

A WOMAN'S HAPPIEST MOMENT.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

'Twas not in glittering hall, or rose-wreathed bow
Not 'mid the swell of music, or the hush
Of hearts grown still with love ; not in the hour
Of twilight's shadowy gloom, or sunset's blush,
Nor of the fairy moon-rise ; no, nor when
The seraph of the midnight guarded men.
I gazed not in thine eye, nor thine, nor thine,
Nor yet in thine, thou brightest one, and far
Whose soul of dreams did erewhile win from mine
As much devotion as or sun, or star,
E'er won from Persian worshipper of fire,
Or beauty from a youthful poet's lyre.
But it was when a lonely, wandering boy,
Chilled by the autumn blast, and pale, and sad,
Thanked me with something like a gleam of joy,
And took the silver, which was all I had.
That was the happiest moment of my life,
And still its memory shines thro' cloud and strife.
The youth was fair. The soul of Italy
Sat mourning in the darkness of his eyes,
And on his dusky brow 'twas sweet to see
The lingering kiss of warmer winds and skies,
As if the spirit of his land would stay
A guardian angel for the exile's way.
But he was frail and desolate too, and I,
Despite my burning love for glorious things,
Thought but of this while he was passing by,
To vanish, like a bird with radiant wings,
And voice of sorrow, which would make us hear
Its grief, not see its hues, while it is near.
And if I still think on each broken word'
Which fell so sadly from his tender mouth,
It is not that my rapture therein heard
The liquid music of th' impassioned South,
But that I won a blessing, which may stay,
To plead for me on God's avenging day.
