

**THE
CHRISTIAN YEAR**

**BY
THE REV. JOHN KEBLE.**

INTRODUCTION.

John Keble, two years older than his friend Dr. Arnold of Rugby, three years older than Thomas Carlyle, and nine years older than John Henry Newman, was born in 1792, at Fairford in Gloucestershire. He was born in his father's parsonage, and educated at home by his father till he went to college. His father then entered him at his own college at Oxford, Corpus Christi. Thoroughly trained, Keble obtained high reputation at his University for character and scholarship, and became a Fellow of Oriel. After some years he gave up work in the University, though he could not divest himself of a large influence there for good, returned home to his old father, who required help in his ministry, and undertook for him the duty of two little curacies. The father lived on to the age of ninety. John Keble's love for God and his devotion to the Church had often been expressed in verse. On days which the Church specially celebrated, he had from time to time written short poems to utter from the heart his own devout sense of their spiritual use and meaning. As the number of these poems increased, the desire rose to follow in like manner the whole course of the Christian Year as it was marked for the people by the sequence of church services, which had been arranged to bring in due order before the minds of Christian worshippers all the foundations of their faith, and all the elements of a religious life. A book of poems, breathing faith and worship at all points, and in all attitudes of heavenward contemplation, within the circle of the Christian Year, would, he hoped, restore in many minds to many a benumbed form life and energy.

In 1825, while the poems of the Christian Year were gradually being shaped into a single work, a brother became able to relieve John Keble in that pious care for which his father had drawn him away from a great University career, and he then went to a curacy at Hursley, four or five miles from Winchester.

In 1827—when its author's age was thirty-five—"The Christian Year" was published. Like George Herbert, whose equal he was in piety though not in power, Keble was joined to the Church in fullest sympathy with all its ordinances, and desired to quicken worship by putting into each part of the ritual a life that might pass into and raise the life of man. The spirit of true religion, with a power beyond that of any earthly feuds and controversies, binds together those in whom it really lives. Setting aside all smaller questions of the relative value of different earthly means to the attainment of a life hidden with Christ in God, Christians of all forms who are one in spirit have found help from "John Keble's Christian Year," and think of its guileless author with kindly affection. Within five-and-twenty years of its publication, a hundred thousand copies had

been sold. The book is still diffused so widely, in editions of all forms, that it may yet go on, until the circle of the years shall be no more, living and making live.

Four years after "The Christian Year" appeared, Keble was appointed (in 1831) to the usual five years' tenure of the Poetry Professorship at Oxford. Two years after he had been appointed Poetry Professor, he preached the Assize Sermon, and took for his theme "National Apostasy." John Henry Newman, who had obtained his Fellowship at Oriel some years before the publication of "The Christian Year," and was twenty-six years old when it appeared, received from it a strong impulse towards the endeavour to revive the spirit of the Church by restoring life and soul to all her ordinances, and even to the minutest detail of her ritual. The deep respect felt for the author of "The Christian Year" gave power to the sermon of 1833 upon National Apostasy, and made it the starting-point of the Oxford movement known as Tractarian, from the issue of tracts through which its promoters sought to stir life in the clergy and the people; known also as Puseyite because it received help at the end of the year 1833 from Dr. Pusey, who was of like age with J. H. Newman, and then Regius Professor of Hebrew. There was a danger, which some then foresaw, in the nature of this endeavour to put life into the Church; but we all now recognise the purity of Christian zeal that prompted the attempt to make dead forms of ceremonial glow again with spiritual fire, and serve as aids to the recovery of light and warmth in our devotions.

It was in 1833 that Keble, by one earnest sermon, with a pure life at the back of it, and this book that had prepared the way, gave the direct impulse to an Oxford movement for the reformation of the Church. The movement then began. But Keble went back to his curacy at Hursley. Two years afterwards the curate became vicar, and then Keble married. His after-life continued innocent and happy. He and his wife died within two months of each other, in the same year, 1866. He had taken part with his friends at Oxford by writing five of their Tracts, publishing a few sermons that laboured towards the same end, and editing a "Library of the Fathers." In 1847 he produced another volume of poems, "Lyra Innocentium," which associated doctrines of the Church with the lives of children, whom he loved, though his own marriage was childless.

The power of Keble's verse lies in its truth. A faithful and pure nature, strong in home affections, full of love and reverence for all that is of heaven in our earthly lot, strives for the full consecration of man's life with love and faith. There is no rare gift of genius. Keble is not in subtlety of thought or of expression another George Herbert, or another Henry Vaughan. But his voice is not the less in

unison with theirs, for every note is true, and wins us by its purity. His also are melodies of the everlasting chime.

“And be ye sure that Love can bless
E’en in this crowded loneliness,
Where ever moving myriads seem to say,
Go—thou art nought to us, nor we to thee—away!”

“There are in this loud stunning tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
Of the everlasting chime;
Who carry music in their heart
Through dusky lane and wrangling mart,
Plying their daily task with busier feet,
Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat.”

With a peal, then, of such music let us ring in the New Year for our Library; and for our lives.

January 1, 1887.

H. M.

DEDICATION.

When in my silent solitary walk,
I sought a strain not all unworthy Thee,
My heart, still ringing with wild worldly talk,
Gave forth no note of holier minstrelsy.

Prayer is the secret, to myself I said,
Strong supplication must call down the charm,
And thus with untuned heart I feebly prayed,
Knocking at Heaven’s gate with earth-palsied arm.

Fountain of Harmony! Thou Spirit blest,
By whom the troubled waves of earthly sound
Are gathered into order, such as best
Some high-souled bard in his enchanted round

May compass, Power divine! Oh, spread Thy wing,
Thy dovelike wing that makes confusion fly,
Over my dark, void spirit, summoning
New worlds of music, strains that may not die.

Oh, happiest who before thine altar wait,
With pure hands ever holding up on high
The guiding Star of all who seek Thy gate,
The undying lamp of heavenly Poesy.

Too weak, too wavering, for such holy task
Is my frail arm, O Lord; but I would fain
Track to its source the brightness, I would bask
In the clear ray that makes Thy pathway plain.

I dare not hope with David's harp to chase
The evil spirit from the troubled breast;
Enough for me if I can find such grace
To listen to the strain, and be at rest.

THE CHRISTIAN YEAR.

Morning.

His compassions fail not. They are new every morning.

Hues of the rich unfolding morn,
That, ere the glorious sun be born,
By some soft touch invisible
Around his path are taught to swell;—

Thou rustling breeze so fresh and gay,
That dancest forth at opening day,
And brushing by with joyous wing,
Wakenest each little leaf to sing;—

Ye fragrant clouds of dewy steam,
By which deep grove and tangled stream
Pay, for soft rains in season given,
Their tribute to the genial heaven;—

Why waste your treasures of delight
Upon our thankless, joyless sight;
Who day by day to sin awake,
Seldom of Heaven and you partake?

Oh, timely happy, timely wise,
Hearts that with rising morn arise!
Eyes that the beam celestial view,
Which evermore makes all things new!

New every morning is the love
Our wakening and uprising prove;
Through sleep and darkness safely brought,
Restored to life, and power, and thought.

New mercies, each returning day,
Hover around us while we pray;
New perils past, new sins forgiven,
New thoughts of God, new hopes of Heaven.

If on our daily course our mind
Be set to hallow all we find,
New treasures still, of countless price,
God will provide for sacrifice.

Old friends, old scenes will lovelier be,
As more of Heaven in each we see:
Some softening gleam of love and prayer
Shall dawn on every cross and care.

As for some dear familiar strain
Untired we ask, and ask again,
Ever, in its melodious store,
Finding a spell unheard before;

Such is the bliss of souls serene,
When they have sworn, and stedfast mean,
Counting the cost, in all t' espy
Their God, in all themselves deny.

Oh, could we learn that sacrifice,
What lights would all around us rise!

How would our hearts with wisdom talk
Along Life's dullest, dreariest walk!

We need not bid, for cloistered cell,
Our neighbour and our work farewell,
Nor strive to wind ourselves too high
For sinful man beneath the sky:

The trivial round, the common task,
Would furnish all we ought to ask;
Room to deny ourselves; a road
To bring us daily nearer God.

Seek we no more; content with these,
Let present Rapture, Comfort, Ease,
As Heaven shall bid them, come and go:—
The secret this of Rest below.

Only, O Lord, in Thy dear love
Fit us for perfect Rest above;
And help us, this and every day,
To live more nearly as we pray.

Evening.

Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.—*St. Luke xxiv.*
29.

'Tis gone, that bright and orbèd blaze,
Fast fading from our wistful gaze;
You mantling cloud has hid from sight
The last faint pulse of quivering light.

In darkness and in weariness
The traveller on his way must press,
No gleam to watch on tree or tower,
Whiling away the lonesome hour.

Sun of my soul! Thou Saviour dear,
It is not night if Thou be near:
Oh, may no earth-born cloud arise
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes!

When round Thy wondrous works below
My searching rapturous glance I throw,
Tracing out Wisdom, Power and Love,
In earth or sky, in stream or grove;—

Or by the light Thy words disclose
Watch Time's full river as it flows,
Scanning Thy gracious Providence,
Where not too deep for mortal sense:—

When with dear friends sweet talk I hold,
And all the flowers of life unfold;
Let not my heart within me burn,
Except in all I Thee discern.

When the soft dews of kindly sleep
My wearied eyelids gently steep,
Be my last thought, how sweet to rest
For ever on my Saviour's breast.

Abide with me from morn till eve,
For without Thee I cannot live:
Abide with me when night is nigh,
For without Thee I dare not die.

Thou Framer of the light and dark,
Steer through the tempest Thine own ark:
Amid the howling wintry sea
We are in port if we have Thee.

The Rulers of this Christian land,
'Twixt Thee and us ordained to stand,—
Guide Thou their course, O Lord, aright,
Let all do all as in Thy sight.

Oh! by Thine own sad burthen, borne
So meekly up the hill of scorn,
Teach Thou Thy Priests their daily cross
To bear as Thine, nor count it loss!

If some poor wandering child of Thine
Have spurned to-day the voice divine,

Now, Lord, the gracious work begin;
Let him no more lie down in sin.

Watch by the sick: enrich the poor
With blessings from Thy boundless store:
Be every mourner's sleep to-night,
Like infants' slumbers, pure and light.

Come near and bless us when we wake,
Ere through the world our way we take;
Till in the ocean of Thy love
We lose ourselves, in Heaven above.

Advent Sunday.

Now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.—*Romans* xiii 11.

Awake—again the Gospel-trump is blown—
From year to year it swells with louder tone,
 From year to year the signs of wrath
 Are gathering round the Judge's path,
Strange words fulfilled, and mighty works achieved,
And truth in all the world both hated and believed.

Awake! why linger in the gorgeous town,
Sworn liegemen of the Cross and thorny crown?
 Up from your beds of sloth for shame,
 Speed to the eastern mount like flame,
Nor wonder, should ye find your King in tears,
E'en with the loud Hosanna ringing in His ears.

Alas! no need to rouse them: long ago
They are gone forth to swell Messiah's show:
 With glittering robes and garlands sweet
 They strew the ground beneath His feet:
All but your hearts are there—O doomed to prove
The arrows winged in Heaven for Faith that will not love!

Meanwhile He passes through th' adoring crowd,
Calm as the march of some majestic cloud,
 That o'er wild scenes of ocean-war

Holds its still course in Heaven afar:
E'en so, heart-searching Lord, as years roll on,
Thou keepest silent watch from Thy triumphal throne:

E'en so, the world is thronging round to gaze
On the dread vision of the latter days,
 Constrained to own Thee, but in heart
 Prepared to take Barabbas' part:
"Hosanna" now, to-morrow "Crucify,"
The changeful burden still of their rude lawless cry.

Yet in that throng of selfish hearts untrue
Thy sad eye rests upon Thy faithful few,
 Children and childlike souls are there,
 Blind Bartimeus' humble prayer,
And Lazarus wakened from his four days' sleep,
Enduring life again, that Passover to keep.

And fast beside the olive-bordered way
Stands the blessed home where Jesus deigned to stay,
 The peaceful home, to Zeal sincere
 And heavenly Contemplation dear,
Where Martha loved to wait with reverence meet,
And wiser Mary lingered at Thy sacred feet.

Still through decaying ages as they glide,
Thou lov'st Thy chosen remnant to divide;
 Sprinkled along the waste of years
 Full many a soft green isle appears:
Pause where we may upon the desert road,
Some shelter is in sight, some sacred safe abode.

When withering blasts of error swept the sky,
And Love's last flower seemed fain to droop and die,
 How sweet, how lone the ray benign
 On sheltered nooks of Palestine!
Then to his early home did Love repair,
And cheered his sickening heart with his own native air.

Years roll away: again the tide of crime
Has swept Thy footsteps from the favoured clime
 Where shall the holy Cross find rest?

On a crowned monarch's mailèd breast:
Like some bright angel o'er the darkling scene,
Through court and camp he holds his heavenward course serene.

A fouler vision yet; an age of light,
Light without love, glares on the aching sight:
Oh, who can tell how calm and sweet,
Meek Walton, shows thy green retreat,
When wearied with the tale thy times disclose,
The eye first finds thee out in thy secure repose?

Thus bad and good their several warnings give
Of His approach, whom none may see and live:
Faith's ear, with awful still delight,
Counts them like minute-bells at night.
Keeping the heart awake till dawn of morn,
While to her funeral pile this aged world is borne.

But what are Heaven's alarms to hearts that cower
In wilful slumber, deepening every hour,
That draw their curtains closer round,
The nearer swells the trumpet's sound?
Lord, ere our trembling lamps sink down and die,
Touch us with chastening hand, and make us feel Thee nigh.

Third Sunday in Advent.

What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? . . .
But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than
a prophet. *St. Matthew xi.7, 9.*

What went ye out to see
O'er the rude sandy lea,
Where stately Jordan flows by many a palm,
Or where Gennesaret's wave
Delights the flowers to lave,
That o'er her western slope breathe airs of balm.

All through the summer night,
Those blossoms red and bright
Spread their soft breasts, unheeding, to the breeze,
Like hermits watching still

Around the sacred hill,
Where erst our Saviour watched upon His knees.

The Paschal moon above
Seems like a saint to rove,
Left shining in the world with Christ alone;
Below, the lake's still face
Sleeps sweetly in th' embrace
Of mountains terrac'd high with mossy stone.

Here may we sit, and dream
Over the heavenly theme,
Till to our soul the former days return;
Till on the grassy bed,
Where thousands once He fed,
The world's incarnate Maker we discern.

O cross no more the main,
Wandering so will and vain,
To count the reeds that tremble in the wind,
On listless dalliance bound,
Like children gazing round,
Who on God's works no seal of Godhead find.

Bask not in courtly bower,
Or sun-bright hall of power,
Pass Babel quick, and seek the holy land—
From robes of Tyrian dye
Turn with undazzled eye
To Bethlehem's glade, or Carmel's haunted strand.

Or choose thee out a cell
In Kedron's storied dell,
Beside the springs of Love, that never die;
Among the olives kneel
The chill night-blast to feel,
And watch the Moon that saw thy Master's agony.

Then rise at dawn of day,
And wind thy thoughtful way,
Where rested once the Temple's stately shade,
With due feet tracing round

The city's northern bound,
To th' other holy garden, where the Lord was laid.

Who thus alternate see
His death and victory,
Rising and falling as on angel wings,
They, while they seem to roam,
Draw daily nearer home,
Their heart untravell'd still adores the King of kings.

Or, if at home they stay,
Yet are they, day by day,
In spirit journeying through the glorious land,
Not for light Fancy's reed,
Nor Honour's purple meed,
Nor gifted Prophet's lore, nor Science' wondrous wand.

But more than Prophet, more
Than Angels can adore
With face unveiled, is He they go to seek:
Blessèd be God, Whose grace
Shows Him in every place
To homeliest hearts of pilgrims pure and meek.

The Circumcision of Christ.

In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands.
Coloss. ii. 11.

The year begins with Thee,
And Thou beginn'st with woe,
To let the world of sinners see
That blood for sin must flow.

Thine infant cries, O Lord,
Thy tears upon the breast,
Are not enough—the legal sword
Must do its stern behest.

Like sacrificial wine
Poured on a victim's head

Are those few precious drops of Thine,
Now first to offering led.

They are the pledge and seal
Of Christ's unswerving faith
Given to His Sire, our souls to heal,
Although it cost His death.

They to His Church of old,
To each true Jewish heart,
In Gospel graces manifold
Communion blest impart.

Now of Thy love we deem
As of an ocean vast,
Mounting in tides against the stream
Of ages gone and past.

Both theirs and ours Thou art,
As we and they are Thine;
Kings, Prophets, Patriarchs—all have part
Along the sacred line.

By blood and water too
God's mark is set on Thee,
That in Thee every faithful view
Both covenants might see.

O bond of union, dear
And strong as is Thy grace!
Saints, parted by a thousand year,
May thus in heart embrace.

Is there a mourner true,
Who fallen on faithless days,
Sighs for the heart-consoling view
Of those Heaven deigned to praise?

In spirit may'st thou meet
With faithful Abraham here,
Whom soon in Eden thou shalt greet
A nursing Father dear.

Would'st thou a poet be?
And would thy dull heart fain
Borrow of Israel's minstrelsy
One high enraptured strain?

Come here thy soul to tune,
Here set thy feeble chant,
Here, if at all beneath the moon,
Is holy David's haunt.

Art thou a child of tears,
Cradled in care and woe?
And seems it hard, thy vernal years
Few vernal joys can show?

And fall the sounds of mirth
Sad on thy lonely heart,
From all the hopes and charms of earth
Untimely called to part?

Look here, and hold thy peace:
The Giver of all good
E'en from the womb takes no release
From suffering, tears, and blood.

If thou would'st reap in love,
First sow in holy fear:
So life a winter's morn may prove
To a bright endless year.

Second Sunday after Christmas.

When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth
for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.
Isaiah, xli. 17.

And wilt thou hear the fevered heart
To Thee in silence cry?
And as th' inconstant wildfires dart
Out of the restless eye,
Wilt thou forgive the wayward though
By kindly woes yet half untaught

A Saviours right, so dearly bought,
That Hope should never die?

Thou wilt: for many a languid prayer
Has reached Thee from the wild,
Since the lorn mother, wandering there,
Cast down her fainting child,
Then stole apart to weep and die,
Nor knew an angel form was nigh,
To show soft waters gushing by,
And dewy shadows mild.

Thou wilt—for Thou art Israel's God,
And Thine unwearied arm
Is ready yet with Moses' rod,
The hidden rill to charm
Out of the dry unfathomed deep
Of sands, that lie in lifeless sleep,
Save when the scorching whirlwinds heap
Their waves in rude alarm.

These moments of wild wrath are Thine—
Thine, too, the drearier hour
When o'er th' horizon's silent line
Fond hopeless fancies cower,
And on the traveller's listless way
Rises and sets th' unchanging day,
No cloud in heaven to slake its ray,
On earth no sheltering bower.

Thou wilt be there, and not forsake,
To turn the bitter pool
Into a bright and breezy lake,
This throbbing brow to cool:
Till loft awhile with Thee alone
The wilful heart be fain to own
That He, by whom our bright hours shone,
Our darkness best may rule.

The scent of water far away
Upon the breeze is flung;
The desert pelican to-day

Securely leaves her young,
Reproving thankless man, who fears
To journey on a few lone years,
Where on the sand Thy step appears,
Thy crown in sight is hung.

Thou, who did sit on Jacob's well
The weary hour of noon,
The languid pulses Thou canst tell,
The nerveless spirit tune.
Thou from Whose cross in anguish burst
The cry that owned Thy dying thirst,
To Thee we turn, our Last and First,
Our Sun and soothing Moon.

From darkness, here, and dreariness
We ask not full repose,
Only be Thou at hand, to bless
Our trial hour of woes.
Is not the pilgrim's toil o'erpaid
By the clear rill and palmy shade?
And see we not, up Earth's dark glade,
The gate of Heaven unclosed?

Second Sunday after Epiphany.

Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine: and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good wine until now. *St. John* ii. 10.

The heart of childhood is all mirth:
We frolic to and fro
As free and blithe, as if on earth
Were no such thing as woe.

But if indeed with reckless faith
We trust the flattering voice,
Which whispers, "Take thy fill ere death,
Indulge thee and rejoice;"

Too surely, every setting day,
Some lost delight we mourn;

The flowers all die along our way
Till we, too, die forlorn.

Such is the world's gay garish feast,
In her first charming bowl
Infusing all that fires the breast,
And cheats the unstable soul.

And still, as loud the revel swells,
The fevered pulse beats higher,
Till the seared taste from foulest wells
Is fain to slake its fire.

Unlike the feast of heavenly love
Spread at the Saviour's word
For souls that hear His call, and prove
Meet for His bridal board.

Why should we fear, youth's draught of joy
If pure would sparkle less?
Why should the cup the sooner cloy,
Which God hath deigned to bless?

For, is it Hope, that thrills so keen
Along each bounding vein,
Still whispering glorious things unseen?—
Faith makes the vision plain.

The world would kill her soon: but Faith
Her daring dreams will cherish,
Speeding her gaze o'er time and death
To realms where nought can perish.

Or is it Love, the dear delight
Of hearts that know no guile,
That all around see all things bright
With their own magic smile?

The silent joy that sinks so deep,
Of confidence and rest,
Lulled in a father's arms to sleep,
Clasped to a mother's breast?

Who, but a Christian, through all life
That blessing may prolong?
Who, through the world's sad day of strife,
Still chant his morning song?

Fathers may hate us or forsake,
God's foundlings then are we:
Mother on child no pity take,
But we shall still have Thee.

We may look home, and seek in vain
A fond fraternal heart,
But Christ hath given His promise plain
To do a Brother's part.

Nor shall dull age, as worldlings say,
The heavenward flame annoy:
The Saviour cannot pass away,
And with Him lives our joy.

Ever the richest, tenderest glow
Sets round the autumnal sun—
But there sight fails: no heart may know
The bliss when life is done.

Such is Thy banquet, dearest Lord;
O give us grace, to cast
Our lot with Thine, to trust Thy word,
And keep our best till last.

Sixth Sunday after Epiphany.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as he is. *St. John* iii. 2.

There are, who darkling and alone,
Would wish the weary night were gone,
Though dawning morn should only show
The secret of their unknown woe:
Who pray for sharpest throbs of pain
To ease them of doubt's galling chain:

“Only disperse the cloud,” they cry,
“And if our fate be death, give light and let us die.”

Unwise I deem them, Lord, unmeet
To profit by Thy chastenings sweet,
For Thou wouldst have us linger still
Upon the verge of good or ill.
That on Thy guiding hand unseen
Our undivided hearts may lean,
And this our frail and foundering bark
Glide in the narrow wake of Thy belovèd ark.

'Tis so in war—the champion true
Loves victory more when dim in view
He sees her glories gild afar
The dusky edge of stubborn war,
Than if the untrodden bloodless field
The harvest of her laurels yield;
Let not my bark in calm abide,
But win her fearless way against the chafing tide.

'Tis so in love—the faithful heart
From her dim vision would not part,
When first to her fond gaze is given
That purest spot in Fancy's heaven,
For all the gorgeous sky beside,
Though pledged her own and sure to abide:
Dearer than every past noon-day
That twilight gleam to her, though faint and far away.

So have I seen some tender flower
Prized above all the vernal bower,
Sheltered beneath the coolest shade,
Embosomed in the greenest glade,
So frail a gem, it scarce may bear
The playful touch of evening air;
When hardier grown we love it less,
And trust it from our sight, not needing our caress.

And wherefore is the sweet spring-tide
Worth all the changeful year beside?
The last-born babe, why lies its part

Deep in the mother's inmost heart?
But that the Lord and Source of love
Would have His weakest ever prove
Our tenderest care—and most of all
Our frail immortal souls, His work and Satan's thrall.

So be it, Lord; I know it best,
Though not as yet this wayward breast
Beat quite in answer to Thy voice,
Yet surely I have made my choice;
I know not yet the promised bliss,
Know not if I shall win or miss;
So doubting, rather let me die,
Than close with aught beside, to last eternally.

What is the Heaven we idly dream?
The self-deceiver's dreary theme,
A cloudless sun that softly shines,
Bright maidens and unfailing vines,
The warrior's pride, the hunter's mirth,
Poor fragments all of this low earth:
Such as in sleep would hardly soothe
A soul that once had tasted of immortal Truth.

What is the Heaven our God bestows?
No Prophet yet, no Angel knows;
Was never yet created eye
Could see across Eternity;
Not seraph's wing for ever soaring
Can pass the flight of souls adoring,
That nearer still and nearer grow
To the unapproachèd Lord, once made for them so low.

Unseen, unfelt their earthly growth,
And self-accused of sin and sloth,
They live and die; their names decay,
Their fragrance passes quite away;
Like violets in the freezing blast
No vernal steam around they cast.—
But they shall flourish from the tomb,
The breath of God shall wake them into odorous bloom.

Then on the incarnate Saviour's breast,
The fount of sweetness, they shall rest,
Their spirits every hour imbued
More deeply with His precious blood.
But peace—still voice and closed eye
Suit best with hearts beyond the sky,
Hearts training in their low abode,
Daily to lose themselves in hope to find their God.

Septuagesima Sunday.

The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen,
being understood by the things that are made. *Romans i. 20.*

There is a book, who runs may read,
Which heavenly truth imparts,
And all the lore its scholars need,
Pure eyes and Christian hearts.

The works of God above, below,
Within us and around,
Are pages in that book, to show
How God Himself is found.

The glorious sky embracing all
Is like the Maker's love,
Wherewith encompassed, great and small
In peace and order move.

The Moon above, the Church below,
A wondrous race they run,
But all their radiance, all their glow,
Each borrows of its Sun.

The Saviour lends the light and heat
That crowns His holy hill;
The saints, like stars, around His seat
Perform their courses still.

The saints above are stars in heaven—
What are the saints on earth?

Like trees they stand whom God has given,
Our Eden's happy birth.

Faith is their fixed unswerving root,
Hope their unfading flower,
Fair deeds of charity their fruit,
The glory of their bower.

The dew of heaven is like Thy grace,
It steals in silence down;
But where it lights, this favoured place
By richest fruits is known.

One Name above all glorious names
With its ten thousand tongues
The everlasting sea proclaims.
Echoing angelic songs.

The raging Fire, the roaring Wind,
Thy boundless power display;
But in the gentler breeze we find
Thy Spirit's viewless way.

Two worlds are ours: 'tis only Sin
Forbids us to descry
The mystic heaven and earth within,
Plain as the sea and sky.

Thou, who hast given me eyes to see
And love this sight so fair,
Give me a heart to find out Thee,
And read Thee everywhere.

Sexagesima Sunday.

So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden
Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the
tree of life. *Genesis* iii. 24; compare chap. vi.

Foe of mankind! too bold thy race:
Thou runn'st at such a reckless pace,
Thine own dire work thou surely wilt confound:

'Twas but one little drop of sin
We saw this morning enter in,
And lo! at eventide the world is drowned.

See here the fruit of wandering eyes,
Of worldly longings to be wise,
Of Passion dwelling on forbidden sweets:
Ye lawless glances, freely rove;
Ruin below and wrath above
Are all that now the wildering fancy meets.

Lord, when in some deep garden glade,
Of Thee and of myself afraid,
From thoughts like these among the bowers I hide,
Nearest and loudest then of all
I seem to hear the Judge's call:—
“Where art thou, fallen man? come forth, and be thou tried.”

Trembling before Thee as I stand,
Where'er I gaze on either hand
The sentence is gone forth, the ground is cursed:
Yet mingled with the penal shower
Some drops of balm in every bower
Steal down like April dews, that softest fall and first.

If filial and maternal love
Memorial of our guilt must prove,
If sinful babes in sorrow must be born,
Yet, to assuage her sharpest throes,
The faithful mother surely knows,
This was the way Thou can'st to save the world forlorn.

If blessèd wedlock may not bless
Without some tinge of bitterness
To dash her cup of joy, since Eden lost,
Chaining to earth with strong desire
Hearts that would highest else aspire,
And o'er the tenderer sex usurping ever most;

Yet by the light of Christian lore
'Tis blind Idolatry no more,
But a sweet help and pattern of true love,

Showing how best the soul may cling
To her immortal Spouse and King,
How He should rule, and she with full desire approve.

If niggard Earth her treasures hide,
To all but labouring hands denied,
Lavish of thorns and worthless weeds alone,
The doom is half in mercy given,
To train us in our way to Heaven,
And show our lagging souls how glory must be won.

If on the sinner's outward frame
God hath impressed His mark of blame,
And e'en our bodies shrink at touch of light,
Yet mercy hath not left us bare:
The very weeds we daily wear
Are to Faith's eye a pledge of God's forgiving might.

And oh! if yet one arrow more,
The sharpest of the Almighty's store,
Tremble upon the string—a sinner's death—
Art Thou not by to soothe and save,
To lay us gently in the grave,
To close the weary eye and hush the parting breath?

Therefore in sight of man bereft
The happy garden still was left;
The fiery sword that guarded, showed it too;
Turning all ways, the world to teach,
That though as yet beyond our reach,
Still in its place the tree of life and glory grew.

Quinquagesima Sunday.

I do set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between
Me and the earth. *Genesis ix. 13.*

Sweet Dove! the softest, steadiest plume,
In all the sunbright sky,
Brightening in ever-changeful bloom
As breezes change on high;—

Sweet Leaf! the pledge of peace and mirth,
“Long sought, and lately won,”
Blessed increase of reviving Earth,
When first it felt the Sun;—

Sweet Rainbow! pride of summer days,
High set at Heaven’s command,
Though into drear and dusky haze
Thou melt on either hand;—

Dear tokens of a pardoning God,
We hail ye, one and all,
As when our fathers walked abroad,
Freed from their twelvemonth’s thrall.

How joyful from the imprisoning ark
On the green earth they spring!
Not blither, after showers, the lark
Mounts up with glistening wing.

So home-bound sailors spring to shore,
Two oceans safely past;
So happy souls, when life is o’er,
Plunge in this empyreal vast.

What wins their first and fondest gaze
In all the blissful field,
And keeps it through a thousand days?
Love face to face revealed:

Love imaged in that cordial look
Our Lord in Eden bends
On souls that sin and earth forsook
In time to die His friends.

And what most welcome and serene
Dawns on the Patriarch’s eye,
In all the emerging hills so green,
In all the brightening sky?

What but the gentle rainbow’s gleam,
Soothing the wearied sight,

That cannot bear the solar beam,
With soft undazzling light?

Lord, if our fathers turned to Thee
With such adoring gaze,
Wondering frail man Thy light should see
Without Thy scorching blaze;

Where is our love, and where our hearts,
We who have seen Thy Son,
Have tried Thy Spirit's winning arts,
And yet we are not won?

The Son of God in radiance beamed
Too bright for us to scan,
But we may face the rays that streamed
From the mild Son of Man.

There, parted into rainbow hues,
In sweet harmonious strife
We see celestial love diffuse
Its light o'er Jesus' life.

God, by His bow, vouchsafes to write
This truth in Heaven above:
As every lovely hue is Light,
So every grace is Love.

Ash Wednesday.

When thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret. *St. Matthew* vi. 17, 18.

“Yes—deep within and deeper yet
The rankling shaft of conscience hide,
Quick let the swelling eye forget
The tears that in the heart abide.
Calm be the voice, the aspect bold,
No shuddering pass o'er lip or brow,
For why should Innocence be told
The pangs that guilty spirits bow?”

“The loving eye that watches thine
Close as the air that wraps thee round—
Why in thy sorrow should it pine,
Since never of thy sin it found?
And wherefore should the heathen see
What chains of darkness thee enslave,
And mocking say, ‘Lo, this is he
Who owned a God that could not save’?”

Thus oft the mourner’s wayward heart
Tempts him to hide his grief and die,
Too feeble for Confession’s smart,
Too proud to bear a pitying eye;
How sweet, in that dark hour, to fall
On bosoms waiting to receive
Our sighs, and gently whisper all!
They love us—will not God forgive?

Else let us keep our fast within,
Till Heaven and we are quite alone,
Then let the grief, the shame, the sin,
Before the mercy-seat be thrown.
Between the porch and altar weep,
Unworthy of the holiest place,
Yet hoping near the shrine to keep
One lowly cell in sight of grace.

Nor fear lest sympathy should fail—
Hast thou not seen, in night hours drear,
When racking thoughts the heart assail,
The glimmering stars by turns appear,
And from the eternal house above
With silent news of mercy steal?
So Angels pause on tasks of love,
To look where sorrowing sinners kneel.

Or if no Angel pass that way,
He who in secret sees, perchance
May bid His own heart-warming ray
Toward thee stream with kindlier glance,
As when upon His drooping head

His Father's light was poured from Heaven,
What time, unsheltered and unfed,
Far in the wild His steps were driven.

High thoughts were with Him in that hour,
Untold, unspeakable on earth—
And who can stay the soaring power
Of spirits weaned from worldly mirth,
While far beyond the sound of praise
With upward eye they float serene,
And learn to bear their Saviour's blaze
When Judgment shall undraw the screen?

First Sunday in Lent.

Haste thee, escape thither: for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither.
Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar. *Genesis* xix. 22.

“Angel of wrath! why linger in mid-air,
While the devoted city's cry
Louder and louder swells? and canst thou spare,
Thy full-charged vial standing by?”
Thus, with stern voice, unsparing Justice pleads:
He hears her not—with softened gaze
His eye is following where sweet Mercy leads,
And till she give the sign, his fury stays.

Guided by her, along the mountain road,
Far through the twilight of the morn,
With hurried footsteps from the accursed abode
He sees the holy household borne;
Angels, or more, on either hand are nigh,
To speed them o'er the tempting plain,
Lingering in heart, and with frail sidelong eye
Seeking how near they may unharmed remain.

“Ah! wherefore gleam those upland slopes so fair?
And why, through every woodland arch,
Swells yon bright vale, as Eden rich and rare,
Where Jordan winds his stately march;
If all must be forsaken, ruined all,

If God have planted but to burn?—
Surely not yet the avenging shower will fall,
Though to my home for one last look I turn.”

Thus while they waver, surely long ago
They had provoked the withering blast,
But that the merciful Avengers know
Their frailty well, and hold them fast.
“Haste, for thy life escape, nor look behind”—
Ever in thrilling sounds like these
They check the wandering eye, severely kind,
Nor let the sinner lose his soul at ease.

And when, o’erwearied with the steep ascent,
We for a nearer refuge crave,
One little spot of ground in mercy lent,
One hour of home before the grave,
Oft in His pity o’er His children weak,
His hand withdraws the penal fire,
And where we fondly cling, forbears to wreak
Full vengeance, till our hearts are weaned entire.

Thus, by the merits of one righteous man,
The Church, our Zoar, shall abide,
Till she abuse, so sore, her lengthened span,
E’en Mercy’s self her face must hide.
Then, onward yet a step, thou hard-won soul;
Though in the Church thou know thy place,
The mountain farther lies—there seek thy goal,
There breathe at large, o’erpast thy dangerous race.

Sweet is the smile of home; the mutual look
When hearts are of each other sure;
Sweet all the joys that crowd the household nook,
The haunt of all affections pure;
Yet in the world e’en these abide, and we
Above the world our calling boast;
Once gain the mountain-top, and thou art free:
Till then, who rest, presume; who turn to look, are lost.

Second Sunday in Lent.

And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father. *Genesis* xxvii. 34. (Compare *Hebrews* xii. 17. He found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.)

“And is there in God’s world so drear a place
Where the loud bitter cry is raised in vain?
Where tears of penance come too late for grace,
As on the uprooted flower the genial rain?”

’Tis even so: the sovereign Lord of souls
Stores in the dungeon of His boundless realm
Each bolt that o’er the sinner vainly rolls,
With gathered wrath the reprobate to whelm.

Will the storm hear the sailor’s piteous cry,
Taught so mistrust, too late, the tempting wave,
When all around he sees but sea and sky,
A God in anger, a self-chosen grave?

Or will the thorns, that strew intemperance’ bed,
Turn with a wish to down? will late remorse
Recall the shaft the murderer’s hand has sped,
Or from the guiltless bosom turn its course?

Then may the unbodied soul in safety fleet
Through the dark curtains of the world above,
Fresh from the stain of crime; nor fear to meet
The God whom here she would not learn to love;

Then is there hope for such as die unblest,
That angel wings may waft them to the shore,
Nor need the unready virgin strike her breast,
Nor wait desponding round the bridegroom’s door.

But where is then the stay of contrite hearts?
Of old they leaned on Thy eternal word,
But with the sinner’s fear their hope departs,
Fast linked as Thy great Name to Thee, O Lord:

That Name, by which Thy faithful oath is past,
That we should endless be, for joy or woe:—
And if the treasures of Thy wrath could waste,
Thy lovers must their promised Heaven forego.

But ask of elder days, earth's vernal hour,
When in familiar talk God's voice was heard,
When at the Patriarch's call the fiery shower
Propitious o'er the turf-built shrine appeared.

Watch by our father Isaac's pastoral door—
The birthright sold, the blessing lost and won;
Tell, Heaven has wrath that can relent no more;
The Grave, dark deeds that cannot be undone.

We barter life for pottage; sell true bliss
For wealth or power, for pleasure or renown;
Thus, Esau-like, our Father's blessing miss,
Then wash with fruitless tears our faded crown.

Our faded crown, despised and flung aside,
Shall on some brother's brow immortal bloom;
No partial hand the blessing may misguide,
No flattering fancy change our Monarch's doom:

His righteous doom, that meek true-hearted Love
The everlasting birthright should receive,
The softest dews drop on her from above,
The richest green her mountain garland weave:

Her brethren, mightiest, wisest, eldest-born,
Bow to her sway, and move at her behest;
Isaac's fond blessing may not fall on scorn,
Nor Balaam's curse on Love, which God hath blest.

Third Sunday in Lent.

When a strong man armed keepeth his place, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. *St. Luke xi.21, 22.*

See Lucifer like lightning fall,
Dashed from his throne of pride;
While, answering Thy victorious call,
The Saints his spoils divide;
This world of Thine, by him usurped too long,
Now opening all her stores to heal Thy servants' wrong.

So when the first-born of Thy foes
Dead in the darkness lay,
When Thy redeemed at midnight rose
And cast their bonds away,
The orphaned realm threw wide her gates, and told
Into freed Israel's lap her jewels and her gold.

And when their wondrous march was o'er,
And they had won their homes,
Where Abraham fed his flock of yore,
Among their fathers' tombs;—
A land that drinks the rain of Heaven at will,
Whose waters kiss the feet of many a vine-clad hill;—

Oft as they watched, at thoughtful eve,
A gale from bowers of balm
Sweep o'er the billowy corn, and heave
The tresses of the palm,
Just as the lingering Sun had touched with gold,
Far o'er the cedar shade, some tower of giants old;

It was a fearful joy, I ween,
To trace the Heathen's toil,
The limpid wells, the orchards green,
Left ready for the spoil,
The household stores untouched, the roses bright
Wreathed o'er the cottage walls in garlands of delight.

And now another Canaan yields
To Thine all-conquering ark:—
Fly from the "old poetic" fields,
Ye Paynim shadows dark!
Immortal Greece, dear land of glorious lays,
Lo! here the "unknown God" of thy unconscious praise.

The olive-wreath, the ivied wand,
 "The sword in myrtles drest,"
Each legend of the shadowy strand
 Now wakes a vision blest;
As little children lisp, and tell of Heaven,
So thoughts beyond their thought to those high Bards were given.

And these are ours: Thy partial grace
 The tempting treasure lends:
These relies of a guilty race
 Are forfeit to Thy friends;
What seemed an idol hymn, now breathes of Thee,
Tuned by Faith's ear to some celestial melody.

There's not a strain to Memory dear,
 Nor flower in classic grove,
There's not a sweet note warbled here,
 But minds us of Thy Love.
O Lord, our Lord, and spoiler of our foes,
There is no light but Thine: with Thee all beauty glows.

Fourth Sunday in Lent.

Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother; and he sought where to weep, and he entered into his chamber and wept there. *Genesis* xliii. 30.

There stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. *Genesis* xlv. 1.

When Nature tries her finest touch,
 Weaving her vernal wreath,
Mark ye, how close she veils her round,
Not to be traced by sight or sound,
 Nor soiled by ruder breath?

Who ever saw the earliest rose
 First open her sweet breast?
Or, when the summer sun goes down,
The first soft star in evening's crown
 Light up her gleaming crest?

Fondly we seek the dawning bloom
On features wan and fair,
The gazing eye no change can trace,
But look away a little space,
Then turn, and lo! 'tis there.

But there's a sweeter flower than e'er
Blushed on the rosy spray—
A brighter star, a richer bloom
Than e'er did western heaven illumine
At close of summer day.

'Tis Love, the last best gift of Heaven;
Love gentle, holy, pure;
But tenderer than a dove's soft eye,
The searching sun, the open sky,
She never could endure.

E'en human Love will shrink from sight
Here in the coarse rude earth:
How then should rash intruding glance
Break in upon *her* sacred trance
Who boasts a heavenly birth?

So still and secret is her growth,
Ever the truest heart,
Where deepest strikes her kindly root
For hope or joy, for flower or fruit,
Least knows its happy part.

God only, and good angels, look
Behind the blissful screen—
As when, triumphant o'er His woes,
The Son of God by moonlight rose,
By all but Heaven unseen:

As when the holy Maid beheld
Her risen Son and Lord:
Thought has not colours half so fair
That she to paint that hour may dare,
In silence best adored.

The gracious Dove, that brought from Heaven
The earnest of our bliss,
Of many a chosen witness telling,
On many a happy vision dwelling,
Sings not a note of this.

So, truest image of the Christ,
Old Israel's long-lost son,
What time, with sweet forgiving cheer,
He called his conscious brethren near,
Would weep with them alone.

He could not trust his melting soul
But in his Maker's sight—
Then why should gentle hearts and true
Bare to the rude world's withering view
Their treasure of delight!

No—let the dainty rose awhile
Her bashful fragrance hide—
Rend not her silken veil too soon,
But leave her, in her own soft noon,
To flourish and abide.

Fifth Sunday in Lent.

And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. *Exodus* iii. 3.

The historic Muse, from age to age,
Through many a waste heart-sickening page
Hath traced the works of Man:
But a celestial call to-day
Stays her, like Moses, on her way,
The works of God to scan.

Far seen across the sandy wild,
Where, like a solitary child,
He thoughtless roamed and free,
One towering thorn was wrapt in flame—
Bright without blaze it went and came:
Who would not turn and see?

Along the mountain ledges green
The scattered sheep at will may glean
The Desert's spicy stores:
The while, with undivided heart,
The shepherd talks with God apart,
And, as he talks, adores.

Ye too, who tend Christ's wildering flock,
Well may ye gather round the rock
That once was Sion's hill:
To watch the fire upon the mount
Still blazing, like the solar fount,
Yet unconsuming still.

Caught from that blaze by wrath Divine,
Lost branches of the once-loved vine,
Now withered, spent, and sere,
See Israel's sons, like glowing brands,
Tossed wildly o'er a thousand lands
For twice a thousand year.

God will not quench nor slay them quite,
But lifts them like a beacon-light
The apostate Church to scare;
Or like pale ghosts that darkling roam,
Hovering around their ancient home,
But find no refuge there.

Ye blessèd Angels! if of you
There be, who love the ways to view
Of Kings and Kingdoms here;
(And sure, 'tis worth an Angel's gaze,
To see, throughout that dreary maze,
God teaching love and fear:)

Oh say, in all the bleak expanse
Is there a spot to win your glance,
So bright, so dark as this?
A hopeless faith, a homeless race,
Yet seeking the most holy place,
And owning the true bliss!

Salted with fire they seem, to show
How spirits lost in endless woe
 May undecaying live.
Oh, sickening thought! yet hold it fast
Long as this glittering world shall last,
 Or sin at heart survive.

And hark! amid the flashing fire,
Mingling with tones of fear and ire,
 Soft Mercy's undersong—
'Tis Abraham's God who speaks so loud,
His people's cries have pierced the cloud,
 He sees, He sees their wrong;

He is come down to break their chain;
Though nevermore on Sion's fane
 His visible ensign wave;
'Tis Sion, wheresoe'er they dwell,
Who, with His own true Israel,
 Shall own Him strong to save.

He shall redeem them one by one,
Where'er the world-encircling sun
 Shall see them meekly kneel:
All that He asks on Israel's part,
Is only that the captive heart
 Its woe and burthen feel.

Gentiles! with fixed yet awful eye
Turn ye this page of mystery,
 Nor slight the warning sound:
"Put off thy shoes from off thy feet—
The place where man his God shall meet,
 Be sure, is holy ground."

Palm Sunday.

And He answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. *St. Luke xix. 40.*

Ye whose hearts are beating high
With the pulse of Poesy,

Heirs of more than royal race,
Framed by Heaven's peculiar grace,
God's own work to do on earth,
 (If the word be not too bold,)
Giving virtue a new birth,
 And a life that ne'er grows old—

Sovereign masters of all hearts!
Know ye, who hath set your parts?
He who gave you breath to sing,
By whose strength ye sweep the string,
He hath chosen you, to lead
 His Hosannas here below;—
Mount, and claim your glorious meed;
 Linger not with sin and woe.

But if ye should hold your peace,
Deem not that the song would cease—
Angels round His glory-throne,
Stars, His guiding hand that own,
Flowers, that grow beneath our feet,
 Stones in earth's dark womb that rest,
High and low in choir shall meet,
 Ere His Name shall be unblest.

Lord, by every minstrel tongue
Be Thy praise so duly sung,
That Thine angels' harps may ne'er
Fail to find fit echoing here:
We the while, of meaner birth,
 Who in that divinest spell
Dare not hope to join on earth,
 Give us grace to listen well.

But should thankless silence seal
Lips that might half Heaven reveal,
Should bards in idol-hymns profane
The sacred soul-enthraling strain,
(As in this bad world below
 Noblest things find vilest using,)

Then, Thy power and mercy show,
In vile things noble breath infusing;

Then waken into sound divine
The very pavement of Thy shrine,
Till we, like Heaven's star-sprinkled floor,
Faintly give back what we adore:
Childlike though the voices be,
And untunable the parts,
Thou wilt own the minstrelsy
If it flow from childlike hearts.

Monday before Easter.

Doubtless Thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not. *Isaiah* lxiii. 16.

“Father to me thou art and mother dear,
And brother too, kind husband of my heart”—
So speaks Andromache in boding fear,
Ere from her last embrace her hero part—
So evermore, by Faith's undying glow,
We own the Crucified in weal or woe.

Strange to our ears the church-bells of our home,
This fragrance of our old paternal fields
May be forgotten; and the time may come
When the babe's kiss no sense of pleasure yields
E'en to the dotting mother: but Thine own
Thou never canst forget, nor leave alone.

There are who sigh that no fond heart is theirs,
None loves them best—O vain and selfish sigh!
Out of the bosom of His love He spares—
The Father spares the Son, for thee to die:
For thee He died—for thee He lives again:
O'er thee He watches in His boundless reign.

Thou art as much His care, as if beside
Nor man nor angel lived in Heaven or earth:
Thus sunbeams pour alike their glorious tide
To light up worlds, or wake an insect's mirth:

They shine and shine with unexhausted store—
Thou art thy Saviour's darling—seek no more.

On thee and thine, thy warfare and thine end,
E'en in His hour of agony He thought,
When, ere the final pang His soul should rend,
The ransomed spirits one by one were brought
To His mind's eye—two silent nights and days
In calmness for His far-seen hour He stays.

Ye vaulted cells, where martyred seers of old
Far in the rocky walls of Sion sleep,
Green terraces and archèd fountains cold,
Where lies the cypress shade so still and deep,
Dear sacred haunts of glory and of woe,
Help us, one hour, to trace His musings high and low:

One heart-ennobling hour! It may not be:
The unearthly thoughts have passed from earth away,
And fast as evening sunbeams from the sea
Thy footsteps all in Sion's deep decay
Were blotted from the holy ground: yet dear
Is every stone of hers; for Thou want surely here.

There is a spot within this sacred dale
That felt Thee kneeling—touched Thy prostrate brow:
One Angel knows it. O might prayer avail
To win that knowledge! sure each holy vow
Less quickly from the unstable soul would fade,
Offered where Christ in agony was laid.

Might tear of ours once mingle with the blood
That from His aching brow by moonlight fell,
Over the mournful joy our thoughts would brood,
Till they had framed within a guardian spell
To chase repining fancies, as they rise,
Like birds of evil wing, to mar our sacrifice.

So dreams the heart self-flattering, fondly dreams;—
Else wherefore, when the bitter waves o'erflow,
Miss we the light, Gethsemane, that streams
From thy dear name, where in His page of woe

It shines, a pale kind star in winter's sky?
Who vainly reads it there, in vain had seen Him die.

Tuesday before Easter.

They gave Him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but He received in not. *St. Mark xv. 23.*

“Fill high the bowl, and spice it well, and pour
The dews oblivious: for the Cross is sharp,
The Cross is sharp, and He
Is tenderer than a lamb.

“He wept by Lazarus' grave—how will He bear
This bed of anguish? and His pale weak form
Is worn with many a watch
Of sorrow and unrest.

“His sweat last night was as great drops of blood,
And the sad burthen pressed Him so to earth,
The very torturers paused
To help Him on His way.

“Fill high the bowl, benumb His aching sense
With medicined sleep.”—O awful in Thy woe!
The parching thirst of death
Is on Thee, and Thou triest

The slumb'rous potion bland, and wilt not drink:
Not sullen, nor in scorn, like haughty man
With suicidal hand
Putting his solace by:

But as at first Thine all-pervading look
Saw from Thy Father's bosom to the abyss
Measuring in calm presage
The infinite descent;

So to the end, though now of mortal pangs
Made heir, and emptied of Thy glory, awhile,
Withunaverted eye
Thou meetest all the storm.

Thou wilt feel all, that Thou mayst pity all;
And rather wouldst Thou wreathe with strong pain,
 Than overcloud Thy soul,
 So clear in agony,

Or lose one glimpse of Heaven before the time
O most entire and perfect sacrifice,
 Renewed in every pulse
 That on the tedious Cross

Told the long hours of death, as, one by one,
The life-strings of that tender heart gave way;
 E'en sinners, taught by Thee,
 Look Sorrow in the face,

And bid her freely welcome, unbeguiled
By false kind solaces, and spells of earth:—
 And yet not all unsoothed;
 For when was Joy so dear,

As the deep calm that breathed, "*Father, forgive,*"
Or, "*Be with Me in Paradise to-day?*"
 And, though the strife be sore,
 Yet in His parting breath

Love masters Agony; the soul that seemed
Forsaken, feels her present God again,
 And in her Father's arms
 Contented dies away.

Wednesday before Easter.

Saying, Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me; nevertheless not
My will, but Thine, be done. *St. Luke xxii. 42.*

O Lord my God, do thou Thy holy will—
 I will lie still—
I will not stir, lest I forsake Thine arm,
 And break the charm
Which lulls me, clinging to my Father's breast,
 In perfect rest.

Wild fancy, peace! thou must not me beguile
With thy false smile:
I know thy flatteries and thy cheating ways;
Be silent, Praise,
Blind guide with siren voice, and blinding all
That hear thy call.

Come, Self-devotion, high and pure,
Thoughts that in thankfulness endure,
Though dearest hopes are faithless found,
And dearest hearts are bursting round.
Come, Resignation, spirit meek,
And let me kiss thy placid cheek,
And read in thy pale eye serene
Their blessing, who by faith can wean
Their hearts from sense, and learn to love
God only, and the joys above.

They say, who know the life divine,
And upward gaze with eagle eyne,
That by each golden crown on high,
Rich with celestial jewelry,
Which for our Lord's redeemed is set,
There hangs a radiant coronet,
All gemmed with pure and living light,
Too dazzling for a sinner's sight,
Prepared for virgin souls, and them
Who seek the martyr's diadem.

Nor deem, who to that bliss aspire,
Must win their way through blood and fire.
The writhings of a wounded heart
Are fiercer than a foeman's dart.
Oft in Life's stillest shade reclining,
In Desolation unrepining,
Without a hope on earth to find
A mirror in an answering mind,
Meek souls there are, who little dream
Their daily strife an Angel's theme,
Or that the rod they take so calm
Shall prove in Heaven a martyr's palm.

And there are souls that seem to dwell
Above this earth—so rich a spell
Floats round their steps, where'er they move,
From hopes fulfilled and mutual love.
Such, if on high their thoughts are set,
Nor in the stream the source forget,
If prompt to quit the bliss they know,
Following the Lamb where'er He go,
By purest pleasures unbeguiled
To idolise or wife or child;
Such wedded souls our God shall own
For faultless virgins round His throne.

Thus everywhere we find our suffering God,
And where He trod
May set our steps: the Cross on Calvary
Uplifted high
Beams on the martyr host, a beacon light
In open fight.

To the still wrestlings of the lonely heart
He doth impart
The virtue of his midnight agony,
When none was nigh,
Save God and one good angel, to assuage
The tempest's rage.

Mortal! if life smile on thee, and thou find
All to thy mind,
Think, who did once from Heaven to Hell descend,
Thee to befriend:
So shalt thou dare forego, at His dear call,
Thy best, thine all.

“O Father! not My will, but Thine be done”—
So spake the Son.
Be this our charm, mellowing Earth's ruder noise
Of griefs and joys:
That we may cling for ever to Thy breast
In perfect rest!

Thursday before Easter.

As the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision. *Daniel* ix. 23.

“O Holymountain of my God,
How do thy towers in ruin lie,
How art thou riven and strewn abroad,
Under the rude and wasteful sky!”
'Twas thus upon his fasting-day
The “Man of Loves” was fain to pray,
His lattice open toward his darling west,
Mourning the ruined home he still must love the best.

Oh! for a love like Daniel's now,
To wing to Heaven but one strong prayer
For God's new Israel, sunk as low,
Yet flourishing to sight as fair,
As Sion in her height of pride,
With queens for handmaids at her side,
With kings her nursing-fathers, thronèd high,
And compassed with the world's too tempting blazonry.

'Tis true, nor winter stays thy growth,
Nor torrid summer's sickly smile;
The flashing billows of the south
Break not upon so lone an isle,
But thou, rich vine, art grafted there,
The fruit of death or life to bear,
Yielding a surer witness every day,
To thine Almighty Author and His steadfast sway.

Oh! grief to think, that grapes of gall
Should cluster round thine healthiest shoot!
God's herald prove a heartless thrall,
Who, if he dared, would fain be mute!
E'en such is this bad world we see,
Which self-condemned in owning Thee,
Yet dares not open farewell of Thee take,
For very pride, and her high-boasted Reason's sake.

What do we then? if far and wide
Men kneel to Christ, the pure and meek,
Yet rage with passion, swell with pride,
Have we not still our faith to seek?
Nay—but in steadfast humbleness
Kneel on to Him, who loves to bless
The prayer that waits for him; and trembling strive
To keep the lingering flame in thine own breast alive.

Dark frowned the future e'en on him,
The loving and belovèd Seer,
What time he saw, through shadows dim,
The boundary of th' eternal year;
He only of the sons of men
Named to be heir of glory then.
Else had it bruised too sore his tender heart
To see God's ransomed world in wrath and flame depart

Then look no more: or closer watch
Thy course in Earth's bewildering ways,
For every glimpse thine eye can catch
Of what shall be in those dread days:
So when th' Archangel's word is spoken,
And Death's deep trance for ever broken,
In mercy thou mayst feel the heavenly hand,
And in thy lot unharmed before thy Saviour stand.

Good Friday.

He is despised and rejected of men. *Isaiah* liii. 3.

Is it not strange, the darkest hour
That ever dawned on sinful earth
Should touch the heart with softer power
For comfort than an angel's mirth?
That to the Cross the mourner's eye should turn
Sooner than where the stars of Christmas burn?

Sooner than where the Easter sun
Shines glorious on yon open grave,
And to and fro the tidings run,

“Who died to heal, is risen to save?”
Sooner than where upon the Saviour’s friends
The very Comforter in light and love descends?

Yet so it is: for duly there
The bitter herbs of earth are set,
Till tempered by the Saviour’s prayer,
And with the Saviour’s life–blood wet,
They turn to sweetness, and drop holy balm,
Soft as imprisoned martyr’s deathbed calm.

All turn to sweet—but most of all
That bitterest to the lip of pride,
When hopes presumptuous fade and fall,
Or Friendship scorns us, duly tried,
Or Love, the flower that closes up for fear
When rude and selfish spirits breathe too near.

Then like a long–forgotten strain
Comes sweeping o’er the heart forlorn
What sunshine hours had taught in vain
Of Jesus suffering shame and scorn,
As in all lowly hearts he suffers still,
While we triumphant ride and have the world at will.

His piercèd hands in vain would hide
His face from rude reproachful gaze,
His ears are open to abide
The wildest storm the tongue can raise,
He who with one rough word, some early day,
Their idol world and them shall sweep for aye away.

But we by Fancy may assuage
The festering sore by Fancy made,
Down in some lonely hermitage
Like wounded pilgrims safely laid,
Where gentlest breezes whisper souls distressed,
That Love yet lives, and Patience shall find rest.

O! shame beyond the bitterest thought
That evil spirit ever framed,
That sinners know what Jesus wrought,

Yet feel their haughty hearts untamed—
That souls in refuge, holding by the Cross,
Should wince and fret at this world's little loss.

Lord of my heart, by Thy last cry,
Let not Thy blood on earth be spent—
Lo, at Thy feet I fainting lie,
Mine eyes upon Thy wounds are bent,
Upon Thy streaming wounds my weary eyes
Wait like the parchèd earth on April skies.

Wash me, and dry these bitter tears,
O let my heart no further roam,
'TisThine by vows, and hopes, and fears.
Long since—O call Thy wanderer home;
To that dear home, safe in Thy wounded side,
Where only broken hearts their sin and shame may hide.

Easter Eve.

As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out
of the pit wherein is no water. *Zechariah* ix. 11.

At length the worst is o'er, and Thou art laid
Deep in Thy darksome bed;
All still and cold beneath yon dreary stone
Thy sacred form is gone;
Around those lips where power and mercy hung,
The dews of deaths have clung;
The dull earth o'er Thee, and Thy foes around,
Thou sleep'st a silent corse, in funeral fetters wound.

Sleep'st Thou indeed? or is Thy spirit fled,
At large among the dead?
Whether in Eden bowers Thy welcome voice
Wake Abraham to rejoice,
Or in some drearier scene Thine eye controls
The thronging band of souls;
That, as Thy blood won earth, Thine agony
Might set the shadowy realm from sin and sorrow free.

Where'er Thou roam'st, one happy soul, we know,
 Seen at Thy side in woe,
Waits on Thy triumphs—even as all the blest
 With him and Thee shall rest.
Each on his cross; by Thee we hang a while,
 Watching Thy patient smile,
Till we have learned to say, "'Tis justly done,
Only in glory, Lord, Thy sinful servant own."

Soon wilt Thou take us to Thy tranquil bower
 To rest one little hour,
Till Thine elect are numbered, and the grave
 Call Thee to come and save:
Then on Thy bosom borne shall we descend
 Again with earth to blend,
Earth all refined with bright supernal fires,
Tinctured with holy blood, and winged with pure desires.

Meanwhile with every son and saint of Thine
 Along the glorious line,
Sitting by turns beneath Thy sacred feet
 We'll hold communion sweet,
Know them by look and voice, and thank them all
 For helping us in thrall,
For words of hope, and bright examples given
To show through moonless skies that there is light in Heaven.

O come that day, when in this restless heart
 Earth shall resign her part,
When in the grave with Thee my limbs shall rest,
 My soul with Thee be blest!
But stay, presumptuous—Christ with Thee abides
 In the rock's dreary sides:
He from this stone will wring Celestial dew
If but this prisoner's heart he faithful found and true.

When tears are spent, and then art left alone
 With ghosts of blessings gone,
Think thou art taken from the cross, and laid
 In Jesus' burial shade;
Take Moses' rod, the rod of prayer, and call

Out of the rocky wall
The fount of holy blood; and lift on high
Thy grovelling soul that feels so desolate and dry.

Prisoner of Hope thou art—look up and sing
In hope of promised spring.
As in the pit his father's darling lay
Beside the desert way,
And knew not how, but knew his God would save
E'en from that living grave,
So, buried with our Lord, we'll chose our eyes
To the decaying world, till Angels bid us rise.

Easter Day.

And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen. *St. Luke xxiv.5, 6.*

Oh! day of days! shall hearts set free
No "minstrel rapture" find for thee?
Thou art this Sun of other days,
They shine by giving back thy rays:

Enthronèd in thy sovereign sphere,
Thou shedd'st thy light on all the year;
Sundays by thee more glorious break,
An Easter Day in every week:

And week days, following in their train,
The fulness of thy blessing gain,
Till all, both resting soil employ,
Be one Lord's day of holy joy.

Then wake, my soul, to high desires,
And earlier light thine altar fires:
The World some hours is on her way,
Nor thinks on thee, thou blessèd day:

Or, if she think, it is in scorn:
The vernal light of Easter morn

To her dark gaze no brighter seems
Than Reason's or the Law's pale beams.

"Where is your Lord?" she scornful asks:
"Where is His hire? we know his tasks;
Sons of a King ye boast to be:
Let us your crowns and treasures see."

We in the words of Truth reply,
(An angel brought them from this sky,)
"Our crown, our treasure is not here,
'Tis stored above the highest sphere:

"Methinks your wisdom guides amiss,
To seek on earth a Christian's bliss;
We watch not now the lifeless stone;
Our only Lord is risen and gone."

Yet e'en the lifeless stone is dear
For thoughts of Him who late lay here;
And the base world, now Christ hath died,
Ennobled is and glorified.

No more a charnel-house, to fence
The relics of lost innocence,
A vault of ruin and decay;
Th' imprisoning stone is rolled away:

'Tis now a cell, where angels use
To come and go with heavenly news,
And in the ears of mourners say,
"Come, see the place where Jesus lay:"

'Tis now a fane, where Love can find
Christ everywhere embalmed and shined:
Aye gathering up memorials sweet,
Where'er she sets her duteous feet.

Oh! joy to Mary first allowed,
When roused from weeping o'er His shroud,
By His own calm, soul-soothing tone,
Breathing her name, as still His own!

Joy to the faithful Three renewed,
As their glad errand they pursued!
Happy, who so Christ's word convey,
That he may meet them on their way!

So is it still: to holy tears,
In lonely hours, Christ risen appears:
In social hours, who Christ would see
Must turn all tasks to Charity.

Monday in Easter Week.

Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him. *Acts* x. 34, 35.

Go up and watch the new-born rill
Just trickling from its mossy bed,
Streaking the heath-clad hill
With a bright emerald thread.

Canst thou her bold career foretell,
What rocks she shall o'erleap or rend,
How far in Ocean's swell
Her freshening billows send?

Perchance that little brook shall flow
The bulwark of some mighty realm,
Bear navies to and fro
With monarchs at their helm.

Or canst thou guess, how far away
Some sister nymph, beside her urn
Reclining night and day,
'Mid reeds and mountain fern,

Nurses her store, with thine to blend
When many a moor and glen are past,
Then in the wide sea end
Their spotless lives at last?

E'en so, the course of prayer who knows?
It springs in silence where it will,
Springs out of sight, and flows
At first a lonely rill:

But streams shall meet it by and by
From thousand sympathetic hearts,
Together swelling high
Their chant of many parts.

Unheard by all but angel ears
The good Cornelius knelt alone,
Nor dreamed his prayers and tears
Would help a world undone.

The while upon his terraced roof
The loved Apostle to his Lord
In silent thought aloof
For heavenly vision soared.

Far o'er the glowing western main
His wistful brow was upward raised,
Where, like an angel's train,
The burnished water blazed.

The saint beside the ocean prayed,
This soldier in his chosen bower,
Where all his eye surveyed
Seemed sacred in that hour.

To each unknown his brother's prayer,
Yet brethren true in dearest love
Were they—and now they share
Fraternal joys above.

There daily through Christ's open gate
They see the Gentile spirits press,
Brightening their high estate
With dearer happiness.

What civic wreath for comrades saved
Shone ever with such deathless gleam,

Or when did perils braved
So sweet to veterans seem?

Tuesday in Easter Week.

And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy, and did run to bring His disciples word. *St. Matthew* xxviii. 8.

TO THE SNOWDROP.

Thou first-born of the year's delight,
Pride of the dewy glade,
In vernal green and virgin white,
Thy vestal robes, arrayed:

'Tis not because thy drooping form
Sinks graceful on its nest,
When chilly shades from gathering storm
Affright thy tender breast;

Nor for yon river islet wild
Beneath the willow spray,
Where, like the ringlets of a child,
Thou weav'st thy circle gay;

'Tis not for these I love thee dear—
Thy shy averted smiles
To Fancy bode a joyous year,
One of Life's fairy isles.

They twinkle to the wintry moon,
And cheer th' ungenial day,
And tell us, all will glisten soon
As green and bright as they.

Is there a heart that loves the spring,
Their witness can refuse?
Yet mortals doubt, when angels bring
From Heaven their Easter news:

When holy maids and matrons speak
Of Christ's forsaken bed,

And voices, that forbid to seek
The hiving 'mid the dead,

And when they say, "Turn, wandering heart,
Thy Lord is ris'n indeed,
Let Pleasure go, put Care apart,
And to His presence speed;"

We smile in scorn: and yet we know
They early sought the tomb,
Their hearts, that now so freshly glow,
Lost in desponding gloom.

They who have sought, nor hope to find,
Wear not so bright a glance:
They, who have won their earthly mind,
Lees reverently advance.

But where in gentle spirits, fear
And joy so duly meet,
These sure have seen the angels near,
And kissed the Saviour's feet.

Nor let the Pastor's thankful eye
Their faltering tale disdain,
As on their lowly couch they lie,
Prisoners of want and pain.

O guide us, when our faithless hearts
From Thee would start aloof,
Where Patience her sweet skill imparts
Beneath some cottage roof:

Revive our dying fires, to burn
High as her anthems soar,
And of our scholars let us learn
Our own forgotten lore.

First Sunday after Easter.

Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to Himself? *Numbers* xvi. 9.

First Father of the holy seed,
If yet, invoked in hour of need,
 Thou count me for Thine own
Not quite an outcast if I prove,
(Thou joy'st in miracles of love),
 Hear, from Thy mercy-throne!

Upon Thine altar's horn of gold
Help me to lay my trembling hold,
 Though stained with Christian gore;—
The blood of souls by Thee redeemed,
But, while I roved or idly dreamed,
 Lost to be found no more.

For oft, when summer leaves were bright,
And every flower was bathed in light,
 In sunshine moments past,
My wilful heart would burst away
From where the holy shadow lay,
 Where heaven my lot had cast.

I thought it scorn with Thee to dwell,
A Hermit in a silent cell,
 While, gaily sweeping by,
Wild Fancy blew his bugle strain,
And marshalled all his gallant train
 In the world's wondering eye.

I would have joined him—but as oft
Thy whispered warnings, kind and soft,
 My better soul confessed.
“My servant, let the world alone—
Safe on the steps of Jesus' throne
 Be tranquil and be blest.”

“Seems it to thee a niggard hand
That nearest Heaven has bade thee stand,
 The ark to touch and bear,
With incense of pure heart's desire
To heap the censer's sacred fire,
 The snow-white Ephod wear?”

Why should we crave the worldling's wreath,
On whom the Saviour deigned to breathe,
 To whom His keys were given,
Who lead the choir where angels meet,
With angels' food our brethren greet,
 And pour the drink of Heaven?

When sorrow all our heart would ask,
We need not shun our daily task,
 And hide ourselves for calm;
The herbs we seek to heal our woe
Familiar by our pathway grow,
 Our common air is balm.

Around each pure domestic shrine
Bright flowers of Eden bloom and twine,
 Our hearths are altars all;
The prayers of hungry souls and poor,
Like armèd angels at the door,
 Our unseen foes appal.

Alms all around and hymns within—
What evil eye can entrance win
 Where guards like these abound?
If chance some heedless heart should roam,
Sure, thought of these will lure it home
 Ere lost in Folly's round.

O joys, that sweetest in decay,
Fall not, like withered leaves, away,
 But with the silent breath
Of violets drooping one by one,
Soon as their fragrant task is done,
 Are wafted high in death!

Second Sunday after Easter.

He hath said, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the Most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open: I shall see Him, but not now; I shall behold Him, but not nigh; there shall come a Star out at Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and

shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children at Sheth. *Numbers*
xxiv.16, 17.

O for a sculptor's hand,
That thou might'st take thy stand,
Thy wild hair floating on the eastern breeze,
Thy tranced yet open gaze
Fixed on the desert haze,
As one who deep in heaven some airy pageant sees.

In outline dim and vast
Their fearful shadows cast
This giant forms of empires on their way
To ruin: one by one
They tower and they are gone,
Yet in the Prophet's soul the dreams of avarice stay.

No sun or star so bright
In all the world of light
That they should draw to Heaven his downward eye:
He hears th' Almighty's word,
He sees the angel's sword,
Yet low upon the earth his heart and treasure lie.

Lo! from you argent field,
To him and us revealed,
One gentle Star glides down, on earth to dwell.
Chained as they are below
Our eyes may see it glow,
And as it mounts again, may track its brightness well.

To him it glared afar,
A token of wild war,
The banner of his Lord's victorious wrath:
But close to us it gleams,
Its soothing lustre streams
Around our home's green walls, and on our church-way path.

We in the tents abide
Which he at distance eyed
Like goodly cedars by the waters spread,
While seven red altar-fires

Rose up in wavy spires,
Where on the mount he watched his sorceries dark and dread.

He watched till morning's ray
On lake and meadow lay,
And willow-shaded streams that silent sweep
Around the bannered lines,
Where by their several signs
The desert-wearied tribes in sight of Canaan sleep.

He watched till knowledge came
Upon his soul like flame,
Not of those magic fires at random caught:
But true Prophetic light
Flashed o'er him, high and bright,
Flashed once, and died away, and left his darkened thought.

And can he choose but fear,
Who feels his God so near,
That when he fain would curse, his powerless tongue
In blessing only moves?—
Alas! the world he loves
Too close around his heart her tangling veil hath flung.

Sceptre and Star divine,
Who in Thine inmost shrine
Hast made us worshippers, O claim Thine own;
More than Thy seers we know—
O teach our love to grow
Up to Thy heavenly light, and reap what Thou hast sown.

Third Sunday after Easter.

A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. *St. John* xvi. 21.

Well may I guess and feel
Why Autumn should be sad;
But vernal airs should sorrow heal,
Spring should be gay and glad:
Yet as along this violet bank I rove,

The languid sweetness seems to choke my breath,
I sit me down beside the hazel grove,
And sigh, and half could wish my weariness were death.

Like a bright veering cloud
Grey blossoms twinkle there,
Warbles around a busy crowd
Of larks in purest air.
Shame on the heart that dreams of blessings gone,
Or wakes the spectral forms of woe and crime,
When nature sings of joy and hope alone,
Reading her cheerful lesson in her own sweet time.

Nor let the proud heart say,
In her self-torturing hour,
The travail pangs must have their way,
The aching brow must lower.
To us long since the glorious Child is born
Our throes should be forgot, or only seem
Like a sad vision told for joy at morn,
For joy that we have waked and found it but a dream.

Mysterious to all thought
A mother's prime of bliss,
When to her eager lips is brought
Her infant's thrilling kiss.
O never shall it set, the sacred light
Which dawns that moment on her tender gaze,
In the eternal distance blending bright
Her darling's hope and hers, for love and joy and praise.

No need for her to weep
Like Thracian wives of yore,
Save when in rapture still and deep
Her thankful heart runs o'er.
They mourned to trust their treasure on the main,
Sure of the storm, unknowing of their guide:
Welcome to her the peril and the pain,
For well she knows the bonus where they may safely hide.

She joys that one is born
Into a world forgiven,

Her Father's household to adorn,
And dwell with her in Heaven.
So have I seen, in Spring's bewitching hour,
When the glad Earth is offering all her best,
Some gentle maid bend o'er a cherished flower,
And wish it worthier on a Parent's heart to rest.

Fourth Sunday after Easter.

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. *St. John xvi 7.*

MySaviour, can it ever be
That I should gain by losing Thee?
The watchful mother tarries nigh,
Though sleep have closed her infant's eye;
For should he wake, and find her gone.
She knows she could not bear his moan.
But I am weaker than a child,
And Thou art more than mother dear;
Without Thee Heaven were but a wild;
How can I live without Thee here!

"'Tis good for you, that I should go,
"You lingering yet awhile below;"—
'TisThine own gracious promise, Lord!
Thy saints have proved the faithful word,
When heaven's bright boundless avenue
Far opened on their eager view,
And homeward to Thy Father's throne,
Still lessening, brightening on their sight,
Thy shadowy car went soaring on;
They tracked Thee up th' abyss of light.

Thou bidd'st rejoice; they dare not mourn,
But to their home in gladness turn,
Their home and God's, that favoured place,
Where still He shines on Abraham's race,
In prayers and blessings there to wait
Like suplicants at their Monarch's gate,

Who bent with bounty rare to aid
The splendours of His crowning day,
Keeps back awhile His largess, made
More welcome for that brief delay:

In doubt they wait, but not unblest;
They doubt not of their Master's rest,
Nor of the gracious will of Heaven—
Who gave His Son, sure all has given—
But in ecstatic awe they muse
What course the genial stream may choose,
And far and wide their fancies rove,
And to their height of wonder strain,
What secret miracle of love
Should make their Saviour's going gain.

The days of hope and prayer are past,
The day of comfort dawns at last,
The everlasting gates again
Roll back, and, lo! a royal train—
From the far depth of light once more
The floods of glory earthward pour:
They part like shower-drops in mid air,
But ne'er so soft fell noon-tide shower,
Nor evening rainbow gleamed so fair
To weary swains in parchèd bower.

Swiftly and straight each tongue of flame
Through cloud and breeze unwavering came,
And darted to its place of rest
On some meek brow of Jesus blest.
Nor fades it yet, that living gleam,
And still those lambent lightnings stream;
Where'er the Lord is, there are they;
In every heart that gives them room,
They light His altar every day,
Zeal to inflame, and vice consume.

Soft as the plumes of Jesus' Dove
They nurse the soul to heavenly love;
The struggling spark of good within,

Just smothered in the strife of sin,
They quicken to a timely glow,
The pure flame spreading high and low.
Said I, that prayer and hope were o'er?
Nay, blessèd Spirit! but by Thee
The Church's prayer finds wings to soar,
The Church's hope finds eyes to see.

Then, fainting soul, arise and sing;
Mount, but be sober on the wing;
Mount up, for Heaven is won by prayer,
Be sober, for thou art not there;
Till Death the weary spirit free,
Thy God hath said, 'Tis good for thee
To walk by faith and not by sight:
Take it on trust a little while;
Soon shalt thou read the mystery right
In the full sunshine of His smile.

Or if thou yet more knowledge crave,
Ask thine own heart, that willing slave
To all that works thee woe or harm
Shouldst thou not need some mighty charm
To win thee to thy Saviour's side,
Though He had deigned with thee to bide?
The Spirit must stir the darkling deep,
The Dove must settle on the Cross,
Else we should all sin on or sleep
With Christ in sight, turning our gain to loss.

Fifth Sunday After Easter.

ROGATION SUNDAY.

And the Lord was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him: and I prayed for Aaron also the same time. *Deuteronomy ix. 20.*

Now is there solemn pause in earth and heaven;
The Conqueror now
His bonds hath riven,
And Angels wonder why He stays below:

Yet hath not man his lesson learned,
How endless love should be returned.

Deep is the silence as of summer noon,
When a soft shower
Will trickle soon,
A gracious rain, freshening the weary bower—
O sweetly then far off is heard
The clear note of some lonely bird.

So let Thy turtle-dove's sad call arise
In doubt and fear
Through darkening skies,
And pierce, O Lord, Thy justly-sealèd ear,
Where on the house-top, all night long
She trills her widowed, faltering song.

Teach her to know and love her hour of prayer,
And evermore,
As faith grows rare,
Unlock her heart, and offer all its store
In holier love and humbler vows,
As suits a lost returning spouse.

Not as at first, but with intenser cry,
Upon the mount
She now must lie,
Till Thy dear love to blot the sad account
Of her rebellious race be won,
Pitying the mother in the son.

But chiefly (for she knows Thee angered worst
By holiest things
Profaned and curst),
Chiefly for Aaron's seed she spreads her wings,
If but one leaf she may from Thee
Win of the reconciling tree.

For what shall heal, when holy water banes!
Or who may guide
O'er desert plains
Thy loved yet sinful people wandering wide,

If Aaron's hand unshrinking mould
An idol form of earthly gold?

Therefore her tears are bitter, and as deep
Her boding sigh,
As, while men sleep,
Sad-hearted mothers heave, that wakeful lie,
To muse upon some darling child
Roaming in youth's uncertain wild.

Therefore on fearful dreams her inward sight
Is fain to dwell—
What lurid light
Shall the last darkness of the world dispel,
The Mediator in His wrath
Descending down the lightning's path.

Yet, yet awhile, offended Saviour, pause,
In act to break
Thine outraged laws,
O spare Thy rebels for Thine own dear sake;
Withdraw Thine hand, nor dash to earth
The covenant of our second birth.

'Tis forfeit like the first—we own it all—
Yet for love's sake
Let it not fall;
But at Thy touch let veiled hearts awake,
That nearest to Thine altar lie,
Yet least of holy things descry.

Teacher of teachers! Priest of priests! from Thee
The sweet strong prayer
Must rise, to free
First Levi, then all Israel, from the snare.
Thou art our Moses out of sight—
Speak for us, or we perish quite.

Ascension Day.

Why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven. *Acts i. 11*

Soft cloud, that while the breeze of May
Chants her glad matins in the leafy arch,
Draw'st thy bright veil across the heavenly way
Meet pavement for an angel's glorious march:

My soul is envious of mine eye,
That it should soar and glide with thee so fast,
The while my grovelling thoughts half buried lie,
Or lawless roam around this earthly waste.

Chains of my heart, avaunt I say—
I will arise, and in the strength of love
Pursue the bright track ere it fade away,
My Saviour's pathway to His home above.

Sure, when I reach the point where earth
Melts into nothing from th' uncumbered sight,
Heaven will o'ercometh' attraction of my birth.
And I shall sink in yonder sea of light:

Till resting by th' incarnate Lord,
Once bleeding, now triumphant for my sake,
I mark Him, how by seraph hosts adored,
He to earth's lowest cares is still awake.

The sun and every vassal star,
All space, beyond the soar of angel wings,
Wait on His word: and yet He stays His car
For every sigh a contrite suppliant brings.

He listens to the silent tear
For all the anthems of the boundless sky—
And shall our dreams of music bar our ear
To His soul-piercing voice for ever nigh?

Nay, gracious Saviour—but as now
Our thoughts have traced Thee to Thy glory-throne
So help us evermore with thee to bow
Where human sorrow breathes her lowly moan.

We must not stand to gaze too long,
Though on unfolding Heaven our gaze we bend
Where lost behind the bright angelic throng
We see Christ's entering triumph slow ascend.

No fear but we shall soon behold,
Faster than now it fades, that gleam revive,
When issuing from his cloud of fiery gold
Our wasted frames feel the true sun, and live.

Then shall we see Thee as Thou art,
For ever fixed in no unfruitful gaze,
But such as lifts the new-created heart,
Age after age, in worthier love and praise.

Sunday after Ascension.

As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another,
as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 1 *St. Peter* iv. 10.

The Earth that in her genial breast
Makes for the down a kindly nest,
Where wafted by the warm south-west
It floats at pleasure,
Yields, thankful, of her very best,
To nurse her treasure:

True to her trust, tree, herb, or reed,
She renders for each scattered seed,
And to her Lord with dutiful heed
Gives large increase:
Thus year by year she works unfeared,
And will not cease.

Woe worth these barren hearts of ours,
Where Thou hast set celestial flowers,
And watered with more balmy showers

Than e'er distilled
In Eden, on th' ambrosial bowers—
Yet nought we yield.

Largely Thou givest, gracious Lord,
Largely Thy gifts should be restored;
Freely Thou givest, and Thy word
Is, "Freely give."
He only, who forgets to hoard,
Has learned to live.

Wisely Thou givest—all around
Thine equal rays are resting found,
Yet varying so on various ground
They pierce and strike,
That not two roseate cups are crowned
With dew alike:

E'en so, in silence, likest Thee,
Steals on soft-handed Charity,
Tempering her gifts, that seem so free,
By time and place,
Till not a woe the bleak world see,
But finds her grace:

Eyes to the blind, and to the lame
Feet, and to sinners wholesome blame,
To starving bodies food and flame,
By turns she brings;
To humbled souls, that sink for shame,
Lends heaven-ward wings:

Leads them the way our Saviour went,
And shows Love's treasure yet unspent;
As when th' unclouded heavens were rent.
Opening His road,
Nor yet His Holy Spirit sent
To our abode.

Ten days th' eternal doors displayed
Were wondering (so th' Almighty bade)
Whom Love enthroned would send, in aid

Of souls that mourn,
Left orphans in Earth's dreary shade
As noon as born.

Open they stand, that prayers in throngs
May rise on high, and holy songs,
Such incense as of right belongs
To the true shrine,
Where stands the Healer of all wrongs
In light divine;

The golden censer in His hand,
He offers hearts from every land,
Tied to His own by gentlest band
Of silent Love:
About Him wingèd blessings stand
In act to move.

A little while, and they shall fleet
From Heaven to Earth, attendants meet
On the life-giving Paraclete
Speeding His flight,
With all that sacred is and sweet,
On saints to light.

Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, all
Shall feel the shower of Mercy fall,
And startling at th' Almighty's call,
Give what He gave,
Till their high deeds the world appal,
And sinners save.

Whitsunday.

And suddenly there came a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. *Acts ii. 2-4*

When God of old came down from Heaven,
In power and wrath He came;

Before His feet the clouds were riven,
Half darkness and half flame:

Around the trembling mountain's base
The prostrate people lay;
A day of wrath and not of grace;
A dim and dreadful day.

But when he came the second time,
He came in power and love,
Softer than gale at morning prime
Hovered His holy Dove.

The fires that rushed on Sinai down
In sudden torrents dread,
Now gently light, a glorious crown,
On every sainted head.

Like arrows went those lightnings forth
Winged with the sinner's doom,
But these, like tongues, o'er all the earth
Proclaiming life to come:

And as on Israel's awe-struck ear
The voice exceeding loud,
The trump, that angels quake to hear,
Thrilled from the deep, dark cloud;

So, when the Spirit of our God
Came down His flock to find,
A voice from Heaven was heard abroad,
A rushing, mighty wind.

Nor doth the outward ear alone
At that high warning start;
Conscience gives back th' appalling tone;
'Tis echoed in the heart.

It fills the Church of God; it fills
The sinful world around;
Only in stubborn hearts and wills
No place for it is found.

To other strains our souls are set:
A giddy whirl of sin
Fills ear and brain, and will not let
Heaven's harmonies come in.

Come Lord, Come Wisdom, Love, and Power,
Open our ears to hear;
Let us not miss th' accepted hour;
Save, Lord, by Love or Fear.

Monday in Whitsun-week.

So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth;
and they left off to build the city. *Genesis xi. 8*

Since all that is not Heaven must fade,
Light be the hand of Ruin laid
Upon the home I love:
With lulling spell let soft Decay
Steal on, and spare the giant sway,
The crash of tower and grove.

Far opening down some woodland deep
In their own quiet glade should sleep
The relics dear to thought,
And wild-flower wreaths from side to side
Their waving tracery hang, to hide
What ruthless Time has wrought.

Such are the visions green and sweet
That o'er the wistful fancy fleet
In Asia's sea-like plain,
Where slowly, round his isles of sand,
Euphrates through the lonely land
Winds toward the pearly main.

Slumber is there, but not of rest;
There her forlorn and weary nest
The famished hawk has found,
The wild dog howls at fall of night,
The serpent's rustling coils affright
The traveller on his round.

What shapeless form, half lost on high,
Half seen against the evening sky,
 Seems like a ghost to glide,
And watch, from Babel's crumbling heap,
Where in her shadow, fast asleep,
 Lies fallen imperial Pride?

With half-closed eye a lion there
Is basking in his noontide lair,
 Or prowls in twilight gloom.
The golden city's king he seems,
Such as in old prophetic dreams
 Sprang from rough ocean's womb.

But where are now his eagle wings,
That sheltered erst a thousand kings,
 Hiding the glorious sky
From half the nations, till they own
No holier name, no mightier throne?
 That vision is gone by.

Quenched is the golden statue's ray,
The breath of heaven has blown away
 What toiling earth had piled,
Scattering wise heart and crafty hand,
As breezes strew on ocean's sand
 The fabrics of a child.

Divided thence through every age
Thy rebels, Lord, their warfare wage,
 And hoarse and jarring all
Mount up their heaven-assailing cries
To Thy bright watchmen in the skies
 From Babel's shattered wall.

Thrice only since, with blended might
The nations on that haughty height
 Have met to scale the Heaven:
Thrice only might a Seraph's look
A moment's shade of sadness brook—
 Such power to guilt was given.

Now the fierce bear and leopard keen
Are perished as they ne'er had been,
Oblivion is their home:
Ambition's boldest dream and last
Must melt before the clarion blast
That sounds the dirge of Rome.

Heroes and kings, obey the charm,
Withdraw the proud high-reaching arm,
There is an oath on high:
That ne'er on brow of mortal birth
Shall blend again the crowns of earth,
Nor in according cry

Her many voices mingling own
One tyrant Lord, one idol throne:
But to His triumphs soon
He shall descend, who rules above,
And the pure language of His love,
All tongues of men shall tune.

Nor let Ambition heartless mourn;
When Babel's very ruins burn,
Her high desires may breathe;—
O'ercome thyself, and thou mayst share
With Christ His Father's throne, and wear
The world's imperial wreath.

Tuesday in Whitsun-week.

When He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them.

St. John x. 4.

(Addressed to Candidates for Ordination.)

“Lord, in Thy field I work all day,
I read, I teach, I warn, I pray,
And yet these wilful wandering sheep
Within Thy fold I cannot keep.

“I journey, yet no step is won—
Alas! the weary course I run!
Like sailors shipwrecked in their dreams,
All powerless and benighted seems.”

What? wearied out with half a life?
Scared with this smooth unbloody strife?
Think where thy coward hopes had flown
Had Heaven held out the martyr's crown.

How couldst thou hang upon the cross,
To whom a weary hour is loss?
Or how the thorns and scourging brook
Whoshrinkest from a scornful look?

Yet ere thy craven spirit faints,
Hear thine own King, the King of Saints;
Though thou wert toiling in the grave,
'Tis He can cheer thee, He can save.

He is th' eternal mirror bright,
Where Angels view the Father's light,
And yet in Him the simplest swain
May read his homely lesson plain.

Early to quit His home on earth,
And claim His high celestial birth,
Alone with His true Father found
Within the temple's solemn round:—

Yet in meek duty to abide
For many a year at Mary's side,
Nor heed, though restless spirits ask,
“What, hath the Christ forgot His task?”

Conscious of Deity within,
To bow before an heir of sin,
With folded arms on humble breast,
By His own servant washed and blest:—

Then full of Heaven, the mystic Dove
Hovering His gracious brow above,

To shun the voice and eye of praise,
And in the wild His trophies raise:—

With hymns of angels in His ears,
Back to His task of woe and tears,
Unmurmuring through the world to roam
With not a wish or thought at home:—

All but Himself to heal and save,
Till ripened for the cross and grave,
He to His Father gently yield
The breath that our redemption sealed:—

Then to unearthly life arise,
Yet not at once to seek the skies,
But glide awhile from saint to saint,
Lest on our lonely way we faint;

And through the cloud by glimpses show
How bright, in Heaven, the marks will glow
Of the true cross, imprinted deep
Both on the Shepherd and the sheep:—

When out of sight, in heart and prayer,
Thy chosen people still to bear,
And from behind Thy glorious veil,
Shed light that cannot change or fail:—

This is Thy pastoral course, O Lord,
Till we be saved, and Thou adored;—
Thy course and ours—but who are they
Who follow on the narrow way?

And yet of Thee from year to year
The Church's solemn chant we hear,
As from Thy cradle to Thy throne
She swells her high heart-cheering tone.

Listen, ye pure white-robèd souls,
Whom in her list she now enrolls,
And gird ye for your high emprise
By these her thrilling minstrelsies.

And wheresoe'er in earth's wide field,
Ye lift, for Him, the red-cross shield,
Be this your song, your joy and pride—
“Our Champion went before and died.”

Trinity Sunday.

If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things? *St. John* iii. 12

Creator, Saviour, strengthening Guide,
Now on Thy mercy's ocean wide
Far out of sight we seem to glide.

Help us, each hour, with steadier eye
To search the deepening mystery,
The wonders of Thy sea and sky.

The blessèd Angels look and long
To praise Thee with a worthier song,
And yet our silence does Thee wrong.—

Along the Church's central space
The sacred weeks, with unfelt pace,
Hath borne us on from grace to grace.

As travellers on some woodland height,
When wintry suns are gleaming bright,
Lose in arched glades their tangled sight;—

By glimpses such as dreamers love
Through her grey veil the leafless grove
Shows where the distant shadows rove;—

Such trembling joy the soul o'er-awes
As nearer to Thy shrine she draws:—
And now before the choir we pause.

The door is closed—but soft and deep
Around the awful arches sweep,
Such airs as soothe a hermit's sleep.

From each carved nook and fretted bend
Cornice and gallery seem to send
Tones that with seraphs hymns might blend.

Three solemn parts together twine
In harmony's mysterious line;
Three solemn aisles approach the shrine:

Yet all are One—together all,
In thoughts that awe but not appal,
Teach the adoring heart to fall.

Within these walls each fluttering guest
Is gently lured to one safe nest—
Without, 'tis moaning and unrest.

The busy world a thousand ways
Is hurrying by, nor ever stays
To catch a note of Thy dear praise.

Why tarries not her chariot wheel,
That o'er her with no vain appeal
One gust of heavenly song might steal?

Alas! for her Thy opening flowers
Unheeded breathe to summer showers,
Unheard the music of Thy bowers.

What echoes from the sacred dome
The selfish spirit may o'ercome
That will not hear of love or home!

The heart that scorned a father's care,
How can it rise in filial prayer?
How an all-seeing Guardian bear?

Or how shall envious brethren own
A Brother on the eternal throne,
Their Father's joy, their hops alone?

How shall Thy Spirit's gracious wile
The sullen brow of gloom beguile,
That frowns on sweet Affection's smile?

Eternal One, Almighty Trine!
(Since Thou art ours, and we are Thine,)
By all Thy love did once resign,

By all the grace Thy heavens still hide,
We pray Thee, keep us at Thy side,
Creator, Saviour, strengthening Guide!

First Sunday after Trinity.

So Joshua smote all the country, . . . and all their kings; he left none remaining.
Joshua x. 40.

Where is the land with milk and honey flowing,
The promise of our God, our fancy's theme?
Here over shattered walls dank weeds are growing,
And blood and fire have run in mingled stream;
Like oaks and cedars all around
The giant corpses strew the ground,
And haughty Jericho's cloud-piercing wall
Lies where it sank at Joshua's trumpet call.

These are not scenes for pastoral dance at even,
For moonlight roving in the fragrant glades,
Soft slumbers in the open eye of Heaven,
And all the listless joy of summer shades.
We in the midst of ruins live,
Which every hour dread warning give,
Nor may our household vine or fig-tree hide
The broken arches of old Canaan's pride.

Where is the sweet repose of hearts repenting,
The deep calm sky, the sunshine of the soul,
Now Heaven and earth are to our bliss consenting,
And all the Godhead joins to make us whole.
The triple crown of mercy now
Is ready for the suppliant's brow,

By the Almighty Three for ever planned,
And from behind the cloud held out by Jesus' hand.

“Now, Christians, hold your own—the land before ye
Is open—win your way, and take your rest.”
So sounds our war-note; but our path of glory
By many a cloud is darkened and unblest:
And daily as we downward glide,
Life's ebbing stream on either side
Shows at each turn some mouldering hope or joy,
The Man seems following still the funeral of the Boy.

Open our eyes, Thou Sun of life and gladness,
That we may see that glorious world of Thine!
It shines for us in vain, while drooping sadness
Enfolds us here like mist: come Power benign,
Touch our chilled hearts with vernal smile,
Our wintry course do Thou beguile,
Nor by the wayside ruins let us mourn,
Who have th' eternal towers for our appointed bourne.

Second Sunday after Trinity.

Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. We know that we have passed
from death unto life, because we love the brethren. 1 *St. John* iii.13, 14.

The clouds that wrap the setting sun
When Autumn's softest gleams are ending,
Where all bright hues together run
In sweet confusion blending:—
Why, as we watch their floating wreath
Seem they the breath of life to breathe?
To Fancy's eye their motions prove
They mantle round the Sun for love.

When up some woodland dale we catch
The many-twinkling smile of ocean,
Or with pleased ear bewildered watch
His chime of restless motion;
Still as the surging waves retire
They seem to gasp with strong desire,

Such signs of love old Ocean gives,
We cannot choose but think he lives.

Wouldst thou the life of souls discern?

Nor human wisdom nor divine
Helps thee by aught beside to learn;

Love is life's only sign.

The spring of the regenerate heart,
The pulse, the glow of every part,
Is the true love of Christ our Lord,
As man embraced, as God adored.

But he, whose heart will bound to mark

The full bright burst of summer morn,
Loves too each little dewy spark,

By leaf or flow'ret worn:

Cheap forms, and common hues, 'tis true,
Through the bright shower-drop' meet his view;
The colouring may be of this earth;
The lustre comes of heavenly birth.

E'en so, who loves the Lord aright,

No soul of man can worthless find;
All will be precious in his sight,

Since Christ on all hath shined:

But chiefly Christian souls; for they,
Though worn and soiled with sinful clay,
Are yet, to eyes that see them true,
All glistening with baptismal dew.

Then marvel not, if such as bask

In purest light of innocence,
Hope against mope, in love's dear task,
Spite of all dark offence.

If they who hate the trespass most,
Yet, when all other love is lost,
Love the poor sinner, marvel not;
Christ's mark outwears the rankest blot.

No distance breaks this tie of blood;

Brothers are brothers evermore;
Nor wrong, nor wrath of deadliest mood,

That magic may o'erpower;
Oft, ere the common source be known,
The kindred drops will claim their own,
And throbbing pulses silently
Move heart towards heart by sympathy.

So it is with true Christian hearts;
Their mutual share in Jesus' blood
An everlasting bond imparts
Of holiest brotherhood:
Oh! might we all our lineage prove,
Give and forgive, do good and love,
By soft endearments in kind strife
Lightening the load of daily life.

There is much need; for not as yet
Are we in shelter or repose,
The holy house is still beset
With leaguer of stern foes;
Wild thoughts within, bad men without,
All evil spirits round about,
Are banded in unblest device,
To spoil Love's earthly paradise.

Then draw we nearer day by day,
Each to his brethren, all to God;
Let the world take us as she may,
We must not change our road;
Not wondering, though in grief, to find
The martyr's foe still keep her mind;
But fixed to hold Love's banner fast,
And by submission win at last.

Third Sunday after Trinity.

There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that
repenteth. *St. Luke xv. 10.*

O hateful spell of Sin! when friends are nigh,
To make stern Memory tell her tale unsought,

And raise accusing shades of hours gone by,
To come between us and all kindly thought!

Chilled at her touch, the self-reproaching soul
Flies from the heart and home she dearest loves,
To where lone mountains tower, or billows roll,
Or to your endless depth, ye solemn groves.

In vain: the averted cheek in loneliest dell
Is conscious of a gaze it cannot bear,
The leaves that rustle near us seem to tell
Our heart's sad secret to the silent air.

Nor is the dream untrue; for all around
The heavens are watching with their thousand eyes,
We cannot pass our guardian angel's bound,
Resigned or sullen, he will hear our sighs.

He in the mazes of the budding wood
Is near, and mourns to see our thankless glance
Dwell coldly, where the fresh green earth is strewed
With the first flowers that lead the vernal dance.

In wasteful bounty showered, they smile unseen,
Unseen by man—but what if purer sprights
By moonlight o'er their dewy bosoms lean
To adore the Father of all gentle lights?

If such there be, O grief and shame to think
That sight of thee should overcloud their joy,
A new-born soul, just waiting on the brink
Of endless life, yet wrapt in earth's annoy!

O turn, and be thou turned! the selfish tear,
In bitter thoughts of low-born care begun,
Let it flow on, but flow refined and clear,
The turbid waters brightening as they run.

Let it flow on, till all thine earthly heart
In penitential drops have ebbed away,
Then fearless turn where Heaven hath set thy part,
Nor shudder at the Eye that saw thee stray.

O lost and found! all gentle souls below
Their dearest welcome shall prepare, and prove
Such joy o'er thee, as raptured seraphs know,
Who learn their lesson at the Throne of Love.

Fourth Sunday after Trinity.

For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by the reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. *Romans* viii 19–22.

It was not then a poet's dream,
An idle vaunt of song,
Such as beneath the moon's soft gleam
On vacant fancies throng;

Which bids us see in heaven and earth,
In all fair things around,
Strong yearnings for a blest new birth
With sinless glories crowned;

Which bids us hear, at each sweet pause
From care and want and toil,
When dewy eve her curtain draws
Over the day's turmoil,

In the low chant of wakeful birds,
In the deep weltering flood,
In whispering leaves, these solemn words—
“God made us all for good.”

All true, all faultless, all in tune
Creation's wondrous choir,
Opened in mystic unison
To last till time expire.

And still it lasts; by day and night,
With one consenting voice,

All hymn Thy glory, Lord, aright,
All worship and rejoice.

Man only mars the sweet accord
O'erpowering with "harsh din"
The music of Thy works and word,
Ill matched with grief and sin.

Sin is with man at morning break,
And through the livelong day
Deafens the ear that fain would wake
To Nature's simple lay.

But when eve's silent footfall steals
Along the eastern sky,
And one by one to earth reveals
Those purer fires on high,

When one by one each human sound
Dies on the awful ear,
Then Nature's voice no more is drowned,
She speaks, and we must hear.

Then pours she on the Christian heart
That warning still and deep,
At which high spirits of old would start
E'en from their Pagan sleep.

Just guessing, through their murky blind
Few, faint, and baffling sight,
Streaks of a brighter heaven behind,
A cloudless depth of light.

Such thoughts, the wreck of Paradise,
Through many a dreary age,
Upborewhate'er of good and wise
Yet lived in bard or sage:

They marked what agonizing throes
Shook the great mother's womb:
But Reason's spells might not disclose
The gracious birth to come:

Nor could the enchantress Hope forecast
God's secret love and power;
The travail pangs of Earth must last
Till her appointed hour.

The hour that saw from opening heaven
Redeeming glory stream,
Beyond the summer hues of even,
Beyond the mid-day beam.

Thenceforth, to eyes of high desire,
The meanest thing below,
As with a seraph's robe of fire
Invested, burn and glow:

The rod of Heaven has touched them all,
The word from Heaven is spoken:
"Rise, shine, and sing, thou captive thrall;
Are not thy fetters broken?"

"The God Who hallowed thee and blest,
Pronouncing thee all good—
Hath He not all thy wrongs redrest,
And all thy bliss renewed?"

"Why mourn'st thou still as one bereft,
Now that th' eternal Son
His blessèd home in Heaven hath left
To make thee all His own?"

Thou mourn'st because sin lingers still
In Christ's new heaven and earth;
Because our rebel works and will
Stain our immortal birth:

Because, as Love and Prayer grow cold,
The Saviour hides His face,
And worldlings blot the temple's gold
With uses vile and base.

Hence all thy groans and travail pains,
Hence, till thy God return,

In Wisdom's ear thy blithest strains,
Oh Nature, seem to mourn.

Fifth Sunday after Trinity.

And Simon answering said unto Him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing; nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net. And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. *St. Luke* v. 5, 6.

“The livelong night we've toiled in vain,
But at Thy gracious word
I will let down the net again:—
Do Thou Thy will, O Lord!”

So spake the weary fisher, spent
With bootless darkling toil,
Yet on his Master's bidding bent
For love and not for spoil.

So day by day and week by week,
In sad and weary thought,
They muse, whom God hath set to seek
The souls His Christ hath bought.

For not upon a tranquil lake
Our pleasant task we ply,
Where all along our glistening wake
The softest moonbeams lie;

Where rippling wave and dashing oar
Our midnight chant attend,
Or whispering palm-leaves from the shore
With midnight silence blend.

Sweet thoughts of peace, ye may not last:
Too soon some ruder sound
Calls us from where ye soar so fast
Back to our earthly round.

For wildest storms our ocean sweep:—
No anchor but the Cross

Might hold: and oft the thankless deep
Turns all our toil to loss.

Full many a dreary anxious hour
We watch our nets alone
In drenching spray, and driving shower,
And hear the night-bird's moan:

At morn we look, and nought is there;
Sad dawn of cheerless day!
Who then from pining and despair
The sickening heart can stay?

There is a stay—and we are strong;
Our Master is at hand,
To cheer our solitary song,
And guide us to the strand.

In His own time; but yet a while
Our bark at sea must ride;
Cast after cast, by force or guile
All waters must be tried:

By blameless guile or gentle force,
As when He deigned to teach
(The lode-star of our Christian course)
Upon this sacred beach.

Should e'er thy wonder-working grace
Triumph by our weak arm,
Let not our sinful fancy trace
Aught human in the charm:

To our own nets ne'er bow we down,
Lest on the eternal shore
The angels, while oar draught they own,
Reject us evermore:

Or, if for our unworthiness
Toil, prayer, and watching fail,
In disappointment Thou canst bless,
So love at heart prevail.

Sixth Sunday after Trinity.

David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. *2 Samuel* xii. 13.

When bitter thoughts, of conscience born,
 With sinners wake at morn,
When from our restless couch we start,
 With fevered lips and withered heart,
Where is the spell to charm those mists away,
And make new morning in that darksome day?
 One draught of spring's delicious air,
 One steadfast thought, that God is there.

These are Thy wonders, hourly wrought,
 Thou Lord of time and thought,
Lifting and lowering souls at will,
 Crowding a world of good or ill
Into a moment's vision; e'en as light
Mounts o'er a cloudy ridge, and all is bright,
 From west to east one thrilling ray
 Turning a wintry world to May.

Would'st thou the pangs of guilt assuage?
 Lo! here an open page,
Where heavenly mercy shines as free
 Written in balm, sad heart, for thee.
Never so fast, in silent April shower,
Flushed into green the dry and leafless bower,
 As Israel's crownèd mourner felt
 The dull hard stone within him melt.

The absolver saw the mighty grief,
 And hastened with relief;—
“The Lord forgives; thou shalt not die:”
 'Twas gently spoke, yet heard on high,
And all the band of angels, used to sing
In heaven, accordant to his raptured string,
 Who many a month had turned away
 With veilèd eyes, nor owned his lay,

Now spread their wings, and throng around
To the glad mournful sound,
And welcome, with bright open face,
The broken heart to love's embrace.
The rock is smitten, and to future years
Springs ever fresh the tide of holy tears
And holy music, whispering peace
Till time and sin together cease.

There drink: and when ye are at rest,
With that free Spirit blest,
Who to the contrite can dispense,
The princely heart of innocence,
If ever, floating from faint earthly lyre,
Was wafted to your soul one high desire,
By all the trembling hope ye feel,
Think on the minstrel as ye kneel:

Think on the shame, that dreadful hour
When tears shall have no power,
Should his own lay th' accuser prove,
Cold while he kindled others' love:
And let your prayer for charity arise,
That his own heart may hear his melodies,
And a true voice to him may cry,
"Thy God forgives—thou shalt not die."

Seventh Sunday after Trinity.

From whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness?
St. Mark viii. 4.

Go not away, thou weary soul:
Heaven has in store a precious dole
Here on Bethsaida's cold and darksome height,
Where over rocks and sands arise
Proud Sirion in the northern skies,
And Tabor's lonely peak, 'twixt thee and noonday light.

And far below, Gennesaret's main
Spreads many a mile of liquid plain,

(Though all seem gathered in one eager bound,
Then narrowing cleaves you palmy lea,
Towards that deep sulphureous sea,
Where five proud cities lie, by one dire sentence drowned.

Landscape of fear! yet, weary heart,
Thou need'st not in thy gloom depart,
Nor fainting turn to seek thy distant home:
Sweetly thy sickening throbs are eyed
By the kind Saviour at thy side;
For healing and for balm e'en now thine hour is come.

No fiery wing is seen to glide,
No cates ambrosial are supplied,
But one poor fisher's rude and scanty store
Is all He asks (and more than needs)
Who men and angels daily feeds,
And stills the wailing sea-bird on the hungry shore.

The feast is o'er, the guests are gone,
And over all that upland lone
The breeze of eve sweeps wildly as of old—
But far unlike the former dreams,
The heart's sweet moonlight softly gleams
Upon life's varied view, so joyless erst and cold.

As mountain travellers in the night,
When heaven by fits is dark and bright,
Pause listening on the silent heath, and hear
Nor trampling hoof nor tinkling bell,
Then bolder scale the rugged fell,
Conscious the more of One, ne'er seen, yet ever near:

So when the tones of rapture gay
On the lorn ear, die quite away,
The lonely world seems lifted nearer heaven;
Seen daily, yet unmarked before,
Earth's common paths are strewn all o'er
With flowers of pensive hope, the wreath of man forgiven.

The low sweet tones of Nature's lyre
No more on listless ears expire,

Nor vainly smiles along the shady way
The primrose in her vernal nest,
Nor unlamented sink to rest
Sweet roses one by one, nor autumn leaves decay.

There's not a star the heaven can show,
There's not a cottage-hearth below,
But feeds with solace kind the willing soul—
Men love us, or they need our love;
Freely they own, or heedless prove
The curse of lawless hearts, the joy of self-control.

Then rouse thee from desponding sleep,
Nor by the wayside lingering weep,
Nor fear to seek Him farther in the wild,
Whose love can turn earth's worst and least
Into a conqueror's royal feast:
Thou wilt not be untrue, thou shalt not be beguiled.

Eight Sunday after Trinity.

It is the man of God, who was disobedient unto the word of the Lord. 1 *King*xiii.
26.

Prophet of God, arise and take
With thee the words of wrath divine,
The scourge of Heaven, to shake
O'er yon apostate shrine.

Where Angels down the lucid stair
Came hovering to our sainted sires
Now, in the twilight, glare
The heathen's wizard fires.

Go, with thy voice the altar rend,
Scatter the ashes, be the arm,
That idols would befriend,
Shrunk at thy withering charm.

Then turn thee, for thy time is short,
But trace not o'er the former way,

Lest idol pleasures court
Thy heedless soul astray.

Thou know'st how hard to hurry by,
Where on the lonely woodland road
Beneath the moonlight sky
The festal warblings flowed;

Where maidens to the Queen of Heaven
Wove the gay dance round oak or palm,
Or breathed their vows at even
In hymns as soft as balm.

Or thee, perchance, a darker spell
Enthralls: the smooth stones of the flood,
By mountain grot or fell,
Pollute with infant's blood;

The giant altar on the rock,
The cavern whence the timbrel's call
Affrights the wandering flock:—
Thou long'st to search them all.

Trust not the dangerous path again—
O forward step and lingering will!
O loved and warned in vain!
And wilt thou perish still?

Thy message given, thine home in sight,
To the forbidden feast return?
Yield to the false delight
Thy better soul could spurn?

Alas, my brother! round thy tomb
In sorrow kneeling, and in fear,
We read the Pastor's doom
Who speaks and will not hear.

The grey-haired saint may fail at last,
The surest guide a wanderer prove;
Death only binds us fast
To the bright shore of love.

Ninth Sunday after Trinity.

And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. 1 *Kings*xix. 12.

In troublous days of anguish and rebuke,
While sadly round them Israel's children look,
And their eyes fail for waiting on their Lord:
While underneath each awful arch of green,
On every mountain-top, God's chosen scene,
Of pure heart-worship, Baal is adored:

'Tis well, true hearts should for a time retire
To holy ground, in quiet to aspire
Towards promised regions of serener grace;
On Horeb, with Elijah, let us lie,
Where all around on mountain, sand, and sky,
God's chariot wheels have left distinctest trace;

There, if in jealousy and strong disdain
We to the sinner's God of sin complain,
Untimely seeking here the peace of Heaven—
"It is enough. O Lord! now let me die
E'en as my fathers did: for what am I
That I should stand where they have vainly striven?"—

Perhaps our God may of our conscience ask,
"What doest thou here frail wanderer from thy task?
Where hast thou left those few sheep in the wild?"
Then should we plead our heart's consuming pain,
At sight of ruined altars, prophets slain,
And God's own ark with blood of souls defiled;

He on the rock may bid us stand, and see
The outskirts of His march of mystery,
His endless warfare with man's wilful heart;
First, His great Power He to the sinner shows
Lo! at His angry blast the rocks unclose,
And to their base the trembling mountains part

Yet the Lord is not here: 'Tis not by Power
He will be known—but darker tempests lower;

Still, sullen heavings vex the labouring ground:
Perhaps His Presence thro' all depth and height,
Best of all gems that deck His crown of light,
The haughty eye may dazzle and confound.

God is not in the earthquake; but behold
From Sinai's caves are bursting, as of old,
The flames of His consuming jealous ire.
Woe to the sinner should stern Justice prove
His chosen attribute;—but He in love
Hastes to proclaim, "God is not in the fire."

The storm is o'er—and hark! a still small voice
Steals on the ear, to say, Jehovah's choice
Is ever with the soft, meek, tender soul;
By soft, meek, tender ways He loves to draw
The sinner, startled by His ways of awe:
Here is our Lord, and not where thunders roll.

Back, then, complainer; loath thy life no more,
Nor deem thyself upon a desert shore,
Because the rocks the nearer prospect close.
Yet in fallen Israel are there hearts and eyes
That day by day in prayer like thine arise;
Thou know'st them not, but their Creator knows.

Go, to the world return, nor fear to cast
Thy bread upon the waters, sure at last
In joy to find it after many days.
The work be thine, the fruit thy children's part:
Choose to believe, not see: sight tempts the heart
From sober walking in true Gospel ways.

Tenth Sunday after Trinity.

And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it. *St. Luke* xix.
41.

Why doth my Saviour weep
At sight of Sion's bowers?
Shows it not fair from yonder steep,
Her gorgeous crown of towers?

Mark well His holy pains:
'Tis not in pride or scorn,
That Israel's King with sorrow stains
His own triumphal morn.

It is not that His soul
Is wandering sadly on,
In thought how soon at death's dark goal
Their course will all be run,
Who now are shouting round
Hosanna to their chief;
No thought like this in Him is found,
This were a Conquerer's grief.

Or doth He feel the Cross
Already in His heart,
The pain, the shame, the scorn, the loss?
Feel e'en His God depart?
No: though He knew full well
The grief that then shall be—
The grief that angels cannot tell—
Our God in agony.

It is not thus He mourns;
Such might be martyr's tears,
When his last lingering look he turns
On human hopes and fears;
But hero ne'er or saint
The secret load might know,
With which His spirit waxeth faint;
His is a Saviour's woe.

“If thou had'st known, e'en thou,
At least in this thy day,
The message of thy peace! but now
'Tis passed for aye away:
Now foes shall trench thee round,
And lay thee even with earth,
And dash thy children to the ground,
Thy glory and thy mirth.”

And doth the Saviour weep
Over His people's sin,
Because we will not let Him keep
The souls He died to win?
Ye hearts, that love the Lord,
If at this, sight ye burn,
See that in thought, in deed, in word,
Ye hate what made Him mourn.

Eleventh Sunday after Trinity.

Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants? *2 Kings v. 26.*

Is this a time to plant and build,
Add house to house, and field to field,
When round our walls the battle lowers,
When mines are hid beneath our towers,
And watchful foes are stealing round
To search and spoil the holy ground?

Is this a time for moonlight dreams
Of love and home by mazy streams,
For Fancy with her shadowy toys,
Aërial hopes and pensive joys,
While souls are wandering far and wide,
And curses swarm on every side?

No—rather steel thy melting heart
To act the martyr's sternest part,
To watch, with firm unshrinking eye,
Thy darling visions as thy die,
Till all bright hopes, and hues of day,
Have faded into twilight gray.

Yes—let them pass without a sigh,
And if the world seem dull and dry,
If long and sad thy lonely hours,
And winds have rent thy sheltering bowers,

Bethink thee what thou art and where,
A sinner in a life of care.

The fire of God is soon to fall
(Thou know'st it) on this earthly ball;
Full many a soul, the price of blood,
Marked by th' Almighty's hand for good,
To utter death that hour shall sweep—
And will the saints in Heaven dare weep?

Then in His wrath shall God uproot
The trees He set, for lack of fruit,
And drown in rude tempestuous blaze
The towers His hand had deigned to raise;
In silence, ere that storm begin,
Count o'er His mercies and thy sin.

Pray only that thine aching heart,
From visions vain content to part,
Strong for Love's sake its woe to hide
May cheerful wait the Cross beside,
Too happy if, that dreadful day,
Thy life be given thee for a prey.

Snatched sudden from th' avenging rod,
Safe in the bosom of thy God,
How wilt thou then look back, and smile
On thoughts that bitterest seemed erewhile,
And bless the pangs that made thee see
This was no world of rest for thee!

Twelfth Sunday after Trinity.

And looking up to heaven, He sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. *St. Mark* vii. 34.

The Son of God in doing good
Was fain to look to Heaven and sigh:
And shall the heirs of sinful blood
Seek joy unmixed in charity?
God will not let Love's work impart
Full solace, lest it steal the heart;

Be thou content in tears to sow,
Blessing, like Jesus, in thy woe:

He looked to Heaven, and sadly sighed—

What saw my gracious Saviour there,
“With fear and anguish to divide

The joy of Heaven—accepted prayer?
So o’er the bed where Lazarus slept
He to His Father groaned and wept:
What saw He mournful in that grave,
Knowing Himself so strong to save?”

O’erwhelming thoughts of pain and grief

Over His sinking spirit sweep;—
What boots it gathering one lost leaf
Out of yon sere and withered heap,
Where souls and bodies, hopes and joys,
All that earth owns or sin destroys,
Under the spurning hoof are cast,
Or tossing in th’ autumnal blast?

The deaf may hear the Saviour’s voice,
The fettered tongue its chain may break;

But the deaf heart, the dumb by choice,

The laggard soul, that will not wake,
The guilt that scorns to be forgiven;—
These baffle e’en the spells of Heaven;
In thought of these, His brows benign
Not e’en in healing cloudless shine.

No eye but His might ever bear

To gaze all down that drear abyss,
Because none ever saw so clear

The shore beyond of endless bliss:
The giddy waves so restless hurled,
The vexed pulse of this feverish world,
He views and counts with steady sight,
Used to behold the Infinite.

But that in such communion high

He hath a fount of strength within,
Sure His meek heart would break and die,

O'erburthened by His brethren's sin;
Weak eyes on darkness dare not gaze,
It dazzles like the noonday blaze;
But He who sees God's face may brook
On the true face of Sin to look.

What then shall wretched sinners do,
When in their last, their hopeless day,
Sin, as it is, shall meet their view,
God turn His face for aye away?
Lord, by Thy sad and earnest eye,
When Thou didst look to Heaven and sigh:
Thy voice, that with a word could chase
The dumb, deaf spirit from his place;

As Thou hast touched our ears, and taught
Our tongues to speak Thy praises plain,
Quell Thou each thankless godless thought
That would make fast our bonds again.
From worldly strife, from mirth unblest,
Drowning Thy music in the breast,
From foul reproach, from thrilling fears,
Preserve, good Lord, Thy servants' ears.

From idle words, that restless throng
And haunt our hearts when we would pray,
From Pride's false chime, and jarring wrong,
Seal Thou my lips, and guard the way:
For Thou hast sworn, that every ear,
Willing or loth, Thy trump shall hear,
And every tongue unchainèd be
To own no hope, no God, but Thee.

Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity.

And He turned Him onto His disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: for I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them: and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them. *St. Luke x. 23, 24.*

On Sinai's top, in prayer and trance,
Full forty nights and forty days
The Prophet watched for one dear glance
Of thee and of Thy ways:

Fasting he watched and all alone,
Wrapt in a still, dark, solid cloud,
The curtain of the Holy One
Drawn round him like a shroud:

So, separate from the world, his breast
Might duly take and strongly keep
The print of Heaven, to be expressed
Ere long on Sion's steep.

There one by one his spirit saw
Of things divine the shadows bright,
The pageant of God's perfect law;
Yet felt not full delight.

Through gold and gems, a dazzling maze,
From veil to veil the vision led,
And ended, where unearthly rays
From o'er the ark were shed.

Yet not that gorgeous place, nor aught
Of human or angelic frame,
Could half appease his craving thought;
The void was still the same.

"Show me Thy glory, gracious Lord!
'Tis Thee," he cries, "not Thine, I seek."
Na, start not at so bold a word
From man, frail worm and weak:

The spark of his first deathless fire
Yet buoys him up, and high above
The holiest creature, dares aspire
To the Creator's love.

The eye in smiles may wander round,
Caught by earth's shadows as they fleet;

But for the soul no help is found,
Save Him who made it, meet.

Spite of yourselves, ye witness this,
Who blindly self or sense adore;
Else wherefore leaving your own bliss
Still restless ask ye more?

This witness bore the saints of old
When highest rapt and favoured most,
Still seeking precious things untold,
Not in fruition lost.

Canaan was theirs; and in it all
The proudest hope of kings dare claim:
Sion was theirs; and at their call
Fire from Jehovah came.

Yet monarchs walked as pilgrims still
In their own land, earth's pride and grace:
And seers would mourn on Sion's hill
Their Lord's averted face.

Vainly they tried the deeps to sound
E'en of their own prophetic thought,
When of Christ crucified and crowned
His Spirit in them taught:

But He their aching gaze repressed,
Which sought behind the veil to see,
For not without us fully blest
Or perfect might they be.

The rays of the Almighty's face
No sinner's eye might then receive;
Only the meekest man found grace
To see His skirts and live.

But we as in a glass espy
The glory of His countenance,
Not in a whirlwind hurrying by
The too presumptuous glance,

But with mild radiance every hour,
From our dear Saviour's face benign
Bent on us with transforming power,
Till we, too, faintly shine.

Sprinkled with His atoning blood
Safely before our God we stand,
As on the rock the Prophet stood,
Beneath His shadowing hand.—

Blessed eyes, which see the things we see!
And yet this tree of life hath proved
To many a soul a poison tree,
Beheld, and not beloved.

So like an angel's is our bliss
(Oh! thought to comfort and appal)
It needs must bring, if used amiss,
An angel's hopeless fall.

Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity.

And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. *St. Luke xvii.17, 18.*

Ten cleansed, and only one remain!
Who would have thought our nature's stain
Was dyed so foul, so deep in grain?
E'en He who reads the heart—
Knows what He gave and what we lost,
Sin's forfeit, and redemption's cost,—
By a short pang of wonder crossed
Seems at the sight to start:

Yet 'twas not wonder, but His love
Our wavering spirits would reprove,
That heavenward seem so free to move
When earth can yield no more
Then from afar on God we cry,
But should the mist of woe roll by,

Not showers across an April sky
Drift, when the storm is o'er,

Faster than those false drops and few
Fleet from the heart, a worthless dew.
What sadder scene can angels view
Than self-deceiving tears,
Poured idly over some dark page
Of earlier life, though pride or rage,
The record of to-day engage,
A woe for future years?

Spirits, that round the sick man's bed
Watched, noting down each prayer he made,
Were your unerring roll displayed,
His pride of health to abase;
Or, when, soft showers in season fall
Answering a famished nation's call,
Should unseen fingers on the wall
Our vows forgotten trace:

How should we gaze in trance of fear!
Yet shines the light as thrilling clear
From Heaven upon that scroll severe,
"Ten cleansed and one remain!"
Nor surer would the blessing prove
Of humbled hearts, that own Thy love,
Should choral welcome from above
Visit our senses plain:

Than by Thy placid voice and brow,
With healing first, with comfort now,
Turned upon him, who hastes to bow
Before Thee, heart and knee;
"Oh! thou, who only wouldst be blest,
On thee alone My blessing rest!
Rise, go thy way in peace, possessed
For evermore of Me."

Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity.

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. *St. Matthew*, vi. 28.

Sweet nurslings of the vernal skies,
 Bathed in soft airs, and fed with dew,
What more than magic in you lies,
 To fill the heart's fond view?
In childhood's sports, companions gay,
In sorrow, on Life's downward way,
How soothing! in our last decay
 Memorials prompt and true.

Relics ye are of Eden's bowers,
 As pure, as fragrant, and as fair,
As when ye crowned the sunshine hours
 Of happy wanderers there.
Fall'n all beside—the world of life,
How is it stained with fear and strife!
In Reason's world what storms are rife,
 What passions range and glare!

But cheerful and unchanged the while
 Your first and perfect form ye show,
The same that won Eve's matron smile
 In the world's opening glow.
The stars of heaven a course are taught
Too high above our human thought:
Ye may be found if ye are sought,
 And as we gaze, we know.

Ye dwell beside our paths and homes,
 Our paths of sin, our homes of sorrow,
And guilty man where'er he roams,
 Your innocent mirth may borrow.
The birds of air before us fleet,
They cannot brook our shame to meet—
But we may taste your solace sweet
 And come again to-morrow.

Ye fearless in your nests abide—
Nor may we scorn, too proudly wise,
Your silent lessons, undescried
By all but lowly eyes:
For ye could draw th' admiring gaze
Of Him who worlds and hearts surveys:
Your order wild, your fragrant maze,
He taught us how to prize.

Ye felt your Maker's smile that hour,
As when He paused and owned you good;
His blessing on earth's primal bower,
Ye felt it all renewed.
What care ye now, if winter's storm
Sweep ruthless o'er each silken form?
Christ's blessing at your heart is warm,
Ye fear no vexing mood.

Alas! of thousand bosoms kind,
That daily court you and caress,
How few the happy secret find
Of your calm loveliness!
“Live for to-day! to-morrow's light
To-morrow's cares shall bring to sight,
Go sleep like closing flowers at night,
And Heaven thy morn will bless.”