

POEMS

By M. J. DUNLOP.

ABS. 1.75.83

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POEMS

BY

MARGARET J. DUNLOP.



KILMARNOCK :
DUNLOP & DRENNAN, PRINTERS, "STANDARD" OFFICE.

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P R E F A C E .

In placing this little volume in the hands of the people I feel that I am—to use a well-known adage—“Sending coal to Newcastle,” or, in plain words, launching a book—more especially a book of poems—where there are already too many.

As the natural consequence of such a feeling, I am led to address to myself the pertinent query, *Cui bono?* to which I find an answer in a criticism of “The Sons of Toil”* written by a literary friend some time ago. He says: “The lines administer vigorous encouragement to the toil-stained and often despairing children of earth, whose burdens not uncommonly press their bearers earthward. To such of our brethren and sisters your lines sound as a veritable *sursum corda*.”

That many of the simple poems in this little book may have a like effect is my sincere desire, and should they in any way prove the means of upholding the cause of Right, or cheering even one weary soul, I shall rest assured that the volume has not gone forth on an entirely fruitless errand.

M. J. D.

* “The Sons of Toil”—page 139.

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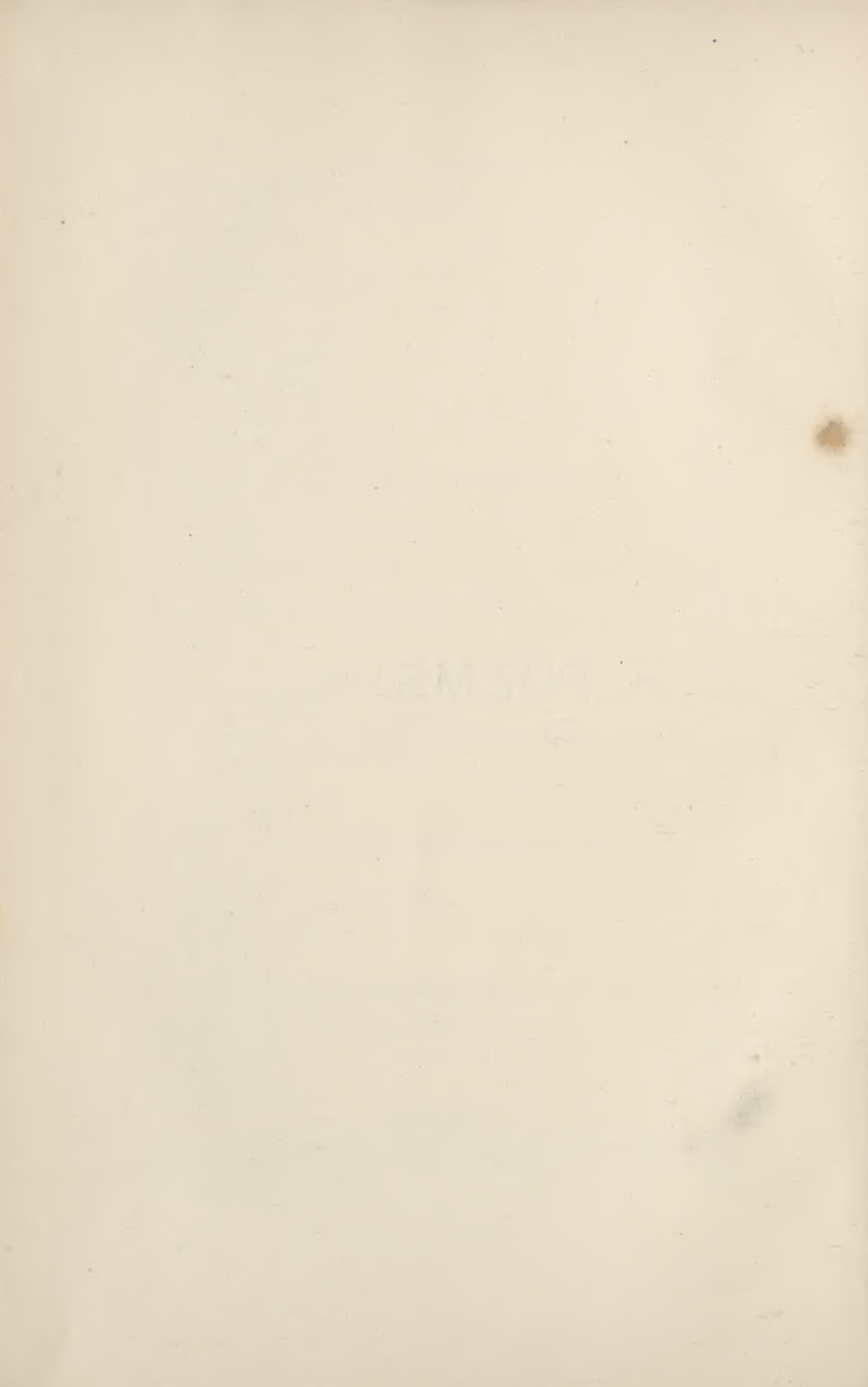
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⌘ POEMS. ⌘



POEMS.



THE MESSAGE OF THE BELLS.

In a close and dreary attic 'midst the city's smoke and
clamour

Sat a poor and lonely widow, who for years above a
score

In this attic now had listened to the Christmas music
pealing

From the chimes within the belfry, just a furlong
from her door.

And to-night she sadly pondered on the Christmas
Eves of childhood,

When the bells their Christmas message had pealed
forth from village tower,

To be heard with glad fulfilment in that dear old
Christian homestead,

And re-echoed in its anthem with a heartfelt faith
and power.

Then the years sped swiftly onward, whilst she passed
from child to maiden,
And a pair of blue eyes, tender, looked with love
into her own,
And a voice she loved sang sweetly in the glorious
Christmas anthem,—
Ah! that Christmas eve was brighter than she e'er
before had known.

Still there came another Christmas—Ah! that Eve was
fraught with anguish,
And to-night the memory strikes her with a thrill of
keenest pain—
When her only boy, her darling, bade farewell to home
and kindred,
And on earth had never looked upon his father's
face again.

Was her boy alive? she wondered: Did he hear the
Christmas message
Pealing, rolling from some belfry in an unknown far
off clime?
Did he think upon his mother and his home so long
forsaken?
Or in death's cold cruel slumber was he wrapt this
Christmas time?

Then she thought of the betrayer who had lured him
on to ruin ;

And the mother heart within her grew as hardest,
coldest stone.

What were goodwill, peace, and pity, to a mother reft,
forsaken ?

Could the tempter of her darling for her anguish
e'er atone ?

As she pondered thus, a clamour in the street below
her window,

Arose above the clanging of the bells upon the air.

There below, stretched on the snow-drift, was a form
all crushed and bleeding,

Whilst beside it wept a bairnie, whose young face
was sweet and fair.

Quick as thought she gained the kerb-stone ; but again
her heart grew bitter,

For before her, weak and helpless, lay the snarer of
her boy.

Then she looked upon the bairnie, and her anger
turned to sorrow,

Whilst the bells within the belfry whispered softly,
"Peace and joy."

Then she bade them bare him upward to her little attic
chamber,
For the seal of death was set upon his cold and
pallid brow ;
And he told her e'er the morning how he'd sought her
long and sadly
To restore her darling's bairnie, who smiled sweetly
on her now.

And he told in bitter sorrow of her lost one's latest
moments—
How he prayed to God to bless her and reward her
tender love ;
And the mother's heart was lightened of a cold and
heavy burden,
For her darling yet might greet her in the golden
realms above.

Ere the dawn of Christmas morning passed a spirit
swiftly homeward,
Whilst the bells within the belfry echoed low their
soft refrain,
And with them the mother wispered—"Unto God be
all the glory,
And to men the love and mercy of the shining
angels' strain."

SISSY AND JIM.

Sisters and brothers all, just for a moment
Listen to me whilst I tell you a tale,
Not of a prince or a noble so stately—
Only an Arab, half starving, and pale.

Down o'er the meadows shone Sol in his glory,
Touching the tree-tops and gilding the lake,
Where, but a league from the heart of the city,
Wandered poor Jim for his wee sister's sake.

Dear to the waif was this frail little sister;
Father, or mother, or friends they had none;
Lonely they lived in a small gloomy cellar,
Where never entered the light of the sun.

Doctor had murmured "fresh air" and "good nursing;"
Jim straightway carried her down to the vale,
Gathered and brought her wee golden-eyed daisies—
Bringing a smile to the features so pale.

“ Could I,” said Jim, “ only get her in yonder,
Whaur a’ the bairnies are tended wi’ care,
She wad grow stronger and brighter than ever—
Roses wad bloom on thae pale cheeks ance mair.”

Here ’cross the meadow the railway track glistened ;
Farther away ran a clear silver stream,
Fringed by a wealth of the fairest wild roses—
Such unto Sis. had been ever a dream.

Jim in her eyes read a wish, ever watchful !
Whispered, “ Just wait, Sis., I’ll bring you a share.”
“ Tan ’oo ? ” said Sissy ; “ de big man will beat ’oo.”
“ Na, na,” said Jim, “ Sissy, God sent them there.’

Swiftly he bounded away to the river,
Gathered some blossoms with bright, happy face,
Till on his ear fell a sound as of thunder ;
Next round the curve, at a terrible pace,

Rushed the express train. Jim turned to his sister.
Merciful Heaven ! she stood on the rail !
Onward it came with the speed of the whirlwind,
Causing poor Jamie with terror to quail.

Only a moment ! then he like an arrow
 Sped o'er the grass till he stood by the track,
 Clutched her, and saved her, then, bleeding and sense-
 less,
 Fell, by the engine tossed ruthlessly back.

Slowly old Sol in his wonderful radiance
 Rose o'er the city and gilded each dome ;
 Entered a sick ward and kissed forty eyelids,
 Rousing each bairn in the hospital home ;

Sent forth a Sunbeam who lit on a vision,
 Fairer than aught she had hitherto seen.
 Pausing, she played with the ringlets so golden,
 Laughed in the eyes of a wee fairy queen.

“ What is your name, child ? and where do you come
 from ?

You were not here but one sunrise ago.”

“ Sissy,” she answered ; “ but where is my Jamie ? ”

“ Ah ! ” said the Sunbeam, “ your story I know.”

“ Told me it was by my sister, who saw you
 Laughing so gaily with Jim in the vale ;
 Well, I may tell you he's safe in the next ward,
 Lying contented, though weary and pale.”

“Just now, in passing, I peeped through the window ;
Now I’ll slip back, dear, and tell him you’re here.”
True to her word then the happy wee Sunbeam
Flew to the accident ward which was near.

Straightway she sped to the face lined by suffering,
Planted a kiss on the marble white brow.
Jamie lay there with an arm and a leg gone :
Only a wreck was the noble boy now.

Yet when he heard of his darling wee sister,
Anguish and suffering were thought of no more.
“Now these kind people will cure her,” he murmured—
Truly unselfish this heart to the core.

“Really I think that ’twas God sent me yonder—
Many a time I ha’e heard o’ His poo’r ;
But noo I believe in’t : deed aye I’m sure o’t !
God sent me yonder to pu’ the wee flo’er.”

“Sae I’ll no murmur because He has taken
Frae me, in wisdom, the limbs that He gave.
What is their loss to the loss o’ wee Sissy ?
Noo she is here, an’ will yet cheat the grave.”

.

Years have sped fast. In a flower-clad cottage,
 Nestling 'midst trees on the edge of the vale,
 Sissy and Jim dwell in peace and contentment.
 Often has Sissy repeated this tale

Unto the dear one who goes there at even,
 Just ere old Sol sinketh down in the west ;
 Ever this dear one declares that while life lasts
 Jamie shall always have share of their best.

HER LAST FAREWELL.

Was it in the land of music, where the sweetest singers
 shine,
 That I heard a voice so tender as to seem to me
 divine—
 In the grand Italian opera, or the English concert
 hall,
 Where the high-born and the wealthy swiftly crowd at
 fashion's call?

Was it in the stately mansion of the noble and the
 grand,
 Where the music, all too perfect, charmed the noblest
 in the land?
 Was it 'midst the costly splendour of the mansion won
 by trade;
 Or the home of simple beauty which the artist soul
 had made?

No, in none of these I heard it. (Ah! it filled my
 soul with pain;
 In a fairer, nobler mansion, may I hear that voice
 again?)
 From the gorgeous Eastern window fell the lights and
 shadows down,
 And upon the fair-haired maiden seemed to cast a
 golden crown.

Ah! she sang as none but angels, whilst the music
rose and fell,
In that solemn, awful moment, 'twas as though she
sang "Farewell";
Then the twilight gathered slowly as the gentle form
bowed low,
And the silvery voice was silent. Had she sunk
beneath the blow?

Ere I rose and touched her gently, yes the fair pure
soul had fled;
In the old Cathedral's silence she was numbered with
with the dead.
Then across the minster pavement fell the shadow of
the Cross,
As a gentle Spirit whispered, "For her gain must be
your loss."

Yet in pity grant forgiveness to the one who pierced
her heart;
Through her cruel and bitter sorrow she hath gained
the "better part,"
For the Master's voice hath called her to His home
of peace and love—
She, who sang on earth so sweetly, sings His praise in
Heaven above.

THE SUNBEAM.

I saw the sun sink in his splendour,
 And I thought as in glory he set,
 "Thou hast left us to 'twilight and darkness,
 But still there is work for thee yet."

I thought of the scenes he had looked on,
 All through that long, bright Summer day ;
 And I thought of the hearts sad and lonely,
 He had cheered with his bright, gentle ray.

I saw the young bride in her beauty,
 As she passed through the open church door ;
 I saw the bright sun shine upon her,
 Then I prayed, "May it last evermore."

But quickly the scene it was shifted ;
 A maiden sat sad and forlorn,
 A maiden, poor, friendless, and homeless,
 From comforts and luxuries torn.

She thought as she sat there and pondered—
 "Into this world, Oh, why was I brought?"
 Just then a bright beam pierced the darkness,
 And a wonderful change it had wrought.

She said, as she watched its bright gleaming—

“Thou dost visit a lone one like me,
And surely the Father who sent thee
Will my sorrow and loneliness see.”

And still it sped onward and onward,
Till it came to the chamber of death,
Where a fond mother, weary with waiting
Sat watching her child's dying breath

And it shed its bright rays through the window ;
Then the dear little child caught its light,
And he said, “Come to me, dearest mother,
To the world that is hid from our sight.”

Then the fond mother's heart it was softened,
And she learnt to bless God for her loss ;
She bowed to the hand that had chastened,
And willingly lifted her cross.

Then I said, as I looked at the sunbeam.
“How much good in this world dost thou do ?
God bless thee, and make me more like thee,
A light 'midst the sorrowful too.”

THE PHARISEE.

The Pharisee knelt in his gilded hall,
 And this was his evening prayer :
 "I thank Thee, Lord, that I never have been
 As that sinful wretch out there."

And the "sinful wretch" was a hungry soul,
 Who, only that very day,
 Had given his crust to a starving child—
 Yet he knew not how to pray.

As the lady sat in her carriage grand,
 She haughtily dropped a crown
 In the outstretched hand of a hungry man,
 With a cold, reproachful frown.

And closer around her her velvet robe
 She drew, with a pious air,
 As she paused at the door of her stately home
 And swept up the marble stair.

The labourer sat in the rich man's pew ;
 So the great one stood aside,
 For he could not sit with a common man—
 'Twould injure his lordship's pride.

So he waved him out, with a pompous air,
From the handsome velvet pew ;
Then knelt to pray with a righteous grace,
As he never failed to do.

But far away to his Heavenly Home
Went the poor man's humble prayer ;
And the kindly deed of the starving soul
Gave joy to the angels there.

But the words of the great man sank to earth,
Weighed down by a load of pride ;
And the lady's gift was bereft of love,
So its kindly incense died

Ere it sped half-way to the Great White Throne,
And the Master gave no heed
As the Pharisee knelt in his gilded home
Recounting each pious deed.

A HAWTHORN SPRAY.

'Twas only a spray of hawthorn bloom—
 So fragile, and sweet, and fair ;
 But it carried hope to a cold, bare room—
 To a sad one working there.

She closed her eyes, whilst the perfume sweet
 Stole straight to her heart as balm ;
 And her thoughts flew back from that noisy street
 To a region bright and calm.

She dwells once more in the old Home Farm,
 Far down in the sunny South :
 Once more she leans on a firm, strong arm,
 And hears from a tender mouth

The story old that is ever new,
 As she stands 'neath the hawthorn's shade,
 Where the path is bright with the sunset's hue,
 And over the earth is laid

The sweet still hush of a Summer night ;
 And the kine have gone to rest,
 Whilst the sky looks down with its star-eyes bright
 To smile on the fair earth's breast.

And still they wait, for he goes away
To a home across the sea
Ere the morrow's sun with his first bright ray
Shall shine o'er the flowery lea.

Then he reaches forth to the hawthorn bough
And plucks from the bough a spray,
Which he bids her keep, an unspoken vow,
Till he comes again one day.

But every year for a whole decade
Has the hawthorn burst in bloom,
And he ne'er has come. Sure all hope must fade
In that dark and lonely room.

Ah, no ! for many a weary time
She looks for the brave, bright face,
And day by day does each vesper chime
Send hope to the lonely place.

To-day : Ah, hark ! does she only dream ?
Or is it his voice once more
That greets her ear, o'er the ceaseless stream
Of Life, as in days of yore ?

“ Ah, God ! ” she cries ; “ he has come at last,
And my time of trial is o'er !
I will dream no more of the weary past,
But the glad, bright days in store.”

TANGLE.

Poor Tangle was a little mite, she was but eight years
 old,
 Her birthday 'twas, and Christmas night, with Christ-
 mas weather cold.
 The north wind blew her tangled hair, to which she
 owed her name ;
 Her bleeding feet were cold and bare ; half clad the
 shivering frame.

A homeless, friendless, outcast child, to-night she
 wandered far,
 Through many an alley dark and wild, led by one
 lonely star ;
 For she had heard about a star which led to One who
 came
 To save and bless, from Heaven afar, and Jesus was
 His name.

So Tangle said, "I'll go to-night ; His birthday this,
 and mine ;
 I'm sure I'll find Him now all right, good star, if you
 will shine."

On, on she sped till round her rose the mansions of
the grand ;
No more she felt the wind that froze the tear-drops on
her hand.

A carriage stopped, and out there sprang a joyous,
happy throng,
Whilst through an open door there rang the sounds of
mirth and song,
And as the fair young children passed within those
portals grand,
Poor Tangle said, " I'm there at last, and that's His
angel band.

" He's holding of his birthday too, so I'll go in and
see,
For teacher said, To such as you He says : ' Come unto
Me.' "

So up the glistening marble stair wee Tangle swiftly
sped,
To turn and fly, in mute despair, from harsh words
harshly said.

With tear-filled eyes and bursting heart, she sobbed
" It can't be He ;
I s'pose He lives in t'other part ; I'll just go there and
see."

Then looking up she saw her guide, and bravely trudged
along
Till where, with portals open wide, a church stood firm
and strong.

She paused ; then ventured gently in, half dazed 'twixt
hope and fear—
Fear, lest her presence might be sin ; hope that the
Christ was here.
Ah, joy ! “ At last I've found the place, for there's His
angels bright,”
She whispered, as with solemn grace the choir boys
came in sight.

Whilst echoing through the noble pile uprose the
grand old strain,
To God be praise : to man, though vile, good-will for
ever reign.
And next burst forth the glorious song, “ To Bethlehem
come away,
Ye faithful ones, nor tarry long ; haste ere the dawn of
day.”

Poor Tangle felt nor cold nor pain, but, rapt in deep
amaze,
Crept softly to the door again ; “ I'll go to where he
says,

An' there I'll find Him sure enough—my star will go
before ;
But p'r'aps the way is very rough, an' my poor feet are
sore.

“But, never mind, I'll soon be there, and then He'll
make me well !
Ah ! Bethlehem must be very fair, now He's gone there
to dwell !
I wish I could get there to-night, 'cause this is my birth-
day
As well as His, an' oh ! He might say, ‘Tangle, you
may stay.’”

The Christmas service soon was o'er ; the people
paused outside,
For there beside the old church door, with blue eyes
open wide,
And fixed upon that one bright star, lay Tangle now
at rest
Upon the snow. Her soul afar lay on the Child King's
breast.

AN ALLEGORY.

In musing frame I walked abroad
 To seek the borders of a wood,
 Where oftentimes I had espied
 A man named Effort toil for food.

Content this man if only he
 Could bless his home and walk aright ;
 For wife and bonny bairnies three
 He'd spend himself by day or night.

Oft as he worked and sang in peace,
 Two forms I noted hover round ;
 "Some wandering sheep, perchance," I said,
 "Whose fold may be in yonder ground."

But lo ! one day a nearer view
 Disclosed unto my wondering eyes
 The truth that yon pure fleece of wool
 But proved for wolves a fair disguise.

Thenceforth I marked them prowling there,
 And gliding round from tree to tree,
 Their evil eyes on Effort fixed,
 Whilst he toiled on for bairnies three.

Alas ! there dawned an evil day.

I walked within the wood once more ;
Ah me ! stretched out poor Effort lay,
A mangled corpse, all steeped in gore.

With sickening heart I gazed around,
Then sought the woodland's deeper shade ;
The wolves were there in human guise,
No longer in their skins arrayed.

Whilst all around on every hand
Lay scattered proofs of Effort's toil,
O'er which they bent with gleaming eyes,
And hands outstretched to share the spoil.

I marvelled much why this should be,
Till one stood by with noble mien,
Who read the wonder in my face,
And spake to me in tones serene.

“ My friend, yon wolves are Hate and Greed,
Who enter oft the human frame
By Satan's aid. Behold them there !
They know not pity, love, or shame.

“ Long have they marked poor Effort there.
Old Hate a grudge against him bore
In that he bravely fought for right,
So Hate in venom spoiled his store.

“Then Greed an eye upon him cast.
‘He thrives,’ thought he; ‘that game I’ll spoil;
What care I for the bairnies three,
If only I can win the spoil?’

“You wonder much why this should be,”
Continued he of noble mien;
“But come, within this mirror look,
And there behold a future scene.”

I looked within. Lo! Effort lay
Beside a form with thorn-crowned head,
Who softly touched the bleeding frame,
And raised it gently from the dead,

Then whispered, “’Twas My Father’s will
That thou should’st die a little space.
By thee He proved yon wolfish pair,
On whom His vengeance falls apace.

“But thou shalt rise, and brighter shine,
Though trampled once by Hate and Greed;
Work bravely on, all evil shun,
And God shall crown thy work indeed.”

Ere yet the words had passed away,
Or Effort vanished from my sight,
A fearful vision met my gaze,
Whilst shrieks of terror rent the night.

'Twas Hate and Greed, the hungry wolves,
In battle o'er their human guise.
I closed my eyes, and turned away
To breathe once more 'neath open skies.

IN THE MINSTER'S SHADOW.

The glorious light was fading in an old cathedral
 town,
 And the dark grey minster towers wore a burnished
 golden crown,
 As an old man, worn and weary, passed along the
 peaceful aisle,
 "Surely here," he whispered softly, "I may rest me
 for awhile."

'Twas the hour of evening service, so he knelt in silent
 prayer
 Till the strains of *Nunc dimittis* floating softly through
 the air
 Touched a sleeping chord in memory, and he saw
 himself once more
 'Midst that youthful band of singers, as in golden days
 of yore.

And beside him stood a figure (ah! he saw that boy
 alone)
 With a face of wondrous beauty and a voice of richest
 tone ;

'Twas his dearest friend, young Pedro, ever bright and
glad and gay,
Who had held his heart in bondage from his earliest
childhood's day.

Then arose another picture ; he had said a sad farewell
To the fair and beauteous maiden who had cast a witch-
ing spell
O'er a heart as true and noble as had ever throbbed in
man
Since the world sprang into order by our Maker's
mighty plan.

Ah ! he worked with joy and vigour in that distant
foreign clime,
Counting one by one the hours till the longed-for happy
time
When his darling May should greet him with a kiss
of purest joy,
And his well-loved comrade Pedro clasp his hands as
when a boy.

Yet again another picture passed before the old man's
sight ;
'Twas the scene which met his vision on that ne'er for-
gotten night,

When he saw his heart's best treasure clasped in
Pedro's fond embrace
Ere he turned to fly in anguish from his own dear
native place.

All his hopes and joys were blighted, and for years
well-nigh two-score
He had wandered, lone and weary, far from Britain's
well-loved shore ;
But to-night, within the shadow of the minster grey,
he stood
Till his heart grew soft and gentle, and he knelt in
chastened mood.

Full soon even-song was over, yet the old man still
knelt on
Till the scanty congregation, save a little child, had
gone ;
Then a sob of bitter anguish woke the echoes all around
As the wanderer turned in wonder at the unexpected
sound.

Swiftly fled the old, sad memories, whilst a subtle
thrill of joy
Shook the old man's tottering figure, as he gazed upon
the boy ;

For before him shone the features of his long-lost
darling May,
Who, he knew, had passed for ever from this weary
world away.

With a trembling hand he touched him, with unsteady
voice he cried
(Whilst the slender, boyish figure nestled closer to his
side):
“What hath caused the heartfelt sorrow? Why those
bitter, scalding tears?
Ah! methinks the strains of laughter best befit thy
tender years.”

“Ah!” the little one made answer, “my dear grandsire
lies alone;
I have come to seek my mother, for his hands are cold
as stone.
She went out to work this morning, ere had rung the
matin bell,
And she bade me watch and tend him, so I tried to
do it well.

“But he looked so white and quiet, and my mother
tarried long;
I bethought me of the minster; she had gone to even-
song.

But she was not here this evening, and she goes no
other way,
But to pray within the minster, ere the closing of the
day."

"Dry your tears, my brave young master," then the
old man made reply,
"We will seek your home together where your mother
may be nigh."
Then the tears were quickly banished, and as sunshine
after rain,
Shone a smile of joy and gladness on the fair young
face again.

Soon they gained the humble dwelling, and he found
his mother there :
But her eyes were full of anguish as she gazed upon
the pair.
Then the old man read the story, but his face grew
ashen grey
As he gazed on Pedro's features ; cold in death his
comrade lay.

Then he turned to Pedro's daughter, child of
beauteous, faithless May,
Who had toiled till life, strength, vigour, all were
fading fast away,

“Wilt thou be to me a daughter for thine own dear
mother's sake
Till I close my weary eyelids, never more on earth to
wake?”

Small the service she could do him, but he made it
thus appear
That he stood in need of succour, for he knew that
death was near
To that dark-eyed, pale-faced widow, and he loved
her little child,
Who recalled his darling's features. Ah! how fair, and
pure, and mild

Was the little one's expression. As he gazed his anger
fled;
Nevermore with thoughts of anger would he think
upon the dead.
He had learnt his Master's lesson, so his life was all
complete:
'Twas within the old grey minster that he found this
treasure sweet.

THE MODERN DIVES.

See St. Luke, chap. xvi., verse 19.

Not for sins of commission, but sins of omission,
 Was Dives the rich man condemned to the flame ;
 His poor, puny self, and his household of pelf
 Were all that he loved, or could love, to his shame.

Outside at his gate lay a poor starving brother—
 A chance sent from Heaven all blindly ignored ;
 In his miserable pride Dives turned him aside,
 And forthwith in Heaven his judgment was scored.

Less love than the dogs had the pampered old sinner,
 They tendered their pity by licking the sore ;
 But he in his health, and the pride of his wealth,
 O'erlooked the poor sufferer who lay at his door.

How oft do we note that old score's repetition
 In Dives to-day with his miserable "pile" ;
 But hand him a sheet with subscriptions replete :
 He'll sign it—the public will read it—and smile.

What cares he for Lazarus, though starving or dying,
 He's only a beggar ! Why trouble his brain ?
 'Twere not worth his while to scatter his "pile"
 To one by whom plaudits he ne'er could obtain.

On, carelessly on, midst his ease and his splendour,
 In selfish oblivion he passes through life ;
 From his home all around is excluded each sound
 That whispers of suff'ring, or sorrow, so rife.

*He thinks ne'er of words that shall sound as a death-
 knell,
 Consigning his soul to the doom of the lost ;
 Gehenna's wild flame bade great Dives proclaim
 The truth of those words to his own bitter cost.

Whilst Lazarus, the slighted, the poor homeless beggar,
 Who was scorned upon earth as the scum of the soil,
 In Paradise bright found a home of delight,
 And freedom from suff'ring and sorrow and toil.

* Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.—St. Matt. xxv., 45th and 46th.

THE ANGEL'S LESSON.

I entered a time-worn minster grey,
'Twas well-nigh filled by a motley throng.
My thoughts ran riot—I could not pray,
For Sorrow's hand was so firm and strong.
I chafed and wept 'neath a burden sore ;
Ah, surely none e'er such a burden bore.

As thus I wept came an angel bright,
Who spoke to me whilst the lights grew pale—
“ Follow me, child, I will grant thee light,
And show thee souls who, through Sorrow's vale,
Patiently walk with unruffled mien—
Each bearing a burden by all unseen.”

We swiftly sped to a mansion fair,
Where wealth and beauty and power held sway ;
Yet over this home hung a cloud of care—
It's only child, ever bright and gay,
Had lowered his mother's head with shame,
And sullied for ever his father's name.

We passed along to another scene.
A man lay low in a small dark room ;
His face bore traces of suffering keen—
No rest for him till he gains the tomb ;
And yet he was patient, bright, and glad,
Though life had been ever a burden sad.

Onward again ! In an office grey,
A youth sat writing ; whilst none could guess
That dark to him was each weary day,
Athwart his face not a smile the less
Flitted, because he had learned to take
A lowlier part for his mother's sake.

Onward, once more ! till a cry of pain
Smote on my ear. What a depth of woe
Lay in that pitiful, heart-wrung strain
None but her God and herself might know.
Turning, I saw her, a maiden fair,
Whose life I had pictured as free from care.

The angel turned with a look of love—
“ My child, I tell thee thy griefs are light.
'Twas granted me from my home above
To show thee these who, through Sorrow's night,
Bravely and sweetly their burden bear,
With a lively faith in their God's good care.”

I raised my eyes to the angel's face,
But found myself in the minster grey,
With naught before me but solemn space—
'Twas only a dream that had passed away.
But I bless my God for the vision fair
That taught me with patience my grief to bear.

ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM.

'Tis Easter morn ! and Church bells softly ringing,
 Send through the air their strains so sweet, and glad ;
 In unison earth's voices all are singing ;
 For Nature smiles, in hopeful verdure clad.

So thinks yon maid who treads the springing clover,
 On this bright morn beneath fair April skies,
 And mingling with a prayer for yon dear rover
 Who holds her heart, glad hymns to God arise.

Right well she knows that he in sweet communion
 With her will worship in you distant land.
 The dear old prayers ! how firm a bond of union
 They feel to her. The thought how great, and grand,

That o'er the sea those same pure prayers are wending
 Their Heaven-ward way ; with Bible precepts clear
 Each heart is warned, whilst myriad tongues are
 blending
 In one grand chant throughout the Church so dear.

She gains her pew: there sits a lonely mother,
 Whose boy midst city haunts treads life's rough way ;
 No need has she dark, boding fears to smother—
 She knows her boy, to-day, with her will pray.

His heart and hers shall rise in one petition
 From city church, from 'neath the village spire.
 Ah ! here indeed they shall not know division ;
 Heart joins with heart to God in pure desire.

And far away, this morn, o'er desert dreary
 A youth lies dying, parched with thirst and pain ;
 Each hour is long, his heart grows faint and weary,
 Till to his ear an old familiar strain

Comes gently floating, with a touch of healing ;
 He hears once more a sister's well-loved voice ;
 He pictures all, he hears the organ pealing ;
 Such memories bid the failing heart rejoice.

"'Tis Easter tide ! Ah ! they at home are kneeling,
 And pleading with our dear up-risen Lord :
 And I with them, to-day, to Christ appealing
 Will plead that I with Christ may rise restored,

*“To enter soon those gates of life, so glorious,
Flung open wide by Jesus’ conquering power ;
Who rose triumphant, over Death victorious,
To shed new light o’er mortals’ darkest hour.”

* See collect for Easter day.

OUTCAST.

“ There is joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth.”

Weary and worn along the desert way
 Of life she walks, for shame hath bowed her head ;
 She passes by, where once she knelt to pray,
 With heedless step, for Faith and Hope are dead.

But hark ! a sound ! 'tis music swelling high,
 Above the river's dark and sullen roll ;
 She cowers low with sad, despairing cry,
 As words* and music pierce her inmost soul.

* “ Weary of earth and laden with my sin,
 I look at Heaven and long to enter in,
 But there no evil thing may find a home ;
 And yet I hear a voice that bids me ‘ Come.’ ”

“ So vile I am, how dare I hope to stand
 In the pure glory of that holy land ?
 Before the whiteness of that throne appear !
 Yet there are hands stretched out to draw me near.”

Within the porch she creeps, and trembling stands,
 Whilst angels watch with loving, pitying eyes,
The outcast one, who, bound with iron bands
 Of sin and shame, for mercy humbly cries.

Ah see ! she kneels outside the old church door,
 To plead for pardon through her Saviour's love ;
Then sinking down upon the cold stone floor,
 She yields her soul to join the choirs above.

Then forth out-pours the crowd of rich and great,
 Who think they act a truly Christian part,
Because, forsooth ! they come in mighty state
 To worship God with proud and haughty heart.

Nor look, nor thought they deign the helpless mass
 Of rags and dirt so still beneath their feet ;
Ah, could they but the gate of Heaven pass,
 To hear the Angels' song of joy so sweet

O'er this poor soul who sinned, yet sinning came,
 Like Magdalene, to the Saviour's feet ;
He will not cast her out—He knows her shame,
 And grants her pardon free, and full, and sweet.

LITTLE WILL.

The night was dark, and the street was cold,
 And the rain came splashing down ;
 And Will was a lamb outside the fold
 In the busy, noisy town.
 No home had he in those alleys dark ;
 No friend in that motley throng ;
 No mother's eye to his footsteps mark,
 Or watch lest they wandered wrong.

He paused as the sound of music sweet
 Fell soft on his listening ear ;
 No more he thought of the rain and sleet,
 But crossed, with a thrill of fear,
 To a church which stood like a beacon bright,
 Midst those squalid haunts of sin ;
 Will held his breath with a deep delight,
 Yet he dared not enter in.

But still he stood, whilst the choir-boys sang
 To One whom he did not know,
 Who oft had borne full many a pang
 Of hunger, and pain, and woe. *

* Hymns A. and M., No. 281.

“ Ah, who can He be ?” said poor wee Will ;
“ Why that’s just the same as me,
For many a time I’m faint, and ill,
Wi’ never a one to see.

“ I’d like to get in an’ sing to Him,
Like them boys a-standin’ there.”
Poor Will had a fancy, faint and dim,
That the unknown One might care.
So his sweet young voice to the music rang
Unconscious of all around ;
He knew not the One to whom he sang,
Yet his Father heard the sound.

And one came out with a sweet, fair face,
Who spoke to the lonely boy,
And bade him enter the sacred place—
Ah ! it filled his soul with joy.
At last he heard of the Saviour dear,
Whose blood for his life was shed ;
And down his cheek rolled a big, hot tear,
As he thought of that Saviour dead.

“ I’d like to sing with them boy’s up there,”
Said Will ere he turned to go ;
“ An’ I’d like to die in that robe so fair
If He’d only will it so.”

.

Six months had fled, and those boys sang still
Their hymns in that chancel fair ;
But sweetest, and clearest, sang little Will,
Of any who worshipped there.
The noon-tide sun thro' the windows bright
Fell soft on each youthful brow,
Yet seemed to fall with a clearer light
On the little Arab now.

His head sank low on his heaving breast,
As he sang of home and love : †
Wee Will had passed to his last long rest,
And had found a home above.
They bore him out in his robe so pure,
In which he had yearned to die ;
He sang of home ! Ah ! his home was sure,
And he to that home was nigh.

† Hymns A. and M., No. 284.

THE MOUNTAIN SPIRIT'S LESSON.

In weary, fractious, restless mood,
 With spirit vexed and sore,
 I sought the mountain's lonely height,
 Where peace reigns evermore.

Perchance above yon surging crowd,
 Its endless strife, and pain,
 Life's tangled skein might clearer prove,
 And rest return again.

Presumptuous soul! I sought in vain
 To trace the Almighty's plan ;
 Nor faith, grown dim in life's dark maze,
 Could e'en His goodness scan.

As thus I mused a form appeared
 From out the mountain haze,
 Whose gentle touch, and kindly tone
 Matched well his pitying gaze.

“Go back my child, what do'est thou here?
 'Tis thine to trust and pray ;
 Nor question God's most gracious love,
 Though rough and hard thy way.

One day He'll make it straight, and plain,
Life's tangled mass unfold ;
And lead thee to a place of peace,
Midst splendours all untold.

Look, faithless one ! I'll raise for thee
One corner of the screen :
'Twill show to thee a picture true
Of what thou would'st have been

Had God His guiding Hand withdrawn
One moment, brief, from thine.
Go, faithless soul, nor question more
That gracious Will Divine."

I swiftly left the mountain height
To face the world again,
With faithless doubts and fears dispelled
The path of Duty plain.

Ah me ! beneath that veil I saw
A struggling form ; 'twas mine
Without a guide. God taught me thus
To trust His Hand Divine.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

'Twas Christmas Eve and the village street
Was wrapped in a robe of white ;
And the stars looked down from their heavenly home
On a Yule-tide fair and bright.

But the lights shone dim in the manor hall ;
And a cheerless, cold despair
Enshrouded the place, whilst the lady wept
O'er her first-born's empty chair.

He, the only son of a noble line,
Had branded his home with shame ;
And the old man mourned for his only child,
Though he never breathed his name.

But to-night he stood at his father's door,
And the servant turned away
With a cold contempt for the weary youth,
Who had ne'er a word to say.

Ah, his father knew ! As with nimble feet
He sprang to the great hall door,
The wanderer knew that his home was gained—
Would he ever leave it more ?

Then the bells rang out with a joyous peal,
'Twas the Christmas tidings old ;
'Twas the message of peace to the souls of earth
Who had wandered from the fold.

And the lights shone bright in the manor hall,
For a noble guest was there
In the spirit of peace and forgiving love
Who had lightened the chill despair.

THE IRVINE LIFEBOAT.

Dedicated to the Crew of the Irvine Lifeboat, who were instrumental in saving the Crew of the Norwegian Ship Frey, on the morning of Saturday, December 29th, 1894.

God bless the noble lifeboat crew, and may His strong
right arm
Encircle, guide, and help them as they answer each
alarm.
As they breast the foaming billows, bound on deed of
mercy true,
Must arise the reverent murmur, "God protect the
lifeboat crew."

Aye we echo "God protect them," for they fear not
unto death,
'Tis as brother helping brother that they face the
mighty breath
Of the gale in fury raging o'er the angry foaming sea.
Ah! these souls so brave and fearless, sure they trust,
Oh! God, in Thee.

Far away in distant Norway, where doth shine the
midnight sun,
Mother, maiden, wife, or sister prayeth for a cherished
one.
And the prayer heard is answered, for those hearts, so
brave and free,
Have responded to His message, Who once walked
upon the sea.

But amidst the shipwrecked number, one young life
has slipped away,
Yet perchance in distant Norway shall some loved one
softly pray
For a blessing on that brother who performed a kindly
deed,
To the lost one ere for ever he had sped from earthly
need.

And where'er around our islands dwells a gallant noble
band,
May He visit them with blessing, Who doth hold the
sea in hand,
Whilst they cleave the raging waters, thus to save
some shipwrecked crew,
Who in dark despair are wafting to their homes a last
adieu.

Ah, we know it ! yes, we know it ! 'tis from hearts so
true and leal
That we gain the noble heroes who effect their
country's weal ;
They are bravest midst the danger, they are strongest
in the fight,
For the demon " self " is vanquished in their aim to
do the right.

So the prayer must still re-echo from each heart o'er
land and sea,
Be he sailor, be he landsman, to the Christ of Galilee:
God be with them, God protect them, every gallant
lifeboat crew,
As they face the roaring tempest, on their deeds of
mercy true.

AT EVENTIDE IT SHALL BE LIGHT.

“The Lord shall give His people the blessing of peace.”
 Psalm xxix., 10.*

'Tis eventide, and all the earth is resting.
 Far in the west the sun is sinking down ;
 His lingering rays have kissed the apple blossom,
 Which, quivering lightly, falls, a pink-tipped crown,

On two bowed heads that wear the “crown of glory,”†
 For they within God's paths have daily trod
 Since first, full fifty years, they sat together
 Beneath that tree, and vowed to serve their God.

No youthful pair are they ; nigh eighty summers
 Have passed, with storm and sunshine, o'er each
 brow.
 Each after each their children have departed ;
 To them is left but one fair grandchild now.

* Version in Book of Common Prayer.

† Proverbs xvi., 31.

Sol's last bright ray has changed from gold to opal,
And all around speaks "light at eventide ;"
But still they wait, whilst evening shadows lengthen,
Hand locked in hand, as when she came a bride.

And just within the blossom laden orchard
Their fair young grandchild sings a full sweet song.
With reverent mien, each bows the head to listen.
"At eventide 'tis light," rings clear and strong.

And just across the hill, the organ, pealing
Within the church, takes up the sweet refrain ;
Then softly echoes, "God shall give His people
His blessing, peace," and earth repeats the strain.

The opal light has trembled into silver,
And earth is radiant 'neath the moon's pure light,
But still they wait beneath the apple-blossom,
Hand locked in hand, as ever so to-night.

Ah, hush ! for them shall dawn a bright to-morrow,
The Lord has granted them His gracious peace.
So surely as the evening shadows lengthen,
His light shall shine, and trials and sorrows cease.

ON A VISIT TO GLASGOW CATHEDRAL.

We pass beside each grass-grown grave,
Hush ! gently tread the soil—
The old, the young, the fair, the brave,
Rest here from earthly toil.

See yonder stands, in solemn state,
The old Cathedral pile ;
Methinks within that sacred gate
Is rest and peace awhile.

Long ages now have come and gone
Since first it reared its head,
In majesty it stands alone
As guardian of the dead.

High Art is here on every side,
In aisle, and nave, and choir,
A solemn beauty here doth 'bide
'Neath arch, and dome, and spire.

A chastened light is shed around,
A soothing balm doth flow,
Whilst Fancy hears in every sound
Some voice of long ago.

A solemn place, serenely grand,
Methinks 'tis holy ground,
Where Christians meet at God's command,
Where songs of praise resound.

Ah, sacred spot ! I leave thy door,
And thou art lost to sight,
Yet Memory holds thee evermore
Enshrined in deep delight.

FOR OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF
HEAVEN.

Suggested by an incident narrated by J. B. Gough.

“ No, I never 'eard o' Jesus,
An' He knows no one like me.
He is far too great an' mighty
Such a chap as me to see ;
An' I don't know 'ow to find 'im,
'E's so grand an' I so wee.

“ An' you know my leg is broken,
So I couldn't walk so far ;
An' I ain't a-got a copper
For to take me in a car :
'Sides, it ain't the least bit likely
If I went I'd find 'im thar.

“ An' I'd like so much to see 'im ”—
Sobbed a poor wee dying child.
Then an angel's tear fell softly
On the little Arab wild,
As the bright one softly whispered—
“ Ah ! thy Saviour, pure and mild,

“ Soon shall claim thee, wand’ring lambkin,
Gently house thee in His fold.
There thy trials and sorrows over,
Safely shielded from the cold,
Thou shalt rest where white-robed angels
Tune their harps of purest gold.”

Here he paused and smiled with gladness,
As another little mite
Whispered softly through the stillness :
“ Bobby, He may come to-night ;”—
(Ah ! methinks this dear wee Arab
Walked by faith and not by sight).

“ For you know in school they told me,
An’ it nearly made me cry,
’Twas so nice that this dear Jesus
Very often passes by.
So we may can make ’im see us.”
“ Do just, Bobby, only try ;

“ Hold your hands up steady ; this way !”
“ Oh ! I can’t, my arm’s so sore.”
Thrice he tried and thrice it failed him.
Then the angel smiled once more
As the suffering waif beside him
His own pillow handed o’er,

So that Bob, with propped up-fingers,
 Might attract Him as He came,
 To the crushed and bleeding lambkin
 Who had never heard His name.
 Ah! 'twere meet to make some Christians
 Bow their heads for very shame,

Thus to see that starving outcast
 In his self-denying love.
 'Tis for such as that wee Arab
 Hangs a golden crown above,
 For around such clings the radiance
 Of the white-winged Holy Dove.

Then a stillness filled the sick-ward,
 Whilst the angel vigil kept
 O'er the two small, weary sufferers,
 Who together sweetly slept
 Till Death's shadow, sent by Jesus,
 Softly through the sick-ward crept,

And with clammy, icy finger
 Touched the poor wee aching brow.
 Once again the angel whispered,
 "Of the scorned of earth wert thou,
 But we'll homeward speed together
 To a loving Saviour now."

Soon the roseate hues of morning
Tinted all the Eastern sky,
With a reflex of the glory
That surrounded Bob on high ;
Where he now has solved the mystery
Of a Saviour ever nigh.

THE ORPHAN'S RELIC.

[A little boy, from one of our charitable institutions, was being taken to a New Jersey farm by an agent, the owners of the farm having had the boy bound to them for a term of years, when the agent noticed that the boy kept placing his hand inside his jacket on the left side, and occasionally would look within with a tender look. At last he said, "What have you got in there, my little friend?" "Oh, nothing, sir," he replied, "only a bit of my mother's dress, which I've sewed on my coat. It was the dress she had on when she died, and now it kind of comforts me when I touch it."]

"Poor little orphan, so lonely and sad!
 What is the treasure that maketh thee glad?
 Close to thy heart it is folded away;
 Show me that treasure, I earnestly pray.

"Why is it watched with such love and such care?
 Is it a diamond, both costly and rare?
 Is it a jewel from the purest of gold?
 Is it a relic, both precious and old?"

"Yes, 'tis a relic! 'tis precious to me!
 Left me by one I shall never more see;
 Never more see on this cold earth of ours,
 Though I may meet her amongst Heaven's flowers.

- “ ’Tis not a jewel of the costliest gold,
’Tis not a diamond of value untold ;
Only a fragment, all tattered and grey,
Cut from her dress on that pitiful day.
- “ Yes, in that garment my mother was clad,
When to this hard world she left me so sad,
When she went home to her Saviour above,
Whom she had honoured and trusted in love.
- “ Ah, ’tis a comfort to me when I gaze
On this small fragment of past happy days ;
Happy they were, with my mother to love—
Oh may I meet her in Heaven above.
- “ That is the reason my treasure I prize,
Guarding it safely—the strongest of ties
Binds it to me ; ’twas my mother’s alone,
Thus it is dearer than costliest stone.
- “ Yes, when I look on my treasure so old,
Then my thoughts rise to the land of pure gold,
Well do I know she is happy up there ;
That I may join her is daily my prayer.”

RAILWAY PLATFORM MUSINGS.

I stand amongst a surging crowd
Upon a platform wide ;
The trains that rush so madly in
Add crowds on every side.

I see amongst that moving mass
Some faces stamped with pain ;
Whilst others there on which I gaze
Wear sunny smiles. Again

A few on whom the monster Greed
Hath laid his vile, coarse hand ;
And some—such faces are not rare—
Who bear Shame's awful brand.

And yonder stalks a Pharisee
With head uplifted high ;
None like himself amidst that crowd
Can this great one descry.

He little dreams yon beggar man,
But lately passed with scorn,
Shall gain an entrance into Heaven,
Whilst he's thrust back, forlorn.

Here stands an old man, bent and grey,
Whose work is well-nigh done ;
Yet youth, to-day, to him returns—
He greets a long lost one.

Ah ! here again I mourn to see
A face so pale and sad ;
Can aught on earth this lonely child,
Of all bereft, make glad ?

Soon by my side a figure stays,
A widow young, and fair,
Returning to her childhood's home,
Bowed 'neath a load of care.

Ah, hush ! A tender, sad farewell
A mother bids her child,
Who leaves the happy, sheltering home
To cross the watery wild.

I pass along a little space,
And meet a face of love ;
No earthly joy such light could give ;
It cometh from above.

And as I stand, there comes the thought :
None here may meet again ;
For each must go his lonely way,
Each bear his grief and pain.

For each one has a cross to bear ;
Our Father wills it so ;
But firm and strong the Hand that guides
Through daily toil and woe.

ONLY.

Only the touch of a little hand,
But it soothed a bleeding heart ;
For it lightened the load of a dull despair,
As it made the warm tear start.

Only a word ! But a word of love
To the wanderer gone astray ;
But it brought him back to the Saviour's feet,
And the dawn of a brighter day.

Only a look ! But a look replete
With the love of a kindly heart ;
Yet 'twas light in the life of a lonely child,
Where love held a minor part.

Only a song ! But it chased the gloom,
As she toiled for her daily bread ;
And her heart grew light, though a tear-drop fell
On the work before her spread.

Only a light ! But it sent a thrill
Through the souls of the homeward bound
And a heartfelt cheer o'er the dark blue wave
Rang out with a mighty sound.

Only a waif ! But his fresh young soul
Was filled with a purer love
'Than the world could guess ; of which none could
know
Save the angel hosts above.

Only the clasp of a toil-worn hand,
But 'twas firm, and true as steel ;
For it spoke of the love of an honest heart,
And a soul that was true and leal.

IN THE TWILIGHT.

She sits by the open window
In the holy twilight, dim,
Whilst over the dark, still water comes
The sound of a vesper hymn.

Full slowly the day-light dieth,
And hushed is each sound of toil,
Far over the bay broods a calm, sweet peace
Untouched by the world's turmoil.

She thinks, to-night, of the faces
That brightened her home of yore,
When life was one long, fair, summer day,
Replete with a wealthy store

Of love. But the tempest gathered,
And now she is old and grey ;
Whilst the early friends of her childhood's home
Have passed for ever away.

But hush ! As the sun-rays linger
Across by the western shore,
A whisper comes " In yon Heavenly home
There is light for evermore."

And still, as the shadows lengthen,
She dreams ; but her dreams are bright,
For she knows that the dawn of a fairer day
Shall gladden her with its light.

So there by the open window
She waits, whilst the light grows dim,
But a message sweet to her weary soul
Is the sound of the vesper hymn.

ONLY THESE.

Only a busy housewife !

But she nobly did her part,
In the wear and tear of the battle of life,
With a cheerful, thankful heart.

Only a dingy office !

But it held a jewel rare,
In the patient soul who had toiled for years
In that old grim office chair.

Only a servant maiden !

Who worked for the One above,
(As she pictured her Lord in His childhood's home)
With a humble, grateful love.

Only a brave young drummer !

But he ne'er forgot to pray,
For he thought of his mother's last fond words
Ere her spirit passed away.

Only a little school-maid !

But her Heavenly Father smiled,
As her favourite toy, with a kindly grace,
She gave to the orphan child.

Only a soul, enduring

Its burden of grief and pain,
As it yearns, in dread, o'er the wandering sheep,
Lest it's labours prove in vain.

Only a weary cripple !

Whose life was a dreary round ;
Yet the cross he bore, through his Saviour's love,
Shall yet to his praise redound.

Only an aged maiden !

But her's was a noble life,
For she laid it all at the Saviour's feet,
Midst the haunts of sin and strife.

BETRAYED.

I saw her once an infant fair ;
Her eyes of deepest, darkest hue
Gazed rapt upon the Infinite,
Entranced by scenes beyond my view.

We met again when she had grown
To girlhood's fair and bright estate ;
Nor ever dreamed that o'er her hung
So cruel and hard and dark a fate.

Then one came by who o'er her cast
The glamour of his withering love.
Ah ! call it not by name so pure :
He bears the curse of God above.

And now I see her lying there,
A bruised and battered, helpless heap ;
None e'er may know her bitter pain,
E're yet she took that fatal leap.

None e'er shall probe the broken heart ;
The God of all alone can see
And know the pangs which racked her soul,
Ere yet she sought eternity.

Ah, Christ ! Who on the Magdalene
Did'st gaze in tenderest pity down,
Look on this helpless, sullied soul,
And from her sins avert Thy frown.

And at the last, when Thou shalt judge
Betwixt betrayer and betrayed,
Look gently on this erring one,
Who, like the Magdalene, hath strayed.

A BROKEN HEART.

“ Agnes Gubert is dead. According to Rubinstein she possessed the richest and most wonderful of all human voices. The impresario, Strakoseh, offered her in his time £10,000 for a six months’ concert tour. She refused, and took the veil, burying her voice and the fortune of a prima donna within the walls of a Baltimore convent. There, it is said, she was not permitted to sing in the choir lest she should grow vain and repent of her vows. The American papers say that this brutal restriction broke her heart.”—*Christian Million*, July 8, 1886.

A broken heart! small wonder that the soul,
 Endowed on earth with wondrous gifts divine,
 Should burst its bonds to gain a fairer goal,
 Where none but pure-souled kindred spirits shine.

Position, wealth, and honours manifold
 Were hers at will—so great her gift of song;
 And yet for her no charm had glittering gold,
 Or plaudits loud of fashion’s motley throng.

How slow to comprehend the spirit meek
 That yields to God all praise for gifts and power
 Are narrow souls. Their faith how blind and weak
 Who thus would seek to hide God’s own fair dower.

Though blind their faith who cruelly sought to stay
The glad out-pouring of a thankful heart
Within God's Holy Temple, day by day,
Their aim was pure—submission was her part.

Ah ! who shall tell the agony and pain,
The wild heart-throbs that she in anguish bore !
As high above the Temple's gilded vane
Rose chant and hymn—'twas hers to sing no more.
They feared that she, e'en there would yield to pride,
So stilled her song ! and then the songstress died.

ONLY A LITTLE FAULT.

Only an infant, so pure and white !
 Straight from its Heavenly home of light ;
 Only a gem to the earth sent down,
 A precious jewel in the Saviour's crown—
 A wee one dear to His tender heart,
 He sends in life's drama to act a part.

Only a child with a stubborn will :
 " Leave him alone, he's an infant still ;
 Leave him alone for a little while,"
 His mother says with a careless smile.
 And the fault grows stronger day by day,
 As the wee one follows his own sweet way.

Only a boy with a fair, bright face,
 But ways that sully its winsome grace ;
 With words and actions so dark and vile,
 That Satan looks on with cold, grim smile,
 And whispers—watching him day by day—
 " I shall find him at last an easy prey."

Only a youth, but the path of crime
His footprints bear ere his manhood's prime ;
He drinketh oft at each poisoned well,
By the pathway that leadeth straight to Hell ;
And the road grows darker day by day,
As he wearily plods the gloomy way.

Only a felon with blackened fame,
And bowed to earth by a load of shame ;
As his mother weeps in his prison cell,
Ere yet shall sound in her ear the knell
That heralds doom to the child she bore.
“ Ah, God, could I only my life live o'er !”

She cries, while her heart grows cold as stone,
“ In aught, in aught can I e'er atone ?
Had I checked my child in the downward way
When the sins were small, he had stood to-day
In God's free air with a conscience pure—
Ah, God, can I live and this pain endure ?

“ Oh grant me, God, that I close my eyes
Ere my darling boy as a felon dies.
May I pass away to the world unseen
Ere dawns the morrow.” The anguish keen
Has cut too deep to the mother's heart,
And Death ere the morrow performs his part.

DAUNT THEM NOT.

Daunt not the hearty singer,
Though the music be not grand,
He shall chant a truer measure
In his own dear fatherland :
And the service pure and simple
Shall our Heavenly Father take,
For He knows such heartfelt worship
Rises upward for His sake.

Daunt not the earnest worker,
Though the fruitage oft may fail,
He shall win the Saviour's blessing,
Though his faithful heart may quail
At the many trials and dangers
Which beset his weary soul,
As he presses slowly onward
To the long-desired goal.

Daunt not the patient mother,
Who has watched long years in vain
For her loved and long-lost darling ;
She shall find her child again

In the House of many mansions,
For her faith, a full, rich store,
Prompts each prayer that he may meet her
On the ever-radiant shore,

Daunt not yon pale-faced maiden,
As she prays with heart and soul
For the sailor laddie, ice-bound
At the frozen Arctic pole ;
For her prayer speeds to Heaven
On the wings of faith and love,
And the sailor lad is shielded
By an angel from above.

Daunt not the little prattler
As it smiles in trustful glee,
For the gentle Shepherd loves it—
“ Bid them all to come to Me,
For of such My Father’s kingdom !”
Were his tender words, replete
With a wealth of love and blessing
For each little prattler sweet.

.

THE POOR STREET SINGER.

“Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him.
—James ii. 5.

(Suggested by an old man singing in the street.)

Poor old man, thy voice is quivering,
Cold and weak, why art thou there ?
Thy poor frame, I see it shivering,
Thou hast only rags to wear.

Singing on, though hope is fleeting,
All seems dark before thee now ;
But for hope of happier meeting,
Thou would'st 'neath thy burden bow.

Who, 'mongst all these anxious toilers,
Thinks upon thy cheerless fate,
Now that age, a great despoiler,
Claims thee in its drear estate ?

Ah ! methinks, in youth's bright morning
Life was not to thee as now ;
Thoughtless souls thy sorrow scorning
As each furrow lines thy brow.

Home, perchance, was bright and beaming,
With sweet faces true and kind,
Wife and children little dreaming
They would leave thee thus behind.

Singing on, though hope is fleeting ;
Oh, take courage ! weep no more !
Thou shalt have a happier greeting
Yonder on the golden shore.

In yon heavenly country dwelling,
With thy dear ones by thy side,
Sweetest music round thee swelling
Praises to the Lamb who died.

Clothed in whitest, purest raiment,
Thou shalt wear a golden crown,
Which a poor and humble claimant,
Thou hast won 'neath Sorrow's frown.

TO A LILY.

Beauteous lily, passing fair,
 What to thee can e'er compare?—
 Stately, pure, and white.
 Holding firm thy graceful head,
 Thou a charm around doth shed,
 Child of beauty bright.

Honoured thou by Christ our Lord,
 Preached by Him in Sacred Word,
 Teaching Faith and Trust ;
 Helping us to look above
 To the Lord of Life and Love,
 Free from earth's dark dust.

Emblem fair of innocence,
 Looking up to Heaven, whence
 Comes thy beauty rare.
 Growing free from earth's dark soil,
 Lest a spot thy beauty spoil,
 This thine only care.

So may thus our souls be free
From the loathsome tyranny
 Of dark sin so vile.
Taught by thee a lesson sure,
May we live both white and pure,
 Ever free from guile.

TO A SNOWDROP.

Beautiful snowdrop ! so spotless, and pure,
 Teaching us nobly how best to endure ;
 Meeting the storm, thou dost bend to the blast
 Humbly and sweetly, till sunshine at last

Whispers, once more, of fair Spring's sunny hours,
 Bears unto all the sweet perfume of flowers,
 Brightens the hearts of the lonely and sad,
 Bids that old Earth in new beauty be clad.

Beautiful snowdrop ! the fair Home above
 Surely doth claim thee, though God, in His love,
 Deemed thee for earth a fit messenger fair,
 Linking our lives to the fair Home up there.

Bending so meekly, though thou art so fair,
 Spotless humility, sweet as it's rare,
 Beautiful snowdrop ! from thee may we learn
 Pride and presumption for ever to spurn.

Ever may we in thy pure spotless white
 Truly be clothed in our great Father's sight.
 Beautiful snowdrop ! like thee may we bend
 Patient, and trustful as thee to the end.

THE EXILE'S RETURN.

I pass the old familiar home
In the quiet village street ;
But I dare not enter now,
For none but strangers' feet
Tread the well-remembered path
'Neath the purple lilac's shade,
Where my soul went forth in a song of love
To a fair and gentle maid.

I pass the dear old trysting stile ;
It is sacred to me now !
Ah ! I fain would linger there
Beneath yon hawthorn bough !
But my soul is crushed with pain
As I think on the happy past,
The past that shall come to me never again
As long as my life shall last.

I pass the old familiar home,
Where I knew a mother's love ;
But a stranger too is there,
She dwells in bliss above.

Ah ! mine is a lonely way ;
But the darkness leaves my soul,
As I think on the friends who have gone before
To a fairer, brighter goal.

And I pass once more the dear old house
In the quiet village street ;
But my heart is warmer now
Though none but strangers' feet
Tread the well-remembered path
'Neath the purple lilac sweet ;
For I pray we may meet in a Heavenly home
Where love is a joy complete.

TO A FRIEND ON HER BRIDAL MORN.

(SEPTEMBER 2ND, 1887.)

The morning dawns at last,
 Thy bridal day ;
God grant it prove serene and bright,
And, star-like, cast a peaceful light
 Along life's way.

Before thee, from this day,
 A new life lies ;
New hopes, new duties lie beyond
This sacred path—this mystic bond—
 And holier ties.

Within another home
 As queen thou'lt reign ;
But we shall miss thy face and voice,
And yet with thee we would rejoice,
 Nor heed the pain.

May joy o'er thee be shed,
 And blessings rare ;
May all thy path be strewn with flowers,
Nor lightest breath of evil powers
 E'er cause a care.

And if misfortune's shade
 Should cloud thy life,
God's blessed love enfold thee round,
His peace, His strength, His grace abound,
 To quell the strife.

Ah, none can be as He,
 So true a friend ;
On this I rest, and wish thee joy,
His peace, His love without alloy
 'Till time shall end.

WAITING.

'Twas eventide, and down by the wild sea-shore
 There wandered, in mute despair,
 A maiden of beauty rare—
 No lily was e'er so fair ;
 Yet sorrow's dart had pierced to her pure heart's core.

And ever and on the wind blew cold and shrill,
 Whilst the waves took up the strain
 In a wild, weird moan of pain ;
 And ever the old refrain,
 " He cometh not," sped over the waters chill.

" He cometh not, and life is all dreary now,"
 She sang, " and all hope seems dead.
 Ah ! bitter the tears I've shed !
 Doth he sleep in ocean bed ?
 Or worse, perchance in life he forgets his vow.

" Week after week glides by, but he cometh not ;
 And the months roll into years,
 Whilst my eyes are dim with tears,
 As my heart grows faint with fears,
 And over the sunlight creeps a dull dark blot.

“ He vowed to me, in the days when Hope was young,
To be true and leal for aye ;
So my heart went, light and gay,
With my sailor lad away,
And Hope sang oft with her clear and silvery tongue.”

One moment more, and out of the far west line
Shot gleams as of purest gold.
Ah ! they filled the heart so cold
With a wealth of peace untold,
And into her soul there shone a light divine.

And now she knows, as homeward she wends her way,
With Hope singing sweetly still,
That oft 'tis our Father's will
Thus to lead to good through ill,
And grant in darkness gleams of eternal day.

NEVER AGAIN.

DEDICATED TO A BEREAVED FRIEND.

Cold and drear is each morning's dawning,
 Weary and sad the evening fall ;
 Low in the grave lies my blue-eyed darling,
 Gone for ever beyond recall.

Never again shall those fond lips murmur
 Words of tender, undying love,
 Never again shall those strong, true fingers
 Tighten on mine till we meet above.

Never again shall those eyes of violet
 Meet my own with their radiant smile,
 Never again shall those springing footsteps
 Music make as they cross the stile.

Over the sunlight creeps a shadow,
 Over the moonbeams a mist of tears ;
 Stars look down, ah ! methinks in pity,
 Sadly the song-birds greet my ears.

.

“God is good,” did I hear them murmur?
 “He knows best Who has taken away.”
 Did they suffer my bitter anguish?
 Could they so calmly kneel to pray?

.

Never again 'neath the drooping lilac
 Shall we meet at the gloamin' hour;
 God has taken away my darling—
 God is good and I trust His power.

Never again shall this sad repining
 After the dear one gone before
 Cloud my life, for the Master bids me
 Live for Him till I gain the shore,

Where my darling shall bid me welcome,
 Angel-clad by the Saviour's side,
 And our love shall have grand fulfilment,
 Fair, and chastened, and glorified.

IN SUMMER WEATHER.

We wandered hand in hand together
 O'er hill and dell and flowery mead,
 All heedless whither it might lead,
 The pathway in this Summer weather ;
 Our hearts were light for love was bright,
 All else seemed nothing in our sight.

Love led the way, and in her pleasure
 She bade the trees smile gaily down
 On us from where each leafy crown
 Met Heaven. They, waving to her measure,
 Made music rare which filled the air,
 Whilst eyes of love made all things fair.

We wandered hand in hand, nor ever
 Knew lilac bloom so fair before,
 Or hawthorn yield so rich a store
 Of blossom. And perchance they never
 Shed bloom so wide as when they vied
 To kiss my beauteous winsome bride.

We wandered hand in hand together
Down by the quiet river side,
Nor deemed that ill could us betide
Where lilac grew in this fair weather ;
'Twas Paradise, and in our eyes
Reflected Heaven beneath the skies.

We wandered hand in hand together,
And knew a pleasure well nigh pain,
Nor would for all the world could gain
The memory lose of that bright weather,
When heart met heart no more to part,
Transfixed and joined by Love's fair dart.

We wandered hand in hand together,
Nor ever breathed a single vow ;
No need, our hearts each other's now,
The angels knew that naught could sever ;
Our paths might part, but Love's fair dart
Must hold for ever heart to heart.

AN AUTUMN IDYL.

As silver o'er the landscape the harvest moon is
 shining,
 Enfolding each fair golden sheaf with softly mellowed
 light,
 Whilst by the orchard yonder, where trees are richly
 laden,
 A nightingale sings sweetly in the stillness of the
 night.

Away o'er the meadow floats a sound of Heavenly
 music,
 Melodious, clear, and sweet upon the silent evening
 air,
 To mingle with the lowing of the kine by yonder
 river—
 Ah! methinks I hear a whisper, "'Tis a world
 surpassing fair."

Athwart the moon-kissed greensward flows a glistening
 silver streamlet,
 Whose soothing cadence mingles with the night-
 ingale's sweet song,
 Whilst the deep blue vault of Heaven sheds o'er all a
 solemn glory,
 As they bless their great Creator in a grand *te deum*,
 long.

In the distance stands "God's Acre," where the peaceful
dead are resting,

Grouped around the House of Prayer with its ivy-
mantled tower.

Ah! 'tis surely so; the moonbeams rest with softer,
purer radiance

O'er this spot where sleeps the peasant side by side
with vanished power.

All golden lie the meadows 'neath their wealth of
Autumn glory,

Enfolded by the shelter of the everlasting hills,

Whose heights are wreathed in vapour as by angel
wings encircled,

And whose silent, solemn beauty through the inmost
being thrills.

Ah! those hills they rise to Heaven, and are lost in
golden glory;

Yes, methinks 'tis e'en the gateway of yon glorious
Home Divine;

And the misty forms as angels are the guardians of
the pathway

Where the pearly gates shall open and the walls of
jasper shine.

PARTED.

Parted ! yes in anger,
 On that bitter day.
 "Go," she said, "for ever,
 I do not bid thee stay."

Softly waved the roses
 On that sun-lit day,
 As in voiceless anguish,
 He tore himself away.

Waved again the roses
 On that fair June day,
 As within "God's Acre"
 We laid her form away.

Softly played a sunbeam
 O'er the silent grave,
 Whispering to the mourner,
 "He takes but what He gave."

Evening shadows lengthen,
Thirty years have fled,
By her tomb he kneeleth,
The one who loved the dead.

Morning lights awaken,
Still he kneels alone,
Naught but clay remaineth,
The wearied soul has flown.

Yes, they once in anger
Parted ; but above
Meet to find how sorrow
Resets the jewel of love.

ON CRAIGIE HILL.

I stand on Craigie's ancient height:
 The scene around is passing fair,
 O'er hill and dale and meadow there,
 So softly falls the waning light.
 Whilst Sol sinks low behind the hills to rest—
 Those hills of Arran standing bold and clear,
 A glorious splendour brightens all the West,
 Like Heaven's fair portals drawing slowly near.

The ocean lies, with changing hue,
 Beyond the fields of tender green ;
 And o'er its rolling breast a sheen
 Of silver plays above the blue.
 And yonder, in the midst, proud Ailsa's rock
 Up-rears its lofty, proud, majestic head !
 So firm it stands, this sturdy, sea-washed block,
 Memento old of by-gone centuries dead.

And here and there, in snowy guise,
 Stand out the dwellings, fresh and fair,
 Of those who with surpassing care
 Till all the soil that round me lies.

They work with God from morn till eventide,
They sow and reap, but He the increase yields ;
A glorious thought on which with holy pride
To dwell, as they of treasure strip the fields.

And far below old Killie stands
With all her chimneys, homes, and spires ;
The birthplace fair of noble sires,
Whose lights shine forth in other lands.
Fain would they stand where I am standing now
To gaze upon their happy childhood's home ;
Perchance they dwell midst wealth and splendour's
glow,
Or midst the forests of the Far West roam.

Beneath the hill the village lies
Enwrapt in quiet evening peace ;
When Nature claims that toil shall cease
An angel watches from the skies.
The moon peeps forth in silvery radiance clear—
A fair and beauteous day gives place to night ;
And pleasure, well-nigh pain, draws forth a tear,
As God I praise for all His glorious might.

BY THE DEAN.

I wandered by the Dean as the evening shadows fell,
And stars peeped gently forth, with a strangely magic
spell ;
From the past a veil was lifted, then I saw them as of
yore :
Noble lords and gentle ladies, who shall grace its halls
no more.

What a song of love and sorrow did the rippling water
sing,
As it glided gently onward where the trees their
shadows fling ;
Echo of the tender love-songs, sung by gallant knights
of old,
Meet to win the high-born maiden, were she e'er so
proud and cold.

Through the leaves the wind was sighing, in a sad and
mournful strain,
While earth's voices softly blended in a solemn, sweet
refrain ;

Did they mourn the vanished splendour of the stately
home so fair,
Which the hand of Time hath chastened to a beauty
soft and rare ?

Did I dream, or was it fancy, that I saw a maiden fair
Issue from the noble castle with a slow, majestic air ;
In her eyes a steadfast purpose, yet a cloud upon her
brow,
As she crossed the ancient courtyard ? Ah ! methinks
I see her now.

'Twas to speed a noble warrior on his way to meet the
foe.

Would it matter to the maiden though they laid her
lover low ?

Yes, it mattered, but 'twere better thus to bear the
keenest pain,

Than that honour should be darkened by a foul and
bitter stain.

“ Why not keep him ? ” said the tempter, “ there are
thousands o'er and o'er,

Who can fight their country's battles : you may see
him nevermore.”

But the patriot spirit conquered, and she raised her
fair young head,

As she crossed the ancient courtyard with a statelier,
firmer tread.



Then the last good-bye was spoken, and the warrior
rode away,
But he nobly did his duty on that dark and trying day,
For he heard the words around him, above clash, and
din, and strife,
“ If you do your duty nobly, you may claim me for
your wife.”

But he never saw the sunset ; cold and still among
the slain
Lay the brave and noble warrior, whil’st the maiden
watched in vain,
Till there came a swift retainer, with a message from
the dead—
“ I shall win my bride in Heaven,” were the only
words it said.

DUNDONALD GLEN.

I stood in the midst of Dundonald's fair glen,
'Twas near, yet seemed far, from the dwellings of men,
How sweet thus to rest me, in Nature's own bower,
On a carpet of green, decked with many a flower.

I heard in the village the children at play,
They all seemed so happy this bright Summer day ;
Their voices, like music, so bright, sweet and clear,
Rang out through the stillness. Ah me! why that tear ?

It fell as I thought of the sorrow and care,
The trials, and temptations, in which they must share ;
Though Jesus before them hath lightened the road,
'Tis only to tread in the pathway He trod.

A fair spot, The Glen, where the weary may rest ;
With dame Nature dressed in her grandest and best ;
'Midst quiet so soothing, all sorrow and pain
Took wings and departed—sweet peace was my gain.

There looming above, yet half-hidden from sight,
Stood the old castle walls, bathed in Sol's glorious light :
The heavens above me, so cloudless and blue,
The longer I gazed seemed the deeper in hue.

The birds on the branches sang gaily o'erhead,
Was it Fancy that whispered I knew what they said ?
Their chant was a simple, sweet lesson of hope
That gave me more courage with trouble to cope.

There are places as fair in this world to be found—
Wherever we wander new beauties abound ;
But ask me for beauty, peace, pleasure : Oh, then
I should say, "Go, and seek them in Dundonald Glen."

SCOTIA.

*Dedicated to friends across the sea, who look back with
loving hearts to their ain dear native Ayrshire.*

Ah Scotia ! auld Scotia, the brave an' the free,
Thy hills clad wi' heather are dear aye tae me ;
Thy mountains an' rivers, thy lochs and thy glens,
Are a' thy ain glories, which God tae thee len's.

Auld Scotia, the lan' o' the Wallace an' Bruce,
Whase names tae auld Cowardice aye give a truce ;
Thy straucht sturdy thistle still rears its prood head
Whaure'er thy brave troops are tae victory led.

Ah Ayrshire ! fair Ayrshire ! the hame whence the fire
An' genius o' " Rabbie " sprang forth tae inspire
The sons o' his kintra wi' thochts great an' gran',
Called forth by the scenes o' his dear native lan'.

An' weel dae I ken in that hame-lan' o' mine
Are frien's wha think aft on the days o' lang syne,
Frien's han's that clasp mine o'er the blue foamin'
 main,
An' cheers me in laneliness, maist kin tae pain.

Aye Scotia ! fair Scotia ! in fancy I see
 Ae corner. Sweet Ayrshire, hoo dear thou'rt tae me ;
 Within thee a bairnie, wi' bairnies I played,
 An' aft through thy meadows fu' happily strayed.

Hoo aft hae I sat through the lang Summer day
 In yon dear auld Schule-hoose, yet wished me away,
 Whene'er past the window a butterfly flew,
 Or a bee humming softly ascended to view.

An' there, speak it gently, below the green sod
 Lie forms that were dearer than 'ocht save my God.
 Weel, weel dae I min' them, the faithfu', the true,
 An' oot o' the memory hope springs forth anew.

As I leuk tae the day when we'll meet ance again,
 An' a' that's noo hazy shall grow clear and plain ;
 When pain shall be banished, an' pairtin's be ne'er,
 Or ocht that could even draw forth a saut tear.

Fair Scotia ! dear Scotia ! richt weel dae I ken
 That nocht on the mainlan' could grace tae thee len'.
 God bless thee then, Scotia, I earnestly pray,
 An' grant thee His guidance for ever an' aye.

MY NATIVE LAND.

I long for the home I have left far behind,
The home I may ne'er see again ;
Each dear spot imprinted so bright on my mind,
Now gives me both pleasure and pain.

'Tis pleasure to think on the fair sunny hours
I spent in the land of my birth,
Where happy and gay, 'neath her green leafy bowers,
I sported in frolicsome mirth.

Her fields are so green and her hills are so fair,
Her skies of a deep azure blue,
Her blossoms have beauty so rich, sweet, and rare,
All clad with an exquisite hue.

Her daughters are true, and her sons strong and brave,
All loving their dear native land ;
Ever ready to fight, their fair country to save,
And shield from an enemy's hand.

'Tis pleasure to think on dear friends true and kind,
But still it is mingled with pain,
The memory so dear leaves a sharp sting behind,
As I think "shall we e'er meet again?"

Ah yes! we may meet, though long years stand between
Where partings for ever are o'er;
Ah yes! we may meet, where our Lord shall be seen,
To dwell in His home evermore.

'Tis sweet thus to think on the dear native land,
But better to think on the love
Which sent down a ransom with merciful hand,
To win us a bright home above.

A TRIBUTE OF LOVE TO MY EARLY HOME.

I'm far, far away from the land of my birth,
 The home where I sported in innocent mirth ;
 Yet where'er I may wander, by land, or by sea,
 I'll still pay a tribute, fair Wyndham, to thee.

There winding along, just a few feet below,
 As silver in sunlight, gleams old river Yeo ;
 Oft Wyndham, I've stood on thy tree-crownêd brow,
 As Memory flies backward I see thee e'en now.

Glad scenes of my childhood, so peaceful and still,
 How often I've wandered o'er Summer-house hill ;
 Whilst Rifleman's Bridge was a wonderful sight,
 And Newton's fair pathways a source of delight.

In Roping-path hedge grew the sweetest of " May,"
 Full well did I prove it each long Summer day ;
 In Goodford's fair " Folley " what primroses grew,
 And sweet-smelling violets all gleaming with dew.

Blackberrying, and nutting ! ah ! how can I tell
The pleasures they yielded ? each child knows it well ;
And then those grand picnics to Montacute woods !
They'd have brightened the darkest, most sombre of
moods.

That well-lov'd old school, with its bevy of girls,
I see it once more 'cross fate's eddies and swirls—
'Those dear ladies, three, who o'er all did preside,
How kindly they sought each young footstep to guide.

Full often in spirit those days I live o'er,
Within them is hidden life's wealthiest store,
God bless the dear home of those fair ladies, three,
'Their memory for ever is precious to me.

MY CHILDHOOD'S HOME.

The memory of my childhood's home
 For ever clings to me ;
 'Tis in the twilight's peaceful hour
 Its fairest scenes I see.

I see it in the fresh bright Spring,
 When all is fair and clear
 And Nature with a mystic charm
 Enfolds the opening year.

Beneath the Summer's warmer glow,
 And brighter, bluer sky,
 The one dear land I love so well
 Still greets my memory's eye.

Amidst fair Autumn's wealthy store
 Of rich and golden grain,
 When every heart is sending up
 A thankful, glad refrain,

And 'neath stern Winter's snowy robe
Of dazzling purest white,
When Nature all is hushed and still,
It flits before my sight.

That home, where childhood's early days
Were spent in mirth and glee,
Shall live for aye enshrined in love,
And sacred be to me.

And may I ne'er forget to pray,
Wherever I may roam,
That God will bless that beautiful spot,
My childhood's early home.

THE AGED EMIGRANT'S FAREWHEEL.

Fareweel, my ain dear country, I shall never see thee
 mair,
 I lea' thy purple heather wi' a heart baith cauld an'
 sair—
 Wi' a heart that's weel-nigh breakin' as thy shores
 recede frae sicht,
 An' I leuk my last upon thee in the cauld grey
 mornin' licht.

I am growin' auld and feeble—aye, my race is nearly
 run,
 Though I lea' thy lowly shelter for a hame whaur
 yonder sun
 Shines wi' dazzlin' licht and splendour, whaur the gold
 dust doth abound.
 Ah! I'm sure that I shall weary when I'm oot o'
 sicht and sound

O' thy weel-lo'ed hills an' heather, o' thy proud an'
 lofty bens,
 O' thy bonnie lochs and rivers, o' thy fair an' lovely
 glens ;
 O' thy patriotic children who a' luvè their native soil,
 An' in sweet contentment labour at their honest daily
 toil.

Whaur I played in life's fair morning ; whaur in early
manhood's pride
Did I woo an' win my Effie, then a fair and blushin'
bride ;
Whaur, save ane, in death's long slumber doth my
sax fair bairnies sleep,
Is the dearest spot 'neath Heaven. Do ye wonder
that I weep ?

Sae, fareweel, my ain dear country, I shall never see
thee mair ;
But I'll pray tae Ane abune us tae enfauld thee wi'
His care—
That thy bairnies may be blessed an' thy garners fu'
an' fair.
Ah ! fareweel, fareweel, my country, I shall never see
thee mair !

TO MY MOTHER ON HER BIRTHDAY.

Oh mother dear ! on this thy natal morn,
 No words express what I would say to thee ;
 Thou dost around thee shed a light new born
 Of every action sweet ; in each we see

Thy patient love to us, and all around,
 Where sorrow reigns, lo ! there we thee shall find,
 Thy listening ear awake to every sound
 Of grief, or pain, to self for ever blind.

Thy love so pure, unselfish, good and kind,
 I'll ne'er forget until my latest day ;
 Within my heart that love for aye enshrined,
 Shall cheer me onward through life's desert way.

Grand Bible truths, learned by my lisping tongue,
 And holy prayers taught to me by thine,
 And maxims pure, as round thy knee I hung,
 Shall form for thee a jewelled crown divine.

May richest blessing on thy brow descend ;
 May time to come be crowned with purest joy.
 Oh mother dear ! may God thy steps defend,
 And grant thee His pure peace without alloy.

TO MY FATHER.

My father dear ! the soul of kindness, blent
With patience, dwells in thee ; a deep true love
Hath blessed my days, and I am well content ;
Shadowed in thee I learn, I feel above

The cares of earth, how the great Father's soul
Around His children cleaves in patience rare,
In love and yearning grants no niggard dole ;
But rich full grace to every child a share.

Ah ! father, blessing rich on thee descend ;
Thy locks of grey be crownèd with light divine ;
God's gracious Hand thy pathway e'er defend,
And His true love around thee ever shine.

A PRAYER.

Oh God! Oh God! my heart is sad, I turn to Thee
alone,
For none on earth can ever feel for this cold heart of
stone ;
'Tis only Thou can'st read the soul, or comprehend
the cry
That pierces through Heaven's vaulted arch to Thy
bright throne on high.

Oh God! Oh God in pitying love look down upon
Thy child,
Who pleads with Thee in tears and pain, nay! bitter
anguish wild ;
Grant me in faith my will to yield, and merge it into
Thine,
So shall a flood of light and peace around my pathway
shine.

A PRAYER FROM A WEARY SOUL.

My spirit fails, Oh Lord ! my strength is small,
 And I am weary of the toilsome way ;
 Oh ! help me, Christ, my Saviour and my all,
 I need Thy love to cast a cheering ray

Athwart the path that I should gladly tread.
 I stumble oft. The way I find is drear ;
 A form before me walks, but far ahead,
 Lit by Thy love, it shines a beacon clear.

'Tis Thy dear form, I see Thee going before ;
 But weakness clogs my steps, I fall behind,
 Whilst pitfalls gather ever more and more ;
 Oh ! Lord give light to me so inly blind.

My spirit sinks 'neath trouble, pain, and grief,
 Thou Who hast borne a cross, give strength to bear ;
 In pitying mercy send Thy child relief,
 Stretch forth Thine hand and make that child Thy
 care.

Oh ! Lord, my sins are black, they weigh me down,
I would be pure, and fair, more like to Thee ;
I pray Thee fit me for a lasting' crown,
That I one day Thy glory, Lord, may see.

Grant me to gaze on Thee, Who died for all,
Help me to know Thee, Saviour, as Thou art ;
Do Thou in pity Thy poor wanderer call
In those sweet tones that heal the wounded heart.

A WORD TO THE WEARY.

Hope on, my friend, yes hope ! Hope on forever ;
What would our lives without this day-star be ?
When friends by death are called upon to sever,
Hope's finger points to where the shadows flee.

Hope on, my friend, yes hope ! Hope on, ye weary !
O'er life's rough road hope cheers the gloomy way,
And whispers softly, " Child, the light serenely
Shall fall at eve ; heed not the darkest day."

Hope on, my friend, yes hope ! Through every sorrow
Hope bids you know that trials and sorrows cease,
That there shall come a time, perchance to-morrow,
When God shall give to thee, His perfect peace.

Hope on, my friend, yes hope ! through all temptation,
Through fiery trial, and bitter conflict sore ;
Hope shows to thee in soothing contemplation,
A time when Satan's power shall be no more.

Hope on, my friend, yes hope! Though joys are
cheating,

A time must dawn when myriad joys divine,
Joys not of earth, but fairer, pure, unfleeting,
Shall thee enfold and o'er thy pathway shine.

Hope on, my friend, yes hope! Hope on forever!

What would our lives without this day-star be?
God grant our hope be taken from us, never
Till we shall stand upon the Crystal Sea.

CHRISTMAS.

The Christmas moon shines bright o'er hill and dale,
And down upon the silent village street.
Ah! hark! glad voices echo through the vale,
The waits burst forth in carols clear and sweet.

As angels sang on that first Christmas morn
A song eternal that shall last for aye,
These simple souls now greet a Saviour born,
And hail His advent ere the dawn of day.

The morning dawns, so bright and fair and clear,
It sheds a gentle peace throughout the land.
Well may we sing, and bless the mystery dear
Of Bethlehem's stable and its faithful band

Of humble souls, enwrapt in dark amaze
Before the new-born Christ, so pure and sweet,
And as the angels sang their Heavenly lays,
With shepherds' haste our infant King to greet.

The earth is clad in vesture pure and white,
True emblem of the Child, the spotless King,
Who was so fair in all His wondrous might ;
He came from Heaven to earth His peace to bring.

A glorious peace ! ah me how sweet the thought
That He our Lord in fullest love came down ;
So meek and humble, yet to us He brought
A pardon free, an everlasting crown.

May warmer love fill every Christian heart
Upon this gladsome, happy Christmas morn ;
As with the Heavenly host we take our part
In praising Christ, the God incarnate born.

CHRISTMAS—ALL HAIL!

Kneel ye, ye people, in thankful devotion,
 Gather ye faithful round Bethlehem's stall;
 Come to behold Him, Emmanuel, God with us,
 Christ now incarnate, the Saviour of all.

Long was He promised, and lo! the fulfilment
 Now is proclaimed by a Seraphic Choir;
 Angels declare it, "Your Saviour is with you,
 Born in a stable, the Nations' Desire."

Sing ye His praises, and learn of Him meekness,
 Laud Him, and tread in the footprints He trod;
 Worshipping, follow His love and devotion—
 Love for the sinner, and faith to His God.

Well may we sing to the Infant Redeemer,
 He Who was born but to suffer and die;
 He Who, though spotless, partook of our nature,
 Linking each soul to the Godhead on high.

House of Bread—Bethlehem—sends forth the Master,*
Bread of our life, richest food of the soul ;
Strengthening and guiding, and helping us ever
Onward through life to a fair shining goal.

Sing ye then, Christians, the oft-carolled music,
Echoes so sweet of the angelic strain ;
“Peace and goodwill,” ye are one common brother-
hood,
Sing it with Christ in the midst once again.

Turn it to deeds, or the song will be fruitless,
Worship the Child King by love and goodwill
Unto all creatures ; and so shall our Christmas
Dawn with a blessing that naught can e'er kill.

* St. John vi., 48, 49, 50, 51.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

Come ye faithful, keep your Christmas !
 Keep it with your Infant King :
 Come ye, praise Him, and adore Him,
 Unto Him your carols sing.
 Down to earth for us He came,
 Meekly suffering want and shame.

Come ye faithful, keep your Christmas !
 Listen to the Angel's song,
 Rolling, echoing through the ages
 To the nations all along.
 "Peace on earth, goodwill to men,"
 Sounds o'er moorland, hill, and fen.

Come ye faithful, keep your Christmas !
 Keep it by your deeds of love,
 Keep it by each kindly action,
 Done as unto Him above.
 So shall ye have peace divine,
 Bright your Christmas morn shall shine.

Come ye faithful, keep your Christmas !
Teach your children of the Child
Who, on earth to bring forgiveness,
Came so spotless, fair, and mild.
Whilst the Christmas joy bells peal,
Teach them Christ on earth to feel.

Come ye faithful, keep your Christmas !
Wreath the holly, deck the bough.
Toil to give the young ones pleasure,
Life for them is brightest now ;
So shall be your Christmas joy
Pure and sweet without alloy.

Come ye faithful, keep your Christmas !
Keep it well with cheerful mirth
Into which the Christ may enter,
As He comes to bless the earth ;
Keep Him at your board a guest,
So shall ye be fully blest.

Come ye faithful, keep your Christmas !
Keep it in the House of Prayer ;
And with angel hosts adoring,
Praise, and bless your Saviour there :
So shall Christmas mirth be bright
Sanctified by Jesus' light.

A HARVEST HYMN.

We thank Thee, Heavenly Father,
 For all Thy bounteous love ;
 The sending, in its fulness,
 Thy blessing from above
 Upon the fields and meadows,
 All rich with golden grain :
 "We thank Thee, Lord, we thank Thee,"
 Be this our grand refrain.

The ever-varying landscape
 Proclaims Thy power benign :
 O'er field, and vine, and orchard
 Thy glorious sun doth shine ;
 And at Thy gracious mandate
 Each season comes and goes :
 Oh, gracious God, we thank Thee,
 From Whom all goodness flows.

For this to Thee we offer
 The firstfruits of the land ;
 The golden grain, which whispers,
 "I come from God's own Hand ;"

The bright-hued floweret glowing ;
The luscious fruits—all Thine :
Ah, God, we humbly thank Thee,
And bless Thy Hand divine.

To man the power Thou grantest
The fruitful soil to till,
Then forth from desolation
Life springeth at Thy will.
So in man's heart, all sinful,
The Heavenly seed is sown
To yield a full, rich increase
In seasons all Thine own.

Then ripe, before Death's sickle,
Falls low such golden grain,
To gain at last Thy garner
Through suffering, toil, and pain.
And still for this we offer
Our humble, grateful love,
And, singing, seek to praise Thee
With angel choirs above.

SUNDAY MORNING.

(Suggested by memories of a Somersetshire village.)

'Tis Sunday morn ! and all is bright around ;
 A gentle stillness sweet pervades the land ;
 In all the place there is no sight, nor sound,
 But speaks to me of God's Almighty Hand.

I raise my eyes to Heaven, and there behold
 A mighty arch, of deepest, cloudless blue,
 (It seems as though it must the earth enfold
 With purity, and peace, yet hide from view

The brightness of that fairer, better Home,
 Lest our weak eyes should fail such light to see !)
 Whilst now and then a fleecy cloud, like foam,
 Flies swiftly o'er the Heavenly, azure sea.

The trees are fresh and green, whilst overhead
 A lark sings out his gayest, sweetest lay ;
 Yes ! over all, God's Heavenly Peace is shed,
 And Nature joins in praising Him to-day.

A lovely scene, so fair, so fresh, and bright !
Rich fields of golden grain spread all around :
Ah ! truly 'tis a great and wond'rous might
That governs all—let praise to God resound.

But hark ! a sound steals through the Sabbath calm,
'Tis village bells ; their voices softly plead,
They speak to me with sweet and soothing balm,
They bid me go where they each one would lead.

So kneeling there, before my Father's throne,
I thank Him for His mercies, day by day,
And yield Him praise—Who is the God alone
That governs all with loving, gentle sway !

TWILIGHT THOUGHTS.

How sweetly calm the sky to-night,
Whilst all around is hushed and still,
Ere stars shine forth, so clear and bright,
To work, with joy, their Maker's will.

Ah, look ! with ever-changing hue,
A cloud comes gently o'er the scene,
And passing swiftly from our view
Is gone as though it ne'er had been.

And now a streak of purest light
Gleams faintly in the golden west,
Then changing to an opal bright,
Shines forth a dazzling, radiant crest.

Ah ! what a clear and peaceful night,
It seems to send sweet thoughts of rest,
To tell of Heavenly splendour bright,
Fair realms of joy among the blest.

As such a night the Christian's end,
 'Tis gentle, calm, and full of peace ;
A passing cloud our God may send,
 Ere comes the longed-for, glad release.

Then slowly sinks his sun to rest,
 Yet leaves behind a shining light.
His work is done, and with the blest ;
 He waits awhile beyond our sight.

TO A STAR IN THE WEST.

Beautiful star ! thou art gleaming alone,
Brighter and purer than fair precious stone ;
Seeming to me like a lamp to us given,
Guiding our feet on the pathway to Heaven.

Working for others, and doing thy best,
Shining for others, ne'er ceasing to rest,
Piercing the gloom as each small cloud is riven—
Faithful to duty, from work never driven.

Helping us all to look up to our home,
Raising our thoughts when from Jesus they roam ;
Giving us tender, sweet glimpses of Heaven,
Cheering each one who with sorrow hath striven.

So may we willingly work for our Lord,
Tracing His footsteps in sweetest accord.
Bright little star ! to thee praises be given,
Blessing for lighting our pathway to Heaven.

MARCH ON, YE SOLDIERS.

“Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil.” (Eph. vi. 10-11.)

March on, ye soldiers ! in God’s might prevailing,
 Upon you now the Holy Ghost is shed
 In seven-fold measure. Yonder foes, so furious,
 Shall see, and lo ! the path of fear shall tread.

Hold fast your weapons, buckle on your armour ;
 The Spirit’s light shall guide you on your way.
 March on, ye soldiers ! angels now are watching
 With interest keen, the issue of the fray.

In every corner lurks a foe to smite you,
 For Satan boasts of legions firm and strong ;
 But stronger ye, if in God’s might ye struggle,
 While angels smile as thus ye smite the wrong.

March on, ye soldiers ! ever onward, upward ;
 Nor look behind : the battle lies before,
 Your Captain cries, “Speed on, My faithful servants,
 I know your toil, your weary pain so sore.

“ For I have crossed the desert long before you,
I know the way, and I the toil have borne,
Have felt the foemen’s spear, and heard their mocking,
And felt My heart and soul with anguish torn.”

Trust not to self, or ye shall help the foemen,
And fall a prey to darts all deftly sped ;
But trust your King, so shall His gracious Spirit
Around your path His saving influence shed.

So shall ye rise at last, with Saints victorious,
To wear a bright and lasting golden Crown ;
Your warfare o’er, your sorrow turned to singing,
And all your weapons laid for ever down.

DECEIT AND GUILF GO NOT OUT OF
THEIR STREETS. (Psalms lv. 11.)

Litera scripta manet.

Down to the earth with all cunning and treachery,
Trample them, bruise them, they stain the land ;
Tho' in Gehenna they flourish full richly,
We will not have them on Britain's fair strand.

Mean, petty actions, the fruit of spite's prompting.
Refuge of spiritless, cowardly knaves ;
Spurn them, ye people, what spirit of grandeur
E'er could become one of treachery's slaves !

Upas trees, deadly, dispensing their poison,
Well do we know them, they cumber the soil ;
Mark well the people who rear the vile saplings,
Tending them, grudging not Satan the toil.

Double-dyed poltroons who, smiling so blandly,
Turn from you straightway to sharpen a knife,
Chuckling the while with a fierce fiendish pleasure,
Hoping to stab you, and maim you for life.

Read them, and scan them, but read them in silence,
Pity them still, though contempt is their lot ;
Oftimes the knife they so cunningly sharpen,
Gives them a lesson and spoils their small plot.

Verdant they think you—well, don't undeceive them,
Leave them to walk in their Upas-lined way ;
Breathe ye apart from the poisonous region,
Walk in full light of God's glorious day.

Utter no lie* nor be false to a brother,
God shall avenge it, 'tis naught but a crime ;
He who shields treachery will rue it for ever,
Breathing its poison for aye, through all time.

* "A lying tongue is but for a moment."—Proverbs xii. 19.

THE SONS OF TOIL.

Hurrah ! for the hardy sons of toil
 Who work with a right good will ;
 Do they follow the plough, or lay axe to the bough,
 Or toil midst the dust of the mill.

Tramp, tramp, over the ground
 Merrily, brightly, their footsteps sound,
 As they hie them forth to their daily round
 Ere sun-rise in the morning.

Hurrah ! for the noble sons of toil
 Who ply the hammer or spade ;
 'Tis the horny brown hand that can fortune command,
 And honour that will not fade.

Tramp, tramp, over the ground
 Merrily, brightly, &c.

Hurrah ! for the grimy sons of toil
 Who work in the darksome mine,
 Where enters no gleam of daylight's fair stream,
 But hearts of content ever shine.

Tramp, tramp, over the ground
 Nobly, grandly, &c.

Hurrah ! for the toiling maidens bright
Who work midst the factory's din ;
Who so truly heart-light, as with glorious might
They fight in life's battle and win ?

Trip, trip, over the ground
Merrily, lightly, &c.

Hurrah ! for the glorious sons of toil,
No matter of what degree ;
Of them all we are proud, and with cheers long and
loud
We'll hail them, the sons of the free.

Tramp, tramp, over the ground
Merrily, brightly, &c.

Hurrah ! for the mighty sons of toil,
And down with the sluggardly knave
Who will ne'er soil his hand, though he burdens the
land,
But lazily goes to his grave.

Tramp, tramp, over the ground,
Never, ah, never ! his footsteps sound,
For he ne'er goes forth to a daily round
Ere sun-rise in the morning.

A PLEA FOR THE CITY SLAVE.

Oh, pity the weary shop-girl,
 Oh, pity the toil-worn lad,
 Who, weary and faint, yet without complaint,
 But with faces worn and sad,
 Toil on from the early morning
 Till sound of the midnight bell
 Falls on every ear with its message clear,
 And shortens work's weary spell.

No change have these weary toilers
 From the city's maddening sound,
 From the year begun till its course is run
 Is a dreary, hopeless round.
 For them dawns no brighter season,
 No wandering in God's pure air
 O'er His mountains free, or by sunlit sea,
 And flower-decked pastures fair.

No chance have these toiling thousands
 To walk in the scholar's way,
 Or gather a store of Art's magic lore—
 "Small need for such things have they!"

Sneers a cold, indifferent public ;
 “ Enough if their daily bread
By their work is sure ;” they may well endure
 Till feeling and hope are dead.

Though we know that toil is noble,
 ’Tis far from our Maker’s plan
That the grass-grown graves of these toil-worn slaves
 Should pave for a mighty clan
The highway to wealth and splendour,
 And soft, voluptuous ease.
Ah ! it cannot be ; God will surely see
 And judge for such souls as these.

A GIPSY SONG.

Heigho ! for the gipsy life,
 The life so wild and free ;
 'Tis a jolly life is the roving life,
 And a blissful life for me.

I've turned my back on the cloistered halls,
 And the haunts of learning grim ;
 Oh, I feel so bright, for my heart is light
 In my old caravan so trim.
 Heigho ! &c.

And the best of it all is, the "screw" runs on
 Whilst that old caravan I drive ;
 How the bumpkins stare, how the maidens fair
 Look askance, as to cook I strive.
 Heigho ! &c.

I've turned my back on the dreary town,
 And the dust of the broiling street ;
 To-day I'll bake, and I'll take the cake—
 You bet that it tastes "rale" sweet.
 Heigho ! &c.

I've fallen in love with a roving life
And I can't make up my mind
'To stand again in the galling chain
Of the life I've left behind.
Heigho ! &c.

And what is worse—but I pray, don't tell—
A gipsy lass so rare
Sent a piercing dart straight through my heart
As I breathed the country air.
Heigho ! &c.

But hark ! what's that ? Oh, I feel so ill
'Tis the kettle boiling o'er !
Oh, that gipsy fair, I must really swear !
For I have to wash the floor.
Heigho ! &c.

Oh, dash it all ! it is six o'clock,
And the fellows come for tea ;
I thank my stars that the cookery wars
To-morrow won't ruffle me.
Heigho ! &c.

AN "AULD MAID'S" SANG.

A lanely "Auld Maid" dae they ca' me !
 I'm happy as happy can be,
 As I sit by my ain cosy fire-side
 Enjoyin' a guid cup o' tea.

I'm bless'd wi' a teapot sae denty,
 A caddy weel filled an' sae trim ;
 My cats an' my parrots are perfect,
 The tabbies sae stately an' prim.

Noo wha would be fashed wi' a husban' ?
 No me—I may juist let ye ken ;
 Odsake, noo preserve me frae sic like,
 A set o' cantankerous men.

An' whatever ye dae, my dear lasses,
 Beware o' their "Wanted a wife,"
 Wi' "Photos enclosed," sic-like nonsense
 May ruin yer plesure for life.

There's mony a woman noo married
Would gladly change places wi' me ;
They fin' out tae their cost what a shadow
"Wedded bliss," as they ca' it, can be.

Noo lasses, sae young an' sae careless,
(Though I'm really no auld yet mysel' ;
Come the time I'll be juist saxty-seeven),
Tak' advice frae yer frien' Isabel.

Heed my words, an' for ever keep single,
Gin ye wish tae be happy for life—
Say nay tae them a' without favour ;
Bid them seek somewhere else for a wife.

Folks say that I'm vexed I'm no married ;
But dinna believe them ava,
I reign here baith maister an' mistress—
Ah ! that's the gran' thing after a'.

YOU AND I.

You and I ! you and I !
 Dry your tears, oh ! don't cry !
 Was there ever a pair
 With us who could vie ?
 We quarrel and fight
 From morning till night,
 And each one is always
 The one in the right.

You and I ! you and I !
 Ah ! the tears are now dry.
 So just for a change,
 I think we will try
 How nice it would be
 This day to agree ;
 Then neighbours won't scoff, dear,
 At you, or at me.

You and I ! you and I !
 Shall we every day try
 That in all the wide world—
 Ah ! that smile in your eye,
 I mean what I say,
 Now darling obey—
 No pair could be lit on
 So happy and gay.

ONLY A SONG BY AN EXQUISITE.

*As daily sung by him to a delighted audience, consisting
of himself and his mirror.*

I'm a handsome young fellow! My size? Well!
some feet.

A dancer more perfect you never will meet.
I'm fond of the ladies, so talk to them all,
And dance in attendance at each beck and call.

When I walk in the park—ah! 'tis really too sweet
To see the girls glance at my patent shod feet;
And then my moustache! with it none can compare!
You know it is waxed with such marvellous care.

I go to each concert, all suppers, and balls;
I miss nothing that's good in society's halls.
The "season" without me would fail to be bright,
And eyes of each fair one be void of delight.

'They all well nigh worship the ground that I tread,
And were I not blessed with a sensible head,
I am sure, long ago, 'twould have injured my brain
To note their manœuvres. Though really not vain.

I cannot help seeing the traps they all set,
The homage they pay me, I'm "mamma's" special pet,
I feel she'll be envied and honoured by all,
The "daughter" on whom my affection may fall.

Ah, well! I'm modest—a fact you all know,
So I need not repeat it wherever I go.
But with me, one and all now, I'm sure must agree
That you'll search far and wide ere equal you see.

At present, dear friends, then I'll bid you farewell,
That you'll meet me again I may safely foretell;
Where'er there's a crowd, though it lightly you scan,
You'll find me, I'm known as "The handsome young
man."

A MEDLEY.

There's Touchy Small Mind, observe him yonder
So busy picking contention's bone.
Ah! do what you will you are sure to offend him,
He never can leave a neighbour alone.

Should you smile on him in a pleasant fashion,
'Tis only that you some end may gain ;
Do you distant seem, he is moved to anger,
He knows you but wish to cause him pain.

Next round the corner trips Wily Oilskin.
In him you surely behold a friend !
His face for you wears a smile seraphic ;
You feel that you'd trust him to the end.

He passes on—and perchance to-morrow
You are coldly shunned by your trusted mate ;
You wonder why, but the truth you guess not,
That Oilskin has sown the seed of hate.

Now down the street, with his arms akimbo,
Flies Graspall Mysel, at a furious pace ;
And you pause to wonder, in blank amazement,
At the look of greed on poor Graspall's face.

Whilst trampled down, in his head-long fury,
Are all the weak ones who stay his speed.
Ah ! naught he cares that the bruised and helpless
Lie friendless there in their hour of need.

The next to greet you is Jean M'Gossip,
Who swiftly crosses the muddy street ;
To tell you sadly "That Miss D'Aubrey
Is mourning the loss of a parrot sweet.

Whilst Mistress Speedwell has bocht a cottage,
An' furnished it oot tae the vera door."
Here Miss M'Gossip shakes all her ringlets
Till one of them falls upon the floor ;

And sighs, "Losh me it's a doon-richt scandal
Tae see the grandeur the Speedwell's hae.
I'm shure I kenna tae what they're coming' ;
The like was never in my young day.

An' then their dochter is gettin' married :
Ah weel ! his taste maun be unco puir !
But a pair's no spoiled, for he's juist as daft-like—
Hech sirs ! it's an awfu' warld, I'm sure."

As Jean thus sighs, whilst her eye-balls skyward
In silent sorrow once more are turned,
You see behind her poor Nancy Curious
With blind uplifted, and fingers burned.

In haste to listen to Jean's long story
Poor Nancy flew, and the kettle fell.
But it matters not, for the pain is little
Compared with the news she caught so well.

In haste she binds up the wounded member.
Then draws the curtain again aside
With trembling fingers, lest aught escape her
Of all that stirs in the crescent wide.

Then turns around to her friend Priscilla.
"Think ye M'Gossip the truth has tauld ?
I'll sune fin' oot a' the oots and ins o't,
An' that ere anither fortnicht's cauld.

'Twixt you an' me, gin we daur but say it,
Yon Jean M'Gossip is mad wi' spite.
But look, Priscilla ! see yon's a stranger
Wha landed at No. 2 last night."

Jean goes her way, and adjusts her ringlet,
Whilst Nancy raises the window higher ;
Then you breathe once more as you swiftly hurry
Away from their scathing tongues of fire ;

Whilst you think of words by our own Poet spoken ;
Drawn forth by love for the poor and weak ;
He felt their truth ; he had often proved it
From hearts and tongues that were aught but meek :

" Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn."

A JUMBLE.

“ Are ye gaun to the Jumble Sale to-day ?”
Quoth Mistress Randall tae Mistress Ray.

“ Deed aye, my frien’, for I need a hat,
A sofa, a chair, an’ a nice grey cat.

“ My curtains tae are a’ wearin’ thin,
Sae maybe I’ll get a pair thrown in
For juist a sang ; then I’ll buy a goon
An’ dolman as braw as ye’ll see in toon.

“ Then Jock’s aye cryin’ for books at nicht,
I often tell him they’ll wear his sicht ;
Sae yon’s the place whaur I’ll buy a score,
An’ then he’ll be blessed wi’ books galore.

“ An’ noo I’m thinkin’ I hae a set
O’ brooch an’ earrings o’ finest jet ;
But I gaed tae a trip ae day an’ lost
The earring that ance sic a guid price cost.

- “Noo, Mrs Randall, I’ll tak’ that set
Tae the Jumble Sale, an’ ye’ll see I’ll get
An earring the same, at a gey sma’ price,
I ken, for I’ve gane there mair than twice.
- “An’ then oor Wull wis juist sayin’ to-day
That he needs a pipe, for he’s tired o’ clay ;
Sae I hae telt him then ‘Ye’ll get what ye seek,
Gin ye gang tae the Jumble Sale this week.’
- “Tobacco tae wull be gaun gey cheap,
An’ ceegarettes that wad gar ye weep,
Sae soothin’, are they, tae the hert an’ brain
When wearied fair oot wi’ hard wark or pain.
- “An’ I’ve often thocht I wad like to get
A grand piano in rosewood set ;
Sae gin there’s ane there I wull tak’ the chance,
An’ gar a’ the neebours wi’ envy dance.
- “Noo, Mrs M’Thrawn across the way,
Wha is fond o’ makin’ a great display,
Wad weel like tae sneer at a Jumble Sale,
Though she gaed tae ane for her last new pail.

“ An’ fine I ken, though she never thinks,
Her last new carpet—deceitful minx—
From a Jumble Sale in another toon
Wis bocht and sent straucht by the luggage doon.”

“ Dae ye tell me sae, my dear Mistress Ray ?
I’ll gang tae the Jumble Sale to-day,
For yon is a carpet I’ve often seen,
An’ said to mysel’, ‘ What a bonny green !’

“ Oor Leezie’s weddin’s a month to-day,
An’ Bob can sweetly the trombone play,
Sae I micht get ane that wad answer fine,
Tae hansel the twa in the present line.”

“ Weel said, my frien’ ! When the hoose is redd
We’ll gang thegither an’ baith get cled,
Then tell a’ oor neebours, baith far and near,
O’ the bargains we got baith oor lives tae cheer.”

DEATH.

'Tis midnight hour, a solemn peace doth reign,
 A soul has left this earth, and passed beyond
 Its portals to the land where, free from pain,
 They dwell in love's firm, sweet immortal bond.

Ah, mystery great! close-veiled from mortal ken,
 We struggle with thy power and hidden might;
 Yet human nature fails; poor sinful men
 Yield one by one, each passing from our sight.

Oh, wondrous thing! too great to comprehend,
 We kneel beside the dead in silent prayer;
 They pass from us, while we can scarcely bend
 To raise the bitter cross we have to bear.

The last good bye is said, those lips are mute,
 Once wont to sing in sweetest, happiest lays;
 Ah! now their song they blend with Heavenly lute,
 Whilst here below we stand in deep amaze.

Ah! can it be, such fate to each the same?
 Yes, all shall solve the mystery, deep and wide,
 As God doth call them, every one by name,
 To cross death's dark and ever-rolling tide.

THE DYING YEAR.

I sit within a silent room,
The midnight hour is nigh ;
The world is wrapped in silent gloom ;
Whence comes that heavy sigh

Which strikes upon my list'ning ear ?
In awe I trembling stand ;
Then raise my eyes, with sudden fear,
To see a form so grand.

A noble face and form I see,
Though age has on him told ;
His steadfast gaze is fixed on me,
With look both stern and cold.

At length he speaks in solemn tone,
With many a bitter tear :
" I leave this earth all sad and lone,
I am the Dying Year.

“You promised me when I was young,
To use and guard me well ;
What countless sins of heart, and tongue,
And hands, have I to tell,

“My Child !” Ah, even now I see
The noble figure sway,
Too late, Old Year, I weep for thee,
For ever passed away.

I raise my head, when lo again !
A tiny form appears,
It is an infant free from stain,
With smiles instead of tears.

Then, as I watch the dawning life,
I pray to Heaven above,
For grace to conquer earthly strife,
By noble, heavenly love.

And if to meet another year
I am not willed to stay,
Oh, Gracious Father, Saviour dear,
Fit me for Heaven, I pray.

LINES ON A MILITARY FUNERAL.

Hearken ! whence that sound of music ?
Soft, and sweet, and strangely low,
Floating o'er the glorious sunshine ;
Ah ! with measured tread, and slow,

On they come, in line advancing.
Why those rifles all reversed ?
Say what ails those brave old warriors ?
All in sorrow, deep, immersed.

Lo ! one glance proclaims the story ;
Floating, fair, is England's sign
O'er the clay-cold form out-stretched there,
Never more to march in line.

There lies tunic, helmet, sabre,
Earthly strife and conflict o'er ;
Laid aside those arms for ever,
Needless now on yon fair shore.

Soldiers, bear your comrade gently,
Slowly onward to the tomb ;
He has closed his earthly battle
Not 'midst carnage, strife's dark doom,

But within his own dear homestead,
Fighting hard the tyrant Pain ;
Ah ! how many a similar warfare
Wages o'er, and o'er again,

'Midst the warriors in Life's battle,
Who no arms shall ever wield
Save the sword of God's own Spirit,
On that God's own battle field.

In that slowly marching regiment
Who shall be the next to go ?
Who may next the " Dead March " sound for,
And the muffled drum beat low ?

Solemn thought ! so full of mystery ;
Jesus grant, whoe'er it be,
May the summons find them waiting,
Bearing only arms for Thee.

TO A FATHER AND MOTHER SUFFERING
UNDER A PAINFUL BEREAVEMENT.

What may we say? Words fail us now ;
We can but bend, with bated breath,
Before God's will. If this be Death,
He wears no sternly frowning brow.

But all is peaceful, fair, and sweet,
For dazzling splendour holds her gaze,
And bids her smile in wrapt amaze
As Christ draws near His lamb to greet.

'Twas once on earth the God-man, mild,
Held in His arms sweet bairns as this,
And there they knew a perfect bliss,
And in His face serenely smiled.

In selfsame love, beyond the veil,
He holds His little lamb to-day
With tender care, and be your stay
He will, with love that cannot fail.

Amidst the saints your saint is fair,
And ye shall find the child again
In realms which mortal eyes would fain
Behold, but have not strength to bear.

And o'er thee yet shall brightly shine
A light from out the depths and dark,
For God Himself shall surely mark
That ye to Him your wills resign.

For whosoe'er his earthly joy
Lays on God's altar so complete
A sacrifice, all pure and sweet,
Must bear him peace without alloy,

And teach him that all earthly loss
Is fraught with good in Jesus' smile,
Whilst treasure stored in Heaven awhile
Awaits each one who bears the Cross.

TO A DYING BOY.

My dear young friend, e'en now
Thy race is run ;
And thou art nearing yon fair Home,
Where Christ, the Sun

Of Righteousness, abides,
And all is peace ;
Where perfect bliss and love doth reign,
Nor e'er shall cease.

Ah ! surely in thine eyes,
So bright, I see
The radiance of the Heavenly Home
Prepared for thee.

Where angels ever sing,
And seraphs shine ;
Where sorrow's notes can never blend
With joys divine.

What marvel if at last
Thy flesh should quail?
Yet Christ will lead thee safely through
The lonely vale,

And from the river's brink
Will safely guide
Thy sinking feet with tender love,
Till yon fair side

Shall greet thy wondering eyes
In splendour bright,
And life's long, dark, cold, wintry day
Be turned to light.

A SIMPLE OFFERING.

Written on the death of H.R.H. The Duke of Clarence.

Illustrious lady ! gracious royal maiden,
 A nation's tears commingle with thine own,
 A nation's heart meets thine with sorrow laden
 O'er sweetest hopes thus sadly, swiftly flown.

Throughout the land, to earth's remotest corner,
 From India's strand to Afric's scorching plain,
 From Western forests wild shall voices legion
 Unite, and echo in one mournful strain.

One week ago, and he our young Prince Victor
 Looked down on thee with proud and tender glance ;
 None guessed that Death ere long, the stern dictator,
 Those eyes would seal in long, deep, solemn trance.

We bow before this messenger in sadness ;
 With awe-struck mien we whisper " Is it so ?"
 Whilst tolling bells eclipse each note of gladness,
 For blighted hopes by one fell stroke laid low.

'Tis even so ! our joy is turned to sorrow ;
The willow weeps, the cypress holds her sway.
From withered bridal wreaths no joy we borrow,
They only tell of withered hopes to-day.

Weep, lady, weep ! 'twill make thine heart the lighter
God grant for this thy life may fairer shine.
Refiner's fire but renders gold the brighter ;
Be thou as gold beneath this fire divine.

For thee we mourn, for thee all humbly kneeling
Before the King of Kings and Lord of Lords
We plead. 'Tis He can grant the touch of healing,
And tune aright life's jarring fretful chords.

Thy Prince, and ours, we leave him calmly sleeping :
Earth unto earth, and dust to native dust.
And o'er the river comes no sound of weeping,
For sight succeeds to faith, and hope, and trust.

IN MEMORIAM.

*Written on the death of Livingstone, the African
Explorer.*

“ Ah ! build for me a hut that I may die in.”
 This prayer thine ere thou did'st lay thee down ;
 No lov'd one near to soothe thy dying hour,
 Or watch thee passing on to wear the crown

Which thou hast won in patience, toil, and suffering,
 And faithful trust in God's great power benign ;
 Led on by love for those who dwelt in darkness,
 That God's own light should o'er that darkness shine.

No lov'd one near, save one poor faithful servant,
 Who shared thy travels, learned from thee to pray :
 God grant that he, with thee, shall cross God's thresh-
 hold,
 When called to rise upon the last great day.

But thou art happy in thy life's work finished,
 Whilst Christ stood close beside thy dying bed,
And blessed thee there, thou could'st not be forsaken.
 His arm upheld thy aching, weary head.

Ah hush ! those travel-worn feet are resting—
 Full many a long, sad, weary mile they've trod—
Imprisoned fast in Death's cold, icy fingers.
 Thy spirit, brave, has flown to meet thy God.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MAGGIE MUIR
CHALMERS,

WHO DIED FEBRUARY 22ND, 1884.

Not dead ! but only gone before,
The one we loved, and held so dear ;
She sleeps, at rest for evermore
Within a brighter sphere.

She lies so peaceful, fair, and calm,
The while we stand with tear dimmed eye.
Ah ! surely this is healing balm—
Her spirit cannot die.

Asleep, at rest, Faith's eye is keen,
Our loved one in the Saviour's arms
We leave to joys by Doubt unseen,
Safe, free from earth's alarms.

We miss her face, we miss her voice ;
We miss her kindly loving ways,
But still we may, we can rejoice,
And chant with her Christ's praise.

We lov'd her here, we mourn her loss,
Yet hope to meet in bliss above ;
So pray for grace to bear the cross
Which Christ hath sent in love.

How could we wish her here again ?
Though great the void in every heart,
Nay ! rather we would bear the pain
And act the nobler part.

ACROSTIC

*In Memory of the Rev. James Buchanan Hamilton,
who died in February, 1881, Minister of the First
Charge, Laigh Kirk.*

J esus now has called him homeward,
A ll the servant's work is o'er.
M any a year of faithful labour,
E ver spent for God and neighbour,
S hall be blest on yonder shore.

B ut the steady old world guidance
U nto all remains a loss.
C an his flock do aught but miss him ?
H elp them Lord to bear the Cross,
A nd to heed his words of warning,
N ow on earth for ever still ;
A ll those words of faithful counsel,
N ever less than God's own Will.

H ail the day that ends in brightness !
A ll its cares and sorrows done,
M erging in a bright to-morrow
I n yon Home where Christ, the Son,
L ives to see His servants muster,
T ouched by Death to live again.
O ver Death He rose victorious,
N ow o'er Death He lives to reign.

IN MEMORIAM.

In Memory of Walter Davidson, who died from injuries received by an explosion in Wishate, July 1st, 1887.

Bear him gently ! leave him resting
 'Neath the angels' watchful eyes ;
 He has gone in youth's fair springtime
 To the rest of Paradise—

There to wait the glorious dawning
 Of the last great harvest morn,
 When the white-robed angel reapers
 Hence shall bear the ripened corn.

Ah ! we miss the fair young figure,
 And the face so blythe and glad ;
 Hard indeed to comprehend it
 'Tis for us. It seems so sad

That a life so full of promise
 Thus should close in youth's fair spring ;
 Could we learn our Father's reason
 We perchance with joy might sing :

Jesus loved him, died to save him,
Called him early to his rest ;
Though the pathway led through suffering,
Strength renewed shall greet the guest

Whom the angels warmly welcome
To the rest of Paradise.
Thence to rise in hope of glory
Through that One Great Sacrifice.

When shall dawn the harvest morning
And the angel reapers come,
Laying low with golden sickle
'Treasure ere they bear it home.

IN · LOVING MEMORY OF PHŒBE.

AGED FOUR YEARS AND TWO MONTHS.

God hath stayed His lamb's brief weeping,
Hushed her gently in His arms ;
She shall know a bright to-morrow,
Free from all earth's care and sorrow,
All its wild and fierce alarms.

Fierce and sharp and brief the struggle,
God in wisdom willed it so ;
We, earth's mortals, question blindly.
Why should God thus deal unkindly ?
Is there love beneath such woe ?

Yes ! methinks I hear a whisper
Wafted from the crystal sea ;
And it speaks of Heaven's glory,
Telling me a wondrous story
Of a little angel free.

And the whisper tells me gently
How this little angel bright
Sings a song of joy and gladness,
Into which no note of sadness
E'er could creep to mar delight.

And the whisper says this angel
Happier is to dwell above,
Watching o'er her father, mother,
Smiling sweetly o'er her brother—
Earthly merged in Heavenly love.

All such dear wee smiling spirits
Are the joy of Heaven fair ;
God had need of this wee maiden,
So He sent an angel laden
With a charge to lead her there.

A MITHER'S LAMENT.

*Dedicated to the Memory of Janet Gibb Woodburn,
aged 6 Years. Died 10th May, 1887.*

My bairnie has gane tae the lan' o' the blest,
An' a' things are darkened an' dreary tae me.
Death's Angel cam' in wi' his cauld, stern behest,
Sae here her wee face I shall never mair see.

Ye speir. Wis it hard thus tae lose my wee wean,
An' see her dear form slowly fadin' awa' ?
Aye hard ; nane but God kens the sorrow an' pain
I bore when He took her whaur, pure as the snaw

That comes doon sae fair frae His mansions abune,
My bairnie dwells safely. I wait for the day
When Jesus shall ca' me (He'll wash a' my sin
In the fount o' His blood) wi' my bairnie tae stay.

Ower guid for this warld wis my bonnie wee floo'er—
Sae sweet an' sae gentle, sae lovin' an' true.
God kens what is best, sae His ain lovin' poo'er
Removed for a season the bairn frae my view.

My bairnie ! my bairnie ! I'll miss thy sweet face.
He sent thee an' took thee, but yet not in vain.
I'll follow thee, darlin' ; thy footsteps I'll trace,
An' bless thee for ever—in sorrow an' pain.

An' yet not in sorrow, for bright hopes remain ;
I'll win tae thee, darlin', in yon bonnie lan',
Whaur angels are singin' in sweetest refrain,
An' a' are united in ae happy ban'.

IN MEMORIAM.

M. A. KERR, AGED 27 YEARS.

Soft be thy resting-place, peaceful thy slumber,
Gone from our midst in the flower of thy day ;
Weeping, we bless thee, and lovingly number
Traits which were thine as thou walked in life's way.

Empty thy place in our own happy dwelling,
Lonely our hearts as we think of thy face ;
Sorrow and anguish within us are swelling,
Sharp is the conflict God's mercy to trace.

Dear to our hearts, yet more dear to thy Master,
How can we murmur that thus He should send
Angels to bear thee where ruth and disaster,
Sorrow and suffering, with joy can ne'er blend.

Lo ! where thou restest sweet flowerets we scatter,
(Emblem to us of the hopes which are sent) ;
Even as they from earth's garbage and matter,
Clad with new life, from thy prison-house rent,

Thou shalt go forth when the last trumpet is sounding,
Fair as a floweret in Heaven to bloom ;
Cleansed from earth's dross, in new beauty abounding,
Leaving for ever the cold lonely tomb.

Then may we meet thee in mansions all-glorious,
Severed no more from the Saviour Who died
Sinners to save, yet o'er death rose victorious,
Freed from its bonds at the great Easter-tide.

IN MEMORIAM.

JAMES B. STRAIN ; MARY ANN GRAHAM ;
and THOMAS CAUFIELD ; aged respectively, 20, 22,
and 24 years ;

*All of whom were members of Holy Trinity Church
Bible Class.*

Why mourn ye ? Why mourn ye ? each father, each
brother ;
Mothers, sisters, why should ye despond ?
Your loved ones have passed to the land of the blest,
To the region of glory beyond

A deep rolling stream, 'tis the river of death,
Whose tide we one day must all brave ;
But our Pilot is strong, and the pathway is bright
That leads from the brink of the wave.

Right bravely they fought in the battle of life,
Till e'en the last vict'ry was won ;
In Paradise now they full peacefully rest,
Awaiting their Saviour's " Well done."

Laid low, ere life's promise was nearly fulfilled,
Your loved ones the fairer shall shine
• Within the King's Palace. His need for them there
Sent an Angel with message Divine.

So there, 'mongst "All Saints," till full glory shall
dawn,
They dwell, blest by love of their King.
Bereft ones, to you the "Communion of Saints"
Full meaning for ever must bring.

So why should ye mourn then, each father, each
brother?
Mothers, sisters, why should ye despond?
God's love is o'er all, and He knows what is best,
Yea, and will to each mourner respond.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF ROBERT MILLER,
WHO DIED MARCH, 31ST, 1890. AGED
19 YEARS.

'Tis early morn, and o'er a darkened room
Death's Angel waits with sweetly solemn mien,
To bear away a fair young chastened soul
To brighter regions, glories all unseen.

Methinks 'tis meet that at the morning tide
That soul should pass, who scarce life's morn hath
known,
To nestle closely in the Saviour's arms,
Who rose at dawn, triumphant, death o'er-thrown.

To-day in Paradise he safely rests,
From cares and danger, trials and sorrow free ;
And from the shadow land there floats a voice,
" Weep not, dear mother, friends, weep not for me,

“ For I am safe at rest with Jesus now ;
I could not, would not go to earth again ;
On earthly pain I can look back and smile ;
And mother, dear, just list to me : I fain

“ Would have thee here forever at my side. ;
So shape thy life as to that blissful end,
That we may meet in joy for evermore,
When God His Angel Death for thee shall send.”

IN LOVING MEMORY OF A. DUNLOP,
WHO DIED OCTOBER 12TH, 1879.

Sadly we miss thy well-known face,
Thy pleasant word, and kindly smile ;
We miss thee from thy wonted place :
We've lost thee for a while.

In childhood's days that kindly voice
And loving smile shed round our way
A halo fair of blessing choice,
A memory sweet to-day.

Now standing at the Saviour's side,
Set free from earthly pain and strife ;
Thou did'st but cross death's rolling tide
To find a fairer life.

We dare not pray "Come back again,"
Though left awhile to mourn thy loss ;
In patience we would bear the pain,
And carry now the cross.

That we may meet for evermore
Where joy, and peace, together roam,
And prove within the golden door
That Christ prepares our home.

IN MEMORY OF E. H. GARDNER,

WHO DIED VERY SUDDENLY AT OLD CUMNOCK, ON
OCTOBER 15TH, 1895, AGED 41 YEARS.

We miss thee, our loved one! When life was the
brightest
An arrow, unerring, Death's Angel sent down.
Not a word, not a look, was vouchsafed us at parting,
But suffering sure passed thee in gaining thy crown.
And so we rejoice that our loss was thy gain,
And pray that no bitterness blend with our pain.

We miss thee, our loved one! We fain would behold
thee,
With hearts sorrow-laden we gaze on a place
Now void in our dwelling; but Jesus hath called thee
To hold thee for us in a loving embrace.
And so we now leave thee in faith, hope, and love,
Till Jesus shall call us to meet thee above.

Fleeting days have dawned and ended, and a year's
swift course has run
Since God called our loved one homeward ; still we
pray, " Thy Will be done."
Faith sees Memory backward gazing with a sad and
wistful eye,
Faith with shining finger points us onward, upward to
the sky ;
Bids us learn that darkest night
Flies before Christ's glorious light.

IN MEMORIAM.

From out our midst has gone a well-loved brother,
 A faithful servant, and a trusted friend
 Was he ; and o'er each head sweep floods of sorrow
 Which yet with rays of joy shall softly blend.

In that has passed his hour of pain and suffering,
 Of toil and battle, earthly strife and care,
 In place of which the rest his Saviour bought him
 Receives him now, that rest with Christ to share.

God noted all his long and faithful service,
 Each kindly deed, each touch of helpful hand ;
 And knew him meet for fairer, brighter regions,
 Where loving service sways the angel band.

God grant Thy peace to weeping wife and children,
 Thy hand outstretch to heal each bleeding heart ;
 Close to Thy side, and in Thine arms enfold them
 Till they and he shall meet no more to part.

Ah ! why should sorrow reign, since Christ victorious,
 Hath conquered death ? Bereaved ones, look on high
 With eyes of faith, and there behold your loved one,
 In robes of white with Christ beyond the sky.

AN AUREOLE.

I saw her oft-times pass along,
 A fragile creature worn and gray ;
 Around her brow an Aureole—
 A gleaming, shining Aureole,
 Of duty done in life's young day.

A time, far back along the years,
 Held forth for her a glad, full life.
 Ah ! then she wore no Aureole—
 No fair and shining Aureole,
 Nor ever recked of sorrow, rife.

There dawned a day ! She chose her lot,
 A life of toil, and pain, and care ;
 'Twas then she won the Aureole—
 The gleaming, shining Aureole
 Which makes in age, her brow so fair.

Pure joys, within the maiden's grasp,
 For weal of dear ones laid aside ;
 All went to form that Aureole—
 That shining, gleaming Aureole,
 Fair joys of love and matron pride.

Yet as she passes by to-day
The world will murmur "Wasted life!"
It cannot see the Aureole—
The shining, golden Aureole,
But sees, instead, her daily strife.

MY EARLY VOW.

Though my heart with woe is breaking,
 Yet I would be happy now ;
 Though I yield her to another,
 I have kept my early vow.
 I have watched her from her childhood,
 Shielded every step in life ;
 And that other is my brother
 Who takes now from me my wife.

Yes, my heart with grief is shaking,
 But I rest me, happy now,
 For my love knows naught of sorrow.
 Would ye learn my boyish vow
 Spoken to her dying mother ?
 'Twas that till my latest breath
 I would treasure, without measure,
 Her dear Nell, in life and death.

Yes, my heart is rent with anguish,
 But I'm glad and happy now,
 For I know that she is joyous ;
 I can trust Him with my vow.
 I shall never wear my flower,
 For her love is all his own ;
 His—that other—Oh ! my brother,
 I must live and die alone.

→☞ TALES. ☞←

MABEL MACKENZIE;

OR,

A Faithful Love Sets Self Aside.

CHAPTER I.



IT was a clear, cold night, just a week before Christmas; the shop windows were brilliantly lighted, and all displayed a goodly number of wares suitable for the festive season. Certainly not the least bright were those of the Emporium of Fashions (which, by the way, promises fair to outrival its famous, enterprising friends in the Metropolis of the West), around which a motley crowd had gathered, anxious to obtain a glimpse of the glories displayed therein. Turning from the window, my attention was arrested by a young lady, who stepped from the doorway and proceeded down King Street before me. It was Mabel Mackenzie, the only child of a wealthy

merchant, who had returned to his native town in order to enjoy an ample fortune amassed in the great city. She was a tall, handsome girl, with finely chiselled features, and splendid dark hair and eyes. Dressed as she was, in rich brown velvet and fur, she presented a picture of beauty, refinement, and comfort. She had not gone far before she was joined by a young man, whom I at once recognised as the young sculptor, Frank Masters. As I watched them my inward comment was, "What a handsome pair they are!" Near St. Marnock's Corner they slackened their pace, and presently I heard Frank say:

"Well, Mabel, I leave to-morrow for Florence; have you nothing to say to me—no word to cheer me when I am far away?"

Mabel looked at him with a saucy smile as she replied, "What should I have to say, Mr. Masters?—farther than wish you every success, which I was just going to do had you only waited a moment."

"Mr. Masters!" repeated Frank, with a scornful emphasis on the *Mr.*; "it was not always so, Miss Mackenzie. Is that all you have to say?"

She looked at him a moment with serious eyes, but the earnest look soon passed away, and was replaced by one of mischief, as she repeated, decidedly, "Yes, all."

"Very well, then, I will say farewell. May every blessing attend you. Heaven knows when we may meet again, if ever in this world."

Before Mabel could reply to this he had turned away, with a look of utter pain and misery in the white, set face. He was a handsome young fellow, with deep blue eyes, fair curly hair, and bronzed skin, but the last few minutes seemed to have added years to his age.

When Mabel reached home she felt very uncomfortable. The feeling haunted her that she had done wrong in allowing Frank to go as she had done. Had she answered his question truthfully? she asked herself; and in her heart she knew she could not say Yes. If she could only recall those last few words! But it was too late now; she knew right well what he would have had her say, for it was not the first time that she had put him lightly off.

As she sat thinking, Mr. Mackenzie entered, and roused her with the words, "Mabel, I have asked young Merivale to dine with us to-night. I met him in town this morning."

"Is he here, papa? I did not know of his return."

"Yes, dear, he came home last night. His Uncle Charles is dead, and Alick has come in for all his money."

"Indeed, papa! I am pleased to hear it," returned Mabel, in a manner that told her thoughts were elsewhere.

True to his promise, Alick Merivale soon put in an appearance. He was a good-looking young man, possessing a fine, open face, and pleasing, gentlemanly manner. Mr. Mackenzie had known him almost

from infancy, so that it was not to be wondered at if he seemed quite at home in that gentleman's house. It was plain, however, to the most casual observer that something other than friendship drew him thither. That something was his love for Mabel, which he had cherished for some years past, though at the present time she was but one-and-twenty, and certainly not in love with Alick. Indeed she had rejected him, but he had determined to act on the principle of the song we all know so well, "Try, try, try again."

In the course of the evening, Alick, crossing over to a small table, took up an album. The first face he saw, on opening it, was that of Frank Masters.

"How now, Mabel," he exclaimed, "what a capital likeness!"

Mabel, not knowing to whom he alluded, crossed over to his side. His eyes were fixed on her face as she looked at the card, and he needed no words to tell him why he had been rejected. Without waiting for an answer he continued,

"I was not aware you knew Frank. He is a fine fellow. I hope he will succeed in Italy."

By this time Mabel had recovered herself a little (exactly what Alick intended), and she returned,

"I hope so ; he leaves to-morrow."

"So soon as that ! I saw him yesterday, and he did not intend to go till next week. However, he may have changed his mind."

.

Christmas morning dawned, clear, and cold. Mabel found, among other presents, a goodly number of Christmas cards awaiting her in the breakfast room. One of these, directed in a well-known hand, was treasured above them all. It bore only the words of Burns's "Farewell to Clarinda"—

“ Ae fond kiss, and then we sever ;
 Ae farewell, alas ! for ever !
 Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
 Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.
 Who shall say that fortune grieves him
 While the star of hope she leaves him ?
 Me, nae cheerful twinkle lights me ;
 Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
 Naething could resist my Nancy :
 But to see her was to love her ;
 Love but her, and love for ever.
 Had I never lov'd sae kindly,
 Had I never lov'd sae blindly,
 Never met, or never parted,
 I had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Fare thee weel, thou first and fairest ;
 Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest ;
 Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
 Peace, enjoyment, love and pleasure !
 Ae fond kiss, and then we sever ;
 Ae farewell, alas ! for ever !
 Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
 Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.”

Yes, that was all the Christmas greeting. But the "I" substituted for "we" in the latter part of the second verse told its own tale to Mabel's desolate heart.

Time rolled on and the cold Winter days gave place to the fair smiling ones of Spring. These in turn lengthened into Summer, and Frank was still abroad. He was doing well, and appeared to like the fair Southern land, by the accounts he sent home from time to time.

Alick Merivale had been in Italy twice. The second time he brought back the news that Frank had removed to Naples. This was the end of June. About the middle of July he intended to go to Ischia for a month, after which he had some thought of visiting Como, Milan, and Lake Maggiore.

All this time Alick had been faithful as ever, although the poor fellow knew he had but a small chance. He could not understand Frank and Mabel. Never once had the former mentioned her name to him. Had she given an unrequited love? Alick asked himself over and over again. Owing to this doubt he remained silent with regard to Mabel, so that Frank did not know, nor even guess, the sorrow gnawing at the girl's heart all those weary days. If he had but known, how different all might have been! He had taken her light manner in earnest—not for what it was really worth. But if Frank had a fault—and where is the mortal without one?—it was

most certainly a touch of pride, and he could not brook that the girl to whom he had given so great a love should hold it so lightly as Mabel seemed to have done.

Time passed on, and with the end of July came news of the fearful earthquake which left the fair island of Ischia a heap of deserted ruins. Poor Mabel! She will never forget that day when she read in the morning paper those terrible words—how they danced before her eyes as she looked at them, till they became a blurred mass,—how she was mercifully relieved for a short time by utter unconsciousness—and how, when she came to herself, all light and life seemed to have departed for ever. It was bitter pain before, now it was absolute torture. Her light words of that night rose before her in all their true meaning. She glanced around her at the signs of wealth and elegance on every hand, but they seemed a bitter mockery as she pictured Frank under a heap of ruins, lying cold in death. Those blue eyes that looked at her the night they parted, with such light and love and grief and pain in their depths, were perchance closed in death's long sleep. The thought almost drove her mad. If only she could have recalled those false words it would not have been so hard to bear. She felt that she had instinctively clung to the hope that all would yet come right. Now it was too late; all chance of such an end to her sorrow was gone for ever.

Alick's watchful eye noted that she grew thinner and paler every day. He knew the signs of mental suffering, and, like the true man he was, set off to the terrible scene for the sole purpose of finding Frank. As he sped onwards the thought arose in his mind, "Should he really be dead, will she look more kindly on me?" But with the whole force of his noble nature he crushed it down, and prayed—yes prayed—that he might find Frank alive and well.

CHAPTER II.

A room in one of the streets of Naples, occupied by Alick Merivale, who at that moment was in a deep reverie and unconsciously uttered his thoughts aloud. They were something like the following :

"Shall I do this and ruin my life? May I not by keeping silent win her yet? I fancy her letters have assumed a kinder tone to me of late. It would be so easy for me to return to Kilmarnock, and after assuring her of his safety, allow matters to remain as they were before."

Here he paused, but as a vision of Mabel's white face presented itself to his mind's eye, he continued :

"No, I cannot buy my life's happiness at such a price ; I will go to him and do my best ; but I am sure I scarcely know how to begin."

As he said this he rose hastily and left the house, never stopping till he reached a handsome mansion in the other end of the city.

In a small, well-lighted studio, sat Frank Masters, with a gleaming block of Carrara marble before him. It was the figure of a woman, with a face strangely like that of Mabel Mackenzie. Frank had worked hard from the time of his arrival in Italy, with the view of driving, if possible, the past from his mind. This, with such a true image of Mabel constantly before him, must have proved a difficult matter. To-day, as he worked, thoughts of her were crowding through his brain.

“What have I done, that I should suffer so?” he murmured; “Does she ever think of me, I wonder? Of course not. I am but a fool to entertain such a hope. Indeed, I am almost tempted to wish I had died in Ischia. Why was I saved?—I who am so miserable, while hundreds of happy, smiling mortals were destroyed. But stay! this is base ingratitude. Since Alick Merivale has won the prize, I must be resigned. May he prove worthy of it, as I believe he will. Oh merciful Heaven! it is hard to bear! And I was so sure she loved me; yet, if she had, she would never have sent me away as she did on that bitter night.”

Here Frank flung himself forward on the cold marble in a passion of grief and pain. Presently he was aroused by a hand on his shoulder, and turning,

found himself face to face with Alick Merivale. This was not their first meeting, however, during this visit of Alick's to Naples. Merivale came across Frank before he had spent an hour in the city; and there learnt the narrow escape he had had, his left arm having been broken and his hand severely bruised by falling debris.

Frank held out his hand as Alick said :

“Well, and how is the invalid to-day? Surely you are not pretending to work, old boy?”

“I can scarcely call it work, the little I have done; but I am heartily tired of doing nothing.”

Alick found his task easier than he anticipated. After discussing general subjects, he said,

“I have heard from Mabel Mac——”

“Mabel! What of her? Is she well?” eagerly interrupted Frank.

Alick saw at once that Mabel's was no unrequited love, as he had imagined, and he returned :

“Yes, old fellow. She is as well as usual; but before I proceed farther, allow me to ask you a single question. Do you love her?”

Frank stared at him in blank amazement; then repeated,

“Love her! I should think so indeed. I fancy you must have seen that long ago. But why do you ask? Is it not enough that you have won her love from me, that you must needs probe the wound afresh by coming here and asking idle questions?”

“ My dear Frank, you are labouring under a strange mistake ; she does not care for me ”—here Alick’s voice broke—“ I am only as a brother to her ; and to be candid with you, I think you are nothing short of a fool to stay pining here for what you might have if you would only take the trouble to go and ask for it. I would have given you this hint before, but I could not tell whether you loved the girl or not, and I feared to place her in an awkward position by disclosing the secret I accidentally discovered.”

Frank sprang up and laid a trembling hand on Alick’s shoulder, as he said,

“ Is this true that you tell me, Merivale ! ”

“ Indeed it is, my dear Frank. If you had seen Mabel as I have, you would not doubt my word.”

As Alick ceased, Frank grasped his hand, and in a voice scarcely audible, said,

“ Oh Merivale ! to you, under Heaven, I owe a debt of gratitude which I can never repay.”

.

The good ship Estella was ready to depart, and only waited the turn of the tide to bear away the moving mass which crowded her deck. On the quay stood two young men, one of whom was going on board. This was Alick Merivale, and his companion was no other than Frank Masters, who had returned to his native land, but only to see his friend leave its shores. Alick was bound for South Africa, where in

new sights and sounds he hoped to forget the past. He had fought a hard battle with self, but had come off at last victorious. The temptation had been strong, but he had found strength to conquer. Even yet, as he stood there and noted the happiness shining in Frank's blue eyes, he was tempted to rebel ; but his better nature gained the ascendancy, and as he held out his hand, he said,

“ My dear Frank, you have my earnest prayers and best wishes for your welfare and happiness. Say good-bye to her again for me.”

Here his voice failed, and he turned away his head, but with a mighty effort controlling himself, he continued,

“ I say, old fellow, think on me sometimes when I am far away. Some day I may come back and see you all again.”

“ Never fear, Alick, we can never forget you ; we owe too much to your noble love.”

“ Well, here goes ! Once again, good-bye.”

“ Good-bye, Alick ; may Heaven bless you and bring you safe back to us all.”

The next moment Alick Merivale was gone, and Frank stood on the quay alone.

.

A week later Frank returned to Naples, accompanied by his young wife, whose health had improved wonderfully of late. They visited Milan, Como, Lake

Maggiore, and a dozen beautiful places besides, before they settled in the home in sunny Naples which Frank had spared no expense to beautify, and where they will soon be joined by Mr. Mackenzie, who has promised to spend a portion, but only a portion, of the year in his daughter's Italian home, because, to use his own words, "I canna' forsake bonnie Scotland a'thegither."

As for Mr. and Mrs. Masters, they are both happy, and as they look back on the past—thanks to Alick Merivale's noble love and friendship—they can truly say :

"A FAITHFUL LOVE SETS SELF ASIDE."

MARY MACDONALD;

OR,


True Till Death.

“ Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
 And leave auld Scotia’s shore ?
 Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
 Across the Atlantic’s roar ?

.....

We ha’s plighted our troth, my Mary,
 In mutual affection to join,
 And curst be the cause that shall part us !
 The hour and the moment o’ time !”

—BURNS.

“  ILL ye aye be true to me, Mary ?”

“ Ay, Allan, true till death !”

“ Weel, then, Heaven bless ye,
 darlin’, and keep ye safe till I come
 to claim my bonnie bride.”

“ Allan, maun ye really gang ?”

“ I must, Mary, but no’ for lang ; three years will
 sune go by, an’ you an’ I ha’e true Scottish hearts.”

O

With these words the young man tore himself away, and walked rapidly across the wide stretch of sand to the comfortable home he was to leave on the morrow.

This was, indeed, a sad night for Allan Wyllie, the last he would spend in his native land, for three long years, at least. None the less sorrowful was it for the father and mother to whom this only child was the greatest earthly treasure. How could they know that they would ever see him again? Before his return they might both be resting in the quiet graveyard, beneath the shadow of the old kirk, which they had faithfully attended from their youth up. Here in the same cottage had Robert Wyllie been born, and here he hoped to die. He succeeded his father as game-keeper to Lord C——, and had once dreamed that his only child would follow in his steps; but he evinced a liking for other work, so Robert wisely pocketed his disappointment, and sent Allan to the neighbouring town, where he went to and fro every day. Thus he grew up to man's estate, without a break in the quiet monotony of his life, until his mother's brother, who possessed a large sugar plantation in the West Indies, offered him a good situation if he would consent to come.

It was a great trial to the worthy pair, but as they themselves said, "If it is for the laddie's guid, what richt ha'e we to stand in his licht? Let him gang, an' the blessin' of Him abune gae wi' him."

So it came to pass that Allan went to bid bonny Mary Macdonald farewell.

After he left her, Mary stood as one in a dream, straining her eyes to catch a glimpse of the loved figure; then, turning towards her home, she murmured: "Three years! he said three years wad sune gae by, an' then he wad come to fetch his bride."

"Ha! ha! div ye think sae, Mary Macdonald? There'll be blue snaw when that comes to pass. Ay, ay, my lass, ye'll see wi' clear een that day, I'm dootin'. Div ye no think he'll fa' in wi' another lass oot yonder?"

Mary stood still, and gazed around in bewilderment, as these words, uttered in harsh, grating tones, fell on her ear, but she could see nothing; all around was silent save for the sound of the bat, as it passed on in its evening flight. The girl entered the cottage where her widowed mother sat. Her cheeks were pale, but this Mrs. Macdonald attributed to Allan's departure. She did not hear the ill-omened words which sank so deeply into Mary's heart. As the girl lay on her bed that night, they were present with her; over and over again she repeated them to herself, always ending with the words:

"Wha could it be, I winner? I wad like to ken; but why sud I fash my head wi' sic trash? It wad be some puir haverin' body, no' a there. I micht think shame o' mysel', and me telt Allan this verra nicht that I wad aye be true till death."

.

Two years passed away, and Allan remained true to the home love; at least, if he were faithless, his letters bore no trace of it. He was prospering, and often alluded to the future, and the home he was preparing for his bride. He frequently mentioned his cousin, Bessie, a charming little brunette, and prophesied what a nice companion she would be for Mary in her tropical home. It was a bright morning in the beginning of September when one of these West Indian letters arrived. As the postman left the door, a girl of about Mary's own age entered the house. She was very handsome, with beautiful dark eyes, but in their depths could burn a light which boded no good to the one who might chance to incur her displeasure. Those same eyes rested for a moment on the letter in Mary's hand, but were instantly withdrawn, though not before she had detected the foreign post-mark.

"Weel, Mary, an' hoo are ye the day? I houp ye ha'e guid news this mornin'?"

"Ou, ay, guid news; they're a' in guid health. She maun be an awfu' lassie that cousin o' Allan's; he hauds her up mair and mair every letter. I declare I ha'e fa'en in love wi' the lassie afore I ha'e seen her."

"Weel, Mary, dinna tak' it ill in me sayin't, but I wadna like a lad o' mine to talk sae muckle aboot anither lass. I'm no sayin', mind ye, onything aboot Allan. I believe he's guid and true eneuch, still the best o' them gangs wrang, an' it's no' juist the thing praisin' anither lass sae bauldly to yer verra face."

“Hoots, Jeanie, woman, ye’re bletherin’; I’m sure Allan means nae hairm.”

“Maybe no’, Mary, but ye dinna ken what it may lead to.”

Here Mrs. Macdonald, who had listened in silence, exclaimed :

“Noo, Jeanie Macnab, if ye dinna be quieter I’ll show ye the sunest road to the door. Mind ye, I could trust Allan Wyllie though he filled twenty letters wi’ praises o’ Bessie Fraser. She’s a guid lass, or Allan widna say it, an’ sae lang as my dochter can trust him, as I ken she does, you nor nae ither body need meddle in the maitter.”

“’Deed no’, Mrs Macdonald, that’s true, but I spak’ for the best, sae ye maun juist excuse me. Every ane kens their ain business, an’ I houp that Mary’ll no’ ha’e cause to repent her trust.”

“Nae fears o’ that, Jeanie; nae fears o’ that. Allan’s a guid lad, an’ ane that’ll no break his word.”

“Ou, ay, he’s a’ that, but I maun bid ye guid day. I’ll look in some ither time.”

As the door closed, Mrs. Macdonald said, “I canna thole that lassie; her back’s a perfect cordial.”

But to this Mary made no reply. Had the seed sown taken root? Mary rose the following morning with a heavy heart. An undefined feeling of dread had taken possession of her, which, try as she would, she could not shake off. Scarcely had she seated herself to work (for Mary and her mother supported

themselves by their needle) when a knock was heard at the door, and a child's voice said :

"Please, Mary, Mistress Wyllie sent me down to speir if ye wad come up for a wee. Maister Wyllie's rale bad, an' wad like to see ye."

"Ill ! Is it onything serious?"

"I dinna ken, but I think it is, for Mistress Wyllie's greetin' unco sair."

"Weel, rin awa' up an' tell Mistress Wyllie that I'll be there the noo."

Away went the child, and Mary followed as quickly as possible. When she entered the cottage the first thing she saw was Mrs. Wyllie supported by the child's mother. Then her glance passed on to the bed, and she knew that the old man had gone home. Poor Mrs. Wyllie was completely stricken with grief.

"The Doctor says it is heart disease," she told Mary, "an' I'm gey an' sure I'll no' be lang behind him."

She was right. Before that day three months she lay at rest beside the one who had proved himself a true protector for the past thirty years.

.

September came round again, but it brought only pain and grief to Mary. In all her life she never forgot the calm, full beauty of those autumn evenings, so still and peaceful they were in vivid contrast to the tumult of hopes and fears that filled her heart.

It was three years since Allan's departure, and nearly eight months since she had last heard from him. Jeanie Macnab's words often recurred to her mind, but she thrust them resolutely aside. In this, however, she was not always successful, and to-night was one of these occasions. She was returning home from the neighbouring town, thinking sadly of that night when Allan said farewell.

So absorbed was she in her own thoughts that she did not see the figure of a woman approaching. It was Jeanie Macnab, who for the past six months had been working in Glasgow. Mary started as the familiar voice said, "Weel, Mary, and hoo ha'e ye been leevin' ? I'm unco gled to see ye. Is yer mither weel ?"

"Dear me, Jeanie. is this yersel' ?" answered Mary. "Ay, mither's rale weel. An' what's brocht ye here ?"

"I had twa or three days to mysel', so I thocht I wad tak' a bit rin to see ye a'."

"Weel, I'm prood to see ye : but will ye no' come up an' see my mither ?"

"Weel, I nicht dae waur."

"An' hoo dae ye like Glesca ?"

"Rael weel, Mary. And wha dae ye think I saw there no' lang after I gaed ?"

"I'm sure I canna say."

"Weel, I saw Alick Stewart."

"Alick Stewart ! No' him that gaed oot afore Allan ?"

“The very same ; he cam’ hame about sax months syne.”

“Is he hame for a’thegither ?”

“No ; he’s gaun back next month.”

“Oh ! Jeanie, woman (here Mary caught the other’s arm in a vice-like grip) had he nae word o’ Allan ? Was he weel ?”

“Ay, Mary, weel eneuch——” here Jeanie paused, with a look in her eyes which made Mary’s heart stand still. “I dinna ken hoo to——”

“Oh, woman, haste ye !” as Jeanie still held back ; “onething is better than this suspense.”

“Weel, then, Mary, gin ye wull ha’e’t, Alick telt me that Allan was gaun to be marrit to his cousin Bessie ; he said it was a’ through the place.”

.

Three weeks previous to the events last recorded, two young people sat in the verandah of Mr. Fraser’s house, Port au Prince. It was his daughter, Bessie, and Allan Wyllie. The latter looked pale and thin, but as Bessie said, “Yes, Allan, I really think you should go,” his countenance brightened, and a faint flush coloured the wan cheek as he replied, “Do you think so, Bessie ?”

“I am sure of it, sir. These things are never well done by proxy. By all means go yourself.”

“Very well, I will go by the first vessel ; but if that story proves true, my whole life will be darkened.”

“I believe it to be false. Do you know, Allan, I never liked that man ; I am sure that he is not to be trusted.”

.

Mary and Jeanie—the former with a face that might have been chiselled in marble, so cold and immovable it looked ; the latter with a strange gleam in her bold, black eyes, which, try as she would, she could not wholly conceal, and frightened at the effect of her own words—soon reached the cottage. Mrs. Macdonald at once perceived that something was wrong, and elicited the same story from Jeanie that Mary had previously heard, after which that young lady took her departure ; not more glad to turn her back on the place than Mrs. Macdonald was to be free of her. After she had gone, the good woman, turning to her daughter, said, “Dinna, Mary, lass, dinna tak’ on sae ; it’s maybe no’ true, and if it is there’s as guid fish in the sea as ever cam oot o’t.”

These words caused the girl to break down, for which her mother was very thankful, and she sobbed, “Na, na, mither, nae ither for me. I promised him to be true till death, and I will keep my word ; maybe I’ll no’ leeve lang,” and the slender frame shook with convulsive sobs. Another week passed, during which Mary moved as one in a dream. She did her work, but it seemed to have lost all interest for her. On the Saturday, however, she seemed brighter, and her

mother prevailed on her to go for a short walk. She took her way to the place where she had parted with Allan three years before, and stood looking out to sea. It was a sheltered nook behind some rocks, so she did not notice a tall figure approaching. Presently a voice, sounding as if under the influence of deep emotion, said, "Mary, Mary!"

Turning quickly she beheld Allan Wyllie, thin and white, certainly, but still himself. In the clear eyes shone the old love light that had never beamed but for her. With a cry of "Oh, Allan, Allan! what has come ower ye this while?" she sprang towards him, but drew back as he handed her a note, saying, "Read that, Mary." Opening it with trembling fingers, she read in audible tones:—

Argyle Street, March 1st, 18—

MY DEAR ALLAN,—Arrived safe, and had a pleasant voyage. I have your packet still. How can I tell you? But it must be done. I find Miss Macdonald about to be married, so am keeping it until I hear from you again. It seems some rich old fellow has offered his hand and wealth, and been accepted. Human nature again, you see. I need not tell you how much I sympathise with you. Hoping to hear from you soon,

I remain, "

Your ever true friend,

ALICK STEWART.

"Oh, Allan, what a barefaced lie, I never thocht on takin' the man."

"The man! Who? Did——"

“Ay, Allan, auld Whinstane offered, but I couldna thole him; forbye (with blushing cheeks) ye ken what I telt ye afore ye gaed awa’.”

“I do, my darling! many a time it has cheered me, and from this moment nothing shall ever come between us. That fellow is a treacherous scoundrel, Bessie told me she could not trust him.”

“Weel, Allan, he certainly telt Jeanie Macnab that you and Bessie were gaun to be marriets.”

“Well, darling, it was a well-laid plot, but you and I will defeat them in the end. When I received that note I was in the height of fever, but came off as soon as the Doctor would let me. Ah, Mary! it is only now I realise the truth o’ oor ain poet’s words:

‘For while life’s dearest blood is warm,
 One thought from her shall ne’er depart.
 And she (as fairest in her form) !
 She has the truest, kindest heart.’”

.

It now only remains to expose the treachery of Alick Stewart and Jeanie Macnab. The former was jealous of Allan from the first day of his arrival in Port au Prince. When he found himself entrusted with the packet for Mary, it struck him directly that it was a sure means to obtain revenge for his fancied injuries.

As for Jeanie, she had hated Mary all along, having had a fancy for Allan, and choosing to consider her-

self a much injured person when she heard of their engagement. She it was who, hidden among some trees at a short distance, had, in her rage, hurled the taunt at Mary on the night of Allan's farewell.

Of course, when she and Stewart met in Glasgow, they soon came to an understanding, and between them laid the plot that so nearly wrecked two innocent lives. They soon reaped the reward of their sin, however, for Alick was dismissed from Mr. Fraser's employment, and sank from bad to worse, while Jeanie, having married him, of course sank with him, and so realised the truth of the oft-repeated words, "The way of transgressors is hard."

HIS MOTHER'S CHOICE.

THE harvest moon shone brightly on the broad acres of Briarlea, and its young master, who stood beside a five-barred gate on his own domain, looked eagerly along the lake leading therefrom. His patience was at last rewarded by the appearance of a fair girl, and he murmured, "At last! I wonder what her answer will be." As she drew nearer, the look on her face sent a chill to his heart; he could not tell why, yet he felt the answer would not be favourable to himself. Springing forward he caught her in his arms, but she drew back, causing him to exclaim, "Jeanie, dear, what is the meaning of this. You promised me an answer to-night."

"Sae I did, Norman, an' I'll be true to my word."

"Well, then, darling?"

"Norman, it canna be."

"Jeanie! why is this? Do you not love me?"

But I know you do ; I have seen it in your eyes, over and over again."

"Weel, Norman, I wad raither dee than marry ye, sae lang as yer mither's sae sair against me as I ken she is ; think ye I wad enter your family to be looked on as though I had nae business there?"

"Nae business there, Jeanie ! my wife could never be looked on in that licht ; but wha telt ye that my mither wis against ye ?"

"I heard it myself ; ae day she was speakin' tae Miss Prim, an' ye ken she disna ken me."

"Dae ye really mean this, Jeanie ?"

"Ay, Norman, I could never bear it."

"Weel, lassie, ye canna ha'e much love for me, or ye wadna treat me like this ; but e'en 's ye like, good-bye an' Heaven bless ye, I shall go abroad."

The next moment Jeanie stood alone, with a terrible pain tugging at her heart-strings. She was the only child of a widow lady, very poor, but who had seen "better days," and had come to spend the rest of her life in the village adjoining Briarlea.

The following morning as Norman entered the village, he caught sight of Jeanie Gray, standing at her mother's gate attired for walking. Norman's face grew a shade paler, but controlling himself with an effort he said, "Good morning, Miss Gray ! I see you're for a walk the day."

Jeanie turned, and a swift bright blush spread over neck and brow, as she replied—"Yes, Aunt Bella sent

for me to come to her; she has some ane in the hoose wi' a broken leg."

"Jeanie, d' ye no' ken wha that some ane is?"

"No, she didna say."

"Weel, it's my mother; she gaed to the toon yestreen, and fell, breakin' her leg, sae they took her into yer aunt's hoose, an' the Doctor says she's no' to be moved for some time; I'm on my way there, sae if ye've nae objections we'll gang thegither."

.

A bright cheerful room in the house of Mrs. Mackie, Jeanie's aunt, by the fire on a couch, placed so as to command a view from the window, sat or rather lay a woman of about fifty-five years of age. Her countenance expressed great determination, though somewhat softened by suffering. This was Mrs. M'Alister, the woman who had so sternly set her face against her son's marriage with Jeanie Gray. By her side sat a girl with fair curling hair and violet-blue eyes, no other than Jeanie herself. All these weeks she had tended Mrs. M'Alister with loving care, though that lady never guessed who she really was. Passing for Mrs. Mackie's daughter, Jeanie grew more and more necessary to the invalid. Many a time she said to herself, "If I could juist get Norman to marry this lassie; but they look unco cauld at ane anither; I daursay his heid's sae much ta'en up wi' yon Jeanie

Gray that he can think on naething else. I wunner what she's like. No' like this ane at onyrate, o' that I'm gey an' shure. 'Od, I think the laddie maun be blin'."

Some such words as these she spoke to-day in half-audible tones, causing Jeanie to redden to the roots of her fair hair, and turn away to hide the smile she could not repress; the more so when Mrs. M'Alister continued abruptly, "Jeanie, woman! are ye no' thinkin' on gettin' married? it's time a braw lassie like you wis lookin' for a guid hame."

"Time eneuch yet, Mrs. M'Alister, I'm no' in a hurry."

"Ah, but lassie ye sudna talk that way, if ye ha'e a guid chance tak' it; there's oor Norman, noo, ye wad be the verra wife for him; 'deed, I hauf think he has a fancy for ye as it is."

"Na, na, Mrs. M'Alister, that canna be; what would Jeanie Gray say to that?"

"Jeanie Gray! Eh, lassie, awa' wi' yer blethers for onysake, oor Norman wull never marry her; he—but here he comes to answer for himsel'. Here, Norman, till ye hear what I ha'e been tellin' Jeanie. I wis sayin' she wad mak' a richt wife to ye."

"Did ye tell her that, mither?"

"'Deed did I, but she's bletherin' aboot yon silly thing, Jeanie Gray, as if it could be ony business o' hers. But come, Norman, dae ye no think it yersel'?"

“Weel, mither, I wadna say.” (This with a sly, mischievous glance in Jeanie’s direction, who seemed to enjoy it immensely, judging from the malicious sparkle in the violet eyes.) “But what does Jeanie think hersel’? It must be *audi alteram partem*.” (This as Jeanie left the room.)

“Hoots, Norman, gae wa’ wi’ yer lingo; I dinna ken what she thinks, ye’ll ha’e to fin’ oot that yersel’; but ye ha’e my blessin’, and I’m shure she’ll mak’ ye a faur better wife than yon lassie ye raved sae muckle aboot.”

“Maybe ye’re richt, mither; I hear she pleases you better at ony rate. I’ll see what I can dae.”

“That’s common sense noo, lad! an’ ye ken ye’ll get a proper tocher wi’ Jeanie Mackie, her faither’s worth a guid pickle siller.”

“Och, mither, never mind the siller, I’m no’ needin’ it.”

“Ah but, Norman, mind the main thing, aye mind the main thing—siller ne’er gangs wrang.”

“I see, mither, that you an’ I’ll never agree on that point, for I aye think that if folk has enouch to dae them, they sud be content. But I maun awa’, I promised to see the smith at five o’clock.”

Six weeks later Mrs. M’Alister was at home again. Briarlea was ruled by her firm hand once more. Moving slowly through the close, on a crisp October

afternoon, she overheard the following conversation between the dairymaid and ploughman :

“I say, Meg! Dae ye ken I met the young maister an’ yon bonnie lass at the cottage the day again?”

“Div ye tell me sae? Is that no’ the fourth time this week, an’ it but Thursday?”

“’Deed is it, Meg.”

“Min’ ye, Jock, it ’ll no’ be lang till he brings her hame to Briarlea. That’ll be a match as shure as my name’s Meg.”

“Ou ay, ony ane wi’ hauf an e’e nicht see that he’s clean daft about Miss Gray.”

Mrs. M’Alister waited to hear no more, but hurrying back to the house as fast as her still weak leg would allow her, awaited the culprit’s return with as much patience as could be expected under the circumstances.

He soon arrived, and on entering the kitchen, was greeted with the words, “Norman M’Alister, ye’re a fine lad, I will say! What is the meanin’ o’ this, makin’ yersel’ the talk o’ the hale kintra side; I winner what Jeanie Mackie ’ll say to this?”

“What do you mean, mother?” enquired Norman, with a sly twinkle in his dark eye.

“Mean! I mean to say that it’s neither decent nor right in you to gang stravagin’ about the kintra wi’ yon lassie, an’ you engaged to Jeanie Mackie.”

“Weel, mither, an’ wha else wis I wi’ this afternoon?”

“Oh, dinna tell me; dinna staun’ there wi’ an innocent face. Did I no hear Jock and Meg discussing

you and her no' hauf an oor sin'? Did I no' hear Jock say that he met ye doon the street wi' her this verra day, an' that it wis the fourth time this week? Can ye deny that, lad?"

"Weel, mither, what about it though it wis?"

"Weel, a' I can say is that ye're a shameless loon to treat ony lassie as ye're treatin' Jeanie Mackie."

"I think Jeanie'll no' pit hersel' about wi' my treatment, she has mair sense."

"Maybe no', but if she disna, she's no like me; but lassies are no' the same noo as they were in my young days."

"Mither, I'll tell ye plainly, whether ye're pleased or no', I'm gaun to bring Jeanie Gray here as my wife; I'm no' wantin' to quarrel wi' ye, but I must have her treated with respect, if ye canna luv her."

"Weel, Norman, I wash my hands o' the affair. Ye were aye head-strong, and wilful, sae if ye ha'e an unhappy life, dinna blame me."

"I'm no' the least afraid, mither, I'll bring her up to-night and introduce her to ye."

That evening, as Mrs. M'Alister entered the parlour, Jeanie Mackie rose to meet her; but that lady shook her head, and in doleful tones, said, "Guid e'en to ye Jeanie, dear, but I'm wae to see ye here the nicht."

"That's but a puir welcome to gi'e me, Mrs. M'Alister, when I come to see ye."

"Ah, lassie! I'm glad to see ye for yer ain sake; but I'm expectin' company the nicht, that I'm no' unco prood to see. Norman is bringin' up yon lassie Gray to introduce her to me; I canna thole her ava'. If he had only been wise enouch to tak' you instead."

"Hoots, Mrs. M'Alister, if I'm no' his taste ye canna blame him."

"Taste! Taste, indeed! He has a puir taste that didna fa' in luv' wi' you, my lassie. He surely—"

Here the door opened, and Norman entered, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Mackie, and an elderly lady in deep mourning. Shaking hands with the two former, Mrs. M'Alister said, "This 'll be Miss Gray, I expect," while Jeanie stuffed her handkerchief in her mouth.

"No, mother, that is Mrs. Gray."

"Where is she then? I thocht ye—" But here she stopped short, for, crossing over to the sofa, Norman drew Jeanie's arm through his own, saying, "Allow me, mother, to present to you Miss Gray, my intended wife."

His mother drew back, looking at him with wide-open eyes, and gasped, "Jeanie Gray! Norman, what does this mean?"

"It means, mother, that this is Jeanie Mackie Gray, this lady's daughter, and Mrs. Mackie's niece. Do you still refuse to receive her?"

“Ye rascal, ye ha’e fairly made the fule o’ yer auld mither this time ; but I’ll be even wi’ ye yet. Ay, I’ll tak’ her for a dochter, for I ha’e lo’ed her as ane frae the first day I saw her.”

“Puir an’ a’ as I am !” slyly put in Jeanie.

“Ay, puir an’ a’ as ye are, for ye’re worth yer ain wecht in gold.”

“Well,” said Mr. Mackie, who had not yet spoken, “I think it is my turn to speak now. I ha’e nae children o’ my ain, sae on Jeanie’s marriage day I intend to gi’e her a thoosan’ pounds.”

“There, ye see, Norman, I’ll not be a penniless lass after a’.”

“No, darlin’, it wad have been a’ the same. Ye’re worth mair than a’ the wealth o’ Golconda to me ; an’ mither has managed to get her ain choice after a’.”

THE END.

DUNLOP & DRENNAN, PRINTERS, "STANDARD" OFFICE, KILMARNOCK.

