Lines
In reply to some received from
The Rev.d Edward Fontaine

Pontotoc Mississippi.

A welcome to thy minstrel skill,
Dear friend of happier days;
Thy notes are sweet – but sweeter still,
The love that prompts thy lays.
From sorrows deep, and cherish'd long,
Thou wouldst my thoughts reclaim,
And by thy soft, enchanting song,
Awake a brighter train.

But vain it is thy harp to strike!
My woes thou canst not drown,
Unless thy notes, Cecelia's like,
Can draw an Angel down.
Until I see my daughter fair,
Lost Plicad of my soul,
The burning tears of my despair,
Must ever, ever roll.

Nor would I if I could, revive,
From my distraction wild;
I love the grief that keeps alive,
The memory of my child;
And if my heart, by hope betray'd,
Should court a vain repose,
How poorly were the guilt repaid,
By all that earth bestows.

The morning Star that fades from sight,
Still beams upon the mind;
So doth her beauty leave the light
Of memory behind;
Though lost to earth, too early gone,
By others seen no more,
She is to me, still shining on,
And brighter than before.

The smile she wore when last we met,
The tear she shed at parting;
The kiss upon my eye-lids set,
To keep my own from starting,
Like bright, remembered dreams of bliss,
Are lingering with me yet;-
That smile and tear and sealing kiss,
I never can forget.

And you, my friend, who knew her worth,
And loved that worth to praise;
And how amidst the ills of earth,
She walked in beauty's ways,
Will not condemn the grateful tears—
The ever-flowing stream,
That keeps a loveliness like hers,
In memory, fresh and green.

No—let me still in silence, keep
My vigils o'er her tomb;
And with my tears, forever steep
The flowers that o'er it bloom;
Though all the world should pass it by,
A place remembered not,
'Tis meet that I should linger nigh,
And bless the hallow'd spot.

The sacred love—the holy woes,
Awaken'd by the dead,
Are like the fragrance of the rose,
When all its bloom is fled;
And as beside the grave we stand,
The mournful thoughts that rise,
Are whispers from the spirit land,
Sweet voices from the skies.

Then leave, O, leave me to my grief,
Too wedded now to part;
'T will duly work its own relief,
By eating out the heart;
But till my daughter, pure and bright,
To me shall reappear,
My life must be a sleepless night,
Without a star to cheer.

You tell me that my grief is vain,
My child will not return –
No earthly tears can wake again,
The ashes of the Urn;
You tell me too, that she is gone
To regions blest and fair,
And wrong it is her loss to mourn,
Since she's an Angel there.

I know it all – I know it all;
Yet still with grief oppress'd,
My spirit sighs for her recall,
And will not be at rest;
I cannot, cannot give her up,
I am not reconciled;
O, take away the bitter cup,
And bring me back my child.

She was the last, enchanting ray,
That cheered me here below,
The only Star to guide my way,
Through this dark world of woe;
And now bereft of that sweet light,
O, how shall I sustain
The shadows of the awful night,
Which must with me remain!

Like him upon the rocky peak,
In wrath and vengeance doom'd
A victim to the Vulture's beak,
To suffer unconsumed;
So am I doom'd in darkness deep,
All desolate and chill,
To bear a pang that will not sleep,
A death that will not kill.

And be it so — all silently,
I'll bear the adverse weight;
But He I hope in yonder sky,
Who dooms me to my fate,
Will in His own good way and time,
My lovely one restore;
If not on earth, in that bless'd clime,
Where parting is no more.

I know He will — for even now,
On faith's delighted eye,
He breaketh like his own bright bow,
And speaks me from on high;
Amidst my deep despondency,
He whispers in my ear;
Thy daughter may not come to thee,
But thou canst go to her.

Enough, enough — I ask no more —
A light hath flash'd within;
My child from earth, He only bore,
To lure me on to Him;
Then let Him keep the jewel, bright,
O, let Him wear the gem;
I would not snatch so pure a light,
From His bright diadem.

The only boon, O, God, I crave,
Is soon thy face to see;
I long to pass the dull, cold grave,
And wing my way to Thee —
To Thee O, Lord, and all my friends,
In Thine eternal sphere,
Where I may make some poor amends,
For all my errors here.