

Occasional Papers

— BY —

C. M. TELFER.

OCCASIONAL
VERSES. . . .

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MRS. C. M. TELFER.

OCCASIONAL VERSES

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C. M. TELFER.

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ON THE DEPARTURE OF BROTHER WILLIAM and other friends for the Otago Diggings.

- 1 And they are gone—the friends we love?
Yes, gone! It seems so strange
To see the empty place and chair,
The well-known voice no more to hear,
The dear familiar step.
- 2 We linger o'er the parting scene
With thoughts we scarce can tell,—
The upturned glance, the tearful eye,
The lingering kiss, the last "Good-bye,"
Reluctant, sad farewell.
- 3 And still we love to dream of them
As morn and eve' returns;
Their looks, and words that they have said,
The kind, kind acts that o'er us shed
A light that ever burns.
- 4 We follow them with eyes of love
To far New Zealand's plain;
But oh, to think days must elapse,
Nay, many weeks and months, perhaps,
E'er we shall meet again.
- 5 But hope, bright hope still leads our thoughts
To their returning home,
With all success their efforts crowned,
While words, and looks, and love flow around,
For they have ceased to roam.



**TO MISS JOHNSON, of ANGASTON,
on the occasion of her Marriage to the Rev. John
Langdon Parsons, and subsequent departure for
New Zealand.**

- 1 Dear friend, accept this token small,
Of the esteem we feel;
Thy time and skill have long been given,
Leading our songs of praise to heaven,
With still untiring zeal,

- 2 Farewell! Farewell! Oh, we shall miss
 The face so long beloved;
 Forgotten thou wilt never be,
 No, we will still remember thee
 When far from us removed.
- 3 And we will ask for thee, dear friend,
 That Heaven will bless and guide,
 That Jesus will thy portion be,
 Still keeping, still directing thee
 When oceans us divide.
- 4 And we will ask that he, whose lot
 Thou hast preferred to share,
 May be an honored instrument
 Of God, still using talents lent,
 His Counsel to declare.
- 5 And oh! may'st thou and he at last,
 As shining stars appear,
 When God thy earthly work shall bless,
 And many turned to righteousness
 Shall crown thy labours here.



FAREWELL TO THE SPRING.

- 1 The hills are turning brown again;
 Alas! how very soon,
 The young green grass grows ripe and dies,
 And Spring flowers cease to bloom;
 And Summer's hot winds take the place
 Of Spring's soft balmy breeze,
 And freshest, fairest blossoms fall
 From peach and apple trees.
- 2 The hills are turning brown again;
 Oh! since this time last year
 How many we have known have ceased
 To watch for changes here.
 Fair Spring once more has gone from us,
 Oh! are these friends of ours
 "Where everlasting Spring abides,
 And never-withering flowers?"

- 3 The hills are turning brown again;
 We do not think it strange,
 For life is ever changing still,
 And we ourselves must change.
 And thus our youth will pass away
 Just like the early Spring,
 And sadder thoughts, and hopes less bright,
 Those coming years will bring.
- 4 The hills are turning brown again,
 But the trees, how bright their green;
 Oh, the varied hues of the grand old gums,
 And the orchards gay between.
 And summer suns, both grain and fruit,
 Will to perfection bring:
 So I will cease to mourn for thee,
 Thou dear, delightful Spring.



CASTLE BUILDING.

- 1 I'm a castle builder, yet tell me not
 'Tis wrong to dream of a brighter lot;
 For the visions of fancy are passing fair,
 And the castles that only exist in air.
 For fancy is busy, and thought is free,
 And bright are the webs they weave for me.
- 2 'Tis sweet to soar away from the real,
 To revel awhile in a world ideal;
 Seeing fair things that before me gleam,
 Fanciful visions, and hope's bright beam;
 Oh! Fairy fields are before my sight,
 In the luxury rich of a day-dream bright.
- 3 The future, the future in these glad hours,
 Is a glorious pathway all strewn with flowers;
 And not a shadow flits o'er my way,
 But the sun beams forth with a brighter ray.
 Oh! I love to picture beautiful things,
 And to dwell on dreamy imaginings.
- 4 They are only dreams, and I know it well,
 So with scarce a pang I banish the spell;
 Yet life, methinks, wears a brighter hue
 For visions of brightness—the dreamland view;
 And stern commonsense, with its prosy power,
 Has left me to rest in a magical bower,

MORNING.

- 1 Oh! I love a stroll in the early morn,
When Aurora opens the gates of dawn;
When the still soft air is fresh and sweet,
And the birds awake their mates to greet,
As they joyous start from every tree,
And the air is filled with melody.
- 2 On yonder tree the boughs among,
The magpie sings his merry song;
And the Laughing Jack—he cannot sing!
But you hear his merry laughter ring,
As his “Ha! ha! ha!” and “He! he! he!”
Re-echoes loud from tree to tree.
- 3 And the parrots, too, with their plumage gay,
Flutter their wings in the dawn’s bright ray;
They flock overhead in the free, fresh breeze,
Then scatter, and scream, and fill the trees.
If it is not song, ’tis a merry sound,
As they flit and flutter and dart around.
- 4 And now the sun peeps o’er the hill,
And the charming scene grows fairer still;
As his glory beams light up the scene
The fields are decked in a brighter green;
And the myriad drops of crystal dew
Sparkle and glisten on every bough.
- 5 There’s a sad, sweet charm in the silent night,
When the pale moon sheds her tranquil light;
There’s a charm each hour of a perfect day.
Some love to bask in the noontide ray,
But I love best the early dawn,
Still take delight in the dewy morn.



THE DRUNKARD'S CHILD.

Written for, and published in, “The Temperance Herald.”

- 1 I saw her first, a pleasing child,
With guileless, winsome ways;
A face that riveted my thoughts,
And fixed my earnest gaze.

- 2 I cannot tell why that sweet child,
My heart so quickly won;
Nor why I thought of her again,
As days and weeks passed on.
- 3 She had a pair of speaking eyes,
Her face was passing fair;
Quick sensibility, and thought,
Were plainly written there.
- 4 She was a child who might have graced
The rich man's lordly dome;
Her's was a mien that might have blessed
A brighter, fairer home.
- 5 A nature fine, and sensitive,
To that young child was given;
A power to feel the keenest pain
That human heart has riven.
- 6 A power to drink of happiness,
To love, and yearn for love;
A heart that might, perchance, have learned
To fix its hopes above.
- 7 But what, to her, was beauty's gift?
In some mean garment clad,
I've often met her in the street,
Disfigured, lonely, sad.
- 8 And what, to her, intelligence
And quick discerning thought;
Her mental powers must run to waste,
Neglected, and untaught.
- 10 At her, gay children often laugh,
While proud ones mock and jeer;
And whispered taunts, and words unkind,
Are those that meet her ear.
- 11 But why? oh why this life for her?
Thus early marked by pain?
And why this stamp of poverty,
That bows her head with shame?
- 12 For well we know, in this fair clime,
Australia's sunny land,
The honest working man may thrive,
And 'mid home comforts stand.

- 13 His children the fair privilege
Of school and books enjoy,
Well clothed, well fed, they know no want,
Nor learn for bread to sigh.
- 14 Then why the shadow o'er this path?
Oh! why this young life spoiled?
Her parents drink the inebriate's cup—
She is a drunkard's child.
- 15 Enthralled by this degrading vice,
What hope for them is given?
Oh may some angel win them back
To virtue, peace, and heaven!



THE VINEYARDS.

Written for, and published in, "The Temperance Herald."

- 1 The vineyards, Oh! the vineyards,
How brightly fair they grow;
All waving in the sunlight,
With leaves of emerald hue;
Their graceful twining loveliness,
And cool, refreshing shade,
Were formed to bless these homes of ours,
Like bowers in Eden made.
- 2 The vineyards, yes, the vineyards,
Are scattered far and wide;
On plains, and slopes, in gullies,
And on the brown hill side;
And 'tis a pleasant sight to see,
Dry grassy hills between,
And spreading fields of golden wheat,
These plots of freshing green.
- 3 Theirs is the cool, retiréd walk
For evening's peaceful hour;
Theirs are the fruity clusters rich,
And theirs the shady bower.
'Tis passing strange a serpent hides
Amid their branches fair;
'Twas never meant that 'neath their leaves
Should lurk a deadly snare.

- 4 Health-giving clusters, luscious fruit,
 So tempting rich and fair;
 Ye were not meant to lead our sons
 To ruin and despair.
 To spoil the lives of youth and age,
 The fondest hopes to blight
 Of parents dear; and bring instead,
 Grim shadows black as night.
- 5 Wine is a mocker; Oh! look not
 On the fleeting joy it brings;
 Its bite is venom'd, and at last,
 It like an adder stings.
 Say who hath sorrow? Who hath woe?
 And who the causeless wound?
 Who in contention sad, and strife,
 Are ever, ever found?
- 6 Ah! the zephyrs soft are fanning
 Full many a burning brow;
 And there are many aching hearts
 And burdened spirits now;
 And oh! no sympathising friend
 The burden's weight may share;
 Alone, alone each weary breast,
 Must bear its load of care.
- 7 Good men have e'en been known to fall
 Before this subtle foe;
 Too weak to stand, they yield, then wake
 To deep remorse and woe.
 See'st thou, strong man, how many fall
 To wine and drink a prey?
 Oh! though thou standest, spread no snare
 In thy weak brother's way.



ON THE DEATH OF MY DEAR FATHER, CHARLES MASTERS, of Angaston.

- 1 Oh! must we believe he has left us for ever?
 Our father, so long our protector and guide;
 Oh! Death, what close bonds thou'rt permitted to sever,
 What tender affections thy strong hands divide.

- 2 He has passed from amongst us, no more we behold him,
The chair that was his stands unoccupied now!
Oh! how mournfully sad are the thoughts that steal o'er us,
Recalled by some relic, we cannot tell how.
- 3 He faded away when the Autumn leaves falling,
Were silently preaching of death and decay;
And we watched him grow thinner, and paler, and weaker,
Till hope died, and we knew he was passing away.
- 4 Then friends came and spake of the Heavenly Mansions,
That often-told story that never grows old;
Of the free, full Redemption bestowed on the trusting,
The security, peace, and the glory untold.
- 5 He listened, not raptured, for bitter is parting,
And death's chilly river must yet be passed through;
Yet so calmly, so peacefully, resting on Jesus,
He loved the blest Name to be spoken of, too.
- 6 And then came the day, how intense was its sadness,
What anguish, last moments of loved ones to see;
Oh, my Father! from memory can never be banished,
That last lingering look of affection from thee.
- 7 And now he has left us, returning ah! never,
The place that once knew him will know him no more;
His face will be missed from our circle for ever,
Till we all meet again on the Heavenly shore.
- 8 And while I thus mourn him, my spirit is yearning
To pierce through the veil that is resting between;
We gaze on the dark and mysterious river,
But beyond its cold waters all, all is unseen.
- 9 Yet, I know that his free ransomed spirit is resting
Now safe in the arms of Omnipotent love;
He has gone to the Saviour, in whom he was trusting,
And has joined the glad throng of redeemed ones above.



ALL THINGS ARE OURS.

Written after hearing a Sermon on the above text by the
Rev. J. Hannay, of Angaston.

- 1 Oh! it is strange that we should ever murmur;
He hath given us richly all things to enjoy;
This world is ours, with its unnumbered treasures,
And that celestial home beyond the sky.

- 2 This world is ours, this life, this keen enjoying
The rays of brightness o'er our pathway shed;
This power to pluck the roses from the thorn bush,
And taste the bounties Heaven for us has spread.
- 3 This world is ours, all clad in rainbow splendour,
Those green-clad hills, that azure sky above,
Beauties too numerous for tongues to utter,
Rich bounties still proclaiming God is Love.
- 4 This world is ours, its hopes, its joys, its friendships,
And all those loved ones, home's sweet tender ties;
Say'st thou, sad heart, "How oft those ties are broken"?
Ah! yes; but there's reunion in the skies.
- 5 This world is ours, and we may taste its bounties;
Thou, Christian, need'st not give up aught but sin;
Stand fast in Christ's own liberty most glorious,
Pure be thy life, and pure thy heart within.
- 6 This world is ours, but oh! that world beyond us,
That world ear hath not heard, nor eye hath seen;
The heart of man hath never yet imagined
What are those fields of everliving green.
- 7 We only know that then our ransomed spirits,
Free from the sins that mar our earthly peace,
Shall perfect love and purity inherit,
And, oh! the bliss of heaven can never cease.
- 8 We only know the Great Triune Jehovah
Will ever light that glorious home above;
Our Blest Redeemer be the Sun and Centre,
And fear will be cast out by perfect love.



LINES WRITTEN ON THE DEATH OF MRS. T. RADFORD, of Angaston.

- 1 Farewell, gentle spirit, thy journey is ended,
Thy pilgrimage over, thy mission fulfilled;
Long, long hast thou toiled in the vineyard of Jesus,
And well has the portion allotted been tilled.
- 2 Farewell! Shall we weep that thy spirit is gathered
Like a ripe shock of corn, to the garner above?
Thou wer't calmly awaiting the call of the Master,
And sweetly reposing in Jesus's love.

- 3 Oh! did'st thou exclaim in the language triumphant,
 In words of God's age-stricken servant of old?
 "In peace let my spirit depart, O my Father!"
 When the last of thy loved ones had entered the fold.
- 4 Oh! was it for this thou did'st linger amongst us?
 Was this the last wish of thy true mother's heart?
 And so the petition thy kind Saviour granted,
 'Ere He called thee away from the earth to depart.
- 5 Oh! sadly he'll miss thine unwearying attention,
 Thy husband, who lingers behind thee awhile;
 And thy offspring, and theirs, e'en the least of their children,
 Will miss thy kind greeting and motherly smile.
- 6 Yes, thine was a spirit so gentle and loving,
 So like to the Spirit of Jesus, thy Lord,
 It seemed, like an angel, to hover amongst us,
 A bright ray of light, on our path to afford.
- 7 Like thee, I would live, ever loved and still loving,
 And, life's journey over, like thee sink to rest;
 Still running the race of the heavenly pilgrim,
 Till called by my God to the home of the blest.



ON THE DEATH OF MR. and MRS. RADFORD,
(Mr. Radford died about a fortnight after his
beloved wife).

- 1 Together in life's springtime bright,
 Their journey was begun;
 Together, too, for many a year,
 They loved and laboured on.
- 2 The same bright hope possessed each heart,
 And ever hand in hand,
 They strove to walk with God, and sought
 To reach the Better Land.
- 3 And now they've fought the Christian fight,
 The victory they have won;
 And each has heard the Master speak
 The welcome words, "Well done!"
- 4 She left us first, awhile she stayed
 In Beulah's beauteous land,
 And breathed Heaven's air and caught a strain
 From the Celestial band.

- 5 Oh sad, the parting hour has come,
Oh sad, that death should sever;
He finds himself alone, and knows
That she has crossed the river.
- 6 Not long, not long, a little while,
The welcome call is given,
The waiting spirit hears, and hastes
To join its loved in Heaven.
- 7 We miss her as the sweet perfume
The fragrant violets shed,
Is missed when Spring is over,
And the gentle flowers are dead.
- 8 We miss him, yes, we miss him,
As we miss some grand old tree;
Under whose shadow we have played
In childhood's hours of glee.
- 9 We miss the patriarchal form,
Well known for many a year;
And miss the oft prophetic voice
That we were wont to hear.
- 10 We miss the admonitions grave,
And kindly warnings given;
We miss him, oh so oft—yet know
That we shall meet in Heaven.
- 11 Yes, both have passed the cold, dark flood,
And gained the other side;
Lovely and pleasant were their lives,
And death could not divide.



The foregoing verses were written at Angaston when a girl.

TO A FRIEND:—A FRAGMENT.

- 1 There is a Light that shines for all;
That Light may shine for thee;
There is no need for thee to dwell
In hopeless misery.

- 2 There is a Sun that on the soul
 Surpassing radiance flings;
 Oh! would that Sun might rise to thee,
 With healing in his wings.
- 3 Then when earth's fairy dreams depart,
 And hope's bright visions flee;
 That Lamp divine should light thy path
 To Immortality.



**ON THE DEATH OF MY LITTLE JOHN ERNEST,
 who died at Kersbrook at the age of 14 months.**

- 1 "Safe in the arms of Jesus,
 Safe on His gentle breast,"
 But my arms are empty, my heart is sad,
 And my spirit cannot rest.
- 2 "Safe in the arms of Jesus,"
 Oh! why will the tears still start?
 He was part of my daily labour,
 Of my very life a part.
- 3 God only knows how I miss him,
 As the weeks and months pass by;
 My darling, my pure-faced baby,
 My own little cherub boy.
- 4 For me there is weeping and sighing,
 And sorrowing day by day;
 And oh! such terrible pining
 For the wee white face that's away.
- 5 But he's safe in the Saviour's keeping,
 Gone to his long last rest;
 Safe from sin and temptation,
 Safe with the good and blest.
- 6 I know that my Saviour has bought him,
 Jesus who died for me;
 In Christ he will surely live again,
 And my lost one I shall see.
- 7 I shall see him in radiant beauty,
 No pain on his baby brow;
 Oh! hush, my heart, this anguished cry,
 To have him with thee now,

- 8 He has passed through the terrible river
Of suffering, death, and pain;
But he's gone where they never say "I am sick,"
And he never can die again.
- 9 "Not much to lose a baby,"
The unknowing world may say;
May they never know what my heart has known,
Nor feel what I feel to-day.
- 10 I know I have other treasures,
And for these I thank my God;
And methinks he'll forgive that I sigh so oft
For the one beneath the sod.
- 11 For he knows our frame and weakness,
And remembers we are but dust;
And he pities His weary children,
And will help them still to trust.

December 23rd, 1877.



SONG OF THE DROUGHT.

- 1 In the sultry month of March,
'Mid the flies, and dust, and heat,
The farmers away on the Northern plains
Were busily sowing their wheat.
- 2 Sow, sow, sow,
O'er the loose and dusty soil;
Up and down with a patient tread
Does the heavy cart-horse toil.
- 3 Plough, and harrow, and sow,
Sow, and harrow, and plough,
'Mid the teaming flies that know no rest,
And the sweat drops on the brow.
- 4 With the seed-sower's clatter and whirr,
And the whirlwinds eddying round;
'Mid clouds of dust from the plough and team,
The farmers were sowing their ground.
- 5 And still with prodigal hand
They scatter the golden grain;
Then turn their eyes to the clouds above,
Anxiously watching for rain.

- 6 Anxiously watching for rain,
For the Summer was dry and hot;
And the fierce hot wind had swept the grass
From every fertile spot.
- 7 And drifted sand all o'er
Where the scant dry grass had been;
So the cattle were looking for pasture in vain,
The pasture that nowhere was seen.
- 8 April, May, and June,
Hoping and watching for rain;
Saying so often, "It must come soon,"
But watching and hoping in vain.
- 9 Oh! the poor, lean kine,
How they watch you as they pass,
With perplexed and pitiful eyes,
That have hunted in vain for grass.
- 10 They have eaten the straw and chaff,
They have picked o'er the bushes so dry;
They have finished the straw that covered the sheds,
And there's nothing to do but die!
- 11 Oh! the cruel, carnivorous crow,
With flaming eyes and beak;
But I draw a veil o'er the sights I've seen
Of the suffering kine so meek.
- 12 July and August fled;
Comes September, with balmy air;
The hills should be bright with their gold and white,
And their everlastings fair.
- 13 But the busy bees are out,
All looking for flowers in vain;
Perchance they don't know that flowers cannot grow
Without Heaven's bountiful rain.
- 14 'Tis harvest time on the North,
But there's never an ear of wheat;
No hay to mow, and no seed to sow,
And nothing for stock to eat.
- 15 Oh! but to breathe the breath
Of the fragrant hay once more;
And to see the strippers go sailing round,
And to hear their buzz and roar.

- 16 Oh! men with your waving crops,
 And your smiling pastures fair;
 With trailing vines and orchards gay,
 Just think of the fields so bare.
- 17 Where the sowing and labour were vain,
 Where whirlwinds their vigils keep,
 Where the hot winds rush and the duststorms sweep,
 But there's nothing to mow or reap.

Willow Plains, November 6th, 1896.



RAIN AT LAST.

(Written after the Drought.)

- 1 Rain at last! Wonderful rain!
 Drenching the hillside, soaking the plain,
 Filling the dams, replenishing tanks,
 Rushing down creeks, o'erflowing the banks.
- 2 Flooding the garden, the trees washing clean,
 Soon will the hillside be tinted with green;
 Soon will all Nature, with one happy voice,
 Singing and laughing, awake and rejoice.
- 3 Oh! 'tis but to the weary that rest is so sweet,
 And none but the hungry can relish their meat;
 And only can those who've long waited in vain,
 With whole-hearted gladness thus welcome the rain.
- 4 Yes, soon will the pepper trees deck in their sheen,
 And the gums shake their boughs in a new tint of green;
 E'en the desert acacias in pale yellow bloom,
 Will yield to the zephyrs their wealth of perfume.
- 5 And soon may the wheat fields be smiling again,
 With cattle and horses to graze on the plain;
 Soon all the dear banished ones homeward be won,
 Husband and father, and brother and son.
- 6 Care-killing, heart-easing, beautiful rain,
 Visit this drought-stricken region again;
 Then to our gratified vision you'll bring
 All the delights of a radiant Spring.
- 7 Oh! visit us often and stay for awhile,
 Till all the wide plain shall be dressed in a smile;
 And then may our spirits in gratitude fall,
 At the feet of the Giver who blesseth us all.

O COCKATOO.

- 1 Our Cocky is a wondrous bird,
Well worthy of a ditty;
And were his name unknown to fame,
'Twere certainly a pity.
- 2 When morning dawns and wakes the world,
And all the birds are singing;
Throughout the house you'll hear his voice,
In lively accents ringing.
- 3 He listens to the cawing crows,
He hears the roosters crowing;
"Boys, boys," he calls; of course, he means
"Now, boys, be up and doing."
- 4 But if the boys to sleep inclined,
With Morpheus seem to parley;
He calls them each and all by name,
Thus—"Albert! Ernest! Charley!"
- 5 I think he wants his breakfast, too,
He calls for Bertha, oft;
And "Mother! mother!" too, he says,
In tones both loud and soft.
- 6 I cannot tell you all his talk
Throughout the live-long day,
But when the horses come from work,
He calls out loudly "Whoa!"
- 7 He calls the dogs "Watch, Watch, Lad, Lad!"
Then sternly says "Lie down!"
You'd almost fancy from his tone
That you could see his frown.
- 8 He's social, and a temperance bird,
Not given much to mope;
When strangers call, he'll often say,
"You're going to the Band of Hope?"
- 9 And when around the social board,
Some tale you might relate;
His voice will fill each pause with "Oh!"
Expressive and sedate.
- 10 And when the children home from school,
Are coming, far away,
He hears their voices, knows their names,
And all you'll hear him say

- 11 Is "Walter! Eddie! Eddie! Walter!"
In quiet, constant din;
Until they're home, and through the gate
The boys come rushing in.
- 12 But if we should forget to feed,
Or bring him in at night;
In mournful tones he'll let you know
How much he feels the slight.
- 13 "Poor Cocky! Pretty Boy!" he says,
"Poor Cocky!" o'er and o'er;
Until his perch is carried in,
And he is fed once more.
- 14 E'en Cocky has his place to fill,
In God's great world of beauty;
'Tis to make mirth, and bring a smile,
Amid life's sterner duty.
- 15 And if he makes us stop and laugh
Amid the work and hurry,
It helps to banish care awhile,
And we forget to worry.

