

## TO NYDIA.

“CALL it a *moment's* work, (and such it seems,)
   
This tale's a fragment from the life of dreams;
   
But say, that years matured the silent strife,
   
And 't is a record from the dream of life.”

Lady — I bring a flower, a token
   
Of all the thousand deep heart-beatings,
   
So warmly felt, yet all unspoken,
   
Which thrilled me at our former meetings;
   
When I hung o'er thy form, and dwelt
   
In quiet luxury of vision,
   
Nought but thy fairy beauty felt,
   
And our dull world — a home Elysian.

A token of the better power,
   
Thy purity of soul has given,
   
To strengthen me in trial's hour,
   
And lead me nearer on to Heaven.
   
For, gazing in thy eyes, I scanned
   
In them thy nature, trusting, mild,
   
Unchanged since from thy Maker's hand
   
Thou cam'st, his gentle, loving child.
   
A nobler love upon me came,
   
My heart adored with prayer and hymn,
   
That *truth*, thy being's central flame,
   
Which no earth-mists had power to dim.
   
Alas! that time and change must ever
   
Round this pale orb united go;
   
Alas! that love is constant never,
   
And human faith so weak below!
   
Could we have thought, when, side by side,
   
The thickly sparkling stars have seen us,
   
That this dark cloud of fear and pride
   
And cold distrust could roll between us?
   
Lady! by thy deep trusting eyes,
   
By thy most lovely smile, I swore
   
That, firm as these o'er-arching skies,
   
Our hearts were chained forevermore.
   
They still are chained — nor stars, nor storms,
   
Nor severing length of lonely years,
   
Can break the tie young passion forms,
   
The links of thy past smiles and tears,
   
Though, dearest, thou forget my name,
   
Though memory's tear-dimmed glass be broken,
   
The Past will ever live the same,
   
And hold what we have done and spoken.
   
The summer flower forgets the dew,
   
Which fed its young buds through the spring,
   
But, in its ripe leaf's burning hue,
   
Those pure May-drops are revelling.

I know my fate — to drift alone
   
Across life's many-tinted ocean,
   
Singly to hear its tempests moan,
   
Singly to feel its heavy motion;
   
Love's waves, turned backward on my breast,
   
Must stagnate, and grow bitter there,
   
To live, un blessing and unblest,
   
This is my fate; I know and bear.

But round *thee*, dearest, there shall cling
   
And cluster many hearts; another,
   
A better love than mine shall bring
   
To the fair bride and happy mother.
   
Though a few years have wasted all
   
My youthful powers of deep affection,
   
Yet, on my sunless day shall fall
   
From thy calm joy a warm reflection.

Farewell! — and when this flower has faded,
   
Let each too tender thought decay,
   
Each memory too deeply shaded
   
Die, when its leaves have dropped away.
   
But I — within my secret heart —
   
All thy kind deeds and words will treasure,
   
Each scene where thou hast borne a part,
   
Shall be my mind's loved home of pleasure.
   
Farewell! — I dwell upon the word,
   
For, though we oft may meet again,
   
Nought in our cold tones shall be heard
   
To tell of bygone joy or pain.
   
T' is the last time that I shall speak,
   
Freely, as I so oft have spoken,
   
When lit thine eye and burned thy cheek,
   
At hopes now blighted, pledges broken.
   
And now 't is past. For me, no more
   
Has Heaven a sunbeam, earth a flower,
   
I see life's poetry is o'er,
   
And welcome duty's trial-hour.
   
I call on toil, to wear away
   
These trembling feelings, ill-repressed;
   
I call on custom's wintry sway
   
To freeze the hot blood of my breast.
   
The caged bird dies whose mate has flown,
   
Why should my heart's sensation last,
   
Its twin-soul fled, its love-bowers on
   
The dim horizon of the Past!