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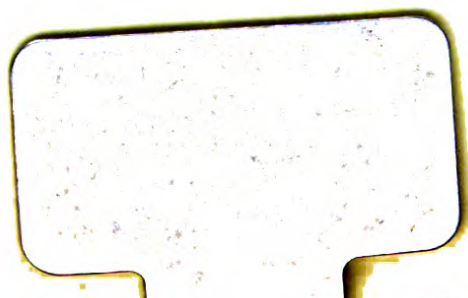


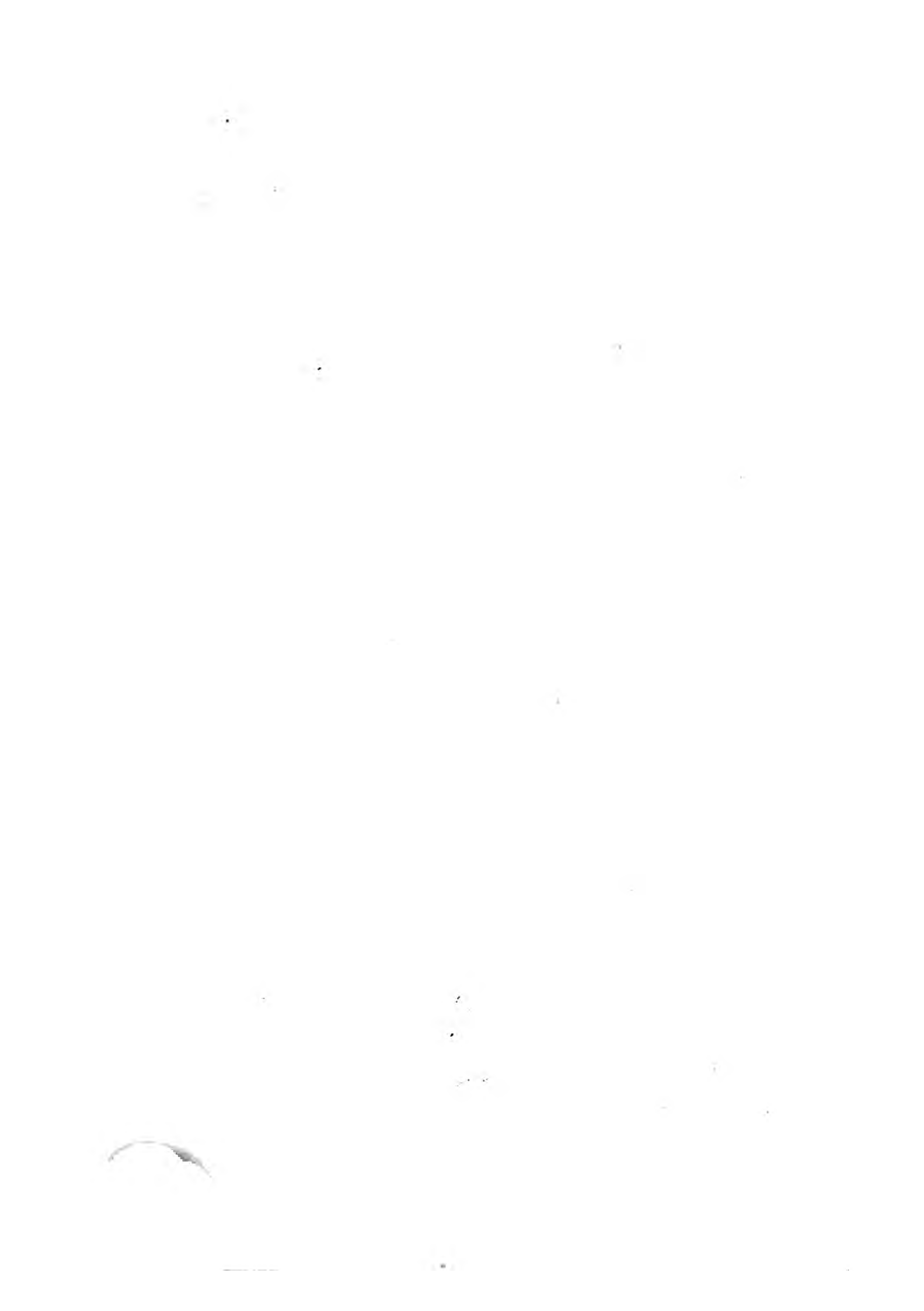
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Linto and Laneer [verse].



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BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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by the author's son, Price 3/6,

TALES AND POEMS.

CRITIQUES.

From BRIEF, November 28th, 1879.

"It is now some years since Mr. Harris, the Cornish Miner Poet, was recognised as such before the world. The present is the twelfth volume of prose and verse which has emanated from one who is undoubtedly endowed with a natural gift of song, and who possesses, too, a rich imagination and considerable powers of expression. The Tales in the volume under notice are all marked by originality, and interest the reader to the end. The Poems are characterised by sweetness, pathos, and often a strange and unexpected power. They cover a vast range of subjects, secular and religious, and are sure to be popular. The book is illustrated with some cuts by the author's son, who is seeking to become a wood engraver. We trust that he may meet with all encouragement."

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He bore the smallest bundle on his back,
Tied in a 'kerchief without fringe or flower ;
His mouth was large, his piercing eyes were black
As sloes that cluster in an autumn bower.

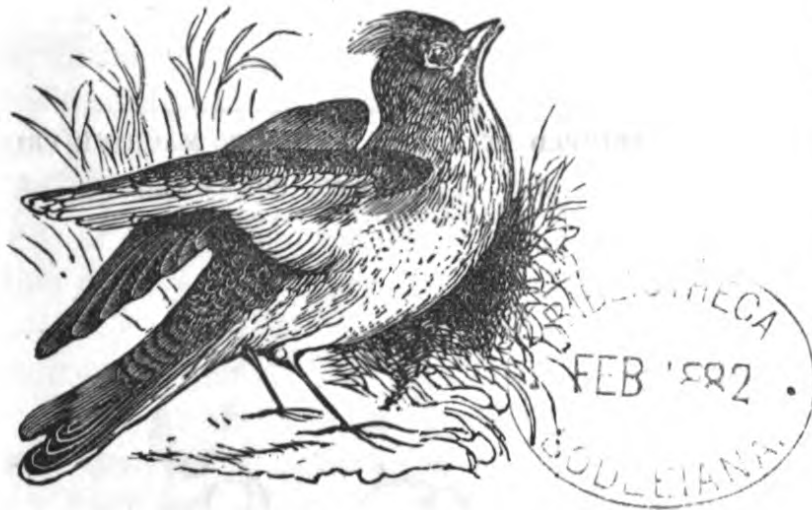
Linto and Laneer, Part First, page 3.

LINTO AND LANEER.

BY

JOHN HARRIS,

AUTHOR OF "MONRO," "WAYSIDE PICTURES," "THE TWO GIANTS,"
"TALES AND POEMS," ETC., ETC.



“What a bliss
To listen to the rapture of the lark
O'er clover-scents, and moorlands rich with praise,
Where God is worshipped by all living things !”

Page 20.

London :

HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO.

FALMOUTH: THE AUTHOR.

1881.

280. 0. 714.



PRINTED BY J. GILL AND SON, MACHINE PRINTERS,
PENRYN, CORNWALL.



P R E F A C E .



THIS is the author's fifteenth volume published on his own responsibility, at an outlay of more than one thousand pounds—a serious sum to be accounted for by a working man. Nearly thirty years ago he claimed for his verses originality and simplicity, which merit has been freely accorded him by the public and the press. He puts forth a similar claim for the pieces in the present collection, wherein he has earnestly aimed at the promotion of religion, temperance, morality, and truth—"Peace on earth, and good will toward men."

This volume has been written in his hours of leisure from the important duties of his calling as Scripture Reader at Falmouth, which might otherwise have been barren of fruit. His place of study, as in days gone by, has chiefly been the lanes and fields, his garden-bower, and solitary shore-paths, where the winds and waters ever teach with truthful voices. The composition of these poems has been their own reward, without the writing of which his earthly happiness would have been greatly diminished. As he brings out this book with the knowledge of the loss of many of his best supporters by death, the edition is limited, so as not to entrench too seriously on his slender finance. The few wood engravings are the work of his invalid son.

The author most cordially thanks his remaining patrons and friends for their kind and generous aid once more, and trusts that they, as well as an appreciative public, may find not a little in this his last collection to excite their just commendation, throughout which his chief aim has been to elevate his race.

FALMOUTH,

October 14th, 1881.

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LINTO AND LANEER.

PART FIRST.

THE hoards of Nature never will be spent,
Whilst mind is active, and the soul is free :
A lesson lingers in the rose's scent,
And hangs in mystery on the waving tree.
The sweetest tales float over lane and lea,
And gem the village with poetic light ;
And odes are rolling from the restless sea,
From clouds and comets in their wondrous flight,
And he who listens long may hear them day and night.

The earth is one great universe of truth,
Where precepts shine suggestive everywhere,
In trusting childhood, and aspiring youth,
Unconquered manhood, bending age and care.
Each hamlet has its known tradition rare,
Each town a tell-tale which the gossips heed,
Each lane a mystery when the trees are bare,
Each wood-walk memories as the hills recede,
All fraught with facts for man, which he who runs
may read.

The little town of Rooktree has a tale,
Which oft the matron murmurs at her door,
When village songs are trembling through the dale,
And twilight gathers on the distant moor.
I re-produce it from my memory's store,
With just a change to suit Apollo's ear,
Who loves to wander by the sounding shore,
Or sit bay-crowned beside the fern-fringed mere,
And sing the simple song of LINTO and LANEER.

Down from the uplands stole a lonely man, [long ;
Whose clothes were dust-stained as with travel
He paused a moment where the streamlet ran
Among the willows with a murmuring song.
His eyes he wiped the shining reeds among,
Then onward struggled in the summer heat ;
He seemed ill-fed, nor active looked, nor strong ;
And as he passed the fields of waving wheat,
He whispered to the skies, "O, God, direct my feet !"

His tattered garb a beggar might have worn,
And seemed he so as down the path he came :
His hat was crushed, his seamy jacket torn,
And it was plain the weary wight was lame.
He looked like one who lost his household name
In some strange surge that swept away its pride,
And left him clinging to the shade of fame,
Where bitterns scream along the shallow tide,
And bats and beating wings among the wreckage ride.

He bore the smallest bundle on his back,
Tied in a 'kerchief without fringe or flower ;
His mouth was large, his piercing eyes were black
As sloes that cluster in an autumn bower :
His tangled hair knew not the comb's clean power,
But like soiled threads it darkly dangled down,
Or heath-tufts beaten with the wintry shower :
His shoes were stringless, his worn trousers brown,
And with a suppliant look he slouched into the town.

The children watched him as he passed the dell,
And saw him stand before Dame Meto's door ;
Her dog, they knew, would do his business well,
He always barked at strangers who were poor :
And then they heard his deep, sharp, sudden roar,
And caught the rattle of his shining chain,
And saw his head—and then they saw no more,
But rushed with eagerness adown the lane,
And soon, forgetting all, were at their play again.

He told them he was weary with his march
O'er roads rough-pebbled, and through regions
Where Desolation, on a broken arch, [lone,
Sobbed in the darkness to the war-god's moan :
That he was wrecked upon a shore unknown,
Where wild men fed him in a hut of bark,
Till summer robes were o'er the valleys thrown,
When he was rescued by a passing barque,
And borne to England's isle in Freedom's lonely ark.

Perhaps they knew him as old Wakefield's son,
Dame Meto's nephew on the husband's side,
Who to the village shop was wont to run
On errands for them ere the rector died ?
He brought the cattle from the moorland wide,
And often at their kitchen table fed,
A petted boy who loved his schemes to hide ;
And schemes were ever running in his head ;
But now he came to ask a morsel of their bread.

Dame Meto frowned, and bade him leave the place,
Her boys threw chips upon him at the door,
The parrot screamed at such a sorry case,
The kitten mewed, the dog did louder roar.
But one there was whose young love's richest store
Outflowed to him in girlhood's tenderest gleams ;
The cup she proffers to the pilgrim poor,
And her own florin, which she so esteems,
Held in her gift-purse long among its silken seams.

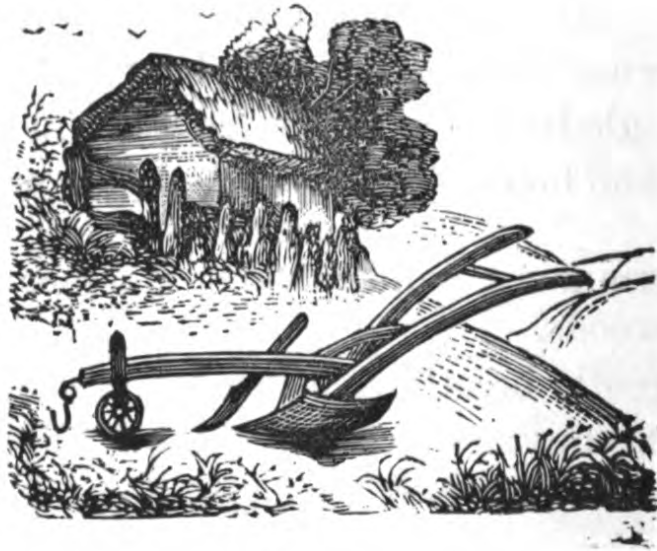
She stole into the road when he had left,
And handed him her only birthday bun ;
She bade him weep not, though so much bereft,
Alone in gloom, like Hagar's little son.
She told him God's clear eye watched every one,
In every place, where'er their feet may tread ;
That His rich mercy never passed by none ;
For bird and beast were by His bounty fed,
The Lord of life and love. "O ! pray to Him," she said.

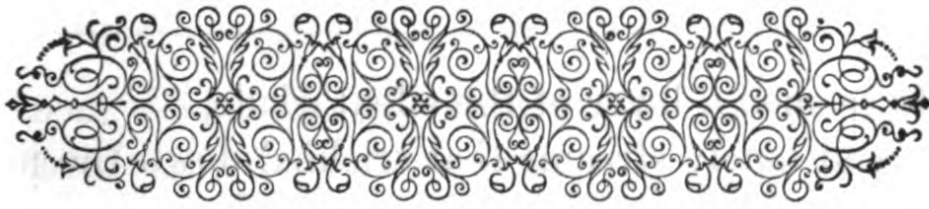
“ My Bible tells me I must love the poor,
And give to others as I would receive.
Linto, perhaps, may never see thee more,
But this I want thee simply to believe,
That Linto’s tender heart has learnt to grieve
For those who sorrow when there sings no lark,
When great winds wail, and noisy billows heave.
Remember Linto when the skies are dark,
And fly where rest and peace await thee in the Ark.”

O blessed truth ! whose import shall increase
And brighter beam as seasons onward run,
Till waste and woe and fiery feuds shall cease,
And heaven’s eternal splendour is begun.
O bring it in, Jehovah’s glorious Son,
When stars shall sparkle on a globe of love,
And incense soar, when day’s long task is done,
From gladsome vales the fruitful vines above,
And milk and honey flow where floats the peaceful dove.

The murmuring winds, when summer tunes the
woods,
The gentle breathing of the lowland flowers,
The plunging passion of the foaming floods,
The rolling thunder through the midnight hours,
Are greatly stript of all their magic powers
Before the echo from the lifted tree,
While the sun reels, and awful darkness lowers,
And whispers filled the joyous earth and sea,
That Christ for sin hath died, and guilty man is free.

Could you have looked into that beggar's face,
You would have seen a holy radiance there,
Like him who softly leaves his secret place
Which he has hallowed by believing prayer.
He wiped his eyes, and stroked her silken hair,
And breathed like one who feels a sudden pain
Almost too powerful for the frame to bear ;
And then he watched her down the narrow lane,
Still whispering as she went, "I'll come to thee again."





LINTO AND LANEER

PART SECOND.

THE spring blushed o'er, the summer roses died,
The autumn fruit hung ripening on the trees,
The harvest sheaves lay on the low hill side,
And harvest songs were ringing in the leas ;
A holy halo rested on the seas,
And melted into music in the woods
Over the tracks of homeward-laden bees,
Where Song sat singing by the foaming floods,
Clad in a russet garb aforetime bright with buds.

Again a traveller from the silent heights
Came slowly downward to the sheltered vale,
And pleased he seemed to view the rural sights
Which met his eye like some old rhymer's tale.
He marked the waters gliding through the dale,
And the fleet swallows winging o'er the mead,
Like vision-jets where Night's weird symbols sail,
And heard the sky-larks warbling o'er the reed,
And saw the strange moor-queen upon her snowy steed.

He seemed a lover of the silent glade,
And lonely streams that trickled down the moss,
The ivy trailing in the pine-tree's shade,
Or wrapt around the fragment of a cross,
The shadowy shapes that haunt the shattered fosse,
The filmy atoms glittering in the sand,
The gleaming rushes where the waters toss,
The wheeling plovers as the great rocks stand,
And in the smallest newt he saw his Father's hand.

“How good Thou art, O Thou Eternal One,”
Beside a bubbling fountain he began,
Whose waters sparkled in the glorious sun,
As down the hill among the reeds it ran,
“To all, to all, but more to erring man,
Who strangely stumbles on his weary way,
Incurring justly Thy eternal ban,
Though meeting mercy every new-born day,
And basking in the grace which gilds him with its ray !

“This osier covert is a temple meet,
O'erflowing with the splendour of Thy power,
And every glade is Piety's retreat,
Where God is speaking in the humblest flower !
I worship here in this sequestered bower,
And feel Thee nearer than in cities vast,
Where congregations pass devotion's hour,
And pillars gleam, with man's device o'er-cast,
And organs strain with sound, and timbrels swell the
blast.

“I thank Thee for the quiet of the groves,
The tinkling rills, the closet in the creek,
The hymns that tremble through the dim alcoves,
Or roll along the pathless mountain bleak.
True prayer may rise from cave, or splintered peak,
Or lonely cottage where the land is bare ;
And they shall find, who in the Spirit seek,
That God’s great power is present everywhere
To kill and make alive—His own right arm is bare.

“The truest aspirations of the heart,
Are often those from some poor wretch unknown,
Who has been called with all his gods to part,
In some small hovel where the night winds moan.
How he besieges the eternal throne,
With none to hear him save the Prince Divine,
Whose blood did for the sins of man atone !
With lowly heart he nears His solemn shrine
Who is for evermore the overshadowing Vine.

“In yonder cottage, when I was a boy,
Dwelt a strange man who built himself a bower ;
Its wicker door was ever watched by Joy,
Whose face was cheerful in the sun and shower ;
The porch was covered with the passion-flower,
The walls hung o’er with prints of birds and trees,
And sounds of song re-filled it hour by hour,
Like those which tremble through the summer
leas,
Or fall from woody hills, or rise from swelling seas.

“ Here dwelt a poet whom the valleys owned,
Whose songs were true as airs at curfew-chime,
When the full night-queen calmly walks enthroned,
And all the woods are one soul-soothing rhyme,
Filling creation with a sense sublime.
And yet men knew him not in labour’s guise,
But left him toiling o’er the track of time,
Pain at his heart, and sorrow in his eyes,
And visions in his brain that throng the upper skies.

“ They could not comprehend what God had given,
And so his mission was to them unknown ;
And though he long among his own had striven,
And asked for bread, he only got a stone.
O heed, Jehovah, the oppressed one’s moan,
And succour those who travel through the fire,—
The child of genius on the cold world thrown,
Whose storms of passion oversweep his lyre,
Alone among the reed o’ershadowed by the briar.

“ In that lone hovel where the thatch is thin,
Dwelt an old saint whose knitting brought her
She heard a knocking as she sat within, [bread ;
And at the door perceived a maiden’s head,
And it was long since that poor child was fed ;
She called her in, and gave her all she had,
Reserving nothing for herself, ’tis said.
This is the charity which maketh glad
The hosts of the redeemed in shining vestments clad.

“Hark ! what is that ? the spirit of the vale ?
Or is it some bright angel by the lake,
Where gossamers in golden circles sail,
And dodder hangs its beauty on the brake ?
Again ! again ! what murmurings does it make !
I’ll on my way where all these roses gleam,
And tall fox-gloves their painted helmets shake,
And Love sits sighing by the sobbing stream
With landscapes bathed in May in her delicious
dream.”

He turned an angle of the jutting road,
And there a maiden, beautiful as light,
Stood in the doorway of a small abode,
And, like the morning, her fair face was bright.
A sudden halt beset him at the sight,
As her clear eyes were turned upon his face,
And he half-faltered with supreme delight,
“This is the boundary of my earnest race ;
I came to seek my flower, and find it in this place.

“Yes, I am he who stood in ragged vest,
When winds were struggling on the moaning
With weary limbs, and sorrow-laden breast, [moor,
In thirst and hunger at thy mother’s door :
And she disowned me in my raiment poor,
And frowned me off like some fierce beast of prey.
But one there was whose cup of love brimmed o’er,
Who bade me hope, who gave me bread that day,
And smoothed my stony path, and taught my lips to
pray.

“In spite of rags, in spite of misery’s mien,
Of trembling limbs, and hunger-gleaming eyes,
A houseless wanderer through this wild terrene,
Beaten with storms that mid gaunt mountains rise,
Which swirl with sorrow under frosty skies,
She came to me, and gave me all she had,
And whispered something of the Great All-Wise,
Whose mercy reacheth to the lonely lad,
Whose friends are yet unknown, and makes the
mourner glad.

“Thank God for mercy in a world of crime,
Spanning the hills with zones of living light,
Shedding its rays of charity sublime
Upon the rich man and the humblest wight,
Where loose sands shift, or verdure glads the sight,
Or commerce lifts on high its endless roar,
Gilding the darkness of the drearest night,
Gladdening the widow from salvation’s store,
And causing Want and Woe to feel they are not poor.

“I know not why I find thee in this shed,
Whose reedy eaves are just above the rock :
Perhaps thy mother is among the dead,
Where all the pilgrims of creation flock,
And thou alone art left to bear the shock
Which ruin echoes over hopes destroyed,
The fading floweret of the household stock,
Without a voice to whisper through the void,
Where friendship smiled of yore, and music never
cloyed ?”

“Yes it is so,” the maiden meekly said ;
And there were crystal drops upon her face,
Which washed the roses as they downward sped,
Giving her cheeks a softer, sweeter grace.
No sound disturbed the quiet of the place,
Save a lone sky-lark singing o’er the corn,
Filling with rapture the blue halls of space :
And down the slope, with sudden currents worn,
A blackbird mid the leaves was whistling on a thorn.

Old Meg lived here, who hourly stitched for bread ;
And when the tide of death rolled o’er the land,
And Linto’s mother lay among the dead,
She stretched to her her ever-helpful hand,
And drew her hearth-ward with a silken band :
So she sat there with thoughts she could not name,
And gleaming eyes beside the smouldering brand,
As castles glittered in the golden flame, [came.
And long-lost tones in sparks and snapping branches

By this time Meg was also at the door,
And asked the stranger to her humble shed,
With whitewashed walls, and thinly-sanded floor,
And hour-glass trickling on the dresser’s head.
An eight-day clock ticked by the truckle bed,
With the full moon upon its honest face ;
And puss lay sleeping by the skein of thread.
The open Bible rested in its place,
Her glasses on the page the holy words to trace.

She placed a chair beside the rush-made mat,
And bade him sit and feel himself at ease ;
Disposed she seemed to have a friendly chat,
While hummed without the honey-seeking bees,
And wrens flew chattering through the garden trees.
He told the tale of hunger long ago,
When Famine walked upon the wailing breeze,
And every height was clothed in bitter snow,
And Death came o'er the wold with certain step and
slow.

And when repulsed by those whose love should cheer,
His kindred in the calendar of time,
One to his gulf of wretchedness drew near,
And filled its echoes with the tenderest rhyme ;
Stretched forth her hand and dragged him from the
slime,
And placed him once again on hope's highway.
And this was Linto, with a will sublime ;
Yes, Linto, whom he met with joy that day, [lay.
The Maiden of the Meads who neath Meg's roof-tree
“ And let me tell you that my lot is changed,
He whom you see is now no longer poor :
Though a tired wanderer on the earth I've ranged,
I'm thankful that I need not do it more.
The King has blessed me with a golden store,
And I am come to bring the maiden's dower,
And what was lent by Linto to restore :
She has her hundreds from this very hour ;
And Meg shall want no more in sunshine and in
shower.

“ The cup of water its reward shall win
When swords and spears are overspread with rust,
When War’s wild minions, deeply stained with sin,
Are overthrown and sleeping in the dust :
For War shall die, though now chin-deep in lust,
The battle-corvette bear the merchant’s flag,
And perish ever envy and distrust,
Though scoffers snarl, and empty bipeds brag,
Till Peace in Gospel robes sing psalms from crag to
crag.

“ And as I asked for Linto down the hill,
’Twas told me that a youth the maid admired,
An honest lad whose soul was free from ill,
Possessing all that is by love desired :
But he was poor, in peasant garb attired,
So they defer the wedding psalm to sing.
Now let it come with all the stir required,
I’ll give to Linto, ere the bells shall ring,
A purse of glittering gold to buy her marriage ring.

“ I can afford to cheer you with this sum,
For I have houses, mortgages, and lands,
And mines of richness where wide rivers come
And roll their waters over shining sands.
’Twas God who blessed the labour of my hands,
And back to Him I gladly yield His own,
Thereby obeying His divine commands,
Who ever speaketh from His lofty throne
That all we have and are is from Himself a loan.

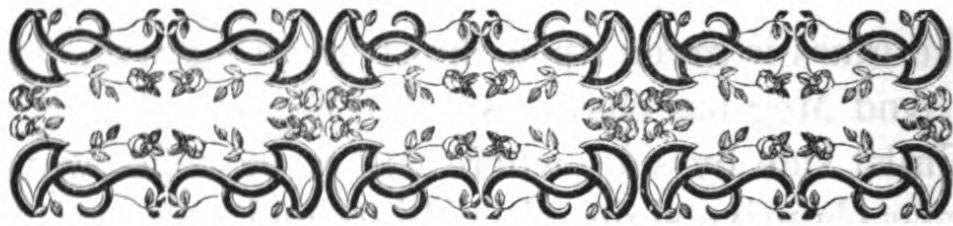
“No thanks, I pray you. Thank the King of Power,
For all is His, and all to Him shall bow.
May Peace abide for ever in your bower,
And twine her vine-wreaths round your household
May life be ever beautiful as now! [bough!
I go to mingle with the sons of men,
Cheered with the brightness beaming on your brow.
Farewell! farewell! The thrush is in the fen,
And twilight calls the bard to worship in the glen.”

And he was gone. And soon a letter came,
And soon the bridesmaids trod the fields in white,
With faces sweet, and hands with flowers a-flame,
As if there were no shadow of the night:
The bells pealed downward from the woody height,
And swelled into the valleys rich with grain,
And towered and trembled in the summer light,
Now up the steep, now down the dells again,
And Linto and Laneer were now no longer twain.

And thus twill be while seasons come and go,
While flowers blush sweetness in the dingles dim,
While fountains bubble, and while rivers flow,
And woods are wakeful with the eternal hymn:
The marriage-bells shall shake the lakelet's rim,
And murmur strangely down the tell-tale moor,
And heap their echoes mid the boulders grim;
And men shall woo, and wed, and be no more
Than shifting sand which lies upon the great sea-shore.

The grass is green upon the stranger's grave,
And Meg has passed into the higher sphere ;
Whilst side by side, where willow branches wave
In plaintive sighs, sleep Linto and Laneer.
Love breathes her zephyrs in another ear,
The climbing flower obeys another hand,
The song is changed that ushers in the year,
And other footprints trail along the sand ;
Yet still this legend old is lingering through the land.





MINOR POEMS.

ANNA GRAY.

A FOAMING river, hills on either hand,
Rocks clustered quaintly, winter-smitten
A hedge, a hawthorn, a small hazel gate, [pines,
A sweet-briar bank, a stake-fenced garden-plot,
And in the midst a cottage. Anna Gray
Had lived here sixty summers. Her own John
Brought her into this dwelling, when the bells
Rang marriage welcomes, and the earth put on
Her stainless garments unbedewed with tears.
But now no John had she! When autumn leaves
Were pencilled with the magic of the mist,
And glow-worms ceased to shine, he quickly fell,
And the grave caught him. Great straits swiftly
And she was like a traveller on the sands, [came,
Whose staff was broken when 'twas most required,

With darkness all around him, and the sleet
Dashed full upon his forehead. But her trust
Was in His arm who guides the flaming spheres,
And fills with food the smallest woodland bird.

To-night she reads her Bible. All her bread
Has long been eaten, all her money gone :
She has no chips or firing, yet her hope
Unwavering clings to Him who cannot lie.
Her prayer is offered, and she sinks to rest
In charity with Heaven and all mankind,
As confident of succour as a child.

Angels are watching where the roses hang
Around her narrow casement, and their wings
Make melody upon the listening night.
May seraphs thus attend us while we sleep !

The winds o'erleap their barriers : every gust
Heaves like an earthquake. The great sea is wild,
And lifts its foamy arms to crush the clouds,
Which drive their black-built chariots through the
dark

Unseen, save when they graze the lightning's glare,
Or rush into the grandeur of the blaze.

The hills have solemn voices ; the deep vales
Are full of struggles never heard before,
As if a forest wrestled with the fire.

The seamen shake their heads in mute despair
While Midnight blows his trumpet, and the ship,

Returning with her costly merchandise,
With words of cheer, and messages of grace,
Lurches into the caverns of the deep,
To brace her yards, and spread her sails no more.
But after storm a calm, and strain repose.

Ye would have known twas sunshine, by the lark
Singing above the hill-tops—singing still,
As if an Eden harper missed his way
In music to our planet. His soft trills
Hang like a lyre-wreath over half the heavens,
Steeping the world in sweetness. What a bliss
To listen to the rapture of the bird
O'er clover-scents, and moorlands rich with praise,
Where God is worshipped by all living things!
Our globe would lose its purest, tenderest tones,
And the bard languish for immaculate sweets,
Were the lark silent in his bower of beams.

Along the shore two happy children walk,
And the waves kiss their footprints on the sands,
Retire, and come again with playful voice,
Scarce rushing, like the willows in a calm.
The sea-birds muse upon the jutting rocks,
Or flap their heavy wings along the waves ;
And from the creeks the scent of flowers comes down,
Laden with songs of birds, and hum of bees,
And poem of wood, and praise of waterfall.

The peace is perfect, and the rage of storms
Seems far away among the unnamed years.

The children played with shells and shingles bright,
And toyed with foam-ships, wrecked as soon as seen.
At length the boy, between two slippery reefs
Long worn with washing, picked a letter up,
And gave it to his sister. She perceived,
The older of the two, that the address
Was plainly Anna Gray, and that it bore
A foreign stamp upon it. It was wet
With the salt waves, and creased, and badly bruised,
As if much hardship had beset its way.
They took it to the town, where the police
Brought truthful judgment to its management,
Till the right owner broke the official seal,
And its contents were open to the day.

“Good morning, Madam,” a brisk traveller said,
At the gate resting, “have you heard the news?
But it is sure to fly from door to door
As fast as tongues can blab it. In the storm
Which rushed down on our coast awhile ago,
As if the clouds had let their secrets forth
In hollow roarings, a mail steamer struck
The Stag Rocks off the Lizard. On the beach
Two children found a letter which it bore
Washed in upon the pebbles. Mysteries come
With every morning stain, and evening star,

Nor will they cease till love itself shall leap
The battlements of Time, in fulness lost.
This strange epistle found its rightful course
To Anna Gray, whose furniture was sold,
And she had put her homely bonnet on
To go and seek an order for the House.
Tis said that she was praying by the hearth,
Where the last brand was smouldering, when a knock
Told her the postman's errand, and she rose,
With streaming eyes, and took the proffered boon,
Which saved her from the gloomy workhouse ward.
That letter bore an order for a sum
Sufficient for her lifetime. Though the storm
Dashed it upon the billows, where it sank
Into the awful stillness, yet it rose
And floated into rest, to gladden one
Whose faith in Providence unswerving braved
The grip of trouble and the crush of care.
Twas from a kinsman on her husband's side,
A prosperous emigrant on foreign soil,
Who heard a Voice when eve came down the glens,
And bowed in awe, and willingly obeyed.
The scoffer, Madam, mocks the care of God,
But He was here at the eleventh hour,
To gild the landscape with the glow of heaven.
Adieu ! God reigneth though the wicked frown."

And many years lived Anna in content
Beside my father's meadows, where the larks

Trill sweetest, and the ever murmuring winds
With lays are laden, such as seraphs sing.
The swallows make wide circles o'er the heath,
Each curve a poem with bright hare-bells starred.
No waters flow like these, nor any flowers,
Pencilled by angel-fingers, are so fair.
I see them now, and long to lay me down
Where moss is perfumed by them, lost in dreams
Like those of boyhood, while the mystic fays
Fill me with fancies never felt before,
And the sweet music of the evening bells
Murmurs the trust of long-lost Anna Gray.

THE POOR MAN'S HERITAGE.

THE hearth was swept, the grate re-filled,
The kettle on the hob,
The lamp a-blaze—then waited Nell
The coming of her Rob.
And soon a step was on the walk,
A welcome, well-known pace,
Two loving arms around her neck,
A kiss upon her face.

He quickly washed, and combed his hair ;
Then in his place sat he,
With smoking viands on the board,
And baby on his knee.
And as with grateful heart he ate
His bacon and his bread,
And drank his coffee thankfully,
To his good wife he said,—

“ Mine is a poor man’s heritage,
I toil from morn till night,
But on my pathway evermore
There is a golden light,
Which meets me in the darkest place
I have to travel through,
And gilds the rugged wilderness
From home, and Heaven, and you.

“ To-night my weary feet would scarce
Convey me on the road,
I was as one pressed down to earth
With an oppressive load :
But thoughts of home, and waiting wife,
And laughing baby-boy,
Inspired me with a sudden strength
So that I leaped for joy.

“ The poor man loves his humble home,
Where cheap prints deck the screen,
And pine-logs blaze upon the hearth,
And crack their songs at e’en,

As much as he whose pride of birth
Is in his gilded hall,
Where paintings blaze in golden frames,
And crystal waters fall.

“ My happy home, my babe and Nell,
Are with me all the day,
As if an angel tracked my steps,
To wipe my tears away.
There is no winter where a wife
Diffuses Christian joy,
And Hope holds forth a crown of flowers
To deck her darling boy.

“ I’ve travelled up and down the earth,
And still am led to think,
The poor man’s fullest, fellest foes,
Are dreadful WAR and DRINK.
And while I have a tongue to speak,
This fact will I record,
And brand with everlasting shame
The tankard and the sword.”

LESSONS OF NATURE.

SWEET hymns for ever, in melodious order,
Around my pathway swell,
Breeze-wakened poems from the daisy’s border,
And the bright king-cup’s bell.

There is a higher teaching mid the mountains,
Than man to man can bring,
Where roses whisper over shining fountains,
And happy throstles sing.

The purest lessons murmur from the sedges,
By busy man unstirred,
Where birds are building in the silent hedges,
And God Himself is heard.

The hill-tops tell us more than pen revealeth ;
Each brooklet's silver line,
As down the valley mid the flowers it stealeth,
Is fraught with love Divine.

And so I praise the goodness of the Giver,
To whom all thanks belong,
For bud, and tree, and richly-rolling river,
For solitude and song.

HAST THOU GOLD AND SILVER ?

HAST thou gold and silver ?
Lands and bartons any ?
Coach and horse and driver ?
Then thy friends are many.
But in fustian covered,
With a pickaxe only,
Trudging down the desert
Makes it rather lonely.

Men with silver buckles,
And a well-filled pocket,
Get the ear of wonder,
Get distinction's rocket.
But the working biped,
Galled with bar and hammer,
Has the smallest audience
For his country grammar.

True-born native talent,
From the masses lowly,
To the work-room wedded,
Wins distinction slowly.
But the man of fortune,
In his castle hoary,
With the smallest effort
Rushes up to glory.

Art thou soiled with delving,
Where the Fates have bound thee?
Then the smiles are stinted
From the world around thee.
But the princely owner
Of a hundred towers
Wins from peer and peasant
Homage-winks in showers.

Do not fear, my brother,
Slacken not thy duty;
O'er the darkened landscape
Shine some stars of beauty.

Altogether kingly,
Truest blessing giving,
Is the honest earner
Of his daily living.

OLD JASPER'S EAGLE.

MURNING down a dingle
Near the water's edge,
Where the happy songsters
Hummed among the sedge,
I observed old Jasper
Leaning o'er the hatch
Of his woodbined cottage,
With its roof of thatch.

Jasper kept an eagle
In a shattered shed :
How his plumes were ruffled !
How he hung his head !
All the fire had vanished
From his kingly eye ;
And it seemed to Jasper
That the bird would die.

“ Listen, Jasper, listen,
Liberty is sweet ;
Give the fettered freedom,
Light and summer heat.
Let him seek his eyry,
Let him face the sun,
Where the clouds in splendour
Glow till day is done.”

Pity filled his bosom
For the noble bird ;
Jasper's pining captive
All his pulses stirred :
He unbarred the wicket,
Shouting in his glee,
As the chain he severed,
“ Eagle, thou art free ! ”

But the kingly creature,
In his native grace,
Never moved a feather
In that gloomy place,
Till the great clouds parted,
And a sun-shaft fell
On his trembling pinions
In the narrow cell.

Then his eyes he opened,
Then he raised his head,
All his feathers fluttered,
He his wings outspread :

Up into the glory,
Higher still and higher,
Towered the kingly eagle,
In a blaze of fire.

Jasper watched, and whispered,
“How am I like thee,
Till the loving Spirit
Sets the captive free?
Till the Sun of Mercy
Gilds me from above,
And I leave the shadows
For the hills of love.”

MY TREASURES.

Y STILL have you, my darlings,
Where wayside waters flow,
And larks sing o'er the meadows
On cloudlets white as snow:
I still have you—the daisy,
The lily and the rose,
Which man can not deny me,
And Providence bestows.

Ye talk to me in in hedges,
Ye whisper on the hills,
Unseal your urns in dingles
Where turn the water-mills,
As foamy rivers tumble
Among the towering trees,
And airs which poets gather
Are floating on the breeze.

Ye cannot snatch the flowerets
Up from my daily track,
Though fickle Fortune's vintage
Ye coldly let me lack.

O, one dear sun-born blossom,
Within the sheltered glen,
Where Meditation museth,
Is worth a thousand men.

I still have you, dear wildings,
On pasture, peak, and plain,
Where winds weave endless story,
So I will not complain :
No! though I eat my morsel
Unbuttered by the log,
And scarcely have a fragment
To feed my hungry dog.

I still have you, my darlings ;
The winds and waves are mine,
The clouds, and crags, and comets
That in their orbits shine.

One beaming bunch of daisies,
O'er which the summer cloud
Floats mid the sky-lark's echoes,
Is worth the grandest crowd.

I still have you, my darlings,
The smile of wife and boy ;
So let the gold's false glitter
Bring other bipeds joy.
Ye cannot stay the music
That murmurs in mine ear,
Although ye load my larder
With scarce a peasant's cheer.

I still have you, my darlings,
My bank and spreading beech,
With more of heavenly wisdom
Than all the pulpits teach :
For God's own voice is speaking
Where'er your bright eyes be,
" O, bending child of sorrow,
Look up ! and trust in Me."

SPRING.

FROM the doorway of the South,
Whence the breeze is stealing,
Comes young Spring, with gentle voice
O'er the meadows pealing.

Here a darling crocus peeps,
There a primrose yellow,
And the violet by the brook
Noddeth to its fellow.

Larks are scattering songs around,
Early trees are sprouting,
Ploughman whistles o'er the ground,
All the winds are shouting.

Valleys tell the valleys much
Of the days a-coming,
And the rivers roll their joy
Where the woods are humming.

Mosses fill their cups with wine
For the coming fairies,
And the vernal rain-drops shine
Where the landscape varies.

Life is stirring in the sap
Of the withered larches,
And the rose half-shows its buds
In the forest arches.

Robin calls his mate to build,
By the hawthorn bushes,
While the dingle rings its joy,
Redolent with thrushes.

God is speaking in the earth
Of our daily duty.
Soon will come the happy May
Rich in bud and beauty.

ENGLAND'S CURSE.

IN towns and cities, there they stand,
And by the wayside lone,
A-near the simple belfry-roof
With ivy overgrown,
With red words on their brazen fronts,
And gaily-painted sign.
O, Death is grimly lurking there
In brandy, beer, and wine.

The man of taste, with soul refined,
The heedless wag, go there,
And he who in the courts of God
Lifts up his voice in prayer:
They go to lose the strength of grace,
And reason's solemn sway,
To reap a harvest of despair,
And hurl their souls away.

Like gilded sirens, they uprise
By creek and harbour-cave,
To lure the tippler to his doom
Neath liquor's fiery wave.
Woe to the workman lingering there,
Woe to his children dear !
Already ruin's horrid wail
Rings in his heavy ear.

Go there—and hope your fireside flies,
Where want sits in the shade,
And rags hang on your childrens' limbs,
Who sigh in vain for aid ;
The healthful roses surely leave
The cheeks you loved so well,
When life was new, and skies were bright,
And rang your marriage bell.

Go there—and you shall ne'er attain
To thoughtful man's degree,
But drivel out an aimless life
Where thorns and thistles be :
For ever ruled, and ruling not,
Where glimmering twilight reigns,
And Ignorance, with hardened hands,
Makes fast your heavy chains.

Bedaub them, gild them as you may,
With pencil, brush, or pen,
They are the breeding-pests of crime,
They are destruction's den,

Where souls are fitted for the fire,
Whose furious billows roar
In torrid tossings o'er the lost
In woe for evermore.

If my poor harp had stronger strings,
Instead of this weak lyre,
I'd send an echo through the earth
In words of blazing fire,
Till England's darksome dens of death,
Which dim the light of day,
Should glitter in the Gospel's gleam :
O, roll the curse away !

The murmurs rising mid the hills
Condemn thee on their track,
And shoeless children in the streets
Re-sigh the echo back :
The feeble wife, the feebler babe,
The daughter forced astray,
Lift up their hands to England's God :
O, roll the curse away !

THE LEGEND OF MODOBERT.

A FAR-OFF legend from the scroll of Time,
Comes down the sweep of years,
Like the grand echo of some ancient rhyme,
Filling the eyes with tears.

Modobert's mother, whom he loved so well,
The gentlest of her kind,
Could not behold the beauty of the dell,
For she, alas ! was blind.

One day Modobert watched her in her place,
And, grieved at what she missed,
Such pure love seized him from his mother's face,
That her closed orbs he kissed.

When suddenly the darkness was unsealed,
The earth and heaven were bright,
And their full glories to her gaze revealed ;
Her glad eyes flamed with light.

Tis even so with him who gropes in gloom,
Nor heeds the Spirit's call :
The kiss of mercy makes the desert bloom,
God's love reneweth all.

O MAN, WHERE'ER THY FEET MAY GO.

G MAN, where'er thy feet may go,
Remember, Jesus tells thee so,
Tis wrong to render blow for blow.

Tis wrong to frown when frowns are given,
Although thy heart be sorely riven,
And thou for lasting peace hast striven.

Let evil reign not o'er thy will,
But overcome the tempter still,
By freely giving good for ill.

For thy worst persecutor pray,
And those who scourge thee on thy way,
And light shall gild thee day by day.

And should he cold and hungry lie,
Feed him beneath the frowning sky,
And thou shalt save his soul thereby.

This is thy Saviour's own command :
Obey Him, love Him, with Him stand,
And thou shalt gain the higher land.

CORNWALL.

IS it a small thing in thine eyes,
That from thy moors should come
A peasant-piper, crooning low
Within a reedy home,
Whom tor, and heath, and Druid-block,
And music-haunted mound,
First taught in odes and hymns divine,
When life was April-bound ?

How oft he sought the daisy's home,
What time its petals close,
And twilight worshipped in thy glens,
To pour out all his woes !
Grand echoes of the Eternal Voice
Pealed through Eve's dusky doors,
And floods of liquid, living song,
Rolled down thy listening moors.

O, is it nought, dear native shire,
That his young love was thine,
When hope, by brooks and crystal wells,
In fairest flowers did shine ;
That his first notes of simple song
Were murmured on thy breast,
And floated round thy ivied crags,
When twilight filled the west ?

O, is it nought that he sang on
Till boyhood's race was run,
And with wild flowerets round his reed
Stood under manhood's sun,
With toil-beads on his burning brow
It was a grief to see,
Although a smile was on his face
For children on his knee ?

O, is it nought that every flower
Was like an angel's eye,
Which gleamed with glory on his soul
As he went musing by,

Where rills ran o'er with liquid sound,
And summer minstrels hum
Among the rose-leaves of the bower
Till sixty years are come ?

O, is it nought to love the land
Where first he saw the day,
And in its praises, hour by hour,
To sing his life away ?
He weeps, he weeps to think his songs
Have been Cornwallia's store,
And now at sixty years of age
She needs his lays no more !

He weeps, he weeps to think how hard
Her loving heart has grown,
And wonders why she almost gives
Her peasant-bard a stone !
Nor can he cease his songs to sing,
Nor fling away his reed :
Perchance the warblings of his shell
Some stranger-heart may heed.

So while his hand can guide his quill,
And gentle thoughts are given,
He adds his simple verse to verse,
And leaves the rest with Heaven.
The hills may stagger where they stand,
The river-beds be dry,
And islands hurry to the deeps,
But true song cannot die.

THE LAME TEACHER.

OLD age on crutches hobbled up the hill,
Careworn and coarsely clad ;
It was a mile, or more, to Turner's mill,
Where he a shelter had.

A driver stopped his horses on the road,
Where trembling willows sighed,
And a clear river down the valley flowed,
And took him up to ride.

And the first words the aged cripple spoke,
As on they travelled slow,
Were those which from a heart of fervour broke,
"Thank God for friends below !"

He seemed to bring into that carriage-space
The glory of the hills,
Where angels wander with celestial grace
Beside the heavenly rills.

His hearer listened with a glad surprise,
As on their way they plod,
And dipt his urn, with meekly-moistened eyes,
Into the wells of God.

Thus weakness often overcometh strength,
And breaks the bars of might :
The Spirit speaketh, till the soul at length
Lets in the living Light.

IS THE WORLD COLD TO THEE, MARY ?

IS the world cold to thee, Mary ?
I Frosty blasts blowing around ?
 Ice in the buds of the roses,
 Ice in the echoing ground ?

Is thy love darkened at dawning ?
 Does the wind wail in thine ear ?
 Art thou with sorrow unuttered
 Shedding the penitent tear ?

Know'st thou the mildew destroyeth ?
 Know'st thou the fog-shroud will fall
 Where the bright flowerets are tended
 Under the sheltering wall ?

Is the world cold to thee, Mary ?
 Wait—and the spring will be here,
 Wait—and the gladness of summer
 Shall in thy being appear.

THE SHARPSHOOTER'S VICTIM.

IS there nothing for man but the gun and the sword ?
I Why cannot disputes be settled by word ?
 Why cannot the errors to which we are prone
 Be righted for ever by reason alone ?

A soldier, when twilight was over the fern,
Sat writing a letter beside a small burn,
To the dearest on earth he had left by the well,
When cuckoo was sounding his note in the dell.

In a tick he was shot in a sharpshooter's beat,
With the ink in his pen, and his hand on the sheet ;
And no bell tolled for him in his grave on the wild,
Nor the letter e'er gladdened his wife or his child.

O think of the agony caused by that ball,
And let this great wickedness finally fall,
The empire of slaughter abolish its stain,
And the Monarch of mercy and righteousness reign.

ENGLAND AND ITS QUEEN.

IS there nought else, my brothers,
Than rifle, sword, and knife,
And rack and roaring cannon,
To settle human strife ?
O try some other method,
Without the fatal blow,
To win thy brother's favour,
To pacify thy foe.

O, loving Queen of England,
O, sovereign of the free !
From cot and stately mansion
Thy people look to thee,
To bid the rising tumult
Of raging rulers cease,
And wear upon thy sceptre
The gentle dove of Peace.

Withold thy royal sanction
From martial strife and gore
Which senators might settle
Without the battle's roar.
Ten thousand prayers are offered,
That mercy may increase,
And England's Queen be folded
In the white robe of Peace.

Is not thy God thy guardian,
His presence from above ?
And is not England's glory
The halo of His love ?
And more than countless warriors,
Whose deadly weapons shine
In fort and moated castle,
The blessed Book Divine ?

His anger shakes the mountains,
Till from their beds they leap
And sink mid storm and tempest
Like bubbles in the deep.

O, loving Queen of England,
Withhold the flaming rod,
And send to every nation
The precious Book of God.

O stay thee on His promise,
Throughout the coming years,
The Rock that never moveth,
More than the sheen of spears ;
More than thy ships of thunder
Thy foes to overwhelm,
And God shall surely bless thee,
And save thee and thy realm.

O, loving Queen of England,
The poor man looks to thee,
With sadness in his features,
And children on his knee,
And prays the God of mercy
That raging wars may cease,
And men of all conditions
Delight in works of peace.

O, loving Queen of England,
The highest bliss below
Is to assuage life's sorrows,
And lessen human woe.
May He in richness crown thee
With blessing from above,
And wrap around thee ever
The white robe of His love!

KING CUPS.

WELCOME, welcome mid the mosses,
With your shining shields,
Whispering how I used to wander
Through my father's fields.

Wander, wander in the spring-time,
Cheered with jets of gold,
Where the whortle-leaves were winking
By the boulders old.

Wander, wander, crooning, humming
Shreds of new-made verse,
Hearing poems in the passes
Which the winds rehearse.

Seeing islands in the waters,
Where the roses gleam
Over every height and hollow,
Over every stream.

Hearing sounds that never travel,
Seeing lights afar
Beaming not from cot or castle,
Not from moon or star.

Wander, wander, crooning, humming
In a land of lays,
Where the music of the fairies
Fills the sunny days.

Glow ye in unbroken clusters
Far into the noon,
Lying in the arms of Twilight
Neath the rising moon.

Thus ye lift a shining wicket
Gemmed with bars of gold,
And I see the gleaming king cups
As in days of old.

OUR FEATHERED TEACHERS.

MY harp upon the willow had been hung,
When, seeking Nature's bowers,
I quaffed the scent the hawthorn clusters flung
From uplands rich with flowers.

A happy linnet on a holly bough,
Where hummed the honey-bees,
And a clear brooklet purled, it knew not how,
Sang to the summer breeze.

"Cheer up, sad heart," the sweet bird seemed to say,
"The morn was swathed in mist,
But now the sun is on his joyous way,
And untold loves exist.

“And though the clouds are sometimes overhead,
When in my leafy home,
And rain-drops fall upon the violet’s bed,
I know the light will come.”

And as I mused from emerald lea to lea,
Amid the tuneful hum,
I seemed to hear the linnet on the tree,
“I know the light will come.”

That lonely songster in the shadowy glen,
Far more than human words,
Revived my spirit; and I’ve known since then
God speaketh through the birds.

SAM SNELL.

I SCARCELY knew him, though he lived
Just down the village way,
In a small cottage by the brook,
Whose waters never stay:
He had a wife, and children seven,
And eighteen pence a day.

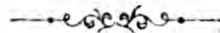
One quiet morn, when troops of larks
Were singing overhead,
I passed the open village gate,
Beside the thatcher’s shed,
Where roses whisper o’er the walks
With daisy-knots o’erspread.

In a green lane among the fields,
Where blue-bells waved in bands,
I saw Sam Snell beside a hedge,
Amid the lonely lands,
Between two bushes bending down,
His head upon his hands.

“Good morning, Sam,” I said to him,
“How very sweet the day?”
“Yes, yes,” he cried, “there’s noise at home,
Or something in the way
My meditations to disturb,
So I came here to pray.”

And then his head upon his hands
Fell on the mossy sod;
I left him there among the hills
By murmuring breezes trod,
While o’er the sweetly-scented meads
Sounded the voice of God.

A hundred harpers pealed their hymns
Upon the summer air,
Ten thousand thousand worshippers
Made earth a house of prayer;
And surely Sam among the ferns
Knew that the Lord was there.



THE PIOUS POOR.

THE poor, the poor, the pious poor,
Who know the Lord, and little more,
Who earn their bread from day to day,
How blest with Heaven and home are they !

The sun, arising in the morn
O'er waving woods and fields of corn,
Brings floods of brightness to their door,
The poor, the poor, the pious poor.

And when the moon begins her march
Through seas of silver up yon arch,
Their grateful songs will heavenward soar,
The poor, the poor, the pious poor.

With food and raiment quite content,
They thank Him for His mercies sent,
And sleep's sweet spells their powers restore,
The poor, the poor, the pious poor.

With health and strength and sweet repose,
No monarch more enjoyment knows,
Who pines amid his gilded store,
Than do the poor, the pious poor.

O how HE loved, who came to bless
The child of misery and distress,
When walking by the lake's green shore,
The poor, the poor, the pious poor !

The sea and sky, the trees and flowers,
 The waters murmuring through bright bowers,
 The birds that sing till day is o'er,
 Are theirs to cheer the pious poor.

And when sweet Sabbath rest is given,
 And peace pervadeth earth and heaven,
 When Zion's songs to Eden soar,
 How joy the poor, the pious poor!

And so their bark glides down the stream,
 Where hope's sweet roses ever gleam,
 Till anchored on the golden shore,
 The poor, the poor, the pious poor.

HAST THOU BREAD AND WATER?

HAST thou bread and water?
 Then give thanks and sing;
 Thirsty lips are longing
 For the cooling spring;
 Hungry ones are pining,
 Where the grate-bars rust,
 For the humblest viand,
 For the coarsest crust.

Hast thou strength of reason?
 Then give thanks and pray;
 Lofty minds are prostrate
 Where the willows sway,

Where the herbage withers,
Where the reefs are bare,
With the whirl of sorrow,
With the rush of care.

Hast thou eyes to witness
Waves of living light?
Then sing songs of gladness
Morning, noon, and night :
There are those in blindness,
Stumbling on their way,
To whose darkened vision
It is never day.

Hast thou legs to bear thee
Where the daisies grow,
Where the birds are building,
Where the waters flow ?
Then rejoice, for many
Cannot leave their place,
Pinioned to a circle,
Shattered in the race.

Hast thou ears which tingle
When the sky-lark sings ?
Then look up in wonder
To the King of Kings :
Some are smote with deafness,
Dead to every tone
As a block of marble,
Or a mountain stone.

Canst thou move thy fingers?
Canst thou move thy feet?
Thank the glorious Giver,
As tis surely meet :—
Thank Him for His favours,
Neither small nor few,
Every eve repeated,
Every morning new.

Hast thou sons and daughters,
God's good gifts below?
Many a childless parent
Sits in weeds of woe.
In this world of mercies
Bid thy doubts disperse ;
Grumble not at blessings
Which may seem adverse.

A DAISY-CLUSTER.

BY a brooklet, in a hollow
Where the rushes gleam,
Grew a pretty daisy-cluster
Almost in the stream.

As I reached this glade one morning,
O'er a bridge and stile,
"Come," the flowerets seemed to whisper,
"And converse awhile.

“ We have idyls on our edges,
By the sunlight penned,
When the south winds through the willows
Their own poets send.

“ Peace and Love, in garlands shining,
Sit beside our stems,
And the fingers of the fairies
Weave our diadems.

“ Dost thou shed the tears of sorrow,
Banished from thy clan ?
Better tell it to the daisies,
Than to selfish man.

“ More because the God of Mercy
Speaketh where we shine.
Be it known that every daisy
Has a voice divine.”

TOMMY AND HIS FATHER.

“ **P**UT on your jacket, Tommy,
And nicely comb your hair ;
We'll go to church together,
Now July days are fair.
For months I've been afflicted,
But now am getting well ;
I hear across the valley
The echo of the bell.

“O hasten, Tommy, hasten,
Obey the ringing chime,
And take your gilt-edged Bible,
That we may be in time.
Since I have been afflicted,
The messenger has come,
And many have departed
To their eternal home.

“I trust they found the favour
Of Him who sinners saves;
And now the bells are pealing
Above their silent graves!
Come, Tommy, come! the blackbird
Is singing on the thorn,
And in the upland meadows
The lark is o'er the corn.

“Hand me my staff of hazel,
My glasses, and my hat,
And brush the rim a little;
O, many thanks for that.
Lock up the house-door, Tommy,
And close the outer hatch,
And put the key, for safety,
Under the shaven thatch.

“Give me your arm now, Tommy.
How fresh from woody bowers
The breeze falls on my forehead!
Thank God for Sabbath hours.

I hear His voice of mercy
 Across the new-mown hay :
 To me, to me He speaketh,
 ‘Thy sins are washed away !’

“This is the chapel, Tommy.
 Now put me to my place,
 And let me once more gather
 The manna of His grace.”
 And, ere a word was spoken,
 His heart o’erflowed with love.
 And soon he saw his Saviour
 In realms of rest above.

MEG MILLER.

THE house in which Meg Miller lived
 Was on the common’s edge,
 A reed-roofed hut, one story high,
 Among the ferns and sedge,
 Where swallows floated o’er the moss,
 And birds sang in the tree,
 And by the garden wall a well
 As clear as clear can be.

Meg Miller’s house is seen no more :
 The storm came on one night,
 And shook the walls, and rent the reed,
 And stript the rafters quite.

And now mid weeds and ivy-leaves,
Where curious creatures creep,
And voices walk at noon of night,
The mossy ruins sleep.

One eve, when autumn stript the trees,
She put her knitting down,
And then to little Frank she said,
Whose hair was soft and brown,
“Come near me, child. I seem to hear
A rush along the broom,
That when to-morrow comes, we go
Into the poorhouse gloom.

“Then down the glen another sound
Will echo o’er the sod,
That we must use the means we have,
And leave the rest with God.
Come, Frank, lay by your model boat,
And put your tools away,
And let us read the blessed Book,
And sing our hymn, and pray.”

How full, how earnest was that prayer !
God heard it mid the spheres,
And sent the angel of His love
To wipe away their tears.
None knew henceforth how they survived ;
Some say that snowy wings
Were seen to hover o’er the cot,
What time the last lark sings.

But true it is that every day
Found bread upon their board,
And every eve their song of praise
Beyond the pine-tops soared.
And hands unseen, and shapes unknown,
Procured their daily fare,
And fluttering wings at eventide
Made music on the air.

ALTHOUGH EXCITEMENT RULES
THE THRONG.

ALTHOUGH excitement rules the throng,
And eager footsteps rush along,
Yet will I seek the lonely rill,
To watch the moon rise o'er the hill.

If my own bower had been more near,
Where I so oft have shed the tear,
How would I leave these buildings stern
For waving heath, and whispering fern !

O what are all these shouts to me,
So near the great mysterious sea,
Whose waves nor reef nor rock have spurned,
From which no voyager e'er returned !

A poet loves the murmuring corn,
 More than the wild crowd's hollow horn,
 And none will miss him or his lyre,
 Save his own household round the fire.

The sweets of solitude remain
 Untasted by gay Fashion's train,
 Known only unto those who can
 Revere the mountains more than man.

THE CORNISH HUER.*

THE Huer is out on the hills away,
 And his eyes are fixed on the distant bay.
 There are signs of fish in the offing now,
 And he waits with his arm on a pine-tree's bough,
 Half-rent when the northern winds were up,
 And the sea-foam whitened the Giant's Cup.

They come, they come, that longed-for shoal,
 And his voice goes forth in a welcome roll
 Over rock and reef, over lake and land,
 Where huts are hidden in creeks of sand;
 And the hardy fishers are at their oars,
 And their glad wives watch them from their doors.

* The Cornish Huer is one who is stationed on the hills, near the cliffs, in the pilchard season, to give the word of warning on the approach of a shoal of fish, when the boats at once put out to secure them.

Heave ho! heave ho! the nets are cast,
 The shining fish are enclosed at last.
 The boats are filled—they row to shore.
 Hurrah! hurrah! they return once more,
 A harvest to reap for “one and all.”
 Hurrah for the Huer who gives the call!

WAITING.

THE wood fire smouldered on the stone,
 The red pine scarcely spoke,
 The clock ticked louder than twas wont,
 Within its case of oak:
 Far off the ocean's restless waves
 Broke on the sounding shore,
 And the great fir-wood softly stirred
 As darkness walked the moor.

Thrice had old Robin stuffed his pipe,
 And thrice he raised his head,
 To mark how fast the hour-glass ran,
 When to his wife he said,
 “Tis weary, Ellen, waiting thus,
 For one so long apart:
 How yearn we to receive our boy
 With open arms and heart!

“ Did he not say he'd come to-night ?
Read o'er the words again ;
Here are your glasses from the Bóok.
Yes, Ellen, that is plain.
I'll break another faggot-brand,
Although so strong and stout,
For I should sorrow if our boy
Came when the fire was out.

“ Tis weary, Ellen, waiting thus,
Like beggar at the gate,
Who hears no friendly foot approach,
Though eve is getting late.
But we must rest on Him who long
Has borne our heavy load,
And seek to glorify His name,
And trust Him on the road.

“ Hark, hark, a footstep ! Ellen, up,
And ope the door, and see.
Come to thy sire's embrace, my boy,
As God receiveth me.”
And soon his own dear mother's arms
Around his neck were flung,
The kiss of pure love on his cheek,
The song of welcome sung.



THE ALPINE HUNTER.

AN Alpine hunter went up the steep,
Watched by his wife where the waters sweep,
Watched by his boy where the crags were high,
As the sun shone out in the bluest sky,
And his heart was light, and the chamois fleet,
As it leapt the chasms with nimble feet.

But ere his gun woke the echoes round,
From the frozen heights, with a rushing sound,
An avalanche slid like a demon wild,
And buried his house, his wife and child,
Who suddenly lay in the dark below,
Cut off from the world in a tomb of snow.

The eve is come, and he homeward hies,
Bearing with joy his hunter's prize.
The glen is reached where his hut should be,
But the snow is there, and the rended tree!
And he groans like one who has lost his way
Where the tiger springs and the fierce wolves bay.

Nine days he dug through the cruel snow,
And then he embraced them alive below.
Their tears fell fast, as their kisses came,
And again they rejoiced in the Saviour's name,
Kneeling in prayer at the table's head,
Where the lamp burnt low by the last meal spread.

And when they were dragged from their snowy tomb,
The earth was arrayed in its loveliest bloom.
How green were the pines whose tall heads nod !
And the voice of the torrent was full of God.
And many a mother still tells her home-throng
Of the Alpine hunter whose love was so strong.

LOST MEG.

ON a thyme-bank mid the bracken
Sat she all alone,
With her little feet, blue-slippered,
Resting on a stone.

She had neither hat nor kerchief,
Her soft arms were bare,
Eyes as mystical as lakelets,
And a face how fair !

O'er her head the moon rose shining
Through the slender pines,
And the last lay of the robin
Rang among the vines.

By her was her broken dolly,
With a wounded nose ;
And the drooping maiden's eyelids
Seemed about to close.

“I am little Meg,” she murmured,
 With a childish ring,
 “I came out to hear the cuckoo,
 But he will not sing.”

Mother sought her, father, brother,
 Running near and far,
 Till they found her on the moorland
 Humming to a star.

“Why so naughty, child?” they questioned:
 Smiled the simple thing,
 “Meg came out to hear the cuckoo,
 But he will not sing.”

She to this infantile answer
 Would devoutly cling,
 That she came to hear the cuckoo,
 But he would not sing.

There are many, like the maiden,
 Cut by Fortune's sling,
 Who go out to hear the cuckoo,
 But he will not sing.

WHAT SHALL IT BE?

WHAT shall it be, my brother,
 The Bible, or the sword,
 The cornfield, or the cannon,
 Mailed Mars, or Christ the Lord?

The ringing song of plenty,
Where poets sweep the lyre,
And grapes hang in the valleys,
Or famine, plague, and fire?

What shall it be, my brother,
The song of praise and prayer,
From plains where roses blossom,
Or shrieks which rend the air?

The awful rain of ruin,
Hope trampled in the sod,
Hate's howl of desolation,
Or the sweet love of God?

What shall it be, my brother,
The ploughshare and the team,
The whistle of the mower,
The corn-scythe's silvery gleam?
Or ravaged lands, where briers
The battered walls o'erspread,
And rank grass hides in ridges
The white bones of the dead?

What shall it be, my brother,
The shepherd with his sheep,
The arbour of contentment,
Where snowy lilies sleep?
Or Havoc's bolts of thunder,
As loud the red mine springs,
And thrust meets thrust with vengeance,
Where vultures flap their wings?

What shall it be, my brother,
The jubilee of Peace,
Love's everlasting summer,
When strife and storm shalt cease?
Or quarrel following quarrel,
Throughout the stricken land,
Where widow mourns to widow,
And red War plies his brand?

What shall it be, my brother,
Religion's golden store,
Or the fierce scowl of malice,
Where wreckage lines the shore?
What shall it be? O, answer,
Rest, or the flaming rod,
Christ and His glorious Gospel,
War, or the Word of God?

What shall it be, my brother?
It lies within thy will
To devastate, or culture,
To ransack, save, or kill.
Only thou should'st remember
That thou art not thine own,
And for thy just deservings
The Judge is on His throne.

What shall it be, my brother,
The white robe of content,
Or the black cloak of anguish,
With Horror's fingers rent?

Swords flaming in the valleys,
Swords flashing on the sea,
Or the full song of mercy?
O, say, WHAT shall it be?

THE BLACKBIRD.

TRILL! trill!
In the sound of the mill
Sang a blackbird in his glee,
Under the leaves,
Close by the eaves,
On the branch of a sycamore tree.

Trill! trill!
And his yellow bill
Shone in the light of day,
As the miller stood
By his wheel of wood
Brushing the tears away.

A week ago
His little son Joe
Heard this same blackbird sing;
And now he is laid
In the churchyard shade,
Where the churchyard daisies spring!

Trill ! trill !
 And he listens still,
 While his thoughts are over the gloom,
 Where the clouds no more
 Drop down on the shore,
 And joys eternal bloom.

Trill ! trill !
 Like a minstrel's quill,
 When eve-light veils the sod.
 And the miller sighed
 In his doorway wide,
 " I'll trust my all with God."

Not a single note
 Which may onward float
 Through Nature's sacred span,
 Whether high or low,
 Whether swift or slow,
 But speaks the truth to man.

CAUTION.

“ THE bridge is dangerous o'er the loch,
 Go this way by the Beeton Block,
 And mark the path along the rock.

“The wind is veering, by the spray,
A sudden storm is on its way,
I would not take the boat to-day.

“Leave the tree-roof's outspreading shade,
Now lightnings make the earth afraid,
Tis better trust the open glade.

“I would not climb the hill just now,
The fire is on its burning brow,
And surely Death has work enow?”

The traveller's ears disdained the sound :
The boat went out—they both were drowned,
And not a shred was ever found.

The tree was left. The climber bent
Upon his staff, then downward went,
Saved by the heeded message sent.

Tis thus our safety, day by day,
Depends on how our hearts obey
The voice of Him who points the way.

NOBODY'S.

THROW the urchin a crust which is mouldy and
He is only a beggar from nobody's yard, [hard,
A parentless imp with a countenance scarred.

What matters for him ? Let him lie on the stone,
 Pass by him, good lady, and let him alone,
 The priest did the same in the Book which you own.

How pale is his face, for which nobody sighs,
 And how strange is the light in his deep pleading eyes !
 Turn your gaze from his form—O ! a fig for his cries.

You have children, you say, whom you lovingly kiss,
 Whose full cups of plenty bring exquisite bliss ?
 And yet you pass by ! God will judge you for this.

God will judge you for this when the sea is no more,
 And the books are all oped in the trumpet's dread roar,
 And the rain of His anger rolls over the shore.

NATURE'S ANTHEMS.

A WIND passed o'er the roses of the hollow,
 With gentle feet it trod,
 And voices through the soothing twilight follow,
 "Salvation to our God !"

A little stream stole from a mossy fountain,
 Downward by tarn and tree,
 Where murmurs melted up the silent mountain,
 "Come, worship God with me !"

In a green bend the birds of snowy whiteness
Poured forth their silvery strains,
Where a clear lake lay sleeping in its brightness,
“The Prince of mercy reigns!”

The forest, when the northern storm was sounding,
Sent up its loud acclaim,
While Ocean's waves were on the rocks resounding,
“O, praise His wondrous name!”

There is in silence holiest adoration
To the eternal King;
And sweetest anthems ever fill creation,
Such as the seraphs sing.

THE STRANGE VISITOR.

I HAD been reading an old bardic strain,
Leading me through the tangles of a moor,
When, with the genii of the poet's brain,
A knock was on my door.

“Come in,” I cried. And by my cheerful grate
Stood in wet weeds a sorrow-stricken hag;
Her bonnet seemed a cast-off shred of Fate,
Her cloak a rended rag.

And she had orbs as fierce as raging flame,
And tangled hair, and cheek-bones rudely high;
And as she vainly tried to speak my name
Her tongue was parched and dry.

“What do you here?” I stammered in my chair;
 She staggered forward with a silly nod,
 So that her hot breath almost singed my hair,
 “To find the way to God.”

I bade her rest and warm her bony hands,
 I gave her in her hunger food of mine,
 And helped her, as she sat beside the brands,
 To Christ the Bread Divine.

She bowed her head, and wept great tears of grief;
 The prayer of faith was heard for the estranged,
 The Comfortor vouchsafed His sweet relief,
 Henceforth her life was changed.

REWARDED TRUST.

IT was much talked of in the glen,
 The gossip of the hill,
 With grandame at her spinning-wheel,
 The maiden at the mill;
 That if Meg Martin wedded Joe,
 She'd surely rue the day,
 For as they viewed him guinea-less,
 She'd throw herself away.

They little knew affection's power
 Had hushed the storm of strife,
 They little knew Meg Martin's love
 Was stronger than her life;

That Joe was prized above the farm,
Or glittering jewels rare,
And at the evening hour she breathed
Her lover's name in prayer.

They little knew no star in heaven,
Or summer scene below,
Nor rose, nor rill, nor rising crag,
Entranced her like her Joe.
He was her landscape, where the sun
Gleamed emerald meads across,
Her paragon of purest gold,
To whom all else was dross.

And so she took him to her heart,
With daily praise and prayer,
And Heaven rewarded such a trust,
And blest the happy pair.
Meg loved her Joe, Joe loved his Meg,
And children round them came,
Whom God supplied with daily bread,
For which they thanked His name.

And could we travel down the lane,
Where elms their branches spread,
And cuckoo on the topmost bough
Is shouting overhead,
A cottage gleaming through the trees
Would charm us as we go,
Where live, with parents blest of Heaven,
Another Meg and Joe.

True love is more than title-deeds,
Or Fortune's glittering heap,
Than ships of costly merchandise,
Or castles on the steep.
But better far than all beside,
Than riches of the mine,
Or bartons where great forests meet,
Is charity Divine.

TO A FURZE-BRANCH.

THE April songs through sprout and spray
Were softly melting into May,
When I thy fragrance found,
And bore thee to my mantle-shelf,
That thou might'st comfort my poor self,
And fill me with sweet sound.

I pricked my hands to gather thee
Under the budding hawthorn tree,
Where dreaming hedge-leaves slept,
And smiling fays, with wondering eyes,
Looked at me with a mute surprise,
As softly on I stepped.

Bright bars of splendour crossed the brake,
And fell upon the sleeping lake,
 And crowned the distant hill,
Making a glory of the streams,
The lake a mass of billowy gleams,
 Which glitter with me still.

They come, they come with mystic spells,
Whene'er I view thy golden bells
 Within my little room :
And songs are trembling through the trees,
And cuckoo's note is on the breeze,
 Where gentle wildings bloom.

Methinks I see the steeple-top,
Where pines their feathery branches drop,
 And birds build in the moss.
All this my furze-branch brings to me,
And so I'm glad I gathered thee
 Beside a sleeping cross.

We need not gold to make us bright,
Or silver gleaming on the sight,
 While we have Nature's own.
The furze-bush glowing on the moor
Outsplendours Fortune's glittering store,
 Though seated on a throne.



THE BURNING SHIP.

“BEACH the good ship,” the captain cried;
And still the flames rose higher,
Burst through the hatchway with a roar,
And set the masts on fire.
And strong men hugged their treasures tight,
With nervous, trembling hands;
For they were coming from a clime
Where gold shone in the sands.

No use, no use! The flames increase,
They cannot reach the shore;
From stem to stern they fleetly spread,
With one tremendous roar.
The sea and sky are all a-glow,
No place of rest is found,
And hurrying feet rush to and fro,
With horror all around.

“Sir, can you swim?” a little maid
Cried to a veteran bold,
Who anxiously stood by the poop,
With his large belt of gold.
Great tears were shining in her eyes,
Amid the dreadful strife;
He knew it meant—which will you save,
Your money, or my life?

He dashed his hand across his face,
His gold upon the deck ;
And her two arms were quickly thrown
Round her deliverer's neck,
Who leapt into the lurid wave,
Amid the burning roar,
Exclaiming, "Cling to me, my love !"
And both got safe to shore.

Thank God for such a noble act,
Reminding us of One
Who saves us from the sea of wrath
Through His eternal Son.
There is a foaming flood which rolls
Between us and the blest,
But Christ upholds us in His arms,
And brings us safe to rest.

MY AUDIENCE.

SUN-BORN scions of the sedges,
Let me talk with you,
Flowerets of the winding hedges,
Where the wood-doves coo.

Scattered are my sons and daughters,
Gone each loving face !
Ye must now, by woods and waters,
Fill their empty place.

Should I sometimes speak to others,
Be they grave, or gay,
I have noticed that my brothers
Turn their heads away.

But ye listen with bright faces
In the tender grass,
Looking out from leafy places
As I humming pass.

With you I can end my story,
Where the brooklets run,
Clad in robes of golden glory
With the setting sun.

When the breeze comes down in billows
From the forest strong,
Ye arise amid the willows
With the sound of song.

So I prize you for the tidings
Your sweet scents afford,
Tellingman, from out your hidings,
Of a love restored.



THE BOYS OF SKIBBEREEN.

SAY not Affection's filial fire
Now scarcely shows a gleam,
When throbs the grand electric wire,
In this fast age of steam.
Are there not deeds which shame the sword,
Where warrior ranks are filed,
And foemen hurl the bolts of hate,
Oft practised by a child ?

Mc Carthy's yearly rent was due,
Cloncuggar crops had failed,
And in his hovel by the hill
His stricken household wailed.
Do what he would, live as he might,
No loophole could he find ;
Though he so oft denied himself,
He was some pounds behind.

His little boys were greatly touched
To see their father's grief,
And so at eve they formed a plan
To bring their sire relief.
They'd ask the Duchess far away
To heed their sad lament,
And aid them in their low estate
To pay their father's rent.

So in the morning light they left
Mc Carthy's low abode ;
They kissed their mother at the gate,
And soon were on the road.
Three weeks they travelled, step by step,
Two hundred miles and more,
And then bare-footed stood before
The lofty castle-door.

Fourteen was one, the other twelve ;
But they were plump and strong,
Who thus, to plead their father's cause,
Had begged their way along.
And who can tell from their young hearts,
As on and on they plod,
With hope-rays beaming in their eyes,
What prayers arose to God !

Her Grace received them tenderly,
And soothed their wild unrest ;
Delighted with their filial love,
She granted their request :
And food had they, and silver bright ;
Good angels watched the deed,
As they were stript of their poor rags,
And clothed in warmest tweed.

Next day they reached their home by train,
Among the moorlands bare,
Where smiling faces welcomed them,
And O what joy was there !

And oft they'll bless her Grace's name,
When evening falls serene,
Whose Christian charity so cheered
The boys of Skibbereen.

WHEN A BODY'S HUMBLE.

WHEN a body's humble,
Honest, frank, and bland,
Be he clad in barracan,
I say, Here's my hand.
But from pride and puffing,
Swells, and such as they,
Somehow I can't help it,
And I turn away.

When a body's simple,
Modest, plain, and clear,
Be he rough as granite,
I can lend an ear.
But a prating coxcomb,
Bursting with conceit,
With his golden eyeglass,
Drives me to my feet.

When a body's gentle,
Soothing, soft, and mild,
I am bound to love him
As my little child.

But a bouncing braggart,
Feeling overwise,
Panting forth his periods,
Makes me shut my eyes.

When a body's godly,
Prayerful and sincere,
Though his home's a hovel,
He's a brother dear.
But the false pretender,
With his pious groan,
And his long-drawn visage,
I will never own.

When a body's striving
With an earnest zeal,
I can put my shoulder
To the sluggish wheel.
But a lazy scoundrel,
Loafing daily bread,
Whining as with weakness,
Makes me shake my head.

Velvet often hideth
Ignorance and dearth,
While plain fustain covers
Souls of noblest worth.
So to manly natures,
Though in frieze they stand
With a spade and pickaxe,
Here's my heart and hand.

MARTHA MOOR.

WHERE was no knocker to the door,
Where dwelt in peace old Martha Moor,
And nearly all the items there,
A bed, a table, and a chair.

A cage contained her favourite bird,
Whose notes at morn and eve were heard,
And by the rose-tree's severed spray
Her Bible with her glasses lay.

A few yards off, a bubbling well
Sent its clear waters down the dell,
Where Martha with her pitcher went,
When songs were soaring the ascent.

Her friends were fewer than her pains ;
Her knitting brought the chiefest gains.
But she was happier with her rye,
Than those who mourn in castles high.

She was too old and lame to plod
Her way to church to worship God ;
Nor prayer nor hymn she seldom heard,
Except from buzzing bee and bird.

The rich passed by her dwelling small,
And rarely did the rector call ;
But seraphs from their shining bowers
Came here with scents of fadeless flowers.

She ate her crust with sweet content,
 And praised Him every step she went ;
 Till one May eve, on wings of love
 Bright angels carried her above.

And now whene'er I see a door
 Without a knocker on the moor,
 Where sunbeams weave their golden bars,
 I think of Martha in the stars.

A STAINLESS NAME.

WHERE are ten thousand lovely things
 In this bright world of ours,
 Where Beauty walks among the buds,
 And worships mid the flowers ;
 Where spreading farm, and speckled kine,
 Make rural households blest ;
 But an unquestioned, stainless name,
 Is better than the best.

Tis fine to have a coach and greys,
 And servants at your ring,
 With liveried lackeys at the gate ;
 O dear ! a pleasant thing.
 Where lords and ladies make their calls,
 In silks and satins dressed :
 But an unquestioned, stainless name,
 Is better than the best.

Tis well to have superb heirlooms
Suspended high for show,
Where mirrors gleam along the walls,
And summer landscapes glow ;
And title-deeds to broad estates,
Locked in the iron chest :
But an unquestioned, stainless name,
Is better than the best.

Tis good to have a bank-account,
With bonds and railway shares,
An interest in famed silver mines,
To enrich proud sons and heirs,
Who walk the world with strange resolves,
In classic words expressed ;
But an unquestioned, stainless name,
Is better than the best.

The titled man may tread in gloom,
The millionaire be sad,
And he whose bartons reach the hills
Be very seldom glad.
For earthly riches cannot make
Its proud possessor blest ;
But an unquestioned, stainless name,
Is better than the best.

So let us keep a conscience clear,
In spite of Siren's sound,
And the false echoes of the earth,
Which may at times confound ;

Believing, knowing, feeling sure
Of this Divine bequest,
That an unquestioned, stainless name,
Is better than the best.

THE CRIPPLED MINER.

A SIMPLE theme—but humbly I
Would offer it to Him,
Whose mercy ever shall endure
Till suns and stars are dim :
Whose love still flows o'er all the earth,
From distant pole to pole,
And through the Spirit of His grace
Thrills the believing soul.

The day was fine, the larks were up
Singing their April psalm,
The early flowers were peeping forth,
Whose every look was balm,
As down a crooked lane I went,
Which led into a moor
Where rushes grew beside the stream
Close by the thatcher's door.

Before me was an ill-clothed man,
Bent on his crutches low,
And mid the stones and rugged ruts
His gait was very slow.

And as I neared him, I could see
His was a piteous case ;
The marks of powder, flint, and fire
Were on that miner's face.

A hole exploded in his work,
Before he could withdraw,
Crashed round him with a thunder-roar,
And shattered him like straw.
His limbs were broken in the blast,
His manhood bruised away,
And life to him was life no more
From that eventful day.

We met—I spoke of birds and flowers,
Which God to man had given,
And how the blossoms never fade
On the green hills of heaven ;
When such a shout from that pale form
Rose the white clouds above,
Linked with the Saviour's hallowed name,
As listening angels love.

O could the infidel have seen
His face glow bright with fire,
As if a seraph in the air
Swept high his golden lyre,
Whose rare refulgence strangely flashed
Upon the lonely moor
A glory such as Eden wears,
He'd doubt His Word no more.

The heights with hallelujahs rang ;
Methinks I hear them still,
Though twenty years have passed away,
With freights of good and ill.
And long ere this that shattered man,
Of such a low estate,
Clad in the white robes of the King,
Has passed the golden gate.

He had no earthly heritage
To fill his life with joy ;
But peace Divine had been his stay,
Which blight can not destroy.
And up and down this warring world,
How many souls there be
Who testify that Christ's own truth
Can set the shackled free !

SUMMER RAIN.

NOW gently it falls from the quiet sky,
On the lonely mead and mountain high !
No voice of wind, no rush of gale,
No echo of storm in the leafy vale,
But soft as a fairy tapping the pane
When the moon is full, is the summer rain.

The thirsty flowers by the moorland streams,
And hedgerow bends where the ivy gleams,
Drink in the drops, as they gently fall
Pat, pat on the leaves, with a good for all ;
And they whisper it over, and over again,
“ Thanks, thanks for the freshening summer rain.”

The fox-glove longed for the drops to come,
And the daisy pined in its lowly home,
The wild rose drooped on the dusty spray,
And the woodbine wept by the lone highway,
Till they quickly felt revived again
In the silent, softening summer rain.

How gently it comes ! and who can tell
Its blest results on field and fell,
On garden-bower, and corn-mead green,
And where the fruit mid the leaves is seen ;
Or the grasses bend on the thirsty plain
In the silent, softening summer rain !

So God's free grace in silence falls,
When the waiting one in spirit calls,
And the quiet worker is often blest
By Him who soothes the seas to rest,
And the flowers appear on the gladdened plain,
In the silent, softening Spirit's rain.



EVENING ECHOES.

I STOOD among the ferns and mountain rills,
Whose waters trickled far :
Before me were the twilight-covered hills,
Behind, the evening star.

Far off among the willows of the creek,
Beneath the old oak-tree,
I heard a Voice out of the gloaming speak,
And it was calling me.

The moths buzzed round me in their circling flight,
The bats were on the wing,
The glow-worms sparkled in the mosses bright,
And glittered by the spring.

“ Fear not the darkness coming down the glen,
The shadows on the sod ;
Give the last remnant to thy fellow-men,
And stay thee on thy God.

“ Lift up thy voice in honour of the King,
Till strife’s last storm be o’er,
And hallelujahs through the welkin ring,”
Dashed through the dusk, and moor.

A solemn awe came down the Day’s dim track,
I heard the Eve-gates close,
Whose dusky barriers kept the purple back,
And then the moon arose.

And in the silver flood, a mighty sound
 Washed, like a billowy sea,
 The lowly dingles and the higher ground,
 "Jerusalem is free!"

The clustering stars with anthems gemmed their
 Gladdening the murmuring air, [rays,
 And every hollow was a harp of praise.
 I knew that God was there.

OLD JAFFO.

HIS hair was grey, his face was sad,
 His form was somewhat bent,
 And heavily he pressed his staff,
 As down the road he went.
 O, he had wandered far away
 From paths in childhood trod,
 Amid the scenes of other lands,
 And far away from God.

On a rude seat beneath a tree,
 A short way from the town,
 Where little birds chirped on the boughs,
 Old Jaffo sat him down.
 And much of cold unhappiness
 His countenance expressed,
 As with sad meaning in his eyes
 He gazed into the west.

Just then the church-bells by the sea
Sent forth a pleasant peal,
Which sounded softly through the trees,
Where turned the miller's wheel.
And down the vales and dingles dim,
And up by castles old,
And on by cottages of reed,
The pleasant echo rolled.

Ding dong ! ding dong ! and every swell,
As up and down they rise,
Winged with the memory of the past,
Brought tears into his eyes.
His mother's voice was with him there,
Her face he seemed to see,
And once again his evening prayer
Was lisped beside her knee.

For hours he sat in silent thought,
Within that leafy glade,
With a great anguish in his heart,
And angels knew he prayed ;
While drops of godly sorrow o'er
His furrowed features ran.
And when old Jaffo rose to leave,
He was a different man.



I CAME TOO LATE.

DEAR Cornwall! thou hast much to love,
To cherish and admire!
Among the boulders of the moor
Thou gavest me my lyre,
Which has been like a loving child
Through all my low estate:
And yet men wag their knowing heads,
And say I came too late.

If I were with the Druids born,
A long, long time ago,
They say my county would be kind,
And not neglect me so.
But this may be a small excuse
To gull the ear of Fate,
To stand aloof with empty hands
And cry, "He came too late!"

Too late! A thousand echoes ring
Around me day by day,
And all thy woods and waterfalls
Have freshness in their lay,
Which Time's strong hand can never change,
Nor Fortune's frowns abate,
Although among thy mineral mounds
I may have come too late.

I have my bread and water-cup,
And wife, and bairns, and home,
Content with what the Lord has given,
With no desire to roam.

A little makes a poet glad,
And lifts his earthly weight,
Although among the sons of men
He may have come too late.

I'll sing as long as any strings
Shall tingle on my lyre,
And pray that bounteous Providence
May my weak lays inspire,
So that their echoes may be given
To cheer the heart sedate,
Although within a cot of reed
I may have come too late.

I have no wealth in gold or lands
To lay at Mercy's feet,
Nought save the weakest, simplest song,
An offering most unmeet.
But this is His who giveth all,
Who makes the crooked straight,
And sends the brooklet o'er the sands,
Though I have come too late.

Do as you will, act as you may,
Withold, or freely give,
While sea and sky and earth remain,
True song shall ever live.

But say not, though no roses hang
About the singer's gate,
And his hard hands are stained with toil,
That he has come too late.

THERE IS LAND TO PLOUGH, MAN.

THERE is land to plough, man,
There is ground to break ;
Take the handles now, man,
And the furrow make.
Weeds are spreading fast, man,
Thorns are springing, too,
Up with zest at last, man,
And thy little do.

There is seed to sow, man ;
Scatter precious grain
Where the land is low, man,
Where the ridges reign,
Mid the coldest crags, man,
Mid the roughest reed,
Mid the rustling flags, man ;
God will bless the deed.

There are meads to mow, man ;
Take thy sharpened scythe,
To the harvest go, man,
Where the breeze is blithe.

There is work for all, man,
 In the field of love ;
 Heed the blessed call, man,
 Ringing from above.

Dost thou long to rest, man,
 Ere the fight is won ?
 This would not be best, man,
 Till thy work is done.
 Keep thine armour bright, man,
 Sleep not on thy shield ;
 God will guard the right, man,
 Till the world is healed.

Swell the holy strain, man,
 Sounding up the hills,
 Floating o'er the plain, man,
 Trembling down the rills :
 Tis the harvest song, man,
 Where the reapers be ;
 How it rolls along, man,
 " Heaven for all is free ! "

THE TWO WALKS.

RHyme-seeking down a lane where wood-
 And swallows swept along, [bine grew,
 Frequented only by the musing few,
 I heard a simple song.

I paused to listen, glancing through the brake
Tinged with the sun's red fire,
And saw a maiden sitting by the lake
Singing beneath a briar.

And as she sang the sun burst forth anew,
The hills put back their shrouds,
And floating southward seemed, amid the blue,
An angel on the clouds.

No music ever filled me with delight
Like that lone maiden's lay ;
And fancy told me that the angel bright
Bore the soft strain away.

Another walk in that same shadowy lane,
With hawthorns overhead :—
I met a funeral by the clustering cane,
And my sweet maid was dead !

IF THOU WOULD'ST BE HAPPY.

IF thou would'st be happy,
To thyself be true ;
In this world of action
Have a work to do :
This shall blessing bring thee,
This shall comfort win ;
For where all is earnest,
Idleness is sin.

Idleness is sadness,
 Idleness is pain ;
Let thy hands be active,
 Or thy busy brain,
If thou would'st be healthy,
 If thou would'st be strong,
If thou would'st be joyous
 As the day is long.

Drop a word of kindness
 In the pensive ear ;
Help a fellow-pilgrim
 O'er the desert drear ;
Give a cherry greeting
 To the child of grief,
It will comfort sadness,
 Bring thy heart relief.

There is love to cherish,
 There is light to throw
O'er the darksome desert,
 O'er the wrecks of woe.
Strive to aid thy brother,
 With a cheerful heart ;
If thou would'st be happy,
 Happiness impart.



THE WILLOW BASKET.

“SHALL I help you, Nancy,
O'er this stupid stile?
To your mother's dwelling
Is a longish mile.
Let me have your basket;
I am strong, you see,
Such a little burden
Is not much for me.”

Nancy yielded, blushing;
And we dare not say
How they sweetly chatted
On their pleasant way.
Love was in the meeting,
Love can clear the sky,
Making winter summer,
Though the snows are high.

And that willow basket,—
Though a curious thing,—
Brought the simple question,
Brought the wedding ring;
Brought another Nancy,
Like a fairy toy,
In a cot of roses,
In a home of joy.



VINCENT DE PAUL.

OF all the gifts God giveth man,
From His high home above,
To gladden earth with gleams of heaven,
The sweetest boon is love.
And still it lives, and suffers long,
Where sin has left its stain,
To wipe away the widow's tears,
And quell the power of pain.

Among the galleys of Marseilles
A Christian hero past,
Chilled with the misery of chained ranks,
Whose lives were ebbing fast ;
Chilled with the looks of blank despair
In floating prisons pent,
Of convicts where all hope had fled,
Which smote him as he went.

O what a stifling, sickening scene,
Above, around, below,
From moaning manhood dashed with grief,
Remorse and guilt and woe !
The face where piety should beam,
From God's own light within,
And love and truth and mercy meet,
Marred with the blight of sin !

A young man, paler than the rest,
Pined in the prisoner's chain,
Whose wife and little children starved
Where wind rushed through the pane.
He seemed to hear their cries for bread,
Which o'er the galleys rolled ;
And tears were in the convict's eyes,
As he his story told.

Vincent de Paul an offer made
To take the captive's place :
And the freed man to wife and child
Rushed at the swiftest pace,
While his deliverer sat in chains,
And plied the heavy oar,
For a strange convict in his guilt
Condemned, and crushed, and poor !

For weeks this sacrifice was made,
With all the pain it brings,
Till the good Countess set him free,
Amid the praise of kings ;
Amid the praise of all whose hearts
Are warmed with holy fire,
Who hail the beggar and the prince
As sons of one great Sire.

Do not our thoughts revert to HIM
Through whom we pardon win,
Who came to seek and save the lost,
The Sacrifice for sin ?

He broke the chains which bind us down,
When dying on the tree,
And through the power of living faith
Now sets the captive free.

THE FATHER'S ADVICE.

“**L**EARN your lessons, Peter,
This will give you grace,
This will give you honour,
This will give you place ;
This will give you silver,
This will give you land,
And you'll hold the lever
In your own right hand.

“ Learn your lessons, Peter ;
Knowledge is sublime,
In the farthest region,
In the wildest clime.
Brass is nothing to it,
Iron is but rust,
Silver coarsest pebbles,
Gold the lightest dust.

“ Learn your lessons, Peter,
This will help you more
Than a father's fortune,
Than an uncle's store.

Every added figure
On the puzzling sheet,
Every small correction,
Makes the sum complete.

“Learn your lessons, Peter ;
Work away, my boy,
And ere manhood cometh
It will give you joy ;
It will give you sunshine,
It will give you love,
In the blessed guidance
Of the Hand above.”

YEARNINGS.

THERE is a nameless yearning in my heart,
Born with the light of day,
Which I would utter wholly, or in part,
Yet cannot sing, or say.

Sun-gilded fancies, never clothed before,
Like rainbows o'er a fall,
Or wavelets breaking on the purple shore,
When dews and twilight fall.

I listen for it in the solemn sea,
And winds that seldom rest ;
And yet the language will not come to me
Whereby it is expressed.

The lightning marching down the comet's track,
The roaring of the woods,
The giant storm-king on his courser black,
The thunder of the floods ;

The rose-scents floating on their summer course,
The moorland's wealth of gold,
Bring endless yearnings from their wondrous Source,
Which never can be told.

Even here I cannot grasp the words I would,
Bereft of mental might.
O, Thou who broodest o'er the troubled flood,
Say, " Let there now be light ! "

If I could twist the wild winds in my hair,
And span this mighty ball,
Or write my sonnets with the lightning's flare,
Then I might utter all.

I struggle with my words, like one thrust o'er
A thicket briar-o'ergrown,
Yet cannot say what comes for evermore
Out of the strange unknown.



THE CUP OF WATER.

THE life of one for piety renowned
Filled me with wonder strong,
Whom generations have with honour crowned,
And chaplets of rich song.

Weighing his worth with my poor puny deeds,
Less than a newt's small stain,
I wiped my eyes, and sighed among the reeds,
"I almost live in vain !"

Just then a little girl came to my gate,
Close by the runnel's brink,
"Please, sir," said she, "for school I'm rather late,
Can you let Annie drink ?"

I filled the cup, and placed it in her hand ;
'Twas joy her looks to see,
And a soft voice came o'er the river sand,
"This is thy work for ME."

EUTYPHA.

A MARSH was on my right, where willows grew
By brooks with freshets worn,
And bright pools shimmered underneath the blue
Sky of a July morn.

There was no sound, except the old mill-wheel
Where the clear river swells ;
And the elms nodded to the joyous peal
Of the sweet village bells.

I questioned Tim the meaning of that sound,
Which rose to meet the crags,
As with his scythe upon the rilly ground
He mowed the waving flags.

He told me 'twas Eutypha's wedding-day,
And she had waited long :
Full fifteen years had slowly passed away
Her native hills among,

Since Henry left her for a distant clime,
From whom no tidings came.
"He's dead," they cried ; "he cannot be in time :"
Her love was still the same.

Three weeks ago, when hay was in the swath,
The postman's knock was heard,
Which brought the ripe fruit of Eutypha's faith,
The true the loving word.

So patient trust a full reward had won,
Though for long seasons riven,
And heart met heart, when trial-days were done,
And love for love was given.



ROBIN'S RETURN.

IN the summer twilight,
When the bees were still,
Mary was returning
From the village mill,
When a man before her
Came up to the door ;
She had crossed the meadow,
He had crossed the moor.

Scarcely had his knocking
Fallen on her ear,
When he chanced to see her
Through a shining tear :
And before his Mary
Moved another pace,
Robin's arms were round her
In a fond embrace.

Inside all was bustle ;
Mother brushed the chair,
Sister brought the roses,
Tommy smoothed his hair :
Kitty called her father
From the hayfield near,
Standing by the wicket,
" Robin is come here ! "

Tales were told of travel,
Tales were told of gain,
Till the moon of midnight
Silvered o'er the pane.
And when harvest music
Floated on the gale,
Robin led his Mary
To the altar-rail.

MYSTIC MELODY.

WHERE is a melody that floats to me
When eve is on the moor,
And the wind stealeth through the leafy tree
Beside the river's shore.

Like waters ebbing, down the cadence glides
The broad way of the moon,
Over the wide flat where the heron hides,
And night-birds sob their tune.

I strive to give it utterance in my lay,
But cannot catch the strain,
Which like a sceptred monarch stalks away,
And it is all in vain.

From the old woods it comes, the waters clear,
 The swallows in their flight,
 The mystic portals of the opening year,
 The chambers of the night.

Is it an echo of the lyres of love,
 Which angel forms possess,
 Borne earthward down the grand star-tracks
 That I may not express? [above,

I know not. Yet I hear it evermore,
 Which time can not destroy,
 Sweet sounds of song the hills and valleys o'er,
 Earth's most delicious joy.

TO A TUFT OF HEATHER.

WHY honeyed scent-waft many a legend tells,
 Which makes my heart rejoice;
 And in the music of thy golden bells
 I hear my mother's voice.

The bliss of boyhood cometh back again,
 The glory of my youth,
 When I went musing through my mountain lane
 A seeker after truth.

Ye saw my tears, ye saw my bursts of joy,
As new thoughts filled my soul,
Which Nature granted to her singing boy,
While seasons round me roll.

I walked among you where the gorse-brakes heave,
Feeling supremely blest,
And lay upon you in the arms of Eve,
When twilight wooed the west.

Ye gemmed my path like helmet-crested fays,
Murmuring along the moor,
Filling my life with breeze-awakened lays,
Even at my father's door.

The Sabbath bells, the swallows wheeling round,
My school-path o'er the plain,
The sounding echoes of the bouldered ground,
Come back to me again.

The first loved flowers whose treasured names were
Which on the moorland grew, [mine,
Were the dear daisy, where the elves recline,
The tall ox-eye, and you.

Behind a boulder, with your tufts o'erhead,
I tuned my simple lyre,
While the great sun upon his crimson bed
Tipped your bright bells with fire.

I hold my harp, though storms have laid me low,
And cares its strains destroy.
Tis well! The mighty Master wills it so,
For evermore a joy.

THE YOUNG RABBITS.

IN a hedge, where osiers whispered
To the rising moon,
Two shy rabbits made their dwelling
At the end of June.

And when July changed the corn-ears,
They had young ones five,
Which the fur-clad parents noticed
In their sedge-home thrive.

There were two secluded tunnels
To their snug abode;
One came out into a meadow,
One into the road.

Carefully their parents nursed them,
And when eve was come
Brought them dainty food, and warned them
Not to leave their home.

Brought them clover from the cornfields,
Brought them leaflets small,
Brought them green blades from the dingle,
Roots and rinds and all.

“Never, never,” said the mother,
“Go till night is cool,
And the twinkling stars are shining
On the moorland pool.

“Then be sure to let me lead you
Where the field is broad ;
But avoid the narrow tunnel
Ending in the road.

“Men are there, and traps, and mastiffs,
Fifty five and more :
Don't go out into the highway,
Where your death is sure.”

But they would not heed their mother :
So, one sunny day,
Out they sprang into a wheel-rut
Of the public way.

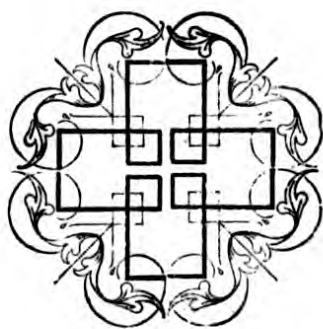
One was picked up by a carter,
One a dog pursued,
One fell headlong o'er a high place
Where the rocks were rude.

In their home the parent-rabbits
Listened with surprise,
And they trembled by their doorway
As they heard their cries.

Pop! a gun went by a farm-gate,
Where the fourth had fled;
And the fifth in fissures vainly
Strove to hide its head.

Sighed the mother in her sorrow,
In her new-found fear,
“If they had obeyed my teaching
They would still be here!”

Disobedience ends in ruin,
In this world of strife,
Where so many pits are open,
But obedience—life.



THE DREAM.

I HAD a dream, when Morning came to Night
And warned his exit—a most singular dream,
With power enough to make my spirit shake,
And my flesh tremble, as with lightning scathed.
Methought the sky dropped down upon the hills
In awful blueness. Not a sound was heard
Throughout the universe ; no song or lyre,
No bird or river—everything did rest.
And there was little light to mark the scene.
A doleful dimness, such as thunder brings
When the hills wait, with vapour on their heads,
The downpour of the tempest—this was all.
Except the blueness there was little else.
And this weird colour baffled all beneath,
Beyond description. Then below the east
A forest sprang, whose broad top touched the sky :
And in the firmament I saw three eyes,
Surpassing brilliant, flashing as with fire.
In even row they gleamed, and seemed so near,
Almost within my touch. The outer ones
Were trembling in their orbits ; but I knew
The middle eye was God. And then I woke,
Like a lorn traveller in an unknown wood,
Scarce knowing why the branches hid his way :
But that great Eye was o'er me in the heavens !
Was it a warning ? for ere day was done
My limbs were bound by sickness.

HAS THY BROTHER FALLEN ?

HAS thy brother fallen,
In temptation's hour,
Overcome by Satan,
Conquered by his power?
Cease thy cold upbraiding,
Censure not his tears;
Love will save the sinner,
Never won by sneers.

Thou art on thy journey,
Where the snares are spread,
And hast need of watching
Both thy heart and head.
If His grace be slighted
In the hour of need,
Thy own strength is weaker
Than a bruised reed.

Exercise the mercy
Which thy God bestows,
Never wound thy brother,
Nor increase his woes.
Charity is holy,
'Tis the Gospel leaven,
Charity is Christ-like,
Charity is heaven.

If thou would'st be happy,
Kindly speak of all ;
Breathe no bitter slander
O'er thy brother's fall :
Thou thyself may'st stumble ;
Learn the law of love,
And the earth shall brighten
Into heaven above.

JEMMY RAIL AND BEATY.

NEATH a flowery hawthorn,
In the evening cool,
Beaty sat by Brindle
On a milking-stool ;
And while she was humming
Of the miller's mate,
Some one stood and listened
By the hazel gate.

Who was he, we wonder ?
This was Jemmy Rail ;
And when she had finished,
Home he bore her pail.
And beneath the roses
Something said the lad
Which gave Beaty blushes,
Which made Beaty glad.

Jemmy Rail had nothing
But his own two hands,
Working, daily working
On the parson's lands.
He was simply honest,
For the truth was bold,
Which was more to Beaty
Than a chest of gold.

Soon the star of evening
Rose above a cot
Where they dwelt contented
With their humble lot,
Fed by honest labour,
As the seasons close,
While the household fairies
Sang them to repose.

PEGGY DEE.

“**H**OW far is it to Foxvale?”
A weary woman said,
“I’ve been away a long time
To earn my daily bread.
My father and my mother,
They told me up the way,
Have left the dear old cottage,
And gone down there to stay.”

“How far is it to Foxvale?
My name is Peggy Dee.
Must I go by that farm-gate,
Where all those cattle be?”

“Yes, keep on straight before you,
Of bye-paths have a care,
Then down the hill a little,
And you will soon be there.”

“Good morning. Thank you greatly:
Kind words are silver dust,
Which strews the path to Eden,
And it can never rust.
O, long ago I’ve proved it,
In many a trying hour,
That kindness heals the spirit
With more than mortal power.”

And Peggy soon reached Foxvale,
And found her parents there,
And wept for very gladness
To see their silver hair.
You almost hear the greetings
The worthy couple gave,
Sustained by Peggy’s kindness
Till hidden in the grave.



LOOK UP!

DARKNESS, and storm, and trial,
And half inclined to lag?
Look up! a gleam of sunshine
Is on the higher crag:
And soon its growing glory
The lower steeps shall stain,
And fill the bends with beauty,
And gladden all the plain.

Weary and weak with watching?
Lie not upon the shore
Till the great billows whelm thee
In ocean's solemn roar.
Up! seek a solid foothold,
'Tis sinful to complain:
Before thee vines are smiling,
And fields of golden grain.

Where duty calls thee, enter,
And lift thy banner high:
Success may seem to linger;
It cometh by and bye.
Mankind shall bless thy labours,
Though slowly they proceed,
And crown thee with affection,
And God shall own thy deed.

Look up! 'twill clear thy vision,
And give thy thoughts new birth,
While undiscovered treasures
Shall gleam in heaven and earth ;
The trials of thy journey
Shall press thee less severe :
Look up, and sing for gladness,
Look up, for help is near.

TOMMY BRAY.

A CHILD could tell that too much drink
Had come to Tommy Bray,
Who, when the moon was o'er the mill,
Thus staggered on his way.
Scarce knowing where his footsteps went,
He rambled to his shed,
And spoke unkindly to his wife,
And beat his boy to bed.

But baby Ellen lingered still
Beside the broken stair,
And whispered in her mother's ear,
"I have not told my prayer."
Then down she knelt, and clasped her hands,
Her evening hymn to say ;
And every word was like a blow
To trembling Tommy Bray.

He called his boy, he called his girl,
He sought a loved embrace ;
“ I’ve been a heathen long enough :
Come, Peggy, take your place.
Henceforth I shun the landlord’s tap,
My tippling workmates, too,
In weakness rendered strong by Him,
And live for home and you.”

The cloth was taken from the dish
Where Tommy’s supper steamed,
And as they each received a part,
How bright their glad eyes gleamed !
The pale wife wiped her tears away,
Amid the blissful hum,
And baby Ellen softly said
That Jesus Christ was come.

And never more did Tommy Bray
Drink down his children’s bread,
Or sup in selfish solitude,
Or beat his boy to bed.
O, baby Ellen’s words were true,
Which trembled in their home,
When Tommy saw himself aright,
And Jesus Christ had come.



POOR PEGGY.

IN a cottage near a harbour
Of the western land,
Sat poor Peggy late one evening
By the smouldering brand.

Loud the waves broke o'er the boulders,
Smote the jutting rocks,
And her lonely straw-thatched dwelling
Trembled with the shocks.

All her bread that eve was eaten,
All her money spent ;
And her husband, sons and daughters,
Long had left the tent.

She was lonely as a heron
Where the waters flow,
When October, mid the dry leaves,
Bids the swallows go.

Prayed she with her hands uplifted,
In her empty shed,
“ Father, in divine compassion,
Send poor Peggy bread ! ”

All at once the door was opened,
And her sailor Jack
Rushed into her arms, exclaiming,
“ Mother, I'm come back ! ”

All his messmates quickly perished
Near their native shore :
God preserved him, and Jack's mother
Never wanted more.

Simple earnest prayer is answered,
God comes down below,
And His own believing people
Ever find it so.

THE FACES AT THE PANE.

WHERE'ER I go, whate'er I do,
A vision meets mine eye
From the far valleys of the past,
Flecked with the summer sky.
It comes in days of quiet trust,
It comes in wind and rain,
It comes when harvest crowns the earth—
The faces at the pane.

When toiling in the darksome mine,
As tired as tired can be,
How has the glad thought cheered my soul,—
My children watch for me !
And as I oped the garden gate,
Which led into the lane,
How danced my heart to see once more
The faces at the pane !

Two little girls, with gleaming eyes,
 With soft and shining hair,
And sweetest prattle on their lips,
 Were watching for me there.
One in the grave is sleeping now,
 And one has crossed the main ;
Yet still I see, where'er I be,
 The faces at the pane.

And when I brought some hedgerow fruit,
 Or darling hedgerow flowers,
Which they were early taught to love,
 Their kisses came in showers.
O, precious were those distant days,
 Which may not come again,
Made brighter, fairer, fresher for
 The faces at the pane.

Old age has bound me in its bands,
 And o'er the solemn sea
I seem to hear mysterious sounds
 From unknown lake and lea.
But through the cares that lie behind,
 Along the murky plain,
I see, as if but yesterday,
 The faces at the pane.

Few retrospects have greater joy,
 Now life is waning fast,
And fewer visions sun my soul
 Like this from out the past.

And thank I Him who giveth much
Our gratitude to gain,
Nor least among His greater gifts
The faces at the pane.

LOOK CHEERFUL.

LOOK cheerful, though of seeming good
Thou art at times bereft,
And fierce frosts nip the tender flowers ;
Hast thou not blessings left ?
Thine eyes can see, thine ears can hear
The sounds of earth and air :
Perhaps the traveller at thy side
Does not these blessings share ?

Look cheerful. In this weary world
A smile has often power
Beyond the price of glittering gold,
Or treasure's costliest dower.
And he who has no houses high,
No cultured lands to till,
Or cattle grazing by the brook,
May give it, if he will.

Look cheerful, God ordains it so ;
He never willed that gloom
Should hang upon the good man's brow,
And shroud his face like doom.

The child of faith lays claim to all
That earth may reckon bright,
And in his eye should ever gleam
The glow of Gospel light.

Look cheerful, it will do thee good,
And heal thy brother's soul,
While toiling onward, step by step,
Towards the final goal.
Thou canst not measure half the power
A happy glance may bring,
Nor how it often soothes despair,
And makes the dumb to sing.

Look cheerful. Adverse gales to-day
May drop from heights severe,
But do thy best, and trust in God,
To-morrow may be clear.
Incessant gloominess is sin ;
So banish this disgrace,
And give what God to thee has given ;
He loves a cheerful face.

DECISION.

WHE sun upon his crimson car
Had reached the doors of Eve,
And of the hills and musing vales
Was taking loving leave.

How glowed the creeks with ruddy light !
The hill-tops caught the stain,
Which filled the clouds along the heavens,
And tinged the murmuring main.

He walked the heath-tracks of the moor,
With solemn thoughts impressed ;
And voices, never heard before,
Were speaking in his breast.
Along the river's winding course,
Where willow branches swung,
And little birds made melody,
The hallowed echoes rung.

“ Decide ! decide ! ” flowed everywhere,
O'er rock and emerald lea,
“ Nor put it off another hour,
But give thy heart to ME.
The treacherous world will lure thee on
Till weightier cares increase :
O, this is the accepted time
To find the Prince of Peace.”

He looked across the smiling fields,
Where sire and mother dwelt,
Who oft in earnest prayer for him
Had in the closet knelt ;
And tears came out upon his face,
Which God and angels see,
As broken sobs came from his heart,
“ I give myself to Thee ! ”

None taught him where the graceful ferns
Were whispering in their place,
Save One who ever freely gives
The Spirit of His grace.
As gently as the dew descends
Upon the summer flowers,
So did his waiting soul receive
The Spirit's quickening powers.

And step by step along the road
That leads to heavenly day,
Leaning upon his Saviour's arm,
He travelled on his way.
With joy his heart is often filled,
That, where the high hills be,
He whispered in the purple light,
"I give myself to Thee !

NAPOLEON.

HIS birth was like some ominous star,
Which sheds its baneful light afar,
Foreshadowing famine, plague, and war.

He left his cradle for the sword,
While mimic arms were round him stored,
And cannon rattled on his board.

His toys were trumps that led the host,
Or painted sentries at their post,
And war-lines ranked along the coast.

And as he grew, this passion strong
Impelled him, as he rushed along
With frantic feet the way of wrong.

And when he grasped sufficient power
The nymph of Mercy to deflower,
He trampled Truth within her bower.

He let the whelps of Carnage out,
And scattered fire and flame about,
And joyed to see the sacked redoubt.

His myriad murders who can name,
For love of blood, for love of fame,
Which truly Christian hearts disclaim ?

Peace fled the earth where'er he trod,
And Famine fainted on the sod,
And orphans raised their hands to God.

All human ties he rent in twain,
Delighted most when giving pain,
And gloating over armies slain.

How many widows has he made,
By spear and bullet, shell and blade,
Pursuing thus the soldier's trade !

How he more swiftly could destroy
The blessed fruits of man's employ,
Was his sublimest, chiefest joy.

I'd rather be the poorest hind,
That any wayside hut can find,
Than such a man with such a mind.

He plunged the sword in Love's own breast,
And slew Affection's tenderest guest,
And fired the trusting peasant's nest.

Cities were sabred at his beck,
And Death stood silent o'er the wreck,
A sea of crimson to his neck.

His solemn setting sadly came,
He bowed his head in lonely shame,
And perished while the lightnings flame.

How will he answer for his deeds,
When the archangel downward speeds,
And earth is wrapped in fiery weeds?

THE DEMAND.

EARTH was perfected in greenness,
When I took my way
Down a lonely lane, and narrow,
At the close of day.

Through the halo of the evening,
From the misty sea,
Came a Form of aspect lovely,
Very close to me.

In the grey skirts of the gloaming,
As I drew more near,
Loveliness became more lovely,
And that voice how clear !

“ I was rich, where heaven is shining,
Poor I come to thee ;
Bled I on the cross for sinners :
What hast thou for Me ? ”

“ It is Jesus,” conscience whispered,
“ Trust, and He is thine.
Take me, take me, precious Saviour,
I my all resign.”

PEACE FOR THE PILGRIM.

YES, there are hours of calm repose,
In this exhausting world of woes,
As, sheltered in some shady glen,
Apart from noise, apart from men,
The lonely traveller hears the breeze
Low-sighing through the rustling trees.

And when the full moon o'er the wood
Uprises in a silver flood,
And stars begin their shining race,
Each in its Heaven-appointed place,
The farthest orb a blazing sphere,
The voice of God is very near.

And as the clouds, in splendour drest,
Hang round the archway of the west,
The thought of heaven consoles his heart,
Where friends, long sundered, never part,
And through the golden rifts he sees
The clusters on the living trees.

Yes, there is peace for weary man,
In life's eventful, toilsome span,
If he will turn aside and dream
Where hawthorns hang above the stream,
And Silence, in the glow-worm's flame,
Repeats Jehovah's glorious name.

ROBERT BURNS.

NOW oft I've heard dear Robin's reed,
When ploughing in my father's mead,
And gazed on Tam o' Shanter's steed!

Like thee, I've had to delve the soil,
With earth-stained hardened hands of toil,
Which softer, daintier palms might spoil.

But what is nobler in all lands,
Than, passing lonely, or in bands,
To earn the bread with honest hands?

Like plovers sweeping o'er the plain,
Or brooklets trickling after rain,
Thy songs are murmuring through my brain.

A cot of thatch has often more
Than pillared hall, or polished floor,
With statues grouped beside the door.

Neglected when thy rustic wire
Outrang the country's tuneful choir,
Now nations own thy matchless lyre.

The traveller to thy land shall turn,
And strew fresh flowerets o'er thy urn,
And link thy name with every burn.

The ploughman-bard rich fame shall reap,
When emperors in oblivion sleep,
And warriors rise not from the deep.

The cottar's hymn, the cottar's prayer,
Shall sanctify the evening air,
Till Time his funeral-robcs shall wear.

The plough, the rake, the hay-cock's bands,
The useful tools the farm demands,
Are hallowed by thy bardic hands.

The child at play upon the lea,
The old man sitting neath the tree,
Shall love the daisy more for thee.

Too soon thy feverish life was spent,
Then Heaven demanded what was lent,
And fell the unprotected tent.

Old Scotland's hills, and flowery plains,
Green woods, and fields, and bowery lanes,
Are fairer for thy liquid strains.

Let him who would thy failings blame,
Remember all that on thee came,
And pity give instead of shame.

Pale Charity bends o'er thy tomb,
In morning's dawn, and evening's gloom,
Where flowers of fame immortal bloom.

A simple songster far away,
Would crown thee with his leaf of bay,
And place a wild wreath o'er thy clay.

Too oft, perhaps, thy own fierce light
Was wont to singe thee in the fight,
When clad in full prophetic might.

But through the world thy name shall ring
While winter snows give place to spring,
And larks in summer soar and sing.



THE HIGHWAY SINGER.

BY a highway through a valley,
Where low willows grew,
Dwelt a bard, whose simple singing
Was to nature true.

Down this highway drove the merchant,
Rode the millionaire,
Walked the lover with his maiden
In the evening fair.

Old men passed his rustic dwelling,
Young men sauntered by,
Care with garments worn and dusty,
Grief with moistened eye.

Every phase of human feeling,
Sounds from down and dell,
Voices which the hollows utter,
He deciphered well.

But he sang his songs in silence,
Weaving wondrous thought
When the stars were on the waters,
So men knew him not.

Turned he dregs of human dulness
Into beaten gold ;
Yet he lived and died a stranger
By this highway old.

SANDIE AND REUBY.

IN an inn-porch of the city
A tall merchant stood,
And in fancy saw his dwelling
By the distant wood.

Saw his wife and happy children,
Where the plovers whir
When a shrill voice echoed by him,
“Buy my matches, sir?”

Thin and blue the boy's sharp visage;
He looked strangely old,
With his bare feet on the pavement
Red with bitter cold.

“No!” he answered. Sandie pleaded,
Smote with pressing cares:
“O, do buy them, sir—I'm hungry!”
Till he sold his wares.

But his pockets held no coppers:
Then in trust spoke he,
“Take this shilling—keep your penny,
Bring the change to me.”

Off the boy went. Twilight deepened,
Yet he came no more.
“Am I cheated?” thought the merchant,
Standing by the door.

Yet this boy's face was a study,
Which he dared not doubt ;
So he waited till the evening
Brought the bright stars out.

Then a little ragged fellow
Stood beside his fire,
Paler, thinner than his brother,
Though a trifle higher.

Diving down into the patches
Of his trousers torn,
"Did you buy of brother Sandie
Matches, sir, this morn ?

"In the street a cart ran o'er him,
Where the walls are high :
O, sir, both his legs are broken,
And they say he'll die !

"Gone is Sandie's box and bonnet,
Gone his money, too ;
I have fourpence of your shilling,
Which he sends to you."

Reuby laid it on the table,
With great sobs of pain :
So the merchant went to see him
Down the city lane.

Lying on a bed of shavings
 Was the honest lad ;
 And he turned his eyes upon him,
 " O, sir, I am bad.

" I was coming with your money,
 When the horses flew,
 And beneath their hoofs I suffered :
 What will Reuby do ?

" Night by night we slept together,
 Shared our wee bits, too,—
 I and only brother Reuby,—
 What will Reuby do ? "

Took he Sandie's hand, and whispered
 What the Saviour saith,
 As his blue eyes slowly darkened
 With the dusk of death.

THREESCORE !

THREESCORE ! and like a tree
 By the lone pathway drear,
 Holding one leaf, where eve-shades be,
 To the departing year,

Stand I, where barren sweeps
 Reach the horizon's rim,
 And voices from untrodden steeps
 Sob through the dingles dim !

Threescore ! in perils long,
So very little done,
When up the flowery steep of song
My climb has just begun !

Threescore ! And can it be ?
I shake my changing hair,
And lift my grateful heart to Thee
With wonder in my chair.

Threescore ! and sighing still
For home where roses gleam,
And woodbines kiss my cottage sill
Beside the moorland stream ?

Threescore ! A few meads back
I feel my childhood's joy,
Wandering in Flora's flowery track,
A happy-hearted boy.

Threescore ! O, thank His power,
Whose grace hath given tears,
With bursts of sunshine hour by hour,
Throughout my sixty years.

LEND A HELPING HAND.

ON life's toilsome journey
There are wounds to heal,
There are griefs to soften,
There are wrongs to feel :

There are tears to lessen,
Sobs to understand,
Where the lone one walketh :—
Lend a helping hand.

See'st thou one in earnest
For his brother's weal,
Though he low has fallen
Where the shadows steal,
Where the winds of winter
Sweep along the land
With a dismal dolour ?
Lend a helping hand.

Is thy neighbour's burden
More than he can bear,
Struggling with disaster,
Battling with despair,
Though an honest worker,
With an honest band
Striving in uprightness ?
Lend a helping hand.

Is the poet pining
In his garret old ?
Is the widow weeping
Where the walls are cold ?
Is the child of talent
Hampered by the brand,
Where Distress is crouching ?
Lend a helping hand.

Give thy strength to weakness,
Give thy love to grief,
God's reward shall cheer thee
For thy free relief.
If thou would'st be happy
Where thy lot shall stand,
To the feeblest toiler
Lend a helping hand.

THE TEST OF FRIENDSHIP.

WOULD'ST thou test the friendship
Of the world about thee,
Those who say they cannot
Walk the earth without thee?
Be it storm or quiet,
Be it dark or sunny,
Spring or winter weather?
Try to borrow money.

How thine old mates dwindle,
Shyer still and shyer,
With their eyes averted
As thou reachest nigher,
Should'st thou chance to meet them,
Though before so bonny,
If thou of thy flash friends
Try to borrow money!

Strange it is, and striking,
How the face will alter,
How the eyes will darken,
How the lips will falter,
How the smiles will languish,
Once as sweet as honey,
If thou of thy flash friend
Try to borrow money.

Time will never tell thee
What is false and shiny,
What is true-made treasure,
What is black and briny,
What is clear as water,
What is drugged and dunny,
Till thou of thy flash friends
Try to borrow money.

Do thy full endeavour,
Every new-born morrow,
Where thy God has placed thee,
So thou need'st not borrow.
Rather eat thy dry bread
Without milk or honey,
Than of any flash friend
Try to borrow money.



SEATARA.

S NOW and a stalking storm ! The forest boughs
Moan as they smite each other, swaying wild
Backwards and forwards, and appalling sounds
Drop through the gap of gloom. Six days and nights
The travellers have been there, with cold encamped,
Their food exhausted, all their fuel gone,
Their last steed broken loose, when Death drew near
To claim the famished party. Whispering low,
Seatara called the strongest of the band,
“The Bridegroom summons me beyond the palms,
To cross the waters of the lonely stream
Which lave the shores unseen. Lift up my head,
And take what’s under it,”—and she expired.
Within a bag they found the bread and meat
Which she for six days had denied herself,
That they might live the longer. Noble soul !
More queenly than the wearer of a crown.
And when the seventh day came without a sun,
The white drifts hemmed them in, and they lay down
And fell asleep—all save one mateless man,
Who lived to tell Seatara’s thrilling tale.

ESTHER SIMS.

IN a small room of a courtlet
Dwelt old Esther Sims,
And I’ve heard her, as I passed there,
Singing Wesley’s hymns.

I was sitting by her ingle
One November eve,
When she told me what I herewith
Into rhythm weave.

Food and fire were both exhausted,
All was gone, she said,
Not a penny in her pocket,
Not a crust of bread.

Then she knelt beside the settle,
Knelt in tears and prayer,
Till she heard the postman knocking,
Which for her was rare.

Tremblingly she oped the letter
By the casement damp,
When five shillings met her vision
In the newest stamps.

On the wrapper were two verses,
Written plain and fair,
From the tender Psalms of David,
Of the Shepherd's care.

How she thanked the gracious Giver,
Kneeling by the seat,
Words of mine can never utter,
Nor my song repeat.

Till this day the Christian donor
 Is to her unknown :
 But old Esther says it reached her
 From Jehovah's throne.

THE AYRSHIRE PLOUGHMAN.

“ And then to die so young, and leave
 Unfinished what he might achieve !
 Yet better, sure
 Is this, than wandering up and down
 An old man, in a country town
 Infirm and poor.”—W. H. LONGFELLOW.

SO sings the great bard o'er the sea,
 Who walks in light alone,
 With Fame's bright rainbow o'er his head,
 And truth in every tone.
 For if old age had come to thee,
 Thy worshippers might shun
 Poor Robin in his lowly cot
 With all his siller done.

In this cold region of neglect,
 Perchance thou would'st have known
 The agony to ask for bread
 And only get a stone.

For poverty's true friends are few,
He struggles, like the mole,
Who digs his tunnel in the dark,
Though genius gilds his soul.

Thou would'st have known 'twas hard to keep
What thou had'st grandly won ;
A hundred anxious feet were swift
Along thy path to run,
And tread thee down where nettles sting,
And rattle slate and shard,
And harsh discordant voices drown
The music of the bard.

Gray locks, a stick, and wrinkles deep,
The body bending low,
Are signs at which the cold world saith,
"Now let the old man go!"
And he whose wealth is simple song,
When age bedims the eye,
Will not be missed, nor missed his harp,
Should he lie down and die.

So it was surely well for thee
To fall in manhood's noon,
When every string of thy sweet lyre
Retained its matchless tune.
In glory's blaze thy sun went down,
When not a cloud was gray ;
And Love kneels by dear Robin's tomb,
To wipe his wrongs away.

THE OLD AND NEW YEAR.

I HEARD a swift upheaving on the hills,
As if an earthquake spoke,
When not a star was on the frozen rills,
Or glimmer in the oak.

The rush grew louder as the midnight neared,
Until it shook the latch,
And tossed and tumbled on its mission weird,
And thundered o'er the thatch.

I tried to gaze into the dreadful gloom,
Black as the night-bird's wing,
Where dying dirges through the hollows boom,
That mortal may not sing.

A wave of wildness rocked the blinded earth,
And o'er the ocean sighed,
And rolled its echoes down the desert's dearth,
In which the OLD YEAR died.

And then amid the mystery of the moon,
Where riot left no trace,
I gazed again into the night's calm noon
Upon the NEW YEAR's face.



THE ANGELIC SONG.

EARTH through all her isles was waiting,
Every vale was still,
Whispers floated o'er the waters,
Ran along the hill ;
When a star of crystal brightness
Gemmed the eastern sky,
And the shepherds sought the manger
Where the Babe did lie.

Through the firmament an echo
From the angels rang,
Who, with glittering wings expanded,
To the glad world sang,
“Glory, glory in the highest,
Peace to every clan !
Christ is born to bring salvation
And good-will to man.”

This glad anthem ringeth ever,
And shall never cease
Till the nations sit in concord
At the feet of Peace ;
Till the sound of war is silenced
By His conquering grace,
And the brotherhood of mercy
Binds the human race.



DO THY UTMOST.

ART thou called to labour
With the pen or plane,
With the spade or spindle,
With the wedge or wain,
With the hoe or hammer,
Blest with light, or dim ?
Do thy very utmost,
Leave the rest with Him.

Seems thy life-task harder
Than thy brother's lot ?
'Tis what God ordaineth,
So neglect it not.
Ply thy bending paddles
To the river's rim ;
Do thy very utmost,
Leave the rest with Him.

None but cowards tremble
At their daily task ;
Whatsoe'er thou needest,
Bend the knee, and ask.
Strength shall be imparted,
Power to every limb,
If thou do thy utmost,
Leave the rest with Him.

Thy reward may linger
Till the moons are past,
Till the years are silent ;
It will come at last :
Come with joy and shouting,
Come with praise and hymn,
If thou do thy utmost,
Leave the rest with Him.

If not here, hereafter,
Thy full duty done,
Where the Lamb of Beauty
Is the fadeless sun ;
Where the living waters
Lave the fountain's rim,
If thou do thy utmost,
Leave the rest with Him.

THE KIND-HEARTED CABMAN.

AT a corner, where the wall
Looked a little shabby,
Stood a lady, clad in furs,
Talking to a cabby.

His was such an honest face,
Frank, and free, and sunny ;
You could tell he loved his horse
Better than his money.

“Do you ever use a whip?”

Asked she soft and clever :

“No,” said cabby, straightening up,

“Never, madam, never !

“’Twere a sin I could not brook

In my pathway lying :

Kindness is the better whip,

And for this I’m trying.

“Pony will obey the rein,

Nor deceives me ever,

Though I use no cruel whip,

Never, madam, never.

“Whipcord takes the strength away

From the willing creature,

And what agony it gives

To its every feature !

“Pony loves his master well ;

Ah ! my horse is clever.

Do I use the cruel whip ?

NEVER, madam, NEVER.”

SIX GRAY PAUPERS.

BBETTER here than in the snow,
When the winds of winter blow,
Where the Union yields no hire,
Six gray paupers round the fire.

Better here than in the street,
 Begging through the slime and sleet,
 As the blast is beating higher,
 Six gray paupers round the fire.

One had been a miller kind,
 One a hedger, one a hind,
 Two were blacksmiths, one a squire,—
 Six gray paupers round the fire.

God have mercy on their souls,
 Where the workhouse echo rolls,
 Sitting here in coarse attire,
 Six gray paupers round the fire !

Is not heaven for them as free
 As for those where statues be ?
 So sing I an octave higher,
 Six gray paupers round the fire.

Had I flocks, and farms to reap,
 I would kill my fattest sheep,
 Feast them to their hearts' desire,
 Six gray paupers round the fire.

JUNATA.

“GO over to granny's, Junata,
 I hear she is poorly to-day,
 And take her these beautiful roses,
 And carry those branches of may.

Grandfather will brighten to see them,
So fresh from the fence by the flood,
For they have no garden, or orchard,
Since leaving their home in the wood."

And down through the dingle of hawthorn,
Where blue-bells were fringing the well,
She tripped with a little song, ringing
As clear as the sound of a bell.
And the leaves of the roses brought gladness
To age in the silence and shade,
As if they were walking where angels
In vestures of purity strayed.

'Tis thus that the smallest attention
To those who are feeble, or old,
Is oft with the grateful possessor
More precious than silver and gold.
A flower from the hand of a maiden,
A song from the bill of a bird,
May ravish the soul into sweetness,
Though torrents roll onward unheard.

THE SPRING FLOWERS CALL US
TO THE GLENS.

THE spring flowers call us to the glens,
'Mid Nature's opening life ;
Then why should'st thou be pressed with care
O'ermuch to-day, dear wife ?

Remember that our Father's love,
For every suppliant free,
Whose eye perceives the sparrow's fall,
Knows what is best for thee.

We may be straitened on the way,
Where cold winds sometimes sweep ;
But might it not be worse, dear wife,
As down the hill we creep ?
We might be homeless on the earth,
Weak wanderers here below,
And begging arm-in-arm for bread :
Thank God ! it is not so.

O, might we not be stript of all
That makes our dear home fair,
And sitting by the workhouse grate
With dreams of days which were ?
I know thy heart is full of thanks
For what the Lord has given :
So we will trust in Him, dear wife,
Till safe at home in heaven.

Come dark, come light, we'll journey on
Through our allotted years,
With thanks for all our God has given :
I write these words with tears,
Which, when the sun of life is set,
And ripe the flower of love,
Shall in the garden of the skies
Be wiped away above.

CORNWALLIA'S WELCOME TO
THEIR ROYAL HIGHNESSES THE PRINCE
AND PRINCESS OF WALES,
MAY 20th, 1880.

THE sun is up, the night is gone,
The dewy flowers unclose,
A glory glitters on the lake,
And gilds the fragrant rose.
The bud-crowned Spring walks o'er the land,
Linked arm-in-arm with May,
And new-born songs of welcome greet
Our Royal guests to-day.

Cornwallia's sons and daughters bright,
With loyal hearts and true,
O Prince and Princess much beloved,
Send up a shout for you,—
A shout which rends the freshening air,
From Truro's waving flags,
Across the dells and dingles dim,
To Sennen's solemn crags.

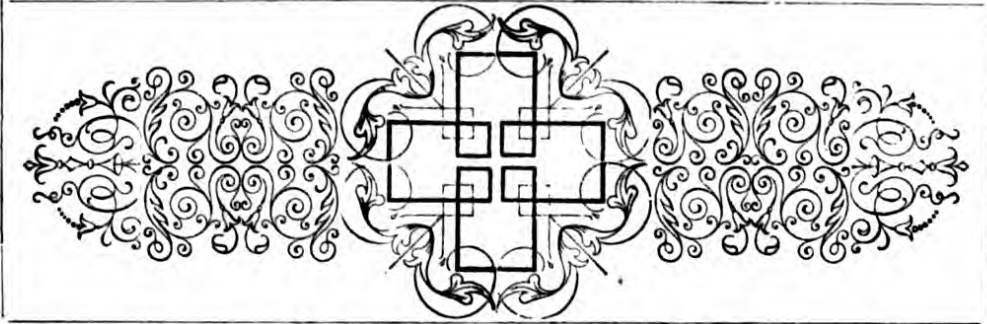
Our Cornish children welcome you,
With hands and eyes upraised ;
And Cornish grandames hail you here,
Who long your worth have praised :
And every dweller of the creek,
Or castled hillock's crest,
Unite to give your sons and you
Rich welcome to the West.

The hills awake their Druid tones,
The cromlechs have a voice,
The mineral mountains and the vales
On this glad day rejoice.
Gray boulders send an echo forth,
In mystic moorland bands ;
The rivers roll it to the sea,
The old woods clap their hands.

Cornwall is out in summer weeds,
Beneath the bluest sky ;
The mother holds her baby up
To see the Prince pass by :
And old men, resting on their staffs,
And gentle maidens fair,
Are whispering through their shining tears,
“ God bless the Royal Pair ! ”

And on, and on, o'er carn and cross,
O'er rills and flowery meads,
Where heath-tufts hang about the crags,
The holy echo speeds ;
Through cornfields green with vernal sap,
And rose-rimmed gardens rare,
From young and old, from rich and poor,—
“ God bless the Royal Pair ! ”





POEMS ON SCRIPTURAL
SUBJECTS.

THE STORM SILENCED.

—
MARK iv.
—

THE blue waves curl and shimmer
Upon the silent strand,
And the soft light of evening
Steals o'er the listening land,
When the ships left their moorings,
And sailed upon the sea,
As songs soared up the valleys
Of lovely Galilee.

Jesus is in the vessel,
 Upon the solemn deep,
And on a humble pillow
 Is lying fast asleep ;
When the great storm awaketh
 With a tremendous roar,
Driving the foamy billows
 Upon the startled shore.

Into the ship the waters
 Rush with a fearful sound,
And overhead the thunders
 Roll through the dark profound.
The mariners are fearful,
 And shrink with awe the brave,
Who cry as they awake Him,
 “ O Master, Master, save ! ”

Then He arose all kingly,
 And hushed the winds to rest ;
He breathed a holy stillness
 Along the ocean's breast.
Down went the waves in silence,
 Down went the storm's stern will
Into delicious calmness,
 At His sweet “ Peace, be still ! ”

Their failing faith He chided :
 O, they were pale with fear,
And whispered in their wonder,
 “ What strange Man have we here ? ”

The riot of the tempest,
The sea in surges stirred,
The awful wind's wild wonder,
Are quiet at His word !”

And still His voice of mercy
Is sounding through the land,
And those who call upon Him
Shall find Him near at hand :
The angry storm is silenced,
The wild waves dash no more,
And flow the gentle waters
Upon the peaceful shore.

THE POWER OF FAITH.

MATTHEW ix.

JESUS is with the ruler,
Whose daughter lieth low,
And crowds of people throng Him,
As to his house they go :
Some to implore His pity,
Some marvelling at His fame,
Some with new love enkindled,
And some to praise His name.

Mark that pale, timid woman,
With feeble step and slow !
Twelve years of wasting sickness
Have strangely laid her low :
Twelve years of ceaseless spending,
In suffering, on and on,
With many a famed physician,
Until her means are gone.

And she was nothing bettered,
It was sheer waste, she knew,
Her step became more feeble,
Her pale face paler grew.
And in the sighing tempest
She seemed to hear her doom,
And catch the solemn echoes
That murmur from the tomb.

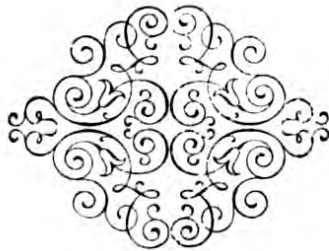
She knew the power of Jesus,
Who then was very nigh,
And so she came behind Him,
As He was passing by,
Believing in her weakness,
With light-enkindled soul,
That if she touched His garment,
She should at once be whole.

None helped her to the Saviour,
Of all that anxious band,
But gently as an infant
She raised her trembling hand ;

And faith had grandly triumphed,
O, faith for her had won
The health for which she languished,
The favour of the Son.

“Who touched Me?” said the Healer.
And at His feet she fell,
And told Him all her sorrow,
And what to her befel.
He spoke in tenderest pity,
He bade her sobbings cease ;
“Thy faith hath brought the blessing,
O, daughter, go in peace !”

So is it with the sinner,
Who gives his wanderings o'er :
Throughout all generations
Faith makes the promise sure.
Faith gilds the pilgrim's passage
Beyond the shades of night,
And, on his Saviour resting,
He gains the hills of light.



THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

—
LUKE X.
—

AMID the solemn valleys,
Where the meek coney feeds,
And gladsome birds are singing,
A lonely traveller speeds.
His staff supports him firmly,
He quaffs the cooling air,
With thoughts of home and kindred,
And lifts his heart in prayer.

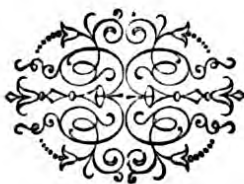
Thieves steal upon him slyly,
And he is quickly bound ;
They strip him of his raiment,
They cast him on the ground :
They cared not how he suffered,
They cared not how he bled ;
They filched his few possessions,
And left him nearly dead.

A white-robed priest is coming :
God's own will surely stay,
And aid the prostrate creature ?
He looks another way !
But let us hope the Levite
Will help the wretch anon,
For down the road he walketh :
Yet he, too, passeth on.

But now a third approacheth ;
More pity fills his eye,
Than those who left their brother
Upon the road to die.
He has compassion on him,
He helps the wounded man,
He mollifies his bruises ;
O, good Samaritan !

On his own beast he helped him,
He brought him to an inn,
He gave him food and shelter
As if he were his kin :
He begged the host to keep him,
Till God should health restore,
And say what was expended,
And he would pay him more.

His was the hand of mercy,
An emblem of His love
Who came to raise the trodden,
And lift our souls above.
Jesus for sin was smitten,
Jesus the winepress trod,
The only true Physician,
The blessèd Christ of God.



PETER'S DELIVERANCE.

THE ACTS xii.

BETWEEN two watchful soldiers
The trustful prisoner slept,
While outside by the doorway
Strict watch the sentry kept :
And outside prayer was offered,
In penitential strains,
That God would save His servant,
Though bound with heavy chains.

Spreads o'er the sleeping city
The silence of the night,
When lo ! the prison flameth
With no earth-kindled light.
An angel spoke to Peter,
Whose form was brighter far
Than Morning's sea of splendour,
Or light from moon or star.

"Up quickly," spoke the seraph :
And Peter's heavy bands,
Like slender fire-scorched grasses,
Fell from his trembling hands.
"Gird up—bind on thy sandals ;
True prayer is heard for thee :
Put on thy outer garment,
And come and follow me."

O, was it all a vision,
Too beautiful to last ?
The wards and drowsy watchers
Are in a moment past :
And the great gate of iron,
Where Wealth her heaps had stored
Within the city's darkness,
Oped of its own accord.

And then the angel left him ;
And Peter, wondering, knew
That the despised Messiah
Was to His promise true.
Where humble prayer is offered,
And faith for succour calls,
The benediction cometh,
The heavenly manna falls.

He reached the home of Mary,
Delighted to explain
How glory filled the prison,
And God had rent his chain.
The sigh of faith still shatters
The darkest doubts of dearth,
And gilds with heavenly splendour
The prison-house of earth.



THE VILLAGE SISTERS.

LUKE X.

HOW quiet is the village,
Through which the west wind blows,
O'ershadowed with the olive,
And fragrant with the rose !
The tinkle of the streamlet,
Among the shallows clear,
Where swallows dip their pinions,
Falls on the listening ear.

Jesus has passed the fountain,
Where birds of beauty flit,
And now in Martha's dwelling
He and His followers sit.
O what a joy for Jesus
In humbleness to come
To talk with the believer,
And sit within his home !

And Martha had a sister,
Of disposition sweet,
A gentle, loving spirit,
Who sat at Jesus' feet,
And heard His gracious message
With love-enkindled eyes,
Where Bethany was watching
In beautiful surprise.

But Martha, cumbered Martha,
How deeply steeped in care !
How did she toil in serving,
And hurry here and there,
Blaming the quiet Mary,
As it was most unmeet,
Who truly served her Saviour,
And worshipped at His feet !

O, hear His loving answer,
“ Thy troubles and thy cares
Are very many, Martha ;
But one thing Mary shares,
Which above all is needful,
The only precious part,
Which shall not thence be taken,—
My love within her heart.”

And evermore that village,
Throughout the coming days,
Where Mary sat in silence,
Shall have the harp of praise :
Where Jesus saw the sisters,
And taught, in words benign,
That we should love each other
With charity Divine.



THE POOL OF BETHESDA.

—
JOHN V.
—

BY the Pool-side he waited,
Amid the stricken throng,
The troubling of the water ;
And he had waited long.
But in his great prostration
Some of the crowd distressed
Had felt the power of healing,
And he remained unblest.

Again the clouds are parted,
And from the heights above
An angel earthward speedeth
Upon his work of love.
His white wings stir the waters,
The poor man tries again :
Too slow ! too slow ! He faileth ;
His efforts are in vain.

His eyes run o'er with sorrow :
For eight-and-thirty years
The pressure of affliction
Has forced the bitter tears.
How has he prayed at morning,
How has he prayed at noon,
That health might be his portion,
That health might bless him soon !

Christ standeth in the porchway,
Where the poor cripple lies ;
He heals him in a moment,
He bids the prostrate rise :
And from the ground he starteth,
With praises to the King,
So that the arches echo,
And the great buildings ring.

That Sabbath, in the temple,
He worshipped at His feet,
And thanked the gracious Healer
Before the mercy seat.
Nought is too hard for Jesus :
If He at pity's call
Forgave the prostrate cripple,
Then He forgiveth all.

SIMON'S GUESTS.

LUKE vii.

JESUS in lowly meekness
Sat down at Simon's board,
When a poor pensive woman
Crept in behind her Lord ;

A well-known city sinner,
With shame and suffering bowed,
Whom Scorn's pernicious finger
Selected from the crowd.

She came behind Him weeping,
She washed His feet with tears,
She wiped them with her tresses,
The growth of sunny years ;
Anointed them with ointment,
And kissed them in her love,
So graciously accepted
By Him who reigns above.

O Simon, erring Simon,
Thy thoughts to Him are known
Who sitteth at thy table,
Who reads thy heart alone !
“ If two poor helpless debtors
Owed, and at once were free,
Five hundred pence, or fifty,
Whose love would greatest be ? ”

And Simon answered promptly,
“ The love-sum would be more
In him who owed the greater,
And not the lesser, store.”
And sweetly spoke the Saviour,
The Father's kingly Son,
As never man had uttered,
As never man had done :

How He his house had entered,
And no one came to greet
Him with the kiss of welcome,
Or water for His feet,
Save this poor trodden sinner,
A fragment of the Fall,
Cut with the cords of sorrow,
And she had done it all.

And then His voice of mercy
Fell on her gladdened ear,
And rays of heavenly glory
Gleamed in the falling tear :
“ For this thy sins are pardoned,
For this thy sorrows cease :
Thy faith hath brought the blessing,
Go on thy way in peace.”

And Simon's guests were startled ;
The echo smote their souls,
Which evermore in fulness
Through all creation rolls.
The erring child of sorrow,
Whose heart with grief is riven,
Believing on the Saviour,
Shall feel his sins forgiven.



PAUL AND SILAS.

THE ACTS xvi.

THE Sabbath halo rested
Upon the city's pride,
And Paul and Silas worshipped
By the clear river's side ;
Where many heard the Gospel,
Where many shed the tear,
And Lydia's heart was opened
In gentleness and fear.

Down came the persecutor :
Their clothes were rent away,
And they were sadly beaten
In the full light of day ;
In the full city's tumult,
With all its daily shocks,
And in the inner prison
Their feet were in the stocks.

Songs at the hour of midnight,
Prayer in the prisoners' cell !
Hark to the hallelujahs,
That through the darkness swell !
Hark to the grinding earthquake,
That shakes their stony tomb
From quaking top to basement :
God speaketh in the gloom.

The ponderous doors were opened,
The chains fell from their hands ;
Philippi's fettered captives
Lose all their heavy bands.
O, God had plainly spoken,
And God was plainly there,
To liberate His servants,
In answer to their prayer.

Earthquake and storm and riot
Were blended with His will,
And every barrier broken,
As He can break them still.
Prayer opes the deepest dungeon,
Saves from the thickest mire,
Rescues from wildest waters,
And quells the flaming fire.

Out of his sleep the keeper
Woke with a sudden fright,
As the foundations grated,
And, calling for a light,
He sprang before them quickly :
"What must I do," cried he,
"To know salvation certain ?
O, tell the news to me."

Believe on Christ the Saviour,
The Father's only Son,
And all thy guilt is pardoned,
And all thy sins are gone."

And the converted jailor,
In his own home-retreat,
Washed the two bruised disciples,
And gave them food to eat.

God cometh in the thunder,
And in the soft wind's voice,
To save into His favour
The people of His choice ;
The people of His ransom.
Through earth it soundeth still,
"Come to the Living Waters,
Come WHOSOEVER WILL !"



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