

## PREACHER'S LOVE-VACATION.

RING, village bells, but not for me ;  
 You are not rapping at my door,  
 But at my neighbor's, the church-goer,  
 Who prinks, and primly spells  
 The impending litany ;  
 And maids break into every hue  
 That turns to a parterre the pew.  
 There's not a house cannot afford  
 Some tag to bring before the Lord,  
 And when the priest would offer to His name,  
 On hundred hearts a hundred bonnets flame.

No ringing can decoy my morn ;  
 The air transfers each stroke with scorn ;  
 The meeting house has been unroofed,  
 So long to duller blasts well-proofed ;  
 The pulpit crumbles, frescoes fly,  
 Exhales the organ with a sigh ;  
 Of hymn or bible not a trace,  
 But out-of-doors fills all the place:

Hear that carol in the elm,  
 While the branches dip and sway  
 To its pit' as to a helm, —  
 Unto both the joy's the day.  
 All the week the earth has rolled  
 This hush of Sunday to unfold ;  
 Whirring of a million wheels,  
 Jar, recoil, and sweat, and grime,  
 Clashes of the laborers' steels  
 Forged this silence, built this clime,  
 Raised this morning temple, free  
 For worship by this bird and me.

He is aye for Sunday dressed,  
 Surplice fitted in the nest,  
 Born for him, not made, and fits  
 Without a pinch around his song,  
 Does not catch and throw his wits,  
 On his message wreaks no wrong.  
 Hear him pipe without a trick  
 The perfect honor of his heart  
 No hunger nor ambitions price  
 His throat to take a Sunday piece.  
 He heard the notes when he was young,  
 Ventured with them day by day,  
 Sorted with his mates and sung,  
 Heard other notes, but did not stray.  
 Close to Nature's pitch he kept,  
 Revelation old as birds,  
 Ere the prophets lived and slept,  
 Or whistles caught and aped their words.  
 Hear him flood the air with sound !  
 Such a little pulse is he  
 'Twixt the leaves can scarce be found ;  
 Yet no organ's heard by me  
 Out of all that shake the pews,  
 Monsters bellowing tainted news.  
     What sincereness,  
 Hardly yet a moment born !  
     Latest clearness  
 Coined and ringing with the morn.

Now it grows so keen  
 That it fills me, fills the scene,  
 Seems to fuse the light and air  
 To a bridge ; shall I repair  
 Thitherward to Him, devote  
 My soul through His sweet psalmist's throat  
 To mystic thoughts, and mount to thrill  
 With visions from His highest hill ?

Scarce I step upon the bridge,  
 Pass the country's nearest ridge,  
 Than I find my feeling fleet ;  
 Like a waft across the wheat

It runs to bend before one face ;  
 The song has killed the envious space  
 That keeps me worshipping alone :  
 Again I see her, and am prone  
 Where all of God that she contains  
 Claims me, and my soul distrains :  
 Where of late I hardly dared  
 Meet the splendor of her eyes,  
 But swerved aside, so ill I fared,  
 Her glorious youth could so surprise.

What a tide

Sparkles in those eyes, and breaks !

They are virgin beaches

That mid-ocean reaches,

Big with heaven, and not to be defied.

My heart has fear at first, and shakes,

When health and maidenhood's expanse

Run in, and break upon her glance ;

Sky-lifted ripples, half they greet,

Half threaten, running to my feet.

A tide undyked, a shore unclaimed,

A nature all by Nature framed ;

A soul as frank as every zone

Which its own weathers rule alone ;

A glee unspoiled by afterthought,

And moods that every day are wrought

Freshly, for the day's emprise, —

Wrought, as days are, in the skies.

What is she, then, but Godhead near,

A word made flesh and shown to men,

A hint to lift my awe, to clear

My lusts, and grant a soul again.

My temple is her form, her hand,  
 From head to foot the way she's planned :  
 The whole of her, in sex and charm,  
 The woman Heaven thought no harm.  
 The lyric of her step I mark,  
 My own heart beats it in the dark ;  
 By every curve my glances climb  
 To scale and hold God's chastest rhyme.

My temple this, — not made with hands :  
 This, while the organ shakes all lands,  
 Responsive to the preacher's curse  
 'Gainst Nature, to the ghastly verse  
 Which damns in God's name God himself,  
 To texts which lay upon the shelf  
 The world that is for worlds not yet,  
 To dreary sentences that fret  
 Because He made and saw 'twas well  
 Without a heaven or a hell.

This, little bird, is thy refrain ;

Pipe it when I preach again.

Something that I live and feel

Be the text that I reveal.

Whatsoever maketh young,

Bids the harp be newly strung,

With the latest rapture tunes

For resinging oldest runes ;

Whatever smile the stems will take

Of old ideals, let them slake

Their dryness, till the petals claim

Again the blush that gave them fame ;

Whatever crescent in the west

Disturbs with hope Endymion's rest,

Civil jar or challenge rude

That tears off the fancy's hood,

And shows its quarry in the sky,

And bids it from the wrist be cast,

Its jesses cut, its chafing past,

Its flight renewed, — this be the spell

For me, and neither book nor bell.

JOHN WEISS.