

# POEMS

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Poems by Mrs. O. M. Livingston

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**MRS. O. M. LIVINGSTON**

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BY

MRS. O. M. LIVINGSTON.



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PREFACE.

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THE Author has selected from her manuscripts the poems contained in this volume, hoping that, notwithstanding their imperfections, they would be not unfavorably received by the public. Many of them are now published for the first time, while others have before appeared in the leading periodicals of the day. They are the productions of moments that have intervened during the duties of domestic life, often unstudied, and written in the fullness of the feelings of the heart. Perhaps the reader may select from them a thought to recall some wild flower which has been passed on the way-side of life, and cause it again to shed its fragrance on the sterile fields of Time.



## POEMS.

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AUTHOR'S SOLILOQUY.

I 'VE had serious thoughts to publish a book,  
But prospects grow darker wherever I look;  
Discouragements gather, there 's carnage and  
dread,  
And thousands, alas! have no money for bread:  
For war drains the country and empties the  
purse,  
While business is daily becoming much worse.  
I know when a dollar is hard to be got,  
Thro'gs look at a book, yet they purchase it  
not;  
For wants more important must first be sup-  
plied,  
And price of a book will of course be denied.

Just look at the author, how wasted and thin,—  
How the fires of genius consume him within!  
He heeds not his rest, he spurns the rich feast,  
Yet labors that science be widely increased.



He's bold of exterior, observers will say;  
That seldom he smiles, — that he never is gay.  
I pray you, kind critics, a moment to hear —  
Why treat the poor author unkind or severe?  
Deal gently while you may his failings condemn,  
But dwell on his merits, — dwell kindly on  
them.

An author his errors may not always see,  
Hence faults will escape him that never should  
be :

Yet faultless productions have seldom been found ;  
In works of great merit will errors abound.  
To offer my verse might elicit a smile,  
Abounding in failings and feeble in style :  
With Rogers and Hemans I claim not to stand,  
Or bright stars that shine in *our* galaxy grand.  
'Tis said a good name we can never obtain,  
Until, from all envy, in dust we are lain.  
There's many a brow has been fitted to wear  
Rich garlands few mortals are destined to share,  
But circumstance adverse disposing their lot,  
Or cut from a critic was never forgot,  
Whose wounds, through a life-time, incurably deep,  
Stayed the fountains of genius, and hush'd them  
to sleep, —

Thus clipping forever the young eaglet's flight,  
The Muses had cherished with fondest delight.  
Some others, more daring, a bold stand assume,  
Upon sarcasm most in a contest presume :  
Thus Byron ascended the climax of fame,  
Bade his critics recoil and trumpet his name.

In our journey of life what changes we see :  
From the gilded saloon, man a beggar may be ;  
From the summit of fame may the mightiest leap,  
And tarnish the glory a life-time did reap ;  
From the humblest of stations the genius may  
rise,

Whose talents and virtues all ages surprise.  
Behold that pale mendicant asking for bread !  
His woe-wasted form is an object of dread ;  
In the circle of friendship his presence was  
bless'd ;

As the fav'rite of all he was ever caress'd ;  
At the altar of Genius her loved one he came,  
There lighted a torch that emblazoned his name ;  
But insidious ways to fashion's curst sin,  
Ah ! too soon in its vortex they hurled him  
within !

To the cup of pollution he turned him aside ;  
He thirsted, and drank, and all principle died.  
Now behold in that beggar, the object of pain,  
All, all of that greatness that now doth remain !  
That orphan boy, friendless, that wanders the  
street,

Whose presence 't is pain for the gentry to meet,  
In the National Chair may find him a seat,  
And honors by monarchs be laid at his feet.  
All greatness is greatest when firmly 't is based  
On the structure of Truth, — 't will ne'er be  
erased ;

For cunning, deceit, or the smooth wiles of art,  
Only please for a moment, — they win not the  
heart.

If aiming for honor, distinction, or fame,  
Let the halo of Justice encircle your name.  
From Truth's hallowed throne man should never  
descend ;  
Then greatness may well in his character blend.

In this land of advancement whatever man  
wills,  
He mounts till the summit of stations he fills ;  
No impediment offers to darken desires ;  
Encouragement woos him, and freedom inspires.  
Thus man has indeed a most wonderful scope,  
His genius creative will consummate hope.  
O'er the ocean in triumph he goes at his will ;  
How grand his achievements ! how mighty his  
skill !  
He levels the mountains, and plains meet the  
eyes !  
He fells the deep forest, and cities arise.  
The realms of the pole, where the glacier sub-  
lime,  
Hath stood with bold front since the earliest of  
time,  
And splendor hath lent to that myst'ry of waves  
No mind ever compass'd, no sail ever braves !  
'Mid footprints of God on that desolate shore,  
Where He walks in his grandeur and hideth his  
lore —  
There genius of *man* hath his pathway explored,  
And light on these regions of Nature hath poured.