

**SONNETS OF SPINSTERHOOD;  
THE SPINSTER'S BOOK  
OF DREAMS, DELICATE  
TRACERIES OF DIM DESIRES**

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Sonnets of spinsterhood; the spinster's book of dreams, delicate trceries of dim desires by Snow Longley

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**SNOW LONGLEY**

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# SONNETS *of* SPINSTERHOOD

THE SPINSTER'S BOOK *of* DREAMS  
DELICATE TRACERIES *of*  
DIM DESIRES

*By* SNOW LONGLEY



MADE IN  
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**T**HREE Sonnets need, perhaps, a word of explanation. In a recent reading of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "Sonnets from the Portuguese," the conviction was borne in upon me that the sentiment of love is worthy of expression, whether or not it outwardly finds an object; "for the romantic passion" as a dream, an ideal or a memory is a source of inspiration in every human life. I have endeavored to make the sequence of sonnets show the ideal progress from the personal to the racial, from the love which seeks individual expression to the love for humanity.

Class of  
1900



### PROEM

Light-pencilled in the spinster's book of dreams  
Are delicate traceries of dim desires,  
That still, at times, give forth their fitful gleams,  
Though grayed to ashes with youth's sinking fires;  
And sometimes, in life's long, slow afternoon,  
She turns the pages, yellowed with the years,  
And finds a flower, its petals caught too soon  
And here impressèd, stained with gentle tears,  
Before the ripe fruit 'neath its heart might bear  
The changing mystery of th' enfolded seed,  
She smooths its petals with a tender care,  
And passes on where errant memories lead.  
And with the turning page the quiet room  
Holds the faint perfume of life's springtide bloom.



## SONNETS OF SPINSTERHOOD

### I.

Spirit of Love, to thee alone I give  
These verses which my fancy has set free,  
A votive offering on thy shrine to live,  
Bound in a golden band of poesy;  
And if the flowers fade, the gold prove  
dross,  
Fling them aside—thou hast no need  
of praise;  
Nor will another grieve, mine own the  
loss,  
Since I walk lonely all my earthly days.  
But as the vestal maids of old must tend  
The altar whence domestic joys took  
flame,  
So may my incense with thy candles  
blend,  
So may I tend thy fires in love's own  
name,  
Content if by my service love may shine  
With brighter glow on other hearths  
than mine.