

THE MEMORIALS.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

"Starlight and sunrise—very sweet

The olden airs come up again;
And yet the joy that used to beat
Its golden plumes to each soft strain
Is sunken in a gulf of pain.

"Starlight and music still," she said,
And sadly bowed her aching head.

"Starlight and music still—but oh,
I miss the charm of long ago.

'Tis true, the night is fair as then,
Ay, fair as even night can be;

And never did the eyes of men
See lovelier things than now I see;
For, white clouds fly across the moon,
Like shadows of the angel's wings;
And far and near the wind's low tune
Seems what a blessed spirit sings
When first 'tis free from fated things,
To dive among the purple spaces
With soul's delicious dreaminesses,
And float into the veiled places
Of Glory, heaven and hell confesses.

"What made the charm of long ago?"

The heliotropes were sweet, I know;
And some late roses round us there
Seemed crimson cradles rocked in air;
Where moonbeams lay in silence deep,
Like baby-fairies gone to sleep.
Yet these, I think, have little part
In the arcana of my heart.

Ah, midnight hair of heavy sweeping,
And short, curved lip and fair young brow,
And voice of song, whose ghost is keeping
An echo in my bosom now;
And dark-blue eyes, and languid lashes
That drooped with dreams from lids of snow,
Or rose with passion's fiery flashes—
Ye made the charm of long ago.

"Once, when a buried hope was young,
I saw a comet, up among

The cloud-world's awful wildernesses,
With star-pearls in its golden tresses.
Those stars themselves were wondrous bright,
If they had only burned elsewhere,
But pale in the supernal light
Of that fierce comet's flashing hair.

And thus it was with thee. Thy face
Had many a rare and radiant grace,
Which, seen alone, had looked divine,
But in thy soul's transcendent shine,
Even they wore but the glow which clings
Around creation's dimmer things.

"Another charm of long ago

Was from a darker eye than thine,
Which had as wild a spell for mine,
And lip as sweet, and voice as low—
Ah, still that voice floats thro' my dreams,
And still its: '*Hear me, Norma!*' seems
To keep the old, half-murmurous sigh,
Which might have won it a reply.

"One severed curl—some faded flowers,
And memories of the vanished hours,
Are all that's linked with him or thee
Which now remains on earth for me.

The curl has shaded his dusk brow,
The flowers have touched thy snowy hand
The visions of the hours come now,
Like spectres from a fearful land.

I looked upon the curl to-day,
Whose raven coils before me lay,
And heard these words beside me there:
'His heart is blacker than his hair.'

Well—I do not know * * But—I'll keep the curl—
For—I prized it much—when a dreaming girl.
And they've said of thee * * But—I'll keep the flowers,
Tho' they grew in this poisoned world of ours.

"Starlight and music. Hush the strain;
The dead will not come back again
To wake the voice of their still guitars—
So, hush the strain, and shade the stars,
With the closed blinds from my weary sight,
For I cannot bear their haunted light,
Since the dead will not come back again;

Though they are not held by the grave from me,
Tho' they walk the world and share its pain,
Tho' their lips are red, and their eyes can see,
Yes, the breathing changed are doubly dead,
But curls and flowers from the long ago
Are enchanted things, whose spells are shed
Like the still, white leaves from the Flower of Snow.
Touch them—and the glitter of holy wings
Fills the heart as thickly as angels fill
The air round a pictured God. And springs
Gush over life's deserts with musical thrill,
Till we feel there is naught has such blessed powers
As our severed curls and our faded flowers."