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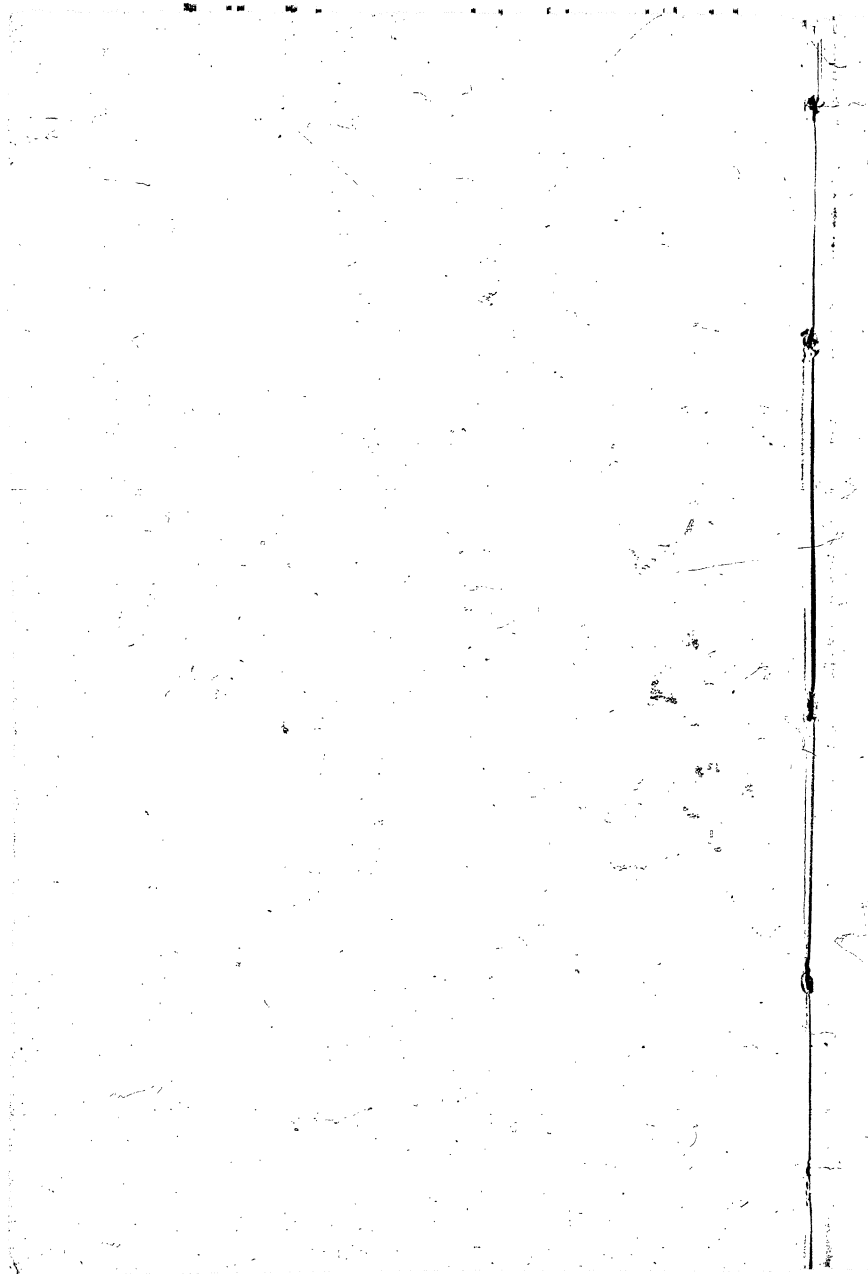
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W

J. G. A. Bourne Esqre
With the Author's regards.

P O E M S,

WRITTEN IN NEWFOUNDLAND.

23669



P O E M S,
WRITTEN IN NEWFOUNDLAND,

BY

HENRIETTA PRESCOTT.

L O N D O N :
SAUNDERS AND OTLEY, CONDUIT STREET.

M D C C C X X X I X .

LONDON:
PRINTED BY W. CLOWES AND SONS,
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THE
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LONDON

INSCRIBED

TO

My Beloved Parents,

BY THEIR

GRATEFUL AND AFFECTIONATE DAUGHTER,

HENRIETTA PRESCOTT.



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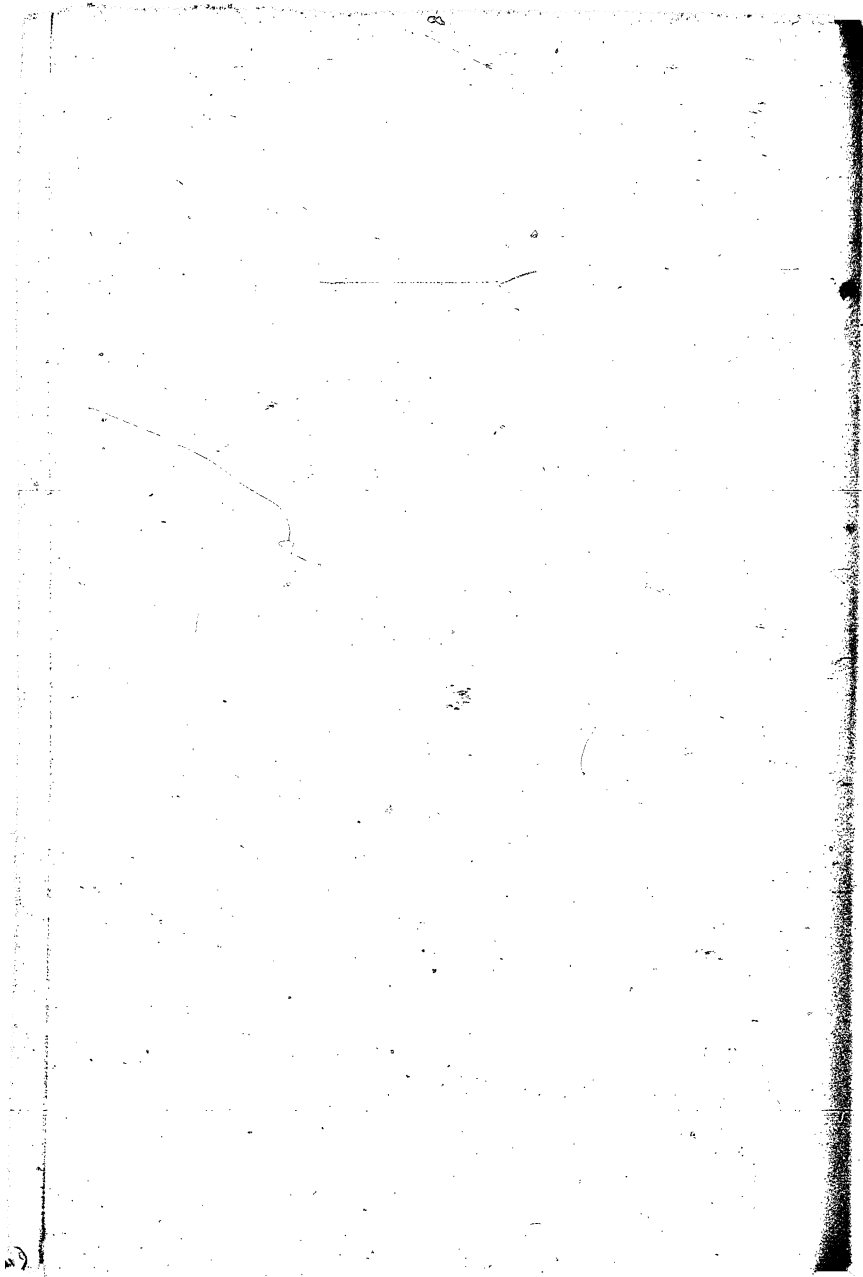
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ODE TO THE QUEEN.

I.

Oh! our's is the fairest land
 On which the sun looks down,
 And our's is the brightest Queen
 That ever wore a crown.
 Old England's sons are kind and brave,
 Her daughters good and fair,
 With open hand, and gen'rous heart,
 And spirits free as air.
 No fields wear richer green than hers!
 No streams more silv'ry sheen,—
 A blessing on our own dear land!
 A blessing on our Queen!

II.

Old England's red-cross banner waves
 O'er many a foreign sod,—
 Where'er the foot of man can roam
 Her gallant sons have trod.

On many a distant shore are laid
Her brave, in battle slain,
But the banner of Old England shone
Victorious o'er the plain !
'Tis planted 'neath the Indian skies,
It cheers the Arctic scene,—
A blessing on our own dear land !
A blessing on our Queen !

III.

Old England's sons have borne afar,
Uncheck'd by want or pain,
The words of faith, and love, and hope,
By desert and by main ;
Have bravely met the martyr's doom,
And, with uplifted hand,
Still pray'd that light might chase the shades
From ev'ry heathen land.
Fair temples in the wilderness
Rise up where they have been.
A blessing on our own dear land !
A blessing on our Queen !

IV.

To cheer the sad, and help th' oppress'd,
Is England's dearest care ;
The homeless exile seeks her shores,
Secure of welcome there !
Her gallant vessels ride the seas
To free the trembling slave,—
For tyranny is for the mean,
And kindness for the brave !
Hope rises in the suff'rer's heart
When England's flag is seen.
A blessing on our own dear land!
A blessing on our Queen !

V.

Her nobles have their palace home,
Her poor their quiet cot,
Beside the meanest door aye smiles
The blooming garden-plot.
Upon her hills are waving woods,
Along her vales broad parks,
Upon her mighty rivers float
Her merchants' freighted barks.

There's not a port in foreign lands
Where Britons are not seen.
A blessing on our own dear land !
A blessing on our Queen !

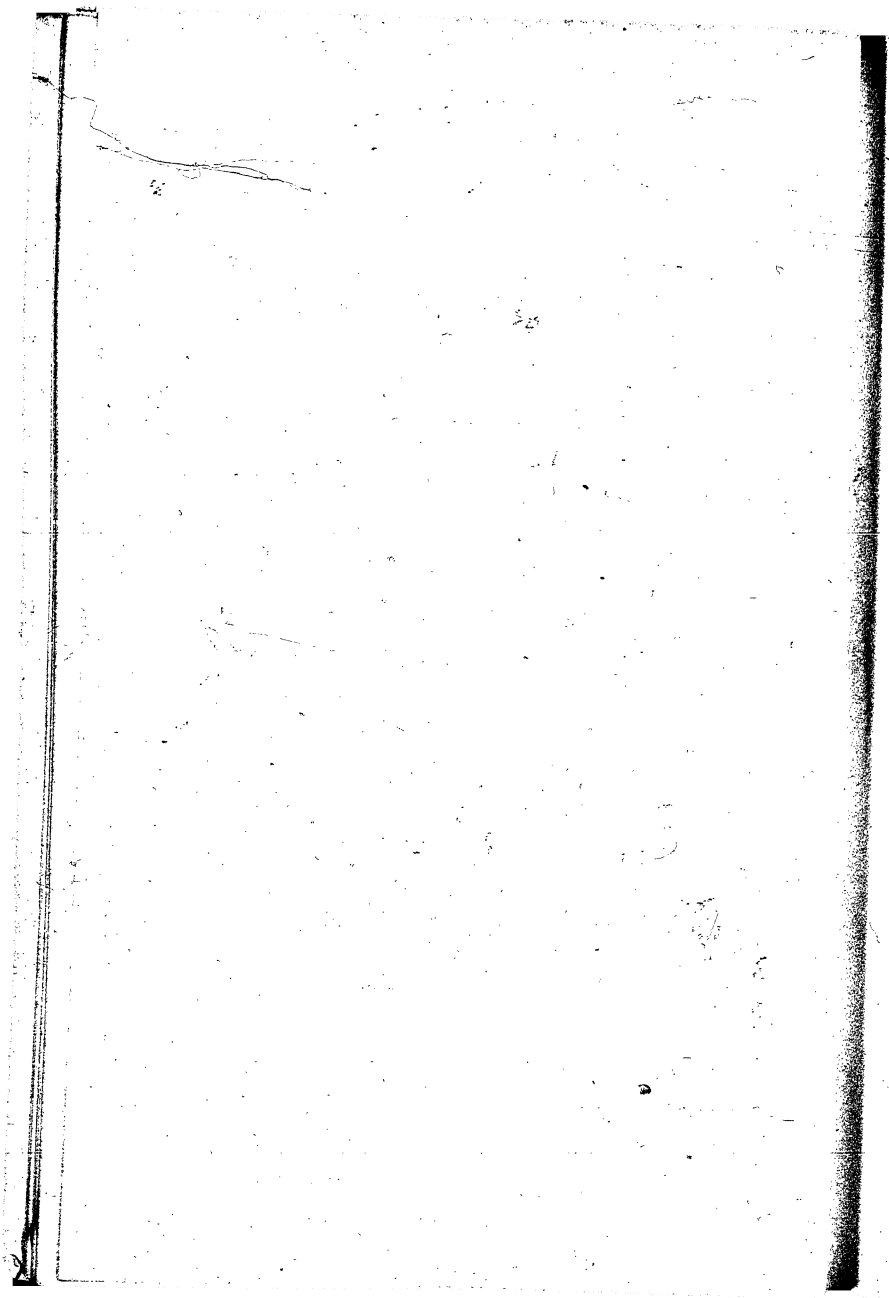
VI.

Oh ! many great and conqu'ring kings
Have ruled our lovely land,
But happier is the gentle sway
Of woman's sceptred hand !
A blessing on the fair young head
Of her who rules the Isles,
And loves to meet the cheering light
Of a grateful people's smiles !
May the future of VICTORIA'S life
Be as the past has been !
A blessing on our own dear land !
A blessing on our Queen !

TASSO, IONE,

AND

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.



TASSO.

PART THE FIRST.

————— “ peregrino errante, infra gli scogli,
E fra l' onde agitato, e quasi absorto.”

TASSO.

“ E' spirito meschino chi si limita al presente. Il tempo è chiamato il
vindice della verità, la quale è figurata nel sole: non sempre vi sono
nuvole che coprono il sole.”

ROSSETTI.

BERNARDO TASSO, the father of the great Epic Poet, after a long residence at the court of the Prince of Salerno, whose private secretary he had been appointed, was permitted to retire with his wife to a villa at Sorrento, some slight account of which I have versified from one of his letters. At Sorrento was born the son whose fame has eclipsed that of his father. From his happy retirement, Bernardo was recalled by his patron, whose fortunes he faithfully followed, even after the disastrous conclusion of the Neapolitan rebellion against the Spaniards. At length he returned to Rome, and sent for his young son, then about ten years old, who had previously resided at Naples with his mother. In the year 1556, the approach of the Spanish army drove Bernardo from Rome. The subsequent history of the younger Tasso is well known; and a more sorrowful one has seldom been recorded. Yet he "to one purpose clung" through all his afflictions, and left a noble monument of his genius and piety.

I wished and intended to make my Poem a much longer one; but I thought it was presumptuous to write of Italy under the influences of a stormy sky and of a dreary land.

TASSO.

PART THE FIRST.

I.

It is the day's last, ling'ring hour ;
A glory still is lent
To broken wall, and massive tow'r,
And time-stained battlement.
The ruddy light has not yet past
From vast St. Peter's dome ;
Fair is the smile the heavens cast
On Rome ! imperial Rome !—
Imperial still,—although no more
Her legions pass from shore to shore,
Led by great conquerors,—
Although above the mighty dead
Her humbled eagle bows his head,

And 'mid the columns, where, of old,
Her children's wondrous feats were told,

The moaning nightwind stirs :
Imperial still, though Time has rent
Proud palace, hall, and monument.
No more upon the Tiber's banks
Are ranged her armies' countless ranks,—

An altered fate is hers !

Her once victorious banner furl'd,
Her sons who governed half the world,

Her learned senators,—

All these are of the things long gone,
Yet she is still a mighty one !
She ruleth still a realm of thought ;
By Pilgrims are her loved walls sought ;
Still at her name the fond heart thrills,—
Rome ! Empress of the Seven Hills !

II.

And now, in that sweet evening-time,

A Father and his Son

Have lingered till the vesper-chime

Tells them the day is done.

They linger on the Tiber's shore,
Haunted with images of yore.
The quiet stillness of the hour
Hath awed the child's young heart,
And, silent as a sleeping flow'r,
He marks the day depart.
The Father gazes on each pile,
Renowned in ancient story,
To which the ray gives back awhile
More than its former glory ;
The child is brooding o'er the morrow,—
The Father o'er his present sorrow !

III.

“ My Boy ! ”—and at that voice's sound,
So low, so passing sweet,
The child hath knelt upon the ground
Beside his father's feet ;
He tosses back his clust'ring hair,
He lifts his violet eyes,—
He gazes not, while kneeling there,
On field, or stream, or skies.

He looks but on the mournful face
That wears for him love's changeless grace:—

“Torquato! 'tis a gloomy fate
To dwell with one so desolate,
And in thine early childhood's years,
Be thus familiarized with tears!
My days are marked with woe and strife,
But must thy parent's darkened life

Cast shadows on thy road?
Better among these falling stones,
Where lie the Roman heroes' bones,
To make my last abode!”

No answer hath Torquato made,
But o'er his brow a gath'ring shade
Tells of his spirit's pain.

“Torquato, raise thy pure young brow,
No hope remains to me save thou,
Oh smile on me again!”

“Yet tell me, Father,—some fresh care
Has bowed thy soul thus low,—
Shall not thine own Torquato's share
With thine its heavy woe?”

“ Yes, Boy !—the Spanish host is near,
And ere to morrow’s light,
Like seamen, who in sadness steer
Their bark in deepest night,
We must go forth to ask for bread
And shelter for the exiles’ head !
Alas for our bright Italy,
The garden of the earth !
Her sons in gilded slavery
Mocked by the stranger’s mirth,
Her gifted children forced to roam,
From court to court, to seek a home,
Discarded when some courtier’s tongue
A stain upon their name hath flung !
The flags of conquering potentates
Are by her breezes fann’d—
A battle-field for neighbouring states,—
Such is our own bright land !

IV.

“ Rememberest thou our-home that stood
Upon Sorrento’s Bay ?

TASSO.

How gently on the purple flood

Its peaceful image lay !

Within its walls were loving words ;

Fair children, glad as singing-birds ;

And one, in whose calm smile there dwelt

A charm for ev'ry care I'd felt.

Behind it rose the mountain-heights,

And we could climb to distant sites

And breathe their gladd'ning air,

And, as we passed, the flowers and trees

Were filled with sound of birds and bees, —

Paphos was not more fair !

Amid that mountain-wilderness

No noonday sunshine burns ;

The Naiads, in each deep recess,

Pour from their silver urns

A thousand pure and laughing rills ;

That leap like fawns along the hills ;

And far away, across the seas,

Gleam Naples' marble palaces.

It was a dwelling meet for me,

Rejoiced in spirit to be free

From all the trammels of a court,
And I have joined my children's sport
 With laugh as light as theirs :
For like a weary bird that flies
From bough to bough, when tempests rise,
And finds at last its quiet nest,—
So deemed I I had found my rest,
 So left my dreary cares !

V.

“ Thou knowest what wrongs fair Naples bore,
Until her sons could bear no more,
And all their sleeping pride awoke
To burst the Spaniard's galling yoke.
'Twas then I left my home of love,—
 Ah! well they deemed, of yore,
That Syrens from Sorrento's grove
 Called voyagers to the shore !
And with Salerno's Prince I went.
From land to land our steps we bent
 To ask the stranger's aid.

A gloomy time was that, my son,
For silent sadness; one by one,
 I saw my dear hopes fade!
And when at last I rested here,
I deemed no new distress or fear
 Should haunt my clouded way.
There is no rest for me! no peace,
Till death the burdened soul release!
 Why doth the loiterer stay?"

VI.

The eve is fading into night;
The ruined piles, that were so bright
 Only an hour ago,
Are frowning now like giant forms
That dare the rage of wars and storms,
And from the darkly-clouded sky
A drear and chill solemnity
 Falls on the earth below.
The child hath seized his father's hand,
 He whispers, "Linger not!
Like spirits those lone ruins stand,—
 Come home from this sad spot!"

“ Nay, let us stay awhile, my Boy :

Sad as this place may seem,

'Tis dear to those who feel that joy

Is but a childish dream.

Well does it suit the hearts that know

Life's hollow vanity and woe ;

For they who deemed themselves undying,

Around us here in heaps are lying,

Unnoticed or unknown ;

And in yon proudest works of men

The gliding snake has made its den ;—

The very dust on which we tread

Is but the ashes of the dead,

Or victor's arch o'erthrown.

The young have nursed their dreams of fame

Upon this river-shore,

And fondly smiled to think their name

Should live for evermore.

Vain ! vain such thought ! and vainer still

The eagerness to raise

A token in this world of ill,—

Of trouble-haunted days !”

VII.

“ My Father, these are bitter words !—
Better to tend the lowing herds
In peasant’s rudest ignorance,
Than thus, with a foreboding glance,
 To dwell on future sadness,
And see the blight on ev’ry flow’r
That might have cheered us one short hour,
 And pain in ev’ry gladness !”

VIII:

“ Nay, Boy,”—and all the shadows roll
From the inspired Poet’s soul,—
“ Nay ! think not genius bringeth sorrow—
 It is a false belief !
Rather it giveth strength to borrow
 Joy from ev’ry grief.
The eagle on the beetling rock
May feel the tempest’s frequent shock ;

But would he change his home of pride
For forests, deep and dim?
His subjects in the shade abide,—
It is no place for him!
His flight is ever tow'rd's the sun,
With an undazzled eye;
Though proud the eyrie he has won,
His wish is still on high;
And upward to the heavens he springs,
With glowing heart and fearless wings!

IX.

The Poet hath a second being,—
A world untouched by care;
From life's o'erwhelming troubles fleeing,
He findeth refuge there!
Oh! what though the unthinking crowd,
When storms were raging, long and loud,
Might look with momentary pity
Upon the aged man,
Who wandered homeless in their city,
Weary, and blind, and wan?

Such pity Homer could not need :

He had his secret bliss !

What is the greatest warrior's deed

To such a song as his ?

He saw with a prophetic eye

His earthly immortality !

X.

“ And what though want and fear may darken

The current of our days,

And none may care awhile to hearken

The Poet's murmured lays ?

It is not for a fading wreath,

That we have braved distress and death,

With martyrs' cheerful constancy.

A holier hope is our's !

We to our second world may flee,

Whene'er the tempest lours ;

And calling round us gentle vision,

And fancy, not of Earth,

With things untainted and Elysian,
May dwell amid a mirth,
In which the world can take no part,—
It reaches but the Poet's heart !

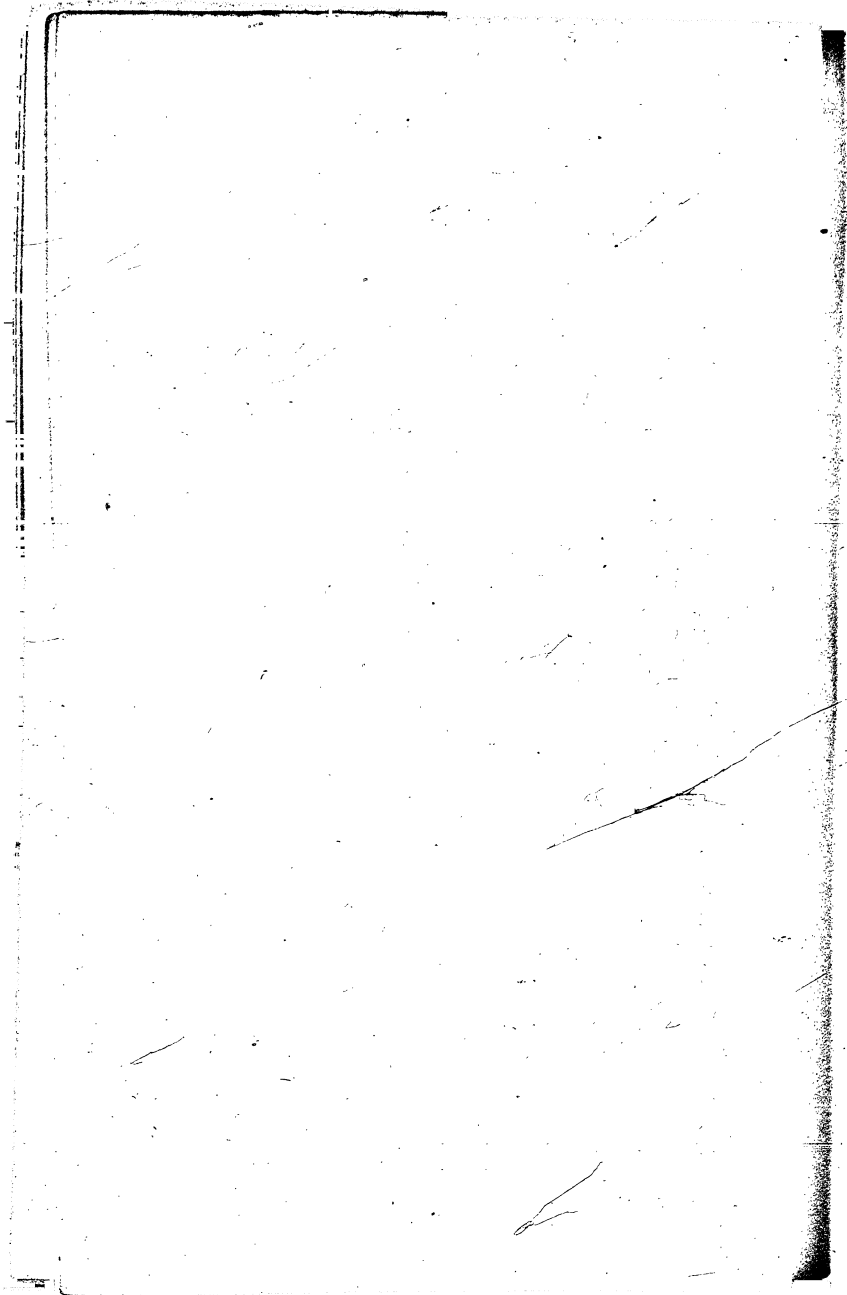
XI.

“ They heed not now the Poet's numbers,
His song's sweet music chime.
It matters not ! the good ne'er slumbers
Unheeded through all time ;
But, floating down the stream of age,
The thoughts of high and holy sage,
The earnest words of faithful Bard,
With Truth's unfailing force,
Shall, by no human passion marr'd,
Leave blessings on their course
What though the Bard meet scorn and hate ?
Deep joy his spirit hath ;
His is no unrecorded fate,
And angels guard his path ;
His footsteps are 'mid grief and wars,—
His hope is high above the stars !”

XII.

A silence follows that wild song,
Unbroken, save that ever,
With music soft, there rolls along
Broad Tiber's ancient river ;
And lightly now the breezes move
Around the silent orange-grove,
And bend the branches of the tree
That forms the Poet's canopy.
The darkened clouds have passed away,
The stars look calmly down,
And, where the dreary shadows lay,
A lovely light is thrown.
Torquato feels his hope unbroken,
As if a spirit's voice had spoken :—
" Father, it is enough !" he saith,
" Even with thy unshrinking faith
I, too, my doom will brave.
The Father's hope,—the mother's prayer,—
These shall preserve me from despair,
And cheer me to the grave !

I, too, will seek and love the truth
From these sad hours of early youth ;
And though no guerdon Fame may give,
 Though Tasso's name may die,—
Shall not his soul's revealings live
 Through all eternity ?
It is enough !—my soul would ask
 No fading laurels here,—
Torquato shall fulfil his task
 Without one selfish fear !”
The light of hope is on his brow,
 And genius in his eye ;
And that young Poet's earnest vow
 Is registered on high !



TASSO.

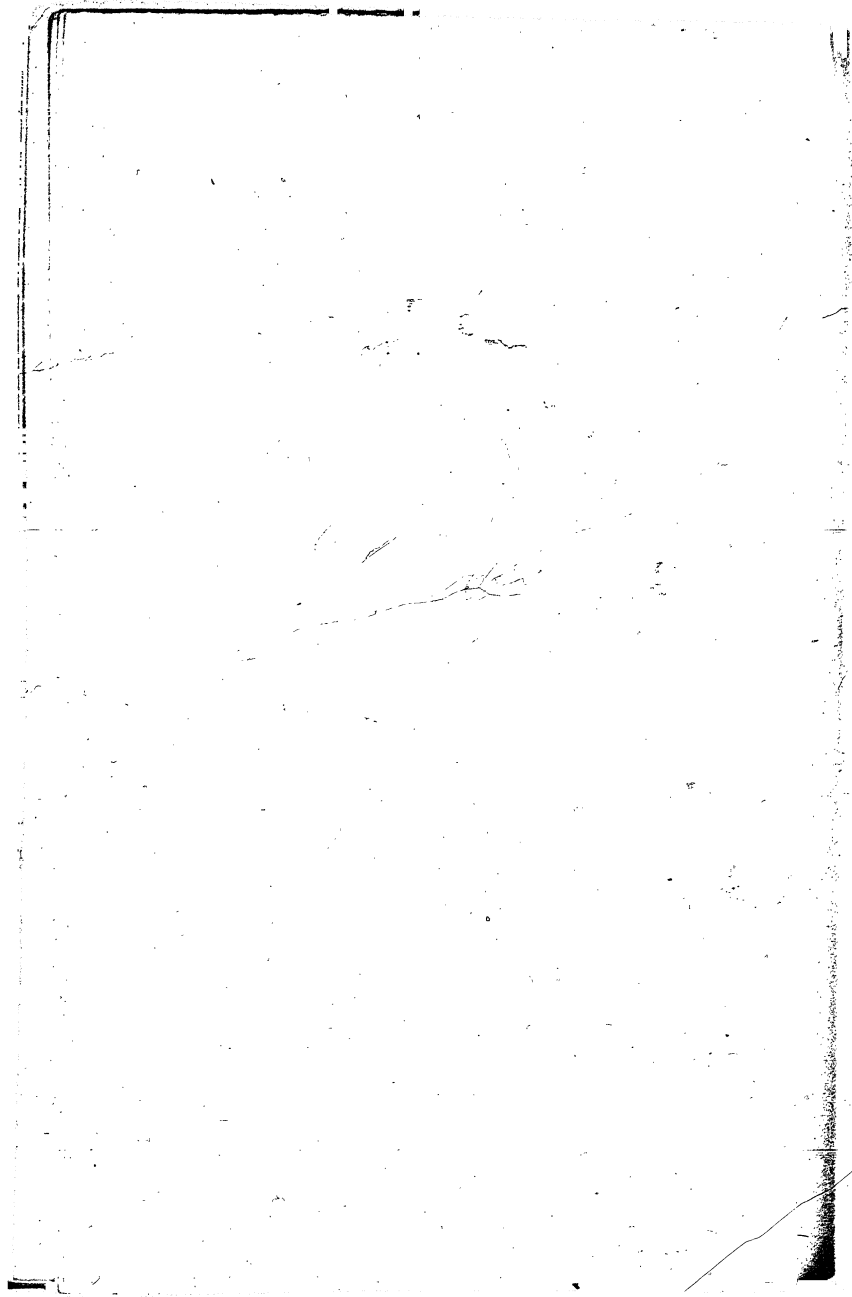
PART THE SECOND.

“ Nul maggior dolore
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
Nella miseria.”

DANTE.

“ Oimè! misero me! Io aveva disegnato di scrivere quattro tragedie, &c.—e di accoppiare cou la filosofia, l'eloquenza, in guisa che rimanesse di me eterna memoria nel mondo, e mi aveva proposto un fine di gloria e di onore altissimo. Ma ora, oppresso dal peso di tante sciagure, ho messo in abbandono ogni pensiero di gloria e di onore; ed assai felice mi parrebbe se senza sospetto potessi trarmi la sete, dalla quale continuamente son travagliato.”

Scritto da T. Tasso al amico Scipione Gonzaga.



TASSO.

PART THE SECOND.

I.

YEARS, changeful years have rolled away,
And they who, side by side,
Lingered to watch the close of day
Near Tiber's flowing tide,—
The fond and earnest-hearted child,
The man of many cares,
On whom no earthly fortune smiled,—
What destinies are theirs?

II.

The Bard whom Sorrow called her own
Long in the grave hath slept;

No word the monumental stone
Tell of the tears he wept ;
No word of grief and wrong,
Nor tale of sickening hope is there,
But proud and lasting words declare
The beauties of his song.

III.

Ah ! little recks the joyous spirit
How dark have been the days
Of some, whose mighty works inherit
Everlasting praise !
Full little dream we of the pain,
The want, the weariness,
Of many a Bard, whose hopeful strain
Ten thousand lips may bless,—
The petty cares, the daily sorrow,
That made the heart their prey ;
The shadow flung upon the morrow
By the sadness of to-day !

IV.

Not to the Poet's living doom
We give our sympathy ;
We think but of the sculptured tomb,
The glorious memory :
We reck not that the cheering word
It had been joy to hear,
Remained for aye by him unheard,—
'Twas spoken round his bier !

V.

But he, the Poet's gifted son,
What fame, what honours, hath he won ?
Still has his hope an unchecked wing ?
Like murmurs from a hidden spring,
Hath his rich song been breathed ?
Or is his place acknowledged high
Among the sons of melody,—
His home in palace halls,—his name
From land to land loud told by Fame,—
His brow with laurel wreathed ?

VI.

It has been so! Princes have hung
On the sweet accents of his tongue,
And belted lords and ladies bright
Have flocked in crowds to hear
His gorgeous tales of love and fight,—
The blossom and the spear!

VII.

Ferrara's proudest sons have bowed
To him whose praise all lips avowed;
And in the Duke Alphonso's hall
He was more honoured than they all.
Time was, when day's rude sounds all hush'd
Along the twilight grove,
The Lady Leonor hath blush'd
To hear him speak of love.
But clouds have darkened o'er his fate,
And left him lone and desolate;

The brightness of his spirit dim ;
Fame but a mockery to him ;
Disgraced, and torn from courts, to dwell
A captive in a madman's cell !

VIII.

The sultry heat of day is gone,
And with a deep, rich music-tone,
 Each fainting flower caressing,
As free and joyous as a child,
The breeze sings now by wood and wild,
And in Ferrara's crowded street
The old and young its coming greet
 With smiles and words of blessing.

IX.

The captive Poet loves to feel
That fragrant breath across him steal ;
He leans upon his prison bars
To watch th' uprising of the stars.
Oh ! little in that altered face,
 E'en in an hour of joy,

Remaineth now, wherein to trace
 Resemblance to the Boy !
The hollow cheek, with languor flush'd,
 The sunk yet restless eye,—
These witness of a spirit crush'd
 By its adversity.

X.

But now all mournful thoughts depart ;
A calm hath fallen on his heart,
And through the vista of past years,
Half blinded by delicious tears,
He sees her radiant form once more,
His own, his tender Leonor.
Fondly now he breathes again
The words of a once-welcome strain.

XI.

“ Sorrow's shadow o'er me hung,
 Life was dark with weeping,
Tremblingly my untried hand,
 O'er the harpstrings sweeping,

Woke a few low, wailing notes,
Like the breeze that round us floats;
Now my song is glad and free,
For I murmur it to thee,
 Leonor, my Leonor!

XII.

“ Like a dreary waste unblest
E'en by one pale flower,
Open to the blighting storm
And the midnight shower,
Cheerless, cheerless was the Past!
Hope, o'erwearied, sank at last,
Folding her storm-ruffled wing;—
Upward now thou bidst her spring,
 Leonor, my Leonor!

XIII.

“ Like a star whose loved light falls
In a mournful prison,
Thou, my bright and dearest one,
On my heart hast risen.

Could thy form be mirrored there
 Side by side with wan despair?
 On me while those fond eyes shine,
 Image there is none but thine,
Leonor, my Leonor!

XIV.

"Sayest thou I have won a page
 In Italia's story?—
 Thine the inspiration was,
 Thine should be the glory!
 Let me gaze upon thy brow,
 Beaming as it beameth now!—
 What are wealth and fame to me,
 While I thus may sing to thee,
Leonor, my Leonor?"

XV.

The lay hath faded with the smile;
 The spell that lulled his pain a while
 Hath passed, his dream of pleasure breaking;—
 Alas! the anguish of such waking!

His gloomy thoughts once more have found him ;
The dark, sad walls again close round him,—
He feels their shadow on his soul ;
Back, blighting recollections roll ;
And as he turns him to the page
On which to trace his fears,—
His cares,—his Lord's relentless rage,—
'Tis wet with bitter tears !

XVI.

“ A woeful doom is mine, my friend,
A drear and woeful doom !
No ray of hope, no thought of peace
To cheer my spirit's gloom,—
No changing of my sad estate
Save for a lonely tomb !

XVII.

“ It was not thus I thought to be,
A prey to grief and shame ;
Far other was the fancied fate
That to my vision came.
The thought of all I might have been
Scorches my heart like flame !

XVIII.

“ The madman’s shriek disturbs my rest,—
I shudder as I feel
Unearthly terrors at that sound
Across my spirit steal ;—
The horror of this dark abode
Makes all my senses reel !

XIX.

“ A fever rages in my veins,
My lips are hot and dry ;
And near my cell, I hear a stream
Sing as it trickles by ;—
To drink the waters of that stream
In vain ! in vain I sigh !

XX.

“ And I, whose hope it was to build
A monument,—to be
A marvel and an oft-sought shrine
To all posterity ;—
Alas ! that I shall leave no work
To hallow my memory !

XXI.

“ I close my eyes and dream again
A wild and thrilling dream :
I stand once more at eventide
Beneath the young Moon's beam,
And fair as Eden's blessed plains
The things around me seem.

XXII.

“ I stand upon the dewy lawn,
I feel the evening wind ;
The lily lifts her chalices
With fragrant incense lined,
As if to drink the falling dew
For sustenance, she pined.

XXIII.

“ The orange gently waves her boughs,
With many a pearly flower,
Flinging adown the green, green leave
In a richly-scented shower :
The dove's low call comes sweetly now
From distant citron bower.

XXIV.

“ A melody is in mine ear,
A voice of leaves and rills,
I see the lovely moonlight sleep
On the far mounds and hills:
As beauty fills the earth and sky
So joy my spirit fills !

XXV.

“ And far away on flowery bank,
Half hidden by the trees,
Whose ancient branches o'er it bend
Like stately canopies,
The young and fair are lingering
To meet the joyous breeze.

XXVI.

“ I see them gathered there in groups —
Some hearkening to a tale
Of love and grief, that suiteth well
The light so dim and pale,
And gentle sigh and pitying word
Float near me on the gale.

XXVII.

“ Or there some wilder legend breathes
A spell of awe and dread,
Speaking of spectres that have stood
Beside the murderer's bed ;
In low mysterious tones are told
The fearful words they said.

XXVIII.

“ The bravest of the list'ning throng
Scarce dares to turn his head ;
And cheeks are white with terror now
That erst were rosy red :
For the marble fauns among the woods
Seem spirits from the dead !

XXIX.

“ And there a lover whispers low
In maiden's willing ear,
The blush is mantling on her cheek,
She sheds a joyful tear ;
Then timidly she bends to cull
The flowers that cluster near.

XXX.

“ There, purple grape and downy peach
Lie strewn upon the ground,
And merrily a laughing ring
Chants to the harp’s glad sound ;
With praises of some radiant one
— Each brimming cup is crown’d.

XXXI.

“ Far down yon path a gentle pair
Are wandering apart,
When suddenly, from deepest shade,
Bright forms across them dart,
And then rings out the music-laugh
That springs from joyous heart !

XXXII.

“ All this I see, all this I hear
While I am still alone,
And near me is the heaving lake
Making its constant moan ;
While in its depths the calm soft stars
Move to that lulling tone.

XXXIII.

“ I hear a light step on the grass,
The boughs are pushed aside,—
Like a pure spirit from on high
I see my loved one glide.
What are the glories now to me
Of earth, or sky, or tide ?

XXXIV.

“ I clasp her hand in mine—I read
Love in her half-raised eyes,—
I speak no greeting words to her,—
What need of words when ties
Have bound us, heart to loving heart,
With dearest sympathies ?

XXXV.

“ I see the moonlight make her cheek
Seem fairer than by day ;
I see a smile of perfect joy
Round rosy lips at play,
And I ask if Time hath power to steal
A bliss like our's away !

XXXVI.

“ She answers with a serious smile,
My blessed Leonor !
‘ By the brightest of the stars above,
Thine ! thine till life be o’er !’—
A cloud comes o’er that brightest star,
And we see its beams no more.

XXXVII.

“ It is a sign of future ill,
And yet I heed it not,
But blessing her for that dear vow,
I lead her from the spot,
And as we wander she foretells
A proud, a shining lot.

XXXVIII.

‘ Torquato, my beloved, mine own !
Fate has been just to thee ;
The bay is on thy glorious brow,
Thou King of Poesy !
How blest is Leonor to share
Thine immortality !

XXXIX.

'Nay, fear thou not! I cannot fear,
Beloved, when thou art nigh;
I were unworthy love like thine
If e'er my hope could die.
Look up, and I will give thee back
A smile for ev'ry sigh!

XL.

'Nay, fear thou not! In future years,
Some tender Bard shall tell
How once a Princess left a court,
In cottage lone to dwell,
And say how great the joy and love
That to her portion fell.

XLI.

Will not the tale be sweet, mine own?
Far sweeter, then, the truth;
Fostering the noble thoughts that charm
These palmy hours of youth;
And looking only forth to death,
As a call to realms of ruth.'

XLII.

“ I hearken to her syren voice,
I fondly press her hand,—
My Leonor ! and couldst thou leave
Thy courtiers’ flattering band,
And dwell, a Poet’s only joy,
Unhonoured in the land ?

XLIII.

“ And wouldst thou doff thy silken robe
A humbler garb to wear,
And cast aside the Eastern gems
That gleam amid thy hair ?
Such change would make thee to mine eyes,
Beloved, seem more fair !

XLIV.

“ My hand should cull the dewy flowers,
Meet gift for such as thou !
And thou shouldst weave them into wreaths,
And bind them round thy brow,
The while I sang some mournful strain
Such as thou lovest now.

XLV.

“ Dear one ! could such deep joy be mine ?
 And couldst thou turn aside
 From princely rank and gorgeous state,
 And leave thy home of pride
 To dwell beneath a lowly roof,
 A Poet’s cherish’d Bride ?

XLVI.

“ I mark a tear steal calmly down,
 And drop upon the earth ;
 But such a sadness seems to me
 Far dearer now than mirth :
 It tells me that without my love
 All else were nothing worth.

XLVII.

“ She loves me with a faithful love ;
 What bliss is in the thought !
 Much have I wished, yet little hoped,
 And dared to ask for nought ;*
 And I have won that pure, high heart,
 So long, so humbly sought !

* “ Brama assai, poco spera, nulla chiede.”

XLVIII.

“ It is a wild and thrilling dream
That binds me in its chain,
And bids me thus in my despair
Live o'er past hours again ;
I wake with anguish in my heart,
And madness in my brain !

XLIX.

“ I hear a spirit-voice invite,—
I follow where it calls,
And seem to roam in solitude
Through subterranean halls ;
Wild, ghastly shapes and monsters dire
Frown on me from the walls.

L.

“ I cannot choose but follow still
Where that low whisper leads,—
That low sweet sound like midnight winds
Stirring among the reeds,—
But ever from my charmed ear
The mystic voice recedes.

LI.

“ On, on, through dim and rugged caves,
For many a weary hour,
I roam with slow, uncertain steps,
Feeling my spirit cower,
And yet I dare not pause, so great
Is that low whisper’s power.

LII.

“ I scarce can grope along my path
Amid rude stones and mud,—
I tremble at the dark, still pools,
For I know they are of blood!—
At length I see the ruddy wave
Of a deep and silent flood.

LIII.

“ The voice which led me ceaseth now,
No sound is in the cave,
And there, beside that crimson stream,
Reflected in its wave,
I meet my Leonor again,—
She cometh from the grave!

LIV.

“ Her face ! I see it still ! how changed
From what it was of old !
The eyes that were so full of love,
Are scornful now, and cold ;
And bitter taunts are on the lips
That once of fondness told !

LV.

“ I look upon her altered face,
It changes in my sight,—
The colour fades from off her cheeks,
Her lips grow thin and white,
And from her moveless eyes hath pass'd
Even their scornful light.

LVI.

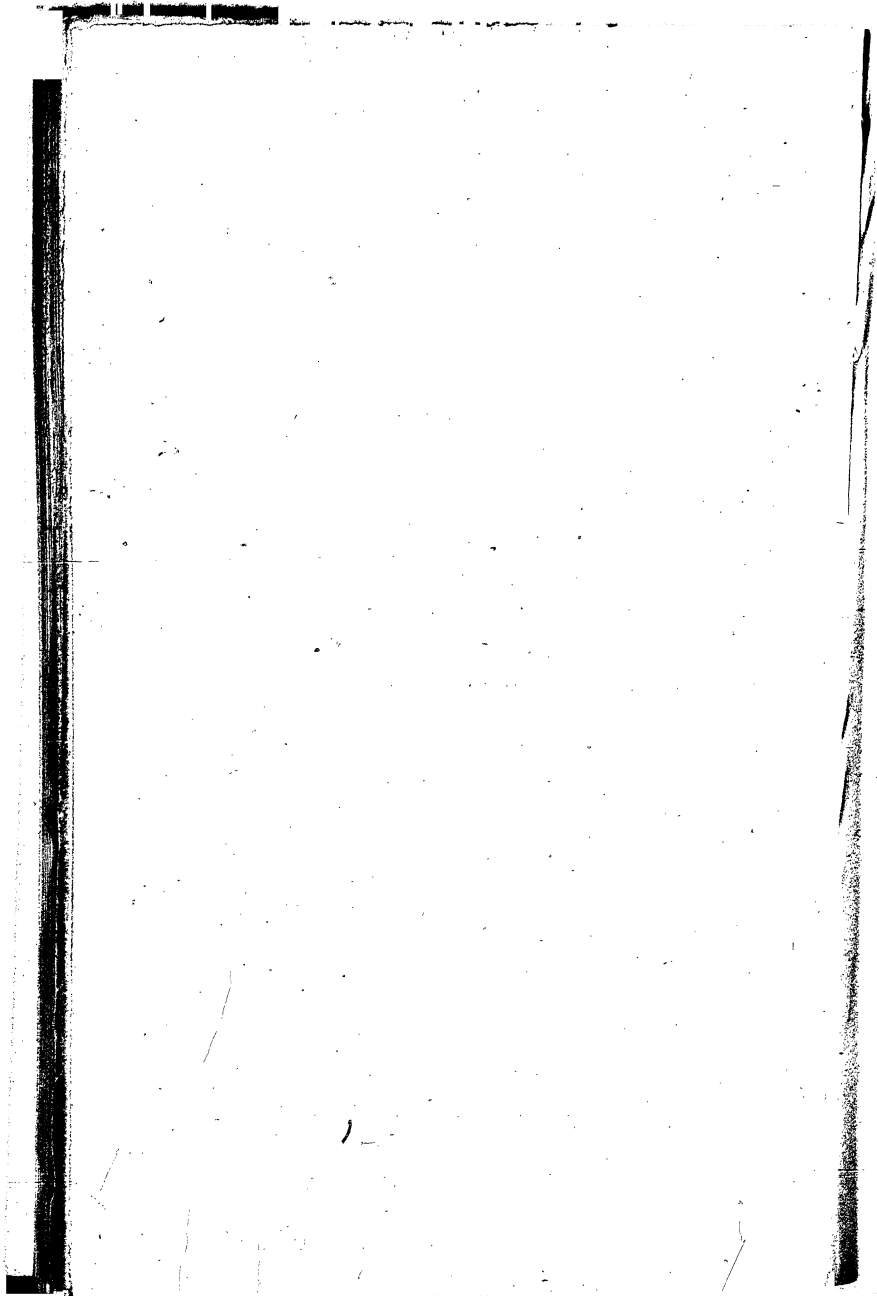
“ Those fearful eyes ! they gaze on me,
I see the wan lips move,
She speaks again the vow she spoke
Once in Ferrara's grove,
And viewless spirits echo round
Those sacred words of love !

LVII.

“ Those fearful eyes! their stony gaze
Is fix'd upon me still!
From vein to vein I feel the blood
Creep tardily and chill,
My limbs refuse to bear me thence,
They move not at my will ;

LVIII.

“ And jeering voices mock my pain,
They call me by my name ;—
‘ Fool! has Time failed to teach thee yet
Thy soaring thought to tame ?
Blest lover ! honoured Bard ! is this
Thy dream of love and fame ? ’ ”

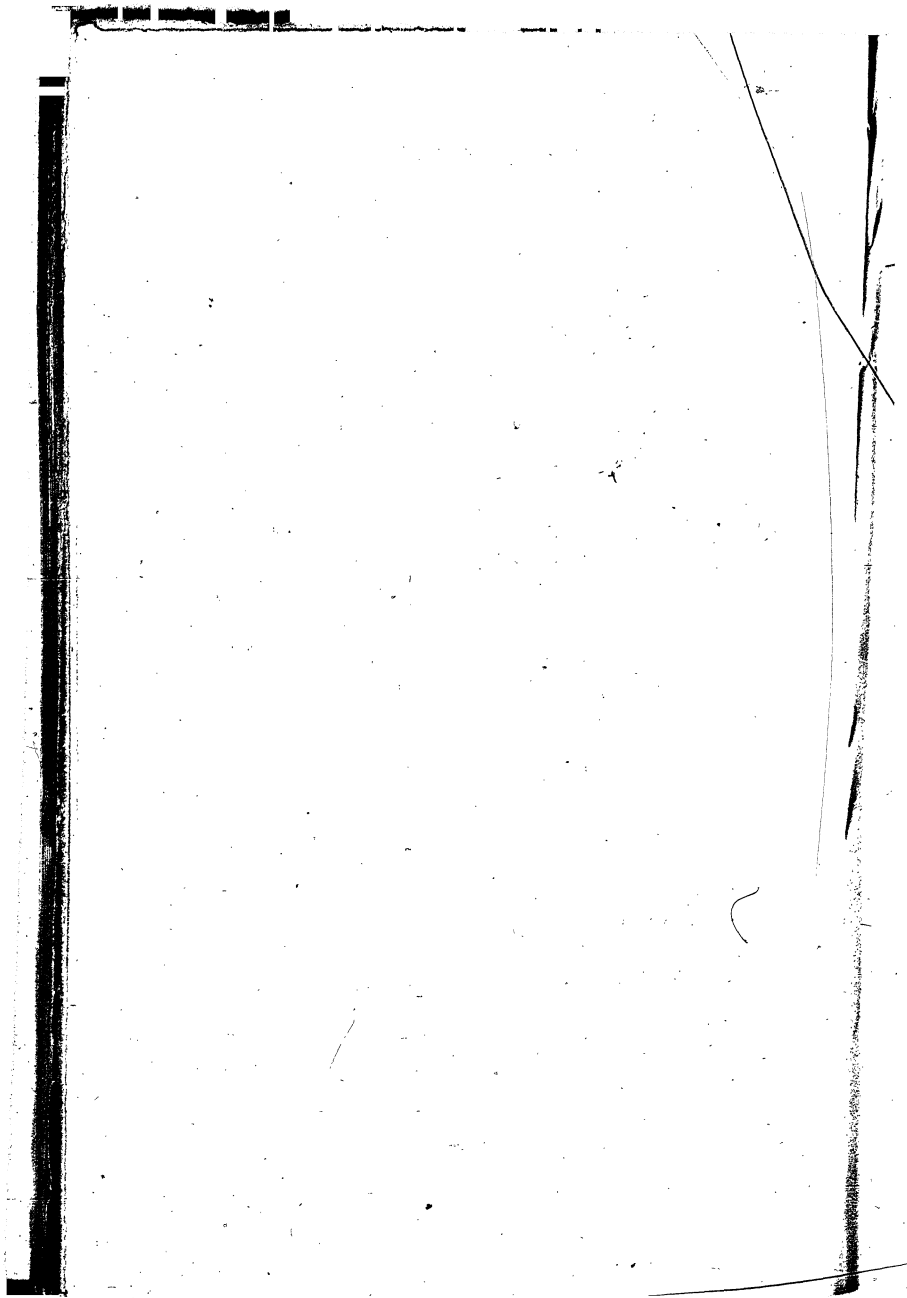


TASSO.

PART THE THIRD.

E fra la sorte
O misera o serena,
Sai tu ben quale è premio e quale è pena?
— Se stessa affina
La virtù ne' travagli.

METASTASIO.



TASSO.

PART THE THIRD.

I.

“Dost not the morning dawn? How heavily
The hours of night drag on!—I fondly pine
But once again to gaze upon the sky,—
The home of parted souls,—the home of mine!
Look forth! look forth! Is there no ruddy light
Stealing across the Eastern bound of Heaven?
Oh! that ere Death had wholly veiled my sight,
One glance at all that I have loved were given!
One glance at Earth,—the loved,—the beautiful,—
One kiss of the soft breeze to cool my brow,—
Once more the voice of flowing streams to lull
The pain that racks my frame so wildly now!

Look forth! does not the morning star fade slow
Like a fond friend, unwilling to depart?
Is not th' advancing daylight's joyous glow
Like the free sunshine of a youthful heart,
Bathing in glory every common thing
On which its smile may fall? Is not the dew
Upborne to heaven with motion lingering?
Doth not the ancient City, on the view,
Gleam through the passing shades,—how mighty still!
A City peopled with old imag'ries,
That gives each pillar and each fane-crown'd hill
Familiar names, loved o'er far lands and seas?
Fling wide the casement! let my fainting soul
Drink in the loveliness of Earth once more!
Let me but hear again the waters roll!
Still let me dream as I have dreamt of yore,
Once, only once again!"——

II.

From pallid lips those whispers flow;
The few who hear them uttered know
That life's last hour is nigh.

They draw aside the curtain fold
To watch the first faint streaks of gold
That tremble in the sky;—
They watch in silence, for they feel
A shadow o'er their spirits steal,
And know it is of death.
No sound awakens in the room
Where Tasso waits to meet his doom,
Save his own struggling breath.

III.

It is a solemn thing to see
A spirit take its flight,
And know, whate'er its doom may be,
The secrets of Eternity
Are breaking on its sight,—
The knowledge we have vainly sought,—
Too lofty for our fetter'd thought,—
Which yet the restless soul will yearn,
With a fond eagerness, to learn;
Like some imprisoned bird,

That spreads its wings, and seeks to rise
Far upward to the sunny skies,
By native impulse stirr'd;
But hemmed in,—wounded by the walls
Which still its course restrain,
Faint, weary, trembling, sad, it falls,
And pants with grief and pain:
Yet when once more the impulse calls,
Upward it springs again!

IV.

It is a solemn thing to wait,
Feeling the Angel near,
Whose hand shall ope Death's awful gate
For one our soul holds dear!
To see the face, whose smile hath been
The sunshine of each earthly scene,
Wearing a calm unknown,
Till human grief, and fear, and care
Had past, and left no token there,
And Heaven had claimed its own.

A calm, as if the Dead had smiled,
Rejoicing like a loving child
 Long absent from its home ;
While they who watch the soul, forsake
The Earth, and feel the sweet cords break
Which bound them unto life, yet dare
Breathe no wild murmur of despair,
 Because the hour is come !

V.

It is a solemn time, when one,
 Whose mighty mind could raise
An everlasting shrine, hath done
 With Earth's tear-watered bays,
And passes forth unseen, alone,
To answer at th' Immortal's throne
 For all the gifts he gave ;
No voice to soothe the anxious heart
That sadly watches him depart
 Replying from the grave !

VI.

Fondly the Poet turns his eyes
To meet the breaking dawn,
While gentle music-sounds arise,—
The whisper of the breeze, that sighs
Across the blooming lawn ;
The singing of a fountain, hidden
In a thick bower of leaves,
Most like a bird that chants unbidden
Its gay song on the eaves ;
The stirring of the boughs ; the notes
Outpouring from a thousand throats,
Like waters from a spring ;
And, as the brilliant rays at last
Pierce through the shades, there floateth past
A sound of frequent wing.

VII.

It comes,—the glory of the morn !
Up springs the gorgeous Sun ;
A joy, of his glad presence born,
Through all the Earth does run.

It comes! and as a breath may thrill
The harp's rich golden chords,
So doth that morning glory fill
The Poet's heart, so earnest still,
That rife with all impassioned feeling,
Like to a solemn music pealing,
Burst forth his latest words.

VIII.

“ Once more I see thy face, oh Earth! fair Earth!
Once more my heart is open to thy smile!
There riseth from thy breast a voice of mirth,
And I am passing to my grave the while!
Earth! Mother Earth! hast thou no sign of woe,
No moan, no sigh of sympathy, to tell
Thy love for him who prayed he might not go,
Till he had murmured thee one last farewell?
Still canst thou echo voices of delight
When death's chill, iron grasp is on me laid?
No token of distress doth meet my sight;
The gurgling waters laugh along the shade;

The wind is tossing high the willow boughs,
Gay as the banners of a conquering chief :
Why droop they not like plumes o'er mourning brows,
Around a hero's bier, low bent in grief ?
Rich odours rise from every flower's cup ;
Soft music warble forth the bird and bee ;
And far away the fountain flingeth up
Its rainbow-tinted spray with noisy glee ;
The clouds with slow, reluctant motion pass
Across the heavens, in golden radiance drest ;
The hum of insects creeps along the grass ;
Gaily the child awakens from his rest.

IX.

“ Is there no token, Earth, of sympathy ?
Is all my love, mine earnest love forgot ? —
Dark is the hour of my last agony, —
Dark to my spirit, — yet thou grievest not !
I have claimed kindred with all beauteous things,
Loving them with the fondness of a brother ;
E'en now in death, thy child, departing, clings
To thy beloved bosom, Earth, my Mother !

Thy streams, thy calm blue lakes, thy mighty floods,
The lonely echoes of thy rocks and hills,
Thy secret dells, thy solitary woods,
Thy flowers, waving as the soft air wills,
My soul has loved all these,—has seem'd to hear
Sweet utterance of truths from them awaking,—
An utterance unheard by common ear
Of truths, like heaven's own light upon me breaking.

X.

“ And was it but a dream? Is there no tie
Linking thy beauty with the Poet's soul?
The veil of death already dims mine eye,
And yet in gladness thine hours onward roll!
Was it a dream, oh Earth? Dost thou rejoice
To see a son pass from thy homes for aye,—
One who hath made thy loveliness his choice,
Who weepeth, longing yet awhile to stay?

XI.

“ And yet why shouldst thou grieve that I have run
Through all my troubled course?—My heart was
torn

With cares and fears ere youth had well begun:

Dim was the twilight of mine early morn !

Smile on, great Mother ! It is well to flee

From chains that ever gall th' immortal part,

Whose strength, but half revealed, gives misery

Full scope to prey upon the eager heart.

Smile on then, Mother, smile ! for life hath brought

Much sorrow to thy child : yet, Mother dear,

There is a bitter anguish in the thought

That I am passing to another sphere,

Unconscious of the sights and sounds which there

Incessant gladden the beatified ;—

Thou Earth, whose aspect is so passing fair,

I weep to leave thee for a land untried !

XII.

“ This is not well ! I am a murmurer yet !

It was a passing weakness,—it is gone.

Once more my soul springs upward, and is met

Midway by angels bidding me hope on ;

And as the bird, which leaves its grassy nest

To meet the earliest beams that earthward glide,

The morning's dewy wet upon its breast,
Feeleth that dew by those sweet sunbeams dried,
So now my grief is o'er ! My thought can cleave
The calm, blue, spiritual vault of heaven,
Where the bright stars their midnight mazes weave.
It mounts ! e'en now the fleshly bonds seem riven !

XIII.

" I have not lived in vain ! My heart hath clung
Still faithful to one hope,—a hope fulfill'd !
The lofty strain that Tasso's lips have sung
Shall live when all his busy cares are still'd.
It is enough ! My soul is willing now
Friend-like to meet the great Destroyer, Death.
My task is done ! I have performed my vow !
To thee, great Lord, I yield my latest breath !"

XIV.

His arms are folded on his breast,
A smile is on his face ;
Calm is Torquato Tasso's rest
After a troubled race.

Once more the room is silent; none
Dares even breathe a sigh,
For a mighty spirit hath begun
Its course of bliss on high!

I O N E.

A POEM IN IRREGULAR VERSE.

"Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth,
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep."

MILTON.

DEDICATED TO A FRIEND,
WHO SUGGESTED THE IDEA OF "GUARDIAN ANGELS"
AS A SUBJECT FOR A POEM.

I O N E.

I.

THE glory hath departed
From her old ancestral halls;—
Earth covers the light-hearted
Who dwelt within their walls.
She hath watched beside the dead;
She hath raised the throbbing head,
Feeling its last pulses flutter,
While the lips still strove to utter,
With their slow and struggling breath,
Love unfailing even in death.
One by one all, all have past
To a brighter home,—
For clouds can never overcast
Eden's glorious dome.
Change and grief are all unknown
In the land where they have flown;

And Love, whose steps are haunted ever,

Upon the earth, by Fear,

Wanders beside th' eternal river

With no dark shadow near.

All the lovely things that are,—

The opening rose, the early star,

The moving shadow of the tree,

The waving of the grass,—

That waveth like a summer sea

When low winds o'er it pass,—

The images alone can be

Of Eden's beauteous scenery.

And all the sounds whose music brings

A calm and silent sadness,

To which the earnest heart still clings

More fondly than to gladness,—

The many-voiced night-breezes pealing,

Like some impassioned heart revealing

Its bursts of high and chainless feeling,

Scarce comprehended by the throng,

Who lightly deem the daring song

An utterance of madness ;—

The warbling of the hidden bird ;
Among the leafy branches heard ;
The voice of solitary rills,
 Like happy children, springing
Adown the everlasting hills,
 Made joyous by their singing ;
These sounds, that now by secret spells
Bid tears come softly from their cells,
As if some gentle influence stole
Across the half-unconscious soul,—
Some lovely vision floating by
From our eternal home on high,
While, weeping as an exile weeps,
We bless the sound that o'er us creeps,
Scarce knowing, as we feel its pow'r,
 Whether the tearful sigh
We breathe so calmly in that hour—
 Is born of Hope or Memory ;
These are but echoes, faint and dull
 Of Eden's melodies,
All that we deem most beautiful
 Is harsh and rude to these.

II.

Ione knew they all were there,—
The loved,—the lost,—the true;
She knew they twined around their hair
Wreaths that in Eden grew;
She knew that young and old had won
That holy place and calm,
Where the stream of life aye floweth on
To the sound of the angels' psalm!
She saw them in her sleep,—the same,
And yet more pure and fair,
And she knew they bore another name,
And breathed another air.
She longed to be like them,—to feel
Unawed by their still gaze;
Again beside them she would kneel
Chanting her hymn of praise.
For in her mother's smile there shone
The glory of a ransomed one,
Reflected from the face of Him,
Beside whose glance the sun is dim

Ione dared not look on her,—
She saw her radiant garments stir,—
She heard, but could not understand,
The language of the better land;
And she would pray to be at rest,
Pillow'd upon that loving breast!
A gulf between them now there was:
She pray'd the Lord of Love,
That she that gloomy gulf might pass,—
Her soul be call'd above;
Even in sleep she pray'd to be
Free as her cherish'd ones were free!

III.

Night fell upon the earth,—a night
Uncheer'd by moon or star;
The roaring blast, as it hurried past,
Heeded nor bolt nor bar.
Ione felt its chilling power,
And shudder'd as it came,
Mocking her in that dreary hour,—
Dimming her lamp's pale flame,—

As every treasured picture shaking,
That hung around her room,
It came with hoarse, deep murmur, waking
Thoughts dire of dread and gloom.
She fell upon her knees and wept,—
Wept bitterly and long :
Her tide of grief its bounds o'erleapt
And flow'd deep, dark, and strong.
And then she raised her eyes, and shook
The tears away,* and pray'd,
Up-gazing with an earnest look,
To seek immortal aid.
The storm that made the old walls reel
Raged with a fearful noise,
And yet that passionate appeal
Rose clear above its voice.

IV.

“ Great Father ! hear me, for my heart is lonely—
No face in all the earth hath smiles for me !

* ————— There she shook
The holy water from her heavenly eyes.

All, all are gone! Why should I linger only,
Pining in vain the Spirits' land to see?
Take me to them whom Thou dost sanctify!
My heart is lonely, Lord,—oh! let me die!

V.

“ I tremble at the silence of these chambers,
Once rife with laughter and sweet, loving tones;
The ivy through each broken casement clammers;
All night the wind around the turret moans;
No mother's whisper soothes me as I lie.
My heart is lonely, Lord,—oh! let me die!

VI.

“ They are with thee, great Lord!—My gifted brother,
Taken in youth and manly strength away,
And she who wept for him, my sainted mother!
I watched them in their death-sleep as they lay,—
I heard a blessing with their latest sigh.
My heart is lonely, Lord,—oh! let me die!

VII.

“ She too is gone, oh Lord! the gentle being,
Whose quiet gladness was not of the earth;
She was the first, from fleshy bondage fleeing,
That knew the glories of the heav'nly birth.
I saw the death-film dim her loving eye.
My heart is lonely, Lord,—oh! let me die!

VIII.

“ And he is gone, great Lord!—he who had number'd
Long thoughtful years,—my father is with Thee!
He who had wept with me for them that slumber'd,—
I saw him droop,—I knew that it must be!
He smiled upon me in his agony.
My heart is lonely, Lord,—oh! let me die!

IX.

‘ I did not mourn for him alone. One blessing
Remain'd of all I once had call'd mine own:
I felt his tender grasp, his lips' caressing,
And joy'd to think I was not all alone.
Oh! the fond passion of that last dear tie!
My heart is lonely, Lord,—oh! let me die!

X.

“ Not long a young child’s heart gives place to sorrow ;
Full soon his laugh like merry music rang ;
And I from him some cheerfulness could borrow,
Ceasing from tears, when he so gaily sang.
That bliss I did not fear could e’er pass by.
My heart is lonely, Lord,—oh ! let me die !

XI.

“ He had my mother’s smile, my father’s spirit,—
Fond, beautiful, and generous, and brave ;—
’Tis such as he thou callest to inherit,
In youth, the glorious life beyond the grave !
His spirit left its dwelling peacefully.
My heart is lonely, Lord,—oh ! let me die !

XII.

“ Let me depart ! Lord, in thy mercy hear me
Not one ! not one, in all this dreary world,
Blesses my presence ! Lord ! not one is near me !
On me alone thy vengeance hath been hurld.—
Great Father, hear my spirit’s bitter cry !
My heart is lonely, Lord,—oh ! let me die !”

XIII.

That wild despairing voice is o'er ;

She bows her head again ;

And thick and fast upon the floor

Her tears drop down like rain.

But now there stealeth o'er her sense

A soft and soothing influence,

And, with her cheek still wet, a slumber

Hath bound her in its chain,

And she forgets the thoughts that cumber

Her life with grief and pain.

She dreams she sees a form draw nigh,

With smile benign and pitying eye :

It is a messenger of grace.

Ione feared the bliss

That glisten'd in her mother's face,

And yet she fears not this :

She sees the palm-branch in his hand,

The star-crown on his brow,

For he is of the sinless band

That in high heaven bow.

No trace of human passion lurks
In that untainted creature ;
No dark, unworthy feeling works
In his immortal nature !

XIV.

He speaks,—yet 'tis not to the ear
That his soft words are spoken ;
It is the heart that seems to hear,—
That heart so faint and broken.

XV.

“ Ione, fear thou not !
Deem not the Lord, his ancient promise breaking
Thy sorrows hath forgot !
Fear not that He, his former ways forsaking,
Neglecteth thee ! Lift up thy heart to heaven,
Where dwell the loved, the faithful, the forgiven.
They are but gone before,
To rest from grief and care on th' eternal shore. ”

XVI.

“ In heav'n thy dear ones rest,
Where the angelic host for aye rejoices—
Ione ! they are blest !

In heav'n are heard their rich, melodious voices,
 Mingling their praises with celestial choirs—
 Singing such words as heav'n's pure joy inspires

In the redeeméd soul,
 And sweet through Eden's plains the blissful murmurs
 roll.

XVII.

“ Rejoice that they are gone,
 All faithful to their God. Of all the treasures
 So loved, so mourn'd, not one
 Hath failed to win the undecaying pleasures!
 Not one, but wears the amaranthine crown!
 Not one, but o'er his gold harp bows him down,
 And sings the joyous strain,—
 Blessing and praise to Him, who died and rose again!

XVIII.

“ And thou, Ione, thou,
 Whose home, once peopled with beloved faces,
 Seemeth so mournful now—
 Whose heart turns sadly from long-vacant places

Knowing the light of human love no more,
And dwelling ever on the doom that tore
 Thy kindred from thy side ;
Thou for whom days and years so darkly seem to
 glide,—

 Think not thou art alone !
Each human soul is by a guide attended
 Until life's toil be done,
And then the angel flees, his mission ended,
Back to his home. How blest if he can bear
The human soul committed to his care
 E'en to the Saviour's feet,
While all the ransomed host a brother's coming
 greet !

XIX.

 " Thus have I been with thee,
Communing with the spirit in temptation,
 While thou, unconsciously,
Heeding the thoughts I whisper'd of salvation
Hast turn'd thee from a path beset with snares.
I knew that thou would'st bless me for my cares
 When death unveil'd thine eyes,
And gave thee strength to see a native of the skies.

XX.

“ Ione, thou hast seen,
With kindling eye and heart with rapture swelling,
The beauty that hath been
Scatter'd so freely round thine earthly dwelling ;
Hast read deep truths upon the starry sky,—
Wisdom that leads to immortality ;
Well hast thou loved the light,
Whose rays, like friendly smiles, cheer'd thee in
deepest night.

XXI.

“ And thou hast won sweet thought
From wood-crown'd mountains, with long ages hoary ;
The river's voice hath brought
Visions to thee of an unfailing glory ;—
All hath been full of blessing,—sight and sound,—
E'en in the lily's whiteness thou hast found
A sign of purity,
Such as the just shall know through all eternity.

XXII.

“ I one! when such gleams
Of more than earthly glory were upon thee—
When, in thy midnight dreams,
Shadows of parted ones from earth’s cares won thee—
It was my whisper, falling like the dew,
That bids the fainting flow’r look up anew,
Which to thy spirit gave
A power to taste such joy as lives beyond the grave !

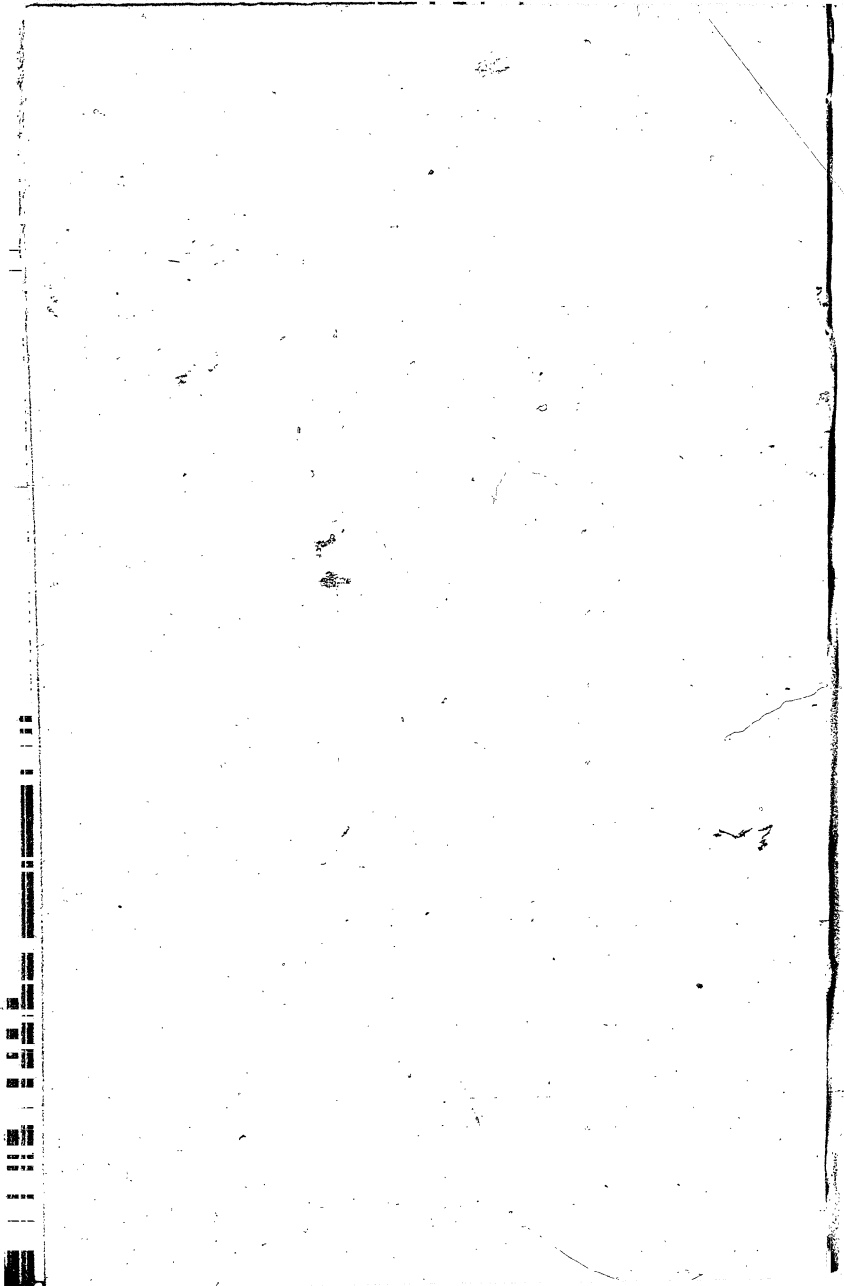
XXIII.

“ Still to thy steps I cleave !
Think not thy way is lone and unprotected—
Fear not, nor grieve,
But be thou faithful still and undejected !
Wait calmly till a messenger be sent
To call thee to the great Omnipotent,
When I again shall stand,
Unblamed, among the shining crowd at His right
hand.

XXIV.

“ Unblamed, for I shall lead
Thy soul, Ione, to those heav'nly regions
For the believer's meed ;
And voices from the bright unnumber'd legions
Shall utter as we pass their grateful songs—
Glory to Him to whom all praise belongs,
Great in his wondrous might,
Yet greater in the love that brought this soul to light !”

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.



THE DUKE OF REICHSTADT.

"SPEAK," said the child, "of tented field,
Of banners in the breeze,
Of crested helm and gleaming shield,—
Tell me of these!"

They told him of his mother's line,
Who ruled, with princely sway,
From Danube to the wooded Rhine,—
Many and great were they!

They told him of a warlike band,
The champions of the Cross,
Who would have sought the Holy Land,
But for their Leader's loss.

They told him how each belted knight
Turn'd sadly from the promised fight

To bear the body of his Chief,
Amid the Christians' muttered grief,
 Back to a royal tomb ;*
And though at first they spoke of joy,
And cheer'd the wild and gallant Boy,
 The end was all of gloom !

“Tell me of him, beside whose fame
 All other fame is dim !
Speak ye my mighty Father's name ;
 Tell me of him !”

Then told they of a mighty one,
 Whose name rang far and wide,
And, while they spoke, the Hero's son
 Forgot how he had died !
They told of one,—the Conqueror
 In many a bloody fray ;
They spoke of the exciting stir
 Where tented thousands lay ;

* Frederick Barbarossa, drowned in the Cydnus, 1188, when on his way to assist the Crusaders against Saladin, after having humbled the Greek emperor.

They told how each brave man would try
To meet his chief's approving eye ;
They said Napoleon won and wore
The crowns long lines of princes bore ;
 They said the people's shout,
O'er battle-field, through crowded street,
The laurell'd Emperor's course to greet,
 Wildly and loud rang out !

The gallant Boy's young eye flash'd fire,
Proud thoughts rush'd o'er his brain ;—
“ Oh ! speak ye still of my great Sire !—
 Tell me again !”

They told him ;—but a woeful change
Came o'er the brilliant tale ;
They told of things so sad and strange,
 The list'ner's cheek grew pale.
They spoke of one,—the conquer'd now,
 In battle's bloody strife,—
The laurel wither'd from his brow,
 The joy pass'd from his life !
They spoke of one on rocky strand,
Far from his own adopted land,

Gazing intense from dreary steep,
As if across the heaving deep

His country he might see ;

His heart crush'd down beneath its pride,

And one friend only at his side—

And this, they said, was He !

“ My Father ! ” cried the weeping child ;

“ And was it thus he dwelt,

Where rock on hopeless rock was piled ?

Say what he felt ! ”

They said the Hero loved full well

To speak of his past days,

Of deeds that future Bards should tell

In their undying lays.

They said at last his lion heart

Mourn'd its unwonted fate,

That deep and deeper sank the dart

Of foes' unpitiful hate :

They said that, day by day, his mind,

Like prison'd eagle, sank and pined ;

The head that once had worn a crown,
Now, night by night, lay sadly down
 Till death had rent his chain.

They said a willow-shaded grave
Was his,—the mighty and the brave,—
 Amid th' Atlantic main.

They watch'd the Boy's oft-changing cheek
 As thus they spoke the rest;
They knew that thoughts he could not speak
 Woke in his breast.

What were the thoughts that in him stirr'd,
 And burn'd his heart like flame,
When he, Napoleon's son, had heard
 Of his great Father's shame?

It matters not! The Warrior's child
 Hath bow'd him down in death,
And whisper'd murmurs, kind and mild,
 Came with his failing breath,
Pard'ning his Father's enemies.
And when the death-film dimm'd his eyes,

A smile was on his fair, young face,—
A smile of more than earthly grace;
And they, around the bed
Of him who once was hail'd a King,
Saw that from pain and sorrowing
His soul for aye had fled!

A TRAVELLER'S TALE.

Founded on an Anecdote related in Burnes's Bokhara.

I.

“Good Traveller, thou hast journey'd far,
Great wonders thou hast known ;
Then tell us of thy wanderings
In forests deep and lone,
Or in those lands where some old tale
Belongs to every stone.”

II.

Yes, children ! many lands I've trod,
And wondrous things I've seen :
I've stood within Palmyra's bounds,—
The Desert's fallen Queen,—
In Petra's City of the Dead
A wond'ring guest I've been.

III.

My image has been given back
By many a nameless pool;
I've linger'd in untrodden woods
Till the torrid day grew cool;
I've wander'd by the Ganges' stream,
And mountains of Cabool.

IV.

I'll tell you what befell me once
In great Bokhara's street,
Where Frank, and bearded Israelite,
And turban'd Moslem meet.
When through a lonely way I pass'd,
A man knelt at my feet.

V.

He clung to me with close embrace;—
“Oh Stranger, hear me speak!
Such pity as thou feel'st for me,
I long might vainly seek;—
I read it in thy tearful eye,
And in thy changing cheek.

VI.

" 'Tis five-and-twenty years ago,
When I was ten years old,
That I was stolen from my home,
And brought here to be sold.
Alas! that men should be so base
As thus to sin for gold!

VII.

" I am a Russian soldier's son,
My sire had long been dead ;
In fighting for his country's fame
That gallant warrior bled.
My mother lived with me alone,
Beneath a lowly shed.

VIII.

" I was her stay, her only child ;
And though our home was poor,
And near it were the snow-capp'd hills,
And round a barren moor,
Yet joyfully my mother's smile
Aye met me at the door ;

IX.

“And when, at eve, the pine-log blazed
So cheerfully and bright,
And we, whose greatest happiness
Was in each other's sight,
Sat, heedless of the storms without,
In undisturb'd delight,

X.

“My mother told of mighty wars,
And well-fought battle-ground,
Until I felt my spirit stir'd
As by a trumpet's sound;
And then, with tears, she gently said,
'Twas there *his* death he found!

XI.

“Thy father, boy, in battle fell!
Alas! when war began,
The fields lay waste, the towns were burn'd,
And blood in torrents ran.
But thou,—in peace thou canst not live
An undistinguished man!

XII.

“ And so she gave me lofty hopes
Of an unsullied fame :
She told me that of noble race
She and my father came ;
And I, though poor and feeble now,
Must ne'er disgrace my name.

XIII.

“ Each night she bless'd me lovingly,
And taught my lips to pray,
And all her sweet and hopeful words
I thought on as I lay.
I still remember that old time
As though 'twere yesterday !

XIV.

“ I left her one bright, sunny morn,
To seek a straying sheep ;
At noon-day, wearied with my toil,
I lay me down to sleep.
Good Stranger, from my dreams of home
I waken'd but to weep !

XV.

“ I heard the tramp of rapid feet,
The neigh of eager steed,
Then felt that I was borne along
With an unwonted speed.
They led me over Don's dark wave—
It was a ruthless deed !

XVI.

“ An Arab face bent over me,—
A voice spoke unknown words ;
I look'd around,—I saw no sign
Of quiet flocks and herds ;
I heard the howl of savage beasts,
And cry of unknown birds.

XVII.

“ I dared not raise my head again,
I closed my burning eyes.
For many days, o'er hill and dale,
On, on, our courser hies,
Until we reach'd at last the plain
Where these strong towers rise.

XVIII.

“ I wept not, though my heart was crush'd
At thought of my lone mother,
And though my anguish was so deep,
My sobs I tried to smother ;
The first who spoke a gentle word,
I clave to as a brother.

XIX.

“ For five-and-twenty long, long years
I've lived a stranger's slave :
I pine to hear the sound again
Of Don's fast-rolling wave,—
To see my country, though the sight
Should bring me to the grave !

XX.

“ The worshippers of Mahomet
Believe I hold their creed :
Oh no ! my mother's care had sown
Betimes the precious seed,
And I have learn'd its blessedness
In hours of sorest need.

XXI.

“Oh tell me of my own dear land.
Is there no hope for us?
Is not our own great Emperor
A brave, true-hearted Russ?
And will he let his children pine
In bondage ever thus?”

XXII.

My children! many things I've seen,
By hill and desert sand,
But never saw I sadder sight,
In any distant land,
Than that poor Russian slave, who wept
Upon my trembling hand.

A SONG FOR EXILES.

I.

By thy rich and peopled cities,
 With palace-border'd streets,—
By the monuments and trophies
 That tell thy heroes' feats,—
By thy towns and scatter'd hamlets,
 Thy cottages and halls,—
By thy fair and ancient temples,
 Thy ruins' ivied walls,—
By these in joy and sorrow,
 By these through good and ill,—
Old England, blessed country!
 Thy children love thee still.

II.

By thy deep and pathless forests,
 Thy joyous singing birds,—
By thy broad and sunny meadows,
 Thy grazing flocks and herds,—

By thy willow-shaded rivers,
The breezes of thy hills,—
By thy lone and mossy valleys,
Thy rocks and laughing rills,—
By thy lakes and mountain torrents,
Thine ocean-bounded shore,—
Old England, we shall love thee
Till life itself be o'er !

III.

By the splendour of thine annals,
By our fathers' noble fame,—
By thy warriors' fadeless laurels,
Thy martyrs' sainted name,—
By thine unforgotten sages,
And the deeds which they have wrought,—
By thy poets' treasure-volumes,
Thy records of high thought,—
By the hope thy sun of glory
Through ages may not set,—
By the past and by the future,
Thy children love thee yet !

IV.

By our heart's own best affections,
Our childhood's quiet home,—
By the holy thoughts that cheer us
Wherever we may roam,—
By each ancient song and story
That now most precious seems,—
By the loved and loving faces
That greet us in our dreams,—
By the first low prayer we utter'd
Around our mother's knee,—
Our faithful love, Old England!
Till death, shall cleave to thee!

STANZAS WRITTEN FOR AN ITALIAN AIR.

 "BUONA NOTTE."

OH! awaken a strain of past hours,
 And call back the joys that are gone,—all gone!
 Though above us a dark'ning sky lours,
 There's comfort e'en yet in its tone.
 For what, though the loved and true-hearted
 Have passed from the sun-light away,—far away?
 The faces of all the departed
 Draw near at the sound of our lay!
 For what, though the loved, &c.

Arouse, then, the thoughts that are sleeping,
 The mem'ry of all we have wept,—long wept!
 Let thy fingers the silent chords sweeping
 Chase the shadows that round us have crept.

And again, once again, we will borrow,
From the bliss of the days that are past,—long
past!

A ray to enliven the sorrow
Which time o'er our pathway has cast!
And again, once again, &c.

LONG AGO.

I.

“LONG ago!”—How gently
To a blest one’s ear,
Like the waters’ warbling,
Low, and sweet, and clear ;
Or the fairy music
Of a soaring bird,
When, from sunny heavens,
Falling notes are heard ;
Or the tranquil whispers
Of the midnight breeze
Calling to the echoes
’Mid the forest-trees,—

II.

Do those sweet words murmur
Tales of days long past,
While the soul will linger
Backward looks to cast,

Ever fondly bending
O'er its treasure store,
All its hoarded records
Telling o'er and o'er!
Deep and cherish'd feelings
At the sound arise,
Visions full of gladness
Sweep before our eyes.

III.

Mem'ry o'er the spirit
Welcome chains will fling,
Bearing it, unwearied,
Backward to its spring,
Culling ev'ry blossom
Scatter'd on its way,
Basking in the brightness
Of affection's ray,
With a wondrous power
Bidding it rejoice,
Wak'ning buried pleasures
With her mighty voice.

IV.

E'en the broken-hearted,
Rising at her call,
Seems again to wander
In his father's hall,
While sweet Mem'ry ever,
By her magic spells
Rousing hidden feelings
From their silent cells,
Calleth the departed
With her syren tone,
Till the weary mourner
Feels no longer lone.

V.

"Long ago!" How wildly
Do those simple words,
Breathed upon the spirit,
Wake its richest chords!
Bringing sweet remembrance
Of our childhood's days
Ere our weary footsteps
Trode the world's dark maze,

When a thousand wonders
On our young eyes broke,
And Devotion's fervour
In our hearts awoke.

VI.

Still our yearning nature
Loveth to look back,
Though no clouds may lower
O'er our future track.
Smiles, whose gladsome radiance
Vainly round us shone,
Tones that waked no fondness,
Faces that are gone,
Scenes we valued lightly
In the days of yore,
Now we love to think on,—
They can come no more!

VII.

Oh! when Memory soundeth
All her harp's rich strings,
And a shining halo
O'er our friendship flings,

When she softly telleth
Of the days gone by,
Steeping parted hours
In her rosy dye,
From each troubled moment
Stealing its alloy,
Till her warbling music
Tells of nought but joy ;

VIII.

May'st thou gladly hearken
To her gentle song,
While her wondrous power
Beareth thee along !
When,—her quiet footsteps
Lingering awhile,—
All our loyng converse
Brightens in her smile,
May thy heart think kindly,
As her accents flow,
Of our fond communion
Past "long, long ago !"

THE STARS.

I.

A BLESSING on your changeless sight,
Ye stars of heaven !
We greet your rays with calm delight
Whenever, at even,
Upon the troubled sea of life
Their smile is cast,
And, turning from all care and strife,
We deem at last
That peace is in the earth.

II.

To joyous beings ye are dear,
For they may look
Upon your light so pure and clear,
As on a book,
And read, as from a glowing page,
All beautiful dreams
That have been dreamt in every age
Beneath your beams,
Of things not known below.

III.

But, oh! to lone and weary hearts
Far dearer still,
When each wild hope of youth departs,
And sorrow's chill
Has wither'd ev'ry joy on earth ;
Far dearer then
Than ev'ry sign of common mirth,
Or laugh of men,
Are ye in far-off skies !

IV.

Dear,—for a blessing ever falls
From your glad home.
The lonely one awhile recalls,
When forth ye come,
Of youth the fantasies and glow,
The dreams long flown ;
Forgetting for a time the woe
He since has known,—
He is once more a child !

V.

Sweet thoughts of love and harmony
Come stealing down
Upon our spirits silently;
When ye have thrown
A veil of radiance o'er the sky.
Upward our sight,
With awe we turn, and know not why,
Sad thoughts take flight
When ye look forth above.

VI.

What marvel then that, at the first,
When Earth was young,
Those souls which for the truth did thirst
Deem'd that ye flung
A spell upon our earthly fate,
As, in your course,
With music and in shining state,
Ye moved,—the source
Of high and holy visions?

VII.

What are ye, then, ye radiant creatures,
The domes of heaven?
Are ye the homes to lofty natures
For ever given?
Have Sin and Death ne'er found a place
In one bright dwelling?
Doth Beauty wear unsullied grace?
Are hymns still swelling
Of rapture never blighted?

VIII.

Have ye deep vales, and ancient hills,
And darken'd woods?
Have ye soft music sounds from rills,
And mountain floods?
Do all glad breezes as they pass
Sweet odours bring?
Are murm'ring reeds among the grass?
Do blossoms swing
From aged trees like ours?

IX.

And is the warbling of the bird,
Or hum of bees,
Or joyous voice of insects, heard
Among your trees?
Have ye the same glad sounds and sights
Which greet us here,—
The same fair days and tranquil nights
To us so dear.—
The same sweet sympathies?

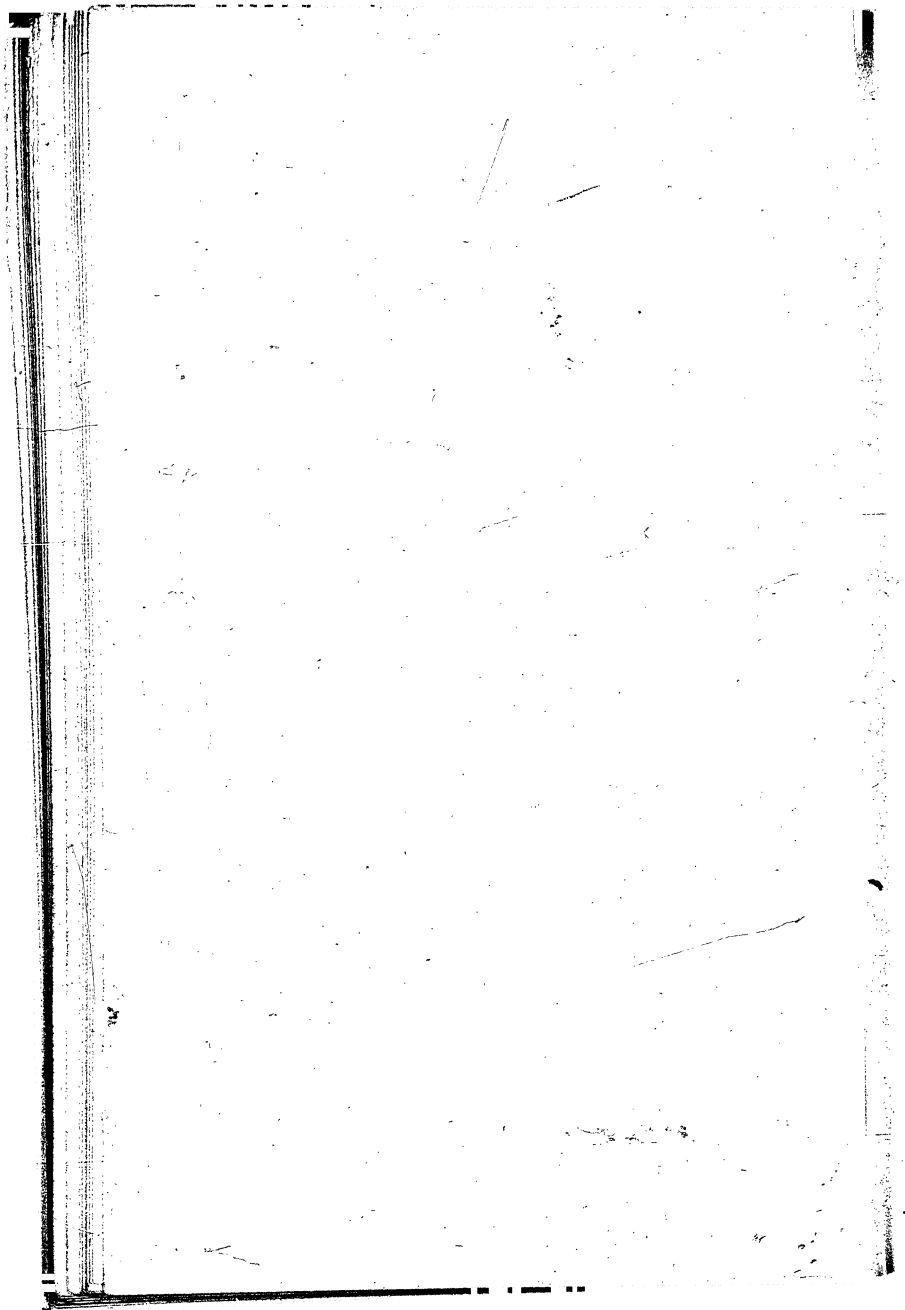
X.

For you do oceans now display
A boundless glory,
Kissing with drops of snowy spray
Cliffs wild and hoary?
For you do bright unnumber'd waves
Make melody,
Awak'ning from the coral caves
Rich harmony,
In answer to their own?

XI.

We may not know, we can but gaze,
With trusting hope,
Upon your still-unchanging blaze
In heaven's cope;
That blaze which bids us look on high
When Earth is dark,
Till the faint heart and streaming eye
Feel that a spark
Of God's own mercy hath enlighten'd you!

POEMS FOR YOUTH.



THESE

POEMS FOR YOUTH

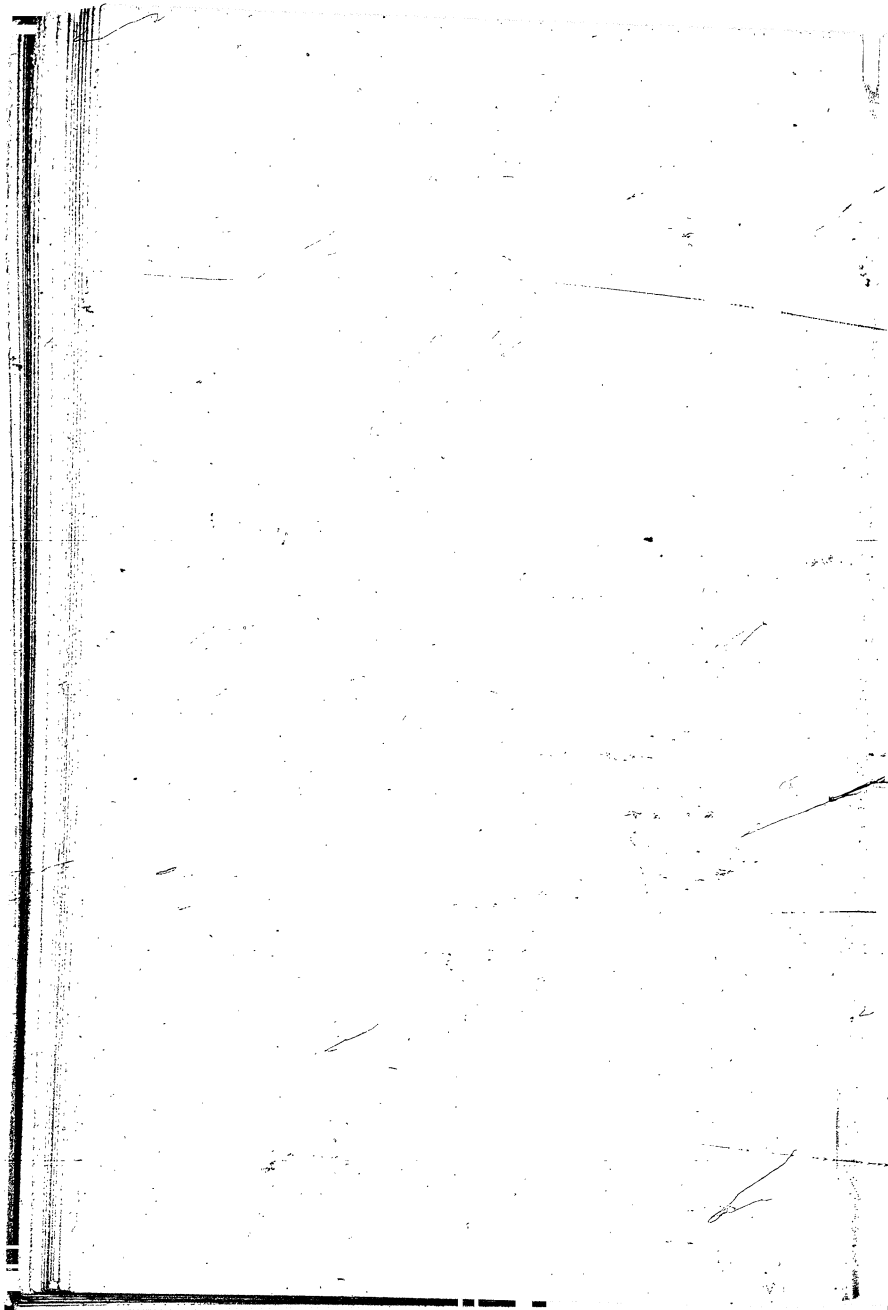
ARE

INSCRIBED TO HER PARENTS

BY

THEIR GRATEFUL AND AFFECTIONATE

DAUGHTER.



INVOCATION TO THE SPIRIT OF POETRY.

"These and Poetry are one."

BRYANT.

"SPIRIT of Poetry, where dost thou dwell?
Where is thy resting-place? Answer, oh, tell!"

"Thou hast rambled at morn, amid forest-trees,—
I was floating along on the gladsome breeze.
Thou hast gazed at eve on the sun's last ray,—
In the crimson clouds of the west I lay.
Thou hast wander'd forth in the starry night,—
I was resting on high in the silv'ry light.
Thou hast ridden the waves of the boundless sea,—
And didst thou not *feel* I was there with thee?
Unfetter'd and free is my path to roam,
The glorious universe all my home!
By the torrent wild or the gliding brook,—
In the sunny plain or the darksome nook ;

Where clouds are passing the mountain's brow,
Or deep in the shadowy vale below ;
In the kingly oak,—in the lily's bell,—
Where Beauty is gleaming, oh ! *there* I dwell !"

"To hear thy soft minstrelsy where shall I seek ?
Where dost thou warble it ? Answer, oh, speak !"

"Thou hast listen'd at night, when the strong winds
blow :

Thou hast heard the glad murmurs where waters flow :
Thou hast hearken'd with joy to the song of birds,
And the distant lowing of flocks and herds :
Thou hast loved sweet Melody's deepening swell.
And the far-off sound of the village bell,—
Thou hast heard my voice ! It was I who spoke
When the fondest thoughts of thy heart awoke.
I have spoken oft in the thunder's crash,
In the stormy gale and the waters' dash.
Thou hearest around thee my music's tone ;
The voices of Nature are all mine own,
From the bounding cataract's ceaseless roar,
And the beat of waves on the rocky shore,

To the song of the lark in the summer sky,
And the hum of the bee as she passeth by.
By wood and by river, by stream and by grot,
Have I strung my wild harp, and thou heed'st it not!

“Yet tell me, bright Spirit,—oh, speak again!
Why do we seek thee so oft in vain?”

“’Tis that they whom I bless must from guile be free,
Ere about them the trace of my steps they see.
Their hearts must be fill'd with an earnest love
For the many around them and One above.
Then will they look with a kindling eye
On the beautiful things that before them lie:
Then in their hours of pain and grief
My visits shall soothe them and give relief.
I have wander'd at night to the captive's cell,
When the calmness of slumber upon him fell,
And have borne his spirit to those he loved
Till he dream'd that their forms around him moved.
I have watch'd by his side till I saw, at last,
That a smile o'er his sorrowful features past.

All may not know me, yet blest is he
Who heareth the voice of my harmony !
It shall cheer him on Earth in a time of sorrow,
From above shall a tone of rejoicing borrow ;
And still, when this being hath pass'd away,
Shall it sound in the regions of endless day !”

TO MY YOUNGER SISTERS AND BROTHER.

UPON each river bank in yore
A modest chapel stood,
In which the traveller knelt, before
He ventured on the flood ;
And many a gem and flow'r hung there
In token of an answer'd prayer.

Thus we, before we launch our soul
Upon the stream of thought,
Of which the mighty waters roll
To gladness and to nought,
Should humbly pause awhile to pray
For blessings on our daring way.

My Children! on this river's brink,
This deep and changeful stream,
I've paused in quiet joy to think
That ev'ry gentle dream
I've dreamt of Earth and Sky and Sea
Remembrance kind should wake of me.

Oft thus, in hopeful prayer, I've knelt
Beside this river's bed,
Until the longing wish I felt
Seem'd to its object sped,
Such blessings aided from above
The efforts of a sister's love !

THE DEPARTURE.

ONCE on a balmy summer's eve, on England's happy
strand,

The flush of sunset linger'd still upon the meadow-
land,

The moon hung scarcely visible upon the rosy sky,
The breeze was like a mother's kiss, it passed so softly
by;

The clouds, like fairy cities, in the west were gaily
piled,

The rippling of the stream was like the laughter of a
child,

The shadow of a lordly hall lay sleeping on the flood,
And songs of birds came joyously from dark and leafy
wood.

A ship was anchor'd in the stream, her sails all closely
furl'd,

Awaiting there the morrow's dawn to seek the Western
world,

And on the deck a quiet group stood gazing at the
shore,

Or heark'ning to the measured dip of passing boat-
man's oar.

Young children were among the group,—that eve they
did not play,—

And hearts that often lightly beat,—that eve they were
not gay ;

A shadow was on ev'ry brow, and tears in silence fell,
They knew not, till that parting hour, they loved their
land so well !

They listen'd to familiar sounds,—the rustling of the
trees,

The murmur of far-distant bells borne sweetly on the
breeze ;

They heard wild shouts of laughter and gay childhood's
ringing call,

They heard the frequent chiming of the old clock at
the Hall ;

They look'd on lawn and meadow, on deep wood and
breezy hill,

And almost seem'd to hear the voice of some far-
gleaming rill ;

They thought upon their trackless voyage,—on ocean's
raging foam,
And, turning to that peaceful scene, they felt it was
their *Home*.

They thought of all that they had left,—the pale and
tearful face

Of some beloved one, grieving now to see their vacant
place.

They thought of all the earnest words, the fond, half-
breathed farewell,

The burst of sorrow that betray'd a love too deep to
tell;

They thought of those whose lips had blest their early
helpless years,

Of eyes once bright with happy smiles, now dim with
falling tears;

They knew fond prayers would follow them across the
stormy deep,

They knew they left sad friends behind,—what marvel
they should weep?

Soft music, from the neighb'ring coast, rose suddenly
and stole

Like spicy odours that from far rejoice the seaman's
soul.

It was an old and well-known strain, by blended voices
utter'd,

And at its rich and swelling tones the sad ones' pulses
flutter'd.

It was the song by Israel sung when God had set them
free,

It bade them pour the hymn of praise o'er Egypt's
dreary sea ;

Its tale was of a mighty arm that led from place to
place,

And guarded, with a Father's love, weak Israel's chosen
race.

It was a welcome tale to them whose way led o'er the
wave ;

They trusted to the watchful eye, the arm so strong to
save ;

And when the sunset faded, and eve deepen'd into
night,
And hush'd were those glad voices in the pale and
fair moonlight,
The parting ones were leaning calmly o'er the vessel's
side,
And speaking of the loveliness of earth, and sky, and
tide ;
For hope had whisper'd to each heart the promise of a
day
Of glad returning to their home, when years had roll'd
away.

A SPRING MORNING IN NEWFOUNDLAND.

AWAKE, dear child! the sun hath long since risen ;
Awake! the smile of Spring is on the earth ;
The streams have broken from their icy prison
To fill the valleys with a voice of mirth ;
The little waves creep slowly o'er the ocean,
To cast their glist'ning spray upon the shore ;
Full many a white-sail'd ship is now in motion,
And many a boatman gaily plies his oar.

Awake! Is this a time to sleep,
When joy is on the Earth, and music in the Deep?

Awake! for now the breeze is onward sweeping,
To dry the dew along the path we'll tread ;
The torrent o'er its stony road is leaping,
The harbour rocks, the shadows o'er it spread ;

The few white clouds, by Morn's soft breathing driven,
Are beautiful as angels' cars might be ;
A glory by this early light is given
To barren mound, and lake, and flow'ry lea.
Awake ! - Is this a time to sleep,
When joy is on the Earth, and music in the Deep ?

Oh, come ! we'll wander, in these sunny hours,
Over the grassy fields and rugged hill ;
We'll wander far to seek the earliest flowers,
We'll search the leafy banks of each glad rill ;
And if some bird should chase the lone wood's sadness
With music, joyous as the wild-harp's tone,
We, too, will shout an answer of like gladness,
We'll sing a lay as merry as his own !
Awake ! Is this a time to sleep,
When joy is on the Earth, and music in the Deep ?

Though there be here no yellow cowslip glowing,
No primrose hidden in the hawthorn shade,
No purple hyacinth its soft breath throwing
Upon the air, along the forest glade ;

Yet there are flow'rs in lovely clusters beaming,
Like fallen stars upon the wide lake's brim,
And silvery bells about the dark marsh gleaming,
While lily-leaves the waters' brightness dim.

Awake! Is this a time to sleep,
When joy is on the Earth, and music in the Deep?

Are not the things around us fair and cheering?

Does not thine heart beat happily to-day?
Like the thin mists the glorious sun is clearing,

Have not all angry feelings pass'd away?
In the soft murmur of the winds and waters

Canst thou not hear a low, yet mighty voice,
Bidding thee love and help Earth's sons and daughters,
And weep when they are sad, and smile when they
rejoice?

Awake! Is this a time to sleep,
This voice is in the Earth,—this voice is in the Deep!

Come! let us hear and heed the tale it utters,—

A tale of God's own care and love towards men.
It is the same the breeze in darkness mutters,
And torrents shout along the lonely glen;

It is the same,—ever the same assurance,
The stars repeat it from their homes above,—
“There is a God who pities man’s endurance,
A God whose might is equall’d by His love !”
Awake ! Is this a time to sleep ?
This tale is in the Earth,—this tale is in the Deep !

A SUMMER HYMN.

WHEN the day-beam quivers
O'er the rocky height,
And the streams and rivers
Roll along in light;
When the mighty ocean
Lies as if asleep,
And, with tender motion,
Breezes o'er it creep;
When the wood-bird singeth
In the forest-tree,
And the petrel springeth
Gaily o'er the sea;
Oh, Lord! when all is calm and fair,
Teach us to feel that Thou art there!

When the day-beam dieth
 Slowly in the west,
And the light breeze sigheth
 O'er the ocean's breast ;
When the small birds nestle
 In their leafy home,
And the fisher's vessel
 Rideth o'er the foam ;
When the ripe fruit glanceth
 Through o'erhanging leaves,
And the woodbine danceth
 'Neath the cottage eaves ;
Oh Lord ! when all is calm and fair,
Teach us to feel that Thou art there !

When the stars are beaming
 With a quiet ray,
And all things are seeming
 Fairer than by day ;
When the Moon upspringeth
 From the moaning deep ;
When the river singeth,
 And the torrents leap ;

When soft slumber stealeth
Over young and old,
And the Spirit feeleth
Peace and joy untold ;
Oh Lord ! when all is calm and fair,
Teach us to feel that Thou art there !

THE BEGINNING OF WINTER.

THE glory of the Summer hours is passing from the
land ;

The foaming waves beat hoarsely, now, upon the
rugged strand ;

The radiant leaves are torn away in clusters from the
woods ;

The coming frost full soon will hush the voice of
streams and floods ;

The wind is roaring dismally around our pleasant
home,

And heavy clouds have gathered darkly o'er the
Heaven's dome ;

The snow-flake falleth silently upon the dreary
earth ;

The bitter wintry air hath stilled the joyous house-fly's
mirth ;

The Ousel in the wood's recess hath ceased to pour
his lay ;

And ye are mourning o'er the days so quickly past
away.

'Tis true they have been happy days,—we've lingered
on the hill,

To mark awhile the glist'ning course of some low-
singing rill ;

We've loved to watch the painted boat pass gaily o'er
the lake,

We've hearkened to the torrent's roar, loud echoing
down the brake ;

We've paused to list the merry tone of hidden water-
fall,

Or hear, from out the bushy dell, a distant woodbird's
call ;

We've sought and found, in secret nooks, full many
lovely things,—

The native Indian's natural cup, the gay wild rose that
flings

Its odour o'er the barren waste, the pale pink maiden-
hair

That looketh down into the stream to see its image there.

All these bright flowers we've often seen, and many
more beside,—

The yellow lily 'mid its leaves upon the sleeping tide,
The blossoms of the shrubs that high among the rocks
take root,

And bear, as Autumn days come on, rich store of ruddy
fruit.

The iris, too, has raised its head within the marshy
field;

The Indian tea, whose woolly leaves a welcome harvest
yield;

And like the coral branches, 'neath the waters of the sea,
Was the moss that grew and blossomed on the marsh
or grassy lea.

What, though all these have passed away, we will but
love them more,

Their memory dwelleth in our hearts, although their
life be o'er!

We'll gather with a thankful joy around the cheering
blaze,

And talk of all we've seen and done through long,
glad summer days;

And though the snow lie deep and drear upon the
meadow-grass,

And with a wild and moaning sound the nightly
tempests pass,

Though icebergs, shaped like palaces, should gleam all
cold and bright,

And e'en the broad Atlantic's waves be hidden from
our sight,—

Though, from the fir-tree's feath'ry boughs the icicles
may drop,

And hang from rugged sea-cliff's brink, or from our
own house-top,

We'll look around our "ingle-nook;" and they who
gather here,—

Have they not love to gladden them, though all without
be drear?

And let us seek for Beauty still, though death seem
all around,

And shrivelled leaf and withered bloom have fallen to
the ground;

Though storms may often round us break,—chill snow
and driving rain,—

Oh! let us seek for Beauty still,—we shall not seek in
vain.

And upward let us look at eve, through clear and
frosty air,

E'en to the cloudless heav'ns, and watch the gath'ring
glory there,

As, one by one, the stars look forth; and, like a long-
loved friend,

The gentle Moon unto the Earth a greeting seems to
send.

We'll watch the wild Aurora as it rushes o'er the sky,
While its beams now fade, now brighter glow, and now
in darkness die.

And let us look upon the snow, as white and pure it lies,
Where the vales are gently sloping, or the hill's tall
summits rise;

Let us mark each branch and twig in the frequent
“silver-frost,”

And confess that, e'en now, the trace of Beauty is not
lost.

We'll sing old songs and tell old tales,—we'll make
these halls resound

With echoes of glad music, and our voices' merry
round.

And as we bend in gratitude, to make our prayer to
Him,

Before whose blessed kingdom's joy all earthly joys
are dim,—

When we see the smile of peace and health on each
beloved face,—

Oh! *then*, we'll say, "Our lot hath fallen in a goodly
place."

CHRISTMAS DAY.

I.

COME near, my little Boy, come near !
Here is a pleasant seat ;
The fire is blazing high and clear, —
Sit down, then, at my feet.
The snow is falling on the ground
Like white flow'rs from a tree ;
And oft the passing loud bell's sound
Rings out right merrily.
Come near, my little Boy, and say,
Is this a pleasant Christmas Day ?

II.

Did you not see, as we rode past
The houses of the poor,
Some children running onward fast
To reach their parents' door ?

And now, no doubt, they've gathered there
In love, and peace, and glee,
Around their father's oaken chair,—
The young ones on his knee,—
All thanking God that even they
Have such a happy Christmas Day!

III.

And though a storm might come to night,
They would not heed the noise,
They're all so full of wild delight,
Those happy girls and boys!
Do you not think that God is good
To make such pleasure dwell
In hovels built of clay and wood?
Should we not love Him well?
For it is He who makes us gay
Upon this pleasant Christmas Day!

IV.

And you, my Child, look round you here,
In this, your peaceful home,
Where nothing you dislike or fear
Is e'er allowed to come;

Look at the Parents whom you love,
Your Sisters at your side ;—
Should you not thank the God above,
And ask Him still to guide,
And bless, and keep us, that we may
See many a happy Christmas Day ?

V.

Oh ! let us not forget, my Boy,
Amidst our playful mirth,
To think of Him who left all joy,
And dwelt upon the Earth,
To die at last a death of pain,
And save us from our sin !
Oh ! let us strive the road to gain,
That we may enter in,
When Death shall come, to that blest place
Where God will meet us face to face !

THE SNOW-BIRDS.*

I.

WHEN flowers fade upon the Earth,
And winds are hoarsely sighing,
And leaves, that hailed the Summer's birth,
Are dead or dying ;

When frost is on the window-pane,
And snow upon the mountains,
And not a sound comes e'er the plain
From rills or fountains ;

II.

When families in gladness meet,
And watch the red blaze leaping,
While the old house-dog, at their feet,
Lies calmly sleeping ;

* The Snow-bird, a native of Newfoundland, is small, and, during the winter, almost white. It is seen often in the immediate neighbourhood of human habitations, during the severe frosts.

And children, as the daylight fails,
Draw closer round the fire,
To list the songs and merry tales
That never tire;—

III.

Oft, when they hear the fearful storm
That bursts around their dwelling,
While they are all so safe and warm,
Gay stories telling,
They pause a moment in their glee,
And ev'ry cheek grows paler
At thought of him that braves the Sea,—
The wave-tost sailor.

IV.

Yet, when the strong man quits his load
To let the wind rush o'er him,
And sighs to see the dreary road
That lies before him,
E'en *then* a flutt'ring sound is heard,
Although the blast be raving,—
It is a solitary bird
The tempest braving.

V.

Not one alone ! full many come
Across the white fields sweeping,
E'en where the smoke from cottage home
Is upward creeping.
Who guides those small birds in their flight
When men and children tremble,
And, shiv'ring, round the wood-fire's light
In groups assemble ?

VI.

When aged boughs are earthward borne,
And ancient trees are shattered,
And bricks from wall and house-roof torn,
Are widely scattered,—
Who feeds them when the Autumn fruit
No more from green bough swingeth,
And moss around the fir-tree's root
No longer springeth ?

VII.

Who guides and feeds the helpless ones ?—
A good and gracious Being,
Whose mercy through all nations runs,—
A God all-seeing !

'Tis He who feeds the humblest things
To which He giveth motion,—
'Tis He who guides their wanderings
By land and ocean!

THE FOG-GUN.*

I.

THE day is closing on the sea,
A day of storm and dread,—
The trembling ship meets wearily
Each wave's foam-crested head ;
The cracking poles, like willows bow
To still increasing blasts ;
The gallant crew, exhausted now,
Are clinging to the masts,
And calling on the sailor's friend
His strong and pitying aid to lend.

II.

They drift along before the gale
Whither, they cannot know,
For the fog is hanging like a veil
Around them as they go.

* It is customary at St. John's, Newfoundland, at Halifax, Nova Scotia, and in many other situations where fogs are frequent and dense, to fire a gun every hour as a guide or warning to any vessels that may be near the coast.

Darker and darker grows the day,
Loud and more loud the storm,
The fog so dense each sailor may
Scarce see his neighbour's form—
The brave turn pale to think that night
May yield them to the wild Sea's might.

III.

A mother with her only child
Is in the wave-tost bark,
And, as the tempest grows more wild,
The eve more drear and dark,
She clasps the baby to her heart,
And prays for him alone ;
For she is ready to depart,

So he, her precious one,
Might still be saved by Him, who trod
O'er raging waves,—the Son of God !

IV.

And others, who, few hours before,
Were full of joy and hope,
All telling of the days of yore,
And giving boundless scope

To visions of their future hours—
Alas! how altered now!
The gayest of the hopeful cowers,
The young girl bends her brow,
And weeps that, over dreams so fair,
Should fall the shadow of despair!

V.

A sound comes booming o'er the deep,
Solemn, and sad, and slow,
Yet instantly the sailors leap
Once more to man the prow:
The mother's tears fall thick and fast
Upon her baby's face;
She trusts that they may reach at last
Their home, their native place;
And, though she did not weep for fear,
She weeps at thought of safety near.

VI.

The young are full of hope again,
The girl hath dried her eyes,
While, through the fog and driving rain,
The lab'ring vessel flies.

Again! again the welcome sound,
Nearer and nearer still!
It cometh from their native ground,—
The steep and well-known hill
Frowns through the evening's darkening glooms
As once again the Fog gun booms.

VII.

They pass at length the guarded fort;
They pass the rocky height;
And now, within the sheltered port,
They're safe from Ocean's might.
One cheer, one loud, long grateful cheer
Bursts forth from ev'ry lip,
As, in their welcome rest they hear
The sound that led their ship,
And brought them o'er the raging sea,
To the calm port "where they would be!"

A SHORT STORY.

THERE are sunshine and gladness by lane and by lea,
There is bloom on the grass, there is fruit on the tree,
The song of the reaper awakes with the morn,
For the farmer is cutting his ripe yellow corn ;
Far off, in the forest, along the green brink,
The deer have come down to the waters to drink ;
And rivers are bounding from hill and from brake,
To mingle their streams with the broad sunny lake.

Two beings are resting on yonder hill-side
That slopes gently down to the waters' calm tide,—
A child whose young spirit has never known care,
And a thoughtful old man, with bent form and white
hair ;—

The child has been chasing the gay honey-bee,
With songs, like the nightingale's, joyous and free ;
The man has not moved from the lake's mossy brim,
For his footstep is feeble,—his eyesight is dim.

“ Oh ! why,” said the child, “ do you stay here all day ?
You see not the deer, nor the waters’ bright play ;
You see not the flight of the lark nor the dove ;
You see not the grass, nor the tall boughs above.
The hedge-row with beautiful blossoms is lined,—
Old man ! these are nothing to one who is blind.”
“ My child,” said the man,—and a kind smile awoke,
And brightened his time-wrinkled face as he spoke,—
“ There are joys by a merciful God ever given
To the blind and the lonely whose hope is in heaven.
I see not the lake nor the proud mountain-deer,
Yet the music of waters is sweet to mine ear :
I think, as I hear it, of those that are blest,
And pray to be with them in glorious rest.”

WISHES.

If we our wishes could fulfil,
What pleasant hours we'd pass,
To-day, in regions fair and still,
Upon the velvet grass !
We'd seek some calm sequestered shade ;
Some wild, untrodden woodland glade,
Where tempests could not come :
The bright laburnum, o'er us bent,
Should form our lovely natural tent,
Our happy summer home !
The proud magnolia should lift up
For us its pure and scented cup ;
The rose-acacia near our bower
Be planted like a verdant tower ;
The light leaves of the bamboo tree
Should spread their fairy canopy ;

The vine's rich fruit lie on the ground ;

 The willow's drooping head

Beside the gloomy pine be found ;

 The rose, by Nature led,

Should fling abroad its crimson bloom ;

 The light gumscistus' flowers

Cast down, near some dark cedar's gloom,

 Their snowy leaves in showers.

We'd have all shrubs from southern lands :

 The bay from Grecian Isles ;

The laden olive-tree that stands

 Where endless summer smiles ;

The palm that o'er the desert flings

 A shadow, long and light,

To warn the trav'ler of the springs

 That else might shun his sight ;

And ev'ry lovely thing that grows,

From torrid heats to Arctic snows :

The orange, with its flow'rs and fruit,

The mango, with its spreading root,

And apples bright as those that hung

In gardens by old poets sung,

And many a tree more gay and fair
Than heart can dream, or lip declare ;
And all things to which poetry gives
A charm that through all ages lives.
All flowers, such as we have seen
By babbling brook or forest-green :
The hyacinth, whose purple bells,
 Still waving as they hang,
Seem ringing everlasting knells
 For him from whom they sprang ;
The white narcissus, bowing down
Its radiant and unspotted crown ;
The daisy, that, by lawn and wood,
Whispers of thoughts most pure and good ;
And the gay flower of the wind,
 The sweet anemone,
That has a tale for ev'ry mind
 Of childhood's artless glee ;
The violet's blue and loving eye
Should greet us on our way ;
The primrose blossoms, pale and shy,
 Smile on us all the day !

And thou shouldst read some wild old tale,
Until the light of day grew pale,
Of him* who on the Italian coast
 Plucked down the golden bough,
And raised, 'mid Erebus' sad host,
 His young and crested brow,
And, by the waves of Acheron,
As the great Sibyl led him on,
The slow and darkly-rolling stream
Gave back his armour's fitful gleam,
And all the frightened sprits fled
To see the living 'mid the dead!

Or thou shouldst speak awhile of him
 Who sang of battle-strife,
With whitened hair and eyesight dim,
 And led a wand'ring life.
We'd seem to see attentive groups
 Flock round the old man's knee,
And children gathering in troops
 Stand near him silently,

And hang upon old Homer's lips,
Or question of the Grecian ships,
And all the deeds of mighty chiefs
 Before the walls of Troy:
We'd sorrow for the warriors' griefs,
 And glory in their joy!

Or,—dearer still,—thy lips should pour
Some legend of the days of yore,
That tells of high and gallant deed
 By Christian hero done;
And grieves for those whose hearts must bleed
 Ere Zion could be won!
And we should seem to see again
An army on the Syrian plain,
And ev'ry waving bough around
 Should seem a warrior's plume,
And ev'ry melancholy sound
 The mourning o'er his tomb!
And we should see great Godfrey stand
 Among his mighty host;
We'd hearken to his loud command,
 And see bright lances cross,

And watch the red-cross banner shine
Triumphant through all Palestine !

Or, when the passing breeze might stir

The branches of the trees,

We'd speak of early Mariner

On unfrequented seas.

And, spirit-like, our thought should sweep

With great Columbus o'er the Deep ;

We'd watch with him by night and day

Upon his wide and boist'rous way,—

Rejoicing when his noble heart

The voyage knew was o'er ;

And in his joy we'd bear a part

On the discovered shore.

We'd talk of Spanish argosies

Laden with gem and gold ;

And many wondrous tales like these

By ancient ballad told.

And when we two had communed thus,

Nor marked the hours float by,

Till, meekly gazing down on us,

The stars rose in the sky,

Thy voice should breathe some dear old strain,
Some Bard's unstudied rhymes,

Whose sound might bring to us again

Remembrance of past times.

And, in the pauses of thy song,

The evening wind should bear along

The murmur of some far-off brook ;

And we, within our happy nook,

With quiet tears upon our cheek,

Should feel a joy we could not speak :

And with a deep and holy love,

And ev'ry thought a prayer,

We'd gaze upon the heav'ns above,

And breathe the balmy air.

If we our wishes could fulfil,

What pleasant hours we'd pass

To-day, in regions fair and still,

Upon the tufted grass !

THE WALLFLOWERS.

There stands a castle, old and grey,
On England's southern shore ;
Its days of warlike pageantry,
And pomp, and pride, are o'er ;
The din of arms, the clash of steel,
Will sound there never more.

No banner waves upon its tow'r,
The ivy o'er it creeps,
The stones that tumble from the walls
Lie in neglected heaps,
And from each crevice, hole, and chink
The yellow wallflow'r peeps.

No cannon on the battlements,
No sentry going his round,
No strong portcullis at the gate,
No warder's bugle-sound,
No shout of soldiers in the hall,
No bark of watchful hound.

The dungeons are half filled with earth,
The prison chambers bare ;
Between the iron-bars flows in
The summer's scented air,
And finds not now the captive band
Who once were grieving there.

They say the Romans built that pile
Hundreds of years ago ;
Since then new empires have grown up,
And old ones are laid low,
Yet still that castle looketh down
Upon the waves' calm flow.

Green mossy turf and mallow flow'rs
Now in the deep moat spring ;
Rude brambles, laden with their fruit,
To hoary buttress cling ;
And, o'er the now deserted walls,
The sea-gull flaps his wing.

Yet all within the grass-grown court
To ruin is not given :
The chapel, where, in ancient days,
Proud warriors' souls were shriven,
Still, with its meek and ivied spire,
Points upward to the heaven.

And still upon each Sabbath-day
Throughout the peaceful year
Its modest bell rings out to bid
The village crowd draw near,
To worship in that quiet place
With calm and holy fear.

No moan of "hope deferred" is there,
No captive's tearful sigh ;
The mother leads her children now
Where buried warriors lie ;
And friends, within the churchyard's bound,
May commune pleasantly.

But of the castle, old and grey,
Not much I meant to tell;
Unconsciously my thoughts have loved
About its walls to dwell;
I've seemed to breathe the scented air,
And hear the Sabbath bell.

A laughing train passed from my home
One glad, bright summer's day,
And down the straggling village street
We took our noisy way;
My mother, slowly following,
Smiled kindly on our play.

We pass'd the moat and thick-barred gate,
We pass'd the castle court,
And then we sought the broken stair
And chambers of the fort,
While e'en the dreary dungeon walls
Gave echoes to our sport.

We climbed the falling battlements
To look upon the scene
That stretched around the castle-walls ;
Broad meadows, fair and green,
The waters moaning far below,
As they for aye had been ;

And on the plain the parsonage
With vine and rose o'er-grown,
And, far away, the wide, wide hill
On which our kite was flown,
While o'er the blue and distant waves
The white-sailed vessel shone.

We turned not from that pleasant place
Till eve began to fall,
And when, with light and loving hearts,
We heard my mother's call,
I lingered but to pluck the flow'rs
That grow on crumbling wall.

Away! away! with bounding steps,
Our young feet homeward sped,
And then I ran to plant my prize
In my loved flower-bed.—
Alas! when morning came again
My nosegay was all dead!

My mother smiled to see my grief,
And I this truth was taught—
That things which have no root will fade,
And die, and come to nought.
My children, when you would do right,
Let this be in your thought!

THE TREES.

I.

Oh! love you not the leafy trees,
 The children of the woods?
 The murmur of the summer seas,
 The roar of mighty floods,
 Have not a richer sound than winds
 In leafy forest wake,
 When down they sweep from mountain steep,
 Through dell, and glade, and brake,
 Among the leafy trees!

II.

The leafy trees! the leafy trees!
 Know you the ancient lime,
 Its drooping blossoms filled with bees
 Ringing their pleasant chime?
 Know you the beech, whose glossy leaves,
 Half hide its rich nut store?
 The yew, that stands, like one who grieves,
 Mid those who are no more?
 Know you these leafy trees?

III.

And love you not the forest-king?
It is old England's boast,
That hearts of oak, which own no yoke,
Do guard her sea-girt coast.
Her children, binding round their brows,
With joy and loving pride,
A chaplet of the oak's green boughs,
Proclaim him far and wide
King of the leafy trees!

IV.

And there are willows bending low
Above some lonely stream,
Whose gentle waters onward flow,
Like music in a dream;
And tall, old elms in stately rows,
Flinging a welcome shade,
While wheeling flocks of rooks and crows
Fly round the nests they've made
High in the leafy trees.

V.

And know you not the hardy fir?
Wherever it doth spring,

Where summer airs its foliage stir
Like spirits' passing wing,
Or where the raging winter's blast
May bend it to the earth,
Whate'er of gloom be round it cast,
It wears some sign of mirth,—
Still 'tis a leafy tree!

VI.

Oh! pleasant is the shade they give,
The leafy forest-trees;
Among them many creatures live
In happiness and ease.
Full many find a dwelling there;
The small bird makes her nest,
The squirrel, though the fields be fair,
Yet loves the trees the best;
He loves the leafy trees!

VII.

And do not you, too, love them well,
And long once more to look
At evening, down the wooded dell,
Or willow-shaded brook?

Do you not wish to hear again
The young leaves rustling sound ;
The ringing of the summer rain,
Upon the forest mound,
Among the leafy trees ?

. VIII.

We see not now the giant forms
Of trees of our own land ;
There flourish in this land of storms
Few of their joyous band,
And these lift up their stunted boughs
Between the iron rocks,
And, though unbroken, many a token
They bear of winter's shocks,
These lone yet leafy trees !

IX.

They still are green through storm and show'r ;
They wear their summer smile,
Though chill winds beat and tempests lour :
And we,—shall we the while

Neglect the lesson they may teach,—
A lesson of content?
Shall we not heed them when they preach
By signs so eloquent?—
Not heed the leafy trees?

X.

Yes! we will heed them! we will strive
To smile, whate'er betide;
Like them, when chilling tempests drive,
Their wrath we will abide;
And trustingly we'll look above,
Nor heed the wastes around,
Feeling that He, whose name is Love,
Hath bow'd us to the ground
To rise like leafy trees!

THE WIND.

I.

WHAT is it that hath wakened from their sleeping
 The lovely things of earth, and sky, and sea?
 What is it that, o'er land and water sweeping,
 Pours loudly forth a music-tone of glee?
 Hark! as it cometh o'er the far-off ocean,
 The little billows rise to meet its kiss;
 A melody as joyous as their motion
 They breathe in answer to that voice of bliss—
 It is the wind, the summer-breath of heaven!

II.

What is it that, amid the dark recesses
 Of hidden caverns on the rocky shore,
 With murmurs like a mother's fond caresses,
 Moveth along the depths, so damp and hoar?
 That, with a sound as gay as childhood's laughter,
 Seeketh the swallow in her quiet nest
 Among the ivy by the cottage rafter,
 And cheereth with its joy her patient rest?
 It is the wind, the summer-breath of heaven!

III.

What is it that unfoldeth from the mountains
The mists that veil'd their summits from our sight ?
What is it that, around the woodland fountains,
Lingers awhile with whispers of delight,—
That loves to wander near the bank of rivers,
Gliding with mirth and gentleness along,
While o'er their breast the parting daylight quivers,
And birds raise cheerfully their even-song ?
It is the wind, the summer-breath of heaven !

IV.

What is it that, along the forest stealing,
Calls leaf and branch to greet its welcome voice ?
What is it that, through shelter'd valley pealing,
Bids giant trees and lowly plants rejoice,—
That passes gaily o'er the fresh young flowers,
And bears along their richly-scented breath,—
That chases winter from the plains and bowers,
And wakens life and joy from blight and death ?
It is the wind, the summer-breath of heaven !

V.

What is it that in sunshine and in gladness
Sweeps onward o'er the deep the tall, proud ship,
That with its murmur cheers the sick man's sadness,
And brings calm words of comfort to his lip ?
What is it in whose whispers low and broken
The lonely mourner seems again to hear
Kind, loving words that once of yore were spoken
By long-departed ones, unseen yet dear ?
It is the wind, the summer-breath of heaven !

VI.

It is a "still, small voice,"—a voice that telleth
A gentle tale of love, and joy, and peace ;
It is a breath—a blessed breath—that quelleth
Our angry feelings, bidding passion cease ;
It is a messenger, whose visits leave us
A token from above, in mercy sent ;
It is a comforter when Earth's cares grieve us,
Refreshing us when Hope is well-nigh spent ;
It is the wind, the blessed breath of heaven !

THE FLOWERS.

I.

Do you not love them—the bright, bright flowers ?
Have you not loved them for aye ?
In the sunniest plains, in the darkest bowers,
They are laughing along our way.
They burst from the mould when the spring's soft
breath
Is felt by the sleeping earth ;
Till autumn bringeth decay and death,
Their's is a life of mirth,—
The bright, bright flowers !

II.

Do you not love them—the gay king-cup
That danceth upon the wild,
And the yellow primrose that looketh up
Like a meek and loving child,

The rose whose sharp but unheeded thorn
Hath punished your eager hand,
The woodbine wreath from the hedge-row torn,
And the water-plant brought to land,—
The bright, bright flowers?

III.

Do they not whisper of many an hour
You've lingered in some fair park,
Where the cedar stood like a tall old tow'r,
And the shadows were long and dark ;
Where the oak reared proudly its aged arm,
And spread its undying root,
While the daisy, sheltered from storm and harm,
Was nestling about its foot,
With bright, bright flowers?

IV.

And do you remember the secret nooks
You've hunted for cowslip-bells,
When the echoed scream of the startled rooks
Rang loud through the far-off dells,

And the deer arose from the waving fern,
And dashed o'er the dewy grass,
While you, on the bank of the forest burn,
Were searching, as they did pass,
For bright, bright flowers?

V.

Oh! they look upward in every place
Through this beautiful world of ours,
And dear as the smile on an old friend's face
Is the smile of the bright, bright flowers!
They tell us of wand'rings by woods and streams;
They tell us of lanes and trees;
But the children of showers and sunny beams
Have lovelier tales than these,—
The bright, bright flowers!

VI.

They tell of a season when men were not,
When earth was by angels trod,
And leaves and flowers in every spot
Burst forth at the call of God;

When spirits, singing their hymns at even,
Wandered by wood and glade,
And the Lord look'd down from the highest heaven,
And bless'd what He had made,—
The bright, bright flowers !

VII.

That blessing remaineth upon them still,
Though often the storm-cloud lowers,
And frequent tempests may soil and chill
The gayest of earth's fair flowers.
When Sin and Death, with their sister Grief,
Made a home in the hearts of men,
The blessing of God on each tender leaf
Preserved in their beauty then
The bright, bright flowers !

VIII.

The lily is lovely as when it slept
On the waters of Eden's lake ;
The woodbine breathes sweetly as when it crept
In Eden from brake to brake.

They were left as a proof of the loveliness
Of Adam and Eve's first home ;
They are here as a type of the joys that bless
The just in a world to come,—
The bright, bright flowers !

THE RIVER.

I.

A LITTLE river springeth forth among the ancient
hills,
Where the solitary nightingale her midnight music
trills,
Where stand tall groups of forest-trees, like bands of
mighty men,
Unconquered by the wintry storms that sweep along
the glen:
It runneth like a silver thread among the tufted
grass,
O'er ruddy sand and mossy stone its merry waters
pass,
And solemn voices waken from each dell and rocky
height,—
The roaring of the cataract that stays not, day or
night,

The eagle's cry of triumph as he waves his fearless
wing,

The murmur of the breezes through the forest wan-
dering,

The footsteps of the timid deer that from the thicket
bound,

The mountain echo giving back each long familiar
sound,—

These voices are awakening, near the river at its
source,—

These voices seem to greet it as it passes on its
course.

On! on the river flows!

II.

On, onward flow the river's waves, a deeper channel
wearing,

Bright roses and forget-me-not's upon their margin
bearing.

The cottage maiden seeks the cress that on its bosom
floats,

The children come in merry groups to sail their little
boats;

The villagers, at eventide, with laughter and gay
song,

Draw near to watch the river as it bounds in mirth
along ;

The old man leans upon his staff, to listen to its
tone,

And tell his children's children of the hours that are
by-gone :

He feels the welcome freshness lift the white hair from
his brow,

He forgets his age and sorrows,—he is young and
happy now ;

He seems to hear his mother call among the ancient
woods,

His brothers' happy voices in the distant mountain-
floods ;

And as the air grows colder, and he turns him from
the place,

There are blessings in his heart,—there's a smile upon
his face.

On ! on the river flows !

III.

On, onward ever flows the stream, through meadow
and through moor,

By the rich man's gilded palace and the hovel of the
poor,—

Now gleaming in the sunshine, and now stealing on in
shade,—

Now through some noisy village, and now down some
mossy glade,—

Now met by tributary rills from ev'ry wooded site,—

The river boundeth onward in increasing joy and might.

Like the singing of a fearless child, its voice is glad
and loud,

The youthful and the happy ones about its margin
crowd ;

The fisherman full often, now, is wand'ring on the
shore,—

There are sounds upon its waters of the boatman's
rapid oar :

It waters oft the harvest-field, it turns the miller's
wheel,

Its waves refresh the beggar as he takes his scanty
meal :

There are bridges flung across it, there are roads along
its banks,
And houses above houses are ranged in goodly
ranks.

On! on the river flows!

IV.

On, onward flows the joyous stream beneath a city's
walls,
Reflecting often in its depths high tow'rs and princely
halls:
Now shadowed by the trees that skirt some old,
ancestral park,
Now bearing forward on its course the richly-freighted
bark.
On, onward in a widening bed, the proud, strong
waters sweep,
Until their might and loveliness are lost in the great
deep.
Yet mid the varied scenes the river passed upon its
way,
The shadow of the heaven still upon its bosom lay;

The fleecy clouds that lingered in the balmy evening
air,

The stars through long calm summer nights were
sweetly mirror'd there ;

And thus a blessed lot is theirs on life's increasing
stream,

Whose hearts reflect the heavenly rays that on their
pathway beam ;

Who, bearing joy and cheerfulness, wherever they may
rove,

Are cheer'd themselves by peaceful light that cometh
from above,

As life's stream floweth on !

THE MOON AND STARS.

I.

MOON! beautiful Moon,
That risest slowly o'er the sea,
Come, for many long for thee!
Come! oh come! the weary day,
Its heat,—its din,—have pass'd away!
The hum of busy streets is o'er,
The traffic, toil, and care;
The labourer, at his open-door,
Breathes the cool evening air;
The mother stops her noisy wheel,
The children cease their play,
The grandsire blesses as they kneel
And join their hands to pray.
Oh! smile thou, then, on sire and boy,
Come in this hour of quiet joy,—
Moon! beautiful Moon!

II.

Moon ! beautiful Moon !
The mourner lifts his aching brow
To meet the breeze that passeth now ;
The willows o'er the lake are bent,
The flowers give out their richest scent :
 Oh ! let thy mild and soothing light
 Fall in the sick child's room ;
Let not the eyes that watch to-night
 Look up to skies of gloom !
And shine thou on the ruin'd pile,—
 The dark, sad ivy leaf ;
Shine, like a pale and shadowy smile,
 Upon the brow of grief.
On dewy grass and closing flower
Shine forth !—it is thine own sweet hour,
 Moon ! beautiful Moon !

III.

Stars ! glorious Stars !
Come forth ! oh come, each far-off Sun !
Look down, ye mighty, one by one,

All beauteous as ye were at first,
Ere man had sinn'd or earth was curst !
Come ! the lone prisoner strains his eye
To catch your first loved ray ;
For shame and penitence are shy,—
They dread the glare of day.
Come ! greet the tear that bathes a cheek
Furrow'd with woe and age,
And let your calm light cheer the meek,
And fling on Holy Page
Beams, like a smile from Heaven sent,
To bid the lonely be content,—
Stars ! glorious Stars !

IV.

Stars ! glorious Stars !
The aged seaman guides his ship
By you, with smiles upon his lip ;
The boy who climbs the giddy mast
Knows that his home is near at last :
Then shine ye forth to light the bark
Upon the treach'rous deep ;

Shine where the rock glooms tall and dark,
And where the whirlpools sweep.
And when we see your peaceful beam
Sleeping on mossy glade,
Or mighty main, or quiet stream,
We'll bless the Pow'r that made
Bright dwellers in a higher sphere,
Whose beauties reach us even here,—
Stars ! glorious Stars !

THE SEA.

I:

We love the summer flowers,
We love the forest's pride,
We love the ivied towers
Where warriors nobly died ;
We love the guardian rocks that stand,
Like bulwarks, round our native land ;
We love the bubbling rills,
The wide, blue mountain lakes,
We love our country's hills,
Her woodland's thymy brakes :
Not less we love to look on thee,
Thou great and ever-moving Sea !

II.

We love, at early dawn,
Through wood and field to pass ;
We love to cross the lawn
While dew lies on the grass,
And boweth down the daisy's head :
We love to seek in mossy bed

The blossoms of the Spring,
While bravely, in our sight,
The king of birds takes wing
From some far distant height :
Not less we love to look on thee,
Thou great and ever-moving Sea !

III.

We love, at early day,
To hear the merry lark ;
We love to hear the lay,
When earth and sky grow dark,
Or while the early stars are pale,
Of solitary nightingale.

We love, among the mountains,
To hear the wild deer bound,
Or pause where hidden fountains
Spring upward with sweet sound :
Not less we love to list to thee,
Thou wild and ever-sounding Sea !

IV.

We love the noise of rain
Upon the forest leaves,

We love the gleaner's strain
 Among the wheaten sheaves,
The low, glad hum of laden bee,
The music sounds of hollow tree ;
 The chime of village bells,
 The cottager's sweet hymn,
The shouts from wooded dells
 When twilight groweth dim :
Not less we love to list to thee,
Thou wild and ever-sounding Sea !

V.

We love thy changing face,
 Changing, yet glorious ever,
Unmarked by footstep's trace,
 Thy moan that ceaseth never.
Thy calm is as a friend's loved smile
To children of a wave-girt isle.
 Thrones crumble, nations fall,
 Man's works are rent and broken,—
But thou, outlasting all,
 Art here a mighty token,—
An emblem of eternal pow'r
For men,—the creatures of an hour !

THE CORAL REEF.

I.

Nor all the tales that have been told,
Nor songs that have been sung,—
Not all the stories of the old,
Nor books loved by the young,—
Can speak of half the things that be
Hidden beneath the wond'rous Sea !

II.

For treasures lie unheeded there
Such as no eye hath seen ;
The diamond gives its brilliant glare,
The pearl its dazzling sheen ;
And gorgeous gem and golden heap
Shine where the great sea-monsters leap.

III.

But things as beautiful as these
The eye of man may reach
Amid the peaceful Southern Seas
Around Tahiti's beach,

Where cocoa-tree and banyan-leaf
Wave o'er the lofty coral reef.

IV.

In truth it is a wond'rous sight
To see that coral pile ;
'Twould seem by superhuman might
Erected round the isle,—
And space is left between to float
The stranger's ship or native's boat.

V.

It is more wond'rous still to know
Who did that strong wall raise
Upon whose summit palm-trees grow,
And herds of cattle graze,—
While savages have built their home
There, high above the ocean-foam.

VI.

Down, down beneath the heaving wave,
A thousand fathoms deep,
Where oft the young have found a grave,
Where prison'd tempests sleep,—
Where giant fish a home have made,—
There are that wall's foundations laid.

VII.

And ask you who the Architect
So mighty and so bold,
Who dared to plan and to erect
A wall where strong waves roll'd ?
'Twas not the work of man, you know,—
He builds not where the sea-weeds grow.

VIII.

You think, perhaps, it was some creature
Of more than human force,—
Some being of another nature,
Who bowed from his high course,
And left this monument to tell
Of them who in the bright stars dwell.

IX.

It was not so, my child ; no strength,
Even so great as ours,
Built up that pile, until at length
It raised its crown of flowers,
And gave Tabiti's dark-brow'd daughters
A home amid the purple waters.

X.

It was an insect family
That made the wond'rous wall!
They worked by millions patiently,
One instinct shared by all,—
For God can make the humblest worm
His destined purposes perform:

XI.

And year by year, and age by age,
The insects wrought their task,
Until, at last, a learned sage
Came, of their work to ask,
And learnt from that weak family
A lesson of humility.

XII.

For they were weaker far than he,
Yet God had made them strong;
Their work unchanged, unhurt would be,
While ages roll'd along,—
And men may scarcely find a trace
Of their forefathers' dwelling-place!

XIII.

His heart was full of humble thought,
His lips pour'd forth a prayer,—
He knew what feeble means had wrought
The ocean-barrier there;
And he could trust the God whose hand
Had guarded that frail insect band !

A RIDING SONG.

I.

AWAY! away! where breezes play,
And sing to the flower-bells,
Where murmurs pass o'er the waving grass
Like a voice from distant wells;
We'll go where summer shadows lie,
And old trees toss their boughs on high.
Come! thy steed is fleet and gay,—
Brother, away!

II.

Over the hill and dancing rill,
And over the golden lea,
By the woody brake and the glassy lake,
Beside the summer sea;
There, oh! there, our path may lie,—
And who so glad as you and I?
We know what joy like this is worth,—
Brother, come forth!

III.

Like the eagle's flight, or the rocket's light,—
Like the flash of the ocean surf,—
Like the baying hound, our steeds shall bound
Along the blooming turf;
We'll dash across the mountain-stream,
We'll break the wild stag's mid-day dream:
Why linger we so long at home?—
Brother, oh come!

IV.

The gentle air will lift thy hair,
And play on thy joyous brow;
The bee's free chime, in the blooming thyme,
Is ringing gaily now;
Thy steed, impatient, paws the ground,—
Dear brother, mount! Away we bound.
Gay, as the laughing earth is gay,—
Away! away!

V.

Where shall we turn? Where the merry burn
Calls with a loving tone,
Or up yon mound, where the ocean's sound
Comes like an infant's moan?

The dove sings in the forest hollow,—
Ride on! her's is the voice we'll follow!
Bow down to pass this leafy spray,
This is our way!

VI.

Hark to the song of birds among
The shade of each darksome tree,
And many a fount from the grassy mount,
Making glad melody:
The scent of flowers is rich and sweet,
When they are crush'd by the horses' feet.
Is not our ride to-day, my boy,
Quite full of joy?

VII.

Beware! beware! the timid hare
Is skimming across our way;
The deer take flight to the upland height
From the fern-leaves where they lay.
See where the small green lizard creeps,
And here is the nest where the dormouse sleeps.
Look where the shadowy leaves are stirr'd
By the glad bird!

VIII.

We'll quit the shade of this fair glade,
Where flickering shadows lie,
And up yon slope, like the antelope,
Our gallant steeds shall fly.
And through long wintry hours we'll talk
Of the day we threaded the woodland walk,
And tell what breezy hills we clomb,
Far, far from home.
Away! away! ere the light grows grey,—
By mount and by valley, away! away!

A STORY.

I.

COME! you would have me tell a story
Of ramble in the grassy lane,
Or visit to the castle hoary,
Or gay shell-gath'ring by the main,—
One of the many tales I've often told
Of times when I was only six years old.

II.

I love to think of those gone days
When I'd one sister and a brother,
And we together sang glad lays,
Or sat in silence round my mother;
And hung, as you do now, on every word
Of well-known tale, more loved the oftener heard.

III.

That brother is beyond the sea,
That sister seen but in my dreams;
But ye grow up in love to me,
Our parents' smile upon us beams,

So 'tis not sad to think of that gone time,
Tho' we are dwellers in a stranger clime.

IV.

Come, then ! sit round, and I will talk,—
You, dear one, rest upon my knee ;
My tale shall be about a walk,
Not by the castle, nor the sea,
But on a hill, with low, thick grass o'erspread,
To which a long and shady pathway led.

V.

It was a pleasant place,—that hill,—
Although no tree grew on its face,
No sound was near of gurgling rill,
And yet it was a pleasant place,
For there the happy village child might find
The early blue-bells dancing in the wind ;

VI.

And, as the bee was passing by,
The rich thyme-flow'rs might tempt her there,
Or in the furze-bloom she might lie,
Rock'd in that nest so sweet and fair,

Humming aloud all through the livelong day
To call her sister bees to come and play.

VII.

And there were often moths that flew
Close to the thymy grass at even,
Their small wings lined with tender blue,
Bright as the hue of summer heaven ;
Many a time I've watch'd those fair moths skim
Across the blooming turf when day grew dim.

VIII.

It was in summer, long ago,
When I was but a little child,
Not like the ancient dame you know,
But very young and very wild,
I went, with others young and wild as I,
Up that wide hill,—a merry company.

IX.

Far off we saw the water shining,
And tall masts bending to the breeze ;
Far off we saw green branches twining,
And glad birds swinging in the trees,

And in the corn-fields, all along the lane,
Red poppies gleam'd and danced among the grain.

X.

All these were sights we loved right well,
And yet we did not linger long,
But o'er each mound, and down each dell,
With laugh, and joke, and shout, and song,
Bounding in joy beneath the cloudless sun,
We paused not till the destin'd place was won.

XI.

And there how gay and pleased were we!
A large and pictured kite we'd brought;
The time was come! we let it free,
And up it rose as quick as thought,
Till like a tiny speck on high it hung,—
So far we scarce could see the shade it flung.

XII.

Oh! had you heard our laughter then,
Ringing along the broad hill-side!
It must have startled every wren
That in the hawthorn-bush did hide,

Sitting within her warm and mossy nest,
Her blue eggs cover'd by her russet breast ;

XIII.

It must have startled ev'ry bee
That flew within long space around,
For over field and over lea
Rang gaily out that merry sound,
While, like a living thing, our beauteous kite
Rose up still higher in the sunny light.

XIV.

This is my tale,—is it too short?
Then, dear ones, I will tell you more ;
It shall not be about our sport,
For that, when night came on, was o'er ;
But rather of the friends who play'd together
Through that long, happy day of summer weather.

XV.

'Twas not the last time, nor the first,
For all were like one family,
All often by the same arms nurst,
All sharers in each other's glee.

Time has brought changes to us all,—to some
No earthly change or trouble now can come.

XVI.

My children, some of those I said
Were young, and wild, and full of play,
Are number'd with the quiet dead.

To them the cheerful light of day,
The things they loved, the things most dear to us,
Are nothing now. Know you why it is thus ?

XVII.

I see you do. Remember, then,
To cast unkindness from your heart ;—
We know not how, we know not when,
We may be summon'd to depart ;
Let us, then, love each other on the earth,
In storm and calm, in sorrow and in mirth ;

XVIII.

For 'tis a bitter thing, indeed,
When those we loved are dead and gone,
To know we've made their kind hearts bleed,
Tho' many a time we might have done
Some action we should love to think of now,
While cold damp clay lies on the loved one's brow.

A MEETING IN THE DESERT.*

I.

A sign of human life and care upon the boundless
plain;

The "desert-ships" pass noiselessly along the sandy
main;

And silently the travellers gaze around them as they
go

To seek the palm-tree that betrays the waters' hidden
flow.

II.

It is in vain! around them spreads, far as the eye can
see,

The same wild, dreary barrenness;—no shrub or tufted
tree,—

* These lines refer to an incident related by Captain Burnes, in his interesting "Travels in Bokhara." In crossing the Desert between Bokhara and Persia with a caravan, he met seven Persians, captured by the Toorkmuns, at Ghaeen, near Meshid, while cultivating their fields, and now on their way to be sold as slaves at Bokhara. Captain Burnes paused to hear their story, and gave them a melon, for which they expressed much gratitude.

No passing cloud or welling fount to cool the hot
wind's breath,
Nought but the burning sun on high, the desert-sands
beneath ;

III.

Yet onward still the camels tramp, unwearied, swift,
and strong,
While far away some living thing to meet them moves
along :
A speck at first against the sky, upon the wide, wide
plain,
It cometh near, and then they hear the clank of iron
chain.

IV.

It is a weary captive train from Persia's land of roses,
Where ev'ry hour throughout the day some fresh young
bud uncloses ;
Where sunbeams on the forest-grass, through arching
branches quiver,
And murmurs rise by night and day from stream and
mighty river.

V.

A shout to cheer the mournful troop from yonder
trav'lers comes ;
And one has paused upon his way to ask them of their
homes,
And give them, from his slender store, a fruit in fair
climes grown.
They weep to see a sympathy by passing stranger
shown.

VI.

“ A blessing, trav'ler, from above be with thy pitying
heart !
Ne'er may'st thou know, as we have known, affliction's
fiery dart !
A blessing, stranger, from on high go with thee to thy
grave !
Ne'er may'st thou feel, as we have felt, the anguish of
a slave !

VII.

“ Thy face is tow'rds our father's land, thy path is to
the free ;
Thy feet will tread our native fields,—but they are
nought to thee !

While we, with hearts that sorrow still for Persia's
blooming sod,
Must bear, in far and dreary lands, the rude oppressor's
rod!

VIII.

"Our children mark the tears that fall upon their
mother's cheek ;
Our sisters look upon her grief, and weep, yet dare not
speak ;
Fond eyes will watch for us in vain through melan-
choly hours ;
Fond voices breathe our names unheard in Meshid's
leafy bow'rs.

IX.

"They tore us from our quiet fields to this sad wilder-
ness ;
They heeded not the children's fear, the mother's wild
distress :
We know that there awaits us now the slave's un-
varied doom,—
A life of hopeless toil and pain,—a lone and foreign
tomb!"

X.

The traveller and the captive band exchange a kind
farewell ;

They part,—the one in happy lands the sad one's fate
to tell ;

And they, the captives, o'er the sands and mountains
wild and hoar,

With anguish ever in their hearts, to mourn the days
of yore.

THE GRANDMOTHER.

A TRUE STORY.

I.

AN aged woman, poor and weak,
From her low door looks forth ;
The snow falls on her wither'd cheek ;
The wind blows from the north :
Her clothes can scarcely keep her warm,
They are so thin and old ;—
She draws her cloak around her form,
Yet shudders still with cold.

II.

“ Dear Grandmother, I pray you stay ! ”
“ Nay, I must go, ” she said ;
“ Before another Christmas-day,
I may be with the dead.”
“ But, Grandmother, the way is long,
The snow lies very deep.”
“ A hand, my darling, kind and strong,
Will guard me down the steep.

III.

“ I have obey'd the Sunday chime
Through many a long, long year.
The Lord is good,—I wait His time,—
Why should Death make me fear ?
I'll seek again the temple-door,
I'll hear the Holy word;
And I will kneel in faith once more
At the table of my Lord.”

IV.

She goes, with footsteps weak and slow,
The wintry blast to dare ;
Her grandchild leads her o'er the snow
With mute and watchful care.
Within the house of God she prays
Her end may quickly come,
For all her days are troubled days,
And Heaven is her home !

V.

The hymn's last echo dies away,—
That hymn, whose tale so sweet
Is told upon this holy day
Wherever Christians meet.

To-day they hail the Saviour's birth
In words by angels given,
"Peace and good-will to men on earth,
Glory to God in heaven!"

VI.

And now upon the altar-stairs
An eager crowd is kneeling;
In silent awe each full heart shares
That hour's grateful feeling.
"Eat, Christian! think of Him who died
In agony for thee!
Drink! for the blood flow'd from his side
To make Sin's captives free!"

VII.

The guests have from the table pass'd,
The calm yet happy crowd;
That aged woman is the last
Before the altar bow'd.
The rest have knelt in families,
But she is there alone;—
At length she riseth from her knees,—
The sacred rite is done.

VIII.

She moves to find a quiet seat
Along the narrow aisle ;
She scarce can feel her trembling feet,
Yet you may see her smile,
Because her prayer was not in vain ;
She's heard the Holy word,
And she has knelt in faith again
At the table of her Lord !

IX.

But see !—she stops,—she cannot move,—
How eagerly she turns
For one last lingering gaze above !
Still for the light she yearns,
Though darkness gathers o'er her eyes :
She cannot leave that spot—
The people's mingled prayers arise,
And yet she hears them not.

X.

A shriek ! another, yet more shrill,
Her falt'ring lips outpour,
And then she lieth pale and still
At length upon the floor.

And now her rigid form they bear
Along the road she trod.
They deem that from the house of prayer
Her soul hath flown to God.

XI.

It is not so. For many weeks
She still must wait for death,
Her limbs all trembling when she speaks,
Or draws her painful breath.
But when the wish'd-for hour comes near,
So peacefully she dies,
Her sobbing grandchild scarce may hear
The last, faint, parting sighs!

THE FOREST-POOL.

I.

COME for a while to the gay greenwood,
Where the partridge is rearing her callow brood,
Where the primrose and harebell look sweetly up,
And the dew lieth yet in the violet's cup,
By the shadowy path and the grassy lane ;
By fields that are sown with the wheaten grain ;
Come, let us roam while the sun rides high,
And the hours of morning pass gaily by !

II.

Oh ! look at the woodbine on yonder bank,
And the bough of the rose-tree, so wild and lank ;—
Spring up ! you will seize it ! spring higher yet !
You see what the bold and the brave can get !
We'll linger a moment by yon hedge-side,
Where the brightest and earliest blossoms hide—
Now for a race, children ! one, two, and three,
Who will be first at the alder-tree ?

III.

Come to the foot of the beech-crown'd hill
Where the waters are slumbering dark and still!
Here we will rest till the day grows cool.
Look down! look down on the silent pool!
Look down, far down, yet ye strive in vain
To see the pebble ye threw, again.
They say men have tried with a long, long line,
But of stone or of sand they could find no sign.

IV.

The waters close over the stone you throw,
And it sinks far down to the depths below,
But you hear it not ring on the land beneath,
For the forest-pool is as still as death.
Nobody knows how deep it may be,
But ever it slumbereth silently;
By day and by night it is always the same,
Token of glee from its face never came.

V.

Sunbeam may ne'er in its waters sink,
For tall trees above it their branches link;
Never the loveliest stars may see
Those waters reflect their tranquillity;

And ne'er can the beautiful moonbeams kiss
A pool so lonely and dark as this.
A shadow is ever upon its face,—
Look down! look down! 'tis a dreary place.

VI.

The hills stand around it like mighty walls;
And when the glad breeze through the forest calls,
It stirs not the pool, though its merry voice
Bids every tree of the wood rejoice,
And sends on the rills with a happier tone;—
These shadowy waters are sad alone!
Silent and dreary by night and by day,
The one unrejoicing where others are gay.

VII.

Oh! come from the pool—'tis a mournful scene!
But let us remember how sad it has been.
Think, dear ones, how dreary a heart would be
That shared not with others their grief and glee,
That caught not the sunshine that fell from heaven,
The numberless blessings so freely given.
Come from the pool, for it gives not back
One sign of the gladness along our track.

THE OLD, OLD TIMES.

I.

'Tis sweet to think of old, old times,

When Earth was young,

And in the fertile Eastern climes

God's praise was sung :

Before the crimson tide of slaughter

Had stain'd Euphrates' quiet water ;

Before the pride of man had hurl'd

Contention o'er our lovely world,

And bathed its fields in blood :

When life was calm, and men were few,

And all things common now were new,

And God declared them good !

Then holy hymns at eventide

Rose sweetly from the water-side,

And words of prayer awoke at morn

With opening flowers,

At mid-day from the waving corn

And woodland bowers.

Oh! lovely were those Eastern climes,
And happy were those old, old times!

II.

For then, along the forest hollow
 Low whispers came,
Bidding the eager child to follow,
 Calling his name,
And guiding, by their low rich sound,
His footsteps to the hallow'd ground
Where radiant dwellers of the skies
In glory stood before his eyes,
 And told him of their home ;
Or breathed aloud their holy lays,
Where now dark unbelievers raise
 Their minaret and dome.
Then children knew that angels kept
Bright watch around them while they slept,
And often might with whisper'd words
 Glad dreams inspire,
Or touch awhile the golden chords
 Of heav'nly lyre.

Oh ! lovely were those Eastern climes,
And happy were those old, old times !

III.

For then as evening shadows fell,
 And calm dews wept,
And, murmur'ing down the wooded dell,
 The soft wind swept,

While sounds in harmony were blent,
The Patriarch, before his tent,
Calling his children round his knee,
Pour'd forth beneath the cedar-tree

 His evening orison.

And, as the early stars look'd out,
He told them of the joyous shout,

 When the great work was done,
That burst from all the sons of heaven,
While lights so glorious were given
To smile on new-created man

 And cheer his birth,
Ere bitterness or death began
 To walk the Earth.

Oh ! lovely were those Eastern climes,
And happy were those old, old times !

IV.

For often would the river pour
 A sweeter sound,
And odours richer than before
 Rise from the ground ;
While the tamed lion from his den
Came fearless to the homes of men,
And, silently, the lamb drew near,
Unconscious of its usual fear,
 And lay down at his side ;
And all acknowledged, by their gladness,
And freedom from all passion's madness,
 That spirits near must glide ;
And through the darkly-waving trees
Came soft, unearthly melodies,
While chasten'd glory fell from far
 Where meek heads bowed,
Like rays that come from some pale star,
 Piercing the cloud.
Oh ! lovely were those Eastern climes,
And happy were those old, old times !

V.

Those angel-forms may greet our sight

Now never more ;

Those heav'nly lays that rose at night

For aye are o'er.

No Prophet with his eye of fire,

No Bard whom heav'n-born dreams inspire,

No Poet bless'd with high revealings

To move man's purest, holiest feelings,—

We need not feel regret ;—

Our Earth is glad and lovely still,

And on each stream, and plain, and hill,

A blessing lingers yet.

Fair plants bloom still where angels trod,

The grass grows thick upon the sod,

The sun still smiles, the peaceful moon

Looks from above ;

The stars still give their blessed boon,—

Their smile of love,

That seems to bid us calmly wait

For a more glorious future fate !

THE PRISONER OF THE CONCIERGERIE.*

GIVE me your thought, my child, awhile ;

We'll flee o'er space and time,
And stand within a strong old pile
In a far distant clime.

The sun is shining on the street,
The sky is calm and fair ;—
Such pleasant sights can scarcely greet
The mournful dwellers there !

The walls are thick, and grey with age ;
Upon them you may trace
The signs of many a winter's rage ;—
It is a dismal place ;

* Suggested by a picture in Thiers' "Histoire de la Révolution Française."

This long dark passage, damp and still,
The windows far apart!
My child, does not a fearful chill
Fall now upon your heart?

Look round us! doors on ev'ry side
As strong as they can be;
Alas! how much those doors may hide
Of human misery!
Perhaps some faithful spirits long
For their immortal wreath,
Perhaps, with unrepented wrong,
Some dread to meet their death!

My child, look through this iron grate,
A solemn sight is here!
Where are the luxury and state,
The subjects' humble fear,—
The crowd of gay and ready friends
That wait upon a queen?
That noble brow in sadness bends
At thought of what has been.

It is the widow'd Queen of France,
Good Marie Antoinette !
Of old her kind and joyous glance
Bade Grief his pain forget.
And are there none to comfort her,
Some word of hope to bring ?
She's daughter of an Emperor,
And widow of a King ?

Her cheeks are sunken, wan, and pale ;
Her hair is white with sorrow ;
She weeps,—the bravest heart might quail
To think upon her morrow ;
And yet 'tis not for this that tears
Are rolling from her eyes.
Her thoughts are with departed years ;—
Heard you those stifled sighs ?

It is not for herself she grieves,
Though death comes with the morn.
It is for those young hearts she leaves
Uncared for and forlorn.

Her children ! she will look no more
Upon their cherish'd forms ;
She goeth to a happier shore,
But they must meet Earth's storms ;

And she who smiled away their pain,
And wept to see them weep,
Upon whose bosom they have lain
In their calm infant sleep,—
She may not guide or cheer them now,
When they are desolate ;
Alas ! her lovely ones must bow
To an unwonted fate.

And Louis :—Scorn, and hate, and woe
Were heap'd upon his head,
Until that noble head lay low,
And he was with the dead !
She thinks of his last parting word,—
Their bitter parting hour ;—
What is the fire, and what the sword
To that one sorrow's power ?

The sister, too, whose loving face,
Amid their deepest gloom,
Shed something still of joy and grace
In the dark Temple room ;
What trials yet are her's to pass ?
Is *she*, too, doomed to death,—
The victim of the cruel mass,—
The pure Elizabeth ?

Come forth, my child ! we'll make no sound,
Her hours are sad and brief ;
See ! the large tears fall on the ground,—
It is a sacred grief !
She clasps her trembling hands in prayer,—
It is from heav'n alone
That comfort for her heavy care
Can flow, poor lonely one !

This is no tale by Poet dream'd ;
It is a mournful truth ;
Once gay where princely splendour beam'd,
She perish'd in her youth,—

The bright, the fair, the envied Queen!

Oh! let us not forget

How sad our fancied sight has been

Of Marie Antoinette!

A PRISONER AT SAN DOMINGO. (1500.)

I.

ANOTHER captive would you see ?
Give me your thought again !
We'll fly to where the tamarind-tree
Shadows the purple main ;
And backward, over time's long road,
We'll pass three hundred years,
And linger where a dark abode
Its solemn front uprears.

II.

We will not pause upon the strand
Though all around be fair,
Though blooming trees by breezes fann'd
Breathe odours on the air ;
Though butterflies with gorgeous wings
On lovely blossoms rest,
And many a bird unwearied sings
Above his spicy nest ;

III.

Though sunset fadeth on the woods,
And stars are in the sky,
And cataracts and mountain floods
Pour their rich tones on high ;
Though humming-birds from bough to bough
Flit like a moving flower,
And fire-flies wander gaily now
Around the prison tower ;

IV.

Though far away the orange-tree
Hangs out its golden fruit,
And 'mid its branches merrily
The brilliant parrots hoot ;
And down beneath the forest-mound
The waves of the great sea
Mingle, with ev'ry gayer sound,
Their endless melody.

V.

We'll go to yonder cell, where lies
A captive good and great,
The victim of his enemies,—
Betray'd by envious hate.

The stars have flung upon the walls
A pale and shadowy light;
Upon that high, calm brow it falls,—
That eye that still is bright.

VI.

Yet, sorrow on his spirit weighs,—
Is this to be the end
Of him whose name with words of praise
Posterity should blend?
Is it for him whose deeds fame spoke
Among the sons of men,
Thus, undeserved, to bear the yoke
In a mean felon's den.

VII.

It is the noble Genoese,
Whose high and faithful soul
Fear'd not to brave tempestuous seas,
And won the promised goal!
'Tis he who dared his ship to steer
To seek a Western World,
And first in a new hemisphere
The Spanish flag unfurl'd!

VIII.

'Tis he whose eye first saw a light
On Hispaniola's shore,
And deem'd that one, long-pray'd-for sight
Repaid him, o'er and o'er,
For years of toil, and want, and scorn.
'Tis he who silent stood
To watch until the ling'ring morn
Shone forth o'er lawn and wood.

IX.

Look on him now! The vesper-toll
Comes slowly through the air,
Calling on ev'ry human soul
To turn to God in prayer.
He kneels upon his prison-stone
At sound of that dull chime,
And smiles, as if its passing tone
Spoke hope of happier time.

X.

His chain-bound hands are raised on high,
A flush is on his cheek,
Upturn'd his dark and earnest eye,
His Saviour's help to seek.

And soon a ray of calm delight
To cheer his soul is given ;
As if the Lord of Love and Might
Smiled on him from high heaven.

XI.

He kneels with peace upon his brow,
For hope is in his heart ;
Report's false tale he fears not now,
Nor envy's poisoned dart :
He, who had borne him o'er the wave,
And stilled the tempest's rage,—
He, who was ever prompt to save,
Would guard him in his age !

XII.

A sound disturbs him from his prayer,—
The bolts are drawn aside :
A moment ! 'mid the torches' glare,
A friend* is at his side.

* Villejo.

A guard surrounds the dungeon-room,
He lifts his noble head :—
“You come to lead me to my doom,—
I am prepared!” he said.

XIII.

“No! no! my friend. To sunny Spain
They bid us bear thee forth,
That all the world may learn again
The great Columbus' worth!”
“Thank God! for He hath seen my pain,—
A God of grace is He!
My name shall pass without a stain
To all posterity!”

THE MARCH OF THE CRUSADERS TO
JERUSALEM.*

I.

A BREEZE floats o'er the Syrian plains,
To tell that morn is near;
Already from the Christian camp
Rise murmurs loud and clear.
The Red-Cross Knights, with snowy plumes,
On stately chargers prance,
And, like the summer lightning's flash,
Gleam out bright shield and lance.
Now all are ready for the march
Before the trumpet calls:
At length upon each anxious ear
The cheerful summons falls.

* These lines, which have little pretension to the strictness of a translation, were suggested, at least, by the early stanzas of the Third Canto of "La Gerusalemme Liberata."

II.

The wise and gallant leader speaks,—
He gives to all their stations,—
And they would follow him till death,—
Those men of many nations !
'Twere easier to stop the course
Of whirlpools in the deep,
Or lull the free and stormy winds
Of Apennine to sleep ;
And yet he marshals all the host,—
“ March on, brave men ! march on !
March onward to Jerusalem
With Godfrey of Bouillon !”

III.

With bounding feet and eager hearts
Their march they have begun ;
Yet not until the fields are scorch'd
By the meridian sun.
Jerusalem appears in sight,
Ten thousand lifted hands
Are pointing to the verdant hills
Where widow'd Zion stands !

Ten thousand mingled voices raise
A wild, triumphant cry,—
“All hail! all hail, Jerusalem!”—
The shout rings to the sky!

IV.

Thus, when o'er strange and doubtful seas
The seamen guide their bark,
Where tempests roar, and waves run high,
And clouds are thick and dark,—
If haply, o'er the raging deep,
They see their quiet home,
How gladly from each laughing lip
The words of greeting come!
Each sailor to his fellow calls
To look at his abode,—
And, in their joy, they all forget
The dangers of the road.

V.

But to the first wild burst of joy
That Zion's walls awaken
Succeeds a deep and contrite grief,—
Man's arrogance is shaken.

They scarcely dare to look again
Upon that holy place,
Wherein the gentle Lord of Life
First spoke the words of grace.
Within those walls the Saviour died,—
Upon those hills He trod,—
And thence He rose to dwell again
At the right hand of God.

VI.

Faint, stifled sobs, and humble prayers,
And low repentant sighs,
Now, with a sad and murmur'ing sound,
From the great host arise ;
As winds among the summer leaves
Pour forth their wild, deep tones :
Or through the dark and narrow vale
The gath'ring tempest moans :
Or like the sea among the rocks
Making a mournful sound,
While flinging up its stormy spray
Along the shelving ground.

VII.

Each warrior meekly bares his feet,—
The leader and the led,—
And golden gem and waving plume
Are torn from ev'ry head ;
While, with the signs of outward pomp,
They quit all pride of soul,
And down the bravest hero's face
Warm tears of sorrow roll.
And while repentance chokes each voice,
And pales each manly cheek,
The humbled, self-accusing souls,
Thus in the silence speak :—

VIII.

“ Thou, here, great Lord, with-streams of blood,
Didst bathe the crimson'd earth ;
Shall not a fount of bitter tears
At such a thought have birth ?
My frozen heart ! why dost thou not
At such remembrance melt ?
My harden'd heart ! why bend'st thou not
Where once thy Saviour knelt ?

Unfeeling one ! and shall thy pride

E'en here refuse to bow ?—

For ever they deserve to weep

Whose sad tears fall not now !”

THE WIDOW OF NAIN.

I.

A SOUND is in the streets of Nain, of wailing for the
dead,

A weeping train moves slowly on, by dark-robed
mourners led ;

They weep that the departed soul so soon its race hath
run,—

They carry to his mountain-grave the widow's only
son ;

They bear him to the city walls, and, ever as they go,
Their blended voices breathe a strain of music sad and
slow,—

“ Beloved ! thou hast departed !

Thou of the bounding step and flashing eye,—

Thou,—even thou couldst die !

And the high hopes we centred in thy name,—

The promise of thy fame,—

These, too, have vanish'd like a morning flow'r,—
And one, who look'd not for this hour,
Weeps for thee, broken-hearted !

II.

“ Beloved thou art gone hence !
Never again to roam, at eventide,
Where the deep waters glide,—
Never again to gaze in extasy
Up to the starry sky,
Until thy burning thoughts flow forth in song,
And thy rich voice pour free and long
Its earnest eloquence !

III.

“ We bear thee to thy tomb !
And she whose ear drank in thy lightest word —
Whose loving heart was stirr'd
With but the echo of thy coming feet,—
Whose life *thou* madest sweet,—
She mourns with the deep anguish of a mother
And we are bearing thee, dear brother,
E'en to the grave's still gloom !

IV.

“ We bear thee from thy home,
 From crowded mart and thickly-peopled street,
 And halls where gay sounds meet,—
 From tow’rs that have for countless ages stood,
 And dark, bird-haunted wood:
 Beloved! thy mother’s faint and bleeding heart
 Asks where thou’rt gone, and what thou art;—
 Why doth no answer come ?

V.

“ Answer us, parted one !
 We lay thy loved form sadly in the ground;—
 Answer us ! hast thou found
 Some land where grief like our’s is unknown ?
 Answer us ! hast thou flown
 Where things that thou didst dream of in thy youth—
 Unfading glory, peace, and truth,—
 Say, brother, are they won ? ”

VI.

They pause awhile;—yet no reply is by the lost one
 given,—
 No sound beside the mother’s moan,—the low, soft
 breeze of heaven.

They're passing through the city's gate, they seek the
mountain-side,

To lay him in his early grave,—their beautiful—their
pride!

But who, with mild yet noble grace, so gently draweth
near,

To look on the calm face of him who lies upon the
bier?

What voice is that whose high command unseals the
death-shut eyes,

And bids the widow's moan be still'd—the silent dead
arise?

See! at his feet, in gratitude, the wond'ring people
bend:—

'Tis HE! the mighty Lord of Life!—Jesus! the
mourner's friend:

'Tis He who cheers the widow's heart, and wipes her
tears away:

'Tis He who bids the grave, awhile, give back its
destined prey.

THE MEETING OF THE CIRCASSIAN CHIEFS.*

I.

A crowd is passing the defiles
Of the Caucasian hills,
Through paths on which the sun ne'er smiles,
By solitary rills.
They wind along the narrow road
From many a mountain height,
With waving pennon flung abroad,
And lances long and bright.
They come from distant rocks and streams,
From far-off forest lands ;
And now at last the sunshine gleams
On the brave Circassian bands.

II.

There lies a deep, retired vale,
Through which a river pours
Its low and never-ending tale ;
Tall trees are on its shores,

* See Spencer's "Circassia."

And mountains in their might surround
The valley like a wall.
Not often o'er that turfy ground
Hath rung the trumpet call ;
But now, beside the quiet flood
Proud spear-men stand in groups,
And voices rise among the wood
From the brave Circassian troops.

III.

Again the morning sun looks down
Upon the stirring scene,
Where, like a new and fairy town,
The tents rise on the green.
On yonder mound the assembled chiefs
Their plans deliberate,—
They murmur at the many griefs
They've borne from Russia's hate:
"Circassia shall not call in vain,—
We'll give our latest breath !"
The words re-echo down the plain,—
"We'll fight for her till death !"

IV.

“Heroes!” an aged warrior said,
“My strength is failing fast;
Four of my gallant sons are dead,—
This young one is my last!
My sons were laid in bloody graves,
And I am near my end,
And yet, to fight the Russian slaves,
This dearest one I lend.
Fight bravely for each quiet hearth,
For each dear family;
No warrior-bands in all the earth
Have a holier cause than we!”

V.

In silence they have heard him speak,—
In silence he departs.
The chieftains stand with flushing cheek
And high, undaunted hearts.
But when no more they see his form
Among the waving trees,
A shout as loud as midnight storm
Bursts forth upon the breeze.

The mountains standing round about,
Deep cave, and rocky den,
Give wildly back an answering shout
To the brave Circassian men !

SOLEMN THOUGHTS.

I.

GATHER in silence here !

Speak not above your breath !

For now the old, old year,

Is near its death !

And while we wait the midnight bell,

That rings the dying one's last knell,

Let each inquire of his heart

What witness the old year,

Whose latest moments now depart,

Shall of his actions bear !

Have blessings shone along his road,

Riches, and peace, and health ?

And has *one* sufferer's abode

Been gladden'd by his wealth ?

It is a solemn time, the death of the old year !

II.

Let each, in quiet thought,
While waiting for the morrow,
Ask what the year has brought
Of joy or sorrow ;

And, with all worldly pride subdued,
Lift up his heart in gratitude
For all the gladness on his path ;

Or if, with weeping eye,
Within the old year's days, he hath
Seen a beloved one die,

Let him awhile in silence kneel
And make his humble prayer,
Till calmness o'er his spirit steal
And leave a blessing there !

It is a solemn time, the death of the old year !

III.

To them whose homes are fill'd
With tones of love and joy,
Whose hearts, by no grief chill'd,
No fears annoy ;

To them whose days are few and bright ;
To them whose hairs with age are white ;
To them who wander on in glce,
 Whose roses have no thorn ;
To them whose spirits death may free
 Before the morrow's morn ;
To all who know the awful goal
 In few years must be won ;
To ev'ry answerable soul,—
 To earth's most thoughtless son,—
 It is a solemn time, the death of the old year !

IV.

My children, gather near !
 Upon the past look back !
Had not the old, old year,
 A peaceful track ?
And have we all in earnest striven
To act as servants of high Heaven ?
And have we search'd for wisdom's light
 With an unfailing love,
And ask'd, to aid our feeble sight,
 Assistance from above ?

Has ev'ry pow'r of heart and mind,
By the Creator lent,
In one unwearied course combined,
Been well and gladly spent?

It is a solemn time, the death of the old year!

V.

The knell has rung! 'Tis done!
The last, last hour has fled!
The new year has begun,
The old is dead!

With strength renew'd from wisdom's source,

Once more we'll gladly tread our course,

And with a hope that boldly springs

Above distress and death,

To lovely and unsullied things

That fade not at Time's breath,

And with a loving charity

For all the sons of earth,

And such a joy as shall not flee,

We'll hail the New Year's birth,—

For 'tis a hopeful time, the birth of the new year!

THOUGHTS ON IMMORTALITY.

I.

THIS yearning for the beautiful,
So passionately strong,
That human might can never lull;
Nor fetter bind it long;
This thirst for things more glad and bright
Than earthly things can be,—
This wish that, with a wond'rous might,
The heart breathes to be free:
Why are these feelings with us still,—
In storm or calm, in good or ill?

II.

While gazing on the fairest scene
We could behold on earth,
The thoughts that in our hearts have been
Were not akin to mirth;

For dreams of higher glory yet
Than that which round us lay,
With silent tears our eyelids wet,
And bade us turn away
From scenes of Art, or Nature's pride,
With spirit still unsatisfied.

III.

Whence come these dreams of loveliness,
So pure and so refined,
Which ever seem most prone to bless
The most exalted mind?
Whence comes the pow'r to feel and know
That aught may be more fair
Than all the beauteous sights that glow
E'en in this world of care?
And in the most unclouded face,
Why long we for a higher grace?

IV.

And in our sleep, the sights that come,
The music-sounds we hear,
Are like the sights and sounds of home,
Unknown for many a year,

That soothe the weary traveller, spent
With worldly toil and strife;
Oh! whence, then, are these pleasures lent
To cheer our troubled life?
And why, when'er they come to greet
Our hearts, do they with fondness beat?

V.

Why do our eyes with gladness dwell
Upon each quiet star,
As if an angel voice might tell,
From ev'ry gleaming car,
Some promise of the peace and love
So long and vainly sought,
Whose dwelling-place is far above,
In the bright land of thought?
And even to our latest day,
Why love we the unfading ray?

VI.

It may be that those worlds are fill'd
With sinless companies,
Whose homes, from age to age, are thrill'd
By holy melodies.

Perhaps amid the universe,—
Above, around, beneath,—
On us alone hath fall'n the curse,
The blight of sin and death :—
This world is still creation's blot,
The only world where peace is not !

VII.

Yet, though we be a fallen race,
And ever prone to sin,
Within our souls we still may trace
Their lofty origin.
These yearnings for unearthly bliss,
The consciousness we feel
Of joys unknown in worlds like this,—
The visions, too, that steal
With loveliness our paths to cheer,—
All tell us that no home is here
For children of a higher sphere !

LINES TO A FADING GERANIUM.

I.

CHILD of a gayer land,
And milder clime than this,—
Thou that the breeze with murmurs bland
Of old was wont to kiss,—
Alas! our wintry tempest's breath
Hath been to thee the blast of death.
Thy pale and shrivell'd leaves
Are falling to the ground ;
In truth my spirit starts and grieves,
Whene'er I hear the sound,
As if it were the latest knell
Of something I had loved right well.

II.

Dreamers* have found in thee,
Thou solitary plant,
That seekest not the sunshine's glee,
And feelest not the want

* The "sorrowful geranium" is the emblem of a melancholy spirit.

Of fellowship and neighbourhood,—
Preferring still thy solitude,—
A type of mournful hearts,
 Bow'd down with silent woe,
Who, when the joy of life departs,
 From splendour's dazzling show
Will turn them wearily aside,
Their melancholy thoughts to hide:

III.

Yet now far sadder still,
 When fearful storms awake,
And frost hath prison'd every rill,
 And hidden every lake ;
While from the woods and mountains hoary
Hath pass'd away all former glory,
Thy drooping head declares
 How deeply thou hast pined
For pleasant sounds and balmy airs,
 The nurses of thy kind,—
Tis well that thou should'st perish now,—
This is no home for such as thou !

IV.

Oh ! it is even thus,
When sorrow's gath'ring cloud,
That chills all comeliness in us,
Enwraps us like a shroud : ..
And mutt'ring tempests round us roll
In the dark winter of the soul ;
When sadly, one by one,
The wither'd leaves of life
Fall down and leave the stem alone
To meet the shock of strife,
Till e'en the lonely trunk at length
Is shatter'd by the whirlwind's strength.

V.

Fade on ! this was no home
For loveliness like thine :
Thou lovest not the sculptured dome :
The tendrils of the vine,
Or blossoms of th' acacia-tree,
Had form'd a roof more meet for thee—
Some quiet, mossy nook,
Where mid-day shades are deep,
And music from the far-off brook
Might lull thee to thy sleep :

There, shelter'd from the winter's rage,
Should be thy lonely hermitage.

VI.

Yet still do odours rise
Now from thy faded bloom,
As if a grateful sacrifice
Were offer'd for thy doom :
And thou didst joy to pass away
When nothing that was dear might stay :
Like some afflicted soul
That patiently lives on,
And yet rejoices when the goal
It wishes for is won,
And pours in death a grateful song
To him who has not tarried long.

VII.

Thy faint, rich breathing brings
The thoughts of olden times,—
Of loved and long-forgotten things.—
The distant evening chimes,
The gladness of long summer days,
The village maiden's merry lays,

The kisses of the breeze,—
My childhood's thousand pleasures,
And even sadder thoughts than these,
Of one among Love's treasures,—
One bright companion who is laid
Alone beneath the yew-tree's shade.

VIII.

Thy modest garb I've seen
Cheering the humble cot,
Or dwelling in some bower green
Unnoticed and forgot,
Or shadow'd by some blooming mound ;
And now in thee my heart hath found
A record of the past ;
Kind word and loving smile
Around me here their sweet spells cast,
And thou, poor plant, the while,
With all the sights and signs of mirth,
Art passing from the dreary earth.

IX.

Oh ! be my lot like thine,
Save in its loneliness,
Preferring shade to gay sunshine,
Loving the wood's recess ;

And call'd by Nature's still small voice
To feel, to worship, to rejoice !

And be at last my end

With humble gládnness met,
Leaving with ev'ry long-loved friend

A kind and calm regret,
Whose whisper'd tales to them may be
What thou in death hast been to me.

“ THE HAPPY RIVER.”*

I.

Thou river of the joyous voice !
 Let others call thee by the name
 Of some great warrior chief, whose deeds
 Have fill'd the world with fame ;

II.

Or choose they some harmonious word,
 Such as was given to rills of old,
 That through Arcadia's verdant plains
 In tranquil beauty roll'd ;

III.

Or, by a holier impulse moved,
 Let others name thee from the stream,
 That, gushing near their father's door,
 Inspired their childhood's dream.

* A stream, which, after winding its way through much beautiful scenery, falls into the harbour of St. John's.

IV.

Not such the name a stranger's heart
Hath chosen thee, thou rapid river,
In guerdon of the pleasant thoughts
Of which thou wert the giver.

V.

No title drawn from old romance
Of gallant knight or lovely lady,
Nor e'en from Yarrow's stream, that flows
By mountains tall and shady;

VI.

A simpler, yet a dearer name
Is thine, among my household band,—
A name that they shall speak with love
E'en in their own bright land:

VII.

"The Happy River,"—for thy tones
Are gay as music e'er might be,
Ringing beneath the fir's deep shade,
In child-like mockery.

VIII.

“The Happy River,”—for thy way
Has been by many a wood-crown'd hill,
Each, to thy bosom, sending forth
Its own free joyous rill.

IX.

To me such name seems meet; for oft
From some retired and moss-grown place,
Mirror'd in thy calm depths, I've seen
My mother's gentle face;

X.

And where, adown the old grey rock,
In mirth and sunshine thou wert springing;
My fair, young sister bow'd her head
To hearken to thy singing.

XI.

Upon thy breast one summer's day
My little brother sail'd his boat,
And gaily rang his shout of joy
To see it safely float.

XII.

And many a solitary joy
Thy voice hath waken'd in my heart,—
Such joy as, through long, changeful years,
Shall fade not, nor depart.

XIII.

Fond faces of long absent ones
Upon thy banks have seem'd to shine,
And voices, rich and soft, to mix
Their loving tones with thine.

XIV.

And dear old tales, by Poets sung,
Have risen gently on my soul,
The while, with half-closed eyes, I watch'd
Thy glancing waters roll.

XV.

The Red-cross Knight seem'd moving near,
Where waved the cherry o'er thy tide,
Most like a warrior's radiant plume
That waveth high in pride ;

XVI.

And where a sunbeam, through the leaves,
Shone softly on the earth,
The meek-eyed Una seem'd to smile
In calm and saintly mirth.

XVII.

And Oberon, with all his train,
Hath danced and sported 'neath thy trees.
While Ariel's inviting song
Rose wildly on the breeze.

XVIII.

My thoughts have wander'd to the days,
When here the Indian mother led
Her children to the grassy heights
That shadow still thy bed.

XIX.

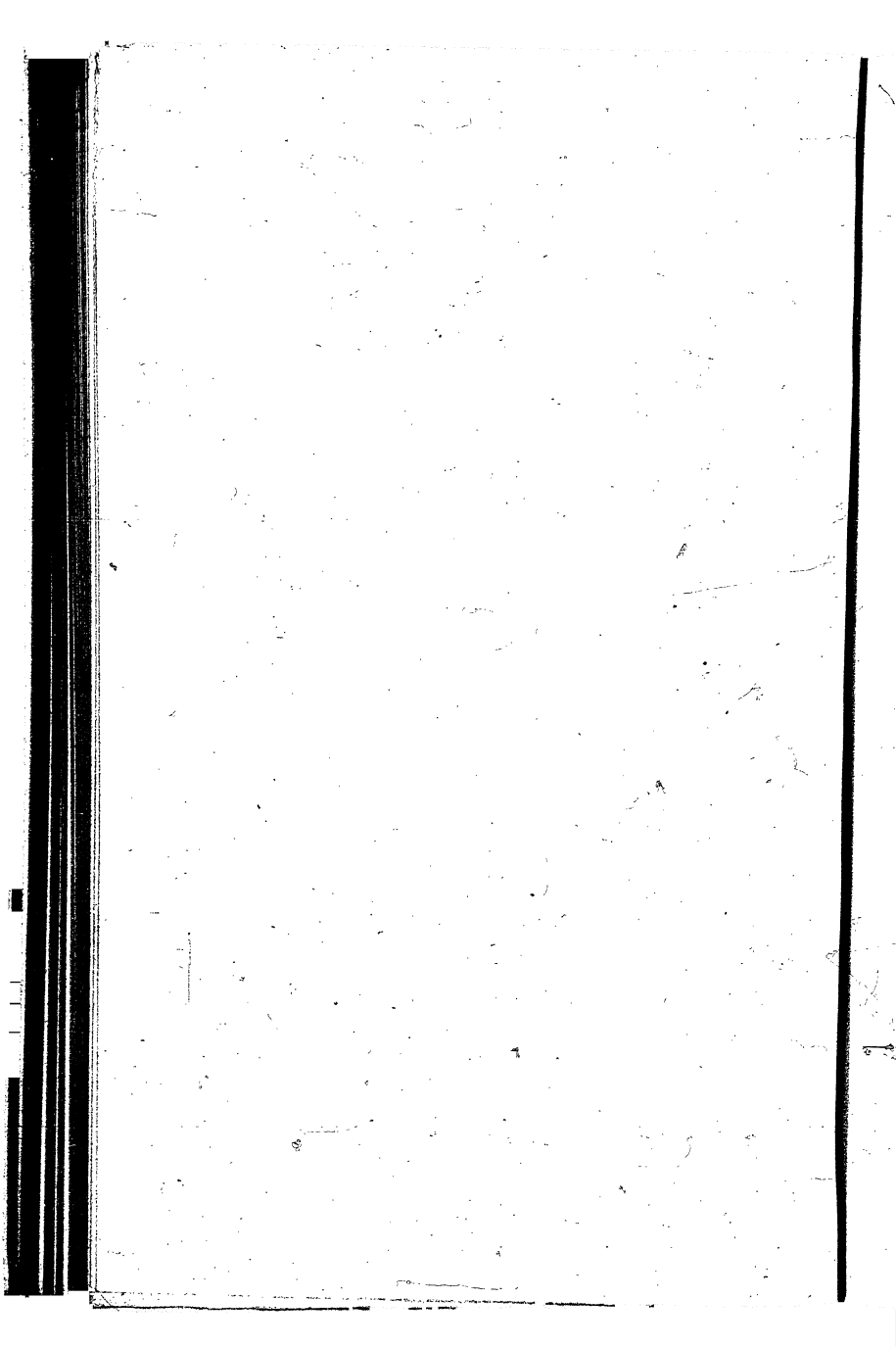
I saw them meet their sire, who had
A free man's firm and lofty pace ;
I loved to see the children spring
To meet his fond embrace.

XX.

The dream may pass, yet still it leaves
A happy picture in my mind ;—
Perchance less precious are such dreams
Than what they leave behind.

XXI.

Then hail to thee, fair stream ! all hail,
And blessing from a stranger's heart !
Come weal or woe, for aye to me
" The happy stream " thou art !

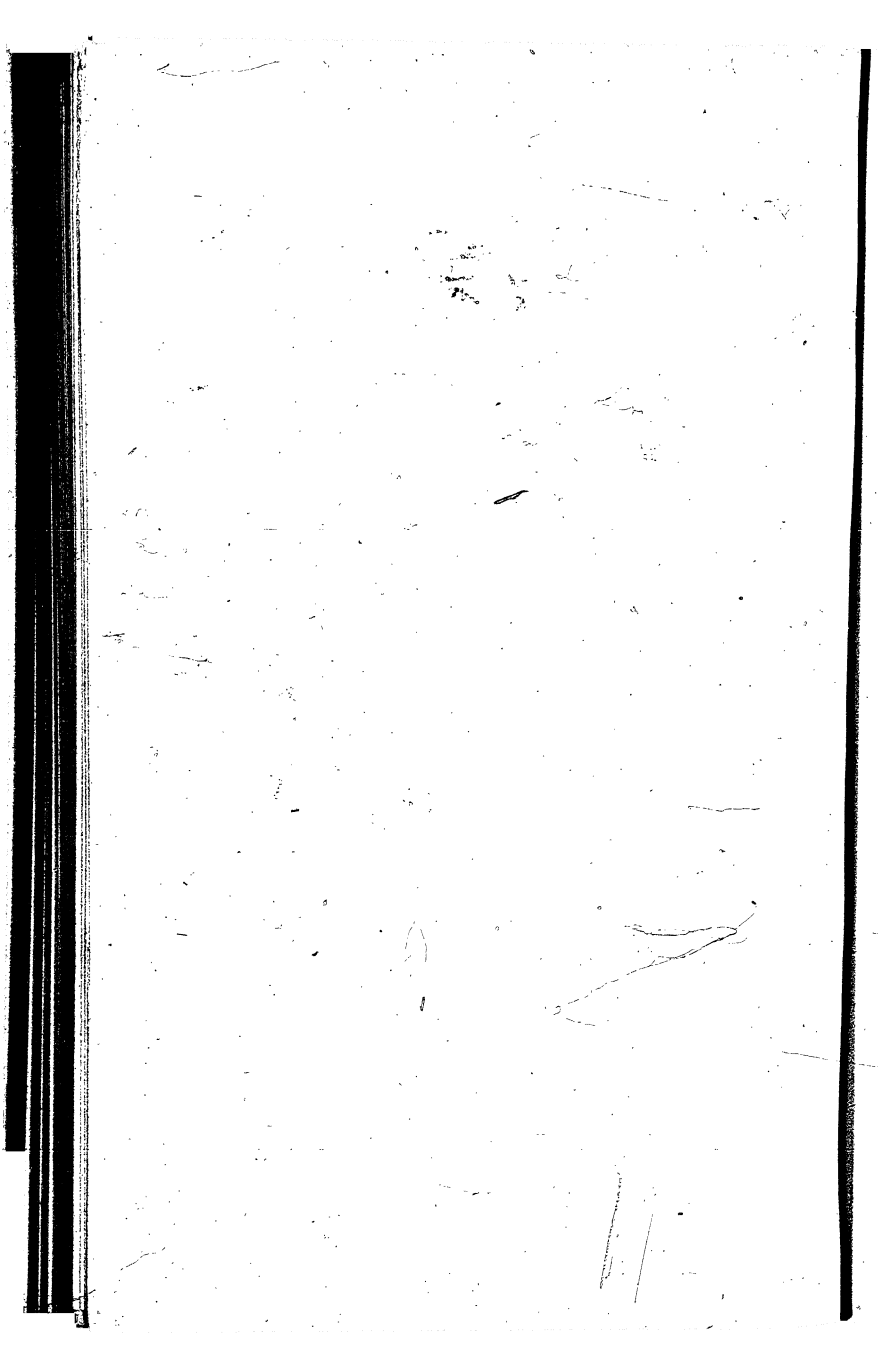


A L M A.

A POEM.

" Far happier they who, fixing hope and aim
On the humanities of peaceful fame,
Enter betimes, with more than martial fire,
The generous course, aspire, and still aspire:
Upheld by warnings, heeded not too late,
Stifle the contradictions of their fate,
And to one purpose cling, their Being's god-like mate!"

WORDSWORTH.



INTRODUCTION.

I.

It is an eve in summer time,
At sunset's welcome hour ;
The bees have ceased their busy chime,
And left the closing flow'r ;
The lark drops, wearied, from the skies,
And seeks his quiet nest ;
The heav'n-inspired melodies
Still gushing from his breast,—
Thus bearing to a world of care
The joy which thrills the upper air ;
The trees fling shadows on the grass,
Long, dark, and motionless ;
The flowers stand, like an angel band,
In silent loveliness,
And ev'ry leaf and ev'ry blade
Gives now a calm and happy shade.

The winds have sung themselves to sleep ;
The river's waters onward creep
With tender and untroubled motion ;
And far away, the purple ocean
 Heaves up its crested waves,
Awak'ning, with the gentle kiss,
That tells its own excess of bliss,
 Sweet sounds from hidden caves.

II.

The child hath ceased his noisy race,
 No more his laughter peals ;
For o'er his mother's lifted face,
 A holy calmness steals ;
And as, beneath some aged tree,
She draws him fondly to her knee,
And tells him of the ancient days
When angels sang their hymns of praise
 Upon the fair young Earth ;
Or speaks of one, long loved and lost,
Who now among the heav'nly host
 May dwell in sacred mirth,—
He looks upon the glowing sky,
 Half longing to depart,

For the thought of immortality
Stirs wildly in his heart.
Yet while bright visions o'er him glide
Of an eternal joy,
More closely to his mother's side
Clingeth the wond'ring boy,
As if he fear'd to quit her love,
E'en for the bliss that shines above!

III.

The aged man hath bow'd his head
Beside a lonely rill,
That sends sweet music from its bed
When all around is still.
Calm tears are rolling from his eyes,
For, mingled with the rill's low sighs,
A voice long silent summons back
The hopes that cheer'd his early track:
And one, who in the grave hath lain
Through many long sad years,—
One fair, young face, without a stain
Of earthly griefs and fears,—
Seems there upon the grassy shore
As fond and mirthful as of yore.

Till all the ills which time has wrought
Have faded from the old man's thought !

IV.

Oh, earnest human heart ! how deep
The spell that bids thy troubles sleep

 In such an hour as this,
When death no longer fearful seems,
And all thy highest, holiest dreams,
Refresh'd at inspiration's springs,
Return "with healing on their wings,"

 Kind ministers of bliss !

The very mourner weeps no more ;
The saddest ones, that murmur'd bore
 The morn's gay blaze of light,
Now commune with their grief, and bless

The peace that hushes their distress,
 As evening fades to night.

Is it that they, whose mortal chain
 For ever has been riven,

Come down invisibly again,

 When earth is most like heaven.
Willing to cease their joyful song,
And move awhile amidst the throng

Of loved ones faint with sorrow,
To pour into their souls, like balm,
A vision of the sacred calm
That never fades from heav'n away,—
Thus bringing hopeful cheer to-day,
Whose light can reach the morrow?
Is it that music from above
Floats on the charmed gales?—
It is a mystery of love,
Which death alone unveils!

V.

Along the depths of yonder glade
A winding pathway leads,
By Nature ever joyous made
With all her loveliest weeds.
The daisy and the yellow broom
Are there beneath the chestnut's gloom :
The blue-bell, with an infant's glee,
Is smiling near the aged tree :
The cedar's branches sweep the ground,—
The soft green light steals down
Among the gnats that flutter round
The cowslip's golden crown :

The pine lifts up its pillar'd glory,
The oak and elm, their branches hoary,
Entwine like old cathedral aisles,
 Only less dark and sad;
For here the merry summer smiles,
 And ev'ry sound is glad!
By many thymy mounts and hills,
 And many lovely nooks,—
By many gushing founts and rills,
 And leaf-embower'd brooks,
The pathway leads; and not less fair
 The scene wherein it ends.
The wide, unruffled ocean, there,
 A quiet murmur sends,
As if to greet the beauteous things,
 Whose image, o'er its breast,
A new and peaceful glory flings
 In this sweet hour of rest.
Far off rides many a white-wing'd boat,
As tranquil as the thoughts that float
 Across a happy heart;
And like the youthful hopes whose home

Is yet unfound, across the foam
The tameless sea-mews dart.

VI.

Come down that winding path, sweet friend,
Where ev'ry well-known tree
Above thy gentle head shall bend,
As if it welcomed thee!
Come forth, and watch the moon arise
Above the purple sea,
That in thy calm and loving eyes
Her smile may mirror'd be!
Come forth! we will forget awhile
That we are in a world of guile;
We will not speak of daily care,
Nor hopes, whose guerdon is despair.
Come forth, and give thine ev'ry sense
To this sweet season's influence;
And ere this peaceful hour is gone,
Beneath yon oak's dark bough,
I'll murmur thee a tale of one
As pure of soul as thou!

And thou shalt bless me as I tell
What lofty thoughts and hopes may dwell
In human heart as in a shrine :
Come forth then, my beloved, and list this tale
of mine !

A L M A.

I.

THE hour of midnight glideth gently by,—
The calm, the holy, the soft-paced hour,—
Around whose feet the blooming grasses lie,
Silently bathing in the dewy show'r ;
While, here and there, a pale, rich-scented flow'r
Raises its drowsy head, and smiles to see
The moonlight dappling all the forest bow'r,
Down-gliding through the thick-leaved holly-tree.

II.

The midnight hour, when stars are in the skies,—
Those blessed stars, whose spirit-rays have power
To make the very earth seem Paradise :
Bright ministers of peace, that have a dower

Of pure, unearthly visions for the heart
That yearns to them with fondness,—almost seeming,
By its impassion'd love, to have a part
In their untainted and eternal beaming!

III.

The midnight hour, when earthly sounds are still,
Save where the night-bird, from some leafy spray,
Pours loud, rich music at his own glad will,
Joyous as if an angel taught the lay,—
Or like some fond, full heart, whose thoughts and
dreams
Flow forth in song, telling that hope and youth
Wander by sunny plains and limpid streams,
Cheer'd by the everlasting smiles of truth.

IV.

And, rising from some deep, leaf-hidden bed,
A voice of waters,—a clear ringing sound
Sings to the star-beams, telling how it sped
Through dismal caves and hollows underground,
Still seeking for the light; and how, at length,
The joyous waters bounded from their prison,
Like a young hero glorying in his might,
Or war-horse at the trumpet-call arisen.

V.

Gay as an infant's laughter is that tone,
Singing of love, and purity, and bliss,—
And telling how the fair Narcissus shone,
Bending to greet its mirror'd loveliness :
And how the willow bathed her pale, green leaves,
And dried them gaily in the evening wind,
In regions where the deathless ivy weaves
A garland round the oak's proud crest to bind.

VI.

And then it singeth of the antler'd deer,
Upspringing from the fern along the brink,
And with a stately motion drawing near
To that unsullied water-course to drink ;
And how young voices, far among the hills,
Made music scarce less joyous than its own,
Taught, by the murmur of the mountain-rills,
A gladness but to Nature's children known.

VII.

The midnight hour, when dreams are in the earth,
Quick'ning the weary soul,—the hopeless spirit,—
Awhile to new, bright wishes giving birth,
And whisp'ring of fresh pleasures to inherit.

The midnight hour, that stills the cry of pain,
 And seals the suff'ring infant's eyes in sleep,
 While softly o'er the mother's heart again
 Thoughts of her child's unblighted future sweep.

VIII.

The midnight hour! Her silent presence moves
 Through yonder garden, where her white feet crush
 Sweet odours from the thyme; and, as she roves
 Along the dells where crystal fountains gush,
 Her gentle fingers close the drooping eyes
 Of flow'rs that else might fade before the morn:
 For her the lily breathes its balmiest sighs,—
 For her the rose's spicy scent is born.

IX.

Well might she long to linger in that place,
 So rich in all earth owns of loveliest!
 There, marble forms, with melancholy grace,
 And still, yet glorious beauty, on the crest
 Of wooded heights, are gleaming softly out,
 Like holy thoughts, amid encircling shades;
 While ev'ry breeze that stirreth round about
 Sendeth a long, deep echo down the glades;—

X.

An echo like a whisper from the ground,—
An utterance to speak the yearning love
That thrills the mother earth ; a joyful sound,
To which replies the fond and faithful dove,—
Filling with wilder glee the nightingale,
While loud and louder still his quick notes throng,
As if the light of heav'n might rather fail
Than that wide love which speaketh in his song.

XI.

And there are groves of blossom-laden trees ;
And smooth, green lawns ; and grassy paths : and
plants
That ring their colour'd bells whene'er the breeze
Passes at morn along their sunny haunts ;
And marble founts, o'er each a nymph presiding
With light-poised urn and brow with lilies crown'd ;
And radiant fruit among the thick leaves hiding,—
All these, and more, are in that garden found.

XII.

And in the midst a palace, like a vision,
Lifteth its front to greet the moonbeams' smile.
Meet for such dwelling is that scene Elysian,—
Meet for such scene that light and fairy pile !

The lofty walls and graceful porticoes,
 Bearing of tempest or of age no stain ;
And wreath-bound pillars, beautiful as those
 Through ages shadowing the Grecian plain.

XIII.

Young Alma turneth from those palace-walls,
 And down yon grassy path her way hath taken ;
So light, so silently her footstep falls,
 The dewdrops from the grass are scarcely shaken.
Her cheek is pale, yet not with passion pale,—
 Her eyes are tearful, as she stops to gaze
Upon the few transparent clouds that sail
 Across the moon, and drink her lovely rays.

XIV.

Her cheek is pale, yet not with passion's strife,—
 Not with the storms that raise the world's dark
 ocean,—
Not with a broken hope! To her is life
 Yet known but as a time of sweet emotion.
No bitterness is in such tears as hers ;
 They are but an expression of delight,
When some immortal hope within her stirs ;
 And such are the calm tears she weeps to-night.

XV.

Oh happy soul, to which a glory clings
Won from the light of immortality,
Throwing a halo round all common things,—
Still prompt to bless, and strong to sanctify !
Oh happy soul, walking the earth attended
By thoughts that angels love to look upon :
All purposes, all acts in one hope blended,—
A hope undying till the goal is won !

XVI.

Young Alma treads the solitary path ;
Her gifted soul o'erflowing with sweet thought ;
The earth for her to-night new beauty hath,—
Fond recollections round her crowd unsought ;—
And words, whose very sound is music, rise,
Unbidden, to her lips, the while she bends
To cull the blossoms, whose rich breathing dies
As softly as the parting sigh of friends.

XVII.

Along the chestnut shade she slowly passes,
Kneeling beside the old tree's root, to seek
The lowly flow'rs that hide among the grasses,—
For well she loveth what is pure and meek.

And now, once more, the moonbeams kiss her cheek,
As onward to yon pool she wends her way,
Still warbling forth such sounds as best may speak
Her spirit's joy, her feelings' cheerful play.

XVIII.

Beside the silent waters Alma rests,
Unheard, ungreeted by a living creature,
Save where the stock-doves, brooding o'er their nests,
Utter the gladness of their loving nature ;
And she hath garlanded her fair, young brow
With dewy blossoms, chosen for the sake
Of legendary tale of days long fled,
Or dear remembrance which their odours wake.

XIX.

She bends to look upon the pool's still face,
Whereon the lily's ivory cups are sleeping,
While stars, that o'er that fair and quiet place
Their mute and spiritual watch are keeping,
Are imaged softly mid the earth-born flow'rs,
As if they joy'd to meet such purity,
And fain would still prolong the blessed hours
When earth with heav'n commingled seems to be.

XX.

Lovely to Alma's spirit is that sight,—

Most like her own young mind,—where human
feeling

And human thought are calm, and pure, and white,

As are those lilies, now but half revealing

Their stainless leaves; and thoughts of Eden's gladness.

And heav'nly hopes, her spirit mirrors bright,

With an unruffled peace that owns no sadness,—

E'en as the pool gives back the stars of light.

XXI.

She gazes round her,—but no sign is there

Of life or motion,—slumber broodeth near.

She listens; but no sound is in the air,

Save where a fountain ringeth loud and clear.

Once more she bendeth o'er the water's side,

Half starting as her own deep, earnest gaze

Beams upward from the depths; then murmurs glide

From Alma's lips, sweet as an angel's lays.

XXII.

“Spirit! the hour is come!

I feel thy happy breath,—I know this is thy home!

Awake, sweet Spirit!

By all the yearning love that bindeth still
 My heart to thine ; by all the sounds that thrill
 My soul in this calm region ; by the sights
 To which thy pow'r hath giv'n untold delights

For thy beloved ones to inherit,—

Awake, sweet Spirit!

Come forth ! It is an hour thou lovest well :
 The deer are couching in the forest dell,
 And in the lime hath ceased the wild bee's hum.
 Man's voice is hush'd in sleep. Sweet Spirit, come !

XXIII.

Then are those tranquil waters slowly stirr'd.

As if some pow'r had bidden them divide ;

The while a low rich melody is heard,

And Alma, trembling, turns her head aside.

Anon a harp-like murmur upward steals,

Speaking in gentle words to soothe her fear,—

“Child of a lofty destiny ! why feels

Thine heart this terror ? Alma, I am here !”

XXIV.

And Alma fears no longer. She hath raised

Her fond blue eyes, and met the Spirit's glance.

Calmly as ever loving infant gazed

Upon an earthly mother's countenance ;

And she hath clasp'd the lovely Spirit's hand,
 And bless'd her for her voice's harmony,
 While fondly, like two sister-flow'rs, they stand
 Reflected in the pool's tranquillity.

XXV.

And Alma speaks. "My soul hath pined to hear
 Thy lips declare the secrets of thy being;
 Yet, now, it is enough that thou art near,—
 Enough that thou from bonds my heart art freeing.
 I feel thy pow'r. I know my thoughts can spring,
 E'en with an eagle's daring, by thy might;—
 I know thou lend'st them their untired wing,
 I know thy careful love directs their flight.

XXVI.

"It is enough that thou art here beside me;
 Yet let me hear the music of thy tongue!
 Through the dim paths of life, sweet Spirit, guide me!
 Thou, by whose inspiration Bards have sung.—
 Thou who hast given visions to the blind
 Of glories such as earth may never wear,—
 Thou, who hast arm'd the pure ethereal mind,—
 Contempt and grief, and hate and death, to bear!

XXVII.

" Spirit of Poësy and Truth ! still bend
 Thy calm, soft eyes upon me, that awhile
 Mine eager soul with thine may seem to blend ;
 Still let me meet thy kind, unchanging smile !
 And speak, oh glorious One ! tell if in vain
 My heart hath sought to comprehend thy voice.
 Bid me not turn from thy dear haunts again !
 Speak ! for my joy all hangs upon thy choice ! "

XXVIII.

" Faint not, nor tremble, Alma," gently says
 That radiant Spirit,— " Let thy hope be strong ;
 Thy love unfailing as those starry rays.
 Cling to thy faith ; turn from all shame and wrong :
 So shalt thou meet me as thou meetest now,—
 So shall I commune with thee until death,
 And these pale, fading flow'rs that deck thy brow
 Be cast aside for an immortal wreath !

XXIX.

~~" Let but one voice breathe gratefully thy name
 For some sweet thought of comfort won from thee :
 To woman's heart, what were the proudest fame,
 Weigh'd with such blessing, ask'd on bended knee ?~~

Fear not! A proud, high destiny is thine,
Thou gifted Daughter of the Earth; whose vow
Hath bound thee Priestess of great Nature's shrine!
Despondency is not for such as thou!

XXX.

And Alma smiles in gratitude, and turns
To cast her wreath upon the waters; saying
That those young lilies, with their scented urns,
Will laugh to see the wood-grown flow'rs decaying.
And then she calls the Spirit; but the tone
Of that sweet music, which so lately rose,
Replieth not; and Alma hears alone
The distant fountain singing as it flows.

XXXI.

She knows not if it were a dream or truth,
That Spirit's presence, and its gentle speech:
And yet, more gladness in her haunted youth
She feels, for all the hope it sought to teach.
Homeward she bends her steps, resolved to cleave
Still to the purpose of her faithful soul;—
Whether the Future bid her joy or grieve,
Still hopefully to seek the chosen goal!

XXXII.

And afterward she moved as one enfolded
 In joys and hopes beyond the reach of time ;
 Her life to holy thoughts and feelings moulded
 By the sweet influence of a sunny clime,—
 The eloquent beauty of fair flow'r and tree,—
 The melody of winds and echoing hills,—
 The deep, wild modulations of the sea,—
 And gayer music of fresh-glancing rills ;—

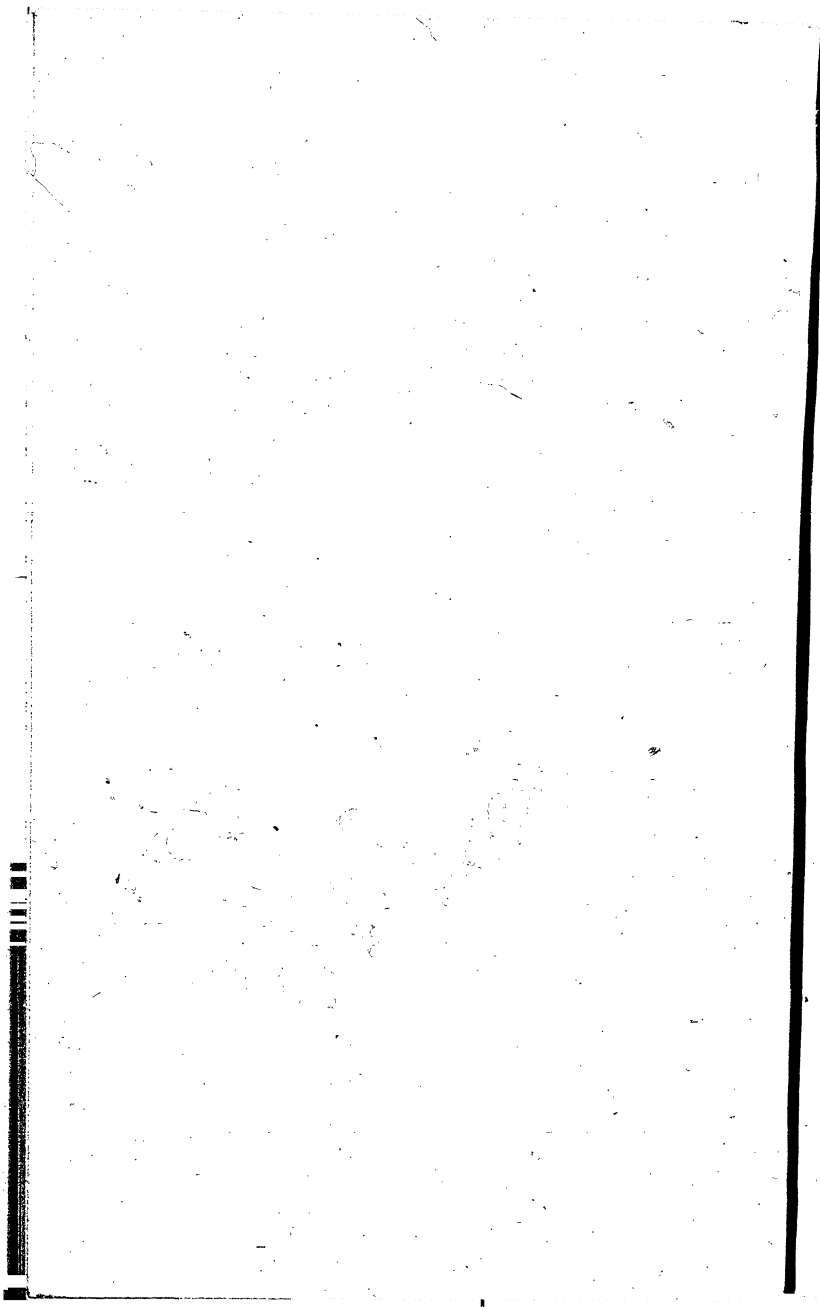
XXXIII.

And, more than all, the light of loving faces,—
 The Mother's anxious gaze and murmur'd pray'r,—
 The Sisters' laughing tones and glad embraces,—
 The father's noble brow and silver'd hair.
 From these she learn'd such wisdom as could wean
 Her heart from the cold world :—from these she
 learn'd
 Upon a staff of deathless hope to lean :—
 Thus finding all for which her fond soul yearn'd !

THE TRIUMPH OF PEACE.

"La Morte è fin d'una prigione oscura
Agli agimi gentili."

PETRARCH.



THE TRIUMPH OF PEACE.

PART THE FIRST.

I.

GAY woodbines round the casement twine,
With star-like jessamine ;
And, lovely as an infant's face,
The rose looks laughing in ;
The sunbeams glance between the leaves,
Like fond and silent smiles,
To greet the ruddy fruit that hangs
Beneath the sculptur'd tiles.
As silently as in a dream
The sunny moments pass,—
You e'en might hear the lily's leaf
Drop softly on the grass.

II.

A deep, unbroken stillness reigns,
Save when a flow'r is stirr'd
At intervals by drowsy bee ;
Or when a summer bird
Floats onward, gaily as a cloud,
And murmurs forth its glee
To earth and sky, in gentle streams
Of dew-like melody.
The vine's young tendrils hang unmov'd—
So low the wind's rich breath—
But what is Life's most silent calm
Beside the calm of Death ?

III.

What though the rose still flourish there,
The grape's bright clusters shine,
The jasmin round the window-frame
Its scented blossoms twine ?
The eyes that watch'd their loveliness
May gaze on them no more,—
The hand that train'd their budding leaves,
Alas ! its task is o'er !

What though full sweetly on the ear
May fall the wood-bird's strain?
The wild, impassion'd voice of grief
Hath call'd on her in vain!

IV.

She lies upon her stately bed,
Whose curtain's crimson fold
Still flings a bloom upon her face,
So still, so fair, so cold.
And yet such bloom is not like life,
A very babe might know
The peaceful smile upon her lip
From earth's joy could not flow.
The brow that gleams so softly out
Beneath the braided hair,
What but the angel's parting look
Had left such calmness there?

V.

Men call thee stern and terrible,
Oh, Death! thy name hath pow'r
To bring a cloud upon our hearts
E'en in their gayest hour.

Not such thou wert to her! We dare
Shed no regretful tear,
Though she, the loved, the beautiful,
No more may sojourn here.
We sigh,—it is but for ourselves,—
Like her we would be free,
Like her rejoice to quit the dust
Of our mortality.

VI.

Yet human love is strong and deep.
Woe to the shrinking faith
That dares not rise above a world
Of agony and death!
Woe to the wild and gifted heart
That bids its joys all twine,—
Its tenderness, its eager hopes—
Around an earthly shrine!
Woe to the proud and passionate,
Whose soul hath loved but *one*!
Let him draw near and look, for Death
A solemn work hath done!

VII.

Let him draw near and press the hands
Cross'd meekly on her breast,—
No more her soul looks through those eyes,—
It moves among the blest!
Let him in anguish mourn a life
Of ev'ry hope bereft;
He speaks to dust that wears a light
The passing spirit left.
Let him tell softly of the bliss
That cheer'd their past, dear lot,—
Let him call wildly on her name,—
The calm smile changeth not!

VIII.

E'en in his boyhood's days he spurn'd
All commune with his kind;
In youth he moved among the crowd
Lonely in heart and mind.
He laugh'd to mark the voice of mirth
Cease when his step drew near,
And bright eyes meet his scornful glance
In silence and in fear.

He mock'd at human faith, and love,
And friendly sympathy,
Not recking that a loving child
Were wiser far than he.

IX.

He knew not of the sweet, still thoughts
That over fond hearts glide ;
He lived a solitary man,
Weak in his very pride.
But when he saw that blest one's face,
A change across him stole ;
He felt its quiet beauty flow
Like balm into his soul.
Beside her innocence, his strength
Of intellect was nought ;
Far nobler seem'd her utterance
Of one fresh, holy thought.

X.

To her he spoke not of the past.
He would not seek to dim
Her radiant spirit with the griefs
That had afflicted him.

He learn'd to love the things she loved ;
The gay, pied moss that made
A pillow for her gentle head
Beneath the cedar-shade ;
The flow'rs in which her young heart read
Its own sweet dreams of love ;
The lark's triumphant matin-song ;
The murmur of the dove :

XI.

All these, scarce mark'd by him before,
Had then grown lovelier.
He joy'd to greet them, for they all
Were eloquent of *her*.
A "fountain of sweet waters" woke
To music at her voice,
Bidding his soul, refresh'd and cheer'd,
Look round him and rejoice.
He thought less scornfully of men,—
More humbly of his Lord,—
How could he dare to speak to her
A cold or scoffing word ?

XII.

Strange how that young and guileless one

To his dark spirit clung!

Strange how upon his lightest speech

Her daily gladness hung!

No doubt had ever chill'd her joy:

She knew he loved her well,

She thought the faith he seem'd to share

No fear of Death could quell;

She deem'd him good, and kind, and true,

And when her failing eye

Turn'd to the heav'ns from that fond face,

It scarce was pain to die!

XIII.

And now once more he is alone!

The silver cord is rent

That bound him to his fellow-men:

The star, whose beaming lent

A glory to his life, hath set.

He cannot weep,—he wept

When fondly once she breathed his name

And bless'd him while she slept

But now, how fierce the agony
That crushes down his heart !
How wild the flashes of despair
That o'er his spirit dart !

XIV.

Dead ! dead !—the rest is all forgot,—
And still the trees bloom on,
And still the sunbeams play, as if
No joy from earth had gone !
A dark, drear vision of the grave
Is rising round him now,
A vision of the crawling worm
Upon that marble brow.
Alas ! for him who meets, alone
In *human* strength, such blow ;
Who dares not look upon the heavens
When all is dark below !

PART THE SECOND.

I.

Where made that miserable man
His young bride's lonely grave?
Not where the banners of his race
In fading splendour wave;
Not where the light through tinted glass
On crumbling statue falls,
And deeds of gallant knights long dead
Are blazon'd on the walls;
Not in the dark, old abbey's aisle,—
He could not bear its gloom,—
He said no work of man should fling
A shadow on *her* tomb!

II.

There rises 'neath a branching oak
A solitary mound ;
Full many voices mingle there
In one low, happy sound ;
The mother-bird upon her nest,
The wind among the leaves,
The stream that gaily from afar
Its varied mazes weaves,
And gentle whispers that are heard
When the full heart will heed,
The messengers of peace and love,
Found in our utmost need.

III.

And o'er that mound are drooping plants
Where wild bees make their home,
And butterflies and purple moths
In warmth and sunshine roam ;
And through long vistas of old wood,
The roving eye may see
The scatter'd herds of browsing deer
Upon the sunny lea,

And grassy pathways, arch'd o'erhead
With slowly waving trees,
That downward lead to some blue lake
Scarce ruffled by the breeze.

IV.

That mound,—it is the lost one's grave;
And each calm sound and sight,
In which, throughout her holy life,
Her spirit took delight,
Now meet around her place of rest.
And what tho' vain the care
That chose the loveliest spot of earth,
And laid the slumb'rer there?
He who "hath borne our sorrows" smiles
In pity on such deeds
As soothe the bitter agony
With which a lone heart bleeds!

V.

'Tis morn; the dew is on the grass,
The lark is in the cloud,
The early rays have scarcely kiss'd
The flow'rs in slumber bow'd.

He wendeth from his dreary home,
As wends he day by day,
To sit in silence near her grave
And muse his life away.
The birds, familiar with his step,
Flee not at his advance,—
The fawn will meet his dark, sad eye,
With free and fearless glance.

VI.

Hark ! as he nears the aged oak,
A cheerful sound of song
Upon the richly-scented breeze
Floats merrily along.
A human voice ! What step hath dared
Profane that hallowed place ?
He flies,—A gentle child is there,—
He sees its laughing face,
The song still trembling on its lip,
Its seat, that mound beloved ;
The fairy hand still grasping flow'rs
Cull'd as it gaily roved.

VII.

“Far fitter watch than I,” he says,
“Art thou, oh happy child!
Lovely as she who sleeps below,
Smiling as once she smiled!
Far better than these burning thoughts,
This wild tho’ speechless sorrow,
The heart that from a lily’s bell
A dream of joy can borrow!
Yea! rest thou still upon her grave,
Sing on thy merry lay,
Although the echo of her voice
Hath died from earth for aye!

VIII.

“Mine eyes are dry,—my heart is sear’d,—
Life hath no hope nor joy,
Yet there are blessings in thy face,
Thou free and gladsome boy!

Sing on! the earth and sky are gay,
Why should'st not *thou* be glad?
Thou hast no blighting memory
To make all Nature sad.
Sing on! thou hast her own sweet voice,
Her own deep, tender gaze,—
Thou bring'st me back the lovely dreams
Of long-departed days!"

IX.

The boy has heard those mournful words,
Heard, but not understood,
His heart was with the playful things
That haunt the neighb'ring wood.
He lays his finger on his lip,
And bows his head, to hear
The doves' fond call and sweet response
Fall softly on the ear.
He loves to watch their calm, round eyes
Gleam downward from the bough;
He feels his spirit bound to them,
He knows not why nor how.

X.

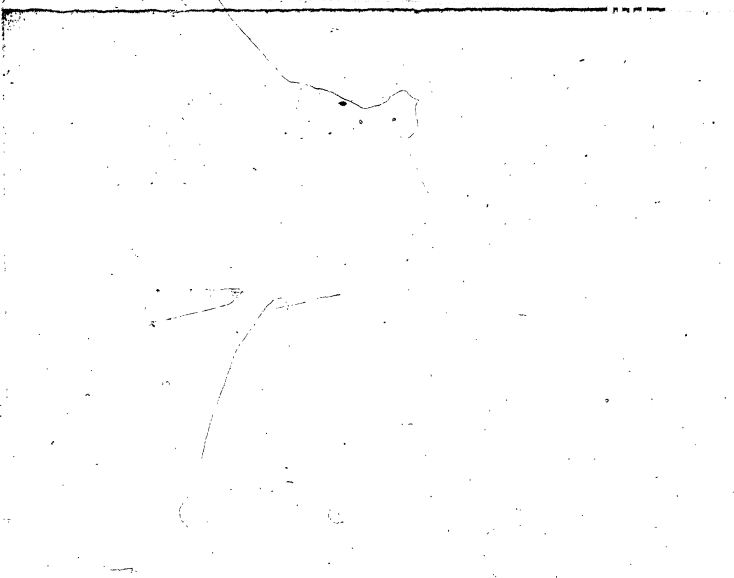
Oh blessed child ! the man of grief
Those loving sounds hath heard.
There lay a meaning in their voice,—
'Twas wise to speak no word.
'Twas wise to let that harmony
Sink calmly on his soul.
He kneels beside his loved one's grave,
And fast the big tears roll,
The first he has had pow'r to shed
Through all his bitter woe,—
A blessing on the holy thought
That bade those warm tears flow !

XI.

There glides a vision o'er his sense
Of Eden's bow'rs of bliss,
And there he sees the lost one smile
In saintly loveliness.
He prays !—his pride is humbled now.
Angels rejoice on high,
When from a prostrate soul, like his,
Bursts forth a pleading cry.

Oh! human love is strong,—more strong,
More deep that love divine,
Which o'er a bruised and wayward heart
Caused light and hope to shine!

THE END.



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