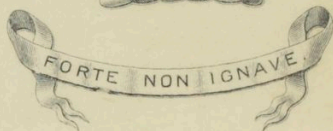


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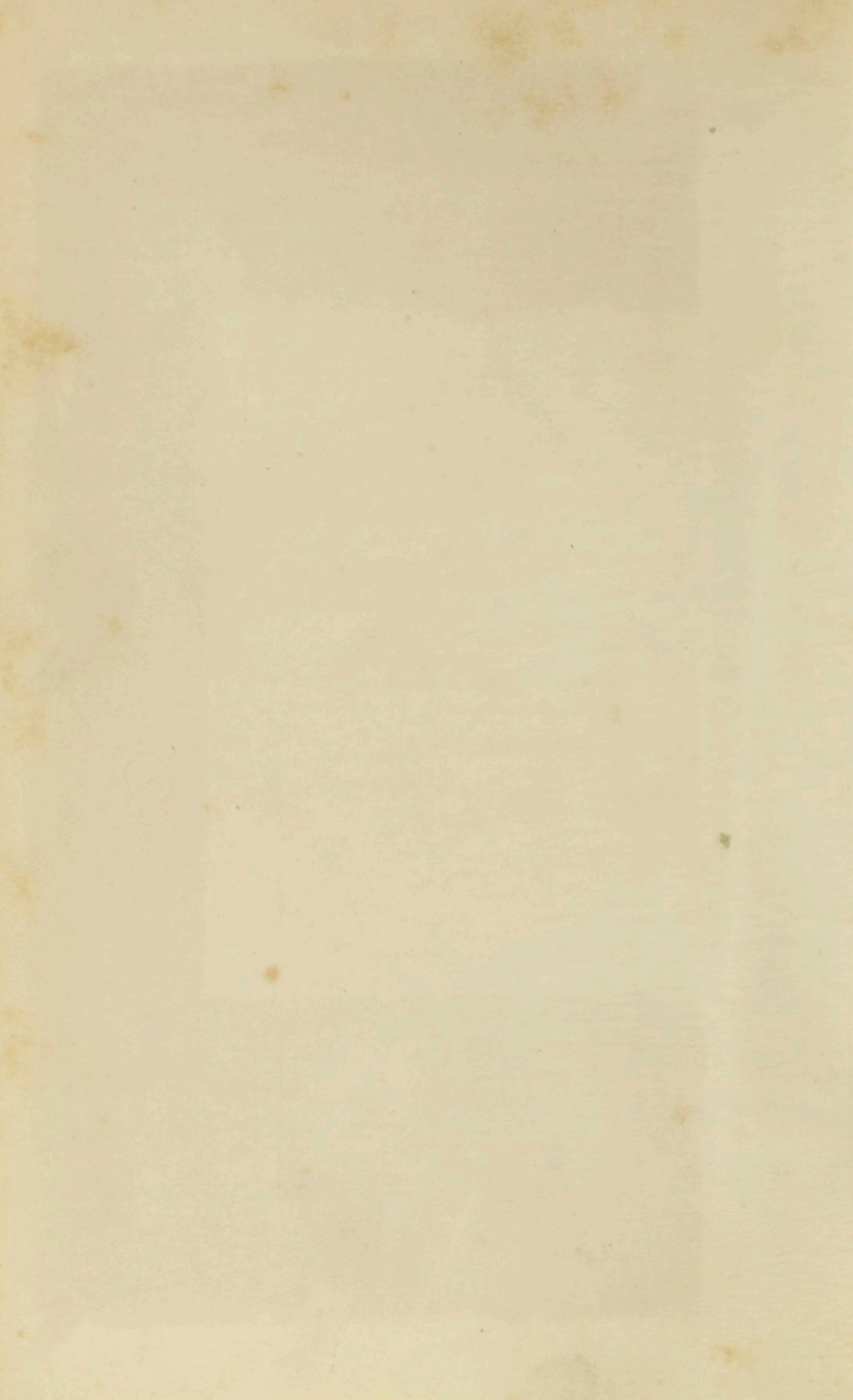
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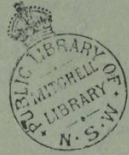
Alfred Leef.

CASE _____ SHELF _____

N^o _____



RANDOM



RHYMES.

BY

THE REV. WILLIAM ALLEN,

Pastor of the Independent Church, Rathdown Street, Carlton.

WITH A PREFACE BY

THE REV. A. GOSMAN,

*Principal of the Congregational College, and Examiner in Logic and
Philosophy for the Melbourne University.*

Melbourne:

PUBLISHED BY MESSRS. A. AND W. BRUCE,
68 ELIZABETH STREET.

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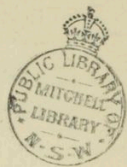
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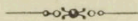
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P R E F A C E .



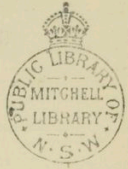
THIS little book of poetry, entitled "Random Rhymes," by my friend and former pupil, the REV. WM. ALLEN, hardly needs any introduction or commendation from me. The modesty of its author, however, makes him shrink from appearing alone before the public ; and hence, considering our past relations, it was but natural, perhaps, he should ask me to stand beside him, and speak a few words in favour of his poetic effusions. I do this with all confidence, and in all honesty. "Random Rhymes," in my judgment, is pervaded throughout by a true and genuine spirit of poetry, and is not without considerable merit in the element of poetic diction. Some of the pieces, such as "Do the best you can," have that indescribable ring about them which lifts them up, as if by some invisible spring, into popular acceptance and favour. One of the marks of true poetry is its capacity to excite emotion, and also to help those to express it whose poverty of language fails to give adequate utterance to their struggling and pent-up feelings. Judged by this standard, "Random Rhymes" will stand the test. Our emotional enjoyment is increased by the perusal of "Random Rhymes," and nearly all the poems of which it is composed have their uses in relation to every-day duties and cares.

The religious spirit that breathes in these rhymes is that of New Testament Christianity—a spirit as far removed from narrowness and superstition as it is from dreamy sentiment or colourless beliefs in the sphere of faith.

While the author alone is responsible for both the rhymes themselves and their publication, I have no apologies to make for these few words of prefatory commendation. The author did not ask for "merciful consideration" at my hands, and I have not given it. The mere compassion of those who may favour the author with their criticisms in the press is not appealed to; and, for myself, I have too much faith in the ability and honesty of the press to implore critics to be just. The standard of poetry must not be lowered, but maintained at all hazards, and at whatever cost; but, at the same time, it should not be forgotten that the press can do much to develop and aid the spirit of poetry where it unmistakably manifests itself. Permit me to add that my knowledge of MR. ALLEN enables and entitles me to say that no one will welcome discriminating criticism, whether favourable or otherwise, more thankfully than he, and, what is of more importance, turn it to more profitable uses.

A. GOSMAN.

CONGREGATIONAL COLLEGE,
RUSSELL-STREET, 18th March, 1886.



RANDOM RHYMES.

Sonnets.

AD CLERUM.

REMEMBER, thoughts are seeds, nor idly dream
Of reaping harvest ere the crop be grown ;
Vex not thy peace, but make God's time thine own ;
Nor, in thy haste, thy toil misspent esteem
Because no sudden signs of fruitage seem
Ready to greet thine over-eager sight.
Nay ! trouble not, except to sow *aright*.
Be earnest, patient, and the truth thy theme,
And ponder this :—What men with loud acclaim
Have hailed as truth's own latest, grandest word,
Not seldom shall hereafter prove abhorred
When God shall all things rightly judge and name ;
While grains of truth in modest corners cast
Shall bloom in heaven's own beauty at the last.

July, 1885.

WOOLLAHRA.

WOOLLAHRA ! throned upon thy leafy heights,
A stately queen in royal raiment drest,
Thou sittest crowned with manifold delights.
Thy ceaseless calm care's toilworn sons invites
To where beneath thy feet the wavelets creep,
Whose lazy plash, breaking the stillness deep,
On drowsy ears with dreamy cadence smites.

Oh, that amidst this world's rude buffeting
 My secret heart possessed a peace like thine.
 This life would then foretaste the life divine,
 Care would its burden lose, and grief its sting.
 Thou who did'st leave Thine own as legacy,
 That sacred peace, bestow the gift on me.

November, 1881.

TIMES OF VISION.

O lucid moments ! when the soul, clear-eyed,
 Looks on the substance 'neath the veil of sense,
 And feels, allured by some sweet influence,
 Itself unto the infinite allied.
 Glad as a bridegroom in his new-made bride,
 Its trembling joy the exulting spirit knows,
 But, ah ! how quickly its untimely close
 Mocks the fair promise of its early pride.
 Prophetic moments, giving golden dreams,
 Whereon a yet more glorious waking waits,
 Transfigured moments, when the shining gates
 Unlock their bars, and heav'nly light forth-streams—
 Ye pass, but ye endure. In you we see
 What man's eternal future is to be.

March, 1882.

BUNYAN AND MILTON.

WHEN the thick night of superstition lay
 Over our island home of liberty,
 Ravaged by persecution's storm remorselessly,
 Twin-stars, bright heralds of our happier day,
 Flung out upon the dark their hopeful ray :
 Bunyan and Milton ! Be their praises sung
 Where'er is heard the English name or tongue !
 Oh, harken ! From their tombs we hear them say
 To us, the men of this enfranchised time,
 " Favoured of God, to you the fruit appears
 Of that fair seed we sowed 'mid toil and tears.
 See that your lives be like your trust—sublime."
 Our hearts respond. Before our fathers' God
 We vow to take the path they nobly trod.

July, 1884.

IN MEMORIAM.

FULL fourteen years have spent their tedious course
 Since in the bloom and freshness of thy prime
 Death laid thee low. No more in converse close
 On themes of high debate our talk we hold,
 Retracing o'er and o'er the oft-trod path,
 While wingèd hours speed unregarded by.
 Dost thou remember in thy peaceful seat
 That earnest hour beneath the solemn stars
 Which marked the crisis of two human lives?
 Or hast thou still, amongst the immortal powers,
 A memory of the time when, hand in hand,
 Upon the threshold of the opening year,
 We re-affirmed the sacred, friendly vow?
 Never again beneath the sultry noon
 Or under midnight stars we take our way;
 Never again shall feel the pulses thrill
 When, after absence, greeting; nevermore
 In all the affluent flow of friendly speech
 On books, and men, and life, and nature talk,
 Ranging at will amidst the fields of thought.
 Never again? I wrong the happy dead,
 I wrong the Lord of Life to speak the word.
 Never again beneath these lower skies,
 But where the arduous and protracted war
 'Twixt flesh and spirit finds eternal end,
 We shall resume our earthly fellowship.
 It is the weakness of our foolish state
 To *pity* those who on the shores of light
 Have earlier landed. So we pity thee,
 Who, in the fulness of thy perfect life,
 Smil'st on our pity. Rather should we judge
 Ourselves for pity, thee for envy meet.
 We, compassed still about with fleshly bonds
 That chafe the aspiring soul, and chain it down
 To grovelling deeds at war with high desire;
 Whilst thou, unvext by all the dismal strife,
 Art calm and stainless as the o'er-arching blue.
 Somewhere amidst the boundless realms of light
 God hides thee: God doth teach thee: thou dost *know*
 Where we but *guess*: thou, with illumined eyes,
 Dost *gaze* upon the truth for which we *grope*.
 When next I meet thee I shall find thee rich
 In stores of garnered wisdom. Thou shalt lead
 My steps along the shining ways of truth,
 As in thine earthly days: nor shall I miss

The well-remembered face, the open smile
 As clear and frank as childhood's ; thou shalt be,
 Although transfigured, still thy very self.
 So, in the hope to meet, a brief farewell,
 Friend of my soul, who keepest still thy throne
 Within my dearest heart ! Life's latest toil
 Shall soon be past ; then shall we spring to meet,
 Strike hands once more, with rapture all aglow,
 And consecrate again our friendship's bond.
 O Thou, who hold'st within Thy sleepless care
 His life and mine ! Thou omnipresent Love,
 Guide Thou my feet along the slippery road
 By which souls travel. Let Thy gentleness
 Stoop to my weakness. Purge in me the base,
 Lift up the low. Confirm what Thou hast wrought
 Of good within ; and lead me all the way
 Through darkness up to light, till in Thy light
 I dwell for ever with the man I love.

February, 1882.

DO THE BEST YOU CAN

WHEN skies are dark, and tempests lower,
 And sadness fills the gloomy hour,
 Don't sit and o'er your troubles glower,
 But do the best you can.

It may so chance the storm you fear
 Will never, after all, come near,
 So keep a heart of honest cheer,
 And do the best you can.

But if it should in fury break,
 This need not steadfast purpose shake,
 Or of a man a coward make,
 So do the best you can.

It cannot always winter be ;
 The storm will pass, and you, set free
 From what you feared, the happier be,
 So do the best you can.

And do not blame your evil case,
 Or think that you, of all the race,
 Have found the most unhappy place,
 But do the best you can.

If you could others' feelings know,
 They have, perhaps, a keener woe,
 Although you never fancied so ;
 Then do the best you can.

But even if 'tis as you think—
 If none a cup so bitter drink,
 Or 'neath such heavy burdens sink—
 Still do the best you can.

Grumbling won't make an atom less
 The load you bear ; but cheerfulness
 And courage will, so onward press
 And do the best you can.

Besides, remember, not in vain
 Is every bravely-taken pain :
 By these we manly virtue gain,
 So do the best you can.

True gain is this—worth more by far
 Than sordid wealth, or pomp of war,
 Or honour's falsely glittering star ;
 Then do the best you can.

Ah ! but brave hearts are human yet ;
 The foolish tears brave cheeks will wet ;
 Earth's noblest may at times forget
 To do the best they can.

Take, then, this thought your hope to raise,
 And turn your mourning into praise :
 A heart of love guides all your ways,
 So do the best you can.

Blow stormiest winds from blackest skies,
 Old ocean's mightiest billows rise,
 My steadfast soul knows no surprise,
 I'll do the best I can.

He who set fast the lofty hills,
 The wild waves' fiercest raging stills,
 Into my soul His strength distils—
 I'll do the best I can.

AMONG THE HILLS.

There remaineth, therefore, a rest for the people of God."

THE smile of God beams on these sunlit hills,
 The calm of God rests in these quiet vales,
 The voice of God breathes in these summer winds,
 Grateful and restful to a burdened heart
 As to a weary child its mother's kiss.
 Nature is full of God. Amidst the din
 And fret and tumult of our city life
 We lose Him ; but in nature's solitudes
 His presence is regained. So fair and still
 Is all the scene around, we might suppose
 That, in a happy moment, we had chanced
 On true Arcadia ; that the restless tide
 Of human sin had neither ebb nor flow ;
 That human hearts had such a peace as sits
 Upon the forefront of the eternal hills.
 But all too swiftly sad experience comes
 To banish the illusion. Here, no less
 Than in the city's haunts, the sinful sea
 Casts up, alas ! continual mire and dirt.
 Above, the mountains lift their heads to heaven,
 The homes of everlasting quietude ;
 Below, the hamlet's petty life moves on,
 Vext with mean passions and ignoble cares.
 And so, I judge, beside humanity
 And its tempestuous course abides the calm
 Of that great love which fills the universe.
 Take comfort, O my soul ! Be brave ! Be true !
 Make thou His will thy guide, and rest assured
 Somewhere beyond this tost and toilful life
 In God's great love remains a rest for thee.

July, 1881.

 WHEN LOVE AND I WERE YOUNG TOGETHER.

WHATE'ER the changeful seasons be,
 Come sunny days, or wintry weather,
 Ah ! ne'er return those hours to me
 When Love and I were young together.

The cares that round my heart have hung
 In those glad days weighed not a feather,
 Nor fear its ugly shadow flung,
 When Love and I were young together.

The golden sunshine glowed around,
 Beneath my feet the purple heather,
 And jocund was the wild bird's sound,
 When Love and I were young together.

And sometimes musing on life's close,
 And home beyond, I question whether
 Heaven keener raptures holds than those
 When Love and I were young together.

August, 1885.

A "SUPERNATURAL" EPIGRAM.

COMPOSED ON THE OCCASION OF A "MIRACULOUS" DISCUSSION BETWEEN
 THE REV. ALEX. GOSMAN AND DEAN RUSSELL, OF ADELAIDE.

'TwiXT Mr. Gosman and the Dean
 "What is a miracle's" debated ;
 Two controversial clerics keen,
 In even contest fairly mated.
 As pours the metaphysic speech,
 The length of learned words is such,
 Behold a *miracle* in each—
 That either man can say so much.

October, 1879.

BY THE SEA.

THE glorious sea
 Is rolling free
 In tides of murm'rous music flowing,
 Entranced I lie
 'TwiXT earth and sky,
 While summer airs are round me blowing.

Beneath the power
 Of such an hour
 To draw the vital air is blessing ;
 The strain of life,
 The din, the strife,
 Some fleeting moments cease distressing.

Too quickly o'er,
 Come back once more
 Life's grinding toil and dull endeavour ;
 But wheresoe'er
 Our feet repair
 The haunting memory leaves us never.

Towards those bright days
 We turn our gaze
 From out the restless, fev'rish present,
 And fondly hope
 Within its scope
 The future holds some hours as pleasant.

Ah ! so in gleams
 Of mystic dreams
 The soul reviews its primal glory,
 Looks back to see
 What man could be
 Ere Eden's fall had marred the story.

So, too, we dare
 To brave despair
 When sin o'er grace appears victorious,
 As faith describes
 Beyond the skies
 A land than Paradise more glorious.

Yes, God has given,
 Ere entering Heaven,
 Hints of that future life transcendent—
 Such glimpses bright
 Of heavenly light
 As make this work-day world resplendent.

9th January, 1882.

IN PUBLIC MEETING ASSEMBLED.

UPOSE a gravely earnest man—
 His speech my spirit stirred ;
 Then straight flung out a Pharisee
 His sharp protesting word :

“ What folly moves this impious man
 I cannot understand.
 Upon convention's sacred ark
 He dares to lay his hand.”

Then held I converse with myself—
 “ That man, where'er he be,
 Who fights for truth, against him finds
 Th' immortal Pharisee.

“ Such glamour pride and prejudice
 Have round his vision cast,
 For ever, in a dream, he sees
 The present through the past.

“ Nor hope thou, man of fervent heart,
 To move his stubborn will ;
 As fiercer blaze the fires in thee,
 In him an icier chill.

“ Hast thou forgot what men they were
 The Saviour told of yore,
 You, in the kingdom of our God,
 The harlots go before ?

“ Not to the abject wretch, distained
 With grosser forms of sin,
 But to conventional saints, 'twas said,
 ‘ Ye cannot enter in.’ ”

September, 1885.

THE VISION OF GOD.

I THANK Thee, God, for every lovely thing—
 Bright-plumaged birds, swift insects' gauzy wing,
 Spring's tender buds and summer's leafy bowers,
 And all the glorious wealth of Austral flowers.

I thank Thee, God, because Thy face appears
 In every changing form that Nature wears ;
 I see Thy glory in the glowing west
 When blood-red suns in splendour sink to rest.

Thy lovely presence, too, I feel is nigh
 When tenderer tints suffuse the evening sky,
 When soft green shades with opal, gold, and grey
 Into each other melt, and die away.

Alike in tranquil Nature's breathless moods,
 When o'er the landscape deathless stillness broods,
 As when the storm-blasts rave and thunders roar,
 I find a present God, and I adore.

But, oh! however grand that pictured page,
 Where Thou reveal'st Thy name from age to age,
 My soul adores a glory greater far
 Than ever shone from sun or gleamed from star.

To Calvary's Cross I turn my raptured eyes,
 And awe-struck gaze on that dread sacrifice :
 Creation's God my human nature owns,
 And in His sacred self my guilt atones.

Cross of my Lord! from thee a radiance streams
 Brighter than the fierce sun's meridian beams.
 'Tis in thy lustre Nature's book I scan,
 And read in every page God's love to man.

With mute discourse I gaze in musing hour
 Upon the wonder of some silken flower,
 Then o'er the prospect range with pensive gaze
 And hear ten thousand calls to prayer and praise.

'Tis then, O Cross of Christ! I learn from thee
 In all around my Father's love to see ;
 New beauty animates the various scene
 When in each part a Father's gift is seen.

O Cross of Christ! when these dulled powers shall fail,
 'Mid the chill terrors of the shadowy vale ;
 When every scene that thrilled with joy intense
 Has lost its power to charm the palsied sense ;

When o'er the filming sight death's darkness hangs,
 And the worn frame is vexed with mortal pangs,
 That whispered name shall still the deathful strife
 And for a moment stay the parting life.

But, oh! when that tremendous moment's past,
 The fettered soul from bondage loosed at last,
 Then these purged eyes shall feast their eager view
 On wonders such as Nature never knew.

DE PROFUNDIS.

O LORD! 'mid this false world's deceitful glare,
 "Show me Thy truth" is my continual prayer ;
 When vice, in virtue's garb, essays to win
 My tempted soul, diffuse Thy light within.

I see proud priests within the temple door
 Fawn on the rich and coldly scan the poor ;
 I see them, filled with hateful human pride,
 Preach so that man, not God, is glorified.

I see Thy sacred name profanely made
 The sordid pulpit artist's stock-in-trade ;
 I see the crowd approve the base design
 And worship at a wooden idol's shrine.

I see within how sanctimonious vice,
 With impious prayers, affronts the insulted skies ;
 Outside, where feigned devotion bows the head,
 A fearful waste of moral wildness spread.

I see, amid the rulers of the land,
 The vilest men in highest places stand ;
 That for which modest worth in vain has striven
 To blatant impudence insanelly given.

I see where gilded Vice her temple rears
 And finds a host of eager worshippers ;
 And near the sensual sty, in splendour drest,
 The naked vileness of the slum confest.

I see the lustful ruffian's bold pretence,
 Stained with the blood of martyred innocence ;
 I see his victims hide in death their shame,
 While the cold world gives him an honoured name.

All a mere sample of that monstrous brood
 Of sin that dares the avenging wrath of God :
 Too foul to meet the gaze of casual eye,
 Covered from sight, the worst pollutions lie.

But, O my God ! if at so small a part
 Of all that shocks the eye and grieves the heart
 My sinful sense revolts, what must it be
 To Thee, a God of spotless purity ?

Have Thy pure eyes from age to age surveyed
 This dreadful scene of human guilt displayed ;
 And can'st Thou, seeing all beneath the sun,
 Hold no great purpose to have justice done ?

O Great Revealer ! Thou shalt tear the mask
 From saintly sin ; the reptile crew who bask
 In Fortune's sunlight bring to justice due,
 And o'er the whole wide world make all things new.

Bright Star of Hope ! we hail thy cheering ray,
 Prophetic herald of a sinless day ;
 But, oh ! how distant seems the expected dawn !
 How far the advent of that glorious morn !

Impatient man God's judgment would forestall,
 And *instant* fire from heaven on sinners call :
 Thine ageless years move on, Thy purpose stands,
 And all is safe in Thine almighty hands.

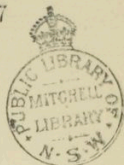
November, 1881.

A SONG OF HOPE.

WORLD ! as through thee my way I take,
 Gazing on all the mingled scene,
 Sad yearnings in my bosom wake,
 Pondering what is, and might have been.
 I see base act, yet high desire
 In lives by heedless passion tost ;
 Foul ashes choking noble fire,
 And cry, " Must all the good be lost ? "

Responsive to the spirit's call,
 A voice from heaven seems to fall,
 " No ! God shall yet reclaim it all. "

The poet's faculty divine
 Mated, in union sad and strange,
 With lusts like those of Circe's swine,
 Who love in sensual filth to range.
 The magic power of beauty's wile,
 Its witching grace, its subtle spell,
 That should from sin to God beguile,
 Made lamps to light the way to hell.



The charm of music's lofty strain,
 The artist's pencil, rainbow-hued,
 I see, consumed with secret pain,
 To basest purposes subdued.
 The sage's philosophic scan,
 That searches all the world of mind,
 Bent basely down to earth and man—
 To every trace of Godhead blind.

Shall woman's beauty—shall the dreams
 The poet's hour of rapture knows—
 The singer's strain—the artist's themes—
 The sage's thought—in silence close ?
 O, sparks from the eternal light,
 Must ye be quenched in death's chill frost ?
 In dark despair's eternal night
 Is all the good for ever lost ?

No! louder than the thunder's call,
 The heavenly message seems to fall,
 "Our God shall yet reclaim it all."

July, 1885.

OUR OWN.

DEAR little hands, so dimpled, soft, and warm !
 Dear little round-limbed, chubby infant form !

Dear little eyes, with happy radiance bright !
 Dear little ears, like sea-shells, pink and white !

Dear little cheeks, whose rosy mounds enclose
 Dear little saucy, quaintly turned-up nose !

Dear little ruby lips, enwreathed with smiles
 Whose merry sunshine tedious care beguiles !

Dear little comic, double-pointed chin !
 Dear little toes, so daintily turned in !

Dear little locks o'er the smooth head that stray,
 Like scattered sunbeams that have lost their way !

Dear for a thousand reasons, all well known,
 But all summed up in that one word—OUR OWN !

August, 1882.

MODERN SAINTSHIP.

ILLUSTRIOUS "John P. Robinson" assures us
 In "Judee" many things were quite unknown ;
 And one of those Judea never dreamt of
 Is that strange thing to which religion's grown.

We used to think the upward path was thorny,
 And roughish climbing pilgrims might expect :
 Our modern saints make it a pleasure journey,
 A first-class trip by train to heav'n direct.

We used to think there was broader pathway—
 An easy track, by myriad travellers trod :
 Our modern saints have quite destroyed the difference
 Between this road and that which leads to God.

We used to think the world, the flesh, the devil,
 Were hostile to a truly Christian race :
 Our modern saints have struck a league with Satan,
 And made these ancient foes th' allies of grace.

We used to think the Saviour told His followers
 For Him the shame to spurn, the cross to bear ;
 The cross (*no shame!*) our ball-room Christians carry,
 These "*full-dressed*" saints on *half-dressed* bosoms wear.

We used to think the Scripture somewhere taught us
 That wilful sin will find a bitter end :
 Our modern saints have quite reversed the teaching,
 And, willy nilly, all to glory send.

Well ! things *are* upside down ; yet who'd have thought it ?—
 That Christ should leave behind so poor a plan
 That all its chief provisions need revising,
 And setting right, by His frail creature, man.

Yet somehow still (although I'm out of fashion)
 I can't consent these modern paths to plod,
 For through my mind a text keeps strangely ringing,
 "Friends of the world are enemies of God."

And, after all, can these be really CHRISTIANS—
 This pleasure-seeking, self-indulgent crowd ?
 Can THESE be followers of the lowly Jesus—
 Of Him whose back the savage scourgers ploughed ?

What, O ye modern saints, if the last testing
 For ever dash your proud pretensions down,
 And Christ decree, while angel hosts approve it,
 That those who shirked the cross must miss the crown?

So, on the whole, upon a peradventure
 I think I'll hardly hang the life to come,
 But, in the good old way the Saviour travelled,
 Seek, by God's grace, to make my journey home.

UNDYING BEAUTY.

You say, "Alas! for beauty—
 Man's life is but a sigh;
 The fate of all things lovely
 Is speedily to die."

You see the pomp of sunset
 Gaze on the glowing west,
 And say, "The fading splendour
 Sinks in the ocean's breast."

You hear the voice of music,
 The poet's burning word,
 And say, "It dies in silence,
 And is no longer heard."

But in the great hereafter
 The songster's tender strain,
 The poet's inspiration,
 Shall wake to life again.

And speech and song avail not,
 And artist's colours fail
 To hint that brighter glory
 Which lies beyond the veil.

Then say not they have perished,
 For beauty cannot die—
 Evanishing a moment,
 It lives eternally.

FOR A SALE OF GIFTS.

“The children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the Lord, every man and woman whose heart made them willing to bring for ALL MANNER OF WORK. . . . And all the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun.”—EXODUS xxxv. 29 and 25.

In the book of Holy Scripture
Is the story quaintly told
How they built the Tabernacle,
In the far-off days of old.

And the desert heard the echoes
Of full many a ringing blow,
As the sturdy sons of labour
Laid the gnarled acacia low.

Israel's swarthy sons and daughters
Heard their God's commanding word,
And they brought a willing offering
For “the service of the Lord.”

There the fathers of the people,
Grave and reverend in their mien,
Bearing costly gems and spices,
In the joyous crowd are seen.

And the stately matron, likewise,
Brings the goat's-hair she has spun,
In the hours of loving labour
From her household duties won.

While beside her is a maiden,
Who, with gift resplendent stands,
Wrought in broidered gold and purple
By the skill of her fair hands.

So the lofty and the lowly,
And the matron and the maid,
All alike, of every station,
Have their free-will offering made.

Thus we read the Hebrew story,
But not less have eyes to see
Underneath a deeper meaning
In the old-world history.

They made up—those “willing offerings,”
 From his gift who tilled the sod
 To the ruler of the people’s—
 Portion of the HOUSE OF GOD.

Even now are acts of service
 Which all Christly lives afford
 Built into the mystic temple
 Of the glory of the Lord.

So to-day our gifts, O Father,
 We with willing minds would bring ;
 Make Thou pure our hearts who offer,
 And accept the offering.

A PASTOR'S PRAYER.

MIDST multifarious griefs we move
 With honest wish life's woes to bless,
 Yet, vext with impotence, exclaim,
 O Saviour ! grant Thy tenderness.

We mark Thy sacred course below,
 While clamorous suppliants round Thee press,
 Yet no impatient look or tone
 Mars Thine exhaustless tenderness.

As drooping flowers that feel the dew,
 And answer to the sun's caress,
 So sorrow-laden hearts revive,
 Responsive to Thy tenderness.

But we, Thy followers, give, O Lord,
 Too oft, when sorrow seeks redress,
Official comfort, formal speech,
 Instead of Thine own tenderness.

Our guilt we would not hide from Thee,
 But frankly all our shame confess ;
 But, ah ! we cannot let Thee go,
 Unless Thou grant Thy tenderness.

BROKEN FLOWERS.

THE flow'r that thou hast broken all in vain
 Dost thou desire to bring to life again.
 Fragrance and form are gone ; nor canst thou breathe
 Life into that which is the prey of death.

The bruised flow'r may live ; the broken stem
 Passes all art to mend. Alas ! of them
 Whom life's rough shocks assault, the bruised may live,
 But broken souls we never may retrieve.

Beware ! for human blossoms frail and fair
 Are round about thy pathway everywhere.
 O, crush them not, lest thou in anguish yearn
 For a lost life that never shall return.

February, 1883.

A DOUBLE NIGHT.

THE deepening shadows mark the day's decline,
 Night's kindly veil is cast o'er earth and sin,
 But all my heart is filled with light divine,
 O Sun of Righteousness, Thou shin'st within.

Above my head God's steadfast fires are burning,
 The twinkling city lamps appear below,
 From earth to heaven I turn, with wistful yearning,
 For human brothers sunk in sin and woe.

Night mantles all : these feeble points of light
 Serve but to make the darkness visible ;
 But who can tell how black that moral night,
 Which doth within the human spirit dwell ?

The adulterer's eye, that waited for the gloom ;
 The crafty felon, skulking in his lair :
 The ruthless murderer, flying from his doom,
 Lie hid beneath the mantling darkness there.

Thick darkness hovered once o'er that abyss,
Amidst whose formless deeps the world began ;
But deeper than that primal darkness this,
Which hovers o'er the guilty soul of man.

Thou who didst move upon the formless void,
When Nature in the womb of chaos lay,
Move now upon a world by sin destroyed,
And let hell's darkness glow with heavenly day.

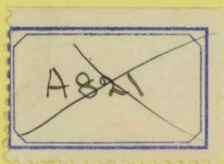
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