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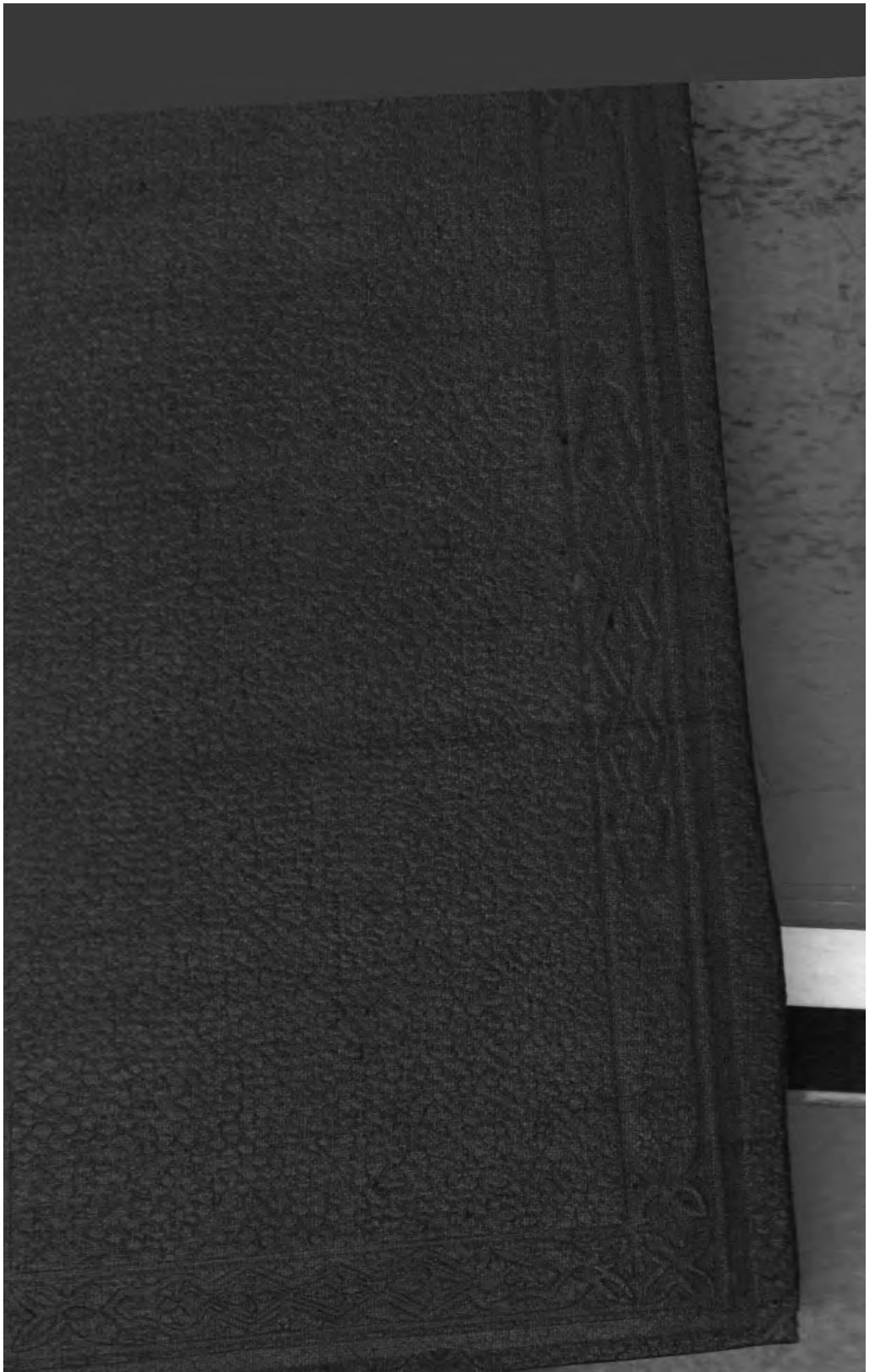
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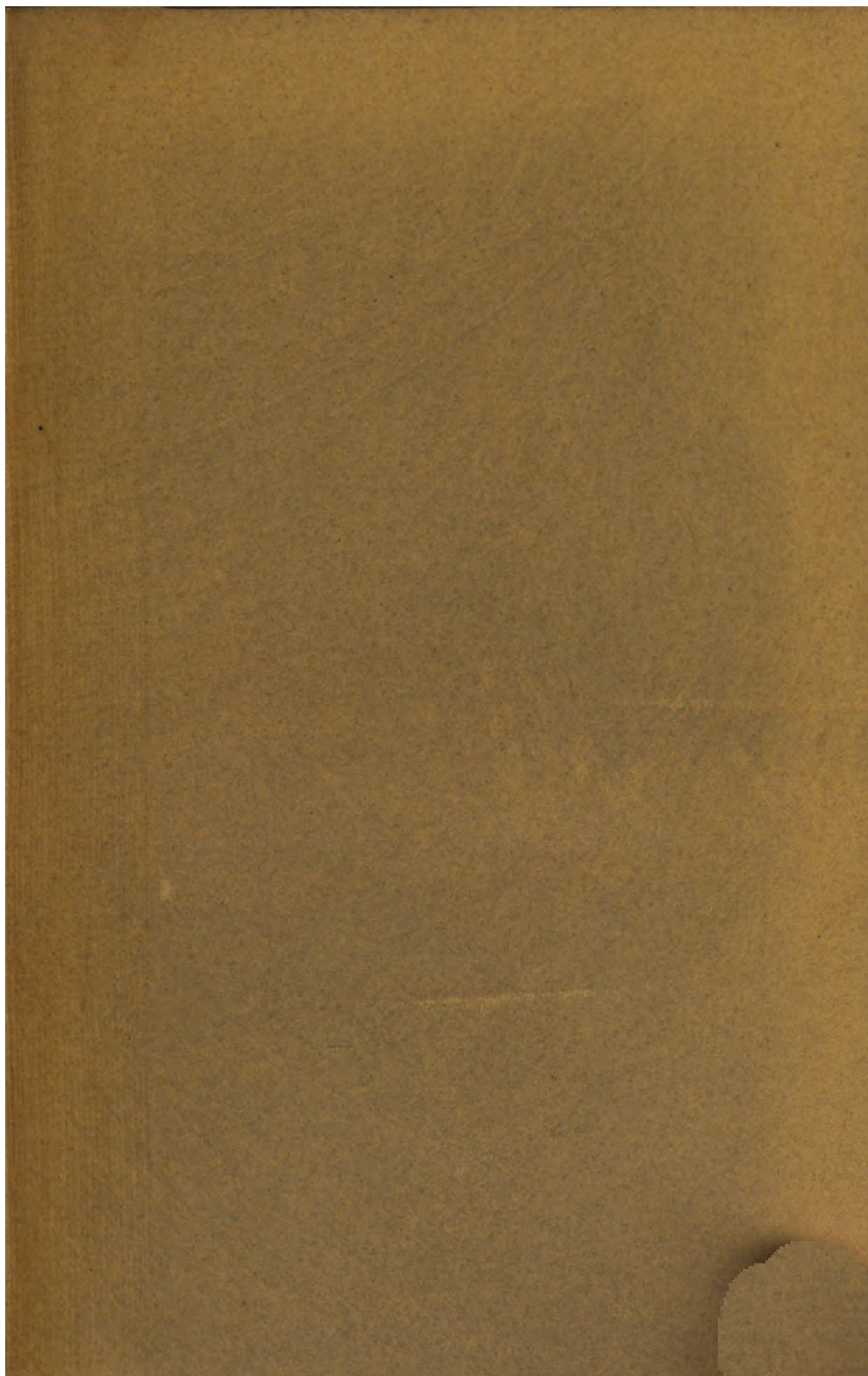


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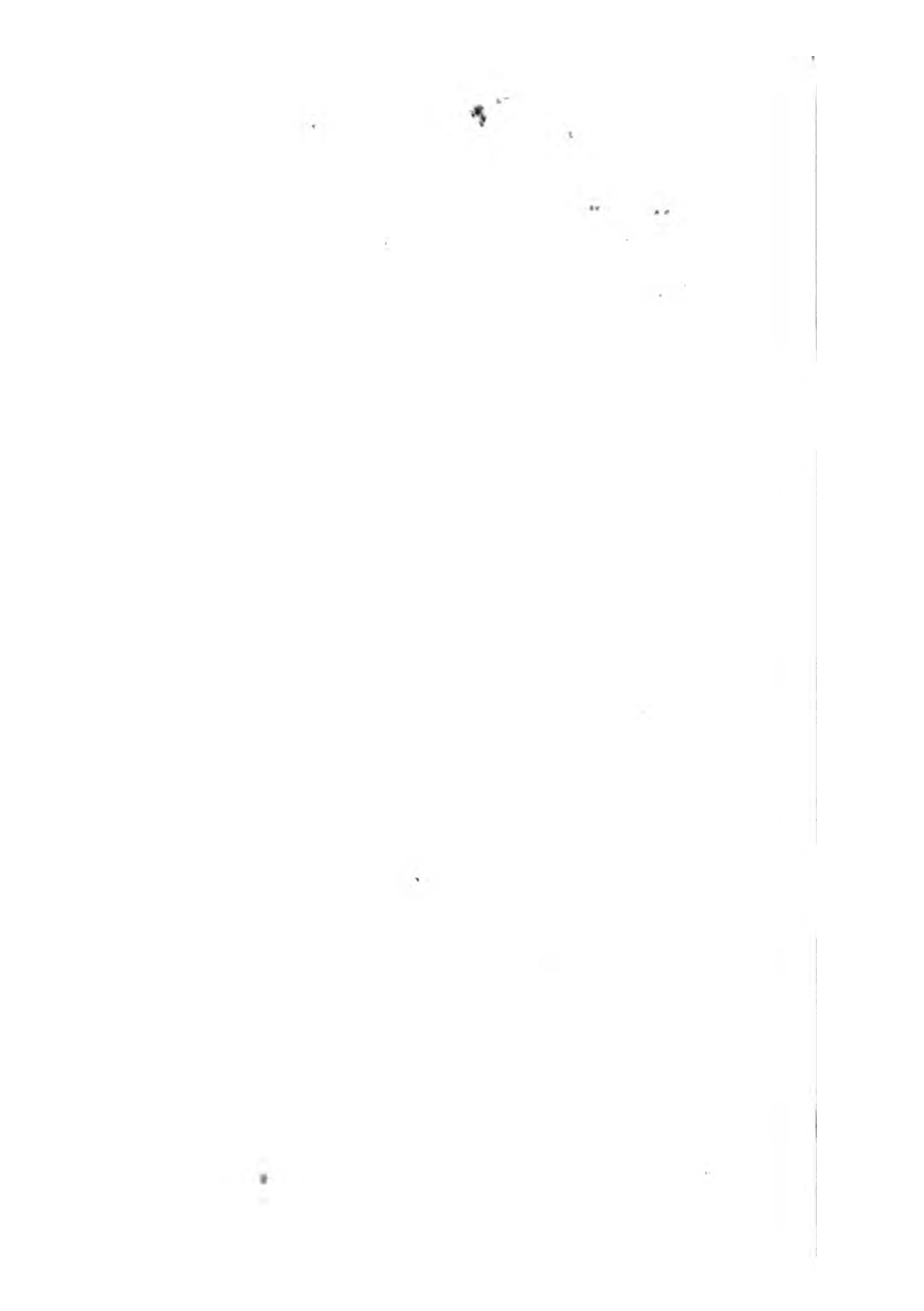
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SONGS FOR THE SUFFERING.





SONGS FOR THE SUFFERING

BY

THOMAS DAVIS, M.A.,

INCUMBENT OF ROUNDHAY, YORKSHIRE;

AUTHOR OF 'DEVOTIONAL VERSE FOR A MONTH,' ETC.



LONDON:

JOHN W. PARKER AND SON, WEST STRAND.

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P R E F A C E.

THE title adopted for this small work will, perhaps, sufficiently indicate its purpose. It may, however, be here remarked, that it is mainly in its more obvious and express adaptation to console under every kind of trial, that the volume will be found to differ from the one already published under the title of *Devotional Verse for a Month, and other brief Pieces*; and that, in the two combined, almost every great sacred topic on which it is important for the mind to meditate, will in its turn present itself to the reader.

A few lighter pieces are mingled here with others, in the hope that, being innocently gay, they may serve to beguile some moments consistently with the general character of the volume.

A small number of these poems have appeared anonymously before; but, as the Author believes, in a less finished form.

He trusts he shall not be misunderstood if he

adds, that a somewhat particular description of himself in the title-page is rendered desirable by the circumstance, that there appears to be another individual of precisely the same name who is a writer of published verse.

ROUNDHAY PARSONAGE,

March, 1859.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTORY VERSES	1
FIRST DAY:—	
JOY IN GOD	3
SELF-DEDICATION	4
SECOND DAY:—	
PRESENT STRENGTH	5
SICKNESS AND HEALTH	7
THIRD DAY:—	
THE CHRISTIAN AIM	8
NOBLENESSE	10
FOURTH DAY:—	
PATIENT FAITH	12
THE WINGED SPIRIT	13
FIFTH DAY:—	
TRUST IN DARKNESS	15
OBSCURITY	16
SIXTH DAY:—	
THE GREAT INVITATION	17
RACHEL AND BENONI	18
SEVENTH DAY:—	
SOLACE IN TRUTH	19
LOFTY PLACE	20

	PAGE
EIGHTH DAY:—	
UNION WITH GOD	21
REST IN THE LORD	22
NINTH DAY:—	
TEMPTATION COMMON	24
RAVEN AND DOVE	26
TENTH DAY:—	
GOD'S APPROVAL	27
THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS	28
ELEVENTH DAY:—	
WAIT TO-MORROW	30
THE FINAL STRIFE	32
TWELFTH DAY:—	
PROMISE TO THE UPRIGHT	34
EARTHLY AND HEAVENLY JOYS	35
THIRTEENTH DAY:—	
THE HIGHEST GOOD	37
SHADOWS AND REALITY	38
FOURTEENTH DAY:—	
COMMUNION WITH GOD	39
HOPES AND TERRORS	40
FIFTEENTH DAY:—	
UNSOUNDED DEPTHS	41
SEEING DARKLY	42
SIXTEENTH DAY:—	
FAME ENOUGH	44
BETHLEHEM	46
SEVENTEENTH DAY:—	
CONSCIOUS LOVE	48
LIVING WATERS	49

CONTENTS.

ix

	PAGE
EIGHTEENTH DAY:—	
HOLY FEAR	50
COMFORT UNSOUGHT	51
NINETEENTH DAY:—	
FLEETING CARES	52
DIVINE PLEASURE	54
TWENTIETH DAY:—	
SORROW HEALED	56
LAUGHING CHILDREN	58
TWENTY-FIRST DAY:—	
LIKENESS TO GOD	60
HOLIEST GLADNESS	62
TWENTY-SECOND DAY:—	
LIFE A GOOD	64
THE LAST RESTING-PLACE	65
TWENTY-THIRD DAY:—	
EARTH AND HEAVEN	67
TEARS	68
TWENTY-FOURTH DAY:—	
CARE DISMISSED	70
ALL ILLS WITHIN	72
TWENTY-FIFTH DAY:—	
THE HARD TASK	73
VALUE	74
TWENTY-SIXTH DAY:—	
FRIENDS OF GOD	75
THE DOVE AND THE ARK	76
TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY:—	
THE QUENCHLESS LIGHT	77
THE MIGHT OF PRAYER	78

	PAGE
TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY:—	
THE HIGH VOCATION	79
LOVE AND FEAR	81
TWENTY-NINTH DAY:—	
MURMURING	82
THANKSGIVING	83
THIRTIETH DAY:—	
THE SECURE TREASURE	84
THE TRAVELLER'S PRAYER	85
THIRTY-FIRST DAY:—	
SAFETY	86
BIRTH AND DEATH	88

ADDITIONAL BRIEF SACRED POEMS.

ON AWAKING	91
BEFORE SLEEPING	92
FOR THE SLEEPLESS	93
TO THE FALLEN	94
ON DEATH	95
THE LAST REQUEST	98
THE LAST PRAYER	99

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

A SUMMER SOUND	103
THE TIME FOR SONG	104
TO A CHILD	107
TO A SKYLARK	109
THE FALL OF THE OAK	110
A SIGH, A TEAR, AND A SMILE	114

CONTENTS.

xi

	PAGE
THE LOWER DEPTH	115
THE HOMELESS MAN	117
TO A MOTHER ON THE LOSS OF AN INFANT	119
THE MOSSY OLD OAK	121
TO A CHILD OF FANCY	124
DARE TO BE TRUE.	126
THE HAILSTONES	128
THE LAVEROCK	130
THE VILLAGE BELLS	132
THE DROUGHT OVER	134
TO A TIMEPIECE	136
THE UNCEASING SONG.	138
THE MOWER'S SCYTHE	141
NEVER MURMUR MORE	143
INSECT JOY	144
THE CEASELESS JEST	145
THE CUCKOO	146
TO A REDBREAST	149
TO A LAMB	151
GOD IS LOVE	154
THE PAST SHOWER.	157
TO A LARK	159
WITHERED LEAVES	165
TO A CAGED THRUSH	168
THE EAGLE AND THE HERON	171
MOON AND STARS	174
HOLY HABITS	177
LITTLE THINGS	179

1

2

3

4

5

*I*F song for converse, Lord, with Thee
Can matchless aid impart,
How dear, how sacred song should be
To every christian heart !

*And who that knows and seeks that aid
But owns its mystic might ;
And still, when cares the breast invade,
Finds song put cares to flight ?*

*The harp once swept by Jesse's son
Its strong, fresh power hath proved
From age to age, and praises won
From souls that deeply loved.*

*And there be humbler harps on earth
That yet wake joys divine :
O Thou from whom all power hath birth,
Now let such harp be mine.*



First Day.

JOY IN GOD.

*'Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee :
and let such as love thy salvation say con-
tinually, Let God be magnified.'*

Ps. lxx. 4.

HE on whom life's sun is shining
Should find life a pleasant vale ;
Nor in spirit know repining,
Though all lesser lights should fail.

He who still towards heaven tendeth
Should go singing on his way,
Even though sorrow sometimes blendeth
Her notes haply with the lay.

Christian, keep a gladsome spirit
In a humble, thankful breast :
'Tis the meekly glad inherit
Gladness in the land of rest.

God is glorified by praises :
Praises spring from joy and love :
And who here the sweet song raises,
He shall swell the songs above.

SELF-DEDICATION.

'I will pay my vows.'

Ps. xxii. 25.

LORD, unto Thee I raise
A spirit glad and free ;
And dedicate once more my days
With firm resolve to Thee.

In word, in thought, in deed
I yield me to thy will :
O God, my purpose kindly heed,
And help me to fulfil.



Second Day.

PRESENT STRENGTH.

'As thy days, so shall thy strength be.'

DEUT. xxxiii. 25.

THE present I have strength to bear :
 Father, accept my praise !
 And for the future, 'tis Thy care
 Whose eye alone surveys.

No future ill Thou givest me ;
 None didst Thou ever give ;
 Nor would I more the future see
 Than in the future live.

Still keep it hidden, O my God !
 Raise not as yet the veil ;
 Lest, overjoyed, or overawed,
 My spirit faint and fail.

Nor yet would I the past survey,
 And shed the fruitless tear ;
 Vain were regret for yesterday,
 As for to-morrow fear.

Enough for me, a child of dust,
From hour to hour to raise
Mine eyes to Thee with present trust,
And hope, and love, and praise.



SICKNESS AND HEALTH.

'It is good for me that I have been afflicted.'

Ps. cxix. 71.

LORD, if sickness draw my soul
Nearer in sweet bonds to Thee,
Health withhold ; nor make me whole
Till those bonds yet closer be.

Joys in sickness Thou canst give,
Health too little prized or knew ;
Trust, hope, love, so prone to live
Faintly, with fresh strength renew.

What can health more blest afford ?
Health, too oft with cares opprest ?
God, I ask that boon restored
Only when Thou deemest best.

Not my will but Thine be done !
I will breathe no other prayer,
Save that, while my prayer is one,
This may my whole heart declare.

Third Day.

THE CHRISTIAN AIM.

*'Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father
which is in heaven is perfect.'*

MATT. v. 48.

O THE very aim is blest,
(Doubt ye none, nor be afraid,)
To have place amid the best
Of the creatures God hath made.

It ennobles all our life ;
Makes the trivial sublime ;
And, pursued with ceaseless strife,
Gives eternal worth to time.

It enhances every joy ;
Heals the breast by sorrow riven ;
And the changeless, dull employ
Brightens with the beams of heaven.

Weary, vacant hours are past,
Never more to wake a sigh,
When, with purpose strong as vast,
Once we set our aim so high.

And, if hope aright possess
Most the heart that most desires,
Not less surely Heaven will bless
That which Heaven alone inspires.

With, then, firm and stedfast breast,
Christian, seek, nor be afraid,
To have place amid the best
Of the creatures God hath made.



NOBLENES.

'Trust in the Lord, and do good.'

Ps. xxxvii. 3.

NOBLE are the souls that live
 For a noble end ;
 Blessed, that rejoice to give
 Blessings to extend.

Thou mayst not the harvest see,
 But, believing, sow ;
 And thy very work shall be
 Joy enough below.

Ever fresh as is the light
 Of the morning sun
 Is the labour for the right,
 If but rightly done.

And if sweet, too, be the rest,
 When the night descends,
 O, what cometh 'mid the blest,
 When all darkness ends !

Labourer, of mortal days,
But of aims divine,
Toil and spend, and trust and praise :
Good past thought is thine.



Fourth Day.

PATIENT FAITH.

'He that believeth shall not make haste.'

Is. xxviii. 16.

HE that believeth makes not haste,
 But waits with tranquil breast
 His time in whom his hopes are placed,
 And deems His time the best.

And God hastes not : eternity,
 Wherein He worketh all,
 Demands not He in haste should be,
 Whoe'er in haste may call.

Man to redeem from sins and fears
 He willed ere time began ;
 Flowed down the long, long stream of years ;
 Then He redeemèd man.

And thou who givest Him thy love,
 Before thine earliest breath
 He willed to bless thee ever above :
 O wait His will till death !

THE WINGED SPIRIT.

*'I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not
worthy to be compared with the glory which
shall be revealed in us.'*

ROM. viii. 18.

WHEN the dull frame, suffering sore,
Still must lie from morn to even,
Let the wingèd spirit soar
Till it smile in heaven.

If it must descend again
To the dim room from the sky,
It shall better rest with pain
For its flight on high.

And, from weakness gathering strength,
Up to heaven again shall soar,
And again, until at length
It return no more.

Then, how sweet the perfect rest,
Following close the painful day,
With the thought amid the blest,
It shall last for aye !

Weary sufferer, that wouldst know
All that meek, strong faith can gain ;
Even with tears let praises flow
Unto God for pain.



Fifty Day.

TRUST IN DARKNESS.

*'Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee ; and
let thy judgments help me.'*

Ps. cxix. 175.

WHEN all grows dark around, above,
To trust Thy wisdom, power, and love,
And sad misgivings spurn ;
O God, it is a harder task
Than in glad beams of love to bask,
And love so felt return.

And yet, how good each seeming ill,
Whene'er we can this task fulfil,
Nor one faint murmur raise !
Father, vouchsafe to me the power,
Nor spare till even my darkest hour
Through trust abound in praise.



OBSCURITY.

'Now we see through a glass, darkly ; but then face to face : now I know in part ; but then shall I know even as also I am known.'

1 COR. xiii. 12.

THESSE mists that dim mine eye,
 What beauty may they wear
 At noon, or eve, in the azure sky,
 Amid the sunbeams there !

They would not then my sight
 Obstruct, as now at morn ;
 But yield me, as I gazed, delight,
 Like joy of sorrow born.

And these that shroud my soul,
 May they, too, gladness wake ?
 O will they ever upward roll,
 And sunbeams on them break ?

Thy faithful Word saith—yes.
 Lord, I will trust and love ;
 And Thee, so darkly seen, will bless,
 Till all be bright above.

Sixth Day.

THE GREAT INVITATION.

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'

MATT. xi. 28.

IF now I yield myself to be
Of sin and sorrow healed,
Shall I ere long ascend to see
Thee and Thy heaven revealed ?

Lord, do I hear Thee bid me cast
My cares and fears away ;
And trust and love ; then soar at last
To realms of endless day ?

O wilt Thou bliss supreme accord
In Thine own glorious sphere,
If I but trust Thee wholly, Lord,
To make me happy here ?

Then, witness all in heaven above
That human deeds can see,
I yield, with joy and praise and love,
Myself, my all, to Thee.

RACHEL AND BENONI.

GEN. xxx. 1 ; xxxv. 18.

'GIVE me children, or I die,'
Rachel passionately cried.
Heard and answered was her cry :
Breathed Benoni—Rachel died.

Dead, she speaks ; and I will learn :
God, my constant prayer shall be :
From me every evil turn ;
Give what seemeth good to Thee.



Seventh Day.

SOLACE IN TRUTH.

*'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten
Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not
perish, but have everlasting life.'*

JOHN iii. 16.

A MIDST all Truth is there no balm for thee?
O cast that fatal error from thy breast!
Know that there is what, found and felt, would be
Thy solace here, thy pledge of heavenly rest.

There is a God : take comfort from the thought.
There is a God who loves : be soothed yet more.
His very name is Love ; and He hath bought
Thee for His heaven : believe it and adore.

Believe, though darkness cover thee as night ;
Adore, albeit in a maze profound,
Wherein thought sinks or struggling gropes for light :
So all shall yet to good untold redound.

Amidst all joy what joy shall burst on thee !
O wake thee, mourner, and despair thou never :
Wait but the breaking morn, the shadows flee ;
And Truth for thee has yielded bliss for ever!

LOFTY PLACE.

*'Seekest thou great things for
thyself? Seek them not.'*

JER. xlv. 5.

STRANGE misery of lofty place!
It cometh of a weary chase,
With weary heart is held;
Yet who once treads the stormy height,
And to the vale would bend his flight,
Is by sweet shades repelled.

O thou whose place may lowly be,
If God come down to dwell with thee,
And grant thee tranquil days,
Scarce heard amidst the millions here,
In heaven thy name is known and dear:
Lift up thy heart in praise.

Eighty Day.

UNION WITH GOD.

'He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.'

1 COR. vi. 17.

FATHER, for my Saviour's sake,
Lend a gracious ear to me ;
And in bonds no power can break
Knit my spirit unto Thee.

If I breathe a vast desire,
Lord, it speaks my nature's want ;
And the prayer Thou dost inspire
Wilt thou not in mercy grant ?

Taught, encouraged, by Thy Word,
I can ask Thee nothing less ;
And, my fervent suit unheard,
Not the universe could bless.

O then, for my Saviour's sake,
Lend a gracious ear to me ;
And in bonds no power can break
Knit my spirit unto Thee.

REST IN THE LORD.

'I would not live alway.'

JOB vii. 16.

I WOULD not live alway : 'tis said in the hour
 When pleasure hath sated, or sorrow opprest :
 The heart scarcely knowing what thing hath the power
 To yield what it longeth for, longeth for rest.

'I would not live alway : 'tis said in the night
 By the sufferer tossing and wearied and worn
 With pain to which darkness seems worse than the light ;
 And yet he looks hopelessly onward to morn.

'I would not live alway : O, listen, ye gay !
 And listen, ye victims of sorrow and pain !
 'Tis the calm voice of faith and of love that can say,
 ' Tho' 'tis blessed to live, yet to die will be gain.'

Would ye, too, as peacefully rest in the Lord ?
 O, call ye upon Him while yet He is nigh !
 Confess Him, adore Him, confide in His word :
 'Twill be sweet then to live, but still sweeter to die.

To live will be alway to love Him below ;
And to see Him, tho' dimly, from morning till even :
To die will but be to soar upward and go
Evermore to see clearly and love Him in Heaven.



Ninth Day.

TEMPTATION COMMON.

'There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man : but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able ; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.'

1 COR. X. 13.

ART thou from heavier sorrows free,
 While yet some light griefs rest on thee ?
 Around upon thy fellow-men
 Look keenly, searchingly ;—and then,
 From earth to heaven uplift thy gaze,
 And breathe a fervid song of praise.

Amid the homes afar or near,
 How many where the frequent tear
 O'er pain and want, fast linked, is shed,
 Or, haply, over loved ones dead !
 How few where hopes and joys combine,
 Brighter than are, or might be, thine !

Thou art not free from every ill :
It is not yet thy Maker's will :
Nor were it good for thee to be
So shielded upon earth ; the tree
Fenced from the gust as well as storm
Were poor in fruit, and weak in form.

But bear awhile, a brief while bear,
With trust, hope, love ; and thou shalt share
The land where weary pilgrims rest,
Ineffably and ever blest :
'Tis high above this changeful dome,
The seraph's and the good man's home.



RAVEN AND DOVE.

GEN. viii.

WHEN the flood was all around,
 Even the Raven did not fly
 From the refuge she had found,
 But there waited patiently.

When returned hill, field, and grove,
 As the waters passed away,
 Offered liberty to rove,
 Not the very Dove would stay.*

Thou who mournest o'er a fate,
 Like the waste of waters, dark,
 If for this thou better wait
 In the heaven-appointed Ark ;—

Then with grateful spirit know,
 Good in guise of ill is given ;
 And that all which grieves below
 Soon shall wake thy praise in heaven.

* See *Art of Contentment*.

Tenth Day.

GOD'S APPROVAL.

'He that judgeth me is the Lord.'

1 COR. iv. 4.

O THAT mine eye could oftener see
Thee, Lord of all, and only Thee!
Thus learning best to calmly scan
Alike the praise and blame of man.

In Thee alone my spirit lives;
Thy hand my every blessing gives:
O how should aught have power to move
A care, except that Thou approve?

Lord, I am weak! With shame I own,
To other Lords I bow me down;
Bow down while yearning to be free,
To wait on Thee, and only Thee!

O help me every bond to break;
And stronger, nobler, holier make
Thy child so frail; till nought can move
A care, except that Thou approve.

THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

*'But unto you that fear my name shall the
Sun of Righteousness arise with
healing in his wings.*

MAL. iv. 2.

LESS pleased by what we have
Than grieved by what we miss,
We fondly crave, and seek, and crave
Imaginary bliss.

In vain the wise essay
To impress our hearts aright :
Awake we dream scarce less by day
Than asleep we dream by night.

But dreams, which never chase
The darkness or the cloud,
Beguiling oft to a fruitless race,
Yet more the soul enshroud.

O Thou, of might unknown ;
Great Sun of Righteousness !
It is Thine own, and Thine alone,
To illume, to cheer, to bless.

When Thou impartest light,
Vain visions pass away ;
And, real as Thy beams are bright,
Come joys of endless day.

Illume then, Lord, illumine
Our souls with heavenly rays ;
Till, gone for ever clouds and gloom,
We wake to ceaseless praise.



Eleventh Day.

WAIT TO-MORROW.

*' Weeping may endure for a night, but
joy cometh in the morning.'*

Ps. xxx. 5.

MOURNER, calmly wait to-morrow ;
Murmur not, how'er opprest :
Peace is never tired, but sorrow
Soon lies down to rest.

Rarely long the dark cloud lowers,
But descends in gentle rain ;
Then with freshened, sunlit flowers
Smile the fields again.

Hearts were never made for mourning,
Nor the eye to shed a tear ;
And there comes a brighter morning
Than the night is drear.

For the very darkness brighter,
Which that morn shall chase away,
If the spirit's light grew lighter
In the clouded day.

If its love could live adoring
Still the hand that sent the grief ;
While, it might be, yet imploring
With meek lips relief.

Wait then, mourner, wait to-morrow ;
Murmur not, howe'er opprest ;
Grief that trusteth, patient sorrow,
Ends in blissful rest.



THE FINAL STRIFE.

*'Be not thou far from me, O Lord ; O my
strength, haste thee to help me.'*

Ps. xxii. 19.

WHEN faintly flows the stream of life
 Within my failing frame ;
 When comes the lone and silent strife
 Men shrink or shun to name ;
 May trust and hope, with blessings rife,
 My love but more inflame !

How new, despite of all before,
 My feelings then will be !
 What light illumine the sacred lore
 I now so dimly see,
 Descending through the opening door
 Of vast eternity !

O Lord my God, I ever need
 Thy help, thy love, thy smile ;
 For these from day to day I plead ;
 And still, whate'er defile
 My life, would seek this highest need
 With spirit pure from guile.

But O, how shall I need them when
The last great strife is nigh !
When all things dear to mortal ken
Fade from my fading eye !
O smile, my God, upon me then,
And let me, gazing—die.



Twelfth Day.

PROMISE TO THE UPRIGHT.

*'The Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give
grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold
from them that walk uprightly.'*

Ps. lxxxiv. 11.

NO good thing shall the upright want :
O promise vast as brief !
Grant me to be of them, and grant,
Lord, in Thy word belief.

Long hast Thou taught me that on earth
May no repose be known,
Until within the soul have birth
Trust in Thyself alone.

Long have I learnt that all beside
Proves, in the hour of need,
As an o'erclouded star, to guide ;
To stay, a broken reed.

Then give me, thou eternal Sun,
Ever an upright heart ;
Nor, till the cloudless land be won,
Let steadfast faith depart.

EARTHLY AND HEAVENLY JOYS.

*'I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy
in the God of my salvation.'*

HAB. iii. 18.

THE dearest joys the heart hath known
From lovely things of earth
Often, like music's sweetest tone,
Have perished in their birth.

So brief, so transient was their power,
It was but as the breath
Of fragrance from the claspèd flower,
That sweetly tells its death.

Some, from the height to which they rose,
So quickly changed to fears,
That not the lark with pinions close
More swiftly disappears.

Is there a joy that ever lives ?
There is—but not of earth :
Unmeasured grace the blessing gives ;
And 'tis of heavenly birth.

Sweeter than music from the lyre,
Or perfume from the flower,
It rises like the lark, but higher
Than he has strength to tower.

That God from whose great bounty spring
Sweet sounds, sweet scents, all good ;
Who gives the lark his buoyant wing,
And man his angel's food ;—

He is its Giver, Author, Source :
O for a seraph's hymn,
To tell to all with winning force
What joy is found in Him !



Thirteenth Day.

THE HIGHEST GOOD.

'Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God.'

Ps. cxliii. 10.

REDEEMED by Thee from sin and death,
 Sustained, preserved, with ceaseless care,
 O Father, till my latest breath
 This will I make my fervent prayer :—

Clearly reveal to me Thy will ;
 Let it be ever in my view ;
 And help me by Thy spirit still
 With filial love Thy will to do.

With love that sheds its own glad light,
 Still brightening, upon wisdom's ways ;
 And, all it may not sound despite,
 Holds fast calm trust, and moves to praise.

I ask of Thee no higher bliss,
 In earth beneath or heaven above ;
 Sure that my only good is this,
 As that Thyself, O God, art Love.

SHADOWS AND REALITY.

*My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou
me according to thy word.'*

Ps. cxix. 25.

I WOULD not doat on shadows to the end,
Too oft already tempted and beguiled :
I would not still on fleeting phantoms spend
My hopes, and die, despite of years, a child.

The spell that binds me I would break, and hence
One great and glad reality would see :
The happiness, O God, Thou dost dispense
To all who seek their happiness in Thee.

But earth is with me ! earth is all around !
Her glittering lures are ever in my sight !
And thus my spirit creeps upon the ground,
That else would soar to Thee on wings of light !

O help me in the weakness that I mourn !
Cleanse, Lord, and take a heart which long hath known
That without Thee it were indeed forlorn,
Though all Thy hands have fashioned were its own.

Fourteenth Day.

COMMUNION WITH GOD.

*“ God is love; and he that dwelleth in love
dwelleth in God, and God in him.”*

I JOHN iv. 16.

ONE on whom the soul may pour
All the treasure of her love,
Fearless she should e'er adore
Sacred, perfect right above ;—

One on whom in every place,
Every hour of day or night,
Though she see not yet His face,
She can commune with delight ;—

O, for whatsoe'er beside
These too eager bosoms pant ;
This, and only this, when tried,
Find we answer nature's want.

Father, what Thy grace hath taught,
Deeply grave upon my heart ;
And from Thee, in deed or thought,
Never let my soul depart.

HOPES AND TERRORS.

*'Wickedness condemned by her own witness is very
timorous, and being pressed by conscience,
always forecasteth grievous things.'*

WISDOM xvii. 11.

SOFTEST breezes nurse the flower ;
Strongest winds throw down the tree ;
And oft prove unseen a power
Passing all things that we see.

Gentlest hopes and direst terrors
None may note, o'er men prevail,
Fostering goodness, sins and errors
Chasing, when all else would fail.

Lord of all things, these Thou usest
In thy viewless, boundless sway,
Still controlling, as Thou choosest,
All who yield or disobey.

Rule, O Father, in my bosom ;
And let me so yield to Thee,
As to breezes soft the blossom ;
Not as to strong winds the tree.

Fifteenth Day.

UNSOUNDED DEPTHS.

*'Clouds and darkness are round about him ; righteousness
and judgment are the habitation of his throne.'*

Ps. xcvi. 2.

IN the ocean vast, profound,
Of thy wisdom, Lord of all,
There are depths we cannot sound ;
Where what erring mortals call
Discords are, and still shall be,
In sublimest harmony.

By Thy gift of reason, Lord,
We descry that ocean vast ;
By the faith Thou dost accord
Own that harmony ; and cast
Far away each doubt that stays,
Fervent and adoring praise.

God, in harmony divine
Let Thy gifts within me dwell ;
And with blended force incline
Evermore my heart to tell,
How the depths I cannot sound
Wake but reverence profound.

SEEING DARKLY.

*'Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face
to face; now I know in part; but then shall
I know even as also I am known.'*

I COR. xiii. 12.

ON this wild earth wild torrents leap,
And thundering plunge down mountains steep,
To flood the fields all freshly sown,
While helpless peasants gaze and moan.

On this wild earth wild winds sweep down,
And earthquakes swallow tower and town,
And madmen rave, and bondsmen toil,
And war, pest, famine, waste and spoil.

Yet—on this earth gay flowers upspring,
Bright insects sport, blithe warblers sing;
Through all the air, the sea, the ground
Delights unseen, untold, abound.

On this fair earth glad children dance;
Maidens and youths, in love's sweet trance,
Dream blissful dreams; and Heaven imparts
Pure pleasures to unnumbered hearts.

God, I will muse upon the glad
And bright, and leave the dark and sad,
Till the clear light of heaven shall show
How all conspired for good below.

Thus peace within my breast shall dwell,
And trust, hope, love, Thy praise shall tell,
Until my spirit, raptured, soar,
To know, and therefore love Thee more.



Sixteenth Day.

FAME ENOUGH.

'I am small, and of no reputation.'

Ps. cxix. 141.*

LOWLY though my name may be,
Great, O God of all, is Thine ;
And, if I am known to Thee,
Fame enough is mine.

On Thy countless creatures, Lord,
I reflect, and faint, and sink :
Then—I listen to Thy Word,
And sweet solace drink.

'Tis what Thou, the King of kings,
Speakest unto me, Thy child :
Hope at that blest thought upsprings,
As all heaven had smiled.

It reveals that Thou didst give
Jesus, Thy beloved, to die ;
That who trust in Him might live
With Thyself on high.

* Prayer-book translation.

It assures me I am seen,
Known, protected, loved by Thee :
'Tis enough :—with soul serene
I wait eternity.



BETHLEHEM.

*'Thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among
the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come
forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel ;
whose goings forth have been from
of old, from everlasting.'*

MICAH v. 2.

A LITTLE village upon earth
Was Bethlehem—a lowly place ;
Yet was it honoured by the birth
Of Jesus for a fallen race.

A little orb amid the spheres
Is earth, that did the Saviour nurse ;
Yet earth to heavenly eyes appears
How favoured in the universe !

Be not cast down, then, O my soul !
Lest, of His works a trivial thing,
Thou shouldst be, 'mid the amazing whole,
Unheeded by thy God and King.

Glow in thee love to Him—the gem
Of priceless, everlasting worth ?
Dearer art thou than Bethlehem,
The little village upon earth.

Canst thou adore, and, in the robe
Of white He gives, His praise rehearse?
More prized art thou than this great globe,
So small in His vast universe.



Seventeenth Day.

CONSCIOUS LOVE.

'Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear ; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.'

ROM. viii. 15.

FOR the conscious love of Thee,
 Lord, no price too vast I know :
 When that pure delight I see,
 O, how fades all else below !

Can it be that ever more
 This frail heart, by sin beguiled,
 Should not heed the priceless lore
 Thou hast plainly taught Thy child ?

Can the soul, once girt with light,
 Bright well nigh as Eden knew,
 Plunge to depths of utter night,
 And the phantoms there pursue ?

Lord, it can, if left by Thee,
 Even to death itself deceive :
 O, stretch forth thine hand to me !
 Hold me, guide me, never leave !

LIVING WATERS.

*' Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give
him shall never thirst ; but the water that I shall
give him shall be in him a well of water
springing up into everlasting life.'*

JOHN iv. 14.

HOW oft the spirit roves away
To quench its burning thirst, and grieves
No stream to find, while waters play
Around the very home it leaves!

Such bootless wandering, mourner, cease ;
To heaven uplift a suppliant eye ;
And where thou art the God of peace
Will show thee living waters nigh.

Sweet streams that flow from Zion's hill,
And, like the wondrous stream of old,
Where'er thou roam shall follow still,
If once thy brightening eyes behold.

And oh, how welcome shall they be !
Not more within the desert wild
The well-spring it was hers to see
Who wept a fainting, dying child.

Eighteenth Day.

HOLY FEAR.

'In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence.'

PROV. xiv. 26.

O THE bliss to cast away
 Fear that all high thought denies,
 For the fear that day by day
 Lifts the spirit to the skies !

Whether in life's humblest shade,
 Or its loftiest estate,
 This, while other fears degrade
 And enthral, makes free and great.

By the Christian, as he kneels
 Reverently in prayer, 'tis known ;
 Kindred fear the seraph feels,
 As he bows before the throne.

Cherish, Lord, this fear in me ;
 Let it grow within my breast,
 Till both fear and love shall be
 Perfected where all are blest.

COMFORT UNSOUGHT.

'Go work to-day in my vineyard.'

MATT. XXI. 28.

WHAT to-day demandeth—do ;
 Let each word and deed and thought
 Prove thee to life's purpose true :
 Comfort then shall come unsought.

Comfort is not all thine aim ;
 Nor to any always given :
 Seek that love thy breast inflame :
 Love shall comfort bring—and heaven.

God with boundless grace imparts
 Gifts unnumbered to His own ;
 But the best of human hearts
 Look not for His gifts alone.

Be it thine far more to seek
 His will to be ever taught,
 And to obey with spirit meek :
 Comfort then shall come unsought.

Nineteenth Day.

FLEETING CARES.

'Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.'

2 COR. iv. 17, 18.

FLEETING cares and griefs I know,
 Even like the anxious throng;
 But no more may aught below
 Vex or wound my spirit long.

'Tis but pause, and ponder well
 Things no mortal eye discerns;
 And, though floods around me swell,
 Peace into my breast returns.

Or, when darkest clouds arise,
 Faith with fervent suit can pray,
 Till her glad, uplifted eyes
 See them float or fade away.

Lord, accept my grateful praise ;
All my lips or heart can pour ;
And in wisdom's pleasant ways
Guide my feet for evermore.



DIVINE PLEASURE.

*'The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him ;
in those that hope in his mercy.'*

Ps. cxlvii. 11.

SHALL I yield Jehovah pleasure,
I, created of the dust,
If I prize the priceless treasure
He prepareth for the just ?

If I hope in Him and fear Him,
As my Father and my Friend ;
And to serve Him, please, be near Him.
Count my joy and make my end ?

Shall I yield Jehovah pleasure,
Throned amid the hosts august,
If His mercies passing measure
Peace inspire through loving trust ?

Peace, that is the pledge of Heaven
Yea, that is my heaven begun ?
Trust, that morning, noon, and even
Cloudless sees the eternal Sun ?

God, to Thee, with spirit fervent,
I will pray—O hear my prayer !
Make, and ever keep, thy servant
Meet such wondrous grace to share !



Twentieth Day.

SORROW HEALED.

*'None spake a word unto him ; for they saw
that his grief was very great.'*

JOB ii. 13.

IS thy sorrow very great ?
What were mortal words to Thee ?
Wait on God, poor mourner, wait :
Thy sole comforter is He.

'Tis the Maker of the heart,
'Tis the Sender of the grief,
Can alone the balm impart
That shall yield thee sweet relief.

Tell to man thy bitter woes ;
Thence may spring yet worse to bear :
Tell them unto God who knows ;
It may prove prevailing prayer.

Weak to make the body whole
Of sore hurt is human skill ;
But to heal the stricken soul,
It for this is weaker still.

While so great is God above,
That, to hear His truth revealed
And to trust its words of love—
This alone is to be healed.



LAUGHING CHILDREN.

'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.'

MATT. vi. 34.

WHY is the heart of manhood sad,
And care upon his brow,
While yonder children frolic, glad
As birds upon the bough ?

Man seldom in the present lives ;
His spirit roves away
To what the past or future gives
To overcloud to-day.

Yon laughing children see the sun
Above them now is bright ;
And are the while content to run
And gambol in his light.

They will not make a doubtful ill
Through fear a certain one ;
And those young hearts with sadness fill,
Where God hath planted none.

But each glad little one reveals
A remedy for sorrows ;
He takes to-day, and never steals
From yesterdays or morrows.

Ye elders learn : rejoice to-day
In what to-day supplies :
Past ills are gone : to-morrow may
Translate you to the skies.



Twenty-first Day.

LIKENESS TO GOD.

'Be ye holy ; for I am holy.'

I PETER i. 16.

IN heart and life, O God, I would be pure ;
 And wait on Thee with ever fervent love ;
 Not hoping heaven to earn, alone secure
 In Thy redeeming grace, my refuge sure,
 Though the hills shake, and earth's foundations move.

But, because Thou art holy, and thine eye
 Doth hate iniquity, although it spare ;
 Because the ransomed of the Lord should die
 To all that pierced their Lord on Calvary,
 And so grow meet for heaven, whose home is there.

Nor less would I be pure because I see
 The peerless beauty of a stainless life ;
 And feel how sweet, how blissful it would be
 In deed and spirit to resemble Thee,
 Casting for aye away doubt, fear, and anxious strife.

O help me, Lord, that blessedness to gain !
Let even my very weakness win thine aid !
If needful, chasten ; I will not complain ;
Nay, I will thank Thee for the grief or pain
By which Thy goodness then were best displayed.

Yet is my nature weak for suffering ;
Alas, well nigh as weak as to obey !
O then forgive one further prayer I bring :
Let me not need the bitter chastening,
But by sweet mercy's power aright my spirit sway.



HOLIEST GLADNESS.

The blessed God.'

TIM. i. 11.

CHRISTIAN mourner that wouldst know
 Holiest gladness here below ;
 Joy that he thou lovest best
 Is, and ever shall be, blest.

In thine hours of bitterest grief
 Let the thought yield sweet relief,
 That in bliss no tongue can tell
 Doth thy God and Saviour dwell.

Then—in silence ask thine heart,
 Will not He that bliss impart ?
 Not unto His loved, His own,
 Made, redeemed by Him alone ?

Is the love His bosom bears
 Feebler than the love in theirs ;
 So that it shall never be
 Joy to Him their joy to see ?

O dismiss thy doubts and fears ;
Wait but till thy Lord appears ;
Praise, though suffering ; watch, with prayer :
Thou shalt see His bliss—and share.



Twenty-second Day.

LIFE A GOOD.

'Thou hast granted me life.'

JOB X. 12.

LIFE, O Father, is from Thee :
 All is good that Thou dost give :
 Till the boon recalled I see,
 I will thank Thee that I live.

Here I may grow ripe for heaven ;
 Grow in trust, hope, love, and praise :
 Here are ties in mercy given,
 Sweetest, tenderest cares to raise.

And those ties I cannot break :
 No, I cannot break them now,
 More than the green leaf can take
 Flight spontaneous from the bough.

But, Lord, whisper in mine ear
 In sweet tones, 'tis time to die ;
 And that whisper shall be dear
 As the raptures of the sky.

THE LAST RESTING-PLACE.

'O grave, where is thy victory?'

I COR. XV. 55.

HERE, 'mid many a fragrant flower,
And in soft repose, I lie :
Shall the couch a little lower
That awaits me wake a sigh ?

Shall I fear, O Earth, thy bosom ?
Shrink and faint to lay me there,
Whence the delicate lovely blossom
Springs to gladden earth and air ?

Whence the tree, the brook, the river,
Soft clouds floating in the sky,
All fair things come, whispering ever
Of the love Divine on high ?

Yea, whence One arose victorious
O'er the darkness of the grave,
His strong arm revealing, glorious
In its might Divine to save ?

No, fair Earth ! a tender mother
Thou hast been, and yet canst be ;
And through Him, my Lord and Brother,
Sweet shall be my rest in thee.



Twenty-third Day.

EARTH AND HEAVEN.

*'O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in
wisdom hast thou made them all:
the earth is full of thy riches.'*

Ps. civ. 24.

O GOD, I bless Thee for a world so fair ;
Yet more that here I may converse with Thee ;
And 'mid this affluent loveliness prepare
To chant Thy praises in eternity.

'Tis sweet to trace Thy wisdom, power, and love
In woods, fields, waters, with such beauty fraught :
How sweet to trace them evermore above
In scenes of glory passing mortal thought !

Scenes that awaken ever new delight ;
And still fresh love, fresh gratitude inspire
In seraph hosts, that with Thy saints unite
In one loud song, and with one soul admire.

God, can it be such life shall come through death ?
Shall more than noontide light on darkness break ?
O hear my prayer ! and till my latest breath
Guide me, and keep me, for my Saviour's sake !

T E A R S.

'God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.'

REV. vii. 17.

THERE are secret tears that fall,
 Every sorrow to destroy ;
 Since they reach and nourish all
 The deep-hidden roots of joy.

Such are tears, of sadness born,
 Over sins that will not die ;
 Though fresh mercies every morn
 Seem to upbraid them from the sky.

Such are tears of holy grief
 Waked by thoughts of Love supreme
 Scorned by them for whose relief
 It sent Jesus to redeem.

Such, too, are the tears that flow,
 When the beams of mercy melt
 Hearts once frozen ; till they know
 Heaven's great secret—pardon felt.

These are tears from hearts that soar ;
These reveal bright founts of love,
Which shall well for evermore
In the Paradise above.

Christian, let them freely fall,
Long as sin shall tempt astray,
Or love move thee—until all
Tears be wiped for aye away.



Twenty-fourth Day.

CARE DISMISSED.

*'I have been young, and now am old ; yet
have I not seen the righteous forsaken,
nor his seed begging bread.'*

Ps. xxxvii. 25.

OF all that breathes in earth or air,
Shall man alone be vexed with care ?
While feeding countless creatures wild,
Will God forget His nobler child ?

Go, ask the hoary-headed sage,
How many, in his youth or age,
He hath in piteous want espied,
Who trusted Heaven would all provide :

Who trusted ; yet, as Wisdom bade,
The while they trusted, toiled and prayed ;
Who kept to-day's small needs in view,
But would not keep to-morrow's too.

He hath marked as oft, with sorrowing eye,
For lack of food a sparrow die ;
Or, as night fell, the encircled hen
Refuse to outspread her wings again.

O Father, teach us thence to see,
How calmly all may rest in Thee ;
How surely trust Thy power and love,
Till faith be lost in sight above.



ALL ILLS WITHIN.

'Perfect love casteth out fear.'

I JOHN iv. 18.

ALL ills are in the soul :
 O child of fear and doubt,
 There, there exert control ;
 And leave the things without.

The things without are strong,
 Countless, and oft perplexed ;
 And who would rule that throng
 Shall ceaselessly be vexed.

While in the soul one grace,
 Fervent and glowing there,
 Can with still might displace
 All fear and doubt and care.

O seek until thou know
 That filial, trustful love,
 Whose fruit is peace below,
 And bliss past thought above.

Twenty-fifth Day.

THE HARD TASK.

'I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love.'

HOSEA xi. 4.

WHO hath not found it hard to feel
 Content beneath the sky,
 While yet the heart no blessings steal
 From good supreme on high?

But Thou who hearest all who turn
 To Thee and humbly pray,
 If ever heavenly joys I spurn,
 Take earthly joys away.

Rather with terror let me quail
 Beneath Thy dreaded wrath,
 Than taste Thy goodness here, and fail
 To tread the narrow path.

But O, let love, let love suffice!
 Still bind my heart to Thee
 With that soft chain of countless price
 My Saviour bought for me!

V A L U E.

*Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not
bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth
not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat
ye that which is good, and let your
soul delight itself in fatness.*

Is. lv. 2.

HONOUR sometimes comes to worth;
But 'tis envied ever :
Courtèd are the high of birth;
For their birth loved never.

With its might and pomp and glare
Wealth the crowd entices;
Often to oppress with care,
And degrade with vices.

Pleasure sweeps her lyre and sings,
Heedless how she spendeth
Life—till Death has snapped the strings :
Then the music endeth.

Rank, wealth, honour, reckless mirth ;
Would that it were given
Here on earth to see your worth
As 'tis seen in heaven !

Twenty-sixth Day.

FRIENDS OF GOD.

'I have called you friends.'

JOHN XV. 15.

L ORD of all the worlds on high
 That adorn the midnight sky,
 And afar past sight extend ;
 King of kings, who on Thy throne
 Swayest the universe alone ;
 Callest Thou me Thy friend ?

Thought is weak to scan Thy ways ;
 With vain effort speech essays,
 In meet terms, Thy grace to laud ;
 But my prayer in mercy hear ;
 Worthy let my life appear
 Of a friend of God.

THE DOVE AND THE ARK.

*'He stayed yet other seven days, and sent
forth the dove; which returned not
again unto him any more.'*

GEN. viii. 12.

THE Dove from out the Ark of old
Away on fearless wing could fly,
Nor seek again that sheltering hold,
Since skies were fair, and earth was dry.

Enough for her the woodlands wild,
The peaceful glade's reviving green;
And the bright sun that o'er her smiled,
As death and woe had never been.

Where'er she flew she found a home,
Or with instinctive skill could make;
And thence again could freely roam,
And joys as pure and sweet partake.

Christian, it is not so with thee!
The floods around still swell and flow:
Once from the Ark that shelters flee,
And whither, whither wilt thou go?

Twenty-seventh Day.

THE QUENCHLESS LIGHT.

*'Thou wilt shew me the path of life : in thy presence
is fulness of joy ; at thy right hand there
are pleasures for evermore.'*

Ps. xvi. 11.

NEVER, never, O my God,
Wilt Thou quench the light of Love ;
Nor shall souls that long to laud,
Fail to laud Thy grace above.

Glow in me the sacred flame,
Kindled by Thy power divine ?
Then—adorèd be Thy name !
Life, eternal life is mine !

Heaven, with all its bliss untold,
Heaven, my utmost thought above,
Shall in Thy good time enfold
Every soul instinct with love.

O my Father, more impart
Of that priceless grace to me ;
And for ever shall my heart
Breathe its gratitude to Thee !

THE MIGHT OF PRAYER.

'In my distress I cried unto the Lord, and he heard me.'

Ps. cxx. 1.

A MAIDEN, lost on a wild moor,
 While pealed and flashed the tempest round,
 Prayed—and the lightning beauty wore,
 The thunder seemed a pleasant sound.

A sailor in a rifted ship,
 That laboured 'midst a stormy ocean,
 Prayed—while the word was on his lip
 His fears were hushed to calm devotion.

At midnight shook the solid earth :
 A sleeper woke with horror thrilled :
 He prayed—and, as the voice went forth,
 His heart, before the earth, was stilled.

Could prayer do more? A dying man
 Trembled to feel his fate draw nigh :
 He looked to Heaven; a prayer began;
 And dropped a tear of ecstasy.

Twenty-eighth Day.

THE HIGH VOCATION.

*'God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love where-
with he loved us, even when we were dead in sins,
hath quickened us together with Christ; (by grace
ye are saved;) and hath raised us up
together, and made us sit together in
heavenly places in Christ Jesus.'*

EPH. ii. 4—6.

WOULD that ever, morn and even,
By that faith which Thou canst give,
As within Thy peaceful heaven,
I could hence, my Saviour, live!

Such Thy grace, my risen Lord,
This Thou callest me to do :
O then now Thy help accord,
And from day to day renew.

'Tis not Thou wouldst have me wait
For the joys of Christian trust ;
But that, cold to joys so great,
Cleaves my spirit to the dust.

Lend me, O, my Saviour, lend
Faith's glad wings on high to flee;
And thus grace my life to spend
Calmly, as in heaven with Thee.



LOVE AND FEAR.

' Perfect love casteth out fear.'

1 JOHN iv. 18.

' Happy is the man that feareth always.'

PROV. xxviii. 14.

THE mighty God who rules above,
 He is thy Father : O, with love,
 Confiding love, draw near :
 Thy Father is the mighty God
 Who spread the firmament abroad :
 Approach with holy fear.

Thy love should be the child's that knows
 The sweetness of secure repose
 Upon a father's breast ;
 Thy fear, the feeling pure and deep,
 That prompts him watchfully to keep
 Meet for that place of rest.

O, watch and pray that both may be
 In holy union found in thee ;
 And thou shalt soon adore
 Thy God and Father face to face,
 Where Love in its own native place
 Reveres for evermore.

Twenty-ninth Day.

MURMURING.

'Wherefore doth a living man complain?'

LAM. iii. 39.

WHOM deemest thou thyself, O Man,
That murmurest thus with bitter tears ?
Say, art thou greater, holier than
God's chosen saints of ancient years ?

Remember Abraham, David, John,
And Paul, and each of kindred love,
Who mourned below, but now are gone
To praise the more their God above.

Yea, think of Him, who all beside
Surpassed in greatness as in woe ;
Who lived and suffered, wept and died,
For thee, for me, for all below.

O muse on Him until thy tears
Be but bright signs of speechless praise,
That God for thee that Saviour hears ;
And yet prolongs thy priceless days.

THANKSGIVING.

*' Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving ; sing praise
upon the harp unto our God.'*

Ps. cxlvii. 7.

THANKFUL, and a murmurer too,
Man, thou canst not be ;
And, on earth not thankful, who
Joy in heaven shall see ?

In the grave is no device,
Work, nor thought of wisdom's ways :
Wilt thou there for Paradise
Learn glad songs of praise ?

Lips that living did not know
How to breathe the loving breath
Of sweet praises, shall they grow
Skilled to praise in death ?

Man, suppress thy murmuring ;
Holier, happier be ;
Shake thee from the dust and sing,
As thou heaven wouldst see.

Thirtieth Day.

THE SECURE TREASURE.

'The kingdom of God is within you.'

LUKE xvii. 21.

FOR ever moving, here and there,
 What is the good that we can bear
 Still with us both by day and night,
 Secure, and fraught with fresh delight ?

Fruit of redeeming love of old,
 It is that pearl of price untold,
 Which, soaring even to realms unknown,
 The unbodied soul can bear alone.

Thou who, to pay its wondrous price,
 Didst leave thy blissful Paradise ;
 Who sorrow, pangs, and death didst know,
 The treasure freely to bestow ;—

Guard and preserve it in my heart
 From hour to hour till life depart :
 Yea, ever, Lord, thy servant bless
 With peaceful, joyful righteousness.

THE TRAVELLER'S PRAYER.

* *'In journeyings often.'*

2 COR. xi. 26.

WHILE from place to place I rove,
 Still to keep a tranquil breast,
 And, with ever steadfast love,
 Cleave unto my only rest ;—

In each changed and changing scene,
 Thronged or lonely, vexed or still,
 Thee to commune with unseen,
 And my life's great trust fulfil ;—

Lord, whate'er the soul design,
 And howe'er resolved the heart,
 This yet asks a power divine
 Which thou only canst impart.

Grant that power, O my God !
 Still my Strength, my Guardian, be ;
 And, where'er I roam abroad,
 Never let me roam from Thee.

Thirty-first Day.

S A F E T Y.

'Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.'

Ps. cxix. 117.

LORD, uphold me with Thy hand :
 Never, never let me go :
 Stayed by Thee, I firmly stand ;
 Left—a breath may overthrow.

I have yet a path to tread,
 Solemn, silent, lone, and strange :
 Ere each earthly want be fled,
 There must come a darksome change.

Toward that change I daily wend :
 'Tis not seldom in mine eye :—
 God, if Thou wert not my Friend,
 It were dread to live or die.

But with Thee to guide, sustain,
 Fear shall never shake my soul ;
 Nay, not weakness, darkness, pain,
 Shall sublimest hopes control.

Lord, uphold me with Thy hand :
Never, never let me go :
Stayed by Thee, I firmly stand ;
Left—I sink to utter woe.



BIRTH AND DEATH.

*'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of
death I will fear no evil ; for thou art with me ;
thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.'*

Ps. xxiii. 4.

A MIST, as of the morn, abides
Where life first wakes a cry ;
A dusk, as of the evening, hides
Its last scene from the eye.

I feared not evil when the breath
Of life was first inspired ;
I will not fear it when at death
That breath shall be required.

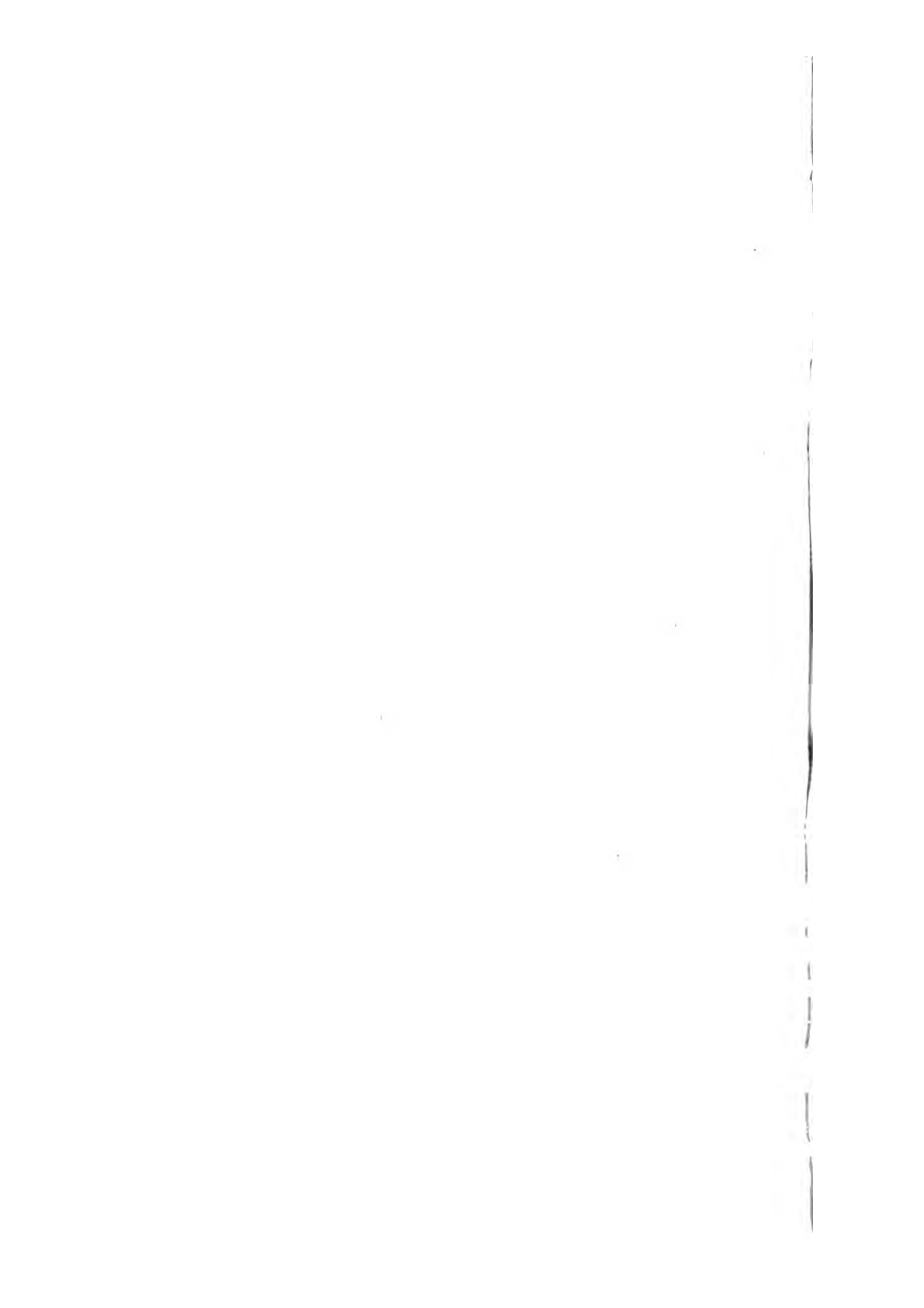
Unconsciously, as in a dream,
I came to life below ;
No clearer light, perhaps, will gleam
When from this life I go.

Enough, that to my earthly morn
Bright light was slowly given ;
Enough, if thus my soul be born
To endless light in heaven.

A D D I T I O N A L

B R I E F S A C R E D

P O E M S .



On Awaking.

'With my spirit within me will I seek thee early.'

Is. xxvi. 9.

ONCE more the morn in beauty breaks :
Once more the world from slumber wakes :
O wake, my heart, my voice, my mind !
God would I praise, and bless mankind !

Accept my praise, Great Source of Good !
And fill my soul with gratitude,
That now, to sow for heaven, newborn,
I greet with joy this opening morn.

And give me grace, Lord, through this day,
With Truth, with Thee, to hold my way ;
To eschew the wrong, to observe the right,
And walk 'midst men—a child of light.

Then, when the last great morn shall break,
And bid Thy saints to rapture wake,
O grant me, 'mid the hosts above,
To swell the eternal songs of love.

Before Sleeping.

*'I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep : for thou,
Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.'*

Ps. iv. 8.

NOW, Father, let me sink to sleep :
But Thou watch o'er me still ;
And guard me through the night, and keep
Secure from every ill.

In darkness let me strength regain
To serve Thee, Lord, in light ;
And may the day's best thoughts retain
Sweet influence o'er the night.

Be dreams, if present, meet for one
To whom the hope is given—
All sorrows past, all labours done—
Of endless rest in heaven.

And when return the morn's bright gleams,
Give me afresh to see,
O Light Divine, thy brighter beams,
And commune still with Thee.

For the Sleepless.

'There shall be no night there.'

REV. xxii. 5.

FATHER, I will not praise by day
 Alone the love that lights my way ;
 But, wakeful weariness despite,
 In these dark watches of the night.

The gifts Thy bounteous hands supply
 Shall brighten, Lord, my sleepless eye ;
 And songs inspire, while all around
 Are hushed and still in sleep profound.

More clearly for the darkness nigh
 My soul shall see her home on high ;
 And, like the stars that o'er me glow,
 Her holiest hopes but brighter grow.

Thus, wakeful, thankful hours of night
 Even here shall minister delight ;
 And soon, through Jesu's boundless love,
 Enhance the eternal morn above.

To the Fallen.

*'Return unto the Lord thy God ; for thou
hast fallen by thine iniquity.'*

HOSEA xiv. 1.

ART thou now fallen in the strife ?
O, hear what mercy saith !
Arise ! resolve ! thy Strength, thy Life,
See still—and trust till death.

The holiest 'mid the sons of men
Have fallen—perhaps like thee ;
But they awoke, prayed, strove—and then
Came peaceful victory.



On Death.

*'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?
The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin
is the law. But thanks be to God, which
giveth us the victory through
our Lord Jesus Christ.'*

I COR. XV. 55-57.

COME, Death, and let me muse on thee,
Ere yet thy hand be on my frame,
Till to my soul still dearer be
My great Redeemer's name.

Yea, come; thyself more plainly show,
Before that hand be on me laid;
Till all beyond thee brighter grow,
And all things nearer fade.

What art thou? Thou canst quench the eyes,
Canst still the pulse, canst stop the breath,
Steal every sense—yet faith defies
Thine utmost might, O Death.

This living, breathing, feeling frame
The soul may want, yet not deplore;
But wait till the last trump proclaim
The season to restore.

Thou strik'st the good ; and thine own blow
 Quells utterly thy power to harm :
 Thy fiercest terrors pass—and show
 Strength to compose alarm.

Steal on them even as a thief,
 To kill, and take their all away ;
 That arm but yields them sweet relief,
 Which thou dost raise to slay.

Not seldom, when the stream of life
 But faintly, faintly flows,
 Within, despite the visible strife,
 Is strange, but sweet, repose.

Perhaps, too, while fond bosoms bleed
 To mark thy last dread work commence,
 Some power benign may ever speed
 To numb the mortal sense.

And oft, 'tis certain, converse high
 Yields joy, yields rapture, in that hour
 When thou, to many a tearful eye,
 Art terrible in power.

Then opens Heaven ! the spirit soars :
 Its own that blissful home receives :
 Her God she sees—draws near—adores—
 And never, never leaves !

O Death, by grace divine, no ill
My faltering heart shall fear from thee ;
But breathe, when even my lips are still,
Its praise for victory.



The Last Request.

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was.

ECCLES. xii. 7.

O PLACE me not in stony cell
 Within the sacred house of God ;
 But let my mouldering ashes dwell
 Beneath the fresh, green, open sod.

There let my dust to dust return ;
 And, while descend the unfelt showers,
 And orbs unseen above me burn,
 There feed the grass and trees and flowers.

Let the fresh daisies fresher grow,
 And branch and blade more vigorous shoot ;
 Because there sleeps a form below
 That gently mingles with their root.

So shall my body help to adorn
 The earth once loved—alas, too well !
 Till both, in God's good time new-born,
 With fresh, strong power His praise shall swell.

The Last Prayer.

*'Into thine hand I commend my spirit : thou hast redeemed
me, O Lord God of truth.'*

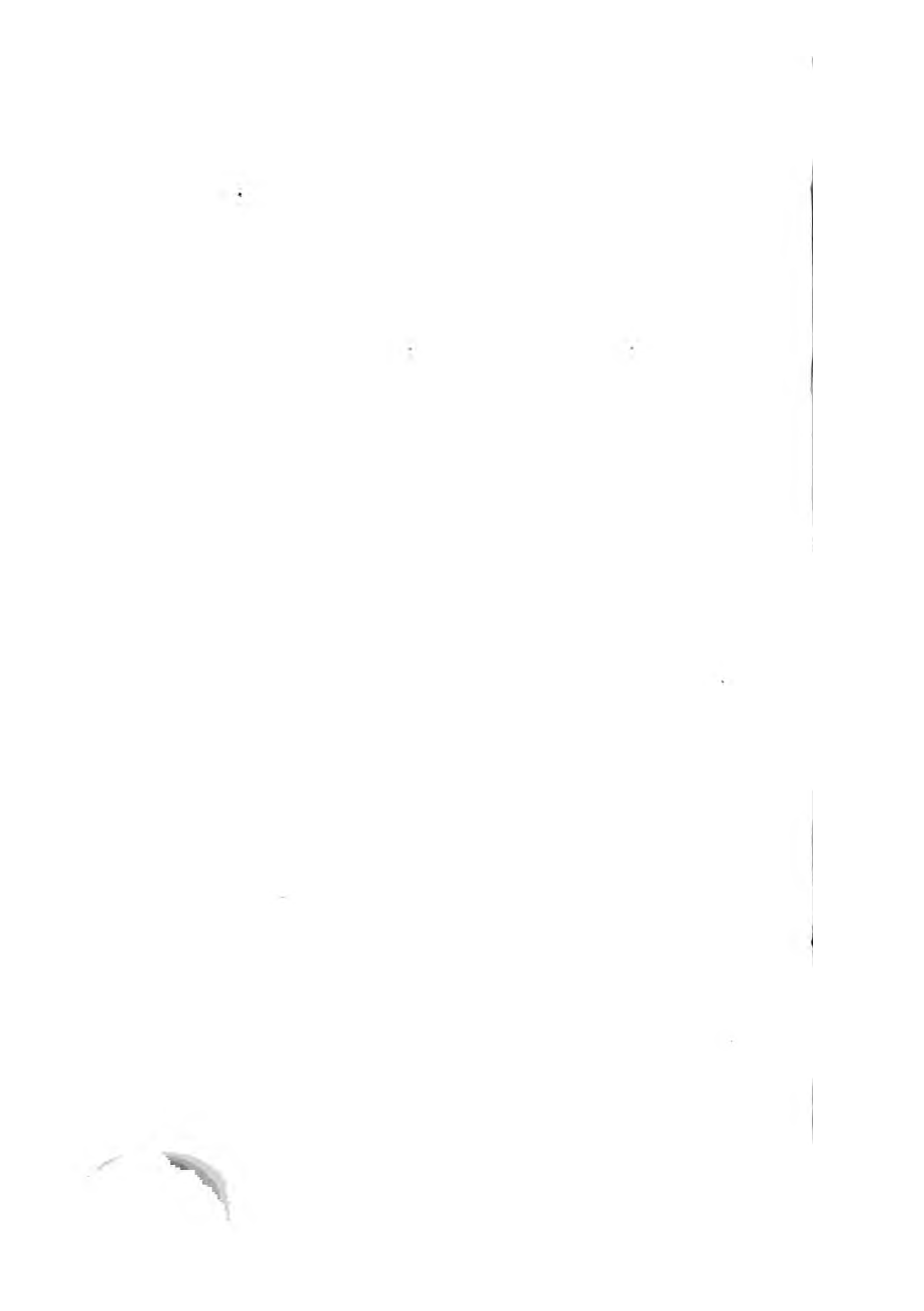
Ps. xxxi. 5.

FADING and failing, sinking to the tomb,
Yet have I strength to look, to cling to Thee :
Light of my spirit 'mid the encircling gloom,
Let this remain throughout eternity.

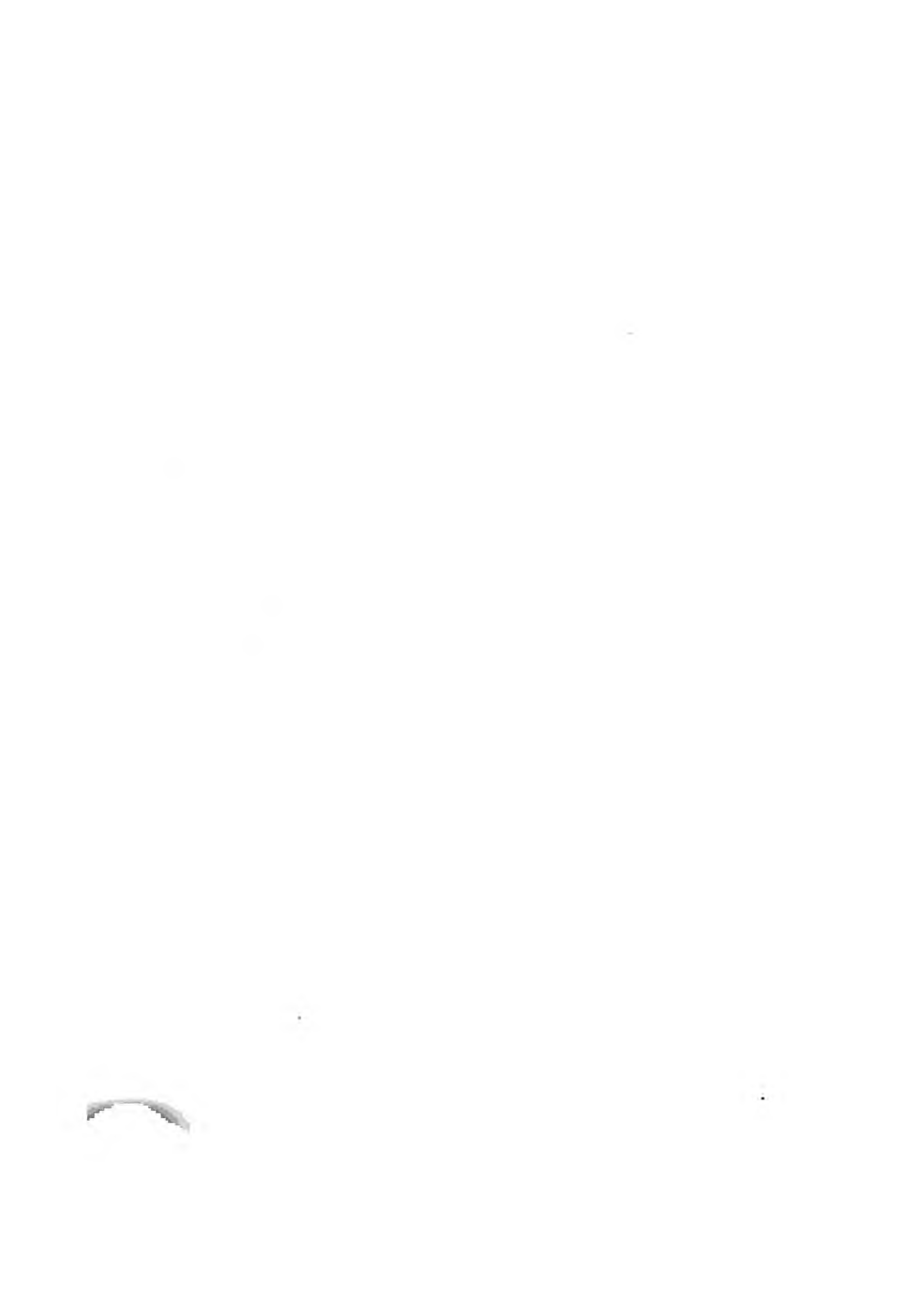
'Tis my last prayer : I ask, I seek no more :
Health, strength, life, friends, however prized or dear
In years gone by or now, I bow before
Thy will, my God, and yield without a tear.

But, reft of Thee, O whither could I go ?
Dreary and dark and lone, one boundless grave,
Were now the universe, did I not know
That Thou wert nigh to succour and to save.

Then be Thou mine ! be ever, ever mine !
For ever let me look and cling to Thee !—
And now, O Father, let Thy love divine
Light my still soul into eternity.



MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.



A Summer Sound.

A CLOUD upon my spirit hung :
I knew not how or whence it sprung :
Like one from gathering mists of earth,
Unseen were both its growth and birth.

Thou camest, too—I know not how—
Small thing, that wheellest round me now ;
And that warm, busy, drowsy hum,
Half kind, methinks, half quarrelsome ;—

Which sudden sinks to rest, or springs,
As thou dost furl or fan thy wings ;
Telling thou canst not wind a note,
Except when in the breeze afloat ;—

That hum hath moved this heart of mine,
As fitful, sure, well nigh as thine, *
Till sadness is exchanged for glee,
And I can only hum with thee.

The Time for Song.

I DO not love a lay that tells,
 In notes of woe, that life is sad :
 Why ring dull chimes on muffled bells
 To gloom the glad ?

Far fittier told in sighs than songs,
 If they must need be told at all,
 The pains and sorrows, wants and wrongs,
 That each befall.

The world but little cares, I ween,
 To hear the minstrel's tuneful moan :
 Enough men think to bear the spleen
 That is their own.

They love far more to hear a lay
 Which speaks not of another's cares ;
 But with sweet music charms away,
 Or tempers theirs.

A song should be when hearts beat high
 With joy, not sink opprest with sadness :
 Who silent in their troubles lie,
 Best sing in gladness.

The merry lark may have his time
 Of want and sorrow—none can doubt it ;
 But then he does not mount sublime,
 And sing about it.

No ! little diamond edition
 Of nature's sweetest, blithest ditty !
 He dreams not of the poor ambition
 Of winning pity.

Still as a bee 'mid winter snows,
 When dull at heart, the songster lies ;
 But when his gladness overflows,
 It fills the skies.

He soars on high ; and all may see
 He soars to sing, and sings to bless ;
 And not to pour forth melody
 In heaviness.

If, when he mounts, his gladsome strain
 Should please the world below, and move them
 With joy, 'tis well : if not, tis plain
 He's far above them.

It grieves not him, light-hearted elf,
If some won't heed his music : still
He warbles on to please himself,
And those who will.

Such ways I love, thou minstrel gay :
I'll sing with thee in sunny weather ;
And when there comes a gloomy day—
We'll rest together.



To a Child.

'A merry heart doeth good like a medicine.'
 PROV. xvii. 22.

COME, my little household flower,
 Fresh in winter as in spring,
 Brighten with thy bright eyes' power
 All that else were saddening.

Bound upon my knee, and laugh :
 Laugh in wildest, merriest cue :
 I of thy full cup will quaff :
 Thou hast joy enough for two.

What the song is to the bird,
 What the floweret to the lea,
 What the gambol to the herd,
 Prank and laughter are to thee.

And the heart that duly thinks
 On the great truth all reveal,
 Of a sweet, fresh fountain drinks,
 Potent every grief to heal.

Let me, then, with dimpling cheek,
 Seen through shadowing curls above,
And with arch look, mirth, and freak,
 Gladness feed, and hope, and love.

Life at noontide was a dream,
 With all waking joys denied it :
Lo ! 'tis now a pleasant stream,
 With a lovely flower beside it !

Come, then, sweetest, bound and laugh :
 Laugh in wildest, merriest cue :
I of thy full cup will quaff :
 Thou hast joy enough for two.



To a Skylark.

WHICH moves more quickly? Throat or wings?
Warbler, I can but tell
That, throat or wings, no bird that sings
For joy shows joy so well.

No; blackbird, throstle, nightingale,
Sweet as we own their skill,
Never poured forth so blithe a tale;
And, lark—they never will.

Too close to earth they spend their days;
They cannot soar as thou:
Up in the sky thou sing'st thy lays;
They chant upon a bough.

O lark, till they can get thy wing,
And mount into the blue,
Blithest of all thy notes shall ring,
And best wake gladness, too.

The Fall of the Oak.

*'He heweth him down cedars, and taketh
the cypress and the oak.'*

Is. xlv. 14.

THE woodman lifts his axe on high,
And strikes the giant Oak ;
While Echo, as she watcheth nigh,
Laughs at the puny stroke.

The lifted axe descends again :
Again, in rocky cell,
The merry maiden laughs—and then
Flies laughing through the dell.

And still, as every blow descends,
Her joyous note is heard,
And sweetly with the warbling blends
Of streamlet and of bird.

Ah ! wherefore laughs the maiden so ?
She deems the woodman's stroke
Is idle as an infant's blow
Against the giant Oak.

For that old Oak hath borne the storm
 Through many changeful years ;
 And still his venerable form
 In steadfast might uprears.

He seemeth, too, with sullen pride
 To bear the woodman's blow ;
 And as his arms, outstretching wide,
 Could crush the feeble foe.

But wider, deeper, grows the wound
 The strokes resounding make ;
 And white it gleams the trunk around,
 And the light branches shake.

Then, on one gaping side alone
 The certain axe descends,
 Until the woodman, weary grown,
 His pitiless work suspends.

Awhile he stands, and fetches breath,
 And wipes his dewy brow ;
 And Echo, too, is still as death :
 She seems appallèd now !

The little birds have hushed their song
 Around the solemn scene ;
 And, hidden the green brakes among,
 Do marvel much, I ween.

All, all is still!—the breeze that sighed
 But now hath passed away ;
 Or in the old tree sunk and died,
 Where once it loved to play.

Then, bent upon his ruthless work,
 An upward gazing eye
 The woodman turns, wherein doth lurk
 The pride of victory.

He looks, that he may judge aright
 Where next the blows should be,
 That from his arm of gathering might
 Shall fell the doomèd tree.

'Tis done: the swift strokes fall again
 Deep in the wound around :
 The leaf-crowned monarch leans—and then
 Falls crashing to the ground.

Ah! dread the sound, and sad the sight!
 And yet, crushed, broken tree,
 One thought shall cheer: no child of night
 Shall make a god from thee.

No! go to serve far nobler use:
 While dies thy hidden root,
 In human hearts for heaven produce
 Earth's fairest living fruit.

Teach man to bless the love that yields
Earth, sea, and azure dome ;
And thee, through life to adorn his fields ;
Then—build, grace, cheer his home.



A Sigh, a Tear, and a Smile.

A SIGH—it is the language meet
 Of every earthly sorrow ;
 Which, like a breath, away may fleet
 For aye before to-morrow.

A Tear—it is a tiny elf,
 That oft well shows our sadness :
 It dims the eye ; yet, bright itself,
 It seems more fit for gladness.

But Joy's sweet language is a Smile ;
 And we so often need it,
 Lips, cheeks, teeth, eyes, all aid the style ;
 And even a babe can read it.

From all 'tis clear, no token here
 Is fit for lasting sorrow :
 A Sigh is but a breath : a Tear
 May deck a Smile to-morrow.

The Lower Depth.

ART thou a sage philosopher ;
 And, ever seeing ills around,
 In word, or thought, a murmurer ?—
 Thou hast a lower depth to sound.

Not seldom doth the unfathomed sea
 A face of gloom or trouble show,
 While millions of glad creatures, free
 As the waves o'er them, sport below.

Art thou a sceptic, bold of flight,
 By whom the Word Divine is spurned
 For what thou deemest Reason's light ?—
 Thou hast but half thy lesson learned.

Thy Reason is a Heaven-sent guide,
 To whom, if thou but rightly yield,
 Grateful and glad thou wilt confide,
 With childlike trust, in Truth revealed ;—

Till earth and sky, for praise and prayer,
To thee be one blue-vaulted shrine,
With God's great lamp suspended there
For souls else dark—the Word Divine.



The Homeless Man.

'Give me neither poverty nor riches.'

PROV. xxx. 8.

A WANDERER at my garden gate,
 In miserable garb attired,
 With tone and aspect desperate,
 To labour in my fields desired.

I looked upon him with an eye
 That sympathy at least revealed ;
 And gently gave the brief reply
 To his request, 'I have no field.'

The while I spake the mower's scythe
 With sprightly music thrilled my ear ;
 The little birds were singing blithe ;
 Bright was the earth ; the skies were clear.

He travelled on—a lonely man !
 No more by nature's charms beguiled
 Than if his eye could only scan
 The sands upon a desert wild.

'I have no field :' that brief reply
 Still lingered in my spirit's ear,
 While now I gazed with pensive eye
 Upon the bending mowers near.

But why, methought, have I a home,
 And tread this pleasant garden's soil,
 While yonder fellow-man must roam,
 Seeking in vain a day of toil ?

Why am not I the wanderer,
 Alone, desponding, desolate ;
 And he the happier dweller here,
 Musing in pity on my fate ?—

Father ! if ever there should steal
 Within this changeful, treacherous breast
 A wish (that haply would conceal
 Its form in cunning woven vest)—

For aught beneath yon peaceful sky,
 That it were sin to fondly scan ;
 O bring to memory's heart and eye
 That seeming homeless, hopeless man !



To a Mother on the Loss of an Infant.

'Of such is the kingdom of God.'

MARK X. 14.

DEEM not, because its race was run
 So quickly upon earth,
 In vain thy darling little one
 Partook of mortal birth.

Nor think, because *thy* joy is flown,
 And changed so soon for sadness,
 'Twere better thou hadst never known
 A mother's rapturous gladness.

Thy babe, if it could whisper now
 From yonder peaceful sky,
 Would chase the sorrow from thy brow,
 And check the rising sigh.

'Twould tell thee, to be born below,
 And then so *soon* ascend,
 Is first a moment's pain to know,
 Then—joys that never end.

'Twould tell thee that it did not breathe
The breath of life to die ;
But lived and died to wear a wreath
Unfading in the sky.

Yea, rather, to go up, and take
Its part in songs of love ;
And sweeter, louder still to make
The melodies above.

'Tis thus that, through its mortal birth,
Immortal joys are given ;
And who would mourn time lost on earth,
If it be gained in heaven ?

O dry, fond mother, dry the tear ;
Nor think thy babe is dead ;
Think rather it alighted here
A moment—and is fled.



The mossy old Oak.

KNOW ye the scent of the mossy old oak,
 Afar in the forest's shade?
 Hath it never within your hearts awoke
 A love for the sheltered glade?
 Scarce sweeter to me is the violet,
 The sunny bank breathing o'er;
 And I never have yet with that odour met,
 But I loved the woods the more.

It is there that the dove delights to breathe
 Her pensive and lulling note,
 And the woodbine her slender branch to wreath,
 And the kite to wheel and float.
 It is there that the squirrel from tree to tree
 Winds safely as flits the bird,
 And the rabbit at evening frisks with glee
 Where the rustling leaves are stirred.

It is near the old oak the streamlet sings,
 As if it rejoiced to be
 So embowered awhile in its wanderings
 From the mountain to the sea;

And the pheasant comes there at eve to sip
 From the brake where she was born ;
 And the woodcock from far his bill to dip
 For food on a frosty morn.

And the fox, and the wild-cat, and the owl
 Go there in the night for prey ;
 And as guiltlessly, too, in the darkness prowl
 As others have prowled by day.
 And there, while the moon sheds her silvery light
 On all in the woods or plains,
 Sweet Philomel gladdens the livelong night
 With her own unrivalled strains.

It was there, when beneath the autumnal sun
 The ripe, rustling corn was waving,
 And the reaper, his labours now begun,
 The pitiless beams was braving—
 I used with a holiday heart to stray,
 In the pride of conscious leisure,
 To gather, so hidden till close of day,
 The slippery nuts at pleasure.

It is haply for these and a thousand things
 The oak of the forest near,
 And thoughts which come thither on viewless wings,
 That its mossy scent is dear ;
 But the reasons of love are ever, I trow,
 Far easier felt than spoke ;
 So, if ye would better know mine, then go
 Yourselves to the mossy old oak.

And while ye are there, O love to think
How, countless as forest leaves,
And various, too, are the pleasures we drink
From all that the sense perceives ;
The pleasures of sight, with the pleasures of sound,
Of taste, and of feeling, blent ;
And, from mosses and grasses and blossoms around,
The dreamy delights of scent.



To a Child of Fancy.

GO, Ellen, go ! I met thee
 As the bloom came on the May ;
 And now I would forget thee
 As it droppeth from the spray.
 Within, without the bosom
 Was then delicious growth :
 O that the withering blossom
 Now told the fate of both !

But true love, that oft springeth
 Beneath a vernal sky,
 Whate'er the summer bringeth,
 Will not in summer die.
 No, Ellen, no ! I met thee,
 And I dreamt a dream so sweet,
 That, ere my heart forget thee,
 Itself must cease to beat.

Alas ! that but a flower
 (Not more, not more art thou)
 Had e'er the witching power
 That blights my spirit now !

Go, Ellen, go! I met thee,
And my life burst into bloom ;
I leave thee to forget thee
When—'tis withered in the Tomb.

The Tomb!—Ah, let me borrow
What thou, O Tomb, canst yield !—
Lo, by thy gloom, my sorrow
Sees a far light revealed !—
Nay, sees even here remaining
For me a joy unmixed !—
Farewell, farewell, complaining ;
This loving heart is fixed !



Dare to be True.

'Every one that is of the Truth heareth my voice.'

JOHN xviii. 37.

DARE, O mortal, to be true :
 What thou thinkest, speak alone :
 Hosts may scorn thee ; friends be few :
 Truth shall bless her own.

'Of the Truth' are they who strive
 Eagerly the right to learn ;
 And thus waxing strength derive
 All beside to spurn.

Faithful to the Truth are they,
 Who would urge through fire and storm,
 If need were, their resolute way,
 Duty to perform.

He was *'of the Truth,'* who came
 'Midst the wandering, false, and lost,
 Priceless tidings to proclaim,
 Knowing well the cost.

Faithful to the Truth He stood,
Mocked, derided, scorned, denied ;
Still through life the strife renewed ;
Then—triumphant died.

And will He, now throned, forget
Them who, heedful of His voice,
With fixed heart the right abet,
And in Truth rejoice ?

Wearied man, of many years,
Thou yet fresh, whose years are few,
Trust His promise ; quench thy fears ;
Dare thou to be True.



The Hailstones.

*'Holy Father, keep through thine own name those
whom thou hast given me, that they
may be one, as we are.'*

JOHN xvii. 11.

HOW hard, how cold, how separate,
These hailstones on the sprinkled lawn !
Not one would mourn its fellow's fate,
If with the sweeping winds 'twere gone ;
And, even should all thus disappear,
Nor blade nor flower would miss them here.

But let yon dark cloud pass away,
And heaven's warm light on each descend ;
Then all beneath the gladsome ray,
With loveliest hues, would melt and blend ;
To gently feed the grass and flowers,
And deck yet more these circling bowers.

How hard, how cold, how separate
Are hearts untouched by heavenly grace !
Each seeks his own, and strife and hate
Make this bad world a doleful place ;
And even if all should pass away,
Virtue might weep, yet vice decay.

But let the bright beams from above
Those hearts so frozen duly melt ;
Then all unite, and holy love
In every breast is prized and felt ;
While streams, that bless where'er they go,
Earth's dreariest deserts overflow.

O Thou, who for Thine own didst pray
That they might all the union sweet
Of Christian brotherhood display,
Till earth should worship at Thy feet ;
Now let Thy holy will be done,
And all, as God and Thou, be one !



The Laverock.

YON laverock merrily mounts on high :
 Will he leave the green earth for ever ?
 Or thinks he such rapturous melody
 It were better pour forth all alone in the sky,
 Where sorrow and sighing are never ?

He is gone : ah, no ! for against yon light
 Cloud of silver I see him yet ;
 And still he is winging his upward flight
 To the blue where the stars will be at night,
 When the sun he so loves is set.

And now, had you watched, you might see him lie
 On the cloud as it sails along ;
 But vain were the search of the gazer's eye,
 Unless it had followed him through the sky ;
 And scarce can you hear his song.

Still higher he mounts ! he fades away !
 He is lost in the light of heaven !
 Like a little bright star at the dawn of day,
 That is hid in the light of the golden ray,
 And will only return at even.

Will he, too, thus hidden so long remain ?

No ! I see him, I hear his notes !

And sprightly and pauseless is yet the strain

As when he so joyously left the plain ;—

And now on the breeze he floats.

He floats and wheels round, but still merrily sings,

As if with exhaustless mirth ;

Till, hovering there with expanded wings,

He looks upon tenderest, dearest things,

And—ah ! he is dropped to earth !

How silent he lies !—Yet he teaches there

Hardly less than on joyous wing :

Not only, my spirit, learn melody rare,

And with anthems of gratitude gladden the air ;

Take rest but again to sing.

Yet rest not too long ; for on earth there are snares :

Thou art safest in open sky :

The fowler may capture thee unawares,

Unless thou art watching, with many prayers

To that God who will hear thy cry.

But still of the minstrel of morning learn,

And again and again ascend ;

Till thy wing shall gain strength, and thy bosom burn

For a height whence thou never mayst more return :—

And thy flight in the skies shall end.

The Village Bells.

ON with your joyful tale ;
Spread it o'er lake and lea ;
Make glad my native vale,
As it was wont to be.

Sweet is your changeful play ;
Loud on the gale it swells ;
Then softly dies away
Down in the hollow dells.

What though the throstle sing
Not as in former days,
And the pale primrose spring
Scantlier 'mid the braes,—

Ye, like a constant friend,
Still are the same, I ween ;
Glad are the tones ye send
As they have ever been.

Even as in early years,
Oft on this sunny bank,
Till well-nigh moved to tears,
I your sweet music drank ;—

So I can now rejoice,
Till my rapt bosom swells,
In the same pleasant voice
Of the same village bells.

Still, then, your joyful tale
Spread over lake and lea ;
Make glad my native vale
As it was wont to be.



The Drought over.

'The heaven gave rain.'

JAS. v. 18.

A YE, sing with all thy heart, sweet bird,
 Even if it be alone :
 Shame on the mute that are not stirred
 To raptures like thine own !

The rain has come, and gone, and left
 A boon transcending thought
 On fields well-nigh of all bereft
 That vernal months had brought.

The thirsty earth is satisfied :
 The long, long heavy rain
 Has every little rill supplied
 With its sweet song again :—

Its low, sweet song—ah ! thine is not,
 Glad minstrel, what it seems :
 Listening to thee I had forgot
 A thousand thousand streams :—

Nor less, amid glad sounds, how few,
Of all afar or near,
Beneath this wide o'er-arching blue
May reach the quickest ear.

Sweet melodies by day, by night,
Around the varied earth,
Rise to the Lord of life and light,
Whence came its wondrous birth.

If mute distress and notes of woe
Are ceaseless, yet 'tis true,
And loving hearts should joy to know
Glad praise is ceaseless too.

Then sing, sing on! but not, sweet bird,
Alone: even now combine
Innumerable strains, by me unheard,
Of joy and praise with thine.



To a Timepiece.

*'Behold, now is the accepted time; behold now
is the day of salvation.'*

2 COR. vi. 2.

A FAITHFUL monitor we need ;
And thou a monitor shouldst be,
That solemnly proclaims the speed
Of time towards eternity.

Thy voice, and face, and finger speak
Incessantly to ear and eye ;
And who from thee instruction seek
Shall truths of import deep descry.

Thou shouldst be as the wayside stone,
That ever and anon doth cheer
The worn and weary traveller, shown
His friends, his rest, his home are near.

But ah ! far oftener, viewed aright,
Wouldst thou remind, in language plain,
Of home long left, and onward flight
Where friends and rest were sought in vain !

Yet might'st thou still, with truth sublime,
Proclaim in every contrite ear
That now is the accepted time;
For now there is a Saviour near.

O may each passer-by that sees
Thy radiant face, a moment linger;
And solace or monition seize
From thy small voice and golden finger!



The unceasing Song.

THERE'S not a month of all the year,
Nor hour of night or day,
But sweet sounds wake, the heart to cheer,
And chase its griefs away.

The sky in spring or summer time
May oft be drear and dun ;
But the gay lark will sing and climb,
As if to greet the sun.

Or, should the heavy shower descend
From out that gloomy sky,
Throstle and he their songs will blend
Before the flowers are dry.

Of autumn winds sweet sounds are born
Amid the fading leaves ;
And gently swell from billowy corn
And leaning, dying sheaves.

The little redbreast trills her lay
 'Mid winter drear and hoar :
 The streams then sing, and leap, and play,
 As if their hearts ran o'er.

Not even the keen Frost's mighty power
 Can hush the streams' blithe song ;
 It is from birth their own sweet dower,
 With hearts for ever strong.

His force they scorn upon the height ;
 And if along the plains
 They yield awhile to his thralling might,
 They sing beneath their chains ;—

Sing sweetly, though the strain be low ;
 And it shall joy impart ;
 For still the listening ear may know,
 'Tis from the inmost heart.

Soon free once more, they bound away,
 And plunge and leap along,
 As vigour were won from brief delay,
 And fill the heavens with song :

The fair, blue heavens ! beneath whose dome,
 When spring returns, and still
 Are day's blithe birds, in moonlit home
 Sings wakeful Philomel :

The fair, blue heavens ! whence oft by night,
 Through all the circling year,
 The choral strain from starry height
 Steals down serene and clear :

An ancient melody ; best known
 Where resting flocks lie down
 On moorland wild, or mountain lone ;
 Yet heard in thorp and town.

And could we, listening, catch whate'er
 From hearts of holy men
 Ascends to heaven, 'mid all their care,
 And fears, and sorrows, then—

By proof transporting should we know
 That good, and seeming ill,
 Wake praises glad, that sweetly flow
 With music never still.

Great Source benign of all that cheers
 On earth, and every hope
 That to the musing soul endears
 The blue, star-lighted cope,—

Let none be mute ; let all who share
 Thy gifts, with voice and heart
 Made strong by love, rejoice to bear
 In that blest hymn their part.

The Mower's Scythe.

MANY praise the soaring lark,
Warbling in the sky so blithe,
Till you scarce can choose but hark :
Why so few the mower's scythe ?

Even the bee within the flower,
Bending its small stem so lithe,
Has of praises had a shower :
Why, then, not the mower's scythe ?

O the sweetly-sounding weapon,
Played on by a skilful hand ;
When at early morn you step on
The fresh, dewy meadow-land !

Here is one, and there another ;
Haply there are four or five,
Each as blithesome as its brother,
Making all the field alive !

Now the tones are high and thrilling ;
Quick, too, as the lightning's wing ;
Every heart that listens filling,
Beyond all imagining !

Then—how softly, smoothly gliding,
As each instrument doth pass
Just before the mower, guiding
Its curved motion through the grass !

'Tis enough to make a poet
Even with very envy writhe
At such skill, and long to know it,
That his harp might match a scythe.

Never, never, mighty mower,
Hast thou even had a tithe
Of the praise for music's power
Due to thee and thy bright scythe !



Heber murmur more.

*'Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured,
and were destroyed of the destroyer.'*

1 COR. X. 10.

KNOW'ST thou well the sufferer's part ?
And not less complainings sore ?
Take this counsel to thy heart :
Never murmur more.

Change thy murmurings into praise :
God, it may be, yet will bless
Bounteously thy future days,
For thy thankfulness.

Haply, many an evil past
Came thy pleasures to alloy ;
For that countless gifts and vast
Woke few songs of joy.

O, then, whatso'er the days
Which yet wait thee have in store,
Meet them as they come with praise :
Never murmur more.

Insect Joy.

*'O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom
hast thou made them all. The earth
is full of thy riches.'*

. Ps. civ. 24.

ABOVE the streamlet's bend, in this warm nook,
 How vast the sum of gladness at its height!
 Yea, overflowing!—gladness that cannot brook
 A moment's stillness, but impels to flight,
 Whose twinkling evolutions baffle sight;
 And to the eye, most fixed and searching, look
 As weaving but confusion exquisite;
 While yet each wing moves freely, as it took
 A lonely way, fanning the upland breeze,
 In place of beams instinct with life as these!
 And is this joy, so rapturously high,
 A drop, a point immeasurably small,
 Of that which fills the earth, the air, the sky?—
 O, who shall speak Thy praise, great bounteous
 Lord of all!

The ceaseless Jest.

'To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.'

ECCLES. iii. 1.

SMILES are as sunlight on the face ;
 Laughter is oft as music blest ;
 But out of time and out of place
 Is still the ceaseless jest.

'Tis out of time ; as were the heat
 And brightness of the pleasant sun
 On both the toil of day and sweet
 Repose when toil is done.

'Tis out of place ; as glad song were
 Through days, weeks, months, within a home
 To which, in quick succession, care,
 Hope, joy, and sorrow come.

O, life is chequered ; life is short ;
 And ye who long to spend it best,
 While loving seasonable sport,
 Eschew the ceaseless jest.

The Cuckoo.

SWEET herald of the lovely things that be
So strong to lure thee from thy haunts remote !
Never more welcome than thine own to me
Was nature's tenderest or blithest note.

Well doth thy voice beseem its tale of spring ;
Thy pleasant, never-wearying employ ;
Soft as the dove's, and as unvarying :
Hers breathes of love and peace, thine love and joy.

Would that mine own could half as sweetly tell
The feelings vague and dim, yet strong and deep,
Which thou hast power to waken from the cell
Wherein they live and sleep—how lightly sleep !

Once more return the holidays of life ;
The vernal afternoons of early days ;
Seasons with gladness and affection rife,
And all that nature loveliest arrays.

Though rarely, yet thy voice I sometimes heard
 In childhood's walks, and in its happiest hour,
 When love o'erflows ; and so I loved thee, bird,
 As childhood often loves, with lasting power.

I loved thee partly for thy note, that owns
 No likeness amid all in earth or air ;
 But more, methinks, because thy vernal tones
 Came blent with orchards, lambs, and meadows fair.

And it might be I loved thee not the less
 Because I never had seen thy slender wing :
 No plumage beautiful as fancy's dress ;
 No form so fair as her imagining.

Ripe years are come, and thou art dearer now
 Than thou wert then, sweet messenger of spring ;
 Telling more clearly from thy leafy bough
 How good to all that lives is nature's King.

Thy heart is full of joy—yea, overflows ;
 And birds and butterflies and insects small
 Are glad as thou ; while every flower that blows
 Around thee seems to brighten at thy call.

And I partake with each !—I, who alone
 Deserve a life of deep, unmingled sadness,
 Wake with the fragrant breeze, and thy sweet tone,
 To take my share so large in nature's gladness !

How good to all that lives is nature's King !

 Again, again, sweet bird, shout, shout thy praise !
And you, ye warblers, loud and louder sing ;
 And forests, hills, and streams your voices raise !

And I, least worthy, too will lift my song,
 Till distant echoes all around shall ring,
And this glad sound with answering voice prolong,
 ' How good to all that lives is nature's King !'



To a Redbreast.

*'I have learned, in whatsoever state I am,
therewith to be content.'*

PHIL. iv. 11.

LITTLE suffices thee, small minstrel gay !
While all is cold and cheerless on the ground,
Enough that thou canst flit from spray to spray,
And trill thy slender melodies around.

Methinks the crimson colour of thy breast
Well speaks the fervour of the heart it bears :
Thou hast no cares o'er winter's snowy vest,
Or deemest praise a remedy for cares.

Thy grateful gladness, even for scanty food,
Seems as it warmed thee, spite of frost and snow ;
And so, while others o'er their sorrows brood,
Thy voice is blithe, though it must needs be low.

There are who learn of thee, and so will I :
Unmurmuring will I pass my changeful days ;
Each good increasing by a grateful eye ;
Each ill abating by a song of praise.

I will not cloud the present with the past ;
Nor borrow shadows from a future sky :
'Tis in the present that my lot is cast,
And ever will be through eternity.

'Sufficient to the day the present ill,'
Was kindly uttered by a heavenly voice ;
And one inspired to tell his Master's will
Hath bid us alway in the Lord rejoice.

Lord, I obey !—in Thee rejoicing now ;
Rejoicing to believe, to feel Thee here,
Blessing the redbreast 'mid the winter's snow,
And me well pleased his little song to hear.



To a Lamb.

THOU little new-born basker in the sun!
 Flat on thy side ; as thou hadst but to feel
 How pleasantly thy strange, bright moments run,
 While vernal beams through thy thin vesture steal.

Ah! start not up, as if thou fearedst me,
 And haste thus tottering to thy bleating dam ;
 I were as loth to injure thee as she,
 Though she may love thee better, timorous lamb.

And why dread me, too, more than yonder steed,
 That snorts and trots so loftily around ;
 As he would lord it over all the mead,
 Nor cared if he should crush thee on the ground ?

Thou hadst not risen thus, I ween, for him ;
 And even now thou only look'st at me :
 What, little youngling, or in face or limb,
 Have I to wake thy terror more than he ?

Ah, sin ! thou meetest me where'er I stray!
 I see thee in the city and the woods ;
 Beside the beaten and the pathless way ;
 In busiest haunts, and stillest solitudes !

Or, rather, I do bring thee in my bosom ;
 As if my spirit from its home must fly,
 Ere it can see, beneath the hawthorn blossom,
 A little milk-white lamb without a sigh.

Time was, thou gentlest playmate of the spring,
 Thou hadst believed man's look of love sincere ;
 No ill suspected that his form could bring ;
 But rather 'licked the hand' thou couldst not fear.

All, all is changed ! Man treads the green earth now
 A monarch dreaded, wheresoe'er he stray :
 Each creature shuns him : even from the bough
 The little warbler, seeing, flits away !

And yet—methinks, while gazing upon thee,
 Beneath the brightness of this vernal sky,
 Dim were the faith, or dead, that could not see
 More to awaken gladness than a sigh.

If earth remind me, wheresoe'er I rove,
 That sinful man is from his Maker riven,
 I trace an emblem of redeeming Love,
 Whether I look upon the earth or heaven.

In thee, sweet type of meekest innocence !
Whose blood ere long some mortal hand shall shed,
I read of One, my refuge and defence,
In silent sorrow to the slaughter led.

And thou, all-glorious, renovating sun !
From whose bright beams this living beauty springs,
Thou, too, remind'st me of the Holy One,
The Sun now risen with healing in His wings.

O Lamb of God ! O Sun of righteousness !
Atoning Saviour ! Fount of light and life !
This peaceful walk I ask of Thee to bless,
When comes the world once more with noise and
strife.



God is Love.

WHY comes this fragrance on the summer breeze,
 The blended tribute of ten thousand flowers,
 To me, a frequent wanderer 'mid the trees
 That form these gay, though solitary bowers ?
 One answer is around, beneath, above ;
 The echo of the voice that—' God is Love.'

Why bursts such melody from tree and bush,
 The overflowing of each songster's heart,
 So filling mine that it can scarcely hush
 Awhile to listen, but would take its part ?
 'Tis but one song I hear where'er I rove,
 Though countless be the notes, that—' God is Love.'

Why leaps the streamlet down the mountain's side,
 Hastening so swiftly to the vale beneath,
 To cheer the shepherd's thirsty flock, or glide
 Where the hot sun has left a faded wreath,

Or, rippling, aid the music of the grove ?
 Its own glad voice replies, that—‘ God is Love.’

In starry heavens, at the midnight hour,
 In ever-varying hues at morning’s dawn,
 In the fair bow athwart the falling shower,
 In forest, river, lake, rock, hill, and lawn,
 One truth is written : all conspire to prove,
 What grace of old revealed, that—‘ God is Love.’

Nor less this pulse of health, far-glancing eye,
 And heart so moved with beauty, perfume, song,
 This spirit soaring through a gorgeous sky,
 Or diving ocean’s coral caves among,
 Fleeter than darting fish or startled dove ;
 All, all declare the same, that—‘ God is Love.’

Is it a fallen world on which I gaze ?
 Am I as deeply fallen as the rest ;
 Yet joys partaking past my utmost praise,
 Instead of wandering forlorn, unblest ?—
 It is as if an unseen spirit strove
 To grave upon my heart, that—‘ God is Love.’

Yet wouldst thou see, my soul, this truth displayed
 In characters which wondering angels read ;
 And read, adoring—go, imploring aid
 To gaze with faith, behold the Saviour bleed !
 Thy God in human form ! O, what can prove,
 If this suffice thee not, that—‘ God is Love !’

Cling to His cross !—and let thy ceaseless prayer
Be that thy grasp may fail not ; and ere long
Thou shalt ascend to that fair temple where,
In strains ecstatic, an innumerable throng
Of saints and seraphs, round the throne above,
Proclaim for evermore, that—‘ God is Love.’



The past Shower.

'The rain is over and gone.'

CANT. ii. 11.

THE shower is past ; and through the vale one song
 Alone doth welcome the returning rays ;
 But that so clear, so full, it were to wrong
 Its melody, methinks, to speak its praise,
 Except with answering sweetness. O, again
 Repeat, glad bird, thine own rich notes, before
 Others do shake their plumes and join the strain :
 Thy single voice to me now lovelier seems than more.

How fresh the air ! how sweet the hawthorn blossom !
 The very earth is fragrant ! as the shower
 Had left some delicate perfume on her bosom,
 While making yet more odorous every flower.
 The grass, the trees, all glisten, and reflect
 With dazzling brightness the descending beams :
 Ah ! who that looked around could now suspect
 That even one spot on earth with sin and sadness teems !

Could any deem it were a rebel earth
That thus is clothed with beauty as a robe ?
Could any, listening now to nature's mirth,
Believe the mortal monarch of the globe
Treads it in tears ? O righteous, bounteous God !
Let other beams be yet more largely given,
Let other showers descend on man's abode,
Till human hearts accord more both with earth and
heaven !



To a Lark.

MANY a song, that few have heard,
 I have breathed to thee, glad bird ;
 And must now, a minstrel brother,
 Scorn who pleases, breathe another.

Haply there will come an hour
 When some hearts shall feel the power
 Of a simple, quiet lay :
 Dreamer, hush ! there never may.

Well, enough, enough of mine,
 If they will but list to thine ;
 And what they withhold from me,
 Fondly lavish upon thee. *

I should love thee, joyous elf,
 Didst thou, just to please thyself,
 With that quivering voice and wing,
 Sing and mount, and mount and sing.

* This was written previously to the appearance of several reviews of *Devotional Verse for a Month, and other brief Pieces*. With those reviews the Author has ample reason to be more than satisfied.

I should listen, and confess
That I knew not, nor could guess,
In what better, wiser way
Thou couldst spend a summer day.

Let the bird be who he will,
Blackbird, throstle, philomel ;
Let him greet the morning light,
Vespers chant, or cheer the night ;—

He might surely learn of thee,
Or, admiring, rather see—
For, like thee to soar and sing,
Thou at least must lend him wing—

Just the very way in nature
For a little, lively creature,
Free to rove and free to rest,
To beguile his time the best.

If the sun be in the sky,
Visible to every eye,
Thou dost gaily mount to meet him,
And with sweetest music greet him.

If the clouds obscure his beams,
Hide him quite, and, as it seems,
Would have none on earth to mind him,
Thou dost soar aloft to find him.

Thou art not a bird to dread
 Lowering weather overhead :
 'Tis enough for thee if dry
 Where thou art, 'twixt earth and sky.

Nay, who note and know thee best
 Will, as I do now, attest,
 That, when bent upon a strain,
 Thou canst stand a drop of rain.

Neither dost thou think with many
 There's much need, if there be any,
From the spleen, or *for* diversion,
 Oft to take a long excursion ;—

Just determined not to roam
 Anywhere in sight of home ;
 But in far-off, foreign places,
 'Mid strange hearts, and tongues, and faces.

No ; though thou dost love thy pleasure,
 And, in sooth, a handsome measure,
 Thou couldst never understand
 Why it might not be at hand ;

Why, to take a pleasant trip,
 Folks must give their homes the slip
 For a month or two, or more,
 Just when roses deck the door.

It is better, in thine eye,
 To enjoy the earth and sky,
 And whate'er in either be
 Lovely, or to hear or see,—

Near thy little, lowly nest,
 As affection deemeth best ;
 Seldom wandering so but still
 Thou canst thither drop at will.

Oft thou art content to wait
 With thy little ones and mate,
 Sharing sweet domestic bliss
 Without tone or look amiss ;—

Never fearing, too, I trow,
 That thine offspring, as they grow,
 Will have any love for scenes,
 Ways, or friends, beyond thy means ;—

Nor when thou, with heart elate,
 Seest them in fledged estate,
 'Twill perplex thyself, or wife,
 How to put them out in life.

Should thy family become
 Over-large to dwell at home,
 Thou canst send—say three or four,
 Or a dozen, or a score—

Without any fitting out,
 Or the smallest care about
 Future ways and means of doing,
 Or imprudent, early wooing—

To some hill-side, green and dry,
 Or the fairest meadow nigh ;
 Whence, in almost any weather,
 They may soar and sing together ;

Sure that every now and then
 They with swelling voice shall ken
 Thee amid some silver cloud,
 Greeting them with song as loud.—

But, sweet bird, I rove away
 Far from what I thought to say :
 I should love thee, I repeat,
 Didst thou pour thy music sweet,—

Without vanity or art,
 Just to please thine own glad heart,
 In the clouds that round thee glisten,
 Caring not though none should listen :

But I love thee, warbler, more,
 For that thou dost seem to pour
 Thine unrivalled song of gladness
 Oft to chase another's sadness.

Thou hast surely somewhere heard,
 That thy music is preferred
 By this heart to any strain
 In the garden, grove, or plain ;—

And for this, if thou but see
 I do need thy minstrelsy,
 Thou delight'st to mount above,
 Sweetly rendering love for love.

Carol on, then, peerless singer !
 I to listen oft will linger,
 Yielding, whensoever I may,
 To the influence of thy lay.

And be sure I will not fail
 Now and then to breathe a tale—
 Not, alas! as it should be,
 In sweet music, worthy thee ;

But, at least, in strains above
 Heartless song, revealing love
 Bent its gratitude to show,—
 Let the world give ear or no.

Withered Leaves.

THE forest leaves, that late were seen
 High o'er our heads in living green,
 Are lying cold and withered on the ground;
 And where the yellow primrose grew,
 Anemone and bell of blue,
 All, all is now with foliage sere embrowned !

Full many a nest the leaves concealed
 The winds of autumn have revealed ;
 And each looks dark, and desolate, and lone ;
 But Nature, kind to beast and bird,
 And all that lives, the blast deferred
 Until the little minstrels all were flown.

Yet marvel not each voice is still,
 And silence reigns o'er vale and hill :
 How could they sing above the perished flowers?
 Or how o'er withered leaves that grew
 So green around them ere they knew
 A care, or fear, or aught, save summer's sun-bright
 hours ?

The scarlet berries may adorn
 The leafless branch of rose and thorn,
 And nourish them despite the wintry sky ;
 But, ah ! 'twere vain to sing the strain
 That would to memory bring again
 Fair scenes it could not bring to heart and eye !

Yet, patiently, ye minstrels, wait
 Amid the woods so desolate ;
 Nor even despair, though ye should see on all
 That now remains of summer flowers,
 And leaves that formed your earliest bowers,
 The winter snows in solemn silence fall.

Those snows shall melt ; and spring's soft breeze,
 Light playing with the whispering trees,
 Blent with the sunbeams, shall renew the scene ;
 While many a withered leaf around
 That strews shall fertilize the ground,
 Whence flowers shall sweetly spring, and grass of
 freshest green.

The budding, bursting woods, again,
 And yet again, a blithesome strain
 From countless swelling, quivering throats shall wake ;
 And ye, the gladlier for the drear
 Departed days, shall swell the cheer,
 Till man, despite his cares, your joy partake.

Then learn, while ye in silence wait,
To gild with hope the desolate
And melancholy scene around ye view ;
And I, who need not less to take
Than the least warbler of the brake
That lesson to my heart, will learn with you.

Though withered leaves and perished flowers,
The relics of my vernal hours,
May sometimes seem to lie around my way ;
Yet I will cheer with hope sublime
The dreary waste, the wintry time ;
And peacefully await a brighter day.



To a Caged Thrush

IN A CROWDED STREET.

THOU mayst be light of heart, sweet bird,
With wing no longer free ;
And blither notes I never heard
From sunniest bush or tree.

And yet, though I could listen long,
Wert thou unprisoned nigh,
And thank thee for that well-known song,
It now but wakes a sigh :

A sigh for far-off meadows green,
Or more for copse or grove,
Where thou didst learn those notes, I ween,
And I should joy to rove.

I scarce can think thou art so gay
As thou wouldst fondly seem ;
But rather thus wouldst chase away
An ever returning dream :—

A dream that o'er thee from a cloud
Or passing breeze might creep:
Thou singest as one might laugh aloud,
That else were forced to weep.

Or can it be, thy song would teach
The grace of sweet content
With any lot that comes, to each
Who sees thy banishment?

Art thou a little wingèd spright
Within these busy haunts,
To show how men may put to flight
Their sorrows, cares, and wants?

O, I will deem it thus may be,
And so to thee will listen,
Till I can praise for liberty
As thou dost for thy prison.

I will not sigh for the green fields,
Or woodlands, far away;
But take what even a city yields
Of gladness for to-day.

As thou wouldst vainly beat thy wing
Against the wires about thee,
And hence contentedly dost sing
Where all were gloom without thee;—

So I, with happier lot than thine,
Will chafe or struggle never;
But make, like thine, my home a shrine
Of songs and gladness ever.



The Eagle and the Heron.

*'They are passed away . . . as the eagle
that hasteth to the prey.'*

JOB ix. 26.

TO Fancy's eye, exulting in the ease
With which he floated down or met the breeze;
Now wheeling gently round, as if to show
His grace was equal to his strength; and now
Still in mid air; then soaring swift on high;—
An eagle sported in a cloudless sky.

Pleased to look on, as with the winds he played,
Gazing and musing on the bird, I strayed;
When, with arched pinions, startled by the sound
Of my slow steps upon the rushy ground,
A heron rose; and, in his upward flight,
Soon caught the feathered monarch's piercing sight.

Checking his sportive course, the bird on high
Quivered a moment o'er him in the sky,
With head bent downward; then with matchless flight,
Swift as a falling meteor of the night,
Stooped on his quarry, dealing the eager wound,
And grasping, clinging, struggling to the ground.

Alone, to muse inclined, and still to roam,
 While sank the sun into his gorgeous home,
 'What may I learn from this?' I half inquire.
 'Learn,' said a voice, 'that goodness to admire,
 Which in the eagle hasting to his prey
 Warns thee how quickly fleet thine hours away.

'Learn that, compared with ages infinite,
 Thy life is pictured by an eagle's flight—
 His flight when swiftest; when with cleaving wing
 He downward darts, like arrow from the string;
 And, carrying still that image in thy view,
 Do with thy might whate'er thou hast to do.

'Follow thy Lord: work on while yet 'tis light,
 And be not tempted to forget the night:
 Treading even now so closely on the grave,
 Where wisdom ceases, and no arm can save,
 See, ere thou enter, that, like yonder sun,
 All that thou hast to do by day is done.

'Let the struck heron, too, upon the ground
 Teach thee how quickly real ills are found,
 When fancied ones are fled. That bleeding bird,
 Had he a friendly step in stillness heard,
 Would have escaped a foe: he fell misled,
 The hapless victim of a needless dread.

'He feared where no fear was : a mortal nigh
Was worse to him than danger from the sky :
The one was heard ; the other heard nor seen,
Though plain above in yonder blue serene.
If thou shouldst marvel at such folly, see
Thyself be not a kindred prodigy !'



Moon and Stars.

*'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament
sheweth his handiwork.'*

Ps. xix. 1.

YE countless stars, that in the clear blue skies
Circle the moon in silence, yet proclaim
His power whose hand your lasting light supplies,
Well doth your solemn stillness laud His name.

The spirit's depths need neither speech nor sound ;
And 'tis with them ye commune from afar :
Your voiceless beams inspire with awe profound
The breast that ponders what and whence ye are.

Ye 'light us deep into the Deity ;'
And there are hearts wherein ye kindle love ;
And O, what thirst intense, to soar and see
No longer from beneath you, but above !

And soar we may ; instinct with love, we must :
The soul that can survey, admire, embrace
Unnumbered worlds, was formed not for the dust ;
But to ascend and see her Maker's face.



Even now my spirit mounts : I sweetly feel
 The peace ye breathe around ; and, lifted high,
 Should gaze on Him whose glory ye reveal,
 Were but unsealed my longing, feeble eye.

Ye roll for ever in one course decreed,
 Unconscious of the wondrous praise ye sing :
 I freely soar, as with a seraph's speed,
 And rove thro' all your host with raptured wing.

And shall I sink to nothing in the grave ?
 Shall this, whate'er it be, that cleaves the skies,
 In one drear hour be lost ; as in his cave
 The beast—all quenched for ever—when he dies ?

Shall ye, though beauteous, senseless, still endure,
 To magnify a God ye cannot love ;
 While I, who feel a yearning deep and pure
 To see Him, praise Him, dwell with Him above,—

Sink to the dust and perish ?—O profound,
 Dismal, and fatal folly of the fool,
 To dream a little, perishable mound
 Of earth can quench a living, loving soul !

Sooner shall you, ye myriad spheres of light,
 Drop from the heavens at a mortal's breath,
 Than sink these spirits into utter night,
 Touched by the feeble, shadowy hand of death.

Rather with brighter lustre shall they glow ;
A thousand-fold more beauteously shine ;
As ye, when day hath passed away below,
Beam forth on high to deck the eternal shrine.

Come, then, pale Shadow, that I feared erewhile :
When Heaven permits thee lift thine arm and smite :
By grace divine, my fading eye shall smile ;
Its light, retiring, soar to realms of light.



Holy Habits.

'Optimum elige: suave et facile illud faciet consuetudo.'

SLOWLY fashioned, link by link,
 S Slowly waxing strong,
 Till the spirit never shrink,
 Save from touch of wrong;—

Holy habits are thy wealth,
 Golden, pleasant chains;
 Passing earth's prime blessing, health,
 Endless, priceless gains;—

Holy habits give thee place
 With the noblest, best—
 All most godlike, of thy race,
 And with seraphs blest;—

Holy habits are thy joy,
 Wisdom's pleasant ways,
 Yielding good without alloy,
 Lengthening too thy days.

Seek them, Christian, night and morn ;
Seek them noon and even ;
Seek them till thy soul be born,
Without stain—in Heaven.



Little Things.

THE flower is small that decks the field ;
 The bee is small that bends the flower ;
 But flower and bee alike may yield
 Food for a thoughtful hour.

Essence and attributes of each
 For ends profound combine ;
 And all they are, and all they teach
 Springs from the mind divine.

Is there who scorneth little things ?
 As wisely might he scorn to eat
 The food that bounteous autumn brings
 In little grains of wheat.

Methinks, indeed, that such an one
 Few pleasures upon earth will find,
 Where well-nigh every good is won
 From little things combined.

The lark, that in the morning air
 Amid the sunbeams mounts and sings ;
 What lifted her so lightly there ?—
 Small feathers in her wings.

What form, too, then the beauteous eyes
 With which all nature oft is bright,
 Meadows and streams, woods, hills, and skies ?
 Minutest waves of light.

And when the earth is sere and sad
 From summer's over-fervid reign,
 How is she in fresh beauty clad ?—
 By little drops of rain.

Yea, and the robe that nature weaves,
 Whence does it every robe surpass ?—
 From little flowers, and little leaves,
 And little blades of grass.

O sure, who scorneth little things,
 If he were not a thoughtless elf,
 Far above all that round him springs,
 Would scorn his little self.

THE END.

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