

1849

Communings with the Departed

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“And leave some record in the hearts of men
That he has been——”

The same simple modest worth has distinguished him in every stage of his successful career; the noble sentiments and exalted love for humanity that breathe through all his works, do honor to the land of Penn; speak well for the purity of the moral atmosphere he breathed in his early youth, amid the green hills of his own loved Brandywine.

The second edition of his last volume, we believe, his “Rhymes of Travel,” has been published. This book well sustains the young poet’s rising fame. Want of room forbids us to particularize. We cannot refrain, however, from mentioning two pieces as having pleased us very much: his “Wayside Dream,” and that noble and spirited poem, “The Continents.” We would like to speak of others, but these must suffice. We heartily commend the book to all lovers of good poetry.

COMMUNINGS WITH THE DEPARTED.

THE Spring flower blooms above thee,
My sister and my friend;
'Tis nursed by hearts that love thee
With love that cannot end.
The wild bird warbles o'er thee,
In melancholy mood;
He sings but to deplore thee,
The youthful and the good.
Thou canst not breathe the fragrant air;
Thou canst not hear the minstrel there.

The Summer dew is gleaming,
Bathed in the morning light;
Pure as thy spirit seeming,
And as thy spirit, bright;
Ere noon it flies to heaven,
As thou hast early fled;
Thy morn to earth was given,
Thy noon is with the dead;
Next dawn the dew-drops shall restore;
Ah! when will death's long night be o'er?

The Autumn winds are calling
The storm clouds from the west,
And withered leaves are falling
Around thy place of rest;

The evening fire is lighted
 In yonder rural home,
 The broken group, heart-blighted,
 Weep that thou dost not come.
 Ah! hushed thy voice in silent earth;
 Thy seat is vacant at the hearth!

The Winter snows descending,
 Their virgin mantle spread—
 A shroud to nature lending,
 To wrap her children dead.
 No minstrel bird is keeping
 His vigil o'er thy tomb—
 The voiceless air is sleeping
 In chill, unbroken gloom;
 But earth shall break her icy chain;
 So thou to life shalt wake again!



THE WORLD OF MYSTERY.

“THE spirit of the age,” which we are continually hearing extolled by cracked-brained authors or saintly hypocrites, may be briefly defined “the love of money.” As this principle (if it may be so called) pervades everything, upon it are founded the prevalent ideas of moral and intellectual culture. We are taught to believe that there is no education but that derived from books, for these are expensive; and that we are bound to observe no moral laws but those set forth by some worthy divine, who must be well paid for his trouble.

But the human mind, though fortified (or rather imprisoned) by such “moral and intellectual culture,” cannot resist the powerful influence exercised over it by an innate though suppressed belief in dark and hidden mysteries of the universe, which books cannot explain. In vain we struggle against this fascination—there is something hidden from mortal eyes which we long, yet dread, to look upon.

The first emotion of this secret principle of our nature is called forth by the nursery tale of fairy or goblin, and active still, life itself departs as the dying sinner trembles at the dread spirits of that mysterious world into which he rushes, while the joyful Christian pauses for a moment with awful wonder at the gates of heaven. We may close up the heart in the rigid barriers of philosophy, and confine the imagination to mathematical lines, but its boldness leaps these artificial bounds and laughs to scorn the