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Between the Lights

BY

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WILLIAM BRIGGS
1904

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BETWEEN

Between

DREAMS

O dreams

INHERITANCE

There live

A WOODLAND

Noisy little

INDIAN SUNDAY

I have striven

THE WIND

"Dear Mother"

A SEA SONG

'Tis O! my

PANSIES

Pansies for

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BETWEEN THE LIGHTS.

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BETWEEN THE LIGHTS.

Between the lights when day had died,
She, straying from the unknown wide,
Paused for a moment at my side—

Only a moment, but for me
'Twas Heaven. I could even see
Her dear face, dim and shadowy.

A fleeting touch upon my hair,
A touch that used to linger there,
Replaced the heavy hand of care.

The wond'ring air thrilled to a tone
That fell so softly ; I alone
Could tell the whisper was her own.

But never since in twilight grey,
Or moonlit night, or sunlit day,
Has her sweet spirit strayed my way.

Only a moment, all that she
Could wrest from wide eternity,
Between the lights, she gave to me.

DREAMS.

O dreams, so dear you are and sweet,
 So deep within my heart ye hide,
 That all the pageant of the real
 Seems but a little thing outside.

I wonder if, all dreaming done,
 Our tired, aching hearts may see
 One little dream of all they dreamed
 Become a great reality?

Or shall we still dream on, and dream
 With far-off eyes that always see
 Some wond'rous joy, some crowning good,
 Some triumph in the far "to be"?

And, seeing, are content to wait,
 And hope and serve? Perhaps 'tis planned
 That we should seek the peace of life,
 And find it, in the shadow-land.

Come, then, and go with vagrant will,
 Ye joys and sorrows of the seen!
 Ye move me not while I may hold
 Within my silent heart—a dream.

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INHERITANCE.

There lived a man who raised his hand and said,
 "I will be great!"
 And thro' a long, long life he bravely knocked
 At Fame's closed gate.

A son he left who, like his sire, strove
 High place to win ;—
 Worn out, he died, and dying, left no trace
 That he had been.

He also left a son, who, without care
 Or planning how,
 Bore the fair letters of a deathless fame
 Upon his brow.

"Behold a genius, filled with fire divine!"
 The people cried,
 Not knowing that to make him what he was
 Two men had died.

A WOODLAND STREAMLET.

Noisy little woodland streamlet,
Why so very gay?
Do you never cease your babble
All the livelong day?

What provokes these sudden, gleeful
Outbursts of delight?
Are you always laughing, laughing,
Even in the night?

Do you never stop to wonder,
As you sometimes flow
Through the quiet leafy places
Where the mosses grow?

Do you never stop to listen,
Gliding softly by,
Where the hermit thrush is singing
To the evening sky?

Does your mirthful voice grow weary
When the day is fled,
And the sleepy flowers beside you
Want to go to bed?

Or with fund of merry nonsense
Never, never done,
Do you tell the patient starbeams
All you told the sun?

I was straying through the woodland
In a pleasant dream,
When your noisy call awoke me,
Thoughtless little stream.

Through the arching trees you called me,
And the sweet dream fled ;
Have you something you can give me,
Careless stream, instead ?

Nay, try not to flow sedately,
That will never do ;
Simple stream, you are too shallow,
I can see through you.

So! you try to hold your laughter,
But it breaks away ;
Ah, no doubt the joke's a good one,—
Little stream, good-day!

INDIAN SUMMER.

I have strayed from silent places,
Where the days are dreaming always ;
And fair summer lies a-dying,
Roses withered on her breast.
I have stolen all her beauty,
All her softness, all her sweetness ;
In her robe of folden sunshine
I am drest.

I will breathe a mist about me
Lest you see my face too clearly,
Lest you follow me too boldly
I will silence every song.
Thro' the haze and thro' the silence
You will know that I am passing ;
When you break the spell that holds you
I am gone.

THE WIND AND THE MAPLE.

" Dear Maple Tree, your daughter is
So fair and so beguiling,
With crimson roses on her cheeks,
And face so sweet and smiling,
I could not choose but stop and beg
That I might have the pleasure
Of taking her slim hand in mine
To tread an Autumn measure."

" Sir Gentle Breeze," said Mistress Tree,
" I fear 'twould not be proper,
For when my child begins to dance
I find it hard to stop her.
The Autumn measure that you beg
Would, doubtless, be delightful ;
But should her dress be soiled or torn
My grief would be quite frightful."

Miss Maple Leaf then tossed her head,
And shook her tresses yellow ;
She looked upon Sir Gentle Breeze,
Who was a handsome fellow ;

" Oh, mother dear," she whispered low,
" I love that gallant rover,
And should he tear my pretty frock
I'll help you make it over."

Away they flew. They twirled and whirled
With gaiety unflagging,
Till, suddenly, Miss Maple Leaf
Perceived her train was dragging.
" Stop, stop, Sir Gentle Breeze!" she cried;
But he, the ardent lover,
Whirled on and on until she sobbed,
" I wish I'd stayed with mother."

When at long last he laughs " Adieu
Her yellow curls are flying,
Her trampled frock is soiled and torn,
She scarce can keep from crying ;
For, all alone, she waits the scorn
And anger of her mother,
While he, her gallant cavalier,
Is dancing with another.

A SEA SONG.

'Tis O! my heart for the briny wind,
And the sea-sound on the shore ;
For the flash of the sun on a distant sail
Which my eyes shall see no more.

'Tis O! for the boom of the breaking waves,
And the shriek of the rising gale ;
And O! for the dreamy sun-lit pools
Where the lazy sea-weeds trail.

'Tis O! for a night of a million stars,
When the ocean's voice is kind,
And the sails are set for a fairy world
With a silver sea behind.

'Tis O! for the glint of the morning light
And the breath of the morning breeze,
And the golden path which the sun doth make
O'er the pleasant morning seas.

'Tis O! for the voice that thrills my heart,
For the voice of the calling sea;
For the light caress of the flying spray
And the wind's wild harmony.

'Tis O! for that voice I hear no more—
No more do the free winds blow,
And the song that sings in my empty heart
Is a song from long ago.

'Tis O! and O! and my eyes are wet,
And O! for my heart is sore;
And I'm homesick, homesick for the wind
And the sea-sound on the shore.

Sweet wi

Love in h

Hovering

PANSIES.

Pansies for thoughts—
 At daylight I found them,
 Sweet with the freshness of morning upon them,
 Tossed in the passage ;
 Love was their message—
 Pansies for thoughts.

Pansies for thoughts—
 In my brown hair he fixed them,
 Love in his eyes as he stooped low and kissed them ;
 With hope without measure,
 Life opened together—
 Pansies for thoughts.

Pansies for thoughts—
 On a wee grave we left them,
 Hovering angels leaned over and blessed them ;
 Safe from all sorrow,
 We'll meet her to-morrow —
 Pansies for thoughts.

PANSIES.

Pansies for thoughts—
How the skies bend above them ;
Pansies for thoughts, how the winds seem to love them
One little flower,
Gathered forever—
Pansies for thoughts.

Pansies for thoughts—
When sunlight is dying
Low in the west, and night winds are sighing,
Earth's bitter leaven
Fits us for Heaven—
Pansies for thoughts.

THE HAUNTED GARDEN.

In a sweet, secluded garden
Lilacs white and purple grow ;
Yellow jonquils waft their petals
To the violets below.

Fragrant roses, white and crimson,
Climb in summer o'er the wall ;
Mignonette and velvet pansies
Nestle 'neath the asters tall.

All the day is passed in dreaming ;
Should a vagrant bee intrude,
He alone disturbs the stillness
Of its perfumed quietude.

But at evening, in the season
When the twilight lingers long,
Thro' the garden floats the music
Of some half-forgotten song,

Whispered words and merry laughter
Cheer the quiet evening air,
And beneath the lilac bushes
Shines a gleam of golden hair.

THE HAUNTED GARDEN.

Down the walk beside the roses
Comes a figure that I know—
Ah, these tear-mists ! were we parted
Twenty weary years ago ?

Look once more—ah ! now I see her
Sitting in the arbor there,
Dreaming with her book unopened.
Oh, my heart, did I but dare—

I could almost, almost hold her,
Was not that her hand I kissed ?
Nay, she fades away as moonbeams
Vanish in a pearly mist.

All day long I cannot see her,
But at eve she meets me here,
Not a change to mark the passing
Of the long and changing year.

Seek not this secluded garden
With the purple lilac trees,
Well my heart will guard the secret
Where I meet my memories.

A FANTASY.

There's a shade in the water,
Where the water is brown,
Like a shade in my Love's brown hair ;
There's a gleam on the water,
When the sun's going down,
That has never before shone there.

There's a shade on the water,
'Neath the bend of the trees,
Like a thought in my Love's brown eyes ;
There's a stir o'er the water
At the breath of the breeze,
Like a smile that is born and dies.

There's a charm o'er the water—
I listen, and lo !
There is oft at the close of the day
A song o'er the water,
A song that I know
Must stray from a shore far away.

A FANTASY.

When the moon all the water
Has silvered, I see
A way leading straight from the sky ;
And down its clear pathway
Hope whispers to me,
Her feet in the silence pass by.

THE ROBIN'S WOOING.

Under the changing April skies
I lift my voice and sing ;
In melody I tell my Love
A Robin's thoughts of spring ;
Then, as my Love draws near, I seek
A strain her heart to stir—
She is a woman, so I sing
A Robin's thoughts of her.
And then I glance serenely o'er
The ladies on our tree,
And tell my Love that never one
Is half so fair as she.
I swear upon my Robin word
Her beauty I adore,
And also (just to please her) that
I never loved before.
I bid her take a look around
And see if she can find
Among the other Robins one
Completely to her mind.

THE ROBIN'S WOOING.

I bid her notice how my voice
Soars higher than the rest,
And not another bird can boast
Such red upon his breast.
I am the great Cock-Robin, and
Should she obedient be,
Some day she'll be my little wife
And keep my nest for me!

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THE DAY OF FATE.

O fairest day, now dim in twilight sky,
Tho' all Life's thousand days before me lie,
With thee the fairest, dearest day
 Shall die!

If I could touch thy robe and bid thee stay,
Bring morning back again and night delay,
Eternity I'd change for thee,
 Sweet day.

But ah, no god am I to stay thy flight!
Soft o'er thy going closes in the night,
O fairest day ; farewell, O day
 Most bright!

THE FORLORN HOPE.

One saw the coming doom and was afraid,
 And said, "My friends, the cause for which you
 dare
 Is just and worthy, and it has my prayer—
 My time and money are engaged elsewhere."

Another said, "'Twas a good cause and true,
 Not until men condemned it did I doubt,
 '*Vox populi, vox Dei*,' and all that—
 I think 'twere wise and prudent to step out!"

And still another mused, "All hope is lost!
 It was a righteous cause; but then, you see,
 I'm older than I was—in fact, I feel
 Too much excitement is not good for me."

Another saw the cloud against the sky,
 Gave health and wealth and all his manhood's
 might
 To fight for the lost cause and prove it true;
 His battle-cry, "Let God defend the right!"

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THE FORLORN HOPE.

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Alone, against a serried world he stood,
His few companions melted from his side ;
Yet all his life he ceased not in the strife,
Nor had he won the battle when he died.

When he was dead some said, " Was not this man
A little higher than the common run ?
This cause he fought for, surely it was good ! "
And so above his grave the fight was won.

LOVE'S DEAREST MOMENT.

Love's dearest moment? Nay, I cannot tell,
 Love's moments are so many and so dear ;
 Yet, though I marvel at their wond'rous sum,
 Methinks Love's dearest moment is—to come.

For were Love's sweetest day in sunset dead,
 Then Love her golden promise would belie ;
 And memory fill our hearts with sad regret,—
 Nay, dear, Love's sweetest moment is—not yet.

Love's dearest moment? Ah, 'twill never come
 Love's highest heights our eyes will never see ;
 Love's sweetest, fairest day will never dawn,—
 There'll always be a fairer—farther on.

AN UNKNOWN SONG

Sing me the song of a day,
Of a day !—
Of the work which it sends,
Of the strength which it spends,
Of its promise of dawn,
Of its sweet evensong
Fair and still, calm and gray,
At the close of the day.

Sing me the song of a night,
Of a night !—
How it hears all our prayers,
And forgets all our cares,
And folds safely away
The poor work of the day
Out of sound, out of sight,
In the soft depths of night.

Sing me the song of a life,
Of a life !—
Of the yeas and the nays,
Of the sorrow-paved ways,

AN UNKNOWN SONG.

Of the work never done,
 Of the songs left unsung,
 Of the peace and the strife
 Of a swift passing life.

Sing me the song of a sleep,
 Of a sleep !—
 Of a wonderful rest,
 Of a dreamland unguessed,
 Of a dawn that shall rise
 O'er the far Eastern skies,
 Of a life made complete
 When we wake from our sleep.

Sing me the song of a love,
 Of a love !—
 That song no one knows ;
 Not the breeze as it blows,
 Not the bird's gentle note,
 Not the light clouds that float,
 Not below or above
 Is the song of a love.

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LANG SYNE.

Christmas-time brings muckle sorrow
 When we're left oor 'lane ;
 Lang it seems until the morrow
 When we've lost oor ain.
 Sad tae see remembered faces
 Smilin' frae their weel-kenned places,
 An' tae think we'll never, never
 Bid them welcome hame.

Ither times there's toil and worry
 A' the lea-lang day ;
 We forget, amid the hurry,
 Them that's fled away.
 At the eve we're a' sae weary
 We scarce ken the hame is dreary,
 Scarce we miss the langed-for footfa'
 That is still for aye.

But when Christmas-time is nearin'

An' the folk are gay,

Ither skies sae bricht appearin'

Mak' oor ain seem gray.

A' the heartsome merry-makin'

Fills oor empty hearts tae breakin'

Thinkin', thinkin', always thinkin'

O' a bygone day.

Carpe
Sky
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CLOSE OF THE YEAR.

Carpets of crimson and gold,
Sky with a veil o'er the blue,
Wind wafted fragrant and soft from the West,
Haze with the sun shining thro'.

Carpets of desolate brown,
Sky that is billowed with gray,
Wind blowing, rain-laden, out of the East
Dark ere the close of the day.

Carpets of dazzling white,
Sky that is distant and clear,
Wind sweeping bitter and strong from the North
Bringing the close of the year.

A BY-GONE LOVE.

I know a hero living in a book,
 A dusty, dingy book, well hid away
 Behind the problem novels of to-day,
 In some far corner where but few would look.

Courtly he is in person, pure in thought,
 Cleanly in life, of manner somewhat grave;
 Never less gentle when most truly brave,
 Reverencing woman as a hero ought.

I know a maiden also, passing fair,
 Her sweet face blooms from out the dusty page
 A lovely creature of a by-gone age;
 To call her "heroine" I hardly dare.

For though assuredly the hero's mate,
 So good, so pure, so womanly is she,
 From strange and twisted oddities so free,
 I fear that you would find her out of date.

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A BY-GONE LOVE.

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Her laughing glance the hero's pulses stir,
He loves her madly ; any one can see
That he aspires to her hand, and she—
She blushes when the hero looks at her.

O dusty little book of charming lore,
Of maidens fair and lovers brave and true,
Go, go, we have no further use for you—
The Realistic Novel has the floor.

ok.

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page

MAGERSFONTEIN.

Far on the field of battle,
 In sight of hostile guns,
 With grim and silent agony
 They lay, brave Scotland's sons—
 Dead faces lifting to the sky,
 'Mid sunset's sullen glare,
 Dead eyes, whose rage swift death has caught
 And fixed in mockery there.

These leave the fight with honor,
 This peace is signed and sealed;
 They lie in rank and wait for him
 Who led them to the field;
 For him whose rugged face they loved,
 Whose praise was more to them
 Than all the plaudits of a world
 Made up of praising men.

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"The Flowers o' the Forest"
Wails faintly o'er the plain ;
No strain that ever piper played
Was filled so full of pain.
Hands tighten on the arms they hold,
And eyes grow wild and red ;
Man looks not on his brother
As he views the numbered dead.

Now sounds the sad "Lochaber,"
And every head is bowed,
And every heart a vengeance vows
Which none may speak aloud.
They give no sign, these silent men,
They make no boast or threat
But such as one may read upon
A stern face sternly set.

From yonder frowning kopje
A watching Boer might see
A silent regiment leave their dead
And vanish silently.
Well might its menace stir his soul,
Well might he fear to fight
Those grim and silent warriors
Who leave their dead to-night.

For they can wait for triumph
Till, on the open veldt,
With glist'ning bay'net points they'll write
The vengeance of the Celt.
No rain of fire will stop their rush,
No death their hearts appal ;
God help the Boers when next they hear
The Highland pibroch's call !

LOVE IS LIKE A ROSE.

Love is like a rose,
One my fancy chose,—
Sleeping, folded round with green,
Crimson, touched with dewdrop's sheen,—
Love is like a rose.

Love is like a rose,
One my heart well knows,—
Op'ning, glowing 'neath my smile,
Gathered to my heart awhile,—
Love is like a rose.

Love is like a rose,
Tend'rest flower that blows,—
Waking with the morning sun,
Fading ere the day is done,—
Love is like a rose.

BEFORE SUNRISE.

Soft, filmy mists of morning, cool and gray,
 A lightening shade where dewy grasses lie,
 A trembling pause, ere morn with flaming dye
 Dashes the sky with portent of the day.

Since yestereve the world has known respite
 From all her million sorrows—blessed boon !
 O hush ! too soon will come the dawn ; too soon
 The unrelenting summons of the light.

Stilled now the weary brain and heaving breast ;
 From burning eyes no more the tear-drops start ;
 Stilled now the anguish of the aching heart
 Which throbbed the long day thro' and found no rest

Oh, what so dear as sleep to weary men !
 Sweet sleep and deep forgetfulness, which fain
 Would win a space of peace and rest from pain
 Ere tyrant day drives forth her slaves again !

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But see ! t
 Far, far
 O hush
 Be still, ar

Hush, rest! Awake not yet ; with tender care
The cool, dim mist weights weary eyes with sleep,
Smooths out the lines which day has pressed so
deep,
Kisses the lips and leaves a faint smile there.

O hush, thou happy bird, soft silence keep !
Silence the song that swells within thy breast.
What dost thou know of living's sore unrest?
Silence thy song and let the sad world sleep.

But see! the faint, pink signal of the dawn,—
Far, far there glints the sun's first slender ray!
O hush! urge not the triumph of the day;
Be still, and let the tired world sleep on!

LOVE AND LOSS.

The earth and the sea and the sky,
 And the trill of a bird,
 Great infinite oceans of an air
 Where there lingers—a word.

A word in great oceans of air
 And a bird's joyful cry;
 Nothing else in the earth or the sea,
 Nothing else in the sky.

But the word has a soul, and the soul
 Of the word is divine;
 And it changes the air and the sea
 And the sky for all time.

Oh, the song of the bird in the air!
 Oh, the wash of the sea!
 Oh, the light of the earth and the sky,
 And the gladness of me!

Let me sing, let me pray, let me live,
And forever rejoice,
For the air and the earth and the sea,
And the sound of a voice.

Why darkens the day o'er the sea?
Why darkens the day
O'er the great empty earth and a sky
That is empty and gray?

MY LADYE.

My ladye's name is Madeline,
 Her coming clothes the earth with green
 And spreads the sky with fairer sheen,
 With sun-lit cloud-dreams in between.

The sunset pauses in the West
 In brighter evening glory drest;
 The wild-bird twitters in her nest,
 The twilight falls with deeper rest.

It seems that when my ladye smiles
 The cool, deep shadows of her eyes
 Are lit with radiance from the skies,
 Like purple clouds where sunlight lies.

No coiled or braided locks hath she,
 But auburn tresses rippling free,
 Where sunbeams hide right winsomely
 And weave a golden net for me.

And when she meets me by the stream,
 So pure and childlike doth she seem,
 I fear me 'tis a teasing dream—
 My ladye's name is Madeline.

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IN MAY-TIME.

O'er the fresh, sweet meadows where the grass is
springing,

Through the budding forests where the birds are
singing,

Up the hill and down the glade
Life is just beginning.

Through the crowded city fragrant winds are straying,
By the dusty highway laughing brooks are playing ;

Youth is having holiday
Life has gone a-Maying.

See the tender saplings, shining rain-drops shaking,
Where the wild-wood lilies from their dreams are
waking ;

See the old world, young once more,
Winter's sloth forsaking.

Down in windy valleys daisies still lie sleeping,
Tho' in sheltered woodlands violets are peeping ;

Spring has gathered all the land
To her kindest keeping.

THE RIVER PATHWAY.

Away! Away! So runs the river,
 The flowers spring and the grasses quiver;
 The sweet mists sway with the breath of May
 My love and I walk by the river.

Along the river pathway the tall blue flags are swaying, There's

Adown the river pathway my love and I go straying. We say

A question trembles on the air,
 An answer lingers somewhere near,
 The curious breezes paused to hear,
 The "yes" for which I'm praying.

Ma say

It comes at last—a word so sweet
 The western sky with crimson blushes,
 The world grows fair, while at our feet
 The river ripples through the rushes.
 Oh, love is true and life is sweet,
 And hope is boundless as the sea,
 The restless river floweth fleet,
 And ever changes silently.

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Away! Away! fast flows the river,
 The flowers droop and the grasses shiver;
 The west glows red with a day just dead—
 My love is sleeping by the river.

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COMPENSATIONS.

There's goin' to be a Chris'mas-tree next door!

Jess an' me know;

We saw them buyin' candles to the store—

An't must be so!

Ma says the Joneses folks is awful proud,

An' so you see,

Their little boy an' girl don't play around

With Jess an' me.

When me and Jess make snow-mans in the street,

They sit an' stare

Outen their windows, but they never come—

They wouldn't dare!

An' when we made that big terboggan-slide,

They bawled, you bet,

Because their ma said, No, they couldn't play,

Fear they'd get wet!

An' oh, that day when all the street was ice !
 An' we'd begin
 An' slide fer half a mile, their ma she said
 They must stay in !

An' when the sleigh went scootin' past their door
 With Jess an' me,
 They blubbered till they froze the window-pane,
 An' couldn't see.

But now they're goin' to have a really show—
 A Chris'mas tree,
 An' there ain't been no invitation come
 Fer Jess an' me !

Ma says that if she felt so bad because
 She couldn't go,
 She'd go and soak her head before she'd let
 Them upstarts know !

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THE CONQUEROR.

Love, thou art dead ! to-day with solemn words
 We laid thy form to rest and said " Good-bye,"
 And turned away, back to an empty world,
 And left thee lying there beneath the sky.

How shall I find thee, love, my love, again ?
 Where shall I seek thee ? For my life must be
 A life-long looking for my life-long love,
 A challenge to Death's dread supremacy.

For certain am I that there is a way
 By which my fettered soul may follow thine,
 Which all these years has lived so near my own
 That Death alone could touch the parting line.

O, boastful death, when, with your loathsome smile,
 In her dear eyes you quenched the loving light,
 And set your livid seal upon her lips,
 And hid her beauty from my longing sight,

You thought to break the union of our souls
By separation for a little while ;
By killing Life you sought to bury Love !
A blunder at which all the ages smile.

For know, O Death, though dread indeed thy power
Thou art but keeper of an open door,
Through which, in every age, at any hour,
Fair Love may pass—the only Conqueror.

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WHY.

I love her for her winsome eyes,
And yet—ah, no—if they were blind
And dulled with age or dimmed by care,
No queen to me were half so fair.

I love her for her smiling eyes,
Her dainty head so proudly set ;
Yet could she lose them, I confess,
I would not love one whit the less.

I love her for her gentle grace,
For the pure heart that shines through all ;
I love her first, and last, and best,
Because of her soul's loveliness.

THE QUADRILLE.

Each to his place stepping with grace,
 While the sweet prelude still lingers ;
 Happy meanwhile watching her smile,
 Touching the tips of her fingers.

How the lights gleam ! was it a dream
 That, as you begged for a favor,
 Marjorie's eye, dewy and shy,
 Seemed for an instant to waver ?

Nay, be not vain ! dread her disdain,
 'Twas but a trick of love's blindness ;
 She is so fair, how could you dare
 Dream she regards you with kindness ?

Better be gay, dance while you may,
 Youth is no season for sorrow ;
 Just for this set, try to forget
 What she may say on the morrow.

So to her place lead her with grace,
 Touching the tips of her fingers ;
 Happy meanwhile watching her smile,
 While the sweet prelude still lingers.

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A SONG.

A swaying form beneath the trees,
A laugh that through the darkness rings,
A soft, dim whiteness in the night,
Where Mabel in the hammock swings.

O swing and sway, and swing and sway ;
How swift the cool, dark moments fly !
Unburdened save by lightest word,
Untroubled save by lightest sigh.

The envious night would hide her smile—
And yet I see her smiling there ;
And some stray star has paused to weave
A glimmering halo round her hair.

O swing and sway, and swing and sway ;
For each new moment gladly live ;
Wisdom will come in other years
When life has nothing else to give.

But now in Springtime's fairest hours,
Ere love has tried his treach'rous wings,
Life pauses with me 'neath the trees
Where Mabel in the hammock swings.

NOVEMBER.

O dreary days, and rugged ways,
 And bitter winds so fiercely blowing;
 O fallen leaves, and shiv'ring trees,
 And bare, brown fields with nothing growing

O empty plains, and sweeping rains,
 O lonely wood, a requiem sighing
 O'er summer dead and songsters fled,
 And flowers in their dark graves lying!

O early night, and laggard light,
 O glittering frost with fairy fingers;
 O glad surprise of sunset skies
 Where Heaven's brightest glory lingers!

O changeful time of gloom and shine,
 Thy charm my heart will long remember,
 In all the year I hold most dear
 The cold and colorless November.

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CONSTANCY.

The world is wide, my love, the world is wide,
And we are widely parted ; yet 'tis true
That neither day nor night, nor time nor space,
Can separate my love-freed soul from you.

And fate is strong, O love, and fate is strong ;
Yet what is love that cannot conquer fate,
And what is faith that cannot always trust,
And what is strength that is not strong to wait ?

And life, O love, is hard, and life is hard,
Yet grief to love a nobler strength doth lend ;
And gladly would I tread the roughest road
To stand a moment with thee at the end.

And death is sure, O love, and death is sure,
But death can never hide thy soul from me ;
For did'st thou dwell in yonder shining star
My thought would build a bridge of sympathy.

So all the tricks of changing circumstance
Are naught beside a power far above
All time and distance, fate and sullen death—
The mighty power of love that says " I love."

THE LOST KEY.

I closed a chamber in my heart,
 And locked the door for aye ;
 Then, lest my weakness traitor prove,
 I threw the key away.

'Twas well I did, for soon there came
 A hand that gently knocked ;
 "Excuse me, madam," said my heart,
 "I fear the door is locked."

"No matter," said the winning voice,
 "You'll open it for me."
 "I cannot, madam," said my heart,
 "I've thrown away the key."

She knocked awhile, then gaily tried
 Her own keys one by one ;
 And sighed a little when she found
 The lock would yield to none.

Yet when her knocking ceased, 'twas I
 Who sighed ; and since that day
 I've searched in dusty corners for
 The key I threw away.

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I HEAR YOU SINGING.

I hear you singing when the day is breaking,
Ere yet the sun has climbed above the trees,
When all the dew-drenched earth to life is waking,
And happy birdlings twitter in the eaves.

So the long day begins for me in blessing,
I go to meet the world content and strong,
To find life's thousand voices all expressing
Some meaning hidden in your morning song.

When evening comes I still will hear your singing,
Filling with music all the twilight world,
While weary birds to hidden nests are winging,
And day's bright banner in the west lies furled.

So the long day will close for me in gladness,
And peace be o'er me like a mantle thrown ;
I wonder that I lived so long with sadness,
While you were here to live with me—my own.

A MEMORY.

Blue-bells nodding on the brae,
Heather blowing on the hill ;
On the bosom of the loch
Sunlight sleeping warm and still.

Crystal spring in rocky nook,
Hiding from the eager sun ;
Music as of fairie bells,
Where the laughing streamlets run.

Golden splendor on the crag,
Purple gloom in valley deep,
Where the wayward mountain rill,
Tired of playing, falls asleep.

Highland maid with tender glance,
Heart as pure as new-born day ;
Eyes like some deep mountain tarn,
Where the stars have lost their way

These are scenes which yet my heart
Shrines with Scotland's magic name ;
Could I visit them once more
Would I find them still the same ?

Crag and streamlet would be there,
And the heather on the hill,
And the blue-bell on the brae,
And the loch serene and still.

But the maid with tender glance,
Eyes so deep and heart so true ?
Nay, 'tis not on Scotland's heath
I may hope to meet with you.

ROSE OF LOVE.

Many a rose
 In the hot-house grows,
 Holding its charm for the wealthiest buyer ;
 Out in the air,
 In the garden there,
 Blossoms the rose of my only desire.

Languid are these,
 Shut from the breeze,
 Blowing all sweet from the meadows of clover ;
 Out where she grows,
 My little rose
 Lifts up a face with the dew sprinkled over.

Roses are dear,
 In the hot-house here ;
 I would not buy were their beauty perfection.
 Roses as rare,
 Sweet and as fair,
 Blossom and bloom, asking only affection.

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ROSE OF LOVE.

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Oh, for one day
To cast all away,
Just to be free for a few golden hours ;
To lose all regret,
To enjoy, to forget,
Near to my rose in a garden of flowers.

UNFAITH.

If I might choose what I must suffer here,
Since all must shed the universal tear,
My prayer would be, "O Mighty One above,
Let me not lose my faith in one I love!"
For to know false whom once we held most true,
Earth has no keener pain for me or you.

GRATITUDE.

For long the light of stars had been my guide through
 deepest night,
 So placid did they shine, so high in heav'n, so safe
 so bright.

Then fell a night when heav'n had lost its stars, or
 my sight ;
 I wandered, missed the way—in all the world there
 was no light.

Then came the light of your most steadfast eyes, so
 true, so clear ;
 They were the stars which set anew my course and
 brought me here.

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FRIENDSHIP.

You do not love me, Geraldine,
I am a friend to you no more ;
Many have been your friends before,
And many in the coming time
May slip into this place of mine,
Discuss the topics of the day,
And walk with you a little way.

And yet I love you, Geraldine,
Must love you always, come what may,—
To-day and one long yesterday,
And all to-morrows, stretching on
Until my share of time is gone—
What use to ask a senseless "Why"?
For you are you, and I am I.

Since I must love you, Geraldine,
And since my friendship is your will,
I'll be your friend and love you still ;
Since love is not the gift you prize
I'll make of friendship love's disguise.
Some live their lives from end to end
And never really find—a friend !