

LITERATURE.

TO ONE BELOVED.

BY PARK BENJAMIN.

I

Years, years have past,
My sweetest, since I heard thy voice's tone,
Saying thou would'st be mine, and mine alone;
Dark years have cast
Their shadows on me, and my brow no more
Smiles with the happy light that once it wore.
My heart is sere,
Life a leaf driven by the autumnal gale;
The early rose-hues of my life are pale,
Its garden drear,
Its bower deserted; for my singing bird
Among its green retreats no more is heard.
Oh, trust them not
Who say that I have long forgotten thee,
That even now thou art not dear to me,
Though far my lot
From thine, and though Time's onward rolling tide
May never waft me, dearest, to thy side.
I would forget,
Alas! I strive in vain; in dreams, in dreams,
The glory of thy smile upon me beams—
No star has met
My gaze for years, whose lustre doth not shine,
Whose look of speechless love is not like thine.
The evening air—
Soft witness of the floweret's fragrant death—
Floats not so sweetly to me as thy breath;
The moonlight fair
On snowy waste sleeps not with purer ray
Than thy clear memory on my soul's decay.
I love thee still,
And I shall love thee ever, and above
All earthly objects, with undying love.
The mountain rill
Seeks with no surer course the far, bright sea,
Than my unchanged affection flows to thee!

II

A year has flown,
My heart's best angel, since for thee I strung
My frail, unheeded lyre; since last I sung
With earnest tone
My love undying—yet, in all my dreams,
Thy smiles have lingered like the stars on streams.
On ruffled wing,
Like storm-tost bird, that year has sped away
Into the shadowy past, and not a day
To me could bring
Familiar joys like those I knew of yore,
But morn and noon and night a sorrow bore.
Alas for Time!
For me his sickle reaps the harvest fair
Of hopes which blossomed in the summer air
Of youth's warm clime,
But leave to bloom the deeply-rooted tree,
Planted by Grief and nursed by Memory.
Beneath its shade
I muse and weep alone, while daylight dies,
Changing its dolphin-hues in Western skies;
And when they fade,
And when the moon, of starry hosts the queen,
Waves her transparent sceptre o'er the scene:
I seek the vale,
And, roving there mid sylvan solitudes,
Lost in the shadows of columnar woods,
A vision pale
As the white wings of seraphs in the night,
Rises before me with supernal light.
I seek the mount,
And in communion with a loftier sphere,
I feel thy presence spiritually near;
I seek the fount,
And thou art my Egeria, and the glade
Around the sparkling waves is holier made.
I seek the brook,
And in the silvery shout of waters hear
Thy merry, melting tones salute my ear,
And in the look
Of lillies, floating from the lovely land,
See something soft and stainless as thy hand.
All things convey
A likeness of my early, only love,
All fairest things around, below, above—
The diamond spray
Over the billows, and the bedded pearls,
And the light flag the lighter breeze unfurls.
For, in the grace
As well as in the beauty of the sea,
I find a true similitude to thee,
And I can trace
Thine image in the loveliness that dwells
Mid inland forests and sequestered dells.
I am thine own,
My sweetest, though thou never canst be mine;
I would not, if I could, the bonds untwine
Around me thrown,

Since first I breathed to thee that word of fire,
Re-echoed now, how feebly! by my lyre.

Love, constant love—

Age cannot quench it—like the primal ray
From the vast fountain that supplies the day,
Far, far above
Our cloud-encircled region, it will flow,
As pure and as eternal in its glow.

Oh, when I die,

(If until then thou may'st not drop a tear,
Weep then for one to whom thou wast most dear,
To whom thy sigh,
Denied in life, in death if fondly given,
Will seem the dearest incense—air of Heaven.

III.

Dost thou not turn,
Fairest and kindest, from the flowery way
On which thy feet are treading every day,
And seek to learn
Tidings sometimes of him who loved thee well,
More than his pen can write or tongue can tell?

Gaze not thine eyes

(Ah, wild and lustrous eyes! ye were my fate,
Upon the lines he fashioned, not of late,
But when the skies
Of joy were over him, and he was blessed
That he could sing of treasures he possessed?

Treasures more dear

Than gold in ingots or barbaric piles
Of pearls and rubies—thy most precious smiles.
Bring, bring me here,
Relentless Time, some of those treasures now,
And print a hundred wrinkles on my brow!

Make me grow old

Before my years are many, take away
Health, youth, ambition—let my strength decay,
Let me be sold
To be the slave of some strange, barren lore—
Only those treasures to my heart restore!

Ah, I implore

A boon that cannot be, a blessing flown
Unto a realm so distant from my own,
That, could I soar
On eagle's wings, it still would be afar,
As if I strove to reach the zenith star.

The future vast

Before me lifts majestic steeps on high,
Which I must stand upon before I die,
For in the past
Love buried lies, and nothing lives but Fame,
To speak unto the coming age my race and name.

IV.

VALEDICTION.

Old Time steals on;

Hairs silvery white are mingling with the brown,
And heavy burdens press my spirit down,
And they are gone—
The fresh, young joys that were forever springing,
And flown the birds that were forever singing.

Still to my love,

My earliest, fondest, though my lost, I turn,
Like one who weeps above a funeral urn,
And, like a dove
Plaining for his companions, do I grieve
Mid the deep shadows of this starry eve.

Where is my home?

O'er the wide world like an autumnal leaf,
I'm tost and driven by the wind of grief;
I would not roam,
And yet for me there is no household spot,
Where in new hopes past memories are forgot.

This deep midnight,

This holy hush, this undisturbed repose,
Or yon large star, that in the zenith glows,
Brings no delight,
For thus of yore its beams were wont to shine,
When thy dear eyes were upward turned to mine.

Another now

Lists to the music of thy low, soft tone,
Another folds thee to his heart alone;
And that fair brow,
That sunny cheek, which I so purely pressed,
Another's lips in passion have caressed.

Avaits it not

That I should sorrow, that my dreams should be
Filled with bright angels, who resemble thee;
For I must blot
Thine image from my soul, and dash away
The golden colors of my love's young day.

Ever farewell!

Bend thou and listen to my latest word,
And let the fountains of thy heart be stirred,
While my sad shell
Breathes its faint murmurs—for they must recall
When thou wast mine as I was thine—thine all.

On many a shrine

I've cast the offerings of a careless hour
Since from my heart I plucked its deathless flower,
And made it thine—
But gave I worship deep and pure and true,
To her alone who feels this last adieu.

NATURE AND ART.

A TALE OF CROSS PURPOSES.

'Away with that dull book, Rosa;—you will have sufficient leisure to spoil your eyes when I shall need you less,' said the beautiful Edna Newell, to her less lovely cousin Rosaline.

'At your service, cousin Edna,' replied the sweet-tempered maiden, as she laid the dull '*Course of Time*' upon an ottoman at her feet.

'Now, then, just select for me the most becoming ornament for my hair, if you please,—always remembering that I wish to look particularly well this evening—even to surpass myself, if possible!'

'Ah! again for a conquest, Edna!'

'As you like,' replied the coquettish beauty, placing upon her fair brow a row of costly gems;—this pearly band would be just the thing, had I never worn it,—that silver wreath is too common,—what think you of this brilliant tiara? does it not give one a look of royalty?'
'Just why I would not wear it, cousin. I love simplicity.'

'So do not I, then: and this bright diadem shall grace my brow to-night; for, do you know, Rosa dear, that the handsome stranger, Sir Henrick de Lisle, is to honor the assembly with his presence this evening?'

'And pray, cousin Edna, what then?'

'What then, indeed!—and just imagine that talented and haughty Southern nabob kneeling at the shrine of the 'adorable Edna'—and pray, cousin Rosa, what then?'

A merry-ringing laugh rang through the apartment, which seemed but the joyous outpourings of an overflowing heart.

'Ah! Edna—Edna! you richly merit a reprimand—but if you are so anxious to render your charms irresistible, allow me to dress your hair for once, nor condemn my skill untried; for, believe, lovely faces and light hearts need not the aid of gems.'

'Enough—proceed, sweet Quakeress,' said the merry girl, seating herself opposite the broad mirror.

Already the white taper fingers of Rosa were twining with the jetty locks—the shining bands were gathered in a knot, and tastefully fastened by a small golden pin; a tiny wreath of moss rosebuds was twined with the glossy braids, and all was completed.

'Thank you, sweet coz; but oh! horrible simplicity;—and thus am I arrayed for a conquest!—this night I am to storm the fortress of a hitherto invincible heart!—to secure a lover! to win a husband! and all by my own matchless charms—unadorned! Cousin Rosa, your flattery is unpardonable—your taste abominable, and your whims unbearable:—from simplicity, singularity, and single blessedness, good Lord deliver us!' and, quick as thought, the ill-fated rose buds were lying at her feet, and again the ebon tresses waved over her white neck and shoulders unconfined.

We will now leave the capricious beauty to arrange her own bright locks, and follow the half-vexed Rose to her own simple toilette. Her hair was dressed by Nature; the soft chestnut curls shaded a neck and brow of pearly whiteness, unconfined and unadorned. A flowing robe of snowy white veiled her sylph-like form, confined at the waste by a *ceinture* of silver embroidery, fastened by a pearly clasp,—the only ornament that graced the form of sweet Rose Newell. We must pardon the smile that dimpled her glowing cheeks as her image stole a sly glance from her sparkling eyes in passing again the mirror, as she hied to her cousin's apartment—to behold the fabric of splendor, reared upon the ruins of her own pure and simple taste. The beautiful hair of Edna was half concealed beneath the broad glittering tiara that adorned, or, rather, *deformed* her brow. She was arrayed in a bodice of white satin, embroidered with silver, with a flowing skirt of azure, and golden embroidery. A costly necklace, and bracelets to match, completed the queenly attire of the beautiful but self-idealized Edna Newell.

'Oh, Edna!' exclaimed the half-frowning Rosa.

'Ah, Rosa!' echoed her cousin.

'I would scorn to marry the man who could thus be won,' sighed the modest maiden, as she picked up one of her unfortunate rose buds, and placed it carelessly in her belt.

'And when I am *Lady De Lisle*,' whispered Edna, 'I will publish all my sweet cousin's works on '*The Beauty of Simplicity*,' and the '*Pleasures of Single Life*,' together with sundry Essays on '*Domestic Economy*,' '*Coquetry*,' &c. &c.'

Rosa blushed, but a kiss from Edna sealed their peace.

A scene of enchanting beauty was presented at the assembly that evening. The softest shaded lights shed haloes around the angelic features of youth and joyous beauty, while the sweetest exotics lent their breath to perfume the evening air, as mirth, music, and splendor, seemed contending for the reign. Rosa was enraptured,—not that she cared for display or coveted admiration—not that she experienced any pleasure in listening to the insipid conversation of the gallant and the gay. But she secretly worshipped the beautiful: and her whole soul was devoted to music. Thus was she happy in her innocence and simplicity. Not so her beautiful cousin, the bright diadem sat heavily on her brow, as her wandering eyes sought in vain the form of the handsome stranger. At length a most fantastically dressed young gentleman made his appearance in the crowd.

'Ah, he comes!' she murmured; 'that can be no