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RELIGIOUS POETRY.

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OF  
*The Best Poems of all Ages and Tongues.*

*WITH BIOGRAPHICAL AND LITERARY NOTES.*

EDITED BY

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AND

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"Blessings on them and eternal praise,  
Who gave us nobler loves and nobler cares ;  
The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs  
Of Truth and pure Delight by heavenly lays!"

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

*With Illustrations.*

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1881.

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'Tis man, helpless man, through this life  
 tempted on  
 By fair shining hopes, that in shining are gone.  
 There is a bright fountain, through that desert  
 stealing,  
 To pure lips alone its refreshment revealing, —  
 What may that fountain be ?  
 'Tis truth, holy truth, that, like springs under  
 ground,  
 By the gifted of Heaven alone can be found.  
 There is a fair spirit, whose wand hath the  
 spell  
 Topoint where those waters in secrecy dwell, —  
 Who may that spirit be ?  
 'Tis faith, humble faith, who hath learned  
 that, where'er  
 Her wand bends to worship, the truth must  
 be there !

THOMAS MOORE.

ENCOURAGEMENT TO TRUST AND  
 LOVE GOD.

PSALM XXXIV.

NAHUM TATE (son of Dr. Faithful Tate, a profuse sacred poet of the age of Elizabeth), ranked by Southey lowest of all the English poets-laureate, except Shadwell, was an intemperate and improvident poet, born in Dublin in 1652. He was educated at Trinity College, and went to London, where he became an author. He assisted Dryden in writing "Absalom and Achitophel," and made an altered version of "King Lear," which kept the stage for some years. He is now best known as having been associated with Dr. Nicholas Brady in preparing a version of the Psalms commonly printed in the English Book of Common Prayer. Tate died a refugee from his creditors, Aug. 12, 1715.

DR. NICHOLAS BRADY was also a native of Ireland, where he was born in 1659. He was a partisan of the Prince of Orange, and when the prince came to the throne, became one of his chaplains. He made a translation of the Æneid and published other works. He died in 1726.

THROUGH all the changing scenes of life,  
 In trouble and in joy,  
 The praises of my God shall still  
 My heart and tongue employ.  
 Of his deliverance I will boast  
 Till all, who are distrest,  
 From my example comfort take,  
 And charm their griefs to rest.  
 The hosts of God encamp around  
 The dwellings of the just ;  
 Protection he affords to all  
 Who make his name their trust.  
 Oh, make but trial of his love !  
 Experience will decide  
 How blest are they, and only they,  
 Who in his truth confide.

Fear him, ye saints, and you will then  
 Have nothing else to fear ;  
 Make you his service your delight, —  
 Your wants shall be his care.

While hungry lions lack their prey,  
 The Lord will food provide  
 For such as put their trust in him,  
 And see their needs supplied.

TATE AND BRADY.

1696.

THIS WORLD IS ALL A FLEETING  
 SHOW.

THIS world is all a fleeting show,  
 For man's illusion given ;  
 The smiles of joy, the tears of woe,  
 Deceitful shine, deceitful flow —  
 There's nothing true but Heaven !

And false the light on glory's plume,  
 As fading hues of even ;  
 And love and hope and beauty's bloom  
 Are blossoms gathered for the tomb —  
 There's nothing bright but Heaven !

Poor wanderers of a stormy day,  
 From wave to wave we're driven,  
 And fancy's flash and reason's ray  
 Serve but to light the troubled way —  
 There's nothing calm but Heaven !

THOMAS MOORE.

"AFTER MANY DAYS."

MISS ANNIE R. STILLMAN (known as "Grace Raymond," under which pseudonyme she has contributed to the Southern press) was born in 1815, and is a resident of Charleston, S. C. Up to the time at which the following lines were written she had been subject to a partial blindness, which affected her at twilight, and was able to discern only an occasional star.

A CHILD! beneath the overhanging night,  
 That beamed with stars in constellated light,  
 Often to stand, and strive to view, in vain,  
 The soft, still splendors of the lustrous train,  
 Until at times, on eyeballs long upturned,  
 Distant and dim, a twinkling taper burned. —  
 One pitying orb, a small and unknown star,  
 At eve's wide casement glimmering afar,  
 Whose slender flame helped only to descry  
 The blank, black darkness of the curtained  
 sky.

A girl! to hear gray Science name each gem  
 That God had set in Evening's diadem ;  
 To hear the poet sing of starry eyes,  
 Like peeping angels, peering through the  
 skies ;

To gaze on night and see her bending down  
Her bald and gloomy brows without a crown ;  
At most, by pin-pricks in the bannered blue,  
To see but hints of glory struggling through ;  
To be in love with Beauty, and to feel  
God did her sweetest majesties conceal.

A woman ! with a woman's growing soul  
That ever burned to read the heavenly scroll,  
With God's star-language hieroglyphed in  
light

Upon the sapphire parchment of the night ;  
To gaze for hours with sad and hopeless eyes  
Upon the fast-sealed volume of the skies ;  
To teach a restless heart to be content  
To throb beneath a shrouded firmament ;  
Its starry-peopled regions seeing not, —  
This, Father, in thy wisdom, was my lot.

Often I prayed, if yearnings deep be prayer,  
God's glory once to see the heavens declare ;  
Often the wild desire hurt its wings,  
Oft tried with vague, unreal imaginings  
To paint upon the imprisoning walls of night  
Its dreams of those unwitnessed worlds of  
light ;

Oft trembling, paused, lest fancy, all too fond,  
The bright original had soared beyond, —  
Scarce vainer that faint heart which trembled  
lest

Heaven than its glowing hopes should prove  
less blest !

Still, Father-God, thy providence was dumb,  
Until the glad predestined hour was come  
Which should unveil the bright, long-hidden  
skies,

And give their glories to my longing eyes.  
'T was night, and to the cooler outer air  
Some viewless power allured me unaware.  
One upward glance, — and lo ! with trembling  
awe,

With deep intoxicating joy, I saw  
The sky in unimagined splendor shine,  
And knew at last full well my prayer was  
mine !

O night ! O golden night ! O *day* of nights !  
Skies filled with glittering, overhanging lights !  
Majestic presences, — so dear, so new ;  
The bright, still population of the blue ;  
A shining senate gathered in the skies,  
In ranks on ranks, in tiers on tiers, they rise !  
What marvel that, in languageless unrest,  
My heart throbbed thickly in my laboring  
breast, —

A heart too long grown intimate with pain,  
This burdening joy unquiet to contain ?

Still in the sky the shining numbers swelled,  
And still untired my ravished eyes beheld  
The hovering hosts in milk-white millions  
brood,

A hushed and luminous infinitude.  
Those star-lit moments, as they fled fast,  
Atoned in full for all the darkened past ;  
For in their tiny chalices they bore  
The compressed nectar of life's stinted store ;  
The draught of bliss which God distils from  
tears,  
The hoarded sweetness of the rifled years.

Nor round red sun, nor silver-shielded moon,  
Nor all the blinding glories of the noon,  
Nor rainbow's many-tinted arch of light,  
Nor jagged lightning leaping through the  
night,

Did e'er so rapture this adoring heart,  
Or revelations so divine impart  
Of the immortal majesty of Him  
Before whom kneels the wing-veiled sera-  
phim,  
As that blest hour which soft undid the bars  
That hid the bright eternities of stars.

Author of light, unborn, undying One !  
Whose smile begot the bright, refulgent sun ;  
Whose fingers bent the young moon's silver  
bow ;

Whose handiwork the star-wrought heavens  
show ;  
Who call'st the rolling planets by their names ;  
Who countest their innumerable flames ;  
Within whose clouds the quivered lightnings  
sleep,  
Till bidden forth the heaven-bright arrows  
leap. —

Forgive the sinful lips which dare to raise  
To thee the accents of earth-fettered praise.

O God ! before thy light-encircled throne  
Thy faithfulness my humbled soul would  
own ;

To thee my trembling, laden thanks would  
mount,

Whose loving-kindnesses the stars outcount ;  
Whose tender mercies are extended far  
Beyond the limits of the farthest star ;  
And strive to praise thee in untutored way,  
With all the transports of a new-found lay,  
For those illuminated worlds on high,  
Though only seen but once before I die !

ANNIE R. STILLMAN.