

**CONSOLATION; OR, A
WINTER'S GLEANING,
IN A POEM**

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Consolation; Or, A Winter's Gleaning, in a Poem by S. J. Lawrence

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S. J. LAWRENCE

**CONSOLATION; OR, A
WINTER'S GLEANING,
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Consolation;

OR,

A WINTER'S GLEANING.

IN A POEM.

By S. J. L.

lv.



BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY B. B. RUSSELL, 55 CORNHILL.

1871.

DEDICATION.

TO some few of my friends to memory dear
This work I offer, be they far or near ;
And if, in tracing these pages o'er,
They're reminded of days no more,
Of the pleasant hours we five have shared,
Then I am repaid for each line prepared.
Trusting to the loving-kindness of all,
I on your charity truly must call
To pardon the errors that uppermost lie :
They'll grieve, I know, the critical eye.
But not for the critic, be he good or wise,
Have I my heart-fancies bidden to rise,
But for those who lightened my lonely heart
When from home and loved ones doomed to part :
Who by their tenderness sought to while
The tedious hours with song and with smile,
Nor sought in vain. Hot tears fall fast
As I think of the four, loved till the last ;
And though mile upon mile our persons divide,
Our souls, united, walk closely beside.
Dear friends of my heart, though we ne'er meet more
Until we've crossed to the shining shore,
May the past, with its memories kind and sweet,
With its halo of love, rest at your feet,
Where I, with humble reverence, lay
The book that "HULDA" has written to-day !

APRIL 13, 1871.

WQR 19 FEB 1896

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CONSOLATION.

CHAPTER I.

THE WEDDING.

ALL the long day the pure and fleecy snow
Had been softly falling down in flurries
White ; while old Mount Grace was covered o'er
From base to crown with her spotless robe.

All the little brooks that in summer-time
Babbled to the passer-by so gayly
And so free were hushed then and still ;
For 'twas mid-winter, and in her chill embrace
All Nature rocked herself to sleep.

Some two miles out from the village street
Of dear old Warwick, — for there my stories lies
In its beginning, — there stood, and yet doth stand,
The pleasant farm-house of John Stevens,
A well-to-do farmer, kind and jolly,
Who loved to crack his joke with a neighbor,
And who loved his wife and his children well ;
But some there were who said, perhaps with truth,

His idol and his pet was not his wife,
Nor either of his children ten, but his
Gray mare.

Within the house, the busy housewife,
On many cares intent, sped back and forth
With a smiling face, but with weary feet ;
For, when the evening came, Vira, her eldest,
The daughter of her youth, would leave her home
To share with him she'd chosen their future,
Be it weal or woe. Aunt Eunice and Thankful,
John's maiden sisters, were making wreaths
With which to deck the large old-fashioned room,
By courtesy called parlor ; though we of modern times
Would smile to have so plain and barren room
Thus denominated.

The dark yet polished floor was carpetless,
Save here and there a home-made rug.

The ample fireplace, from whence pleasant warmth
Permeated all the room, reflected back
The brightening glow of the great fire-dogs,
Polished so highly, they seemed like mirrors.

In the far-off corner stood the guest-bed,
With its silken curtains flowing loosely
From the wainscoted ceiling to the floor ;
A wooden settee, covered with gorgeous patch,
Graced another corner ; while close beside
Stood the three-legged light-stand, with the Bible,
A century old, lying on it year by year.

A large old-fashioned bureau with brass handles
Also pressed against the wall : above it
Hung the "family record," wrought by Vira
When only eleven : its companion-piece
Represented a milkmaid and green cows,