

HAPPINESS.

Happiness is an endowment, and not an acquisition. It depends more upon temperament and disposition than environment. It is a state or condition of mind, and not a commodity to be bought or sold in the market. A beggar may be happier in his rags than a king in his purple. Poverty is no more incompatible with happiness than wealth, and the inquiry, How to be happy though poor? implies a want of understanding of the conditions upon which happiness depends. Dives was not happy because he was a millionaire, nor Lazarus wretched because he was a pauper. There is a quality in the soul of man that is superior to circumstances and that defies calamity and misfortune. The man who is unhappy when he is poor would be unhappy if he were rich, and he who is happy in a palace in Paris would be happy in a dug-out on the frontier of Dakota. There are as many unhappy rich men as there are unhappy poor men. Every heart knows its own bitterness and its own joy. Not that wealth and what it brings is not desirable—books, travel, leisure, comfort, the best food and raiment, agreeable companionship—but all these do not necessarily bring happiness and may coëxist with the deepest wretchedness, while adversity and penury, exile and privation are not incompatible with the loftiest exaltation of the soul.

"More true joy Marcellus exiled feels,
Than Cæsar with a Senate at his heels."

OPPORTUNITY.

*Master of human destinies am I!
Fame, love and fortune on my footsteps wait.
Cities and fields I walk; I penetrate
Deserts and seas remote, and passing by
Hovel and mart and palace, soon or late
I knock unbidden once at every gate!
If sleeping, wake; if feasting, rise before
I turn away. It is the hour of fate,
And they who follow me reach every state
Mortals desire, and conquer every foe
Save death; but those who doubt or hesitate,
Condemned to failure, penury and woe,
Seek me in vain and uselessly implore.
I answer not, and I return no more!*

MY SPRING RESIDENCE.

(Published in *The Williams College Quarterly*, June, 1855.)

Build me a pillared Castle in the Air
Within some mountain's purple hollow, scooped
Upon its western slope, and forests where
The clouds are anchored and the pines are looped
With bearded gold and gleam

Drowse it with murmured hum of droning bees
And sleepy din of fountains spouting wine
Whose spray shall drown the sense in ecstasies
And wrap the air, as incense from a shrine,
In faint and rare perfume.

Story its walls with pictures seen in dream
The loves of gods and wreathing groups of maids
With slender throats and hair in golden stream;
The palpitating lines and woven shades
From sunset's cloudy foam

Carve fluted columns zenith high; a dome
Of Grecian harmony, and capitals
Remote in air above the eagle's home
Set statues upon sculptured pedestals
Round the majestic room.

Let mild eyed Shakspeare sit upon the throne,
With wild, impetuous Shelley at his side;
Then he, by Gorgon erities turned to stone,
Who felt, long summer days before he died,
White daisies on his tomb.

Thrill the dumb air with distant music poured
Through silver tubes, or shaken from the strings
Of melancholy harps to the accord
Of cataracts, whose water leaps and sings
Swift through a rocky flume.

MY SPRING RESIDENCE.

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Strew me a couch knee-deep with flowers and grass,
With cool and oozy mosses for my head,
And curtain it with vines whose buds are stars,
With trailing arbutue and primroses red
Just bursting into bloom.

Gird my enchanted valley with a zone
Of snowy summits fading to the sea,
Lit by a sun which like an opal-stone
Glow with a mild, fantastic brilliancy
To burn but not consume.

Through the blue landscape, leagues remote and deep,
A glimmering river smiles along its way
As a bright dream flows through the lands of sleep
And wastes in the oblivious sea of day
Which alien skies illumine.

Here will I dwell in delicatest rest,
And watch the clouds that paint the evening sky,
Or slope their walls of gray along the west
And march afar in rainy rhythm by
With flame and sea-like boom;

Untwine the music of the leaves and brooks
And let the world neglected thunder on:
What reck's the clutch of gold, the greed of books,
The scholar's laurel or the poet's crown,
The victor's sword and plume?

A life of calm repose and liberal ease
Orbed by the limits of impassioned sense;
A life of summer days on singing seas,
A voyage without cause or consequence,
Be this my Godlike doom!

Golden Hill, 1855.