

NIGHT AND THE DESERTER.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

"I might forget her melting prayer
When wild'ring pleasures madly fly ;
But in the still unbroken air
Her gentle tones come stealing by."

The stars again, the scornful stars ! Oh, Heaven,
Why let thy cold lights mock a mourner so ?
See how they smile—and I am not forgiven—
They smile, *they smile*—and *she* is sleeping low !

In gloom, in dust—the dark, dark eye's glad splendor,
Dim, dim—the lip's warm crimson chill and pale,
The young, pure *heart*—so tried, so true and tender,
In gloom ? in dust ? it is a fearful tale !

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I, the world's idol, I whose praise is ringing
In princely halls above the banquet-wine,
I, on whose shrine young hearts their loves are flinging—
Hearts ? *Hers* is dust—and what is earth to mine ?

What chills me thus ? Ay, this magnolia blossom,
Given by a fair hand in yon bower's dim light—
Like one she prest to her impassioned bosom,
Pledge of the faith—I broke : that fatal night.

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I, the world's idol—wherefore do I shiver ?
Is not the flush of praises burning yet ?
Why gaze I wildly on this lovely river ?
They won *her* from its wave—why not forget ?

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Sweet air of night, why is your calmness fearful ?
Far skies, why should your silence madden me ?
Most splendid stars, how can your spell be tearful ?
Winds, do ye truly whisper :—Where is she ?

Loved one and lost forever, ay, *forever*—
Years, years ye will not bring her love again—
In time—oh, in—eternity I'll never
Gaze on her once—I know my tears are vain.

Is there no peace ? Father, heart-broken, lonely,
Bowed with remorse I ask Thee to forgive—
Yes, there is peace—and thou, my God, thou only
Canst bid the dying to look up and live.

