Monody.

Written at evening on the Banks of the Chattahoochee.

Oft when the sun along the West,
His farewell splendor throws,
Imparting to the wounded breast,
The spirit of repose,
My mind reverts to former scenes,
To joys of other days,
When love illumin'd all my dreams,
And hope inspired my lays.

I would not for the world, forget,
When here at eventide,
The Lyre of love, I softly swept,
To her, my peerless bride,
Whose blended smiles and tears proclaimed
The triumph of my art,
And plainly told, the Minstrel reigned,
The monarch of her heart.

Enriched with every mental grace,
And every moral worth,
She shone among her own bright race,
A paragon on earth,
So luminous with love and song,
So little dim'd by shade,
Her beauty threw a light along,
Her foot-steps as she strayed. ×

But all the loveliness that so long
Around her once, hath fled;
She sleepeth in the valley's shade,
A dweller with the dead;
And I am here with ruined mind,
Left lingering on the strand,
To throw my music to the wind,
My tears upon the sand.

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I grieve to think she hears no more,
The songs she loved so well;
That all the strains I now may pour
Of evenings in the dell,
Must float unheard – must fall to her,
As silently as time,
Unheeded as the dewy tear
That Nature weeps with mine.

O, if thou canst thy slumbers break,
My dear departed bride,
Now at thy Minstrel's call, awake,
And linger by his side;
O, come, and bless his evening song,
The last his Harp may send,
Before its master's breaking heart,
Shall songs and sorrows end.

I fain would let thee know, blest shade,
Tho' years have sadly flown,
My love, with time, has not decayed,
My heart is still thine own;
And thine shall be, till life shall set,
Thro' weal and woe the same,
As warmly as when first we met,
Until we meet again.

If I have sought the festal hall,
My sorrows to beguile;
Or touched my harp, at Lady's call
In praise of beauty's smile,
O, still thou didst my thoughts control
Amidst the smiling throng;
Thou wert the idol of my soul,
The spirit of my song.

Take, take, ye gay and laughing girls,
The songs that freely pours;
The Minstrel's heart – the Minstrel's heart!
It never can be yours;
The music of my song may be
To living beauty shed,
But all the love that warms the strain,
I mean it for the dead.