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A LEAF FROM THE OLD FOREST.

POEMS BY
JOHN D. COSSAR.

LONDON:
SMART & ALLEN, LONDON HOUSE YARD, PATERNOSTER ROW.
1870.

A LEAF FROM THE OLD FOREST.

p. 2

O bring me a leaf from the Old Forest,
The forest of beauty and song;
Where the Ettrick, through woods and fair meadows,
Doth lead its sweet waters along.

O bring me a leaf from the Old Forest,
A tuft from the glossy black pine;
A leaf from the oak and high chestnut tree
And a branch of green holly combine.

O bring me a leaf from the Old Forest,
A token so sacred, O bring;
'Twill recall those bright scenes to remembrance,
Old friendships around it will cling.

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PRELUDE.

p. 5

ADDRESSED TO THE CRITIC.

Critics of art, connoisseurs of fair Fame,
Who on her bulwarks stand, to guard the way
Unto the courts wherein her favored dwell,
Where they have gained admittance by the pass
"True merit," which alone can bring them there;
Thine is the power the unworthy to debar,
To tell them that they are unfit to come
To seek a standing near her honored throne.
Away in sorrow the besiegers turn,
Foiled in their effort, to more humble scenes,
With showers of censure pouring round them fast,
And shame in volleys flying on to them.
These are thy missiles, and they lose no mark,
But bear sore torture to the vanquished wretch,
Until oblivion hides him from their power.
Stay they to barter, then the task is vain;
'Tis but a weary while they can withstand

p. 6

The many darts sent with a fatal aim.

I make me bold to speak a word with thee,
Though better far my tongue had held its peace,
And though my mission be a barren task,
And woe betide me in the course I take.
If ye my motive deem it good to ask,
In form of motto, I will give it thus:
"He who doth not to battle venture forth
No trophy takes, as they who go to win."
It is not meet that I should dare to judge
If Merit tend me in the mission here;
But I will trust that Honor may attend,
And that ye will a fair decision give.
I urge no claim to learning high and great,
Nor kinship to the noble in descent,
Nor hold a name to offer of renown;
But from the ranks of secret come, unknown,
And trust in time of fortune to advance,
Then to behold thee in a happy mood.
For men have moods which to their acts imply
An impulse, which doth change the scenes in view
From cheerful unto gloomy, or reverse;
And critics, doubtless, are as other men,
Prone to the changes which incite the throng.

p. 7

TO THE SEER.

Time honored Seers, of every age bestowed
The reverence of man; whose is the power
To scan the future, and draw back the veil,
That people of the present may behold
The scenes and fates which lie secluded there;
To tell strange stories of the time to come,
The kind of life which is awaiting some;
Whereat the heart doth shudder to behold
What it shall be, of revel mirth propelled,
Or bound in joys licentious and wild,
Inoculate with sin of blackest hue,
Verging on crime—yea, crime in hideous form,
To crown the ruin of this hapless one.

If any of this God-like race remain,
Who pry the future with such wondrous skill,
Pass on the pages of this book a glance,
And tell if ye can see upon the time to come,
Aught which is worthy in the art of rhyme;
If from this rugged ripler ye can glean
A flower or two which bear poetic worth;
And if ye see the stream go gliding on
In pleasant ways, through the far distance, spread
On fertile banks, till it at length attain
A fair and undisturbed flow, and give
A beauty to the scenes which round it lie,
Or if it ripple for a weary while,
And die at length into a marshy waste,
Give choice to say the former; for the voice
Of him who doth a tiding good convey
Is sweeter far than his which speaketh ill.

p. 8

TO THE SAGE.

Ye sages, wise and good, or, if not good,
Though wise, the more thy loss, attend and hear
Awhile, though but a pensive ear ye lend,
If ye will deign to hearken as I speak.
More wont are ye to hear the well-tuned voice
Of classic writer flow in brilliant thought,
Poured from a noble mind, and deep and clear.
Learned of the liberty I take, resolved,
I come thy favor to seduce, and crave
That ye will hearken with a patient heed
Until my story hath been fully told.
Spurn not a man because his years are few,
Or that he seems a novice at the first;
But lend a fair and an impartial heed,

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Till he can prove if aught which he can bring,
 Is fit to harbour for the worth it holds.
 The fame of all the great, first as a bud appears,
 And daily spreads till gay perfections shine;
 So must it ever be to those who rise;
 And thus I claim indulgence at thy hand.
 Raised with fair hope, I leave thee to the task,
 And trust that of a judgment wise and good
 Ye will declare a fair decision, such
 As Justice (ever just) would deem it right
 To give to one confiding for the truth.
 I hold no purpose dark, but proudly tell
 I long to bear the barrier down which stays
 The narrow path unto the hill of Fame,
 And win a way unto the lustrous heights,
 When, looking hence, behold the seat of toil,
 And they who labor, striving to ascend;
 And now in sweet reflection view once more
 The days of old, when the like toil was mine.

TO THE PEOPLE.

All ye who form, each in thy mite, the vast
 And countless chaos of humanity,
 Named, as of use, "The Public," I dispute
 No term as base or just, but join thereto
 An atom with the motley crowd, resigned,
 Of kings, and lords, and people, all as one,
 Who hold no claim as critic, seer, or sage,
 And spurn the name of Sloth as loathsome to
 The ear; who dwell within the pale, and breathe
 The air of this delirious age, when pomps
 And fashions rage throughout the land, and half
 Of all the people know not why they live,
 But live to feast on sensual delights,
 And deck the body with insipid show;
 When they who are not would be great and high;
 And, if their fortune doth not bear them on
 With the incessant speed they seek, then fraud
 Is called to aid, until the bubble bursts,
 Because the pressure is beyond the means;
 And they are cast, in anguish and despair,
 Unto the depths of ruin, there to lie
 With jeers of many pouring on to them.
 Unto the speech these times give slippery words,
 And to the tongue alike a flattering robe;
 That falsehood seems like unto sacred truth,
 And enmities the bonds of friendship seem.
 O rife Perfidity! O Vanity!
 O Pride! Great are thy ravages among
 This simple race, who for a lucre strive,
 And pomp, and gain, with an unquenched thirst;
 Whose hand is avaricious, and who hold
 No check upon it; but, to swell their store
 In overflowing barns, do from the poor
 Extort unjust and utmost usury,
 Nor scruple have to snatch the morsel from
 The widow's mouth, or leave the orphan bare.
 When kings and rulers do for glory pant,
 Till thousands of their fellow mortals fall,
 In dead or wounded, at a single blow
 Laid prostrate, thus to feed their evil lust,
 Their satiate thirst which can no limit know.
 Or it may be for one's offended pride,
 Or some imagined insult to avenge
 With the outpouring of a people's blood.
 Oh! it doth seem an awful thing indeed
 That the wild demon should so rage in man,
 And that the learning of the present age
 Should not advance his wisdom more than now;
 But that, with vengeance rising from his path,
 He should in heedless haste go driving on
 To the dark pits of torture called "Hell."
 Arise, ye slothful people! ye who live

In the soft ways of luxury and ease;
Awake and sit in mooted ease no more,
But count the stern realities of life.
Ye who in drowsy slumber have destroyed,
Have slept all these fair golden hours away,
Whose footprints are inscribed upon thy brow,
Think of the marks of sin against thy name,
And say if no reproach doth sting thy soul.
For why was man created? I may deem
It were for nobler purpose than to waste—
To sin and loll in idleness away—
The only life which he shall ever live,
Save in the long and last eternity.
Cast idle sloth and sinfulness away,
All ye who are the people; and, methinks,
When that is done, I see a nobler race
Begin to crown the land with joy and love,
And tranquil, sweet, and fair prosperity.

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Power is supreme, and power in unity
Is thine, renown to give or keep, if ye
Are of the few who walk in ways upright,
(For it is joy to think there yet are some
Who to their ways do give an earnest heed),
Or with the crowd, who heed not how they go,
But walk in blindness and in corrupt ways
Unto a death which they will long to shun.
Though foolish ye may deem me thus to come,
And reason say this were a doubtful way
To seek abroad for favor, yet it is
Thy goodly favor which I come to ask;
And I am but a novice, yet will hope
Ye will not that withhold which seemeth just
To give. Fair maidens, more than all, 'tis thine
Approval which I long the most to gain.
Ambition bids me rise, aspiring, bids
Me seek from thee a word of favor, kind;
For ye are more compassionate than man,
And give your judgments in a softer way.
If ye, and if the public, see it fit
To render me a judgment good, then will
My joy be full, and I shall strive anew;
But, if ye give opposing judgment, then
I yield my pen to better hands, and seek
No more to speak, and from the quest of fame
Return to calm seclusiveness again.

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King Nimæra.

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A SATIRE.

INTRODUCTION.

p. 16

In the following Poem, the purpose of the Author shall be to shew that man is born to vicissitudes, and to censure the lewdness and frivolities to which he stoops.

To personate characters, time is represented by King Nimæra; birth, life, and death respectively by Kalim, Weemus, and Sero; while mankind is represented by Nimæra's subjects, and the world by his kingdom, heaven by "The Land of Bliss," and hell by "The Pit of Terrors."

KING NIMÆRA.

p. 17

Honor from the many nations,
Honor from the scattered people,
Honor much had King Nimæra.
King Nimæra on his throne sat
In his ancient power and greatness,
In his modern pomp and splendor,
With adornments full about him,
With musicians ever by him,

With advisers sitting round him,
Till he needed of their wisdom;
They were counted by the thousands,
By the hundreds and the thousands.
Sage-like was this King Nimæra;
Furrowed was his brow with seasons;
Hoary were his locks and silvery,
Ran the sportive breezes through them,
Tossed them up in endless frolic.
Mutely sat the aged monarch
Mid the many lights and shadows,
Mid the many scenes and changes
Which for ever came around him,
Casting cursive glances on them,
Smiling now at some adroitness,
Frowning then at deeds of folly;
And a mystic manner had he,
Deep, and hidden, and mysterious,
That the people could not fathom
What he purposed for the future;
Yet he loved this people fondly,
And they fondly loved their monarch.
In their sorrow he beheld them,
And would comfort sometimes offer,
As, in joy and mirth elated,
He would sometimes bring them sadness.
These were dealings mystic to them,
Yet they were for good intended.

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Springtime saw him calm and gentle,
Sweet and pleasing in his manner;
In the Summer he was joyful,
Light and gay as some fair maiden
In the time she seeks a wooer.
These were seasons of rejoicing,
And he called musicians forward,
Skilled in every art of music,
That the songs of night and morning,
And the blooming of the daytime,
Came from every hill and valley;
Every wind and zephyr laden
With melodious floods of music.
And in Autumn he came freely,
With a hand in bounty flowing,
Filling all the stores and garners
With rich heaps of fruit the choicest,
And with wine, and corn, and spices,
That the heart of every subject
Poured its thankful blessings on him.
But in Winter he was gloomy,
Dark, and dismal, and uncheerful,
And sat brooding as in anger,
Robed in garments dull and heavy;
All gay vesture now forsaken,
And all music now forbidden.
Then the Winter turned and vanished
As it came, unsought, uncherished,
Now unmourned and unregretted;
And the Spring again came dancing,
Casting charms around profusely
By the lanes, and woods, and waters,
And brought music, mirth, and gladness,
That the monarch heard the gay notes,
And removed his sombre garments,
And his frowns and dismal broodings,
Donning in their stead right gladly
His accustomed festal garments,
And his manner bright and cheerful.

p. 19

Three great princes had Nimæra,
Who held each a post of honor
In the ruling of the kingdom,
In the keeping of the subjects.
Wisdom had they, and were vested
Much in favor, much in honor;
And a spirit moved within them,
Guiding and directing always.

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'Twas a spirit high and sacred,
From the Maker of the kingdom,
Who in pow'r set King Nimæra,
And who watched for ever on it
With an eye of keen discerning,
To behold if Justice guarded
Every action of the rulers.

Kalim was a prince the foremost,
Who brought people to the kingdom,
Made them of a wondrous matter,
Moulded, fashioned, and designed them,
Limbs and bodies full of senses,
Some with beauties and attractions,
Comely in their forms and graces,
Others wanting and imperfect,
And repulsive in appearance.
He conveyed them unto Weemus,
Left them in his care for training,
Heeding not how that was ordered,
But returned without delaying,
Backward to his own seclusion,
Homeward to his mystic working;
For his only thoughts resided,
And his only glory rested,
In the numbers he created,
In their beauty of formation,
Which in secret depths he fashioned.

Weemus was a prince the second,
Great among the princely chieftains;
He was keeper of the subjects,
Took them from the hands of Kalim
Young and tender as a blossom,
Fed the spirit in their bosom,
Cared and kept them out of danger,
Framed them unto firmer being,
Led them unto good or evil,
Led them on to pomp and glory,
Rising out of great achievements,
By these ways to wealth and grandeur,
Scattered on their footpaths wisdom—
Wisdom, knowledge, and discretion,
Evils, vices, lust, and anger,
As a sower scatters corn-seed;
Let them gather as they listed
Of the good or of the evil.
They had powers of true discernment,
To direct them as they gathered
Which were good and which were evil,
Written and engraved on records,
Words of endless power and meaning;
And a few the good selected,
Gathered from a wise discretion;
But the crowds were blind and heedless,
Minded not the laws and records,
Gathered freely of the evil,
Wandered on in lusts and vices,
Wandered on to spoil and plunder,
Wandered on to want and sorrow,
Misery, and pain, and anguish.

Strange his dealings were and hidden;
Oft would take the greatest boaster,
Mighty in his own beholding,
Who in pomp and riches loitered,
In high seats of veneration,
And would draw him downward, downward,
Rob him of his pomp and splendor,
Of his riches and his glory,
Set him by the homeless beggar,
Holden in the pangs of hunger,
Gladly feeding on the morsels
Given by the poor and humble,
Who were once by him despised.
Lone, and destitute, and humbled,
Soon he learns his frail condition,
And that he is only mortal.

Or the unpretending stranger,
From a poor and humble dwelling,
And unknown among the people,
Weemus oft would take and guide him
High unto a seat of honor,
To reside in noble mansions,
Fame and praise for ever by him.
Thuswise Weemus often acted,
Fearless of rebuke or censure,
And accounted not his reasons,
Dealing ever as he listed.

Sero was the third prince calléd;
He was stern, and fierce, and warlike;
Fear and terror walked before him
In the sight of all the people,
And his bearing was majestic;
Quick and keen his glances darted,
Like a strong man's arrow flying;
And the people tried to shun him,
To avoid the ways he haunted;
And they trembled sadly, sorely,
If he ever ventured near them.
Yet beneath his hardened manner
Dwelt a gentle spirit calmly;
It was only to the wicked,
To the evil and the sinful,
That his terror was revealéd.
Sero from the hands of Weemus
Took the people rudely, boldly,
As directed by the spirit
Which for ever ruled his actions.
Old, and young, and middle-aged,
Heedless of their years he took them,
Heedless of their power or greatness,
Heedless of their worth or beauty,
Or of want or low attainments;
Pious-minded, vain, and sinful,
Fell alike to be removéd.
There were some who longed his coming
To relieve them of their burden,
And admit them to the bright realms
Which he watched, and kept, and guarded,
There to rest in peace and tranquil,
Sheltered from the wars and tumults,
From the storms, and fears, and terrors
Which were ever raging freely
Throughout all the lands of Weemus.
They had seen in feeble vision—
Seen a ray of future glory,
Of the sweet and happy pleasures
In this kingdom Sero guarded;
Longed and panted for admission,
Toiled and labored for a passport,
Fought and battled for a title
To this realm where trouble is not,
Till they had become the victors,
And were waiting now to enter.

Throughout all Nimæra's kingdom
Warning heralds Sero sent out
To implore the heedless people,
Raising thus their warning voices:
"Turn, ye people, turn from evil,
Know ye that the day is nearing
For the long and weary journey
Through dark valleys and wild passes
To the lands of the hereafter.
Be ye ready for departure,
Robed and girded for the journey;
For our guide, the princely Sero,
Cometh; he is soon before you.
If you are not waiting ready,
He will not delay the journey,
But will in the darkness leave you,
Which ye cannot wander out of,
From its terrors or its dangers,

Till it take you to destruction,
To an everlasting torment.”
Thus the warning heralds wandered,
Oft complaining, oft imploring
Unto all the erring people,
Unto all the slothful numbers;
But they were so bound in pleasures,
Were in sin and lust so tangled,
That they heeded not the warning—
The kind words of warning spoken;
Which were lost and vainly wasted,
Were as mists upon a bulwark,
Bearing with them no impression,
Save unto a sorry number—
But a few who heard and listened,
And returned from evil doing
Unto ways of truth and knowledge.

And of Sero let me tell you.

He was keeper of the passes
Leading to the land of Wisdom—
Wisdom, clothed in radiant glory;
And unto the lands of Darkness—
Darkness, clothed in every horror.
With bewailing he was girded,
To that band a key suspended;
He was girded with rejoicing,
To that band a key suspended.
These were keys wherewith he opened,
Opened he therewith the wickets,
To allow the people entrance
As the passport they presented.
Just between the wickets sat he,
Wide his dusky pinions spreading,
One upon each entrance holding;
And above him waved a banner,
In its colors dull and dismal;
Deep and solemn was the motto,
Was the warning written on it;
Thus it was in bold description—
“Woe is for the evildoer;
For the upright, joy and gladness.”
And a voice beside him echoed,
In sonorous sounds and loudly,
Tones of gladness, tones of sadness,
“Hark ye, hark ye, all who wander,
Woe is for the evildoer;
For the upright, joy and gladness.”
In his right hand Sero wielded,—
Brandished a terrific weapon,
And it was a sword of terror;
For the evil, but beholding,
Trembled as an aspen leaflet,
Shuddered as the ruined shudder.
Wonder movéd all the people
While they listened to the sayings,
To the wonders he unfolded
Of the regions which he guarded.
Thus he made his mystic sayings:
“Through this wicket on my right hand
Is a vale of noble grandeur,
Placid and surpassing lovely,
Which the pilgrim, as he enters,
Hails with overflowing gladness.
Seraphs from the holy regions—
Oh, so sweet, and so inviting!—
Meet him as he enters therein;
Through the pleasant passes guide him,
By the banks of streamlets gliding,
With a constant music laden;
Mellow light-beams on them dancing,
Waltzing to the streamlet’s music;
Music soft and so melodious
Rising from the groves around them;
Groves of myrtle and of woodbine
Full of odors rich and soothing,

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Rising from the flowery vials;
Flowers which clothe the banks, adorning,
Till the breezes hail their essence;
Zephyrs soft, and fair, and gentle,
Take these balmy odors with them,
Throughout all the holy regions.
Thus he wanders onward, onward,
With his angel guides advancing,
Wrapt in wonder and adoration,
Raptured with the matchless beauty,
Till a softer music cometh,
Sweeter than the notes around him,
On the distance flowing sweetly.
Soon the strains come nearer, clearer,
And he wonders why the music.
'Whence these songs of mirth and gladness?'
Asketh thus his angel escort.
'Where and whence these sounds melodious?
Whose are all these festive voices?
What the cause of such rejoicing?'
And the spirits answer thuswise:
'These are bands of angels singing
In the happy land of Blessing,
In the lofty halls of gladness.
Seraphs from their golden harps draw
Notes to swell the songs of gladness.
These are songs of glad rejoicings
For another pilgrim nearing,—
One escaped the land of bondage.
This the source of these rejoicings.'
Ere this answer hath been spoken,
Lo! before them rise the portals
Of the holy land of Blessing.
This the city he hath heard of
In such sweet and wondrous stories,
Whence he longed in patient waiting
To arrive at, now before him.
How enraptured he beholdeth
All its dazzling brightness spreading,
As he nearer comes and nearer
To the haven of his journey,
Thousand times ten thousands grander
Than his brightest fancies thought of.
Sparkling, bounding in its brightness,
Comes the soft and cheering fair light,
Rolling o'er the diamond bulwarks,
Flowing through the golden portals,
Like ten thousand fairy sunbeams.
All the bulwarks are of diamond,
And of purest gold the portals;
Paved of brightest gems the courts are;
Blended in a noble grandeur,
Sapphire blocks and blocks of ruby,
Emerald bars and bars of opal,
Rows of amethyst and topaz,
Sparkling in their golden framework.
Lofty are the walls and mighty,
Rising unto heights unmeasured,
Mighty, strong beyond conception.
Round the outer palisading
Of the diamond walls are watching
Many hosts from the Sabaoth
Of the King of all these bright realms.
Sleepless are their eyes and piercing,
Terrible they are in battle;
Nothing can uphold against them.
They are clad in mail of pure white,
Brilliant and of dazzling splendor;
Helmets have they, white and burnished,
Feathery white plumes in them waving;
Brilliant also are their breastplates,
And their shields, with 'Love' engraven
On the front in golden letters,
Are most gorgeous in beholding
When the light streams full upon them;

And destruction is the weapon
They employ to guard the city;
Awful is the havoc thereby
To the foe who dares approach them.
Now before the golden gateway,
Which with massive bars is builded,
Stands the pilgrim with his escort;
And they sound a mighty trumpet,
That the strains in thrilling grandeur
Flow sonorous through the kingdom.
Then behold the keeper cometh,
Who the gateway ever keepeth,
To unfold the golden barrings;
And he throws the gate wide open,
And the pilgrim enters therein
Now into the holy regions.

There a band of seraphs meet him,
Chosen from the ranks around them,
Guide him to the shining white throne,
Where the King in glory sitteth.
And the holy King says, 'Welcome,
Welcome to you, pilgrim, brother!'
And he bids an angel bring him—
Bring him royal robes and robe him,
Garments rich, and white, and lovely,
And a golden crown to crown him.
While the empyrean minstrels rising,
All in flowing garments vested,
Some with harps and some with timbrels,
Some with lutes and some with trumpets,
All in goodly order mingled,
In the skill of gay perfection;
Far the minstrel band extendeth
Like a wilderness of grandeur.
As a sea of flowing white waves
Mingled up with diamond ripples;
As the moon on sparkling waters,
Comes the light from glowing beacons,
Dancing on their crowns of glory,
Far and near redounding, flowing
In a thousand dazzling colors,
Like unto a flood of crystal.
Silent are they all and heedful
While the leader on his tower stands,
High amid the radiant brightness,
Till his silver wand is raised;
Then for music every trumpet,
Every lute, and every timbrel,
Every harp is strung and ready,
And for songs wait all the voices.
Lo! it falls, and floods melodious
Flow from every voice united,
Rise from every lute and timbrel,
Stream from every harp and trumpet.
Noble and majestic cadence,
Full of might and full of sweetness;
Like tremendous thunders rolling,
Rumbling in their strength and grandeur;
Sweet as nectar, which is pouréd
From the cup which Juno holdeth.
Far and near the echoes answer,
From the vaults and arches flying,
In the distant spaces rising
Over thrones, and crowns, and mansions,
Breaking o'er the vitreous white throne;
Like a music-meteor falling,
Casting down its charms around it,
Ever softest, sweetest, fairest;
Softly as the summer showereth,
From its fragrant bosom, largely,
Dews upon the sleeping meadow.
This is honor to the pilgrim,
Welcome to his seat of glory;
Songs of joy that he is landed
From the perils of the journey

To be one for ever with them.
Now beside the throne he standeth,
In his bosom gladness flowing.
He hath now been crowned and vested;
And the King, arising, speaketh:
'Guide him to his seat of glory,
To the mansion he hath gainéd.'
Then, as magic fell amid them,
Every voice is mute and silent,
Every sound subdued resideth,
Every strain on faltering pinion
From its gaysome course alighteth;
Still and peaceful is the white throng,
Calmness, as in death, prevaieth.
Now he sits enthroned amid them,
And again the strains are wakened,
Mighty as to storms of thunder
Born as from the womb of calmness,
Rising as from death released.
Now his voice is with them mingled
In the songs, and hymns, and anthems,
Which shall evermore continue
Throughout all this land of Blisses,
Where is love the only bondage,
Love the mighty power which holds them."

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Thuswise speaketh Sero, telling
Of the land whereto the wicket
On his right hand gives admission.
But far different is the story
Which he giveth of the regions,
Whence the wicket on his left hand
To the wanderer gives admission.
Spoken thus his vivid brief is:
"He, who by this wicket enters,
Loseth hope and loseth courage,
Meeteth gloomy fears and terrors,
Misery and anguish rising
In their wildest forms about him;
And upon the distance looming
Awful terrors, monsters hideous,
Scenes and shadows dark and dreary.
Now the stifled groan of murder,—
Now the seething moan of anguish,—
Now bewailings in bereavement,
And lamentings of the ruined,
Loud, and painful, and laborious,
In an awful concert mingled,
Flow upon his ear bewildered,
As in toil he wanders weary
In the crowd, yet lost and lonely,
To the dreaded pit of terrors,
And its dismal dens and dungeons,
Damp, and stifled, and obnoxious,
Burning with eternal anger
And with lurid flames of vengeance.
Lo! aghast, he starts in terror,
And anon doth sink in anguish,
Weeping for the talents wasted,
And the warnings he despiséd;
And for hope he looks and longeth
In a deep and fervent longing,
But it is a vain desire;
Nothing but an awful doom sits
Frowning on his pains and terrors.
Onward, on he fast is driven,
Through a rugged path and perilous;
Rising on the hills above him,
Roaring thunders roll and rumble,
With a mighty noise and terror;
All things at their greatness tremble.
Sheets of flame, in livid fierceness,
Sweep and fly in wildest swiftness;
O'er the rugged heights ascending,
Cast their lurid glares upon them,
In their course revealing further

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Of the dangers hid in darkness.
And beneath him gulphs are yawning,
Greedy to devour, are gaping;
Torrents deep within them roaring,
Lashing up their foamy billows;
With the laving of their forces
All the pathway shakes and trembles.
Brutes, in hungry anger raving,
Prowl from dens, and caves, and caverns,
Mingle with the ghosts and spectres,
Lusting for a bloody surfeit.
Reptiles, subtle and obnoxious,
Crawl, and welter, and recoil them
On the path in slimy matters,
Reeking with a poisoned odor,
Darting poisons to molest him.
Arrows from the towers are flying,
Shafts of flame and showers of fire,
Sweeping on through clouds and vapors,
Like unto a storm of hailstones
Driven by a mighty tempest.
Sadder and more bitter feelings,
Deeper, darker fears betake him,
As, above the groans around him,
Coming from the pit of terrors,
Bitter wailings, mournful cryings,
Rise and fill the air with anguish.
Now in view the dingy walls stand,
In their black and dismal bearing,
Of the gloomy pit of terrors;
Gloomy, like a loathsome dungeon.
Now before the gate he standeth,
Worn, and weary, and dejected;
And the lurid glares break through it
Of the flames for ever burning;
And he sees the shames, the tortures,
And the writhing objects in them,
Suffering and enduring anguish.
They who once on bounty feasted,
Now enclosed in pangs of hunger;
They who were the poor's oppressors,
Now oppressed and trodden under.
Now destroyers are destroyéd,
Scoffers are with scoff betaken,
And the lofty are made humble;
And he shudders to behold them.
Then an awful oath is spoken,
Bidding to unbar the passage;
And the burdened words are answered
With another oath as fearful
From the fierce and sullen keeper;
And the creaking bars fly backward
With a mighty clash of vengeance.
Then the brazen gate is opened,
And the poor deluded victim
Thrust into the pit of horrors,
All amid the fouldome vapors.
Flies the postern close behind him,
Back the bolts and bars are driven,
Creaking with their heavy burden;
And a motley throng surround him,
Railing, scoffing, and abusing;
Each devising of some evil
To annoy, or taunt, or torture.
Vengeance burneth black within him,
And infernal wars are raging
In him and in all the dwellers,
One and one against another,
Who are doomed through time eternal
To this awful pit of terrors;
Where the evil spirits harbour,
Keep, and count their spoil and plunder,
Gathered from among the people,
Brought from many ruined cities,
Gained in many depredations,

By the hand of havoc aided."

These are stories Sero telleth
Of the happy land of Blissés,
Of the dreaded pit of terrors,
To the people of the kingdom,
If perchance he may allure them
By the wonders he revealeth
Of the blissés of the former,
Of the terrors of the latter.
But through all Nimæra's kingdom
Went a band of evil spirits,
Tribunes of the Prince of Darkness,
Went to aid his evil purpose;
Pried and scouted every corner,
Entered into all the dwellings,
Came to tempt and to misguide them,
Came to tempt Nimæra's people,
Lead them on to lust and evil,
Taught them how to rob and plunder,
Taught them how to kill and murder,
Put corruption in their wishes,
Poisoned all their thoughts and reasons,
Mingled madness in their pleasures,
Blinded them with show and grandeur,
Gave them longings and ambitions,
That they lost their true discernment,
As a man with wines confuséd
Loses proper sense and caution.
And they gave such sumptuous meetings,
And they said such wondrous fair things—
Things that ne'er before were heard of,
That the dazzled people followed;
And they reaped a mighty harvest,
Leading, drawing as they listed;
For this was a simple people,
Credulous, and blind, and simple.

Now the Maker of the kingdom,
From his pure and dazzling white throne,
Looked and saw the dreadful havoc
Raging mid Nimæra's people,
And it vexed him very sorely;
For he loved the people fondly
Who were wisely formed by Kalim:
Bones, with matter moulded on them,
Fraught with channels, watercourses,
And red rivers running through them,
From a mystic fountain rising,
Flowing ever fast and constant,
Giving and diffusing vigor
Through the many wondrous members.
Counsel took He to restore them
From destruction's ruthless havoc,
In an earnest consultation
Saying ever and repeating,
"We must save this ruined people;
We must give them light and caution:
Light, to shew their wayward goings;
Caution, to direct them rightly."
So a band of spirits went out,
Builded with a holy ardour,
Sped athrough the heights and spaces
To Nimæra's kingdom, saying:
"We will reason with this people;
Reason boldly, turn and change them,
Warn them of the evil spirits,
Shew them thrones, and crowns, and mansions,
As a trophy of repentance,
Till they cannot fail but hear us,
Till they turn in great rejoicing."
Thus the spirits went and wandered,
Talked and reasoned with the people,
Shewing thrones, and crowns, and mansions,
Using every power and effort
To persuade them of the folly,
Of the dangers they were choosing.

They who heard the deep entreaties
For a minute turned to listen;
Felt the powers within them moving
Striving to believe and follow.
But, a little season longer,
When the spirits passéd from them,
They returned unto the rapids,
To the mighty stream of ruin
Rolling onward to destruction;
For they were so much enamoured
By the cunning fascinations
Which the evil spirits gave them
That they lacked strength and courage,
And they failed to turn and follow,
Save a very little number,
Who restrained their lusts and wishes,
And gave heed unto the sayings
Which the kindly spirits bore them,
Gaining power, the more they harken'd,
To withstand the evil spirits,
And to baffle their endeavours.
These went to the land of Blisses;
But for one who Sero passéd
Through the wicket on his right hand,
Going to the holy regions,
Seven passéd on his left hand,
Going to the pit of terrors.

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Now that I have told you fairly,
Shewing as is due to render
Of the powers of King Nimæra
And his three most favored princes,
Giving Sero's own description
Of the wonders of the regions
Which lie hid within the wickets
Which he ever proudly guardeth,
Will you listen when I tell you,—
Will you hearken to the stories
I can give you of Nimæra,
And his three most powerful princes,
And their dealings with the people?
I shall do my best to render
Stories such as will entice you;
Though my voice is low and feeble,
Though my pen is slow and wayward,
Never moving fair and fluent,
As the spirit which directs it
Would that it should move and tell you.
They shall but be little stories,
Gathered from the many records
Which the people kept and courted
In their halls, and towns, and cities.

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I.

Sailing o'er the sparkling waters,
With accordant breezes favoured,
Came a vessel homeward bearing,
And a gladsome people on it.
Sang they songs, and danced, and sported;
Sadness was unknown amid them;
Old, and young, and middle-aged
Were they, and of divers stations.
While their pleasures were the fullest,
Sero saw their joys and pondered,—
Pondered with his inward spirit:
"Lo! they have an idle fancy,
All their thoughts are gay and heedless,
And they dream not of destruction,
Think not of a danger nearing,
Nor will hearken to the warnings
Which are ever spoken to them.
Ere another morn has wakened
Shall their joys be turned to mourning.
I will send, and turn, and change them."
Said he to retainers by him,

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“Seest thou that fair-like vessel,
And the mirthful crew upon it?
Go, and captive make the number,
And their spirits hither bring me;
But their bodies can be portioned
To the monsters of the ocean.
Neptune I shall call and waken;
He will lend me storms and tempests,
Lightnings and mighty thunders,
Which shall in the mission aid thee,
Give an awful grandeur to it;
Like the flowing of great banners,
And as many torches blazing,
And the sounds of drums and trumpets,
Shall be storms, and flames, and thunder.”
So the mission goeth forthwith
O’er the still and tranquil waters;
And they waken slumbering Neptune,
Who advanceth storms and tempests;
And the waves rise up in anger,
Foam and hiss in reckless fury;
Thunders bellow martial music;
Lightnings flash their vivid torchlight.
Grand and mighty the procession!
Neptune, in majestic pomp, came
In his chariot, attended
By a myriad mystic beings,
To direct the storms and thunders,
And to rule the foaming billows.
Spake he thus unto the waters:
“Ope your gates, ye billows, open,
That great Sero’s host may enter
With the booty they have taken,
And the bodies of their captives,
Which shall in my caverns slumber,
In my rocky halls and grottos.”
Then the mighty gates were opened;
And they all went downward, down,
Down into the dark, cold waters,
With their cries and earnest prayers,
Wailings bitter and lamentings.
Woeful was the scene to witness:
Children clinging to their mothers,
Husbands in their wives’ embraces,
Brothers by their sisters holding,
Others running wild and madly,
Crying to their gods for succour;
Every heart in very terror
Quailing at the rising future.
But these cries cannot be answered;
They have sought too late for succour;
For the gates are closed upon them,
And the victors have their spirits,
Bearing to their princely Sero,
And their bodies are consigné
To the halls of mighty Neptune.
Then did Sero take the spirits
As the mission brought them to him;
And for every one which entered
By the wicket on his right hand,
Leading to the land of gladness,
Seven by the other entered,
Down into the pit of terrors.

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II.

Stood a fair and stately dwelling
In the concourse of the people,
Of the lofty of the people;
Looked it on the smaller buildings
Downward in a scornful manner;
Proud was it of fine appearance,
Proud the people who dwelt in it.
There the arts of every nation
Met with the united purpose

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To adorn and to give splendor
To the chambers of this mansion,
To its corridors and landings.
Ottomans of downy velvet
In the looms of Utrecht woven,
Vases of Chinese production,
Crystals, bright and burnished figures,
Models made of gold and silver,
Tapestry, and lace, and network,
Carpets from the looms of Brussels,
Woven into gaudy figures.

In a certain gorgeous chamber,
In apparel likewise gorgeous,
Sat a mighty, pompous woman.
Very high were her ideas
Of her own expanded person,
And her own unmeasured value;
All the world would not contain them,
They were so elate and soaring.
Luxury and ease were round her,
As she fancied to receive them;
And a host of powdered servants
Waited idly for her orders.
Now she calls for an attendant,
And doth give him orders thuswise:
“‘Not at home’ shall be the answer
Unto all who this day seek me,
Save unto his highness Fashion;
Ye shall give to him admission.”
State obeisance marks his exit,
Ready for a plumper falsehood,
Spoken to his lady’s order.
Soon a knock, which sounds familiar.
Lo! it is the dunning trader,
Who is sorely run to hold him
From the stream of dangerous rumours;
But the answer thus is told him—
“Not at home, my lady is not.”
So the tradesman from her doorway,
Empty-handed, homeward turns,
Thinks not such a ready answer
Is an utter fabrication.

Sero, from his seat beholding,
Saw this lounging lump of matter,
Puffed up in pomp and splendor.
He was moved to indignation,
And said, in a scornful manner,
“O blinded fool! O filthy pomp!
Glory ye in dust and shadows?
See ye not the wild delusions,
Which ye cherish so and fondle,
Through the darkness they are set in?”
Said he to attendants by him,
“Go ye to that stately chamber
Where this pompous woman sitteth;
Pass the trader in the doorway
And the ready story-teller,
Enter and lay hold upon her;
Take the lusty look she weareth,
Cast it to the winds that ramble,
Racing through the hills and mountains;
Take her great imaginations,
Sift them in the seive of honor—
Lo! they are as dross and ashes,
And her pomps and giddy grandeur
Scatter and disperse them likewise.”
So went Sero’s servants forward,
Did as had their chief commanded,
Smote this pompous woman sorely—
With the rod of sickness smote her;
And the ruddy color left her,
And those lofty airs and manners;
Sickness and a ghastly pallor
Came upon her limbs and forehead,
And she hourly sank and wasted

Till a spectre she resembled.
Then the spirit fled the body,
And was carried unto Sero;
Sero through the wicket passed it
To the pit of Long Damnation.
What is now this pompous woman,
And her great imagination?
These have vanished like a shadow,
As a myth or phantom figure;
And that body, once so lusty,
Is a mouldering lump of matter,
Corruptible, and vile, and filthy.

III.

In a miserable dwelling
Sat a miserable old man
Mid a heap of hoarded treasures,
Buried in the walls and burrows;
And it was his constant idol,
And his brain was ever scheming
How he might augment the numbers.
Oft he turned the treasure over,
Counting fondly and recounting;
And he joyed to hear the jingle
Of the yellow coins he counted.
Threescore years had been devoted,
Scraping of this gain together.
He had fed on scanty portion,
Grudging sorely every morsel;
And had clothed himself in raiments
Which a beggar scarce would stand in.
He had never fed the hungry,
And had never clothed the naked,
That he might increase his riches.

Sero in this hovel saw him
Bending o'er his golden treasures;
And he laughed derisive laughter,
And sarcastic was his manner,
As his servants he commanded
To the miser's presence, saying,
"Lo! our princely Sero wisteth
Whence are all these hoarded riches,—
If in scruple they were gathered.
If ye long to take them with you
When you leave this land of Weemus
For the lands of the hereafter;
If ye think to buy a passport
To the land of Blisses with them,
Ye are sadly much mistaken.
This we deem as dross and worthless.
Ye can never enter thereto
Bearing such a burden with you.
Ye must feed the hungry with it,
And must clothe the naked wanderer,
And employ it as a talent
To be used for wiser purpose
Than to hoard in walls and burrows,
If ye long to be admitted
To the tranquil land of Blisses."
But the old man would not listen
To the words of wisdom spoken;
He was so engrossed in counting,
And in adding to his riches.
So the servant raised his weapon,
Sorely therewith smote the miser,—
With destruction did he smite him,—
That he fell a lifeless clay-heap
Down among the hoarded moneys;
And his spirit was removed
Unto Sero, and he opened
Wide the wicket on his left hand,
And it passed into the darkness,
To the pit of gloom and terrors.
Then the door was rudely opened

Of this miserable dwelling
By the people claiming kinship;
And they scrambled for the riches,
And in many quarrels sought them,
Tending to the disuniting
Of the sacred bonds of friendship;
Brother against brother rising,
Raging in a bitter conflict.
Many, who received a portion,
Went and squandered to his ruin
All he had in lust and gambling,
Till his life was sorely broken.
When his riches had been pillaged,
Then the body of the miser
Was removed quick and coldly,
Lowered in the grave and covered;
But of they who followed with it,
No one wept a tear of sorrow,
No one mourned for his departure;
But they gave attendance only,—
That, stern duty had commanded.
Thus the end was of the old man,
Of the miserable miser.

IV.

In a wilderness of houses
In the heart of a great city,
Full of riches, full of plenty,
And of people high and prosperous,
Of its ancient greatness boasting,
And its modern princely splendors;
In a loathsome and a dark street,
Foulsome odors rising from it,
Rife and pregnant with diseases,
Stood a hovel, foul and filthy;
Lay a being, wane and wasted,
On a straw heap in a corner;
Scarce a rag to hide her person,
Lice and vermin creeping on her;
And beside her stood distraction,
Woe, and want, and piercing hunger;
And her look was wild and vacant,
Like a spectre's, wandering madly.
When the night came, it was laden
Much with gloomy fear and sadness,
And a trembling apprehension
That the dawn would not approach her;
And the morning was attended
With but little hope or succour.
Charity, in cold attendance,
Came with many words and wishes;
And, in fair and full pretending,
Stood, and pitied, and regretted;
But it gave a meagre pittance
Or of comfort or appeasing,
To withdraw the pangs of hunger,
Or relieve her sunken spirit.
But good Sero saw in pity.
He beheld her calm endurance
Of the anguish bearing on her;
And he sent and took her spirit—
Took it gently from the ruin,
From the filth and the pollution;
And he opened wide the wicket
By his right hand, and conveyed it
From the misery and anguish
To the happy land of Blisses,
To the land of peace and plenty.

With the burden of my stories
I shall not detain you further,
Lest ye weary to pursue them
Through the dreary way they lead you.
Let me further only mention,

Sero's servants were engagéd
Ever seeking and conveying
Subjects from the hands of Weemus
To the watch-ward of their chieftain.
Mute and mystic were their movements;
Softly, and without observance,
Passed they to the secret chamber,—
Took from thence the hidden subject;
From the lover's fond embraces
Tore away his dearest treasure—
She, to whom his life was wedded,
Was for ever sworn betrothéd;
Went into the stately dwelling,
And the lowly and the humble,
Heedless of position took them;
To the sacred courts of prayer,
Where the Maker of the kingdoms
Held communion with the people;
And into the gay assemblies,
To the scenes of mirth and gladness,
Where were songs and revel dances,
In a maddened fulness rising.
Many widows left they mourning—
Widows wailing, orphans weeping,
In unmitigated sorrow,
For the loss of near and dear ones.
Hard and cruel seemed their dealings
In the sight of all the people;
For they could not learn the purpose
Which, in all their acts, directed.
Yet these were most wisely ordered;
For the Maker of the kingdom,
Of Nimæra's kingdom,—moved them—
Moved, and guided, and informed them.

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Sero to the land of Blissés
Passéd all the just and lowly;
They whose lives had been preservéd
From the soiling stains of evil;
Who had lived in single purpose,
Holy and uprightly always;
Who had made oblations fitting,
Praise and honor to the Founder
Of Nimæra and his kingdom;
And had made a full endeavour
In obeying the commandments
Which were written for their guidance;
Who of charity gave freely
Unto all the poor and needy,
And, in giving, had no purpose
Selfishly to further thereby.

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But unto the pit of terrors
Evil and unrighteous people,
All the lukewarm and the heedless
Of the order of the statutes,
All blasphemers and revilers,
And all foul and filthy talkers,
Liars, brawlers, and adulterers,
They whose hands are stained in murder,
All the proud and haughty boasters,
All licentious and deceivers,
They who are the poor's oppressors,
Robbers and unjust receivers,—
These for ever had their portion
In the pit of gloom and terrors.

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If ye wonder at its greatness
And the grand and deep foundation
Of the kingdom of Nimæra,
We will take a tour and see it,
Going unto every limit
Where Nimæra great in power is,
Where he holds his goodly council,
Chief of all the powers beside him.
From the womb of words it came forth,
Out of chaos and of darkness,

First in rude and wild confusion,
Then arranged in goodly order;
Lands and waters, woods and pastures,
And with moving creatures peopled.

First, behold the orbs above us,
Which are ever sparkling brightly;
Let us upward rise and see them—
See their great and many wonders,
With a wonder rising mountains
Through the circuit they are set in.
These are worlds like our own one,
And have each their separate people,
Laws, and customs, and strange dealings;
And these worlds are ever turning,
Moving round the orbs of splendor,
Fixed, in the height of spaces,
For a light and heat unto them.
Now we wonder if these people
Are by evil spirits haunted,
Which incite them to rebellion,
And destroy their God-like image;
But we cannot solve the wonder,
And must choose to sit in darkness.
Then I guide you hence awayward
From the sparkling of this system,
From the sun's rebounding brightness,
And the pale moon's ever-fair light,
And the many colored star lights,
Blended in a great profusion,
To the limits of our world,
Which we best can know and search in.
First, unto the boundless ocean,
By the billow which returneth

Echo to great Neptune's call,
Where the mermaid host sojourneth
In his ancient rocky hall;
Where Leviathan, the mighty
Keeper of all Neptune's treasure,
Roams around the rocky caverns
In majestic state, exploring.
Let us see these mighty waters
When they rise in foaming billows,
Swallowing towns, and ships, and people,
Roaring like a mighty thunder;
And, when they are still and peaceful,
Like a plain of pasture spreading,
Sleeping as a virgin sleepeth
Ere vain love-dreams fill her bosom.
Both these aspects are majestic,
Grand, and pleasing, and inspiring.
On a bark we will convey us
Through the peering rocks and islands,
Where the Summer brings its sunshine,
And the Winter frost and snow-storms,
For a season to the lone isles.
Then unto the tropic regions,
Where the proud sun pours its glory
On the burning sandy deserts;
Streams of brightness everlasting,
Like ten thousand mountains blazing;
And the khamsheens wild and fiercely
Sweep in burning flakes along them,
And torment the weary traveller
Who is slowly wading through them,
Thirsting for a cooling river.
And 'tis there the wild tornado
Riseth in its frame of terror,
Wild, and fierce, and unrelenting.
To the spreading woods and forests
Of the black pine and the myrtle,
Of the cedar and the red birch,
Of the oak tree and the walnut,
Of the tulip and mahogany,
All in branchy webwork blended,
That the light can hardly enter

To remove the clouds of darkness
In the vast and deep recesses;
Where the lion and the tiger,
Where the panther and the leopard,
And the jaguar and hyæna,
And the tan wolf and the ocelot,
In the daytime hold their parley,
And resort for wakeful slumbers,
Till the dusky hand of black night
Draweth down her curtain on them;
Then they leave the sylvan passes
To traverse the open valley,
Prowling after luckless surfeit,
Lurking by the lakes and rivers
For the panting prey which cometh
To allay its thirsty feelings
At their sweet and cooling waters.
There the owl at midnight whoopeth,
And the lions roar majestic,
And the many prowling wild brutes
Raise such divers sounds and noises,
That it gives a fearful grandeur
To the scene at hours of midnight.

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To the rocky hills and mountains
We will next direct our journey,
Which with heathy robes are mantled,
And whose heads are ever wearing
Caps of snow of many ages.
These are in adorning climates,
Where the seasons bring their changes,
Where comes hoary-headed white frost,
And the plummy flakes of white snow,
Showered around in bounty's largess,
Lend the plains a pure white carpet,
And the hills a dazzling wrapper,
Which they don in princely grandeur,
Till the herald voice resoundeth
O'er the mountains, hills, and valleys,
From the orient regions coming:
"Haste ye, Winter, your departure,
And remove those chill adornments,
Fold those dreary garments quickly,
And begone unto your own land;
For our fairy queen approacheth,
Comes our gentle queen to claim her
Now the rule of this dominion.
Hark how sweet the songs she bringeth!
We shall give her welcome greetings."
Now the peaceful vales and pastures
All in beauty spread before us;
And the fragrant kine are grazing,
And the merry lambs run frisking
Mid the perfumes of the meadow,
From the odors of the Spring flowers;
And the Casket dove is cooing
Love songs to its cherished mate;
And the shepherd boy is wooing
By the rustic cottage gate.
There the swains, in nature's freedom,
Pour their mirth around profusely;
And the aged people fondly
See the mirth they once partook of.

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Now, from scenes so sweet and pleasant,
We must turn and journey onward;
From the mountains' rugged grandeur,
Where the chamois and the wild deer
Roam in constant freedom over;
Where the eagle soaring flyeth,
Scouting with a keen beholding;
And with thunders rolling by us,
And with lightnings trouling round us,
Seek for other scenes and fancies.
Thence away unto the regions,
Gliding o'er the restless billows,
Through the howling storms and tempests,

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Unto scenes of snow and icelands,
Where the blocks of ice are dancing
Like huge hills amid the billows,
And the snows are ever sleeping,
And the frosts are ever biting;
Where the bears go prowling wildly,
Creeping from their icy caverns.
There we find a nature also,
And a people who enjoy it.

But that we have made a survey
Rudely of the different regions,
And in visits on our journey
Have discerned the varying customs
Of the many different people
Who take glory in their white skins,
Or of others who, alike, likewise,
Build their pride in skins of copper;
Let us notice more minutely
Scenes, and wonders, and behaviours
On this kingdom of Nimæra,
As they often come before us.
So the little stream we follow,
Rising from a rocky mountain,
See it moving onward, onward,
Gathering force, and power, and beauty,
Till it gets a rolling river,
Sweeping onward to the ocean,
Watering many pleasant valleys,
Cheering many a thirsty traveller.
This is like a man who riseth
From a humble life and hidden
Unto power, and wealth, and wisdom,
Gaining large and goodly influence,
Giving, as he upward rises,
Courage unto needy pilgrims,
Help unto the homeless wanderer.
These are of Nimæra's kingdom.
But, as we have traced the river
From its wild and rustic birthplace,
Let us see the scenes beside it;
And in wonder deep we ponder
How all these things were created,
And of the unbounded knowledge
Of the Being great who made them.
First we pass the lake which spreadeth
Wide its bosom to the sunshine,
Or unto the winds and tempests;
By its mountain bulwarks guarded,
Which for everlasting passion
Keep the couch whereon it sleepeth.
Then the sweet and happy village,
Standing in the peaceful valley,
Fraught of fondest recollections
Of the happy days of childhood
Unto many far departed,
Toiling through the world's courses.
There is simple joy and humble,
And in unity the daytime
And the tranquil of the night time
Keep harmonious pleasures by it.
Stand around it woods and pastures,
Full of song, and peace, and plenty;
O'er them softest winds are wafted,
Sporting gently with the leaflets,
Which unite in murmurs often,
Seeming to reproach them thuswise:
"Why came ye so near our pillows,
To disturb the peaceful order
Of our slumbers sweet and soothing?"
In the east behold the gay orb
Leave its cradle for rejoicing
O'er its course in might and grandeur.
On the west behold the pillow
Where it lieth down to slumber.
Next, as we go wandering onward

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From these rustic scenes and pleasing,
 Comes the city, overflowing
 With a motley population.
 There oft pestilence and sickness
 Pay each other salutation,
 And unite their fatal efforts
 To destroy in deadly numbers,
 Raging through the streets in darkness,
 And disguised in the daytime
 To betray the one who thinks not
 That his doom is yet so near him.
 There the harlot of the midnight
 Holdeth forth her deadly charmings
 To entice the blind and simple.
 He is simple who doth lend her
 Such a glance that lusts go after;
 He defiled that partaketh
 Of the couch she sheweth to him.
 Seek of wisdom, and refrain thee
 From the path whereon she lurketh;
 She will draw thy vigor from thee,
 And thy spirit to destruction.
 There is sin, in all its blackness,
 Spreading wide its vile infection.
 Like unto a thief it stealeth
 Through the crowded lanes and alleys;
 And appeareth, robed more gaily,
 Yet as hideous in its purpose,
 In the dwellings of the lofty,
 On their walks and promenadings.
 Here the young are led from virtue
 Unto every ill devising;
 As the lad who, in his anger,
 Curseth a reproving parent
 Daily wanders unto evil,
 Till his hand is raised to murder,
 Reeking in a brother's life-blood.
 Then of fear he is betaken,
 And a bloody spirit haunts him,
 Till his days are sadly ended
 Hanging on the loathsome gallows.
 Here is revel mirth and gladness,
 And gay scenes, where flock the simple.
 They are simple who, allured,
 Follow Pleasure's fleeting phantom.
 They are led deluded onward,
 Till it is a curse unto them,
 And they have not power to leave it.
 They are led to low desires,
 Craving unto lust and evil;
 As the drunkard and profaner,
 As the vile and the licentious
 Glory in plebian language,
 With their sharp tongues dipt in slander,
 And their words in curses flowing,
 Think not of their awful ending
 Till destruction comes upon them.
 Thus the gorgeous devil hieth
 To the grand and gay assemblies,
 And attend him many pages
 In their many-colored costumes;
 They are eager at enlisting,—
 Luring numbers to his bondage.
 Have you taken his temptation?
 Are you too an eager worker
 To allure the simple to him?
 Say how many souls are writhing
 In a long and sad destruction,
 Who pursued a better pathway
 Till you lured them to forego it.

But I must not wander thuswise.

We are now in the great city,
 Where the lofty and the lowly,
 And the sumptuous and the starving,
 Are within each other's shadows.

There the merchant and the trader
Tendeth each his own transactions;
Some deal fairly, some deal falsely.
And the judges sit dispensing
Seeming justice to the people;
But their judgments are corrupted,
And they rule in wrong or favor.
There is constant din and bustle;
And the weary shopman standeth
Day to day in close confinement;
And the pallid seamstress sitteth
For a long and tedious twelve hours
Stitching, while her life is ebbing
In a rapid current from her.
Now awhile we see the playhouse,
And the giddy hall of music,
And the scenes exposéd therein,
Oft immodest and immoral.
Next the nest of thieves and robbers,
With their heaps of spoil and plunder,
And their hidden laws and customs.
Then we seek the house of prayer,
Which is only weekly opened,
Or which day to day inviteth
Weary souls into its shadow,
There to hold a sweet communion
With the God who made and keeps them,
Or the silent hours of midnight
To employ in watchful prayer.
As we come unto His presence
Let us bow in holy reverence,
As is ever due and fitting,
To the God who there descendeth.
Now behold the people gathered;
They are all as one together,
But their thoughts are widely parted.
Some are earnest, true, and godly,
Others wicked and regardless;
Some are semi-sanctimonious,
(Most obnoxious of deceivers.)
Let us see their inward purpose.
One doth offer true oblation—
Praise and worship, as he seemeth;
While the thoughts of one near by him
Are among the world's pleasures;
And another has come hither
To give homage, style, and fashion;
And another thinks of feasting
(His great god is in his belly.)
Suchlike is the varied purpose
Of the lofty and the humble,
Met together and commingled
In this sacred house of prayer.
Now we leave this hallowed building,
And again the street we enter.
There we meet a mournful number,
In a mournful measuring treading,
All in sombre garments vested;
And in reverent awe we follow
To the place where skulls of dead men
And the framework of the body
In the grave's deep stillness slumber,—
Where the worms are ever feeding
On the bodies fast decaying.
There the mourners lay their burden
In the cold grave, weeping on it
Tears of anguish deep and bitter;
And they heap the mould upon it,
And return a little season,
Till the time for their departure:
Soon in death they also slumber.
Let us always keep as sacred
This still dwelling of our fathers,
Whereto oft the lonely mourner,
Oft the orphan and the widow,

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Come to weep a tear of sorrow
 On the cold ground which enshrineth
 The remains of dear ones parted
 Ever from their earthly presence.

Now we leave the crowded city,
 With its mingled good and evil,
 With its noise, and din, and bustle,
 And the roll of laden waggon,
 And the mail cart, and the black van;
 And we pass a little onward,
 Down beside the pleasant river,
 To the fields of war and bloodshed,
 Where destruction's storm is raging,
 Where the valiant and the brave men
 All around are thickly falling—
 Falling as the leaves of Autumn,
 Trampled in the dust around them,
 Where they soon will be forgotten,
 Sleeping in the depth of ages.
 Gory red the river runneth,
 And the plains with blood are steaming—
 Boiling blood, which from the wounded
 Floweth, gushing fast and freely.
 Why is all this ruthless ravage,
 And this people fiercely warring?
 It is for a vain ambition,
 Or a little earthly matter
 Which they cannot settle better
 Than in war and deadly bloodshed,
 Or to gain an angry vengeance
 For some insult which appeareth
 To imagination hideous.

Now we leave the sterner presence
 Of the earth and all its changes,
 And we take the wings of fancy,
 (Which is sister to poesy),
 Guided by the light of record
 Thereon mount, and fly, surveying,
 Far above the heights of knowledge.
 And we take a retrospective
 Of the ancient times and people,
 When was nature young and blooming,
 When our fathers were created,
 And within the blessed Eden
 Set to tend and to adorn it.
 Adam with his Eve belovéd,
 Happy in their single nature,
 Thus brought forth to joy and pleasure,
 Innocent and sweet amusement,
 In attending on the fair wants
 Of the creatures set around them,
 Over which, in kingly greatness,
 They were made the head, the purpose
 Of these others in creation,
 From the unexploréd chaos.
 Thence we come into the present.
 Age to age doth bring us onward
 Through the fickle term of nations
 And the changes of the people,
 Mid their tumults and their tranquils,
 As they stand in pomp and glory,
 Firm and faithful in their own strength,
 Till its frailty cometh on them
 And they are completely conquered,—
 Broken down in great destruction.
 O'er the waters of the deluge
 We come sailing onward, onward;
 And arrive with many records
 From the many downcast nations,
 From the people of all ages,
 First, and last, and intervening.
 And we pass the time allotted
 To the gods of superstition,
 When the world was set in darkness,
 In the fear of gods of fancy,

Who held counsel on Olympus.
There sat Jupiter, the greatest,
On his ivory and gold throne,
And communed with his advisers,
Who were Juno, his betrothed,
Fairest goddess of the council,
Who gave from her depths of knowledge
Good advisings to her chieftain.
Then were Mars, the fierce and warlike,
And Apollo, for the poets,
With Diana, his twin sister,
Who sat on the silent moonbeam,
Chaste, enchanting in her meekness.
Then stood Venus, rich in charmings,
Goddess sole of love and beauty;
And stood Mercury, the swiftest
Bearer of the council's tidings.
Then came Neptune, strong and mighty,
Ruler of the storms and tempests;
And the god of fire near him,
Who was Vulcan, rude and ready.
And to Vesta, Saturn's daughter,
Were entrusted fires also,
More refined and more celestial;
While the number was completed
By good Ceres, full of bounty,
Keeper of the corns and harvests.
Thus in council sat the great gods,
Dealing fates unto the nations;
So the simple people fancied.
Now the flight of fancy over,
She hath brought us safely homeward,
To the spot we love the fondest.
There we lay the many tokens
Of the wondrous journey by us,
And reflect now quaintly, calmly
On the great things we have witnessed
In this kingdom of Nimæra;
And, before our thoughts are settled,
We by votaries are surrounded
From the courts of every people,
From the throne of every nation,
Who, in tongues that widely vary,
And in words that sound so strangely,
Give their mission, bear their record
Of the throne of King Nimæra,
Of his ancient power and greatness,
Of his presence with the modern,
With their people of the present.
And to give its own conviction
Shall the voice of every creature,
Of the nobles of creation,
All in one together mingle,
From the feeble voice of old age
To the lisping tongue of childhood.
Grand shall be their mingled accents,
Which in verity are rising,
Telling likewise of Nimæra,
Who their every purpose ruleth,
Tends it in its first conception,
Baffles wholly and destroys it,
Or unto completion brings it,
Bringeth out its faults or virtues,
Shewing where its merit lieth.
Then shall every beast that liveth,
Every bird and every reptile,
Every fish and every insect,
Raise their own peculiar voices—
(Terrible, or sweet, or puny);
And will testify their own way
Of the powers of King Nimæra,
Who their being's fire feedeth,
Gives them space for life and glory,
With that limit ends their being;
For no hidden spirit have they

Image to the holy Maker.
Now the grave shall yield its token,
And the battle-field its relic,
Stained in gore and kept in glory;
And the caverns of the ocean
Shall advance a token likewise,
Opening wide their watery great doors,
Shew the works of many ages
By the hand of King Nimæra,
With the wonders stored among them,
Worked, and fashioned, and performed.
Then the voice of stormy Winter,
And the soft and pleasing fair notes
Of the Springtime and the Summer,
And the richly-laden Autumn,
Shall a ready answer make us.
And the mighty wind that bloweth,
And the soothing and the soft breeze
With a pensive murmur cometh—
Cometh laden with responses
From the trees of every forest
(Every leaflet's tiny voice joined),
From the fair and fertile valleys,
From among the hills and mountains,
With advisings to speak boldly
Of the powers of King Nimæra;
That in every race or ramble
Has his throne been set around them,
Built of wonders and composéd
Far amid the wilds and fertiles.
Here and hence these heralds answer;
Then they take their pinions swiftly,
And are vanished ere we know them,
Still to roam, and race, and ramble.
Next the voices shall be blended
Of the brooklets and great rivers,
Of the ever-murmuring ocean,
Of the wild and roaring thunders,
Of the tempest howling terrors,
Hailstones heavy and great snow-storms,
And the flames of fire roaring;
These shall boldly say their saying,
That he is among them alway,
That they have for ever known him,
And their strength dependeth on him.
Then the rocks in echoes answer—
Answer to the roll of thunders,
And the roaring of the ocean,
In a myriad sounds replying,
Own the powers of King Nimæra.
Then the stars shall twinkle signs forth,
Like the language of the speechless;
And the sun in dazzling bright rays,
And the moon with mellow fair beams,
And the evening and the morning,
And the noonday and the midnight,
And the dew which gently falleth,
And the raindrops and the vapors,
And the mists on all the rivers,
And the fleecy and the black clouds
Shall inscribe their ready answers,
And with mystic fingers write thus:
"When our buoyant pinions take us
High unto the outer heavens,
Far beyond the eagle's soarings,
Then we see Nimæra's wonders
In all spaces that we visit
On the earth or in the heavens,
And, in every form that nears us,
See his wondrous power and greatness;
For his throne is firmly builded,
Rising unto all the world."
And they further shall inform us
That some strange and mystic stories
Have been spoken of Nimæra

And his dealings with the people,
 Counted in the ancient numbers,
 Reckoned in the current courses.
 Now that we are well informéd
 Of his throne, and power, and dealings,
 Let us hear the voice of Reason,
 Speaking lastly, yet abounding
 Much of wisdom and of foresight,
 Seeing, as a prophet, matters
 Hidden yet upon the future;
 And he tells us, "Yet a short time
 Stands the throne of King Nimæra;
 He but reigns a season longer,
 Then yields up his power and kingdom—
 Yields it to the hand which gave it;
 And he well hath filled his mission,—
 Ever faithful, ever constant.
 Now he steppeth from his high throne,
 Builided to the gates eternal,
 Which are quickly opened to him,
 And he joins the never ending.
 Then his kingdom is forgotten,
 And in flames as chaff consuméd,
 Rolled away as clouds of vapor;
 Clouds of smoke and clouds of vapor,
 Flying with the roar of thunders,
 Terrible, and loud, and mighty,
 And with lurid lights illuming
 All the vast unfathomed chaos.
 Then comes gloom and dismal darkness,
 Falling over all the spaces,
 When the flames forget their burning.
 Now his people come for judgment,
 And they are in substance spirits,
 Born to everlasting being.
 Mighty is the Judge who sitteth,
 And His throne a sea of splendor.
 He gives justice without favor.
 He is good, and kind, and gentle.
 They whose lives have been directed
 Just, and upright, and unswerving
 From the ways of truth, shall see Him
 With a joy of sweetest measure.
 He is stern and firm in purpose.
 They whose lives have been of evil
 Tremble in His awful presence;
 For they see their doom engraven,—
 'To the pit of Long Damnation,'
 Awful gloom and awful terrors."

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LORD HENRY OF THE EDEN-SIDE.

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INTRODUCTION.

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The scene of this Poem is located on the banks of the Eden, a pleasant river in Cumberland. It is founded on facts, but the names and some other immaterial points are imaginary.

LORD HENRY OF THE EDEN-SIDE.

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Roll, ye gentle waters,
 Rich in music laden;
 Know ye not of matters
 Hid in sorrow's deep den.
 Bloom, ye buxom beauties,
 By this Eden river;
 Thine a gem of duties
 To attend it ever.
 Spread, ye fruitful valleys,
 Drawing from it life-spring;
 Ye may cope with allies,
 And a victor's song sing.

'Twas by this Eden of the northern land,
Upon the fertile banks of the fair stream,
Where nature's beauties to the noonday spread,
And in the golden sunset sparkle more,
As charm to charm is added ever new,
Until the eye is weary to behold
The bounty of the grandeur there contained,
To watch the peaceful bosom of the stream
Sparkle, as with a thousand diamonds set;
While softly moving, as by inward life
Inspired, to guide it in the bidden course,
As it glides on and onward to the firth;
While in its rural bed the silver trout
Runs pouting freely, darts from stone to stone,
As of that sport it never should be sore.
And from the banks, amid the sylvan brake,
A life of melody is rising here and there
From wood-wild songsters, which their glory take
To mete a measure ever sweet and fair;
As though the task were for a victory,
And each endeavoured to advance its notes
In sweetest sounds and fairest melody.
'Tis sweetly soothing to the weary mind,
Which here hath turned a little time for rest.
Amid this scene the happy swains delight
To dwell, and draw the vigor of their life
With all the fulness nature can supply,
And every morn awake to new delights
Robust and hale, and of a healthy mind,
And so go forth to labor, and to take
The fulness of the land they labor on,
And in the meadows feed their favored kine,
So full and ready that they low and long
The maid with pails to ease the milky load.
Sweet is this scene in early hours when viewed,
What time the rising sun comes proudly forth,
Midway to east, between the south and north,
And chases quick the lingering night away,
Which, as a schoolboy, loiters on the way;
Or in the tranquil of a closing day
It is beheld in charms surpassing sweet,
Just as the sun has done his bidden course,
And goes to slumber in the favored west,
Yet lingers long to take a parting look
Upon the land which he shall leave behind,
As seeming loth to wander from the scene,
But, called of duty, moves at length away,
And draws his train behind the distant hills,
Till all is lost to the admiring gaze,
Which feasted on the beauties to the last.
For darkness comes with night, his paramour,
And cast their shadows over all the land;
And in their stilly presence creeps repose,
And folds his arms around the lifeful sounds,
Till all is hushed of nature into rest,
And all the tuneful throng is mutely still,
And comes no sound of labor from the hill.
Then thrilling is the grandeur of the calm;
The only sounds which come upon the ear,
To tell the mind that life remaineth near,
Are the soft murmurings of the silvery stream,
The gentle winds which whisper to the trees
As they go wandering in the border woods,
Or now and then the screeching of an owl,
The bleating lamb, or distant watch-dog's howl.

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'Twas on this scene Lord Henry loved to dwell—
A noble bearer of a noble name—
Lured by the tranquil of a country home
To muse upon the beauties of the land.
'Twas here the castle of his fathers stood—
Time honored and of pleasing memories,

Adorned of nature and of every art
 Which the devising of the mind can give
 To feed the fancy of admiring man.
 But in these pleasantries soon there came a time
 When he got weary of the lonesome life,
 Which led him, day by day, in the same scenes,
 And did not still the longings of his soul.
 For now he felt the presence of a power
 Which all men feel, that moves the will at ease
 Unto a bondage which they fain would shun,
 Yet loving well the while the gentle guile
 Which bids the soul unto the presence sweet
 Of some fair maid, whose winning charms had wrought
 Well on the strongholds of a purposed heart,
 Until the entrance hath been fully made,
 And it is captive to her choosing will,
 And all the forms to wedlock which pertain.
 This mystic power incited on him more,
 Till he resolved to seek a maiden fair,
 And share with her the blessings of his home,
 And mete with her the measure of his life.
 Thus said the voice which whispered to his soul:
 "And she shall cheer me in the heavy hours,
 And give a spirit to my lonesome life;
 And she shall be a maiden, young, and fair,
 And gentle, and be termed the sweetest flower
 Of all the land for many measures round;
 And such a maiden I shall love, and serve,
 And honor, and revere, with all the love
 Which an admiring soul can give to one
 Who is the perfect image of his heart."
 And, ere a while, Lord Henry loved, and wooed,
 And wed a maiden of a worthy line,
 And led her gently to his country home,
 And used every power to make her glad,
 And loved and served her with a constant love,
 And had no mind to other than to her.
 For she was sweet, and fair, and gentle (more
 Than the bright picture he had fancied of);
 And they were happy in such tranquil joys,
 As day by day went fleeting on its course,
 And saw them still in one united love,
 And one to one the source of sweetest joy.
 These bore their record ere they passed away
 Of some distinguished pleasure to imply—
 A sweetness to the retrospective thought.
 She was his sole companion day and night.
 Oft he would lead her to the flowery lawn,
 And in the rosy bowers bedeck her hair,
 And watch the image of his soul repose
 In all her beauty 'neath a rosy crown;
 Amid the fragrance of the blooming eve,
 And the soft cadence from the sylvan towers,
 Beheld the heaving of her gentle breast,
 Moved by the passing of a peaceful breath,
 Until of love his soul would overflow;
 Then he would bend and lay his lips to hers,
 And pour a shower of mellow kisses there.
 Then he loved well to hear the harp reply—
 The silvery harp—unto her nimble touch,
 And shower its floods of melody away,
 To mingle with the songs of nature by;
 For it knew well the softness of her touch,
 And gladly gave its music in return.
 But more he loved than music of the harp,
 Or songs of many valleys in the Spring,
 When every fragment of the air is full
 Of song and all the arts of melody,
 To hear the sweetness of her full-tuned voice,
 Raised to the measure of some favored song;
 A life-like presence lending to the theme,
 Until the soul is fervent in return
 Of they who listen to its thrilling power.
 Then they would wander to the village oft,
 Now by the path along the bridge, and then

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Across the water by the ferry-boat;
For the coy village is across the stream,
Near on a line from where the castle stands,
And nigh it well, that when the breeze accords,
Or calm prevails, the sounds come floating o'er
Of mirthful lads in gambol on the green,
Or the part song of buxom damsel raised,
Who lightly busies at her noonday task;
Anon the chime of the church clock, which tells
Another hour departed of the year.
And all these sounds familiar to them come,
And all the village holds them in respect,
Which as they near the rustic boys will doff
Their brown worn caps in manner rustic like,
While dame and damsel pay a reverence meet
Unto the lady they have learnt to love;
For she is loved by all the people well,
And held in honor as a God-sent friend,—
Kind-hearted to the poor, and to the sick
A double help and kindly comforter.

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In manner thus the seasons quickly pass,
One after one,—the flowery Summer and
The golden Autumn, with her bounty hand;
Then, in the background, Winter, and again,
When Spring, the early Summer; it was then,
Her full time having come, the lady went
Unto her chamber, and brought forth a child.
And it was robed, and brought, and put into
The father's hand, and he was very glad
With the full joy which fills a father's heart,
And went and kissed his wife, and bade
Her speedy well, and all things seeméd good;
And in his ear a sweet, soft voice foretold:
"Thine is a happy lot of years to come,
All full of tranquil and domestic bliss;
Thy paths are by the ways of harmony,
And a fair train of love shall ever tend,
With all her blessings largely to bestow,
Upon thy head as dew in Summer night."
Again he went unto his wife, to see
How quickly she got well and how she fared
For he was weary to be wanting her,
And longed to see her graceful form again
Come quickly here and there about his home.
But lo! he saw the hand of sickness had
Upon his loved one laid a ruthless hold,
And that the lustre of her eye had gone,
And that her voice had lost its brightest chords.
Then day and night he watched her, and bestowed
Of every tendence he could think to give,
Which would allay the fever, or imply
Relief awhile unto her aching head.
But day and night he saw her further wane,
Her life-stream ebbing every hour away;
Until at last he saw her wane and die,
Beheld her sink into the arms of death.
Then woeful was the scene, to see him bend
Upon the lifeless form in floods of woe,
Whose bitter torrents overwhelméd long;
And much he wept in full and heavy tears,
Till they who saw it thought his heart would break;
And for long hours he gazed upon her form,
Nor could conceive that she was truly dead.
And all the household wept, and many came
To give him comfort, but he turned away,
And could not hearken to their kindly words,
And rose and left the house to wander out,
And passed the old domestic at the door,
Who dare not question where his master went.
And to the woods he wandered. It was night,
And long the warblers of the dale had sung
Their last glad anthem to the dying day,
And gone to slumber in the sylvan bowers
Until the dawning of another morn.
And on he wandered, but he knew not whence,

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For all his thoughts were maddened and confused.
 Then to the bower he came, where oft in time
 But lately gone he had his loved one led,
 And with the fairest flowers bedecked her hair.
 He paused awhile, and, with a heavy sigh,
 Spake to the flowers, "O ye fair flowers, receive
 The lamentations of a widowed heart.
 Thy gay perfections have no further charms;
 And those sweet odors are diffuséd now
 As fragrance is unto a wasted land,
 Since she who loved them has for ever gone."
 Then on he pressed into the deepest depths
 Of the still woods, his mournful story told
 In tears and sighs unto the woods and wilds;
 And they made answer in a murmur deep,
 Which ran from tree to tree adown the break;
 While from the stream a low lamenting came,
 And the clear heavens wept gentle tear-drops down,
 And every star seemed as a pitying eye—
 An eye of love with sparkling tear-drops full.
 And all around was mute, and the pale moon
 Came forth to take a survey of her realm,
 Parading in a calm majestic air
 From end to end, and casting here and there,
 Through the condenseness of the sylvan boughs,
 Her sidelong glances, which intrude the depths,
 And lay strange shadows wrangling on the ground.
 Then for a while he stood amazed amid
 The awful tremor of this death-like calm,
 And for a time his grief forgot its depth;
 For a calm wonder sat enthroned instead
 Upon his soul, which shewed the great, and good,
 And grand conception of the God who made
 The earth and heavens in order so profound.
 And, growing weary, there he sat him down
 Beneath the cover of a spreading tree;
 For it was many days since he had slept
 Or rested for his earnest watchfulness.
 He breathed a silent prayer that God would send
 Him comfort in and strength to bear the grief,
 Then drew his mantle o'er him, and remained
 Wrapt in the sadness of his mournful thoughts,
 Until the gentle arms of slumber closed
 Around him, and he slept a deep, soft sleep.
 And in the watches of the night there came
 A bright and wondrous vision on his mind.
 He dreamt that on a lovely eve he sat
 Beneath the shadow of a spreading tree,
 In adoration of the beauties round
 But heartsore with the burden of his woe;
 When the sweet fragments of a heavenly song
 Broke on his ear. He raised his eyes, and lo!
 Amid the tranquil heights above he saw
 Forth from the portals of the eternal gates
 Two angel forms descending unto him.
 Their garments were as white as Winter snow,
 And on their brows were sparkling crowns of gold,
 And they had wings as angels, and each held
 A banner in her hand, on which these words
 In golden letters were so strangely wrought:
 "'Tis peace, and love, and joy eternally
 Adorns the precincts of our blessed home."
 And bright their presence was as dazzling suns,
 Which send a radiance through the heavens wide.
 They now before him stood, and she who spake
 Was lovely to behold; her perfect form
 Was as the form of his departed one,
 Yet lovelier far; and the sweet voice did seem
 The same sweet voice he had been wont to hear.
 In fervent power, yet softly, thus she spake:
 "Dear Henry, rise and mourn no more for me,
 Since I am in a sweet eternity,
 And dwell in peace, and joy, and love, and songs,
 Which are for ever gladly rising there.
 Sweet were our days together spent below,

But sweeter far they shall be when above
 We are united through unending days
 With her, an angel too, who was our babe,
 And who hath come to bear me presence here."
 Then by the hand she took him, and thus spake
 In kind and pleading words: "The laws of man
 Would hold and deem it just that, if a man
 In time of his prosperity forget
 To render to his God a full return
 Of thankfulness and praise, then he shall be
 In time of his adversity forgot.
 But God is more compassionate, and says
 That if a man turn from his heedless ways,
 And bear a true repentance, he shall live.
 Then I, the spirit of your once fond wife,
 Come from the realms of bliss, do thee adjure;
 Turn to thy God, and give Him worship due,
 And mourn not with a needless sorrow more.
 Then, but a season longer, ye shall come
 And join me in this never-ending bliss."
 Awe-struck and dumb the wondering Henry stood,
 And took communion from the Holy One;
 In adoration bound, he knew not whence
 To make an answer fit, and would have knelt,
 Like as before a God, to worship them.
 But, ere he knew, they had on pinions bright
 Resumed their course unto the regions whence
 He saw them come; and, with a wondering look,
 He watched them still ascend, until the gates
 Of heaven opened, and they entered in.
 Then it was morn, and Henry woke from sleep,
 And looked in wonder on the things around,
 And felt bewildered for a time to know
 How hither he had come, and whence the cause.
 Then fragments of the dream broke on his mind,
 And yet awhile the joys, the cares, the woes
 Came clear in their intensity, as when
 He had endured them in the days just gone.
 The chilly numbness from his limbs removed,
 He turned to wander homeward, being now
 Refreshed by sleep and more in spirit soothed,
 Reflecting long and deep on the stern truths
 And troubles tending on the lives of men.
 Then came the vision of the night before
 Clear as the waters of a Summer stream,
 And bore its beauties to his soul anew,
 Wherefrom he saw a lucent line ascend,
 Of comfort and of warning to his life,
 Bidding his soul to higher things ascend,
 As vapors rise—as vapors rise and flow—
 To seek the presence of the sunny heights,
 Sore of their sojourn in the sphere below;
 And thus reflected on his bygone days:
 "Ah me! ah me! my latter life hath been
 A sorry semblance of the lives of men,
 Who seek for pleasures in a barren land,
 And look for comfort in an empty urn,
 And lose the aim wherefore they live and die
 Amid the luring of deluding joys.
 O error bold! ye now thyself reveal
 Within the chaos of departed time,
 That she, my wife, received the honor due
 Unto my God, for she was as my God,—
 The idol I adored, my constant theme.
 Forget! forgive! I will return again
 Unto a nobler purpose, and will give
 Unto my God the reverence which is meet,
 And yet a cherished recollection hold,
 Because of her who hath departed, and
 Who came to warn me of my error here.
 Then in a future day I shall ascend,
 And share beside her an eternal joy."
 Again he thought, "But can the babe be dead?
 It which should be my only comfort now.
 But now I cannot murmur; I will say,

'God's will be done!' He knoweth what is good."
 In manner thus he pondered full and deep,
 Until the hall he reached, then entered in.
 And all the household wondered whence he came,
 For that their lord had been the night away,
 But none could ask him whither he had been;
 And when they told him that the child was dead,
 For it was sickly ere he wandered forth,
 He shed a silent tear, and calmly said,
 "Great are my woes, but I can bear them now."
 And 'twas the vision of the fallen night
 That stood a comfort to his spirit then;
 Yet he had hoped to see the child survive,
 And be a last lone comfort to his soul
 Of earthly kind. And they were glad to see
 That the full torrent of his grief had gone,
 And that a peaceful sadness moved him now.
 Then on the fifth day from her death it was,
 All due obsequies made, the castle gates
 Were opened, and emerged therefrom, in deep
 And sombre black, a mournful train, which bore
 Unto the grave the mother and the child.
 There in the ancients' tombs they were reposed
 Together, by the graves where many years
 Had slept his fathers in a silent sleep.
 The old church bell tolled mournfully, and all
 The village mourned, while many wept among
 The aged and the feeble, who had known
 The kindness of her way, and the full hand
 With which in trouble she had come to them.

Then Henry rose, and left the well-loved spot,
 Nor could he brook to linger on the scene,
 Where had been spent so many happy hours
 With her he loved, and where she lived and died;
 But in a foreign land he sought a home,
 And there sojournéd many years away.

MY MOTHER'S DEATH.

It is a mournful song I sing—
 A loving mother dead.
 Who can so hard a tidings bring,
 Or deeper sorrow bid.

THE MESSAGE.

Soft as an angel's breath,
 Swift as the wings of death,
 Through all the haunts of men,
 By lake and by river,
 Across forest and fen,
 Onward they sped, paused they never.
 By hamlet or hall,
 Mystic their pall,
 Hied as a spirit hidden from view,
 Faithless nor wavering, ever more true.
 Onward these words sped—
 "Your mother is dead."
 Quick as a dart,
 Piercing the heart,
 Bore they upon me;
 Reeling the blow sent me.
 Oh! for the woe lent me,
 How could I stand.

THE AFFLICTOR.

Was it the hand of God lifted the rod?
 Oh how hard does it seem, wonderful God!
 Mighty and marvellous, we but behold
 In wonder and awe Thy mysteries told—

The work of Thy hand
Throughout all the land,
Bearing on mankind—
Man frail and mortal.
Dark and ambiguous, mighty and grand,
All Thy works are;
Thee, whom all the angels adore,
Falling in prostration before
Thy radiant throne.
In beauty of state
The archangels wait,
Seeking Thy glory,
Great God, alone.
How shall we bend,
Seeking to lend
Humble adoration, worship before Thee?
How shall we yield us meekly submissive
Unto Thy will?
So prone is the heart oft to rebel,
Murmuring still;
From morning until night,
And
From darkness until light,
It doth rebel.
Send,
O Lord! the spirit of meekness,
And dispel
All turbulent thought
And vainglory sought.
We are but nought
In the presence of Thy greatness.

p. 111

THE COMFORTER.

O Lord! reach us
Thy hand, rich in comfort and love;
Our grief soothe, and raise us above
The tide of woe in which we move;
In this loss console us; sweet may
Our mourning be; oh! let us say,
"God hath removed her; He took her away."
And, Lord, teach us
In all things Thy wisdom to see.
Thou wouldst not have us always be
Wandering this vale of misery.

p. 112

HER SUFFERING.

Great had her sorrow been,
Anguish and woe,
Pouring their full fury,
Bearing her low.
But, in agony sore,
The affliction she bore
Meek as a child.
Though every breath was in agony seethed,
Yet not a murmur her parched lips breathed,
So passively mild.
All the earth's gladness
Is but as sadness
Unto her now.
All its gay pleasures
And its great treasures
Are but as measures
Empty and vain.
Peace, peace in her soul
Has fullest control.

HER DEATH.

Then the deliverer came,
And, in the glorious name
Of the great God, took her away
High unto the regions of day.

p. 113

And, ere she yielded her breath
Unto the angel of death,
These were the last words she spoke—
How sweetly from her lips they broke!—
“Saviour, receive my spirit,”
Breathed in all the merit
Of her Redeemer’s love.
He stood waiting above,
Watching the angels move
Unto His throne.

And thus the angel came and went;
But they who by the pillow bent
Were not the power of vision lent
To see the holy being sent
Among them then,
And moving when
He passed away,
Felt not the soft zephyrs lay
Room for his wing,
Heard not the heavenly throng
Their glad anthem sing,
Till the fulness of their song
Made the high arches ring.

p. 114

THE LAST FAREWELL.

Well I remember
Her long, lingering look,—
The last farewell I took,
Returning from home.
’Twas early September,
The cornfields looked yellow,
And garden fruits mellow
Were beginning to come.
She came to the gate with me,
And faltered, “Farewell!”
But oh! it was a hard one;
The silent tear fell
Down from her eye.
Merrily the birds sang,
But in her heart rang
A more sorrowful lay,
As she saw me away,
Watching the turn
Where ripples the burn,
Till I had gone past;
And this was the last—
The last of farewells.
Oh how Time tells
His wonderful power,
So stern in the hour!

p. 115

REFLECTIONS.

Low the flowing crops bent,
With their fulness content;
And many a sickle was sent
Into the rustling fields,
While the gay reaper wields
The bounty which God yields
In his goodness to man.
But as I heard these reapers sing,
Thought not Death’s reaper would bring
To me sorrow so soon;
Thought not he would come and remove
The one dearest object of love,
The earth’s greatest boon,
From my presence away.
Hallowed shall be that day,
In memory alway
Most dear unto me;
For, though I did not see
The angel of death near,
She may have seen

p. 116

His sable garments peer
From the long ranks of time,
And heard his voice chime,
"I shall come to bring thee
Unto eternity."

Dead! dead!

Oh! bid

My trembling heart be still.
It cannot brook this ill;
This strange and burdened truth
It cannot bear.

The brightness of my youth
It chills to hear.

Ah me! and has she gone,
Who in sickness watched me long,
Smoothed my pillow, hushed the throng,
And said

To childhood's fears, "Begone!"

Who in error chid,

And would gently bid

A rising rage be still,
Or check a stubborn will,
In childhood seeming ill.

I think I see her now
(The smile upon her brow)

Sit in the woody shade,
Adown the rural glade,

So full in song.

And watch her fondled boy,
With some much cherished toy,
Run raptured long.

Ah yes! too truly she hath gone.

The vacant seat to fill

There is none other, there is none
To take her place.

A mother lost

Is ever most

A home can bear.

Can time never more

That image restore?

Has that voice gone to keep

Its long silent sleep

With the dead in the grave?

She whom God hath said

Should have reverence paid,

Here on the earth,

All of her birth,

Called to give honor,

Long life the donor,

God hath said shall have.

Dead, they all tell me.

So strange, it doth seem

Like a vision befel me—

A wonderful dream,

That I no more may breathe

That name ever dear,

Save in a mournful voice

Hushed silent in fear.

p. 117

THE FUNERAL.

Now the old church bell

Tolls forth its death knell,

Mournfully to tell

The hour has come at last,

In heavy sadness past,

To bury the dead,

And in silence bid.

Then the mourners go,

All mournfully slow,

Every heart beating low

The march of the dead.

All with soft and gentle tread

Unto the sepulchre sped,

p. 118

And humbly bent every head,
Bearing to her last home the dead,
In all the obsequies due;
Every follower, in presence true,
Many a well-known neighbour view,
Paying his last meet respect
Unto her who has gone,
And whose remembrance shone
Bright in the memory of them.
Now through the old town they pace—
The good old familiar place,
Where often in time before
She, in life's abounding store,
Passed by many a friendly door.

p. 119

But now, how changed is the scene!
She, cold in death's awful sheen,
Is borne unto the still hallowed green.
Every passer turns to see,
And they say, "Who can it be?"
And they ponder in the thought—
One more unto death brought.
Soon may we, too, soon be sought.
But they who her in life knew
Feel the truth more strangely true,
And they take a sadder view
Of the great loss to the few,
Who received the bosom love
Which her kind deeds went to prove.
Now they tread in the hallowed ground,
Where the sons of ages have found
Together a home.

p. 120

And they pause by the chosen ground,
And all, in a silence profound,
Hear the words of comfort flow,
In deep power, sadly and low,
From the messenger of love,
Appointed of God above
To tell to His people peace,
And from care a glad release;
And his words of comfort are
Sweeter to their hearts by far
Than balm to a seething wound.

And now they lay
In the cold clay,
To moulder away,
All that is mortal of her.

O grave! receive her;
Ye have no terror,
But to relieve her
A world of woe.

'Tis but a season,
Waiting in reason,
She shall be there.

She hath gone down corruptible,
But shall rise incorruptible,

p. 121

Adornéd and fair,
When this grave which is closéd
Shall again be discloséd,
And the Good Shepherd shall call
Together unto Him all
His people, faithful and good,
Who in life steadfast have stood.

O widower! weep not,
And, orphans, lament not.
Weep not by the cold grave,
Long not that ye might have
Her with you again;
But let her remain

Alone in the grave,
In the peace of her last long abode.
Far sweeter is death unto her now.

AFTER THE BURIAL.

All hath been finished now;
And from the darkened brow
Of the grave the people move,
Pondering his own heart to prove,
 Each unto his home.
While of the old dead's demesne
 Hallowed fancies come,
Living and clear, urgent and fain,
As they visit in thought again
And again the place where remain
Their fathers, the sons of many ages,
Gathered from the ever-turning pages
Of the volume of time,
Like a long running rhyme—
 Old age and youth,
 Falsehood and truth,
 Beauty and pride
 Side unto side
In that old churchyard,
In the sacred guard
Of hallowed rest.
Then a behest
Moveth the breast
To be holy and meek,
Lowly to seek
Life unto life,
Bearing through strife
Unto the end,
Trying to blend
Love unto life.

p. 122

HOME SORROW.

p. 123

Woe is the guest
Of every breast
As they turn from the grave,
Bordered in a wave
 Of melancholy deep.
But their woe is not as our woe
In fervor or depth; they cannot know
 The fulness to weep
 Which we know,—
We who have held the keep
 Of her noble heart,
Who was of our unity the crown,
And who was the bosom of our home,
Where did the soul of every member come.
We know the part,
As true mourners, to weep;
For never again,
While time doth remain,
Shall we hear her voice
Relating in choice
Some well-pleasing tale,
Which never could fail
The hours to beguile,
As many a smile
Ran from face unto face.
But now her wonted place
Is vacant, and we
Can sorrow but see
In all things which she
By remembrance comes.
Yet there is a soft tranquil in presence of grief,
Which filleth the bosom of hallowed relief,
Making the pang sweet which rendeth the heart,
Soothing the sorrow and easing the smart,
Leading the mind from vain follies away,
To seek a more sacred and truthful array.

p. 124

IN REMEMBRANCE.

O memory of a mother gone!
Whene'er with others, or alone,

I hear or breathe that sacred name,
May it allure the hallowed flame
To shine on thee, and lead thy son
Into a better life, begun
Unworthy that which hath been done.
For him and all, and us anon,
In course of life I hear the knell
Of mournful, solemn funeral bell,
Or see the deep black drapings flow
Of funeral cortege moving slow.
Or, when the sombre weeds I don,
May they of warning not be lone,
But freely tell, in solemn truth,
The waning of my boasted youth;
That ere a while those rites shall be
Obsequies fashioned over me.
Then heedless, hasty spirit, pause
To learn and know the better cause
Wherefore ye live, and freely ask
Of wisdom for a fitter task.

p. 125

TO THE OBSERVER.

Pause, cold observer, pause awhile;
Why will not death thy thoughts beguile?
Think ye for ever to abide
By this deluding desert side?
O wanderer, turn;
O wanderer, stay;
Why will ye spurn
The voice to-day?
A little while—
An hour—may bring
A broken smile,
Death on the wing,
To bear thee down
By laden grief
Beneath his frown.
The time is brief.
Then stay, oh stay!
And lend an ear
To what the dead—
The dying say.
Thy doom is hid,
Thy death is near;
The Judge will bid
Thee soon appear.

p. 126

THE WORLD'S END.

p. 129

The gates of heaven are opened, and, behold,
The herald comes upon the wings of night,
When men in slumber lie, and when abroad
The robber goes to plunder what he can;
And when the lusty have gone forth to cull
A night's defilement in an evil way;
The gambler sitteth at his dizzy game,
The sotted drunkard feeds his bestial thirst,
And revel dancers are aloud in mirth.
Alike the heedless and the godly sleep,
When from the herald's waking trumpet comes
The awful and sonorous cadence, which
Shall roll around the earth from pole to pole—
More grand, more great, and more tremendous than
The voice of terror in the stormy sky,
As when a thousand thunders war therein
An angry war among the heavy clouds.
And at the sound the wicked tremble sore,
For now they know an awful doom at hand,
And quail to find no rescue from its power.
The robber drops the plunder from his hand;

The lusty startle at the mighty sound,
 And from their beds of sin turn wildly forth;
 And from his game the gambler leaps amazed
 And terror-struck; whereas the drunkard wakes—
 The sotted drunkard—from his stupid sleep,
 And feels the awful terrors of the hour.
 But by the righteous is the sound received
 As the glad tidings which they long have sought;
 For well they know the glory of the sign,
 When He, their true Deliverer, shall come.
 The earth shall tremble and rebound, and all
 The graves shall ope their darkened mouths, until
 The long-forgotten dead shall come therefrom.
 Then He who is the Judge appears forth from
 The heavenly gates; upon the lurid flame
 His chariot shall roll, and on the clouds
 Of sable smoke, down through the stormy sky,
 Where roar tremendous thunders, mid the cries
 Of agony and fear, which rise anon,
 Heartrending, from the lost, in anguish sore,
 Who call for shelter, but have no reply,
 Save terrors still more awful than before;
 Who seek for mercy, when their fearful doom
 Shall echo in their ear, "Too late! too late!"
 Then all the earth shall be engrossed in flame
 From sea to sea, and high the lurid glare
 Shall rise in streams amid the gloomy clouds;
 And the great waters, laving on the flame
 Their boiling waves, shall feed its power ten times,
 And lend their vapors to the burning air.
 All things shall be consumed excepting man;
 And through the flames the righteous shall be led
 Unhurt, as though there were no flame; whereas
 The wicked shall of tortures be conceived
 More deep in power than ever known before.

Then on His throne, mid glories so immense,
 The Judge in dreadful majesty appears,
 And looks in thrilling calm on all around.
 And on His brow sits equity enthroned,
 And truth and love united with it there;
 So radiant is His presence that, unveiled,
 The eye is dazzled which upon it dwells.
 He calls before Him all the people, and
 Discerns between the evil and the good
 Of all the deeds which they have done, and weighs
 Together in a balance, one in one,
 The evil and the good of all their thoughts,
 And all their words and mingled purposes.
 Then they to whom the balance falls to ill
 Their judgment thus receive: "Depart, depart
 Unto the burning lake, for ever fed.
 Ye would not hearken to the warning words,
 And now it is too late. Depart! depart!"
 Then to the hell eternal they and all
 The tortures of the world, and fears, and pains,
 And lust and anger, malice and disdain,
 And pride, and pomp, and every evil thought,
 Shall roll together, in a burning mass,
 Down deeper, deeper to the yawning gulphs.
 Thus all the mountains and great hills shall fly;
 And seas, and lakes, and rivers of the earth
 Shall vanish as a cloud before the wind;
 And He who was the Judge shall now ascend,
 Together with His chosen people, high
 Unto the heavenly gates, and, entering in,
 Shall have abode through day that knows no end
 In an Elysium of unmeasured joy.

THE SABBATH DAY.

Sweetest and fairest of the days that dawn

Upon Elysian hill, and over lawn,
 And field, and city spread a roseate light!
 The morning of the Sabbath day—in dight
 Of many a hallowed strain it comes. The bell
 Of every village o'er the plain doth tell,
 From its high seat, within the sacred tower
 Above the house of God, from hour to hour,
 A joyous song; and in cathedral town
 The gladsome peals break forth and warble down;
 While through the city every belfrey gives
 A glad reply, which seems to say, "He lives!
 He lives!" The song of praise is heard ascend,
 Raised to the heavenly throne, in one to blend
 With angels' song, from many a cottage rung,
 Where on this day the father with his young
 Sits down in peace; while, in the pine grove down
 The rural glen, a myriad voices crown
 The clear-tuned solo of the warbling thrush,
 Or oft in chorus to a duet flush,
 Sung with the full-piped blackbird of the wood,
 Their notes are joined. The aspect and the mood
 Of everything is changed, as wont on day
 Of toil the crowded city moves to lay
 The bands of slumber for a time away,
 But brings not out the bustle and the din
 Which is her weekday aspect; and within
 Her walls a stilly peace prevails; the roar
 And noise of lumbering waggon comes no more
 Along the well-worn street, nor busy tread
 Of envoy, hurrying on, by duty led,
 To bank, or warehouse, or to court of law.
 The myriad sounds have ceased, which nature saw
 Were fit to wait upon the day of toil;
 Nor mendicant nor ballad beggar foil
 The sacred rest with their assiduous song.
 And round the factory door the noisy throng
 Forgets to come as on the other days;
 Aside her task the weary seamstress lays,
 Now from the close and foul-aired workroom free.
 The toilsome shop is closed, and also he
 Who for the week stood there doth taste the sweets
 Of liberty awhile; the penman meets
 No more the tiring scroll; and now in chain
 The prisoner sits within his dungeon, wan
 And weary; but he hears some soothing strain
 Break through the thick and iron-girded wall;
 And then the heavy shackles seem to fall
 From off his feet; a strange emotion fills
 His soul, and through his wasted body thrills,
 When of the bygone days he thinks in sweet
 And lingering thought; and then his eyes to meet
 The scanty rays are turned, and on his mind
 Awhile the captive fate forgets to find
 Its deepest force or weary sigh to send.

p. 136

Turn from the city, and to country lend
 A passing thought. All labor is at rest.
 The plough lies set, point in the mottled breast
 Of half-tilled field; the flail is laid above
 The barn's brown wall; the shining sickles move
 Not from their keep; the woodman's axe is still;
 The golden sheaf doth not the feeder fill;
 The huntsman's horn is hung behind the door;
 The delver's spade stands idle on the floor;
 The horse and oxen run the open field,
 Set free to graze; the holloaing drivers wield
 No whip or goad, and all the swain is free;
 The laborer walks abroad, and turns to see,
 With favoring look, the toilings of his hand,
 And fruits of labor rising from the land;
 The rustic lovers saunter in the fields,
 To talk of love and reap the joy it yields.

p. 137

The tower-clock now the worship-hour relates,
 And every church the worshipper awaits.
 Then thither come the cottar and his wife,
 (Once fair, now furrowed with the cares of life,)

p. 138

With sons and daughters; and, behind them near,
 The jovial farmer and his wife appear.
 Then comes the county squire; till the seats,
 One after one, are full. Then shortly meets
 The people's eager eye the tranquil face
 Of their beloved pastor, in his place.
 He kneels to God, and in deep fervour prays
 A sweet and powerful prayer; then he lays
 The open Bible down, and well expounds
 The message of the Saviour's love, till bounds,
 For truths so hallowed, every tending heart
 In joy. Then praise is sung; a ready part
 Takes every voice to raise a worthy song,
 Which breaks from seat to seat the aisle along.
 Then kneel the people by the throne of grace
 To take the blessing, ere they part to pace
 Again the world's besetting path. It falls
 Among them like as dew upon the palls
 Of parchéd flowers, to raise and nourish in
 The hour of need the vital spark within.

Sweetest and fairest, hallowed day of rest!
 "Peace" is thy banner and thy mottoed crest—
 An open boon to all. The weary wait—
 The weary wait and sigh to see the gate
 Of dawn admit thee forth in eastern sky.
 The merchant's daughter, as each morn goes by,
 Looks on the scenes without, and counts the days
 That fly—six, five, four, three, two, one—and lays
 A hopeful joy upon the day to come,
 When she shall by her father sit, and some
 Inspiring volume read, or, in a walk
 Through wood or vale, employ the time in talk,
 Sweet and instructively. The widow waits
 To see her son come home, and anxious gets
 When near the hour has drawn that she shall hear
 The step of her sole comforter draw near,
 With whom on earth she findeth sweetest joy.
 The orphans wait, and every night employ
 A time in prayer, that God be pleased to spare
 Their elder brother, and bestow him fair
 And happy days. They long the Sabbath day;
 For then he comes among them, and doth lay
 A cheerful spirit to the humble home;
 Pure and delicious truths he tells them from
 A flowing heart, and they all love him well.

All people love the Sabbath—they who dwell
 In early years of innocence and joy,
 And they of lusty prime, whom cares employ
 A thousand snares to tangle or to stem.
 But more than all, the Sabbath is to them
 A day of sweet delight who totter near
 The precincts of the grave without a fear—
 Yea, rather, with a joyous hope ere long
 To leave the weary ranks they now belong,
 Of feeble age, and, passing death's dark throng,
 Attain the kingdom of eternal song.

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BEAUTY ADORNED.

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Of late stood Time amid the scenes of life,
 With hoary locks and beard of silvery grey,
 And furrows deep upon his sage-like brow.
 Beside him was a dial of huge size,
 Whereby he shewed the minutes as they grew
 To hours, and days, and years in silent haste.
 He was in wistful mood, and, while I saw,
 Did point his finger to the midnight hour.
 'Twas in a dream this wondrous scene appeared,
 Or in that stupor which is known between

The rule of sleep and wake, when neither claim
The power of holding a supreme command,
Which may be call'd half slumber and half wake.
Morpheus had drawn his stilly presence nigh,
And hush'd all things into a calm profound.
A thousand wondrous thoughts upon my mind,
In order unaccounted, had gone by.
Then as they passed a striking vision came;
'Twas bright and lucent as the early dawn,
Which pays obeisance to a smiling morn.
The stage of life was there before me set;
The curtain rose, and on it I beheld
A maiden fair, the foremost in the act.
Her mien was noble, and she held erect
A form which was in Beauty's garb arrayed.
Her eye was sparkling as the morning dew,
And full of language—full that it o'erflowed.
Her teeth were white and pure as Winter snow;
I saw them peer between her cherry lips,
As these were moving in a gracious smile,
Which traced her features like a silvery stream,
And ran from view adown her dove-like neck.
Her cheek was blooming as a new-blown rose;
A modest flush came o'er it as she stood.
Her voice was sweet like music on the air,
Thrown from a harp touched by a fairy sprite;
And in her look a happy tranquil dwelt.
Bound with the crown of virtue which she wore
Upon her brow (a diadem of gems)
Were the sweet flowers of purity, which gave
A charm more sweet than all the rest to see.
In short, she was perfection's perfect choice,
And Beauty's fairest child of all the group
Of Eve's unnumbered daughters, who abide,
Or have abode, amid these mingled scenes.
'Twas now the season of her noonday prime,
Wherein she might have gloried if she would;
But the calm spirit which within her moved
Would not allow like vanities to rise.
Amid the lucent streams of mellow light,
Which showered its fullest softness down on her,
She stood—the beauteous maiden stood adored.
To see the gay perfection of her charms
Came wonder, peering forth; for he was lured
With an intense delight to see a form
Clothed and adorned in such simplicity,
Yet of unbounded elegance the while.
And far her fame had spread throughout the land.
Then soon from town and city numbers came,
And from the quiet of their country homes,
To cast their admiration at her feet;
For they had longed with their own eyes to see
Her nymph-like form, and with their ears to hear
The music of her voice, and for themselves
To read the language of her sparkling eye.
And many sought to win her as his own;
And to her shrine they brought rich offerings all,
Each of the best and choicest of his stores.
And she beheld the riches which they brought,
And heard the words of flattery which they bore,
And marked the attentions lavished unto her,
But gave no heed to these, and deemed them all
As idle and deluding vanities;
For she beheld they sought the outward charms,
But minded not the treasures of the heart,
Which are more precious than all other gain.
So she did make, in firm yet kindly words,
An answer of refusal unto each,
And held her from them in discreet reserve.
Erewhile another came, whom she beheld
Sought more the secret worth than outward charms,
And that he was in every purpose fair,
And just and honorable, true and good,
And that he brought no dazzling gifts to tempt
Her with, that he might win her heart and hand.

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And he in silent heed did note awhile
Her nature and the ordering of her ways,
And was much pleased to see them ordered well,
And that the beauties of a virtuous mind
Were not extinguished by her outward charms,
As is, alas! the case too frequently.
Then from this admiration yet awhile
Did rise a love fair and reciprocal;
And in due course he sought her heart and hand,
And she did yield them gladly unto him.
Thus they were in the bonds of wedlock joined,
To mete the measure of their lives in one;
And in their home was harmony and peace,
And in all things they were together true.
Time stood, and from his hand the hours, and days,
Anon, and years dealt listlessly away;
And, ere a while, she merged on ripened years,
With many honors rising from her path,
Had sons and daughters, and had trained them well,
As it is fitting that a mother should,
And had her mission filled in every way.
Then was her act concluded, and she left
The scenes of life and all the changes there,
And came in gladness to a higher realm,
And there abode together with the just,
Who to their Maker give the glory due,
And who in the affairs of life forget
Not to ascribe Him praise and worship most.

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The curtain fell, and, lo! a clear, strange voice
Broke from the hidden scenes, declaring thus,
And with the words a thrilling power was borne,
That every passer in amazement turned:
"Blessed are they who walk in virtue's way!
A maid of virtue is a precious gem,
More priceless than the pearl of many seas.
Her mind is pure as snow which Winter breathes,
White and unspotted with the stains of time.
Her memory is like the gorgeous sun,
Which hath gone down behind the distant hills,
Yet sends a stream of glory from its seat
Upon the firmament where once it rode,
Diffusing there a sweet and golden light.
So shall the recollections of her shine
Upon the hearts of men, who in her time
Did know her worth and the fair fruits thereof."

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Scarce had these words been uttered, when again.
The curtain rose, which hid the stage of life;
And, lo! I saw the like fair scenes were there,
Which in the former act had been displayed;
But she who stood the foremost in the act
Was other maiden, yet as sweet and fair.
Her every limb of beauty was adorned,
And in her face did winning brightness shine.
A manner gay she had, which unto men
Was sweet and charming, that whoe'er beheld
Was at the sight of thrilling rapture filled;
And all her mirth was gay and ever full,
And all her laughter fraught of dancing fun.
A roguish eye she had, from which went forth
Glances askance, to plunder, as they wot,
From simple hearts, which could not turn away
The wily darts which she cast unto them.
Her cheek was bright, and of a rosy hue,
And wondrous was the fashion of her lips,
And they did seem to speak soft tales of love
In every motion which pervaded them.
Which turned to rapture all who gazed thereon,
So deep the passion which they pouted forth.
Her locks were golden, and with braids entwined
In such a magic manner, and they waved
Upon the breezes in a sportive way.
Her raiment was of Fashion's last design,
And so arranged to shew her perfect form
In all the fine proportions it displayed.
Her soft white arms were bared unto the view,

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And scarce she needed other charm to hold,
Than did the vesture sideward drawn reveal
Of beauty lying in a tranquil sleep
Upon a pillow of the sweetest form.
And she was proud of graces like to these;
And sadly well she did her beauty know.

Forth from the ranks of town and city came
A host of pert admirers, to gaze
Upon her sweet and all-bewitching charms,
And cull a little frolic from her hand.
And she was free and open unto all,
And held to each full gaiety and wit,
And on her manner kept no check at all,
And strove to seem more pleasing every hour,
And loved the admiration which they gave.

Time stood, and from his hand the hours, and days,
Anon, and years dealt listlessly away;
And one by one her charms were seen to go;
For every year, as it sped on its course,
Plucked from the flower of purity a leaf,
And from her beauty took the brightest gem,
Until all virtue had been torn away,
And beauty shorn of every single germ.
Thus was her ruin sealed, and day by day
She sank into more hopeless depths of sin,
And was more hardened unto evil ways.
Her form grew haggard and uncouth to see,
And in her eye a dark defiance frowned.
Her soul turned black unto its very core,
And was polluted as a mountain stream
Drugged with the fluid from a bloody war.
Her brow was stamped with hatred and revenge.
Woe and distraction, from these loathsome fonts,
Fierce as hell-torrents, burst upon her path;
And she did spurn repentance. And I saw
The Evil One from depths of darkness come;
And in her way he set a fearful pit,
And death appeared the entrance thereunto.
Then it was opened wider in her way;
I heard an awful shriek, and, lo! beheld
That she was swallowed in its boundless depths.

Thus was the act concluded, and again
The curtain fell upon the stage of life;
And all who saw it trembled at the scene,
And deathlike was the calm which stood around,
And every breath was held for very fear.

Then the same voice was heard again which spoke
Such words of wisdom in the former scene.
And now the curtain was again withdrawn,
And every form had vanished from the view,
Save he who spake and hoary-headed Time;
And Time still stood and dealt the hours away.
And over all a mighty change had come;
Old things had gone, and others held their place;
And he who was the speaker stood upright,
And was adorned with raiment pure and white.
He stood surrounded by a dazzling light;
More bright his presence was than gorgeous suns,
Whereas he had an eye of wondrous power.
Imposing was his presence to behold,
And these the words in stirring force he spake:
"Pause, all ye young, ye thoughtless ones who run
In wild delight among the gay-borne paths,
Which pleasure spreads enticingly around.
O youth deluded! dwell not in the thought
That they shall prosper for eternal years.
Truth is profound, and this more deep than all—
That beauty is but like a passing charm,
And youth a landmark by the way of Time—
A stage which soon his chariot rolls by,
And leaves in dark obscurity behind,
As it drives on to the eternal gates.
Then pause, and be not blinded by the show
Of such an idle vanity. Ye know
An end awaits the sojourn here below."

These were his warnings. Then methought I saw,
 One on each hand, the two eternal gates;
 Whereto he turned, and, opening one, disclosed
 Realms of most wondrous beauty, and therein
 Were beings of a loveliness untold;
 And all around appeared to give them joy,
 And in their midst dwelt unity and love,
 And they were clothed in raiments purely grand,
 With diadems of honor on their brows;
 And sweet the music was which hovered round,
 And this appeared an everlasting feast.
 Then he did close, without a word or sign,
 This gate, and to the other mutely went,
 And, opening which, disclosed to the view
 Such ghastly scenes of torture, and therein
 Were creatures seething in eternal flame;
 And loathsome was their presence to behold,
 And woe and agony were ever in their midst,
 And bitter were the strifes, in which they bore
 An angry hate to other wretches doomed
 Alike with them to welter in its toil.
 These were the scenes. Then, mutely as before,
 He closed the gate, and vanished from the view.
 And every gazer stood in wonder bound,
 Until upon the distance came the sound
 Of chariots and horsemen; and, erewhile,
 Came rolling up the chariots of Time
 In quick succession; and I saw therein,
 Beings conveyed to the eternal gates;
 Some unto that o'er which these golden words
 Were traced in figures ever bold and bright:
 "Enter, ye blessed, to eternal joy;"
 And others unto that o'er which I saw,
 "Enter, ye cursed, to eternal doom."
 Then fell the curtain on the scene, and, lo!
 I woke from slumber, and it was a dream.

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Minor Pieces.

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WALTER.

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AN ACROSTIC.

While vigor lives, and youth's brief time is still,
 Apply thy mind to wisdom, and fulfil
 Life's noble purpose, which is "Good to all."
 Thus cull a favor which shall never fall;
 Enriched of labors, so enshrine thy name;
 Repose at last in peace with honored fame.

THE ARRIVAL IN LEITH DOCKS, ON A VISIT TO SCOTLAND.

p. 158

The sun had risen but an hour,
 And spread his golden ray
 O'er sea, and land, and garden bower,—
 Thus dawned a glorious day.

A stilly calm prevailed to rest
 On the surrounding scene;
 Scarce could upon the ocean's breast
 Be a faint ripple seen.

The soft, fresh air of Summer morn
 Stood peacefully around,
 When we, upon the ocean borne,
 In view of Leith were found.

I rose in haste to hail the sight
 Of Scotland's lovely shore,
 Which to my mind brought fancies bright
 And thoughts of days of yore.

The good old castle towering stood

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Majestic o'er the scene;
Defiance from its rocky rood
Was always frowning seen.

I thought, had it the power to speak,
What stories could it tell;
What deeds of darkness could it break,
Or mysteries dispel.

Around its seat, in hidden gore,
Foul deeds of vengeance sleep,
Which causéd orphans to implore,
And widows oft to weep.

And now, in close succession, see
The smoky ringlets rise,
From many a chimney-top set free,
Ascending to the skies.

Then comes there to salute the ear
Faint fragments of a sound;
And mingled noises soon I hear,—
The bustle turns profound,

From slumber as the city wakes,
And Duty gives her call,
And for each man a mission makes,—
A duty gives to all;

Then set I foot upon the shore—
The shore I long to gain;
It shall be dear for evermore,
While memory I retain.

RECOLLECTIONS.

To Sarah.

Let recollections, like the proud sun's ray,
Illuminate and cheer each lonely day,
Restore a peace, afford a tranquil rest,
Create a joy in your oft troubled breast;
And when kind slumber doth its tendance lend,
And angels sweet around thy pillow bend,
May dreams of happy hours thy spirit cheer—
Fond dreams of they who to thy heart are dear.
But tell me, love, what is the lingering thought
Which seeks a presence, from the distance brought,
Far, far away, and which, with pleasing spells,
Doth mingle here and there a word which tells—
Oh sadly true!—that ye shall meet no more
The one you love? These thoughts are very sore;
The spirit sinks in grief and sadness low,
And thrilling shudders through the being flow.
Farewell, farewell, my cup of earthly joy!
I drain the dregs, and they are now alloy.

A STOLEN KISS.

The day had passed as other days do pass,
With record made of all the deeds
Performed by one, or two, or a whole mass,—
It matters not, for all concedes.

The sun in turn had lit the eastern sky,
Performed his circuit to the west,
Diffusing light and heat below and high,
And there had sunk his golden crest.

Monotony had likewise marked my course—
By that I mean that nothing rare
Had happenéd at all, to cause recourse
To friendly joy or cold despair.

A pleasant ramble by the ocean side—
May be it was the company
That added joy when I did watch the tide
Roll on the shore of the great sea.

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This o'er, thought turned to urge a night's repose—
 An old, though ever new, retreat—
 To rest the weary body, and to close
 The mind awhile in tranquils sweet.

But, prior to this, I thought it might be well
 To store some food into the mind,
 And on the wonders of the day to dwell,
 There fitting nourishment to find.

The comic thoughts of famous "Punch" were read,
 Then something dry, but suited more
 As wholesome food—so some old fogies said—
 "The Daily News," let none deplore.

For comfort's sake—which people always mind,
 Excepting ladies, when the book
 Of modes another pleasing style can find,
 And then they think more how they look.

An instance take of chignon (dead folk's hair)—
 A lady, I know well, remarked,
 "I wish I was not forced those things to wear,
 But fashion must be always marked."

Again I say, for comfort's sake alone
 The couch I sought, and thought it best
 Awhile to rest my weary body on;
 The weary always seek for rest.

p. 164

The chronicle of news a time was used,
 At first with understanding clear;
 It gave instruction, and sometimes amused,
 (A mixture there for any seer.)

A nod then came, and soon I winged my flight
 Away into the land of Nod;
 All earthly things were lost to sense and sight;
 A fairy land my footsteps trod.

The distance might have been an inch, a mile,
 Or thousands,—ten, for what I know;
 It seemed a pleasant place, for still a smile
 Was on my face; I liked it so.

Wrapt in those fairy dreams of pleasant lands,
 A gentle pressure on my lips,
 Of softest touch, like that of fairy hands,
 And sweet as though with honey tips,

Saluted me, and such a silvery sound
 Came with it, which as magic fell
 Upon my ear, so sweet and so profound.
 It is a stolen kiss I tell.

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THE ORPHAN BOY.

p. 166

See that poor, deserted, homeless boy,
 All lonely, sad, and weary;
 Nothing to cheer his wee heart to joy,
 All melancholy dreary.
 For his heart is heavy, and he sobs;
 Tear-drops trickle from his eye;
 As in solitude he sits and throbs,
 Gay people pass him by.
 The poor wee boy.

No mother has he, so kind and dear,
 To wipe his big tears away,
 His heavy heart to gladness cheer,
 Or soft words of kindness say;
 No father a home to provide,
 From the Winter's chilly blast;
 But anywhere he may abide,—
 A deserted, poor outcast.
 The poor wee boy.

A BRIGHT DAY, AFTER A SEASON OF DULL WEATHER.

p. 167

How smiling all the people seem!
On every face behold a gleam;
Each heart of joy must brimful teem,
And thus send forth a cheering beam.

The gloomy clouds have passed away,
And bright and glorious is the day;
The sun gives forth a genial ray,
And gentle breezes music play.

'Tis strange—but no more strange than true—
That cloudy weather can construe
Unto our thoughts a gloomy view,
That all things seem of dismal hue.

But with a clear, transparent sky,
All gloomy thoughts as quickly fly,
And bright and happy ones supply
Their place, and raise our spirits high.

And thus we in the world shall find
The rough and smooth will be combined,
Ordained by One who meaneth kind,
To brace the firmness of the mind.

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MUSIC.

p. 169

Come, music sweet; come, music, to me here;
In softest strains of melody appear;
Pour on this wounded heart thy healing balm,
Prepared to soothe, and troubled spirits calm.
E'er since the time that on this mouldy ball
Man held a place, and that before the fall,
The youthful world was held in no reserve;
For thy enchanting strains did pleasure serve
The young creation, and they hailed the sound.
But then the Author's work did all rebound
With perfect mirth, and music in it all,
Till evil spirits causéd man to fall.
But when the fruit was tasted and thought good,
First by the woman, then the man, as food,
Though the condition was at first so placed,
That they might use or all the produce taste
Of the fair garden, save alone one tree,
Which in the centre stood, and there to be
Untouched; but, notwithstanding these commands,
The rosy fruit looked tempting in Eve's hands,
Where it was by the cunning serpent placed.
Her watering teeth the dimpled apple traced
It suited well her palate when she ate;
She gave to man, and then was sealed their fate.
When in the book of record was inscribed
This scene so sad, as man to evil bribed,
Music still came, but with it came alloy,
For sounds of sadness came with sounds of joy.

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At first the music was but nature's own;
Yet who will not in ready justice own
That nature's notes in beauty far excel
All sounds that art's production can impel?
Who this can question, if they lend an ear
Unto the lark that, pouring music clear,
Makes all the sphere for many miles around
With his gay song re-echo and resound;
Or, pausing, marks the sweet, melodious lay
The nightingale at stilly night doth lay;
Or listens to the morn or evening praise,
As the wild warblers blended chorus raise,
The hum of bee, as duty it fulfils,
The rippling stream that sports among the hills,
The constant murmur of the mighty seas,
Or pensive sighing of the Summer breeze,
Which, rambling, rustles through the leafy trees,
The choice of favor it may well command?
Yet art's production may in honor stand,
And hear the praises which her lover tells.
Who doth not love to hear the Sabbath bells?

p. 171

Or who attend, without an inward sigh,
The gentle song which maidens' lips supply,
While on the harp with skilful touch is played
Responsive song, in harmony conveyed?
Or who can hear the noble martial strain,
And not be moved to long the sounds again?
The deep, grand notes of noble organ who
Can mutely tend, as they go thrilling through,
From aisle to aisle of some cathedral old,
And, rising, still their richer sounds unfold?

The love of music in the bud appears
First in the child of sweet and early years;
Then in the youth its early leaves unfold;
The fruit it bears in manhood's time behold;
Until the Autumn comes, old age enthral,
Decay sets in, and then the leaflet falls.

THE EVIL ONE.

p. 172

The Devil is out unfettered;
His dens lie deep in hell;
His power is scarcely bettered;
Who can his cunning tell?

He roams in raving hunger;
The world is his course;
He's dreadful more than thunder
Where'er he has recourse.

Destruction wanders with him,
And death is in his hand;
A mighty host is with him;
Well arméd is his band.

He lies in ambush for thee;
He hovers near thy path;
He follows ever by thee;
An aim on thee he hath.

Then haste thee, haste thee; surely
Ye soon will feel his power.
Be watchful, be not weary;
Let not thy spirit cower.

p. 173

The path is steep and narrow;
'Tis rugged, rough, and torn;
A harsh, a testing harrow,
Beset with many a thorn.

There yawns a mighty chasm;
The fearful pit is deep;
'Tis terror but to see them;
It makes the spirit creep.

No guide but One is able
To lead thee safely through;
All others are unstable,
Unfit, untried, untrue.

Fly to the rock for safety—
The rock he cannot climb!
Fly! fly! nor think it hasty;
And trust not fickle time.

FRIENDSHIP.

p. 174

And friendship is the sacred name—
The name I love to hear;
Gives to my heart a sacred flame,
And music to my ear.

Yes, friendship is a joy indeed,
A peaceful, fragrant bower;
To which doth many a soul recede
In tribulation's hour;

And there its load of sorrow lays,
Feels conscious of relief,

Soothed by the balm which it displays
For healing wounds of grief.

Its paths are pleasant and serene;
They lie in pleasure's way;
It is true pleasure—there is seen
No base, no false array.

'Tis there true joy is to be found,
And anger lays her down
Amid the placid scenes around,
To bask away her frown.

And there that childhood oft is seen
To spread its purest glee,
And hold its dimpled arms in ween
To friendship pure and free.

'Tis there that riper manhood goes
And feeble age reclines;
For it the genial sunshine knows,
Which on her pathway shines.

True friendship's fervour ne'er grows cold;
Its lamp doth alway burn;
Its beauty never waxeth old;
Its shadows never turn.

The waters are both sweet and pure,
Which through its courses flow;
Such as would souls of trouble lure;
'Tis they who try them know.

Were old and young together joined,
In friendship's paths to tread,
What blessings would thereby rebound
On many a sorrowing head!

TO THE SPIRIT OF POETRY.

Hail, spirit of poetic flame!
Thine is the theme for me;
Thine are the realms—the glorious realms
My fancy longs to see.

What seraph on the wings of light
Can bear a charm like thee?
And where, in fancy's wide domain,
Can fitter grandeur be?

Behold thy shadows on the sky,
Thy glory in the sun;
And o'er the earth, as light as air,
Thy fairy footsteps run.

I see thee in the smiling morn
And in the glowing noon,
Thy sparkling brightness in the stars,
Thy beauties in the moon.

I see thy bark go gliding on
O'er all the mighty seas.
I hear thy voice upon the storm,
And gentler on the breeze,

Comes thrilling with the warbling notes
The lark pours out on high,
And in the blackbird's evening song
Flows to my pathway nigh;

Comes with the brooklet's murmuring voice,
And from the ocean wave,
Which Neptune in his choice sees fit
Upon the shore to lave.

I hear the rude, prosaic law
Pour out its vile abuse,
In earnest with its bitter vice
My fancy to seduce.

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Yet let the sceptic whet his scythe,
Thy beauties to deplore;
So shall I love them fonder still,
And seek thy presence more.

The proud revilers who employ
Their tongues as poisoned darts
I deem of rude, unpolished taste,
Uncouth and shallow hearts.

p. 179

BOYISH DAYS.

p. 180

Hail, happy thought—
Sweet, happy thought
Of boyish days!
Can hope no more arise?
Can I no more surmise
That they will come again?
All happy sport!
All sweet resort
To merry games,
To which, with spirit light,
I often did unite
In free and boy-like glee!
The welcome call
To bat and ball
I used to hear
With that intense delight,
So free, and pure, and bright,
Which only boys can know.
The merry gambols
And country rambles
I loved to join,
With admiration high,
To which no fear was nigh.
Are they for ever gone?
Yes, they are gone—
For ever gone;
In time's abyss
I see them foundering fast;
It soon will be the last—,
The dying breath of them.
'Tis sorrow now
Bedecks my brow,
And sorry care
Lies waiting in my path;
Prevailing power it hath
To bear the spirit down.
But let me rise
To win the prize,
Which is for those
Who triumph o'er despair,
And, passing every care,
Fight bravely to the end.

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BEAUTY.

p. 182

Beauty, as the rose of Summer,
For a season looketh gay;
Ere a while it fades and falleth;
So doth beauty pass away.
Charms, the brilliant and enticing,
Sparkle to allure awhile;
But they are the world's vain treasure,
And an outward, fleeting wile.
There is yet a charm more pleasing
Than the outward to behold;
'Tis a humble spirit, easing
Pilgrims onward to the fold.
This the scythe of time shall never
Rob of its adorning grace;
But shall leave it laurels ever
To bedeck its resting place.

'Tis the maiden who shall win them
Walks in virtue's modest way,
Heeding not the world's gay treasure,
Minding not the worldling's way.

Not the maiden who rejoiceth
To abound in vaunting show;
This shall in the time forsake her,
When her hope hath sunken low.

MY SCHOOLMATES.

p. 184

Oh! where have all my schoolmates gone,
With whom I used to play,
In harmless sport and happy glee,
For many a pleasant day?

It grieves me much whene'er I think
That I no more may see
The happy faces of the few
Who schoolmates were to me.

To seek them would be fruitless toil;
I know not where they are;
For up and down the world wide
They're scattered near and far.

Some still are in the native place,
Some far beyond the sea,
Some trading on the mighty main,
Some in eternity.

THE DEPARTED YEAR.

p. 185

Farewell, departed year!
How swiftly have thy golden moments fled!
Gone to the past,
In the dark lays of record to repose;
Whence might be culled a tale
Which would impeach our name—
The way we spent the precious hours,
Whereof to learn we shudder, in the thought
That they passed from us as a worthless thing,
While all our heed to idleness was lent.
Recall the olden deeds,
Review the acts performed, and see
How they will bear the scrutiny ye give.
How do the deeds of ill
Throng round the retrospective glance!
While few and feeble are the acts of truth.
Where is the profit we have gained?
Or where the good a brother took from us?
Let us not spurn the many warnings shewn.
Who may not from the ranks of friendship glean
One name, or more, in sacred reverence held,
Of some dear friend, departed now,
But who, while we gave welcome to the year just gone,
Was with us, and who held
A love deep rooted in our hearts,
And who, we once had hope,
Would seasons more remain to comfort us.
The present ours.
May we of wisdom learn the way to live;
For who can know that we may live
To see this year depart, or see another come?
Now let us to the year departed say farewell;
For it has gone, with all its joys and cares,
Which, ere we knew, moved from our presence, and
Another came; which in the old seat sits, whereof
We wonder what its course may yield,
And all around mysterious fancies rise.
But darkness o'er the scene a curtain holds,
And veils from view what is upon the time
Which is to come.

p. 186

Onward ever time is passing;
 Forward still it hies;
 By the way delaying never,
 In constant speed it flies.
 By days and years we number make,
 And lay out every stage;
 While change in many a form appears,
 To mark each passing age.

But, mid the changing scenes of time,
 Thy pale head still appears,
 To shew that, in her beauty clad,
 Loved Spring's sweet presence nears.
 With soothing balms she comes supplied,
 Preparéd to bestow
 Them freely on each troubled head;
 For freely do they flow.

But thou, the first of all her band,
 The fairest of her gems,
 We hail thee as a welcome guest,
 Which Winter still contemns.
 For thou art still the harbinger
 (A credit to her choice)
 To tell that pleasant times draw nigh,
 For which let all rejoice.

p. 188

What artist's pencil e'er could trace,
 Or painter's brush apply
 On canvas, such a perfect form
 As thy frail leaves supply?
 They are more pure than running brook,
 And whiter than the snow—
 The winter garment of the ground,
 Which soon will beauty shew.

No giddy grandeur vesteth thee;
 No fitless fashions flow;
 Thy mien retains a modest air,
 Whence hidden graces shew.
 From this might many a maiden fair
 A lesson good receive:—
 That gay appearance fades away,
 And tends but to deceive.

SPRING.

p. 189

Blest bearer of peace, she comes in her grandeur;
 I hear the sweet echo, and hear it again,
 Through the forests of trees and o'er the green fields,
 In sounds of contentment, in music's sweet strain.

She rides in the skies, and she comes on the breeze
 From her mansions so aerial, illumined, and fair;
 They stand in a mystery unfathomed by thought,
 And who can describe them, or who can tell where?

The sound of her footstep, the tone of her call
 Is hailed with rejoicings—rejoicings of joy;
 Her whisper so gentle, her breathings of peace
 All feelings of sadness allure and decoy.

The birds of the air, the warbling songsters,
 The thrush and the blackbird uniting send higher,
 By adding their songs to chorus of chorus,
 Redouble her welcome and sing a sweet lyre.

See, through the dark soil, in patient procession,
 The flowers are beginning again to appear;
 From beds of repose, from darkest of hidings,
 In caution most careful they cunningly peer,

p. 190

And seemingly ask, in anxious desire,
 If 'tis the voice of Spring, if Winter's no more;
 All longing the time when howling blasts go,

To crown her their queen from shore unto shore;
To spread a rich carpet, by nature entwined,
Pave all her pathways with richest of gems;
To stud it with beauty in grandest profusion,
With roses and daisies on stalks and on stems.
Then welcome right gladly, then welcome, sweet Spring!
Let all be united, let every one sing;
Blended in a lyric let every voice be,
Your fairest of praises and sweetest notes bring.

THE BEREAVEMENT.
Written for S. L.

p. 191

Beside a bed of sickness sat
A maiden young and fair,
Torn from the scenes of youth and joy,
Her loved one was laid there.

She watched with an unceasing care
From morning until night,
Nor left him in the stilly hours
Before the morning light.

She marked each feebly passing breath
And every burdened sigh;
Nor grew she weary of the task;
No sleep came to her nigh.

She kissed his cheek, his pillow smoothed,
His burning brow she bathed;
And with a balmy fillet oft
His aching temples swathed.

Into the future deep and long
Her brooding thoughts would pry;
She could not think that he must soon—
That he must truly die.

p. 192

And yet she saw the ruddy hue
Pass from his cheek away,
And that the lustre of his eye
Grew fainter every day.

At last a gentle sleep he slept,
And hope came in her breast,
As she beheld the tranquil smiles
Which on his features rest.

She sat and sighed, "Ah me! ah me!
Oh for the time again
When I shall see thy happy smile
Its wonted mirth regain!

Then shall we, as in time before,
The tranquil hours employ
In love and in a measure full
Of unpolluted joy."

Oh, child of hope! She knew not then
That he who by her lay
Was closed in death's unyielding arms,
His spirit borne away.

p. 193

And when she turned from these fair dreams,
And saw he breathed no more,
Oh! woeful was it to behold
The grief the maiden bore.

She grasped the pale and lifeless form;
Her tears fell on it fast;
She sat the long night through and wept,
And wept the noonday past.

No more she cares for earthly things,
Nor friendly presence nigh;
These gladly now would leave behind,
And now would gladly die.

Dear mourner, is there nought to calm—
To soothe thy troubled breast?
Is there no balm to heal its wounds,
And give thy spirit rest?

Yes! there is one—a fragrant balm,
A fountain filled with love,
Which floweth ever full and free
In the bright realms above.

'Tis there the weary and the sad
Can comforts true receive,
And there the bleeding heart alone
Its anguish can relieve.

Oh! brightly yet the star of hope
Sends forth its radiant beams,
And sweetly yet the voice of love
In friendly welcome gleams.

Then raise thy tear-bedimméd eyes,
And call its bounty down;
Which, if in faith ye seek, will flow,
And all thy sorrows drown.

FAREWELL.

Farewell! farewell! a sad farewell
My soul can only give.
And can it be
That I may see
Thy cherished face no more,—
See it again no more?

I cannot tell, I must not tell
The sorrow that is mine;
But while I live
Yet will I give
A lingering thought to thee,
A happy thought to thee.

And to those days, those happy days,
I often will recur,
Which we have spent,
On pleasures bent,
Together bound by peaceful joy—
A fair, a pure, a loving joy.
Farewell! farewell!

IN FANCY BOUND.

I lost myself in labyrinths of unexplored delight,
In wandering from the paths of sterner truth;
They seemed, beyond a doubt, all pleasing, fair, serene, and bright,
Such as would charm the wonder of a youth.

Behind, before, and all around, appearing to the eye
As one concerted scene of peaceful joy,
With pleasing streams of unpolluted pleasure flowing by,
And in it all I saw no base alloy.

The scope was boundless, and I wandered, still admiring all,
Indulging oft in free, unfettered thought;
In wonder wrapt, I wandered on, but found no rest withal,
As each new scene was to my fancy brought.

And in the future I could see with an imagining eye
A cheering prospect, rising pure and bright.
It seemed my future path in smooth, unchequered ways did lie,
That cares were easy and life's burdens light.

Amid the tranquils sweet around, and to my own design,
I built me castles of a towering height,
And thereto did my pleasures and my rising hopes resign,
Thought that these bulwarks would resist all might.

But, lo! they fell in ruined heaps, and mighty was the fall,
And my bright hopes lay ruined at my feet,

p. 194

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p. 197

And the deluding dream of fancy passed away, and all
The scenes so fair did from me now retreat;

Like as the mirage travellers see upon the desert waste,
In view where cooling waters seem to rise,
And which the body longs to reach, the parchéd tongue to taste—
Alas! alas! such fancy is not wise.

COUNTRY RAMBLES.

p. 198

Well do I love to ramble
Among the golden heath,
To roam, and rove, and scramble
On the soft turf beneath.

'Tis there that health is ever
Abounding to be found,
And beauty faileth never
In full charms to abound.

I pity oft and sorrow
For the poor city child,
That ne'er the chance can borrow
To ramble free and wild;

It looks so pale and feeble,
Its cheek is thin and white,
Its sicknesses are treble,
Its joys are never bright.

How different is the childling
That roams the open lea!
A rosy little wildling,
And gay, and blithe, and free.

p. 199

THE OWL.

p. 200

Thou hermit bird of tender sight!
Ha! well thou fliest from the light,
To lie in secret and repose,
Hid in some crevice no one knows;
And, wrapt in slumber's lightest sleep,
Thy ears their vigils ever keep,
Lest some stray wanderer may intrude,
To mar thy sacred solitude.
Thy pinions only bear thee out
To search for plunder and to scout
For prey, in soft and noiseless flight,
When earth lies in repose, and night
Has drawn her curtain o'er the sky.
'Tis then, 'tis then thy tender eye
Is keen to see, reviewing all
Which under its quick glance may fall.

MINNIE LEE.

p. 201

A PICTURE.

A maiden came to Castletown;
A tear stood in her eye;
Soon on her cheek it trickled down;
Sore did the maiden cry.

I called her to my side, and said,
"Why, maiden, do you cry?"
A while her weeping then was stayed,
But she made no reply.

I spoke to her, in kindly tones,
Of friendship and of love;
I asked about her loved ones,
And where she meant to rove.

She, with a voice in sadness lost,
And choked with many a sigh,
Said that her father's form was toss'd
Beneath the billows high.

Her mother had for many years
 Been silent in the grave;
 Her brother, too, she told in tears,
 Was killed—a soldier brave.

And now her father's friends withheld
 The friendship once they gave;
 And she, an orphan lone, beheld
 No succour but the grave.

She then besought some menial form
 Of duty to fulfil,
 And gladly would the child conform
 To many a trying ill.

I said, "Dear maiden, come with me;
 My home shall too be thine,
 And with my daughters ye shall be
 Another child of mine."

And then she wept for very joy;
 Her tongue would not convey
 The words she sought it to employ
 What thanks she longed to say.

And with, a trembling step she came,
 And, ere a little while,
 Her joys returned, of old the same,
 And came her olden smile.

And she by all was fondly loved;
 She was so good and kind,
 And gentle in her way, and proved
 A charm of charms combined.

Years rolled away, eight happy years,
 Since the memorial day;
 Then in the town gay joy appears,
 And merry minstrels play.

And loudly peal the merry bells;
 It is her wedding-day;
 It is my son who gladly tells
 "I will," I love to say.

THE AIM OF LIFE.

Mark well, and do not pass in heedless haste,
 Nor all your time in needless folly waste;
 But, if with you a solemn thought doth dwell,
 Pray lend it here, and think it may be well
 Awhile to set aside the world's stern care,
 And for a true, though passing, glance prepare
 Upon a theme which is too often hid
 By pleasure's streams and vanities which thread
 The onward path which through the wide world wends,
 Which chequered is, and many a snare attends.
 The theme I speak of is the aim of life.
 Who fails to see, amid the passing strife
 Where man appears, and in a season dies,
 Forgotten soon in mouldering dust he lies,
 That he has strayed from the good purpose far,
 That all his joys are vain, and such as mar
 His hope to an unmitigated peace.
 The bonds grow stronger, and his lusts increase
 The while his chances are for ever lost,
 And he is now before the tempest toss'd.
 A thoughtful mind in question thus may dwell;
 And who is found an answer fit to tell?
 When man was formed, what aim was held in view
 By the Creator, ever just and true,
 Who all things made but for a purpose wise?
 Behold, his work an ample proof supplies
 What feelings stirred His breast when man was made,

And all creation to him subject laid.
 Discretion lent to shew the ill from good,
 Portrayed in him the Maker's image stood;
 Nor was it meant that he should time employ
 In foolish pleasure and licentious joy,
 Less far that self should be his only theme;
 A fallen state soon had he to redeem.
 More thus the purpose, and the Maker's law
 Held it as good, and man the duty saw—
 That God, the Maker, should true worship have,
 And reverence and love; and, as to prove
 Obedyance, it was held that he should love
 His neighbour as himself. This from above
 Bestowed, and from conditions free, save one,
 And which was sweet and pleasing to be done
 In the true spirit of a perfect life,
 Where no fear came, or jealousy, or strife—
 No earthly thing should have the honor due
 Unto the Maker; yet how sadly few
 Can say they have endeavoured to be true!

THE PRIMROSE.

p. 206

Not in a rosy bower,
 Not in a garden gay,
 Nor by a watchman's tower,
 I saw the primrose play;

But by a meadow green—
 A meadow sweet and fair,
 In beauty it was seen;
 I saw the primrose there.

It sported with the breeze,
 It courted with the sun,
 And tried so hard to please
 With all its puny fun.

It flirted with the moon,
 And kissed the early dew;
 They left it both ere noon;
 These lovers were not true.

A little murmuring brook
 Came wandering by the way;
 It came to have a look,
 And with the flower to play.

It gave it drink so sweet,
 And sang a pretty song;
 The brook seemed to entreat
 To be the lover long.

A sturdy old oak tree
 Bent o'er it night and day,
 Its guardian feigned to be,
 And shelter it alway.

In time some courtiers took
 Their turn to have a woo.
 I came to take a look,
 And was a lover too.

I took the pretty flower,
 And set it in my breast,
 Rejoicing in that hour,
 But sorrowing left the rest.

p. 207

IN MOONLIGHT MET. *To L. A. A.*

p. 208

Lest gossip wakes, be mute, breathe not a word
Of how, or where, or when, save that we met;
To chance, or luck, or fortune bid the fault,
Till ye can tell how else our friendship came.
Improved occasions are not often rued,
Except discretion fails in self-command.

As brief a while as may a friendship live
No one can tell, so soon it dies, or how,
Now as it came, and as a seed expands,
In nurture soon springs up; so sprang, matured
Each time the more a favor in regard.

As first of chance, unsought till then, but now
Let favor choose if she may hold the power
Drawn from the font of pleasure to supply
Enticing sweets, which, though you took, rebelled.
Reigned o'er the scene the silvery moon, which smiled,
Together with the stars, in silent joy.
Of that she deemed no harm, was sweetly pleased!
Neptune breathed silence and supplied the chance.

A WAYWARD CHILD.
To K. N.

p. 209

Knew she not whence fair fancy rose,
Audacious fun in vagrant throws,
Turned random, loose, on purpose set,
Elate to cope with those it met.

Now aptly sprung new forms around,
As each advanced the most profound.
She held to all a winning smile;
How many took her heedful wile.

A FLIRT.
To L. W.

p. 210

Lost love, I answer, since you make me tell
Of every maiden who from prudence fell
Unto the rambling tide, flirtation swell.
I mete my mind, though ye regard in scorn;
She gives her heart, in many fragments torn,
A piece to each who have her flirtings borne.

Who spreads her charms to every wind that beats,
Or loves a bit with every man she meets,
Of constant love can never be possessed.
Duped is the man who, for a mating nest,
Sets choice on her; his life shall lack of rest.

THE LITTLE ROGUE.
To H. B.

p. 211

Ha! the little rogue, I caught her
As she stole my heart away;
Round and round she had entwined her,
Reeling in her grasp it lay.
In my fancy could I think her
E'er so wicked as to play
Torture on a helpless prey?

But how happy was the sorrow
As a captive there to be,

Resting ever on the morrow
To advance new joys to me!
Lost amid the vast abounding,
Each endeavour found me more
Tangled in the great surrounding,
Turned obeying to adore.

ENAMOURED.

p. 212

By her sweet and silvery laughter,
And the dimples on her rose cheek,
Roguish languish in her black eye,
Telling tales of love and romance—
Oh how lovely to behold her!
Never beauty sweeter, fairer.

A PRESENCE SWEET.

p. 213

A soothing balm, a cheering ray
Thy presence is to me,
Though rising clouds may for a day
A darkening shadow be.

Yet I will hope the flame of love
A beacon bright will shine,
And cast the hazy clouds away,
And prove thee truly mine.

Oh! quickly fly the happy hours
Thy presence doth beguile,
As on thy cheek I sit and see
The rosy dimples smile,

And hear the silvery sounds which rise
Like music from thy lips,
To dance upon the balmy air,
Which every listener sips.

FAITHLESS.

p. 214

Oh call me not a faithless friend!
The charge I cannot bear,
When spoken by such lips as thine,
By one so sweetly fair.

Pray yield me but the chance to tell,
The time to give to thee
A reason, and it will dispel
The doubts ye now can see.

Blest is the man whose onward course
Is free from every ill,
Who also doth impartially
Love's golden censer fill.

DECEITFUL.

p. 215

Deceitful, yet so young;
Deceitful, yet so fair;
Who, gazing on those charms,
Would think deceit was there?

Oh that I now must learn
Of beauty to beware!
For that it is a tempting bait
Upon a hidden snare.

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