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INTERLUDES

VERSES

BY

BELLE WILLEY GUE

THE HOUSEHOLD REALM PRESS

CHICAGO

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Not all who sing are poets; some must stay
Within the limits of the common way;
Not all souls mount the steps that touch the stars—
Some never climb beyond the sunset bars.
And, so, these words of mine I do not claim
Will set my feet upon the way to fame ;
But they go forth as interludes between
The facts and fancies of life's shifting scene.
Some other soul may hear the harmony
These thoughts of mine have faintly brought to me.

INTERLUDES

A SONG IN THE NIGHT.

Sweeter, by far, than the songs of the day,
Purer than music of gladness and light,
Is the song that bids sorrow and pain flee away
And comes to the soul in the depths of its night.

The heart may grow faint with trials and fears,
For striving and failing may narrow a life

To burdens, that, crowding the swift-moving
years,

Incite us to labor and urge us to strife.

But just when the darkness hangs heavy and cold,
And storm-clouds have hidden the dead day's
delight,

There comes, with its magic, sad hearts to unfold,
The glory grief gives us — a song in the night.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

The way of the world is stony and steep,

From its dangers there is no guard;

And many who walk there have hearts that weep,
For the way of the world is hard.

INTERLUDES.

There are lonely graves along the way
Where life's fond hopes were lost,
But the mourners may not stop nor stay,
And they dare not count the cost.

For the way of the world is on and on,
There are always hills to climb ;
While the blessing of sunshine is quickly gone,
There are clouds till the end of time.

The way of the world has sudden turns,
Where we meet or we part with friends ;
The meetings are joys that our sorrow earns,
The parting our struggling sends.

For we each must find the path alone,
Though the darkness our haven hide ;
On the way of the world no light is thrown,
Whatever our souls betide.

But flowers bloom beside the road,
And love dispels fate's frown ;
When our strength no longer can bear our load,
We may lay our burden down.

For the way of the world is full of care,
And crowded the busy street,
And be our legacy foul or fair
The passing of many feet

INTERLUDES.

Will crush the flowers or cover the stain,
And stifle our dying moan.
But there's sweet in the bitter cup we drain,
If it comes to our lips alone.

For although the way of the world is cold,
Yet, under our closest masks,
There are love and truth that never grow old,
And they sanctify worldly tasks.

A WINTER SUNSET.

Over the hills is my heart's desire —
Over the snow-clad hills.
Over the hills is a living fire,
Where the sun sinks into the west.

Straight from the Sun-God's heart of flame,
Rises a gleaming spire ;
Over the hills is an honored name,
Over the hills is rest.

But the hills are steep and hard to climb,
While dangers bar the way,
And my soul is far from that sunny time,
When love was my glorious guest.

INTERLUDES.

Over the hills is the close of day,
Far from the world's mad whirl ;
For a life that must battle with grief alway,
The hush of the night were best.

A WINTER MORNING.

A stretch of golden splendor spans the east
When night's disguising shadows backward flee,
And rifts of rose in sober clouds, fresh-fleeced,
Are like to sun-kissed waves of a sudsy sea.
The night's sweet peace has banished hovering
storm
That marred the world of mortals, yesterday ;
Thus, when, though dead, my human heart was
warm,
Did sleep drive all my griefs and doubts away.
But snake-like smoke streams out against the
sky—
Sure symbol of the greed of selfish man ;
It speaks of earth and earth's stern toil, and I
Must act my part, though hidden is the plan.

INTERLUDES.

WINTER.

Snow on the hills, dear, snow in the valleys,
Snow on your hair, too, but love in your heart ;
Cold are the still years, but firm your affection,
So strong that no sorrow can tear it apart.

Hidden are flowers that bloom in the summer,
Silent and dreaming in strengthening sleep ;
Ice-bound the waters that brighten the prairies,
Fast-locked your love, too, but constant and
deep.

Beauties of earth that by fierce winds seem blasted
Will come to perfection when time is no more ;
Hard words are melted by tears of forgiveness,
And spring-time is glorious when winter is o'er.

SIGNS IN THE HEAVENS.

Before the morning shines a star,
Before the night a sun—
A hint of what broad worlds there are
When our brief day is done.

INTERLUDES.

THE CEDAR OF OREGON.

Stately and tall you stood, Oregon Cedar,
Of all your proud brotherhood, natural leader.

What were the secrets your deep roots were prob-
ing,
While feeding the strength of your evergreen
robing?

Towering toward the sky, did your leaves listen,
Hearing lost spirits cry where dewdrops glisten?

By the glad music that comes from your burning,
I know a freed soul to its home is returning.

In the midst of the flame a prayer it is singing,
From sorrow and shame its way it is winging.

O soul, bound so long by a hard lesson's learning,
Your joy is far past my weak wisdom's discerning.

So brave and so strong mid the pitiless fire!
A sweet, solemn song on a funeral pyre.

In winter's heart there lies the spring
Budding for its blossoming.

INTERLUDES.

JUST FOR TODAY.

Just for today these flowers are thine—
Thine to devour with greedy eye ;
Just for tonight the still stars shine
To light your soul to its destiny.

Just for today the winds of heaven
Fan from your brow the hand of pain ;
Just for tonight these tears are given
To wash from your soul this earthly stain.

Just for today his love for thee
Is constant and pure, and fair and good ;
Just for tonight you cannot see
The faults of a common brotherhood.

Just for today—let us drink them in—
All of the beauties of every sense ;
Welcome the sorrow and shun the sin
That brings all souls sad recompense.

If all our days were peaceful days,
We would not welcome rest ;
We're guided through life's devious ways
By One who knoweth best.

INTERLUDES.

OVERDUE.

My ship should have come in the morning,
When the sky was blue and fair,
When the sun of hope was rising,
And my heart was brave to dare ;
For I had been strong in the struggle
With my life's regrets and tears,
Had the peace my ship is bringing
Been but mine through the cruel years.

And at noon when my soul was heavy
With a nameless dread and doubt,
My ship, with its priceless treasure,
Would have called my courage out ;
And my eyes had been clear and steady
As my hands had been strong and firm ;
But I gazed over still, cold waters,
And could never a sail discern.

Now I sit in the sunset shadows,
That the nearing night doth cast,
Mid the drifting sands of my present,
And the wrecks of my hopeful past ;
Yet I trust that the far horizon
Doth hide from my earthly view
The satisfying cargo
Of my ship that is overdue.

INTERLUDES.

LIMITED.

Paint me a tree, my artist,
That speaks through its trembling leaves ;
Paint me warm lips that quiver
When their owner joys or grieves ;
And here, where the shadows deepen
And the chastened sunlight falls,
Let me lave in the silent waters
That your magic brush recalls.

And you, oh, my high-souled poet,
With your gift of eternal youth,
Write me the word that shall bring me
To the dwelling of actual truth.
Read me no dreamy fancies—
Fair images of your brain—
But disclose the secret of gladness,
And the mystery of pain.

And you, who have power to open
The mystical gates of sound,
Bring back the voice of my mother
That the sweeping years have drowned ;
No music that ever was written
Could equal one tender word
Of the sweetest, purest cadence
That my ears have ever heard.

INTERLUDES.

Oh, worshipful, gentle lover,
Making vows for the years to come,
Are you sure that you'll not forget me
When my few brief days are done?
When human hands are sundered,
And a grave is heaped between,
Few hearts force life's devotion
Past death's dark, chilling stream.

Oh, fair is pictured nature
And wonderful is thought,
And song makes peace of sorrows
That life and loss have brought ;
Uplifting like Levana,
Dear one, are words of thine,
But everything that's finite
Falls short of the divine.

THE JOY OF LIFE.

Oh, life hath joy in the morning time
For every living thing;
Glad bells send out a merry chime,
And nature's voices sing.

INTERLUDES.

Life's hopes are bounding in the blood,
Earth's beauties stretch away ;
The world is fresh, and fair, and good,
In the dawning of the day.

The joy that comes with the high noon hour
Is the joy of the flowers in bloom,
The consciousness of strength and power
O'er the threads in life's swift loom.
Possession dims our fondest dreams,
Earth's sorrows pass us by,
Life's fairest sunshine o'er us streams
When the hour of noon is nigh.

Oh, sweet is the joy of eventide,
Loved memories of the past ;
By silent shores still waters glide
When the light is fading fast ;
The joy of one who has run his race,
The blessing of well earned rest ;
Oh, the joys of the day are full of grace,
But the evening joys are best.

INTERLUDES.

BEYOND.

Somewhere, beyond your narrow, dark horizon

There gleams a vision your eyes would joy to see

Somewhere, beyond deformities that haunt you,

Symmetry and beauty are bountiful and free.

Somewhere, beyond this deep, discordant jarring

There swells an anthem of glorious harmony ;

Somewhere, there throbs a keynote that would
help you

To hear through all nature a perfect symphony.

Somewhere, beyond the clasp that now defiles you,

There is a strength that's good and kind and
clean;

Somewhere, beyond this fickle, human longing,

There is a love on which your heart may lean.

Never forgetting this promise of the future,

Walk through the world, advancing while you
dream,

Know that a land of plenteous peace awaits you,

Though bounded by a turbid, shifting stream.

INTERLUDES.

MY GUEST.

Long had I watched for him, and when he came
I gladly, proudly, led him to his place—
My richest chamber, decked with all the grace
I could command; warmed by a sacred flame,
A holy brightness only he could claim.
His voice was full of music; o'er his face
There swept a veil; beneath it I could trace
His beauteous features, yet the cloud became
A terror to me. "Love," I cried, "sweet Love,
I pray thee let me undimmed sunshine borrow
From out the splendor of thine eyes; remove
What hides thee from me. "Wait," he said,
"tomorrow"—
"Today!" I cried, "and never from me rove."
The mist is gone. I know my guest is Sorrow.

TO A WHITE-FRINGED POPPY.

Teach me, fair flower, to forget
Life's toil and trouble, fire and fret;
Pure as thy petals make my heart,
Forced in the world to bear its part:

INTERLUDES.

Like thy serrated leaves, my soul
Is torn, while waves of sorrow roll
Above the graves wherein are laid
What once a gloried halo made
Of common things that grate and jar,
Where only searing memories are.

But may I e'er remember when
I first knew love of fellow-men ;
Not singly and for certain graces
We think we see in human faces ;
But when my eyes were opened wide
To beauties lying close beside
The path my blundering feet had trod,
My sad eyes searching on the sod,
For selfish joys my being craved—
Deep pools where longing might be laved.

I pray you, poppy, leave behind
Seeds to perpetuate your kind ;
And plant them here within my heart,
So that, when bitter tear-drops start,
They will but hasten into bloom
Oblivion's types that speak the doom
Of love and love's divine regret,
For love is dead when we forget.
And let me, like you, cull to-day,
Whatever blessings come my way.

INTERLUDES.

WOOD VIOLETS.

What cares my soul for the world and its sorrows,
What fears my heart for its swift-coming doom,
What care I now for my anxious tomorrows ?
My violets are in bloom.

Full of the sweetness of love more than mortal,
Making paradise of my narrow room,
Making my window of heaven the portal :
My violets are in bloom.

Bringing me comfort my dead hopes have hidden,
Telling of peace that will come to me soon,
Bringing me joys that are pure as unbidden :
My violets are in bloom.

Memories dear as themselves do they cover,
Deep in the shelter of silence and gloom,
Visions of sunshine and trees bending over
Where violets are in bloom.

To those who write and those who read
The end comes swift and sure ;
No human hope—no human need
Forever can endure.

INTERLUDES.

THE CHINESE LILY.

The sacred lily of Cathay
Strayed from its home one winter's day,
And angels guided it my way.

On Hera's bosom taught to rest,
(Of all the Greeks the lovliest),
Hath to her heart this blossom pressed.

Its perfume is her fragrant breath ;
The dew upon its snowy sheath
Was caught her tender eyes beneath.

“Behold the lilies of the field!”
Cried One who death's dark door unsealed—
God's glorious thought through flesh revealed.

To thee, my love, this gift I send,
And may these spotless petals lend
Remembrance of a constant friend.

These silent, loving hearts of gold,
The mystery of life unfold—
A wondrous story yet untold.

Sweet emblems of fair purity ;
I pray that lilies bring to thee
The rarest dreams of land and sea.

INTERLUDES.

JUNE ROSES.

June roses are fairies, imprisoned but happy,
They're blushing with pleasure or pale with delight ;

June roses are fair in the freshness of morning,
But sweeter and dearer are roses at night.

The bonds of the sprite are the soft, silken petals,
The heart of the rose is the fairy's warm breast.
The breath of the fairy is fragrant and helpful,
Sustaining sad souls that are longing for rest.

The wind is a rover who loves the bright fairy,
And, loosening her fetters, he scatters the rose ;
And so, from her prison, still cheerful and happy,
Away, with her lover, the sweet fairy goes.

(Set to music by Fanny Snow Knowlton, and published in her book of "Nature's Songs," by Milton Bradley Co., Springfield, Mass., in 1898.)

After the winter of discontent
Cometh the blessing of tears.
After hours in suffering spent,
Cometh the healing of years.

INTERLUDES.

BRING FLOWERS.

Bring flowers—bring flowers—to greet the wee
maiden ;

Bring lilies as pure as her innocent soul,
As sweet as her face by earth's sorrows unladen,
Bring trailing arbutus and daisies and hope.

Bring flowers—frail flowers—to wear at her wed-
ding ;

Bring roses that blush with remembrance of
bliss ;

Bring flowers as bright as her heart is confiding,
And pansies and patience and unselfish love.

Bring flowers—pale flowers—her coffin to cover,
For years are as flowers that live but to fade ;

Farewell to the voices of friend and of lover,
Bring poppies and heliotrope and violets and
tears.

A FLOWER.

The seed was sown in bitterness,
It was watered with many tears,
And sad eyes watched it growing,
Through barren, dreary years.

INTERLUDES.

The plant at first was dwarfish,
Like a helpless heart that grieves ;
And harsh winds tossed and twisted
Its stunted, shadowed leaves.

But a bud of fragrant beauty
Was swelling in the gloom,
And a single gleam of sunshine
Has coaxed it into bloom.

The soil is a strong soul's sorrow ;
The flower is a hidden hope ;
And it lifts up lives that falter,
And in utter darkness grope.

Its breath is the dainty perfume
That creeps past the close shut gates
Of the heaven of peace and gladness
That the steadfast heart awaits.

WAY-SIDE ROSES.

Stretching out glad hands to greet me,
Just a casual passer-by,
Bringing down from heights Elysian
Living truths for those who die.

INTERLUDES.

Gifts from God to those who journey
Through the mystery of the night,
Faithful guides to point all mortals
To the way that leads to light.

Springing up by common road-ways,
Clothed in all their dainty grace,
Modest, pure, and steadfast spirits,
Children of a lowly race.

Harsh winds rudely toss and twist them,
Fierce suns drink their perfume in ;
Beauty—sadly sweet and trustful—
Swallowed up by unknown sin.

Gleams of genius—flaming beacons,
Flowers that bloom beside the way ;
Fragrance, music, stars of evening,
Lead from darkness unto day.

The winter's storm is fierce and strong,
But mightier far the power of wrong ;
We may not bar the tempest's track,
But one pure soul can force sin back.

INTERLUDES.

SAFE.

A soul has broken through the gates of earth
And gained its port, its troublous voyage o'er.
The beacon that an angel raised to guide
His frail bark through the waste of waters
Trembled, glimmered, poised itself and fell ;
I saw it leave the hand that trimmed its flame
And pass into oblivion; it neared our world
To light the soul it guided safely through
The harbor's mouth—the narrow way that men
Are taught to think is death. I know the soul
That just now left its borrowed clay was one
Whose course was girt about with danger,
For the star was very bright; a safer soul
Had needed not so clear a light; his course
Had been through calmer seas ; but this one,
Tempest-tossed, led on by demons, drifted,
Horror-stricken, near to Scylla and her twin,
Charybdis ; wrecked or swallowed up he would
Have been but for the loving eyes that watched,
The loving hands that set the star, by which
He ever tried to steer his ship ; the crew
Was mutinous and reefed the sails or raised
The anchor, worked the ship, at will; to him
They would not yield obedience; but tonight

INTERLUDES.

That pain-pierced soul has reached his haven ;
To-night his angel welcomes him; to-night
She frees him from the wounds, the scars, that sin
Has seemed to stain him with. How gloriously
That soul enjoys his freedom! How his angel
Clasps him close and loves him! Bliss untold!
Had his earth-life been less tiresome, think you
Rest had been so sweet to him, so sating?

Published by *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, Feb. 1892.

ALL SAINTS' DAY.

Of all the laurels lost and won,
The crown of love seems best to me.
A dream of hope is heaven begun,
Though closely joined to poverty.
Of all the graces neath the sun
There's none so sweet as Charity.
By Faith are earthly fears undone ;
Through Faith a righteous law we see.
I worship all the Saints in One
And find them all in thee.

INTERLUDES.

GOD KNOWS.

No soul can ever wander
In sorrow or in sin,
So far God cannot find it
And guide it back to Him.

The weaknesses and forces
That make our mortal deeds,
Are known to Him, and with them,
Our longing and our needs.

The devious ways we journey,
The dangers that we meet,
Are only steps and lessons
Predestined for our feet.

The darkness and the bruises
Are but to make us strong,
To see the road before us,
And recognize the wrong.

Our Father sees our fetters,
And He will set us free,
To follow love and beauty
Through all eternity.

INTERLUDES.

A NEW YEAR.

Sins and sorrows of the past
Stagger into view ;
Hopes that were too dear to last,
Come before me, too.
Days that were so sweet and glad
Have passed away,
And so my heart is very sad,
On New Year's day.

Unstained hours gleam for all
Where the future lies,
There do living waters fall,
Watched by tender eyes ;
Changing skies of blue are clad
In gold or gray,
And so my inmost soul is glad
On New Year's day.

May Christmas peace and Christmas cheer
Be yours through all the coming year.

INTERLUDES.

RE-INCARNATION.

The lazy sunshine of the spring
Is softly drifting by,
While toward the still past hastening
The laden hours fly.

For time and sense must pass away,
As earthly beauties fade;
And night shuts out the fairest day,
As sunshine sinks in shade.

But strong souls were not born to die ;
They change their outward form ;
We hear sin's expiating cry
In every wailing storm.

Within this lily's creamy cup
The spirit of a queen
Re-lives a life she offered up
Despair and pride between :
This stately native of the Nile
Brings unto earth again
The wealth of Cleopatra's smile,
But purified by pain.

Beneath this violet's royal dress
I see a woman's heart ;
She knew not peace nor happiness,
But bravely bore her part :

INTERLUDES.

I know her thoughts reanimate
This subtle, sweet perfume ;
Thus Justice, though she tarry late,
Brings sorrow into bloom.

So, dear, in days that are to come
Some flower at your feet—
Though lips of mine are cold and dumb—
Will my devotion speak.

WHEN THE SUN SHINES.

When the sunshine o'er one hovers,
Hope and longing are at hand ;
All the world is made for lovers,
Beauty rules the peaceful land.

Fairest flowers rise to meet it,
Lift their faces toward the light,
Sweetest bird-songs thrill to greet it,
Sunshine makes all nature bright.

Tears of sorrow may be staining
All the bitter path of pain,
But, remember, when it's raining,
That the sun will shine again.

INTERLUDES.

EASTER LILIES.

Easter lilies lift their faces
After winter's storms pass by ;
Angel gifts and angel graces
Rise from death's despairing cry.

Clinging care for what must perish
In life's chilling, biting sleet,
Leads us on to fondly cherish
What is lasting, pure and sweet.

Easter lilies add a blessing
To a strong soul's perfect peace ;
Easter lilies are caressing
Hearts whose sorrows never cease.

Faith and truth and beauty found them
On their joyous natal morn,
Bounteous promises surround them,
In their shadow love is born.

Dead leaves drift o'er summer's grave—
Resurrection all things have;
Nothing lives and dies in vain ;
Deepest loss is highest gain.

INTERLUDES.

ARBOR DAY.

To plant a tree—perchance beneath its shade
A burden sore and heavy shall be laid,
A cross by cruelty or blunders made,
In years to be.

To plant a tree—perhaps its murmuring leaves
May whisper comfort to some heart that grieves ;
Thus present thought a future good achieves ;
These things may be.

To plant a tree—sometime a little child
May sleep as if a tender mother smiled
Beneath these branches, undefiled ;
Sweet rest to thee.

To plant a tree—oh, lovers, may your feet
Bear you, with rapturous joy, sometime, to meet
The dearest life your own shall ever greet,
Beneath this tree.

To plant a tree—bring peace and hope and sleep
To human hearts that smile and souls that weep ;
Be broad and high and full of love, but keep
No thought of me.

INTERLUDES.

TO THE QUEEN OF THE MAY.

Light of foot and fair of feature,
Mirth and music in your glance,
Welcome every living creature
To the rhythmic May-pole dance.

Give a gayly-colored streamer
To each eager, empty hand ;
Thou the queen and glad redeemer
Of a frozen, dreary land.

Move, then, to a merry measure,
Fill the universe with song,
Voice a thought for all to treasure,
Summer days are dear and long.

Woodland sprite or nymph or woman,
Bring refreshing, ambient air,
Spirit thou, but sweetly human,
Fragrant breath and flowing hair.

Soft winds blowing, sunbeams glancing,
Flowers blooming all the way,
All hearts join you in your dancing,
Joyous, helpful queen of May.

INTERLUDES.

DECORATION DAY.

Let us weep for the widowed in heart and in
spirit,
Bereft of the dearest of blessings of earth ;
For the fatherless children, fore-doomed to in-
herit
The horrors of war that o'er-shadowed their
birth ;
For beauty and promise were hidden away
In the graves that we cover with sorrow to-day.
But rejoice for the souls early freed from their
crosses,
Who rose, at one bound, to most difficult
heights ;
Who left all life's heart-aches and evils and
losses,
In the noble defense of humanity's rights ;
The patriot's high purpose is speaking, always,
From the graves that we cover with honor
today.

INTERLUDES.

ONE MORNING IN JUNE.

The breath of nature fills the air,
Fresh from a wholesome, peaceful rest ;
The prairie's face seems doubly fair,
By night's fond, farewell tears caressed.

Wild rosebuds rise to deck the day
And greet the sun in glad surprise ;
The darkness that has passed away
Has left mild wonder in their eyes.

Tall cottonwoods are whispering
Of secrets far too deep for me,
And feathered lovers madly sing
To listening mates, persuasively.

Like some rare jewel set in jade,
Gleams forth the shy anemone,
Inquisitive, yet half afraid,
Free, untamed creatures speak to me.

Here, happy, loitering cattle stray,
Wading, knee-deep, in clover bloom,
Unmindful of that dreadful day
When they shall meet their cruel doom.

INTERLUDES.

The forest's shade is hovering
O'er many a soft and anxious nest ;
The small hearts it is covering
Make love love's only perfect test.

* * * * *

With all its rich treasure
It vanished too soon ;
Day-dreams had no measure
That morning in June.

A JUNE EVENING.

The day has passed with all its weight
Of sorrows and of fears ;
The day has passed, and with it, gone
Its raptures and its tears.

Sweet roses send their fragrance out
Beside the common road ;
The soul within them gently speaks,
And lightens many a load.

INTERLUDES.

Here, gentle, peaceful cattle sleep ;
I hear their restful sighs ;
Such blessed nights leave human help
Within their quiet eyes.

I see bright firefly signals now
Flash out against the dark ;
I wonder what the message is
Of each small, brilliant spark.

The hosts of heaven have set their lamps
Where all the world may see,
And on to higher, better thoughts
They beckon, graciously.

When, in my misty, future life,
My soul grows sick with wrong,
The memories of this calm night
Shall make me glad and strong.

WHEN THE CORN'S LAID BY.

There's sweet fragrance in the meadows,
There are nights too fair to die,
There is sunshine chasing shadows,
When the corn's laid by.

INTERLUDES.

There is strength in every morning,
There's a promise in the sky,
Hope the wide world is adorning,
When the corn's laid by.

Conscience clear and cheerful labor
Make the heart too light to sigh,
Nature greets one as a neighbor,
When the corn's laid by.

Peace and rest and glad ambition
All the ills of earth defy,
We're approaching full fruition,
When the corn's laid by.

LOVE.

Though tossed the lake, the mountain
The rising sun doth greet ;
Though pitchers break, the fountain
Still keeps its waters sweet.

Though friends and fortune fail them
And even death seems slow,
No ruin can assail them
Who purest loving know.

INTERLUDES.

AN AUGUST ACADIA.

Tall trees with loving, leafy arms that touch
Their sister trees across a shallow stream
Which, having long refreshed the thirsty air,
Hath narrowed, till the margin of its bed
Where tiny tribes were wont to dart and float
Is unprotected from the noon-day sun
Who found it coyly cool and left it warm ;
Each prisoning pebble walling in some sprite
Whose blushes burned themselves into the stone
That shut her in—so fierce the Fairy grew
Beneath the bold caressing of the rays
That seemed to try to coax her from her cell ;
Though jealous shadows came, they quickly went,
As sorrow melts before the power of love.

The dim, primeval forest stretched away
On all sides from this bit of open sky ;
From those dark aisles two tired women came
Unto the languor of this safe retreat ;
Aweary with the weight of wealth they bore
As trophies of their wandering in the woods,
They cast themselves upon the silent shore ;
The one, her soft cheek pillowed in her hand,
Her listless limbs disposed with careless grace,

INTERLUDES.

Drew gently to her breast the other's head,
Her free hand toying with their mingled hair ;
Like Lillith and an Eve before the fall,
With beauty and with innocence endowed,
The peace of nature kissed their eye-lids down.

A little farther down the creek's cramped course
A moss grown bridge that human hands had
built

Was freighted with a motley company ;
Pale Grief—grim Want—hot Tears—and woman's
Woe—

E'en satisfying Love was waiting there
To make or mar the future of the two

Who rested on such pure, enchanted ground,
That nothing past or coming troubled them ;
The dumb despair that was to crush one down,
The blessed hope that was to make her strong,
The pain the other bore so patiently,
That those who saw her thought her soul at
peace,

Were all beyond the magic atmosphere
That wrapped them round that happy August
day.

Though this brief glimpse of calm Acadia
Was but an interlude in stormy lives,

INTERLUDES.

Remembrance of it always brought a taste
That lingered in their hearts and made the cup
They had to drain less bitter, yet, the source
Of the strange spell they knew not; evermore
Each little Nun within her cloister kept
Her secret pure and undefiled; content
With the small boundaries nature'd set for her,
She dwelt in happiness and perfect rest.
Sweet souls! They deem that all the world is
fair!

Shall we who breathe this earthly air and know
That sin and sunshine, love and sorrow, blend,
Presume to call them "blind" or only "wise?"

SAFETY.

She walks in safety all the way
Wherever life may guide her,
Though, temptingly, by night and day
Earth's dangers stalk beside her.
They cannot spoil or stain her soul,
Because her thoughts are pure;
Eyes lifted toward a sacred goal
No evil can endure.

INTERLUDES.

IF SUMMER SKIES WERE ALWAYS BLUE.

If summer skies were always blue,
And trusted friends were always true,
Then I'd put perfect faith in you,
My bonnie dearie.

If years were always rosy June,
And hearts were never out of tune,
Then I would wed you and wed soon,
My bonnie dearie.

If there were ne'er a storm-swept night,
And all of love were love's delight,
Then I'd with yours my fate unite,
My bonnie dearie.

But as it is, I'll set you free,
And sadly keep your memory
A sweet and sacred thing to me,
My bonnie dearie.

Set to music by Fanny Snow-Knowlton. Published
by Oliver Ditson & Co.

INTERLUDES.

SEPTEMBER.

Sad stars of April watched and wept
Till May-flowers wakened from their sleep.
June, crowned with royal roses, swept
Through nature's palace, wide and deep.

Then summer's sultry suns began
To draw swift lightning from the skies,
And wild winds shrieked "How frail is man
How futile are his human cries!"

The great, red, glorious harvest moon,
Calm harbinger of happy rest,
Foretold of days to follow soon,
Of all the year the brightest, best.

The haze that veils the distant hills
Shuts out a weary world of care;
September's quiet presence stills
Heartaches that grow into despair.

This first rich jewel of the fall
Adorns the forest and the plain;
Its benediction blesses all,
Like welcome, sweet, refreshing rain.

INTERLUDES.

THANKSGIVING DAY.

For the great gift of human sight,
By which the radiant summer skies,
And the swift glance of glad surprise
That sometimes leaps to lover's eyes—
By which the sparkling stars of night,
Are, through God's grace, revealed to thee.

For the sweet mystery of touch,
The warm, soft clasp of tender hands,
And messages from distant lands,
Stronger, by far, than golden bands,
(The brightest spots on earth are such)—
Give thanks, my friend, today, with me.

For the wide, wondrous world of sound,
So strong to banish mortal fears,
And make a song of all the years,
A song of smiles and healing tears—
That many a listening soul has found,
For dissonance and harmony,

For each small flower's fragrant breath,
A balm for some lone heart that grieves
O'er wasted days and fallen leaves,
When friendship fails and love deceives—
For every phase of life and death,
Thanksgiving, praise and charity.

INTERLUDES.

ON CHRISTMAS EVE.

Mistletoe weeps as she hangs in the hall,
Mistletoe is weary ;
She longs for the fairest one of all,
Longs for you, my dearie.

She gave her life to nourish tears,
As the nights grew longer ;
Darkest nights and wildest fears
Make a strong heart stronger.

Does mistletoe weep for the love that is wed—
Closely joined—to sorrow ?
And can she hear the sentence read
Of some sad tomorrow ?

While she is brooding o'er the spot
Set apart for lovers,
Dire foreboding marreth not
Bliss that she discovers.

Mistletoe's grieving, now, with me ;
You, alone, she misses ;
Come, my dear one, let her see
How your lips make kisses.

INTERLUDES.

THE CLOSING YEAR.

With mistletoe and holly
Upon your bier,
Make room for youth and folly,
Thou sad old year.

You've felt the pains and sorrows
That mortals know;
We long for new tomorrows,
So bid you go.

We'll give the joys you've taught us
A last goodbye,
And failures that you've brought us
A passing sigh.

When sunshine gilds your coffin
With hope and cheer,
The world's hard heart will soften,
And shed a tear.

But a new year discerning
Beyond your tomb,
All mortals will be turning
From grief and gloom.

INTERLUDES.

They'll place a wreath of holly
Upon your grave,
And haste to greet the folly
That once you gave.

A BLIZZARD'S BIRTH.

A dense, gray fog like a dove's soft wing
Shrouded the wide, bare plain ;
A pale sun peered like a timorous thing,
Curtained by coming rain.

A searching wind from the sunny south
Swept past the sad sky's tears ;
A slow, sweet smile on a sensitive mouth,
Hopes that are changed to fears.

Great, feathery, fluttering, coaxing flakes
Fly through the shuddering air,
Then a biting sleet that willfully makes
Havoc of what is fair.

The fierce north wind and the east and west
Are wildly whirling by,
A treacherous, dangerous, unkind jest—
A blizzard in full cry.

INTERLUDES.

FULFILLMENT.

Maytime comes, however dreary
Cheerless winter days have been ;
Heart of mine, be thou not weary,
Summer's peace will come again.

Frost but nourishes the flowers,
Hovering o'er them while they sleep ;
Thoughtful, lonely, wretched hours
Visions bring to eyes that weep.

Sunset makes the sky seem bluer,
Life renewed each flower shares ;
Sorrow makes the strong heart truer
To the love a strong soul bears.

Blossoms gathered for the seeking
All the works of art surpass ;
Nature's hopes fulfilled are speaking
In each tiny blade of grass.

Universal strength is lending
Lessons with the passing years,
Universal good is sending
All the flowers, all the tears.

INTERLUDES.

REWARD.

The summit gained, we do not heed the steps
Up which we've climbed, although our feet be torn
And bleeding from their roughness. The cloud-
swept

Valleys and the sun-kissed hills absorb our souls ;
We breathe the higher, purer air, drink in the
view,

Unmindful of the storms and thorns that tossed
And pierced us 'ere we reached our goal. The bird
That's warm within his nest does not regret
His battle with the wind and rain that strove
To keep him from his leaf-embowered home ;
He smoothes his ruffled plumage, tucks his head
Beneath his wing, and rests beside his mate.
The ship that's safely gained her chosen port
Mourns not her sides all stained and battered
By the billows of the sea, but rides, serene,
At anchor. When gazing through the starry eyes
Of Heaven, catching glimpses of the vastness
Far beyond the limit of our finite world
We do not dread the blackness of the night.
When listening to the whirr of angel's wings
We are unconscious of the grief that brought
Us under them. It is not what we have

INTERLUDES.

That brings us happiness, so much as how
Our treasures come to us. Gifts from one we
Hate were valueless. The strength that God
Has given His children, strength to bear and do
Is priceless. Only in one way can mortals
Come into possession of that supernal peace
That lifts them high above the jeers, the hoots,
The senseless scornings of the many. I know
The one sure road is through the brave endurance
Of pain and fear and mighty, bitter sorrow.

LIFE.

Sorrow and sighing and sobbing and tears ;
Fruitless endeavor and weakness and fears ;
Doubts for the days and dread of the years.

Sunshine and smiling and love that is pure ;
Joys that are blissful and peace that is sure ;
Hopes for the future and strength to endure.

INTERLUDES.

COURAGE.

Tendrils of love I twine for thee,
And from thy pictured face
A living light shines out for me—
Thy steadfast spirit's grace.

Personal sorrow fades away,
And from eternity
Thy strength upholds my earthly stay
With love's sweet mystery.

Dear, in the depths my soul must go ;
Stand thou upon the brink ;
With thee so near, my heart, I know,
Will falter not nor shrink.

DEATH.

Silence and distance and horrors of night ;
Adorable beauties shut out from the sight ;
Coldness and absence and longing for light.

Safety—completion—and knowledge and rest ;
Soothing hands laid on a turbulent breast ;
Fullness of glory by mortals unguessed.

INTERLUDES.

A PETITION.

Valentine, Saint Valentine, listen to our prayer ;
Make our sun of joy to shine, banish our despair .
To you, who cured deformity many years ago,
We bring sad hearts, tearfully, our wounds to
show.

Heal them; Saint Valentine, martyred and strong,
Mend me this heart of mine broken for long.

Send us some sign, we pray, make us now to see
Some far-off flower-strewn way leading on to
thee.

Valentine, Saint Valentine, listen to our prayer ;
Give us love as pure as thine, make our spirits
fair.

REST.

The hazy Indian summer
Hangs o'er the distant hill ;
My soul drinks in the silence,
And all the world is still.

INTERLUDES.

Forgotten are the sorrows
That came with burning days,
And hushed to far, faint echoes
The censure and the praise.

The world is fair and peaceful,
And calmly beats a heart
Where all the storms of passion
And love have played their part.

Winter and spring and summer
With all their wealth pass by,
And lead to life's last autumn
Where restless longings die.

OVER-LIVING.

With all your steps to music,
And all your soul a song,
How can the day be dreary?
How can the night be long?

INTERLUDES.

Look up, dear heart, and listen
To purest harmony,
See fairest faces beaming
With spirit sympathy.

Let not your strong faith tremble,
Nor yield to dark despair;
Know there's a world of beauty
Above a world of care.

With one sweet hope to guide you,
You have a steadfast friend
To fill your soul with courage,
Whatever fate may send.

LOVE IS A SHADOW.

Love is a shadow fleeing ever
From those who seek his face;
Love is a dreamer waking never
From love's ethereal place.

Mortals sleep and bending o'er them
This shadow bids them come;
Let but love go on before them,
They follow blind and dumb.

INTERLUDES.

Shadows come in sunny weather ;
Love is of the day ;
Grief and darkness are together
When love is far away.

Love is a river flowing ever
Out toward the restless sea ;
Love is a shadow staying never
To rest on you and me.

DREAMLAND,

Far, far away toward the sunset
Is an island of the sea,
Where all is light and beauty.
And life and love are free.

The light is always golden,
And the beauties never pall ;
The air is full of music,
And love is over all.

When weary with the struggles
That come to you and me,
Let us haste away, together,
To this island of the sea.

INTERLUDES.

DEFEAT.

I saw a woman clambering up a height ;
Her form was slight ; too frail a thing she seemed
For such a burden as was hers to bear ;
Alone she journeyed, but her solitude
Was such as lends a gracious charm to all
Who gaze upon the face of one who dreams,
And, dreaming, tells of sights and sounds above
The common world that common mortals know.
Majestic strength shone grandly from her eyes ;
The lines about her mouth were drawn by pain
Yet showed her lips had trembled to great joy.
Right humbly did she kneel before a shrine
I could not see ; and, always, when she rose,
She seemed to see beyond the path that stretched
So far, so steep ; seemed to see the goal
Toward which she struggled ; then the darkness
came.

Each living soul must find within itself
The might to conquer, courage to sustain,
In an unequal battle with the world ;
And so I know she bravely won the place
She strove to gain ; and when I saw her stand
Upon the summit of her hoped-for joy,
Her triumph and her peace were glorious ;

INTERLUDES.

I heard her murmur: 'Now grant me to see
That nobler life for which I gave my own ;
I've borne the sorrow, give me my reward.'
And then there shone from out her face the
 light
That comes when hidden, baleful fires are burning
Within a tortured soul; I stood beside
Her then, and looked, with her, upon a wreck
Tossed out upon the shores of death by waves
That gather volume from a selfish grief
And are the waves of weakness and of sin.
And she, so strong to counsel, tender to
Console, had worshipped what we saw and made
Herself a living sacrifice for him.
I turned away from ruin so complete.

AN UNKNOWN WOMAN.

She died ; her strong heart ceased to beat,
 Stilled for all time was her clear voice,
Resting, at last, were weary feet
 And hands that made the weak rejoice.

INTERLUDES.

They who had shared her patient life,
Came, now, to look upon her, dead ;
Leaving, awhile, their earthly strife,
By common loss and sorrow led.

“Oh, mother mine,” a maiden cried,
Her tears flowed fast, “oh, mother mine,
In all this great, wide world beside
There is no love so sweet as thine.”

“She was my wife,” said one, “for years
She toiled with courage at my side ;
She brought me pleasures, soothed my fears,
She was my comfort and my pride.”

“ My one true friend,” one thought, “my own ;
With others I must needs be gay,
But, in rare hours with you alone,
I let my sorrow have its way .”

And some there were who could not come
To leave a flower on her grave ;
The deepest griefs are often dumb,
And memories are all they have.

All her small world had fondly clung
To attributes that she had shown
By hand or heart or eye or tongue,
But by no human was she known.

INTERLUDES.

LOVE'S SEARCH FOR LOVE.

Half hidden by an over-hanging flower
The God of love, divine and human, slumbered
There had he lain for many a happy hour,
Hours that sunbeams bright had numbered.
His quiver lay beside him on the sand,
His bow was clasped within his chubby
hand.

The waves had sung a soothing lullaby
When weary Cupid sought a nook to rest in ;
But now they called him by their warning cry
From Morpheus' arms, where dreams had blessed
him.

Bewildered, then, Love leaped into the foam
That made fair Aphrodite's baby-home.

In coral caves of her Ægean sea,
Queen Venus veiled her eyes from Roman light ;
Within their shelter Cupid came when he
Had passed all human harbors in his flight.
Close cuddled there upon his mother's breast
The cunning Cherub seemed a fitting guest.

"Eros, my pet, what frightened you?" she said,
"Your wings are ruffled and your bow is
battered ;

INTERLUDES.

The vagrant ringlets of your comely head,
Like wind-tossed, sun-kissed waves, are scattered."

She'd half a mind to chide him, but one look
Upon Love's face, and frowns her brow forsook.

Then sweet Love stilled his deep, quick breathing
That often follows his tumultuous haste,
When safety once again in smiles was wreathing
His lips, whose roses fear ofttimes lays waste,
He 'gan to count the arrows he had carried
While near the hearts of mortals he had tarried.

"Of winged shafts ten I had only this morning,
But one transfixed a haughty woman's heart,
Who'd given to vows and prayers but idle scorning.

Another made two life-barks drift apart"—

"But where," quoth Venus, "are the two
you tipped

With love that from Divinity you sipped?"

"The one," said he, "forms the eternal part
Of a sweet soul who dwelt among a race
So full of cruelty that death's cold dart
Left a glad smile upon his human face ;

INTERLUDES.

So glad that men beheld with wonder
The joy from which their sins held them
asunder."

"The other's—lost !" then Cupid cried in grief;
Poor Love is never very far from pain,
And Love is wise, though 'tis beyond belief
That he remembers all his loss and gain;
Find this he must—it was above all price,
Who held it ope'd the gate of Paradise.

Then Love set out upon an eager quest,
To find what he had lost on earth,
Vowing to give himself no moment's rest,
Nor lend himself to sorrow nor to mirth
Until he deemed he'd found the mislaid love,
And beauty's queen his judgment should
approve.

Blind Cupid's hearing is phenomenal,
So, oft he heard his own name spoken
In tones intense and tones uncommon—all
People had for him some sort of token:
But to divide the love divine from human—
His task was great, his study—man and
woman.

"My dearest love," one cried, (The God leaned
low) ;

INTERLUDES.

“ If I were sure that I should never see
Your face again, sweet, I should long to go
From earth, thenceforth a dreary waste to me.”

“ Degrees !” said Venus, when he told her,
“ My boy, you’ll wiser be when you are
older.”

Long time ago Love learned to read by feeling
And so he saw this sentence in a letter :

“ Dear, could I feel your soft arms stealing
About my neck, each earthly, blinding fetter
Would disappear; my soul but needs the
vision
Of your pure eyes to reach the fields Elys-
ian.”

“ When words like these,” the judge said, “ mortal
men

With human lips for mortal women fashion,
Be sure they mean an earthly heaven. When
They write of arms and eyes, be sure ’tis passion
That speaks through them.” (She sighed.)

“ And yet, forsooth,
The creatures really mean to tell the truth.”

Then Cupid paused beside a mother bending
Above a dainty, tiny, cradled form ;

“ My precious one, my joy shall be defending

INTERLUDES.

Your life with mine against each threatening
storm.

God help me keep your tender feet from
straying

Where snares are laid." She kissed the child
while praying.

"Now, this," quoth Love, "is more than mere af-
fection;

From selfishness and baseness it is free ;

If 'tis not heavenly love 'twill 'scape detection."

But Venus said : "Can you not plainly see

This is a part of mundane motherhood ?

'Tis of the earth, and yet 'tis very good."

Cupid grew sad, and quietly he crept

Within a heart that writhed in bitter sorrow.

The woman's lips were murmuring while she wept:

"I pray thee, hide from me the empty morrow !

May the dear one I love be sweetly sleeping,

Though I this weary watch with woe am
keeping.

"Father, protect him—guard him from my gloom—

Let me keep all the thorns—give him the flow-
ers—

Shut all our sadness in my living tomb !

Grant him but memories of our happy hours !"

INTERLUDES.

Such love is not all pure, but may become so.
Venus saw pride in it and told her son so.

Love hovered o'er a misty, moon-lit sea ;
Two drifted there who spake no word save this ;
" Love," breathed the woman, and " Love," answered he,
Her sweet lips quivered 'neath his lingering
kiss.

With Cupid perched upon their fairy boat
No wonder it was rapture there to float.

Within the circle of his strong arms' clasping
Her warm blood changed her cheeks from white
to red.

Love thought that he was very near to grasping
The arrow he had lost ; but Venus said,
" Your human wand'rings have misled you,
dear ;
Such love as that may not outlive one year."

When Love's long search has been so unsuccessful
ful

The blessed baby's apt to seem quite flurried ;
When for his wrongs there seems no sure redress,
full

Many a woe he wears will make him worried.

INTERLUDES.

But, scorched by sarcasm, or spent with
scorning,
Love spreads his wings and seeks some new
adorning.

So, starting out once more in sunny weather,
He stopped at sound of murmuring voices
And found a maiden and a man together,
And heard, in thrilling tones: "My heart rejoices
That I have won your love; 'tis sweet to me
And, always, for that gift, I'll worship thee."

And then he told her that she was an angel,
And Cupid, all too trusting, did not wonder ;
Although of heaven and earth he has the range,
all

Mortals weave a veil to keep him under.

But Venus gave this trophy quick rejection
Saying it was of love a dim reflection.

Hope is of Love a satisfying guest,

So he bethought him of a handsome face
Where lurking dimples oft had given him rest ;
But stern resolve had ta'en their wonted place.
Love is persistent and once come, he lingers;
And so he poised himself on this man's fin-
gers.

INTERLUDES.

And yet they wrote: "My darling, it is best;
Our destiny is cruel, hence I go,
And you with me must yield to fate's behest;
What this step costs me, dear, you'll never
know."

Cupid was loath to leave, but had to say,
"From what Gods love fear drives them not
away."

On a fair face the seal of death was set;
Love looked upon her 'ere she went away.
Those who could know her never could forget
Her soul—herself; the twilight of her day
Upon the earth had followed all too soon
And shed its shadow o'er her glorious noon.
A woman, like to her, yet stronger, tearless stood.
"My wounded dove!" she said, "my broken
flower!

You will have left life's treacherous flood
Far—far behind you 'ere another hour.
Earth's night is closing round you, but 'tis
fleet,
And deathless is the dawning you will
greet."

She uttered not one weak, protesting moan;

INTERLUDES.

She watched the spirit quit the beauteous dust,
Then, doomed to walk the earth alone,
She bowed her head and whispered, "God is
just."

Then Beauty gave sweet Love her crowning
kiss

And said, "The holy angels love like this."

BROKEN WIRES.

Strong are the sensitive, hidden wires
On which there travels secret thought,
Impelled by fierce or fond desires,
With human needs and longings fraught.

But coldness breaks these bonds in twain,
And other lives may come between ;
So light a thing is mortal pain,
Thus earthly chance and change are seen.

Yet he who sees the perfect plan
May give a ray of love divine
To seal anew the sundered span,
And send your soul, dear friend, to mine.

INTERLUDES.

THE GIFT OF HEALING.

‘When that blow falls,’ I said, ‘my heart will
break.’

And afterwards, I seemed to see myself
Grown strong and stern and cold, impervious
To griefs of those about me ; what I saw
Of sorrows in the lives that touched with mine
Should pass me by as if I saw it not.

No other soul had promise such as mine,
And it so wrecked by what had made it sure ;
And then I prayed, ‘Oh, God, in mercy, ward
The blow : for if it fall I shall grow hard.’

The stroke was not delayed ; my warm heart
plead

In vain ; then gave its human blood to stain
Relentless steel. And, now, all griefs assail
My soul as shadows that are cast against
Dense darkness ; all their power to force the
light

From out my life is gone, because my heart
Dwells in the gloom where no sun shines ; a
tomb

Shuts out the day and hides the flowers ; yet,
stunned,

In this retreat, my soul responds to woes

INTERLUDES.

That come to others. Griefs that once I passed
In silent scorn because they seemed so slight
Beside my own, I know do blight and sear.
Now, mourning ones do bring their burdened
 hearts
To me as to a sure relief; when, now,
I see the pure who writhe in anguish, I
Can see how sorrow strengthens them; and when
I look on sin, I see the suffering that
Is sure to follow it; and so my soul
Has found the way to pity all the world.
That death-blow to my selfish hopes broke down
What bars us from another's woe; the power
To help, comes when our lives have lost their
 glory.

EVER-BLOOMING.

The drifting snows are piled above
 The grave wherein was laid
A form that held the soul of love,
 By chastening sorrow made.

INTERLUDES.

Cold are the hands that clung to mine ;
Stilled is the clear, strong voice ;
Closed are the deep, dark eyes divine
That bade my heart rejoice.

Blasted are beauteous flowers of peace
That flourished in your care,
Flowers that promised me release
From bonds of dull despair.

And yet is granted unto me
In your sweet memory, dear,
A gift perennial from thee—
I've roses all the year.

SYMPATHY.

What were rich music with no ears to hear it ?
What were rare visions with no eyes to see ?
What, to my heart, unless you were near it,
Were all that the universe offers to me ?

Deep are the valleys and rugged the mountains,
Silent and dark are the waters of life ;
The rivers of sorrow are wide, while joy's fountains
Recede from the world and its wearisome strife.

INTERLUDES.

Love is to life as the sunshine to flowers ;
The touch of your hand is a safeguard for me
The years are as days and the days are as hours,
Made glad by the glory of sweet sympathy.

WINTER WINDS.

If winter winds were always here,
And leaves were always brown and sere,
Then I'd despair of you, my dear,
Whose love is summer.

If sunshine did not follow snow,
And blessings wait us where we go,
And healing come for every blow,
I'd lose my hope, dear.

If hearts were hurt by years of frost
And sorrow were not worth its cost,
Then I should count my heaven lost,
And with it, you, dear.

I know, though tossed by bitter pain,
My summertime will come again,
My tears are only April rain,
And you are true, dear.

INTERLUDES.

IF YOU WERE HERE AND THE WORLD AWAY.

If you were here and the world away,
I'd banish sorrow ;
I'd breathe the blessings of today,
Nor dread tomorrow.

If you were here and the world were lost—
My life's sun setting,
My soul would have no thought of cost,
No wild regretting.

If you were here and the world away,
My hopes would fold their wings
Like tired birds that spend their day
Dragged down by common things.

If you were here and the world shut out,
My heart would rest,
For well I know beyond all doubt
That you are best.

But you are gone and the world is here,
And all is gone—
All that my inmost heart holds dear—
And I'm alone.

INTERLUDES.

ABOVE THE EARTH.

Flying—flying—swift of wing,
May all good betide you ;
Human forethought could not bring
Power to lift and guide you.

Crying—crying—as you go,
Gayly on together ;
Floating, now, serene and slow.
Light of life and feather.

Dying—dying—reeling where
Once your flight was fearless ;
Hearts that throb in upper air
Suffer and are tearless,

THE CITY OF DULUTH.

Stanch and stout, she dared all weathers,
Braved the storm and bore the calm,
Watched lithe white-caps leap like feathers,
Heard old ocean's thunderous psalm.
Strong as bonds of love and truth,
Stately City of Duluth.

INTERLUDES.

On her decks pace human lovers,
Hearts less steadfast than her own ,
With a dream of rest she covers
Those whose sorrow walks alone.
Guardian of both age and youth,
Tender City of Duluth.

From the eager, fierce, fresh water
Many a load of precious freight
She has kept; but one day brought her
Barred from safety, to her fate.
Sunk from sight and small the ruth,
Silent City of Duluth.

LET ME BUT LOOK UPON YOUR FACE.

Let me but look upon your face
Just as my time shall come to die;
I shall lose the sight of time and place
With no thought of beauties that passed me by.

Let me but touch your hand with mine,
Just as my warm blood chills in death ;
Wild joy shall leap from my heart to thine,
And quicken and thrill e'en my parting breath.

INTERLUDES.

Let but your dear voice speak my name,
Just as all earthly sounds shall cease;
Discords of treachery, loss and gain
Shall be swallowed up in a psalm of peace.

Come to me, love, when the light grows dim
Of the last of the days I shall ever know,
Your nearness shall bless me and shut me in
From danger and sorrow wherever I go.

SOMETIME.

Out from the land of the used-to-be,
On to an unknown fate,
And my sad soul sings for I know that you
Will come to me, soon or late.

Not with the flush of the untried day,
Not with the blaze of noon,
But with evening's peace and perfect rest;
Oh, come to me, Love, come soon.

Only to know you are waiting there
Where past and future meet,
Shuts all of bitterness from my heart,
And makes all my sorrows sweet.

INTERLUDES.

Let my years be slow and my nights be dark,
Let days be drear and long,
I shall find you, dear, and harmony
Shall flood my soul with sacred song.

COULD I BUT COME TO YOU.

Could I but come to you whither you've gone,
Wonderful secrets to me were made known
Secrets my soul has sought,
Sorrows my life has brought,
All understood.

Could I but follow through infinite space
Up the vast height where you rest in your place,
Over the sun and stars,
Past all our worldly bars,
Free as the air.

Dearest, I'll come to you whither you've gone,
When the brief span of my earth-life is done ;
Learning my lessons here,
Casting out doubt and fear,
Help me to come.

INTERLUDES.

TO A DEER IN A PUBLIC LIBRARY.

Doomed to browse mid rusty volumes,
Wrested from thy place,
Doomed to leave the grassy hill-sides
This dull spot to grace ;

Here's my hand and here's my pity,
I'm, like thee, alone;
Though so many humans greet me,
Soul-kin I have none.

Though the rabble roar around me,
Through thy sightless eyes
By the power thy spirit gives me
Nature's splendors rise ;

Snow-crowned peaks and peaceful valleys,
Clear, refreshing streams—
With thy mate, thus re-created,
Moonlight o'er them gleams,
Captive thou to sternest keeper ;
Death hath firmly bound
All thy strong and supple sinews ;
Fate hast on thee frowned.

INTERLUDES.

Should thy slayer come to view thee,
May his keen eyes see
How his pleasure brought a cruel,
Bitter wrong to thee.

IT WAS SUMMER.

It was summer only a day ago,
Here, where now gleams this drifted snow ;
Summer, and flowers were blooming here
Where frost is sparkling, cold and clear ;
Gay birds were voicing nature's glee,
Where wild winds shriek, remorselessly.
Memories to cherish and hopes to cheer,
These are the gifts of the changing year.

It was only a day ago, your love
Shone through the darkness my life above ;
Once I was sure of your steadfast hand,
While now, alone, I must fall or stand.
Your voice was potent to guide and cheer ;
Now, but my own sorrow's cry I hear.
I pray that my soul may be good and brave—
A flower that blossoms on your grave.

INTERLUDES.

ANTI-BICYCLE.

Oh, give me the life of the bounding steed—
Let those who will love the senseless wheel—
For nothing is a cold machine
Compared with what can think and feel.
And all the night or all the day,
In stormy or in pleasant weather,
O'er ice and sleet or muddy roads,
My horse and I can be together.
Free as the air we both can breathe,
We climb the rugged hills and mountains,
Gayly we gallop through the vales.
And drink from nature's glorious fountains.
Give me the touch of the soft, warm nose,
And the loving neigh and the active brain,
The sensitive ears and the flying feet,
To guide and guard me through sun and rain.
Give me the curve of an arching neck,
With nervous strength and a clear, bright eye,
With the swift, strong play of slender limbs,
And let all the wheels in the world go by.

INTERLUDES.

PREDESTINATION.

The kitten played about the house
As young things will ;
There ventured forth a bright-eyed mouse
Its destiny to fulfill ;
There lurks within the tiger's breast
A fierce desire,
And so--ah ! well ! you know the rest
No hidden fire
Leaped out to save the tiny life ;
The deed was done ;
An atom worsted in the strife.
The cat played on.

You sighed and smiled and looked at me,
You played your part ;
Then passed on gayly, glad and free,
And broke my heart.
The fiery serpents of the sky
No human hand
Can guide or stay, but helplessly,
Do mortals stand

INTERLUDES.

Before the Power who governs all,
While love and hate
Point out the road for great and small—
The way of fate.

THE BETTER PART.

His supple fingers sweep the answ'ring keys ;
They thrill beneath his strong and tender touch ;
The rhythmic sound has in it magic, such
As conquered ancient Orpheus' rocks and trees ;
And still, his one ambition is to please
The multitude ; his thought is given so much
To outward form that from his sordid touch
The mystic life within forever flees.

Another, all unnoticed by the throng,
In darkness and in sorrow's silence heard
The music that his blundering, groping hand
Could only mar; and yet this soul was stirred
As were the listening Greeks by Sappho's song.
He could not sing but he could understand.

INTERLUDES.

AN EVENING BLESSING.

This day with its griefs and sorrows
Has said farewell to my world,
And this day's sun's last arrows
Have into my heart been hurled.

In this secluded valley
Where nature reigns supreme,
There comes to my soul a presence
That soothes like a blissful dream.

The birds' "goodnight" doth bring me
A promise of peace and rest ;
Though hard my lot and lonely,
There is One who knoweth best.

So strong, so sweet, so tender,
The eye of the evening star
Shines on 'till the gates of heaven
Swing, silently, ajar.

This day that has passed so harshly
Has brought me to quiet night ;
By climbing o'er pain and anguish,
My soul has reached this height.

INTERLUDES.

AN OPEN DOOR.

It seems to stand so wide, as if it were
Inviting me to come ! And yet, I know
That it is narrow, for, 'ere they could pass
Beyond those portals, friends of yours and mine
Have laid aside the sorrows that we've seen
Them bend beneath, and cumbrous cares have
ceased
To weigh them down because they could not take
Them past the Sentinel who guards the door :
Dear joys that were so pure and sweet their souls
Were lifted up and strengthened by their power,
They each have left behind them with the clasp
Of human hands and human lips caressing.
Each earthling claims that threshold as his own
For one brief instant ; all beyond is black
And still ; perhaps our sins and their regrets—
Our duties done and their rewards—will greet
Us on the other side ; perhaps our hopes
And haunting fears will there be rounded out—
Made grander—and perhaps our glimpse of time
Will dwindle into nothing in the light
Of broad eternity's unspanned spaces :
For whether thought or speech or sight or touch

INTERLUDES.

Is found within the darkness that we feel
No mortal surely knows, since never a voice
Comes back to us from out the silent land.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

The soft, September haze had kissed the hills ;
His day had closed mid gleams of sunset-glow,
And peace and promise such as poets know
Had blessed him here ; the myst'ry that fulfills
Earth's hopes and dreams and with its presence
stills

Earth's fears and pains, was waiting to bestow
Its silent rest ; in unseen grandeur flow
The waters that must bear us from life's ills.

Just as the glad, new morning beckoned him,
Sad earth's despair and wrongs grew weak and
dim ;

His sunrise streamed along the out-bound tide ;
God's strong, brave angels welcomed to their
side

One who from earth had drawn no mortal
stain,
But left behind a pure, prophetic gain.

INTERLUDES.

SUCCOR.

A rough, steep path stretched out before my feet,
'Twas hedged with cruel thorns that pierced and
 stung
My hands that groped about in search of help ;
The miry clay through which I'd struggled on
Clogging my footsteps, clung to me ; the wounds
Sins of my past had given me were opened ;
They clamored loudly and had drawn me back
Into the deep and dreadful slough from which
My soul's demands had raised me, had a voice
Not called from out the gloom by which the path
Was shrouded round. It said, "Come on! the light
Is just above you. I can see the crowns
Designed for you and me ; their gleaming thrills
And gives me courage ; the steps are plainer
Here, and smoother than the ones you're passing ;
The day begins to break around me ; airs
That are divine are wafted down to me ;
They fill me with new life. My friend, I beg,
Do not despair ! Go not back into the slums,
But follow me. I know the lurking dangers
That encompass you. I, too, have battled with
The world and conquered it. The victory

INTERLUDES.

Repays me richly." That assisting voice
Has been my strength and stay. The road is not
So hard to clamber over now. My wounds
Are healing and my heart grows light. I long
To see the angel's face; her voice is sweet ;
I know she's waiting for me where this path
Is ended. Oft I've felt in dreams, her hand
Clasped close about my own. Oft I forget
The pains and fears that harass me, because
The thought of her warm welcome comforts me.

WHEN DAYLIGHT DAWNS.

Softly dreaming, sweetly sleeping,
Seems the weary world of men,
While the silent sky is keeping
Watch until it wakes again.

Day is shunned by those who stumble
Through the devious ways of sin,
Truth and right, however humble,
Search the soul they enter in.

INTERLUDES.

For a while some shadows linger,
Shadows that the night has cast ;
Daylight points a warning finger
From the present to the past.

Cowards do not seek the morning—
Dare not face the sun's bright rays ;
Brave hearts greet the daylight's dawning,
With thanksgiving, prayer and praise.

MEMORIES.

The silent twilight deepens,
For time is fleet ;
But once there was a twilight
When love was sweet.

The walls that now surround me
Have heard your voice,
Attuned to make my pulses
And soul rejoice.

No sunshine and no sorrow
Can take away
The bliss that held and thrilled me
One sad, sweet day.

INTERLUDES.

In memories and twilight
I find the power
That made my life a poem
For one brief hour.

WHEN WE ARE OLD.

“When we are old,” she said, “when we are old,
Our lives shall flow together side by side ;
Together shall we watch eternity unfold,
Whatever ills our present paths betide.

Do not despair, dear; keep your brave heart strong ;
All of the sorrows that bind you shall be told
Here in my arms, secure from every wrong,
When we are old, my darling, when we're old.”

* * * * *

Resting in safety and far away from sin,
Where death's dark curtain can never be un-
rolled,
There shall I join you and gladly enter in
Where love awaits me, and never can grow old.

INTERLUDES.

CHANCE.

The wind blows good—the wind blows ill—
And happy hours are flying :
All that is past is cold and still
And fragrant flowers are dying.

The wind blows soft—the wind blows warm—
And we forget fate's chiding,
Nor hear the muttering of the storm
That unseen hands are guiding.

The winds are fierce and loud and strong—
Of life's despair they're shrieking ;
Drained are the clear, sweet springs of song,
And all earth's ties are breaking.

We cannot change the storm-wind's course,
Nor stay its awful power ;
We cannot shelter from death's force
Our dearest, fairest flower.

Creatures of chance we must remain,
The strongest wills but creeping,
Yet He who sends us peace and pain
Still has us in His keeping.

INTERLUDES.

UNCERTAINTY.

A mariner has reached a foreign shore ;
Refreshing breezes bring him flowers' breath,
He feels again firm earth beneath his feet,
The hum of insects and the song of birds
Give him glad greeting, while his eye delights
To gaze upon the undulating stretch
Of grass-clad hills and vales ; waters that lave
The unknown coast are fresh and pure ; their taste
Is welcomed by him ; many days at sea
Help one to feel what joyful landing means.
And yet he cannot know if from some height,
Far off, unseen by him, these sweet streams rush.
He cannot know if they are fed by springs
Too deep to be exhausted or defiled ;
He cannot know if they do help to drain
A continent's untraversed grandeur, or
A tiny island's puny pleasantness.
He rests beneath the shadowy trees, he basks
Upon the sunny sands ; he plucks the fruits
That grow within his reach ; some withered
flowers
Bear witness of his fickle, grasping hands.
And then, perchance, he sails away and leaves
Behind him, all untried, the mystery,

INTERLUDES.

The possible enchantments and, no doubt,
Some lurking dangers, too. In much this way
One soul grows conscious of another one.
The windows of the soul are clear and bright,
Its messenger is tuneful, low and sweet ;
The human that enwraps the soul is fair,
But limpid eyes are sometimes shallow, too,
And voices that are sweet can falsehoods utter ;
Frail, changing charms that yield themselves to
each

Who seeks them out may make weak pulses flutter ;
And so the sailor's apt to drift away
All unenlightened as to what he's found,
What shallows or what depths he leaves behind
He knows not, nor can ever know ; for each
Must be his own discoverer as to thoughts.
Perhaps all other minds may climb too high
Or grope too low to find rich gems that lie
Fast locked, without the one inspired key
That has the power to bring them to the light.
We treasure up some apt and pretty phrase,
Perhaps we press some kisses on the lips
Of one who pleases us, perhaps we leave

INTERLUDES.

A transient heartache when we go, perhaps
A lasting sorrow ; sad remembrances
May go with us ; it may be that in dreams
Of day or night, visions will come to us.
Imagination paints what's sometimes, more,
And sometimes less, than is reality.

ADORATION.

Flowers are fairest as they die,
So, my love, you perish,
Though I know, alas ! that I
Lesser loves shall cherish.

Breathe your latest, sweetest breath ;
I go on without you ;
You are going to your death
With all your charms about you.

Underneath your coffin-lid
Rests my heart's devotion,
Many a precious pearl is hid
By the storm-tossed ocean.

Time and place may now destroy
All that's left of living,
Friends upbraid and foes annoy
Passing heart-pangs giving.

PRELUDES.

Sleep, my dearest and my best,
Nothing, now, can maim you ;
Darkest days of mine are blest
For my soul can claim you.

RECOMPENSE.

While far in the eastern heavens
The eye of the evening star
Burns red from the fierce reflections
Of a world where mortals are,
The clouds hang thick and sombre
O'er the spot where my sweet day died,
And memory's voiceless phantoms
About her still grave glide.
Yet out from the depth of shadows
There flashes a sacred thought,
That brings to my soul more comfort
Than all that my joy hath wrought.

PRELUDES.

MESSENGERS.

The night is full of stars—
One star, alone, I see ;
This one of heaven's windows
Gives light enough for me.

Of all the forest's foliage,
One leaf came floating down ;
It brought to me sweet comfort ;
I knew it for my own.

Of all of nature's flowers
This one has given its breath
To be a balm for sorrow—
To save my hope from death.

O light ! O leaf ! O blossom !
My grief was dumb and blind ;
You gave it voice and vision
That only mourners find.

I found the world a riddle,
You made its meaning plain ;
My life was all in chaos,
You gave it form and name.



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