

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

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THE LOST GARDEN.

THERE was a fair green garden sloping
From the southeast side of the mountain-ledge;
And the earliest tint of the dawn came groping
Down through its paths, from the day's dim edge.
The bluest skies and the reddest roses
Arched and varied its velvet sod;
And the glad birds sang, as the soul supposes
The angels sing on the hills of God.

I wandered there when my veins seemed bursting
With life's rare rapture, and keen delight;
And yet in my heart was a constant thirsting
For something over the mountain-height.

I wanted to stand in the blaze of glory
That turned to crimson the peaks of snow,
And the winds from the west all breathed a story
Of realms and regions I longed to know.

I saw on the garden's south side growing
The brightest blossoms that breathe of June,
I saw in the east how the sun was glowing,
And the gold air shook with a wild bird's tune;
I heard the drip of a silver fountain,
And the pulse of a young laugh throbbed with glee;
But still I looked out over the mountain
Where unnamed wonders awaited me.

I came at last to the western gateway
That led to the path I longed to climb;
But a shadow fell on my spirit straightway,
For close at my side stood greybeard Time.
I paused, with feet that were fain to linger
Hard by that garden's golden gate;
But Time spoke, pointing with one stern finger;
"Pass on," he said, "for the day grows late."

And now on the chill gray cliffs I wander;
The heights recede which I thought to find,
And the light seems dim on the mountain yonder,
When I think of the garden I left behind.
Should I stand at last on its summit's splendor,
I know full well it would not repay
For the fair lost tints of the dawn so tender
That crept up over the edge o' day.

I would go back, but the ways are winding,
If ways there are to that land, in sooth;
For what man succeeds in ever finding
A path to the garden of his lost youth?
But I think sometimes, when the June stars glisten,
That a rose-scent drifts from far away;
And I know, when I lean from the cliffs and listen,
That a young laugh breaks on the air like spray.

ART AND HEART.

THOUGH critics may bow to art, and I am its
 own true lover,
 It is not art, but heart, which wins the wide world
 over.

Though smooth be the heartless prayer, no ear in
 Heaven will mind it,
 And the finest phrase falls dead, if there is no feeling
 behind it.

Though perfect the player's touch, little if any he
 sways us,
 Unless we feel his heart throb through the music he
 plays us.

Though the poet may spend his life in skillfully
 rounding a measure,
 Unless he writes from a full warm heart, he gives us
 little pleasure.

So is not the speech which tells, but the impulse
 which goes with the saying,
 And it is not the words of the prayer, but the yearn-
 ing back of the praying.

It is not the artist's skill, which into our soul comes
 stealing
 With a joy that is almost pain, but it is the player's
 feeling.

And it is not the poet's song, though sweeter than
 sweet bells chiming,
 Which thrills us through and through, but the heart
 which beats under the rhyming.

And therefore I say again, though I am art's own true
 lover,
 That it is not art, but heart, which wins the wide
 world over.

AS BY FIRE.

SOMETIMES I feel so passionate a yearning
 For spiritual perfection here below,
 This vigorous frame with healthful fervor burning,
 Seems my determined foe.

So actively it makes a stern resistance,
 So cruelly sometimes it wages war
 Against a wholly spiritual existence
 Which I am striving for.

It interrupts my soul's intense devotions,
 Some hope it strangles of divinest birth,
 With a swift rush of violent emotions
 Which link me to the earth.

It is as if two mortal foes contended
 Within my bosom in a deadly strife,
 One for the loftier aims for souls intended,
 One for the earthly life.

And yet I know this very war within me,
 Which brings out all my will-power and control;
 This very conflict at the last shall win me
 The loved and longed-for goal.

The very fire which seems sometimes so cruel,
 Is the white light, that shows me my own strength,
 A furnace, fed by the divinest fuel
 It may become at length.

Ah! when in the immortal ranks enlisted,
 I sometimes wonder if we shall not find
 That not by deeds, but by what we've resisted,
 Our places are assigned.

IF I SHOULD DIE.

RONDEAU.

IF I should die, how kind you all would grow,
 In that strange hour I would not have one foe.
 There are no words too beautiful to say
 Of one who goes forever more away
 Across that ebbing tide which has no flow.

With what new lustre my good deeds would glow!
 If faults were mine, no one would call them so,
 Or speak of me in aught but praise that day,
 If I should die.

Ah, friends! before my listening ear lies low,
 While I can hear and understand, bestow
 That gentle treatment and fond love, I pray,
 The lustre of whose late though radiant way
 Would gild my grave with mocking light, I know,
 If I should die.

MISALLIANCE.

I AM troubled to-night with a curious pain;
 It is not of the flesh, it is not of the brain,
 Nor yet of a heart that is breaking:
 But down still deeper, and out of sight—
 In the place where the soul and the body unite—
 There lies the seat of the aching.

They have been lovers, in days gone by;
 But the soul is fickle, and longs to fly
 From the fettering misalliance:
 And she tears at the bonds which are binding her so,
 And pleads with the body to let her go,
 But he will not yield compliance.

For the body loves, as he loved in the past
 When he wedded the soul; and he holds her fast,
 And swears that he will not loose her;
 That he will keep her and hide her away
 For ever and ever and for a day
 From the arms of Death, the seducer.

Ah! this is the strife that is wearying me—
 The strife 'twixt a soul that would be free
 And a body that will not let her.
 And I say to my soul, "Be calm, and wait;
 For I tell ye truly that soon or late
 Ye surely shall drop each fetter.

And I say to the body, "Be kind, I pray;
 For the soul is not of thy mortal clay,
 But is formed in spirit fashion."
 And still through the hours of the solemn night
 I can hear my sad soul's plea for flight,
 And my body's reply of passion.

RESPONSE.

I SAID this morning, as I leaned and threw
 My shutters open to the Spring's surprise,
 "Tell me, O Earth, how is it that in you
 Year after year the same fresh feelings rise?
 How do you keep your young exultant glee?
 No more those sweet emotions come to me.
 "I note through all your fissures, how the tide
 Of healthful life goes leaping as of old.
 Your royal dawns retain their pomp and pride;
 Your sunsets lose no atom of their gold.
 How can this wonder be?" My soul's fine ear
 Leaned, listening, till a small voice answered near.
 "My days lapse never over into night;
 My nights encroach not on the rights of dawn.
 I rush not breathless after some delight;
 I waste no grief for any pleasure gone.
 My July noons burn not the entire year.
 Heart, hearken well!" Yes, yes; go on; I hear.

"I do not strive to make my sunsets' gold
 Pave all the dim and distant realms of space.
 I do not bid my crimson dawns unfold
 To lend the midnight a fictitious grace.
 I break no law, for all God's laws are good.
 Heart, hast thou heard?" Yes, yes; and understood.

DROUTH.

WHY do we pity those who weep? The pain
 That finds a ready outlet in the flow
 Of salt and bitter tears is blessed woe,
 And does not need our sympathies. The rain
 But fits the shorn field for new yield of grain;
 While the red brazen skies, the sun's fierce glow,
 The dry, hot winds that from the tropics blow
 Do parch and wither the unsheltered plain.
 The anguish that through long, remorseless years
 Looks out upon the world with no relief,
 Of sudden tempests or slow dripping tears,—
 The still, unuttered, silent, wordless grief
 That evermore doth ache, and ache, and ache,—
 This is the sorrow wherewith hearts do break.

THE CREED.

WHOOEVER was begotten by pure love,
 And came desired and welcomed into life,
 Is of immaculate conception. He
 Whose heart is full of tenderness and truth,
 Who loves mankind more than he loves himself,
 And cannot find room in his heart for hate,
 May be another Christ. We all may be
 The Saviours of the world, if we believe
 In the Divinity which dwells in us
 And worship it, and nail our grosser selves,
 Our tempers, greeds, and our unworthy aims
 Upon the cross. Who giveth love to all,
 Pays kindness for unkindness, smiles for frowns,
 And lends new courage to each fainting heart,
 And strengthens hope and scatters joy abroad,
 He, too, is a Redeemer, Son of God.

PROGRESS.

LET there be many windows to your soul,
 That all the glory of the universe
 May beautify it. Not the narrow pane
 Of one poor creed can catch the radiant rays
 That shine from countless sources. Tear away
 The blinds of superstition; let the light
 Pour through fair windows broad as Truth itself
 And high as God.

Why should the spirit peer

Through some priest curtained orifice, and grope
 Along dim corridors of doubt, when all
 The splendor from unfathomed seas of space
 Might bathe it with the golden waves of Love?
 Sweep up the debris of decaying faiths;
 Sweep down the cobwebs of worn-out beliefs,
 And throw your soul wide open to the light
 Of Reason and of Knowledge. Tune your ear

To all the wordless music of the stars
 And to the voice of Nature, and your heart
 Shall turn to truth and goodness, as the plant
 Turns to the sun. A thousand unseen hands
 Reach down to help you to their peace-crowned
 heights,
 And all the forces of the firmament
 Shall fortify your strength. Be not afraid
 To thrust aside half-truths and grasp the whole.

MY FRIEND.

WHEN first I looked upon the face of Pain
 I shrunk repelled, as one shrinks from a foe
 Who stands with dagger poised, as for a blow.
 I was in search of Pleasure and of Gain;
 I turned aside to let him pass: in vain;
 He looked straight in my eyes and would not go.
 "Shake hands," he said, "our paths are one, and so
 We must be comrades on the way, 'tis plain."

 I felt the firm clasp of his hand on mine;
 Through all my veins it sent a strengthening glow.
 I straightway linked my arm in his, and lo!
 He led me forth to joys almost divine;
 With God's great truths enriched me in the end.
 And now I hold him as my dearest friend.

RED CARNATIONS.

ONE time in Arcadie's fair bowers
 There met a bright immortal band,
 To choose their emblems from the flowers
 That made an Eden of that land.

Sweet Constancy, with eyes of hope,
 Strayed down the garden path alone
 And gathered sprays of heliotrope,
 To place in clusters at her zone.

True Friendship plucked the ivy green,
 Forever fresh, forever fair.
 Inconstancy with flippant mien
 The fading primrose chose to wear.

One moment Love the rose paused by;
 But Beauty picked it for her hair.
 Love paced the garden with a sigh,—
 He found no fitting emblem there.

Then suddenly he saw a flame;
 A conflagration turned to bloom.
 It even put the rose to shame,
 Both in its beauty and perfume.

He watched it, and it did not fade:
 He plucked it, and it brighter grew.
 In cold or heat, all undismayed,
 It kept its fragrance and its hue.

"Here deathless love and passion sleep,"
 He cried, "embodied in this flower.
 This is the emblem I will keep."
 Love wore carnations from that hour.

LIFE IS TOO SHORT.

LIFE is too short for any vain regretting;
 Let dead delight bury its dead, I say,
 And let us go upon our way forgetting
 The joys, and sorrows, of each yesterday.
 Between the swift sun's rising and its setting,
 We have no time for useless tears or fretting,

Life is too short.

Life is too short for any bitter feeling;
 Time is the best avenger if we wait,
 The years speed by, and on their wings bear healing,
 We have no room for anything like hate.
 This solemn truth the low mounds seem revealing
 That thick and fast about our feet are stealing,

Life is too short.

Life is too short for aught but high endeavor,—
 Too short for spite, but long enough for love.
 And love lives on forever and forever,
 It links the worlds that circle on above:
 'Tis God's first law, the universe's lever.
 In His vast realm the radiant souls sigh never

"Life is too short."

A SCULPTOR.

AS the ambitious sculptor, tireless, lifts
 Chisel and hammer to the block at hand,
 Before my half-formed character I stand
 And ply the shining tools of mental gifts.
 I'll cut away a huge unsightly side,
 Of selfishness, and smooth to curves of grace
 The angles of ill-temper.

And no trace

Shall my sure hammer leave of silly pride.
 Chip after chip must fall from vain desires,
 And the sharp corners of my discontent
 Be rounded into symmetry, and lent
 Great harmony by faith that never tires.
 Unfinished still, I must toil on and on,
 Till the pale critic, Death, shall say, "'Tis done."

CREATION.

THE impulse of all love is to create.
 God was so full of love, in His embrace
 He clasped the empty nothingness of space,
 And lo! the solar system! High in state
 The mighty sun sat, so supreme and great
 With this same essence, one smile of its face
 Brought myriad forms of life forth; race on race
 From insects up to men.

Through love, not hate,
 All that is grand in nature or in art
 Sprang into being. He who would build sublime
 And lasting works, to stand the test of time
 Must inspiration draw from his full heart.
 And he who loveth widely, well and much,
 The secret holds of the true master touch.

BEYOND.

IT seemeth such a little way to me
 Across to that strange country—the Beyond;
 And yet, not strange, for it has grown to be
 The home of those of whom I am so fond,
 They make it seem familiar and most dear,
 As journeying friends bring distant regions near.
 So close it lies, that when my sight is clear
 I think I almost see the gleaming strand.
 I know I feel those who have gone from here
 Come near enough sometimes, to touch my hand.
 I often think, but for our veiled eyes,
 We should find Heaven right round about us lies.
 I cannot make it seem a day to dread,
 When from this dear earth I shall journey out
 To that still dearer country of the dead,
 And join the lost ones, so long dreamed about.
 I love this world, yet shall I love to go
 And meet the friends who wait for me, I know.