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OCTAVIA,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

EDINBURGH.

MDCCCLIY.

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TO

SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON, BART., THIS SMALL VOLUME

IS, WITH HIS KIND PERMISSION,

MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

Edinburgh, May 1852.

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OCTAVIA.



OCTAVIA.

Gentle Octavia! still unto mine age
The bonny lassie of my schoolboy day,
To thee I sing this rudely fashion'd lay,
To thee, as pure as the unwritten page.
Thy gentle memory helpeth to assuage

The weariness of life's grief-furrow'd way, And on my darkness flings bright beams of May, Cheering my journey to the final stage. Gentle Octavia! if again we meet,

Thou shalt be with the angels, but more fair, And with the seraphim shalt pace the street,

Gold pav'd, of heaven, as lovely as the prayer Thy clear heart breathes to God, a prayer of love, Mingling in music with the songs above. Hown at your wild will, ye winds of December!
Tear in your wrath the last leaf from the tree,
As musing I gaze on the fire's dying ember,
Thy moaning recalls the forgotten to me.

Mychildhood and schooldays are passing before me, My playmates' glad voices I hear them again, And sadly the fond recollection comes o'er me, Of vows made when boys, to be broken when men.

Howl, ye December winds! cruel recalling
That which I wish were forgotten for aye;
Ye sound like the clod on the coffin-lid falling,
Which covers what once was the light of our day.

Howl as ye will, over mountain and forest, Tear the last leaf from the cold, shivering tree, Ye waken up memories saddest and sorest, And tis memories alone ye can bring back to me.

Yet among the old faces dim passing before me, One fair maiden's form stands out from the throng, And while the calm spell of her spirit is o'er me, Ere the last ember blackens, I'll break into song. Young Spring is bringing
Joy unto the earth,
The blossom to the flower,
The rosebud to the bower,
The sunshine and the shower;
A thousand birds are singing,
Where the forest boughs are flinging
Their shadows on the grass,
As the merry breezes pass—
Happy, happy earth!

Young Spring is bringing
Sorrow unto me,
The thoughts of days gone by,
Of mirth that knew no sigh,
Of hopes that bloom'd to die,
The memories of the cherish'd,
Who have left me, or have perish'd;
The vision of the olden
Happy time, all gleaming golden—
Unhappy, weary me!

Young Spring is bringing
Hope for earth and me:
The bee again will hum
In the sunny days to come;
To the flower, alas! she's dumb;
And my heart again shall waken
From its dream of the forsaken,

And love again shall warm it
With a flame that shall not harm it—
Happy, happy earth and me!

Spring, young-eyed Spring, Is dancing o'er the earth, Singing as she goes A song of careless mirth: And as she passes by Peeps the primrose from the hedge, And the daisy opes its eye In the shadow of the sedge: And the music of her strain Wakes the slumbering stream again, And it breaks in shining shivers The Winter's crystal chain, And in its freedom wild, Like a happy-hearted child, It runs on, often tumbling, Ever murmuring and grumbling At old Winter for his frost and snow, And dreary days, and rain; Never thinking it is going Far too swiftly to the shore, To be lost and be forgotten. For ever, evermore.

Alas! the life of every man Like this happy streamlet once began: Its home was childhood's mountain land, Of a world beyond it nothing knew, It only look'd at the heaven so blue, And the fair-eyed flowers that beside it grew, And the fern and heather no shadow threw Across it, for childhood can nothing know Of the dreary shadows of guilt and woe; But it runs, with a face full of smiling glances, Through the green valley of its fancies, And its course is measured by silver sand.

I met Spring on the mountains, Beside the Western Sea. List'ning to the fountains, That were singing joyously. Much I love those western valleys, Much I love those glens so green, There my fancy built a palace, For there it found a queen. I found my young queen sitting In the shadow of a tree. With the sunbeams ever flitting Round her brow and tresses free. She was laughing, she was crying, When I drew her to my side. Saying, "I've come to make you the queen Of these mountains so high, these valleys so green." So I bade her sit on a mossy stone-For a mountain queen a fitting throneAnd I made a crown of hill-side daisies. And spoke in gallant schoolboy phrases Of the poets who would sing her praises, And, kneeling down, I kiss'd the hand Of the youthful queen of my mountain land, Then rose and crown'd my bride. Oh! she was a happier girl that day Than any queen of the days of old, Who drank of pearls from chalice of gold. Her courtiers were all lovely things; The lark rose up on quivering wings And vow'd allegiance in a song; The flowers, as she pass'd along, All bow'd, acknowledged fealty: Only the wind was rather too free; But he was the jester of our court, And pluck'd at her flowery crown in sport, Unloos'd the locks of her golden hair, Shook them a moment down the air, Then flung them back on her neck of snow; And the sun he smil'd his sweetest of smiles, Ere he laid him down 'mong the western isles, In his chamber of purple glow. Ere we reach'd her home the stars came forth. And the streamers leapt up in the cloudless north To gaze on her, more lovely far, More loveable than any star; And when the moon look'd down the vale, Tinging her cheek with a lustre pale,

She look'd so lovely in the light
Of those thousand torches of the night
That were lighting home my new-made bride,
I drew her closer to my side,
For much I fear'd that some fairy band
Would steal her away to elfin land.

Autumn, pale-faced Autumn, Slowly comes this way, Her mantle is the twilight When it darkens from the gray; Her cheek it hath a crimson flush. Like the colour that comes and goes On the face of one who pines away, A flush that tells of swift decay, Of calm and cold repose, I have seen the slow-paced Autumn Wand'ring through the fields, The leaves she look'd on faded. The flowers droop'd and died, The sun his sad brow shaded. And the widow'd streamlets sigh'd. All the joy that Autumn yields Is ended when the wain Brings the treasures of the fields Through the straw-besprinkl'd lane. It was in the Autumn time, Just before the wintry weather, Ere the fields grew white with rime, Ere the purple left the heather, That I wander'd to the sea-shore, Took my last look of the islands Marshall'd round sea-girt Oban, Belted with it glorious highlands. Daylight sunk as through Kirerra Swept our vessel on its way, On my heart there fell a darkness Deeper than the dying day.

My queen and I began our reign
When Spring winds o'er the daisy blew,
And I, a self-elected king,
Heard Summer's forest branches sing,
And trod the full-bloom'd heather bell;
And round us whisper'd Summer's dew,
In many a twilight wandering.
But when the Summer bade farewell,
And sad winds moan'd across the plain,
Aye when the Autumn shadows fell,
I was a queenless king.

Youthful tears are like the shower Falling in the sunny weather, Drieth swift as youth forgets Its sorrow and its tears together. I soon forgot the tears I shed When parting with my mountain queen; But now, since many years are fled, Some slow, some swift, in which I've seen A thousand dearest hopes lie dead, Tears come again into mine eyes, Not of regret, nor yet of pain; But that I know that never more Return the times that once have been: For manhood thinketh in its sorrow That hope may never come to-morrow, That all the best is gone before.

I TROD the highland glen once more, With fair Octavia by my side, And I recall'd the former times In which she was my boyhood's bride, My boyish love, and boyish rhymes; Of how I found her in the glade, And of the flowery crown I made; How six long years had pass'd o'er her, And left her all the lovelier; And how it seem'd like yesterday, When on the sands of Oban's bay, My tears were falling as we parted; And how a tear had sometimes started Into mine eyes, amid the roar And bustle of the city's street, When I in happy thought once more Wander'd with her by hills and streams, The purple heather 'neath our feet; And how I saw her in my dreams, And wept, because she would not speak; Real tears they were, for when I woke I found them trickling down my cheek. Mid such sweet talk we wander'd on Until the day began to wane,

Till on us stream'd the blaze that shone Through her rose-trelliss'd window-pane.

When all the house had gone to rest,
And she in virgin beauty slept,
While Innocence the angel kept
A silent watch beside her bed,
As gently throbb'd her rounding breast,
When golden visions came and fled
Across her dreams, and it might be,
When higher, quicker throbb'd her breast,
Until the guardian angel press'd
A gentle hand upon her form,
As if to calm the pulsing storm,
Yes, it might be, would it might be,
That in that time she dreamt of me.

I sought no rest, but musing stood
Beside the casement open wide,
And gaz'd across the dark fir wood,
Upon Loch Lihnne's darker tide;
And watch'd each star that sank behind
The lofty mountain peaks of Mull,
Until the morning, gray and dull,
Rose slowly with the rising wind;
Until its brighter hues began
To redden dark-brow'd Cruachan.
I mus'd on peets who had sung
The praise of her they lov'd the best;

And while the mists of morning clung Unmoving to the mountain's breast, I sang my lovely highland queen, Although she was no highland maid; Her infant footsteps first had stray'd Through Durham's quiet meadows green, Her early childhood first had play'd Where Durham's old cathedral walls Fling their gray shadows on the stream When sunset into twilight falls-The winding, wand'ring stream of Wear, That through the sleepy Summer hours Basks in the bright, unclouded beam, As if it lov'd to linger near The city of the sacred towers. She was a bud in southern bowers. Transplanted to the mountain's dun, To be the loveliest of the flowers That rise to kiss the northern sun. I sang my love as best I could, To the dim light of breaking day, And though the verse be harsh and rude, Thus ran the lav :-

In the twilight of the Summer eve, Upon the crimson western deep, I've seen the wavelets slowly heave The vessel into sleep. In the quiet Summer eve I've lain Upon my own beloved's breast, That rose and sank as heav'd the main, And rock'd my soul to rest.

I've look'd into her angel eyes,
The while her soft hand smooth'd my brow,
Until the stars began to rise,
And dews fell from the bough.

And every sentence I could speak Began and ended with her name, And oftentimes across her cheek There went a blushful flame.

I saw it not, I knew 'twas there,

For when I kiss'd her I could feel
A warm breath, as of Summer air,
Across her beauty steal.

Her beauty was not like the sun In the full splendour of his prime, But the young dawn, whose glories run To light the cloudy clime.

A glory, like a rippling stream, Flow'd down her tresses long and fair, As if the Summer's sunniest beam Were woven in her hair. Words could not speak the thoughts; her eyes Spoke soundless as the falling dew, Fill'd with a warmth the sunny skies Of Italy ne'er knew.

And when she spoke, it was no sage Uttering a grand prophetic truth, 'Twas not the mimicry of age, But the warm words of youth.

She spoke, and woe forgot its grief, And age forgot its care the while, And even sickness found relief And healing in her smile.

She was all beauty unto me,
'Mong loveliest things, the loveliest far,
And ever shall her memory be
My guardian, guiding star.

How boyhood longeth for the years To bring it to the age of man ! How manhood turns with grief and tears Unto the time when youth began, Or e'er it knew of cloudy grief, And tears that fall like April's rain To slay its young hopes in the leaf, And strew their blossoms on the plain! I have no faith in golden dreams Though, as a boy, I held them true, Nor think each thing is what it seems; Yet oftentimes a glory streams Across my sadness, like the light Of Autumn moons, that only shew The loveliest things, and hide the rest, As memory treasures in its breast The peace, the joy, the calm delight That wing'd the hours of long ago. And sometimes to my soul is given A holier hour, in which I see, In sin-defac'd humanity, A faint and flick'ring gleam of love, And know 'twas kindled from above; And in that hour my soul has striven

To look through sunset into heaven. I've felt the Almighty God revealing Himself in ev'ry better feeling; Him all-pervading I have found Within the busy bustling street, Where Want creeps by with blue cold feet, And Wealth wheels on with rattling sound. Aye, by the ever silent hills, And by the never silent sea, I've felt his glorious presence fills That which man names infinity.

I found him in Octavia's heart,
And why should I not find him there?
Of his great work she was a part,
And he had made her passing fair;
So fair, so good, that think I still
Upon this woe-bedarken'd earth,
Angels yet work their father's will,
And sit, not unseen, by the hearth,
But wear the form that she doth wear,
A form of beauty and of youth,
To make us quite forget our care
While gazing on the golden hair,
The eye so bright, the brow so fair,

Of Innocence and Truth.

FAREWELL, Octavia! unto me
Thy voice is silent evermore,
That which I hop'd can never be,
For change and chance have shut the door

Against me, that I cannot come Into thy presence, but I yet Believe that though thy voice is dumb, Thou art not willing to forget

Among thy suitors' buzzing throng, Amid their words of studied grace, Him who now sings for thee this song, Whose inspiration was thy face,

Round which a halo ever shone,
A glory of meridian day,
I could not bear to be alone,
'Twas darkness when you went away.

Or if thou hast forgot me now,
I have not yet forgotten thee,
The bird can ne'er forget the bough
That blossom'd in its nesting tree;

On which it sat through Summer's days,
And sang away the sunny time,
As I, upborne upon thy praise,
First ventur'd forth my youthful rhyme.

Still do I love thee, with the love
That brother unto sister bears,
All selfish end and aim above,
The love that deepest sorrow shares.

That makes each kindness shewn to thee,
To me a greater kindness shewn,
That makes thy every sorrow be
A sadder sorrow of my own.

Full many an hour when griev'd and sad,
With none around my grief to share,
Thy spirit came my soul to glad,
And sooth'd the sorrow of my care.

Each path that we together trod
By silent glen and sounding sea,
Each look and word that cheer'd the road,
Shall sacred in my memory be.

Dear unto me the western hills,
Each heathery copse, each wimpling lake,
Dear all the valleys, rocks, and rills,
Dear—for thy own beloved sake.

In coming years, if I should chance To tread by highland hill and glen, Each fair scene will recall thy glance And bring thy lov'd voice back again.

Through all my pilgrimage of life, My journey o'er this world of woe, Amid its tumult and its strife, Thy spirit by my side shall go;

And in Adversity's dark night Sweet tidings to my soul will tell, Will whisper of the region bright, Where Love, and Truth, and Beauty dwell.

Farewell, Octavia! morning breaks, In blackness all the embers lie. And merry Nature now awakes The birds to sing, and me to sigh.



SONNETS.

SUPPLY BURNISHED

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BORTHWICK CASTLE.

1

No more the spear and shield hang in the hall, Echoes no more the tramp of mailed heel, Vanish'd the rolling smoke and glitt'ring steel, What time the Southron foeman storm'd thewall—'Tis Summer's loveliest day, and I recall The ancient memories of the mould'ring peel, The knight who battled for his country's weal; All gone—knights, ladies, pages, serfs, and all; The whin yet gilds the gentle sloping hill; The grass is still as green; the skies as blue; Through yonder woodland murmureth the rill, As when on Flodden fell the blood-red dew; And so it will be when my heart is still, Through every change is beauty ever true.

II. BOUNTIFUL Summer! how I love thy sky,

Thy snowy gleam of cloudland rolling white, Thy dream of heaven in the dim starlight, Thy whitening corn fields, and larks singing high. Here on the castle's turret top I lie, And thou art showering down thy glad delight Of golden gleams, and streamlets flashing bright,

And distance where the hazy purples die,—
Hum-toiling bee, around the blushing flower,
Gath'ring the sweets of smiling sun-mouth'd May;
Soar, gentle bird, above yon green-clad bower,
And sing to far off hills your home-learnt lay;

Here, I am happy, in the passing hour, Content to be possessor of to-day.

SIR WALTER SCOTT AND HIS LITERARY FRIENDS. PAINTED BY THOMAS PAED.

т

Here have they come by Arts' high invitation!
And if the painter only had the power
To make them speak, Oh! what a priceless
dower!

To listen to the words of inspiration!

To listen to the men who rule the nation,
By linking heart to heart, and mind to mind.
The Northern Harp no more upon the wind
Shall fling the song of patriot adoration—

Nor Wordsworth priest-like chaunt great Nature's hymn—

Nor Campbell's pœan swell like ocean's roar— Nor Crabbe's soft sigh wail through the workhouse dim—

Nor Hogg with fairies sing on Yarrow's shore; Genius mourns Jeffrey, Art and Science weep Where Wilkie, Allan, and where Davy sleep.

II.

The words and deeds of great men never die, They are not silent when their lips are dumb,

And though we hear them not amid the hum Of bustling earth, in solitude's clear sky

They still are speaking, like the lark on high,

That sings above the thundering battle-plain. The poet and the painter chaunt one strain, And each to each gives immortality.

The bard of Erin lives, although his lyre Hangs silent with the harp on Tara's walls;

And Wilson's eye still gleams with youthful fire, His voice still teaches in our classic halls; And Lockhart sings till Spain's blue hills once more Flash with the spears of Cid Campeadore.

I. First came sweet Summer, 'neath her golden feet

The fields spread out their flowers of varied bue; Above her path the birds unnumber'd flew, Singing in joyous choir, a welcome meet. The ocean's billows did her coming greet And revell'd in the sunshine of her eyes, The streamlets whisper'd forth a glad surprise And ran to tell it to each green retreat. By hill and dale, thus onward did she stray, And as she pass'd, all things upon her smil'd; The amorous trees shook out their tresses gay, The choral winds awoke an anthem wild; The enraptur'd sun did linger on his way

To feast his gaze on Nature's loveliest child.

TT

But Summer died; to tell the doleful tale
The grieved winds ran wildly to and fro;
The flowers did hear it and bent down in woe,
The streams with mournful murmurs fill'd the vale.

The streams with mournful murmurs fill'd the va The trees did tremble at the wind's sad wail,

And on the ground their grief-shed locks did fling; The birds no more held gladsome triumphing, But told their sorrows to the twilight pale. And Autumn came, the funeral rites to pay,

And Autumn came, the funeral rites to pay,
And heap'd the brown leaves on her sister's bier;
And often came the clouds by night and day

To drop upon her grave a mourner's tear;
And the sad sun went hurrying on his way,

For she was dead that he did love so dear.

Then Winter came, a sad-eyed man and old, To seek for Autumn. By the silent brook All dead she lay within the grassy nook

That held sweet Summer's grave, his sorrow roll'd Down his worn cheeks, and fell upon the mould, Big drops of ice, and in his grief he took

From her cold hand the wither'd flowers, and shook

Their scentless blossoms o'er the frozen wold—
"I cannot leave thee, lov'd one, lying there,

"I cannot leave thee, lov'd one, lying there,
Bleak, bitter are the winds that round thee blow."
With trembling hand of age and tender care,

He wrapp'd her in his mantle white as snow, Then wander'd on, like one in sad despair,

Then wander'd on, like one in sad despair, With many a moan, and tottering step and slow.

"ONE MORE UNFORTUNATE."

And wast thou born beside the hill and stream?

And trodst the daisied grass with thy young feet?

Or was it in the city's bustling street?
Where Nature's beauty comes but in a dream—
And did thine eye with holy joy e'er gleam
When young Love whisper'd truth into thine
ear?

Or were the words dark-purpos'd insincere? To lead thee as the marsh-fire's mocking glean. Oh! do not ask her why she went astray; Let that be buried with the bright before—

Let that be buried with the bright before—
Poor wanderer of the city's midnight way,
A home-hearth and a friend are thine no more!
Thy home the street, thine only friend the grave;
A woman still—Oh! sisters, will ye save?

POEMS.



THE DEBATE.

WE met one eve in Tom the artist's house,

And talk'd of love, until the bright-eyed dawn Shook out his streaming banner in the east, And the stars hurried from his flashing spears. And long we argued, till at last George said-George large of brain link'd to a kindly heart-"Speak as you will, I hold where I began, That passion need not be a part of love, For you may love, and she return your love, And each be all the world unto each, And yet may meet, and speak, and part as friends. The poets, when they tell a tale of love, Rave about kisses, and of grasping hands, And twining arms, and silent long embrace. Now, love, I say, may be where these are not." Then Tom made answer, "My heart says, cold love.

If such thing is, is friendship, nothing more—And frozen love might be a name for hate.

I won't believe two lovers ever met,
And walk'd, or sat, one hour in solitude,

But ere they parted, took at least one kiss, Ave twenty kisses, twenty more to that." Then George, "I am in love, and am belov'd, So to o'erthrow your words I'll tell a tale-One day I went with Mary on my arm, To wander through the woods of Hawthornden. And by the river's side, hid in the shade, We sat from mid-day till the green-bower'd glen Was cloth'd with shadow; there we spoke of love, Of bygone days, of present hopes and fears, And then return'd unto the village inn; Now, all that time I never touch'd her lips." Then Tom roar'd out a laugh, and laughing, said, "You ice your love as I might ice my wine, You cannot drink love with its natural glow, Lest it should harm your stomach or your head." "But stop," said George, "my tale is not yet done. We waited in the lobby for the coach A full half-hour, and just to pass the time, I kiss'd her once behind the bar-room door." We all laugh'd loud and long, till Tom began, With slow and measur'd tone, "O George, O

I envy you whose heart can keep so cool, When head and heart of mine would burst in flame;

I'll speak not of myself, but tell a tale, Told unto me by one I dearly love, One far away, whose spirit listens now:

George,

Like you, he was in love, and was belov'd,
And for six months, like you, he was a monk,
All kissing and embracing he eschew'd;
Like you, he went one day to Hawthornden,
She with him, and it was the first glad time
They ever met in deaf-ear'd solitude,
The self-same flowers round him as were round
you,

The self-same river running through the rocks, Shaking the shadows of the moveless trees; Her arm was round his neck, his round her waist, And sitting thus, he told his heart's great wish, Stammering he told it, till love broke the bonds Of bashfulness that fetter'd down his tongue, And then his words came like a mountain stream, Leapt o'er each other; were they written down, Would sound like nonsense unto you and me. She shap'd them into meaning, and at last He ended, 'May I call you Jeanie mine.' While he was speaking, her pale face hung down Upon her bosom, when he ceas'd still hung, And as he look'd across her trembling eyes, And tighter grasp'd her hand, she turn'd her face Large-eyed on his, and drew him to her breast, And said, nor yes, nor no, but whisper'd, 'James.' Had James been George, and heard that little word, And felt the heaving of her heart that beat Against his breast, as asking entrance there, He would have turn'd his eyes up to the trees

And said, 'Well, Jane, we've spent a pleasant day.'

James could not speak, he knew not what to speak, But rose and kiss'd her, clasp'd her in his arms, Nor thought of time nor of eternity! But liv'd in heaven through that long embrace ! Oft has he told me, that his name that day Sounded so sweetly strange he knew it not. Now could I moralize, and grieve to think That to the lover's heart comes one glad hour, Which never comes again. I nothing know Of wedded life, but I am certain sure, That wedded life must oft recall the days When the tongue utter'd what the heart had felt, And almost wish those glad days back again, As I now wish I were again a boy. I aim no blow at marriage, for I deem It is a holy compact between two, A sacred promise that with single heart, And single purpose, they shall tread life's path Unparted in the day of joy or ill; Yet must I think, first love to marriage is As soaring poesy to creeping prose." So ended Tom. Then Frank said, "Let me tell One little story to my dear friend George, Wherein he who was actor in the scene, Did as friend George in his short comedy, But for a reason differing from George As differs gloomy Hell and dazzling Heaven.

It was a raw and misty Autumn eve, With such sad heading doth begin my tale, The brown leaves whirl'd along the muddy roads, Crouching in dark heaps by the sheltering walls. He, whom I tell of, left the farm-house door, Walk'd with his lov'd one down the avenue, Dark with the shadows of the thick grown firs-They stood a while at distance by the gate, She spoke, 'We part; 'tis not my wish, 'tis not, You know 'tis not, yet must I say, Farewell! Perhaps my father's mind may change, and then We shall be one before the eye of man, As we are now beneath the eye of God, And till that time thy memory shall shine Upon the dark of my grief-clouded heart, As streams the sunshine through the prison grate.' He clutch'd her arm, and gasp'd as if to speak, Unloos'd his gripe, and rush'd into the night, While fell her arm as dead against her side." Then William, with a growl, "Tut, tut, I think We've wasted many hours in foolish talk, Unto the great neglect of nuts and wine: I say, if any man should wish a wife, Then let him look till he finds one to suit, Wasting no time in coining sugar'd words, But plumply say, 'I'm willing to be yours, Will you be partner of my bed and board?" For I maintain that none of you to-night Paint love as in the general it exists:

Tis all made up of concerts, and of balls, And stiff-neck'd parties at the Christmas time, And prosy wooings of the elder folks, Who weigh their daughter's lover by the pound. There are no Romeo's and Juliet's now—Love is a huckster in an auction stand, And to the highest bidder sells his prize." Thus he ran on, until his hearers yawn'd, And parted from each other, just as gleam'd The red dawn light upon the Lomond's brow.

THE THISTLE-DOWN AND THE THOUGHT.

ONCE a thistle-down was whirling Upon the Autumn breeze. Over rivers, over forests, And dark blue stripes of seas. Through the country's silent meadow, Through the busy smoky town, In shadow and in sunlight, Went the weary thistle-down. On stream and wave it floated, Like a wander'd flake of foam; But the wind pursued it ever, Chas'd it further from its home ; Till it hid within the shadow Of an humble little flower, On went the wind of Autumn-It was safe within its bower. From beneath the wild flower's shadow, Ere many summers past, Rose a tall and stately thistle That defied the Autumn blast,

Growing on in green-leav'd grandeur,
Through many a day and night,
Until a noble nation
Made it emblem of their might.

And poets sung its praises,

And the glorious battles won, 'Neath the banner of the Thistle,

When the dust-cloud hid the sun.

To the world, in bygone ages,

There came a mighty Thought; It went through plain and city,

But the world knew it not.

None gave it kindly welcome,

It was beneath all scorn; But it wander'd, ever wearing

A smiling face like morn.

One day it chanc'd to enter

A lowly cottage door; Its footsteps, like the angels', Fell unheard upon the floor.

Beside the open window,

A poor, young poet lay;

On the volume which he read in Shone the parting glint of day.

Never mov'd the bended poet, Leapt the thought into his heart;

From his fingers fell the volume, As he rose with sudden start. And words of inspiration Flow'd like music from his tongue; His bright eye growing brighter As the thought more closely clung. And he walk'd abroad in gladness,

With a vision true and clear,

Seeing, singing like a prophet, Of a glorious coming year. His music woke the echoes

Of the stony heart of man, His every word a war-cry

In Life's stormy battle-van.

So the thought that once was slighted With the curling lip of scorn,

Went again from out the cottage, From the poet lowly born.

From the poet lowly born.

It sounded forth no trumpet,

No banner it unfurl'd,

But march'd along, a victor, For the worship of the world.

In after years the nations Were pilgrims to the cot,

Where, with the poet-ploughman, Once dwelt the mighty thought.

YARROW.

SILENT the mighty bard who once,
Like soaring lark in Summer weather,
In rippling numbers, sang the praise
Of Yarrow's stream, and Yarrow's heather.
He trod this glen with those whose names
Are girded round their country's story,
And by the rush of Yarrow's wave,
Shap'd the bright dreams of poet's glory.

To-day I pace the grassy glen,
And, though I boast no "winsome marrow,"
Yet one is walking by my side
Worthy to be "The Flower of Yarrow."
I envy not the mind that sang
Kilmeny in the land of wonder,

Kilmeny in the land of wonder, Nor he whose northern harp awoke Old Scotland and its warlike thunder.

For those I love are round me now, Kind friends, to me a greater treasure Than the high converse of the minds Who revel in poetic measure. The black clouds in the windy sky Scatter in flight, then join to rally, The while the rain and sunshine pass Alternate o'er the hill and valley.

Down Ettrick sweeps the stormy gust, St Mary rolls its foamy billows,

Trembles the rain-dew'd fern and grass Beneath the shade of Dryhope's willows. In Yarrow's glen, a mourner's tears

Made Yarrow flow with bitter sorrow-A happy bride she was to-day,

A weeping widow on the morrow.

My thought went forward to the days When I, perchance, by friends forsaken,

Might wander here, where stream and hill Long buried memories would awaken,

This was the "dowie, dowie den,"

So was it nam'd by poets olden;

To me it is a glen of joy,

Where hopes spring round me ripe and golden.

Down on the mountains creeps the mist,

The evening wind is moaning sadly; But what to me the mist, the moan,

Whose heart with hope is beating gladly? The mist is but the looming shade

Of sorrow that may ne'er come near me;

The moaning wind, a far off woe, Whose spectral form may never fear me.

But now I turn from Yarrow's glen;
It may be in some future summer
That I to Yarrow yet again
Shall trace my steps, a blythesome comer.
Farewell, dear Yarrow! thou shalt be
A wimpling stream, a rolling river,
When those who look'd on thee to-day
Are silent in the earth for ever.

And till my dwelling is the house
Turf-cover'd, lonely, dark, and narrow,
My thoughts shall wander by thy stream,
To woo thy beauty, darling Yarrow.

THE SONG OF THE UNIVERSE.

It hath not ceas'd—the ancient melody, First sung by the rejoicing morning stars, When the Almighty on creation smil'd, And all the sons of God shouted for joy.

It hath not ceas'd-glad Nature everywhere Prolongs the young world's birth-hymn, heard By highest God, and his attendant hosts. It hath not ceas'd-all things created sing ;-The sun, when in his golden armour clad, He scales the cloud-built battlements of dawn-The gentle maiden moon that softly glides To kiss with dewy light in night's calm hours The folded eyelids of the flowers-the stars, The living jewels sparkling in the crown Which girds the forehead of immensity. Aurora, when she leads her shining bands Along the icy ridges of the north With streaming banners and long flashing spears-The Ocean, when wild tempest bids his surge Rush to the shore to tear and gnaw the chain,

Rock-link'd that binds him, or in gentle calm The low wave ripples gleaming o'er the sand— Forests and groves, that dance their flickering leaves

Unto the Summer wind—rivers and streams
That roll in beauty, or that leap in light—
The mountains, which the lavish sunset decks
With robes of purple and with crowns of gold;—
All, all things sing the grand eternal song—
All beings, from the angel highest born,
That wheels his flight around the burning throne,
Unto the bee that woos the Spring-time flower—
All join to sing the everlasting strain,
That shall not cease-when Time and Death are
dead!

That shall re-echo through eternity, For ever, and for ever—God is love!

EPITHALAMIUM.

I've seen two streamlets on the heathery mountains, Leaping in gladness each adown its glade, Fed with the crystal of the stainless fountains, That rise amid the broom and bracken's shade.

I've seen them o'er the sunny pebbles leaping, With happy murmur like to childhood's voice; Awhile within the pool deep-shadow'd sleeping, Then onward on their journey to rejoice.

At mid-day, the free sunshine on their waters Kiss'd every wave until it blush'd in gold; At midnight came the stars, heaven's bright-eyed daughters,

To bathe their beauty in the limpid cold.

Like these two streams, two friends of mine once started

On life, from infancy's crystalline source,
By many a hill and many a valley parted,

Yet both ran happy on their separate course.

The scenes they lov'd were different, and the meadows

Were different, in which their childhood stray'd; The friends with whom they ran through lights and shadows

Were different as the thoughts that round them play'd.

I've seen two streams adown the mountain coming,

Mingle with gentle murmur into one,

To glide through vales where summer bees were

The older love-tales of the flowers and sun.

Calm was their beauty then,—a noble river,
That roll'd by city's din and pastoral song,
For mile on mile, as it would roll for ever,
Growing in splendour as it roll'd along.

So, my beloved friends, this day have ended Their solitary pilgrimage through time,

And, like the streams in one another blended, Shall journey onward to the land sublime!

Calm be their travel; and if cloudy sorrow Darken the sunshine of their onward way, May Hope give promise of a brighter morrow, And keep the promise in a golden day. Prophetic Hope speaks of young smiling faces, Of little arms around a mother cast, Of girlhood's form, in which a father traces Her that he woo'd and won in days gone past.

My blessing on them! and may Heaven's blessing
Fall like the dew upon them day by day!
And Time's hand touch them with a gentle pressing,
Whispering gently, "Earth is not for ave."

DELTA.

Still runs the ripple up yon yellow sand,
Wimples yon river slowly to the sea,
The Summer wind is wandering through the land,
Murmuring its song in every bush and tree.

When blossoms whiten on thy garden wall,
And swallows twitter at thy window-pane,
Thou wilt be lying where the shadows fall
Among the rank weeds of the churchyard
plain.

Thou lovedst Nature with a love sincere, Revelling amid all beauty 'neath the sun; But thou art dead—and Nature sheds no tear, Though all her lovers perish'd, one by one.

Ay, thou art dead! no more thy voice shall sing Of homely mirth, of heavenly joy sublime; Like to the bird that sings to cheer the Spring, Thou fled'st with Summer to a better clime. I mourn thee not! I only mourn for those
Who miss thy gentle voice, thy kindly eye;
Thou didst thy work as did the Autumn rose—
Gave out thy sweetness, and lay down to die.

I mourn thee not! it was no phantom grim

That smote thee down with bloody-dripping

spear;

It was the loveliest of the cherubim

That led thee through you portal crystal clear.

Thy work is finish'd—towers and temples fall,

Time hides his ruin with the wild flower's
shade;

A great mind's utterance can outlive them all— A poet's words are things that cannot fade.

FACT

WE sat within the forest's shade,
Upon a mound of waving grass,
So thick a bower the branches made,
A sunbeam scarce had room to pass.

But when the soft wind shook the bough, A wandering, wanton sunbeam came, Ran to her lips and kiss'd her brow, Then vanish'd as for very shame!

I envied not the sunbeam's kiss,

Nor the warm breeze that shook her hair,

My heart was running o'er with bliss!

O! what should jealousy do there?

I never saw the skies so blue,
The streams so clear, the grass so green;
And ev'ry bird that o'er us flew
Sang as if Winter ne'er had been.

Her hand was lying in my hand, Few words upon our silence broke;

But well my heart could understand

The words her fingers' pressure spoke.

We sat within that blissful bower Till sunset deeper shadows cast; I never thought in that glad hour Of the dim future, or the past.

And oft I press'd that gentle arm,
And oft my kisses flush'd her cheek;
My tongue was fetter'd with a charm,
My love—it would not let me speak.

Then came the first embrace, delight
To which no name hath yet been given—
And sacred pledges did we plight:
O love! first love! youth's dream of heaven!

And side by side we walk'd, and came
Into the bustling village street,
I. blushing whisper'd her sweet name

I, blushing, whisper'd her sweet name, We parted—yes, we soon shall meet!

FANCY.

The Summer is come back once more,
With beauty on its flower-sprent wings—
Within the shaded cottage door,
The mother clasps her babe, and sings

The song perchance its father sung
When he a lover came to woo,
When round her neck his plaid he flung,
And she did promise, and was true.

O happy mother! sing thy song,
And prattle to thy smiling boy,
But through my mind such memories throng,
That will not let me share thy joy.

But I must to the forest glade,
And leave all mirthful sight and sound—
Here is the bower's o'er-arching shade!
Here waves the long grass on the mound!

But vanish'd is the glorious hue
That clad the bygone Summer tide;
That o'er all things a halo threw,—
She is not sitting by my side!

The happy birds, on twittering wing,
Flit mong the branches overhead;
Beneath my feet the wild flowers spring,
And beauty all around is spread.

O happy birds! your song may flow, I do not mourn that ye are glad; But I rejoice ye cannot know The sorrow that doth make me sad.

Ye flowers! no word from me shall fall Of envy for your lovely bloom; The Summer decks your festive hall, And Winter lays you in the tomb.

My grief to you why should I tell?

No more ye charm mine eye and ear—
A sad voice murmurs in this dell,

"She is not here! she is not here!"

O love! first love! O widow'd heart!
Would I had never felt your power!
I thought not we should ever part!
How could I in that holy hour?

I blame her not—let beauty live; I love her still—she loves me not; She wrong'd me much—can I forgive? I have forgiven—not forgot, 'Twas in the Summer time she sank to rest,
In the calm twilight of a sunny day,
When the last beam fell dark into the west,
And Life's too busy sounds were pass'd away.
The happy swallow slept within its nest,
The leaves hung motionless before the pane,
Her sweet, pale face was lying on my breast,
And her heart beat as ne'er to beat again.

Like some sad wretch, whose life is living sorrow,
To whom both day and night move all too slow,
Yet fondly thinks that each returning morrow
Will bring some secret healing to his woe;
In some drear night he wakes, to list the clock
Tell out with lazy stroke Time's ebb and flow
With long, dumb pause, as if his grief to mock—
So did I list her heart heave to and fro.

"Carry me, father, down beside the door, And, father, I shall sit upon your knee, And we shall look upon the winding shore, The grassy valleys, and the deep, dark sea: I'm sure the village children miss me now In all their merry gambols on the lea; But when this burning pain has left my brow, I'll be as merry as they all can be."

"Tis very dark, and far off looks the hill,
And a thick mist is gather'd o'er the dell,
And yet is everything so strangely still,
My ears seem ringing with the Ocean's swell.
Dear father, tell me, tell me why you weep?
To-morrow I'll be strong again and well;
Now, take me to my bed, and I shall sleep,
And then—and then"—Dead on myarm she fell.

THE SONG OF THE SUN.

At morning I rise
From the eastern skies.
And mount my amber car;
And hurrying night,
All pale with affright,
To her deserts flies afar.

Each starlet on high Shuts its twinkling eye, For it cannot look on me When I fling the blaze Of my dazzling rays O'er heaven, earth, and sea.

Oh, never I lag,
But o'er mountain and crag
With my golden wheels I go;
The streamlets rejoice
With their many-ton'd voice,
And the sea-waves dance below.

Down, down to the deeps,
Where the sea-snake creeps
And the bright fish sparkle by,
To the fathomless bowers
Of the coral flowers,
I look with a fearless eye.

I seize the streams
With my burning beams,
And stretch an arch o'er Heaven;
I cross the storm,
On that aëry form,
When the tempest-clouds are riven.

I burst through the shroud Of the thunder-cloud, And smile at the tempest's wrath; I waken to mirth The drooping earth, And beauty I spread in my path.

Crystalline towers
And diamond bowers
I build in the northern sea;
My streamers bright
I unfurl to the night
Where the ice-bound regions be,

I linger a while
By some lonely isle
That gems the brow of ocean:
I stay not to rest,
But away to the west
I hurry with ceaseless motion.

When wearied and worn,
To my couch I return,
And sink on the western billow;
The twilight skies
With their thousand dyes
Are curtain'd around my pillow.

Chaotic night fled
When my banner I spread
O'er a world in the flush of its prime;
And its folds shall wave free
O'er the earth and the sea,
Till Eternity conquereth Time.

When the morning stars sung
O'er a world yet young,
I join'd in the heaven-echoed hymn;
And on shall I glide
In my glory and pride
Till the stars in their courses grow dim.

THE SONG OF DEATH.

From Hell I sprung
When Eden rung
To the wailings of Earth's first daughter,
And with joy I shriek'd
When the young earth reek'd
With fratricidal slaughter.

That taints the gale,
And Famine with hollow eye,
At my command
Scour sea and land,
And the fear-struck nations die.

The Pestilence pale

When the crimson rain
Of the battle-plain
Falls fast upon hauberk and shield,
I pilot each dart
To my victim's heart,
And exult o'er the din of the field.

When that battle-tide
Rolls deep and wide,
I spread out my banquet-hall,
And bird and beast
To the carcass-feast
Come gladly at my call.

When the down-trod slave, On land or wave, Weeps sore in his unpitied pain, With a sweep of my hand I shiver his band,

I shiver his band, A freeman he bursts from his chain.

The despot may prate
Of his power and state,
I laugh at the boast of his pride;
He may trample and scorn
His bondman at morn,
At night shall he sleep by his side.

When Hunger and Care
And grim Despair
Haunt the poor in their lonely deu,
From their pillow of clay
I bear them away,
To know never sorrow again.

I glide round the walls
Of the palace-halls
When they echo mirth's joyous tone,
My cold grasp I fling
Around the king,
And I burl him from his throne.

Ere the new-born child
Hath look'd and smil'd
On the sunlight of gladsome day,
To the couch of his sleep
I silently creep,
And snatch his bright soul away.

I spare not the son
Of the widow'd one,
Nor the fair in their blooming time;
Relentless I slay
The mournful and gay,
And the strong in their manhood's prime.

And hand in hand,
Over sea and land,
With my daughter, the Grave, I tread,
Till the archangel's blast,
The loudest and last,
Change the living, and waken the dead.

MADALEEN

I've heard it said, but never sung,
"Love is an idle dream,
Unworthy of a poet's tongue,
An old and worn-out theme."
If such a sad, unholy thought,

My thought had ever been, It would have vanish'd into naught Before fair Madaleen.

She is no nymph, nor sprightly fay, No woodland queen is she,

No Dryad of the Grecian lay, No Naiad of the sea.

She sleeps not in the forest's shade, Nor trips the daisied green; Although she's but a city maid,

She is my Madaleen.

How unto others' eyes she seems, It troubleth not my heart. Who can weigh beauty in the beams Of nicely balanc'd art? I'd pass the fairest in the land,
Wer't Beauty's crowned queen,
To kiss the lips and grasp the hand
Of dark-eyed Madaleen.

I love her for her lovely face,
Her eyes that smile in mine,
But better for her soul's calm grace,
That makes her half divine.
Earth's beauty fades, leaves naught to tell
Of what before had been;
Heaven's beauty evermore shall dwell
With pure-soul'd Madaleen.

My knowledge of high Heaven is rude; I know 'tis passing fair, And I believe the True, the Good, The Beautiful are there. I think of it a land afar, A bright Elysian scene,

A bright Elysian scene, Peopled with angel-forms that are All like to Madaleen.

CONSOLATION.

Hast thou e'er sorrow'd for a friend whom death Has taken from thy bosom? Have thy tears E'er fallen on the grave that held the form Whose every word was sunshine to thy soul, Whose every look was as a glimpse of Heaven?

Hast thou e'er stood beside the sea, whose waves Were soon to roll between thee and the heart That in thy breast made music as it beat, And taken there the last farewell, and kiss'd The lips that oft had suck'd away thy care?

I mourn not the departed—will not weep For those whom death or distance takes away; We are as lovers parted for a while, Amid the ravell'd mazes of a dance, To join each other when the dance is done.

But I can mourn with those who say with me, I had a friend whom I lov'd next to God, And thought her vow was true as she was fair; But now she passes by me with a look
That sees me, but remembers me no more.

All things recall her—Winter's stars bring back The happy nights when, round each other twin'd, We pac'd the city's unfrequented street, And whisper'd what we felt with voice so low, As if afraid the very stars might hear.

All things recall her—Summer's grass and flowers 'Mong which we sat, and listen'd to the songs Of birds that o'er us flew in happy pairs, And wish'd the years would bring the day when we Would sing united on our flight through time.

I sorrow'd sore, till Pride stept in, and said,
"He upon whom she now bestows her love,
Kisses the lips that first were kiss'd by you,
And dallies with the ringlets which your hand
An hundred times have loosen'd from their curl."

Pride left me; Manliness came next, "I know You lov'd her truly, and have kept your vow; I only blame you that in careless hour, In the impiety of love, you thought A woman's heart unchangeable as God's."

ISABELLA.

Strikes are chasing one another
Ever round her lips and eyes,
Only pausing for a moment
When a flash of glad surprise
Lightens up her dimpled cheeks;
Her dimpled cheeks, not white as snow,
'Nor red as is the budding rose,
But of an undefined glow,
Like that which sunest sometimes throws
Upon the distant mountain peaks,
When the departing sunbeam stays
Upon the rising moon to gaze,
And when she cometh, bids farewell
To moor and meadow, lake and fell,
That glimmer in the golden haze.

I cannot say she is a fairy, Her form is not so light and airy As those of Fancy's wild creation, With which poetical imagination Peoples the dingles and the forest nooks, Who sleep all day in buttercups and daisies, And by the margin of the moonlit brooks, In dresses all of glancing sheen, Upon the dew-bespangled green, Wheel through their dance's tiny mazes.

She is not such a matchless beauty—
I tell you, but it's just between us,
That the old Roman gazing on his Venus
And then on her, would disappointed
Have swift destroy'd his grand creation,
Wrought in high hours of inspiration—
That wondrous marble which the ages
Have thron'd as perfect beauty, and anointed
Of form ideal, the unrivall'd queen.

I care not for the verdict of the sages—
She is far more than these, a pure-soul'd woman!
The loveliest thing that Earth hath ever seen;
For never yet could sculptor's art
Foreshadow even dimly that which gives
The highest beauty, though his sculpture lives.
A breathless life—the highest, noblest part
Of man or woman, a true, loving heart.

I see her 'mong an hundred household cares, And ever busy with domestic duties, As with an unreluctant face she shares The daily toils that make home ever dear; And in such scene to me she doth appear More lovely than imagination's beauties, For she her stainless soul, her all, hath given To make this earth what it was meant to be, A type of the unseen reality, A foretaste of a holy, happy heaven.

SONG.

I would weary of day if the sun's golden light Ever beam'd from a heaven all cloudless and free;

No sunrise nor sunset to gladden the sight, But a mid-day of splendour o'er earth and o'er sea.

I would weary of night if no streak in the east Came to tell that the dawning was coming that way;

Though the stars shone as bright as the lamps at a feast,

I would ever be looking and longing for day!

I would weary of Winter, so gloomy and cold,

No birds in the forest, no flowers on the hill; Though Summer were showering its treasures untold

Of glad things on earth, I would tire of it still!

- I would weary of music though e'en it should be The sweetest of songs that were ever yet sung,
- Though it rivall'd the lark as he springs from the lea,
 - Or the streamlet that wanders the woodlands among.
- I would weary of riches, and titles, and fame,
 They cannot bring happiness, proud though
 they be;
- I would weary of all earthly things I can name, Unless I could share them, my Mary, with thee.

SHE sits upon the grey-moss'd stone,
Just where the byepath joins the lane;
Through the old hedge, so thickly grown,
You catch green glimpses of the plain.
And all alone she sitteth there:
One hand is lying on her knee,
Round one is twin'd her long brown hair,
And with a sad voice moaneth she,
My poor, poor heart!

Two months ago, within this lane,
He took my hand; I thought him true:
He said he would return again
Ere two months pass'd, then bade adieu!
I watch'd his form in distance fade;
I wav'd him many a far farewell;
The birds ceas'd singing in the shade,
And evening's darker shadows fell—
My poor, poor heart!

Twas yesterday he was to come, And from the sunrise to the set I listen'd to the wild bee's hum; I knew he never could forget! He came not—and this weary day Is dying in the dim grey light: Perhaps he is not far away!

Perhaps he will return to-night!

My poor, poor heart!

But if he should return no more,
Then that will come, my haunting fear—
Turn'd by my father to the door
Without a mother's parting tear!
My once kind friends will shake the head,

And they that hate me jeer and scorn,
"It just has happen'd as we said:"
No pity for the poor forlorn!

My poor, poor heart!

No home! no home! to miss the smile That lighted up our happy hearth; To wander houseless mile on mile.

To wander houseless mile on mile,

A black spot on a sunbright earth.

The sparrows are all hous'd and fed,

And I am friendless and forlorn:
Oh! would to God that I were dead!
Oh! were I but the dumb unborn!

Oh! break, poor heart!

Tis evening, and she sits alone!
Her wet hands hide her cheeks and eyes;
Her hair streams on the grey-moss'd stone;
From the dark wood the screech-owl cries—
The stars are twinkling in the sky—

The night-wind wails among the trees—
Across the moon the white clouds fly—
Her mantle trembles in the breeze—
Oh! poor, poor heart!

Morning—but you can guess the rest— The lovely maid is lying there, Her cold hands clasp'd upon her breast, As if her spirit pass'd in prayer: No whitest cloud, nor vapour thin, To hide God's blessed sky above! A pure heart never lov'd in sin— Oh! can a pure heart sin in love? Alas! poor heart!

WILLIE.

SLEEP, Willie darling, thine eye's beaming ray Is clos'd in calm rest like the violet's flower That looks on the sun of the Summer's bright day, Then folds up its leaves in the grey twilight hour.

Sleep, Willie darling, the ringlets of gold
That lie on thy brow like the sunlight on snow
Are dearer to me than the treasures untold,
That shine in the land where the setting suns go.

Sleep, Willie dear, o'er thine eye's sunny blue May no cloud ever hover to darken or dim, May the smile on thy mouth be as fresh and as new,

May the smile on thy mouth be as fresh and as new, Untouch'd by Time's finger—the ruthless and grim.

My Willie, my own, may thy journey through life Be as calm as the sleep that is folding thine eye; Thou shalt hear, mayst thou feel not, the tempest and strife

That rend many hearts as their fury sweeps by.

78 WILLIE.

Oh, long be thy years! and when old friends are gone.

And thou shalt have laid me beneath the green tree.

I shall watch thee from Heaven as thou journeyest on,

Or an angel unseen I shall journey with thee.

Then sleep, Williedarling, creep close to my breast, Creep close to the bosom that's beating for thee, With a mother's fond blessing I know thou art blest. Thou blessing and hope of thy father and me.

IN MEMORY OF WILLIE.

Oh! Willie, when first o'er thy baby-sleep bending, The joy of my heart found its language in tears,

And the prayer of my bosom to Heaven was ascending,

For blessings on thee in the dim coming years.

But the dream is departed, the glory is vanish'd, I doubt not 'tis better, for God will'd it so—

That thou from a cold, weary world should be banish'd.

Away from all share in its sorrow and woe.

My Willie, I weep, but for thee my tears fall not; I weep for a hope that is wither'd for aye—

I weep for a joy that the long years recall not— I weep, my heart's sunshine hath lost its best ray.

"You shall see him again," so Hope whispers to cheer me,

"He waits for thy coming beyond the dark tide;"
And there, my dear Willie, thou'lt ever be near me,

A glorified spirit, to walk by my side.

And He who once liv'd on this earth meek and lowly,

Who bless'd the glad children that smil'd round His knee,

Will love thee in Heaven with a love deep and holy,

A love truer far than a mother's can be.

"I mroht have known that this would come,
That one by one they would depart;
But yet I hop'd perhaps that some
Would have some pity for my heart,
Some word to calm my aching brow,
Some kind, calm word of consolation;
But sorrow is around me now,
My heart is dark with desolation.

I could bear solitude; but, oh!
By all despised, the jest of some—
I've yet one friend that will not go,
Alas! poor, kind friend, he is dumb.
I know he very much doth feel,
He tells me with his eyes so meek;
He licks away the tears that steal
In burning bubbles down my cheek."

Proud, worldly man, look down and call
This trembling heart some damning name;
There is a God above us all—
Think you he heeds your praise or blame?

Oh! say not 'tis the fear of Him

That keeps your footsteps in the right;
Ye'd fill sin's flaggon to the brim,

Were ye but hid from human sight.

And if ye never sinn'd in deed,
How often have you sinn'd in thought?
The fear of man your heartless creed—
Man's praise and blame is sold and bought.
Heaven judges on a different plan,
He sees not sin as ye do see;
He loves the sorrowing Publican.

He hates the long-faced Pharisee.

EDUCATION.

On the house-roof heavily falleth the rain, My sad thoughts wander wearily, The red leaves are rustling down the lane, The tall trees shiver like giants in pain, And the wind is moaning drearily.

By a stunted hedge an old man lies,
The wind is moaning drearily,
There's a hand on his mouth to deaden his cries,
And the other is at a woman's eyes,
And the dark night passes wearily.

The morning comes, the old man is there, His spirit pass'd on the midnight air; A little bird sings on the bough so bare, It knows not of sorrow, not even by name, As if Autumn and Summer were one and the same, And naked boughs, and drifting leaves, Are things o'er which only the human grieves.

Leapeth and runneth the gay sunlight O'er meadow and hillside cheerily, But where is the woman, who, cold with affright, Heard her father's anguish mingle last night With the wind that moan'd so drearily?

There's a room in the city damp and cold,
With a clammy smell like churchyard mould,
'Tis many long years since the sound of laughter
Made echo in the mildew'd rafter:
The spider had left it for many a day,
'Twas even too damp for the rats to stay;
The sunlight gleams through broken panes
On the black pools made by last night's rains,
And striketh up on a woman's face,
Where beauty has left a feeble trace—
A dim, faint trace, as if to say,
"Here was I till Want came and drove me away,
The want of a home, of a friend, of a name;
And the worst came last—the want of shame."

And wherefore came the sad forlorn?

Alas! that her baby might be born
With a roof between her and the sky.
Her father died. With blue, cold feet
She ran through the gusts of drifting sleet,
And laid her here, without blanket or sheet,
That her babe might be born, and she might die!

Years have come, and years have gone, Since the sun on that outcast woman shone. Booms the last stroke of the midnight hour From the hollow roof of St Sepulchre's tower. Midnight—and heavily falleth the snow, Yet the streets are fill'd to overflow With a motley crowd, that eagerly wait Till the clock hath struck the hour of eight, When a wretch shall swing at the prison-gate.

Tis that woman's son, the child of woe:
Born in poverty, suckled in crime,
It grew a man before its time;
In a mother's love, a father's care,
And the joys of home, it had no share;
A friend was a blessing it never could know;
Its school was the prison and the street,
Its teachers the robber and the cheat;
It learn'd its lessons of vice full well,
And now it lies in Newgate cell.

Alas! that soul in its infancy's hour Was as pure and fair as the snow-white flower, Which catches the beaded drops of dew In the lonely silence of a glen Where never comes the feet of men, Where the smoke of the city never flew. What matters the world-stirring breath of fame
Or treasure in heaps untold,

Or the boast of a proud and titled name Come down from thy sires of old?

For when Death stalks forth with sheathless sword,

The lustre of gold grows dim;

The beggar in rags, and the ermine-clad lord,

What matters it where the body is laid?
What matters the carved tomb,
Or the honours to the cold corpse paid?
'Tis all one at the day of doom;

When those who have perish'd in storm and strife, Who sleep 'neath wave and mound,

Shall break from their slumber and leap into life
At the archangel's trumpet sound.

JEANIE TELFORD.

The skies were smiling at the bright-eyed Spring, What time she ran, by mountain and by glen, Waking the drowsy bird from wintry sleep, Raising the drooping foreheads of the flowers, Hanging the jewell'd rain-drops on the bough, And filling Earth with life, and light, and song-

The sun was down, and one long streak of red

Lay like a spear of fire along the west,
And the low lights that gleam'd through bush
and tree
Glow'd like the window of cathedral old,
When rising morn looks through the stained arch.
The village sounds were silent, and the smoke,
Slow floating from the cottage-roofs, arose
In dark brown columns 'gainst the twilight sky.
There is a mossy bank beside the burn,
Where never comes the laughter and the shout
Of merry children in the village street,
And all unheard the clanging anyil's sound.

The busy clatter of the dusty mill, And the hoarse waters of the splashing dam. Upon that bank in twilight's sacred hour-For twilight has been sanctified to love-Two lovers sat and spoke in whispers low, Filling each pause of silence with a kiss. Oh, Jeanie Telford! sore ye rued that time, 'Twas then ye gave your full heart unto one Who never knew the value of the gift, Who never knew a woman's heart of love Is the best gift that Heaven bestows on man-Sole earthly thing that tells the bliss of Heaven. They parted in the starlight. O ye stars ! If it be true that ve do share our griefs, There was no star, the smallest in high Heaven, But mourn'd for Jeanie in that hapless hour.

He came no more unto the twilight tryst; But oft she wander'd thither, and would watch Through the slow hours the blossoms sailing by, Which the rude wind pluck'd from the snowy

thorn

And careless scatter'd on the stream, to float A few brief moments by the daisied banks, And through the shadows of sweet-scented flowers, Until the mill-wheel drown'd them in the dark: She little thought their fate would be her own. Weeks roll'd away, and to the streamlet's side Came Jeanie ne'er again; no more her song

Made chorus with the whirring of her wheel, No more the bird was taught the strain of love; But hung unheeded by the window-pane, Where she would sit and gaze along the road, As if expecting Hope to come that way.

At length her father's home grew sad and strange, For each thing woke the memories of the past: The old clock ticking ceaseless by the door, That mark'd the happy hour at which he came; The chair she call'd her Jamie's, and the stool She drew beside him, leaning on his knee, And listening to his love with upturn'd face.

She rose one morn, before the Autumn sun Had dried the dew upon the uncut corn, Through fields and streams she went, and untrod ways,

Whither she knew not, cared not—anywhere. The lark sang loud above, she heard it not; The reapers paus'd amid their bending toil, And shook their heads in sorrow as she pass'd, Unseen by her; and thus she wander'd on, Until the fields were silent, and the sun Sank in the purple distance of the sea; Until she rested by a stream that runs Through the dark shadow of Dundrennan's woods, And sitting there, she saw two shadows pass Across the darkness: one was his who broke

His vow—her heart; and one a woman's form. The ear of madness, like the ear of love, Is quick to hear: she heard his much-lov'd voice, And rose to hug him to her heart; but turn'd With one loud shriek, and hurried to the sea. One moment, 'twixt the red west and the cliff,' A form stood black as midnight; and the next, The flap and flutter of a woman's dress, The lone scream of a sea-bird, and the plash, As clos'd the waters o'er a stricken heart.

On! Jeanie, fold your hand in mine, And promise fair and promise true To keep the pledge of "auld langsyne," The sacred pledge between us two.

'Twas then I spoke my boyish praise—
I said that you were unto me
As to the flower the Summer's rays,
As is the sunshine to the sea.

I spoke as youthful love will speak;
It utters what it scarce hath felt:

My warmest words were poor and weak, Though then before thy face I knelt.

I knew not then to be alone,
I knew not then to want a friend;
Bright sunshine o'er my path was thrown,
The sunshine thoughtless Hope will send.

My heart is dark with thoughts to come, With what has been, and what may be; With grief my restless heart were dumb, If 'twere not for thy bonny e'e;

That is to me a glint of Heaven,
A green spot on my desert way,
A gleam when sorrow's clouds are riven,
A vision of the tearless day.

Thou art a dream of endless May,
That never knoweth clouds or rain,
That wileth from my heart away
The thought that brings me grief and pain.

So, Jeanie, fold your hand in mine,
And plight once more your word so true;
To love with love that will not tine,
Growing through sunshine, rain, and dew.

And will I say she gave her hand,
And kiss'd me o'er and o'er again?
Oh, Love hath power naught can withstand!
Oh, Love alone can banish pain!

I love the shadows of the trees
That flicker on the bending corn,
I love the humming of the bees,
The lark's loud song that wakes the morn;

They bring her once more to my side,
I feel my arm around her twine;
And birds, and bees, and Summer's pride,
Are vocal as in auld langsyne.

IN MEMORY OF G. F.

DEATH is so common in this dying world, The death of dearest hopes, of sweetest joys, The death of friend and kindred, that we hear The mournful tidings with a tearless eve. Yet must I mourn when Autumn's sad-voiced wind Tells its wild tale of sorrow to the flower. That listens dumbly, and then dies in grief. Vet must I mourn when one I call'd a friend Fades like a flower before the blighting wind; Ave like a flower, his life was like a flower That grows unnoticed, and that blooms unseen, Flinging its perfume round the little nook, The happy nook, whose sweetest name is home. No, not unseen; though man should see it not, Yet is it known unto the Summer bee, Yet is it woo'd by dews and sunny skies, Yet is its beauty prais'd amid the songs Of thousand birds that wander o'er the hills. Still must I mourn, not for the flower that died, Its life was beauty. As the dying rose Bequeaths its fragrance to its withering leaves, So he has left to us as legacy, Sweet-scented memories of a gentle heart.

Still must I mourn, to think a sister-flower, Whose leaves still spread their beauty to the sun, Hath lost the flower that blossom'd at her side; That on her trembling stem the big tears lie-Sad tears, that are the dew of sorrow's night. Yet must I mourn for one whose love for him Was pure and passionless, a mother's love, The truest love that liveth upon Earth. And yet I should not mourn, for well I know She now has less to bind her unto Earth, And more to Heaven, and therefore more to God; That God who sends his loveliest angel, Death-Although at times she wears a grisly mask-To wander o'er the sad world and transplant Its loveliest flowers to blossom in high Heaven I cease to mourn; my sorrow would but grieve The sainted soul that hovers round me now. The skies still shower their sunshine o'er the fields Although the flower has perish'd, and the birds Still flood the groves with music, and the bees Cease not their humming while one bloom remains. So I will sing in joy, and not in grief, Of him whose path is different far from mine; For mine is through a mist of doubt and woe,

His through the glorious star-way of the skies.

TO GAVAZZI.

FAREWELL, Gavazzi! that which thou hast spoken, Not like the seed on barren rock shall fall; Speak till thy country's fetter-links are broken, The heart of man shall answer to your call!

Farewell, Gavazzi! we shall long remember Thy wondrous eloquence of hand and tongue, Nowstrong and stern as storm-blasts in December, Now musical as if thy Tasso sung.

Speak, speak, it was a Heaven-denounc'd alliance That march'd in triumph o'er Rome's shatter'd walls:

Speak, rouse the slumb'ring thunder of defiance, And scare the robber-despots from her halls.

Speak for thy Italy! God hears thy pleading— He is not silent, though man thinks him dumb; He sees her patriots banish'd, bound, and bleeding, And he hath sworn "her freedom is to come!" Sworn by himself! For hath he not recorded That sin shall not for ever hold the sway? Though priestand tyrantforlong years have lorded, Their end shall be on God's appointed day—

Not sooner than Almighty God intendeth:
But do not therefore cease, thou noble man;
Thy labour for thy country never endeth—
Thou art a worker-out of God's great plan.

God made thine Italy a land of beauty,
Of flooding sunshine, and of deep blue skies:
God made it so; but man forgot his duty—
Look on her now, sad sorrow fills thine eyes.

God made thine Italy the Muses' glory—
She had her Dante, and her Angelo,
Her Galileo, beacon-lights in story;
What has she now? Sad hearts, and sadder woe.

God made thine Italy a land of heroes—
Thou hast not yet forgot each starry name.
Who rule her now? Caligulas and Neros,
The traitor-hearted boasters of their shame.

No, Italy, thy brave have not all perish'd! Although they tread no more their native land; Mazzini and Gavazzi still are cherish'd, And Garibaldi of the lion-band! But Italy shall see a grand awaking, Shall sit a queen, as she has sat of yore! Already Pio Nono's throne is shaking, The earthquake grumbles neath his palace floor.

Already "Mene, Mene," fiercely blazes,
Writ on the walls of his own Vatican;
Already Justice her right hand upraises
To hurl him from the loathing sight of man.

All vain to him has been Time's admonition; He dare not call on Heaven to give him aid; He has no God, but boundless, mad ambition, As thou hast terribly and truly said.

Farewell, Gavazzi! Heaven's blessing o'er thee, And Heaven haste the freedom-bringing day! A mighty, noble labour is before thee; We bid thee God-speed on thine onward way! O SUMMER hour! O green-leav'd bower!
Where dancing shadows fall,
In the deep silence of the glade
Her hand within my hand was laid,
And the sweet promise then was made—
O Love, that rulest all!

Aye, here the stone on which was thrown Her bonnet and her shawl, When in the ringlets of her hair, That rippled in the sunny air, I twined the flowers, herself more fair! O Love, that rulest all!

O Autumn hour! O wither'd flower!
Here where the red leaves fall,
Dark clouds across the sunshine pass,
The wind moans creeping through the grass.
I sit alone, and sigh Alas!
And Love yet ruleth all.

O leafless bower! comes thy glad hour When dews and sunshine fall; The bird again shall rest its wing, Within your thick-leav'd branches sing, My hope returns not with the Spring, And yet Love ruleth all.

O wintry day! O face of clay!
O death-enrobing pall!
She died who was my life in life,
She died, my dearer far than wife,
She sleeps away from storm and strife,
And yet Love ruleth all.

O wintry hour! O sleet and shower! I I care not how ye fall; I saw her to the churchyard borne, My dearest tie was rudely torn; Yet wherefore should I sigh and mourn? God bendeli) over all.

O green Spring hour! O budding flower!
Beside the churchyard wall,
Thou bloomest o'er her oft-kiss'd brow,
Who was and is an angel now:
In Heaven I may not keep my vow;
And yet God ruleth all.

MEMORIES OF TWEEDSIDE.

When first I saw thee, Mary Hume,

You were but three years auld,
A bairnie rowin' in the grass,
Beside the Minnie Cauld.
When neist I saw thee, Mary Hume,
Auld Time wi' lovin' hand
Had written on your bonnie broo
"The fairest in the land,"
Mary,
"The beauty o' the land."

When first I saw thee, Mary Hume,
I fear'd thy mither's look,
And my knees thegither aften went
When an angry nieve she shook;
But noo beside thee, Mary Hume,
Oh, little would I care
For a'thy mither's angry filtes,
Wi you but smilling there,
Mary,

In queenly beauty there.

When first I saw thee, Mary Hume, I thocht this warld a spot Whaur the promises o' early days Could never be forgot.

When last I saw thee, Mary Hume, I minded days gane by,

And friendships that had pass'd away Like the white clouds frae the sky, Mary,

Like the glory frae the sky.

When first I saw thee, Mary Hume, I didna ken the years Would bring a time when I maun wade Out through a tide o' tears.

When last I saw thee, Mary Hume, Thy smile shone like a licht

Across the waters o' my grief,
Across my eerie nicht,
Mary,

My drearie, starless nicht.

I canna tell thee, Mary Hume,
Whaur yet my steps may be,
Amang my Scotland's bonnie hills,
Or by a far off sea.
Yct can I tell thee, Mary Hume,

Whaurever I may gang,

Thy face by nicht shall be my dream, Thy name by day my sang,

Mary,

In joy and grief my sang.

Bonnie, bonnie Mary Hume,

When the mools are roun' my head, And I lie forgotten like my hopes,

I'd lie by bonnie Tweed;

And you'll bring your bairns, Mary Hume, In Simmer time to play

Aboon his grave, wha sang o' you,

The sunlicht o' his day,

Mary,

His star baith nicht an

Tais star batti incit and day

My heart's ain heart, my Mary Hume,
I noo maun say fareweel,
Through dark and licht, through day and nicht,

To thee I'll aye be leal;

Be leal and true, dear Mary Hume, Until we meet up there,

Beside a bonnier stream that rins 'Mang braes beyond compare,

Mary,

In licht beyond compare

II.

The wind is on the western bay, The gloamin' darkens frae the grey, Gin morning I'll be far away

Frae a' that's dear to me, Mary. I leave my hameland's heathery hills, Its grassy shaws, and siller rills, Without ae pang; the tear that fills My ee is but for thee, Mary.

There's mony, mony that I ken, Will miss me aiblins noo and then, But nane on me their thochts will spen'

For lang, lang years, like thee, Mary. I've met wi' beauty's lowin' smile, I've aften felt its witchin' guile; 'Twas thee alane could ever wile

The mournfu' thochts frae me, Mary.

The hawthorn, in its snawy pride, Will wave aboon the burnie's tide, Amang the wild flowers by its side,

I'll sit nae mair wi' thee, Mary.
The Simmer winds ilk year will blaw
The hawthorn blooms like driftin' snaw,
And rain and sunshine aft will fa'

Upon our trysting tree, Mary.

'Neath it we'll meet nae mair; I ken We'll meet when baith our journeys en', And endless trysting hour we'll spen'. Where parting canna be, Mary. The stars are rising ower the hill, The winds are blawin' drear and chill; Mair cauld and drear the thochts that fill My heart at leaving thee, Mary.

There's gladness in this world o' ours, It's rinnin' ower wi' sang, And ilka thing speaks loud o' love, Whaure'er I chance to gang; There's sadness in this world o' ours, My een rin ower wi' tears, To think on young hearts growin' auld Wi' sorrow, no wi' years. So, Mary, dinna turn awa' That bonnie face o' thine : Oh, dinna sunder noo in twa The ane heart o' langsyne.

There's sunlicht in this world o' ours, And young hearts beating high, To them the Future wears the licht O' Simmer's cloudless sky;

There's darkness in this world o' ours,
There's clouds o' dool and care,
The sun o' Hope aft rises bricht,
To set in mirk despair.
So, Mary, dinna turn awa'
That kind, kind smile o' thine,
The ainly sunshine left ava
Unto this heart o' mine.

There's riches in this world o' ours,
There's routh o' gowd and gear,
And jewels glint on snawy broos,
Like stars in Winter clear;
There's poortith in this world o' ours,
There's hunger cauld and keen,
There's mony a thing to grue the heart,
The puir have only seen.
So, Mary, dinna turn awa'

That heavenly smile o' thine, For weel I ken thy love is a' The treasure I can tine. The poet shall never want subject and theme

While there's Winter, cold, leafless; and Summer's gay beam;

While grand rolls the river, or glad leaps the stream;

While morn climbs the mountain with thousand dyed gleam;

While midnight lies calm in her own starry dream; While clouds chase each other when tempests are high,

Or sleep on the hill-tops in Summer's calm sky; While the grass clothes the meadow, the forest, the hill:

While the wild flower is waving by rock or by rill; While the village-maid sits at her door in the sun;

While through street, or through meadow, the glad children run;

While there's hope and despair; while there's gladness and woe;

While love warms the heart with a sunshiny glow; While Earth rolls the course it hath roll'd in of yore.

Unexhausted for ever the poet's rich store













