

### THE MARCHIONESS DE LAFAYETTE.

SINCE we became a nation, among the most familiar of our household words has been the name of the young French nobleman, who, in the darkest hour of our revolutionary struggle, left his home and all the luxuries and honors attendant on his wealth and rank, to risk his life in the cause of the oppressed. But little has been known among us concerning his high-minded wife, who, fully sympathizing with him in his ardent love of political liberty, bravely bore, for his sake, privations and dangers to which few of her sex are subjected.

Madame de Lafayette belonged to the house of Noailles, one of the most ancient and honorable in the annals of the peerage of France. Her father, the Duke d'Ayen, until he inherited the title of Duke de Noailles, was a courtly, cultivated, and distinguished man; but, more fond of shining in society than of the quiet enjoyment of domestic life, took little pains to win the affection or form the characters of his five children, all of whom were daughters. In their mother, however, the high-born girls possessed their greatest earthly blessing. Although she had an excellent governess to instruct them, the real task of education she would delegate to no one. The children began each day with her, accompanied her to church at noon; and, after an early dinner, spent the intervening hours, until twilight, in her private room, engaged in needle-work, and listening to the teachings, which, without the form of lessons, were in the pleasantest and most indelible manner impressed upon their minds and hearts. Wisely the good mother improved the tender years of her little charges, for the heiresses of the house of Noailles could not fail to be early sought for as brilliant matches. Louise, the eldest, was soon taken from the band of loving sisters, and given in marriage to her father's cousin, the Viscount de Noailles. Adrienne, the second daughter, had passed not more than fourteen summers when similar arrangements were made for her, and she was wedded to the Marquis de Lafayette, only two years her senior.

The youthful marquis had been a husband about three years, when, at a dinner party at Metz, he chanced to meet the Duke of Gloucester, brother of George III., and heard from him that the American colonies had dared to throw off the British yoke, and were fighting to secure their freedom. Lafayette's sympathies were immediately enlisted in favor of the Americans. He was already an officer in the guards; and, before he rose from the table, had secretly determined to draw his sword in the cause of the colonists. He hastened to Paris, where he found the American agents—Franklin, Dean, and Arthur Lee, and informed them of his purpose. But so disheartening at that time was the prospect of the colonists, that the

commissioners frankly told him they could not advise him to execute his generous scheme, nor even provide for his passage across the ocean. Lafayette replied that the more desperate was the condition of the Americans, the more urgent was their need of help; and that he would procure a vessel for himself. He then proceeded to purchase a sloop at Bordeaux; but, although he had taken into confidence none of his relatives except his wife, he found, before his vessel was quite ready, that the French government had been apprised of his intention, and had issued orders for his arrest. He therefore hurriedly set sail for a Spanish port. Here officers met him with commands from the king that he should proceed to Marseilles. They also brought from his relatives letters, which upbraided him for his design, and begged him to abandon it. His young wife, however, was in perfect sympathy with him, and her letter unselfishly urged him to persist in the enterprise for which he had parted from her. Lafayette remained firm. Managing to elude his pursuers, he embarked for the New World, and reached his destination in safety, although the passage was long, stormy, and dangerous.

Madame de Lafayette was left with the sweet solace of a little daughter; but, before she received her husband's first letters from America, telling of his cordial and grateful reception by the colonists, and tenderly speaking of his winning Henriette, the lovely infant had been consigned to its early grave. The bereaved mother, however, had soon the happiness of clasping another daughter to her bosom, and this child was spared to be her comfort and to welcome with her the return of the gallant volunteer to his home and native land. But it was not until peace was declared between England and the colonists that Lafayette rejoined his family to reside permanently in France. During the interval, he had made two visits to his home. One of them was necessitated by serious illness; and, when he re-embarked for America, he took with him his brother-in-law, the Viscount de Noailles, who also with ardor espoused the cause of the struggling colonists.

Madame de Lafayette's sisters were all married in youth, but the one next younger than herself died at the age of twenty-five years. In the year of this loss occurred a winter of unusual severity, and Madame d'Ayen's other daughters were devoted in their attentions to the poor. Madame de Lafayette and her sister Pauline, now Madame de Montagu, together visited the jails, and sought to relieve, as far as possible, the sufferings of their joyless inmates. When the former was obliged to leave Paris, she committed her *protégés* to the care of this sister, who was active and untiring in collecting money from the rich and distributing it among the needy. The mighty wheel of the French Revolution was now swiftly

approaching, although as yet there seemed to be every reason to hope that the discontent of the people could be appeased without bloodshed. Madame d'Ayen, however, felt a presentiment of the troubles that were at hand. She was, during this period of suspense, prostrated by severe illness, and calmly but gravely spoke to her children of her fears and the importance of being ready to endure the trials, however sharp, which might await them. Lafayette and all his brothers-in-law sympathized with the radicals, although Madame de Montagu's husband was less enthusiastic in the matter than the others, and she herself considered the measures taken for reformation little adapted to the purpose.

On the day of the Assembly of the Notables, which was the beginning of the Revolution, she was obliged to remain at home to take care of a sick servant; but, while watching over the sufferer, she was in spirit with her mother and sisters, as they prayed in church that the consultations of the Assembly might be rightly guided. Not long after this her loyal heart was shocked by the tidings that Lafayette had assumed the command of the National Guard. Her health was not firm at the time. She fainted upon hearing the news, and was afterward so dangerously sick that her physicians despaired of her recovery. Her father-in-law, with whom she had lived since her marriage, was of a passionate and selfish temperament. He was also a violent conservative, not from principle, but from fear of losing the privileges of his own rank. He was now enraged against Lafayette and the Viscount de Noailles, and when either of their wives came to visit Madame de Montagu, would quit the house in a boyish passion, slamming after him every door which he opened. He soon became eager to secure his personal safety by leaving the country; and, as he could not persuade his son to forsake France thus early in her hour of trial, he set off alone. A short time only elapsed before the Marquis de Montagu, learning that the old man was actually overwhelmed with grief on account of his continued residence in France, reluctantly consented to emigrate.

While De Montagu was making preparations to execute this purpose, Lafayette, with his wife and children, started for Auvergne, to take up their residence on his own estate of Chavaignac. Louis XVI. had sworn to the Constitution, and the General, flattering himself that the state of the kingdom was one of permanent internal peace, had resigned his military command in the hope of enjoying a tranquil life in the bosom of his family. He had now three children: Anastasie, born soon after he embarked for America the first time, George Washington, and Virginie, named for the State in whose capital her father's bust had been set up. Madame de Lafayette felt very happy in the present prospect of events, and wrote to

her sister Pauline that they could make her a visit on their way to Chavaignac. But Madame de Montagu was residing in a castle that belonged to her father-in-law, and could not venture to entertain Lafayette beneath its roof. She was therefore compelled to decline the offer, and only allow herself to see her sister by going to meet her at a small inn at which the travellers stopped on their journey. It was a comfort to the sisters to meet even thus furtively, but their parting was particularly sad on the part of the younger, who was on the eve of exile. In due time Lafayette and his family arrived at Chavaignac. But he was soon drawn from his happy retirement to take command of an army sent to guard the frontier in consequence of the war with Austria. He anxiously endeavored to protect the royal family, but the queen was afraid to trust him; and, after the Reign of Terror was inaugurated, he found that he must flee from France if he would save his own life. He was attempting to reach Holland, when, at Liège, he and his aide-de-camp were seized by an Austrian patrol; and, on the ground that he was the enemy of all crowns, they were given up to the Prussians, and imprisoned in separate apartments in Wesel.

A few weeks after the flight of Lafayette from France, his wife was arrested, and detained at Puy. But upon her earnest application to Brissot, entreating his interference in her behalf that she might follow the wish of her heart and join her husband, he was so far moved to compassion as to allow her to repair to Chavaignac upon her parole. This, however, did not satisfy the anxious wife, and again she wrote to him in eager but unavailing terms for permission to leave the country. She remembered that a diploma of citizenship in the United States had been bestowed upon her husband, and she wrote to Washington, begging that he would attempt the release of her husband on this plea. Months elapsed without bringing her a reply; and then, so confident was she that the silence of Washington could not be owing to indifference towards his old companion-in-arms, that she sent to him a second letter. But her own freedom was only temporary. She was soon arrested again, and confined for several months at Brionde, from whence she was removed to a prison in Paris. Meanwhile her father, finding that an abode in France was dangerous to himself, had gone into exile; but, not dreaming that the revolutionists would strike at women, had not taken his family from the country. About two months, however, before her second arrest, her grandmother, mother, and elder sister were put under surveillance; and, after detention for a while in their own house, they also were shut up in another prison in Paris. The two sisters were able for a while to exchange notes, but, shortly after, they were deprived of this comfort; the fatal

day arrived on which Madame de Lafayette was informed that her three relatives had been guillotined together. At first she was prostrated by the heart-rending intelligence, but her vigorous spirit rose again to comfort and aid her companions in cruel captivity. The American minister was exerting himself in her behalf, but she gave her stern jailers so much trouble by her efforts to succor the other prisoners, that her friends dreaded lest her name should appear in one of the daily lists of forty victims for the guillotine.

The Reign of Terror at last came to a close, and the surviving prisoners were set at liberty with the exception of Madame de Lafayette, who was so obnoxious to the Convention on the General's account, that she was still kept in custody. She was summoned before Legendre; but, in reply to his aspersions upon her husband, defended him with such earnestness, that he angrily remanded her to prison. Here she remained until February, 1795, when her release was effected by the interference of the Government of the United States. It had been customary for the wives of proscribed emigrants to feign a divorce, in order to save at least some portion of their property. But to this procedure Madame de Lafayette would never resort. "What noble imprudence," wrote her husband, after her death, "made her remain almost the only woman in France whose name was dangerous to her, yet who would never change it? Each of her petitions and appeals began with the words 'La Femme Lafayette.' Never did this woman, so indulgent towards party spirit, allow, when close upon the scaffold, a single imputation on me to pass without defending me, nor an opportunity of showing her principles without manifesting them, and owning that they came from me."

As soon as Madame de Lafayette was at liberty, she began preparations for joining her husband. Her first step was to proceed to Auvergne to resume the charge of her children, who had been placed, during her unjust imprisonment, under the care of an elderly aunt. Chavaignac had been confiscated; but, by means of borrowing money of the United States minister, and diamonds of her youngest sister, she redeemed it, and thus provided a comfortable home for the kind relative, who had a double claim to gratitude, since she had taken care of Lafayette in his orphaned boyhood as well as temporarily watched over his children. Madame de Lafayette then sent her little boy to the United States, committing him to the care of his namesake, General Washington; and, with her two daughters, the elder of whom was only fifteen years of age, set off in an humble equipage for Paris. From this city she started for Germany with the purpose of proceeding to Vienna, and there supplicating the Emperor to release her husband. Lafayette had now been for a long time imprisoned at Olmutz, in Mo-

ravia, for the Prussians had shifted back to the Austrians the odium of holding him in captivity. The latter, upon immuring him, informed him that he would never again see anything but the walls of his prison, that he would never receive tidings of his family, and that his very name would no longer be given him. For a while, he was allowed neither knives nor forks, and was confined in a damp, dark dungeon, where the misery of his abode so wore upon him that he lost all his hair. Twice only since he was taken to Olmutz had he heard of his wife. In 1794, a Dutch physician managed to send him a note, saying that she was living; and he wrote a reply upon the margin of a novel by means of Indian ink and lemon-juice. Again, in the succeeding year, through his aide-de-camp, a series of whistlings kept up by one person after another in the prison, enabled him, by a preconcerted signal, to understand the same good tidings.

Madame de Lafayette, on her route to Vienna, stopped at Altona, where Madame de Montagu was residing with an aunt. Full of deep emotion was the meeting of the fond sisters, who had suffered so much during the few years that had elapsed since they separated at the little inn on the road to Chavaignac. Madame de Montagu's first words, when her agitation allowed her to speak, were, "Did you see them?" meaning their martyred relatives. The elder sister was obliged to reply in the negative, but she had heard of the noble constancy with which they met their fate from the lips of the good priest, who, in disguise, attended them even to the scaffold. Whereas, Madame de Montagu had only received his sad but animating account by means of letters, written upon cambric handkerchiefs, which her youngest sister, Madame de Gramont, had contrived to send her by a messenger, who brought them concealed in the lining of his coat. Madame de Lafayette's aunt now advised her to abandon the scheme of joining the General, from consideration of what she and her little girls must suffer in prison life. But the wife's purpose could not be shaken; and, after brief enjoyment of her sister's society, she proceeded to Vienna. It was not without difficulty that a personal interview with the Emperor was obtained; but, finally, her earnest suit was successful, and she was permitted to repair to the old dismal fortress at Olmutz upon condition that she should become a prisoner as close as her husband.

As her eyes fell upon the massive outer walls of the prison, after her long, wearisome, anxious journey, her heart leapt for joy, and she exclaimed, in the words of Tobit, "Blessed be God that liveth forever, and blessed be His kingdom, for he doth scourge and have mercy. I will praise Him in the land of my captivity." Joyous was the meeting between the General and his wife and children, but scarcely had

they embraced each other before they were interrupted by officials, who demanded of the newly-arrived their purses and silver forks. The hardships which Lafayette had undergone during his long confinement had sadly changed his personal appearance, but his sufferings had not destroyed the natural buoyancy of his temperament, and the reunited family settled cheerfully into the unvaried routine of prison life. The young ladies had a cell to themselves, which, like their parents', was furnished with a curtainless bed, two chairs, two tables, and a stove. The family took breakfast together, and then the mother accompanied her daughters to their apartment, where she remained until dinner time. The rest of the day was passed with the General. In the early evening, a corporal appeared with his heavy keys, and the young girls marched back to their own cell; one of them blushing violently as they passed between the sabres of the soldiers on duty; the other looking disdainful, or amused, as her mood might be. Madame de Lafayette was in possession of a copy of Buffon, and occupied herself in writing upon its margin a memoir of her excellent mother. Anastasie's skilful hands made an old coat furnish material for shoes for her father; and the little Virginie, under her sister's guidance, helped to make corsets and dresses. But Madame de Lafayette's health failed in this close confinement, and, although she was allowed a physician, who could communicate with her by talking in Latin to her husband, she could not obtain permission to leave the prison for a change of air except upon condition of never returning to it. She therefore resigned herself to her fate, until the United States and England, both strongly remonstrating with Bonaparte, the Consul required the Austrian government to release Lafayette and his faithful aide-de-camp. Five years had rolled heavily away since the General's arrest at Liège; and, for nearly two years, his wife and daughters had shared the rigors of his captivity.

Madame de Montagu's present home was on the Lake of Ploen, in Holstein; and, to this spot, the released prisoners wended their way. When they reached their destination, Madame de Montagu heard the postilion's horn; and, hastening to leap into a boat, was quickly carried across the lake to meet the party upon the opposite shore. With what joy she recrossed the water with Madame de Lafayette and Virginie seated in the same boat with herself; while Anastasie, the General, the Marquis de Montagu, and the aide-de-camp occupied another. Once more in possession of freedom and the society of cherished relatives, the mother and her daughters passed happy days in the quiet occupations of reading, working, and conversation. After the lapse of a few months, the family circle was widened and enriched by the return of young Lafayette from the United

States, and in the spring the wedding of Anastasie and a brother of her father's aide-de-camp was celebrated.

Madame de Lafayette's health had been undermined in the Olmutz prison, and was still very delicate. But as soon as she felt able to assume the care of a large household, she removed with her family to the village of Vianen, in Holland, where she had the pleasure of entertaining both her sisters at the same time. The General's immense fortune had been mostly confiscated, and his means were now so limited that his wife could sometimes provide, for a party of fifteen or more persons, no more substantial dish than a preparation of eggs. The Marquis de Montagu declared that he had but one good dinner while he was in Holland, and then he did not dine at the General's. Despite all this, however, the three sisters found sufficient happiness in their reunion; and, as though the days were not long enough for them, would sit up until midnight, shivering in their cold room, but forgetting discomfort in eager conversation. Before separating, they drew up together, in commemoration of their martyred relatives, a litany, which they agreed to repeat daily, that, however far apart their earthly homes might be, in spirit they might be united. One brief extract from the litany must suffice to exhibit the animus of the whole:—

"Let us enter into the spirit of these dear victims when they made ready for their death, filled with resignation and burning charity. After their example let us pray for their enemies, and, as it is said in the last lines of their will, let us not only forgive them, but pray God to fill them with His mercy. Let us strive to gather up fresh blessings for the fulfilment of the duties of our station. Let us entreat the Lord to increase in us His love, to fulfil His holy will in us. Let us join our devotions to those of the Church Militant, the Church Suffering, and above all to the Church Triumphant, in the eternal song of the Heavenly Jerusalem. Amen. Alleluia!"

It soon became necessary for the family party at Vianen to break up. But in the course of a few years all the sisters were again settled in France, and each had received her share in their mother's property. One common subject of solicitude weighed upon their hearts. This was to discover where the precious relics of their slaughtered kindred had been deposited. It was a difficult matter to search out, for the revolutionary tribunals had studiously concealed it. Finally Madame de Montagu heard of a young woman, Mademoiselle Paris by name, a worker upon lace, who could give her the anxiously-desired information; and having found the girl in her humble lodgings, listened with intense sympathy and interest to her thrilling story. Mademoiselle Paris had with her own eyes seen her aged, infirm father, and the kind brother who supported the whole family,

guillotined together; and when their bodies, with those of other victims, were thrown into large blood-stained carts, mechanically had followed the remains, and found that they were hastily and carelessly buried at Picpus, near the ruins of an old convent. Madame de Lafayette and her sister Pauline proceeded to the designated spot. They could not doubt that this was the resting-place of the bodies of their loved ones, since the latter were guillotined at the same place where Mademoiselle Paris's relatives suffered, and, as the guillotine had only stood there six weeks, although within that brief interval thirteen hundred persons were slain by it, there was every reason to believe that all the victims were interred at Picpus. Madame de Lafayette and her sister at first designed to erect upon this spot a memorial only to their own relatives, but further consideration induced them to feel that it should commemorate all the sufferers. They therefore started the project, and the work gradually increased, until the present memorial was finished. This is a large church, dark and solemn in its general aspect, but grand and costly. Two walls of the choir are completely covered with tablets, bearing the names of the thirteen hundred victims commemorated by the sacred edifice. The old convent is now used in part for a nunnery, and in part as a college for training missionaries for the heathen.

The more striking incidents of Madame de Lafayette's life had now transpired. Her health continued infirm, but she took great interest in a village school, which she had established at Chavaignac, and lived on, a blessing to her family and acquaintances, until in the year 1807 it became evident that her enfeebled constitution was giving way. The state of Madame de Grammont's health prevented her from leaving her own home. But Madame de Montagu hastened to the bedside of her cherished sister Adrienne, to soothe her declining days, and catch her last utterances of affection and devotion. Already the failing body had clouded the mind, and the invalid was at times delirious. Yet even her unconscious words betrayed the usual tenor of her thoughts. She would think that her mother was still living, and inquire concerning her. The third of December she fancied a day in Easter-tide. Her sister told her that it was the Advent season. "Well," she rejoined, "it is a time of longing. Life is short. Happy he who has lived for God." Again, she thought that a Friday was Sunday. Her sister sweetly rectified the mistake by saying, "It is the day of the cross." "True," she replied, "I unite myself to it with all my heart."

"Are you a Christian?" she said one day to her husband. "Of what sect? Ah! I know; you are a Fayetteite."

The General smiled sadly, as he answered, "So were you, I think."

"Yes," rejoined the devoted wife, "I would give my life for that sect, but first of all one must be a Christian. You admire Jesus Christ, and one day you will own His Divinity. Will you come with me to martyrdom?"

Her husband replied that he would go anywhere with her—words which gave her intense delight, since she took them as a promise that he would be a Christian.

In an hour of perfect consciousness that the Angel of Death had summoned her, she broke forth into the same hymn of Tobit, in which she had found expression for her joyous emotion, when upon the point of joining her husband in prison. On Christmas Eve came the end. Many loving mourners stood around her bed. A nephew read the prayers for the dying; and when his voice ceased, her sister, as she gazed at the serene face of the sufferer, repeated: "I will lay me down in peace to take my rest, for it is Thou, Lord, only that makest me dwell in safety." Before the clock struck twelve, her weary spirit was at rest.

After the decease of his resolute, loving wife, Lafayette wrote to his old aide-de-camp:—

"She was fourteen, I sixteen, when her heart amalgamated itself with all that could interest me. I always thought I loved her well, and needed her much; but only when losing her did I fully understand what remains for me of a life which had seemed full of troubles, but for which there is now no possible happiness and well being. . . . I owed to her a happiness without break or cloud. Much as she loved me, with I may say a passionate affection, I never saw the least shade of *exigence* or discontent, nothing that did not leave the freest course to all my enterprises, and if I looked back to the time of our youth I could recall traits of unexampled forbearance and generosity. You have always seen her heart and mind with me in my sentiments and politics, rejoicing at all that could conduce to my glory, and far more at what, as she said, made me fully known; above all delighted when she saw me sacrifice opportunities of glory to a right principle.

"Her devotion was also peculiar. Never in these thirty-four years did it cause me a shadow of inconvenience. All her observances were regulated with a view to my convenience . . . and the hope she expressed was always that, with the uprightness she knew I possessed, I should yet be convinced. Her last recommendations to me were in this spirit. She begged me, for the love of her, to read certain books, which I will certainly examine once more with true earnestness, and to teach me to love her religion she called it sovereign liberty."

Again, in 1824, when, at the nation's invitation, Lafayette came to this country with his son, his thoughts, in the midst of his triumphs, sadly reverted to her whom he termed *la meilleure partie de moi-même*, and he wrote: "She

whose trust in the United States never failed, foresaw for me all that we have found. I love to think that her blessing has prevailed to bring us all the happiness we experience in this world."

Five years after the return of Lafayette to his native land occurred another French revolution, in which he acted as leader, and not only exerted his influence to prevent excesses, but yielded his private preference for a republic, and established Louis Philippe on the throne—a "monarchy surrounded by republican institutions." But he had already passed the allotted term of human life, and soon withdrew from the arena of politics. During the winter of 1834, his health appeared to be failing. On the first day of May, in that year, he wrote the last letter which he ever penned. It was addressed to the president of the Society for Negro Emancipation at Glasgow, and told of the earnest desire which Washington and other of the founders of our country felt to have it delivered from the fatal incubus of slavery. About three weeks after writing this epistle, Lafayette closed his eyes in the dreamless sleep of death. His obsequies were celebrated with great honors, and, in accordance with his own request, his remains were interred at Picpus, where rested the body of his loved and loving wife.

Five years later, Madame de Montagu, with a frame worn by many sorrows, but still strong in spirit, placed in the hands of her daughter the crucifix ring, which her sister Adrienne, on her death-bed, had committed to her keeping, and shortly after calmly passed on to the Silent Land.

The youngest of the five sisters of Noailles, Rosalie, or Madame de Grammont, was now the sole survivor of those children, in regard to whom their mother's chief desire had been, that she might at last be able to meet her Maker, and say, "Of those that Thou gavest me have I lost none." Madame de Grammont lived until the year 1853. During the revolution of 1848, one of her daughter's children said to her:—

"Grandmother, suppose to-morrow morning you saw the guillotine set up in our square, as it was in the time of the Terror, should you not be rather uneasy?"

"My poor dear," quietly replied the old lady, "that is not the question. Must we not die? The great point is to be ready. As to the kind of death, that is a mere detail."

OH, how beautiful it is to love! Even thou that sneerest and laughest in cold indifference or scorn if others are near thee—thou, too, must acknowledge its truth when thou art alone, and confess that a foolish world is prone to laugh in public at what in private it reveres as one of the highest impulses of our nature—namely, love.

## TO MY LITTLE NAMESAKE.

BY LINDA WARFEL.

"Linda, we have named the baby for you."  
Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_.

BIRDIE, in your cradle nest!  
Though my lips have ne'er caressed,  
Nor my fingers lightly pressed  
Your wee frame—  
Tenderly my heart is stirred  
By a mother's written word,  
That she calls her household bird  
By my name.

Lovingly your image fair,  
In my inmost heart has share,  
And I cherish fondly there  
Dreams of thee!  
Pure and holy is the thought,  
By your unseen presence brought,  
Of a love as yet untaught  
Unto me.

Baby! though I ne'er should know  
Your pure features here below,  
Words of kindness, ere I go,  
Let me say!  
"Linda!" while you bear my name,  
Let no crimson spot of shame  
Blot its fair, un sullied fame,  
While I stay.

From life's sorrows oft, that rise—  
Life's best angels in disguise—  
Learn this lesson and be wise,  
"Life is brief."  
Read, with thoughts of pure intent,  
Warning words in kindness meant,  
List the teachers God hath sent,  
Love and Grief.

Baby! so the swift years fly,  
Drawing closer earth and sky,  
They will call us both to lie  
In the tomb;  
But, ere life's sands are all told,  
Earth to me will have grown cold;  
I'll be feeble, gray, and old,  
In your bloom.

Birdie! when the years have flown,  
And your feet can walk alone—  
When upon your heart has grown  
Maidenhood!  
Keep you, darling, from the strife  
Of a sickly, fevered life,  
And from ill with pleasures rife,  
Pure and good.

Ever close your guileless heart  
'Gainst the tempter's ready art,  
Mine has learned that joys depart,  
Why not thine?  
You, like me, may shed hot tears,  
Like me, be oppressed with fears,  
Ere come and gone have twice ten years,  
Baby, mine!

Guide aright those little feet,  
That when life has fled so fleet,  
They may tread the golden street  
Up above:  
Keep your lips from guile of men,  
That when rings the glad "Amen!"  
They may sing, with thousands ten,  
"God is love!"

A FAITHFUL friend is better than gold.