

THE DEATH OF A GENTLE MAIDEN.

A PHANTASY: INSCRIBED TO S. T. D.

'Now is done thy long day's work;
Fold thy palms across thy breast,
Fold thine arms, turn to thy rest,
Let them rave!
Shadows of the silver birk
Sweep the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave!'

TENNYSON.

'Twas Sabbath eve: on couch of rose-leaves lying,
With all her undimmed loveliness around her,
Silent, yet fast, a radiant ONE was dying;
Fading most like the flowery wreaths that bound her
With fragrance, vainly wasted. There had been
A fitful dirge upon the cool air borne,
That spake of parting. Sadly sweet was seen
A hectic bloom upon the cheek of morn,
That told of tears to be ere day was done.
Dark pall-like clouds swept by till set of sun,
Then folded their broad pinions, and reclined
In sullen grandeur o'er the distant West,
Like spectral forms in slumber. Every wind
Had wailed itself to stillness, and a rest
Voiceless and deep stole down upon the world.
The STORM-FIEND slowly turned his sombre car,
With drooping wing, and lurid banner furled,
Toward his own rugged North, while from afar
There came a sudden gleam, a golden ray,
A strange, rich light, as from a young moon's birth,
And shone o'er ONE, there passing fast away
From the soft sky, and green, rejoicing earth!

Many a presence, dim and fair,
Pale gleaming shapes of things, divine and rare,
With tearful eyes and broken sounds of weeping,
Beside that couch a mournful watch were keeping
In that hushed eve. Gay Zephyr pensive stood,
With plumes enfolded like a stricken flower's;
And Echo from her cave in dark wild wood
Held whisperings faint with groups of gentle hours,
Making the silence yet more sad and still;
And glowing sighs that dwell in rustling grass,
And guardian spirits of each singing rill,
Murmurs from vine-clad vale and sunny hill,
Odors that from the rose's deep heart pass,
When kissed by breeze of even, gathered there,
Where that clear radiance quivered on the air,
Melting to farewell showers. And there seemed
A gush of music, dying far away,
Soft, exquisite, and low, like that is dreamed
By one who slumbereth at the close of day
On Ocean's golden wave. A liquid tone,
Like fall of distant waters, deep and lone,
A silvery strain of many voices blending,
Fell on my soul; and, thrilling cadence sending
Far thro' the coming night, did float along,
Profoundly sorrowful, this brief, wild parting song:

FARE thee well!

We have heard the solemn chime,
Pealing forth the flight of TIME.
Sternly tolls its passing bell
For thy latest funeral knell.
From Earth's griefs, unquiet fears,
Mournful memories, lingering tears,
Mortal ill, and mortal wo,
Thou art soon about to go!

Fare thee well!

Brightness marked thy pathway here;
Stars, and skies, far, blue, and clear,
Gorgeous clouds and silvery haze
Floating in the streaming rays;
Love, and hope, and joyous mirth,
Such as in young hearts have birth;
Soon will be a lasting close!
Come not breathings of repose?

Fare thee well!

Fades the thronging dream of life
Through the mist of mortal strife;
Rends the veil that shrouds the real
From the vast and lone ideal;
Spectres wild, and quaint, and strange,
Flitting gleam in hurried change
O'er the Future's magic glass;
They are passing — Thou wilt pass!

Fare thee well!

Paler grows thy lustrous eye,
As the light of sunset sky,
Death-damps chill are on thy brow,
White and cold as moon-lit snow.
As a bird with wounded wing,
Now thy heart is fluttering;
Soon 't will rest, to beat no more —
Pang and thrill alike be o'er!

Fare thee well!

In the shadowy dome of dreams
Mournful light of Memory streams
O'er the voiceless forms and still
That the busy Past did fill.
Far from wreck of wo and weeping,
They in stormless peace are sleeping;
There thy sisters long have gone,
Thither *thou* wilt soon be flown —

Fare thee well!

Music that ends not in tears,
Love that knows no boding fears,
Tones that falter not in sighs,
Hearts in which no sorrow lies,
Flowers, unfading, sweet, and fair,
Sister! all await thee there!
We shall miss thee; but away!
Wearied one, no longer stay!

Fare thee well!

'T was gone! That radiant train melted away
Like last love-whispers of the broken-hearted;
And with the purple gleam of closing day
The gentle SPIRIT OF THE MONTH departed!

R.

FOREST WALKS IN THE WEST.

BY THE 'HERMIT OF THE PRAIRIES.'

It is strange that men should prefer to live in cities. If there were any pleasantness conceivable in the perpetual clamor and strife of tongues, or in sharpening one's face by frequent contact with the crowd, or in receiving a thousand ideas daily of which only one can be retained, the preference would not be so unaccountable. But much communion with men does not tend to soften the heart; and a multitude of ideas, like a surfeit of food, will not digest. How much more delightful to pass one's life in the country, where the multifarious noises and confusion of the town die away before they reach half way to him, and only the higher voices, the voices of the higher men, fall on his ear! At intervals, to continue the figure, one of these voices utters a thought which the heavens, or the earth, or the human mind has been ransacked to find; and he sits down in quiet to incorporate it with his own brain, without having his nerves jarred with the same thought repeated in an hundred different tones, and with a thousand modifications. All is tranquillity around him and within him. He is not hourly jostled by hardening avarice, or ambition, or self-idolatry, in any of its forms. He converses with himself, and the nobler spirits that have lived, or that do live; and if he is not a happier, and does not die a better man than the denizen of the metropolis, it must be that there is something radically defective in his nature. This thought is naturally suggested by the country through which I am passing. I don't know that interminable woods are a necessary accompaniment of rural life; but if they were, and when they are, it would be and is so much the better for those whose tastes, like mine, incline that way. Not exactly that I would live *in* the woods, either, but yet not so *far* from them that I could not sometimes lose myself in them.

Ohio, the State of 'the Beautiful River,' has as yet woodland enough to satisfy the most extravagant desire. I have been travelling many days along this untrodden highway; the giant trees almost constantly interlocking their branches over head, except when the enclosed ten-acre lot of stumps, and the block-house dwelling of some hardy emigrant break the monotony. And I expect it will be the same for several weeks to come, until I emerge into daylight on the borders of some prairie. I hope those weeks will be many; for it is really pleasant, plodding along with no company but these tall beeches and maples, and no conversation save such as the birds and I, each in our own language, hold with one another. I have learned some new movements in music too; for when the little choristers do me the honor to stop and examine my physical