



MOME LIFE  
IN SONG



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HOME LIFE IN SONG WITH THE POETS  
OF TO-DAY.



"SNOWED IN."

FRONTISPIECE.



# HOME LIFE IN SONG

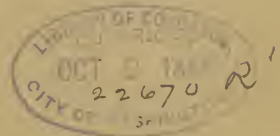
WITH

THE POETS OF TO-DAY.

I. BABYHOOD. II. CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH. III. HOME LIFE.  
IV. GRANDPARENTS. V. LOOKING BACKWARD.

33  
NEW AND ENLARGED EDITION, WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

By  
Anson D. F. Randolph.



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## NOTES.

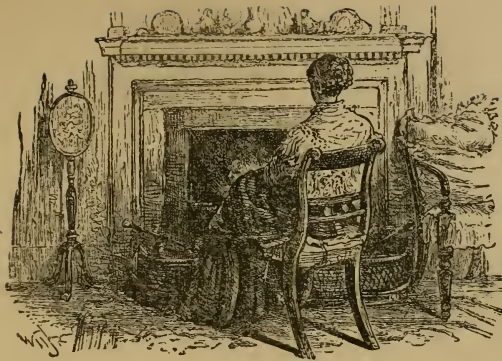
### I.

*In this collection the compiler has sought to present some of the many phases and experiences of Home Life. No attempt has been made to secure absolute unity in classification or expression; the simple purpose having been to gather—not from the published volumes of well-known authors, but from other sources—the magazine and newspaper—a portion of the many excellent verses that are constantly floating through them. It is hoped that in this more accessible and permanent form they may prove acceptable to all who cherish the common incidents and memories of Domestic Life.*

A. D. F. R.

### II.

*The marked favor which this compilation has received since its first publication, has led to the present revised and enlarged edition; containing nearly one hundred additional poems, and numerous illustrations.*



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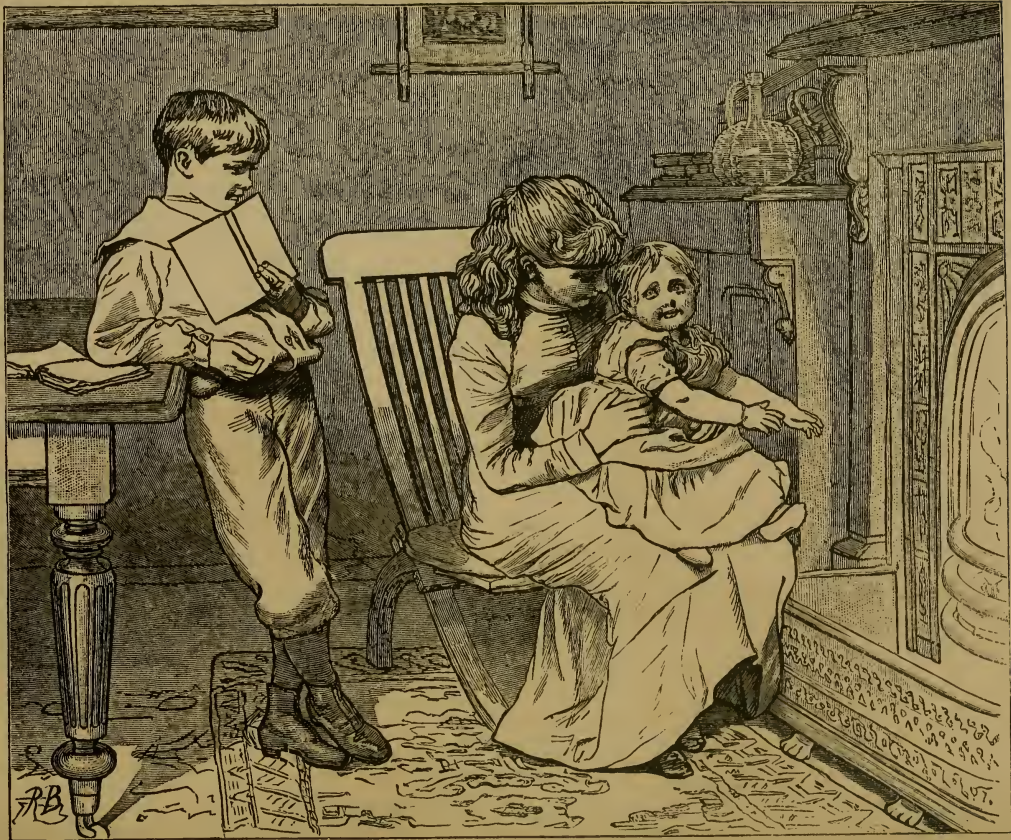
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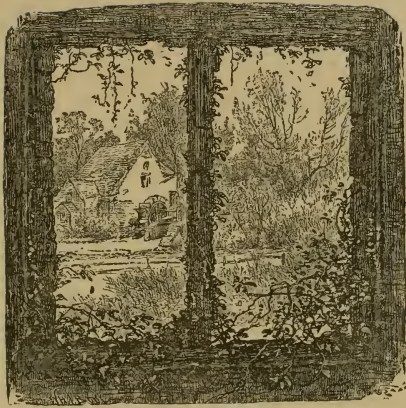




BABYHOOD.



AN INTERRUPTED LESSON.



## B A B Y H O O D .

---

### *THIS BABY OF OURS.*

THERE'S not a blossom of beautiful  
 May,  
 Silver of daisy or daffodil gay,  
 Nor the rosy bloom of apple-tree flow-  
 ers,  
 Fair as the face of this baby of ours.

You can never find on a bright June  
 day  
 A bit of fair sky so cheery and gay,  
 Nor the haze on the hill, in noonday  
 hours,  
 Blue as the eyes of this baby of ours.

There's not a murmur of wakening  
 bird,  
 The clearest, sweetest, that ever was  
 heard  
 In the tender hush of the dawn's still  
 hours,  
 Sweet as the voice of this baby of ours.

There's no gossamer silk of tasseled  
 corn,  
 No flimsiest thread of the shy wood-  
 fern,  
 Not even the cobweb spread over the  
 flowers,  
 Fine as the hair of this baby of ours.

There's no fairy shell by the sounding  
 sea,  
 No wild-rose that nods on the windy  
 lea,  
 No blush of the sun through April's soft  
 showers,  
 Pink as the palms of this baby of ours.

May the dear Lord spare her to us, we  
 pray,  
 For many a long and sunshiny day,  
 Ere He takes to bloom in Paradise bow-  
 ers,  
 This wee bit darling—this baby of ours.

## THE "SWEETEST SPOT."

THE sweetest spot in the house to me  
Is the spot which holds my treasure  
wee.

What is my treasure? Come and see—  
Only a blue-eyed baby.

Only a bundle of dimples and love,  
Dropped in my arms from somewhere  
above;

A white-winged, cooing, and nestling  
dove,

Or—a bundle of mischief, maybe.

Now creeping here, now creeping there,  
Calling me hither and everywhere ;  
Playing with sunbeams on the floor,  
Cooing—"a-gooing" over and o'er ;  
Climbing up and clambering down,  
Bumping and bruising his tiny crown ;  
Sticking his toes through the dainty  
socks,

Soiling and tearing his dainty frocks ;  
Falling and crying and catching his  
breath,

Till mamma is frightened almost to  
death ;

Laughing and shouting in frolic and  
play,

Having a world of his nonsense to say ;  
Showing the dimples in cheek and in  
chin,

Where frolic and mischief peep out and  
in ;

Asking for kisses and *getting* them, too,  
On cheek and on chin and on eyes so  
blue ;

Ready for play when the sunbeams rise,  
Ready for sleep with the twilight skies ;  
And the sweetest spot in the house,  
you see,

Is the spot which holds my treasure  
wee—

My blue-eyed baby, my bundle of love,  
My white-winged, cooing, and nestling  
dove ;

And long may he find his haven of  
rest

In his mother's arms, on his mother's  
breast.

## SHALL THE BABY STAY?

In a little brown house,  
With scarce room for a mouse,  
Came with morning's first ray,  
One remarkable day,  
(Though who told her the way  
I am sure I can't say)  
A young lady so wee  
That you scarcely could see  
Her small speck of a nose ;  
And, to speak of her toes,  
Though it seems hardly fair  
Since they surely were there,  
Keep them covered we must ;  
You must take them on trust.

Now this little brown house,  
With scarce room for a mouse,  
Was quite full of small boys,  
With their books and their toys,  
Their wild bustle and noise.

"My dear lads," quoth papa,  
"We've too many by far ;  
Tell us what can we do  
With this damsel so new?  
We've no room for her here,  
So to me 'tis quite clear,  
Though it gives me great pain,  
I must hang her again  
On the tree whence she came,  
(Do not cry, there's no blame)  
With her white blanket round her  
Just as Nurse Russell found her."

Said stout little Ned,  
"I'll stay all day in bed,  
Squeezed up nice and small  
Very close to the wall."  
Then spoke Tommie, "I'll go  
To the cellar below ;  
I'll just travel about,  
But not try to get out ;  
Till you're all fast asleep.  
And so quiet I'll be  
You'll not dream it is me."  
Then flaxen-haired Will :  
"I'll be dreadfully still ;  
On the back-stairs I'll stay,  
Way off, out of the way."



Master Johnny the fair  
Shook his bright curly hair,  
"Here's a nice place for me,  
Dear papa, do you see?  
I just fit in so tight  
I could stand here all night."  
And a niche in the wall  
Held his figure so small.

Quoth the father, "Well done,  
My brave darlings, come on!  
Here's a shoulder for Will,  
Pray sit still, sir, sit still!  
Valiant Thomas, for thee,  
A good seat on my knee,  
And Edward, thy brother,  
Can perch on the other,  
Baby John, take my back;  
Now, who says we can't pack?"

So love gives us room  
And our birdie shall stay.  
We'll keep her, my boys,  
Till God takes her away.

---

*MY BIRD.*

ERE last year's moon had left the sky,  
A birdling sought my Indian nest,  
And folded, oh, so lovingly,  
Her tiny wings upon my breast.

From morn till evening's purple tinge,  
In winsome helplessness she lies;  
Two rose leaves, with a silken fringe,  
Shut softly on her starry eyes.

There's not in Ind a lovelier bird;  
Broad earth owns not a happier nest:  
O God, Thou hast a fountain stirred,  
Whose waters never more shall rest!

This beautiful, mysterious thing,  
This seeming visitant from heaven,  
This bird with the immortal wing,  
To me, to me, Thy hand has given.

The pulse first caught its tiny stroke,  
The blood its crimson hue, from  
mine;

This life, which I have dared invoke,  
Henceforth is parallel with Thine.

A silent awe is in my room;  
I tremble with delicious fear;  
The future, with its light and gloom—  
Time and Eternity are here.

Doubts—hopes, in eager tumult rise;  
Hear, O my God, one earnest prayer.  
Room for my bird in Paradise,  
And give her angel plumage there!

---

*A WEE SANG ON A WEE  
SUBJECT.*

OH, my bonnie Mary,  
Winsome little fairy,  
Ever licht and airy—  
Singin' a' the day;  
Lauchin' aye sae sweetly,  
Actin' sae discreetly,  
Winnin' hearts completely,  
Witchin' Mary May.

Cheekies red as roses,  
Lippies sweet as posies,  
Ilka charm discloses,  
Quite a lurin' fay;  
Eenie ever glancin',  
Leggies ever dancin',  
Life an' love enchantin'—  
Bonnie Mary May.

Hoo I lo'e thee, Mary!  
Witchin' little fairy,  
A palace were a prairie,  
Wantin' sic a stay;  
Sic gladness floats about thee,  
Princes widna flout thee.  
Life were cauld without thee,  
Little Mary May.

---

*THE BABY I LOVE.*

THIS is the baby I love!  
The baby that can not talk;  
The baby that can not walk  
The baby that just begins to creep;  
The baby that's cuddled and rock'd to  
sleep;  
Oh, this is the baby I love!

This is the baby I love !  
 The baby that 's never cross ;  
 The baby that papa can toss ;  
 The baby that crows when held aloft ;  
 The baby that 's rosy and round and  
 soft ;  
 Oh, this is the baby I love !

'This is the baby I love !  
 The baby that laughs when I peep  
 To see is it still asleep ;  
 The baby that coos and frowns and  
 blinks  
 When left alone—as it sometimes  
*thinks* ;  
 Oh, this is the baby I love !

This is the baby I love !  
 The baby that lies on my knee,  
 And dimples and smiles on me  
 While I strip it and bathe it and kiss  
 it—Oh !  
 Till with bathing and kissing 'tis all  
 aglow ;  
 Yes, this is the baby I love !

This is the baby I love !  
 The baby all freshly dressed ;  
 That, waking, is never at rest ;  
 That plucks at my collar and pulls my  
 hair  
 Till I look like a witch—but I do not  
 care ;  
 Oh, this is the baby I love !

This is the baby I love !  
 The baby that understands,  
 And dances with feet and hands,  
 And a sweet, little, whinnying, eager  
 cry  
 For the nice warm breakfast that waits  
 it close by ;  
 Oh, this is the baby I love !

This is the baby I love !  
 The baby that tries to talk ;  
 The baby that longs to walk ;  
 And oh, its mamma will wake some  
 day  
 To find that her baby has—*run away* !  
 My baby !—the baby I love !

*BABY'S FIRST STEP.*

'Twas a very simple lesson,  
 So simple—yet deep and sweet.  
 'Twas taught by our year-old baby,  
 Whose wee little dancing feet  
 Were tottering on the threshold  
 Of the open nursery door,  
 His bright eyes intently watching  
 A new toy upon the floor.

All untried and untested  
 Were those tiny, active feet ;  
 Never one step had they taken  
 In nursery or on the street ;  
 But the toy lay far beyond them,  
 And our baby's eager eyes  
 Danced, and he crowed in his gladness  
 As he saw the glittering prize.

"Come, little boy ; come and take it ;  
 Father will not let you fall."  
 He lifted his face and listened,  
 As he heard the gentle call ;  
 Turned his sweet blue eyes, and seeing  
 A strong hand on either side,  
 Gathered all his faith and courage,  
 And his first weak footstep tried.

*MY BABY.*

WITH frolicsome freaks,  
 And rosy, red cheeks,  
 My baby lies waiting for me ;  
 He thinks not of crying,  
 But ever is trying  
 To sing a glad song in his glee.

His parted lips show  
 Three teeth in a row,  
 As white and as precious as pearls ;  
 And his soft, silken hair  
 O'er his forehead so fair  
 Falls in dark, thick-clustering curls.

His eyes, like two stars,  
 Peep out from the bars  
 Of his crib, as he watches for me,  
 And his pink little toes,  
 Down under the clothes,  
 Are kicking about to be free.

I'm coming, my boy!  
 My treasure, my joy!  
 You shall wait no longer for me;  
 But we'll up and away,  
 And be merry and gay,  
 Out under the old maple tree.

—  
*BABY.*

BABY, baby, on my breast,  
 Oh, my little one, sleep sound!  
 While the red clouds warm the west,  
 And the bright leaves light the  
 ground.

Mother's love is round you here;  
 God's love, too, is close and near;  
 Full and happy be thy rest,  
 Baby, baby, on my breast!

Baby, baby, at my knee,  
 Lift your eyes up, let them show  
 All the dreams I can not see;  
 Talk and tell me, make me know  
 How the world's dim puzzles seem  
 To your soul's pure waking dream.  
 Bring your marbles all to me,  
 Baby, baby, at my knee.

Baby, baby, at my side,  
 Ah, your cheek just reaches mine,  
 So, you will not be denied;  
 Glossy braids are smooth and fine,  
 And I read within your eyes  
 Womanhood's fair mysteries,  
 Baby, baby, at my side,  
 Tall enough to be a bride!

Baby, baby, far from me,  
 Lines of care have crossed your brow,  
 Little children climb your knee,  
 Fill your heart and household now,  
 "Mother," is my baby's name,  
 Yet to me, she's still the same;  
 Still the child I rocked to rest  
 As a baby on my breast.

—  
*THE NURSE'S SONG.*

WHEN nursery lamps are veiled, and  
 nurse is singing  
 In accents low,

Timing her music to the cradle's swing-  
 ing,

Now fast, now slow—

Singing of Baby Bunting, soft and  
 furry

In rabbit cloak,

Or rock-a-byed amid the toss and  
 flurry

Of wind-swept oak?

Of Boy Blue sleeping with his horn  
 beside him;

Of my son John,

Who went to bed (let all good boys  
 deride him)

With stockings on;

Of sweet Bo-Peep, following her lamb-  
 kins straying;

Of Dames in shoes;

Of cows, considerate, 'mid the Piper's  
 playing,

Which tune to choose;

Of Gotham's wise men bowling o'er  
 the billow,

Or him, less wise,

Who chose rough bramble-bushes for  
 a pillow,

And scratched his eyes.

It may be, while she sings, that through  
 the portal

Soft footsteps glide,

And, all invisible to grown-up mortal,  
 At cradle side

Sits Mother Goose herself, the dear old  
 mother,

And rocks and croons,

In tones which Baby hearkens, but no  
 other,

Her old-new tunes!

I think it must be so, else why, years  
 after,

Do we retrace

And ring with shadowy, recollected  
 laughter,

Thoughts of that face;

Seen, yet unseen, beaming across the  
ages

Brimful of fun  
And wit and wisdom, baffling all the  
sages

Under the sun?

A grown-up child has place still, which  
no other

May dare refuse,  
I, grown-up, bring this offering to our  
Mother,

To Mother Goose,

And, standing with the babies at that  
olden,

Immortal knee,

I seem to feel her smile, benign and  
golden,

Falling on me.

---

*THE HAPPY HOUR.*

THE busy day is over,  
The household work is done;  
The cares that fret the morning  
Have faded with the sun;  
And, in the tender twilight,  
I sit in happy rest,  
With my darling little baby  
Asleep upon my breast.

White lids, with silken fringes,  
Shut out the waning light;  
A little hand, close folded,  
Holds mamma's fingers tight;  
And in their soft, white wrappings,  
At last in perfect rest,  
Two dainty feet are cuddled  
Like birdies in a nest.

All hopes and loves unworthy  
Depart at this sweet hour;  
All pure and noble longings  
Renew their holy power;  
For Christ, who, in the Virgin,  
Our motherhood has blest,  
Is near to every woman  
With a baby on her breast.

*THE SLEEPY LITTLE SISTER.*

I SAT, one evening, watching  
A little golden head  
That was nodding o'er a picture book  
And pretty soon I said,  
"Come, darling, you are sleepy,  
Don't you want to go to bed?"  
"No," she said, "I isn't sleepy,  
But I can't hold up my head.

"Just now it feels so heavy,  
There isn't any use;  
Do let me lay it down to rest  
On dear old Mother Goose!  
I sha'n't shut up my eyes at all,  
And so you need not fear;  
I'll keep 'em open all the while  
To see this picture here."

And then, as I said nothing,  
She settled for a nap;  
One curl was resting on the frill  
Of the old lady's cap;  
Her arms embraced the children small  
Inhabiting the shoe—  
"Oh, dear," thought I, "what shall I  
say?  
For this will never do."

I sat awhile in silence,  
Till the clock struck its "ding, ding,"  
And then I went around and kissed  
The cunning little thing.  
The violets unfolded  
As I kissed her, and she said,  
"I isn't sleepy, sister,  
But I guess I'll go to bed."

---

*LITTLE TYRANT.*

LET every sound be dead;  
Baby sleeps.  
The Emperor softly tread!  
Baby sleeps.  
Let Mozart's music stop!  
Let Phidias' chisel drop!  
Baby sleeps.  
Demosthenes be dumb!  
Our tyrant's hour has come!  
Baby sleeps.



*BABY'S COLOR.*

SCARLET is my baby's color,  
 Color of her dainty lips;  
 Scarlet is the shade that matches  
 Splendor that her eyes eclipse.  
 Scarlet sets her face in glory,  
 Sunset flame and twilight eyes;  
 Eyes that far outshine the fairest  
 Star in all the evening skies.

Every color suits my baby!  
 With her shining gold-brown hair,  
 And her dark, dark eyes of splendor,  
 What may not my baby wear?  
 Blue is like the smile of heaven  
 In the dimples of her face;  
 Buff enhances while it softens  
 Every witching baby-grace.

White adorns her till her garments  
 Seem the robes that angels wear,  
 And a crown is in the sunshine  
 Falling on her silken hair.  
 Yet, my baby, how I tremble  
 When, in robes of snowy white,  
 I have hushed you into slumber  
 For the long, long, dreamful night:

Tremble, lest the angels, finding  
 Baby in her robes of white,  
 Think her but a little wanderer  
 From the golden shores of light.  
 Earth is rough; yet oh, good angels,  
 Leave my baby yet awhile,  
 For the darkness and the shadow  
 Flee before her sunny smile.

I will keep her, oh, good angels,  
 Free from every sinful guile;  
 I will teach her holy lessons,  
 Leave my baby yet awhile.  
 Do not look upon her beauty,  
 Lest you take her for your own;  
 She is mine, oh, pitying angels—  
 All my heart to her has grown.

Leave her though you love her, angels,  
 And the shadows, long and deep,  
 Fall athwart the toilsome journey  
 Of "Life's cold and slippery steep."

Leave her—I will bear the burdens,  
 I will keep the child from harm—  
 I will shelter her and shield her  
 From each bitter raging storm.

Nay, nay, angels, do not frown so,  
 I can guard her but with prayer;  
 I am weak; but God is mighty,  
 And His love is everywhere.  
 He will help me bring the lambkin  
 Safe at last into His fold,  
 With her dark, dark eyes of splendor,  
 And her brown hair tinged with gold.

*A MOTHER'S DITTY.*

IT'S about my chubby bit bairn  
 That I wanted a word to tell,  
 I'm sure his match is no to be fand  
 In the ring o' the Heigh Kirk Bell.

The lasses (an' I hae three),  
 I may say they are a' verra well;  
 But they ne'er gi'ed me the hauf o' the  
 thoct  
 As this wee bit steering chiel.

Look at him rin to his faither,  
 I'm sure it's a sicht to see;  
 The twa o' them screechin' and lauchin',  
 And roaring wi' verra glee.

See! Up the wee man he catches  
 By the oxters, and sends him awa'  
 Near to the roof. And I gie a start,  
 As I see that he's like to fa'.

But his faither is there to catch him,  
 In a faither's ain loving arms;  
 And then sic a squealin' and kittlin',  
 Dispel a' my silly alarms.

And they rumple and sprauchle aboot—  
 Look noo, on the floor they're doon;  
 And they tumble and caper and shout,  
 Eneuch to deeve the toun.

Noo faither's his galloping horse,  
 And the wee man "gees" and  
 "wo's;"  
 He hobbles and rides him to London,  
 And on the racket goes.

And then as he hugs his daddie,  
A prood, prood man is he ;  
But o' that wee fair-haired laddie  
He'll never be fonder than me.

When I look in his bonnie blue een,  
My ain begin to blink,  
As I wonder if e'er he'll turn out bad ;  
Of that I daur hardly think.

For noo as he sits on my knee,  
Wi' his airm flung roun' my neck,  
He cuddles and kisses his mammy sae  
fond,  
Till my heart is like to break.

For if the wee man should ever  
Gae awa' on the road that's wrang,  
I kenna what faither himself wad do,  
But I to my grave wad gang.

So to the Lord I whisper  
A prayer aboon my wean,  
That he may be kept frae sorrow,  
And suffering, and sin, and pain.

Lang may my jewel be spared,  
And aye to his mither be kind ;  
Then I kiss the wee lips and brush off  
the tear,  
And leave a' thae shadows behind.

—————  
*DREAM, MY BABY.*

MOTHER'S baby, rock and rest,  
Little birds are fast asleep.  
Close beneath her mother-breast,  
Safe the bird her brood will keep.  
Oh ! my nestling, mother sings,  
Close within the mother-arms,  
Fold thy little, unfledged wings,  
Safe from any rude alarms.  
Sweet, my baby, on my breast  
Dream your happy dreams and  
rest.

Rest, oh ! rest.

Ah ! my baby, from the nest  
Little birds will some day fly  
To the east and to the west,  
Wild their pretty wings to try.

But, fly they fast, my bird, or far,  
Never can they find the spot,  
Under sun or any star,  
Where the mother-love is not.  
Sweet, my baby, on my breast  
Dream your happy dreams and  
rest.

Rest, oh ! rest.

Oh ! my baby, mother prays,  
As she clasps you closer still,  
All sweet things for coming days,  
And not any earthly ill.  
Always, child, remember this :  
Mother's heart is warm and true,  
And she tells you, with a kiss,  
There'll be always room for you.  
Sweet, my baby, on my breast,  
Dream your happy dreams and  
rest.

Rest, oh ! rest.

—————  
*AN UNFINISHED PRAYER.*

"Now I lay"—say it, darling ;  
"Lay me," lisped the tiny lips  
Of my daughter, kneeling, bending  
O'er her folded finger-tips.

"Down to sleep—to sleep," she mur-  
mured,  
And the curly head dropped low.  
"I pray the Lord," I gently added,  
"You can say it all, I know."

"Pray the Lord"—the words came  
faintly,  
Fainter still—"My soul to keep ;"  
Then the tired head fairly nodded,  
And the child was fast asleep.

But the dewy eyes half opened  
When I clasped her to my breast,  
And the dear voice softly whispered,  
"Mamma, God knows all the rest."

Oh, the trusting, sweet confiding  
Of that child-heart ! Would that I  
Thus might trust my Heavenly Father  
He who hears my humblest cry.

*THE WEE-BIT BAIRN.*

WE ha'e a wee-bit bairn at hame,  
Sae blithesome, cannie bright,  
That ever syne the day he came  
Has filled the house wi' light.

He now is twa years old, or mair,  
A' glib o' tongue and foot ;  
He climbs up ilka fatal stair,  
He claims ilk cast-off boot.

Barefit he toddles roun' the streets,  
Wi' gran'sire close behin' ;  
Giving ilk person that he meets  
Piece o' his childish min'.

Who kens the wee thing, what'll he be  
When years a score ha'e gaun ?  
Gladding his mither's grateful e'e,  
Piercing her breast wi' thorn !

God gie His angels charge to keep  
The bairnie, lest he stray ;  
And though in death we fa' asleep,  
Show him the narrow way.

*THREE IN A BED.*

GAY little velvet coats,  
One, two, three ;  
Any home happier  
Could there be ?  
Topsev and Johnny  
And sleepy Ned,  
Purring so cosily,  
Three in a bed.

Woe to the stupid mouse,  
Prowling about !  
Old mother Pussy  
Is on the lookout.  
Little cats, big cats,  
All must be fed,  
In the sky parlor  
Three in a bed.

Mother's a gypsy puss,—  
Often she moves,  
Thinking much travel  
Her children improves.

High-minded familii,  
Very well bred ;  
No falling out, you see !  
Three in a bed.

*THE BIRD'S RETURN.*

“WHERE have you been, little birdie,—  
Where have you been so long ?”

“Warbling in glee  
Far o'er the sea,  
And learning for you a new song,  
My sweet—  
Learning for you a new song.”

“Why did you go, little birdie,—  
Why did you go from me ?”

“Winter was here,  
Leafless and drear ;  
And so I flew over the sea,  
My sweet—  
So I flew over the sea.”

“What did you see, little birdie,—  
What did you see each day ?”

“Sunshine and flowers,  
Blossoms and bowers,  
And pretty white lambkins at play,  
My sweet—  
Pretty white lambkins at play.”

“Who kept you safe, little birdie,—  
Who kept you safe from all harm ?”

“The Father of all,  
Of great and of small :  
He sheltered me under His arm,  
My sweet—  
Under His dear loving arm.”

*BABY ASLEEP.*

TWO little dimpled hands  
Chubby and warm,  
Two little rosy cheeks  
Perfect in form :

Two tiny golden curls  
On her pure brow,  
Resting so daintily  
Always—as now :

Two little heavy eyes  
Dewy with sleep,  
Angels above them  
Vigil will keep.

Jesus will care for thee  
Safe in His love,  
Dream, little slumberer,  
Watched from above.

—————  
*AFTER ALL.*

DANCING like a sunbeam,  
Darting here and there,  
Hiding 'neath the table,  
Peeping round a chair,  
Making merry music  
With her laughter sweet,  
And the roguish patter  
Of her flying feet.  
Papa hears the frolic ;  
Rover joins the fun ;  
Who would think it's bed-time  
For my little one !

On a snowy pillow  
A little golden head ;  
A dainty white-robed figure  
In a cradle bed.  
Blue eyes softly closing,  
Red lips smiling sweet ;  
Quiet, dimpled fingers ;  
Quiet, dimpled feet.  
Listening in the doorway,  
I hear a sweet voice call ;  
"Mamma, mamma dearie,  
I love you after all !"

After all, dear Saviour,  
When my closing eyes,  
See the shadows creeping  
O'er the evening skies ;  
After all the straying  
Of my wayward feet ;

After all my erring,  
May Thy mercy sweet  
Hear the trembling accents  
From my lips that fall :  
"Jesus, precious Saviour,  
I love Thee after all !"

—————  
*LULLABY.*

BYE, Baby, day is over,  
Bees are drowsing in the clover ;  
Bye, Baby, bye.  
Now the sun to bed is gliding,  
All the pretty flowers are hiding ;  
Bye, Baby, bye.

Bye, Baby, birds are sleeping,  
One by one the stars are peeping ;  
Bye, Baby, bye.  
In the far-off sky the twinkle,  
While the cows come, tinkle, tinkle ;  
Bye, Baby, bye.

Bye, Baby, mother holds thee,  
Loving, tender care enfolds thee :  
Bye, Baby, bye.  
Angels in thy dreams caress thee,  
Through the darkness guard and bless  
thee ;  
Bye, Baby, bye.

—————  
*AT NIGHT.*

THE little weary wingèd bees  
Give up their honey-quest,  
And all the little singing birds  
Fly home and go to rest.

The butterflies fold up at last  
Their shining, golden crowns ;  
And daisies, in their wee white cups,  
Sleep on the dewy downs.

The cattle, with their tinkling bells,  
Come home across the wold ;  
And you're the only little lamb  
That's left without the fold.

Then come, my pretty one, 'tis time  
Thou, too, shouldst find thy rest ;



The violet's eyes, as blue as thine,  
Droop on each dewy breast.

And buttercups, adown the lane,  
Are folded from the dark,  
And they'll be earlier out than you,  
And hear the first brown lark.

Then haste, before the stars climb up  
The blue walls of the skies ;  
For sure you would not let them see  
Such drooping little eyes.

Fear not the shadow, for God keeps  
Awake through all the night ;  
To make our sleep more sweet and  
calm,  
He takes away the light.

—————  
*BABY'S TOES.*

OH, the tiny, curled-up treasure,  
Just as cute as cute can be !  
Come and help me count them, Mad-  
gie,  
While the baby bends to see ;

Peeps demurely over dainty  
Skirts, drawn up to dimpled knees.  
Hey, my lady Lily ! whose two  
Roly-poly feet are these ?

See the darling's round-eyed wonder—  
Does she really know they're hers ?  
Now she reaches down to feel them,  
While new triumph in her stirs.

Crow your fill, my little lady !  
Those are your own cunning toes,  
Round, and soft, and fat, and funny,  
And—how many ? Madgie knows !

Call them lily-buds to please her ?  
Madgie says they are too pink,  
Say ten roses and two posies !  
Rather rose-buds, don't you think ?

Come, wee toes, lie still ; be covered ;  
You've cut capers quite enough ;  
If you don't, we'll kiss and put you  
Each one in a paper ruff.

*BABY'S DAY.*

THE reason I call it "Baby's Day"  
Is funny enough to tell ;  
The first thing she did was give "syrup  
of squills"

To dolly to make her well ;  
And then when I told her how wrong  
it was,  
She said, with a quivering sigh,  
"I'm sorry I made her so sticky, mam-  
ma,  
But I couldn't let dolly die."

Then comforted wholly she went away,  
And was just as still as a mouse,  
And I thought to be sure I should find  
her at once

In the nursery playing "house ;"  
But, lo ! on the way as I started to look,  
A queer little piece I found,  
Just like a center of snowy lawn  
That the scissors had scalloped  
round.

I cried "O, baby ! what have you done ?  
You have been to somebody's drawer,  
And taken from out of the handker-  
chief pile

The most beautiful one that you  
saw !"  
And then the dear little head went down  
Pathetic as it could be,  
While she sobbed, "There was no-  
thing for me to cut,  
And I thought I'd take two or  
three !"

It was only a little later on,  
That the water began to splash,  
And I jumped and found she was rub-  
bing away

On her sister's holiday sash ;  
But, catching a look of utter dismay,  
As she lifted her innocent eyes,  
She whispered : "Don't worry, I'll  
wash it all *clean*,  
And hang it up till it dries."

But the funny mishaps of that wonder-  
ful day  
I could not begin to relate ;

The boxes of buttons and pins she spilled,  
 Like a cherub pursued by fate!  
 And still, all the while, the dear little dove  
 Was fluttering 'round her nest,  
 And the only thing I really *could* do  
 Was to smooth out her wings on my breast.

But the day drifted on till it came to an end,  
 And the great moon rose in sight,  
 And the dear soft lids o'er the dear soft eyes  
 Dropped tenderly their good-night.  
 And I thought, as I looked on her lying asleep,  
 I was glad (for once in a way),  
 That my beautiful child was human enough  
 For a mischievous "Baby Day."

#### LULU'S COMPLAINT.

I's a poor 'ittle sorrowful baby,  
 For B'idget is way down stairs;  
 My titten has st'ached my finder,  
 And Dolly won't say her p'ayers.

I haint seen my bootiful mamma  
 Since-ever so lon'ado;  
 An' I ain't her tunnin'est baby  
 No londer, for B'idget says so.

My ma's got another *new* baby;  
 Dod dived it—he did—yesterday,  
 An' it kies, it kies, oh, so defful!  
 I wis' he would tate it away.

I don't want no "sweet 'ittle sister!"  
 I want my dood mamma, I do;  
 I want her to tiss me, an' tiss me,  
 An' tall me her p'ecious Lulu!

I dess my bid papa will b'in' me  
 A 'ittle dood titten some day.  
 Here's nurse wid my mamma's new  
 baby,  
 I wis' s'e would tate it away.

Oh, oh, what tunnin' red finders!  
 It sees me yite o' its eyes!  
 I dess we will teep it, and dive it  
 Some tanny whenever it kies.

I dess I will dive it my Dolly  
 To play wid mos' every day;  
 And I dess, I dess—Say, B'idget,  
 As' Dod not to tate it away.

#### MAMMA'S STORY.

"TELL us a story, mamma dear,"  
 The children cried one day.  
 "The rain falls fast. It is going to last,  
 And we are all tired of play."

Ah! pleading eyes and winning tones,  
 How could they be denied?  
 So mamma began in merry strain,  
 And she laid her work aside:

"There was an old woman that lived  
 in a shoe,  
 And of all the children that ever you  
 knew,  
 Hers was the wildest, funniest crew;  
 Do you wonder she didn't know what  
 to do?"

"There were Ella, and Nell, and Mary  
 Belle,  
 Laurie, Laura, and Maud Estelle,  
 Sarah, Sammy, and Josephine,  
 Norah, Norval, and Madeline,  
 Lillian, Archibald, and Harry,  
 Christopher, Charlie, Pete, and Carrie,  
 Jemmy, Johnny, and Theodore,  
 And over a half a dozen more.

"And then such a terrible time, 'twas  
 said,  
 She had in getting them all to bed.  
 And supper, alas! was such a dread,  
 Especially when they cried for bread.  
 One night she threatened to whip them  
 all,  
 And reached for the switch upon the  
 wall.

My! how the mad-cap urchins flew  
 In and out of the poor old shoe;  
 Over each other they madly dash,  
 The old lady after them like a flash.  
 Through a hole in the worn-out sole,  
 Back and forth at each button-hole;  
 Out at the top and in at the toe,  
 Around and under, away they go.

“Finally, wearied out with fun,  
 They drop in their places one by one,  
 And not till her house is still as death,  
 Does the old woman pause to recover  
 breath.”

---

*ANITA AND HER DOLLS.*

FAMILY-laden,  
 Wee, wise maiden—  
 Knits her brow in dainty knots;  
 How to dolly  
 Cure of folly  
 Occupies her busy thoughts.

“Dollie’s wet her  
 Feet to get her  
 Posies, in the morning dew;  
 Sure to be sick—  
 Cold or colic—  
 Like as not the measles, too

“There is Freddy,  
 Always ready  
 Into awful ‘fairs to fall:  
 Bad as Rosy—  
 Doodness knows, I  
 Don’t know how to manage ‘tall!

“Jack or Norah’s  
 Telled a story!  
 One or t’uver ate ma’s cake!  
 While there’s silly,  
 Greedy Willy,  
 Got a drefful stomach ache!

“Naughty Bessie  
 Tored her dress; she  
 Wants anuver one, I sponse;  
 I tell you what  
 It tates a lot  
 Of work to teep my dolls in tose!”

Look! she lays her  
 Down by Cæsar—  
 What can be the matter, now?  
 Blue eyes closing,  
 Blinking, dozing—  
 Wee white hands and lily brow—

Cheeks so waxen,  
 Tresses flaxen,  
 Footsteps, that a fairy seems—  
 All now wander  
 Over yonder,  
 In the happy land of dreams!

---

*A HINT.*

OUR Daisy lay down  
 In her little nightgown,  
 And kissed me again and again,  
 On forehead and cheek,  
 On lips that would speak,  
 But found themselves shut, to their gain

Then, foolish, absurd,  
 To utter a word,  
 I asked her the question so old  
 That wife and that lover  
 Ask over and over,  
 As if they were surer when told!

There, close at her side,  
 “Do you love me?” I cried;  
 She lifted her golden-crowned head;  
 A puzzled surprise  
 Shone in her gray eyes—  
 “Why, that’s why I kiss you!” she said.

---

*GOING UP.*

UP and up the baby goes,  
 Up to papa’s shoulder.  
 Now she clings to papa’s nose—  
 Now, becoming bolder,  
 How she flings her arms and crows!  
 Do you think the darling knows  
 How strong the arms that hold her?

Up and up the baby goes,  
Taller, wiser, older ;  
As the calyx holds the rose,  
Childish years enfold her ;  
By and by they shall enclose  
From the woman and the rose ;  
Then, O Father, hold her !

On the heights of womanhood,  
Hold her, Heavenly Father ;  
Lest, forgetting what is good,  
She be carried rather  
Down with folly's multitude  
Into error's mazy wood  
Where the shadows gather.

Up and up the baby goes ;  
Heavenly Father, give her  
Heart to feel for others' woes,  
Hands of helping ever ;  
Let her bloom, when life shall close,  
Like a white immortal rose  
By the crystal river.

—  
*TELLING A STORY.*

LITTLE Blue-eyes is sleepy,  
Come here and be rocked to sleep.  
What shall I tell you, darling ?  
The story of Little Bo Peep ?  
Or of the cows in the garden,  
Or the children who ran away ?  
If I'm to be story-teller  
What shall I tell you, pray ?

"Tell me"—the Blue-eyes opened  
Like pansies when they blow,  
"Of the baby in the manger,  
The little child-Christ, you know.  
I like to hear that 'tory  
The best of all you tell."  
And my four-year-old nestles closer  
As the twilight shadows fell.

And I told my darling over  
The old, old tale again :  
Of the baby born in the manger,  
And the Christ who died for men,  
Of the great warm heart of Jesus,  
And the children whom He blest,  
Like the blue-eyed boy who listened  
As he lay upon my breast.

And I prayed, as my darling slumbered,  
That my child, with eyes so sweet,  
Might learn from his Saviour's lesson  
And sit at the Master's feet.  
Pray God he may never forget it,  
But always love to hear  
The tender and touching story  
That now he holds so dear.

—  
*GOING TO BED.*

OUR Fannie Angelina  
Didn't want to go to bed,—  
Her reasons would you know ? then  
Let me tell you what she said  
At eight o'clock precisely,  
At the close of yesterday,  
Her mamma in the trundle-bed  
Had tucked her snug away.  
"It isn't time to go to bed,  
The clock goes round too quick ;  
It hurts my back to lie in bed  
And almost makes me sick :  
I want to show my Uncle George  
My pretty birthday ring ;  
And sing him ' Jesus loves me,'  
For he likes to hear me sing ;  
My dollie, Haddynewya,  
Her yellow dress is thin,  
And she's sitting on the horse-block,  
I forgot to bring her in ;  
I want to go and get her,  
She'll catch a cold and die ;  
I want to get my nankachick,  
I guess I've got to cry.  
I said I'd wait till papa comes,  
I wonder what he'll think ;  
There's something hurts me in my  
throat,  
I want to get a drink.  
I guess I'd rather get it in  
My little silver cup—  
What makes me have to go to bed  
When you are staying up ?"  
So Fannie Angelina  
Was determined not to do it.  
Yet she drifted off to Nod land,  
Poor child, before she knew it.

The queen who reigns in Nod land  
 Shut her willful eyes so tight,  
 They quite forgot to open  
 Till the sun was shining bright.

—————  
*MAMMA'S KISSES.*

A KISS when I awake in the morning,  
 A kiss when I go to bed,  
 A kiss when I burn my finger,  
 A kiss when I bump my head.

A kiss when my bath is over,  
 A kiss when my bath begins;  
 My mamma is full of kisses,  
 As full as nurse is of pins.

A kiss when I play with my rattle,  
 A kiss when I pull her hair;  
 She covered me over with kisses  
 The day I fell from the stair.

A kiss when I give her trouble,  
 A kiss when I give her joy;  
 There's nothing like mamma's kisses  
 For her own little baby boy.

—————  
*THE MOTHER'S CRADLE SONG.*

SING him a cradle song,  
 Tender and low;  
 Tell him how Jesus came  
 Long, long ago:  
 Came as a little one,  
 Lowly and mild,  
 God's own eternal Son,  
 Yet Mary's child.

Long years may come and pass,  
 And there shall be  
 Under the churchyard grass  
 Slumber for thee;  
 Yet shall thy song live on  
 Still in his life,  
 Sweeter when thou art gone  
 Out of the strife.

Sorrow will come with time,  
 Faith may grow cold;  
 Truth, like a silver chime,  
 Calls to the fold;

Calls to the roving sheep  
 (Gone far astray,)  
 "Come, and thy Lord shall keep  
 Spoilers away."

Say not the words are weak,  
 Scorned of the wise;  
 Doth not the Master speak  
 In lowly guise?  
 He shall thy weakness make  
 Holy and strong,  
 And thy poor song shall wake  
 A sweeter song.

—————  
*THE WEE BIT SHOON.*

THE wee bit shoon she used to wear  
 They gav me aften greet;  
 At gloamin' time could I aince mair  
 But haud those pink-white feet.

But haud those feet within my han's,  
 An' hear her ripplin' glee,  
 A warl' o' houses an' o' lan's,  
 Hooe eptay wad they be.

Those tiny palms, could I but taste,  
 Sae aft to me stretched out,  
 The earth wad be nae mair a waste,  
 My heid nae whirl about.

The curls, hauf-grown, that graced her  
 broo,  
 The glintin' o' her een,  
 The tremblin' o' her matchless mou',  
 Still haunt me, though unseen.

Wad death gie back, for ane short  
 hour,  
 The lapfu' that was mine;  
 But, ah! but, ah! I'd hae nae power  
 The treasure to resign.

—————  
*OUT IN THE RAIN.*

A ROUND little face, peeping out of a  
 shawl,  
 That was trying to cover it, dimples  
 and all;



A fat little hand pushing sturdily up,  
And catching the drops in its mite of a  
cup;  
A frolicsome baby that didn't complain,  
Though mamma and he were out in  
the rain.

The ferry-boat jerked itself into the  
slip,  
And down came the shower, a pelt and  
a drip;  
The pretty young ladies were mute  
with despair,  
For the rain would just leave them  
with "nothing to wear;"  
While the dainty young gentlemen  
stared at the skies,  
With a feeling quite mildly expressed  
by surprise;  
But 'twas fun to the baby, and once  
and again  
He laughed his delight at the beautiful  
rain.

There were women with bundles, and  
men with cigars,  
There were newsboys around with  
their *Heralds* and *Stars*,  
There were crowds going up, there  
were crowds going down,  
And faster the deluge poured over the  
town;  
Umbrellas were useless at home in the  
hall,  
And baby was fortunate, wrapped in a  
shawl;  
He tugged at it bravely, with struggle  
and strain,  
It hindered his seeing enough of the  
rain.

Oh, baby! you darling, so merry and  
sweet,  
I followed you up the long hill of the  
street;  
I'd nothing to fear, for *my* hat was not  
new,  
And so I had leisure to trifle with you,  
And throw you my kisses, and think  
what a joy

That dear little mamma must find such  
a boy;  
An armful to carry, a weight on her  
shoulder,  
But day by day growing a tiny bit  
older;  
Her pride and her comfort. She didn't  
complain  
As she bore you so cheerily home in  
the rain.

Once there, how she'd loosen that  
magical pin  
That had fastened so precious a prison-  
er in;  
And golden curls tumbled, and cap all  
awry,  
And rumpled and crumpled, but hap-  
py and dry,  
Would set you once more on the two  
little feet,  
Restless and rosy, and cunning and  
fleet,  
And laugh as you told her again and  
again,  
"How nithe it wath, mamma, out dere  
in de wain."

SAFE-FOLDED.

OH, it is hard when o'er the face  
We scarce can see for weeping,  
The little, loving baby face,  
That last, still shade comes creep-  
ing;  
Full hard to close the tender eyes,  
And fold the hands for sleeping.

Yet, when the world our own would  
claim,  
It doth not greatly grieve us;  
We calmly see, as days go by,  
Our little children leave us—  
And, smiling, heed not how the swift,  
Soft-footed years bereave us.

Oh, mother-hearts! I count you rich  
Beyond mere earth-possessing,  
Whose little babies never grow

Away from your caressing—  
Safe-folded in His tender arms,  
Who gives again, with blessing.

—  
*LITTLENESS.*

"Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in  
my infirmity."

WEARILY from stair to stair  
Slowly climb the little feet,  
Dress awry and tangled hair,  
Pouting lips as berries sweet.

"I'se so tired, don't 'ou see?  
Dess I never 'll det up-stairs.  
Dranpa, won't 'ou tarry me,  
So as I tan say my prayers?"

Light the burden that I bore,  
Nestling softly on my breast;  
Arms that hugged me o'er and o'er,  
Tiny form at perfect rest.

And the midget softly said,  
"Ain't 'ou glad I'se small? 'Ou see,  
When I have to go to bed,  
'Ou tan always tarry me."

Glad I clasped the maiden close,  
Warm the beating of my heart;  
Love, which every parent knows,  
Made the happy tear-drops start.

Ah! I thought, my weary feet,  
Toiling painfully life's stair,  
Often find it passing sweet  
When I meet my Father there.

Weak and sinful, poor and blind,  
Glad I seek His sheltering arm;  
Joyful welcome there I find,  
Calm security from harm.

Whispering prattle faint and low,  
In His ever open ear,  
Words whose meaning I scarce know,  
Yet He loves to pause and hear.

Does there ever o'er Him fall  
That glad thrill of holy glee—  
Gladness that I am so small  
He can safely carry me?

*OUR BABY.*

"DOD will tate tare of baby dear,"  
My winsome darling said,  
When in her robe of white she knelt  
Beside her little bed.

Her tiny dimpled hands were clasped,  
As though she were in prayer,  
And, oh! methought a heavenly glow  
Fell on her golden hair.

A ray, it may be, darted through  
The door just pushed ajar  
By angel hand, whose radiant face  
Like a bright evening star

Looked down upon my darling one,  
Kneeling beside her bed,  
And smiled to hear the simple faith  
In the sweet words she said.

"Dod will tate tare of baby dear,"  
And then the eyelids drooped;  
I laid her gently down to sleep,  
But thought the angel stooped

To kiss good-night; for the red lips  
Were parted as she slept,  
And o'er her face a holy smile  
In rippling dimples crept.

"God will take care of baby dear!"  
Ah, yes! I knew it well,  
E'en when the shadows, cold and chill,  
Upon her young life fell.

And yet the mother-heart rebelled!  
This puny hand, I said,  
Can shield her, guide her in the path  
Where God would have her led.

I could not lose my petted flower,  
So beautiful, so dear,  
Nor thought it was too dark and chill  
For such sweet blossoms here.

"Dod will tate tare of baby dear,"  
The parched lips murmured slow!  
And then the eyelids drooped and  
closed  
Forever, here below!

Oh, mourning heart, hush thy sad wail,  
 She's safe, now, in His love;  
 "God will take care of baby dear"  
 In His bright home above.

*THE QUEEN IN HER CARRIAGE  
 IS RIDING BY.*

OH, the queen in her carriage is pass-  
 ing by:  
 Her cheeks are like roses, her eyes like  
 the sky;  
 Her wonderful teeth are white as new  
 milk,  
 Her pretty blonde hair is softer than  
 silk.

She's the loveliest monarch that ever  
 was seen;  
 You ask of what country the darling is  
 queen;  
 Her empire extends not to far distant  
 parts,  
 She is queen of our household, the mis-  
 tress of hearts.

For scepter she lifts her soft dimpled  
 hands;  
 Her subjects all hasten to heed her  
 commands;  
 Her smile is bewitching, and fearful  
 her frown,  
 And all must obey when she puts her  
 foot down.

May blessings descend on the bright  
 little head,  
 From the time she awakes till she's  
 safely in bed;  
 And now do you guess, when I speak  
 of the queen,  
 'Tis only our six months baby I mean?

*CRADLE SONG.*

SLEEP, my baby, beside the fire,  
 Sleep, child, sleep;  
 Winds are wailing, nigher and nigher,  
 Waves are raising, higher and higher,  
 Sleep, child, sleep;  
 While thy father, out on the sea,  
 Toils all night for thee and me.

Sleep, my baby, content and blest,  
 Sleep, child, sleep;  
 Whether the heart in thy mother's  
 breast  
 Be light or heavy—so best! so best!  
 Sleep, child, sleep!  
 While thy father, out on the sea,  
 Toils all night for thee and me.

*THE SUNDAY BABY.*

YOU wonderful little Sunday child!  
 Half of your fortune scarce you know,  
 Although you have blinked and winked  
 and smiled  
 Full seven and twenty days below.

"The bairn that was born on Sabbath  
 day,"  
 So say the old wives over their  
 glass—  
 "Is bonny and healthy, and wise and  
 gay!"  
 What do you think of that, my lass?

Health and wisdom, and beauty and  
 mirth!  
 And (as if that were not enough for  
 a dower),  
 Because of the holy day of your birth,  
 Abroad you may walk in the gloam-  
 ing's hour.

When we poor bodies, with backward  
 look,  
 Shiver and quiver and quake with  
 fear  
 Of fiend and fairy, and kelpie and  
 spook,  
 Never a thought need you take, my  
 dear—

For "Sunday's child" may go where  
 it please,  
 Sunday's child shall be free from  
 harm!  
 Right down through the mountain side  
 it sees  
 The mines unopened where jewels  
 swarm!

Oh, fortunate baby! Sunday lass!  
 The veins of gold through the rocks  
 you'll see;  
 And when o'er the shining sands you  
 pass,  
 You can tell where the hidden springs  
 may be.

And never a fiend or an airy sprite  
 May thwart or hinder you all your  
 days,  
 Whenever it chances, in mirk mid-  
 night,  
 The lids of your marvelous eyes you  
 raise.

You may see, while your heart is pure  
 and true,  
 The angels that visit this lower  
 sphere,  
 Drop down the firmament, two and  
 two,  
 Their errands of mercy to work down  
 here.

This is the dower of a Sunday child;  
 What do you think of it, little brown  
 head,  
 Winking and blinking your eyes so  
 mild,  
 Down in the depths of your snowy  
 bed?

---

*THE DEAREST BABY.*

SOUTH and North,  
 East and West,  
 Where is the baby  
 That I love best?

A little papoose  
 Under the trees?  
 A Chinese beauty  
 Beyond the seas?

An English child  
 Among the mills?

A Switzer baby  
 Between the hills?

A dark-eyed darling  
 In Southern vales?  
 An Iceland baby  
 In Northern gales?

What nonsense-talk  
 To speak of these!  
 The dearest baby  
 Is on my knees.

---

*CRADLE SONG.*

SLEEP, baby, sleep! for the night  
 draweth nigh;  
 The daylight is fading from earth and  
 from sky;  
 Through rifts in the azure the stars  
 will soon peep,  
 While the breeze whispers softly, oh,  
 sleep, baby, sleep.

Sleep, baby, sleep! mother sits by thy  
 side,  
 And rocks thee so gently, her joy and  
 her pride.  
 'Tis time you were shutting your bon-  
 nie blue eye,  
 There's nothing to fear, darling, sleep  
 and by-bye.

May angels watch o'er thee, through  
 dark and through light;  
 God's tender care keep thee, we live in  
 His sight;  
 We'll trust Him, my darling, by night  
 and by day;  
 The hand that has made us, will guard  
 us alway.

Sleep, baby, sleep! now the sand-man  
 is here;  
 He stole in quite softly, his purpose is  
 clear;  
 Through the ivory gate into dream-  
 land she goes—  
 Now rest thee, my darling, sweet be  
 thy repose.

*BABY-FAITH.*

OH ! beautiful faith of childhood ! How  
It beamed to-night on the upturned  
brow  
Of my three-year love, as she knelt to  
say  
Her prayers, in her guileless, dreamy  
way.

“ And wouldn't my darling like,” I said,  
As softly I stroked the bowing head,  
“ Like to be good, and by and by  
Go to a home in the happy sky,  
Away and away above yon star,  
Where God and His holy angels are ? ”

She lifted her drowsed and dewy eyes,  
And a shy, scared look of half-surprise  
Rippled and filmed their depths of blue  
And kept the gladness from breaking  
through.

“ I think I would like to go,” she said,  
Yet doubtfully shook her golden head,  
And clasped my hands in her fingers  
small,  
“ But, then, I'm afraid that I might fall  
Out at the moon ! ”

Her baby eye  
Saw only an opening in the sky—  
A marvellous oriel, whence the light  
Of heaven streamed out across the  
night—  
Where the angels lean, as they come  
and go,  
A-gaze at our world, so far below.

She mused a moment in tender thought,  
Then suddenly every feature caught  
A new, rare sparkle, and I could trace  
The dawn of the trust that flashed her  
face.

“ But God is good. He will understand  
That Baby's afraid, and will take my  
hand  
And lead me in at the shining door,  
And then I shall be afraid no more.”

*SAND IN THE LITTLE EYES.*

AN old, old man, with whiskers white,  
Flies over the earth as night comes  
down,  
And softly sings in his gentle flight,  
As he winds his way through the  
shades of night,  
“ Close, little eyelids ! close up tight ;  
For the Sandman is in town.”

He comes to the babe while yet 'tis  
light ;  
But on all at last the shower comes  
down,  
And the eyes of blue and brown, so  
bright  
Must close when he sings, as he  
comes by night,  
“ Close, little eyelids ! close up tight ;  
For the Sandman is in town.”

He knows what makes little eyes so  
bright,  
So he pours the showers of bright  
sand down,  
And sweet sleep lingers till broad day-  
light :  
Then flies to him who sings each  
night,  
“ Close, little eyelids ! close up tight ;  
For the Sandman is in town.”

*HER NAME.*

“ I'M *losted!* Could you find me,  
please ? ”

Poor little frightened baby !  
The wind had tossed her golden fleece,  
The stones had scratched her dimpled  
knees.

I stooped, and lifted her with ease,  
And softly whispered, “ Maybe ;

“ Tell me your name, my little maid,  
I can't find you without it.”

“ My name is Shiny-eyes,” she said.

“ Yes, but your last ? ” She shook her  
head ;

“ Up to my house 'ey never said  
A single fing about it.”



“But, dear,” I said, “what *is* your name?”

“Why, di’n’t you hear me told you? Dust Shiny-eyes.” A bright thought came:

“Yes, when you’re good; but when they blame

You, little one—is’t just the same  
When mamma has to scold you?”

“My mamma never scolds,” she moans,  
A little blush ensuing,

“’Cept when I’ve been a-frowning stones,  
And then she says (the culprit owns),

‘*Mehitable Sapphira Jones*,  
What *has* you been a doing?’”

—————  
*BABYLAND.*

How many miles to Babyland?  
Any one can tell;  
Up one flight  
To the right—  
Please to ring the bell.

What can you see in Babyland?  
Little folks in white,  
Downy heads,  
Cradle beds,  
Faces pure and bright.

What do they do in Babyland?  
Dream, and wake, and play,  
Laugh and crow,  
Shout and grow,  
Jolly times have they.

What do they say in Babyland?  
Why, the oddest things!  
Might as well  
Try to tell  
What a birdie sings.

Who is the Queen of Babyland?  
Mother, kind and sweet;  
And her love,  
Born above,  
Guides the little feet.

*BABY'S BREAKFAST--NURSE'S MUSINGS.*

HERE'S a stool, and here's a chair,  
For my little lady fair;  
Here's the mug, and here's the spoon,  
Breakfast will be ready soon.

Here's the knife, and here's the bread,  
Soon my darling shall be fed;  
Lay the cloth so smooth and neat,  
Get all ready for my sweet.

We have milk so fresh and white,  
Every morning, every night;  
We have bread and butter too,  
Some for me and some for you.

All we need our God has sent us,  
But remember, life is lent us;  
Let it then be spent for Him,  
Not in idleness or sin.

Pretty, smiling, bright, and good,  
Sits baby in her little hood.  
Good and gentle is my sweet,  
Trotting on her little feet;  
Good and gentle is my baby,  
Yes, she's quite a little lady!

—————  
*QUEEN BESS.*

MOUTH like a rosebud,  
Eyes like the night—  
Reigning a princess  
In her own right.  
A wee bit of tyrant,  
I must confess,  
But all hearts yield to her—  
Little Queen Bess.

Never a safer throne  
Than papa's knee—  
Waving her fat white hands,  
With laughter free,  
Speaking a language  
Love only can guess,  
Wait we upon her will,  
Bonny Queen Bess.

All of the household  
Bow low at her feet,  
Quickly to hasten  
At each bidding sweet.  
Never did sovereign  
Such subjects possess,  
Faithful and loving,  
As Baby-Queen Bess.

—————  
*BABY'S MISTAKE.*

My baby boy sat on the floor,  
His big blue eyes were full of wonder  
For he had never seen before  
That baby in the mirror door—  
What kept the two, so near, asunder?  
He leaned toward that golden head  
The mirror border framed within,  
Until twin cheeks, like roses red,  
Lay side by side, then softly said—  
“I can't get out; can you come in?”

—————  
*BABY FINGERS.*

TEN fat little fingers, so taper and neat,  
Ten fat little fingers, so rosy and sweet,  
Eagerly reaching for all that comes  
near,  
Now poking your eyes out, now pulling  
your hair,  
Smoothing and patting with velvet-like  
touch,  
Then digging your cheeks with a mis-  
chievous clutch;  
Gently waving good-bye with infantine  
grace,  
Then dragging your bonnet down over  
your face;  
Beating pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, slow  
and sedate,  
Then tearing a book at a furious rate;  
Gravely holding them out, like a king,  
to be kissed,  
Then thumping the window with tightly  
closed fist;  
Now lying asleep, all dimpled and warm,  
On the white cradle-pillow, secure from  
all harm.

Oh, dear baby hands! how much love  
you enfold  
In the weak, careless clasp of those  
fingers' soft hold!  
Keep spotless, as now, through the  
world's evil ways,  
And bless, with fond care, our last  
weariful days.

—————  
*GUESS.*

I SEE two lilies, white as snow,  
That mother loves and kisses so;  
Dearer they are than gold or lands;  
Guess me the lilies—*baby's hands!*

I know a rosebud fairer far  
Than any buds of flowers are;  
Sweeter than sweet winds of the south;  
Guess me the rosebud—*baby's mouth!*

I've found a place where shines the  
sun;  
Yes, long, long after day is done;  
Oh, how it loves to linger there!  
Guess me the sunshine—*baby's hair!*

There are two windows where I see  
My own glad face peep out at me,  
These windows beam like June's own  
skies;  
Guess me the riddle—*baby's eyes!*

—————  
*HANG UP BABY'S STOCKING.*

HANG up the baby's stocking,  
Be sure you don't forget;  
The dear little dimpled darling!  
She never saw Christmas yet;  
But I've told her all about it,  
And she opened her big blue eyes,  
And I'm sure she understands it,  
She looks so funny and wise.

Dear! what a tiny stocking!  
It doesn't take much to hold  
Such pink little toes as baby's  
Away from the frost and cold.

But, then, for the baby's Christmas  
It will never do at all,  
Why, Santa wouldn't be looking  
For anything half so small!

I know what we'll do for the baby,  
I've thought of the very best plan,  
I'll borrow a stocking of grandma—  
The longest that ever I can;  
And you'll hang it by mine, dear mother,  
Right here in the corner, so,  
And write a letter to Santa,  
And fasten it on to the toe.

Write: "This is the baby's stocking,  
That hangs in the corner here,  
You never have seen her, Santa,  
For she only came this year;  
And she's just the blessedest baby!  
And now, before you go,  
Just cram her stocking with goodies,  
From the top clean down to the toe."

*HUSH-A-BY.*

HUSH-A-BY baby! as the birds fly,  
We are off to the island of lullaby,  
I am the captain and you are the crew,  
And the cradle, I guess, is our birch-bark canoe;  
We'll drift away from this work-day shore,  
Forty thousand long leagues or more,  
Till we reach the strand where happy dreams wait,  
Whether we're early or whether we're late.

*BABY IN THE CRIB, THINKING.*

BEAUTIFUL little mamma,  
What do you think I'd do  
If you were a baby smiling,  
And I a mamma like you?  
I never would leave my baby  
Waiting to be caressed,  
But reach out my arms and take her,  
And gather her on my breast!  
That's what I'd do  
If I were you!

Beautiful little mamma,  
Sometimes I hear you sigh,  
Sitting alone at the window,  
Looking up at the sky.  
If I had a baby cooing,  
Trying to win a smile,  
I'd kiss her, and so be happy,  
And forget, forget for a while!  
That's what I'd do  
If I were you!

Beautiful little mamma,  
How would you like to be  
A wide-awake, patient baby,  
Nobody looking to see?  
If I were a beautiful mamma,  
And knew what my baby knew,  
I'd be at the crib to welcome  
After her nap was through!  
That's what I'd do  
If I were you!

*BABY'S TOLL-GATE.*

KNOCK at the door,  
Peep in;  
Lift up the latch,  
And walk in.

What a funny door—  
A forehead fair;  
House with a roof  
Of golden hair,  
And tangled curls  
From ridge to base,  
Over the eaves—  
Queer little place.

Two windows there,  
And baby peeps in;  
Finds the bright blue  
Where the sky went in,  
And a laughing elf  
Looks out to see  
Who raps so loud,  
And calls for me.

A dainty nose  
Turned up—beware!  
With thumbs and fingers  
Lift it with care.

The portals open ;  
 Don't walk in !  
 Bow to the dimple  
 On the chin.

A kiss for toll  
 Now you must pay,  
 Or not come in  
 At all to-day.

---

*OUR SKY.*

I KNOW of a dainty blue sky,  
 And it is the baby's blue eye ;  
 And we watch it to see  
 What the weather will be ;  
 But we never can tell if we try.

We catch a wee glimpse of the sun  
 And think such a fine day is begun ;  
 And everything neat  
 And happy and sweet,  
 All ready for frolic and fun.

The rainbows are here without doubt ;  
 And the robins and roses come out ;  
 And gay bobolinks  
 And poppies and pinks,  
 And butterflies skimming about.

The blue-bells are ringing a chime,  
 And the fairies come marching in time,  
 Mother Goose and the rest,  
 In their fine Sunday best,  
 And dance in a rollicking rhyme.

But lo ! there's a storm in the sky !  
 Then how the wee fairy folks fly !  
 And Mother Goose rings  
 For umbrellas and things,  
 And tries hard to keep herself dry.

The birds and the blossoms look sad ;  
 For they wore the best coats that they  
 had ;  
 To think such a shower  
 Should come up in an hour !  
 'Tis really, yes, really too bad !

But look ! while they worry and fret  
 The clouds are all gone and the wet ;  
 And the sky is as blue  
 And as innocent too  
 As if it had never rained yet.

So we cannot tell if we try  
 The signs of this dainty blue sky.  
 But its smile or its frown  
 Turns the house upside down,  
 For it is the baby's blue eye.

---

*BABY'S GOOD-NIGHT.*

GO to sleep, baby,  
 Shut your blue eyes,  
 Bright stars are winking  
 Up in the skies.  
 So go to sleep, baby,  
 Be sure you don't cry,  
 For mother will sing you  
 A sweet lullaby.

Up in their nests  
 In the great, tall trees,  
 Little birds rock  
 In the evening breeze.  
 Down in the meadow,  
 Beside the old sheep,  
 The baby lambs lay  
 Them down to sleep.

So my little baby  
 On mother's breast,  
 Forgets all her troubles,  
 And sinks to her rest.  
 God bless her ! God keep her  
 Safe from all harms,  
 The fast asleep baby  
 In mother's own arms.

---

*LEARNING TO WALK.*

ONLY beginning the journey,  
 Many a mile to go ;  
 Little feet, how they patter,  
 Wandering to and fro.

Trying again, so bravely,  
 Laughing in baby glee ;  
 Hiding its face in mother's lap,  
 Proud as a baby can be.

Talking the oddest language  
 Ever before was heard ;  
 But mother—you'd hardly think so—  
 Understands every word.

Tottering now, and falling,  
 Eyes that are going to cry,  
 Kisses and plenty of love-words,  
 Willing again to try.

Father of all, oh, guide them,  
 The pattering little feet,  
 While they are treading the up-hill road,  
 Braving the dust and heat.

Aid them when they grow weary,  
 Keep them in a pathway blest,  
 And when the journey's ended,  
 Saviour, oh, give them rest.

THE BABY.

NAE shoon to hide her tiny taes,  
 Nae stockings on her feet ;  
 Her supple ankles white as snow  
 Of early blossoms sweet.  
 Her simple dress of sprinkled pink,  
 Her double, dimpled chin ;  
 Her pucker'd lip and bonny mou',  
 With nae ane tooth between.  
 Her een sae like her mither's een,  
 Twa gentle, liquid things ;  
 Her face is like an angel's face—  
 We're glad she has nae wings.





CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH.



AMONG THE BLOSSOMS.

## CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH.

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### *BENNY'S QUESTIONS.*

WHAT is the kitty good for?  
My little boy Benny said.

To catch the mice in the pantry  
When they nibble mamma's bread,  
To sit on the rug in the sunshine,  
To play with her little toes,  
And if kitty is good for anything else,  
It is more than mamma knows.

What is the mooly cow good for,  
Mamma? I'd like to know.

To eat green grass in the pastures  
Where the meadow-lilies grow,  
To give us sweet golden butter,  
Rich milk, and yellow cream,  
And a great many more good presents  
Than Benny could even dream.

What are the busy bees good for—  
To sting little boys? asked he.

There is many a lesson my boy could  
learn

From even a busy bee.  
For he works all day in the summer  
Laying sweet treasures by  
For the long cold days that are com-  
ing,  
When roses and violets die.

What is old Rover good for?  
I'm sure I can not see.

To teach my Benny how patient  
Even a brute can be ;  
To watch papa's house at midnight,  
When the lamps are all out in the  
street,  
So, Benny, take care of good Rover,  
And give him enough to eat.

What is my mamma good for?  
The little rogue laughing said.

Oh, Benny, my boy, I answered,  
As I pillowed his sunshiny head,  
Your mamma is good for nothing  
If she can not teach her child  
To follow the Infant Saviour,  
So loving, tender, and mild.

---

### *FOUR YEARS OLD.*

OH, sun! so far up in the blue sky ;  
Oh, clovers! so white and so sweet ;  
Oh, little brook! shining like silver,  
And running so fast past my feet,—

You don't know what strange thing  
has happened  
Since sunset and star-shine last night ;  
Since the four-o'clocks closed their red  
petals  
To wake up so early and bright.

Say, what will you think when I tell  
you  
What my dear mamma whispered to  
me,  
When she kissed me on each cheek  
twice over?  
You don't know what a man you may  
see!

Sweet-clover, stand still; do not blow  
so :  
I shall whisper way down in your ear,  
I was four years old early this morn-  
ing!  
Would you think so, to see me, my  
dear ?

Do you notice my pants and two pockets?

I'm so old, I must dress like a man;  
I must learn to read books and write letters,  
And I'll write one to you when I can.

My pretty gold butterflies flying,  
Little birds, and my busy brown bee,  
I shall never be too old to love you;  
And I hope that you'll always love me!

—  
*SUCH FUN.*

MADGE, wee woman with earnest look,  
Is head and ears in a fairy book;  
Rob is a rogue with hair of tow,  
Last but greatest is Baby Joe.

Fastened down there  
In the big arm-chair,  
Stiff and angular, strong and square.  
He can't get up and he can't slide out;  
Nothing to do but to wriggle about,  
Suck his thumbs and his rubber ring,  
And wonder vaguely about his shoes  
(Shiny and small such as babies use),  
How they ever came on his feet.  
If they're made to look at, or only to eat?  
Thinks quite strongly of making a spring  
In the hope of breaking the naughty thing  
That holds him a prisoner snug and tight  
In that tiresome chair from morning till night.

But here comes Rob with a funny face,  
Baby looks up and takes heart of grace;  
All his sorrows and griefs are past;  
Here is something to do at last.

He gurgles and crows  
And wrinkles his nose,  
With one little dimple that comes and goes;

He stretches an arm with a doubled-up fist,

Soft and rosy from elbow to wrist,  
For Rob has been puffing his red cheeks out

Till they look like big apples he's holding there,

Ripe and shining and smooth and fair.  
Baby Joe strikes hard with his fist of pink

At the puckered-up lips, then quicker than wink

Rob jumps to his feet with a laugh and a shout,

And capers and dances and whirls about.

But the best of the play is, that when it is done

They can play it all over again,  
Such fun!

—  
*TROUBLES IN HIGH LIFE.*

TWO miniature mothers at play on the floor

Their wearisome cares were debating;

How Dora and Arabelle, children no more,

Were twice as much trouble as ever before,

And the causes each had her own cares to deplore,

Were, really, well worth my relating.

Said one little mother: "You really don't know

What a burden my life is with Bella!  
Her extravagant habits I hope she'll outgrow.

She buys her kid gloves by the dozen,  
you know,

Sits for *cartes-de-visite* every fortnight or so,

And don't do a thing that I tell her!"

Those stylish young ladies (the dollies,  
you know),

Had complexions soft, pearly, and waxen,

With arms, neck, and forehead, as  
white as the snow,  
Golden hair sweeping down to the  
waist and below,  
Eyes blue as the sky, cheeks with  
youth's ruddy glow,—  
Of a beauty pure Grecian and Saxon.

“Indeed!” said the other, “that’s sad  
to be sure;  
But, ah,” with a sigh, “no one  
guesses  
The cares and anxieties mothers en-  
dure.  
For though Dora appears so sedate  
and demure,  
She spends all the money that I can  
secure  
On her cloaks and her bonnets and  
dresses.”

Then followed such prattle of fashion  
and style,  
I smiled as I listened and wondered,  
And I thought, had I tried to repeat it  
erewhile,  
How these fair little Israelites, without  
guile,  
Would mock at my lack of their knowl-  
edge, and smile  
At the way I had stumbled and  
blundered.

And I thought, too, when each youth-  
ful mother had conned  
Her startling and touching narration,  
Of the dolls of which I in my child-  
hood was fond,  
How with Dora and Arabelle they’d  
correspond,  
And how far dolls and children to-day  
are beyond  
Those we had in the last generation!

—————  
*LITTLE MARY'S SECRET.*

OH, larks! sing out to the thrushes,  
And thrushes, sing to the sky;  
Sing from your nests in the bushes,  
And sing wherever you fly;

For I’m sure that never another  
Such secret was told unto you—  
I’ve just got a baby brother!  
And I wish that the whole world  
knew.

I have told the buttercups, truly,  
And the clover that grows by the  
way;  
And it pleases me each time, newly,  
When I think of it during the day.  
And I say to myself: “Little Mary,  
You ought to be good as you can,  
For the sake of the beautiful fairy  
That brought you the wee little  
man.”

I’m five years old in the summer,  
And I’m getting quite large and tall,  
But I thought, till I saw the new-  
comer,  
When I looked in the glass, I was  
small.  
And I rise in the morning quite early,  
To be sure that the baby is here,  
For his hair is so soft and curly,  
And his hands so tiny and dear!

I stop in the midst of my pleasure—  
I’m so happy I can not play—  
And keep peeping in at my treasure,  
To see how much he gains in a day.  
But he doesn’t look much like growing,  
Yet I think that he will in a year,  
And I wish that the days would be go-  
ing,  
And the time when he walks would  
be here!

Oh, larks! sing out to the thrushes,  
And thrushes, sing as you soar;  
For I think, when another spring  
blushes,  
I can tell you a great deal more:  
I shall look from one to the other,  
And say: “Guess who I’m bringing  
to you?”  
And you’ll look—and see—he’s my  
brother!  
And you’ll sing, “Little Mary was  
true.”



*LITTLE BOY BLUE.*

UNDER the hay-stack, little Boy Blue  
Sleeps with his head on his arm,  
While voices of men and voices of  
maids  
Are calling him over the farm.

Sheep in the meadows are running wild,  
Where poisonous herbage grows,  
Leaving white tufts of downy fleece  
On the thorns of the sweet wild-  
rose.

Out in the fields where the silken corn  
Its plumed head nods and bows,  
Where golden pumpkins ripen below,  
Trample the white-faced cows.

But no loud blast on the shining horn  
Calls back the straying sheep,  
And the cows may wander in hay or  
corn  
While their keeper lies asleep.

His roguish eyes are tightly shut,  
His dimples are all at rest ;  
The chubby hand, tucked under his  
head,  
By one rosy cheek is pressed.

Waken him? No. Let down the bars  
And gather the truant sheep,  
Open the barnyard and drive in the  
cows,  
But let the little boy sleep.

For year after year we can shear the  
fleece,  
And corn can always be sown ;  
But the sleep that visits little Boy Blue  
Will not come when the years have  
flown.

*TOO LITTLE, EH!*

Two little girls are better than one,  
Two little boys can double the fun,  
Two little birds can make a fine nest,  
Two little arms can love mother best,

Two little ponies must go to a span,  
Two little pockets has my little man,  
Two little eyes to open and close,  
Two little ears and one little nose,  
Two little elbows, dimpled and sweet,  
Two little shoes on two little feet,  
Two little lips and one little chin,  
Two little cheeks with a rose set in,  
Two little shoulders chubby and strong,  
Two little legs running all day long,  
Two little prayers does my darling say,  
Twice does he kneel by my side each  
day,  
Two little folded hands, soft and brown,  
Two little eyelids cast meekly down,  
And two little angels guard him in bed,  
One at the foot and one at the head.

*BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL.**BEFORE SCHOOL.*

“QUARTER to nine !  
Boys and girls, do you hear ?”  
“One more buckwheat, then—  
Be quick, mother dear,  
Where is my luncheon-box ?”—  
“Under the shelf,  
Just in the place  
You left it yourself !”  
“I can't say my table !”—  
“Oh, find me my cap !”  
“One kiss for mamma,  
And sweet Sis in her lap.”  
“Be good, dear !”—“I'll try.”—  
“9 times 9's 81.”  
“Take your mittens !”—“All right.”—  
“Hurry up, Bill ; let's run.”  
With a slam of the door  
They are off, girls and boys,  
And the mother draws breath  
In the lull of their noise.

*AFTER SCHOOL.*

“Don't wake up the baby !  
Come gently, my dear !”  
“Oh, mother, I've torn my  
New dress, just look here !

U'm sorry, I only was  
 Climbing the wall."  
 "Oh, mother, my map  
 Was the nicest of all!"  
 "And Nelly, in spelling,  
 Went up to the head!"  
 "Oh, say! can I go out  
 On the hill with my sled?"  
 "I've got such a toothache;"—  
 "The teacher's unfair!"  
 "Is dinner most ready?  
 I'm just like a bear!"  
 Be patient, worn mother,  
 They're growing up fast,  
 These nursery whirlwinds,  
 Not long do they last;  
 A still, lonely house would be  
 Far worse than noise;  
 Rejoice and be glad in  
 Your brave girls and boys!

---

*BED-TIME.*

## I.

THE children are going to bed  
 In nurseries shaded and clean,  
 And many a bright and curly head  
 Is nestling the white sheets between.

Little faces all washed white as snow,  
 Are dewy with kisses to-night,  
 And young lips are murmuring low  
 Sweet prayers—words from con-  
 sciences white.

Tiny dresses and jackets and shoes  
 Lie folded away till the morn,  
 Like the chrysalis, no more of use  
 To the gayly-striped insect new-born.

The angel of sleep hovers near,  
 And curtains the room with his  
 wings;  
 That incense to angels is dear  
 Which from the nursery altars up-  
 springs.

Little eyelids quite tired with play,  
 Are drooping and closing like flowers,

And restless young forms laid away,  
 To sleep through the long midnight  
 hours.

In cottage and castle and hall,  
 In valley, on prairie, or hill,  
 The calm hush of evening doth fall,  
 And life hath grown suddenly still.

At sunset a blessing comes down,  
 And peace upon all things is shed,  
 For in city and village and town  
 The children are going to bed.

## II.

The children are going to bed,  
 Such bed as their lives ever know,  
 In alley and attic and shed,  
 And cellar-ways fetid and low,  
 In homes where wrangle and din  
 Turn night into hideous noon,  
 Where the voice of shame, sorrow, and  
 sin  
 Will break their light slumbers too  
 soon.

All tumbled and dirty they lie,  
 No kiss on the heavy young brow,  
 A tear scarcely dried in the eye,  
 The flush of a blow ling'ring now.  
 They sleep upon pavement or floor,  
 With never a low word of prayer,  
 Or gasp at the window or door  
 For a breath of the life-giving air.

Far up in the tenement high  
 They sob at the falling of day,  
 And angels bend down from the sky  
 To hear what the poor children say.  
 It may be that even in heaven  
 Some bright tears of pity are shed,  
 And sins of the day all forgiven  
 When the children are going to bed.

## III.

"The children are going to bed!"  
 Hushed voices speak gently the  
 word:  
 All muffled the mother's light tread,  
 No merry "Good-evening" is heard,

No breath stirs the ringlets of gold,  
 No dimple the passionless cheek,  
 No tossing limbs ruffle a fold  
 Laid over the hands folded meek.

Oh! quiet the cradle, though small,  
 Where the children are laid to their  
 rest;

There is room and to spare for them all,  
 In Earth's warm and welcoming  
 breast.

What matter if castle or cot  
 Once held the fair image of snow?  
 All alike are they now in their lot,  
 As they nestle the flowers below.

Then cover them up from our sight,  
 Spread the freshest green turf o'er  
 their head,

Bid them one more caressing "good-  
 night,"

The children are going to bed.  
 The children are folded in dreams,  
 Bright angels have sung them to  
 sleep,

And stars with their great solemn  
 beams,  
 Loving watch o'er their tired forms  
 keep.

No waking to sorrow or gloom,  
 No hunger, no shame, and no sin,  
 Oh! faithful and loving the tomb  
 That safe from life's ills shuts them  
 in.

The sweet name of Jesus our Lord  
 Once more o'er their pillows be said,  
 And praise, that, secure in His Word,  
 The children are going to bed.

---

*THE OTHER SIDE OF THE  
 MOON.*

SHE turns her great grave eyes toward  
 mine,  
 While I stroke her soft hair's gold;  
 We watch the moon through the win-  
 dow shine;  
 She is only six years old.

"Is it true," she asks, with her guile-  
 less mien,  
 And her voice in tender tune,  
 "That nobody ever yet has seen  
 The other side of the moon?"

I smile at her question, answering  
 "Yes;"

And then, by a strange thought  
 stirred,

I murmur, half in forgetfulness  
 That she listens to every word:  
 "There are treasures on earth so rich  
 and fair

That they can not stay with us here,  
 And the other side of the moon is where  
 They go when they disappear!

"There are hopes that the spirit hardly  
 names,

And songs that it mutely sings;

There are good resolves, and exalted  
 aims;

There are longings for nobler things;  
 There are sounds and visions that  
 haunt our lot,

Ere they vanish, or seem to die,  
 And the other side of the moon (why  
 not?)

Is the far bourne where they fly!

"We could guess how that realm were  
 passing sweet,

And of strangely precious worth,

If its distant reaches enshrined com-  
 plete

The incompleteness of earth!

If there we could find, like a living  
 dream,

What here we but mourn and miss,  
 Oh, the other side of the moon must  
 beam

With a glory unknown in this!"

"Are you talking of Heaven?" she  
 whispers now,

While she nestles against my knees.

And I say, as I kiss her white wide  
 brow,

"You may call it so, if you please . . .

For whatever that wondrous land may  
be,  
Should we journey there, late or soon,  
Perhaps we may look down from  
Heaven and see—  
The other side of the moon !”

—  
*GOOD-NIGHT.*

GOOD-NIGHT ! the sun is setting,  
“ Good-night !” the robins sing,  
And blue-eyed dolls and blue-eyed girls  
Should soon be following.  
Come ! lay the Lady Geraldine  
Among the pillows white ;  
'Tis time the little mother kissed  
Her sleepy doll good-night.

And, Willie, put the cart away,  
And drive into the shed  
The pony and the mooly cow ;  
'Tis time to go to bed.  
For, listen ! in the lilac tree  
The robin does not sing ;  
“ Good-night !” he sang, and tucked  
his head  
Beneath his weary wing.

Soon all the world will go to rest,  
And all the sky grow dim ;  
God “ giveth His beloved sleep,”  
So we may trust in Him.  
The Lord is in the shadow,  
And the Lord is in the light,  
To guard His little ones from harm ;  
Good-night, dear hearts, good-night !

—  
*COUNTRY CHILDREN*

LITTLE fresh violets,  
Born in the wildwood ;  
Sweetly illustrating  
Innocent childhood :  
Shy as the antelope—  
Brown as a berry—  
Free as the mountain air,  
Romping and merry.

Blue eyes and hazel eyes  
Peep from the hedges,  
Shaded by sun-bonnets,  
Frayed at the edges !

Up in the apple trees,  
Careless of danger,  
Manhood in embryo  
Stares at the stranger.

Out in the hilly patch,  
Seeking the berries—  
Under the orchard trees,  
Feasting on cherries—  
Trampling the clover blooms,  
Down 'mong the grasses,  
No voice to hinder them,  
Dear lads and lasses !

No grim propriety—  
No interdiction ;  
Free as the birdlings  
From city restriction !  
Coining the purest blood,  
Strength'ning each muscle,  
Donning health armor  
'Gainst life's coming bustle.

Dear little innocents !  
Born in the wildwood ;  
Oh, that all little ones  
Had such a childhood !  
Blue skies spread over them,  
Earth's green beneath them  
No sweeter heritage  
Could we bequeathe them.

—  
*THE LITTLE CAVALIER.*

HE walks beside his mother,  
And looks up in her face ;  
He wears a glow of boyish pride  
With such a royal grace !  
He proudly waits upon her ;  
Would shield her without fear—  
The boy who loves his mother well,  
Her little cavalier.

To see no tears of sorrow  
Upon her loving cheek,  
To gain her sweet, approving smile,  
To hear her softly speak—  
Ah ! what in all this wide world  
Could be to him so dear ?—  
The boy who loves his mother well,  
Her little cavalier.

Look for him in the future  
 Among the good, the true :  
 All blessings on the upward way  
 His little feet pursue.  
 Of robed and crowned and sceptered  
 kings  
 He stands the royal peer—  
 The boy who loves his mother well,  
 Her little cavalier.

— — — — —  
 " THAT LITTLE HAT."

I FIND it in the garden path,  
 Its little crown half full  
 Of white flowers ; where's the rogue  
 Who dared my roses pull ?  
 I find it on the roadside there,  
 The flowers tossed away,  
 And in the crown, packed carefully,  
 A load of stones and clay.

I find it in the daisied field,  
 Or hidden in the clover,  
 Inspected by the wandering bees,  
 And crawled by insects over.  
 I find it on the old barn floor,  
 Or in the manger resting,  
 Or swinging from the beams above,  
 Where cooing doves are nesting.

I find it 'neath my busy feet  
 Upon the kitchen floor,  
 Or lying midway up the stairs,  
 Or by my chamber door.  
 I find it in, I find it out,  
 'Neath table, lounge, or chair,  
 The little shabby brimless thing,  
 I find it everywhere

But on the curly, golden pate  
 For which alone 'twas meant,  
 That little restless, sunny head,  
 On mischief always bent.  
 Oh ! baby boy, this problem solve,  
 And tell me, darling, whether  
 Your roguish pate and this old hat  
 Were *ever* seen together ?

— — — — —  
 MY BOY.

A LITTLE roll of flannel fine ;  
 A thrill in mother's heart—" 'tis mine ;"

A little head of golden hair ;  
 A lifted eye to heaven in prayer ;

A smile that ripples to a laugh ;  
 A tear with grief in its behalf ;  
 A pushing of a slender chair ;  
 A climbing of the oaken stair ;

A stride o'er everything at hand ;  
 A horse at Santa Claus' command ;  
 A little cart all painted red ;  
 A train of cars at full steam sped ;

A pair of " pants " that reach the knee ;  
 A strut like midshipman from sea ;  
 A pair of boots with tops of red ;  
 A knife, a ball, a gallant sled ;

A pocket full of everything ;  
 A " shooter," skates, and yards of string.  
 A voting fraction's " such a bore ;"  
 A holiday rejoicing o'er ;

A stretching down the pantaloons ;  
 A swim—a wrestling match at noon ;  
 A little Latin now, and Greek ;  
 A letter home just once a week ;

A roaming through collegiate halls ;  
 A summer evening spent in calls ;  
 A rapture o'er a sunny face ;  
 A bow, a ring, some bridal lace ;

A kneeling at the chancel rail ;  
 A trembling bride, a bridegroom pale  
 A leap into the world's wide sea ;  
 My boy was gone—ah me ! ah me !

— — — — —  
 THREE OPINIONS.

THE great Thanksgiving dinner  
 Was over—scant room to doubt ;  
 For a trio of little faces,  
 Jolly and fat, peeped out.  
 Fat quite nigh to bursting,  
 Jolly, good reason why—  
 Up to their eyes in turkey,  
 Brimful of pumpkin pie.

Three so lucky youngsters  
 Well might afford to pause,  
 To pity the turkey—martyrs  
 Roasted in such a cause.



And Susie had raised the question—  
 Jollily late, say I—  
 Whether in this day's honor  
 'Twere just the turk should die.

She shook her brown curls doubtful.  
 "I ain't quite sure," she said,  
 "If even I'd like for honor  
 To be a turkey dead.  
 Ours strutted about so proudly,  
 Must 've thought he'd be spared.  
 It was sort of mean to kill him;  
 Bob, do you think he cared?"

Came a peal of puzzled laughter,  
 With the answer, from Bob's lips:  
 "Why, what was a turkey made for  
 But just for human nips?  
 I'm sure he'd 've felt real slighted  
 Not to be killed to-day,  
 For every well-trained turkey  
 Is proud to die this way."

Spoke Beth, the household baby—  
 Beth, nigh bursting, too;  
 "I think 'ou'th jutht the queeretht,  
 Funnietht 'ittle Thue.  
 I knowth the vevy weathon,  
 I th' pothed 'ou underwthood:  
 If it wathn't wight to kill him  
 He wouldn't tatht the dood."

Quite charming the baby's logic;  
 Wee Susan seemed convinced,  
 And crumpled up her conscience  
 So tight it never winced.  
 Surely, with her, quite easy  
 To see the reason why—  
 Up to her eyes in turkey,  
 Brimful of pumpkin pie.

—  
 DAISY'S NEW PLAY.

OUR little Daisy is rosy and sweet,  
 Neat as a pin from her head to her  
 feet;  
 Her long, waving ringlets are yellow  
 as gold,  
 And her bonny brown eyes they are  
 bright to behold.

All the day through it makes one re-  
 joice  
 To hear the soft tones of her sweet,  
 laughing voice;  
 Summer or winter, sunshine or rain,  
 No one hears Daisy fret and complain.

Up stairs and down, nimble with fun,  
 Two little slippered feet scamper and  
 run,  
 While two little hands as nimble as  
 they  
 Make themselves busy with work and  
 with play.

Every one's errands they're ready to  
 do—  
 Find mamma's needle; button her  
 shoe;  
 Set papa's slippers down by the fire;  
 Build baby's block-house two stories  
 higher.

Hold the long skein for grandmother's  
 knitting;  
 Pick up the ball that's apt to go flit-  
 ting;  
 Run for the letters when the bell rings;  
 Oh, she's the Daisy for all sorts of  
 things!

Once when it rained, and baby was  
 cross,  
 And mother and nurse were quite at a  
 loss—  
 At their wit's end, in fact, I may say—  
 Daisy invented a new sort of play.

She put a mop-cap on her curly young  
 head,  
 Grandmother's cap, if the truth must  
 be said,  
 And next thing she borrowed, don't  
 you suppose,  
 Grandmother's specs to stick on her  
 nose!

Somebody lent her an old parasol,  
 So she was so dressed to make us a  
 call;

And you should have seen the baby's  
delight  
When little grandmother danced into  
sight.

All in a minute the cross fit was over,  
And he was as gay as a bee in the  
clover,  
Laughing and crowing in such a wild  
frolic,  
Nurse was afraid it would give him the  
colic.

Our little Daisy, dainty and fair,  
From her plump little toes to her yellow  
gold hair,  
Gentle and good as she's bonny and  
clever,  
Every one prays, Bless her forever !

Strangers that meet her out in the  
street,  
Whisper, with kisses, Isn't she sweet?  
Sweet as a violet, fresh as a rose,  
And how much we love her nobody  
knows !

---

*WHERE'S MY BABY?*

WHERE'S my baby? Where's my  
baby?  
But a little while ago,  
In my arms I held one fondly,  
And a robe of lengthened flow  
Covered little knees so dimpled,  
And each pink and chubby toe.

Where's my baby? I remember  
Now about the shoes so red,  
Peeping from his shortened dresses,  
And the bright curls on his head;  
Of the little teeth so pearly,  
And the first sweet words he said.

Where's my baby? Ask that urchin,  
Let me hear what he will say;  
"Where's your baby, ma?" he ques-  
tioned,  
With a roguish look and way;  
"Guess he's grown to be a boy, now,  
Big enough to work and play."

Where's my baby? Where's my baby?  
Ah! the years fly on apace!  
Yesterday I held and kissed it,  
In its loveliness and grace;  
But to-morrow sturdy manhood  
Takes the little baby's place.

---

*THE LITTLE BOY'S LAMENT.*

OH, why must I always be washed  
so clean  
And scrubbed and drenched for  
Sunday,  
When you know very well, for you've  
always seen,  
That I'm dirty again on Monday?

My eyes are filled with the lathery  
soap,  
Which adown my ears is dripping;  
And my smarting eyes I can scarcely  
ope,  
And my lips the suds are sipping.

It's down my neck and up my nose,  
And to choke me you seem to be  
trying;  
That I'll shut my mouth you need not  
suppose,  
For how can I keep from crying?

You rub as hard as ever you can,  
And your hands are hard to my sor-  
row;  
No woman shall wash me when I'm a  
man,  
And I wish I was one to-morrow.

---

*LITTLE BOOTS.*

NOT those I sadly laid away,  
With little stockings soft and gay,  
That sunless, heart-sick, saddest day,  
I passed beneath the rod;  
I wipe from them the gathering mold,  
I wonder at their growing old,  
Then think how long the streets of  
gold  
My little one has trod !

To-day a little larger pair  
 Are traversing the hall and stair,  
 Or somersaulting in the air,  
 Are never, never still :  
 Down at the heel ! Out at the toes !  
 Mud-covered ! every mother knows  
 How " in-and-out " her dear boy goes,  
 Oft chide him as she will.

But life and strength and glowing  
 health,  
 Come through those little boots by  
 stealth,  
 And willing errands, love's sweet  
 wealth  
 At bidding bring us joy.  
 Bear with the little boots, I pray ;  
 Soon into life they'll walk away,  
 And, sitting lone, your heart will say,  
 Where is my little boy ?

—  
*A WEE PHILOSOPHER.*

As down the path, one Sabbath-morn,  
 I walked at rapid rate,  
 There stepped beside me hurriedly,  
 Lest she, too, should be late,  
 From tip to toe as sweet a maid  
 As careful mother e'er arrayed  
 For church, on Sunday morning.

A little space she trotted on  
 Demurely at my side—  
 A proper maid for Sabbath-morn—  
 When suddenly she spied  
 A luscious tempter in her path :  
 I heard a jolly crow and laugh ;  
 " Just ripe for Sunday morning ! "

A clump of whortleberries, green  
 Save just a few in sight,  
 Which, smarter than their neighbors,  
 had  
 Turned black within the night :  
 These bobbed their heads, as if to say,  
 " We'll wager that you've come this  
 way  
 To pick us, Sunday morning ! "

Too tempting was the prospect for  
 So wee a maid to slight ;  
 Quick plunged she 'mid the vines, then  
 rose  
 Uproarious with delight —  
 So merry that she heeded not,  
 So happy that she quite forgot  
 That it was Sunday morning.

A-sudden paused she, and her voice  
 Took quite a sober trill ;  
 A penitent in word at least,  
 She softly spoke—though still  
 She clutched the berry-branches tight,  
 " I don't suppose it was just right  
 To pick them Sunday morning ! "

So very loth was she to yield  
 The luscious prize at stake,  
 This little maid was tempted sore  
 A compromise to make ;  
 And curious, silent listener, I,  
 Next moment heard th' exultant cry :  
 " I'll eat them Monday morning ! "

" Perhaps that won't so wicked be "—  
 And carefully she stowed  
 Her booty in a hiding-place,  
 Then hurried down the road,  
 From tip to toe as sweet a maid  
 As ruthless tempter e'er waylaid  
 Bound church-ward Sunday morn-  
 ing !

That she could keep her compromise  
 I doubted very much ;  
 Yet, truly, never all that day  
 Did she the berries touch.  
 But, bright and early, once again  
 I saw her tripping down the lane,  
 To eat them, Monday morning.

—  
*OUR CHARLIE.*

THERE'S a hurry of half-clipped words  
 Flung out of the baby mouth ;  
 A kiss like the rustle of birds,  
 And a breath like the wind from the  
 south.

There are chubby arms clasping me  
tight

In the warmth of a childish caress,  
There are questioning glances bright  
And a little hand pulling my dress.

Then, a leap out of babyhood's door,  
A cheerily ringing voice,  
A bounding step on the floor,  
A boyish bustle and noise ;  
Lo, the inches are growing tall  
On the head with its bright curls  
shorn !

There's a slate and a book and a ball,  
Cut fingers, and looks forlorn.

A lengthening down of his clothes,  
A fumbling after his wits,  
A freckle or two on his nose,  
A collar that never fits,  
A voice that is cracked and hoarse,  
A trouble with hands and feet,  
A laugh grown a trifle coarse,  
And a muckle bit o' conceit.

A voice that is merry and strong,  
The curl of a dark moustache,  
The ring of a college song,  
A tale of adventures rash ;  
A sign on an office door,  
A story the poets sing,  
A few whispered words said o'er,  
A sigh and a proffered ring ;

An army marching away,  
The touch of a parting hand,  
The dawn of a battle day,  
A grave in a southern land ;  
A few swift tears to fall,  
A uniform faded and torn,  
A picture to hang on the wall,  
A presence forever gone !

---

*LETTING THE OLD CAT DIE.*

NOT long ago I wandered near  
A playground in the wood,  
And there heard words from a young-  
ster's lips  
That I never quite understood.

"Now, let the old cat die," he laughed ;  
I saw him give a push,  
Then gravely scamper away as he  
spied  
My face peep over the bush.

But what he pushed, or where he went,  
I could not well make out,  
On account of the thicket of bending  
boughs  
That bordered the place about.

"The little villain has stoned a cat,  
Or hung it upon a limb,  
And left it to die all alone," I said,  
"But I'll play the mischief with him."

I forced my way between the boughs,  
The poor old cat to seek,  
And what did I find but a swinging  
child,  
With her bright hair brushing her  
cheek.

Her bright hair floated to and fro,  
Her little red dress flashed by,  
But the loveliest thing of all, I thought,  
Was the gleam of her laughing eye.

Swinging and swaying back and forth,  
With the rosy light in her face,  
She seemed like a bird and a flower in  
one,  
And the forest her native place.

"Steady ! I'll send you up, my child,"  
But she stopped me with a cry :  
"Go 'way ! go 'way ! don't touch me,  
please,  
I'm letting the old cat die !"

"You letting him die !" I cried, aghast,  
"Why, where's the cat, my dear ?"  
And lo ! the laughter that filled the  
woods  
Was the thing for the birds to hear.

"Why, don't you know," said the little  
maid,  
The fitting, beautiful elf,  
"That we call it 'letting the old cat  
die,'  
When the swing stops all of itself ?"

Then swinging and swinging, and  
 looking back,  
 With the merriest look in her eye,  
 She bade me "Good-day," and I left  
 her alone,  
 A-letting the old cat die.

WHAT'S A BOY LIKE?

LIKE a wasp, like a sprite,  
 Like a goose, like an eel,  
 Like a top, like a kite,  
 Like an owl, like a wheel,  
 Like the wind, like a snail,  
 Like a knife, like a crow,  
 Like a thorn, like a flail,  
 Like a hawk, like a doe.

Like the sea, like a weed,  
 Like a watch, like the sun,  
 Like a cloud, like a seed,  
 Like a book, like a gun,  
 Like a smile, like a tree,  
 Like a lamb, like the moon,  
 Like a bud, like a bee,  
 Like a burr, like a tune.

Like a colt, like a whip,  
 Like a mouse, like a mill,  
 Like a bell, like a ship,  
 Like a jay, like a rill,  
 Like a shower, like a cat,  
 Like a frog, like a toy,  
 Like a ball, like a bat,  
 Most of all—like a boy.

PAYING HER WAY.

WHAT has my darling been doing to-  
 day,  
 To pay for her washing and mend-  
 ing?  
 How can she manage to keep out of  
 debt  
 For so much caressing and tend-  
 ing?

How can I wait till the years shall  
 have flown,  
 And the hands have grown larger  
 and stronger?

Who will be able the interest to pay  
 If the debt runs many years longer?

Dear little feet! How they fly to my  
 side!

White arms my neck are caressing.  
 Sweetest of kisses are laid on my cheek,  
 Fair head my shoulder is pressing.  
 Nothing at all from my darling is due,  
 From evil may angels defend her—  
 The debt is discharged as fast as 'tis  
 made,  
 For love is a legal tender!

SWINGING ON A BIRCH TREE.

SWINGING on a birch tree  
 To a sleepy tune,  
 Hummed by all the breezes  
 In the month of June!  
 Little leaves a-flutter  
 Sound like dancing drops  
 Of a brook on pebbles—  
 Song that never stops.

Up and down we see-saw;  
 Up into the sky;  
 How it opens on us,  
 Like a wide blue eye!  
 You and I are sailors  
 Rocking on a mast;  
 And the world's our vessel:  
 Ho! she sails so fast!

Blue, blue sea around us;  
 Not a ship in sight;  
 They will hang out lanterns  
 When they pass to-night.  
 We with ours will follow  
 Through the midnight deep  
 Not a thought of danger,  
 Though the crew's asleep.

Oh, how still the air is!  
 There an oriole flew;  
 What a jolly whistle!  
 He's a sailor, too.



Yonder is his hammock  
 In the elm-top high :  
 One more ballad, messmate !  
 Sing it as you fly !

Up and down we see-saw :  
 Down into the grass,  
 Scented fern and rose-buds,  
 All a woven mass.  
 That's the sort of carpet  
 Fitted for our feet ;  
 Tapestry nor velvet  
 Is so rich and neat.

Swinging on a birch tree !  
 This is summer joy,  
 Fun for all vacation—  
 Don't you think so, boy ?  
 Up and down to see-saw,  
 Merry and at ease,  
 Careless as a brook is,  
 Idle as the breeze.

ONLY A BOY.

ONLY a boy, with his noise and fun,  
 The veriest mystery under the sun ;  
 As brimful of mischief and wit and  
 glee  
 As ever a human frame can be,  
 And as hard to manage as—ah ! ah  
 me !  
 'Tis hard to tell ;  
 Yet we love him well.

Only a boy, with his fearful tread,  
 Who can not be driven, but must be  
 led ;  
 Who troubles the neighbors' dogs and  
 cats,  
 And tears more clothes, and spoils  
 more hats,  
 Loses more tops and kites and bats,  
 Than would stock a store  
 For a year or more.

Only a boy, with his wild, strange ways ;  
 With his idle hours on busy days ;

With his queer remarks and odd re-  
 plies,  
 Sometimes foolish, and sometimes  
 wise ;

Often brilliant, for one of his size  
 As a meteor hurled  
 From the pleasant world.

Only a boy, who will be a man,  
 If nature goes on with her first great  
 plan ;  
 If fire or water, or some fatal snare,  
 Conspire not to rob us of this our heir,  
 Our blessing, our trouble, our rest, our  
 care,  
 Our torment, our joy—  
 "Only a boy."

CHESTNUTS.

DOWN in the orchard, all the day,  
 The apples ripened and dropped away ;  
 Tawny, and yellow, and red they fell,  
 Filling the air with a spicy smell.

There were purple grapes on the al-  
 ders low,  
 But the jays had gathered them long  
 ago :  
 And the merry children had plundered  
 well,  
 Hedge, and thicket, and hazel dell.

But the sturdy chestnuts over the hill  
 Guarded their prickly caskets still,  
 And laughed in scorn at the wind and  
 rain,  
 Beating their burly limbs in vain.

"Hush !" said the frost. "If you'll  
 hold your breath  
 Till hill and valley are still as death  
 I will whisper a spell that shall open  
 wide  
 The caskets green where the treasures  
 hide."

The rain sank down and the wind was  
 still,  
 And the world was wrapped in the  
 moonlight chill ;

And a faint white mist, like a ghost,  
was seen  
Creeping over the valley green.

Over the roofs of the sleeping town,  
Over the hillsides, bare and brown ;  
Field, and meadow, and wood were  
crossed  
By the shining trail of the silver frost.

Close at the door of each guarded cell  
He breathed the words of his wonder-  
ful spell,  
And the bristling lances turned aside  
And every portal flew open wide.

Up sprang the wind with a loud "Ho !  
ho !"  
And scattered the treasures to and fro :  
And the children shouted, "Come  
away !  
There is sport in the chestnut woods  
to-day."

—————  
*RUNNING AWAY FROM  
MAMMA.*

RUNNING away from mamma,  
Bareheaded up the street,  
Kicking the dust into yellow smoke  
With little roguish feet,  
Tossing it over his clean white dress  
Into his stocking heels,  
Checking the little wooden horse  
That trundles along on wheels.

Dreaming away with mild blue eyes,  
And speculating why  
God don't give him the golden ball  
That drops in the quivering sky—  
What is the use of that pretty pink  
cloud  
Sailing away on high,  
If he didn't have a ride on it ?  
And it's no use to try !

If that woman grew with glasses on,  
If this house is papa's ;  
Why that nice red cow won't talk to  
him,  
Leaning across the bars.

Into the neighbors' gates and doors,  
Under their cherry trees,  
Into mischief and out again  
Wherever he may please.

Wandering at last to the old church  
steps  
Little horse and all,  
Climbing up laboriously—  
(Too bad if he should fall !)  
Pushing in with dimpled hands  
The great doors strong and tall,  
Letting the warm sweet summer light  
Glide down the shadowed wall.

Standing still in the solemn hush  
Of the chancel, nave, and dome,  
Thinking it is prettier  
Than the sitting-room at home.  
Not a bit afraid—ah ! no, indeed,  
Of the shadows vast and dim,  
Quite at home and sure it was made  
All on purpose for him.

The old, old story comes up to me,  
Written so long ago,  
About the heavenly temple  
Where you and I must go.  
The beautiful waiting temple  
That has no room for sin—  
Something about a little child  
And the way of entering in.

—————  
*STORMY-DAY PARTY.*

BABY and I are invited  
To a fine party, they say,  
I'm sure we will be delighted  
To go on this stormy day.  
"Give my love—I'll come ; baby, too,  
Joins me with a hearty, 'a-goo.'"

"'Tis not very far—just walk out here,"  
Said dancing little Freddy,  
"Have this easy-chair, mamma dear,  
The party is quite ready.  
Mrs. Hippo, mamma ; Miss Rose, too,"  
I bowed, and baby said, "a-goo."

Freddy did so very funny look,  
 In papa's coat and high hat—  
 Grace, as Mrs. Hippo and chief  
 cook,  
 In Bridget's new calico, sat.  
 We talked and chatted as people do,  
 Baby repeating his sweet "a-goo."

Tea was served on dainty dishes,  
 Nuts, pop-corn, and bits of cake,  
 Peppermints and candy fishes,  
 Were spread for us to partake.  
 We sipped and ate, enjoyed it, too,  
 And baby laughed and said, "a-goo."

A step was heard out in the hall,  
 Stamping the snow from the feet,  
 "Papa's come," we shouted, and all  
 Invited him to the treat.  
 He gave us kisses, not a few,  
 But best of all was baby's "a-goo."

"I'm so glad," the dear papa said,  
 "While storming so wild without,  
 We have sunshine within. Fred,  
 Ask mamma to play; no doubt  
 We can join in the singing, too,  
 And baby help with his "a-goo."

---

*GOOD-NIGHT AND GOOD-  
 MORNING.*

A FAIR little girl  
 Sat under a tree,  
 Sewing as long as  
 Her eyes could see;  
 She smoothed her work,  
 And folded it right,  
 And said, "Dear work,  
 Good-night, good-night."

Such a number of rooks  
 Went over her head,  
 Crying, "Caw, caw,"  
 On their way to bed.  
 She said, as she watched  
 Their curious flight,  
 "Little black things,  
 Good-night, good-night."

The horses neighed,  
 And the oxen lowed,  
 And the sheep's "bleat, bleat,"  
 Came over the road;  
 All seeming to say,  
 With a quiet delight,  
 "Good little girl,  
 Good-night, good-night."

She did not say  
 To the sun, "Good-night,"  
 Though she saw him there,  
 Like a ball of light;  
 For she knew he had  
 God's time to keep  
 All over the world,  
 And never could sleep.

The tall, pink fox-glove  
 Bowed his head:  
 The violets curtsied  
 And went to bed;  
 And good little Lucy  
 Tied up her hair,  
 And said, on her knees,  
 Her favorite prayer.

And while on her pillow  
 She softly lay,  
 She heard nothing more  
 Till again it was day.  
 And all things said  
 To the beautiful sun,  
 "Good-morning, good-morning,  
 Our work has begun."

---

*MICE.*

THEY break the kitchen windows  
 And overturn the chairs;  
 They cut the doors and tables—  
 Much wicked work is theirs.  
 Your watch they often handle,  
 And sometimes let it fall;  
 Which fact is quite surprising  
 When told of rodents small.

They hide your books and papers,  
 Unlock the doors and gates;  
 They revel in the pantry  
 And rattle down the plates.

They fill your boots with pebbles,  
And, to your great dismay,  
A garret full of pussies  
Can't keep the knaves away.

But mice don't slam the shutters,  
And sail your hats for boats.  
And give away to beggars  
Your pantaloons and coats.  
At last, you muse on Darwin,  
And, much to your annoy,  
You find those mice developed  
Into that youngest boy.

---

*SHADOWS ON THE WALL.*

LITTLE Bessie wakes at midnight,  
And upon the nursery wall,  
Sees she by the flickering firelight  
Shadows dancing grim and tall.

Now they rise and now they beckon,  
Nearer still they seem to come,  
Bessie's blue eyes gaze wide open,  
And her lips are stricken dumb.

Bessie thinks they are "the witches,"  
"Mary said they'd take away  
All the naughty little children,  
And I've not been good to-day.

"Once I did not mind my mother,  
And I broke the china cup,"  
So the little tender conscience  
All the past day's sins sums up.

Still the dancing shadows waken  
Childhood's grief and childhood's  
fear,

And there sink into the pillow  
Many a sob and many a tear;

Till the mother, sleeping lightly,  
Just within the open door,  
Wakes and listens for a moment;  
Hastens barefoot o'er the floor;

Folds the little weeping maiden  
Close within her loving arms;  
And upon that tender bosom  
Bessie sobs out her alarms.

Then the mother, softly smiling,  
Whispers, "All your witches tall,  
Oh, my foolish little Bessie,  
Are but shadows on the wall!

"See, the tall ones are the andirons;  
That the wardrobe; this the chair;  
And the shawl upon the sofa  
Makes the face with flowing hair.

"Has my darling then forgotten,  
When she said her evening prayer,  
How she prayed that God's good an-  
gels  
Still might have her in their care?

"Sure she knows that the Good Shep-  
herd  
Guards His flock by day and night,  
And the lambs are folded safely,  
In the dark as in the light."

Soon upon her mother's bosom  
Little Bessie falls asleep,  
Murmuring, as she clings the closer,  
"Pray the Lord my soul to keep."

And the mother, softly kissing  
The wet eyelids and the hair,  
Tossed back from the snowy forehead,  
Clasps her close in voiceless prayer.

That the Love which gave her darling  
Still may keep till dawns the day  
When earth's haunting fears are over,  
And the shadows flee away.

---

*CASTLES IN THE FIRE.*

SITTING by the fire-light,  
In the twilight gray,  
Building airy castles,  
Bessie, Jack, and May,  
Curly brown and golden locks,  
Nestled close together,  
Heeding not the wailing winds  
Of November weather.

Seeing in the wood-fire  
Many a vision rare;  
Tracing in their fancies,  
The future gay and fair.

Well it is each dreamer  
Sees not down the years  
All his cares and sorrows,  
All his toils and tears.

“Look ! I see a war-horse,  
Prancing inky black.  
Don't you see me charging  
Fiercely on his back ?  
Now, again, I'm bowing  
To the loud ' Hurrah ! '  
I've come back victorious—  
A hero from the war.”

See the haughty lady,  
Turning cold away  
From the throng of suitors,  
Who all vainly pray.  
Oh, she will not listen,  
Noble though they be,  
She's waiting for her sailor,  
Sailing o'er the sea.”

Now it is sweet May's turn,  
Peering in the blaze,  
What can see dear blue eyes,  
Of the future days ?

“I can see a little urn,  
'Neath a willow-tree,  
In a churchyard, all alone,  
That I think's for me.”

Boyish peals of laughter,  
Ring out clear and free,  
“Yes, I see the little urn,  
It's to make the tea.  
I'll come back from battle,  
Bessie from the sea,  
Dearest May shall sit at home,  
And brew us cups of tea.”

---

#### LITTLE MISS MEDDLESOME.

LITTLE Miss Meddlesome, scattering  
crumbs,  
Into the library noisily comes—  
Twirls off her apron, tilts open some  
books,  
And into a work-basket rummaging,  
looks.

Out go the spools spinning over the  
floor,  
Beeswax and needle-case stepped out  
before ;  
She tosses the tape-rule and plays with  
the floss,  
And says to herself, “ Now won't mam-  
ma be cross ! ”

Little Miss Meddlesome climbs to the  
shelf,  
Since no one is looking, and, mischiev-  
ous elf,  
Pulls down the fine vases, the cuckoo  
clock stops,  
And sprinkles the carpet with damag-  
ing drops.

She turns over the ottoman, frightens  
the bird,  
And sees that the chairs in a medley  
are stirred ;  
Then creeps on the sofa, and, all in a  
heap,  
Drops out of her frolicsome mischief  
asleep.

But here comes the nurse, who is shak-  
ing her head,  
And frowns at the Mischief asleep on  
her bed ;  
But let's hope when Miss Meddlesome's  
slumber is o'er  
She may wake from good dreams and  
do mischief no more.

---

#### PATCHWORK.

LITTLE Miss Margery sits and sews,  
Painfully creaking her needle goes,  
As the moist little fingers push it  
through.  
Such a long stint she has got to do !  
“What is the good,” she says with a  
sigh,  
“Of making more quilts to just lay by ?  
“Up in the press lies row on row ;  
Who are they for ? I should like to  
know.



'You'll be glad some day,' says Aunt Pauline,  
'That you made so many.' What can she mean?

Pretty white spreads, I think, look best;  
And, anyway, little girls want some rest."

The small brass thimble gleefully rolled  
(Margery likes to play 'tis gold),  
Scissors and spool with a clatter fell;  
Solemn old clock, now don't you tell!  
Over the sill see Margery lean,  
Heedless of patchwork and Aunt Pauline.

Clover-heads with their horns of honey,  
Daisies with gold and silver money,  
Strings of strawberries yet to be,  
Yellow butterflies, gay and free,  
Sun and wind, and a chance to play,—  
All these scarcely a rod away.

She knows she could find a four-leafed clover  
Before she had hunted the field half over;  
And, oh! by the way that sparrow flew,  
She must have a nest there, certain true!  
Only a thin white wall between!—  
When suddenly in walked Aunt Pauline.

The high-backed chairs grew straighter still,  
The clock began to tick with a will,  
Even the foolish half-moon face  
Checked itself in a broad grimace,  
While a vagrant bee who was buzzing through  
Out of the window quickly flew.

Guilty Margery, quite aghast,  
Straightens up and sews very fast.  
But all in vain, however she tries,  
To cheat for a moment those keen eyes

Under their spectacles looking through  
Body and soul—and patchwork, too.

"What is the matter," she asks, "to-day?  
You want to go out in the field and play?  
If I were so silly I wouldn't have told—  
A great, big girl nearly twelve years old.  
Let me see your work. Well, I do declare,  
'Twould disgrace a baby, Margery Ware!

"It must all come out. Here, take this pin;  
Sit beside me, while you begin.  
Remember, you must not leave your seat  
Until it is done all true and neat.  
You'll be thankful yet that you learned to sew,"  
With a glance at Margery's face of woe.

"When I was a girl," says Aunt Pauline,  
"An idle minute was seldom seen;  
You've no idea of the pains we'd take,  
Our beautiful patchwork squares to make.  
For prints were precious, and thread was high,  
And little enough could our parents buy.

"You could sew if you only tried;  
What in the world do you see outside?  
Grass wants cutting; the corn looks dry;  
Signs of rain, I think, in the sky.  
Carefully, child, don't hurry so.  
Set your stitches exact and slow."

Margery swings her restless feet,  
Clover blossoms do smell so sweet;

Smooth little finger-tips grow rough,  
 Won't she ever have done enough?  
 Well, she must bear it while she's  
     small;  
 Grown-up folks needn't sew at all.

—

*LITTLE TODDIE.*

Is it bright with summer gladness,  
     Toddie dear;  
 Is there nowhere any sadness,  
     Toddie dear,  
 In that land of pleasant mountains,  
 Crystal rivers, silver fountains,  
 In that home to which you hastened  
 From the home by sorrow chastened,  
     Joyless here?

Do the seraph-bands surround you,  
     Toddie boy?  
 Do the angels gather round you,  
     Toddie boy?  
 Do they keep your heart from grieving  
 For the mother you are leaving,  
 For the mother who is groaning  
 With a broken-hearted moaning  
     For her boy?

Yes, we know that love upholds you,  
     Toddie dear;  
 That a wondrous love enfolds you,  
     Toddie dear,  
 With an infinite sweet pity.  
 In that shining golden city  
 Little ones are crowned with blessing,  
 All the Saviour's care possessing,  
     There as here.

But we loved you very dearly,  
     Toddie boy;  
 And we held you very nearly,  
     Toddie boy!  
 Many, many tender mothers,  
 Little sisters, little brothers,  
 Would be sorely grieved in spirit,  
 But they know that you inherit  
     Peace and joy.

*BLUE AND GRAY.*

"OH, mother, what do they mean by  
 blue?  
 And what do they mean by gray?"  
 Was heard from the lips of a little child  
 As she bounded in from play.  
 The mother's eyes filled up with tears;  
 She turned to her darling fair,  
 And smoothed away from the sunny  
     brow  
 Its treasures of golden hair.

"Why, mother's eyes are blue, my  
 sweet,  
 And grandpa's hair is gray,  
 And the love we bear our darling child  
 Grows stronger every day."  
 "But what did they mean?" persisted  
 the child;  
 "For I saw two cripples to-day,  
 And one of them said he fought for  
 the blue;  
 The other, he fought for the gray.

"Now, he of the blue had lost a leg,  
 And the other had but one arm,  
 And both seemed worn and weary and  
 sad,  
 Yet their greeting was kind and  
 warm.

They told of battles in days gone by,  
 Till it made my young blood thrill;  
 The leg was lost in the Wilderness  
 fight,  
 And the arm on Malvern Hill.

"They sat on the stone by the farm-  
 yard gate,  
 And talked for an hour or more,  
 Till their eyes grew bright and their  
 hearts seemed warm  
 With fighting their battles o'er.  
 And parting at last with a friendly  
 grasp,  
 In a kindly, brotherly way,  
 Each calling on God to speed the time  
 Uniting the blue and gray."

Then the mother thought of other  
 days—  
 Two stalwart boys from her riven;

How they knelt at her side and, lisp-  
ing, prayed,

“Our Father which art in Heaven ;”

How one wore the gray and the other  
the blue ;

How they passed away from sight,  
And had gone to the land where gray  
and blue

Are merged in colors of light.

And she answered her darling with  
golden hair,

While her heart was sadly wrung  
With the thoughts awakened in that  
sad hour

By her innocent, prattling tongue ;

“The blue and the gray are the colors  
of God ;

They are seen in the sky at even,  
And many a noble, gallant soul  
Has found them passports to Heav-  
en.”

#### HUMAN NATURE.

Two little children, five years old,  
Marie the gentle, Charlie the bold ;  
Sweet and bright and quaintly wise,  
Angels both, in their mother's eyes.

But you, if you follow my verse, shall  
see

That they were as human as human  
can be,

And had not yet learned the maturer  
art

Of hiding the “self” of the finite heart.

One day they found, in their romp and  
play,

Two little rabbits soft and gray—  
Soft and gray, and just of a size,  
As like each other as your two eyes.

All day long the children made love  
To the dear little pets—their treasure-  
trove ;

They kissed and hugged them until the  
night

Brought to the conies a glad respite.

Too much fondling doesn't agree  
With the rabbit nature, as we shall see,  
For ere the light of another day  
Had chased the shadows of night away,

One little pet had gone to the shades,  
Or, let us hope, to perennial glades,  
Brighter and softer than any below—  
A heaven where good little rabbits go.

The living and dead lay side by side,  
And still alike as before one died ;  
And it chanced that the children came  
singly to view

The pets they had dreamed of all the  
night through.

First came Charlie, and, with sad sur-  
prise,

Beheld the dead with streaming eye ;  
Howe'er, consoling, he said,  
“Poor little Marie—*her rabbit's dead!*”

Later came Marie, and stood aghast ;  
She kissed and caressed it, but at last  
Found voice to say, while her young  
heart bled,

“I'm so sorry for Charlie—*his rabbit's  
dead!*”

#### THE SPELLIN' SCHOOL.

SEE that crevice in the floor—  
Slender line from desk to door,  
First meridian of the school—  
Which all the scholars toe by rule.  
Ranged along in rigid row,  
Inky, golden, brown, and tow,  
Are heads of spellers high and low,  
Like notes in music sweet as June,  
Dotting off a dancing tune.

Boy of Bashan takes the lead—  
Roughly thatched his bullet-head—  
At the foot an eight-year old  
Stands with head of trembling gold ;  
Watch her when the word is missed !  
Her eyes are like an amethyst,  
Her fingers dove-tailed, lips apart ;  
She knows that very word by heart  
And swings like any pendulum,  
Trembling lest it fail to come.

Runs the word along the line,  
 Like the running of a vine,  
 Blossoms out from lip to lip,  
 Till the girl in azure slip  
 Catches breath and spells the word,  
 Flits up the class like any bird,  
 Cheeks in bloom with honest blood,  
 And proudly stands where Bashan  
 stood!

—

*SUNDAY NIGHT.*

THREE little curly heads golden and  
 fair,  
 Three pairs of hands that are lifted in  
 prayer,  
 Three little figures in garments of  
 white,  
 Three little mouths that are kissed for  
 good-night,  
 Three little gowns that are folded away,  
 Three little children who rest from their  
 play,  
 Three little hearts that are full of de-  
 light,  
 For this is the close of a sweet Sun-  
 day night.

And mamma had clustered them all  
 round her knee,  
 And made them as happy as children  
 could be ;  
 She told to them stories of Jesus of old  
 Who called little children like lambs  
 to His fold ;  
 Who gathered them up in His arms to  
 caress,  
 And blessed them as only a Saviour  
 could bless,  
 While the innocent faces grew tender  
 and bright  
 With the sweet, earnest talk of the  
 calm Sunday night.

And the blue eyes of Bennie had wid-  
 en'd with fear,  
 While Maidie had dropped an occa-  
 sional tear,

When they heard of the lions and  
 Daniel so bold,  
 And Joseph who once by his brethren  
 was sold,  
 And the children who walked 'mid the  
 furnace of flame,  
 Till the Angel of God in his purity came,  
 Walking unharmed in their garments  
 of white,—  
 Oh, these were sweet stories to hear  
 Sunday night !

And Maidie had said—the dear little  
 child—  
 Looking up in the face of her mother  
 so mild,  
 “ I wish—oh, so much !—I wish, mam-  
 ma dear,  
 When the angels were walking they'd  
 come to us here ;  
 I'd like once to see them, so shining  
 and fair,  
 Come floating and floating right down  
 through the air.  
 Let's ask them to come,” said the wee  
 little sprite,  
 “ Let's ask them to come to *us* this  
 Sunday night.”

Then mamma told in her grave, gentle  
 way,  
 How the angels were guarding the  
 children each day ;  
 How they stood softly round by the  
 little one's bed ;  
 How the blessings descended alike on  
 each head ;  
 But when they were naughty or will-  
 fully bad,  
 Then the Father was grieved and His  
 angels were sad.  
 “ Ah, I mean to be good,” lisped the  
 baby, “ and then  
 I may see them some time when they're  
 coming to Ben !”

Oh, the innocent children ! How lit-  
 tle they know  
 Of the dear eyes in heaven bent on  
 them below ;

Of the guardian spirits, who close by  
 their side  
 Are watching and waiting to strengthen  
 and guide ;  
 And now, as they lie wrapped in  
 dreams and in sleep,  
 How ceaseless the vigils the angels  
 will keep !  
 And mamma prays, “ Father, oh, guide  
 them aright,  
 And send Thy good angels to guard  
 them to-night ! ”

YE BALLAD OF CHRISTMAS.

SING a song of Christmas !  
 Pockets full of gold ;  
 Plums and cakes for Polly’s stocking,  
 More than it can hold.  
 Pudding in the great pot,  
 Turkey on the spit,  
 Merry faces around the fire—  
 Sorrow ? not a bit !

Sing a song of Christmas !  
 Carols in the street,  
 Bundles going home with people,  
 Everywhere we meet.  
 Holly, fir, and spruce boughs  
 Green upon the wall,  
 Spotless snow along the road,  
 More going to fall.

Sing a song of Christmas !  
 Empty pockets here ;  
 Windows broken, garments thin,  
 Stove black and drear.  
 Noses blue and frosty,  
 Fingers pinched and red,  
 Little hungry children going  
 Supperless to bed.

Sing a song of Christmas—  
 Tears are falling fast ;  
 Empty is the baby’s chair,  
 Since ’twas Christmas last.  
 Wrathfully the north wind  
 Wails across the snow,  
 Is there not a little grave  
 Frozen down below ?

Sing a song of Christmas !  
 Thanks to God on high  
 For the tender hearts abounding  
 With His charity !  
 Gifts for all the needy,  
 For the sad hearts, love,  
 And a little angel smiling  
 In sweet heaven above !

CHILD’S MORNING HYMN.

SAFELY guarded by Thy presence,  
 By Thy tender love and power,  
 Holy Father ! Thou hast brought me  
 To this peaceful happy hour.

While the night shades gather round  
 me,  
 While “ I laid me down and slept,”  
 ’Twas Thy mercy that sustained me,  
 And my life in being kept.

Thoughts of all this care so tender,  
 Wakes a morning hymn of praise,  
 While a song of full thanksgiving,  
 Here and now to Thee I raise.

Strengthened thus in mind and body,  
 Help me to begin anew,  
 In the race of love and duty,  
 And the *right* each hour pursue.

So, when all life’s changing seasons,  
 Fraught with “ weal or woe,” are  
 past,  
 Kept and saved by love eternal,  
 Praise shall crown the work at last.

THE GOOD SHIP “NEVER-FAIL.”

“ WHY don’t you launch your boat,  
 my boy ? ”  
 I asked the other day,  
 As strolling idly on the beach  
 I saw my lads at play ;  
 One blue-eyed rogue shook back his  
 curls,  
 And held his ship to me,



“I’m giving her a name,” he cried,  
 “Before she goes to sea ;  
 We rigged her out so smart and taut,  
 With flag and snow-white sail,  
 And now I’ll trust her to the waves,  
 And call her ‘Never-Fail.’”

The little ship sailed proudly out,  
 Through mimic rock and shoal,  
 The child stood watching on the beach  
 His vessel reach its goal ;  
 The wind had risen soft at first,  
 But wilder soon it blew,  
 It strained and bent the slender mast,  
 That still rose straight and true ;  
 “Yet,” cried the boy, “my ship is safe,  
 In spite of wind and gale,  
 Her sails are strong, her sides are firm,  
 Her name is ‘Never-Fail.’”

And presently the wind was lulled,  
 The little bark came home,  
 No wreck, although her sails were wet,  
 Her deck all washed with foam ;  
 And loudly laughed my true boy then,  
 As at his feet she lay.  
 And wisely spoke my true boy then,  
 Although ’twas said in play—  
 “Papa, I thought if mast and sail  
 And tackle all were true,  
 With such a name as ‘Never-Fail,’  
 She’d sail the wide sea through.”

---

*PLANTING HIMSELF TO GROW.*

DEAR little bright-eyed Willie,  
 ‘Always so full of glee,  
 Always so very mischievous,  
 The pride of our home is he.

One bright summer day we found him  
 Close by the garden wall,  
 Standing so grave and dignified  
 Beside a sunflower tall.

His tiny feet he had covered  
 With the moist and cooling sand ;  
 The stalk of the great, tall sunflower  
 He grasped with his chubby hand.

When he saw us standing near him,  
 Gazing so wonderingly  
 At his babyship, he greeted us  
 With a merry shout of glee.

We asked our darling what pleased  
 him ;  
 He replied with a face aglow,  
 “Mamma, I’m going to be a man ;  
 I’ve planted myself to grow !”

---

*“THANKS TO YOU.”*

EVERY day for a month of Sundays,  
 Saturdays, Tuesdays, Fridays, Mon-  
 days,  
 Jack had pondered the various means  
 And methods pertaining to grinding  
 machines,  
 Until he was sure he could build a  
 wheel  
 That, given the sort of dam that’s  
 proper,  
 Would only need some corn in the  
 hopper  
 To turn out very respectable meal.

Jerry, and Jane, and Joe, and the others,  
 Jack’s incredulous sisters and brothers,  
 Gave him credit for good intentions,  
 But took no stock in the boy’s inven-  
 tions.

In fact, they laughed them quite to  
 scorn ;  
 Instead of wasting his time, they said,  
 He would be more likely to earn his  
 bread  
 Planting potatoes or hoeing corn

Bessie alone, when all the rest  
 Crushed his spirit with jibe and jest,  
 Whispered softly, “Whatever they say,  
 I know you will build the wheel some  
 day !”

Chirping crickets and singing birds  
 Were not so sweet as her heartsome  
 words ;

Straight he answered, “If ever I do,  
 I know it will only be thanks to you !”

Many a time sore heart and brain  
 Leap at a word, grown strong again,  
 Thanks to her, as the story goes,  
 Hope and courage in Jack arose;  
 Till one bright day in the meadow-  
 brook  
 There was heard a sound as of water  
 plashing,  
 And Bessie watched with her happy  
 look  
 The little wheel in the sunlight flashing.

By and by, as the years were fraught  
 With fruit of his earnest toil and  
 thought,  
 Brothers and sisters changed their  
 tune—  
 "Our Jack," they cried, "will be fa-  
 mous soon!"  
 Which was nothing more than Bessie  
 knew,  
 She said, and had known it all the  
 while!  
 But Jack replied with a kiss and a  
 smile,  
 "If ever I am, it is thanks to you!"

—————  
*A LITTLE GIRL'S WONDER.*

WHAT do the birds say, I wonder, I  
 wonder,  
 With their chitter and chatter? It  
 isn't all play,  
 Do they scold, do they fret at some  
 boggle or blunder,  
 As we fret, as we scold day after  
 day?

Do their hearts ever ache, I wonder, I  
 wonder,  
 At anything else than the danger  
 that comes  
 When some enemy threatens them  
 over or under  
 The great, leafy boughs of their great  
 leafy homes?

Do they vow to be friends, I wonder,  
 I wonder,  
 With promises fair and promises  
 sweet,

Then, quick as a wink, at a word fal-  
 asunder,  
 As human friends do, in a moment  
 of heat?

But day after day I may wonder and  
 wonder,  
 And ask them no end of such ques-  
 tions as these—  
 With chitter and chatter, now over,  
 now under,  
 The big, leafy boughs of the big,  
 leafy trees.

They dart and they skim, with their  
 bills full of plunder,  
 But never a word of an answer they  
 give,  
 And never a word shall I get, though  
 I wonder  
 From morning till night, as long as  
 I live.

—————  
*MOTHER GOOSE.*

"TELL me a story, mamma,  
 One that is not very long,  
 I am getting so tired and sleepy,  
 Or sing me a little song—  
 Something about the boy in blue  
 That watched the cows and sheep,  
 Who ought to get up and blow the horn,  
 But he lies in the hay asleep."

And I answered with quick impatience,  
 While he hung his sleepy head,  
 "No, not a story or song to-night,  
 Bertie must go to bed."  
 But after the room was silent,  
 And the weary boy asleep,  
 And never a sound came on my ears  
 Save the lonely cricket's peep.

The voice with the tone of pleading  
 Kept coming again and again,  
 "Tell me a story or sing me a scng,"  
 Till I could not bear the pain;  
 So I went with stealthy footstep  
 To see how my darling slept;  
 Weak and foolish though it may seem  
 I knelt by the bed and wept,

To think that I had refused him  
 The song that he loved so well,  
 And refused the simple story  
 That none but a mother can tell.  
 And I said, "Sleep on, sweet dreamer ;  
 Fear not the cows and the sheep ;  
 Dream that you lie in the meadow,  
 Under the hay asleep.  
 All too soon you will waken,  
 To watch o'er the field of corn ;  
 All too soon will the sheep get in,  
 Though you bravely blow your horn."

—————

*THE PLAY-HOUSE.*

UNDER a fir in the garden ground  
 A strange habitation to-day I found,  
 Built of bushes, and bark, and boards,  
 And holding hidden the queerest  
 hoards.

There were bits of crockery, sticks, and  
 stones,  
 Shreds of pink calico, strings of cones,  
 Crumbs of candle, a picture-book,  
 And, strangest of all, in a cosy nook  
 Was an idol made in the image of man,  
 With charcoal eyes, and stuffed with  
 bran.

"Were they heathens who dwelt  
 there?" Oh, no, indeed.

"Were they animals?" Yes, of the  
 kind that can read,  
 And laugh and cry, or be wicked and  
 pray,  
 And when they are old their hair grows  
 gray.

Their names are Margery, Ned, and  
 Sue ;

Their curls are brown, and their eyes  
 are blue ;

And they builded there in the summer  
 heat,  
 As glad as the birds, and sang as sweet.

The birds that built in the tree-tops high  
 Are singing under a summer sky ;

But the dear little builders who toiled  
 below  
 Are singing here in the firelight glow.

—————

*FANNY'S MUD PIES.*

UNDER the apple-tree, spreading and  
 thick,  
 Happy with only a pan and a stick,  
 On the soft grass in the meadow that  
 lies,  
 Our little Fanny is making mud pies.

On her bright apron, and bright droop-  
 ing head,  
 Showers of pink and white blossoms  
 are shed ;  
 Tied to a branch, that seems just meant  
 for that,  
 Dances and flutters her little straw hat.

Gravely she stirs, with a serious look,  
 Making believe she's a true pastry cook ;  
 Sundry brown splashes on forehead and  
 eyes  
 Show that our Fanny is making mud  
 pies.

But all the soil of her innocent play  
 Clean soap and water will soon wash  
 away ;  
 Many a pleasure in daintier guise  
 Leaves darker traces than Fanny's mud  
 pies.

Dash, full of joy in the bright summer  
 day,  
 Zealously chases the robins away,  
 Barks at the squirrels, or snaps at the  
 flies,  
 All the while Fanny is making mud pies.

Sunshine and soft summer breezes astir,  
 While she is busy, are busy with her, —  
 Cheeks rosy glowing, and bright spark-  
 ling eyes,  
 Bring them to Fanny while making mud  
 pies.

Dollies and playthings are all laid away,  
 Not to come out till the next rainy day ;  
 Under the blue of those sweet summer  
 skies  
 Nothing so pleasant as making mud  
 pies.

THE NAUGHTY BAIRN.

THE bairnie sat on the hillock hard,  
 The bright little brook beside,  
 With a world of care on his bonnie face,  
 And the tears on his cheek scarce  
 dried.

A naughty boy the bairn had been,  
 He had strayed from school away.  
 For the lessons were hard, and he could  
 not learn,  
 And he longed, oh, he longed to play.

He put his books in his satchel worn,  
 And kissed the mother good-bye ;  
 And smiled at her caution to walk in  
 the road,  
 For the grass was scarcely dry.

The naughty bairn ! he had in his mind  
 How merry it would be  
 To go and sit by the babbling brook,  
 And the pebbles and flowers see.

He could not bear to think of the school,  
 And the long, long, tiresome day :  
 So he laid his satchel 'neath the old  
 stone wall,  
 And hied to the brook away.

He tossed the pebbles in the waters  
 bright,  
 And plucked the sweet wild flowers ;  
 And thought what a merry way this was  
 To spend the morning hours.

So he merrily played till the sun went  
 down,  
 In a sea of crimson fire ;  
 And he saw o'er the meadows slowly  
 creep  
 The shadow of the village spire.

And then he remembered he must go  
 home,  
 And he thought of his mother's  
 frown ;  
 And then first he saw his mud-soiled  
 hands,  
 And the stains on his best school  
 gown.

And somehow the brook as it rippled  
 along,  
 Sang a quaint and a sad, sad lay ;  
 It sang to the bairn of the stolen hours,  
 And the lost and wasted day.

And home through the gloaming the  
 bairnie strayed,  
 But the smile of the day was gone ;  
 For, child as he was, he felt the grief  
 That always follows wrong.

Though the doing wrong may seem  
 merry and light,  
 The mem'ry is cold and chill ;  
 And the only pleasure we can truly  
 know,  
 Is doing the Father's will.

THE SCHOOL-BOY.

WE bought him a box for his books  
 and things,  
 And a cricket-bag for his bat ;  
 And he looked the brightest and best of  
 kings  
 Under his new straw hat.

We handed him into the railway train  
 With a troop of his young compeers,  
 And we made as though it were dust  
 and rain  
 Were filling our eyes with tears.

We looked in his innocent face to see  
 The sign of a sorrowful heart ;  
 But he only shouldered his bat with glee  
 And wondered when they would  
 start.

'Twas not that he loved not as heretofore,

For the boy was tender and kind ;  
But his was a world that was all before  
And ours was a world behind.

'Twas not his fluttering heart was cold,  
For the child was loyal and true ;  
And the parents love the love that is old  
And the children the love that is new.

And we came to know that love is a  
flower  
Which only groweth down ;  
And we scarcely spoke for the space of  
an hour  
As we drove back through the town.

---

"HARE AND HOUNDS."

"WHAT shall we do?" the children  
said,

By the spirit of frolic and mischief led,  
Frank and Lulu and Carrie, three  
As full of nonsense as they could be :  
Who never were known any fun to stop  
Until they were just about ready to drop.  
Frank, whose "knowledge-box" surely  
abounds

With games, spoke up for "Hare and  
Hounds."

"Down the cellar or up the stair,  
Here and there, and everywhere,  
You must follow, for I'm the Hare!"  
Lulu and Carrie gave quick consent,  
And at cutting their papers and capers  
went,

For the stairs were steep, and they  
must not fail

To have enough for a good long trail.

Away went the Hare

Right up the stair,

And away went the Hounds, a laugh-  
ing pair ;

And Tony, who sat

Near Kitty, the cat,

And was really a dog worth looking at,

With a queer grimace

Soon joined the race,

And followed the game at a lively pace !

Then puss, who knew

A thing or two,

Prepared to follow the noisy crew,  
And never before or since, I ween,  
Was ever beheld such a hunting scene !  
The Hare was swift ; and the papers  
went

This way and that, to confuse the scent ;  
But Tony, keeping his nose in air,  
In a very few moments betrayed the  
Hare,

Which the children told him was hardly  
fair.

I can not tell you how long they played,  
Of the fun they had, or the noise they  
made ;

For the best of things in this world, I  
think,

Can ne'er be written with pen and ink.  
But Bridget, who went on her daily  
rounds,

Picking up after the "Hare and  
Hounds,"

Said she didn't mind hearing their  
lively capers,

But her back was broke with scraps o'  
papers.

Carrie, next day, couldn't raise her  
head ;

Frank and Lulu were sick in bed ;

The dog and the cat were a used-up  
pair,

And all of them needed the doctor's  
care.

The children themselves can hardly fail  
To tack a moral upon this trail ;

And I guess on rather more level  
grounds

They'll play their next game of "Hare  
and Hounds."

---

CHURN SLOWLY.

A LITTLE maid in the morning sun  
Stood merrily singing and churn-  
ing—



“ Oh, how I wish this butter was done,  
Then off to the fields I'd be turn-  
ing ! ”

So she hurried the dasher up and down,  
Till the farmer called, with a half-made  
frown,

“ Churn slowly ! ”

“ Don't play the dasher so fast, my dear,  
It's not so good for the butter,  
And will make your arms ache, too, I  
fear,

And put you all in a flutter—  
For this is the rule, wherever you turn,  
Don't be in haste whenever you churn—  
‘ Churn slowly ! ’

“ If you'd see your butter come nice  
and sweet,

Don't churn with a nervous jerking,  
But ply the dasher slowly and neat—

You'll hardly know you're working ;  
And when the butter has come, you'll  
say,

‘ Yes, this is surely the very best way ’—  
Churn slowly ! ”

Now, little folks, do you think that you  
A lesson can find in butter ?

Don't be in haste, whatever you do,  
Or get yourself in a flutter ;

And while you stand at life's great  
churn,

Let the farmer's words to you return,  
“ Churn slowly ! ”

---

### TWO SCHOOL-BOYS.

Two school-boys on their way to school  
I day by day was meeting ;

Yet though I met them day by day,  
We each and all pursued our way,  
Nor exchanged a friendly greeting.

At last I got to nod and smile,  
To smile they, too, were willing ;  
And then I used to stop and stand,  
And often shake them by the hand,  
And sometimes tip a shilling ;

Till it became a daily treat  
To meet these morning scholars :  
I loved to see their merry looks,  
Though schoolward bound, with bag  
of books,  
Bright cheeks, and shining collars.

Soon came the summer holidays,  
And when they were half over,  
I took a trip to Germany,  
And three months passed away ere I  
Recrossed the straits of Dover.

Again I took that old, old walk—  
What time the leaves were yellow,  
The autumn day was very still—  
Just at the bottom of the hill  
I met *one* little fellow.

He hailed me with a joyful cry  
Of joyfullest delectation :  
I laughed to see him laughing so.  
“ But where's our friend ? ” “ What !  
don't you know ? ”  
He died in the vacation.”

How was it that I turned aside,  
With rough, abruptest bearing ?  
No matter ; on the instant I  
Turned off, nor even said, “ Good-bye, ”  
And left the youngster staring.

---

### THE MORNING SONG.

SING, little daughter, sing ;  
Sing me your morning song,  
Thanking our Father for His love  
And care the whole night long.

Sing out with cheerful heart,  
Sing out with cheerful voice ;  
The tones of gratitude to God  
Will make my heart rejoice.

Thank Him for parents dear,  
Thy father and thy mother ;  
Thank Him for little sister Bess,  
Thank Him for little brother.

Thank Him for pleasant home,  
 Thank Him for many a friend,  
 For mercies which we can not count,  
 For mercies without end.

Thank Him for health and strength,  
 Thank Him for clothes and food,  
 Thank Him for light and the fresh air,  
 Thank Him for every good.

Thank Him for pleasant days,  
 For sunshine and for showers,  
 For the green grass and lofty trees,  
 And for the fair wild flowers.

Thank Him, oh, most of all,  
 For His most Holy Word,  
 Wherein we read the wondrous love  
 Of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Thank Him that Christ has died  
 That we might die to sin ;  
 Thank Him that Christ is risen again,  
 That we His heaven may win.

Sing, little daughter, sing ;  
 Sing forth with heart and voice,  
 Thanking the Lord for all His gifts ;  
 Rejoice, my child, rejoice.

---

*THE BOY I LOVE.*

MY boy, do you know the boy I love ?  
 I fancy I see him now ;  
 His forehead bare in the sweet spring  
 air,  
 With the wind of hope in his waving  
 hair,  
 With sunrise on his brow.

He is something near your height,  
 may be,  
 And just about your years ;  
 Timid as you ; but his will is strong,  
 And his love of right and his hate of  
 wrong  
 Are mightier than his fears.

He has the courage of simple truth,  
 The trial that he must bear ;  
 The peril, the ghost that frights him  
 most,  
 He faces boldly, and like a ghost  
 It vanishes in air.

As wild-fowl take, by river and lake,  
 The sunshine and the rain,  
 With cheerful, constant hardihood,  
 He meets the bad luck and the good,  
 The pleasure and the pain.

Come friends in need? With heart  
 and deed  
 He gives himself to them.  
 He has the grace which reverence  
 lends—  
 Reverence, the crowning flower that  
 bends  
 The upright lily-stem.

Though deep and strong his sense of  
 wrong,  
 Fiery his blood and young,  
 His spirit is gentle, his heart is great,  
 He is swift to pardon and slow to hate,  
 And master of his tongue.

Fond of his sports? No merrier lad's  
 Sweet laughter ever rang !  
 But he is so generous and so frank,  
 His wildest wit, or his maddest prank,  
 Can never cause a pang.

His own sweet ease, all things that  
 please,  
 He loves, like any boy ;  
 But fosters a prudent fortitude ;  
 Nor will he squander a future good  
 To buy a fleeting joy.

Face brown or fair? I little care  
 Whatever the hue may be,  
 Or whether his eyes are dark or light,  
 If his tongue be true and his honor  
 bright,  
 He is still the boy for me.

Where does he dwell? I can not tell ;  
 Nor do I know his name.

Or poor or rich? I don't mind which;  
Or learning Latin, or digging ditch,  
I love him all the same.

With high, brave heart, perform your  
part,  
Be noble and kind as he;  
Then, some fair morning, when you  
pass,  
Fresh from glad dreams, before your  
glass,  
His likeness you may see.

You are puzzled? What! you think  
there is not  
A boy like him—surmise  
That he is only a bright ideal?  
But you have power to make him real,  
And clothe him to our eyes.

You have rightly guessed: in each  
pure breast  
Is his abiding-place.  
Then let your own true life portray  
His beauty, and blossom day by day  
With something of his grace.

### THE LESSON.

[A beautiful answer was given by a little Scotch girl; when her class at school was examined, she replied to the question, "What is patience?"—"Wait a wee, and dinna weary."]

A VILLAGE school-room—this the  
scene—  
Aglow with a slant sun cheery:  
A dominie there, of youthful mien,  
With the sun of his spirit sharp and  
keen,  
And a class of girls in serried row,  
Some taller, and some of stature low:  
And some like the morning sun, afire  
To reach the summit of brave desire;  
And, as aye, some unco' dreary!

"I canna an' winna teach, and ye  
Sae stupid the while I query—  
Nae vision for ocht but vanity!"  
With thundering rap the dominie

Out-blurted, chafed by a listless girl,  
Whose only care seemed to smooth and  
twirl

Her apron streamers. "Will onie lass  
Mak' answer in a' this glaikit class?"  
The dominie sighed aweary.

"Oh, ay," said a little one, "I can tell."  
"Weel, out wi't, then, my  
dearie"—

And the frown from the master's fore-  
head fell,  
For the sweetest girl in school was  
Nell—

"I wan't ye to show me the meaning  
plain  
O' *patience*; sin' ow'r and ow'r again  
I've put it this day!" Then the little  
maid,

With a rougish twinkle, soberly said,  
"Wait a wee' and dinna weary."

### GRANDFATHER'S BARN.

OH, don't you remember our grand-  
father's barn,  
Where our cousins and we met to  
play:  
How we climbed on the beams and the  
scaffolds high,  
Or tumbled at will on the hay?  
How we sat in a row on the bundles  
of straw,  
And riddles and witch stories told,  
While the sunshine came in through  
the cracks of the south,  
And turned all the dust into gold?

How we played hide-and-sceek in each  
cranny and nook,  
Wherever a child could be stowed;  
Then we made us a coach of a hogs-  
head of rye,  
And on it to "Boston" we rode?  
And then we kept store, and sold barley  
and oats,  
And corn by the bushel or bin;  
And straw for our sisters to braid into  
hats,  
And flax, for our mothers to spin.

Then we played we were biddies, and  
 cackled and crowed,  
 Till grandmother in haste came to  
 see

If the weasles were killing the old  
 speckled hen,  
 Or whatever the matter might be ;  
 How she patted our heads when she  
 saw her mistake,  
 And called us her sweet "chicken-  
 dears !"

While a tear dimmed her eye as the  
 picture recalled  
 The scenes of her own vanished  
 years.

How we tittered and swung, and played  
 meeting and school,  
 And Indian, and soldier, and bear !  
 While up on the rafter the swallows  
 kept house,  
 Or sailed through the soft summer  
 air.

How we longed to peep into their curi-  
 ous nests !  
 But they were too far overhead ;  
 So we wished we were giants, or  
 winged like the birds,  
 And then we'd do wonders, we said.

And don't you remember the racket  
 we made  
 When selling at auction the hay ;  
 And how we wound up with a keel-  
 over leap

From the scaffold down into the bay ?  
 When we went in to supper, our grand-  
 father said,

If he had not once been a boy,  
 He should thought that the Hessians  
 were sacking the town,  
 Or an earthquake had come to de-  
 stroy.

---

*LITTLE BAGGAGE.*

WAITING at a wayside station  
 For a weary hour's duration,  
 Lost in anxious cogitation,  
 Over this and that ;

In there tripped a little maiden,  
 Box and bag and basket laden,  
 And beside me sat.

Little baggage ! rich in treasure ;  
 Youth, and hope, and heart for pleas-  
 ure,  
 Sweet contentment without measure,  
 All I once possessed.  
 Small, fair fingers, folded quaintly,  
 Blue eyes very calm and saintly,  
 Very full of rest.

Little dove of peace, I thought her,  
 Bless the happy stars that brought her !  
 To my care-worn heart I caught her,  
 Though she never knew.  
 And the dark cloud of repining  
 Sudden showed its silver lining  
 Bright against the blue.

Oh, the charm of childhood's graces !  
 Changing earth's most desert places  
 Into such a fair oasis,  
 Fresh with morning dew ;  
 That the world, grown old and dreary,  
 Seems less work-a-day and weary,  
 And hope wakes anew.

Sooner can their freshness free us  
 From the cares that years decree us,  
 Than the fabled child of Zeus  
 Could to youth restore.  
 Happy who the myth believing,  
 And the nectar cup receiving,  
 Lives a child once more.

---

*LITTLE BROWN HANDS.*

THEY drive home the cows from the  
 pasture,  
 Up through the long shady lane,  
 Where the quail whistles loud in the  
 wheat-fields,  
 That are yellow with ripening grain.  
 They find, in the thick, waving grasses,  
 Where the scarlet-lipped strawberry  
 grows,  
 They gather the earliest snow-drops  
 And the first crimson buds of the  
 rose.

They toss the hay in the meadow ;  
 They gather the elder-bloom white ;  
 They find where the dusky grapes purple  
 In the soft-tinted October light.  
 They know where the apples hang  
 ripest,  
 And are sweeter than Italy's wines ;  
 They know where the fruit hangs the  
 thickest  
 On the long, thorny blackberry vines.

They gather the delicate sea-weeds,  
 And build tiny castles of sand ;  
 They pick up the beautiful sea-shells—  
 Fairy barks that have drifted to land.  
 They wave from the tall, rocking tree-  
 tops,  
 Where the oriole's hammock-nest  
 swings,  
 And at night-time are folded in slum-  
 ber  
 By a song that a fond mother sings.

Those who toil bravely are strongest ;  
 The humble and poor become great ;  
 And from these brown-handed children  
 Shall grow mighty rulers of state.  
 The pen of the author and statesman—  
 The noble and wise of the land—  
 The sword, and chisel, and palette  
 Shall be held in the little brown  
 hand.

—————  
*A FANCY.*

I SUPPOSE if all the children  
 Who have lived through ages long  
 Were collected and inspected  
 They would make a wondrous  
 throng.  
 Oh, the babble of the Babel !  
 Oh, the flutter of the fuss !  
 To begin with Cain and Abel,  
 And to finish up with us !

Think of all the men and women  
 Who are now and who have been,  
 Every nation since creation  
 That this world of ours has seen ;

And of all of them, not any  
 But was once a baby small,  
 While of children, oh, how many  
 Never have grown up at all !

Some have never laughed or spoken,  
 Never used their rosy feet ;  
 Some have even flown to heaven  
 Ere they knew that earth was sweet.  
 And indeed I wonder whether,  
 If we reckon ev'ry birth,  
 And bring such a flock together  
 There is room for them on earth ?

Who will wash their smiling faces,  
 Who their saucy ears will box ?  
 Who will dress them and caress them ?  
 Who will darn their little socks ?  
 Where are arms enough to hold them ?  
 Hands to pat each shining head ?  
 Who will praise them ? who will scold  
 them ?  
 Who will pack them off to bed ?

Little happy Christian children,  
 Little savage children, too,  
 In all stages of all ages,  
 That our planet ever knew !  
 Little princes and princesses,  
 Little beggars, wan and faint,  
 Some in very handsome dresses,  
 Naked some, bedaubed with paint.

Only think of the confusion  
 Such a motley crowd would make !  
 And the clatter of their chatter,  
 And the things that they would  
 break !  
 Oh, the babble of the Babel !  
 Oh, the flutter of the fuss !  
 To begin with Cain and Abel,  
 And to finish off with us !

—————  
*THE YELLOW COTTAGE.*

'MID fields with useless daisies white,  
 Between a river and a wood,  
 With not another house in sight,  
 The low-roofed yellow cottage stood,



Where I,  
Long years ago, a little maid,  
Through all life's rosy morning played.

No other child the region knew ;  
My only playmate was myself,  
And all our books, a treasured few,  
Were gathered on a single shelf ;  
But, oh !  
Not wealth a king might prize could be  
What those old volumes were to me !

On winter's night beside the fire,  
In summer, sitting in the door,  
I turned, with love that did not tire,  
Their well-worn pages o'er and o'er ;  
In me,  
Though sadly fallen, it is true,  
Their heroines all lived anew !

One day, about my neck a ruff  
Of elder flowers with fragrant breath,  
I was, with conscious pride enough  
To suit the part, Elizabeth ;  
The next,  
Ensnared by many wily plots,  
I sighed, the hapless Queen of Scots !

Where darting swallows used to flit  
Close to me, on some jutting rocks,  
Above the river, I would sit  
For hours, and wreath my yellow  
locks,

And trill  
A child's shrill song, and, singing, play  
It was a siren's watching lay.

On Sundays, underneath the tree  
That overhung the orchard wall,  
While watching, one by one, to see  
The ripe, sweet apples fall,  
I tried

My very best to make believe  
I was in Eden and was Eve !

Oh, golden hours ! when I, to-day,  
Would make a truce with care,  
No more of queens, in bright array,  
I dream, or sirens fair ;

In thought,  
I am again the little maid  
Who round the yellow cottage played.

*SOMEBODY'S MOTHER.*

THE woman was old and ragged and  
gray,  
And bent with the chill of the winter's  
day :

The street was wet with a recent snow,  
And the woman's feet were aged and  
slow.

She stood at the crossing and waited  
long,  
Alone, uncared-for, amid the throng

Of human beings who passed her by,  
Nor heeded the glance of her anxious  
eye.

Down the street, with laughter and  
shout,  
Glad in the freedom of " school let out,"

Came the boys like a flock of sheep,  
Hailing the snow piled white and deep.

Past the woman so old and gray  
Hastened the children on their way,

Nor offered a helping hand to her,  
So meek, so timid, afraid to stir

Lest the carriage wheels or the horses'  
feet  
Should crowd her down in the slippery  
street.

At last came one of the merry troop—  
The gayest laddie of all the group :

He paused beside her, and whispered  
low,  
" I'll help you across if you wish to go."

Her aged hand on his strong young arm  
She placed, and so, without hurt or  
harm,

He guided the trembling feet along,  
Proud that his own were firm and  
strong.

Then back again to his friends he went,  
His young heart happy and well content.

"She's somebody's mother, boys, you  
know,  
For all she's aged and poor and slow ;

And I hope some fellow will lend a hand  
To help my mother, you understand,

If ever she's poor and old and gray,  
When her own dear boy is far away."

And "somebody's mother" bowed low  
her head  
In her home that night, and the prayer  
she said

Was "God be kind to the noble boy,  
Who is somebody's son and pride and  
joy!"

*A MAY-DAY CAROL.*

"AH! whither, fair maiden,  
So bonny and bright,  
Are your fairy feet hasting  
At dawn's early light?"

"To gather May-flowers,  
For this is the day  
The virgin Spring ushers in  
Beautiful May."

"Then gather sweet violets,  
Meek-eyed and blue,  
They'll catch from your bright orbs  
A lovelier hue!"

"Ah! flatterer, flatterer,  
Violets and eyes  
Both catch their deep hue  
From the bright Spring  
skies.

"Weave a buttercup garland,  
And Nature outvie,  
As they on your golden locks  
Lovingly lie."

"Ah! flatterer, look!  
There is Nature's pure gold  
In the rift of yon rosy cloud's  
Soft fleecy fold."

"Then gather anemones,  
Waxen and pure ;  
Your brow is their rival,  
Of that I am sure."  
"Ah! flatterer, flatterer!  
Under the snow,  
That rivals all whiteness,  
Pale anemones grow."

"Then come through the orchard,  
With peach-blossoms laden ;  
Let the bloom catch the tint  
From thy cheek, pretty maiden."  
"Ah! flatterer, cease ;  
I have tarried too long ;  
The woodland is teeming  
With perfume and song ;  
And the birds will not flatter,  
Their warbling is true ;  
So a happy May morning,  
And good-bye to you !"

*EIGHTEEN.*

A SOFT gray mist lies low in the valley,  
And trails its folds o'er the green-  
robed hills—

It falls like a shadow across the river,  
And mutely kisses the fern-edged  
rills,  
Sweet in the woods I hear the sing-  
ing—

The tuneful murmur of drowsy birds ;  
And my heart goes out in a glad  
thanksgiving—

A half-breathed prayer that is deeper  
than words.

"Father in heaven, who lifted the  
shadow

Off my heart where it lay like a river,  
Lowly I thank Thee for op'ning the  
gateway—

For taking Thy child and her sorrow  
right in."

This is my prayer in the morn's gray  
dawning  
Of this tender June-day a-break in  
the skies ;

Dark was the cloud that hung o'er  
 life's morning,  
*Now* the sun shines like an angel's  
 eyes.

Eighteen to-day! this world lies be-  
 fore me—

A long wide path for my willing feet.  
 Down, dark Past! with your tears  
 and mourning;

The Future is waiting glad and  
 sweet.

Out of the dust I rise triumphant,  
 Hopeful and strong for the coming  
 years;

Eighteen to-day; good-bye, lost child-  
 hood!

Good-bye, my weakness and useless  
 tears!

Over the river the mist is rising,  
 The sun is kissing the verdant hills—  
 And it floods the meadow with tender  
 beauty;

The song of the birds my being  
 thrills.

The shadow is passing; the light is  
 dawning,

Guide my footsteps, O Friend above!  
 Keep me safe till the night has fallen—  
 Safe in the shelter of Thy love.

---

THE BATTLE OF LIFE.

Go forth in the Battle of Life, my boy,

Go while it is called to-day;

For the years go out, and the years  
 come in,

Regardless of those who may lose or  
 win—

Of those who may work or play.

And the troops march steadily on, my  
 boy,

To the army gone before;

You may hear the sound of their fall-  
 ing feet,

Going down to the river where the  
 two worlds meet;

Their go to return no more.

There is room for you in the ranks  
 my boy,  
 And duty, too, assigned;  
 Step into the front with cheerful  
 grace—

Be quick, or another may take your  
 place,  
 And you may be left behind.

There is work to be done by the way,  
 my boy,

That, you *never can tread again*;  
 Work for the loftiest, lowliest men—  
 Work for the plow, adze, spindle, and  
 pen;  
 Work for the hands and the brain.

The *Serpent* will follow your steps,  
 my boy,

To lay for your feet a snare;  
 And pleasure sits in her fairy bowers,  
 With garlands of poppies and lotus  
 flowers  
 Enwreathing her golden hair.

Temptations will wait by the way, my  
 boy,

Temptations without and within;  
 And spirits of evil, in robes as fair  
 As the holiest angels in Heaven wear,  
 Will lure you to deadly sin.

Then put on the armor of God, my  
 boy,

In the beautiful days of youth;  
 Put on the helmet, breast-plate, and  
 shield,

And the sword that the feeblest arm  
 may wield

In the cause of Right and Truth.

And go to the Battle of Life, my boy  
 With the peace of the Gospel shod,  
 And before High Heaven, do the best  
 you can

For the great reward, for the good of  
 man,

For the Kingdom and crown of God.

*VACATION DAYS.*

EACH year, early in the summer,  
While yet 'tis blue, blue June,  
Suddenly the wild birds waken,  
And with a longing tune  
Go song-singing of the children  
That are shut from the sun ;  
"They are coming," the singers carol,  
"For the school-days are done !"

And they sing the song of cherries  
Along the garden wall ;  
And they sing the song of berries  
That grow in thickets tall ;  
And they sing the song of rambles,  
Long rambles in the sun :  
"They are coming," the singers carol,  
"For the school-days are done !"

And they sing the song of hammocks  
Hung in the deep pine trees,  
Where the children brown and brighten  
With swaying in the breeze—  
Happy, happy little children,  
Just let out in the sun !  
"They are coming," the singers carol,  
"For the school-days are done !"

Give the world up to the children,  
Yes, near and far and wide !  
Let the willing welcomes waken  
Up all the country side  
Meet them, bird and bee and blossom,  
And meet them, breeze and sun,  
Carol ! carol ! Oh, carol ! carol !  
That the school-days are done !

—————  
*GRADUATED.*

A THOUSAND eyes behold the class-  
mates range  
Their semicircles round the rector's  
chair,  
While he, with stately-sounding old-  
world words,  
Gives parchment honors there.

A thousand shining eyes ! but none  
descry  
The shape that's clearest to my  
dimming sight,  
A shadow form that in yon goodly  
throng  
Moveth as with a right.

A form as fair as any of the rest,  
Pressing, like them, with eager tread  
of youth—  
A face that not the brightest may out-  
shine  
For lovingness or truth !

See how 'tis moved with feelings of the  
hour !  
With boyish pleasure, yet with manly  
pain ;  
Pleased with the prize, yet ready to  
prefer  
The long, sweet strife again.

Ah, tear-dimmed eyes ! it is in vain  
you try,  
With the self-cheating spirit to re-  
store  
That shape unto the place that knew it  
once,  
But knows it now no more.

He is not here, the earnest lad who  
threw  
Himself so lovingly into the round  
Of college life, the fullest that as yet  
His brief young days had found.

He is not here. Far other prizes now  
May beckon him. Oh, dear one, long  
away,  
What high companionships content  
thee for  
Thine absence here to-day ?

What happy schools, far off, of love and  
joy  
Have with their charms the gentle  
grief consoled  
With which thy faithful spirit laid aside  
The life it loved of old ?

Not all the learning of the wise of earth  
 Could find an answer. Wearily,  
 mine eye  
 Turns from the smiling company to  
 seek  
 Outside the blue June sky.

Through open windows of the crowded  
 church,  
 In still significance, it looketh down,  
 And tossing elm-boughs hush them-  
 selves to catch  
 The word it might make known.

The buzz within, the rector's stately  
 speech,  
 Grow far-off to mine ear, and die  
 away.

I find again the silence of thy strange,  
 Sad graduation day;

I hear again thy Master's simple words,  
 So low, so sweet, conferring thy de-  
 gree:  
 'Of such my kingdom is; let none for-  
 bid  
 His coming unto me.'

---

KATIE'S TREASURES.

IN the soft October sunshine,  
 'Neath the forest's golden eaves,  
 Roamed a merry band of maidens,  
 In a crimson rain of leaves.  
 And 'mid ringing bursts of laughter,  
 Fluttering through the misty air,  
 All their young hearts' cherished treas-  
 ures  
 Each with other did compare.

"I dwell in a lordly mansion,"  
 Cried a pair of scarlet lips,  
 "In the carpets' tufted roses,  
 Deep my lightest footfall dips.  
 Oh! the curtains and the pictures!  
 But, more beautiful than all,  
 You should see the western sunlight  
 Creep along the painted wall."

"Listen," quickly cried another,  
 "Listen, now, I pray, to me:  
 Years ago there was a necklace  
 Borne across the deep blue sea;  
 In its velvet-cushioned casket,  
 Stars could not so brightly shine,  
 But this chain of prisoned rainbows  
 By and by will all be mine."

"I have not such wondrous jewels,"  
 Proudly spoke another voice,  
 "But I'd rather have my *father*,  
 If I had to take my choice.  
 He has grown so very famous—  
 People almost kiss his hand,  
 And in time, I'm very certain,  
 He'll be ruler of the land."

Thus ran on the eager voices,  
 As they gayly had begun,  
 Till some tale of wondrous treasure,  
 Every child had told, save *one*.  
 "She will not have much to tell us,"  
 Whispered they, "poor little thing!"  
 But with smiles, said blue-eyed Katie,  
 "I'm the daughter of a king!"

Then they laughed: "Oh, princess,  
 tell us,  
 Where the king, your father, dwells;  
 Do your mighty palace portals  
 Swing at touch of golden bells?"  
 Meekly answered gentle Katie,  
 Pushing back a floating curl,  
 "All the shining wall is golden,  
 Every gate a single pearl.

"And more glorious than the sunrise  
 Through the purple morning mist,  
 Brightly glow the brave foundations,  
 Jasper, sapphire, amethyst.  
 And within—such wondrous treasures,  
 Oh! what happiness to see!  
 But, when home my father calls me,  
 He will give them all to me."

Then the little maids grew thoughtful,  
 And they looked with tender eyes  
 On the sweet-faced little Katie,  
 Gazing upward to the skies.



And they said, "Oh, happy princess!  
List'ning for the great King's call,  
You have found the greatest treasure,  
You are richest of us all."

"LITTLE CHILDREN."

KEEP a guard on your words, my dar-  
lings,  
For words are wonderful things;  
They are sweet, like the bees' fresh  
honey,  
Like the bees, they have terrible  
stings.

They can bless, like the warm, glad  
sunshine,  
And brighten a lonely life,  
They can cut, in the strife of anger,  
Like an open, two-edged knife.

Let them pass through your lips un-  
challenged,  
If their errand is true and kind;  
If they come to support the weary,  
To comfort and help the blind.

If a bitter, revengeful spirit  
Prompts the words, let them be un-  
said;  
They may flash through a brain like  
lightning,  
Or fall on a heart like lead.

Keep them back if they're cold and  
cruel,  
Under bar, and lock, and seal;  
The wounds they make, my darlings,  
Are always slow to heal.  
May peace guard your lives, and ever,  
From this time of your early youth,  
May the words that you daily utter  
Be the beautiful words of truth.

NO W.

"THERE is a good time coming,  
boys";  
So runs the hopeful song;  
Such is the poetry of youth:  
When life and hope are strong.

But when these buoyant days are  
passed,  
Age cries: "How changed are men!  
Things were not so when I was young;  
The best of times was then."

"There is a good time coming, boys";  
The truth we will allow;  
But, waiting not for brighter days,  
There is a good time now.  
Why not improve the present, then,  
Where'er the future lead;  
And let each passing moment's page  
Bear proof of thought and deed?

"There is a good time coming, boys";  
And many a one has passed;  
For each has had his own good time,  
And will have to the last.  
Then do thy work, while lingers youth  
With freshness on its brow,  
Still mindful of life's greatest truth,  
*The best of times is now.*

THE BOYS AND GIRLS.

GOD wants the boys, the merry, merry  
boys,  
The noisy boys, the funny boys,  
The thoughtless boys—  
God wants the boys, with all their  
joys,  
That He as gold may make them  
pure,  
And teach them trials to endure;  
His heroes brave  
He'll have them be,  
Fighting for truth  
And purity.  
God wants the boys.

God wants the happy-hearted girls,  
The loving girls, the best of girls,  
The worst of girls—  
God wants to make the girls His pearls,  
And so reflect His holy face,  
And bring to mind His wondrous  
grace,

That beautiful  
The world may be,  
And filled with love  
And purity.  
God wants the girls.

— — —  
*THE BOYS.*

THERE come the boys! Oh, dear,  
the noise!

The whole house feels the racket;  
Behold the knee of Christie's pants,  
And weep o'er Bertie's jacket!

But never mind; if eyes keep bright,  
And limbs grow straight and limber;  
We'd rather lose the tree's whole bark  
Than find unsound the timber.

Now hear the tops and marbles roll!  
The floors—oh, woe betide them!  
And I must watch the banisters,  
For I know the boys who ride them!

Look well as you descend the stairs,  
I often find them haunted  
By ghostly boys that make no noise  
Just when their noise is wanted.

The very chairs are tied in pairs,  
And made to prance and caper;  
What swords are whittled out of sticks;  
What brave hats made of paper.

The dinner-bell peals loud and well,  
To tell the milkman's coming;  
And then the rush of "steam-car  
trains"  
Sets all our ears a-humming.

How oft I say, "What shall I do  
To keep these children quiet?"  
If I could find a good receipt  
I certainly should try it.

But what to do with these wild boys  
And all their din and clatter,  
Is really quite a grave affair—  
No laughing, trifling matter.

"Boys will be boys"—but not for  
long;  
Ah, could we bear about us  
This thought:—"How very soon our  
boys  
Will learn to do without us;

"How soon, and tall, deep-voiced men  
Will gravely call us 'Mother,'  
Or we be stretching empty hands  
From this world to the other."

More gently should we chide the noise,  
And when night quells the racket,  
Stitch in but loving thoughts and  
prayers  
While mending pants and jacket.

— — —  
*THE TROUBLE OF THE HOUSE.*

THEY name her "Trouble of the  
House,"  
My merry little one,  
And tell large stories of the deeds  
Her busy hands have done;

That every room has its own tale  
Of mischief to declare,  
Of eyes which peer exceeding bright  
Through locks of golden hair.

I don't believe one-half they say,  
And if I did, what then?  
Why, simply that her little life  
Was bubbling up again;

That one more ray of sunlight streamed  
Through this fair world of ours;  
That one more bud was blossoming  
Within our garden bowers.

True, wrecks of many a toy and gem  
Lie scattered on the floor;  
And little feet come pattering  
Through every open door;

And, tireless as the bee which culls  
Its honey from the flower,

Her mind, with curious wonderings  
filled,  
Is busy every hour.

But we as soon the streams may turn  
Which to the ocean roll,  
As quench this spark that glows and  
burns  
In an immortal soul.

The wish to know the why and when,  
The mystery to explore,  
The will to dare the path to tread  
We have not trod before,

Rules both alike the man and child,  
The simple and the wise ;  
Both chase the bubble as it flits  
Before their eager eyes.

Both sport with trifles—bat and ball  
Are in our hands alway ;  
And longings, never satisfied,  
Attend us day by day.

Then chide her not, but rather bid  
Her glad heart soar and sing ;  
The dew is fresh upon her brow,  
Be freedom on her wing.

We hail the promise of to-day,  
For, if the ruddy glow  
Of morning breaks upon us such,  
What may the evening show !

---

*SENDING A VALENTINE.*

I MIGHT begin, "the rose is red"  
(Though that is not so very new),  
Or this the boys all think is good :  
"If you love me as I love you."

But, seems to me, a valentine  
Is nicer when you do not say  
The same old things that every one  
Keeps saying, in the same old way.

And I asked Jane, the other night,  
What grown-up people write about ;  
She would not answer me at first,  
But laughed till I began to pout.  
That stopped her, for she saw I meant  
The question (and she will not tease).  
"Why—love," she said, "and shining  
eyes,  
A kiss, soft hair—just what they  
please."  
It can't be hard, if that is all,  
So I'll begin by saying this :

"To my dear lady beautiful  
I send a valentine and kiss ;  
The valentine because she has  
The loveliest hair and gentlest eyes ;  
The kiss, because I love her more  
Than any one beneath the skies ;  
Because she is the kindest, best,  
The sweetest lady ever known ;  
And every year I'll say the same,  
The very same, to her alone !"

There ! Now it's finished. Who will  
do ?  
I've thought of one and then another.  
Who is there like it ? Why, of course,  
I'll send it right away to Mother !

---

*DAMARIS BROWN.*

DAMARIS BROWN is a wooden doll,  
Three inches round, and ten inches tall ;  
Her cheeks are chubby, her nose is flat,  
And very old-fashioned her Leghorn  
hat ;  
Her gown is of calico, apple green,  
Her slippers the queerest ever was  
seen ;  
She wears an apron that once was  
white,  
And the children call her a perfect  
fright.

Damaris Brown was my Grandma's  
doll—  
Three inches round, and ten inches tall,

A perfect beauty, my Grandma thought,  
When with her savings the doll she  
bought,  
At number twenty Commercial Row,  
On Grandma's birthday so long ago;  
"Too pretty to play with," said Grand-  
ma dear,  
So she laid her away with loving care.

Grandma remembers the story well:  
Often and often I've heard her tell  
How she kissed her and how she  
sighed,—

Alas! she sacrificed love to pride;  
Wrapped her in tissue-paper soft,  
Turning and peeping, oft and oft;  
That was how she was handed down  
From Grandma to me — Damaris  
Brown.

*THE LITTLE BEGGAR'S BUT-  
TON-HOLE BOUQUET.*

'Twas on a bitter winter's day;  
I saw a strange, pathetic sight:  
The streets were gloomy, cold and  
gray,  
The air with falling snow was white.

A little ragged beggar child  
Went running through the cold and  
storm;  
He looked as if he never smiled,  
As if he never had been warm.

Sudden, he spied beneath his feet  
A faded button-hole bouquet;  
Trampled and wet with rain and sleet,  
Withered and worthless, there it lay.

He bounded, seized it with delight,  
Stood still and shook it free from  
snow;  
Into his coat he pinned it tight,—  
His eyes lit up with sudden glow.

He sauntered on, all pleased and proud,  
His face transformed in every line;  
And lingered that the hurrying crowd  
Might chance to see that he was fine.

The man who threw the flowers away  
Never one-half such pleasure had;  
The flowers' best work was done that  
day  
In cheering up that beggar lad.

Ah me, too often we forget,  
Happy in these good homes of ours,  
How many in this world are yet  
Glad even of the withered flowers!

*CHILDREN'S CHURCH.*

THE church-bells for service are ring-  
ing,  
The parents gone forth on their way  
And here on the door-step are sitting  
Three golden-haired children at play.

The darlings, untiring and restless,  
Are still for the service too small;  
But yet they would fain be as pious  
As parents and uncles and all.

So each from a hymn-book is singing—  
'Tis held upside down, it is true;  
Their sweet roguish voices are ringing  
As if every number they knew.

But what they are singing they know  
not;  
Each sings in a different tone.  
Sing on, little children: your voices  
Will reach to the Heavenly Throne;

For yonder your angels are standing,  
Who sing to the Father of all:  
He loves best the sound of His praises  
From children, though ever so small.

Sing on! How the birds in the garden  
Are vying with you in your song,  
As, hopping among the young  
branches,  
They twitter on all the day long!

Sing on! For in faith ye are singing,  
And that is enough in God's sight:

A heart like the dove's, pure and guileless,  
Wings early to heaven its flight.

Sing ever! We elders sing also;  
We read, and the words understand;  
Yet oft, too, alas! we are holding  
Our books upside down in the hand.

Sing ever! We sing, as is fitting,  
From notes written carefully down;  
But ah! from the strife of the brethren  
How often has harmony flown!

Sing on! From our lofty cathedrals  
What melodies glorious we hear!  
What are they?—a sweet childish lisping,  
A breath in the Mighty One's ear.

MASTER THEODORE.

Tittlebat Titmouse Theodore Van Horn  
Was the prettiest baby that ever was  
born,  
I bathed him and fed him and taught  
him "Bo-Peep,"  
Rocked him and trotted him, and sang  
him to sleep.  
Then I bade him good-bye, and crossed  
the wide sea,  
And it rolled twenty years 'twixt that  
baby and me;  
Till at last I resolved I would cross the  
blue main  
And hug my own precious wee baby  
again.

Well, that old ship creaked, and that  
old ship tossed—  
I was sure as I lived that we all should  
be lost—  
But at last we saw sea-gulls, and soon  
we saw land;  
And then we were in; and—if there  
didn't stand  
My own blessed baby! He came there  
to meet me!

Yes, when we all landed, he hastened  
to greet me!

And wonder of wonders! that baby  
had grown

To be bigger than me, and he stood all  
alone!

"Why, Nursey!" he said (he could  
talk, think of that!)

As he bowed like a marquis and lifted  
his hat.

"Ah, how *did* you know your old  
Nursey? Oh, my!

You've changed very much, and no  
wonder," says I;

When I spied of a sudden his mother,  
behind—

Sweet lady! She'd helped him Old  
Nursey to find,

And he told me, right there, he'd a  
sweet little wife,

And that I should live with them the  
rest of my life.

So I'm here, and right happy. You  
just ought to see

The dear little fellow that sits on my  
knee.

He has beautiful dimples and eyes like  
his Ma,

And a nose and a chin, just the same  
as his Pa.

Ah, me! He's a beauty! There never  
was born

A prettier babe than this latest Van  
Horn.

MAY'S GOOD-NIGHT.

As the sun went down in purple and  
red,

A sweet little maiden pleasantly said:  
"Now, good-night, sun,

For your work is done,  
You have shone so bright through the  
Summer day,

I am sorry to see you go away.

"And good-night, work: with the dark  
we cease,"



Then she folded it neatly, without a crease.

"Good needle and thread,  
You must go to bed :

All day, you know, it was in, it was out,  
Though we knew quite well what we  
were about.

"And little brown bird in the sycamore  
tree,  
You have sung pretty songs all day to  
me.

Now go to your rest,  
In your nice, soft nest :

I shall see you again in the morning-  
light."

And the bird twittered back, "Good-  
night, good-night."

"And, roses and lilies, the daylight  
flies ;

You must go to sleep." Then they  
shut their eyes.

"Dear daisies white,  
It is nearly night."

So each little daisy nodded its head  
And the violets courtesied and went to  
bed.

Then, fair little May, in the evening  
gloom,

Went softly away to her own sweet  
room ;

Laid her new doll, Grace,  
In its proper place ;

Put her books and her clothes away  
with care,

And carefully brushed her long, brown  
hair ;

With her little bare feet, in her night-  
gown white,

Took a farewell peep of the lovely  
night ;

Said her evening prayer,  
With a loving care ;

Lay down on her pillow and slept all  
night,

And knew nothing more till the morn-  
ing light.

*THE FAIRY'S GIFT.*

WHAT shall it be, my little maid ?  
A fairy tale ? Then listen  
While in and out, with busy click,  
Your shining needles glisten.

One summer day long years ago  
A pretty maid was sitting  
Upon the door-step in the sun,  
While idle lay her knitting.

A frown was on her forehead fair,  
Her eyes with tears were shining,  
And all her young and girlish heart  
Was heavy with repining.

A sudden footstep sounded near,  
And through her tears up-glancing  
She saw across the sunny field  
A quaint old dame advancing.

"Good Fairy Bountiful," she cried,  
"Ah me, but I am weary ;  
From morn till night my toil is hard,  
The days are long and dreary.

"Lend me, I pray, thy magic wand,  
That shall my labor lighten."

"Nay," said the dame, "a better gift  
I bring, thy life to brighten,

"Ten little workmen, brave and swift,  
Who ever shall obey thee,  
Lay on them what command thou wilt,  
And prove their skill, I pray thee."

The fairy opened wide her cloak,  
Ten dwarfs flew out from under.  
The maiden watched them do her work,  
Her blue eyes big with wonder.

Now here, now there, with nimble feet  
They ran to do her pleasure.

"Kind Fairy Bountiful," she cried,  
"Give me this wondrous treasure !"

The fairy smiled. "Keep for thine own  
These servants good and clever ;  
But, little one, remember this,  
Let them be idle never."

She vanished. Had the maiden dream-  
ed ?

Maybe. But ever after  
Her work was as by magic done,  
Her days were filled with laughter.

O thoughtful little maiden mine,  
Low on your clasped hands leaning,  
Now you have heard my fairy tale,  
Can you not guess its meaning ?

Take up your idle work again,  
Nor let the slow task linger,  
One of those fairy workmen hides  
In every dimpled finger.

#### A LITTLE PHILOSOPHER.

THE days are short, and the nights are  
long,

And the wind is nipping cold ;  
The tasks are hard and the sums are  
wrong,

And the teachers often scold.

But Johnny McCree,  
Oh, what cares he  
As he whistles along the way ?

" It will all come right  
By to-morrow night,"  
Says Johnny McCree to-day.

The plums are few, and the cake is  
plain,

The shoes are out at the toe ;  
For money, you look in the purse in  
vain—

It was all spent long ago.  
But Johnny McCree,  
Oh, what cares he  
As he whistles along the street ?  
Would you have the blues  
For a pair of shoes  
While you have a pair of feet ?

The snow is deep, there are paths to  
break,

But the little arm is strong,  
And work is play, if you'll only take  
Your work with a bit of song.

And Johnny McCree,  
Oh, what cares he  
As he whistles along the road ?  
He will do his best,  
And will leave the rest  
To the care of his Father, God.

The mother's face, it is often sad—  
She scarce knows what to do ;  
But at Johnny's kiss she is bright and  
glad—

She loves him, and wouldn't you ?  
For Johnny McCree,  
Oh, what cares he  
As he whistles along the way ?  
The trouble will go,  
And " I told you so,"  
Our brave little John will say.

#### MISTRESS MARY.

Mary, Mary, quite contrary,  
How does your garden grow ?  
With silver bells, and cockle-shells,  
And tulips, all a row.

PRITHEE, tell me, mistress Mary,  
Why this rhyme of " quite contrary " ?  
Why should Mother Goose, beholding  
All these pleasant blooms unfolding—  
Every prim and pretty border  
Standing in such shining order—  
Looking o'er the lovely rows,  
Ask you " how your garden grows " ?

Mary, so precise and chary,  
Are you, anyhow, contrary ?  
While these sweetly perfect lines  
Nod their gentle countersigns,  
Spending all your strength on this,  
Lest the least thing grow amiss,  
Weareth some unseen parterre  
Quite a different kind of air ?

Through your hating of a weed  
Runs there anything to seed—  
Thistle-blow of petulance,  
Bitter blade of blame, perchance,  
Or a flaunting stem of pride,  
In that other garden-side ?

Mary, in our women-hearts  
Spring such curious counterparts !

In our home-plots watching wary  
Lest the faultless order vary  
By the dropping of a leaf,  
Or a blossom come to grief  
From the blasting of a storm,  
Or the eating of a worm—  
Let us both be certain, Mary,  
Nothing dearer goes contrary !

—  
*AN OLD SAW.*

A DEAR little maid came skipping out  
In the glad new day with a merry  
shout ;  
With dancing feet and with flying hair  
She sang with joy in the morning air.

*“ Don't sing before breakfast, you'll  
cry before night ! ”*  
What a croak, to darken the child's  
delight !  
And the stupid old nurse, again and  
again,  
Repeated the ancient, dull refrain.

The child paused, trying to under-  
stand ;  
But her eyes saw the great world rain-  
bow-spanned ;  
Her light little feet hardly touched the  
earth,  
And her soul brimmed over with inno-  
cent mirth.

“ Never mind—don't listen—O sweet  
little maid !  
Make sure of your morning song,” I  
said :  
“ And if pain must meet you, why, all  
the more  
Be glad of the rapture that came be-  
fore.

“ O, tears and sorrow are plenty enough,  
Storms may be bitter and paths be  
rough,

But our tears should fall like the dear  
Earth's showers  
That help to ripen the fruits and flow-  
ers.

“ So gladden the day with your blissful  
song,  
Sing on while you may, my dear, sweet  
and strong !  
Make sure of your moment of pure de-  
light,  
No matter what trials may come before  
night.”

—  
*ENTERING IN.*

THE church was dim and silent  
With the hush before the prayer,  
Only the solemn trembling  
Of the organ stirred the air ;  
Without, the sweet, still sunshine ;  
Within, the holy calm  
Where priest and people waited  
For the swelling of the psalm.

Slowly the door swung open,  
And a little baby girl,  
Brown-eyed with brown hair falling  
In many a wavy curl,  
With soft cheeks flushing hotly,  
Shy glances downward thrown,  
And small hands clasped before her,  
Stood in the aisle alone.

Stood half abashed, half frightened,  
Unknowing where to go,  
While, like a wind-rocked flower,  
Her form swayed to and fro,  
And the changing color fluttered  
In the little, troubled face,  
As from side to side she wavered  
With a mute, imploring grace.

It was but for a moment ;  
What wonder that we smiled,  
By such a strange, sweet picture  
From holy thoughts beguiled ?

Then up rose some one softly ;  
 And many an eye grew dim,  
 As through the tender silence  
 He bore the child with him.

And I—I wondered (losing  
 The sermon and the prayer)  
 If when, sometime, I enter  
 The "many mansions" fair,  
 And stand, abashed and drooping,  
 In the portal's golden glow,  
 Our God will send an angel  
 To show me where to go!

*THE CHILDREN'S COUNTRY.*

SHE is sitting very silent in her little  
 crimson chair,  
 With the flicker of the firelight on her  
 pretty golden hair ;  
 And all pleasant things surround her,  
 but her thoughts are elsewhere.

For these little lads and lasses have a  
 country of their own,  
 Where, without the older people, they  
 can wander off alone,  
 Into dim and distant regions, that were  
 never named or known.

They are wearied with the questions,  
 and the running to and fro,  
 For some one is always saying, "You  
 must come," or "You must go";  
 "You must speak and write correctly  
 sitting, standing, thus and so."

So they turn at any moment from the  
 figures on their slates,  
 And the names of all the islands, and  
 the oceans, and the States  
 Are forgotten in a moment when they  
 see the shining gates

Of their own delightful country, where  
 they wander as they please,  
 On the great enchanted mountains, or  
 beneath the forest trees,  
 With a thousand other children, all  
 entirely at their ease.

Oh, the happy, happy children ! do  
 they wish for anything,  
 Book or bird, or boat or picture, silken  
 dress or golden ring ?  
 Lo ! a little page will hasten, and the  
 treasure straight will bring.

It is strange the older people cannot  
 find this land at all :  
 If they ever knew its language, it is  
 lost beyond recall,  
 And they only, in their dreamings,  
 hear its music rise and fall.

Oh, the riches of the children with this  
 country for their own !  
 All the splendor of its castles, every  
 flower and precious stone,  
 Until time itself is ended, and the  
 worlds are overthrown.

*CHILDREN'S JOYS.*

THE children's world is full of sweet  
 surprises ;  
 Our common things are precious in  
 their sight ;  
 For them, the stars shine and the  
 morning rises,  
 To show new treasures of untold  
 delight !

A dance of bluebells in the shady  
 places ;  
 A crimson flush of sunset in the  
 west ;  
 The cobwebs, delicate as fairy laces ;  
 The sudden finding of a wood-bird's  
 nest.

Their hearts and lips are full of sim-  
 ple praises  
 To Him who made the earth di-  
 vinely sweet ;  
 They dwell among the buttercups and  
 daisies,  
 And find His blessings strewn about  
 their feet.

But we, worn out by days of toil and  
sorrow,  
And sick of pleasures that are false  
and vain,  
Would freely give our golden hoards  
to borrow  
One little hour of childhood's bliss  
again.

Yet He who sees their joy beholds our  
sadness ;  
And in the wisdom of a Father's  
love  
He keeps the secret of the heavenly  
gladness—  
Our sweet surprises wait for us  
above,

*A FAREWELL.*

MY fairest child, I have no song to  
give you ;  
No lark could pipe to skies so cold  
and grey :  
Yet, ere we part, one lesson I can leave  
you  
For every day.

Be good, sweet, sweet maid, and let  
who will be clever ;  
Do noble things, nor dream them  
all day long :  
And so make life, death, and that vast  
forever  
One grand, sweet song.





HOME LIFE AND HOME SCENES

IN THE

COUNTRY.



A HARVEST DAY.

## HOME LIFE AND HOME SCENES IN THE COUNTRY.

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### *A FOUR-LEAFED CLOVER.*

A FOUR-LEAFED clover ! In my chamber-drawer,  
Turning my treasures over, where they lay,  
I came across this leaf, grown dry and sere,  
Yet holding still the faint perfume of May  
That filled it when I plucked it from the hay.

'Twas years ago I found it. Happy chance  
I thought it then, that laid it at my feet ;  
I put it softly, shyly, in my shoe,  
And walked unheeding over blossoms sweet,  
Wondering what fate my maiden steps would meet.

So, sauntering slowly where forget-me-nots  
Swung in the breeze their tiny bells of blue,  
And where wild grape-vines flung their tendrils wide,  
I heard a step, swift, eager—one I knew,  
And turning, in vexation, saw 'twas you.

“Why did you spoil my charm?” I cried in haste,  
And when you asked what evil you had brought,  
I said, with reddening cheeks and tear-wet eyes,  
I never would reveal the harm you wrought  
By coming to me when I wished you not.

You turned away in wonder at my mood,  
And I stood still, half vexed and half ashamed ;  
Was this the girlhood's knight I hoped to meet ?  
This man with sinewy arm for labor framed ?—  
“A son of toil,” I sneered, “most aptly named.”

Ah, well ! the years bring wisdom in their train ;  
And as I look into your face to-day,  
Its clear, gray eyes down-shining into mine,  
I thank my fate for that auspicious day  
When clover-leaf and you came in my way.

---

### *AGAIN !*

OH, sweet and fair ! Oh, rich and rare  
That day so long ago,  
And autumn sunshine everywhere,  
The heather all aglow,  
The ferns were clad in cloth of gold,  
The waves sang on the shore ;  
Such suns will shine, such waves will sing  
Forever, evermore.

Oh, fit and few ! Oh, tried and true !  
The friends who met that day,  
Each one the other's spirit knew ;  
And so in earnest play  
The hours flew past, until at last  
The twilight kissed the shore ;  
We said : “Such days shall come again  
Forever, evermore.”

One day again, no cloud of pain  
 A shadow o'er us cast,  
 And yet we strove in vain, in vain  
 To conjure up the past:  
 Like, but unlike the sun that shone,  
 The waves that beat the shore,  
 The words we said, the songs we sung,  
 Like—unlike—evermore.

For ghosts unseen crept in between,  
 And, when our songs flowed free,  
 Sang discords in an undertone,  
 And marred the harmony,  
 "The past is ours, not yours," they said,  
 "The waves that beat the shore,  
 Though like the same, are not the same,  
 Oh, never, never more!"

—  
*YOU AND I.*

WE meet to-day, we part to-morrow;  
 You and I;  
 If in secret, silent sorrow,  
 You regret the stern decree,  
 And I sigh,  
 Dreaming dreams of what might be,  
 Would fate only leave us free,  
 Will it make life less worth living?  
 Will it make love less worth giving?  
 Or, if we walked on together,  
 Would our joys be any brighter?  
 Would our sorrows be the lighter?  
 Time and tide,  
 In their hurried onward rushing,  
 Sweep us on, and, answer nothing.

Much is given ere the asking,  
 And we try,  
 Vainly, heart and brain both tasking,  
 To forget the bitter knowledge,  
 Asking why  
 Things unequal were created?  
 Why so many lives mismated  
 Curse the earth? forever grieving,  
 With deceit themselves deceiving,  
 When a word in candor spoken,  
 Would sad hearts forever lighten,  
 And sad eyes forever brighten;  
 What a change,

If we said things as we meant them,  
 And but meant them when we said  
 them!

Years shall bless and years bereave us,  
 You and I,  
 As the summer-time shall leave us,  
 And the autumn tints veil softly  
 Youth's fair sky.

Other scenes ere long shall greet us,  
 Other friends will warmly meet us,  
 And, if wooing voices 'round us,  
 Fondly with their love have crowned  
 us,  
 Shall we, yielding, tell to memory  
 It were better that no token  
 Kept our friendship still unbroken?  
 Or, at last,  
 Shall we, somehow, find each other  
 Dearer far than any other?

—  
*KEPT.*

My lover and I stood on the shore;  
 His boat rocked out on the sun-lit  
 bay;  
 A little flower from my breast he tore,  
 And a kiss from my lips he stole  
 away.  
 "Never fear, little lass, never fear!"  
 cried he,  
 "I will bring thy rosebud back to  
 thee."

On the shining deck I saw him stand:  
 I saw him stand by the snowy sail;  
 He waved farewell with the flower in  
 his hand,  
 But my heart beat quick and my  
 cheek grew pale.  
 Though never a cloud was in the sky,  
 I shuddered to hear the sea-gulls cry.

The whole white fleet was outward  
 bound.  
 Brave fisher-lads,—with a song they  
 went!  
 The waves rolled in with a sullen  
 sound,

And the day and the tide were  
nearly spent,  
The last sail, touched with an ashen  
light,  
Like a ghost sped into the dusky night.

Then back, as I stood on the shore  
and prayed,  
They came, for the storm-wind blew  
apace.

The women came from their cots  
afraid ;

The salt spray sprinkled each pallid  
face ;

But while they murmured : “ Alas !  
Alack ! ”

I thought, “ He will bring my rose-bud  
back.”

The great wind roared, and the hun-  
gry hiss

Of the seething brine on the flying  
shore,

Seemed moaning and sighing only this :  
“ Ah, nevermore ! ah, nevermore ! ”

We held each other close. The foam  
Still whispered to me : “ He will come  
home.”

The morning dawned on the awful  
sea !

They came to land. “ None lost ? ”  
“ But one.”

I stood in my place all silently.

He went in the sunlight ; he came  
in the sun.

Washed to the shore, in his dear, dead  
hand

He brought me my rosebud back to  
land.

WOOING.

CAPTIVE little hand,  
Wherefore trembling so ?  
Like a fluttering bird,  
All your pulses stirred :  
Would you, if you could—  
Would you go ?

Drooping, downcast eyes,  
Filled with love's own light,  
'Neath your snowy lid  
All my world lies hid :  
Why so shyly veiled  
From my sight ?

Lovely quivering lips,  
With your wealth of red,  
Speak the longed-for word.  
First in Eden heard,  
In your own sweet way  
Be it said.

Eager, restless heart,  
Longing for your mate,  
What have you to fear ?  
Find contentment here ;  
To my tender love  
Trust your fate.

Dainty little maid,  
Graced with charms so sweet,  
One bright glance bestow ;  
Nay—but I will know  
If—ah, yes, for me,  
Life's complete !

DON'T STAY LONG.

A LOOK of yearning tenderness  
Beneath her lashes lies,  
And hope and love unutterable  
Are shadowed in her eyes,  
As in some deep, unruffled stream  
Are clouds and summer skies.

She passed to early womanhood,  
From dreamy, sweet girl life,  
And crossed the rosy threshold but  
To find herself a wife ;  
Oh ! gently should he lead her steps  
Along the path of life !

And as she clasped her small white  
hands  
Upon his arms so strong,  
How often like a summer sigh,  
Or a sweet pleading song,  
She whispers, with a parting kiss,  
“ Beloved one, don't stay long.”



They're almost always on her lip,  
Her gentlest parting words,  
Sweet as the fragrance from rose leaves  
When by soft zephyrs stirred,  
And lingering in the memory  
Like songs of summer birds.

And in his heart they nestle warm  
When other scenes amid ;  
He stays not till she weary grows,  
And her fond eyes are hid  
In tears which lie in bitterness  
Beneath each veiling lid.

And, oh, how many hearts are kept  
By that love-uttering song !  
There's scarcely one who on life's  
waves  
Is swiftly borne along,  
But what has heard from some dear  
lips  
These sweet words, "Don't stay  
long."

—

*WEDDING-DAY WISHES.*

SINCE I have not for your bridal  
Any precious offerings brought—  
Gold, or gems, or costly fabric,  
By the curious workman wrought—

Let your thought admit the fancy,  
While you read the words I write,  
That your friend's heart is a casket,  
And her wishes jewels bright.

Thus you shall be fairly furnished  
With all favors brides should wear,  
For the neck, the wrists, the fingers,  
For your brow and shining hair.

Husband's love and faith should crown  
you,  
Better than wrought gems a queen ;  
Wifely truth and trust illumine,  
More than pearls could, race and  
mien.

Home and sweet content I wish you,  
More than lands and lofty hall—  
Bracelets these, and golden neck-chain  
Holding you in willing thrall.

Daily, loving words of kindness,  
These for jeweled rings should be ;  
Better than the diamond's radiance  
Is the light of charity.

And for fairest, best adorning,  
Never wanting, ever bright,  
Wear the "meek and quiet spirit,"  
Priceless in the Giver's sight.

These will fail not, though misfortune  
Sweep all earthly goods away ;  
God's dear smile of love and favor  
Turneth darkness into day.

—

*OVER THE BARS.*

'Twas milking time, and the cows  
came up  
From the meadows sweet with clover,  
And stood in the lane, while pretty  
Jane  
Had a quiet chat with the drover—  
Such a quiet chat it scarcely seemed  
That a single word was spoken ;  
While a magic spell with the night  
dews fell,  
And the rhythm of song was un-  
broken.

The cattle stood at the lover's side,  
Without any show of vexation,  
As though impressed with a five-bar  
rest  
Was a part of their rest-oration.  
And as Jane listened to the notes that  
came  
Right under the bars and over,  
Her heart took wing, the silly thing,  
And nestled up close to the drover.

She heard him say his home was poor,  
That he'd nothing but love to give  
her ;  
And she smiled content, as though love  
had spent  
Every arrow he had in his quiver ;  
She smiled content, when the evening  
air  
With voices of birds are ringing,

And her lips confessed that a lowly  
nest  
Should never prevent her singing.

So over the bars the lovers lean,  
In the joy of their sweet communion ;  
And their looks declare that poverty  
ne'er  
Shall be a bar to their union ;  
Oh, sweetest music, go thread your  
rhymes,  
Now under the bars and over ;  
Where pretty Jane, in the fragrant  
lane,  
Bewitched the heart of the drover.

—————  
*TWO OF THEM.*

IN the farm-house porch the farmer sat,  
With his daughter having a cosy chat :  
She was his only child, and he  
Thought her as fair as a girl could be.  
A wee bit jealous the old man grew,  
If he fancied any might come to woo  
His one pet lamb, and her loving care  
He wished with nobody else to share.

"There should be two of you, child,"  
said he ;

"There should be two to welcome me  
When I come home from the field at  
night :

Two would make the old homestead  
bright.

There's neighbor Grey with his chil-  
dren four

To be glad together. Had I one more,  
A proud old father I'd be, my dear,  
With two good children to greet me  
here."

Down by the gate 'neath the old elm-  
tree

Donald waited alone ; and she  
For whom he waited his love-call  
heard,

And on either cheek the blushes stirred.

"Father," she said, and knelt her  
down,

And kissed the hand that was old and  
brown—

"Father, there may be two, if you will,  
And I—your only daughter still.

"Two to welcome you home at night ;  
Two to make the old homestead bright :  
I—and somebody else." "I see,"

Said the farmer, "and whom may  
'somebody' be?"

Oh, the dimples in Bessie's cheek,  
That played with the blushes at hide-  
and-seek !

Away from his gaze she turned her  
head,

"One of neighbor Grey's children,"  
she said.

"H'm!" said the farmer ; "make it  
plain ;

Is it Susan, Alice, or Mary Jane?"

Another kiss on the aged hand,  
To help the farmer to understand (?)

"H'm," said the farmer : "yes ; I see ;  
It is two for yourself and one for me."

But Bessie said, "There can be but  
one

For me and my heart till life is done."

—————  
*A HAPPY WIFE.*

HE wraps me round with his riches,

He covers me up with his care,  
And his love is the love of a manhood  
Whose life is a living prayer.

I have plighted my woman's affections  
I have given my all in all,

And the flowers of a daily contentment  
Renew their sweet lives ere they fall ;

And yet like an instrument pre-  
cious

That playeth an olden tune,  
My heart in the midst of its bless-  
ings

Goes back to a day in June—

To a day when beneath the  
branches  
I stood by a silent stream,  
And saw in its bosom an image  
As one seeth a face in a dream.

I would not resign his devotion,  
No, not for a heart that lives !  
Nor change one jot my condition  
For the change that condition gives :  
I should mourn not more for another,  
Nor more for another rejoice,  
Than now, when I weep at his absence,  
Or welcome his step and his voice.  
And yet like an instrument pre-  
cious,  
That playeth an olden tune,  
My heart in the midst of its bless-  
ings  
Goes back to a day in June—  
To a day when, beneath the  
branches,  
I stood in the shadowy light,  
And heard the low words of a  
whisper  
As one heareth a voice in the  
night.

RECONSTRUCTION.

IN a wagon made of willow  
Wheeled I once a little maiden,  
Ringlets shining on the pillow,  
Rolling homeward treasure laden,  
Like a boat upon the billow.

Ten years fled. Ah ! how I missed  
her  
When we left the village school !  
But she said she'd be my sister  
As we lingered by the pool,  
And I passionately kissed her.

Ten more fretting years renew it ;  
Little wagon made of willow ;  
Loving eyes are bent to view it ;  
Loving hands adjust the pillow,  
And we've fitted rockers to it.

WEDDED.

SOME quick and bitter words we said,  
And then we parted. How the sun  
Swam through a sullen sea of gray !  
A chill fell on the summer day.  
Life's best and happiest hours were  
done,  
Friendship was dead.

How proud we went our separate ways,  
And spake no word and made no  
moan ;  
She braided up her flowing hair,  
That I had always called so fair,  
Although she scorned my loving tone,  
My word of praise.

And I? I matched her scorn with  
scorn,  
I hated her with all my heart,  
Until—we chanced to meet one day ;  
She turned her pretty head away ;  
I saw two pearly tear-drops start,  
Lo ! love was born.

Some fond, repenting word I said,  
She answered only with a sigh ;  
But when I took her hand in mine  
A radiant glory half divine  
Flooded the earth and filled the sky.  
Now we are wed.

AN AUGUST DAY.

OVER the fields by winding ways  
We wandered on together,  
Under the flashing azure skies,  
In a hush of August weather.  
Round about us, afar and near,  
We heard the locusts humming,  
And the asters starring the lonely path  
Laughed out to see us coming.

Bird songs out of the sunlit oak  
Fell rippling through the shadow,  
Like a spear of flame the cardinal  
flower  
Burned out along the meadow.

Into our hearts the blithe wind blew,  
Its own free gladness giving,  
And all things laughed in the happy  
earth,  
For the pure sweet joy of living.

Two roamed on with their eyes alight,  
And their hearts too still for laugh-  
ter,

Two in a revel of golden life,  
Looked neither before nor after.  
One went dreaming with downcast  
face

Through the hush of the woodland  
cover,

But one praised God from a trembling  
heart

That the shadow of pain was over.

---

*BLACKBERRIES AND KISSES.*

WE were up on the green old hill-side  
Where the blackberry bushes grow,  
And we gathered the ripe, sweet  
berries

Till the sun was getting low,  
And somehow, where the fruit was  
ripest—

I could not account for this!—

We were sure to eat all the berries,  
And sweeten them with a kiss.

Oh, I know of nothing better,  
The whole year round, than this:  
A handful of ripe blackberries  
Made sweet with a lover's kiss.

“If they saw us eating the berries  
In this new, but pleasant way,  
They would say we were silly  
creatures,”

Said she: but I answered, “Nay.

They would say we were wise, my  
darling,

To eat our berries so,

For kisses are cheaper than sugar  
In times like these, you know.”

Oh, I know of nothing better,  
The whole year round, than this:  
A handful of ripe blackberries  
Made sweet with a lover's kiss.

As we stood in the path together,  
When our feet were homeward  
turned,

I whispered the sweet old question  
That each lover's heart has learned.

I forget the words of her answer,

But I can remember this,

It was all my heart had hoped for,  
And I took it with a kiss.

Oh, I know of nothing better,

The whole year round, than this:

A handful of ripe blackberries  
Made sweet by a lover's kiss.

---

*LICHEN.*

LITTLE lichen, fondly clinging

In the wild wood to the tree;

Covering unseemly places,

Hiding all thy tender graces,

Ever dwelling in the shade,

Never seeing sunny glade.

Little lichen, emblem sweet

Of a friend, whom now I greet;

She, too, dwelleth in the shade,

Pineth not for sunnier glade,

Clinging to the dear home-walls,

Where scarce a ray of sunshine falls.

Yet in her heart such love abideth,

That she like the dark places hideth;

She would not be a roadside flower,

Nor long to dwell in sunny bower;

She loves the deep and woody shade,

She loves the *dark that God has made.*

She is not dazed with golden glare

Of worldly joy, however fair;

And in her little corner shineth,

A purer light, my soul divineth,

Than any earthly sunshine bringeth;

A light from Him to whom she clingeth

---

*THE GIRL FOR ME.*

JUST fair enough to be pretty,

Just gentle enough to be sweet,

Just saucy enough to be witty,

Just dainty enough to be neat.

Just tall enough to be graceful,  
 Just slight enough for a fay,  
 Just dress enough to be tasteful,  
 Just merry enough to be gay.

Just tears enough to be tender,  
 Just sighs enough to be sad ;  
 Tones soft enough to remember  
 Your heart through the cadence  
 made glad.

Just meek enough for submission,  
 Just bold enough to be brave,  
 Just pride enough for ambition,  
 Just thoughtful enough to be grave.

A tongue that can talk without harm-  
 ing,  
 Just mischief enough to tease,  
 Manners pleasant enough to be charm-  
 ing,  
 That put you at once at your ease.

Disdain for silly presumption,  
 Sarcasm to answer a fool,  
 Cool contempt shown to assumption,  
 Proper dignity always the rule.

Flights of fairy fancy ethereal,  
 Devotion to science full paid,  
 Stuff of the sort of material  
 Poets and painters are made.

Generous enough, and kind-hearted,  
 Pure as the angles above ;  
 Oh, from her may I never be parted,  
 For such is the maiden I love.

—  
 LOVERS' PRECEPT.

Do not let us take the highway, sweet ;  
 It is full of curious, prying eyes.  
 Let us choose the wandering path that  
 lies  
 Thro' the fields, and shuns the dust  
 and heat—  
 Daisy-bordered, bridged by waving  
 shade  
 Thro' whose interlacings glints the  
 golden flood

Which the priest this morning, when  
 he prayed,  
 Likened to the all-embracing love of  
 God—  
 Sweet the text that followed, I could  
 have wished no other :  
 " A new command I give, Love ye one  
 another."

I turned to watch you as the words di-  
 vine  
 Stole on my sense like music of the  
 spheres ;  
 A flush crept o'er your cheek, a mist  
 of tears  
 Swam to your eyes, which drooped  
 away from mine.  
 I saw the hand that held your book of  
 prayer  
 Thrill like a flower swept by delicious  
 gales ;  
 But not a look would you vouchsafe  
 me there.  
 Oh, lovely saint, shrined within altar  
 veils,  
 Were you afraid to turn and face your  
 brother  
 After the new command, " Love ye one  
 another? "

I will absolve you for the look not  
 given,  
 So fully doth suffice the look you give.  
 Droop not, shy, lily lids, but let me  
 live  
 Forever, in your eyes serene, blue  
 heaven !  
 Lay hand to heart, and tell me, maiden  
 mine,  
 If in the long, strange years you do  
 not see,  
 You fear you may regret the tender  
 sign  
 Of love and trust which you now give  
 to me,  
 Or wish in secret it had been some  
 other  
 Who learned with you the lesson,  
 " Love ye one another."



For life will not be all like this, alas !  
A walk thro' meadows, under skies so  
fair,

With bobolinks a-trilling in the air,  
And daisies blooming golden in the  
grass.

There will be rough and stormy days,  
my sweet,

When God behind a cloud will hide  
from sight,

And you and I, with hurt and weary  
feet,

Will pass through thorny ways to  
reach the light :

Shall it be hand-in-hand, dear, and  
patient with each other,

Remembering the message, " Love ye  
one another ? "

---

MARGARET.

INTO the garden I walked ;  
Ne'er had I seen her before,  
Under a budding white rose  
She stood in the shade of the door.

Quiet and pale was her face,  
But maidenly bright were her eyes,  
Fair as the newly-born moon  
When low in the easterly skies.

There as I stood by her side  
My spirit grew happy and free ;  
Would I had said what I thought,  
That none would I marry but thee.

The far-off bells were tolling,  
For 'twas some one's funeral-day,  
And in the meadows close by  
The mowers were mowing the hay.

Into the garden I walked ;  
But once had I seen her before ;  
Vacant and still was the house,  
Wide open was standing the door,

Then silent and listening I went  
Up to the curtainless bed,  
Where she lay shrouded in white,  
All wintry, lonely, and dead ;

There was a look on her face  
As if she'd been thinking of me.

" Dear Margaret," then whispered I,  
" None will I marry but thee ! "  
And the far-off bells were ringing,  
For 'twas some one's wedding-day,  
And in the meadows close by  
The mowers were mowing the hay.

Silent and dark was yon lake,  
As under the desolate hill,  
Lit by no gleam from the sky,

It slumbered there, dreary and still,  
Till, with its swallow-like wing,

The wind in its wandering flight  
Touched into music the reeds,

And broke it in ripples of light.

Silent and dark was my heart,  
Till suddenly thrilled by the tone

Tender and pure of the voice  
Which told me I was not alone.

Yet how I long to be dead,  
Whene'er, on a calm summer day,

The far-off bells are ringing,  
And the mowers are mowing the  
hay !

---

ON THE THRESHOLD.

STANDING on the threshold,  
With her wakening heart and mind,  
Standing on the threshold,  
With her childhood left behind ;  
The woman softness blending  
With the look of sweet surprise  
For life and all its marvels  
That lights the clear blue eyes.

Standing on the threshold,  
With light foot and fearless hand,  
As the young knight by his armor  
In minster nave might stand ;  
The fresh red lip just touching  
Youth's ruddy rapturous wine,  
The eager heart all brave, pure hope,  
Oh, happy child of mine !

I cou'd guard the helpless infant  
That nestled in my arms :  
I could save the prattler's golden head  
From petty baby harms ;

I could brighten childhood's gladness,  
And comfort childhood's tears,  
But I can not cross the threshold  
With the step of riper years.

For hopes, and joys, and maiden  
dreams  
Are waiting for her there,  
Where girlhood's fancies bud and  
bloom

In April's golden air ;  
And passionate love, and passionate  
griefs,  
And passionate gladness lie  
Among the crimson flowers that spring  
As youth goes fluttering by.

Ah ! on those rosy pathways  
Is no place for sobered feet,  
My tired eyes have naught of strength  
Such fervid glow to meet ;  
My voice is all too sad to sound  
Amid the joyous notes  
Of the music that through charmed  
air  
For opening girlhood floats.

Yet thorns amid the leaves may lurk,  
And thunder-clouds may lower,  
And death, or change, or falsehood  
blight  
The jasmine in the bower ;  
May God avert the woe, my child ;  
But oh, should tempest come,  
Remember, by the threshold waits  
The patient love of home !

---

WILLY'S WIFE.

THE road is long and rough, you see,  
Far stretching o'er the prairie ;  
And if his father went—why, I  
Must stay and mind the dairy.  
Perhaps an idle tear I dropped  
To see him mount the filly,  
And go alone to bless the bans  
Of our dear boy, our Willy.

A week of days has passed since then,  
Each longer than the other,  
So strange it is to think he'd wed,  
And I not there—his mother.  
So strange, when he, a toddling thing,  
Got all my care so freely ;  
Well, care and kisses wait to-day  
For Willy's wife and Willy.

What's that you say? That I've not  
seen,  
And so I may not love her,  
Not love his love? Why troops of  
girls  
Might lift their heads above her.  
Ah, all the girls might fairer be,  
In bloom of rose and lily ;  
But dearer than the best to me  
Would be the wife of Willy.

'Tis true, he's young. 'Twere well,  
perhaps,  
He'd waited just a little ;  
A lover's knot too early tied  
May prove, alas ! but brittle.  
Yet old folks often make mistake  
In thinking young folks silly,  
And what's the use to question now?—  
She's wife of my boy Willy.

Oh, ah ! be sure, some other might  
Have lined with gold his pocket ;  
But I have seen full many a stick  
Dome down from costly rocket.  
And yet—I hinted to the boy  
His own short purse ; and still he  
But scorned the hint. Well, love's  
enough  
To dower the wife of Willy.

For Willy, let me tell you now,  
Is not the one to falter  
In doing what an honest man  
Has promised at the altar ;  
'Twill be no fault of idle ways  
If later times prove chilly ;  
No need, I wis, for aught but love  
With this young wife of Willy.

And that a wife brings love, I'm sure  
Should make a mother kindly ;  
The mother, if she's wise at all,  
Will scan a little blindly ;  
For smooth the ruts as smooth we may  
Life's path will yet be hilly ;  
There's many a flint to prick the feet  
Of even the wife of Willy.

So keep your doubts, no longer jest,  
Because I'm anxious waiting  
To clasp my darlings to my breast,  
And bless their early mating.  
I spake full loud to stay the match ;  
But now my finger stilly  
Is placed upon my lip—since she  
Is mine, the wife of Willy.

She's Willy's wife, and so she's mine,  
My own dear, darling daughter ;  
If they're one flesh, they're but one  
blood,  
And " blood is more than water."'  
Then hold your peace about the charms  
Of Susan or of Milly ;  
I tell you, friends, she's best of all,  
This wife of my boy Willy.

Lo ! here they are, the precious pair !  
My precious boy, my rover—  
And with him one to crown his days ;  
Look ! who could help but love  
her ?  
Come, father, shut the kitchen door,  
The winds without blow shrilly,  
But what care we, beside the fire,  
With Willy's wife and Willy ?

The bread is white upon the board,  
The kettle bravely simmers,  
The red flame dances up the wall  
Where shining pewter shimmers ;  
The neighbors come and greetings  
bring  
In welcome, " will he, nill he ;"  
Oh, happy day that light the home  
With Willy's wife and Willy !

## A RETURN.

" Do ye not know me, Donald ?"  
Pushing back her gray hair—  
" Can you not speak to me, Donald  
Me who was once so fair ?

" Many years have gone over us—  
Fortunate years for thee ;  
When I see thee they seem not so  
many—  
Only when thou seest me.

" For I wear the snow of winters  
No sun and no summer can change ;  
Yet I seem to hear the spring coming,  
And the blue-bird beginning to  
range.

" As when in the old days together  
We wandered and talked by the  
stream,  
Of thy life in the far new country,  
And our love. Was it all a dream ?

" For what could I be to thee, Donald,  
A man grown to honor and land,  
With a choice of the whole world be-  
fore thee—  
While I could give thee but my  
hand !

" 'Twas long that I stayed by the brook-  
side,  
In the dews and the dark of the eve,  
Through winter and summer there-  
after,  
Ere I could forget to grieve.

" For thou wast my first love, Donald—  
Thou the first love of my heart :  
Why should I not tell thee, Donald,  
What sadness it was then to part ?"

" I can not recall thee, woman ;  
And yet, when I hear thy voice,  
I hear the low rippling river,  
I see the girl of my choice.

" Can ye not tell me of Janet,  
Something of her I once loved ?

She gave me a wing for my bonnet ;  
I gave her a ring ere I roved."

"Think ye on her sometimes, Donald ?  
Can ye remember the ring ?

It is worn now very thin, Donald ;  
Yet, perhaps, ye'll remember the  
thing.

"It is here on my hand still, Donald ;  
I can not remove it again ;  
I have kept it through labor and sor-  
row ;  
It is grown now a part of my pain !"

---

*AT NIGHTFALL.*

COMING along by the meadows,  
Just after the sun went down,  
Watching the gathering shadows  
Creep over the hillsides brown.

Coming along in the gloaming,  
With never a star in the sky,  
My thoughts went a-roaming, a-roam-  
ing  
Through days that are long gone by.

Days when desire said, "To-morrow,  
To-morrow, heart, we'll be gay !"  
Days ere the heart heard the sorrow  
Which echoes through yesterday.

Life was a goblet burnished,  
That with love for wine was filled ;  
The cup is bruised and tarnished,  
And the precious wine is spilled.

But to the traveler weary,  
Just coming in sight of home,  
What does it matter how dreary  
The way whereby he has come ?

Coming along by the meadows,  
And watching the fading day,  
Duskier than night's dusky shadows  
Fell shadows of yesterday.

In the northern sunset's glimmer,  
The Great Bear opened his eyes ;  
Low in the east a shimmer  
Showed where the full moon would  
rise.

Lights in a window were gleaming,  
And some one stood at the gate,  
Said, "Why do you stand there dream-  
ing ?  
And why are you home so late ?"

Yesterday's shadows and sorrow  
That moment all vanished away !  
Here were to-day and to-morrow—  
What matter for yesterday !

---

*THE SECOND PLACE.*

UNTO my loved ones have I given all :  
The tireless service of my willing  
hands,  
The strength of swift feet running to  
their call,  
Each pulse of this fond heart whose  
love commands  
The busy brain unto their use ; each  
grace,  
Each gift, the flower and fruit of life.  
To me  
They give, with gracious hearts and  
tenderly,  
The second place.

Such joy as my glad service may dis-  
pense  
They spend to make some brighter  
life more blest ;  
The grief that comes despite my frail  
defense  
They seek to soothe upon a dearer  
breast.  
Love veils his deepest glories from my  
face ;  
I dimly dream how fair the light may  
be  
Beyond the shade, when I hold, long-  
ingly,  
The second place.

And yet 'tis sweet to know that though  
 I make  
 No soul's supremest bliss, no life  
 shall lie  
 Ruined and desolated for my sake,  
 Nor any heart be broken when I die.  
 And sweet it is to see my little space  
 Grow wider hour by hour; and grate-  
 fully  
 I thank the tender fate that granted me  
 The second place.

---

*HEARTSEASE.*

OF all the bonny buds that blow  
 In bright or cloudy weather,  
 Of all the flowers that come and go  
 The whole twelve moons together,  
 The little purple pansy brings  
 Thoughts of the sweetest, saddest  
 things.

I had a little lover once,  
 Who used to give me posies;  
 His eyes were blue as hyacinths,  
 His lips were red as roses—  
 And everybody loved to praise  
 His pretty looks and winsome ways.

The girls that went to school with me  
 Made little jealous speeches,  
 Because he brought me royally  
 His biggest plums and peaches,  
 And always at the door would wait  
 To carry home my books and slate.

“They couldn't see”—with pout and  
 fling—  
 “The mighty fascination  
 About that little snub-nosed thing  
 To win such admiration;  
 As if there weren't a dozen girls  
 With nicer eyes and longer curls.”

And this I knew as well as they,  
 And never could see clearly  
 Why more than Marion or May,  
 I should be loved so dearly.  
 So once I asked him, why was this?  
 He only answered with a kiss.

Until I teased him—“Tell me why—  
 I want to know the reason;”  
 When from the garden-bed close by  
 (The pansies were in season)  
 He plucked and gave a flower to me,  
 With sweet and simple gravity.

“The garden is in bloom,” he said,  
 “With lilies pale and slender,  
 With roses and verbenas red,  
 And fuchsias' purple splendor;  
 But over and above the rest,  
 This little heartsease suits me best.”

“Am I your little heartsease, then?”  
 I asked with blushing pleasure;  
 He answered yes! and yes again—  
 Heartsease and dearest treasure—  
 That the round world and all the sea  
 Held nothing half so sweet as me.

I listened with a proud delight  
 Too rare for words to capture,  
 Nor ever dreamed what sudden blight  
 Would come to chill my rapture.  
 Could I foresee the tender bloom  
 Of pansies round a little tomb?

Life holds some stern experience,  
 As most of us discover,  
 And I've had other losses since  
 I lost my little lover;  
 But still this purple pansy brings  
 Thoughts of the saddest, sweetest  
 things.

---

*“PAPA, PLEASE LET ME IN!”*

A TIMID knock was at my door,  
 And restless feet were on the floor;

A soft sweet voice said, “Papa, please,  
 And little Jimmie will not tease.”

I knew the presence waiting there,  
 The deep blue eyes, the nut-brown  
 hair.

Just now, the bolt upon him drawn,  
 He had been banished all forlorn;



For turning things all upside down,  
While I was in a study brown.

His little hand touched everything,  
His tongue put in such questioning ;

That I could not command my thought,  
And so I rose and turned him out.

He went without remonstrance cry,  
But curled his lip so mournfully ;

That courage cooled as I went back,  
And somehow I was off the track.

Did I not know that, in his eyes,  
My study was a paradise ?

And there he stood beseechingly,  
With voice so soft and sobbingly ;

And so with show of discipline,  
I rose and let my Jimmie in.

His dear red lips my cheek did press,  
About my neck he flung caress.

" I'm sorry, papa ; let me stay,  
And I'll be good and still all day."

Then down with book upon the floor,  
He sat and turned the pictures o'er.

And as he mused, he sweetly said,  
" I wonder when the folks are dead,

And go to God, how long they stand,  
Before our Father takes their hand ;

And says to them, I'm glad you've  
come,  
To my nice warm and pretty home.

And is it long they have to wait,  
Before God opens wide the gate ? "

I told my boy the Lord would come,  
Himself, to take His people home.

" And will He come for me, papa,  
When I must leave you and mamma ?

Oh, if He does, I'll thank Him so,  
For He will know the way to go."

Two weeks had passed and little more,  
Our Jimmie was at death's dark door,

He murmured sadly in his sleep,  
And asked the Lord his " soul to keep."

" I'm knocking, papa, at the door ;  
Please let me in, I'll plague no more."

Then suddenly, with opened eyes,  
That shone with sweet and glad sur-  
prise :

" Oh, thank you, Jesus ; you have come,  
To take your little Jimmie home."

We closed his eyes, his work was done,  
Our darling boy was from us gone.

O Jesus Christ, our blessed Lord,  
We thank Thee for Thy precious word :

" Suffer the children, let them come,  
For I will lead them to my home."

---

*THE EVENING PRAYER.*

ALL day the children's busy feet  
Had pattered to and fro ;  
And all the day their little hands  
Had been in mischief so—

That oft my patience had been tried ;  
But tender, loving care  
Had kept them through the day from  
harm,  
And safe from ev'ry snare.

But when the even-tide had come,  
The children went up-stairs,  
And knelt beside their little beds,  
To say their wonted prayers.

With folded hands and rev'rent mien,  
" Our Father," first they say,  
Then, " Now I lay me down to sleep,"  
With childlike faith they pray.

With cheeks upon the pillow pressed,  
They give a kiss, and say,—  
“Good-night; we love you, dear  
mamma,  
You’ve been so kind to-day.”

“Dood-night; I love oo, too, mamma,”  
And baby’s eyelids close;  
And tired feet and restless hands  
Enjoy the sweet repose.

The trouble and the weariness  
To me indeed seemed light,  
Since love had thus my efforts crowned  
To guide their steps aright.

And as I picked the playthings up,  
And put the books away,  
My heart gave grateful thanks to God,  
For His kind care all day.

—

*A STORY TOLD TO GRACIE.*

ONE day in Summer’s glow  
Not many years ago,  
A little baby lay upon my knee,  
With rings of silken hair,  
And fingers waxen fair,  
Tiny and soft, and pink as pink could be.

We watched it thrive and grow,  
Ah me! we loved it so—  
And marked its daily gain of sweeter  
charms;  
It learned to laugh and crow,  
And play and kiss us—so—  
Until one day we missed it from our  
arms.

In sudden, strange surprise,  
We met each other’s eyes,  
Asking, “Who stole our pretty babe  
away?”  
We questioned earth and air,  
But, seeking everywhere,  
We never found it from that summer  
day.

But in its wonted place  
There was another face—  
A little girl’s with yellow curly hair  
About her shoulders tossed,  
And the sweet babe we lost  
Seemed sometimes looking from her  
eyes so fair.

She dances, romps, and sings,  
And does a hundred things  
Which my lost baby never tried to do;  
She longs to read in books,  
And with bright, eager looks  
Is always asking questions strange  
and new.

And I can scarcely tell,  
I love the rogue so well,  
Whether I would retrace the four-  
years’ track,  
And lose the merry sprite,  
Who makes my home so bright,  
To have again my little baby back.

Ah, blue-eyes! do you see  
Who stole my babe from me,  
And brought the little girl from fairy  
clime?

A gray old man with wings,  
Who steals all precious things;  
He lives forever, and his name is Time.

He rules the world, they say;  
He took my babe away—  
My precious babe—and left me in its  
place  
This little maiden fair,  
With yellow curly hair,  
Who lives on stories, and whose name  
is Grace!

—

*MOSS ROSES.*

WHITE with the whiteness of the snow,  
Pink with the faintest rosy glow,  
They blossom on their sprays;  
They glad the borders with their bloom,  
And sweeten with their rich perfume  
The mossy garden-ways.

The dew that from their brimming  
leaves  
Drips down the mignonette receives,  
And sweeter grows thereby;  
The tall June lilies stand anear,  
In raiment white and gold, and here  
The purple pansies lie.

Warm sunshine glitters over all.  
On daisied sward and ivied wall,  
On lily, pansy, rose;  
While flitting round each garden-bed,  
With joyous laugh and airy tread,  
A fairer sunbeam goes.

A little human blossom, bright  
With childish, innocent delight  
Of life yet in its dawn;  
With sunshine prisoned in her hair,  
Deep eyes unshadowed by a care,  
She gambols on the lawn.

She checks the light, elastic tread,  
And stays to hear, far overhead,  
The lark's song to its close;  
Eyes shaded by two tiny hands—  
We pray God bless her as she stands,  
Our little daughter Rose.

Yea, bless the Rose, dear God, since we  
Have given the Lily back to thee  
That bloomed with her awhile;  
Yea, bless her deeply, doubly now  
For her dear sake, whose angel brow  
Reflects thine awful smile.

How often in her childish face  
Our hungry, longing eyes can trace  
The looks of one away;  
How often in her merry tone  
A music wakes, more sad than moan,  
Of accents, hushed for aye!

God bless the child to blossom here,  
Our clinging human hearts to cheer,  
Till life has reached its close;  
To grow in sweetest grace and bloom,  
To beautify the dear old home,  
Our precious daughter Rose!

## WILL.

YOUR face, my boy, when six months  
old

We propped you laughing in a chair;  
And the sun-artist caught the gold  
Which rippled o'er your waving hair;  
And deftly shadowed forth the while  
That blooming cheek, that roguish  
smile,

Those dimples seldom still—  
The tiny, wondering, wide-eyed elf!  
Now can you recognize yourself  
In this small portrait, Will?

I glance at it, then turn to you,  
Where in your healthful ease you  
stand,

No beauty! but a lad as true  
And pure as any in the land;  
For nature through fair sylvan ways  
Hath led and gladdened all your days,  
Kept free from sordid ill—

Hath filled your veins with blissful  
fire,

And winged your instincts to aspire  
Sunward and Godward, Will!

"Can this tall youth," I sometimes  
say,

"Be mine, *my* son?" It surely  
seems

Scarce farther backward than a day,  
Since, watching o'er your feverish  
dreams

In that child-illness of the brain,  
I thought—O Christ! with what keen  
pain,

Your pulse would soon be still.  
That all your boyish sports were o'er,  
And I—heart-broken—never more  
Should call or clasp you, Will!

But Heaven was kind, death passed  
you by;

And now upon your arm I lead,  
My *second self*—of clearer eye,  
Of firmer nerve and sturdier mien—  
In you, methinks, my long-lost youth  
Revives, from whose sweet founts of  
truth

And joy I drink my fill.

I feel your every heart-throb—know  
What inmost hopes within you glow—  
One soul's between us, Will !

Pray Heaven that this be always so !  
That ever on your soul and mine—  
Though my thin locks grow white as  
snow—  
The self-same radiant trust may  
shine.

Pray, that while this, my life, endures,  
It aye may sympathize with yours,  
In thought, aim, action, still,  
That you, O son ! (till comes the end)  
In me may find your comrade, friend,  
And *more* than father, Will !

### SCHOOL-DAYS.

ONCE more by mount and meadow  
side  
The merry bells are ringing ;  
Once more by vale and river wide  
The school-room doors are swing-  
ing ;  
Forgotten books with pensive looks,  
And slates come forth from cover,  
For hand in hand to lesson-land  
Go little lass and lover.

What meed of bliss were ours, my  
friend,  
If we, like these, were able  
Our cares and discontents to spend  
In vanquishing a table—  
If we could be so light and free  
Amid our garnered pleasures,  
As those who sweet the tale repeat  
Of runic weights and measures !

Ah ! children dear, our later days  
Have brought us wise anointing ;  
We see in all your sunny ways  
The Father's kind appointing ;  
Your morning-bell is ours as well—  
We go to school to duty,  
Whose brow severe from year to year  
Wears fadeless wreaths of beauty.

### THE AFTERTIME.

A WEE cot house abune the knowe,  
A snod flower yaird wi' mony a  
posie,  
Where lilacs bloom and myrtles grow  
Beside a bower fu' snug and cozy ;  
'Twas there I woo'd my winsome  
May ;  
'Twas there I press'd her to my  
bosom,  
When spring keeked oot frae bank  
and brae  
In mony a bud and mony a blossom.

An auld kirk stands beside the stream  
That wimples through the daisied  
meadow,  
Where cowslips glint and lilies gleam  
Beneath the spreading bourtree's  
shadow ;  
'Twas there I wed my bonny bride,  
When Summer light was fain to  
linger ;  
'Twas there, while nestling at my side,  
I placed the gowd ring on her finger.

A lonely kirk-yaird i' the glen,  
Where mony a pearlie tear has fallen,  
Where silence seals the strifes o' men,  
Whate'er their rank, whate'er their  
callin'.

When Winter's blast piped i' the grove,  
When lingering blooms had fa'n  
and perished,  
'Twas there I laid my early love,  
Beside a babe we baith had cher-  
ished.

But there's a lan' ayont the blue  
That kens naught o' our kittle  
weather,  
Where a' the leal and guid and true,  
Though pairted lang, may yet for-  
gather.  
There sits she by the gowden gates—  
For there I hae a tryst to meet her ;  
But love that strengthens while it waits  
Maks a' the aftertime the sweeter.

*POOR.*

WHAT! poor you say? Why save you,  
 friend,  
 I've more than half the world can  
 show;  
 Such wealth as mine you can not boast,  
 Such bliss as mine you can not know,  
 I've more than keenest head can sum,  
 Could ever dream of night or day—  
 I've treasures hid from sordid hearts,  
 No cunning thief can take away.

My riches never bring distrust  
 Between me and my fellow-men;  
 No evil passion stirs my breast,  
 To yield me hate for hate again;  
 But pleasure, peace, and joy they  
 bring;  
 They soothe my cares, they make  
 me glad,  
 They give delight I can not name,  
 And buy me comfort when I'm sad.

Come here and open wide your eyes;  
 You see earth's glory at my feet,  
 You see the sky above my head;  
 The sunshine on my garden seat;  
 You see the love that lights my home,  
 The children round my cottage  
 door—  
 The birds, the bees, the grass and  
 flowers,  
 And you have dared to call me poor!

Come here and open wide your ears:  
 And hark the music morning makes,  
 When from the hills and from the  
 woods  
 Her high and holy anthem breaks.  
 Come here, and catch the grand old  
 songs  
 That nature sings me evermore—  
 The whisperings of a thousand things,  
 And tell me, tell me, am I poor?

Not rich is he, though wider far  
 His acres stretch than eyes can roll,  
 Who has no sunshine in his mind,  
 No wealth of beauty in his soul.

Not poor is he, though never known  
 His name in hall or city mart,  
 Who smiles content beneath his load,  
 With God and Nature in his heart.

*RESCUED.*

“LITTLE lad, slow wandering  
 Across the sands so yellow,  
 Leading safe a lassie small—  
 Oh, tell me, little fellow,  
 Whither go you, loitering  
 In the summer weather,  
 Chattering like sweet-voiced birds  
 On a bough together?”

“I am Robert, if you please,  
 And this is Rose, my sister,  
 Youngest of us all”—and he bent  
 His curly head and kissed her.  
 “Every day we come and wait  
 Here till the sun is setting,  
 Waiting for our father's ship,  
 For mother dear is fretting.

“Long ago he sailed away  
 Out of sight and hearing,  
 Straight across the bay he went,  
 Into sunset steering,  
 Every day we look for him,  
 And hope for his returning;  
 Every night my mother  
 Keeps the candle burning.

“Summer goes, and Winter comes,  
 And Spring returns, but never  
 Father's step comes to the gate.  
 Oh! is he gone forever?  
 The great grand ship that bore him off,  
 Think you some tempest wrecked  
 her?”  
 Tears shone in little Rose's eyes,  
 Upturned to her protector.

Eagerly the bonny boy went on,  
 “Oh, sir, look yonder!  
 In the offing see the sails  
 That east and westward wander



Every hour they come and go,  
The misty distance thronging,  
While we watch and see them fade,  
With sorrow and with longing."

"Little Robert! little Rose"  
The stranger's eyes were glistening;  
At his bronzed and bearded face  
Up gazed the children, listening;  
He knelt upon the yellow sand,  
And clasped them to his bosom,  
Robert brave, and little Rose,  
As bright as any blossom.

"Father! Father! Is it you?"  
The still air rings with rapture;  
All the vanished joy of years  
The waiting ones re-capture!  
Finds he welcome wild and sweet,  
The low thatched cottage reaching,  
But the ship that into sunset steered,  
Upon the rocks lies bleaching!

—————  
*A PICTURE.*

Two little souls, a boy and a girl,  
Wandering on to the foot of the hill.  
Bushes of green and blossoms of pearl  
Laugh at themselves in the road-side  
rill.

Crossing the lane a gorgeous jay,  
Bathed in the light of a flattering ray,  
Jauntily chatters, "Some day, some  
day!"

Two sweet souls, a man and a maid,  
(Beechen branches twisted above),  
Picking the daisies which sprinkle a  
glade,  
And trying their luck at a game of love.  
"This year?" "Next year?" What do  
they say?

And out of the beeches the curious jay  
Peeps and chuckles, "Some day, some  
day!"

Two old souls, and the end of the day  
Follows them home to the foot of  
the hill;

One late gleam which has wandered  
astray,  
Breaks from a copse and dimples the  
rill.

Autumn leaves are strewing the way,  
And hoarse from the larch the hungry  
jay  
Shouts out to the night, "Some day,  
some day!"

Two poor souls, in the dead of the  
night,  
Side by side, lie stiffened and still;  
And the winter's moon just softens  
her light,  
As it solemnly rests at the foot of the  
hill,

Remembering the bees and the buds  
and the May,  
The Summer gold and the Autumn  
gray,  
And the warm, green lane where the  
beetles play.

In the crisp cold night the shivering jay  
Croaks out of his dream, "Some day,  
some day!"

—————  
*WHERE THE BLACKBIRD  
SINGS.*

DOWN the quiet country road,  
Before you reach the lofty ridge  
Where the birch tree first awakened  
To the morning's low breath swings,  
I oftentimes sit in silence  
On the small moss-covered bridge,  
Near the little shady nook  
Where the blackbird sings.

There the spreading trees meet o'er me,  
And I hear no harsh voice calling,  
Whilst his sweetness to my fancy's  
dream  
A sacred feeling brings,  
As it mingles with the rippling  
Of the brook or pebbles falling  
In the little shady nook  
Where the blackbird sings.

There the ivy climbs the highest  
 Of the lofty trees beside me,  
 And the bluebell like a carpet  
 In the early Summer springs ;  
 In the thorn I need but clamber,  
 And the snowy bloom would hide me  
 In the little shady nook  
 Where the blackbird sings.

There the trout his supper seeking,  
 In the sunny beam is leaping,  
 And the pool is brought to life again  
 In many glistening rings,  
 When the day seems growing fainter,  
 And the shadows onward creeping,  
 In the little shady nook  
 Where the blackbird sings.

There the swallows dart like spirits  
 Underneath the narrow arches,  
 And the air a sweetened perfume  
 Like the almond round me flings,  
 And I dream of holy quiet  
 As I watch the feathery larches  
 In the little shady nook  
 Where the blackbird sings.

Oh, if I could only tell you  
 What unbroken heart-felt pleasure  
 Ever waits me in this spot,  
 To which my thought so fondly  
 clings,  
 You would follow me nor wonder  
 'Tis my only pleasant leisure,  
 By the little shady nook  
 Where the blackbird sings.

---

*THE SUMMER.*

OH, happy are the children  
 On a pleasant summer day,  
 How it rests the weary worker  
 To watch them at their play !  
 See them running, jumping, dancing,  
 Hear them as they shout and sing,  
 While notes of perfect gladness  
 In their childish voices ring.

The waving grass of summer,  
 And its skies so softly blue,  
 And the flowers, so thickly springing,  
 Of loveliest form and hue,  
 And the birds, whose joyous music  
 Floats abroad from tree to tree—  
 All these make not the sweetness  
 Which summer brings to me.

But to see the little children,  
 As they gather up the flowers,  
 To hear them calling to the birds  
 Up in their leafy bowers,  
 To note with what untiring zeal  
 They dig the dusty road,  
 The ecstasy with which they greet  
 Each ugly "hoppy toad."

To see them stretched upon the grass  
 Beneath the maple-trees,  
 Telling of the wondrous things  
 Which a childish fancy sees,  
 Receiving all the grasshoppers,  
 And the caterpillars, too,  
 As their chosen friends and playmates,  
 Without the least ado.

Oh, this to me is summer,  
 And in this she speaks to me,  
 With accents low and gentle  
 And with tend'rst sympathy,  
 And I never can forget,  
 Howe'er busy be the day,  
 To look out through the window  
 On the children at their play.

---

*TENDER MEMORIES.*

THE orchard blooms in red and white,  
 The meadow glows with blossoms  
 fair ;  
 The river runs a stream of light  
 Between its banks of beauty rare.  
 The homestead seems of heaven a  
 part—  
 A little heaven here below,  
 Where only one is sad at heart—  
 The little girl that loves you so.

For now you roam through far-off  
lands—

The distant worlds beyond the sea;  
O'er snow-crowned Alps, by shining  
sands,  
Amid the dreams of Italy;  
Through valleys of the Grecian State,  
Where heroes reigned so long ago;  
While here for you I sadly wait—  
The little girl that loves you so.

Your letters tell of sunsets sweet  
Beyond the Jordan's shrunken  
streams;  
Of buried cities where the feet  
Of Time seems caught in ancient  
dreams.  
How, deified, in halls of art,  
Love reigns the queen where'er you  
go,  
And brings still nearer to your heart  
The little girl that loves you so.

I know you think of me at times,  
And long for rest, and love, and  
home;  
My prayers, like old remembered  
rhymes,  
Must follow you where'er you roam.  
Ah! dearest, come what may to you—  
Come grief or bliss, come joy or  
woe,  
There's one whose every thought is  
true—  
The little girl that loves you so.

---

*THE MILK-MAID AND THE  
PAIL OF MILK.*

HER milk pail on her head,  
Perrette set out to town.  
No heels her low shoes had,  
Nor flounce nor train her gown;  
And her step was light  
On that morn so bright,  
And her face had never a frown.

The milk, she said, I'll sell,  
And its price for eggs will pay;  
The nests, well filled, I'll guard  
From harm by night and day;  
And the brood once hatched,  
Renard sly will be matched  
By the watch that I'll keep alway.

In time I'll sell my chicks  
And buy a pig instead;  
The cost will not be much  
To keep him housed and fed.  
He'll grow fat in a trice  
And will bring a good price,  
When I sell him, living or dead.

What now shall me prevent  
A goodly cow to buy?  
Her calf shall leap beside;  
Then who so rich as I?  
Thereupon poor Perrette  
Leaped too, and upset  
All the milk that she carried so high.

Good-bye to cow and calf!  
Good-bye to pig as well!  
Good-bye, oh, nests and eggs!  
With pail and milk ye fell!

The moral is plain  
That castles in Spain  
As doubtless you oft have heard tell,  
Are charming and fair,  
But are built in the air,  
And therefore not wisely nor well.

---

*CUDDLE DOON.*

THE bairnies cuddle doon at nicht,  
Wi' muckle faucht an' din;  
Oh, try an' sleep, ye waukrife rogues,  
Your father's comin' in.  
They never heed a word I speak;  
I try to gie a frown,  
But aye I hap them up an' cry,  
"Oh bairnies, cuddle doon."

Wee Jamie wi' the curly heid—  
 He aye sleeps next the wa'—  
 Bangs up an' cries, "I want a piece;"  
 The rascal starts them a'.  
 I rin an' fetch them pieces, drinks,  
 They stop awee the soun';  
 Then draw the blankets up an' cry,  
 "Noo, weanies, cuddle doon."

But ere five minutes gang, wee Rab  
 Cries oot frae 'neath the claes,  
 "Mither, mak' Tam gie ower at ance—  
 He's kittlin' wi' his taes."  
 The mischief's in that Tam for tricks,  
 He'd bother half the toon:  
 But aye I hap them up an' cry,  
 "Oh, bairnies, cuddle doon."

At length they hear their father's fit,  
 An', as he steeks the door,  
 They turn their faces to the wa',  
 While Tam pretends to snore.  
 "Hae a' the weans been gude?" he  
 asks,  
 As he pits off his shoon;  
 "The bairnies, John, are in their beds,  
 An' long since cuddled doon."

An' just afore we bed oorsel',  
 We look at oor wee lanibs;  
 Tam has his arms roun' wee Rab's  
 neck,  
 An' Rab his airms roun' Tam's.  
 I left wee Jamie up the bed,  
 An' as I straik each croon,  
 I whisper' till my heart fill up,  
 "Oh, bairnies, cuddle doon."

The bairnies cuddle doon at nicht,  
 Wi' mirth that's dear to me;  
 But sune the big warl's cark an' care  
 Will quaten doon their glee,  
 Yet come what will to ilka ane,  
 May He who sits aboon  
 Aye whisper, though their pows be  
 bald,  
 "Oh, bairnies, cuddle doon."

*THE HOUSE BEAUTIFUL.*

[“I think the house beautiful; it is so full of re-  
 membrances.”

“The slow, sweet hours that bring us all things  
 good,

The slow sad hours that bring us all things ill,  
 And all good things from evil.”—Tennyson.]

I AM sitting beside my nursery fire,  
 Watching my children at play,  
 And my thoughts go back to the long,  
 long years  
 Whose record is—passed away.

Yes, passed away is the echo I hear,  
 As I sit within this room,  
 And think of the lives of those loved  
 ones dear  
 Who first made the house a home.

But these dumb old walls give no echo  
 back,  
 They have kept their secret well,  
 Fond words have they heard while  
 glad tears were shed,  
 But never a one they tell.

But there lingers about them a hallow-  
 ing charm,  
 And I feel them dearer now,  
 As, folding my children within my arm,  
 I kissed each fair white brow.

I think of the time when I stood by  
 your side,  
 To begin my life anew,  
 And we whispered low, till death us  
 do part  
 We will be to each other true.

And through the years that have passed  
 since then  
 Our lives have been richly blessed,  
 While our home was *hers*—'twas as if  
 we had  
 Entertained an angel guest.

And what hearts were ours when first  
 to my breast  
 I folded our baby girl,  
 Then another came, little Sunbeam  
 bright,  
 Laughing eyes and flaxen curl.

And the dear old home is now ours  
alone!

As a trust it comes to me,  
Yes, a sacred trust from those who are  
gone,  
Ah! what shall *our* record be?

As sitting beside my nursery fire,  
Watching my children at play,  
I ask, Will they feel it a holy place,  
When we, too, have passed away?

---

A CROWD OF BOYS.

WE live in a bit of a cottage,  
With rooms neither many nor wide;  
Yet we're rich in possessions—at table  
Our children count three on a side.  
There are brown eyes and blue eyes  
and hazel,  
And with various gifts they're en-  
dowed;  
But the school-boys agree that our  
Benny  
Is the jolliest boy in the crowd.

My neighbor who has only daughters,  
Came in with her sewing one day,  
And, while we were pleasantly chatting,  
The children came in from their  
play.  
She paused in the midst of a story,  
Unused to hear voices so loud,  
But smilingly added: "Your Benny  
Is the noisiest boy in the crowd!"

Their Grandpa drops in of a morning,  
And is often invited to stop,  
To tell them some story or other,  
Or mend up a wagon or top.  
He is always amused at their sayings,  
And seems of them all to be proud;  
But he says, *sotto voce*, that Benny  
is the smartest of all in the crowd.

And Grandma, who dwells in the quiet,  
Unmoved by earth's clamor and  
noise,

Comes in with her sweet, placid man-  
ners,  
For an afternoon talk with the boys.  
She sets them at peace, if a quarrel  
Breaks over their joy like a cloud,  
She is fond of them all; but thinks  
Benny  
Is the prettiest one in the crowd.

Aunt Jane, from her stately old man-  
sion,  
O'ershadowed by poplar and elm,  
Came down to the city last winter,  
To visit my turbulent realm.  
"I am glad," she assured me, at part-  
ing,  
"Such blessings to you are allowed;  
But keep a tight rein on that Benny,  
He's the sauciest boy in the crowd!"

Ah me! what a mixed reputation  
For any one boy to possess!  
As the others have talents unnumbered,  
We're a Babel, I frankly confess.  
A philosopher asked to appraise them,  
At the task would be puzzled and  
cowed,  
Though at dinner might reason that  
Benny  
Is the hungriest boy in the crowd.

At night, when they all have been  
settled  
In crib and in cradle and bed,  
I go on a tour of inspection  
And pillow each slumbering head;  
And, while I commend them to heaven,  
With spirit in reverence bowed,  
I am sure I can never determine  
The dearest or best in the crowd.

---

AN AIR-CASTLE.

I BUILT a house in my youthful dreams  
In a sunny and pleasant nook,  
Where I might listen, the whole day  
long,  
To the voice of the gurgling brook;



A cottage with wide and airy rooms  
And broad and shining floors—  
A house with the hidden charms of  
home  
And the freedom of out-of-doors.

Fair morning-glories climb and bloom  
At will by the eastern eaves,  
And on the doorstep and window-sill  
The roses shake their leaves ;  
And fair old-fashioned lilacs toss  
Their purple plumage high,  
While honeysuckles drop their sweets  
On every passer-by.

Down at the end of a pleasant path  
Is a group of evergreen trees—  
Pine and hemlock, and spruce and fir,  
With their spicy fragrances ;  
And, sweetest picture of calm content  
That mortal ever saw,  
Under a low-boughed apple-tree  
Is a bee-hive made of straw.

I have pictured it all a hundred times—  
I shall do it a hundred more ;  
But I never shall own the pleasant  
home,  
With the roses over the door.  
Never a dream of mine came true—  
It is Fate's unbending law ;  
I never shall see the apple-tree,  
Nor the bee-hive made of straw.

But yet in the airy realm of dreams,  
Where all my riches be,  
I enter into the heritage  
Which is else denied to me.  
I have but to close my eyes to find  
My Eden without a flaw—  
The home, the garden, the apple-tree,  
And the bee-hive made of straw.

—  
*A MUSIC LESSON ON THE BAG-  
PIPES.*

FINGERS on the holes, Johnny,  
Fairly in a row ;  
Lift this and then that,  
And blow, blow, blow !

That's how to play, Johnny,  
On the pipes sae shrill ;  
Never was the piper yet  
But needed a' his skill.

And lang and sair he tried it, too,  
Afore he won the knack  
Of makin' bag and pipe gie  
His very yearnin's back.  
The echo to his heart-strings  
Frae such a thing to come  
Oh, is it no a wonder—  
Like a voice frae out the tomb ?

Be patient noo, my Johnny lad,  
Ye mustna hurry thro'—  
Take time and try it o'er again—  
Sic a blast ye blew !  
It's no alains by blowin' strong,  
But eke by blowin' true,  
That ye can mak' the music  
To thrill folk thro' and thro'.

The weak folk and the learnin',  
'Tis them that mak's the din ;  
But for the finished pipers  
They count it as a sin ;  
And maybe it's the very same  
A' the world thro'—  
The learners' the very ones  
That mak' the most ado !

Ye know the Southrons taunt us—  
I sayna they're unfair—  
About our squallin' music,  
And their taunts have burt me sair ;  
But if they'd heard a piper true  
At night come o'er the hill,  
Playin' up a pibroch  
Upon the wind sae still ;

Rising now, and falling,  
And floating on the air,  
The sounds come softly on ye  
Almost ere ye're aware,  
And fold themselves about the heart  
That hasna yet forgot  
The witchery of love and joy  
Within some lonely spot—

I'm sure they wadna taunt us so,  
 Nor say the bagpipe's wild,  
 Nor speak o' squeakin' noises  
 Enough to deave a chiid;  
 They would say the bagpipe only  
 Is the voice of hill and glen;  
 And would listen to it sorrowing,  
 Within the haunts of men.

Fingers on the holes, Johnny,  
 Fairly in a row;  
 Lift this and then that,  
 And blow, blow, blow!  
 That's how to play, Johnny,  
 On the pipes sae shrill;  
 Never was the piper yet  
 But needed a' his skill.

---

*AN OLD HAND.*

BLUE-VEINED and wrinkled, knuckly  
 and brown,  
 This good old hand is clasping mine;  
 I bend above it, and looking down,  
 I study its aspect, line by line.

This hand has clasped a thousand  
 hands  
 That long have known no answering  
 thrill;  
 Some have moldered in foreign lands—  
 Some in the graveyard on the hill.

Clasped a mother's hand, in the day  
 When it was little, and soft, and  
 white—  
 Mother, who kissed it, and went away,  
 To rest till the waking in God's good  
 light.

Clasped a lover's hand, years ago,  
 Who sailed away and left her in  
 tears;  
 Under Sahara's torrid sun  
 Its bones have whitened years and  
 years.

Clasped the hand of a good man true,  
 Who held it softly and fell asleep,  
 And woke no more and never knew  
 How long that impress this would  
 keep.

Clasped so many, so many!—so few  
 That still respond to the living will,  
 Or can answer this pressure so kind  
 and true!  
 So many, that lie unmoved and still!

Clasped, at last, this hand my own;  
 And mine will molder, too, in turn;  
 Will any clasp it when I am gone?  
 In vain I study this hand to learn!

---

*THE OLD CLOCK.*

OH, the old, old clock of the household  
 stock,  
 Was the brightest thing and neatest;  
 Its hands, though old, had a touch of  
 gold,  
 And its chimes rang still the sweet-  
 est.  
 'Twas a monitor, too, though its words  
 were few,  
 Yet they lived, though nations al-  
 tered;  
 And its voice, still strong, warned old  
 and young,  
 When the voice of friendship faltered.  
 "Tick, tick," it said—"quick, quick to  
 bed.  
 For ten I've given warning;  
 Up, up, and go, or else, you know,  
 You'll never rise soon in the morn-  
 ing."

A friendly voice was that old, old clock,  
 As it stood in the corner smiling,  
 And blessed the time with a merry  
 chime,  
 The winter hours beguiling;  
 But a cross old voice was that tiresome  
 clock,  
 As it called the daybreak boldly,

When the dawn looked gray on the  
 misty way  
 And the early air blew coldly ;  
 "Tick, tick," it said—"quick out of  
 bed,  
 For five I've given warning ;  
 You'll never have health, you'll never  
 get wealth,  
 Unless you're up soon in the morn-  
 ing."

Still hourly the clock goes round and  
 round,  
 With a tone that ceases never ;  
 While tears are shed for bright days  
 fled,  
 And the old friends lost forever ;  
 Its heart beats on, though hearts are  
 gone  
 That warmer beat and younger ;  
 Its hands still move, though hands we  
 love  
 Are clasped on earth no longer !  
 "Tick, tick," it said—"to the church-  
 yard bed,  
 The grave hath given warning ;  
 Up, up, and rise, and look to the skies,  
 And prepare for the heavenly morn-  
 ing."

—  
 THE HAPPY VILLAGE.

As often I pass the roadside,  
 When wearily falls the day,  
 I turn to look from the hill-top  
 At the mountains far away.

The red sun through the forests  
 Throws hither his parting beams,  
 And far in the quiet valley  
 The happy village gleams.

There the lamp is lit in the cottage  
 As the husbandman's labors cease,  
 And I think that all things are gath-  
 ered  
 And folded in twilight peace.

But the sound of merry voices  
 Is heard in the village street,  
 While pleased the grandame watches  
 The play of the little feet.

And at night to many a fireside  
 The rosy children come :  
 To tales of the bright-eyed fairies  
 They listen and are dumb.

There seems it a joy forever  
 To labor and to learn,  
 For love, with an eye of magic,  
 Is patient to discern.

And the father blesses the mother,  
 And the children bless the sire,  
 And the cheer and joy of the hearth-  
 stone  
 Is as light from an altar fire.

Oh, flowers of rarest beauty  
 In that green valley grow !  
 And whether 'twere earth or heaven,  
 Why shouldst thou care to know ?

Save that thy brow is troubled,  
 And dim is thy helpmate's eye,  
 And graves are green in the valley,  
 And the stars are bright in the sky.

—  
 A CLOSE, HARD MAN.

A HARD, close man was Solomon Ray,  
 Nothing of value he gave away ;  
 He hoarded and saved ;  
 He pinched and shaved ;  
 And the more he had, the more he  
 craved.

The hard-earned dollar he tried to gain  
 Brought him little but care and pain ;  
 For little he spent,  
 And all he lent  
 He made it bring him twenty per cent.

Such was the life of Solomon Ray.  
 The years went by, and his hair grew  
 gray ;  
 His cheeks grew thin,  
 And his soul within  
 Grew hard as the dollar he worked to  
 win.

But he died one day, as all men must,  
 For life is fleeting and men but dust.  
 The heirs were gay  
 That laid him away,  
 And that was the end of Solomon Ray.

They quarreled now who had little  
 cared  
 For Solomon Ray while his life was  
 spared.

His lands were sold,  
 And his hard-earned gold  
 All went to the lawyers, I am told.

Yet men will cheat, and pinch, and  
 save,  
 Nor carry their treasures beyond the  
 grave,

All their gold some day  
 Will melt away,  
 Like the selfish savings of Solomon  
 Ray.

---

NOVEMBER.

WHEN thistle-blows do lightly float  
 About the pasture-height,  
 And shrills the hawk a parting note,  
 And creeps the frost at night,  
 Then hilly ho! though singing so,  
 And whistle as I may,  
 There comes again the old heart pain  
 Through all the livelong day.

In high wind creaks the leafless tree  
 And nods the fading fern;  
 The knolls are dun as snow-clouds be,  
 And cold the sun does burn.  
 Then ho, hollo! though calling so,  
 I can not keep it down;  
 The tears arise unto my eyes,  
 And thoughts are chill and brown.

Far in the cedars' dusky stoles,  
 Where the sere ground-vine weaves,  
 The partridge drums funereal rolls  
 Above the fallen leaves.  
 And hip, hip, ho! though cheering so,  
 It stills no whit the pain:  
 For drip, drip, drip, from bare branch-  
 tip,  
 I hear the year's last rain.

So drive the cold cows from the hill,  
 And call the wet sheep in;  
 And let their stamping clatter fill  
 The barn with warming din.  
 And ho, folk, ho! though it is so  
 That we no more may roam,  
 We still will find a cheerful mind  
 Around the fire at home!

---

THE COW-BELLS.

ONE—in the distance, when the star  
 came out  
 Over the dark green woods upon the  
 hill—

One bell's low tinkle, and the farmer's  
 shout,  
 While in the pauses sang the whip-  
 poor-will.

Two, three, and more. She's coming  
 now; but wait!  
 She stops. There's clover in yon  
 tufts of fern.

Lightfoot! Coo-coo! Come down; the  
 milking's late.  
 Robert, run up beyond the lane's  
 quick turn.

Two little arms stretch out to clasp a  
 cup  
 Of gentle Lightfoot's milk. "Come  
 down, Coo-coo!  
 The farmer, tired with haying, wants  
 to sup."  
 Hark! on the silent air the bell peals  
 out anew.

There's silence now. She's at the hill-  
 side spring,  
 Drinking with liquid, vacant eyes,  
 her fill;  
 While upward flits on dreamy, bat-like  
 wing  
 The somber, brooding, plaintive  
 whip-poor-will.

Coo-coo! she's coming; hear her lull-  
 ing bell!  
 Or does the farmer strike his empty  
 glass

With pewter spoon. Perhaps in yonder dell

The bell is drowned amid the meadow's grass.

She's in her yard at last; the bell is still,

And she has done her peaceful work.  
Ah! me,

What if some higher spirits wait to fill  
Their earthly longings from humanity!

### THE REAPERS.

THE reapers bend their lusty backs;

Their sounding sickles sway;

At every stroke the golden sea

Recedes to give them way;

The heavy ears fall bowing down,

And nestle at their feet.

Such will, such work as theirs, perforce,

Must win—must homage meet.

So careless of fatigue they go,

So true, so steadily,

The admiring traveler on the road

Leans o'er the gate to see;

With marvel of the soon-fallen breadth,

The lounging gossips tell;

But the reapers labor for us all;

'Tis need they should work well.

Ere the great sun that burns above

Shall crimson in the west,

And the children's poppy nosegays  
fade,

And they lie down to rest,

Each golden spear that upward points

Each fall upon the field,

And the farmer drain a sparkling glass,

Rejoicing o'er the yield.

Ply, bonny men, your sickles bright,

And give the people bread!

At every conquering stride you take,

On want and woe you tread.

Drop, heavy ears, and give the strength

You gathered from this plain,

That man may rise refreshed and firm,

And do great things again.

God bless the hands all hard and brown,

That guide the cleaving plow,

That cast abroad the shining seed,

And build the wealthy mow;

They rear the bread our children eat;

'Tis by their toil we live;

Hurrah! give them the loudest cheer

That grateful hearts can give!

### THE OLD FARM-GATE.

THE old farm-gate hangs, sagging down,

On rusty hinges, bent and brown;

Its latch is gone, and here and there

It shows rude traces of repair.

The old farm-gate has seen each year

The blossoms bloom and disappear;

The bright green leaves of spring unfold,

And turn to autumn's red and gold.

The children have upon it clung,

And in and out with rapture swung.

When their young hearts were good  
and pure—

When hope was fair and faith was  
sure.

Beside that gate have lovers true,

Told the old story always new;

Have made their vows, have dreamed  
of bliss,

And sealed each promise with a kiss.

The old farm-gate has opened wide

To welcome home the new-made  
bride,

When lilacs bloomed, and locusts fair,

With their sweet fragrance filled the  
air.

That gate, with rusty weight and  
chain,

Has closed upon the solemn train

That bore her lifeless form away,

Upon a dreary autumn day.



The lichens gray and mosses green  
Upon its rotting posts are seen ;  
Initials, carved with youthful skill  
Long years ago, are on it still.

Yet dear to me, above all things,  
By reason of the thoughts it brings,  
Is that old gate, now sagging down,  
On rusty hinges, bent and brown.

---

*THE OLD BARN.*

RICKETY, old and crazy,  
Shingleless, lacking some doors ;  
Bad in the upper story,  
Wanting boards in the floors ;  
Beams strung thick with cobwebs,  
Ridge-pole yellow and gray,  
Hanging in helpless innocence  
Over the mows of hay.

How the winds turned around it—  
Winds of a stormy day—  
Scattering the fragrant hay seed,  
Whisking the straws away ;  
Streaming in at the crannies,  
Spreading the clover smell,  
Changing the dark old granary  
Into a flowery dell.

Oh, how I loved the shadows,  
That clung to the silent roof,  
Day-dreams wove with the quiet,  
Many a glittering woof ;  
I climbed to the highest rafters,  
And watched the swallows at play,  
Admired the knots in the boarding,  
And rolled in the billows of hay.

Palace of king couldn't match it ;  
The Vatican loses its charm,  
When placed in my memory's balance,  
Beside the old gray barn !  
And I'd rather scent the clover,  
Piled in the barn's roomy mows,  
Than sit in the breath of the highlands  
Poured from Apennine brows !

*THE PATCHWORK QUILT.*

LIGHT and shadows rise and fall  
In the room with the rosy-papered  
wall,  
Room to me that is best of all.

Wind, lift up the muslin screen !  
Let in the light that comes between  
The maple leaves of shining green.

Fall soft upon the patchwork spread,  
Quilt of blue and white and red,  
Upon a carved old-fashioned bed.

Your worn-out squares are quilted  
through  
With thoughts of all I used to do,  
When I wore the dresses now in you.

I was a girl with braided hair,—  
I think of the time I gave the tear,  
The zigzag rent beyond repair,—

As I went through the fields a girlish  
rover,  
In dress of white all dotted over  
With sprigs of wheat, and sprays of  
clover.

Oh, dress ! that once was mine to wear,  
Your clover blooms are scattered  
there  
In the pink and white of that patch-  
work square.

Wind, lift up the muslin screen !  
Let in the light that comes between  
The maple leaves of shining green.

Fall soft upon the patchwork spread ;  
For a little child that now is dead,  
Sewed your squares of white and red.

One summer's day she wrought in you,  
And left her needle half-way through,  
With a knotted, twisted thread of blue.

Before she slept that summer's night,  
She laid away, and out of sight,  
Your folded squares of red and white.

She sought for blooms that fadeless  
grow,  
And left for other hands to sew  
The clover blossoms here below.

And still the light through windows  
small,  
Throws shadows on the rosy wall,  
On the quaint old-fashioned bedstead  
tall;

And falls in waving bars of gold  
Across each faded, wrinkled fold  
Of clover blossoms growing old;

While into Life's great patchwork  
square,  
With knotted threads of thought and  
care,  
I sew my dreams and fancies fair.

When night shall deeper shadows  
throw,  
I will leave my work, and softly go  
To seek for blooms that fadeless grow.

What matters it? I will not grieve,  
If other hands shall interweave  
And smooth the tangled threads I  
leave.

Beyond the dark, in fields of bliss,  
I'll gather flowers, and will not miss  
The clover blossoms left in this.

I will backward look through all the  
shade,  
To see in full completeness laid  
The patchwork squares that I have  
made.

---

*THE SPINNING-WHEEL.*

A WHITE pine floor and low-ceiled  
room,  
A wheel and a reel and a great brown  
loom,  
The windows out and the world in  
bloom—

A pair of "swifts" in the corner, where  
The grandmother sat in her rush-  
wrought chair,  
And pulled at the distaff's tangled hair;

And sang to herself as she spun the tow  
While "the little wheel" ran as soft  
and low  
As muffled brooks where the grasses  
grow  
And lie one way with the water's flow.

As the Christ's field lilies free from  
sin,  
So she grew like them when she ceased  
to spin,  
Counted her "knots" and handed  
them in.

"The great wheel" rigged in its har-  
ness stands—  
A three-legged thing with its spindle  
bands—  
And the slender spokes, like the willow  
wands  
That spring so thick in the low, wet  
lands,  
Turn dense at the touch of a woman's  
hands.

As the wheel whirls swift, how rank  
they grow!  
But how sparse and thin when the  
wheel runs slow  
Forward and backward and to and fro!

There's a heap of rolls like clouds in  
curl,  
And a bright-faced, springy, barefoot  
girl;  
She gives a touch and a careless whirl.

She holds a roll in her shapely hand  
That the sun has kissed and the wind  
has fanned,  
And its mate obeys the wheel's com-  
mand.

There must be winds on her rosy heel!  
And there must be bees in the spin-  
dled steel!  
A thousand spokes in the dizzy wheel!

Have you forgotten the left-breast  
knock  
When you bagged the bee in the holly-  
hock,  
And the angry burr of an ancient clock,

All ready to strike, came out of the  
mill,  
Where covered with meal the rogue  
was still,  
Till it made your thumb and finger  
thrill?

It is one, two, three—the roll is caught :  
'Tis a backward step and the thread  
is taut,  
A hurry of wheel and the roll is wrought !

'Tis one, two, three, and the yarn runs  
on,  
And the spindle shapes like a white-  
pine cone,  
As even and still as something grown.

The barefoot maiden follows the thread  
Like somebody caught and tether'd  
and led  
Up to the buzz of the busy head.

With backward sweep and willow  
bend  
Monarch would borrow if maiden could  
lend,  
She draws out the thread to the white  
wool's end.

From English sheep of the old-time  
farm,  
With their legs as fair as a woman's  
arm,  
And faces white as a girl's alarm.

She breaks her thread with an angry  
twang  
Just as if at her touch a harp-string  
rang  
And keyed to the quaint old song she  
sang

That came to a halt on her cherry lip,  
While she tied one knot that never  
could slip,  
And thought of another, when her  
ship—

All laden with dreams in splendid  
guise—  
Should sail right out of the azure skies  
And a lover bring with great brown  
eyes!

Ah, broad the day but her work was  
done—

Two "runs" by reel! She had twisted  
and spun  
Her two-score "knots" by set of sun.

With her one, two, three the wheel  
beside,  
And the three, two, one, of her back-  
ward glide,  
Till the bees went home and daytime  
died!

In apron white as the white sea foam,  
She gathered the wealth or her velvet  
gloom,  
And railed it in with a tall back-comb ;

She crushed the dew with her naked  
feet,  
The track of the sun was a golden  
street,  
The grass was cool and the air was  
sweet.

The girl gazed up at the mackerel sky,  
And it looked like a pattern lifted high ;  
But she never dreamed of angels high.

And she spoke right out : " Do just  
see there !

What a blue and white for the clouded  
pair  
I'm going to knit for Sunday wear ! "

The wheel is dead and the bees are  
gone,  
And the girl is dressed in a silver lawn,  
And her feet are shod with a golden  
dawn.

From a wind-swung tree that waves  
before,  
A shadow is dodging in the door—  
Flickering ghost on the white pine  
floor—

And the cat, unlearned in the shadow's  
law,  
Just touched its edge with a velvet paw  
To hold it still with an ivory claw !

But its spectral cloak is blown about,  
And a moment more and the ghost is  
out,  
And leaves us all in shadowy doubt.

If ever it fell on floor at all,  
Or if ever it swung along the wall  
Or whether a shroud or a phantom  
shawl !

Oh, brow that the old-time morning  
kissed  
Good-night, my girl of the double and  
twist,  
Oh, barefoot vision ! Vanishing mist !

---

*THE FISHERMAN'S FUNERAL.*

UP on the breezy headland  
The fisherman's grave they made,  
Where over the daisies and clover bells,  
The birchen branches swayed ;  
Above us the lark was singing  
In the cloudless skies of June,  
And under the cliffs the billows  
Were chanting their ceaseless tune :  
For the creamy line was curving  
Along the hollow shore,  
Where the dear old tides were flowing  
That he would ride no more.

The dirge of the wave, the note of the  
bird,  
And the priest's low tones were blent  
In the breeze that blew from the moor-  
land,  
All laden with country scent ;

But never a thought of the new-mown  
hay  
Tossing on sunny plains,  
Or of lilies deep in the wildwood,  
Or roses gemming the lanes,  
Woke in the hearts of the stern, bronzed  
men  
Who gathered around the grave  
Where lay the mate who had fought  
with them  
The battle of wind and wave.

How boldly he steered the coble  
Across the foaming bar,  
When the sky was black to the east-  
ward  
And the breakers white on the Scar !  
How his keen eye caught the squall  
ahead,  
How his strong hand furled the sail,  
As we drove o'er the angry waters  
Before the raging gale !  
How cheery he kept all the long dark  
night ;  
And never a parson spoke  
Good words, like those he said to us  
When at last the morning broke !

So thought the dead man's comrades  
As silent and sad they stood,  
While the prayer was prayed, the bless-  
ing said,  
And the dull earth struck the wood ;  
And the widow's sob, and the orphan's  
wail,  
Jarred through the joyous air ;  
How could the light wind o'er the sea  
Blow on so fresh and fair ?  
How could the gay waves laugh and  
leap  
Landward o'er sand and stone,  
While he, who knew and loved them  
all,  
Lay lapped in clay alone ?

But for long, when to the beetling  
heights  
The snow-tipped billows roll,  
When the cod, and skate, and dogfish  
Dart around the herring shoal :

When gear is sorted, and sails are set,  
 And the merry breezes blow,  
 And away to the deep-sea harvest,  
 The stalwart reapers go,  
 A kindly sigh, and a hearty word,  
 They will give to him who lies  
 Where the clover springs, and the  
 heather blooms  
 Beneath the northern skies.

—  
*A PICTURE AND A PARABLE.*

AN old-time ingle, warm and wide,  
 Shaming our modern manners,  
 Where backwood monarch, side by  
 side,  
 Fling up their rival banners,  
 And sent their gleaming cohorts fast  
 The flying shadows after,  
 Till warmth and comfort glow at last  
 From shining floor to rafter ;  
 Now glittering in the silver store  
 Of heirlooms with a story,  
 Now weaving saintly halos for  
 The elder's crown of glory ;  
 But tenderest the fire-light glows,  
 And merriest is glancing  
 Upon a boy with cheek of rose,  
 In baby frolic dancing  
 About a loving father's knee,  
 Whose brow of care unbending  
 To join in all the baby glee  
 Is father's fondness lending ;  
 While, with her loving smile for all,  
 The gentle household mother  
 Moves queenly through her kingdom  
 small,  
 Nor longs for any other,  
 But muses, in a happy way,  
 Whether on earth there may be  
 Another such papa to play  
 Bo-peep with such a baby.  
 Full well the picture I recall  
 My childish fancy greeted,  
 And which the scene that most of all  
 I liked to have repeated :  
 How, when his father's hiding-place  
 The boy could not discover,  
 A while he stood with puzzled face  
 Thinking the matter over,

Then stooped with sudden roguery  
 And airs of mock confiding,  
 And peeped beneath a chip to see  
 If there papa was hiding ;  
 And how the trick brought papa out  
 With sudden peal of laughter,  
 And joyous was the baby's shout,  
 And wild the frolic after.

And still my fancy lingers in  
 The pretty, childish story,  
 And thinks a deeper sense to win,  
 As from an allegory ;  
 For what do we with childish wits—  
 More witless children rather—  
 Seeking beneath our chips and bits  
 Of truth to find the Father—  
 "Lo here, lo there"—when every-  
 where  
 His walls of home do hold us,  
 The warmth and love-light of his care  
 By day and night infold us ?  
 And when we lay us down to sleep,  
 And scenes of earth forsake us,  
 His presence still our souls shall keep,  
 His morning kiss shall wake us.  
 Does not the Father's pity yearn  
 To comfort them that fear Him,  
 Until within His arms they learn  
 That they are always near Him ?

—  
*OUR YOUNG FOLKS.*

THERE'S a little face at the window  
 And two dimpled hands on the pane ;  
 And somebody's eyes are fixed upon  
 The gate at the end of the lane.

The hills have caught the shadow  
 Which heralds the coming night,  
 And the lane, with its flowering fringe,  
 grows dim  
 To the watcher's anxious sight.

Where, half way down,  
 Like a glittering crown,  
 A fire-fly band have clustered  
 round an aster's leaf—  
 A royal chief—  
 A driven herd are mustered.



Away behind,  
 With busy mind,  
 But a step that is light and free,  
 And a sun-burnt face  
 On which the trace  
 Of a hard day's work you see,

Comes the farmer home from toil,  
 Driving the cows before him ;  
 And the child-eyes strained at the win-  
 dow there,  
 Were the first in the house that saw  
 him.

Ah ! would, when the day is done  
 And I leave my cares behind me,  
 I could have such a pair of winsome  
 eyes  
 Searching the night to find me !

—————  
*MISCHIEF-MAKERS.*

OH ! could there in this world be found  
 Some little spot of happy ground,  
 Without the village tattling !  
 How doubly blest that spot would be  
 Where all might dwell in liberty,  
 Free from the bitter misery,  
 Of gossip's endless prattling.

If such a spot were really known,  
 Dame Peace might call it all her own,  
 And in it she might fix her throne,  
 Forever and forever.  
 There like a queen might reign and  
 live,  
 While every one would soon forgive  
 The little slights they might receive,  
 And be offended never.

'Tis mischief-makers that remove  
 Far from our hearts that warmth of  
 love,  
 And lead us all to disapprove  
 What gives another pleasure ;  
 They seem to take one's part—but  
 when  
 They've heard our cares, unkindly then  
 They soon retail them out again,  
 Mixed up with poisonous measure.

And then they've such a cunning way  
 Of telling ill-meant tales ; they say,  
 "Don't mention it, I pray,  
 I would not tell another :"  
 Straight to your neighbors then they  
 go,  
 Narrating everything they know ;  
 And break the peace of high and low,  
 Wife, husband, friend, and brother.

Oh ! that the mischief-making crew  
 Were all reduced to one or two,  
 And they were painted red or blue,  
 That every one might know them !  
 Then would our villagers forget  
 To rage and quarrel, fume and fret,  
 And falling into an angry pet  
 With things so much below them.

For 'tis a sad degrading part  
 To make another's bosom smart,  
 And plant a dagger in the heart  
 We ought to love and cherish.  
 Then let us evermore be found  
 In quietness with all around,  
 While friendship, joy, and peace abound  
 And angry feelings perish.

—————  
*UNDER THE MAPLE.*

THE start it gave me just now to see,  
 As I stood in the door-way looking  
 out,  
 Rob Greene at play by the maple-tree,  
 Throwing the scarlet leaves about !

It carried me back a long, long way ;  
 Ten years ago—how the time runs  
 by !  
 There was nobody left at home that  
 day  
 But little Jimmy and father and I.

My husband's father, an old, old man,  
 Close on to eighty, but still so smart :  
 It was only of late that he began  
 To stay in the house and doze apart.

But the fancy took him that afternoon  
To go to the meadow to watch the  
men ;  
And as fast as I argued, just so soon  
He went right over it all again ;

Till, seeing how set he seemed to be,  
I thought, with the air so warm and  
still,  
It could not hurt him to go with me  
And sit for a little under the hill.

So, lending my arm to his feeble tread,  
Together slowly we crossed the road,  
While Jim and his cart ran on ahead  
With a heap of pillows for wagon  
load.

We made him a soft seat, cushioned  
about,  
Of an old chair out of the barn close  
by ;  
Then Jim went off with a caper and  
shout,  
While we sat silent, father and I.

For me, I was watching the men at  
work,  
And looking at Jack, my oldest son—  
So like his father ! he never would  
shirk,  
But kept straight on till the stint  
was done.

Seventeen was Jack that last July :  
A great stout fellow, so tall and  
strong !  
And I spoke to the old man by and by,  
To see how fast he was getting along.

But father had turned away his head,  
A-following Jimmy's busy game  
With the maple leaves, whose bloody  
red  
Flared up in the sun like so much  
flame.

His lips, as he looked, began to move,  
And I heard him mutter a word or  
two :

" Yes, Joe ! A fire in the Weston  
grove ?  
Just wait—one minute—I'll go with  
you ! "

" Why, father," I cried, " what do you  
mean ? "  
For I knew he talked of his brother  
Joe,  
The twin that was drowned at scarce  
fifteen,  
Sixty summers and more ago.

" The sun has dazzled you : don't you  
see  
That isn't a fire a-blazing there ?  
It's only Jim, by the maple-tree,  
Tossing the red leaves into the air. "

But still he nodded and looked and  
smiled,  
Whispering something I could not  
hear ;  
Till, fairly frightened, I called the child,  
Who left his play and came frolick-  
ing near.

The old man started out of his seat :  
" Yes, Joe, yes ; I'm coming," said he.  
A moment he kept his tottering feet  
And then his weight grew heavy on  
me.

" Father ! " I screamed ; but he did not  
mind,  
Though they all came running about  
us then :  
The poor old body was left behind,  
And the twins were young together  
again.

And I wonder sometimes, when I wake  
at night,  
Was it his eyes or my own were  
dim ?  
Did something stand beyond my sight,  
Among the leaves, and beckon to  
him ?

Well, there comes Jim up the interval  
road ;

Ten summers ago? yes, all of ten :  
That's Baby Jack on the pumpkin load,  
And Jim is as old as Jack was then.

—————  
*WE CAN MAKE HOME HAPPY.*

THOUGH we may not change the cot-  
tage

For a mansion tall and grand,  
Or exchange a little grass-plat  
For a boundless stretch of land—  
Yet there's something brighter, dearer,  
Than the wealth we'd thus com-  
mand.

Though we have no means to purchase  
Costly pictures, rich and rare—  
Though we have no silken hangings  
For the walls so cold and bare—  
We can hang them o'er with garlands,  
For flowers bloom everywhere.

We can always make home cheerful,  
If the right course we begin ;  
We can make its inmates happy,  
And their truest blessings win ;  
It will make the small room brighter  
If we let the sunlight in.

We can gather round the fireside  
When the evening hours are long ;  
We can blend our hearts and voices  
In a lappy social song ;  
We can guide some erring brother,  
Lead him from the path of wrong.

We may fill our home with music,  
And with sunshine brimming o'er,  
If against all dark intruders  
We will firmly close the door—  
Yet should evil shadows enter,  
We must love each other more.

There are treasures for the lowly  
Which the grandest fail to find ;  
There is a chain of sweet affection  
Binding friends of kindred mind—  
We may reap the choicest blessings  
From the poorest lot assigned.

*HOME AGAIN.*

HOME again ; mother, your boy will  
rest

For a time, at least, in the old home  
nest.

How good to see you in your cor-  
nered nook

With knitting, or sewing, or paper, or  
book,

The same sweet mother my boyhood  
knew,

The faithful, the patient, the tender  
and true.

You have little changed ; ah, well  
maybe

A few gray hairs in the brown I see ;  
A mark or two, under smiling eyes,

So lovingly bent in your glad surprise ;  
'Tis I who have changed ; ah, mother

mine,  
From a teasing lad, to manhood's  
prime.

No longer I climb on your knee at  
night

For a story told in the soft firelight ;  
No broken slate or book all torn,

Do I bring to you with its edges worn :  
But I'll come to you with my graver

cares,  
You'll help me bear them with tender  
prayers.

I'll come again as of old—and you  
Will help the man to be brave and

true ;  
For the man's the boy, only older

grown,  
And the world has many a stumbling  
stone.

Ah, mother mine, there is always rest  
When I find you here in the old home

nest.

—————  
*ON THE STAIRWAY.*

THE little children on the stairway,  
Cased in a slippery glare of sleet,  
By post and railing vainly clamber—  
Slight hold is there for baby feet.

High in the cold air swings the school-bell,

"Come up! come up!" its clang commands;

A quick thought flies from lips to fingers,

"'Tis easier taking hold of hands."

Low laughter lights their rosy faces;  
Stout arms the faltering strugglers lift;

Now all at last have won the threshold,  
And out of sight within they drift,

Flinging back bloom upon the snow-wreaths;

The blank, white world reflects their smile;

Their word has cleared for us a path-way,

Though Alps of ice the high-road pile.

We all are children on a stairway,  
Weary of vain attempts to climb,

Or, strong ourselves, forgetting others—  
While silver peals of Duty chime

High in the echoing heaven above us,  
And, welcome we or dread the call,

Upon the steps we may not linger—  
Ascend we must, slide back, or fall.

Whose is the fault if this one stumbles?  
If that laments a hopeless bruise?

Or if any other sits despairing?  
Yours, mine, who timely aid refuse,

Small honor to go up unhindered  
While a tired brother by us stands;

The little children, they shall teach us,  
"'Tis easier taking hold of hands."

Still up and down on Virtue's ladder  
Unnumbered beings come and go,

With faces turned to nether darkness,  
Or sunned with a celestial glow.

The truants out of Duty's heaven,  
The white and dazzling seraph-

bands,  
Are brethren still; and, struggling up-

ward,  
"'Tis easier taking hold of hands."

*"NOW I LAY ME DOWN TO SLEEP."*

"Now I lay me down to sleep,  
I pray the Lord my soul to keep"—

So the baby learned her prayer  
Kneeling by her mother's chair;

In her little bed-gown white,  
Said it over every night;

Learning, in her childish way,  
How a little child could pray.

"Now I lay me down to sleep"—

Said the child a maiden grown:  
Thinking, with a backward glance,

How the happy past had flown,  
Since, beside her mother's knee,

With a child's humility,  
She had said her simple prayer,

Feeling safe in Jesus' care.

"I pray the Lord my soul to keep"—

Yet the words were careless said:  
Lightly had the hand of Time

Laid his fingers on her head;  
On Life's golden afternoon

Gay the bells and sweet the tune,  
And upon her wedding-day

She had half forgot to pray.

"Now I lay me down to sleep"—

How the words come back again,  
With a measure that was born

Half of pleasure, half of pain:  
Kneeling by a cradle bed,

With a hand upon each head,  
Rose the old prayer, soft and slow,

As a brooklet in its flow.

All alone, with bended head,  
She has nothing but her dead;

Yet with heart so full of care,  
Still her lips repeat the prayer;

Rest at last! oh, storm-tossed soul!  
Safe beyond the breakers' roll:

He, the Lord, her soul shall keep,  
Now she lays her down to sleep.

*A CHILD'S FACE AT THE WINDOW.*

I COULD not comprehend  
The preacher nor his text ;  
I walked with downcast head,  
And brooded thoughts perplexed.  
In things too deep for me  
My footing soon I lost,  
'Twixt doubt and faithless cavil  
Swaying wind-blown and tossed.

At last my eyes I lifted ;  
A face looked down at me,  
A child's face at the window ;—  
Could there evangel be  
More swift ? ashamed I said,  
And must I so forget  
That lesson old, the child  
Who in the midst was set ?

As innocent and simple,  
As fearless, if I'd be,  
Quiet-behaved I'd fret not,  
Nor start, at mystery.  
The child's face at the window  
Shall, like a masterpiece,  
Be, henceforth, mine to copy ;  
O Lord, my skill increase !

*EVENING HYMN.*

CLOSE, little weary eyes,  
The day at last is over ;  
To-night no more surprise  
Shall they discover.  
Nor bird, nor butterfly,  
Nor unfamiliar flower,  
Nor picture in the sky,  
Nor fairy in the bower.

Rest, little weary feet,  
The woods are dark and lonely ;  
The little birds rest sweet,  
The owl is watching only ;  
No buttercup is seen,  
Nor daisy in the meadow ;  
Their gold, and white, and green  
Are turned to purple shadow.

Fold, little busy hands,  
Day is the time for doing ;  
The boats lie on the sands,  
The mill-wheels are not going.  
Within the darksome mine  
Are hushed the spade and hammer ;  
The cattle rest supine,  
The cock withholds his clamor.

Still, little restless heart,  
Be still until the morrow ;  
Till then thou hast no part  
In either joy or sorrow.  
To new and joyous day  
Shall little birds awake thee ;  
Again to work and play,  
With strength renewed betake thee.

*LEARNING TO PRAY.*

KNEELING fair in the twilight gray,  
A beautiful child was trying to pray ;  
His cheek was on his mother's knee,  
His little bare feet half hidden,  
His smile still coming unbidden,  
And his heart brimful of glee.

"I want to laugh. Is it naughty ? Say !  
Oh mamma ! I've had such fun to-day,  
I hardly can say my prayers.  
I don't feel just like praying ;  
I want to be outdoors playing,  
And run all undressed down-stairs.

"I can see the flowers in the garden-  
bed,  
Shining so pretty, and sweet, and red,  
And Sammy is swinging, I guess.  
Oh ! everything is so fine out there,  
I want to put it all in my prayer,  
Do you mean I can do it by 'Yes !'

"When I say 'Now I lay me,' word  
for word,  
It seems to me as if nobody heard,  
Would 'Thank you, dear God,' be  
right ?  
He gave me a mamma,  
And papa, and Sammy—  
Oh, mamma, you nodded I might."



Clasping his hands and hiding his face,  
Unconsciously yearning for help and  
for grace,  
The little one now began.  
His mother's nod and sanction  
Had led him close to the dear  
Lord's feet,  
And his words like music ran.

\* Thank you for making this home so  
nice,  
The flowers, and folks, and my two  
white mice,  
(I wish I could keep right on)  
I thank you, too, for every day,  
Only I'm most too glad to pray ;  
Dear God, I'm done.

“Now, mamma, rock me — just a  
minute—  
And sing the hymn with ‘darling’  
in it ;  
I wish I could say my prayers !  
When I get big I know I can.  
Oh ! won't it be nice to be a man,  
And stay all night down-stairs ? ”

The mother singing, clasping him tight,  
Kissing and cooing a fond “Good-  
night,”  
Had treasured his every word ;  
For well she knew the artless joy  
And love of her precious, innocent  
boy,  
Were a prayer that her Lord had  
heard.

—————  
*AUNT POLLY'S ADVICE.*

If things go wrong in the household  
(As they often will, you know),  
Or you're worried out with cares that  
vex,  
And the children try you so ;  
Don't sit in the vale of shadows,  
Or stoop to be a scold ;  
'Twill only make bad worse, you see,  
While you grow gray and old.

I know how things will bother,  
While work seems mountain high,  
And the adding of a feather's weight  
Makes you feel as if you'd die ;  
And then perhaps your husband  
Says something quite unkind,  
(He has his worries, too, poor man),  
So pray, then, never mind.

A sharp retort is best unsaid,  
Though censure's hard to bear ;  
But John may think you're most to  
blame  
If you his spirit share.  
Then keep your temper, gentle Nell,  
Just do the best you can ;  
And by and by God will unfold  
The secret of His plan.

I've had my troubles, too, dear Nell,  
And many and many a day,  
If the Lord had not been with me,  
I'd have fainted by the way.  
Then let Faith fold her brooding wing  
O'er all your doubts and fears,  
And God will give thee needed strength  
For all the coming years.

—————  
*ROWING AGAINST THE TIDE.*

It is easy to glide with its ripples,  
Adown the stream of time,  
To flow with the course of the river,  
Like music to some old rhyme ;  
But, ah ! it takes courage and patience,  
Against its current to ride,  
And we must have strength from  
Heaven,  
When rowing against the tide.

We may float on the river's surface,  
While our oars scarce touch the  
stream,  
And visions of earthly glory  
On our dazzled sight may gleam ;  
We forget that on before us  
The dashing torrents roar,  
And while we are idly dreaming,  
Its waters will carry us o'er.

But a few—ah! would there were  
many—

Row up the "Stream of Life,"  
They struggle against its surges,  
And mind neither toil nor strife;  
Though weary and faint with labor,  
Singing triumphant they ride,  
For Christ is the hero's captain  
When rowing against the tide.

Far on through the hazy distance,  
Like the mist on a distant shore,  
They see the walls of a city,  
With its banners floating o'er.  
Seen through a glass so darkly,  
They almost mistake their way;  
But Faith throws light on their labor  
When darkness shuts out their day.

And shall we be one of that number,  
Who mind not toil nor pain?  
Shall we moan the loss of earth's  
pleasures,  
When we have a crown to gain?  
Or shall we glide on with the river,  
With Death at the end of the ride,  
While our brother, with Heaven before  
him,  
Is rowing against the tide?

THE MOTHER WANTS HER BOY.

THERE'S a homestead waiting for you,  
my boy,  
In a quaint old-fashioned town;  
The gray moss clings to the garden  
wall,  
And the dwelling is low and brown;  
But a vacant chair by the fireside  
stands,  
And never a grace is said;  
But a mother prays that her absent son  
Soon may be homeward led,  
For the mother wants her boy.

She trains the vines and tends the  
flowers,  
For she says, "My boy will come;  
And I want the quiet, humble place  
To be just the dear old home

That it seemed when he, a gentle lad,  
Used to pluck the orchard's gold,  
And gather of roses and lilies tall,  
Far more than his hands could hold,  
And still I want my boy."

How well she knows the very place,  
When you played at bat and ball:  
And the violet cap you wore to school,  
Still hangs on its hook in the hall;  
And when the twilight hour draws near  
She steals adown the lane  
To cosset the lambs you used to pet,  
And dream you were home again;  
For the mother wants her boy.

She is growing old, and her eyes are  
dim  
With watching day by day,  
For the children nurtured at her breast  
Have slipt from her arms away;  
Alone and lonely, she names the hours  
As the dear ones come and go:  
Their coming she calls "The time of  
flowers!"  
Their going, "The hours of snow!"  
And ever she wants her boy.

Walk on, toil on; give strength and  
mind  
To the task in your chosen place;  
But never forget the dear old home,  
And the mother's loving face!  
You may count your blessings score  
on score,  
You may heap your golden grain,  
But remember when her grave is made,  
Your coming will be in vain,  
And *now* she wants her boy.

MY OLD SILVER THIMBLE.

THE old silver thimble I've worn for  
years,  
How much it has helped me to do!  
In mending the rents in little ones'  
clothes,  
Or making them clothes that were  
new.

At morn it has shone on my finger,  
When the dew still sprinkled the  
flowers,  
And has taken the gleam of the lamp-  
light  
'Mid latest of night's quiet hours.

It helped me to fashion the trousers  
Which Johnnie was proud to display,  
And the fairy-like dresses that clung to  
The delicate form of dear May.

In the dark room it quietly glittered,  
When our sweet little baby lay  
dead;  
Whilst it pressed in the needle that  
brodered  
The tiny lace cap for its head.

And again, in the time of a bridal,  
'Twas ready to help us its best,  
In forming the robes of the birdling  
Then leaving the warm parent nest.

And so it has proven trustworthy  
For what it was called on to do,  
No flaws have come o'er its clear sur-  
face,  
Its silver is sterling and true.

And though for the "latest invention,"  
That takes up the stitches so fast,  
It is sometimes unused and neglected,  
'Tis bright as it was in the past.

If we, who have souls in our bodies,  
Were staunch as this thimble has  
been,  
On earth would be more of God's peo-  
ple,  
And less of corruption and sin.

Then, standing at last with freed  
spirits,  
At the great gates of jasper and  
gold,  
The angels would warmly inclose us  
In God's ever-glorious fold.

“ IN THE GARRET ARE OUR  
BOYS.”

HERE I'm sitting, stitching, darning  
Little stockings, toes and heels,  
While above my head the racket  
Sounds like distant thunder-peals.  
What on earth can mean this tumult,  
Whence comes this distracting  
noise?  
Ah, I know it; yes, I hear them,—  
“In the garret are our boys.”

There is Grayson, “dead in earnest,”  
Wanting things to go “just so;”  
Banging all the boards together,  
Placing boxes in a row;  
“Make believe” his having auction,  
Selling worn-out broken toys.  
Do you wonder at the clatter?  
“In the garret are our boys.”

Now the barrel from the corner  
Fast is rolling o'er and o'er,  
And the croquet balls are bounding  
Here and there across the floor.  
“Seize a mallet,” “quick,” “get  
ready,”  
“There's your ball,” “*here* mine  
goes,”  
“I can beat you if I try it,”  
“I can strike the hardest blows.”

Hark, a shout of merry laughter—  
Hammond's joyful, jolly glee!  
“Brother, don't you see I'm beating?  
Better clear the track for me.”  
*Bang, bang, bang!* Oh, *dear*, 'tis  
deafening,  
Have you ever heard this noise?  
Not unless you are the mother  
Of just three such darling boys.

Now I hear a shout from Milton—  
He's the youngest of the three—  
“Oh, that's nothing, if I missed it,”  
“Take care, brother, don't hit me.”  
“Mamma, *mamma!* call to Beamic,”\*  
“Here's my book and there's my  
ball,”

\* “Beamic” is a pet name given to Hammond.

"*Let me be*, or I'll go tell her,  
Mamma, Beamie made me fall."

Yes, I'm sitting, stitching, mending  
Pants and jackets, quite a sight;  
Need I grieve o'er countless stitches,  
If they cover hearts all right?  
Should the bustle in the garret  
E'er disturb my sweetest joys,  
If my heart is yearning heavenward,  
For the welfare of our boys?

If when years have brought them man-  
hood,  
And the broad world is their field;  
When this heart that so much loves  
them,  
Its *first place* is forced to yield;  
When I ponder o'er the by-gones,  
Will these days be reckoned joys?  
Will I wish that I could say then,  
"In the garret are our boys?"

—  
*STILL DAY IN AUTUMN.*

I LOVE to wander through the wood-  
land hoary,  
In the soft gloom of an autumnal  
day,  
When summer gathers up her robes  
of glory,  
And, like a dream of beauty, glides  
away.  
How through each loved, familiar path  
she lingers,  
Serenely smiling through the golden  
mist,  
Tinting the wild grape with her dewy  
fingers,  
Till the cool emerald turns to ame-  
thyst.  
Kindling the faint stars of the hazel,  
shining  
To light the gloom of autumn's  
mouldering halls,  
With hoary plumes the clematis en-  
twining,  
Where o'er the rock her withered  
garland falls.

Warm lights are on the sleepy up-  
lands waning  
Beneath dark clouds along the hori-  
zon rolled,  
Till the slant sunbeams through their  
fringes raining  
Bathe all the hills in melancholy  
gold.

The moist wind breathes of crisped  
leaves and flowers  
In the damp hollows of the wood-  
land sown,  
Mingling the freshness of autumnal  
showers  
With spicy airs from cedar alleys  
blown.

Beside the brook and on the cum-  
bered meadow,  
Where yellow fern-tufts fleck the  
faded ground,  
With folded lids beneath their palmy  
shadow,  
The gentian nods, in dewy slumbers  
bound.

Upon those soft-fringed lids the bee  
sits brooding,  
Like a fond lover loth to say fare-  
well,  
Or, with shut wings, through silken  
folds intruding,  
Creeps near her heart his drowsy  
tale to tell.

The little birds upon the hillside  
lonely  
Flit noiselessly along from spray to  
spray,  
Silent as a sweet wandering thought,  
that only  
Shows its bright wings and softly  
glides away.

The scentless flowers, in the warm  
sunlight dreaming,  
Forget to breathe their fullness of  
delight:

And through the tranced wood soft  
airs are streaming,  
Still as the dew-fall of the summer  
night.

So in my heart a sweet unwonted  
feeling  
Stirs like the wind in ocean's hol-  
low shell,  
Through all its secret chambers sadly  
stealing,  
Yet finds no words its mystic charm  
to tell.

THE COUNTRY SERMON.

IT was a shining Sunday morn,  
Out of a week of thunder born ;  
And soothing bells their summons  
peal'd,  
For country folk, o'er farm and field.

I sought the church that on the hill  
Towered in the sunlight pure and still ;  
I sat upon a grave-slab gray,  
To breathe the balm of that bright day.

I watched the people gathering slow  
From the far parish spread below,  
From gabled grange, historic hall,  
From many a cottage rude and small.

They came in choicer Sunday guise,  
With Sabbath peace in patient eyes,  
As those who doubtless looked to find  
Some holy boon for life and mind.

I had not thought to leave the stone  
Whereon I sat and mused alone,  
But something in me seemed to say  
That theirs might be the better way.

I rose and joined the church-bound  
train ;  
My voice blent with their chanted  
strain ;

And one spake words not ill in tune  
With beauty of that summer noon :  
"How all of brightest, best we see  
Must shadows of the heavenly be ;

"How the blue dawn, and morning's  
glow  
And the vast sunset's fiery show,  
Soft, pearly moon, and stars of night,  
Are shadows of the heavenly light ;

"How all the sweetest sounds of earth,  
Music of winds, birds, infants' mirth,  
Anthems that float church-aisles along,  
Are shadows of the heavenly song ;

"How mother's fondness, rich and  
fair,  
Large trust of child and father's care,  
The selfless loves that deepliest move,  
Are shadows of the heavenly love ;

"How the delights that kindle here,  
How gay heart-laughter ringing clear,  
How ecstasies without alloy  
Are shadows of the heavenly joy ;

"How blessed moods of quiet deep,  
How placid dream and death-like  
sleep.  
How sleep-like death in snow shroud  
drest,  
Are shadows of the heavenly rest :

"And how, if leal—through suffering,  
loss,  
And thrift more perilous to the Cross,  
In our inferior measure, we  
May shadows of the heavenly be :

"Until at last, when Time is o'er,  
And its vain visions vex no more,  
All the pale shadows we shall miss,  
In sheer, supreme, substantial bliss."

The simple words with feeling fraught,  
A warmer faith and juster wrought ;  
And forth I went with brighter eye,  
To find a fairer life and sky.

For things about, within me, wore  
Divine, new meanings, hid before ;  
And unto life, thought, work was given  
The sacred light of final heaven.



*HOME.*

OVER dark fields, and rivers deep and cold,  
 And fen-land waste and drear,  
 Flies the glad message on a wire of gold,  
 "Home and true hearts are here!"

Fain would I hide me from the icy blast,  
 But yet it may not be;  
 So, with averted eyes, I hurry past  
 The firelight and the glee—

Home! gasps my home-sick spirit, and  
 I bound  
 Onward and onward still;  
 Glad when in distance dies the siren  
 sound,  
 That might have warped my will.

And as at length I fling the wintry  
 gloom  
 And perils far behind;  
 The twinkling point becomes a fire-lit  
 room,  
 And rest, and peace of mind.

And happy faces, and a loyal wife,  
 Whose pulses ever beat  
 One tune amid the treacherous chords  
 of life,  
 Unchanging, true, and sweet.

So, from the lattice in the sapphire  
 keep,  
 (Where lie the treasures true)  
 A line of glory threads the mazy deep,  
 A voice comes out to woo.

Pure is the lamp that guides our feet  
 on high,  
 And sweet the gentle call,  
 So soft around Love's silken fetters lie,  
 There is no sense of thrall,

As to one goal we move, a pilgrim  
 band,  
 Chastened by tears and pain,  
 Thorns hedging up the way on either  
 hand,  
 Lest we should run in vain.

*IDLE WORDS.*

ONCE I said,  
 Seeing two soft starry eyes,  
 Darkly bright as midnight skies—  
 Eyes prophetic of the power  
 Sure to be thy woman's dower,  
 When the years should crown thee  
 queen  
 Of the realm as yet unseen;  
 "Sometimes, sweet, those eyes shall  
 make  
 Lovers mad for their sweet sake!"

Once I said,  
 Seeing tresses, golden brown,  
 In a bright shower falling down  
 Over neck and bosom fair,  
 As yon sculptured angels are—  
 Odorous tresses, drooping low  
 O'er a forehead pure as snow;  
 "Sometimes, sweet, in thy soft hair,  
 Love shall set a shining snare!"

Once I said,  
 Seeing lips, whose crimson glow  
 Mock the roses wet with dew—  
 Warm, sweet lips, whose breath was  
 balm,  
 Pure, proud lips, serenely calm—  
 Tender lips, whose smiling grace  
 Lit with splendor all the face;  
 "Sweet, for kiss of thine, some day,  
 Men will barter souls away!"

Idly said!  
 God hath taken care of all  
 Joy or pain that might befall;  
 Lover's lip shall never thrill  
 At thy kisses, soft and still;  
 Lover's heart shall never break  
 In sore anguish for thy sake;  
 Lover's soul for thee shall know  
 Nor love's rapture, nor its woe.  
 All is said!

*RECOMPENSE.*

IN Spring, two robins from the warmer  
 lands  
 Buildd a nest upon an unsafe limb

Of the tall tree that by my window  
stands,  
And every morn they praised God  
with a hymn.  
And when a certain season passed  
away,  
Five light-green eggs within the build-  
ing lay.

Above the rush and clatter of the street  
Devotedly was guarded each green  
trust,  
And the round house was an abode  
most sweet,  
Roofed with awaiting wings. Better  
to rust  
With iron patience than forego a hope,  
And pent life in the shells was felt to  
grope.

But one dread day, before the sun went  
down,  
A cloud arose, a black and monstrous  
hand,  
That robbed the sunset of its golden  
crown.  
A windy shudder shook the fright-  
ened land,  
And portals of the storm were opened  
wide,  
And pealing thunder rolled on every  
side.

Then was it some unchained malicious  
gust  
Troubled the spray whereon the nest  
was made,  
And to the ground the soft-floored  
dwelling thrust,  
And wrecked its hapless store. The  
birds, dismayed,  
Shrilled their unusual grief, and beat  
the air  
With wings whose very whirl was like  
despair.

At dawn, my neighbors, living o'er the  
way,  
Sent me the whisper that their babe  
was dead;  
And when they led me where the body  
lay—

The free, winged spirit's shell, un-  
timely shed—  
And the wild cries of their distress I  
heard,  
I thought with pity of each parent bird.

Yet grief is but a cloud that soon is  
past;  
For there the mated robins came  
once more,  
And built again a nest, compact and  
fast,  
Upon the tree that grows before my  
door;  
And in it, from the window, could be  
seen  
Five sources of sweet music, new and  
clean.

Time passed, and to the good home  
opposite  
Another babe was born, and all the  
love  
That was bereft that fierce and stormy  
night,  
Fell to the latter child as from above;  
And in the nest five yellow mouths,  
one day,  
Of their impatient hunger made display.

We love our dead, and hold their mem-  
ories dear;  
But living love is sweeter than re-  
gret;  
God's ways are just, and though they  
seem severe,  
He can give back with blessings  
greater yet  
Than we have lost. He chastens for  
some good,  
That in our weakness is not understood.

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*THE FISHERMAN'S WIDOW.*

THE tears are standing upon her  
cheeks,  
And her eyes are weary and dim—  
She has sat at the window for weeks  
and weeks,  
For a sight of his boat and him.

She takes the youngest child on her  
knee,  
And turns its face to her breast—  
“O God,” she says, “that my babe  
and me  
Were laid in our grave to rest!”

The boats come sailing in over the bay,  
And the women run down to the  
shore;  
But, though she sits there till the judg-  
ment day,  
His boat will come in no more.

—

*THE SEA'S ANSWER.*

THE pale moon rushed along the stormy  
sky,  
Now hid, now seen, like some belated  
bark,  
That drives among the breakers aim-  
lessly,  
Their white crests gleaming silver  
through the dark.  
Pale as the moon, beneath the light-  
house covered  
The silent watcher on the great stone  
pier;  
She saw how black the gathering cloud-  
rack lowered,  
She heard the gale's hoarse warning  
muttering near;  
She felt the kindred tumult in her  
breast,  
With nature's angry mood was prompt  
to blend;  
Yet the sea answered, stilling her un-  
rest,  
“The hardest hap comes ever to the  
end.”

Though the great waves roll thunder-  
ing to the shore,  
And o'er the reef the cruel surf-clouds  
foam,  
Though fierce and high the crashing  
breakers roar

Between the weary fisherman and  
home;  
Calm to its depths the tide will ebb at  
night,  
The waves keep whispering backward  
from the Scar,  
And as the cottage-hearth shows wel-  
come light,  
The laden coble leaps the harbor bar.  
Ears that can hear, hearts that can  
understand,  
Know Ocean tells us, like a staunch  
old friend,  
“God holds the future in His loving  
hand,  
The hardest hap comes ever to the  
end.”

The red-roofed houses piled beneath  
the head  
In silent separate lights began to shine,  
The struggling moon her tearful radi-  
ance shed  
On the grand beauty of the ruined  
shrine;  
From the quay-side, laugh, snatch of  
song, and call,  
Came fitful to the pier upon the breeze,  
And, regular as pulse's rise and fall,  
Boomed the long echo of the breaking  
seas.  
And still the watcher on the great stone  
pier  
Lingered above the eternal waves to  
bend,  
Taking their answer home to hush  
and cheer,  
“The hardest hap comes ever to the  
end.”

—

*AT THE OLD FARM.*

YES, 'tis true. The blinds are closed,  
And the front door streams with  
crape.  
Surely through the house last eve  
Stole a vague and awful shape,  
Dimly seen by only one—  
Viewless, soundless to the rest;  
Only one descried the arrow  
Ere its death pang pierced his breast.

Why, they say he kissed his wife !  
 She was sitting by the door,  
 With her patient, work-worn hands  
 Folded, for the day was o'er,  
 And the twilight wind stirred softly,  
 Tapped the lilacs on the pane,  
 While belated bees swung slowly  
 Homeward through the lane.

"Ruth," he said, and touched her brow,  
 Gently as a lover might,  
 Stooped and kissed her, sitting there.  
 She was struck with sudden fright.  
 "Ah! what is it, John!" she cried.  
 "Do you think I'm going to die?"  
 "No!" he answered; "no, dear wife.  
 If 'tis any one 'tis I."

Full ten years or more had passed  
 Since he'd given her a word  
 Thoughtful, feeling-like, caressing.  
 She could scarce believe she heard  
 Rightly now. Their talk, you see,  
 Was, most part, about the farm—  
 Butter, eggs, the new Alderney,  
 Making hay; they meant no harm—

Kindly, honest, Christian folk,  
 Both the deacon and his wife;  
 Only, somehow, they had lost  
 All the romance out of life,  
 And the love which they began with,  
 Like a flower o'ergrown with weeds,  
 Struggled on, half choked, half buried,  
 In the strife for worldly needs.

Well, the night came on apace.  
 All the usual chores were done,  
 And they went to bed as usual;  
 Rising always with the sun,  
 'Twas not worth while burning candles;  
 And at midnight, lo! a call  
 Woke the sleepers. One was taken,  
 One was left—and that was all.

Lucy told me of the kiss.  
 On her way to meet the choir,  
 She had stopped to see Aunt Ruth,  
 She and Neighbor Brown's Desire.

They were not surprised this morning  
 When they heard that he was dead;  
 That he must have had a warning  
 Was what our Lucy said.

But I think the real love,  
 The true love, that never dies,  
 Once two loyal hearts have known it,  
 Wakened 'neath those evening skies,  
 And 'twill be a comfort sweet,  
 In her lonely time to be,  
 That before he went he spoke  
 To the "dear wife" tenderly.

—  
 HUSH!

"I CAN scarcely hear," she murmured,  
 "For my heart beats loud and fast,  
 But surely, in the far, far distance  
 I can hear a sound at last."

"It is only the reapers singing,  
 As they carry home their sheaves;  
 And the evening breeze has risen,  
 And rustles the dying leaves."

"Listen! there are voices talking,"  
 Calmly still she strove to speak,  
 Yet her voice grew faint and trembling,  
 And the red flushed in her cheek.

"It is only the children playing  
 Below, now their work is done,  
 And they laugh that their eyes are  
 dazzled  
 By the rays of the setting sun."

Fainter grew her voice, and weaker,  
 As with anxious eyes she cried,  
 "Down the avenue of chestnuts  
 I can hear a horseman ride,"

"It is only the deer that were  
 feeding  
 In the herd on the clover-grass,  
 They were startled and fled to the  
 thicket  
 As they saw the reapers pass."

Now the night arose in silence,  
 Birds lay in their leafy nest  
 And the deer couched in the forest,  
 And the children were at rest;

There was only a sound of weeping  
From watchers around a bed,  
But Rest to the weary spirit,  
Peace to the quiet Dead!

THANKSGIVING TURKEY.

VALLEYS lay in sunny vapor,  
And a radiance mild was shed  
From each tree that like a taper  
At a feast stood. Then we said,  
"Our feast, too, shall soon be spread,  
Of good Thanksgiving turkey."

And already still November  
Drapes her snowy table here.  
Fetch a log, then; coax the ember;  
Fill your hearts with old-time cheer;  
Heaven be thanked for one more  
year,  
And our Thanksgiving turkey!

Welcome, brothers—all our party  
Gathered in the homestead old!  
Shake the snow off, and with hearty  
Hand-shakes drive away the cold;  
Else your plate you'll hardly hold  
Of good Thanksgiving turkey.

When the skies are sad and murky,  
'Tis a cheerful thing to meet  
Round this homely roast of turkey—  
Pilgrims, pausing just to greet,  
Then, with earnest grace, to eat  
A new Thanksgiving turkey.

And the merry feast is freighted  
With its meanings true and deep.  
Those we've loved and those we've  
hated,  
All, to-day, the rite will keep,  
All, to-day, their dishes heap  
With plump Thanksgiving tur-  
key.

But how many hearts must tingle  
Now with mournful memories!  
In the festal wine shall mingle  
Unseen tears, perhaps from eyes  
That look beyond the board where  
lies  
Our plain Thanksgiving turkey.

See around us drawing nearer  
Those faint yearning shapes of air—  
Friends than whom earth holds none  
dearer!

No—alas! they are not there;  
Have they then forgot to share  
Our good Thanksgiving turkey?

Some have gone away and tarried  
Strangely long by some strange  
wave;

Some have turned to foes; we carried  
Some unto the pine-girt grave;  
They'll come no more so joyous-  
brave

To take Thanksgiving turkey.

Nay, repine not. Let our laughter  
Leap like fire-light up again.

Soon we touch the wide Hereafter,  
Snow-field yet untrod of men;  
Shall we meet once more—and  
when?

To eat Thanksgiving turkey?

And though not, 'twere still ungrate-  
ful

'Mid such warm companionhood  
To forecast the future fateful.  
Finding there no balanced good,  
'Tis but a type of finer food,  
This plain Thanksgiving turkey;

Of higher gifts a quaint reminder,  
Then let the bounty do its best  
To make us gladder, stronger, kinder.  
Bid no ghost to be our guest.  
But eat as those now gone to rest  
Once ate Thanksgiving turkey.

HER MOTHER'S EAR.

THEY sat at the spinning together,  
And they spun the fine white thread;  
One face was old and the other young,  
A golden and silver head.



And at times the young voice broke in  
 song  
 That was wonderfully sweet,  
 And the mother's heart beat deep and  
 calm,  
 For her joy was most complete.

And at times the mother counseled  
 In a voice so soft and low,  
 How the untried feet of her daughter  
 Through this strange, rough life  
 should go.

There was many a holy lesson  
 Inwoven with silent prayer,  
 Taught to her gentle, listening child,  
 As they two sat spinning there.

"And of all that I speak, my darling,  
 From my older head and heart,  
 God giveth me one last thing to say,  
 And with it thou shalt not part:

"Thou wilt listen to many voices—  
 And, ah woe, that this must be!—  
 The voice of praise and the voice of  
 love  
 And the voice of flattery;

"But listen to me, my little one:  
 There's one thing that thou shalt  
 fear,  
 Let never a word to my love be said  
 Which her mother may not hear.

"No matter how true, my darling one,  
 The words may seem to thee,  
 They are not fit for my child to hear  
 If they can not be told to me.

"If thou'lt ever keep thy young heart  
 pure,  
 And thy mother's heart from fear,  
 Bring all that is told to thee by day  
 At night to thy mother's ear."

And thus they sat spinning together,  
 And an angel bent to see  
 The mother and child whose happy  
 life  
 Went on so lovingly.

And a record was made by his golden  
 pen,  
 And this on his page he said,  
 That the mother who counseled her  
 child so well  
 Need never to feel afraid;

For God would keep the heart of the  
 child  
 Who with tender love and fear,  
 Should kneel at her mother's side at  
 night,  
 With lips to her mother's ear!

—  
*THOU WILT NEVER GROW OLD.*

THOU wilt never grow old,  
 Nor weary, nor sad, in the home of  
 thy birth;  
 My beautiful lily, thy leaves will unfold  
 In a clime that is purer and brighter  
 than earth.

Oh, holy and fair, I rejoice thou art  
 there,  
 In that kingdom of light, with its  
 cities of gold;  
 Where the air thrills with angel ho-  
 sannas, and where  
 Thou wilt never grow old,  
 sweet—  
 Never grow old!

I am a pilgrim, with sorrow and sin  
 Haunting my footsteps wherever I  
 go;  
 Life is a warfare my title to win:  
 Well will it be if it end not in woe!  
 Pray for me, sweet; I am laden with  
 care;  
 Dark are my garments with mildew  
 and mold;  
 Thou, my bright angel, art sinless and  
 fair,  
 And will never grow old, sweet—  
 Never grow old!

Now, canst thou hear from thy home  
 in the skies,  
 All the fond words I am whispering  
 to thee?

Dost thou look down on me with the  
soft eyes  
Greeting me oft ere thy spirit was  
free?

So I believe, though the shadow of  
time

Hide the bright spirit I yet shall be-  
hold:

Thou wilt still love me, and, pleasure  
sublime,

Thou wilt never grow old,  
sweet—

Never grow old!

Thus wilt thou be when the pilgrim,  
grown gray,

Weeps when the vines from the  
hearthstone are riven;

Faith shall behold thee, as pure as the  
day

Thou wert torn from the earth and  
transplanted to heaven.

Oh, holy and fair, I rejoice thou art  
there,

In that kingdom of light, with its  
cities of gold;

Where the air thrills with angel ho-  
sannas, and where

Thou wilt never grow old,  
sweet—

Never grow old!

#### THE FARMER FEEDETH ALL.

My lord rides through his palace gate,  
My lady sweeps along in state;

The sage thinks long on many a thing,  
And the maiden muses on marrying;

The minstrel harpeth merrily,

The sailor plows the foaming sea,

The huntsman kills the good red deer,

And the soldier wars without e'en fear;

But fall to each whate'er befall,

The farmer he must feed them all.

Smith hammereth cherry red the sword,

Priest preacheth pure the Holy Word;

Dame Alice worketh 'broidery well,

Clerk Richard tales of love can tell;

The tap-wife sells her foaming beer,  
Dan Fisher fisheth in the mere;  
And courtiers ruffle, strut, and shine,  
While pages bring the Gascon wine.  
But fall to each whate'er befall,  
The farmer he must feed them all.

Man builds his castles, fair and high,  
Wherever river runneth by;  
Great cities rise in every land,  
Great churches show the builder's hand;  
Great arches, monuments, and towers,  
Fair palaces and pleasing bowers;  
Great work is done, be it here or there,  
And well man worketh everywhere:  
But work or rest, whate'er befall,  
The farmer he must feed them all.

#### MY BROOK.

SING, little Brook, and bid me sleep,  
In thy cool shadows, dark and deep;  
For soon within the noisy town,  
Sleep from my eyelids will have flown:  
And I, with weary heart and sore,  
Shall long to hear thy voice once more.

In early days 'twas said to me,  
"The earth has not a home for thee."  
Lightly I smiled to hear my doom;  
Then turned away to seek my home:  
And ever since, on every side,  
Have sought it vainly, far and wide.

The memory of thy music sweet  
May find me in the rocky street;  
So thou, dear Brook, may'st soothe  
again

As oft before, the dreary pain,  
That, like old ocean's ceaseless moan,  
Is aye my heart's deep undertone.

Sing on between the banks of flowers  
Where I have passed the summer hours,  
In waving lines of light and shade  
By mighty elms and willows made,  
By Balm of Gilead, blessed tree!  
Sing on, and teach thy careless glee,  
Thy ceaseless melody to me.

Thou hast, like me, no other home  
Than God's blue, overarching dome;  
And thou art hastening on like me,  
And soon we both shall reach the sea.  
I fain would sing through all my days,  
As thou dost, to our Maker's praise.

THE PINE AND THE WALNUT.

A MILE or so from the gray little town  
Of Newcastle, perched like a gull by  
the sea,

On the Kittery side (where the banks  
sheive down

To the lovely river's golden brown),  
There towered, long since, an old  
pine tree.

And across the stream, in a right bee-  
line,

Like a sentry guarding the ruined  
fort,

Was a large-limbed walnut, where the  
kine

Huddled together in shower and shine,  
Nibbling the herbage, sparse and  
short.

Summer and winter those brave old  
trees

Watched the blue river that slipped  
between—

Leaned to the sunshine and drank the  
breeze,

Clothed like emperors, taking their  
ease

Now in ermine and now in green.

Many a time, when I was a lad,

I drifted by with suspended oar,

The wind in the walnut seemed so sad!  
But, ah! what a blustering voice it  
had

In the rugged pine on the other  
shore.

And often, in restless slumber tost,

I seemed to be drifting down the  
tide,

Hearing the strident wind as it crost—  
To die away like a murmuring ghost  
In the drooping boughs on the far-  
ther side.

Perhaps 'twas a boyish fantasy—  
The dream of a dreamer, half  
afraid—

That the wind grew sad in the walnut  
tree,

But surged through the pine like the  
surging sea,

With a sound of distant cannonade!

Only a fantasy! Who can tell?

But I think 'twill haunt me to the  
end,

Seeing what curious things befell  
The walnut tree and the pine as well—

For they went together, friend and  
friend!

From a sullen cloud broke war at last,  
And a grim sea-dog of the quarter  
deck

Took the gaunt old pine for a mizzen-  
mast:

In the flame of battle his spirit past,  
And the mizzen dragged by the  
shattered wreck.

With the Union Jack across him laid,  
They bore him back to the town by  
the sea;

The guns at the yard his requiem  
played,

And the admiral's coffin, it is said,  
Was shaped of the planks of the wal-  
nut tree!

“NOW I LAY ME.”

BED-TIME for the twittering birdies,  
Mother Wren has hushed to rest;

Bed-time for my little birdie,

Nestled closely to my breast.

Now beside me lowly kneeling,

Hear the lisping tongue repeat—

Dear old prayer of tender memory—  
“Now I lay me down to sleep.”

With what trusting grace, and tender,  
 Rosy lips petition make:  
 "Pray the Lord to take my spirit,  
 If I die before I wake."  
 And no thought of dread comes o'er  
 me,  
 As I kiss her sweet "good-night."  
 We're so careless of our darlings  
 Till we lay them out of sight!

Once again 'tis birdie's bed-time;  
 Little neighbors in the tree  
 Hush their baby bird to slumber,  
 With no thought of lonely me.  
 Ah! my mother's arms are empty,  
 Draped in sadness all the room,  
 And no whispered "Now I lay me"  
 Breaks upon the twilight gloom.

Smooth and white the little pillow,  
 Undisturbed the pretty bed,  
 On the table lie her playthings,  
 Mute reminder of my dead.  
 For no more my little treasure  
 My sad mother's heart may keep;  
 In the heavenly Father's bosom  
 I have laid her down to sleep.

Down to sleep! Ah, yearning mother,  
 Murmuring and sick at heart,  
 Full of joy shall be the waking,  
 Where no sorrow finds a part.  
 There we'll find our garnered treasures,  
 From all pain and earth cares free,  
 Where no sad good-bye shall pain us  
 Through a long eternity.

---

*MY MOTHER'S WHEEL.*

IN the shadows creeping o'er  
 Narrow pane and attic floor,  
 Stands a wheel with mould'ring band,  
 Turned no more by foot or hand;  
 Dust upon it deeply lies,  
 Tiny specks that cloud the eyes;  
 Over it the spiders spin  
 Daylight out and evening in.

As I sit beside it now,  
 Weary heart and aching brow,  
 Years go backward as the tide  
 From the silver seasons glide.  
 Life again is passing fair,  
 Sunshine glints my face and hair,  
 And a simple child I kneel,  
 Happy by this little wheel.

Once again I hear its hum,  
 While the moments go and come;  
 See the tireless fingers hold  
 Finest threads like shining gold;  
 Busy till the sunset-red,  
 Till the last faint beam is fled!  
 Spinning all the livelong day,  
 Hours of pain and joy away.

Faithful hands that toiled so long,  
 Lips that sung my cradle song,  
 Come and hush my sighs once more,  
 Lighten burdens as before!  
 Softly through the silent room  
 Floats a brightness through the gloom,  
 While her presence seems to steal  
 Back to me beside this wheel.

---

*UNFINISHED STILL.*

A BABY'S boot, and a skein of wool,  
 Faded and soiled, and soft;  
 Odd things, you say, and no doubt  
 you're right,  
 Round a seaman's neck this stormy  
 night,  
 Up in the yards aloft.

Most like it's folly; but, mate, look  
 here;  
 When first I went to sea,  
 A woman stood on the far-off strand,  
 With a wedding-ring on the small,  
 soft hand  
 Which clung so close to me.

My wife, God bless her! The day be-  
 fore  
 She sat beside my foot;  
 And the sunlight kissed her yellow  
 hair,  
 And the dainty fingers, deft and fair,  
 Knitted a baby's boot.

The voyage was over; I came ashore;  
 What, think you, found I there?  
 A grave the daisies had sprinkled white;  
 A cottage empty, and dark as night,  
 And this beside the chair.

The little boot, 'twas unfinished still;  
 The tangled skein lay near;  
 But the knitter had gone away to rest,  
 With the babe asleep on her quiet  
 breast,  
 Down in the churchyard drear.

### A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN.

IN a little white house on a hillside  
 green,  
 Lives a beautiful woman as ever was  
 seen;  
 In the sixty-five years that she's lived,  
 I may say,  
 She's been growing more beautiful  
 every day.  
 You do not believe it? Ask Susie, my  
 sister,  
 She's the very first person that ever  
 had kissed her.  
 And if she's not nursed her by night  
 and by day,  
 Poor Sue would have been in a very  
 bad way.  
 I can bring other witnesses whom you  
 may face,  
 They will tell you the same—they were  
 in the same case.  
 "Has she lovers?" Yes, surely! No  
 less than eleven!  
 She has seven on earth, and four more  
 up in heaven.  
 Her hair is so beautiful—faded and  
 thin,  
 There are beautiful wrinkles, from  
 forehead to chin,  
 Her eyes are as charming as charming  
 can be,  
 When she looks o'er her glasses so  
 fondly at me,

And I know by her life, which has  
 beautiful been,  
 She is like "the king's daughter"—  
 "all glorious within."  
 Ah, you've guessed who it is! It could  
 be no other,  
 I'm sure, than my beautiful, darling  
 old mother.

### FARMER JOHN.

HOME from his journey Farmer John  
 Arrived this morning safe and sound.  
 His black coat off, and his old clothes  
 on,  
 "Now I'm myself," says Farmer John;  
 And he thinks, "I'll look around."  
 Up leaps the dog: "Get down, you pup;  
 Are you so glad you would eat me up?"  
 The old cow lows at the gate to greet  
 him;  
 The horses prick up their ears to meet  
 him;  
 "Well, well, old Bay!  
 Ha, ha, old Gray!  
 Do you get good feed when I am  
 away?"  
 "You haven't a rib!" says Farmer  
 John;  
 "The cattle are looking round and  
 sleek;  
 The colt is going to be a roan,  
 And a beauty, too; how he has grown!  
 We'll wean the calf next week,"  
 Says Farmer John. "When I've been  
 off,  
 To call you again about the trough,  
 And watch you, and pet you, while you  
 drink,  
 Is a greater comfort than you can  
 think!"  
 And he pats old Bay,  
 And he slaps old Gray;—  
 "Ah, this is the comfort of going  
 away!"  
 "For, after all," said Farmer John,  
 "The best of the journey is getting  
 home!"



I've seen great sights,—but would I give

This spot, and the peaceful life I live,  
For all their Paris and Rome?

These hills for the city's stifled air,  
And big hotels, all bustle and glare;  
Land all houses, and road all stones,  
That deafen your ears and batter your bones?

Would you, old Bay?

Would you, old Gray?

That's what one gets by going away!"

"There money is king," says Farmer John;

"And fashion is queen; and it's mighty queer

To see how, sometimes, while the man is raking and scraping all he can,

The wife spends, every year,

Enough, you would think, for a score of wives,

To keep them in luxury all their lives.

The town is a perfect Babylon

To a quiet chap," says Farmer John.

"You see, old Bay,

You see, old Gray,—

I'm wiser than when I went away."

"I've found out this," says Farmer John,—

"That happiness is not bought and sold,

And clutched in a life of waste and hurry,

In nights of pleasure and days of worry;

And wealth isn't all in gold,

Mortgage and stocks and ten per cent.—

But in simple ways, and sweet content,  
Few wants, pure hopes, and noble ends,

Some lands to till, and a few good friends,

Like you, old Bay,

And you, old Gray!

That's what I've learned by going away."

And a happy man is Farmer John,—

Oh, a rich and happy man is he!

He sees the peas and pumpkins growing,

The corn in tassel, the buckwheat blowing,

And fruit on vine and tree;

The large, kind oxen look their thanks  
As he rubs their foreheads and strokes their flanks;

The doves light round him, and strut and coo;

Says Farmer John, "I'll take you too,—

And you, old Bay,

And you, old Gray!

Next time I travel so far away!"

---

CONTENT.

WONDER of wonders in my stroll

I met to-day

A woman with a loyal soul,

And deeply read in wisdom's scroll;

And I will try to tell the whole

This queen did say.

"'Tis true no carpet decks my floor,

But what of that?

God's warmest sunbeams on it pour,

With love spots fleck it o'er and o'er;

And small feet through the open door

Come pit-a-pat.

"No silken webs of rare design

And tints grotesque

My windows shade; but clinging vine

And flow'ring plant there intertwine,

And sun and leaves and stems combine

Sweet arabesque.

"Our frugal hearth knows not the storm

That makes a part

Of many lives; our true loves form

Our brightest joys and home's sweet charm.

No fireside e'er so large can warm

A lonely heart.

“Of no great deed my mind to test  
 You’ll ever hear.  
 Who seeks for fame seeks not the best;  
 Who toils for wealth gains but unrest;  
 A babe’s soft lips upon my breast  
 Were far more dear.

“Too many children—spoke your  
 mirth—  
 To me are given?  
 Thank God, I’m of such honor worth!  
 I gladly say with each new birth,  
 Not men alone we bear to earth,  
 Angels for Heaven.

“A slave? No, friend, you can not see;  
 You do not know.  
 I’d give him all; he’d all give me.  
 Our wills must each the other’s be.  
 When we love most, then most we’re  
 free!  
 This must be so.

“No sweeter, nobler lot in life  
 For you or me;  
 To be a good man’s loving wife,  
 To guard him when temptation’s rife,  
 Rest on his strong arm when the strife  
 Shall fiercest be.

“And, leaning on his faithful breast,  
 Look calmly out;  
 Secure no evil can infest,  
 No jealous fears thy peace molest;  
 For perfect love is perfect rest,  
 And dead is doubt.”

I gazed upon this woman bright  
 In mute surprise.  
 I felt a coward in her sight.  
 I knew her glowing words were right.  
 Of truth the everlasting light  
 Was in her eyes.

“ONE.”

“For of him, and through him, and to him are  
 all things.”

THE worn, scarred veteran from his  
 wars returning,  
 Hastes with swift feet, to seek the  
 welcome door,

His eager heart within him fondly  
 yearning  
 For that asylum whence he’ll roam  
 no more.

Still, as his weak hands press the latch,  
 restraining  
 The flooding tears that will unbid-  
 den gush—  
 As the pent waters ’gainst the barrier  
 straining,  
 Bear all before them in their mighty  
 rush,—

While, as he enters, her thin hand up-  
 lifting,  
 She shades her eyes that she may  
 better see  
 The timid children to her quickly drift-  
 ing  
 Stand in mute questioning at their  
 mother’s knee.

“Does Mary Morton live here?” cries  
 he faltering,  
 With voice all tremulous with sup-  
 pressed joy,  
 The mighty current of his true love  
 altering  
 The alien tone his sweet guile would  
 employ.

Ah, useless ambushment! ah, vain en-  
 deavor!  
 Her fond love fathoms all thy poor  
 disguise;  
 No cunning cloak concealing *thee*  
 could ever  
 Foil the sharp scrutiny of her keen  
 eyes.

Quick she enfolds him in her warm  
 embraces  
 On that swift-throbbing breast where  
 he sat ’shrined  
 All those long years that with their  
 laggard paces  
 Crept slowly on, and left no joy be-  
 hind.

Then as the fullness of her great emotion

Floods with bright beauty all the earth and air,

With the great earnestness of true devotion,

She softly breathes for both the *common* prayer.

“Father, forgive these years of sad repining,

The dark mistrust of Thy kind, watchful care,

E’en while Thy gentle, loving hands were twining

This crown of joy for our poor brows to wear.

“Help us, as here we humbly kneel before Thee,

True man and wife whom nothing e’er can part,

While for Thy great love we can but adore Thee,

To pledge the service of our single heart.”

While, as they kneel, the golden day advancing,

The morn’s rich splendors all the heavens illumine,

Through the scant window the swift sunbeams glancing,

Light with glad radiance all that lonely room.

---

THE ANXIOUS MOTHER.

NEVER did a kinder mother Nurse her child upon her knee;

Yet I knew somehow or other That she always feared for me.

When at school my teacher told her I was busy as a bee—

Learning more than others older— She was pleased—yet feared for me.

All the summer woods were ringing With my shouts of joyous glee,

Through the house she heard me singing—

Yet she always feared for me.

Was she whimsical, or fretted?

That the dear one could not be!

Was I selfish, false, or petted?

That she always feared for me.

Did she think I did not love her,

Nor at heart with her agree?

Vain such question to discover,

Why she always feared for me!

But one morn, in anguish waking

With a dreadful agony,

She said, in hers my small hand taking,

“He was drowned this day at sea.”

And she told how but one other

Branch grew from her household tree,

And lest I, the last, should wither,

That was why she feared for me!

Then convulsively she snatched me;

Setting me upon her knee—

To her beating heart she clasped me,

While I sobbed, “Why fear for me?”

“For you told me I must walk, too,

In the path my father trod,

And that he, with none to talk to,

On the ocean walked with God.

“Often did you tell me, mother,

That our father’s God was near—

That his Saviour was my brother—

Therefore I should never fear.”

---

NOT ONE TO SPARE!

[A father and mother, in straitened circumstances, with seven children, were offered by a wealthy, but childless, neighbor a comfortable provision, on condition that they would give him one of their children. This beautiful poem tells the result.]

“WHICH shall it be? Which shall it be?”

I looked at John—John looked at me, (Dear, patient John, who loves me yet,

As well as though my locks were jet),

And when I found that I must speak,

My voice seemed strangely low and weak;

"Tell me again what Robert said!"  
And then I listening bent my head:  
"This is his letter,—'I will give  
A house and land while you shall live,  
If, in return, from out your seven,  
One child to me for aye is given.'"

I looked at John's old garments worn,  
I thought of all that John had borne  
Of poverty, and work, and care,  
Which I, though willing, could not  
share;

I thought of seven mouths to feed,  
Of seven little children's need,  
And then of this.—"Come, John,"  
said I,

"We'll choose among them as they lie  
Asleep;" so, walking hand in hand,  
Dear John and I surveyed our band,—  
First to the cradle lightly stepped,  
Where Lilian the baby slept.

A glory 'gainst the pillow white;  
Softly the father stooped to lay  
His rough hand down in loving way,  
When dream or whisper made her stir,  
And huskily he said: "Not her, not  
her."

We stooped beside the trundle-bed,  
And one long ray of lamplight shed  
Athwart the boyish faces there,  
In sleep so pitiful and fair;  
I saw on Jamie's rough, red cheek,  
A tear undried. Ere John could speak,  
"He's but a baby, too," said I,  
And kissed him as we hurried by.  
Pale, patient Robbie's angel face  
Still in his sleep bore suffering's trace.  
"No, for a thousand crowns, not him,"  
He whispered, while our eyes were dim;  
Poor Dick! bad Dick! our wayward  
son,

Turbulent, reckless, idle one—  
Could he be spared? "Nay, He who  
gave

Bid us befriend him to his grave;  
Only a mother's heart can be  
Patient enough for such as he.  
And so," said John, "I would not dare  
To send him from her bedside prayer."  
Then stole we softly up above  
And knelt by Mary, child of love.

"Perhaps for her 'twould better be,"  
I said to John. Quite silently  
He lifted up a curl that lay  
Across her cheek in willful way,  
And shook his head, "Nay, love, not  
thee,"

The while my heart beat audibly.  
Only one more, our eldest lad,  
Trusty and truthful, good and glad—  
So like his father. "No, John, no—  
I can not, will not let him go."  
And so we wrote, in courteous way,  
We could not drive one child away;  
And afterward toil lighter seemed,  
Thinking of that of which we dreamed,  
Happy in truth that not one face  
Was missed from its accustomed place;  
Thankful to work for all the seven,  
Trusting the rest to One in heaven!

---

*MY WIFE AND CHILD.*

THE tattoo beats—the lights are gone,  
The camp around in slumber lies;  
The night with solemn pace moves on,  
The shadows thicken o'er the skies;  
But sleep my weary eyes hath frown,  
And sad, uneasy thoughts arise.

I think of thee, O dearest one,  
Whose love my earthly life hath  
blest—  
Of thee and him—our baby son—  
Who slumbers on thy gentle breast;  
God of the tender, frail, and lone,  
Oh, guard the gentle sleepers' rest.

And hover, gently hover near,  
To her whose watchful eye is wet—  
To mother-wife—the double dear,  
In whose young heart have freshly  
met  
Two streams of love so deep and clear—  
And cheer her drooping spirits yet.

Now, while she kneels before Thy  
throne,  
Oh, teach her, Ruler of the skies,

That while by Thy behest alone  
 Earth's mightiest powers fall or rise,  
 No tear is wept to Thee unknown,  
 No hair is lost, no sparrow dies.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

GOD bless the little stockings  
 All over the land to-night,  
 Hung in the choicest corners,  
 In the glow of crimson light !  
 The tiny, scarlet stocking,  
 With a hole in the heel and toe,  
 Worn by wonderful journeys  
 The darlings have had to go.

And Heaven pity the children,  
 Wherever their home may be,  
 Who wake at the first gray dawning,  
 An empty stocking to see,  
 Left, in the faith of childhood,  
 Hanging against the wall,  
 Just where the dazzling glory  
 Of Santa's light will fall !

Alas ! for the lonely mother,  
 Whose cradle is empty still,  
 With never a shoe nor a stocking  
 With dainty toys to fill !  
 Who sits in the swarthy twilight  
 There, sobbing against the pane,  
 And thinks of the little baby  
 Whose grave lies out in the rain !

Oh, the empty shoes and stockings  
 Forever laid aside !  
 Oh, the tangled, broken shoe-strings,  
 Never more to be tied !  
 Oh, the little graves at the mercy  
 Of the cold December rain !  
 Oh, the feet in the snow-white sandals,  
 That never can trip again !

But happier they who slumber,  
 With marble at foot and head,  
 Than the child who had no shelter,  
 No raiment, nor food, nor a bed !  
 Then heaven help the LIVING !  
 Children of want and pain,  
 Knowing no fold nor pasture,  
 Out, to-night, in the rain !

THE "COMING MAN."

A PAIR of very chubby legs,  
 Encased in scarlet hose ;  
 A pair of little stubby boots,  
 With rather doubtful toes ;  
 A little kilt, a little coat,  
 Cut as a mother can—  
 And lo ! before us strides, in state,  
 The future "coming man."  
 His eyes perchance will read the stars,  
 And search their unknown ways ;  
 Perchance the human heart and soul  
 Will open to their gaze ;  
 Perchance their keen and flashing  
 glance  
 Will be a nation's light—  
 Those eyes, that now are wistful bent  
 On some "big fellow's" kite.  
 That brow, where mighty thoughts  
 will dwell  
 In solemn, secret state,  
 Where fierce Ambition's restless  
 strength  
 Shall war with future fate :  
 Where Science from now hidden caves  
 New treasures shall outpour—  
 'Tis knit now, with a troubled doubt,  
 Are two or three cents more ?  
 Those lips that, in the coming years,  
 Will plead, or pray, or teach ;  
 Those whispered words, on lightning  
 flash,  
 From world to world may reach ;  
 That, sternly grave, may speak com-  
 mand  
 Or, smiling, win control—  
 Are coaxing now for ginger-bread  
 With all a baby's soul ?  
 Those hands—those little busy hands—  
 So sticky, small, and brown ;  
 Those hands, whose only mission  
 seems  
 To tear all order down—  
 Who knows what hidden strength  
 may lie  
 Within their chubby grasp,  
 Though now 'tis but a taffy-stick  
 In sturdy hold they clasp ?



Ah, blessings on those little hands,  
 Whose work is not undone !  
 And blessings on those little feet,  
 Whose race is yet unrun !  
 And blessings on the little brain  
 That has not learned to plan !  
 Whate'er the Future holds in store,  
 God bless the " coming man."

THE HOME CONCERT.

WELL, Tom, my boy, I must say good-  
 bye,  
 I've had a wonderful visit here ;  
 Enjoyed it, too, as well as I could  
 Away from all that my heart holds  
 dear.  
 Maybe I have been a trifle rough—  
 A little awkward, your wife would  
 say—  
 And very likely I've missed the hint  
 Of your city polish day by day.

But somehow, Tom, though the same  
 old roof  
 Sheltered us both when we were  
 boys,  
 And the same dear mother - love  
 watched us both,  
 Sharing our childish griefs and joys,  
 Yet you are almost a stranger now ;  
 Your ways and mine are as far apart  
 As though we had never thrown an  
 arm  
 About each other with loving heart.

Your city home is a palace, Tom ;  
 Your wife and children are fair to  
 see ;  
 You couldn't breathe in the little cot,  
 The little home, that belongs to *me*.  
 And I am lost in your grand large  
 house,  
 And dazed with the wealth on every  
 side,  
 And I hardly know my brother, Tom,  
 In the midst of so much stately pride.

Yes, the concert was grand last night,  
 The singing splendid ; but, do you  
 know,  
 My heart kept longing, the evening  
 through,  
 For another concert, so sweet and  
 low,  
 That maybe it wouldn't please the ear  
 Of one so cultured and grand as you ;  
 But to its music—laugh if you wil:—  
 My heart and thoughts must ever be  
 true.

I shut my eyes in the hall last night  
 (For the clash of the music wearied  
 me),  
 And close to my heart this vision  
 came—  
 The same sweet picture I always  
 see :  
 In the vine-clad porch of a cottage  
 home,  
 Half in shadow and half in sun,  
 A mother chanting her lullaby,  
 Rocking to rest her little one.

And soft and sweet as the music fell  
 From the mother's lips, I heard the  
 coo  
 Of my baby girl, as with drowsy tongue  
 She echoed the song with "Goo-a-  
 goo."  
 Together they sang, the mother and  
 babe,  
 My wife and child, by the cottage  
 door ;  
 Ah ! *that* is the concert, brother Tom,  
 My ears are aching to hear once  
 more.

So now good-bye. And I wish you  
 well,  
 And many a year of wealth and gain.  
 You were born to be rich and gay ;  
 I am content to be poor and plain ;  
 And I go back to my country home  
 With a love that absence has  
 strengthened too,  
 Back to the concert all my own—  
 Mother's singing and baby's coo.

*THE OLD STONE WALL.*

It stands as it stood in "Auld Lang Syne,"

By the side of the lane that leads to the spring,

Over it clammers the running vine,  
And about it the mosses and lichens cling,

In the bushes that grow on either hand

The robins chirp and the bluejays call,

While stately cedars, a giant band,  
Their shadows throw o'er the old stone wall.

What sounds it has echoed in other years,

Perchance the savage war-whoop shrill,

While the homestead blazed amid shrieks and tears,

And the cannons booming on Bunker Hill.

The bear may have roamed through the sunny glade,

The deer may have fled from the hunter's hall,

And the fox by the moonlight have slyly strayed

Since strong hands builded the old stone wall.

I wonder sometimes what his name might be

Whose workmen gathered these ancient stones.

Did his firelock stand 'gainst the nearest tree,

Was he Smith, or Thompson, or Brown, or Jones?

Did he wear a queue and a three-cornered hat?

Did he live in a cottage, or fine old hall?

Was he long or short? was he lean or fat?

This man who builded the gray stone wall.

Perhaps he landed on Plymouth Rock  
From the *Mayflower's* boat, with the Pilgrim band,

And wandered away from the little flock

To make him a home in this rugged land.

Perhaps he had children, who climbed his knee

When the shades of evening began to fall,

While he told of his childhood beyond the sea,

And rested from building my old stone wall.

Hundreds of winters and snows since then

Have whitened the hills of the still old town;

The builder has gone from the haunts of men,

In the valley of death he has laid him down.

But the fruit of his labor is staunch and strong;

'Twill be well when for us the Reaper shall call,

If the work we leave shall endure as long  
As his who builded the old stone wall.

*SCOTCH HYMN.*

THERE are blossoms that hae budded,  
Been blighted i' the cauld,

An' lammies that hae perished,  
Because they left the fauld;

But cower ye in aneath His wings  
Wha died upon the tree,

An' gathers in His bosom  
Helpless weans like you and me.

In the warld there's tribulation;  
In the warld there is wae;

But the warld it is bonnie,  
For our Father made it sae;

Then brighten up your armor,  
An' be happy as ye gang,

Though your sky be aften clouded,  
It winna be for lang.

*ARE THE CHILDREN AT HOME?*

EACH day when the glow of sunset  
Fades in the western sky,  
And the wee ones, tired of playing,  
Go tripping lightly by,  
I steal away from my husband,  
Asleep in his easy-chair,  
And watch from the open doorway  
Their faces fresh and fair.

*Alone* in the dear old homestead  
That once was full of life,  
Ringing with girlish laughter,  
Echoing boyish strife,  
*We two are waiting together;*  
And oft, as the shadows come,  
With tremulous voice *he* calls me,  
"It is night! are the children home?"

"Yes, love!" I answer him gently,  
"They're all *home* long ago;"  
And I sing, in my quivering treble,  
A song so soft and low,  
Till the old man drops to slumber,  
With his head upon his hand,  
And I tell to myself the number  
*Home in the better land.*

Home, where never a sorrow  
Shall dim their eyes with tears,  
Where the smile of God is on them  
Through all the summer years!  
I know!—yet my arms are empty,  
That fondly folded seven,  
And the mother heart within me  
Is almost starved for heaven.

Sometimes, in the dusk of evening,  
I only shut my eyes,  
And the children are all about me,  
A vision from the skies!  
The babes whose dimpled fingers  
Lost the way to my breast,  
And the beautiful ones, the angels,  
Passed to the world of the blest.

With never a cloud upon them,  
I see their radiant brows;  
My boys that I gave to freedom—  
The red sword sealed their vows!

In a tangled Southern forest,  
Twin brothers, bold and brave,  
They fell; and the flag they died for,  
Thank God, floats over their grave.

A breath, and the vision is lifted  
Away on wings of light,  
And again we two are together,  
All alone in the night.  
They tell me his mind is failing,  
But I smile at idle fears,  
He is only back with the children,  
In the dear and peaceful years.

And still as the summer sunset  
Fades away in the west,  
And the wee ones, tired of playing,  
Go trooping home to rest,  
My husband calls from his corner,  
"Say, love! have the children come?"  
And I answer, with eyes uplifted,  
"Yes, dear! they are all at home!"

—————

*MY GOOD, OLD-FASHIONED  
MOTHER.*

THEY brought home the portrait last  
night to me;  
On the parlor walls it is hung.  
I gave to the artist a picture small,  
Which was taken when she was  
young.  
It's true to life—and here's a look in  
the eyes  
I never saw in another,  
And the same sweet smile that she  
always wore—  
'Tis my good, old-fashioned mother.

The hair in the picture's wavy and  
dark,  
'Twas taken before she was gray,  
And the same short curls, at the side,  
hang down,  
For she always wore it that way.  
Her hand on the Bible easily rests,  
As when, with sisters and brother,  
I knelt at her knee, reciting my verse,  
To my good, old-fashioned mother.

Her dress it is plain and quite out of style,

Not a puff or ruffle is there ;  
And no jewels or gold glitter and shine—

She never had any to wear.  
Ambition for wealth, or love of display,  
We could not even discover,  
For poor in spirit and humble in heart,  
Was my good, old-fashioned mother.

Her life was crowded with work and with care—

How did she accomplish it all !  
I do not remember she ever complained,  
And yet she was slender and small.  
Motives of life that were selfish or wrong,

With Christian grace did she smother,  
And lived for her God, the loved ones at home—  
My true, good, old-fashioned mother.

The years of her life were only three-score,

When the messenger whispered, low,  
“The Master has come and calleth for thee.”

She answered, “I’m ready to go,”  
I gaze alone on her portrait to-night,  
And more than ever I love her,  
And I thank the Lord that He gave to me  
Such a good, old-fashioned mother.

---

*READY TO DEPART.*

HER step grows slower on the flowery sward ;

Friend after friend draws nigh with aching heart,  
And whispers, “Lo, the handmaid of the Lord is ready to depart.”

They ask her if she weeps for summers flown,

For the old hopes—the old loves tried and true?

She answers, “He that sitteth on the throne  
Saith, ‘I make all things new.’”

They ask her if she feels no vain regret,  
For joys that stand like earth’s ungathered grain ?

She answers, “Christ hath richer harvests yet ;  
For me to die is gain.”

They ask her if she has no tears to shed,  
For her old home amid the pleasant lands ?

She answers, “God shall give me in its stead  
A house not made with hands.”

Thus calmly trusting in the Saviour’s grace,

She rests upon the margin of the tide,  
And sees the light of her fair dwelling-place  
Upon the other side.

---

*BUILDING ON THE SAND.*

’Tis well to woo, ’tis well to wed,  
For so the world hath done  
Since myrtles grew and roses blew,  
And morning brought the sun.  
But have a care, ye young and fair,  
Be sure ye pledge with truth ;  
Be certain that your love will wear  
Beyond the days of youth !  
For if you give not heart for heart,  
As well as hand for hand,  
You’ll find you’ve played the unwise part,  
And “built upon the sand.”

’Tis well to save, ’tis well to have  
A goodly store of gold,  
And hold enough of shining stuff,  
For charity is cold.  
But place not all your hope and trust  
In what the deep mine brings ;  
We can not live on yellow dust  
Unmixed with purer things ;

And he who piles up wealth alone  
Will often have to stand  
Beside his coffer chest, and own  
'Tis "built upon the sand."

'Tis good to speak in kindly guise,  
And soothe where'er we can ;  
Fair speech should bind the human  
mind,  
And love link man to man.  
But stop not at the gentle words ;  
Let deeds with language dwell ;  
The one who pities starving birds  
Should scatter crumbs as well ;  
The mercy that is warm and true,  
Must lend a helping hand,  
For those that talk, yet fail to do,  
But "build upon the sand."

—

*THE PSALM-BOOK IN THE  
GARRET.*

A GARRET grows a human thing  
With lonely oriental eyes,  
To whom confiding fingers bring  
The world in yesterday's disguise.

Ah, richer far than noontide blaze  
The soft gray silence of the air,  
As if long years of ended days  
Had garnered all their twilights there.

The heart can see so clear and far  
In such a place, with such a light—  
God counts His heavens star by star,  
And rains them down unclouded  
night.

Where rafters set their cobwebb'd feet  
Upon the rugged oaken ledge,  
I found a flock of singers sweet,  
Like snow-bound sparrows in a  
hedge.

In silk of spider's spinning hid,  
A long and narrow psalm-book lay ;  
I wrote a name upon the lid,  
Then brushed the idle dust away.

Ah, dotted tribe with ebon heads  
That climb the slender fence along !  
As black as ink, as thick as weeds,  
Ye little Africans of song !

Who wrote upon this page, "Forget  
Me Not ?" These cruel leaves of old  
Have crushed to death a violet—  
See here, its spectre's pallid gold.

A penciled whisper during prayer  
Is that poor *dim* and girlish word ;  
But ah, I linger longest where  
It opens of its own accord.

These spotted leaves ! how they once  
basked  
Beneath the glance of girlhood's eyes,  
And parted to the gaze unasked,  
As spread the wings of butterflies.

The book falls open where it will—  
Broad on the page runs "Silver  
Street !"  
That shining way to "Zion's Hill"  
Where base and treble used to meet.

I shake the leaves. They part at  
"Mear"—  
Again they strike the good old tune ;  
The village church is builded here ;  
The twilight turns to afternoon.

Old house of Puritanic wood,  
Through whose unpainted windows  
streamed  
On seats as primitive and rude  
As Jacob's pillow when he dreamed,

The white and undiluted day !  
Thy naked aisle no roses grace  
That blossomed at the shuttle's play ;  
Nor saints distempered bless the  
place.

Like feudal castles, front to front,  
In timbered oak of Saxon Thor,  
To brave the siege and bear the brunt  
Of Bunyan's endless Holy War.



The pulpit and the gallery stand—  
Between the twain a peaceful space.  
The prayer and praise on either hand,  
And girls and Gospel face to face.

I hear the reverend elder say,  
“Hymn fifty-first, long meter, sing!”  
I hear the psalm-books’ fluttered play,  
Like flocks of sparrows taking wing.

Armed with a fork to pitch the tune,  
I hear the deacon call “Dundee;”  
And mount as brisk as “Bonny Doon”  
His “fa, sol, la,” and scent the key.

He “trees” the note for Sister Gray:  
The old Scotch warbling strains be-  
gin;  
The bass of Bashan leads the way,  
And all the girls fall sweetly in.

How swells the hymn of heavenly love,  
As rise the tides in Fundy’s Bay!  
Till all the air below, above,  
Is sweet with song and caraway!

A fugue let loose cheers up the place  
With bass and tenor, alto, air;  
The parts strike in with measured  
grace,  
And something sweet is everywhere!

As if some warbling brood should  
build  
Of bits of tunes a singing nest,  
Each bringing that with which it  
thrilled  
And weaving it with all the rest!

The congregation rise and stand;  
“Old Hundred’s” reeling thunder  
comes  
In heavy surges, slow and grand,  
As beats the surf its solemn drums.

Now comes the times when “China’s”  
wail  
Is blended with the faint perfume  
Of whispering crape and cloudy veil,  
That fold within their rustling gloom

Some wounded human mourning dove,  
And fall around some stricken one  
With nothing left alive to love  
Below the unregarded sun!

And now they sing a star in sight,  
The blessed “Star of Bethlehem;”  
And now the air is royal bright  
With “Coronation’s” diadem.

They show me spots of dimpled sod,  
They say the girls of old are there—  
Oh, no, they swell the choirs of God;  
The dear old songs are everywhere!

---

*A FLOWER FOR THE DEAD.*

YOU placed this flower in her hand,  
you said?  
This pure, pale rose in her hand of  
clay?  
Methinks could she lift her sealed eyes  
They would meet your own with a  
grieved surprise!

She has been your wife for many a year,  
When clouds hung low and when skies  
were clear;  
At your feet she laid her life’s glad  
spring,  
And her summer’s glorious blossom-  
ing.

Her whole heart went with the hand  
you won;  
If its warm love waned as the years  
went on,  
If it chilled in the grasp of an icy spell,  
What was the reason? I pray you tell.

You can not? I can! and beside her  
bier  
My soul must speak, and your soul  
must hear:  
If she was not all that she might have  
been,  
Hers was the sorrow—yours the sin!

Whose was the fault if she did not grow  
 Like a rose in the summer? Do you  
 know?  
 Does a lily grow when its leaves are  
 chilled?  
 Does it bloom when its root is winter  
 killed?  
 For a little while, when you first were  
 wed,  
 Your love was like sunshine round her  
 shed;  
 Then something crept between you  
 two,  
 You led where she could not follow  
 you.  
 With a man's firm tread you went and  
 came;  
 You lived for wealth, for power, for  
 fame;  
 Shut into her woman's works and ways,  
 She heard the nation chant your praise.  
 But ah! you had dropped her hand the  
 while.  
 What time had you for a kiss, a smile?  
 You two, with the same roof overhead,  
 Were as far apart as the sundered dead.  
 You, in your manhood's strength and  
 prime;  
 She—worn and faded before her time,  
 'Tis a common story. This rose, you  
 say,  
 You laid in her pallid hand to-day?  
 When did you give her a flower before?  
 Ah, well! What matter, when all is  
 o'er?  
 Yet stay a moment; you'll wed again.  
 I mean no reproach; 'tis the way of  
 men.  
 But I pray you think, when some fairer  
 face  
 Shines like a star from her wanted  
 place,  
 That love will starve if it is not fed,  
 That true hearts pray for their daily  
 bread.

## TREASURES.

I HAVE some withered flowers  
 That are softly laid away,  
 Not because they were so beautiful  
 And fragrant in their day—  
 But little fingers crisped them,  
 And little lips caressed,  
 And little hands so tenderly  
 Placed them on a "mother's"  
 breast.  
 The paper that enfolds them  
 Was white in other years—  
 But 'tis rumpled now and crumpled,  
 And stained with many tears.  
 Yet, though they looked so worthless,  
 This paper and the flowers,  
 They clasp and hold, like links of gold,  
 Memories of jewel-hours.

I have some little ringlets,  
 They are softly laid away,  
 Their lustre and their beauty  
 Are like the sun's glad ray.  
 But 'tis not for this I prize them—  
 It is that they restore  
 The tender grace of loving face  
 That gladdens earth no more  
 As the shipwrecked men at midnight  
 Have oft been known to cling,  
 With a silent prayer, in wild despair,  
 To some frail, floating thing,  
 So I, in darkened moment,  
 Clasp, with a voiceless prayer,  
 While wandering wide on grief's deep  
 tide  
 These locks of golden hair.

I have some broken playthings  
 That are softly laid away,  
 With some dainty little garments  
 Made in a long-past day:  
 To each there is a history,  
 But this I may not tell,  
 Lest the old, old flood of sorrow  
 Again should rise and swell.  
 Now that the skies are brightened  
 And the fearful storm is o'er,  
 Let me sit in tender calmness,  
 On memory's silent shore,

And count the simple treasures  
That still remain to show  
Where Hope's fair freight, by saddest  
fate,  
Was shipwrecked long ago.

I have another treasure  
That is softly laid away,  
And though I have not seen it  
This many a weary day,  
From every thing around me  
Comes a token and a sign  
That 'tis fondly watched and guarded,  
And that it still is mine.  
When the flowers lie dead in winter,  
In their winding-sheets of snow,  
We know they'll rise to charm our  
eyes  
Again in summer's glow,  
Thus I, in this chill season,  
When frost and darkness reign,  
Wait the blest spring whose warmth  
shall bring  
Life to my flower again.

—————  
*SOMEBODY'S DARLING.*

INTO a ward of the whitewashed walls,  
Where the dead and the dying lay—  
Wounded by bayonets, shells, and  
balls,  
Somebody's darling was borne one  
day.  
Somebody's darling! So young and so  
brave,  
Wearing still on his pale, sweet face,  
Soon to be hid by the dust of the grave,  
The lingering light of his boyhood's  
grace.

Matted and damp are the curls of gold  
Kissing the snow of that fair young  
brow:  
Pale are the lips of delicate mold—  
Somebody's darling is dying now.  
Back from the beautiful blue-veined  
face  
Brush every wandering silken  
thread;  
Cross his hands as a sign of grace—  
Somebody's darling is still and dead.

Kiss him once for *Somebody's* sake,  
Murmur a prayer now soft and low,  
One bright curl from the cluster take—  
They were Somebody's pride, you  
know.

Somebody's hand hath rested there;  
Was it a mother's, soft and white?  
And have the lips of a sister fair  
Been baptized in those waves of  
light?

God knows best. He was Somebody's  
love,  
Somebody's heart enshrined him  
there;  
Somebody wafted his name above,  
Night and morn, on the wings of  
prayer,  
Somebody wept when he marched  
away,  
Looking so handsome, brave, and  
grand;  
Somebody's kiss on his forehead lay;  
Somebody clung to his parting hand.

Somebody's watching and waiting for  
him,  
Yearning to hold him again to her  
heart.  
There he lies—with the blue eyes dim,  
And smiling, childlike lips apart.  
Tenderly bury the fair young dead,  
Pausing to drop on his grave a tear;  
Carve on the wooden slab at his head—  
"*Somebody's darling lies buried  
here!*"

—————  
*MY BLOSSOM.*

ONCE in my quiet garden  
A precious blossom grew;  
Pink with the morning sunshine,  
And bright with early dew.

But the Master of the garden  
Carried me far away,  
And with my precious blossom  
No longer could I stay.

Oh ! bitter was the parting,  
 And my tears fell fast like rain  
 As I kissed the budding blossom  
 I might not see again.

Like Eve, in her woful passion,  
 From the garden gate I passed ;  
 One look of love and longing  
 Sent backward for the last.

But I said to the gracious Master,  
 When my breath came back once  
 more—

“I know Thy hand is righteous  
 Though my heart be smitten sore.

“I can not tend my blossom  
 With water and with sun ;  
 I gave it to Thee, my Master,  
 To see the work be done !

“Though I die by the wayside,  
 Or wander in the showers ;  
 Keep Thou my tender blossom  
 Among Thy dearest flowers.”

And the long, long days went by me,  
 But never for a day,  
 Though rolling up to hundreds,  
 This prayer I cease to pray.

And now I hear her praises  
 Wafted on every air ;  
 How sweet my lily groweth,  
 How gentle and how fair.

And I know the mighty Master  
 Hath heard me day and night,  
 And blessed her with His blessing  
 Of beauty and delight.

And my life sings like the water  
 That runneth to the sea,  
 For the Lord hath been to my lily  
 All that I could not be.

So now I wait with patience  
 Till all the storm be passed,  
 And He shall bring my blossom  
 To Him—and me—at last.

“REQUIESCAT IN PACE.”

SLEEP here in peace !  
 To earth's kind bosom do we tearful  
 take thee ;  
 No mortal sound again from rest shall  
 wake thee ;  
 No fever-thirst, no grief that needs as-  
 suaging,  
 No tempest burst above thy head loud-  
 raging.

Sleep here in peace !

Sleep here in peace !  
 No more thou'lt know the sun's glad  
 morning shining ;  
 No more the glory of the day's declin-  
 ing ;  
 No more the night that stoops serene  
 above thee,  
 Watching thy rest like tender eyes  
 that love thee.

Sleep here in peace !

Sleep here in peace !  
 Unknown to thee the spring will come  
 with blessing,  
 The turf above thee in soft verdure  
 dressing !  
 Unknown will come the autumn rich  
 and mellow,  
 Sprinkling thy couch with foliage golden  
 yellow.

Sleep here in peace !

Sleep here in peace !  
 This is earth's rest for all her broken-  
 hearted,  
 Where she has garnered up our dear  
 departed ;  
 The prattling babe, the wife, the old  
 man hoary,  
 The tired of human life, the crowned  
 with glory.

Sleep here in peace !

Sleep here in peace !  
 This is the gate for thee to walk im-  
 mortal ;  
 This is the entrance to the pearly por-  
 tal,

The pathway trod by saints and sages  
 olden,  
 Whose feet shall walk Jerusalem the  
 golden.  
 Sleep here in peace !

Sleep here in peace !  
 For not on *earth* shall be man's rest  
 eternal ;  
 Faith's morn shall come. Each set-  
 ting sun diurnal,  
 Each human sleeping and each human  
 waking,  
 Hastens the day that shall on earth be  
 breaking.  
 Sleep here in peace !

Sleep here in peace !  
 Faith's morn shall come when He, our  
 Lord and Maker,  
 Shall claim His own that slumber in  
 God's acre ;  
 When He who once for man death's  
 anguish tasted,  
 Shall show death's gloomy realm de-  
 spoiled and wasted.  
 Sleep here in peace !

#### A QUIET NEIGHBORHOOD.

A SUNNY slope where the first daisies  
 blow,  
 And purple asters meet November  
 snow ;  
 Where somber-hued amid the brightest  
 green,  
 The smooth, brown road winds down  
 between  
 Fair dwelling - places, some found it  
 good  
 Slow gathering here, to form a neigh-  
 borhood.  
 Weary of noise perhaps, and glad to  
 come  
 To the deep stillness of this hill-side  
 home  
 Or worn with heavy labor, and in need  
 of rest,

Or racked with pain, or burdened and  
 sore pressed  
 With years, but finding quietude,  
 Solace, and peace in this good neigh-  
 borhood.

For once these dwellings entered, the  
 closed door  
 Shuts out the burdens one has borne  
 before ;  
 If he were poor, now is he rich indeed,  
 Roof overhead, and land for all his  
 need ;  
 None here upon his tellows' rights in-  
 trude ;  
 Each is content in this good neigh-  
 borhood.

And brown and bare, or green with  
 summer showers,  
 Aglow with autumn tints, or bright  
 with flowers ;  
 Or folded close in robe of snowy white,  
 At morn, at eve, or in the solemn night  
 Stars looking down, a silent multitude ;  
 God's peace is resting on this neigh-  
 borhood.

See, one lies waiting to be carried  
 there,  
 Whose life but now was full of vexing  
 care ;  
 The day too short for all she found  
 to do,  
 " *Tired to death* "—her hard tasks  
 never through ;  
 Now tranquil, restful—every sense  
 subdued  
 To the sweet stillness of the neigh-  
 borhood.

Wonderful change ! Oh, happy, kind  
 release !  
 On the worn face a look of Sabbath  
 peace ;  
 To tired hands rest, and to the eyes  
 that weep  
 Or wake for sorrow, deepest, sweetest  
 sleep.



Best—sleep—Ah, if we only understood  
How safe our dear ones in that neighborhood.

So every morning, my day's work begun,  
I smile to think that all their work is done:  
Cheerfully bear the burden and the heat;  
Knowing their rest is very calm and sweet—  
But, O my Father, when it seemeth good,  
Let me, too, join that blessed neighborhood.

—————  
*THE CHOICE.*

BEN EZRA, mourning wild  
Above the body of his child,  
His taith with fate unreconciled,  
Complained, and could not understand  
Why Death's relentless hand  
A thousand common lives should spare  
To snatch a life so fair.

“The old outlive the young;  
The sweetest song is hushed ere it be sung;  
The loveliest bud,” he thought,  
“Is come to naught;  
The page of brightest promise falls unread;  
Oh, cruel jest!” he said.

At last  
His soul flew back into the past.  
Again he smiled above his new-born son,  
And was aware of One  
Who, standing by the cradle, spake:  
“This gift again I take

When but a few swift years are sped.  
Now choose!” the Presence said:  
“Since by the changeless, fathomless decree,  
This bitter loss must be,  
Were it not better I should touch

The child, and mar it, lest it grow to such  
As, losing, thou wouldst mourn too much?

“Or shall I crown it with my rarest crown  
Of glory, to bring down  
A deeper shadow when it fades  
Than common shades?  
So wouldst thou have—and miss—  
The greater bliss!”

“Nay!” cried Ben Ezra; “since this grace  
Bides but so little space,  
Keep back no gift of treasures manifold  
That heaven doth hold;  
But pour the brightness of all spheres  
Into my child's few years,  
That I may drink of joy's full measure first,  
Though afterward I thirst!”

The vision fled,  
Ben Ezra was alone beside his dead;  
And, while afresh he grieved,  
Praised God, with tears, that such a child had lived!

—————  
*HARVEST.*

THO' weel I lo'e the budding spring,  
I'll no misca' John Frost,  
Nor will I roose the summer days  
At gowden autumn's cost;  
For a' the seasons in their turn  
Some wished-for pleasures bring,  
And hand in hand they jink aboot,  
Like weans at jingo-ring.

Fu' weel I mind how aft ye said,  
When winter nights were lang,  
“I weary for the summer woods,  
The lintie's tittering sang.”  
But when the woods grew gay and green,  
And birds sang sweet and clear,  
It then was, “When will hairst-time come,  
The gloaming o' the year?”

Oh! hairst-time's like a lipping cup  
 That's gi'en wi' furthy glee!  
 The fields are fu' o' yellow corn,  
 Red apples bend the tree;  
 The geaty air, sae lady-like!  
 Has on a scented gown,  
 And wi' an airy string she leads  
 The thistle-seed balloon.

The yellow corn will porridge mak',  
 The apples taste your mou',  
 And ower the stibble riggs I'll chase  
 The thistle-down wi' you;  
 I'll pu' the haw frae aff the thorn,  
 The red hip frae the brier—  
 For wealth hangs in each tangled nook  
 In the gloaming o' the year.

Sweet Hope! ye biggit ha'e a nest  
 Within my bairnie's breast—  
 Oh! may his trusting heart ne'er trow  
 That whiles ye sing in jest;  
 Soon coming joys are dancing aye  
 Before his langing een  
 He sees the flower that isna blawn,  
 And birds that ne'er were seen;

The stibble rigg is aye ahin',  
 The gowden grain afore,  
 And apples drop into his lap,  
 Or row in at the door!  
 Come, hairst-time, then, unto my bairn,  
 Drest in your gayest gear,  
 Wi' saft and winnowing win's to cool  
 The gloaming o' the year!

---

*SUMMER'S DONE.*

THINNER the leaves of the larches  
 show,  
 Motionless held in the languid air;  
 Fainter by waysides the sweet-briers  
 grow,  
 Wide bloom laying their gold hearts  
 bare,  
 Languishing one by one:  
 Summer is almost done.

Deeper-hued roses have long since  
 died;  
 Silent the birds through the white  
 mist fly;  
 Down of the thistles by hot sun dried,  
 Covers with pale fleece vines grow-  
 ing nigh;  
 Little brooks calmer run:  
 Summer is almost done.

Later the flush of the sunrise sweeps,  
 Shortening the reign of the slow-  
 coming day;  
 Earlier shade of the twilight creeps  
 Over the swallows skimming away;  
 Crickets their notes have begun;  
 Summer is almost done.

Darkened to mourning the sad-col-  
 ored beech;  
 Empty the nests in its purple boughs  
 lie;  
 Something elusive we never can reach  
 Deepens the glory of days going by;  
 Aftermath lies in the sun:  
 Summer is almost done.

Child! why regret that the summer  
 must go?  
*Sweet lies the aftermath left in the  
 sun;*  
 Lives that are earnest more beautiful  
 grow  
 Out of a childhood in beauty begun:  
 Harvests of gold can be won  
 Only—*when summer is done.*

---

*BETTER IN THE MORNING.*

“YOU can't help the baby, parson,  
 But still I want ye to go  
 Down an' look in upon her,  
 An' read an' pray, you know.  
 Only last week she was skippin' round  
 A pullin' my whiskers and hair,  
 A climbin' up to the table  
 into her litle high-chair.

“ The first night that she took it,  
 When her little cheeks grew red,  
 When she kissed good-night to papa,  
 And went away to bed—  
 Sez she, ‘Tis headache, papa,  
 Be better in mornin’—bye’;  
 An’ somethin’ in how she said it  
 Jest made me want to cry.

“ But the mornin’ brought the fever,  
 And her little hands were hot,  
 An’ the pretty red of her little cheeks  
 Grew into a crimson spot.  
 But she laid there jest ez patient  
 Ez ever a woman could,  
 Takin’ whatever we give her  
 Better’n a grown woman would.

“ The days are terrible long an’ slow,  
 An’ she’s growin’ wus in each;  
 An’ now she’s jest a slippin’  
 Clear away out ov our reach.  
 Every night when I kiss her,  
 Tryin’ hard not to cry,  
 She says in a way that kills me—  
 ‘ Be better in the mornin’—bye !’

“ She can’t get thro’ the night, parson,  
 So I want ye to come an’ pray,  
 And talk with mother a little—  
 You’ll know jest what to say.  
 Not that the baby needs it,  
 Nor that we make any complaint  
 That God seems to think He’s needin’  
 The smile uv the little saint.”

I walked along with the corporal,  
 To the door of his humble home,  
 To which the silent messenger  
 Before me had already come;  
 And if he had been a titled prince,  
 I would not have been honored more,  
 Than I was with his heartfelt welcome  
 To his lowly cottage-door.

Night falls again in the cottage;  
 They move in silence and dread  
 Around the room where the baby  
 Lies panting upon her bed.

“ Does baby know papa, darling ? ”  
 And she moves her little face,  
 With answer that shows she knows  
 him ;  
 But scarcely a visible trace

All her wonderful infantile beauty  
 Remains as it was before  
 The unseen, silent messenger  
 Had waited at the door.  
 “ Papa—kiss—baby ;—I’s—so—tired.”  
 The man bows low his face,  
 And two swollen hands are lifted  
 In baby’s last embrace.

And into her father’s grizzled beard  
 The little red fingers cling,  
 While her husky whispered tenderness  
 Tears from a rock would wring.  
 “ Baby—is—so—sick—papa—  
 But—don’t—want—you—to—cry ? ”  
 The little hands fall on the coverlet—  
 “ Be—better—in—mornin’—bye ! ”

And night around baby is falling,  
 Settling down dark and dense ;  
 Does God need their darling in heaven  
 That He must carry her hence ?  
 I prayed, with tears in my voice,  
 As the corporal solemnly knelt,  
 With such grief as never before  
 His great warm heart had felt.

Oh ! frivolous men and women !  
 Do you know that around you, and  
 nigh—  
 Alike from the humble and haughty  
 Goeth up evermore the cry :  
 “ My child, my precious, my darling,  
 How can I let you die ? ”  
 Oh ! hear ye the white lips whisper—  
 “ Be—better—in—mornin’—bye ! ”

BELOVED OF GOD.

SHE was so fair,  
 The rose and lily vied not with her face,  
 Whereon Time dared not set his  
 seal of care ;

Oh, soul well-lodged in such an inborn  
grace—  
So young and fair.

She was so kind,  
All things grew kind beneath her touch  
and tone;  
Her breath gave softness to the win-  
try wind;  
Her words like rose leaves o'er our  
path were strown;  
Oh, nature kind!

So little taint  
Of ills primeval marked her birth  
Men thought they saw the glory of  
a saint  
Fence her around from all the grosser  
earth,  
And every taint.

Such lowliness  
Was hers, her heart but throbbed to  
bow her down  
To choose her friends 'mid sorrow  
and distress:  
The heavens smiled, for much they  
love to crown  
Such lowliness.

And so much love  
Came from her, as from flow'rs their  
odorous breath,  
We stole its sweetness with us, till  
above  
The angels bore her through the Gates  
of Death,  
Where all is love.

Yet o'er her grave  
No cunning hand hath raised a gilded  
tomb;  
True hearts enshrine her—souls she  
wrought to save:  
The "lilies of the field" above her  
bloom;  
Heav'n decks her grave.

"NO MORE SEA."

AY, artists come to paint it;  
And writers to put in a book,  
How grand in storm, and fair in calm,  
The old North Sea can look.

I've wondered to hear them talking,  
How to mimic in music or song,  
The voice fills the brooding air  
With its thunder low and long;

Since never aught but itself, I wot,  
Could sound like its angry roar,  
When its breakers rise to the east  
winds' call,  
To crash on the rocky shore.

But rough or smooth, in shade or shine,  
The face of the mighty main  
Can speak of little else to me  
But memory, fear, or pain.

Father and husband, and bold, bright  
boy,  
It has taken them one by one;  
I shall lie alone in the church-yard  
there,  
When my weary days are done.

God never sent me a milder bairn  
To stay by me to the last,  
So I sit by the restless tides alone,  
By the grave of all my past;

By the waves so strong and pitiless,  
That have drowned life's joys for me,  
And think of "the land where all shall  
meet,  
The land where is no more sea."

Yet I can not rest in meadow or fell,  
Or the quiet inland lanes,  
Where the great trees spread their  
rustling arms  
Over the smiling plains.

I can't draw breath in the country,  
All shadowed, and green, and dumb,  
The want of the sea is at my heart,  
I hear it calling, "Come."

I hearken, and rise and follow ;  
 Perhaps my men down there,  
 Where the bright shells gleam, and the  
 fishes dart  
 'Mid seaweeds' tangle fair,

Will find me best, if still on earth,  
 When the angel's trump is blown,  
 On the sand-reach, or the tall cliff-  
 side,  
 Ere we pass to the great white  
 throne.

So summer and winter, all alone,  
 By the breaker's lip I wait,  
 Till I see the red light flush the clouds,  
 As he opens the golden gate ;

And though at the sound of the rising  
 waves  
 I oft-times tremble and weep,  
 When the air is void of their glorious  
 voice  
 I can neither rest nor sleep.

And the strangest of all the promises  
 Writ in the Book, to me,  
 Is how on the shores of Paradise,  
 " There shall be no more sea."

—  
 MY NEIGHBORS.

I SIT at the window at early eve,  
 Rocking my baby to sleep ;  
 While the twilight shadows with sun-  
 set beams  
 Are playing at hide and peep.  
 And, crooning a time-worn slumber-  
 song  
 Dreamingly o'er and o'er,  
 I watch my neighbors who live near  
 by,  
 As I've watched them often before.

My neighbors live in the old elm-tree,  
 Whose branches many and strong,  
 At morning and night have nodded  
 to me  
 Full many a summer long.

The sunbeams fall from the golden  
 sky,  
 And merrily play and shine  
 The livelong day on the little pair  
 Who have builded their home near  
 mine.

We are very happy, my neighbors and I ;  
 Intimate friends are we ;  
 I sing them a song of my own some-  
 times,  
 And they merrily sing to me.  
 And now, as I sit by the window here,  
 My neighbor is on her nest,  
 And both of us watch with tender  
 love  
 Our little ones in their rest.

She folds her wings with a warble low  
 Over her babies three ;  
 And my arms are clasping my baby  
 girl  
 And holding her close to me.  
 And the twilight shadows are falling  
 fast  
 Over the mountain side ;  
 And the breeze which has rustled the  
 elm-tree leaves  
 Grows still with the even-tide.

Oh ! little brown neighbor, 'twill not  
 be long  
 Ere *your* children will fly away ;  
 While my wee girl to the dear home-  
 nest  
 Will cling for many a day.  
 There will come a time when the little  
 nest  
 Will have blown from the old elm-  
 tree ;  
 Will you come again, dear little brown  
 bird,  
 To build your nest near me ?

—  
 A WOMAN'S SONG TO WOMAN.

PULL the needle, swing the broom,  
 Tidy up the littered room,



Patch the trousers, darn the shirt,  
Fight the daily dust and dirt ;  
All around you trust your skill,  
Confident of kindness still.

Stir the gruel, knead the bread,  
Tax your hands, and heart, and head :  
Children sick and household hungry ;  
(Though some thoughtless words have  
stung you),  
All are waiting on your will,  
Confident of kindness still.

Never mind the glance oblique,  
Never cause of coldness seek,  
Never notice slight or frown,  
By your conduct live them down :  
All at last will seek your skill,  
Confident of kindness still.

Lift your heart and lift your eyes,  
Let continual prayer arise ;  
Think of all the Saviour's woe  
When He walked with man below,  
How poor sinners sought His skill,  
Confident of kindness still.

Sing the song and tell the story  
Of the Saviour's coming glory,  
To the children whom He blesses  
With your guidance and caresses,  
Who for all things wait your will,  
Confident of kindness still.

Feed the hungry and the weak,  
Words of cheer and comfort speak,  
Be the angel of the poor,  
Teach them bravely to endure ;  
Show them this, the Father's will,  
Confident of kindness still.

Gratitude may be your lot,  
Then be thankful ; but, if not,  
Are you better than your Lord  
Who endured the cross and sword  
From those very hands whose skill  
Waited ever on His will ?

Noble is a life of care  
If a holy zeal be there ;  
All your little deeds of love  
Heavenward helps at last may prove,

If you seek your Father's will,  
Trusting in His kindness still.

*THANKSGIVING HYMN.*

FOR us, O Lord, the year has brought  
Its bloom and harvest glory ;  
To us, through changing seasons,  
taught

Thy truth, in gospel story.  
Again our voices join in song,  
And bring their glad thanksgiving  
To Thee, to whom all years belong,  
To Thee, the ever-living.

We meet with gladness on each lip,  
And kindly warmth of greeting,  
And in thy boundless fellowship,  
Each heart to heart is beating,  
And for this day, and for this hour,  
We bring our glad thanksgiving  
To Thee, the ever-gracious Lord,  
To Thee, the ever-living.

We oft have sung with joy-crowned  
brow  
Of thy new love upspringing,  
And some who joined our songs, are  
now

Amid the angels singing,  
But friends below and friends above  
Unite in glad thanksgiving,  
To Thee, whom all Thy children love,  
To Thee, the ever-living.

Thy power in prayer we oft have felt,  
Thy sympathy most tender,  
And seemed to see, as we have knelt,  
Thy face, in veiled splendor.  
For all these joys from Paradise,  
We bring our glad thanksgiving  
To Thee, who every good supplies,  
To Thee, the ever-living.

So may we join from year to year,  
Thy goodness ever singing,  
And each at last with rapture hear  
The bells of glory ringing.  
Then, safe with Thee, again we'll raise  
Our voices in thanksgiving  
To Thee, in more exalted praise,  
To Thee, the ever-living.

*UNDER THE LILACS.*

UNDER the lilacs we talked and sat,  
Sat and talked through the sunny  
day;

Birds were flying this way and that,  
And the fragrant air was soft with  
May.

This was the burden of all we said:  
"Oh what would life be if love were  
dead?"

The oriole shot its ribboned flame  
From tree to meadow, from mead-  
ow to tree.

Out of the hills a clear brook came  
Crooning a tender melody;  
But, hearing its murmur, I heard it  
said,  
"Oh what would life be if love were  
dead?"

The bumble-bee hurried along his way;  
The grass was showing its purest  
green;

We felt the soulful pulse of May  
On the fairest day that was ever seen.  
And this was the burden of all it said,  
"Oh what would life be if love were  
dead?"

Under the lilacs Elsa and I  
Sat and talked from hour to hour,  
Looking up to the azure sky  
And looking down to the tiniest  
flower;

But this was the burden each fair  
thing said:  
"Oh what would life be if love were  
dead?"

We saw at length the moon arise  
And print her crescent in the west:  
I looked in Elsa's shining eyes;  
But who cannot foretell the rest?  
Two beating hearts that plainly said,  
"Oh what would life be if love were  
dead?"

*BESSIE'S ENGAGEMENT.*

OH, grandma sits in her oaken chair,  
And in flies Bessie with tangled hair;  
"I'm going to be married, oh, grand-  
mamma,  
I'm going to be married! Ha, ha!  
ha, ha!"

Oh, grandma smooths out her apron-  
string:  
"Do you know, my dear, 'tis a solemn  
thing?"

"'Tis solemner not to, grandmamma,  
I'm going to be married! Ha, ha!  
ha, ha!"

Oh, grandma smooths out her apron-  
string,  
And gazes down at her wedding-ring,  
And still she smiles as she drops a tear;  
"'Tis solemner not to.' Yes, my dear."

*THE SHOEING FORGE.*

A STONE'S-THROW from the market-  
town,  
Close on the lane that wanders down  
Between tall trees and hedge rows  
green,

The famous shoeing forge is seen;  
Open it stands upon the road,  
That day and night is overflowed  
By ruddy light that leaps and falls  
Along the rafters on the walls.

And often, halting on his way,  
The idler from the town will stay  
To hear the sharp, clear, ringing sound,  
And watch the red sparks raining  
round,

And the bright, fiery metal glow,  
While the strong smith, with blow on  
blow,  
Hammers it into shape, a sight  
To rouse his wonder and delight.

Now in the smouldering fire once more  
The bar is thrust; the bellows roar

And fan the flame to fiercer light,  
 Until the metal waxes white;  
 Then on the anvil placed again,  
 Ding-dong, the strokes descend amain;  
 Strong is the arm, the vision true,  
 Of him who shapes the iron shoe.

For thee, O reader, is the thought  
 That great success in life is wrought  
 Not by the idler as he stands  
 With wondering looks and empty  
 hands,  
 But by the toiler, who can take  
 Each adverse circumstance and make  
 It bend beneath the force and fire  
 Of firm resolve and high desire.

—————  
*VACATION SONG.*

I HAVE closed my books and hidden my  
 slate,  
 And thrown my satchel across the gate,  
 My school is out for a season of rest,  
 And now for the school-room I love  
 the best!

My school-room lies on the meadow  
 wide,  
 Where under the clover the sunbeams  
 hide;  
 Where the long vines cling to the  
 mossy bars,  
 And the daisies twinkle like fallen stars:

Where clusters of buttercups gild the  
 scene,  
 Like showers of gold-dust thrown over  
 the green,  
 And the wind's flying footsteps are  
 traced, as they pass,  
 By the dance of the sorrel and dip of  
 the grass.

My lessons are written in clouds and  
 trees,  
 And no one whispers, except the  
 breeze,  
 Who sometimes blows, from a secret  
 place,  
 A stray, sweet blossom against my face.

My school-bell rings in the rippling  
 stream  
 Which hides itself, like a school-boy's  
 dream,  
 Under the shadow and out of sight,  
 But laughing still for its own delight.

My schoolmates there are the birds  
 and bees  
 And the saucy squirrel, less wise than  
 these,  
 For he only learns, in all the weeks,  
 How many chestnuts will fill his cheeks.

My teacher is patient, and never yet  
 A lesson of hers did I once forget,  
 For wonderful love do her lips impart,  
 And all her lessons are learned by heart.

Oh, come! oh, come! or we shall be  
 late,  
 And Autumn will fasten the golden  
 gate:  
 Of all the school-rooms, in East or  
 West,  
 The school of nature I love the best.

—————  
*THE FARMER'S SEVENTY  
 YEARS.*

AH, there he is, lad, at the plow;  
 He beats the boys for work,  
 And whatso'er the task might be,  
 None ever saw him shirk.  
 And he can laugh, too, till his eyes  
 Run o'er with mirthful tears,  
 And sing full many an old-time song  
 In spite of seventy years.

"Good-morning, friends! 'tis twelve  
 o'clock;  
 Time for a half-hour's rest."  
 And farmer John took out his lunch  
 And ate it with the rest.  
 "A harder task it is," he said,  
 "Than following up these steers  
 Or mending fences, far, for me  
 To feel my seventy years.

“ You ask me why I feel so young ;  
 I'm sure, friends, I can't tell,  
 But think it is my good wife's fault  
 Who's kept me up so well ;  
 For women such as she are scarce  
 In this poor vale of tears ;  
 She's given me love and hope and  
 strength  
 For more than forty years.

“ And then, my boys have all done  
 well,  
 As far as they have gone,  
 And that thing warms an old man's  
 blood,  
 And helps him up and on.  
 My girls have never caused a pang,  
 Or raised up anxious fears ;  
 Then wonder not that I feel young  
 And hale at seventy years.

“ Why don't my good boys do my work  
 And let me sit and rest ?  
 Ah ! friends, that wouldn't do for me ;  
 I like my own way best.  
 They have their duty ; I have mine ;  
 And till the end appears,  
 I mean to smell the soil, my friends,”  
 Said the man of seventy years.

—  
 THE THAW.

THE clouds had softened when we came  
 from school,  
 And here and there some small, dis-  
 colored pool  
 Or plashy torrent, bursting from the  
 snow,  
 Prognosticated what the morn would  
 show.  
 Then all the night, while we were snug  
 in bed,  
 It poured a flood,—so dear, good  
 grandma said,—  
 That drenched the fields, the gardens  
 overflowed,  
 and plowed deep furrows in the miry  
 road.

It ceased at morning, and a mist began,  
 Whose coursing drops down all the  
 windows ran.  
 But peering forth what change we saw  
 around—  
 “ Look ! look ! ” we cried, “ see, grand-  
 ma, there's the ground ! ”  
 The simple turf it was, but childhood's  
 mind  
 In common things can growing marvels  
 find.  
 Our weeks were long, and we had half  
 forgot  
 How looked the earth when drift and  
 glare were not.

We saw our snow-men “ dead ” about  
 the yard,  
 O'erthrown and headless on the spongy  
 sward ;  
 The sodden leaves, by Indian summer  
 cast,  
 Lay thick about us as we knew them  
 last ;  
 The steamy sheep went wandering forth  
 at will,  
 The barn fowls strayed with crow and  
 cackle shrill ;  
 Deep down the cattle set their blacken-  
 ed hoofs,  
 And pigeons thronged the bare and  
 smoking roofs.

Here crept a brook, there poured a  
 maelstrom down—  
 “ The world's made new ! ” we cried,  
 “ and oh, how brown ! ”  
 It seemed so strange, this brownness  
 everywhere,  
 This coming forth of earth to light and  
 air.  
 Maud found her mitten, sought for high  
 and low,  
 And Tom his hatchet, missing since  
 the snow.  
 And grandma, when our wondering  
 looks she saw,  
 Said, “ Yes, dears, 'tis the January  
 thaw.”

So had she seen it times threescore and ten,  
 While girls to matrons grew and boys to men;  
 And well she warned us of bespattered suits,  
 Of coughs and colds, wet feet and ruined boots.  
 "With thaws," she said, "diseases oft begin—  
 Dear me! the mud that you are tracking in!  
 You'll run and race from early morn till dark,  
 And then all night you'll bark and bark and bark!"

Ah, grandma had experience at her back,  
 True was her judgment as her almanac.  
 Long weeks the thaw delayed its passing off,  
 Maud caught the measles, Tom the whooping-cough;  
 Poor Bounce, our pet, was chid for miry paws,  
 And pussy's feet offended household laws;  
 The door-mat suffered and the broom was twirled,  
 And Mud usurped the empire of our world.

MARGARET.

THROUGH the doorway shone the summer morning,  
 Rich with bloom to tempt the honey bees,  
 Small blue waves ran whispering to the sedges,  
 White sails curved to feel the eager breeze.

I remember still the loon's weird laughter,  
 And the gray gulls wheeling overhead,

Then a low voice, full of pity, saying,  
 "Did they tell you little Margaret was dead?"

"Little Margaret. You see the daisies growing, knee deep, on the windy hill:  
 How she loved the bonny roadside blossoms!  
 She is dead, and they are growing still.

"If a bird dropped, sudden, into silence,  
 One with ear attent would miss its lay;  
 Is there anywhere a heart of nature  
 That can grieve for music passed away?"

"You remember all her winsome beauty;  
 God had made her very sweet and fair;  
 Are such graces wholly lost in dying?  
 Do you think she can be sweeter over there?"

"And if you and I some day should meet her,  
 Crowned and radiant, by the river side,  
 Do you think that we should surely know her  
 For the self-same little Margaret who died?"

Only tears for answer—while the thrushes  
 Filled the leafy covert with their glee;  
 Idle butterflies went drifting past us,  
 Golden blossoms blown along the lea.

In its green cup lay the shining water,  
 All its blue waves blossomed into spray;  
 On the hill the crowding ranks of daisies  
 Tossed their heads like children at their play.



Through the doorway shone the summer morning,  
 Not a tint of all its freshness fled ;  
 Only we two sitting in our sadness,  
 Mourned that little Margaret was dead.

—  
*A GOOD-NIGHT.*

BY-AND-BY, the evening falls,  
 Sons of labor rest,  
 Weary cattle seek the stalls,  
 Birds are in the nest.  
 By-and-by the tide will turn,  
 Change come o'er the sky,  
 Life's hard task the child will learn,  
 By-and-by.

By-and-by, the din will cease,  
 Day's long hours be past,  
 By-and-by in holy peace  
 We shall sleep at last.  
 Calm will be the sea-wind's roar,  
 Calm we too shall lie,  
 Toil and moil and weep no more,  
 By-and-by.

—  
*THE DREAMER.*

ALL day the white-haired woman sits  
 Beside the open door and knits ;  
 No living thing her dim eye sees,  
 As busy with old memories  
 She dreams her dreams of what has  
 been,  
 And knits her old-time fancies in.

She thinks of those who long ago  
 Went out across the threshold low ;  
 How many times her listening ear  
 Had thought familiar footsteps near,  
 And when she started up to find  
 A dead leaf rustling in the wind ;

But never as of those who lie  
 Beneath the wide and tender sky,  
 With folded hands on quiet breast  
 All wrapped about with peace and rest,

She thinks of them. For her they tread  
 The green earth with her. None are  
 dead.

Though years have fallen like the leaves  
 About the graves where summer weaves  
 Her grass-fringed coverlet, to keep  
 Safe hid from all the ones asleep,  
 She sees them all. No grass nor mold  
 Can hide the ones she loved of old.

She talks with them. When brown-  
 winged bee  
 Makes merry in the locust tree,  
 She thinks he comes and sits with her,  
 Whose voice was love's interpreter.  
 O dreamer ! young again to-day,  
 What matter if your hair is gray ?

Sometimes she thinks that round her  
 knee  
 Her children play in happy glee,  
 And when they tired and sleepy grow,  
 She sings some songs of long ago,  
 And on her mother's loving breast  
 She rocks her little ones to rest.

O dreamer ! knitting all the day  
 Your dreams in with your stitches gray,  
 Yours is a happy, happy heart—  
 A haunted world from ours apart ;  
 The years that turn your tresses gray,  
 Have given you back your youth to-day.

—  
*FOR A WARNING.*

I CAN tell just how it happened, though  
 it's fifty years ago,  
 And I sometimes think it's curious that  
 I can remember so ;  
 For though things that lately happened  
 slip my mind, and fade away,  
 I am sure that I shall never lose the  
 memory of that day.

Job was coming to Thanksgiving—so  
 he wrote us in the Fall ;  
 He was Ezra's oldest brother, and his  
 favorite of them all.

We'd been keeping house since April,  
 but I couldn't always tell  
 When my pie-crust would be flaky, or  
 the poultry roasted well ;  
 So I felt a little worried—if the truth  
 must be confessed—  
 At the thought of Ezra's brother com-  
 ing as our household guest.

Just a week before Thanksgiving Ezra  
 rode one day to town,  
 As I needed things for cooking—flour,  
 and sugar, white and brown ;  
 And I worked like any beaver, all the  
 time he was away,  
 Making mince and stewing apple for  
 the coming holiday.  
 I was hot, and tired, and nervous, when  
 he galloped home at night—  
 All that day my work had plagued me,  
 nothing seemed to go just right.

"Here's the flour, Lucindy," said he ;  
 "it's the best there is in town ;  
 I forgot the other sugar, but I've  
 brought enough of brown."  
 "You're a fool!" I cried in fury, and  
 the tears began to fall ;  
 "Ride ten miles to do an errand, and  
 forget it after all!"

I was cross and clean discouraged, as  
 I thought he ought to know ;  
 But he turned as white as marble when  
 he heard me speaking so.  
 Not a word he said in answer, but he  
 started for the door,  
 And in less than half a minute galloped  
 down the road once more.

Then I nearly cried my eyes out, what  
 with grief and fear and shame ;  
 He was good and kind and patient ; I  
 was all the one to blame.  
 And the hours wore on till midnight, and  
 my heart seemed turned to stone,  
 As I listened for his coming while I sat  
 there all alone.

With the daylight came a neighbor ;  
 "Ezra has been hurt," he said ;  
 "Found beside the road unconscious ;  
 taken up at first for dead."  
 Just behind him came four others, with  
 a burden slowly brought ;  
 As I stood and dumbly watched them  
 you can guess of all I thought !

Oh, the days and nights that followed !  
 Ezra lived, but that was all ;  
 And with tearless eyes I waited for the  
 worst that might befall.  
 Wandering in a wild delirium, broken  
 phrases now and then  
 Dropped from fevered lips, and told me  
 what his painful thoughts had been.

So Thanksgiving dawned upon us. Job  
 came early, shocked to meet  
 Such a broken-hearted woman for the  
 bride he hoped to greet.  
 Not a word we spoke together in that  
 hushed and shadowed room,  
 Where we waited for the twilight dark-  
 ening down to deeper gloom ;  
 For the doctor said that morning,  
 "There is nothing more to do ;  
 If he lives till after sunset, I, perhaps,  
 can pull him through."

Just as five o'clock was striking, Ezra  
 woke and feebly stirred ;  
 "Did you get the sugar, darling?"  
 were the words I faintly heard.  
 How I cried ! You can't imagine how  
 I felt to hear him speak,  
 Or to see his look of wonder as I bent  
 to kiss his cheek.  
 Well, I've told a long, long story—  
 Ezra's coming up the walk—  
 But I've had a purpose in it ; 'twasn't  
 just for idle talk.  
 Don't you think, my dear, you'd better  
 make your quarrel up with Gray ?  
 It may save a world of trouble, and it's  
 near Thanksgiving Day.

*LILACS.*

DAME MARGERY has a lilac bush  
That grows by her cottage door,  
And there it has blossomed its purple  
flush

Full twenty-five years or more.  
For she says, and a quiver goes over  
her lip,

“John planted it here for me,  
That morning before he sailed in the  
ship

That never came home from sea.”

To every boy and girl that goes  
To school by the kind dame's door,  
She gives a bunch of the purple blows,  
Till blossoming time is o'er,  
She loves to have, and she loves to  
give,

And the good dame says, “You  
know

The way to keep, you'll see, if you live  
Next Spring, is to bestow.”

Ma'am Allison lives across the street,  
And her lilac tree grows high :  
But away she drives the little feet  
When they come her lilacs nigh,  
“Dame Margery's blooms will soon  
be gone—

She's foolish, seems to me ;  
I'll not be breaking my lilacs down  
For every child,” says she.

Spring came. Dame Margery's bush  
was full

Of wonderful, perfect bloom ;  
In royal purple beautiful,  
And sweet with its fresh perfume.  
Ma'am Allison's tree had of blooms  
not one !

The last year's seeds were there ;  
But vain she watched till the May was  
gone,  
For purple blossoms fair.

Dame Margery said, “Ah ! don't you  
know  
If last year's blossoms stay,

The next year's buds will fail to grow  
Till these are broken away ?  
For this year's lilacs cannot live  
With seeds of last year's Spring.”  
Ma'am Allison learned that she must  
give,  
If she would have a thing. !

*THE FRIEND'S BURIAL.*

MY thoughts are all in yonder town,  
Where, wept by many tears,  
To-day my mother's friend lays down  
The burden of her years.

True as in life, no poor disguise  
Of death with her is seen,  
And on her simple casket lies  
No wreath of bloom and green.

O, not for her the florist's art,  
The mocking weeds of woe,  
But blessings of the voiceless heart,  
The love that passeth show !

Yet all about the softening air  
Of new-born sweetness tells,  
And the ungathered May-flowers wear  
The tints of ocean shells.

The old, assuring miracle  
Is fresh as heretofore ;  
And earth takes up its parable  
Of life from death once more.

Here organ swell and church-bell toll  
Methinks but discordant were,  
The prayerful silence of the soul  
Is best befitting her.

No sound should break the quietude  
Alike of earth and sky ;  
O wandering wind in Seabrook wood,  
Breathe but a half-heard sigh !

Sing softly, spring-bird, for her sake,  
And thou, not distant sea,  
Lapse lightly, as if Jesus spake,  
And thou wert Galilee !

For all her quiet life flowed on  
 As meadow streamlets flow,  
 Where fresher green reveals alone  
 The noiseless ways they go.

From her loved place of prayer I see  
 The plain-robed mourners pass,  
 With slow feet treading reverently  
 The graveyard's springing grass.

Make room, O mourning ones, for me,  
 Where, like the friends of Paul,  
 That you no more her face shall see  
 You sorrow most of all.

Her path shall brighten more and more  
 Unto the perfect day;  
 She cannot fail of peace who bore  
 Such peace with her away.

O sweet, calm face that seemed to wear  
 The look of sins forgiven!  
 O voice of prayer that seemed to bear  
 Our own needs up to heaven!

How reverent in our midst she stood,  
 Or knelt in grateful praise!  
 What grace of Christian womanhood  
 Was in her household ways!

For still her holy living meant  
 No duty left undone;  
 The heavenly and the human blent  
 Their kindred loves in one.

And if her life small leisure found  
 For feasting ear and eye,  
 And pleasure, on her daily round,  
 She passed unpausing by,

Yet with her went a secret sense  
 Of all things sweet and fair,  
 And beauty's gracious providence  
 Refreshed her unaware.

She kept her line of rectitude  
 With love's unconscious ease;  
 Her kindly instincts understood  
 All gentle courtesies.

An inborn charm of graciousness  
 Made sweet her smile and tone,  
 And glorified her farm-wife dress  
 With beauty not its own.

The dear Lord's best interpreters  
 Are humble human souls;  
 The Gospel of a life like hers  
 Is more than books or scrolls.

From scheme and creed the light goes  
 out,  
 The saintly fact survives;  
 The blessed Master none can doubt  
 Revealed in holy lives.

—————

*WINTER—A LAMENT.*

O SAD-VOICED winds that sigh about  
 my door!  
 Ye mourn the pleasant hours that are  
 no more,  
 The tender graces of the vanished  
 spring,  
 The sultry splendor of long summer  
 days,  
 The songs of birds, and streamlets  
 murmuring,  
 And far hills dimly seen through pur-  
 ple haze.

Still as the shrouded dead the cold  
 earth lies;  
 Sunless and sullen droop the troubled  
 skies;  
 There is no sound within the leafless  
 wood,  
 No mellow echo on the barren hill;  
 Hushed is the piping of the insect  
 brood,  
 And hushed the gurgle of the meadow-  
 rill.

By rutted lanes the tangled green is  
 gone;  
 The vine no longer hides the naked  
 stone,

But with its skeleton black fingers  
 clings,—  
 Its clustered berries, withered on the  
 stem,  
 Held sadly out like humble offerings,  
 Too poor for any hand to gather them.

On hillside pastures where the pant-  
 ing sheep  
 Hid from high noon in piny shadows  
 deep,  
 In level lawns with daisies overcast,  
 The haunts of belted bees and butter-  
 flies,  
 The sere grass whistles in the cut-  
 ting blast,  
 The wrinkled mould in frozen furrows  
 lies.

Now o'er the landscape dreary and  
 forsaken,  
 Like some thin veil by unseen fingers  
 shaken,  
 The snow comes softly hovering  
 through the air,  
 Flake after flake in crossing threads of  
 white,  
 Weaving in misty mazes everywhere,  
 Till forest, field, and hill are shut from  
 sight.

O sad-voiced winds that sigh about my  
 door!  
 I mourn with ye the hours that are no  
 more.  
 My heart is weary of the sullen sky,  
 The leafless branches, and the frozen  
 plain;  
 I long to hear the earliest wild-bird's  
 cry  
 And see the earth in gladsome green  
 again.

BY THE STREAM.

SWEET tangled banks where ox-eyed  
 daisies grow  
 And scarlet poppies gleam ;

Sweet changing lights, that ever come  
 and go  
 Upon the quiet stream !

Once more I see the flash of splendid  
 wings,  
 As dragon-flies flit by ;  
 Once more for me the small sedge-  
 warbler sings  
 Beneath a sapphire sky.

Once more I feel the simple, fresh con-  
 tent  
 I found in stream and soil  
 When golden Summers slowly came  
 and went,  
 And mine was all their spoil.

I find amid the honeysuckle flowers,  
 And shy forget-me-not,  
 Old boyish memories of lonely hours  
 Passed in this silent spot.

Oh, God of nature, how Thy kindness  
 keeps  
 Some changeless things on  
 earth !  
 And he who roams far off, and toils  
 and weeps,  
 Comes home to learn their  
 worth.

Gay visions vanish, worldly schemes  
 may fail,  
 Hope prove an idle dream,  
 But still the blossoms flourish, red and  
 pale,  
 Beside my native stream.

THE CHURCHYARD PATH.

HE leant beside the churchyard gate,  
 A dying man, yet loth to go ;  
 A little longer he would wait  
 For strength to face the last dread  
 foe ;



The shadows on the stones  
around  
Fell darker still, and more pro-  
found.

A little cottage girl came by,  
And dropped a courtesy at the gate;  
He, longing for some human cry,  
Spake: "Little one, you wander  
late;  
Do you not fear the churchyard  
gloom?"  
She shook her head—" 'Tis my  
way home."

And so passed on into the shade  
A weary child, and nothing more;  
Nay, a heaven-guided little maid,  
A troubled spirit to restore.  
He stood erect, the truth made  
known,

The churchyard path was *his* way  
home.

—————  
*DOLCINO TO MARGARET.*

THE world goes up, and the world goes  
down,  
And the sunshine follows the rain,  
And yesterday's sneer, and yesterday's  
frown  
Can never come over again,  
Sweet wife,  
No, never come over again.

For woman is warm though man be  
cold,  
And the night will hallow the day;  
Till the heart which at even was weary  
and old,  
Can rise in the morning gay,  
Sweet wife,  
To its work in the morning gay.



HOME SCENES AND HOME LIFE  
IN THE  
TOWN.



FIRESIDE MUSINGS.

## HOME SCENES AND HOME LIFE IN THE TOWN.

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### *HOLD CLOSER STILL MY HAND.*

HOLD closer still my hand, dear love,  
Nor fear its touch will soil thine  
own ;  
No palm is cleaner now than this,  
So free from earth-stain has it grown  
Since last you held it clasped so close,  
And with it held my life and heart.  
For my heart beat but in your smile,  
And life was death, we two apart.

I loved you so. And you? Ah, well!  
I have no word or thought of blame;  
And even now my voice grows low  
And tender, whispering your name.  
You gauged my love by yours; that's  
all.

I do not think you understood;  
There is a point you men can't reach,  
Up the white heights of womanhood.

You love us—so at least you say,  
With many a tender smile and word;  
You kiss us close on mouth and brow,  
Till all our heart within is stirred;  
And having, unlike you, you see,  
No other interests at stake,  
We give our best, and count that death  
Is blessed when suffered for your  
sake.

---

### *THE QUEEN.*

SHE lives not in a palace;  
She sits not on a throne;  
She holds no golden scepter;  
She wears no precious stone;

And yet, her home is regal;  
No prince ere lived in such:  
Her subjects feel, with gladness,  
Their queen's soft, thrilling touch.

Her word is jeweled scepter;  
Her eyes are shining gems—  
No royal barge ere carried  
Such on the royal Thames.

Her subjects are her children;  
Her queendom is her life;  
Those who obey her mandates  
Call her their—mother—wife.

---

### *BREAD AND CHEESE AND KISSES.*

ONE day, when I came home fatigued,  
And felt inclined to grumble,  
Because my life was one of toil,  
Because my lot was humble,  
I said to Kate, my darling wife,  
In whom my whole life bliss is,  
“What have you got for dinner, Kate?”  
“Why, bread and cheese and kisses.”

Though worn and tired, my heart  
leaped up  
As those plain words she uttered,  
Why should I envy those whose bread  
Than mine's more thickly buttered?  
I said, “We'll have dessert at once.”  
“What's that?” she asked. “Why  
this is.”  
I kissed her. Ah, what sweeter meal  
Than bread and cheese and kisses?

I gazed at her with more delight;  
She nodded and smiled gaily;  
I said, “My love, on such a meal  
I'd dine with pleasure daily;  
When I but think of you, dear girl,  
I pity those fine misses  
Who turn aside their head and pout  
At bread and cheese and kisses.



“ And when I look on your dear form,  
 And on your face so homely ;  
 And when I look in your dear eyes,  
 And on your dress so comely ;  
 And when I hold you in my arms,  
 I laugh at fortune’s misses.  
 I’m blest in you, content with you,  
 And bread and cheese and kisses.”

—  
*GROWING OLD.*

I LOOKED in the tell-tale mirror,  
 And saw the marks of care,  
 The crow’s feet and the wrinkles,  
 And the gray in the dark-brown  
 hair.  
 My wife looked o’er my shoulder—  
 Most beautiful was she ;  
 “ Thou wilt never grow old, my love,”  
 she said,  
 “ Never grow old to me.  
 For age is the chilling of heart,  
 And thine, as mine can tell,  
 Is as young and warm as when first  
 we heard  
 The sound of our bridal bell !”  
 I turned and kissed her ripe red lips :  
 “ Let time do its worst on me,  
 If in my soul, my love, my faith,  
 I never seem old to thee !”

—  
*TOGETHER—FOREVER !*

SWEET heart, your bonnie eyes were  
 blue  
 When first we met, you know :  
 They gave me back looks fond and  
 true  
 In the days of long ago !  
 They shone like lakes of tranquil light  
 In those young days of ours,  
 When we with hearts and footsteps  
 light  
 Plucked April’s opening flowers.  
 Those April days went fleetly by,  
 And in your April eyes,  
 Dear heart, soft shadows came to lie  
 Like clouds in sunny skies.

Full many a doubt and sweet wife-care  
 Weighed those past days of ours,  
 And yet we stole some moments rare  
 To pluck midsummer’s flowers.

Dear heart of mine, sweet heart, true  
 heart,  
 Lift up your eyes to me !  
 Those cares had never power to part  
 Loves pledged so truthfully !  
 And in our life’s late, fair fall days—  
 Though frost has stripped the bow-  
 ers—  
 We’ll search the old, well-trodden  
 ways,  
 For autumn’s closing flowers !

—  
*HIS AND HERS.*

HIS to struggle and defend ;  
 Hers to quietly arrange ;  
 His to make rude forces bend ;  
 Hers to soothe in every change.  
 His to manage or invent ;  
 War when it may bring its night,  
 Giving a full, brave consent,  
 Evermore the watchword “ Right.”  
 Hers the inner wealth to keep,  
 Shielded from the outer blaze ;  
 But when over battles sweep,  
 On his brow to press her praise.

Thus temptations forth he’ll meet,  
 Perils, trials, all will dare,  
 While he knows an angel sweet  
 Watches in a safe home there—  
 Watches till his glad return—  
 When the music of the hearth,  
 Where their married heart-stars burn,  
 Breathes the dearest on the earth.

His is the stern field without ;  
 Hers is the bright one within ;  
 Yet there is such peace about,  
 Neither’s ever called to win.  
 Equal right amid the place—  
 Crowned together Strength and  
 Grace.



Sword-armed Husband ! Pearl-wreathed Wife !

Ye have found the real shrine  
Where the children breathe true life :

Obedience, love, joy entwined.

Yes, it is prophetic, too,

Of the mansion waiting you

Under that Eternal Dome

Where the gentle, brave, and true

Live, love in a Heavenly Home.

---

TWO DAYS.

No fairer day was ever seen—

The sky of cloudless blue—

The tall old trees like tents of green,

With sunlight sifting through.

But warmth and brightness brought  
no ease,

No soothing for my pain,

And singing birds and droning bees

Took up one sad refrain—

The echo of my longing heart,

They bore it back to me :

*"The friend so long and truly loved  
Is far away from thee !"*

A winter morning, dark and gray—

The leaden sky hangs low,

The wailing wind rose with the day ;

Upheaps the drifting snow.

I watch through half-blurred window-  
pane

The sullen, driving storm,

But spite of tempest's howl and strain

My heart is light and warm.

These wild discordant voices blend

In one sweet melody ;

*"The friend so long and truly loved  
Is coming back to me !"*

---

BETTER NOT TO KNOW.

IF in the years to come, dear,

When all are growing old,

And I am wan and wrinkled,

Your love for me grows cold,

My heart would break to know it,

And death come all too slow ;

Then do not tell me, darling,

'Tis better not to know.

You think me almost perfect,

And see no fault to-day—

Sometime you will discover

I am but common clay ;

You'll see my many failings

With eyes that keener grow,

But do not tell me, darling,

'Tis better not to know.

If sometime in the future,

As down life's stream we glide,

You almost wish a fairer face

Were sailing by your side,

Your thoughts go back regretfully

To days of long ago,

Oh, do not tell me, darling,

'Tis better not to know.

And if you find, alas ! too late,

Some mem'ry lingers still,

Some loss has left an aching void,

A place I can not fill,

Still wear for me a smile, dear,

As through this life we go,

And never tell me, darling,

'Tis better not to know.

The way is very long, dear heart,

Perhaps a darksome way,

That lies between this world of ours

And God's eternal day ;

But we will walk it hand in hand,

And share each joy, each woe ;

Since God doth lead us, darling,

'Tis best we can not know.

---

I TOLD YOU.

I TOLD you the winter would go, love,

I told you the winter would go ;

That he'd flee in shame when the south

wind came,

And you smiled when I told you so.

You said the blustering fellow  
 Would never yield to a breeze,  
 That his cold, icy breath had frozen to  
 death  
 The flowers and grass and trees.

But I told you the snow would melt,  
 love,

In the passionate glance o' the sun,  
 And the leaves on the trees, and the  
 flowers and bees

Would come back again, one by one ;  
 That the great white clouds would van-  
 ish,

And the sky turn tender and blue,  
 And the sweet birds would sing and  
 talk of the spring,  
 And, love, it has all come true.

I told you that sorrow would fade, love,  
 And you would forget half your pain ;  
 That the sweet bird of song would  
 waken ere long,

And sing in your bosom again ;  
 That hope would creep out of the  
 shadows,

And back to its nest in your heart,  
 And gladness would come, and find its  
 old home,

And that sadness at length would  
 depart.

---

*GOOD-NIGHT.*

GOD keep you safe, my little love,  
 All through the night ;  
 Rest close in His encircling arms  
 Until the light.

My heart is with you as I kneel to pray ;  
 Good-night ! God keep you in His care  
 alway.

Thick shadows creep like silent  
 ghosts  
 About my head ;

I lose myself in tender dreams ;  
 The moon comes stealing through the  
 window bars,  
 A silver sickle gleaming 'mid the stars.

For I, though I am far away,  
 Feel safe and strong ;  
 To trust you thus, dear love—and  
 yet—

The night is long—  
 I say with sobbing breath the old fond  
 prayer,  
 Good-night ! Sweet dreams ! God keep  
 you everywhere !

---

*GOOD-BYE.*

GOOD-BYE, good-bye, it is the sweetest  
 blessing

That falls from mortal lips on mor-  
 tal ears,  
 The weakness of our human love con-  
 fessing,

The promise that a love more strong  
 is near—

May God be with you !

Why do we say it when the tears are  
 starting !

Why must a word so sweet bring  
 only pain ?

*Our* love seems all-sufficient till the  
 parting,

And then we feel it impotent and  
 vain—

May God be with you !

Oh, may He guide and bless and keep  
 you ever,

He who is so strong to battle with  
 your foes ;

Whoever fails, His love can fail you  
 never,

And all your needs He in His wis-  
 dom knows—

May God be with you !

Better than earthly presence, e'en the  
 dearest,

Is the great blessing that our part-  
 ings bring ;

For in the loneliest moments, God is  
 nearest,

And from our sorrows heavenly com-  
 forts spring

If God be with us !

Good-bye, good-bye, with latest breath  
 we say it,  
 A legacy of hope, and faith, and love ;  
 Parting must come, we can not long  
 delay it,  
 But, one in Him, we hope to meet  
 above,  
 If God be with us !

Good-bye—'tis all we have for one an-  
 other,  
 Our love, more strong than death,  
 is helpless still,  
 For none can take the burden from his  
 brother,  
 Or shield, except by prayer, from any  
 ill.  
 May God be with you !

—————  
 THE ANSWER.

"That we together may sail,  
 Just as we used to do."  
*Carleton's Ballads.*

AND what if I should be kind ?  
 And what if you should be true ?  
 The old love could never go on  
 Just as it used to do.

The wan, white hands of the waves,  
 That smote us swift apart,  
 Will never enclasp again,  
 And draw us heart to heart.

The cold, far feet of the tides  
 That trod between us two,  
 Can never retrace their steps,  
 And fall where they used to do.

Oh, well the ships must remember,  
 That go down to the awful sea,  
 No keel that chisels the current  
 Can cut where it used to be.

Not a throb of the gloom or glory  
 That stirs in the sun or the rain,  
 Will ever be *that* gloom or glory  
 That dazzled or darkened—again.

Not a wave that stretches its arms  
 And yearns to the breast of the shore,  
 Is ever the wave that came trusting,  
 And yearning, and loving, before.

The hope that is high as the heavens,  
 The joy that is keen as pain,  
 The faith that is free as the morning,  
 Can die—but can live not again.

And though I should step beside you,  
 And hand should lean unto hand,  
 We should walk mutely—stifled—  
 Ghosts in a breathless land.

For I am as dead as you are,  
 And you are as dead as I ;  
 He who burns souls down to ashes,  
 He only can answer why.

And what if I should be kind ?  
 And though you should be true ?  
 The old love could never, never  
 Love on as it used to do.

—————  
 A LOVE SONG.

WHETHER she love me, I can not tell.  
 O'er her sweet face the blushes come  
 and go ;  
 Through dark-fringed covers, drooping  
 softly down,  
 I see the light from tender, deep eyes  
 glow.

Whether she love me, I can not tell.  
 I only see the gleam of golden hair  
 O'er the white shoulders gently rippling  
 low ;  
 Than fairest pictured saint she is  
 more fair.

Whether she love me, I can not tell.  
 I only see sweet shyness in her look  
 Of innocence that drew my heart away ;  
 Who, loving her, all other loves for-  
 sook.

Whether she love me, I can not tell.  
 But this I know, and find the knowl-  
 edge sweet :  
 For good or ill, for life or death itself,  
 My happy heart is ever at her feet.

*JUST A FEW WORDS.*

JUST a few words, but they blinded  
The brightness all out of a day ;  
JUST a few words, but they lifted  
The shadows and cast them away.

Oh ! the pain of the wounds,  
Of the harden'd word's sting ;  
Oh ! the balm and the brightness  
That kind ones will bring.

Only a frown, but it dampen'd  
The cheer of a dear little heart ;  
Only a smile, but its sweetness  
Check'd tears that were ready to  
start.

Sullen frowns—how they chill,  
Happy smiles—how they lure  
One to smile, one to raise,  
One to kill, one to cure.

Oh, that the rules of our living  
More like to the golden would be !  
Much, oh ! so much more of sunshine  
Would go out from you and me.

Less profession, more truth  
In our every-day life,  
More justice, then surely,  
Lighter hearts and less strife.

For better and kinder we all mean to  
be,  
But there's lack in the thinking of both  
you and me.

*COMFORT.*

IF there should come a time, as well  
there may,  
When sudden tribulation smites thine  
heart,  
And thou dost come to me for help  
and stay,  
And comfort, how shall I perform  
my part ?

How shall I make my heart a resting-  
place,  
A shelter safe for thee when terrors  
smite ?

How shall I bring the sunshine to thy  
face,

And dry thy tears in bitter woe's de-  
spite ?

How shall I win the strength to keep  
my voice

Steady and firm, although I hear thy  
sobs ?

How shall I bid thy fainting soul re-  
joice,

Nor mar the counsel by mine own  
heart-throbs ?

Love, my love teaches me a certain  
way,

So, if thy dark hour come, I am thy  
stay.

I must live higher, nearer to the  
reach

Of angels in their blessed trustful-  
ness,

Learn their unselfishness ere I can  
teach

Content to thee whom I would  
greatly bless.

Ah me ! what woe were mine if thou  
shouldst come,

Troubled, but trusting unto me for  
aid,

And I should meet thee powerless and  
dumb,

Willing to help thee, but confused,  
afraid !

It shall not happen thus, for I will  
rise,

God helping me, to higher life, and  
gain

Courage and strength to give thee  
counsel wise,

And deeper love to bless thee in thy  
pain.

Fear not, dear love, thy trial hour  
shall be

The dearest bond between my heart  
and thee.

*MIZPAH.*

YES, brief our parting words shall be,  
And few our parting tears;  
The Lord shall watch 'twixt me and  
thee,

Through all the coming years.  
His eyes shall be our guiding light,  
Wherever we may roam  
Like beacon-fires that burn at night,  
To lure the wanderer home.

We will not fear that time or change  
Our perfect trust can dim,  
No shadow of a wrong estrange  
The hearts that rest in Him;  
But should they for one hour forget,  
For one faint hour be cold,  
The Lord shall watch between us yet,  
His love our love shall hold.

Beloved, when we reach apart  
The valley lone and dread,  
Which, side by side, and heart to heart,  
We once had thought to tread,  
His faithful rod, thy staff and mine,  
Through all the ways shall be  
The comfort of His grace a sign  
Still between me and thee.

*IN THE CITY.*

TWO artless souls I met to-day—  
A pair of homespun lovers;  
As lightsome and as careless they  
As aught the sunshine covers.

Stray moths that float the summer  
through  
Had wingless seemed beside them,  
Who, wholly glad, found naught to do  
With what might yet betide them.

Along the busy street they stept,  
Their arms close intertwined,  
And of the crowd no record kept  
While one to other listed.

I could not hear a word they said,  
Yet quick, returning glances  
Between them, spoke of spirits wed  
Like those in old romances.

The satchel swinging on his arm,  
His garments quaintly fitted,  
Her old-time dress yet girlish charm,  
All held me while they flitted.

I saw they would not barter one  
Of either's valued kisses  
For any riches under sun  
That make up meaner blisses.

And then I thought how heaven comes  
down  
To bless the simple-hearted,  
Who have no care for fashion's frown,  
Nor fear but to be parted.

And thought, too, if the world but  
guessed  
The half of what it loses  
By slighting love, 'twould stand con-  
fessed  
In shame of what it chooses.

Yet nothing recked the happy pair  
Of such a lesson needed  
By folk o'erlooked, while passing there  
Themselves as little heeded.

All unconcerned they dreamed not  
why  
I scanned their tell-tale faces,  
And pitied silent ones go by  
To cold, heart-lonely places.

These laughed and talked delighting  
each,  
And stept as on the heather;  
Supremely blessed one goal to reach,  
Linked arm in arm together.

*CHANGED HARMONIES.*

FAIR faces beaming round the house-  
hold hearth,  
Young joyous tones in melody of mirth,  
The sire doubly living in his boy,  
And she, the crown of all that wealth  
of joy;  
These make the home like some sweet  
lyre, given  
To sound on earth the harmonies of  
heaven.



A sudden discord breaks the swelling  
 strain,  
 One chord has snapped; the harmony  
 again  
 Subdued and slower moves, but never  
 more  
 Can pour the same glad music as of  
 yore;  
 Less and less full the strains successive  
 wake,  
 Chord after chord must break—and  
 break—and break;  
 Until on earth the lyre, dumb and  
 riven,  
 Finds all its chords restrung to loftier  
 notes in heaven.

—————  
*DIVIDED.*

I KNOW the dream is over,  
 I know you can not be  
 In all the time to come the same  
 That you have been to me;  
 The color still is in the cheek,  
 The lustre in the eye,—  
 But, ah! we two have parted hands—  
 Good-bye!

Not that I love you less,  
 For, oh! my heart is sore,—  
 Not that the lips that breathe your  
 name  
 Are less fond than of yore;  
 But the unresting feet of Time  
 Have traveled on so fast!  
 And soul from soul has grown away  
 At last.

I think I just stood still—  
 For I had found my all—  
 But your rich life swept ever on  
 Beyond my weak recall;  
 And now, although the voice rings  
 sweet,  
 And clear the dear eyes shine,  
 I know no part of all their wealth  
 Is mine.

What bridge can sad Love build  
 Across this gulf of Change,  
 Who needs must work with broken  
 hopes  
 And fancies new and strange?  
 Alas, it is too late,—  
 The light fades down the sky,  
 The hands slip slowly each from each—  
 Good-bye!

—————  
*SEPARATION.*

A WALL was grown up between the  
 two—  
 A strong, thick wall, though all un-  
 seen;  
 None knew when the first stones were  
 laid,  
 Nor how the wall was built, I ween.

And so their lives were wide apart,  
 Although they shared one board,  
 one bed;  
 A careless eye saw naught amiss,  
 Yet each was to the other dead.

He, much absorbed in work and gain,  
 Grew soon unmindful of his loss;  
 A hard indifference worse than hate  
 Changed love's pure gold to worth-  
 less dross.

She suffered tortures all untold;  
 Too proud to mourn, too strong to  
 die;  
 The wall pressed heavily on her heart;  
 Her white face showed her misery.

Such walls are growing day by day  
 'Twixt man and wife, 'twixt friend  
 and friend—  
 Would they could know, who lightly  
 build,  
 How sad and bitter is the end.

A careless word, an unkind thought,  
 A slight neglect, a taunting tone—  
 Such things as these, before we know,  
 Have laid the wall's foundation stone.

*TRODDEN FLOWERS.*

THERE are some hearts that, like the  
 loving vine,  
 Cling to unkindly rocks and ruined  
 towers,  
 Spirits that suffer and do not repine—  
 Patient and sweet as lowly trodden  
 flowers  
 That from the passer's heel arise,  
 And bring back odorous breath instead  
 of sighs.

But there are other hearts that will not  
 feel  
 The lonely love that haunts their  
 eyes and ears ;  
 That wound fond faith with anger  
 worse than steel ;  
 And out of pity's spring draw idle  
 tears.  
 Oh, Nature ! shall it ever be thy will  
 Ill things with good to mingle, good  
 with ill ?

Why should the heavy foot of sorrow  
 press  
 The willing heart of uncomplaining  
 love—  
 Meek charity that shrinks not from  
 distress,  
 Gentleness, loth her tyrants to re-  
 prove ?  
 Though virtue weep forever and la-  
 ment,  
 Will one hard heart turn to her and  
 repent ?

Why should the reed be broken that  
 will bend,  
 And they that dry the tears in others'  
 eyes  
 Feel their own anguish swelling with-  
 out end,  
 Their summer darkened with the  
 smoke of sighs ?  
 Sure, Love to some fair region of his  
 own  
 Will flee at last, and leave us here  
 alone.

Love weepeth always—weepeth for  
 the past,  
 For woes that are, for woes that  
 may betide ;  
 Why should not hard ambition weep  
 at last,  
 Envy and hatred, avarice and pride ?  
 Fate whispers, so low is your lot,  
 They would be rebels ; love rebelleth  
 not.

*A HOME.*

WHAT is a home ? A guarded space  
 Wherein a few, unfairly blest  
 Shall sit together, face to face,  
 And bask and purr, and be at rest ?

Where cushioned walls rise up between  
 Its inmates and the common air,  
 The common pain, and pad, and screen  
 From blows of fate or winds of care ?

Where Art may blossom strong and  
 free,  
 And Pleasure furl her silken wing,  
 And every laden moment be  
 A precious and peculiar thing ?

And past and future, softly veiled  
 In hiding mists, shall float and lie  
 Forgotten half, and unassailed  
 By either Hope or Memory.

While the luxurious Present weaves  
 Her perfumed spells untried, untrue,  
 'Broiders her garments, heaps her  
 sheaves,  
 All for the pleasure of a few ?

Can it be this—the longed-for thing  
 Which wanderers on the restless  
 foam,  
 Unsheltered beggars, birds on wing  
 Aspire to, dream of, christen  
 "Home ?"

No. Art may bloom, and peace and  
 bliss ;  
 Grief may refrain and Death forget ;

But if there be no more than this  
The soul of home is wanting yet.

Dim image from far glory caught,  
Fair type of fairer things to be,  
The true home rises in our thought  
As beacon for all men to see.

Its lamps burn freely in the night;  
Its fire-glow unhidden shed  
Their cheering and abounding light  
On homeless folk uncomforted.

Each sweet and secret thing within  
Gives out a fragrance on the air—  
A thankful breath sent forth to win  
A little smile from others' care.

The few, they bask in closer heat;  
The many catch the further ray.  
Life higher seems, the world more  
sweet,  
And hope and Heaven less far away.

So the old miracle anew  
Is wrought on earth and proved  
good,  
And crumbs apportioned for a few,  
God-blessed, suffice a multitude.

-----  
*ONLY.*

It was only a little blossom,  
Just the merest bit of bloom,  
But it brought a glimpse of summer  
To the little darkened room.

It was only a glad "good-morning,"  
As she passed along the way;  
But it spread the morning's glory  
Over the livelong day.

Only a song; but the music,  
Though simply pure and sweet,  
Brought back to better pathways  
The reckless roving feet.

Only! In our blind wisdom  
How dare we say it at all?  
Since the ages alone can tell us  
Which is the great or small.

*SPARROWS.*

LITTLE birds sit on the telegraph  
wires,  
And chitter and flitter, and fold their  
wings,  
Maybe they think that for them and  
their sires,  
Stretched always on purpose these  
wonderful strings:  
And perhaps the Thought that the  
world inspires  
*Did* plan for the birds among other  
things.

Little birds sit on the slender lines,  
And the news of the world runs under  
their feet,  
How value rises, and how declines;  
How kings with their armies in battle  
meet;  
And all the while, 'mid the soundless  
signs,  
They chirp their small gossipings  
foolish-sweet.

Little things light on the lines of our  
lives,  
Hopes and joys and acts of to-day;  
And we think that for these the Lord  
contrives,  
Nor catch what the hidden lightnings  
say.  
But from end to end his meaning ar-  
rives,  
And His word runs underneath all  
the way.

Is life only wires and lightnings then,  
Apart from that which about it  
clings?  
Are the works and the hopes and the  
prayers of men  
Only sparrows that light on God's  
telegraph strings,  
Holding a moment and gone again?  
Nay; He planned for the birds with  
the larger things.

*PARTED.*

OH, loved and lost so long, so long ago !  
The barriers fall at last between our  
faces.

Time has turned back for us his cease-  
less flow,  
Our feet stand in the old familiar  
places.

Your eyes look into mine, as oft be-  
fore,  
The dear sad eyes of deep and ear-  
nest feeling ;  
And carried to those sweet days  
of yore,  
A flood of tender thoughts is o'er  
me stealing.

And as you come with hands out-  
stretched to mine,  
Step as of old so light and joyous-  
hearted,  
My heart forgets the faithlessness of  
thine,  
Forgets the long, long years since  
we were parted.

But stop! altho' your breath is on my  
cheek  
And happy tear-drops on my lashes  
tremble,  
I shrink from you—nay, you must let  
me speak—  
These are not fancies I could fain  
dissemble.

A nameless something stands between  
us still—  
See, see yon shapes that close about  
us gather !  
At their approach my heart grows faint  
and chill.  
Cling closer to thee? Nay, they part  
us rather !

Phantoms they are from your dead past  
and mine !  
Events and faces gone we thought  
forever—

Ah, can you not their presence here  
divine ?

The hands that erst they parted still  
they sever !

These at your feet once laid me in de-  
spair.

See how they still are glaring down  
upon me !

These are the blessed ones that found  
me there

And back to life and light and glad-  
ness won me.

Forgive? I do forgive. 'Tis not my  
pride,

But yon dark ghosts of yours keep  
us asunder,

And these dear ones of light here at  
my side

That look on me with piteous, speech-  
less wonder.

I do forgive thee ; but can not forget  
The love that replaced thine. Nay,  
come not nearer !

Dear as you were, and are, and shall be,  
yet

My past, dead as it is, to me is dearer.

*LOVES.*

“ Now tell me, dear, of all the loves  
Have lived within your breast,  
Of all the loves of your whole life,  
Which have you loved the best ?

“ The first, that came when the young  
heart

Was strong with youth's desire,  
The passion that was pain in part,  
Quick change of frost and fire ;  
Or the swift fancy somewhere caught  
In crowded city's street ;

In land of palm or pine, inwrought  
With dreams both great and sweet

A face that followed, went before  
In misty light,

Haunting the heart forevermore  
By day and night ?

“Or do you hold as best the love  
Which Fate for healing brings,  
The quiet folding of the dove  
After the restless wings—  
The love far sought, that yet was near,  
A home of peace and rest?  
Of all your loves, now tell me, dear,  
Which have you loved the best?”

He looked into the wasting west,  
Across a purple field of sea;  
“Of all my loves, I’ve loved the best  
The one that—loved not me—  
Ah me!”

—————  
*LET BYGONES BE BYGONES.*

LET bygones be bygones; if bygones  
were clouded

By aught that occasioned a pang of  
regret,  
Oh, let them in darkest oblivion be  
shrouded;  
’Tis wise and ’tis kind to forgive and  
forget.

Let bygones be bygones, and good be  
extracted

From ill over which it is folly to fret;  
The wisest of mortals have foolishly  
acted—

The kindest are those who forgive  
and forget.

Let bygones be bygones; oh, cherish  
no longer

The thought that the sun of Affec-  
tion has set;

Eclipsed for a moment, its rays will be  
stronger,

If you, like a Christian, forgive and  
forget.

Let bygones be bygones; your heart  
will be lighter,

When kindness of yours with recep-  
tion has met;

The flame of your love will be purer  
and brighter,

If, Godlike, you strive to forgive and  
forget.

Let bygones be bygones; oh, purge  
out the leaven  
Of malice, and try an example to set  
To others, who, craving the mercy of  
heaven,  
Are sadly too slow to forgive and  
forget.

Let bygones be bygones; remember  
how deeply

To heaven’s forbearance we all are  
in debt;

They value God’s infinite goodness too  
cheaply

To heed not the precept, “Forgive  
and forget.”

—————  
*I PRAY FOR THEE.*

WHEN thou art very weak and weary,  
dear,

When it is dark, and all seems dreary  
here,

And suddenly a light, almost divine,  
Upon thy doubting eyes and heart  
doth shine

And thou the way to go dost plainly  
see,

Know, dearest heart, that then I pray  
for thee.

Far off in little chamber I am saying  
These words all softly, and God hears  
me praying:

Dear Lord, I do not know  
If all is well

With him whom I love so.

But Thou canst tell;

Oh, give him light to see!

Oh, with him ever be!

Till all is well.

When with a weight of sorrow and of  
fears,

Crushed to the earth, thou weapest  
bitter tears,

Lo! gently round the arms of tender-  
est love

Raise thee from depths of woe, and  
far above,



Thou hear'st a sweet voice say, "Trust  
in me!"

Know, dearest heart, that then I pray  
for thee.

Then with full heart of love to God I'm  
saying

These words, all softly, and He hears  
me praying:

O Lord! perhaps, to-day,  
Down in the dust,  
He think'st not Thou didst say,  
"Heart, in me trust!"  
Oh, save him, Lord, in love!  
Oh, lift him up above,  
Out of the dust.

When all the answering beauty of thy  
soul

Is throbbing, thrilling with the rap-  
turous whole

Of Nature, as on odorous summer  
night

The tremulous stars thy senses all de-  
light,

Thou feelest higher joys than these  
can be,

Know, dearest heart, that then I pray  
for thee.

For at my twilight window I am say-  
ing

These words, all softly, and God hears  
me praying:

Dear Father, as to-night  
He sees the sky  
With glorious beauty light,  
To Thee on high,  
Who this rare radiance wrought,  
Raise his adoring thought  
Above the sky.

When tenderly beside some stricken  
child

Thou standest, and dost speak of Jesus  
mild,

Dost whisper of His patience and His  
death,

It seems to thee, as if some quickening  
breath

Of God's rich power in thine own words  
might be,

Know, dearest heart, that then I pray  
for thee.

With all the knowledge-power of love  
I'm saying

These words, all softly, and God hears  
me praying:

Be with him, Lord, to-day,  
And him inspire,  
As lovingly a way,  
A path far higher,  
He shows to blinded heart,  
To his thought warmth impart,  
His words inspire!

And if, e'en now, eyes better loved than  
mine

Waken that wondrous tenderness in  
thine,

If all thy better self to life is stirred  
By other's look, or touch, or gentle  
word,

If one is dearer now than I can be,  
Still, dearest heart, believe I pray for  
thee.

Between my sobbing and my tears, I'm  
saying

These words, all softly, and God hears  
me praying:

Dear Lord, if it is best,  
Make him more glad!  
Give to him joy and rest:  
I may be sad:  
I can most lonely be,  
Dear Lord, if only he  
Is made more glad.

---

*WHEN THE SONG'S GONE OUT  
OF YOUR LIFE.*

WHEN the song's gone out of your life,  
That you thought would last to the  
end—

That first sweet song of the heart  
That no after days can lend—

The song of the birds to the trees,  
The song of the wind to the flowers,  
The song that the heart sings low to  
itself

When it wakes in life's morning  
hours :

"You can start no other song."

Not even a tremulous note  
Will falter forth on the empty air ;  
It dies in your aching throat.

It is all in vain that you try,  
For the spirit of song has fled—  
The nightingale sings no more to the  
rose

When the beautiful flower is dead.

So let silence softly fall

On the bruised heart's quivering  
strings ;

Perhaps from the loss of all you may  
learn

The song that the seraph sings :  
A grand and glorious psalm  
That will tremble, and rise, and  
thrill,

And fill your breast with its grateful  
rest,

And its lonely yearnings still.

#### THE DATE IN THE RING.

The women dressed her for farewell  
In snowy silk and lace ;  
A crown of her braided hair they set  
Above her quiet face,  
And on her placid breast they laid  
White roses, as became a maid.

Her mother bent and kissed her lips,  
And kissed her braided hair,  
And folded down the peaceful hands  
Upon the bosom fair,  
And, weeping, saw on one a ring—  
A little golden time-worn thing.

She took it from the icy hand  
And looked for rhyme or name—  
Something to say why it was there,  
From whose fond thought it came.

She only saw, through many a tear,  
A date long past—day, month, and  
year.

"'Twas some school-fellow's gift," she  
sighed,

"The child forgot to show,"  
And put it back in its own place  
With tender touch and slow,  
And saw its tiny glitter rest  
Like sunbeam on that pulseless breast.

Ah, little ring, you kept it well,  
The secret of your date !

Whatever its meaning, it goes untold  
Beyond the earth and fate :  
Pain or blessing—who can say  
How much of either in it lay ?

We watch the light in our darlings'  
eyes,

The lines that the slow years bring,  
Yet know as little what they mean  
As the secret of the ring.

Joy or sorrow—God only knows  
How much of both lies under the rose.

#### HOME.

WHEN daily tasks are done, and tired  
hands  
Lie still and folded on the resting  
knee,

When loving thoughts have leave to  
loose their bands,  
And wander over past and future  
free ;

When visions bright of love and hope  
fulfilled  
Bring weary eyes a spark of olden  
fire,

One castle fairer than the rest we  
build,  
One blessing more than others we  
desire ;

A home, our home, wherein all wait-  
ing past,

We two may stand together, and  
alone ;

Our patient taskwork finished, and at last  
 Love's perfect blessedness and peace  
 our own.  
 Some little nest of safety and delight,  
 Guarded by God's good angels day and  
 night.

We can not guess if this dear home  
 shall lie  
 In some green spot embowered with  
 arching trees,  
 Where bird-notes joined with brook-  
 notes gliding by,  
 Shall make us music as we sit at  
 ease.  
 Or if amid the city's busy din  
 Is built the nest for which we look  
 and long,  
 No sound without shall mar the peace  
 within,  
 The calm of love that time has  
 proved so strong,  
 Or if, ah! solemn thought, this home  
 of ours  
 Doth lie beyond the world's confus-  
 ing noise;  
 And if the nest be built in Eden  
 bowers,  
 What do we still, but silently re-  
 joice?  
 We have a home, but of its happy  
 state  
 We know not yet. We are content to  
 wait.

WHAT WE SHOULD CARE FOR.

IT matters little where I was born,  
 Or if my parents were rich or poor;  
 Whether they shrank at the cold  
 world's scorn,  
 Or walked in the pride of wealth  
 secure;  
 But whether I live an honest man,  
 And hold my integrity firm in my  
 clutch,  
 I tell you, brother, plain as I am,  
 It matters much!

It matters little how long I stay  
 In a world of sorrow, sin, and care;  
 Whether in youth I am called away,  
 Or live till my bones and pate are  
 bare;  
 But whether I do the best I can  
 To soften the weight of adversity's  
 touch  
 On the faded cheek of my fellow-man,  
 It matters much!

It matters little where be my grave,  
 Or on the land or on the sea,  
 By purling brook or 'neath stormy  
 wave,  
 It matters little or naught to me;  
 But whether the angel Death comes  
 down  
 And marks my brow with his loving  
 touch,  
 As one that shall wear the victor's  
 crown,  
 It matters much!

HIDDEN PATHS.

What thou doest I know not now, but I shall  
 know hereafter.

SAD-EYED Madonnas walk the earth  
 in every land—  
 Pure mother-hearts whose secret e'en  
 to them is hid  
 In deeps of love and pain, deeps by  
 bright promise spanned,  
 But all unbridged of those fulfill-  
 ments, that amid

Earth's pressing needs, make solid  
 ground for mortal feet.  
 It is so hard to walk by faith when  
 years go by,  
 And bring no added sight, or proof  
 wherewith to greet  
 And strengthen failing power, or still  
 reproachful cry.

So walk the seers and sages of all  
 lands and times,  
 A true apostle's true succession from  
 the old

First days, when God first set His seal  
in ancient climes  
Upon devoted priestly souls, through  
all the fold,

Down to the hour when the last priest-  
ess-mother bore  
Some child of promise for some wait-  
ing nation's need,  
All true reformers, teachers, leaders,  
evermore  
Must come in forms prepared, despite  
all seeming need.

In forms prepared, and through their  
one appointed lot  
Tho' none in all the era see and re-  
cognize  
The worker, as in grooves of royal  
law, forgot  
By those for whom they toil, to  
mounts of sacrifice

Called irresistibly—and for all reason  
why  
The toll, toll, toll, throughout their  
soul the era-bell  
By which God calls His chosen—Ah!  
beloved, to die  
Were so much easier; yet "He doeth  
all things well."

The far event and purpose justifies,  
explains,  
No God-appointed work may ever  
"haste" or "rest,"  
The pruned away, the shorn, unblos-  
soming years have gains  
Of late rich fruit that proves a hand  
divine hath dressed.

It shall be given these to walk in Para-  
dise.  
God's priests and priestesses, co-  
workers are with Him;  
'Tis not too much to pay for such pearl  
of great price  
That many passing earthly years be  
shorn and dim.

*BIRTH SONG.*

LET winds and waters murmur clear;  
More sweet this infant voice to me,  
That comes as from the golden sphere  
Where thrills the soul of harmony:  
Blow, tempest, and let thunder roll—  
God gives us this immortal soul.

Let scepters flash, and senates shake;  
The war-steed neigh, the trumpet  
blow;  
Let banners strike the wind, and make  
A splendor where the warriors go:  
What heed we? War may rage and  
roll—  
God gives us this immortal soul.

Let science glimmer on the brine,  
Bind isle to isle, and clime to clime;  
And on the ocean's lyric line,  
Let lightning twang the psalms of  
time:  
A triumph! Let the music roll—  
God gives us this immortal soul.

For, in this soul, serene and clear,  
All mortal and immortal shine:  
Eternity, a single year,  
Thought glowing into light divine:  
Bend, bend the knee! let anthems roll  
For God's sweet gift, a virgin soul!

*THE EVENING HEARTHSTONE.*

GLADLY now we gather round it,  
For the toiling day is done,  
And the gay and solemn twilight  
Follows down the golden sun.  
Shadows lengthen on the pavement,  
Stalk like giants through the gloom,  
Wander past the dusky casement,  
Creep around the fire-lit room.  
Draw the curtain, close the shut-  
ters,  
Place the slippers by the fire;  
Though the rude wind loudly  
mutters,  
What care we for wind-  
sprite's ire?

What care we for outward seeming?  
Fickle Fortune's frown or smile?

If around us love is beaming,  
Love can human ills beguile.  
'Neath the cottage-roof and palace,  
From the peasant to the king,  
All are quaffing from life's chalice  
Bubbles that enchantment bring.

Grates are glowing, music flow-  
ing

From the lips we love the  
best;

Oh, the joy, the bliss of knowing  
There are hearts whereon to  
rest!

Hearts that throb with eager gladness—

Hearts that echo to our own—

While grim care and haunting sadness  
Mingle ne'er in look or tone.

Care may tread the halls of daylight,  
Sadness haunt the midnight hour,  
But the weird and witching twilight  
Brings the glowing hearthstone's  
dower.

Altar of our holiest feelings!

Childhood's well-remembered  
shrine!

Spirit-yearnings — soul-reveal-  
ings—

Wreaths immortal round thee  
twine!

---

*THE BABY OVER THE WAY.*

As I've sat at my chamber window,

I've noticed again and again

The sweetest of baby figures

At the opposite window pane;

Rosy cheeks daintily dimpled,

Curls that, without any check,

Tumble and twist in confusion,

With the corals about its neck.

But how has that little one stolen

A march on my foolish old heart?

And why, as I watch those bright  
eyes,

Will the quick tear instinctively  
start?

Ah! because in the long-ago years,  
Ere time mingled my tresses with  
gray,

I, too, had a baby as lovely  
As the little one over the way.

From the white robe and clustering  
curls,

From that vision of infinite joy,  
Oh, sadly, so sadly I turn

To all I have left of my boy;

To the baby-clothes, yellow with age,  
To the curl that once lay on his  
brow,

To the old-fashioned cradle—the  
nest—

So drearily tenantless now.

The first grief comes back to me then,

The longing that can not be told,

For the sight of the dear little face,

For my own darling baby to hold;

And my arms ache with emptiness, so

That I feel I am hardly content

To wait for the summons to go

The way that my little one went.

And so, for the sake of the joy

That long ago gladdened my heart,

For the light that once shone on my  
way,

So quickly, alas! to depart;

For the love that I bore my own  
darling,

All babies are dearer to-day;

And I think I must call on the mother

Of that baby over the way.

---

*CHILDLESS.*

MY neighbor's house is not so high,

Nor half so nice as mine;

I often see the blinds ajar,

And though the curtain's fine,

It's only muslin, and the steps

Are not of stone at all—

And yet I long for her small home

To give mine all in all.



Her lawn is never left to grow—  
 The children tread it down;  
 And when the father comes at night,  
 I hear them clatter down  
 The gravel walk; and such a noise  
 Comes to my quiet ears,  
 As my sad heart's been waiting for  
 So many silent years.

Sometimes I peep to see them seize  
 His coat, and hand, and knees—  
 All three so anxious to be first;  
 And hear her call, "Don't tease  
 Papa"—the baby springs—  
 And then the low brown door  
 Shuts out their happiness, and I  
 Sit wishing, as before,

That my neighbor's little cottage  
 And the jewels of her crown  
 Had been my own; my mansion  
 With its front of granite brown,  
 Its damask, and its Honiton—  
 Its lawn so green and bright—  
 How gladly would I give them  
 For her motherhood to-night!

—  
*WHERE IS YOUR BOY TO-NIGHT?*

LIFE is teeming with evil snares,  
 The gates of sin are wide,  
 The rosy fingers of pleasure wave  
 And beckon the young inside.  
 Man of the world, with open purse,  
 Seeking your own delight,  
 Pause, ere reason is wholly gone—  
 Where is your boy to-night?

Sirens are singing on every hand  
 Luring the ear of youth,  
 Gilded falsehood with silver notes  
 Drowneth the voice of truth.  
 Dainty lady in costly robes,  
 Your parlors gleam with light,  
 Fate and beauty your senses steep—  
 Where is your boy to-night?

Tempting whispers of royal spoil  
 Flatter the youthful soul  
 Eagerly entering into life,  
 Restive of all control.

Needs are many, and duties stern  
 Crowd on the weary sight;  
 Father, buried in business cares,  
 Where is your boy to-night?

Pitfalls lurk in the flowery way,  
 Vice has a golden gate,  
 Who shall guide the unweary feet  
 Into the highway straight?  
 Patient worker with willing hand  
 Keeping the home-hearth bright,  
 Tired mother with tender eyes,  
 Where is your boy to-night?

Turn his feet from the evil paths  
 Ere they have entered in,  
 Keep him unspotted while yet ye may,  
 Earth is so stained with sin;  
 Ere he has learned to follow wrong,  
 Teach him to love the right,  
 Watch, ere watching is wholly vain—  
 Where is your boy to-night?

—  
*TAKE THIS LETTER TO MY MOTHER.*

TAKE this letter to my mother,  
 Far across the deep blue sea,  
 It will fill her heart with pleasure,  
 She'll be glad to hear from me.  
 How she wept when last we parted,  
 How her heart was filled with pain,  
 When she said, "Good-bye, God bless  
 you—  
 We may never meet again."

Take this letter to my mother,  
 It will fill her heart with joy,  
 Tell her that her prayers are answered,  
 God protects her absent boy;  
 Tell her to be glad and cheerful,  
 Pray for me where'er I roam,  
 And ere long I'll turn my footsteps  
 Back toward my dear old home.

Take this letter to my mother,  
 It is filled with words of love,  
 If on earth I'll never meet her,  
 Tell her that we'll meet above,

Where there is no hour of parting,  
 All is peace, and love, and joy;  
 God will bless my dear old mother,  
 And protect her only boy.

---

*THE MOTHER.*

“A perfect woman nobly planned.”

NEVER too tired to hear or heed  
 The slightest cry of her children's need;  
 Never impatient in look or word,  
 By what tender thoughts her heart is  
 stirred.

Through nights of watching and busy  
 days,  
 Unwearied, she asks no meed of praise;  
 For others spending and being spent,  
 She finds therein her sweet content.

Though decked in no robes of silken  
 sheen,  
 In her small domain she walks a queen;  
 Outshining far the costliest gem,  
 A spirit meek is her diadem.

Though fortune frown, she is brave of  
 heart,  
 No selfish thought in her life has part;  
 Patient and trustful though storms may  
 lower,  
 A faithful friend in life's darkest hour.

---

*TWO TOILERS.*

“LADY, sitting in silken gear,  
 Up in your chamber height,  
 Lay sunshine in a golden web  
 Across your floor to-night?  
 For sure your threads were all of gold,  
 I saw their glimmer fall  
 Through your fingers, and cast a gleam  
 Upon your pictured wall.”

“Alas! but heavy-hearted still,  
 I see along the west,  
 Day's white sail vanish dreamily  
 Over the darkness crest.

For scant, and poor, the freight all told  
 I have sent out therein;  
 Though rich, and full, and splendid  
 heaped,  
 I hoped it would have been.”

For clumsy weaving tarnished oft  
 The gleaming treasure gold;  
 And my best arts but left it there  
 Faded, and dull, and old.  
 Sometimes tears dimmed my vision, so  
 I only could work slow;  
 Or the tears dropping rusted sore  
 The burnished, yellow glow.

“Oh! may we not with weary eyes,  
 Friend, fold our hands and weep,  
 When it is growing late for work,  
 And almost time to sleep?  
 For we are but vain toilers all,  
 Each in his empty way;  
 And life's best gold is set with gloom,  
 And Heaven's far away.”

“Toiler, sitting in humble garb,  
 Down in your shady room,  
 Patient have I seen you bending  
 Over your busy loom;  
 I have caught no sheen of golden,  
 Glinting, glad and gay—  
 Naught for your daily store to weave,  
 But dull and quiet gray.”

“Toiler, like a warm wing-shelter  
 Comes darkness brooding o'er;  
 Resting in the soothing shadow,  
 Sit now within thy door;  
 Tell me how through the light's delay  
 You wove your stint to-day,  
 Out of that gloomy, shady store,  
 Your dim and dusky gray?”

“God cares to have (I guess not why,  
 And yet so I believe),  
 In His fair world—the dusty web  
 That even spiders weave,  
 There must be reason, then, to think  
 He needs the poor, pale gray;  
 And so I weave it carefully,  
 And simply trust He may.”

"And sometime in a glad surprise,  
As if by chance inrolled,  
Shining from out the dusk I find  
Even a thread of gold,  
How richly forth it shines erewhile  
Set in my homely woof ;  
And like a crown glows out so grand  
Beneath my humble roof !"

"I am content to fold my hands,  
Now at the still night-fall ;  
God sets no soul to work for naught,  
Nor cheats one of us all  
With wasted toil ; we work His will  
Each in his diff'rent way ;  
And e'en life's gray has in it gold,  
Nor is Heaven far away."

---

*TIRED MOTHERS.*

A LITTLE elbow leans upon your knee,  
Your tired knee that has so much to  
bear ;  
A child's dear eyes are looking lovingly  
From underneath a thatch of tangled  
hair,  
Perhaps you do not heed the velvet  
touch  
Of warm, moist fingers, holding  
yours so tight—  
You do not prize this blessing over-  
much ;  
You almost are too tired to pray  
to-night.

But it is blessedness ! A year ago  
I did not see it as I do to-day—  
We are all so dull and thankless, and  
too slow  
To catch the sunshine till it slips  
away.  
And now it seems surpassing strange  
to me  
That, while I bore the badge of  
motherhood,  
I did not kiss more oft and tenderly  
The little child that brought me only  
good.

And if, some night when you sit down  
to rest,  
You miss this elbow from your tired  
knee—  
This restless, curling head from off  
your breast,  
This lisping tongue that chatters  
constantly ;  
If from your own the dimpled hands  
had slipped,  
And ne'er would nestle to your palm  
again ;  
If the white feet into their grave had  
tripped,  
I could not blame you for your heart-  
ache then.

I wonder so that mothers ever fret  
At little children clinging to their  
gown ;  
Or that the foot-prints, when the days  
are wet,  
Are ever black enough to make them  
frown.  
If I could find a little muddy boot,  
Or cap or jacket, on my chamber  
floor ;  
If I could kiss a rosy, restless foot,  
And hear it patter in my home once  
more ;  
If I could mend a broken cart to-day,  
To-morrow make a kite to reach the  
sky—  
There is no woman in God's world  
could say  
She was more blissfully content  
than I.  
But ah ! the dainty pillow next my  
own  
Is never ruffled by a shining head ;  
My singing birdling from its nest has  
flown ;  
The little boy I used to kiss is dead !

---

*A MOTHER'S WORK.*

"She looketh well to the ways of her house-  
hold, and eateth not the bread of idleness."—  
PROV. xxxi. 27.

EARLY in the morning  
Up as soon as light,

Overseeing breakfast,  
 Putting all thinks right ;  
 Dressing little children,  
 Hearing lessons said,  
 Washing baby faces,  
 Toasting husband's bread.

After breakfast reading,  
 Holding one at prayers :  
 Putting up the dinners,  
 Mending little tears ;  
 Good-bye kissing children,  
 Sending off to school,  
 With a prayer and blessing,  
 Mother's heart is full.

Washing up the dishes,  
 Sweeping carpets clean,  
 Doing up the chamber-work,  
 Sewing on machine ;  
 Baby lies a-crying—  
 Rubbing little eyes,  
 Mother leaves her sewing  
 To sing the lullabies.

Cutting little garments,  
 Trimming children's hats,  
 Writing for the papers,  
 With callers having chats ;  
 Hearing little footsteps  
 Running through the hall,  
 Telling school is over,  
 As mamma's name they call.

Talking with the children  
 All about their school,  
 Soothing little troubles,  
 Teaching grammar rules ;  
 Seeing about supper,  
 Lighting up the room,  
 Making home look cheerful,  
 Expecting husband soon.

Then, with all her headaches,  
 Keeping to herself,  
 Always looking cheerful,  
 Other lives to bless.  
 Putting to bed children—  
 Hearing say their prayers,

Giving all a good-night's kiss,  
 Before she goes down-stairs.

Once more in the parlor,  
 Sitting down to rest,  
 Reading in the Bible  
 How His promises are blest ;  
 Taking all her sorrows  
 And every care to One,  
 With that trusting, hopeful heart,  
 Which none but mothers own.

---

*GOING AWAY.*

Do not be angry with me  
 For an idle word I say ;  
 Do not be angry, father,  
 Because I am going away.  
 Have patience with me, my mother,  
 Though I may have none with you ;  
 But I love you, I love you, mother,  
 Whatever I say or do.  
 Look kindly upon me, sister,  
 You are beautiful and gay ;  
 Your days will be long and happy,  
 But I am going away.  
 With me, if you could but read it,  
 Clear written on cheek and brow,  
 There is no past, no future—  
 Only a brief, calm Now ;  
 A little space to be glad in—  
 A lesser space to grieve ;  
 And life's whole scene fades from me,  
 As the landscape fades at eve.

Except—that eve I shall see not,  
 My day is ended at noon ;  
 And the saddest bit of the story  
 Is—it does not end too soon.  
 I am so weary, weary !  
 I could turn my face to the wall ;  
 Like a sick child, long before bedtime,  
 Drop asleep among you all ;  
 So glad that lessons are over ;  
 Still gladder that play is done ;  
 And a dusky curtain stretches  
 Between me and the sun.

Good-bye, my father and mother !  
 Two of you—and but one of me !  
 And, sister, you'll find some stranger  
 Much closer than I could be ;  
 One more—but death's quiet teaching  
 Is making me slowly wise ;  
 My heart, too poor for his keeping,  
 Thou, God, Thou wilt not despise ;  
 My soul, too weak for earth's battle,  
 Thou wilt gird up anew,  
 And the angels shall see me doing  
 The work I was meant to do ;  
 The work that I ever failed in,  
 And wept o'er, and tried again,  
 Till brain, and body, and spirit  
 Snapped under the cruel strain.

That is over. So none need be sorry ;  
 You rather ought to rejoice,  
 And sing my *vade in pacem*  
 Without a break in your voice ;  
 And let me depart contented,  
 Before the heat of the day ;  
 For I shall be still God's servant,  
 Although I have gone away !

—————  
*MY MOTHER KNELT IN  
 PRAYER.*

ONCE in my boyhood's gladsome day,  
 My spirits light as air,  
 I wandered to a lonely room,  
 Where mother knelt in prayer.

Her hands were clasped in fervency,  
 Her lips gave forth no sound ;  
 Yet, awe-struck, solemnly I felt  
 I stood on holy ground.

My mother, all entranced in prayer,  
 My presence heeded not ;  
 And reverently I turned away  
 In silence from the spot.

An orphan wanderer, far from home  
 In after-time I strayed ;  
 But God has kept me, and I feel  
 He heard her when she prayed.

"SIT STILL, MY DAUGHTER."

"SIT still, my daughter !  
 Wouldst thou learn thy lesson,  
 And wouldst thou comfort bring my  
 wounded heart ?  
 Another heard thy sweet confession :  
 'Mother ! we can not part.'

"Sit still, my daughter !  
 Wait in sweet submission  
 Until the way made plainer be.  
 Fear not, the Lord who prompted thy  
 decision  
 Will strengthen thee.

"Sit still, my daughter !  
 Banish all thy sadness ;  
 The clouds around thy path will flee  
 away,  
 And thou shalt bind thy sheaves with  
 gladness—  
 'Watch and Pray.'

"Sit still, my daughter !  
 Thine heavenly Friend  
 'Will keep thy feet ;' thou shalt not  
 rove,  
 But gather here the choicest gifts He'll  
 send ;  
 His banner over thee is 'Love.'

"Sit still, my daughter !  
 He who led thee hither  
 Will perfect what concerneth thee ;  
 His spotless robe shall be thy shelter,  
 His precious blood thine only plea.

"Sit still, my daughter !  
 Enviably station !  
 Thus lowly waiting at the Master's  
 feet,  
 With trustful confidence and bright  
 anticipation  
 Of joy complete.

"Sit still, my daughter !  
 We, too, would seek this low position,  
 Would ever learn obedience to our  
 Father's will,  
 Would gladly heed this gentle admon-  
 ition,  
 Daughter, 'Sit still.'"



*THE MOTHER'S DAY-DREAM.*

A MOTHER sat at her sewing,  
 But her brow was full of thought ;  
 The little one playing beside her  
 Her own sweet mischief wrought.  
 A book on a chair lay near her ;  
 'Twas open, I strove to see,  
 At the old Greek artist's story,  
 " I paint for eternity."

So I fancied all her dreaming ;  
 I watched her serious eye  
 As the 'broidery dropped from her  
 fingers,  
 And she heaved a heartfelt sigh.  
 She drew the little one nearer,  
 And looked on the sunny face,  
 Swept the bright curls from the open  
 brow,  
 And kissed it with loving grace.

And she thought, " I, too, am an-artist ;  
 My life-work here I see,  
 This sweet, dear face, my hand must  
 trace,  
 I must paint for eternity.  
 Hence, each dark passion shadow !  
 Pain's deeply-graven lines !  
 Hers must be the reflected beauty  
 That from the pure heart shines.

" But how shall I blend the colors,  
 How mingle the light and shade,  
 Or arrange the weird surroundings .  
 The future has arrayed ?  
 Oh, Life ! thou hast weary nightfalls,  
 And days all drear that be,  
 But, from thy darkness, marvelous  
 grace  
 Wilt thou evoke for me ?

" Alas, that I am but a learner !  
 So where shall I make me wise,  
 Or obtain the rare old colors,  
 The Master's precious dyes ?  
 I must haste to the fount of beauty,  
 Must pleasingly kneel at His feet,  
 And crave, 'mid his wiser scholars,  
 The humblest pupil's seat.

" Then, hand and heart together,  
 Some grace shall add each day ;  
 Thus, thus, shall her face grow lus-  
 trous  
 With beauty that can not decay.  
 My darling ! God guide my pencil,  
 And grant me the vision to see  
 In the light of His love, without blem-  
 ish or stain,  
 In the coming eternity."

Then the mother awoke from her day-  
 dream,  
 Her face grew bright again,  
 And I knew her faith was strengthened  
 By more than angel's ken.  
 Her fingers flew the faster  
 As she sang a soft, low song ;  
 It seemed like a prayer, for the child  
 so fair,  
 As it thrilled the air along.

*MENDING STOCKINGS.*

IT is an autumn afternoon  
 Chilly with rain and gray with cloud ;  
 Rocking, the while my needle flies,  
 I think and talk sometimes aloud.

Piled in my lap, a soft, bright heap,  
 Are crimson stockings, and white,  
 and blue ;  
 How little feet will dance them out,  
 Who but a mother ever knew ?

Still is the house—my merry three  
 Out for a visit have gone to-day ;  
 Here in the hush I sit and rest,  
 Tired with their rush and noise and  
 play.

Ah ! but two dear brown eyes will peep  
 Over my darn in this crimson toe ;  
 He is the only son we have,  
 And mothers love their boys, you  
 know !

Over and under, out and in,  
 (My stocking mending is never  
 done !)

Slowly across the lessening space  
 Threads of the soft blue worsted run.

Is it a fancy?—Gentle arms  
Creep 'round my neck in a loving  
wise;

Yes, my twin girlie, these blue hose  
Bring me a thought of your azure  
eyes.

Easy it is to weave a web  
Out of my youngest darling's hair,  
Filling the space her rounded knee  
Pressed through the stocking soft  
and fair;

Dancing with every tricky bound,  
Framing the happy sunlit face,—  
Lift up your lips, my rosebud, do,  
Where for my kisses is sweeter  
place?

Hark! was that a step in the hall?  
No—'twas a sweep of the wind out-  
side.

Mending and darning—day has waned,  
Twilight is spreading her mantle  
wide.

Ah! my mending is not complete  
Now that the stockings folded are,  
Soberer work have I to do—  
Weaving whose issues are greater  
far.

Faint fall my hands. Help me, O  
Lord!  
Take Thou the work, for these souls  
are Thine.

Sanctify, teach, mold, guide, and bless,  
Till in Thy likeness their spirits  
shine!

Darker it grows. The lonely house  
Waits for the sound of their merry  
cheer.

Hark! they have come with laugh and  
shout.

Oh, I am glad they are safely here!

---

FAILED.

YES, I am a ruined man, Kate!  
Everything gone at last;

Nothing to show for the trouble and toil  
Of the weary years that are past:  
Houses and lands and money  
Have taken wings and fled,  
This morning I signed away  
The roof from over my head.

I shouldn't care for myself, Kate;  
I'm used to the world's rough ways;  
I've dug and delved, and plodded along  
Through all my manhood days;  
But I think of you and the children,  
And it almost breaks my heart,  
For I thought so surely to give my  
boys  
And girls a splendid start.

So many years on the ladder,  
I thought I was near the top—  
Only a few years longer,  
And then I expected to stop  
And put the boys in my place, Kate,  
With an easier life ahead,  
But now I must give the prospect up;  
That comforting dream is dead.

"I'm worth more than my gold," eh?  
You're good to look at it so,  
But a man isn't worth very much, Kate,  
When his hair is turning to snow;  
My poor little girls, with their soft,  
white hands  
And innocent eyes of blue,  
Turned adrift in the heartless world—  
What can and what will they do?

"An honest failure?" indeed, it was,  
Dollar for dollar paid.  
Never a creditor suffered,  
Whatever people have said.  
Better are rags and a conscience clear,  
Than a palace and flushes of shame,  
One thing I shall leave to my children,  
Kate,  
And that is an honest name.

What's that? "The boys are not  
troubled?"

They are ready now to begin  
And gain us another fortune,  
And work through thick and thin?"

The noble fellows ! already I feel  
I haven't so much to bear,  
Their courage has lightened my heavy  
load  
Of misery and despair.

"And the girls were so glad it was  
honest?"

They'd rather not dress so fine,  
And think that they did it with money  
That wasn't honestly mine?  
They're ready to show what they're  
made of,  
Quick to earn and to save?"  
My blessed, good little daughters !  
So generous and so brave.

And you think we needn't fret, Kate,  
While we have each other left,  
No matter of what possession  
Our lives may be bereft?  
You are right. With a quiet con-  
science  
And a wife so good and true  
I'll put my hand to the plow again,  
And know that we'll pull through.

---

*THEY SAID.*

THEY said of her, "She never can  
have felt

The sorrows that great, earnest nat-  
ures feel,"

They said, "Her placid lips have  
never spelt

Hard lessons, taught by pain. Her  
eyes reveal

No passionate yearning, no per-  
plexed appeal

To other eyes. Life and her heart  
have dealt

With her but lightly." When the Pil-  
grims dwelt

First by their Rock, lest savage feet  
should steal

To precious graves with desecrating  
tread,

The burial-field was with the plow-  
share crossed ;

And there her silken curls in the light  
maize tossed.

With thanks those Pilgrims ate their  
bitter bread,

While peaceful harvests hid what they  
prized most :

I thought of them when this of her  
they said.

They of this other said, "No heart  
has she,

Else would she not with ready  
prattle smile

On all who cross her path, and merrily  
The steps of child, man, bird, and  
brute beguile

With overflow of winsome prank  
and wile.

How shallow must this sparkling bub-  
bler be ! "

And did you never down a hill-side see  
A laughing brook go dancing, mile  
on mile,

Fresh from a never-failing mountain  
spring,

Whose depths of sweetness none  
might sound or guess ?

The spring was the brook's heart,  
which sought to fling

Gleams of its hidden joy on everything.  
Life's deep wells yield perennial  
cheerfulness.

They spake of her from their own  
shallowness.

---

*SO GOES THE WORLD.*

OUR varied days pass on and on,  
Our hopes fade unfulfilled away,

And things which seem the life of life,  
Are taken from us day by day ;

And yet through all the busy streets  
The crowd of pleasure-seekers  
throng,

The puppets play, the showman calls,  
And gossips chat the whole day  
long,

And so the world goes on !

Our little dramas come to naught ;  
 Our lives may fail, our darling plan  
 May crumble into nothingness,  
 Our firmest castle fall to sand ;  
 And yet they all may sing and dance,  
 The money-makers laugh and shout,  
 The stars, unmindful, still shine bright,  
 Unconscious that our light is out,  
 And so the world goes on !

The house grows sad that once was  
 gay ;  
 The dear ones seek their Blessed  
 Home,  
 And we may watch and wait in vain  
 To hear their well-known footsteps  
 come ;  
 And yet the sunlight flecks the floor  
 And makes the summer shadows  
 long,  
 The rosebuds at the casement bloom,  
 The bird pours forth this cheerful  
 song,  
 And so the world goes on !

And God goes on, and with our woe,  
 Weaves golden threads of joy and  
 peace,  
 Guarding within His heart of hearts,  
 Our days of pain our days of ease—  
 He marks them all—the seed, the  
 sheaves,  
 The dancer's smile, the mourner's  
 tears,  
 And keeps them safe—His children  
 all—  
 Through all these vernal years.  
 And so the world goes on !

---

IF WE KNEW.

IF we knew the woe and heart-ache  
 Waiting for us down the road,  
 If our lips could taste the wormwood,  
 If our backs could feel the load ;  
 Would we waste to-day in wishing  
 For a time that ne'er can be ;  
 Would we wait in such impatience  
 For our ships to come from sea ?

If we knew the baby fingers  
 Pressed against the window-pane,  
 Would be cold and stiff to-morrow—  
 Never trouble us again ;  
 Would the bright eyes of our darling  
 Catch the frown upon our brow ?  
 Would the prints of rosy fingers  
 Vex us as they do now ?

Ah, these little ice-cold fingers,  
 How they point our memories back  
 To the hasty words and actions  
 Strewn along our backward track !  
 How those little hands remind us,  
 As in snowy grace they lie,  
 Not to scatter thorns—but roses—  
 For our reaping by and by !

Strange we never prize the music  
 Till the sweet-voiced bird has flown ;  
 Strange that we should slight the violets  
 Till the lovely flowers are gone ;  
 Strange that summer skies and sun,  
 shine  
 Never seem one-half so fair  
 As when winter's snowy pinions  
 Shake their white down in the air !

Lips from which the seal of silence  
 None but God can roll away,  
 Never blossomed in such beauty  
 As adorns the mouth to-day ;  
 And sweet words that freight our mem-  
 ory  
 With their beautiful perfume,  
 Come to us in sweeter accents  
 Through the portals of the tomb.

Let us gather up the sunbeams  
 Lying all along our path ;  
 Let us keep the wheat and roses,  
 Casting out the thorns and chaff ;  
 Let us find our sweetest comfort  
 In the blessings of to-day ;  
 With a patient hand removing  
 All the briars from our way.

---

MAKE CHILDHOOD SWEET.

WAIT not till the little hands are at rest  
 Ere you fill them full of flowers ;



Wait not for the crowning tuberose  
 To make sweet the last sad hours ;  
 But while in the busy household band,  
 Your darlings still need your guiding  
 hand.  
 Oh, fill their lives with sweetness !

Wait not till the little hearts are still,  
 For the loving look and phrase ;  
 But while you gently chide a fault,  
 The good deed kindly praise.  
 The word you would speak beside the  
 bier  
 Falls sweeter far on the living ear ;  
 Oh, fill young lives with sweetness !

Ah, what are kisses on clay-coll lips  
 To the rosy mouth we press,  
 When our wee one flies to her mother's  
 arms,  
 For love's tenderest caress ?  
 Let never a worldly bauble keep  
 Your heart from the joy each day  
 should reap,  
 Circling your lives with sweetness.

Give thanks each morn for the sturdy  
 boys,  
 Give thanks for the fairy girls ;  
 With a dower of wealth like this at  
 home,  
 Would you rifle the earth for pearls ?  
 Wait not for death to gem love's crown,  
 But daily shower life's blessings down,  
 And fill young hearts with sweetness.

Remember the homes where the light  
 has fled,  
 Where the rose has faded away ;  
 And the love that glows in youthful  
 hearts,  
 Oh, cherish it while you may !  
 And make your home a garden of  
 flowers,  
 Where joy shall bloom, through child-  
 hood's hours,  
 And fill your lives with sweetness.

*A WORD FOR THE MOTHER.*

SEND the children to bed with a kiss  
 and a smile ;  
 Sweet childhood will tarry at best but  
 a while ;  
 And soon they will pass from the por-  
 tals of home,  
 The wilderness ways of their life-work  
 to roam.

Yes, tuck them in bed with a gentle  
 "good-night !"  
 The mantle of shadows is veiling the  
 light ;  
 And maybe — God knows — on this  
 sweet little face  
 May fall deeper shadows in life's weary  
 race.

Yes, say it : "God bless my dear chil-  
 dren, I pray !"  
 It may be the last you will say it for  
 aye !  
 The night may be long ere you see  
 them again ;  
 The motherless children may call you  
 in vain !

Drop sweet benediction on each little  
 head,  
 And fold them in prayer as they nestle  
 in bed ;  
 A guard of bright angels around them  
 invite,  
 The spirit may slip from the mooring  
 to-night.

*OUR MOTHER.*

"OLD? oh, no ! she can never be old.  
 Though threescore or more summers  
 be hers,  
 And her life's purple garners now hold  
 The rich fruitage of seventy warm  
 years.  
 There are lives that grow wrinkled  
 with time,  
 And hearts that get callous with  
 gold,  
 And young heads that are gray-haired  
 with crime,  
 But our mother can never grow old !



"She is faded and care-bent, I know,  
Like a sheaf that is laden with ears;  
Her footsteps are halting and slow,  
And her cheeks bear the traces of  
tears;

But her heart is all mellow and ripe,  
With the ever sweet juices of love;  
Her speech is a fair-coined type  
Of the free-spoken language above.

"It is strange that we mark time by  
years,  
And a name to each passing day  
give,

And say that life's ending appears  
When we're only beginning to live!  
Time may change, may cut down and  
renew,

Each season new scenes may unfold,  
Things may please us—then fade from  
our view—

But our mother can never grow old!

"Old? old? no, indeed! she is young  
As ever she was in her life!

The fairest and dearest among  
All women, with loveliness rife;  
Her soul looks abroad through its veil,  
With a smile like the light of the  
morn,

And the dews of true feeling exhale  
From the depths where her graces  
were born.

"And some day the angels will come  
For this beautiful mother of ours,  
And will bear her away to their home,  
That is close by the Amaranth  
bowers;

And there, in her radiant youth,  
Where the ransomed aye flourish  
and bloom,

In the region of sunlight and truth,  
She will wait for her children to  
come."

—————  
*CRADLE SONG.*

A MOTHER sang beside her little child,  
Who, knowing not the meaning of  
the strain.

Still gazed on her with eyes wide open  
mild,

And listened pleased with cadence  
and refrain.

"Only the pure in heart see God."  
Those were the words the singing  
mother said,  
As in the firelight laughing baby played.

From day to day this was her house-  
hold hymn,

As shadows of the evening gathered  
there,

As through the twilight showed the  
homestead dim,

Her song wing-like did seem to  
cleave the air—

"Only the pure in heart see God."  
It floated up to some altar place,  
Where spirits gaze for aye upon God's  
face.

The mother's spirit passed into the  
boy,

Grafting upon his soul her cradle  
words,

As old birds teach their offspring to  
employ

Their tuneful throats to imitate the  
birds—

"Only the pure in heart see God."  
As thrushes teach their young the  
thrush's lays,  
She taught her deathless one a hymn  
of praise:

It bore its peaceful harvest to the child;  
In all the thoughtful after years of  
life

It often stilled the raging unrest wild,  
That frets the spirit in our worldly  
strife—

"Only the pure in heart see God."  
It sometimes gave the wounded spirit  
rest,

When heavily with many cares op-  
pressed.

It ran for aye a cool, life-giving rill,  
Sparkling and sweet and hidden in  
the heart,

And sometimes seemed to overflow  
 and fill  
 His life; sometimes it seemed to  
 roll—  
 "Only the pure in heart see God."  
 A stream of brightness from a high,  
 far throne,  
 Whose beauty was for him alone.

—————  
*A MOTHER'S HEART.*

A LITTLE dreaming, such as mothers  
 know;  
 A little lingering over dainty things;  
 A happy heart, wherein love all aglow  
 Stirs like a bird at dawn that wakes  
 and sings—  
 And that is all.

A little clasping to her yearning breast;  
 A little musing over future years;  
 A heart that prays, "Dear Lord, Thou  
 knowest best,  
 But spare my flower life's bitterest  
 rain of tears"—  
 And that is all.

A little spirit speeding through the  
 night;  
 A little home grown lonely, dark,  
 and chill;  
 A sad heart, groping blindly for the  
 light;  
 A little snow-clad grave beneath the  
 hill—  
 And that is all.

A little gathering of life's broken thread;  
 A little patience keeping back the  
 tears;  
 A heart that sings, "Thy darling is  
 not dead,  
 God keeps her safe through His  
 eternal years"—  
 And that is all.

—————  
*PATIENCE, MOTHER.*

PATIENCE, mother; don't be weary  
 Of the restless little head

Now reclining on your bosom,  
 Sleeping now on cradle-bed.  
 Should the little head grow weary,  
 Sinking to a dreamless sleep,  
 Resting on a coffin pillow,  
 Then, oh mother, how you'd weep,—  
 Weep to think you'd been impatient,  
 And perhaps a bit unkind,  
 To the darling little baby  
 That had left you thus behind.

Patience, mother; don't be weary  
 Of the clinging finger-tips  
 Creeping round like tiny tendrils,  
 Nor the rosy, parted lips.  
 Should the lips be pale and silent,  
 Little hands be folded still,  
 Glad would mother be to have them  
 Clinging at their own sweet will;  
 For how very much you'd missed them,  
 None but mother's heart can say.  
 Rosy lips, how glad you'd kiss them—  
 Clinging fingers, feel them play.

Patience, mother; don't be weary  
 Of the baby prattle sweet,  
 Of the steady patter, patter,  
 Of the ever busy feet.  
 Should the tiny feet grow weary,  
 And the merry prattle cease;  
 Should they both be stilled forever,  
 In a never-ending peace,  
 Vainly then would mother listen  
 For a sound e'en half so sweet  
 As the cooing of an infant  
 And the noise of baby feet.

Patience, mother; don't be weary  
 Of bright eyes so wide-awake,—  
 Bright eyes full of love and laughter;  
 Sunshine in your home they make.  
 Should the sparkling eyes grow weary,  
 Close, no more to ope on you,  
 To wake no more with glad surprise,  
 Then what, mother, would you do?  
 Oh, gladly then you'd see their light,  
 Nor would wish they'd "go to  
 sleep;"

In vain the thought, unheeded wish,  
 They can never wake nor weep.

Patience, mother ; don't be weary  
 Of the loving little heart,  
 Clinging ever to its mother,  
 Fearing with her care to part.  
 Should the little heart grow weary,  
 Seek a Saviour's heavenly fold,  
 There, forever, with the angels  
 Shielded from the storm and cold,  
 Mother, you would weep with sorrow,  
 Thinking you had caused it pain.  
 Patient be, then, while they're with  
 you ;  
 Then you'll ne'er " regret in vain."

—  
*ONE LITTLE SONG.*

If I could hear one little song  
 I heard long years ago,  
 And hear her sing who sang it then  
 In accents pure and low,  
 It seems to me no sweeter joy  
 A weary heart could know.

At times the soul's mysterious power  
 Brings back the melody—  
 Like distant chimes that rise and fall,  
 Like murmurings of the sea ;  
 And then I hear, or seem to hear,  
 The song once sang to me.

I turn me from the present hour  
 Against the lapse of years ;  
 And looking back to brighter days,  
 Through days of hopes and fears,  
 The olden memories fill my heart  
 And dim my eyes with tears.

I hear, and yet I do not hear,  
 The good old song of yore ;  
 She can not sing who sang it then,  
 And ne'er will sing it more ;  
 For light and life and love have gone,  
 As hope had gone before.

Oh ! could I hear the little song  
 I heard long years ago,  
 And hear her sing as once she sang  
 In accents pure and low,  
 It seems to me no sweeter joy  
 A weary heart could know.

*THE HOUSEWIFE.*

WHAT has this woman been doing,  
 So long since the morning begun ?  
 I don't believe she can remember  
 One-half of the work she has done.

Dressing the dear little baby,  
 Combing his soft silken hair,  
 Putting him back in the cradle  
 To sleep and grow healthy and fair.

Doing the work in the kitchen,  
 Just what it happens to be,  
 Covering books for the school-room,  
 Ready for callers at three.

Mending and making and chatting,  
 Two or three children to teach,  
 If not the primer's first lesson,  
 Methods no others can preach.

That's what this woman's been doing,  
 Day after day 'tis the same ;  
 Angels, oh, watch and defend her,  
 " Mother"—for that is her name.

—  
*IF ONLY MOTHERS KNEW.*

If only mothers knew, she said,  
 How hungry children are for love,  
 Above each virgin little bed  
 A mother's lips would prove,  
 How sweet are kisses that are given  
 Between a rosy mouth and heaven.

If only my mamma would kneel,  
 As your dear mother, every night,  
 Beside her little girl, to feel  
 If all the wraps are folded tight,  
 And hold my hands, her elbow fair  
 Between my cheeks and her soft hair ;

And looking in my dreaming eyes  
 As if she saw some lovely thing ;  
 And smiling in such fond surprise  
 On all my hopes of life that spring  
 Like flowers beneath her tender gaze,  
 I could not stray in evil ways.

I would not wound the gentle breast  
That held me warm within its fold ;  
My mother's love would still be best,  
However sad, or plain, or old ;  
And even though the world forsake,  
I'd love her for her love's dear sake.

---

*MY BABY.*

ALWAYS I rock my baby to sleep  
When night comes on,  
Some mothers only sit and weep,  
Their darlings gone ;  
But my baby is mine, my very own,  
And I am never left alone.

Who could take from the mother's  
heart  
Her little one ?  
The twining tendrils may not part,  
Nor be undone ;  
My baby is mine, my very own,  
And I am never left alone.

Our Lord can hold in His embrace  
Baby and me,  
And I am wholly satisfied  
That this shall be ;  
For baby is still my very own,  
And I am never left alone.

Always I rock my baby to sleep  
When night comes on,  
Some mothers only sit and weep,  
Their darlings gone ;  
But my baby is mine, my very own,  
And I am never left alone.

---

*BORN AT JERUSALEM.*

ENGLISH child of Eastern birth,  
Welcome to our wondrous earth ;  
Welcome, innocent blue eyes,  
Opening upon Syrian skies ;  
Welcome, feet that soon will stand  
On Judea's sacred land ;  
Bud from honorable stem,  
Babe, born at Jerusalem.

Or, if of still older creed,  
Ere the world of Christ had need  
I should think of Rachel fair,  
Hannah, who child Samuel bare ;  
Hebrew women, grand and calm,  
Whose pure lives roll like a psalm  
Down the centuries. Who like them,  
Mothers of Jerusalem ?

Little sweet god-daughter mine !  
Thy fair unknown face will shine  
Like the stars which shepherds see  
Still, o'er the plains of Galilee ;  
Were I of that faith of old  
Christians held 'gainst Paynims bold  
I should say the Virgin mild  
Specially on thee had smiled,  
That the Mother of all mothers  
Had loved thine beyond the others,  
Sending such a priceless gem  
To her, in Jerusalem.

And thy unheard voice will fill  
Silence, like Siloam's rill,  
Where the hills in purple hem,  
Stand about Jerusalem.

Babe, thy future who can see ?  
But we bless thee, full and free,  
Walk, where walked Christ's stainless  
feet,  
In the Temple and the street :  
“Holy, harmless, undefiled,”  
Yet to parents human child ;  
Till thou walk with Him—and them—  
In the New Jerusalem.

---

*“A LITTLE CROWN.”*

WRITE it, O Angel ! in the Book,  
Among the lambs of my fair flock,  
One more dear name shall be engraved  
By Jesus saved.

The angel paused and wrote it down,  
Then turned and touched a glowing  
crown,  
On which the precious sentence  
gleamed,  
By Christ redeemed !

It was our lamb, whose name was  
there,  
So precious and so sweetly fair  
That oft we trembled as he dreamed  
So near to heaven he seemed.

And if the angel softly came  
And gently called his little name,  
For beauteous grew his darling eyes  
With heavenly ecstasies,

Ah me! we would have stayed the  
hand  
Which led him to the beauteous land,  
But troops of little ones came down  
To lead him to his crown!

He went so sweetly to that throng,  
We almost heard the welcome song  
Of countless darlings gone before,  
Unto the shining shore!

—  
"OUR OWN."

IF I had known in the morning  
How wearily all the day  
The words unkind  
Would trouble my mind  
I said when you went away,  
I had been more careful, darling,  
Nor given you needless pain;  
But we vex "our own"  
With look and tone,  
We might never take back again.

For though in the quiet evening  
You may give me the kiss of peace,  
Yet it might be  
That never for me  
The pain of the heart should cease.  
How many go forth in the morning  
That never come home at night;  
And hearts have broken  
For harsh words spoken  
That sorrow can ne'er set right.

We have careful thoughts for the  
stranger,  
And smiles for the sometime guest;  
But oft for "our own"  
The bitter tone,  
Though we love "our own" the best.

Ah! lips with the curve impatient;  
Ah! brow with that look of scorn;  
'Twere a cruel fate,  
Were the night too late  
To undo the work of morn.

—  
*FIRES AND HOUSES AND  
SMILES.*

IF the world seems cold to you,  
Kindle fires to warm it!  
Let their comfort hide from view  
Winters that deform it;  
Hearts as frozen as your own,  
To that radiance gather;  
You will soon forget to moan,—  
"Ah! the cheerless weather."

If the world's a wilderness,  
Go build houses in it!  
With it help your loneliness  
On the winds to din it!  
Raise a hut, however slight,  
Weeds and brambles smother,  
And to roof and meal invite  
Some forlorn brother.

If the world's a vale of tears,  
Smile till rainbows span it;  
Breathe the love that life endears;  
Clear from clouds to fan it.  
Of your gladness lend a gleam  
Unto souls that shiver;  
Show them how dark Sorrow's stream  
Blends with Hope's bright river.

—  
*THE GUEST.*

FROM out the great world's rush and  
din  
There came a guest;  
The inner court he entered in,  
And sat at rest.

Slow on the wild tide of affairs  
The gates were closed;  
Afar the hungry host of cares  
At last reposed.



Then through the dim doors of the  
 past,  
 All pure of blame,  
 Came boyish memories floating fast—  
 His mother's name.

“ Ah! all this loud world calls the best  
 I'd give,” he said,  
 “ To feel her hand, on her dear breast  
 To lean my head.

“ I cry within the crownèd day,  
*That* would be joy,  
 Could she but bear me far away,  
 Once more her boy.”

Man's strength is weakness, after all—  
 He stood confessed ;  
 None quite can still the heart's wild  
 call,  
 None quite are blessed.

Across the face that knows no fear  
 A shade swept fast,  
 As if a following angel near  
 That moment passed.

The sacred silence of the room  
 Did softly stir ;  
 A splendor grew within the gloom  
 Of her, of her!

Out to the great world's rush and din  
 Has gone my guest ;  
 The battle flame, the praise men win  
 Are his—not rest.

Far out amid the earth's turmoils  
 A strong man stands,  
 Upheld in triumph and in toils  
 By unseen hands.

But who may lift with subtle wand  
 The masks we wear?  
 I only know his mother's hand  
 Is on his hair.

I only know through all life's harms,  
 Through sin's alloy,  
 Somehow, somewhere that mother's  
 arms  
 . Will reach her boy.

*A MOTHER'S CARES.*

I DO not think that I could bear  
 My daily weight of woman's care  
 If it were not for this,  
 That Jesus seemeth always near :  
 Unseen, but whispering in my ear,  
 Some tender word of love and cheer,  
 To fill my soul with bliss !

There are so many trivial cares  
 That no one knows and no one shares,  
 Too small for me to tell ;  
 Things e'en my husband can not see ;  
 Nor his dear love uplift from me  
 Each hour's unnamed perplexity,  
 That mothers know so well.

The failure of some household scheme,  
 The ending of some pleasant dream,  
 Deep hidden in my breast ;  
 The weariness of children's noise,  
 The yearning for that subtle poise  
 That turneth duties into joys,  
 And giveth inner rest.

These secret things, however small,  
 Are known to Jesus, each and all,  
 And this thought brings me peace.  
 I do not need to say one word ;  
 He knows what thought my heart hath  
 stirred,  
 And by divine caress my Lord  
 Makes all its throbbing cease.

And then upon His loving breast  
 My weary head is laid at rest,  
 In speechless ecstasy !  
 Until it seemeth all in vain  
 That care, fatigue, or mortal pain  
 Should hope to drive me forth again  
 From such felicity !

*THE RIGHTS OF WOMAN.*

THE rights of woman—what are they?  
 The right to labor, love, and pray,  
 The right to weep when others weep,  
 The right to wake when others sleep.

The right to dry the falling tear,  
The right to quell the rising fear;  
The right to smooth the brow of care,  
And whisper comfort to despair.

The right to watch the parting breath,  
To soothe and cheer the bed of death;  
The right, when earthly hopes all fail,  
To point to that within the veil.

The right the wanderer to reclaim,  
And win the lost from paths of shame;  
The right to comfort and to bless  
The widow and the fatherless.

The right the little ones to guide,  
In simple faith to Him who died,  
With earnest love and gentle praise,  
To bless and cheer their youthful days.

The right to live for those we love,  
The right to die that love to prove;  
The right to brighten earthly homes  
With pleasant smiles and gentle tones.

Are these thy rights? Then use them  
well;  
Thy silent influence none can tell;  
If these are thine, why ask for more?  
Thou hast enough to answer for.

---

*SPRING WORK.*

I AM cutting papers to-day, mother,  
(Papers to cover a shelf),  
And saving out bits for my scrap-book;  
But unlike my former self,  
With the thoughts that are grand and  
noble,  
And the lines the poet sings,  
I am saving some very simple  
And decidedly childlike things.

For throned in her chair beside me,  
Sits a wee one, dainty and sweet,  
And I trust in the days that are com-  
ing  
She will care these lines to repeat.

I think that in planning her life-work,  
The same fair future I see  
Which you saw in the long ago, mother,  
When you planned and prayed about  
me.

I long to come home at the twilight,  
And, sitting down by your feet,  
Listen again to the Bible tales  
You used long ago to repeat—  
Of Adam, and Eve, and Abel:  
Of Noah who heard and obeyed;  
Of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,  
With the faith and love they dis-  
played.

There was Joseph, sold into Egypt,  
And Moses before the king,  
And David, who slew Goliath,  
With a little stone in his sling;  
There was Samuel, called at night-  
time,  
And Jonah cast in the deep,  
And many a dream and vision  
Of prophets and kings asleep.

Then there was the wonderful story  
Of the Child in a manger-bed,  
Who marked the pathway to glory  
With tears and blood that He shed.  
Dear mother, that "old, old story"  
Is the life of my life to me,  
And I want to train up my children  
To be all He would have them be.

Oh, a mother's mission is holy,  
And she must be holy, too,  
Or sadly fail in performing  
The work God gives her to do.  
So while I am sweeping and scrubbing,  
And cleaning dust from the paint,  
In my heart I am earnestly praying  
To be clean of sin and its taint.

While the farmer goes to his planting,  
The mother, by look and tone,  
Is sowing in soil just as certain  
To yield of the seed she has sown.  
The work that she does may be lowly,  
But angels are watching her life;  
The love of the Saviour sustaineth  
Each faithful mother and wife.

“WRITE THEM A LETTER  
TO-NIGHT.”

DON'T go to the theater, concert, or  
ball,

But stay in your room to-night ;  
Deny yourself to the friends that call,  
And a good long letter write—

Write to the sad old folks at home,  
Who sit when the day is done,  
With folded hands and downcast eyes,  
And think of the absent one.

Don't selfishly scribble “excuse my  
haste,

I've scarcely the time to write,”  
Lest their brooding thoughts go wan-  
dering back

To many a by-gone night—  
When they lost their needed sleep and  
rest,

And every breath was a prayer—  
That God would leave their delicate  
babe

To their tender love and care.

Don't let them feel that you've no  
more need

Of their love or counsel wise ;  
For the heart grows strongly sensitive  
When age has dimmed the eyes—

It might be well to let them believe  
You never forgot them, quite ;  
That you deem it a pleasure when far  
away,

Long letters home to write.

Don't think that the young and giddy  
friends

Who make your pastime gay,  
Have half the anxious thought for you  
That the old folks have to-day.

The duty of writing do not put off ;  
Let sleep or pleasure wait,  
Lest the letter for which they looked  
and longed

Be a day or an hour *too late*.

For the loving, sad old folks at home,  
With locks fast turning white,  
Are longing to hear from the absent  
one—

Write them a letter to-night.

A MOTHER'S THOUGHTS BY  
HER CHILD.

O GOD of boundless purity,  
How strange that Thou should'st give  
to me

This young and tender heart,  
To train to walk in Thine own ways,  
That he may end his mortal days  
In glory where Thou art !

Alas ! how slow, how hopeless, too,  
Am I, this sacred work to do !  
My utmost strength must fail.

Yet, Holy Spirit, if Thy power  
Be given to me from hour to hour  
I surely shall prevail.

O Gracious influence, to his heart  
Give will to choose the “better part,”  
Which none can take away.

By him, O helping God, be found ;  
To him in gifts of love abound ;  
Be with him every day.

And, God of grace, his mother bless  
With prayer, and faith, and watchful-  
ness,

Now that she has a child.  
Let not her weak indulgence spoil,  
Nor yet her stern, harsh manner foil,  
This heart so soft and mild.

Help her in every act and word  
To follow close her lowly Lord ;  
Be this her only pride—

That she may holy influence shed  
Around this dear immortal's head,  
And keep him on Thy side.

Then, when the last great trump shall  
sound,

And all before their Judge be found  
To hear their sentence pass'd,  
May he in glory then appear,  
Receive Thy prize, Thy “Well done”  
hear—

A conqueror at last.

Yes, may this soul of rarer worth  
To me than all the souls of earth,  
But wear Thy diadem ;

Then, through eternity I'll raise  
A mother's song of unmixed praise,  
To Thee, redeeming Lamb.

—————  
*VERSES.*

*HONOR.*

LOSSES on losses, fast they came ;  
Men said : " There's left him but his  
name ;  
But that is free from blot or blame."

Despairing, bowed with care and  
dread,  
As if he heard, he raised his head.  
" Thank God, I have my name ! " he  
said.

—————  
*SUSPICION.*

A palace ; gilded ease and glare ;  
Loud jests and laughter ; banquets  
rare ;  
Dark hints of foul beneath the fair.

At daybreak, on a sleepless bed,  
He moaned and turned his fevered  
head.  
" I've all things but a name ! " he said.

—————  
*THE TICK OF THE CLOCK AT  
MIDNIGHT.*

'Tis the tick of the clock at midnight,  
Solemnly, startlingly clear,  
Like the throb of a fevered pulsation  
Made audible to the ear.  
Through the house reigns a death-like  
silence,

The death-like silence of sleep,  
While the fragments of time, like me-  
teors,

Pass flashing across the deep.  
From the coming eternity rushing,  
They illumine for a moment our sky,  
But no power can stay their departure ;  
They touch us and hurry by.

They touch on the heart of the watcher,  
And utter these words in his ear :  
" Can ye not watch for one hour,  
And our soul-stirring message hear ?  
We are God's messengers, speeding  
With swift and invisible flight,  
And we speak to you best in the  
silence

Of the quiet, dead-hush of the night.  
Remember we carry our message  
Of what you are doing on earth  
To the bountiful Father in heaven,  
Who endowed you with souls at your  
birth.

What are ye doing, oh, mortals !  
With that glorious gift of a soul ?  
For what are your strongest yearn-  
ings,

And what is the longed-for goal ?  
Pleasure, and power, and riches,  
Leisure and freedom from care—  
Is it for these ye are striving ?  
Such striving must end in despair.  
Like a butterfly crushed in the grasp-  
ing,

So pleasure is crushèd when caught,  
And power must end in weakness,  
And riches must end in naught ;  
While indolent leisure lies basking,  
Sleepily, selfishly glad,  
Till the adder of conscience stings it,  
And the terror driveth it mad.  
Soon the dawn will streak the horizon  
And herald the fateful day ;  
Prepare ! Lo, the kingdom of heaven  
Approacheth ! Watch and pray ! "

—————  
*PRAYER FOR SATURDAY  
EVENING.*

CHAFED and worn with worldly care,  
Sweetly, Lord, my heart prepare ;  
Bid this inmost tempest cease ;  
Jesus, come and whisper peace !  
Hush the whirlwind of my will ;  
With Thyself my spirit fill ;  
End in calm this busy week,  
Let the Sabbath gently break.

Sever, Lord, these earthly ties—  
 Fain my soul to Thee would rise ;  
 Disentangle me from time,  
 Lift me to a purer clime ;  
 Let me cast away my load,  
 Let me now draw near to God.  
 Gently, loving Jesus, speak ;  
 End in calm this busy week.

—————  
*MOTHERHOOD.*

“ HER lot is on you ”—woman’s lot  
 she meant,  
 The singer who sang sweetly long  
 ago ;  
 And rose and yew and tender myrtle  
 blent,  
 To crown the harp that rang to love  
 and woe.  
 Awake, oh, poetess, and vow one strain  
 To sing of motherhood, its joy, its pain.

What does it give to us, this mother  
 love—  
 In verse and tale and legend glorified,  
 Chosen by lips divine as type above  
 All other passions? Men have lived  
 and died  
 For sisters, maiden queens, and cher-  
 ished wives,  
 Yet, sealed by God, the one chief love  
 survives.

Yet what is it it gives us? Shrinking  
 dread,  
 Peril, and pain, and agony forgot,  
 Because we hold the ray of gladness  
 shed  
 By the first cry from lips that know  
 us not  
 Worth all that has been paid, is yet to  
 pay,  
 For the new worship, born and crown-  
 ed that day.

Then nursing, teaching, training, self-  
 denial,  
 That never knows itself, so deep it  
 lies,

The eager taking up of every trial,  
 To smooth spring’s pathway, light  
 her April skies ;  
 Watching and guiding, loving, long-  
 ing, praying,  
 No coldness daunting, and no wrong  
 dismaying.

And when the lovely bud to blossom  
 wakes,  
 And when the soft, shy dawn-star  
 flashes bright,  
 Another hand the perfect flower takes  
 Another wins the gladness of the  
 light ;  
 A sweet, soft, clinging, fond farewell  
 is given ;  
 Still a farewell, and then alone with  
 Heaven.

With Heaven! Will He take the tired  
 heart,  
 The God who gave the child and  
 formed the mother,  
 Who sees her strive to play her des-  
 tined part,  
 And smiling yield her darling to an-  
 other?  
 Ay, on His cross He thought of Mary’s  
 woe ;  
 He pities still the mothers left below.

—————  
*THE WAY WE GROW OLD.*

A BROKEN toy ; a task that held away  
 A yearning child-heart from an hour  
 of play ;  
 A Christmas that no Christmas idols  
 brought ;  
 A tangled lesson, full of tangled  
 thought ;  
 A homesick boy ; a senior gowned and  
 wise ;  
 A glimpse of life, when lo ! the curtains  
 rise,

Fold over fold,  
 And hangs the picture, like a bound-  
 less sea—  
 The world, all action and reality—  
 So we grow old.



A wedding, and a tender wife's caress ;  
A prattling babe the parent's life to  
bless ;

A home of joys and cares in equal part ;  
A dreary watching with a heavy heart,  
And death's dread angel knocking at  
the gate ;

And Hope and Courage bidding sor-  
row wait,

Or lose her hold ;

A new-made grave, and then a brave  
return

To where the fires of life triumphant  
burn—

So we grow old.

A fortune and a gen'rous meed of fame,  
Or direful ruin and a tarnished name ;  
A slipping off of week and month and  
year,

Faster and faster as the close draws  
near ;

A grief to-day, and with to-morrow's  
light

A pleasure that transforms the sullen  
night

From lead to gold ;

A chilling winter of unchanging storm ;  
A spring replete with dawns and sun-  
sets warm—

So we grow old.

Old to ourselves, but children yet to be  
In the strange cities of eternity.

### THE CHILDREN'S BED-TIME.

THE clock strikes seven in the hall,  
The curfew of the children's day,  
That calls each little pattering foot  
From dance and song and livelong  
play ;

Their day that in our wider light  
Floats like a silver day-moon white,  
Nor in our darkness sinks to rest,  
But sets within a golden west.

Ah, tender hour that sends a drift  
Of children's kisses through the  
house,

And cuckoo-notes of sweet "Good-  
night,"

That thoughts of heaven and home  
arouse ;

And a soft stir to sense and heart,  
As when the bee and blossom part ;  
And little feet that patter slower,  
Like the last droppings of the shower.

And in the children's rooms aloft  
What blossom shapes do gayly slip  
Their dainty sheaths, and rosy run  
From clasping hand and kissing lip,  
A naked sweetness to the eye—  
Blossom and babe and butterfly  
In witching one, so dear a sight !  
An ecstasy of life and light.

And, ah, what lovely witcheries  
Bestrew the floor ! an empty sock,  
By vanished dance and song left loose

As dead birds' throats, a tiny smock  
That, sure, upon some meadow grew,  
And drank the heaven-sweet rains ; a  
shoe

Scarce bigger than acorn cup ;  
Frocks that seem flowery meads cut up.

Then lily-dressed in angel-white  
To mother's knee they trooping  
come,

The soft palms fold like kissing shells,  
And they and we go singing home—  
Their bright heads bowed and wor-  
shipping,

As though some glory of the spring,  
Some daffodil that mocks the day,  
Should fold his golden palms and pray.

The gates of Paradise swing wide  
A moment's space in soft accord,  
And those dread Angels, Life and  
Death,

A moment veil the flaming sword,  
As o'er this weary world forlorn  
From Eden's secret heart is borne  
That breath of Paradise most fair,  
Which mothers call "the children's  
prayer."

Ah, deep pathetic mystery!  
 The world's great woe unconscious  
 hung,  
 A rain-drop on a blossom's lip;  
 White innocence that woos our  
 wrong,  
 And Love divine that looks again,  
 Unconscious of the Cross and pain,  
 From sweet child-eyes, and in that  
 child  
 Sad earth and heaven reconciled.

Then kissed, on beds we lay them  
 down,  
 As fragrant-white as clover'd sod,  
 And all the upper floors grow hushed  
 With children's sleep and dews of  
 God.  
 And as our stars their beams do hide,  
 The stars of twilight, opening wide,  
 Take up the heavenly tale at even,  
 And light us on to God and heaven.

---

THE FOLLOWER.

WE have a youngster in the house,  
 A little man of ten,  
 Who dearest to his mother is  
 Of all God's little men,  
 In-doors and out he clings to her;  
 He follows up and down;  
 He steals his slender hand in hers;  
 He plucks her by the gown.  
 "Why do you cling to me so, child?  
 You track me everywhere;  
 You never let me be alone."  
 And he, with serious air,  
 Answered, as closer still he drew,  
 "My feet were made to follow you."

Two years before the boy was born  
 Another child of seven,  
 Whom Heaven had lent to us awhile,  
 Went back again to Heaven.  
 He came to fill his brother's place,  
 And bless our failing years;  
 The good God sent him down in love  
 To dry our useless tears.

I think so, mother, for I hear  
 In what the child has said  
 A meaning that he knows not of,  
 A message from the dead.  
 He answered wiser than he knew,  
 "My feet were made to follow you."

Come here, my child, and sit with me,  
 Your head upon my breast;  
 You are the last of all my sons,  
 And you must be the best.  
 How much I love you, you may guess,  
 When, grown men like me,  
 You sit as I am sitting now,  
 Your child upon your knee.  
 Think of me then, and what I said  
 (And practiced when I could),  
 "'Tis something to be wise and great,  
 'Tis better to be good.  
 Oh, say to all things good and true,  
 'My feet were made to follow you!'"

Come here, my wife, and sit by me,  
 And place your hand in mine  
 (And yours, my child): while I have  
 you  
 'Tis wicked to repine.  
 We've had our share of sorrow, love;  
 We've had our graves to fill;  
 But, thank the good God overhead,  
 We have each other still!  
 We've nothing in the world besides,  
 For we are only three;  
 Mother and child, *my* wife and child,  
 How dear you are to me!  
 I know—indeed, I always knew,  
 "My feet were made to follow you!"

---

HOLIDAYS.

THE holiest of all holidays are those  
 Kept by ourselves in silence and  
 apart—  
 The secret anniversaries of the  
 heart,  
 When the full river of feeling over-  
 flows—  
 The happy days unclouded to their  
 close,

The sudden joys that out of darkness start  
 As flames from ashes; swift desires,  
 that dart  
 Like swallows singing down each wind  
 that blows!  
 White as the gleam of a receding  
 sail;  
 White as a cloud that floats and fades  
 in air,  
 White as the whitest lily on a stream,  
 These tender memories are; a fairy  
 tale  
 Of some enchanted land we know not  
 where,  
 But lovely as a landscape in a dream.

—————  
*WEATHER PROBABILITIES.*

INS and outs; whims and pouts;  
 Ups and downs; smiles and frowns;  
 Falls of dolls; cries and calls;  
 Head on lap; gapes and naps;  
 All this together will make up the  
 weather  
 Probable for our youngest to-day.

Shocks and knocks; tumbled locks;  
 Sulky looks for old school-books;  
 Rapid race; apes' grimace;  
 And stunning shout for school let out;  
 All this together will make up the  
 weather  
 Probable for our zone to-day.

Fears and tears; crimsoned ears;  
 Flushing cheek; eyes that speak;  
 Shy and meek; a loving art  
 That finds its way to love's own heart;  
 All this together will make up the  
 weather  
 Probable for our delicate May.

But all the roughest breezes stirred,  
 Are lulled to sleep at mother's word,  
 And every cloud in childhood's skies  
 Melts in the sunshine of her eyes;  
 With this sweet mother the blandest  
 weather  
 Is possible for the children to-day.

*DEAR LITTLE HANDS.*

DEAR little hands! I loved them so!  
 And now they are lying under the  
 snow—  
 Under the snow so cold and white,  
 And I can not see them or touch them  
 to-night,  
 They are quiet and still at last. Ah!  
 me,  
 How busy and restless they used to be!  
 But now they can never reach up  
 thro' the snow!  
 Dear little hands! I loved them so!  
 Dear little hands! I miss them so!  
 All through the day wherever I go;

All through the night how lonely it  
 seems,  
 For no little hands wake me out of my  
 dreams!  
 I miss them thro' all the weary hours—  
 Miss them as others miss sunshine and  
 flowers—  
 Day-time or night-time wherever I go;  
 Dear little hands! I loved them so!

Dear little hands! When the Master  
 shall call  
 I'll welcome the summons that comes  
 to us all.  
 When my feet touch the waters so  
 dark and so cold,  
 And I catch my first glimpse of the  
 City of Gold,  
 If I keep my eyes fixed on the heav-  
 enly gate,  
 Over the tide where the white-robed  
 ones wait,  
 Shall I know you, I wonder, among  
 the bright bands?  
 Will you beckon me over, oh, dear  
 little hands?

—————  
*THE TOYS.*

MY little son, who looked from thought-  
 ful eyes,  
 And moved and spoke in quiet, grown-  
 up wise,

Having my law the seventh time disobeyed,  
 I struck him, and dismissed  
 With hard words and unknissed,  
 His mother, who was patient, being dead.  
 Then fearing his grief should hinder sleep,  
 I visited his bed,  
 But found him slumbering deep,  
 With darkened eyelids, and their lashes yet  
 From his late sobbing wet.  
 And I, with moan,  
 Kissing away his tears, left others of my own;  
 For, on a table drawn beside his head,  
 He had put, within his reach,  
 A box of counters and a red-veined stone,  
 A piece of glass abraded by the beach,  
 And six or seven shells,  
 A bottle with blue bells  
 And two French copper coins, ranged there with careful art  
 To comfort his sad heart.  
 So when that night I prayed  
 To God, I wept, and said,  
 Ah! when at last we lie with tranced breath,  
 Not seeing Thee in death,  
 And Thou rememberest of what toys  
 We made our joys,  
 How weakly understood  
 Thy great commanded good,  
 Then, fatherly, not less  
 Than I, whom Thou hast moulded from the clay,  
 Thou'lt leave Thy wrath and say,  
 "I will be sorry for their childishness."

*KISSING THE CHILDREN.*

KISSES in the morning  
 Make the day seem bright,  
 Filling every corner  
 With a gleam of light;  
 And what happiness he misses  
 Who, affection's impulse scorning,

Departs, and gives no kisses  
 To the children in the morning.

Many think it folly;  
 Many say it's bliss;  
 Very much depending  
 On whose lips you kiss!  
 But the truth I am confessing,  
 And I'd have you all take warning,  
 If you covet any blessing,  
 Kiss the children in the morning.

*PAPA'S LETTER.*

I WAS sitting in my study,  
 Writing letters when I heard,  
 "Please, dear mamma, Mary told me  
 Mamma mustn't be disturbed.

"But I'se so tired of the kitty,  
 Want some ozzer fing to do,  
 Witing letters, is 'ou, mamma?  
 Tan't I wite a letter, too?"

"Not now, darling, mamma's busy;  
 Run and play with kitty now."  
 "No, no, mamma, me wite a letter!  
 Tan if 'ou will show me how."

I would paint my darling's portrait  
 As his sweet eyes searched my face—  
 Hair of gold and eyes of azure,  
 Form of childish witching grace.

But the eager face was clouded,  
 As I slowly shook my head,  
 Till I said, "I'll make a letter  
 Of you, darling boy, instead."

So I parted back the tresses  
 From his forehead high and white,  
 And a stamp in sport I pasted  
 'Mid its waves of golden light,

Then said I, "Now little letter,  
 Go away and bear good news;"  
 And I smiled, as, down the staircase,  
 Clattered loud the little shoes.



Leaving me, the darling hurried  
Down to Mary in his glee,  
"Mamma's witing lots of letters;  
I'se a letter, Mary—see!"

No one heard the little prattle,  
As once more he climbed the stair,  
Reaching his little cap and tippet,  
Standing on the entry stair.

No one heard the front door open,  
No one saw the golden hair,  
As it floated o'er his shoulders  
In the crisp October air.

Down the street the baby hastened  
Till he reached the office door,  
"I'se a letter, Mr. Postman;  
Is there room for any more?"

"'Cause dis letter, doin to papa;  
Papa lives with God, 'ou know,  
Mamma sent me for a letter;  
Does 'ou fink 'at I tan do?"

But the clerk in wonder answered,  
"Not to-day, my little man."  
"Den I'll find anoizzer office,  
'Cause I must do if I tan."

Fain the clerk would have detained  
him,  
But the pleading face was gone,  
And the little feet were hastening—  
By the busy crowd swept on.

Su'denly the crowd was parted,  
People fled to left and right  
As a pair of maddened horses,  
At the moment dashed in sight.

No one saw the baby figure—  
No one saw the golden hair,  
Till a voice of frightened sweetness  
Rang out on the autumn air.

'Twas too late—a moment only  
Stood the beauteous vision there,  
Then the little face lay lifeless,  
Covered o'er with golden hair.

Reverently they raised my darling,  
Brushed away the curls of gold,  
Saw the stamp upon the forehead,  
Growing now so icy cold.

Not a mark the face disfigured,  
Showing where a hoof had trod;  
But the little life was ended—  
"Papa's letter" was with God.

---

IN THE NEST.

GATHER them close to your loving  
heart—  
Cradle them on your breast;  
They will soon enough leave your  
brooding care;  
Soon enough mount youth's topmost  
stair—  
Little ones in the nest.

Fret not that the children's hearts are  
gay,  
That their restless feet will run,  
There may come a time in the by-  
and-by,  
When you'll sit in your lonely room  
and sigh  
For a sound of childish fun:

When you'll long for a repetition sweet  
That sounded through each room,  
Of "Mother," "Mother," the dear  
love calls  
That will echo long in the silent halls,  
And add to their stately gloom.

There may come a time when you'll  
long to hear  
The eager, boyish tread,  
The tuneless whistle, the clear, shrill  
shout,  
The busy bustle in and out,  
And pattering overhead.

When the boys and girls are all grown  
up,  
And scattered far and wide,



Or gone to the undiscovered shore,  
Where youth and age come never-  
more,  
You will miss them from your side.

Then gather them close to your loving  
heart,  
Cradle them to your breast ;  
They will soon enough leave your  
brooding care,  
Soon enough mount youth's topmost  
stair—  
Little ones in the nest.

A RHYME OF ONE.

YOU sleep upon your mother's breast,  
Your race begun,  
A welcome, long a wish'd-for guest,  
Whose age is One.

A baby-boy, you wonder why  
You can not run ;  
You try to talk—how hard you try!—  
You're only One.

Ere long you won't be such a dunce :  
You'll eat your bun,  
And fly your kite, like folk who once  
Were only One.

You'll rhyme, and woo, and fight, and  
joke,  
Perhaps you'll pun :  
Such feats are never done by folk  
Before they're One.

Some day, too, you may have your joy,  
And envy none ;  
Yes, yourself, may own a boy  
Who isn't One.

He'll dance, and laugh, and crow, he'll  
do  
As you have done :  
(You crown a happy home, tho' you  
Are only One.)

But when he's grown shall you be here  
To share his fun,  
And talk of days when he (the dear !)  
Was hardly One ?

Dear child, 'tis your poor lot to be  
My little son ;  
I'm glad, though I am old, you see,—  
While you are One.

CRANK AND PULLEY.

(MACHINE POETRY).

MY family machine,  
Oh, 'tis so hard to run ;  
I get it all in shape,  
In order, one by one,  
The cogs, the wheels, and rollers  
In line, not one in flank,  
I take the place of " driver,"  
And try to turn the crank.

Oh, dear ! how they do bother !  
The Willie wheel won't roll ;  
The Bettie cog is broken—  
Tom spike don't hit the hole !  
I work, and work, and worry,  
I turn with might and main,  
And when I try to hurry  
I telescope the train.

But hold ! Have I not heard ?—  
Stop ! Let me think—and pray.  
Oh, yes, the cord and pulley ;  
Is that the " better way ?"  
It may be well to try it,  
I'll see what I can do,  
If skillfully I ply it  
Perhaps the train will go.

Oh, happy thought ! Oh, glorious !  
Come, let me try again.  
The pulley is victorious !  
How smoothly runs the train !  
The Willie wheel goes rolling,  
The Bettie cog ne'er slips,  
Tom spike just hits the hole in—  
All go for—mother's lips.

I wonder if a patent—  
 No, no, it shall not be—  
 Let *everybody* have it,  
 The blessed thing! Just see!  
 With "cords of love" I move it,  
 The oil of grace I ply,  
 And oh! how I do love it,  
 As heavenward we fly!

—————

*FATHER AT PLAY.*

SUCH fun as we had one rainy day,  
 When father was home and helped us  
 play!

We made a ship and hoisted sail,  
 And crossed the sea in a fearful gale—

But we hadn't sailed into London town,  
 When captain and crew and vessel  
 went down.

Down, down in a jolly wreck,  
 With the captain rolling under the  
 deck.

But he broke out again with a lion's  
 roar,  
 And we on two legs, he on four,

Ran out of the parlor and up the stair,  
 And frightened mamma and the baby  
 there.

So mamma said she'd be p'liceman  
 now,  
 And tried to 'rest us. She didn't know  
 how!

Then the lion laughed and forgot to  
 roar,  
 Till we chased him out of the nursery  
 door;

And then he turned to a pony gay,  
 And carried us all on his back away.

Whippity, lickity, hickity ho!  
 If we hadn't fun, then I don't know!

Till we tumbled off and he cantered on,  
 Never stopping to see if his load was  
 gone.

And I couldn't tell any more than he  
 Which was CHARLIE and which was  
 me,

Or which was Towzer, for all in a mix  
 You'd think three people had turned  
 to six.

Till Towzer's tail was caught in the  
 door;  
 He wouldn't hurrah with us any more.

And mamma came out the rumpus to  
 quiet,  
 And told us a story to break up the  
 riot.

—————

*"WASN'T HIS FATHER THERE?"*

IN a pleasant, homely chamber,  
 On a sunny autumn day,  
 Sat a father and a mother,  
 With their little child at play.

Round about the room she wandered,  
 In her careless, childish joy,  
 Fondling with a simple pleasure,  
 In her hands a baby's toy.

"Well does Lillie love her playthings,"  
 Said her father, glancing down;  
 Then he told her a short story,  
 What he saw that day in town:

How a father to his office,  
 Brought, that morn, his little son;  
 Hoped to have him close beside him,  
 While his work was being done.

But the little boy grew weary,  
 Home and toys were far away;  
 And his smiles were changed to crying,  
 Long before the close of day.

Quietly did Lillie listen,  
 Till the story short was through;  
 Then a smiling look of questioning  
 Grew into the eyes so blue.

Had she understood him rightly?  
Was the story told her fair?  
Baby cries for vanished playthings,  
Why, "Was not his *father* there?"

Oh! these wondrous, hisping accents,  
How they fall like drops of balm,  
Soothing all our restless sobbing  
Into heaven's own blessed calm.

Still through mouths of babes He  
    speaketh,  
Who Himself a babe became,  
And the human heart of Jesus  
Evermore is still the same.

—————  
*MOTHER'S WAY.*

OFT within our little cottage,  
As the shadows gently fall,  
While the sunlight touches softly  
One sweet face upon the wall,  
Do we gather close together,  
And in hushed and tender tone,  
Ask each other's full forgiveness  
For the wrong that each has done.  
Should you wonder why this custom,  
At the ending of the day,  
Eye and voice would quickly answer,  
"It was once our mother's way!"

If our home be bright and cheery,  
If it hold a welcome true,  
Opening wide its door of greeting  
To the many, not the few;  
If we share our Father's bounty  
With the needy, day by day,  
'Tis because our hearts remember  
This was ever mother's way.

Sometimes, when our hands grow  
    weary,  
Or our tasks seem very long;  
When our burdens look too heavy,  
And we deem the right all wrong,  
Then we gain a new, fresh courage,  
As we rise, to proudly say:  
"I et us do our duty bravely,  
This was our dear mother's way."

Thus we keep her memory precious,  
While we never cease to pray  
That, at last, when lengthening shadows  
    Mark the evening of our day,  
They may find us waiting calmly,  
To go home our mother's way!

—————  
*THE DUMB CHILD.*

SHE is my only girl.  
I asked for her as some most precious  
    thing—  
For all unfinished was Love's jeweled  
    ring,  
Till set with this soft pearl!  
The shadow time brought forth I could  
    not see,  
How pure, how perfect seemed the gift  
to me!

Oh! many a soft old tune  
I used to sing unto that deafened ear,  
And suffered not the slightest footstep  
    near,  
Lest she might wake too soon:  
And hushed her brothers' laughter  
while she lay.  
Ah, needless care! I might have let  
them play.

'Twas long ere I believed  
That this one daughter might not speak  
to me;  
Waited and watched—God knows how  
    patiently!  
How willingly deceived.  
Vain Love was long the untiring nurse  
of Faith,  
And tended hope until it starved to  
death.

Oh, if she could but hear  
For one short hour, till I her tongue  
    might teach  
To call me mother, in the broken  
    speech  
That thrills the mother's ear!  
Alas! those sealed lips never may be  
    stirred  
To the deep music of that holy word.

My heart it sorely tries,  
 To see her kneel with such a reverent  
 air,  
 Beside her brothers at their evening  
 prayer,  
 Or lift those earnest eyes  
 To watch our lips, as though our words  
 she knew,  
 Then move her own, as she were speak-  
 ing too.

I've watched her looking up  
 To the bright wonder of a sunset sky,  
 With such a depth of meaning in her  
 eye,  
 That I could almost hope  
 The struggling soul would burst its  
 binding cords,  
 And the long pent-up thoughts flow  
 forth in words.

The song of bird and bee,  
 The chorus of the breezes, streams, and  
 groves,  
 All the grand music to which nature  
 moves,  
 Are wasted melody  
 To her; the world of sound a tuneless  
 void;  
 While even silence had its charm de-  
 stroyed.

Her face is very fair;  
 Her blue eye beautiful; of finest mold  
 The soft white brow, o'er which in  
 waves of gold,  
 Ripples her shining hair.  
 Alas! this lovely temple closed must  
 be,  
 For He who made it keeps the master-  
 key.

Wills He the mind within  
 Should from earth's Babel clamor be  
 kept free,  
 E'en that His still, small voice and step  
 might be  
 Heard, at its inner shrine,  
 Through that deep hush of soul, with  
 clearer thrill!  
 Then should I grieve? Oh, murmuring  
 heart, be still!

She seems to have a sense  
 Of quiet gladness, in her noiseless  
 play;  
 She hath a pleasant smile, a gentle  
 way,  
 Whose voiceless eloquence  
 Touches all hearts, though I had once  
 the fear  
 That even her father would not care  
 for her.

Thank God, it is not so!  
 And when his sons are playing merrily,  
 She comes and leans her head upon his  
 knee—  
 Oh, at such times I know,  
 By his full eye and tones subdued and  
 mild,  
 How his heart yearns over his silent  
 child.

Not of all gifts bereft,  
 Even now. How could I say she did  
 not speak?  
 What real language lights her eye and  
 cheek.  
 And thanks to Him who left  
 Unto her soul yet open avenues  
 For joys to enter, and for love to use!

And God in love doth give  
 To her defect a beauty of its own,  
 And we a deeper tenderness have  
 known  
 Thro' that for which we grieve.  
 Yet shall the seal be melted from her  
 ear,  
 Yea, and my voice shall fill it—but not  
 here.

When that new sense is given,  
 What rapture will its first experience  
 be,  
 That never woke to meaner melody  
 Than the rich songs of heaven—  
 To hear the full-toned anthem swell-  
 ing round,  
 While angels teach the ecstasies of  
 sound!

*LINES ON THE DEATH OF A CHILD.*

BEHOLD a seraph soaring  
 From out our weary world ;  
 In robes of white,  
 One starlit night,  
 With spirit-wings unfurled,  
 He took his flight  
 To the gates of light,  
 To make his dwelling there,  
 Seraphic songs outpouring  
 Upon the silent air.

Oh, how he loved thee, mother,  
 Thy bosom was his bed ;  
 'Twas sweet to rest  
 On thy soft breast  
 The little weary head ;  
 To feel thee press  
 With fond caress  
 The bright and radiant brow,  
 But the blessed "Elder Brother"  
 Will cherish "baby" now.

Life lay, untrod, before him,  
 The future all unknown ;  
 How might the years  
 Have flowed with tears,  
 Till laughter changed to moan !  
 How might the strife  
 Of human life  
 Have brought his soul to harm !  
 But now a shield is o'er him—  
 The Everlasting Arm !

The paths of bliss unbounded  
 His feet already tread—  
 The heavenly fields  
 Whose harvest yields  
 The true and living bread.  
 On fruitful hills,  
 By placid rills,  
 The lambs of Jesus feed ;  
 By heaven's wealth surrounded,  
 What can he ever need ?

Dear weeping father, mother,  
 How could he longer wait

When Jesus calls?  
 From jasper walls  
 Swung wide the golden gate.  
 But he will stand  
 At God's right hand,  
 To wait and watch for you ;  
 And there will be another  
 'To bid you "welcome" too.

And so he left you, winging  
 His upward flight afar,  
 Till, through the night,  
 There shone the light  
 Of one more radiant star !  
 Through countless years  
 No bitter tears  
 Shall dim those lustrous eyes ;  
 No sighs shall mar the singing  
 Beneath those cloudless skies !

*SATURDAY NIGHT.*

THE spirit's trailing garments, that  
 have swept  
 Through all the week, along the  
 dusty ways,  
 Catching assoilment from the worldly  
 days,  
 Though oft aside the foot in 'voidance  
 stept—  
 Gather them up to-night ; they have  
 not kept  
 Their earlier beauty. Thorny cares  
 have torn  
 Their delicate fabric—fretting troub-  
 les worn  
 The 'broidered hem, the while the  
 wearer wept,  
 And strove with vain attempt to  
 walk apart  
 Where the clay touched not. Where-  
 fore, weary one !  
 Loosen these work-day vestments  
 from thee, lest,  
 Uncleansed by meditation's holy art,  
 Thy soul be found unfitted to put on  
 The pure, fair linen of the Sabbath  
 rest !



*BY THE FIRE-LIGHT.*

I THINK you would not care to know  
this now ;

Life is too full of youth, and hope,  
and strength ;

And so the wish comes that I knew  
but how

I might run forward on far-reaching  
length

Of your life's path, and if I found a  
place

Where ways were steep, where bit-  
ter, anxious hours

Must blanch the courage even from  
your face—

There, on that spot, I'd lay not gifts,  
not flowers,

But these few lines, which you would  
read, then smile,

And be more glad one fleeting mo-  
ment's while.

Do you remember how, one night, you  
came,

Almost a stranger, yet so much a  
friend

That as we watched the fire-light's flit-  
ting flame

We talked of life's deep purpose—  
of its end—

Unrealized ambitions—fruitless strife ?  
A not unusual theme. You did not

know  
How dark a cloud that night obscured  
my life ;

Doubt of myself—a hideous shade  
that low

Hung over all things—made me doubt  
mankind,

And even to God's great goodness  
rendered blind !

What gentle spirit bade you speak the  
word

Which from its gloomy bonds my  
heart set free ?

Sweet as the song of spring's return-  
ing bird,

Yet only this—that you believed in  
me !

The dancing flames flashed forth a  
cheerier glow,

The grateful warmth stole all my  
being through,

Vanished sick doubts as mists at  
morning go :

To your belief I would, indeed, be  
true !

Your kindly thought had placed me  
far too high,

Yet, brave to reach that height, I con-  
stant try !

*COMPENSATION.*

SHE folded up the worn and mended  
frock

And smoothed it tenderly upon her  
knee,

Then through the soft web of a wee  
red sock

She wove the bright wool, musing  
thoughtfully,

“Can this be all? The great world is  
so fair,

I hunger for its green and pleasant  
ways,

A cripple prisoned in her restless  
chair,

Looks from her window with a wist-  
ful gaze.

“The fruits I cannot reach are red and  
sweet,

The paths forbidden are both green  
and wide ;

O God! there is no boon to helpless  
feet

So altogether sweet as paths denied.  
Home is most fair: bright are my

household fires,  
And children are a gift without

alloy:  
But who would bound the field of  
their desires

By the prim hedges of mere fireside  
joy ?

"I can but weave a faint thread to  
and fro,  
Making a frail woof in a baby's  
sock;  
Into the world's sweet tumult I would  
go,  
At its strong gates my trembling  
hand would knock."  
Just then the children came, the father  
too,  
Their eager faces lit the twilight  
gloom,  
"Dear heart," he whispered, as he  
nearer drew,  
"How sweet it is within this little  
room!

"God puts my strongest comfort here  
to draw  
When thirst is great, and common  
wells are dry.  
Your pure desire is my unerring law;  
Tell me, dear one, who is so safe  
as I?  
Home is the pasture where my soul  
may feed,  
This room a paradise has grown to  
be;  
And only where these patient feet  
shall lead  
Can it be home for these dear ones  
and me."

He touched with reverent hand the  
helpless feet,  
The children crowded close and  
kissed her hair.  
"Our mother is so good, and kind,  
and sweet,  
There's not another like her any-  
where!"  
The baby in her low bed opened wide  
The soft blue flowers of her timid  
eyes,  
And viewed the group about the cra-  
dle side  
With smiles of glad and innocent  
surprise.

The mother drew the baby to her knee  
And smiling, said: "The stars shine  
soft to-night;  
My world is fair; its hedges sweet to  
me,  
And whatsoever is, dear Lord, is  
right!"

THANKSGIVING EVE.

A TRUE INCIDENT.

HAND in hand through the city streets,  
As the chilly November twilight fell,  
Two childish figures walk up and  
down—  
The bootblack Teddie and sister  
Nell.

With wistful eyes they peer in the  
shops,  
Where dazzling lights from the win-  
dows shine  
On golden products from farm and  
field,  
And luscious fruits from every clime.

"O Teddie!" said Nell, "let's play  
for to-night  
These things are ours, and let's sup-  
pose  
We can choose whatever we want to  
eat,  
It might come true, perhaps—who  
knows?"

Two pinched little faces press the pane,  
And eagerly plan for the morrow's  
feast  
Of dainties their lips will never touch,  
Forgetting their hunger a while, at  
least.

The pavement was cold for shoeless  
feet,  
Ted's jacket was thin; he shivered  
and said,

"Let's go to a place and choose some clothes."

"Agreed!" said Nell, and away they sped

To a furrier's shop, ablaze with light,  
In whose fancied warmth they place  
their hands,  
And play their scanty garments are  
changed  
For softest fur, from far-off lands.

"A grand Thanksgiving we'll have!"  
cried Nell,

"These make-believe things seem  
almost true;

I've most forgot how hungry I was,  
And, Teddie, I'm *almost* warm,  
aren't you?"

O happy hearts that rejoice to-day  
In all the bounty the season brings,  
Have pity on those who vainly strive  
To be warmed and fed with imagin-  
ings!

DAISIES IN THE CITY.

AWAY from the soil that bore them,  
Away from the waving grass,  
Away from the winds that kissed  
them,  
Down in the meadow pass,  
Away from the sun that gave them  
Their hearts of yellowest gold,  
Away from the tears of heaven,  
And the love they nightly told.

Away from the song of the bobolink,  
Away from the song of the rain,  
Away from the song of the reaper's  
scythe,  
As it sweeps through the golden  
grain,  
Away from the song of the whirring  
bee,  
As it seeks the purple clover,  
Away from the song of the farmer's  
lass,  
As she sings of her farmer lover.

Away from the smiles of the summer  
sky,—

Sweet recollections bringing;  
For in the shadow of these walls  
I hear the throstle singing;  
I see the face of nature glow,  
With all her brilliant treasures,  
And I haunt the scenes of earlier years,  
And pursue my childhood pleasures.

And many eyes are filled with tears,  
When in my casement spying  
These messengers from scented fields;—  
And many hearts with sighing;  
And some perhaps as I, have caught  
From out their fragrance spreading,  
The incense which the fairer flowers  
In heavenly fields are shedding.

ANISE AND CUMMIN.

WEARILY with homely duties done,  
Tired through treading day by day  
Over and over from sun to sun,  
One and the same small round  
away,  
Under her breath I heard her say:

"Oh! for the sweep of the keen-edged  
scythe,  
Oh! for the swaths, when the reap-  
ing's o'er  
Proof of the toil's success. I tithed  
Anise and cummin—such petty store!  
Cummin and anise—nothing more!

"Only a meagre garden-space,  
Out of the world so rich and broad—  
Only a strip of standing-place!  
Only a patch of herb-strown sod  
Given, in which to work for God!

"Yet is my hand as full of care  
Under the shine and frost and rain,  
Tending and weeding and watching  
there,  
Even as though I deemed a wain  
Were to be piled with sheaves of  
grain.

“Then when the work is done, what cheer

Have I to greet me, great or small?  
 What that shall show how year by year,

Patient I've wrought at duty's call?  
 Anise and cummin—that is all!”

Turning, I raised the drooping head,  
 Just as I heard a sob arise:

“Anise and cummin and mint,” I said  
 (Kissing her over her aching eyes),  
 “Even our Lord doth not despise.

“Think you He looks for headed wheat  
 Out of your plot of garden-ground?

Think you He counts as incomplete  
 Service that from such scanty bound  
 Yields Him the tithing He has found?

“What are to Him the world's wide  
 plains?

Him who hath never a need to fill  
 Even one garner with our small grains?  
 Yet, if the plot is yours to till,  
 Tithe Him the anise and cummin  
 still!”

IF WE COULD KNOW.

If we could know  
 Which of us, darling, would be first to  
 go;

Who would be first to breast the  
 swelling tide,

And step alone upon the other side—  
 If we could know!

If it were you,  
 Should I walk softly, keeping death in  
 view?

Should I my love to you more oft ex-  
 press?

Or should I grieve you, darling, any  
 less—

If it were you?

If it were I,  
 Should I improve the moments slip-  
 ping by?

Should I more closely follow God's  
 great plan?

Be filled with sweeter charity to man—  
 If it were I?

If we could know!

We cannot, darling; and 'tis better so.  
 I should forget, just as I do to-day,  
 And walk along the same old stum-  
 bling way—

If I could know.

I would not know

Which of us, darling, will be first to go.  
 I only wish the space may not be long  
 Between the parting and the greeting  
 song;

But when, or where, or how we're  
 called to go—

I would not know.

DAILY CARES AND WORRIES.

WHEN you are sore bewildered,  
 Not knowing what to do,  
 When all your schemes seem baffled,  
 And earthly helpers few—

Go to the Lord for guidance  
 As well as for His grace;  
 Look up for His direction,  
 And strength to run the race.

He knows your every sorrow,  
 Each little cross and care;  
 Each trifling daily worry  
 So difficult to bear.

'Twas just because He loved you  
 He left His throne on high;  
 To save you and redeem you,  
 To suffer and to die.

But in this far-off country,  
 Where weary feet oft slide,  
 How restful to remember  
 Your Saviour is your Guide,

Near you till life is over,  
Near you by day and night ;  
Near you until He takes you  
Into His perfect light !

*HOME MINISTRIES.*

“ And the odor of it filled the house.”

“ AND the odor of it filled the house ! ”  
O, Mary, thou didst break  
The alabaster box, and lo !

The fragrance for thy sake,  
Is in each page that telleth us,  
Thy heart gave its best treasure thus.

“ And the odor of it filled the house ! ”  
O, subtle, and most sweet,  
The incense of thy *Love* that made  
Thy humble home complete.  
With that pure, fragrant atmosphere  
Of love, the lowliest home is dear.

“ And the odor of it filled the house ! ”  
O, ministry divine !  
Not she serves best who breaks the  
bread,  
Or pours the purple wine ;  
But she who cometh tenderly,  
And in her every ministry,

Remembers that the soul hath needs  
But hath not fleshly hands,  
Appealing to the outward sight ;  
Who alway understands  
The finer senses, that are fed  
*Not* by a gift of wine, or bread.

O, loving heart so minist'ring  
With faith in the unseen,  
That all home toils are glorified,  
And no small task seems mean !  
I know thy breathings so pervade  
Thy home, that it is fragrant made.

“ And the odor of it filled the house ! ”  
O, gentle heart, I trow,  
Not sweeter perfume from the box,  
Broken for love could flow,  
Than filleth some homes, it may be  
That have no other fragrancancy !

*ASPIRATION.*

WITH timid hand, a little lad,  
From hunger faint and ill,  
Knocked at my door one autumn night,  
At twilight gray and chill.

For broken bits of food he begged  
In such an humble way,  
That had my heart been made of steel  
I could not bid him nay.

He entered when I bade, and crouched  
Within a corner dim,  
And ate in hungry haste the food  
I quickly proffered him.

Bright home-life glimpses strange and  
sweet,  
Through open doorways stole,  
And warmth and love awoke to life  
The hunger of his soul.

That little, pleading, wistful face,  
Undimpled by a smile,  
I oft recall at twilight gray,  
Though years have lapsed the while.

Thus I through doubt and darkness  
press  
My sad and weary way,  
And at the door of faith and hope  
In humble accents pray :

“ O grant me, Master, but the crumbs  
That from Thy table fall,  
And I indeed shall grateful be,  
Although this gift be all.”

Grateful, indeed, but not content,  
I crave a richer store—

“ Dear Lord, the bread Thy children  
share,  
Give me forevermore.

“ And let the warmth, and light, and  
love  
Of kindness peace impart ;  
In royal measure that shall fill  
And satisfy my heart.”



## AN OLD SONG.

"God hath chosen the weak things of the world."

It was an old and once familiar strain,  
A distant echo from the years gone  
by;  
And now we heard its melody again  
Beneath a foreign sky.

A company of strangers, met to part,  
Spending an evening in the same  
hotel,  
And soft as dew upon each weary  
heart  
The sweet notes fell.

She was a fair and gentle maid who  
sang,  
Who summers seventeen had scarce-  
ly told,  
And deftly from her practiced hand  
and tongue  
The music rolled.

We hushed our busy talk to hear her  
sing,  
The earnest student laid his book  
aside,  
While memory bore us on her noise-  
less wing  
O'er ocean wide.

To that far distant land beyond the  
sea,  
Which we had left on foreign shores  
to roam,  
The music bore us on its pinions free  
Back to our home ;

Back to the land which we have left  
behind,  
The land of love, and hope, and faith,  
and prayer,  
And showed the faithful hearts and  
faces kind  
That loved us there.

And one there was who heard that  
soothing song,  
Whose heart was heavy with its  
weight of care,

Embittered by a sense of cruel wrong  
No friend might share.

Silently, proudly, had he borne his  
pain,  
Crushed from his wounded heart  
each softening thought ;  
But the sweet tones of that forgotten  
strain  
New feelings brought.

Strange longings rose once more to see  
the place  
Which in his boyhood he had held  
so dear,  
To see once more his aged father's  
face,  
His voice to hear ;

To meet again his gentle sister's  
smile—  
('Twas she who used to sing this  
self-same song),  
Would not her love his thoughts from  
sorrow wile,  
And soothe his wrong ?

How would their faithful hearts rejoice  
to greet  
Their prodigal's return from distant  
shore,  
And bind his heart by many a wel-  
come sweet  
To roam no more !

Thus he resolved that when the morn-  
ing came,  
He would arise and homeward wend  
his way,  
And, heedless of the harsh world's  
praise or blame,  
No more would stray.

Little the singer guessed the power  
that lay  
Beneath the accents of her simple  
song ;  
Its soothing words should haunt him  
day by day,  
And make him strong.

The lengthening twilight stole into the  
 room  
 And wrapped us in its mantle cold  
 and grey ;  
 But from the list'ner's heart the deeper  
 gloom  
 Had passed away.

The song was ended, and the singer  
 rose,  
 And lights were brought, and books  
 and work resumed ;  
 His spirit tasted long-denied repose  
 By hope illum'd ;

And when the morning dawned he  
 homeward turned,  
 Back to his father's house beyond  
 the sea,  
 The dear old homestead where his  
 spirit yearned  
 Once more to be.

O happy maid ! Go singing thus  
 through life,  
 Bidding the lost return, the weak  
 be strong ;  
 Thine is a gift with heavenly comfort  
 rife,  
 The gift of song.



GRANDFATHER AND GRANDMOTHER.



WATCHING GRANDMOTHER.



## GRANDFATHER AND GRANDMOTHER.

### BEAUTIFUL GRANDMAMMA.

GRANDMAMMA sits in her quaint arm-chair ;

Never was lady more sweet and fair ;  
Her gray locks ripple like silver shells,  
And her brow its own calm story tells  
Of a gentle life and a peaceful even,  
A trust in God and a hope in heaven.

Little girl Mary sits rocking away  
In her own low seat, like some win-  
some fay ;

Two doll babies her kisses share,  
And another one lies by the side of her  
chair ;

May is fair as the morning dew :  
Cheeks of roses and ribbons of blue.

“ Say, grandmamma,” says the pretty  
elf,

“ Tell me a story about yourself.  
When you were little what did you  
play ?

Was you good or naughty, the whole  
long day ?

Was it hundreds and hundreds of years  
ago ?

And what makes your soft hair as white  
as snow ?

“ Did you have a mamma to hug and  
kiss,

And a dolly like this, and this, and this ?  
Did you have a pussy like my little  
Kate ?

Did you go to bed when the clock  
struck eight ?

Did you have long curls and beads like  
mine,

And a new silk apron, with ribbon  
fine ? ”

Grandmamma smiled at the little maid,  
And, laying aside her knitting, she  
said :

“ Go to my desk, and a red box you'll  
see ;

Carefully lift it, and bring it to me.”  
So May put her dollies away, and ran,  
Saying, “ I'll be careful as ever I can.”

Then grandmamma opened the box,  
and lo !

A beautiful child, with throat like  
snow,

Lips just tinted like pink shells rare,  
Eyes of hazel, and golden hair,  
Hand all dimpled, and teeth like pearls,  
Fairest and sweetest of little girls.

“ Oh, who is it ? ” cried winsome May,  
“ How I wish she was here to-day !

Wouldn't I love her like everything ;  
Say, dear grandmamma, who can she  
be ? ”

“ Darling,” said grandmamma, “ that  
child was me.”

May looked long at the dimpled grace,  
And then at the saint-like, fair old  
face ;

“ How funny,” she cried, with a smile  
and a kiss,

“ To have such a dear little grandma  
as this !

“ Still,” she added, with a smiling zest,  
“ I think, dear grandma, I like *you*  
best.”

So May climbed on the silken knee,  
And grandma told her her history ;  
What plays she played, what toys she  
had,

How at times she was naughty, or  
good, or sad,



“But the best thing you did,” said  
 May, “don’t you see?  
 Was to grow to a beautiful grandma  
 for me.”

—  
 OLD SONGS AND NEW.

“OH dinna sing thae jinglin’ sangs  
 That tempt the graceless feet,  
 Wi’ solemn words in daft array  
 Like guisers on the street!  
 But to the grand auld measures  
 That fill the kirks at hame,  
 Sing the sweet psalms that David sang  
 To strains that he nicht claim.

“At least let thae licht sangs be still  
 On the holy Sabbath day,  
 Nor thrum sic evil dancin’ rants  
 When to your God ye pray.  
 Ill do sic wanton thairms  
 Become the holy Name;  
 Oh, sound His praise in the grand auld  
 strains  
 That fill the kirks at hame.”

Oh, Grannie, let the bairns sing  
 As fits their lightsome mood,  
 Nor let the gloom o’ Sinai cloud  
 Their gowan-buskit road.  
 Sweet were the auld kirk anthems  
 Where lyart elders knelt;  
 Yet thinkna Heaven disdained to hear  
 The laverock’s gladsome lilt.

Oft hae our torn an’ tempted hearts  
 Thrilled to the Psalmist’s lyre,  
 And kened the sins an’ griefs our ain  
 That did his strains inspire.  
 But the sangs that pleased the Master,  
 When this cauld world He trod,  
 Were the glad hosannas o’ the weans  
 That hailed Him as their God.

Bethink ye how our faith was wrocht  
 In persecution’s fires,  
 When on the Covenant anvil stern  
 God fashioned out our sires.

The hills that drank their life-blood  
 Echo their martyr psalms,  
 Each misty moor their children till  
 Their rugged faith embalms.

But they hae fa’ en on sunnier days,  
 Thae slips o’ the auld tree:  
 Though Covenant bluid is in their  
 veins  
 Nae Covenant fires they dree;  
 Theirs are the laughin’ blossoms,  
 The fragrant, sweet-blown flowers  
 O’ the faith bedewed wi’ the martyr  
 blood  
 On Scotland’s heathery moors.

Then, Grannie, let the bairnies sing  
 As suits their glesome mood;  
 Nor let our Sinai cloud the path  
 Their God wi’ flowers hath strewed.  
 When David’s waes beset them,  
 Like us, his psalms they’ll sing,  
 But let the loud hosannas rise  
 That hail the Children’s King.

—  
 DREAMING AT FOURSCORE.

SHE sits in the gathering twilight  
 In her well-worn rocking-chair,  
 With the snow of life’s long winter  
 In the meshes of her hair.  
 She dreams of the little children  
 Who left her long ago,  
 And listens for their footsteps  
 With the longing mothers know.

She hears them coming, coming!  
 And her heart is all elate  
 At the patter of little footsteps  
 Down by the garden-gate.  
 The clatter of children’s voices  
 Comes merrily to her ears,  
 And she cries in her quivering treble,  
 “You are late, my little dears!”

And then, they are here beside her  
 As she had them long ago—  
 Susie, and Ben, and Mary,  
 And Ruthie, and little Joe.

And her heart throbs high with rapture

As each fond kiss is given,  
And the night is filled with music  
Sweet as her dreams of heaven.

Such wonderful things they tell her!

A nest in the apple-tree:  
And the robin gave them a scolding  
For climbing up to see!  
A wee white lamb in the pasture—  
A wild rose on the hill—  
And such a great ripe strawberry  
As Joe found by the mill!

She listens to all their prattle,

Her heart abrim with rest.  
She's queen in a little kingdom,  
Each child a royal guest.  
Queen? 'Tis an empty title!  
More than a queen is she:  
Mother of young immortals  
Who gather at her knee.

She brings their welcome supper,  
And they sit down at her feet  
Tired, and hungry, and happy,  
And she laughs to see them eat.  
Then she smooths the yellow tangles  
With a mother's patient hand,  
While she tells some wonderful story  
Of the children's fairy-land.

Then the little knotted shoe-strings  
Are patiently untied,  
And the children in their night-gowns  
Kneel at their mother's side.  
Their voices are low and sleepy  
Ere their simple prayers are said,  
And the good-night kiss is given  
By each waiting little bed.

Then a quiet comes about her,  
Solemn and still and deep,  
And she says in her dreamy fancies,  
"The children are fast asleep."  
Yes, fast asleep, poor mother,  
In their beds so low and green,  
Daisies and clover blossom  
Each face and the sky between.

*THE OLD MAN'S SONG.*

OH, don't be sorrowful, darling;  
Now don't be sorrowful, pray;  
For taking the year together, my dear,  
There isn't more night than day.

'Tis rainy weather, my darling;  
Time's waves they heavily run;  
But taking the year together, my dear,  
There isn't more cloud than sun.

We are old folks, now, my darling;  
Our heads they are growing gray;  
But, taking the year all round, my dear,  
You will always find the May.

We've had our May, my darling,  
And our roses long ago;  
And the time of the year is coming, my dear,  
For the long dark nights and the snow.

But God is God, my darling,  
Of night as well as of day;  
And we feel and know that we can go  
Wherever He leads the way.

*SIX AND SEVENTY-SIX.*

TWO faces on a card I see,  
A New Year's gift of love to me,  
A pretty childish ministry!

It were not hard, I think, to fix  
Their ages solely from Time's tricks,  
Without the "Six and Seventy-six."

"Maimie and Grandma," side by side,  
And seventy years betwixt them  
glide—  
A bubbling fount—an ebbing tide;

A morning beam—a sunset ray;  
A bud—a blossom in decay;  
A rippling mouth—and lips that pray;

A waxen brow—a furrowed face;  
Defiant smiles—and looks of grace—  
And contrasts more as more I trace.

The child sees seventy years, as far  
Beyond, to her, yon distant star,  
And marvels what their mysteries are.

These to the wearied eyes appear  
A fleeting mist, a shadowy sphere,  
And briefer than one waiting year.

Maimie and Grandma—Hope and  
Faith,  
Translated by one sunny breath—  
And this to me the picture saith.

—  
"G'ANPA'S" NAP.

ON the wide porch, thickly shaded,  
One clear sultry summer day,  
Sheltered from the heat, I rested,  
Musing, as an old man may.

Stirring leaves of silver poplar,  
Softly came a cooling breeze,  
Bringing smell of fragrant clover  
And the distant hum of bees.

Suddenly my dream was broken ;  
Sound of hastening feet came near,  
And sweet, childish words, clear-  
spoken,  
Fell upon my listening ear.

But I did not move nor answer  
As I heard the merry words,  
Sounding like the joyous twitter  
Of a pair of happy birds.

"G'anpa, see ! we've got some posies—  
Nicest ones you ever saw !  
Mamma gave us all these roses ;  
Why don't you wake up, G'anpa ? "

"Guess he's sleep tight," whispered  
Gracie ;  
So they sat down side by side,  
Softly playing there, till Daisy  
Clapped her little hands and cried :

"S'pose we stick our flowers round  
him,  
Play that he's our great big vase,  
Then he'll be so s'prised to see them  
When he wakes up—won't he,  
Grace ? "

So, with low and earnest whisper,  
And a grave, important air,  
They adorned their sleeping "G'anpa,"  
Stepping tiptoe round his chair.

Then at last their work was ended ;  
"Posies" stuck out everywhere.  
"Gracie, don't he look just splendid  
With those roses in his hair ? "

Patiently, with eyes admiring,  
They stood waiting near me there—  
Gentle Grace and Daisy Darling—  
Precious little loving pair.

Pretty soon their "G'anpa," woke up,  
"S'prised" as ever he could be,  
Seeing rose and yellow king-cup  
Grow on such a funny tree !

And two happy little faces  
Looked in mine that summer day,  
So I pleased their childish fancies,  
Loving as an old man may.

—  
GRANDMOTHER'S LESSON.

THE quilting bee was over,  
The folks had all gone home,  
And grandmother was sitting  
By the fireside alone.  
When the children came in softly,  
And, clustering around her chair,  
Waited a talk with grandma  
Ere they said their evening prayer.

"We are each of us making patch-  
work—  
All of us, old and young ;  
And the pieces are all provided,  
And sent to us one by one.  
And when they come to us folded,  
And we don't know how to turn,  
We must just give up our puzzling,  
And look to Heaven and learn.

"Sometimes our work seems useless,  
And with sighs of discontent,  
We wish that something greater  
For our life-work had been sent.  
But there's One who watches our labor  
With earnest, tender care,  
And when we are trying to please  
Him,  
He makes it wondrous fair."

"He will examine our stitches  
When the hour of trial shall come,  
And He will look to the motive  
And help us to take each one;  
And He judges us very kindly,  
And allows for the falling tear,  
That kept us at times from seeing  
How to thread our needles clear."

"You will see that all your pieces  
Were cut and prepared for you.  
The light and the dark together,  
With judgment unerring and true.  
And the work that looked the darkest  
Now seems the brightest and best;  
That your eyes are no more weary,  
But have entered the heavenly rest."

"And then upon seeing the Master,  
And gazing into His face,  
You'll forget all about your own work;  
In His glorious work of grace.  
And with praises to Him forever  
Your heart will overflow,  
Till earth's sorrows are all forgotten,  
And its trials left below."

---

### GRANDPA'S STORY.

A STORY? a story?  
Ah, yes, my dear children,  
Come, gather you closely  
'Bout grandpapa's knee;  
I'll tell you a story,  
A sweet little story,  
A story that happened  
To grandma and me.

I'm old now—I know it,  
My hair is all snowy,

And I've touched the full cycle  
Of threescore and ten;  
The story I'll tell you,  
It happened, my darlings,  
When I had a grandpa,  
And I was "Wee Ben;"

And grandma, dear grandma,  
Who sits there a-knitting,  
Was fair-haired and dimpled,  
A right pretty lass;  
We were playmates, my children,  
Your grandma and I were;  
We were lovers as children;  
Ah! how the years pass!

"The story?" Hallo, there  
Is mist on my glasses;  
It always will come, when  
I think of that day;  
It will go in a minute—  
Hand grandpa his 'kerchief;  
The story I'll tell when  
I've wiped it away.

You see we were playing,  
Your grandma and I were;  
Were playing that we were  
The "Babes in the Wood;"  
And we said we were lost  
In the depths of the forest,  
And pretended to cry,  
As lost babies should.

And I saw grandma crying,  
And forgot she was playing,  
And then I cried, too,  
Hard as ever I could;  
Then grandma laughed,  
And I smiled through my crying,  
And so we stopped playing  
The "Babes in the Wood."

And all our lives through we've  
Been working and playing,  
And laughing and crying,  
As we did in the game.  
For when grandma has cried,  
My eyes have grown misty,  
And my smiles have all come  
When grandmamma's came!

*GREAT-GRANDMOTHER'S  
SPINNING-WHEEL.*

OUT of the garret,  
Odd little thing, we bear it :  
Out of the dusty, moldy gloom,  
Into the sunlight-flooded room.  
Dust is over it, heavy and gray,  
Thick on the treadle, thick on the  
wheel,  
And spiders have spun on it, day by  
day,  
To mock at its old-time, busy zeal.

Smiling we linger,  
Pointing with curious finger  
As this or that quaint shape we see  
In this last-century mystery.  
But grandmother's face grows grave  
and pale,  
Our jests are idle, our wonder lost,  
This little wheel lifts up the veil  
To her from the land of grave and  
ghost.

Younger and stronger,  
White-haired and weak no longer,  
She sees, wide open, the cottage door,  
The ceiling low, and the sanded floor ;  
The roses that climb outside, with  
bloom  
Half of the window space conceal ;  
And her mother, who sits in the tidy  
room,  
Is spinning flax at this little wheel !

She hears the whirring,  
Soft as a kitten purring,  
And under and over the busy noise  
The tender song of her mother's voice.  
Her childhood's ways she walks again,  
Her childhood's heart she bears  
once more ;  
Drops from her like a leaf, the pain  
And burden of almost fourscore !

But for a minute !  
Then, with a tremor in it  
Of age and grief, her voice speaks low :  
" She died just fifty years ago ! "

Now no longer with spirits gay,  
The novel and crude alone we see,  
But wiping the gathered dust away,  
Our tears fall on it reverently.

We think how tender,  
With love and self-surrender,  
Those busy hands their labor wrought  
Upon it in time to loving thought,—  
Hopeful and eager long ago—  
While now in their folded peace they  
lie,  
Heedless that the toil goes on, below  
The dust of half a century !

Ah, if that spirit  
Could hover once more near it ;  
Could out of the dead past come again,  
Warm and living as it was then,  
In the cosy household corner here,  
Where stands the little old-fashioned  
thing,  
How the children's children gathered  
near,  
Would give it heart-full welcoming !

*THE FAST MAIL.*

GRANDMOTHER'S OPINION.

LETTERS? Four times a day,  
And the postman never gets tired,  
A rappin' an' tappin' an' handin' 'em  
in,—  
Aye, it's for that he is hired ;  
Susan an' Eleanor watchin',  
An' allers they've time to stop,  
Whatever they 're doin', to read 'em--  
Letters, fresh from the shop.

A letter's no consequence now.  
You heerd from Jonathan's wife,  
Ye tell me, to-day? What then?  
Ye hear every week o' your life,  
An' she at t'other end o' the  
Continent. *I* want to know  
Where *she* gets the stuff to put in 'em ;  
That's what bothers me so.



A letter 's no consequence now.  
 They say that there's millions a day  
 A flyin' hither an' yon,  
 Thick as the robins in May;  
 A flyin' hither an' yon,  
 Like the snowflakes out o' the sky,  
 An' meltin' away as quick,—  
 Gone with the breath o' a sigh.

I tell you when I was young—  
 A slip o' a thing like Sue—  
 When this faded hair was brown,  
 An' these dimmin' eyes were blue,  
 An' up in the mountain land  
 Your gran'ther was courtin' me,  
 A letter was worth its weight—  
 Worth waitin' a bit to see.

Writ with a strong quill pen, an'  
 Writ from a thoughtful heart,  
 Not flashed from a point o' steel,  
 As sharp an' cold as a dart;  
 An' it told the neighborhood news,  
 Whose names had been called in  
 church,  
 Whose barn had been sot on fire,  
 Whose will folks were tryin' to  
 search.

It began with an "Honored Sir,"  
 Or a "Much Respected Miss,"  
 An' it didn't dare allude,  
 Even distantly, to a kiss;  
 But it hoped it found you well,  
 An' it spoke in guarded phrase,  
 An' a solemn sort o' style,  
 Like the minister, when he prays.

"Formal an' frigid," Susan?  
 Is that what you're pleased to say?  
 Let me have my word, my dear,  
 My time is passin' away;  
 Before these fast mail days—  
 Oh, you needn't begin to blush!—  
 Neither males nor females, child,  
 Were given to so much gush.

Robert, he went to the pines one  
 Spell—it was bitter cold—  
 Oh, those hunter-men were giants,  
 Believe me, stalwart an' bold;

He was six months gone, an' I only  
 Had one letter all that time,  
 An' I kep' it safe in my Bible,  
 An' I larned it off like rhyme.

What's that? The postman again,  
 A rappin' an' tappin'? Pray  
 What is Willie a writin' for?  
 Two letters from him to-day.  
 Is it Katie is sick? Scarlet fever?  
 Dear lamb, I'm afraid, I'm afraid;  
 I have set my heart on my love,  
 On the darling, the sweet little maid.

We'll hear once more before night.  
 Oh, thanks to the Lord for His  
 ways,  
 They are better, for some things, now,  
 Than they were in my early days.  
 When your soul is dark with suspense,  
 And your cheek with fear turns pale,  
 Then you lift up a song o' praise  
 For the hope o' the good Fast Mail.

“*WAITING FOR MOTHER!*”

THE old man sits in his easy-chair,  
 Slumbering the moments away,  
 Dreaming a dream that is all his own,  
 On this gladsome, peaceful day.  
 His children have gathered from far  
 and near,  
 His children's children beside,  
 And merry voices are echoing through  
 The "Homestead's" hall, so wide.

But far away in the years long flown  
 Grandfather lives again;  
 And his heart forgets that it ever knew  
 A shadow of grief and pain,  
 For he sees his wife as he saw her  
 then—  
 A matron comely and fair,  
 With her children gathered around his  
 board  
 And never a vacant chair.

Oh! happy this dream of the "Auld  
Lang Syne,"

Of the years long slipped away!  
And the old man's lips have gathered  
a smile

And his heart grows young and gay.  
But a kiss falls gently upon his brow,  
From his daughter's lips so true:  
"Dinner is ready; and, Father, dear,  
We are *only waiting for you!*"

The old man wakes at his daughter's  
call,

And he looks at the table near.  
"There's *one* of us missing, my child,"  
he says,

"We will wait till *Mother* is here."  
There are tears in the eyes of his  
children then,  
As they gaze on an empty chair;  
For many a lonely year has passed  
Since "*Mother*" sat with them  
there.

But the old man pleads still wistfully:  
"We must *wait for Mother*, you  
know!"

And they let him rest in his old arm-  
chair

Till the sun at last sinks low.  
Then leaving a smile for the children  
here,

He turns from the earth away,  
And has gone to "*Mother*," beyond  
the skies,  
With the close of the quiet day.

---

ONCE AGAIN.

"LOOK up once again, dear grandma;  
How pretty you are to-night!  
Your hair is lovely, my grandma—  
So soft, and silky, and white."

Bless the child! his words like a ditty  
Keep singing low in my brain—  
Though I'm much too old to be pretty,  
'They sound like a dear old strain.

I suppose it is very silly  
That my eyes should fill with tears,  
But he gave me a thought o' Willie,  
And a time back, years and years.

My hair won my pet name, Golding,—  
It was softly said that night:  
"Look up once again, my darling;  
How pretty you are to-night!"

But now I'm an old woman,  
With my old eyes full of tears,  
And longing to join my good man,  
Home before me years and years.

---

GRANDMOTHER—A PORTRAIT.

A FACE on which the years lie gently,  
Softening ever as they go,  
As a stone is smoothed and brightened  
By the river's ceaseless flow.

Eyes to which tears are no strangers,  
For she often tears hath shed  
Over burdens born by others,  
Which she fain would bear instead.

And her hair is silver woven,  
As though light were falling down  
From the city she is nearing,  
Just foreshadowing the crown.

And her feet, they ne'er seem weary  
When they others' steps can spare;  
And her hands are very busy  
Lightening others' load of care.

And her smile, it cometh gently,  
Like the moonlight falling clear  
On some still, sequestered water,  
Pure and sparkling, heaven near.

And her thoughts, they seem too holy,  
And her gentle love too pure,  
To see crime and guilt in others  
Unless seeing, she can cure.

Oh, dear heart; the toilsome journey  
Now is mostly overpast:  
And the glimpse of heaven you give us  
Will be part of heaven at last.

GRANDMOTHER'S PATCH-  
WORK.

A GENEROUS basket piled to the brim  
With odds and ends so quaint and  
queer,  
Bright from the past, or age-worn and  
dim ;  
For they're gathered away from  
year to year.

As over them all her fancies rove—  
These scraps of garments from  
friends and kin—  
Like faces they seem which appear in  
a dream ;  
Ah, there's much unseen of life and  
love  
With grandmother's patchwork knitted  
in.

For each has some precious story to  
tell  
To the dear old eyes reading them  
o'er ;  
A tale of its own, that she knows full  
well,  
Born back to the hallowed days of  
yore.

The children will crowd about her  
knee,  
With eager ear for each history ;  
These old-time relics which oft they  
see  
Are full of meaning and mystery.

They know just which is the piece of  
pink  
Their father wore—her baby John ;  
The old lady smiles ; " Only to think  
How sweet and cunning he looked  
with it on."

And one, they know, is all upon earth  
To tell of the little girl who died ;  
How oft they have gazed, and hushed  
their mirth,  
And over its tender story sighed !

And here is something that's handed  
down  
To tell what she in her prime has  
done ;  
The fine checked linen of blue and  
brown—  
The piece *she* " colored, and wove,  
and spun."

There's Willie's apron, and mother's  
dress ;  
And the soldier-coat of brother Ben,  
Who marched away from each loved  
caress,  
But, alas ! did not march home  
again.

This, you know, is a piece of the gown  
Which grandmother wore on her  
wedding-day ;  
The children spread it reverently  
down—  
" Please tell us about it again," they  
say.

For that is the tale they love the best—  
How she started out on her bridal  
tour  
To find a home in the great, wild West,  
Where the wolves came howling  
around her door.

How they almost starved for the lack  
of food—  
Then swam the ford for a bit of corn ;  
How they tracked the deer through the  
pathless wood,  
And o'er the hills in the purple morn.

Then she sees herself with rose-  
wreathed brow,  
In bridal robes a young girl fair ;  
The silver that lies on her forehead now,  
In long dark ringlets of silken hair.

If, in her dreams, her dim eyes shed,  
Over her needle, sometimes a tear,  
'Tis not in sadness ; but joy instead,  
That God is so good, and heaven so  
near.

So over them all her fancies rove—  
 These scraps of garments from  
 friends and kin—  
 For there's much unseen of life and  
 love  
 With grandmother's patchwork  
 quilted in.

AN OLD MAN'S VALENTINE.

"GIVE me a Valentine, Youth"—  
 And the old man's cheeks were  
 aglow,  
 Though a staff was in his hand  
 And his hair was white as snow—  
 "Give me a Valentine—something nice;  
 The girl I love is beyond a price.  
 "One of the old-fashioned kind,  
 All sweet with the perfume of flow-  
 ers;  
 With dear little simple rhymes,  
 And two lovers in rosy bowers;  
 With a timid hope and a thought of  
 tears--  
 That has been my style for fifty years.  
 "This one will suit her, I think,  
 Her eyes, as these blossoms, are  
 blue,  
 White as these lilies her hair,  
 Like this dove, she is tender and true.  
 Just such a Valentine—smiles and  
 fears—  
 As I've sent her now for fifty years.  
 "No need for laughing, young men!  
 But laugh when you're seventy years  
 old,  
 If the girl you love to-day  
 Is beloved of you seventy-fold;  
 Laugh if you've had, through fifty  
 years' strife,  
 The wonderful joy of a faithful wife.  
 "Send her a Valentine, then,  
 As I'm sending my wife to-day;  
 Send her one every year,  
 For that is a true Lover's way.

God give you, young men, a wife like  
 mine,  
 And you'll send her, I know, a Valen-  
 tine!"

GRANDMOTHER'S NEW-YEAR'S  
 LETTER.

I PROMISED to write to you, John, I  
 know,  
 A full account of my visit here;  
 But, somehow, I can't feel settled yet,  
 Or used to things that are strange  
 and queer.  
 Katie gave me a welcome kind,  
 And maybe her kiss came from her  
 heart!  
 But there seemed a *something*, I know  
 not what,  
 Despite her kiss, which kept us apart.  
 I saw her look at the gown I wore,  
 And the poor old bonnet upon my  
 head,  
 And I *guessed* the thoughts that her  
 proud heart felt,  
 Even before a word was said.  
 I can not fairly complain, dear John;  
 Maybe I'm homesick away from you;  
 But—though you may call me foolish,  
 dear—  
 There is *something* which chills me  
 through and through.  
 Katie's husband is tall and fine,  
 A wonderful business man, they say;  
 And I've noticed he never has time to  
 kiss  
 His children, or join them at their  
 play.  
 And, speaking of children, the little  
 ones here  
 Are not like children when *we* were  
 young,  
*We* never mimicked our elders, John,  
 Or spoke to the aged with flippant  
 tongue.

I haven't described my room to you,  
 It's a quiet room on the upper floor,  
 Katie thought it would suit me best—  
 "Out of the way of noise," and,  
 more,  
 "She doesn't disturb me through the  
 day,  
 When people call, for she knows I'm  
 old."

Yes, I am old; but my *wits are* strong,  
 And there *are* some truths which  
 needn't be told.

This New-Year's Day I'm sitting alone  
 (For Katie is busy with friends, you  
 see,

And, having so much to do and say,  
 She has no time to remember me);  
 But I can't help thinking of home and  
 you,  
 And the kitchen fire, a-blazing high,  
 And the dear old year that has just  
 gone out—  
 How we watched it *in*, John, you  
 and I.

*You* are sitting now in the old arm-  
 chair;

The first day of the year has flown;  
 And the twilight shadows, which gath-  
 er fast,

Are shutting you in, dear John, *alone*.  
 But my city visit is almost done,  
 And my tired heart will know no  
 rest

Till, safe in the homestead once again,  
 I lay my head on my husband's  
 breast.

---

GRANDPA AND BESS.

Two bright heads in the corner,  
 Deep in the easy-chair;  
 One with a crown of yellow gold,  
 And one like the silver fair;  
 One with the morning's rosy flush,  
 And one with the twilight's tender  
 hush.

"Where do the New-Years come  
 from?"

Asks Goldilocks in her glee;  
 "Do they sail in a pearly shallop  
 Across a wonderful sea;  
 A sea whose waters with rainbows  
 spanned,  
 Touch all the borders of fairy-land?"

"Do all the birds in that country  
 Keep singing by night and by day?  
 Singing among the blossoms  
 That never wither away?  
 Will they let you feel as you hold them  
 near,  
 Their warm hearts beating, but not  
 with fear?"

"And the happy little children,  
 Do they wander as they will,  
 To gather the sweet wild roses,  
 And the strawberries on the hill.  
 White wings, like butterflies all afloat,  
 And a purple cloud for a fairy boat?"

"There sure is such a country,  
 I've seen it many a night,  
 Though I never, never could find it  
 Awake in the morning light.  
 And that is the country over the sea,  
 Where the beautiful New-Years wait  
 for me."

"Where do the New-Years come  
 from?"

Says grandpa, looking away  
 Through the frosty rime on the win-  
 dow,  
 To the distant hills so gray;  
 "They come from the country of youth  
 I know,  
 And they pass to the land of the long  
 ago."

"And which is the fairest country?"  
 Dear heart, I never can tell;  
 Where the New-Years wait their  
 dawning  
 Or the beautiful Old-Years dwell;  
 But the sweetest summers that ever  
 shone  
 To the land of the long ago have flown.



“ The New-Years wait for you, darling ;  
 And the Old-Years wait for me ;  
 They have carried my dearest treasures  
 To the country over the sea ;  
 The eyes that were brightest, the lips  
 that sung  
 The gladdest carols when life was  
 young.

“ But I know of a better country,  
 Where the Old-Years all are new ;  
 I shall find its shining pathway  
 Sooner, sweet heart, than you ;  
 And I'll send you a message of love  
 and cheer  
 With every dawn of a glad New-Year.”

The eyes of the dear old pilgrim  
 Are looking across the snows ;  
 While closer nestles the merry face,  
 With its flush like a pink wild rose.  
 Dreaming together the young and old,  
 Locks of silver and crown of gold.

---

*BEDTIME.*

WHEN the lamps were lit in the even-  
 ing

And the shutters were fastened tight,  
 And the room where the household  
 gathered

Was cosy, and warm, and bright,  
 When the bustle of work was over,  
 And the children were tired of play,  
 It seemed to us that our bedtime  
 Was the pleasantest part of the day.

For grandmother had her knitting ;  
 Click ! clack ! would the needles go ;  
 The baby was snug in the cradle,  
 And mother had time to sew ;  
 And we, in our little night-gowns,  
 Would clamber on father's knee,  
 And sheltered within his loving arms  
 Were as happy as we could be.

He could not sing ; but he whistled  
 A tune that was sure to keep  
 The little ones very quiet,  
 And put the baby to sleep ;

And whenever I want a lullaby,  
 The sweetest I e'er shall know  
 Is the one that my father always used  
 In the beautiful long ago.

Sometimes there were apples roasted ;  
 And then there were nuts to crack ;  
 And jokes to be told, and stories  
 That had a delicious smack ;  
 And the longer we lingered, the harder  
 We found it to get away,  
 For to us the children's bedtime  
 Seemed the sweetest hour of the day.

But at last the word was spoken ;  
 “ Come, come ! ” the mother said,  
 In her quietest tones—“ it is really time  
 That little folks went to bed ; ”  
 And we who were wide awake as owls,  
 And ready for any lark,  
 With mournful step moved slowly out  
 And into the joyless dark.

And long after we had folded  
 In slumber's serene embrace,  
 And with the angels of dreamland  
 Were floating through fairy space,  
 Dear father would come to our bedside,  
 And tuck us in, oh, so tight !  
 We'd sleep as warm as birds in a nest  
 All through the livelong night.

And when my bedtime cometh,  
 And the last “ Good-nights ” are  
 said,  
 And with the rest of the children  
 I go to my narrow bed,  
 My sleep will be all the sweeter  
 For the touch of a loving hand,  
 And a Father's smile will greet me  
 As I enter the morning-land.

---

*READ TO SLEEP.*

FOR threescore years and ten,  
 Burdened with care and woe,  
 She has traveled the weary ways of men,  
 And she's tired and wants to go.

It has been so hard to live !  
 And even her stinted store,  
 It seemed as if fate had grudged to  
 give,  
 And she wishes her need was o'er.

So, musing one afternoon,  
 Her knitting upon her lap,  
 She hears at her door a drift of tune,  
 And a quick, familiar tap.

In flashes a child's fresh face,  
 And with voice, bird-like and gay,  
 She asks, "Shall I find a pretty place,  
 And read you a Psalm to-day?"

"Aye, read me a Psalm : '*The Lord  
 Is my Shepherd*;' soft, not fast ;  
 Then turn the leaves of the Holy Word  
 Till you come to the very last.

"Where it tells of the wondrous walls  
 Of jacinth and sapphire stone ;  
 And the shine of the crystal light that  
 falls  
 In rainbows about the throne ;

"Where there never are any tears,  
 (Find where the verse so saith),  
 Nor sorrow, nor crying, through all  
 God's years,  
 Nor hunger, nor cold, nor death ;

"Of the city whose streets are gold ;  
 Ah, *here*, it was not my share  
 One single piece in my hands to hold—  
 But my feet shall tread on it *there* !

"Yes, read of it all ; it lifts  
 My soul up into the light,  
 And I look straight through the leaden  
 rifts,  
 To the land where there's no more  
 night."

So the little reader read  
 Till the slow-going needles stopped ;  
 And then as she saw the weary head  
 On the wearier breast had dropped,  
 Rising, she nearer stepped—  
 How easy it all had been !—  
 The gates had unclosed as the sleeper  
 slept,  
 And an angel had drawn her in !

## AN AUTUMN WHISPER.

LITTLE Daisy said one day  
 Since the autumn weather—  
 "Hark ! I hear the angels all  
 Whispering together !  
 Grandpa, please to come with me,  
 Help me hunt and find 'em ?  
 Guess they're in the corny tents,  
 Else they hide behind 'em."

Little Daisy, four-year-old,  
 In the autumn weather,  
 And her grandpa went a-field  
 Hand in hand together.  
 He unbound a shock of corn,  
 Daisy peered within it,—  
 "Oh ! they whisper louder now !  
 See 'em in a minute !"

To and fro from sheaf to sheaf  
 Daisy flitted brightly,  
 And the friendly russet stalks  
 Waved their banners lightly.  
 Many were the mystic tents  
 Searched and prattled over,  
 Yet no wings she spied but those  
 Of a startled plover.

"Grandpa, they're here, I know,  
 But I can not see one ;  
 Maybe I must wait for that  
 Till I get to be one.  
 But they whisper, oh ! so sweet,  
 Hide-and-seek while playing !  
 Let us both be very still,  
 And listen what they're saying ! \*

On the fallen shock of corn  
 In the autumn weather,  
 Infancy and ripened age  
 Harkened there together.  
 Oh, the golden autumn day !  
 'Tis the earth's perfection,  
 When she, dying, in her heart  
 Holds the resurrection.

Weary child the angel wings  
 Sees while sweetly sleeping ;  
 Thoughts more blessed and as pure  
 O'er his soul are sweeping.

Daisy, waking from her dream,  
 Finds a glimpse of glory  
 In the aged face, and lips :  
 "Grandpa's heard their story !"

Sitting 'mong the ripened corn  
 Lovingly together,  
 Daisy listens to the words  
 Sweet as autumn weather :  
 "Grandpa, when my curls are white,  
 And I'm done with playing,  
 Will the angels teach me, too,  
 What they're always saying ?"

Snowy heads, whose garnered lives  
 'Gainst the Cross are leaning,  
 You can give to angels' words  
 More than angels' meaning.  
 Oh, how blessed to walk with God  
 Year and year together,  
 Having ripened sheaves that sing  
 In the autumn weather !

---

*GRANDMA'S KNITTING.*

'TIS the quiet hour of twilight  
 Which follows the set of sun,  
 When the toil of the day is over,  
 And the evening rest begun,  
 And the silence is broken only  
 By the ticking of the clock ;  
 While grandma sits by the fireside,  
 Knitting a little sock.

The yarn flies over the needles,  
 In stitches of white and gray ;  
 But her fingers only are working,  
 For her mind is far away ;  
 And a vision of golden ringlets,  
 Of a snowy muslin frock,  
 Moistens the eyes of grandma,  
 As she knits the little sock.

Oh, oft have those fingers fashioned  
 Finest garments of old !  
 Oh, oft on that loving bosom  
 Have rested ringlets of gold !

For "grandma" then was "mother,"  
 And her own were the household  
 joys ;  
 And she held in her deep affection  
 The love of three darling boys.

Dear Charlie was lain 'neath the  
 daisies  
 When his years but numbered two ;  
 Fred fell in the battle of Vicksburg—  
 One of our heroes in blue ;  
 But the babe of darling Louie  
 In the cradle she loves to rock ;  
 And 'tis for the second Charlie  
 She is knitting the little sock.

No wonder that grandma sits musing  
 While the shining needles fly ;  
 No wonder the seam and the turning  
 Are marked with a weary sigh.  
 Her work will be rounded and finished  
 At the striking of the clock ;  
 And a crowd of tender memories  
 Knit into the little sock.

---

*GRANDMOTHER.*

AND this is her room and her cushioned  
 chair ;  
 They seem of herself a part ;  
 And here are her caps and her knitting  
 work—  
 They look so like her, dear heart !

'Tis many a year since we laid these  
 away  
 In camphor and sighs and tears ;  
 And still I can hear poor grandmother  
 say,  
 "Don't weep when I'm gone, my  
 dears."

But nature is strong and the will is  
 weak  
 And we wept, aye, wept full sore,  
 When the calm, sweet eyes that we  
 loved so well,  
 Looked on us no more—no more.

And still I can hear her sweet voice  
to-day,  
And feel the touch of her hand,  
As she blessed us all with a tender  
smile,  
Ere she passed to that other land.

Oh! the days have been sad and long—  
so long,  
Since grandmother went her way;  
And now by the side of these faded  
things,  
I can only weep and pray.

But grandmother's God, is He not my  
God?  
And doth He not rule above?  
Oh, yes! I will trust and smile through  
my tears,  
And henceforth look only above.

---

*THREE BASKETS.*

BERTHA'S basket; maiden Bertha,  
With the merry dancing eyes,  
And the brow whereon a shadow  
Would be such a rare surprise—  
What has she within this dainty  
Shell of rushes, silken-lined,  
Where so many maiden musings  
Innocently are enshrined?

Gayly mingled ends of worsted;  
Beads that glitter silver-bright;  
Fleece of Shetland, light and airy,  
Lying there in waves of white;  
'Broidered linen wrought for pastime  
In the dreamy summer hours;  
And perhaps a poet's idyl,  
Read amid the leaves and flowers.

Bertha's basket; mother Bertha,  
Ah, serener light hath grown  
In the thoughtful eyes; the forehead  
Hath some flitting sorrows known.  
In the larger basket looking,  
Other handiwork we find;  
Where the woman's heart, its pleasure,  
Love, and longing hath enshrined.

Little aprons; little dresses;  
Trousers patched about the knee  
With tender art, where no keen critic  
Can the mother's piecing see;  
Flannel worked with skill and patience,  
And an overflowing store.  
Every size of little stockings  
Always needing one stitch more.

Bertha's basket; grandma Bertha;  
For the years have run their way,  
And it seems, in looking backward,  
It was only yesterday  
That the maiden tripped so lightly,  
That the matron had her cares—  
Age slips on so gently, gently,  
Like an angel unawares.

Grandma's work is contemplative,  
With the scintillance of steel  
Glean the needles, smooth with flash-  
ing  
Off the toe or round the heel.  
Leisure days have found the lady;  
But her face is deeply lined,  
And her heart is as a temple—  
Hallowed memories there are  
shrined.

As along the dusty high-road  
Rise the milestones one by one,  
Telling here and there the distance  
Until all the way is done;  
So a woman's working basket  
Marks the journey of her life,  
Working dearest work for others,  
Whether she be maid or wife.

---

*GRANDPA AND BABY.*

OUT on the lawn, one summer's day,  
I left my baby boy at play,  
And smiled to hear his gleeful shout  
And happy voice sing in and out  
Among the arches of the trees,  
Then die away upon the breeze;  
While all the playful echoes stirred  
With merry laugh and lisping word.

But when I missed the cheerful noise,  
Nor longer heard the prattling voice,  
I rose, and to the window hied,  
And, looking hence, this vision spied—  
Oh, memory ! though thy name be pain,  
Paint, paint that picture o'er again !

The western sun his glory threw  
Along the sward of emerald hue ;  
Save where, perchance, in playful frown,  
Some cool, green shadows nestled  
down,  
And idly shifting with the sun,  
Crept slowly eastward, one by one.

Beneath the elm tree's waving crest,  
Where the winds tossed the birdlings'  
nest,  
And where alternate sun and shade  
Like changing fancies skipped and  
played,  
The old arm-chair, secure and good,  
With wide-spread arms, inviting stood ;  
And in its cushions, broad and deep,  
Grandpa and baby sat asleep.

On rounded cheek and golden head  
The sinking sun his radiance shed,  
While on the grandsire's silver crown  
A single ray dropped softly down,  
And then, in benediction fell  
On both, and wrapped them in its  
spell.

The breeze, in frolic growing bold,  
Tossed up the rings of shining gold  
On baby's brow, then with the gray  
On grandpa's head, began to play.

In the worn palm, securely pressed,  
One little dimpled hand found rest ;  
The other clasped a withered flower,  
Culled, all at will, in Nature's bower.

Fixed was the look of sad content,  
On the worn face, a trifle bent ;  
And forward drooped, to rest the chin,  
My baby's clustered curls within ;  
While on the collar of his coat  
The gray and gold together float.

Such tinting one might vainly seek  
As slept on baby's lip and cheek ;  
But thin and pale the other one,  
And sad and care-worn in the sun ;  
And so the evening shadows fell,  
And deeper grew, but all was well.

The elm-tree boughs now gaunt and  
bare,  
Are tossed about the wintry air,  
While pale, wan shadows come and  
go  
Upon the lawn, all white with snow ;  
But never more, at eve or dawn,  
On garden-walk or grassy lawn,  
May I, in vision fair, behold  
That little head, with crown of gold,  
Nor evermore, on summer day,  
That other one, with crown of gray.  
Aneath the dreary, drifted snow,  
The silver head, and gold, lie low ;  
Yet evermore, in joy and pain,  
Oh, memory ! paint that scene again.

#### GRANDMOTHERS.

GRANDMOTHERS are very nice folks ;  
They beat all the aunts in creation,  
They let a chap do what he likes,  
And don't worry about education.

I'm sure I can't see it at all,  
What a poor fellow ever could do  
For apples, and pennies, and cakes,  
Without a grandmother or two.

And if he is bad now and then,  
And makes a great racketing noise,  
They only look over their specs,  
And say, " Ah, these boys will be  
boys !

" Life is only short at the best ;  
Let the children be happy to-day,"  
Then they look for awhile at the sky,  
And the hills that are far, far away.

Quite often, as twilight comes on,  
Grandmothers sing hymns very low,



To themselves as they rock by the fire,  
About Heaven, and when they shall  
go.

And then, a boy stopping to think,  
Will find a hot tear in his eye,  
To know what will come at last ;  
For grandmothers all have to die.

I wish they could stay here and pray,  
For a boy needs their prayers ev'ry  
night ;  
Some boys more than others, I s'pose ;  
Such as I, need a wonderful sight.

---

*FOURSCORE AND THREE.*

APART in the golden glory,  
With eyes that look afar,  
From the weary way behind you  
To the sunset gates ajar.

I see you sitting, dreaming,  
In the dear old rocking-chair,  
While the snow of eighty winters  
Sleeps softly in your hair.

The birthday words are spoken  
By the loved ones at your side ;  
But your heart has gone a-Maying  
Down the season's backward tide.

Again in the dear home circle  
Are gathered the children all ;  
Again the feet so restless  
Come running at your call.

You watch their happy playing,  
And hear their shouts of glee ;  
You comfort their childish sorrows,  
And hold them on your knee.

Yet another voice is potent  
To waken the old-time spell ;  
The voice that in life's fair May-time  
Did its sweet story tell.

But the vision fades too quickly,  
And you sit in the sunset ray ;

The voices are hushed and silent,  
You are eighty-three to-day !

Our little lamb grew weary,  
And went long ago to sleep ;  
His grave is almost hidden  
In the churchyard grass so deep.

Past many and many a milestone  
I've journeyed, hand in hand ;  
Till the Master's call came softly,  
And one went to the Better Land.

But your heart is full of comfort,  
You know that the loved ones wait  
The sound of your sweet home-coming,  
Through the shining, pearly gate ;

Linger awhile in the sunset,  
That we in the vales below  
May catch, as we toil in the shadows,  
The beautiful golden glow.

Stretch out your hands in blessing  
On us and our little ones,  
As Moses, from Mount Nebo,  
Blessed Israel's wayward sons.

And when the Master's angel  
Whispers his summons sweet,  
Wait on the shining hills of heaven  
The coming of our feet !

---

*SEVENTY YEARS.*

AND is this age? There's wrinkles  
o'er her brow,  
And snow has fallen on the nut-  
brown hair,  
The rose is faded too—but where are  
now  
The strain of struggle, and the stamp  
of care ?

All gone. Her struggle's past, her  
care is dead ;  
Her only labor is to rest and wait.

And need one envy girlhood's restless  
joy,  
Who sits and watches close to  
heaven's gate?

Where is the love that cheered her  
youthful days?  
Where all the faces that she used to  
see?

Ay, where the darlings of her later  
age,  
The child that learned to pray beside  
her knee?

All gone before her. Yet she is con-  
tent;  
Her pleasures now bloom freshly  
every day:  
She's happy when her neighbor's lin-  
net sings,  
She's happy when her neighbor's  
children play.

She grieves (for with no pain, there  
is no peace),  
She grieves o'er sorrows that are not  
her own,  
She used to watch two brothers pass  
to school—  
She sighs to see the elder pass alone!

And thus she sits and waits at heaven's  
gates:  
There's but one thought that ever  
shades her brow:  
She had one son she lost before he  
died:  
Long, long before—but he is buried  
now.

Yet, having seen much sorrow and  
much joy,  
She has seen nothing that need breed  
Despair;

So, when she thinks of heaven's golden  
street,  
She hopes to meet her missing dar-  
ling there!

*GROWING OLD.*

SOFTLY, O softly, the years have swept  
by thee,  
Touching thee lightly, with tender-  
est care;  
Sorrow and death they have often  
brought nigh thee,  
Yet they have left thee but beauty to  
wear.

Growing old gracefully,  
Gracefully fair.

Far from the storms that are lashing  
the ocean,  
Nearer each day to the pleasant  
Home-light;  
Far from the waves that are big with  
commotion,  
Under full sail, and the harbor in  
sight:  
Growing old cheerfully,  
Cheerful and bright.

Past all the winds that were adverse  
and chilling,  
Past all the islands that lured thee  
to rest,  
Past all the currents that lured thee,  
unwilling,  
Far from thy course to the Land of  
the Blest:  
Growing old peacefully,  
Peaceful and blest.

Never a feeling of envy or sorrow  
When the bright faces of children  
are seen;  
Never a year from the young wouldst  
thou borrow—  
Thou dost remember what lieth be-  
tween:  
Growing old willingly,  
Thankful, serene.

Rich in experience that angels might  
covet,  
Rich in a faith that has grown with  
thy years,

Rich in a love that grew from and  
above it,  
Soothing thy sorrows and hushing  
thy fears:

Growing old wealthily,  
Loving and dear.

Hearts at the sound of thy coming are  
brightened,  
Ready and willing thy hand to re-  
lieve;

Many a face at thy kind word has  
brightened—

“It is more blessed to give than re-  
ceive”:

Growing old happily,  
Ceasing to grieve.

Eyes that grow dim to the earth and  
its glory

Have a sweet recompense youth can-  
not know;

Ears that grow dull to the world and  
its story

Drink in the songs that from Para-  
dise flow:

Growing old graciously,  
Purer than snow.



LOOKING BACKWARD.





THE OLDEST AND THE YOUNGEST.



## LOOKING BACKWARD.

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### *THREESCORE AND TEN.*

THREESCORE and ten! How the tide  
rolls on,  
Nearing the limitless sea;  
Bearing the voyager over life's flood  
To boundless eternity,  
On, through the childhood's sunny  
hours,  
On, through youth with its golden  
flowers,  
On, through manhood's ripened  
powers,  
Till age appears,  
With its crown of years,  
And the time-worn mariner, sighing  
for rest,  
Anchors at last in the port of the blest.

Threescore and ten! How the rolling  
years  
Are checkered with sunshine and  
shade!  
The calm chased away by the pitiless  
storm,  
Earth's joy into sorrow must fade,  
Spring with its bloom and perfume  
sped,  
Fruit-laden summer quickly fled,  
Autumn come with weary tread,  
Bent with the load  
Of treasured food,  
And then stern winter, with frosty  
breath,  
Throws over the fields the pall of  
death.

Threescore and ten! And if we shall  
reach  
The bound to life that here is set,  
How few of the comrades of early years  
Around us will linger yet!

Father and mother, their journey is  
o'er;  
Brothers and sisters, we greet them  
no more;  
Our loved ones stand thronging  
the further shore.  
They beckon us on,  
They point to the crown,  
And with longing hearts they wait  
To lead us through the pearly gate.

Threescore and ten! And the snows  
of years  
Are resting upon that brow;  
But, as backward we glance o'er the  
way we have trod,  
Before God our Father we bow,  
And joyous we bring Him our  
song of praise,  
His mercies have cheered us  
through all our days,  
And we fervently pray that life's  
setting rays  
Through love divine  
May cloudless shine—  
Melting away in purer light  
That illumines the land which knows  
no night.

Threescore and ten! Stand firm in  
thy lot.  
Faithful and true to the end;  
Bending thine ear to catch every word  
Of the message the Master doth send;  
Wakeful thine eye, for far spent is  
the night;  
Burnished thine armor, thou  
soldier of light;  
Ready to march, for the day-star  
is bright;  
Bold in the fight  
For truth and right!

Thou a conqueror shalt stand  
With the exulting blood-bought band.

Threescore and ten! And what shall  
we add

To measure the earthly strife?  
How many sands are left in the glass,  
Counting the years of life?

One by one they silently fall,  
One by one till have fallen all,  
One by one till thy God shall call:

“Thy race is run,  
Servant, well done!

Faithful in thy Lord's employ,  
Enter now into His joy!”

—————  
*I'M SIXTY TO-DAY.*

IN the far away past, when with me  
life was new,  
The dim, distant future arose to my  
view,

And the years seemed like mile-stones  
arranged on my way,  
But I've passed fifty-nine and reached  
sixty to-day.

Looking forward, the youth scarce the  
path can discern,  
But the eye glancing back sees each  
crook and each turn;  
And now I see oft where my steps  
went astray,  
But I would not retrace them though  
sixty to-day.

Though fortune her favors to me seldom  
sends,  
I have wealth without stint in the love  
of my friends;  
While my locks are yet brown with  
scarce one thread of gray,  
And my step is elastic, though sixty  
to-day.

The past of my life often seems like a  
dream,  
As I've mourned over loved ones that  
crossed the dark stream,

But the Comforter whispers, they're  
not far away,  
I soon shall rejoin them; I'm sixty to-  
day.

The morning of life brought its sun-  
shine and flowers,  
The midday its labors and oft-needed  
showers,  
But high noon is passed, and I watch  
down the way,  
Knowing soon 'twill be sunset; I'm  
sixty to-day.

Yet I'll try while the day lasts to make  
others glad,  
I'll help those in trouble and cheer  
them when sad,  
I'll weep with the mourner and laugh  
with the gay,  
And I'll keep my heart young though  
I'm sixty to-day.

—————  
*LIFE'S WEST WINDOWS.*

WE stand at life's west windows,  
And think of the days that are  
gone;  
Remembering the coming sunset,  
We too must remember the morn;  
But the sun will set, the day will close,  
And an end will come to all our woes.

As we watch from the western case-  
ments,  
Reviewing our happy youth,  
We mourn for its vanished promise  
Of honor, ambition, and truth;  
But hopes will fail and pride decay,  
When we think how soon we must  
away.

We stand at life's west windows,  
And turn not sadly away,  
To watch on our children's faces  
The noontide of sparkling day;  
But our sun must set, our lips grow  
dumb,  
And to look from our windows our chil-  
dren come.

Still looking from life's west win-  
dows ;  
And we know we would not again  
Look forth from the eastern lattice,  
And live over all life's pain ;  
Though life's sunlight be brilliant, its  
sunset is sweet,  
Since it brings longed-for rest to our  
weary feet.

“THE DAYS THAT ARE GONE.”

“DO ye think of the days that are  
gone, Jeanie ?  
As ye sit by your fire at night,  
Do ye wish that the morn might bring  
back the time  
When your heart and your step were  
light ?”

“I think of the days that are gone,  
Robin,  
And all that I joyed in then,  
But the fairest that ever arose on me  
I have never wished back again.”

“Do you think of the hopes that are  
gone, Jeanie ?  
As ye sit by your fire at night,  
Do ye reckon them o'er, as they faded  
fast,  
Like buds in an early blight ?”

“I think of the hopes that are gone,  
Robin,  
But I mourn not their stay was fleet,  
For they fell as the leaves of the red  
rose fall,  
That even in fading are sweet.”

“Do ye think of the friends that are  
gone, Jeanie ?  
As ye sit by your fire at night,  
Do ye wish they were round you again  
once more,  
By the hearth that they made so  
bright ?”

“I think of the friends that are gone,  
Robin,  
They are dear to my heart as then,  
But the best and dearest among them  
all  
I have never wished back again !”

HEARTSEASE.

SOUTHWARD still the sun is slanting  
day by day,  
Skies that brim with gold and azure  
slowly change ;  
Beauty waxes cold and dim and can  
not stay,  
Into tone and tint steals something  
ill and strange.

Threat of evil finds its way to every  
ear,  
Lurks in light and shade and sounds  
in every breath ;  
From the pathless snow-fields comes a  
warning drear,  
And the shuddering north-wind car-  
ries news of death.

Stealthy step of Winter near and  
nearer draws :  
Locking earth beneath him, terrible  
with might,  
Strides he from the icy zone without a  
pause,  
Swift and sure and fierce, with  
ready hand to smite.

Dearest, when without the door he  
threatening stands,  
Having rendered desolate the fair  
green earth,  
And sent her happy birds to sunnier  
lands,  
And choked with sullen snows her  
summer mirth,

We shall sit together, you and I once  
more,  
Warm and quiet, shut away from  
storm and cold ;

We shall smile to hear him blustering  
at the door,  
While the room glows with the fire-  
light's ruddy gold.

How safe my heart keeps every mem-  
ory sweet,  
Holding still your picture, as you  
used to sit,  
Ever lovely, full of grace from head to  
feet,  
With that heap of snowy wool I  
watched you knit ;

With the lamplight falling on your  
cloudy hair—  
On the rich, loose bands of brown,  
so soft to touch ;  
On the silken knot of rose you used to  
wear,  
On the thoughtful little face I love  
so much.

You remember, when aloud I read to  
you,  
Sometimes silence intervened. You  
would not move,  
But in your radiant cheek the blushes  
grew ;  
For you knew I paused to gaze at  
you, my love !—

Paused to realize my heaven, till with  
kind,  
Clear, and questioning gray eyes you  
sought my face—  
What a look ! Its kindling glory struck  
me blind.  
'Twas a splendor that illumined all  
the place.

What to us are Winter's blows and  
hate and wrath ?  
And what matter that the green  
earth's bloom is fled ?  
There has been immortal Summer in  
our path  
All the happy, happy years since we  
were wed.

*BEYOND THE HILLS OF SNOW.*

THERE is a picture in my heart—  
A little sunny face—  
So sweetly framed in amber hair,  
So full of childish grace.  
A little form that idly leans  
Upon a low stone-wall,  
She does not heed the robin's song  
Nor yet the brooklet's call.

A little foot-path, smoothly worn,  
Leads to an open door ;  
The leafy lights and shadows dance  
Upon the oaken floor.  
The pine-trees stand like sentinels  
Around that little home ;  
The sunlight warms no fairer spot  
Beneath the sky's blue dome.

A day in summer, sweet and still,  
The world seems half asleep.  
The grassy hill-sides, toward the east  
The shadows longer creep,  
The sunlight lingers lovingly  
Among the wreathing vines :  
The shadows nestle soft and cool  
Among the guardian pines.

The soft white clouds, like snow-clad  
hills,  
Lie shining in the west,  
A line of golden tracery  
Marks out their feathery crest.  
Oh, tender, dreamy, childish eyes,  
So full of happy light !  
The sweet blue sky on which you gaze  
Is not more clear and bright.

What lies beyond those gleaming  
heights  
The young heart longs to know,  
What fairy regions hid away  
Beyond the hills of snow.

—  
To-day I rest my weary self  
Upon the same old wall ;  
From out the far-off woodland glen  
I hear the brooklet call.

Oh, hills and slopes ! Oh, clouds and  
 pines,  
 Oh, tender summer skies !  
 Where is the glory that ye wore  
 To childhood's trusting eyes ?

The fairest spot on earth—and yet  
 I can but long to go,  
 As when a little dreaming child,  
 Beyond the hills of snow.

NEARING THE SHORE.

AN old man sat in a worn arm-chair ;  
 White as snow is his thin soft hair ;  
 Furrowed his cheek by time and care :  
 And back and forth he sways ;  
 There's a far-away look in his dim,  
 dim eye,  
 Which tells of thoughts of the long  
 gone-by,  
 For he sits once more 'neath a cloud-  
 less sky,  
 And in childhood merrily plays.

He rests his cheek on the head of his  
 cane,  
 And, happily smiling, dreams over  
 again  
 Of that home, the brook, the meadow,  
 the lane,  
 Dreams all with a vision clear ;  
 Then childhood yields unto manhood's  
 place,  
 And he looks once more in his bright,  
 bright face,  
 And down in the starry eyes he can  
 trace  
 A love remembered and dear.

Then he wakes and sighs : " It seems  
 but a dream  
 That comes to me now like a golden  
 gleam,  
 Or the shimmering glow of the sun's  
 last beam,  
 But 'tis pleasant to think it o'er.  
 That youth was so sweet, but now it is  
 past ;  
 Those days of love were too precious  
 to last,

But over yonder their pleasures are  
 cast,  
 And I am nearing the shore."

He is gliding on in his little boat ;  
 O'er the calm still water they peacefully  
 float ;  
 But echo full oft brings a well-known  
 note

From the land he has left behind.  
 But Time will row back for him no  
 more,  
 And he gazes away to that other shore,  
 And knows when the voyage of life  
 shall be o'er,  
 That his dream beyond he will find.

The seeds of youth, which in youth  
 we sow,  
 Adown through the isles of the future  
 will grow,  
 And shed on age a beautiful glow,  
 As they come in memory's gleams.  
 Loved faces will come to dimming  
 sight ;  
 Sweet words will echo in day-dreams  
 bright,  
 And circle old age with their halos of  
 light  
 As they mingle in beautiful dreams.

NOTHING TO DO BUT TO GO.

A WANDERER I've been, and have  
 traveled for years,  
 By the stage coach, the steamboat,  
 the train ;  
 I have known joyful meetings, have  
 shed parting tears,  
 With friends I might ne'er meet  
 again.  
 And I've learned—let my farewells be  
 joyous or sad—  
 No haste or distraction to show,  
 But with baggage pre-checked, and  
 with passage prepaid,  
 To have nothing to do but to go.



The loiterer, when over the iron-clad track

The train is heard coming apace,  
For his ticket will clamor, and urge for his check,

In a whirl of impatient distress ;  
While others, more timeful, with undisturbed mien,

Will composedly pace to and fro,  
Or, quietly seated, will wait for the train,

With nothing to do but to go.

Oh, thus—I have thought—when we're called to depart

For the land whence we never return,  
May we feel we are fully prepared for the start

When the death-sounding note we discern.

With our ticket secured, and our cares all at rest,

No disquieting thoughts may we know,

But tranquilly waiting to be found at the last,

With nothing to do but to go.

#### THE OLD COUPLE.

It stands in a sunny meadow,

The house so mossy and brown ;

With its cumbrous, old stone chimneys,  
And the gray roof sloping down.

The trees fold their green arms around it,

The trees, a century old ;

And the winds go chanting through them,

And the sunbeams drop their gold.

The cowslips spring in the marshes,

And the roses bloom on the hill ;

And beside the brook on the pastures,  
The herbs go feeding at will.

The children have gone and left them,  
They sit in the sun alone !

And the old wife's tears are falling,  
As she harks to the well-known tone,

That won her heart in her girlhood,  
That has soothed her in many a care,  
And praises her now for the brightness  
Her old face used to wear.

She thinks again of her bridal—

How, dressed in her robe of white,  
She stood by her gay, young lover,  
In the morning's rosy light.

Oh, the morning is rosy as ever,  
But the rose from her cheek is fled ;  
And the sunshine still is golden,  
But it falls on a silvered head.

And the girlhood dreams, once vanished,

Come back in her winter-time,

Till her feeble pulses tremble  
With the thrill of spring-time's prime.

And looking forth from the window,  
She thinks how the trees have grown,  
Since, clad in her bridal whiteness,  
She crossed the old door-stone.

Though dimmed her eye's bright azure,  
And dimmed her hair's young gold ;  
The love in her girlhood plighted  
Has never grown dim nor old.

They sat in peace in the sunshine,  
Till the day was almost done ;  
And then, at its close, an angel  
Stole over the threshold stone.

He folded their hands together—  
He touched their eyelids with balm ;  
And their last breath floated upward,  
Like the close of a solemn psalm.

Like a bridal pair they traversed  
The unseen, mystical road  
That leads to the beautiful city,  
" Whose Builder and Maker is God."

Perhaps in that miracle country  
They will give her lost youth back ;  
And the flowers of a vanished spring-time  
Will bloom in the spirit's track.

One draught from the living waters  
 Shall call back his manhood's prime;  
 And eternal years shall measure  
 The love that outlived time.

But the shapes that they left behind  
 them,

The wrinkles and silver hair,  
 Made holy to us by the kisses  
 The angel had printed there,

We will hide away 'neath the willows,  
 When the day is low in the west;  
 Where the sunbeams can not find them,  
 Nor the winds disturb their rest.

And we'll suffer no tell-tale tombstone,  
 With its age and date, to rise  
 O'er the two who are old no longer  
 In the Father's House in the skies.

-----  
*EYES.*

SWEET baby eyes,  
 That look around with such a grave  
 surprise,

What do you see?  
 A strange new world, where simple  
 things

Engender wild imaginings  
 And fancies free?

A resting place that is not home,  
 A Paradise wherein to roam  
 For years may be!

Oh, placid, wondering baby eyes,  
 The mystery that in you lies  
 Oft puzzles me.

Clear, boyish eyes,  
 Whose fearless glance unconsciously  
 defies

Trouble and care;  
 When babyhood is passed and gone,  
 What is it that you gaze upon?

A land most fair;  
 A sunny shore with pleasure rife,  
 And that great, glorious gift of life  
 'Tis bliss to share.

Oh, happy, trustful, boyish eyes,  
 Let sages envy, fools despise  
 The faith you wear.

The anxious eyes  
 Of manhood, slowly piercing earth's  
 disguise,

Discover—what?  
 That life at best is quickly done,  
 That hopes fulfilled and wishes won  
 Are dearly got;  
 That shadows chased in headlong  
 haste,

And golden fruit he strove to taste,  
 Delight him not;  
 Oh, restless, doubting, troubled eyes,  
 To learn in sorrow to be wise  
 In manhood's lot.

Dim, aged eyes,  
 Gazing across the wreck of broken ties,  
 What do they see?  
 Behind—dead leaves that withered fall,  
 A fading wilderness where all  
 Is vanity;

Before—to gladden weary sight,  
 A glimpse, a promise of the bright  
 Eternity.

Oh, dim, and tearful aged eyes,  
 If waiting till that dawn shall rise,  
 Blessed are ye!

-----  
*TWO PICTURES.*

I.

AN old farm-house, with meadows  
 wide,

And sweet with clover on each side;  
 A bright-eyed boy, who looks from out  
 The door with woodbine wreathed  
 about,

And wishes his one thought all day:  
 "Oh! if I could but fly away  
 From this dull spot the world to see,  
 How happy, happy, happy,  
 How happy I should be."

II.

Amid the city's constant din,  
 A man who round the world has been,  
 Who, 'mid the tumult and the throng,  
 Is thinking, thinking all day long:

“Oh! could I only tread once more  
The field-path to the farm-house door,  
The old, green meadow could I see,  
How happy, happy, happy,  
How happy I should be.”

—————  
*MY BIRD AND I.*

THE day is young and I am young,  
The red-bird whistles to his mate;  
He sits the tender leaves among,  
I swing upon the garden gate;  
He sings that life is always gay—  
“A day so fair can never die.”  
I laugh and cast my flowers away;  
We are so weary, he and I.

Deep wading through the yellow wheat,  
My sheaves unbound within my  
hand,

I sink, to rest my tired feet,  
And noontide heat broods o'er the  
land;

The red-bird falters in his song—  
We fear the day will never die;  
The minutes drag the hours along—  
We are so weary, he and I.

I stand alone; my work is done;  
The bird lies dying at my feet;  
There's promise in the setting sun;  
The evening air blows soft and  
sweet.

My binded sheaves I lay aside;  
The day is dead; I too must die.  
When stars come out at eventide  
We shall be resting, he and I.

—————  
*WATCHING COWS.*

WHEN we lived down in Mapledale,  
You and I, dear brother Joe,  
On the great farm below the mill,  
Forty years or more ago,  
And we watched the cows, long sum-  
mer days,  
Eating the grass and clover,  
How long it seemed to us before  
Our boyhood would be over.

No wonder now, we often say,  
Summer days were longer then,  
Our father, when the daylight came,  
Called the boys as well as men;  
And when the milking all was done,  
We trudged, with feet bare and  
brown,  
Out in the fields to watch the cows  
Till the great, round sun went down.

Ah! when we walked off down the  
lane,  
'Neath those broad-brimmed hats  
we wore,  
How father watched us from the barn,  
Mother from the kitchen door.  
“Keep out an eye,” our father cried;  
Mother, “Mind, boys, where you go.”  
How very hard and slow it came,  
The butter and cheese then, Joe.

'Twas steady work that watching cows,  
Oft we sat down to complain,  
And then, you know, the cows were sure  
To get off into the grain.  
We'd never seen the great world then:  
Days at school had been but few,  
But lessons learned in those green  
fields  
Have helped us our long life through.

All work of life is very much  
Like that of watching cows, Joe.  
For, when we don't keep out an eye,  
Grain is trampled down, you know.  
And folks are some like cows, I've  
found;  
They're always wand'ring over:  
Thinking their own not half as good  
As neighbor's grass and clover.

Father and mother long have lain  
In the church-yard, side by side;  
And we've traveled many a mile  
From Mapledale, since they died.  
But when I've strayed in paths of sin,  
I've seen mother in the door,  
And heard her say, “Mind where you  
go,”  
Just as she did years before.

Oft, when I've grumbled at my lot,  
 Leaning on my neighbor's fence,  
 And, looking over on his side,  
 Wished I had his pounds and pence,  
 I've heard my father, from the loft  
 In our old barn, shout again,  
 "Keep out an eye," and looking back  
 Saw the cows eating my grain.

Well, you and I are getting old,  
 We'll soon be done watching, Joe,  
 For in that home beyond, there is  
 No trampling down of grain, you  
 know.  
 There we shall all rest satisfied,  
 For each will love the other,  
 And no one want the place that God  
 Has given to his brother.

-----  
*EVERY YEAR.*

THE spring has less of brightness  
 Every year ;  
 And the snow a ghashtlier whiteness  
 Every year ;  
 Nor do summer flowers quicken,  
 Nor autumn fruitage thicken  
 As they once did, for they sicken  
 Every year.

It is growing darker, colder,  
 Every year ;  
 And the heart and soul grow older  
 Every year ;  
 I care not now for dancing,  
 Or for eyes with passion glancing,  
 Love is less and less entrancing  
 Every year.

Of the loves and sorrows blended  
 Every year ;  
 Of the charms of friendship ended  
 Every year ;  
 Of the ties that still might bind me  
 Until Time to Death resigned me,  
 My infirmities remind me  
 Every year.

Ah ! how sad to look before us  
 Every year ;  
 While the cloud grows darker o'er us  
 Every year ;  
 When we see the blossoms faded,  
 That to bloom we might have aided,  
 And immortal garlands braided,  
 Every year.

To the past go more dead faces  
 Every year ;  
 As the loved leave vacant places  
 Every year ;  
 Everywhere the sad eyes meet us,  
 In the evening's dusk they greet us,  
 And to come to them entreat us,  
 Every year.

"You are growing old," they tell us ;  
 "Ev'ry year ;  
 You are more alone," they tell us,  
 "Every year ;  
 You can win no new affection,  
 You have only recollection,  
 Deeper sorrow and dejection,  
 Every year."

Yes ! the shores of life are shifting  
 Every year ;  
 And we are seaward drifting  
 Every year ;  
 Old pleasures, changing, fret us,  
 The living more forget us,  
 There are fewer to regret us  
 Every year.

But the truer life draws nigher  
 Every year ;  
 And its morning star climbs higher  
 Every year ;  
 Earth's hold on us grows slighter,  
 And the heavy burden lighter,  
 And the Dawn Immortal brighter  
 Every year.

-----  
*THE HOME OF MY HEART.*

NOT here in the populous town,  
 In the play-house or mart,  
 Not here in the ways gray and brown,  
 But afar on the green-swelling down,  
 Is the home of my heart.

There the hillside slopes down to a dell

Whence a streamlet has start;  
There are woods and sweet grass on the swell,  
And the south winds and west know it well;

'Tis the home of my heart.

There's a cottage o'ershadowed by leaves

Growing fairer than art,  
Where under the low sloping eaves  
No false hand the swallow bereaves:  
'Tis the home of my heart.

And there as you gaze down the lea,  
Where the trees stand apart,  
Over grassland and woodland may be  
You will catch the faint gleam of the sea

From the home of my heart.

And there in the rapturous spring,  
When the morning rays dart  
O'er the plain, and the morning birds sing,

You may see the most beautiful thing  
In the home of my heart.

For there at the casement above,  
Where the rose-bushes part,  
Will blush the fair face of my love;  
Ah, yes! it is this that will prove  
'Tis the home of my heart.

#### AMONG THE OLD LACES.

SHE spread them softly upon her knee,  
The rare old webs of costly thread,  
With here a border and there a shred  
Of fabric filmy and fair to see;

"They once were lovely," she sighed to me.

"They are lovely still," I said.

She drew them near with the aged hand,

Whose ling'ring touch was a faint caress.

"You speak of the laces, child? Ah, yes!

But I was thinking"—she paused and scanned

The tiny flaw in a woven strand  
With a half forgetfulness.

"Was thinking, dear, in a fond old way,  
That a mother has, when she sits alone,

When plumes are left, but the birds have flown,

How long we treasure and fold away  
Such small reminders of those who stray  
From the nest so soon outgrown.

"Now this"—uplifting a tiny shred  
Whose yellow mesh was an antique prize—

"Was fashioned under my loving eyes.

An infant crown for my son's fair head.  
You scarce would think that? Ah!  
truly said,

My Willie has grown so wise.

"But these he wore on his christening day,

Above the dimples they fell like snow;

But lace will rust while the shoulders grow,

And honors fairer than these they say  
He carries proudly, and yet I pray  
He may wear them so purely, so.

"This leaf, wrought edge and the fleecy net

My Mary wore as she smiling stood  
Where books were closed and her womanhood

Lay wide beyond. I had hoped—and yet

Since she rests sweetly, can I regret  
The loss of an earthly good?

"My other daughters? Yes, one by one

They knelt for mother to drape this veil



With bridal blessing. My heart did fail  
That last sad morn when the task was done.  
Poor veil, how long, as the years go on,  
Will you read me your thrice-told tale?"

She paused. I waited, and scanned her face,  
The eyes were full of the far away,  
And memory walked in the yesterday;  
Sweet dreams had peopled the films of lace;  
I read the token, and yielded place;  
Forgotten—I need not stay.

"THE BOYS."

ARE we "the boys" that used to make  
The tables ring with noisy follies?  
Whose deep-lung'd laughter oft would shake  
The ceiling with its thunder-volleys?

Are we the youths with lips unshorn,  
At beauty's feet unwrinkled suitors,  
Whose memories reach tradition's morn—  
The days of prehistoric tutors?

"The boys" we knew—but who are these  
Whose heads might serve for Plutarch's sages,  
Or Fox's martyrs, if you please,  
Or hermits of the dismal ages?

"The boys" we knew—can these be those?  
Their cheeks with morning's blush were painted.  
Where are the Harrys, Jims, and Joes,  
With whom we once were well acquainted?

If we are they, we're not the same;  
If they are we, why, then they're masking;

Do tell us, neighbor, what's your name?  
Who are you?—What's the use of asking?

You once were George, or Bill, or Ben:  
There's you, yourself—there's yon, that other;  
I know you now—I knew you then—  
You used to be your younger brother!

"DIE LIEBE WINTERT NICHT."

"No winter-time in love!"  
The little child we kissed in years ago,  
It went to sleep one eve,  
And woke not when the morning touched its cheek,  
Ne'er woke again to grieve.  
It wears the wild-rose tint in its soft cheek,  
It keeps its rings of gold  
Above the pure-veined forehead, white as snow;  
It ne'er to us grew old.

"No winter-time in love!"  
The earth wears different blossoms every month,  
And it is even so  
With her who sits beside me, in her heart  
New graces bloom and grow.  
She is more patient than in years ago;  
In place of the lush rose,  
Deep-hearted lilies over "pearls" of peace  
On quiet waters close.

"No winter-time in love!"  
One hinted gently of the white hoarfrost  
That gleamed upon our hair:  
We smiled as one who keeps his secret well.

Oh, heart, how young you are !  
 How full of tender pulses, leaping  
 quick  
 At thrill of any bird,  
 And answering to the patter of small  
 feet.

“ No winter-time in love ! ”  
 We call it winter when some cheek is  
 cold,  
 Some cheek we loved to press ;  
 Only a moment, then we lift our eyes  
 And tenderly we bless  
 Th' one who, walking in the garden  
 of the heart,  
 Made an eternal spring—  
 There is no winter and there can not be  
 After love's entering.

—————  
*THE WIFE OF MY YOUTH.*

THE yellow light of day is spent,  
 And fading into gray ;  
 And creeping shadows, silently,  
 Lengthen about my way.

A dampness gathers on the air,  
 And through my frame it sends  
 A chill that's coldest at my heart—  
 I know what it portends.

I know what lieth just beyond :  
 My failing eye discerns  
 The dim, mysterious vale, from which  
 No traveler returns.

I do not shrink, I do not fear ;  
 I know that this must be ;  
 The evening and the silent night  
 Bring welcome rest to me.

Yet 'twas not thus, alone, I thought  
 The hillside to descend ;  
 But hand in hand to journey down  
 With a devoted friend.

I hoped her presence would beguile  
 The sadness of the way,  
 And make as pleasant as the morn  
 The evening shadows gray.

But hers is not the voice I hear,  
 Is not the face I see,  
 When she that bears my name draws  
 near  
 To talk or walk with me.

Ah, me ! 'tis not her love I need,  
 'Tis not for her I sigh,  
 As, wearily and drearily,  
 I journey down to die.

Oh, Thou that from the hill's high top  
 Didst in my sight ascend,  
 Leaving me desolate ! return,  
 And cheer my journey's end.

My life's best love, my heart's desire !  
 All other loves grow cold,  
 As round my head and round my heart  
 The mists and shadows fold.

To thee, to thee I turn again,  
 With all my early truth ;  
 Yearns not thy soul to answer mine,  
 Wife of my happy youth ?

I miss thee more and more, as down,  
 With feeble steps and slow,  
 An old, a sad, a weary man,  
 Unto my grave I go.

—————  
*MEAR.*

I HEARD the words of the preacher,  
 As he read that hymn so dear,  
 Which mother sang at our cradle  
 To the ancient tune of Mear.

And I felt her angel presence,  
 As sung were those blessed words ;  
 My heart with rapture filling  
 As sweet as the sound of birds.

I longed for the land of Summer,  
 Life's River, with waters clear,  
 For the calm, sweet eyes of mother,  
 Who sung the old tune of Mear.

Oh, tale of the shepherds watching  
 Over their flocks in the night !  
 Of the dear Lord, sending angels  
 Enshrouded in glory bright !

Oh, story ! told in the Orient,  
 To each wandering shepherd's ear ;  
 That story, sung by my mother  
 To the hallowed tune of Mear.

Oh, pure white Babe of the manger !  
 Thy story shall ever run,  
 Till redemption's work is finished,  
 All souls to God's kingdom won !

To-day, that e'er welcome cadence  
 Of song floated back to me ;  
 Over the paths of my childhood  
 It lovingly came, all free.

I thanked the good All-Father,  
 For this memory brightly clear ;  
 The saintly smile of my mother,  
 And her low voice singing Mear.

Ah me ! the father has rested  
 Many and many a year ;  
 The mother, who sang by our cradle,  
 Has gone to a higher sphere.

Brothers and sisters have parted ;  
 Some live in the Better Land ,  
 And some are waiting their summons,  
 Sojourners yet on life's strand.

I feel when we meet up yonder  
 Where cometh no sigh nor tear,  
 Our mother will softly sing us  
 The grand old tune of Mear.

---

*THE OLD SCHOOL-HOUSE.*

I SAT an hour to-day, John,  
 Beside the old brook-stream—  
 Where we were school-boys in old  
 time

When manhood was a dream.  
 The brook is choked with fallen leaves,  
 The pond is dried away ;  
 I scarce believe that you would know  
 The dear old place to-day.

The school-house is no more, John,  
 Beneath our locust trees ;  
 The wild rose by the window's side  
 No more waves in the breeze ;  
 The scattered stones look desolate,  
 The sod they rested on  
 Has been plowed up by stranger hands  
 Since you and I were gone.

The chestnut-tree is dead, John,  
 And, what is sadder now,  
 The broken grape-vine of our swing  
 Hangs on the withered bough.  
 I read our names upon the bark,  
 And found the pebbles rare  
 Laid up beneath the hollow side,  
 As we had piled them there.

Beneath the grass-grown bank, John,  
 I looked for our old spring,  
 That bubbled down the alder path  
 Three paces from the swing ;  
 The rushes grow upon the brink,  
 The pool is black and bare,  
 And not a foot for many a day  
 It seems has trodden there.

I took the old blind road, John,  
 That wandered up the hill—  
 'Tis darker than it used to be,  
 And seems so lone and still :  
 The birds yet sing upon the boughs  
 Where once the sweet grapes hung,  
 But not a voice of humankind  
 Where all our voices rung.

I sat me on the fence, John,  
 That lives as in old time,  
 The same half panel in the path  
 We used so oft to climb,  
 And thought how, o'er the bars of life,  
 Our playmates had passed on,  
 And left me counting on the spot  
 The faces that were gone.

---

*GAINS AND LOSSES.*

THE twilight deepening fast  
 Enwrapped me, ruled me, with its  
 shadowy spell--

Cares half forgotten—griefs whose pain  
had passed—

Losses once mourned—I knew the  
phantoms well,  
Stole back like noiseless ghosts from  
out a tomb,  
And thronged my musing heart, my  
quiet room.

Came faces fondly loved,  
Beneath their coffin-lids long shut  
away—  
And others, fair, despite their falsehood  
proved—  
Dead hopes—dead dreams—these  
swelled the long array—  
Dim spectral shapes of joys long  
craved, denied,  
Like beggars famishing and hungry-  
eyed.

Until at last I said :  
“ If I might but forget ! might blot  
from sight  
This useless past—might bid its  
shrouded dead  
To haunt me nevermore, by day or  
night—  
Might be made free of memories, whose  
chain,  
Heavier with years, can bring me  
naught but pain.

“ I *need* forgetfulness !  
The ‘sorrow’s crown’ of which the  
poet sings,  
My aching temples heavily doth press,  
And added thorns methinks the fu-  
ture brings ;  
Then let me at some lethe drink my  
fill,  
And say to memory (if not ‘Peace’),  
‘Be still.’ ”

The words were scarcely said  
When a white angel rustled in the  
gloom,  
And as with sudden awe I bent my  
head  
His soft clear accents floated through  
my room,

So strangely pitiful, I hear them yet—  
And thus he spake : “ Wouldst thou  
indeed *forget* ?

“ Forget thy many crosses—  
Thy dark despondent days—thy bit-  
ter tears—  
The lonely hours that followed grievous  
losses—  
The burthens of the slowly gliding  
years—  
Dead hopes and disappointed dreams—  
ah me !  
Forget all these ? how *poor* then  
wouldst thou be !

“ Canst thou forget a grief,  
And yet remember how God’s grace  
was sent  
To comfort and to keep thee ? On  
each leaf  
Of thy life’s record tears and smiles  
are blent  
So closely that in blotting out the *pain*  
Thou must efface the *peace*, thy greater  
gain.

“ For He who knows thee best,  
And knowing, loves thee with a love  
divine,  
Has given Memory for thy life-long  
guest—  
Canst thou not trust His tender dis-  
cipline ?  
Or wilt thou, wayward, faithless,  
tempt e’en yet  
Life’s saddest doom—to *lose* and then  
*forget* ?

“ From heavenly heights some  
day  
Thou shalt look back, serene, on  
present pain,  
And then, remembering all the cross-  
marked way,  
Shalt learn how losses widen into  
gain—  
How the dear Master’s love and tender  
care  
Held back the bud to give the blossom  
fair ! ”

Then from my sight he passed,  
The shining one—and all that dusky  
place  
Shone with soft gleams from robe and  
feature cast.  
The twilight wore a newer, sweeter  
grace—  
And, like a strain of heavenly music,  
stole  
A calm deep peace upon my wearied  
soul.

THE OLD CHESTS IN THE  
GARRET.

UP in the garret one rainy day,  
Where the rafters were hung with the  
cobwebs gray,  
Where the dust lay thick on chest and  
board,  
Where the wind up great wide chim-  
neys roared,  
I came to think awhile.

Round about the room in a row,  
Were chests of treasures of long ago :  
Quaint old fans of sandal-wood,  
Silks that alone in their glory stood,  
On some day long passed by.

India muslins fine and old,  
Costly lace as yellow as gold,  
Satin with its silvery sheen,  
Strings of pearls fit for a queen,  
Carefully stored away.

Into my fancy a picture came,  
Of royal knight, of stately dame,  
Of laughing eyes, of glossy curls  
Fastened back with these strings of  
pearls,  
Some by-gone Christmas eve.

I closed the chest-lid with a sigh,  
And hung the key on a rafter nigh,  
For many a Christmas eve had gone,  
Passed had many a Christmas morn,  
While they slept under the snow.

Resting there, for their work was done,  
Of deeds, of words, and honor won ;  
Those in memory will stay,  
Though lord and lady have passed  
away,  
And treasures fall to dust.

I opened another chest to find  
Packs of letters with ribbons twined,  
Some of the ribbons were bright and  
gay,  
Others were black and seemed to say,  
Sad news was with them bound.

One letter writ in a manly hand,  
Came over the sea from a foreign land,  
Telling when the ship should sail ;  
But the vessel sank in a fearful gale  
And the sailor came no more.

I started, for the tears fell fast  
O'er this reminder of the past,  
But softly speaking in my ear  
An angel's voice I seemed to hear,  
And this it said to me :

“ Weep not for a past which is over  
and gone,  
The friends whose memory you mourn  
Safe through the storms of life's rough  
sea  
By the dear Christ's side are awaiting  
thee,  
Soon shalt thou meet them  
there.”

The dusky garret with peace was  
filled,  
The pattering rain on the roof was  
stilled,  
The sunbeams flickering through the  
room,  
Came like light from my Father's home,  
Or a smile from loved ones gone.

THE DEPARTED.

ONE dear friend after another  
Is called away from earth,  
And leaves in our hearts a shadow  
Of loneliness and dearth.



We think, with a wistful longing,  
Of the ever-gathering band  
Who await our own home-coming  
In the blessed sinless land.

We stand around the death-bed  
Of the friend who has passed away,  
And our bitter tears are falling  
O'er his unconscious clay.

But oh, where our friends are dwelling,  
With what delight they press  
To greet the dear new-comer  
With joy and tenderness!

What comfort after sorrow,  
What rest from life's long pain,  
When he knows that death is over,  
When he finds his own again;

His, all that the years hath taken,  
Of memory, joy, or power,  
And his life's fair tree stands laden  
With all its fruit and flower!

The friends whom death had taken,  
Of whom the thought for years  
Had been steeped in mortal sadness,  
Deep pain, and lonely tears,

They now are the dear home-circle,  
Whose smiles make glad his day,  
The halo of sorrow around them  
Has melted in light away.

Ah me! in their boundless g'adness,  
In their infinite content,  
Does one longing for us mingle?  
Is one sigh for absence blent?

Nay, dear ones true and tender,  
Not a shadow of our woe  
Can dim your heavenly sunshine;  
We are glad to have it so.

But let our memory enter  
Into your thankful song,  
For our hearts are yours and love you,  
And we shall come ere long.

"BLESSED ARE THEY THAT  
MOURN."

ANCE I had a wife o' my ain,  
An ingle warm and bright,  
A candle in my window set  
To cheer me hame at night.  
And now the wife's in heaven aboon,  
An' through its opened door,  
Heaven's glory's hauding up my heart,  
Across earth's lanely moor.

ANCE I had a bit bonnie farm,  
And watched for rain and shine,  
But noo I look on a' the land,  
And a' the land seems mine.  
And in the vera sun i' the lift  
I feel to have my share;  
There's something in me sib to all  
That's living anywhere.

An' thochts come ben, I canna tell;  
In talk they'd only look  
Like butterflies wi' pins stuck through  
An' fastened in a book.  
I'd rather let 'em flutter out  
On God's own bonnie trees;  
The eyes may aften ha' a glimpse  
O' what hands shouldna seize.

There's depth in life man canna sound,  
There's a height he canna reach,  
But there's a Light that shines for all,  
And There's a Way for each.  
And turning to the right is joy,  
And to the wrong is hell,  
Yet there's one thing he canna miss,  
An' that is God Himsel'.

NOT LOST.

"THE flowers are here, and violet eyes  
Are blue as summer's sunny skies;  
There comes a fragrance as we pass,  
From blossoms hidden in the grass,  
And daisies star the meadows green,  
My love will now grow glad, I ween."  
"The flowers but creep above the dead,  
And hide my flower," was all she said.

“ But see, the birds have come again,  
Their songs will charm away your  
pain ;

In leafy bowers new nests are made,  
New madrigals ring through the shade.  
You can not now be sad when from  
Each bower such merry greetings  
come.”

“ Ah, me ! their songs but pierce my  
breast,  
As weep I o'er my empty nest.”

“ But it is now on hillsides green  
That flocks of snow-white lambs are  
seen.”

“ Speak not of lambs,” she sadly said.  
“ The lamb that on my love was fed  
Has wandered from the fold, while I  
Out in the dark can only cry,  
I would not see a happy fold  
While my one lamb lies in the cold.”

“ But there are children everywhere ;  
Can they not share your love and  
care ? ”

“ Ah, me ! each little child I kiss  
Reminds me of my own lost bliss,  
And gaze I in each baby face  
In vain my darling's looks to trace.  
Oh, no ! ” she sobbed, with bitter  
moan,

“ I want my own ! I want my own ! ”

“ I can not bear the flowers : they bloom  
For me but over one small tomb ;  
The birds but mock with empty glee  
One voice forever still for me ;  
The very sunshine on the floor  
But makes me miss my sunbeam more.  
How can my aching heart throb on,  
When what it beat for now is gone ? ”

Poor heart ! I see now why you break ;  
You thought that our dear Lord could  
take

Away what He had meant to be  
Your own through all eternity.  
They do not know a mother's heart—  
Who knows but God, our sweet, sad  
part ?—

That say, when our sweet bird has  
flown,  
“ The child belongs to God alone.”

You need not give up love, oh, no ;  
God does not mock a mother so :  
The earth may claim the robe of white  
Which waving green hides from your  
sight ;

But not an angel pure that sings  
Before the Throne on earthward wings,  
On acts of love, belongs more true  
To God than that, dear child, to you.

Dear heart, look up, for you have given  
One more to sing the song of heaven.  
'Tis happiness to feel upon  
Your breast a soul that is your own ;  
But it is deeper bliss to know,  
While angels watch a blossom grow  
Fairer and sweeter every day,  
“ It is her child,” they fondly say.

Oh ! it is wealth to have your best  
Safe from life's sorrow and unrest ;  
Nor need you lose your treasure while  
She dwell's beneath the Father's smile ;  
For God's bright home is not so far,  
And near you like a guiding star,  
Your angel child her wings will fold,  
And open wide the gates of gold.

COMING BACK.

THEY say, if our beloved dead  
Should seek the old, familiar place,  
Some stranger would be there instead,  
And they would find no welcoming  
face.

I can not tell how it might be  
In other homes ; but this I know,  
Could my lost darling come to me,  
That she would never find it so.

Twelve times the flowers have come  
and gone,  
Twelve times the winter winds have  
blown,  
The while her peaceful rest went on ;  
And I have learned to live alone.

Have slowly learned from day to day,  
In all life's tasks to bear my part;  
But whether grave or whether gay,  
I hide her memory in my heart.

And if my darling comes to share  
My pleasant fireside warm and  
bright,  
She still will find her empty chair,  
Where it has waited day and night.

Fond, faithful love has blessed my way,  
And friends are round me, true and  
tried,  
They have their places; hers to-day  
Is empty as the day she died.

How would I spring with bated breath,  
And joy too deep for word or sign,  
To take my darling home from death,  
And once again to call her mine.

I dare not dream the blissful dream,  
It fills my heart with wild unrest;  
Where yonder cold, white marbles  
gleam,  
She still must slumber; God knows  
best.

But this I know, that those who say  
Our best beloved would find no  
place,  
Have never hungered, every day,  
Through years and years, for one dear  
face.

— — —  
"IF WE'D THOUGHT."

IF we'd thought at our last meeting  
With the friend we loved so dear,  
By his grave we'd soon be standing,  
Dropping down the silent tear,  
Would that word we spoke so lightly  
Have been uttered by us then?  
Would that in our silent sorrow  
We could call it back again!

IF we'd thought that soon a parting  
Would us sever far and wide,  
That some of the gladsome faces  
Would be soon across the tide,

Would the hasty word and action,  
Would the satire sharp and keen  
From our lips have ever fallen,  
Or the action e'er been seen?

If we'd thought the friendly counsel  
Was the last we e'er should hear,  
Would we then have scoffed so lightly?  
Let our heedlessness appear?  
If we'd thought the kind inquiry  
Soon would cease forevermore,  
Would it then have been a trouble,  
Would we then have wished it o'er?

If we'd thought that act of kindness  
Was the last our friend should seek,  
Would we have by cruel harshness  
Brought the blushes to his cheek?  
If we'd thought our heartless folly  
Would have left so deep a sore,  
Would we then have spoken rudely?  
Would we not have hushed it o'er?

If we'd thought—alas! the sorrows  
That the words awaken now:  
If we'd thought—ah! then the wrinkles  
Would be fewer on the brow.  
"If we'd thought that death was com-  
ing,"  
Will that be our latest cry?  
God forbid! we know He's coming,  
Let us think—He draweth nigh!

— — —  
THE TWO LIGHTS.

"When I'm a man!" is the poetry of youth,  
'When I was young!' is the poetry of old age."

"When I'm a man," the stripling cries,  
And strives the coming years to  
scan—

"Ah, then I shall be strong and wise,  
When I'm a man!"

"When I was young," the old man  
sighs,

"Bravely the lark and linnet sung  
Their carol under sunny skies,  
When I was young!"

“When I’m a man, I shall be free  
To guard the right, the truth up-  
hold.”

“When I was young I bent no knee  
To power or gold.”

“Then shall I satisfy my soul  
With yonder prize, when I’m a man.”  
“Too late I found how vain the goal  
To which I ran.”

“When I’m a man these idle toys  
Aside forever shall be flung.”  
“There was no poison in my joys  
When I was young.”

The boy’s bright dream is all before,  
The man’s romance lies far behind;  
Had we the present and no more,  
Fate were unkind.

But, brother, toiling in the night,  
Still count yourself not all unblest  
If in the east there gleams a light,  
Or in the west.

---

*AN OLD MAN'S DREAM.*

OH, for one hour of youthful joy!  
Give back my twentieth spring!  
I’d rather laugh a bright-haired boy,  
Than reign a gray-haired king.

Off with the wrinkled spoils of age;  
Away with learning’s crown;  
Tear out life’s wisdom-written page,  
And cast its trophies down.

One moment let my life-blood stream  
From boyhood’s fount of flame;  
Give me one giddy, reeling dream  
Of life, and love, and fame.

My listening angel heard the prayer  
And calmly smiling, said,  
“If I but touch thy silvered hair,  
Thy hasty wish had sped.

“But is there nothing in the track  
To bid thee fondly stay,  
While the swift seasons hurry back,  
To find the wished-for day?”

Ah, truest soul of womankind,  
Without thee what were life?  
One bliss I can not leave behind—  
I’ll take my precious wife.

The angel took a sapphire pen,  
And wrote in rainbow hue,  
“The man would be a boy again,  
And be a husband too.

“And is there nothing yet unsaid,  
Before the change appears?  
Remember, all thy gifts have fled  
With these dissolving years.”

“Why, yes, I would one favor more:  
My fond paternal joys—  
I could not bear to lose them all;  
I’ll take my girls and boys.”

The smiling angel dropped his pen,  
“Why, this will never do;  
The man would be a boy again,  
And be a father too!”

And so I laughed. My laughter woke  
The household with its noise.  
I wrote my dream when morning broke,  
To please my girls and boys.

---

*NOT AS I WILL.*

NOT as I will; how can I say it, Lord?  
The faces, dear as life itself could be,  
Are out of sight beneath the heavy  
sword;  
I call; the dumb lips never answer  
me.

Behind me lie the long and lonely  
years;  
But through the days all overworn  
with care,

I still have kept the thought, too sad  
for tears,  
Of the dear faces cold and deathly  
fair.

Only in dreams I see them as of old,  
And even then my joy is touched  
with pain,

For as their fingers would my own en-  
fold,

The blessed vision vanishes again,

And I but hear the winter wind with-  
out;

I know how cold and dark their  
dwellings lie,

How drearily the snow is tossed about  
By homeless winds beneath the mid-  
night sky.

The festal seasons of the year return ;  
And scattered households gladly re-  
unite ;

Upon the hearths the cheerful home-  
fires burn,  
And the gay circles gather in their  
light.

For me, I sit alone ; the empty chair  
At my still fire-side, waits no coming  
guest ;

But haunting thoughts and memories  
are there,  
And those sad inmates, heartache  
and unrest.

I know the heavenly city safely stands,  
Fair beyond all things that we deem  
most fair,

Eternal in the heavens, not made with  
hands ;

I know all beauty and all joy are  
there.

But earthly love is passionate and  
strong.

O God, forgive the hearts that Thou  
hast made ;

Forgive us that our days seem sad and  
long,

And that we weep and grieve o'er  
hopes decayed.

Lead Thou Thy lonesome children ;  
help us say,

Though sobs break all our speech,  
Thou still canst hear,

“ Not as I will,” for, oh, we long and  
pray

To yield our idols without doubt or  
fear ;

To Thine own hands, that, pierced and  
torn for us,

Have taught our hearts how strong  
true love may be ;

Help us to learn these lessons well, for  
thus

Our stricken hearts alone may rest  
in Thee.

---

*AT MITHER'S KNEE.*

AT mither's knee I waitin' stood,  
Wi' fingers link'd behin' me,  
The bauldest o' the bairnheid brood :—  
That hour they seldom fined me ;  
My mither's weel-arch'd bree aboon,  
Wi' lo'e-lit e'e, a' droopin'—  
The deid, the gaun, they gather roun',  
In memory's halie groupin' !

Her han' she placed upon my heid ;  
Hoo aften I've caressed it !  
An' syne it mould'ed wi' the deid,  
Hoo aft wi' tears ha'e blessed it !  
Hoo sweet she tauld us o' Christ's lo'e,  
Hoo He lay in the manger :  
Hoo, then, she leuked our hale life thro',  
An' mapped out ilka danger.

A roguish, rompin' bairn was I,  
Wi' een deep-set, blue-blinkin',  
Wha speir'd o' things 'baith laigh and  
high,  
An' had a way o' thinkin' :  
Her leuk o' lo'e could mak' the tear  
Adoon my cheek fast trickle—  
But, ah, nae bairn lang face lang wears,  
He has o' joys sic mickle.



She never thought her wark was gran',  
 Nor bruided it, nor tauld it:  
 But, kept at it, wi' silent han',  
 Our bairnheid life to mould it;  
 She blent it wi' the halie sphere,  
 Ower whilk she stretch'd lo'e's  
 scepter;  
 The harvest o' life's comin' year,  
 Hopefu' through a' this kept her.

For, like the sources o' the burn,  
 Frae rocks an' trees doon-drappin',  
 These deft-hid things that first we  
 learn,  
 Still oot they maun be crappin',  
 I've lang forgot the beuks I read,  
 The wise things taught i' college:  
 But time'll na dri'e frae oot my head  
 That itther bairnheid knowledge!

#### A SCATTERED FAMILY.

WE have been all together on the  
 earth;  
 But now the band that bound our  
 gentle sheaf  
 Is loosed—the powerful magic bond of  
 birth;  
 Our hearts no longer turn one golden  
 leaf  
 Each day; no more, though every  
 winter night,  
 Brightening within though skies  
 without may frown,  
 We all are gathered close about one  
 light,  
 With loving wreaths the warm quick  
 hours to crown;  
 For the one word of "Home," which  
 we had worn,  
 From the soul's lips, to worldly lan-  
 guage clear,  
 Returns an alien answer to its sound,  
 From other firesides, winter-lighted,  
 borne. . . .  
 "Home!"—'twas a word of heaven  
 homeless here,  
 Whose wandering echo in our hearts  
 we found!

#### IN THE ORCHARD.

COOL, restful shadows 'neath the old,  
 gnarled trees,  
 A fresh-mown meadow, stretching  
 to the right,  
 Beyond, dark druid firs on bended knees  
 Before their shrine of hills aflame  
 with light,  
 When, dipping low, October's magic  
 cup  
 From gloomy fens transmuted gold  
 draws up!

A dreamy quiet reigns—no brooding  
 bird  
 Startles the shade where dainty nests  
 are hid;  
 Ended the summer's work, and naught  
 is heard  
 Save drowsy drones repeating what  
 "she did,  
 She didn't, she did,"—when days  
 were long and bright,  
 And full of busy noise from morn till  
 night.

Oh, rare, such autumn life! Oh, buds of  
 June!  
 Beneath these weighted boughs of  
 gold and red,  
 As one who sudden hears a long-lost  
 tune,  
 With hushed and almost reverent  
 step I tread,  
 Breathing once more the delicate  
 perfume  
 Of fresh-plowed earth and flash of  
 rosy bloom!

Oh, promises fulfilled! Oh, hopes of  
 youth!  
 With humble heart I place them  
 side by side,  
 Thankful to Higher strength if aught,  
 forsooth,  
 Of ripened, golden harvest doth  
 abide;  
 And for the rest—ah, well! the dear  
 Lord knew  
 Why some fair buds to fruitage never  
 grew!

*AN EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY.*

How swiftly rise the rolling years !  
 How fast they come and go !  
 Through storm and sunshine, joy and  
 tears,

They keep their mighty flow  
 Onward from childhood's merry play,  
 Through youth's romantic page,  
 Through "heat and burden of the  
 day"

Down to declining age.

Hither from busy life we come,  
 Round the old hearth to meet,  
 We gather in this ancient home,  
 About our Mother's feet ;  
 We bring the tribute of the heart,  
 The tribute of the hand,  
 To her who bore the Mother's part,  
 Amid our household band.

To-day the Past unseals its urn,  
 And pours its treasures back,  
 The golden memories return  
 Along their noiseless track ;  
 It rises up—the olden time,  
 The years of long ago,  
 When life was in its early prime,  
 And gladness in its flow.

When parsons stayed till hair grew  
 gray,  
 And died amid their flocks,  
 And little gains were laid away,  
 Without such ponderous locks ;  
 When he who taught the winter school  
 Was one of great renown,  
 And all the greater, as a rule,  
 If from another town.

When spelling-school and husking-  
 bee,  
 With trainings now and then,  
 Gave ample range for jollity  
 To boys and grown-up men ;  
 When fife and drum along the street  
 Were good as modern bands,  
 And home-made music sounded sweet  
 As that from foreign lands.

When dresses, cut from calico,  
 Made lasses look as fair  
 As all the silks and velvets do  
 Which modern lasses wear ;  
 When Love knew how to find the  
 heart  
 And easily prevail,  
 And did not have to wing his dart  
 Through fashion's coat of mail.

When churches yet were minus stoves,  
 And preachers read their notes  
 Dressed up in good warm buckskin  
 gloves  
 And solid overcoats ;  
 When through the winter cold and  
 storm  
 The hearers—high and low—  
 Would rap their feet to keep them  
 warm,  
 And hail the time to go.

*THE OLD HOME.*

I HAVE gone—I can not always go, you  
 know ;  
 Best 'tis so—  
 Home across the distant ridges of the  
 year,  
 With my ear :  
 And the old house, standing still on the  
 old ground,  
 There I found.

In the parlor, in my fancy, I could  
 trace  
 Father's face ;  
 And my mother, with her old accus-  
 tomed air,  
 Sitting there ;  
 While beside them brothers, sisters,  
 true and good,  
 Silent stood.

Through the stillness swam the song  
 of summer bird,  
 And there stirred

On the wall the leaf-flecked sunshine ;  
and its glow

Faded slow ;

But, from all the loving lips I watched  
around—

Not a sound.

Then I went up-stairs, slow entering  
'mid their glooms

All the rooms ;

And I trod with softened step along  
the floors ;

Opened doors ;

But I never heard a voice or met a soul  
In the whole.

Of the breaths that stirred the draperies  
to and fro

Long ago ;

Of the eyes that through the casement  
used to peep

Out of sleep ;

Of the feet that in these chambers used  
to run—

Now are none.

Of the sunshine pouring downward  
from the sky,

Blue and high ;

Of the leafage and the ancient garden  
plot,

Brown and hot ;

Of the streamlet and the shingle and  
the tide—

These abide.

But beyond the azure vaulting over-  
head

Are my dead ;

Though their graves were dug apart in  
many lands,

Joining hands,

They have gathered and are waiting  
till I come.

That is home !

---

*BOYS AND GIRLS.*

WHEN we are young our boys are  
sweet,

They climb our knees and lie at our  
feet ;

When we are old they are hard to  
please,

Cold as the rock and wild as the  
breeze ;

They kiss us kindly and speak us fair,  
But we know their hearts are other-  
where.

Oh, my son's my son till he gets him  
a wife,

But my daughter's my daughter all  
my life.

When we are young our days are  
bright,

And full of hope from morn till night ;  
When we are old we sit alone,

And think of pleasant days long gone,  
When the house was full of the chil-  
dren's noise,

The willful girls and naughty boys.

Oh, my son's my son till he gets  
him a wife,

But my daughter's my daughter all  
my life.

---

*OUR SAINT.*

THERE was a woman once so pure and  
fine

That men half wondered if she were  
divine,

And there were those would reverently  
confess

Dark sins to her of their unsaintliness.

She was not canonized, as some have  
been,

And yet you could not trace the taint  
of sin

In any of her cheery words and ways  
Of any place or day of all her days.

And so we thought her saint, and called  
her such,

While here and there came one who  
longed to touch

Her garment's hem, if haply it might  
be

A holy charm to set a chained soui  
free.

Madonna? No; and yet it always  
 seemed  
 That the still influences which from her  
 streamed  
 Were like those ancient ones where  
 knelt and trod  
 In Galilee the mother of our God.

Some saints are named upon the  
 Church's books  
 Who paved their lives with penance,  
 and whose looks  
 Were overshadowed with a gloom in-  
 tense—  
 Error's sincere, but bitter eloquence.

Not such an one was she—our saint—  
 ah, no;  
 From all her being shone the ardent  
 glow  
 Of loves and hopes that fed on happi-  
 ness,  
 Receiving which, she could the better  
 bless.

She even chided with a helpful smile,  
 And chiding, longed to say "well done"  
 the while,  
 Then beamed on goodness with so  
 bright a grace  
 That all sweet things seemed nestling  
 in her face.

The rankling hates and envies of man-  
 kind,  
 That steal their hope and truth and  
 make them blind,  
 And keep them back from virtue's path  
 and goal,  
 Were scared and scattered by her gen-  
 tle soul.

She never fluttered like a bird at sight  
 Of any ill, for love o'ercame all fright,  
 And stirred the mother-feeling, which  
 is wont  
 To stand protectingly in danger's front.

Her voice, more winning than the voice  
 of lute,  
 Did speak its word in season, then  
 was mute,

Pausing and waiting willingly to learn,  
 While other speech, or silence, had its  
 turn.

Her changing eyes and changing lips  
 were pleas  
 For thousands to all tender sympathies,  
 Revealing there a soul that could not  
 rest  
 From wishing blessings on each life  
 unblest.

Her willing feet and willing hands  
 would haste  
 To give each new-found sufferer a taste  
 Of whatsoever thing might soothe or  
 heal  
 The body or the soul, for either's weal.

Could you have heard her pray, as we  
 have heard,  
 To the dear God, each softly-uttered  
 word  
 Seeming to fly straight upward to His  
 throne,  
 You would have wished to make her  
 faith your own.

You would have felt the secret of her  
 power,  
 And wondered not that almost every  
 hour  
 New strength and courage unto her  
 were sent,  
 Nor that she shared them whereso'er  
 she went.

Could you have heard her sing, as we  
 have heard,  
 Her notes more pure than those of any  
 bird,  
 And praise and tenderness in every  
 one,  
 You'd half have worshiped her, as we  
 have done.

She was herself a very prayer and song,  
 E'en though her lips kept silence, all  
 day long;

You saw her such in every move and  
look,  
And read her such, as in an open book.

A perfect woman? No; but almost  
this,  
And needed to foreshow the love and  
bliss  
Of unseen future, so that we might  
strive  
The more to keep our altar fires alive.

How much of good and warmth one  
glowing heart  
Can to this bad and chilly world im-  
part!  
How clearly, too, its light o'ershines  
the way  
Through these dark days unto the per-  
fect day!

---

*COMING HOME.*

OH, brothers and sisters growing old,  
Do you all remember yet,  
That home, in the shade of the rustling  
trees,  
Where once our household met?

Do you know how we used to come  
from school,  
Through the summer's pleasant heat,  
With the yellow fennel's golden dust  
On our tired little feet.

And how sometimes, in an idle mood,  
We loitered by the way,  
And stopped in the woods to gather  
flowers,  
And in the fields to play?

Till warned by the deepening shadow's  
fall,  
That told of the coming night,  
We climbed to the top of the last long  
hill,  
And saw our home in sight?

And brothers and sisters, older now  
Than she whose life is o'er,  
Do you think of the mother's loving  
face,  
That looked from the open door?

Alas, for the changing things of time!  
That home in the dust is low,  
And that loving smile was hid from us  
In that darkness long ago.

And we come to life's last hill,  
From which our weary eyes  
Can almost look on that home that  
shines  
Eternal in the skies.

So, brothers and sisters, as we go,  
Still let us move as one,  
Always together keeping step  
Till the march of life is done.

For that mother, who waited for us here,  
Wearing a smile so sweet,  
Now waits on the hills of Paradise  
For her children's coming feet.

---

*THE LOST BABIES.*

COME, my wife, put down the Bible,  
Lay your glasses on the book,  
Both of us are bent and aged—  
Backward, mother, let us look.  
This is still the same old homestead,  
Where I brought you long ago,  
When the hair was bright with sun-  
shine,  
That is now like winter's snow.  
Let us talk about the babies  
As we sit here all alone,  
Such a merry troop of youngsters;  
How we lost them one by one.

Jack, the first of all the party,  
Came to us one winter's night.  
Jack, you said, should be a parson,  
Long before he saw the light.  
Do you see that great cathedral,  
Filled, the transept and the nave,



Hear the organ grandly pealing,  
 Watch the silken hangings wave ;  
 See the priest in robes of office,  
 With the altar at his back—  
 Would you think that gifted preacher  
 Could be our own little Jack ?

Then a girl with curly tresses  
 Used to climb upon my knee,  
 Like a little fairy princess  
 Ruling at the age of three.  
 With the years there came a wedding—  
 How your fond heart swelled with  
 pride

When the lord of all the country  
 Chose your baby for his bride !  
 Watch that stately carriage coming,  
 And the form reclining there—  
 Would you think that brilliant lady  
 Could be your own little Clare ?

Then the last, a blue-eyed youngster—  
 I can hear him prattling now—  
 Such a strong and sturdy fellow,  
 With his broad and honest brow.  
 How he used to love his mother !  
 Ah ! I see your trembling lip !  
 He is far off on the water,  
 Captain of a royal ship.  
 See the bronze upon his forehead,  
 Hear the voice of stern command—  
 That the boy who clung so fondly  
 To his mother's gentle hand ?

Ah ! my wife, we've lost the babies,  
 Ours so long and ours alone :  
 What are we to these great people,  
 Stately men and women grown ?  
 Seldom do we even see them ;  
 Yes, a bitter tear-drop starts,  
 As we sit here in the fire-light,  
 Lonely hearth and lonely hearts.  
 All their lives are full without us ;  
 They'll stop long enough one day  
 Just to lay us in the church-yard,  
 Then they'll each go on their way.

---

*THE OLD HOMESTEAD.*

AH ! here it is, that dear old place  
 Unchanged through all these years ;

How like some sweet, familiar face  
 My childhood's home appears ;  
 The grand old trees beside the door  
 Still spread their branches wide ;  
 The river wanders as of yore,  
 With sweetly murmuring tide ;  
 The distant hills look green and gay,  
 The flowers blooming wild,  
 And everything looks glad to-day,  
 As when I was a child.

Regardless how the years have flown,  
 Half wondering I stand,  
 I catch no fond, endearing tone,  
 I clasp no friendly hand ;  
 I think my mother's smile to meet,  
 I list my father's call,  
 I pause to hear my brother's feet  
 Come bounding through the hall ;  
 But silence all around me reigns,  
 A chill creeps through my heart—  
 No trace of those I love remains,  
 And tears unbidden start.

What though the sunbeams fall as fair,  
 What though the budding flowers  
 Still shed their fragrance on the air,  
 Within life's golden hours ;  
 The loving ones that cluster here  
 These walls may not restore ;  
 Voices that filled my youthful ear  
 Will greet my soul no more ;  
 And yet I quit the dear old place  
 With slow and lingering tread,  
 As when we kiss a clay-cold face  
 And leave it with the dead.

---

*NOTHING.*

THERE is nothing to see !  
 It is only a silver birch ;  
 But it comes like a beautiful joy to me,  
 Like the joy you feel so calm and free,  
 When all is still as still can be,  
 After a psalm in the church.

It is so fair and light !  
 It grows on a rock by a well !

The rock is so strong and the birch is  
so slight,  
That they fill my heart with a strange  
delight,  
And I think they make a wonderful  
sight,  
Though why I can never tell !

The rock I grasp and reach,  
And the birch-tree I can not touch ;  
But its rustling leaves have a tender  
speech,  
For I feel a particular love for each,  
And I know that their whispered words  
can teach  
And comfort me very much.

The rock is strong and wild,  
And the well is wide and deep ;  
So I nodded my little head and smiled,  
For I felt they could both protect a  
child ;  
And the birch-tree murmured soft and  
mild,  
And so I fell fast asleep.

Why should this written be ?  
And what have I got to tell ?  
The wise, wise people will laugh at me,  
And say there is nothing at all to see,  
Only a rock, and only a tree,  
And only a little well !

MEMORIES OF THE OLD  
KITCHEN.

FAR back in my musings, my thoughts  
have been cast  
To the cot where the hours of my child-  
hood were passed.  
I loved all its rooms, to the pantry and  
hall,  
But that blessed old kitchen was dearer  
than all.  
Its chairs and its table, none brighter  
could be,  
For all its surroundings were sacred to  
me,

To the nail in the ceiling, the latch on  
the door ;  
And I loved every crack of that old  
kitchen floor.

I remember the fire-place with mouth  
high and wide,  
The old-fashioned oven that stood by  
its side,  
Out of which, each Thanksgiving, came  
puddings and pies,  
That fairly bewildered and dazzled our  
eyes ;  
And then, too, Saint Nicholas, slyly and  
still,  
Came down, every Christmas, our  
stockings to fill ;  
But the dearest of memories I've laid  
up in store,  
Is the mother that trod that old  
kitchen-floor.

Day in and day out, from morning till  
night,  
Her footsteps were busy, her heart  
always light ;  
For it seemed to me then that she  
knew not a care,  
The smile was so gentle her face used  
to wear.  
I remember with pleasure what joy  
filled our eyes  
When she told us the stories that chil-  
dren so prize ;  
They were new every night, though  
we'd heard them before  
From her lips, at the wheel, on the old  
kitchen-floor.

I remember the window where morn-  
ings I'd run,  
As soon as the daybreak, to watch for  
the sun ;  
And I thought, when my head scarcely  
reached to the sill,  
That it slept through the night, in the  
trees on the hill,  
And the small tract of ground that my  
eyes there could view  
Was all of the world that my fancy  
knew ;

Indeed, I cared not to know of it more,  
For a world in itself was that old  
kitchen-floor.

To-night those old visions come back  
at their will,

But the wheel and its music forever are  
still ;

The band is moth-eaten, the wheel  
laid away,

And the fingers that turned it lie  
mould'ring in clay :

The hearthstone, so sacred, is just as  
'twas then,

And the voices of children ring out  
there again ;

The sun through the window looks in  
as of yore,

But it sees stranger feet on the old  
kitchen-floor.

I ask not for honor, but this I would  
crave—

That when the lips speaking are closed  
in the grave,

My children will gather theirs round at  
their side,

And tell of the mother that long ago  
died :

'Twould be more enduring, far dearer  
to me

Than inscription on marble or granite  
could be,

To have them tell often, as I did of  
yore,

Of the mother that trod the old kitchen-  
floor.

—

*A LIFE'S REGRET.*

TURNING the leaves in an idle way  
Of a book I was skimming the other  
day.

I found a line at the end of a song,  
Which keeps on haunting me all day  
long

With its sweet and mournful melody,  
“Oh, love, my love, had you loved but  
me !”

Sadder a burden could never be  
Than “love, my love, had you loved  
but me !”

Few words and simple : but, oh, how  
much

The singer has told in that little touch !  
How hard a story of chances lost,

Of bright hopes blighted and true love  
crossed,

Is heard in the whispered melody,  
“Oh, love, my love, had you loved but  
me !”

To many a sorrow the key may be  
That “love, my love, had you loved  
me !”

I don't believe in what poets have said  
Of hearts that are broken and lives  
that are dead ;

Lives well ordered will stand to their  
course,

And hearts of true metal ring little the  
worse,

But—they vibrate still that melody,  
“Oh, love, my love, had you loved but  
me !”

My life is well ; but what would it be,  
Sweet “love, my love, had you loved  
but me !”

The world rolls on and the years roll  
by,

Day-dreams vanish and memories die ;  
But it surges up with a restless pain,

That fond lost longing ever again  
Breathed in the passionate melody,

“Oh, love, my love, had you loved but  
me !”

It might have been, but it can not be !  
Yet “love, my love, had you loved but  
me !”

—

*LOOKING BACK.*

THIS is the old farm-house,  
With its deep, rose-tangled porch,  
Where hover and rise white butterflies,  
And honey bees hold debauch.

Oh, many a time and oft  
I have followed the lark aloft !

And my heart, my heart flies back  
On the dead years' shadowy track.

And now in the lane, on a loaded wain,  
I'm a happy and hot little boy again !

Just such a windless noon  
 As this in a buried June,  
 When the scented hay in the  
 meadows lay,  
 And the thrushes were all in tune.  
 On the staggering load exultant  
 rode,  
 And the red-faced wagoner, "wey'd  
 and whoa'd."  
 Long ago in a buried June!

Days when to breathe was bliss,  
 Perfect, and pure, and strong,  
 No pulse of the heart amiss,  
 No beak of the brain-work wrong,  
 When care was a word and love an  
 absurd  
 Fabrication of story and song.

Is it so long ago,  
 This life of color and light?  
 Will it not show some after-glow  
 Ere the day dips into the night?  
 Oh, youth, have ye left me quite?  
 Oh, years, have ye dimmed my sight?  
 Lo, the light is shade and the colors  
 fade,  
 And the day dips into the night.

OH, FOR A SWING IN THE OLD  
 ELM TREE.

OH, for a swing in the old elm tree  
 And a breath from the clover fields!  
 I'd give the state of a palace hall  
 And the spices that India yields

To see again in the old-time way  
 The meadows and pastures I knew,  
 The hills and the valleys, the rocks  
 and the trees,  
 And the woods where the wild-  
 flowers grew;

To lie once more in the thick, soft grass  
 With the sweet winds brushing by,  
 The world outside and a heart at peace,  
 And above the summer sky:

To watch the clouds in their shifting  
 lights  
 And the mists on the distant hills,  
 And dream to the music of rustling  
 leaves  
 And the voices of dancing rills;

To wade once more in the cooling  
 stream  
 That wound by the roadside below,  
 Where the laurel bloomed, and the  
 eglantine  
 And the maiden-hair used to grow;

To kneel again in the little church  
 Where I prayed with a childish trust  
 Ere the haunting doubts of a later  
 time  
 Had touched it with moth and rust;

To sleep once more 'neath the moss-  
 grown roof:  
 My spirit would find again  
 The long-lost chord of that happy time  
 And take up the glad refrain.

My heart grows sick and my eyes are  
 dim  
 For a sight of familiar things;  
 The grassy nook and the old elm tree  
 Would be more than the throne of  
 kings.

Ah, me, how the years have stretched  
 between!  
 What chances and changes they've  
 wrought!  
 What gains and what losses, what  
 hopes and what fears,  
 How little of promise they've  
 brought!

THE DAYS THAT ARE NO  
 MORE.

OH, memories of green and pleasant  
 places,  
 Where happy birds their wood-notes  
 twittered low!  
 Oh, love that lit the dear, familiar faces  
 We buried long ago!

From barren heights their sweetness  
we remember,  
And backward gaze with wistful,  
yearning eyes.  
As hearts regret, 'mid snowdrifts of  
December,  
The summer's sunny skies.

Glad hours that seemed their rainbow  
tints to borrow  
From some illumined page of fairy  
lore ;  
Bright days that never lacked a bright  
to-morrow,  
Days that return no more.

Fair gardens, with their many-blossom-  
ed alleys,  
And red, ripe roses breathing out  
perfume ;  
Deep violet nooks in green, sequestered  
valleys,  
Empurpled o'er with bloom.

Sunset that lighted up the brown-  
leaved beeches,  
Turning their dusky glooms to glim-  
mering gold ;  
Moonlight that on the river's fern-  
fringed beaches  
Streamed white-rayed, silvery cold.

O'er moorlands bleak we wander  
weary-hearted,  
Throug mhany a tangled, wild, and  
thorny maze,  
Remembering as in dreams the days  
departed,  
The by-gone, happy days.

TELL ME WHERE THE VIOLETS  
GROW.

I WONDER where the violets grow,  
The lily-bells as white as snow ;  
A single tiny stem I've found  
Close nestled in the leaves around ;  
One tiny stem, a single one,  
And yet how high the morning sun !

I thought they always, always grew  
Where free birds sung and skies were  
blue—

These tiny bells too frail to touch ;  
It would not matter half so much  
How high the sun or few the flowers ;  
But Jeannie waits and counts the hours,  
And listens in her earnest way  
To hear me coming, and to-day  
I promised something nice to bring—  
Some little, dainty, sweetened thing—  
And promised not to stay. Alas !  
To hunt for violets in the grass—  
For violets sweet, and bells of snow—  
With many, many miles to go,  
And then to see them in the street—  
Those tiny little bells so sweet—  
Is not so easy quite, I think,  
As gathering flowers upon the brink  
Of brooks, as once so long ago  
We used to do. Oh, Belles-of-snow !  
I'm sure if you could only see  
The pale face waiting there for me.  
You would peep out and let me find  
Your bells to gather up and bind ;  
It is a face so pale and sad—  
Not even bread to make it glad—  
The lips that whispered in a prayer  
Were cold to-day ; oh, tell me where  
The little clumps of violets grow,  
Those lily-bells as white as snow !

A SUMMER DAY.

DEEP down beside the tangled sedge  
The meadow-lark sings all the day,  
And bursts at times from out the hedge  
The mimic chatter of the jay ;  
And here and there a wandering note,  
A cricket's chirp, comes sweet and  
clear,  
Where dreamy mists of summer float  
At noon upon the grassy mere.

Afar away below the hill  
I see the noisy mill-wheel go,  
The smooth, broad lake above the mill,  
The flash of foam that roars below !



And on the even slopes that rise  
So gently toward the mountain's  
brow,

The cattle watch with sleepy eyes  
The lazy plowboy at the plow.

My soul is sleeping, and its dreams  
Ah, sad and sweet that dreaming  
thrills,

For there are other vales and streams,  
And other flocks on other hills—  
The hills whereon I climbed to pull  
The golden-rods and weeds of May,  
When all the world was beautiful  
And all my life a summer day.

### THE FIR-TREE.

HEAR'ST thou the song it sings to me?  
The endless song of the dark fir-tree.  
Before my window, beside my door,  
It sighs and whispers forevermore,  
By dawn, or daylight, or night's mid-  
hour,

I hear its still small voice of power,  
“Eternity! Eternity!”  
Is the hourly message it brings to me.

When I am weary and worn with pain,  
And the burning sunshine fires my  
brain,  
Faint, and listless, and fit for death,  
It swings and rustles with fragrant  
breath:

“Hot and lonely thy noon may be,  
But there is a long, long rest for thee:  
Eternity! Eternity!”  
This is the psalm of the old fir-tree.

Sometimes the storms of summer pour,  
The lightnings dazzle, the thunders  
roar;

Those dark boughs groan, and writhe,  
and sway,  
But, sighing and moaning, still they  
say:

“An end of the tempests of earth shall  
be;

A tranquil morning awaiteth thee—  
Eternity! Eternity!  
Beyond this fateful and angry sea.”

When winter hath scattered leaf and  
rose,  
And the boughs bend low with heavy  
snows,

Their patient drooping a lesson lends,  
To a life borne down with the care He  
sends.

“Bend to thy burden! awhile, for thee  
The weight and wear of toil must be.

Eternity! Eternity!  
From care and carking shall set thee  
free.”

If the ways of man my spirit vex,  
And the ways of God my soul perplex,  
When He hath taken my life's desire,  
And molten my heart in His 'fining fire;  
When the dearest eyes I can not see,  
And the voice I longed for is dead to  
me:

“Wait! for thy longing shall find the  
key;

Eternity! Eternity!  
There shall the dayspring come back  
to thee,”  
Softly singeth the dark fir-tree.

When I shall sleep in my quiet grave,  
Oh, kindly fir-tree, above me wave!  
Utter thine anthems to one who grieves  
Under thy shining, singing leaves:  
“Keep thy faith like the fadeless tree!  
Tender and true let memory be,

Eternity! Eternity!  
There thy lost love is waiting for thee!”  
Blest be thy music, oh, dark fir-tree!  
And blessed the Maker who fashioned  
thee!

### “NOT DEAD, BUT RISEN.”

HE who died at Azim sends  
This to comfort all his friends:

Faithful friends! It lies, I know,  
Pale and white, and cold as snow;  
And ye say, “Abdallah's dead!”  
Weeping at the feet and head.  
I can see your falling tears;  
I can hear your sighs and prayers;

Yet I smile and whisper this :  
I am not the thing you kiss ;  
Cease your tears, and let it lie—  
It *was* mine—it is not I.

Sweet friends ! What the women lave  
For the last sleep of the grave,  
Is a hut which I am quitting ;  
Is a garment no more fitting ;  
Is a cage from which at last,  
Like a bird, my soul has passed.  
Love the inmate, not the room—  
The wearer, not the garb—the plume  
Of the eagle, not the bars  
That kept him from those splendid  
stars !

Loving friends ! Be wise, and dry  
Straightway every weeping eye.  
What ye lift upon the bier  
Is not worth a single tear.  
'Tis an empty sea-shell—one  
Out of which the pearl has gone ;  
The shell is broken.—it lies there :  
The pearl, the all, the soul is here.  
'Tis an earthen jar, whose lid  
Allah sealed the while it hid  
That treasure of his treasury—  
A mind that loved. Let it lie ;  
Let the shard be earth's once more,  
Since the gold is in his store !

Allah glorious ! Allah good !  
Now thy world is understood ;  
Now the long, long wonder ends !  
Yet ye weep, my erring friends,  
While the man whom ye call dead,  
In unspoken bliss instead,  
Lives and loves you ; lost, 'tis true  
For the light that shines for you ;  
But in the light ye can not see,  
Of undisturbed felicity—  
In a perfect paradise,  
And a life that never dies.

Farewell, friends ! But not farewell ;  
Where I am, ye too shall dwell.  
I am gone before your face  
A moment's worth, a little space.  
When ye come where I have slept,  
Ye will wonder why ye wept ;

Ye will know, by true love taught,  
That here is all, and there is naught.  
Weep awhile, if ye are fain—  
Sunshine still must follow rain ;  
Only not a death—for death,  
Now we know, is that first breath  
Which our souls draw when we enter  
Life, which is of all life center.

Be ye certain, all seems love  
Viewed from Allah's throne above !  
Be ye stout of heart and come  
Bravely onward to your home !  
La-il Allah ! Allah la !  
Oh, love divine ! Oh, love always !

He who died at Azim gave  
This to those who made his grave.

—  
*SOUNDS.*

THERE are countless sounds in this  
world of ours,  
Where hidden music dwells ;  
The song of birds when the day is  
young,  
The chime of distant bells ;  
The echo of children's voices, borne  
From the shady primrose dells.

The tiny tread of a childish foot,  
That strays about the room ;  
The tiny voice of a childish song,  
That comes to you through the  
gloom  
When the evening shadows are long  
without,  
And the light grows dim at home.

The murmuring rustle of the leaves  
That breathes a quiet tune ;  
The gentle dripping upon the grass  
Of a midnight shower in June,  
The far-off voice of a hidden brook,  
That sings low to the moon.

The voice you have waited for so long,  
The greeting kind and free ;  
The word that calls back to your heart  
Some old, old memory,

That sealed the promise your soul has  
held  
Silent and sacredly.

There are many sounds in these hearts  
of ours,  
That speak to us alone ;  
Voices that reach not other ears,  
Unheard save by our own ;  
Footsteps that echo back again  
From the past with a muffled tone.

Oh, is there naught in those sounds to  
you ?  
No tender meaning there ?  
Can you not hear their echoes now,  
As the cry of some despair ?  
Or is your life so crowned with bliss  
You can forget they were ?

---

BUBBLES.

I.

I STOOD on the brink in childhood,  
And watched the bubbles go  
From the rock-fretted, sunny ripple  
To the smoother tide below.

And over the wide creek-bottom,  
Under them every one,  
Went golden stars in the water,  
All luminous with the sun.

But the bubbles broke on the surface,  
And under, like stars of gold  
Broke ; and the hurrying water  
Flowed onward, swift and cold,

II.

I stood on the brink in manhood,  
And it came to my weary brain,  
And my heart, so dull and heavy  
After the years of pain—

That every hollowest bubble  
Which over my life had passed  
Still into its deeper current  
Some heavenly gleam had cast ;

That, however I mocked it gayly,  
And guessed at its hollowness,  
Still shone, with each bursting bubble,  
One star in my soul the less.

---

A WIDOW'S THOUGHT.

SING on, ye happy warblers, nor re-  
frain,  
Ye can not bring him pleasure now,  
nor pain ;  
Thou merry brooklet, dancing in the  
sun,  
Haste on thy way, till play and work  
be done.

Thou careless herdsboy, whistling o'er  
the lea,  
I would not that my sorrow saddened  
thee ;  
And ye, ye tender flow'rets that he  
loved,  
I'd have ye bloom where'er his feet  
have roved.

I would not that the children in the  
street  
E'en for a moment stilled their busy  
feet ;  
I would not close the casement from  
the light,  
I would not drive loved faces from my  
sight.

I would not other eyes should fade and  
fill,  
I would not other hearts should doubt  
His will ;  
Oh, heav'nly Father, even in my grief  
I'll ask submission, and 'twill bring  
belief.

My load no earthly friend I'll ask to  
share,  
For Thou hast taught us where to cast  
our care,  
My shadow shall not cloud another's  
way—  
The light on others' paths I'd gladly  
stay.

And it may be, in soothing others' pain,  
That peace and hope shall come to me again,  
And I may prove why God in love denies,  
And chooses thus to bless the faith  
He tries.

PARSON KELLY.

OLD Parson Kelly's fair young wife,  
Irene,  
Died when but three months wed,  
And no new love has ever come between  
His true heart and the dead,  
Though now for sixty years the grass  
has grown  
Upon her grave, and on its simple  
stone  
The moss  
And yellow lichens creep her name  
across.

Outside the door, in the warm summer  
air,  
The old man sits for hours.  
The idle wind, that stirs his silver hair,  
Is sweet with June's first flowers ;  
But dull his mind, and clouded with  
the haze  
Of life's last weary, gray November  
days ;  
And dim  
The past and present look alike to  
him.

The sunny scene around, confused and  
blurred,  
The twitter of the birds,  
Blend in his mind with voices long  
since heard—  
Glad childhood's careless words,  
Old hymns and Scripture texts ; while  
indistinct  
Yet strong, one thought with all fair  
things is linked—  
The bride  
Of his lost youth is ever by his side.

By its sweet weight of snowy blossoms  
bowed,

The rose-tree branch hangs low,  
And in the sunshine, like a fleecy cloud,  
Sways slowly to and fro.

"Oh, is it you?" the old man asks  
"Irene!"

And smiles, and fancies that her face  
he's seen

Beneath

The opening roses of a bridal wreath!

Down from the gambrel roof a white  
dove flits,

The sunshine on its wings,  
And lighting close to where the  
dreamer sits,

A vision with it brings—  
A golden gleam from some long van-  
ished day,

"Dear love," he calls ; then, "Why  
will you not stay?"

He sighs,

For, at his voice, the bird looks up  
and flies!

Oh, constant heart! whose failing  
thoughts cling fast

To one long laid in dust,  
Still seeing, turned to thine, as in the  
past,

Her look of perfect trust,  
Her soft voice hearing in the south  
wind's breath,

Dream on! Love pure as thine shall  
outlive death,

And when

The gates unfold, her eyes meet  
thine again!

THE BROKEN HEARTHSTONE.

OUR foot struck hard against a broken  
stone—

A hearthstone 'mid the corn :  
It was the hearthstone that our child  
ish feet

In the years past had worn.

We bowed, not heavy with a load of  
grief,  
But tender tears came, making our be-  
lief

More fresh within us; not as to a  
grave

We came to seek the place,  
But o'er the stones we bent most ten-  
derly

Our sober homeward face;  
We came as one who duly understands  
The house he seeketh—one not made  
with hands.

But we would lean our homeward face  
once more

Upon earth's altar stones,  
And if we cling too closely to the  
place,

New tenderness atones  
For anything of doubt or human dread,  
And in the place our soul was com-  
forted.

A soft hand, fragrant as an angel's  
wing,

Reached from the stones and laid  
Its touch upon us, there we found a  
string

Of pearls hung in the shade  
Of the green waving corn; we knew  
the clear,

White valley lilies, to our childhood  
dear.

They came up through the chinks of  
the mossed stone;

They had crept from the still  
To the old hearth. Perhaps most ten-  
derly

Their fibers felt the chill  
Of loneliness and crept more near, and  
near,

As we do to the hearthstone every  
year.

However, there they were, the valley  
bells

A-tremble on their strings—

The frail, yet the enduring, the un-  
changed.

As if an angel's wing  
Had swept our heart, it trembled, and  
we said,

Yea, Lord, our pilgrim soul is com-  
forted!

The corn above us waved triumph-  
antly;

Vale-lilies bent beneath,  
And all things said—not less our  
heart within—

“There is, there is no death!”  
We will not put our human yearnings  
by,

They knit our soul to that which can  
not die;

But when we go on love's lone pil-  
grimage,

And when our tears like rain  
Fall down on broken hearths, let us  
arise

In hope renewed again;  
“We seek a better country,” even  
where

The many mansions of the Father are.

And for the tenderness and for the  
tears

That welled as if from springs,  
We thank Thee, God, and for the  
trembling notes

That hope within us sings!  
She catches up the rustle of the corn,  
The faintest whisper in the lily born,

And runs them on the white threads  
of the heart,

And they are sadly sweet—  
Not chance nor change, nor any frost  
of time

Our soul's life can defeat.  
Our home is an abiding city; there,  
with God,

Are those who, with us, earth's poor  
hearthstones trod.



*IN AUTUMNS LONG AGO.*

THE hills were veiled in purple mist,  
 The trees set as a zone of gold,  
 And far away as eye could reach  
 The still green prairie onward rolled.  
 The sky was blue as blue could be,  
 The cotton fields were white as now :  
 Oh, what a trance of joy had we  
 In autumns long ago !

Two happy children on a hill,  
 And seeing in the sunset clouds  
 Haroun's enchanted city loom  
 'Mid seas all white with fairy shrouds,  
 We gaze till all the golden depths  
 Held Bagdad's splendid pomp and  
 glow :  
 The scents of Samarcand embalm  
 The autumns long ago.

We were so earnest as we planned  
 Such lives as never could have been—  
 Lives like some gorgeous phantasy  
 With words of love dropped in be-  
 tween.  
 I've had as foolish plans since then,  
 Yet wanting all the warmth and glow  
 That made life an enchanted dream  
 In autumns long ago.

Oh, could I see with those same eyes,  
 Or wave again the magic wand  
 That set among the sunset skies  
 The palaces of fairy-land,  
 We'd walk once more in scented grass,  
 And feel the cool Gulf breezes blow,  
 Love ! half life's glory died with thee,  
 One autumn long ago.

Oh, young brave heart that trod alone  
 The wondrous road so dim and cold ;  
 How did thy small feet find their way  
 To that fair land with streets of gold ?  
 For, far beyond the sunset clouds,  
 And far beyond all lands I know,  
 Thy sweet soul passed, and left me  
 here,  
 One autumn long ago.

Some day I shall feel tired of life,  
 And, full of rest from head to feet,  
 Shall fall on sleep and wait for thee  
 To lead me up the golden street.  
 Oh, then, beloved, our hopes and  
 dreams  
 Shall all to sweet completion grow,  
 And we shall link eternal joys  
 With autumns long ago.

*A FAREWELL.*

FAREWELL, days, and months, and  
 years ;  
 Farewell, thoughts, and hopes, and  
 fears ;  
 Farewell, old delight, and woe ;  
 Farewell, self of long ago !  
 In the old familiar place  
 Time sped on at slower pace—  
 Past recall, indeed, you lie,  
 Days, and months, and years gone by,  
 Now the old familiar door  
 Shuts us out forevermore !

Farewell, house—no more our home !  
 Others, in the years to come,  
 Hither homeward will return—  
 On the hearth their fires will burn ;  
 Children that we do not know  
 Gather round the blithesome glow ;  
 Other feet will tread the stair,  
 Other guests be welcomed there.  
 We, whose home it was before,  
 Shall be strangers evermore !

May be, in the years to come,  
 Past the house our feet may roam—  
 Over all a subtle change  
 Will have stolen and made it strange,  
 And the house we leave to-day  
 Will have vanished quite away.  
 In this house's joy and care  
 We shall have no lot nor share ;  
 All our life herein will seem  
 Like a half-forgotten dream.  
 We shall be as ghosts, that come  
 Ling'ring round their ancient home,  
 If our feet pass evermore  
 Near the old familiar door.

Farewell, days, and months, and years;  
 Farewell, buried hopes and fears!  
 Wheresoe'er our footsteps stray,  
 Whether long or brief our stay,  
 Whatsoever good we find,  
 Many graves we leave behind.  
 So, farewell, old joy and pain,  
 We shall never know again!  
 Farewell, all things that we leave!  
 Surely, life and warmth must cleave  
 To the house, when we are gone.  
 Can it empty seem, and lone,  
 When the echoes of the years,  
 Hopes and joys, and griefs and fears,  
 Scarce have died from roof and wall?  
 Surely, ghostly steps will fall  
 On the bare dismantled floors,  
 Gliding in at open doors,  
 Flitting up and down the stair,  
 Will not shadows wander there—  
 Shades more vague than shadows are,  
 Or than ghosts that break death's bar?  
 Sure our wraiths, when we are gone,  
 Oft will haunt the chambers lone—  
 Come to seek (ah, ne'er to find!)  
 All the years we leave behind?  
 Farewell, house, forevermore!  
 Farewell, old familiar door!  
 Farewell, home—yet no, not so—  
 Home goes with us where we go!

—————  
*IN EXILE.*

THE sea at the crag's base brightens,  
 And shivers in waves of gold;  
 And overhead, in its vastness,  
 The fathomless blue is rolled.  
 There comes no wind from the water,  
 There shines no sail on the main,  
 And not a cloudlet to shadow  
 The earth with its fleecy grain,  
 Oh! give in return for this glory,  
 So passionate, warm, and still,  
 The mist of a Highland valley—  
 The breeze from a Scottish hill.

Day after day glides slowly,  
 Ever and ever the same;  
 Seas of intensest splendor,  
 Airs which smite hot as flame.

Birds of imperial plumage,  
 Palms straight as columns of fire,  
 Flutter and glitter around me;  
 But not so my soul's desire.  
 I long for the song of the laverock,  
 The cataract's leap and flash,  
 The sweep of the red deer's antlers,  
 The gleam of the mountain ash.

Only when night's quiescent,  
 And peopled with alien stars,  
 Old faces come to the casement,  
 And peer through the vine-leaved  
 bars.  
 No words! But I guess their fancies—  
 Their dreamings are also mine—  
 Of the land of the cloud and heather—  
 The region of Auld Lang Syne.  
 Again we are treading the mountains,  
 Below us broadens the firth,  
 And billows of light keep rolling  
 Down leagues of empurpled heath.

Speed swift through the glowing  
 tropics,  
 Stout ship, which shall bear me  
 home;  
 Oh, pass, as a God-sent arrow,  
 Through tempest, darkness, and  
 foam,  
 Bear up through the silent girdle  
 That circles the flying earth,  
 Till there shall blaze on thy compass  
 The lode-star over the north,  
 That the winds of the hills may greet  
 us,  
 That our footsteps again may be  
 In the land of our heart's traditions,  
 And close to the storied sea.

—————  
*APPLE-BLOSSOMS.*

THE orchard grass is sunshine barred,  
 And starry-white upon the sward  
 The pretty daisies lie;  
 I rest beneath a mossy tree,  
 And through its waving branches see  
 The sapphire of the sky.

I feel the balmy breeze of May  
Soft blowing down the grassy way,  
And in the boughs above  
The little birds break into song,  
And praise in thrilling strains and  
strong,  
Spring's halcyon days of love.

The apple-blossoms fall around,  
And fleck the daisy-checked ground  
As breezes softly blow ;  
I stretch a lazy hand aloft,  
And grasp a cluster, silken-soft,  
Like rosy-tinted snow.

I look at every tender leaf,  
And marvel while a life so brief  
To such sweet things is given ;  
Why not for them a longer space  
To blossom gayly in their place,  
Beneath the summer heaven ?

Why not for them a longer time  
To feel the sun at morning prime,  
To see the moon at night ?  
To quiver by soft breezes stirred :  
To listen when God's morning-bird  
Sings heavenward his delight.

Ah, me, my heart ! it must be so,  
The blossom drops that fruit may  
grow,  
The sweetness of the flower  
Dies early on the vernal breeze,  
That Autumn time may bless the trees  
With gold and crimson dower.

Ah, me, my heart ! so must thou see  
The flowery hopes that gladden thee  
In this thy morning prime,  
Fade in the fair place where they grow,  
Drop round thee swifly, like the snow  
Of apple-blossom time.

But if they leave thee, good and true,  
And pure as when they blossomed new,  
Then gladly let them go ;  
Where now these fairy blossoms be,  
In God's good time thine eyes shall see  
Thy life's fair harvest glow !

*WILLOW WHISTLES.*

'Twas long ago—'tis but a dream—  
Enwoven, like a silver thread  
In emerald velvet, wound the stream  
Down through the daisy-flowered  
mead,  
Where flaming dandelions grew,  
And shone like gold amid the green,  
And violets from dells of dew  
Looked shyly out upon the scene.

A barefoot boy and sun-browned lass  
Sat making whistles by the brook ;  
The willows, at the nodding grass,  
Their sunlit tresses gayly shook,  
And through the rushes' amorous ranks  
The wooing winds of summer sighed,  
And white-robed hawthorns on the  
banks  
Embraced above the silvery tide.

And thus flew by the light-winged  
hours ;  
Then on the stream in childish play,  
They cast their broken twigs and  
flowers,  
And watched them slowly drift away,  
And hoped that Time, in coming years,  
Might gently bear their lives along,  
Where love's sweet light on Sorrow's  
tears  
Arch rainbows over vales of song.

But, gliding like that singing stream,  
The passing years sweep ever on ;  
And hopes which filled that loving  
dream  
Are, like the drifting flowers, gone.  
He flung his boyhood's toy away  
To listen to the trump of fame,  
And she forgot the merry lay  
That from the willow whistle came.

The willow died ; the nodding grass  
And rushes are no longer there ;  
The fickle winds have sought, alas !  
And wooed a thousand scenes as  
fair.  
And he recalling, like a dream,  
That summer day, has often sighed

That one as lovely as the stream,  
Should prove as changeful as its  
tide.

The hawthorn stands where then it  
stood—

No flower or leaf its head adorns—  
She wears her crown of womanhood,  
And finds it but a crown of thorns ;  
And he, 'mid sorrow's blasting flame,  
Has seen his cloud-built castles fall,  
And finds, alas ! the trump of fame  
A willow whistle after all.

---

*THANKSGIVING.*

OH, the glorious Thanksgivings  
Of the days that are no more,  
How, with each recurring season,  
Wakes their mem'ry o'er and o'er :  
When the hearts of men were simpler,  
And the needs of life were less,  
And its mercies were not reckoned  
By the measure of excess.

What a happy turning homeward,  
On the eve of that glad day ;  
What a throng of recollections  
Round each object on the way.  
Here the school-house with its maple,  
Leafless now, and dark, and grim,  
Shaking with each gust that crossed it  
Threat'ning rods on every limb.

There the hill whose towering summit  
Boyish feet had loved to climb,  
When the distant peaks stood beck'ning,  
In the glow of eventime ;  
And where boyish hearts had wondered,  
Till the coming of the stars,  
Of the great wide world that waited  
Far beyond those sunset bars.

Ah, how gladly manhood's footsteps  
Took again the homeward way,  
Fain to leave the world behind them,  
Were it only for a day ;

Fain to seek the dear old hearthstone,  
Warm with loving hearts and true,  
While in simple, guileless pleasures  
Youth and joy returned anew.

Then how sweet and safe the sleeping  
'Neath the sheltering roof once more,  
With the sentry poplars keeping  
Guard above it as of yore.  
Homely though the old square chamber,  
And its couch but quaint and rude,  
Still the dreams that sought its pillow  
Were a bright beatitude.

Heaven send the glad Thanksgiving  
Of that older, simpler time,  
Tarry with us not in fancy,  
Not in retrospective rhyme ;  
But in true and living earnest,  
May the spirit of that day,  
Artless, plain, and unpretending,  
Once again resume its sway.

---

*THE COUNTRY LIFE.*

NOT what we would, but what we  
must,  
Makes up the sum of living ;  
Heaven is both more or less than just  
In taking and in giving.  
Swords cleave to hands that sought  
the plow,  
And laurels miss the soldier's brow.

Me, whom the city holds, whose feet  
Have worn its stony highways,  
Familiar with its loneliest street—  
Its ways were never my ways.  
My cradle was beside the sea,  
And there, I hope, my grave will be.

Old homestead ! in that gray old town  
Thy vane is seaward blowing ;  
Thy slip of garden stretches down  
To where the tide is flowing ;  
Below they lie ; their sails are furled,  
The ships that go about the world.

Dearer that little country house,  
 Inland, with pines beside it ;  
 Some peach - trees, with unfruitful  
 boughs,  
 A well, with weeds to hide it ;  
 No flowers, or only such as rise  
 Self-sown, poor things, which all de-  
 spise.

Dear country home, can I forget  
 The least of thy sweet trifles ?  
 The window-vines that clamber yet,  
 Whose blooms the bee still rifles ?  
 The roadside blackberries, growing  
 ripe,  
 And in the woods the Indian pipe ?

Happy the man who tills the field,  
 Content with rustic labor ;  
 Earth does to him her fullness yield,  
 Hap what may be to his neighbor,  
 Well days, sound nights—oh ! can  
 there be  
 A life more rational and free ?

Dear country life of child and man !  
 For both the best, the strongest,  
 That with the earliest race began,  
 And hast outlived the longest ;  
 Their cities perished long ago ;  
 Who the first farmers were we know.

Perhaps our Babels, too, will fall ;  
 If so, no lamentations,  
 For Mother Earth will shelter all,  
 And feed the unborn nations !  
 Yes, and the swords that menace now  
 Will then be beaten to the plow.

---

*THE BONNIE WEE WELL.*

THE bonnie wee well on the breist o'  
 the brae,  
 That shinkles sae cauld in the sweet  
 smiles o' day,  
 An' croons a laigh sang a' to pleasure  
 itsel',  
 As it jinks 'neath the breckan and  
 genty blue-bell.

The bonnie wee well on the breist o'  
 the brae  
 Seems an image tae me o' a bairnie at  
 play ;  
 For it springs frae the yird wi' a flicker  
 o' glee,  
 And kisses the flowers, while its ripple  
 they pree.

The bonnie wee well on the breist o'  
 the brae  
 Wins blessings on blessings fu' monie  
 ilk day ;  
 For the wayworn and wearie aft rest  
 by its side,  
 And man, wife, and wean a' are richly  
 supplied.

The bonnie wee well on the breist o'  
 the brae,  
 When the hare steals to drink in the  
 gloamin' sae gray,  
 Where the wild moorlan' birds dip  
 their nebs and take wing,  
 And the lark wets his whistle, ere  
 mounting to sing.

Thou bonnie wee well on the breist o'  
 the brae,  
 My memory oft haunts thee by nicht  
 and by day,  
 For the friends I ha'e loved in the  
 years that are gane,  
 Ha'e knelt by the brim, and thy gush  
 ha'e parta'en'.

Thou bonnie wee well on the breist o'  
 the brae,  
 While I stoop to thy bosom, my thirst  
 to allay,  
 I will drink to the loved ones who come  
 back nae mair,  
 And my tears will but hallow thy bosom  
 sae fair.

Thou bonnie wee well on the briest o'  
 the brae,  
 My blessing rests with thee, wherever  
 I stray ;  
 In joy and in sorrow, in sunshine and  
 gloom,  
 I will dream of thy beauty, thy fresh-  
 ness and bloom.



In the depths of the city, midst turmoil  
and noise,  
I'll oft hear with rapture thy love-  
teaching voice,  
While fancy takes wing to thy rich  
fringe of green,  
And quaffs thy cool waters in noon's  
gowden sheen.

CLOSING DAYS.

THE splashing breakers on the beach  
Seem to the listening ear  
To wail a soft, sweet, plaintive dirge  
For the departing year.  
The yellow leaves, whirl'd o'er the path  
By the sharp autumn breeze,  
In eddyng clouds are falling fast  
From all the rustling trees.

The frost-beads sprinkle on the grass,  
Bright in the chilly dawn ;  
The mateless thrush his lonely meal  
Seeks on the rectory lawn.  
The laurustinus 'gins to show  
Her white and roseate flowers—  
Sure token that have fled at last  
The summer's golden hours.

Blackberries on the privet hang,  
The ash shows clusters red,  
Crowned with a scarlet diadem  
King Oak's majestic head ;  
The elms are orange, the queen beech  
Is robed in russet brown,  
And from the graceful pendant birch  
Dun leaves come showering down.

Close in the furze the linnet lies,  
The lark's shrill voice is mute,  
No longer from the cherry-bough  
The blackbird tunes his flute ;  
The white-throat and the nightingale  
To sunnier climes have flown,  
And on the berried holly-bough  
The redbreast sings alone.

Ah, sweet and solemn are the days  
That mark the dying year,

Waking, like music, in the heart  
Some slumbering memories dear—  
Of times gone by, of friends long dead,  
Of happy fleeting hours,  
When our fond youth was one long  
dream  
Of love and joy and flowers.

“WAGES.”

I.

IT was a merry brook, that ran  
Beside my cottage door all day ;  
I heard it, as I sat and span,  
Singing a pleasant song away.

I span my thread with mickle care ;  
The weight within my hand in-  
creased ;  
The spring crept by me unaware ;  
The brook dried up—the music  
ceased.

I missed it little, took small thought  
That silent was its merry din,  
Because its melody was wrought  
Into the thread I sat to spin.

II.

IT was a lark that sang most sweet  
Amongst the sunrise clouds so red ;  
I knew his nest lay near my feet,  
Although he sang so high o'erhead.

And though he sang so loud and clear  
Up in the golden clouds above,  
His throbbing song seemed wondrous  
near ;  
I twined it with the web I wove.

The long days' glory still drew on ;  
Then Autumn came ; the Summer  
fled ;  
The music that I loved was gone ;  
The song was hushed—the singer  
dead.

## III.

I wove on with a steadfast heart ;  
 My web grew greater, fold on fold,  
 I bore it to the crowded mart ;  
 They paid my wage in good red  
 gold—

Red gold, and fine. I turned me back,  
 The city's dust was in my throat—  
 No brook ran babbling down its track ;  
 No bird trilled out a tender note—

But city noise, and rush, and heat,  
 The gold was red like minted blood ;  
 Oh ! for the cool grass to my feet,  
 The bird's song, and the babbling  
 flood.

## IV.

I turned me, and I went my way—  
 My lonely, empty way, alone ;  
 The gold within my bosom lay ;  
 My woven web of dreams was gone !

Did the gold pay me ? No ; in sooth,  
 Gold never paid for brook and bird,  
 Nor for the coined dreams of youth,  
 Nor for the music that I heard.

My web is gone ! The gold is mine,  
 And they who bought it, can they  
 see

What dreams and fancies intertwine  
 With every woven thread for me ?

---

 YEARS AFTER.

I KNOW the years have rolled across  
 thy grave

Till it has grown a plot of level  
 grass—

All Summer does its green luxuriance  
 wave

In silken shimmer on the breast,  
 alas !

And all the Winter it is lost to sight  
 Beneath a winding-sheet of chilly  
 white.

I know the precious name I loved so  
 much

Is heard no more the haunts of men  
 among ;

The tree thou plantedst has outgrown  
 thy touch.

And sings to alien ears its murmur-  
 ing song ;

The lattice-rose forgets thy tendance  
 sweet,

The air thy laughter, and the sod thy  
 feet.

Through the dear wood where grew  
 the violets,

Like the worn track of travel, toil,  
 and trade !

And steam's imprisoned demon fumes  
 and frets,

With shrieks that scare the wild  
 bird from the shade,

Mills vex the lazy streams, and on its  
 shore

The timid harebell swings its chimes  
 no more.

But yet—even yet—if I, grown changed  
 and old,

Should lift my eyes at opening of  
 the door,

And see again thy fair head's waving  
 gold,

And meet thy dear eyes' tender  
 smiles once more,

These tears of parting like a breath  
 would seem,

And I should say, " I know it was a  
 dream ! "

---

 THE OLD MILL.

OH, the merry mill-stream ! it is spark-  
 ling and bright

As it runs down the hill-side in shad-  
 ow and light ;

Now it circles in pools, and now  
 throws a cascade,

And laughs out in high glee at the leap  
 it has made.

With its ripples are mingled on many  
 a day,  
 The shouts and the laughter of chil-  
 dren at play;  
 And many a picnic is joyously spread  
 On its banks, where the green branches  
 wave overhead.

But the jolliest place is the old ruined  
 mill,  
 With the great wooden water-wheel,  
 solemn and still;  
 Once it whirled round and round with  
 the rush of the stream,  
 Till a new mill was built to be driven  
 by steam.

Now the children climb over its big  
 wooden spokes,  
 But the wheel into motion they never  
 can coax;  
 They may clamber and push, they may  
 tug with a zest,  
 They cannot awake the old giant from  
 rest.

And perhaps, if it only could speak, it  
 would say:  
 "After all the hard labor I've done in  
 my day,  
 It is pleasant to know that the chil-  
 dren may still  
 Find their happiest times in the old  
 ruined mill."

---

*THE ROUND OF LIFE.*

Two children down by the shining  
 strand,  
 With eyes as blue as the summer  
 see,  
 While the sinking sun fills all the land  
 With the glow of a golden mystery:  
 Laughing aloud at the sea-mew's cry,  
 Gazing with joy on its snowy breast,  
 Till the first star looks from the even-  
 ing sky,  
 And the amber bars stretch over the  
 west.

A soft green dell by the breezy shore,  
 A sailor lad and a maiden fair;  
 Hand clasped in hand, while the tale  
 of yore  
 Is borne again on the listening air.  
 For love is young, though love be old,  
 And love alone the heart can fill;  
 And the dear old tale, that has been  
 told  
 In the days gone by, is spoken still.

A trim-built home on a sheltered bay;  
 A wife looking out on the glistening  
 sea;  
 A prayer for the loved one far away,  
 And prattling imps 'neath the old  
 roof-tree;  
 A lifted latch and a radiant face  
 By the open door in the falling night;  
 A welcome home and a warm embrace  
 From the love of his youth and his  
 children bright.

An aged man in an old arm-chair;  
 A golden light from the western  
 sky;  
 His wife by his side, with her silvered  
 hair,  
 And the open Book of God close by;  
 Sweet on the bay the gloaming falls,  
 And bright is the glow of the even-  
 ing star;  
 But dearer to them are the jasper walls  
 And the golden streets of the Land  
 afar.

An old churchyard on a green hill-side,  
 Two lying still in their peaceful rest;  
 The fisherman's boat going out with  
 the tide  
 In the fiery glow of the amber west.  
 Children's laughter and old men's  
 sighs,  
 The night that follows the morning  
 clear,  
 A rainbow bridging our darkened  
 skies,  
 Are the round of our lives from year  
 to year.

*THE AGED BELIEVER AT THE  
GATE OF HEAVEN.*

I'M kneeling at the threshold,  
Weary, faint, and sore;  
Waiting for the dawning,  
For the opening of the door;  
Waiting till the Master  
Shall bid me rise and come  
To the glory of His presence—  
To the gladness of His home.

A weary path I've travelled,  
'Mid darkness, storm, and strife;  
Bearing many a burden—  
Struggling for my life;  
But now the morn is breaking,  
My toil will soon be o'er;  
I'm kneeling at the threshold—  
My hand is on the door.

Methinks I hear the voices  
Of the blessed as they stand,  
Singing in the sunshine  
Of the sinless land.  
O! would that I were with them,  
Amid their shining throng,  
Mingling in their worship—  
Joining in their song.

The friends that started with me  
Have entered long ago;  
One by one they left me  
Struggling with the foe.  
Their pilgrimage was shorter,  
Their triumph sooner won;  
How lovingly they'll greet me  
When my toil is done!

With them, the blessed angels,  
That know nor grief nor sin,  
I see them by the portals,  
Prepared to let me in.  
O Lord, I wait Thy pleasure;  
Thy time and way are best;  
But O! so worn and weary,  
Dear Father, bid me rest.

*THE OLD FARM.*

OUT in the meadows the farm-house  
lies,  
Old and gray, and fronting the west.  
Many a swallow thither flies  
Twittering under the evening skies,  
In the old chimneys builds her nest.

Ah! how the sounds make our old  
hearts swell!  
Send them again on an eager quest:  
Bid the sweet winds of heaven tell  
Those we have loved so long and well  
Come again home to the dear old  
nest.

When the gray evening, cool and still,  
Hushes the brain and heart to rest,  
Memory comes with a joyous thrill,  
Brings the young children back at will,  
Calls them all home to the gray old  
nest.

Patient we wait till the golden morn  
Rise on our weariness half-confessed;  
Till, with the chill and darkness gone,  
Hope shall arise with another dawn,  
And a new day to the sad old nest.

Soon shall we see all the eager east  
Bright with the Day-star, at heav-  
en's behest;  
Soon, from the bondage of clay re-  
leased,  
Rise to the Palace, the King's own  
feast,  
Birds of flight from the last year's  
nest.

*AT THE LAST.*

THREE little words within my brain  
Beat back and forth their one refrain;  
Three little words, whose dull distress  
Means everything and nothingness,  
Unbidden move my lips instead  
Of other utterance: She is dead.

Here, lingering, we talked of late  
Beside the hedge-grown garden gate ;  
Till, smiling, ere the twilight fell  
She bade me take a last farewell.  
Those were the final words she said—  
But yesterday—and she is dead !

I see the very gown she wore,  
The color I had praised before ;  
The swaying length, where she would  
pass,  
Made a light rustle on the grass :  
There in the porch she turned her  
head  
For one last smile—and she is dead !

Could I have known what was to  
come,  
Those hours had not been blind and  
dumb !  
I would have followed close with  
Death,  
Have striven for every glance and  
breath !  
But now—the final word is said,  
The last look taken—she is dead !

We were not lovers—such as they  
Who pledge a faith to last for aye ;  
Yet seems the Universe to me  
A riddle now without a key :  
What means the sunshine overhead,  
The bloom below—now she is dead ?

So new my grief, its sudden haze  
Bewilders my accustomed ways ;  
And yet so old, it seems my heart  
Was never from its pain apart :—  
What was and is and shall be, wed  
With that one sentence—She is dead.

—————  
*MUSINGS IN THE TWILIGHT.*

IN the twilight alone I am sitting,  
And fast through my memory are flit-  
ting

The dreams of youth.

The future is smiling before me,  
And hope's bright visions float o'er  
me—

Shall I doubt their truth ?  
I know that my hopes may prove bub-  
bles,  
Too frail to endure,  
And thick-strewn be the cares and the  
troubles  
That life has in store.

But 'tis best we know not the sorrow  
That comes with a longed-for to-  
morrow,  
And the anguish and care :  
If the veil from my future were lifted,  
Perhaps at the sight I had drifted  
Down into despair ;  
If I knew all the woes that awaited  
My hurrying feet,  
My pleasures might oftener be  
frighted  
With bitter than sweet.

And yet, though my life has been lonely,  
Some flowers I have plucked that  
could only  
From trials have sprung ;  
Some joys I have known that did bor-  
row  
Their brightness from contrast with  
sorrow  
That over me hung.  
For the moonbeams are brighter in  
seeming  
When clouds are gone by,  
If only a moment their gleaming  
Be hid from the eye.

Sad indeed would be Life's dewy  
morning  
If, all Hope's bright promises scorning,  
O'erburdened with fears,  
We saw but the woe and the sorrow  
That would come to our hearts on the  
morrow,  
The sighs and the tears.  
So 'tis best that we may not discover  
What Fate hath in store,  
Nor lift up the veil that hangs over  
What lieth before.



*THE OLD HOME.*

YES, still the same, the same old spot ;  
The years may go, the years may  
come,  
Yet through them all there changeth  
not  
The old familiar home.

The poplars by the old mill stream  
A trifle taller may have grown ;  
The ivies round the turret green  
Perchance more thickly thrown.

Yet still the same green lands are here  
That brought their violet scents in  
Spring,  
And heard through many a golden  
year  
The winsome echoes ring,

Of children, in the April morn,  
Knee-deep in yellow cowslip blooms ;  
Of lovers' whispers lightly borne  
Through sultry twilight glooms.

And out upon the red-bricked town,  
The quaint old houses stand the  
same ;  
The same old sign swings at the Crown,  
Ablaze in sunset flame.

Yet, still 'tis not the same old spot—  
The old familiar friends are gone,  
I ask of those who know them not ;  
All strangers, every one.

The morning brooks may sing the  
same ;  
The white thorns blossom in the  
May ;  
But each long-loved, remembered  
name  
Has passed in turn away.

*BABY'S CURL.*

I FOUND, to-day, amid some treasured  
things,  
Kept long with loving care,

Some faded flowers, love notes and  
broken rings,  
And—dearest far of all love's offerings,  
This little curl of hair.

The silent, burning tears fell unre-  
pressed  
For the dear curly head  
My willing fingers have so oft caressed,  
Till every childish grief was soothed to  
rest,  
I number with my dead.

Never again my eager hands shall stray  
Amid the clustering hair,  
Where in the long ago this sweet curl  
lay ;  
For the dear head is lying far away,  
Beyond my love and care :

Beyond the reach and need of love's  
caress ;  
The precious, curly head  
Can never feel again my warm lips  
press,  
Or know with what a depth of tender-  
ness  
I hold this silken thread.

What wonder that the tears fall thick  
and fast,  
Here in the twilight dim !  
For this, my darling's ringlet, is the  
last  
And only relic of a sacred past !  
'Tis all I have of him.

*DANIEL GRAY.*

If I shall ever win the home in heaven  
For whose sweet rest I humbly hope  
and pray,  
In the great company of the forgiven  
I shall be sure to find old Daniel Gray.

I knew him well ; in truth, few knew  
him better ;  
For my young eyes oft read for him  
the Word,

<p>And saw how meekly from the crystal letter He drank the life of his beloved Lord.</p> <p>Old Daniel Gray was not a man who lifted On ready words his freight of grati- tude, Nor was he ever called among the gifted, In the prayer-meetings of his neighbor- hood.</p> <p>He had a few old-fashioned words and phrases, Linked in with sacred texts and Sun- day rhymes ; And I suppose that in his prayers and graces, I've heard them all at least a thousand times.</p> <p>I see him now—his form, his face, his motions, His homespun habit, and his silver hair,— And hear the language of his trite de- votions, Rising behind the straight-backed kitchen chair.</p> <p>I can remember how the sentence sounded— “ Help us, O Lord, to pray and not to faint ! ” And how the “ conquering and to con- quer ” rounded The loftier aspiration of the saint.</p> <p>He had some notions that did not im- prove him, He never kissed his children—so they say ; And finest scenes of rarest flowers would move him Less than a horse-shoe picked up in the way.</p> <p>He had a hearty hatred of oppression, And righteous word for sin of every kind ;</p>	<p>Alas, that the transgressor and trans- gression Were linked so closely in his honest mind !</p> <p>He could see naught but vanity in beauty, And naught but weakness in a fond caress, And pitied men whose views of Chris- tian duty Allowed indulgence in such foolishness.</p> <p>Yet there were love and tenderness within him ; And I am told that when his Charley died, Nor nature's need nor gentle word could win him From his fond vigils at the sleeper's side.</p> <p>And when they came to bury little Charley, They found fresh dewdrops sprinkled in his hair, And on his breast a rosebud gathered early, And guessed, but did not know who placed it there.</p> <p>Honest, faithful, constant in his call- ing, Strictly attendant on the means of grace, Instant in prayer, and fearful most of failing, Old Daniel Gray was always in his place.</p> <p>A practical old man and yet a dreamer, He thought that in some strange, un- looked-for way His mighty Friend in Heaven, the great Redeemer, Would honor him with wealth some golden day.</p>
--	--

This dream he carried in a hopeful  
spirit

Until in death his patient eye grew dim,  
And his Redeemer called him to inherit

The heaven of wealth long garnered  
up for him.

So, if I ever win the home in Heaven  
For whose sweet rest I humbly hope  
and pray,

In the great company of the forgiven  
I shall be sure to find old Daniel  
Gray.

—  
*THE RETURN.*

ALL day the land in golden sunlight lay,  
All day a happy people to and fro  
Moved through the quiet Summer ways;  
all day

I wandered with bowed head and  
footsteps slow,

A stranger in the well-remembered  
place,

Where Time has left not one familiar  
face

I knew long years ago.

By marsh-lands golden with bog asphodel,

I saw the fitful plover wheel and  
scream ;

The soft winds swayed the foxglove's  
purple bell ;

The iris trembled by the whispering  
stream ;

Gazing on these blue hills which know  
not change,

All the dead years seemed fallen dim  
and strange,

Unreal as a dream.

Unchanged as in my dreams lay the  
fair land,

The laughter-loving lips, the eager  
feet,

The hands that struck warm welcome  
to my hand,

The hearts that at my coming higher  
beat,

Have long been cold in death ; no glad  
surprise

Wakens for me in any living eyes,  
That once made life so sweet.

Slowly the day drew down the golden  
west ;

The purple shadows lengthened on  
the plain,

Yet I unresting through a world at rest,  
Went silent with my memory and  
my pain ;

Then, for a little space, across the years  
To me, bowed down with time and  
worn with tears,

My friends came back again.

By many a spot where Summer could  
not last,

In other days, for all our joy too long,  
They came about me from the shadowy past,

As last I saw them, young and gay  
and strong ;

And she, my heart, came fair as in the  
days

When at her coming all the radiant  
ways

Thrilled into happy song.

Ah me ! once here, on such a Summer  
night,

In silent bliss together she and I  
Stood watching the pale lingering  
fringe of light

Go slowly creeping round the north-  
ern sky.

Ah, love, if all the weary years could give  
But one sweet hour of that sweet night  
to live

With thee—and then to die !

The old sweet fragrance fills the Sum-  
mer air,

The same light lingers on the north-  
ern sea,

Still, as of old, the silent land lies fair  
Beneath the silent stars, the melody

Of moving waters still is on the shore,  
And I am here again—but nevermore

Will she come back to me.

*UNTO THE DESIRED HAVEN.*

WHAT matter how the winds may  
 blow,  
 Or blow they east, or blow they west?  
 What reck I how the tides may flow,  
 Since ebb or flood alike is best?  
 No summer calm, no winter gale,  
 Impedes or drives me from my way:  
 I steadfast toward the haven sail,  
 That lies, perhaps, not far away.

I mind the weary days of old,  
 When motionless I seemed to lie;  
 The nights when fierce the billows  
 rolled,  
 And changed my course, I knew not  
 why.  
 I feared the calm, I feared the gale,  
 Foreboding danger and delay,  
 Forgetting I was thus to sail  
 To reach what seemed so far away.

I measure not the loss and fret  
 Which through those years of doubt  
 I bore:

I keep the memory fresh, and yet  
 Would hold God's patient mercy  
 more.

What wrecks have passed me in the  
 gale,

What ships gone down on summer  
 day:

While I, with furled or spreading sail,  
 Stood for the haven far away.

What matter how the winds may blow,  
 Since fair or foul alike are best:

God holds them in His hand, I know.

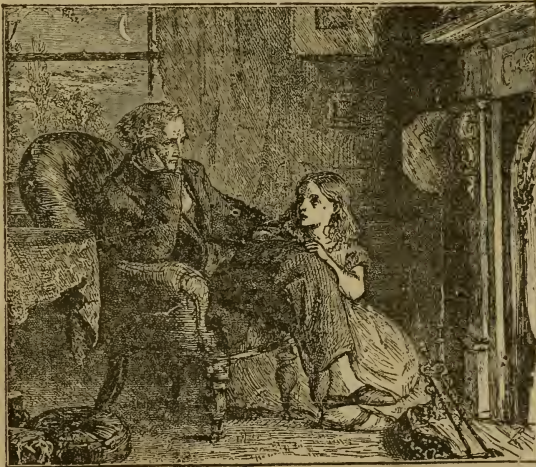
And I may leave to Him the rest,

Assured that neither calm nor gale

Can bring me danger or delay,

As still I toward the haven sail,

That lies, I know, not far away.



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