A POEM.

MANHOUD'S DREAM BY THE SEA.

Written For and Read at the Anniversary of the Southean Literary Society, May 11, 1883, Sy Nevin C. Heisler, Easton, Pa.

Upon a gio ious summer day I chanced To wander by the seashore; down along The sands, that shone like moulten silver 'neath The noontide splendor of the sun. The waves In lazy playfulness came slowly in, And shook their dewy ringlets on the strand; Or met and broke in tiny wreaths of spray Which the sun lit with rain-bow hues, until They seemed like the small lamps that light the bowers Where tairies dwell. The cool, salt air came from The sea, and kissed the dark rocks that o'erhung The waves. And as I wandered on I saw, Just where the shadow of the clids fell dark Upon the sand, a man reclining at Mis case. He saw me not, but seemed immerced In thought; his dark locks flowing back revealed An intellectual brow, on which the hand Of care had furrowed many lines. His eyes. Dark, flashing, full of slumbrous fire, were fixed On the wide waste of waters stretching to The far horizon's verae : and as he gazed His mind's conflicting thoughts found utterance thus :-I am lying by the seashore, dreaming through the summer day, And my mind is full of fancies for my heart is far away. From the dead years that are buried in the ocean of the past Thoughts and visions are now crowding on my memory thick and fast. Strange how mem'ry hurries backward to the calm, pure days of youth. When our lives were free from error and our hearts were filled with truth. When the chords of being trembled unto hope's soft whisperings, And the soul of inspiration hovered 'round on noiseless wings. Yet 'tie so ! we love to linger on the pleasures that are gone, For the joys of our existence are the sweetest at its dawn. In a vague and wondrous legend of the dreamy days of old, Where enchanting tales and stories of the past, dea t years are told It is said the soul of music stole one evening o'er the sea, Pouring o'er the silent billows tones that shook with melody. And the sailors stopped to listen as they heard the magic sound Rising on the light winged breezes, swelling grandly all around. Peal on peal the heavenly music burst upon the closing day, Then, in slowly dying cadence, like a dream-song, passed away. And the awed and silent list'ners felt a secret throb of pain When they thought that magic singing they should never hear again. Far the white-winged ship was watted by the soitly breathing breeze, Like a thing of life and motion o'er the toam-encrested seas. When at last the weary voyage, with its calms and storms was o'er, And the musing sailors wandered down the billow-beaten shore; From the sands in idlesse picking many a purple tinted shell, Lo! the self-same, sad, sweet music on their raptured senses fell. For the shells had caught the echo of that singing rich and grand, And were murmuring in chorus as they lay there on the sand. In the dim and dreamy distance they could hear the plunging waves Rushing through the traceless windings of the ocean's crystal caves. And, in unison, the thunder of the surf upon the shore Took a sweeter, higher meaning than it ever had before. They were glad to hear the music they had lost up in the sea Pouring forth from shell and cavern in its matchless harmony. And, throughout the fleeting ages, this unearthly music swells From the ocean's crystal caverns and the purple tinted shells. Thus, while floating down life's river to the ocean deep and vast, Ev'ry tone that greets our hearing brings an echo of the past. And a flood of recollections sweeps upon the active mind,-Recollections that the present with the past shall ever bind. We retrace the weary seasons, full of sunshine and of rain, Full of pleasure, full of sorrow, and are children on e again. Once again we feel the sunshine warm these dreary hearts of ours As it used to shine upon them in those happy childhood hours. Once again a mother's kisses are imprinted on our brow, And she seems to bend above us, just as in our childhood, now. I remember how I wandered, when as yet a careless child, By the broad expanse of ocean, where its waters softly smiled. How I watched the tiny wavelets at they leapt upon the strand, Making strange and curious markings on the soft and yielding sand. Then it seemed that no disturbing power could break its tranquil rest, For eternal peace seemed written on its calmly slumb'ring breast, But upon the far horizon rose a dark and gloomy cloud, While, in hoarse, wild tones, the thunder o'er the waters muttered loud. Sadly rose the dirge-like moaning of surges on the air, While, from out the middle blackness, burst the lightning's lurid glare. Burst upon the scene revealing high-blown billows white with spray, And the reeling vessels driven belpless on their foaming way. Oh! my soul was filled with norror as I watched the matchless night Ot the wild waves and the tempest struggling in the fittul light. But a calm across the waters of the troubled ocean crept And the billows ceased their surging, for the sullen tempest slept. Then the holy light of even on the heaving waters fell, And the wavelets leapt to kiss it as it wept its last tarewell Slowly fied the golden radiance, and the night enwrapped the sky, While the soft, sweet lamps of heaven shed their lustre from on high. Oh! I knew not as I stood there, gazing o'er the changeful main, That in mine own life its changes would be mirrored back again. There, with all the trust of childhood, I had dreamt that life would be Smooth and stormless as its waters when they murmured restfully. But I found that life an ocean, swept by wild and frequent storms, Where, beneath its calmest waters, tempests veiled their awful forms; Where, behind the gloom and blackness that enwrapped the storm-swept heaven, Burned the stars with quenchless lustre 'till the clouds at length were riven. As we gaze into the future how the spirit fondly dreams That our lives will be as happy as the cloudless present seems But the years, though fraught with pleasure, still their weight of pain must bring And the tears of sorrow linger on our pale cheeks while we sing. Joy and gladness, strangely mingled, on our hearts unceasing flow, And there is no earthly pleasure but will find some kind red woe. I remembered how my sister, with the love-light in her eyes, And a smile upon her features like the pure light of the skies, Faded and grew weaker daily, as I watched there by her side,-Faded like some frost-touched blossom, and without a murmur died. Oh! I wept in childish sorrow, when they shut her narrow bed, And I feit as though beneath it mine own heart lay cold and dead. For I knew not how I loved her till she lay so cold and still, And they placed her soulless body 'neath the elm trees on the hill. Then at eve I oft would wander where the stately elm trees wave, Kneeling in the dreamy twilight by the little new made grave. And methought my angel sister, from the dim far world's above, Came and threw her arms about me, came and whispered words of love. Was it but a dream of childhood? or do those we cherish come. With sweet words of consolation, from their new and sinless home? For her presence has been with me when my heart was lone and sad, Bringing joy, and peace, and comfort, that would make my spirit glad. When temptations crowded round me and my soul was dark within, Then her guardian form was near me, keeping still my heart from sin. There was one,-I loved her dearly, with the passion-love of youth, When we fondly dream that beauty is the manifest of truth,-That but played with my affections, and enticed me with a smile, That concealed the deadly venom which has killed my spirit, while She whose false yet lovely image from my heart I cannot wrest Goes her way in wanton gladness-happy on another's breast. Happy in the cold embrace of a lord whose hand is hers, While his heart is with some harlot whom the moment's whim prefers. And she knows her degradation, smiling in her robes of shame, Satisfied with empty honors, that are honors but in name. Can she from the path of virtue, thus without a blush depart,-Heaven written on her features, hell imprinted on her heart? Sacrificing pure affections to a hell-born lust for gold Treating teauty as a bauble to be bought, at will, or sold. Yet I loved her, oh! I loved her, as the young alone can love, With that first fond trust in woman which so oft their curse doth prove. Little dreamt I as we wandered by the ever changing sea That its changes were an image of her own inconstancy. For she seemed so pure and gentle to my love-bewildered mind That I looked not 'neath her beauty for the curse that lay behind. But I called upon my manhood and I threw my love away Since the idol of its worship proved itself but common clay. And I taught my soul to linger in the painful past no more, But to gaze with earnest purpose to the years that lay before Filled with nobler aspiratious life new sense and meaning found, And I walked in higher places where new joys, new griefs abound. Joys that seemed the higher, sweeter for the trials I had known ; Griefs that took a higher meaning from the sweet joys that were gone. Yet how often, Oh! how often, do I feel a throb of pain, As remembrance wakes the heart-pangs of that perished love again. Then she seems as when I loved her, true-souled as she once hath been; But to mar the happy vision comes the mem'ry of her sin. Of the sin that dragged her downward, though it brought her power and gold,-Of the sin which, like a death-blast, turned my warm affections cold. I would curse her, but I cannot, even though my heart is torn, And my love can never perish though she met that love with scorn.

But I doubt not I am happier with my secret weight of woe Than the woman who has scorned me is smid her pomp and show. for they say that heartless women sometimes feel a throb of pain, And with vain and fruitless pleadings ask their honor back again. Ask it ! Oh! how vain the asking, for 'tis gone to come no more; Naught can make the sin-stained spirit stainless as it was before.

How the erring and the fallen wish and pray to be again Sinless as they were, and struggle,—but to find their struggles vain. Striving to retrace their footsteps and to have their sins torgiven; Striving for that peace while living that is found alone in heaven. For there are no hands to help them-none to listen to their sigh; Men and women-fellow-mortals-with a cold sneer pass them by. Oh! ye hypocrites that scorn them-ye who hear but heed them not, Have a care lest at the judgment ye may also be forgot ! God's own words-a solemn utterance-bear a warning voice to all :-"It must be that some must perish-woe to those by whom they fall !" Ye who drive these weak ones downward in their sinning day by day, Will, at the great day of judgment, be more culpable than they. For how oft in seeming Christians deepest, darkest passions dwell; And how oft a haughty spirit vells a soul as black as hell. And they pass the weak and fallen-those for whom a God has died,

With their eyes upturned to heaven, moving beliward in their pride. Such is life; full of deceivers; men that are not what they seem, Women-no! they are not women-beings, such as in a dream Of hell on earth might figure, make this dreary plain of life But a place of wild disorder, and of soul-distressing strife. Why, Oh! why, must all things earthly be but snares our nearts to guile, And earth's loveliest and fairest still deceive us with a smile ! When life's roses we would gather we but grasp the poisoned thorns And the ivy chokes the branches that its foliage adorns. Still the widely spreading Upas freights with death the balmy air,

That directs us onward, upward, 'till we reach sublimer things Onward then to meet the future with its weight of smiles and tears, Looking still beyond the changes of the fading, dying years. For amid the toils and shadows brighter, fairer hopes are given .-Far beyond the weep ng-gladness, and beyond the dying-heaven. Such the visions that are flitting through the chambers of my heart, Visions of the days departed-days whose mem'ries ne'er depart ; As I lie here sad and weary-weary of this weigh' of clay, Dreary midst the closing shadows of the listless summer day!

And the sound of curses mingles with the holy voice of prayer.

Yet we are not all unholy; in our hearts a music rings.

DRY GOUDS.

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