DISCUSSIONS

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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 Sob 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 but 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 whelm 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 frighted 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 tossest 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.

BAPTISMAL HYMN.

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 but 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 you starry orbs.