



MY THOUGHTS.

◇ A BOOK OF POEMS, ◇

—BY—

M. PAULINE FITZGERALD,

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

JAMES E. SHEPARD.



1896.

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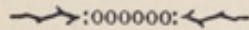
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A decorative floral border on the left side of the text, featuring a central stem with several small, five-petaled flowers and leaves, curving upwards and then downwards.

To my little sister Roberta Annetta  
J., whose loving hands and fond affec-  
tions have made my life better  
and happier, I respectfully  
dedicate this book.

## INTRODUCTION.



Poetry is simply the music of a soul varied by different emotions conceived in the mind, and expressed in words. Coleridge says, "Poetry is the blossom and the fragrance of all human knowledge, human thought, human passion, emotion and language."

All true poetry is music, whether it expresses the emotions of a heart wrought up to the highest pitch of passion, or the sweet calmness of a soul resting in peaceful repose.

"Music where soft voices die,  
Vibrates in the memory,"

We oftentimes find delight and comfort perusing the thoughts of those who are gone. It brings the past vividly to our minds, and causes us to sigh or rejoice, as the case may be.

Beautiful thoughts, whether inscribed on printed paper, or merely expressed in every-day talk, are as lasting in their impressions as the chiseled characters on the lines on parsian marble are lasting. The writer of this book, inspired by the same god of poetry that actuated Shelley, Tenryson and Longfellow—saw beauty in common words, and has woven them together so as to present such beautiful pictures of imagination that we find ourselves wandering, in paths of peace and calmness.

Wordsworth says :

"To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears "



Miss Fitzgerald, in her book, has shown a fondness for those who are despondent, and she seeks to give them an account of her thoughts. It bespeakes still greater things in the future. The readers of this book must remember that the negro has not had the time to fully cultivate a poetic heart, or to yet reach the standard of great poets. They have only had thirty years or more of freedom, and this shows great progress for them. Miss Fitzgerald has shown to the world what a North Carolina negro woman can do; she has given her thoughts to the world for the benefit of her race.

Bailey, in his Festus, says:

"Fine thoughts are wealth, for the right use of which  
Men are, and ought to be accountable."

Beginning life under unfavorable circumstances, deprived of the advantages of a thorough education, Miss Fitzgerald has shown what perseverance, even in a woman, can do. Let this book be an incentive to other young women to leave something behind which will live after them.

"Love well the poet who may sow your grave with flowers—  
The traveler to the far land of the past,"

I am proud to write the introduction of this, believing it is the book of a noble, true woman.

JAMES E. SHEPARD.

## TO THE MEMORY OF DR. H. M. TUPPER.

Dr. Tupper, thou hast left us

In this world of sin below ;

IV Thou hast reached the land of promise,  
There to rest for evermore.

Thou hast labored long and earnest

For a race so long oppressed;

And thy aim was true and honest,

And thy love was well expressed.

Thou hast reached the pearly portals ;

Passed within the shining way;

To remain a ransomed mortal,

Far beyond our sight away.

Thou hast left a school of learning,

Ever as a beacon light ;

Thus to guide the youth and maiden,

In a way, both true, and right.

Thou a "polished shaft" art taken,

But thy work to us will show

That there is for us a mission,

Though of it we may not know.

There may be another leader

In thy mourned and empty place;

But thy service, none can render

As a helper of our race.



Noble was thy work among us,  
 Day by day, and year by year;  
 Never faltering, never murmuring,  
 Of our joys and woes to share.

I Now thy noble work is ended,  
 God, thy Father, called thee home:  
 Some one else must wield the sceptre,  
 Try thy vacant place to fill.

As we find we all must answer  
 To death's summons at some time;  
 Yet we hope to leave accomplished  
 Half the work that thou hast done.

IV And when all on earth is ended,  
 And we've reached the golden shore;  
 May we see thee Dr. Tupper,  
 Happy there for evermore.

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#### A WILD ROSE,

By the wayside blooming,  
 In the morning hour,  
 Forth its perfume sending,  
 Grew a little flower.

Pink and white its colors;  
 Fresh and sweet they are,  
 As they greet the traveler  
 Coming from afar.



I teach morality and truth  
To the maiden and the youth.

Teach them how to shun the danger,  
To which so many are exposed ;  
Teach them to forget no longer  
That sin is death's eternal woe.

So my friend, you see the reason  
Why I often tired look,  
And its not every person  
Has patience enough to do this work.

### ONLY A SHOWER.

(By BLANCHIE M. WALL)

They say that some time in every life,  
No matter how great or small;  
No matter how bright the sun may shine,  
A shower of rain must fall.  
That for every smile we must drop a tear,  
And the pleasures we only borrow,  
Like pearls on a necklace will slip away,  
And be lost in an ocean of sorrow.

That in every heart is a secret thorn,  
Though the outside looks so fair;  
And often the blackest woe lies hid,  
Neath the smiling mask we wear.  
We follow a bubble of rainbow hue,  
As mariners follow the light;

As alas ! it proves but a will-o-the wisp,  
A fire-fly of the night.

But why not tell of the brighter side,  
3 For sure as the night brings morn;  
Sorrow will melt like snow on the hill,  
A calm will follow the storm.  
What harm if the raindrops wet us through,  
They may only last for an hour;  
And our lives that were dry as summer dust,  
Were only an April shower.

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### TO THE MEMORY OF BISHOP DANIEL PAYNE.

God is calling home the veterans,  
From this battlefield of time ;  
One by one, he still is calling,  
For he says to them "you're mine."

Bishop Payne, an aged soldier,  
Who's been fighting many a year ;  
As commander, captain, leader,  
Will no more be with us here.

For his mission here is ended,  
Which he faithfully performed  
Till his spirit had departed ;  
IV For his home, the shining shore.

Would we call thee back, Oh! Bishop,  
If we had the power to do?  
No, for now thy rest is perfect ;  
Which before thou never knew.



Thus it seems that God is aiming  
 At the brightest shining lights;  
 But we should not be complaining,  
 They are his, and he doth right.

They are crossing o'er the river;  
 Gathering home from every land;  
 There they'll live with Christ forever,  
 When they've reached the golden stand.

Bishop Payne, among the ransomed,  
 Is singing praises to the Lord,  
 As he wears his "palms of victory,"  
 Which are promised in God's word.

Though we miss thee, *dear old father*,  
 And will never see thy form,  
 In thy long accustomed places,  
 But we'll meet thee on that morn.

Where the wicked cease from troubling,  
 And the weary are at rest;  
 There, dear Bishop, we are going,  
 We, as souls forever blest.

Dec. 5th, 1893.

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### THE STORM.

Hark! how the distant thunder roars,  
 And see the vivid lightning flash;  
 And see the rain as it downward pours,  
 'Mid thunders roar and lightnings crash,  
 It falls to earth and wets the land  
 And makes it yield for the good of man.

Look ! see the lightning as it plays  
 Across the dark and stormy sky,  
 Clouds have obscured the sun's bright rays;  
 We cannot see them though we try,  
 To pierce the clouds and see once more  
 The welcome sunshine as before.

Hark ! what was that? 'twas the lightning crash  
 See what was that? 'twas the lightning flash,  
 List to the wind as it blows a gale,  
 And seems to tell us some sad tale,  
 Of the sorrow it made along its way  
 For it gave no warning or time to pray.

Oh! raging storm, oh! tempest wild  
 Thou hast robbed many a loving child,  
 Of mother or father or relative dear,  
 And caused the fond wife a bitter tear,  
 As she thinks of her husband taken away  
 By a terrible storm on one sad day.

No one can hinder thy terrible work,  
 Nor is it worth while from thee to shirk ;  
 For thou fearest nothing on earth or in sky,  
 But taketh thy way and passeth none by,  
 That unfortunately is found in thy path  
 Thou spendeth upon him part of thy wrath.

But after the storm comes the welcome calm,  
 The sun bursts forth and the breeze is balm;  
 The earth seems happy since the storm is o'er,  
 And hopes it will injure her children no more;  
 But that rain will come when needed most,  
 For 'tis sent by God, and he knows best.



HIS QUEER PRAYER —A Georgia exchange says that at a prayer-meeting, held in a new church over in Butts County, a good man prayed thus :

"O Lord, thou knowest that we are thankful to Thee that our souls are safe from the fire that quencheth not. If a man lose his horse, Thou knowest that he can buy another ; if he lose his house, Thou knowest that he can build another ; if he lose his wife, Thou knowest that he can get another ; but if he lose his soul--good-by John."—ATLANTA CONSTITUTION.

### GOOD BYE.

Good bye, dear heart, I bid you now adieu,  
But 'tis not always I'll be gone from you ;  
'Twas hard for me to go from you away,  
But duty called me, and I could not stay.

Your face was sad, your eyes were full of tears,  
But you will know, I'll not be gone for years;  
I'll think of you, my darling, every day,  
And your bright smile will cheer me on my way.

I know behind the clouds the sun's still shining,  
And my darling for her lover is still pining;  
But soon we'll meet again, the time's not very long,  
Don't sigh for me loved one, it will be wrong.

Think of me kindly, lovingly and gently,  
Our hearts will love the same, so never fear;  
I'll think and pray for you, though silently,  
We are in body parted, yet in mind we're near.

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### THE GATE OF LIFE.

Oh ! who has read of the gate of life ?

IV  
p Far away in that unknown land

Where all is over, both battle and strife,  
And Christ is the theme of song.

Where sorrow is over and joy complete,  
The voice of the Saviour is heard;  
Where only pure hearts in harmony meet —  
Those who've kept the Saviour's word.

The gate that leads to the city so fair,  
With its walls of jasper and pearl,  
That leads to the beautiful throne up there  
In that far off unknown world.

We have read of that gate of life,  
Where our friends have entered in :  
Some mother or father, some husband or wife ?  
Who've cleansed their robes from sin.

The ransomed will pass through the pearly gate  
Into the city not made with hands,  
And for ages and ages, will patiently wait  
For those of different lands.

This story is old, but to us ever new ;  
I That tells of God and his love ;  
That guides us safely this rough world through,  
And points us to heaven above.

That keeps us from sorrow, from toil and care,  
But each one must stand the test  
Before we can enter the city, where  
We'll find that sweet haven of rest.



We all hope to enter that gate of life,  
 To walk through the streets of gold;  
 That we've heard of, and sung of all our lives,  
 Yet the half has never been told.

Nor will it be told in this world below,  
 While this mortal life shall last;  
 But we'll know the rest in the time to come,  
 When all things here are past,

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### AUTUMN.

The autumn leaves are falling,  
 The roses scattered lie;  
 The birds their mates are calling,  
 And the swallows homeward fly.

The trees have lost their lustre,  
 As the winter closes in;  
 Their branches seem forsaken,  
 The boughs look bare and thin.

'Tis sad to see this changing,  
 In nature's work of art;  
 For the birds to stop their singing  
 And from the flowers to part.

But sure there is some reason,  
 Why nature makes a change;  
 Each month comes in its season,  
 They never do exchange;

But come to do their duty,  
 Be it joyful or if sad;  
 To fill the earth with beauty,  
 To make it gay and glad,

Or to make it sad and gloomy,  
 To breathe forth ice and snow;  
 To make you cold and chilly,  
 As you your way may go.

Each month follows the other,  
 As morning follows night;  
 Each comes to fill its mission,  
 And do its duty right.

So now has come the autumn,  
 The ending of the year;  
 The past is like a phantom,  
 And winter's nearly here.

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### THE FALLING LEAVES.

Oh! see how the leaves are falling,  
 From the tree tops tall and high;  
 Away they go, as the stiff winds blow;  
 Oh! see them how they fly!

First, the leaves begin to tremble,  
 Then the life goes out of them;  
 They shake, and flutter, and rustle,  
 Then they leave their mother stem.



Oh ! where is the bright coat of green ?  
 Worn a few short weeks ago ;  
 'Tis gone, no more to be seen,  
 It will not return, oh ! no.

Must they go away and leave us,  
 Can we not keep them here ?  
 No, they are bidding farewell to us,  
 For now 'tis fall of the year.

---

### TO THE MEMORY OF MISS MINNIE J. BANKS.

She is gone ! as a fair flower ;  
 Springeth up 'neath morning's sun,  
 And before another morrow,  
 Forth to the unknown has gone.

She has left us here to worry,  
 With the battle and the strife ;  
 'Till this mortal life is ended,  
 And we've entered the new life,

Which we know is in Christ Jesus,  
 Our Redeemer, and our Lord ;  
 She has known this only Savior—  
 Found him in his precious word.

As his temple she frequented ;  
 There to hear the word of life,  
 But she laid aside this body  
 When she entered the new life.

Minnie, thou art gone forever,  
Never more we'll see thy face;  
And thy form we'll see, no, *never*,  
In its old accustomed place.

To return to earth, you cannot,  
Nor we would not have thee to;  
For this world is full of sorrow,  
As we each go journeying through.

But thy life has been a lesson,  
That we all may early learn;  
Life is short and time is pressing,  
Us into the near unknown.

Thou wert fair as a fresh flower,  
And in manner sweet and mild;  
But no more thy voice will cheer us  
Or thy long accustomed smile.

Yes, dear Minnie, we will meet thee,  
Where the surges cease to roll;  
There with joy we'll surely greet you,  
Not in body, but in soul.

When we've laid aside the armor,  
No more fighting to be done;  
Battle fought, the struggle ended,  
And for us the victory won.

When "good bye" is said forever;  
No more parting from our mates;  
We will all be found rejoicing,  
As we go sweeping through the gates.



**To the Memory of Hon. Fred Douglas.**

Our leader brave has fallen,  
The hero of our race,  
The Douglas of our nation,  
Has left a vacant place.

From slavery's early hardships,  
Up to the present time,  
This man through many conflicts  
Has never ceased to climb.

The hill that leads to science,  
The road, that leads to fame,  
Was reached by self-reliance,  
Oh, may long live his name!

When can we find another,  
To us what Douglas was?  
A christian, friend and brother,  
A patriot true he was.

Thy zeal and earnest labor  
Were shown forth day by day;  
No time was spent in error  
Or idly thrown away.

Oh! loved and much respected,  
Thou hast gone from us away,  
Thy end was not expected,  
But thou coul'st not always stay.

We as a race are sorrowful  
At our leader's sudden fall;

But we should not be forgetful  
That death must come to all.

To the rich, the high, the noble,  
The bravest of our land,  
Must leave this world of trouble  
And reach another land.

The Hon. Frederick Douglas  
Is a model for us, too;  
We must be brave and fearless  
If we would this world go through.

Respectful, kind and truthful,  
Earnest, brave and wise,  
As our loved and fallen hero,  
Who now so lowly lies.

To the family of Mr. Douglas,  
We share in thy grief to day,  
And pray the God of heaven  
Thy tears may wipe away.

I Our God knows what's best for us,  
And who to take or leave,  
For all we have he gave us.  
And still he freely gives.

For, "when the bridegroom cometh,"  
For us, he will not wait;  
II Get ready then to meet Him,  
Before it is too late."

Feb. 20th, 1895.



**THE MIDNIGHT SONGSTER.**

'Twas midnight's quiet hour,  
When upon the floating breeze,  
Bursts from a quiet bower—  
From out a clump of trees;  
A bird's sweet joyous song,  
Ah! well he sang, and long.

From one song to another  
This songster hurried on,  
And naught there was to bother  
The singer or the song,  
Save only his own echo;  
Rang merrily and long.

We sing to please our audience,  
He sang to please himself,  
With a feeling of defiance,  
And not a thought of self;  
With a feeling of reliance,  
That he felt within himself.

He stopped as if reflecting,  
And then burst forth again,  
As if he was expecting  
A promised prize to win;  
The king of song he is,  
The laurels fair are his.

Unfettered, bold and free,  
He sang a joyful note;

A happy bird was he,  
 As his song on the breeze did float;  
 Guess who it was I heard?  
 Why, 'twas the mocking-bird.

He chose a quiet hour,  
 When every plant and flower  
 Seemed sleeping in its bower;  
 King of the feathered tribe,  
 To you, much praise ascribe,  
 And may your song ring wide.

---

### THE PROGRESS OF OUR RACE.

✓ We are coming to the front,  
 Hark! the sound of tramping feet,  
 We will all obstacles mount,  
 Never thinking of defeat.

Up through toil and tribulation,  
 We are coming one by one;  
 As men and women of the nation,  
 Many battles we have won.

We have Lawyers, Doctors, Teachers,  
 Druggists, Merchants and Editors too,  
 Brickmakers, Seamstresses, Carpenters, Preachers,  
 Each one aims to go right through.

Here within our own bright city,  
 Are men of brain, of grit and gold,  
 Women, intelligent, accomplished, witty,  
 As any women of the world.



Men of mark of our own race,  
 Women of fame belong to us,  
 Worthy of filling any place,  
 Able also to keep any trust.

Are we not proud of those of the race  
 Who have borne so much, so long,  
 Who can any storm or danger face,  
 To protect our own from wrong?

Truly 'tis said to those who will wait  
 Come all things good and true.  
 Had happiness better not come, if late  
 My brother and friend, to you?

Unfurl our banner aloft—let it float  
 On every passing breeze;  
 Let each of the race be up and about  
 And at least, we can rest at ease.

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**AN ODE TO THE FIRST COLORED DRUG STORE  
 OPENED IN DURHAM, N. C.**

In our city fast, and noisy,  
 With its people running o'er,  
 In a building neat and cozy,  
 We have now a new drug store.

Where for silver, and gold, not trust,  
 We can get the drinks we want;  
 Where polite clerks will oblige us,  
 With foaming drinks from out the fount.

Everything to suit your fancy,  
 Sweet perfumes or Toilet Soap,  
 Quinine, Camphor, Laudanum, Honey,  
 All in the line of Drugs, we hope.

Where medicine will be compounded  
 At morning, noon or night;  
 Bring along all our prescriptions,  
 They will be filled, both quick and right.

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LIFE.

Tell me *not* of joy and pleasure,  
 They are not just what they seem;  
 And our hearts are crushed *forever*  
 By the things we little dream.

Life is real, love is *earnest*,  
 And our hearts though stout and brave,  
 Yet, may *break*, and leave us *hopeless*  
 Until we have reached the grave.

Let us then be *very* careful,  
 Who it is we *like* or *love*;  
 For our liking may be *fatal*—  
 Let us turn our thoughts above.

Man is *mortal*, man is *erring*,  
 He *may* love (for who has not?).  
 Yet how many are deceiving  
 And their promises have forgot.



In the world's broad field of learning,  
 Let us try to imbibe our share,  
 Looking to the time of reaping,  
 For a sure reward is there.

Trust no future how'er pleasant;  
 For the glitter exceeds the gold;  
 And we'll find it not so brilliant,  
 And that the half has not been told.

Thus we *love*, we *cannot help it*,  
 God has bid us this to do;  
 But he did not say "play with it,"  
 "Nor be *false* the whole way through."

In conclusion, let me ask you,  
 First, of all things, to be true;  
 As man to man in God united  
 And trust others as you'd have them trust you.

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### AFRICA.

April 25th, 1895

In Africa's far off land there roam  
 Thousands of children without care;  
 With heathen parents, heathen homes,  
 No christian friends to guide them there.

No bible there to read God's word;  
 No teachers there to teach of God,  
 But as the wild bird flits so free  
 From place to place, and tree to tree.

Are we christians here in a christian land,  
 And will not heed God's blest command;  
 "Go preach my Gospel," saith the Lord,  
 And give to all my precious word.

In heathen darkness, there they dwell;  
 The christian life, they know not of:  
 IV They know not of the yawning hell,  
 Nor of the heaven so far above.

They know not that the Saviour died,  
 To pay our debt of sin and woe;  
 II The immaculate Lamb was crucified  
 On earth, and back to heaven did go.

Can we not help to spread God's word,  
 And help christianize this far off land,  
 So that christian voices may be heard?  
 Some one will go from out our band.

Some as missionaries have gone forth;  
 The risk have run of life or death;  
 They bear God's word of love and truth  
 Across the oceans foaming breadth.

They teach of heaven, of joy, of love;  
 Plant deep God's word within the soul;  
 Tell how Christ came from heaven above,  
 And died to save this wicked world.

God bless the missionaries true,  
 Who leave their homes to go away,



To heathen lands, and heathen homes,  
To show to them the light of day.

They have from their dear friends to part,  
And oft go away with sorrow and pain;  
With feeling sad, and heavy heart,  
For they know not that they'll return again.

We should each one lend a helping hand,  
And help this work to move along;  
'Tis our duty, and we know we can,  
And we should do it before we sing this song.

“Over the ocean wave, far, far, away,  
There the poor heathen live waiting for day;  
I 5 Pity them, pity them, christians at home,  
Hasten with the bread of life, hasten and come.”

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### DECEPTION.

It was morning, and the shadows,  
Fell across my path full length  
And the fresh breeze from the meadows  
Gave unto myself new strength.

As I gazed upon the beauty,  
Created by the hand of God,  
I felt it my unbounded duty  
To obey His precious word.

And these questions came before me  
And their meanings filled my mind;  
Can I be a perfect christian,  
And within deception find?

Can I say I love my neighbor  
 As I truly love myself?  
 Can I thus deceive another,  
 And not expect the same myself?

If I practice *first* deception,  
 On a victim free from such,  
 Shall I not receive deception,  
 From a friend that I like much?

For a saying tried and truthful,  
 If we'll heed 'twill save us pain,  
 "As you measure to your neighbor  
 He will measure back again."

For of all things mean and wicked  
 This "deception," is the worst,  
 And 'twill bring to those *affected*  
 Without *fail*, its *own swift curse*.

May 14, 1894.

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### THE SORROWING HEART.

Oh, saddened heart! bowed down with grief,  
 Is there no friend, who can bring relief?  
 No father dear or mother mild  
 Who can comfort thee, thou weeping child?

Perhaps thou hast strayed from God away,  
 His precious laws would not obey;  
 And he has struck with chastening rod,  
 To call you back; thou child of God.



Lift up thy head ! lift up thine heart ;  
 And bid sad thoughts from thee depart,  
 No more let sin or sorrow find  
 A resting place within thy mind.

We do not know, we cannot tell,  
 Sometimes, when we are doing well,  
 And often have rebellious been ;  
 To God, our dear and blessed friend.

These earthly things will soon decay,  
 And we must go from earth away  
 And meet the great and final Judge  
 Who lives away in heaven above.

Maybe thou hast a lover had,  
 Who unto thee quite false has been;  
 If so, forget thy trouble sad,  
 And let sorrow there no more be seen.

Upon thy once bright shining face  
 Within thy merry smiles,  
 Place trouble at a distance,  
 Away many, many a mile.

And let sunshine stay forever,  
 Upon thy vision bright ;  
 Trust in God our blessed Saviour,  
 And all in the end will be right.

**My Thoughts.**

Nov. 20th, 1894.

As the shadows softly gather,  
O'er the far off western hills,  
And the sun is slowly setting  
Yet my thoughts will not be still.

For I'm thinking of joy and sorrow,  
That into one's life must come;  
Of the cares that come to-morrow  
With each rising of the sun.

Life is made of joy and sadness,  
And of each we have a share;  
We can get nought here but madness,  
Work and toil and care.

Or we can find around our pathway  
Beams of sunshine bright and clear,  
That will light this earthly stairway,  
Leading heavenward from here.

And this falls upon my memory  
As a message from above,  
That we to others must be kindly  
Guided by the law of love.

Yes, each one can use his talent  
Be it small or even great,  
To help the heavy-hearted,  
And to banish spite and hate,