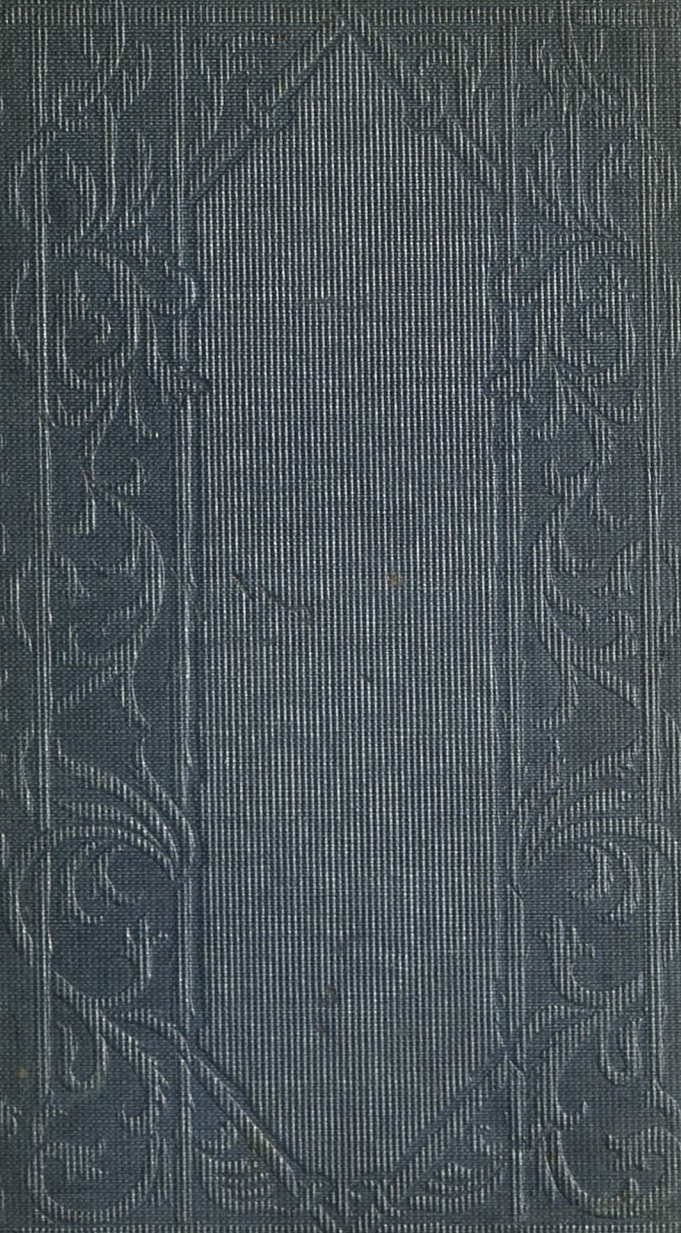
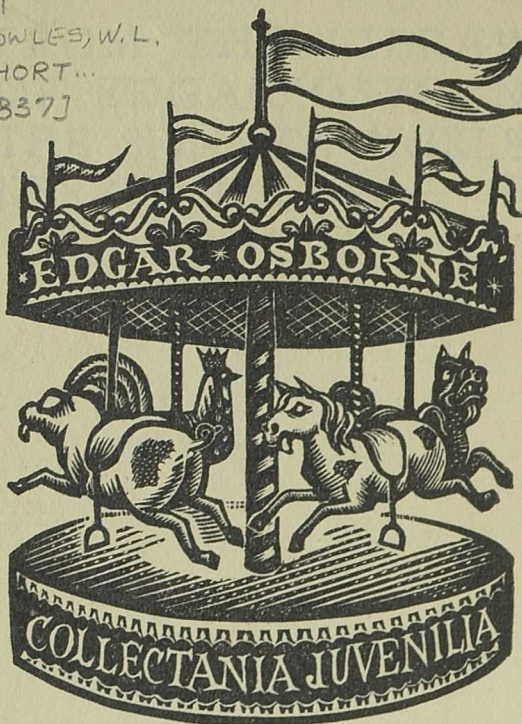


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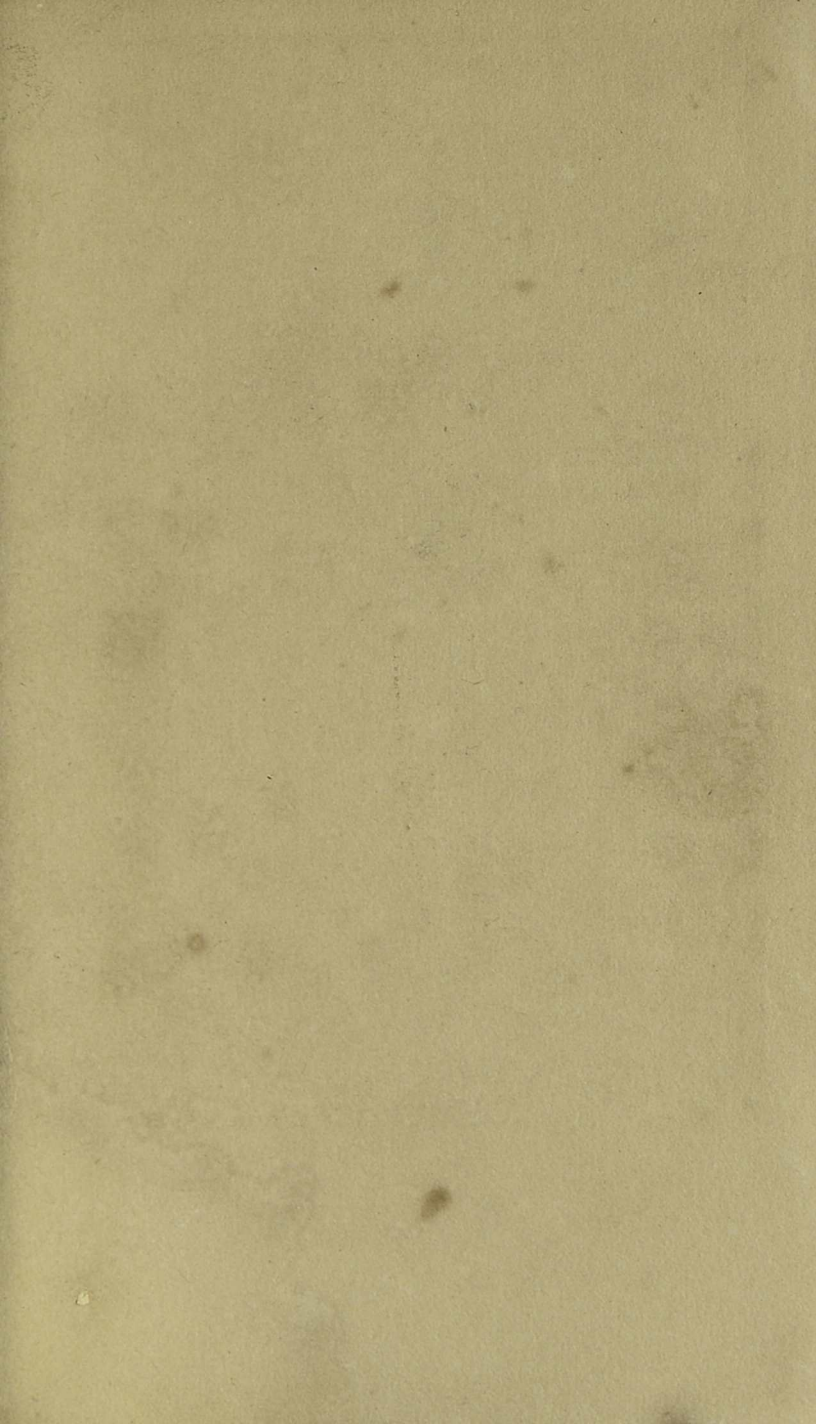


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MABEL OSBORNE





Printed by Sir J. Reynolds & Co.

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THE GIRL AND CHICKENS.

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| See, sister, where the chickens trip, | Dear sister, shall we shut our eyes. |
| All busy in the morn: | And to the night be blind. |
| Look, how their heads they dip and dip. | For drink of Him who food supplies |
| To peck the scatter'd corn. | To us, and all mankind. |

Or many be our wants, or few.
 Or fine, or coarse, our fare,
 To Heaven's protecting care is due
 The voice of praise and prayer.

SHORT VERSES

FOR

LITTLE CHILDREN.

BY THE

REV. W. L. BOWLES.

LONDON:

DARTON AND CLARK.

One Shilling.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT
OF
BREMILL PARSONAGE HOUSE
AND GARDEN.

“ The village Parson’s modest mansion rose.”

GOLDSMITH.

THE traveller from Bath to London, about three miles from the town of Chippenham, on ascending the hill, called Derry-hill, sees a vast extent of country spreading on the left hand. On gaining the summit of this ascent, he sees, on the right, the long line of the woods of Bowood Park, the seat of the Marquess of Lansdowne, extending for about two miles, half-way between the towns of Calne and Chippenham.

Immediately opposite the line of the plantations, of the princely domains of Bowood Park, at about three miles distance to the right, rising on an eminence, appear conspicuously in the sunshine, the ancient tower of Bremhill Church among the elms, and near the white gable-ends of a retired, but picturesque Parsonage. That is the Parsonage of the Author of these Village Verses, and the Church.

* In the parsonage house of Bremhill, the ideas of consonance and picturesque propriety have been consulted, as far as they could be adopted, the house being old, but large and convenient. By parapetting the whole with a simple gothic ornamental railing, such as appears on the church at Stourhead, a unity

* Extracted from History of Bremhill, now out of print.

has been given to the exterior, and the long low roofs have put on an ecclesiastical appearance.

The garden contains upwards of two acres, with a gravel walk under the windows. A Gothic porch has been added, the bow-windows being surmounted with the same kind of parapet as the house, somewhat more ornamental. It lies to the morning sun; the road to the house, on the north, enters through a large arch. The garden is on a slope, commanding views of the surrounding country, with the tower of Calne Church in front, the woods of Bowood on the right, and the mansion and woods of Walter Henegage, esq. towards the south. The view to the south-east is terminated by the last chalky cliffs of the Marlborough downs, extending to within a few miles of Swindon. In the garden, a winding path from the gravel walk, in front of the house, leads to a small piece of water, originally a square pond.

This walk as it approaches the water, leads into a darker shade, and descending some steps, placed to give a picturesque appearance to the bank, you enter a kind of cave with a dripping rill, which falls into the water below, whose bank is broken by thorns, and hazels, and poplars, among darker shrubs.

Passing round the water, you come to an arched walk of hazels, which leads again to the green in front of the house, where, dipping a small slope, the path passes near an old and ivied elm. As this seat looks on the magnificent line of Bowood park and plantations, the obvious thought could not well be avoided:—

When in thy sight another's vast domain
Spreads its dark sweep of woods, dost thou complain?
Nay! rather thank the God who plac'd thy state
Above the lowly, but beneath the great;

And still his name with gratitude revere
Who bless'd the sabbath of thy leisure here.

The walk leads round a plantation of shrubs, to the bottom of the lawn, from whence is seen a fountain, between a laurel arch; and through a dark passage a grey sun-dial appears among beds of flowers, opposite the fountain.

The sun-dial, a small antique twisted column, grey with age, was probably the dial of the abbot of Malmesbury, and counted his hours when at the adjoining lodge; for it was taken from the garden of the farm-house, which had originally been the summer retirement of this mitred lord. It has the appearance of being *monastic*, but a more ornate capital has been added, the plate on which bears the date of 1688. I must again venture to give the appropriate inscription;—

To note the few and fleeting hours,
That dial, stands amid the flowers,
Mortal, let the sight impart
Its pensive moral to thy heart.
If youth and joy too soon are pass'd,
If life's sweet roses fade too fast,
If thou dost muse on many a day,
Of silent summers stolen away,
Or grieve for many an earthly loss,
Oh! turn, and think upon the cross.

The whole of the small green slope is here dotted with beds of flowers; a step, into some rock-work, leads to a kind of hermit's oratory, with crucifix and stained glass, built to receive the shattered fragments, as their last asylum, of the pillars of Stanley Abbey. The dripping water passes through the rock-work into a large shell, the gift of a valued friend, the author of "*The Pleasures of Memory*;" and I add with less hesitation, the inscription, because it was furnished by the author of "*The Pains*

of Memory," a poem, in its kind, of the most exquisite harmony and fancy, though the author has long left the bowers of the muses, and the harp of music, for the severe professional duties of the bar. I have some pride in mentioning the name of Peregrine Bingham, being a near relation, as well as rising in character and fame at the bar. The verses will speak for themselves, and are not unworthy *his* muse whose poem suggested the comparisons. The inscription is placed over the large Indian shell :

" Snatch'd from an Indian ocean's roar,
I drink the whelming tide no more ;
But in this rock, remote and still,
Now serve to pour the murmuring rill.
Listen ! do thoughts awake, which long have slept ?
Oh ! like his song, who placed me here,
The sweetest song to memory dear,
When life's tumultuous storms are past,
May we, to such sweet music, close at last
The eye-lids that have wept ! " *

Leaving the small oratory, a terrace of flowers leads to a Gothic stone-seat at the end, and returning to the flower-garden, we wind up a narrow path from the more verdant scene, to a small dark path, with fantastic roots shooting from the bank, where a grave-stone appears, on which an hour-glass is carved.

A root-house fronts us, with dark boughs branching over it. Sit down in that old carved chair. If I cannot welcome some illustrious visitors in such consummate verse as Pope, I may, I hope, not without blameless pride, tell you, reader, in this chair have sat, among other visitors, Sir Samuel Romilly, Sir George Beaumont, Sir Humphry Davy,

* Pleasures of Memory.

poets as well as philosophers ; Madame de Stael, Dugald Stewart, Rogers, Moore, Crabbe, Southey, &c.

Two lines on a small board on this root-house point the application :

Dost thou lament the dead, and mourn the loss
Of many friends, Oh ! think upon the cross !

Over an old tomb-stone, through an arch, at a distance in light beyond, there is a vista to a stone cross, which, in the seventeenth century, would have been *idolatrous*.

To detail more of the garden would appear ostentatious, and I fear I may be thought egotistical in detailing so much. Having conducted the reader thus far, I shall take him, before we part, through an arch, to an old yew, which has seen the persecution of the loyal English clergy ; has witnessed their return, and many changes of ecclesiastical and national fortune. Under the branches of that solitary but mute historian of the pensive plain let us now rest ; it stands at the very extreme northern edge of that garden which we have just perambulated. It fronts the tower, the church-yard, and looks on to an old sun-dial, once a *cross*. The *cross* was found broken at its foot, probably, by the country iconoclasts of the day. I have brought the interesting fragment again into light, and placed it conspicuously opposite to an old Scotch fir in the church-yard. The accumulation of the soil of centuries had covered an ascent of four steps at the bottom of this record of silent hours. These steps have been worn in places, from the act of frequent prostration or kneeling, by the forefathers of the hamlet, perhaps before the church existed. From a seat near this old yew tree you see the church-yard and battlements of the church on one side ; and on the other you look over a great extent of country.

On a still summer's evening, the distant sound of the hurrying coaches on the great London road are heard, as they pass to and from the metropolis. On this spot this last admonitory inscription fronts you:

There rest the village dead, and there too I
 (When yonder dial points the hour,) must lie ;
 Look round, the distant prospect is display'd
 Like life's fair landscape, mark'd with light and shade.
 Stranger, in peace pursue thine onward road,
 And ne'er forget thy long and last abode.
 Yet keep the Christian's hope before thine eye,
 And seek the bright reversion of the sky.

Christian reader, we have passed a few hours together, I hope not entirely unprofitably to you. But the sun is shining out, the bells are ringing, we will now leave the parsonage, the garden, the churchyard, and pass along this village terrace. I may take up a few moments more of your time whilst we slowly pace along the path-way which leads to the road, and listen to the village peal,

Like the dream of a village chime,
 Which in youth we lov'd to hear.

We have now come to the end of this meadow. *Here* is the path that once led to the rural abode of the royal Abbot of Malmesbury, and which still leads to the humbler parsonage; *there* is the road that conducts you back to the GREAT WORLD.

Companion of a few hours, while the sunshine of life lasts, you will hear the morning music of these bells at a distance, and remember, if any thing should have been said worth remembering in this account of a retired parish in Wiltshire,

In peace pursue thy distant road,
 But ne'er forget thy LONG and LAST ABODE.

Bremhill, 1837.

LITTLE VILLAGER'S
V E R S E B O O K.

FAREWELL TO SUMMER.

How soon the Summer-days are fled,
The violet and the primrose dead !
No more the lark with dewy wings
Aloft, amid the rainbow sings ;
Winter is come ! and see forlorn,
He sits, beneath the leafless thorn :
But God is through all times the same ;
Come, let us praise his glorious name :
Nor summer, winter—clouds, nor night,
Are seen about his throne of light ;
There is no death, or change, or care,
Saviour of sinners, lead us there !

WIDOW AND UNDUTIFUL SON.

WILLIAM, I do not like the boy
Whom you have made your friend,
In idleness is all his joy,—
Small hope he will amend.

You were my only comfort left,
When your poor father slept
In death ;—and of his love bereft,
God knows, how much I wept.

Fate had dealt very hard with me ;
God may my grief assuage,
But I had hope that you would be
The comfort of my age.

Oh ! God, from every evil keep,
From all temptations save,
'Till with your father I shall sleep,
In the same quiet grave.

THE
HOUSELESS ROBIN IN JANUARY.

WHEN silent snows around are spread,
Of every bird that flies,
Poor Robin goes the last to bed,
And is the first to rise.*

In the cold dawn he sits forlorn,
Then "Chit—chit—chit" we hear,
To bring to his deserted thorn
The few friends that are near.

This is his morning hymn. It says,
In this cold wintry weather,
Poor friends who wait for better days,
Sing one sad song together.

Happy when age and death appear,
If some few friends remain,
Even so the last cold hours to cheer,
Till Spring's eternal reign.

* The Lark only is up in the skies earlier in summer.

HEDGE, TO THE GARDEN-ROSE.

YES ! thou art fairest of the fair,
 And in thy garden-bed,
 Or, decking young Louisa's hair,
 Dost lift, in pride, thy head,—

Thou scornest a poor sister-rose,
 That in the hedge-row green,
 At random, without culture, grows
 Unnoticed, or scarce seen.

But spare thy boast—thy hues as frail,
 As short thy life shall be,
 When thou shalt shrink from the cold blast,
 And fade away like me—

If both shall fade, as prouder man
 Must fade, who passes by—
 Virtue, beyond life's narrow span,
 Shall bloom and never die.

TO A CHILD

WHO HAD LOST HER FATHER.

COME here, poor girl, what makes you cry?
Father is dead and gone,
And mother, little Tom, and I,
Are left on earth alone.

Go home, my child, and read your book,
And bid your mother pray,
And to the Lord for comfort look,
Who gives and takes away.

Go home, poor child, and then kneel down
And pray that God may bless,
However Fortune's clouds may frown,
The poor and fatherless.

CHEDDAR PINK, SOMERSET.

OH ! look, upon this rocky ledge
 A little flower is seen,
 It asks not for the sheltering hedge,
 Nor dots the meadow green.

And such in cold adversity,
 Is meek and modest worth,
 Which smiles beneath th' inclement sky,
 Or sharp wind of the north.

The lily lifts her head, and scorns
 The flower beside the road,
 And such the beauty that adorns
 The peasant's lone abode.

And if a duteous daughter strives
 To fly from snares of vice,
 One flower, the world's cold clime survives,
 To bloom in Paradise.

ON A TOMBSTONE,

INSCRIBED WITH GOLD LETTERS, " HERE
LIES A MAN BELOVED OF GOD !"

HARK, Hark ! it was the passing bell !
It tolls—slowly as it tolls—to tell
Another soul is fled away ;
Where is it ? Oh ! let Angels say.
But when, as all things mortal must,
The body is returned to dust—
Though the vain stone that marks the sod,
Boast " here lies one beloved by God ;"
Then tremble, Christian, to survey
Such proud presumption in the way
That leads to thy own church, for there
Thou still hast heard " The Lord's own pray'r,"
Trod the same path thy fathers trod,
Walk'd humbly, meekly, with thy God ;
And when the bell for thee doth toll—
May God, through Christ, receive thy soul.

THE MOTHER TO HER ELDEST SON.

OH William ! have you said your prayers
This morn, before you came down stairs ?
Who watch'd you in your sleep last night ?
Who welcomes you to morning light ?
When you were ill and like to die,
Who heard and saw me pray and cry ?
Your father, though he now is gray,
Goes out to plough and work all day,
Yet has he not, beyond all wealth,
Contentedness of heart and health ?
Still strong, beyond his age's date,
Because his youth was temperate.
Happy on Sundays to repair
To his forefathers' house of prayer.
Now, go to school, and read your book,
And sober, for such blessings look.

THE DYING DAUGHTER.

WEEP not for me, my mother dear,
That this sad world I leave,
Sweet music from Heaven's gate I hear,
And therefore do not grieve.

But mind my little bird be fed,
And from the rosemary-tree,
Gather a slip, when I am dead,
Then, to "remember me."

I never more shall see the sun,—
I go where troubles cease,—
"Father, in Heav'n, thy will be done,—
Farewell, I die in peace."

POOR POLL,

OF THE PARSONAGE KITCHEN.

Poor Poll, how strange a fate was thine !
In Indian regions far away,
Where suns of summer cloudless shine,
Thy lids first open'd to the day.

Forlorn, companionless, and cold,
Yet taught from rope to rope to skip,
Where the blue billows round thee roll'd,
Thy world and prison was a ship.

Loud-laughing in Trafalgar's fight,
When on the deck thy master stood,*
A chain-shot struck him in thy sight,
And thy green plumes were wet with blood.

In thy last master's parsonage
 The changes of thy fortune cease,
 There thou dost meet advancing age,
 And wait like him, to die in peace.

* Captain Cook, of the *Bellerophon*, bought this bird in India; it was *laughing* in the midst of that terrible conflict, near Captain Cook, when he was shot dead. The Bird was afterwards brought to England; but the Captain's widow, hourly reminded of its first master, consigned it to the care of Mrs. Bowles, knowing it would be kindly attended till its death. Its last days were spent in Bremhill Parsonage Kitchen. It had been the companion of Captain Cook for many years both on ship-board and on shore. It died of age, but how old it was precisely I have not the means of ascertaining. A monument is erected to the memory of Captain Cook in St. Pauls Church. Poor old Poll is buried, with other animals, in Bremhill Garden.

LOST DAUGHTER

RESTORED TO HER MOTHER.

A BROKEN hearted mother sigh'd,
Her grey hair on her brow—
And when the night came down she cried,
“Oh! where is Sarah now?”

Her younger child sprung from the chair,
Look'd through the window-pane—
And cried, “Oh! mother, Oh! look there—
“Sarah is come again.”

“My child—my child—my long-lost child,
“Where—but you look so ill!

“Your cheek how pale! your eyes how wild!
“Your mother loves you still.

“And welcome to this humble home,
“Come, cast all fears away—

“No more, through the cold night, to roam—
“But, go to bed and pray.”

TWO OLD MEN OF THE ASYLUM.

Look at those two old men ; one, clean
And neat, at church is always seen ;
The other, not so old, and dress'd—
His hair uncomb'd—in tatter'd vest.
Thoughtless he spent his youthful prime,
A slave to idleness and crime :
And now, his helplessness is such,
He bends on a sustaining crutch.
The other thoughtful, but content,
Looks back upon a life well spent,
And knows, when every grief is past,
And he lays down his staff at last,
He then shall meet, with rapturous song,
The Saviour he has served so long.

ON A YOUNG WOMAN'S GRAVE.

HE whom she loved—deceived—forsook—
No voice of joy again she hears,
Sadness was ever on her look,
That gave her bloom of youth to tears.

Pity her not: but, maidens fair,
Who troop as gay as summer by,
Think that ye hear a voice, “BEWARE!
Lest you too, broken-hearted, die!”

MY FATHER'S GRAVE.

“ My Father's grave :” I heard her say,
And mark'd a starting tear,
Oh ! no ! I would not go away,
“ My Father's grave is here.”

Some tender tears in silence start,
When Spring's gay birds I hear,
For all things whisper to my heart,
“ My Father's grave is here.”

Pleasure may shine in colours gay,
And brighter scenes appear ;
But no ! I would not go away,
“ My Father's grave is here.”

COTTAGE CHILD.

CHILD of the turfy cot, if aught could move
 The coldest heart to pity and to love,
 'Twere surely found in thee!—stern traces mark
 The brow of age, where age impresses dark
 The stealing line of sorrow, but thine eye
 Wears not deceit, or pride, or cruelty.

Thy tear is soon forgotten: thou wilt weep,
 And then the wintry winds will lull thy sleep,
 As 'twere with some sad music—and thy smiles,
 Unlike the world's, oft hiding cruel wiles,
 Befit thy helpless innocence, and lend
 A charm might win mankind to be thy friend.

OLD MAN OF NINETY.

OLD Man, I saw thee in thy garden chair,
Sitting in silence, mid the shrubs and trees
Of thy small cottage croft; while murmuring
bees

Went by, and almost touch'd thy temples bare,
Edg'd with a few flakes of the whitest hair;
And sooth'd by the faint hum of ebbing seas,
And song of birds, and breath of the young
breeze;—

Thus didst thou sit, feeling the summer air
Blow gently,—with a sad still decadence,
Sinking to earth in hope, but all alone:—
Oh! hast thou wept to feel the lonely sense
Of earthly loss, musing on voices gone?
Hush the vain murmur that without offence,
Thy head may rest in peace beneath the
Church-yard stone.

HYMN FOR 300 CHILDREN,

ASSEMBLED IN THE CATHEDRAL; EDUCATED BY
THE SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.*

OH! if tears may fill the eyes,
A Parent's and a Christian's tears,
If ever strains to Heaven may rise,
Which Pity's bending angel hears—

Yes! 'tis when a sight like this
Shall bid those tears of gladness start,
Awake the thoughts of heavenly bliss,
And steal from earth and care the heart.

Here, are no dark clouds of care
That hang on some pale mother's look;
Her child at night-fall said its prayer—
And see! now clasps its holy book.

* The music of this hymn was composed by the author;
it was sung after he had preached a sermon.

Did that mother kiss its hair ?

Or watch its sleep beside the bed ?

Or thought, "poor child," how wilt thou fare

"In this hard world when I am dead ?"

To the Lord we lift our prayers,

That child from sin and grief to save,

Lest a poor father's few gray hairs

Be brought with sorrow to the grave.

Children, feel the grateful debt,

Raise your hopes to bliss above,

Nor ever, in the world forget,

A Christian's Faith—a Christian's Love.

HYMN FOR MORNING SERVICE,

ON THE OPENING OF A NEW CHURCH.

GOD of all worlds, Lord of all might,
Thy Temple in eternal light,
Beyond the bounds of space we see,
Great God, is only fit for thee !

But when the bell of Sunday calls,
Disdain not thou such holy walls,
As humble piety can raise,
To swell the sounds of prayer and praise.

Awak'd from slumbers of the night,
Rejoicing in the Sabbath light,
Still to thy house may we repair,
To join that voice of praise and prayer.

When the bell tolls, and friends are dead,
And the green turf is on our head,
May our sons' sons, from year to year,
And their sons' sons, assemble here.

Till man from the cold grave shall rise,
To join his Saviour in the skies;
When we may hope to meet again,
And swell a more angelic strain.

VILLAGE EPITAPHS,

IN BREMHILL CHURCH-YARD,

*Placed there by the Pastor, to commemorate
the guiltless characters and virtues of a few
of the humbler part of his flock.*

I.

ON A YOUNG WOMAN WHO DIED OF A
CONSUMPTION.

OUR Pastor placed this humble stone: be-
neath

Lies one more, victim of untimely death :
Stranger, approach and read—it tells the tale,
Of silent duty in life's lowly vale,
Of one, her aged parents' only care,
Never beheld without a parents' prayer !

Her pale consumption smote in youth's fair
bloom ;

How wept the few who follow'd to the tomb,
Her mother most, and husband, for she left
An infant and a husband both bereft ;
He, as it smiles, that infant shall behold,
And weep the more for *Her* who here lies cold.

II.

ON AN OLD PARISHIONER. IN THE WAY
TO CHURCH.

READER ! this heap of earth, this grave-stone
mark ;

Here lie the last remains of poor John Dark !
Five years beyond man's age he liv'd, and trod
This path, each Sabbath to the house of God,
From youth to age ; nor ever from his heart
Did that best PRAYER OUR SAVIOUR TAUGHT,
depart.

At his last hour, with lifted hands, he cried,
"THY KINGDOM COME, THY WILL BE DONE,"
and died.

III.

ON AN OLD SOLDIER, AGED 92.

A POOR old soldier shall not lie unknown,
 Without a verse, and this recording stone.
 'Twas his, in youth, o'er distant lands to stray,
 Danger and death companions of his way.
 Here, in his native village, stealing age
 Clos'd the lone evening of his pilgrimage.
 Speak of the past—of names of high renown,
 Or brave commanders long to dust gone down!
 His look with instant animation glow'd,
 Tho' ninety winters on his head had snow'd.
 His country, while he liv'd, a boon supplied,
 And faith her shield held o'er him when he
 died.

Think, Christian, that his spirit lives with God,
 And pluck the wild weeds from the lowly sod,
 Where, dust to dust, beneath the chancel
 shade,
 Till the last trump, a brave man's bones are
 laid.

IV.

ON AN AGED FATHER AND MOTHER, WRITTEN
IN THE CHARACTER OF A MOST EXEMPLARY
SON: THE FATHER LIVING TO 87 YEARS.

My father—my poor mother ! both are gone,
And o'er your cold remains I place this stone
In memory of your virtues—may it tell
How long *one* parent liv'd, and *both*, how well!
And oh ! my mother, a memorial be,
Of all I owe in this sad world to thee !
How poor, alas ! this tribute to thy love,
Whose best and brightest record is above.

V.

ON THE FATHER OF A LARGE FAMILY.

How quiet is the bed of death,
Where the departing Christian lies,
While angels watch his parting breath,
And wait to close his weary eyes !

Children, who mark this lowly spot,
With eyes perhaps with weeping dim !
HERE LIES YOUR FATHER ! pray to God,
That you may live and die like him !

VI.

ON JOHN HARDING, AGED 84.

LAY down thy pilgrim's staff upon this heap,
 And till the morning of redemption sleep,
 Old way-farer of earth ! From youth to age,
 Long, but not weary, was thy pilgrimage ;
 Thy Christian pilgrimage, for truth and prayer
 Alone enabled thee some griefs to bear.
 Left, in old age, without a husband's aid,
 Thy wife shall pray beside thee to be laid :
 For more than a kind father didst thou prove,
 To fourteen children of her faithful love.
 May future fathers of the village trace
 The same sure path to the same resting place ;
 And future sons, taught in their youth to save,*
 Learn that first lesson from a Poor Man's
 Grave !

* He saved from one hundred pounds, left when a lad to him by his father, four hundred pounds.

VII.

ON A DUTIFUL DAUGHTER,

WHO DIED TWO YEARS AFTER HER FATHER,
 BUT IN THE SAME WEEK OF THE YEAR, AND
 BURIED IN THE SAME GRAVE.

“ OH ! Mother, I will rise and pray,”
 With feeble voice, she cried,
 “ For this, dear Mother, is the day
 On which poor Father died.”

Faintly she spoke—she knelt—she pray’d,
 Her eyes, with weeping dim,—
 And ere seven days had pass’d, was laid
 In the same grave with him.

Oh ! when all worlds, before their God,
 In trembling hope shall stand,
 She shall awake from the same sod,
 And smile at his right hand.

THE END.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following COMPOSITIONS were written originally, to be learnt by heart by Poor Children of my own Parish, who have been instructed every Sunday through the Summer, for many years, on the Garden Lawn before the Parsonage House, by Mrs. Bowles. The object, which to the best of my knowledge is in a great degree* novel, was briefly to describe the most obvious images in Country Life, familiar to every child ; and in the smallest compass to connect them with the earliest feelings of Humanity and Piety. Fourteen of these little Poems were composed with this view many years ago ; but it was not thought of extending their knowledge

* Every one is acquainted with Dr. Watts's elegant Hymns for Children ; but out of twenty-eight hymns, three only are of the nature of these compositions.

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THE END.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following COMPOSITIONS were written originally, to be learnt by heart by Poor Children of my own Parish, who have been instructed every Sunday through the Summer, for many years, on the Garden Lawn before the Parsonage House, by Mrs. Bowles. The object, which to the best of my knowledge is in a great degree* novel, was briefly to describe the most obvious images in Country Life, familiar to every child ; and in the smallest compass to connect them with the earliest feelings of Humanity and Piety. Fourteen of these little Poems were composed with this view many years ago ; but it was not thought of extending their knowledge

* Every one is acquainted with Dr. Watts's elegant Hymns for Children ; but out of twenty-eight hymns, three only are of the nature of these compositions.

beyond the village circle, to which they were originally limited, except by a very few copies given away.

I have now added to the number, and revised the whole ; thinking, when early Education is so widely extended, they may be found, on a wider scale, to answer the purpose for which they were written. They may be also found acceptable to Mothers, in a higher station of life, who might wish to impress on their children's memory, as they grow up, a love of natural scenes, combined with the earliest feelings of Sympathy and Religion.

Some of the Compositions, such as "The Swan," "Mower," &c. are purposely designed for the exercise of more advanced intellect. The first composition is merely introductory.

W. L. B.

PATH OF LIFE.

Oh, Lord,—in sickness and in health,
To every lot resign'd—
Grant me before all worldly wealth,
A meek and thankful mind.

As, Life, thy upland path we tread,
And often pause in pain,
To think of friends or parents dead,
Oh ! let us not complain.

The Lord may give or take away,
But nought our faith can move,
While we to Heaven can look, and say,
“ OUR FATHER lives above.”

SUN-RISE.

WHEN from my humble bed I rise,
And see the morning Sun,
Who, glorious in the eastern skies,
His journey has begun ;

I think of that Almighty Power,
Which call'd his orb from night ;
I think how many at this hour,
Rejoice beneath its light :

And then I pray, in every land,
Where'er its light is shed ;
That all who live might bless the hand
Which gives their daily bread.

SUMMER'S EVENING.

As homeward, by the evening star,
I pass along the plain,
I see the taper's light afar,
Shine through our cottage-pane.

My brothers and my sisters dear,
The child upon the knee,
Spring, when my hastening steps they hear,
And smile to welcome me.

And when the fire is growing dim,
And mother's labours cease,
I fold my hands, and say my hymn,
And "lay me down in peace."

SPRING.—CUCKOO.

THE Bee is humming in the Sun,
The yellow Cowslip springs ;
And, hark ! from yonder Woodland's side
Again the Cuckoo sings !

“ Cuckoo,—Cuckoo ! ” no other note,
She sings, from day to day ;
But I, though a poor Cottage Girl,
Can work, and read, and pray.

And whilst in knowledge I rejoice,
Which heavenly truth displays,
Oh ! let me still employ my voice,
In my Redeemer's praise.

SHEEP-FOLD.

THE Sheep were in the field at night ;
And now, a new-born Lamb
Totters and trembles in the light,
Or bleats beside its dam.

How anxiously the mother tries,
With every tender care,
To screen it from inclement skies,
And the cold morning air.

The hail-storm of the east is fled,
She seems with joy to swell,
While ever, as she bends her head,
I hear the tinkling bell.

So while for me a mother's prayer
Ascends to Heaven above,
May I repay her tender care
With gratitude and love.

SUNDAY MORNING.

THE Sunday bells are knolling slow,
The Summer morn how fair,
While father, mother, children go,—
And seek the house of prayer.

Some musing roam the church-yard round,
Some turn their head with sighs,
And gaze upon the new-made ground,
Where Old Giles Summers lies.

But see the Pastor in his band,
The bells have ceas'd to knoll,
Now enter, and at God's command,
Think, Christian, of thy soul.

Whilst heav'nly hopes around thee shine,
As in God's presence live,
And calmer comforts shall be thine,
Than all the world can give.

HEN AND CHICKENS.

SEE, sister, where the chickens trip,
All busy in the morn ;
Look, how their heads they dip and dip,
To peck the scatter'd corn.

Dear sister, shall we shut our eyes,
And to the sight be blind,
Nor think of Him who food supplies,
To us, and all mankind ?

Or many be our wants, or few,
Or fine, or coarse, our fare,
To Heaven's protecting care is due
The voice of praise and prayer.

POOR MAN'S GRAVE.

OLD Andrews of the hut is dead,
And many a child appears,
While slowly "dust to dust" is read,
Around his grave in tears.

So he is gone, where small and great,
And poor, and high, and low,
And Dives proud in worldly state,
And Lazarus must go.

May we among the Just be found,
Though short our sojourn here,
Who, when the Trump of Doom shall sound,
May hear it without fear.

PRIMROSE.

'Tis the first primrose ! see how meek,
Yet beautiful it looks,
As just a lesson it may speak
As that which is in books.

While gardens show, in flow'ring pride,
The lily's stately ranks,
It loves its modest head to hide
Beneath the bramble banks.

And so the little cottage maid
May bloom unseen and die ;
But she, when transient flow'rets fade,
Shall live with Christ on high.

HOUR-GLASS.

As by my mother's side I stand,
Whose hairs from time are few and gray,
I watch the hour-glass shed its sand,
To mark how wears the night away.

Her sight, by age, is now decay'd ;
The spectacles, to aid her eyes,
Upon the Bible-leaf are laid,
That open in the window lies.

Though age must many ills endure,
As time for ever runs away,
This shows her Christian comforts sure,
And leads to Heaven's eternal day.

BIRD'S NEST.

IN yonder brake there is a nest ;
But come not, George, too nigh,
Lest the poor mother, frighten'd thence,
Should leave her young and fly.

Think with what pain, through many a day,
Soft moss and straw she brought ;
And let our own dear mother's care
Be present to our thought.

And think how must her heart deplore,
And droop with grief and pain,
If those she rear'd, and nurs'd, and lov'd,
She ne'er should see again.

MOWER.

HARK ! to the Mower's whistling blade,
How steadily he mows,
The grass is heap'd, the daisies fade,
All scatter'd as he goes.

So Time, as with a stern delight,
Mid human havoc tow'rs,
And sweeps, resistless in his might,
Kingdoms as grass and flow'rs.

The flow'rs of Life may bloom or fade,
But He in whom I trust,
Though cold, and in my grave-clothes laid,
Can raise me from the dust.

SATURDAY NIGHT.

COME, let us, ere we go to bed,
O'er the decaying embers chat,
Tho' little Mary hangs her head,
And strokes no more the purring cat.

And let us tell how pris'ners pine
In silent dungeons, dark and drear,
Whilst in our face the embers shine,
And all is calm and peaceful here.

The English cot is free from cares,
But see the brand* is wasted quite ;
Come, little Mary, say your prayers,
Kiss, mother, kiss ! good night, good night.

* Brand is a piece of wood for the fire.

SUNDAY NIGHT.

LET us unfold God's holy book,
And by the taper's light,
With hearts subdued, and sober look,
So spend the Sabbath night.

Where now the thoughts of anxious life,
Its guilty pleasures where?
Here dies its loud and mourning strife,
And all its sounds of care.

Let other views our hearts engross,
To our Redeemer true,
Who seems expiring on the cross,
To say, "I DIED FOR YOU."

SWALLOW AND RED-BREAST

THE swallows at the close of day,
When autumn shone with fainter ray,
Around the chimney circling flew,
Ere yet they bade a long adieu
To climes where soon the winter drear
Shall close the unrejoicing year.
Now with swift wing they skim aloof,
Now settle on the crowded roof,
As council and advice to take,
Ere they the chilly north forsake;
Then one disdainful turn'd his eye
Upon a red-breast twitt'ring nigh,
And thus began, with taunting scorn,
"Thou household imp, obscure, forlorn,
"Thro' the deep winter's dreary day,
"Here, dull and shiv'ring, shalt thou stay,

“ Whilst we who make the world our home,
“ To softer climes, impatient roam,
“ Where summer, still on some green isle,
“ Rests, with her sweet and lovely smile.
“ Thus speeding far, and far away,
“ We leave behind the short’ning day.”

“ ’Tis true, (the red-breast answer’d meek,)
“ No other scenes I ask, or seek ;
“ To every change alike resign’d,
“ I fear not the cold winter’s wind.
“ When Spring returns, the circling year
“ Shall find me still contented here ;
“ But whilst my warm affections rest
“ Within the circle of my nest,
“ I learn to pity those that roam,
“ And love the more my humble home.”

APRIL SHOWER.

WHEN rain-drops, glistening from the thatch,
Like drops of silver, run ;
Our old blind grannam lifts the latch,
To feel the cheering Sun.

She sees no rainbow in the sky :
But when the Cuckoo sung,
She thought upon the years gone by,
When she was blithe and young.

But God, who comforts want and age,
Shall be her only friend,
And bless, till her long pilgrimage
In silent dust shall end.

BUTTERFLY AND BEE.

METHOUGHT I heard a butterfly
Say to a labouring bee,
"Thou hast no colours of the sky
"On painted wings, like me!"

"Poor child of vanity, those dyes
"And colours bright and rare,
(With mild reproof the bee replies,)
"Are all beneath my care.

"Content I toil from morn till eve,
"And, scorning idleness,
"To tribes of gaudy sloth I leave
"The vanities of dress."

WINTER.—RED-BREAST.

Poor Robin sits and sings alone,
When show'rs and driving sleet,
By the cold winds of winter blown,
The cottage casement beat.

Come, let him share our chimney-nook,
And dry his dripping wing,
See, little Mary shuts her book,
And cries, "Poor Robin, sing."

Methinks I hear his faint reply,—
"When cowslips deck the plain,
"The lark shall carol in the sky,
"And I shall sing again.

"But in the cold and wintry day,
"To you I owe a debt,
"That, in the sunshine of the May,
"I never can forget."

CHILD AND BLIND GRANDFATHER.

THOUGH grandfather has long been blind,
And his few locks are gray,
He loves to feel the Summer wind,
Round his pale temples play.

We'll lead him to some quiet place,
Some unfrequented nook,
Where winds breathe soft, and wild flow'rs grace
The borders of the brook.

There he shall sit, as in a dream,
Though nought he can behold ;
Till the brook's murmur—it shall seem,
The voice of friends of old.

Think no more of them, aged man,
For here thou hast no friend ;
Think—since this life is but a span,
Of joys that have no end.

GLOW-WORM.

Oh, what is this, which shines so bright,
And, in the lonely place,
Hangs out its small green lamp at night,
The dewy bank to grace?

It is a glow-worm,—still and pale,
It shines the whole night long,
When only stars, oh, nightingale,
Seem list'ning to thy song.

And so, amid the world's cold night,
Thro' good report or ill,
Shines out the humble Christian's light,
As lonely and as still.

SWAN.

Look at that Swan ! how still he goes !
His neck and breast, like silver, gleam ;
He seems, majestic as he rows,
The glory of the lonely stream.

There is a glory in the war,
A glory, when the warrior wears—
(His visage mark'd with many a scar)
The laurel, wet with human tears.

Those scenes, no glory can impart,
With trumps, and drums, and noises rude,
Like that which fills his silent heart,
Who walks with God in quietude.

THE CONVICT.

LUKE ANDREWS is transported ! never more
 To see his Sisters, Mother, or the shore
 Of his own Country ! never more to see
 The cottage-smoke rise o'er the sheltering tree !
 Never again beneath the morning beam,
 "Jocund to drive a-field his tinkling team !"

When first the path of idleness he trod,
 And left, on Sabbath days, the House of God—
 The fellowship of wild companions kept—
 How oft at night his mother wak'd and wept !
 When he is homeless, and far off at sea,
 She now will sigh, "Does he REMEMBER me ?"
 Remember her ! alas ! the thought how vain !
 She ne'er will see him in this world again !
 And she is broken-hearted ; but her trust
 Is still in Him whose works and ways are just.

Oh ! may we still revere his great command,
 And die remember'd, in our native land !

VILLAGE-BELLS.

WHO does not love the village-bells ?
 The cheerful peal, and solemn toll ?
One, of the rustic wedding tells,
 And *one*, bespeaks a parting soul.

The lark in sunshine sings his song,
 And dress'd in garments white and gay,
 The village lasses trip along,
 For this is Susan's wedding-day.

Ah! gather flow'rs of sweetest hue,
 Young violets from the bank's green side,
 And on poor Mary's coffin strew,
 For in the bloom of youth she died.

So passes life !—the smile, the tear,
 Succeed, as on our path we stray ;
 Thy " KINGDOM COME !" for we are here,
 " As guests who tarry but a day."

STAR-LIGHT FROST.

THE stars are shining over head,
In the clear frosty night,
So will they shine when we are dead,
As countless and as bright.

For brief the time, and small the space,
That e'en the proudest have,
Ere they conclude their various race,
In silence and the grave.

But the pure soul from dust shall rise,
By our great Saviour's aid,
When the last trump shall rend the skies,
And all the stars shall fade !

WITHER'D LEAF.

OH ! mark the wither'd leaves that fall,
In silence to the ground ;
Upon the human heart they call,
And preach without a sound.

They say, " So passes man's brief year,
" To-day his green leaves wave ;
" To-morrow chang'd by time, and sere,*
" He drops into the grave."

Let wisdom be our sole concern,
Since life's green days, how brief !
And faith and heavenly hope shall learn
A lesson from THE LEAF.

* Sere is dry-withered.

SHEPHERD AND HIS DOG,

ON THE WILTSHIRE DOWNS.

My dog and I are lame and old,
 On these wide downs we watch all day;
 He looks in my face when the wind blows cold,
 And thus methinks I hear him say:—

“The grey stone circle* is below,
 “The village-smoke is at our feet;
 “We nothing hear but the sailing crow,
 “And feeding flocks that roam and bleat.

“Far off, the early horseman hies,
 “In shower or sunshine riding on,—
 “Yonder the dusty whirlwind flies,
 “The distant coach is seen and gone.

“Though solitude around is spread,
 “Master, alone thou shalt not be;
 “And when the turf is on thy head,
 “I only shall remember thee!”

I mark'd his look of faithful love;
 I plac'd my hand on his shaggy side;
 “There is a Sun that shines above,
 “A Sun that shines on both,” I cried.

* Avebury.

CHILDREN GATHERING FLOWERS

IN THE CHURCH-YARD OF SALISBURY CATHEDRAL.

WHEN summer comes, the little children play
 In the Church-Yard of our Cathedral gray,
 Busy as morning bees, and gathering flowers,
 In the brief sunshine ; they, of coming hours
 Reck not, intent upon their play, tho' Time
 Speed like a spectre by them, and their prime
 Bear on to sorrow—"ANGEL, cry aloud!"
 Tell them of life's long evening—of the shroud:
 No! let them play; for age alone, and care,
 Too soon will frown, to teach them what they
 are.

Then let them play; but come, with aspect
 bland,
 Come, Charity, and lead them by the hand;
 Come, Faith, and point amidst life's saddest
 gloom
 A light from Heaven, that shines beyond the
 tomb.

When they look up, and in the clouds admire
 The lessening shaft of that ærial spire,
 So be their thoughts uplifted from the sod,
 Where Time's brief flowers they gather—to
 their God.

DUTIFUL CHILD

READING THE STORY OF JOSEPH TO A SICK FATHER.

BROTHER and sister are a-maying gone ;
By my sick father's bed I watch alone :
Light in the sun, from field to field they roam,
To bring a cowslip-ball or May-thorn home :
I sit and read of Joseph, in the land
Of Egypt, when his guilty brothers stand
Before him,—but they know him not,—aside
He turns his face, the bursting tears to hide.
Scarce to these words an utterance he can give,
“ I am your brother Joseph,—doth he live,
“ My father! the old man of whom ye speak ?”
And tears are falling on my father's cheek.
Tho' my poor mother rests among the dead,
And pain and sickness visit this sad bed,
We think not, while we turn the holy page,
Of this vain world,—of sorrow, or of age,—
And oh ! my father,—I am bless'd indeed,—
Bless'd for *your* sake, that I have learnt to read.

OLD LABOURER.

ARE you not tir'd, oh poor old man ?

The drops are on your brow ;
Your labour with the Sun began,
And you are labouring now.

“ I murmur not to dig the soil ;

“ For I have heard it read,

“ That man by industry and toil

“ Must eat his daily bread.

“ The lark awakes me with his song,

“ That hails the morrow gray,

“ And when I mourn for human wrong,

“ I think of God, and pray.”

Let worldlings* waste their time and health,
And try each vain delight,
They cannot buy, with all their wealth,
The labourer's rest at night.

* Those whose thoughts are only of this world.

BIRD IN CAGE.

Oh ! who would keep a little bird confin'd ?
When cowslip-bells are nodding in the wind,
When every hedge as with " Good-morrow "
rings,

And heard from wood to coombe, the blackbird
sings.

Oh ! who would keep a little bird confin'd
In his cold wiry prison ! Let him fly,
And hear him sing, " How sweet is liberty ! "

LITTLE MARY'S LINNET.

DEAR Mary, if thy little bird
Should, all the Winter long,
Pleas'd from the window to be heard,
Repay thy kindness in a song ;

A lesson let it still convey,
To all with sense endued ;
“ And such the voice,” oh, let it say,
“ The still small voice of gratitude.”

THE END.

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