

Two Letters to a Friend

By Theodore Watts

O LOVE, my love ! if I no more should see
Thyself, nor on the earth the shadow of thee,
Nor image of thine eyes in any spring,—
How then should sound upon Life's darkening slope
The ground-whirl of the perished leaves of Hope,
The wind of Death's imperishable wing ?

D. G. R.

Letter I.—After the Wedding

BRIGHT-BROWED as Summer's self who claspt the land—
With eyes like English skies, where seemed to play
Deep azure dreams behind the tender grey—
All light and love, she moved : I see her stand
Beneath that tree ; I see the happy band
Of bridesmaids on the lawn where blossoms sway
In light so rare it seems as if the day
Glowed conscious of the future's golden strand.

O Friend, if sun and wind and flowers and birds
In language deeper drawn than human words

From

From deeper founts than Time shall e'er destroy,
 All spoke to thee in Summer's rich caress,
 Even so my heart, though wordless too, could bless :
 It could but feel a joy to know thy joy.

Letter II.—After Death's Mockery

When Death from out the dark, by one blind blow,
 Strikes down Love's heart of hearts—severs a life—
 Cleaves it in twain as by a sudden knife,
 Leaving the dreadful Present, dumb with woe,
 Mocked by a Past whose rainbow-skies aglow
 O'erarch Love's bowers where all his flowers seem rife
 In bloom of one sweet loving girl and wife—
 Then Friendship's voice must whisper, whisper low.

Though well I know 'tis thou who dost inherit
 Heroic blood and faith that lends the spirit
 Strength known to souls like thine of noblest strain,
 Comfort I dare not proffer. What relief
 Shall Friendship proffer Love in such wild grief?
 I can but suffer pain to know thy pain :

I can but suffer pain ; and yet to me
 Returns that day whose light seemed heavenly light,
 Whose breath seemed incense rising to unite
 That lawn—where every flower, and bird and bee

Seemed

Seemed loving her who shone beneath that tree—
With lawns far off whose flower of higher delight
Behind Death's icy peaks and fens of night
Bloomed 'neath a heaven her eyes, not ours, could see.

Brother, did Nature mock us with that glory
Which seemed to prophesy Love's rounded story?
Or was it, that sweet Summer's fond device
To show thee *who* shall stand on Eden slopes,
Where bloom the broken buds of earthly hopes—
Stand waiting 'neath a tree of Paradise?

