

**THE VICTORIES OF
LOVE, AND
OTHER POEMS**

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The victories of love, and other poems by Coventry Patmore

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COVENTRY PATMORE

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VICTORIES OF LOVE,
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BY
COVENTRY PATMORE.



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1888.

AFTER the very cordial reception given to the poems of "The Angel in the House," which their author generously made accessible to the readers of these little books, it is evident that another volume from the same clear singer of the purity of household love requires no Introduction.

I have only, in the name of the readers, to thank Mr. Coventry Patmore for his liberality, and wish him—say, rather, assure him of—the best return he seeks in a wide influence for good.

H. M.

THE VICTORIES OF LOVE.

Book I.

I.

FROM FREDERICK GRAHAM.

MOTHER, I smile at your alarms !
I own, indeed, my Cousin's charms,
But, like all nursery maladies,
Love is not badly taken twice.
Have you forgotten Charlotte Hayes,
My playmate in the pleasant days
At Knatchley, and her sister, Anne,
The twins, so made on the same plan,
That one wore blue, the other white,
To mark them to their father's sight ;
And how, at Knatchley harvesting,
You bade me kiss her in the ring,
Like Anne and all the others ? You,
That never of my sickness knew,
Will laugh, yet had I the disease,
And gravely, if the signs are these :

As, ere the Spring has any power,
 The almond branch all turns to flower,
 Though not a leaf is out, so she
 The bloom of life provoked in me ;
 And, hard till then and selfish, I
 Was thenceforth nought but sanctity
 And service : life was mere delight
 In being wholly good and right,
 As she was ; just, without a slur ;
 Honouring myself no less than her ;
 Obeying, in the lowliest place,
 Ev'n to the slightest gesture, grace,
 Assured that one so fair, so true,
 He only served that was so too,
 For me, hence weak towards the weak,
 No more the unnoted blackbird's shriek
 Startled the light-leaved wood ; on high
 Wander'd the gauding butterfly,
 Unscared by my hung cap ; the bee,
 Rifling the hollyhock in glee,
 Was no more trapp'd with his own flower
 And for his honey slain. Her power,
 From great things even to the grass
 Through which the unfenced footways pass
 Was law, and that which keeps the law,
 Cherubic quiety and awe ;
 Day was her doing, and the lark
 Had reason for his song ; the dark

In anagram innumerable spelt
Her name with stars that throbb'd and felt;
'Twas the sad summit of delight
To wake and weep for her at night;
She turn'd to triumph or to shame
The strife of every childish game;
The heart would come into my throat
At rosebuds; howsoe'er remote,
In opposition or consent,
Each thing, or person, or event,
Or seeming neutral howsoe'er,
All, in the live, electric air,
Awoke, took aspect, and confess'd
In her a centre of unrest,
Yea, stocks and stones within me bred
Anxieties of joy and dread.

O, bright apocalyptic sky
O'erarching childhood! Far and nigh
Mystery and obscuration none,
Yet nowhere any moon or sun!
What reason for these sighs? What hope,
Daunting with its audacious scope
The disconcerted heart, affects
These ceremonies and respects?
Why stratagems in everything?
Why, why not kiss her in the ring?
'Tis nothing strange that warriors hold,
Whose fierce, forecasting eyes behold