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TO ELLA.
BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

I dreamed of thee last night, and so my heart
Goes wand'ring back into the summers gone,
When my glad hopes rose, upon flashing plumes,
Like birds of Paradise, and flew towards Heaven!
Ah—the storm met them on their upward way!
But—well, I smile the same. * *

Each starry ti[me]
Amid the roses we would linger then,
Learning the winds the poetry we loved!
And oh—hast thou forgotten what a future
I wished—ay, thought to find? Alas—alas!
The visionary of the olden years,
Who wasteth all God's holy night in schemes
For changing earth's dull metals into gold—
Nor yet the Spaniard, wand'ring thro' the wilds
Of pathless forests in an eager search
Of El Dorado's glittering loveliness,
Dreamed not a wilder thing!

At last I know
'Tis well when these mirages of the heart
Fade ere we gain their light—*since fade they must!*
For, oh! to reach the Fairy-land of Love—
And find the myrtles raining poisoned dew,
The rose-wreaths, into stinging scorpions changed,
And the enchanted fountains of the distance
Flinging up showers of—dry and burning sands—
Why—were this not indeed a *mocking* death?

I tell thee—but 'tis vain—thou hast not learned
The utter desolation of the heart
For which the earth—the heaven—gives no relief—
But—tears and tears and tears! Oh, some have knelt—
Stabbed through the spirit by invisible swords,
And girded with an icy dark—they've knelt
Beneath blue skies all overflowed with light,
And asked the angels—and the king of angels
Only—for mercy—but they answered not.
And sometimes, in dark dreamings, I have thought
Celestial shapes—feeling themselves no grief—

Knew not to even pity things that weep!
But it must be that our dim eyes see not
To read aright the signs of God. Perchance
That which to us seems punishment *is* mercy.
Well—well—the solemn mystery of life
Will be made plain—*at last*. * *