

## A FRAGMENT.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

“At last I see the vesper star :  
Carlos, attune thee thy guitar,  
    And, while I hear thee singing,  
I will forget the ruined years  
To whose dark shrines my early tears  
    In icy drops are clinging.”

“I must go elsewhere, Isabel—  
But yonder bird will sing as well.”  
    The maiden gazed above her ;  
Then sadly bowed her graceful head,  
And in deep, echoing accents said—  
    “He is the Rose’s lover.”

He heard the low, reproachful tone,  
But passed, and left her all alone—!  
    Amid soft, southern sweetness ;  
Where earth and air awaken love,  
He left a girl to weep above  
    A fairy heart-dream’s fleetness.

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’Twas night. Voluptuous music sighed,  
’Mid light and perfume, o’er a bride  
    Whose mist-like veil was flowing  
Around a form of faultless mold ;  
But Carlos—dreamy, pale, and cold—  
    Gazed on her cheek’s rich glowing.

“If it were Isabel !” he said—  
Then hurried where the wine’s rich red  
    Flashed its bewildering brightness,  
And with flushed cheek, and restless eye,  
And heart where feverish fires burned high,  
    Spoke words of mirth and lightness.

Vain was *her* rank, her beauty’s spell—  
The thought, “If it were Isabel,”  
    Writhed in his bosom’s sadness ;  
And ere the rosy, smiling May,  
That brought his bridal, passed away  
    Her stars looked on his madness.

Oft all alone by night he’d rave  
By Isabel’s deserted grave,  
    And waste his tears above her.  
And when the nightingale was heard,  
He’d mutter, listening to the bird,  
    “He is the Rose’s lover.”

Ah—though his story’s sad to hear,  
Though it awakes the sigh and tear,  
    And makes the spirit falter—  
How many hearts, like his, could tell  
The thought—*If it were Isabel*—  
    Has chilled them at the altar !