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Miscellaneous Verses

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PRIZE POEMS AND MISCELLANEOUS VERSES ***

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THE DEATH OF SAUL:

AND OTHER

EISTEDDFOD PRIZE POEMS

AND

MISCELLANEOUS VERSES.

BY

J. C. MANNING

(CARL MORGANWG.)

SWANSEA:

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AND ALL BOOKSELLERS.

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1877.

DEATH OF SAUL

AND

OTHER POEMS.

THE EISTEDDFOD COMMITTEE

AND THE

"DEATH OF SAUL."

Being restricted by the Wrexham Eisteddfod Committee to 200 lines, I was obliged to lop away from the bulk of the following poem just sufficient for their requirements. I have always declaimed, from a physical point of view, against the pernicious influence of light-lacing, and this being so, it was not likely I could go at once and mentally encase my delicate muse, for a permanency, in a straight waistcoat, at the behest of any committee in the world. What would she have thought of me? If, therefore, the committee, or any member of it, should by chance observe that the "Death of Saul," as I now produce it, is of a more comprehensive character than the "Death of Saul" for which they were good enough to award me the first prize, they will see the poem without the temporary stays in which I was necessitated to encase it in order to make it acceptable to them and their restrictive tastes. To squeeze a poem of nearly 400 lines into the dimensions of one of 200, is, in my opinion, an achievement worthy of a prize in itself; and as half of the original had a gold medal awarded to it, the whole of it, I should think, ought to be worth two. I trust Eisteddfod committees, when they contemplate putting the curb upon us poor poets, will think of the Wrexham National Eisteddfod, and how half the "Death of Saul" took a first prize.

TO THE PUBLIC.

Let the bright sun of Approbation shine
In warmth upon the humble rhymester's line,
And, like the lark that flutters tow'rds the light,
He spreads his pinions for a loftier flight.
The chilling frowns of critics may retard,
But cannot kill, the ardour of the Bard,
For, gaining wisdom by experience taught,
As grass grows strong from wounds by mowers wrought,
Success will come the Poet's fears to assuage,
Crowning his hopes with Poesy's perfect page.

PREFACE.

The verses which make up this volume have been written at intervals, and under the most varied and chequered circumstances, extending over a period of five-and-twenty years. If, therefore, they bear upon their surface variety of sentiment and incongruity of feeling, that fact will explain it. I am fully aware that some of the pieces are unequal in merit from a purely artistic point of view, but I have felt that my audience will be varied in its composition, and hence the introduction of variety. The tone, however, of the whole work, I believe to be healthy; and where honest maxims, combined with homely metaphor, are found to take the place of high constructive art, they will, I know, be excused by votaries of the latter, for the sake of those whose hearts and instincts are much more sensitive to homely appeals than to the charms of mere artistic effect. The pieces have all been written, together with many other effusions, at such leisure moments as have been accorded to one who, during the whole time of their composition, has had to apply himself, almost without cessation, to the performance of newspaper press duties; and those who know anything about such things need not be told that a taste for versification is, to a press-man, as a rule, what poverty is to most people—a very inconvenient and by no means a profitable companion. In my own case, however, the inconvenience has been a pleasure, and I have no reason to find fault as to profit. From the fitful excitement of journalistic duties I have turned to "making poetry," as Spenser defines the art, as a jaded spirit looks for rest, and have always felt refreshed after it. My only hope in connection with the poetry I have thus made is, that those who may incline to read what I have written will take as much pleasure in reading as I have taken in writing it, and that the result to myself will be a justification for having published the work, to be found only in that public appreciation which I hope to obtain,

SWANSEA.—J. C. MANNING.

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TO THE

MOST HONOURABLE THE MARQUESS OF BUTE:

**WITH A GRATEFUL SENSE OF HIS LORDSHIP'S GENEROUS AND
OTHERWISE DISINTERESTED DESIRE,**

IN ACCEPTING THE DEDICATION OF THE WORK,

**TO ALONE FURTHER THE VIEWS AND ENCOURAGE THE LITERARY
ASPIRATIONS OF THE WRITER,**

THIS VOLUME,

BY HIS LORDSHIP'S PERMISSION,

IS DEDICATED,

**WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF RESPECTFUL ADMIRATION OF HIS
TALENT AND WORTH,**

BY HIS LORDSHIP'S OBLIGED AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

DEATH OF SAUL.

PRIZE POEM.

WREXHAM NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD, 1876.

"The Vicar of Wrexham delivered his award on the 28 poems in English or Welsh, on 'The Death of Saul' ('*Marwolaeth Saul*'). The prize 5 pounds 5s. was given by Dr. Williams, Chairman of the Committee, and a gold medal was given by the Committee. The Vicar said the best composition was an English poem, signed 'David.' It was written in a style well adapted to the subject, in language dignified and sonorous, with not a little of the rhythmic cadence of *Paradise Lost*. It was real poetry; suggestive, and at times deeply impressive—the poetry of thought and culture, not of mere figure and fancy, and it was well calculated to do honour to its author, and to the National Eisteddfod of Wales. 'David' was among his fellow-competitors as Saul was amongst his brethren, higher than any of them from his shoulders upwards, and to him he awarded the prize which his poem well deserved."

HISTORICAL NOTE.

The design followed out in the succeeding poem has been to touch upon the leading historical incidents of Saul's career that lead up to and explain his tragic death on Mount Gilboa. With him, nearly 3,000 years ago, commenced the Monarchical government of the Israelites, who had previously been governed by a Theocracy. The Prophet Samuel, who anointed Saul, was the last of the High Priests or Judges under this Theocracy, which existed for 800 years, and died out with the acceptance of Saul, by the Israelites, as "King of all the tribes of Israel." The incidents touched upon range from the proclamation of Saul as King, by Samuel (1095 B.C.), to the fall of the hapless Monarch at the battle of Gilboa, 40 years afterwards.

Death of Saul

As through the waves the freighted argosy
Securely plunges, when the lode star's light
Her path makes clear, and as, when angry clouds
Obscure the guide that leads her on her way,
She strikes the hidden rock and all is lost,
So he of whom I sing—favoured of God,
By disobedience dimmed the light divine
That shone with bright effulgence like the sun,
And sank in sorrow, where he might have soared
Up to the loftiest peak of earthly joy
In sweet foretaste of heavenly joys to come.
Called from his flocks and herds in humble strait
And made to rule a nation; high in Heaven
The great Jehovah lighting up the way;
On earth an upright Judge and Prophet wise
Sent by the Lord to bend his steps aright;
Sons dutiful and true; no speck to mar
The noble grandeur of a proud career;
Yet, from the rays that flickered o'er his path,
Sent for his good, he wove the lightning shaft
That seared his heart, e'en as the stalwart oak,
Soaring in pride of pow'r, falls 'neath the flash,
And lies a prostrate wreck. Like one of old,
Who, wrestling with the orb whose far-off light
Gave beauty to his waxen wings, upsoared
Where angels dared not go, came to his doom,
And fell a molten mass; so, tempting Heaven,

Saul died the death of disobedient Pride
And self-willed Folly—curses of mankind!
Sins against God which wrought the Fall, and sent,
As tempests moan along the listening night,
A wail of mournful sadness drifting down
The annals of the world: unearthly strains!
Cries of eternal souls that know no rest.

Episode the First.

THE ISRAELITES DEMAND A KING, AND SAUL IS GIVEN TO RULE OVER THEM.

"God save the King!" the Israelites exclaimed, (*a*)
When, by the aged Prophet summoned forth
To Mizpeh, all the tribes by lot declared
That Saul should be their ruler. Since they left
The land of Egypt and its galling stripes,
Till then, the only living God had been
Their King and Governor; and Samuel old,
The last of Israel's Judges, when he brought
The man they chose to be their future King,
And said: "Behold the ruler of your choice!"
Told them of loving mercies they for years
Had from the great Jehovah's hand received,
And mourned in sorrowing tones that God their Judge
Should be by them rejected: and they cried
"A King! give us a King—for thou art old (*b*)
"And in those ways thou all thy life hast walked
"Walk not thy sons: lucre their idol is—
"And Judgment is perverted by the bribes
"They take to stifle justice: give us, then,
"A King to judge us. Other nations boast
"Of such a chief—a King, give us a King!"
So Saul became the crowned of Israel—
The first great King of their united tribes.

Episode the Second.

SAUL DISAPPOINTS THE EXPECTATIONS OF JEHOVAH, AND IS VISITED WITH THE ALMIGHTY'S DISPLEASURE.

Brave is the heart that beats with yearning throb
Tow'rds highest hopes, when, wandering in the vale,
Some snowy Alp gleams forth with flashing crown
Of golden glory in the morning light.
Brave is the heart that lovingly expands
And longs the far-off splendour to embrace.
Thus yearned the heart of Saul, when from his flocks
The Prophet led him forth, and, pointing up
Tow'rds Israel's crown, exclaimed: "See what the Lord
Hath done for thee!" But Saul upon the throne
Grew sorely dazed. Though brave the heart, the brain
Swam in an ecstasy of wildering light—
A helmless boat upon a troubled sea.
Men nursed in gloom can rarely brook the sun;
And many a life to sombre paths inured
The sunshine of Prosperity hath quenched,
As dewdrops glistening on the lowly sward
Like priceless jewels ere the morning breaks,
Melt into space when light and heat abound,
As though they ne'er had been. Relentless fate!
This ruthless law the world's wide ways hath fringed
With wreckage of a host of peerless lives;
And Saul is numbered 'mongst the broken drift.
Saul, though the Lord's anointed, saw not God:

But—curse of life! ingratitude prevailed.
His faith waxed weak as days of trial came:
And when, deserted by his teeming hosts
At Gilgal, he the Prophet's priestly right
In faithless haste assumed, the Prophet cried
"The Lord hath said no son of thine shall reign
O'er Israel!" (c) Yet, heedless of the voice
Of warning which a patient God vouchsafed,
With disobedience lurking in his heart,
He strove to shield the King of Amalek—
He whom the Lord commanded him to kill—
Seizing his flocks and herds for selfish gain
Beneath the garb of sacrificial faith—
Sin so distasteful to the Lord that Saul
Sat in the dark displeasure of his God. (d)
And out from this displeasure, like the dawn
From dusky night, the youthful David sprang—
The Lord's anointed, yea, the Lord's beloved:
Sweet Bard of Bethlehem! whose harp divine,
Tuned to the throbbings of a guileless heart,
Soothed the dark spirit of the sinful King,
And woke his life to light and hope again, (e)
But ah! the sling and stone his envy roused,
And envy hate begat. 'Tis ever so:
The honest fealty of a noble soul
To all that's brave, and true, and good in life,
Will meet malicious hindrance. So the King
This brave young bard and warrior of the Lord
In ruthless persecution sought to kill.
Twice, with a true nobility of heart
Which to the noble heart alone belongs,
The slayer of Goliath stayed his hand
When Saul lay at his mercy. "Take thy life;
"Thou art the Lord's anointed, sinful, though,
"And faithless to the truth as shifting sand!"
Thus David spake, and went his weary way,
An exile from the land he loved so well.
So Saul had steeled his heart and set his face
Against the living God, and thus he lay
Beneath the great Jehovah's awful ban.

Episode the Third

SAUL, DESERTED BY THE ALMIGHTY, CONSULTS THE WITCH OF ENDOR, AND HIS FALL IS FORETOLD BY THE SPIRIT OF THE DEAD PROPHET.

As o'er the earth a darkling cloud appears,
And grows in blackness till the scathing shaft
Comes forth with swelling thunder, so the cloud,
Black unto bursting with the wrath divine,
Hung o'er the head of Israel's erring King.
The light of heavenly faith from him was gone,
And life was full of dreary, dark despair.
Outstretched along the plains of Shunem lay
The army of the heathen Philistines—(f)
A countless horde, at whose relentless head
Achish, the King of Gath, with stern acclaim
Breathed war against the Israelitish host.
Heedless of help from God, the wretched Saul
Had called his tribes together, and they swarmed
Along the plains of Gilboa, whence they saw
The mighty army of their heathen foe
Lie like a drowsy panther in its lair
With limbs all wakeful for the hungry leap.

"Enquire me of the Lord!" the King had said,
Communing with the doubtings of his heart.
But answer came not. Dreams were dumb and dark—
Unfathomed mysteries. No Urim spake;
And Prophets wore the silence of the grave.
So Saul, the King, disheartened and disguised,
Went forth at night. (*g*) The rival armies lay
Sleeping beneath the darksome dome of Heaven,
And all was still, save when the ghostly wind
Swept o'er the plains with melancholy moan.
That night the shadowy shape of one long dead
Stood face-to-face with Saul, in lonely cave,
The Witch of Endor's haunt. Ah, me—the fall!
To degradation deep that man hath slid
Who 'gainst the Lord in stiff-necked folly strives
Choosing the path of cabalistic wiles—
The dark and turbid garniture of toads,
And philters rank of necromantic knaves—
Who spurns the hand which, by the light of Heaven,
Points clear and straight along the spacious road
Which angel feet have trod. Ah, me—the fall!
And sad the fate of him who shuns the truth:
Who, like the lonely Saul, eschews the light,
And leagues with darkness—listening for the voice
Of angels in abodes where devils dwell.
So the dead Prophet and the erring King,
By Heaven's own will, not by the witch's craft,
Confront each other in the dark retreat.
The dreamy shadow speaks: "Wherefore," it saith,
"Dost thou disquiet me!" (*h*) And from the earth
Came the sepulchral tones, which, floating up,
Joined the weird meanings of the hollow wind,
And swept in ghostly cadences away
Like exiled souls in pain. And Saul replied;
"I'm sore distressed: Alas! the living God
"Averts His face and answers me no more;
"What"—and the pleading voice, in trembling tones
That might have won a stony heart to tears,
Asks of the shadowy shape—"What shall I do!"
And hollow voices seem to echo back
The anguish-freighted words—"What shall I do!"
'Twas hell's own mockery! The blistering heat—
Like burning blast, hot and invisible—
That scorched the heart of Saul, was but the breath
Of Satan, gloating o'er the moral death
Of him who, chosen of Jehovah, lay
A victim to those foul Satanic wiles
Which the sworn enemy of God had planned
In inmost hate. "I cannot scale the height
"Of Him 'gainst whom eternal enmity
"I've sworn," it seemed to say: "but—soothing thought!
"Deep in the hearts of mortals *He* hath named
"To do His bidding, will I thrust my darts,
"And through their wounds, as His ambassadors,
"The spirit bruise of Him who sent them—thus!"
And then again, as though his breaking heart
Were cleft with red-hot blade, the voice of Saul
Is heard in mortal anguish breathing out
The soul-subduing tones—"What shall I do?"
Dead silence intervenes; and then again
The spirit of the Prophet slowly speaks:
"To-morrow thou and thine," it faintly said,
"Shalt be with me; and Israel's mighty host
"Shall be the captives of the heathen foe!"

The fateful answer smites the listener low,
And utter darkness falls upon his life.

Episode the Fourth.

BATTLE OF GILBOA AND THE DEATH OF SAUL.

The morrow came: the bloody fray began.
The sun shone fierce and hot upon the scene.
Lashed into fury like a raging sea
The wrestling multitude for vantage strove
With deadly chivalry. On Gilboa's mount
The King looked forth and watched the sanguine strife,
Clothed in the golden panoply of war.
Upon his brow the stately monarch wore
The crown of all the tribes of Israel,
A-fire with jewels flashing in the sun
In bitter mockery of his trampled heart.
Noble in mien, yet, with a sorrowing soul,
Anxious his gaze—for in the sweltering surge
Three sons of Saul were battling with the rest;
His first-born, Jonathan; Abinadab;
And Melchi-shua—idols of his life!
Around him like a hurricane of hail
The pinioned shafts with aim unerring sped,
Bearing dark death upon their feathery wings.
The clashing sword its dismal carnage made
As foe met foe; and flashing sparks out-flew
As blade crossed blade with murderous intent.
The outcry rose—"They fly! they fly!" The King
Looked down upon the fray with trembling heart.
The bloody stream along the valley ran,
And chariots swept like eagles on the wind
On deathly mission borne. The conflict fierce
Waxed fiercer—fiercer still; the rain of gore
Wetted the soddened plain, and arrows flew
Thicker and faster through the darkening air.
The barbèd spear, flung forth with stalwart arm,
Sped like a whirlwind on its flight of death.
Along the ranks the warrior's clarion call
Inspired to valorous life the struggling hosts,
And shouts of victory from contending hordes
Blended with sorrowing moans of dying men.
"Thy sons, O King!" a breathless herald cried,
Fresh from the carnage, bowing low his head,
Where Saul, heart-weary, watched the dreadful strife
On Gilboa's height. "Thy sons, O mighty King!"
The herald cried, and sank upon the ground
By haste exhausted. Saul, with fitful start,
Upraised the prostrate messenger. "My sons!
"What of them? Speak!" he gasped, with startled look,
"Dead!" moaned the herald, and an echo came,
As though deep down in some sepulchral vault
The word was spoken. From the heart of Saul
That mournful echo came—so sad and low!
"Dead! dead! Ah, woe is me!" he sadly sighed.
"My sons—my best beloved! Woe! Woe—alas!"
And as he spake, e'en while his head, gold-crowned,
Bent low in pain beneath the crushing blow,
An arrow from the foe his armour smote,
And pierced his breast, already rent with grief.
Then stepped with hurried tread a servant forth,
And plucked the arrow from its cruel feast,
Rending his robe to stanch the purple stream.

"Heed not the wound!" exclaimed the King. "Too late!
"Where Heaven smites, men's blows are light indeed."
Then bending o'er his breast his kingly head
He wept aloud: "Rejected of the Lord;
"My sons among the slain; my valorous host
"In bondage of the heathen—let me die!"
So sobbed the King, as down the bloody plain
The chariots of the foe came thundering on;
And horsemen cleft the air in hot array—
A mighty stream of chivalry and life!
The Israelites had fled, and at their heels
The roaring tumult followed like a storm
That rolls from world to world. And through the blast
Of warfare came a weak and wailing voice
Moaning in utter anguish—"Let me die!"
'Twas Saul the Anointed—Israel's fallen King:
Crushed 'neath the hand of an offended God!
"Lo!" cried the King, and raised his tearful eyes,
"The Philistines are near, pierce thou my breast!"
And, turning round, his kingly breast he bared,
Bidding his armour-bearer thrust his sword
Hilt-deep into his heart. "Better to die
"By friendly hand," he cried, "than owe my death
"To yonder hated victors. Quick! Thy sword!
"Thrust deep and quickly!" But the faltering hand
That held the sword fell nerveless. "Mighty King!
"I dare not!" spake the trembling armourer.
"Then by my own I die," exclaimed the King.
And as he spake he poised the glittering blade
Point upward from the earth, and moaning fell
Upon the thirsty steel. The ruddy gush
Came spurting through the armour that he wore,
And steamed in misty vapour to the sky
In voiceless testimony to the truth
Of words once spoken by the living God!
Aghast the faithful armour-bearer stood.
"O, mighty King! I die with thee!" he said,
And, falling on his sword, the blood of both
Commingle, as from ghastly wounds it ran
In trickling streamlets down Mount Gilboa's side. (i)
As ebbs and flows the sea with troubled throb
'Twixt shore and shore, or as the thistle-down
Halts in the eddies of the summer wind
In trembling doubt, so do the flickering souls
Of dying men float fearfully between
The earth and unseen worlds that lie beyond.
So hung the life of Saul, whose bitter cup,
Still at his lips, contained its bitterest dregs.
Prostrate he lay, by bloody sword transfixed;
A corpse his pillow; arms extended out,
And body bent in agony of pain,
The flame of life still fluttering at his heart
A waning lamp. He heard the tumult swell.
Bondage was worse than death. "They come! They come!"
He moaned. "Stand ye upon my breast," he said,
To one, a stranger, lingering near the spot,
"And force the gurgling stream back on my heart,
"To quench the life within me. Quick! They come!"
The stranger did the cruel bidding. (j) Hark!
"The King!" the foemen cry, and fiercely rusht
Upon the Royal captive, who, till then,
Had lain by them unseen. But while the shout
Swept like a storm along the swelling ranks
The soul of Saul went drifting through the dark,

Like some fair ship with sails and cordage rent,
Out from the stormy trials of his life,
To tempt the terrors of an unknown sea.
And then the cry of lamentation rose
In Israel, and the Hebrew maidens hung
Their speechless harps upon the willow branch,
And mourned the loved and lost unceasingly.

(a) Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay, but we will have a King over us, that we also may be like all the nations. And Samuel said to all the people, "See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen." And all the people shouted and said, "God save the King!"—I SAMUEL, viii. and ix. 19, 20, 24.

(b) And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel. And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.—I SAMUEL, viii., 1, 2.

(c) And Saul said, "Bring hither a burnt offering," and he offered the burnt offering. And Samuel came, and Saul went out to meet him. And Samuel said, "What hast thou done? Thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God which he commanded thee, and thy kingdom shall not continue."—I SAMUEL, xiii., 10, 14.

(d) And Samuel said, "The Lord sent thee, and said go and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites. Wherefore didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil?" And Saul said unto Samuel, "The people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God at Gilgal." And Samuel said, "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee."—I SAMUEL, xv., 18, 23.

(e) And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand. So Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.—I SAMUEL, xvi., 23.

(f) And the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in Shunem; and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched in Gilboa.—I SAMUEL, xxviii., 4.

(g) Then said Saul unto his servants, "Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her and enquire of her." And his servants said to him, "Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor." And Saul disguised himself, and came to the woman by night. And he said, "I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring him up whom I shall name of thee."—I SAMUEL, xxviii., 7, 8.

(h) And Samuel said to Saul, "Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up?" And Saul answered, "I am sore distressed, for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more. Therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do." And Samuel said, "Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord, nor executedst not his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto thee this day. To-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me; and the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines." Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth.—I SAMUEL, xxviii., 15, 20.

(i) And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him, and he was sore wounded of the archers. Then said Saul unto his armour-bearer, "Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith, lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through." But his armour-bearer would not, therefore Saul took a sword and fell upon it. And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him.—I SAMUEL, xxxi., 3, 5.

(j) And David said unto the young man, "How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead?" And the young man that told him said: "As I happened by chance upon Mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear: and lo! the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. And he said unto me, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me; for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole within me. So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live, after that he was fallen."—II SAMUEL, i., 5, 10.

PALM SUNDAY IN WALES.

FLOWERING SUNDAY.

PRIZE POEM.

WREXHAM NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD, 1876.

Fifteen competed for the prize of 5 pounds, and a silver medal for the best English poem, never before published, upon any distinctively Welsh subject. Mr. Osborne Morgan, M.P., Mr. Trevor Parkins, and the Rev. Ll. Thomas adjudicated. The latter gave the award.

Out by the hedgerows, along by the steep;
Through the meadows; away and away,
Where the daisies, like stars, through the green grass peep,
And the snowdrops and violets, waking from sleep,
Look forth at the dawning day.

Down by the brooklet—by murmuring rills,
By rivers that glide along;
Where the lark in the heavens melodiously trills,
And the air the wild blossom with perfume fills,
The shimmering leaves among.

Through the still valley; along by the pool,
Where the daffodil's bosom of gold
So shyly expands to the breezes cool
As they murmur, like children coming from school,
In whisperings over the wold.

In the dark coppice, where fairies dwell,
Where the wren and the red-breast build;
Along the green lanes, through dingle and dell,
O'er bracken and brake, and moss-covered fell,
Where the primroses pathways gild.

Hither and thither the tiny feet
Of children gaily sped,
In the cool grey dawn of the morning sweet,
Plucking wild flowers—an offering meet
To garnish the graves of the dead.

Out from the beaten pathway, quaint and white,
The village church—a crumbling pile—is seen;
It stands in solitude midst mounds of green
Like ancient dame in moss-grown cloak bedight.

The mantling ivy clings around its form—
The patient growth of many and many a year.
As though a gentle hand had placed it there
To shield the tottering morsel from the storm.

A sombre cypress rears its mournful head
Above the porch, through which, in days gone by,
Young men and maidens sped so hopefully,
That now lie slumbering with the silent dead:

The silent dead, that round the olden pile
Crumble to dust as though they ne'er had been.
Whose graven annals, writ o'er billows green,
Though voiceless, tell sad stories all the while.

And as they speak in speechless eloquence,
The waving shadows of the cypress fall

In spectral patches on the quaint old wall,
Nodding in wise and ghostly reticence

In silent sanction at the stories told
By each decrepit, wizen-featured stone,
That seems to muse, like ancient village crone
Belost in thought o'er memories strange and old.

Outside the stunted boundary, a row
Of poplars tall—beside whose haughty mien
And silky rustlings of whose robes of green
The lowly church still humbler seems to grow.

A-near the lych-gate in the crumbling wall,
A spreading oak, grotesque and ancient, stands,
Like aged monk extending prayerful hands
In silent benediction over all,

'Twas early morn: the red sun glinted o'er
The hazy sky-line of the far-off hill:
Below, the valley slept so calm and still—
A misty sea engirt by golden shore.

Out in the dim and dreamy distance rose
A spectral range of alp-like scenery—
Mountain on mountain, far as eye could see,
Their foreheads white and hoar with wintry snows.

And as I leaned the low-built wall upon
That shut the little churchyard from the road,
Children and maidens into Death's abode,
With wild flow'rs laden, wandered one by one.

And in their midst, stooping and white with age,
Rich in their wealth of quaint old village lore,
Came ancient dames, with faces furrowed o'er,
That told of griefs in life's long pilgrimage.

The sun is rising now: the poplar tips
Are touched with liquid light: the gravestones old,
And hoary church, are flushed with fringe of gold,
As though embraced by angel's hallowed lips.

And with the morning sunshine children roam
To place wild flowers where the loved ones slept;
O'er father, mother, sister—long since swept
Away by death—with blossoms sweet they come.

Silent reminders of abiding love!
What tender language from each petal springs!
Affection's tribute! Heart's best offerings!
Wanderers, surely, from the realms above!

For heart-to-heart, and life-to-life, had been
The loves of those who were and those who are;
Till death had severed them—O, cruel bar!
Leaving a dark and unknown stream between.

And on that stream, in loving fancy tossed,
Each faithful heart its floral tribute threw,
As though the hope from out the tribute grew
To bridge the gulf the one beloved had crossed.

Near yonder grave there stands a widowed life:
Husband and son beneath the grave-stone rest:
Some laurels tell, by tender lip caressed,
The changeless love of mother and of wife.

And o'er the bright green leaflets as they lie
She scatters snowdrops with their waxen leaves,
And all the while her troubled bosom heaves
In tenderness, with many a sorrowing sigh.

Out from the light, to where the cypress shade
In mournful darkness falls, a figure crept;
And as she knelt, the morning breezes swept
A cloud of hair about her drooping head.

Her feet were small and slender, bare and white—
White as the daisy-fringe on which she trod;
Like shimmering snowdrops in the greening sod,
Or glow-worms glistening in the Summer night.

And as deep down in gloomy chasms seen
By those up-looking, stars in daylight shine,
So shone the beauty of her face divine
In the dark shadows of the cypress green.

Her girlish hands a primrose wreath enwove,
With fingers deft, and eyes with tears bedimmed:
No lovelier face the painter's art e'er limned,
No poet's thought e'er told of sweeter love

Than that young mother's, as, with tender grace,
She kissed the chaplet ere she laid it down
Upon a tiny hillock, earthy-brown—
Of first and only child the resting place.

And then the few stray blossoms that were left
She kissed and strewed upon the little mound—
Looked lingering back towards the sacred ground,
As from the shade she bore her heart bereft.

As gentle ripples, from the side we lave
Of placid lake, will reach the other side,
So, o'er Death's river—silent, dark, and wide—
Blossoms may bear the kiss that mother gave.

Or, if in fervent faith she deemed it so,
The thought to joyless lives a pleasure brings,
And who shall tell, where dotting fondness clings,
The loss which hearts bereaved can only know?

And who shall doubt that to such love is given,
Borne upward, clothed in perfume to the sky,
The pow'r to reach, in death's great mystery,
Lost hearts, and add a bliss to those of Heaven?

Other sad pilgrims came. A mother here
A duteous daughter mourns, whose days had been
A ceaseless blessing—an oasis green
On life's enfevered plain: a brooklet clear,

That ran the meadows of glad lives along,
Till, like a stream that meanders to the sea,
In the dark Ocean of Eternity
Lost was their source of laughter, light, and song.

And yonder, clothed in darksome silence, grieves
A loving daughter near a mother's tomb—
Down by the stunted wall in willow-gloom
And shadows thrown by sombre cypress leaves:

And as, in life, the waving kerchief speaks
The words of friends departing which the heart
Is all too full to utter e're we part

For ever, so the sorrowing daughter seeks

In thought one recollection more to wave
To one long dead; and asks in speechless woe
Primrose and snowdrop on the mound below
To bear love's messages beyond the grave!

And in the golden sunshine children come
With prattling tongue and winsome, rosy face—
Like blossoms flowering in a lonely place—
And lay their tributes o'er each narrow home

Where lies the helpless beacon of their lives
In darkness quencht—gone ere their infant thought
Could realise the loss which Death had wrought—
The stab the stern Destroying Angel gives.

And o'er each silent grave Love's tributes fall—
The primrose, cowslip, gentle daffodil—
The snow-drop, and the tender daisy—till
God's acre sleeps beneath a flowery pall.

And now the sun in all its glory came
And lit the world up with a light divine,
Casting fresh beauty o'er each sacred shrine:
Breathing on all things an inspiring flame.

As if the God of Light had bade it be,
In sweet reward for pious rite performed;
As if, with human love and fondness charmed,
The Lord had smiled with love's benignity.

For not to this old churchyard where I stand
Is audience of the dead, through flow'rs, confined
A nation's heart—a nation's love—combined,
Make it the sweet observance of the land.

In humble cot—in proud patrician halls,
The Floral Festival fills every breast;
And o'er the grass, where'er the loved ones rest,
The lowly flow'r with choice exotic falls.

And as they fall upon the sacred spot,
Sacred to every heart that strews them there,
They seem to sing in voices low and clear:
"Though gone for evermore—forgotten not!

"Though never more—still evermore—above
"Eternal will their deathless spirits reign.
"No more until above to meet again:
"Till then send up sweet messages of love."

So sang the blossoms with their odorous breath—
Or so in fancy sang they unto me;
"No more—yet evermore, eternally!
"Though lost, alas! remembered still in death!"

ELEGY

ON THE LATE CRAWSHAY BAILEY, ESQ.,

"THE IRON KING."

PRIZE POEM:

ABERGAVENNY EISTEDDFOD, 1874.

The programme opened with a competition for the best English Elegy on the late Crawshay Bailey, Esq., for which a prize of 10 pounds was given, and a bardic chair, value 5 pounds, by Mr. William Lewis. There were twelve competitors, and each composition was confined to a limit of 200 lines.

Sadly the sea, by Mynwy's rugged shore,
Moans for the dead in many a mournful strain.
A voice from hearts bereft cries "Come again;"
But wavelets whisper softly, "Never more!"

The restless winds take up the solemn cry,
As though—an age of sorrow in each breath—
The words, "O, come again," could call back Death
From the far-off, unseen Eternity.

"Our dwellings darkened when his life went out:
"We stand in cold eclipse, for gone the light
"Which made our cottage-homes so warm and bright;
"And shadows deepen o'er the world without.

"Come back—come back!" Upon the mournful wind
These words fall weirdly as they float along,
Melting the soul to tears: for lo! the song
Rises from hearts that seek but ne'er will find:

Save one more billow on the sea of graves;
One joyaunt voice the fewer in life's throng;
One hand the less to help the world along;
One Hero more 'mongst earth's departed Braves.

For who that in life's battle-field could fight
As he has fought, whose painless victories
Transcended war's heroic chivalries,
Could in his country's heart claim nobler height?

None may the niche of glory haplier grace,
None may the crown of greatness prouder wear,
Than he upon whose tomb the silent tear
Falls slowly down from many a drooping face.

Faces whose hard and rugged outlines show
Life's daily struggle—O, how bravely fought!
Faces to which the only gladness brought
Came from the Friend who yonder lieth low.

Let us in mournful retrospect commune
O'er what that still cold heart and brain have won:
A hymn of life in lisping first begun,
Ending in harmony's most perfect tune.

As comes the sun from out the darkling-night,
And strikes, as did the patriarch of old,
Life's barren rocks, which flush with green and gold,
And pour out waters glad with living light,

So, crowned with blessings, in the far-off days,
Like Midas, Mynwy's monarch touched the earth,
Wrought golden plenty where once reigned a dearth,
And raised an empire he alone could raise.

No service his, of slavery, to bind
With tyrant fancy vassals to his will:
All hearts beat quick with sympathetic thrill
For one who loved the humblest of their kind.

His kingdom rang with fealty from the free—
Such blessed faith as faith itself ensures.
His reign alone that sway which e'er secures
A subject's true and trustful sympathy.

So love men's love begat in bounteous flow;
It blossomed round his path as flowers bloom,
Filling his life with such a rare perfume
Of heart's devotion kings can seldom know.

His master-mind, with almost boundless reach,
Planned work so vast that mankind, wondering still,
Could scarcely compass his gigantic will
Which grasped great things as ocean clasps the beach.

His home of homes was where the Cyclops forged
Their bolts, as though for Jove to hold his own:
His fondest study where, through ages grown,
The silent ores old Cambria's mountains gorged.

Mammoth machines that, with incessant whirl,
Rolled onward ever on their ponderous way:
Gigantic marvels, deafening in their play,
And swift, industrious, never-ending swirl.

All these he loved, as men alone can love
The things that win their love: to *him* they shone
Instinct with living beauty all their own,
Touched with a light divine as from above.

For them, and *with* them, toiled he day by day
In true companionship: they were his Friends,
Bound by the tie whose influence never ends,
By faithful bonds which never pass away.

And as the sunflower looks towards the light
All through the livelong day, so did his heart
Ne'er from this bond of love play recreant part,
But every moment beat that heart aright;

A heart so large and true—true to the core;
So spacious that the great might enter in;
Yet none too poor its sympathy to win,
And every throb a pleasure at their door.

And so, through all the toilful hours of thought,
He reared a world-wide pinnacle of fame,
Whose summit reached, his heart was still the same,
Undazed by splendours which his hand had wrought.

Long stood he on the topmost peak of praise
From tongues of men, as mountains tipped with snow
Stand with their lofty foreheads all a-glow,
Lit up with beauty by the sun's bright rays.

His life was climaxed by a kinglier dower
Than even kings themselves can hope to reach;
No grander, prouder lesson can we teach,
Than win great things by self-inherent power.

Brighter examples manhood cannot show,
Than with true hand, brave heart, and sleepless mind,
To build up name and fortune 'midst their kind,
From grains and drops—as worlds and oceans grow.

So, in the rare meridian of his time,
In pride of conscious strength, he stood alone,
A king of kings upon his Iron Throne,

Wrought out from humble step to height sublime,

As shadows lengthen in the setting sun,
So spread the stature of his later life,
Which, like Colossus, o'er earth's busy strife,
Towered grandly till that life's last sand was run.

And so he passed away, as meteors die;
Leaving a trail of splendour here on earth
To mark the road he took in virtuous worth,
In sterling truth, and rare integrity.

These are the living landmarks he has left:
Bright jewels in his earthly sojourn set,
Whose brilliance seen, those looking ne'er forgot:
A glorious heritage for friends bereft.

Such gems as those who mourn may still adore,
Whose glistening rays men's footsteps lead aright
Through life's dark way, like glow-worms in the night,
Or angel-glintings from the eternal shore.

As round decaying flowers perfume clings
In silent tribute to the blossoms dead,
So memory, brooding o'er his spirit fled,
Nought but the sweetest recollection brings.

ELEGIES

NASH VAUGHAN EDWARDES VAUGHAN.

(OF RHEOLA.)

DIED SEPTEMBER 18TH, 1868. (*a*)

I.

Let bard on battle-field, in sounding verse,
Proclaim to distant time the warrior-deed
That makes a hero, whose triumphal hearse
Rolls graveward o'er a thousand hearts that bleed
In widowed agony. Let golden lyre
Of regal Court engaged in worldly strife
Clothe princely foibles with poetic fire,
And crown with fame a king's ignoble life.
Let chroniclers of Camp and Court proclaim
A Warrior's greatness, and a Monarch's fame.
Be mine with verse the tomb of one to grace
Whose nobler deeds deserve a nobler place.

II.

The lofty fane that cleaves the glowing sky,
And heavenward points with golden finger-tip—
Structure whence flows the sacred harmony
Of prayer and praise from Christian heart and lip:
The ranging corridors where—blest the task—
'Tis ours to soothe the fever and the pain
Of wounded natures, who, despairing, ask
For healing touch that makes them whole again.

These are the monuments that proudly stand
On corner stones—fruit of his princely hand:
Homes for the poor, wound-stricken to the sod;
And altars for the worship of his God.

III.

The blazing meteor glares along the sky;
The thunder shakes the mountain with its roar;
But meteors for a moment live—then die:
The thunder peals—and then is heard no more.
The most refreshing rains in silence fall;
The most entrancing tones are sweet and low;
The greatest, mightiest truths, are simplest all;
Life's dearest light comes forth in voiceless flow;
E'en so his heart and hand were ever found
Flinging in mute beneficence around
The germs of Truth and Charity combined,
To heal the heart and purify the mind.

(a) The life of Mr. Vaughan was one daily round of charitable deeds, in furtherance of religion and social amelioration. His munificent donation to the Swansea Hospital, offered conditionally, led to the enlarged foundation of that noble institution, which stands a silent tribute to his memory. This Elegy was written at the request of the late Mr. John Williams, proprietor of the *Cambrian*, Swansea, who, in the letter requesting me to write the verses, said: "Such noble qualities as Mr. Vaughan possessed deserve everything good which human tongue can say of them."

MONODY.

ON THE DEATH OF MRS. NICHOLL CARNE. (a)

Down the long vista of historic years
I look, and through the dusky haze descry
Funereal pomp, and Royal pageantry,
Gracing the tombs of queens, and kings, and peers.

I see on marble monuments deep hewn
The name and fame of mighty and of great,
Who lie in granite effigy and state,
Waiting the summons to the last Tribune.

But 'mongst the hero-host that shrouded sleep
'Neath purple banner and engraven stone,
Death hath not numbered one among his own
More regal-souled than she for whom we weep.

Though a right Royal lineage she could claim,
Proudly descendant from a Cambrian King;
She was content to let her virtues bring
Something more noble than a Royal name.

Her's was no sceptered life in queenly state:
Yet queen she was, in all that makes a Queen;
No deeds heroic marked her life serene:
Yet heroine she in all that makes us great.

Through all the phases of a blameless life
She lingered round the threshold of the poor:
Where brighter scenes less noble minds allure,
Her's was the joy to move 'midst martyr-strife.

To watch where hearts, by poverty o'ercome,
Lay weak and wailing; and to point above,
With words of hope, of comfort, and of love,
Till brighter, happier, grew each cottage home.

And wine and oil fell plenteous from her hand,
To cheer the wounded on life's weary way:
While, for the human wrecks that round her lay,
Her beacon-light beamed o'er the darkling strand.

Her's was a life of Love; then, of deep griefs,
We'll rear a monument unto her name,
More leal and lasting than the chiselled fame
Of mighty monarchs or heroic chiefs.

And see! the virtues of the parent stem
Break forth in blossom o'er the branching tree:
Long may such fair, such bright fruition be,
Of those bereaved their proudest diadem.

With sheltering arms—with hearts for ever green,
By love united, may they still unite;
So shall they gladden still the sainted sight
Of one who is not, but who once has been.

(a) Mrs. Carne, relict of the late Rev. R. Nicholl Carne, of Dimlands Castle, and mother of R. C. N. Carne, Esq., Nash Manor, and of J. W. N. Carne, Esq., Dimlands and St. Donat's Castles, died November 28th, 1866, at Dimlands, in the 94th year of her age. Deceased could claim a Royal Welsh lineage, being the 34th in unbroken descent from Ynyr, King of Gwent and Dyfed. Her long life was distinguished by unostentatious acts of charity and good works.

ELEGIAC STANZAS

ON THE DEATH OF MRS. PASCOE ST. LEGER GRENFELL, MAESTEG HOUSE, SWANSEA. DIED JANUARY 8TH, 1868.

This world heroic souls can little spare
That battle bravely with life's every ill:
When days are dark that saintly smiles can wear,
And all around with heavenly glory fill.

This world can little spare the Christian heart
That holds with tearful faith the hand of God
With never-yielding grasp; and takes full part
In works divine on earth's degenerate sod.

This world can little spare the gentle voice
That woos the sinful from the dreamy road
Of human frailties, making hearts rejoice,
Relieving souls of many a bitter load.

This world can little spare the bounteous hand
That Plenty plants where Want oft grew before;
Raising the latchet as with angel-wand,
To cheer the darksome cottage of the poor.

Virtues like these the world can little spare
That fleck life's road like snowdrops in the Spring,
Making it beautiful; and, virtue rare!
Silent and heedless of the bliss they bring.

But if the world should weep, how must they mourn
For whom her goodness bloomed a thousand-fold
More sweet in tender love? E'en as the dawn
Crowns all it looks on with a fringe of gold.

So did affection gird in rosy might
The home which by her presence was adorned,
Where came an aching void: for lo! their light
Was quencht by death and in the tomb in-urned.

Not quencht. Ah, no! For Heaven's eternal gates
Flew open, and in robes which angels wear
Her sainted spirit entered; and it waits
For those that were beloved to join it there.

IN DREAMS.

I.

When they carried away my darling
To a kingdom beyond the sky,
I knew what the angels intended,
So I stifled the tear and the sigh,
But I prayed she might send me a message
Of love from the realms of the blest,
As to me a whole life of repining
Was the cost of her Heaven of rest.

II.

Yes: I prayed she might send me a message;
One word from her mansion of bliss;
One ray from her features angelic:
From her sweet lips the saintliest kiss;
And I question the wind, as it wanders
As though from the regions above,
But it whispers in sadness, and brings me
From the absent no message of love.

III.

At night I grow weary with watching
The stars, as I sadly surmise
Which of all those bright jewels resplendent
Borrow light from my lost one's eyes:
Then I sleep—and a vision approaches;
And again all my own she would seem:
But on waking my Love has departed,
And my heart aches to find it a dream.

IV.

Oh, I prayed she might send me a message;
But nought the sweet missive will bring:
The breath of the morning, the sunlight,
The carol of birds on the wing,
Come to gladden my heart with their gladness;
But joyless and tuneless each seems;
And the only sad joy that is left me
Is to live with my dearest in dreams.

The above words, wrought in imperishable flowers, were placed on the coffin of the late Mr. John Johnes, of Dolaucothy, at the time of his interment at Cayo, by his youngest daughter, to whom the following elegiac stanzas are respectfully inscribed.

I.

"Mewn cof anwyl."

So sings the lorn and lonely nightingale,
Sighing in sombre thicket all day long,
Weaving its throbbing heartstrings into song
For absent mate, with sorrowing unavail.
And every warble seems to say—"Alone!"
While every pause brings musical reply:
Sad Philomel! Each sweet responsive sigh
Is but the dreamy echo of its own.

II.

"Mewn cof anwyl."

So sings the West wind through the darkling eve,
In spirit-wanderings up and down the wold,
Each mournful sorrow at its heart untold,
Sighing in secret—as the angels grieve,
"Bring back my love!" sobs the bereaved wind;
And sleeping flow'rets waken at the sound,
Shedding their dewy tears upon the ground:
"She seeks," they whisper, "who shall never find!"

III.

"Mewn cof anwyl."

So sings all night the never-resting sea;
And stars look down with tender, loving eyes;
The air is filled with saddening memories
Of what was once—but ne'er again may be.
"Here lie the lost!" the ocean seems to moan;
"I yearn to clasp them to my throbbing heart
"In fond embrace: The lost—myself a part!
So near—so near—and yet I mourn alone!"

IV.

"Mewn cof anwyl."

As roses, crusht and dead, in silence leave
Their precious heritage of perfume rare,
So the good name our dear departed bear
Reflects in cheering light on those who grieve;
And memory, brooding o'er the love thus left,
In tender fancy crowns the dream with tears,
Till, as the hue that on bright rain appears,
Peace comes to comfort lonely hearts bereft.

(a) In loving memory.

ELEGIAC.

'Tis not with rude, irreverent feet,
I tread where sacred sorrows lie;

But gently raise, in accents meet,
My voice in earnest sympathy:
In sympathy with one bereaved,
Who mourns a loss which all deplore:
Whose grief by Hope is unrelieved—
For tears bring back the Past no more.

'Tis not in words the wound to heal
Which tenderest ties, when broken, make;
'Tis not in language to conceal
The griefs which snapped affection's wake
But sorrows, stinging though they be,
In sympathy some sweetness find,
Which may assuage, though slenderly,
The grief that clouds a manly mind.

IN MEMORIAM.

The blameless life of her whose grave I strew
With flow'rs of thought deep gathered from the heart
Of heavenliest things was formed the greater part:
No sentiment but love her bosom knew.

Her influence, like the sunlight from on high,
That flames with splendour every opening flower,
Stole o'er us silently: yet O, the power!
Charming our household world resplendently.

And little hearts tow'rds that sweet influence yearned;
And little voices loved to lisp her name;
For when, to them, the world was dark, she came,
Love-bright, and so their lives in beauty burned.

In beauty burned with pure and happy glow;
Their joys were her's. In thought I see her now,
Love prompted, sitting with a dreamy brow,
Planning the pleasures she might never know.

Her's was the hand that wreathed so daintily
With flow'rs each fissure Circumstance had formed,
And, by its touch, like snows by sunsets warmed,
Each rigid thought was softened rosily.

Her's was the heart, by noblest impulse moved,
That beat with earnest fondness all divine;
That filled life's cup of joy with rarest wine,
For those who proudly felt they were beloved.

But soft! God's edict 'twas, that, from above,
Laden with anguish, came with cruel blow.
'Twas Heaven's gain: the grief those only know
Who lost her just as they had learnt to love.

Ah, me: the cost to be to Heaven akin:
The harvest ripens round the Eternal gate:
The pure in soul and saintliest-hearted wait:
The Reaper comes and plucks the nearest in.

Ah, me: the cost life's fairest flower to be:
Petal and spray all elegance and grace:
Each blossom beauteous as an angel's face;
And yet, alas! the first to drop and die.

Ah, me: the cost life's tenderest chords to wake,
With sweet enchantment breaking up the air;
To know each tone will call forth many a tear:
Each tender touch a heart or spirit-ache.

Ah, me: the cost for human hearts to claim
Where God before His perfect seal had set,
Like mortals straying into Heaven unlet,
We perish gazing on celestial flame.

TO CLARA.

'Twas a short decade that thou and I
Walked hand-in-hand through the world together;
When the cruel clouds obscured our sky,
And bitter and bleak was life's daily weather.
But a brave little heart was thine—and so,
Though it might have been lighter had fortune willed it,
It battled, in boundless faith I know,
And just as the sunshine 'gan to grow
The hand of Death reached forth—and chilled it.

The blow was unkind; but Heaven knows best:
I felt that my loss was to thee a blessing;
For I knew, when I laid thee down to rest,
I was giving an angel to angels' caressing:
Thy love to my heart was ever dear,
With thy gentle voice and thy brave endeavour;
Though briefly we wandered together here,
Two souls were cemented with smile and tear,
That, one on earth, will be one for ever.

E. H. R.

DIED NOVEMBER 30TH, 1867.

She came in beauty like the sun,
And flusht with hope each heart and eye,
As roses redden into life
When Summer passes by.

And like the sun she calmly set,
With love's own golden glory crown'd,
In light whose rays for evermore
In mem'ry will abound.

A. R.

DIED APRIL 21ST, 1865.

In silent grief the blow we'll bear:
Though gone, with us she'll still abide.
Her name a shape of love will wear,
In viewless influence by our side.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

VENUS AND ASTERY

A LEGEND OF THE GODS. (*a*)

Ah! hapless nymph! Doomed for a time to bear
The badge which none but fickle lives should wear.
How oft the envious tongue creates the dart
That cleaves the saintly soul and breaks the heart:
How oft the hasty ear full credence gives
To words in which no grain of truth survives:
Were Juno just, her heart would now delight
Turning thy dappled wings to waxen white,
Where jealous Venus and her envious train
By falsehood fixed an undeserv'd stain.

(*a*) Astery, one of the most beautiful of Venus's nymphs, and, as Spenser says,

"Excelling all the crew
In courteous usage and unstained hue,"

Is said to have been instructed "on a day" by her mistress to go forth with her companions gathering flowers with which to adorn her forehead. She did so, and being more industrious than the rest, gathered more flowers than any of them. On being praised by Venus, her companions, being envious of her, told the goddess that Astery had been assisted by Cupid, Venus's son, in culling the blossoms. For this supposed offence she was immediately turned by Venus into a butterfly, and her wings, which before were white, were stained with the colours of all the flowers she had gathered, "for memory of her pretended crime, though crime none were."—*Spenser's "Muiopotmos"*, 1576.

TO A ROYAL MOURNER.

1864.

'Twere wise, O Queen, to let thy features shine
Upon thy faithful people once again;
As Summer comes to light the paths of men,
So would thy presence round our hearts entwine.

It is not meet our Queen of Queens should stay
Lifelong and tearful in the sombre glade,
Whither, to hide the wound which Heaven made,
She shrank, as shrinks the stricken deer away.

We do not ask thy heart to let us in
With all the freeness of an early day:
Nor hope to bear thy greatest grief away,
As though, with thee, that grief had never been.

But, as the silent chancel leaves the sun
To shine through mellowing windows on the floor,

So would we enter thy great heart once more,
Subdued, in reverence of the sainted one.

We wept with thee when throbb'd the passing-bell,
And felt thy great affliction from afar:
We mourned that such a grief thy life should mar,
And loved thee more for loving him so well.

One pearly thought surrounds that sombre time;
One golden hope enframes the past regret:
We thank our Father thou art with us yet,
The more majestic for thy grief sublime.

BEAUTIFUL WALES.

There is a little history attached to the following lines. Twenty years ago, my friend, Mr. Arthur J. Morris, at that time an accountant at the Llwydcoed Ironworks, Aberdare, and subsequently manager at the Plymouth Ironworks, Merthyr Tydfil, but now deceased, asked me to write a song in praise of Wales. I did so, and wrote and sent him the words of "Beautiful Wales," a Welsh translation of which was made and forwarded to me by Mr. Daniel Morgan (Daniel ap Gwilym), of Aberaman, Aberdare. A short time afterwards I received a request from Mr. R. Andrews, of Manchester (whom I never saw and do not know) for permission to set the words to music, which permission I gave, and the song (English version) was published by Robert Cocks and Co., London. It has long since been out of print. I found, on receiving some copies of the music, that the tune was merely an adaptation of a well-known dance tune, and some years ago I wrote to Mr. Brinley Richards on the subject, who regretted that the words had not been wedded to more suitable music. The matter, however, was lost sight of by myself, and I was under the impression that the song had been forgotten. To my surprise it suddenly cropped up as a great favourite of the Sunday schools, and I have myself heard it sung at school anniversaries to various tunes. It would seem, therefore, that after playing the vagrant for goodness knows how long, it became a reformed character, was taken in hand by school children, and by them adopted as a pet and made a favourite of.

BEAUTIFUL WALES.

I know a land whose sunny shore
The sea's wild waves embrace,
Whose heart is full of mystic lore
That flashes from its face;
A land where cloud-kissed mountains are,
And green and flowery vales,
Where Poesy lingers like a star:
That land is sunny Wales.

Wales, the wild—the beautiful,
The beautiful—the free;
My heart and hand are thine, O land
Of magic minstrelsy.

And in this mystic land of mine
What dainty maids there be,
Whose faces shine with love divine,
Like sunlight on the sea.
The boasted fair of other climes
That live in songs and tales
Will never be more fair to me
Than those of sunny Wales.

Wales, the wild—the beautiful,
The beautiful—the free;
My heart and hand are thine, O land
Of magic minstrelsy.

GWALIA DEG.

Mi wn am wlad, a'i garw draeth
Gofleidir gan y don,
Sy'n orlawn o gyfrinawl ddysg
'R hwn draetha'i gwyneb llon:
Gwlad yw lle mae mynyddoedd ban,
A glynoedd gwyrdd eu lliw;
Lle'r erys awenyddiaeth glaer:
Hoff Walia heulawg yw.

Gwalia wyllt, wyt decaf wlad;
Wyt decaf wlad—wlad rydd!
Dy eiddo i gyd wyf fi, O dud
Y swynawl gerdd ddiludd.

Ac yn y wlad gyfrinawl hon,
Ceir merched uchel fri,
Sydd a'u gwynebau'n t'w'nu fel
Goleuni haul uwch lli.
Prydferthwch ffrostiawl gwledydd pell,
Sy'n byw yn ngerddi'r byd,
Nis byddant byth brydferthach im
Na rhai fy heulawg dud.

Gwalia wyllt, wyt decaf wlad;
Wyt decaf wlad—wlad rydd!
Dy eiddo i gyd wyf fi, O dud
Y swynawl gerdd ddiludd.

THE WELSH LANGUAGE.

My bardic friend "Caradawc," of Abergavenny, sent me the following
Englyn, with a request that I would write an English translation:

ENGLYN I'R IAITH GYMRAEG.

Iaith anwyl y Brythoniaid;—Iaith gywrain—
Iaith gara fy Enaid;
Iaith gry, iaith bery heb baid,
Gorenwog Iaith Gwroniaid.

IOAN DAFYDD A'I CANT.

To which was written and forwarded the following reply;

ON THE WELSH LANGUAGE.

A language to love—when our tongues in love speak it;

A language to hate—when 'tis spoken by fools;
A language to live—when the pure in life seek it,
A language to die—when the lying tongue rules;
A blessing—when blessings lead men to enjoy it;
A curse—when for cursing 'tis used as a rod;
The language of Satan—when devils employ it;
When angels indite it—the language of God.

A FOOLISH BIRD.

An ostrich o'er the desert wide,
With upturned beak and jaunty stride,
In stately, self-sufficient pride,
One day was gently roaming.
When—dreadful sound to ostrich ears,
To ostrich mind the worst of fears—
Our desert champion thinks he hears
The dreaded hunter coming.
Ill-fated bird! He might have fled:
Those legs of his would soon have sped
That flossy tail—that lofty head—
Far, far away from danger.
But—fatal error of his race—
In sandy bank he hid his face,
And thought by this to evade the chase
Of the ostrich-bagging ranger.
So he who, like the ostrich vain,
Is ign'rant, and would so remain,
Of what folks do, it's very plain
In folly's road he's walking.
For if in sand you hide your head
Just to escape that which you dread,
And, seeing not, say danger's fled:
'Tis worse than childish talking.

"I'D CHOOSE TO BE A NIGHTINGALE."

Answer to a Poem which appeared in a daily paper, with the above title, signed "Mary" (Llandoverly.)

Gentle Mary! Do you know
What it is you crave?
Listen! As the flowers grow
O'er the dismal grave,
So, when sweetest sings the bird
Thou would'st like to be,
When in twilight's hour is heard
The magic melody,
Harshly comes the cruel thorn
Against the songster's breast,
And melting music thus is born
Of pain and sad unrest (*a*)
So if like Philomel thou'dst sing,
And happiness impart,
Thy breast must bear the cruel sting
That haunts the songster's heart.

(a) There is a poetic legend, which says that when the Nightingale sings the sweetest, it presses its breast against a thorn.

TRUE PHILANTHROPY.

Written on hearing that J. D. Llewelyn, Esq., of Penllergare, had refused a public Testimonial, the offer of which was evoked by his unbounded charity and unostentatious acts of philanthropy, which recognition it was desired to inaugurate in the shape of a statue of himself, placed in front of the Swansea hospital—an institution which owes so much to his munificent liberality.

MARCH 6th, 1876.

Friend of the poor, for whom thy ceaseless thought
Is as the sun, that warms the earthy clod
Into a flush of blossom beauty-fraught,
Waking in hearts by poverty distraught
Glimpses in life of Heaven and of God.

And as the sun sends forth his golden beams
In silence, all unweeting of their worth,
So from thy life in silent beauty streams
That Heaven-born charity which never seems
To know itself—and blushes at its birth.

No sculptor's art thy goodness need proclaim:
The knowledge lives in hearts that feel its power—
A love more lasting than a marbled fame:
Brooding in silence o'er thy cherished name,
As light is worshipped by the voiceless flower.

DISRAELI.

O'er the Present proudly striding
Like Colossus o'er the wave,
And a beacon-light high holding,
While the tempests loudly rave:
Laying bare in truthful teaching
Treach'rous breakers round the bay,
That the good old barque of England
May in safety sail away:
Though the tongue of fiercest Faction
In its Folly may deride,
Still he stands in lofty learning
Like a giant o'er the tide,
While the murmuring wavelets passing
Far beneath his kingly hand,
Looking upward, blindly babble
Where they cannot understand.

When his country's proudest sceptre
He was called upon to sway,
Ruled he with a noble purpose
That will never pass away:
So, the Future, of his striving
With its trumpet-tongue shall tell:
How he battled for the Bible;

How he loved old England well:
How his nature, though not faultless
(Human nature may not be),
Bore the never-dying impress
Of life's truest chivalry,
How they wrote upon the marble,
Where he lay beneath the sod:
"Faithfully he served his country,"
"Truthfully he served his God."

DOWN IN THE DARK.

A RECOLLECTION OF THE FERNDALE COLLIERY EXPLOSION. NOVEMBER, 1867.

Down in the dark—in the blinding dark;
Away from the sunshine bright above:
Away from the gaze of those they love,
They are lying stony and stark.

Down in the dark—deep down in the dark,
With the terror of death in each sightless eye,
Which tells how hard 'tis to burn and die
Down—down in the poisonous dark.

Up in the light—in the broad noon-light—
Poor hearts are breaking: hot tears are shed,
As, tenderly shrouding each cinder-like head,
It is hid from the aching sight.

Up in the light—in the soft gas-light
Of the draped room, in luxurious guise;
In our comfort forgetting who plods and plies
Far down in eternal night.

Up in the light—further up in the light;
In the pure clear light of a Queenly crown,
A widowed monarch is looking down
Tow'ards the dark, with compassion bedight.

Up in the light—further up in the light—
From the dazzling light of a Maker's throne—
The angel of Pity came down to zone
Human hearts through that dreadful night.

DAISY MAY.

A STORY OF CHRISTMASTIDE LONG AGO.

PART THE FIRST.

"Don't bolt the door, John," said the Dame,
Who sat esconced in oaken chair,
The good man paused, and back he came,
Silent, and with a troubled air.

"To night 'tis just a year ago
Since Daisy left," the mother sighed.

"Don't blame the child, I loved her so;
But better had our darling died."

The father spake not. Glistening bright
A tear stole down the mother's cheek.
"A year to-night! A year to-night!
I sometimes think my heart will break."

'Tis Christmas-eve, and in that cot
The good old couple grieve and yearn
For one, though absent, ne'er forgot:
"Don't bolt the door, she may return."

"She may return." The midnight chime
With mystic music fills the air,
And bears the news, "'Tis Christmas time,"
In sobbing wavelets everywhere.

PART THE SECOND

Our village pride was Daisy May;
A fairy being, all too good
For earthly thought—as bright as day—
Just blooming into womanhood.

The low, sweet music of her voice,
Was like the sound of rippling rills;
It bade the listening heart rejoice,
And won as with enchanting spells.

Her eyes, like violets dipt in dew,
The soul enthralled with tender glance,
That gave to things a brighter hue,
And fringed our lives with new romance.

And from her forehead, white as pearl,
There hung a cloud of golden hair,
Whose lustre threw around the girl
A halo such as angels wear.

"Ah, me!" sighed many a village swain,
"Her love what bliss 'twould be to win
He whom the beauteous prize shall gain
Will open Heaven and enter in."

And as she passed with girlish grace
She met the glance of every eye,
Till blushes fluttered o'er her face
Like roses when the sun goes by.

But while in virgin life she walkt;
While sunlight round her footsteps played,
Abroad unbridled Passion stalked:
She loved, and, trusting, was betrayed.

And in the city, 'mongst the gay,
Far, far from friends who mourned her fate,
She flung Love's precious pearls away,
And woke, but woke, alas, too late.

She woke to find herself alone,
Save baby sleeping at her breast:
In that vast city all unknown,
Unloved, unpitied, and unblest.

Unloved by one who swore to love;
Unpitied by the cruel crowd;

Unblest by all save Him above,
To whom she prayed in grief aloud.

In fitful dreams she saw, and oft,
That humble cottage by the burn;
And heard a voice, so sweet and soft:
"Don't bolt the door, she may return."

"She may return." Delicious dream.
"Then mother loves me still," she sighed.
Ah! little knew she of the stream
Of tears that mother shed and dried.

Of weary watches in the night;
Of aching heart throughout the day;
Of darkened hours that once were bright,
Made glad by her now far away.

And when, in unforgiving mood,
The father urged his tenets stern,
How oft that mother tearful stood:
"Don't bolt the door, she may return."

PART THE THIRD.

'Tis Christmas Eve: the midnight chime
With mystic music fills the air,
And bears the news, "'Tis Christmas time,"
In sobbing wavelets everywhere.

Without, the weird wind whistles by;
Clothed is the ground with drifting snow;
Within, the yule logs, piled on high,
Their cheery warmth and comfort throw.

And in that cottage by the moor,
Where father, mother, mourning dwell.
The fire is bright, where hearts are sore
The chime to them a mournful knell.

"What's that?" the mother faintly said:
"Methought I heard a weary sigh."
The father sadly shook his head:
"Tis but the wind that wanders by."

Again the Dame, with drowsy start—
"It is no dream—I heard a groan."
Oh, the misgivings of her heart!
"'Tis but the music's murmuring moan."

They little thought, while thus they sighed,
That at their threshold, fainting, lay
The child for whom they would have died,
For whom they prayed both night and day.

'Twas bitter chill! The snowy fall
Came drifting slowly through the air,
And gently clothed with ghostly pall
The wasted form that slumbered there.

And all the live-long night she slept,
While breaking hearts within grew sore;
While father, mother, mourned and wept,
She lay in silence at the door.

Till, in the morning, all aglow,
The sun, in looking o'er the hill,

Like sculptured marble in the snow,
Saw Daisy, stony, stark, and still.

Then tenderly, in confined state,
The hapless girl they grave-ward bore,
And, as they mourned her cruel fate,
Her tomb with flowers scattered o'er.

Leaving the broken-hearted child
To sleep in peace beneath the sod,
And he who first her heart beguiled
To cope with conscience and his God.

LINES:

ACCOMPANYING A PURSE GIVEN TO A FRIEND ON HIS BIRTHDAY.

The Purse I send to you, my friend,
Is empty, but if wishes warm
Could fill it, 'twould be brimming o'er
With handfuls of the golden charm.
The only wealth I have to give
Are words which may be worth a thought.
Be sure, as you would prosperous live,
While earning sixpence spend a groat:
Your purse will then grow slowly full,
A friend in need you'll always find,
And comforts, which can only flow
From plenty and a peaceful mind.

FORSAKEN.

'Twas a white water-lily I saw that day,
With its leaves looking up to the sky,
And baring its breast to the sportive play
Of the wavelets dancing by.
And O for the music the streamlet made,
As it floated in ripples along;
Round the beautiful blossom it eddied and played
With a voice full of silvery song.

So all through the Summer the lily laughed,
And with glances of loving and light
Drank in fresher beauty with each dainty draught
Of the water so playful and bright.
"And is it for ever," the floweret sighed,
"That thy vows of affection will last?"
"For ever and ever!" the streamlet replied,
And, embracing her, hurried past.

The Summer days vanished—the Winter came:
Ah! where could the lily be?
The sun still warmed with its golden flame;
But the streamlet had gone to the sea.
And the blossom that once, with its bosom of white,
Like a star from the heavens shone,

Lay frozen and dead. Ah, sorrowful plight!
It had died in the dark alone.

CHRISTMAS IS COMING.

Christmas is coming with merry laugh,
With a merry laugh and a joyful shout,
And the tidings are flung with an iron tongue
From a thousand steeples pealing out;
Hang up the holly—the mistletoe hang;
Bedeck every nook round the old fireside;
Make bright every hearth—let the joy-bells clang
With a warm-hearted welcome to Christmas-tide.

Christmas is coming! But some will see
By the old fireside a vacant place;
And a vision will flit through the festive glee
Of an absent—a never-returning face;
And a voice that was music itself last year
Will be mournfully missed in the even-song;
And children will speak, with a gathering tear,
Of the virtues which now to the dead belong.

Christmas is coming! Look back o'er the past:
Is there nought to forgive? Is there nought to forget?
Have we seized all the chances of life that were placed
In our path: or in this have we nought to regret?
Have we fought on life's battle-ground manfully—true,
While success, like a butterfly, flew from our reach?
Have we pressed in pursuit of the prize as it flew?
Has the Past, in its dying, no lesson to teach?

Christmas is coming! But who shall say
That at Christmas-time they again may meet?
For graves lie thick in the crowded way;
And we elbow Death in the open street
Let Folly embitter the festival hour
With a tongue that would injure—a heart that would hate!
True wisdom is blest with a nobler dower:
In another year it may be too late.

Christmas is coming! The wealthy will sit
In purple, fine linen, and sumptuous state;
'Twere well in their plenty they should not forget
The poor that stand meek at the outer gate.
For who can foreshadow the changes of life?
See! yesterday's King is an outcast to-day;
Success comes in time to the strong in the strife;
And Fortune's a game at which paupers can play.

Christmas is coming? The trader will quail
Over ledgers unsquared—and accounts overdue:
And his pen fain would tell all the sorrowful tale
Which his heart, full of fear, has not courage to do!
Had he all that is owing, how happy his heart;
How buoyant his footstep—how joyous his face;
But his debtors from gold as their life's blood will part;
And their hoard lies untouched o'er a brother's disgrace.

But Christmas is coming with merry laugh,
Amid pain, amid pleasure, with joyful shout,

And the tidings are flung with an iron tongue
From a thousand steeples pealing out.
Hang up the holly—the mistletoe hang;
Bedeck every nook round the old fireside:
Let us bury our care: let the joy-bells clang
With a warm-hearted welcome to Christmas-tide.

HEART LINKS.

The mist that rises from the river,
Evermore—evermore,
Tells how hearts are born to sever
As of yore—as of yore.
But the silvery mist returneth
Sparkling dew and blessed rain;
So the loving heart, though distant,
Comes again—comes again.

The stars that shine in brightness o'er us
In the sky—in the sky,
Speak of loved ones gone before us
Born to die—born to die,
Who, in days of earthly sadness,
O'er us watch with tender love,
As the starlight falls around us
From above—from above.

The rose that gives, before it leaves us,
Fragrance rare—fragrance rare,
Links of love in absence weaves us
Sweet to wear—sweet to wear;
So true hearts in love united
Bound by pure affection's chain,
Though in life or death divided,
Meet again—meet again.

THE OAK TO THE IVY.

'Twas in my Spring of palmy gladness
First I met thee, Ivy wife;
Then my brow, untouched by sadness,
Bloomed with regal-foliaged life;
Proud my arms hung forth in blessing
O'er thy trustful spirit dear,
And my heart, 'neath thy caressing,
Wore a Spring-dress all the year!
Time wings on: my strength is fleeing,
And my leafy beauties too;
Still thou clings't around my being,
Changeless—ever true.

Churlish Autumn hath uncrowned me,
Still I feel thy fond embrace;
Winter sad throws gloom around me:
Sweet! thou smil'st up in my face;

Spring arrives with flowery treasures,
Summer skips by, sun-caressed;
Yet thou, envying not their pleasures,
Bloom'st upon my rugged breast.
Time wings on: my strength is fleeing,
And my leafy beauties too;
Still thou cling'st around my being,
Changeless—ever true.

Though my limbs grow old and weary,
Trembling in the wintry air;
And my life be dark and dreary—
Still I feel that thou art near;
Stripped of all my blossoms golden,
'Reft of stalwart forest pride—
Sere and fallow, leafless, olden;
Yet remain'st thou by my side.
Time wings on: my strength is fleeing,
And my leafy beauties too;
Life-long cling'st thou round my being,
Changeless—ever true.

EPIGRAM

ON A WELSHWOMAN'S HAT.

"O changeful woman! Constant man!"
Has been the theme for buried ages.
But here's the truth: say "No" who can—
Ye bards, philosophers, and sages:
Men buy their Hats all kinds of shapes;
Our own Welshwomen change their's never;
'Tis with their Hats as with their loves—
Where fancy rests the heart approves,
And, loving once, they love for ever!

SHADOWS IN THE FIRE.

She sat and she gazed in the fire:
In the fire with a dreamy look:
And she seemed as though she could never tire
Of reading the fiery book.

She saw, midst the embers bright,
A figure both manly and fair,
Blue eyes that shone with a loving light:
And showers of nut-brown hair.

She saw her own image stand
By that form on a sunny day:
One kiss of the lip: one grasp of the hand:
And her heart was borne away.

She saw, through the flickering flame,
A bier in a darkened room:
And a coffin that bore her idol's name

Was hurried away to the tomb.

She saw, from a distant strand,
A missive sent over the main:
The letter was writ by a stranger's hand:
And she sighed for her lover in vain.

So she sat and she gazed in the fire:
In the fire, with a dreamy look:
And she seemed as though she could never tire
Of reading the fiery book.

THE BELFRY OLD.

On a New Year's Eve, by a belfry old,
With a sea of solemn graves around,
While the grim grey tower of the village church
Kept silent ward o'er each grassy mound,
With a cloak of ivy about it grown,
Fringed round, like fur, with a snowy fray;
On a New Year's Eve I watched alone
The life of the last year ebbing away.

Anon there came from the belfry out
A strange wild sound as of pleasure and pain;
For the birth of the new a jubilant shout:
For the death of the old a sad refrain.
And the voice went throbbingly through the air,
Went sobbing and sighing, with laughter blent;
All the echoes awakening everywhere;
A guest that was welcomed wherever, it went.

I thought, as the sound of each babbling bell
Came gushing away from the belfry old,
That stories such as the dying tell
Were up in that belfry being told:
As the words men mutter in life's last fear
Seem to shrink from Eternity back to Time,
So it seemed to me that each echo clear
Came back from the grave with a lesson sublime.

"Yet another year!" it seemed to say;
Gone one more year in the battle of life;
With its yearnings in gloom for the coming day,
Its pantings for peace 'mid the daily strife;
Clay lips that kissed but a year ago
With the fervent warmth of life and love;
Dear eyes that gladdened bright homes below
In one short year with the stars above.

Gone one more year, with its masses that prayed
For the daily bread that so seldom came;
With its lives whom sinning could never degrade,
Till the canker of want brought guilt and shame.
Gone one more year, with its noble souls
Who raised up the weary in hours of need;
With its crowds that started for wished-for goals,
And drooped by the way, broken-hearted indeed.

Gone one more year, with its wearisome woes;
Its pleasures hoped for—never seen:

Its swallow-winged friends: its fair-faced foes:
Its sorrow which happiness might have been:
Its cant and its cunning: its craft and crime:
Its loves and its hates: its hopes and fears:
Its lives that, reaching tow'rds heights sublime,
Fell short of the mark in a sea of tears.

Gone one more year, to tell all the rest
How wise the old world had gotten of late:
How fools still flourish, by wealth caressed:
How the noble of mind meet a pauper's fate;
How the infidel heart, accursed, defies
All hopes of Heaven—all fears of hell:
How the saintly preach from the book of lies,
And scoff at the truths which Saviours tell.

How the pious who poison the poor man's food
In shoddy and shop grow golden and grand:
How the rent-roll harbours the stolen rood—
The emblazoned escutcheon the bloody hand:
How women and men to the altar hie,
And swear to the promise they rarely keep;
How Vice, a shameless and living lie,
Gets honours which Virtue never can reap.

Gone one more year: there is no return.
Press onward, still onward, for weal or woe.
Beat heart: throb brain: hot eyelids burn:
Man's troubles and trials who cares to know?
Birth, marriage, and death: death, marriage, and birth,
Are the treadmill steps of this wheel of strife;
Cloak, draught, and a crust—then a hole in the earth:
And the struggle for these is the story of life.

So sang the bells in the belfry old,
Or so it seemed to me they sang;
And the year died out as the moments rolled,
Still o'er its bier the joy-bells rang:
'Twas mourning an instant, merriment then,
And the ghastly shroud where the old year lay—
How like is the humour of bells and men—
Became swaddling-clothes for the New Year's Day.

BEAUTIFUL BARBARA.

Beautiful Barbara—Barbara bright,
As bright and as fresh as the dainty dawn,
What is it disturbeth her bosom white,
As the breeze into billows kisseth the corn?

Beautiful Barbara—silent and shy,
Shy as the dove, as the dove as fond,
What a dreaminess lives in her hazel eye,
As she looketh away through the valley beyond.

Through the valley beyond, where the daisies blush,
Where the woodbines bloom and the rivulets run;
Through the valley beyond, where, in evening's hush,
Beautiful Barbara's heart was won.

And the maiden Barbara, fair and forlorn,

The grass-green meadow looketh along;
The morrow was fixed for her wedding morn,
And she vieweth in vision the bridal throng.

She looketh, and weepeth, and looketh in vain:
Her heart was trustful; his heart was untrue;
And beautiful Barbara mingleth amain
Her tears with the daisies and the dew.

And the harvest moon sat silent and pale,
Silent and pale o'er the far-off hill:
And the sun in the morning flushing the vale
Saw beautiful Barbara stark and still.

Stark and still, with a forehead of white,
Round which the dew-drop coronal shone;
And the sunbeams came with their laughing light,
But beautiful Barbara sleepeth on.

'Twas a trying path for her dainty feet,
For such dainty feet as her's to tread.
So her trampled heart 'gainst its bars had beat,
Till it bravely broke and heavenward fled.

SONG OF THE SILKEN SHROUD.

Out in Babylon yonder,
By the gas-lights' dull red glare,
In a stifling room—a living tomb,
With never a breath of air,
A slender girl is sitting;
At her feet a silken cloud,
Which music makes, while her young heart aches,
As she stitches the rustling shroud.
And this is the song the glistening silk
Sings, out in the work-room yonder:

"Quick! quick! quick!
"My lady is waiting to roam.
"If you wish to die, the needle ply;
"You can die when you reach your home."

And while the gas-lights flicker and play
The life of the sempstress ebbs away
In the West End work-room yonder.

Out in Babylon yonder,
In the blaze of the ball-room gay,
My lady sits; while round her flits
A skeleton slender and grey.
And the ghastly spectre standeth
By the side of my lady fair
So mournfully bland, and with bony hand
It plays with her costume rare.
And this is the song the ghostly guest
Sings, out in the ball-room yonder:

"Look! look! look!
"Sit ye scornful and proud.
"Your boddice a hearse; every stitch a curse;
"Your skirt a silken shroud."

For while the gas-lights flickered in play
The life of the sempstress ebbed away
In the West End work-room yonder.

A UNIVERSITY FOR WALES.

**WRITTEN IN 1867, AND INSCRIBED TO THOSE WHO WERE THEN ENGAGED IN THE NOBLE AND PATRIOTIC
WORK OF PROVIDING ONE.**

In the cause of Education
Let us raise the standard high,
And in tones of exultation
"Upward—onward!" be the cry.
Let us rear this Fane of Learning—
Beauteous Temple of the Mind;
Where true hearts, for knowledge yearning,
May the priceless jewel find.

In the cause of Education
Let the glorious altar stand,
As a bulwark of the nation,
As a blessing in the land.
Let an unsectarian fabric
Grow in grandeur from the sod,
As a crown upon our manhood,
As a monument to God.

In the cause of Education
Let the wealth which Wisdom owns
Be out-scattered open-handed
To uprear this Throne of Thrones:
And, like bread upon the waters,
Hearts that give from store of gold
Will, in never-dying blessings,
Richly reap a thousand-fold.

In the cause of Education,
In the search for simple Truth,
In the proud Confederation
Which ennobles striving youth,
Let each heart's best pulses quicken,
Patriotic souls up-leap,
Till, mind-freighted, sails the fabric
Like an ark upon the deep.

GRIEFS UNTOLD.

In silence blooms the Summer rose,
With damask cheek and odorous breath,
And ne'er a ruddy leaf that blows
Whispers of canker or of death:
But sweetly smiles the lovely flower
All through the sunshine warm and gay,
And tells not of the canker-dower
That eats its inmost heart away.

In gladness rolls the river bright
Down through the meadow grassy-green,
With ripples full of laughing light
That wake with joy the sunny scene.
From morn till morn, with cheery tread,
The stream walks on with ne'er a sigh,
Nor tells of pebbles hard and dead
That deep below the surface lie.

"I WILL."

It is Christmas Eve, and the dance is o'er:
"Good night—good night all round!"
And the red light streams through the open door,
Like a sprite on the snowy ground.
And faces peer down the glowing dell
From the cottage warm and bright,
To see the last of the village belle
Who stands in the pale moonlight.
And waving her hand with a last farewell,
Is lost from their yearning sight.
But not alone is that maiden fair
Of the pearl-white face and the golden hair.

"Thou knowest I love thee, Blanche," he said,
Who walked by the maiden's side,
And her cheeks flushed up with a sweeter red
When he asked her to be his bride.
Though humble, their love was pure as light—
As pure as the snow they trod;
And the peal from the belfry woke the night
Like a voice from the Throne of God:
Or plaudits of angels glad with delight
At their Maker's approving nod.
Through a manly bosom it sent a thrill,
For it came with the bells did the girl's "I will."

DAWN AND DEATH.

The sobbing winds of winter
Lingered sadly round the door,
Then ran in mystic meanings
Through the dark across the moor;
The window panes were streaming
With the tears which heaven wept,
And a mother sat a-dreaming
O'er an infant as it slept:
Its little hands were folded;
And its little eyes of blue
Were clothed in alabaster
With the azure peeping through:
Its face, so still and star-like,
Was as white as maiden snow:
And it breathed in faintest ripples,
As the wavelets come and go.

The morn in golden beauty
Through the lattice gaily peept,
But muffled was the window
Of the room where darling slept:
The mother's heart was breaking
Into tears like Summer cloud,
For a starry face was circled
With a little lily shroud;
And a soul from sunny features
Like a beam of light had fled:
Before her, like a snowdrop,
Her miracle lay dead!
Ah! 'Twas cruel thus to chasten,
Though her loss was darling's gain:
And her heart would rifle Heaven
Could she clasp her babe again.

CASTLES IN THE AIR.

Autumn's sun was brightly blazing
Like a suit of golden mail;
Flocks along the mead were grazing;
Lambkins frolicked through the vale.
Brooklets gossipped o'er their beauty;
Leaves came down in whisp'ring showers;
And the vine-trees, lush and fruity,
Climbed and clung in am'rous bowers:

Beauty—gladness—
Floated round me everywhere;
Still in sadness
Built I castles in the air—
In the soft and dreamy air.

Far above me, like a spirit,
Rose an alp in proud array,
And my heart so yearned to near it
As I in the valley lay.
Ah, thought I, yon summit seemeth
Like a throne, so pure and bright;
Lo! how grandly-great it gleameth,
Crown'd with everlasting light!

Then I started
From the valley calm and fair,
Hopeful-hearted,
Tow'rds the castle in the air—
High up in the dreamy air.

Many a tortuous path and winding
Rid my soul embattle through;
Many a thorn of bitter finding
Choked my way with perils new:
Upward still, footsore and bleeding,
On with lonesome heart I pressed;
And I heard the chimes receding
In the vale so calm and blest.

Still I wandered
Up the pathway rough and drear,
Till I pondered

By the castle in the air—
Like a spirit in the air.

I had reached the lofty glory;
I had gained the alpine peak;
Lowly lay the world before me—
Yet my heart was like to break!
Where I stood 'twas cold and dreary—
Crown'd with white and glistening snow:
"Ah," I sighed, with heart a-weary—
"Distance lent the golden glow!"

Thus Fame ever
Woos men from earth's valleys fair,
Oft to shiver
Near life's castles in the air—
In the far-off wintry air.

THE WITHERED ROSE.

I had a silver chalice once
Of exquisite design,
In shape 'twas like the human heart
This little vase of mine.
I plucked a rose and placed the flow'r
Within the shiny cup,
And drank the incense hour by hour
The rosebud offered up.
And as it opened leaf by leaf
Its beauties spreading wide,
I saw no blossom such as mine
In all the world beside.

The sunlight came, but came in vain,
And day succeeded day,
But leaf by leaf my rosebud drooped,
Until it passed away.
And thus in life we look for love
From other loves apart—
A gift from Heavenly hand above—
And plant it near the heart;
But Death comes forth with chilly touch;
The blossom droops and dies;
And breaking hearts are filled alone
With fragrant memories.

WRECKS OF LIFE.

I sat upon the shingly Beach
One sunny Summer-day,
A-listening to the mystic speech
Of a million waves at play.
And as I watched the flowing flood
I saw a little child,
Who near a mimic fabric stood

Of shells his hands had piled.
And as he turned to go away,
He said, with look of sorrow:
"Build up I cannot more to-day—
"I'll come again to-morrow!"

The morrow came—he thither hied—
Looked for his castle gay;
But while he'd slept the cruel tide
Had washt it all away.
And thus in life we gaily build
Shell castles in the air;
Our hopes the fairy fabrics gild
With colours bright and rare:
But the dark flood of human strife
Rolls onward while we sleep,
And o'er the wrecks, where waves ran rife,
We waken but to weep.

ELEANOR:

DIED ON HER WEDDING DAY.

Scarce nineteen Summers had breathed their bloom,
Had breathed their bloom on her dainty cheek,
When they bore her away to the voiceless tomb
With hearts so full they were like to break.
And down in the churchyard old and green,
In the churchyard green where the yew-tree waves,
A dark little mound of earth is seen—
One billow more to the sea of graves.

Dear heart! How sad, in the gorgeous light,
In the gorgeous light of a purple dawn,
With life so hopeful of pure delight,
Away from the world to be rudely torn!
To be rudely torn in the tender hour,
In the tender hour when her heart was young;
While the virgin dew on the opening flower
With a trembling joy like a jewel hung.

Ere the budding soul, so sweetly shy,
Had opened its core to the coming kiss
Of an earthly love that was born to die
Ere it filled her heart with its hallowed bliss.
So down in the churchyard old and green,
In the churchyard green where the yew-tree waves,
A dark little mound of earth is seen—
One billow more to the sea of graves.

Scarce nineteen Summers had breathed their bloom,
Had breathed their bloom on her dainty cheek,
And they bore her away to the voiceless tomb
With hearts so full they were like to break:
With hearts so full even this belief
Dispelled not a tear from their aching eyes—
Though they saw their beloved through clouds of grief
An angel beyond in the golden skies.

NEW YEAR'S BELLS.

Hearst thou that peal a-telling
Night-noon stories to the Sky;
Hark! each wave of sound comes welling
Like a scolded angel's cry;
And the voice the belfry flingeth
Sobbing from its brazen breast,
Like a god in trouble singeth,
Waking half the world from rest;
Now it wails in murmuring sadness,
As a child at words unkind;
Now it comes with merry gladness,
Floating weirdly on the wind.
Ah! 'tis sad;—yet sprightly-hearted;
Song of Birth and gloomy Bier;
Death-dirge for the Days departed;
Carol for the coming Year.
Is it that the voice reminds thee
Of the wasted moments past?
Saith it that the New Year finds thee
Where it left thee last?

Doth the merry music taunt thee,
How the Palace love had reared
Mocks with echoes now, that haunt thee
Where thou dream'dst they would have cheered?
Moan the bells with thee in sorrow
O'er a little mound of green,
Rising up from graveyard furrow
Bleakly blank upon the scene?
Doth the tender language, stealing
O'er the soul with soothing swell,
Waken thoughts from sweet concealing:
Joyous tale for chimes to tell;
Reviving dainty hours of gladness,
Fresh as daisies in the spring,
As birds in summer, void of sadness,
Songs, heart-buried, wake and sing?
Doth the sea of music bear thee
Back again upon the Past,
To show thee that the New Year finds thee
Happier than the last?

Doth it tell of plans laid glowing
On the anvil of thy heart;
Times thou'st raised thy hand for throwing
In life's battle many a dart?
How each plan unstricken lingered
Till the mouldful heat was gone?
How each dart was faintly fingered,
Resting in the end unthrown;
Of the Faith thou pawn'dst for Fancies—
Substance for a fade-ful beam?
Doth it taunt with bartered chances—
Sterling strength for drowsy dream?
Doth it brand thee apathetic?
Twit with lost days many a one?
Doth it chant in words emphatic
"Gone for aye; for ever gone?"
Is it that the voice reminds thee
Of the wasted moments past?
Saith it that the New Year finds thee.

Wiser than the last?

'Tis not so!—and still, as ever,
Time's a jewel in its loss;
But, possessed in plenty, never
Held as ought but worthless dross.
Like lost truant-boys we linger
Whimpering in Life's mazy wood,
Heedless of the silent finger
Ever pointing for our good;
Each, in plodding darkness groping,
Clothes his day in dreamy night,
'Stead of boldly climbing, hoping,
Up the steeps towards the light,
Where, as metal plucks the lightning
Flashing from the lofty sky,
Sturdy purpose, ever heightening,
Grasps an Immortality.
Let not future peals remind thee,
Then, of wasted moments passed;
Let not future New Years find thee
Where each left thee last.

THE VASE AND THE WEED:

A PLEA FOR THE BIBLE.

I had a vase of classic beauty,
Rare in richly-carved design;
Memento of an ancient splendour
Was this peerless vase of mine.
A master-hand of old had graved it:
Hand for many a year inurned:
And out from every line and tracing
Germs of genuine genius yearned.
I took the gem and proudly placed it
On a pillar 'mongst the flowers,
And watcht how radiance round it hovered,
Bathed with sunlight and with showers.
A little weed-like plant grew near it,
And anon crept o'er its face;
Until at length, with stealth insidious,
It quite obscured its classic grace,
And where was once a noble picture
Of the Beauteous and the True,
There hung a mass of straggling herbage
Flecked with blooms of sickly hue.
The Summer passed: the plant had flourished,
As every weed in Summer will;
When Winter came and struck the straggler
To the heart with bitter chill.
It died: the winds of March played round it,
Laughing at its wretched plight.
Then blew it from its slender holding,
Like a feather out of sight.
But still in undimmed freshness standing,
Reared the vase its classic face;
Rare in its old, eternal beauty,
Majestic in its pride of place.

A RIDDLE.

A riddle of riddles: Who'll give it a name?
A portrait of God in a worm-eaten frame.
A mount in his own eye—in others' a mite;
The foot-boy of Wrong, and the headsman of Right;
A vaunter of Virtue—yet dallies with Vice;
From the cope to the basement bought up at a price;
A vane in his friendship—in folly a rock;
In custom a time-piece—in manners a mock;
A fib under fashion—a fool under form;
In charity chilly—in wealth-making warm:
In hatred satanic—a lambkin in love;
A hawk in religion with coo of a dove;
A riddle unravelled—a story untold;
A worm deemed an idol if covered with gold.
A dog in a gutter—a God on a throne:
In slander electric—in justice a drone:
A parrot in promise, and frail as a shade;
A hooded immortal in life's masquerade;
A sham-lacquered bauble, a bubble, a breath:
A boaster in life-time—a coward in death.

TO A FLY:

BURNED BY A GAS-LIGHT.

Poor prostrate speck! Thou round and round
With wildering limp dost come and go;
Thy tale to me, devoid of sound,
Bears the mute majesty of woe.
In bounding pride of revelry,
Seared by the cruel, burning blast,
Thy fall instructive is to me
As fall of States and Empires vast.

No sounding theme from lips of fire,
No marvel of the immortal quill,
Can teach a moral, sterner—higher,
Than thou, so helpless and so still.
Reft as thou art by blistering burn—
Blinded and shorn—poor stricken Fly!
The wise may stoop and lessons learn
From thy unmeasured agony.

It tells how maid, in guileless youth,
Flies tow'rds her Love with trusting wing,
Bruises her heart 'gainst broken truth,
And falls, like thee, a crippled thing.
How man in bacchanalian sphere
Soars to the heat of Pleasure's sun,
Then, by gradations dark and drear,
Sinks low as thee, poor wingless one:
How hearts from proud Ambition's height
Have drooped to darkest, lowest hell—
From blazing noon to pitchy night,
With pangs a demon-tongue may tell:
How aspirations glory-fraught
Have gained the goal in dark despair;

How golden hopes have come to nought
But wailings in the midnight air.

There! and the life I ne'er could give
In pitying tenderness I've ta'en;
Far better thus to die, than live
A life of helpless, hopeless pain.
Ambitious hearts—high-vaulting pow'rs—
That aim to grasp life's distant sky,
See through the spirit-blinding hours
What wrought the fall of yonder Fly.

TO A FRIEND.

I fear to name thee. If I were
To do so, I could never tell
What virtues crown thy nature rare;
'Twould pain thy heart—I know it well.

Thou dost not ask for thy reward
In words that all the world may hear,
For thoughtful acts and kind regard
By thee for others everywhere.

Thou seek'st alone for grateful thought
From those to whom thy worth is known;
So for much good thine heart hath wrought
Find gratitude within mine own.

RETRIBUTION.

A spider once wove a right marvellous net,
Whose equal no human hand ever wove yet,
So complete in design was each beautiful fret,
And finished in every particular.
And the wily old architect, proud of his craft,
Ensconced in a snug little sanctum abaft,
Laid wait for the flies; and he chuckled and laughed,
As he pricked up his organs auricular.

A week had elapsed, and the spider still wrought
Fell ruin on all the frail flies that he caught;
All right rules of decency set he at nought:
Each meal made him much more rapacious.
But his foot got entangled one horrible hour,
As he rushed forth a poor screaming fly to devour,
And to get his leg free was far out of his pow'r,
Secure was our spider sagacious.

Where now is the beautiful fabric of gauze?
Behold! in the centre, by one of his claws,
A dead spider is hanging surrounded by flaws
And many a struggle-made fracture.
'Twas hard, in the height of his fly-killing fun,
And sad, in the light of a Summer-day sun,
To die all alone, as that spider had done,

In a mesh of his own manufacture.

THE THREE GRACES.

I.

Her hair is as bright as the sunbeam's light,
And she walks with a regal grace,
And she bares full proud to the empty crowd
The wealth of her wondrous face;
And her haughty smile thus speaks the while:
"Approach me on bended knee!"
She's a beautiful star I could worship afar,
But—her love's not the love for me.

II.

Her hair is as black as the raven's back,
And her face—what a queenly one;
And her voice ripples out like the trembling shout
Of a Lark when he sings to the sun;
But her form is filled with a soul self-willed
That would lord o'er a luckless he;
Pride reigns in her breast, like snow in a nest,
And—her love's not the love for me.

III.

Her hair—what mind I the tint of her hair,
When her eyes are the tenderest blue;
And her loving face bears many a grace
Lit up with a sunny hue?
When I find—O I find, that her heart is kind—
That she goes not abroad to see
The World—or be seen. Her love, I ween,
Is the love that was made for me.

THE LAST ROSE OF SUMMER.

Where now is the Summer's last Rose,
That reigned like a queen on the briar?
'T is faded! and o'er its grave glows
The glad warmth of Winter's first fire.

We welcome the Flame with delight,
As we welcomed the Rose in the Spring:
But the blossom's as nought in our sight
'Mid pleasures which Firesides bring.

And so with life's swallow-winged friends:
The Rose is adored in its day;
But when its prosperity ends
'T is cast like a puppet away.

THE STARLING AND THE GOOSE.

A FABLE.

A silly bird of waddling gait
On a common once was bred,
And brainless was his addle pate
As the stubble on which he fed;
Ambition-fired once on a day
He took himself to flight,
And in a castle all decay
He nestled out of sight.
"O why," said he, "should mind like mine
"Midst gosling-flock be lost?
"In learning I was meant to shine!"
And up his bill he tossed.
"I'll hide," said he, "and in the dark
"I'll like an owl cry out
("In wisdom owls are birds of mark),
"And none shall find me out!"
And so from turret hooted he
At all he saw and heard;
Hoo-hoo! Hoo-hoo! What melody!
And what a silly bird!
At length a Starling which had flown
Down on the Castle wall
Thus spake: "Why what a simple drone
"You are to sit and bawl!
"Though *you* presume *an Owl* to be,
"It's not a bit of use!
"Your body though folks cannot see
"They know the difference—pardon me!
"Betwixt the screech of Owl up tree
"And the cackling of a Goose!"

THE HEROES OF ALMA.

OCTOBER, 1854.

Heaven speed you, Braves! Undaunted lion-hearts
Well have you thus redeemed a solemn trust,
And added, by your bright heroic deeds,
Another lustrous ray to deck the brow,
Of this the good Old Land, whose gladdened heart
Leaps forth for very joy and thankfulness,
Proud of the gallant sons she calls her own;
Right nobly have you ta'en the gauntlet up
Ambition flung before the world, and fought
'Gainst Evil, Might, and hated Despot-law;
Bled, conquered, clipped the wings of soaring Pride,
And earned in Serf-land such a brilliant name
Time's breath can never dim. But list!—a wail
Of sorrowing sadness sweeps across the Land,
With which the up-sent jubilant psalm is blent.
'Reft orphans' cries, in mournful cadence soft,
Sobs wrung from widows' broken, bleeding hearts;
And fond hoar-headed parents' sighs and tears,
Commingling all, merge in a requiem sad

For those brave hearts that fell in Freedom's cause.
Then let us plant Fame's laurels o'er their graves,
And keep them green with tears of gratitude.

A KIND WORD, A SMILE, OR A KISS.

There's a word, softly spoken, which leadeth
The erring from darkness and night;
There's an effortless action that sheddeth
A sun-world of gladdening light;
There's a sweet something-nothing which bringeth
A fore-taste of Paradise bliss:
Full and large is the love that up-springeth
From kind words, a smile, or a kiss.

Eyes a-plenty with tears have been blinded,
Hearts legion in sadness have bled,
And many of earth's angel-minded
In grief have gone down to the dead,
And the world, with its bright laughing gladness,
Oft changed to a frowning abyss,
By vain mortals refusing, in madness,
A kind word, a smile, or a kiss.

DEAR MOTHER I'M THINKING OF THEE.

NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1855.

In the hush of night, when the pale starlight
Through my casement silently steals;
When the Moon walks on to the bower of the Sun,
And her beautiful face reveals:
When tranquil's the scene, and the mist on the green
Lies calm as a slumbering sea,
From my lattice I peep, 'ere I lay down to sleep,
And whisper a prayer for thee:
 Mother! Dear Mother!
 O, blessings on thee!
From my lattice I peep, 'ere I lay down to sleep,
And think, dear Mother, of thee.

When the dew goes up from the white lily cup
In rose-coloured clouds to the sky;
When the voice of the Lark trembles out from the dark,
And the winds kiss the flowers with a sigh;
When the King of Dawn, like a world new-born,
Scatters love-light over the lea;
From my lattice I peep, when I wake from sleep,
And whisper a prayer for thee:
 Mother! Dear Mother!
 O, blessings on thee!
From my lattice I peep, when I wake from sleep,
And think, dear Mother, of thee.

THE HERON AND THE WEATHER-VANE.

A FABLE.

A weather-vane on steeple top
Had stood for many a day,
And every year a coat of gold
Increased his aspect gay.
Subservient to the changing air,
Each puff he'd quickly learn
To obey with sycophantic twist
And never-failing turn.

A Heron once, from lowly fen,
Soared up in stately flight;
But, striking 'gainst the gilded vane,
He fell in sorry plight:
And as, with wounded wing, he lay
Down in the marsh below,
He thus addressed the glittering thing,
The cause of all his woe:

"Vain upstart! 'tis from such as thee
That Merit, lowly born,
In striving oft to win a name,
Wins nought but bitter scorn:
But for such treacherous knaves as thou,
What crowds of souls would soar
With lofty swoop, that now, like me,
Will mount, Ah! never more!

It fits thee well, that lacquer suit,
Base flunkey as thou art!
Though bright, it never covered brain;
Though gilded, ne'er a heart!
Rather than wear upon my back
Such livery as thine,
I'd earn an honest crust, and make
The scullion's calling mine."

THE THREE MIRRORS.

A FABLE.

Three mirrors of the usual sort
Were gifted once with power of thought;
And as they hung against the wall
They felt that they were prophets all.
The first, a plate-glass o'er the fire;
The next, a concave, standing higher;
A portly convex 'tother side
Made up the three; and as he eyed
His brother mirrors, brilliant each,
Thus gave to thought the rein of speech:
"Such power as mine who ever saw?
If in my face without a flaw
Men chance to gaze, they taller seem
Than what they are: delightful scheme!
I like to elongate the truth;

What else but flattery pleases youth?
A boy who in my face should scan
Will grow as tall as any man!"
Says convex; "That is not the case
With me; for those who in *my* face
Should chance to look, themselves will find
Turned into things of dwarfish kind.
To praise mankind is what I hate:
What says our neighbour, Master Plate?"
The plate-glass then essayed to speak;
Said he: "My friends, I never seek
So to distort the things I see
That none can tell what things they be.
I find it more convenient far
To show mankind just what they are!"
A table the dispute had heard,
And asked for leave to say a word.
"Agreed," rejoined the glassy crowd:
When thus the table spoke aloud:
"The virtues which you each would claim
As yours, are virtues but in name.
You, Concave, lessen what you see,
Though well you know 't should larger be.
While Convex, aye to flattery prove,
Makes mounts of what are mites alone.
Plain-spoken Plate, in wrong the least,
Would tell a beast it *was* a beast,
Forgetting 'tis not always right
To judge from what appears in sight.
Your faces ought to blush for shame,
And yet you think you're not to blame!
You know that men are slow to think,
And will of *any* fountain drink;
Who fear their brain's behest to do,
So frame their faith from such as you!
Judged by the simplest human rules,
You are the knaves—and they the fools."

THE TWO CLOCKS.

A FABLE.

A country dame, to early-rising prone,
Two clocks possessed: the one, a rattling Dutch,
Seldom aright, though noisy in its tone,
With naughty knack of striking two too much.
The other was a steady, stately piece,
That rang the hour true as the finger told:
For many a year 't had kept its corner place;
The owner said 'twas worth its weight in gold!
One washing-eve, the Dame, to rise at four,
Sought early rest, and, capped and gowned, did droop
Fast as a church, to judge from nasal snore,
That broke the silence with a hoarse hor-hoop:
When all at once with fitful start she woke;
For that same tinkling Dutchman on the stair
Had told the hour of four with clattering stroke,
And waked the sleeper ere she was aware.
"Odd drat the clock!" she sighed; but, knowing well
The cackling thing struck two at least a-head,

She turned; and back to such deep slumber fell,
But for her snore you might have thought her dead.
And so she slept till four o'clock was due,
When t'other time-piece truly told the tale;
Straightway the drowsy dame to labour flew,
And soon the suds went flirting round the pail.

MORAL.

Whoe'er breaks faith in petty ways
Will never hold a friend;
While he who ne'er a trust betrays
Gets trusted to the end.

SACRIFICIAL.

WRITTEN AFTER WITNESSING THE EXECUTION OF TWO GREEK SAILORS AT SWANSEA, MARCH, 1859.

The morning broke fair, with a florid light,
And the lark fluttered upward in musical flight,
As the sun stept over the distant height
In mantle purple and golden.
The blue bounding billows in waltzing play
Lookt up in the face of the coming day,
And sang, as they danced o'er the sandy bay,
Their sea-songs mystic and olden.

High up, on the gable of yonder jail,
The workmen are plying with hammer and nail,
And the slow-rising framework hinteth a tale
Of mournful and sombre seeming.
'Tis the gibbet that rears its brow on high,
And the morn-breezes pass it with many a sigh,
As it stands gazing up to the fair blue sky
Like a spectre dumbly dreaming.

Through lane and alley: through alley and street
The echoes are startled by hurrying feet;
And thousands, in action fitful and fleet,
Press on to the execution.
The squalid-faced mother her baby bears;
And the father his boy on his shoulder rears:
The frail and the sinning emerge in pairs
From darkness and destitution.

Aloft on the gibbet two beings stand,
Whose foreheads are smirched with the murder-brand,
Whose lives, by the lawgivers bungling and bland,
Declared are to justice forfeit.
Below, like a statue stark and still,
A legion of faces, in brutish will,
Gaze up to the gallows with many a thrill,
And thirst for the coming surfeit.

But one more look at the silvery sea:
One thought of the lark in its musical glee;
One breath of the sweet breeze, balmy and free;
One prayer from two hearts that falter;
And Lo! in reply to a mortal's nod,
From the gibbet-tree dangle two pieces of clod,

Their souls standing face-to-face with their God,
Each wearing a hangman's halter.

Ah! shrink from the murderer; quaint, wise world
Yea: shudder at sight of him; sanctified world!
Go: plume him up deftly; clever old world!
Till he shines like a gilded excrescence:
Then strangle him dog-like—a civilised plan!
Quick! trample his life out: he's not of the clan:
He stinks in the nostrils of saintly man,
Though fit for the Infinite's presence!

WALES TO "PUNCH."

On his milking the amende honourable to Wales and the Welsh, in
some verses, the last of which was the following:

"And *Punch*—incarnate justice,
Intends henceforth to lick
All who shall scorn and sneer at you:
You jolly little brick."

I'm glad, old friend, that you your error see,
Of sneering where you cannot understand:
You've owned your fault: let by-gones by-gones be;
Past blows from *Punch* forgetting—there's my hand.
Lick whom you list—creation if you please:
Let those who choose laugh at me: let them sneer;
I earn, before I eat, my bread and cheese;
I love my language; and I like my beer.
Content with what I have, so that it come
Through honest sources: happy at my lot,
I seek not—wish not—for a fairer home.
Hard work: my Bible: children: wife: a cot:
These are my birthright, these I'll strive to keep,
And round my humble hearth affection bind:
From Eisteddfodau untold pleasures reap;
And try to live at peace with all mankind.
Then glad am I that you your error see,
Of sneering where you cannot understand:
You've owned your fault: let by-gones by-gones be;
Past blows from *Punch* forgetting—there's my hand.

WELCOME!

The following was written as a Prologue, to be read at the opening of the Wrexham National Eisteddfod, 1876. It was not successful in taking the offered prize, but as the adjudicator who made the award was pleased to say it was "above the average," I have thought its publication here will not be out of place.

Welcome! thrice welcome—one and all,
To this our Nation's Festival;
Be 't Peer or peasant; old or young:
Welcome! thrice welcome, friends among.

If Peer—no title that he bears—
No decoration that he wears—
Can the proud name of Bard excel,
Or pale the badge he loves so well.
If Peasant—he may here be taught
That none are poor who, rich in thought,
Possess in Mind's high utterings
A nobler heritage than kings.
If old—what once you were you'll see:
If young—what p'rhaps one day you'll be—
For youth yearns upward to the sage;
And childhood's joy delighteth age.
Come rich—come poor—come old and young,
And join our Feast of Art and Song.
What forms our banquet all shall know,
And hungry homeward none must go.
We boast not here of knife or platter;
Our feast is of the mind—not matter,
Along our festive board observe
No crystal fruit—no rare preserve:
No choice exotic here and there,
With wine cup sparkling everywhere:
No toothsome dish—no morsel sweet—
Such savoury things as people eat;
So if for these you yearn—refrain!
For these you'll look and long in vain.
Our Feast's composed of dainty dishes—
To suit far daintier tastes and wishes.
While for the splendour of our wine—
I've oftimes heard it called divine:
For who that drinks of Music's stream,
Or quaffs of Art's inspiring theme,
Shall say that both are things of earth—
That both are not of heavenly birth?
While gathered blossoms fade away,
The Poet's thoughts for ever stay—
E'en as the rose's perfumed breath
Survives the faded flow'ret's death.
No pleasure human hand can give
Is lasting—all things briefly live.
But sounds which flow from Minstrelsy
Vibrate through all eternity!
Then welcome! welcome! one and all,
To this, our Nation's Festival.
Come rich—come poor: come old and young
And join our Feast of Art and Song!

CHANGE.

In the Summer golden,
When the forests olden
Shook their rich tresses gaily in the morn;
And the lark upflew,
Sprinkling silver dew
Down from its light wing o'er the yellow corn;
When every blessing
Seem'd the earth caressing,
As though 'twere fondled by some love sublime,
Strong in her youthful hope,

Upon the sunny slope
A maid sat, dreaming o'er the happy time—
Dreaming what blissful heights were hers to climb.

In the Winter dreary,
When the willow, weary,
Hung sad and silent o'er the frozen stream;
And the trembling lark
Murmur'd, cold and stark,
In wailful pathos o'er its vanish'd dream;
When the bleak winds linger'd
And dead flowerets finger'd,
When all earth's graces, pale and coffin'd, slept,
With joys for ever flown,
In the wide world alone,
Over a broken faith a maiden wept—
Yet, with unswerving love, true vigil kept.

FALSE AS FAIR.

My heart was like the rosebud
That woos the Summer's glance,
And trembles 'neath its magic touch
As breeze-kisst lilies dance:
So, like the faithless Summer,
She kissed me with a sigh,
And woke my life to gladness,
Then passed in beauty by.
My heart was like the blossom
That blooms beside the brook,
And revels in its silvery laugh,
Its bright and sunny look:
So, like the graceful streamlet,
She kissed me with a sigh,
And woke my life to gladness,
Then passed in beauty by.

HEADS AND HEARTS.

The Head fell in love one day,
As young heads will oftentimes do;
What it felt I cannot say:
That is nothing to me nor to you:
But this much I know,
It made a great show
And told every friend it came near
If its idol should rove
It could ne'er again love,
No being on earth was so dear.

So Time, the fleet-footed, moved on,
And the Head knew not what to believe;
A whole fortnight its Love had been gone,
And it felt no desire to grieve.
Its passion so hot

In a month was forgot;
And in six weeks no trace could be found;
While, in two months, the Head,
Which should then have been dead,
For another was looking around.

The Heart fell in love one day:
The mischief was very soon done!
It tried all it could to be gay;
But loving, it found, was not fun.
For hours it would sit
In a moping fit,
And could only throb lively and free
When that one was near
Which it felt was so dear,
And when that one was absent—Ah, me!

So the days and the nights hurried on;
And the Heart nursed in silence its thought:
To a distance its idol had gone,
Then it felt how completely 'twas caught:
Other hearts came to sue:
To the absent 'twas true—
Loving better the longer apart:
Thus while Love in the head
Is very soon dead,
It is deathless when once in the heart.

FALL OF SEBASTOPOL.

1855.

"Advance!" was the cry that shot up to the sky
When the dawn of the day had begun;
And the steel glistened bright in the glad golden light
Of a glorious Eastern sun.
And the words rang clear, with no trembling fear—
"Brave Britons! on you I rely!"
And the answer pealed out with a mighty shout—
"Sebastopol falls, or we die!"
Advance!—Advance!—Men of England and France!
"Sebastopol falls, or we die!"
Now the death-storm pours, and the smoke up-soars,
And the battle rages with furious might,
And the red blood streams, and the fire-flash gleams,
And the writhing thousands—God! God! what a sight.
The hoarse-throated cannon belch fiery breath,
And hurl forth the murderous rain,
Which dances along on its message of death,
And sings o'er the dying and slain!
Crash! Crash! Then a leap and a dash!
Hand to hand—face to face, goes the fight;
The bayonets plunge, and the red streams splash,
And up goes a shout of delight—
"The enemy runs!—Men flinch from their guns!
On! Forward! For God and for Right!
Advance!—Advance!—Men of England and France!
Press forward, for Freedom and Right!
On—On—On! Hurrah! the goal's won;
See! the old colours flutter and dance,

And proudly they wave over Tyranny's grave:
Well done! Men of England and France—Hurrah!
Hurrah! for old England and France!"

TO LORD DERBY.

1877.

As the monarch that grows in the forest, and rears
Its brow ever green to the firmament bright,
So, steadfast and sturdy, thy proud form appears,
Of patriots the hope, and thy country's delight.

Through thy heart, firm and true as the oak trees that stand
In the soil of Old England—in which *thou* hast grown,
There runs the same life which *they* draw from the land,
And the heart of thy country 's the life of thine own.

With the seal of Nobility set by thy Sire,
Thou tread'st in his steps as thou bearest his name;
And the glow that he added to Albion's fire
Reflects through the Past and enhances thy fame.

Where Freedom is free'st, thou takest thy stand:
Where Tyranny threatens, thy mission is told;
And thy tongue, which we hail as the Voice of the Land,
Speaks the wish of a nation heroic and bold.

And bright will the name be of England, as long
As safe in thy keeping her honour remains—
'Twill stand 'mongst the noblest in story and song,
And be worthy the purest and loftiest strains.

UNREQUITED.

A beautiful Streamlet went dancing along,
With its bright brow fretted with flow'rs,
And it leapt o'er the woodland with many a song,
And laughed through the sunny hours.
 Away and away!
 All the blue Summer day,
 The streamlet went laughing away.

A willow Tree grew near the light-hearted brook,
And hung o'er the Beauty in pride:
And he yearned night and day for a kiss or a look
From the streamlet that flowed at his side.
 But away and away,
 All the blue Summer day,
 The streamlet went laughing away.

All his leaves and his blossom he shower'd on her head,
And would gladly have given his life:
But to all this affection the streamlet was dead,
And she laughed at the willow's heart-strife.
 And away—away,
 All the blue Summer day,

The streamlet went laughing away.

"Ah, me," quoth the willow: "how false was the dream!"
And, drooping, heart-broken he died;
While his last leaf in love he let fall on the stream
That so coldly flowed on at his side.
And away—away,
All the blue Summer day,
The streamlet went laughing away.

THE HOUSEHOLD SPIRIT.

A spirit stealeth up and down the stairs
Noiseless as thistle-down upon the wind:
So calm—so sweetly calm—the look it wears:
Melful as music is its voice—and kind.
Like lustrous violets full of twinkling life
Two orbs of beauty light its face divine:
And o'er its cheeks a dainty red runs rife,
Like languid lilies flusht with rosy wine.
Its velvet touch doth soothe where dwells a pain;
Its glance doth angelize each angry thought;
And, like a rainbow-picture in the rain,
Where tears fall thick its voice is comfort-fraught.
How like a seraph bright it threads along
Each room erewhile so desolate and dark,
Waking their slumbering echoes into song
As laughs the Morn when uproused by the lark.
Methinks a home doth wear its heavenliest light
When haunted by so good, so fair a sprite.

HAD I A HEART.

Had I a heart to give away
As when, in days that now are o'er,
We watcht the bright blue billows play,
Roaming along the sounding shore;
When joys like Summer blossoms bloom'd,
When love and hope were all our own;
I'd bring that heart—to sadness doomed—
And let it beat for thee alone.

Had I a heart to give away,
Its daily thought in life would be,
Like yonder bird, with trembling lay,
To sing sweet songs, dear love, of thee.
But, ah! the heart that once was mine
Is mine, alas! no more to give;
And joys that once were joys divine
In mem'ry now alone can live.

A BRIDAL SIMILE.

Adown the world two grand historic streams

With stately flow moved on through widening ways,
Rich with the glory of life's noblest dreams,
Bright with the halo of life's sunniest days.
Out from their depths two blithesome streamlets ran,
O'er which the smiles of Heaven hourly shone;
Till, meeting: Ah! then life afresh began,
For both, embracing, mingled into one.

From yonder rose two crystal dewdrops hung
But yesternorn. The sun came forth and kissed
The gems that to the perfumed blossom clung,
And clothed them with a robe of purple mist.
The soft warm wind of Heaven gently breathed
Upon the twain: they hung no more apart;
But, with the sweetness of a rosebud wreathed,
Blent soul with soul and mingled heart with heart.

Live on, united pair: with love so blest
Your pathway ought but sunny may not be.
Live on, united pair: and be the breast
Of thornless roses yours unceasingly.
And as the river to the ocean flies
Be yours to pass as gently from life's shore:
Then, like sweet fragrance when the blossom dies,
Leave names to live in mem'ry evermore.

SONG.

They tell me thou art faithless, Love!
That vows thy lips have sworn—
The smiles which light thy lovely face—
Are false as April morn;
My brightest dreams of happiness
They wish me to forget:
But, No! the spell that won my love
Doth bind my spirit yet.

They tell me thou art faithless, Love!
And changeful as a dream:
They say thou'rt frail as drifts of sand
That kiss the laughing stream;
They whisper if I wed thee, Sweet!
My heart will know regret:
But, No! the spell that won my love
Doth bind my spirit yet.

I WOULD MY LOVE.

I would my Love were not so fair
In sweet external beauty:
And dreamt less of her charms so rare,
And more of homely duty.
The rose that blooms in pudent pride
When pluckt will pout most sorely;
P'rhaps she I'm wooing for my bride

Will grow more self-willed hourly.
Her form might shame the graceful fay's;
Her face wears all life's graces:
But wayward thoughts and wayward ways
Make far from pretty faces.

I would my Love were not so fair
(I mean it when I breathe it):
What though each hair be golden hair,
If temper ill dwells 'neath it?
Her lips would make the red rose blush,
Her voice trolls graceful phrases,
Her brow is calm as Evening's hush,
Her teeth as white as daises.
Her cheeks are fresh as infant Day's,
Round which cling Beauty's traces:
But wayward thoughts and wayward ways
Make far from pretty faces.

DEATH IN LIFE:

A TRUE STORY.

The following simple narrative is founded on fact. A young village couple married, and soon after their marriage went to live in London. Success did not follow the honest-hearted husband in his search for employment, and he and his young wife were reduced to actual want. In their wretchedness a child was born to them, which died in the midst of the desolate circumstances by which the young mother was surrounded. For three years the mother was deprived of reason—a gloomy period of Death in Life—and passionately mourned the loss of her first-born. An eminent London practitioner, to whom her case became known, was of opinion that reason would return should a second child be born to the disconsolate mother. This proved to be correct; and after three years of mental aberration the sufferer woke as from a dream. For many months after the awakening she was under the impression that her second child was her first-born, and only became aware of the true state of the case when it was gently broken to her by her husband.

I.

Lovely as a sunbright Spring is,
Yonder trembling maid advances,
Clothed in beauty like the morning—
Like the silver-misted morning—
With a face of shiny radiance,
Tinted with a tinge of blushes,
Like reflections from a goblet
Filled with wine of richest ruby.

Now she nears the low church portal—
Flickers through the white-washed portal,
Lighting up the sleepy structure,
As a sunbeam lights the drowsy
Blossom into wakeful gladness.

See! she stands before the altar,
With the chosen one beside her;
And the holy Mentor murmurs
Words that link their lives like rivets,
Which no force should break asunder.

Now the simple prayer is ended;
And two souls, like kissing shadows,
Mingle so no hand shall part them!
Mingle like sweet-chorded music;

Mingle like the sighs of Summer—
Like the breath of fruit and blossom;
Mingle like two kissing raindrops—
Twain in one. Thrice happy maiden!
Life to thee is like the morning,
As the fresh-faced balmy morning,
Full of melody and music;
Full of soft delicious fragrance;
Full of Love, as dew-soaked jasmins
Are of sweet and spicy odour;
Full of Love, as leaping streamlets
Are of life. Thrice happy maiden!

II.

Turn we to a lowly dwelling—
One amongst a million dwellings—
Where a mother silent rocketh
To-and-fro with down-let eyelids,
Gazing on her sleeping infant,
While the just-expiring embers
Smoulder through the gloomy darkness.
On the shelf a rushlight flickers
With a dull and sickly glimmer,
Turning night to ghostly, deathly,
Pallid wretchedness and sadness,
Just revealing the dim outline
Of a pale and tearful mother,
With a babe upon her bosom.
"Thus am I," she muttered, wailing,
"Left to linger lorn and lonely
In the morning of my being.
If 'twere not for thee, my sweet babe,
Lily of my life's dark waters—
Silver link that holds my sad heart
To the earth—I fain would lay me
Down, and sleep death's calm and sweet sleep.
Oh! how sweetly calm it must be.
In the green and silent graveyard,
With the moonlight and the daisies!
If 'twere not for thee, my loved one,
I could lay me down and kiss Death
With the gladness I now kiss thee.
Oh! how cold thy tiny lips are!
Like a Spring-time blossom frozen.
Nestle, dear one, in my bosom!"
And the mother presst the sleeper
Closer—closer, to her white breast:
Forward, backward—gently rocking;
While the rushlight flickered ghastly.
Hark! a footstep nears the dwelling;
And the door is flung wide open,
Banging backward 'gainst the table;
And a human being enters,
Flusht with liquor, drencht with water!
For the rain came down in torrents,
And the wind blew cold and gusty.
"Well, Blanche!" spake the thoughtless husband,
Not unkindly. "Weeping always."
"Yes, Charles, I could ne'er have slumbered
Had I gone to bed," she answered.
Then she rose to shut the night out,
But the stubborn wind resisted,
And, for spite, dasht through the crevice

Of the window. "Foolish girl, then,
Thus to wait for me!" he muttered.
When a shriek—so wild, so piercing—
Weirdly wild—intensely piercing—
Struck him like a sharp stiletto.
Then another—and another!
Purging clear his turbid senses.

"Blanche!" he cried; and sprang towards her
Just in time to save her falling;
And her child fell from her bosom,
Like a snow-fall from the house-top
To the earth. "Blanche! Blanche!" he gasped out;
"Tell me what it is that pains thee."
But her face was still as marble.
Then he kissed her cheeks—her forehead—
Then her lips, and called out wildly:
"Blanche, my own neglected darling,
Look, look up, and say thou livest,
Speak, if but to curse thy husband—
Curse thy wretched, heartless husband."

Then her eyelids slowly opened,
And she gazed up in his white face,
White as paper as her own was!
"Charles!" she sighed, "I have been dreaming:
Is my child dead?" "No!" he answered,
"See, 'tis sleeping!" "Dead!" the mother
Murmured faintly, "Sleeping—sleeping!"

In a chair he gently placed her:
Then he stooped to take the child up,
Kisst and placed it on her bosom.

Frantic then the mother hugged it;
Gazed a moment; then with laughter
Wild, she made the room re-echo—
"They would take my bonny baby—
Rob me of my dainty darling,
Would they? Ha! ha! ha!" she shouted.
And she turned her large blue eyes up
With a strange and fitful gazing,
Laughing till the tears chased madly
Down her cheeks of pallid whiteness.

"Dear, dear Blanche!" her husband murmured,
Stretching out his hand towards her;
But she started wildly forward,
Crouched down in the furthest corner,
And, with face tear-dabbled over,
And her hair in long, lank tresses,
With a voice so low and plaintive
'Twould have won a brute to lameness,
Faintly sobbed she: "Do not take it!
Do not take it!—do not take it!"
And she hugged her infant closer,
Sobbing sadly, "Do not take it!"

"Blanche! dear Blanche!" her husband faltered,
With a voice low, husht, and chokeful,
"I—I am thy worthless husband!"

Then he walkt a step towards her;
But the girl with 'wildered features
Drew her thin hand o'er her forehead,
And in wandering accents muttered:

"Husband? Husband? No, not husband!
I am still a laughing maiden;
Yet methought I had been married,
And bore such a sweet, sweet baby—
Such a fair and bonny baby!"

Baby—baby—hush; the wild winds
Sing so plaintive. Hush—h!" And then she
Laid the child upon the cold floor,
And, with hair in wild disorder,
Laughing, crying, sobbing, talking,
O'er it hung, like March a-shivering
O'er the birth of infant April.

Lightly then her husband toucht her
On the shoulder; but she look'd not—
Spake not—moved not. Slowly rose she
From her kneeling, crouching posture;
And she stood a hopeless dreamer,
With the child a corpse beside her!

III.

In a dry and sun-parch'd graveyard,
In a small corpse-crowded graveyard,
With the lurid sky above it,
With the smoke from chimneys o'er it,
With the din of life around it—
Din of rushing life about it;
Sat a girlish, grief-worn figure,
Croucht up in the darkest corner,
With her pallid face turned upwards;
To and fro in silence rocking
On a little mound of dark dirt.

Like a veiled Nun rose the pale moon,
Draped about with fleecy vapour;
And the stars in solemn conclave
Came to meet her—came to greet her,
To their convent home to bear her:
She had soared above the dingy
Earth, and left the world behind her.
As she passed she lookt down sadly,
Gazed with silent, noble pity,
At the girlish, grief-worn figure,
Sitting in the darkest corner
Of that small corpse-crowded graveyard,
With her pallid face turned upwards,
On a little mound of dark dirt.

Round about from windows flickered
Lights, which told of inside revels;
Rooms, with mirth and banquets laden,
Sobbing kisses, soft embraces,
Feasts of Love, and feasts of Pleasure,
Ruby lips, and joyous laughter.

Then the buzz of life grew softer,
Broken only by the tramping
Of a troop of bacchanalians,
Reeling through the streets deserted,
With their loud uproarious language.
Still the girlish, grief-worn figure,
Croucht in dark and dreary corner
Of that small corpse-crowded graveyard,
With her pallid face turned upwards,
On a little mound of dark dirt.

The gray herald of the Morning,
Dapple-clad, came forth to tell the
Sleepy world his Lord was coming.
Straight the drowsy buildings leapt up
Like huge giants from their slumber,
And, with faces flusht and ruddy,
Waited for the King of Morning!

Lo! he comes from far-off mountains,
With a glory-robe about him,
With a robe of gold and purple;
And a buzz of mighty wonder
Rises as, with step majestic,
And with glance sublime, he walks on,
Gathering his robe about him,
To his West-embowered palace,
Still the girlish, grief-worn figure,
Croucht in dark and dreary corner
Of that small corpse-crowded graveyard,
With her pallid face turned upwards,
To and fro in silence rocking,
On a little mound of black dirt!

When the box which held her treasure
Had been borne from home and buried,
She had followed, undetected;
And when all had left the graveyard
She had crept to that small hillock,
Trembling like a half-crushed lily;
Yearning towards the child beneath her,
Yet, the while, to earth-life clinging
By a link—bruised but unbroken.

Whilst at home her frantic husband
Called aloud in vain for "Blanche!"

IV.

Hours flew by like honey-laden
Bees, with sting and honey laden:
Days, like ghostly shadows, flitted
By; and weeks and months rolled onward
With a never-ceasing rolling,
Like the blue bright waves a-rolling,
Never quiet—never ending!

Still the girlish, grief-worn figure,
Might be seen, with vacant glances,
Threading through life's rushing whirlpool—
Gliding, like a sunbeam, o'er it—
To that small corpse-crowded graveyard;
Where for hours she'd sit and murmur,
With a wild and plaintive wailing;
"Come back, darling! Come back, darling;
Come, for I am broken-hearted."

When at home, with nimble fingers
Oft she'd clothe a doll and call it
Her sweet babe—her darling baby—
Her long-absent, long-lost baby!
Her fair bonny-featured baby!
And her husband would bend o'er her,
With low words of pure affection—
As when first he woo'd and won her.

And her home was not the dungeon—
The sad, dark, and dismal dungeon—
The cold death-vault of her infant,
With the drear and ghastly rushlight:
But a home of cottage comfort,
Every sweet of love and loving.
Yes! the wan and pallid mother
Found on that dark night, a husband—
Found a home; but—lost her reason!

V.

"Do not, for the world, awake her!
 'Twere her death-knell to awake her!"
 Urged the old and careful nursewife.
 "Let me look but for a moment—
 Gaze but for one little moment!"
 'Twas the voice of Charles that pleaded:
 Softly, then, he drew the curtain,
 Gently, fearful, drew the curtain—
 "Charles!—dear Charles!" a faint voice murmured,
 In a tone so weak and lowly,
 Sweetly weak and soul-subduing.
 "Blanche!—my sweet one!" gasp'd the husband,
 "Dost thou know me?—God, I thank thee!"
 Then he threw his arms around her,
 And, amidst a shower of kisses,
 Truest, purest, grateful kisses,
 Drew the loved one to his bosom:
 And the babe that nestled near her
 Covered he with warm caresses.
 Reason, like a golden sunbeam
 On a lily-cup, had lightened
 Her sweet soul so dark and turbid—
 For three years so darkly turbid;
 Three long years so dark and turbid.
 "Charles, my dream has been a sad one,"
 Spake she, like expiring music,
 Shadowed with a mournful sadness.
 "I have dreamt they stole my baby,
 Buried my dear, darling infant!"
 Then she took the babe and kiss'd it,
 Presst it to her snowy bosom;
 And, with voice low, soft, and grateful,
 Murmured, "Charles, I am *so* happy!
 Do not weep—I'm *very* happy!"

VI.

Reader! 'tis no idle fiction:
 Once a lovely, laughing maiden—
 Lovely as a Summer morning,
 Lived and loved, as I have told thee;
 Lost her babe, as I have told thee;
 And a mental night came o'er her
 Like a ghastly, gaping fissure,
 Like a chasm of empty darkness.
 As a new-made grave in Summer
 Bulges up dark and unsightly,
 With the bright blue sky above it,
 And the daisies smiling round it,
 So, with all its doleful darkness,
 Fell the dream of that fair sufferer
 O'er her mind with inward canker,
 Like a slug upon the rose-leaf!
 Then she woke, as I have told thee,
 After three years' trance-like sleeping,
 Knowing not she had been sleeping;
 And for months she never doubted
 That the child she loved and fondled
 Was her long-dead darling first-born!
 Happy hearts all feared to tell her:
 Death in Life again they dreaded.

Now no Death in Life they fear;
 Blanche is happy all the year.

SONG OF THE STRIKE.

1874.

With features haggard and worn;
With a child in its coffin—dead;
With a wife and sons o'er a fireless hearth,
In a hovel with never a bed;
While the wind through lattice and door
Is driving the sleet and rain,
A workman strong, with sinews of steel,
Sits singing this dismal refrain:
 Strike! Strike! Strike!
 Let the bright wheels of Industry rust:
 Let us earn in our shame
 A pauper's name,
 Or eat of a criminal crust.

Ah! What though the little ones die,
And women sink weary and weak;
And the paths of life, with suffering rife,
Be paved with the hearts that break?
While souls, famine-smitten and crusht,
Seek food in the skies away,
This workman strong, with sinews of steel,
Sits singing his terrible lay:
 Strike! Strike! Strike!
 Let the bright wheels of Industry rust:
 Let us earn in our shame
 A pauper's name,
 Or eat of a criminal crust.

And while the dark workhouse gate
Is besieged by a famishing crowd,
Forge, hammer, and mine, with their mission divine,
Lie dumb, like a corpse in a shroud.
And Plenty, with beckon and smile,
Points up at the golden rain
That is ready to fall to beautify all,
But is checked by the dread refrain:
 Strike! Strike! Strike!
 Let the bright wheels of Industry rust:
 Let us earn in our shame
 A pauper's name,
 Or eat of a criminal crust.

Alas! That a spirit so brave,
That a heart so loyal and true,
Should crouch in the dust with a sightless trust
At the nod of a selfish few.
Alas! That the olden ties—
The links binding Master and Man— (*a*)
Should be broken in twain, and this ghostly refrain
Cloud all with its shadowy ban:
 Strike! Strike! Strike!
 Let the bright wheels of Industry rust:
 Let us earn in our shame
 A pauper's name,
 Or eat of a criminal crust.

(*a*) In a recent address to his workmen, Mr. Robert Crawshay, the extensive ironmaster, of Cyfarthfa Castle, said: "The happy time has passed, and black times have come. You threw your old master overboard, and took to strangers, and broke the tie between yourselves and me. When the deputation

came up to me at the Castle, and I asked them to give me a fortnight to work off an old order of rails, and they refused, I then told them the old tie was broken; and from that day to this it has."

NATURE'S HEROES.

DEDICATED TO THE WELSH MINERS WHO BRAVELY RESCUED THEIR FELLOWS AT THE INUNDATION OF THE TYNEWYDD COLLIERY.

FRIDAY, APRIL 20TH, 1877. (*a*)

Hero from instinct, and by nature brave,
Is he who risks his life a life to save;
Who sees no peril, be it e'er so great,
Where helpless human lives for succour wait;
Who looks on death with selfless disregard;
Whose sense of duty brings its own reward.
Such are the Braves who now inspire my pen:
Pride of the gods—and heroes among men.
The warrior who, on glorious battle plain,
Falls bravely fighting—dies to live again
In fame hereafter: this he, falling, knows;
And painless hence are War's most painful blows.
This is the hope that buoys his latest breath,
Stanches the wound, and plucks the sting from death.
But humbler hearts that sally forth to fight
'Gainst foes unseen, in realms of pitchy night,
Ne'er dreaming that the chivalrous affray
Will e'er be heard of—more than heroes they,
And more deserving they their country's praise
Than nobler names that wear their country's bays.
Duty, which glistens in the garish beam
That makes it beautiful—as jewels gleam
When sunlight pours upon them—lacks the pow'r,
The grandeur, which, in dark and secret hour,
Crowns lowly brows with bravery more bright
Than fame achieved in Glory's dazzling light.
Nature's heroics need but suns to shine
To show the world their origin divine:
And as the plant in darksome cave will grow
Whether warm sunshine bless its face or no,
A secret impulse yearning day and night
In hourly striving tow'rds the unseen light,
So lives the hero-germ in every heart—
Of earthy life the bright, the heavenly part:
The pow'r that brings the blossom from the sod,
And gives to man an attribute of God.

(*a*) Four men and a boy were entombed for nine days, from noon on Wednesday, April 11th, to mid-day on Friday, April 20th, in the Tynewydd Pit, Rhondda Valley. They were at length rescued by the almost super-human efforts of a band of brave workers, who, at the risk of their lives, cut through 38 yards of the solid coal-rock in order to get at their companions, working day and night, and, at times, regarding every stroke a prelude to almost certain death. Their heroic exertions were crowned with success, and they received the recorded thanks of their Queen and country, having the further honour bestowed upon them of being the first recipients of the Albert medal, given by Her Majesty for acts of exceptional bravery.

ELEGY

ON THE DEATH OF A LITTLE CHILD.

He came:

As red-lipt rosebuds in the Summer come:
A tiny angel, let from Heav'n to roam,
With laughing love to clothe our childless home
The God-sent cherub came.

He lived

One little hour; What bliss was in the space!
Our lives that day were fringed with fresher grace
And in the casket of our darling's face
What honeyed hopes were hived.

He droopt:

And o'er our souls a mighty sorrow swept,
With many fears the night-long watch we kept,
Tearful and sad: Yet even as we wept
Our star-faced beauty droopt.

He died:

And darksome grew our life's bright morning sun.
Gloomy the day so radiantly begun.
What joy, what joy, without our darling one,
Is all the world beside?

Tis past:

The perfumed rosebud of our life is dead:
Helpless we bend, and mourn the cherub fled,
Even as the bruised reed bends low its head
Before the cruel blast.

MAGDALENE.

Penitent! Penniless!

Where can she go?
Her poor heart is aching
With many a woe.

Repentant—though sinning:

Remorseful and sad,
She weeps in the moonlight
While others are glad.

Shrink not away from her,

Stained though she be:

She once, as the purest,

Was sinless and free:

And penitence bringeth

A shroud for her shame:

Hide it forgetfully;

Pity—nor blame.

Penniless! Penitent!

Gone every hope:

Warm lights are gleaming

From basement to cope.

Plenty surroundeth her:

Starving and stark,

Lonely she pleadeth

Out in the dark.
The cold moon above her,
The black stream below,
No friendly voice near her:
Where can she go?
Turned every face from her
Closed every door:
Plash in the moonlight!
She pleadeth no more.

LOVE WALKS WITH HUMANITY YET.

Though toilers for gold stain their souls in a strife
That enslaves them to Avarice grim,
Though Tyranny's hand fills the wine cup of life
With gall, surging over the brim;
Though Might in dark hatefulness reigns for a time,
And Right by Wrong's frownings be met;
Love lives—a guest-angel from heaven's far clime,
And walks with humanity yet.

And still the world, Balaam-like, blind as the night,
Sees not the fair seraph stand by
That beckons it onward to Morning and Light,
Lark-like, from the sod to the sky;
Love, slighted, smiles on, as the Thorn-crown'd of old,
Sun-featured and Godlike in might,
Its magic touch changing life's dross into gold,
Earth's darkness to Paradise bright.

As gems on Death's fingers flash up from the tomb
And rays o'er its loneliness shed;
As flowerets in early Spring tremblingly bloom
Ere Winter's cold ice-breath has fled;
So Love, rainbow-like, smiles through sadness and tears,
Bridging up from the earth to the sky;
The grave 'neath its glance a bright blossom-robe wears,
As the Night smiles when Morn dances by.

The rich mellow sunshine that kisses the earth,
The flow'rs that laugh up from the sod,
The song-birds that psalm out their jubilant mirth
Heart-rapt in the presence of God,
The sweet purling brooklet, with voice soft and low,
The sea-shouts, like peals from above,
The sky-kissing mountains, the valleys below,
All tell us to live and to love.

THE TWO TREES.

A FABLE.

Two trees once grew beside a running brook:
An Alder, one, of unassuming mien:
His mate, a Poplar, who, with lofty look,
Wore, with a rustling flirt, his robe of green.

With pompous front the Poplar mounted high,
And curried converse with each swelling breeze;
While Alder seemed content to live and die
A lowly shrub among surrounding trees.

And many a little ragged urchin came
And plucked the juicy berries from the bough
Of teeming Alder, trading with the same,
Thus earning oft an honest meal, I trow:
But stuck-up Poplar glanced with pride supreme
At such low doings—such plebeian ties—
Cocked up his nose, and thought—oh! fatal dream!—
To grow, and grow, until he reached the skies.

Each Autumn Alder brought forth berries bright,
And freely gave to all who chose to take:
Each Summer, Poplar added to his height,
And wore his robe with loftier, prouder shake,
One day the woodman, axe on shoulder, came,
And laid our soaring Poplar 'mongst the dead,
Stripped off his robe, and sent him—O the shame!—
To prop the gable of a donkey shed.

MORAL.

Whoe'er, like Alder, strives to aid
The lowly where he can,
Shall win respect from every soul
That bears the stamp of man:
But he who, Poplar-like, o'er-rides
Poor mortals as they pass,
Will well be used if used to prop
A stable for an ass.

STANZAS:

WRITTEN IN THE SHADOW OF A VERY DARK CLOUD.

"Never saw I the righteous forsaken,"
Once sang the good Psalmist of old;
"Nor his seed for a crust humbly begging."
How oft has the story been told!
But the story would ne'er have been written,
Had the writer but lived in our day,
When thousands with hunger are smitten—
No matter how plead they or pray.

They may say there's a lining of silver
To the darkest—the dreariest cloud:
That garniture, white fringe, and flowers,
Grace the black pall, the coffin, and shroud.
But the lining at best is but vapour;
Silk and lacquer to nothingness fade
After hearts in their sorrow have broken
O'er the wrecks which Adversity made.

They may say that the box of Pandora
Holds reward in the bottom at last
For those who strive on in the searching.
And forget the fierce blows of the Past.

But late comes the voice of approval,
And worthless the cup and the crust,
When, in striving, by Death overtaken,
We lie lone and low in the dust.

They may say that right-living and thinking
Will keep the grim wolf from the door;
But how many Saints are there sinking
Whose crime is to live and be poor!
Let the knave promulgate the deception,
And dress the world's wounds with such salve;
It is false—while rank Villainy prospers,
And Virtue 's permitted to starve.

They may say—but mankind is a fiction
That puzzles the wisest to read;
And life is a vast contradiction—
A fable—a folly indeed.
He happy in heart is who careth
No jot for mankind or its ways,
To defy the world's frown he who dareth,
Unconscious of blame or of praise.

VERSES:

WRITTEN AFTER READING A BIOGRAPHY OF HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BEAUFORT, TO WHOM THESE LINES ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

1877.

Like a Sea with its source in the distance belost,
That upholds on its breast and contains in its heart
Countless treasures and gems of which none know the cost—
All the brightest achievements of Science and Art:

So the proud race of Somerset flows down the Past,
With its Statesmen and Warriors—kinsmen of Kings:
With its learning and culture—its heritage vast—
And its virtues which inborn Nobility brings.

In the Wars of the Roses three Somersets gave
Up their lives for their Monarch in danger's dark hour,
And the rain of their hearts'-blood that watered each grave
Brought a still brighter flush to their Destiny's flow'r.

And when men the fair features of Liberty smeared
With the stain of Licentiousness through the dark Past,
'Twas a Somerset England's proud Standard upreared
O'er the stronghold of Raglan—and bled to the last:

A stronghold whose name once a Warrior bore
Who with courage undaunted chivalrously led
The brave soldiers of England through carnage and gore;
Where a Czar bade defiance—a Somerset bled.

Long the foremost in loyalty, forum, and field;
Where the sword wins renown or where politics grace:
Always first to be doing—the latest to yield:
All these are the virtues, the pride of thy race.

In the face of thy life like a mirror we see
All the lives of true Englishmen shaped as thine own,

For the tastes and pursuits which form nature in thee
Are the food from whose sustenance Britons have grown.

When Philanthropy leads, in its fights for the Poor,
No sincerer heart follows more keenly than thine;
For there's nought else in life hath more pow'r to allure,
Where the soul takes delight in the mission divine.

All the ages the wild storms of Faction have raved,
Though alluring the paths in which traitors have trod,
Not a moment hast thou or thine ancestors waived
In your love for Old England, its Throne, and its God.

A SIMILE.

In early Morning, tall and gaunt,
Our shadows reach across the street;
Like giant sprites they seem to haunt
The things we meet.

But at noon-tide more dwarfed they fall
Around about each sun-crown'd thing;
Yet lengthen out, and grow more tall,
Towards evening.

And thus Dependence among men
Is largely seen in Childhood's stage;
At Mid-life hides; but comes again
With hoary age.

THE TWO SPARROWS.

A FABLE.

Two Sparrows, prisoned in a room,
Kept, every now and then,
Dashing against the window-panes,
Which threw them back again:
And many a time, with trembling heart,
They flew towards the light,
But something which they could not see
Still stopped them in their flight:

A-tired they hopped about the floor,
And watched the sunshine gay,
And each one asked within himself
"Why ca'nt I get away?"
Another try: another dash,
As though with heart and soul;
And one, by chance, the barrier broke,
And bounded through the hole.

His comrade heard the merry chirp
He gave till out of sight,
Then, fluttering round, to free himself
He tried with all his might.

But at that moment Puss came in,
And on him cast an eye,
Then took the trembler in her claws
And taught him how to die.

MORAL.

How oft in life, though never meant,
Men gain their point by Accident,
Or Chance—that foe to 'stablished rules;
The guiding-star of knaves and fools.

FLOATING AWAY.

A maiden sat musingly down by the side
Of Life's river that flowed at her feet,
And she watcht the dark stream 'neath the willows glide
In its voiceless and stately retreat.

'Twas a solemn tide—
Deep, dark, and wide,
And fringed with a sedgy fray:
In the morning—at night—
Through darkness and light,
It floated—floated away.

The maid was light-hearted, with features as fair
As the sunbeams that played o'er her face,
And her bosom was garnisht with flowerets rare
That gave to it many a grace:
And she playfully sung,
As she plucked and flung
Each blossom as bright as the day
From her breast to the stream
That like a drear dream
Went floating—floating away.

The sun in its brightness illumined the sky;
The lark loudly carolled aloft;
The breezes swept onward with many a sigh,
And kissed with caresses soft.
Still, still the fair maid
By the dark river strayed,
And flung forth in thoughtless play
Each bud from her breast
In wilful unrest,
And laught as it floated away.

Up the tall pine trees clomb the shadows of eve
To welcome the coming night;
And the recreant bird in the twilight was heard
Wending nest-ward in plaintive plight;
When, too long delay'd,
In haste rose the maid
Heart-tired of her flirting play.
And she saw the last gleam
Of her flow'rs down the stream
Floating—floating away.

The blossoms so chaste that had made her more fair
With their sweetness, their perfume, and light,

Were gone—and her bosom, now cheerless and bare,
Grew cold in the dewy night.
Thus they who, in youth,
Mistake flirting for truth,
And fritter their love but in play,
Will behold, like the maid,
All their brightest charms fade,
And floating for ever away.

A FLORAL FABLE.

A sweet geranium once, in pride of place
'Mongst rare exotics in a Palace lived;
With watchful care from tender hands it thrived,
Standing in lofty sphere with odorous grace.

The smiling Sun, each morning making call,
Such tender looks and such sweet kisses gave,
That in a little time, true as I live,
He to the tender flow'r was all in all.

But true love's course, 'tis said, ne'er smooth did run:
The pretty flower was sent, now here, now there,
Until at length she found more humble sphere,
Far, far removed from kisses of the sun.

Here, with dejected look, she pined anew,
Placed in the lattice of a lowly cot,
In pent-up alley, fever-fraught and hot,
And wore from day to day a sicklier hue.

No blessed sunlight flusht her dainty cheek,
No cooling breeze refreshed her pallid brow,
Droopful she stood—methinks I see her now,
Nursing the grief of which she might not speak.

A blinding wall shut out her darling sun,
Tow'rds which, with prayerful arm, she hourly reached
In mute appeal; and lovingly beseeched,
As 'twere, to gaze upon the worshipped one.

No soul e'er panted its dear love to see
With dreams more tender than the dying plant—
Hoping and yearning, with a hungering want,
Sun-ward in all her heart's idolatry.

But Ah! the fickle sun, from flow'r to flow'r,
In lusty love did revel all the day,
Nor thought of her, now dying far away,
Whom he had kissed through many a rosy hour.

In dead of night, when great hearts die, the storm
Swept down the barrier that blocked out the light,
And in the morn, refreshing, pure, and bright,
The sun came leaping in, so soft and warm.

But sunshine came too late. The blossom brave,
While yearning for dear light and warmth, had died.
As men will sometimes die waiting the tide
That flows at length to eddy round—a grave.

"RING DOWN THE CURTAIN."

"Ring down the Curtain" were the last dying words of a young and beautiful American actress, who died of consumption when in the zenith of her popularity.

Ring down the curtain;
So ends the play!
Night-time is coming;
Past is the day.
Sang I in sadness
Adorned with a smile;
Pourtraying gladness
And dying the while!
How my brow burneth—
With fever oppressed:
How my heart yearneth
For silence and rest.
Soothe me to slumber:
Why should ye sigh?
Ring down the curtain;
'Tis pleasant to die!

Ring down the curtain:
Critics depart!
The end of your blaming—
A wearisome heart:
Fame which your praise brought—
A Summer-day cloud:
Fruit of my toiling—
A coffin and shroud!
Light though, and fitful,
The dreams of my life,
My soul like a vessel
From ocean of strife
Calmly and peaceful
To her haven doth fly:
Ring down the curtain—
'Tis pleasant to die!

THE TELEGRAPH POST.

A FABLE.

A telegraph post by the roadside stood
In a village humble and fair,
And he raised his head, did this column of wood,
As high as he could in the air:
"Oh, Oh!" quoth he, as along the wire
The news from the wide world through
Hurried backwards and forwards in words of fire,
Breathing promises fair, or threatenings dire,
Never heeding the post as they flew.

"Oh, Oh!" quoth he: "That I should stand here
"And bear on my shoulders high
"Such an upstart lot, who no manners have got
"To pass *me*, who upraises them, by!
"I'll stand it no longer,"—and thinking, no doubt,
To bring down the wires in his fall,

He stumbled: but no! for above and below
The other posts stood—the wires wouldn't let go:
And our post couldn't tumble at all.

And there he hung like a helpless thing,
Till his place by another was ta'en;
And the foolish post with dry sticks a host
On the firewood stack was lain.
"You ignorant dolt!" said a Raven wise
Who sat on the wall bright in feather—
"You must have been blind. When to tumble inclined
"You should with your neighbouring posts have combined
And have all stood or fallen together."

MORAL.

Units, as units, are helpless things
In the soul-stirring struggles of life;
But Success is the laurel which Unity brings
To crown the true heart in the strife.

BREAKING ON THE SHORE.

I saw the sunbeams dancing o'er the ocean
One Summer-time. Bright was each laughing wave;
I felt a thrill to see their sweet emotion,
Each happy in the kiss the other gave:
But Winter came with all its storm and sadness,
And every wave that kissed and smiled before
Bid long farewell to dreams of sunny gladness
And broke its heart upon the stony shore.

So like the Summer crown'd with many a blessing
She dawn'd upon this lonely heart of mine:
And life grew lovely with her sweet caressing
As blooms the thorn claspt by the bright woodbine:
But now, Alas! in churchyard bleak she's lying,
And dearest joys are gone to come no more:
Like yonder wave, for absent sunbeam sighing,
My heart with grief is breaking on life's shore.

HURRAH FOR THE RIFLE CORPS

SET TO MUSIC AND PUBLISHED IN 1856.

The fair Knights of old, with trappings of gold,
And falchions that gleamed by their side,
Went forth to the fight with hearts gay and light
To war 'gainst Oppression and Pride:
And though long since dead, it must not be said
That the proud reign of Chivalry 's o'er—
There are many as bold as the brave Knights of old
To be found in the Rifle Corps.
Hurrah! Hurrah! for the Rifle Corps;
May they ever be ready to stand

In defence of the Right, and be willing to fight
For the Queen and their native land.

Old England intends with the world to be friends,
While Honour with Peace is combined;
But the moment her foe lifts his hand for a blow,
All friendship she flings to the wind.
Should an enemy dare e'en as much as prepare
To bring War's alarms to our shore,
He will find every coast bristling o'er with a host
Of the brave-hearted Rifle Corps.
Hurrah! Hurrah! for the Rifle Corps;
May they ever be ready to stand
In defence of the Right, and be willing to fight
For the Queen and their native land.

Let the wine goblet brim with red wine to the rim—
Let Beauty look on all the while,
As with eyes that approve in the language of love
She crowns the proud toast with a smile:
May each Rifle be seen round the Throne and the Queen
Should danger e'er threaten our shore:
And with many a shout let the echo ring out—
Three cheers for the Rifle Corps!
Hurrah! Hurrah! for the Rifle Corps;
May they ever be ready to stand
In defence of the Right, and be willing to fight
For the Queen and their native land.

CAREFUL WHEN YOU FIND A FRIEND.

SET TO MUSIC AND PUBLISHED.

O if in life you'd friends obtain,
Be careful how you choose them;
For real friends are hard to gain,
And trifling things may lose them.
Hold out your hand to every palm
That reaches forth to greet you;
But keep your heart for those alone
Who with pure friendship meet you.
Then if in life a friend you'd find,
Be careful how you choose one;
True friends are scarce among mankind:
A trifling thing may lose one.

A friend your heart may now relieve,
And one day want relieving;
So if from others you'd receive
Ne'er shrink from wisely giving.
Be grateful when you find a friend—
The heart that's thankless—spurn it;
Let conscience guide you to the end—
Take friendship and return it.
Then if in life a friend you'd find,
Be careful how you choose one;
True friends are scarce among mankind:
A trifling thing may lose one.

When days grow cold the swallow flies,
Till sunshine bright returneth;

When life grows dark false friendship dies:
True friendship brighter burneth.
An angel fair, twin-born of Love,
It lights life's pathway for us;
And like the stars that shine above,
At night beams brighter o'er us.
Then if in life a friend you'd find,
Be careful how you choose one;
True friends are scarce among mankind:
A trifling thing may lose one.

BROTHERLY LOVE.

SET TO MUSIC AND PUBLISHED.

There's a place in this world, free from trouble and strife,
Which the wise try their hardest to find,
Where the heart that encounters the sharp thorns of life
Will meet nought that's harsh or unkind;
Where each tries his best to make joy for the rest—
In sunshine or shadow the same;
Where all who assemble in Friendship's behest
Are Brothers in heart and in name.
Let brotherly love continue—
Let the flag of the Craft be unfurled;
We 'll join hand-in-hand
While united we stand:
'Tis the way to get on in the world.

There's a pleasure in life go wherever we may,
'Tis one of all pleasures the best—
To meet as we travel by night or by day
One friend that's more true than the rest.
Whose heart beats responsive to Friendship and Love,
In Faith, Hope, and Charity's call;
Who, blind to our follies, is slow to reprove,
And friendly whate'er may befall.
Let brotherly love continue—
Let the flag of the Craft be unfurled;
We 'll join hand-in-hand
While united we stand:
'Tis the way to get on in the world.

Then let us, my brothers, through life's busy scene,
Should sadness or sorrow appear,
Be true to our promise, as others have been,
And strive the dark pathway to cheer.
Our stay is but short in this valley below;
On all sides we troubles may scan;
Let us help one another wherever we go,
And make them as light as we can.
Let brotherly love continue—
Let the flag of the Craft be unfurled;
We 'll join hand-in-hand
While united we stand:
'Tis the way to get on in the world.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE.

WRITTEN DURING THE CRIMEAN WAR.

(FOR MUSIC.)

Let the proud Russian boast of his granite-bound coast,
And his armies that challenge the world;
Let him stand in his might against Freedom and Right,
With his flag of Oppression unfurled:
Old England and France hand-in-hand will advance
In the wide path of Progress and Glory,
That will win them a name on the bright scroll of Fame,
Everlasting in song and in story.
Old England and France, then, for ever;
Brave France and Old England for ever;
And while the world stands may the glorious Twin-lands
Be united in friendship together.

Both by land and by sea this land of the free—
Britannia, the Queen of the wave,
Proudly stands side by-side, and in Friendship allied,
With France, the gallant and the brave:
Whilst the stern Tyrant raves at his nobles and slaves,
Old England and France frown defiance,
And both bravely press on till the goal shall be won—
Then Hurrah! for the glorious alliance!
Old England and France, then, for ever;
Brave France and Old England for ever;
And while the world stands may the glorious Twin-lands
Be united in friendship together.

AGAINST THE STREAM.

(FOR MUSIC.)

How oft, in life's rough battle, we,
Struck down by hard adversity,
In saddest hour of trial see
No friend with helping hand.
Then in despair beneath the wave
We sink, with none to help or save.
When if we 'd been both bold and brave
We might have reached the land.
Should things go wrong this is the plan;
Forget the past as best you can,
Then turn your sleeves up like a man
And pull against the stream.

Yes, pull against the stream, my friends;
That lane is long which never ends;
That bow ne'er made which never bends
To shoot its arrow home.
If twenty times you miss your aim,
Or ten times twenty lose the game,
Keep up your spirits all the same—
Your turn is sure to come.
Should things go wrong this is the plan;
Forget the past as best you can,

Then turn your sleeves up like a man
And pull against the stream.

In love or pleasure, work or play,
Men cannot always win the day,
For mixed among life's prizes gay
What hosts of blanks are found.
Though skies to-day be overcast—
Though bitter blows the wintry blast—
The Summer days will come at last
With hope and sunshine crown'd.
Should things go wrong this is the plan;
Forget the past as best you can,
Then turn your sleeves up like a man,
And pull against the stream.

WRECKED IN SIGHT OF HOME.

(FOR MUSIC.)

The ship through the sunshine sails over the sea,
From many a distant clime comes she,
Freighted with treasure, see how she flies
Cheerily over the foam.
Hearts are all happy, cheeks are all bright,
The long-absent land appears in sight;
Little they dream that the beautiful prize
Will be wrecked in sight of home!

The storm breaks above them, the thunders roll,
The ship gets aground on the hidden shoal,
And the turbulent waters dash over the barque,
And cries from the doomed ship come.
Till nothing is left the tale to tell,
But the angry roar of the surging swell;
So the grand old vessel goes down in the dark—
Wrecked in sight of home.

And thus as we wander through life's rugged way,
Fighting its battles as best we may,
Seeking in fancy a far-distant spot
To rest when we've ceased to roam:
And just as the haven of comfort appears,
Our hopes are all turned into sadness and tears,
We droop near the threshold—ne'er enter the cot—
Wrecked in sight of home.

SONNET.

I could not love thee more, if life depended
On one more link being fixed to Affection's chain;
Nor cease to love thee—save my passion ended
With life; for love and life were blanks if twain!
I could not love thee less; the flame, full-statured
Leaps from the soul, and knows no infancy;
But like the sun—majestic, golden-featured,

Soars like a heav'n of beauty from life's sea.
I would not love thee for thy radiant tresses,
Rich budding mouth, and eyes twin-born of Light.
No: Charms less fadeful thy dear heart possesses—
Gems that will flash through life's noontide and night.
But simple words fall short of what I'll prove:
Accept them but as lispings of my love.

SEBASTOPOL IS WON.

1855.

SET TO MUSIC AND PUBLISHED.

Dance on! ye vaulting joy-bells, shout
In spirit-gladdening notes,
Whilst mimic thunders bellow out
From cannons' brazen throats:
"Tyrant! awake ye, tremblingly;
The advent has begun:
Hark! to the mighty jubilant cry—
"Sebastopol is won!"
Ring out, rejoice, and clap your hands,
Shout, patriots, everyone!
A burst of joy let rend the sky:
Sebastopol is won!

No dream of brilliant conquest 'twas,
Nor selfish hope of gain,
That sent the blood mad-rushing through
And through each Briton's vein;
No! such was not the spell that nerved
Old England for the fight,
Her war cry with her brother braves'
Was "Freedom, God, and Right!"
Ring out, rejoice, and clap your hands,
Shout, patriots, everyone!
A burst of joy let rend the sky:
Sebastopol is won!

Shame! shame! upon the craven souls
Of those who trembling stood,
And would not—dare not—lend a hand
To stay this feast of blood!
Whose cringing spirits lowly bowed
Before the despot-glance
Of him whose star now pales before
Brave England! Mighty France!
Ring out, rejoice, and clap your hands,
Shout, patriots, everyone!
A burst of joy let rend the sky;
Sebastopol is won!

Tho' hoary grows the mother-land
Her enemies may learn
That 'neath her smile so queenly-grand
There lives a purpose stern!
Then Britons chant exulting paeans,
Long pent-up joy release;
From yonder flaming pile upsoars

The Morning Sun of Peace! (*a*)
Ring out, rejoice, and clap your hands,
Shout, patriots, everyone!
A burst of joy let rend the sky:
Sebastopol is won!

(*a*) I am sorry to find that the aspiration here embodied has been falsified. War is now raging (1877), and from precisely the same causes as those which led to the Crimean war, nearly a quarter of a century ago.

HOLD YOUR TONGUE.

SET TO MUSIC AND PUBLISHED.

I've often thought, as through the world I've travelled to and fro,
How many folks about me—above me and below—
Might make this life more happy, if old as well as young
Would bear in mind the maxim which bids them hold their tongue.
Hold your tongue—hold your tongue—you'll ne'er be thought a dunce:
Hold your tongue and think twice before you loose it once:
Hold your tongue—for quiet folks are oft reputed wise:
Hold your tongue, but open wide your ears and your eyes.

How oft we find that words unkind unhappy lives will make;
That loving hearts through idle words will bleed and sometimes break;
What mischief have we scattered all our bosom friends among,
Which might have been avoided had we only held our tongue.
Hold your tongue—hold your tongue: you'll ne'er be thought a dunce:
Hold your tongue and think twice before you loose it once:
Hold your tongue—for quiet folks are oft reputed wise:
Hold your tongue, but open wide your ears and your eyes.

The kindly deeds men do in life their own reward will bring;
But where they come with trumpet-words, their sweetness bears a sting:
The silent giver 's most beloved right-thinking folks among;
So when you do a kindly thing, be sure you hold your tongue.
Hold your tongue—hold your tongue: you'll ne'er be thought a dunce:
Hold your tongue and think twice before you loose it once:
Hold your tongue—for quiet folks are oft reputed wise:
Hold your tongue, but open wide your ears and your eyes.

Yes: hold your tongue, except in life when days of sorrow come;
Then speak to raise a drooping heart, or cheer a darksome home.
If none of these—let silence be the burden of your song:
He holds his own, nor hurts his friend, who learns to hold his tongue.
Hold your tongue—hold your tongue; you'll ne'er be thought a dunce:
Hold your tongue and think twice before you loose it once:
Hold your tongue—for quiet folks are oft reputed wise:
Hold your tongue, but open wide your ears and your eyes.

MY MOTHER'S PORTRAIT.

SET TO MUSIC AND PUBLISHED.

Ah! Well can I remember:

"She'll come no more," they said.
Her last sweet words, they told me,
Were blessings on my head.
Ah! Well can I remember
What sadness all things wore
In childhood, when they told me
"She'll come—she'll come no more!"
Awake or asleep,
Sweet prize above all other;
Close to my heart I'll keep
The likeness of my mother.

Ah! Well can I remember,
Those eyes were filled with tears—
The face that smiled upon me
Seemed sad with many fears:
"Who'll care for thee, my sweet one?"
"Who'll love thee now?" she cried:
Then from her arms they bore me—
'Twas then, they said, she died.
Awake or asleep,
Sweet prize above all other:
Close to my heart I'll keep
The likeness of my mother.

What though, through cloud and sunshine,
Bright thoughts around me cling:
Though friends in kindness greet me,
No mother's love they bring.
I see her form before me;
I see the sad, sweet smile;
And yet my heart is lonely,
So lonely, all the while.
Awake or asleep,
Sweet prize above all other:
Close to my heart I'll keep
The likeness of my mother.

NEVER MORE.

FOR MUSIC.

A tear-drop glistened on her cheek,
Then died upon the sand.
With aching heart, as though 'twould break,
She waved her trembling hand.
And as the vessel cleft the foam
And fled the rocky shore,
She sought alone her cottage home
And murmur'd "Never more!"

He ne'er returned. She droopt for him
With all her girlish love;
And oft her thoughts would lightly skim
The sea, like Noah's dove.
But every wave that danced along
Like silver to the shore
Brought back the burden of her song,
And murmur'd "Never more!"

LINES

ON THE DEATH OF THE REV. CANON JENKINS, VICAR OF ABERDARE.

If the great heart of Lifetime in unison beats
With Eternity's throb through Infinity's space,
Then our thoughts of thy goodness, which love oft repeats,
May vibrate in thy bosom, though lost be thy face.

Thy life was a martyrdom: noble the part
Of self-abnegation thou playd'st for the Poor;
Whose gratitude fixes thy name in each heart,
Where in Memory's shrine 'twill for ever endure.

FILIAL INGRATITUDE.

A FABLE.

An oak tree falling on the mead,
By woodman's stroke laid low,
Saw, as a handle to the axe
Which wrought the fatal blow,
A bough that once upon his breast
Drew nurture from his heart,
And as a tender, helpless shoot,
Grew of his life a part.
"Woe! woe!" he sighed, as on the earth
He drew expiring breath:
"That what I nurtured at its birth
Should rend my heart in death!"

THE VINE AND THE SUNFLOWER.

A FABLE.

A very young Vine in a garden grew,
And she longed for a lover—as maidens do;
And many a dear little tendril threw
About her in innocent spirit.
For she yearned to climb upward—who is it that don't?
Only give *man* a chance, and then see if he wont:
To rise in the world, though some fail to own 't,
Is a weakness we all inherit.

So this very young Vine, with excusable taste,
And knowing such things for her good were placed,
Looked all round the garden with glances chaste
For a something her faith to pin to.
The fair little wisher had thoughts of her own,
Nor cared for the pleasure of climbing alone;
To perhaps the same feeling most ladies are prone,
But that question we'll not now go into.

The first thing that came in her youthful way
Was a gold-featured Sunflower—gaudy and gay—

Who dressed himself up in resplendent array,
And gazed on the sun as an equal.
"Look! look!" quoth the Vine: "He's a lover of mine:
"And see how the gold round his face doth shine!"
So at once she began round the stem to twine;
But mark what befel in the sequel.

One morning, soon after, a hurricane rose:
And as most people know, when the storm-god blows,
The hollow of heart is the thing that goes
To the ground—and the wind sweeps past it.
So the arrogant Sunflower, lofty in pride,
And hollow from root to branch beside,
Soon tumbled before the stormy tide,
And lay where the wind had cast it.

It was well for the Vine that her tendrils' hold
Was a clasp that a moment served to unfold;
So she turned from the thing that she thought was gold
With a heart for the warning grateful:
And that which had dazzled her youthful eyes—
Which filled her young bosom with sweet surprise—
The flow'r which she took for a golden prize—
Became all to her that was hateful.

POETIC PROVERBS.

I.

"If thou be surety for thy friend, thou art snared with the words of thy mouth,"—PROVERBS vi. v. 1, 2.

Think well, my son, before you lend
Your name as bond for any friend;
Or, when the day of reckoning comes,
Come broken hearts and blighted homes.
Think well, my son, before you give
Your trusty word, that knaves may live:
Be not for such the stepping-stone,
But strive to earn and keep thine own.

II.

"A wise son maketh a glad father; but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother."—PROVERBS x, v. 1.

Be wise, my son, as o'er the earth
Thou walk'st in search of wealth or fame;
Return her love who gave thee birth—
His, who thy youthful guide became.
That mother's heart must cease to beat;
That father's voice must cease to guide;
Oh! then what recollections sweet
Will cheer thy life's dark eventide.

III.

"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick; The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul."—PROVERBS xiii, v. 12, 19.

I am watching—I am waiting;
And my heart droops sad and low.
No glad message brings me comfort
As the moments come and go.
While the flowers bask in sunshine;
While birds sing on every tree;
I am weary—wearing, waiting—
For a message, love, from thee.

IV.

"A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband."—PROVERBS xii, v. 4.

As is the lustre to the lily;
As is the fragrance to the rose;
As is the perfume to the violet
In sweet humility that grows.
As is the glad warmth of the sunshine
Whene'er the earth is dark and cold;
So, to the loving heart that wears it,
Is Virtue's purest crown of gold.

V.

"Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth
is heaviness."—PROVERBS xiv, v. 13.

What though kind friends that gather round me
Seek to make my heart rejoice?
I miss the face I love so dearly—
Miss the music of thy voice;
And though I smile, as if in gladness,
Tis but the phantom of a smile;
My heart, in sorrowing and sadness,
Mourns thy absence all the while.

CHRISTMAS ANTICIPATIONS.

As the sun looks down on the ice-bound river
Melting the stream that is frozen o'er,
So gladness to hearts that the long years sever
Comes with old Christmas as of yore.
For the hearth glows bright in the yule-log's light,
And we look for the face that is far away:
'Twill come with the morn—with the wakening dawn,
And our hearts will be happy on Christmas Day.

The holly-branch laughs with its berries bright,
As we hang it up high in the air;
The mistletoe shakes with subdued delight
The leaves that its branches wear;
The ivy smiles out from its place on the wall;
And the fire-light gives welcome cheer;
We have dreamt they are coming—and, one and all,
Are wondering "Will they be here?"

Christmas bells are ringing—ringing,
Ringing out the olden chime;
Choristers are singing—singing,
Singing carols, keeping time;

And my heart is waiting—waiting,
Waiting for the day so near;
For my Love is coming—coming,
Coming with the glad New Year.

As flowerets turn towards the sun,
As streams run to the sea,
So yearns my heart for Christmas-time
That brings my love to me!

GOLDEN TRESSES.

Like threads of golden sunshine
By angels' fingers wove,
Sweet as the scented woodbine,
Are the tresses of my love.
The winds that whisper softly
I'd give my life to be,
That I might kiss those tresses bright,
And die in ecstasy.

Those threads of golden sunshine
Like bonds my heart enchain,
And when in dreams I wander
They win me back again.
They throw a gleam of glory
O'er the pathway where I go,
As when of old, in splendour bright,
Heav'n's angels walkt below.

HOPE FOR THE BEST.

Hope on for the best; where's the use of repining:
Droop not by the way, for there's work to be done;
Great ends are attained, not by fretting and whining—
By patience and labour the goal must be won.
Fear not the world's frown: though it spurn the down-falling,
'Twill shrink from a lamb if in lion-skin dress;
Whate'er be thy trouble—however enthralling—
Press onward, despair not, and hope for the best.

If sorrow o'ertake thee—then be not faint-hearted;
Life ne'er was ordained to be shadeless and bright;
One morn from the other by night-time is parted;
The sun always shines though we see not the light;
Misfortunes in life, like the nettle, prove harmless,
If grappled stout-hearted and fearlessly presst;
Rich sweets, without bitters, soon cloy and grow charmless,
Then press on, despair not, and hope for the best.

GONE BEFORE.

The silent night is coming on,
The day is gone and past;
The willows waving to and fro
Their mournful shadows cast.
I'm thinking o'er the happy years
We wandered side by side,
And Oh, my heart is filled with tears,
I've lost my darling bride.
Softly sighs the evening breeze,
And soothes my bosom sore,
While angel voices seem to sing:
"Not lost, but gone before."

I think of her whose gentle voice
My drooping spirit cheered;
In fancy see her eyes grow bright,
When prosp'rous days appeared.
And as—like vessels that from storms
To quiet havens glide—
We neared the haven of our hopes,
I lost my darling bride.
Softly sighs the evening breeze,
And soothes my bosom sore,
While angel voices seem to sing:
"Not lost, but gone before."

HENRY BATH:

DIED OCTOBER THE 14TH, 1864.

"For the charitable heart is as a flowing river: it moveth meekly and in silence, and scattereth abroad its blessings to beautify the world."

Ever the silent river flows
Adown the mead in speechless eloquence,
More telling than the language of the tongue;
Its heart reflecting Heaven's own radiance
In unmarred beauty as it glides along.

Ever the silent river flows:
And in its depths, of untold wealth the source,
What sleeping myst'ries, hidden and serene,
Lie in their latent, undeveloped force;
Yet on it moves as though it ne'er had been.

Ever the silent river flows:
No shadowy nook escapes its placid glance;
Tow'rds cavern dark with velvet step it steals;
And passing on as though in dreamful trance,
The story of its mission unreveals.

Ever the silent river flows:
It clothes the meadows with a fleecy mist;
Softens earth's arid heart with gentle rain,
Till by the warm and sunny Morning kisst
Nature looks upward—fresh and bright again.

Ever the silent river flows:
And weeping willows, reaching prayerfully
As though in adoration, droop to greet
The dreamy river as it passes by;

And throw their leafy blessings at its feet.

Ever the silent river flows:

All Nature tells the story of its worth:

A daily miracle—morn, noon, and night

Softly beneficent: of joy the birth:

A voiceless messenger of hope and light.

Ever the silent river flows:

And so, in gentle meekness and sweet stealth,

Out from the life of him whose loss we mourn

There flowed of Charity a boundless wealth,

To cheer the Poor by griefs and sorrows torn.

Ever the silent river flows:

For ever and for ever flowing on:

So runs the river of his goodness rare,

A noble heritage from sire to son;

With grateful hearts abounding everywhere.

SONG OF THE WORKER.

TO BE SUNG IN PRAISE OF THOSE WHO DESERVE IT, BY THOSE WHO THINK SO.

The strokes of the hammer ring out day and night,

And the huge wheels whirl and they spin:

The sky is on fire with the forge's light—

Oh, Oh! for the roar and the din.

The sparks fly aloft like a starry cloud,

And the voices of workmen ring

With a cheery refrain both happy and loud,

And this is the song they sing:

Bless thee, my master—bless thee;

Prosperity always be thine.

May plenty in store ever garnish thy door,

And each day bring its blessings divine.

The cottage that stands by the mountain side

Is bright with the cheerful fire,

And the house-wife gazes with honest pride

On the faces of husband and sire,

Who, fresh from the forge, with their brawny hands

The food that they eat have won,

And this is the wish that each breast expands

Ere the bountiful meal is begun:

Bless thee, my master—bless thee;

Prosperity always be thine.

May plenty in store ever garnish thy door,

And each day bring its blessings divine.

'Tis dark in that cottage: and sorrow is there;

For sickness brings troubles amain;

The sigh from affliction is heard on the air,

And sad sounds the mournful refrain.

But, sun-like in winter, a friend in their need

Pours the light over lattice and floor:

And these are the words that emblazon the deed

From the heart that with love brimmeth o'er:

Bless thee, my master—bless thee;

Prosperity always be thine.

May plenty in store ever garnish thy door,

And each day bring its blessings divine.

A hand that is princely: the heart of a king:
All kindness and goodness combined;
A name that will long, with the virtues we sing,
Deep—deep in our hearts be enshrined.
And may the strong bond of affection like this
Be the pledge of good faith to the end;
For sad will the day be should ever we miss
From our midst such a true-hearted friend.
Bless thee—a thousand hearts bless thee:
Prosperity always be thine.
May plenty in store ever garnish thy door,
And each day bring its blessings divine.

THE BROOKLET'S AMBITION.

In a sweet little glen,
Far from footsteps of men,
Once a bright-featured Brooklet was born,
It could boast of its birth
From a hole in the earth
Well protected by bramble and thorn.
For a time 'twas content,
Nor on wandering bent,
Till the raindrops fell plenteous and free,
And disturbed the sweet rest
Of the rivulet's breast,
By whispering tales of the sea.

What the rain had to tell
Made the rivulet swell,
And grow large and more large by degrees,
Till it broke with a bound
From the hole in the ground,
And was lost in a forest of trees.
But it found its way out,
And meandered about
O'er the meadow, the lowland, and lea,
Till it came, full of pride,
With a thousand beside,
And emptied itself in the sea.

But alas for the stream!
And alas for its dream
Of ambition! such dreamings were o'er,
When it found to its cost
As a stream it was lost
The moment it leapt from the shore.
So like rivulets—men,
Humbly born in life's glen,
Proudly dream as the lowlands they lave,
That they're each one a sea,
Whilst they're only—ah, me!
Of life's ocean at best but a wave.

ST. VALENTINE'S EVE.

A dear little name I placed under my pillow
On St. Valentine's eve, just to work out a charm,
For 'twas said if I dreamed of the maiden who owned it,
I should wed her as certain as sunshine is warm:
And lo! in my sleep, a sweet vision came o'er me:
A fair-featured maiden—and beauteous as fair—
In attitude graceful stood smiling before me,
With eyes dark and lustrous, and brown flowing hair:
Her hand I took hold of, and gently endeavoured
The rosiest of rose-coloured lips to impress;
I whispered her name—and the vision departed:
The name that I whispered was—No: you must guess!

LOST!

A dark form lingers on the lea,
In the moon-lit night—
In the cold white light,
Beneath the shade of an old oak tree,
Like a dusky sprite,
Or ghost newly sped
From the voiceless dead;
And the flowers droop round it weeping,
While the sad moon streams
Her white-wan beams
O'er the world as it lieth sleeping.
And ere the morn
A wail forlorn
Will arise from a lost one weeping.

A soft step leaves the cottage door
In the moon-lit night,
Like a leaflet's flight;
A pure heart leaps, full of rich love-lore,
Tow'rds the dusky sprite
That stands like a shade
From the voiceless dead,
And the flowers droop round them weeping,
While the sad moon streams
Her white-wan beams
O'er the world as it lieth sleeping;
And ere the morn
A wail forlorn
Will arise from a lost one weeping.

LILYBELL.

Little Lily she was fair—
O how fair no tongue can tell!
Life was bright beyond compare
Filled with love and Lilybell.

Little Lily came the day
Both our hearts were lorn and lone.
Oh! what bliss it was to say

"Lilybell is all our own!"

Little Lily stay'd and smiled
On us for a year or so,
Then they came and took the child
Upward where the angels go.

Little Lily left a mark—
Mark of light where e'r she trod:
Left her footprints in the dark,
Just to guide us up to God.

Upward, then, we look alway:
Pray and shed the silent tear;
Hoping soon will come the day
We shall join our darling there.

GONE!

SUGGESTED ON HEARING OF THE DEATH, ONLY A FEW DAYS APART, OF TWO INFANT CHILDREN OF AN ESTEEMED FRIEND.

Gone! Like a ray, that came and kissed some flow'rs,
Charming their loneliness with many a hue;
But cheering only, as such marvels do,
A few short hours.

Gone! Like a dew-drop-jewel of the mist,
That lives the briefest moment in the morn;
Sparkling in purity upon a thorn;
Then heaven-ward kist.

Gone! Like a Summer-wind, that woke a thrill
In every leaf it fondled as it fled,
Then left each leaflet drooping low its head
Mournful and still.

Gone! Like a swelling wail at Autumn time,
That went with such sad cadences away,
'Twas thought a God from Heav'n had come astray
Weeping sublime.

Gone! Like a dream of beauty in the night,
That came to tell a fair and welcome tale,
Then left the wakening dreamer to bewail
The dead delight.

LIFE DREAMS.

Behold yon truant schoolboy, cap in hand,
Bound o'er the gilded mead with frantic whoop,
And to each butterfly give ready chase;
Till one more gaudy than the flutt'ring rest
Starts up before his gaze. Then darts he forth
To clutch the prize, which ever and anon
Lingers on shiny flow'r till nearly caught,
Then flickers off with tantalizing flirt.

The youth with hopeful heart keeps up the chase,
And so intent upon the game, that he
Sees not the yawning slough beneath his feet,
Until he finds himself o'er head and ears
In dreary plight. And so it is through life:
From youth to age man dreams of happiness:
Grasps every gilded bubble that upsoars,
Fondly believing each to be the prize
His fancy pictured. Still the wished-for joy
Is far beyond his reach as e'er it was;
Yet, buoyed with hope, he sees, or thinks he sees,
The coming future bearing in its arms
The smiling Beauty that he pants to grasp.
With palpitating heart and trembling hand
He reaches forth to pluck the prize—when lo!
The treach'rous earth expanding at his feet,
He finds in place of happiness—a grave.

AEOLUS AND AURORA:

GIVING A LITTLE INFORMATION AS TO THE MUSIC OF THE GODS. (a)

Said Aurora to Aeolus, as they sat o'er their bohea,
Surrounded by Zephyruses—exactly three times three—
"Olus, dear, a new piano is the thing of things we want."
I regret to say Aeolus raised his eyes and said "We dont!"
So unlike his mournful manner, when his sweet sad harp he plays;
And he heav'd a sigh regretful as he thought of other days—
As he thought of early moments, ere Aurora's heart was won—
Ere beefsteak was fifteen pence a-pound, and coals five crowns a-ton;
Ere nine little West-winds murmured round his table every meal,
And the tones of a piano nought but sweetness could reveal,
As his own Aurora played it in the home of her mamma,
Ere his own Aurora, blushing, had referred him to papa.
All these feelings moved Aeolus, but to climax in "We dont!"
As he heard "A new piano is the thing of things we want."
It was settled—who could help it? For Aurora, like the rest
Of winning little women, knew that kisses pleased the best;
It was settled—who could help it? So, the local paper brought,
The quick eye of Aurora these glad words of comfort caught (*b*)
"Dear Aeolus," said Aurora, "this is quite the thing for me;"
"All is just as it all should be—it's a *lady's* property:
"P'rhaps her husband 's short of money;
p'rhaps the rent they want to pay;
"P'rhaps—" but cutting short my story, the piano came next day.
Yes—the walnut case *was* "beautiful" for beeswax made it so;
And the keyboard *was* by Collard—"Collard's registered," you know.
It is true, it *was* full compass; but the "richness" wasn't much;
And a feature felt in vain for was the "repetition touch."
Yes—it *was* a "trichord cottage," and "but little used" had been;
And the wood, like those who bought it, all inside was very green.
It was worth a score of guineas—e'en if really worth a score:
And the "lady" who was "leaving" ere she left sold three or four,
Piping hot from minor makers, though all Collard's make-believe;
And at each recurring victim laughed a laugh within her sleeve.
Of course no breach of morals to the seller I impugn,
Although it cost five pounds a-year to keep the thing in tune.
I rather blame the buyers two for napping being caught:
And that's the way "Aeolus dear" a new piano bought.

(a) The foregoing lines were written several years ago, and published at the time, with the view of exposing a fraud too frequently practised upon people in search of so-called "bargains." Aeolus and Aurora are no imaginary characters.

(b) A lady removing from ————, is desirous of selling her Piano. A full rich tone, 7 octaves, in beautiful walnut case, trichord cottage, repetition touch, registered keyboard, by Collard, but little used. 27 guineas will be accepted, worth 60.—Apply to, &c.

SONNET:

ON BEING ASKED MY OPINION UPON THE MATTER TO WHICH IT REFERS.

Should'st thou find in thy travels a maid that is free,
And content to love nought in the wide world but thee;
With a face that is gentle—be 't dark or be 't fair;
And a brow that ne'er ceases good-temper to wear;
With a soul like a rosebud that's not yet unfurled—
All strange to the tricks and the ways of the world;
And a mind that would blush at its fanciful roam,
Should it dream there are spheres more delightful than home,
With a love that would love thee alone for thy sake
In bonds which adversity never could break.
Should'st thou find such a treasure—then unlock thy heart,
And place the bright gem in its innermost part;
Watch over it tenderly—love it with pride;
And gratefully crown it thy heaven-sent bride.

SLEEPING IN THE SNOW.

(FOR MUSIC.)

"O, let me slumber—let me sleep!"
The fair-haired boy in whispers sighed;
Then sank upon the snowy steep,
While friendly hearts to rouse him tried.
"O, let me sleep!" and as he spake
His weary spirit sought its rest,
And slept, no more again to wake,
Save haply there—among the blest.
Sleep—sleep—sleeping:
He sleeps beneath the starry dome;
And far away his mother, weeping,
Waits his coming home.

We raised him gently from the snow,
And bore him in our arms away.
The sweet white face is smiling now—
Made whiter by the moon's pale ray.
And when the sun in beauty rose
We laid him in the silent tomb,
Where mountains with eternal snows
High up tow'rds Heaven grandly loom.
Sleep—sleep—sleeping:
He sleeps beneath the starry dome;
And far away his mother, weeping,
Waits his coming home. (a)

(a) The late Artemus Ward, in his "American Drolleries," tells a pathetic story of a boy, a German, who died from the severity of the weather, while travelling, in company with others, in the vicinity of the Rocky Mountains. He was the only child of a widowed mother. The intense cold induced drowsiness; and while being forced along by his companions with the view of counteracting the effects of the frost, his continued cry, uttered with soul-stirring plaintiveness, was: "Let me sleep—let me sleep." Unable to save him, his companions permitted him to lie down and "fall asleep in the snow"—a sleep from which he never woke.

WITH THE RAIN.

A Dewdrop and a Violet
Were wedded on an April day;
The Dewdrop kist his pretty pet,
Then by the Sun was called away.
The drooping flow'r bewailed her choice;
"My love will never come again!"
But from the clouds came answering voice:
"I come, my darling, with the rain!"

The Violet had jealous fears,
And told her sorrow to the Rose:
"Say—is he faithful?" O those tears!
The blossom whispered—"Goodness knows!"
The recreant dewdrop came at last,
And eased his love of all her pain:
With kisses sweet her sorrows passed,
And life anew came with the rain.

ODE:

ON THE DEATH OF A VERY INTIMATE FRIEND, A YOUNG SURGEON, WHO DIED FROM FEVER, AFTER ATTENDING A PATIENT.

'Tis sad indeed to chant a dirge of gloom—
To weave the cypress for a youthful brow:
To moan a requiem o'er an early tomb,
And sing in sorrow as I'm singing now.
While men raise mausoleums to die brave—
With flimsy flatt'ries gilded tombs besmear—
We need no banner o'er our Brother's grave
To tell what wealth of worth lies buried there.

Gone! and the word re-echoes with a sound
Mournful as muffled bells upon the wind;
Sad in its influence on all around—
Telling of griefs that still remain behind.
A thousand hearts may throb with tender swell—
Though every soul in deepest sorrow grieves,
How much he was beloved they only tell;
But who shall gauge the yawning breach he leaves?

Dark is the social world in which he moved—
Lending his aid unmindful of the cost.
Stilled is the heart the sternest 'mongst us loved;
Dim is the lustrous jewel we have lost.
For souls like his, so tender and so great,

Are pearls that stud the earth like stars the sky:
Above—the password at celestial gate;
Below—the germ of immortality.

Gone! Just as life was breaking, full of hope—
Clothed in the gorgeous beauty of its morn;
Free in Ambition's ever-widening scope,
A pictured prospect exquisitely drawn.
As void of self as angels are of sin,
What sweet anticipations stirred his brain:
What heights for others would he strive to win;
What little for himself he'd seek to gain.

But while the world was bathed in golden light;
While beauty breathed from every opening flower;
While streamlets danced along with gay delight;
While mellow music filled each songful bower;
With heart-warm friends whose love ran brimming o'er
For him who, full of life, stood with them then;
In such an hour Death led him from the shore;
And gone the worth we ne'er may know again.

ON THE DEATH OF A FRIEND.

She left a mournful void upon our hearts;
Within her home she left a vacant place:
But, as the setting sun at eve imparts
A holy twilight calm to nature's face,
So, chastened, bend we o'er the early tomb
Of one who to us all was very dear,
Whose cherished memory, like a fragrant bloom,
Will live embalmed in recollection's tear.

LINES:

WRITTEN IN THE PRAYER BOOK OF A YOUNG LADY WHO HAD JILTED HER LOVER.

To love unbeloved—O how painful the bliss!
By such passion our heart-strings we sever:
Like raindrops in rivers, which die with a kiss,
We are lost in life's waters for ever.

VICARIOUS MARTYRS:

WRITTEN AND SENT AS A VALENTINE TO MY HEN-PECKED SCHOOLMASTER.

I wonder if thy Tyrant knows
That every peck she gives to *thee*
Brings down a perfect show'r of blows
On my companions and on me.
Martyrs vicarious are we all:

Too great a coward thou to rule
Thy wife, or let thy vengeance fall
On *her*—and so thou flog'st the school.

STANZAS:

**WRITTEN AT TUNBRIDGE WELLS IN 1854, AFTER HAVING SEEN LADY NOEL BYRON, WIDOW OF THE POET,
LORD BYRON, WHO WAS STAYING THERE FOR THE BENEFIT OF HER HEALTH.**

Like the Moon that is waning, thou movest along—
Silent, pensive, and pale—through thy sorrow's dark Night;
For thou draw'st from the rays of our bright Sun of Song
The white coldness that lives where reflected 's the light.

And the stars which in fancy around thee I see,
As in bright golden fire they eternally shine,
Seem to cast from their splendour a lustre on thee,
As of light from thy husband's effusions divine.

In the flush of his fame were thy virtues unseen,
By his blinding effulgence of genius hid:
Could he now see thy face, with its sorrow serene,
Much might he unsay—undo much that he did,

For I see in that face all the sorrows he told—
All the sadness he meant in his marvellous lore;
And the shadows of Memory, silent and old,
Seem to come with the light from Eternity's shore.

And I feel, though the world said his spirit and thine
Were as wide as the sun and the moon are apart,
That the beams of his love o'er thy bosom still shine—
That the thought of his passion still nurtures thy heart.

TO LOUISA:

WHEN A YEAR OLD.

My sweet one, thou art starting now
In life's heart-saddening race,
With Innocence upon thy brow
And Beauty in thy face;
A tiny star among the host
That fleck the arc of life;
A tiny barque on ocean tossed,
To brave its billowy strife.
May Virtue reign supremely o'er
And round thy footsteps cling;
While Faith and Hope for evermore
Celestial numbers sing.
O may thy life be one glad dream
Of bright unclouded joy;
Thy love one pure and sunny theme
Of bliss without alloy.
Should Fate or Fortune's dazzling rays
Lead thee to other climes,

Then, darling, let this meet thy gaze,
And think of me sometimes.

THE ORATOR AND THE CASK

A FABLE.

INTRODUCING A CHARACTER FROM LIFE.

A speaker of the suasive school,
Who more resembled knave than fool,
His prospects gauged once on a time,
And sought how he might upward climb.
The scheme Political had failed;
The star of Piety had paled;
The Convert Drunkard would not tell—
His friends the cheat had learnt to smell.
All things our changeful friend had tried—
Had spouted far and shouted wide.
When all at once—ah! happy thought:
The Temp'rance cause in tow was brought.
And with it, up and down the land,
Our hero roamed with lofty hand,
Consigning to a dreadful place,
Whose name this fable must not grace,
All men—the one who touched a drop,
With him who knew not when to stop.
Arriving in a town one day,
He on his string began to play;
And mounted on a brandy cask
With noisy speech went through his task.
The barrel on whose head he stood
At length gave vent in warmth of blood:
"Ungracious varlet—stay thy hand:
"What! run down those on whom you stand?"
Then, utterance-choked, he tumbled o'er,
Casting the speaker on the floor.
And as he rolled along the street—
"Let me consistent teachers meet!"
He said—"or give me none at all
To teach me how to stand or fall!"
Thus seekers after Truth declaim
'Gainst teachers—teachers but in name—
Who live by what they deprecate,
And love the thing they seem to hate—
Who like the speaker raised on high
On barrel-top, 'gainst barrels cry:
Who, though of others Temp'rance ask,
Are slaves themselves to th' brandy flask.

THE MAID OF THE WAR.

SET TO MUSIC AND PUBLISHED ON THE DEPARTURE OF MISS FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE AND HER STAFF OF
NURSES FOR THE CRIMEA.

When the cannon's loud rattle
Told tales of the battle,
And the nations turned pale at the rout;
When the clarion rang madly,
And maidens wept sadly,
And swords leapt with fire-flashes out;
One frail girl of beauty
Shrank not from her duty,
But raised her sweet voice 'bove the roar;
Her bright smiles of kindness
Played o'er the dark blindness:
'Twas Florence, the Maid of the War.

When thousands, down-falling,
For help were out-calling—
Neglected, on straw-pallet cast—
A fair form drew near them
To aid and to cheer them;
Her shadow they kissed as it passed, (*a*)
When they droopt in their sadness,
Or raved in their madness,
She left her glad home from afar
To heal up their sorrows,
And tell of bright morrows;
'Twas Florence, the Maid of the War.

(*a*) So impressed were some of the wounded soldiers in the hospital at the kindness and gentle treatment received at the hands of Miss Nightingale, that, unable otherwise to testify their gratitude, they kissed her shadow as it fell upon the pillow of the pallets, on which they lay. One poor fellow is said to have done this with his latest breath.

IMPROMPTU:

ON BEING ASKED BY A LADY TO WRITE A VERSE IN HER ALBUM.

If I could place my thoughts upon thy heart
As on this virgin page I now indite,
What words unspoken would I not impart
Which only on my own I dare to write?

MARY:

DIED MAY 30TH, 1860.

But one short hour
She came and tripped it o'er the rugged earth,
Like a light sunbeam o'er the troubled wave;
Then shrank in silence to her little grave,
A rose-bud bitten at its opening birth.

The hand of death
Had ta'en before her one who loved her well
With all the fondness of a Mother's heart,
Whose darling's soul was made of Heav'n a part

E're sank the echoes of her own death-knell.

And so she died:

Before her mind scarce knew the way to live.

But sorrowing tears 'twere useless now to shed:

Our hopes must bloom, or mingle with the dead,
As Heav'n alone deems fit to take or give!

LINES:

ON THE MARRIAGE OF MISS ELIZABETH MARY NICHOLL CARNE, FEBRUARY 6TH, 1868.

Oh, blessed Love! that clothes with laughing flowers
Life's martyr-crown of thorns, and raises up
The heart to hold communion with its God,
'Tis thine, this day, with golden clasp, to bind
The volume of a life, where sterling worth
And beauty go to make the story up.
A maiden, one, who, when on tiptoe, sees
Her history running through a line of Kings:
In fame how excellent; in life how pure;
As though the virtues of her ancestry
Had found new utterance in her virtuous self.
As rain-drops, trickling through the hills of Time,
Commingling gather, till, in sparkling life,
They come, a streamlet, happy in the sun,
To gladden all with beauty, so the gems
That thickly fleck an old ancestral name
From time how distant, centre in the soul
Of her who comes this day with loving smile
To crown a husband with such wealth of worth
As 'tis her own to give. Thrice happy pair!
May cloudlets never dim the arc of light
That should engirdle all their lives, and make
Their home a paradise. If such should come,
May they be transient as a summer cloud
That mars but for a moment, yet to make
The sky more beautiful. May truest Love
Be with them ever, garnishing their lives
With bliss perpetual, and lighting up
Their footsteps o'er the earth, as when, of old,
God's angels walked with men. So shall they live
A life which loving hearts alone may know.

IMPROMPTU:

ON THE DEATH OF MR. THOMAS KNEATH, A WELL-KNOWN TEACHER OF NAVIGATION, AT SWANSEA.

He pupils taught to brave the gale
Secure on life's tempestuous sea;
Then, pupil he of Death, set sail
To navigate Eternity.

The students taught by him—return
In safety to their friends ashore;
But tutor Death, so cold and stern,

Brings back his pupils—never-more.

EXTRACTS FROM SOME UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPT.

HUMILITY OPPRESSED.

Blame not the world:
But blame its law that makes it crime akin
To be of lowly birth—to lack the gold
Whereby to coat the mask to cheat the world
Of sterling merit. See yon beauteous fly
Breaking its plumage 'gainst the glassy pane,
Till spent and weary, yearning tow'rds the sun.
E'en so the lowly-born but large of soul
See not, but feel, the chilling barrier
Set up by Pride to mar their sky-ward flight
To liberty and life.

UPWARD STRIVINGS.

See, when the simple moth doth blindly rush
To reach the flame, its life oft pays the debt
Of folly. Yet 'tis nobler thus to die
Midst all the brightness of a waking life,
Than from the world ooze out through darkened ways
By beggarly instalments—none to feel
Thy life but thine own poor ignoble self:
And none to tell the moment of thy death
Save those who profit by it.

TRUTHFULNESS.

Ne'er seek, by artful guise of words, to taint
The truth with falsehood's hue. Poor, trembling Truth!
Trust in her would be boundless, if our tongues
Uttered the coin as fashioned in the heart.
And then poor Heart would have no need to send
Her champion blushes to the cheeks to tell
The world how basely she had been traduced.

LOVE'S INFLUENCE.

O love sublime!
How thy sweet influence agitates the soul,
Voicing its hidden chords, as breathing winds
Wake the rude harp to thrilling melody.
All things must pass away; but love shall live
For ever. 'Tis th' immortal soul of life.
Scathless and beauteous midst th' incongruous mass
Of desolated hearts and stricken souls,
And spirits faintful 'neath a world of woe,
And dusky millions in the mine of life;
And all the rank corruption of the earth—
Its weeds, its thorns, its sadness-breeding hate;
Its selfishness, its swallow-pinioned friends;
Its rottenness of core and lack of truth:
When all have changed, save Nature and itself,
This Heaven-sent flow'r of Eden—peerless love—
Shall blossom in Evangel purity,

And sanctify a host to people Heaven.

VALUE OF ADVERSITY.

Friction with sorrow rubs perception keen;
And dear-bought knowledge makes us prophets all.

MISGUIDING APPEARANCES.

What! Is the graveyard sod less fresh and green—
The daisies there less like the meadow flow'r—
Because pollution slumbers at their roots?
Judge not thou, then, by what appears to be,
But what exacting Conscience tells thee is.

VIRGIN PURITY.

As fair a soul as ever came from God,
And one more gentle never walkt the earth
In mortal guise. Of sweet external, too:
Fresh as the wakening morn with violet breath;
And every action, look, thought, word, and trace,
Were strung to tuneful melody. Her life
Was music's echo—stealing o'er the soul
Like dying strains, soft and retiringly.
In childish grace to womanhood she grew,
And like the virgin lily stood and smiled—
Flinging around the fragrance of herself
Unweeting of the blessings that she brought.

MAN'S DESTINY.

All human actions are ordained of God,
And for the common good: yet men see not
The strings that keep earth's puppets on the move;
But whine and whimper—wondering at the ways
By which unlook'd-for ends are brought about:
As blind imprisoned birds bruise out their lives
Against the cruel bars they cannot see.

LOVE'S INCONGRUITIES.

Experience tells the world it were as mad
To link the Present with the sluggish Past,
As wed the ways of winsome, wanton youth,
To lean and laggard age. I pitied her:
Made her the mistress of my countless wealth—
Loving with doting and uxorious love.
And the ripe graces of her radiant mind
Shone out resplendent. But my withered life
Woke to her love with sere and sickly hope;
As some departed June, won with the sighs
Of waning Winter, turns and spends a day
For very pity with the lonely eld,
Who greets her sunny visit with a glance
Of cold inanity, and strives to smile.
O had I known this little hour of time
When life was young—or knew it not at all!
Then my heart's buoyance, at such love as her's,
Had blossom'd brightly—as the merry May
Skips from the golden South with balmy breath,
Breathing upon the dark and thorn-clad fields,
Till fragrant buds peep out like love-lit eyes,

And hedges redden as she walks along.
As these—her love and mine. But *now*—alas!

RETRIBUTION.

O that the wretchedness entailed by sin
Might form the prelude—not the after-piece.
How few there are would brave the hurricane:
How few the crimes mankind would have to count.

LOVE'S MUTABILITY.

My heart is dark again.
My tree of life but yestermorn was flusht
With golden fruit: to-day it creaks in pain,
And wintry winds moan through its leafless boughs.
Time, some hours younger, saw me clasp the sky
Of hope with radiant brow: the plodding churl
May see me now go stumbling in the dark,
And blindly groping for the hand of Death
To lead me hence. O life! O world! O woman!

A MOTHER'S ADVICE.

Mother. Clarence, my darling boy,
The world to which thou yearn'st is grey with crime;
And glittering Vice will bask before thy face,
As serpents lie in sedgy, o'ergrown grass,
In glossy beauty, whilst Life's potent glance
Will thrall thy soul as with a spirit-spell:
But hold thy heart, a chalice for the Good
And Beautiful to crush, with pearly hands,
The mellow draught which purifies the thought,
And lights the soul. Thirst after knowledge, child.
Thy face shall shine, then, brightly as a king's,
As did the prophets' in the olden time
When holding converse with the living God.
As rain-drops falling from the sky above
Upon the mountain-peak remain not there,
But hasten down to voice the simple rill,
So knowledge, born of God, should be attained
By peasant as by peer—by king or slave.
Have faith—large faith. Some of life's mightiest great
Have peered out, like the moon from frowning hills,
Then ventured forth, and walkt their splendour'd night
In pale, cold majesty; while some have dasht
On sun-steeds through the ocean of the world,
As comets plough the shoreless sea of stars,
Blinding old Earth with wreaths of splendid foam
And sparkling sprays: others have strode the world
Like a Colossus, and the glory-light
That streamed up from the far, far end of time,
Hath smote their lofty brows, and glinted down
Upon the world they shadowed: some have lived
And cleft their times with such a whistling swoop
That plodding minds seemed reeling 'tother way—
Men who had suffering-purified their souls
To angel rarity, that they might scan,
Like old Elijah, e'en the throne of God,
And live.

Clarence. Thy voice doth marshal on my soul
To battle, and to dream of noble things.
Thy golden words I'll graft upon my heart

Like blossoms wedded to the granite rock.
But, Mother, weep not! Why should April tears
Come with the sunshine of thy voice?

Mother. Bless thee,
God bless thee, Clarence! May thy sorrows be
Light and evanescent as vapour wreaths
That fleck the Summer blue. My dreams shall wing
Their way to thee, as moonbeams pierce the night.
And I will send my soul up in a cloud
Of thought to Heav'n, wreathed with a Mother's prayer,
For thee. Farewell—and be thou blest.

SUNRISE IN THE COUNTRY.

What a sweet atmosphere of melody
And coolness falls upon the troubled heart,
Like oil upon the wave. Dance on—dance on—
Ye couriers of the sun—full-throated choir;
And sky-ward fling your sobbing psalmody—
A sunrise offering to the coming day.
On—on: still higher! Still rolls the torrent down,
Bearing the soul up in a cloud of sprays,
The world seems deluged with a golden shower:
Myriads of larks trill out their morning psalm,
As though the stars were changed to silver bells
Timbrelling forth their sweet melodious bursts
In joyous welcome of the maiden Morn.

FAITH IN LOVE.

Man's faith in woman's love
Is all the darken'd earth can boast of Heaven.
That faith destroyed—farewell to happiness,
And joy, and worldly hope, and all that goes
To deify mankind.

UNREQUITED AFFECTION.

She was a simple cottage-girl,
But lovely as a poet's richest thought
Of woman's beauty—and as false as fair.
I've writhed beneath the witchery of her voice
As cornfields palpitate beneath the breeze—
Have sued with praying hands—lavished my life
Upon her image, as the bright stars pour
Their trembling splendours on the cold-heart lake—
Wounded my manliness upon the rock
Of her too fatal beauty, like a storm
That twines with sobbing fondness round the neck
Of some sky-kissing hill, bursts in his love,
Then slowly droops and flows about her feet
A puling streamlet,—whilst a gilded cloud
Is toying with the brow of his Beloved!
'Twas gold that sear'd the love-bud of her heart;
To bitter ashes turned my life's sweet fruit;
And sent my soul adrift upon the world
A wandering, worthless wreck.

THE POET'S TROUBLES.

To be possess'd of passion's ecstasy
Outswelling from the heart; the teeming brain

Afire with glowing light; as when the sun
Catches the tall tree-tops with Summer warmth,
And draws the trembling sap with impulse sweet
Through every fibre up to th' glory-crown;
To feel the breath of some rare influence
Of subtle life suck at the throbbing soul
As though into infinity to kiss
The yielding passion subtle as itself;
To see the hand of God in everything;
To hear His voice in every sound that comes;
To long, and long, with passionate desire,
To speak the language which the dream divine
Incessantly implies; to live and move
In Fancy's heav'n—yet know that earth still holds
The fancy captive: these the daily death
Of many minds that wrestle all in vain
'Gainst that which Heav'n in cruel kindness sends
To teach mankind humility. Ah, me!
The pow'r to feel the touch of Paradise
And to enjoy it not—as hungering men
Have died ere now, gazing upon the food
By heartless gaolers placed beyond their reach.

ECHOES FROM THE CITY.

The modern Babylon
Sleeps like a serpent coil'd up at my feet.
London—huge model of the great round earth,
The teeming birthplace and the mausoleum
Of millions; where dark graves and drawing-rooms
Gaze from each other into each; where flow'rs
Of blushing life droop in the grasp of Vice
Like blossoms in the fingers of a corpse;
Where cank'rous gold sways, millions with a nod
To abject slavery, buying men up
As toys for knaves to play with in the game
Of life; where Truth is kicked from foot to foot,
Till in bewilderment she cries aloud
And swears to save her life she is a lie;
Where Love and Hate, in masquerading guise,
Pell-mell dance on; chameleon Charity,
In all its varying phases, crawls along—
Now shrinking up dark courts in russet tint,
And then, in bold and gaudy colours drest
Which publish trumpet-tongued its whereabouts,
It takes a garish stand before the world
And calls itself an angel. Thus for aye—
For ever, rolls the dark and turbid stream
In feverish unrest.

LOVE'S WILES.

When Beauty smiles upon thee—have a care.
Kingdoms ere this have hinged upon a kiss
From woman's lips: and smiles have won a crown.
Glances from bright eyes of a gentle maid,
Whose cheeks would redden at a mouse's glance,
Have hearts befool'd that in their noble strength
Had shaken Kingdoms down. Have thou a care.

HAZARD IN LOVE.

My sorrowing heart is like the blasted oak

That claspt the dazzling lightning to its breast,
Yielding its life up to the burning kiss.
Springs came along and fondled all in vain,
And Summers toy'd with warm and am'rous breath;
But nought in life could e'er again restore
The greening foliage of its early days.
Man never loves but once—then 'tis a cast
For life or death. If death—alas the day!
If life—'twere perfect Paradise.

A MOTHER'S LOVE.

And friends fell from me—all, save God, and one
Beside—and she my mother—gentle, true.
As the bleak wind sweeps o'er the trembling limbs
Of some fair tree denuded of its dress,
How oft is seen, upon the topmost spray,
One lonely leaf, which braves the passing storm
Of Winter, and when gladsome Spring arrives,
And blossoms bloom in beauty all around,
It bends its brow and silent falls away.
So droopt that friend, who, through the livelong day
Of icy cold that chill'd my inmost life,
Sat like a bird upon the outside branch,
And sweetly sang me songs of coming Spring.

"THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS."

'Tis everywhere! The babe that sees with pain
The look of feign'd displeasure on the face
Of doting mother; and the mother who
Lays down the babe to rest—no more to wake;
The youth and maiden fair who tempt the stream
Of love that never brings them to the goal
Their fancy pictured; hearts that droop and break:
Upon life's thorny way; old age that sees
Long-hoped for peace among the silent dead
And deems it life to die. The shadow falls
Athwart the sunny hopes of every heart,
And shadowy most when gentle arms extend
For love's embrace, and find it not—as night
Is darkest near the dawn. Brighter the flame
Of light celestial 'twixt which and our hearts
The blessed Cross doth stand, sharper the shade
That falls upon our lives, as greatest gains
Involve the pains of great adventurings;
Or, nearer Death, nearer eternal Life.

CURATES AND COLLIERS.

ON READING IN A COMIC PAPER VERY ABSURD COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE WAGES OF CURATES AND COLLIERS.

If colliers were curates, and curates were colliers,
I wonder what price the best coal would be then;
Whether meat would be dearer, or Heaven be nearer,
Or truth be less earnestly preached among men.

I know that the incomes of curates are slender;
But curates get luxuries colliers ne'er see,

Which they don't have to pay for, nor work night and day for,
In mines dark and slushy on back and bent knee.

Keep pulpits for curates—but pay them good stipends:
Keep mines for the colliers—but pay colliers well:
O, the Pit—no detraction—brings Pulpit reaction,
For pulpits would sicken if collieries fell.

Then go, sneering cynic—write nonsense and fiction
On champagne and velvet, on satin and sin;
Though the joke may be able, 'tis false as a fable,
And shows what a fog Fleet-street sometimes gets in.

WANTED: A WIFE.

A VOICE FROM THE LADIES.

Being a reply to "M. C. D.," who advertised in a Swansea Newspaper for a wife, 1856.

Deputed by some lady friends,
Who think, with me, when ought offends,
'Tis best to have it out at once,
Not nurse your wrath like moping dunce,
I venture forth—(now don't be hard,
And sneer, "Dear me, a female bard!"
I'm not the only Bard that's seen
Inditing verse in crinoline. (a)
I say—deputed by a few
Young ladies: 'tis no matter who:
I come—(of vict'ry little chance)—
With "M. C. D." to break a lance;
To intimate our great surprise
To hear ourselves called—merchandise,
To be obtained—(there's no disguising
The fact)—obtained by advertising!
Obtained for better or for worse,
Just like a pony, pig, or horse.
And now, Sir, Mister "M. C. D.,"
Pray, tell us, whomso'er you be,
D'ye think a lady's heart you'll gain
By such a process? O how vain!

(a) These monstrosities—I mean the *balloons*, not the bards—are now out of date—thank goodness!

With us, we hold in blank disgrace
The man who fears to show his face.
A tim'rous heart we all despise:
But we adore the flashing eyes,
The manly form—the lofty hand;
The soul created to command.
Love comes to us, no bidden guest,
For him who loves and rules us best.
The rosy god lights not his taper
For him who, in a trading paper,
Behind a printed notice screens,
And fears to tell us what he means.
Why don't he to the busy marts

Come forth and seige our tender hearts?
'Tis wrong to buy pigs in a poke:
To wed so—what a silly joke!
In promenade, church, or bazaar,
At proper moments, there we are,
To be secured by manly hearts,
And, when secured, to do our parts
To temper life with him we love,
And woman's fondest instincts prove;
To yield submission to his will,
And, faulty though, to love him still.
Then "M. C. D." I pray refrain:
By means like these no wife you'll gain:
If you've no manlier mode to try,
We'll single live, and single die.

FRAGMENTS AND TRIFLES.

SYMPATHY.

A Wit, reduced in means, in Market-place
Hawk'd buns all hot. A chum, with sorrowing face,
Came up—condoled: the Wit exclaimed "Have done!
"Your sympathy be bothered—BUY A BUN!"

A FRAGMENT.

Once on a time a grimy sweep
Was creeping down the street,
When Quartern Loaf, the biker's boy,
Below he chanced to meet:
"Sweep!" sneered the baker: and the sweep
Gave Puff a sooty flout;
But Puff-crumb did not deal in soot,
So turned his face about;
Nor did he care to soundly drub
The imp of dirty flues:
"Go change your clothes!" said he, "and then
"I'll thrash you when you choose!
"It will not do for me to fight
"With such a sooty elf;
"My jacket's white, 'twould soon be black
"By tussling with yourself!"

LAW VERSUS THEOLOGY:

ON AN EMINENT COUNTY COURT JUDGE.

Some pulpit preachers think so very deep
That drowsy listeners find themselves asleep;

But the deep-thoughted law which — teaches
Makes "wide awake" all those to whom *he* preaches.

THE BROKEN MODEL:

TO ONE WHO WELL DESERVED THE STRICTURES WHICH THESE LINES CONTAIN.

When Nature saw she'd made a perfect man
She broke the mould and threw away the pieces,
Which being found by Satan, he began
And stuck the bits together—hence the creases,
The twists, the crooked botches, that we find—
Sad counterfeits of Nature's perfect moulding;
Hearts wrongly placed—a topsy-turvy mind—
Things that deserve the scorn of all beholding.
It needs no oracle in Delphic shade
To name the model from which *thou* wert made.

IMPROMPTU:

ON AN INVETERATE SPOUTER.

If wealth of words men wealth of wisdom call'd,
And measured Genius by the way she bawled,
Then — would be the head of all the crew,
The King of Genius and of Wisdom too.

A CHARACTER.

In childhood spoilt: a misery at school;
In wooing, what you might expect—a fool.
In small things honest, and in great a knave;
At home a tyrant, and abroad a slave.

COUPLET:

ON A PAUPER WHOSE WEALTH GREW FASTER THAN HIS MANNERS.

Paupers grown rich forget what once they've been,
Though, born a pig the snout is always seen.

PAUSE!

Aye—hesitate! "Soldiers who stop to think
Are lost." So said a soldier (*a*) ere he died:
Lost, then, art thou—thus shivering on the brink.
Death was thy father's cure for humbled pride!

(*a*) Wellington.

THE TEST OF THE STICK.

Mick Malone on the tramp, weary, dusty, and warm,
Thought a pint of good ale wouldn't do him much harm;
But before he indulged—just for Conscience's sake—
He thought he'd the views of Authority take.
So poisoning his stick on the ground—so they say,
He resolved on the beer if it fell the beer way;
If it went the contrary direction—why then
He'd his coppers retain, and trudge onward again.
The shillalegh, not thirsty, went wrong way for Mick,
Who again and again tried the Test of the Stick,
Till, worn out with refusing, the sprig tumbled right:
"Bring a pint!" sang out Pat, which he drank with delight;
And smacking his lips as he finished his beer,
Cried—"Success, Mick, me boy! always persevere!"

NOTE:

CONCERNING IUAN WYLLT, AN EISTEDDFOD AT NEATH, AND MY FIRST PRIZE POEM.

I think I ought to mention here, that the "Ode on the Death of a very Intimate Friend" (page 199), was written in 1853, before I came to reside in Wales. About three or four years after this—I forget the date—a prize was offered at an Eisteddfod held at Neath, by Mr. James Kenway, the then Mayor, for the best monody on the death of Mr. Edward Evans. I competed for the prize, and obtained it. The model of the Ode was taken by me in writing the Monody, the general conditions of the two events being somewhat similar, and much of the same language is used in both poems. I may add, as a matter that may be interesting to some, that the Neath Eisteddfod prize was the first for which I competed, and the first I obtained. The adjudicator was the late Mr. J. Roberts (Iuan Wyllt), whose death, as I write these lines, is being recorded in the newspapers. In adjudicating upon the poem, Mr. Roberts said: "In this production we have the traces of a muse of a superior order. The language is chaste and poetic, the versification is clear and melodious, and the mournfully pathetic strain that pervades the whole elegy harmonises well with the sorrowful character of the subject. As regards both matter and manner, the writer has excelled by many degrees all the other competitors, and his elegy is fully deserving the offered prize." It is not too much to say, that to the encouragement contained in the foregoing remarks of Iuan Wyllt was due the spirit of emulation which led me subsequently to compete at the various Elsteddfodau in the Principality with so much success.

THE END.

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