

## POEMS FROM "MOPSA THE FAIRY."

## THE SHEPHERD LADY.

## I.

Who pipes upon the long green hill,  
 Where meadow grass is deep?  
 The white lamb bleats but followeth on —  
 Follow the clean white sheep.  
 The dear white lady in yon high tower,  
 She hearkeneth in her sleep.

All in long grass the piper stands,  
 Goodly and grave is he;  
 Outside the tower, at dawn of day,  
 The notes of his pipe ring free.  
 A thought from his heart doth reach to hers:  
 "Come down, O lady! to me."

She lifts her head, she dons her gown:  
 Ah! the lady is fair;  
 She ties the girdle on her waist,  
 And binds her flaxen hair,  
 And down she stealeth, down and down,  
 Down the turret stair.

Behold him! With the flock he wons  
 Along yon grassy lea.  
 "My shepherd lord, my shepherd love,  
 What wilt thou, then, with me?  
 My heart is gone out of my breast,  
 And followeth on to thee."

## II.

"The white lambs feed in tender grass:  
 With them and thee to bide,  
 How good it were," she saith at noon;

"Albeit the meads are wide.  
 Oh! well is me," she saith when day  
 Draws on to eventide.

Hark! hark! the shepherd's voice. Oh, sweet!  
 Her tears drop down like rain.  
 "Take now this crook, my chosen, my fere,  
 And tend the flock full fain;  
 Feed them, O lady, and lose not one,  
 Till I shall come again."

Right soft her speech: "My will is thine,  
 And my reward thy grace!"  
 Gone are his footsteps over the hill,  
 Withdrawn his goodly face;  
 The mournful dusk begins to gather,  
 The daylight wanes apace.

## III.

On sunny slopes, ah! long the lady  
 Feedeth her flock at noon;  
 She leads it down to drink at eve  
 Where the small rivulets croon.  
 All night her locks are wet with dew  
 Her eyes outwatch the moon.

Beyond the hills her voice is heard,  
 She sings when life doth wane:  
 "My longing heart is full of love,  
 Nor shall my watch be vain.  
 My shepherd lord, I see him not,  
 But he will come again."

## ABOVE THE CLOUDS.

AND can this be my own world?  
 'Tis all gold and snow,  
 Save where the scarlet waves are hurled

Down yon gulf below.  
 'Tis thy world, 'tis my world,  
 City, mead, and shore,  
 For he that hath his own world  
 Hath many worlds more.

—◆—  
 LOVE'S THREAD OF GOLD.

In the night she told a story,  
 In the night and all night through,  
 While the moon was in her glory,  
 And the branches dropped with dew.  
 'Twas my life she told, and round it  
 Rose the years as from a deep;  
 In the world's great heart she found it,  
 Cradled like a child asleep.  
 In the night I saw her weaving  
 By the misty moonbeam cold,  
 All the weft her shuttle cleaving  
 With a sacred thread of gold.  
 Ah! she wept me tears of sorrow,  
 Lulling tears so mystic sweet;  
 Then she wove my last to-morrow,  
 And her web lay at my feet.  
 Of my life she made the story:  
 I must weep — so soon 'twas told!  
 But your name did lend it glory,  
 And your love its thread of gold!

—◆—  
 FAILURE.

We are much bound to them that do succeed;  
 But, in a more pathetic sense, are bound  
 To such as fail. They all our loss expound;  
 They comfort us for work that will not speed,  
 And life — itself a failure.

Ay, his deed,  
 Sweetest in story, who the dusk profound  
 Of Hades flooded with entrancing sound,  
 Music's own tears, was failure. Doth it read  
 Therefore the worse? Ah, no! so much to dare,  
 He fronts the regnant Darkness on its throne. —  
 So much to do; impetuous even there,  
 He pours out love's disconsolate sweet moan —  
 He wins; but few for that his deed recall:  
 Its power is in the look which costs him all.

—◆—  
 GIVE US LOVE AND GIVE US PEACE.

ONE morning, oh! so early, my beloved, my beloved,  
 All the birds were singing blithely, as if never they  
 would cease;  
 'Twas a thrush sang in my garden, "Hear the story,  
 hear the story!"  
 And the lark sang, "Give us glory!"  
 And the dove said, "Give us peace!"  
 Then I listened, oh! so early, my beloved, my be-  
 loved,  
 To that murmur from the woodland of the dove, my  
 dear, the dove;  
 When the nightingale came after, "Give us fame to  
 sweeten duty!"  
 When the wren sang, "Give us beauty!"  
 She made answer, "Give us love!"  
 Sweet is spring, and sweet the morning, my beloved,  
 my beloved; [the year's increase,  
 Now for us doth spring, doth morning, wait upon  
 And my prayer goes up, "Oh, give us, crowned in  
 youth with marriage glory,  
 Give for all our life's dear story,  
 Give us love, and give us peace!"

## THE DAYS WITHOUT ALLOY.

WHEN I sit on market-days amid the comers and  
the goers,  
Oh! full oft I have a vision of the days without  
alloy,  
And a ship comes up the river with a jolly gang of  
towers,  
And a "pull'e haul'e, pull'e haul'e, yoy! heave,  
hoy!"

There is busy talk around me, all about mine ears it  
hummeth,  
But the wooden wharves I look on, and a dancing,  
heaving buoy,  
For 'tis tidetime in the river, and she cometh — oh,  
she cometh!  
With a "pull'e haul'e, pull'e haul'e, yoy! heave,  
hoy!"

Then I hear the water washing, never golden waves  
were brighter,  
And I hear the capstan creaking — 'tis a sound  
that cannot cloy.  
Bring her to, to ship her lading, brig or schooner,  
sloop or lighter,  
With a "pull'e haul'e, pull'e haul'e, yoy! heave,  
hoy!"

"Will ye step aboard, my dearest? for the high seas  
lie before us."  
So I sailed adown the river in those days with-  
out alloy;  
We are launched! But when, I wonder, shall a  
sweeter sound float o'er us  
Than yon "pull'e haul'e, pull'e haul'e, yoy!  
heave, hoy!"

## THE LEAVES OF LIGN ALOES.

DROP, drop from the leaves of lign aloes,  
O honey-dew! drop from the tree.  
Float up though your clear river shallows,  
White lilies, beloved of the bee.

Let the people, O Queen! say, and bless thee,  
Her bounty drops soft as the dew,  
And spotless in honor confess thee,  
As lilies are spotless in hue.

On the roof stands yon white stork awaking,  
His feathers flush rosy the while,  
For, lo! from the blushing east breaking,  
The sun sheds the bloom of his smile.

Let them boast of thy word, "It is certain;  
We doubt it no more," let them say,  
"Than to-morrow that night's dusky curtain  
Shall roll back its folds for the day."

## ON THE ROCKS BY ABERDEEN.

ON the rocks by Aberdeen,  
Where the whislin' wave had been  
As I wandered and at e'en  
Was eerie;

There I saw thee sailing west,  
And I ran with joy opprest —  
Ay, and took out all my best,  
My dearie.

Then I busked mysel' wi' speed,  
And the neighbors cried "What need?  
'Tis a lass in any weed  
Aye bonny!"

Now my heart, my heart is sair :  
 What's the good, though I be fair,  
 For thou'lt never see me mair,  
 Man Johnnie!

---

FEATHERS AND MOSS.

THE marten flew to the finch's nest,  
 Feathers and moss, and a wisp of hay :  
 "The arrow it sped to thy brown mate's breast :  
 Low in the broom is thy mate to-day."  
 "Liest thou low, love? low in the broom?  
 Feathers and moss, and a wisp of hay,  
 Warm the white eggs till I learn his doom."  
 She beateth her wings, and away, away.  
 "Ah, my sweet singer, thy days are told  
 (Feathers and moss, and a wisp of hay) !  
 Thine eyes are dim, and the eggs grow cold.  
 O mournful morrow! O dark to-day!"  
 The finch flew back to her cold, cold nest,  
 Feathers and moss, and a wisp of hay,  
 Mine is the trouble that rent her breast,  
 And home is silent, and love is clay.

---

SWEET is childhood — childhood's over,  
 Kiss and part.  
 Sweet is youth ; but youth's a rover —  
 So's my heart.  
 Sweet is rest ; but by all showing  
 Toil is nigh.  
 We must go. Alas! the going,  
 Say "good-bye."

THE GYPSY'S SELLING SONG.

My good man — he's an old, old man,  
 And my good man got a fall,  
 To buy me a bargain so fast he ran  
 When he heard the gypsies call :  
 "Buy, buy brushes,  
 Baskets wrought o' rushes.  
 Buy them, buy them, take them, try them,  
 Buy, dames all."  
 My old man, he has money and land,  
 And a young, young wife am I.  
 Let him put the penny in my white hand  
 When he hears the gypsies cry :  
 "Buy, buy laces,  
 Veils to screen your faces.  
 Buy them, buy them, take and try them.  
 Buy, maids, buy."

---

A WOOING SONG.

My fair lady's a dear, dear lady —  
 I walked by her side to woo.  
 In a garden alley, so sweet and shady,  
 She answered, "I love not you,  
 John, John Brady,"  
 Quoth my dear lady,  
 "Pray now, pray now, go your way now,  
 Do, John, do."  
 Yet my fair lady's my own, own lady,  
 For I passed another day ;  
 While making her moan, she sat all alone,  
 And thus, and thus did she say :  
 "John, John Brady,"  
 Quoth my dear lady,  
 "Do now, do now, once more woo now.  
 Pray, John, pray!"

## SLEEP AND TIME.

“WAKE, baillie, wake! the crafts are out;  
Wake!” said the knight, “be quick!  
For high street, bye street, over the town  
They fight with poker and stick.”  
Said the squire, “A fight so fell was ne’er  
In all thy bailliewick.”  
What said the old clock in the tower?

“Tick, tick, tick!”

“Wake, daughter, wake! the hour draws on;  
Wake,” quoth the dame, “be quick!  
The meats are set, the guests are coming,  
The fiddler waxing his stick.”  
She said, “The bridegroom waiting and waiting  
To see thy face is sick.”  
What said the new clock in her bower?

“Tick, tick, tick!”

## MASTER, QUOTH THE AULD HOUND.

“MASTER,” quoth the auld hound,  
“Where will ye go?”  
“Over moss, over muir,  
To court my new jo.”  
“Master, though the night be merk,  
I’se follow through the snow.

“Court her, master, court her,  
So shall ye do weel;  
But and ben she’ll guide the house,  
I’se get milk and meal,  
Ye’se get liting while she sits  
With her rock and reel.”

“For oh! she has a sweet tongue,  
And een that look down,  
A gold girdle for her waist,  
And a purple gown.  
She has a good word forbye  
Fra a’ folk in the town.”

## LIKE A LAVEROCK IN THE LIFT.

It’s we two, it’s we two, it’s we two for aye,  
All the world and we too, and Heaven be our stay.  
Like a laverock in the lift, sing, O bonny bride!  
All the world was Adam once, with Eve by his side.  
What’s the world, my lass, my love! — what can it do?  
I am thine, and thou art mine; life is sweet and new.  
If the world have missed the mark, let it stand by,  
For we two have gotten leave, and once more we’ll try.

Like a laverock in the lift, sing, O bonny bride!  
It’s we two, it’s we two, happy side by side.  
Take a kiss from me thy man; now the song begins:  
“All is made afresh for us, and the brave heart wins.”

When the darker days come, and no sun will shine,  
Thou shalt dry my tears, lass, and I’ll dry thine.  
It’s we two, it’s we two, while the world’s away,  
Sitting by the golden sheaves on our wedding day.

## BEES AND OTHER FELLOW-CREATURES.

THE dove laid some little sticks,  
Then began to coo;  
The gnat took his trumpet up  
To play the day through;

The pie chattered soft and long —  
 But that she always does;  
 The bee did all he had to do,  
 And only said, "Buzz."

---

LITTLE BABE.

Little babe, while burns the west,  
 Warm thee, warm thee in my breast;  
 While the moon doth shine her best,  
 And the dews distil not.

All the land so sad, so fair —  
 Sweet its toils are, blest its care.  
 Child, we may not enter there!  
 Some there are that will not.

Fain would I thy margins know,  
 Land of work, and land of snow;  
 Land of life, whose rivers flow  
 On, and on, and stay not.

Fain would I thy small limbs fold,  
 While the weary hours are told,  
 Little babe in cradle cold.  
 Some there are that may not.

A LAND THAT LIVING WARMTH  
 DISOWNS.

A land that living warmth disowns,  
 It meets my wondering ken;  
 A land where all the men are stones,  
 Or all the stones are men.

---

THE PRINCE SHALL TO THE CHASE  
 AGAIN.

The prince shall to the chase again,  
 The dame has got her face again,  
 The king shall have his place again  
 Aneath the fairy dome.

And all the knights shall woo again,  
 And all the doves shall coo again,  
 And all the dreams come true again,  
 And Jack shall go home.

## AT ONE AGAIN.

## I. NOONDAY.

Two angry men — in heat they sever,  
 And one goes home by a harvest field:—  
 "Hope's naught," quoth he, "and vain endeavor;  
 I said and say it, I will not yield!

"As for this wrong, no art can mend it,  
 The bond is shiver'd that held us twain;  
 Old friends we be, but law must end it,  
 Whether for loss or whether for gain.

"Yon stream is small — full slow its wending;  
 But winning is sweet, but right is fine;  
 And shoal of trout, or willowy bending —  
 Though Law be costly — I'll prove them mine.

"His strawberry cow slipped loose her tether,  
 And trod the best of my barley down;  
 His little lasses at play together  
 Pluck'd the poppies my boys had grown.

"What then — Why naught! *She* lack'd of reason;  
 And *they* — my little ones match them well:—  
 But *this* — Nay all things have their season,  
 And 'tis my reason to curb and quell."

## II. SUNSET.

So saith he, when noontide fervors flout him,  
 So thinks, when the West is amber and red,  
 When he smells the hop-vines sweet about him,  
 And the clouds are rosy overhead.

While slender and tall the hop-poles going  
 Straight to the West in their leafy lines,  
 Portion it out into chambers, glowing,  
 And bask in red day as the sun declines.

Between the leaves in his latticed arbor  
 He sees the sky, as they flutter and turn,  
 While moor'd like boats in a golden harbor  
 The fleets of feathery cloudlets burn.

Withdrawn in shadow, he thinketh over  
 Harsh thoughts, the fruit-laden trees among,  
 Till pheasants call their young to cover,  
 — And cushats coo them a nursery song.

And flocks of ducks forsake their sedges,  
 Wending home to the wide barn-door,  
 And loaded wains between the hedges  
 Slowly creep to his threshing floor —

Slowly creep. And his tired senses  
 Float him over the magic stream,  
 To a world where Fancy recompenses  
 Vengeful thoughts, with a troubled dream!