and enter the manager's door,
In the minor nooks of the office and store,
Are you happy!

Til you buy a large house and make your pile,
In the stages that hold you in the meanwhile,
Are you happy!

Til you find a lover who will love you well,
While in hopes and fears you feign would dwell,
Are you happy!

For happiness lies not in manager's door,
Nor the glint of a house with a polished floor,
Nor is born when two heart's each other adore.—
If you had not happiness long before,
You will not be happy.

In the life that you live in your present state,
When others are rising and you have to wait,
When much seems to pass you and hope seems afar,
Oh, learn to be happy wherever you are.

The Joy of Living.

BREATHE fresh and true,
Clouds vanish as with magic wand
A brighter hue
Flashes, and Sun of life beyond,
And azure blue.

Stride on—firm—serious,
Giving the best you can, and know
Good is imperious;
And in a little manner so
Pierce the mysterious.

Clouds—mostly dust—
Rise from the stamp of fretting feet;
Why then disgust!
The sun shines when we shun deceit,
And welcome trust.

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The Child's Happiest Hour.

CHILDREN in the sunlight
Playing with their toys,
Caring not for big things,
Counting not their joys,
All serenely happy,
All supremely gay,
Wonderfully busy
At their morning play.

Theirs is not the worry,
Theirs but to enjoy.
"Why are you so happy
Fair haired girl and boy?"
"We are playing grown up
Shop and home,—we two,
This our happiest moment,—
Imitating you."

Ah! what is the lesson
Children teach us here,
Happy imitating
Nobler, grown up sphere?
We are happy also
Imitating Him,
Whom to strive to live like
Makes His Heaven less dim.

The Bridge Builder.

I AM part of the bridge,—the mighty bridge
That stretches from out the marvellous past
To the still more marvellous future.
I am part of the dust of this wonderful age
That into the passing of time is cast,
To build but the base of a pillar.

I do not envy the mighty girder,
Nor pinnacle bright with sun and gilt
That soars in popular view.
I do my work, and I am not lost,
For on every part of the structure built
Is the eye of the Great Engineer.

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Courage.

LITTLE band elastic
Lying on my desk,
In a coil of tangles
Happily grotesque,
I would make you useful,
Stretch you wide and long,
Till I nearly break you,
If you are not strong.
I must stretch you largely,
Give you widest grasp,
Round my work I place you,
Which you firmly clasp.

Little man unthankful
Wasting in the world,
Tangled coil of duties
Not as yet unfurled,
God would take your courage,
Stretch it wide and long,
Till He nearly breaks you,
If you are not strong.
He must stretch it largely
Give you widest clasp
Round His work He sets you
Which you firmly grasp.

The Prodigal in Heaven.

I LIVED in the world as a prodigal would ;
I laughed at a God when the flesh said, 'I must ;'
And I mixed in my mind and I misunderstood
Liberty, licence and lust.

The clerics all cautioned the use of free-will :
And worldly men spoke of the God of star-dust :
And I laughed as I wallowed confusing still
Liberty, licence and lust.

One day I awoke with a terrible qualm,
I had lost all desire in the vicious strife,
And I longed to exchange for my filthy sham
Liberty, love and life.

Oh ! that I'd guarded and kept undefiled—
Reaping the joy of a house and a wife
Fondling the hands of a smiling child—
Liberty, love and life.

Then a cleric came and stirred my mind,
And fervently told what the Scripture saith :—
The steps of the prodigal ever find
Debauch, disease and death.

Yet a Saviour—so the Scripture told,—
Could save my soul in my final breath,
And never again could my life unfold
Debauch, disease and death.

One moment I thought it an easy way,
The next, remorse disorder'd my brain,
And so I experienced day by day
Punishment, penance and pain.

Then to God for another chance I cried,
And I fought disease but I fought in vain,
And I shudder'd to meet,—for a coward I died,—
Punishment, penance and pain.

No loved ones in Heaven with me to share
The joy in the growth of our spirit careers ;
I arrived in Heaven and was welcomed there
With carols, chants and cheers.

Yet fears were mine, for a coward I died ;
And the lost sheep found brought the angel tears;
And the fatted calf was more than implied,
Mid carols, chants and cheers.

So you think to the prodigal all is given,
That he fools with the human and then the divine,
Gets the best of it here and then in Heaven,
Woeful waste and wine.

Then wait till you see his life above,
How his soul for a higher life doth pine,
How his past cries thro' his lessons of love
Woeful waste and wine.

My back-door entrance I cannot dismiss,
With remorse and shame my soul is riven,
And for all who are fools I affirm there is
A height of hell in Heaven.

For the fatted calf is not every day killed,
And the joy of a welcome every day given;
For years with my head bowed I fulfilled
A height of hell in Heaven.

Truth.

HOW sweet thro' life to catch the twilight gleam !
How sad to lonely walk thro' such a maze!
How calm at th' end to have the sunset rays !
How rough to sink away without a beam
Into the dark ! Is't but a glorious dream
That man should battle steadily life's frays,
And bend his will and heart and brain to praise,
And make the power of love and truth supreme,
To light himself even but the smallest spark
Onwards and upwards to the Ideal of Right ?
Nay, 'tis the early dawn that lights the dark,
Too holy a flush to scorn ; which rightly caught
Doth flower the human reason with daring thought,
And burst the human bosom with passionate light.

Aspirations.

OH! to be caught into her arms as Nature's pet,
And to be taught
Some fuller hint o' the rise and set
Of all that's wrought.

See, from the ape historians trace man's rise,—how ages
His progress shape,—
How Her great movements Nature gauges
With aeon tape.

I cannot see the Whence I came, the Where I go;
Yet I decide
That life such as I have and know
Is sanctified.

So here I am, here I must stay.—Then let me work,
Not feebly war;
Do,—not despond; attempt,—not shirk,
Construct,—not mar.

Ideals are mine, and all my power of life eclipse;
So 'tis a fact
That most I murmur with my lips
I do not act.

Immortal Light! Immortal Life! Immortal Love!
Like moon at night
The ideal reflects the God above
To darken'd sight.

Following ideals not chasing fireflies through the gloom;
Each step doth teach
That such beyond the mouldering tomb
My soul may reach.

Such may be wrong, and but the smoke of dying fire;
Yet I belong
To those who tune the human lyre
To noblest song.

Our lisping tongue speaks sadly of our faith grown old;
Nay, faith is young,
And noblest songs as yet untold,
Anthems unsung.

Nor heart's despond, nor thoughts that fly with broken wing,
Nor death so grim,
Shall make me less the nobly sing
My trust in Him.

Such is my faith; and taking such, have I not strength
To march,—even when
The shadows seem eternal length
To my weak ken!

God's love o'erbounds my highest thoughts, my energies
Patiently rounding;
Till bursts the blasts of angel skies
My soul astounding.

The future lifts, where I by grades yet mystical
Shall have ascended
To God,—and wisdom of it all
Stands comprehended.

Genesis.

FOR centuries
Man believed—ere his sense grew finer—
Eve's enterprise
In a small spot in Asia Minor,
Called Paradise.

Now Science menaces ;
With every modern rèsarch glory
Herself replenishes ;
And in her well-stocked laboratory
Dissects poor Genesis.

She won't allow
The Spirit of Science, young and crude,
Which wrote the How
And Why of things as best it could,
As it does now.

For the man-child
In arrow-heads, on slab and column,
Grandly compiled
His theories, which, sacred and solemn,
Can't be defiled.

For they disclose
The first few thoughts throbbing the mind
Of man.—On those
Majestic thoughts, oft frail and blind,
Our thoughts arose.

We may be nearer
The truth now than of yore; our senses
May now be clearer;—
Then those who helped the consequences
Should be the dearer.

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The Awe of the Universe.

VAULT of Immensity!

Wherein a race

Of puny men crawl ever on the crust
Of a slow travelling planet round and round
A ball of fire,—itself but a small speck
In the great all,—Immeasurable Vault!

What is the secret hidden in thy depths?
What is thy nature? What is that which stirs
Thy mighty wheels to action? What thy birth,
Thy life, thy death, thy work, thy final goal?
What art thou? Why wasn't ever any being?
"NOTHING" is better than a cruel heap
Of senseless matter.

Vault of Immensity!

What means this whirl of suns, this rush
Of worlds, and the stupendous whole that forms
The Universe? What errand is in shape
To grant the right of such a mighty scheme
As life unfolds.

Immeasurable Vault!

Sees't thou the little stripling man upon
The outer edge of yonder planet? Say,
Why he doth live! Why he doth ever long
To know thy hidden secrets! Why to gain
Command of thy most inner meaning! Look!
How he doth grasp at the minutest truth
That thou bestow'st upon him; puzzled, stands
Gazing at thee one moment, then retires
We know not where: we hope and hope! Ah! say,
What these things mean; aye,—what this life doth mean.
This little life we all must live with thee,
In thee and for thee, thou most Mighty Vault!
What is the sense and meaning of all things!
What is the use and trend of human life!
What is the mission of the Universe!
What is—Existence!

The Children of the City.

A CHILD sped forth o'er the city streets
In the glow of a beautiful dream,
And the brain that throbs, and the heart that beats,
And the eye that burns with a wonderful gleam,
Roams over the city's stupendous piles,
And stately architectural styles.

Down radiant avenues speeds the child,
Entranced with the marvels more and more,
By the vastness of it all beguiled,
The business haste, the traffic roar,
Until it forgets it has a home,
And a father who waits for the child to come.

So some go forth in the universe
With their telescope and their microscope,
Entranced with the vastness, there disperse
In every part of it all to grope,
Until they forget their Father's Home,
And the Father Who waits for them to come.

Another child speeds o'er the city,

"No wonderful streets for him," says he
"The filth of the city" his faithful ditty,

The lanes and the ashpits he will see ;
Forgetting he has a beautiful Home,
And a Father Who waits for him to come.

"See," doth he cry when he finds any filth,

"What a filthy old place this world really is !
Dont talk to me of its beauty and wealth."

And so he returns to his sordid bliss ;
Forgetting he has a beautiful Home,
And a Father who longs for him to come.

Know, if you will, of the filth of the lanes ;

See, if you will, the wonderful streets ;
Sorrow for sin and earth's wild pains ;

Rise with the learned in science feats ;
But never forget your beautiful Home,
And the Father Who waits for you to come.

The Photograph.

Genesis.

I WENT to seek God's wondrous ways,—
Let no one at me laugh.
I took my little camera,
And took a Photograph.

The Christian.

Leave it alone, foul sacrilege,
Disturb it if you dare.
Science examines in the dark,
How can they see it there?

Science.

Too small for me, I'll develop it,
Enlarge it on a mount.
One hundred years in a dark room shows
'Tis a wonderful account.

The Christian.

More power to your instruments, light to your paths,
Strength to your mighty pens.
Bring it out, bring it out to the light again
Fresh from your stronger lens.

Life.

LIFE! Thou strange thing
That formest me a conscious being,
Why didst thou bring
Me into action,—thus decreeing
Work, help, and sing!

Yet would I cry,—
“Power, Law, Chance, Life, even at the worst
Mere Energy!
I thank thee in thy mighty burst
Thou madest me.

“For I may aid
Some conscious beings in their plight,
Whom thou hast made,
Ere from the strange sad scene thy might
Doth bid me fade.

“Yet I must own
I feel man is not of such stuff
As might be blown
From chaos, Nature's wanton puff,
Cast forth alone.”

Tell me it all in thirty-one Verses.

TELL me, Old Sexton, who built this church,
The forests whence came these pews of birch,
The quarries and hills of the stones and the rest,
And how the Architect's thought was expressed,
Tell me it all, or I'll give you but curses,
Minutely, exactly, in thirty-one verses.

Tell me, Old Bible, who built this world,
How thousands of ages its story unfurled,
Fire-mists and star-dust out of the past,
Tell me it all from the first to the last,
Tell me it all, or I'll give you but curses,
Minutely, exactly, in thirty-one verses.

erses.

The Parson a Drunkard--

A Scientific Demonstration.

rch,

est,

d,

[SAW him near the district of the saloons
And the forms that were there were almost the same
I saw man near the district of the baboons [as his.
And his bones the same, of the like I know he is.

I know when he preaches I think he is higher than sot,
The guess he is drunk of the two is likely the least.
I know man rises above his earthly lot,
The guess he is blest is more than the guess he is beast.

In His Image.

I GAZED at my child, a baby son,
He is made in my image I know,
And tho' he can't use his tongue to talk
And his little soft feet to run and walk,
Yet in my image he's made I know,
And more to my image he'll grow.

And I am God's child in this cradled world
I am made in His Image I know;
And tho' I but stammer with lispng tongue,
And in his service am feeble and young,
Yet in His Image I'm made I know,
And more to His Image I surely grow.

Survival of the Fittest and Origins.

O POET, how did you write your verses?

I wrote a great many and picked out the best,
I wrote them all down and discarded the rest,
And that's how I wrote my verses.

O Poet. how did your thought arise?

Like the wind on the leaves, or the surf on the sand,
Like the breath of a Spirit I can't understand,
And that's how my thought arose.

O Scientist, tell us the life of man?

Nature made many forms, picked out the best,
Moulded them well and discarded the rest,
And that is the life of man.

O Scientist, how did it all arise?

Like the Path of a Purpose wondrously planned,
Like the Touch of a God and a Master Hand,
And that's how it all arose.

Why I cannot be an Athiest.

MUST I deny
Impulse within that feels the need
To deify
Some Power. Perplexed yet brave I plead
With broken cry :-

“O Power Titantic !
Our nature won't believe Thou art
Senseless Mechanic,
Bringing the peerless brain and heart
From Atom-Panic !

“Timeless and Boundless,
Eternally creating—senseless,
Silent, self-soundless,
Against thy very self defenceless,
Thy duty groundless,

“O Furious Fate !
In the Eternal Boundlessness
Ne'er to abate,
What other beings, in what distress
Dost thou create !

"O Wicked Force
If such thou be,—worse than the devils
Of Hell;—strange source
To manifest thro' blind upheavals
Love,—Christ,—Remorse!"

Is't but a dream
Our faith in love and sacrifice?
Or Mighty Gleam
Showing Perfection's Boundless Price
And Peerless Scheme?

Choose which you will,
To me the last seems fuller choice,
And truer thrill;
For human mind with moral voice
Convinceth still:—

There's some power greater
Than matter's might and motion's mist,
The Sole-Dictator,
Which we call, striking the matter's gist,
God, the Creator.

Cry of the Poor Man.

WHO shall deliver the poor from the sting of the down-trodden race?

Who shall rise up in their cause and alter the world's disgrace?

Who shall lift up but a finger to help when the care-worn cries?

Who shall dare wrench from the Altar the victims of sacrifice?

How shall the world grow nobler? by great individual wealth?

How shall the world grow stronger? by lords and ladies good health?

How shall the world grow happier? by the strong ones grasping the plums?

How shall the world grow purer? by the poor closed up in slums?

When shall the world grow truer? a thousand centuries hence?

Yes, if the world sits down to calculate the expense,
Moved not by heart nor soul, but leaving all to the brain,
Twiddling its thumbs in theories of an economic gain.

Mills economic are doing the work of an hundred men,
Engines the work of thousands, derricks the work of ten :
Wealth, we are told, is brought by machines to the highest
pitch ;

Wealth !—but for whom ?—for the poor ? No, not for the poor,
but the rich.

Laws economic (so-called) have favour'd the rich in the past,
All the justice on earth cries out that they cannot last.
Bring the world to its senses, the men with the hearts insist,
From actions of quiet men to theories of socialist.

How shall we work for the poor ? Take power of parliament,
Legislate juster laws, and regulate trusts and rent ?
Or shall we work with morality in the dark alley and den,
Striving to change the lives of individual men ?

Both must be worked together,—juster laws,—and morality;
Lifting the man's environment,—and individual quality;
Like as a tunnel, beginning at both the important ends,
'Till in the middle both meet, working meanwhile as friends,

Hope for the best thro' it all; for, three hundred years ago,
Rich men could put their slaves in a dungeon, and castles
will show

Now the dread marks where the tongues of the slaves licked
moisture away,

How the world's conscience has grown ! 'Twould not tolerate
such to-day.

Three hundred years in the future is it vain, indeed, to hope
That the world's conscience will rise, and the poor no longer
grope
Down in their dungeons and dens, striving with dirt and
dearth ;
Much will be changed and cleaned, a happier place the earth.

'Tis not enough that the poor should rest in a *future* world,
Lodged in the bosom of Abraham, or harping on gates that
are pearl'd ;
Here and *now* must they lodge, with a juster set of laws,
Lodged with the *sons* of the Patriarch, in bosoms that burst
for their cause.

Sing Me of Love.

O POET, sing me a song of love.

I'll sing thee a song of a girl and a boy,
And the meeting of both in the highest joy,
Selfish no more, nor narrow.
For with this theme I often toy,
And the symbol that I would now employ
Is the shot of cupid's arrow.

O Philosopher, sing me a song of love.

I'll tell thee straight of a natural act ;
If you want it in syllables more exact,
Reproduction, man's persistence.
And the joining of two in the law's compact,
And the name that I give to this well known fact
Is the course of least resistance.

O Great-heart, sing me a song of love.

I'll hymn thee of two on holy ground,
Of a love where a hint of God is found,
And the life of the future widens.
And the base of the love is solid and sound,
For the hope of such life and love is found
In the faith of Divine Guidance.

The Wicked Old Maid.

She was as gay
As a summer's day,
And pretty as girl could be.
She had her way,
And with love did play,
And her charms to all were free.
Real love not caught,
No man she brought
To his metaphorical knee ;
For 'twas men she sought,
And her folly wrought
No royal ecstasy.
At thirty she woke
From her little life-joke
The folly of it all to know ;
And in anger she spoke
With a heart nigh broke
Of life as a fleeting show.
And she faintly guessed
Of all that was best
In the life of a love that must grow.
Discontent unexpressed
Soured in her breast
As homeless she ran to and fro.

The Good Old Maid.

SHE was as sweet,
And as daintily neat,
As a flower in the early spring.
And her heart did beat
With love's young heat
For one to whom she could cling,
But she nursed with a will
When her parents fell ill
'Til the chances of marriage took wing;
Yet she struggled still
Her lot to fulfil
Tho' she grasped not the gist of the thing.
Tho' on earth love's won
And by two begun,
Soul growth,—human love deified;
She loved first one
Had been better to shun,
And her second lover had died.
Tho' beyond the skies
No marriage lies,
A higher than such is implied.
In paradise
For her sacrifice
Be sure the Lord will provide.

I may tell my Boy of a God.

I MAY tell my boy of a God,
And bid him in virtue plod,
Instil it in him with a rod
'Till a look is as good as a nod.
But the only God he knows,
And the God to which he grows,
Is the God the parent shows
As about his work he goes.

I may tell my boy of the world,
That the good man's life is pearl'd,
That the bad man down is hurled,
As the life of each is unfurled.
But he sees only that side of life
That I live at home with my wife,
More love let there be than strife,
For that's his idea of life.

I may tell my boy of heaven,
And warn him of flippant leaven,
Tell him six and five are eleven,
Bid him keep one day in seven.
But our home is his heaven to him,
And my own sense of God is dim;
Let my work be all square tho' grim,
And my sabbath hear a sermon and a hymn.

Love.

OH! the wild throb of the heart's bounding swell,
The pure fresh motion in the soul's abyss,
The long swift rush of deeply sacred bliss,
When true love thrills us with its sweet strong spell,
Shows us life's inmost rapture,—pearl o' the shell,
Assumes and gathers in the betrothal kiss
All joy that was, will ever be, or is.
And the profounder joy,—ever to dwell
Near to each other in a dream of love;
Mingling two beings in the true love-glow,
Merging two wills that,—God may form twin souls,
As each new rapture doth the love-life prove;
On which vast wealth of beauty ever rolls,
And love's delight doth ever richer grow.

Love is the height of life ; something above
The elements that shroud the common clay ;
Something that speaks to us of a better day.
How does the little offspring gently move
The father's kindness and the mother's love
Unto a wondrous height ! Ah ! who can weigh
Such vast affections ! And when years grow grey,
And one sinks out of life, the memory of
Past years of joy and peace and love has aisled
The others sad long day with paths of light,
And the departed, mirrored in the child,
Will live again in the aged widow'd sight,
And so love triumphs even to the last breath,
And loved in life goes forth to loved in death.

Marriage.

YOU talk to me of marriage
And call it a dangerous course,
Avoid a family shipwreck
And conjugal remorse.

I say you may hide from danger,
But I will follow love;
For most ships that go to sea, sir,
Are not wrecked, but safe enough.

You hear of the mighty shipwrecks
In marriage and at sea.
But most passages are lovely,
Tho' storms will ever be.

And like everything else in life, sir,
With an average ounce of care,
In marriage or at sea, sir,
The voyage will be fair,

Water into Wine.

O LORD, I must struggle and strive
In a world that is striking me hard,
And most of my labour seems marr'd,
Til I think, "better dead than alive."

Yet, O Lord, thro' it all I am Thine;
Turn my work to a task worth while,
And my struggle into a smile,
And the sweat of my brow into wine.

O Lord, I have struggled with pain;
When the death of my little one came
I had almost cursed Thy name,
For I called upon Thee in vain,

Yet, O Lord, thro' it all I am Thine:
Turn my thoughts to the great Afterlife,
And my heart to the love of my wife,
And the tears of my soul into wine.

O Lord, I have struggled with doubt ;
The Universe seems but an ocean,
And Spirit but sorry emotion,
And, O Lord, they have usher'd Thee out,

Yet, O Lord, thro' it all I am Thine ;
 Turn my life to a search for Thy presence,
 And my soul to a share of Thine essence,
And my ocean of doubt into wine.

Why I am not an Agnostic.

ALAS! our age
Considers priest, religion, church
Weak heritage,
Seeks moral life in sound research
As higher stage;
Self-magnified,
Like bread that scoffs its virgin soil,—
Or echo pride,—
Or rich man scorning labourer's toil,—
Age deified.

Yet for our sloth
Each new age needs agnostic doubt,
Men up in wrath,
Who say, "Religion's going out,
And all is froth."
Like snail on sand
Their cry doth perish in the sweep
And God-command
Of the next billow which doth creep
Along the strand.

And he who sneers
At hints of man's immortal part,
At saint's careers,
At yearning of the human heart,
And passion's tears;
And he who smiles
At singing of those aspirations
In minster aisles,
Breathing religion's exaltations
In gothic piles;
Such are not readers
Of human love and suffering.
Greater the pleaders
Who pray and hope and give and sing,
Unconscious leaders.

For must we plod
Thro' suns that gather like the dust,
Thro' atom clod,
Before we follow Christ and trust
Ourselves to God!
Or must we read
All learning, weigh it in the scale,
Before we plead
That human effort may not fail,
And vainly bleed!

Jacobs Ladder.

I LIFTED my ladder of life to heaven,
Would the Angels of God behold me!
O the joy and the help that was hastily given,
Behold the half was not told me!

I met in my youth an illness severe;
Which my friends said was all for my good;
And I thank'd them tho' reasons were not too clear,
For I knew they had eased me as best they could.

Then I learnt to lay my hand,
As the Great God above had planned,
In the Angel of Sorrow's hand
On a higher rung to stand.

And I meet other angels in troubles severe
Which my friends say are all for my good;
And I thank them with thanks that are now more
clear,
For I know they speak as a christian should.

May I learn to lay my hand,
As the Great God above hath planned,
In the Angel of death's strong hand,
On the last rung of all to stand,
As the joys of the Future expand.

Why I am a Believer.

WEAK and uncouth

I pick up faith, and hope, and love,

Duty, and truth;

Potential powers in me they move

But in their youth.

Faith gently rises,

Urges a Moral Being that blesses

And energises,

That God is more than spiritual guesses,

Sacred surmises.

Hope leaps afar,

Transcends the horizon of our sphere,

Past sun and star,

And brings back message to the ear,

God and Christ are.

And love acclaim
Itself the eternal principle,
Its mighty flames
Burn with self-sacrifice and tell
Of Divine Aims;

Self-sacrifice,
Not dewdrop melting in the sun,
Not man's device,
Nor tears that only idle run,
But pearl of price:

Our human nature
Growing in wondrous sense of duty,
Reaching a stature
Where duty seems a task of beauty
For God's young creature.

The Iceberg.

O THOU fleeting Iceberg,
From the frozen North,
Who gave thee thine order,
"Piece of Ice, go forth!"
Ocean is my father;
Ocean's sun I claim,
He is my commander
At his bid I came.
Down to warmer climates
I will gently ride;
As he shines upon me
I am glorified;
And the more he melts me
So the more I grow
Like my father ocean
Till to him I go.

O thou fleeting Christian
From the indifferent host,
Who gave thee thine order,
"Struggle upward most!"
God is my good Father,
And His Son I claim
As my good commander,
Honour I His name.

Warm is love and labour,
Heavens clime implied ;
As he shines upon me
I am glorified.
And the more he helps me
So the more I grow,
Like my Father's Kingdom,
'Til to Him I go.

Doggerels Deep.

AH! piteous squabbles!
Where fiery bigots seek the strife with
Sectarian baubles!
And think to pave the way of life with
Doctrinal cobbles!

O wondrous feat!
That man should write a moral law,
Inspired soul-heat,
From man-desire, Jehovah-awe,
Conscious concrete!

Beneath—the infernal,
Sin crushing the instinct to respond
To the supernal,—
Above—the Expanse of Love.—Beyond—
That Love Eternal.

False assiduity,
To make a miracle of mind from
Mental Fatuity;
And mourn a moral world designed from
Moral Vacuity!

My Name is Legion.

LIKE the child who is told of the little bad boy,
Who comes in his place and smashes his toy,
To the lower and higher which wise men employ
To class human nature in folly or joy,
I live in a desert region.

For the life of my soul is checked by its moods,
And the clash of their combats in endless fueds,
And the flight of their movements my will illudes,
Til in hopeless confusion my spirit broods,
And I fear my name is Legion.

The secret, O Lord, of thy power I would know,
To the swine or the sea bid my moods all go;
With a single heart and hope would I glow,
To the fulness of thy stature grow,
For I would be a Christian.

Like the glint of the sun on the crest of the wave,
Or the gleam in the eye of a man that is brave,
As I gain more light and face the grave,
The more I can rise and conquer the knave;
O Lord, I would be a Christian.

Hopes.

CALLED and elected
By my own will and the world's needs,
Moved and directed
By a great impulse that so leads
As tho' connected
With something vast
And good, beyond my poor conception,
I humbly cast
My all,—and spite of all deception,
Hope to the last.

And the heart swells,
And hopes and hints and solace brings
From unseen wells
Of rapture; and of better things
And happier tells.
Mid the unrest
I trust to moral scholar's brain;
I trust the best
Of effort issues human gain,
And is God-blest.

Pathos and pity,
And prayers that stretch beyond our tombs
No idle ditty;
But passages o' the catacombs
Of a higher city,
We cannot see;
Our language doth our eyes eclipse;
Whilst sympathy,
The soul's divine apocalypse,
Doth speak of Thee.

And life expands
Throbbing with love.—That which seems true
Actually commands:
Give.—tho' thy gift but seem to strew
The desert sand.
Our intuition:
That thro' this clang of cares unequal
There runs a mission,
The finger-post of a glorious sequel,
Prophetic Vision.

The Death of Our Loved One.

GIVE her back to us, back to us, Lord, we pray,
She is more to us now than ever before,
And all the neglect of the past and more
We will try to undo, O Lord, could she stay,

For we can but cry, "Thy will be done."
O Lord, she is past the doctor's skill.
If the heart must stop and the pulse be still,
Give us strength to endure when she is gone,

Give us power to endure the funeral,
And to face the sight of an empty home.
Help us all in our need unto Thee to come ;
And see in her death a loving call.

A vanished footprint in the snow.
The color of a vessel's wake,
The dream that suddenly doth break,
Are ours while memory holds them so.

But she was real and part of us ;
And she has gone to live with Thee ;
And there no partings e'er will be,
But here it must be ever thus.

The Captain of Our Salvation.

ENOUGH to feel
I' the vortex of this passionate strife
The strong appeal,
Self-sacrifice is highest life
Noblest ideal.

He hoped to see
Self-sacrifice the finest sense
Of Virtue, He,
The Christ of Bible documents,
Made wondrous plea.

His God-like spell,
His teaching, peerless argument,
Who can excell!
The Christ of Sermon on the Mount,
And parable.

All that exists
In poets and philosophers
And moralists
Doth fill our struggling characters
With moral mists.

But He, the one
Who leads thro' sacrifice to Right,
And He alone,
Gives us the fire o' the Infinite,
And God-like tone.

The Cry of the Christian Soul.

IF the Power of Powers ignores us,
Who is with us, who is for us?
Wails the dismal human chorus.

We have creeds of former ages,
Work of holiest, mightiest sages,
We are reverent and courageous.

There rescission, here correction,
Thro' it all a strong connection
Points to God and to Perfection.

Purpose is astir 'twould seem ;
Are we fools to wisely deem
We are in a Mighty Scheme !

Here a virtue, here a vice,
Man's Perfection needs a price,
And the price,—self-sacrifice.

Such is breathed on heathen column,
Writ in every holy volume,
Swelling forth, supremely solemn.

Are these lessons world-wide scattered,
Only dreams that dream-like flattered,
And are now to be all shattered!

It is not to me alone meant
Incarnation and Atonement
Is the God of Gods Enthronement:

Incarnation, Christ's Divinity,
Second Person of the Trinity,
More in sense than Mere Infinity.

Hard to grasp the Three in One;
Heat, Attraction, Light,—One Sun;
Three strands, and the rope is spun.

Yet to teach self-sacrifice
Seems indeed cold artifice
If alone *man* pays the price.

Dimly see I tho' I falter
God not only Priest-Assaulter,
God as Victim on His Altar.

Not in death alone on cross,
Human pain a morbid gloss,
But in deeper, holier loss.

If I try more to explain it,
I will doubtless only stain it,
Strive I rather to attain it.

Think I of my wasted powers,
Of the world's sad suffering hours,
Clouded sun and trampled flowers ;

Sin and hate and misery
Rolling like Satanic sea,
I have my Gethsemane.

Yet from Christ my faith I borrow,
Thro' the garden of such sorrow
Rise to holier, brighter morrow.

Suffers God and moans creation,
Christ his royal intimation,
And Self-sacrifice Salvation.

A Harvest Prayer.

I ASK not, Lord, for golden coin,
For such may drive me far from Thee.
I ask, O Lord, Thine Image stamped
On golden opportunity.

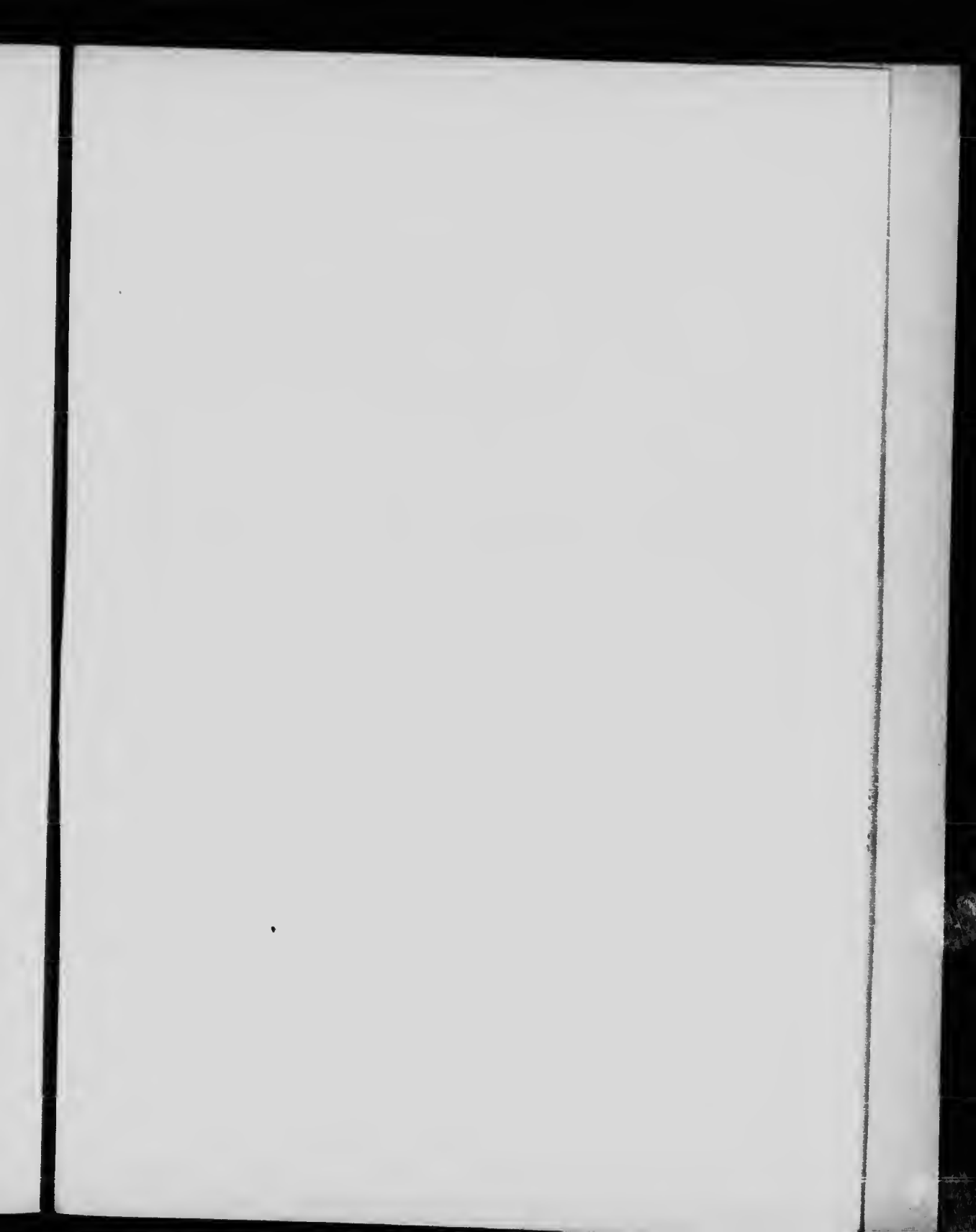
I ask not wealth from silver mines
To dig and spend with sordid crowds.
I ask but leave to oft supply
The silver linings to life's clouds.

I crave not diamonds rich and rare,
The quartz that shadows hate and crime.
I crave to find some moral gem,
Soul-sifted in the Sands of Time.

I crave not rubies from the East,
Red from the rocks thro' which they came.
I crave to feel that Christ is God,
Red blood of martyrs on His Name.

I pray not pearls from Persian gulf
That I may all my friends excel.
I pray the power to dive for Truth,
And find it sparkling in the shell.

I pray not, Lord, for great estates,
That I may prosper more and more.
I pray for Heavenly properties,
Thy Gift, O Lord, for I am poor.



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