

POEMS.

THE CHARMER.

"Socrates.--'However, you and Simmias appear to me as if you wished to sift this subject more thoroughly, and to be afraid, like children, lest, on the soul's departure from the body, winds should blow it away.'

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"Upon this Cebes said, 'Endeavor to teach us better, Socrates. * * * Perhaps there is a childish spirit in our breast, that has such a dread. Let us endeavor to persuade him not to be afraid of death, as of hobgoblins.'

"'But you must charm him every day,' said Socrates, 'until you have quieted his fears.'

"'But whence, O Socrates,' he said, 'can we procure a skilful charmer for such a case, now you are about to leave us.'

"'Greece is wide, Cebes,' he replied: 'and in it surely there are skilful men, and there are also many barbarous nations, all of which you should search, seeking such a charmer, sparing neither

money nor toil, as there is nothing on which you can more reasonably spend your money."--(Last conversation of Socrates with his disciples, as narrated by Plato in the Phædo.)

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"We need that Charmer, for our hearts are sore
With longings for the things that may not be;
Faint for the friends that shall return no more;
Dark with distrust, or wrung with agony.

"What is this life? and what to us is death?
Whence came we? whither go? and where are those
Who, in a moment stricken from our side,
Passed to that land of shadow and repose?

"And are they all dust? and dust must we become?
Or are they living in some unknown clime?
Shall we regain them in that far-off home,
And live anew beyond the waves of time?

"O man divine! on thee our souls have hung;
Thou wert our teacher in these questions high;
But, ah, this day divides thee from our side,
And veils in dust thy kindly-guiding eye.

"Where is that Charmer whom thou bidst us seek?
On what far shores may his sweet voice be heard?
When shall these questions of our yearning souls
Be answered by the bright Eternal Word?"

So spake the youth of Athens, weeping round,
When Socrates lay calmly down to die;
So spake the sage, prophetic of the hour
When earth's fair morning star should rise on high.

They found Him not, those youths of soul divine,
Long seeking, wandering, watching on life's shore--
Reasoning, aspiring, yearning for the light,
Death came and found them--doubting as before.

But years passed on; and lo! the Charmer came--
Pure, simple, sweet, as comes the silver dew;
And the world knew him not--he walked alone,
Encircled only by his trusting few.

Like the Athenian sage rejected, scorned,
Betrayed, condemned, his day of doom drew nigh;
He drew his faithful few more closely round,
And told them that his hour was come to die.

"Let not your heart be troubled," then he said;

"My Father's house hath mansions large and fair;
I go before you to prepare your place;
I will return to take you with me there."

And since that hour the awful foe is charmed,
And life and death are glorified and fair.
Whither he went we know--the way we know--
And with firm step press on to meet him there.

PILGRIM'S SONG IN THE DESERT.

'Tis morning now--upon the eastern hills
Once more the sun lights up this cheerless scene;
But O, no morning in my Father's house
Is dawning now, for there no night hath been.

Ten thousand thousand now, on Zion's hills,
All robed in white, with palmy crowns, do stray,
While I, an exile, far from fatherland,
Still wandering, faint along the desert way.

O home! dear home! my own, my native home!
O Father, friends, when shall I look on you?
When shall these weary wanderings be o'er,
And I be gathered back to stray no more?

O thou, the brightness of whose gracious face
These weary, longing eyes have never seen,--
By whose dear thought, for whose beloved sake,
My course, through toil and tears, I daily take,--

I think of thee when the myrrh-dropping morn
Steps forth upon the purple eastern steep;
I think of thee in the fair eventide,

When the bright-sandalled stars their watches keep.

And trembling hope, and fainting, sorrowing love,
On thy dear word for comfort doth rely;
And clear-eyed Faith, with strong forereaching gaze,
Beholds thee here, unseen, but ever nigh.

Walking in white with thee, she dimly sees,
All beautiful, these lovely ones withdrawn,
With whom my heart went upward, as they rose,
Like morning stars, to light a coming dawn.

All sinless now, and crowned, and glorified,
Where'er thou movest move they still with thee,
As erst, in sweet communion by thy side,
Walked John and Mary in old Galilee.

But hush, my heart! 'Tis but a day or two
Divides thee from that bright, immortal shore.
Rise up! rise up! and gird thee for the race!
Fast fly the hours, and all will soon be o'er.

Thou hast the new name written in thy soul;
Thou hast the mystic stone he gives his own.
Thy soul, made one with him, shall feel no more
That she is walking on her path alone.

MARY AT THE CROSS.

"Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother."

O wondrous mother! Since the dawn of time
Was ever joy, was ever grief like thine?
O, highly favored in thy joy's deep flow,
And favored e'en in this, thy bitterest woe!

Poor was that home in simple Nazareth,
Where thou, fair growing, like some silent flower,
Last of a kingly line,--unknown and lowly,
O desert lily,--passed thy childhood's hour.

The world knew not the tender, serious maiden,
Who, through deep loving years so silent grew,
Filled with high thoughts and holy aspirations,
Which, save thy Father, God's, no eye might view.

And then it came, that message from the Highest,

Such as to woman ne'er before descended;
Th' almighty shadowing wings thy soul o'erspread,
And with thy life the Life of worlds was blended.

What visions, then, of future glory filled thee,
Mother of King and kingdom yet unknown--
Mother, fulfiller of all prophecy,
Which through dim ages wondering seers had shown!

Well did thy dark eye kindle, thy deep soul
Rise into billows, and thy heart rejoice;
Then woke the poet's fire, the prophet's song
Tuned with strange, burning words thy timid voice.

Then in dark contrast came the lowly manger,
The outcast shed, the tramp of brutal feet;
Again, behold earth's learned, and her lowly,
Sages and shepherds, prostrate at thy feet.

Then to the temple bearing, hark! again
What strange, conflicting tones of prophecy
Breathe o'er the Child, foreshadowing words of joy,
High triumph, and yet bitter agony.

O, highly favored thou, in many an hour
Spent in lone musing with thy wondrous Son,

When thou didst gaze into that glorious eye,
And hold that mighty hand within thy own.

Blessed through those thirty years, when in thy dwelling
He lived a God disguised, with unknown power,
And thou, his sole adorer,--his best love,--
Trusting, revering, waitedst for his hour.

Blessed in that hour, when called by opening heaven
With cloud, and voice, and the baptizing flame,
Up from the Jordan walked th' acknowledged stranger,
And awe-struck crowds grew silent as he came.

Blessed, when full of grace, with glory crowned,
He from both hands almighty favors poured,
And, though he had not where to lay his head,
Brought to his feet alike the slave and lord.

Crowds followed; thousands shouted, "Lo, our King!"
Fast beat thy heart; now, now the hour draws nigh:
Behold the crown--the throne! the nations bend.
Ah, no! fond mother, no! behold him die.

Now by that cross thou tak'st thy final station,
And shar'st the last dark trial of thy Son;
Not with weak tears or woman's lamentation,

But with high, silent anguish, like his own.

Hail, highly favored, even in this deep passion,
Hail, in this bitter anguish--thou art blest--
Blest in the holy power with him to suffer
Those deep death pangs that lead to higher rest.

All now is darkness; and in that deep stillness
The God-man wrestles with that mighty woe;
Hark to that cry, the rock of ages rending--
"Tis finished!" Mother, all is glory now!

By sufferings mighty as his mighty soul
Hath the Jehovah risen--forever blest;
And through all ages must his heart-beloved
Through the same baptism enter the same rest.

CHRISTIAN PEACE.

"Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man; thou shalt keep them secretly as in a pavilion from the strife of tongues."

When winds are raging o'er the upper ocean,
And billows wild contend with angry roar,
'Tis said, far down beneath the wild commotion,
That peaceful stillness reigneth evermore.

Far, far beneath, the noise of tempest dieth,
And silver waves chime ever peacefully,
And no rude storm, how fierce soe'er he flieth,
Disturbs the Sabbath of that deeper sea.

So to the heart that knows thy love, O Purest,
There is a temple, sacred evermore,
And all the babble of life's angry voices
Die in hushed stillness at its peaceful door.

Far, far away, the roar of passion dieth,
And loving thoughts rise calm and peacefully,
And no rude storm, how fierce soe'er he flieth,

Disturbs the soul that dwells, O Lord, in thee.

O, rest of rests! O, peace serene, eternal!

THOU ever livest; and thou changest never;

And in the secret of thy presence dwelleth

Fulness of joy--forever and forever.

ABIDE IN ME AND I IN YOU.

THE SOUL'S ANSWER.

That mystic word of thine, O sovereign Lord,
Is all too pure, too high, too deep for me;
Weary of striving, and with longing faint,
I breathe it back again in prayer to thee.

Abide in me, I pray, and I in thee;
From this good hour, O, leave me nevermore;
Then shall the discord cease, the wound be healed,
The lifelong bleeding of the soul be o'er.

Abide in me--o'ershadow by thy love
Each half-formed purpose and dark thought of sin;
Quench, e'er it rise, each selfish, low desire,
And keep my soul as thine, calm and divine.

As some rare perfume in a vase of clay
Pervades it with a fragrance not its own,
So, when thou dwellest in a mortal soul,
All heaven's own sweetness seems around it thrown.

The soul alone, like a neglected harp,

Grows out of tune, and needs a hand divine;
Dwell thou within it, tune, and touch the chords,
Till every note and string shall answer thine.

Abide in me; there have been moments pure
When I have seen thy face and felt thy power;
Then evil lost its grasp, and passion, hushed,
Owned the divine enchantment of the hour.

These were but seasons beautiful and rare;
"Abide in me,"--and they shall ever be;
Fulfil at once thy precept and my prayer--
Come and abide in me, and I in thee.

WHEN I AWAKE I AM STILL WITH THEE.

Still, still with thee, when purple morning breaketh,
When the bird waketh and the shadows flee;
Fairer than morning, lovelier than the daylight,
Dawns the sweet consciousness, I am with thee!

Alone with thee, amid the mystic shadows,
The solemn hush of nature newly born;
Alone with thee in breathless adoration,
In the calm dew and freshness of the morn.

As in the dawning o'er the waveless ocean
The image of the morning star doth rest,
So in this stillness thou beholdest only
Thine image in the waters of my breast.

Still, still with thee! as to each new-born morning
A fresh and solemn splendor still is given,
So doth this blessed consciousness, awaking,
Breathe, each day, nearness unto thee and heaven.

When sinks the soul, subdued by toil, to slumber,
Its closing eye looks up to thee in prayer,
Sweet the repose beneath thy wings o'ershading,

But sweeter still to wake and find thee there.

So shall it be at last, in that bright morning

When the soul waketh and life's shadows flee;

O, in that hour, fairer than daylight dawning,

Shall rise the glorious thought, I am with thee!

CHRIST'S VOICE IN THE SOUL.

"Come ye yourselves into a desert place and rest a while; for there were many coming and going, so that they had no time so much as to eat."

'Mid the mad whirl of life, its dim confusion,
Its jarring discords and poor vanity,
Breathing like music over troubled waters,
What gentle voice, O Christian, speaks to thee?

It is a stranger--not of earth or earthly;
By the serene, deep fulness of that eye,--
By the calm, pitying smile, the gesture lowly,--
It is thy Savior as he passeth by.

"Come, come," he saith, "into a desert place,
Thou who art weary of life's lower sphere;
Leave its low strifes, forget its babbling noise;
Come thou with me--all shall be bright and clear.

"Art thou bewildered by contesting voices,
Sick to thy soul of party noise and strife?
Come, leave it all, and seek that solitude

Where thou shalt learn of me a purer life.

"When far behind the world's great tumult dieth,
Thou shalt look back and wonder at its roar;
But its far voice shall seem to thee a dream,
Its power to vex thy holier life be o'er.

"There shalt thou learn the secret of a power,
Mine to bestow, which heals the ills of living;
To overcome by love, to live by prayer,
To conquer man's worst evils by forgiving."

THE END.