

1849

An Imitation of "What Constitutes a State?"

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God surely would not hurry one so young and fair, away from earth. Such were my thoughts as I sat there, more moved than I had ever been before, with my bosom heaving, and my heart almost bursting, and yet with an eye dry, and tearless. Roused at length, by hearing my name breathed, as I had heard it breathed of yore, I turned and saw her playing with a single tress of her hair. Taking up a pair of scissors that lay beside her, with her own hand, she severed this one little lock, and putting it into mine, she said, "don't forget me—I am dying now, but I am not afraid—I *did* wish to live, but that is past." For a moment her lips quivered, as if other words plead for utterance. Her eye gleamed and brightened, even 'neath the death dew that was now gathering on it. A sweet smile played upon her countenance. She was lovely in death.

I have it yet about my heart—
 Her beauty of that day:
 As if the robe that she should wear
 In other climes were given;
 That I might learn to know it there,
 And seek her out in heaven.

For some moments I sat, expecting to hear her speak, to see her smile again. But her hand grew colder and colder as it lay clasped in mine. Now I wept—wept like a child, and turned away.

I saw her again, as she lay shrouded in the coffin, a wreath of wild autumn flowers upon her breast, and that same sweet smile upon her face; but she was cold and dead. Her spirit had left the lovely tenement to begin a new and brighter existence. She went into the presence of her God pure and innocent. And I have not forgotten her yet. Her image has lingered around my heart from that day to the present; and often when tempted to some youthful folly, she has seemed to stand before me, and my better nature has triumphed.



AN IMITATION OF

"WHAT CONSTITUTES A STATE?"

What constitutes a man?
 Not learning, wit, or wealth, or shouted name;
 Not titled honors, or ancestral fame;
 Not deeds in battle's van:
 But steadfast purpose, and an honest heart;
 A will that never wavers from the right;
 A ready hand to gather and impart;
 A mind to grasp the true, the infinite;
 A soul aspiring to a blest abode;
 The love of human kind,—the fear of God;—
 These constitute a *man*.