



A

LIBRARY
OF
RELIGIOUS POETRY.

A COLLECTION
OF
The Best Poems of all Ages and Tongues.

WITH BIOGRAPHICAL AND LITERARY NOTES.

EDITED BY

PHILIP SCHAFF, D.D., LL.D.

AND

ARTHUR GILMAN, M.A.

"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.

NEW YORK :
DODD, MEAD, AND COMPANY.

1881.

Copyright, 1880.
BY DODD, MEAD, & CO.

You must dread for yours the crime that sears,
Dark guilt unwashed by repentant tears,
And unconfessed :

Mine entered betimes on eternal years,
Oh, how much the best !

But grief is selfish ; I cannot see
Always why I should so stricken be
More than the rest ;

But I know that, as well as for them, for me
God did the best !

MRS. HELEN FISKE JACKSON.

MOTHERHOOD.

"HER lot is on you," — woman's lot she meant,
The singer who sang sweetly long ago ;
And rose and yew and tender myrtle blent,
To crown the harp that rang to love and woe.
Awake, O poetess, and vow one strain
To sing of motherhood, its joy, its pain

What does it give to us, this mother-love, —
In verse and tale and legend glorified,
Chosen by lips divine as type above
All other passions ? Men have lived and
died

For sisters, maiden queens, and cherished
wives,
Yet, sealed by God, the one chief love sur-
vives.

Yet what is it it gives us ? Shrinking dread,
Peril, and pain, and agony forgot,
Because we hold the ray of gladness shed
By the first cry from lips that know us not
Worth all that has been paid, is yet to pay,
For the new worship, born and crowned that
day.

Then nursing, teaching, training, self-denial,
That never knows itself, so deep it lies,
The eager taking up of every trial,
To smooth spring's pathway, light her April
skies ;
Watching and guiding, loving, longing, pray-
ing,
No coldness daunting, and no wrong dismay-
ing.

And when the lovely bud to blossom wakes,
And when the soft shy dawn-star flashes
bright,
Another hand the perfect flower takes.
Another wins the gladness of the light ;
A sweet, soft, clinging, fond farewell is given ;
Still a farewell, and then alone with Heaven.

With Heaven ! Will he take the tired heart,
The God who gave the child and formed the
mother,

Who sees her strive to play her destined part,
And, smiling, yield her darling to another ?
Ay, on his cross he thought of Mary's woe ;
He pities still the mothers left below.

AUTHOR UNKNOWN.

BIRTH.

JUST when each bud was big with bloom,
And as prophetic of perfume,
When spring, with her bright horoscope,
Was sweet as an unuttered hope ;

Just when the last star flickered out,
And twilight, like a soul in doubt,
Hovered between the dark and dawn,
And day lay waiting to be born ;

Just when the gray and dewy air
Grew sacred as an unvoiced prayer,
And somewhere through the dusk she heard
The stirring of a nested bird ; —

Four angels glorified the place :
Wan Pain unveiled her awful face ;
Joy, soaring, sang ; Love, brooding, smiled ;
Peace laid upon her breast a child.

ANNIE R. STILLMAN.

THE NEW-BORN BABE.

INTO our home one blessed day
A wee sweet babe had found its way,

While through the mist of tears and pain
Sunlight fell on our hearts again !

There it lay in its tender grace, —
The wee babe in its resting-place.

The father's eye with pride and joy
Beamed as it rested on his boy !

He saw, as the years roll swift away,
And time had blanched his locks to gray,

A strong young figure guide his feet
On until life and death should meet,

And when his days on earth should close,
The loved one lay him to repose !

But what the voice within *her* ear,
The mother, — in whose eye a tear