

Oh Thou! who art of friends, the dearest,  
Hear thou my prayer.  
For him, who next to Thee, is nearest,  
Whose love, next thine, my chiefest care.

Thy skill was wrought the deep emotion  
Of human love,  
Triumphing the spirit oft with wild commotion,  
Unlike the peacefulness above;

Then pity Thou the boding sorrow,  
Through darkness blind,  
Forsaking not so far as to the morrow,  
Save passage of some ill to find!

Thou, on the far-off seas discerning,  
That speck so small,  
That's 'very little thing,' not sparing,  
Keep Thou the barque that holds my all!

Oh, lay thy gentle hand, protecting,  
On this dear head,  
Each wind and wave in love directing,  
Rocking in peace his ocean-bed.

And give thine angels charge concerning,  
Each footstep rash,  
Lest heedless, thoughtless, blindly turning,  
Against some ill his spirit dash.

In holy, soft-like deeds, abounding,  
And heav'nly grace,  
Each tranquil hope his heart surrounding,  
Show him Thy secret dwelling place.

From all the grief my spirit measures,  
Oh! shelter him;  
From anguish that the heart-string severs,  
From tears, that make youth's eye grow dim.

And oh! my loneliness, so dreary,  
My widowed heart,  
In hours, when hope, itself, is weary,  
Soothie thou with Heaven's unequalled art.

One boon—O, more—leave!—oh, hear me!  
Bring him again,  
With blessings back to love and cheer me!  
Let, let not this one prayer be vain!

Father! of every friend, the dearest,  
Hear Thou my prayer,  
For him, who next to Thee, is nearest,  
Whose love next Thine, my chiefest care.

The wild south-west monsoon has risen,  
With broad, gray wings of gloom,  
While here, from out my dreary prison,  
I look as from a tomb—Alas!  
My heart another tomb.

Upon the low thatched roof, the rain  
With ceaseless pattering falls;  
My choicest treasures bear its stains;  
Mould gathers on the walls; would heaven  
'Twere only on the walls!

Sweet mother, I am here alone,  
In sorrow and in pain;  
The sunshine from my heart has flown;  
It feels the driving rain—Ah, me!  
The chill, and mould, and rain.

Four haggard months have wheeled their round  
Since love upon it smiled,  
And everything of earth has frowned  
On thy poor stricken child, sweet friend,  
Thy weary, suffering child.

I'd watched my loved one night and day,  
Scarce breathing when he slept,  
And as my hopes were swept away,  
I'd in his bosom wept—Oh God!  
How had I prayed and wept!

And when they bore him to the ship,  
I saw the white sails spread,  
I kissed his speechless, quivering lip,  
And left him on his bed—Alas!  
It seemed a coffin bed.

When from my gentle sister's tomb,  
Long since, in tears, we came,  
Thou saidst, 'How desolate each room!  
Well, mine were just the same that day—  
The very, very same.

Then, mother, little Charley came,  
Our beautiful, fair boy,  
With my own father's cherished name:  
But oh! he brought no joy—my child  
Brought mourning, and no joy.

His little grave I cannot see,  
Though weary months have sped  
Since pitying lips bent over me,  
Add whispered, 'He is dead!—Mother!  
'Tis dreadful to be dead!

### GENTLE WORDS.

A young Rose in summer time  
Is beautiful to me,  
And glorious the many stars  
That glimmer on the sea.  
But gentle words and loving hearts,  
And hands to clasp mine own,  
Are better than the brightest flowers  
Or stars that ever shone.

The sun may warm, the Grass to life,  
The Dew, the Drooping Flower,  
And eyes grow bright and watch the light  
Of Autumn's opening hour—  
But words that breathe of tenderness,  
And smiles we know are true,  
Are warmer than the Summer time,  
And brighter than the Dew.

It is not much the world can give,  
With all its subtle art,  
And Gold or Gems are not the things  
To satisfy the Heart;  
But oh! if those who cluster round  
The altar and the hearth,  
Have gentle words and loving smiles,  
How beautiful is earth!

I do not mean for one like me—  
So weary worn and weak—  
Death's shadowy paleness seems to be  
E'en now upon my cheek—his seal,  
On form, and brow, and cheek.

But for a bright-winged bird like him,  
To hush his joyous song,  
And prisoned in a coffin dim,  
Join Death's pale phantom throng—my boy  
To join that grizzly throng!

Oh, mother, I can scarcely bear  
To think of this to-day!  
It was so exquisitely fair,  
That little form of clay—my heart  
Still lingers by his clay.

And when for one loved far, far more,  
Come thick-gathering tears,  
My star of faith is clouded o'er,  
I sink beneath my fears, sweet friend,  
My heavy weight of fears.

Oh, but to feel the fond arms twine  
Around me once again!  
It almost seems those lips of thine  
Might kiss away the pain—might soothe  
This dull, cold, heavy pain.

But gentle mother, through life's storms  
I may not lean on thee,  
For helpless, cowering little forms  
Cling trusting to me—poor babies!  
To have no guide but me.

With weary foot, and broken wing,  
With bleeding heart and sore,  
Thy dove looks backwards sorrowing,  
But seeks the ark no more—thy breast  
Seeks never, never more.

Sweet mother, for thy wanderer pray;  
That loftier faith be given;  
Her broken reeds all swept away,  
That she may lean on Heaven—her heart  
Grow strong in Christ and Heaven.

Once, when young Hope's fresh morning dew  
Lay sparkling on my breast,  
My bounding heart thought but to do,  
To work at Heaven's behest—my pains  
Come at the same behest!

All fearfully, all tearfully—  
Alone and sorrowing,  
My dim eye lifted to the sky,  
Fast to the Cross I cling—Oh, Christ!  
To thy dear Cross I cling.

Maulmain, August 7th, 1850.

### THE LOVED.

They are going one by one,  
From the altar and the hearth,  
With the music of their tone  
And the sunlight of their mirth;  
With the hopes their bosoms cherished,  
With the joys their memory knew,  
Hopes that in their radiance perished  
Like fading flowers or early dew.

From the valley's broad and green,  
From the mountain's stern, yet dear;  
From the river's crystal sheen,  
Silently they disappear;  
All the visions of their dreaming  
Fade away and are forgot,  
And the brain with wisdom teeming,  
Sinks to earth and rises not!

On the hill-side, and the lee,  
Forms were sporting—where are they?  
On the air were sounds of glee;  
Listen, they have passed away;  
Fades the soonest, all that's rarest,  
Hopes the brightest, first decay,  
Friends the dearest—forms the fairest,  
Melt like summer clouds away!

### THE LAST GOOD NIGHT.

Close the eyelids—press them gently,  
'O'er the dead an' lead thy eyes;  
For the soul that made them lovely  
Has returned to sit the skies.  
Wipe the dew—drops from her forehead;  
Sever one dear golden tress;  
Fold her icy hands all meekly;  
Smooth the little snowy dress;  
Scatter flowers so pure and white—  
Lay the bud upon her breast;  
There—now softly say Good Night.

Though our tears flow fast and faster,  
Yet we would not call her back.  
We are glad her face no longer  
Treads life's rough and thorny track;  
We are glad our heavenly Father  
Took her while her heart was pure;  
We are glad He did not leave her,  
All life's troubles to endure.  
We are glad—and yet the tear drop  
Falls for alas! we know,  
That our friends will be lonely,  
We shall miss our darling so.

While the twilight shadows gather,  
We shall wait in vain to feel  
Little arms, all white and dimpled,  
Round our neck so softly steal;  
Oar wet cheeks will miss the pressure  
Of sweet lips, so warm and red;  
And our bosoms, coolly, sadly,  
Mourn as that darling little head,  
Which was a want to rest there sweetly,  
And those golden eyes so bright—  
We shall miss their loving glances—  
We shall miss their soft Good Night.

When the morrow's sun is shining,  
They will take their cherished form;  
They will bear it to the churchyard,  
And consign it to the worm.  
Well—what matter? it is only  
The clay dress our darling wore;  
God has robed her as an angel—  
She has rest of this no more,  
Fold her hands, and o'er her pillow  
Scatter flowers, all pure and white;  
Kiss that marble brow and whisper,  
Once again, a last Good Night.

Parody  
Darton

L. L. Parody

