

## THE CHRISTIAN WOMANS DROWNING HYMN.

### A MONODY.

(A Christian lady and organist, went July, 1886, with, and at the request of her sister, for a few days' excursion to Indianola. They arrived the day before the great night storm and tidal wave, which submerged the town. Both the ladies and children, after hours of fearful suspense, were drowned, the house where they sought refuge being broken to pieces in the waves. A survivor stated that the organist spent much of the interval in most moving prayer. Their remains were recovered on the subsidence of the tempest, and interred at their homes, amidst universally solemn and tender sympathy.

The following verses are imagined, as expressing the emotions of the Christian wife, sister and mother, during her long struggle with the waters:)

Sister, awake! Oh list! there is a change;  
The moon, whose flood of light, at eventide  
Made of the placid sea an answering range  
Of star-lit sky, the upper heavens beside;  
Sheds now its fitful gleams through angry rifts.  
The fanning breezes that caressed our locks  
Are swollen to a gale, on which there drifts  
The shriek of drowning men; and sullen shocks  
Of waves, like trampling hosts, assault the ground—  
• Oh hear beneath the hollow, deep sea-moan  
Soh of unrest eternal! where doth sound  
The smothered agony, and parting groan  
Of all the dead that ocean's caverns keep.  
Our hearts, oh! sister, yesterday were bright  
As was the sun-lit surface of the deep;  
Our mirth was like its ripples tipped with light—  
We thought hut in this summer-sea to lave,  
Our members fevered by the dog-star's ray.  
And yet, beneath our laughter's rippling wave  
My spirit heard a moan, which seemed to say  
In tone half-felt, unreasoning; beware!  
Thou art the type, thou beauteous, treacherous sea  
Of mortals' lives, whose sunny joys show fair  
But to prelude the the storm.  
Come, let us flee!  
See these intrusive surges, each more nigh  
Than its audacious fellow! Sister, come!

Too late, thou sayest? 'Ere now the breakers fly,  
 Crowned with crashing wrecks and seething foam,  
 Across that narrow isthmus, where alone  
 Our path to safety lay. Remorseless deep,  
 Thy cunning, faithless work, 'thou hast well done.  
 We are thy helpless prey, which thou wilt keep  
 Fast caught in thine embrace, to wait the death  
 Thy fierce yet stealthy tread will bring. Oh fate  
 So sudden, unforeseen! to end our breath  
 In our strong prime! To set so short a date,  
 One eve, betwixt our joy and our despair!  
 Insidious foe; knewest thou that manly breast,  
 Those nervous, sheltering arms are absent far,  
 Which even thy mighty rage would dare contest  
 For her he loved? Against two women weak,  
 Two frightened babes, inexorable king,  
 Resounds thy diapason dread, the shriek  
 Of wailing beasts, that bear upon their wings  
 The hissing spray, and thunder of thy hosts  
 To drown our puny cry.

So with thy shout,  
 From far-off tropic deeps and Carib-coasts  
 Thy huge reserve of floods thou callest out  
 To overwhelm these helpless lives. Our bruised limbs  
 And garments rent are tossed like leaves that float  
 On autumn blasts; while ever nearer climbs  
 Thy cruel, lapping wave, to clutch our throat.  
 Yea, thou art mighty in thy rage, oh sea!  
 Thou, atheist Titan, wouldst assault the sky  
 And fain wouldst bid the frightened stars to flee  
 From thy vast tumult! But they do not fly!  
 Between the storm-rent clouds I see their beams,  
 Slender but steadfast, and serene as clear,  
 Disdain thy brutal wrath; and with them streams  
 That still, small voice believing spirits hear;  
 Soft, but more potent than thy deaf'ning roar.  
 It is thy Master's voice, insurgent deep,  
 Who sits above those stars, who shuts the door,  
 Or opens to the storm, who bids thee keep  
 Thy subject bounds, and measures all thy flood  
 In his mere palm; when he bids, "Peace; be still;"  
 Thy waves shall crouch like beasts, beneath his rod.  
 Thou tosses wide thy billows' hands to kill.  
 The everlasting arms enfold and keep  
 My better life; Jehovah, he who guides  
 Yon starry worlds, as shepherds lead their sheep,  
 Inspires my psalm of faith, above the tides  
 Of thy vain tumult, ringing high and clear.

Belov'd on earth, farewell! Oh heavenly spouse  
I come! thy voice doth cast out all my fear  
And charms my soul aloft. Thy will allows  
To the devourer, naught hut this poor clay,  
Earth-born like it. Then, take it, ravenous sea!  
Thy futile spoil; thou hast an empty prey.  
Even this for a day—nor shall it be  
The food of thy sea monsters, nor be drawn  
To thy dark caverns. This my soul foresees,  
Grown prescient in the light of heaven's near dawn.  
Whilst thou shalt cower at my Lord's decrees  
Back to thy kennels, this poor frame shall lie  
Embalmed in loving tears, and take its rest  
Beneath the flowers and sheltering groves, hard by  
The peaceful homes of men; and temples blest  
Of Christ; until his resurrection-morn  
And that new world, when "Seas shall be no more."  
Thus, from thy stormiest crest, with holy scorn,  
I mount to peaceful mansions, where thy roar  
No more shall reach, than to yon starry orbs.